5. Land and song

mei konenia, mei konenia
mei konenia, mei konenia
mei konenia, kalipopo
mei konenia
imane yo
ko wanda tiani sola alimbus kone leka suwano
steep slope, steep slope
steep slope, steep slope
steep slope, Kalipopo
steep slope
girl oh
if you come break a real cane grass stick and hold it

Scholars working in all parts of Papua New Guinea have written of the extraordinary relationships in the country between people and their place. The Kaluli people sing of the landscape and their relationship to it, particularly in the genre of gisaro (Schieffelin 1976; Feld 1982, 1988, 1996). A number of publications address the effect of mining on Papua New Guinean peoples living in the Highlands region, taking into account the close relationships between people and the land in these areas (Rumsey and Weiner 2001, 2004; Stewart and Strathern 2002b, 2004; Halvaksz 2003; Jorgensen 2004). Many other works could be recalled that examine these relationships, and in this chapter I will add to these explorations through my examination of Duna land in song.

As Basso observes:

[N]ow and again, and sometimes without apparent cause, awareness is seized—arrested—and the place on which it settles becomes an object of spontaneous reflection and resonating sentiment. It is at times such as these, when individuals step back from the flow of everyday experience and attend self-consciously to places—when, we may say, they pause to actively sense them—that their relationships to geographical space are most richly lived and surely felt....Persons thus involved may also dwell on aspects of themselves, on sides and corners of their own evolving identities. (Basso 1996:54-55)

The majority of songs I have recorded by Duna people reference land in a manner that is integral to the expression of their identity. The expression of the relationship between people and their land in art forms such as music is acknowledged as an important part of the social process of identification. Basso 1996:57) continues:
Relationships to places may also find expression through the agencies of myth, prayer, music, dance....[people] are forever performing acts that reproduce and express their own sense of place—and also, inextricably, their own understandings of who and what they are.

Thus, people not only reproduce and express their place through creative means, they change and manipulate their identity, their place, through such forms of expression.

Haley provides a comprehensive account of the Duna people’s relationship to land, revealing its complexity. She (2002a:8–9) describes the relationship as an ‘intimate connection’ and goes on to say: ‘For the Duna, identity is inextricably bound to land and to place.’ Although the concept of a strong connection to place in Duna ancestral life is understood, place is important in contemporary Duna consciousness as well (see also Stewart and Strathern 2002b; Strathern and Stewart 2004). Haley explores this in her research into the projection of Bible stories (Christianity being a modern element of Duna life) onto the landscape of old. In this chapter, I discuss both older and newer forms of Duna music in relation to land—the praising (and derogating) of it, the fertility of it and movement through it. The latter half of the chapter focuses on the music in the Duna diasporic locations of Mount Hagen and Lae, and examines what happens to Duna music when it moves away from its home. This chapter relies less on musical analysis and more on the textual content of the songs. Through this type of comparative approach, I show how particular sentiments are maintained and expressed across the musical ‘platforms’ of ancestral and introduced styles.

The Duna and land

‘For any cultural system’, Basso (1996:89) reminds us, ‘what counts as a “place” is an empirical question that must be answered ethnographically’. I hope to do so over the course of this chapter, through Duna voices in song. First, though, I would like to propose that, generally considered, there are four frames of identity to which the Duna relate in terms of land and place. It is important to note that these proposed frames of identity are not to be understood as discrete in themselves but rather as permeable, or as points on a sliding scale, and are of course affected by the context in which they are employed, figuring as a tension in space-time (see Munn 1986). I have labelled these frames, in order of weakest to strongest, as national, regional, local and parish. I will now examine each of these in turn, reflecting briefly on their manifestation in music.

The concept of a national identity is barely evident in Papua New Guinea, particularly for those who live and work outside Port Moresby and other major town centres. National identity is essentially a product of independence and is
under conscious attempts at construction (Foster 1995:1; Toyoda 2006:32–3). There is little sense of a national collective and this could be due in part to the decline in the quality and extent of schooling—one of the main institutions for the inculcation of nationhood but which now reaches fewer children than ever. There is a sense of individual cultures, which can be grouped together regionally but not nationally. There is, however, a view of Papua New Guinea versus the rest of the world in development rhetoric that is employed by people throughout the country, particularly in places such as Kopiago with little in the way of services and infrastructure. Such development rhetoric is sometimes used in these cases to denigrate Papua New Guinea in comparison with other, more developed nations. Musically, this division between Papua New Guinea and the rest of the world is paramount in the language of musical styles that are essentially classified in Duna as mindi ipakana (‘black song’) and khao ipakana (‘white song’) as has been elaborated on earlier.

The second identity frame I consider here is the regional, or trans-Duna identity, here being a belonging to a pan-Highlands collective (and its sub-regions). A regional identity did not exist for most people prior to colonisation, mobility being minimal. This frame of identity manifests itself most clearly in the realm of introduced musical styles. Cassettes which now circulate at Kopiago include songs by various artists in a number of Papua New Guinean languages. These songs shape people’s understanding of the world outside the Duna speaking area—especially the understanding of children, who have little experience away from home, and who are inclined to replicate these songs in their original languages. An example of this kind of song which evokes regions of Papua New Guinea is one in Tok Pisin by the K-Mala Band of Enga Province. The song is popular all around the country, including Kopiago, where it circulates on cassette only (radio is not available to most there). The chorus of this song has as its text:

```
pasin bilong meri Wabag the way of Wabag women
pasim garas igo daun long baksait is to tie their hair at the back
na kamap olsem meri Aroma and become like Aroma women
```

This song references not one but two regions of the world outside Kopiago: the town of Wabag, which is the centre of Enga Province and where another Highlands ethnic group—Engans—live; and an ethnic group from the Papuan region of the country, Aroma, who originate from the coast in Central Province. In this way, regional impressions and distinctions are formed through popular songs. Duna listeners appear to identify themselves in this context with Wabag people as fellow Highlanders, in contrast to coastal people. The reference to coastal people evokes a national frame of identity.
Within the regional frame of identity, but somewhat sliding towards the local frame, are a number of sub-regions of identity. The Duna place within a Hela regional identity is an example of this, and is addressed by music most explicitly by recent music releases and the dedications within their liner notes and lyrics. These recent releases are part of the agitation for the formation of a separate Hela province made up of a number of language groups from the western area of what is now the Southern Highlands Province—primarily people from the electorates of Tari-Pori, Komo-Magarima and Koroba-Kopio (Kaiabe 2006). The idea of a Hela Province is a political goal which was first mooted in the 1960s, and which continues to gain momentum in the new millenium. An example of such a release is the Pesaps album ‘Souths Ame’ (Pesaps n.d.), in which the liner notes dedicate the song *Huli Medley* ‘to especially all the Hela Iginis’ (‘Hela sons’), the majority of Hela people being Huli speakers (Kaiabe 2006).

Another example of recent Hela musical expression is the 2004 release by a band known as ‘Sounds of Hela’. Although all the songs on this album are either in Huli or Tok Pisin, the liner notes declare that ‘The band brought up this musical style for Hela people around the country. Also to Hela people, “Noken kisim bagarap, stap isi, stap gut” [‘don’t get into trouble, be calm, be good’] and co-operate with each other’ (Sounds of Hela 2004).

The third identity frame that can be considered I have termed ‘local’. By this I mean to suggest that local areas, such as Kopiago, are distinguished from other Duna-speaking centres, such as Kelabo (refer to Figure 1.2). Dialect differences exist between these two particular regions, which are located at opposite ends of Duna-speaking country. People identify themselves—particularly when located outside the Duna area in a place such as Mount Hagen—with the centre that most clearly represents, or services, their home parish. For example, people of Hirane would identify themselves with Kopiago station. Interestingly, people from Awi, which is close to the border of Huli-speaking country, often identify themselves as coming from the larger centre of Pori, which is within the Huli area (people from this area of the country are usually fluent in both languages).

Once again, this local frame of identity is most clearly demarcated in introduced music, rather than ancestral genres, which are mostly concerned with expressing the parish frame of identity and its subdivisions. In this local frame, areas within Duna country can be represented in the form of particular musical bands. This representation manifests itself in the musicians who form the band, and regularly the local frame of identity is also apparent in the band names. For example, the Christian band Muller Hill Gospel Singers, identified with the Kelabo area, named themselves after the Muller Range, which is a landmark feature in the area. Their second album, representing their debut into the popular music industry, was released under the name Ramula Bitz. This new name is a combination of two place names from very different regions in Papua.
New Guinea: Rabaul (‘Ra-’) and Muller Range (‘-mula’) (the ‘Bitz’ part of the name appears to derive from the English ‘beach’). Two of the band members—brothers—have mixed parentage from these two regions. It is not uncommon for Papua New Guinean bands to name themselves after a prominent feature of their home landscape. The Giluwe Rebels are another example (Webb 1993:86), Giluwe being the highest mountain in the Southern Highlands Province and the second-highest mountain in Papua New Guinea. In the case of Ramula Bitz, not only is the local identity strongly evoked in the band’s title, the references to Rabaul, and the beach, again evoke a national identity.

Finally, within the most fundamental frame, and that which is clearly evident in song, the Duna describe place in terms of parishes (for example, Hirane) and the particular areas (for example, the slopes of Hirane known as Kalisanda, or ‘Kalipopo’) and features (for example, Hirane’s Rewapi creek) within those parishes. There are at least two clans, known in Duna as *imaau’wa* (Haley 2002a: xxix), within each parish (*rindi*). For example, Hirane parish is made up of three clans: Saiya, Mberia and Haperia (Haley 2002a, vol. 2:7).

A person’s parish identity, when a singular parish is declared, is often the place where they currently reside, or have resided the longest. However, Duna parish identities are multiple. The Duna social structure is one of cognatic descent, and as such, ‘Duna men and women can maintain membership in more than one clan at any particular time. Accordingly many individuals and families maintain gardens and, in some cases, houses in more than one territory’ (Haley 2002a:137). Duna persons very often have four parish identities: two inherited from their paternal grandparents (FF, FM) and two from their maternal grandparents (MM, MF). One’s spouse usually comes from another parish, certainly from another clan, but if this were not the case, then there would be less than four parishes with which they would identify. These parish identities are very important in determining a person’s land rights. A Duna person might have an additional parish identity, for example if they settle in a place where neither their mother nor father has lived; however this relocation does not usually entail land rights (though some rights can be activated through working within that parish and/or participating in its economy such as contributing to bride-price payments). A woman or man marrying and settling outside the community is a perfect example of a situation that creates an additional parish identity (Stürzenhofecker 1998: 90). Often, however, relocation occurs which draws upon affiliation to that land

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1 In pre-contact times, marrying within one’s *rindi* meant that compensation had to be paid, and if it was not, a person would be punished. It was considered ‘tambu’ (forbidden) at this time to marry within one’s clan. Things appear to have become less rigid since European contact and there are several people who have married within their own clan (Richard Alo, Personal communication, 6 September 2006).
beyond the parents’ or grandparents’ generations (for further discussion on the complexity of Duna social structure, taking the Aluni Valley as its departure point, see Strathern and Stewart 2004:25-52).

Parish identities are clearly stated in numerous songs created by the Duna—those of ancestral origin and those that are influenced by introduced music. This will become more apparent as this chapter, and this publication, progresses. Groups of musicians have also named themselves after parishes: Richard Alo’s stringband which was formed at Kopiago in the 1980s was named ‘Auwi sola’ (‘Auwi cane grass’) after the plant that grows at Auwi creek located within Mbara (this band will be further discussed towards the end of this chapter).2 This is his mother’s parish and is located next to his parish of residence (Aiyuguni) (Richard Alo, Personal communication, 18 June 2006). Multiple parish identities are evident most clearly in khene ipakana, as revealed in Chapter 4.

Through the textual analysis of a number of Duna songs, this chapter draws attention to the permeability of these proposed frames of identity. Such songs can be seen as one way in which many of the Duna at Kopiago now experience life outside of their immediate community, in the face of limited transport opportunities such as a neglected highway (as explored in Chapter 3) and the increasing price of air fares (described towards the end of this chapter in Example 5.21). I begin my analysis by examining the parish frame of identity more closely, with songs that name parishes, and their subdivisions, and that utilise the kēiyaka for these places.

**Land kēiyaka**

Invoking place names is ‘a central feature of Papuan poetry’ (Weiner 1991:6), including that of Duna. Haley (2002a:117–23) has written of the importance of place names to the Duna, how these names can reveal characteristics of the land, how they can reference actual events which have occurred, and the reciprocal relationship these place names often have to personal names. Haley (2002a:123–4) also describes how a place usually has several names, and that a parish is known by several kēiyaka which have particular patronymic and matronymic prefixes that can be applied to it, and consequently to the people from that parish.

Place name kēiyaka as they appear in Duna song are alternative names for a given place (for example a parish). They can occur singularly or consecutively in parallel lines or verses. Through these sequences of juxtaposed lines or

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2 The Auwi Sola band is reported to have played at night at the ‘hausman’ near Auwi creek. In this way the old and the new would be united.
verses that list the different places where a person has lived or with which they are associated over their lifetime—such as the verses which make up ipakana yakaya—the singer creates an impression of movement through landscape, as will be discussed shortly. Like the place names used in the songs of the Kaluli (Feld 1996:102-03), the Duna therefore can create actual trails through song.

Place references expressed in ordinary language and as praise names are evident in awenene ipakana such as ipakana yakaya, yekia, selepa, and pikono. However, they are also evident in contemporary song. In a later section of this chapter entitled ‘Moving through the landscape’, several examples of contemporary songs that use kēiyaka for places will be drawn on.

Praising (and denigrating) land

Traditional Duna musical forms listing the kēiyaka of places have as one function the praising of the land which they are singing about, hence the translation of this term as ‘praise names’. Example 5.1 is a mali mapu, a ceremonial dance genre with sung text, whose primary function is to praise land.3 The text of this song was provided by Robert Kendoli, whose father is from Aiyuguni, hence the reference to Ania mountain, part of which is in that parish. Any of the men from that area can form the necessary group to sing this song and praise their land by evoking its dramatic scenery.

Example 5.1: mali mapu text.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{waiya ralua na wanda nawayanda na riya} & \quad \text{waiya ralua rain will come or it will not come,} \\
\text{noya mina aupa} & \quad \text{(the mountain) it tells us} \\
\text{amina aupa} & \quad \text{my mina Ania is getting dark} \\
\text{arange aupa} & \quad \text{amina Ania is getting dark} \\
\text{arange aupa} & \quad \text{arange Ania is getting dark}
\end{align*}
\]

There is also a hidden meaning in addition to the literal. A man in the performing group may look at a woman whilst singing this mali mapu to make his feelings, and the hidden meaning, known to her, as if he were asking her: ‘Are you going to cry or not? It looks like your face is downcast/dark’ (Richard Alo, Personal communication, 26 July 2006).

Yekia courting songs also have as a core function the praising of land (Example 5.2):

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3 This mali mapu was not performed for recording but rather recited as an example of this genre, and then discussed. A performance would require a number of men and a clear space, and these conditions were not available at the home in Mount Hagen where this discussion took place. Hence I am unable to provide a musical transcription of it.
The phrase *heka upia nginitia* is used to address men from the parish of Aluni. My collaborator Richard Alo is addressed with the singular form of this, *heka upia ngini*, as his father’s mother (FM) comes from that parish.4 *Upia* is the praise name for a particular bird of paradise, and *ralu* the praise name for ‘place’. The river Rano, which creates the border between Aluni and the parish of Horaile, is listed, followed in the next line by its praise name, *erano*.

The song describes the birds of Aluni, which can be seen early in the morning. There is also a hidden meaning within this song. It addresses the Aluni boys, telling them that the girls of Aluni (signified by the birds) who live near Rano river, go to the garden early in the morning. It suggests if the boys want to see them, they too must go out early. Flying is a reference to the movement of their grass skirts.

In singing about the girls from Aluni in this way, using the praise names for people of the parish of Aluni and the place of Rano, the singer is praising or promoting this ground. Often, in the context of courting, such a verse would be sung by a man from this parish of Aluni, who wants to express the positive attributes of his place in order to attract a bride to his parish. However, as in this case, it can also be sung by someone from another parish, who might like to praise the girls from Aluni and encourage other men to pursue them, or who would like to reveal to an Aluni woman listening that he is interested in her.

New song styles can also have the function of praising land. Example 5.3 with its repetitive refrain *mei konenia* (‘steep slope’, after which this publication is entitled) serves to praise the area within Hirane known as Kalisanda, which slopes down to the shore of Lake Kopiago (see Figure 5.1). Here the area is known by its affectionate nickname ‘Kalipopo’, so named in the 1980s after the neighbourhood of Kalibobo in the seaside town of Madang, Papua New Guinea.

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4 A person usually has several praise names, due to the multiple parish identities they inherit. Generally people with that same parish identity call the person by the name pertaining to that parish. For example, Richard Alo lists his praise names as *kulu ngini* (for the parish of Yalia, where his FF comes from), *heka upia nane* (for the parish of Aluni, where his FM comes from), and *kayako nane* (for the parish of Mbara, where his MF and MM comes from. Richard’s friend Kenny Kendoli, who has Aluni heritage, would call Richard *heka upia nane*, whilst someone from Yalia would greet him as *kulu ngini*, and another from Mbara would acknowledge him as *kayako nane*. 

130
which also fronts the water—albeit an altogether different kind. The place Kalibobo became particularly well known across Papua New Guinea through the popularity of the Kalibobo Bamboo Band, whose two cassettes were hugely popular in the late 1970s and early 1980s, often being played in the stores of Mendi and Tari (Steven Feld, Personal communication, 28 February 2008). In this way a kind of modern kēiyaka for a Hirane land feature has been created, and a national frame of identity is also gently evoked.

Example 5.3 (Audio 20): ‘mei konenia’.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mei konenia}, & \quad \text{mei konenia} \\
\text{steeep slope}, & \quad \text{steeep slope}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mei konenia}, & \quad \text{mei konenia} \\
\text{steeep slope}, & \quad \text{steeep slope}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mei konenia}, & \quad \text{Kalipopo} \\
\text{steeep slope}, & \quad \text{Kalipopo}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mei konenia} & \\
\text{steeep slope}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
imane yo & \\
girl oh
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ko wanda tiani sola alimbu kone leka suwano} & \\
\text{if you come break a real cane grass stick and hold it}
\end{align*}
\]

This version was sung unaccompanied by a group of young women; however, it is likely that the song was originally composed for a local Duna stringband. Incidentally, this song is built on the same melodic and harmonic formula as the Christian song style introduced in Chapter 3 with the song ‘nane laip senis nganda waya keina’ (Example 3.4). It is yet another musical example that supports the finding that Christian and secular songs inform each other.

This song can also be compared to Example 6.7 of Chapter 6 which also uses the phrase sola alimbu leka suwano (‘break a cane grass stick and hold it’). This phrase describes the need for a walking stick, in this case made of the local cane grass, to climb up the steep slopes of Kalipopo. The song presents the steep slopes as a distinguishing feature of the area—the praise arises as other areas nearby do not have such a dramatic and impressive land feature.

Steep slopes can also mean unproductive or fragile land, land that is difficult to traverse. The fact that the girl who is desired might struggle to walk to Kalipopo unless she takes a walking stick may well be a deterrent for her. The following song, which begins in Tok Pisin⁵ and then moves to Duna, declares that once the girl in question has seen Kalipopo, she will return to where she comes from as she will be dissuaded by its steep slope. The praise name for rindi—ralu—is used which gives added emphasis to the singer’s place, as it does in other song examples.

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⁵ The text for the first verse of this song is an adaptation of the chorus of the song ‘Kerema’, released by the band Hollie Maea in 1990 and sung by Robert Oeka, whose lyrics are: ‘Maunten wara bilong Kerema miks wantaim solawara/Kerema yu no save, yu yet kam na lukim’ (the mountain water of Kerema mixes with the ocean/Kerema you do not know, you yourself come and see). Kerema is a coastal town and the provincial centre of Gulf Province—again, part of a national framework.
Figure 5.1: Kalisanda, or ‘Kalipopo’.
Example 5.4 (▶ Audio 21): ‘maunten wara bilong kalipopo’.

maunten wara bilong kalipopo  
the mountain water of Kalipopo

go miks wantaim L.K.  
mixes with Lake Kopiago

yu no save, yu yet kam na lukim em  
you do not know, you yourself come and see it

(x3)

imane apona  
girl over there

kalipopo nakeyatiani  
if you haven’t seen Kalipopo

ipa rokania ipa apona  
water aplenty, water over there

keyata ko riyanda  
look and you will want to go back (home)

no ralu kalipopo mei konenia  
my ralu place Kalipopo is a steep slope

imane apona  
girl over there

kalipopo nakeyatiani  
if you haven’t seen Kalipopo

no ralu mei konenia  
my ralu place is a steep slope

keyata ko riyana  
look and you will go back (home)

imane apona  
girl over there

kalipopo mei konenia  
Kalipopo is a steep slope

keyata ko riyana  
look and you will go back (home)

Such a negative song seems to effectively discourage girls from marrying into the place described. However, one Duna man, however, explained that even though a man might express such views in song, the girl to whom he directs his singing would still come to live with him, as she would have already made a promise to him that she would do so (Lepani Kendoli, Personal communication, 14 July 2006). Richard Alo supports this sentiment as he claims that when a woman hears her lover singing a song which denigrates his place, she will become even more enamoured of him and dismiss the poor qualities of his land, choosing to remain with him (Richard Alo, Personal communication, 24 July 2006). In effect these songs, and others like them, are a test of the woman’s love: even though her lover’s land might be poor, if she truly loves him she will marry him anyway.

It is not only new styles of song which give voice to negative sentiments about one’s own place. Many yekia courting songs too have such content, inducing the same ‘sori’ (Tok Pisin for ‘sympathy’) effect in the women who are listening. Such negative yekia are likened to popular songs such as Example 5.4, the two genres having been described as ‘wankain’ (‘one and the same’) though they have ‘narapela nek’ (‘a different melody’) (Lepani Kendoli, Personal communication, 14 July 2006).

The yekia that is Example 5.5 describes the men of Hirane parish calling out to the women of Hagini parish to rouse themselves and move to Hirane to be with them, but the women choose to marry elsewhere.
Steep Slopes

Example 5.5 (▶ Audio 22): yekia.

riyata ole alandorane kolo wanetia ralu sopana pawa miniya ima mininda rutia waleso

we sang out in the afternoon to the kolo Hagini daughters’ ralu place below in the yard, ‘move, women come and move (to Hirane)’ but they married

hora pawa miniya ima mininda rutia waleso

hora Hirane, the yard, ‘move, women come and move (to Hirane)’ but they married

akura pawa miniya ima mininda rutia waleso

akura Hirane, the yard, ‘move, women come and move (to Hirane)’ but they married

Haley (2008:225–6) argues that these yekia of negative sentiment, where men in particular decry their place, are becoming more frequent at Kopiago due to the displacement of Duna masculinity in the present day. However, the denigration of person and place—recognised by some as the rhetorical device of meiosis—is a common and established device used in courting songs throughout the Highlands of Papua New Guinea (cf. Strathern 1974), as shall be discussed in Chapter 6, and these songs should be considered in that light.

The food of place

There are many examples of food references in both traditional and newer forms of Duna song. One example which has already been considered is Soti Mbulu’s ipakana heya of Chapter 4. In one of his verses he refers to the deceased Wakili as having cared for the sweet potato mounds, and asking if she will come back to tend them again. Yekia courting songs, too, often have food as a central theme—typically the enticing of a wife through depicting the land as rich and fertile:

Example 5.6 (▶ Audio 23): yekia.

kolo nginitia ralu, kolo nginitia ralu sopana kolo iri ruwanokua nakeyao mbatia reipe?

the kolo nut pandanus Horaile sons’ ralu place, the kolo nut pandanus Horaile sons’ ralu place down below has plenty of kolo nut pandanus, I could tell you but are there some here who haven’t seen it?

rano anga kolo iri ruwanokua nakeyao mbatia reipe?

the rano Horaile place down below has plenty of anga kolo nut pandanus, I could tell you but are there some here who haven’t seen it?

erano anga kolo iri ruwanokua nakeyao mbatia reipe? aiyo ai.

the erano Horaile place down below has plenty of anga kolo nut pandanus, I could tell you but are there some here who haven’t seen it? aiyo ai.

This yekia verse (Example 5.6) was sung for recording by a man named Jim Siape, who has already married a woman from the parish of Horaile. It appears that not only is he literally praising Horaile as being a place with many nut pandanus trees, but that he is praising the many girls that can be found there
(represented by the common metaphor of nut pandanus). The singer may have as one of his intentions the encouragement of the other men at the yekia to follow his example and marry from there.

Selepa courting songs can also refer to food (Example 5.7):

Example 5.7 (► Audio 24): selepa.

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{hiru hama noma hutia waru pina haya akupa} & \quad \text{this hiru clearing used for fighting is full of mud so get your net and catch haya fish} \\
\text{lope waru pina haya akupa} & \quad \text{lope Kaguane is full of mud so get your net and catch haya fish} \\
\text{kalope waru pina haya akupa, ee ai ai.} & \quad \text{kalope Kaguane is full of mud so get your net and catch haya fish, ee ai ai.}
\end{align*} \]

The verse describes the ground as so muddy that you could catch fish in it as if it is a lake (Kenny Kendoli, Personal communication, 25 July 2006). Thus it praises Kaguane as being a fertile land with much food to offer.

The selepa verse that followed this one in this recorded performance (Example 5.8) asks the woman if she has the skills to break up the materials in order to make a fishing ring to catch the haya fish in Lake Kopiago (see Figure 5.2).

Example 5.8 (► Audio 25): selepa.

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{yangoli-o aku lekanatia, ko koneipe?} & \quad \text{woman, to break the fishing ring, do you know how?} \\
\text{kapia haya aku lekanatia, ko koneipe?} & \quad \text{kapia Lake Kopiago haya fish, to break the fishing ring, do you know how?} \\
\text{kapiako haya aku lekanatia, ko koneipe?} & \quad \text{Lake Kopiago haya fish, to break the fishing ring, do you know how?} \\
\text{ee ai ai.} & \quad \text{ee ai ai.}
\end{align*} \]

The composer of this selepa verse, Kenny Kendoli, explained to me that he was employing parable talk: when asking the woman if she knows how to work with the fishing ring, he is implying that if she doesn’t, he will show her—thus they would come together as a pair of lovers. Exactly the same sentiment, but with regard to catching fish in the hand rather than a net, is expressed in the stringband song beginning with the line ‘ipa auwi karuya raroko’ presented later in this chapter under the discussion of diasporic song.

Kahn (1996:175) writes of the Wamira of Papua New Guinea that hunger for them is not only a physical state but an emotional one. Feld (1982:27–8) and

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6 The figure of the nut pandanus is a common way of alluding to women in Duna song, often used to refer to their genitalia, particularly when the nut is described as ripe and exposed with the breaking open of its hard covering to reveal the soft fleshy meat within. Yekia is full of such sexual metaphor, as many other Duna song genres also are.
Schieffelin (1976:26–7, 72) report the same for the Kaluli. It is also the case for the Duna. Food production is tied up in social relationships with others—those who help work the garden and those who eat the produce—and to be without family is to be without food (and vice versa).

Stewart and Strathern (2002a:77) support the view of food production being central to relationships (and relationships encompassing death) when they write: ‘Being with people means making gardens, producing food, and sharing in its consumption, and death is the negation of this process. The Duna people have made this fact central to their courting songs’. Of course, the importance of food for relationships extends beyond courting: consolidating relationships through eating together, or providing another with food, is often evident in the oral stories of the Duna such as pikono.

It appears that missionaries realised early on the importance of food in relationships and they used this connection when composing songs to entice people to Jesus. This can be seen in the following Christian song, which begins with the repetitive refrain Yesu epo (Example 5.10). It contains comparisons between knowing Jesus and eating the traditional Duna foods of pig and (more recently) chicken, claiming that those foods are not sweet (epo being similar to the Tok Pisin sense of the term ‘swit’, also meaning ‘tasty’) when compared to Jesus. The third verse, in this version sung by Duna people living in Mount Hagen, opens up to include foods of far-away regions.

Figure 5.2: Duna fishing ring, Lake Kopiago.
Example 5.9 is the opening lines of a woman's *pikono* recorded in 2005; its text clearly shows the link between the orphan girl’s lack of family and lack of food.

**Example 5.9 (‖ Audio 26): pikono.**

(translation provided by Lila San Roque)

```
paye imane ndu kho pi hanga raonorua rita          right, there was a girl living there it's said
ime ne ndu kho pi kho antia hinia nariya-o        the girl she didn’t know her mother
kho apa hinia nariya-o                             she didn’t know her father
kho hanga raonorua rita                            she lived there it’s said

kho hanga rao rita-a                                she lived there it’s said
kho raoka raoka raoka raokaya hapia rao ayu rao    she was staying staying staying she lived
hapia rao                                          before she lived then she lived before

ayu raoya hanga raoka po                            then she was living there making her life
kho hina pi hinia naraya-o                          she had no sweet potato
mbou pi ndu naraya-o                               no garden either
hina khei pi ndu naraya home po                     no sweet potato runners either and that’s
                                                  how it was
kho antia amene homerape sako                      she didn’t know about her mother and
                                                  father
kho hanga raonorua rita-o                          she lived there it’s said
```

**Example 5.10 (‖ Audio 27): ‘Yesu epo’.**

```
Yesu epo Yesu epo                              Jesus is sweet Jesus is sweet
Yesu epo Yesu epo                              Jesus is sweet Jesus is sweet
Yesu epo kupalini konera                      Jesus is sweet my true love
Yesu epo                                      Jesus is sweet

ita nayaroko epo neyana                        when I eat pig it is not sweet
heka nayaroko epo neyana                       when I eat chicken it is not sweet
Yesu epo kupalini konera                      Jesus is sweet my true love
Yesu epo (x2)                                  Jesus is sweet (x2)

Madang taro nayaroko epo neyana                when I eat Madang taro it is not sweet
Sepik saksak nayaroko epo neyana               when I eat Sepik sago it is not sweet
Yesu epo kupalini konera                      Jesus is sweet my true love
Yesu epo                                      Jesus is sweet
```
Another version of this song contains a verse which substitutes pig and chicken for the processed and extremely desirable (and, in Kopiago, unobtainable) brand-name foods Ramu Sugar and Oksapmin Honey:

Ramu suga *nayarako epo neyana*  
when I eat Ramu sugar it is not sweet

Oksi honi *nayarako epo neyana*  
when I eat Oksapmin honey it is not sweet

Yesu epo  
Jesus is sweet

Yesu *kupalini konera*  
Jesus is sweet my true love

So, references to food have been maintained in the Duna Christian repertoire throughout social (and dietary) change, encompassing foods grown at home, imported, or experienced in other provinces.

Introduced song styles, sung by both men and women, can also complain of a land’s lack of food (Example 5.11).

**Example 5.11 (Audio 28): ‘kalipopo nane rokania’**.

- *kalipopo nane rokania*  
Kalipopo has many boys

- *imane nduna kho wanda konotiani*  
if a woman thinks to come and marry

- *ko hutiani homo wamo ruwanda ko wayeni*  
if you come and say this and that (is not good about me), you cannot come

- *ko hutiani aki kone noaepe? riya ko yauna*  
if you come, what will you eat? they will ask, you will cry (from hunger)

- *ko hutiani ko hutiani*  
if you come, if you come

- *ko hutiani aki kone noaepe? riya ko yauna*  
if you come, what will you eat? they will ask, you will cry (from hunger)

Again, by describing one’s place negatively, sympathy in the listener is elicited. Kalipopo might not have a lot of food to offer, but if the song is effective in its intent as a song of enticement, she will come anyway, with or without her walking stick of cane grass (refer here again to Example 5.3).

**Moving through the landscape**

As was discussed earlier in this chapter, and as has been seen in Chapter 4, *khene ipakana* is a song genre that moves through the landscape by listing various places of that person’s life in juxtaposed verses. However, there are more literal ways of moving through the landscape in Duna song. The genre *pikono* usually involves a journey of some description, in which convention necessitates the recounting of a number of places and the kēiyaka of these places (the process of *ipakana yakaya*) through which the protagonist travels. There are also snapshots of sub-journeys within these broader frameworks: in one *pikono* the singer Kiale
Yokona describes the setting sun, reciting all the names of the places where the last rays of sun fall (see Figure 5.3). Example 5.12 represents the first segment of an almost four minute description.

The same pikono contains an ipakana yakaya sequence that refers to Rabaul, Bougainville and Port Moresby (Example 5.13). Such references would not have occurred in pre-contact times, as the knowledge of such far away places was not readily available.

Figure 5.3: sun setting over the Highlands.

Example 5.12 (► Audio 29): pikono.

(translation provided by Lila San Roque)

\[ \begin{align*} 
  \textit{horame rane yarita}^* & \quad \text{so it was it’s heard} \\
  \textit{ake naneka imane ngana pi kono imaneka} & \quad \text{what then, the boys thinking the girls would leave first, the girls thinking that the boys would leave first} \\
  \textit{naneka ngana pi konoyaroko} & \quad \text{the ulu alu wape sun was no longer near it’s heard} \\
  \textit{ulu alu wanena kho honga neya yarita} & \quad \text{it went across and sat down over on the} \\
  \textit{etona marapia mburipi nene rao apoya kata} & \quad \text{peak of marapia mburipi Kunai mountain} \\
  \textit{etona yarita kaka kayiamba rao etoya kata} & \quad \text{across it’s heard sitting at Kaka mountain at Kayiamba mountain} 
\end{align*} \]
Steep Slopes

 kiraya epana wuandu aporane yarita  
 burning across there blazing over it’s heard
 rina yarita epana yarita-e  
 it’s heard over there it’s heard
 [audience member: peta kana wane]  
 [peta kana Aluni daughters]

 kira aporane alu ali ruwata rana  
 burning over and then at the place of the one
called Alu Ali
 yawa yapale ndu po kuru pokó etoya kata  
 leaping across to a yawa yapale Aku place of mine
 pari pere ndu po kuru pokó etoya kata  
 leaping across to a pari pere Aku place of mine
 apona piri pere ndu po kuru pokó etoya kata  
 leaping over and across to a piri pere Aku place of mine

* The word yarita is a very common one in pikono, often punctuating the end of lines. It has here been translated as ‘it’s heard’: essentially the word identifies the singer of the pikono as a third person, someone who has heard this story from another, rather than having experienced it first-hand, the suggestion being that the pikono is a story being told now about things from the distant past that have been described before). (cf. Gillespie and San Roque forthcoming.

Example 5.13 (► Audio 30): pikono.

(translation provided by Lila San Roque)

 ngayeni yarita  
 going yet it’s heard
 reke epa kona singata keyaroko-o-m  
 they reach an outcrop and look around
 wana raya ipa solowarana raya etona ripu ripai ngorane keyaroko  
 the ocean sitting there stretching on and on and
 they look across the white-capped waves
 anga wane opo ndu potia rao eto  
 the daughters opo Rabaul ones of mine sitting
 on the other side
 kokono ndu potia rao eto  
 kokopo Rabaul ones of mine sitting on the other
 side
 etona lapalo ndu potia rao etotiana  
 across there the lapalo Rabaul ones of mine
 sitting on the other side
 anga wane lapulu ndu potia rao etotiana-e  
 the daughters lapulu Rabaul ones of mine sitting
 on the other side
 hoyaki keya etona ke eto keyaroko  
 looking back to this side and looking over to the
 other side
 repe nepetia khunuya etona kiata ndu potia rao etotiana  
 the ones with white eyes white teeth across there
 the kiata Bougainville ones of mine sitting
 on the other side
 etona kiata panguna ndu potia rao apotiana  
 across there kiata panguna Bougainville ones of
 mine sitting away over there
 etoyaki yarita etoyaki sura kepo sapura ndu potia rao etotiana-e  
 the far side it’s heard on the far side sura kepo
 sapura Port Moresby ones of mine sitting on the
 other side

So the reciting of locations in pikono is not restricted to local places. In its listing of these foreign places the above excerpt of this pikono recalls to mind a Christian
song which describes travelling to Rabaul, Ok Tedi, Mount Hagen, Port Moresby in order to escape inevitable death. The relevant verses are reproduced here (Example 5.14).

**Example 5.14 (► Audio 31): ‘ipa sipi sayata’**.

**ipa sipi sayata Rabaul ngutiani**

if you go on a ship to Rabaul

**khene ko pi wanania**

death will come with you

**antia kone antia Yesu sanda**

mother, real mother, get Jesus

**riya wano**

turn back and come

(x2)

**heka mbaluta Hagen ngutiani**

if you go on a plane to Hagen

**khene ko pi wanania**

death will come with you

**antia kone antia Yesu sanda**

mother, real mother, get Jesus

**riya wano**

turn back and come

**sia hatiata Ok Tedi ngutiani**

if you go by foot to Ok Tedi

**khene ko pi wanania**

death will come with you

**khane kone khane Yesu sanda**

brother, real brother, get Jesus

**riya wano**

turn back and come

**heka mbaluta Hagen ngutiani**

if you go on a plane to Hagen

**khene ko pi wanania**

death will come with you

**khane kone khane Yesu sanda**

brother, real brother, get Jesus

**riya wano**

turn back and come

**Air Niuginita Mosbi ngutiani**

if you go with Air Nuigini to Moresby

**khene ko pi wanania**

death will come with you

**khane kone khane Yesu sanda**

brother, real brother, get Jesus

**riya wano**

turn back and come

Contemporary songs are, however, not only about far away places or experiences. Example 5.15, composed by teenager Rodney Kenny and sung for recording by him and his peers, is a typical short song praising home by setting it at the end of a journey and showing a feeling of ‘sori’—in this case understood to be ‘an exclamation of gladness’ (Mihalic 1971:180–1)—at arriving there.

**Example 5.15 (► Audio 32): ‘ipa ikili mbiteya’**.

**ipa ikili mbiteya karia kendei rakiya**

cross water Ikili, go over Mount Kendei

**ipa rano mbiteya ipa tumbutu mbiteya**

cross water Rano, cross water Tumbutu

**karia pauwa rakiya singa romara**

go over Mount Pauwa and arrive up

**sori-o no ralu pakura singa romara**

oh! to my ralu place pakura Hirane arrive up
Another version recorded six weeks later shows minor textual changes: it replaces ‘sori-o’ with *singa romara* and *pakura* with two other praise names for Hirane, *auwi* and *yungu*. This is further evidence to support the argument (highlighted at various points throughout this text) that the song texts of the Duna, both of ancestral and introduced origins, are in a continuous state of flux.

Other songs are stories of attempts made by people to leave their home, but for various reasons, such as the journey being too difficult (or expensive), or the feeling for home too strong, are unable to. Example 5.16, recorded with some of the same young boys, combines both sentiments.

**Example 5.16 (Audio 33):** ‘*akalu nene nene keno raroko*’.

- *akalu nene nene keno raroko* on top of (Mount) Akalu we two sit down
- *wia peretia hewa karai pima apima wia peretia* slope across, the Hewa mountains Pima and Apima slope across
- *nganda ruwata ngayaroko* we say we are going, we try to go
- *hatia ukarua oro daro hatia ukarua* the road is long between Oro and Mount Daro, the road is long
- *kono kandora* our thoughts (to go) were cut
- *kono kandora no rindi auwi yungu kono kandora* our thoughts (to go) were cut, our land *auwi yungu* Hirane, our thoughts (to go) were cut
- *sokomaro* the view
- *sokomaro akalu nene kata sokomaro* the view from on top of Akalu where we are, the view
- *si bruk a noya auwi yungu si bruk a* the waves break at my *auwi yungu* Hirane, the waves break

The feeling of nostalgia in regard to place has been addressed by a number of scholars (cf. Schieffelin 1976:179; Weiner 1991; Basso 1996:54). In particular, one scholar of Duna, Stürzenhofecker, writes of this sentiment as it pertains to women. She writes that women’s nostalgia for their natal place is expressed by the composition of song about various localities of that place (Stürzenhofecker 1998:151). According to her, women are only united with their natal place after death, that is if they move away during marriage (Stürzenhofecker 1998:97). In the context of this reference Stürzenhofecker is no doubt writing of ancestral song, though in my experience the composition of newer styles of song also expresses this kind of nostalgia. This is evident in the musical examples shown in this chapter.
Songs of journeys are popular both at home in Kopiago and away, as will be reiterated in the following section. A common element of the journey song is the arrival of a letter, which instigates the journey or experience. This next song was composed by a young man Lepani Kendoli in the town of Mount Hagen to illustrate the journey undertaken by myself and Lila to reach our fieldsite of Hirane (Example 5.17). Although no letters were actually written summoning us to travel to Hirane, poetic licence was taken by Lepani to fit the story to the familiar plot motivation.

**Example 5.17 (Audio 34): ‘Kirsty Lila ne anene’**.

- *Kirsty Lila ne anene Mosbi karoko*
  - Kirsty and Lila the pair at Port Moresby
- *pepa yapa pi home kata nariya singa romatia*
  - two letters, from where they did not know, arrived up there

- *Kirsty Lila ne kheno Mosbi kheno raroko*
  - Kirsty and Lila the pair were sitting at Port Moresby
- *pepa yapa pi Mosbi kata singa romatia*
  - two letters to Port Moresby arrived up there

- *pepata SATA keyaroko*
  - they got the letters and looked at them
- *anene pi yungupakura kone wano rirarua*
  - the two to yungu pakura Hirane true must come, the letters said

(x2)

- *home rirane aneneka*
  - like this they (the letters) said, the pair
- *Mosbi siti ya Mount Hagen e kone singa romatia*
  - (left) Port Moresby and to Mount Hagen true they came up

- *anel(ne) singaya M.A.Fta*
  - the pair arriving up, to MAF
- *wanania yaroko L.K. kone hongo are neya rita*
  - they came and asked, L.K. is not near they were told

- *home rirane*
  - like this (MAF) said
- *singa romaya Kopiago kone singa romara*
  - arriving up there to Kopiago, arrived up there

- *singa romaya*
  - arriving up there
- *singa romaya akura(rl) rewapi kone singa romara*
  - arriving up there at night to rewapi Hirane true, arrived up there

- *home rirane*
  - like this they said
- *home porane no auwi yungutia siya reina*
  - like this it happened, my auwi yungu Hirane people hold them

- *home horane*
  - like this they came
- *home horane auwi yungu nginitiaka siya reina*
  - like this they came, the auwi yungu Hirane sons hold them
Thus Lepani has myself and Lila moving through the frames of identity from the national, starting at Port Moresby, to the regional as we arrive at Mount Hagen in the centre of the Highlands region, on to the local area of Kopiago by plane, and then finally arriving at our parish location of Hirane where we are welcomed by our friends. I will now consider movement in the other direction—the Duna who have travelled away from their home parishes and settled outside.

The Duna diaspora

Despite the close connection Duna people have to the place of their birth and of their family, a sizeable number of Duna now live outside their home communities. Reasons for relocating are many, and the period of time that they stay away is variable, from a few weeks up to several years, or even a lifetime. The most populous Duna diasporic communities in Papua New Guinea are known to be in the cities of Port Moresby, Lae, and Mount Hagen, and the mining communities of Tabubil, Ok Tedi, and Porgera. In 1983 Nicholas Modjeska produced a radio program using recordings made by Don Niles of stringband and yekia of the Duna settlement at Six Mile in Port Moresby, which showed even then a musically active diasporic community (see Modjeska 1983).

In this section I will consider the general nature of such migration in Papua New Guinea, the kind of music which results from this experience, and then I will profile the Duna diasporic groups in Mount Hagen and Lae with whom I have spent time in between my travels to their home area of Kopiago. These friends have sung many songs for recording, and I will examine some of these songs here.

Of course, the Duna are not the only language group in Papua New Guinea to undertake migration in large numbers. There is ample literature in the fields of anthropology and human geography (not to mention the research of statisticians in Papua New Guinea) which addresses the phenomenon of migration (see for example May 1977; Goddard 2001; Umezaki and Ohtsuka 2003). A full discussion of it would be beyond the scope of this research. Suffice it to say that overwhelmingly it seems that the primary reason for migration, at least for the adult male population, is the search for employment (‘painim wok’, a phenomenon so common in Papua New Guinea that one of the nation’s most

7 Although I acknowledge that the term ‘diaspora’ has particular historical and religious significance in referring to the Dispersion of Jews, I use it here more loosely, and in a manner that is increasingly more common in academic research, to describe any group of people living away from their original home. In this case I use it to describe Duna people who are living outside of the place of origin of their language group in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea. In common with other recent literature I use lower case to further remove the term from its historical association. For a discussion on contemporary definitions of the term ‘diaspora’ and some of the controversy surrounding the use of the term, see Lewellen 2002:159-170.
popular rock bands was named such). Other reasons for relocation given by Duna people include schooling (for the child population), illness (that is, the need to visit a working hospital/clinic, since the availability of health services in Kopiago itself ranges from extremely limited to non-existent), and the need to escape difficult family situations (such as domestic violence).

There are at least four settlement areas in Mount Hagen with significant numbers of Duna. These areas are known as ‘T’ School, New Town, Bata Compound, and Dobel (more or less in order of size/prominence—this last area is significantly further out of town on the road to the airport). The gathering point for Duna speakers in the town centre (at least in the years 2005-2006) was on a corner outside a strip of shops on Wahgi Parade, one of the town’s main roads, and from where the inter-provincial PMVs (Public Motor Vehicles) depart.

My informants and collaborators in Kopiago who had come to town and were staying with their relatives who lived in the ‘T’ School settlement first introduced me to these settlement areas. The ‘T’ School settlement area is named after the nearby school, Hagen Primary School. The name ‘T’ School is an abbreviation of territory school, which was a term used in the colonial period to label those schools that provided for the Territory of Papua and New Guinea (now known as national schools); this was in contrast with ‘A’ schools, or Australian Schools (now known as international schools) (Kevin Murphy, Personal communication, 1 July 2006). Because of these family relations, my experience of the Duna diaspora in Mount Hagen focuses on this one settlement area, and most of the recordings I have made of this diasporic group were conducted there in 2005 and 2006.

It is worth describing the nature of ‘settlement’ before I proceed to describe the songs created and/or performed by those living in such an environment. Generally the Duna inhabitants of ‘T’ School have appropriated the use of Hagen town land by a purchase in some form from the local government. The story of how one household head, Brian Iri, obtained his block of land is typical of settlement in this area (see Figure 5.4). Brian recalls that around 1989 he obtained his current block of land at ‘T’ School from a man from Wabag (in Enga Province) who was staying there. He offered him 600 kina for it, which the man took immediately, as he was reported to fear the end of the world with the approaching millenium and was keen to return to his home in Wabag. Brian described the Hagen settlement areas during this time as ‘weslan bilong gavman’ (‘government wasteland’); however, he explained that once town became full of settlers, they were asked by the government to ‘register’ their blocks of land, which involved paying a fee. In 2002, when Brian registered his land, he paid 200 kina for it. But in order to actually obtain the title for the land, Brian would
need to pay the government several thousand kina, which he currently is unable to do (Brian Iri, Personal communication, 24 July 2006). Thus, there appears to be several layers to the process of acquiring land for non-Hagen settlers.

The first striking thing about the recordings I have made at ‘T’ School is that many performers chose to preface their first recording of songs and stories with an unprompted statement introducing themselves and their place of origin: ‘No yaka --. No rindi --.’ (‘My name is --. My parish is --.’) Although people often introduced themselves before recording a song or story during my fieldwork in Kopiago, rarely did they volunteer a statement aligning themselves with a particular Duna parish. Most likely this was because many of the people were already in their parish when the recording took place, and the knowledge of this was taken as a given. Those recorded at ‘T’ School were out of their home environment, and keen to make the connection to their own place clear, therefore defining to me their own identity in relation to land.8

The second striking thing about the songs recorded is the continued prominence of place names in song. I had somewhat naively expected that when one was removed from one’s place, the songs sung would also be so removed, but this was not so. Not only are a number of songs set in Duna places, which serve to reinforce the singers’ identity, there are also one or two songs with contained references to places in the town of Mount Hagen. Example 5.18 describes love letters coming down Wara Gerimb (see Figure 5.5), the creek in Mount Hagen which marks the outer border between the ‘T’ School settlement area and the land owners of Mount Hagen (it will be recalled from earlier in this chapter that the arrival of letters to instigate action/experience and often a journey is a common feature of secular Duna song). This song was sung by three women from the Kopiago parish of Suwaka who live near this creek: initially they began the song with the words *imane yapa* (‘two women’) but when I pointed out jokingly that they were three, they quickly changed the opening lines.

**Example 5.18 (Audio 35): ‘imane itupa pi’**

*imane itupa pi ngerimb raroko*  
three girls at Gerimb were sitting

*leta itupa pi ngerimb ulitiaka siya peretia (x2)*  
three letters down Gerimb creek floodwaters were carried

*hona pi rõya sata*  
they swam and got them

---

8 I do not mean to suggest that the expression of land identity is more important for the dislocated than for the Duna living in their *rindi* (‘parish’). Those ‘at home’ express their land identity regularly, and one important way is through song, as I have shown. What I suggest here is that the Duna at home do not seem to have the need to explicitly introduce their land affiliation outside of song, unlike the diasporic community.
yaka yaroko keno keno ruwTanda rirarua
reading it, (the letter) said that you and me, you and me are becoming sweethearts

ruwanda ruwata riya karoko
so it said and we were sweethearts

riya karoko lima ala rutiaka lembo kutia
we were sweethearts and the sweethearts from before were angry

lemba lemba korane
they were angry angry

ko momoya no ralu L.K. leka riyara
it just seems like I live here, my place is L.K., I have turned back

ko momoya no ralu L.K. leka riyara
it just seems like I live here, my place is L.K., I have turned back

Figure 5.4: Brian Iri and family at their block in Mount Hagen, 2006.

The women sing of sitting by Gerimb creek in Hagen when letters are carried downstream to them on the water. These letters are Hagen letters, and it is suggested that they are written by Hagen men, who would like to befriend these women. They are courted for a time by these men, but their ‘sweethearts from before’ (that is their Kopiago lovers) are unimpressed. So the women leave their new Hagen liaisons, declaring their home to be Lake Kopiago, and describing their presence in Hagen as something only temporary, almost an illusion (ko momoya).
Most of the songs sung by the Duna diaspora in Mount Hagen (except for the Christian ones) focus on expressing the feeling of being away from home, away from the land to which they are connected. Themes include the forgetting of home and family and developing madness when encountering the sea for the first time, or when becoming attached to a woman from a coastal area (the travelling protagonist in these songs is usually a man—I have not heard any Duna songs where a Highlands woman is described as falling for a coastal man).

Example 5.19 was sung for recording by the same group of three women as above, and using the same melodic and harmonic schema as the previous song (another example, then, of melodic recycling). Note the reference to crossing various waters (*ipa mbiteya*) and arriving up (*singa romara*), very similar textual lines to that sung by the young boys Hirane parish presented earlier in this chapter. It is very likely that this well known song formula informed the boys’ efforts.

**Example 5.19 (Audio 36): 'hewa Mande ngi'.**

```
hewa mande ngi
hewa mande ngi karia weri rakiya no hora
(x2)
ipa pori mbiteya ipa sakali mbiteya
singa romara yungura tari singa romara
singa romata karoko
Air Niugini karia Ambuaneneta panga kutia

horata pokol romaya
pokol romaya POM siti kone singa romara

singa romata karoko
karoko Papua walitiaka salo kutia

salo salo korane
salo korane antia apatia pi konda kora
salo korane yamali raotia pi konda kora

home porane solwarasi keya kono kandora
(x2)
```

on Monday at daytime I left
on Monday at daytime I left and went over Mount Weri and came

crossing water Pori crossing water Sakali
arrived up at Yunguru Tari airport arrived up

arrived up and while there
Air Niugini over Mount Ambua the plane passed

into this I climbed up
I climbed up, to Port Moresby city true I arrived up

while there a Papuan woman messed up my thinking

messed up, messed up my thinking and so
messed up my thinking and so my mother and father also I forgot
messed up my thinking and so my lover who is waiting also I forgot

like that it happened, seeing the salt water sea my thoughts (of home) were cut
The women who sang this song for recording claimed it as their own creation, but another Duna person, Lepani Kendoli, claimed to have heard it at Kopiago station in the early 1980s by a group of male performers. It is very likely that the melody and the textual structure are in a sense recycled materials from previous sources (as we have seen in the creation of Christian songs inspired by stringband songs and vice versa). So whilst it is the song of these women who may have tailored the text to their purposes, it is unlikely to be completely their original.

It is said that when such a song as this is heard it can drive women (the lovers who have been abandoned by wandering males) to cut off their fingers, or parts of their fingers, with grief (a common way in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea for a person to show they have experienced a personal tragedy), or to commit suicide by drowning themselves (Lepani Kendoli, Personal communication, May 2005). Of course, such a response to song is not reserved for newly introduced forms of music; the courting songs of yekia and selepa can result in the same reaction. This will be further explored in the following chapter.

It is important to note that songs like these are sung both by those of the diaspora and at home in Kopiago—if they are composed away from home, the songs certainly return home with the singers and circulate amongst the people there. The popularity of these songs, particularly with the younger population, sees them potentially serving as a dissuader to travel, listing all the terrible experiences that could befall those who choose to leave home. Many songs address particular anxieties related to absence from home, such as the death of parents, the difficulty in finding the money needed to return to ‘ples’, and the singers’ own death and return home in a coffin.

Example 5.20 (► Audio 37): ‘antia yo moni ndu ngi’

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{antia yo moni ndu ngi} & \quad \text{Mother oh give me some money} \\
\text{apa yo moni ndu ngi} & \quad \text{Father oh give some money} \\
\text{kei nguina Lae siti} & \quad \text{I will go and see Lae city} \\
\text{kei nguina} & \quad \text{I will go and see} \\
\text{kei ngayata moni ndu pi} & \quad \text{Having gone to see, some money} \\
\text{waepame kol boksi} & \quad \text{instead of sending, a coffin box} \\
\text{waeweinia} & \quad \text{I will send} \\
\text{kaki kano ipa auwi kokera} & \quad \text{bury me at Auwi creek bend} \\
\text{kaki kano} & \quad \text{bury me}
\end{align*}
\]
Figure 5.5: Wara Gerimb.
In Example 5.20 the singer asks his parents for money to travel to the city of Lae, a coastal city in the Morobe Province of Papua New Guinea where many Duna people now live. The suggestion is that the singer would find employment there and have enough money to send some home to his parents (presumably to pay back this debt plus some extra for their living). However, he imagines that he might die in Lae, and the money he obtains while there will have to go towards buying his coffin. Finally, he expresses his wish to be buried at the bend in Auwi creek.

Another song example has both transport problems and death in its lyrics (Example 5.21). Although there are no parish references or praise names used, it is still a place-identifying song as it firmly declares, in the language of home, that the creators, and the performers, of the song do not belong to their diasporic location, but to the home where their mother is to be found.

Example 5.21 (Audio 38): ‘no Mosbi ngata karoko’.

\begin{verbatim}
no Mosbi ngata karoko            I went to (Port) Moresby and while I was there
no antia khene rarita           my mother I heard had died
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
(x2)
home rirane riyanda ruwata       when they said that I thought of going back
waki yarako MBA ratia mani        while asking, these MBA* (tickets) the price seems too
pukarua (x2)                      high

home rirane no wanda hatia       when they said that I had no way of coming
naraya
antia ko yaka memori na siya reina mother your name as a memory I hold it here with me
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
(x2)
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
* MBA stands for Milne Bay Air, an airline that once provided a service to Kopiago. This airline service
is said to have ceased operation in the region sometime in the 1990s, and so the reference to it in this
song gives an indication of the age of the composition.
\end{verbatim}

The composition of both Examples 5.20 and 5.21 is attributed to the Auwi Sola stringband (Richard Alo, Personal communication, 23 July and 16 September 2006). The stringbands of Kopiago have always named themselves after parish locations. The Auwi Sola stringband is no exception. The band has had a number of members since they were formed, but all members are from the same clan (Okopa clan, from the parish of Mbara), hence the name of the band identifies one of the group’s places of origin. In 2006 I travelled with Richard Alo from my base in Mount Hagen to Lae in order to meet up with members of the Auwi Sola stringband living there (see Figure 5.6).

The city of Lae is perhaps the most important industrial centre in Papua New Guinea. Because of this, it attracts many Papua New Guineans from other
provinces looking for work. The Duna population is no exception, and there has reportedly been a continuous presence of Kopiago people and their families in Lae for over twenty years. The main centres for Duna living in Lae are at the settlements of Four Mile and Chinatown.

In travelling to Lae, I was interested to study how people sang about place when they were not actually living in it. One of the first songs recorded there was a very joyous song referring to the Auwi creek (Example 5.22), the band’s namesake and the boys’ clan area (see Figure 5.7).

Example 5.22 (▶ Audio 39): ‘ipa auwi’.

ipa auwi karuya raroko while sitting there blocking Auwi creek
ipa wenatiaka pikipakatia fish in the water jump up and down
(x2)
sanda ruwata ngayaro ko you think of getting (fish), while going there
sa kuteni sola siritiaka ruwa nguanania if you become confused, the cane grass spirits will tell you
(x2)

In this short song the singer describes the way to catch fish in Auwi creek: ‘blocking’ the water by sitting in it with legs open and outstretched, facing upstream (while another boy above channels the fish downwards). When the person sitting in the water attempts to grab them, they jump up out of the water and down into it again. The singer explains to his audience that if they would like to learn how to catch fish in this way, the spirits from the Auwi creek where the cane grass (‘pit-pit’) grows will teach them.

By referring to Auwi creek in this way, and describing it as a fertile place with many fish, this song serves to praise the ground of these clansmen/ band members. However, this song is also a courting song. It was explained to me that the spirits described actually represent the band members themselves, who would be keen to show a girl how to catch fish in order to entice her to his place.

Water spirits, or ipa siri, were important for courting in times past, helping men to send messages to the girl whom they desire (this will be further expanded upon in the next chapter). This song therefore is a modern kind of yekia or selepa, with a hidden message to attract a girl.

It can be seen that songs with specific reference to place, and showing an interaction with the environment and expression of beliefs from the ‘taim bipo’ (or ‘time before white contact’) are still very important to people performing in introduced musical styles, even among the Duna diaspora.
It is perhaps unsurprising to note that in Mount Hagen and Lae, people were keen to tell ancestral stories and sing lotu and popular songs, but it was not always easy to find anyone willing to sing ancestral genres. On two occasions yekia were sung to me in Mount Hagen for recording, but this was the only sung ancestral genre I was able to record among the diaspora. Some of these yekia had contemporary political content, and will be presented in a later chapter on politics and song. Several pikono stories were told in Mount Hagen, but they were very short, and only in the spoken form, not sung. It is relevant to note that the telling of a pikono in the sung style during the day—that is, out of context—is said to incur the risk of the singer’s anus closing up (Richard Alo, Personal communication, 20 June 2006). Such an experience is something known to Duna people through narratives—see for example the ‘Man without an anus’ story collected by Nicholas Modjeska and reproduced by Nicole Haley in the Appendix of her thesis (2002a vol. 2:187). Considering that my only visits to Hagen’s ‘T’ School settlement were during the daytime, this would explain the performance of pikono in spoken form only there. It appears then that place may be important in the performance of ancestral song genres in another sense—that of the physical setting for performance.
Figure 5.7: Auwi creek, Kopiago.
Conclusion

This chapter reveals the close relationship of the Duna to the land and how this relationship is reinstated and manipulated through song. A continuity of song text content is shown across songs that originated in ancestral times, and those songs composed in an introduced style. Songs at both ends of this spectrum are concerned with singing about place, particularly about a (usually the singer’s) particular parish and the sites within that parish. Kēiyà for places are used across the spectrum of songs. References to food in relation to the fertility of land appear often. Many songs are concerned with moving through landscape: examples include khene ipakana (which can list multiple parishes), pikono (which often recount journeys), Christian songs and stringband/secular songs.

Themes such as these are evident also in the songs of the Duna diaspora, as shown in the songs I have discussed which were composed by Duna people living in the towns of Mount Hagen and Lae. People in these locations are keen to use both speech and song to declare their parish identity, but they can also sing of places within the diaspora itself, thus incorporating their away-from-home experience into their identity and life stories. Songs of moving through the landscape in the form of journeys are common, as they are at home (many songs of being away return home with people and circulate amongst the people there), and many of these journey songs express the challenges of being away, and the difficulties encountered in attempting to return home. Many of these songs of landscape, food and journeys are songs of love. Land is closely connected with relationships in Duna culture, especially in relationships with the opposite sex, and it is now to the process of courting that we turn.