

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

**Moyle/Songs from the Second Float**

is published by University of Hawai'i Press and copyrighted, © 2007, by University of Hawai'i Press. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form by any electronic or mechanical means (including photocopying, recording, or information storage and retrieval) without permission in writing from the publisher, except for reading and browsing via the World Wide Web. Users are not permitted to mount this file on any network servers.

## *Preface*

Few researchers have spent extended time on Takū. William Churchill (1884) and Richard Parkinson (1885, 1896) visited briefly, as did the Hamburg Museum's South Seas Expedition in 1910 led by Ernst Sarfert (Thilenius 1931). The American linguist Samuel H Elbert spent six weeks on Takū in 1963 studying the language; he subsequently produced a report on living conditions and a brief outline of local customs for the Australian administration (Elbert 1963a). He also made a series of audio recordings, later deposited in the Bernice P Bishop Museum, Honolulu. Another American linguist, (Irwin) Jay Howard, worked on the island in 1964, 1976, and 1978–1979 to produce a dictionary of the Takū language. A preliminary version of this dictionary exists in computer disk form only, and apparently only one publication resulted from Howard's fieldwork (Howard 1981). Arriving first as an assistant to Howard on his final trip, Barbara G Moir returned to Takū in the 1980s as a graduate student in archaeology, researching the cultivation of the giant clam (Moir 1989).

My own fieldwork consisted of six periods of two or three months each, beginning in 1994 and concluding in 2000. I visited briefly again in 2001. During these periods I was a guest of Ariki Avo, who gave me the ancestral name Sauhatu to denote his adoption of me into his own family, a name used in my presence on formal occasions by most people, but on all occasions by the Ariki's mother, Tepuka.

### **Linguistic Orthography**

Several issues of language arise in this work. Illiteracy is confined to older residents who grew up before the present school was established, but younger Takū tend to correspond with one another in an idiosyncratic manner and without any diacritics. In the absence of a uniform orthography, I have tried to present original Takū material in as clear a manner as possible, specifically with respect to double consonants and long vowels. To this end, I consulted with Takū teachers at the community school and with several other adults and linguists.

In written Takū, one letter may commonly represent two different sounds. Thus, the word *ara* in which both vowels are short means “path,” but if the sec-

ond vowel is long—*arā*—the word means “and then.” Most of the people who write in Takū use the same /a/ to represent both the /a/ and /ā/ sounds, but when reading aloud from such material, they frequently pause or reread to correctly identify long vowels. Just as there are short and long vowels, there are also single and double consonants. For instance, *kai* (to eat) has a single consonant, but the consonant can be doubled, in which case it forms another word, *kkai* (fable). Double consonants are produced by prolonging the articulation of the respective short consonants. In this work, I mark long vowels with a macron and double consonants by doubling them, as here.

Because of the nature of the material, I have also included a wide variety of vernacular terms in the text; a glossary at the end of the book lists those more frequently used.

### *Language Change*

Takū’s spoken language is in a state of flux. For instance, older residents use an /f/ sound (*fare*) while younger Takū prefer an /h/ sound (*hare*); this extends to even personal names. Since it is apparent that use of /h/ forms is increasing as the number of practitioners of the /f/ forms decreases through natural attrition, I use the /h/ form in this present work except, for instance, in songs where the /f/ form is deliberately and consciously retained. One exception is the universal retention of /ff/. Among children and teenagers, the /r/ tends to be trilled, and /h/ is substituted for /s/ in some words (*heai* for *seai*), in apparent imitation of Nukumanu or Peilau speaking style. Such idiosyncrasies have not been incorporated in this work. Additionally, /l/ and /r/ are used interchangeably among speakers generally, with the exception of /ll/, and many words routinely contain both forms (*laro* “below,” *rilo* “out of sight”).

### *Personal Names*

Although the names given to infants at birth are retained for life, many residents acquire other names that tend to be used in preference to their birth names. In some instances, the assigned naming occurs at a very young age, and indeed, during the fieldwork period, a few adults discovered their birth names for the first time. Some arrived at the discovery through their own initiative, others from workmates on Nukuria, Bougainville, or elsewhere; several of these names have now become incorporated within local nomenclature to the extent that they recur as birth names in subsequent generations of the same family. The issue of which form of the personal name should be used in this present work is complicated somewhat by my references to song poetry, where either form of the name may appear. My requests for guidance from the community revealed divided opinion.

Accordingly, to accommodate this complex set of circumstances, I use in the book what I believe to be the more common form of a personal name.

Many personal names include the definite article *te*, which, when written, is normally incorporated into the following word to produce a single word. I generally follow this practice, but write articles as separate words when presenting vernacular texts and when identifying geographical locations, the latter because frequently the name constitutes an entire phrase, for example, Te Utua Anuanu (Anuanu's Outcrop).

## Musical Orthography

Much of Takū's singing can be represented in notational form using standard orthography, but a few features require special explanation.

### *Transposition*

In instances where a notation has been transposed from the pitch recorded, for purposes of eliminating accidentals or constantly shifting between clefs, I indicate the original pitch at the head of the transcription. Thus "+2" indicates that the original overall pitch was two semitones higher than that transcribed.

### *Vowel Shifts and Underpinned Texts*

For aesthetic reasons discussed elsewhere (see pp. 174–176), most song poetry observes a vowel shift from /a/ to /o/ in some, but not all, words, and I had to make a working decision about the linguistic form in which song poetry should appear. I chose to retain the sung form when underpinning texts to musical notations, indicating a shift by writing a changed /a/ as /ò/, but I revert to the spoken form when discussing texts alone, since the focus here is on the poetry itself rather than its mode of delivery.

Singers occasionally appear to omit one syllable of a word or they were sung too softly to be audible on the recording; in the notations such syllables appear within brackets.

### *Bar-lines*

In the few notations that show metered characteristics, the dotted bar-lines delineate bars. Elsewhere, bar-lines designate larger structural divisions: double bar-lines identify the end of a half verse, refrain and singing stabilizer, and dotted bar-lines occur at the ends of phrases within a half verse.

### *Abbreviations*

For reasons of economy of space, notations carry abbreviated terms denoting song structure or performance features:

hcl hand clapping  
 hmh *hakamauhua* (singing stabilizer), a structural element

### *Rhythmic Recitation*

Several children’s game songs are performed in rhythmic recitation. Since precise pitch is irrelevant, I have dispensed with the five-line staff when notating these. Individual notes sung at an indefinite pitch or rhythmically recited are represented, with conventional note-heads replaced by crosses.

### *Song Structure*

Because references to song structure occur in several chapters, I include here a summary of terminology. Indigenous terminology for song structure is precise and applies to all categories of local composition. The most common context for discussions using such terminology is after a singing error has occurred during the rehearsal of newly composed material. The correct material is identified by its poetic content or its structural label or both. Such a corrective procedure is possible because a typical performance presents material in a sequence of named sections: the *vvoro* (opener) is followed by the *hakamauhua* (singing stabilizer) and *hati* (refrain). For each of the subsequent verses of the song, sections are presented as follows: *puku* (first verse-part)—*hakamauhua* (singing stabilizer)—*soa puku* (companion verse)—*hakamauhua* (singing stabilizer)—*hati* (refrain). This structure is typified in the poetry of a *lani* song (table 1) in praise of success in ocean fishing by hand-lining.

Table 1. Typical Structure of a Takū Song

<i>vvoro</i>	<i>Te hānota i te laki nei.</i>	I fished in the northwest trade wind.	opener
<i>hakamauhua</i>	<i>Nimonimo nau e te tahe.</i>	Spinning around in the current.	singing stabilizer
<i>hati</i>	<i>Leva hānota i te laki nei.</i>	My sweetheart fished in the northwest wind.	refrain
<i>puku</i>	<i>Tele tau hatu ma tau tamana;</i>	I let down my sinker, uttering my [dead] father’s formula;	verse
<i>hakamauhua</i>	<i>Nimonimo nau e te tahe</i>	Spinning around in the current.	singing stabilizer
<i>soa puku</i>	<i>Tele tau hatu ma te Seiana,</i>	I let down my sinker, uttering Seiana’s formula.	companion verse
<i>hakamauhua</i>	<i>Nimonimo nau e te tahe.</i>	Spinning around in the current.	singing stabilizer
<i>hati</i>	<i>Leva hānota i te laki nei.</i>	My sweetheart fished in the northwest wind.	refrain
<i>puku</i>	<i>Nau talaki te tuahenua;</i>	I opened the fishing grounds,	verse
<i>hakamauhua</i>	<i>Nimonimo nau e te tahe</i>	Spinning around in the current.	singing stabilizer
<i>soapuku</i>	<i>Nau talaki o pula malama,</i>	I opened them with a successful catch	companion verse
<i>hakamauhua</i>	<i>Nimonimo nau e te tahe.</i>	Spinning around in the current.	singing stabilizer
<i>hati</i>	<i>Leva hānota i te laki nei.</i>	My sweetheart fished in the northwest wind.	refrain
<i>puku</i>	<i>Hatau aku ika i tau atua;</i>	With my spirit beside me, I caught my fish;	verse
<i>hakamauhua</i>	<i>Nimonimo nau e te tahe</i>	Spinning around in the current.	singing stabilizer
<i>soapuku</i>	<i>Hatau aku palu e Laputuna,</i>	With Laputuna beside me, I caught my <i>palu</i> fish.	companion verse
<i>hakamauhua</i>	<i>Nimonimo nau e te tahe.</i>	Spinning around in the current.	singing stabilizer
<i>hati</i>	<i>Leva hānota i te laki nei.</i>	My sweetheart fished in the northwest wind.	refrain

In notations appearing in this book, repetition of the *hati* or the *hakamauhua* or individual verses is indicated at the end of preceding lines, for example:



E ā - ī - ē, ni mo - mo - e a - ke tò - nò u ru - to - no. + hnh, hati, hati

## A Chronology of Previous Audio Recordings

Table 2. A Chronology of Previous Audio Recordings

Recorder	Date	Description	Location of Originals
Ray Sheridan <sup>1</sup>	1953	songs	National Archives, Canberra
Margaret Spencer <sup>2</sup>	1960	songs	Archive of Maori and Pacific Music, Auckland
Samuel Elbert	1963	stories, songs	University of Hawai'i, Honolulu
Segaropa (Seg) Pūtuha	1979	songs	unknown
Tekapu Apava	1973	songs, stories	held by recorder
Irwin Howard	1976–1979	stories	unknown
Richard Feinberg	1984	songs	held by recorder

### Notes

1. Working on behalf of the Australian Broadcasting Commission.
2. Author of *Doctor's Wife in Rabaul* (1967).

I am unaware of any commercial recordings or published notations of Takū songs, and although several published accounts of visits to the atoll include mention of dance performances, the sole published summary is an encyclopedia article by Barbara Moir (1998).

## Issues of Privacy

There are certain types of information I have deliberately excluded from this work for reasons of privacy. Each of the five clan elders (*mātua*) includes in his inventory of ritual utterances a series of invocations (*taku*) intended for performance on the *marae* in the presence of the other elders and the assembled adult population of the community. Their contents cover a variety of topics vital to the physical and spiritual well-being of the people, and performance is intended to enlist ancestral assistance to achieve those ends. The mode of delivery and typical duration of the utterances, however, is such that a casual listener would be unlikely to memorize them and use them for personal purposes, and to that extent, the *taku* constitute private property. Accordingly, when discussing the roles of the clan elders, I refer to this material only in translation.

Men make contact with their ancestors and personal spirits through invocations called *kavai*. These are used most commonly when fishing, to secure supernatural assistance and so increase the likelihood of a successful trip but also occasionally on shore as well. Because knowledge of *kavai* is kept within individual families, a father passing on his repertoire on request to his sons, I do not discuss these invocations further or present them as examples.

Another category of song is excluded from detailed study here for similar reasons. Each clan possesses a *hakaipiri henua* (“attaching the death-necklet”) song performed as a garland is placed around the neck of a dead fellow clan member shortly before burial. Only those senior clan members standing close by at that moment join in; indeed, only such people are familiar with the song, and even then, only a few may be able to sing it in its entirety. In keeping with the restricted nature of such songs, it was the wish of the community that details about them be excluded from this work.

### Companion CD

A companion CD, *Songs from the Second Float*, issued by Ode Records, Post Office Box 37-179, Parnell, Auckland, New Zealand, contains recordings of several songs discussed here. Ordering details can be found online at <<http://www.oderecords.co.nz/default.asp>>.