TATAU: SYMMETRY AS CONFLICT MEDIATION OF LINE–SPACE INTERSECTION

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From a Tongan context, *tatau* (symmetry) also means mirror image, image, copy, likeness, same, and equal, among other things. My theoretical inquiry into tatau revolves around the *tā-vā* (time-space) theory of reality, which basically recognizes the philosophical fact that all things in reality stand in eternal relations of exchange, giving rise to order or conflict. By extension, the theory also takes into account the historical fact that because of these never-ending exchange connections, order and conflict are of the same logical order in that order is a form of conflict.

For things to exist, they must do so in time and space, and they are therefore spatiotemporal. These everlasting relations of exchange between all things across nature, mind, and society are expressed in terms of *tā* (time) and *vā* (space) as a common medium of existence on the abstract level and by way of their *fuo* (form) and *uho* (content) on the concrete level. Furthermore, such unending exchange relations between things, events, or states of affairs exist by means of intersection, where spatiotemporal, substantial–formal, and functional conflicts, on both the abstract and concrete levels, are symmetrically reconciled by means of tatau, thereby transforming them to order. This state of *noa* (zero point), i.e., order, is a counterbalance of equal and opposite forces.

The use of tatau as a means of mediation of conflicts at the crossing point of things applies as much to the colliding objects in nature as it does to the

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opposing ideas in mind and competing demands in society. In abstract ways, these contradictory tendencies are expressed at the shifting interface of *kohi* (line) and vā, such as the mediation of *vaa'i haka* (intersecting bodily movements in dance), *vaa'itā* (interlacing tones in music), and *vaa'i'uhinga* (conflicting human meanings in poetry) on the concrete level. By dealing with the intersection of *kohi* and *vā,* where the mediation of contradictions are done by means of tatau, my paper will share a common focus with the paper of *Hūfanga* 'Okusitino Māhina on the traditional Tongan thinking and practice *takohi* (drawing).

Given the eternality of relations of exchange between all things within and across nature, mind, and society, it can be concluded that intersection is fundamental to all things in reality. By the same token, conflict and order are permanent dimensions of reality. Art as a form of social activity is no exception. This is evident in *tufunga* (material), *faiva* (performance), and *nimamea'a* (fine arts), where conflicts are mediated by means of tatau to produce both *potupotutatau* (harmony) and *faka'ofo'ofa* (beauty). By way of demonstration, I will critically examine specific instances of tatau, such as tatau (wringing), *tautau* (hanging), *fakatatau* (role modeling), and tatau (saying goodbye), all of which are connected with the mediation of conflicting tendencies.

Tongan art is divided into *faiva* (performance), *tufunga* (material), and *nimamea'a* (fine arts). Material arts have many examples, which include *tufunga langafale* (architecture or house building). Performance arts are *sino* (body centered), and material and fine arts are *tu'asino-* (non–body centered) (Māhina, Ka'ili, and Ka'ili 2006). A further classification is made between body-centered performance arts and non–body-centered material and fine arts. There are also qualities internal or intrinsic and external or extrinsic to all three arts. The qualities internal to, or inside, all arts are called *tatau* (symmetry), *potupotutatau* (harmony), and *mālie* or *faka'ofo'ofa* (excitement) (Ka'ili 2007; Māhina 2008a; cf. Helu 1999; Kaeppler 1993; Moyle 1987, 1991). In addition, the qualities external to, and outside, all of them are called *māfana* (warmth), *vela* (burning), and *tauelangi* (excitement). In this essay, emphasis will be put on the internal qualities of arts, paying attention to architecture, known in Tonga as the material art of tufunga langafale, in the wider context of the *tā-vā* (time-space) theory of art (Harvey 1990; Māhina 2004a; Potauaine and Māhina 2011; cf. Ka'ili 2007; Williams 2009). Specifically, attention will be paid to the Tongan thinking and practice of tatau, considered an artistic device of conflict mediation created by *takohi* as line–space[1] intersection.[2] In this respect, this essay is linked in formal, substantial, and functional terms to the essay by *Hūfanga* 'Okusitino Māhina on takohi (drawing) in Tongan thinking and practice (this volume).

Quality and Utility of Art

Like epistemological questions that have secondary importance to the ontological questions (Anderson 1962, 2007; Māhina 2004b, 2008a, 2008b), the external qualities of arts are considered secondary to the internal qualities (Anderson, Cullum, and Lycos 1982; Māhina 2004a). Even though the external qualities are taken to be secondary, they will be briefly discussed since they have certain bearings on this chapter (Potauaine and Māhina 2011). The internal qualities of arts are connected with their production as a process, and the external qualities are an outcome. Whereas the process of art is both investigative and transformative, the outcome of art is both communicative and transformative (Anderson 1962, 2007; Māhina 2005b). Therefore, transformation is common to both process and outcome of art. As an investigative process, subject matters of art are internally transformed through tatau, potupotutatau, and mālie or faka'ofo'ofa from conflict to order and as an outcome of some communicative means of parallel but external transformation through the emotional states māfana, vela, and tauelangi from conflict to order (Māhina 2008a, 2008b; Potauaine and Māhina 2011; also see Māhina 2004c; Manu'atu 2000). The communicative and transformative aspects make up the use or function of art.

An inquiry into Tongan arts found the word beauty to have two meanings, mālie and faka'ofo'ofa, which are both fused and confused in the existing literature on Tongan art (Helu 1999; Kaeppler 1993; Māhina 1992; Moyle 1987). The words mālie and faka'ofo'ofa[3] both mean beauty, with mālie for faiva and faka'ofo'ofa for tufunga and nimamea'a. The impact of faiva on both producer and consumer of performance arts is mainly emotional, such as the movement of the emotional states of warmth, burning, and excitement. Such emotional feelings are seen in *faiva hiva* (music) and *faiva haka* (dance) as performance arts. But the impact of tufunga and nimamea'a on producer and consumer of material and fine arts is largely physical, hence its material effect on human eyes as physically constituted entities.[4] The effect of material and fine arts, as in *tufunga tāvalivali* (painting) and *nimamea'a lālanga* (mat weaving), is confined strictly to faka'ofo'ofa in absence of the feelings of warmth, burning, and excitement that are normally connected with performance arts, such as music and dance (Fig. 1).

In both material and fine arts, the internal quality faka'ofo'ofa has the same effect of beauty on both producer and consumer, in contrast to the external feelings of māfana, vela, and tauelangi peculiarly connected with performance arts. So, the term faka'ofo'ofa is internally connected with material and fine arts, as well as externally linked to both producer and consumer of both arts, as in the case of tufunga langafale (Figs. 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6). In addition to the preceding distinctions, there are further distinctions of great importance.

FIGURE 1. ***Kupesi Halafata'ulitaha*** **(Single Black Pallbearer Line Design), 2010. Artist and Photograph: Sēmisi F. Potauaine. Tufunga Tātatau.**

In Tongan aesthetic thinking and practice, there is an important distinction between good works of art and bad works of art (Anderson 1962, 2007; Anderson, Cullum, and Lycos 1982; Māhina 2004a). In performance arts, the distinction is between *faiva mālie* (good works of art) and *faiva palakū* (bad works of art), and in material and fine arts, the distinction is between tufunga and *nimamea'a faka'ofo'ofa* (good works of art) and tufunga and *nimamea'a palakū* (bad works of art)[5] (Māhina 2003, 2004a, 2005a, 2005b).

While performance arts, on the one hand, and material and fine arts, on the other, differ in terms of mālie and faka'ofo'ofa, both meaning beauty, and they commonly embrace the word *palakū* (bad works of art). The distinction between good works of art and bad works of art revolves around two opposed states of affairs relating to their production in the creative process. Good works of art collectively refer to artworks informed by states of tatau, potupotutatau, and mālie or faka'ofo'ofa, in opposition to bad works of art informing artworks commonly led by conditions of *tokehekehe* (asymmetrical),

FIGURE 2. ***Falehau* Meeting House, Tongatapu, 1784. Artist: John Webber, 1751–93, Plate 80. Ref: A-340-055, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, NZ.**

potupotukehekehe (disharmonious), and palakū (ugly states of affairs) (Ka'ili 2007; Māhina 2005b; Potauaine and Māhina 2011). The main concerns here are to deal with symmetry and its summation, which amounts to harmony, or defining beauty as a state of affairs in the creative process. As both specific and general entities, both symmetry and harmony are two sides of the same thing, given that symmetry is equal to harmony.

As an intrinsic quality, symmetry can be analyzed in terms of the tā-vā theory of art (Māhina 2004a), a derivative of the tā-vā theory of reality (Māhina 2008a, 2008b). Herein, art can be defined as a sustained tā-vā transformation and *fuo-uho* (form–content), on both abstract and concrete levels, from a condition of conflict to a state of order (Māhina 2004a). While the functional aspect is important, it is nevertheless considered to be of a secondary value. This is situated in the wider context of the time-space theory of reality, especially several of its general and specific tenets. In general, the theory states that all things in nature, mind, and society stand in eternal relations of exchange, giving rise to conflict or order. As a specific tenet, it states that conflict and order are logically of the same status in that conflict is a form of order (Ka'ili 2007; Māhina 2008b; Williams 2009). So, chaos and order coexist temporally spatially, formally substantially, and functionally across the

FIGURE 3. ***Faikava Kava*** **Drinking, ʻEua, Tonga, 1974. Photograph: Christopher A. Gist. Source: Tonga Pictorial (Gestle 1974:48)**

natural, psychological, and social domains. Therefore, symmetry is concerned with the interplay of chaos and order, variously expressed in terms of conflict and resolution, intersection and mediation, or connection and separation, as in architecture, music, and mat weaving (Māhina 2002b; Rees 2002).

Conflict and Order

In the domain of art and literature, conflict and order are made manifest within and across performance, material, and fine arts. Like all types of spatiotemporal, substantial–formal, and functional transformation across nature, mind, and society, conflicts in subject matters under artistic and literary production are transformed by way of tā-vā, fuo-uho across the physical, emotional, and human domains. For example, conflict and order are expressed by way of intersecting *ʻuhinga* (human meanings), as in the case of *faiva taʻanga* (poetry), *faiva fakaoli* (comedy), and *faiva fakamamahi* (tragedy), and intersecting *kohi* (lines) and vā, such as tufunga langafale, *tufunga tātatau* (tattooing), and faiva haka (Māhina 2008a, 2010). The sustained production of symmetry is executed by means of artistic and literary devices

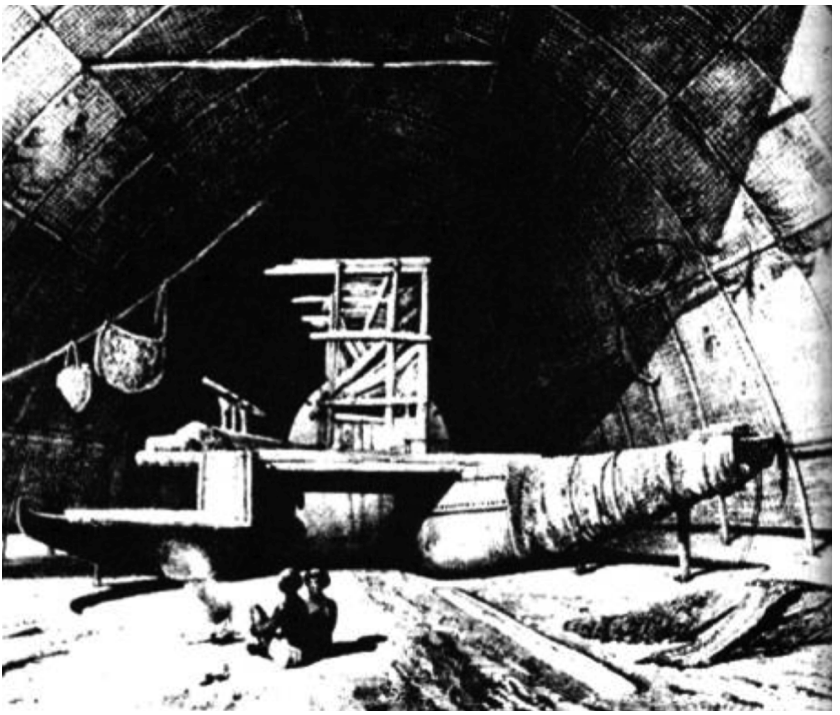

FIGURE 4. ***Fale Alafolau*** **Canoe Hanger, Vava'u, Tonga, 1840. Artist: Le Breton. Ref: PUBL-0028-078, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, NZ.**

across performance, material, and fine arts, such as *heliaki* (i.e., symbolically saying one thing and meaning another), and *hola* (i.e., a subdivision of two bodily movements) separately in poetry and dance, *toki* (i.e., stone adze) in both architecture and sculpture, and *nge'esifingota* (i.e., sharp-bladed seashell) and *fo'ifā* (i.e., sharp-pointed, brush-like pandanus fruit) in mat weaving and bark-cloth making, respectively (Māhina 2002b; Rees 2002). In all cases, these artistic and literary devices are a form of intersection, i.e., both intellectual and physical means for the production symmetry.

Mata (or Its Tatau Symmetry, Ava)

All physical sharp-pointed, cutting-edged devices, such as adzes, seashells, and brushes, are expressed as a series of intersections or intersection and

FIGURE 5. **First *Fonua*, First *Faʻē* Mother, First *Fale* House: *Fonua* Mother's Placenta (Birth). Source: http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.coltsneckobgyn.com/images/.**

mediation, i.e., an ongoing process of exchange and cycle. These line–space intersecting devices are described in terms of *mata* (eyes), such as *mata'i toki* (eye of the adze), *mata'i nge'esifingota* (eye of the seashell), and *mata'i fā* (eye of the pandanus fruit) (Potauaine and Māhina 2011). In ancient Tonga, however, tufunga langafale made use specifically of mataʻi toki for the construction of houses, combining both thinking and practice relating to line–space intersection. In close connection with the material art tufunga langafale is *tufunga lalava* (material art of line–space intersection). Besides, tufunga lalava, which was used for holding together house parts, where *kafa kula-kafa 'uli* (red *kafa*-sennit–black kafa-sennit), *kohi-vā* (line–space intersection) is referred to as *mata'i kupesi* (eye of the design) (Māhina 2002b; Potauaine and Māhina 2011; Rees 2002) (Fig. 6).

Architecture, or house building for that matter, is a material art that basically involves a mediation of conflicts at the intersection of tā and vā, fuo and uho, of things through tatau, potupotutatau, and fakaʻofoʻofa from a condition of chaos to a state of order (Māhina 2002b, 2004a; Potauaine and Māhina 2011). Basically, both fuo and uho of architecture or house building are made up of tā and vā on the abstract level and kohi and vā on the concrete level, with wood, stones, steel, and glass as their range of possible *vaka* (media). In contemporary architecture, *mata'i peni* (eye of the pen) is used principally as an artistic device of line–space intersection on the abstract level and such lineal–spatial tools as *mata'i kili* (eye of the saw), *mata'i hāmala* (eye of the hammer), *mata'i fa'o* (eye of the nail), and *mata'i lula* (eye of the ruler) for its building on the concrete level. Such architectural devices function as time-marking tools of spaces, characterized by means of such media as wood, stones, steel, and glass (Māhina and Potauaine 2011). The use of *fale* for human purposes defines its *'aonga* (function).

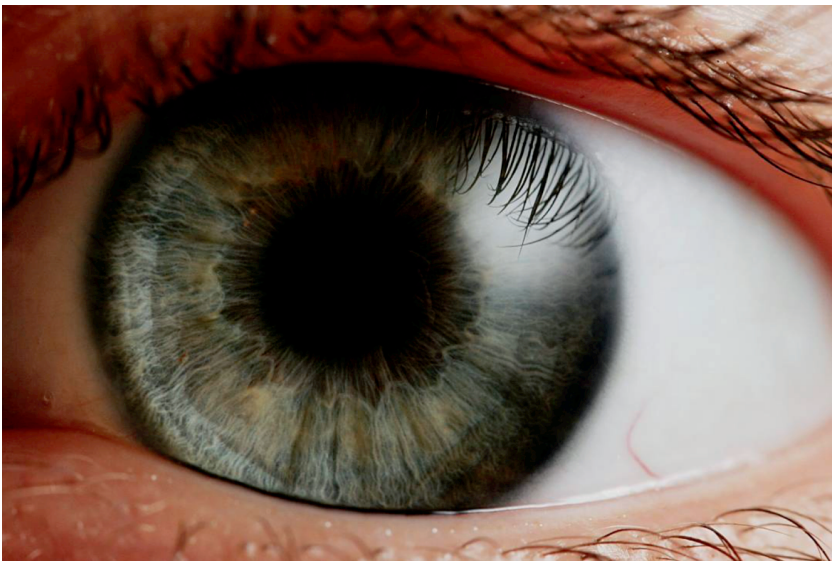

FIGURE 6. ***Mata ʻUli* Black Eye/*Ava ʻUli* Black Hole: *Mata* Eye. Source: http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://poundingheartbeat.com/…/2008/10/eye.jpg.**

Tatau: Symmetry

In subsequent discussions, I will examine instances of tatau in spatiotemporal, substantial–formal, and functional terms and link them to the natural, psychological, and social realms, with a particular focus on performance, material, and fine arts (see Helu 1999; Kaeppler 1993; Māhina 2005b). The word tatau refers to a diversity of things, which range spatiotemporally, substantially formally, and practically in physical, emotional, and human terms from harmony, copying, equality, and opposition; through fission, fusion, mirror image, and wringing; to warring, juxtaposing, aligning, and comparing. By implication, tatau can be defined as a process of mediation of conflicts at the crossing point of things in nature, mind, and society applying to the colliding and splitting objects, opposing ideas, and competing demands, respectively. In both theoretical and practical ways, tatau can be seen in nature, for example, the cycle of *tahi mamaha* (low tide) and *tahi huʻa* (high tide) or the circular movement of *ʻaho* (day) and *pōʻuli* (night), with both succumbing to the behavior of nature in symmetry and harmony. In reality, such cyclical, rhythmic processes are points of conflict, where the entities intersection and mediation are regulated in

nature both symmetrically and harmoniously (Māhina, Ka'ili, and Ka'ili 2006; Potauaine and Māhina 2011).

As an intrinsic quality of art, potupotutatau can be said to be a summation, totality, or collection of symmetries. Aesthetically, harmony is the sustained intensification time and space, and form and content, of things through the continual succession of symmetries, which begins with tatau through a summation of symmetries, i.e., potupotutatau to mālie or faka'ofo'ofa. For example, in faiva haka, each set of symmetry of bodily movements is combined by means of a continuity to collectively form a whole dance, defined as harmony. This state of harmony is what beauty as a state of affairs is all about (Māhina 2008a, 2008b). Symmetry and harmony, i.e., a series of symmetries and a summation of them, both of which are the same, is a state of order, balance, or equilibrium. Such states are made up of equal and opposite tendencies, defined as noa (paradoxically meaning "nothing"). This state of noa also means the zero point, as in opposing negatively and positively intersecting axes in mathematics, meeting points of equal and opposite forces in physics, or two intersecting states of affairs such as *talanoa* (talking critically yet harmoniously) in knowledge production and communication. In all instances, conflicts are transformed by way of both intersection and mediation (Māhina 2008a, 2008b; Potauaine and Māhina 2011).

Opposing the states of tatau and potupotutatau are the conditions of tokehekehe and potupotukehekehe, with examples seen in the former as dormant volcanoes, good works of art, and social stability and in the latter as volcanic eruptions, bad works of art, and wars (Potauaine and Māhina 2011). In dealing with conflicts at the interface of intersection and mediation, the former are a success and the latter are a failure. Other meanings of tatau in various forms include such things as *tau* (hang), e.g., *tau fō* (hanging of washing) and tautau (hanging as a form of capital punishment); tau (war), e.g., *tau fakafonua* (civil war) and *tau lau* (war of words); and tau (contact), e.g., one thing in contact with another, such as a car hitting a tree. All these examples, either as elongations or as abbreviations of tatau, point to a multiple, dialectical movement of conflicting tendencies, where intersection and mediation are involved in a process resulting in either conditions of tatau and potupotutatau or states of tokehekehe and potupotukehekehe (Māhina 2005b, 2008a, 2008b).

Instances of Tatau

The wringing of bounded *kava* (roots) is called tatau or *tau kava,* and the wringing of grated coconut flesh and scraped *koka* (tree bark) is referred to as tatau or *tau niu* and tatau or *tau koka,* respectively (Māhina 2002b; Rees

2002). Tau kava, tau niu, and tau koka use the wringing tools *fautaukava, pulutauniu,* and *fautaukoka,* made from fibers of hibiscus plants and husks of fruits of coconut trees, for the separation of sap from bounded kava, grated *niu* (flesh), and scraped koka. As a process, the wringing of kava, niu, and koka fluids is unified with the respective wringers of fautaukava, pulutauniu, and fautaukoka and the extraction through separation from roots, flesh, and bark, respectively. Both the symmetry and the harmony the wringing, as well as the asymmetry and the disharmony of it, are dependent on equal or unequal movement of mutually spiral yet opposite tendencies of the act of wringing. So, the more equal the wringing is, the better it is as a form of extraction of liquids at the interface of intersection and mediation. This common state of affair is called *maha lelei* (goodly empty), meaning the bounded kava, grated coconut flesh, and scraped koka are fully dried or devoid of fluid.

Similarly, in performance art, *faiva faifolau* (navigation and voyaging), when a vaka (boat) is moving close to a *taulanga* (port), it is called *fakatautau.* By the rhythmic act of fakatautau, reference is made to tempo marking of spaces between and including wharf and boat by means of intersection and mediation. In addition, the word tau, amid others, refers to when a boat arrives at a port. The term taulanga is an elongation of *taula'anga* (literally "place of anchor"), which normally refers to a port of call. The word for anchor is *taula* (arriving sail), where the term *lā* stands for sail. The terms *tukufolau* and *taufolau* refer to a *folau* (voyage) *tuku* (leaving a port) and tau (arriving at another), a movement from a point of origin to a point of destination, i.e., from separation to connection. Once a boat arrives, or a voyage reaches its point of destination, then the situation is referred to as *taufonua* (literally "reaching the land") or taufolau (voyage arriving). Therefore, the spaces between departure and arrival are temporally marked through symmetry and harmony at the interface of conflict and resolution or intersection and mediation (Hau'ofa 1993; Helu 1999).

By the same token, the lā and the taula are mediated on the *fungavaka* (deck) of the vaka. Like a synchronized dance, upon arrival, both the sail and anchor are dropped, respective processes known as *tuku lā* (drop sail) and *lī taula* or *tuku taula* (drop anchor). However, upon departure, the hoisting of the sail is variously called *fusi taula* (pull anchor), *fusi lā* (pull sail), or *fai lā* (set sail). Therefore, the sail mediates propulsion and anchor negotiates position, both in symmetrically spatiotemporal and substantial–formal ways. In both instances, there is a mediation of conflicts between sail and hull, on the one hand, and anchor and hull, on the other, amounting to an overall negotiation of sail, hull, and anchor. There is a form of both asymmetry and disharmony associated with sailing, expressed by the terms *taumu'avalea,* a reference to a boat losing its bearing with respect to a point of destination,

and *taumulivalea,* referring to a boat losing bearing in relation to a point of separation (Fig. 4).

Fale, Kava, and Vaka

The compass of a boat is called *olovaha,*[6] symbolic of men, situated midway[7] in *mu'a* (front of the vessel). At the *mui* (rear or stern), opposite the mu'a (front or prow), is the *fohe'uli* rudder, symbolizing women. Physically, the word *toka*[8] applies to a boat running aground; culturally, it is an honorific term for sleeping and death, as in the *fa'itoka* (resting place) of the dead. This is evident in the formal Tongan kava ceremony, in which a formal tatau (mirror image) of a vaka is conducted inside the fale (Figs. 2 and 3). In Tongan thinking and practice, both vaka and fale are symbolically and historically referred to as *fefine* (woman, female) in the same way that fefine is linked to vaka and fale in figurative and actual ways (Figs. 2, 3, and 5). There are, then, spatiotemporal, substantial–formal, and functional relationships among kava, vaka, and fale, where formal roles of both men and women are revised and standardized from time to time. In most cases, men are associated with mu'a of the kava (circle), where olovaha is positioned midway at the top end, seated by a ruling aristocrat or reigning monarch and flanked by his two *matāpule* (talking chiefs) (Fig. 3). The chiefs and their respective matāpule are seated along two sides of the kava, called the *'alofi* (rowers) of boats. At the mui (bottom) end of the circle is positioned the *tou'a,* kava mixers, and kava makers, made up of both men and women of close chiefly affiliations (Fig. 3).

Tatau: Heliaki as an Intersecting Poetical Device

In Tongan faiva ta'anga performance art poetry, heliaki[9] (symbolically saying one thing and meaning another) (Kaeppler 1993; Moyle 1987; Wood-Ellem 2004) is used as an artistic and literary tool for mediating human meanings. By reconciling conflicting human meanings, the poet engages in producing tatau, potupotutatau, and mālie through epiphoric, qualitative, and metaphoric associative exchange between closely connected qualities or attributes of things in the creative process (Māhina 2005b, 2008a, 2008b). As a form of mediation, the poet negotiates time-space, form–content, and functional conflicts at the intersection of two *vaa'i 'uhinga* (human meanings). At this point, my discussion reflects on a beautiful *hiva kakala* love song[10] titled *Fio Tovola* ("Urge to Ask"), composed by a famous Tongan contemporary poet Siosaia Mataele in 1930 (Velt 2000, 45). An approximate translation of this love song into English was recently made

by Māhina (2009). Of great relevance is the poet's effective production of tatau and potupotutatau, where individual symmetries within and across the verses and chorus are unified, rhythmically defining the total harmony of the poem. By extension, Mataele is able to mediate a multiplicity of tensions at the interfaces of sky and earth, land and sea, and nature and nurture, which are further negotiated at the intersection of sail, hull, and anchor.

Fio Tovola	**Urge to Ask**
1. *Fio tovola pē ʻe tolona nai ʻafē*?	1. Urge to ask, will it ever come to pass?
Uisa he naua e moana vavalé	Crashing waves of the bottomless ocean
Lōmekina kita ʻe he ʻofa mamaé[11]	Drowned am I by unselfish love
Ko si ʻete taufonua nai ʻafē?	When will I ever reach the land?
2. *Lose si ʻi ngoue takafia ʻe he laioné*	2. A rose in the garden roamed by lions
Manule ʻo pulusila ʻo e ngaahi hōsitē	Guarding-animals as weapons of hosts
ʻE toki ngofua toli ʻe he maʻu paasi pē	Allowed for plucking only by pass holders
Tuli ki he fā[12] *te u ʻuli tapu tafoé*	Keep to the mark, never to retreat
3. *To ʻe loto*[13] *hikilā si ʻete fiehuá*	3. Heart-strickened, my sails are set to sail
Siu e manusiu fanga ʻena he houfonuá	Sea-birds hovering over land-caused swells
Hoholo e lā fietuku si ʻoto taulá	Sails are put down, ready to anchor
Ka e tala ʻe hai ʻe ngofua ha tuʻu ki ʻutá	Yet, there's no permit to set foot on land
Tau[14]:	Chorus:
ʻAmanaki tala ʻe he fua mailé	Hope measured in nautical miles
Sio fatungaloa ʻene lauiafé	Seeing storm-clouds by the thousands
Folaua tonu ʻe he fua ki he losé	Sailing head-on towards the rose
Ko si ʻete taufonua nai ʻafē?	When will I ever reach the land?

As a great work of art and literature, Mataele effectively deals with the subject matter of his creation, i.e., *ʻofa mamae* (unselfish love), on two levels. On the general level, he wrestles with conflicts underlying his topic as events or occurrences that are freely presented in nature with a high degree of uncertainty beyond human control. On the specific level, he handles his topic of poetic creation with inevitable obstacles in the way. In response, Mataele mediates these two sets of distinct but related conflicts through effective heliaki, rhythmically transforming them from *felekeu* (chaos) to *maau* (order), defined by tatau and potupotutatau. For example, he presents his enormous state of uncertainty by setting it in opposition to the immensity of the *moana vavale* (bottomless ocean). This is made to equal the depth of his unfathomable ʻofa mamae, in which he is symbolically yet emotionally *lōmekina* (drowned). He is not sure he will ever taufonua (set foot) on land, i.e., succeed in seeing his lover. All *kupu* (verses) and tau (chorus) of the poem are made up of a circular, sustained series of conflict and resolution, separation and connection, or intersection and mediation reconciled through tatau and potupotutatau.

Mataele begins by displaying his emotional state of longing, i.e., unselfish love, which urged him to ask a question about his sense of uncertainty (verse 1, line 1). Given the inevitability of the situation, Mataele recognizes the enormity of the obstacles he faces (verse 1, lines 2 and 3), resolving to the uncertainty thus presented (verse 1, line 4). As a typical tectonic, metaphoric, or figurative technique, he again takes into account the immensity of the situation, likening it to *laione* (lions) closely guarding the target of his unconditional love, symbolized by the *lose* (rose) (verse 2, lines 1 and 2). In the face of adversity, the poet is determined to relentlessly strive for the rose, even without the necessary qualifications (verse 2, lines 3 and 4). With basically the same thought, in stanza three, he is more than firmed to set sail, knowing he is up against the unpredictable *houfonua* (winds and currents) (verse 3, lines 1 and 2) and, worst still, without a *ngofua ke tuʻu ki ʻuta* (permit to land) (verse 3, lines 3 and 4). In the chorus, the poet rhythmically continues with the same thinking, accepting his *ʻamanaki* (hope) positioned in direct opposition to the mind-boggling, impending, and powerful *fatungaloa* (storm clouds) (chorus, lines 1 and 2) and deciding instead to conquer all barriers, including death, so that he meets his beloved rose (chorus, lines 3 and 4).

Tatau: Hola as an Intersecting Dance Device

Besides the artistic and literary devices hola, *kaihaʻasi,* or *haka-funga-haka,* conducted by way of the insertion of an additional bodily movement between two specified vaaʻi haka, there are variations such as *helepasi,* the insertion

of an extra *pasi* (hand clap) between two designated *vaa'i pasi* (hand claps). The word *hele* (knife) points to pasi as a dance device for the mediation of intersecting hand claps through conflict and resolution, separation and connection, or intersection and mediation. The word *hele'i* stands for splitting something by cutting it into halves. When the act of hele is repeated, then we have what is called *fakatahele* or *fakatohele,* which also varies as *fakatahala* or *fakatohala,* engaging further repetition of drumbeats between existing defined drumbeats. Although the aesthetically organized *haka* are already at a state of tatau, it is intensified by the insertion of an extra haka, thereby maintaining a state of potupotutatau as a progeny of mālie. As a form of heliaki, the two pasi as time markers, including the space between them, are further demarcated at the interface of symmetry, resulting in the reconstitution of both time and space as a form of harmony.

Tatau: Tu'akautā as an Intersecting Musical Device

Like heliaki and hola, kaiha'asi, or haka-funga-haka, as both poetic and dance devices in faiva ta'anga and faiva haka, respectively, the musical device *tu'akautā* is used in faiva hiva as a means of mediating an extra musical note between two designated notes, such as the insertion of half a musical tone above and below, following the rules of octaves, minors, and majors.[15] The terms heliaki, hola, kaiha'asi or haka-funga-haka, and tu'akautā are associated with poetry, music, and dance and seem to be paradoxical in outlook, yet their functions as devices are strictly defined. For instance, the word heliaki functions at the point of intersection of two objects, and the terms hola, kaiha'asi, or haka-funga-haka undertake the location of an extra dance movement away from designated bodily moments. Likewise, the word tu'akautā suggests positioning of an additional musical beat outside yet inside (between) two specified musical notes. These poetic, musical, and dance devices are appropriated as means for the production of internally led aesthetic qualities tatau, potupotutatau, and mālie or faka'ofo'ofa, which commonly affect both producers and viewers in terms of the externally driven emotional qualities māfana, vela,[16] and tauelangi[17] (Māhina 2003, 2004c, 2005b; Manu'atu 2000; Potauaine and Māhina 2011).

Material, Performance, and Fine Arts

All art forms are spatiotemporally, substantially formally, and functionally related across nature, mind, and society, be they performance, material, and fine arts. The same logic applies to both tufunga lalava of kohi and vā intersection and tufunga tātatau. Both art forms are connected by means

of time-space, form–content, and function, linking the physical, psychological, and social realms. Both of them use *kula* (red) and *ʻuli* (black) as tempo makers of space, with tufunga lalava using kafa kula and kafa ʻuli and tufunga tātatau using *kili kula* (red skin) and *vaitohi ʻuli* (black ink). The production of *ʻata* (images) by means of intersecting kili kula and vaitohi ʻuli is derived from *kupesi* (designs) produced by tufunga lalava, considered the master art (Māhina 2008a, 2009; Potauaine and Māhina 2011). By far, the only art form that uses the word tatau is tufunga tātatau (literally "material art of symmetry-producing," i.e., tattooing) (Fig. 1). Most art forms use both *tā* and *vā*, variously expressed as *faiva tāfangufangu* (nose-flute playing), *tufunga tātongitongi* (sculpture), and nimamea'a lālanga.

Like faiva haka, tufunga tātatau uses the body as a vaka, with intersecting lines and spaces in the form of red skin and black ink as its content (Fig. 4). To tā (beat) is to kohi, and to tatau is to wring the flesh by means *mata'ihui tātatau* as a time-marking device, allowing the body to bleed, i.e., a form of conflict. As spelled out earlier, the word tatau refers to many things, which include copy, mirror image, and equal. There are two types of exchange taking place in tattooing: one in which red skin and black ink are intersected, and one that involves the intersection of red blood and black ink. The insertion of the black ink into the red skin is compensated by red blood through bleeding. A process of equal and opposite movement of things by way of connection and separation, where the insertion black ink into, or connection with, red skin allows for bleeding or separating of the blood from the body. This complex process is conducted by way of tatau. The sequences in this complex process allow the oscillation between the inner and the outer spaces of the body. The body acts merely as a medium for the activities connected with the production of kupesi[18] and its complex, elaborate, and beautiful geometric designs, defined as a form of abstraction by way of arrangement and formation. From a classical angle, the inner space points to the ancestral origin of a person in physical terms and the outer space points to the future, with both past and future mediated in the present (Refiti 2008, 104). Such a movement takes place on the skin, i.e., surface, in time and space as in tatau as a copy of the origin, now transferred from father to son, i.e., from body to body and from one generation to the next (Refiti 2008: 99–102; Wendt 1996) (Fig. 1).

The various applications of symmetry—such as bilateral, rotation and reflection, cylindrical, chiral, similarity, spiral or helical, and transitional[19]—are only applied to the exteriority and materiality of fale architecture. For instance, bilateral symmetry in a Tongan tattoo is comparable to that used on the columns of the Parthenon, where the left-hand side merely functions as the mirror image of the right-hand side (Fig. 1). As evident from

the preceding discussions, the intrinsic qualities of the Tongan concept and practice of tatau are constituted as a series of symmetries that are multidirectional and multidimensional in nature, as are those relating to the movement of intersecting tendencies between inside and outside surfaces such as the interchange between black ink and red skin, black ink and red blood, and black ink and black blood. These forms of intersection or types of interchanges are mediated by such simple devices as toki and *hui* (needles), where their points of intersection are referred to as mata'i toki and *mata'i hui* (eye of the needle), respectively (Fig. 6).

Conclusion

Demonstrated are some fundamentals of tatau in the mediation of the spatiotemporal, substantial–formal, and functional conflicts at the interface of things, events, or states of affairs across the natural, psychological, and social spectra. This philosophical fact is confirmed by the new general tā-vā theory of reality, which advances a view that all things in nature, mind, and society stand in everlasting relations of exchange, amounting to conflict or order, and that conflict and order are of the same logical makeup in that order is a form of conflict. As a derivative of the time-space theory, the tā-vā theory of art involves the transformation of spatiotemporal, substantial–temporal, and functional conflicts through symmetry, harmony, and beauty from a condition of chaos to a state of order.

NOTES

1. Kohi-vā intersection parallels time-space intersection, where kohi is a form of tā as advanced by the tā-vā theory of reality, with tā and vā as the common medium in which all things exist in reality, as in nature, mind, and society.

2. A brief version of this essay was presented at the 13th Tongan Research Association Conference "Siu'alaimoana: Voyaging through the Oceans of Tongan Theories and Practices," University of California, Berkeley, December 3–6, 2009.

3. The root word for faka'ofo'ofa (literally "in the way of love") is *'ofa* (love). The word 'ofa has several meanings, such as *ongo* (emotional feelings) of attachment between a person and his or her sweetheart, a person and his or her god, or a mother and her child. All these instances of 'ofa express a process of two-way exchange relations, defined by a state of harmony, balance, or equilibrium that generates feelings of excitement, awe, or amazement. In this way, faka'ofo'ofa is spatiotemporally, substantially formally, and functionally equal to mālie.

4. The emotional and the physical are, respectively, emotive and instinctive, associated with ongo and *ongo 'anga* (physical senses). The physical senses are considered ongo 'anga

(doorways) through which knowledge is channeled to *'atamai* (mind), *fakakaukau,* and ongo (feelings) (see, e.g., Helu 1999; Māhina 2002a).

5. The term palakū can be literally translated as *pala* (rotten) and *kū* (unpleasant odor). It means unpleasant or intolerable, defined as the lack of symmetry, harmony, and beauty.

6. A classical seafaring term, it refers to olovaha, where the term *olo* means to cajole or to rub and *vaha* means the space between lands or actual sea passage (Adam 1990).

7. In classical Tonga, both the *taumu'a* (prow) and the *taumui* (stern) ends of canoes or boats, e.g., *popao*, *tongiaki*, *tafa'anga,* and *kalia*, were used to mean either end. Another variation of taumui is *taumuli*. The front end of the vessel upon arrival can be used as the rear end upon departure. In comparison to modern design, the vessels have a fixed front and a fixed rear, aided with port designs and technological, mechanical means (Fig. 4).

8. The name given to the beams of the fale (Fig. 2).

9. For definitions of heliaki, see, e.g., Helu 1999; Kaeppler 1993; Moyle 1987. Of all the definitions, the one offered by Māhina (see, e.g., 2004b, 2008b, 2009) gives a fuller picture of the complex behavior of heliaki.

10. The term hiva kakala (song of sweet scent flowers) symbolizes love as a noble human feeling.

11. 'Ofa mamaé (unselfish love) is a Tongan poetic phrase used commonly by poets. Although no Tongan dictionary contains the phrase, it also means unconditional love.

12. In Tonga, many flowers have been classified into *kakala 'eiki* (chiefly flowers) and *kakala vale* (commoner flowers), with sweet-scented *fā* pandanus fruits considered chiefly (Helu-Thaman 2005).

13. The phrase *to'e loto* refers to internally caused anguish from a love-stricken heart.

14. The Tongan word for chorus is tau, which designates its role as a verse in taking the emotional feeling of tauelangi (literally "reaching the sky") to tau (reach) its climax, acquired through the production of tatau and potupotutatau (Māhina 2003, 2004c, 2005b; Manu'atu 2000).

15. Tongan harmony fairly simple and monotonous yet compounded by a number of fundamental changes, such as *liliu fasi* (melody), *liliu le'olahi* (volume), *liliu tā* (tempo), and *liliu tō* (key change). These make Tongan music a beautiful work of art.

16. Led by tatau, the states of māfana (warmth) and *momoko* (cold) as equal and opposite tendencies are reconciled through a movement of shifting energy-like, fiery-led human emotions toward a condition of *noa* that is neutralized by opposing warm and cold states.

17. The term tauelangi is closely linked to the tau, performed as a means of lifting up the emotional states, viz., warmth, fieriness, and excitement. Both tauelangi and tau are directly connected with tatau and potupotutatau, where time-space, form–content, and functional conflicts at the interface of separation and connection are reconciled in the

creative process. In addition, the term *langi* is deified as the sky, pyramid, face, and terraced tombs of ancient Tu‘i Tonga dynasty.

18. Kupesi is also used in the Tonga context as an expression relating two people as sibling, offspring, or just relatives in both nuclear and extended family contexts as a means to "make connection."

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GLOSSARY

'aho—day
'alofi—rowing
'amanaki—hope
'*aonga*—function, use
'ata—image; shadow; picture
'atamai—mind, intellect, intelligence, reason
ava—hole; see mata (eye)
fai lā—set sail
fa'itoka—cemetery; grave; burial place
faiva faifolau—art of navigation or voyaging
faiva fakamamahi—art of tragedy
faiva fakaoli—art of comedy
faiva haka—art of dancing
faiva hiva—art of music making and singing
faiva mālie—good works of performance art
faiva palakū—bad works of performing art
faiva ta'anga—art of word making, poetry
faiva tāfangufangu—art of nose-flute playing
faiva—performance arts
fakakaukau—thinking
faka'ofo'ofa—beauty
fakatahala—form of *fakatohala*
fakatahele—form of *fakatohala*
fakatatau—compare, equalize, realign, juxtapose, counterpoise
fakatautau—ship approaching port
fakatohala—beat within beats
fakatohele—form of *fakatohala*
fale—house, building
fatungaloa—storm clouds
fautaukava—wringer of *kava*
fautaukoka—wringer of *koka* tree bark
fefine—woman, female
felekeu—chaos
fio tovola—urge to ask (Fijian)
fohe'uli—rudder, literally "black oar"

fo ʻifā—pandanus fruit
folau—voyage, journey
funga—surface
fungavaka—canoe deck
fuo—form
fuo-uho—form–content
fusi lā—put up sail
fusi taula—pull anchor
haka—dance as bodily movements
haka—dance; bodily movement
haka-funga-haka—intersecting dance device, literally "a move upon another," see *hola* and *kaiha ʻasi*
hele ʻi—cut by a knife
hele—knife
helepasi—form of *haka-funga-haka, hola* or *kaiha ʻasi*
heliaki—intersecting poetry device
hiva kakala—love song
hola—see *haka-funga-haka* and *kaiha ʻasi*
houfonua—type of rough waves
hui—needle, bone
kafa kula-kafa ʻuli—red *kafa*-sennit–black *kafa*-sennit
kafa kula—red *kafa*-sennit
kafa ʻuli—black *kafa*-sennit
kafa—*kafa*-sennit
kaiha ʻasi—see *haka-funga-haka* and *hola*
kakala ʻeiki—chiefly flowers.
kakala vale—common flowers
kalia—double-hulled canoe
kava—kava plant *(Piper methysticum),* also means beard
kili kula—red skin, male skin
kohikohi—drawing; scribing; cf. tohitohi (new form of kohikohi)
kohi—line, abbreviation for *kohikohi*
kohi-vā—line–space
koka—plant *(Bishovia javanica)*
kula—red
kula-ʻuli—red-black
kupesi—intersecting device for images, design
kupu—verse
laione—lion
langi—sky, honorific for face of the king, royal tombs of ancient Tuʻi Tonga dynasty

lā—sail
lī taula—drop anchor; see *tuku taula*
liliu fasi—melody change
liliu le ʻolahi—volume change
liliu tā—tempo change
liliu tō—key change
lōmekina—a form of drowning
lose—rose
maau—order; another term for poem
māfana—warm, warmth
maha lelei—absolute empty
mālie—beauty; see *faka ʻofo ʻofa*
mata—eye or face, i.e., eye-lining device; see *ava*
mata ʻi fā—literally "eye of the pandanus fruit," i.e., eye-lining *fā* fruit
mata ʻi fa ʻo—literally "eye of the nail"
mata ʻi hāmala—literally "eye of the hammer"
mata ʻi hui—literally "eye of the needle"
mata ʻi kili—literally "eye of the saw"
mata ʻi kupesi—literally "eye of the design"
mata ʻi lula—literally "eye of the ruler"
mata ʻi nge ʻesifingota—literally "eye of the seashell"
mata ʻi peni—literally "eye of the pen"
mata ʻi toki—literally "eye of the axe or adze"
mata ʻihui tātatau—literally "eye of the tattooing needle"
matāpule—talking chief
moana vavale—unfathomable ocean
momoko—cold
mu ʻa—front side, prow
mui—back side, stern
nge ʻesifingota—sharp-bladed, line-making seashell
ngofua ke tu ʻu ki ʻuta—permit to land
nimamea ʻa faka ʻofo ʻofa—good works of fine art
nimamea ʻa lālanga—art of mat weaving
nimamea ʻa palakū—bad works of fine art
nimamea ʻa—fine art
niu—coconut
noa—zero point, state of symmetry, harmony, balance, or proportion
ʻofa mamae—unselfish love, shared love
ʻofa—love
olo—cajole or rub
olovaha—form of compass for navigation and voyaging

ongo ʻanga—doorway, physical senses, literally "place of feeling"
ongo—sound, emotion or feeling
palakū—bad, ugly, lack of beauty
palakū—ugly; opposite of beauty
pasi—clapping, basic form of dance movement
popao—outrigger canoe
potupotukehekehe—disharmony
pō ʻuli—night (literally "black night")
pulutauniu—coconut flesh wringer
sino—body
tafa ʻanga—type of double-hulled canoe
tahi hu ʻa—high tide
tahi mamaha—low tide
takohi—drawing
talanoa—story, storytelling, talking critically yet harmoniously
tatau—symmetry, copy, mirror image, likeness, sameness, equal
tā—time
tau fakafonua—civil war
tau fō—hanging of washing
tau kava—wringing of pounded *kava*
tau koka—wringing of scraped *koka* tree bark
tau lau—war of words
tau niu—wringing of grated coconut flesh
tau—arrive, chorus, contact, hang, hit, war
tauelangi—excitement, climaxed elation
taufolau—arrival of a voyage; see *taufonua*
taufonua—arrival of a voyage, literally "reaching the land," see *taufolau*
taula—anchor, literally "arriving sail"
taula ʻanga—literally "place of anchor," port of call; see *taulanga*
taulanga—port, harbor, anchorage; see *taula ʻanga*
taumu ʻa—prow
taumu ʻavalea—off course in relation to destination
taumui—stern; see *taumuli*
taumuli—stern; see *taumui*
taumulivalea—off course in relation to point of origin
tautau—hang, hanging, elongation of *tau*
tā-vā—time-space
to ʻe loto—aching desire; internal pain
toka—fale cross beams, boat running aground, honorific term for sleeping and death
tokehekehe—asymmetry

toki—axe or adze
tongiaki—type of canoe
tou ʻa—*kava* mixers and *kava* makers
tu ʻakautā—form of time marker, i.e., outside yet inside of defined beats
tu ʻasino—nonbodied; outside of the body
tufunga lalava—art of *kafa*-sennit lashing, i.e., art of line–space intersection
tufunga langafale—art of house building, i.e., architecture
tufunga tātatau—art of tattooing, literally "art of symmetry making"
tufunga tātongitongi—art of image making, i.e., sculpture
tufunga tāvalivali—art of painting
tufunga—material art, material artist
tuku lā—drop sail
tuku taula—drop anchor
tukufolau—voyage leaving
tuku—leaving
ʻuhinga—meaning
uho—content, flesh, umbilical cord
ʻuli—dirt, black, black colors
vaa ʻi haka—two spatiotemporally defined bodily movements
vaa ʻi pasi—two spatiotemporally defined hand claps
vaa ʻi ʻuhinga—two spatiotemporally defined human meanings
vaa ʻitā—two spatiotemporally defined tones
vaa ʻi ʻuhinga—intersecting or connecting and separating; meaning in-between
vaha—ocean space
vaitohi ʻuli—black ink
vaka—boat, vessel, medium
vā—space
vela—burning, fieriness