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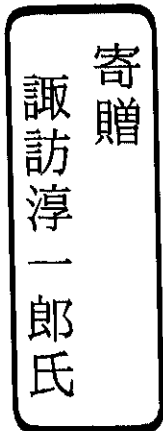
A SAILING CANOE AND OTHER SORRY THINGS:  
ANTHROPOLOGY OF CONTEMPORARY GUITAR BAND MUSIC IN PERI-  
URBAN MADANG

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A dissertation submitted to the Doctoral Program in History and Anthropology,  
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## CONTENTS

List of Illustrations	iv
List of Music Examples	vi
Acknowledgement	vii
Orthography	x
Maps	xii
Introduction	15
The Peri-Urban Grassroots	15
Ethnography of Music in Papua New Guinea	28
Scope and Plan	35
1. The Construction of Genre	41
The Origin of Postcontact Genre	41
The Racing Guitars	49
The Appropriation of Electronics	55
<i>Lokol</i> versus <i>Waitman singsing</i>	64
Conclusion	75
2. Madang Music in Practice	79
Musicianship and Organization	79
Men as Performer	88
The Learning by Skin	101
Conclusion	109
3. Multilingualism and Song Text	113
The <i>Six-to-Six</i> and Powerband Songs	114
Significance of <i>Tok ples</i> Idioms	124
Addresses Mixed, Juxtaposed	141
Articulating the Sentiment	147
Conclusion	158

4. The <i>Sore Singsing</i> : Stringband Lament for Christian Funeral	162
The Giving of “Last Respect”	163
The Art of Addressing	174
A Canoe Named <i>Nimor</i>	182
Textual Treatment of <i>Sore</i>	191
Premonitions	199
Conclusion	206
5. Feeling <i>Madang Stail</i> : Invention of a Vocal Technique	211
The Origin of <i>Madang Stail</i>	211
The Invention of Contour	220
Coordination of the Vibrato with Words	230
Vibrato in the <i>Sore Singsing</i>	238
The Imagining of <i>Madang Stail</i>	245
Conclusion	250
6. <i>Wantok</i> Ideology, Fragment Hearing	254
Differentiation of Genre and Aural Cognition	255
The Discovery of <i>Sore</i>	258
<i>Wantok</i> Ideology	263
Fragment Hearing	268
Conclusion	273
7. Toward Cultural Process of Music-Making	276
Plates	286
Appendices	299
1. Chronology of Musical Events around Madang	299
2. Biographical Notes of Musicians	303
3. Genre Distinction of Postcontact Music around Madang	307
4. Supplement to Ideal Types of Audience	308
5. Detailed Word List of Yabob <i>Tok Ples</i> Song Texts	309
6. Transcription of Song Texts	310
Glossary	329
References Cited	335
Cassette Recordings Cited	342

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

### Maps

Map 1. Madang Province	xii
Map 2. Madang and Around	xiii
Map 3. Yabob Village	xiv

### Tables

Table 1: Types of Discourse for Musical Performance	65
Table 2: Ideal Types of Audience	71
Table 3: Membership Change of Old Dog and the Offbeats (Yabob)	80
Table 4: Reference to Proper Names in Bel Songs	86
Table 5: Subject of Affection	99
Table 6: Themes of Heterosexual Love	100
Table 7: Learning Process of Music	102
Table 8: The <i>Six-to-Six</i> at Laiwaden Oval March 7, 1997 from 9:30 pm. to 0:30 am.	115
Table 9: Incorporation of the <i>Singsing Tumbuna</i>	120
Table 10: Frequency of Languages Used	121
Table 11: Number of Languages Used in a Single Composition	122
Table 12: Combination of Languages (Yabob, Tok Pisin, English)	123
Table 13: Word List of Yabob <i>Tok Ples</i> Song Texts	131
Table 14: Frequency of Words	132
Table 15: The <i>Sore Singsing</i> of Yabob	169
Table 16: Frequently Used Idioms in the <i>Sore Singsing</i>	172

### Plates

Plate 1. Covers of commercial cassettes	286
Plate 2. A <i>darem</i> on Yabob Island	287
Plate 3. A new house on Yabob Island	288
Plate 4. Canoe building on Yabob Island	289
Plate 5. Yabob potters	290
Plate 6. Portrait of Aksim Siming	291
Plate 7. A set of bamboo tubes in Riwo	292
Plate 8. The <i>six-to-six</i> concert at Laiwaden Oval	293
Plate 9. A day concert in Port Moresby	294
Plate 10. A view of a <i>panu</i> from Kranket Island	295

Plate 11. Departing by a dinghy from Yabob Island	296
Plate 12. Entrance of Yabob <i>singsing</i> dancers	297
Plate 13. After a recording	298

## LIST OF MUSIC EXAMPLES

Ex. 1a <i>Tamoata</i> Quakes (POM 107)	216
Ex. 1b <i>Yam Ilon en manin ienmeg</i> Aksim Siming (field recording)	216
Ex. 2a <i>Sele mole</i> Mogoi Hotline (TT 104)	216
Ex. 2b <i>Sipa manua e</i> Mogoi Hotline (TT 104)	216
Ex. 2c <i>Malehum</i> Ziros (TT 103)	218
Ex. 3a <i>Longpela taim</i> Kale Gadagads (TT 42)	218
Ex. 3b <i>Ad o ad o</i> Kale Gadagads (TT 42)	218
Ex. 4a <i>Ples Paramana</i> Sounds of Paramana (TT 112)	218
Ex. 4b <i>Nori e, dear o</i> B.B. Kings (IPNGS 008)	219
Ex. 5a <i>Ngame sansan laulau mon</i> Gase Stringband (TT 13)	219
Ex. 5b <i>Mitibog nui</i> Gase Stringband (TT 13)	219
Ex. 5c <i>O bo izinen kin</i> Aksim Siming (field recording)	219
Ex. 6a <i>Mangi nogut</i> Wali Hits (TT 109)	222
Ex. 6b <i>Aidau e</i> Wali Hits (TT 109)	222
Ex. 6c <i>Minarao</i> Wali Hits (TT 109)	222
Ex. 7a <i>Uta mon e</i> Old Dog and the Offbeats (TT 55)	224
Ex. 7b <i>Uta mon e</i> Kale Gadagads (TT 66)	224
Ex. 7c <i>Uta mon e</i> Old Dog and the Offbeats (TT 73)	224
Ex. 8a <i>Sirori Yabob singsing tumbuna</i> (field recording)	225
Ex. 8b <i>Sirori</i> Kale Gadagads (TT 66)	225
Ex. 9a <i>Krititangale Yabob singsing tumbuna</i> (field recording)	225
Ex. 9b <i>Krititangale</i> Old Dog and the Offbeats (TT 37)	225
Ex. 10 <i>Maimai kalunge</i> Willie Tropu (CHM 1136)	227
Ex. 11a <i>Hangu panu</i> Old Dog and the Offbeats (TT 55)	227
Ex. 11b <i>Boskru</i> Jansh Talad (TT 113)	227
Ex. 12a <i>Long solid days</i> Kale Gadagads (TT 21)	227
Ex. 12b <i>Kros bilong tupela</i> Kale Gadagads (TT 21)	234
Ex. 12c <i>Mama ma-mama</i> Wali Hits (TT 109)	234
Ex. 12d <i>Kalibobo</i> Old Dog and the Offbeats (CHM 1014)	234
Ex. 13 <i>If I ever say good-bye</i> Kale Gadagads (TT 66)	236
Ex. 14 <i>Umar malain hei</i> Kale Gadagads (TT 42)	236
Ex. 15 <i>Nen a</i> Kale Gadagads (TT 66)	242
Ex. 16 <i>Sapar</i> Yabob stringband (field recording)	242

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## ORTHOGRAPHY

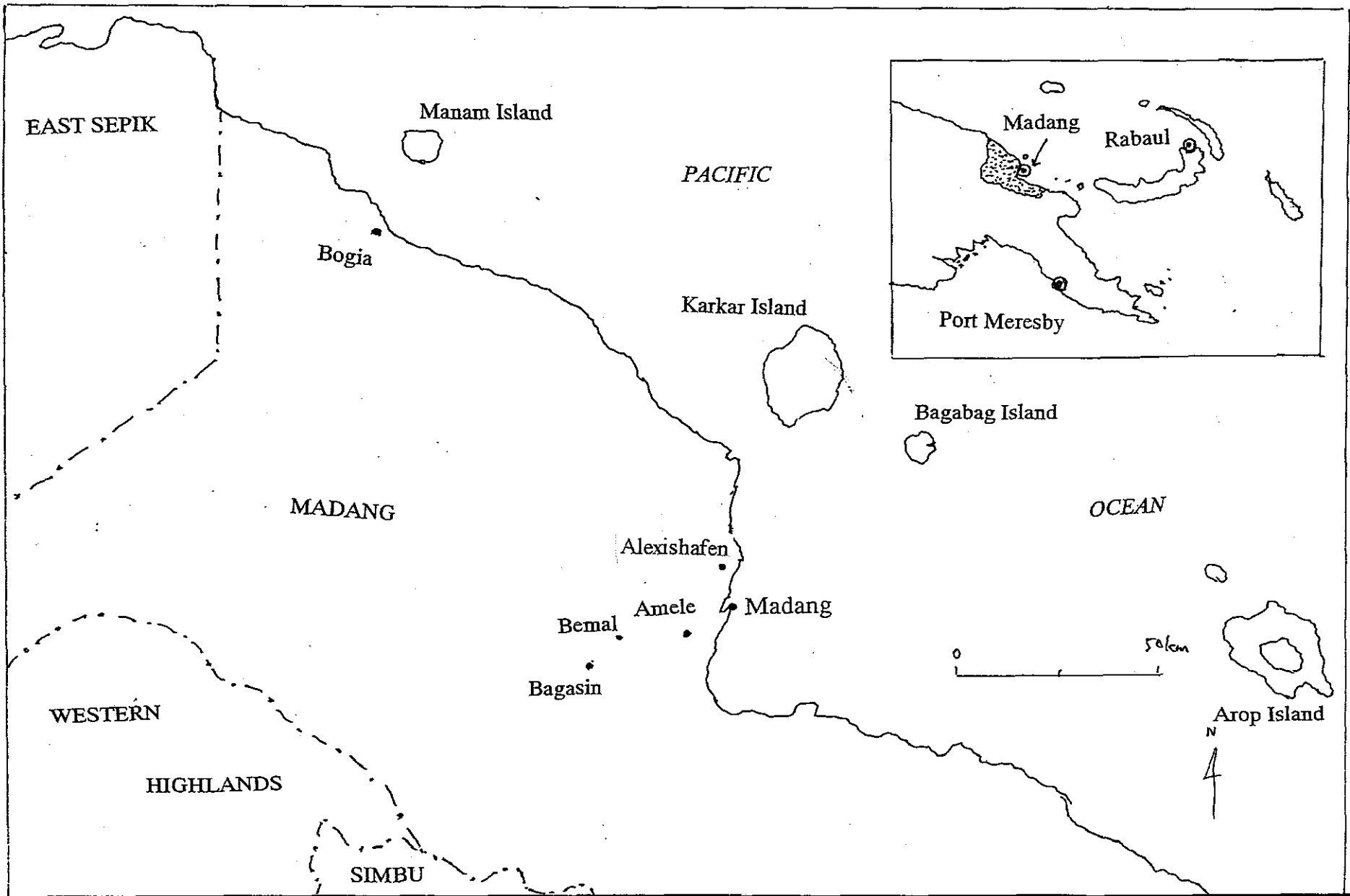
I did not use the phonetic alphabet for the nasal consonant /ng/ because of incoherence with *tok ples* of Yabob and Tok Pisin, both of which would spell it “ng” (Mihalic 1971:5). The fricative /r/ in Yabob (as well as in Bilbil) always corresponds to /z/ (voiceless lateral sibilant) in Bel. To notate Bel and Yabob (or Bilbil) I modified the convention proposed by Dempwolf (Dempwolf n.d.). Regardless of Tok Pisin or *tok ples* I have followed the orthography proposed in Mihalic’s dictionary (Mihalic 1971) and spelling book *Tok Pisin Stret!* (1994). The above-mentioned books are also the sources of finding spellings for new Tok Pisin loan words in particular from English.

Some word orders for Tok Pisin phrases in Madang show localism. Most compound nouns that have something to do with music are usually formed with the modifier first, opposite to the orthography of Mihalic (Mihalic 1971:42). Thus, in Madang, for example, *singsing tumbuna* is called *tumbuna singsing*, and *singsing lotu* is referred as *lotu singsing*. I have not entirely followed Mihalic’s orthography, however. In the case of the stringband funeral songs, which is to be written as *singsing sore* instead of *sore singsing* according to Mihalic’s system, I chose the latter simply because the music seems to be strictly a local phenomenon. Local speakers, especially younger generations, frequently replace Tok Pisin /p/ with labials /ɸ/ and /β/ in order to accommodate to English /f/ and /v/. I did not make distinction to each of the case unless the word in question was an obvious loan and not regarded as a legitimate Tok Pisin idiom such as *filin* (“feeling”), *lav* (“love”), and so on.

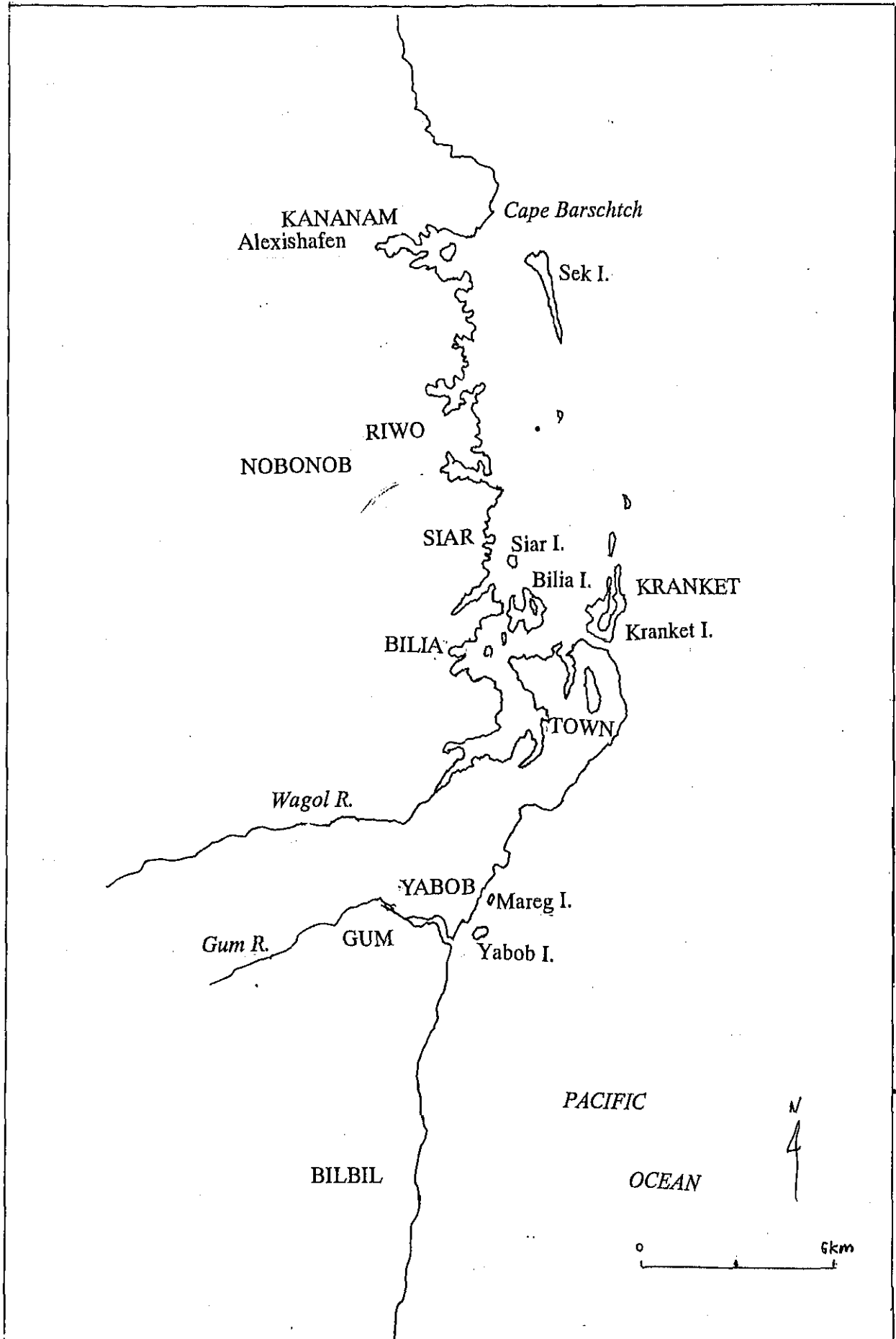
Geographical names follow general consensus of the locals. Some of these

changes are simply corrections; in particular, a village that appears as “Biliau” on Madang town map is corrected to “Bilia,” and an island that appears under the name “Jomba” in some maps is corrected to Mareg. Kranket is still sometimes referred as its old name “Gedaged,” “Graged” or “Gidaged” especially in the Bel-speaking area, but this writing will use the more accepted name throughout. Unless it is quoted or transcribed verbatim the same principle of favouring contemporary local naming will be applied to the following instances as well: Yabob (Jambomba), Bilbil (Bilibili), Siar (Ziazi), Riwo (Zivo), Malmal (Malamal), Nobonob (Nobanob), Sek (Seg), Arop (Long), and Kalibobo (Kalibob or Kilibob, which is erroneous actually). Although the locals pronounce geographical names of European origin often in an abbreviated form, such as *Basis* for Cape Barschtch, or *Aleksis* for Alexishafen, these I have kept the original spelling.

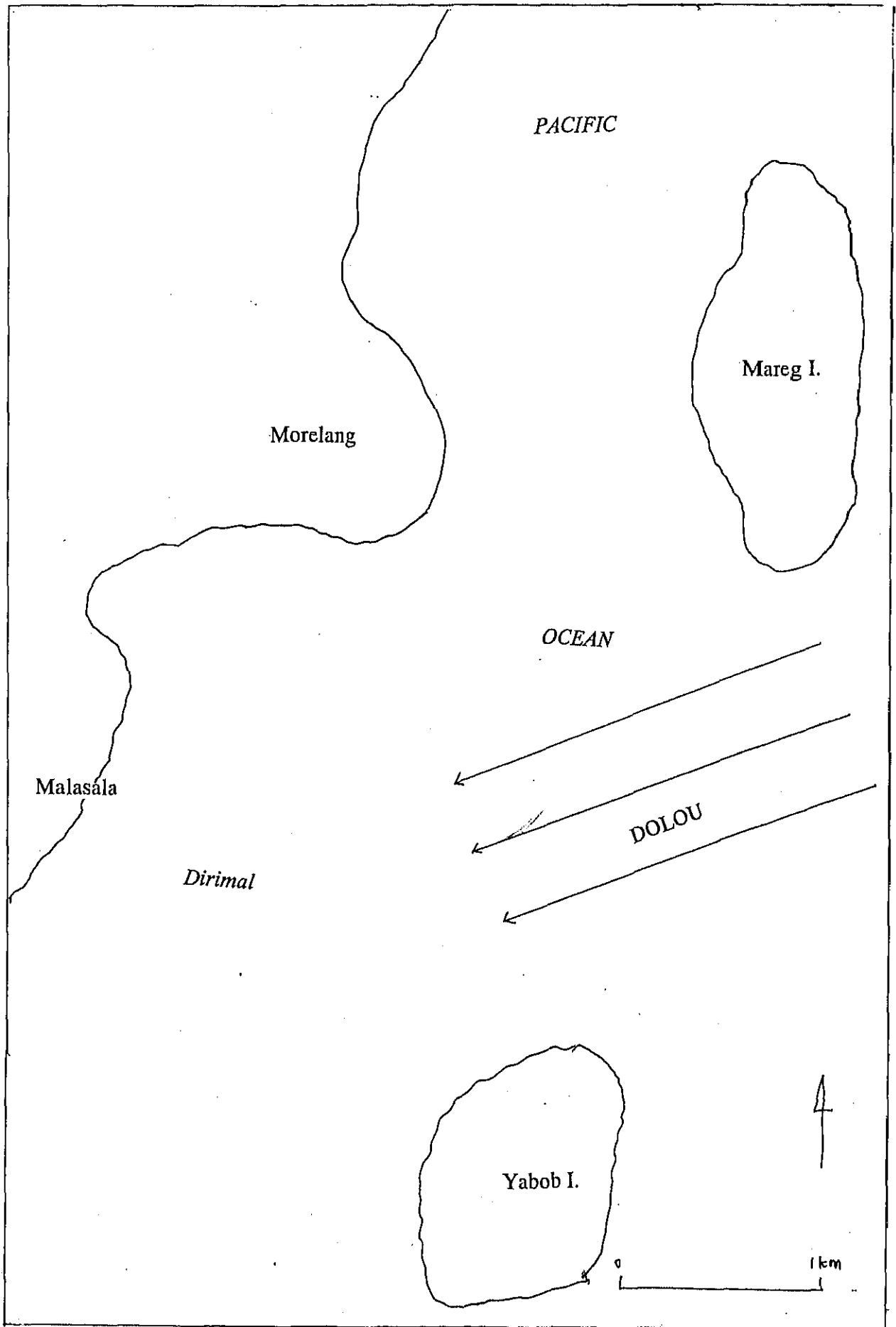
Names of Papua New Guineans in the Madang area are written with the given name first followed by one’s father’s name, since there is no traditional family names. Thus, Willie Tropu, whose father is Tropu Beg, is shortened just as “Willie,” Aksim Siming as “Aksim,” and so forth. Some people have a native *ples nem* (village name) besides Christian one, in which case I have chosen better-known one (including the spelling) to represent throughout the thesis. For example, Sandie Gabriel was usually called Gumang in his village, but the magnitude of his publicity has made it more suitable to call him “Sandie” throughout, although his Christian name sometimes spells as “Sendie,” “Sandy,” etc. As for Japanese names in bibliographical references, I followed the indigenous order whenever the work is written in Japanese: Fukushima Masato, instead of Masato Fukushima, for instance (Turabian 1987:171).



Map 1. Madang Province



Map 2. Madang and Around



Map 3. Yabob Village

## 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 *toksave* 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:

*Bi a rien so pia mon  
konom hangu ngalon heideg  
bigabeg hangu  
piadep panaup ngeni.*

*Hangu nenman ger dimate  
ulong ulongdeg piade...*

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*.<sup>1</sup>

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 stret*, 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).<sup>2</sup> 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.

Madang<sup>3</sup> 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 Malmal, Riwo, Sek and Kananam 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.<sup>4</sup> 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 Bilbil.<sup>5</sup>

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.<sup>6</sup> 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,<sup>7</sup> 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 Bilbil 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.<sup>8</sup> 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 *mulung 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.<sup>9</sup> The dancing has fixed steps and the singing consists of a single vocal part with sometimes a variation called *mokoi*<sup>10</sup>, 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.<sup>11</sup>

### 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 Kaluli 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).<sup>12</sup>

In line with Feld’ study, Yamada Yôichi 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).<sup>13</sup> 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).<sup>14</sup> 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 ascendancy, 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).<sup>15</sup>

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 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).<sup>16</sup> 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.<sup>17</sup> 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 *musik* 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 peri-urban 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 stail* in the 1990s, for which Madang singers has become known throughout the country, if not stereotyped. *Madang stail* is developed from a unique

vibrato of a local artist after his death. The inventor of *Madang stail* might have obtained his inspiration from women's ritual cry and traditional song style, although nothing is certain. At any rate, *Madang stail* is described as a *nais* (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 inculcation 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.

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<sup>1</sup> A Tok Pisin phrase to say "That's all."

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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 Jabêm area (Zahn 1996:194, 424).

<sup>4</sup> Sometimes the locals translates the word "grassroots" in Tok Pisin as *man nating*, or "people without distinction."

<sup>5</sup> 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

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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 Kananam, Riwo, Malmal, 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.

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> They mainly shot birds and fruit bats.

<sup>8</sup> 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).

<sup>9</sup> 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.

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

<sup>11</sup> 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.

<sup>12</sup> The comparison to Turner is mine, not Feld's.

<sup>13</sup> 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

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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.

<sup>14</sup> 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 *kopikat* is a style of learning and performance.

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

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

<sup>17</sup> I will be using English word “music” to signify *musik* for convenience.



## THE CONSTRUCTION OF GENRE

Representative monographs of music in PNG have focused upon an “indigenous” cultural setting and extracted a set of local knowledge based from folk taxonomy and oral tradition. Madang, however, no longer pertains to indigenous mythological constructs and practice since its colonization. The ethnography of music in Madang needs to look into generative aspects of music—including cognitive one—as well as local representation of “music,” the signification of which interacts with postcontact situations such as urbanization, informal economy, modern world views, media dissemination, advancement of technology, or compositional practice. The concept of “Madang music” itself involves with a postcontact imagination, for without this station of colonial administration the peri-urban environment has not been emergent. The music-making in Madang therefore must be examined in terms of *modus operandi* of musical materials, in which analyses of cultural process is not represented as native verbal symbols. See Appendix 1 and 2 for historical facts, and Appendix 3 for identification of genre.

### The Origin of Postcontact Genre

The earliest musical practice in Madang starts from the age of colonization with the introduction of hitherto non-existent concepts of “music” and “song.” In the era of colonial encounter, the concepts of “music” (*musik*) and “song” (*singsing*) themselves were a new idea when they were introduced along with Tok Pisin vocabulary; in this

regard, “music” and “song” were ‘discovered’ by the locals. In fact, there have never been any *tok ples* equivalent of the words *musik* (music in general or instrumental music specifically) and *singsing* (any vocal piece of music).

Each village has its own style of costume and repertoire, but among coastal Madang communities between Karkar Island and western Rai Coast has more or less common features. A piece of standard *singsing tumbuna* in the Madang area today consists of several *kundu* players, always men, and men and female dancers, all dressed with the *bilas*, or decoration made by colourful leaves and chicken feathers. The *kundu* is a wooden hourglass drum with a handle in the middle; the skin of a lizard, always tuned, covers one side of the instrument to be beaten by hand, and the other side is hollow. A special pigment, a copper red made from a species of plant and earth, is applied to face and body. Women are dressed in a dyed grass skirt, and men usually wear various headdresses and a *malo*, or a G-string. Some dancers may wear the rattle made of the shell of a nut, called *gargar*, on the wrists or ankles. The dancing may take place in public occasions such as opening of a public facility, but the cultural shows are the most important opportunity for the dancing groups since a prize is often given to the most outstanding performance. Young women are allowed to either hide their breasts with the *bilas* or wear a brassiere of navy blue or black especially when the *singsing* is not for a cultural event.

In general, the dancing is usually unisexual unless it is for initiation ritual for boys, although men and women never take pairs; dances for women exists in a few villages. There is no active body movement comparing to other parts of PNG; the bare sole is

never raised, and the head and arms are mostly motionless, as if exaggeration is not a virtue of dancing. The dancers may form circles or lines, but each step takes place quietly. The movement of the grass skirts becomes an important element of dancing; the women choose their partner of an equal height so that their grass skirts would not hit against each other because of different strides. The beat of the *kundu* decides the tempo, which is basically even, patterned and not very fast, and cues the dancers when the pattern changes of the dance ends; thus, the *kundu* leader is always chosen from the elders.

There is actually no dancing without a singing voice. Usually, the composer is a grown man; authorship is, however, not recognized—individual creativity is not recognized in such a “composer”, and a new composition does not accompany a novel dancing. Most *singsing* numbers in the Madang area are composed in a repetition of short phrases that must have had some impression on the composer. For instance, if a song repeats *nal e, nal e*, etc., and he might have wanted to mark the occasion of dancing, since the word *nal* means “day” in Yabob language. Because the *singsing* was performed all through the night in the precontact times for intertribal feasts, most pieces are made of a chain of the small repetitive songs. The dance patterns are always memorized according to the succession of the small songs, and the basic pattern is kept throughout the large chain. Since the repertoire was subject to be traded intertribally as a political event, many older *singsing* numbers contain indecipherable words from old *tok ples* of other villages, if they were not corrupted as a result of oral dissemination. Even some compositions from the same village might employ obsolete *tok ples* idioms; the dancers often never understand the meaning of the syllables as they utter in performance.

Precontact music is often identified as *singsing tumbuna*, or “the songs of ancestors” in Tok Pisin. Locally, the term *singsing tumbuna* is often homonymous to *kundu singsing*, or the songs for the hourglass-shaped drum, the generic name for dance pieces with the instrument. In the precontact days, the instruments such as bullroarers and various others made of bamboo or coconut shells were used to “impersonate” the spirit *meziab* in the Bel-speaking area for initiation rites to frighten the new-comers to the secret society (Hannemann 1996:21). The slit drum, *garamut* in Tok Pisin, has been used widely in order to communicate messages in a long distance by the beat of the instrument along with hollering. Courtship songs were sung when the youngsters play with their mates during the night, the repertoire called Daik or Deik has been choreographed for the *singsing tumbuna* dancing in Yabob and Bilbil. The dance pieces were subject to “trade” (*baim singsing*) among friendly tribes. The old *Kastam* such as the production of sound of spirit *meziab*, the courtship songs, the trading and performance of the *kundu* dancing were prohibited by the missionaries, and today nothing certain is known about them. Much of the surviving repertoire of *singsing tumbuna* dance pieces has already been influenced by the colonial administration of prewar years, which resurrected it for ceremonial events after the ban imposed by the Lutheran mission in the area. The dancing survived in respect to cultural events in the 1920’s but the trading of the *singsing tumbuna* has been ceased after the independence, when the institution of cultural show started to regularly involve Madang village dancers. Sometimes prizes are given to the participants, and the system of competition naturally blocked the dissemination of repertoire. The churches introduced the *kwaia*, or choir, singing from the Pacific, and

produced a number of devotional songs in indigenous melodies and languages. The *singsing lotu*, or “songs of the church” have been composed still today, and often accompanied by the acoustic guitar in the services.

In the precontact ages, each piece of “*singsing tumbuna*” used to be referred as each particular names, such as *Daik*, *Kanam*, *Maimai*, *Aum*, *Kalog*, *Gengeng*, and so on, with no generic name. Sometimes, there was different set of interaction attributed to each piece, such as in the case of *Daik* as courtship song. There was no generic name for “*singsing tumbuna*,” and dance was subject to have an individual property as a way of sound expression. Hannemann, who lived in the Siar mission states:

When the fast was over the *meziab* (great spirit) was called into the *meziab-dazem* (sacred clubhouse) to preside over the initiatory rites. The *meziab*'s eerie voice was impersonated by swinging a large number of bullroarers and by blowing on various bamboo and gourd instruments, coconut-shell whistles and by shaking rattles. Trembling with fear the boys were pulled over by their guardians to get acquainted with the great *meziab* (Hannemann 1996:21).

The sound produced by these instruments represents the supernatural being called *meziab*, and it is perceived as an organized system of sound with a more or less iconic signification like elsewhere in PNG (Feld 1990:225-238; Yamada 1997a:241-253). Such a form of sound produced by adult males of the *meziab-dazem* was interpreted as a fundamentally different phenomenon from other products of sound-producing such as play songs or courtship song. The sound from the *meziab dazem* did indicate the presence of the spirit for those who do not know how the source of the sound. The cultural system of sound in the precontact era, in other words, consisted of individual domains of sound-producing actions to the extent that each of them was totally autonomous at least on a

normative level. Although today's music-making also has generic distinction such as stringband laments, gospels, and so on, they are nonetheless either *singsing* (songs) or *musik* (music, instrumental music). In the postcontact era, the category *musik* only makes distinction against non-*musik*, with the latter consisting of the *garamut* (the slit drum for signal) and hollering, and the *meziab* was already disenchanting.

By contrast to the *meziab dazem*'s sound of spirit, dancing pieces of the *singsing tumbuna* are subject to trade, which is hard to understand today in the age of cultural shows where individual villages compete for prizes for distinction. The trading of *singsing tumbuna*, known as *baim singsing* ("buying of the singsing"), is operated between tribes; it consisted of teaching and learning of the repertoire, and meals were served by the hosting village throughout the session which usually took several days, and ended by performing and eating pigs together. Again, however, there is no generic name that would include the tradable pieces as a whole in Madang. Bartering of the individual pieces are not possible for some reason, and this might have some relation to the lack of a unifying concept for all the dance pieces. The exchange always takes place between the host, who is to learn the song, and the visitors, who is to teach it; therefore, by "trade" it does not mean an exchange of a dance piece for another. The trading of old *singsing tumbuna* pieces created a state of asymmetry between the two parties by highlighting those who with knowledge of the piece and those who without it which is to be resolved by teaching and learning of the piece in order to achieve a sense of equality. In this regard, feast is an important constituent as much as the dancing itself. Thus, the trading of *singsing tumbuna* was by nature a pattern of exchange of cultural knowledge as a vehicle

and pretext for reciprocity.

In the postcontact era, the trading of dance piece and performance of the *meziab* interments become restricted or banned by the missionaries and colonial administrators. With introduction of cultural shows and other public events, the dance pieces have become public productions, and the magical instruments of *meziab dazem* were destroyed by the missions. By the time that Hannemann wrote the above-quoted lines pre-contact activities were by and large effectively driven away at least in the Protestant-controlled areas south of the Nobonob station (Inselmann 1991:66).<sup>1</sup> The reciprocal system, in which the *singsing tumbuna* was embedded, obviously never extended to the colonists. The missions, Catholics and Protestants alike, have never participated in the performance of *singsing tumbuna*; although exchange of commodity should have taken place between the mission and the natives, there have never been any *singsing* to accompany the occasion. In the native societies *singsing* of the host community has celebrated the trade when the cover of the load, especially in case of clay pots, is being removed from the canoe. Instead, the missions tried to terminate the sound-producing *kastom* by destroying the instruments and tabooing to reconstruct them. In turn, the natives find that reciprocal transaction through learning and teaching of the *singsing tumbuna* is impossible with the mission and the colonial administration that have totally different cultural cognition and signification of sound.

The colonization of Madang meant a denial of old sound-producing system, and the natives who wish to maintain the *singsing tumbuna* in the Madang communities have had to accommodate with the new order of sound in which any native systems against the

colonists' standard is subject to banishment. Therefore, when the people of Siar village have petitioned to the Australian administration in 1923 hoping to secure the activity of *singsing tumbuna* by incorporating it into cultural events and inspection ceremony (Hannemann 1996:93), the exchange of the dance piece no longer has remained as same. Spectatorship became an alternative in order to save the performative practice of *singsing tumbuna*. The concept of cultural preservation, in which the natives have been immersed already at that time, indicates that the significance of *singsing tumbuna* was displaced as a result of abandoning the original system. This means that formats of the performance have become the basis for identification of native music, and not how it is practiced, which is still in use today. Kanam, which is not to be confused with a widely practiced *singsing tumbuna* repertoire by the same name—or it might have been that the word indicated a “song” in some *tok ples* of northern coastal Madang—has texts sung in local languages mostly in Bel. The melody of Kanam is not notated (Kristen Pres 1958) so that it has been learned by heart.<sup>2</sup> In the Amele speaking area, there has been Due to serve the same purpose (Amman, etc. 1980).

The significance of Christian sacred music in respect to the development of guitar band music is introduction of Western tonality, which was taught in the missions. By meaning “Western tonality” I mean the genre of devotional music itself for there have been indigenous melodies incorporated in the hymns as well. In terms of musical structure there might be some native elements—which I could not clearly identify other than as a non-European vocal contour, though—but the very essence of the practice of Christian institution was a novelty. Besides, there were a few Samoan missionaries in the



Protestant station to instruct choir singing known as *kwaia*, which is a form of polyphonic a capella with sacred texts developed in the Pacific islands.<sup>3</sup> Modern concept of spectator, audience and musician emerged from these practices, which must have interacted as catalyst for the introduction of the guitar after World War II.

### The Racing Guitars

In 1945 war veteran Elisa Imai came back to his native Kranket Island with a guitar in hand. had got it from somewhere while in service, perhaps from an American or a Filipino servicemen as in the cases in the former New Guinea territory (Webb 1993:2-4), but nothing is clear today. The guitar was first introduced in Madang in 1945, brought by war veteran Elisa Imai of Kranket, who learned the stringband music in service. The earliest surviving example of composition for the guitar is an attempt by Elisa in his native language Bel in 1945. The tune *Ngame sansan laulau mon* sounds mostly like a waltz, which was the main form of music entertainment in the Pacifics at that time but never known to the natives in Madang. The elders in Siar village, however, had a great concern against Elisa's performance, since, as one informant put it, "Once the girls go out to hear the boys singing with the guitar, they would forget about helping housework and never come back."

Around the same time that Elisa brought his guitar to Kranket, several young men of Siar went to Port Moresby to work for shipping, and bought the guitar there. When they came back to Madang around 1952, the guitar was already a *tambu* to be played in public. It was not until 1957 that the guitar playing was resumed in the villages

with approval of the elders. When Akism Siming, another Kranket man who acquired songs for the guitar and ukulele from various sources particularly in Fiji between 1954 and 1956 as a college student, started performing stringband tunes with his *wantok* friends.

In 1960 first public concert was held at old Sagalau High School in order to raise fund for renovating of the school building. Aksim Siming, who got the idea while he was in Fiji, performed in the field truck; donation (five shillings per adult) was collected at gate. Around this time, Aksim started to compose in *tok ples*. The 1960's are the decade in Madang that the guitar band music became established as major entertainment. The relationship between the performer and the audience gradually became connected with monetary value, and music-making turned to be subject to market standard. Thus, the introduction of cash transaction, the fund raising, is not simply a new form of performative practice but a creation of a new field of cultural production, in which the performers are potentially valued in the market.<sup>4</sup> Aksim tentatively named his band, rather artlessly, "Kranket Stringband" as early as in 1957, but its activity has been sporadic.

By 1970, most villages around Madang had at least one active stringband with their own compositions in *tok ples* or Tok Pisin, and each village began developing a unique style of performance and composition. The bambooband, which stereotypically represents things Madang today, is introduced by a Siar man Deb Atip from his friends from the Solomons, when he has been studying English at Balop Teacher's College in Lae. Deb's instruction transforms village stringband Patfon Stringband into Patfon Bambooband between 1967 and 1968.<sup>5</sup> The distinction of individual bands in terms of

*wantok* in a small geographic scale, instrumentation, and repertoire became a practice after the idea of competition.

Aksim's attempt turned out to be a great success: even after he left Madang for inspection tour the fund raising concert was continued, and similar attractions started to be undertaken. In 1968, fund raising was finally developed into a grand competition. This annual competition, the fund raising for the youth division of local church, is today known as *gita resis*, literally "guitar races."<sup>6</sup> It was usually held in New Year Eve, and it became the main attraction around the time of year. The objective of the *gita resis* is clearly expressed in the name itself: it was indeed a race local bands (the candidates have to be from Madang) to compete for a prize. In the first competition the entrants consisted of the Bel-speaking area only, but the membership soon expanded to the entire Madang Province by 1971. Aksim Siming and Deb Atip were among the original juries who checked out criteria such as "Performance" (dress, bows, staging of the band), "Tune" (harmony, pitch, tuning), "Time" (three pieces must be performed within ten minutes) and "Style" (accompanying dancing and/or action if there is any). Members should not exceed ten for a band, and an entrance fee of five kinas was to be paid prior to the performance. No restriction was applied to instrumentation for no distinction between the stringband and the bambooband was made. As many as 24 bands participated during the epoch of *gita resis*.

The influence of *gita resis* to the guitar band music today has been rather great. Firstly, along with the term "stringband" and "bambooband," band music became an institution in a sense that there became a clear notion of performance with objectives such

as winning a prize or playing beautifully for pride. Social context of guitar-playing was consequently differentiated into private intra-village context from public performance by invention of the notion of the *gita resis*. Performance of the guitar band in the village became an informal occasion in the sense that there would be no third party present to evaluate the performance. This is a great difference from the earlier stages when Aksim Siming went around the villages near his residence by request for demonstration of the *musik*. In addition, the performance in competition distinguishes rehearsal from “real” presentation, success from failure, cool improvisation from sheer mistake, and big winners from poor losers. The idea of *gita resis* Madang is not simply a framework of performance in the shape of a game, but a consciousness in that a piece of music should be played nicely. As a result, the musicians thereafter would spend many hours experimenting toward a “good” piece or performance, and the notion of “good music” was scaled in comparison with another. The winning of game is now judged by the third party, the spectator.

Secondly, despite copyright was not strictly imposed, authenticity became the central concern for the competitors. A number of stringband song texts surviving today refer to rivalry among the villages, portraying which village precedes the others. The local bands express their authenticity even in their song lyrics as below (translated in English):

O Siar, Kranket,  
we have the single *tok ples*.  
You see Riwo as a kopikiat.  
So what? It's your worry, brothers!

(Gabriel Tabali, *O Ziazi Gedaged*)

(Verse 1): O Muddy Bay, its name is going down.

We leave those villages alone,  
you people can go first.

(Verse 2): Now we got up,

you people can go first.

So, we leave them alone:

The Muddy Bay is just as it is.

(Adolf Gatagot, *Oi Muddy Bay*)

These songs introduce the performers by contrasting themselves against other bands. The message of the song is in a sense metalinguistic for the singers sing a song that announces that they are going to sing now. The bands (Riwo's Kitawa Stringband and Kananam's Iduan Muddy Bay) represent their villages by identifying their locality in these lyrics. The inter-village rivalry among the bands was built up by competition, and traditional ideas regarding *apim nem* (raising one's reputation) became the principle of music-making as well. The village rivalry influenced development of performative styles unique to each village. The leading guitar of Kananam (Iduan Muddy Bay and Young Muddy Bay), an old-fashion ensemble of Kranket (Jomba Drifters, etc.), distinct styles of bambooband in Riwo (Madu Rockers), Siar (Patfon Bambooband) and Bilia (Melanesian Bambooband), for instances, must be a result of such a distinction.

Thirdly, the *gita resis* marks the first occasion of which music-making became an enterprise. Through the transition to market system the people have discovered sociocultural types of game such as rivalry, audience, spectator, jury, the stage, and so on. The value of music began to be scaled by the competitions and involvement of cash flow

in the form of admission fee, and the concept of music-making as a mean of making money emerged. However, the enterprise was carefully disguised as a display of goodwill, as the imagined community of Madang is characterized as reciprocity. Although many fund raising concerts used the donation for its initial purposes—subsequent “tea fund” concerts, for instance, purchased public school equipment from the fund—some have been more a commercial enterprise. In fact, many of “fund raising” concerts today are actually held by a private sector or an election candidate for earning income. The enterprise, however, does not always appear to make profit. In fact, the performance is frequently cut off due to mechanical trouble, violence, or bad weather. There have never been full-time musicians in the Madang area except those who have contract with the recording studio, and most bands prefer to set up a stage in a contained rural area where much less trouble is expected.

Lastly, in the *gita resis* jurists did not have a criterion concerning quality of composition. The *gita resis* was essentially for the guitarists, and accomplishment of poetics was not a part of their interest. The text of the song was regarded as a secondary element. Although the lyrics of the song from the *gita resis* era shows a great degree of coherency in comparison to the powerband compositions, the content itself was actually no great importance to the criteria of evaluation, as the judges mainly evaluated visual and tonal aspect of the performance. Prizes were awarded to a good performance of music, not the theme of song albeit love, village band rivalry, call for communal unity, friendship, or sorrow of separation. Therefore, it is not surprising that a number of songs composed by local guitar bands during the time of the competition were introductory theme song of

the band. When I asked to record their original compositions during interviews in Kananam and Riwo, local guitarists in each village played one introductory song (*Oi Muddy Bay* and *O Ziazi Gedaged*) out of a set of four.<sup>7</sup>

### The Appropriation of Electronics

The annual *gita resis* was terminated in 1978 because of an alleged accounting problem. The true decline of the stringband and bambooband, however, was due to the upsurge of powerband, a rock band version of the guitar band. Although the locals often attribute the transition from the stringband and bambooband to the powerband to changing taste of the audience, their reference to *laik* (“taste”) or *diman* (“demand”) do not necessarily elucidate how the presence of electricity and cassette recording. As for the introduction of electronics, there is a transitional period from the stringband and bambooband to the powerband between the late 1970’s and early 1980’s. As the number of the guitar band increased considerably since the time of Aksim Siming’s old trio, the leader’s acoustic guitar had its strings connected to radio speakers in order to use them as an amplifier. The amplified acoustic guitars were basically used to increase the volume of the leading part.

Urbanization in Madang, as in elsewhere in PNG in general, took shape without incorporating the peri-urban communities into some kind of city life or street culture. Madang, since the colonial times, consists of churches, governmental functionaries, produce markets, harbours, parks, tourist facilities, stores, housing areas and schools; therefore, in terms of music-making only public performance takes place in the town situations. Although cassette music industry has been very much an urban affair as in

Port Moresby today and Rabaul before the 1994 volcano eruption, there have been no political economic forces to organize the demography as emerging subaltern working class. The Madang town in fact has no public space where one can hang around in late hours like movie theatre, tavern, café, concert hall or disco with strong subcultural undertone. Town stores and market close at six in the afternoon, and the bus stops running; tourist facilities would be still open but the prices are exorbitant. The long-standing urban socioeconomic activity, which has been prevalent in Southeast Asia such as a bazaar economy, peddling and bargaining, is virtually nonexistent. As a result, the town area has been providing the role of a surrogate than an active centre for raring musical ideas in music history of Madang. Villagers tend to feel secure in their own community, especially after the sunset when the *raskol* (young criminal gang) activity takes place and the transportation terminates. Each village owns at least one clubhouse (*klab*), where the beer is sold with a reasonable charge; it is basically safe because of the familiar geography and the *wantoks* (fellow villagers) hanging around. As for musical activity, all-night dancing, or the *six-to-six*, is occasionally held either with a live band or a “DJ” playing the cassettes.<sup>8</sup> The audiences refer to “real Madang music” to signify the kind of music played in these places by local artists; thus, the *six-to-six* is the ideal research field in order to observe aural cognition of the local audience.

Appropriation of electronic utilities had already taken place even before advancement of cassette recording, and its advantage was felt by most as a learning aid. In Riwo, Kitawa Band reconstructed bamboo tubes from the cover jacket of a record disc of Solomon Island bambooband music, and learned the repertoire by listening to the pieces



from the turntable around 1970.<sup>9</sup> The art of copying with an aid of electronics advanced stringband improvisation of the Iduan Muddy Bay band of Kananam. Lead guitarist and composer Adolf Gatagot developed his remarkable skill of improvisation from the programs of Radio Wewak and Radio Madang. Although Adolf was given an acoustic guitar as a birthday present from his brother, there was nobody around him with a good command of the instrument. Adolf's isolation and his use of the radio turned out to be a crucial factor for his unique and flamboyant guitar fills that were transmitted to his successor in the new stringband Young Muddy Bay.

Radio broadcasting started during the Australian administration, and radio programs for Melanesian audiences had been available since the 1960s (Turner 1994:191-192).<sup>10</sup> Industrialization of popular music, which was initiated by urban Chinese-Melanesian businesses in Rabaul in the early 1980's, almost simultaneously spread to Madang; Kavieng-born Chris Seeto, who is to this day the only entrepreneur to own a recording studio in Madang.<sup>11</sup> After a brief study in electronic engineering in Australia, Chris first acted as chief recording engineer to SantaLina Production in Madang, which was established in between 1980 and 1981, and today he owns the new studio, Tumbuna Traks. It seems that the cassettes are marketed to a young audience, although the *six-to-six* is a public entertainment embracing all generations. Appropriation of cassette sound recording has taken place in a various forms in private and communal levels: they are used to submit a demo tape to the recording studio, or to reproduce privately recorded songs. In the earlier years of advent of the electronic instruments, local bands, usually stringbands privately recorded their compositions by request, and

exchanged for various goods. Yabob youths in the early 1980's, for instance, recorded their stringband songs (some of which must have been recycled in the albums by Kale Gadagads) for a carton of beer.

The first powerband in Madang is Kanagioi, a band initiated by Robert Kig 1979, a resident in the town compound. Robert taught himself *pop musik stret* (i.e., non-*lokol* pops) from the cassette tapes and radio programs. He joined the "college band" while he was studying in Lae Technical College in 1973. When he came back to Madang, he forms the Y.C. Band together with his *wantok* and friends; the naming of "Y.C." stands for "Youth Catholic," from where they borrowed the instruments (two electric guitars, two acoustic guitars, a base guitar and a drum set). Robert and his mates preferred to copy Chuck Berry, Elvis Presley, Linda Ronstadt, and other "folk" and "English songs" for public performance. Kanagioi was named after an inactive volcano of Karkar Island, from where the Kigs hail.<sup>12</sup> The band's instruments, a keyboard, an acoustic guitar, a couple of electric guitars, a base guitar and a drum set, were bought by Robert's salary earned from Japan and New Guinea Timbers. The band activity included regular and occasional gigs at Madang Resort Hotel and other tourist facilities, village clubs, and promotional campaign of private firms such as San Miguel Beer. The impact of Kanagioi has been decisive for development of the powerband in the area, since the band has become the real-life example for other bands to follow, such as Cool Figures (Bilia), Boka Boks (Riwo) and Kale Gadagads (Yabob) followed in the early 1980's. A relatively fast dissemination of the powerband in peri-urban Madang communities shows that aural perception and musicianship of the locals have arrived to such a point of maturation that they could

reconstruct and produce electronic music by listening to the cassette, radio, live performance and other forms of media.

Cassette music industry was established in the 1980s; the presence of local Radio Madang and cassette producer Tumbuna Trak Studio has been vital for promoting local powerbands. Early radio program by AM Radio Madang's *Maus bilong Garamut* has contributed to familiarize the stringband. Other innovations of electronics entail introduction of new performative technique and instrumentation involving the electric guitar and synthesizer, use of the loud speaker and cassette tape recorder, promotion of the products, and expansion of repertoire by absorbing rock, raggae and other forms of popular music from the West. Being located close to urban centre, the peri-urban communities in Madang have taken advantage of a good reception of radio wave and a greater access to cash income that enable purchasing audio equipment such as radio-cassette players. Cassette recordings have become even more important to the local practice of music-making than ever before. Kanagioi, Madang's first and important powerband that specialized in copies of Western pops in the early 1980's, selected songs on radio programs suitable for copying. These songs were usually a rock or other mainstream Western pops, then buy a cassette album that includes the song so that they can play over the parts. Sandie Gabriel, leader of the powerband Kale Gadagads of Yabob, is said to record female ritual cry in funerals on cassette in order to invent his own style of singing, which eventually has become the prototype of the "Madang style," a vibrato vocal technique. In addition, recording studios nowadays play the major role of promoting the local bands, some of which have become a nation-wide success such as

Kale Gadagads, Old Dog and The Offbeats, Yondik, and Wali Hits in the 1990's. The electronic media has become the basis for the advent of the guitar band music in Madang since fairly early stages of its introduction.

The main field of production of powerband music has been, along with the radio and commercial cassette tape recordings, an all-night outdoor dancing session, today known as the *six-to-six*. The *six-to-six* involves either a live band or a cassette "disco." The basic concept of fund raising is still maintained, bearing titles such as *Helpim Yagaum Haus Sik* ("Help Yagaum Hospital"), *Helpim Ol Katolik Yut* ("Help the Catholic Youth"), and so forth. The session usually continues from six in the evening to six in the morning, hence its name, without rest. The dance style, known as *tromoi lek* ("throwing out the legs"), is a sort of Western disco dancing with no particular pattern of steps, but body contact between opposite sex and slow dances are not present. A good dancing is noted as subtle and exquisite motion of steps for the dancers usually keep their soles touch the ground, no standout hopping, twisting or jumping—an interesting parallel with the local *singsing tumbuna* steps.

The popularity of powerband as an entertainment wiped away most of stringbands and bamboobands in the area. Regular performance of the stringband is only prepared in non-grassroots contexts such as in the dinning lounges of tourist facilities, and performance of the bambooband is even rarer; clearly, market value of old band style is regarded as in tropical exoticism or nostalgia of the plantation times. Now that the old bands are losing their local audiences in concert situation to the powerbands, it is an inevitable consequence that performances involving the accoustic guitar is today take

place only in informal occasions and church meetings. Specialization of the powerband has lead most of the village youth to become consumers of the product instead of producers; today, more and more boys would rather buy the cassette or go to the *six-to-six* to enjoy than make music by themselves. By and large, guitar band activities in Kananam, Riwo, Malmal and Siar appears to have diminished remarkably, despite local outdoor disco and powerband concerts are a thriving form of entertainment. The advent of nation-wide cassette music industry has resulted in a differentiation between the *musik man* (the “artists” in a sense that rock musicians are called in the west) who is committed to the field of cultural production, and the audience who is a consumer of the cultural product. This schism is also present between the powerband “artists” and non-powerband performers who play the guitar and sing in informal occasions.

Although the younger generations no longer show interests in the old instrumentation as much as they used to do before, the real issue here is that the effect of commodification of music is now making an impact upon social formation of the performing groups. The fund raising to purchase the electronic instruments and audio equipment are by all means not difficult if one wishes to do so: one can always take advantage of the *wantok* system to borrow the machines and secure the spaces for performance. Madang’s *lokol* music has become available in commercial product so easily that much fewer number of young people no longer makes an effort to produce it. The locals appear to have somewhat a weak motivation to become a professional musician, explore market potential or keep and expand performance contracts for cash income because of market size, family restriction, financial risks and reluctance of competition.

Madang's situation is reminiscent of Adorno's criticism of Benjamin's article "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (Benjamin 1968). In this, Benjamin was in favour of modern technology in hoping that it can emancipate the mass from the power structure of prestigious "aura" of authenticated work of art. However, Adorno demonstrated a destructive possibility of mass media that deduces aesthetic response of the individual to the "regression of listening" in relation to Lukács's concept of "reification" (Adorno 1995). The Benjamin-Adorno argument can serve a meaningful frame of reference for evaluating electronic media in the peri-urban Madang, in which music is indeed typically facing "the age of mechanical reproduction." While "fetish character in music" (Adorno *ibid.*) is not as apparent,<sup>13</sup> the electronization of musical production has let the powerbands dominate Madang's musical scene, almost completely replacing local stringbands and bamboobands. The market that favours loud, synthesized sound has eventually driven away the old-timers who have a taste for stringband and bambooband. In fact, the existing stringbands and bamboobands today are the ones maintaining contracts with tourist facilities, and even in these cases new compositions seem to be ceased.

The distinction between the guitar band music and *singsing tumbuna* is fairly clear not only in terms of musical characteristics but also the context of performance signified by each genre. Much of the scenes of activity of the bands have been in the recording studio and the overnight *six-to-six* concerts. Performance of the *singsing tumbuna*, ever since the Australian administration intervened to make it a sort of indigenous fine art genre (Hannemann 1996:93), has been regarded as formal, ceremonial

and a display in which participating villagers themselves become object of the spectacle. If a *singsing* group performs, its context is built up as an inter-communal and reciprocal affair such as opening ceremony of new processing facility in Madang Copra Marketing Board or to mark an end to boy's puberty ritual. Although guitar bands and *singsing* groups might perform in the same cultural event, the *singsing tumbuna* is hardly represented as commercial entertainment like the powerband music. Interestingly, there has never been a grassroots market for a *singsing tumbuna* cassette. The guitar band music, on the other hand, is not always subject to entertainment and consumption. It appears as if contemporary music in the Madang area is becoming industrialized, as stringbands and bamboobands are actually drove to the verge of extinction by the powerband; even remaining stringbands are almost exclusively for the tourists. Nevertheless, the change and development of contemporary band music have created a new way of expressions depending upon parameters of socio-economic environment, involving the communal sector. The contemporary music of Madang has actually developed into an amalgamation of sound patterns produced by the phonemes of Madang *tok ples*, melodic contour derived from arranging *singsing tumbuna*, the vibrato vocal style, and the basic atmosphere of music that has roots in the local lifestyles.

#### *Lokol versus Waitman Singsing*

Many times in local out-door live concerts I heard voices angrily curse a copy of poorly played Western pop, saying: "Play PNG's music!" "Stop that Whitman's song!" and so

forth, with almost invariably beer bottles being hurled at the stage. The rock and other forms of Western music except the reggae (*rege*), are generally called *waitman singsing* (white men's song). The *waitman singsing*'s position in the local music culture has been rather ambivalent. No need to say, Western pops are widely available. Town stores have copies of cassettes, and the radio stations broadcast them daily; some would even enthusiastically tell anecdotes of Eric Clapton, Santana, The Scorpions, or Red Zeppelin, adding "I love those *waitman singsing*." As for an unsatisfying performance of a *lokol singsing* (domestic pop), musicians would never be yelled like "Stop that *lokol* stuff!" but either simply ignored until a beer bottle flies or a fight would break out among the bored audiences. In other words, only a poor performance of Western number faces reaction as if the selection itself was inappropriate in the first place. The locals would often comment on the Madang peri-urban band music as: "You never get to the real songs of PNG as long as you stick around in place like Port Moresby." "If you want to put your feelings in your singing, then it should turn out like this." "Madang's music is better than others because ours have meanings." and so on. Such comments, however, do not necessarily reflect the reality since the people do listen to *lokol* numbers from other provinces such as Morobe or Oro, often sung in the languages that they never understand. Also, there are recorded Madang bands that people do not like for various reasons such as the quality of the performance, arrangement or alleged piracy. The imagination at work here is that the aesthetic judgment of *gutpela singsing* ("good song") predicates the category of *singsing bilong Madang stret* ("truly Madang's song").



Table 1: Types of Discourse for Musical Performance

<p>1. Reference to Competence</p> <p><i>Gutpela</i> (Good)</p> <p><i>Mi laikim</i> (I like...)</p> <p><i>Moa nais</i> (Better)</p> <p><i>Nais</i> (Nice)</p> <p><i>Save long singsing</i> (Do/Does [not] know how to sing)</p> <p><i>Rabis</i> (Rabbish)</p> <p>2. Reference to Identity</p> <p><i>(Singsing bilong) Madang</i> ([Song of] Madang)</p> <p><i>(Singsing bilong) PNG</i> ([Song of] PNG)</p> <p><i>(Singsing bilong) ol Kristen</i> ([Songs for] the Christian)</p>
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The audience at local concerts often rejects copies of *waitman singsing* stating that they do not like the music because it does not belong to PNG. As Table 1 indicates there seems to be two large groups for pattern of discourse about music: Reference to Competence and Reference to Identity. The first category, Reference to Competence, entails the rating of musical performance in terms of relative judgement. The reference to musical competence has a more elaborate vocabulary in positive reaction than negative ones. Positive reactions are expressed as judgement to the quality of music (*Gutpela*, *Nais*), an active selection or support (*Mi laikim*), in comparison to previous performances (*Moa nais*), or appraisal to the performer (*Save long singsing*). Among these, *Gutpela* seems to refer to a satisfactory performance, while *Nais* means a reaction form a deeper level such as a moving performance of lament or songs that evoke particularly strong sentiment or personal memory. To convey the dissatisfaction, the negation of a positive expression is mostly used. Thus, the negative of *Gutpela* is expressed as *I no gutpela* or

*Nogut*. The denial of *Mi laikim* is *Mi no laikim*, and a poor performer is described as *I nogat save long singsing* (“has no knowledge about how to sing”), *I no save long singsing* (“does not know how to sing”), or *I no inap long singsing* (“is not capable of singing”). Of the negative reactions, *Rabis* (“rubbish”) alone stands out as the one without compound idiom for the negative of *rabis*, *i no rabis* (“is not rubbish”), is never actually used as a positive evaluation of musical performance.<sup>14</sup> In other words, there are at least several kinds of “neat” against just one “garbage” music, and clearly the tendency is that the people distinguish the quality of positive stimuli according to their attitude toward musical performance.

Any identification with individual villages or particular musicians generally connotes neutral meaning. Although the locutions such as *singsing bilong Yabob* (“a song off/from Yabob village”) or *singsing bilong Aksim* (“a song composed by Aksim Siming”) are certainly present, they merely denote facts of composition. The morality behind this phenomenon is that village rivalry and hero-worship are generally repressed or underplayed in favour of the Madang as the ground of activity for the grassroots. In peri-urban Madang societies the smallest unit of positive identification starts from Madang as the rural-urban complex. Expression *Em i singsing bilong Madang* (“This [It] is Madang’s song”) identifies locality of the performance with a positive connotation that it is a good piece of music deserving the brand, while a poor performance might be simply a *rabis*. By and large, such a labeling is applicable to Madang-born performers who are currently living in elsewhere such as Port Moresby. The definition of “Madang” can stretch between the vicinity of Schering Peninsula and the Province depending on the

object of judgement. The second smallest “Madang” would be so-called *nambis Madang*, or “coastal Madang.” If a band from Sarang (Madang District) or Karkar (Karkar District), Saidor (Rai Coast District) or Manam (Bogia District) is praised as a *singsing bilong Madang*, the speaker is marking *nambis Madang* from other regions. The provincial border consists of the largest local unit of “Madang.” When a Bemal (Madang District) band plays a *singsing bilong Madang*, it is contrasted against the rest of the country.

The larger frames of reference are “PNG” for guitar band music in general and the “Christians” (*Kristen*) for religious music such as the gospel. The “PNG” in this case contrasts PNG musicians from the rest of the world, particularly from non-classical Western music described as *waitman singsing*. The *Kristen* music, on the other hand, disregards national boundary but the sacred guitar band music from the secular. Predictably, those who favour *Kristen* music also tend to feel against the *six-to-six* and the content of powerband songs, which are seen as corrupting the youth. The similarity between these two locutions is that the two almost essentially connote value judgement than a simple identification by locality or contents. The locutions *Em i lokol singsing* (“It is a *lokol* song”) and *Em i singsing bilong PNG* (“It is PNG’s song”) might represent the same kind of guitar band music in most cases; the only difference appears to be the distinctions in terms of domestic/overseas and PNG/West dichotomies. However, the two are never similar in that the latter instantly objectifies national pride constructed from a positive stimulus. The locution *singsing bilong PNG* connotes that the referred piece of music is obviously a *lokol*, or characteristically PNG-made, yet it sounds better than *waitman singsing* because it is a domestic production and thus reflects the people’s taste

and feeling.

The negative form of Reference to Identity signifies a denial of identity that could lead to a negation of musical value as well. The use of Madang references seems to express the speaker's intention to describe a poor performance ("Can this be Madang's music? Never!"), or, more simply, the facts about the composition ("No, I do not think the song is from Madang"). However, the references to PNG and Kristen musics have a very different implication. The locution *Em i no Kristen musik* ("This [It] not Christian music.") can almost mean an accusation, and *Em i no singsing bilong PNG* means something essentially incompatible with the value of the speaker regardless of quality of performance. The following episode in a cultural show during my field research exemplifies how the PNG music can be represented.

... The prizes were given to the *singsing tumbuna* dancers, and the students on the stage started to play again. The numbers were some copies from the rock but I could not identify. The music sounded like a Western pop tune not only for music but the language they were singing, which was audibly English. No cool wind. Hot afternoon sun. As we walked away from the concert field tiredly and hungrily, I said to myself aloud "Did they really rehearse the piece alright?" Hearing my words, *lokol* musician X uttered: "Besides, this is not PNG's song, too (*Na i no singsing bilong PNG tu*)."

Here, musician X is expressing his dissatisfaction with the performance of the band, being ignited by my monologue. Although a poor performance of *lokol* tune can be as bad as a poorly sung *waitman singsing* in reality, X appears to say that the incompetence of the band is partially due to the students' selection of repertoire itself. Therefore, the references to the Madang region and the PNG nation corresponds to the articulation of positive stimuli (*Gutpela* or *Nais*), while a negation of them express the incompetent

(Rabis).

The musical genre in Madang has not simply developing in the specialization of the *lokol singsing*, or domestic guitar band music. As the rock band format has become popular, there have been a number of locals who show interest in Western pop music, particularly hard rock and heavy metal. These Western pops are generically called *waitman singsing*, or “White men’s songs,” and there have been attempts to employ experimental chord progressions, melodic lines, as well as the rhythm. Here is what a local musician in his late twenties—let us call him Harry—has to say about the difference between the *lokol* and *waitman singsing*, in supporting the latter.

So, I never get busy with the *lokol* stuffs. The *lokol* sounds too simple because there is no good base line—some guys at studio always spoil it. The chords are simple, too. I like *waitman singsing* like Eric Clapton, the Scorpions, Santana—they have all the good chords, beats. I am learning them from a chord book I got. And Santana’s got very nice minor chords because they learned from Spanish guitarists. If I could own a production, I would take all the bullshit out [from the *lokol* cassette tunes]. I would only keep *nais* beat and a lot of *nais* chords. But they do not like the kind of stuff we play here in Madang as much as in Lae, so we sort of just like to play for the bars in hotels...

Harry has been active as a powerband musician, has composed songs in his *tok ples* and Tok Pisin, arranged local *singsing tumbuna* in a manner of progressive rock, and has approached for recording sessions with domestic productions. Harry and his band always feel discrepancy against their audience in Madang for their compositions are very often received with indifference. He finds the chords in *lokol* songs too simple by contrast to the *waitman singsing*, and he regards the beat of the *lokol* songs too weak. He names well-known Western pop artists and bands, whose cassettes he purchased or dubbed, as

good examples. The nightclubs in tourist facilities are the places where Harry prefers to perform because the patrons tend to like copies from the hard rock. Lae, the headquarter of neighbouring Morobe Province and the second to Port Moresby in terms of scale and activity, is rather symbolically mentioned above among other centres that Harry and his band have been around for their urban image. Harry laments that his compositions have yet to find an audience due to the locals' preference to *lokol* style; in addition, expatriates and tourists never listen to his arrangement from local *singsing tumbuna* and songs in *tokples* or Pidgin in the clubhouse.<sup>15</sup> Upon listening to their band perform, the difference of taste between Harry and the grassroots audience by and large seems obvious; Harry's band never employ stringband tunes, uses progressive patterns characteristic among the hard rock whose complexity is more than the audience can tune into. Yet, despite the *waitman singsing* has been attracting Harry, it has never alienated his sense of identity as a member of community; in fact he commented Madang's *lokol singsing* as a style of good music comparing to the others, and Sandie Gabriel continues to be his mentor and hero. Harry himself does not play the *lokol* songs unless he performs at village or town *six-to-six*, some of which he has been organizing, and nobody around the community finds anything wrong with, inappropriate or deviant about his inclination.

To the locals it is a fact of life that some like *lokol*, some like old stringband or bambooband, some like gospel, or some like *waitman singsing*, as Table 2 summarizes below.

Table 2: Ideal Types of Audience

	Gospel	Pacific	<i>Lokol</i>	Western pops
Evangelist	Positive	Choice	Negative	Negative
Old-timer	Choice	Positive	Negative	Negative
<i>Lokol</i>	Choice	Choice	Positive	Choice
Passive	Passive	Passive	Choice	Passive
Hard-rocker	Negative	Negative	Negative	Positive
Intellectual	Detached	Detached	Detached	Choice

The six ideal types of actors, Evangelist, Old-Timer, *Lokol*, Passive, Hard-Rocker, and Intellectual, represent more or less regular reaction to musical stimuli according to the genres identified as Gospel, Pacific, *Lokol*, and Western Pops. Although the boundaries among both the ideal types and genre are rigid by all means, they delineate variation of musical reception. The ideal types tends to be vocalized by men with a particular interest in composition, performance or production, but activity such as singing, dancing and listening indicates them categorical regardless of gender. The reactions categorized here as Positive, Choice, Passive, Negative, and Detached characterize stimuli, but actual behaviour of each might vary depending on ideal type genre. The Positive reaction of an Evangelist toward the Gospel can be devotional ecstasy, while the Positive reaction of an Old-Timer to the Pacific tunes might entail nostalgia (Cf. Appendix 4). An Evangelist

consists of any Christian sects but seems to be more prevalent among radical schools. An Evangelist is an active supporter for religious music and against current popular music categorized here as the domestic *Lokol* and the Western Pops. An Old-timer (Aksim is one) laments the recent development and shows a lack of interests in the music after the powerband. A typical Old-Timer belongs to the generation of *gita resis* or before. The Pacific music such as old stringband and bambooband tunes, which is today only available from the local radio and sporadic performances in private or a cultural show, is the passion for an Old-Timer. The *Lokol* appears to be the most prevalent character of all music listeners. A *Lokol* listener is a fan of the powerband and generally represented by the generation born after 1960. A *Lokol* fan displays a more acceptance towards the older guitar band genre than most Old-Timers do towards a *Lokol* tune. A *Lokol* listener might purchase domestic cassettes and attentively listen to weekly hit chart radio program PNG Top 20. A *Lokol* is usually either indifferent or relatively unenthusiastic to the Western Pops. A Passive listener perhaps represents the majority of music perception, and only this category consists of non-musicians entirely. A Passive might lack interest in music at all, even a religious one. However, a Passive is present in the *six-to-six* and other attractions for entertainment, and in this sense this type consists of the matrix for all the ideal types. For *lokol* tunes are the ones that a Passive is most likely to encounter, a *Lokol* might be the ideal type from which a Passive would develop. A Hard-Rocker and an Intellectual are obvious minorities. Harry belongs to the type Hard-Rocker, a minority mostly grown up during or after the era of *gita resis* with a taste for Western pops but rejects gospel and *lokol* powerband songs. A Hard-Rocker is usually vocal about one's



preference and known for a subcultural attitude toward Western Pops. A Hard-Rocker might not be a fan of the Gospel, but this does not necessarily mean a denial of Christian faith. Lastly, an Intellectual with a tertiary education maintains a detached attitude to the guitar band music by the grassroots. An Intellectual might show some interests in jazz and other forms of Western music, and sacred music without a commercial orientation (like indigenously composed hymn) as well as the *singsing tumbuna* are also an interest, even if such attention might be academic one.<sup>16</sup> Some Intellectuals are professional musicians with a particular interest in a new brand of electronic music that is circulated as *lokol* tunes, but the *Lokol* listeners find such “new wave” experiments too complex and detached from their primary activity in music, namely dancing. As a consequence, productions by an Intellectual musician tend to find more audience in Australia or New Zealand, as in the case of the Sanguma band or Ronnie Galama (Hayward 1995).<sup>17</sup> Contemporary jazz and serious music with a perspective of ethnomusicological scholarship in the past curricula by the Department of Creative Arts at University of Papua New Guinea might have played some role in the general attitude of an Intellectual.

Interestingly, Harry’s preference to *waitman singsing* has no relation to class-consciousness or subcultural identity, of which he has no knowledge and position. Being a typical case of peri-urbanite relying on “informal” economic transactions (Barber 1993), his livelihood is not based on urban settings, and his commitment to the village *mangi* has always been serious.<sup>18</sup> There is no regular sociocultural factor correlative between Harry’s taste for *waitman singsing* and his way of being as a *wantok*. A sense of yearning for Western pop culture must be present, but Harry and his group are not expressing their

sense of identity as the Westernized, comparing the self with Western urban working class. Their imagination does not extend to fashion of a pop—something as being *nais* is not necessarily “pop,” for the former is a particular feeling of neatness attached to the local livelihood—and they remain to find their identity as Madang.<sup>19</sup> Their conscious selection of *waitman singsing* to *lokol singsing* has no place in their sense of being in the community—to choose between the *waitman* and *lokol* songs have no subcultural principle. The *waitman singsing* in local concert situations never attracts a large crowd. The audiences prefer the elements of the *lokol* music because in this way they can extend their imaginations and embodied senses attached to everyday life in the peri-urban settings. In the same token, Harry’s comment is his sense of attachment to a particular form of music in his own terms whether it might be related to his everyday life in community or not. It would be even dishonest as well as ethnocentric to repudiate Harry’s claim deeming his musicianship not compatible with an ethnotheory of aesthetics, or simply a deviant cultural behaviour. Western music such as serious music or jazz has never been valued in the rural societies; even any knowledge of Western music theory is not counted as a positive disposition that might *apim nem* (raise reputation) of the musician. In Madang, performative competence in *singsing tumbuna* does not seem to contribute greatly for social advancement, at least when it is compared to possession of pigs, command of English, station in religious organization, political credence, entrepreneurship, occupation, cash, or criminal record (sometimes). There is no outright cultural rivalry or hostility between the *singsing tumbuna* and the guitar band, although the latter often takes blame for moral corruption from the evangelists and the intellectuals

with a background of tertiary education who set their field of activity in Port Moresby.<sup>20</sup> There must be some elements that make *lokol* more attractive than *waitman singsing* to the peri-urban audience in Madang despite periodic objections.

### Conclusion

If music-making in Madang is seen as a postcontact phenomenon, its ethnotheory has to be sought in considering the emergence of the concept of *musik*; the genre has interacted as an arena for performance, composition, and reception of the produced sound. The question, then, becomes how people hear music in order to regenerate compose or to find its significance. Today, the *lokol* guitar band songs reflect everyday experience of local livelihood in a most direct way. As the advancement of modern technology enabled the introduction of electronics to the guitar band music, music-making has become incorporated into capitalist economic system to a large extent. The identification of musical performance with place names especially, the ones entailing regional and national boundaries, clearly operates in terms of “imagined community” as Benedict Anderson noted (Anderson 1983). In reality, however, audience reaction varies according to the category of music and attitude toward each genre of music.

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<sup>1</sup> Still, some natives have apparently tried to outmaneuver the colonial powers. A local informant accounts why only Yabob has had both the Protestant and Catholic missions in the prewar times:

The bigman of Yabob, my father, was a man of *singsing*. When the Protestants arrived at Yabob Island—I was only a kid then, so I don’t remember exactly when—they tabooed a lot of things, like, they burned down the *darem* (young

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men's house), which I saw. There was a magic to catch wild pigeons, but that, too, was tabooed and lost now. Of course those *kundu singsing* were tabooed as well. So, the man went around hiding to play his *singing* in the bush so that the missionaries can not catch him.

Then, one day he visited Alexishafen to see his in-laws: his wife was from Kananam, and saw there a lot of *singsing tumbuna* going on without taboo. He asked the villagers why it was okay to beat the kundu, and they replied that the Catholics did not care about the *singsing*. Now, he met a missionary in the station to let the Catholics build their own church and graveyard on Mareg Island, and let his family convert to Catholic. He himself did not, though: he got never baptized, and before the meal he would pray to Anut, God in our old times, instead of Our Father. (TB)

The bigman of Yabob is in this discourse represented as a man of practical reason. He successfully continues to perform the *singsing tumbuna*, despite the Protestants' persisting prohibition, by patronizing the rival Catholic mission. The process of interaction in the sequence is an appropriation of cultural knowledge between the colonial power and the natives to achieve their goals through manipulation and counter-manipulation.

<sup>2</sup> However, from a village church service on one Sunday I came to have an impression that the locals are not very confident of the actual melody of individual Kanam songs. Kanam as a *singsing tumbuna* perhaps originated in Karkar (Niles and Webb 1988:40).

<sup>3</sup> The Samoan missionaries taught the Polynesian *kwaia* chorus in the Lutheran mission at Siar before World War II.

<sup>4</sup> By the "field of cultural production," I am employing Bourdieu's term (Bourdieu 1993). But while such a sociological framework is useful to signify articulation of contests and negotiations, class stratification that he finds as basis of the structure as a vital element in Madang.

<sup>5</sup> "Patfon" is name of a rock that stands on the shore of Siar.

<sup>6</sup> It seems that the *gita resis* does not originate in Madang, and the term must have come from other places.

<sup>7</sup> To record four songs each from a single band was a suggestion by one of my local friends who was also happen to be a musician. His limiting of the samples to four is intriguing in that he said the four songs as sufficient (*inap*) for a field recording; perhaps he was thinking back the regulation of *gita resis* that limited the entries to three unconsciously.

<sup>8</sup> Currently, in Madang the dancing is the only form of public entertainment except for

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showing of the video in private house. Although young children (escorted by their mothers) and women are regularly present in the *six-to-six* dancing, liquor and drug consumption, and “raskalism” are essentially a male activity. The gates are usually set in somewhere between 1.00 and 2.00 kinas.

<sup>9</sup> The initial instrumentation tried by Kitawa Band was an eight-tube set and a pair of vertical ‘stomping’ tubes.

<sup>10</sup> The television station, called EMTV, has been open since 1988 and it broadcasts domestic and overseas music videos, but due to a low access to the television sets and limited selection of music programs, the television’s impact have been negligible to the locals.

<sup>11</sup> Chris Seeto has no relation with Greg Seeto, manager of Pacific Gold Studio.

<sup>12</sup> The Kigs hail from Komoria in the Takia region of Karkar Island.

<sup>13</sup> Adorno’s discussion on “fetishism of music” entails a behavioral characteristic of the “regressive listening” that blindly supports popular cultural industry. “Fetishism of music” is a consequence of commodification process even involving Schoenberg and Webern, and its really means that commodification of music can destroy mutual relations that marks more communal and concentrated mode of music-listening (Adorno 1995).

<sup>14</sup> *Rabis* does not even have a positive connotation as *bad* in English.

<sup>15</sup> Actually, the audience in Madang, including the musicians, has hardly been influenced by the ‘new waves’ in Port Moresby. The artists such as Ronnie Galama, despite their publicity elsewhere in the Pacific (Hayward 1995), are never heard in local *six-to-six*. Ronnie Galama’s unpopularity in Madang is not because his better-known compositions are arrangements of Maopa *singsing tumbuna* of Central Province, but the way he arranges them is not suitable to dance with.

<sup>16</sup> In presenting a paper about the *sore singsing* of Yabob at a music conference held in Port Moresby (Suwa f.c.), I found a number of PNG audiences, especially university students looked puzzled in disbelief. They did not seem to understand the cassette examples of powerband renditions of Sandie Gabriel’s tunes were initially composed for commemoration the songs appeared to them as just *lokol* pop tunes that the urban moral majority associate with immoral conduct and mayhem (Neuenfelt 1998). It was totally beyond their imagination—even if my command of English as a foreign speaker might have been a reason for it—that the sound of acoustic guitar and the melody of the pop can generate emotional responses in Christian mortuary practice. The postcolonial situation in PNG is that urban elite and emerging middle-class from various backgrounds are now endorsing cultural radicalism that construct their ideology in world system. Of

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course, the modus operandi of music-making must be sought in such aspects of aural cognition as well.

<sup>17</sup> Ronnie Galama, a native from Maopa in Central Province, received more audiences through his music video in Australia than among PNG grassroots. Galama's best compositions *Goruna* and *Rinunu* are based from traditional Maopa legend, and its musical structure does not have the sort of the beat that most powerband compositions do. Hayward points out: "the difference between Galama ...and other PNG music videos...is in their attempts to begin to commodify Galama in terms of his traditional ethnicity and cultural identity" (Hayward 1995:14).

<sup>18</sup> In fact, there is hardly any low-income working class in PNG, for "lower income" households are often associated with rural subsistent livelihood and informal sectors in squatter settlement.

<sup>19</sup> I took no statistic to correlate audience type with socioeconomic factors such as income, education, or gender. However, Harry's case seems one of the many that have no relation between musical distinction and socioeconomic one.

<sup>20</sup> Western musicology, with an emphasis of the jazz, has been taught at the tertiary institutions such as Goroka Teacher's College or University of Papua New Guinea. Occasionally, high schools and corrective institutions have provided music education as well, especially workshops of musical instruments such as the guitar; however, music theory has never been subject of the study.

## MADANG MUSIC IN PRACTICE

This chapter will illustrate how social formation of the guitar band music has taken shape into a generic construction by particularly focusing upon organizational schema such as the formation of the band and the learning process of music.<sup>1</sup> As for the band organization it will become clear that the principle of *wantok* plays a dominant role, which is based on village network. The word *wantok* derives from the Melanesian composite of “one talk,” signifying that shared language parallels with shared communal bonding. In the initial stage of the rendition of song text, the *kopikat* (copycat) strategy, which reproduces the original performance without getting known to the words of music, was used. As the art of *kopikat* becomes mature, the performer starts to acquire improvisation, composition, and original singing and instrumental technique that as a demand in the *lokol* audience.

### Musicianship and Organization

A village band usually consists of members from the same village, with occasional inclusion of friends in town. To explicate, the following Table 3 shows a history of membership of Yabob *lokol* band Old Dog and The Offbeats. The band initially started as G.F. Rockers and was active between 1979 and 1980. G.F. Rockers were inspired by powerband Kanagioid, but their intention was to compose *lokol* tunes. Old Dog and the Offbeats were a development from the G.F. Rockers and formed in around 1988. Old Dog and The Offbeats have produced four cassette albums from two studios, one in Madang

town and another in Port Moresby.

Table 3: Membership Change of Old Dog and the Offbeats (Yabob)

(Abbreviations: v-lead vocal, g-guitar, b-bass, k-keyboards, d-drums, m-manager, oth-other unspecified parts, ?-part unclear.)

Musician	(1979-1980)	(1990)	(1992)	(1993)	(1995)
Willie Tropu (1962?-)	v, g	v	v	v	v
Paul Tropu (1966-)	g	g	g	g	g
Johnson Lanke (1960?)	g	g	g	g	g
Michael Lanke (?-)	b?				
Terry Tobotol (?-)	k?				
Lawrence Tropu (1970-)		k	d		d
Demas Saul (1965-)		b	b	b	
David Salok (?-)			m	m	
Julius Onkau (?-)			oth		
Maniot Okole (?-)				(k?)	
Eki Egurupa (?-)				?	k
John Subam (?-)				?	oth
Martin Molt (?-)					b



With Willie “Old Dog” Tropu going solo in Moresby, activity as a band has become sporadic. The members of Old Dog and the Offbeats are mostly from virilocal households in the same village. The exception is Terry Tobotol, whose father was a Tolai; there might have been a few more, but there is no clear data. The formation of the band shows another principle known as *tirungu* (close associate by generation)<sup>2</sup> relationship in Yabob. In the case of Old Dog and The Offbeats the members whose area are known falls within a decade between 1960 and 1970. The members with the same surname are brothers, namely the Tropus and the Lankes. The three core members, Willie and Paul Tropu and Johnson Lanke are close friends but from different clans: Willie and Paul belong to the Kakon clan, and Johnson to the Madib. The parts of the band has been relatively fixed: Willie leading the vocal, Paul and Johnson playing the guitar, Lawrence the drum, and Demas joining the base until he became a fulltime musician to the Tumbuna Trak studio. As many other powerbands, the keyboardist has been changing because of the availability of the instrument. Musicianship in the keyboard is a special skill for there is no piano in the village as well as the town households.

While the dissemination of guitar band music is never selective or esoteric, membership of guitar bands is formed in terms of *wantok* almost without exception. The principle of *tirungu* relation actually stands on the notion of *wantok*. The Tok Pisin word *wantok* is the generic term that denotes relatives, fellow villagers, neighbours, and so forth, although when used as an address, the word *wantok* can rather connote a forced sense of camaraderie such as the one between a sales attendant and a client. As it has been described previously, there are three strata of languages in use in Madang: *tok ples*, Tok

Pisin and English. The ethnic boundary of peri-urban Madang communities naturally corresponds with the local category of *tok ples*, or the “village talk,” and this principle has played an important role for formation of the guitar band music at various levels especially those regarding compositional practice and member organization. The village organization based on the notion of *wantok* sociologically consists of closely settled clans (*klan*) that share a common *tok ples*; it is very rare for a clan to have a ‘different’ *tok ples*, although it has occurred.<sup>3</sup> Since the term *wantok* never includes a spouse, parent, child, grand parent, grand children and sibling; it does not signify a member of the family but those who might be related in a more extended level of kinship. A *wantok* may mean a *kandere* (kindred of mother’s side) and a *tambu* (in-laws) who usually come from a different village or clan. In the Madang area very often a spouse’s language can be acquired by spending some length of time in his or her *ples* (village).<sup>4</sup> The competence of the “foreign language” varies from a phrase-book level to a near-native one, but the phonetic system of *tok ples* around Madang is never so widely different each other that the comprehension between them does not seem a strenuous task. Although grammatical structure of the languages is notably different between the two language groups of the Trans New Guinea and Austronesian, the people appear fairly free to interchange. Thus, the concept of *wantok*, in reality, is rather a fluid one, in which other than one language, with various degrees of competence, can be in use. In everyday conversation reference to a *wantok* has a strong connotation of social identity such as, “Oh, he is my *wantok*. Let him come in,” or “She is my *wantok*. She will introduce you the place,” and this sense of identity is based on the proposition “We speak the same language, so we understand each

other.” Of course, in reality there is something like *wantok stil* (stealing one’s relative’s possession), and friction and fights are ever present. But still, the image of a *wantok* is a close, familiar, and helpful figure.

The idea of *wantok* also reflects the modern institution of the Melanesian nation-state. Indeed, the word itself is derived from Tok Pisin, which is an invention a result of westernization; therefore, the concept of *wantok* has been destined to expand its category in order to identify the imagined community of PNG as a whole against other nations, particularly the west. In this regard, the word *wantok* presupposes an anonymous collectivity, not an individual. When the word *wantok* is used as an address, it is never spoken to the addresser’s relative but a stranger; in practice, an in-law may be addressed as *Tambu!* or *Kandere!*. The address *Wantok!* on the other hand, is a general reference to someone whose social category or relationship to the addresser is not apparent. It is interesting that, unlike some other words in Tok Pisin, the word *wantok* has not been included in the *tok ples* of Madang as a loan word. The sentence in which the term *wantok* is used is always spoken in Tok Pisin, and identity of the *wantok* is often anonymous figures such as in the following lyrics of a couple of stringband numbers:

Today is the day for us all Papua New Guineans.  
Now one ocean gathers and prospers the way of ancestors.  
You *wantons*, come here, and enjoy yourselves.  
The way of Papua New Guinea will be shown, and we will see.  
(Jomba Drifters, *Dispela de em i de bilong yumi*. The original in Tok Pisin.)

O *wantok* woman,  
you simply fooled me,  
you wrote my name  
underneath yours.

(Aksim Siming, *Meri wantok*, The original in Tok Pisin and Bel.)

The first example, composed for a multicultural event celebrating the independence of PNG, clearly represents the *wantok* as the nationals, and it addresses so forth. However, the use of the word *wantok* is exclusively used for the syntax in Tok Pisin, the first three lines, and not in the *tok ples* Bel, the last line of the verse. The second example, a standard stringband number by one of Madang's first composer and guitarist, tells the audience about a denied love: the last two lines are a Tok Pisin idiom suggesting an outmaneuvered protagonist. This verse is followed by three more others sung in the *tok ples* Bel, and each time the line begins with *O papu inan pain* ("village woman"), *O Morelang pain* ("Morelang woman") and *O Tatakorek pain* ("Tatakorek woman"). Morelang and Tatakorek are names of settlements in Yabob and the *panu inan* in this song presumably signifies Kranket. The first verse in Tok Pisin, therefore, is a more general statement, and the word *wantok* parallels with each geographical name. The idea of *wantok* actually presupposes a cultural "Other" as the addressee such as the women of other villages or the fellow nationals who must be communicated in the lingua franca. The context that the idea of *wantok* is used is a modern folk model of interrelationship with strangers in the era of imagined communities, not a kind of communal sense of identity at any rate.

Complexity of multilingualism and articulation of style in the peri-urban Madang communities gives an important perspective to the formation of guitar band music in the

following respects. First, although it is not possible to survey all the bands formed since the 1970s, it is clear that band members have been predominantly organized in terms of village *wantoks*. Even if the members do not come from the same village, there is always a home village where the majority of the members. The *wantok*-based band organization has created a preference of composing songs in *tok ples*. As the later chapters will discuss in detail, practice of village guitar band has a root in the *gita resis*, a series of competition of the guitar bands in the 1970s. Naturally compositional ability and musicianship were the essential qualification, and although intra-village adaptation has been common—the member of a band in competition should not exceed ten, and a village can send as many bands as desired—the musical ideas were not easily transmitted from village to village. As a result, the style of music shows a remarkable variety according to villages: the bambooband, of example, flourished only in Malmal, Riwo, Siar, Bilia and Amele, each of which developing their own repertoire and innovations of the bamboo. Even the electronic media such as the radio or sound recording hardly influenced the situation for each village would develop its own interest in adopting the music. In Kranket the village bands more or less chose to stick to the old stringband format, presumably due to its closeness to tourist facilities where such music is still in demand as it being a symbol of the colonial Pacific. Kananam was successful in creating a unique guitar solo by listening to the Papuan stringbands on the radio very much thanks to personal talent of the guitarists. Riwo developed a special style by tuning into the bamboobands of the Solomons, although no particular developments from the bambooband is notable. Latecomer Yabob adopted the powerband in the 1980's and found a way to a new style for *lokol* sound. It

is as if the pre-contact system of *meziab dazem*, the secret society that valued magic based on young men's house is resurrected into the contemporary practice of guitar band music, despite which is an illusion because the two pertaining so much differences and displacements.

Second, group organization of the guitar bands has influenced use of language in the song texts, which has been predominantly composed in the native tongue of *tok ples*. The subject of the songs often involves either the name of the band, as if it were an introduction, or local geography around Madang, frequently micro-geography in the village. As Table 4 indicates, of the 48 samples of stringband and bambooband songs composed between 1946 and mid-1980s in the Bel-speaking area of Kananam, Riwo, Siar, Bilia and Kranket, 11 songs (22.9%), or nearly a quarter of the entire sample, call out geographical name. This frequency of geographical name shows a stark contrast to that of personal name, which appears in only 2 of the entire sample (4.2%).

Table 4: Reference to Proper Names in Bel Songs

	Cases	Percentage
Geographical Names	11	22.9
Personal Names	2	4.2
No Reference	35	72.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The landscape that is referred in the lyrics is usually a scene of action or even a subject for

sentimentalism:

O Mitibog Island, I shall leave you now.  
How is the island?  
I do not like this: you cannot see me from here,  
and you will not be able to as well.

I think of my parents that now I do no more,  
they will cry and say  
that I am alone and there is not another,  
when I lose my life.

(Wesley Bosli, *Mitibog nui*)

Here, Mitibog, a part of the territory of Kranket village, is portrayed as homeland from where the protagonist is about to depart. Such examples of “maudlin” songs are always composed by the natives of the *ples* as described, and tend to be a favourite number of the performers. The overall sentiment of the lyrics of “Mitibog nui” is clearly by Wesley’s text that concentrates on signification of the lived world of the village, by using *tok ples* and reference to micro-geography.

Lastly, in relation to the presence of *tok ples*, which has been vital to signification of song lyrics, urban social identity never prevailed in both musical expression and social formation of the guitar band music in Madang. The peri-urban guitar bands in Madang are not urban but rural by imagery and social formation, and compositional technique has taken a strong emphasis on the reference to village life. If there is anything conscious about composition and reception of the music, it is the articulation of the refined (*nais*). There are a couple of episodes regarding Sandie Gabriel, prominent songwriter of Yabob who was killed in a car accident:

Sandie once told us that our songs must have weight (*singsing mas gat weit*), and there are words that have more force than the others. As you sit down by the beach under the moonlight, you get a feeling, and you think about a lot of things as you see the quiet landscape where the sea stays so calm and beautiful. These things are the source for composing fine songs.

(PT)

Really, if Sandie was alive he would be still sitting down in that house down below (on Yabob Island), and he would practice all through the night. When the sun comes up, he would go to bed and never get up until afternoon. When the sun goes down, he would pick up the guitar, and start composing again. Oh, you would be listening to his voice till daybreak, hardly asleep.

(S)

Eminent powerband composer Sandie Gabriel's reference to the village landscape of Yabob Island as an essential source of composition derives from his nocturnal habit of composition in the village. As Sandie's case exemplifies, the incubation of musical ideas that predispose rural everyday images is fairly common to the peri-urban Madang, since the song text that involve maritime landscapes is not an exceptional characteristics of Sandie but a general inclination of the Austronesian-speaking coastal communities. As to the peri-urban Madang communities, the communities are in fact not only imagined, as in the extended notion of *wantok* or Beautiful Madang, but also actually in practice because of the multilingualism and social process of composition itself.<sup>5</sup>

### Men as Performer

Gender asymmetry in the peri-urban Madang society is not negligible even to musical activities, as much as other parts of the country. As in the case of most PNG societies, music-making has been men's domain; in many cases women have been kept away from



musical knowledge or even touching and seeing the instruments, and ethnographers have seen it in relation to gender symbolism of various cultural objects (Herdt 1981:1-19). Around Madang, few stories about the bamboo flute and bullroarer survive in the coastal communities, which might indicate that the possession of the wind instruments played an important role in the belief system of *meziab dazem*.<sup>6</sup> Contemporary music in Madang, in terms of social formation, has so far involved sexual division. Since musical activity regarding the guitar band music is essentially a domain of men, I would like to discuss the situation by categorizing the men as social actors in the peri-urban society without reducing the subject into the polarity of male and female identities (Dubisch 1986:26-31).

The opinions that downplay or deny women's musical faculty such as singing and dancing are non-existent in Madang. A musically talented woman, especially a good singer or dancer in the *singsing tumbuna*, is referred as a "woman of song" (*meri bilong singsing*), and there are some women in the younger generation who can play the guitar. However, the locals never come to a plausible conclusion why Madang women do not play the guitar in public or compose a stringband tune. They say, "Maybe that shows PNG is an underdeveloped (*i no develop yet*) country," "Women can get raped by the *raskols*—It's not safe here during night, " or "Well, in the first place there was a *kastam* of tabooing women away from playing the instrument. Then the guitar came in, and..." However, none of such explanations satisfy even the locals. Exploitation and physical violence can very much apply to men's risk as well, which is in fact heard as an explanation of some people who left the band or never wish to go professional; even the

fear induced by the tragic end of Sandie Gabriel is mentioned sometimes. Reference to historical background never explains why the Tolai of East New Britain, for instance, has a number of active female musicians, whereas their *kastam* is not far different from Madang's in terms of male domination (Niles and Webb 1988:14; Turalir 1995).

As the colonial Christianity did not encourage women to compose sacred music such as those in the *Kanam Buk* either, despite Western tonality was generally learned regardless of sex through the *kwaia*. Guitar band music, too, came to Madang basically as something for men. The earliest composition in a Madang language *Ngame sansan laulau mon*, or "I was always in the middle of the sea" by war veteran Elisa Imai narrates an experience of romantic conquest from a male point of view.

Before, I went to war.

I killed in a lot of *ples*, but it was like nothing they say,

"You were near to the mouth of shark. My eye is red all over.

Their bellies are yellow, the sharks of your *ples*  
the big ocean."

(Elisa Imai, *Ngame sansan laulau mon*)

The locals agree that shark reference in the lyrics alludes to women of Pacific Islands; probably the yellow bellies characterize ethnic Polynesians. On the other hand, it is interesting that Elisa's singing attracted young men as well as many young women, as it has been quoted in the previous chapter. As a local put: "Once the girls go out to hear the boys singing with the guitar, they would forget about helping housework and never come back." This asymmetry of music-making probably did not matter the participants for Elisa's music was clearly received as an entertainment among the younger generation. Women's inactivity in the guitar band music seems to be largely because of signification

of the guitar as a tool for attracting females by men in its early stages of introduction, as it has been illustrated by the case of Elisa Imai among the locals.

Especially during the epoch of stringband and bambooband, some interested young women participated in the bands, often playing the instruments, and some became a competitive singer; however, entries in competitions were limited to men without a particular reason. When the powerband became the main medium for the band music in the 1980, women stopped playing in public altogether, which is blamed as a result of deteriorating public security. It is uncertain that why Madang did not have female stringbands as in East New Britain, or competitive recorded artists with a background of *kwaia* as in Central (Turalir 1995). The risk management of not placing women in public attention in fear of making their, and the community's, security vulnerable sharply contrasts against the men's acquisition of the guitar band music through mobilization to the outside world, such as the town community, military facilities, and foreign provinces and countries. Therefore, the folk model for sexual division of musical activity in the peri-urban Madang is not based on displaying of masculinity but more or less functional reasoning of social activities.

Women's participation in postcontact music-making in the Madang area has been somewhat limited, or at least it has never been as noticeable as the men. To discuss women in term of guitar band music tends to become how women are represented in the lyrics, some of which have been also exemplified in the previous sections. Despite seemingly passive position of women in the music-making of guitar band, however, they have been playing a quite essential role to production of sound-producing practice as a

whole. One is that women, like men, have been actors of aural cognition through engaging a range of activities such as attending to concerts and dances, becoming a concern of male musician, or even playing and singing in performance in some cases. On the other, there have been sound-producing practices in which women take more active role than men. The fact that the guitar band music has been organized basically by the male member of the communities. But this does not necessarily mean that the aural practice in the process of music-making has never been a shared conduct with the women, although comparing to other centres of guitar band activity in PNG women's initiative in Madang is not as strong.<sup>7</sup> The women in the Madang area has been active in various occupations such as bank clerks, nurses, sales representatives, church works, civil servants, and so forth. Men and women often take parts in domestic chore especially cooking, child rearing and house cleaning as a result of change of residential pattern from men's secret society to nucleus family. Although today the women do not commit to guitar band activity per se, there have been a number of them who can play the guitar or ukulele; in addition, before the mid-1980s women were often incorporated in the stringband and bambooband as singers. While the increasing case of violence, as the locals often claim, is often blamed for the recent inactivity of women in the guitar band today, it must be stressed that sex or gender never seem to make any radical difference in term of aural cognition.

The most notable sound-producing practice by peri-urban women in Madang is women's ritual. The cry comes out spontaneously any time during the death and mortuary ritual of the mourner's family, relatives, or friend; it consists of a wailing with no formal pattern of voice that expresses accusation, remembrance, or rhetorical phrases

of death. In this sense, women's ritual cry is regarded as a "ritual" in a strict sense, but a general activity of mourning. The wailing pattern of ritual cry is found among the women only, although men, too, cry from time to time during the mortuary ritual. There is no local discourse to theorize why only the women have specific pattern of crying; however, the crying is always present in the funeral and burial, and considered to characterize the occasion. In terms of the *singsing tumbuna*, Madang women never play the *kundu*, the hour glass drum; it seems that the sound-producing instruments by and large have never been regarded since the precontact era, and the locals neither encourage nor discourage the women to play the drum. Men and women sing and dance as one group in performance of *singsing tumbuna*. Their singing is usually heterophonic, meaning that they basically sing in the same shape of melody. Thus, aside from women's avoidance of the *kundu*, their musicality does not differ essentially. It is fairly natural to assume that both women and men have similar pattern of aural cognition, in spite of the different role in musical performance.

The same proposition applies to the guitar band music. In the guitar band music, especially since the advent of the powerband, women have become not spectators in public performance altogether; however, they, regardless of age, are music-goers to the local concerts such as the *six-to-six*. The dancing at the *six-to-six* is a kind of disco dancing with no formal dance style and there is no cheek dancing, but man and woman can form a pair to dance face to face. Women sometimes accompany their children or children of their *wantok* in earlier hours, between around six to ten in the evening; old and married women tend to stay aside and remain as the spectators, while young unmarried women take part

in dancing more freely. The most basic part of guitar band music, *tromoi lek*, or “throwing out the legs,” involves the men and the women alike. The composers of powerband music in the Madang area, who are male without exception, compose their song texts essentially from men’s point of view. There are numerous love songs dedicated to someone special or an imaginary character. These songs express a wide range of feelings from happiness to heartbreak, and many of them take form of addressing to the subject. For instance, Aksim Siming’s *Meri wantok*, as translated previously, mildly accuses the narrator’s loved one of flirtation—and many others addresses to the narrator’s mother or daughter, expressing the feelings of yearning, sorrow of separation, family love, and so forth. Unlike popular songs of the west, which the guitar band music has taken its musical idea to a large extent, there have been no songs by male composers that narrate from women’s perspective.

Although women do seem to take personally directed messages in the compositions dedicated to them, in more general contexts they find addressing not related to their sense of identity as a woman. For instance, these love songs are frequently played in the *six-to-six*, but they do not really take the contents of the lyrics seriously in many cases. While they do sense the male attitude to the female sex from these song texts, in the context of the outdoor dancing sessions, along with male audiences, much of the messages of the lyrics do not seem to be deciphered.<sup>8</sup> These love songs in the concert context loses its subject because of the use of it as a dancing music or spectacle. Like male audiences, women in a concert situation find various purposes and impressions of the performance; therefore, meaning of the song texts does not necessarily become the determinant element for the whole atmosphere of the music. In the outdoor dancing, the performance obscures

its initial “meaning” of the composition through noise and occasional confusion. However the performer categorize these songs as love songs, whether the songs signifies a love or not becomes not very important to the audience as long as they are satisfied with the music for the dancing. While musical talent would involve more personal elements, aural cognition—which is the foundation of musicianship—has no substantial difference in terms of sex, as the fact that musical performance involves both sexes as the participants suggests. Men and women together embody the sound of music, and as long as it is a shared experience there is no discrepancy of the feeling in the field of performance. In the concert situation the aural cognition of audience displaces what is being sung to the musical sound for dancing, and the messages in the text become not necessarily an essential element of the music. The categories of song, such as love songs, in the concert situation lose orientation of the subject.

The corporate principles for the guitar band have had a strong relationship with *haus boi* (young men’s house) where young boys would live as a group where friendship of the *tirungu* (*tizag* in Bel) bares foremost significance: they would share room, food, cooking utensils, secrets, enemies and musical instruments. It is rather natural for young men, especially in the era of the *gita resis*, to form the groups according to village boundary. A long-standing guitar band activity has been considered as an increasing chance for domestic arguments, risk for getting involved in an accident and inefficient profit. In addition, presence of male bonding among young members of the community (*mangi*) does induce the reasoning such as “If you get married, you won’t be acting like the time you were a *mangi*. It’s not nice to fool around like that, not taking care of your

family, not helping out your *meri* (wife).” Although domestic violence, adultery, separation, polygamy, gambling, alcoholism, addiction to marihuana, protest suicide and other conflicts might take place regardless of musical behaviour, it is regarded to increase the risk of them. Sustaining male bonding in the guitar band activity is regarded as the most important aspect in terms of social formation, and that very fact instantly becomes a potential threat to family life. Although few locals find social formation of the guitar bands as continuity from the precontact era, the basic pattern of conduct reflects the *mulung* institution of bachelors.

The essential aspect of the guitar band music as male activity in Madang is that it is always an ambivalent, almost a dilemma to some extent, representation of self suspended in between individualism and anonymity. Since there is no musician who acts solo in the Madang area (those who are interested in acting as such would go to Port Moresby, where the star is becoming an institution of pop music industry), everybody is a member of group no matter how short the group would last. In an extreme case, a solo musician appears with studio accompanists as if he was a leader of the composite band. For instance, few people might have heard of Michael Makalu, but his song *Sele mole* by Mogoi Hotline (*mogoi* means a brother in the *tok ples* of Bernal, Trans Gogol) is still a favourite number for *six-to-six* dancing especially among children. As it has been already discussed, formation of the bands has a strong parallel with the linguistic boundary of the peri-urban communities, and the members are naturally the *wantoks* in most cases. Even cautionary statements and edifying messages to the *wantoks* in composition are usually circumvented usually by taking an elder (*lapun*), rather than the composer himself, as the



narrator of the lyrics:

O my friends, this is the place  
where our great grandfathers founded.  
If you wander around other places,  
when you come back it will be gone already.

In the *lion* of Yam the sea stays calm,  
an old man raises his voice and talks.  
He calls out and he says:  
“Everybody, change your mind!”

(Aksim Siming, *Yam ilonen manin ienmeg*)

This Aksim Siming’s piece, (here only the first and third verses are quoted) composed in the Bel language in 1959 for a stringband setting and later arranged for the *kwaia*, is an illustrating example. The lyrics indicate the composer’s edifying concern about urban development and disintegrating communities is voiced out as an anonymous village elder’s opinion, although it might have been based on a real-life event. Although it was clear for the man, who had already seen the effect of modernization while he was in Lae and Fiji as a student, how important for the locals to realize communal ways of life, it was not his interest to air out the issue as his own idea. Aksim did not choose to portray himself as a prophet, bigman or colonial chief *luluai* who dictates people what to do, for anonymity relieves the performer from public gaze.

Jealousy is a negative consequence of individualism in male social conduct that often involves guitar band music. The jealousy is a repressive element for the ‘standout’ activities such as leading the vocal part, conveying personal messages in composition, or producing a solo cassette album. The possible outcome of jealousy might include physical

assaults or sorcery by the enemy (*birua*), although outright and intentional attacks as a result of fame are rather rare. The source of jealousy in the society where honour has the foremost significance is clear: public advancement. The power that arouses excitement, romantic feelings and admiration is nowadays amplified by the loudspeaker and reproduced on cassette, and one can attain publicity for an outstanding performance which enhances sexuality, demonstrates one's achievement of music-making. The performative technique of music-making, especially composition, is regarded as a result of learning. It in a sense still belongs to esoteric knowledge because the nature of music-making is, as it was in the age of the *singsing tumbuna*, at least partially a product of individual talent and commitment which only a selected few can excel. Despite the presence of jealousy, the conduct of *apim nem* (from "upping name," i.e., attaining fame) by means of music is not necessarily considered to be a vanity or self-indulgence, as long as the *wantok* finds a sense in the performance. Here, the principle of reciprocity and redistribution of wealth applies: fame, money, leadership and other recognition one might receive from one's musical talent should be shared among the community. The *bigmen* of musical world are those who take risks in music-making.

Love, affection, ecstasy, denial and betrayal have been a favourite topic of the guitar band music. Table 5 shows the subject of affection among 35 transcribed songs from Amele-speaking area (Amele, Gum and Sinem), 48 from the Bel-speaking area, 11 from Nobonob, and 107 from Yabob composed between 1945 and 1997 in any band format.

Table 5: Subject of Affection

Subject	Amele	Bel	Nobonob	Yabob	Total (%)
Nation		2			2 (1.0)
Home	1	5		6	12 (6.0)
Family				6	6 (3.0)
Fraternity				5	5 (2.4)
Heterosexual	6	14	2	29	51 (25.4)
A Dead Person	1	2	1	11	15 (8.0)
Self-Pity	3	1		7	11 (5.5)
Ambiguous	2	1	1	5	9 (4.5)
Not Clear	22	23	7	38	90 (44.2)
Total	35	48	11	107	201 (100.0)

By “Subject of Affection” I mean a thematic treatment of the subject by means of address. If there is a constant syntax that relates to the phrase “Let us celebrate the Independence,” this text takes the “Nation” as the Subject, for instance. However, the original context and intention of composition are in fact never clearly known to the audience. As the following chapter will discuss in detail, it is also difficult to decide how the song is generally regarded. Therefore, I categorize such ambiguous song texts under “Not Clear.” The category “Not Apparent” includes the songs without any strong orientation to the subject. Aside from the significant presence of laments in Yabob songs (See chapter 4), affection regarding heterosexual love has a notable prevalence next to that to “Home” and “Self-Pity.”

The following Table 6 further elaborates the theme of the love songs. The category “Comedy,” which represents comical treatment to the theme with sarcasm,

risqué diction, or even buffoonery, shows the least significance among most language groups. (Samples from Nobonob are taken entirely by a single cassette produced by Yondik.)

Table 6: Themes of Heterosexual Love

Comedy	9	(18%)
Inquiry	13	(26%)
Yearning	13	(26%)
Sorrow	15	(30%)
Total	50	(100%)

The dominant note among the love songs are “Inquiry” (ask for company or relationship, inquiry for true love), “Yearning” (desire, agitation, admiration, longing), and “Sorrow” (heartbreak, separation, denial of love). The male attitude towards love as the addresser of text in these songs mostly has a serious outlook. Thus, there is always a risk of it being interpreted as deemed as indecent in the case of a married man, who is supposed to be a responsible husband and father, to compose or even sing such songs unless the depicted romance is understood as a fiction. Indeed, it seems that there is a general sense of uneasiness for love songs if a married man sings them. Actually, there are a number of songs that are actually based on other contexts, despite that it might sound like a romance at the first look:

For a longtime I have not seen your face,  
you stay long way, long way from me,  
I just look at your photo always,  
I just look at it, and think of you always.

But you are not staying close to me,  
you are staying far away from me  
I do not know  
whether I will see you again or not.

(David Onkau, *Longpela taim*. The original in Tok Pisin.)

The addresser's reference to "you" is his little daughter: the composer was living in Port Moresby at that time. Like this example, the composers do not play around fiction very much in their songs, and this rule corresponds with general retirement of married men from guitar band activity. This rule is also a reflection of that Madang composers invariably speak of taking "life experience" (*samting bilong laip*) for their inspiration. As a consequence, composition marks the peak of activity to most musicians. Romantic conquest and separation from their loved ones and home due to mobile style of living are the characteristics of unmarried men. Where the life history is abundant, so is creative inspiration.

### The Learning by Skin

*Save bilong skin*, or the "learning by skin" has been the essential conduct of learning not only for music but also in almost every aspect of the peri-urban communities, such as building canoes and houses, clearing gardens, catching fish, making pottery, or the learning of *singsing tumbuna*. The distinction of *save bilong skin* is apparent from the word that implies such knowledge, a "knowing-how" of cultural conduct, as something being ineffable.<sup>9</sup> The learning process of music is summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: Learning Process of Music

Stage	<i>Singsing Tumbuna</i>	Guitar Band
Prepubertal	Joins in dancing led by paraents. Follows the dancing steps.	Rarely instructed to play the instrument except a <i>kapok gita</i> or ukulele.
Initiate	Learns dancing as part of the <i>mulung</i> * ritual.	
Bachelor	Men prepare the <i>kundu</i> to lead the dancing.	Member of a <i>haus boi</i> . Forms group to play in public. Starts composition.
Leader	Composer. Conducts the group by <i>kundu</i> . <i>Man bilong singsing</i> .	Engeneer. Studio musician. Executive. Principle composer. Lead vocalist.

\*The *mulung* initiation is not in practice in all the communities today.

The learning of *singsing tumbuna* consists of prepubertal young child, the intensive instruction in part of the *mulung* ritual, activity as a grown man, and a selective group of leaders who hold influence in music-making as well as everyday life. Young children start with joining in the group being accompanied by a parent or *wantok*, being dressed up like main dancers; the children and their company would dance in slightly away from the main dancers. As the children grow older, they gradually get used to the dance; if they are boys and have an opportunity to enter *mulung*, dance is formally taught as a part of traditional knowledge by grown men who supervise the initiation. The grown men might prepare their own *kundu* drum to join the dance. Male leading dancers known as *man bilong singsing*, or “man of songs” are the composers. A *man bilong singsing* conducts the performance with his *kundu*. As for guitar bands, interested young children start with

smaller instruments, moving onto an acoustic guitar. If he acquires command of music, he joins a group to go out for performance, and many starts composition in this stage. Leading figures of the guitar band are principle composers and lead vocalists. In most cases they start composition or lead singing during their bachelor days. Many stop the activity after marriage, and active married musicians are either contracted to music studio or live band performers at tourist facilities.

In Madang, when being asked about learning process of certain musical skill or knowledge, a local might shrug and say: “That’s a matter of *save bilong skin*: it’s hard to talk about.” Reference to the Tok Pisin phrase *save bilong skin*, literally “knowledge of body,” is a typical reaction by the locals who wish to indicate that transmission and acquisition of an ability belongs to the realm of “tacit knowledge” (Polanyi 1966). In particular, musical skill is not to be learned from school education in Madang. Local guitarists do know chord names and are able to tune the instrument, some have even learned it from a book, and the singers can harmonize in thirds. However, nobody is quite sure about musical scale, and despite they can identify the chords “A major,” “C minor,” etc., neither any of my informants knew that these alphabets represent the base of each chord, nor were they able to call individual pitch in a scale or melodic line. Thus, pitch is recognized and can be reproduced, but the locals never verbalize musical scales or individual pitches from a melodic contour take no part in their musical skill.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, there is no need to learn Western tonality and music theory since they have nothing to do with dissemination of performative knowledge in practice; instead, one can sit and watch closely what others are doing, mentally picturing their activity. In this light, musical skill

is acquired in Lave and Wenger's concept "situated learning" (Lave and Wenger 1991). The following case study, a life history of Kranket man Aksim Siming, exemplify the basic pattern of situated learning that has not been changed so fundamentally over the decades.<sup>11</sup>

Aksim has not see the guitar until 1945 when a Malayo-Chinese-Melanesian mechanic, who used to lived in old Chinese quarter in town, playing the ukulele and singing songs like *You Are My Sunshine*, which is one of the earliest memory of western music for Aksim.<sup>12</sup> A couple of years later Aksim picked up an ukulele, which is left in an old American military hospital in Finschhafen, where his father used to work. After the Siming family comes back to Kranket, Aksim learns tuning of the guitar and ukulele by playing old Tolai and Motu songs from Aksim's uncle-in-law Bill Natera, who is from Yule Island of the Papuan district. Bill eventually ordered a so-called *kapok gita*, a miniature version of the guitar with a trade name of "Pacific Guitar," which Aksim's father gave it as a present to his then very young son. Bill Natera was an engineer, and lived in town with his family. Aksim played the instruments and sings along with his Papuan uncle. Eventually, Aksim and his company, which includes Aksim's close relatives in the same generation, appeared in house parties. Social dance, a favourite pastime of the era, were held in town by the "mix race" (intermarried households of various provinces, not unnecessarily interracial in an ordinary sense). Bill Natera absorbed more of hula, foxtrot and waltz through the attendants, but Aksim and his *wantok* friends were hesitant to learn dancing. Aksim was also given instructions in the guitar and songs sung in Tok Pisin, English and Motu from a former serviceman of Siar,



named Bas Meng, who learned playing fragments of songs with the old guitar which was probably given to the man during his service to the Allies.

Aksim won a scholarship to study in medical college in Suva, Fiji from 1954 to 1956, and there he learned how to play the steel guitar and the favourites of his friend from various parts of the Pacific sing.<sup>13</sup> Since Fiji had dance halls in Suva with active professional musicians, he did not appear in public performances. Aksim came back to Madang in 1957 to work for the Provincial government to instruct public health programs; although he was busy, he willingly performed by request during his inspection tour in the main stations of provincial districts whenever off duty, including occasional performance in the houses of expatriates. He started composition in around 1957, when he was called up to Manam and Bogia in order to take care of public hygiene program after the volcano disaster of Manam Island. In Madang, Aksim played with his *wantok* friends whenever being requested for free of charge (“Nobody even thought of it then,” Aksim recalls), to play in the parties in villages and town.<sup>14</sup> In the end, he acquired songs in Tok Pisin, English, Tolai (perhaps Kuanua), Motu, Solomon Island *Pijin*, *tok ples* of Solomon Islands, Fijian, Tahitian, Rarotongan, Indonesian and Malay along with his own compositions in Bel and Tok Pisin,<sup>15</sup> although Aksim does not comprehend most of these lyrics. Throughout his musical activity, Aksim preferred a band with three or four men, namely two guitars and one ukulele, so that “the sound of the part becomes clear.” He took no interest in new band forms that arrived in Madang after 1960’s consisting of more performers and new instruments. Aksim stops public performance after his marriage in 1966, and has gone no formal recording for his years ended before the advent of local

public radio programs.

Aksim's case summarizes the following points in *save bilong skin* of guitar band music. First, participation in Madang guitar band starts directly from the learning of the instruments such as the ukulele or the *kapok* guitar. Joining in an entourage at a young age to watch the whole undertaking in practice has become a practice since the age of band competition and profit-oriented *six-to-six* in recent years. However, not only that *save bilong skin* entails such a process of watching the band perform but following the band is not a required step for a making of musicianship. *Kapok* guitar and ukulele are especially considered as desirable for newcomers because of the size of the instruments and the reduced number of strings in the ukulele that has four strings instead of six for an acoustic guitar. Neither etudes nor children's songs are present; there is no particular repertoire to serve as practice piece. Regardless of age, a new comer joins the production as back vocalist, ukuleleist, or a player of *kapok* guitar.

Second, there is no written music, transcribed texts, or tabulature to learn the music; for some reason printed or written materials are avoided for learning device, unlike cassette recording has become a great aid to the musicians. In terms of singing, the first assignment of the newcomers is to try to mimic song lyrics exactly the way it is sung. While if the learner is familiar with the language used in the lyrics would certainly benefit—English has been the case for Aksim—it is not necessarily required to understand the content of the lyrics as long as the pronunciation is acceptable. Syntax, lexical groupings, and other grammatical elements are frequently disregarded; the learner's concern is clearly a reproduction of the sound images, not transmission of message. In this

regard, learning method for singing resembles with that for *singsing tumbuna* in which the meaning of the lyrics is often indecipherable. The only complete information they usually have about the foreign songs is the name of the language used in the lyrics, although occasionally the performers know the meaning of some of the words, particularly proper nouns and loan words from English. On the other hand, it is difficult to characterize *kopikat* as a pedagogical practice for it is not institutionalized. There is no talk like, “Do this *kopikat* so you can learn the guitar quick,” or “If you want to play with us, start with *kopikat* of this melody.” Really, the *kopikat* is either a genre of music or quality of performance in a strict sense, especially copies from Western pop music, as in the repertoire of powerband Kanagioi, or the various stringband and bamboobands in an early stage. Although it is true that Aksim started from *kopikat* of performances, *kopikat* as a learning process and that as a performative category fundamentally different in terms of objective. Composing entails a crucial part of *save bilong skin*; in this regard, *save bilong skin* actually includes *kopikat* but the latter is not the essence of the former.

Third, Aksim’s decision to terminate his musical activity publicly with his marriage has been a common practice. Although Aksim’s mentor Bill Natera did continue to play with or instruct his bachelor *wantoks* after marriage, he did not participate in open-air performances very much. Retirement from guitar band activity with termination of celibacy gives the guitar band a characteristic of socialization activity that bridges *wantok*-oriented community and outside world of spectatorship. Aksim relates his withdrawal from the guitar playing as because of audiences’ changing taste from small ensembles to larger settings with new instrumentation, which he did not feel content with

inasmuch as it tends to obscure single melodic parts.<sup>16</sup> He recalls that he wished to give space of activity to the younger generations. Here, the conflict is portrayed both as between aesthetic that audiences' taste failing his, and societal that he is becoming old and committed to his family. Aksim did not like the way of new bands, which relied on volume rather than intertwined vocal timbre. He felt that the younger generations needed more space to develop their musical talent. Being a *musik man* is not regarded as a chore of a married man, and the priority is obviously given to looking after his families.

Fourth, the note-to-note or word-for-word learning method of guitar band music parallels with the learning of *singsing tumbuna* in intertribal exchange in which new compositions and renditions took place as a result of complete copying of the originals. This suggests that overall characteristics of aural disposition have not really changed fundamentally in spite of Westernization of performative idiom through the intervention of colonial institutions, as far as cognitive nature of music-making is concerned.<sup>17</sup> This mimetic learning process marks not simply the early stages of introduction of the guitar songs, but the situated learning of the newcomers to the genre by and large throughout the ages. As for composing, it requires a special interest and usually does not start until the performance skill, including taking care of newcomers and the group. Native *tok ples* or Tok Pisin is the languages for composition. Interestingly, however, many of the newly composed lyrics actually make sense to the composer, especially when it is composed in native *tok ples*. This point expands the notion of learning as mimesis; the transition from the art of copying to the creation of new texts needs to be explored further.

## Conclusion

The *wantok* system, language conflict, aesthetic expectation, gender role expectation, modern institutions, relationship with the outside world and even the presence of Pacific War all fall into consideration in the act of composition and the acquisition of musical competence. In the case of acquisition process of Aksim Siming various factors that have been more or less general elements in the peri-urban Madang have played essential roles in his making of musicianship. Focusing upon groups of musician in terms of communities of practice is helpful in order to illustrate their activity by not relying on static description of ethnic identity. The distribution of knowledge in situated learning is an answer to the question for how the compositions by natives have become a vehicle for communication. Aksim Siming finds that he has felt that his audience has been paying attention gradually on the content of the lyrics. He has become thirty already when he has begun to compose in his *tok ples* and Tok Pisin: He speaks of his sense of control at that time, “*Bihain mi wokim, kam mi save*” (“After I worked, I came to know”). To compose a song in the languages used in Madang, there should be interaction between the composer and the audience, even if such a relationship is not a social fact but an imagined, assumed or internalized one by the composer. Composition becomes as a significant subject since *kopikat* does not explain the whole process of music-making. Coordination is required not only in terms of heuristic knowledge of the body (and mind) but also interaction among the actors involved in music-making.

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<sup>1</sup> By “learning process” I mean making of musicianship, characterized by the idea of “situated learning.” Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger’s critique of the concept of learning has

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raised an issue of how apprenticeship in a general sense reproduces practical knowledge, skill and social action, which is not a simple transmission of information and instruction of factual knowledge. Based on ethnographic studies of various non-/vocational groups such as Yucatec midwives, Vai and Gola tailors, Alcoholics Anonymous, and so on, the two authors have explored a cognitive model of learning which does not have a basis on didactic or modern school institution (Lave and Wenger 1988). Lave and Wenger elucidate that novices attain their goals (to become a tailor, a non-alcoholic, etc.) by participating in the “communities of practice” in which the skills will be learned by first committing to “legitimate peripheral participation” then gradually moving on to full participation.

Learning viewed as situated activity has as its central learning characteristics a process that we call legitimate peripheral participation. By this we mean to draw attention to the point that learners inevitably participate in communities of practitioners and that the mastery of knowledge and skill requires newcomers to move toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of the community. “Legitimate peripheral participation” provides the way to speak about the relations between newcomers and old-timers, and about activities, identities, artifacts, and communities of knowledge and practices (ibid.: 29).

Lave and Wenger’s work covers a wide range of interdisciplinary studies between cognitive science and anthropology, and there have been attempts by groups of anthropologists to employ it for analyzing rituals, performative arts, and so forth (Fukushima 1995; Tanabe 1989).

Lave and Wenger’s attention to making of practical skill in non-pedagogical settings is helpful in elaborating the musicianship in Madang as well. What is different from apprenticeship in Lave and Wenger’s examples, however, is that music in Madang has hardly been a process of reproducing a required standard of goal like sewing clothes or becoming non-alcoholics. Music can transform its style and fashion, value or mode of production in which idiosyncrasy and originality are considered as important, and there is no fixed institution of musicians in which the “old-timers” hold power, controlling resource and distribution of knowledge. Lave and Wenger’s model should be considered in a broader sense in order to accommodate with the situations in Madang.

<sup>2</sup> The *tirungu* relationship is cultivated in the *haus boi*, and modern education system certainly plays a role as well

<sup>3</sup> The clan known as Nop in Yabob, for instance, used to have a distinct *tok ples*, since the clan once constituted a village in Schering Peninsula that was driven away by the colonists.

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<sup>4</sup> Multilingualism in a suburban or peri-urban setting seems to be a general phenomenon in PNG today, as Magne delineated the situation in Goroka where several *tok ples* are in use, mixed with Tok Pisin, and so forth (Magne 1995:79-91).

<sup>5</sup> Benedict Anderson phrased ideological construction of nation-state as “imagined communities,” in which native language in poetical discourse becomes a vehicle of building a sense of counter-historical communalism (Anderson 1983). By the same token, situation in Madang seems like a complexity of representation of imagined communities on local level.

<sup>6</sup> Some sound producing instruments were used as a mean of social control by impersonating the voice of spirit (Hannemann 1996:21). Yabob locals also told me about the bamboo flutes then kept in the *darem* that were hidden from the eye of women and children. The old instruments have been completely wiped away in the Madang area today but the *kundu* and rattles.

<sup>7</sup> In the region around Port Moresby, there have been female powerband singers with a background of church *kwaia* singing, and in the northeast New Britain there have been stringbands consisted of women only (Niles and Webb 1988:4, 14; IPNGS 008).

<sup>8</sup> Also, especially young women rather fear of rape when the concert becomes rough by angry or bored male audiences who would start fighting or throw objects to the stage.

<sup>9</sup> A local, who was a composer and guitarist in his own right, was puzzled as I claimed I came to “get knowledge” (*kisim save*) of guitar music of Madang. He exclaimed in sheer amazement “You don’t play the guitar, so you don’t know the music, you hear? Yet you say you do! You are not saying it right! How do you get to know the music if you can’t play it?”

<sup>10</sup> This fact that they did not have pitch names and scale system presented a tremendous difficulty in reconstructing alignment of bamboo tubes in the bambooband without a real specimen. I would ask, pointing out a drawing of a bamboo set on the notebook “If you hit this bamboo, does it sound C or G?” They would reply “No, no. They are for the chords, like you hit them *dom dom dom dom*. Oh, are you about *do re mi* like the *waitman* use? *Sori*, that’s something that only you can figure out. We can’t help you on that.”

<sup>11</sup> The life histories and data introduced here are reconstructed from field notes of interviews and informal conversations.

<sup>12</sup> The name of the man was Meng Wat. He was occasionally seen performing, likely as a pastime, in front of a hotel that used to stand at today’s new Anderson’s Supermarket. In prewar days he played the harmonica only. It is not clear whether Meng Wat was his entire given name or either just “Wat” or “Meng”; his family and descendants no longer

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live in Madang, and the last news of his was that he went to Wewak sometime after the war.

<sup>13</sup> For some reason, the steel guitar has never been widely used in Madang.

<sup>14</sup> They were often birthday parties, even in the village.

<sup>15</sup> The sole exception is a song composed in Manam, “Nala i Tauna” that describes Aksim’s evacuation from the disaster-stricken island. In fact, composition in foreign *tok ples* is very rare in the entire Madang.

<sup>16</sup> The innovations include handmade chordophone called *liptikes* (“leaf tea case”), made from a wooden tea container for the resonator. In the 1970’s, when the number of the acoustic guitar increased, the lead guitar is connected to an amplifier made of a radio speaker by a wire so that virtuosic improvisations can stand out. Various attempts with idiophonic instruments including the bamboo are tried out. Aksim recalls the new trend started around mid-1960s when the bands began to be paid for performance.

<sup>17</sup> Indeed, it is intriguing that there is no parody in Papua New Guinean music regardless of genre. Even cover versions of western tunes hardly aim to undermine the original atmosphere of lyrics. Likewise, outright imitation of foreign syllables aiming comical or nonsense effects is non-existent.



## MULTILINGUALISM AND SONG TEXT

Madang's music has been received and composed in a multilingual way; regardless of genre, music has been sung in a variety of languages, some of which even obsolete, and the natives would understand only a fraction of the whole body of repertoire. The languages are often mixed and juxtaposed in context in the lyrics, despite each *tok ples* in the Madang area is spoken by approximately merely between 1000 and 2000. There are also arrangements from the *singsing tumbuna* with obsolete idioms, which have been favourite tunes for disco dancing. The multilingualism of song texts reflects the situation that most villages have an indigenous tongue or *tok ples* and often a *tok ples* spoken half a mile away is hardly comprehensive to many; if the syllables are enounced in distorted musico-vocal contour, it would be totally indecipherable. From a marketing perspective, the songs are better to be composed in either Tok Pisin or English so that the message of the text should attract more listeners as in the case of gospel cassettes.<sup>1</sup> A number of musicians should have command in a foreign language good enough to compose a song. But it has never really been done so: the audiences do not necessarily comprehend the whole lyrics. It is indeed remarkable not only that many songs are composed in *tok ples* without sufficient translations, but also these songs often rank high in weekly hit chart PNG Top 20 compiled by NBC FM Kalang. The cassettes are selling, radio programs are enjoyed, songs in *six-to-sixes* are danced to. However, there must be a practical logic behind such a seeming chaos of languages for some songs have attracted the audience in such a way that

they are proud of their *singsing bilong Madang stret*, or “truly Madang’s songs.”

### The *Six-to-Six* and Powerband Songs

As in other music centres in PNG, open-air “fund raising” dancing has been an integral part of performance for the guitar band music in peri-urban Madang.<sup>2</sup> Often such fund-raising is held as an all-night session of dancing; this is known as the *six-to-six* for it usually starts at six in the evening until six in the morning. In town, an auditorium of church or an oval is chosen, but in village, the dancing ground may be set up on lawn or sands. A typical village *six-to-six* has its corners fenced by fresh palm leaves tied to the sticks made of wood or bamboo about 2.0-2.5 metres high. Spaces are reserved for either a stage or fly tent for the band or a cassette deck and the amplifier. The gate is 1 or 2 kinas for adult (children under 10 is either half or free) often with a discount after 11:00 PM in which case the gate becomes half the initial rate. There is no age restriction to attend in the dancing, although usually there are more men than women are present. Plain boiled rice,<sup>3</sup> loose cigarettes, betel nuts and sometimes ruffle tickets with a price of one carton of beer might be sold inside. In peri-urban enterprises beer is not allowed to bring in the concert field for the bottles can become a weapon. Alcohol is available in the club or late-hour black-market. A number of young children are present especially in early hours accompanied by adults: they would learn dance steps sometimes as early as before being enrolled in public school. Rain does not stop the music and dancing, for it will continue until daybreak, although heavy rain in early hours can postpone the date. As hours go by, increasingly grown men under influence of alcohol and/or marihuana appear, sometimes

causing a trouble. Although public security is an essential factor to make the stand successful, no attempt is made to guard the enterprise probably because of the cost. The attire of the audience as well as the performers is basically identical with their town dressing, a T-shirt with a pair of jeans or pants.

Table 8 summarizes a *six-to-six* held at an athletic field in town as a part of political campaign.

Table 8: The *Six-to-Six* at Laiwaden Oval March 7, 1997 from 9:30 pm. to 0:30 am.

Band	Village	Repertoire	Audience Reaction
A	Furam	<i>Lokol</i>	Not many audiences present yet.
B	College (Town)	<i>Lokol</i>	Sporadic dancing. More audience to enter.
C	Yabob	<i>Lokol</i>	More than 50 must be dancing in front of the stage.
D	?	<i>Lokol</i>	Mild reactions.
E	?	<i>Lokol</i>	Cold responses.
F	?	<i>Lokol</i>	Indifference.
G	East Sepik	<i>Lokol</i>	Mild reactions.
H	Yabob	Experimental	Disruption by mechanical trouble. Negative responses.
I	Bilia	<i>Waitman Singsing</i>	Fight breaks up during a copy of "Ebony and Ivory."

Although this fund-raising was a larger enterprise than the standard one-band or cassette disco format of the village dances, the atmosphere of the *six-to-six* was basically the

same.<sup>4</sup> The Laiwaden is the name of the rugby field on Modilon Road in town. This *six-to-six* was sponsored by a candidate to Madang Open electoral ward for 1997, entitled *Helpim Yagaum Haus Sik* ("Help Yagaum Hospital"). Admission fee was K2.00 for adult, K1.00 for student. The concert started late for testing and repair of the equipment. A few married and unmarried Yabob men accompanied me. I was sitting on the lawn in the crowd to listen but left the concert field as a fight, obviously as a result of musical performance of a certain band, broke out. Each band played about 15-20 minutes, but to irritation of some crowd occasional break down of the amplifiers disrupted the music. When the gate had just opened, not many audiences were present for a town enterprise: Perhaps there were less than 300. Because it started in late evening, there was relatively a smaller number of women and children than usual *six-to-six*. We sat down on the lawn, avoiding the red spots of spitted betel nuts, to listen.

The first band to play was from Furam, one of the Amele-speaking villages. The crowd was probably too small to react, and the band received little response from the ground. The next band was a group of college students in town not far from Laiwaden. Some got up to dance to a piece that had a fast beat, which was a standard number from the Sagothorns of Morobe Province. The Sagothorns are one of the better known bands in the Momase (Morobe, Madang, and the Sepiks) region. Band C received more attention from the crowd, which was increasing to well over 300 including those watching over the fence. This Yabob band played *lokol* numbers, most of which seemed to be their original, and the audience particularly reacted to arrangements of a part of Yabob *singsing tumbuna* Kanam and Daik and a nostalgia song about Yabob islands. A crowd of about 50

gathers in front of the stage and started to dance to the reggae beat of the *singsing tumbuna* arrangements, and the nostalgia song was welcomed with screams. The next three bands were not welcomed as well as the previous bands mostly due to mechanical problems. In terms of repertoire, perhaps the audience could have shown more attention if there were some reggae-like tunes present. The next Band G was from East Sepik Province. The band might have consisted of the residents in the settlements around town. The band played their *lokoi* numbers with pieces in a triple metre, which is said to be a characteristic of Sepik stringband music. Some danced to the music, and the performance received a positive reaction. Band H was known for its strong inclination to the hard rock. Although the band did not play copies of *waitman singsing* in front of the grassroots crowd, the *lokoi* listeners did not appear very sympathetic to the experiments entailing complex harmony in their manner. The numbers sung in English with an Anglo-Saxon accent were jeered. The tension built up when the microphone and amplifier broke down and disrupted performance for a quarter of hour or so. Some audience left the field. Band I was another one with an orientation to rock. This time a fight among the audience broke up as a copy of "Ebony and Ivory" was being sung.

In a live *six-to-six*, the repertoire of the band is usually limited to the *lokoi* numbers only; although some bands excel in Western rock (*singsing waitman*), they are usually received with indifference or hurling beer bottles as Band H and I experienced. Locality is always an important factor to the reception of the bands. Since Laiwaden locates rather close to Yabob, Sepik settlements, and the dormitory of the college, it is not surprising that these bands got more reaction from the other participants. It was rather their

selection of music for which the Bilia band, whose village is adjacent to the town, received a negative reaction. As this example suggests, *lokol* pieces with some reggae beat receive a good reaction from grassroots audience in *six-to-six*. Despite that early *kopikiat* powerbands played Western tunes, currently *waitman singsing* receives indifference or negative reaction. Songs entirely sung in English, especially when the words are pronounced in an Anglo-Saxon accent—It does not seem to matter whether it is Californian or Australian—are rejected. Even compositions sung in *tok ples* or Tok Pisin with an orientation of the rock are less popular than *lokol* reggae and reworked stringband tunes.

The *lokol* numbers are always played in a moderate or fast tempo. The dance steps might often appear unsophisticated, spontaneous and, in some cases, uncontrolled in particular when alcohol and/or marihuana is consumed. Slow dancing never takes place and even a slight body contact is avoided between the opposite sexes. Arrangements from the *singsing tumbuna* are never danced in its original choreography; regardless of musical style the format of disco-dancing is maintained in the *six-to-six*, and even the numbers in a triple metre arranged from old stringband numbers are danced in the same step as the others. Although many participants go in the field to dance, a number of others remain in the corners or far from the stage to watch the scene including those who are falling asleep or taking rest: popular. The attendants may be elated by new releases of Madang bands; as soon as the music is played they gather in the centre and start dancing in a good humour, even singing aloud along the lyrics. Poor live performances receive curses and flying objects like beer bottles; obscure English pops on cassette are ignored with basic silence.

Fights may occur either the time the performance annoyingly lacking in spirit and competence, the equipment (such as the amplifier) breaking down, or the selection including too many western pops. In some of the worst cases, however extreme it may be, the confusion may develop into injury or rape, which is a cause of the bad press for the powerband music especially by moral functionaries. In case of cassette "disco" dance session, a "DJ" (usually a young man) in charge of the cassette deck, is present to make a careful selection of the numbers so that non-Madang *lokol* and English songs should not be played in a long succession. The repertoire for *six-to-six* dancing usually consists of domestic (*lokol*) tunes for the most part, intermingled with Western pops. For Western pops, heavy metal, punk, techno pop, progressive rock, rap, hip hop, and other subcultural styles are somehow avoided. Domestic songs are selected from various parts of PNG, but live bands tend to play their originals most of the time, along with other compositions from Madang.

The basic noise, confusion, interchange between vivid reaction and boredom, and the fight are all common phenomena found among the *six-to-six* in general. Naturally, amidst such general noise and confusion it is always difficult in the *six-to-six* to listen to every one of the numbers played through the loud speakers even if the lyrics are sung in a familiar language. As the concert field becomes crowded with people there are so much activities going on the scene with the speakers in full blast. It is totally up to the audience that what they wish to do such as dancing, drinking, chewing betel nuts, eating, chatting, or watching people dance. Small children might start fighting or crying, and might be scolded. Noise arises from conversation, cracking a joke, yelling, singing along, or greeting.

Some might not be participating in the scene but walking around, napping in the corner, smoking tobacco, smoking pot, or fighting that spoils the enterprise. People keep coming in and going out of the scene, and many of them would come back again when they are finished with private businesses, buying smoke or beer, going to outhouse, or taking a nap. The most essential and meaningful thing to the *six-to-six* is simply to be there, and listening to music means to immerse oneself in the whole environment enclosed. Still, the attendants do respond better to *lokol* songs than western, and among the *lokol*, Madang than the rest, singing and shouting along a few lines with the speaker.

The following tables show language use of powerband songs composed in Yabob.<sup>5</sup> The examples are taken from commercial cassettes. There are three large categories of languages used for the lyrics in the guitar band music: *tok ples*, Tok Pisin and English. Table 9 indicates popularity of the *singsing tumbuna* for about a quarter of the entire samples is clearly the arrangement from the traditional dances.

Table 9: Incorporation of the *Singsing Tumbuna*

<u>Song Style</u>	<u>Cases</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
<i>Lokol</i>	71	68.9
<i>Singsing tumbuna</i>	26	25.3
Mixed/Juxtaposed	3	2.9
Other Traditional	3	2.9
Total	103	100.0



The “Mixed/Juxtaposed” category is allocated for the songs that incorporates the words of *singsing tumbuna* in the *lokol* verse, often as a chorus section. “Other Traditional” includes miscellaneous *tok ples* songs, such as play songs, that has been known for a long time. At any rate, the traditional musical genres have clearly been an essential source for local musical ideas of powerband music.

Table 10 shows that the *tok ples* is the most favoured language used for Yabob powerband songs followed by lingua franca Tok Pisin.

Table 10: Frequency of Languages Used

Language	Cases	Frequency (%)*
Yabob	73	52.4 (70.9)
Tok Pisin	54	44.0 (32.5)
English	21	20.4 (12.7)
Bel (Gedaged)**	2	1.2 (1.9)
Amele	2	1.2 (1.9)
Bagasin	2	1.2 (1.9)
Bugati	1	0.6 (1.0)
North Coast Madang	3	1.8 (2.9)
East Sepik	2	1.2 (1.9)
West New Britain	1	0.6 (1.0)
Motu	1	0.6 (1.0)
Language unknown	4	2.4 (3.9)
Total	166	100.0 (133.5)

\* Out of 166 cases. Numbers in brackets are the percentage of cases out of 103 songs.

\*\* The songs are sung in Gedaged accent, the standard speech for Bel.

To contrast, in the stringband and bambooband song texts from the Bel-speaking northern villages, all but merely three out of 48 transcribed samples are entirely sung in non-*tok ples* languages, in Tok Pisin. Tok Pisin songs in the Bel-speaking are composed for performance in multicultural events such as inaugurations of Independence Day or South Pacific Festival of Arts. The local composers' preference to their native *tok ples* for others has been a general tendency since the age of stringband. Yabob musicians very rarely compose in a foreign *tok ples* in spite of their close kinship networks and regional identity with the neighbouring villages such as Gum, Bilbil, Bilia or Kranket. This is contrary to the fact that a number of Yabob musicians can speak these languages. The songs entirely sung in a foreign *tok ples* are renditions from other villages, and all of the Yabob songs only partially incorporate foreign *tok ples* idioms.<sup>6</sup>

The following two Tables 11 and 12 as combined elaborate the contents of multilingual song texts. Table 11 shows that language mixture occurs in about a half of Yabob powerband songs. In these songs the role of Tok Pisin appear to be subordinate to *tok ples* Yabob. While about a half of the samples entail more than two languages, only seven songs are entirely composed in Tok Pisin according to Table 12.

Table 11: Number of Languages Used in a Single Composition

Number of language	Cases	Percentage (%)
One	54	52.4
Two	33	32.0
Three	16	15.6
Total	103	100.0

Table 12: Combination of Languages (Yabob, Tok Pisin, English)

Combination	Cases	Percentage (%)*
Yabob only	33**	36.7 (32.0)
Yabob, Tok Pisin (TP)	20	22.2 (19.4)
Yabob, TP, English	15	16.7 (14.6)
Yabob, English	1	1.1 (1.0)
TP only	7	7.8 (6.8)
TP, English	3	3.3 (2.9)
English only	1	1.1 (1.0)
Other combinations***	10	11.1 (9.7)
Total	90	100.0 (47.6)

\* Numbers in brackets indicate the percentage out of all 103 samples with or without combination of languages.

\*\* Yabob lyrics include 14 arrangements from local *singsing tumbuna*.

\*\*\* Other combinations may involve languages other than Yabob, Tok Pisin, or English.

In fact, more than a third of the whole samples (or more a half of one-language compositions) are composed entirely in the Yabob *tok ples*. As many locals suggest, this incorporation of Tok Pisin is most likely as a result of the studio recording beginning around late 1980's in order to provide translations for non-Yabob audiences. No two local languages are juxtaposed or mixed without involving either English or Tok Pisin. Thus the role of the lingua franca as the mediator of lexical meaning of the *tok ples* is apparent, although the extent of the use of Tok Pisin in such a way is less frequent than it might be expected. As Table 12 further shows in the following, English idioms manifests in that it is never chosen as a major language of composition but appears as phrases in a fair number of samples. English is mostly found as an Anglicism in otherwise Tok Pisin or *tok*

*ples* syntax. Enunciation of English words usually maintains Tok Pisin phonetics: articles are omitted, complex sentences are avoided, and no rhyme is required. From the two tables it also becomes clear that English phrases are mostly mixed in the Yabob-Tok Pisin song texts: Out of 16 three-language compositions, 15 of them have the combination of Yabob, Tok Pisin and English.

To summarize, native *tok ples* has been most frequently used, either entirely or partially, along with the arrangements from local *singsing tumbuna* dance. A non-native *tok ples* would be avoided. Despite a wide access to the audience, the position of Tok Pisin remains auxiliary to the native *tok ples*. The use of English is highly dependent to other languages, and it is never expected to take place of the narrative. Thus, the basic sociolinguistic character of peri-urban environment reflects upon the selection of language in song texts where the native language triggers core imagination, being supported and translated by the lingua franca in order to complement non-native audiences. The official language (as well as the language of the pop) occasionally is inserted for special nuance to the conversation. The composers never seem to service the multilingual audience by incorporating lingua franca in their songs. Since the composers usually fluent in at least native *tok ples* and Tok Pisin, *tok ples* must be essential for some significance to their imagination.

#### Significance of *Tok ples* Idioms

The use of *tok ples* words in the lyrics appears in both arrangements from the *singsing tumbuna* and new compositions. The *tok ples* words in the song lyrics seem to articulate

things untranslatable in Tok Pisin, although many have an approximate Tok Pisin equivalent (*tanim tok*) in the lyrics from time to time. In the case of arrangement from the *singsing tumbuna*, such tok ples words can be very repetitive as a result of reproduction of the text. Many local musicians point out that the repetition is never as a result of poor vocabulary or lack of creativity; it is rather a beneficial aspect of compositions for dancing because of the rhythm. The following one comes from an old *singsing* piece from Yabob, which is made of a highly repetitive sequence of obsolete words (TT 66):

*Lima e lima e lima e lima e*  
*lima mambe e ia*  
*lima lima mambe lima lima mambe*  
*lima e lima e lima e lima e*  
*lima mambe.*

(Sandie Gabriel, *Lima e*)

This text is a part of Yabob's former courtship *singsing tumbuna* called Daik, now choreographed for public performance. The meaning of the lyrics, although many agree that once the word *lima* must have been in Yabob lexicon, is totally forgotten today. *Lima e* has a highly repetitive song text without a particular lexical meaning; nonetheless, it is an independent piece of *lokol* song. In fact, the popularity of the arranged *singsing tumbuna* pieces, such as *Lima e*, in the Madang area is by and large based on the audience perception that it is a part of their native dance piece. In fact, no composers so far have tried to create totally nonsense lyrics; it does not matter for the audience that the meaning of the words is not clear or no longer in use, but it is significant that the song sounds like a *singsing tumbuna* of Madang. Even if the origin of the arranged *singsing tumbuna* pieces is not clear, the locals would try to construct a genealogy. These are some of the phrases

often heard from the locals: “I’m not very sure where this song came from, but I remember the band members said it’s from Bogadijm. It sounds like a piece of *singsing tumbuna* in the area, too.” “Any songs that’s got plenty ‘oo’ or ‘aa’ should be a part *singsing tumbuna* Kanam because that’s how they sing the piece.”

In the cases of “decipherable” song texts, the words in *singsing tumbuna* are often delivered without any formal syntax:

*Nal e nal e nal e nal e a o*  
*nal e nal e nal e nal e nal e a o.*

*Mor e mor e mor e mor e a o*  
*a o e a o e a o a o e a o e a o e a o*  
*a o e a o e a o.*

(*Maimai*)

In the Yabob language *nal* means “day,” and *mor* means “flower.” The locals decipher the pretext of the word *nal* as some celebration of gathering on a particular day, whereas the word *mor* is understood as a reference to some garment for dancing and, on a more metaphorical level, the male genital. These words consist of basic vocabulary of Yabob language, and the lexical significance of them cannot be clearer. Yet, it is not really important for the composer, performer and audience of the *singsing* to interpret some *stori* (story), from the words. Song texts basically never entail a narrative in Madang *singsing tumbuna* but encouraged as highly repetitive. As in these cases, many coastal communities in the Momase region (Morobe, Madang and the Sepiks), the “meaning” of songs text in the *singsing tumbuna* is usually not the pretext of the song. This is contrary to other regions in PNG such as Western Highland, East New Britain, and so forth, where

the context of song can be the pretext of musical interaction (Strathern and Stewart, 1998).<sup>7</sup>

Epic and ballad have never been a strong tradition around Madang, even for the contemporary folklore or guitar band music. The *singsing tumbuna*, as it has been exemplified above, never really deals with a “story” in the lyrics, and the guitar band music appears a sort of continuation of such an aspect. The following example from Nobonob is characteristic in that the telling of a story is something never expected from songs (TT 72):

*Bainamu samiro e ro e  
ebenemu samiro e ro e  
koi yo yo yo yo  
ainumu lepa samire.*

(Yondik, *Bainamu samirere*)

The lyrics mourn: “They are legs of a man, they are arms of a man,” etc. Actually, this song is a representation of a scene from a folk tale, which no one can guess from the verse of Yondik’s song. According to the composer, the story is as follows:

Once upon a time, there were two very young brothers. One night, they went out catch fish with *bombom* (torches made of palms). When they were on their way home, a *masalai* (an evil spirit or a monster) grabbed the younger boy, who was walking behind his brother, by the leg and devoured him. The older boy heard the scream but too late. So he fled back home for his life. Next morning, the older boy came back to the scene of the attack, only to find the bones left on the ground. As the boy collected his brother’s bones in the string bag, his cry echoed in the bush: “These are the legs of a man, these are the arms of a man...”

(Yondik)

Yondik’s composition is original, and not an arrangement from a *singsing tumbuna*; this tale has never been sung as a song, but it is always narrated as a story. Without knowing

the entire story, not to mention of some command of the Nobonob language, the “meaning” of the song *Bainamu samirere* totally remains as a mystery even to the native of Madang. Yondik’s intention is clearly not to narrate the folk tale to his audience; rather, it appears as if he is imagining the atmosphere of the story into a song by reproducing the cry of the boy, *Koi yo yo yo yo yo*. Indeed, the cases such as Yondik’s make the concept of “intention” or “pretext” of composition a displacement, in view of that these cases are representative for the music-making in peri-urban Madang.

The *tok ples* diction is frequently found in the words especially when they involve facts and aspects of everyday life. First of all, there are frequently used idioms with simply no equivalent in Tok Pisin in a lexical sense. When these words are treated as an important element in the composition, no efforts in translation is made. For instance, the lyrics as in the following example, despite its brevity, would pose a daunting task for a serious translator (TT 66):

(Verse 1): *Mesi buruwan me owi ngopoloni de*  
*o hangu kankan rien so pitingini mon.*

(Verse 2): *Hagad bo mesi timu owi nibitip ngala de*  
*me tantuan ura idug itor de.*

(Verse 1): In the middle of the sea, for you I paddle the canoe.  
You should not disturb my feelings so much.

(Verse 2): Despite the sea is rough as the wind gets up in the night [it goes].  
It is not a man, a *masalai* of the waters of Ura.

(Sandie Gabriel, *Mesi buruwan*)

The song illustrates the composer’s *wantok*, a young man who was living in the young men’s house on Yabob Island, who used to paddle his canoe in the late evening to Mareg



Island in order to make a secret rendezvous with his girlfriend. An attempt to translate these lines in Tok Pisin will have two major problems because of the nuances of *tok ples* words in the original. One is how to treat the word *mesi buruwan*, which indicates the waters off shore, since Tok Pisin has no word to effectively translate this other than to make an awkward compromise of *namel solwara*, or the like. The *buruwan* around Yabob also evokes an image of moody sea, for it is a part of the rough *murin*, or open waters; it almost automatically signifies the open waters between the mainland and island that is not always safe to commute by canoe. The word *buruwan*, therefore, can enable the speakers to reconstruct the landscape around the village with little effort; a Tok Pisin translation would be too lengthy to connote the same amount of information.

The other point, relating to the former, is that Tok Pisin's limited vocabulary is likely to increase syllabic counts in the equivalent sentences, making the sound image rather monotonous by the highly redundant idioms. A local translated me the text of *Mesi buruwan*:

*Namel solwara*  
*long yu na mi save pul kanu<sup>8</sup>*  
*yu no ken bagarapim tumas*  
*tingting bilong mi.*

Here, transitive verb *bagarapim* ("to break up," "to corrupt," "to destroy" or "to harm") becomes a necessary inclusion in order to construct the sentence without transforming the original connotation, although it still somewhat spoils the consistency of the syllabic metre. Also, since Yabob verbs can indicate the subject without using pronouns by reflecting them in conjugation (e.g., *ngala*: "I go," *ula*: "you go," *ila*: "he/she/it goes" and

*dila*: “they go”), they often abbreviate pronouns (e.g., *hangu*: “I/my/mine”). A Tok Pisin translation can often require more redundancy than original *tok ples* construction.

To elaborate further, Tables 13 and 14 summarize the most frequently used words and phrases regardless of language. The words from 24 arrangements of *singsing tumbuna* and “Other Traditional,” as shown in Table 9, are subtracted from the 103 songs for their nearly entirely unclear lexicon. The gross sample for Tables 13 and 14 counts 79 each. Idioms that appear in more than four songs are counted except pronouns, particles and other modifiers with highly abstract meanings such as *uyan* (good, very much). Table 13 shows that these frequently used words actually appear in remarkable 46 songs, or more than a half of the entire 79 numbers. This means that the expression of Yabob songs is deeply focused on the topics involving quiet nightly landscape of the maritime village and some emotional addresses, if not formulaic. As it will be clarified, the core of these idioms revolves around the word *sore* or *sori*, indicating sorrow, pity, or nostalgia.

Some *tok ples* words have a Tok Pisin counterpart that frequently appears. The word *nen* (mother) is always used as an address with an alternative Tok Pisin word *mama*. *Bubengu* has its Tok Pisin equivalent *lewa* sung in a number of lyrics alternately. The grouping of synonyms are done according to possible range of imagination. However, the majority of the words in Table 13 indicate that most *tok ples* words are simply not replaceable in Tok Pisin or English. For example, *Bigabeg* in Yabob and *mundunas* in a Bogia language both mean an orphan without a counterpart in Tok Pisin. Proper names of geographical features *ilon*, *nui* and *ples/hotu* are included. Yabob, for instance, is counted technically both as a *nui* (island) and *ples* (village).

Table 13: Word List of Yabob *Tok Ples* Song Texts

N.B.: The list includes one Amele song, one idiom from a Bogia *tok ples*, and three songs with Bel idioms. Idioms with few or no Tok Pisin translation in the texts are shown with \*. The dagger † indicates a borrowed idiom incorporated in *tok ples*.

Words	Number of Songs
<i>Nui</i> [island]	17*
<i>Bubengu/Bubig</i> [darling/liver]	16
<i>Mesi</i> [sea]	15*
<i>Sori/Sore</i> [sorry]	13 †
<i>Manini</i> [calm, quiet]	11*
<i>Panu/Hotu/Yabob</i> [village, Yabob]	11*
<i>Huleu</i> [the moon]	10*
<i>Wag</i> [canoe]	10*
<i>Ilon</i> [bay]	8*
<i>Lalaman</i> [shining/light]	6*
<i>Bigabeg/Mundunas</i> [orphan]	5*
<i>Nen</i> [mother]	4
(No frequently used <i>tok ples</i> words)	33

Many of these words on the table appear in a compounded form to create a phrase, as Appendix 4 shows. For instance, the word *huleu* (“the moon”) hardly stands alone as it is but joined with other words such as *mesi* (sea) or *manin* (calm, quiet), and *hotu* (environs) always appear in the phrase *Hotu bodobodo mok ibol* (The *ples* stays very quiet). *Sore* or *sori* is incorporated in *tok ples* vocabulary today. The instances of *tok ples*-only expression, therefore, concentrate on the references to village landscape. Especially *ilon* and *wag* stand out in this regard for *ilon* has no exact translation Tok Pisin and *wag* is never mentioned as *kanu*.

The importance of a particular idiom should also be sought in terms of repetition, for, predictably, repeated words must have significance in stimuli. Table 14 counts frequency of particular idioms in terms of how many times it appears in a single song on cassette. As it has been discussed already, the significance of the *singsing tumbuna* idioms lies in its origin as a traditional dance. The frequency of words is obtained from commercial cassette recordings of the 79 relevant songs recorded by Yabob musicians to count any refrains.

Table 14: Frequency of Words

Words	# of Songs	# of Repeats	Frequency (79 songs)
<i>Nui</i>	17	74	0.94
<i>Bigabeg/Mundunas</i>	5	71	0.90
<i>Sori/Sore</i>	13	72	0.91
<i>Wag</i>	10	72	0.91
<i>Mesi</i>	15	65	0.82
<i>Panu/Hotu/Yabob</i>	11	60	0.76
<i>Manini</i>	11	58	0.73
<i>Ilon</i>	8	50	0.63
<i>Bubengu/Bubig</i>	16	45	0.57
<i>Nen</i>	4	37	0.47
<i>Huleu</i>	10	28	0.35
<i>Lalaman</i>	6	9	0.11

Although the frequency in a cassette recording is by far not the absolute version of performance, refrains are a definitely important element in Madang musical culture as in the case of *singsing tumbuna*. In addition, in the *six-to-six*, the songs are also likely to be repeated for a few times to keep the dance going.

The frequency obtained on Table 14 is based from the 79 samples so that the significance of the repeats in the entire body of sample can be seen. Statistically, the frequency indicates that the most words appear more than about once in two songs, and the word *nui*, *bigabeg/mundunas*, *sori/sore*, *wag* and *mesi* appears in nearly every song. The significance of *wag* and *bigabeg/mundunas* is impressive in terms of repeats. Especially, *bigabeg/mundunas* effectively stands out for counting 71 repeats (frequency 0.90), although the words appear in only 5 songs. The portraying of village landscape still remains as significant, for *wag*, *mesi*, *panu/hotu/Yabob* and *manini* are present. *Sore/sori* also remain as greatly important. *Bubengu/bubig* might have scored higher somewhat if their Tok Pisin equivalent *lewa* was taken account.

As shown in Tables 13, most idioms hardly appear in their Tok Pisin equivalents as the asteriks indicate. For instance, the word *panu*, which usually translate as Tok Pisin *ples*, or “village” (the plural, however, is *panu panu*). Although the natives interchange *panu* with Tok Pisin *ples* rather freely in everyday conversation, the connotations of the two words are in fact significantly different because of the social positions of the two languages: *tok ples* as indigenous language and Tok Pisin as lingua franca. On one hand, Tok Pisin *ples* sounds neutral and carries merely abstract images. *Ples bilong mi* is the Tok Pisin phrase to describe one’s home village, but it hardly gives any clue to draw concrete image of the scenery that the speaker is referring to. Unless the speaker’s identity is made clear, the reference *ples bilong mi* becomes rather difficult to imagine as a concrete landscape. The *ples bilong mi* as an abstract reference effaces the difference among stilt houses in Hanuabada, yam houses of the Trobriands, longhouses of Western

Highland, round houses made of flattened canes in Simbu, or sago-sewn roofs and totemic posts of Middle Sepik. The *ples bilong mi* becomes the most vague approximation of Melanesian tribal settlement with tropical vegetation, and, therefore, is weak in terms of poetical effect. By contrast, the word *panu*, (*hangu panu*, to mean one's native village) can evoke vivid image of the very community in which the language is spoken. The song lyrics such as the following is a typical elaboration of such a *panu* (TT 73):

*O sori hangu panu  
 bala uyan mok e ien de  
 mesi manini manini mok  
 usop tadup wag tasop tala e  
 hangu panu me bala mok e.*

O sorry, my village:  
 there are good decorations.  
 The sea stays so calm.  
 Let's go and pull the canoe.  
 My village is very beautiful.

(John Saul, *Hangu panu*)

The contents of this text are rather simple and short; here, the only concrete imagery is the calm sea and the canoe, and others words are rather abstract. In the first glance, it might appear rather mystifying in what way the "good decorations (*bala uyan mok*)" can characterize "my village (*hangu panu*)," but it is actually not very hard thing to do if anyone has spent a length of time in a coastal village. One can imagine the shape of the canoe with outrigger that the narrator invites the addressee to paddle together, which is an important specification because some other places in PNG, such as Middle Sepik, build canoes without an outrigger. The elements of *bala* as a configuration of cobalt blue of the

sea, colourful coral, fish, coastal tropical flora, sailing boats and canoes, or bright green mangroves in some *ilon* villages.<sup>9</sup> Stilt houses are built near a white sandy beach where the canoes come and go to, being surrounded by tall palms, mango trees and tiny gardens. Thus, the image of irreplaceable homeland only the word *panu* can evoke with attachment and nostalgia. The range of the meaning of *panu* is not limited to sociological group; it further encloses the artificial, natural and social environment, in which the language has been cultivated, with vivid images. As for village-specific events, *tok ples* can carry much more specific and concrete meanings than Tok Pisin.

The composers are usually the residents in *panu*, for this they are characterized as peri-urban, that they portray; however, the illustration of *hangu panu* is sometimes not devoid of fiction. In order to appropriate an everyday landscape as subject of attachment and yearning, there should be some glorification (*tok bilas*). The following text, only an English translation is presented here due to the length of the song, demonstrates a basic formula of expressing the *panu* (CHM 1136):

(Verse): In the middle of the night  
I woke up and went to the beach:  
the village was very quiet,  
the sea was calm,  
and the wind was blowing softly.  
I looked around, and the place was very nice.

(Chorus): The moon was beautiful, the sea quiet;  
I looked towards Urembu Island,  
then I turned to see Mareg Island:  
all three islands are my islands.

(Old Dog and the Offbeats, *Hangu nui*. The original in Yabob.)

The word *nui* (“island”) has as much vividness of image as in the word *panu*. Urembu Island (an older form of “Urib” is used in the text) is a tiny, now uninhabited island locates south of Yabob, and Mareg is one of the two populated islands of Yabob village, smaller but much more densely populated than Yabob, being located closer to the mainland. The lyrics, like many other songs that portray *panu*, describes a calm sea under the moonlight, where the beach, houses, trees and the sky are lit in blue so that the narrator can look over the islands clearly. The narrator gets up in the late night to see the landscape. The beauty of the quiet landscape makes him goes down to the beach to praise his native land. Serene scenery under the moonlight is one of the most favourite settings for *salim tingting*, or “sending one’s mind” in which romance, affection and nostalgia are the dominant realm of emotion.<sup>10</sup> Although the word *panu* appears only twice in Table 8, the range of imagination that other idioms create clearly represent the landscape of *panu*. As it has been seen, in a number of texts displacement takes place when the *tok ples* imagines its own community through glorifying the image of *panu* as native land. Despite Yabob is stereotyped as a village located in the *murin*, by contrast to the *ilon* area of Madang harbour, Yabob song texts usually never portray their waters as rough outside sea; instead, the view from Yabob islands are always identified as an *ilon*.

It is true that *ilons* do exist around Yabob, for *ilon* can signify any arms of waters near the land as long as they have some enclosed spaces. But even in these cases they are not necessarily placid waters always like the Yam *ilon* around Kranket as illustrated in Aksim Siming’s stringband song *Yam Ilonen manin ienmeg*. Here is an example from Yabob (TT 73):



- (Verse 1): Don't you cry, don't you cry,  
come here and get on the canoe:  
the sea is very calm.
- (Verse 2): The sea is very calm;  
so they pulled away the canoe and went  
in Malasala Ilon.

(Dogek Akung, *Uta mon e*. The original in Yabob.)

This song, translated in English from Yabo, is based on a part of *singsing tumbuna* known as Maimai by adding the second verse. In order to make the image more concrete, the composer refers to Malasala Ilon which is actually a cliff of sharply eroded coral rocks where the Japanese once dug an ammunition storage and a war hospital. Yabob Islanders often refer the point of Malasala as *Ston* (The Stone) because there is no sandy beach to harbour the canoe. Malasala is actually a ferrying point, especially during turbulent weather when the harbour of Morelang settlement, Morelang Ilon, is unreachable. Obviously, it is not important to the local audience whether the real sea, which is mentioned in the text, is always calm or not; instead, it is the image of the landscape presented in the way that the audience can appreciate the lyrics. A tranquil and moonlit *ilon* in the song texts is a realistic landscape to the locals, which appears real as long as it can evoke concrete images.

Although the syntax of *tok ples* lyrics is usually quite coherent, the words of *tok ples* compositions are laid out in such a way that the audience need not to re-/construct images from the text by properly deciphering the sentences. Each word has its own value, or density of hearing, in syntax, when it is performed in a composition, which is to develop formulaic relationship between a noun and a verb or a modifier. Some of such

associations of words include the followings: *wag* (canoe) followed by *iyowade* (to sail) or *usop* (please get on), *huleu* (the moon) described as *lalaman* (shining, bright) or *uyan* (full, beautiful), *mesi* (the sea) followed by *manini* (calm), and *panu* and *hotu* (landscape, surroundings) depicted as *bodo* (quite) or *bodobodo mok* (very quiet). When these combinations are repeated in a number of songs, it becomes no longer necessary for the audience to attentively follow meaning of the texts: one can instantly imagine formalized landscapes with their corresponding emotional values by just tuning into the these words only. Thus, formalized patterns are created such as a fair night, a bright moon, shiny stars, a beach made of white sand,<sup>11</sup> a calm wind, a peaceful sea, a sailing canoe, quiet houses and islands. These idioms are never cliché but a necessary device for delineating the longed-for landscape of *panu*.

Use of *tok ples* may also reflect the composer's social situation since the communal environment has a great significance to one's livelihood. Unlike Tok Pisin or English, *tok ples* emphasizes the feelings of everyday experience in community. Like earlier *tok ples* compositions, which were performed by community-based stringbands and bamboobands to entertain their *wantok* audiences, recent songs, too, use *tok ples* if the text is directed to *wantok* audiences. When a song intends a sort of correspondence within the community, composing in *tok ples* is a necessity. Especially when the song text renders a speech of somebody, such as in the following example, it is not to be translated to Tok Pisin, since it reinforces the range of imagery by employing *tok ples* (TT 21).

*Bi (Nen) a rien so pia mon*  
*konom hangu ngalong hei deg*  
*bigabeg hangu*

*pia dep pa naup ngeni.*

Auntie (Mother), you should not scold me so much.

I am too little to know [the proper conduct].

I am an orphan.

Scold me, but give me the meal.

(Sandie Gabriel, *Bi a*)

These words are said to be originally uttered by an young orphan, whose parents died from illness and self-poisoning successively, to his stepmother (his aunt) punish him and feed him. The word “orphan” in *tok ples* Yabob is *bigabeg*,<sup>12</sup> has no easy translation in Tok Pisin other than awkward *pikinini i no gat mamapapa* (“a child with no mother-and-father”). There is clearly no room for translating these lyrics into Tok Pisin, because if the word *bigabeg* to be replaced by a Tok Pisin idiom, the entire syntax of speech of the little boy would be severely affected by the structure of Tok Pisin. *Ad o ad o* (TT 42) is an example that the word *bigabeg* used as a metaphor, in which the feeling of abandonment of a young runaway couple (some say Sandie’s own episode). They are portrayed as eating overgrown stringy taro in the garden in the sunset, is expressed as *bigabeg*.

(Chorus): *Ad o ad o ad o udu de*  
*ad o ad o ad o udu de.*

(Verse 1): *Bigabeg bigabeg burlon mon*  
*ngator pitul hunia.*

(Verse 2): *Ma uyan hei ei ei ei*  
*mamok alan me ngeni e.*

(Verse 3): *Ad idu e ad idu e naug ngubulig*  
*ngene heig ilug imul.*

(Chorus): The sun, the sun, the sun is going down.  
 The sun, the sun, the sun is going down.  
 (Verse 1): Orphan, orphan I walk around still,  
 And I am hungry.  
 (Verse 2): There is no good food, no, no, no.  
 I eat grownout taro.  
 (Verse 3): As I turn my face the sun goes down,  
 And I think about going home.

(Sandie Gabriel *Ad o ad o*)

By contrast against the frequent reference to the moon (*huleu*), *Ad o ad o* employs rarely used reference to the sun (*ad*) in the setting: Yet this song became a popular dance piece in the area around 1990. The sun in *Ad o ad o* is easily imaginable as a rather scorching one, surmounted by the reference to wandering and hunger in the field after the harvest. Of course, the dancer at the *six-to-six* may or may not know the pretext of the composition, and they might take *Ad o ad o* as a true story of the little orphan. However, either way the composer's reference to the lone *bigabeg* in setting sun (instead of the relaxing, romantic moonlit landscape) is atmospheric in an impressive way. (Perhaps, the fact that the phrase *ad o* is repeated amazing thirty times in its cassette version also might have played some influence on the image and impact of song, as well as its simple and danceable beat.)

The words in *tok ples* has a significance in such a way that it is difficult replace with other languages; this is especially true to the idioms for village settings. Proper nouns of geographical places are essential for a concrete expression of one's yearning to the *panu*. The reference to the orphan (*bigabeg*) seems as significant in order to express sorrow and loneliness as well as helplessness, as other *tok ples* idioms sometimes emphasize. As a basic tendency, it becomes fairly clear that a strong sentiment towards yearning or sorrow dominates the tone of powerband compositions in *tok ples*. The range of imagination that

*tok ples* words present is fairly thematic for there is a marked tendency to describe serene nightly maritime landscape and broken-heartedness. The sea is calm and moonlit, the stars are bright, and canoes are sailing on the ocean; the landscape is a stereotype of *ples* scenery as well since words regarding village and geographical names are referred to. The focus of emotion here is loneliness with the references to an orphan, and one's beloved. The word *sore* appears as the singular word that represents psychological condition.

#### Addresses Mixed, Juxtaposed

Irreplaceable *tok ples* words with Tok Pisin produce a compromise of multilingual mixture in the song lyrics. A common and simple case in Yabob is the leaving out of the word *bubengu* in otherwise Tok Pisin syntax. The word *bubengu* (*bubig* or *bubeg* in Bel, *wavi* in Amele) means the liver as seat of emotion. The word *bubengu* is very often used as an address to someone dear as in the following (TT 55). Even Tok Pisin *lewa* (which appears in about a dozen Yabob powerband song texts) and Yabob *tok ples bubengu* in the same syntax seem to bear different signification to each other:

*Bubengu o bubengu*  
*yu lusim mi na yu go longwe tru*  
*bubengu o bubengu*  
*yu karimap lewa bilong mi go wantaim yu.*

Darling, o darling,  
 you left me and went a long way.  
 Darling, o darling, you have carried  
 away my heart to go with you.

(Paul Tropu, *Bubengu*)

The address *bubengu* is synonymous with Tok Pisin *lewa*<sup>13</sup> in the sense that both words means the liver and someone dear alike—there is even a possibility of influence from Tok Pisin to *tok ples* in terms of the idiomatic usage of *bubengu*. However, the significance of *tok ples*, along with reducing redundancy of wording and accommodating of syllabic count, indicates a particular social space which Tok Pisin and English are unable to produce. The locals often point out that the inclusion of lingua franca and English is actually an attempt to maximize marketing possibility beyond the Madang area. It is true that the juxtaposition of *tok ples* texts with their Tok Pisin equivalents has taken place since the advent of cassettes and local recording studio. Nevertheless, it does not necessarily explain why *tok ples* songs are still so prevalent even in the powerband music, not to mention the widespread arrangements of the *singsing tumbuna*.

When a song text becomes multilingual, as result of increasingly diverse background of audience, there appears even more cases of developing the feelings of or affections. The sound of music through something other than proper interpretation of the syntax or “meaning” of the song as the example of *Bubengu* has indicated. In reality, the difference of degree of aural comprehension, or whether one may “get” the meaning of the song or not, can vary in situation even within the same individual. Depending on physical, psychological and social conditions, one might hear things differently in a day concert situation from a nightly *six-to-six*. In fact, in addition to aesthetic judgment, songs have pretexts and contexts that generates and regenerates beside syntax for each performance, and there is no “perfect” understanding of the lyrics even in a purely lexical level. Only by means of addressing the relationship between the singing voice and the audience becomes

an event that can be imagined. Insertion of English in the song texts occasionally induces this very effect of address such as in the following example (TT 66):

*Daling taim yu bin tokim mi  
bai mi stap wantaim yu foreva moa  
o mug ilo padal  
nia kukun lon mon utor deg  
tasol lewa mi no inap ting hus long yu  
bai mi oltaim tingting long yu  
but one thing you make me wonder  
if I ever say good-bye.*

Darling, when you spoke to me, [you said(?)]  
that you will stay with me forever.  
O yet you have forgotten it.  
You no longer think [about me].  
But my darling, I cannot forget you  
I will always think about you,  
but there is one thing that you make wonder  
if I ever say good-bye.

(Sandie Gabriel, *If I ever say good-bye*)

The lyrics alternate between Tok Pisin, Yabob and English in two lines. The last two lines are an English-based structure, although they are enounced like Tok Pisin. The word *daling* in the first line is a recent Tok Pisin loan word from English “darling,” but it still might sound too western to be addressed casually in everyday conversation. The word *foreva* in the following line is another recent addition to Tok Pisin lexicon at least in Madang, although, again, the usage of Tok Pisin *oltaim* might be still more frequently in use. Despite the polylingual switching of idioms, syntactical coherency of the text is intact, as in the translation above. The third and fourth lines are in *tok ples*, and the fourth

line literally is: “you are standing with your hands,” which is an idiom meaning “you do not care.”

Although the meaning of the text as a whole is coherent, the part in *tok ples* is relatively redundant in the sense that the theme of the lyrics, a lost love, can remain evident even if the *tok ples* part is omitted. In fact, the basic mood of the lyrics is condensed in English phrases in the last two lines, as the title “If I ever say good-bye” suggests. If there is any significance in this song text, it is solely the discovery of the particular sentiment of lost love by articulating it in English. While it is possible to say it in more or less the same way in Tok Pisin, like *Sapos bai mi lusim yu o nogat*, etc., the nuance of the words “if,” “ever,” or “good-bye” will be totally lost. The phrases in English dramatize the singing voice by switching the gear of the locution; indeed, English is a useful tool to romanticize the subject because of the presence of Western love songs. English can be neat way of saying something touchy or special.

Multilingual lyrics often produce an ambiguous syntax. The first Tok Pisin lines, *taim yu bin tokim mi bai mi stap wantaim foeva mo*, can actually make two opposite senses, since the subject of the clause following *bai*. Thus: ‘When you said, “I will never leave you.”’, or ‘When you spoke to me I said, “I will never leave you.”’ The closing sentence “But one thing you make me wonder if I ever say goodbye” is not making a clear sense even as an English phrase both in within the lines and in relation to the other parts of text. It could be a mild accusation to the narrator’s lover that will probably make him say a good-bye, but the lyricist obscures the contents by his personal, if not awkward, diction. The overall nuance of the text is, however, essentially clear for the text deals with



the theme of lost love that should be fairly easily deciphered from addressing words and other expressions such as *Dalin, lewa, Good-bye, mi no inap ting lus long yu*, and so on.

The following example *So melain we'll end up somewhere* has similar unintelligible lines in English in a strict sense. This song is a stringband composition in the 1970's with an edifying purpose, shows a cautionary statement expressed in a mixture of Bel and English:

(Verse): *O nenmam kakgazen aso  
azu melain ta botea mok  
Gedaged Mitibog nead tea  
asop tetemanip taimonpa tala.*

(Chorus): *Ulong lakme naup tenasime azu salan  
egin lakoi ta talanen tea  
so melain we'll end up somewhere.*

(Verse): O mothers, fathers, and brothers, you come here;  
this is not a long talk.  
Gedaged and Mitibog have no names.  
You all gather as one, and we will go together.

(Chorus): You have done it, and you have seen it  
that we can no longer go on.  
It won't take so long before we'll end up somewhere.  
(Wesley Bosli, *So melain we'll end up somewhere*)

As the composer explains, the subject takes a voice of an old man who attempt to warn his *wantok* youngsters for not displaying proper conduct; his message has an emphasis in English as a common practice of emotional speech that might change the language in order to underscore the point. In these cases English is obviously not chosen as the language of popular culture but that of law enforcement. The phrase *we'll end up somewhere* implies

the result of current behaviour will lead to disintegration of community. Since the younger generations comprehend some English due to school education, and the phrase uttered by the old man in the text is not very difficult to understand, the audience is required to hear only but a few phrases in order to grasp the basic mood of the singing voice.

Some of the Tok Pisin phrases are also employed for poetic refinement; for instance, the composers are incorporating novel locutions involving *lewa*, which means both “liver” and “darling,” in order to articulate particular sentiment (TT 21):

*Smiles bilong yu na we bilong i stilim lewa bilong mi  
bubengu hina kagin wi ngabol de  
oru bid ilo ibolg mereme mug tator de  
dreams bilong mi yes dreams bilong mi i tokim mi tru.*

Your smile and the way you are steal my liver  
My darling, I am talking about your way,  
the two of us are in love with each other and walk around.  
My dreams, yes, my dreams were telling me the truth.

(Sandie Gabriel, *First taim tru*)

As being a typical case, the lyrics are sung in two languages, Tok Pisin and Yabob, and a few English words are inserted. The words such as *smiles*, *dreams* and *bubengu* are knit together to create a basic atmosphere of pleasure of love. The expression *stilim lewa bilong mi*, or “to steal my liver,” is obviously a Tok Pisin rendition of English idiom “to steal a someone’s heart.” The idioms involving the word *lewa*, or the seat of affection in the Tok Pisin lexicon, are found especially in powerband lyrics. The following is another example (TT 42):

*Sapos yu bin tokim mi bai mi ken tokim yu sampela toktok  
nogat na yu lusim mipela na yu go*

*tingting i kilim mipela na lewa bilong mipela i bruk pinis  
sori o David o, yu lusim mipela.*

If you had spoken to me, I could have spoken to you something,  
but you did not: you have left us and gone.  
Our feeling is hurting us, and our livers are broken.  
Sorry, o David, you left us.

(Sandie Gabriel, *Umar malain hei*)

This is intended as a lament commemorating death of a composer's *wantok* friend. In this song, the word *lewa* is joined by the verb *bruk*, "to break apart," which expresses the heartbreaking departure of the young man. The adverb for making perfect tense *pinis*, which comes from "finish," is added to indicate the finality of the event.

#### Articulating the Sentiment

Although articulation of affection has been one of the most important aspect in the song lyrics, direct use of abstract words that specify such a psychological conditions has been somehow scarce except the Tok Pisin word *sore*, derived from English "sorry." Some of the older compositions for the celebration of cultural events frequently use Tok Pisin *hamamas* ("happy") for describing the public occasion such as Independence Day ceremony or other cultural events.

*Septemba sikistin em i de bilong yumi  
yumi Papua Niugini bung wantaim  
yumi hamamas long sanap long yumi yet  
long Mekim kantri bilong yumi go het.*

September the Sixteenth, this is the day for us,  
that we Papua New Guineans to get together.

We are happy to stand up by ourselves  
in order to make our country go ahead.

(Adolf Kasemai, *Septemba sikistin*)

Here, the word *hamamas* is chose as celebrate of the independence rather straightforwardly. By contrast, other types of songs that take a subject of the sentiments in everyday life hardly uses abstract a word for happiness even if the atmosphere of the text may be. Only one case employs *hepines*, a loan word from English and an equivalent of *hamamas* (TT 21).

(Verse 1): *Webia pe foreva moa hotu mug bagen inou  
ilug haun imor longtaim bipo  
filim hatek pen na hepines  
bilang lav lav swit lav.*

(Verse 2): *Tokim mi foreva moa wantaim smail long pes  
bubengu hotu mug seseli e  
hagad War binia pa  
you can make it some other days.*

(Verse 1): Hold me ever more for it is daybreak now.  
I think to go back to the past,  
feeling heartache, pain and happiness  
of love, love, sweet love.

(Verse 2): Talk to me ever more with a smile in your face.  
My dearest, it is daybreak.  
Never mind that War is leaving you now.  
You can make it some other day.

(Sandie Gabriel, *Webia pe*)

The text is sung as an address to a lover, as the composer—War, actually the name of a of vine in *tok ples*, was a nickname of Sandie Gabriel—is leaving her at the end of rendezvous because the daybreak is near. English words are liberally incorporated into Tok Pisin

syntax such as *hatek*, *hepines*, *lav*, and the phrase *You can make it some other days* [sic] (*pen* and *swit* are actually Tok Pisin words). The word *hepines* is juxtaposed with *hatek* and *pen* in representing basic state of the feeling *lav*; here, *hepines* is mentioned without a concrete content. Despite presence of these exceptions such as *Webia pe*, impassioned feelings are rarely described as *hamamas* or *hepines*, in most other song texts, even if they might be the closest words to describe the conditions. As it has been discussed, the feeling of love always appears with addresses with intent to be not bold but creative and circumvented. These wordings can be referred as *swit*, such as the phrase “You have stolen my *lewa*,” and so on. It suggests that the state of happiness is too abstract and hollow for imagining from a single abstract word in any languages of the area.

By contrast, Tok Pisin *sore* appears frequently. This does not limit to the cases in Yabob, actually. Out of 52 transcribed compositions from the stringband and bambooband of the entire Madang area have four songs, and transcribed powerband recordings from other villages in the peri-urban Madang (Bilia, Nobonob and Gum) have eight such songs out of 40 transcribed numbers. The incorporation of *sore* in the guitar band song texts might be rather recent tendency, since non-powerband genres do not use the word *sore* as frequently as that of the powerband. It can be assumed that the “discovery” of *sore* in the guitar band music has been rather a new phenomenon as a result of dissemination and familiarization of the genre in the Madang area. It has happened to *sore* but never to *hamamas*. The word *hamamas* is used to realize the audience that they together consist a singular, however artificial, collectivity such as the Papua New Guineans, while *sore* remains to signify personal conditions which creates

rapport between the performer and the audience by identifying the feelings. It should be noted that *sore* can be used as an address as well as a noun, an adverb, or an adjective, and that it expresses much wider domain of sentiment than *hamamas*. *Hamamas* can rather be a redundant word in the carnival-like *six-to-six* concert situations; note that *hamamas* has been almost exclusively used in the compositions for public occasions.

The word *sore* derives from English “sorry”; however, the Tok Pisin usage covers a wider range of sentiment. In Madang today, *sore* has been observed as signifying basically:

*n.*, sorrow, sadness; gladness arising out of memory or reminiscence; gratitude, remembrance; *a.*, sad, sorry for, feel for, think of with feeling, sorry; *adv.*, compassionately, with pity, sadly, condolingly; also exclamation meaning Good!; or expressing sympathy in relation to misfortune, or gladness in relation to good fortune; also a term of greeting meaning “Glad to see you!” Nostalgia (Murphy 1993:103).

To add Murphy’s definition, *sore* can be used for apology also, as in English “I am sorry.” The word *sore* has been incorporated in *tok ples* vocabularies around Madang to represent the feelings articulated in the Tok Pisin vocabulary. The followings are various usage of the word *sore* in the lyrics:

*Sore boskru sekan ngamu ei*  
*o mai ngamu ei*  
*yu man bun nating a*  
*boi bilong Arop tru ya*  
*yu man bun nating a*  
*boi bilong Siassi tru ya.*

"*Sore, boskru*, I will not shake your hand."

"O I won't shake yours, too."

"You are a skinny man,

real boy of Arop!

You are a skinny man,

real boy of Siassi!"

(Jansh Talad, *Boskru*)

*Elsie ong gouz ilo sian*

*welen ong ulon ong sibe*

*zuem ong ulon sori mok*

*a ha ha ha*

*sori mok o Elsie o ngibidu e*

*Elsie ong sibe.*

Elsie, you can do so much

something that you yourself know.

The words you will hear is very sorry.

A huh huh huh,

very *sori*, Elsie, I shall leave you,

Elsie, you alone.

(Adolf Gatagot, *Elsie*)

*Salim salim pas pas sutim pepa o*

*Ai sore mi o saina na o.*

Sending letters, shooting papers,<sup>14</sup>

ay, *sore* me, my darling.

(Anonymous, *Kubak o*)

*Hina sain malain ien deg bedeni*

*sori bubengu.*

You had a long time yet to live, yet you have succumbed.

*Sori*, my dearest.

(Sandie Gabriel, *Umar malain hei*)

The word *sore* is frequently used as an exclamation to express various states of affection. The sentiment in the address is decided according to the context in which the phrase is uttered. Jansh Talad's *Boskru* (TT 113), which some says a rendition of local *singsing tumbuna*, reproduces a *tok pilai*, or jest, between a village (most probably a Bel-speaking) girl and a (likely non-Madang) *boskru*, or a sailor boy. In this case, the address *sore* in these lyrics is meant to be an irony. The audience can imagine a comical exchange between a teasing young girl and an irritated sailor boy as he is leaving, most likely, the Madang harbour. The exchange is reproduced mostly in Tok Pisin, only the phrase *ngamu ei* ("I won't do") is in Bel. Interestingly, the alternation of the two languages reflects the position of the two speakers as well. The girl and the boy do not share a common *tok ples*. The boy accommodates for the Bel-speaking girl by using a Bel phrase to retaliate to the girl's *sekan ngamu ei*, and the girl switches to Tok Pisin from Bel as she really wants to get to the point of her *tok pilai* saying, *yu man bun nating....* This sort of cross-lingual exchange in *bekim tok* ("taking back the talk") is actually observable in the everyday multilingual situation in the area.

The following three examples are expression with seriousness. Adolf Gatagot's stringband number *Elsie*, a love song, uses *sore* (*sori* in the original) to mean "sad" (for the first time) and "my dearest" (for the second time). In both times, *sore* is intended to express the sorrow of separation to one's loved one. *Kubak o*, a traditional number from north coast Madang, presumably a part of the *singsing tumbuna* called Kanam (TT 37) emphasizes repeated transaction of sending love letters. The North Coast *tok ples* word



*saina* is not be confused with Tok Pisin synonym meaning China or the Chinese (*Saina*, *Ol Saina*). In *Kubak o*, the address is directed toward the speaker himself to mean something like, “Pity me!” The lament “Umar malain hei” by Sandie Gabriel (TT 42) mourns the loss of his *wantok* friend in which the composer’s addressing of *sore* is, no need to say, appropriate. What these three examples share is the basic sentiment of loss, usually unbearable, of someone dear.

When *sore* is employed to modify the phrases, a variety of expressions might show up as in the following instances:

(Verse): *Wanpela monin mi do daun long nambis  
solwara slip sore  
kol win i blo isi isi  
mekim ples i nais tru.*

(Chorus): *Kalibobo, Kalibobo  
mekim mi sore long yu  
flying fox na lait toktok  
mekim mi salim tingting.*

(Verse): In one morning I went down to the beach,  
the sea was lying sorry,  
the cool wind was breezing softly  
making the place very nice.

(Chorus): Kalibobo, Kalibobo,  
makes me sorry for you  
flying fox and the light speak  
making me remember.

(Old Dog and the Offbeats, *Kalibobo*)

*Se brata planti man ol i kam long bung  
Ol i stap sore, ol i no lukim pes bilong yu.*

Hey brother, a lot of people came together.  
They all stay sorry, for they cannot see your face.

(Yondik, *Amen uman*)

*Kalibobo* (CHM 1014) refers to the lighthouse of Coastwatcher's Memorial, a tourist attraction.<sup>15</sup> The word *sore* here is used as a personification that expresses a romantic calm sea, then addresser uses it again in order to express one's feeling for *yu*, who is away from the addresser. Note that the feeling regarding *sore* is clearly projected onto the scenery of stereotypically calm *ilon* to compound the atmosphere of the condition of the addresser. The Coastwatcher's Memorial stands on the mainland side of the *ilon* of Yam, facing Kranket Island. Yondik's *Amen uman* commemorates one of his cousins who died in accident. Here, the word forms an idiom *stap sore*, or "staying sorry," to emphasize the feeling of condolence of the mourners.

*Kalibobo* and *Amen uman* have original verses in *tok ples*, Yabob for the former and Nobonob for the latter, and the Tok Pisin verses presented above are actually approximate translation of the *tok ples*. The Tok Pisin verses are referred by both performers as "translations" (*tanim tok*) because the composers usually compose in *tok ples* first if they ever do, and in many cases the Tok Pisin verse is a later addition only after the recording session commences in studio. However, what is remarkable about these two examples is that inclusion of Tok Pisin *sore* is not a result of literal rendition of the *tok ples* originals. The corresponding part of *Kalibobo* in original is:

*Bomu bota lon landen ngadu  
hotu bodo mok ibol  
timtain mesi ding manin mok  
hotu ileg gamun mok e.*

In the morning I went down the beach,  
the place was very quiet,  
the sea was very calm,  
the place was very nice.

(Old Dog and The Offbeats, *Hangu nui*)

(The second paragraph quoted previously in Tok Pisin is the chorus section, and it does not have a *tok ples* counterpart.) Note that the original is difficult to avoid a rather abstract and redundant wording in translation. There is no exact idiom in the original to match with *sore* in the Tok Pisin verse of *Kalibobo*. It shows that *sore* in fact has no *tok ples* equivalent, although *gadon* in Yabob and Bel are referred as a possible translation. The word *sore* has been incorporated into *tok ples* as loan word because there is no word that fits the sentiment expressed in the Tok Pisin word. As for *Amen uman*, the original words are:

*Danap naipi uita bagme mute  
se awa ya naila iya ai domi de.*

All your people and I gather but you.  
O Brother, I cannot see your face.

(Yondik, *Amen uman*)

In the *tok ples* lyrics presented above has no description about the condition of the crowd as they gather for mourning. They are gathering, but their sentiment is not directly shown in the *tok ples* verse because of the lack of the word *sore* in the lines. This case of Yondik's lament supports the assumption that there have been actually no exact words in the *tok ples* vocabulary to describe the condition of separation and mourning than the postcontact import of Tok Pisin *sore*.

The word *sore* expresses a range of emotion that no indigenous idiom in *tok ples* has ever been able to represent. As it has been briefly mentioned, in the Austronesian languages a Tok Pisin equivalent for *sore* can be *gadon*, as in the following stringband song:

*Taig gadon o me maguk mok me o woi izutime*  
*J.D. get gemadoime so mok ta iduoi...*

Brother, you are angry without reason; who will pity you?  
The Jomba Drifters are here to stay and won't go down...

(Wesley Bosli, *Taig gadon o me maguk mok*)

As this example shows, a close approximation of the word *gadon* might be “pity,” or *tarangu* in Tok Pisin, as the expression *Gadon mok!* is translated “What a pity!” or “Poor thing!” A curious point is that *gadon* rarely appears in the guitar band song texts. Thus, even if *sore* is translated to *gadon* from case to case, the range of sentiment that *gadon* can cover is much narrower than its Tok Pisin *sore*. The word *sore* has been taken into *tok ples* lexicons of a number of village languages as in the songs *Umar malain hei* (Yabob), *Elsie* (Kananam), or *Amen uman* (Nobonob), in order to express various states of emotion needed to be emphasized in the guitar band music.

The word *sore* is not simply taken into Madang *tok ples* vocabularies as a necessary ingredient to express a particular range of emotion; in fact, the range of emotion that *sore* represents also demarcates the social spaces charged with such sentiments. For instance, the text of Old Dog and the Offbeats's *Kalibobo*, again, is illustrative in that it projects the narrator's feeling onto natural landscape by describing the waters as *slip sore*, literally, “sleeping (lying) sorry.” Here, the addresser's feelings are emphasized by the



evoke responses among even the multilingual audience, however they are listening to the music in the crowded, carnival-like noise of the *six-to-six* dancing ground. The feeling for *sore*, along with other keywords like *lewa*, English phrases, and so on, almost instantly pull the ear of audience even if other parts of the song are entirely sung in *tok ples*. In a *six-to-six* situation, the word *sore* can be a crucial key for the multilingual audience to intensify the mood of the song in the field of performance.

### Conclusion

The use of *tok ples* dominates local compositions because of its irreplaceable specificity of lexicon, syntax and sociolinguistic characteristics. Song texts in the age of the powerband show a remarkable diversity of languages including various *tok ples*, Tok Pisin and English; even some arrangements from the *singsing tumbuna* reproduce obsolete vocabulary of the originals. It has to be born in mind, however, that music in the peri-urban Madang area has grown out of more or less communal practices revolving around the system of young men's house, acquisition of the *singsing tumbuna* dance pieces, local churches, and the notion of "village language" or *tok ples*. The guitar bands have been organized in terms of to the *wantok* system, and entrepreneurship is still a recent and limited phenomenon. Although the *singsing tumbuna* and early Pacific guitar band songs were acquired through mimetic reproduction, a *kopikiat* in a larger sense, local composers started to produce the new text by employing their native *tok ples*. It is largely due to that the villages have been the main social space of activity for the members of the bands, even if they perform in town or other public situations. Although the songs were composed in

*tok ples*, epic, art of storytelling through music or ballad were never in practice.

The “meaning” of the lyrics may be lost as a lexicon, but the musico-vocal sound in the piece gives the utterance a new, perhaps multi-layered significance. Juxtaposition, alternation and mixture of *tok ples*, Tok Pisin and English appear so freely, often within the same verse alternately, that the text might appear chaotic at first sight. There are even multilingual numbers and arrangement of the *singsing tumbuna* to show up on the PNG Top 20 or receive positive reaction from the audience at dancing sessions. The arrangement of *singsing tumbuna* is a reflection of a general tendency of the guitar band music in that it is not necessarily needed to decipher the meaning of the entire verse. Popularity and of the songs seem to depend upon their delivery such as in melodic contour and singing styles. The use of Tok Pisin and English remain subservient to the *tok ples* still today; the former two are combined with *tok ples* in a majority of cases despite they are official languages of the nation. Many words in *tok ples* are simply irreplaceable with their Tok Pisin or English counterparts because what they signify is irreplaceable landscape and social condition of everyday village life. There are the words regardless of language that are emphasized or repeatedly used in the song lyrics. These words represent basic atmosphere and sentiment of the entire text, and as they are emphasized in such a way, the audience can imagine the mood of the song without really deciphering the whole sections. It is interesting that throughout PNG composers hardly accommodate with the audience for fictional subjects, since the composers directly represent their identity in the text. Even within Madang, composers from inland villages never sing about sea-going canoes and islands, and coastal ones hardly refer to rivers and bush as their home. Despite

such a tendency to describe livelihood, however, intention of expressing cultural identity is rather scarcely observed in a practical level: the composers often say, “We take stories of everyday life for the lyrics.” As the composers never choose the opposite sex as the gender of the singing voice, geo-cultural switching in text does not take place because there is no discrepancy between the singing voice and the singer in real life, or at least it is supposed to be so.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cassette tapes of gospels in PNG are almost invariably sung in either Tok Pisin or English, although there have been no successful singers from Madang. Various forms of *kwaia* tapes distinctively from Central Province usually employ use Motu.

<sup>2</sup> The *six-to-six*, though, seems to be a common form of music entertainment elsewhere in PNG as well. However, for students of Melanesia, the sight of *six-to-six* often appears as a dismal consequence of capitalist influences in the hitherto unaffected societies. What Kenneth Read described as a noise of the *six-to-six* is an obvious sign of such an attitude that is in fact an illusion of anthropological hegemony, which he himself appears to admit to a certain extent (Read 1986:186).

<sup>3</sup> The boiled rice is rapped in woven palm leaves before cooking. No meals are provided in the dancing, since people never eat when they consume alcohol.

<sup>4</sup> The tension between the squatter settlements and rural communities in April 1997 resulted in an indefinite prohibition of public dancing in the later half of the year. Even in an ordinary *six-to-six*, audio-visual equipment was not brought in for security reasons.

<sup>5</sup> Since Yabob is relatively a latecomer in terms of guitar band in the peri-urban Madang, references regarding the stringband and bambooband will be based on the Bel-speaking villages consisting of Kranket, Bilia, Siar, Riwo and Kananam. Data from Malmal have not been obtained at this time of writing.

<sup>6</sup> Bilbil *tok ples* is similar to Yabob, for the difference is in idiomatic level. Only one example, which is unrecorded, employs a Bilbil usage of speech.

<sup>7</sup> Personal conversation with Don Niles in November 1998.

<sup>8</sup> My field note writes *pul kanu*, instead of *pulim kanu* for the transitive verb. As I recall, this usage seems common in coastal Madang: *pulim kanu* means to drag it to the shore,



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whereas *pul kamu* means to paddle it (Cf. Murphy 1993:97).

<sup>9</sup> Perhaps this is a reflection of their seagoing roots and lack of spiritual importance, but the Yabob people hardly identify the scenery of the inland Adelbert and Finisterre ranges as a part of their village's "*bala*" (decoration, adornment). The mountains are not the essential element of describing the Yabob *panu* but the islands and the sea.

<sup>10</sup> Relationship between the ancient courtship play song Daik and the contemporary settings of moonlit scenery is not clearly cited by the locals. There is no intention or sense of historical connection between the two genres.

<sup>11</sup> White sand is a typical landform around Madang. The north coast, which starts from Alexishafen, is filled with volcanic black sands. In the south, A long extension of coral rock stretches to Astrolabe Bay.

<sup>12</sup> A prewar usage in Bel is: "The *begabeg* or servants, if males, had to do many different kinds of wok in the sphere of both sexes. The Madang natives had three classes of people whom they could treat as *begabeg* or servants, viz. captives of war, *ai dagom* or adopted children, and boys who were sent along with people of Yam from Rai to learn the Yam language" (Hannemann 1996:19).

<sup>13</sup> For translation, I chose the word "heart" for Tok Pisin *lewa*.

<sup>14</sup> *Sutim pepa*, or "shooting papers," is another way of saying for "sending a letter."

<sup>15</sup> The origin of the name of the Kalibobo point seems to come from the point Kaliboaboa in the Finschhafen area (Zahn 1996:194), as a local elder attests: "The white men named that place Kalibobo." The giant demigod Kilibob in the Bel mythology might have very few to do with the naming of Kalibobo.

<sup>16</sup> Perhaps, this point reflects the difference between the Tok Pisin idiom *stori* (story), *tok pilai* (joke) and *giaman* (lie, composite). Most grassroots find a *stori* as being based on either real life experience or information acquired from a certain source, a *tok pilai* as an exaggeration or a narrative of comical nature, and a *giaman* as an untrue proposition. Of the three, to alter identity of the speaker is regarded as confusing, or an act of *giamanim man* (deceiving people).

THE *SORE SINGSING*: STRINGBAND LAMENT FOR CHRISTIAN FUNERAL

The *sore singsing*, literally “sorrow song,” is a recent type of guitar band music invented in Yabob and Kranket. Although the *sore singsing* has been practiced in a relatively small number of communities, it represents the development of genre that expressiveness of guitar band music has become instrumental for mortuary ritual. The invention of *sore singsing* is a remarkable phenomenon in respect to its general association of the stringband with secular entertainment and relatively recent presence in cultural history of Madang. The *sore singsing* is an example of social formation of music that has been differentiated as a new genre. To illustrate, the *sore singsing* is a stringband music assuming no specific subcultural life style; as the music is performed in village funeral, especially old women who has little to do with the guitar band music would actively respond to the sound of music with cry. Although the *sore singsing* has been frequently arranged into the cassette to characterize uniqueness of the village powerbands as in the cases of Yabob, it has become integrated into communal ways of life to the extent that some of them accompany a story illustrating premonitory power of the song. This chapter will explore performative practice of the *sore singsing* by focusing on the aesthetic devices in the case of Yabob. The central concern for the analyses of individual texts of *sore singsing* in the following sections is to focus upon representation that make the mourner to respond to the sound of the stringband music.

### The Giving of “Last Respect”

Mortuary rites are one of the many precontact practices that have been terminated with the arrival of Christianity in the Madang area. In the precontact days the corpses were carried by a broken piece of old canoe and buried under the house of the dead in a squatting position. At times, the corpses were left overnight with their family, and occasionally pieces of *kundu singsing* were played “in order to give last respect for the dead,” as one informant put it. Interestingly, in those days there were no dedicating *singsing* pieces to commemorate the death, or at least such attempts have not survived today. Although the parts from *singsing tumbuna* pieces were performed with the *kundu*, the singing was rather spontaneous, without accompanying dancing, and sometimes it was kept playing all through the night in order to “give respect to the dead”. When the missions arrived in the village, however, the old practice ceased, coffins were introduced to carry the corpses, and graveyards were prepared for the burials. The performance of *kundu singsing* was also discontinued, and hymns, in the case of a Protestant funeral, have been introduced.

The only surviving element of mortuary custom is women’s ritual cry, known as *tok sore* or *krai*.<sup>1</sup> As noted elsewhere in the ethnography of PNG (Feld 1990; Schieffelin 1976; Yamada 1997a), woman’s ritual cry in the Madang area consists of formulaic expression of sorrow and weeping. There is no age restriction to the ritual cry: even a very young child can make the cry if the language is acquired. In the postcontact era the mourners’ cry takes place spontaneously before or during the funeral service, procession to the graveyard, or the burial.

The cry is monophonic and employs rather ordinary speech registers with non-melodic vocal contour; its enunciation is in a loud wailing tone with harsh attacks at the beginnings of utterances. The language used in the cry is always either the mourner's *tok ples* or Tok Pisin, although use of the former seems more prevalent than the latter. The cry takes the form of an address to the dead in most cases, often that of accusation, rhetorical question or remembrance. The contents of the cry in coastal communities, especially when they are addressed in *tok ples*, frequently metaphorize the death as a sailing canoe leaving off the shore.<sup>2</sup> No distinction or reputation for quality of crying is recognized.

When a Madang native dies, in hospital, at home, or away from home, the closest kin of the dead will gather in the village to arrange whatever the procedure necessary for the funeral. The death would be immediately notified, and the dead body will be placed in the morgue in order to keep the corpse from decaying until the funeral commences. Yabob has two graveyards that was opened by the missions in the prewar times, one for the Catholic on Mareg Island and the other for the Protestant on Yabob Island. According to the denomination to which the deceased belonged, the village *mangi* (boys) will go over to help the islanders of the burial site to dig the grave. The women's cry can be heard in public as the last service is being conducted in the church nearby the community, where the people would show up to "give the last respect" to the dead. After the service is finished, the coffin is carried to the island by dinghy, along with the closest kin of the dead. As the coffin is placed on the beach, it is decorated by the *bilas* that is colorful leaves of various shades of pink,

green and yellow, and flowers of trees. A clergyman would watch the coffin, waiting for the rest of the crowd to be transported to the island. As the crowd gathers, the last sermon is given, and the procession goes to the graveyard. The coffin is placed in the grave, and buried by the hand of local *mangi*. Contemporary funerals have no mourning period.

The *sore singsing* can be performed during any moments of the proceeding with consent of the church authority and by request of the mourners. The songs are never played if no request is made from the mourners, in which case hymns or gospels without accompaniment. If there is a request, or the mourners wish to play it to the dead, the *sore singsing* will be sung during breaks of the ritual. In most cases, the performance takes place between the addresses and sermons, before the service or by the grave during the last moment of the burial so that the performance of songs would not disrupt the ceremony. The performers of the *sore singsing* are usually either the members of the youth organization of the church or a voluntary stringband instantly formed by the villagers. The instrumentation for the *sore singsing* in the mortuary ritual is always the stringband. The effect of performance can result in an mass expression of intense emotions if the songs are performed with a good musicianship for it is free to join the singing; women's cry is often induced by the singing, and sometimes even the singers themselves would start to cry. *Em bai moa nais*, ("It is better that way") says a local speaking of the stringband lament, *em i gutpela we bilong mipela long givim las rispek long man i dai pinis* ("it is a good way for us to give the last respect to somebody died").

As early as in 1973, Wesley Bosli of Kranket was aware of that audiences can emotionally react to some of his numbers; he composed a few songs “to make them cry” such as *O bubeg ilo so padal mon*.

(Verse):            *Good-bye my darling ah good-bye my samoei*  
                         *gazo eme sain ta ilod alanen sain*  
                         *me woi nima panag pa nug bini biniwoi*  
                         *nieg ngan tet taimon pazeg ngitiuz ngame bubeg.*

(Chorus):           *O bubeg ilo so padal mon*  
                         *samoe alap amatoi*  
                         *o bubeg ilo so padal mon*  
                         *samoe alap amatoi.*

(Verse):            Good-bye my dear, good-bye my old friend,  
                         this is the time for us to worry.  
                         as you hold my hands, we separate.  
                         You have spoken your last letter, and we stand up, o my dear.

(Chorus):           O my dear, you shall not forget us,  
                         for we are old and going to die.  
                         O my dear, you shall not forget us  
                         for we are old and going to die.

(Wesley Bosli, *O bubeg ilo so padal mon*)

The lyrics, as translated in English, sings of old age, separation and death; the singer would sing this number in early hours in the morning, when daybreak is near and the hype of the dancing ground is settling down. The audience would cry to the song with a tune reminiscent of American sheet music.<sup>3</sup> In the later stages of the flourish of stringband and bambooband, in the *six-to-six* context the people seems to have become more and more aware of the sound of the guitar band music as something that can make them cry indeed.

To this day only parts of Kranket and Yabob compose and perform the *sore singsing* for funeral and burial with a clear intent to express the loss and commemorate the

dead. Similar attempts like Yabob's *sore singsing*, to a much lesser extent, have been reported from other villages,<sup>4</sup> but there seems no inter-village influence. No doubt the general attitude among the locals who associates the guitar band music with a lower form of entertainment is apparently blocking the new practice to spread in the Madang area to a large extent. In Yabob there are thirteen known *sore singsing* composed after 1980. The *sore singsing*, like other compositions for the stringband, have no or few vocables, obsolete lexicon, arrangement from the *singsing tumbuna*; on the other hand, occasional mixture of English and Tok Pisin phrases in an otherwise *tok ples* context is reminiscent of powerband lyrics. The greatest difference of the *sore singsing* from other forms of guitar band music, however, is that the pieces are never expected as a dance: the essence of the *sore singsing* to sing along to mourn the death of one's loved one. Although the *sore singsing* usually addresses to the dead in an intimate way, a number of songs are used over for other funerals in general if the lyrics suit the situation; such "general" *sore singsing* counts four in Yabob. As the guitar band music around Madang is devoid of parody—even powerband arrangements of *singsing tumbuna* are not taken as a parody—no parts of *sore singsing* are modified or altered, in order to be used over. (Note that *kopikiat* from western pops has had only a negative value in the powerband songs.) Whether a *sore singsing* can be used for someone else's funeral or mourning in general is decided in terms of how widely the address would be applied.

As the true origin of the *sore singsing* is veiled—the locals find the practice a spontaneous invention with no direct influence from outside or the church, or even between

the communities—the definition of the genre varies according to the informant. In fact, even the generic term of *sore singsing* is not the formal one. Actually, the stringband lament can also be referred as *sore singsing*, *singsing bilong sori*, or *singsing bilong wari*. Kranket's Wesley Bosli, a church worker and one of the active composers of *sore singsing*, finds that the *sore singsing* and the “funeral songs” belong to different categories. According to Wesley, the former signifies any songs with an atmosphere of sorrow or mourning regardless of how they are performed, and the latter is those intended to sing in the mortuary rituals. As he claims, Wesley composed what he defines his first *sore singsing* in 1973, and has started to work on the funeral songs only after 1990. Yabob informants define the *sore singsing* as a body of songs either intended or suitable to be sung to the dead in the funeral. In Yabob the *sore singsing* is further divided into two subgroups: 1) those not performed for the mortuary ritual but general occasions of remembrance, and 2) those either having been performed. The latter category has two further divisions: 2a) songs played only for a particular dead, and 2b) songs played over or playable for the funeral. It seems that category 2b) stands out from the rest of repertoire since these songs in a sense became fixed numbers for the funeral. For the sake of argument, I call 2b) specifically “standard” *sore singsing*, and the rest “general” *sore singsing*. Thus, standard *sore singsing* of Yabob are *Balangut*, *Long solid days*, *Nimor wag*, and *Wag ta*, respectively. Most Yabob *sore singsing* have been arranged for the powerband and commercialized for the cassette, but I still include those performances as a lament in respect to their pretext of composition.



As in Table 15, the first known case of performance of *sore singsing* in Yabob took place in sometime between 1980 and 1981.

Table 15: The *Sore Singsing* of Yabob

(Abbreviations: Y=Yabob, TP=Tok Pisin, E=English. \*=Standard song. † =Premonitional song. N.B.: The languages appear in order of size of portion in the lyrics.)

Title	Year Composed	Language(s)	Type of Address
<i>Balangut</i> *	198-?	Y, TP	General
<i>Brata bilong mi</i>	1992	TP, Y	Personal
<i>Damag o †</i>	1991?	Y	Personal
<i>E Wap</i>	198-?	Y, E	Personal
<i>H.S. Bubengu</i>	?	Y, TP, E	General
<i>Hangu ses e</i>	198-?	Y, Bilbil	Personal
<i>Long solid days</i> *	198-?	TP	General
<i>Lui</i>	198-?	Y	Personal
<i>Nen a</i>	?	Y	Personal
<i>Nimor wag</i> *	1991?	Y	General
<i>Sad memories</i>	?	Y, E	General
<i>Sapar †</i>	198-?	Y	Personal
<i>Umar malain hei</i>	?	Y, TP	Personal
<i>Wag ta</i> *	?	Y	General

Sandie Gabriel composed a song called *Wag ta*, in order to be performed in the funeral of one of his aunts, who was dying in her bed. In those days, the stringband, along with the bambooband, was the only conceivable instrumentation for the guitar band music in the *ples*, and a number of young *mangi* were participating in the activity. As the coffin was laid on the beach of Yabob Island and about to be carried to the grave by the village *mangi*, Sandie and his band, then no name was given to it, started to sing *Wag ta*, literally meaning “a canoe.” At

first, the crowd was surprised at the presence of the stringband, and that the music they started to perform was not even an arrangement of gospel or hymn. The text goes (TT 66),

*Uuu wag ta*  
*Dirimal Ilon iyo wade*  
*bi a bi a*  
*mesi mesi iyo wade.*

A canoe  
sails along the reefs of Dirimal Ilon.  
Aunt, here it goes  
trailing the waves.

(Sandie Gabriel, *Wag ta*)

As the song was repeated, the gatherers started to cry, and their reaction became so intense that some women began to make *krai*, being stimulated by the song. This occasion marked the birth of *sore singsing*, and new numbers were being composed to this day. Despite its brevity, the lyrics of *Wag ta* reveal many of the basic characteristics of *sore singsing* that are to come. First of all, there is a reference to a sailing canoe that frequently appear in women's ritual cry, which is also a circumlocution for death; the expression "here the canoe sails" (*wag iyo wade*), and so forth, is used to refer the death of someone. The word *wag* is of course cannot be replaced by abstract Tok Pisin *kanu*, since the word has a specific reference to the local expression of mourning, such as in *tok sore* or the old *kastam* of carrying the corpse to the burial site by a piece of broken canoe. The address "Aunt" (*bi a*)<sup>5</sup> is one of many words that specifies relationship between the addresser and the dead. The place name, Dirimal Ilon (a reefy area of waters between Yabob Island and the mainland), is mentioned so that the

audience can picture the canoe sailing away from the shore, from the “lived” world of everyday experience. Use of local *tok ples*, imageries of the departing canoe, addressing and reference to the names of familiar landscape are all common techniques for the *sore singsing*.

The following Table 16 elaborates some of the most frequently used idioms in order to characterize basic rhetoric of the *sore singsing* (See also Appendix 5). The lexicon of *sore singsing* can be characterized as a special kind of the addressing to the dead such as accusation, and the imagery of a sailing canoe. Individual names are referred to so that the addressee of the text becomes clear. Kinship terms are incorporated in both *tok ples* and Tok Pisin. The words such as *hangu* (“mine,” “my dear”) and *bubengu* (“darling,” “my dearest”) appear as in ordinary guitar band song texts. Some expressions of heartbreaking is also present in *tok ples rubuti* (“to break apart,” “to be torn away”), Tok Pisin *bagarap* (“to break apart,” “to spoil”) and *bruk* (“to break away”). While it is understandable that the verbs to signify “to die” appear (*mat/dai*), the lyrics of *sore singsing* hardly contain the word *sore* or *sori*. As it will be clarified in the following sections, the atmosphere of being *sore/sori* is usually expressed through more elaborate idioms. Geographical names appear in the songs that sing about a sailing canoe (*iyo wag*). These place names are mostly within village boundary so that the image of leaving canoe can be portrayed vividly. As in the cases of nostalgic songs, the canoe sails on a calm sea.

Table 16: Frequently Used Idioms in the *Sore Singsing*

Individual Names	6
(Kinship Terms)	
<i>nen</i> (mother)	2
<i>mama</i> (mother)	2
<i>bi</i> (aunt)	1
<i>ses</i> (grandfather)	1
<i>brata</i> (brother)	1
(Geographical Names)	
Arop	1
Dirimal	1
Kuru	1
Mareg	1
Morelang	1
Panu Domon	1
Yabob	2
<i>ilon</i>	2
<i>mesi</i>	3
<i>wag/balangut</i>	4
“Not for a long time”	4
“To go away”	3
“Never to forget”	3
“What to do”	2
<i>hangu/bubengu</i>	6
<i>mat/dai</i>	4
<i>rubuti/bagarap/bruk</i>	4
<i>sori</i>	2

The theme of loss is expressed through various idioms in *tok ples*, Tok Pisin and English that signify “not for a long time,” “to go away,” “never to forget,” “what to do.” The phrase “not

for a long time” is especially favoured in the *sore singsing* for a young death, as in “you have not lived longtime yet” (*sain malain umas hei*) in *Lui*, or “your time was still more there” (*hinan sain malain iendeg bedeni*) in *Umar malain hei*. The phrases that connote “to go away,” such in *iyo wag ipadal ile* (“the canoe sailed away and is gone”) in *Nimor wag*, expresses the departure of the dead for the earth. The idioms that suggest “never to forget,” such as in *mi no ting lus* (“I shall not forget”) in *Long solid days*, and “what to do” in *mi no save bai mi mekim wanem* (“I do not know what to do”) address the attitude of the speaker to the dead. Therefore, the prototype of *sore singsing* consists of at least one of the followings: 1) a reference to a sea-going canoe, and 2) address to the dead. Of the *sore singsing* for funeral, or the lament in the narrower sense, three out of four songs have the canoe reference, and actually only one song about a canoe

Unlike the gospels, the *sore singsing* makes no reference to a religious or sacred subject, despite the fact that they are performed for Christian ritual. The *sore singsing* stresses the feel of loss to its imagine subject, the dead, in a dyadic sense to which the belief in God and Jesus Christ is not the primary topic. This aspect of the *sore singsing* highlights its interaction to the dead just like in *tok sore*. Thus, the *sore singsing* is not necessarily regarded as a sacred music in a narrow sense, and this fact has enabled it to experiment with lamentation by taking common and concrete subjects. This absence of religious subject in the *sore singsing* texts at least partially plays a role in its limited extent of practice, being regarded as a form of “secular” music. The phrase “*givim respek*” to the dead entails

manifestation of anguish of the loss addressed to the ones that deceased. The *sore singsing* is regarded as one of the best means to “make a better funeral” (*mekim fyunere! moa nais*) for the lamentation is delivered in a most sincere way by those left from the earth.

### The Art of Addressing

In one way or another, the *sore singsing* involves address to the dead. As it has been shown in Table 15, however, addressing is directed either personal (calling actual name of the person or referring to specific relationship), or general (identity of the addressee not clear from the context). Yabob musicians never replace personal reference in order to make the text suitable for another person (as in *Happy Birthday to You* in Western countries); this explains why so few number of songs are suitable to be used over. Of the thirteen examples collected under suggestion of a Yabob musician, seven of them are in fact not playable for someone else’s funeral because of the identity of the addressee, including *Wag ta*. The address of the *sore singsing* does not only mourn the death of someone beloved but also display a special relationship between the dead and the mourner by elaborating how much the loss is felt by the latter. Such songs signify identity of the dead by either referring to the name or relationships as in the following:

(Verse 1):        *O brata bilong mi longpela rot yumi kam pinis*  
                      *nau tasol yu dai lusim mipela nau*  
                      *dal malain toren mug tatol ke.*  
                      *mereme biniag hibug ketei.*

(Chorus): *San bai sain i kam long mi mun bai sain i kam long mi  
tasol yu bai i no inap  
win bai blo i kam long mi rein bai pundaun wasim mi  
tasol yu bai i no inap.*

(Verse 2): *San i go daun na mun i kam antap  
mi lukluk i go na tingting i bagarap  
mi save mi no inap lukim yu gen  
o hagad tingim longtaim bipo.*

(Verse 1): O my brother, a long way we have come:  
just now you died and left us.  
A long way we have walked along;  
now you left me alone.

(Chorus): The sun will shine on me, the moon will shine on me,  
but you will never.  
The wind will blow on me, the rain will fall and washes me,  
but you will never.

(Verse 2): The sun has gone down, and the moon has come up.  
I turn my eyes, and my feeling is broken.  
I know I will not be able to see you again,  
no matter how I remember longtime ago.

(Willie Tropu, *Brata bilong mi*)

The addressee in Willie Tropu's *Brata bilong mi* (TT 73) is Sandie Gabriel, who died in accident. The composer's feeling of the eternal loss, which it is directly sung to the dead, is displayed in public rhetorically by the copulate phrases that juxtapose the sun for the moon, and the wind for the rain. Also, the lyrics repeatedly emphasize camaraderie between the two men by punctuating the composer's intimacy towards the addressee. As in this *Brata bilong mi*, rhetorical devices in the *sore singsing* construct the discursive structure of the lyrics with little ambiguity.

The lyrics of *sore singsing* might take a form of accusation for having died in a

young age.

*E Wap sain malain umas hei de  
hina damag he bedeni  
he he diwarau deg  
e Wap you are too young to die.*

Hey Wap, you have not stayed for a long time yet.  
You have broken your youthfulness.  
They have all cheated you out.  
Hey Wap, *you are too young to die.*

(Willie Tropolu, *E Wap*)

(Chorus): *Uuuu uuuu ulong ulong deg  
kagin alanmeg unoug utore.*

(Verse 1): *Lui sain malain umas hei  
hina damag bedeni  
umat ule  
umat umat ule.*

(Verse 2): *Gomu ngapau deg tinatama din dipaudeg  
ulong deg awama  
awama biti e  
awama awama biti e.*

(Chorus): Oooo oooo you knew, knew it,  
yet you have done wrong and gone around.

(Verse 1): Lui, you have not stayed for a long time.  
You have broken your youthfulness.  
You are dead and gone,  
you are dead, dead and gone.

(Verse 2): I always spoke to you; your parents, too, spoke to you.  
You heard it and disobeyed,  
you disobeyed,  
you disobeyed, disobeyed.

(Willie Tropolu, *Lui*)



The two young men, Wap and Lui, were Willie's relatives and friends, both of whom died in violence for an alleged crime in an early age. *E Wap* was composed in 1983, and *Lui* (TT 21) was probably sometimes later but not after 1988, when Willie's stringband Old Dog and The Youth recorded the number for a local radio program. Both songs were not performed in the funerals, since they have proper names of the addressees. The phrase *hina damag (he) bedeni*, translated as "you have broken your youthfulness," is a typical *tok sore* for mourning the death of a young person. Although the two examples accuse their addressees' untimely deaths, the addressers' sympathy and pain are apparent in these words. In *E Wap* the young man's death is blamed to his surroundings, and in *Lui* the repetition of the phrases as well as the *krai* "Oooo oooo" portray anguish of the addresser being powerless against the fate of Lui.

*Hangu ses e* in the following, composed by Willie Tropu while he was serving his term in Beon Corrective Institution, is one of the earliest examples of *sore singsing*, although it was not sung in the funeral of the man because he died in jail.

- (Verse 1):        *Nima pauk abenlon*  
                       *ngamaid sinasin oru*  
                       *youra uyan ta lon*  
                       *gomu ta ise ngalong*  
                       *hangu ses e hangu ses e imat e.*
- (Verse 2):        *Ad mug idu e*  
                       *lalaman kobolu mok*  
                       *maya rug rien idu*  
                       *ilingu rubuti mok*  
                       *hangu ses e hangu ses e imat e.*

(Verse 1): I am staying in jail:  
 I have been here for two months.  
 In a good afternoon,  
 a message came and I heard it:  
 my grandfather, my grandfather is dead.

(Verse 2): The sun goes down,  
 and the evening is beautiful.  
 My tears are dropping very much,  
 and my heart is truly broken:  
 my grandfather, my grandfather is dead.

(Willie Tropu, *Hangu ses e*)

Since the addressed *ses* died while he was in jail and composer, too, was convicted this song was not performed in the funeral of the man; it was, however, played in a gathering held in memory of the man, and Willie sung the song there.<sup>6</sup> The phrase *ngamaid sinasin oru*, in the second line of the first verse, is addressed in the *tok ples* of Bilbil, the native language of the old dead man, whereas it is *ngamas huleu oru* in Yabob. As this example indicates, the use of *tok ples* reflects personal quality of addressing in the *sore singsing* for such use of ‘foreign’ *tok ples* in the guitar band composition in general in order to accommodate to a ‘hetero-lingual’ audience is extremely rare.

*E Wap* serves a good example of inclusion of English in the lyrics. The closing line *E Wap, you are too young to die* is a condolence to the dead, in the manner of powerband lyrics in which English phrases articulate the psychological condition of the addresser. The

followings are some other instance of *sore singsing* in which English is incorporated; note they are incorporated as an important element for the expression in regard to construct particular space of discourse.

(Verse 1): *Timu bangen lon*  
*ngotour hinan hei*  
I wish *sapos yu wantaim*  
*bai mi inap strong tumas.*

(Verse 2): *Bai mi kam strong tumas*  
*mulug ila ise*  
*mayarug rien idu*  
*mi tingting bek long yu.*

(Chorus): *H.S. bubengu*  
*ha ha sori o*  
*bubig rubuti.*

(Verse 1): The eye of the wind:  
I am not able to stand up still.  
*I wish* if I were with you  
so that you give me strength.

(Verse 2): The wind is blowing too strongly.  
I turn my eyes:  
Tear is dropping too much.  
I am thinking back of you.

(Chorus): H.S. dearest,  
ah, ah, *sori o*.  
My heart is breaking.

(Sandie Gabriel and Willie Tropu, *H.S. bubengu*)

(Verse 1): *Ses kagin ngawi unou keme*  
*ihug padal inan hei e*  
sad memories *rien mok beni pana*  
sad memories *rien mok beni pana.*

(Verse 2): *Sainmug malain gese* I'm still thinking of you  
*ihug padal inan hei*

*abitawi memories rien mok*  
*memories rien mok beni pana.*

(Verse 1): The way of ancestors that you have worked on me  
that I shall never forget.  
You left a lot of *sad memories*  
You left a lot of *sad memories*.

(Verse 2): Now a longtime has past  
that I shall never forget.  
Why did you leave a lot of *memories*?  
You left a lot of *memories* of you.

(Sandie Gabriel, *Sad memories*)

The man, referred as just in his initials in *H.S. bubengu*, died in a young age from a sudden illness. In this lyrics English phrase “I wish” appears briefly in order to construct a subjunctive mood, which might use too many syllables in an otherwise Tok Pisin phrase. Especially among the younger generations the expression “I wish” can take place often in the writings of greetings, such as “I wish you a merry Christmas,” “I wish a good luck,” and so forth. In this case, too, the address “I wish” is used as a mixture of contemporaneity and formality. The addressee’s age in the lyrics of *Sad memories* (TT 66) is not very clear, but it was probably a grown man because of the reference in the beginning line *ses kagin*, literary “ancestral conduct” or *kastam*. Here the phrase *sad memories* repeatedly appears, along with *I’m still thinking of you* in the beginning of the second verse. Use of English phrases in the *sore singsing* for young persons reflects linguistic environment of the younger generation in which English is given a special representation of sentiment other than literalness, urban and colonial elitism, intellectual sophistry, prestige, or the pop.

The *sore singsing*, as it might be predicted, employs the Tok Pisin word *sore*; as in the case of the above-quoted *H.S. bubengu*, even if the entire lyrics are sung in *tok ples*, the word *sore* can be used rather selectively to express the feeling of mourning. The following example is another, and even more clear, instance where the word *sore* is employed,

(Verse 1):       *Umar malain hei tamasdeg binama  
pik ta tamas hei  
hina sain malain iendeg bedeni  
sori bubengu.*

(Chorus 1):     *Piap ngalon pe gomu uyan ta ngapau pe  
heiga binamag o ule e  
kankan hunamag bubama rubuti mok mok e  
sori o hangu e o ule e.*

(Verse 1):       It is not a long while that you lived and left us;  
it is as if you have never been here.  
You have a long time more to live, yet you are ruined.  
*Sori* my dearest.

(Chorus 1):     If you were able to speak, I would say something good to you.  
But no, you left us and you are gone.  
Our feelings are struck, and our hearts are truly broken.  
*Sori* my dear, you are gone.

(Sandie Gabriel, *Umar malain hei*)

The powerband version of *Umar malain hei* (TT 42) has a translation in Tok Pisin for the second verse as a later addition. The addressee of *Umar malain hei* is a young man who suffered a sudden illness and died. *Umar malain hei* was not ready for the funeral, but played for commemorating gatherings held in the community. The figure of speech in *Umar malain hei* somewhat resembles that of stringband and powerband love songs in terms of frequent

accusations, expression of anguish, heartbreak, and emphatic language switching. Formulaic expressions that question the dead for having died early is prevalent throughout the text, which is each time concluded with the interjection *sore*. Other patterned phrases, such as the ones that refer to broken-heartedness, are present. The address in the *sore singsing* has a consistent subject, the dead, as the previous examples have illustrated. The word *sore* has never been used as a self-pity or general interjection, but to mourn the death of someone beloved. When the addressing in a particular *sore singsing* is regarded as applicable to other mortuary rituals, it would be performed repeatedly as a 'standard' number.

#### A Canoe Named *Nimor*

There are at least three pieces of *sore singsing* that have been performed in actual ritual. The original *sore singsing* is hardly composed for the funeral since death takes place rather unexpectedly without leaving much time for composition, and people are preoccupied with undertaking of the ritual with little time to rehearse. The older compositions are more likely to be performed for the funeral. Interestingly, however, all pieces for the mortuary ritual have something to do with canoes. The imagery of sea-going canoe, which is still the only means of everyday transportation to some islanders, invokes passages of life, particularly the one from life to death. Before the Japanese invasion of Madang in 1942, the sea separated the island compounds from the uninhabited mainland. The people traded their clay pots seawards, and went off shore for fishing; they also commuted to the mainland for gardening and procuring

the clay for the pots, or to make war against hostile tribes. When a villager died, the corpse was carried by a piece of an old canoe. Thus, the image of sea-going canoe has been an important nexus of poetical meaning that illustrates life and death in the community as in the words of some old *singsing tumbuna*:

(Verse 1):        *Uta mon e uta mon e*  
                       *uta mon e uta mon e*  
                       *uta mon e uta mon e*  
                       *waglon udusi.*

(Verse 2):        *Uta mon e uta mon e*  
                       *uta mon e uta mon e*  
                       *uta mon e uta mon e*  
                       *hangu tang me borou panap.*

(Verse 3)        *Uta mon e uta mon e*  
                       *uta mon e uta mon e*  
                       *uta mon e uta mon e*  
                       *you nombu me yesi panap.*

(Verse 1):        Do not cry, do not cry,  
                       do not cry, do not cry,  
                       do not cry, do not cry,  
                       get on the canoe.

(Verse 2):        Do not cry, (etc.),  
                       fetch me my baggage.

(Verse 3):        Do not cry, (etc.),  
                       fill up the water container and give it to me.

(Old Dog and The Offbeats, *Uta mon e*)

*Sirori o sirori e*  
*wange damon a*  
*sirori o sirori e*  
*same damon a.*

*Sirori o, sirori e*  
 on the edge of canoe.  
*Sirori o, sirori e*  
 on the edge of outrigger of the canoe.

(Kale Gadagads, *Sirori e*)

*Uta mon e* (TT 55) is a part of dance piece Maimai, and *Sirori e* (TT 66) a part of former courtship song genre Daik. *Uta mon e* portrays a scene of long-distance voyage, to which a youngster hesitates to participate despite persuasion; the phrase *you nombu yesi pana*, literally “fill up the *nombu*—a water container made of a halved coconut shell— and give it to me,” suggests the destination is far away. *Sirori e* praises the decoration made of pig’s tusks that are usually stuck on the front body and the outrigger of the canoe. These songs point out that the sailing is regarded as a kind of threshold between the everyday and different worlds; anxiety and hesitation expressed in *Uta mon e* and festivity alluded in *Sirori e* represent sailing by canoe as going out into different social spaces from the everyday life.

The image of sea-going canoe is a typical device in the text of *sore singsing* such as in the following:

(Verse):            *Ngalon hei e ngabol inan hei e*  
                          *hangu Nimor wag donden mok rebesi ne*  
                          *Dolou banganlon iyo wag iyo wag*  
                          *iyo wag ipadal ile.*

(Chorus):           *Hangu Nimor wag donden mas de*  
                          *uuuu wug wabip ngalon pe*  
                          *Mareg buruwanlon Yabob buruwanlon*  
                          *iyo wag ipadal ile.*

(Verse):            do not know how I should speak of it.  
                          My canoe Nimor, where has it truly gone?  
                          It sailed away to where the Dolou wind is blowing,  
                          and it disappeared.



(Chorus): My canoe Nimor where are you?  
Answer to me so that I can hear from you.  
Among the waters of Mareg, among the waters of Yabob,  
the canoe went sailing and disappeared.

(Sandie Gabriel, *Nimor wag*)

*Nimor wag* (TT 66) is composed to mourn the death of a man from a subclan of the Kakon clan of Yabob, Kakon Nimor Darem, which literally means “Kakon of the Nimor young men’s house”; the composer belonged to this subclan, and the dead was one of his uncles. Here, Sandie refers to his uncle’s canoe named Nimor after the name of their subclan. For Nimor was the dead man’s personal canoe—there are canoes for family and for person—the reference of it works as a symbol, a synecdoche, to signify the dead. The reference to *Nimor wag* is also allusive of the old *kastam* of carrying a corpse on a piece of broken canoe.

All song texts with a reference to a canoe describe it in *tok ples*, never in Tok Pisin *kanu*. As it has been elaborated in the previous chapter already, such a distinction of preferring *wag* for *kanu* is deeply rooted in the predisposition of guitar band songs. Peri-urban guitar band compositions have been inspired by communal ways of life and experience; in order to express them, appropriate combination of words from the multilingual situation has been sought with a great effort. Among the languages used in everyday life, *tok ples* is regarded as the best one for describing things inside of the village or of addressing to a member of the same community. The prevalence of *tok ples* in the *sore singsing* with references to canoe has similar characteristics. The *tok ples* words create detailed images of village lives since its historical background has made it the language inside of village against lingua franca

Tok Pisin and official English. For instance, in *Nimor wag* it would be completely inappropriate to refer to the canoe as *kanu*. This not because of the entire text being sung in *tok ples*—since juxtaposition or switching of languages is common even among the *sore singsing*—but because the dead named his own vessel as *Nimor wag*. As in the case of *panu* against *ples*, *wag* instantly signifies a sea-going canoe whereas a *kanu* might signify any types of canoe wherever they are used. Therefore, when a local says to an outsider that corpses are used to be carried by a piece of old *kanu* and that a sailing *kanu* symbolizes the dead, the lexicon of *kanu* is a result of interpretive negotiation between the local and the outsider to signify the *wag*.

Although today the word *wag* signifies the canoe, or even means of transport in general as a metonymy,<sup>7</sup> it used to mean only one type of canoes in the narrowest sense. In the prewar days before the relocation program during the colonial administration resulted in loss of the art of canoe-building there was another type of canoe specifically called *balangut*, as in the lyrics of *sore singsing Balangut*.

- (Chorus):        *Balangut o iyowa e balangut o iyowa e*  
                       *balangut o iyowa e balangut o iyowa e.*  
                       *inan sain hei deg*
- (Verse 1):        *Ngalong hei e dodog ngono wi*  
                       *gomu ta ngabol hinan hei*  
                       *hangu balangut iyo wag iyowa e. (To Coda)*
- (Verse 2):        *Hangu balangut wag iyowa e*  
                       *hinan sain hei deg iyo wag ile e*  
                       *bubig ainta rubuti. (To Verse 1)*

(Coda):           *Mi no save bai ki mekim wanem*  
                      *mi no save bai mi toktok wanem*  
                      *hangu balangut iyo wag iyowa e.*

(Chorus):         *Balangut, o it sails now,*  
                      *Balangut, o it sails now.*  
                      It is not the time for it yet.

(Verse 1):         I do not know what to do,  
                      I do not know what to say:  
                      my *balangut* sails now. *(To Coda)*

(Verse 2):         My *balangut* sails now.  
                      It is not the time for it yet, but it sails now.  
                      My heart is broken. *(To Verse 1)*

(Coda):            I do not know what to do,  
                      I do not know what to speak,  
                      My *balangut* sails now.

(Willie Tropu, *Balangut*)

The *balangut* is a two-masted large canoe that is no longer curved today. As the redundant phrase *balangut wag* at the beginning of second verse indicates the word *balangut* is becoming obsolete.<sup>8</sup> But the scene of the text is never felt in practice as out of date; in fact, this number has been played for several occasions of mortuary rituals, and is the most frequently sung *sore singsing*.<sup>9</sup> The text of *Balangut* is fairly repetitive, yet because of this repetitiveness it is capable of invoking a vivid image of sailing canoe that is about to leave the shore, or someone who has just departed from the earth. The repetitiveness of *Balangut* also might have helped the band to learn it instantly in the mortuary rituals. The word *balangut* brings a variety of sound-image referring to sea-going canoes. In the *sore singsing*, the reference to *balangut* or *wag* instead of *kamu* instantly creates an image of a canoe sailing out to the ocean. The canoe reference is always imagined as a leaving one because the *sore*

*singsing* signifies someone leaving this world.

The *tok ples* proper nouns in the *sore singsing* illustrate the passage and destination of the depicted canoe. The itinerary of the canoe in *Nimor wag* is indicated by the phrases *Dolou bangen lon*, literally meaning “toward the side of Dolou,” and *Mareg Buruwan lon Yabob Buruwan lon*, “between the waters of Mareg, between the waters of Yabob.” Dolou is the name of north or northeast breeze that blows in from the ocean between the mainland and Yabob Island. When Dolou blows, the wavy *murin* waters become very calm, sometimes as placid as a mirror, as if it was inland *ilon* waters.<sup>10</sup> Dolou is perhaps regarded as the most suitable of all kinds of wind for the representing condolence for it blows softly and makes the sea peaceful. As a canoe normally sails in a fine weather, the reference to Dolou helps to construct an image of a quiet landscape like Yabob nostalgia songs do: *Hangu panu* (TT 73), *Hangu nui* (CHM 1014) or *Uta mon e* (TT 73) are some of such examples. However, the representing of quiet landscape in the *sore singsing* has a slightly different significance from guitar band nostalgia songs. For example, the lyrics of *sore singsing Nen a* (TT 66) quotes a dying message of an old man who refers to his calm end by the phrase *timtain mesi e wi timu din manin mok* (“the cloud and the sea, the rain and the wind are staying very calm”). Not only the canoe should select a fine weather for a long voyage but also sailing on a rough sea is suitable for describing the last moments.

Names of places that appear in *sore singsing* always mark the route of the canoe by calling names of islands or areas of waters. In *Nimor wag* waters between Mareg and Yabob

are indicated so that the audience can imagine the course of Nimor sailing between the islands and going northeast to the open waters. *Wag ta* describes the canoe pass by the Dirimal Ilon, a coral reef between mainland Malasala cliffs and Yabob Island. Other geographical points that appear in the *sore singsing* in relation to the theme of voyage are. They are Morelang Ilon, Arop Island, and the Kuru reef in *Damag o* (TT 55), and Panu Domon (of Bilbil) in *Nen a* (TT 66). The Morelang Ilon is an arm of water near the mainland compound of Yabob village where the canoes of the island use as the harbour. Arop is the local name of a doughnut-shaped island in the Bismarck Sea near the border of Morobe Province. Kuru is a reef near Yabob Island. Panu Domon is literally “Point of the Village,” which is the name of a section of Bilbil Island. With the exception of Arop Island, which is some 150 kilometres away from Madang, the points are areas of everyday activity to the locals. By naming specific places the image of sailing canoe no doubt becomes concrete, and the motion of the canoe (hence the dead) vanishing becomes vivid. Such place names are not necessarily “markers of history” (Kurita 1988) for the everyday geographical names do not take an active part in the oral tradition. But, they do invoke and strengthen reminiscence of the dead as a collective memory by connecting the images with the place names in the *sore singsing* song texts.<sup>11</sup>

The *sore singsing* of Yabob portrays quiet maritime scenery as its guitar band song texts. However, the *sore singsing* focuses on the image of sea-going canoe for highlighting the imagery of a quiet departure, as the wind Dolou alludes to. The geographical feature of

*ilon*—“cove” or “sound” might be a close equivalent in English, although the locals say that it is *olsem bei*, “a kind of bay”—also adds to such imagery of *sore singsing*. In *Wag ta* the addresser calls the reef of Dirimal as an *ilon*, and also the lyrics of *Damag o* mentions the natural harbour of Morelang as another *ilon*. To call geographical feature such as *ilon* is not necessarily a fiction, since an area of waters with coral reefs as well as a natural harbour, hence relatively calm, are included in the lexicon of *ilon*. Still, as it has been pointed out previously, the definition of *ilon* includes connotation of calm waters while Yabob is stereotypically referred as a *murin* country in contrast with the *ilon* villages Bel-speaking area that locate *insait long Basis* (“inside of Cape Barschtch”). It is therefore necessary to call the waters around Yabob as *ilon* in each phrase in order to emphasize serenity of the sea in the landscape portrayed in song texts, not the stereotypically rough *murin* around Yabob. The significance of specially calling these waters as *ilon* in the lyrics of *sore singsing* is a common technique for Yabob composers who find that the waters around their land is categorized in *tok ples* as *murin* in the Madang area.

The imagery of canoe with illustration of calm local waters on which the canoes sail consists of the main description of *sore singsing*. As the *sore singsing* is performed in the mortuary rituals and other informal occasions of mourning, the mourners would respond to the lyrics essentially by the imagery of the canoe along with the kind of landscapes that make them *filim sore* (“feel sorry”) or *salim tingting* (“remember in memory”). It is a scene of peaceful sea on which the canoe sails until it disappears in the horizon. The imagery of canoe,

quiet landscape and familiar geographical points around village all remind the audience of traditional and everyday life in community in which the sorrow of losing someone dear takes place. The hard facts of life should be mediated through lamentation while the imagining of a communal environment plays a significant role.

### Textual Treatment of *Sore*

Some *sore singsing* are distinctive for discursive complexity in the sense that the original context of the speech is altered. The following song is entitled *Nen a* (TT 66) which laments the death of a relative of the composer:

(Verse): *Nen a e mala bisapa*

*hotu mei nehi*

*ge mereme hangu sain pisini*

*timtain mesi e wi timudin manin mok*

*nen a e so uruti mon ngame hingan tibun.*

(Chorus): *Nen ngame Panu Domon me hingan*

*nen a e so uruti mon ngame hingan tibun.*

(Verse): *Nen*, raise your head and look around,  
see the place above us.

Although my life is about to end,

the cloud and the sea, the rain and the wind stay calm.

*Nen*, do not be frightened, for I have inherited the power over them.

(Chorus): *Nen*, I am man of the Panu Domon clan.

*Nen*, do not be frightened, for I have inherited the power over them.

(Sandie Gabriel, *Nen a*)

The text of *Nen a* contains multiple phases of discourse not only because of the complex lexicon of the word *nen* but also the multi-layered context of composition. The addresser in *Nen a* is speaking to his daughter; therefore, the closest approximation of this instance of *nen* in English might be address “Daughter.”<sup>12</sup> The lyrics of *Nen a* are actually a quotation of the last words uttered by an old dying man to his daughter crying. The man was sick in bed for a long time, and now that his condition was worsening, his daughter was called in the ward to exchange their last conversation on earth. The old man, however, was very calm despite his illness, and tried to placate his daughter by suggesting his peaceful departure. In the text, he refers to the weather, which was described as very fine, as a figurative speech for his physical condition. The line *ngame hinan tibun*, literally “I am a *tibun* of this thing,” represent his ability of magic, however imaginary or real, to pacify the weather; here, he relates the calm weather as a result of his magic. The word *tibun*, again, is a difficult one to find an exact translation in English; it means ancestor or descendants of the same ancestor through which magical power and knowledge is passed on. The idea of the word *tibun* entails a sense of heritage that is to be carried on to the future.

The narrator of the text of *Nen a* weaves out an image of supernatural phenomenon by referring to the magical knowledge of his clan Panu Domon. The clan of Panu Domon in Bilbil, whose name comes from a piece of land on the island where they once resided, was known sailors. The magic that they passed on over the generations consisted of a prayer to pacify the weather so that the canoes could sail long distance without trouble.<sup>13</sup> The theme of



pacified weather, therefore, has a strong relationship with safe voyage, and it was presumably chosen by the old man in order to express how peaceful his own end was going to be. Although there is no specific reference to canoe, the subject of the text is clearly signified by images of a voyage. The old man's address was an announcement of his death, which he himself was sensing near, and was made clear by appropriating traditional image of pacified weather, ancestry, magic, and place name. Composer Sandie Gabriel adopted the old man's words into a song by mentioning the place name of Panu Domon, along with the magical significance of the clan, which the addresser successfully created the image of departure by canoe to the audience.

Contrary to most other *sore singsing* texts, in *Nen a* the addresser and the composer are not identical. The text of *Nen a* was actually rendered by Sandie Gabriel during the funeral of the old man who died shortly after his last address reproduced in the song. In the funeral of the old man the text was delivered as the woman's ritual cry. The speaker of the words as *tok sore* was the old man's daughter herself, who was addressed as *nen* in the text of "Nen a." She was mourning her father's death by recollecting what was being said to her on the old man's deathbed. Thus, there is a transposition of identity in the text of *Nen a*; at first the dying old man was speaking to his daughter, then the old man's daughter commemorated her father's death by reproducing his speech, and finally Sandie Gabriel reconstructed it as a song. It is fairly clear that the singer's voice reproduces that of the crying daughter at the funeral. On the cassette version of the song Sandie places a strong attack on the address *nen a* each time and

stretches its vowels so that the phrase might be heard as an imitation of crying or weeping.<sup>14</sup>

It must be stated, however, that reproduction of speech in the text is usually not be regarded as a *sore singsing*, even if the lyrics contain the theme of sorrow and death. The following *Bi a* falls in an ambiguous area between *sore singsing* and general songs about misery, although the message and context of the lyrics are rather striking.

(Verse 1):        *Bi (Nen) a rien so pia mon*  
                      *konom hangu ngalong hei deg*  
                      *bigabeg hangu*  
                      *pia dep pa naup ngeni.*

(Verse 2):        *Hangu nenman ger dimat e*  
                      *ulong ulong deg pia de*  
                      *bigabeg hangu*  
                      *pia dep pa naup ngeni.*

(Verse 1):        Auntie, (Mama) do not be angry with me so much,  
                      I am still small and do not know a thing.  
                      I am an orphan.

(Verse 2):        You can scold me, but give me the meal.  
                      My parents have been dead already.  
                      You know, know it, yet you scold me.  
                      I am an orphan.  
                      You can scold me, but give me the meal.

(Sandie Gabriel, *Bi a*)

The speaker in the text was one of the composer's cousins, then very young, whose parents passed away rather tragically. The orphan's mother died from illness, and his father, being depressed by the death of his wife, committed suicide by poison that he prepared for himself by extracting from a kind of vine. The children were left behind by their dead parents, and

were looked after by their aunt (*bi*). One day, one of the children was punished for some misconduct, and his meal was suspended; the text of *Bi a* is the words of young boy pleading to his aunt. The lyrics repeats in the second time by replacing *bi* (aunt) for *nen* (mother) probably because that was how the boy called his aunt, since she was his adoptive mother as well.

Despite the young boy's reference to his parents' death (*dimat e*, "they died"), *Bi a* is not considered to be a piece of *sore singsing*. A tragedy of the derelict in hunger is a typical image of condition qualified as *tarangu* ("miserable") in guitar band song lyrics, as in the texts of *Ad o ad o* (TT 42), *Kros bilong tupela* (TT 21) or *Mundunas* (TT 37). However, it neither invokes the feeling of loss and mourning as in the *sore singsing*, nor the addressing is directed toward the dead. The orphan in *Bi a* protest to his aunt but his speech never really mourns the loss of his natal parents; he merely brings up the fact that his parents has been dead only for the sake of emphasize his misery.

The basic difference between *tarangu* songs such as *Bi a* and *sore singsing* is quality of address; it becomes even clearer in the following instance of another non-*sore singsing* *Hangu bangbang* (TT 42):

(Verse): *Hangu bangbang nuni alan mok pitul huniag ileg alan mok  
yati mok soloni panawi e yati mok inei panawi  
hagad gadagad egede mon ngatorwi*

(Chorus): *Gugul dimat dimat dile gugul dimat dimat dilawi e  
dep ibed mon tamaswi.*

(Verse): Something about me is very polluted; I am hungry very much.  
Who will wash my cloths anyway? Who will cook my meal anyway?  
Who cares? I can walk around as if I am crazy.

(Chorus): They all die, die, have gone dead; they all die, die, and go.  
Just us, we stay by ourselves.

(David Ongkau, *Hangu bangbang*)

The speaker in the lyrics mourns the death of one's family and close kin died in succession; the lines *Gugul dimat dimat dile*, etc. suggest the speaker's pessimism that no one can escape death. Although *Hangu bangbang* incorporates accusation such as "Who will wash my cloths anyway?" etc., the song is not regarded as a *sore singsing* for the addressing to the dead is not present. As the closing line in the chorus "Just us, we stay by ourselves" shows the speaker's concern for those still living, the main concern expressed in the text is the inevitability of death and the trauma. The essence of the *sore singsing* is presence of dedication to the dead. *Nen a* has pretext of woman's cry despite the original words were actually uttered by the dead old man himself. By contrast, the thematic focus in the *Bi a* and *Hangu bangbang* is on the living figures such as the young boy and his aunt in *Bi a* or the members of the family in *Hangu bangbang*.

There is an interesting contrast between the two Tok Pisin words *sore* and *tarangu*; while *tarangu* has a *tok ples* counterpart *gadon*, *sore* has no direct translation in the local language. Use of *gadon/tarangu* in guitar band song text is much less frequent than *sore*, counts only three in Yabob and one from Kranket among the entire samples, suggesting that the sentiment and condition expressed by *sore* have more relevance to musical expression in the communities. Since the core sentiment of *gadon/tarangu* is a sense of sympathy rooted in

self-pity, it somehow limits efficacy of representing the subject in loss of someone due to whatever reasons like broken love, departure, separation, or death.

The sentiment of *sore* in the *sore singsing* is expressed through an address to the dead. The following *Long solid days* (TT 21) is considered as suitable for performance in funeral despite the pretext and context of the lyrics had nothing to do with the lament.

(Verse 1):        *Long solid days we've been together mama*  
                      *tasol nau i pinis*  
                      *swit lav bilong yu mama*  
                      *mi no ting lus.*

(Chorus):        *Mama mama*  
                      *plis kam bek gen mama*  
                      *'kos lav bilong yu mama*  
                      *mi no ting lus.*

(Verse 2):        *Nau lukluk bek*  
                      *long ol pikinini bilong yu*  
                      *olsem pisin flai nabaut*  
                      *lav bilng ol long yu*  
                      *yu olsem ston.*

(Verse 1):        For long solid days we've been together, Mama  
                      but now it is finished.  
                      Your sweet love, Mama,  
                      I never forget.

(Chorus):        Mama, Mama,  
                      please come back again, Mama,  
                      'cause your love, Mama,  
                      I never forget.

(Verse 2):        Now looking back,  
                      all your children [are]  
                      like pigeons flying away.  
                      Their love [is] to you [but]  
                      you [are] as if a stone.

(Sandie Gabriel, *Long solid days*)

Initially, this song was meant to describe separation of a villager's mother as a result of broken marriage; therefore, the last line of the second verse *yu olsem ston* was an expression of indifference of the separating mother. This song, which appears on cassette of local powerband Kale Gadagads, incorporates the speech of a crying child in the chorus *Mama, mama*, etc., creating an atmosphere of misery. However, the addresser's expression of anguish has a similar discursive pattern with *sore singsing* in the sense that it is addressed toward the speaker's mother; the address to *mama* makes the song applicable to lamenting loss of someone's mother. The lines such as *tasol nau i pinis, plis kam bek gen, mi no ting lus*, etc., indeed have similar structure to typical *tok sore* that emphasizes departure, asks for the dead to revive, or swear the memory to last for good.

While there are songs that are recognized as *sore singsing*, some others are never considered to be so despite tragic and mournful contents. The appropriation of *sore* from guitar band songs in general to the *sore singsing* is a sort of a discovery through introduction of the Tok Pisin word and its pervasion into *tok ples* vocabulary. In a sense, the sentiment of *sore* is found when the word itself was introduced in Madang. The addressing marks decisive characteristics for the *sore singsing*; the lamentation takes the form of communication with a dead person in the manner that the sentiment of *sore* dominated the atmosphere.

## Premonitions

There are a couple of *sore singsing* that are not originally composed as such but eventually has become one due to the death of the persons referred to or involved in the composition. Such 'premonition songs' are considered as the *sore singsing* for they are regarded as omens of death. The following text of *sore singsing Sapar* was composed to pity a man who was suffering from mental illness:

(Verse 1):        *Sapar gadon din itor*  
                      *muruan yewereg itor*  
                      *Sapar gadon gadon mok e*  
                      *ilum pik epeni pe.*

(Verse 2):        *Aben mok lon imas hei*  
                      *reg mom egede ihutig*  
                      *lou lou ihutig itor itor hieg*  
                      *Yabob lang iseg soroweni.*

(Verse 1):        Sapar is a poor man:  
                      he carries a heavy burden and walks around.  
                      Sapar is a poor man indeed.  
                      You people should feel pity for him a little.

(Verse 2):        He is staying in the place to which he does not really belong.  
                      He has traveled like a piece of wood that the sea brings ashore.  
                      He drifted in the great ocean,  
                      then he has come to the shore of Yabob.

(Sandie Gabriel, *Sapar*)

The title of this song *Sapar* is taken from the name of a man, who was alone and disoriented, and in his middle age. He was said to be born in the Bogadijim area, but for some reason he found Yabob as his home. A local church worker looked after him by giving him a shelter, meals and cloths. Sapar was known for carrying large stones and sacks filled with stones on

his shoulder with no obvious purpose, which he collected in the beach, to spend his day. The composition was first dedicated to Sapar himself, who was still active in carrying his stone with no rest; therefore, the line *Sapar gadon gadon mok e* was probably delivered lightly. In one early mourning, however, when Sandie's Kale Gadagads were performing in a live *six-to-six* at village club Sapar passed away from a sudden sickness in the hospital. When Sapar's death was announced at the outdoor concert stage, the band was playing this very song. The informed audience was startled by the coincidence; they all stopped whatever they were doing, standing still.

The articulation of Sapar's death with the performance of *Sapar* was an insignia for the locals to count this song as a lament. The locals were struck by the fact that the performance of *Sapar* created the context for the song as a *sore singsing* by accidentally connecting the sentiment of *gadon* and the death of the man. In the case of *Sapar* the two events, death of the dedicated of the song and performance of it, occurred almost simultaneously, and the content of *gadon* has become that of death instead of general state of poverty and mental illness. By contrast, *Sau laliku*, as discussed in the previous chapter in detail, is not regarded as a *sore singsing*. The singing of *Sau laliku* reminded the old woman of her dead husband from Bagasin, as she was listening to a powerband rendition of his composition in the concert field. Nonetheless, the Yabob performers had no relation to the woman, and the song itself had no textual or contextual significance of death for the band. *Sau laliku* is not considered as a *sore singsing* not because it is a rendition from the *singsing*



*tumbuna* from some other village but because the performers found no causality between the two events. The *sore singsing* is a local event articulated by means of stringband music in which sharing of grief plays the major role; however, it is also highly generic and contextual.

The other case is a clearer one that connects the text with actual death by causality.

This song, entitled *Damag o* portrays a sailing canoe:

(Chorus): *Nen a nen e*

*damag o wanga nen a.*

(Verse): *Iyo wag mesi mesi Kuru wi e*

*iyo wag mesi mesi Arop wi e*

*Morelang Ilon iyo wade*

*iyo wag mesi mesi*

*Morelang Awan umbale.*

(Chorus): *Nen a nen e,*

Your young canoe, *nen a.*

(Verse): The canoe sails along the ocean  
to the Kuru reefs.

The canoe sails along the ocean  
to Arop Island.

Along the middle of Morelang Ilon it goes.

The canoe sails along the ocean  
through Morelang Awan.

(Salok David, *Damag o*)

*Damag o* (TT 55), as in several other cases of *sore singsing*, describes a sailing canoe, in this case going to as far as Arop Island in the Pacific Ocean. The address *nen* leaves much ambiguity for it could be either a specific reference to the addresser's mother or an unspecified close female kin or an interjection. In fact, the lyrics of *Damag o* appeared in a dream of the composer, and the tune, which is arranged into reggae for the powerband, was

worked out with the members of the band. Kuru, a reef near Yabob Island, Arop and Morelang are mentioned in the lyrics, illustrating itinerary of the sailing canoe. The reference to remote Arop Island, along with the abstract *nen*, creates rather a dream-like effect. Since the folklore in the area often regards Arop and the Siassi Islands with strong spiritual significance, the image of these lines is even atavistic.<sup>15</sup> Despite the canoe reference in the text, the overall impression of the song in the original context along with its arrangement of reggae-style powerband music, could have been anything but a *sore singsing*.

*Damag o* has become a *sore singsing* because of a band member who suddenly died shortly after the composition of the tune. The news of the young man's death shook his fellow band members; they eventually decided to dedicate their new composition to the member in the funeral. *Damag o* was regarded as a *sore singsing* specifically for the dead young man, and never to be performed in someone else's funeral. The significance of the case of *Damag o* is displacement of the causality of death and mourning, the song being attributed to the death of the young man as if the song was a premonition. *Damag o* appeared in a dream, and with its reference to the sailing canoe, the addressing of *nen*, names of significant places, and the coincidental death of the young band man, it was regarded as a *sore singsing*. *Damag o* is illustrating case in that the rhetoric of the song is associated with death of a villager; a *sore singsing* must express some imagery of departure, especially with a reference to a sailing canoe. The feeling of loss of someone in everyday life in community and mourning of it precede any other pretexts of *sore singsing* to the extent that intention and causality of

events have less importance than the emotional significance and real life event to which the music is related.

Both songs *Sapar* and *Damag o* can be seen as articulation of Yabob folk belief that gives premonition to a great cultural value. Some signs are believed to foreshadow a specific event type such as sudden departure, separation or arrival. The followings are some of the better-known Yabob premonitions:<sup>16</sup>

- a) When a yellow butterfly stays on a person's shoulder or arm in the morning, an unexpected visitor may arrive. "And if he wonders why you were expecting him, with betel nuts and palm-leaf mats, you just point to your arm. He would understand the butterfly had let you know he was coming."
- b) If the yellow butterflies are seen flying across the sea in a large flock, a disaster will soon strike the village. The latest instance occurred a few days before the Japanese attacked and landed on Madang.
- c) When a firefly flies circling around someone's body a few times and go straight toward the sea, someone close to the one will have to depart the island.
- d) A kind bird is known to cry all through the day and night before a villager dies from a long sickness. With the death of the person, the cry stops.
- e) When a villager is killed away from home, a shout, a loud cry or a gunshot will be heard from the bush on the island simultaneously with the time of death.
- f) Playing a funeral or burial by digging holes may cause someone's death.
- g) An old tall tree may die when a large snake is killed. That snake must have had home under the tree.

As the agent of premonitory phenomena is concerned, flying beings are strongly favoured, such as butterflies, fireflies and birds. Locals, however, never relate these flying beings as some kind of supernatural beings such as spirits or soul of the dead, as it appears elsewhere in PNG (Feld 1991). Old tall trees, the only ground object in these premonitory sayings, are

referred as a sign death of large snakes, in which the dead trees correspond with dead snakes. The voice of the bird is taken as an announcement. The mysterious cry of dying person in the bush and the funeral play are signs of death for the rather direct association. The reference to sea-going canoe in mourning, which is incorporated in the *sore singsing* as well, has similar structure with the premonitory saying involving insects and bird, for both patterns parallel with the representation of direction show with the agents. The coming and going of non-human agents are compared with that of a person going from the earth to the heaven.

The skeletal patterns of these *stori*, or stories, have something in common in that they have an iconic sign structure between the omen and the referred event. Unnatural movement of butterflies, fireflies and other beings are attributed to sudden events and death, in which the movement of objects represents departure and arrival. Discursive structure of the two *sore singsing*, *Sapar* and *Damag o*, that attributes the compositions as signs of death of particular individuals is a variation of these patterns of *stori*. Interestingly, Yabob people also often attribute sudden death of a person to sorcery, but that is not the discursive pattern for the *sore singsing*. In fact, there have never been a guitar band song attributed as sorcery in the Madang area by and large, not even love magic or *marila*. However, the signification of premonitory *sore singsing* differs from the *stori* in that the performance and dreaming of the songs are connected to death of individuals, and that they are essentially the words of the songs which let the villagers connect the event of music-making and death. The text of *Sapar* and *Damag o* are not only regarded as omens *post factum*, but the structure of discourse is not

similar with the preexisting premonitions introduced here. The performance of the two songs does not indicate any iconic relationship with the event of coming or going. The closest structure to the case of *Sapar* is perhaps seen in premonition d) (announcement of death), and that of *Damag o* has proximity to premonition f) (realization of song about a canoe resulted in a death). However, musical performance and composition as the agent of death has a totally new signification in that humanly organized sound structure such as music, by contrast against cry of a bird or a person, actually mediates death, and musical stimuli is now regarded as deadly sometimes. Music does not kill a person or it is not a supernatural being that compose the song, but it foretells the people the sad news. The relationship between the referent of death and the consequence is much more complex in the cases of song than simple action of the agents as in the examples from a) to f). In the case of music, the sound of guitar, the words, the pretext, and the act of composition are all integrated into the nexus, performance. These elements alone never consist of a premonition, but they have to be blended in by means of performance.

The key to the association between the song text and an actual death is homology; as the canoe sails on the sea, the person passes away. As a result, the 'discovery' of such homology in guitar band music has invented *sore singsing*. The *sore singsing*, consciously or unconsciously, make use of the symbolic association that has been so prevalent among the communities around coastal Madang. If the local attribution of *sore singsing* to premonitions of death is to be phrased as a reinterpretation of folk belief, the new discourse arose is not

simply a revival of older formation of knowledge but is *the* reality, or the practical logic. Even the local's explanation of the essence of *sore singsing* as *givim las rispek* to the dead is but partially true. Premonitory *sore singsing* presents one of the most striking cases of symbolic interaction of the genre. In the *sore singsing* the audience connect the sound of music with death of someone in relation to the song. A performance of song is recognized as a piece of *sore singsing* one only through the audience's experience of the event in which death and sound of music form a strong association.

### Conclusion

The invention of *sore singsing* is striking in that it developed from the public entertainment of the stringband genre. The *sore singsing* took the style of the guitar band music, but it ended up as a genre of music that mourn the death of someone dear in public. The inclusion of the word *sore* in the *sore singsing* means a development of poetics in Madang guitar band music as a whole. Although the meaning of the word *sore* has already entailed the feeling for separation by death, it was not until the invention of *sore singsing* that the locals discovered the nature of the word sung in the guitar band music. The invention of the *sore singsing* is a significant event in that the attendants to the mortuary ritual now find something irresistibly sad and suitable to solemnize the death of a member of kin or community with the sound of the guitar. The immediate resources of *sore singsing* have been stringband songs and women's ritual cry; the guitar band music has given the lament a clear expressive form, and

the cry has served a model for mourning. Addresses to the dead, references to leaving canoes and place name, and the polylingual idioms are characteristics of women's cry as well as the *sore singsing*, and discursive significance of them are basically similar. The imagery of canoes in serene landscapes has been prevalent in nostalgic guitar band songs as well. The sound of guitar has been avoided by Christian mortuary ritual in most of peri-urban Madang villages, although a number of them have composed songs for commemorating deaths of their *wantoks*. It is not certain, therefore, if the practice of *sore singsing* might pervade in the entire Madang area in the future. Still, it is significant that some villages in Madang associate the sound of guitar as something as sorrowful as inducing ritual cries of the mourners regardless of exposure to the guitar band music in everyday life, and in such a short span of time of a decade or so.

From an outsider's perspective, emotional reactions of the mourners to the sound of guitar band music appears somewhat peculiar,<sup>17</sup> but for the locals it is natural to listen to the *sore singsing* with a deep feelings of sorrow. While it is nearly impossible to illustrate the exact cause of the invention, the articulating of *sore* in Madang guitar band music should have a strong relationship in the Yabob imagery of association between the mourning and the sound of guitar or a singing voice. The feeling of *sore* for a broken love, self-pity, separation from lovers and kin, one's *panu* or home, memories of past, sentimental landscapes of quite sea, moonlit beaches, a lone sailing canoe, and other sorry things have been expressed in the lyrics of guitar band music. By contrast, other realms of emotion such as happiness,

contentment, flirtation, anger, irony, ennui, or sarcasm have never been so abundant. The *sore singsing* is an articulation of peri-urban relationship embodied in the cry, which the locals perceive as *mekim fyunere! moa nais* (literally, “making the funeral nicer”), or a state of refinement. It is the complexity of music that makes the people feel such a deep sentiment, and the *sore singsing* makes the death of a *wantok* even more ineffable and uncanny, yet inculcating and “real.”

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<sup>1</sup> There might be room for arguing whether Madang’s case is a “ritual” cry, since there is no clear sense of it being institutional as in Caraveli’s example in Greece (Caraveli 1986). By the phrase “ritual cry” I simply intend to stress formality of the expression, not “ritual” in a strict sense.

<sup>2</sup> Yabob’s instance clearly reflects localism: in Nobonob, by contrast, the bush is the place where the dead banishes. See the text of *Amen uman*.

<sup>3</sup> *O bubeg ilo so padal mon* has the harmonic structure of I-IV-I-V-I.

<sup>4</sup> John Sakon of Kananam left a couple of his compositions of *sore singsing* before his own death in the late 1980’s, *Kak di asop* and *G.P.*; the former commemorates the death of a father in the Alexishafen mission, and the latter was dedicated for one of his young *wantok* man.

<sup>5</sup> More specifically, a *bi* is either father’s sister or mother’s brother’s wife.

<sup>6</sup> There is another *sore singsing* by Willie Tropu in the same period, named “Bau,” although it was not collected during my field research.

<sup>7</sup> A *wag* in general means a canoe, a vessel, an aircraft, a vehicle, and so on.

<sup>8</sup> The verb *iyowa* suggests a long-distance sailing.

<sup>9</sup> An unsubstantiated account counts six times for the performance of *Balangut* in actual occasions of mortuary ritual.

<sup>10</sup> Among nearly ten different names of the wind, of which only Rai (a dry south wind that brings a fine sky but very turbulent sea in August) and Taleu (a humid cool wind that makes heavy rain around February) are frequently mentioned today. Despite the fair sky it brings Rai sank my canoe four times in 1997.



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<sup>11</sup> Apparently, there are esoteric place names that cannot be made in public; these secret place names are passed down through male members of the clan.

<sup>12</sup> The word *nen* have multiple meanings in a single context. On one hand, *nen* is a kinship term widely used in Yabob language, and usually translated in Tok Pisin as *mama*; in this sense, *nen* means “mother” in English, as *nenmam* is literally “mother-and-father,” meaning “parents.” On the other, the word *nen* as well as Tok Pisin *mama* can also be an address to a woman in general (more likely to be married) regardless of her relationship to the addresser. In the latter case, the address is uttered from a point of view of a child; if an old man is heard requesting *O nen o, kisim mi marasin bilong me i kam* (“Nen, fetch me my medicine here!”), he is most likely speaking to his daughter. Yet another common usage of *nen* is an exclamation just like Italian *Mama mia!*

<sup>13</sup> In 1997, Bilbil Island was not inhabited except for a few young men’s houses. It was not clear, therefore, whether the magical knowledge is still in practice. In Yabob, these traditions died out completely along with the arrival of the missions.

<sup>14</sup> I could not clarify if the words in Sandie’s text were verbatim transcription from the woman’s cry, or even they were phrased exactly as the old man did. However, since the *tok ples* of Yabob and Bilbil are similar, it is assumed that the changes in transmission process should have been relatively minor.

<sup>15</sup> It is said that in the traditional times Arop, Tolokiva and Umboi islands were reachable with large canoes. The origin of these islands as well as the those in Madang were once attributed to the power of spiritual being, perhaps a giant, called Kilibob (Hannemann 1996:10-11).

<sup>16</sup> Some of the premonitions may have personal relevance. A dog of a certain villager’s household is known to cover his meal, a dish of rice, with soil by his nose so that the rice is completely hidden under the ground. This is sign of the villager’s relative dying from illness. The mother of this dog was known to do the same.

<sup>17</sup> Perhaps, this is especially true to the Melanesians. A great number of my audiences seemed to be puzzled by my presentation of Yabob *sore singsing* at a music conference in Port Moresby in 1997 (Suwa, f.c.). Apparently, guitar band music is associated with non-spiritual aspects of life by many, and it was hard for them to understand Sandie Gabriel’s *Nen a* contains serious messages. As of 1999, the Faculty of Creative Arts of the University of Papua New Guinea, to which the music department belongs, is closing down, and the

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educational standard in fine arts might face some setback. However, such a construct of stereotypes might become even more active as the urban sectors dominate the rest of country in terms of sociocultural and economic advancement, as well as the religion, taking their model from the West.

## FEELING *MADANG STAIL*: INVENTION OF A VOCAL TECHNIQUE

A new singing practice, locally known as *Madang stail*, has emerged in the Madang area in the late 1980's. By and large, *Madang stail* entails a kind of vibrato often sung in falsetto.<sup>1</sup> Although the naming of *Madang stail* is rather an informal one, it seems to be the most prevalent usage in the sense that people both inside and outside the peri-urban communities associate this particular singing with Madang powerband music. Although the identification of *Madang stail* by the locals often involve use of local languages, particular wording of the song text, or even accompaniment and arrangement, these elements are still subject to the particular vocalisation. This chapter aims to describe musical traits of what the locals put it *singsing i gat filin*, or "songs that have feelings."<sup>2</sup> As recordings of stringband in the age of *gita resis* and early powerband indicate, *Madang stail* has become prevalent no earlier than the late 1980's. Music examples will be presented to illustrate basic techniques of *Madang Stail*.<sup>3</sup> In the end, the effect of *Madang stail* will be discussed in terms of aural cognition of music-making in peri-urban Madang.

### The Origin of *Madang Stail*

*Madang stail* is also called *nek bilong Madang stret*, or *stail bilong Madang*.<sup>4</sup> This vibrato-based vocal technique is attributed as an invention of Yabob singer and composer Sandie Gabriel in the late 1980's, around the time he started to record with Tumbuna Traks in Madang town. However, this does not necessarily mean that the locals recognize

*Madang stail* as a uniform vocal style. For instance, Yabob, a prolific centre of production in the 1990's, has had at least six powerbands and two solo singers after the death of Sandie in 1993, but their employment of the vibrato singing has been idiosyncratic. A local remarked: "In Yabob, our guys have not followed Sandie's way so much. Each one is different. But a lot of other guys outside the village followed only Sandie." Indeed, what is intriguing is the fact that this vocal technique credited as Sandie's invention is no longer called *stail bilong Sandie* ("Sandie's style") and never called as Yabob's style, but *Madang stail*—with the name of town and province.

Sandie Gabriel neither called his own vocal technique as *Madang stail* nor very much conscious of his singing voice as his trade mark, although he apparently developed his medium through experimenting with various sources as he has become one of the best known artist in Madang. The locals attribute his source of creativity to three basic elements: the rock, local *singsing tumbuna* and women's ritual cry. Aside from having been one of the principle composers in Yabob *sore singsing*, and an arranger of the *singsing tumbuna* pieces, Sandie Gabriel was the only singer in the latter half of 1980's to sing songs in the manner of *Madang stail* as it is called today. In acquiring his style of vibrato, Sandie apparently spent some time with one of his relatives, a broadcaster and program producer at Radio Madang, who had gone through some sort of training in Western singing. Local *singsing tumbuna* pieces were learned in community, often with an aid of cassette recording. Women's ritual cry was either learned by heart at funerals or perhaps even recorded from time to time. Sandie's story reveals that *Madang stail* is regarded as an articulation of westernization (the employment of Western pop vocal

technique), historical continuity from the precontact era (influences from the *singsing tumbuna*), and the sentiment of *sore* (the incorporation of women's ritual cry as a musical idea). Since *Madang stail* relates to positive aesthetic value such as *i gat filin* ("with feelings")<sup>5</sup> or *nais* ("nice," or "refined,") the synthesis of these three elements in the vibrato singing has been regarded as significant.

In reality, it is hard to tell that from what sources Sandie Gabriel received the idea for *Madang stail*, simply from listening to his singing voice. Although the most significant influence from the West is the "crooner" or "fake" pop singing techniques during the transitional stage from the stringband to the powerband, thanks to the introduction of electronic devices such as the microphones, the vibrato of Sandie Gabriel does not necessarily resemble the Western style. As the following instances indicate, *Madang stail* today occurs among various part of a phrase including those in the middle. At any rate, by suggesting the influence from Western pop to *Madang stail*, the locals seem to image a line of male vocalists from James Brown or Chuck Berry to "Top 40" mainstream figures such as Michael Jackson. Recall that Robert Kig, the lead singer of Madang's first successful powerband Kanagioi, named Chuck Berry, Elvis Presly and Linda Ronstadt as their initial model of "folk" and "English" tunes back in 1976, when they started their activity in town. A vague shade of blues tradition in the inventing of *Madang stail* might show up from such remarks, although it is still very difficult to substantiate from musical analysis as the following examples will illustrate. Powerband compositions in Madang hardly employ blue-chord progressions except boogie-woogie broken chords of Riwo's Madu Rockers bambooband.

Experiments with the *singsing tumbuna* have become a practice to peri-urban bands already in the latter half of the 1970's. For instance, Bilia Lagoon Brothers were said to arrange a piece of traditional dance from the Rai Coast area, called Sikolegato. However, it was not until the success of Kale Gadagads that the Madang artists started to arrange local *singsing tumbuna* pieces in their productions. The people do not have a proper explanation for the adaptation of traditional dance pieces but only to say, "We thought it might be nice," "We wanted something new," or "There was a great demand for this sort of music then." As it will be shown in the examples, the powerband version of the *singsing tumbuna* mainly takes the words only, and the singing bears little resemblance. Women's ritual cry has been incorporated in the *sore singsing* in the late 1980's, and perhaps this has been a attempt unique to Yabob. Although Kranket is also known to practice the *sore singsing* as well, the musicians from the area have never incorporated *Madang stail* to this day.<sup>6</sup> It is actually difficult to decide in what way *Madang stail* characterizes women's cry other than assuming an imagined association. The actual representation of ritual crying is by and large absent in the singing voice of the guitar bands. *Madang stail* does sometimes remind the audience of wailing contour of a mourner for the falsetto and wavy sound of voice, especially when it is coordinated with the words of *sore singsing* in the powerband production, but the tone of voice is obviously different.<sup>7</sup> Along with the alleged relationship with *singsing tumbuna* vocal styles, women's ritual cry is believed to elaborate the powerband song style by giving a new way of delivering the lyrics, not simply as an embellishment of the melody.

An authenticated performer of *Madang stail* is usually qualified not in terms of

competence but one's identity. If a non-Madang artist—to some “non-Madang” even includes a different district in Madang Province like Rai Coast or Karkar despite strong cultural connection—sings a song in *Madang stail*, it is most likely not perceived so because of the performer's place of origin. Non-Madang singers who employ *Madang stail* is often referred as *i bihainim Madang tasol*, “merely following Madang.” Although *Madang stail* initially started as the vocal style of Sandie Gabriel, most singing voices categorized as *bihainim Sandie* (“following Sandie”) do not exactly sound like an imitation of Sandie Gabriel. It seems as if vibrato and other traits of Sandie's style are becoming more and more emphasized. *Madang stail* is recognized as a vocal technique unique to contemporary Madang musicians as the way of *gutpela singsing* (“good songs”). The village musicians with fairly notable powerband activities such as Yabob, Gum or Bilia currently sing in varieties of *Madang stail*. Outside of Madang, more and more artists seem to be influenced by *Madang stail* since the mid-1990's, probably being inspired by the voice of Gerdix Atege, the lead vocalist of Wali Hits.

Western notation system might transcribe *Madang stail* as an ornament or a vibrato, whether the locals might feel the vibrato an embellishment or not. Ex. 1a shows an instance from non-Madang artist Patti Doi of the Quakes (POM 107).<sup>8</sup> Patti has kinship relations to the Bel-speaking area by his father's side, and he is ethnically a Manam, but because his centre of activity has been in Port Moresby throughout his career, he is not recognized as being *Madang stret*. The song entitled *Tamoata* is perhaps a rendition of Ex. 1b *Yam Ilonen manin ienmeg*, composed by Aksim Siming, for melodic resemblance. Note that the vibratos usually take place in the descending lines toward the cadences.

Music Examples (Actual pitches an octave lower)

Ex. 1a

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 100$

Ex. 1b

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 60$

O ti zag o i nad pa nu e i nad ba  
 ged get e lak ma de fa tu fa  
 tu ya wa u toz pa u se  
 lag a be te a.

Execution

Ex. 2a

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 110$

Sele mole sele mole a Gogol wara e ka  
 rua lain o sele mole sele mole a

Ex. 2b

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 110$

Si pa e si pa manua e Si pa  
 si na e si pa manua e



Interestingly, in the album *I pairap ken*, *Madang stail* employed only in *Tamoata*, other numbers being presented in a Rabaul instrumental style common to Pacific Gold Studio productions.

*Sele mole*<sup>9</sup> and *Sipa manua e* in Examples 2a and 2b are hit songs by Mogoi Hotline of Bema, Trans Gogol (TT 104). Mogoi Hotline, alias Michael Makalu, is usually referred as employing *Madang stail* despite that he is from Bema, a village in the hinterland from a Madang perspective. Michael is a former employee to sale department of Tumbuna Traks, and has lived in town. Mogoi Hotline's style is to sing in falsetto and to apply vibrato to stretching notes, as these examples suggest. To illustrate another, Ex. 2c *Malelum* (TT 103) is an arrangement from *singsing tumbuna* Kanam by Ziros of Sinem, a village adjacent to Gum; they both speak a variety of the Amele language. The vibratos have exceptionally long and high waves, and they are evenly executed. These songs were favourite songs of especially younger generations in the Madang area.<sup>10</sup> Sandie Gabriel himself did not make the vibrato as obviously as Mogoi Hotline, but it has been present since his second album. Ex. 3a *Longpela taim* (TT 42) shows vibrato voicing in the stretching notes, while Ex. 3b *Ad o ad o* (TT 42) presents a more showy case of vibrato which is more reminiscent of *Madang stail*. Thus, Sandie Gabriel himself had no uniform way of applying his style. Still, the fact that *Ad o ad o* became one of the most favourite tunes to dance among local *six-to-six*, along with its offbeat rhythm produced by the keyboards, suggests that the execution of *Madang stail* is capable of creating an atmosphere in the compositions. Whether *Madang stail* has a connection with vibrato singing in some guitar bands and *kwaia* singing from Central Province, is still uncertain.

Ex. 2c

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 120$

ma le lum sa le lum e si ri lum si ri lum e

ma le lum sa le lum e si ri lum si ri lum e

lo la lo o la lo o

la lo la lo la lo o la lo

la lo la lo la lo la lo la lo

Ex. 3a

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 100$

Long pe la taim mi no; lukim peis bi long

yu yu stap long we na yu stap long we long

mi

Ex. 3b

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 110$

A do a do a do mu gu du, de

Bi ga beg bi ga beg bur lon

môn nga tor pi tur hu ni a

Ex. 4a

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 100$

Ples bi long mi Pa ra ma na o sor i o tingting tasol

mi kam long far away mi tingting long em

Ex. 4b

$d = ca. 110$



(Words undecipherable.)

Ex. 5a

$d = ca. 86$

Ngame... san san lau lau mon nga  
 log i bol nga le woi ngai

mul se nga mul e a beg kin  
 nag a nang inai woi me woi san

so wana nan lau lau mon nga toz meg  
 san yaing funag

i lau lau mon nga toz meg

Ex. 5b

$d = ca. 72$

O Mi ti bog nui e nui e ngi bi e nui e me dodintat Nga

mo imok faun e lak so na sa goi lu an tap mai ti a

Ex. 5c

$d = ca. 54$

O bo i zi nen kin nga la en ge i lon kan

Kan nga toz i leg ngi bi ni O

u za toi i log mu zu an ge

i nag ba din bu lak nge ta ni

At least, it is clear that during the time of *gita resis* and before, when Kranket's Aksim Siming learned guitar band singing from his uncle-in-law from Yule Island, there was no experiments in vibrato vocalization. Some examples indicate similarity in the idea of vibrato. Ex. 4a *Ples Paramana* is a song sung by Vali Rai, a former member of Paramana Strangers, recorded with Madang's Tumbuna Traks (TT 112). This is a song about yearning for the narrator's home *ples Paramana*. Note the distinct vibrato singing, which is reminiscent of Madang artists, appears in the stretched enunciation of *o sori o*.<sup>11</sup> To compare, Ex. 4b is an example of execution of vibrato of Central stringband B.B. Kings (the words were not able to decipher for transcription) (IPNGS 008). Most vibrato singing in Central bands seems to take place in stretched notes due to prosodic adjustments where the number of syllables in a certain line is much fewer than the others.

### The Invention of Contour

In the earlier days of stringband music, the melodies were molded from the harmonic skeleton of hitherto learned foreign compositions. As the composer became familiar with the basic structure of the melodies, they started to be modified and altered in order to accommodate with the syllables and phrases of the new compositions. Many "standard" stringband numbers before the advent of powerband mostly have melodic skeletons from Western, particularly those frequently observed in American sheet songs<sup>12</sup>. Ex. 5a *Ngame sansan laulau mon* by Elisa Imai (TT 13), the oldest *tok ples* composition for the guitar band known today, have been presumably inspired by waltz tunes. Ex. 5b *Mitibog nui* by

Wesley Bosli (TT 13) is reminiscent of Anglo-American tunes, and Ex. 5c *O bo izinen kin* by Aksim Siming (TT 13) shows a more personal style perhaps molded from various Pacific tunes. The surviving stringbands and bamboobands have not adopted *Madang stail* apparently because there is virtually no local demand for the stringband *asa* dance music today; since the guitar-based format is limited to tourist facilities and cultural shows, the performers tend to preserve the original vocalization, which is full-voiced and straight. As in the cultural shows where the stringbands or bamboobands and powerbands are given different sections in the program, *Madang stail* is generally associated with the powerband.

As the keyboard and rhythm box have become the essential ingredients to powerband productions, the melodic skeleton of songs also changed from the more or less formalized chord progressions to experimental, the “new wave” style. In the new style, minor harmony has become a possible selection in the chord progression, as well as diminished and augmented chords. While the introduction of electronic instruments has resulted in less rigid polyphonic structure of the stringband, it has enabled the composers to experiment with the melody of compositions. Ex. 6a *Mangi nogut* (TT 109) and the chorus section of Ex. 6b *Aidau e* by Wali Hits (TT 109) represent the melodies composed in a chromatic contour with the usual *Madang stail* vibrato by lead vocal Gerdix Atege.<sup>13</sup> Ex. 6c *Minarao*, another number from Wali Hits (TT 109) represents a rare instance of melody in a minor melodic structure. The chromaticism in these cases seems to have a relationship with Gerdix’s *Madang stail* singing, for often the two intertwine each other to make a complexity.

Execution

Ex. 6a

$\downarrow = ca. 118$

Mama mi no gut pe la man gi tumas

Mama wai na mi kamap man gi kain ol sem

Ex. 6b

$\downarrow = ca. 100$

Chorus

ai dau e o di a leva o di a levaa di a leva o

ye ai dau e o di a leva ai dau e a di a leva o

Ex. 6c

Chorus

i ya u a i ya

u a i ya a i ya

The introduction of electronic instruments and its subsequent effect of the experiments with modal elements in the melody of powerband music are the arrangements of *singsing tumbuna*. As many local composers attest to the fact that it is totally impossible to transcribe the *singsing tumbuna* into the powerband, Madang traditional dance pieces have very subtle melodic contour that never can be reduced into diatonic scales. Ex. 7a is an excerpt from a section of Yabob *singsing tumbuna* piece called *Sirori* in a large strain of *singsing* named Daik. As a typical dance piece in coastal Madang, it has the *kundu* (an hourglass drum) section accompanied, which is played by men, and male and female sing along without any harmonic elements. The singing voice has a rather narrow range of interval, which is notated here as not exceeding a major third, and often shows a highly sliding contour to move from one tonal centre to another. Ex. 7b *Sirori e* (TT 66) is a rendition from the same part of Yabob *singsing tumbuna* Daik, arranged and sung by Sandie Gabriel.

Since a duplication of original melodic contour of the *singsing tumbuna* is highly demanding to the local composers, the arrangements from the *singsing tumbuna* sometimes often show a remarkable variety of arrangements. Examples 8a (TT 55), 8b (TT 66) and 8c (TT 73) are different renditions of *Uta mon e*, a Yabob *singsing tumbuna* from Maimai.<sup>14</sup> Note the idiosyncrasy of the three different composers within the same village; Ex. 8a accompanied the reggae beat, Ex. 8b represents an unidentified dance style, and Ex. 8c comes from the stringband era, composed presumably as a waltz. Ex. 8c employs a vibrato in the middle of the melody, but it is not certain whether its original stringband version was sung in the same manner. In arranging the *singsing tumbuna*

Ex. 7a

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 110$

u ta mon e u ta mon e u ta mon e u  
 ta mon e ya u ta mon e u ta mon e se wag lo lon  
 u du si (Right now!) pupu ro o ye ye ye ya  
 pupu ro o wo wo wo ya pu pu ro wo wo wo

Ex. 7b

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 120$

u ta mon wag lon u du si ne u  
 ta mon e u ta mon ne wag lon u du si

Ex. 7c

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 110$

u ta mon e u ta mon e u sop wag  
 lon u du si me si ma nin  
 me si ma ni ni mok e



$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 86$

Ex. 8a

si ro ri o si ro ri si ro ri a si ro ri, o  
kundu

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 100$

Ex. 8b

si ro ri o si ro ri e e  
wang e da mon a u u  
u si ro ri o si ro ri e u u  
u u wang e da mon a si ro ri e

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 86$

Ex. 9a

kritita nga le tan ga tan ga le kritita son ge ta son ta son ge  
kundu

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 110$

Ex. 9b

kri ti tan ga le tan ga le nga le kri ti ta son ge ta son ge son ge  
i tandi tu i da mon a i tan di tandi tu i da mon a  
kri ti tan ga le tan ga le nga le kri ti ta son ge ta son ge son ge  
kri ti tan ga le tan ga le nga le kri ti ta son ge ta son ge son ge

pieces, the composers are never forced to make a replica of the melody not as clearly as words. “We have to make a new *melodi*,” a local remarked, “in order to make the sound of *tumbuna* song fit into the sound of guitars.” Another instance of arrangement, to elaborate, is Ex. 9a *Krititangale*, a song about an octopus, yet another section from Daik, and its arrangement by Old Dog and the Offbeats as in Ex. 9b (TT 37). It is interesting to see how Sandie applies his *Madang stail* vocal technique to the melody, since actually there is hardly any *Madang stail* vibrato voice apparent in the original *singsing tumbuna*. Sandie is said to have developed *Madang stail* at least to some extent from the local *singsing tumbuna*, yet none of his arrangements sound reminiscent of the original melody. Compare the versions of *Sirori* with those of *Krititangale*, which do not employ vibrato in both versions. Of course, the similarity or causal relationship between the local *singsing tumbuna* and *Madang stail* is a cultural fact for the locals, no matter how they appear differently in the notated examples.

However, *Madang stail* is not always used for all the arrangements of the traditional dance pieces; the appropriation of *Madang stail* is, as it has been quoted from remarks of a local previously, not a necessary ingredient for commercial hits. Ex. 10 *Maimai kalunge* (CHM 1136) sung by Willie Tropu presents a case of a distinctly Madang artist who is not characterized by the vibrato singing style. This number shows little employment of vibrato on the phrase *sar e*, although it became a great favourite among local *six-to-six* “discos” when it was released in 1997. *Maimai*, from which the song is entitled, is a part of Yabob *singsing tumbuna*; this tune was somehow rated as number one on nation-wide PNG Top 20 around July of 1997. There are actually

Ex.10

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 92$

mai mai kalun ge sar e ka lung e mai  
 mai e sar e mai mai e ka lunge  
 maimai e sar e mai mai ka lun ge sar  
 e ka lung e mai mai e sar e

Ex.11a

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 100$

O so ri han gu pa nu ba la  
 u yan mok e i en de

Ex.11b

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 120$

So re bos ku ru sek an nga mu ei o mai nga mu  
 e yu man bun nating a boi bilong Aropturu  
 ya a e ya

Ex.12a

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 110$  Chorus

mama mama plis kam bek gen  
 mama kos lav bilong yu ma ma lav bilong  
 yu ma ma a a mi no ting lus

relatively few examples of adopting of traditional rhythmic patterns into the powerband music, and *Maimai kalunge* is one of such instances that incorporate a reproduction of *singsing tumbuna* in the beginning of the piece as an introduction (it is not transcribed in Ex. 10). But as in the rest of the cases separation of sections between the reproduction and adaptation is clearly marked by a pause. The *singsing tumbuna* and the guitar band music are recognized as something incompatible with each other at least in terms of musical structure; therefore, the composers have to juxtapose them instead of to integrate. Although *Madang stail* is probably based from the vocal contour of *singsing tumbuna*, as the story of Sandie Gabriel explains, in an analytical level reconstruction of the traditional dance piece into a powerband song is not a goal of the composers. Instead, for the locals is it utterly significant the presence of homology between the vocal styles of the traditional and the contemporary in terms of vibrato vocalization. Note that in the two versions of *Sirori* the vibrato is present in both of them; only the executions are different. The aesthetics of *Madang stail* is to feel the vibration in the singing, which has not been present in the previous guitar band music genres but obvious in the *singsing tumbuna*.

To summarize, the following points become as significant. Firstly, it is difficult to identify in what sense *Madang stail* resembles the *singsing tumbuna* despite the claim that Sandie Gabriel was possibly influenced by the traditional song style in inventing his unique vibrato singing. Since there is no obvious relation found between the two singing styles, the discourses that proposes a relationship between *Madang stail* and the *singsing tumbuna* is imagined, if not spurious. In fact, the preservation of the original words seems more important than the melody, as one might witness in a local *six-to-six* in which the

crowd would elated to hear an arrangement form a well-known *singsing* piece, standing up to dance excitedly. The homology between the two styles, rather, seems to be identified with the microtonal vibrato singing, which did not exist in former stringband tunes. At any rate, this sense of continuity from the *singsing tumbuna* and the *lokol* powerband bears the foremost importance in the invention of music.

Secondly, the arrangement of *singsing tumbuna* and the experiment with chromaticism have never been possible without the introduction of electronic instruments. In this sense, the true incubator of *Madang stail* would be the synthesizer instead of the *singsing tumbuna*. Electronization has enabled the composers to disregard the harmonic structure in the instrumental and vocal parts hitherto prevalent in the guitar band music in the area; number of musicians decreased, and vocal parts became rather simple, with the lead vocal taking much of the part in the verses. The role of solo singer increased as the polyphony of stringband faded, which fact might have interacted with the advent of “star” singers rather than collective bands. The lack of polyphony was compensated for altering the quality of the leading vocal part by various styles of vibrato, as Sandie Gabriel experimented with his *Madang stail* singing. The invention of *Madang stail* should be understood a transition from the guitar band music to the powerband, in which the most fundamental change took place in the form of electronization.

Lastly, the local genealogy of *Madang stail* from the *singsing tumbuna* is based on the aesthetics of subtleties that value the vibrato singing in the two genres. As it has been pointed out, to view the vibrato singing in the powerband song style and the traditional dance songs in a causal relationship is actually an articulation that regards the

powerband music within a discourse of historical consciousness. However, in the root of such discourse there is an attachment to the vibrato singing styles that sees the vibrato as significant and valuable. Chromaticism, melodic contour in the arrangements from the *singsing tumbuna*, and the invention and prevalence of *Madang stail* find a nexus in the powerband, as they have become realized thanks to the introduction of electronic instruments.

#### Coordination of the Vibrato with Words

Madang stail emphasizes the sound of language in a number of cases; often these words are those that occupy special value in the text. Ex. 11a *Hangu panu* (TT 73) describes and praises the beautiful landscape of the narrator's village, or *hangu panu* ("my village") in *tok ples* Yabob; note how the vocalist Willie Tropu stretches the syllable *sori* at the beginning of verse as it repeats each time. This incorporation of vibrato in the word *sori* creates a special effect which otherwise might not be attained by ordinary vocal techniques. The vibrato in *Hangu panu* is delivered in a wailing contour and in a high tessitura. Willie usually does not emphasize vibrato; however, the vibrato in the word *sori* indeed extends to six and a half beats, occupying an extremely long space in the text. The word *sori* is also the only Tok Pisin idiom incorporated in the lyrics, and along with the vibrato the word *sori* stands out in the text. In *Hangu panu*, the wording of the text is rather redundant if it is read straightforwardly; only the audience who are provided with the connotation of words such as *panu*, and so on, can reconstruct the intention of the composer. In *Hangu panu* the word *sori* is the sole key to gather the atmosphere of basic

sentiment of the song for a non-Yabob speaker. In this regard, the application of *Madang stail* to *sori* might amplify the emotional significance of the song text that emphatically express attachment to the *panu*, or village. In addition, the articulation of vibrato in *sori* takes place within the syllables of the word, which is one of the characteristics of *Madang stail*.

Ex. 11b *Boskru* by Jansh Talad (TT 113) also has a stretched enunciation of *sore* at the beginning of the verse, but his *Madang stail* singing is more obvious at the end of stretched vocables *a* or *e*.<sup>15</sup> In the enouncing the word *sore*, vibrato is executed only slightly. In the case of Jansh Talad's *Boskru*, contents of the song become more important than its modification, by contrast to Willie's *Hangu panu* in which the emphasis is given to the image of his *panu*. *Madang stail* is a device for distorting the sound of words. *Boskru* entails a conversation between a teasing young local girl and a sailor boy, in which the content of the talking—the young girl making fun of the boy's thin statue, “just like a real man of Arop”—is the whole point of this song as an entertainment. The vocalist might have not wanted to confuse his audience by inserting *Madang stail* vibrato too emphatically in the middle of the syllables, cutting the flow of discourse. As in *Boskru*, when lexical elements bear more significance, the vibrato tends to be employed to lesser extent, if not devoid of it at all.

As the contrast between Examples 11a and 11b presents, appropriation of *Madang stail* would distort the lexicon and syntax of the lyrics when it is used in a certain kind of words and phrases. Ex. 12a *Long solid days* (TT 21) is a unique case in this respect, although this is apparently one of the earliest experiment by Sandie Gabriel. In

the *Long solid days* Sandie's famous *krai* takes place in the chorus. This chorus reproduces a voice of crying child who pleads one's mother to stay with her family; in reproducing the atmosphere of emotional protest of the child, the singer sings these lines in a wailing voice. These vocalizations lack exact pitch-centres and are not transcribable in this Western-based notion; the crying voice of the word *mama* is applied to form a break in middle of the phrases. *Long solid days*, in this powerband version, is developed from a composition for the stringband, but in the earlier performances in the 1980's this crying voice was not incorporated. This 'realist' representation of crying, as the Sandie Gabriel was said to develop his style from these experiments, seems to suggest one of the ingredients of musical inspiration in the process of inventing *Madang stail*. *Long solid days*, as the locals say, were frequently sung in village *six-to-six*, and actually cause emotional reactions from the audience; some of the listeners were seen shedding tears when this song was performed.

Ex. 12b *Kros bilong tupela* (TT 21) by Sandie Gabriel represents a development of the vibrato singing from the previous *Long solid days*. The lyrics is as follows:

(Verse):           *Kros bilong tupela*  
                       *ol i no tingting long pikinini*  
                       *pikinini mi no save*  
                       *i no save long mama i dai pinis*  
                       *apinun nau*  
                       *na aiwara i kam na em i stap long krai.*

(Chorus):           *Mam o o o o ye*  
                       *gigo wain e sare sare sare sare.*

(Verse):           Quarrels between the two:  
                       They are not thinking about their child.  
                       Child I do not know.



S/He does not know one's mother died.  
 (Chorus): Father, *o o o o ye*  
*gigo wain e sare sare sare sare.*  
 (Sandie Gabriel, *Kros bilong tupela*)

Notable vibratos appear in the phrases *tingting long pikinini* (literally, “thinking about the child”) in the verse and the chorus *Mam o o o o ye* which is actually an address to father, for the word *mam* means a male parent in *tok ples*. The chorus section was likely adopted from a part of a certain *singsing tumbuna*. The vibrato in the stretched enunciation of *Mam o* gives a special quality to the address which otherwise might sound rather insignificant without it. As in the previous *Kros bilong tupela* and the following *Mama ma-mama*, the addressing in this example entails kinship relationship. Through the alteration of the text from traditional dance into a narrative, the text of *Kros bilong tupela* creates an atmosphere of a story of tragedy and sadness. The efficacy of *Madang stail* here is the articulation of addressing to someone very close. Through these instances addressing becomes an essential element to the articulation of the vibrato singing; *Madang stail* is therefore no longer an experimental ornamentation to the melody but an aspect of speech in the song text.

Ex. 12c *Mama ma-mama* by Wali Hits (TT 109) is one of many examples in which the spirit of Sandie Gabriel's *Kros bilong tupela* is inherited. This song is composed in three languages juxtaposed with each other in the order of *tok ples* of Gum, Bel (or Yabob), and Tok Pisin, each mournfully repeating, “Mother, o Mother, my child is dead.”<sup>16</sup> Although vocalist Gerdix Atege does not incorporate Sandie's crying in his contour straightforwardly, his use of *Madang stail* has distorting effect on the words

Ex.12b

*d = ca. 120*  
Chorus

Mam o ye  
gi go wan e sar e sar e sar e sar e

Ex.12c

*d = ca. 54*

a ya a u a we ya me mel o adi  
o di fig nen a nen e nen a a  
hangu ai a yo nen a nen e  
nen a hangu ai i mat e

Ex.12d

Chorus

Ka li bo bo Ka li lbo bo me kimmi so re long yu  
Flying fox na. lait tok tok mekim mi sa limtingting

are enounced as *tok sore*, or lamenting. In fact, use of vibrato in the addressing words is frequently found among the songs, in which *sore* is either expressed or dominant sentiment, whether or not the song is composed as a *sore singsing*. Songs such as Ex. 12d *Kalibobo* (CHM 1014) addresses the narrator's feeling to Coast Watcher's Memorial, not as commemorating the casualties in the war but attachment to Madang as his hometown. The effect of *Madang stail* is to make the addressing sound more emotional. The addressing words, because of its natural syntactic order, are usually placed at the beginning of the song text, and in many cases they are formalized to the extent that one does not need to hear every syllable enounced in order to decipher the text. This enables the words to adopt *Madang stail*; vibrato makes the addresses sound more emphatic so that the attachment of the sung subject can be imagined.

The vibrato singing occurs in the phrases sung in English as well. Ex. 13 *If I ever say good-bye* (TT 66) presents such a case in which Sandie Gabriel's singing de-referentializes the original syntax of English to a certain extent into his own world of *Madang stail*. It is significant that here Sandie uses vibrato in the middle of the phrase between *ever* and *say*, rather than either in the beginning or the end. The English phrases in the powerband compositions are often referred as a result of appropriation of existing lyrics, especially when it is applied as a sort of catch phrase to conclude the verse.<sup>17</sup> The text of *If I ever say good-bye* employs three languages, *tok ples* Yabob, Tok Pisin and English; they are actually not juxtaposed as independent verses but mixed together into a singular context. In this case, the vibrato in the English line, which perhaps most young generations of the area would understand, is effective in stressing and aethetizing the

Ex. 13

$\text{♩} = c. 110$

Da lin taim yu bin tok im mi bai mi stap wantaim yu foeva mo o mug  
i lo pa dal ni a ku kun lon mon u tor deg ta sol le wa  
mi no inap ting lus long yu bai mi ol taim ting ting long yu but one thing you  
make mi won der if I e ver say good-bye

Ex. 14

$\text{♩} = c. 96$

u mar ma lain hei ta mas deg bi na ma  
pik ta ta mas hei hi na  
sain ma lain i en deg be de ni  
so ri bu ben gu

English words among the rest of the verse. The application of *Madang stail* vibrato is to enrich the song texts, which are sometime incomprehensible because of multilingual audiences.

As it has been demonstrated above, coordination with the words is essential to the application of *Madang stail*. The followings further discuss the significance of the vibrato singing in enunciation of the words. Firstly, the vibrato singing takes place in several vowels in succession, but rarely extends to three or more words. *Madang stail* is normally applied to the length of one or two syllables. The longer executions of vibrato is usually employed for vocables that contain few or no lexical significance, and the shorter ones involve a part of the words. Not every Madang vocalist employs *Madang stail* to a great extent, and the same vocalist retains a range of variety in applying the vibrato vocal technique. The articulation of the vibrato singing depends on how the vocalist intends to sing the song, and the significance of the words are decided in terms of the importance of the lexicon in context. As the fact that many of the vibratos occur in the stretched sound and vocables, the enunciation of *Madang stail* is not necessarily a clear way of singing as long as intelligibility of the lexicon is concerned.

The vibrato in the syllables of words creates a special effect in the addressing phrases. The application of *Madang stail* to the addressing words interacts as in emphasis of the quality of sentiment of the addresser and the attachment to the sung subject. The vibrato is essential to these songs in that it signifies a particular domain of sentiment; it might even have driven the singers to sing in such a way. The application of the vibrato to addressing words in text articulate sentiment that can not be located without such an

effect of emphasis. If there is any intention present in mind of the performer, it is solely due to the imagining of cognitive pattern, which is found as being capable of inducing emotional reactions among the audience. The sentiment expressed by the singer and invoked among the audience through the vibrato would have bear a different effect if a normal singing voice had been applied, sometime even dramatizing the texts as in Sandie Gabriel's *Long solid days*. Nonetheless, the vibratos do not necessarily clarify the lexicon of the words for it alters the sound to the phonemic level. The displaced words produce a different property of sound, hence significance, of language from the normal speech acts. The vibrato itself is charged with the sentiment of attachment, through displacing the sound of the words. The application of vibrato attracts the audience with the specification of the sentiment, and the phonemes of the words become blurred in the musical sound and the singing voice. *Madang stail* creates both musical and textual significance of specific words and phrases in a given syntax.

#### Vibrato in the *Sore Singsing*

Women's ritual cry has been attributed to the invention of both *sore singsing* and *Madang stail* in which Sandie Gabriel is credited as the incubator. In this section let us look into how the coherent discourse of some of Yabob *sore singsing* attains the effects of the distortion of language through the execution of *Madang stail*. The incorporation of *Madang stail* in the *sore singsing* particularly among commercial cassette recordings has definitely influenced the signification of the former. The nexus between the signified sentiment of text, or emotionally charged textuality, and the vibrato singing becomes most

obviously interrelated in the following examples of *sore singsing*.

Ex. 14 shows an entire melody of *sore singsing Umar malain hei* by Sandie Gabriel. This tune is in fact one of the first recorded instances that Sandie started to develop his own style of singing. The first verse in *tok ples Yabob* and the chorus in *Tok Pisin* are translated as below:

(Verse 1):       It is not for long time that you lived and left us;  
                    it is as if you have never been here.  
                    You had a long time more to live, yet you are ruined.  
                    *Sori*, my dearest.

(Chorus 1):      If you were able to speak, I would say something good to you.  
                    But no, you left us and are gone.  
                    Our feelings are struck, and our hearts are truly broken.  
                    *Sori* my dear, you are gone.

(Sandie Gabriel, *Umar Malain Hei*)

*Umar malain hei* was composed in order to commemorate the death of one of his *wantok* cousin; its text, in a mild way, accuses the dead for having died in a young age. Aside from very slight vibratos in almost all the stretching notes, the typical execution of *Madang stail* in *Umar malain hei* is applied to the phrases *tamasdeg binama* (literally, “you stayed then left us”), *iendeg bedeni* (literally, “was there, then you ruined it”), and *oule e* (literally, “you have gone away”). These words locate in the middle of a sentence or a melodic phrase. The first two phrases enounced with an attack each on the beginning of the syllables—*ta* in *tamasdeg* and *i* in *iendeg*, respectively—as Sandie’s style. The first two vibratos, on particle *-deg* (indicates approximately “as” or “then”) that appears twice, are executed in a rather sharp tremulant voice: their length is short (within one beat) and the movement is quick. The last vibrato on *oule e* is, on the other hand, occurs in the

stretched interjection of the *e* sound; it is sung in a rather wavy vibrato and the note extends to eight beats.

The slight changes of contour, which are not exactly in vibrato yet still noticeable as elaborations, take place in the stretching notes in the phrases *umar malain hei* (literally, “It not for a long time”), *hina sain malain* (literally, “your long time”), and *gomu uyan ta ngapau pe* (literally, “I might speak to you some good words”). Since this vocalization is somewhat difficult to produce in the syllable containing *e*, the vibrato in *pe* has more marked pitch change, which is notated in the example as a descending contour within the syllable. This elaboration is always executed within a length of one syllable and without strong fluctuation, they might sound a closer to Western singing style than strong execution of *Madang stail* vibrato. Sandie Gabriel’s singing frequently employs this sort of soft vibrato, and produces an illusion that he was singing in *Madang stail* throughout the text. As it has been stated, *Madang stail* does not consist of a singular way of vocalization but has various articulations in order to accommodate to particular situations. In terms of words, the vibratos in *Umar malain hei* are applied to the syllables that have relatively weak significance. The particle *-deg* certainly does not contain special meaning by itself that can attract the audience, and interjection *e* is really an addition to the sentence. *Umar malain hei* has messages that has to be intelligible enough for the audience to emotionally respond, as well as the composer’s sentiment of sorrow has to be expressed to the imagined audience, the dead. This is not to say that Sandie Gabriel regarded his vibrato singing as subordinate to the rest of his compositional parameters such as the words, harmony, beat, and so on. However, as in many other cases of his





Ex.15

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 100$

nen a e ma la bi sap a ho tu  
 me ne hi ge me re me han gu sa in pi si  
 ni (o ye) tim tain me si e wi ti  
 mun din ma nin mok nen a so uru  
 ti mon nga me hi nan ti bun

Ex.16

$\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 72$

Sa par ga don din i tor muru  
 wan ye we reg i tor Sa  
 par ga don ga don mok e ilum  
 pik e pe ni pe

mourning talk of a woman at the funeral of her father; her text transcribed by Sandie Gabriel was actually a reproduction of the last words uttered by the mourner's father, who reassured his crying daughter by figuratively stating his peaceful ending. The addressing effect of *Nen a* lies in that the word *nen* is repeatedly enounced in the beginning of each sentential structure; the vibrato adds emotional significance so that the addressing is regarded as something not ordinary to the ear of the audience. In the enunciation of *nen a* vibrato is basically applied to both of the two vowels *e* and *a*, instead of singing in vibrato just in the stretching notes; the distortion created by the vibrato gives the audience—Yabob speakers that is—an impression of emotionally charged speech. In this sense, Sandie's vibrato in *Nen a* presupposes the audience who understands the text of the song; the vibrato in this case seems to bear signification of the *sore singsing*. *Nen a* is an example that suggests the locals' theory regarding women's ritual cry as an ingredient to Sandie Gabriel's *Madang stail*. Since the text of *Nen a* takes the mourning woman's cry, homology between the vibrato and the wailing contour is easily sensed with efficacy. It should be noted that the melodic contour of *Nen a* invariably shows a descending pattern to the final, reminiscent of women's ritual cry that usually ends with descending contour in order to take breath. Along with the incorporation of vibrato into the melodic structure, and the frequent addressing and its vibrato in the word *nen*, *Nen a* bridges the signification between *Madang stail* and *sore singsing*. This means that *Madang stail* is regarded as being capable of expressing the sentiment *sore* ("sorrow") or *wari* ("worry") through the association of wavy voices between the mourning cry and the vibrato vocal style.

The incorporation of *Madang stail* in *Sapar*, as Ex. 16 indicates as well, does not necessarily mean that the vibrato singing always signify the sentiment of *sore* or *wari*; the locals never attest that the vibrato *stands for* crying. In *Nen a*, the contour of Sandie Gabriel's voice somehow resembles with someone wailing, and women's ritual cry has been regarded as one of the sources for the invention of *Madang stail*. However, the singer in recording was not at all commemorating the death of the unfortunate derelict from somewhere else—he was singing the song by request from a field worker such as I, and he sang it in the way he would sing any guitar band tunes as he wishes. The true argument here is supposed to be the fact that *Madang stail* has become compatible with singing *sore singsing*; the vibrato singing is not considered to be odd or inappropriate for the songs for funeral and commemoration even for communal, stringband settings. Therefore, the connection between *Madang stail* and *sore singsing* is a homology to a limited extent; while there are songs such as *Nen a* that remind the audience of a wailing voice in the vibrato singing, other songs do not appear to represent or imitate a crying voice. Even in the case of *Nen a* it is not totally clear if the wailing contour in the melody is a representation for crying; in fact imitation occurs in a rather straightforward way in the chorus of *Long solid days* in the form of sobbing *mama*, etc. The *sore singsing* and *Madang stail* complementarily express the sentiment of *sore*. The incorporation of *Madang stail* in the performances of *sore singsing* indicates that *Madang stail* is suitable for the *sore singsing* as well as ordinary powerband tunes. The vibrato singing has become a representation for refinement with which the *sore singsing* sounds better (*moa nais*).

The relationship between *Madang stail* and *sore singsing* has been recognized in the discourse that regards women's ritual cry as a source of the vibrato vocal style. The cases such as *Nen a* and *Long solid days* suggest a generic connection between the singer Sandie Gabriel's musical idea of vibrato and the sentiment of *sore*. If the imitation of cry in *Long solid days* is regarded as an experimental phase of *Nen a*—the former was composed and released on cassette before the latter—the developmental process becomes rather clear. It is true that Sandie Gabriel perhaps developed his brand of *sore singsing* almost simultaneously with his vibrato singing; however, when the vibrato is applied to *sore singsing*, each case of execution is different. The connection between the vibrato and the *sore singsing* is the sentiment of *sore*, or the discontent caused by loss of someone dear. The signification that bridges the two is the association *Madang stail* is *sore singsing*, and *sore singsing* is *Madang stail*; at the core of the association there echoes a wavy sound of voice.

#### The Imagining of *Madang Stail*

One might find something ominous in the atmosphere of the whole body of work by Sandie Gabriel whose career as a musician abruptly terminated by tragic death of the composer himself. Some local musicians relate Sandie's untimely death with his passion in composition, his preoccupation with the *sore singsing* and other general songs about sorrow and separation in particular. As the example of *sore singsing Sapar* suggests, the post factum attribution of causality—that a song foreshadows a death—has become a prevalent association in the Madang area; therefore, the tragic departure of Sandie Gabriel

looms over nearly everything that he attempted, experimented with, or became celebrated for. As a consequence, the vibrato style initiated by Sandie Gabriel, or the *nek bilong Sandie*, instantaneously connects the singer's tragic end with his successful invention in a deep level of the sentiment: *sore*. Sandie's vocal style has become popular among the local singers only after his death, and the association between the inventor's death and the emotiveness of *Madang stail* seems to be almost inseparable. The vibrato singing is ridden with the image of Sandie Gabriel his works; the whole body of work done by Sandie today cannot be referred without his achievement of expressing the sentiment of *sore*, which was ironically culminated by his own death.

In judging powerband cassette recordings produced by the performers in the Madang are, local musicians often comment the songs with critical phrases such as *singsing i gat filin* ("song that has a feeling") or *nogat filin insait* ("no feelings inside"). By commenting the songs in these terms, the speaker is usually referring to an execution of *Madang stail*; if the vibrato sounds good, it is a *singsing i gat filin*. A *singsing i gat filin* is also a *gutpela singsing* ("good song"), and valued highly. The songs that belong to *nogat filin insait* are those without any vibrato (*stret tumas*, "too straight") or awkward execution of it, especially those with the waves or fluctuation of pitch executed too evenly. Here, the criterion for judging of a good song is based on whether the song contains "feelings" to the ear of the audience, and such feelings are expressed in terms of how well the vibrato is executed. A good articulation of *Madang stail* is the vibrato that has uneven waves, and this sensibility toward asymmetrical pattern of vocal execution is reminiscent of the precontact *singsing tumbuna* song style as well as women's ritual cry.

Of course, the audience does not find a good *Madang stail* should resemble or imitate the *singsing tumbuna* or women's ritual cry. However, aesthetic homology or "iconicity of style" (Feld 1994) with a positive significance inevitably finds the nexus in the execution of *Madang stail* under the category of *singsing i gat filin*.

If a particular execution of *Madang stail* does not fit to the ear of audience, such as due to the use of *tok ples* outside Madang, incompetent performance, etc., the performance will be regarded as either *Em i bihainim Madang tasol* ("It is merely following Madang") or *nogat filin insait*. Thus, *filin*, or sentiment dominant in *Madang stail* is *sore* but at the same time it is *nais* ("nice," or "refined")—feeling *sore* is a nice, refined state of emotion. Feeling the *sore*, in the sense that it is a sorrow, might not necessarily be a positive emotion, but to express it—or to create the atmosphere of it regardless of intention—so that the people can share the sorrow is a refined interaction. By the term "people" (*ol man*)<sup>18</sup> the Papua New Guineans usually mean their *wantoks*, or the members of the community and their kin. This is the moment that *Madang stail* becomes a musical experience charged with articulated sentiment; the execution of vibrato becomes a refined expression of their particular sentiment that instantly reminds the audience of everyday experiences of various states of *sore*. Local composers regardless of genre—the *singsing tumbuna* or guitar band music—invariably attribute their source of musical ideas to images of scenery or events in everyday life. They would enounce the impression of a certain condition, emotion, sequence, ideas, images of scenery, and so on. While it is not regarded as important to narrate or inform whatever the source of text, the composers spend a long time pondering upon the words enounced in melodic contour;

how the song is sung is more crucial for the composers than what the content of song is. How the song is sung equals to the whole content of the text itself. New compositions for the *singsing tumbuna*, for instance, usually entails a certain impressions of the event of performance: if the day in which the dance is performed is memorable, the lyrics would repeat *nal e, nal e* (“the day, the day”), etc. A guitar band tune might celebrate Independence Day, grieve separation, mourn, confess love, caisson the *wantoks*, express the feeling for the *pamu*, and so forth.

To ask, “Why do you sing songs this way?” would not be a good at all in order to find the significance of the articulation of *Madang stail*. The informant might shrug and answer, *Bikos em i save kamap olsem* (“Because it happens as it is”), or *Bikos em bai moa nais olsem* (“Because it would be nicer this way”). The local explanations such as *filin, gutpela singsing, nogut, Madang stail*, and so forth, are in most cases uttered in order to finish the conversation with the inquisitive student. Indeed, to ask how good is a good song is really a tautology that only receives a final, silencing comment such as, *Em i we bilong mipela Madang* (“It’s the way of us Madang”). Even the attribution of the invention of *Madang stail* to the *singsing tumbuna* has been rather contradictory when the executions to the arrangement from the traditional dance pieces are examined. Such locutions are not a display of regional identity in an ordinary sense; it is rather a speech act of mildly refusing to scrutinize the aesthetic reaction that really belongs to the realm of tacit knowledge or uncanny feelings of significance. Therefore, it rather has to be stressed that the nexus resulted by various levels of signification in the execution of *Madang stail* is interacting like a force that creates a realm of aesthetics or synesthesia that makes the



locals positively or negatively express it. What is intriguing about the term *Madang stail* is the fact that it was initially a personal style of Sandie Gabriel: As Sandie died, Sandie's style has now become Madang's style. While such a naming shows a parallel with anonymous authorship of *singsing tumbuna* repertoire, this is not a display of regional identity. Even if such a sense of identity is present and intended to be expressed, it would be empirically false regarding that there are Madang artists who do not incorporate the vibrato as much as some non-Madang singers who have acquired the style, as the locals themselves are certain. In fact, *Madang stail* seems to be spreading to a number of non-Madang artists in the country to the extent that sometime in the future it might as well be called *PNG stail*, instead of *Madang stail*. If *Madang stail* becomes prevalent among the powerband vocalists throughout the country, there will be no point in distinguishing the song style with a name of a province, especially regarding that the domestic productions are aiming to market PNG powerbands overseas in the Pacific. Differentiation of *Madang stail* is never based on sociopolitical intentions in an ordinary sense; rather, it is an articulation of attachment of the vocal style to the audience who has been experiencing so much through the sound of the vibrato invented by their *wantok* artists.

The discourse that paraphrases the prevalence of *Madang stail* is an attempt to finalize the efficacy, which is ineffable by nature, of synesthesia produced by performance of the vibrato. *Madang stail*, therefore, is actually a name for a condition rather than a particular vocal technique per se; such a condition entails attitude towards music-making as well as the atmosphere produced by it in which the vibrato resonates in the various levels of spaces: physical, cognitive, and social. The attitude toward music-

making and its produced atmosphere of performance is the root of the naming *Madang stail*, since the scene of everyday activity of the local artists have been largely around the town. The discourse on the significance of *Madang stail* is a result of contrast against the powerbands of other provinces to which the locals are exposed through the media and concerts. But still, the sense of refinement that incubates such a discourse is not a product of manipulation of transaction but everyday experience. *Madang stail* is a refined way of expressing things belonging to everyday life, which are cultivated through music-making; *Madang stail* is a nexus of sentiment that differentiates the refined from the ordinary by means of articulation of the vibrato singing style.

### Conclusion

*Madang stail* is a result of transition from the stringband to the powerband. The introduction of the electronic instruments and cassette recordings have necessitated the performers to rely more on the percussion and the timbre played by the synthesizer and the electric guitars than ensemble of solo instruments involving the ukulele and the acoustic guitar. *Madang stail* is invented in order to compensate for the decreasing significance of polyphony in singing and instrumentation, and increasing variety of the timbre, the rhythm, chromaticism and scant harmonics imported from Western pop music. The naming of *Madang stail* does not necessarily characterize the song style of all the artists known in the area; in addition, as the cases of non-Madang singers incorporating *Madang stail* indicate, to regard the vibrato singing as distinct to the area is also misleading. There have been a folk model to explain the origin and prevalence of the vibrato singing by

introducing cultural and musical factors; the *singsing tumbuna* and women's ritual cry are particularly regarded as sources of inspiration of Sandie Gabriel. However, *Madang stail* in practice is an invention of performative technique that sensitizes words and other enunciation in text through distorting the words. Such sentiment, being incorporated in the songs to which the audiences are attached in various ways, has been culminated in the word *sore*; in this particular sense, the word *sore* actually entails a wide range of feelings rooted in attachment rather than mere signification of sorrow. *Madang stail* bears geographical name because the positive aspects of music-making which refinement, attachment and the sentiment of *sore* express are all familiarized and embedded in the everyday life in the community. The audience differentiates *Madang stail* in performance when the performers are identified with the area and the vibrato singing is present. The vibrato singing entails a sense of refinement known as *nais*, which summarizes the positive aesthetic sentiment prompted by *sore*. The vibrato singing is recognized as an emotive vocal technique that articulates the familiar, the refined, the attached, and *sore*. As the audience becomes more familiar with the vibrato, an impression of *Madang stail* molds into a style from which the environment of performance generates with or without actual singing every time. The addressing effect of the words sung in *Madang stail* interacts as an articulation of sentiment, which is the foremost criterion for a *gutpela singsing* ("good song"). Through this inculcation the locals make distinction of the performers as those *Madang stret* ("real Madang") and *bihainim Madang tasol* ("just following Madang"). Consequently, *Madang stail* became an important signification of the sentiment underscored by the addressing words, and the naming of *Madang stail*

indicates the association of the vibrato with the grassroots.

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<sup>1</sup> Although I am reluctant to squarely apply Western classical terminology, here I define “vibrato” as “quick reiteration of a single pitch produced by an intermittent stream of breath with fixed vocal chords,” and “fluctuation in pitch” (Randel 1978:540). Yet, my application of the word “vibrato” can be more liberal in order to characterize vocal ornament in general form time to time. Of course, the locals never make any distinctions as such.

<sup>2</sup> Regarding copyright and quality of field recording, the musical examples entail transcription only.

<sup>3</sup> Not all examples transcribe the exact vocal range: treble clef is used for the melodic transcriptions.

<sup>4</sup> *Nek bliong Madang stret*, “voice of real Madang”; *stail bilong Madang*, “style of Madang.”

<sup>5</sup> A phrase with predicate marker *i* can be translated in a number of ways in English according to context. Compare this translation with the one in the beginning of this chapter.

<sup>6</sup> Presumably, their *sore singsing*, which I am yet to hear, never incorporates women’s *tok sore* as a part of text.

<sup>7</sup> I had no opportunity to record and compare women’s ritual cry with *Madang stail* while I was in Yabob, although I heard it once when I attended to a burial on Yabob Island graveyard. That opportunity was also the only time that I saw *sore singsing* being performed, with a strong effect on the attendants. Of course, it happened hardly a couple of months after I arrived in Madang, and I did not think what I saw was actually going to develop into one of the central topics of this thesis then.

<sup>8</sup> The words of the lyrics are not transcribed. All music examples transcribe only a part of the whole text and melody.

<sup>9</sup> “Sele mole” might have some connection with Bernal *singsing tumbuna* called Sael, which is said to be composed by a river spirit but widely practiced in the area through the trading of the *singsing* (Niles and Webb 1988:40).

<sup>10</sup> Presumably, both songs are arrangement from local *singsing tumbuna*, but I could not substantiate this.

<sup>11</sup> What I have expressed as a “discovery” of *sore* in Chapters 3 and 4 is probably a simultaneous phenomenon along with the tradition of vibrato singing in laments in PNG

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as a whole. The incorporation of the word *sore* in the guitar band lyrics is also found in the coastal Central Province (Niles and Webb 1988:3-5), although there is no direct historical connection with Madang is apparent. As it has been said, *sore* has been already incorporated in *tok ples* lexicons of the area, and even *sore singsing* are separately invented and practiced in Kranket and Yabob.

<sup>12</sup> These Anglo-American tunes might be casually referred as the style of Tin Pan Alley, vaudeville, or parlour songs. On the other hand, despite the presence of black American soldiers during and after the W.W.II, there is hardly any influence from black American music traditions in the Madang area.

<sup>13</sup> *Aidau e* is probably a part of *singsing tumbuna* from a Motu-speaking area, but I could not substantiate.

<sup>14</sup> No recordings of the “Uta mon e” section of Maimai were made.

<sup>15</sup> By the word “vocable,” I mean vocalized sound, which does not consist a part of a word or devoid of lexical signification.

<sup>16</sup> Gum (Amele): *Awa au awe ya ni mel adi*. Bel or Yabob: *Nen a nen e nen a hangu ai imate*. Tok Pisin: *Mama ma-mama pikinini (bilong mi) i dai e*.

<sup>17</sup> While the locals did note the appropriation of English phrases from oversea pop songs, usually they never recalled the identity of the source.

<sup>18</sup> In standard Tok Pisin, *ol man* is supposed to be *ol manmeri*, literally “the men and women”; however, Madang speakers regardless of sex tend to shorten it to simply *ol man*.

*WANTOK* IDEOLOGY, FRAGMENT HEARING

The sociocultural basis of guitar band music is characterized in the performative frame of “peri-urban grassroots.” Multilingualism, the notion of *wantok*, precontact sound-producing practice and the incorporation of modern technology have especially played a considerable role to the development of music-making that has been taken shape as complex song text, *six-to-six*, *sore singsing*, or *Madang stail* vocal technique. The generative model of music represents the making of music forms as “differentiation.” The differentiation is a descriptive term to emphasize music-making as a phenomenon contingent to sociocultural environment. The various terms of sentiment articulated by the informants, such as *sore*, *nais*, *Madang stail*, *sore singsing*, *i gat flin*, *salim tingting*, or “songs should have weight,” indicate the existence of nexus between musical form and its practice. The operating mode of differentiation will be sought not in performative practice, which is actually a part of the differentiation process, but how the audience hears the sound. It has been already described that most audiences seem to have disposition for *lokol* or *rege* tunes despite multilingual and often cryptic song text; there has had to be some elements so that the listener can pick up the idea of music, no matter how the song is composed. Further, musical experience in any situation such as in the *six-to-six*, *gita resis*, *sore singsing* at funeral, public performance of *singsing tumbuna*, or even idle strumming of a guitar in village should involve non- or extra-musical sound that is normally categorized as noise or interruptions. The main concern here is how the

process of event becomes the emotive; the musical sound, which is always subject to displacement, should be structured into an affective experience under a cognitive blueprint that builds up images from the given stimuli.

### Differentiation of Genre and Aural Cognition

The initial process of music-making in Madang started from mimesis, as the stringband was acquired from elsewhere in the Pacific. The songs were learned word by word, chord by chord, and conscious attempt of composition became prevalent. These new songs represented particular feelings that the older numbers could not express. Both the desire to compose and performative effect of such new pieces of music were often paraphrased as *nais*. Bourdieu finds “the habitus is the product of the work of inculcation and appropriation necessary in order for those products of collective history, the objective structures...to succeed in reproducing themselves more or less completely, in the form of durable dispositions” (Bourdieu 1977:85). The making of the genre *musik* and *singsing*, being separate from the sound of *meziab* or the calling of the *garamut*, is a differentiation that Bourdieu’s standpoint provides the ground for. If Bourdieu’s phrase “durable dispositions” is understood in a historical sense that is subject to change its formal structure and/or sociocultural ensemble, the force that has generated and regenerated guitar band music in Madang is certainly regarded as a result of habitus. Bourdieu’s discussion on habitus remains something of a black box even if it is understood as a brand of Lévi-Straussian structure extended to a theory of social action, however. In other words, the nature of habitus remains a mystifying, engendering force that divides Kabyle cultural

action in every aspect of their life from the plan of a house to a parable, marriage or agricultural calendar, for instance (Bourdieu 1977:72-158). Bourdieu's underlining theme about tacit dimension of cognitive "logic" is by far an attractive idea in order to extract and explain cultural practice. The *modus operandi* of such a structure should be explored in more detail that generates and constructs, instead of maintaining, cultural phenomenon. In the case of music composition as an inventive aspect of performance should serve a model of aural cognition, for it concerns both receptive and performative elements of the tacit knowledge.

The formation of genre *musik* and *singsing* is a differentiation between the remodeled *singsing tumbuna*, the new *lotu singsing* and the stringband.<sup>1</sup> The sound-producing acts that became characterized as *musik* did not take place in terms of identification or definition between *musik* and non-*musik*, but among *musik* and its subcategory such as guitar band and sacred music. The *singsing tumbuna* is characterized under *singsing*, the song, and recognized as a related genre to guitar band music and others. The sound-producing phenomena are categorized by principle of identification instead of dualistic division. The invention of *gita resis* through introduction of exchange value, the *six-to-six* through electronics, the *sore singsing* through altered moral significance of guitar band music, and *Madang stail* through aesthetic innovation. These are the *modus operandi* of interaction; the concept of fund raising created a clear division between the performer and the audience, the notion of competition selected the winner from the loser, and musical inventions gradually built up to a local style. This postcontact differentiation between the two aesthetic categories associated with various markings shows a vivid



contrast against inter-tribal *singsing* exchange system in the precontact era in which two parties become merged as a singular performative group through the leaning of dance. The *mulung* initiation ritual and the performance of the sound of *meziab* interacted as cementing the youth in the community of the adults. While the precontact music-making united the participants, the postcontact practice has been creating divisions so that active exchange within and among the genre might take place.

The Papua New Guineans authenticate musical products by associating it with regional identity such as peri-urban Madang, coastal Madang, or PNG. Accordingly, the cultural “Other” is defined in terms of the ones not compatible with the image of things Madang. Whether positively or negatively, the *waitman singsing* as the episode of Harry explicated in chapter 1 reflects aesthetic value that the Madang natives find musical elements foreign to *lokol*. The boundary is also drawn within the *lokol* genre between Madang and non-Madang music: an experienced stringband player can recognize the difference of guitar playing among Tolai, Central, Sepik and Manus. The “other-ness” of perception in terms of ethnic identity, however, never simply corresponds to a particular musical style. An unsatisfactory performance of Madang *lokol* tunes, for instance, is never attributed to the ethnicity of the performers: the song sounds bad not because it is sung by Madang artists, but because they “have no knowledge of singing (*nogat save bilong singsing*).” By contrast, a bad performance by non-Madang artists is mostly regarded as different taste in music. The brand of made-in-Madang (*bilong Madang*) represents good cultural value and a fruit of proper conduct, as a longtime sojourner is greeted with phrases such as “Now you are a real man/woman of Madang (*Nau yu*

*mangi/meri Madang tru).*”

If differentiation is characterized as a process of generic distinction, or even social control, displacement of music-making might be described as dispersion. Differentiation becomes a historical process only through dispersion; cultural process of music-making is a coin with the two sides of differentiation and dispersion. The sound of music in a sense spills over the performative frame regardless of the taste or preference of the audience since no one can effectively shut one's ear all the time to screen off whatever the sound they regard as noise. The moment that one feels the vibration resonating in the air, one is instantaneously drawn to the world of sound. The dispersing character of musical sound negates the sense of identity that incessantly attempts to draw any boundary between “Their” and “Our” music. The sound of music resonates in the body and mind, and the conceptualization of genre, or differentiation, is really a secondary nature of music-making. In a multilingual and tribal situation such as PNG, this interaction of dispersion particularly plays an important role in creation of music culture in the age of media dissemination. In the precontact *kastom* of *baim singsing*, musical meaning was built up on the experienced world of music rather than lexical significance of the words, and similar cultural process is still apparent in contemporary aspects of guitar band music, such as multilingual song text or the *lokol* appropriation of reggae.

#### The Discovery of *Sore*

As it has been seen, the *sore singsing* demarcates sorrow by means of rhetorical devices and performative techniques, for instance. The attendants feel the specific social space of

motuary ritual through presence of stringband lament and the reaction among them. The imagining of one's *panu* landscape as well as its nostalgic value is given special significance in the making of guitar band music. The memory of the social life in village becomes a product of music that enriches the feeling of *sore* by means of the performance of *sore singsing*. In other words, the *sore singsing* is a product of "essential physiological and cognitive process," and the invention of lament for guitar band highlight differentiation as a generative structure (Blacking 1973: 7). Blacking found in studying Venda children's appropriation of musical ideas that:

To create new music, composers draw on remembered sound, which is usually associated with emotional reflections to the cultural experiences in which the sounds were heard. The composers of Venda children's songs have, for instance, drawn on the remembered sounds of their national dance. This does not mean that the songs are based on this theme supposed to convey the same emotions, that a song must mean the same to different performers, any more than the national dance means the same to all who become involved in it (Blacking 1995:197).

Hearing takes place in situation. Blacking's statement reflects the *sore singsing* for the invention of lament induces a totally different range of emotions from other genres of guitar band music. Blacking suggests that music does not necessarily function as a vehicle of verbal message but "conveys emotions" according to the context of performance. The formal structure of *sore singsing* derives from the entertainment musical genre stringband. Nonetheless, in a performance, bodily reaction, namely crying to the singing creates an atmosphere marked with grief, memory of the dead, proceedings of mortuary ritual, cry and grief of other attendants and sound of music something to do with sailing canoes and other emphatic elements.

The social formation of powerband music rooted in the *six-to-six* has played a crucial role to the “discovery” of the sentiment *sore* in guitar band music, which has eventually become the invention of *sore singsing* and perhaps even *Madang stail*. The vibrato singing has influenced the guitar band music currently in practice such as powerband or *sore singsing*, although *Madang stail* has been incorporated in many dance pieces that have little or nothing to do with representation of *sore*. By the differentiating of *Madang stail*, the audience feels the atmosphere of *sore* from any particular melodic contour regardless of textual content. The word *sore*, which is the only strong sentiment that has been articulated in the song texts of local guitar band, is dispersing over the compositions. *Madang stail* as aesthetic value is an amalgamation of the beautified feelings based on attachment and the sentiment *sore*.

The sentiment *sore* is indeed “discovered” in the sense that it is as a result of incidences between the performer and the audience. The members of a Yabob powerband had the following experience about the performance of an arrangement of a *singsing tumbuna*, entitled *Sau laliku* around 1990 (TT 73) (See appendix 4 for the words):

*Sau laliku* is a song that Eki [a band member] got from the *singsing tumbuna* of Bagasin. We turned it to a [powerband] song. Now, at one concert, an open field day concert, there was this old woman, one of the *mamas* at the market selling vegetable. She came around and she was listening to us playing, then all of a sudden she started to cry like hell when we started to sing the song. We wondered why. We heard it later that the words of *Sau laliku* were worked out by her dead husband from Bagasin, and our song reminded her of him.

(PT)

Bagasin (locally pronounced as *Begesin* as well) is an inland village located in the Upper Ramu District facing the Trans-Gogol area of Madang District. The instance of *Sau laliku*

took place totally by chance. Even the meaning of the lyrics of *Sau laliku* were not understood by the member of the band because it is a foreign *tok ples* of which they have no knowledge. In addition, they were not expecting anything but a happy audience dancing to the beat of reggae, into which the piece was arranged. Moreover, even in Bagasin the song was a sad memory only to this old woman, since the song itself is a part of local *singsing tumbuna* for dance. This episode of *Sau laliku* is an essence of the *six-to-six* when we think about the history of consciousness in Madang's music. The advent of modern technology has enabled us to gather information and mobilize people from a long distance, and the encounter with the unknown results in a surprise such as the old woman's cry induced by the performance of PNG reggae *Sau laliku*. The old woman ignored how the song was arranged and refashioned, but the retention of the word was "real" enough for her to be reminded of her deceased husband; she responded to a particular dimension of song as a stimulus, and that made her cry. What is really essential to the performer and the audience from this incidence, however, is that the sound of the guitar band can be seriously sad, or *sore*. The power of music will remain in the memory of those who participated in it, and a new practice of music-making may emerge.

Another episode to follow reveals that the sound of the powerband itself might have completely different meanings depending on the individuals concerned due to the private significance of memory and attachment. One day, as I was spending one of those quiet days on Yabob Island, I started to play a Kale Gadagads cassette album on my recorder for some checking. As I began to play the tape, a very old man, who was a relative of the late Sandie Gabriel, came up to my *haus boi*. He sat down just outside the

house, and told me a story of how painful it was to even hear this tune as muzak in a town store:

I always think about him and the day that he was killed whenever I hear his tunes. One day I went out to town for shopping, and as I was in the store, they started to play his song on cassette. Oh, I could not bear it! I left the store quickly like a runaway. Still now every time I hear his songs, I feel sorry for him. Really, he was a good man, took great care of the community...

(TB)

Particularly in the case of the premonitory *sore singsing*, the significance of songs is embodied in the situation. The public performance of guitar band music continues to be sanctioned as in cultural shows or fund-raising concerts. One day, when I was listening to a field recording of *sore singsing Sapar*, a young man sighed: "With this song Sapar's name will stay for good." As these examples show, it is these feelings in everyday life, memory, and familiarity that evoke significance in the audience. The aesthetics of performance is the inducing of *salim tingting*, or thinking back of experience, by means of music. The sense of loss became a theme of musical expression as a result of historical facts of guitar band music and death of the musicians. When the performers felt the sound of *lokol* tunes as a reminiscence of a dead person, the *sore singsing* was invented to differentiate the feeling. By the same token, the feeling *sore* has taken shape of music, the *sore singsing*, and the sound of guitar band music is now regarded as sorrowful according to its pretext and context. The feeling *sore* is indeed discovered and became a singular property of emotion with its vehicle of expression in *sore singsing*; a sailing canoe and other sorry things are cultivated in the form of guitar band music through symbolic associations and memory.

### *Wantok Ideology*

Differentiation is an interaction based on discursive formation, which takes its model from the collectivity known as *wantok* in Tok Pisin. The local propositions about music is a formalizing force from which the ideology of Melanesian nation-state stems. In order to investigate how “doxa” or the conducts “experienced as ‘natural world’ and taken for granted” (Bourdieu 1977:164) influences music-making it might be worthwhile to characterize such a generative force. I call this doxa expressed as the identifying discourse “*Wantok Ideology*” to elucidate an arena of discourse in negotiation that construes identity, culture, and symbolic interactions.<sup>2</sup> To recuperate the idea of *wantok*, the cultural basis of the word should be sought in the polylingual tribal society and colonization. A *wantok* is a member of a tribe but it always excludes a (grand-) parent, a spouse, or a (grand-) child, and often an uncle, an aunt, or a cousin. The word *wantok*, etymologically “one-talk” that is, suggests the shared existence of certain cultural code or disposition, deriving from the analogy of identical language. The term *wantok* at the same time presupposes Tok Pisin speakers as well as the people of PNG, where the language is spoken. The address of *wantok* expresses communicability, kinship, camaraderie and the imagined community. The term *Wantok Ideology* represents the patterns of conduct that Bourdieu termed “economical logic” based on homologies (Bourdieu 1977:114-158). The identification with Madang is a mean of expressing something as valuable, familiar, lively and endeared as much as one’s own existence. The sense of the neat, well-done, refined, beautiful, sublime, moving, vibrant, in control and other aesthetic judgment in a given

context of musical performance is associated with the environment in music-making.

The *Wantok* Ideology interacts in the situation where Tok Pisin and *tok ples*, the languages of everyday use, consist of an arena for imagination; the reference to *wantok* is an ideological framework centred by Tok Pisin, on which the lexicon stands, surrounded by the *tok ples* of Melanesia. Especially, the identification of village for linguistic distinction in a small scale—each village has its own language—creates the image of community consisting of a small number of people with strongly clan-based kinship. Regardless of reality, tribal societies are imagined as a small group, and occasion like a village funeral portrays the size of group by the number of attendants. “We cry a lot in a funeral,” as one villager related, “because our number is small—not like America where there are many. We cry because we are sorry to lose our *wantok*, much more than those big places.” The contrast of a Madang village against the United States is interesting in that these are actually comparable as individual *ples* because of linguistic identity. This account above indicates that emotion is intensified through the association of *wantok*, which essentially regarded as small, closed, intimate and the fear of losing the members. The imagination of small-scale tribal societies through linguistic identification makes *Wantok* Ideology as a strong agency for expressing nostalgia and attachment, and musical innovations are almost constantly driven to serve for the imagination within the village context. If *Wantok* Ideology is creating a situation characteristic to Melanesia, it is based on the presence of *ples* conceptualized by the lingua franca Tok Pisin.<sup>3</sup>

An informant might be perplexed by questions such as “Why do you play the guitar (like that)?” or “How do you compose songs (about so and so)?” from a



fieldworker. To end such curious inquiries, they would categorically answer with phrases like “Because that’s way of PNG” “Because this is the way of us Madang, not other parts of PNG,” or “It’s been done so for so many years that it’s hard to change it altogether.” When a villager gratuitously says “This is real Madang’s music!” while listening to a local tune, for instance, we know such a locution contradictory—there can be incompetent Madang musicians as well as well-received non-Madang, or even Western, artists. Since the idea of *wantok* extends its identification from *tok ples* to Tok Pisin speakers, the distinction between Madang and non-Madang music may as well be transposed to between PNG and non-PNG ones. Likewise, village artists can be identified against other villages in the same area. The essential analogy here is a substitution of the distinction between positive and negative musical stimuli with “Our” (*wantok*) music and “Their” (non-*wantok*) ones. In addition, *Wantok* Ideology is an agency to portray communities as the ones having *gupela pasin* (“good conduct”), as they are associated with nostalgia and homeland. The imagining of community provides nostalgic theme for the song text; a number of the idolized “Beautiful Madang” tunes such as the following make use of the positive image of communities:<sup>4</sup>

Our last round is enough for now;  
 I feel like going back again.  
 I do not belong here, and I am hanging around  
 the town that belongs to someone else.  
 So, I must go back again,  
 I go back again to Beautiful Madang.

(Ziros, *Las raun*. The original text in Tok Pisin.)

The lyrics depict alienation of a mobile youth, a man who is leaving his or her loved one or friend(s) (though the setting seems distinctly male). However, the protagonist’s decision

to suspend their relationship and come back to the senses, or even chastity, is expressed as going back to the *asples* (homeland) from the alienating urban environment. The protagonist “I” tells his or her company of “Beautiful Madang,” a well-known promotional phrase for tourism, as if the place were a photogenic paradise. The parallel between the oppositions “dull / beautiful” and “alien town / Madang the homeland” is apparently present. This discourse of distinction pervades into song texts, and the category of Madang or PNG itself becomes a topic for song texts to depict and praise the homeland as it has been seen among the compositions for public ceremony or cautionary songs such as Aksim Siming’s *Yam ilonen manin ienmeg*.

As for the invention of *Madang stail*, its localization from an individual singing style features a more complex interaction. This singing style was first attributed as a creation of an individual, Sandie Gabriel; after his death the locals found as a similar mode of vibrato practiced by other Madang singers, as a hallmark of regional style. Despite that the vibrato voice has now spread to non-Madang artists in Port Moresby and elsewhere, it remains to be *samting bilong Madang stret* (something that belongs to Madang proper), and the non-Madang artists are *bihainim Madang* (following Madang). Women’s ritual cry and *singsing tumbuna* vocal technique have symbolic connection with the invention of the vibrato, and it is based on this premise that the vibrato by non-Madang artists is felt as a copy. The world felt by vibrato is closely knitted to the memory of death, mourning, sorrow, and communal feelings through the homology of women’s cry and traditional singing. *Madang stail* have a property of musical experience that is felt as a singular, true horizon for the voices of women’s cry and the *singsing tumbuna* are always

felt as expressions of a deep sentiment, maintaining a strong association with communal ways of life. The vibrato therefore cultivates *salim tingting* (the sending-over of memory), which interacts in ritual cry and the *singsing tumbuna*. *Wantok* Ideology on the surface is a discursive structure that forms one pole of musical activity in the cultural system of the peri-urban Madang societies, but when the process of signification is looked into it is really a part of musical practice as it has been discussed elsewhere. “Talks of signs and discourses is inherently social and practical” (Eagleton 1991:194). The reference to positive value powerband music *singsing bilong Madang stret* (“the real songs of Madang”) is imagined as it being representative of everyday Madang world in singing voice. *Madang stail* is prevalent because the *wantok* audiences associate it with emphatic addresses in the songs in which they find attachment.<sup>5</sup>

The song texts are regarded as a key to reveal nature of music-making that is cognition and disposition of sound-producing practices; it has had to be explored by focusing on how people compose, perform and listen to the music. Sociocultural elements of linguistic distinctions, gender, kinship network, community of practice, appropriation of electronics are necessary for music-making and the ideological construction of *wantok*.<sup>6</sup> Further, while the gender discrepancy of performative practice should be scrutinized as a sociocultural theme, the most fundamental aspect of aural cognition in guitar band music is universal. The distinction of music-making is clearly present in both the *singsing tumbuna*, guitar band music, and women’s ritual cry,<sup>7</sup> but in the cognitive level sexual difference does not seem to affect physical condition of hearing. Both men and women participate in the dancing without showing much interest in deciphering of the every text

in the outdoor concert, for instance. The ideology of *wantok* demarcates social identity in linguistic distinction despite that most locals are bilingual or even multilingual and often show multicultural kinship; *Wantok* Ideology is the activating principle of differentiation that associates musical stimuli with the analogy of *wantok*, which is the concept of community real or imagined. In fact, the stimuli themselves are caused by different interactions such as history and social efficacy of poetical imagination, everyday experience involving memory and emotions, and particular musical expressions that instantly integrate them like reggae beat or *Madang stail* vocal technique.

#### Fragment Hearing

Although the *six-to-six* is by no means the only medium through which the locals are immersed in music, as they also listen to the radio, cassette, and so forth, when synesthesia—“interactions across visual-sonic-movement modes” (Feld and Fox 1994:39)—is considered it apparently serves as a representative model of mediation. In the *six-to-six*, participants are surrounded by noise and music sung in the words that they do not necessarily understand, but still the performance is evaluated, songs are occasionally sung along, and the people dance. The audience absorbs musical ideas in a different way from the discursive deciphering of words or the non-musical verbal form such as storytelling; one might call this ‘listening-but-not-listening’ or ‘un-listening.’ In this regard, aural perception and the stylistic structure in contemporary *lokoi* music is fundamentally based on the poetic signification of “de-referentializing of language,” which is defined and elaborated as follows:

“Trends toward ethnographic studies of the interpenetration of music and language contribute strongly to the developing emphasis in sociocultural anthropology on the poetics and pragmatics of expressive performance (...) Music’s poetic de-referentializing of language heightens the symbolic efficacy of its affecting discourse, making it a sensitive gauge of both traditional and emergent forms of sociability and identity, and a key resource in both the construction and the critical inversion of social order” (Feld and Fox 1994:43).

The de-referentializing of language, then, entails musico-vocal elements that treat phonetics in a different way than everyday speech acts. When words are de-referentialized, its original lexicon, which is an inseparable pattern of the sound or the phoneme, will be lost or deformed by being sung in patterned vocal contour. As the result, the song text will construct a different space of meaning when they are vocalized as in a piece of music. Indeed, in some cases the meaning of the words in a song text might be forgotten altogether and appear nonsensical. The vocal deformation of *Madang stail* is the most notable example in Madang musical performance that presupposes the de-referentializing of language. Similarly, melody (*nek*) and beat (*bit*) are the paradigms of formal structure of music that make musical performance as a coherent and closed text. Even if the words are undecipherable or incomprehensible, as long as the music maintains proper performance it is perceived as a piece of *musik* that can be danced to or sung along. The de-referentializing of language is based on musical sound perceived by the participants. The situation in which a given aural stimulus is figured as a musical performance here is the foremost category for the audience rather than the syntax of lyrics.

To expand the concept of “de-referentializing of language” into a more cognitive plane, I use the term “fragment hearing.”<sup>8</sup> The concept “fragment hearing” describes aural and synesthetic cognition of musical phenomena on the assumption that musical

performance entails density of information, or that some aspects or elements of composition is more important, thus more easily and deeply conceivable, than others. The audience in concert field usually differentiates *lokol* from *singsing waitman*, and drawn to a certain wording of the text despite the noise and multilingual song texts. Some aspects of performance bear more significance to the audience because of attachment and their range of imagination. Particular kinds of words, idioms, phrases or tone of voice have informative “density” in the text so that proper comprehension of the entire syntax of song text is not required for musical experience. Fragment hearing displaces the syntax in the setting that people experience the music in play by reconstructing images from a group of significant words or singing voice.

The disposition of fragment hearing might have historical connection with the tradition of *singsing tumbuna* in the Momase area—Morobe, Madang and the Sepiks—for it usually gives less significance to syntactic organization, coherency and textuality of words in the songs. The *singsing tumbuna* in the precontact practice of the *baim singsing*, by which the dance repertoire was transmitted among the tribes, apparently operated on the basis of fragment hearing and continues to be so at present. Fragment hearing perhaps encouraged the compositions that entail repetitive descriptions of impressions in short phrases, or vice versa; at any rate the two seem complementarily related to each other. The repertoire in a foreign *tok ples* was learned by copying manner without taking interest in the content of the words; even in the case of native compositions, the contents of the songs consisted of the repetition of simple phrases or obsolete idioms. The *six-to-six* situation, in which the audience reconstructs, accepts, or rejects the universe of music

through tuning into incomplete, confusing, or highly repetitive chains of information, is a continuation of precontact *singsing tumbuna* performance in that fragment hearing also represents the model of the former. The learning of guitar band music, known as *kopikat*, must have developed from this aspect of the *singsing tumbuna*. The *kopikat* method of musical learning suggests that to know the meaning of words is only optional, and the appreciation of stringband music entailed execution of instrumental and singing techniques as the *gita resis* was judged in terms of the organization of performance rather than the words.

Fragment hearing constructs an experience in that it imagines the singing voice; by *salim tingting*, or “sending out the memory” in the sound of music the audience can be immersed in the field of performance. The singing voice, with occasional deformation, yearns for the native landscape, pleads a leaving lover to stay, or mourns the death of a close kin. In these lyrics, what is important to the audience is the situation and atmosphere invoked by the words and not the message or synopsis of the song text per se. In this regard, fragment hearing operates as a creative ignorance of grammatical elements other than certain idioms, especially a group of words that signify everyday village life. The way audience listens to the sound of music is unchanged as long as the everyday life and music-making in the community continues to interrelate with each other. The sound of music is always in the air—in village *six-to-six*, on the radio, a fellow *wantok* singing, or even imagined sound in the mind—and whoever happened to be there becomes an audience, whether one likes it or not. Even the context as well as pretext for composition becomes a relatively minor concern. Some of *tok ples* words might not come across, or

even Tok Pisin or English words might be missed altogether in general confusion of the concert field, but the atmosphere of performance is still present. This is because positive reaction among a small number of audiences can spread over the ground to build up as a general excitement.<sup>9</sup>

Fragment hearing is not a deviated form of listening, however; in fact it is a practical basis of music-making and the prerogative for appropriation, invention or composition of musico-vocal representation. Among the *sore singsing* the words that carry greater significance for the lamentation amplifies the atmosphere of the performance, and as the cases of “premonition” songs suggest, even the meaning of the text is sometimes reworked. On the surface, the *sore singsing* appears to be interpreted as a message to the dead according to the generic model of *givim rispek*. Indeed, the very discursive structure of the text shows coherency where vocables, obsolete words, and arrangements from *singsing tumbuna* dance pieces are somehow avoided. The non-lexical elements in the *sore singsing* usually entail vocables like “o-o-o-o,” or “ah,” and so forth, and it hardly affects the meaning of the whole lyrics. However, in the actual performance of *sore singsing* crying, saying *tok sore*, preaching, burying the corpse, and other actions of *givim rispek* in the mortuary ritual take place with the music, and the lyrics are not necessarily heard as a complete and coherent message all the time. Usually the mourners cry before deciphering the whole texts of the song, and other participants might be burying the coffin, or praying. The interaction among the various elements of performance complementarily induces the emotion articulated as *sore*, and for mourning whether the text of *sore singsing* is deciphered as a coherent closure is not necessarily



essential. In the *sore singsing* the reproduction of the atmosphere of *sore* is present by means of the images of sea-going canoes, the addresses *bubengu* or *lewa*, names of persons and places, landscape of the villages, the word *sore*, and other phrases that invoke *givim rispek*.

### Conclusion

A “practical logic” and a “logic of practice” have never meant the same thing: *Wantok* Ideology and fragment hearing have been discussed as a hiatus between two different levels of the inculcating force in musical experience. The former locates, articulates and authenticates the given stimuli in terms of homology, and the latter is the principle of reception that emphatically recognizes the particular nature of stimuli embedded in rich meanings. The relationship between *Wantok* Ideology and fragment hearing is best understood as a nexus where projection of musical consciousness emerges from non-reflective aural and performative habits. *Wantok* Ideology feeds back emotive reaction into aural disposition activated by fragment hearing so that musical reaction becomes a resource for musical performance. Fragment hearing is a historical production that locates and condenses sound image into particular idiomatic and syllabic elements; its interaction instantaneously imagines a subject in tribal context, or a subject of *Wantok* Ideology.

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<sup>1</sup>The differentiation, however, did not take place as a historical process of sophistication in musical analysis. The music is regarded as roughly consisting of melody (*nek*), rhythm (*bit*) and chords (*kod*), but the analytical terms never conceptualize any further. The

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differentiation is in this regard an elaboration of generic distinction, not musical elements, in that situation of performance, or use value of music, such as the *six-to-six*, cultural shows, or funerals becomes broken down according to musical styles like *lokol*, *rege*, *waitman singsing*, *singsing tumbuna*, or *sore singsing*.

<sup>2</sup>The term “ideology” in this regard is compatible with the following elaboration by Clifford Geertz. He says “the attempt of ideologies to render otherwise incomprehensible social situations meaningful, to so construe them as to make it possible to act purposefully within them, that accounts both for the ideologies’ highly figurative nature and for the intensity with which, once accepted, they are held” (Geertz 1973:220).

<sup>3</sup> Another interesting point relating to *Wantok* Ideology is the costume for powerband. In town concerts, the *singsing* garments are never worn, while concerts and promotional tour in the cities such as Port Moresby this is the case. Obviously, to express ethnic identity becomes an important theme in multicultural setting more than local one. Compare Plates 8 and 9.

<sup>4</sup> Unless otherwise stated, all original examples are in either Tok Pisin or *tok ples*. See appendix 4 for the transcription of original texts.

<sup>5</sup> From a semiotic point of view, *Madang stail* is a musico-aesthetic practice that operates what Feld calls “iconicity of style,” borrowing Peircean category of sign, as in other music cultures (Feld 1994:109-150). I find iconicity of style as a symbolic interaction, which is the imagining of the subject from hearing the singing voice; in other words, to wonder who is singing or how it is sung is at the core of the signification. The imagining of the singing voice develops from the association of the wavy voice with mourning or other strongly emotional action where the voice becomes an icon of the sentiment that the audience imagines in the singing subject.

<sup>6</sup> The *Wantok* Ideology has been made possible within the framework of the Melanesian nation-state which has invented the category through the introduction of lingua franca Tok Pisin; in spite of its lexicon that signifies local kinship system, the term *wantok* has a post-/colonial background. The notion of *wantok* is, however, characteristic that kinship, tribal, and national consciousness is merged into an identity by linguistic category. The term “*wantok* system,” on the other hand, entails a more sociological tone in that it represents the unmobilizing local system of village-based networks (Geertz and Errington 1991:189-195). The notion of *wantok* continues to construct an important part of imagining the community both in and out of the state.

<sup>7</sup> The devotional music in the church does not have clear division except that the pastor in the Protestant sects is always lead by a man.

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<sup>8</sup> In the earlier versions of writing, the concept “fragment hearing” was phrased as “condensed hearing.” Being advised, the change was made with regard to idiomatic awkwardness of the latter. The former term stressed that the depth of imagery is “condensed” in a small portion of fragmented words and syllables, and that supposedly the aural perception as well as comprehension of language is neither smooth nor proper but bumpy and fragmented, as if the syllables have different density. Composers do prefer to use such ‘dense’ syllables in order to attract both their multilingual and *wantok* audience.

<sup>9</sup> In fact, one might wish to compare the situation in India where cassette music industry reflects multilingualism. But in the case of India, larger lingua francas like Hindi or Bengali have been the language of use for the songs, followed by smaller regional lingua francas and regional languages in order; a hierarchy of polyglossia according to number of speakers is evident (Manuel 1993:155-195). Madang, and likely in other music centres in PNG as well, does not show such a selection of language. Madang composers often create their compositions as if a mosaic made of a variety of languages. There seems to be few concerns from the side of the audience whether they are able to comprehend the entire message of the lyrics or not, not to mention mixing and juxtaposing languages.

## TOWARD CULTURAL PROCESS OF MUSIC-MAKING

The locals came to recognize the subcategory of sound-production, under the introduced category *musik*, according to use value in the peri-urban Madang societies. The new use value of *musik*, which is embedded in modernism, colonialism and local capitalist system in the Pacific, brought change and diversification of expression ranging from the reggae arrangement of *singsing tumbuna* to the lament *sore singsing*. Musical performance is exchanged for capital, cultural identity, solidarity, romantic union, folk belief, religious commitment, or political advancement. The exchange pattern of *baim singsing* once exchanged musical performance for tribal alliance, as its need waned as a result of colonization. The musical form of *singsing tumbuna*, however, provided its basic structure of musical performance involving the *kundu*, singing and dance for cultural show and public ceremony. The technological advancement of the radio, cassette reproduction and electronic instruments in various ways contributed to incorporate guitar band music in the postcolonial capitalist system. The discrepancy between the ideal type of *musikman* (musician) and the audience was invented as a result of the contextualization of *musik*. The discovery of use value of music as well as its development over half a century created ideal types of audience according to inclination. The older musical genre became obsolete and even completely forgotten in the grassroots ways of life; *baim singsing* terminated, the bambooband and stringband are subjects of nostalgia and tourism, and the instruments such as native bamboo flute and the *lipikes* became obsolete. At the same

time, however, construction of musicianship such as learning process and membership of guitar bands reflects strong inclination to communal settings. In addition, the powerband remains to be a favourite local entertainment, replacing the previous *gita resis*. The major concern of this investigation started as a searching for a model of music-making in PNG in the postcontact era. The model termed “generative structure” to exemplify creative aspects of music-making or to grasp music in situation. To begin with, historical outline and the disposition for reactions such as exuberance, crying, feeling *sore* or *nais*, indifference, or even disgust and rejection were identified in order to delineate the basic picture of guitar band music. The discourse that refers to music with Madang social identity really reflects the homology of *Wantok* Ideology but merely bears superficial relation to any demonstrative causes. The generative structure emerges through the interaction between musical experience and discourse about music that typifies “Madang’s music.”

In terms of formal characteristics guitar band music has a strong relationship with the presence of tribal communities surrounding Madang town. The musicians cultivate musical competence and experiment with technological ideas in the village environment, while the urbanized centre has been catalyzing musical activity through providing resources including the capital. Village-based network serves the basic principle for the formation of guitar bands, at the same time becoming the source of imagination, as their primary audiences, especially in early stage of performers’ career, are usually their *wantoks*. These tribal communities are both real and imagined ones to a certain extent inasmuch as they are simultaneously an ideal and place of activity for the grassroots. This

ambiguity of musical practice is a result of interaction *Wantok* Ideology, where the analogy of *wantok* merges the imagining of community and the everyday social structure in a single field of performance. The shared reality of community is the key to the music-making here in that it provides the pretext of activity. Nostalgia, yearning for village lives, and romance as the main topic of guitar band song presuppose the audience living in *wantok* environment. To distinguish such a world of experience in performance as real or imagined is not a significant point as long as it is a matter of consciousness. *Wantok* Ideology is the sole apparatus of inculcation in the social world to the grassroots in order to live communal way of life.

Even if there is a proper decoding of music, it should take much different basis such as existence of singular “cultural identity,” for the text of performance in practice consists of displacement of codification and communication. The all-night *six-to-six* dancing session of powerband music, which is the most dominant aspect of guitar band music in Madang, presents an illustrative ground for such displacement. In the *six-to-six* the audience experiences music as fragmented sound elements because of the general noise, inattentive listening, and multilingual song text. However, this did not mean that the audience lacks musicality. In fact, the audience shows more positive response to domestic pop, or *lokoi*, numbers rejecting what they call *waitman singsing*. Powerband song texts are composed in such a way that the words with greater range of imagination stand out almost separately from syntactic coherency, which has had a crucial role in the compositional aspects of multilingual and syntactic fragmentation, repetition, and appropriation of obsolete lexicon. The performance of *six-to-six* appears rather chaotic in

the first look; nonetheless, it continues to attract the audience because of its attachment to the communal sense of imagination through fragment hearing. In fact, *lokol* compositions indicate a strong inclination to *tok ples* vocabulary that idolizes the landscape of village to interact with the feeling of attachment among the audiences.

Although the powerband culture continues to characterize music in Madang through formal and informal local music industry, the invention of *sore singsing* shows that the guitar band music is now exchanged with communal significance as well. The imagining of subject often has a focus on the sentiment *sore*, which usually develops into a deep reaction. The invention of the *sore singsing* indicates that guitar band music clearly has been taken away from a genre of entertainment to become an apparatus of expressing attachment and communal feelings. The production of *sore singsing* in a sense resembles that of *singsing tumbuna* in *mulung* initiation rites for the communion among the participants are important for the both. The invention of *sore singsing* shows that the cultivated familiarity and attachment to the sound of guitar over the decades have finally brought a drastic change of music-making, from entertainment to the lament. The process of invention here is an appropriation from the stringband song texts with Tok Pisin idiom *sore* that laments separation; even the word *sore* today is incorporated into Madang *tok ples* lexicon, and has become an important native expression.

The concept of *sore singsing* developed from the theme of *sore* in guitar band songs; this created a new form of expression in that lament was never performed in Madang funerals since the precontact ages. The invention of *sore singsing* has a great deal with a new form of representation of the sentiment *sore*. Having been incorporated in the

*tok ples* lexicon, *sore* articulates various senses of loss and attachment to the lost subject. Loneliness, sorrow and pity are Western equivalent of *sore*, yet the word *sore* is significant to *lokol* tunes specially because it denotes a relationship enveloped in a sense of love, which naturally became the central topic for love and nostalgia songs. The sentiment *sore* is not only expressed in the articulation of the word alone but also as a set of imagery that has a strong connection with everyday life in village. A sailing canoe and addressing to the dead consists of typical imagery of *sore singsing* in order to express the feeling. Here the *nais* and *sore* overlaps each other, since a funeral with *sore singsing* induces heavy crying and is often emphatically claimed as a more emotionally enriched (*nais*) funeral. The attachment with communal subjects undoubtedly makes the *sore singsing* felt as *nais* and *sore* simultaneously and inseparably. The core of affect is the prevalent musical expression involving addresses that creates the imagining of singing subject reflected in the voice. The generation of *Madang stail* vocal technique also represents positive feeling and attachment. As the compositions take local ideas, such as the *singsing tumbuna*, or *tok ples* imagery, *Madang stail* is developed as a favoured manner of singing by means of the homology of crying and precontact local singing. The sentiment expressed as *nais* or *sore* instantaneously finds a nexus in the *lokol* guitar songs through the association that relates women's ritual cry, the *singsing tumbuna* vocal technique, with the tone of voice of powerband *Madang stail*. To label this particular type of vibrato vocal style is not necessarily a political strategy that authenticates uniqueness of music in Madang, unless economic motivation is involved. Rather, the naming of *Madang stail* is essentially identification of singing subject in a communal



setting. For the singing subject inculcates the presence of communal feelings through its vocal technique as well as the topic of song, the grassroots locate the feeling related with the everyday life in village.

The term *Wantok* Ideology becomes as a consciousness behind the interaction mediated through *Madang stail*, multilingual lyrics; the *sore singsing*, with a particular inclination to relationships for socialization in village community in postcontact era, too, is in part a result of the imagining of *wantok*. The concept *wantok* entails the ideology of imagined community as well for it is really a Tok Pisin word that includes groupings ranging from relatives or fellowship to national identity; it therefore doubly refers to both the real kin and members of imagined community. The audience feels attachment to a piece of music through the imagining of *wantok*-ness through the addressing that expresses condition of loss and sorrow, the imagined *wantok* subject evoking the feelings *sore* and *nais*. The *Wantok* Ideology consists of the basic principle of musicality in that the grassroots are inculcated through the homology generated from their imagining of community. In the *sore singsing* the composition focused on mourning through the image of sailing canoes and addressing, and through experiencing the situation with music the mourners responded emotionally. The source of imagination in *sore singsing* is contained in the sound of music as a set of thematic elements that is to be expressed as emotional reactions in the time of death of a *wantok* by means of performance.

However, the repertoire of *sore singsing* is even arranged for the cassette to circulate along with ordinary tunes; this means that musical genre is by nature situational, and in a rigorous sense no formal definition is possible in the local music-making. This

transgressing nature of music-making shows that *Wantok* Ideology alone does not formalize musical genre; the association with the *wantok* is certainly a principle of associating musical imagery into experience, but musical context is not necessarily contingent to such association of tribal identity. Musical performance as a stimulus becomes highlighted and recontextualized by means of experience, which displaces the previous event. Sound-producing phenomena always consist of multiple processes of interaction and displacement, and in this very sense music is an event or a chain of events. The concept of fragment hearing involves the theory of “knowing how” in music-making for it belongs to a tacit dimension of cultural cognition. While *Wantok* Ideology is a shared idea with most locals, fragment hearing elucidates the structure of listening that people practice in most cases unreflectively. The way the audience listens to the words of music had been fragmented and displaced to a large extent due to the performative environment, multilingualism, fragmented syntactic segments, the de-referentializing of words, and the practice of *baim singsing*. The concept of fragment hearing delineates a model of aural perception in such a seemingly chaotic situation that attracts audience despite fluctuation of linguistic codes. While dancing might be the most important cultural code for the guitar band music, lexical representation remains as important as well for nostalgia and love songs, newly composed *singsing tumbuna* and the *sore singsing*. The audience is actually capable of reacting to the image evoked by performance through recreating the singing subject from certain sets of words that bear cultural significance. Fragment hearing is a principle of aural practice in which particular idioms reconstruct emotional value regardless of syntactic coherency.

The *Wantok* Ideology and fragment hearing together interact as the operating mode of differentiation and dispersion. The *Wantok* Ideology locates its principle in genre identification such as the distinctness of the *lokoi*, *Madang stail*, or the invention of *sore singsing* through the associations with various cultural elements. Fragment hearing elucidates the underlying structure of aural perception that molds into composition and performance. The nexus between the two modes is the mediation of emotion, namely the attachment to the singing subject. Musical stimuli activated by fragment hearing infuse the feelings, and the emotion evoked by the addressing of subject finds its place in the *wantok* interaction. Differentiation is a cultural process of locating emotion that finds a direction to which the sentiment projects. The guitar band music in Madang actually had a clear distinction in that it has been sung to the performer's *wantok*, real or imagined. As it has been seen already, the preceding band forms to the powerband is facing complete banishment in the age of cassette reproduction, to the dismay of old-timers; likewise, the practice of *sore singsing* is still vulnerable to fundamentalism. *Madang stail* might develop into a national style to which many Papua New Guineans identify themselves. The *waitman singsing* might either provide compositional inspirations or completely replace the *lokoi* music industry. However, as long as the communal ways of life remains as important in terms of both community of practice and the imagined community the generative structure that consists of a complex between the *Wantok* Ideology and fragment hearing should continue to be as the operating mode of music-making. Since the time when Aksim Siming warned postcolonial dissolution of community in his composition *Yam ilonen manin ienmeg*, guitar band songs have

expressed their attachment to the community. So long as the grassroots find *sore, nais* or *salim tingting* in guitar band compositions, it must continue to be the source of imagination whatever the content of “peri-urban,” “Madang,” or “grassroots” might become as.

Fragment hearing might be the basis of even all ideal types of musical listeners. In Madang’s case fragment hearing became emergent as a result of the performative practice *singsing tumbuna* and its successive phenomena such as the prevalence of multilingual song text. However, the concept fragment hearing characterizes musical perception in general regardless of social category, for the mutability of ideal types and the situation of hearing are primarily the source of inculcation that makes the sound of music affective. Musical information has “density” consisting of portions of stimuli, rather than the entire music, that decides the reaction of audience. The “proper” decoding of information probably never exists in the strict sense, because there is no end to musical information as resonance that bears complex pretext and changing context. Beyond the case of Madang, any music-making has its foundation in fragment hearing for demarcation of “complete” or “proper” code depends on performative situation, especially that the sound of music is dispersing by nature. In this sense, fragment hearing might be the primary nature to other types of musical cognition especially attentive “proper” act of deciphering. Musical meanings are dispersing because the judgement between “true” and “false,” or “proper” and “incomplete” information is contingent not only to cultural practice but a given situation or even within an individual from time to time. In addition, to imagine the existence of an encoded information, or a “proper” deciphering of musical information, is

an illusion, just like *Wantok* Ideology, to differentiate the sound and the social type based on identification of musico-vocal phenomena. Musical meanings communicate through density of information, which creates more stimuli to a listening ear than the ones that bear less significance. It is a form of exchange in which the sound itself is both subject and object of the communication—the existence of sound itself is both the mean and goal of communication. Fragment hearing is raw and bare mode of aural cognition that is also the basic constituent of musical experience in general. This plain of communication is by no means even or smooth if one wishes to visualize; it is rather unleveled, multiple, and irregularly textured. Syntax becomes significant in the sense that it provides the ground for the density of lexicon. The aural stimuli mold into an experience and an event through embedding and contextualizing themselves in the situation of performance, and when the audience experiences this lived world they become memorable, being reflected in the discourse of the neat and *sore*.

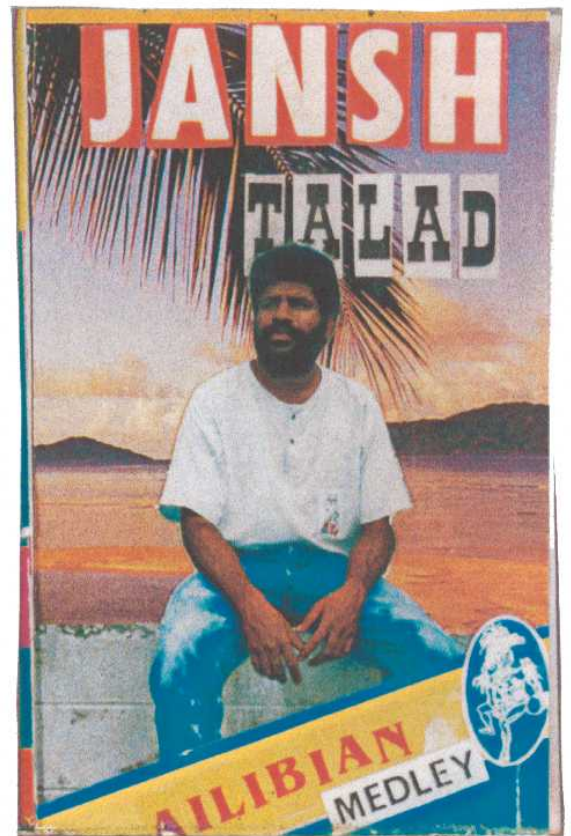
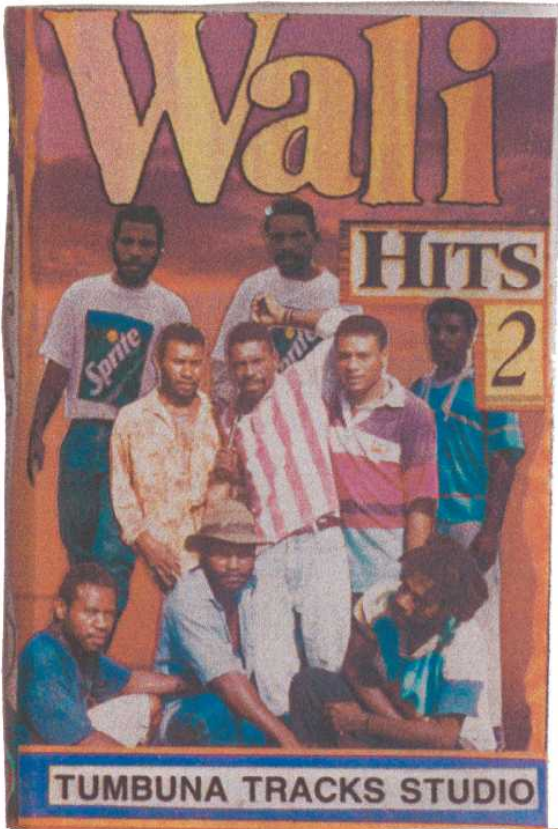
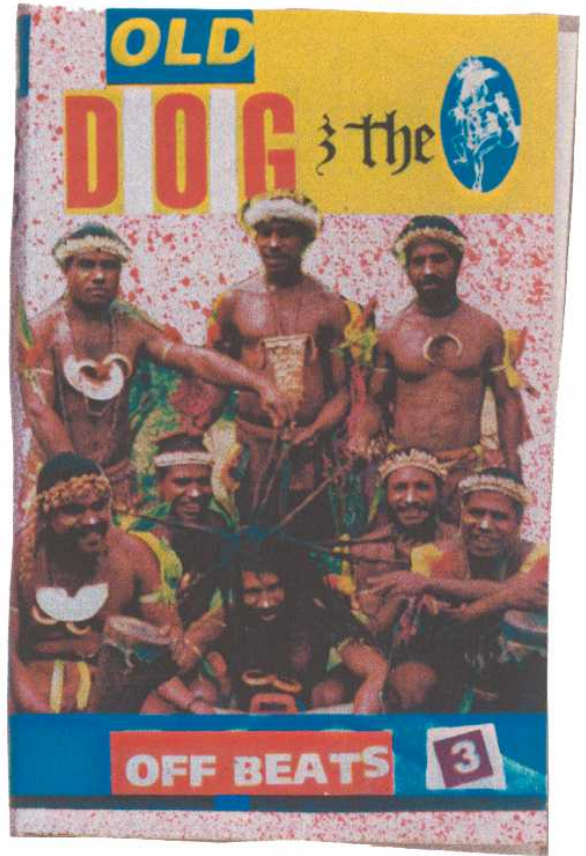


Plate 1. Covers of commercial cassettes



Plate 2. A *darem* on Yabob Island

Young unmarried men are encouraged to look after themselves and cultivate friendship as *kadoi*. Guitar songs might be heard from the house in the night.



Plate 3. A new house on Yabob Island.

Family matter becomes the first concern of a married man, starting from making his own house. Sociability is an important factor for building a good house with help from his *wantok* as much as skill and power.





Plate 4. Canoe building on Yabob Island  
A child watches the work in the bush. He will learn the craft is fruit of labour with his *wantok*.



Plate 5. Yabob potters

Traditional knowledge such as is vanishing perhaps unless tourism gives an opportunity to display the craft. This photo was taken during a filming.



Plate 6. Portrait of Aksim Siming

Aksim is known to be one of the first Madang local to actively perform and compose *gita singsing*.



Plate 7. A set of bamboo tubes in Riwo

The bamboo tubes are arranged to play boogy-woogy chords, and beaten by a pair of thongs. Jais Aben Resort in the plantation is today the only place where Madu Rockers regularly perform, whenever they are called for.



Plate 8. The *six-to-six* concert at Laiwaden Oval  
A village band in action. The “town” cloth is the standard attire for local concerts (Top).  
The audiences at the back are sitting on the lawn, waiting (Bottom).



Plate 9. A day concert in Port Moresby

Willie Tropu of Yabob singing in Madang *singsing* garment while the excited crowd is kept out of fence. The appropriation of traditional dance is the fashion of the 1990's.

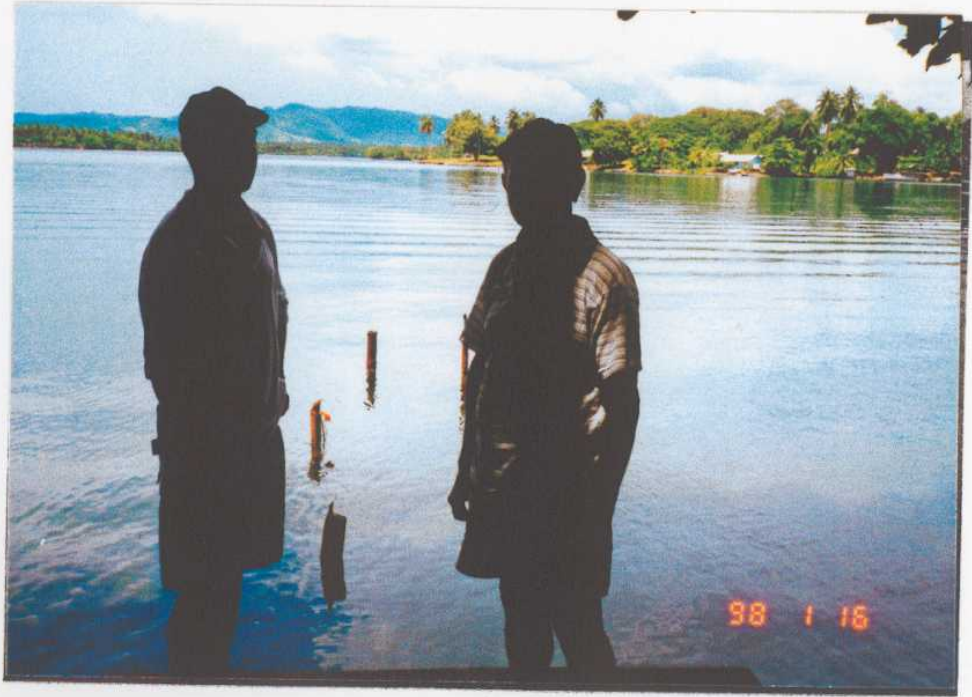


Plate 10. A view of a *panu* from Kranket Island  
The calm inlet *ilon* makes a typical image of cherished homeland, the subject of *sore*.



Plate 11. Departing of a dinghy from Yabob Island

A leaving canoe is a common metaphor for death, for sorrow of separation has been involving vessels since old time.





Plate 12. Entrance of Yabob *singsing* dancers

Some informants related vibrato singing of Madang *lokol* tunes to the vocal style of *singsing tumbuna*. Whether such a remark is true or not, the speakers must have felt something indigenous and intimate in the vibrato, something particularly belonging to their *panu*.



Plate 13. After a recording  
Beer was served as Aksim Siming and company visited us on Yabob Island for field  
recording.

Appendix 1  
Chronology of Musical Events around Madang

Note: The events that are not directly related to music are given in brackets.

- 1876 (Russian ethnologist-biologist Nikolai Miklouho-Maclay arrives in Madang as the first European to encounter the natives.)
- 1885 (German Neu Guinea Kompagnie starts operation. Its headquarters move from Bogadjim to the newly created station of Madang, then Friedrich-Wilhelmshafen, but it will be farther relocated to Rabaul.)
- 1887 (The Rhenish Mission is established in the District.)
- 1909 (The Society of the Divine Word, a body of Catholic mission, builds its headquarters in Alexishafen.)
- 1922 (The Bel-speaking people start to teach Christianity in Rai Coast and the hinterlands.)
- 1923 Christian Elder's Conference votes for discontinuing the *singsing tumbuna* dances. The people of Siar petition the Australian government to keep the dance for public events.
- 1939 Samoan missionaries teach the *kwaia* singing in Karkar.
- 1940 The Letub cargo cult outbreak spreads from Nobonob around Madang.  
The Letub was originally the name for dancing of spiritual significance for the secret societies in Murug village, although the movement itself did not necessarily involve the dancing.  
The *singsing tumbuna* of Yabob is resumed after prohibition by arranging a former courtship song to a dance with *kundu*.
- 1942 (Japanese 18th Army lands on Madang. Many islanders relocate in the bush.)
- 1944 (American 32nd Division lands on Madang.)
- 1945 Malayo-Chinese *hapkas* man (mixed-race) Mengwat is seen singing *You Are My Sunshine* with a ukulele in the town.  
Elisa Imai of Kranket, an ex-serviceman to the Allies, composes a guitar band song in *tok ples*. The guitar music faces an infinite ban by the elders of Siar. The oldest-known stringband song *Ngane sansan laulau mon* is probably composed by Elisa in this year.  
Nalong Gidik of Bilia becomes a crew of M.V. Kaleuno that sailed among various parts of the Pacific. He learned various guitar chord progressions.
- 1946 Around this time, Bill Natera (?-1997), a Papuan from Yule Island, teaches the

- guitar and ukulele to Aksim Siming of Kranket.
- 1947 Bas Meng of Siar, an ex-serviceman to the Allies, teaches his repertoire to Aksim Siming with guitar. The songs were mostly "Hawaiians."
- 1948 Aksim's father purchases a *kapok* guitar for his son by ordering from a catalog. Aksim starts to play at dance parties in town houses.
- 1952-53 Siar young men come back to the village from work for M.V. Karu, which commuted to Port Moresby. They learned Motu songs there and bought a guitar and a ukulele to play.
- 1954 Aksim Siming studies abroad in a medical college in Suva.
- 1957 Nalong Gidik and two foreign teachers hold a music class at newly opened Tusbab Community School in town.  
Aksim Siming comes back to Madang. In Madang, he forms Kranket Stringband. He occasionally played by request during his health inspection trips.
- 1958-60 United Church brings missionaries from Solomon Islands. Some attributes this as the first occasion of performance of the bambooband in Madang.
- 1960 Aksim Siming starts to give fund raising concerts for Sagalau High School.
- 1963 Stringband Iduan Muddy Bay of Kananam is formed.
- 1966-68 Deb Atip of Siar brings back the idea of bambooband to his village while in holidays. Patfon bambooband is formed.  
Around this time, stringband Kopi's Teenagers were active in town. They were mostly from Central Province.
- 1968 *Gita resis* commences with suggestion from Wesley Dag of Siar. *Gita resis* is held annually between 1971 and 1978.
- 1970 Radio Madang starts recordings of local *singsing tumbuna* and guitar band music for the music program *Maus bilong Garamut*.  
Around this time many local bands start to tour around the Province, spreading the guitar band culture.
- 1973 Kitawa Stringband of Riwo is formed. Later it becomes a bambooband.  
Songs about death start to appear in the concerts.
- 1974 Stringband Jomba Drifters of Kranket is formed.
- 1975 (Independence of Papua New Guinea. Rehabilitation on the islands becomes legal.)
- 1976 Independence anniversary is held in town, in which local bands participated under promotion of Radio Madang.  
Bamboobands Bilia Lagoon Brothers of Bilia and Madu Rockers of Riwo are formed.

- Stringband Ubi Wanders of Gum is formed.  
 Powerband Y.C. Band is formed in town.  
 Sporadic experiment with local *singsing tumbuna* starts to take place.
- 1978 Madang Resort Hotel invites Y.C. Band to play at a game fishing reception.  
 Malasala Bambooband and powerband G.F. Rockers of Yabob are formed around this time.
- 1979 Y.C. Band is renamed to Kanagioi.  
 Malmal Bambooband starts activity.
- 1981-82 SantaLina Studio starts activity around this time.
- 1981 Melanesian Bambooband of Bilia and Jomba Drifters are recorded on cassette by FM Kalang.
- 1982 Jomba Drifters signs a contract with Madang Resort Hotel to play stringband music at dinner shows.
- 1983 Powerband Cool Figures of Bilia is formed and recorded in cassette by FM Kalang.  
 Powerband Mesi Gaun and Kales Stringband of Yabob are formed.  
*Sore singsing* starts to be composed in Yabob.
- 1984 Cool Figures plays in Smuggler's Inn regularly.  
 Madu Rockers plays at Goroka Show.
- 1986 Alfred Sibut of Bilia starts the solo activity at CHM Supersound in Port Moresby.  
 Powerbands Kale Gadagads is developed from stringbands.  
 Bokaboks of Riwo releases a cassette album from Tumbuna Traks around this time.
- 1989 Kale Gadagads releases a cassette album from Tumbuna Traks.  
*Madang stail* vocal technique, Reggae-like beat and arrangement from *singsing tumbuna* becomes prevalent.
- 1990 Old Dog and the Offbeats release a cassette album from Tumbuna Traks.  
*Sore singsing* for funerals starts to be performed in Kranket.
- 1992 Performative art group Patfon Music and Culture of Siar develops from the local bambooband.
- 1993 Yondik of Nobonob releases a cassette album from Tumbuna Traks.  
 Sandie Gabriel is killed in accident.
- 1995 Michael Makalu of Bernal, Trans Gogol releases a cassette album from Tumbuna Traks under the name of Mogoi Hotline.  
 Wali Hits of Gum releases a cassette album from Tumbuna Traks.

- Old Dog and the Offbeats signs contract with CHM  
Supersound in Port Moresby.
- 1997 Willie Tropu of Yabob releases a cassette album from CHM  
Supersound, Port Moresby. He becomes active in the capital city.

Appendix 2  
Biographical Notes of Musicians

Adolf Gatagot (b. ?)

Native to Kananam. Self-taught in guitar since 1974. Given an acoustic guitar as a present, and started to develop unique guitar riffs by listening to Radio Wewak and Radio Madang. Reorganized stringband Iduan Muddy Bay. Played at various tourist facilities until 1991. Composer of stringband songs and gospels. His unique guitar solo influenced successors Bartholomew Kalowan and John Sakon of Young Muddy Bay.

Adolf Kasemai (b. 1960?)

Born in Riwo. Both parents are from the same village. Self-taught inukulele and guitar and local stringband songs in 1975. Formed bambooband Madu Rockers in 1976 with initially four bamboo tubes. Introduced the bambooband in the Josephstaal and other areas since 1979. Invited to Goroka Show in 1984 as the first bambooband from Madang Province. Recorded at Radio Madang and with a few other studios. Composer of *Septemba sikistin* (1976) and other songs for Madu Rockers. The boogie-woogie chord progression of Madu Rockers is unique and representative to Madang's bambooband.

Aksim Siming (b. 1930)

Born in Rabaul. Both parents are Kranket natives. Father worked as an employee to Burns & Philip Co. Self-taught in the ukulele while staying in Finschhafen, where the family moved to work in a hospital used to be run by the American Army in 1946. Learned Motu songs and basic guitar playing from uncle-in-law Bill Natera. Enrolls in Amron High School in 1947. Borrows a guitar from Siar ex-serviceman Bas Meng to learn his "Hawaiian" repertoire. Father bought a *kapok* guitar for birthday present from a catalog that Bill Natera had in 1948. Started to perform at dance parties in town. Admitted to Yagaum Hospital and leaves school in 1950. Enrolls in Bumayang High School in Lae in 1952. Studied in a medical collage in Suva in 1954. Assigned to Bogia for the Manam volcano eruption disaster relief as Health Inspector of Provincial government in 1957. Formed Kranket Stringband while in town, and starts composing. Started to perform by request in various places in the Province during inspection tours.

Performed for fund raising concerts for Sagalau High School in 1960. Activity as a band member becomes sporadic after marriage in 1966. Occasionally adjudicated *gita resis* since 1968. Known as one of the earliest figure to compose in local languages, as well as initiator of the fund raising concerts. Composer of numerous stringband songs. Better-known works include *Nala i tauna* (1958), *O bo izinen kin* (1959), *Yam Ilonen manin ienmeg* (1963), and *Meri wantok* (n.d.).

Alfred Sibut (b. 1962)

Born to parentage of Bilia and Salamaua, Morobe Province. Started to play the ukulele that father was given from members of Jomba Drifters in concert on Bilia Island in 1973. Learned the guitar from his uncle Wos Siang in 1975. Involved in activities of Bilia Lagoon Brothers in 1976 and Melanesian Bambooband in 1977, which was recorded by Kalang FM in 1983. Formed powerband Cool Figures and lived in Salamaua in 1983. Played in Lae. Recorded with Tumbuna Traks in 1984. Regularly performed at Smuggler's Inn in 1985 as a Cool Figure. Signed contract with CHM in 1986. Signed contract with Pacific Gold Studio in 1988. Experimented with 26 bamboo tubes to line them chromatically in 1993. Alfred is one of the most active figures in the transition period from the bambooband to the powerband.

Deb Atip (b. ?)

Native to Siar. Studies English pedagogy at Balop Teacher's College in Lae 1966-68. Learned concept of bambooband from school friends with Cook Islands, Solomon Islands and Fiji. Instructed Patfon Bambooband how to prepare the bamboo tubes. Taught at Kubak Community School in Bogia 1968-69. Adjudicated a bombooband competition in 1975. Patfon Bambooband is the first bambooband in the Madang area.



Robert Kig (b. 1957)

Born in Komoria, Karkar Island but soon moves to Madang town. Both parents are from Karkar. Learned the guitar from father, who worked for Japanese and Allies troopers. Learned the ukulele at Kusbau Community School when in Grade 5 in 1967 from expatriate teachers. Father bought a ukulele and a guitar for him in 1970. Started to teach himself "*pop musik stret*" from radio program and cassette tapes.

Formed powerband College Band at Lae Technical College in 1973. Formed powerband Y.C. Band by borrowing instruments and equipment of the Youth Catholic in 1976. Madang Resort Hotel Manager Peter Barter invited him to play for a dinner show at a game fishing reception in 1978 to begin with a series of contracts with tourist facilities. Became employee to Jant (Japan New Guinea Timbers Co.) and formed Kanagioi in 1979. Played promotional campaign for San Miguel Beer in 1981. Involved in establishment of SantaLina Studio in 1981-82. Played for opening of Birds of Paradise Hotel in Goroka in 1989. Recorded with local production and NBC. Robert's Kanagioi inspired local powerbands by becoming a successful model, although Kanagioi itself has concentrated to copies of Western pop music.

Sandie Gabriel (b. ?, d. 1993)

Born in Yabob. Formed Kales Stringband and starts composing in 1983. Formed powerband Kale Gadagads in 1986. Produced cassettes from Tumbuna Traks since 1989 until his own death in 1993 by a car accident. Recognized as the principle figure for developing unique singing and compositional style that influenced many powerband performers and composers around Madang and outside. Composed *sore singsing* and powerband songs.

Wesley Bosli (b. 1953)

Born in Kranket. Farther, a police officer, from Namatanai, New Ireland Province, and mother from Kranket. Father came to Madang as serviceman to the Allies. Studies at Sagalau High School in 1961. Studies in Kusbau High School at 1963. Studied at Tusbab High School in 1969. Left school in 1970. Inspired by the guitar of Aksim Siming\* and starts to practice with a ukulele given by father in 1967. Employed to a local outlet of Steamship and buys a guitar in 1973. Formed Jomba Drifters and recorded in Radio Madang in 1974. Played in the independence ceremony in 1976. Recorded in NBC in 1981. Wins

prizes in various gita resis around the Province. Started to compose and perform *sore singsing* since 1990 as a leader in the Lutheran church. His well-trained and influential Jomba Drifters continue to be active despite the general trend moved to powerband. Prolific composer of stringband songs.

Willie Tropu (b. 1962?)

Native to Yabob. Born into the Tropu family that has produced many active guitar band musicians. Brother to former Radio Madang broadcaster and recording engineer Ken, who promoted local performers. Sent to Catholic youth correction camp at Wewak for two years around in 1982. Composed *sore singsing* while in the camp in 1983, although never performed in the funeral. Formed stringband Old Dog and Youth around in 1986. Recorded in Radio Madang in 1987. Formed powerband Old Dog and the Offbeats in 1989 and recorded with Tumbuna Traks. Leaves Madang in 1995, and became solo from CHM in 1997. Close associate of Sandie Gabriel\*. Composed many songs for stringband and powerband. Known for composing *sore singsing* for funerals and arrangements from local *singsing tumbuna*.

Yondik Maltia (b. 1972?)

Born in Batap, Nobonob. Mother is from *bikples* (main village) Nobonob, father is from Marup, Karkar. Lost eyesight while very young. Inspired by a Dream of an old man with his guitar that had many colours of sound. Father gave him an acoustic guitar, and became the leader of local stringband and bambooband in 1977. Contracted to Tumbuna Traks since 1983. Composer of a number of songs including *Amamete*.

Appendix 3  
Genre Distinction of Postcontact Music around Madang  
(See Glossary for description.)

1. *Gita Singsing* (Guitar songs)
  - Stringben* (Stringband)
  - Social dances
  - Sore singsing* (Sorrow song)
  - Pawaben/Laivben* (Powerband/Live band)
  - Lokol singsing* (Local song)
  - New Wave
  - Rege* (Reggae)
  - Rokenrol* (Rock n roll)
  - Kopikiat* (Copycat)
  - Gospel
  - Waitman singsing* (White men n s song)
  - Hevimetal* (Heavy metal)
2. *Mambuben* (Bambooband)
  - Sutim mambu* (Shooting bamboo)
  - Paitim mambu* (Hitting bamboo)
3. *Tumbuna singsing/Singsing Tumbuna* (“Song of Ancesters”)
  - Kundu singsing* (Dances with hourglass drums)
4. *Lotu singsing* (Church song)
  - Kwaia* (Choir)
  - Gospel
5. Others
  - Garamut* (slit drum)
  - Nursery rhyme
  - Singsing bilong Japan* (Japanese song)
  - Others (Various precontact and Western instrumentals)

Appendix 4  
Supplement to Ideal Types of Audience

	Gospel	Pacific	<i>Lokol</i>	Western pops
<u>Evangelist</u> (Could be a musician or a subject to the church.)	<u>Positive</u> (Stimulus of religious feelings.)	<u>Passive</u> (No particular interest.)	<u>Negative</u> (Never actively participate in the <i>six-to-six</i> . Accusations.)	<u>Negative</u> (Accusations.)
<u>Old-Timer</u> (Could be a musician.)	<u>Choice</u> (If played by acoustic guitar only.)	<u>Positive</u> (Nostalgia. Impassioned in listening.)	<u>Negative</u> (Indifference. "Not my taste.")	<u>Negative</u> (Indifference. "Not my taste.")
<u>Lokol</u> (Could be a musician)	<u>Choice</u> (In case of a religious listener.)	<u>Choice</u> (Indifferent to generation after 1970.)	<u>Positive</u> (Concert-goer. Buy cassettes.)	<u>Passive</u> (Indifferent. Sometimes very negative.)
<u>Passive</u> (Not active.)	<u>Passive</u> (Not religious or musical.)	<u>Passive</u> (No particular response.)	<u>Choice</u> (Dances in the concert at times.)	<u>Passive</u> (No particular response.)
<u>Hard-Rocker</u> (Often a musician.)	<u>Choice</u> (In case of a religious listener.)	<u>Negative</u> (Indifferent. "Not my taste.")	<u>Negative</u> (Indifferent. "Not my taste.")	<u>Positive</u> (Collects music and information.)
<u>Intellectual</u> (Tertiary education. Could be a musician.)	<u>Detached</u> (Feels indigenous sacred music more important.)	<u>Detached</u> (Tends to view the music as cultural relics.)	<u>Detached</u> (Interest towards experiments.)	<u>Choice</u> (Selection could be global.)

Appendix 5  
Detailed Word List of Yabob *Tok Ples* Song Texts

- Bigabeg/Mundunas* [orphan] 4  
    *Galibo* [derelict] 1  
*Bubengu/Bubig* [darling/liver] 12  
    *Bebengu/Bubig rubuti* [heartbreaking] 4  
*Huleu* [the moon] 4  
    *Huleu uyan/lalaman* [the full/bright moon] 3  
    *Huleu uyan mesi manin(i)* [calm sea in the full moon] 3  
    *Huleu mesi* [sea in the moonlight] 3  
*Ilon* [bay] 1  
    *Ilon manin* [calm bay] 1  
    *Godawan* 1  
    *Malasala Ilon* 1  
    *Morelang Ilon* 1  
    *Dirimal (Ilon)* 2  
    *Kuru* 1  
*Lalaman* [shining/light] 6  
*Manini* [calm, quiet] 11  
*Mesi* [sea] 3  
    *Mesi manin(i)* [calm sea] 4  
    *Timtain mesi ding manin(i) mok* [sea is calm and wind very soft] 2  
*Nen* [mother, etc.] 4  
*Nui* [island] 2  
    *Yabob* 5  
    *Mareg* 4  
    *Urembu/Urib* 1  
    *Hangu nui* [my island] 1  
    Others 4  
*Panu* [village] 2  
*Hotu* [environs] 4  
    *Hotu bodo(bodo) mok ibol* [the *ples* stays very quiet] 4  
*Sori/Sore* [sorry] 13  
*Wag* [canoe] 6  
    *Wag (mesimesi) iyowade* [canoe sails (on the sea)] 4

Appendix 6  
Transcription of Song Texts

N.B. The parenthesised words in the song texts signify variations of the phrases. When a line is added with parentheses, it means an additional line sung as a coda. Repeats in the choruses are not reproduced here. English words are italicized for the sake of clarity.

Ad o ad o (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

*(Chorus):* Ad o ad o ad o udude  
ad o ad o ad o udude.

*(Verse 1):* Bigabeg bigabeg burlon mon  
ngator pitul hunia.

*(Verse 2):* Ma uyan hei ei ei ei  
mamok alan me ngeni e.

*(Verse 3):* Ad idu e ad idu e naug ngubulig  
ngene heig ilug imul.

Aidau e (Wali Hits, Gum)

*(Verse 1):* Rong bilong yumi yangpela  
wanem taim i dai bai kamap  
long yumi yangpela  
bai brukim lewa bilong mi.

*(Verse 2):* Taim dai bai painim yumi  
bai brukim lewa bilong  
papamama olgeta  
mekim yumi olgeta krai

*(Chorus 1):* Aidau e odia reva odia reva adia reva o e  
aidau e odia reva aidau e odia reva o.

*(Chorus 2):* Abukai omiava abukai amiava e  
aidau e odia reva o adia reva o.

Amen uman (Yondik, Nobonob)

*(Verse 1):* Amen uman atugo laiya nilmi  
se awa ya naila iya ai domi e.  
danap naipi uita bagme mute  
se awa ya naila iya ai domi de.

*(Verse 2):* Se brata planti man ol i kam bung  
ol i stap sore ol i no lukim pes bilong yu  
olsem wanem se brata olsem yu haitim nau na yu go long bus  
brata lewa mi no lukim pes bilong yu.

Bai mi hangamap (Willie Tropu, Yabob)

*(Verse 1):* Ai o papa ai o mama  
meri ya i kukim mi  
bai mi mekim wanem  
maski ya bai mi hangamap.

*(Verse 2):* Ai o nen o ai o mam o  
polohume me meri ya  
dodog ngonowi ne  
hagad ngakukiwi.

*(Verse 3):* Lau sinagu lau tamagu o  
kekeni dekanai lau mase  
daka nau karaia  
maski ya bai mi hangamap.

Bainamu sanirere (Yondik, Nobonob)

Bainamu samiro e ro e  
ebenemu samiro e ro e  
koi yo yo yo yo  
ainumu lepa samire.

Balangut (Willie Tropu, Yabob)

*(Chorus):* Balangut o iyowa e balangut o iyowa e  
balangut o iyowa e balangut o iyowa e  
inan sain heideg.

*(Verse 1):* Ngalong hei e dodog ngonowi  
gomuta ngabol hinan hei  
hangu balangut iyo wag iyowa e. *(To Coda)*

*(Verse 2):* Hangu balangut wag iyowa e  
hinan sain heideg iyo wag ile e  
bubig ainta rubuti. *(To Verse 1)*

*(Coda):* Mi no save bai ki mekim wanem  
mi no save bai mi toktok wanem  
hangu balangut iyo wag iyowa e.

Bi a (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

*(Verse 1):* Bi (Nen) a rien so pia mon  
konom hangu ngalong heideg  
bigabeg hangu  
piadep panaup ngeni.

*(Verse 2):* Hangu nenman ger dimat e  
ulong ulongdeg pia de  
bigabeg hangu  
piadep panaup ngeni.

Boskru (Jansh Talad, Bilia)

*(Verse 1):* Sore boskru sekan ngamu ei  
o mai ngamu ei  
yu man bun nating a  
boi bilong Arop tru ya  
yu man bun nating a  
boi bilong Siassi tru ya.

*(Chorus 1):* I no man i no man  
kalangar karngala.

*(Verse 2):* Sore misis pain sekan ngamu ei  
o mai ngamu ei  
yu meri bun nating a  
meri bilong Arop tru ya  
yu meri bun nating a  
meri bilong Siassi tru ya.

*(Chorus 2):* I no meri i no meri  
kalangar karngala.



Brata bilong mi (Willie Tropu, Yabob)

*(Verse 1):* O brata bilong mi  
longpela rot yumi kam pinis  
nau tasol yu dai lusim mipela nau  
dal malain toren mug tatol ke.  
mereme biniag hibug ketei.

*(Chorus):* San bai sain i kam long mi  
mun bai sain i kam long mi  
tasol yu bai i no inap  
win bai blo i kam long mi  
rein bai pundaun wasim mi  
tasol yu bai i no inap.

*(Verse 2):* San i go daun na mun i kam antap  
mi lukluk i go na tingting i bagarap  
mi save mi no inap lukim yu gen  
o hagad tingim longtaim bipo.

Bubengu (Paul Tropu, Yabob)

*(Verse):* Bubengu o bubengu  
yu lusim mi na yu go longwe tru  
bubengu o bubengu  
yu karim lewa bilong mi go wantaim yu.

*(Chorus):* Olgeta hap mi go mi save ting long yu  
yu stap long mind bilong mi long olgeta taim  
na mi longtaim mi slip long nait mi save dream long yu  
bikos hap lewa bilong mi yu karim i go.

Damag o (Salok David, Yabob)

*(Chorus):* Nen a nen e  
damag o wanga nen a.

*(Verse):* Iyo wag mesimesi Kuruwi e  
iyo wag mesimesi Aropwi e  
Morelang ilon iyowade  
iyo wag mesimesi  
Morelang awan umbale.

Dispela de em i de bilong yumi (Jomba Drifters, Kranket)

(Verse): Displela de em i de bilong yumi ol PNG  
nau wan solwara i bung na kirapim pasin tumbuna  
ol wantok yupela i kam na hamamasim yupela yet  
PNG inan kagin me peteng ngenap denasi.

(Chorus): Mewoi yaudisamap dangan zigiadoi  
mewoi yaudisamap dangan zigiadoi, fatu e fatu,  
fatu gawai melouglon taintain egin temadoi  
fatu tamaip idi dilongoi.

Duna sipok (Yondik, Nobonob)

(Verse): Duna sipok duna sipok duna sipok e  
Kato yakak tosi man duna sipok us.

(Chorus 1): Ma yo iya nagoda e  
anate o i man duna sipok us.

(Chorus 2): Mama yo yu kam hariap  
yu kam lukim mi na mi bagarap.

E Wap (Willie Tropu, Yabob)

E Wap sain malain umas hei de  
hina damag he bedeni  
he he diwaraudeg  
e Wap *you are too young to die*.

Elsie (Adolf Gatagot, Kananam)

Elsie ong gouz ilosian  
welen ong ulon ongsibe  
zuem ong ulon sori mok  
a ha ha ha  
sori mok o Elsie o ngibidu e  
Elsie ongsibe.

First taim tru (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

(Verse 1): *First* taim tru bilong mi long go long *you* na raun wantaim  
*dreams* bilong mi yes *dreams* bilong mi i tokim mi tru  
tasol mi no save long tingting bilong *you* yet

*dreams* bilong mi yes *dreams* bilong mi i tokim mi tru.  
(Verse 2): *Smiles* bilong yu na we bilong i stilim lewa **bilong** mi  
bubengu hina kagin wi ngabolde  
oru bid ilo ibolg mereme mug tatorde  
*dreams* bilong mi yes *dreams* bilong mi i tokim mi tru.

G.P. (John Sakon, Kananam)

G.P. G.P. G.P. kak dizuem so along  
G.P. G.P. G.P. kak dizuem so gua  
G.P. G.P. G.P. kak dizuem so along  
G.P. G.P. G.P. kak dizuem so gua.

Hangu bangbang (David Ongkau, Yabob)

(Verse): Hangu bangbang nuni alan mok pitul huniag ileg alan mok  
yati mok soloni panawi e yati mok inei panawi  
hagad gadagad egede mon ngatorwi

(Chorus): Gugul dimat dimat dile gugul dimat dimat dilawi e  
depibed mon tamaswi.

Hangu nui (Old Dog and The Offbeats, Yabob)

(Verse): Sain ta buruwan ngamais landen ngadu  
hotu bodobodo mok ibol  
mesi manini mok timu mosmos ipoludek  
hotu ileg gamun mok e.

(Chorus): Huleu uyan mesi manini mok  
mulug ileg Urib ngenehi  
nauk mubulig isek Mareg ngenehi  
toli bitme hangu nui e.  
(Yabob nui me hangu nui e.)

Hangu panu (John Saul, Yabob)

O sori hangu panu  
bala uyan mok e iende  
mesi manini manini mok  
usop tadup wag tasop tala e

hangu panu me bala mok e.  
(No ken ting lus long *Beautiful Madang*.)

Hangu ses e (Willie Tropu, Yabob)

(Verse 1): Nima pauk abenlon  
ngamaid sinasin oru  
youra uyan ta lon  
gomu ta ise ngalong  
hangu ses e hangu ses e imat e.

(Verse 2): Ad mug idu e  
lalaman kobolu mok  
maya rug rien idu  
ilingu rubuti mok  
hangu ses e hangu ses e imat e.

H.S. bubengu (Sandie Gabriel and Willie Tropu, Yabob)

(Verse 1): Timu bagenlon  
ngo tour hinan hei  
*I wish* sapos yu wantaim  
bai mi inap strong tumas.

(Verse 2): Bai mi kam strong tumas  
mulug ila ise  
mayarug rien idu  
mi tingting bek long yu.

(Chorus): H.S. bubengu  
ha ha sori o  
bubig rubuti.

If I ever say good-bye (Sandie Gabriel and Willie Tropu, Yabob)

(Verse 1): Dalin taim yu bin tokim mi  
bai mi stap wantaim yu foreva moa  
o mug ilo padal  
nia kukunlon utordeg  
tasol lewa mi no inap ting lus long yu  
bai mi oltaim tingting long yu  
*but one thing you make me wonder*

*if I ever say good-bye.*

(Verse 2): Dirimal meyeti bala  
Yabob Bilibil ang asop o  
peti ai kobolu dine  
asop ene heip amule  
diseg dine heig dibole  
Dirimal me bala mok e  
ainta dimaisg eg dibole a  
o sori a lewa ule a.

Kak di asop (John Sakon, Kananam)

(Verse 1): O kak di asop tala  
ubou uyan em lon  
fadas inan jubili  
nen sain uyan idu.

(Verse 2): Asop dadangan tala  
inidin ubou tagei  
baz bi dap dilon  
gap bubu din gua.

Kalibobo (Old Dog and The Offbeats, Yabob)

(Verse 1): Bomu bota lon langden ngadu  
hotu bodo mok ibol  
timtain mesi ding manin mok  
hotu ileg gamun mok e.

(Verse 2): Muluk ileg Yabob ngenehig  
muluk isek Mareg ngenehig  
naug ngubulig Godawan ile  
Kalibobo lalaman e.

(Chorus): Kalibobo Kalibobo  
mekim mi sore long yu  
*flying fox* na lait toktok  
mekim mi salim tingting.

(Verse 3): Wanpela monin mi go daun long nambis  
solwara slip sore  
kol win i blo isi isi

mekim ples i nais tru.  
(Verse 4): Mi lukluk i go long Yabob ailan  
mi lukluk i kam long Mareg ailan  
mi lukluk i go long Godawan  
na mi lukim Kalibobo.

Kros bilong tupela (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

(Verse): Kros bilong tupela  
ol i no tingting long pikinini  
pikinini mi no save  
i no save long mama i dai pinis  
apinun nau  
na aiwara i kam na em i stap long krai.  
(Chorus): Mam o o o o ye  
gigo wain e sare sare sare sare.

Kubak o (North Coast Madang Traditional)

(Chorus): Kubak o megeguma  
kubak o mageguma o.  
(Verse 1): Salim salim paspas sutim pepa o  
ai sore mi o saina na o.  
(Verse 2): Bros bo i pas wantaim  
lek bo inap wantaim  
toktok bo isi isi  
ai sore mi o saina na o.

Las laun (Ziros, Gum)

Las raun bilong yumi inap olsem long nau  
ating bai mi go bek gen  
olsem mi no gat ples  
mi kam hangamap i stap  
long ol taun bilong sampela  
olsem na bai mi mas go bek gen  
go bek gen long *Beautiful Madang*.

Long solid days (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

(Verse 1):       *Long solid days we've been together mama*  
tasol nau i pinis  
swit lav bilong yu mama  
mi no ting lus.

(Chorus):       Mama mama  
plis kam bek gen mama  
'kos lav bilong yu mama  
mi no ting lus.

(Verse 2):       Nau lukluk bek  
long ol pikinini bilong yu  
olsem pisin flai nabaut  
lav bilng ol long yu  
yu olsem ston.

Longpela taim (Devid Onkau, Yabob)

(Verse 1):       Longpela taim mi no lukim pes bilong yu  
yu stap longwe yu stap longwe long mi  
mi save lukim ol photos bilong yu tasol  
mi save lukim na mi save tingim yu tasol.

(Chorus):       Tasol yu no i stap klostu long mi  
yu stap longwe tru long mi  
mi no save  
bai mi lukim yu o nogat.

Lui (Willie Tropu, Yabob)

(Chorus):       Uuuu uuuu ulong ulongdeg  
kagin alanmeg unoug utore.

(Verse 1):       Lui sain malain umas hei  
hina damag bedeni  
umat ule  
umat umat ule.

(Verse 2):       Gomu ngapau deg tinatama din dipaudeg  
ulongdeg awama  
awama biti e  
awama awama biti e.

Mangi nogut (Gerdix Atege, Gum)

*(Verse 1):* Mama mi no gutpela mangi tumas  
olsem na mi save sem long raun long ai bilong ol man  
mama wai na mi kamap mangi kain olsem  
na ol yangpela manmeri no save laikim mi tumas awe  
olsem na mi save tingim na aiwara i kam daun.

*(Verse 2):* Sinagu laube dia mero nanuna ta  
olsem na mi save sem long raun long ai bilong ol man  
sinagu ede bamuna lauara ine bamuna  
o me mero kekeni laura ida enia lasi sinagu  
dainai laula loata matagu ranu ia dio.

Meri wantok (Aksim Siming, Kranket)

*(Verse 1):* O meri wantok  
yu giamanim mi tasol  
yu raitim nem bilong mi  
aninit long nem bilong yu.

*(Verse 2):* O panu inan pain (Meziab Dazem)  
dodinge nga se wiziag  
oina painlon se bedaze  
o niag o se mok ngale.

*(Verse 3):* O Morelang (Tatakorek) pain  
dodin ge se kok nau e  
oina painlon se bedaze  
o niag se mok ngale.

Mesi buruwan (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

*(Verse 1):* Mesi buruwan me owi ngopolonide  
o hangu kankan rien so pitingini mon.

*(Verse 2):* Hagad bo mesu timu owi nibitip ngalade  
me tantuan ura idug itorde.

Minarao (Wali Hits, Gum)

Iya yo mainare yare pami mainaro  
iya yo mainare yare pami mainara  
iya ua iya ua iya ua iya iya



iya ua iya ua iya ua iya iya.

Mitibog nui (Wesley Bosli, Kranket)

(Verse 1): O Mitibog nui e ngan ngibini e  
nui e me dodintat  
nga ngamoi mok faun e lak so nasagoi  
luan tap mai tia.

(Verse 2): ngainag mannenoi kankanlak mug bini  
ita mug dibol  
sibeg nieg taimon tata tia  
ngan aeg ngetaniwoi.

Mundunas (Anonymous, Bogia District)

(Verse 1): Taim mi stap mangi yet papa na mama i dai  
mi stap olsem tarangu husat bai lukautim mi long ol samting.  
*When I was six years my dad and mom i dai  
I lived lonely life no one to look after me mundunas.*

(Verse 2): Nogat papamama nogat bratasusa tu  
mi stap olsem mundunas olgeta dei  
nogat gutpela kaikai nogat gutpela ples long slip  
mi stap olsem mundunas olgeta dei tarangu boi.

Nala i tauna (Aksim Siming, Kranket)

(Verse 1): Nala i tauna  
wabubu lo wabubu lo  
lulu o u tui be  
be madidi i doka.

(Verse 2): Motu u pereki  
ngau baga lo u lako lako  
kati o u tui be  
be madidi i doka.

(Verse 3): Bigul yaguna  
wabuna la wabuna la  
laing lo u tui be  
be madidi i doka.

Nen a (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

(Verse): Nen a e mala bisapa  
hotu mei nehi  
gemere me hangu sain pisini  
timtain mesi e wi timu din manin mok  
nen a e so uruti mon ngame hinan tibun.

(Chorus): Nen ngame Panu Domon me hinan  
nen a e so uruti mon ngame hinan tibun.

Ngame sansan laulau mon (Elisa Imai, Kranket)

(Verse 1): Ngame sansan laulau mon ngamul se ngamul e  
abeg kin so wananan laulau mon ngatozmeg  
ilog ibol ngalewoi ngainag anang inaiwoi  
mewoi sansan yaingfunag laulau mon ngatozmeg.

(Verse 2): Ngaget yulon ngatozlak panu kuzum ngafu  
me se men e dibol sasam awanlon uso  
mala gigin dazadin aten paen yang egin  
sasam nami nen egin tig betabet inan.

Nimor wag (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

(Verse): Ngalon hei e ngabol inan hei e  
hangu Nimor wag donden mok rebesi ne  
Dolou bagenlon iyo wag iyo wag  
iyo wag ipadal ile.

(Chorus): Hangu Nimor wag donden masde  
uuuu wug wabip ngalon pe  
Mareg buruwanlon Yabob buruwanlon  
iyo wag ipadal ile.

O bubeg ilo so padal mon (Wesley Bosli, Kranket)

(Verse): *Good-bye my darling ah good-bye my samoei*  
gazo eme sain ta ilod alan en sain  
mewoi nima panag pa nug binibiniwoi  
nieg ngan tet taimon pazeg ngitiuz ngame bubeg.

(Chorus): O bubeg ilo so padal mon  
samoe alap amatoi  
o bubeg ilo so padal mon

samoe alap amatoi.

O Ziazi Gedaged (Gabriel Tabali, Riwo)

O Ziazi Gedagedoi

Bel em zu taka ta

emitio Ziwo em kopikiat

gedodin mok ilo misian mok e o kak di o.

Oi Muddy Bay (Adolf Gatagot, Kananam)

(Verse 1): Oi *Muddy Bay* yangadin tanten  
ngamaneya so azut panupanu  
ang se goz yagami muguna.

(Verse 2): Mizi mona em ngama meiz  
ang se goz amuga  
mane yag ngamuso azut  
*Muddy Bay* em ogok.

Pasin nau yu mekim (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

(Verse 1): Pasin nau yu mekim long mi  
mugag egede hei  
hangu sain owi ngebedeni e  
hambas mala ngonoug ngamas.

(Verse 2): *Good times* bilong yumi tupela  
i no olsem long nau  
hambas hina sain so bedeni mon  
ilo padalp haga ula e.

(Verse 3): *Days went by as a fool for yu*  
mala ngonoug ngamas  
*please darling give me one more chance*  
bai *feelings* bilong mi i orait.

Pepa raunim mi (Willie Tropu, Yabob)

(Verse 1): Mi no save sindaun isi liklik  
ai bilong mi save go kam tumas  
tok i kisim mi oplsem yu gat hevi tumas yu yet save.

(Verse 2): Mi tanim tanim na mi lukluk go kam

mi tingting olsem oli lukim mi pinis  
 mi kisim haiwe na tanim bek gen long Lae.  
 (Chorus): Uuu bai mi go we nau mi no save  
 uuu bai mi go we nau pepa raunim mi  
 bai mi karap long sip bai mi go we a mi no save.  
 (Verse 3): Sapos ol i holim mi bai mi mekim wanem  
 sore tumas mi les long kalabus  
 no, no, no ating bai traim na stap isi  
 (Verse 4): Mama tokim mi na ol papa tokim mi  
 na skul tok i lus pinis  
 nau bai mi tanim na i go bek gen long ples.

Sad Memories (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

(Verse 1): Ses kagin ngawi unou keme  
 ilug padal inan hei e  
*sad memories* rien mok beni pana  
*sad memories* rien mok beni pana.  
 (Verse 2): Sain mug malain gese *I'm still thinking of you*  
 ilug padal inan hei  
 abita wi *memories* rien mok  
*memories* rien mok beni pana.

Sapar (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

(Verse 1): Sapar gadondin itor  
 muruan yewereg itor  
 Sapar gadon gadon mok e  
 ilum pik epeni pe.  
 (Verse 2): Aben mok lon imas hei  
 regmom egede ihutig  
 loulou ihutig itoritor hieg  
 Yabob lang iseg soroweni.

Sau laliku (Anonymous, Begesin)

(Verse 1): Sau laliku lali wou no i e o nou  
 sau laliku lali wou no i e  
 ina mara laliku lali wou no i e o nou

sau laliku lali wou no i e.  
(Chorus): Eoi ao e ao e a  
eoi ao e ao e a  
eoi ao e.

Sele mole (Michael Makalu, Bernal)

Sele mole sele mole a  
sele mole sele mole a  
Gogol Wara e karua lain o  
sele mole sele mole a.

Septemba Sikistin (Adolf Kasemai, Riwo)

(Verse): Septemba Sikistin em i de bilong yumi  
yumi Papua Niugini bung wantaim  
yumi hamamas long sanap long yumi yet  
long mekim kantri bilong yumi go het.

(Chorus): Dispela de em i bikpela de bilong yumi.

(Verse): Septemba Sikistin em i de bilong yumi  
yumi Papua Niugini bung wantaim  
Papua Niugini bung wantaim.

Sipa manua e (Michael Makalu, Bernal)

Sipa e sipa manua e  
sipa e sipa manua e  
sipa e sipa manua e  
sipa e sipa manua e.

Sirori e (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

Sirori o sirori e  
wange damon a  
sirori o sirori e  
same damon a.

So melain we'll end up somewhere (Wesley Bosli, Kranket)

(Verse): O nenmam kagazen aso

azu melain ta bo tea mok  
Gedaged Mitibog nead tea  
asop tetemanip taimon pa tala.

*(Chorus):* Ulonglakme naup tenasi me azu salan  
eginlakoi tata alanen tea  
so melain *we 'll end up somewhere.*

Taig gadon o me maguk mok (Wesley Bosli, Kranket)

*(Verse):* Taig gadon o me maguk mok me o woi izutime  
J.D. get ge madoime so mok ta iduoi  
se ulap utoz gazop ilo imuloi  
M.C. ben ibas madoime teig o me maguk mok.

*(Chorus):* Ula ula udup ula pa.

Umar malain hei (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

*(Verse 1):* Umar malain hei tamasdeg binama  
pik ta tamas hei  
hina sain malain iendeg bedeni  
sori bubengu.

*(Chorus 1):* Piap ngalon pe gomu uyan ta ngapau pe  
hei ga binamag o ule e  
kankan hunamag bubama rubuti mok mok e  
sori o hangu e o ule e.

*(Verse 2):* I no longpela taim na yu lusim mipela  
i no laik yu stap liklik  
longpela taim bilong yu i stap yet na yu go  
sori lewa bilong mi.

*(Chorus 2):* Sapos yu bin tokim mi bai mi ken tokim yu sampela toktok  
nogat na yu lusim mipela na yu go  
tingting i kilim mipela na lewa bilong mipela i bruk pinis  
sori o David o yu lusim mipela.

Uta mon e (Dogek Akung, Yabob)

*(Verse 1):* Uta mon e uta mon e  
usop waglon udusi  
mesi manin mesi manini mok e.

(Verse 2): Mesi maninig iendeg  
wag disog didug dile  
Malasala Malasala ilon e.

Uta mon e (Old Dog and the Offbeats, Yabob)

(Verse 1): Uta mon e uta mon e  
uta mon e uta mon e  
uta mon e uta mon e  
waglon udusi.

(Verse 2): Uta mon e uta mon e  
uta mon e uta mon e  
uta mon e uta mon e  
hangu tang me borou pana.

(Verse 3): Uta mon e uta mon e  
uta mon e uta mon e  
uta mon e uta mon e  
you nombu me yesi pana.

(Chorus): Pupuro ye ye ye a  
pupuro wo wo wo ya  
pupuro ye ye ye a  
pupuro wo wo wo.

Uta mon e (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

(Verse 1): Uta mon waglon udusi  
uta mon e  
uta mon e waglon udusi.

(Verse 2): Uta mon e you nombu yesi pana  
uta mon e  
uta mon e you nombu yesi pana.

Wag ta (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

U u wag ta  
Dirimal ilon iyowade  
bi a bi a  
mesimesi iyowade.

Webia pe (Sandie Gabriel, Yabob)

(Verse 1): Webia pe foreva moa hotu mug bagen inou  
ilug haun imor longtaim bipo  
filim hatek pen na hepines

bilang lav lav swit lav.

(Verse 2): Tokim mi foreva moa wantaim *smail* long pes  
bubengu hotu mug seseli e  
hagad War binia pa  
*you can make it some other days.*

Yam Ilonen manin ienmeg (Aksim Siming, Kranket)

(Verse 1): O tizag o inad panu e  
inad baged get elak made  
fatufatu yawa utoz pa  
uselag abe tea.

(Verse 2): Panutibun ge bagen demaisge  
panu nean nean bisa  
o tizag tibud aben e  
bini tap abe tea.

(Verse 3): Yam Ilonen manin ienmeg  
tamol dinou ta awan bisag  
iwog ibol tamol udangsa  
umoi tap abe tea.

(Verse 4): Az kuzum ses dusad ditoz ge  
ladin izoz ge dimat dile  
o tizag ilo gaze pe  
panu e me oina e.



## GLOSSARY

Abbreviations: *Italics* - Tok Pisin, Y - Yabob, B - Bel, A-Amele (Gum dialect)

### *Baim Singsing*

The trading of dance pieces among the tribes. The hosting village learns the *singsing* of the visiting group. The feast and dancing concluded the learning session. After the age of Cultural Shows\*, *baim singsing* is rarely practiced.

### *Bambooband*

Originated in the Solomons Islands. A band with a set or sets of bamboo tubes. There are two ways practiced in Madang: 1) The *paitim mambu* (hitting bamboo). The bamboo tubes are cut and tuned according to boogie-woogie broken chords and played rubber thongs; 2) The *sutim mambu* (Shooting bamboo). The bamboo tubes are prepared to play the tonic and fifth of a chord, no thirds, held vertically and hit onto the ground. The tubes also can be made of vinyl tubes or papaya. The *stringband*\* or electronic guitar can accompany the bamboo tubes.

### *Bigabeg* (B/Y)

An orphan. A *begabeg* is a captive of war in Bel (Hannemann 1996:19).

### *Bit*

Beat. Rhythm. Sometimes tempo.

### *Bubengu* (Y)

The liver as the seat of emotion. An addressing word to someone dear.

### *Bubig* (B)

The liver as the seat of emotion. An addressing word to someone dear.

### Cultural show

A public performance mainly consisting of groups of the *singsing tumbuna*\* but often includes guitar bands. Originates from first Port Moresby Show. See also *baim singsing*.

### *Daik* (Y)

Name of obsolete courtship songs in Yabob and Bilbil. Name of a *singsing tumbuna*.\*

### *Darem* (Y)

Young men's house.

### *Dazem* (B)

Young men's house.

### *DJ*

A person in charge of selection of cassette recordings to be played at a *six-to-six*\* without a live band. Despite the term "disk jockey," he (usually a male occupation) never talks.

*Dolou* (B/Y)

A north-eastern wind that brings calm sea and rain especially around April.

*Fatu* (B)

The surroundings, a village, a place.

*Fund raising*

A concert aiming to either a charity or an informal enterprise. Often takes the form of *six-to-six\**. Initiated by Aksim Siming of Kranket in 1960.

*Garamut*

The slit drum. The use of this sound-producing instrument in Madang has been limited to communicational purpose, at least in the postcontact era.

*Gargar* (Y)

A rattle made of nutshells.

*Gita resis*

“Guitar races.” A form of *stringband\** competition initially started in Siar as a fund raising for local church organization. The participants would pay adjudication fee and competes for the quality of performance. As it became popular, the competition sometimes included the *bambooband\** as well. The *gita resis* was terminated in around 1977.

*Gita Singsing*

Any piece of song accompanied with the guitar.

*Gospel*

PNG gospels are usually a powerband composition either sung in English or Tok Pisin, with a heavy influence from the American brand musically.

*Hevimetal*

“Heavy metal.” See under *waitman singsing*.

*Hotu* (Y)

The surroundings, a village, a place.

*Ilon* (B/Y)

A bay, an inlet, a reef, any area of waters near land. Collectively the Bel-speaking area.

*Kanam*

Name of a *singsing tumbuna* widespread in the coastal Madang between Karkar and Astrolabe Bay.

*Kanam Buk* (B/Y)

The collection of indigenous Lutheran hymn in Madang.

*Kapok gita*

An Asian-made smaller acoustic guitar. No longer in use. It is not clear whether it was

really made of kapok.

*Ki*

“Key.” Usually refers to a particular chord progression of stringband music. See also *Kod\**.

*Kod*

“Chord.” Any chord played by the music instruments.

*Kopikat*

“Copycat.” Denotes an imitation or a copy from western pop into the *powerband\**, but also suggest the learning process of guitar playing.

*Kundu*

The hourglass drum whose membrane is made of the skin of a lizard locally known as *pariu*.

*Kundu singsing*

“Song for the kundu.” See under *Singsing tumbuna\**.

*Kwaia*

The choir. In Madang, the South Pacific style was first introduced probably by the Lutheran Samoan students. The repertior of *kwaia* probably resembled to the *peroveta* choir singing in the Motu-speaking area, but today it can mean any polyphonic singing of sacred music.

*Lewa*

The liver as the seat of emotion. An addressing word to someone dear.

*Liptikes*

A chordophone made of a wooden tea box and strings supported by a long stick, hence the name “leaf tea case.” Covers the register of the contrabass. It was probably brought from the Tolai of the Rabaul, although the name *liptikes* might be Madang’s original. Flourished during the age of the *gita resis\** but became obsolete as the stringband lost popularity.

*Lokol singsing*

“Local songs,” or is domestic powerband music in general. Sometimes it refers to the *stringband\** and *bambooband \**as well.

*Luhai*

A tribal chief appointed by the colonial government.

*Madang stail*

A vibrato singing style in the powerband attributed to Sandie Gabriel’s invention.

*Maimai (Y)*

Name of a *singsing tumbuna.\**

*Mambuben*

Tok Pisin spelling for the *bambooband*\*.

*Manin* (B)

Calm, quiet.

*Manini* (Y)

Calm, quiet.

*Mas* (B)

The sea.

*Mesi* (Y)

The sea.

*Meziab* (B)

A great spirit believed to stay in the spirit-house, or *meziab dazem*.

*Mulung* (B/Y)

Boy's initiation ritual.

*Murin* (B/Y)

Rough waters. Collectively the south of Schering peninsula.

*Musik*

Postcontact music in general, particularly the instrumentals. See also *Singsing*\*.

*Nais*

Beautiful, wonderful.

*Nek* (*bilong singsing*)

Vocal section of song. Melody. Vocal contour. Singing voice.

New Wave, The

There is no local name for the music of new wave artists such as Sanguma or Ronnie Galama. Despite its international acclaim and easy access as a powerband music, the new wave has had few audience among the grassroots, probably because of its novel music structure unfitting to the *six-to-six* dancing.

*Nui* (B/Y)

An island.

*Palang gita*

Literally "board guitar." Name for the acoustic guitar to distinguish it from other types of the guitar such as the *kapok gita*\*.

*Panu* (B/Y)

A village.

*Pawaben*

Tok Pisin spelling for the *powerband*\*.

*Pawa gita*

The electronic guitars in general.

*Powerband*

A band played with electronic instruments. Repertoire can vary. Also, *laiv ben* (live band).

*Singsing*

Song(s) in general.

*Singsing bilong Japan*

The “Japanese songs” as a generic term in Madang means children’s and wartime songs acquired by the soldiers during the Pacific War.

*Singsing bilong sore*

See under *Sore singsing\**.

*Singsing bilong wari*

See under *Sore singsing\**.

*Singsing lotu*

“Songs of the church.” Sacred music such as hymns or chants. The gospel is usually excluded.

*Singsing tumbuna*

“Songs of the ancestors.” Any survived forms of pre-contact dance music. Many of them were resumed or remodeled after 1920 due to the prohibition enforced by the missionaries.

*Six-to-six*

A Tok Pisin vocabulary, but always spells like English. More often spelled “6 to 6” or “6 tu 6.” An all-night dancing session in name of fund raising. It starts at six in the evening and continues to six in the morning, hence the name.

*Sore singsing*

“Songs of sorrow.” Also known as *singsing bilong sore,\** or *singsing bilong wari\**. The lament with a stringband setting known among Kranket and Yabob probably no earlier than mid-1980s. The contents are usually a mourning address to the dead (*tok sore*) and often intended to be performed for the funeral or burial.

*Strinben*

Tok Pisin spelling for the *stringband\**.

*Stringband*

Spelled *strinben* in TP. A band in which the acoustic guitar and ukulele are used. Few are still active and its main audience today are tourists.

*Ti Fan*

“Tea fund”: a form of public dancing to raise school fund for various purposes, mostly for buying classroom facilities such as afternoon tea for public school. Performance by Aksim Siming of Kranket in 1960 for donation of rebuilding Sagalau High School is the earliest known example for this type of concert.

*Tromoi Lek*

“Trowing-out legs.” Dancing.

*Wag (B/Y)*

A canoe.

*Waitman Singsing*

“Songs of White man.” Western pops. Also, *pop musik stret*. Often synonymous to the *hevimetal*.\*

*Wavi (A)*

The liver as the seat of emotion. An addressing word to someone dear.

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