HGOROFUTUNA
Report of a Survey of the
Music of West Futuna,
Vanuatu

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and
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Futuna, showing the settlements at Ipao and Matagi (Napua and Imrae) and in the Herald Bay district (Itaromara, Isia, Moga and Iasoa). The high flat centre of the island is used for gardening, and is linked to the settlements by precipitous tracks. The photograph on page 5 is taken from the southern point of Herald Bay, looking towards the high interior. (Photograph: Allan Thomas, 1992.)
This is a report of a survey conducted in Futuna in 1990 as part of the Territorial Survey of Oceanic Music funded by Unesco and the Internal Grants Committee, Victoria University of Wellington.

The report describes the activities, and outlines the findings, of the survey. The transcriptions and type-descriptions are intended as working definitions, and are not the result of extensive analysis.

The report was substantially written in the field in September 1990 with the typed copy sent to Futuna for checking. The addition of transcriptions, some reflection and editing have subsequently occurred.

The orthography of the written language is treated in detail in Dougherty 1983:1-14 to which reference should be made. Readers should note the following:

- j usually an “sh” sound
- h a glottal stop
- g pronounced “ng”
INTRODUCTION

Ta pepa nei nipena iefaru penaganea, fijikauga ia Tafaga tuai ia Hgoro Futuna. A 1990 a fijikauga nei nipena e Takaroga Kuautoga Futuna ma Allan Thomas New Zealand.

Ta nohkano ita fijikauga tenei. Pe ka fakatupuria a hgoro keke oji ia hgoro tuai ma hgoro inopogi nei pe ka nage fakarufie pe kaso touaki, pe a vakatagata noromai ka farigoina a Tafaga mo a penaganea ia hgoro keke oji Futuna. Anea oji ni amoa ka nage Futuna, faru ka nage ia Kaltaral Senta i Vila faru ka nage ita Unifesiti Viktoria Niu Silan - Ma nohnea oji nomatakina anea feipenei pe kaiso touaki ia fanua keke oji ia Pasafik.

Ta hnofo ia penaganea fou nofiji inopoginei a tagata ko jikai ta torotoro ia penaganea iorea vahtupuna nohnofo iai tuai. A Unesco neĩ sitokina tafijikauga nei pe kamatakinia a Kastom keke oji ia motu keke ia pasafik.

A nea oji ni amoa mo ni fakatupuria ita fijikauga tenei etapu ta pena mane iai. Kaie mo gatama ia Vakatagata oji noromai pe kirea ka-farigoina a hgoro kastam keke oji ma penaganea kage iai itiorea fanua i Futuna. Efaru antafa foki niamaia ita fijikauga tenei ia Hgoro Hmori ma ta String Band.

Ta fijikauga tenei a faki Futuna oji eno hnofo i Futuna, mai Vila itantafa ia fakoriki mai ta hmori ma ta Ministra E Nahtapei ni gatahtasi iai pe ka pena. A fakai Futuna oji ni situ itantafa ita pena hgoro, fesaoha hkai ma fesaoga, itantafa ita hmori, fakau fakairoa, a ganafune, gatamtane notafiri ma no String Band. Aigoa oreja oji ni serea itasi a norau ita pepa.

Feipe fakau oji nisitu ita fijikauga tenei nikanieni pe kamatakina a tafaga rufie oji o ta fanua i Futuna, ma kafakaria-kea ki a tagata oji uaitafa ita kere pe i Futuna ta foi pahtoka ita tai noiai a tagata ma kastam rufie kage iai.

Ta numra ia tagata nohnofo ia takapito Fanua ifutuna ita nofajaga tenei feipe 3-400 kaie morefuma ta numra tasiana foki ia fakai i Futuna nohnofo i Gauta mai Vila. Efaru nohnofo ia fijikauga efaru noia Haospetel kaie faru nohnofo ia skul.
INTRODUCTION

A recording survey of the music of Futuna was undertaken in August and September 1990 by Takaroga Kuautoga (resident of Futuna and fieldworker [since 1985] of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre) and Allan Thomas (Lecturer in the School of Music, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand).

The aim of the survey was to record examples of each kind of music in Futuna for archiving and study purposes. Archive copies of the recordings are deposited in Futuna, in the Vanuatu Cultural Centre Port Vila, in the Archives of Maori and Pacific Music (Auckland University), and the originals are held in the Asia Pacific Archive, Victoria University of Wellington.

The Territorial Survey of Oceanic music is a project principally funded by Unesco which aims to assist in the conservation and knowledge of the traditions of the Pacific Islands.

The survey was approved by Minister Edward Natapei and the Council of Chiefs in Futuna, and supported by the Vanuatu Cultural Centre. On Futuna, assistance was given by many knowledgeable singers and storytellers, by church leaders, school teachers, women's organisations, the dance group, string band and others.

Those who participated are interested in preserving the tradition of Futuna and in presenting an accurate picture of it to outsiders. Futunans value the special character of the custom of their rocky homeland. The community numbers 400 people living in three regions on the island. Perhaps double that number live in Tanna and Vila, where recordings were also made. Though isolated, the island community is subjected to the 20th-century pressures of modernisation and change.

(A sample audio cassette of Futunan music recorded on this survey, including the items transcribed for this Occasional Paper, is available from the Asia Pacific Archive, School of Music, Victoria University of Wellington, P O Box 600, Wellington, New Zealand. Details will be provided on request.)
Esore a kastam niko touaki kaie efaru nitoe kaie tasi a tafito vaga ota kapman otea pe a “Kastam Kamatakina” atagata kamanatunea iai. A kastam rufie area ka fakairoafeipe ia penaganea ota hnofo otagata. A kastom tafiri nikojikijia ia pito fanua oji ma ni ko fakaria i Vila ma ianohnea waitafa kea feipe Australia ma Japan ma ka rokea foki ita kerenei oji.

Ta materu hgoro ma hkai teni pena nei ka situ fakasisiana ia faikai futuna, ia hgoro ma hkai eni ko touaki mo ni ko vahgaromia ekiera. Aha ka pena kitea pe katufa ia vakatagata noromai waimoa iakitea pe ka farigoina anea nei? Efaru a mentua enei pe a fatoriki ota fanua ka pena.

1. A fatoriki jikitasi oji ia pito fanua i Futuna ka tukage ia tagata pe ka sereia ia pepa a hgoro feipe ia Tagi, Pisaki, Ujia, mefaru foki eituai pe kanomentua ia penaganea iorea vahtupuna nipena nihgoro iai tuai pe kaiso Vahgaronia. Afatoriki ka tusia tasi anofajaga ita tau pekano pena ia tauoji pe a tagata oji ka pena tasi a fakatamauga ia hgoro tuai pe kano mentua ia hgoro ma ka fakairoa foki a tagata oji iai.

2. A fatoriki kanogia a “Vanuatu Kaljaral Senta” pe kai kauna mai ta tagata no pena kaset ia “Video” pe eia kahmai ki Futuna kamei amoa a penaganea oji nopena ita Ramaga. A kaset erua kapena tasi kanage i Vila kaie tasi nio Futuna.

3. Foki a fatoriki ka sara tasi a retu pe kasitokina ita fijikauga tenei, itan tafa ita tape ma ta sereia a khai oji. Pe ka saga ka pena itasi a pepa sisi Kaserea ita fesao i futuna ma ta (English). foki pe a gatama noskul ka taua ma fakai waitafa foki pe kano farigoina ia hcai ita fanua i Futuna.

A mentua oji ni sereia penei pe ta fijikauga tenei kaiso vahgapua kaie ka pena pe ka matakina mo ka fafekina mai efaru anea a tagata niko semenatunea fakasore iai pe ka matakina.
Some notable achievements in retaining the tradition have been made; the policy of the Vanuatu Government in having performances at national and international festivals has undoubtedly helped reinstate traditional dancing.

The survey provided an opportunity for Futunan people to think about the survival of their oral tradition and about positive steps (with written records and archival tapes) which can be taken to strengthen it. At the conclusion of the survey some objectives were suggested to the Council of Chiefs:

1. That the chiefs should encourage each family to remember and write down *tagi* so that the history of earlier generations is not lost. A competition might be held to encourage families to do this. The responsibility for remembering the songs should be shared by all the people.

2. That the chiefs should request the Vanuatu Cultural Centre to film the ceremonies and dances which are done when kingfish are caught. This should be done in canoes, beach, village and *marae* with older men, who remember the custom directing the video. (Copies of the video would be archived in Vila and held in Futuna.)

3. That the chiefs should encourage the recording and writing down of *hkai* (traditional tales) and to look for ways of having these and other custom materials published in the Futunan language as well as English. These materials might then be used in the schools, and by interested people outside Futuna.

These suggestions aim to continue the work of strengthening the oral tradition.
DETAILS OF THE SURVEY

Outline of Activities

The first approach was made to recognised singers of the older generation who were asked to record songs and stories. As we became more aware of the types of music available, we were able to request particular kinds of songs and to explore the repertoire more fully. The typology (see Glossary below) may be considered relatively complete in the areas covered, though with insufficient opportunity for investigation in women's singing, women's dance, incantations, and panpipes style or repertoire. In the areas covered, the limits of the repertoire in any type were not reached, though some songs and stories were recorded a number of times. At this stage it is not possible to give the extent of the repertoire.

Music which was recorded in performance context included custom dance, songs in folk tales, children's traditional games and church hymn singing. The contemporary music of the string band was also recorded in Tanna during the competition at the national 10th Anniversary celebrations. These recordings in performance context provide information for evaluating the solo recordings.

The documentation of songs proved difficult for investigators and singers alike. Although used in everyday conversation, the Futunan language is not frequently written, and translation into English proved difficult. The few translations included in the documentation should be considered provisional until further work is carried out on them. In addition to contemporary Futunan, the songs may have some other language remnants, as well as Vanuatu pidgin English.

Difficulty was experienced because of the spread of the Futunan community in Vanuatu (Vila - Tanna - Futuna) and around the island of Futuna itself. As new information was obtained, it would have been useful to check with earlier informants, but this was seldom possible. The two fieldwork periods in Futuna totalled 5 weeks, and a short time was also spent in Tanna and Vila.

Johnnie Tapasei and Meiri Seitu assisted the authors with recording or translating. Special thanks are due to Numania, Yala, Ukai and Rosmy. The Pastor and session, Women's Group and the School Teachers also contributed to the success of this venture.
Recordings and Equipment

Equipment used in the survey consisted of a Sony TCD5M cassette recorder, a Sony Digital Audio Tape-corder TCD-D10 cassette recorder with stereo condenser microphone, and a JVC video recorder. Both the video recorder and DAT cassette recorder were unable to be fully used owing to the lack of a working generator on the island. They were, however, used for selected recordings on Futuna.

Weather conditions for recording were generally poor; almost constant wind and the lack of solid buildings in most parts of the island made it difficult to escape from extraneous noise.

Copying was possible in the field by combining the two cassette recorders (a complete set of field tapes was left in Futuna) but editing has since been done at the School of Music, Victoria University of Wellington. Interest centres on the use of DAT equipment, a relatively new technology which provided recordings with excellent definition.

TAGI MEMORIAL SONGS

One of the principal purposes of song in Futuna is to remember and record events and people. Songs document history, especially the activities of individuals. Though called “tagi”, a word with associations of weeping or lamenting over death, the songs are not predominantly mournful, but are factual accounts of events in a person’s life (see Ex. 1). In performance songs are often delivered in a quiet unadorned manner or they may be sung and danced as kafa (See below)

Although tagi recount the events of the life of a specific individual that person is not named in the song. Now that tagi are seldom performed, the knowledge of who a particular tagi is about, as well as a full knowledge of the text, seems in imminent danger of being lost. The last tagi to be composed is thought to have been for Ninoho, a man who died in 1976. The composer Kalanu, who participated in this survey, is now very old (born c.1906) and was unable to remember this particular song. No tagi about women were recorded in the survey.
Two *tagi* recording dramatic historic events deserve special mention as important documents of an oral tradition. They concern the labourers’ trips to Queensland and Fiji in the late 19th century. Although these songs relate to an historic event, individuals figure prominently in them. The *tagi* about Queensland was recorded from six singers who each gave a selection of verses, indicating that the song is imperfectly remembered.

Today, songs are commissioned for memorial gatherings (*kaitarua*) held a year or so after death. On these occasions the grave is decorated, there is feasting for the whole community, and the period of mourning (during which, for example, a widow may not remarry) is completed. Modern memorial songs may be group compositions in string band or other musical styles.

Ex. 1. *Tagi O Vakesa.*

\[
\begin{align*}
(A-)vau & \text{ no-ko-} \text{ ma-nu ko ta-fe-tia-tai Vi-la} \\
\text{le kai-a vau no-ko-ma-nu vi-ri a pua Ni-mei} \\
\text{fagona vau ni-mei-ji koi jia vau-tapotu)}
\end{align*}
\]

In the survey, this *tagi* was sung by Naparau and Mere (recording Item 53). If the *tagi* was sung as a *kafâ*, the idiophone beats would occur as the first beat of the bar, but these are not stressed in the singing in this unaccompanied recording. The full text appears in the Appendix.

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1 An account of these two songs appears in Allan Thomas, “Songs as History; A Preliminary Assessment of Two Songs of the Blackbirding Era Recently Recorded in Western Futuna, Vanuatu”. *Journal of Pacific History* (forthcoming).
**KAFA**

Songs with rhythmic accompaniment were formerly performed at festive gatherings. Participants sat beside a log or giant bamboo, striking it with a short wooden beater. The buttress roots of a tree were also mentioned as a possible “drum”. A distinctive musical feature of kafa performance is the accelerated tempo at the end of the song; typically, the final repetition of a chorus will be performed at a faster tempo than the rest of the song. The change in tempo is not gradual, but abruptly increases to more than double the original value, e.g. $J = \frac{1}{7}$ to $J = \frac{1}{9}$.

Any dancing occurring during the performance appears to be improvised.

The word *kafa* has a number of related meanings. (Nos. 1-3 are from Dougherty 1983):

1. Rope made of husk fibres, sennit. This rope is made by splitting the coconut husk in half and beating it with sticks on a log or section of giant bamboo until soft, and then stripping the fibres out of smooth, twist and braid into rope. (Protopolynesian *kafa* - sennit)
2. Festival drum. Large hollow log or giant bamboo which drummers beat with sticks in accompanying traditional songs and dancing. “hta kafa”, drum beating
3. A large traditional gathering involving drumming to set the beat for dancing and singing.
4. Performance of a song with beating of kafa drum, usually concluding with tempo acceleration. Different kinds of songs, including tagi, can be performed as kafa.

A related performance is *suprato* in which beating is done with stones on the ground. In the past, when two groups met and alternated in song performance, *suprato* was said to alternate with kafa. Such alternation could involve abusive songs (for example, between lineages). Challenging or abusive alternation, termed *pisake*, is today found in certain children’s games (see below).

The only performance of kafa seen during the survey was a commissioned performance by the dance group (see below), but individuals singing tagi frequently sang them as kafa by beating time and increasing the tempo at the end of the song.
Kafa performance. The costumed dance group performs a kafa using bamboo as the kafa idiophone. (Photograph: Allan Thomas, Futuna, 1990.)
A wealth of oral narratives (hkai) exists in Futuna, ranging from fanciful nature stories ("How the dove and the flying fox got married") to the exploits of mythological and legendary heroes, especially Maui. Many contain short songs labelled tagihkai (see Ex. 2). The texts of the songs may be obscure but, from their context and the familiarity of the story, they are not misunderstood. The tales themselves are told in contemporary Futunan language.

A notable feature of the tales is the way each is precisely located geographically, and often associated with a certain area on the island, usually with prominent landscape features, especially large boulders or stones. The tales often act as an explanation for the landscape features as well as abundance or appearance in nature. It was noted that most of the stories originated in the Matagi and Herald Bay districts of the island. The impression gained of hkai was that of a lively storytelling tradition, not frequently performed today as family evening entertainment, but well remembered nonetheless.

Ex. 2. Tanaio

Example 2 is Item 92 from the Survey, sung by Saola during the telling of the tale of Tanaio.
Almost all telling of *hkai* during the survey was done while directly facing the tape recorder, and without audience encouragement or interaction. Although this was an artificial setting for storytelling, local evaluation of the recordings suggested that the content was the same when a story was performed for an audience, though it is suggested that subtle changes might be made to make the delivery more entertaining when an audience was present. Some tellers (Yawoi, Kaiaha, Saola) made their tales more entertaining by emphasising humorous incidents with varied voice levels, and speed of delivery. Several tales were recorded more than once, for comparative purposes.

**DANCING**

Traditional dancing is now often associated with a particular group which has performed in recent years at festivals on national or international occasions. Knowledge of dancing was maintained over the last century (c. 1870 - 1970) by known individuals in defiance of church disapproval or prohibition.

A decisive change in the status of dance occurred in the 1970s when, for a visit to the New Hebrides by Queen Elizabeth II, a group rehearsed dances for a performance in Port Vila. The subsequent performing history of dancing is intertwined with that of String Band playing, which has also gained a national reputation from appearance at Festivals. Following the Queen's visit in 1974 were the First National Arts Festival in 1979 and the Independence Festival in 1980 at both of which a Futunan group performed. In 1988 the Futunan group was chosen to represent Vanuatu at the 5th Festival of Pacific Arts in Townsville, Australia, and the success of their performance led to a return trip to perform at Expo in Brisbane. In 1989 the group spent one month at the Asian Expo at Fukuoka, Japan, with a heavy schedule including short performances six times a day. These performance tours are highly valued and sought-after experiences, with serious training schedules and selection procedures.

In addition to the personal experience of travel, the group has spent time in Port Vila en route to performance venues and, with money earned from performing at hotels, they were able to make a large donation to the
new church building in Mission Bay, Futuna.

The group has an established repertoire of traditional dances each associated with a distinctive song type:

1. *Toka*. Dances of peace or “resolution of conflict” performed at dawn at a marae festival. Two types of *toka* are distinguished (by the manner in which the dancers hold an implement, and by song): *Toka Torojia*, and *Toka Sore*.
2. *Hgororagina*. A dance used on a number of festive occasions; the song contains the distinctive call or shout called “*ragina*”.
3. *Namauia*. The most frequently performed festive dance, performed by men or women or men and women. Two styles of dance are identified for Futuna and Aneityum.
4. *Kaimata*. Fishermen’s songs. The origin of the dance is not known (See Ex. 3).
5. *Kafa*. (See above)
6. *Pohpokiga* A dance originally performed around a catch of kingfish or tuna. The reception of these fish was the occasion for a ritual which included a *pohpokiga* dance on the beach when the fish were landed, and at the *marae* where they were brought to be distributed among the community.

Ex. 3. *Hake Mainuea*, a *kaimata*. 
TRADITIONAL GAMES

Ten of these, with chants or songs, were recorded in the survey from children at the school in Herald Bay. Although the games are well known among the adult population, not all were known by the school teachers (who had had their education outside Futuna) or by the children. The recording therefore served to reactivate some games for the current generation of children. Some of the games with counting were considered by the teachers as suitable for classroom use.

Among the games noted are two examples of tag, "Rougasau" and "Tapalia", each of which have abusive songs. These were indicated as the remnant of pisaki, or "giving abuse in song", an activity which used to take place between the two lineages at adult festivals.

Other examples involve a guessing game, "Risirisi" and counting out "Tukutuku", where the rules are relatively clear. Another group of games was those which seem to be enacting some story, although the story itself is not explicitly related in the game: Sina lupe, Sili tafe, Wai jijika, and Ta pelu motesa are in this category.

Ex. 4. Ta pelu motesa, a children's game.

This game is Item 64 in the Survey. The song contains both semispoken and chanted text — all features which are otherwise absent in the repertory of songs recorded in Futuna. The same music is used in another game song, Nigi nigi tona, "Pinch the lump".
In this game, each player grasps the index finger of another player, making a tower of hands in the centre of a circle of about six players. The top finger of the tower is struck from side to side by the leader's index finger while the song is sung (see photograph). After the song, the player with the top finger takes it, smells it, and puts it under his arm. The next finger in the tower is then treated in the same way. When all the fingers have been done, the players sing a different song, swaying from side to side, each player having both index fingers in their armpit. After this song, the players pull down their lower eyelids. A game similar to *Ta pele motesa* is found in Tokelau and elsewhere in West Polynesia.
INSTRUMENTS AND SOUND TOYS

Pu, the couch shell trumpet, is kept at the marae and reserved for signals to the whole community, for example, special meetings or emergencies. Recently it has been used to signal the start of the weekly market (held on the marae).

Kafa (See above) No specially constructed instrument is reserved for this beating. Any available or newly cut giant bamboo is the most usual “drum”. The beaters for kafa are kane. Terms for beating or playing instruments or rhythms are: hta kafa (to beat kafa), papaki (to clap), puia (to blow the pu), amosia (to play guitar).

Fagovava, panpipes, were not heard during the recording survey though some older people (temporarily absent from the island) were said to be able to make and play them.

Instruments played casually as sound-producing toys are often called fago, which is the name of an obsolete flute. Nothing was known of this flute, though the dictionary provides a connection to Polynesian practice in the word fagusu “to breathe through the nose”, and bamboo flutes called fagufagu or fangufangu are reported from Western Polynesia. The instruments played as toys include the jews harp (fago), rolled leaf (fago), leaf whizzer (ragohpa; literally, “noisy fly”), and slit tube (fagoigoi).

CHURCH

Futuna has a distinguished church history being, in 1839, the first place in Melanesia visited by the London Missionary Society (LMS) pioneer, John Williams. The LMS mission suffered many set-backs in these southern islands of the (then) New Hebrides, including the murder of Williams himself and also of the first Samoan missionaries in the Monga district of Futuna. From the 1850s, people from the neighbouring island of Aneityum, who had been trained by the missionaries, accomplished the conversion of many in Futuna, and from 1866 there was a resident European missionary in the person of the Rev. Joseph Copeland. In these years the first books in Futunan
were printed by John Geddie, missionary on Aneityum, who was followed in this work by Dr William Gunn. The first hymn book had “primers and literacy charts” but no trace of this section of the old hymn book was located in Futuna. Although the original book was reprinted in the 1970s, this section was omitted and a chart of common guitar chords added.

The first published collection of hymns contained 124 hymns. Its title is “Ahgoro Hmori”, and each hymn identifies the source of either the text or tune. These are abbreviated as follows: S & S [Songs and Solos], Hymnary, Evan Hy [Evangelistic Hymnal], Alexander’s Hymns, Un.Hy [Union Hymnal], Fr.Ch.Hy [Free Church Hymnal], Jubilee Songs, Gems of Praise, Scot.Hy. [Scottish Hymnal], Songs of the Gospel.

The title page of the second collection of 190 hymns is more explicit:

Some More Hymns of Futuna Language  
(Efarufoki a hgoro i avisau Futuna)  
Translated by Elder Vaega  
and the people of Futuna  
arranged by R N Meake  
December 1973

These hymns are all well known now and (as most of the hymn books have disintegrated) are sung from memory. The church has plans to reprint these two books as one. Also in use is the Vanuatu book New Laef Book 3, a collection in Bislama. A sample was also made on the recording survey of Action Songs — verses concerning Bible stories which are sung with hand actions. These appeared to be of recent origin.

Hymn-singing is a vigorous tradition in the Futuna Presbyterian Church. A deacon (or another person) acts as leader in the hymns, choosing the pitch and starting each verse. All singing of the older hymn repertoire and the bislama hymns is unaccompanied, though guitars are used with some children’s choruses and in the singing of Assembly of God adherents. Among the musical features observed
in the unaccompanied hymn singing were the raising of the pitch for the final or penultimate verse, melodic alteration, and part singing ("soprano, alto, tenor, bass" are names used).

A marked characteristic is the strident "Melanesian" vocal style employed by some singers. Futunan hymn-singing is said to be highly regarded in Vanuatu, having a wide audience at such times as the General Assembly (held in Futuna in 1989) and radio hymn-singing.

Most of the hymns were recorded during the survey at two Combined Presbyterian services when the people of the three districts came together at one of the churches. At these combined services choir items are given by the several districts and organisations of the island, in addition to congregational singing.

**CHRISTMAS - NEW YEAR**

Although the survey did not witness these seasonal celebrations, they were deemed sufficiently distinctive to warrant collecting a descriptive account:

At Christmas the whole population gathers at one place for church services, sports, singing and dancing. The entertainments that each village provides are devised and rehearsed for the occasion. While not overtly competitive, the special features of each contribution will be the subject of discussion and evaluation by the audience.

Much of the dancing for the festival is "action song" or "Polynesian dancing" in which hand gestures illustrate the words. These are songs of welcome and also songs describing everyday activities. Mimes are also performed showing such activities as fishing, or the telling of old stories. Many of these items are humorously portrayed, some are old favourites, others newly made up.

The start of proceedings involves a ceremonial entry onto the host marae with speeches and specially composed songs. Leaders of the visiting group are welcomed with leis presented during the singing of a song. The visitors "open the gate" to the marae with speech and song and the cutting of a ribbon. At the end of the days of festivity a dancing procession gives presents (rice, soap, etc.) to the host village.
These festivities with sports and feasting occupy Christmas day itself and the two or more days following. Weddings may also be included in the festivities.

Another gathering called Punani may occur at New Year at the same village as the Christmas festivities. After midnight on 31 December (marked by the sound of Pu, church bell and drums) a group goes from house to house. The occupants of a house ask the group for songs (string band songs, hymns, choruses) and reward the singers with presents. During the singing the occupants will put perfume and powder on the visiting group.

When moving to the next house, the group is joined by the occupants of the house they have just sung at. In the morning, when all houses have been visited, the accumulated gifts are distributed among the visiting villages (in the same manner in which food is distributed at a major feast).

**STRING BAND**

Music of the string band forms a musical *lingua franca* for Vanuatu which, like pidgin English, is shared (with regional variations) with other parts of Melanesia. Futuna’s band is well known in Vanuatu, it is frequently heard on the radio, has made several trips abroad, won competitions, and published cassettes.

The musical characteristics of Futuna are related to classical string band sound: male-voice harmony, variety of percussion sound, no amplification. There are at present two Futuna bands, one in Port Vila which plays twice a week at Le Lagon hotel, and one in Futuna. The repertoire is largely shared, though each band has a composer. The repertoire however is not exclusive, any contemporary song may be given a string band treatment.

String band in Futuna is thought to have had its origin in the 1960s when a Samoan on Aniwa had a ukulele (and banjo band) and taught others while on a visit to Tanna. One Futunan bought a ukulele and played it, and the movement progressed from there. A particular mark of Futuna’s band is the “bottle piano” — a row of bottles each
filled to a different level with water to create a scale. The "bottle-player" plays a particularly virtuoso line which enlivens the musical texture.

During the survey, recordings of the string bands were made at the Vanuatu 10th Anniversary celebrations in Tanna, which included a String Band competition. The competition required three songs: one on the 10th Anniversary of Independence, one on health and one free choice item. The directions to the judges contained explicit standards for evaluating the music, including the variety of instruments, clarity of words, a good message, uniform dress and the popular response of the audience. Futuna won this competition against the other bands of the region, Noisy Boys and Cona Boys.

**SUMMARY**

This short recording survey provided an opportunity to record examples of the main types of music of Futuna and to outline some of the features of this music system. The small community contains many knowledgeable musicians, several of whom supported the survey with performances. Although the older tradition is valued for its distinctiveness, the current use of music also includes modern hymn-singing and music in string band style. Contributing to a strengthening of the older tradition are the performance opportunities provided by national and international festivals, the activities of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre and, hopefully, the activities associated with this survey.

Fatu'ana, the Futuna String Band at the Festival Pacific Arts, 1988.(Photograph: Gil Hanly, Townsville, 1988.)
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Glossary of Musical Terms

- **bau** a song type.
- **fakamimiji** a song composed under inspiration.
- **hkai** legend or tale. A spoken narrative which often contains short songs, *tagihkai*.
- **hgorofetakaro** a play song.
- **hgorohgorosaki** a paddling song. Also dance performed with a paddling song.
- **hgororagina** a danced song, containing a distinctive call, *ragina*.
- **kafa** song performance with rhythmic beating; also the wooden log drum, and the festival at which the performance occurs.
- **kaimata** fishermen’s song.
- **managrive** a dance using coconut shell halves.
- **namania** a festive dance, for men or women. Two types are named for the islands of Futuna and Aneityum (*Keamu*).
- **pisaki** singing abusive songs competitively between groups.
- **suprato** song performance, in the manner of *kafa*, using stones instead of the log drum for percussion accompaniment.
- **tafiri arafea** an entry dance, leading-in the performing group.
- **tagi** a memorial song. Song which recounts a life history or records an event. May be sung as a *kafa*.
- **tagihkai** short songs in *hkai*.
- **tanes mari** contemporary dance.
- **toka** a dance with weapons or implements. Two kinds of *toka* are distinguished, Toka Torojia and Toka Sore.
Appendix

Example 1. Tagi O Vakesa

1. Avau nokomanu ko tafetiata i Vila
   ie kaia vau nokomanu viri ia pua
   nimei fagona vau nomeijikijia vautapotu.

chorus Vau nokomanu kaia vau nokomanu
ie kaia vau nokomanu aue tukusoa
kaia vau nokomanu kontou aki koe tukusoa.

2. Sanfakauia akoe sau tukumai
   tosoa notagi iatakoe no pari kai
   kaie vau sau tukatu kita kafano kiateia.

3. Tukuai ta vaka tere ia vavanea
   ie ma noko uru ia peau
   vau nokomanu mei fori Teturepa samei
   htau kitaui i Faeme.

4. Vau nokomanu avau sa hravetoto
   ie rotata mai ta ramaga
   hlama Teitoka, Tarufa ma Yauniwa
   ro taena korua an tanemate.

5. Vau nokomanu avau sewirakanu
   ie ni papura ie moma vau nokomanu
   ta purou o Teitoka kanoko hkana ta nouru.

6. Vau nokomanu avau sakaiau kego
   ie nififiria ie Nauriki vau nokomanu
   taseru otukigoa kainirofaji tanoura.

7. Avau nokomanu avau saniu takaro
   ie ni papura ie fata itamrae Tamumu
   pero tupe tanea kanoko takaro anorau.

8. Vau nokomanu avau sa purepuku
   kanoko faoa tukuhfie vau nokomanu
   tapaka iateia korotakakea kogafoa.
This *tagi* commemorates Vakesa, a man who lived towards the end of last century, and was composed by his mother, Pasiva. The first three verses of the song allude to the circumstances of his death — Vakesa had travelled to Vila on a quest to find his brother but, while he was there, he became sick and died. The seven verses which follow each mention a feature of Vakesa’s life. For example, verse 4 is as follows:

I am a flying fish at the season of Ramaga,
the light of Teitoka, Tarufa and Yauniwa,
ready for you to catch.

“Ramaga” is the season for catching flying fish, and the light is the flaming torch in the canoe in which the friends Teitoka, Tarufa and Yauniwa are fishing with Vakesa. The subsequent verses each picture an activity personifying it in the same way:

5. I am the *sewira* leaf...
6. I am the white tail-feather...
7. I am the coconut...
8. I am the round shell...
9. I am the rooster
10. I am the compassionate bird...

Each verse is preceded by “Vau nokomanu” - “I am floating”, or “I am dreaming”. A translation of the start of each verse could read (e.g., Verse 5) “I am dreaming that I am the *sewira* leaf”.

Ex. 2.

*Tanaio Tanaio (x2)*
*tatai tapo  (x2)*
amoe mijia naio o
*o Tanaio Tanaio*

In this *hkai* (traditional tale), Tanaio is an ugly sea-snake living at Feiava in the sea-passage at Herald Bay. He is intending to marry one of the 10 daughters of Sina and Puga who brings food and sings this song —

Tanaio, it is nearly night
[I will] sleep and dream of Tanaio
Tanaio rejects her with a song which has the same melody.