Cook Islanders are an Eastern Polynesian people with close cultural ties to both New Zealand Māori and Tahitian societies. The homeland for a large number of Cook Islands people is now New Zealand and Australia, as well as their 15 islands in Polynesia. Cook Islanders have a vibrant music and dance performance tradition currently practiced in a number of formal and informal contexts. Genres performed today include older style pe‘e ‘chants’ and ʻura pa‘u ‘drum dances’. Contact with European cultures since the early 19th century to the present has resulted in the development of a number of syncretic music genres, including kaparima ‘action songs’, combining traditional dance movements with Western-influenced musical accompaniment, ʻimene tuki (polyphonic ‘hymns with rhythmic grunts’), and ʻūūe (secular ‘songs’). The focus of this paper is contemporary string band and electric band music, syncretic music, combining both Western and indigenous features. Older string band style music in the Cook Islands is traditionally acoustic: multi-part homophonic songs sung by vocal groups and accompanied by strummed guitars (kïtä), ukuleles (ʻukarere) and percussion. This style is used to accompany the ‘action songs’ mentioned above, or is presented as string band music, without dance, for entertainment at social functions and parties, homebrewed beer drinking clubs (especially in the outer islands), at competitions and festivals, and for entertainment of guests at hotels and resorts. Since the 1960s, this music has also acquired an electric dimension, as well as the establishment of an associated local music recording industry and the use of studio production techniques. Such contemporary string band style music, whether acoustic or electric, is common throughout Polynesia, and indeed the Pacific, and has indigenous elements alongside an obvious Western melodic and harmonic basis. Regional indicators, however, both musical and linguistic, imprint a specific cultural identity on the music of each island group. These signature features not only distinguish the contemporary music of the different Polynesian traditions from each other, but differentiate these styles from Western popular music.

The nexus between music and cultural identity has long been accepted as a basic tenet by ethnomusicologists. As Bohlman (1988: 28) points out: “The inception of ethnomusicology as a scientific field of study was thus coeval with the first efforts to couple traditional music and cultural identity within a conceptual framework”. Bohlman then proceeds to catalogue the
importance of this paradigm throughout the history of the discipline. Many scholarly works, including Alan Lomax’s seminal study (1959), have argued that musical style is a significant indicator of social, cultural and regional identity. Other scholars have gone further to argue that music is not merely a reflector of cultural mores, but can often have an active role in determining and changing cultural values (e.g., Stillman 1993, Stokes 1994). The literature on “cultural construction” has also discussed how social and cultural identities can be actively created, constructed, and reconstructed through music (see, for example, Jolly 1992, Linnekin 1992). Several writers have argued this through case studies of specific cultural traditions: Averill (1994) on Haiti and Goldsworthy (1998) on New Caledonia.

The Cook Islands is no exception to the practice of establishing (and celebrating) cultural identity through music. Ways of achieving this in contemporary music include the use of indigenous Cook Islands Māori language for song texts and the presence and role of one or two ukuleles to accompany songs. Another method is the use of techniques or styles found in older indigenous Cook Islands music. Such indigenised aspects include the use of ‘rhythmic grunts’ (tuki) by bass vocalists, and chant style by contemporary composers in some of their songs.3 (See Goldsworthy 2001 for a discussion of local identity in Cook Islands contemporary music.) Another such practice is the use of short chant-like endings tacked on to the end of fast contemporary songs, acoustic or electric, and both in live performances and recordings. These song endings, of about four to eight bars duration (in 4/4 time), will be called “outros” in this paper.4 Less commonly, fast songs may begin with such a short chant. Intro and outro chants are not necessarily related in text or tune to the song proper, nor are they tied to any one particular song, but may be attached to the end of any fast song. The words can be nonsensical or esoteric, and may have sexual connotations.

Although particular outros may have been composed by one person or a performing group, they do not remain tied to that group and can be freely used and exchanged between groups. Outros are not found at the end of all fast songs, neither are they a feature of all performances (live or recorded); they may be considered an optional rather than obligatory part of a performance. If present, they certainly add colour and flair to the song to which they are attached, and their chant-like nature confirms a Polynesian musical identity which may be less apparent in the preceding song.

Such song endings, as well as intros in some cases, are said by some musicians to be derived from or related to earlier Cook Islands chanting styles, such as the pātau (see below), and thus function as signifiers of cultural identity in contemporary music. This paper examines the development of this musical practice and its role both as a formal musical device and as an indicator of local or regional style in popular music of the Pacific.
DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF OUTRO CHANTS IN CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

The following outro, composed by the famous blind musician, Papa Nipu Nipurahi, is a fairly typical example of outro chants in contemporary music in that it has a nonsensical text that is not related to the preceding song (which is about lovers parting) and has a chant-like musical style that is not related to the triadic/diatonic melodic and harmonic style of the preceding song. Papa Nipu based this outro on the well known children’s story (pers. comm.).

Chicken Licken went to the woods
While she was there
The sky fell on her poor little head

M.M. = 130

![Musical notation](image)

Figure 1. (Source: Cassette *Tupuanga Ruperupe*. Apiti Nicholas. T&A Onu Studio. T.N.1, Side 2, No. 1.).

*The Lyrics*

Outro chant texts are mostly in the Cook Islands Māori language, but, as with the texts of the songs themselves, some are in English, as in Figure 1 above.

Outro chants can be on any topic or theme. Food is a favourite subject, as in the following three outros below:

- *E patu te moa*  
  - Kill the chicken
- *E tunu te moa*  
  - Cook the chicken
- *Ta ‘oniāni, ta kare iatu, ta miti iatu ra*  
  - Add onion, put it with the curry, add salt
- *Kia reka o te kai’anga o te moa e mone ra*  
  - So eating the chicken is yummy

(Source: Field video by author of *Papa Nipu*, Auckland, 2006)
Tonati pōkaikai  
Round doughnuts

E puta  
The hole

E puta rotopū  
The hole is in the middle

(Source: CD Tapahua. Tapahua Boys, T.O.S. 25, Track 5)

E marau tunu paka  
Barbequed marau fish

I te uto tāvai  
Add water to the coconut

Falaoa pōpō e  
Round bread (dumplings)

(Source: CD Tapahua. Tapahua Boys, T.O.S. 25, Track 9)  

Like some other imported food types, doughnuts have become a standard part of the Cook Islands diet dating the second outro chant text above to composition in the post-European contact period.

According to Chuck Upu, a leading Cook Islands musician from Auckland, the words of outros are often funny, esoteric or nonsensical and known only to Cook Islands people although today the meaning of some old outros has even been lost to many Cook Islanders. Some make sense in themselves (but have little or no relevance to the preceding song), while the meaning of others is hard to decipher, as in the following example:

Suki, ka suki tāua runga  
Bump, we’ll bump up

Ka suki taua raro  
We’ll bump down

E pāra’ara’a o te kiri mokorā  
You walk flat like a duck

(Source: CD Guns of Raro Live, Vaimutu Records, SVA CD 052, 1999, Track 3b)

It is possible, however, that this outro chant may have sexual connotations, given the number of other outros with sexual innuendo. One outro on a recording in the Archives of Maori and Pacific music at the University of Auckland was tacked on to the end of a song recorded on the northern island of Penrhyn in 1971 by Margaret McKenzie. Described as “a modern Penrhyn song” in the accompanying notes, it is about a man’s longing for his wife who has left him and gone to another island (Mangaia). The outro chant is not musically connected to the preceding song. It is chanted on one pitch with down glides at the end of phrases. Its meaning was apparently unclear even to the people who sang it in 1971, but they said it had something to do with a steel crow-bar.
The women who sang this song for Margaret McKenzie may have not known the implication of the phrase “steel crow-bar” in the concluding chant. On the other hand, it is possible that they were too embarrassed to explain its meaning. I played this song to a Cook Islander friend of mine, Roi Viti, who immediately recognised the ending; he had no hesitation in explaining to me that “steel crow-bar” referred to an erect penis. (So, in this case, the outro is possibly connected in meaning to the text of its preceding song!)

Many other outro chants in contemporary songs have sexual meanings or interpretations:

Mo- mo- e moko pūraka  A taro root (for planting)
E moko pūraka  A taro root
E kavio pai taro  In the taro patch
Tanu ki raro  Plant it (down)

(Source: CD Baby I Love. The Pacific Stars. T&A Onu, CD 39, Track 1)
According to Bobby Moeka, a Cook Islands musician from Auckland, the taro root is a common phallic symbol (pers. comm.). Another more sexually explicit outro occurs at the end of a fast beat song by Dinky Ngatipa:

\[
\begin{align*}
{\text{‘Ōpara mai koe iaku}} & \quad \text{You push me} \\
{E \text{ push atu au iaku}} & \quad \text{I push you} \\
{Piko mai} & \quad \text{Bend down} \\
{Piko atu} & \quad \text{I bend down} \\
{Tūpaki arero} & \quad \text{Hit it hard with the tongue}
\end{align*}
\]

(Source: CD Dinky Ngatipa. Vaimutu Records, Track 3)

It appears that sexual content or innuendo is more frequent in outro chants than in the texts of songs proper. A few contemporary Cook Islands songs do have sex as their primary focus, for example, the 2001 hit Sukerukeru by Angelo (Vaimutu Records, SVA CD 061, Track 1), but this is not common. Most songs are about love of nature or homeland, romantic relationships (or loss of), sport, motor cars, fish and other such subjects.

**The Music**

Musically, “outros” are chant-like, using a limited number of pitches and a narrow melodic range (no more than a fifth). In most cases, they have one main chanting pitch – the tonic of the song. Most outros mainly consist of repetition of this tonic pitch setting the text syllabically, either in quavers or semiquaver note values. Syncopation is also a feature of some outros. As is clear from the metronome marks of the music examples given in this paper, tempi are fast (Presto or Allegro), ranging from 130 to 204 crotchet beats per minute. In Figure 2 above, no other pitches apart from the tonic are used except down glides to the pitch a minor 3rd below the tonic at the end of two of the phrases. Figure 1 repeats the tonic pitch also and adds the pitch a minor 3rd below the tonic as well as two pitches above the tonic. Chanting on the tonic pitch, combined with sporadic use of the pitch a minor 3rd below and the two pitches above, is a typical melodic procedure in outro chants. Such “centric” tonal organisation is common in the pre-European contact music of other Polynesian musical traditions, such as New Zealand Māori sung styles (see, for example, McLean 1999: 337). The two musical examples below both demonstrate this use of four pitches within a range of a perfect 5th, with a centric tonic chanting pitch:
Usually, outros are fairly short – 4 to 8 bars in 4/4; but they can be repeated. Outros are not always four-square; examples of 5 or 6-bar outros exist. Their length often depends on the text. Longer examples are also found as in Figure 5 below. This 11-bar chant features two 6/4 bars. The occasional 6/4 bar (in a basic 4/4 context) is a feature of contemporary Cook Islands songs (not just outro chants) and is related to the setting of the text. (See also Figures 1 and 8). Note the descending sequence in indeterminate pitch that concludes the outro of Figure 5. Indeterminate pitch and down-glides at phrase endings are features found in other outros reinforcing their chant-like nature. (See Figures 2, 6, 8 and 10).

Figure 3. (Source: CD Island Rose. Ken Cameron. LOG CD 008, 2004, Track 1) 7

Figure 4. (Source: CD Tapahua. Tapahua Boys, T.O.S. 25, Track 8) 8
It should be noted that not all fast songs end with an outro. Other common practices to end songs include repeating the last vocal line of the last chorus, an instrumental only ending, or a fade-out on recordings. But outros do have an obvious musical role in providing a conclusion to some songs on the chanted tonic note. In several cases, however, the chanted outro moves to the pitch a major second above the tonic and ends on that note (modulation up a tone) as in the following example sung by Dinky Ngatipa (quoted above) where the key of the song is A major but the outro is chanted and ends on the pitch B:

Figure 5. (Source: CD Te Aito O Rarotonga. Raro Records, CD 005, Track 6)
Modulation up a major second either in the middle of a song or between songs in a medley is common in Cook Islands contemporary music. In some cases, songs end with such a modulation, with or without an outro.

As stated in the introduction to this paper, some bands, especially from the northern Cook Islands, use chants at the start of the song as an intro and some songs start and end with the same chant as in Figures 7 and 8. The chant of Figure 7 occurs in the same form at both the start and end of the song. In the case of Figure 8 there are some differences towards the end of the chant, but the first eight bars are the same as the chant at the end of the song (see Figure 5), and the last phrase of Figure 8 is the same as that of bars 9-10 in Figure 5:

Figure 6. (Source: CD *Dinky Ngatipa*. Vaimutu Records, Track 3)

![Figure 6](source)

Figure 7. (Source: CD *Tapahua*. Tapahua Boys, T.O.S. 25, Track 9)

![Figure 7](source)
The 1970s band, The Swampees, extend this practice further. Their song, ‘Mōrī Pata’ has the same chant at the beginning, middle and end of the song:

Figure 8. (Source: CD Te Aito O Rarotonga. Raro Records, CD 005, Track 6, start)

Figure 9. (Source: Tape at Cook Islands Radio Station. Saturday Night at the Clubhouse. The Swampees. I.W. Productions, I.W.O.1, Side 1, No. 4)
In addition to its musical role in signalling the end of a song, the Cook Islands outro chant has an important role relating to dance. Fast songs are often played in clubs and bars while patrons dance. There are no set choreographed or predetermined steps for specific outros or for outros in general; people usually dance freely with steps and fast hip-shaking characteristic of traditional Cook Islands dance. An outro encourages people to dance more vigorously and gets dancers to finish on a fast beat on the dance floor. According to a member of the Hinano band from Aitutaki, “It can’t be too long because they get too tired or stroppy” (pers. comm.). In some cases, an outro chant text with sexual innuendo will connect with flirtatious movements of the dancers. Sometimes an outro ends the song, but not the whole song item. Rather, it leads to another faster dance section called the tāmūrē. A tāmūrē is also tacked on to end of a fast beat song but is faster; the drum machine beat is increased during the instrumental or vocal lead into the tāmūrē. The following figure is the outro from the song Mrs Captain Kopu, performed by The Guns of Raro; it leads directly to the tāmūrē section.

![Figure 10. (Source: Guns of Raro Live. Vaimutu Records, SVA CD 052, 1999, Track 3b)](image)

In this example, the D major song leads to a chant on the pitch B for the outro. The tāmūrē section is pitched a semitone higher, in C major.

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRACTICE OF OUTROS IN COOK ISLANDS CONTEMPORARY MUSIC**

As few written sources and older recordings exist to help document the development or use of outro chants in Cook Islands contemporary music, it is difficult to accurately date the beginning of this practice. My main source of information about outros is from interviews with contemporary practicing musicians. Performers I interviewed claimed the use of outros was “old”; several musicians in the Cook Islands say that the use of outros in popular songs is as least as old as the 1960s. Some outros on early recordings of
songs made in the 1960s and 1970s, including the one mentioned above in the Archives of Maori and Pacific music in Auckland, do date the practice to at least the mid 60s. The practice of adding outros to songs was popularised in the 60s by musicians such as famous blind singer, Papa Nipu, as well as Bob Mataira and Taura Pakitoa, and may have been introduced to the contemporary music tradition by them and others. Papa Nipu did invent several such as “Kill the Chicken” and “Chicken Licken” and claimed he also wrote the very popular outro “Machine Gun”, which, he said, was first recorded by Bob Mataira in the 60s:

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Aruru mai nei te matini gun
Aruru mai nei te matini gun
Rata tararara, rata tararara
Rata tarara, rata tarara, rata tarara
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I asked many Cook Islands musicians about how the practice of the outro started and its role in contemporary music. Some emphasised the importance of improvisation in their creation particularly in the context of informal singing and drinking in the bush huts. John Lindsay, a well-known musician from Rarotonga, claimed that what was an informal improvisatory practice was taken up by bands for formal gigs at a later date. As Kimi Taokia, a leading musician in Rarotonga today, put it, “It comes from parties, and being silly” (pers. comm.). Chuck Upu suggested they originally came from pe’e (‘chants’) or from lullabies (pers. comm.). In my experience, the phenomenon of the outro chant in contemporary music of the Pacific, in the specific form described above, is distinctive to the Cook Islands or at least to the Cooks and other central islands of East Polynesia and thus acts as a clear indicator of regional style. Although some musicians in the Cook Islands claim it is not found outside their country at all, not even in neighbouring Tahiti, this is not the case. Contemporary Tahitian bands such as Teava piti sometimes add a chant-like outro to the end of their fast songs. Jane Moulin, a leading researcher of Tahitian music and dance, confirms their occurrence in Tahitian popular music from recordings at least as old as the 1960s (pers. email comm., 25/2/07). It is possible that outro practices, similar to those of Tahiti and the Cook Islands, also occur elsewhere in Polynesia. There are some parallels between the endings of fātele dance chants in both Tokelau and, to a lesser extent, Tuvalu and outros in contemporary music of the Cook Islands. Tokelauan ‘end dances’ (tuku) are described by Allan Thomas (1996: 151-54). A popular tuku from the Second World War given by Allan Thomas (1996: 49) is reproduced below:
According to Thomas (1996: 151), tuku belong to a group of “dance interludes” classified as “new dances” that cannot be performed as stand-alone items “but only as an introduction, interlude or flourish to the fātele proper”. Like Cook Islands outros, they are usually short, chant-like, may contain humour and provide a rousing conclusion to the preceding item to which they are attached. Unlike Cook Islands outros, however, their use appears to be almost obligatory: “indeed fātele are seldom seen without it” (Thomas 1996: 151). Moreover, unlike the Tokelauan tuku which have a defined choreography, Cook Islands outros are not dances as such but chanted endings to contemporary songs. Another difference between them is that particular Cook Islands outros are not necessarily associated with particular performing groups as tuku are in Tokelau nor is the same outro used throughout a performance as Thomas reports for the Tokelauan tuku. It is possible, however, that the Tokelauan tuku is closely related to the Polynesian chant-dance type called pātatau, the most likely source of derivation for the Cook Islands outro (see below).

As Chuck Upu suggests (see above), it is likely that chant-like outros in contemporary music of Eastern Polynesia are derived from earlier musical practices and styles in the Cook Islands (and elsewhere in Polynesia). Three musicians I interviewed (one from Atiu and two from Rarotonga) used the term pātatau to refer either to chanted outro endings of modern songs of the Cook Islands (VMK and Taura Pakitoa) or to the fast hip-shake dancing which goes along with it (Kimi Taokia).13 It is possible that contemporary Cook Islands outro practice is derived from a chant style/song-dance type known as pātatau (or a cognate term). Pātatau have been reported and described from Pukapuka and Manihiki in the northern group of the Cook Islands. Kevin Salisbury (1984: 49) identifies a specific genre by this name that he says has been practiced for the last 80 years on Pukapuka. He describes modern pātatau as having sections in intoned chant style contrasting with “the more harmonically based stanzas” in its modern composite form in Pukapuka. In his unpublished Master of Arts dissertation, he (Salisbury 1983: 269-71) gives examples of pātatau in music notation that fit this description. Richard Moyle (1985: 26) describes an “informal dance” from Manihiki called pātahutahu, where a single dancer performs a very short dance with improvised movements to a chant that McLean (1999: 93) describes as “only one or two lines of text repeated many times”. Moyle (1985: 26) appears to link the performance of pātahutahu in
Manihiki to children and domestic entertainment. McLean (1999: 94) writes that in both Manihiki and Pukapuka pātautau “are accompanied by vigorous and often suggestive spontaneous dancing”.

Another possible point of origin for the outro is the patoto, a song-dance type reported in Jennifer Little’s thesis on the music of three southern islands of the Cook Islands. She (1990: 117) describes the patoto as a “short chant by children to accompany a dance performed by the loser of a game” which, she says, can today be tacked on to the end of an ‘ímene mapu or ‘youth song’. This description of a patoto has an obvious resonance with both the Manihikian pāta‘uta‘au described by Moyle and the contemporary Cook Islands outro as I have described it.

Kevin Salisbury (1984: 49) mentions the use of the term pātautau in Tahiti (French Polynesia) to refer to “a chant genre accompanying erotic dance movements and having a rapid tempo and abrupt ending”. And he describes the Cook Islands Pukapukan pātautau as of foreign origin, seeming to suggest that it comes from Tahiti. Jane Moulin describes the Tahitian pāta‘uta‘au as “a rhythmic chant on a basically level contour, often with phrases indicated by the rise of a minor 3rd” (email comm., 25/2/07). This description certainly fits that of the Cook Islands outro, or at least a genre to which it may be related. The chant style/song-dance known variously as pātautau, pāta‘uta‘au, pāta‘uta‘u or pāta‘uta‘u is clearly not limited to the Cook Islands. According to McLean (1999: 93, 287, and 495), the pāta‘uta‘u is widespread in Eastern Polynesia—the Austral Islands, the Marquesas, the Society Islands, Easter Island and the Tuamotus, as well as the Cook Islands, “with differing connotations from place to place”. These “connotations” include common elements such as an association with erotic, improvised movements, rapid tempo, a chant-like melody and an association with children’s chants, all of which are reflected in the current Cook Islands distinctive practice of outros added to the end of contemporary fast songs.

OUTROS AND REGIONAL IDENTITY

The outro and intro chant style of some Cook Islands contemporary songs is probably derived from earlier dance-chant types in Eastern Polynesia such as pātautau and patoto. In some cases these chants were short stand-alone items whereas in others (Little 1990 and Salisbury 1984) they could be attached to or embedded in songs with a more clearly Western melodic and harmonic structure, as they are in fast contemporary songs of the Cook Islands today. The ages of both the pātautau and patoto chant types and the practice of adding chants to contemporary songs are unclear. While the chant-like musical style of outros certainly links them to earlier pre-European
contact genres in the Pacific, the words of several outro chants, mentioning
post-European contact items and events (such as doughnuts, machine guns
etc.), suggest composition in post-colonial times and Salisbury (1984: 49)
refers to the practice of pātautau in Pukapuka being only 80 years old. My
interviews with some musicians in the Cook Islands also confirm that many
were composed relatively recently by contemporary musicians.

More research is necessary to establish the origins and development of the
outro device and its connection with other genres, both in the Cook Islands
and in neighbouring Polynesian traditions. Whatever its origin, however, it
is clear that the use of the outro does confer a local or regional identity on
contemporary music of the Cook Islands, in terms of both time and place.
The use of an older chant style in a contemporary music context stamps the
music as Polynesian rather than Western, and provides a counterbalance to
the obvious Western melodic and harmonic features of songs. Also, because
outro-style endings are not found as a distinctive feature in contemporary
music elsewhere in Polynesia, with the possible exception of Tahiti, their use
defines the song more specifically as Cook Islands, or at least Central/Eastern
Polynesian. Furthermore, the words of the outro can confer local identity in
various ways. A northern or southern group song can be identified by actual
dialect words used in the outro (as in Figures 5, 7 and 8), or local references to
people and places that establish identity. The use of English language outros is
also a regional signifier as it may indicate a country with an English-speaking
colonial history as against a country in French-speaking Polynesia. An outro
can also act as an indicator of time period, for example a period of major
Western impact on the Cooks during the Pacific arena of the Second World
War. (The common “Machine Gun” outro probably dates from experiences of
people during this period.) Outros also reflect broader social mores; the use
of sexual innuendo is common in Cook Islands’ culture and is also a common
feature of song outros. Archaic or esoteric words or phrases and nonsensical
(or apparently nonsensical) elements of outros can also establish cultural
identity since the words may not be understood by outsiders to the tradition,
even when translated. Although there are certainly “nonsensical” elements to
the texts of outros in Cook Islands contemporary music, they do perform very
meaningful structural functions in contemporary songs as well as positioning
the song in time and place through linguistic and musical means. It is not all
a bit of nonsense; it is not even all about sex, although both nonsense and
sexual innuendo are important aspects of outro practice. It is clear, however,
that songs with outros demonstrate the conjunction of the old and the new in
contemporary performance practice; outros imparting an added sense of local
socio-musical identity to Cook Islands contemporary music.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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NOTES

1. Although kaparima is the correct Cook Islands Māori term for this genre, I have also heard it referred to by its English name, “action song”, by Cook Islanders.
2. See McLean 1999, Chapter 3 for an overview of Cook Islands music genres.
3. For example, the song Pakia, in the album Katu (T-Bones) Te Marino (Raro Records, RRCD 014, Track 3), has examples of tuki, while the song Tu Ea, in the album Taokia Bros— Tu, Ea (Raro Records, RRCD 048, Track 1), has pe’e sections.
4. The word “outro” is derived from the word “out” on the pattern of “intro” and is a term mainly used in writing about Western popular music rather than art music. It refers to the concluding section of a piece of music or a radio or television programme. It may be defined as “…a portion of music at the end of a song; like an intro, but at the end instead of the beginning” (Wiktionary: en.wiktionary.org/wiki/outro. Site retrieved 30/12/2007). One Cook Islands musician from a band called Azariah actually used the term outro to me in 1996 to refer to these short chant-like endings of fast songs. Jon Jonassen, a musician and leading researcher into Cook Islands culture, referred to them as ‘openga ‘imene, simply ‘song endings’. Another term for these endings used by some Cook Islanders is pātautau, a term and genre discussed at length later in this article.
6. This outro chant is in the Manihikian language. Uto is the fermented soft flesh of the inside of a fallen mature coconut that has been left a while and produced shoots.
7. The English translation of this outro chant is: “Mama is upset with Papa/ Papa is upset with Mama/ for being drunk on Hinano beer.” Hinano is a local commercial beer in Tahiti. In this case, the outro is connected in meaning to the preceding song, which is about the problems between a man and his wife caused by the husband drinking Hinano beer. Although the text contextualises this song in Tahiti, the language is Cook Islands Māori and the song is accredited to Ken Cameron, a Cook Islander, on the CD cover. This song actually starts in F major, but modulates via C major in the instrumental break to G major for the second part of the song.
8. The translation of this outro is: “You just sit around at home/ You’re old/ Just thinking about a woman”.
9. The text of this outro chant is in the language of Aitutaki. The title of the song, Reureu, is the name of a village on the island.
10. This chant translates as: “O how happy we are/ This night we’ll go out/ I’ll take you/ The woman is short and black.” The exact meaning of this outro chant is unclear. The rest of this song is about the reef where sharks lurk, their eyes reflecting in the light of the flashlight (mōri pata). Note the text elision of the last syllable of the word ‘navenave’ in the first bar of the chant. (See also the word, mo(a), the last word of text in Figure 5). This textual elision is found in other Cook Islands songs; it is also a common practice in Fijian music.

11. According to Jonassen (pers. comm.), the term tāmūrē comes originally from a song composed by an American based in Tahiti during the First World War, which used the term to depict the movements of a fish. McLean (1999: 52) refers to the Tahitian tāmūrē under “Modern dance types” as “social or couple dances which combine the sex-specific movements of ‘ote’a ['drum dance'] with the Western notion of partners”. In my experience, the Cook Islands version of this (with the same name) is a fairly short fast song/dance often tacked on to the end of another piece. It is also the term for the fastest of the Cook Islands drum beats/rhythms.

12. The text and translation of this outro was obtained from Roi Viti (pers. comm.). On a military theme from the same period, the last line of one fātele dance chant from the island of Funafuti in Tuvalu is an onomatopoeic representation of a machine gun: Iaaa uratata uratata uratatatatata bom (Marc Beaulieu, pers. comm.). This fātele, recorded in April, 2006, commemorates the bombing of the Funafuti church in 1943. Its last line functions in a similar way to a Cook Islands outro.

13. This term can also be used in another way—to describe a guitar-strumming style (Pat Williams/the late George Browne, pers. comm.).

REFERENCES


“Outro” Chants in Cook Islands Contemporary Music


Discography

*Angelo Honest Bro! Sweet As*. Vaimutu Records, SVA CD 061.
*Dinky Ngatipa*. Vaimutu Records.
*Taokia Bros - Tu, Ea*. Raro Records, RRCD 048.
*Te Aito O Rarotonga*. Raro Records, CD 005.