4. Mourning and song

\[
\begin{align*}
aiyo & \quad Waki & \quad Waki & \quad Mbeta \\
na & \quad kota & \quad konoya & \quad angu & \quad koyana \\
na & \quad aki & \quad waipe? \\
Epeni & \quad angu & \quad kenda \\
& \quad oh & \quad Waki & \quad Waki & \quad Mbeta \\
& \quad I & \quad worry & \quad about & \quad you & \quad only, & \quad here \\
& \quad what & \quad will & \quad I & \quad do? \\
& \quad in & \quad Heaven & \quad only & \quad will & \quad I & \quad see & \quad you
\end{align*}
\]

In the early hours of Tuesday 15 February 2005, I awoke to darkness and the sounds of hysterical wailing. I said to Lila, my fieldwork companion, ‘I think Wakili has died’. Hastily I dressed and ran out onto the veranda and put the outside light on. Jeremiah loomed in the darkness, and I could just make out the glint of the empty steel hospital bed he was holding. He confirmed my fears with one sentence, ‘Yangpela meri i dai pinis’, and I let out a howl and covered my face with my hands. Together the three of us went down to the elementary school, less than 100m away from our house, and where Wakili had been taken in order to be closer to the local health officer who was to see her the following day. That moment never came.

When Lila and I first arrived at Kopiago the previous Thursday I had asked why Wakili was not to be seen. Almost everyone we knew had turned out to greet us at the airstrip or later at the house. I had made good friends with Wakili, then nineteen years of age, on my first visit to Kopiago in June 2004. Wakili had lived with our host family Kenny Kendoli and Kipu Piero then, helping to care for their four young children—in particular the young girl Monika—and work in the garden, Kipu having no sisters who would otherwise have helped her with these duties (see Figure 4.1).

It was mostly because of her close proximity to our host family that I came to know Wakili. This trip I carried wool for her to make a ‘bilum’ (string bag) for herself, as she had generously given me one as a gift on my departure then, and I was keen to give something back to her. When I enquired after her I was told she was ill—simultaneously I heard the rumour that pregnancy was the cause of her illness, and that she stayed at her parents’ home not only because of her illness but also for the shame of being pregnant to a man to whom she was not betrothed.
A few days after our arrival Lila and I had clambered up the steep gully that was the path to Wakili’s parents’ home. We carried with us the wool for Wakili and a copy of *Where There is No Doctor* (a basic medical care book for those working in remote rural communities), hoping to diagnose her illness. Wakili lay under a tree with an umbrella to shade her, and when she saw I had come she said my name and held out her hand for me to hold. She was yellow and swollen and complained of aches and pains, and could not eat because of vomiting. We suspected Hepatitis but neither of us was sure—with no medical training we were at a loss to do anything. I left the wool by her side in a vain attempt to make her feel better. Little did I know that in less than twelve hours she would be dead.

As we approached the classroom on the night of Wakili’s death, it felt like the walls of bamboo and grass were alive with the heat and the heaving of the bodies inside. Light was dim, the light of torches and kerosene, but it was not for this reason that her body, in the far corner of the room, could not be seen, even after it was lifted onto the hospital bed Jeremiah had brought down. Rather it was because of the many men and women throwing themselves over Wakili’s body, calling out her name, and wailing both independently and together to express
their grief. They stood over her, and leaned over her body in turns, flailing their arms above their heads from the moment of entering the room. In stark contrast, Lila and I stood against the back wall, speechless and with silent tears.

More and more men and women arrived over the course of the next few hours. People screamed and cried, paced with their hands latched behind their heads and called out, sometimes hitting themselves, the walls or the doors. After some time the parents and siblings of Wakili gradually collapsed to the side of the room, most likely exhausted from their grieving, compounded by their midnight vigil guarding Wakili in her last hours.

Over the next days and weeks I would have ample opportunity to study the sounds of mourning. It is important to note that the degree of mourning does vary according to the age of the deceased and the circumstances of the death. A newborn baby who died around the same time as Wakili was buried within twenty-four hours of his death, and as a consequence the mourning period was relatively short. The baby was not grieved for by the larger community in the very emotional manner, and for such an extended, continuous period of time after the burial that Wakili was. The tragic nature of the death of such a young strong woman certainly figured in the many varied outpourings of grief.

Laments and creativity

McLeod observes that music is often created at times of social stress. She writes: ‘Like accusations of witchcraft then, music tends to occur at points of conflict, uncertainty, or stress within the social fabric’ (McLeod 1974:113). This view may explain the outpouring of songs—and accusations—on Wakili’s death. A death is usually a period of immense social upheaval for individuals, and often a whole community, and as such it becomes a fulcrum for cultural creativity, where the living have a forum for the expression of their feelings of tension and desire, and where they can make connections between the living and the dead, and the past, present and future.

Laments have been recognised as a crucial genre in the music of Papua New Guineans, and several scholars have explored laments in detail, including Feld (1982), Weiner (1991) and Suwa (2001a). Writing of the Foi of Papua New Guinea, Weiner declares that ‘women’s poetry is a sung message of love, loss, and grief, proclaiming the temporal ascendancy of human relationship’ (Weiner 1991:119). Suwa writes that ‘the lament genre has been an indispensable means of poetic, often musical, expression among small-scale village communities in Papua New Guinea’ and he declares that the women’s crying is the only ‘traditional’ element left in Madang funerals (Suwa 2001a:53).
In this chapter I will explore the musical expressions surrounding Wakili’s death, using as my examples recordings made within a few hours of her death through to several weeks later. I will discuss these song genres mostly in the chronological order in which the songs were sung. These death songs—_khene ipakana_, or _heya_ (‘crying’)—focus on individual experience—initially mine, as these opening pages attest, but mainly the individual experience of the singers, in particular Kipu Piero, several of whose songs feature in this chapter. A close examination and comparison of the songs reveals common elements between them, of text and of pitch, despite the different styles from which they derive.

Inside the _khene anda_

With permission I recorded the sound of the wailing from outside Wakili’s ‘hauskrai’/ _khene anda_ (‘mourning house’) just after Wakili’s death. A _khene anda_ can be virtually any place where the deceased is located. Often, as in the case of Wakili, it is where the deceased actually died—in Wakili’s case, the school classroom—as the grieving begins directly upon death. In other cases, the deceased can be moved to another location for grieving, and in these cases the sounds of grieving accompany the body as it is moved, maintaining uninterrupted crying.

As hinted in the introduction above, the initial sound in the _khene anda_ appears cacophonous and without structure, but there are many layers to this emotional soundscape. At one level the sounds are spontaneous, with people bursting into the _khene anda_ and crying out. On another level the grief is formulaic and repetitious, and it is this semblance of structure that allows the sounds of grieving to be sustained continuously by many in turns, throughout the days and nights at the _khene anda_ before the body is finally buried some days later.

Realising the significance of Wakili’s death immediately, I documented the events and sounds surrounding her death through recordings, note taking and photographs. The following is an excerpt from my field journal. It describes the sounds of the _khene anda_ on the night of Wakili’s death, and illustrates the spontaneous and the structured nature of the sounds:

It was Alo [a young man, and Wakili’s cousin (see Figure 4.2)] who kept a fairly steady 5 note descent...It almost acted as a bassline, in that the bottom note was like an anchor where the wailing women met his voice...it functions as a tonic note of sorts. Other women murmured on this note.
That is to say, whilst the women grieved spontaneously, the young man Alo repeatedly sang a wordless descending line over an interval of three and a half tones (a fifth). He lingered on his final note, where other voices would meet his. Alo’s descent is musically depicted in Example 4.1.1.

Example 4.1 (Audio 12): Alo’s descent.

The interval of three and a half tones and the role of the tonal centre in this vocal music will be seen in other musical examples in this chapter, in particular the duet between Kepo and Kipu some weeks after Wakili’s death.

Another important issue, which is briefly exposed in the above journal excerpt, is the gender difference in mourning. While men who are closely related or associated with the deceased can articulate their grief in song—and an example of this will be given later in this chapter—such lamentation (and public grieving in general) is chiefly the women’s domain. This can be seen in the number of examples of women’s song in this chapter. It is partly this gender imbalance in singing grieving songs that drew my attention to Alo’s contribution to the soundscape of the khene anda.

Figure 4.2: members of Wakili’s family.

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1 The shape of the descent sketched here was the most frequent, however it employs only four notes. The descent from D to B sometimes utilised a passing C (instead of the quaver D repeated), hence my journal entry describing five notes.
Women and *khene ipakana yakaya*

After the initial grieving in the *khene anda*, the dominant musical expression around the deceased is the *khene ipakana yakaya* (or ‘death song counting’), so named as the song form lists or counts aspects of the life of the deceased (this will be illustrated below). *Khene ipakana yakaya* is predominantly composed and performed by women, and usually the most notable composer/performers are older women, who because of their age hold a certain power and a substantial amount of knowledge.

This relationship between gender, age and power is not an uncommon characteristic of laments around the world. Laments are performed by older, often post-menopausal, women in many cultures. Indigenous Australian laments are one example (cf. Magowan 1994a, 2001). Koskoff relates female sexuality to female musical practices and reveals an inverse relationship between female sexuality and power (Koskoff 1989:7). Applying Koskoff’s view to the study of Finnish-Karelian laments, Tolbert suggests that ‘women often gain power and prestige only when they are past childbearing age, which is mirrored in and/or offers access to privileged musical and ritual roles’ (Tolbert 1990:44). This view is also supported by Petrovic, who writes of women’s music in the Dinaric cultural zone of Yugoslavia that ‘[i]n post-menopausal years, village women in the Dinaric region undergo an upgrading of social status….It is then that they achieve near equality with men and there is a relaxation of the restrictions upon their freedom to communicate with men, since they are considered no longer sexually active.’ (Petrovic 1990:81) It is interesting to note the apparent similarity between the laments of these regions of the world and Duna laments in this regard.

Gabriele Stürzenhofecker writes that in the funeral context Duna women have a transitional role as ‘midwives at the “birth” of the spirit’ (Sturzenhofecker 1998:132). There is, therefore, fertility in death (this connection is further elaborated on in my description of *yekia* courting practices located on sites associated with death—see Chapter 6).

Stürzenhofecker also writes that

[n]arratives link the Female Spirit [Payeme Ima] to the endless oscillation of life and death from the settlement areas to the forest caves, where the dead are still thought to journey, and from which they return as pieces of life force for their individual rebirth. This cyclical process is still energized by Duna women’s ritual actions and their sung laments at the time of the death of kinsfolk. (Sturzenhofecker 1998:203).

These sung laments Stürzenhofecker refers to are the *khene ipakana yakaya*. 
Pokole Pora is an older woman, and the mother of Petros Kilapa, a man in his late twenties at the time of writing, and an important translator and contributor to this research (see Figure 4.3). Known to me as a skilled singer of ancestral genres such as *khene ipakana yakaya*, Pokole was present at Wakili’s *khene anda* and I asked her to sing to me later in the day for recording.² She agreed, and produced a number of *khene ipakana yakaya* devoted to Wakili. These songs, or at least very similar ones, especially in melody, were being sung beside Wakili’s in-state corpse in the *khene anda*, and were becoming increasingly audible as the sounds of hysterical grieving subsided. *Khene ipakana yakaya* are, as briefly mentioned above, characterised by the process of *yakaya* (‘counting’) where aspects of the lives of the deceased, in particular the names of places where the deceased has lived, are listed or counted (cf. Haley 2002a:6-7). They are often constructed of rhetorical questions directed to the deceased, asking them why they have left their earthly life. These attributes are evident in Example 4.2 sung by Pokole to the deceased (note that the range is actually six tones (an octave) lower than depicted here).

**Example 4.2 (► Audio 13): Pokole’s *khene ipakana yakaya*.**

² I had asked permission to record Pokole in the hope to record her singing *in situ*, however, my request was slightly misunderstood, and so she came to our hut that evening to sing instead.
Steep Slopes

antiali-o wara londo kota reyana weipe
dear mother oh, young woman torn down, will you stay or come back?

itara londo kota reyana weipe
young woman of itara Hirane torn down, will you stay or come back?

ataka londo kota reyana weipe
young woman of ataka Hirane torn down, will you stay or come back?

rapaka londo kota reyana weipe
young woman of rapaka Hirane torn down, will you stay or come back?

antiali-o yokolo londo kota reyana weipe
dear mother oh, young woman of yokolo Hirane torn down, will you stay or come back?

yalima londo kota reyana weipe
young woman of yalima Hirane torn down, will you stay or come back?

Figure 4.3: Pokole Pora and Petros Kilapa.

In this verse, Pokole asks the deceased young woman if she will come back to the community, or stay in the land of the dead. She lists the praise names (kēiyaka, underlined in this and other examples) for the young woman’s place of Hirane (the place where she lived and which belongs to her father and his clan—further verses listing the names for Suwaka as the place of Wakili’s mother and her clan were later sung). As Pokole does not use the name of Wakili, it is
these references to place that identify her as the deceased. The word *kota* was translated into Tok Pisin as ‘brukim’ (‘break’), and likened to the tearing off of a flower at its stalk, hence the English equivalent here given as ‘torn down’. The exclamation *antia/lij-o* (‘[dear] mother oh’, where the suffix –*li* is not always used) is a common one not only in Duna *khene ipakana yakaya* but in spoken expressions of grief or sorrow, and is not directed at the deceased (that is, Wakili is not here being referred to as a mother). The exclamation features especially in spontaneous outpourings of grief, as will be apparent in the following musical example.

**Na panenope? (‘what will I do?’)**

About four hours after Wakili’s death, Kipu left the ‘hauskrai’ and returned to the house. Circling the courtyard she sang a long and grief-stricken *khene ipakana* for Wakili, within earshot of those attending the ‘hauskrai’, and her male relatives who, together with other men from the community, were at work constructing Wakili’s coffin. Kipu’s lament lasted approximately ten minutes, seven of which I was able to record through our hut wall (to later play back to, and translate with, Kipu herself). The first lines of this recording are reproduced below. The sung text is in italics, and the Tok Pisin and English translation in normal type with English in the far right column. The Tok Pisin has been included for a few reasons: it was the first translation provided to me by Kipu; it is also a helpful point of reference for analyses of the laments of contemporary popular influence that will be examined later in this chapter. Note that each line is structured as a question to the deceased, as was also the case with the *heya* sung by Pokole Pora described above.

---

antia wali-o antia wali-a mama mama oh mama mama ah mother mother oh mother mother ah

aluarena kenaka aru awanana na panenope? mitupela save lukautim ol yologras, nau bai mi mekim wanem? we two care for and cradle the blonde children, now what will I do?

antia wali-o mama mama oh mother mother oh

antia wali-o mama mama oh mother mother oh

keno wara wanpis kenaka aru awanana na panenope? mitupela save lukautim wara wanpis, nau bai mi mekim wanem? we two care for and cradle the lone *waras*, now what will I do?

---

3 The meaning and function of the suffix –*li* is not entirely clear, as San Roque explains: ‘The sequence –*li* can occur as a suffix on some kin terms and commonly occurs in *kēyaka* vocabulary and some other specialised vocabulary items (eg. expressives). The independent or productive meaning of this form is obscure to me, but it is clear that it usually occurs in highly emotive or exclamatory contexts’ (Lila San Roque, email comm., 30 November 2007).
In this excerpt, Kipu questions the dead Wakili. Together they used to care for Kipu’s blonde children, what will Kipu do now that Wakili is dead? Both Kipu and Wakili would look after Kipu’s only daughter, Monika, so what will Kipu do now? Kipu doesn’t make friends easily, so what will she do now? Wakili is just a young woman, wasn’t she thinking? Kipu is alone now, wasn’t Wakili thinking?

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4 This kind of questioning in songs of mourning, and also the expression of a lack of family members eg. ‘I have no brother/sister’, is present in other groups in Papua New Guinea, such as the Kaluli and their genre of gisaro (Schieffelin 1976:183). Feld describes this type of linguistic construction, often expressed in song, as a key way in which the Kaluli elicit pity (Feld 1982:25-26). An orphan or an only child is seen as the epitome of personal suffering in Duna culture, and such sorry characters appear frequently in song texts such as pikono (sung stories). Also common is the general complaint ‘you didn’t tell me (before you left)’—that the singer was shocked and uninformed.
The words antia (‘mother’ in Duna) and wali (‘mother’ in Huli) are used together here, intensifying the expression of woe. These words serve to punctuate each line of text, at both beginning and end. A cry out is usually attached to the end of the word wali, either an -o sound or an –a sound, depending on the preference of the singer at each particular line.

Duna song often incorporates Huli words, but here Huli is not the only ‘imported’ language. Tok Pisin makes regular appearances in this song, notably in the excerpt for the word and concept ‘wanpis’. This Tok Pisin term comes from the English ‘one piece’, and means ‘alone, without relatives, an orphan, without a mate’ (Mihalic 1971:201). Its use is striking here in combination with a number of kēiyaka (‘praise names’), which have been identified as a fundamental characteristic of Duna song language (see Chapter 2). There is ‘wara wanpis’, ‘warali wanpis’, and ‘ayako wanpis’, all signifying Kipu’s only girl child Monika. Kipu also refers to herself as an ‘ayako wanpis’ now Wakili is dead. In this way, esoteric Duna language is combined with a relatively newly introduced foreign language (that is, Tok Pisin).

Another foreign element is introduced into the song text towards the end of this recording in the form of Wakili’s nickname. It is quite common for Duna people to obtain shortened names or nicknames, which are given and used as a sign of affection for those they name. In this song we learn that Wakili’s alternative name was Waki Mbeta (see Appendix B for the full transcription of Kipu’s lament, with the use of this name for Wakili after the time of 4:59). ‘Waki’ is obviously a shortened version of her full name. ‘Mbeta’ on first glance is somewhat more mysterious. In the course of discussion after this recording it became apparent that Wakili was named after a type of tinned mackerel called ‘Besta’. ‘Mbeta’ is the Duna pronunciation of this word, since there are no single (non pre-nasalised) ‘b’ or combinations of ‘st’ in the language. Any type of tinned food is hard for the people of Wakili’s community to obtain, there being very little of it in the local trade stores (and what is there is priced far beyond the reach of most local people), so the fact that Wakili had been re-named after tinned mackerel means that she was very highly prized by those who called her ‘Waki Mbeta’. It was also said that it was one of Wakili’s favourite foods (see Figure 4.4).

Example 4.3 is a transcription of the first minute of the recording of Kipu’s lament. The style of delivery is spontaneous, and the line between song and speech is sometimes blurred. This is typical of laments: Feld and Fox have noted that the relationship between speech and song is very close in laments, describing the mode of expression as ‘verbal-vocal’ (Feld and Fox 1994:39). At points Kipu’s
voice creaks from emotional strain. This ‘creaky voice’ of course is a feature of laments, one of the ‘icons of crying’ established by Urban and considered by Feld and Fox, the others being ‘the cry break’, ‘the voiced inhalation’, and ‘falsetto vowels’ (Urban 1988: 389-391). These icons of crying are ‘features that are linked indexically to the emotional states and affective projection of lament performance’ (Feld and Fox 1994: 40). Despite the spontaneity of Kipu’s performance, there are particular performance conventions being observed (see Example 4.3).


Melodically, phrases usually start (a fifth) above the tonal centre, with the exclamatory text antia wali-o/a. Following that initial expression is the line of text questioning the deceased, which is characterised by a rapid execution of syllables stepping between one and two tones above the tonal centre. Ending the question with the marker ‘-pe’ the phrase is most often concluded with another exclamatory phrase, similar to the opening one, but mostly on the lowest pitch, the tonal centre. One phrase (at system 5) follows this melodic pattern, though is made up entirely of exclamations.

As this song does not have a regular beat, as is typical of khene ipakana yakaya, the notations here are not to be taken literally with regard to rhythm: the key rhythmic contrast to observe is between the run of syllables and the sustained notes. The run of syllables are represented here by quavers and constitute the question of the phrase and the opening of the exclamations. Sustained notes, which are often on the vocables ‘o’ or ‘a’ and which are represented here by minims, are the culmination of the exclamations, and thus appear in the initial few notes and at the very end. The end of each line is defined by a prolonged pitch (usually on the tonal centre) and a breath.

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5 At these points I have given the pitch that I assumed she was aiming for.
Example 4.3 (► Audio 14, 0:00-1:00): Kipu’s *khene ipakana yakaya*.
Kipu’s lament is of the same genre as Pokole’s given above. The range of around three and a half tones (a fifth), the stepping rapidly between pitches and the conclusion on the tonal centre are some of the features they share. Pokole’s lament also opens with the exclamatory antia (though not wali) and poses a question. How they do differ is in their delivery, and this affects their textual structure. Kipu’s lament is spontaneous, rapid and emotional; Pokole’s is slower and more deliberate.6 Pokole is careful to list the kēiyaka of Wakili’s place, whereas at no point in Kipu’s lament did that occur. It is possible that Kipu did not know as many kēiyaka for Wakili’s place or was not as confident in reproducing them (she declares herself a Christian and also admits to being a ‘child of the white man’ due to her years of school education), however it is also just as likely that her immediate grief obstructed the careful reciting of them. Whilst Kipu used kēiyaka in her lament, she used them in reference to persons, not land: Wakili (and also daughter Monika) as a young girl (wara, warali, aya) and herself as alone, without a sister (ayako). The purposes of the two laments are different—Pokole’s is about seeing the spirit on to a new place and tracing its past in place, whereas Kipu’s, being an immediate response to the death, chastises Wakili and expresses her grief directly to her.

From the examples provided so far in this chapter, it is evident that women—and particularly older women—dominate the laments sung in the Duna community. However, the domain is not exclusive to women. Men also sing khene ipakana, as the next section shall reveal.

## Men and khene ipakana

Over the next couple of days after Wakili’s death, many people visited the khene anda of the schoolhouse (see Figures 4.5 and 4.6). The crying (heya) and laments (khene ipakana) were continuous, as different people came and went, creating an endless wall of sound. So many people arrived to grieve on the morning of Wakili’s death that a side wall of the schoolhouse had to be removed and the body taken outside for the day. Wakili’s family were also a continuous presence, in particular her mother and sisters, whose crying was fundamental to the soundscape.

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6 It is possible, of course, that the different context for this performance (ie. requested, not recorded in the moment of grieving) could explain the difference in tempo and expression of Pokole’s lament. However, it is the case that the highly formulaic laments such as that which Pokole sang are by nature slower and more deliberate. This is necessary for the continuation of their singing over many hours, indeed days, in the khene anda. Laments such as this one of Kipu’s are not sustainable over such a period of time.
On the afternoon of the third day, Wakili’s body was moved in its makeshift coffin from the *khene anda* to the burial ground approximately one kilometre away. The carriers of the coffin were accompanied by a large group of men, women and children who cried as they went. Their faces, arms and legs were covered in mud to show their sorrow.7 Once the procession arrived at the burial site, a makeshift *khene anda* was created under a tarpaulin for Wakili’s coffin, and the women and children milled around this while the men finished digging the grave and building the roof structure to sit above it (see Figure 4.7).

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7 Applying mud to the body to indicate grief is done no matter what the weather conditions—if the days have been dry then mud will be created by adding water to the dry dirt. It can be obtained from almost any source.
There was much hubbub amongst the men whilst they worked quickly to finalise and fit the grave’s roof structure. Whilst this was going on, Soti Mbulu began to sing *khene ipakana yakaya* (see Figure 4.8). He was the first man I had heard sing this genre of song clearly (I had observed a few men, namely Kipu Piero’s husband Kenny Kendoli, and Wakili’s father Akuri Mano murmuring what appeared to be *khene ipakana yakaya* in the *khene anda* of the schoolhouse, but the text had been inaudible). Soti Mbulu was an uncle to Wakili—her mother’s younger brother. Leaning on the grave’s roof structure, Soti called out first in his full voice then falsetto (another of the ‘icons of crying’ established by Urban), before launching into two verses of *khene ipakana yakaya*.8

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8 As I did not record these verses, I have not provided a musical transcription of them here.
In the first verse that Soti sang, he articulated his sorrow at Wakili’s death, using an expression common in khene ipakana that I have translated as ‘to stomach sorrow’ (neya here meaning ‘eat’). This expression is also used in Example 4.7 later in this chapter. Soti intensifies the effect of this expression by using the kēiyaka for sorrow, pape and yaraka (see Example 4.4).

The second verse describes one of Wakili’s activities that she performed in the garden—that is, the building up of sweet potato mounds by moving mud up onto them (see Figure 4.9). Soti asks her if she will return to do this activity again.

It is not coincidental that these verses both refer to eating, and food: food and emotion are closely linked throughout Papua New Guinea, and this important trope is further examined in the following chapter through discussions of land productivity.

As previously described, Soti is closely connected to Wakili, and this makes his singing of khene ipakana yakaya in the public sphere acceptable. He is also a man renowned for his renditions of traditional music such as yekia, therefore
he is accomplished in the knowledge of the textual and musical forms of the *awenene ipakana*. It is interesting to note here that Soti’s heritage is not entirely Duna: Haley records his agnatic descent showing that only his father’s father comes from a Duna-speaking parish (Angora) (Haley 2002a, vol. 2:155).

Figure 4.8: Soti Mbulu sings against the coffin roof.
Example 4.4: Soti’s *khene ipakana yakaya*.

ko ngaya kata *papu neya kata ngoyana, antia-o*  you go and make me stomach this sorrow, then you leave, mother oh

ko ngaya kata *pape neya kata ngoyana, antia-o*  you go and make me stomach this *pape* sorrow, then you leave, mother oh

ko ngaya kata *yaraka neya kata ngoyana, antia-o*  you go and make me stomach this *yaraka* sorrow, then you leave, mother oh

koya laranata ndolu weipe? antia-o  you move the mud, one time you will come back? mother oh

*mopotia* laranata ndolu weipe? antia-o  *mopotia* sweet potato mounds, move the mud, one time you will come back? mother oh

*yarakatia* laranata ndolu weipe? antia-o  *yarakatia* sweet potato mounds, move the mud, one time you will come back? mother oh

Although most Duna appear to marry other Duna, it is not at all uncommon for Duna to marry people from other language groups, particularly neighbouring ones, and this mixed heritage of Soti’s (with his father’s mother from the Huli-speaking area of Tari and his mother’s parent’s from the region of Paiela) does not detract from his status as a performer of traditional Duna genres.

**Group singing of *khene ipakana***

Kepo Akuri is the youngest woman (and, perhaps coincidentally, the only non-parent) I recorded singing *khene ipakana yakaya* at Hirane. Kepo’s status as the first-born daughter to Pandu and Akuri, and thus Wakili’s eldest *hakini kone* (‘true sister’) account for her close bond with Wakili. Kepo was a prominent person in the funeral grieving, spending most of the church service before Wakili’s burial standing almost on top of the coffin or lying prostrate upon it, crying out (see Figures 4.10 and 4.11).

Kepo’s grief at the loss of her sister is likely to have been further compounded by the illicit relationship her ‘husband’ Sakane was said to have had with Wakili. It was rumoured that Wakili’s illness was due to her liaisons with him, and that she had not menstruated for three months. On Monday 21 February, less than a week after Wakili’s death, Sakane and his relatives from Aluni met with Wakili’s relatives from Hirane, just past Kalisanda (near Wanakei) at the edge of Hirane territory. Here the Aluni people paid compensation to Wakili’s family of 6 pigs and around 300 kina in cash. It seemed that Sakane was guilty as charged.

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9 It was said that Kepo had been residing with Sakane at Aluni for some months, and though he hadn’t paid a bride-price to Kepo’s father, Kepo still declared him ‘man bilong mi’ (‘my man’), and the status of their relationship was public knowledge. The Duna have experienced dramatic inflation in bride-price over the last thirty-plus years (Stürzenhofecker 1998:110-118), and this, coupled with the social instability caused by colonialisation and missionisation, could see such ‘de facto’ relations become the norm.
The following day, exactly a week after Wakili had died, Kepo came on one of her frequent visits to Kenny and Kipu’s home, the place where Wakili had spent so much time the year before she died. Pandu was also a frequent visitor, often just sitting looking out towards the lake and crying for Wakili. Both Kepo and Pandu regularly sang *khene ipakana* on the approach to Kenny and Kipu’s home as well as upon their arrival. Often Kipu would be moved by their grief and join them. On this day Kepo was moved to sing for a long period of time, and her verses were particularly intricate. She stood outside our house, moving around it slightly, and was joined by Kipu for much of the singing. Kipu’s physical location at the back of the house and a substantial distance from the microphone during this performance meant that her singing could not be clearly discerned. Here, therefore, I will focus on Kepo’s composition, and the first two minutes of the recording where the verses are concentrated (see Example 4.5). After this analysis I will consider how the song functions as a duet.
Figure 4.10: Wakili’s sister Kepo stands at the base of the coffin (which is on top of the hospital bed) supported by female relatives. Kipu paces in the foreground with hands on her head. Umbrellas are used here as shields from the sun (it was a fine day).

Figure 4.11: Kepo lies prostrate on the coffin.
Example 4.5 (Audio 15, 0:00-2:01): Kepo’s khene ipakana yakaya.
Steep Slopes
4. Mourning and song

Wakili-o antia wane antiali wane  
Wakili oh mother daughter dear mother daughter

Wakili-o  
kanga hutia nendeke ndolu weipe?  
friend of these children, when will you come back?

Wakili-o antiali antia wali-o ah antiali wane ah  
Wakili oh dear mother mother mother ah dear mother daughter ah

Wakili-o  
rina kora suwano  
from Rina mountain take water and carry it

[unintelligible]  

rinako kora suwano  
from rinako Rina mountain take water and carry it

rerepa kora suwano  
from rerepa Rina mountain take water and carry it

antiali wane etopa kora suwano  
dear mother daughter from etopa Rina mountain take water and carry it

kwayupa kora suwano  
from kwayupa Rina mountain take water and carry it

[unintelligible]

Wakili hakini-o  
antiali wane keno awaya  
dear mother daughter our father

pele kola suwano  
break and carry the pele flower

rale kola suwano  
break and carry the rale pele flower

yakale kola suwano  
break and carry the yakale pele flower

yayepi kola suwano  
break and carry the yayepi pele flower

Wakili hakini-o  
Wakili sister oh

Wakili hakini-o ah  
Wakili sister oh ah

apia kola suwano  
break apia and carry it

eyapia kola suwano  
break eyapia apia and carry it

eyane kola suwano  
break eyane apia and carry it

kuruku kola suwano  
break kuruku and carry it

kamenda kola suwano  
break kamenda kuruku and carry it

Wakili hakini-o  
Wakili sister oh

Wakili hakini ah  
Wakili sister ah

apuale heya male pukania ko lumakana  
apuale Nauwa has many male vines/roots that will block your way

angina heya male pukania ko lumakana  
angina Nauwa has many male vines/roots that will block your way

yakale heya male pukania ko lumakana  
yakale Nauwa has many male vines/roots that will block your way
Steep Slopes

antiali wane dear mother daughter
vakupi male pukania ko lumakana many yakupi pele and male will block your way
yakale male pukania ko lumakana many yakale pele and male will block your way

antia wali mother mother
antiali antia wane antiali antia wane dear mother mother daughter, dear mother mother daughter
pele male pukania ko lumakana many pele and male will block your way
rale male ya** ko lumakana rale pele and male ya will block your way
yakale ya male pukania ko lumakana many yakale pele and male will block your way
vakupi ya male pukania ko lumakana many vakupi pele and male will block your way

Wakili hakini wane Wakili hakini-o he Wakili sister daughter Wakili sister oh heh
Wakili hakini wane Wakili hakini-o he dear mother oh
antiali-o
waiyeni kupalapa waiyeni Hirane light-skin
paralu kupalapa paralu Hirane light-skin
antiali wane awiya kupalapa dear mother daughter awiya Hirane light-skin
antiali wane awiya kupalapa dear mother daughter awiya Hirane light-skin
akura kupalapa akura Hirane light-skin
akope kupalapa akope Hirane light-skin
ipuku kupalapa ipuku Hirane light-skin

* The term kanga in the previous line is said to be a Huli word for children; kangalu being the Huli kēiyaka for this term.

** ’ya’ here is simply a vocable such as ‘o’ and ‘ah’.

Kepo’s lament is punctuated frequently by the exclamations antia and wali and also wane (‘daughter’), used in a similar way to the former as an expression of emotion rather than an address to the deceased. The terms hakini (‘sister’) and keno awaya (‘our father’), however, define the personal relationship between the singer and the deceased. Initially Kepo asks of Wakili, friend of Kipu’s children, when she will return. Kepo’s use of keno awaya reinforces the kēiyaka that she recites that reference their father’s land connections, thus identifying him.10 Kepo, though a young woman, is confident in producing the kēiyaka of her parents’ land. She is not a ‘child of the white man’ as Kipu declares herself to be—Kepo has grown up in post-colonial times, and has not had the amount of structured schooling experienced by Kipu. In this way, it can be suggested that Kepo’s knowledge is more in keeping with that of Pokole’s generation.

10 It will be recalled that any Duna person can have two or more connections to land; through the mother’s side, the father’s side, and through other remote cognatic ties (Stürzenhofecker 1998:90).
Mount Rina, a mountain towards Horaile (also called by its kēiyaka here as rinako, rerepa, etopa and kwayupa) is the first place Kepo refers to in her song, and a place to which their father is connected. Kepo instructs the deceased Wakili to get drinking water from this mountain and take it with her on her journey to the place of the dead. In the next verse Kepo tells Wakili to snap off the pele flower (known also by its kēiyaka here as rale, yakale and yayepi) and take that with her too. The juxtaposition of this verse with the Mount Rina reference informs the listener that the pele flower is to be found on this mountain. Likewise the following verse where Kepo tells Wakili to break apia (a kind of bush fibre used to make arm bands given during times of courting, also known by its kēiyaka as eyapia, eyane, kuruku and kamenda) and take it with her.

Nauwa, the place of Akuri’s mother’s father, is the next of Akuri’s places that Kepo refers to, through its kēiyaka of apuale, angina, yakale, and andupi. The many pele flowers and male vines found there will block Wakili’s way, Kepo sings—and perhaps it is because of these plants that Wakili cannot easily move on to the place of the dead, and thus lingers close to home and in the minds of her family, who voice this presence in song.

Finally in this excerpt Kepo gives the kēiyaka for Hirane, Akuri’s father’s father’s place (waiyeni, paralu, awiya, akura, akope, ipuku). She describes Wakili as being a light-skinned (kupalapa) Hirane person. This term is also used in the bachelor cult songs of mindmindi kāo, and is an ideal kind of radiant beauty associated with the ethereal. By distinguishing Wakili in this way Kepo aligns her with a non-earthly quality, suggesting her transformation into the spirit realm.

Musically, Kepo’s lament is similar to Kipu’s lament on the day of Wakili’s death that is presented above, particularly in its use of the range of three and a half tones (a fifth). In her methodical use of kēiyaka, Kepo’s lament is close in style to Pokole’s excerpt featured earlier in this chapter. Pokole’s, Kipu’s and Kepo’s laments are all part of the same genre—khene ipakana—though as Kipu does not count the kēiyaka of places, hers is not a khene ipakana yakaya.

An interesting feature of Kepo’s lament is the melodic and textual parallelism that appears in the first phrase of text after the exclamations (that centres on the tone above the tonal centre, shown here as C#) and the subsequent phrases (that focus on the tonal centre). That is to say, there is a direct copying of interval structure—steps of a tone—as they map on to the corresponding syllables of text. Examples include such words as pu-ka-nia ko lu-ma-ka-na (compare bar 26 with 27 of Example 4.5) and ku-pu-la-pa (compare bar 42 with 44 of the same

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11 The connection between courting and death here is important, and is further examined towards the end of Chapter 6.
example). These phrases of text also feature a brief drop below the tonal centre at their end-point, which is also a feature of other Duna song genres such as *pikono*. These structural features point to an expression of grief formulated and guided by established norms.

While the above discussion has focused on Kepo’s musical expression alone, it should not be forgotten that this performance is actually a ‘duet’. The voices of Kepo and Kipu are not completely independent in this performance, though it might seem so at first; they share many of the same pitches and their phrases conclude on the same tonic note, often simultaneously. Kipu’s melodies are generally restricted to a range of two tones, in contrast to Kepo’s melodies that always begin three and a half tones (a fifth) above the tonal centre. Kipu often begins just before or after Kepo’s verses, and thus, there is often present the interval of one and a half tones between the singers. They also often co-ordinate the ending of their phrases, with Kipu often arriving at the tonal centre some time before Kepo (her verses generally consisting of exclamations such *antia wal-o* only, rather than Kepo’s more intricate *yakaya* verses), and thus setting the place for her musical arrival.

**Example 4.6 (Audio 15, 0:00-0:08): Kepo’s *khene ipakana yakaya* as a duet.**

This kind of interlocking of voices could be described as heterophonic—that is, ‘simultaneous variation, accidental or deliberate, of what is identified as the same melody’ (Cooke n.d.). Therefore, ‘[e]ven though each voice laments distinctly, the cumulative interaction between voices draws the temporal process of the mourning event and its participants into a more dialogic arena’ (Feld and Fox 1994:43).12 Such a relationship between vocal heterophony and textual dialogism in women’s laments has also been recorded for the Kaluli of Papua New Guinea (Feld 1995).

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12 This technique somewhat resembles hocketing of medieval vocal music, which is defined by the New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians as ‘[t]he medieval term for a contrapuntal technique of manipulating silence as a precise mensural value in the 13th and 14th centuries. It occurs in a single voice or, most commonly, in two or more voices, which display the dovetailing of sounds and silences by means of the staggered arrangement of rests’ (Sanders n.d.; cf. Feld 1988:81).
Although there are no examples of pre-contact musical forms with harmony, there are examples where Duna people sing together, co-ordinating their pitches and intervals. This is evident in the singing inside the khene anda as illustrated already with Alo’s and the singing of the women. During Wakili’s funeral and her uncle Soti’s lament, there was also khene ipakana in the background matched to his. In Kepo and Kipu’s lament, this kind of musical interaction is very clear—whilst the two singers are creating individual expression, they are aware of each other’s performance and adapt theirs to suit the overall soundscape. It is a social process of music-making—together Kepo and Kipu support each other in grief. Also, in singing together they address Wakili’s spirit and help her on her way to the place of the dead—the forest cave.

Khene ipakana of exogenous origin

Three weeks after Wakili’s death, I was moving about our wooden hut at night when, over the sound of the night-time insects, I heard Kipu composing and playing another song for Wakili. This song was remarkable as it was different to all other mourning songs I had so far heard. The difference was in the musical system—this new song was clearly influenced by the Western musical forms of church and stringband music. Another difference was the existence of instrumentation. Sung six tones (an octave) lower than here depicted, Kipu accompanied herself by strumming the open strings of the guitar. I recorded her playing and singing through the wall, translating it with her the next day (Example 4.7).

This song of Kipu’s had a regular pulse, and though did not seem to conform to time signatures, I have used them here for analytical purposes to reveal aspects of rhythm and duration. Phrases were irregular in beat length. Mostly the strumming of the guitar fell on the first and third beats of the bars, or the first beat of the duple time bars. During the playing (at bar 24 of this transcription), however, Kipu changed to strum on the second and fourth beats, thus giving the song a ‘reggae feel’. The extra beat of rest in the previous bar seemed to prompt this change (usually Kipu only took two beats to take a breath). Bar 33 saw the strumming return to the first and third beats, as before, and she continued to strum for two more beats once she had finished singing (hence the bar of rest at the end of the transcription). The lack of correlation between the strumming and the singing, and the persistent use of the open strings (not representing any particular chord), points to an instrument used predominantly for rhythmic purposes rather than the usual melodic/harmonic function (cf. Magowan 2007:3-4), and—perhaps first and foremost—an instrument that acts as a signifier of a new musical system, of a modern world.
Melodically the phrases are quite different to those represented in the examples previously shown that were sung by Pokole, Kipu, and Kepo and Kipu together. The range is much greater, however the melodic contour is very similar in that the phrases are generally descents, beginning at the top of the range and concluding on a sustained tonal centre. These descents also exist in other Duna song genres, such as *pikono*. Textually the song articulates much the same as the previous examples. Verses begin with the stock exclamation *antia wali-o*, and ask questions of the deceased. There is however no use of *këiyaka* in Kipu’s new song. The text is direct, without allusive references or metaphor.

In effect, what Kipu has done here is to set the sentiments of traditional *khene ipakana* to a modern beat and a modern instrument. The text, and even the general melodic contour, has remained the same. So too has the performance practice of this as a women’s genre (during my time at Kopiago I never heard a man compose *khene ipakana* in this exogenous style). This song is evidence of a creative resourcefulness in Duna people, and in women in particular, to adapt indigenous forms of musical expression into new forms that maintain a contemporary currency in the face of colonial encounter.

This was not the only exogenously inspired song about Wakili’s death that Kipu composed. The following song (Example 4.8) is another example of typical indigenous *khene ipakana* song text—albeit in the non-indigenous language of Tok Pisin—set to a Western melodic style, composed in the same evening. This melodic style can be identified loosely as ‘lotu’ style which, as discussed in the previous chapter, is diatonic and constructed usually of four melodic and textual phrases, generally alternating between ascending and descending, with a strong triadic construction and focus on the tonal centre, and featuring textual repetition. Once again, the song does not subscribe exactly to a strict time signature, but in order to show aspects of rhythm and duration a time signature is included here (this is also the case for the transcription of the final song of this chapter, Example 4.9). Rhythm is treated loosely, especially over the ascent and descent of bars 10-11, however the focus in this analysis is on melodic content and text.

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13 It is important to note that the social functions of indigenous *khene ipakana* and contemporary versions of this genre do not seem to be the same. *Khene ipakana* are sung from the moment of a person’s death and in a manner to express and perhaps even control grief and crying, and are usually concerned with the recounting of *këiyaka*, in particular those that refer to the land affiliations of the deceased, in order to see the spirit move on to its new place. It seems that the contemporary versions of *khene ipakana* do not arise until some time after the death (for example, several weeks as in this case), and are more reflective in their expression, more about the singer processing their own feelings rather than assisting the movement of the spirit. They could be said to lack the potency, and appropriateness, of indigenous *khene ipakana*; the lack of *këiyaka* sequences in these contemporary versions would also play a part in this.
Example 4.7 (Audio 16): Kipu’s *khene ipakana* (with guitar accompaniment).
In the recorded performance the second verse was repeated twice, making the length a total of four verses. Slight variation appeared between each repetition, but here I show only the melodic structure of the first singing of it (featuring the most common elements of each repetition) for clarity of representation of the overall structure. Once again, the text of each verse is introduced by an exclamation and questions the deceased, as *khene ipakana* does. The verse consisting of four short lines (not counting the repeat of the exclamation) and featuring a kind of textual parallelism in the third and fourth lines is typical of the repetitious song text structure of ‘lotu’ songs.

Musically, although this song belongs to the Western diatonic tradition, it shares both range and intervallic content/melodic structure with the *khene ipakana* of Alo and of Kepo. The range is generally three and a half tones (a fifth; excepting the dip below the tonal centre which only occurs once). The key
interval structure is a descent over this range based on a triadic structure but also employing the pitches in-between. Thus, this seemingly modern lament hangs on pre-existing Duna musical structures and the use of language therein.

It is very likely that this Tok Pisin song arose from the process of translation of Kipu’s lament (Example 4.3) from the day Wakili died. As we worked on that translation Kipu had sat with Lila and me and her husband Kenny, contributing to the translation but mostly allowing her husband to rephrase the song text into Tok Pisin for Lila and me to then turn into English. The key phrase translated from Duna to Tok Pisin in that lament is the same as the one Kipu sings here—‘bai mi mekim wanem?’ The texts also have in common the reference to Wakili as ‘Waki Mbeta’. It is therefore possible that in the process of translation this phrase was brought to the fore for Kipu and then used word-for-word in the subsequent Tok Pisin lament.

Perhaps the most significant element of this *khene ipakana* that merges the indigenous and the exogenous is the reference to Christianity. The combination of introduced religious beliefs with indigenous song text styles has not been found in any of the other *khene ipakana* I have recorded to date. There are versions of *khene ipakana* that incorporate references to other practices associated with white people, for example references to the activities of the deceased, such as playing ball (which will be illustrated later, in Chapter 6 Example 6.12). These tie in well with the typical *khene ipakana* text format: Soti’s lament discussed above shows that the recounting of activities is often an integral part of indigenous song texts; Kipu’s reference to Wakili caring for her children is another example. References to Christianity however do not appear in this pre-contact musical form. It seems that in order to sing a mourning song for Wakili using concepts of Heaven and the Last Day, a song in a non-indigenous musical system (a song in ‘lotu’ style, no less) needs to be created. This would be important for a woman like Kipu who participates in both indigenous and non-indigenous religious practice.

This song however is not the only version. After creating it, Kipu translates it back into Duna language, creating a new song but maintaining the key elements of tonality and text of this introduced song style (Example 4.9). She even translates the Christian themes into related Duna ones, but does not go so far as to set these themes to ancestral music. Kipu sings the Duna word for heaven, *Epeni* (which is derived from the Tok Pisin/English ‘Heven’/Heaven), as a substitute for the ‘Heven’ of the Tok Pisin song. However, rather than singing directly of the ‘Las De’ as she does in the Tok Pisin version, Kipu translates this Christian

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14 Duna words always end in open syllables (vowels), and so it is common for an introduced term to be pronounced similarly but with an additional vowel at the end, eg. ‘i’ in *Epeni*. *Epeni* is pronounced as a ‘p’ rather than a ‘v’ because there are no ‘v’s in Duna, and this is the closest to one.
concept in a way that reflects indigenous concepts of ground. She sings *rindi ita rorane*, which can be translated as the time ‘the ground finishes’. Entropy is an important concept for the Duna—if certain moral behaviour is not practiced, the land (and people) naturally will become infertile, and eventually life as it is known to exist will be no more (Haley 2002a:161-163; see also Stewart and Strathern 2002b:36-37; see also Stewart and Strathern 2002b:ix-xi).

**Example 4.8 (► Audio 17): Kipu’s *khene ipakana* in Tok Pisin.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music notation</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aiyoy Waki Waki Mbeta</td>
<td>oh Waki Waki Mbeta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aiyoy Waki Waki Mbeta</td>
<td>oh Waki Waki Mbeta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mi ya wari, wari tumas long yu</td>
<td>I worry, I worry a lot about you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bai mi mekim wanem?</td>
<td>what will I do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bai mi lukim yu long Heven tasol</td>
<td>I will see you in Heaven only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aiyoy Waki Waki Mbeta</td>
<td>oh Waki Waki Mbeta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aiyoy Waki Waki Mbeta</td>
<td>oh Waki Waki Mbeta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mi ya wari, wari tumas long yu</td>
<td>I worry, I worry a lot about you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bai mi mekim wanem?</td>
<td>what will I do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bai mi lukim yu long las de kamap</td>
<td>I will see you when the Last Day* comes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* ‘Last Day’ refers here to the Christian ‘Judgement Day’.
Example 4.9 (Audio 18): Kipu’s *khene ipakana* based on Example 4.8, in Duna.

![Musical notation]

Stürzenhofecker observes in the Duna area of Aluni where she worked the ‘intersection of mission teaching with local ideology’ and says that ‘[t]he Apostolic Church teaches about the impending end of the world, of the ground, and this has not only impeded attempts to put the old beliefs to rest, but inadvertently contributed to their continuation’ (Stürzenhofecker 1998:74-75). Other faiths also shared this same concern about the end of the world; however, it is significant that the Apostolic Church is particularly mentioned by Stürzenhofecker, as this is the church Kipu has attended for some years.15

In this recorded performance Kipu repeats the first verse twice, and the second verse is sung just once, making again a total length of four verses, with the final line of the second verse again repeated. It is notable that the opening line, ‘*aiyo Waki Waki Mbeta’*, is not repeated in this Duna version, though it was in the Tok Pisin version. Repetition of opening lines is, as I discussed above, a feature of ‘lotu’ song (in both Tok Pisin and ‘tok ples’) and as such, the lack of repetition of the opening line here may support the notion that the Duna version is one step removed from its Christian/Tok Pisin counterpart—it is moving back to

15 After a falling-out with her husband’s relatives and fellow Apostolic church-goers, Kipu now does not attend the Apostolic Church at Hirane but an offshoot of this church, the Christian Apostolic Fellowship (CAF) church located near Kopiago station.
Wakili’s death—the verdict

Weiner observes of the Foi that

in traditional times...all deaths apart from those of the very aged were considered to be caused by sorcery....The laments for deceased relatives always had this comprehension of the ubiquity of sorcery at their core, this understanding of death as the ultimate result of the concealed jealousies and hatreds of communal life. (Weiner 1991:78)

A similar belief in tsuwake, or witchcraft, as the cause of unexpected deaths continues to be held by the Duna (cf. Stewart and Strathern 2002b:xvi). The cause of Wakili’s illness remains unknown. Many rumours surrounded her death, touched on in this chapter’s opening statements. Court took place the day after her death, charging some of the male members of Kipu’s household with ‘fouling’ (sexually molesting) Wakili, but the results of that court cleared the men of any wrong-doing and instead fined a group of women for gossip.16 Thus, ultimately, witchcraft was given as the cause of Wakili’s death, but by whom it was not told. In late 2003 suspicion of witchcraft had resulted in the torture of several women in the community, one who died from her severe injuries, and compensation for that event was still ongoing in 2005. People at this time then were especially mindful of the consequences of accusing—and being accused—of witchcraft.

Late in January 2007, Kepo’s husband Sakane (with whom she had had a baby boy the previous year), died suddenly and unexpectedly. His relatives attributed his death to poisoning by Kepo’s relatives, and revenge of a violent nature was sought (Kenny Kendoli, personal communication, 7 March 2007). Sakane’s and Wakili’s deaths (and the deaths of most other Duna people) are not seen as discrete events but are interlinked, and thus directly affect relations within the community. Death continues to affect people’s relationships through inquests, and in personal memory, and this is reflected in song texts (as shall again be seen when I return to this topic in Chapter 6).

16 Village courts are the most common way for local disputes to be resolved in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. They are public events, usually held outdoors and presided over by resident older male leaders (cf. Merlan and Rumsey 1986:74-76; Goddard 2000).
Conclusion

This chapter has shown a range of typical musical responses to grief by Duna people. As I have shown, these musical responses to grief are typically female responses, as they are in many other societies in the world. These mourning songs, or *khene ipakana* (‘death songs’) are somewhat varied in form due to the spontaneity of their composition, but generally they incorporate a melodic descent over two or three and a half tones, with a prolonged ending on the tonal centre, and are punctuated by exclamatory phrases naming the deceased or their kin relationship (for example *hakini kone* (‘true sister’)) while the body of the text often delivers questions to the deceased. *Khene ipakana yakaya* are one variety of *khene ipakana*, and are distinguished by the systematic naming (*yakaya*) of places, or items within the landscape, that relate to the life experience of the deceased. These are sung at varying degrees of distance from the event of death, either sung by one not close in relationship to the deceased (for example Pokole’s lament analysed in this chapter, recorded on the night of Wakili’s death), or one separated in time from the death (for example Kepo and Kipu’s duet analysed here, recorded a week afterwards). As such, the delivery of *khene ipakana yakaya* is notably more composed than immediate responses to death by close family/friends (for example Kipu’s lament). *Khene ipakana* are an example of strong musical creativity, albeit creativity under convention.

Kipu’s modern *khene ipakana* examined in this chapter feature many of the conventions of the *khene ipakana* genre, and are equally—if not more—innovative. Though her songs utilise an exogenous musical system—diatonic and under the influence of ‘lotu’ song—they also utilise the characteristic exclamations and questions of the deceased. As far as I know from my fieldwork these modern songs were never performed in times of intense grief but in times of reflection and sadness. They are a step removed from the grief expressed in *khene ipakana yakaya*. As such, Kipu’s modern songs do not replace the role of the established *khene ipakana* but are a complement to them. These newly composed songs show an individual bridging the world of the indigenous and the exogenous for her own ends. They are valuable evidence of the creative ability and the possibility—and actuality—of musical change.