Wept Thoughts:
The Voicing of Kaluli Memories

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The study of lament forms, including ritual wailing, sung-texted weeping, keen, mourning songs, dirge, and elegy, is complexly located in discourses of the humanities and social sciences. Because lament varieties are reported throughout the world, questions as to the universality or cultural specificity of their structures and meanings are important and implicitly comparative. Folklorists, philologists, ethnomusicologists, literary scholars, and anthropologists have drawn our attention to a great variety of lament forms. Some researchers have taken a more micro-analytic view of the poetics of lament texts, others a more macro-analytic view of the role that laments play in mourning customs (see Ajuwon l981 and Honko l980 for an overview). Some have concentrated on the differences between laments and other verbal and musical genres. But the key factor that situates all of these studies of laments firmly in the area of research on oral traditions is the dynamic interplay of individual expression and collective forms and sentiments. Vladimir Propp put this quite forcefully in his essay on "Folklore and Reality" (l984:16-38). There he draws attention to the fact that while formulae and motifs (like the poetic rhetorical question to the deceased) are common in laments, the genre is more clearly defined by improvisation, by lack of close variants, and by a certain lack of close similarity despite common motifs. "Each lament contains unique motifs," Propp writes, "for example a kind of biography" (32). This biographical dimension, and its linkages to what Propp termed a "subjective evaluation of reality" (33), speaks to the complex interplay of generic norms and individual creativity in lament, and additionally emphasizes how the analysis of lament texts must necessarily be situated in their socio-historical contexts.

Before pursuing these issues in a specific case study, it is worth stepping back to review the broad programmatic location of an explicitly interdisciplinary study of lament forms. One easy place to start is with the *boundaries of speech and song*. As a classic region of text/tune interplay, we can ask what linguistic and musical creativities interact in the form and performance of these expressions? How are they related to or

differentiated from other speech and song styles? What sonic features of the crying voice and what sonic and semantic features of verbal articulation intersect in these forms? The concern with understanding the boundaries of speech and song is closely linked to a second global issue for lament research, namely, *composition-in-performance*. As a classic region of emergent structures in oral performance, we can ask what interplay of improvisation with formulaic, memorized, and precomposed verbal and musical elements characterize these forms? Is there anything specific to or highlighted in these genres that distinguish their manner of composition-in-performance?

In addition to these two fundamental structural issues, the linkage between lament and sadness points to the significance of *emotion*: how are these stylized expressions linked to the ethology of anger, grief, and despair? How do unique ethnopsychologies shape the role these expressions play in the social construction of emotionality, and in the collective responsibility for its display and interpretation? Fourth, and closely linked in many studies to the question of emotions, is the issue of *gender and genre*. How gender-specific are these various lament genres? If these expressions are largely women's work, what cross-culturally gender-specific statements do they make about suffering, bearing witness to distress, and the association of women and emotionality? Finally, and to link laments to their most forceful social context, there is the issue of *rituals and metaphors of transition and renewal*. As these expressions are always embedded in larger social events marking separation or aggregation, how are they central to the evocation and symbolization of transition? How do they figure into the social construction of memory, nostalgia, and sentimentality?

In this paper I discuss the sung-texted weeping tradition of the Kaluli (Bosavi) people, a small-scale society in a relatively isolated rain-forest region of Papua New Guinea. My discussion will both describe some particular ethnographic, linguistic, musical, and textual characteristics of a form of women's ritual wailing that Kaluli call *sa-yalab*, a term that can be glossed as "sung-texted weeping" (or more literally, "inside weeping" or "inner-texted weeping"), and relate that description to some recent discussion of the five issues cited above.

The Kaluli People

The Kaluli (Bosavi) people number about twelve hundred and live in the tropical rain forest of the Great Papuan Plateau in the Southern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea (detailed ethnographic descriptions are E. Schieffelin l976, Feld l982, B. Schieffelin 1990). On

several hundred square miles of rich land at an altitude of about two thousand feet they hunt, fish, and tend land-intensive swidden gardens that yield sweet potatoes, taro, pandanus, pumpkin, bananas, and many other fruits and vegetables. Their staple food, sago, is processed from wild palms that grow in shallow swamps and creeks branching off from larger river arteries that flow downward from Mt. Bosavi, the collapsed cone of a volcano reaching eight thousand feet. Kaluli live in about twenty distinct longhouse communities; in each, most people still reside in a single communal house comprising fifteen families, or about sixty to eighty people. In recent years, under influence from Papuan evangelical pastors and government officers, there has been a trend toward smaller houses occupied by single families, or at most two or three families.

This is a classless society that has only begun to feel the impact of occupational specialization, stratification, and socially rewarded differentiation since the intensification of outside contact in the last twenty-five years. Overtly, the tone of everyday Kaluli life is strongly egalitarian in social and political spheres. People hunt, gather, garden, and work to produce what they need, taking care of themselves and their families and friends through extensive cooperation in food-sharing and labor assistance, all organized informally through networks of obligation and reciprocity. While gender differences are quite overtly marked, there was traditionally little structural stratification produced by accumulation of goods, rewards, or prestige. Although that is changing rapidly, there is still, evidenced by our recent ethnographic experiences, a general lack of deference to persons, roles, categories, or groups based on power, position, or material ownership. Obvious recent exceptions include pastors, Aid Post Orderlies, and government and mission workers; gender differentials are clearly becoming more pronounced as well.

My use of the term "egalitarian" is not meant to be static and typological. Existing and emerging differentiation, subtle or overt, is a significant historical facet of Kaluli life. While a full discussion of this issue is not offered here, I am concerned to use the word egalitarian cautiously, lest it be assumed that the kind of poetics I will describe is somehow assumed to be a pristine reflection of a perfectly "primitive," communal, oral society. At the same time, it is important to relate Kaluli egalitarianism to gender differences and a local view of personal autonomy and creativity; these issues turn out to be crucial for understanding the poetic and performative context of *sa-yalab*.

Kaluli *sa-yalab*

Sa-yalab is one of five named patterns of Kaluli crying, situated on

several continua in relationship to the other four (see Feld l982:88-99). The five terms are all prefixed specifications of the same onomatopoeic verb for "cry" or "weep"; all five are considered expressive varieties of weeping, and all co-occur in situations of loss or abandonment or separation. Of these five three tend to be short, loud, uncontrolled, and associated with men. Two others are more typically reflective, sustained, controlled, and associated with women. *Sa-yalab* is one of these two latter variants, and is considered the most refined, performed, reflective, and aesthetic form of weeping. The keys to this form are elaborated though improvised texts and a highly patterned and stable melodic contour using four descending tones: the first two a major second apart, the next a minor third below, and the last a major second below (as in the descending tones D-C-A-G). This sonic pattern is said by Kaluli to derive from the call of a fruitdove (birds whose calls contain the intervals of the descending major second and minor third), and this relationship is the subject of a myth that underscores the cultural character of Kaluli associations among sadness, birds, and human expressive sound.

Kaluli weeping types are experienced in two context sets, one including ceremonies and seances and another including funerals and occasions marking personal loss. Ceremonies and seances are pre-planned events that involve the staging of composed poetic songs called *gisalo*. These songs move listeners to tears and the resultant weeping is patterned, but involves little if any text. The tendency in the cried response is toward loud falsetto wails, using the three or four tones of the prescribed melodic contour mentioned previously. These kinds of weeping are largely performed by men, although women are also heard to do them. Funerals and occasions of loss, on the other hand, provide the stage for the two musically and textually elaborated female weeping variants. While men are heard to wail at these events, they tend to do so in the three less elaborated forms that also mark their responses to ceremonial songs. Women also wail this way at funerals, but the principal mourners are distinguished by the manner in which they sit together around the body of the deceased, and perform *sa-yalab*, singing while shedding tears.

Polyphony, Heterophony, *Dulugu Ganalan*

While *sa-yalab* can be characterized as basically monophonic, personal, and soloistic, in point of fact it is far more often the case that two, three, or four women wail simultaneously, sometimes beginning like a chain reaction, with one woman moved by the initial wails of another, and additional voices adding on, then some dropping out. I was so impressed by a solo *sa-yalab* performance that I made that the centerpiece of my

chapter on women's wailing in *Sound and Sentiment* (Feld l990:107-29). Yet while that performance was extremely powerful and often commented upon by Kaluli people, my singling it out for a case analysis perhaps obscured the more typical quality of simultaneous multi-part *sa-yalab* performances. How then to describe the relationship of the voices? This question cannot be answered merely by a technical musicological discussion, since the voice relationships index the deeper issue of social relationships, which is to say the interplay of the individual and collective, personal and traditional dimensions of experience.

The term "polyphony" generally refers to music in many parts, particularly when all or several of the parts proceed independently. It is the dialectical independence and interdependence of the parts that is a key feature of polyphony from the perspective of European music history, such that the parts simultaneously have a distinct identity and structural- functional implications for one another and the resultant totality. The term "heterophony," on the other hand, contrastively refers to the superimposition of a modified musical structure on its original, or put more simply, simultaneous variations of a single melody. From the standpoint of western European Art Music, heterophony is a "simpler" phenomenon, and polyphony (particularly with full harmonic elaboration) represents the height of musical evolution and sophistication.

Outside of the European traditions (and some would argue even within many European traditions), it is often hard to apply the terms polyphony and heterophony distinctly with no ambiguity. This is particularly so in the South Pacific, where forms of polyphony and heterophony are common, but often described with European models as a baseline. In the case of Kaluli weeping we might prefer the term heterophony since the multi-part relationship results from simultaneous performance of slightly variant or elaborated versions of the same basic melodic contour and rhythmic divisions. But there is the problem of different texts and differentiated line lengths. Another reason to avoid the term is that it misses a crucial processual dynamic in many multi-part *sa-yalab* (and in all Kaluli multi-voiced singing), namely, that whatever the initial order of voices they are completely free to switch roles at any point and to continually change order, submerging any sense of "leader" and "follower" roles. If on the other hand we choose the cover term polyphony to stress the structural and functional interdependence of the voices, we have the difficulty of reconciling it with the fact that their musical materials (tones, melodic contours, metrics) are not particularly independent. This terminological problem is widespread in Melanesian music, leading some to adopt the term "echo-polyphony" in order to describe styles involving overlapped repetition of similar melodic and textual elements, just split seconds apart.

Kaluli have a term and clear metalinguistic/metamusical concept that covers the stylistic and performative dimensions of this kind of vocalizing (whether in song, talk, wailing, or bird calls). They call it *dulugu ganalan*, "lift-up-over sounding."[1] *Dulugu ganalan* is a spatial-acoustic metaphor, a visual image set in sonic form and a sonic form set in visual imagery. Intuitively, "lift-up-over sounding" conjures up images of continuous layers, sequential but not linear; of non-gapped multiple presences and densities, overlapping without internal breaks. By calling attention to both the spatial ("lift-up-over") and temporal ("sounding") axes of experience, the term and process explicitly presuppose each sound to exist in fields of prior and contiguous sounds.

"Lift-up-over sounding" in fact refers to numerous typical aspects of Kaluli musical forms and processes, from the very technical (overtones) to the very general (relations of any deliberately coordinated or simply co-present sounds). In the context of *sa-yalab*, *dulugu ganalan* is a stylistic term for how staggered entrances and overlaps as well as breathy, creaky-grained vocalizations "lift-up-over" one another and over the background din of other voices crying and speaking in the longhouse, and over the ever-present background of high-frequency forest sounds.

Another way to get the feel of "lift-up-over sounding" is by contrast with its antithesis, unison. All "lift-up-over sounding" sounds are dense, heavily blended, layered; even when voices or sound types momentarily coincide, the sense is that the unison is either accidental or fleeting, and indeed, it is entirely by chance. The essence of "lift-up-over sounding" is part relations that are *simultaneously in-synchrony while out-of-phase*. By "in-synchrony" I mean that the overall feeling is of togetherness, of consistently cohesive part coordination in sonic motion and participatory experience. Yet the parts are also "out-of-phase," that is, at distinctly different and shifting points of the same cycle or phrase structure at any moment, with each of the parts continually changing in degree of displacement from a hypothetical unison. This is the independent- interdependent dynamic that is so tricky to describe in a non-ethnocentric fashion.

Moreover, *dulugu ganalan* is essentially leaderless and egalitarian. "Lift-up-over" is an image of non-hierarchical yet synchronous, layered, fluid group action. Wailing together as sounding together focuses the tension between egalitarianism (activity requiring a concerted cooperation) and individualism (the personalized aspect of each wailer's performance and text). The echo-sounding of wailing together reproduces the quality of "joining-in" as a model of sociability, of maximized participation amid personal distinction, of making a collective "we" from multiple "I's."

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[1] The discussion of *dulugu ganalan*, "lift-up-over sounding," that follows is a very brief condensation of the analysis reported in Feld l988.

Individual autonomy and collective sociability are thus simultaneously promoted in the process of "lift-up-over sounding."

Intertextuality

It is difficult these days to use the word "intertextuality" without raising the name of Mikhail Bakhtin, and with it the literary debates his work has stimulated surrounding the issues of dialogism and intertextuality (for a good exposition, see Todorov 1984:60-74). Even though I am quite sympathetic to the force of Bakhtin's positions, I do not use "intertextual" here in the broad theoretical sense that makes claims for the relations of all utterances in juxtaposition, nor in the specific sense that distinguishes the prose of the novel from other forms of artistic verbal discourse. Rather I use "intertextual" descriptively to mean a discourse relationship where the spatio-temporal character of multiple voice utterances is indexical to a process of emergence as a cohesive text. It is the jointly produced, collaborative quality of Kaluli multiply-voiced texts, implicating a particular kind of leaderless, egalitarian, and participatory relationship, that interests me here, because Kaluli intertextuality as a discourse relationship is also the key to the social relationships shared by its producers, and to the emergent understandings and feelings evoked for their audience. It is the cumulatively "layered" and interactive dynamic of the jointly produced text that situates the problematic of Kaluli intertextuality parallel to the problematic of polyphony/heterophony, and resolves it in the local concept and aesthetic of *dulugu ganalan*, "lift-up-over sounding."

The process of performing *sa-yalab* wailing as *dulugu ganalan* involves two or more women simultaneously voicing personal memories, thereby situating their immediate emotions, their relationships to each other, the deceased, and those listening, and their social biographies in a layered collaborative text-voicing. Two kinds of intertextuality are clear in Kaluli *sa-yalab* performances; the first variety is performance-internal, and the second variety is cross-performance. In performance-internal intertexts multiple voices wail at the same time, and their texts interact by "lifting-up-over" one another, continually staggering, alternating, and interlocking such that in addition to the purely sonic layering of the four-tone descending melodic contour, the linguistic messages interact to build jointly produced themes.

For example, the opening of a *sa-yalab* for Bibiali at Asondo in November l976 (Feld l985:A3) has Hane wailing "cross-cousin, you and I were together at Kowani [a sago-place], cross-cousin; cross-cousin, having seen *falu* sago at Kowani, I will remember you, cross-cousin." These lines

are overlapped by two other voices, Famu, wailing "father, we were together at Kowani, father; father, you have no brother at Kowani, father [meaning, you have no relations left there, just sago palms]; father, being hungry, you left and came here [no more sago at Kowani, metaphorically linked to no more family there]"; and Gania, wailing, "*nasu*[2] [bridewealth relation], Fagenabo is not your brother [implying that his classificatory brother, Fagenabo, never came to stay with him at his place, Tabili], *nasu*; *nasu*, where so far away have you gone, *nasu*?" Then these lines are overlapped again by Famu, wailing "father, have you gone to your place by the bank of Sago creek?" In a matter of seconds, then, the themes of food, family, relationship, and place are chained from one voice to the next and back again. This process deeply interlinks textual themes as well as the specifically situated biographies and memories of three women who are cousin, daughter, and bridewealth relation to the deceased. While each voice is personal and unique, each is also closely tuned-in to the others, developing, extending, commenting upon, or echoing the previous text.

This interpersonal, intertextual, and intermusical relationship continues. After the voices of Hane and Gania drop out, Famu continues in "lift-up-over" fashion with Fofo, who is also related as *nasu* (giver-receiver of bridewealth) to Bibiali. Fofo wails, "*nasu*, if you had a son, that son would be remembering you every day" [angry lines in a hypothetical subjunctive implying that Bibiali's son did not care much about him, creating the kind of vulnerability that courts death]. Her voice is overlapped by Famu, wailing "father, your son is like a *falu* sago palm at Obesana" [meaning, you have no son, he is dead wood]. She continues, "father, you have no son, father; father, if you had a son he would be thinking of you every day, father." During these lines Fofo's text cites placenames linking her to Bibiali; then she returns to the joint theme: "*nasu*, you were Halisa's [Fofo's daughter's] father, *nasu*; *nasu* from now on you will only talk secretly to your daughter." Fofo's distancing from textual references to Bibiali's real son [Beli] parallels Famu's distancing of the same theme: "father, when you get hungry, you will go to Gunambo's place, far away." In tandem, then, both voices build an image situating Bibiali, the deceased man, in closest relation to people more distant than the one—his elder son Beli—who would be most expected as a close source of support.

Both voices interact to close out the *sa-yalab* with the same theme. Fofo's wailing has lines like, "you are not my son, you'll say like that"

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[2] *Nasu* is a reciprocal relationship term for a giver or receiver of bridewealth. The *nasu* relationship, like two other reciprocal relationships available to Kaluli—namesake (*daiyo*) and one who shares a certain kind of food (*wi aledo*)—carries special affect. Unlike kin relations, these sorts of relationships mark special categories of mutual caring and sentimentality for Kaluli, categories that have been voluntarily created and reproduced.

[ending the line with a special imperative form telling the deceased to speak the words that opened the phrase]; "your son will look on the ground and see the footprints you will put there"; "if you had a son I would be happy with him"; "you and I have no son"; and "my little boy left me, you say like that to me." She ends by repeating the image that Bibiali will now speak secretly to his daughter, and mentions another son (absent from the scene, but on his way at that moment) by name. At the same time, Famu overlaps with lines like, "a young boy is coming back across the flat land now"; "who will give food to your son?" [referring to the aforementioned returning son, coming home from the mission school]; and "you and I were together at Ukini, your son is a *bol* tree at Ukini" [*bol* trees stand alone; the image delivers an angry message about Bibiali's sons' lack of commitment to their father]. In these lines, then, chaining through the central portion of the *sa-yalab* and its closing words, a cohesive theme is jointly produced and evoked: Bibiali's death was a result of the vulnerability that springs from a rupture of family solidarity, particularly poignant as one older son (Beli) had nothing to do with his father, and one younger one (Siyowa, also known as Wosoli) was away five of every seven days at a mission grade school, five hours distant.

While this thematic type of performance-internal intertextuality is quite typical of *sa-yalab* performed in *dulugu ganalan* style, there is also a notable second level of performance-internal intertextuality simultaneously taking place. This is the sequencing of placenames, what Kaluli call *tok*, literally "paths" that deeply signify what people have experienced together and shared in life. For instance, in this same *sa-yalab* Famu cites the placenames of Kowani, Sago se, Seloyasi, Obesana, Gunambolowa ["Gunambo's place," meaning his longhouse community, Sululib, three hours walk away], Asondo, Ukini, Galagido, and Tabili. Fofo cites only the placenames of Yogalimi, Salo sawel, and Misini. Notice that there is no correspondence between the names as cited; each voice is distinct. But an examination of the overlapped or staggered placement of the names in the text, and then an examination of an actual map of the lands mentioned points to a more complex picture. The places chain together from one wailer to the next in the overall text, and they are also either closely proximate locations or similar kinds of places with similar kinds of meanings to the two distinct biographies. When one wails about a sago place where she was together with Bibiali, the other follows in turn citing her sago-place connection with him. When one uses a distant placename, so does the other. When one cites the name of a longhouse community, so does the other. Again, it is clear that the two wailing women listen closely to one another, and, as personal and specific as their texts may be, there is also a continuously cumulative and interactive layering; the aesthetic and emotional force is to intensify and make denser the kinds of messages and

meanings evoked.

A second variety of intertextuality is cross-performance, namely from one *sa-yalab* event to another, separated by time and/or by participants. The effect is to draw the temporal process of the mourning event and the larger process of multiple participants into a kind of more coherent social space where thoughts and feelings are focused and kept in social circulation. The example cited above, for instance, was followed ten minutes later after a quiet period by another *sa-yalab* with one of the same participants and a number of the same themes. In this next sequence Famu continues to wail to her "father," and she is joined within a minute by Galisimi wailing to her *mamu* [distant relation]; later they are both joined by Dulumia who wails with no text, only kin terms.

In this second *sa-yalab* Famu develops the theme of social disruption and alienation. Her text contains lines like "if we hadn't come here this wouldn't have happened" and "we shouldn't have come here to Asondo." These are alternated with lines such as "you and I were together at...," citing places she had been with Bibiali, and phrases like "won't we be together?"; "have you gone by yourself?"; and "wake up now so we can go to our lands." These lines affirm her connections to Bibiali through the places where they spent time and shared together, and these places are contrasted to Asondo, the site of a new longhouse for the people of Tabili. Asondo was a new community of an atypical sort. Members of Tabili and Feliso built adjoining longhouses linked in the center by a common church. Many of the older members of the community opposed this new form of social organization. Famu's text insinuates that the divisiveness and upset surrounding this unnatural community and move, engineered by a pastor and the zealous young Christians of Tabili and Feliso, led to Bibiali's alienation, his general absence from the community, and his death. This theme is developed from her previous *sa-yalab*, which contained the line "we shouldn't have left our place."

Famu's last lines are "we were together at Ukalin; we were together at Kamaido, come back to stay there; your son is a *bol* tree at Ukini (2x); don't you remember Moase? You planted many things there, Siyowa liked to eat them every day." Here Famu's portion of the *sa-yalab* closes by linking three themes: the first is the theme of significant places (Ukalin, Kamaido) where Famu shared with Bibiali; tied to this is the theme that these places are Bibiali's homes in contrast to Asondo; and tied to this is the anger at Bibiali's son Beli (repeating an image from the previous *sa-yalab*, not reiterated in earlier portions of this one) and concern about his younger son, Siyowa (questioning whether he will have food, and implying that Siyowa cannot reciprocate what Bibiali supplied him, that is, food from the large communal Asondo garden at Moase). These images chain from Famu's previous *sa-yalab*, which contained the line "who will give

food to your son?" Famu's closing thus explicitly links this *sa-yalab* text thematically to her previous one around the issues of lands, food, sense of home, alienation, vulnerability, anger at Bibiali's sons, and future provision.

At the same time that Famu wails here, she is overlapped by Galisimi, whose text is slight and contains no placenames. Her main theme is disbelief and shock over Bibiali's death, carried in lines like, "are you tricking me?"; "now that you've tricked me this way you are going off"; "wake up"; "stay alone by yourself"; and "I came to look for you" [referring to the way people went to search for Bibiali when he was missing for several days, only to find him dead at his garden house at Salo waterfall]. While brief, Galisimi's lines have internal intertextual connections to Famu's here. Famu's text, for example, contains overlapping lines on the theme of disbelief like "come back again"; "won't we be together?"; "you never tricked anyone before"; "wake up"; and (several times) "wake up now so we can go off to our lands." On the other hand, Galisimi's lines do not have much intertextual connection to the previous *sa-yalab* phrases of Hane sulo, Gania, Fofo, or Famu.

About one hour and fifteen minutes later Hane wept a long solo *sa-yalab* (transcribed, translated, and annotated in detail in Feld l990:108-28; recorded on Feld l985:A4). Each of the themes from these two earlier multi-voiced sequences is represented and developed: disbelief, lack of family solidarity, anger at Bibiali's sons, the surprise and shock about to greet Siyowa coming home from the mission school, and Bibiali's and others' alienation and displeasure over moving Tabili to Asondo for the purposes of a new type of community. Like Famu, Fofo, and Galisimi before her, Hane uses some of the same phrasings and imagery to enunciate, reiterate, and further develop these central personal and social feelings surrounding Bibiali's death.

As with the case of internal-performance intertextuality, thematic materials are embellished by placenames across performances as well. Placename intertextuality contributes importantly to the larger set of *sa-yalab* sequences. Placenames signify how each mourner shared something special with the deceased but how each of those special things is of a highly social type and quality: where people live, where they garden, where they travel, where they work, where they exchange and share, where their future lives, as reflections in the form of birds, will take them. Collaborative invocation of placenames builds a large map (about seventy-five names are cited in the three above-mentioned *sa-yalab*) that positions the deceased, the wailers, and their audience in the geographical and social space that links overlapping personal histories and meanings.

These two kinds of intertextuality—performance-internal and cross-performance—and the two textual levels in each—thematic and

placename—are not just matters of evocative names and phrases in juxtaposition; they point to a social process that reveals the power of spontaneous joint production to co-articulate personal and collective biography and memory. This embedding is consistent with a larger Durkheimian claim about ritual wailing generally, advanced recently by Gregory Urban (1988), namely, that through overt expression of emotion ritual wailing points toward the desire for sociability. In the Kaluli case this pointing is intensified specifically by the deep relationship between the form (multi-voiced "lift-up-over sounding") and content (thematic and placename intertextuality) of the texts, and the way they in turn point to the social positioning of all involved.

At the same time, this particular kind of wailing indicates that another of Urban's claims needs to be somewhat embellished; he writes: "wailing is a process of making public the feelings of the person who is wailing. It is intended not to be heard, in the ordinary linguistic sense, but rather to be *overheard*. Ritual wailing purports overtly not to engage an addressee, but to allow anyone within earshot access to something that would otherwise be private" (392). In the Kaluli instance the otherwise privacy of the messages is not the issue; wailers are speaking out to the deceased, other wailers, and the present collectivity. Their mode of expression places them forcefully in the social domain as performers. Their words are in some sense very much meant to be heard rather than overheard in that they function as an invitation to others to collaboratively enunciate felt thoughts about the death at hand and the social position of the deceased, through thematic and placename resources.

Boundaries of Speech and Song

Since lament forms take on various manifestations, some more recited, some more sung, some more cried, some more improvised, some more composed, it is important to describe clearly the exact features that are subsumed by the type labeled "ritual wailing." Urban's recent comparative study of ritual wailing in AmerIndian Brazil isolates three code-feature commonalities of diverse wailing manifestations. These are "(1) the existence of a musical line, marked by a characteristic intonational contour and rhythmical structure; (2) the use of various icons of crying; and (3) the absence of an actual addressee, which renders the ritual wailing an overtly monologic or expressive device, despite the importance that may accrue to its status as public, with the desired presence of someone to 'overhear' it" (386). These code-feature commonalities found in AmerIndian Brazil transpose clearly to the Kaluli situation, although all can be elaborated or refined more specifically in relation to the local case.

The existence of a musical line, with a specified contour, and a series of precise phrase and sub-phrase possibilities for that contour are quite marked in the Kaluli instance. A phrase schematic breaks down easily into four subsections, each of which has a series of eight to twelve typical "rewrite" possibilities for pulse (but not pitch) expansion to accommodate words of various syllable lengths. This generates a basic matrix of phrase types, of which about twenty are highly typical combinations. These phrase types can be further expanded by embedding and conjoining. It is neither the linguistic intonational contour nor rhythmic structure that characterizes the line so much as the relationship among line length, phrase and sub-phrase demarcation, and breath groups. Distinctive characteristics such as those Urban found to correlate with line-time length do not occur in the Kaluli instance due to the line variability that results from embedding and conjoining.

Urban isolates four icons of crying found in ritual wailing, the "cry break," voiced inhalation, creaky voice, and falsetto vowel (389). The cry break, sonically realized as a diaphragm pulse accompanied by friction and labeled by the term "sob," is quickly recognizable in Kaluli *sa-yalab* and, as he argues, is the most transparent index of a crying voice. Continuous sobbing, streaming of tears, and nasal discharge by Kaluli wailers link the cry break to reduction of the vowel space, nasality, vibrato voice, and marked volume reduction at the end of breath and sub-phrase groups. Voiced inhalation, which Urban links to heightened emotional involvement, is also characteristic of Kaluli *sa-yalab*, particularly at phrase and sub-phrase onsets and offsets. This feature contributes to the sense of bounded lines, of short, startled bursts of vocalization. Creaking voice, produced through slower glottal chord vibrations, manifests itself clearly in *sa-yalab*, although its interaction with continuous sobbing and nasality produces a sound rather more "raspy" than the "creaky" types Urban found in his Shavante, Bororo, and Shokleng sample. As in those cases, the creaky/raspy quality does clearly distinguish the wailing voice from the speaking voice, except in the cases of those who are ill, particularly with bronchial disorders, or the aged, whose voices become more creaky as the effects of years of living in smoky longhouses takes its toll on their lungs and throats. Urban points out this association between creaking voice and various abnormal states of the organism. His final icon, falsetto vowels, does not typify Kaluli *sa-yalab* the way the other three do.

Finally, Urban points to the prominent absence of an addressee in ritual wailing, and the importance of the "overheard" quality of wailing. While technically true in the Kaluli case as well, a code feature of *sa-yalab* is marked linguistic structure as a direct speech to the deceased. In this case the deceased is fully an addressee, while those who wail simultaneously and those who are more generally co-present constitute "overhearers."

This somewhat complicates the use of the descriptive term "monologic" when applied to this form of wailing. It is certainly monologic or multiply monologic in that there is no returned verbal interaction from the deceased. Yet it is also imaginatively dialogic in its intended linguistic structure and communicative type, and intertextually dialogic when multiple voices participate.

These features help locate *sa-yalab* vis-à-vis boundaries of Kaluli speech and song. Presence of icons of crying gives *sa-yalab* its distinct quality as a voice type, apart from the conversational or singing voice. Yet its linguistic form and intertextual possibilities also give it a conversational quality distinct from song poetics. At the same time its distinctive melodic contour marks it as a kind of non-talked conversation. While there is some awkwardness to the gloss "melodic-texted-sung weeping," that gloss indeed communicates the complex interaction of speech and song characteristics that interact in *sa-yalab*.

Composition-in-Performance

Ruth Finnegan's recent review of the complexities of oral composition practices in the South Pacific (l988:86-109) notes several difficulties with mapping the Parry-Lord oral-formulaic theory onto the extraordinary diversity, flexibility, and variety of compositional techniques known to Oceanic poetries. It is instructive there, as in her earlier, more general discussion of memorization and oral poetry (l977:52-87), to note the issue of variety across and within Pacific societies, genres, and specific items. The Kaluli materials are a further illustration of intra-cultural and cross-generic variety in compositional practice, and it is worth reviewing several key characteristics of oral-formulaic qualities in *sa-yalab* as they compare with those of Kaluli oral song genres.

Finnegan succinctly summarizes four of the key principles of the oral-formulaic theory associated with Parry, Lord, and their followers (for elaboration, see Foley l988): "(1) The text of oral literature is variable and dependent on the occasion of performance, unlike the fixed text of a written book. . . (2) The form of composition characteristic of oral literature is composition-in-performance, i.e., not prior composition divorced from the act of performance. . . (3) Composition and transmission of oral literature is through the process mentioned above and not (as was once thought) through word for word memorization. . . (4) In oral literature, there is no concept of a 'correct' or 'authentic' version" (Finnegan l988:88-89).

On the whole these four characteristics apply rather well to Kaluli *sa-yalab*, although they apply rather poorly to Kaluli song. *Sa-yalab* are

clearly highly occasion-sensitive and textually variable, with an elaborate continuum of more to less formulaic, repetitive, durative, metaphoric, stylistically dense, and poetic features. Additionally, *sa-yalab* do not seem to involve composition prior to performance, although interviews clearly brought out the fact that Kaluli women are aware of and contemplate (and hence "compose" in some sense) the kind of poetic images, particularly placename sequences, that are employed in the texts. Likewise, memorization seems not to play a part in *sa-yalab* performance, although, again, interviews indicated that Kaluli remember poetic lines and images that they have heard in other *sa-yalab* and thus might commit certain forceful ones to memory and then "reinvent" them at a later time. And finally, it seems quite true that there is no focus on "correct" or "authentic" versions, as each *sa-yalab* is, as a whole, valued as a momentary and reflexive performance, rather than a specific instance of a preformed item, judged relative to a pre-existing standard or image of that preformed item as it is performed.

This profile rests quite in distinction to Kaluli song in general, and the five kinds of Kaluli song in particular. In the cases of some song genres, none of the four characterizations apply; texts can be fixed in advance, divorced from performance, worked up and memorized, and listened to and judged as to whether they are correct and authentic versions of a particular song linked to a specific composer. In the case of one song genre, *gisalo* (the most important Kaluli song genre), there are two performance manifestations: ceremonies and spirit-medium seances. In the former instance none of the four characteristics apply (as noted above); in the latter instance criterion one applies, two and three partially apply, and four does not apply. In the cases of the four other song genres (*heyalo*, *koluba*, *sabio*, and *iwo*), at least two of the four do not apply, although this is further complicated by whether the song is performed in a ceremonial context or in an informal everyday context (for example, during garden or sago work). This kind of variation nicely illustrates Finnegan's point about problematic attempts to simplify oral composition with across-the-board generalities.

This variation also illustrates how the oral-formulaic theory must be considered carefully in relation to genre, and in relation to the social dictates and expectations of the situation. Kaluli value some genres for their more spontaneous, improvised, composed-in-performance, and emergent properties. Others are highly valued precisely for their difference—as performances of carefully pre-crafted melodies and texts, even if they recycle very familiar melodic contours or textual themes. *Sa-yalab* conform well to the parameters of oral-formulaic theory, in good part for reasons of local aesthetics: what makes a *sa-yalab* compelling for Kaluli listeners is the sense that it is truly unique and spontaneous, with

in-the-moment and immediate thoughts rendered poetically, a simultaneous voicing of personal and collective memory, an evocation of the pain of separation and the ratification of shared experiences. While Kaluli songs have much of the thematic focus of *sa-yalab* (food, sharing, maps of experience, personal relationships and their ruptures), their evocational stance is the inverse: they are crafted to make others cry. The craft of *sa-yalab* crying, on the other hand, is the spontaneous creation of song. The strong character of this ethnoaesthetic creates a kind of dual *modus operandi* for Kaluli oral poetics, with one variety similar to the features evinced by the oral-formulaic theory, and one greatly dissimilar.

Emotion

Another way to open up some dimensions of how the practices of *sa-yalab* involve a complex interplay of collective and individual sensibilities is to address the socio-psychological role played by the wailing itself, and then to review the issue of singing improvised lines while wailing. This perspective takes us to the issue of just how the physiological production of tears is linked to the feelings encoded and evinced by *sa-yalab* texts in performance. Jerome Neu, a philosopher concerned with the representation of emotion, has recently surveyed the literature on crying and critiqued the commonplaces on the topic that derive from Darwin, James, Freud, and those ethologists and psychologists who reify the mind/body split in their theories. In contrast, he argues that "emotional tears, unlike mechanically induced or reflex tears, are mediated by thought. This is not to say they are the product of conscious deliberation and calculation, but it is to say that they depend on how we perceive the world, on how we think of it, rather than on how the world simply, in fact, is. They express our nature as well as the nature of the world" (l987:35).

Neu's thesis, that we cry because we think, is nicely borne out by Kaluli metalinguistics, ethnography, and ethnopsychology. In Kaluli metalinguistics, the term *sa-yalab* consists of the prefix *sa-* and the verb *yalab* (third-person present form). This is an onomatopoeic verb formed from the sound word *ya-*, signifying the sound of the wailing voice, and *-alab* (from imperative *alama*) meaning "say like that." Several Kaluli verbs are formed this way, with an onomatopoeic stem attached to the verb for "say like that." The prefix *sa-* is semantically quite complex; it can be attached to any verb of soundmaking to denote that it is texted, with an "inside." For example, when the verb for "whistle" is prefixed by *sa-* it means to whistle with words in mind. When the verb for "sing" is prefixed by *sa-* it means to "compose," that is, to add text to the sound. *Sa-* can also be prefixed to sense verbs or verbs of communicative modality; when

added to the verb for "hear" it means to "gossip," when prefixed to the verb for "speak" it means to "speak poetically," that is, with "inside" meanings. *Sa-* then carries the sense of "inside," "text," "thought," "meditation," mental activity apart from apparent surface physical substance (for linguistic and social elaboration, see Feld l990:92-93, 132-38, 165-70, 252). In the case of *sa-yalab*, the *sa-* prefix distinguishes the kind of weeping as a thoughtful, melodic, texted, meditated variety, different from the other kinds of *yalab* mentioned earlier. This metalinguistic construction of the term *sa-yalab* argues for the idea that Kaluli women weep tears of ideas; they cry to think and think to cry. *Sa-yalab* is the height of intellect as affect for Kaluli; it is thoughtful crying, an evocation of memory through the process of melodic-sung-texted weeping.

Psychologists and psychoanalysts have in the past equated weeping with urination, with a cleansing of toxic substance, and with a safe dissipation of aggressive impulses. "Having a good cry" is thus regarded as a cathartic but useful purging of negative substance and feeling. The larger Western commonsense assumption, bolstered by some academic psychology, in which this view of catharsis is situated is that art and expressive behavior generally act as a safety valve in social life; when emotions "build up" to a "boiling point" they must be released, and the release is accomplished by some outpouring. Expressive behavior like ritual wailing is thus sometimes taken in a strictly functionalist sense to represent a bursting of the social seam, an overflow, a chaotic falling apart whose venting leads to the restitution of normal, orderly, rational, integrated behavior. This view sees the dispersal and elimination of excessive, negative, or destructive feelings as key functions of expressive acts.

I think it much more reasonable to argue the opposite scenario, that the key affective quality of Kaluli ritual wailing is a creative "pulling together" of affect rather than its "falling apart" signaled by dispersal of emotional byproducts. Ritual wailing for Kaluli serves much more to centrally display and focus the aesthetics of emotionality, and to positively value these social articulations as organized, thoughtful expressions of personal and social identities as deeply felt. The kind of musical and textual cohesiveness articulated by "lift-up-over sounding," multi-voiced *sa-yalab* is in many ways the prototypical case of productive sociability for Kaluli. Wailing is not a chaotic indication of personal aggressive impulses but rather the placement of felt thought and memory at center stage, articulated simultaneously with maximized autonomy and sociability. It would be hard to imagine such a spontaneous yet socially orchestrated, productive, and coherent manifestation as anything "mediated by thought." *Sa-yalab* are surely as much about thinking as they are about feeling, as

much head-felt as heart-felt, as much intended as impulsive, as much cultural as natural. Indeed, in many ways the most appropriate gloss for the Kaluli term *sa-yalab*, a gloss that captures the mélange of affect and cognition involved, is the one suggested in the main title of this essay: "wept thoughts."

The Kaluli bias is entirely in the opposite direction of the Western valuation when it comes to situating the meaning of emotionality as encoded in these performances. Playbacks of recordings of women's *sa-yalab* spontaneously elicit highly positive evaluative remarks; there is clear appreciation for the way women articulate for the collectivity the essence of what it means to be in the moment, to be fully saturated in a sensibility that brings thoughts to the mind with tears to the eyes. Traditionally no attempts were ever made to constrain *sa-yalab*; these performances were considered vital and necessary parts of social life. In recent years, however, attempts to discourage *sa-yalab* and to negatively value their performance have emerged. Such attempts emanate entirely from evangelical missionaries and from evangelized Kaluli under their influence. The irony of course is that nothing about *sa-yalab* really violates Christian teaching; what they violate is the particular cultural background of the Australian missionaries, who tend to emphasize strong repression of emotional display in all affairs.

Gender and Genre

Many authors have cited a link between the expression of emotion and the voicing of social and personal tensions and conflicts; this is often related to the question of role distance and the position of lament as a largely (and in many places, exclusively) women's genre (for an overview, see Sherzer l987:112-14). Catherine Lutz's recent work opens a new window to this issue through an accounting of Western ethnopsychological biases linking gender and emotion. She observes that "emotion occupies an important place in Western gender ideologies; in identifying emotion primarily with irrationality, subjectivity, the chaotic and other negative characteristics, and in subsequently labelling women as the emotional gender, cultural belief reinforces the ideological subjugation of women" (l986:288). Moreover, "the association of the female with the emotions is reinforced by the naturalness that the two purportedly share. The view of men and of cognition as each more cultural and more civilized contrasts with the primeval associations of the concepts of the female, the emotions, and nature, each of which is simpler, more primitive, and more anti-structural than the male, cognition, and culture" (300).

It is interesting in this regard how much the Western ethno-

psychological link among women, emotionality, and irrationality is not shared by Kaluli. For them, men are by far the more typically and stereotypically emotional gender, the more unpredictable, potentially irrational, the more moody, prone to burst out in tears at any moment or become flamboyantly seized with tantrums of rage or sadness. Kaluli men seem to have more trouble controlling anger and upset than do Kaluli women, and this fact is clearly recognized. Men's crying—*iligi-yalab*, *gana-yalab*, *gana-gili-yalab*—is less controlled, momentary, hysterical, and often accompanied by physical trembling and angry gestures. Women's crying—*gese-yalab* and *sa-yalab*—is more melodic, texted, controlled, reflective, and sustained. These qualities parallel general emotional display patterns: Kaluli women typically act more steady, reliable, and even-tempered in everyday matters, and the obvious composure under intense stress that is indicated by their *sa-yalab* performances is an expressive extension of that constellation. Kaluli men, on the other hand, are given to marked sudden affect changes, moody grimaces and gestures, aggressive or withdrawn posturing, and bursts from sulkiness to exuberance; in common parlance Kaluli men basically "let it all hang out."

While Kaluli men and women all value *sa-yalab* as a positive social performance and essential expressive ritual, the contrast with male poetic song is instructive. Song is obviously a more highly valued form and is considered more powerfully evocative, especially by Kaluli men. Song is aimed at, and succeeds in, making others cry. Because of its controlled, composed, calculated, premeditated, and highly planned construction to move others to tears in the context of elaborate ceremonies, poetic song is presented by men as the fine high point of their ability to evoke, to initiate, to place themselves in the social spotlight.

While positively valuing women's *sa-yalab*, Kaluli men do certainly regard it as a more spontaneous, natural expression. But that does not mean that they regard it as impulsive, wild, irrational, uncontrolled, or less thoughtful than song—only less refined and manipulative in the outcomes and social ends served. That male forms of weeping are momentary outbursts that are not sustained is read as distinctly uncontrolled by both Kaluli men and women. Kaluli men have explicitly told me that women's *sa-yalab* are distinct from more typically male forms of wailing precisely insofar as the male forms are impulsive, wild, and often require others to restrain or help the convulsing wailer gain some composure. On the other hand, Kaluli men evaluate women's weeping by stressing a direct principle: the more song-like the better. What this means is that as *sa-yalab* become more textually cohesive they become more like song in the way that they induce and demand contemplation from listeners. When the thematic images and placenames build and develop into a cumulative climaxing structure ("making hard," *halaido domaki*), then *sa-yalab*, like composed

ceremonial songs, can also move listeners to tears.

What we have here is an expressive economy in which both male and female forms are positively valued, but where the controlled elaborate ceremonial arena gives special emphasis to male forms. Yet the egalitarian dimension comes in through the way in which the evaluative heightening of male song does not proceed through a devaluative lessening of female modes of expression, nor through an ideological move that situates the character of the female expressive form at the irrational, impulsive, uncognized, noncultural border. Kaluli men do not seem particularly threatened or agitated by the importance accorded to *sa-yalab*, but they do tend to point out that what makes *sa-yalab* most forceful to them is the quality of being musically and (particularly) textually close to the craft and feeling of a composed song. Men seem to be saying that *sa-yalab* is intrinsically important and good, but better when it sounds and feels like their way of doing things, in other words, their mode of constructing poetic song.

For their part women tend not to draw this comparison—*sa-yalab* is *sa-yalab* and song is song; they are just "different" (*kole*). When I told Ulahi what men had to say about *sa-yalab*, namely that a song-like construction is what makes them good, she simply responded "men can hear it that way" and would make nothing more of it. I was particularly interested in Ulahi's views on this because she had composed many songs, was an accomplished singer, and was quite articulate and knowledgeable about song form and poetics. But Ulahi and other women with whom I discussed this issue seemed to feel that *sa-yalab* and song were just very different things. They did not relate the positive valuation of *sa-yalab* to song-like textual properties. Rather they related the positive valuation to the way women can singly speak out in *sa-yalab* to articulate feelings that concern the collectivity.

Despite these differences of rationalization, it is clear that the focus of gender specificity in *sa-yalab* is not really in the area of message content. The texts of women's wailing are not about issues or feelings that are unique to women, nor about specifically female anger or distress over death. The message content (generally, shock and disbelief; shared experiences centered around lands, food, and family; insinuations in "turned-over words" as to the underlying cause of the death) is socially general. Gender specificity in *sa-yalab* is marked more singularly at the level of the stylization of spontaneous crying into a melodic-sung-texted form that may be performed in solo or multi-voiced fashion. This stylization into a reflective, sustained, controlled form in the context of intensely charged sentiments speaks to the highly culturalized and cognized presentation of Kaluli female emotionality, whatever Kaluli men might venture about its more natural and improvised character in comparison to

compositionally crafted, ceremonial poetic song.

The "Paths" of "Placenames"

 Keith Basso has recently urged that "placenames are arguably among the most highly charged and richly evocative of all linguistic symbols. Because of their inseparable connection to specific localities, placenames may be used to summon forth an enormous range of mental and emotional associations—associations of time and space, of history and events, of persons and social activities, of oneself and stages in one's life." He continues: "Poets and songwriters have long understood that economy of expression may enhance the quality and force of aesthetic discourse, and that placenames stand ready to be exploited for this purpose" (1988:103). Basso's ethnographic and linguistic work elaborates these propositions, detailing the "pictured depictions" of Apache conversation as "a reciprocal representation and visualization of the ongoing thought of participating speakers" (109) which must be embellished with "add-on" interpretations. He shows that descriptive precision is essential to Apache narrative; listeners must be able to imagine settings for events, and "the evocative power of placenames is most dramatically displayed when a name is used to substitute for the narrative it anchors, "standing up alone" (*'o'áá*), as Apaches say, to symbolize the narrative as well as the wisdom it contains" (112-13).

 Basso's analysis resonates well with the expressive uses of placenames in Kaluli song, narrative, conversation, or *sa-yalab*. Human relationships, all metaphorically encapsulated through what Kaluli call "paths" (*tok*), are literal "maps" of places (*hen wi*, "placenames") whose naming evokes specific shared life experiences as well as embodiments of identity and value. In *sa-yalab* the most common form of placename citation is the formula: "my + {kinship/relationship term} + you and I + {placename}." These translate as "my {relation}, you and I were together at {place}." Intensified emotional force accrues to such lines by the use of an abbreviated linguistic formula, namely *nani* ("you and I") + placename, with no verb. Dropping the verb from the last position of the word order centers the placename in that focused, final position, somewhat animating it with a verbal quality (Kaluli is a verb-final language). This formula marks a particular directness and affective projection; it signals the sensation of co-being at a place. Such lines are sometimes followed or embellished by a second parallelistic line citing a kind of tree, physical feature, or bird found at the place, or followed and embellished by a rhetorical question or remark about the rupture of what has been or could continue to be experienced at that place. Other common follow-ups include quote

directives, for example, "my {X}, you and I were together at the {A} tree at {B}, my {X}; 'always look up to the top branches of the {A} tree,' you say like that to me, my {X}." Here the wailer invokes the place and memory, and follows with the directive for the deceased to say her quoted words back to her. This signals that the deceased should direct her attention to the way he will appear to her (as a bird in the top branches of that tree) in the future. The lines thus link the power of the habitual past association with the rupture and the durative potential future recasting of the relationship, embodied through the same places.

Particularly in the context of their intertextual recitation in *sa-yalab*, placenames and their sequences signal the recognition that life proceeds through actions and events given uniqueness and singularity through locales; locales become an embodiment of the pleasures and difficulties associated with those actions and events. Through placename intertextuality each text is grounded not only in its moment but also in prior, contiguous, imagined, or actual experiences which multiply the referents of the words as well as the qualities of the performance and intensity of feelings in the moment. *Sa-yalab* placenames do more than encode sequences that give texts cohesion; they reveal the cohesion processually and thematically, intensified through performance. More-over, placenames do not just encode memory; they stimulate social recall and imagination, and they revive and reveal and foreshadow feelings, again intensified by the specifically bounded nature of performance. Voicing memories through placenames in *sa-yalab* performance produces emergent feelings of empathy, connectedness—the sense of sameness through difference. As Kaluli so often said to me listening to a playback of another's *sa-yalab*, "yes, I've felt/understood it that way too."

Speaking of what the Apaches call the "strength" of expressive discourse, Basso concludes that "it is my impression that those utterances that perform the broadest range of mutually compatible actions at once are those that Apaches experience as having the greatest communicative impact. In other words, the expressive force of an Apache utterance seems to be roughly proportionate to the number of separate but complementary functions it accomplishes simultaneously..." (l988:121). This general proposition and the Apache metalinguistic label ("strength") and aesthetic ethnotheory outlined by Basso also resonate deeply with the Kaluli situation. Kaluli speak of the "hardness" or "force" (*halaido)* of utterances, texts, and performances, and of the *halaido domaki*, their "making hard" through dramatic cumulative climaxing structures (Feld l990:l26-29, 138, 142, 153-56; also see Feld and Schieffelin l982). "Making hard" is an essential aspect of the planned climaxing structure of Kaluli songs, and it is their "hardening," typified by sequences of placenames, that moves listeners to tears. While "making hard" is not an essential distinctive feature

of the construction of all *sa-yalab*, it is clearly a feature that makes *sa-yalab* powerfully evocative, and it is among the most highly valued features of the genre, one that distinguishes well-remembered voices and texts from others.

The aesthetic feeling of "hardness" that accrues to placenames in Kaluli *sa-yalab* derives from several forms of poetic intensification, or, in Jakobson's famous formulation (1960), "auto-referentiality," the drawing of attention to a message's form and the consequent pleasure of that recognition. Sequence is the key device that accomplishes this poetic function in large measure. The progression of places, moving closer to the scene of the death, or farther away from it, moving through the text and through the time of its voicing, submerge the listener in a bounded mini-reality of places and their evocation. When several voices cite a progression of places, and the progression interacts as well as follows separate trajectories, then the poetic possibilities are complexly multiplied. This is the kind of poetic "hardness" that results from the intertextuality previously discussed.

Finally, the textual environments of placenames evidence a key feature that poetically intensifies their force. This is the use of aspectual markers for the continuous past and durative future. The constructions of "were always," "had always," or "would always" utterances, and their parallelistic shifts to "will always" and "from now on and forever" utterances, provide a powerful means to frame the instantaneous signification of temporality, liminality, and transition, generally mediated through placenames. This force is situated in lines like "we would always garden at {X}, I will always hear your voice in the {A} tree at {X}." Such lines link the experiences and evocative power of places with the recognition that rupture and change are in process, that continuities embody transformations.

Conclusion and Questions

To close I want to underscore that the approach taken here is hopefully a generalizable one not specific to any historical moment or cultural-geographical area. No doubt the next step in a study like this would be to provide an entire text and a detailed musico-poetic analysis and explication. But I would urge that lament forms, and particularly the collective ritual wailing varieties of lament that are found throughout the South Pacific and elsewhere, can profitably be approached first as very thick texts indeed, texts whose form, function, and meaning can be apprehended by confronting the intersection of musical, verbal, folkloric, literary, psychological, gender-related, and sociological constructs

indicated by the five topic areas that began this inquiry. Such an intersection points us to questions that get right to the heart of terms like "oral tradition" and force us to provide rigorous ethnographic assessments of their vicissitudes.

On a more specific level, I want to offer a conclusion about ritual wailing that begins by emphasizing, as Urban (1988) has, the importance of the way human societies do not confine or model ritual forms of wailing within or upon the sonic and durative patterns that strictly characterize cries indexing pain, hurt, injury, momentary sadness, or joy. Ritual wailing hosts continua of musical and linguistic elaboration, and these features are organized in culturally specific and performatively evocative ways. Some musical features along these continua of elaboration include: pitch level, degree of pitch stability, melodic contour, metric and rhythmic organization and stability, correspondence of phrase group and breath-point, degree of phrasal and sub-phrasal repetition, and amount of improvisation from base or formulaic schemes. Some linguistic features along these continua include: degree of pure sound vocalizations to use of conventional well-formed words, line length and format, phonological, syntactic, and semantic micro- and macroparallelism, correspondence of line and sub-line units with breath-points and melodic contours, ellipsis, and formulaic phrases to full syntactic constructions.

More often than not, melodic and rhythmic aspects of tune and phonological and syntactic aspects of text interact in the organization of phrases, breath groups, and lines. This interaction stylizes the musical and linguistic properties of the wailing, and further interacts with the stylization of crying icons cited by Urban to mark the wailing as a culturally specific vocalization type, and as a performance genre indexed to a range of specific situations appropriate for its enunciation.

The specific hypothesis I want to add here springs from the fact that when we move from this code level to the study of performances it is clear that many of the world's ritual wailing forms involve multiple voices interlocked in musical and textual dialectics of independent and interdependent voicing, a crucial factor in considering the potential varieties of culturally specific wailing stylizations. These distinct ways of creating a social "we" out of multiple "I's" lead to the conjecture that *humankind's earliest experiences of and experiments with musical polyphony and orally artistic intertextuality might have been intertwined in collectively improvised ritual wailing*. This hypothesis means to suggest that culturally specific styles of wailing can become codified through emergent improvised processes, and further, that this codification may be the dynamic basis for understanding facets of polyphony and intertextuality more formally codified in the verbal and musical compositional practices of the same society.

   To question the hypothesis as an implicational universal, we might ask the following. Do all societies whose verbally artistic oral traditions involve multi-voice intertextuality, and/or whose musical practices involve polyphony also have some form of significant intertextual/polyphonic dynamic in their ritual wailing? Are there societies that have a significant intertextual/polyphonic dynamic in their ritual wailing yet no verbally artistic intertextuality or musical polyphony, codified or elaborated otherwise? These questions could form the basis for an interesting comparative project aimed toward locating ritual wailing in the evolution of human expressive culture, and more critically in relation to other varieties of verbal and sung lament.[3]

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