INTRODUCTION

In a sunny August day of 1996, which must have been as hot as any other days in Madang, I arrived at the Morelang settlement of Yabob village, with a *loksave* from pop star Willie “Old Dog” Tropu. I met Willie previously at the IPNGS compound in busy and dusty Boroko district of Port Moresby to take an interview so that I might go into the “real PNG” social environment, a village, as many people told me. Willie himself, being a lover of big cities, had chosen to stay in *Mosbi* separate from his band that came for recording then, and he was happy to show me his proud *ples*. He promised to make a contact with one of his brother, Paul, to confirm my stay in a house that he built. Then my command of Tok Pisin was very poor, but that much I understood. In a couple of days I flew over to Beautiful Madang. It was almost the sunset when I arrived at the airport, but I managed to get on a bus for Town. A businessman working for a mining company was going home in Yabob, and he showed me the way to the Morelang settlement by the beach. In Yabob I was welcomed to stay with Willie’s sister’s family. Paul, who was going to be my best friend next year, had been thatching the roof of his new house on Yabob Island and too busy to take care of the sudden visitor.

One afternoon, in a vain attempt to escape from the scorching sun, I stayed in the sitting room; it was a little more comfortable in the traditional stilt house. A humid sea breeze was very soft, as I was about to take a nap. “So you are from Japan, huh?” someone came in and spoke to me in English, “My name is Doggie. How are you?” The man in his forties was nicknamed “Doggie,” from his real name Dogek. Doggie time to
time worked for copra shipping in the wharf; his dexterity extended to the billiard, darts, and music. He said, “So you came to study our music, huh?” as he picked up an acoustic guitar, coloured in green, on the sofa that someone left. He quickly tuned the strings and began to sing in a soothing “Pacific” melody and voice:

\[
\begin{align*}
Bi a rien so pia mon \\
konom hangu ngalon heideg \\
bigabeg hangu \\
piade panaup ngeni.
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
Hangu nenman ger dime \\
ulong ulongdeg piade...
\end{align*}
\]

As I started to transcribe the words, he explained that this song was by a Yabob man Sandie Gabriel, who died some years ago. The text of Bi a was about an orphan: The little boy did not obey his stepmother and scolded by her. The lyrics reproduce his cry in protest: “Auntie, don’t scold me so much. I’m still little and am an orphan. Scold me, but give me the meal. My mother and father passed away. You know that, yet you punish me…”

Besides being a good musician, Doggie, as later I was told, was a “clown” for his practical sense of humour—he once took me “a walk” to the village club to get a bottle then he confessed that he had no money, actually. But as I went into more on the music of Yabob and Madang, Doggie’s (likely unconscious) selection of Bi a by late Sandie Gabriel aside from dozens of Yabob guitar songs started to pull my attention. The content of the song, based from a terrible real-life story, is sorrowful. Even composer Sandie Gabriel himself died a tragic end. There could have been other songs, maybe Doggie’s own
composition, to please me as a foreign student, yet something made the man choose Bi a. Moreover, Doggie was obviously not playing the song as a statement or expressing some kind of blue to me. He came to introduce himself and knew that singing is a good way to begin with. He did not sing Bi a as a prelude to tell story of the orphan or musikman Sandie, nothing; the story was told as a pretext of song by request. They all came as natural as a falling coconut. Em tasol.¹

This study aims to draw a model of aural cognition of music in order to describe the interrelationship between musical expression and sociocultural constructs that together predispose the music-making of Melanesian “grassroots” in peri-urban communities around Madang, Papua New Guinea (PNG). There are distinctly local developments of music-making in the Madang area, and local audience react to the sound of music which they call musik bilong Madang streit, or “real Madang’s music.” However, as it will be discussed in detail, such discourse that categorizes “real Madang’s music” as something refined is but an effect of the locals having no other way to express their attachment to the sound of “their” music. Music-making, instead, has to be scrutinized as a cultural process or a practice that constructs the sound of music as cultural event and process of inculcation. Thus, field data in this study will be employed for illustrating how the actors involved in the peri-urban societies inculcate the quality of sentiment by means of sound producing activities, especially guitar band music.

The Peri-Urban Grassroots

Ethnographic accounts of the Madang societies appear in a few monographs. An
overview of the precontact society has been illustrated in Emil F. Hannemann's compact descriptions of the Bel-speaking area in prewar times (Hannemann 1996). Rudolf Inselmann documented on colonization and the cargo cult outbreak in Nobonob (Inselmann 1991). A field study by Louise Morauta was published with a special interest in colonial political system in the hinterland area (Morauta 1974). However, these works are difficult to obtain today especially outside of PNG, and for some reasons there have never been extensive anthropological studies specifically focused in this area of the country since the independence. The following presents a brief recapitulation from Hannemann, Morauta and my own observation of indigenous Madang societies.

Madang³ was initially established as colonial administrative centre of the Germans around 1887 in prospect of a good harbour. Today the Madang area, home to about 35,000, consists of three distinct groups of communities. Roughly, there are three basic groups of residents. Non-indigenous residents in Schering Peninsula usually work for private enterprises or governmental functionaries and almost exclusively live in the housing areas. The people in squatter settlements, usually in the swampy areas, are mostly from inland districts of Madang and East Sepik Province. The indigenous villagers whose traditional land stretches along the narrow coast between Cape Barschtch and Bilbil Island spanning over 30 kilometres receive the stereotype of Madang. The Madang town, the capital of the province by the same name, occupies the entire Schering Peninsula, and includes an airport. The northern point of the peninsula overlooks customarily claimed islands of Siar, Bilia and Kranket (Gedaged) villages. Farther north, there is an archipelago that contains Momal, Riwo, Sek and Kanam villages. The chain
of islands stretches to the northern node of needle-like Sek Island, which faces the Alexishafen mission station by a narrow strait. By contrast, South of Schering Peninsula has a stretch of sharp coral cliffs until swampy mouth of the Gum River pores into the sea. Since there is nothing to shield the coast from strong current, this area directly faces the Pacific Ocean. The south of the peninsula has been the homeland of Yabob, Gum and Bilbil villages today. Behind the coastline has been the home to Amele and Nobonob peoples.

The islands in the Madang area are, unlike the other islands in Madang Province such as Karkar, Manam, Arop, and Bagabag, not volcanic but flat coral islands. The coastline often shows a zigzag like the rias because of erosion of coral rocks, each point of which is usually referred as a domon or damon, and it often makes a unit of settlement. The coastal villages north of Madang Harbour are locally known as the ilon (inland sea) villages, whereas Yabob and Bilbil in the south are referred as the murin (outside sea) villages. An ilon can also refer to any arm of water such as a bay or an inlet, but when the contrast between the ilon and the murin are made, it stereotypically done so as calm and turbulent waters of Madang. The locals usually note the difference between the ilon and the murin as how one has to take a great care for making and paddling the canoe in the murin waters. The mangroves, a characteristically ilon landscape, are still seen in the coasts between Riwo and Kananam. The native flora in the area was once a tropical rain forest with a rich variety of maritime plants and the mangroves; however, over the decades of development much it has turned into housing areas and plantations. The deforestation in the area has started to cause shortage of wood for canoes and houses in
the island villages, and submersion of coastline has been very much feared and appears to be rather serious. The native fauna has been drastically altered by imports of European animals including the deer during the German time, and the increasing population as well as urbanization apparently has driven away species of mammals and reptiles except the poison snakes. A wide variety of aquatics are still found in the sea.

The people around Madang are referred as “peri-urban grassroots.” The word “peri-urban” signifies that the local social formation is basically communal in the sense that they have institutions developed from the precontact ways of life such as customary land title based on clan leadership in particular. The term “grassroots” represents that they are the Melanesian population in the nation-state of PNG. Ethnic boundary of village in the Madang area very much corresponds to the grouping of local languages called tok ples in Tok Pisin. Madang village communities have either a Trans New Guinea or Austronesian language as their native tongue unless the speaker is creolized to Tok Pisin. Speakers of Trans New Guinean languages are Amele in the hinterland that include Gum in the south along the Gum River, and Nobonob in the hinterland of the Nagada Harbour area in the north on the mainland. Austronesian languages are spoken the rest of the villages along the coast, whose traditional territory have been on the islands: roughly the ilon villages speak varieties of Bel, and the murin villages use closely related tok ples Yabob and Bibil.

As for common tongues, old Lutheran’s policy standardized the tok ples of Siar, Bilia and Kranket (Gedaged) into a common language known as Bel by creating orthography of native tongue and using it for the mission activities including schooling
and composition of sacred music texts. In the hinterlands, Amele was standardized for the same purpose. Tok Pisin, the lingua franca in the most parts of PNG today, is spoken widely, sometimes even replacing the *tok ples* of the village. Tok Pisin has taken over the local lingua francas nearly completely as the area has become an urban centre in the north coast mainland PNG, and it is the only language widely used for transaction among the Melanesian population in town. Public notice, informal letters and notes are also frequently written in Tok Pisin. In the everyday transaction Tok Pisin is much more instrumental than English, the official language of the country. School curricula are taught in English, the official language of the country, from the primary level, but in everyday conversations its use is limited to the most public situations such as in the upper level of education, the court, tourist facilities, banks, governmental functionaries, and so forth. The use of English is associated with prestige, elitism, snobbism, and the pop. In term of written language, English is used as the language for daily newspapers and instructions of commercial products, and the readers seem to be fairly well informed. English vocabulary has also been incorporated into Tok Pisin. Literacy in both Tok Pisin and English seem to fare better in the Madang area than the rural areas in the province.

While the locals certainly feel each *tok ples* distinct, there is no taxonomy of language; in other words, the boundary between Trans New Guinea and Austronesian languages roughly reflects different means of production during the precontact era. The villages of Trans New Guinea languages relied on horticulture, hunting, gathering and fishing (Inselmann 1991:8-9; Morauta 1974:11-26), while the Austronesian-speaking villages, whose territories had been on the islands, were maintained by men conducting
commerce by sea-going canoe, fishing and hunting, and women gardening. Regardless of language distinctions, many of the communities in the area have been organized by clans and young men's house whose membership was given after puberty initiation. The women of the two Austronesian villages of Yabob and Bibil produced clay pots, which were once important commodity traded by men's large canoes. The making of large sea-going canoes was a work exclusively for men of Siar village, which could sail between Karkar and Siassi Islands. Nonetheless, the locals do not feel necessary to distinguish the communities in terms of language family. The distinction between the communities of Trans New Guinea and Austronesian languages are made by the locals as lain bilong bus ("the clans of the bush") and lain bilong nambis ("the clans of the coast") based on the difference of livelihood, but even such a distinction is a fluid one. If coastal Madang and the Upper Ramu area are to be distinguished, the former, regardless of language and livelihood, becomes nambis inclusively, by contrast to the bus or maunten in the farther hinterland. In fact, inter-tribal affairs such as trade, marriage, warfare, and adoption have been taking place without any distinction of language family, as long as the interaction is complied by both parties. Regardless of tok ples, social transactions seem to have been principally operated by reciprocity. Tribal warfare was sporadic but common among the villages until around 1910 as a consequence of land disputes and other inter-village conflicts. Inter-village as well as inter-clan adoption and marriage might have worked out as prevention of hostility especially when a first-born son is involved.

The missions and colonial administration had changed the outlook of the society greatly. The first wave of Christianity in this area took place in the 1890's when the
Germans made an effort to open the station of Madang. However, the main change came after the time when the German possession was taken over by Australia in 1914. The Lutherans, who were moving northward from Finschhafen, set up their mission in Madang, and the Catholics, who were moving southward from Wewak, built theirs in Cape Barschtch, naming it Alexishafen. Traditional institutions such as hunting magic, polygamy, young men's house and secret society (called maziab dazem in Bel), performance of dance pieces today generically known as singsing tumbuna or kundu singsing, tribal warfare, and so on, were either prohibited or discouraged. Traditional burial practice that interred the corpse in a squatting posture under the house was abolished, and graveyards were built in the villages. A cargo cult outbreak, in hoping to redistribute western wealth, took place in Nobonob (Inselmann 1991). There was at least one village on Schering Peninsula that was driven away by the Germans and eventually absorbed by its neighbours. What the locals often refer as bikman, or bigman, seems to be a product of German colonial administration, which introduced the so-called luluai chieftain system in order to collect head tax. The luluai system was first applied to Rabaul in 1897 and the tax started to be collected from 1905 (Inselmann 1991:35-36). The luluai chieftain partially survives in the form of clan leadership, often being succeeded by male members of a particular clan; as a consequence, the leader's power over his people has not been strong. The luluai chieftain has been merged into other forms of traditional leadership such as supervisor of boy's puberty ritual called mutung gaten, credentials regarding prestation of pigs, ability to mediate disputes, and so forth. Today, the term bikman itself is becoming rather obsolete, especially that the pigs are no longer associated
directly as display of wealth in the peri-urban area. As before, *bung*, or meetings held by
the elders continue to be the most important decision-making process in village.

Most island villages were uprooted to the mainland as the Japanese landed on
the Madang town area in 1942. After World War II, the Australian government gradually
made the way to independence of the Melanesian state in 1975 by promoting modern
social systems such as election, public service, plantation economy, and so forth.
Plantations have been established for growing cash crops such as coconut, cocoa, and
robusta coffee along with other forms of agricultural investment such as poultry. The
increasing number of factories and retail businesses opened a way to a wider selection of
employment. School system has been prepared from local public school to the University
of PNG, although school dropouts and unemployment seem to be a serious problem.
Migration from other parts of the country often ends up in uncomfortable squatter
settlements. Liquor consumption and its related cases of crime, especially those involving
young men, has been causing social stress along with illegal guns and drug since
independence. The *bikples*, or the main settlement of the coastal villages have moved to
the mainland in order to accommodate to population increase, water shortage, and
commuting after the Pacific war. The postwar social change, especially the independence
of the nation in 1975, have led the communities to weakening alliance or dissolution of
young men’s house, more exogamy, and much more relaxed pattern of virilocal household.
Some older forms of cultural conduct, such as kinship network, use of *tok ples*, customary
land tenure, subsistence farming and fishing, ceremonial gift transactions involving the pig
and kava drinking to a lesser extent are still in practice to a limited extent.
Sound-producing activities in precontact Madang consisted of the signal by the slit drum (garamut), hollering (for distant communication), children’s play songs, playing the bamboo flute (the knowledge of which was kept secret by the members of young men’s house). The dancing to mark various tribal occasions, today known as the singsing tumbuna, consists of singing and the accompaniment of the hourglass kundu drum and the rattles named of nutshells, called gargar. The slit drum and hollering are still occasionally used today for distant communication, although the distinction of clan-specific style of the prewar times is lost today. The dancing has fixed steps and the singing consists of a single vocal part with sometimes a variation called mokol, in which the beat of the kundu directs pattern changes and end of the singsing. Each dancing piece is made up with a chain of small sections, which are called by the first line of the lyrics. A kundu leader is often a composer as well, and it seems that whoever with a good musicianship and leadership can lead the circle. New composition, which is to be joined as another small section to the large series, has come up from time to time, but no authorship was claimed.

The dancers, both male and female, may sing along. The kundu singsing (the dancing piece with the kundu) was, like other parts of northern coastal New Guinea, subject to trade. A negotiated amount of meal and goods would be provided, in exchange for a collective instruction of a repertoire of singsing including how to wear the costume, how to mix the paint, how to weave and dye the grass skirts and so forth by request. Also, some villages included the singsing as a part of customary knowledge taught in young boy’s puberty initiation called mulung. The mulung dancing session, which marks the end of the ritual seclusion from the rest of village, is still hosted in Yabob and Bilbil biannually.
However, the missionaries in Madang, especially the Lutherans, who were more uncompromising to the native customs than the other, strongly encouraged the natives to relinquish the indigenous music activity which “made concessions to the physical side of man not in harmony with Godly purity” (Hannemann 1996:93). As a result, what one might relate as Madang’s “traditional” *singsing tumbuna* today is actually a product of “periodic interest of the District Officer (then Australian) that they dance for tourists and Australian officials on inspection trips, fit to make its people by way of supplying social diversion and entertainment” (ibid.:93). For instance, the *singsing tumbuna* in Yabob, though only two of which are in practice, was salvaged by remaking the secret courtship dance of unmarried youths for public performance in around 1940. The Daik courtship dancing, the main purpose of which was to choose sexual partners, was strictly prohibited by the mission. Since the *singsing tumbuna* dancing pieces have been subject to trade, and intra-village modification, variation and language difference have been so great as a historical process that older the piece becomes more contents of the lyrics become deformed and forgotten. Moreover, because most lyrics are composed as a repetition of short phrases or even a word, the original meaning of the composition, albeit based on a myth or an everyday episode, tend to be remembered not for a long time. Obsolete words and expressions in the *singsing tumbuna* are never deciphered today due to the historical change of language, folklore and way of life. The composers usually intend to mark special occasion of performance by the text employing repetition and some might share thier pretext of compositional idea, but by and lagre the *singsing tumbuna* is still performed with few considering the content or pretext of the words.
Madang has experienced drastic social change since the last decade on the nineteenth century. The development of guitar band in the area certainly reflects such a cultural history since it is the peri-urbanites that have been practicing, inventing and organizing it. The guitar was introduced after the World War from other parts of the Pacific as a result of migration, and gradually spread among the locals. Guitar bands have been formed basically in terms of village-based network. This early form of guitar band is called stringband. The native contact with the Solomons brought the bambooband, for which Madang became famous; both stringband and bambooband were widely practiced to compete in the gita resis competition. Local music industry started around in the middle of 1980, thanks to electronization, the introduction of cassette production system and local capitalism; the pop band for the cassette is known as the powerband, after Tok Pisin word pawa meaning electricity. The advent of powerband might reflect the widening discrepancy of specialization among the village youth in that many villages did not move on to the powerband as it had been in the organization of gita resis. Instead, the powerband has a deep relationship with the local and national music industry, and a number of active bands some of which being popular nationwide in the form of performance contract, live performance and cassette recording. Madang powerbands today has produced more than twenty cassette albums by 1997, and all-night outdoor dancing called the six-to-six with a live band or cassette player is the only public entertainment today.

The characteristics of the Madang people as peri-urban grassroots have been the essential element for the development of Madang music, as urbanization, communal
institutions and Melanesian nation-state have been the essential element in this area. This
is by contrast other urban centres, Rabaul and Port Moresby that have reared unique
guitar band activities. Rabaul, a thriving centre for plantation economy and the location of
colonial administrations of the German and the Australian governments, has had a strong
tradition of urban Chinese mix-race community that has been a vital player of the guitar
band music (Webb 1995). Port Moresby has been the multicultural business centre and
capital of the nation since the independence. But the indigenous local population of
Hanuabada and Koki communities have never played an initiative role in the transition
from the stringband to the powerband, although this area, along with Marshall Lagoon,
has developed a distinct local stringband style (Niles and Webb 1988:5). Madang’s case is
unique in that the indigenous communities surrounding the former colonial station have
been active in developing locally distinctive music styles, with Madang town
continuously supplying the local performers scenes of activity, capital, new technologies,
and musical ideas.11

Ethnography of Music in Papua New Guinea

Ethnomusicology in PNG has taken advantage of the natives’ rich verbal culture; myths,
legends, stories, parables, poignant dialogues, metaphorical allusions and theorizing
comments are used to explain musico-aesthetic conducts which might appear cryptic at
the first face. In his Sound and Sentiments (Feld 1990) Steven Feld elaborated how a
cultural system of knowledge (of the birds, in the Kaluli society) is coded as sound image
that evokes a particular realm of sentiment. Feld mainly focused on Kaluli mythology to
demonstrate that cry of the fruitdove, which is believed to be a metamorphosed sorrowful young boy who was denied his share of crayfish by his older sister, is signified into the contour of the *gisalo* lament. In Kaiuli mortuary ritual called *gisalo*, the laments are composed in such away that they remind the audience of the story of the young boy. The performance of *gisalo* consequently induces cry among the attendants, for the performance of lament symbolically interacts by means of the “dominant symbol,” as Turner would have called, that, in this case, involves the sentiment evoked through the story of abandonment (ibid.:20-43).\(^{12}\)

In line with Feld’s study, Yamada Yōichi relates how ineffable exuberance in musical performance of the Waxei people of Middle Sepik is rooted in their local belief system that centres around the power of awe-inspiring spirit Guxaj, which brought music to Waxei (Yamada 1997a).\(^{13}\) As his more recent writings on Waxei suggest, Yamada finds “corporeity” as the basic principle in Waxei compositions, the songs of Guxaj. Since existence of spirit Guxaj is only perceivable through the sound of musical instruments or the “sway,” and Waxei’s collective memory concerning the mythology of Guxaj along with multiple contexts of musical performance such as mourning and celebration have ambiguous values of fear and joy. Yamada concludes: “the substantial signification of Waxei’s music is present in the interrelationship among music, corporeity and memory” (Yamada 1997b:205). The standpoint of Feld and Yamada is that ethno-aesthetics or the symbolism of sound is a medium of cultural (and natural) environment by means of performance. In this regard, their work can be characterized as an epistemology of sound, in which sentiment and emotion re-/produced by musical performance is to be treated as
index for system of folk knowledge. Both Feld and Yamada focus on interaction between music-making as cognitive system—such as the folk theory of the sound of fruitdove or the river spirit—and environmental factors as background of performance.

If the change of environment of musical performance is focused, it should be maintained that the structured sound no longer bears the same signification as before. The societies that Feld and Yamada studied in, at least during the time of their field researches and writing, were basically unaffected by Westernization despite presence of the missions; in the case of Feld, anthropologists were not a new existence among the locals already (Feld 1990:7-13; Yamada 1997a:22-23). This study, however, has to take a different perspective from the previous two for the following respects. In Madang traditional performative genre such as the *singsing tumbuna* has been practiced without mythical knowledge since Christianization, for the missions discouraged and the colonial administration renovated it for public performance (Hannemann 1996:93). In addition, Madang *singsing tumbuna* in the precontact times was traded among the tribes with which no mythological instruction was accompanied. Guitar band music, too, has no major tribal story to summarize character of music-making. The discourse about music is still present in Madang, for the people certainly talk about it all the time, and one can certainly call it “mythology” if one wishes. But model of music-making must be sought further into the modality of interaction in which the local discourse about music is taken as a second nature to music-making.

The approach such as those taken by Feld and Yamada has its roots in Alan P. Merriam’s theoretical work *The Anthropology of Music* (Merriam 1964). Although after
Merriam ethnomusicology has developed considerably in terms of theory especially thanks to Structuralism, semiotics and cultural studies, Merriam's point prevails for his critique against autonomy of musical structure and social reductionism of musical phenomena at the same time. For Merriam,

The dual nature of ethnomusicology is clearly a fact of discipline. The major question, however, is not whether the anthropological or the musicological aspect should gain ascendance, but whether there is any way in which the two can be merged, for such a fusion is clearly the objective of ethnomusicology and the keystone upon which the validity of its contribution lies. (Merriam 1964: 17)

As criticizing ethnographical study of cultural Other, he states:

Malinowski was apparently unable to account for the speculative and creative aspects of culture, for he nowhere included either religion or artistic behavior, both of which are universals in human experience. Thus, Malinowski felt he could derive certain aspects of universal human behavior and organization from the needs of the organism as an organism, and thus accounts for past, at least, of culture, he did not account for man as an artistic animal. (Merriam ibid.:22)

Therefore, in order to merge the musical and the cultural in ethnography of music, Merriam was seeking his foundation on music-making, rather than musical structure or social structure of music. Merriam's argument is indeed important in the sense that he sees generative aspect of music as worth examining in the study of ethnomusicology. How music generates should become the central concern for the discipline; here, the question naturally involves cultural process of music-making where musical structure and environment of performance become pervade into each other.

What has to be examined in the ethnography of music is to clarify aspects of music-making such as how musical performance becomes a cultural event so that each
performance consists a genre that generate music-making in turn. As some authors point out, even in the work of Lévi-Strauss which is the semantic anthropology *par excellence*, such a need for a study of practical interaction has already been proposed:

According to Lévi-Strauss, there are two categories of myths: one is intelligible myth with a certain closed form, and the other is the more segmented tacit myth, which is a set of explanations. And what Turner stated on the Ndembu that there are no myths but abundant interpretations actually corresponds to Lévi-Strauss’s tacit myth... [Lévi-Strauss suggested that] the study of “ritual itself” becomes possible only through removing these various interpretations of the ritual (Fukushima 1993:119-120).

In this light, ideological construct in the form of local discourse is a “tacit myth” and the *six-to-six* and other aspects of music-making is “ritual itself.” However, in the guitar band music texts are always present in the compositions; therefore, what might the words do to the audience was put more emphasis than what the words mean. It has been elaborated that the audiences in the *six-to-six* situations in particular, which is a sort of “ritual” in Lévi-Strauss’s discourse, never really tries to comprehend the text but rather responds to the sound-shape of certain word. In such a setting, to bring out a model of interaction stressing that cognition never operates in terms of syntactic coding and decoding of message seems instrumental. To assume “ritual itself” should be explored on a further level in which transaction transforms the relationship and permeates in musical forms. For instance, the significance of the lament, locally known as *sore singsing*, is that the songs have been accepted in the community where there has never been a custom of performing stringband tunes for mortuary ritual. The attachment to the sound of guitar band music has enabled to differentiate the element of *sore* through performance.

“Where’s the music coming from?” (Magne 1995:77) is indeed the central concern of this
study. It has to be taken account that the ever-increasing mobility and diversification of the society today have result the audience sharing backgrounds with different life histories.

By using the word “genre” to designate a particular articulation of musical style and social formation of music-making including patterns of aural cognition, I am expanding Bakhtin’s usage of the term in a sense that he limits his argument in the literary works. Nonetheless, my usage of the word “genre” is not far at all from what Bakhtin asserts:

Actual Social life and historical becoming create within an abstractly national language a multitude of social belief systems; within these various systems (identical in the abstract) are elements of language filled with various semantic and axiological content and each with its own different sound.

Literary language—both spoken and written—although it is unitary not only in its shared, abstract, linguistic markers but also in its forms for conceptualizing these abstract markers, is itself stratified and heteroglot in its aspect as an expressive system, that is, in the forms that carry its meanings (Bakhtin 1981:288).

Surely, sociolinguistic situation in the peri-urban Madang, which is the ground for the social formation of the guitar band music, is basically compatible with these lines by Bakhtin. As it has been exemplified, music is no exception to the expressive system which Bakhtin illustrates as “stratified and heteroglot,” created within “an abstractly national language a multitude of social belief systems.” For social formation is an essential background for textuality of language, it has to be considered how such “social belief systems” interplay in music-making. Frederic Barth uses the term “generative structure” of social action in elaborating his dilemma-solving schema that “should be designed to
explain how the observable frequency patterns, or regularities, are generated” (Barth 1981:34). Barth’s concern of studying social action descriptively without internalizing the subject of study is significant in that it suggests a model of cultural process as a practice. Likewise, music-making is fundamentally subject to negotiation, depending upon “generative structure” of cultural process. If music is viewed as a result of and subject to cultural process, it should be examined from cognitive aspect of music-making to a certain extent. One of the interesting approaches to music-making from this respect is psychological aesthetics. Although there is are a number of theoretical and methodical considerations within the discipline, psychological aesthetics takes a form of empirical science in which musical stimuli is observed as non-verbal or verbal responses (Radocy and Boyle 1988:221-237). The core of this discipline, therefore, is to investigate not “What is music?” but “What people do with music?” Of course, as Blacking elaborated in a number of his books about the Venda, music-making means different things in cultural context (Blacking 1973, 1995). However, it is worthwhile to note empirical approach that regards emotional response in music-making for a statement such as:

Emotional responses are dependent on the relationship between a stimulus (music) and a responding individual. A musical stimulus must produce a tendency for an individual to respond in a particular way. A stimulus that arouses no tendency to respond or that is satisfied without delay cannot arouse emotion. (Radocy and Boyle ibid.:231)

If music is viewed as a kind of stimulus, then, environment in which such stimulus is sensed becomes important factor for music-making. Then, it becomes clear that for ethnography of music attention towards meaning of music becomes the foremost question.
Based from Meyer's framework (Meyer 1956) it can be summarized as: "meaning thus arises out of a triadic relationship among (a) a stimulus, (b) that to which it points, and (c) the conscious observer" (Radocy and Boyle ibid.:232). Although an investigation of music in Madang can not accept empirical aesthetics as in the same way as Meyer and other researchers for historical, sociocultural and performative complexity, it nonetheless will concentrate on patterns of music-making and listening in order to discuss interaction between musical structure and its generative process.

Scope and Plan

The main field research after a brief preliminary week-long stay in Yabob village took place between February 1997 and January 1998. During my stay in the village I was offered in a vacated haus boi, or young men's house, on Yabob Island to sleep in. Living on the island, despite its lack of motorized transportation, eventually turned out be my benefit. This was not only because many of my principle informants happened to be also islanders but I was able to actually experience the life with the sea-going canoe, which is a principle source of imagination in the local guitar band songs. Hotu ("surroundings") and panu ("village") on and around Yabob Island definitely helped me to grasp the images that appear in many of the song texts. The villages that I visited for this thesis are Yabob, Kranket, Bilia, Siar, Riwo, Kananam and Gum. In the end, I collected more than 300 contemporary songs, about 230 of which translated to Tok Pisin with help of the locals, and made about a couple of hours of recording of traditional dancing, the singsing tumbuna, of Yabob. Ethnographic representation was chosen since events and episodes,
such as the one reconstructed in the beginning of this chapter, undoubtedly consist of an important part of information for the investigation.

The first two chapters to follow will discuss the formation of guitar band music from general and social perspectives. Chapter 1 elaborates the origin of concept “music” (musik) as a result of colonization and introduction of lingua franca Tok Pisin. In the early postcontact era, there was no equivalent local term in any Madang languages to generically signify this particular sound-producing activity, and to recognize it as musique eventually creates a genre of musical expression, appropriation and invention albeit a traditional dance piece or a powerband cassette song. The historical development of guitar band music has resulted in generation and integration of musical genre to which different ideal types of audience react in particular ways. Most notably, contemporary domestic guitar band music is often contrasted against Western pop music.

Chapter 2 describes learning process and organization of guitar bands. For periurban guitar bands village-based network is significant since village serves as a boundary of collective activity of the youth. The band activity is essentially a pre-marital activity of village male, and married men who continue to be active are usually either contracted musicians or outstanding singer and composer. As for learning process, formal education and notated music play no significant role, but group activity always serves as the matrix of the practice. These characteristics of guitar bands reflect performative format and musical expression of the local bands especially compositions in village languages with everyday themes and development of local style.

The following three chapters 3, 4 and 5 involve more musical levels. Chapter 3
analyzes powerband lyrics. The all-night outdoor dance session called the six-to-six is the main field for the consumption of the powerband songs. The concert field is usually filled with noise and much distraction, and often it is very difficult to hear what is being sung about. Despite such situations, composers mix as many as three different languages in the same song text, often disregarding the syntax. There are even songs that mystify an interpreter for the use of obsolete vocabulary and over-simplified wording. It will be clarified how idiomatic elements consist of the powerband music that emphasizes particular categories of expression.

Chapter 4 deals with recent invention of stringband lament for funeral, which is a very rare phenomenon in the country where the guitar is regarded as a secular instrument. In fact, only two villages, Kranket of Yabob, practice this sore singsing, or “sorrow songs.” A performance of sore singsing expects no economic return for it mourns the death of a relative. The music is basically same as the stringband composition in terms of melody and instrumental lines, but has a distinct feature in reference to a sailing canoe and address to the dead. The most striking aspect of the sore singsing is that the attendants actually respond with crying, despite that this genre has merely a history of a decade. Some of the numbers accompany even an uncanny story of predicted death in which then ordinary song is deemed as sore singsing because of death of a person in relation to the song.

The focus of chapter 5 is the invention and execution of a vocal style locally known as Madang stall in the 1990s, for which Madang singers has become known throughout the country, if not stereotyped. Madang stall is developed from a unique
vibrato of a local artist after his death. The inventor of *Madang stall* might have obtained his inspiration from women’s ritual cry and traditional song style, although nothing is certain. At any rate, *Madang stall* is described as a *natis* (nice) way of singing and appears in a number of songs to display affects. If such discourse is true, the distorting effect of the vibrato in the middle of a word or a phrase must be regarded as a refined way of singing reminiscent of emphatic speech act. Chapter 6 discusses Madang music as a product of cultural process. What appears to be expression of regional identity in discourse is actually a vocalization of the neat in given musical stimuli in the context of imagined community. The musical innovation such as multilingual lyrics, the lament, and the vibrato vocal technique finds their core in emotional elements in musical expression that appears in parts of performance. Although the structural principle of aural cognition and musical inculturation might be persistent, the result of such a generative scheme has created a variety of musical expressions with new use values. Finally, chapter 7 concludes the discussion throughout this study.

1 A Tok Pisin phrase to say “That’s all.”
2 In this study, I will use the term “precontact” to signify the age before Western contact, roughly before 1870’s, and “postcontact” to indicate the age after the Western arrival.
3 The locals said the original name of “Madang” comes from one of the small islands in the waters of the Harbour, but its exact location was not clear. Niles finds that it is named after an island in the Jabém area (Zahn 1996:194, 424).
4 Sometimes the locals translates the word “grassroots” in Tok Pisin as *man nating,* or “people without distinction.”
5 No recent census discloses population in village level, and there is no reliable statistics for the population of each village. The town area is said to have between 35,000 and 40,000. In the 1997 election Yabob registered its voters around 500, and Bilbil 1,000; if
the youngsters are counted, Yabob has about 1,000 and Bilbil 2,000. The clusters of Nobonob- and Amele-speaking villages should be Bilbil's size or larger, and Kananan, Riwo, Malomal, Siar, Bilia and Kranket all must be the size between Yabob and Bilbil—this means somewhere between 13,000 and 19,000 are living in the peri-urban area. The population of squatter settlements around town before eviction notice of December 1997 was said to be around 8,000.

6 For instance, colloquial expression *Yu no save long Tok Pisin*, or “You do not know Tok Pisin,” is used to accuse someone for an offensive or an uncivil remark.

7 They mainly shot birds and fruit bats.

8 In the Yabob *tok ples*, a bigman is *tomol rien*, literally “big man.” One might wonder if this was a result of the *luluai* chieftain imposed by the Australian government for the *tok ples* word sounds like a straightforward translation from Tok Pisin. In fact, Hannemann merely suggests the short-term “war-chiefs” and “Elders’ council” as political authorities among the villages (Hannemann 1996:34-35).

9 In Yabob, for instance, the major reason for the decline of clan-particular styles in distant communication devices is the fact that only one clan resides on the island after World War II.

10 *Mokoi* is a Yabob word, and presumably used throughout the Austronesian speaking area.

11 Port Moresby’s guitar band music was developed from western tonality brought by the religious music of then London Missionary Society, which is said to be introduced by a Rarotongan missionary (Niles and Webb 1988:4-5); however, today’s music industry there is very much multicultural, especially due to the incoming Tolai musicians. Rabaul, which also has an old guitar music tradition, is different from Port Moresby and Madang in respect of the contribution from Chinese-Melanesian population that has been performing in town. There are stylistic stereotypes among these three musical centres, but they are very complex.

12 The comparison to Turner is mine, not Feld’s.

13 Also, Jürg Wassmann’s painstaking reconstruction of fragmented distribution of esoteric knowledge in Middle Sepik communities (Wassmann 1991) uses verbal segments in what he calls as “totemic” songs as a key to elucidate Sepik system of symbolic and mythological discourses. However, since Wassmann does not specialize in ethnomusicology, he does not extend his interest in a more fundamental question of ethnomusicology: why should myths be encoded in the songs, or what is the significance of the song style to the people. In other words, Wassmann could have investigated further
about these totemic names and mythological episodes that are always delivered as patterned sound elements, music, and no other form of verbal communication. In fact, Wassmann and Spearritt (1996) do make a complementary attempt from the side of ethnomusicology to describe the music. However, musical analysis by Spearritt appears to treat the musical data autonomously without suggesting its connections to cultural system.

14 By the word “genre,” I refer to a complex of multiple performative practice; i.e., musik is usually referred as a genre. The word “performative genre” is sometimes used in order to emphasize performative element of the practice, as the singsing tumbuna is a performative genre in that it involves a certain exchange pattern, dress, singing, etc. By the word “style,” I emphasize formal characteristics of the performative practice, as the kopikai is a style of learning and performance.

15 Fukushima here refers to Turner’s The Forest of Symbols (1967) and Lévi-Strauss’s The Naked Man (1981).

16 The outline of psychological approach to music-making has been given by Radocy and Boyle (1988), which need not to be repeated here.

17 I will be using English word “music” to signify musik for convenience.