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Mobility, Tradition and Adaptation: Samoa's Comparative Advantage in the Global Market Place

Deborah C GOUGH
University of Wollongong, Australia

SAMOA'S ENDURING image is that of a traditional, idyllic Pacific paradise. This image has been created in books and movies and captured in many photographs. Samoans are proud of their islands' beauty and are equally proud of their strong culture, *fa'aSamoa*, which underpins traditional Samoan life. Like many other small island developing states however, Samoa is vulnerable to the forces of globalisation. Key factors that contribute to its vulnerability include exposure to natural disasters, geographical location and isolation, smallness and limited exportable natural resources.

Governments of the Pacific Islands now recognise the influence that globalisation is having on their countries. It is a central theme of their daily affairs and they are occupied with its 'rhetoric,… ideology, and the economic policies'. [1] The Samoan government is no different. Since the 1970s it has been influenced by the set of economic drivers that are commonly framed under the terms economic rationalism or neoliberalism. The leading players that influence Samoan government policy, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), all employ this approach.[2] How then have Samoans responded to this latest challenge? In this paper, I suggest that they have responded strategically to both the challenges and the opportunities afforded them. Samoans are recognised for their adaptation to new circumstances, for striving to take from the new what suits them without relinquishing what is of most importance. They have demonstrated a tireless ability to survive through past experiences of colonialism, the coming of Christianity, the forces of capitalism and globalisation.[3] Similarly, in the current period of intensified globalisation, Samoans are facing contemporary challenges by carving out a niche and adjusting to meet the demands of the present. They are part of the group of new transnational communities that are experiencing migration as a process of empowerment, a process that Portes refers to as 'globalisation from below'.[4]

The most popular Western theory surrounding Polynesians is that they originated in South East Asia around 4,000 years ago. The people who would eventually arrive at the islands they called Samoa, settled there some 3,000 years ago.[5] The earliest contact with Europeans arose through a European diaspora between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries when Polynesians crewed for them as they explored the seas, sought out new territories and trading opportunities, and pursued whaling.[6] Salesa recognises three overlapping periods when Samoa's 'relations with the world beyond changed significantly': the arrival of whaling ships

and the first missionaries in the 1820s and '30s; the arrival of foreign shipping companies and subsequent 'commercialisation' and 'opening-up' of Samoa in the 1850s; and the 1870s which saw the arrival of steamships.[7] Firth refers to this period, roughly from the 1850s to 1914, as 'the first period of globalization' when economies such as Samoa's commenced integration into the global economy.[8] Along with the Europeans came Christianity, trading and commercialisation, colonialism, the annexing of land and occupation during World War Two. Anae describes these events, and more broadly the introduction of capitalism and the impact of a global economy on Samoa, as occasions of "opposition".[9] She argues that such occasions have fueled an enduring Samoan identity both in Samoa and amongst its diasporic communities. It is this enduring sense of 'Samoanness' and adhesion to the traditional collectivism of *fa'aSamoa* that has sustained Samoa and Samoans through many eras of transformation, including finding their niche in a neoliberal globalised world.

A Culture of Mobility

> 'Before they were even 'Samoans' Samoans had come from over the sea, and they never stopped traversing it […] they were voyagers: witness 4000 years of Pacific maritime history […] In this sense Samoan present echoes this past'.[10]

John Connell stresses that in the South Pacific 'there is now "a culture of migration" and that emigration is normal and anticipated' and that 'the life courses of island people… are increasingly embedded in international ties'.[11] Building on this it is important to recognise that there has always been a culture of, if not migration, then mobility in the Pacific.

In general, mobility in the Pacific is explained as an ancient islander characteristic[12] and the travelers themselves as a 'sea-faring' people.[13] There is strong evidence supporting the claim that early Samoans made frequent voyages between islands, concurrently exploring the space around them and expanding their resources. In the case of Tonga and Fiji, in particular, alliances for trade and marriage were made, 'thereby expanding social networks for greater flow of wealth [and] to quench their thirst for adventure'.[14] This style of travel continued virtually unchecked until the intensification of contact with Europeans in the 1930s.[15]

Mobility is not just something that Samoans practice 'off-shore'. While Samoans were taking advantage of opportunities for ocean faring, they continued to move about their islands as they had since settlement. As Salesa says the way Samoans have always gained a sense of their place is by traveling through Samoa, that is they 'continually re-enacted and recreated it, giving meaning to the entity'.[16] He further argues that Samoans followed established pathways, or *ala*, in order to connect and reconnect themselves to place and that, moreover, this internal mobility was 'not simply a means of connecting people and places, but that this circuitry had "high stakes" [and] was fundamental to the Samoan way of life and Samoan politics'.[17]

In exploring the Samoan journeys of the past and connecting them with those of today we can begin to understand the centrality of mobility to the endurance of a Samoan culture. Strong links exist between the earliest Samoan mobility,

contemporary migration and the cultural roots that further connect these periods and actions. Despite this, Western scholarly work on Samoan migration is predominantly framed in the context of post-colonial labour migration and concentrated on the post-World War Two period. In order to understand the way that contemporary Samoans engage in the global system, however, it is necessary to recognise the influence of both historical and cultural aspects.

Chapman and Prothero cite an example of pre-contact circulation amongst the Masu Abucin Rani of Nigeria, known as the 'men who ate away in the dry season'. They argue that the practice was voluntary, and that families traveled to 'work … to maintain social contacts and to meet various obligations'.[18] Samoan *malaga*, a traditional practice that remains strong today, is easily compared. *Malaga* is described by McGrath as a formal journey made by members of a traveling delegation; a journey that forges or reinforces social relationships across a distance.[19] Like the journeys of the Masu Abucin Rani, Salesa argues that *malaga* is a long-standing and fundamental aspect of *fa'aSamoa*. He refers to the presence of *fale tele* (big houses or meeting houses) as being evidence that *malaga* is central to the very architecture and life of each village.[20] In the diaspora today the *fale tele* may have been replaced by church halls and formal lounge rooms but the practice of *malaga* lives on. People still make trips across great distances to affirm alliances, to exchange goods (although these days it is more likely that people will be looking to sell goods, such as fine mats, in order to raise funds) and to make plans for the future.

By the 1900s present day travel paths out of Samoa were established.[21] Moreover, as Salesa states, the reasons people gave for their mobility then parallel those given in the literature concerning contemporary sojourns: 'economic motives, to visit family, for education, to follow the heart… adventure … to '*Tafao*' (wander about)'.[22] Ultimately it is Hau'ofa who reminds us of ancient connections to Oceania, such that we should view the Pacific as 'a sea of islands' rather than 'far islands in a sea': 'Islanders have broken out of their confinement, are moving around and away from their homelands, not so much because their countries are poor, but because they had been unnaturally confined and severed from much of their traditional sources of wealth, and because it *is in their blood to be mobile*'(Emphasis added).[23]

Contemporary Migration

Pacific peoples continue to journey to the various islands in and around the Pacific Rim. According to Chapman and Prothero, 'people are in constant movement [and that] defined in space and time, these movements involve both displacement and reciprocal flows of human beings'.[24]

World War Two was the driving force behind many transformations in the Pacific. Prior to World War One, Samoa was predominantly a subsistence economy. After the bombing of Pearl Harbour, however, the Samoan islands became an important defensive link in the Pacific with some 40,000 United States Marines occupying the islands.[25] Construction to support American military requirements meant that a workforce was required. That workforce was sourced locally and, virtually for the first time, wages became a standard occurrence across Samoa. In this manner, World War Two radically transformed the economic structure of the Samoan islands.[26] Western Samoan's had been exposed to the cash economy earlier via German controlled coconut plantations, however this time vast numbers of

people's expectations began to change; they now wanted to participate in the paid workforce, improve their standard of living and access goods and services not previously available to them. In order to fulfil these new expectations they needed to find employment outside of the subsistence economy. Residents of American Samoa found employment opportunities outside of the Samoan Islands by virtue of their special status in America. Concurrently, like many western countries in the post-World War Two era, New Zealand looked to its former colony to meet its demand for semi and unskilled labour. Workers were needed in the mass-production factories of New Zealand and in the service sector. The indigenous peoples of the surrounding Pacific countries provided one very popular source of this labour. There followed a period of heightened migration that resulted in an increasing integration of Samoans into the global economy. This period, particularly from 1970s onwards, coincides with what has been termed the second, or current, wave of globalisation in the Pacific.[27]

New Zealand's demand for immigrants remained high during the 1960s and into the '70s. The result of this demand was an era of relatively free flowing labour from Samoa to New Zealand. Individuals came first, only to be followed by other family members seeking employment, and so there was a 'snow-balling' of Samoans temporarily residing in New Zealand. By 1970 almost all Samoans had relatives in New Zealand, with many being immediate family.[28] During the 1970s, however, migration policy was tightened. New Zealand began to experience recession and yet again a change in economic fortune, this time as a result of the so-called OPEC 'oil-crisis'. Pacific Islanders in general became 'scapegoats' for a plethora of societies' troubles, from increasing unemployment and a low standard of housing to a decline in law and order.[29] By the late '80s things had become difficult for those Pacific Islanders remaining in New Zealand. By 1991 for example the unemployment rate for Pacific Islanders in New Zealand was double that of the general population, having risen to 28% from 12% in 1986.[30] By now, however, deep-rooted diasporic communities were working together pooling resources, much like they would have back in their island villages. As a result they managed to survive to take advantage of what opportunities, such as better education for their offspring, were on offer.

Spoonley documents the change from individual labour migration to New Zealand in the post World War Two period to complete family unit migration or reunification by the 1960s and '70s.[31] Others have also argued that the nature of the immigrant community changed with this transition.[32] It evolved from one that was essentially seen as transient and temporarily opportunistic, the result of 'circulation',[33] to a community that was willing to lay down more roots in order to create and sustain a diasporic population. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that the drivers behind such change did not alter. People were continuing to be mobile in a way that they always had, in order to take advantage of opportunities, to unite family and to create new alliances.

As John Connell concluded, migration today is far less likely to be circular in nature.[34] Despite this, there continues to be an interchange of individuals between places of origin and destination and, at least up until the last decade, many such movements still concluded in the place where they began.[35] Tens of thousands of Samoan-born and overseas-born Samoans visit 'the island' every year, particularly at Christmas time and for the increasingly popular "Teuila Festival" every September.

Moreover, and notwithstanding the more permanent nature of settlement in diasporic communities, there is still the intention, hope or dream, in many people's minds to return home. Most commonly this is when they retire or have at least established themselves enough economically to return and live a comfortable existence, to build a *palagi* (European) style house or commence a small business. Increasingly, however, educated young people in Samoa are speaking about obtaining a tertiary education overseas, perhaps using this education to 'travel' and see different places but retaining the option of returning to Samoa to establish their careers. This seems to indicate a positive change of attitude towards life in Samoa as the country continues to develop and more opportunities become available. Even for those who do not return, the spiritual connection to 'home', land, birthplace, is universal; fundamentally shaping the nature of the migrants' relationship with their chosen destination.[36]

In 1966, eight percent of Samoans were living overseas, by the mid 1970s the percentage was sixteen and by 1980 a third of Samoans were living in the diaspora in over thirty different nations.[37] Today some 200,000 Samoan-born Samoans, equal the population in Samoa, live abroad.[38] The idea that these 'transnational' travellers are part of an emerging institution, the 'transnational corporation of kin', allowing groups to colonize and exploit economic opportunities across a wide range of economic environments, was first suggested as early as the mid-eighties.[39] Today, Samoans across the globe are active players in what is referred to as 'meta-Samoa'.

Obligation, Service and Culture

In addition to escaping the hardships associated with natural hazards, Connell suggests that the key drivers for South Pacific migration are 'economic even where social changes are significant'.[40] In their early study of Samoans residing in New Zealand, Pitt and Macpherson outline four key emigration motivations: education; obligation to family - both to join relatives in New Zealand but also to support family back in Samoa; the prestige associated with living abroad and earning wages; and economics.[41] Shankman agrees with Pitt and Macpherson's assessment in terms of economic motivators, citing the post-independence stagnation of the island's economy, but argues that population growth, and a western-based education system that encourages expectations that cannot yet be met in Samoa and a general lack of opportunity for youth are also driving factors.[42] What these assessments have in common is that they all place economics at the core of migration in the Pacific. While there is no question that economics is indeed a key driver of Samoan contemporary migration it is important to place 'economics' in its cultural context, that is, to recognise 'the social centrality of the ancient practice of reciprocity, the core of all Oceanic cultures'.[43] In order to do so, it is necessary to understand the basis of 'Samoanness'. Schmidt, for example, suggests that 'Samoan identities are predominantly sociocentric and relational and occur as a series of contextual, situational and collectivist arrangements, in contrast to the more internal, egocentric and individualistic self of the west'.[44]

In a western sense, when people seek to "improve their lot in life", we generally expect that their motivation is individual or, at most, that it extends to their offspring. In a Samoan context, however, a desire to improve ones financial position is driven more from a collective rather than an individualistic perspective. People

discuss their desire for an improved life for their extended family and village. Moreover they speak of it in terms of "obligation" or "service". Membership and service are central components of "Samoanness".[45] Taufa agrees, stressing the importance of not oversimplifying the reasons for Polynesian migration as purely economic as Westerners generally understand it.[46] She paraphrases Anae, who views migration as tied to complex social, cultural and political factors. She argues that for migrant and non-migrant Polynesians, culture has to do with not only the notion of beliefs, attitudes, customs and social relations, but also with political economy. This aspect is paramount when considering *fa'alavelave*, (personal and family obligation), a traditional practice that requires the distribution of both material and customary wealth. In this context, *fa'alavelave* is not only a primary reason for emigration, that is in order to meet one's obligations, but also a fundamental link with 'home' as people meet such obligations across the diaspora. The weight of the obligation is highly significant; it was estimated in 1998 that US$39.53 million was returned to Samoa in the form of remittances alone.[47] Such flows are indicative of strong ties to the homeland and transnational links across communities. Connell notes, 'their use reinforces a traditional set of values', traditional values such as meeting *fa'alavelave*. Moreover he acknowledges that such exchanges may play a part in reinforcing traditional social norms, which will, in turn, assist in halting the type of cultural erosion that is feared in the face of dramatic rates of emigration.[48]

Fa'alavelave itself is part of an ancient belief system, one that began to evolve with Samoan settlement around 1000 BC, and is known as *fa'aSamoa* or 'the Samoan Way'.[49] Kallen defines *fa'aSamoa* as a '...total phenomenon [that is] at once a world view; a way of life; a cherished heritage; a set of structural principles for ordering social life; a plethora of formidable constraints upon behaviour; and an ideological underpinning for strongly positive ethnocultural identification'.[50]

Fa'aSamoa is a traditional governance system, the language, customs and social structure of which was well established by the eighteenth century.[51] It is a system that still oversees all aspects of modern Samoan life: social, economic and political.[52] One of its basic tenets is *tautua* (to provide service). *Tautua* is fundamental to a member's rights and responsibilities to other *'aiga* (family) or *nu'u* (village) members. In order for a member to claim their incontrovertible right to communal property they must first contribute goods and service.[53] This sense of *tautua*, that is 'the belief in the importance of service' is shared by diasporic and island community members alike.[54] It is often the driving force behind the original migration – whereas once young people would have provided 'service' to *'aiga* by working the plantation, now they can fulfill their *tautua* requirements through migration and the opportunities it provides for family. This point was stressed by Macpherson when discussing the 'primary purpose' behind migration.[55] He concluded that its primary aim was to assist family, *'aiga*, with personal interest being of secondary importance. He continues, explaining that this is not contrary to what would be culturally expected and that migration is not a 'true option' in this context; these people, mostly young and single, were chosen by their family to provide this service "*tautua*". In this way, to use his words, 'it is no more or less' than what would be expected back in Samoa.[56] That is to say, that they are expected to serve their family no matter where they are, whether they are in Samoa or in a diasporic community. Samoans across the diaspora still express their migration in terms of *tautua*, either to those family in their

current place of residence or to those in Samoa. Indeed, despite totally different living arrangements, the most obvious of which is living in individual suburban houses as opposed to a village setting, *'aiga* remains the basic unit of the social organisation within the migrant community. *'Aiga* encapsulates migrant identity, facilitates a wide range of overt functions, such as raising money, providing houses and employment, coping with the crises of life, and it gives its members the security of living in a traditional, secure, well-loved group.[57] The point here is that not only is commitment to the traditional institution of *'aiga* one of the major motivations behind migration, but also that its replication across the diaspora is also one of the key reasons Samoans have been able to establish such successful diasporic communities and, ultimately, why these communities flourish.

The links that Samoans maintain across diasporic networks are not unlike those that are sustained by other Pacific Islanders. Tongans living overseas, for example, also maintain 'economic, social, political and emotional ties' with the island of Tonga.[58] Further, Tonga, like Samoa, is economically dependent on remittances from overseas. Moreover, the issue of whether 'second generation' Tongans will maintain ties to the homeland and, in particular, whether their attachment will move beyond 'the emotional' and include continuing practical support like sending of remittances is not unlike the concerns held by Samoans in the diaspora.[59] According to Lee this complacency amongst young Tongans in the diaspora may ultimately threaten the economic future of Tonga. Similarly, Samoans are concerned with the high level of remittance dependency not only by Samoans in Samoa but also that of the country of Samoa as a whole.

Those who drive the globalisation agenda do not care about the particular welfare of small Pacific Island countries, and as Firth puts it, 'comparative advantage is everything, and if a country doesn't have many comparative advantages, that's bad luck'.[60] This is Samoa's comparative advantage; Samoans have been able to engage successfully in the world economy in unique ways while retaining faithful links to traditional practices. Cultural practices based in tradition have provided the framework for their engagement, enabling the comparative advantage that Samoa needs in order to ensure a sustainable future in the contemporary world. If this framework is endangered and the reciprocal system eroded, as is suggested in the previous discussion about second generation Tongans and Samoans, then this comparative advantage could be lost.

Costs and Benefits

Albert Wendt, in an early collection, tells the tale of a young man, Peilua, returning to his homeland of Samoa after being educated overseas. Peilua receives a hero's welcome by his family and village alike; his new status helped considerably by the 'massive and expensive suitcase', full of Western goods and clothing, he brings with him.[61] Sadly, Peilua's prestige meets a rapid demise when the gifts he has been distributing from the suitcase come to an end, the suitcase mysteriously disappearing. His fall from grace is dramatic and he experiences a brutal rejection by the village.

For many Samoans, Wendt's story epitomises their migration journey. They leave their homeland, adapt to a foreign land, take advantage of new opportunities afforded them and, ultimately, find themselves wedged between two worlds. The

more traditional path offers security and the protection of a collective society. The other promises rewards for individual achievement, but the security is low, the risks are many. The great majority of Samoans choose to straddle these two worlds – attempting to take advantage of what the 'new' world, the neo-liberal world, has to offer, while remaining loyal to tradition and the homeland. But this journey is not an easy one. Ironically, in filling a market niche, by selling labour across a diaspora, they chance all that has made the passage possible.

Samoans are now 'off-setting' the risks associated with choosing a more individualistic path with an alternate form of strategic investment; that is, they are actively investing in their children's education and subsequent employment opportunities. In the majority of cases children continue to live at home, or, at the very least, even after marriage stay intimately connected. In many cases they not only provide service to their parents but also to the *'aiga*, either directly or through their parents, both in Samoa and in the diaspora. However, for many Samoans seeking opportunities off the island of Samoa, deliberate investment in their children is now an equal, if not greater motivator, than investment in island-based *'aiga*. Moreover, it is the primary reason most people give when asked why they are now choosing to stay in the diaspora.

Samoa's engagement in the globalised world, no matter how seemingly successful to date, is not without risks. Continued engagement is dependent on market opportunities and favourable migration policies of labour importing countries. Moreover, the lives of Samoa's emigrants are now entrenched in the diaspora. While many people still hold tight to a dream of returning to Samoa, the reality is that this is becoming less of an option and is, moreover, being consciously 'traded' for a life alongside children who are born in the diaspora. People have grown accustomed to the life choices and benefits that living overseas offers them, their children and their family back in Samoa.

These emigrants are part of a system that is committed to *'aiga* and on which Samoa as a whole is directly dependent socially and economically. Their role in this system is well established. Globally they are considered 'labour migrants' and the remittances they send home form part of the estimated $65 billion per annum that is returned to labour exporting countries.[62] In the case of Samoa between 30-50% of the GDP of the country, more than all exports and aid, is remitted each year. Opportunities to participate in the global labour market have boosted per capita GNP and, as a result, assisted development in Samoa. Community services and opportunities, like access to health services and education, have broadened significantly.

There are also costs related to these developments, like changing consumption patterns. When people favour imported food over local produce for example this threatens to further undermine local market opportunities. Moreover, there are 'long-term social and cultural implications' which need to be balanced against the benefits.[63] There is also a strong argument too that emigration hinders development because of "brain drain" and skill export.[64] There are pressing issues concerning the effects of modernity on Samoan society. Social disturbances associated with alcohol for example, a rise in petty crime and 'unrest' amongst youth are topical issues of real concern. A rise in youth suicide in Samoa was attributed to a reduction in the prospects of migration in the 1980s.[65] Youth suicide remains a significant concern

today. More than ever, young people in Samoa are finding it hard to balance the demands of their obligations to a traditional, strongly authoritarian society with the expectations they have following participation in a Western-biased education system and exposure to so many Western ideals – many of which are in conflict with traditional expectations.

In her 1996 novel, "where we once belonged", Sia Figiel offered comment on many of these issues.: 'Suicide – it is the only way. For isn't that what we're slowly doing anyway? Each time a child cries for Coca-Cola instead of coconut juice… Each time we prefer apples to mangoes…. Drowning our children with each mushroom cloud, Love Boat, Fantasy Island …Rambo…'.[66]

Her work speaks to the tension between the traditional agrarian-based life that was once typical in Samoa and the now more characteristic race toward modernity. Once silenced, today such matters are openly discussed by Samoans across the diaspora and are the subject of commentary in the press. In the *Samoan Observer* for example, previously taboo issues, like youth suicide[67] and the abuse of traditional systems are openly debated.[68] There are other concerns too, such as a degree of dependence on remittances that can result in the neglect of productive land or a reluctance to seek paid employment. Some Samoans living overseas are hesitant to return for visits as often as they would like to, fearing what they perceive to be the greediness that will await them when they do. Various opt instead to visit less often or to only send gifts when others are visiting. When they do return some are staying in hotels so as to avoid the demands that will be placed on them when they stay in the village.[69]

These changes, tensions and debates are to be expected given the powerful influences that are being experienced by Samoa and Samoans everywhere. Moreover there is no sign of out migration from small Pacific Island countries easing on the whole. On the contrary, many predict that the trend will intensify.[70] If this is to be the case then it is reasonable to predict that the spread and speed of social transformation associated with out migration will also intensify.

Conclusion

Samoans have demonstrated an obdurate capacity to confront forces of transformation and make strategic adaptations. In their effort to negotiate the global economy they have created a meta-Samoa with links across a well-established diaspora. Their competitive edge is founded on two key aspects of Samoan life. Firstly, Samoans appear to embrace mobility. Since the settlement of Samoa, mobility has been acculturated; people are free to take advantage of labour market opportunities 'off-shore' while at the same time reinforcing their culture through the creation of vibrant Samoan diasporic communities. Secondly, Samoans abroad remain true to one of the key tenets of *fa'aSamoa*, that is, that the welfare of the collective is paramount and primary to that of the individual. By participating in Samoan life across the diaspora, Samoans reinforce their relationship and fulfil their obligations and commitment to extended family and village. At the same time, they are reproducing the social relations that ensure the reproduction of *fa'aSamoa*. By doing both, they are demonstrating their comparative advantage in a neoliberal world. This tactic, however, is not without risks. From the 'outside' such a strategy depends on positive market forces and friendly migration policies. From the 'inside'

it relies on an on-going ability to balance the dialectical relationship between individualism associated with participating in a neo-liberalised world and the collectivism of *fa'aSamoa*. It depends on the ability of Samoans to face challenges with strategic foresight. Only then will they continue to step forward towards a sustainable future, effectively sidestepping the pitfalls of Peilua and the villages in Wendt's early story.

NOTES

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[16] Salesa, p.172.

[17] ibid.

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[20] Salesa.

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[26] Va'a.

[27] Firth.

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[34] Connell, 'An Ocean…'.

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Mobility, Tradition, Adaptation: Samoa's Comparative Advantage in the Global Marketplace

Deborah Gough
University of Wollongong

ABSTRACT

IN AN ECONOMIC environment dominated by neo-liberal policies Samoa strives to carve out a niche. In order to do so it needs to exploit areas of comparative advantage. This paper argues that Samoa already utilises such a competitive advantage: by selling their labour across a vast diaspora Samoans already engage successfully in the world economy. Moreover, it will be argued that traditional practices, and an ease of mobility based on historical and cultural connections, provide the framework for this exploitation. By participating in Samoan life across the diaspora Samoans reinforce their relationships and fulfil their obligations. Concurrently they reproduce the social relations that strengthen culture. By doing both they demonstrate their competitive advantage in a neo-liberal world and take a step closer to a sustainable future.

Deborah Gough is a PhD candidate with the Centre for Asian Pacific Social Transformation Studies (CAPSTRANS) at the University of Wollongong, Australia. Her doctoral research working title is *Flotsam and Jetsam: Samoa as an example of a Small Pacific (Island) State in a Globalising World*.