**Flora Aurima Devatine: The written word
as transmitter of Tahitian traditions**

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Introduction

Description, analysis, and exploration into the recordings and texts of Flora Aurima Devatine inevitably leads any researcher to study the oral dimension of the Tahitian language, and the journey of this orality into writing. The task is significant, not least because it requires mastery of the language, but even more so an ear well-honed to its prosody. Additionally, the transfer of this orality into a 'silent' medium clearly deprives the reader of its specific phonic heritage; yet also offers other perspectives particular to the written form which remain difficult to define.

For Aurima Devatine, the case is simple. "The spoken word will always be stronger than the written because it is free. We can become dizzy quickly, for the storm of the dance is powerful. The words, they dance, they whirl, and can often strike one hard on the head […] The written word needs the spoken in order to communicate. […] Writing relies on speaking and draws its lifeforce from it, it uses its force." Nevertheless, she recognises that "writing has its code, its own intellect. […] For at its heart there is a code that only the initiated, the writers, understand: words, mind, hidden meanings, the images that must be produced from them." (1993: 36-37).

In this vein, none who know her writings will deny that, in the writer's mind:

Ça chante et ça scande,	It sings and chants
Ça cadence dans [sa] tête.	Its rhythm in one's head
Des mots bien sonnants	Its tinkling words
Jaillissent, se balancent,	Spurt and sway
Ne demandent	Only asking
Qu'à danser.	To dance.
Des rythmes spontanés	Its spontaneous rhythms
S'imposent, s'impatientent,	Grow, become impatient
Ne demandent	Only asking
Qu'à faire danser[1]	Us to dance

Once again, the study of Aurima Devatine's works cannot be restricted to texts, since the oral mode has too important a role to play in a fair appreciation of their value. In her article *Flora*

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[1] Extract from the poem *Rythme*, written by Flora Aurima Devatine in 1977 and published in *Humeurs, A l'autre bout de la nuit*, in 1980 under the pseudonym Vaitiare.

Devatine: le corps en résonance ("the body in resonance"),[2] Titaua Porcher recalls that "the reproduction of movements of phrasing and breathing, central facets of orality, appear […] as structural elements throughout the collection"[3] and by extension, in all her writings (2017: 299).

This article aims to analyse the facets which constitute Aurima Devatine's style, something which, it is argued, leans on this "*oraliture*"[4] of rhythms and melodies belonging to the memory and collective heritage of Tahiti, possibly even Polynesia at large. This said, the freedom of creativity expressed by the author equally includes aspects which fall within the workings of the Tahitian language.

Perhaps of highest importance are the issues at the heart of any literary study: how do style and form intersect to create the 'beauty' of literature? What are the macro- and microstructures of these works, and how do they create sense? Which elements of the written and spoken forms contribute to the realisation of the author's intention? We propose to tackle these issues by first addressing the following question: which semiotic concerns are detectible in Aurima Devatine's style?

The research framework most appropriate for this undertaking is semiolinguistics. Patrick Charaudeau defines this as follows:

-   *Semio* as "the construction of meaning and its configuration, formed through a co-understanding of form and meaning, subject to intentionality within a desired frame of actions, and having a purpose of social influence";
-   *Linguistic* as "forms which are principally constituted of linguistic matter – that of natural languages – and, through their double articulation, through the combinative particularity of their features (syntagmatic-paradigmatic, on various levels: word, phrase, text), forms which impose a process of semiosis of the world different to those of other languages" (1995: 2)

This framework allows us to define the meaning of texts by determining the macro- and microstructure of different forms of research into the linguistic sign (signifier/signified). We shall dedicate particular room, however, to exploring the prosody, and more particularly the rhythm, of texts read and analysed by the author.

Our research corpus consists of three videos and their corresponding texts in the Tahitian language:

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[2] Titaua Porcher, "Flora Devatine: le corps en résonance", *Interculturels francophonies* No.31/2017, *Francophonies océaniennes*, texts collected and presented by Andréas Pfersmann and Titaua Porcher, Alliance Française, Lecce, 2017.

[3] In particular *Tergiversations et Rêveries de l'Écriture Orale, Te Pahu a Hono'ura*, published by Au Vent des îles, Papeete, 1998.

[4] This concept was devised by Ernst Merville (Pierre Bambou, "Le concept d'oraliture", in *Le Nouvelliste*, 12 May 1974), as a means to free oral literature from the yoke of its devaluation in terms of a mere "spoken form" (*parole*). It was cited by Titaua Porcher in her article "Flora Devatine: le corps en resonance" (see FN 2).

- The spoken poem (or *pāta'uta'u*) "Pāta'uta'u o te hoe fa'atere o Hokule'a" ("Verse Read Aloud from the Helm of the Hokule'a"), written in 1976 to celebrate the arrival of the famous pirogue;
- The written poem (or *pehepehe*) "Te Manava Ihotupu" ("The Polynesian Consciousness"), written in 1977 on the occasion of the publication of "'Oihanu ē" by the poet and playwright Henri Hiro;
- The spoken poem (or *pāta'uta'u*) "Te pāta'uta'u a te vahine tutuha'a" ("The Chant of the Women Bark-beaters to make *Tapa*"), written in 1978.

The first part of this article will attempt to understand the relationship between orality and writing. The second will define, through comparative analysis, the intention of the author and her relation to what Joseph Courtès describes as 'the meaning of meaning'.[5] The third part of the article is dedicated to the study of prosody through rhythm.

I. Between orality and writing: Rupture or complementarity?[6]

In tackling the œuvre of Aurima Devatine from the perspective of Tahitian speakers, one must entertain the possibility that the spoken and written forms necessarily complement, rather than oppose, one another. Ever since their discovery of writing at the beginning of the 19th century, Tahitians have not broken from its understanding as a tool separate from speaking to signify intentions, feelings, thoughts, aspirations, even their lives. This cycling between the two mediums offers advantages to each, which ultimately permits filling of their respective gaps.

The Tahitian authors of the *puta tupuna* ('books of the ancients') quickly adapted. For them, writing represented an effective means to crystalise words and transmit them to future generations. Along with their writings, however, they continued to leave behind the melodies of songs, chants, and nursery rhymes, the listing of recipe ingredients, and instructions for making traditional medicines, often passed down orally in the home. They continued to recite the *paripari fenua,* the *fa'atara*, and the *fa'ateni* (all genres of traditional oral poem)[7] to their children and grandchildren. The oral dimension of each text would accompany the written transmission of family heritage.

Today, the young generation struggles to find room in the family space for the melodies and tones belonging to the Tahitian language. The sociolinguists and linguists Maria Salaün, Mirose Paia, and Jacques Vernaudon have demonstrated that the Polynesian languages are in

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[5] According to Courtès, the 'meaning of meaning', or 'significance' calls us to consider the semiolinguistic as a useful means to arrive at a detailed understanding of a text. Basing this on lexemes (we shall consider also grammatical morphemes, which are of central importance in this research) and the relationships between different *semes* (units of meaning), we move from exteroceptivity to interoceptivity, from the exterior world to the interior.

[6] See Flora Aurima Devatine's article *Récit d'une communication avec les esprits hi'ohi'o sur deux pratiques magiques : la parole et l'écriture* ("Account of a communication with the *hi'ohi'o* spirits on two magical practices: speaking and writing") published in the conference proceedings *Magie et fantastique dans le Pacifique* (Magic and the fantastic in the Pacific) edited by Sylvie André and published in 1993 by Haere Po no Tahiti.

[7] Flora Aurima Devatine describes the "genres" of oral literature as "traditional oral poetic genres".

decline in French Polynesia (Salaün, Paia & Vernaudon, 2016). And yet, those who do inherit them – despite the situation which these 'indigenous languages living on borrowed time' find themselves in –s gain on two fronts: if writing relieves strain on the memory of the orator, then orality breathes life into writing and realises the words in the present space and time. If writing allows readers to discover the canonical form of an utterance, simple or complex, then the spoken unleashes the potential to thaw frozen idiomatic expressions. Just as writing makes figures of speech and wordplays such as chiasmus possible, orality transmits rhythms and melodies from generation to generation.

Aurima Devatine's writings and readings are well-couched within this description, and are pretexts, on the one hand, to our discovery and understanding of a collective oral heritage, and on the other, to a valuing of her contribution to it. In example 1 below, the onomatopoeic constructions at the ends of the phrases are also used in the *pā'ō'ā* (traditional dances).[8]

Example 1: *Te pāta'uta'u a te vahine tutuha'a*

-        Verse 18: **4** beats: *'Ei 'ahu pu'upu'u nō te ari'i,* **hi**

-        V19: **4** beats: *'Ei 'ahu pu'upu'u nō te ari'i,* **ha**

Example 2 contains the *tārē* (*hei, hei, hei*) that the Polynesian pirogue boatmen would chant to direct the rhythm of the paddles as well as the moment where rowers should change sides.

Example 2: *Pāta'uta'u o te hoe fa'atere o Hokule'a*

-        V22: **3** beats: Hei, hei hei

Verses 10 and 11 are composed of this rhythmic pattern:

-        V10: **3** beats: *'A hoe hoe*
-        V11: **3** beats: *Hoe ā hoe*

It should be noted, however, that for the verses conforming to the set rhythm, certain elements disappear. When Aurima Devatine chants the rhythmic poem "Te pāta'uta'u a te vahine tutuha'a", the musical phrase which in the written form often extends for several verses, must correspond to 2, 4, 6, 8, or 10 beats.

Example 3: *Te pāta'uta'u a te vahine tutuha'a*

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[8] For Flora Aurima Devatine, the *pāta'uta'u* is a spoken poem ("a rhythmic chant or recitation which would accompany certain activities", as defined by the Tahitian Academy) which, through its rhythm, naturally carries away its singers. The couples form and dance in order "not to squander the music" (*'eiaha te pehe 'ia māu'a*), because "dancing the words helps bring them to life". The *Heiva i Tahiti* (a major Tahitian cultural festival celebrated in July), in establishing rules for the *pā'ō'ā*, has denaturalised it and somewhat impaired its soul. This *pāta'u* was chanted and danced in *pā'ō'ā* in 1978 during the *Day of the Academy*, and performed by rhythmic *tapa* beaters in 1980 at the *Pomare Show: Festival of Pomare IV School* in 1980 (interview with Flora Aurima Devatine, 16 September 2019).

- V12: **4** beats: *'Eiaha (e) tutu (i) te hiapo*
- V13: **4** beats: *'Eiaha (e) tutu (i) te tīte*

- V5-6-7: **10** beats: *('A) tīhau maita'i (i) tā 'oe pāta'u, (e) 'amāfatu ('ia) tīveravera e.*

In addition, certain words are shortened, as *'āma'a* (branch) which becomes *a'a* (root), and some phonemes are replaced, while others are removed entirely (*taheāvai*, for example, becomes *tæhævai*). It should be stated that in contemporary Tahitian, the term *tahe* (flow) is often pronounced /*tæhæ*/; the second *a* in *taheāvai* being dropped to permit the musical phrase to scan with the particular rhythmic segment (here, ten beats). For Aurima Devatine, such is the difference between the structure of thought, its transcription to writing, and its journey to orality. Carried on the rhythm, the words are adapted to and become embedded in an oral norm. It is up to the reader-hearer to understand the "complexity within our simplicity".[9]

Example 4: *Te pāta'uta'u a te vahine tutuha'a*

- V14: **2/2/2** beats: *(E) tutu rā ('e) tutu ē, (e) tutuha'a*
- V15-16-17: **10** beats: *(E) tutu (i) te ('ām)a'a 'uru i 'ātorehia na te taheāvai*

Further, the particle *ē*, which Aurima Devatine describes as "a punctuation point designed to accentuate movement",[10] often serves to complete a musical phrase, despite its not being vital to the comprehension of the text. It is, however, useful for the melody and rhythm of the poem when chanted. The author-composers of traditional songs (e.g. *tārava*, *rū'au*) also employ it often in order to resolve a musical phrase corresponding to the rhythm of the song.

Example 5: *Pāta'uta'u o te hoe fa'atere o Hokule'a*

- V8: **4** beats: *('A) tāmau i te hoe 'a hoe*
- V9: **4** beats: *('A) fa'ateretere i te va'a nei ē*

Certain phonemes undergo a phonetic modification (e.g. a short vowel becomes a long vowel). The written form gives no indication of this, writing being by its nature a fixed system.

Example 6: *Te pāta'uta'u a te vahine tutuha'a*

- V15-16-17: **10** beats: *(E) tutu [tutu:] (i) te ('ām)a'a 'uru i 'ātorehia nā te taheāvai*

In summary, beyond its crystalising function, the written forms permit an understanding of the norms of Tahitian (grammar and syntax). However, its limits lie in its lack of transmission of all the prosodic and phonetic modifications which emerge in the spoken form. According to Aurima Devatine, the "beauty" lies in the capacity to merge the written and spoken forms, but also the content and form, the link between clusters of meaning and their given melodic and rhythmic contours, themselves products of the cultural heritage of Tahitians or the creative genius of the author. To say that these texts assume knowledge of the oral tradition, of the 'what' and 'how' of the ways in which these mythical tales (*vāna'a*), poems (*pehepehe*), and

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[9] Interview with Flora Aurima Devatine, 16 September 2019.

[10] Interview with Flora Aurima Devatine, 16 September 2019.

chants (*pāta'u*) were performed by the ancients, is to speak of a rite of passage and an immersion in the prestigious and elite world of the great orators of the past to which this tradition belongs. A product of the chiefdoms of the west coast of Tahiti, the 'style' of Aurima Devatine reflects the ease with which these ancients would declaim and give rhythm to their oratories, songs, and poems.[11]

II. Author intention: what to say, and how to say it

Defining authorial intention as well as her "social influencing project" becomes as much a study of meaning as of form. According to its intended inference and the way in which this is achieved, meaning determines and constructs the style.[12]

It is worth remembering that each of the texts studied in this article were performed at various junctures:

- In 1976, "Pāta'uta'u o te hoe fa'atere o Hokule'a", at the welcoming of the Hawaiian pirogue *Hokule'a*;
- In 1977, "Te Manava Ihotupu", in a cabaret theatre performance of *'Oihanu ē* by Henri Hiro;
- In 1978, "Te pāta'uta'u a te vahine tutuha'a", during the live broadcast of schoolchildren for the *Tahi, rua, toru* show organised by the TV channel ORTF during the annual festival of the *Académie tahitienne* at the youth club (*Maison des Jeunes*) in the cultural centre *Maison de la Culture* (MJMC). This was then published in written form in a collection titled *Les Tablettes: Te Hiapo tata'u sur tapa de Vaitiare* in 1976, under the pseudonym Vaitiare.[13]
- And in 2015 for a series of interviews for the French literary website *Île en île* (*Te* "Manava Ihotupu" and "Te pāta'uta'u a te vahine tutuha'a").

It can be assumed that if these moments of enunciation differ in time and place, the same can be said for the contexts in which they were communicated. Considering such communications from the perspective of the writer-orator, it is clear that writing and then pronouncing a text before its very subjects differs to reading or chanting the same piece to camera in Paris 40 years later. Moreover, thanks to the wonders of technology, reception is now much wider: compare for example the sailor in 1976 with the internet user and the readers of today. As a result, we are witness to several overlaying "space-times": poet and participant; poet and internet

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[11] Flora Aurima Devatine's family history has its roots in the orators of the western chiefdoms of Tahiti. She cites also Jean-Claude Teriierooiterai, renowned author, orator, and Tahitian Academy member, as possessing a style that is close, even similar at its heart. Teriierooiterai is a descendant of the orators of the east coast of Tahiti.

[12] For the oral recitation of a *pāta'u* (a spoken poem), the voice, tone, and delivery will be flowing, chanted, even subtle. For a *vāna'a* (a mythical tale), the delivery is often more grandiose and explosive.

[13] The author has published her thoughts and words in a collection of short books titled *Les Tablettes: Te Hiapo tata'u sur tapa de Vaitiare*, of which the cover image is a photograph of a *tapa* (a traditional form of fabric), untreated, of a chestnut-brown colour. *Hiapo* corresponds to the material fabricated from plant fibres by beating the bark of the banian tree *ficus prolixa.* Traditionally, this fabric was reserved for the nobility.

observer; and poet and print reader. Of principal interest in this study, however, is the original intention of Aurima Devatine, her "project of influence" at the moment where the speeches/texts are conceived, and how this then becomes a "project of influence" over the listener/reader of today.

The first example, "Pāta'uta'u o te hoe fa'atere o Hokule'a", is an *'ōrero-pāta'u* (a chanted poem-declamation). This is not at all a trivial selection since it allowed the author to make the audience aware, in 1976, of something to which she was already highly tuned: namely, the power of rhythm in an oratory performance. This example is part of a collection of four poems by Vaitiare entitled "Te pehe o Hokule'a", of which one, a *fa'atara* (a traditional celebration poem) entitled "Te Fa'atara o Hokule'a", was presented at the song contest held in 1976 to welcome the Hawaiian pirogue *Hokule'a* and sung as a *tārava tahiti* (a type of traditional chant) by a small group of singers from Papara (a district of Tahiti). It went on to receive first prize in the traditional songs category. The chanted poem under examination here was read in 1977, alongside a free translation, during an episode of the *Au souffle des alizés* and *Au ras des alizés* (on the breath of the trade winds/on the cusp of the trade winds) radio programmes, produced by Jacqueline Pichon (under the stage name Kinou).

The second example, "Te Manava Ihotupu" ("The Polynesian Consciousness") was read as a *pehepehe* (poem) during a video shoot in 2015, but the author describes it as an *anau-rautī* (a song-poem of lamentation and exhortation) first delivered in 1977 on the occasion of the performance of *'Oihanu ē* by poet and dramatist Henri Hiro. It should be noted that Hiro is one of the principal instigators of what Bruno Saura terms "the cultural revival", which advocated a return to indigenous culture in response to what was perceived as a western appropriation of the Tahitian people (Saura, 2009). Aurima Devatine places this song-poem within this theme of the birth and rebirth of "the Polynesian consciousness".

The third example, "Te pāta'uta'u a te vahine tutuha'a", is a *pāta'u* (chanted poem) danced by Aurima Devatine in the corresponding video.[14] In 1978, it was composed for the television game show *Tahi, tua, toru*, created and presented by Michelle De Chazeaux, a well-known figure in the Tahitian cultural and audiovisual world. At this time, Flora Aurima Devatine was a school teacher at the Pomare IV protestant school and, for this event, wrote this *pāta'u* for her *4ème* (13-14 years) and *3ème* (14-15 years) pupils. They performed it in December 1978 during *Académie tahitienne* Day at the *Maison des Jeunes – Maison de la Culture.* This *pāta'u* references her knowledge and experience of making *tapa* (a material made from vegetable fibres), learned from her maternal aunt along with Mama Peters, a native of the Marquesas Islands. The poem is also the product of a meeting with women from Western Samoa and Tonga, who were invited to the same festival a year before, on 30 July 1977. Additionally, on 9 December 1978 Mary Pritchard, a Samoan artist, gave a demonstration of *tapa*-making along with her students, showcasing traditional methods, colour preparation, and printing large-scale *tapa*.

We recall at this point that the *pāta'u* or *pāta'uta'u* are spoken poems which, for the most part, were traditionally used to teach children about Tahitian society of days gone by. They often

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[14] We can categorize such a performance of *Te pāta'uta'u a te vahine tutuha'a* as a *pāta'u*, a genre evolved from Tahitian oral heritage.

accompanied everyday tasks such as *tapa* making. The *rautī* (leaders)[15] are those who would direct the workers by calling out to them and encouraging them when fatigue set in, with the aim of helping them forget the arduousness of the task. Aurima Devatine herself proposes that "Te pāta'uta'u a te vahine tutuha'a" is in reality a *rautī-pāta'u*, since it combines characteristics of both genres of traditional poetry.[16]

Each of the three examples was created for a consistent purpose: if, in the first example, the author wanted to create a link between herself as spokesperson of the Tahitian people and the Hawaiian pirogue *Hokule'a*,[17] the third example can be said to act as a bond between her, as singer-leader, and the women *tapa* beaters. The author thus acts as the leader of the orchestra, guiding, encouraging, and calling out to the participants in the same way as she does for other authors and writers.[18] These poems herald the beginning of her long-standing campaign of support for Polynesian writing. Additionally, Aurima Devatine recalls that if, for Boileau, one must "try, try, try again" at the grindstone, then for her, Tahitians must "try, try, try again at the *tapa* stone!".[19] The second example, according to Aurima Devatine, issues from a link established between her, the poet-guide, and the generation present during the performance in 1977.

"Creating a link" seems therefore a response to the points concerning language phenomena raised by Charaudeau.[20] This is the common theme that we propose sheds light on how Aurima Devatine structures her creations. Three main semiotic fields emerge from the three examples, appearing differently in each one (cf. table 1: macro-structures of the three examples).

In each example, the link is created by addressing or identifying the audience from the very first verse. Incitements to action and participation are also clearly present in the three examples. Throughout, they dominate through their repetition and provide the rhythm of the "poem" (14 strophes in example 1, 4 in example 3, and 11 lines dotted throughout example 2).

Above all, however, several cultural *topoi* emerge: lexis to do with navigation (e.g. *tārē*), beating the *tapa* (e.g. *tīhau*), and expressing surprise (e.g. *'atae ho'i ē*). Such descriptions, expressed in both movement and statis, set the scene before, during, or after the action. For example, example 1 draws on the features best suited to express the voyage of the pirogue,

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[15] *Rautī*, literally "leaf of the cordyline" (*tī*), translates the person as much as the utterances they emit. The *Rautī* conducts the rest of the group by holding cordyline leaves in one or both hands.

[16] Email exchange, 27/03/19.

[17] In the *tārava* (traditional song) performed by the Papara group and written by Aurima Devatine for the *Heiva i Tahiti* festival in 2008, the helm of the pirogue is a metaphor for the pen of the author. She invites and encourages Polynesians to write about their own thoughts, knowledge, interpretations, legends, and homeland.

[18] Aurima Devatine similarly draws a link between the *tapa* beaters and authors and writers in "L'écriture feminine, Vahine pāpa'i parau: élément de diversité Culturelle", *Littérature et communauté III/I. Paroles singulières,* No.53 Loxias, published online 19 June 2016, URL: http://revel.unice.fr/loxias/index.html/index?id=8375.

[19] Interview, 9 September 2019.

[20] We recall that, for Charadeau, some "issues surrounding the language phenomenon" are "external" (resulting from action and social influence), while others are "internal" (resulting from meaning and text construction).

whereas in example 2 consciousness is expressed as the result of a cultural awakening. Similarly, example 3 recreates the festive atmosphere of *tapa* beating.

In summary, rhythm unites our three examples: the rhythm of the paddles or of the *tapa* batons becomes the rhythm of the *pāta'u*, whereas the rhythm of the actions which engenders Polynesian consciousness among the younger generations becomes the rhythm of the *'ōrero*.

Table 1: Macro-structures of the three examples

No.	Macro-structure	Semiolinguistic elements	Examples
1	Identification/calling out to performers or others	The author defines the protagonist(s) through the identifying particle *'O* and the vocative particle *e*. Interjections are also a means to call out to others.	Example 1: ***'O Tāpare-i-te-ra'i-o-Vaihī*** (verse 1) Example 2: ***E** te ti'ati'a **ē*** (verse 1) Example 3: ***'A** tae **ho'i ē*** (verse 1)
2	Incitement to action	The injunctive particles *'a* and *e*, as well as the absence of other particle forms, call participants to action.	Example 1: ***ø** Hoe ā hoe* (verse 11) Example 2: ***'A** vavae I te 'iriāputa* (verse 26) Example 3: ***E** tutu rā 'e tutu ē* (verse 14)
3	Description of a state causing or resulting from an action	The inclusive particle *e* and its qualifiers describe a period of stasis, whereas the aspect particle *'ua* describes a period of movement. The prepositional particle *'ei* signals a state resulting from an action, whereas *nō* signals the goal of an action.	Example 2: ***E** reo iti **horuhoru*** (verse 2) Example 3: ***'Ua** rutu a pahu* (verse 29) Example 3: ***'Ei** 'ahu pu'upu'u nō te ari'i, hi* Example 2: *'Ua tūrorirori **nō** te hia'ai ao.*

III. Rhythm: the phonic footprint of the "Aurima Devatine" style

If, for Cruttenden (1986), rhythm is the basis of all prosodic systems of a language, for Albert Di Cristo and Daniel Hirst (1993), it is a deciding factor in the way native speakers identify

their language. One might ask the question: what is rhythm for Tahitians (all Polynesians, even), and how is it perceived?

In the first instance, it is useful to define the word *pāta'u* or *pāta'uta'u.* It incorporates the morphemic suffix *pā*,[21] meaning "to be founded on; to build on; to result in action or to incite action through something expressed basically (in this case, *ta'u*); to hint at something expressed in a basic way",[22] and the process of *ta'u* or *ta'ū* (the length can be shortened), which signifies the sound of a detonation (the repetition of *ta'u* implies emphasis through several rhythmic sets). As a result, to perform a *pāta'u* or a *pāta'u'uta'u* is to perform a number of small "detonations" which mark out a particular rhythm.

The Tahitian Academy defines the word *tīhauhau* as "to strike with batons in order to sound out the beat, often done by dancers". In the *pāta'u*, this term refers to the rhythm of the mallets during the beating of the *tapa*. In a subtle overlapping of the themes (*tapa*/*pāta'u*), Aurima Devatine provides an instruction calling for a "percussive rhythm of the *tapa*/*pāta'u* rhythm", giving the example a phonic markedness. The rhythm (*tīhau* or *tīhauhau*) is most likely to be carried here by the recurrence of the same noise, produced at regular intervals (or irregular, if the rhythm changes), created by the contact of two objects (here, the mallet and the *tapa* frame). If applied to *pāta'uta'u*, it corresponds to a "return to the rhythmic structures composed of an unspecified number of common characteristics" produced by the voice, the poet's language medium (Boudreault, 1970: 25).

However, the term *tīhauhau* is unlikely to be interpreted unanimously by those who teach the traditional singing groups in Tahiti. Many *ra'atira pupu hīmene* (group leaders) tend to use the word *terera'a* (unwind), and beat out the rhythm with a hand on the thigh.[23] The word *tīhauhau* also appeared repeatedly in the sheet music for the traditional songs performed in the 2015 *Heiva i Tahiti* competition, on the advice of Academy member Denise Raapoto, and has increasingly been used during rehearsals since then. In this case, the intention was twofold: on the one hand, to bring the performances in line with the judging criteria; and on the other, to translate the rhythm in the way described by Boudreault.[24]

For Louis Hébert, "three steps are required to produce a rhythm: the breaking down into units, and then the positioning and serialisation of these units. […] Rhythm can notably be defined as a particular configuration which constitutes at least two units of identical value (A, A) or differing value (A, B), in at least two successive moments in time" (2011:1), or indeed on the page.

Following analysis, three macro-structural rhythmic schemas – or "system structured by a rhythm" – emerge clearly:

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[21] *Pā*, which might be considered a word rather than a grammatical morpheme, indicates "wall". *Pāta'u* thus indicates "wall of detonations".

[22] Louise Peltzer, *Grammaire descriptive du tahitien*, Editions Polycop, Papeete, 1996, p.365.

[23] Based on remarks made by Dayna Tavaearii, song group leader in the Arue commune of Tahiti, on 10 September 2018. Tavaearii has been the recipient of several prizes at the Heiva i Tahiti festival, as well as a member of the judging panel.

[24] For Aurima Devatine, the words have become lost with the loss of daily practice yet have seen a re-emergence in the activities of today.

Table 2: Rhythmic schemas of the examples in the research corpus

RHYTHMIC SCHEMA MACRO-STRUCTURES		
Pāta'uta'u o te hoe fa'atere o Hokule'a	*Te Manava Ihotupu*	*Te pāta'uta'u a te vahine tutuha'a*
I. repeated 8 times Schema particular to oratory speech (with accentuation of tone) **II. repeated 12 times** 6 (V10-11)	**I. repeated 3 times** 3 (V1) **II. repeated 4 times** Schema particular to oratory speech (with accentuation of tone)	**I. repeated 1 time** 8 (V1-2) **II. repeated 1 time** 10 (V5-V6-V7) **III. repeated 1 time** 6 (V11) 12 (V12-17) 5 (V18) 5 (V19) **IV. repeated 1 time** 5 (V29) 12 (V30-34) 5 (V35) 5 (V36)

- Example 3: 4 macro-rhythmic schemas, repeated once. The rhythm is distinct, fairly regular, and ascending.
- Example 1: 2 rhythmic schemas. The first, which corresponds to the rhythmic leitmotif of the paddles, is repeated 12 times in several forms (*hei, hei, hei/'a hoe 'a hoe, hoe ā hoe…*). The other schemas, used more to mark the rhythm of the speech, number as many as there are groups of meanings.
- Example 2: 2 rhythmic schemas. The first corresponds to the exclamation *'atae ho'i ē*, whereas the others correspond to the groups of meanings as in example 1.

The following section analyses another example of the micro-structural rhythm of the first phrase of *Pāta'uta'u o te hoe fa'atere o Hokule'a*, filmed by Estelle Castro-Koshy on the 25th July 2018 for an audio recording made for the *Voix vives de Méditerranée* ("Living Voices of the Mediterranean") festival, which took place in Sète. We note, first, the importance which Aurima Devatine places on prosody through the accentuation of rhythm and pronunciation: she does not hesitate to interrupt herself in order to present the poem as she intended, as she would like the rhythm to be. As a result, on two occasions she restarts her recital: the first due to the tonic stress of the *'O* (which in all likelihood sounded wrong to her), the identifying particle and first word of the first phrase; the second due to an erroneous pronunciation of the word *fēto'ito'i* ("shaken"). For her, prosody – that is to say the melody of words and groups of meanings – is vital.

Phrase (official spelling proposed by the Tahitian Academy):

('O) Tāpare-i-te-ra'i-(o)-Vaihī te hoe fa'atere o Hokule'a i ni'a (i) te 'are i Hiti, (i) te 'are i To'a, (i) te 'are ha'apo'opo'o, (i) te 'are fēto'ito'i o te moana nui ē.

It should be clarified that the parentheses serve to identify elements which are intended to be swallowed, and barely audible (perhaps even inaudible) when spoken; whereas the norms of syntax require their presence in the written form. Nevertheless, their absence does not impede comprehension of the *pāta'u* when it is performed.

Rhythmic Groups (original version):

V1 : *'O Tāpare-i-te-ra'i-o-Vaihī*

V2 : *Te hoe fa'atere o Hokule'a*

V3 : *I ni'a i te 'are i Hiti*

V4 : *I te 'are i To'a*

V5 : *I te 'are ha'apo'opo'o*

V6 : *I te 'are fēto'ito'i o te moana nui ē*

A relationship exists between the positioning of the above graphics and the binary rhythm (marked at the key moments) which Aurima Devatine applies to the first phrase. This opening rhythm combines with the tonic stress of the Tahitian language. We should recall here that this allows a speaker/performer to draw attention to a given syllable within a word, which is thus highlighted as the most important within a group of meanings. Here, one can accentuate the reference to the paddle, or any which follows it.

The linguist Duro Raapoto was one of the first to carry out a study of tonic stress in Tahitian, published in his book *Te arataì i te taiòraa* (1990), determining where in a given word syllables should be accentuated. Below we apply his suggestions to the first phrase:

Table 3. Tonic stress and rhythmic accent of the first phrase

	Penultimate syllable	Diphthong	Vocal length	[h]	Prefix
1		Tāpa**re i** [rei]			
2			Vai**hī** [hi:]		
3				**Ho**e [ho]	
4				**Ho**kule'a [ho]	
5				**Hi**ti [hi]	
6	**To**'a [to]				
7					**Ha**'apo'opo'o [ha]
8					**Fē**to'ito'i [fe:]
9	**Nu**i [nu]				

Phonological Analysis (tonic stress in red):

[ˀotapa**rei**/teraˀivai**hi:**/te**ho**wefaˀatereo**ho**kuleˀa//ˀiniˀateˀarei**hi**ti/teˀarei**to**ˀa/

teˀare**ha**ˀapoˀopoˀo/teˀare**fe:**toˀitoˀijotemowana**nu**wije//]

In summary, in focusing on these literary genres of declamation (*rautī*, *'ōrero*), micro-structural analysis reveals the combination of a musical rhythm imposed by the orator (here, in two times, marked at key moments) with the tonic stress particular to the Tahitian language. The macro-structural analysis has shone light on the combination of rhythms belonging to literary forms of declamation with musical forms associated with Tahitian cultural heritage, such as the *pāta'u.* It can therefore be concluded that Aurima Devatine plays with the many rhythms present in Tahitian language and culture in order to interlink them and transmit this cultural heritage to new listeners and generations.

Conclusion

With its emphasis on the semiotic elements at play in the style of Flora Aurima Devatine, the analysis of the three examples discussed here brings into focus the transmission of cultural *topoi* (navigation, *tapa* beating) present in the links which Aurima Devatine establishes with the Other. This said, her genius resides above all in the form she chooses to pass down this heritage: if rhythm constitutes one of the principal pivots for the way in which a speaker identifies a language, then the prosody imposed by her writings, also nourished by French and Spanish culture, undeniably marks her own literary form. As a result, Flora Aurima Devatine's literary œuvre, as much in its content as its form, is doubly, even triply, marked by culture. This shows above all how the cultural heritage of oral tradition can be manifested in the emerging form of expression that is written literature.

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