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01 Traditional Songs Introduction

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Song Types

Introduction to Sikaiana Song Types

Update 2020

This explanation was written in the 1990s. Since then, there has been a considerable erosion in some areas of Sikaiana culture. Most notably, the Sikaiana language is not used in everyday speech, and has been replaced by Pisin and English. I cannot write with certainty about some performance today, but since the songs from my stays, both guitar songs and traditional songs, were performed in the Sikaiana language, I have to assume that there is considerable loss in the performance of the songs described here. There is a notable change in that social media is used to record and play songs in the Sikaiana language. See the songs by Island Boy on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HsfUm-rrGnw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RICKLvQQjwA>

The second one is known to me from my stays in 1980s

I collected information about songs and music as a result of my primary interest in social organization and change on Sikaiana. *1 In many areas of Sikaiana social life, including music, indigenous traditions and practices have been discontinued, altered or replaced by exogenous institutions and practices. Songs, especially composed songs, are an important medium for describing Sikaiana social relations and expressing their values. This was true in traditional song composition, and remained true in the songs that were composed to guitar music. My interest in collecting data about traditional songs was also motivated by my belief that my stay on Sikaiana in 1980-1983 was a final opportunity to record, transcribe and translate many traditional songs known only to the oldest living people. Finally, I collected songs for a personal reason. As I learned more about Sikaiana language and culture, I came to enjoy many of the songs, and they became a meaningful and fulfilling part of my stay there.

Although interested in Sikaiana songs, I am not an ethnomusicologist and I did not focus my research on the musical life of Sikaiana. I will not present an analysis of Sikaiana tunes. *2 This paper is preliminary; a full analysis of Sikaiana songs and music, especially genres, tunes and verse, requires the efforts of someone trained in ethnomusicology. In this paper, I will outline the factors causing social change on Sikaiana, describe the vocabulary of music and songs, discuss the changing contexts and styles of song performance, and finally, list and describe the terms for song genres that I collected. In another paper (Donner 1987), I intend to discuss in more detail the social significance of changing styles of song composition on Sikaiana.

Readers must remember that my research was done in the 1980s and there have been many changes in Sikaiana life. Earlier drafts of this paper were written in the 1990s and do not necessarily represent present-day Sikaiana. I have tried to update the tense here by putting appropriate passages in the past but apologize if I missed some.

The Cultural and Historical Context

Sikaiana is a Polynesian Outlier located about 100 miles east of Malaita Province in the Solomon Islands. It shares many cultural traditions with nearby Polynesian islands including Ontong Java, Tuvalu (the Ellice Islands), Nukumanu, and Taumako. There is also a notable Gilbertese influence dating from the late 19th century. During my stay in 1980-1983, the atoll had a resident population that fluctuated between 200-250 people; approximately 400-500 other Sikaiana people have emigrated from Sikaiana to other parts of the Solomon Islands. At present, Sikaiana is visited once a month by a boat. It departs from Honiara, the capital of the Solomon Islands, circumvents the northern coast of Malaita and arrives on Sikaiana to drop-off and pick-up supplies and passengers. Each way, the trip takes about 36 hours.

Although remote and geographically isolated, Sikaiana has a long experience of culture contact and change. In the mid-19th century Sikaiana was visited by whalers and traders. Manufactured trade goods such as pots, pans, bush knives, flour, and cloth were integral in the local economy by 1900. Sikaiana retained its traditional ritual system until 1929 when a group of Anglican missionaries arrived to convert the island. Within the next decade, Sikaiana's conversion to Christianity was rapid and virtually complete. After 1929, culture change has been especially intensive.

During my stays in the 1980s, Western institutions such as a local church, school, court, government council, and cooperative store were well established on the atoll. Many traditional rituals and practices were not performed for over 40 years, and were only vaguely remembered. Most Sikaiana people attended schools in other parts of the Solomon Islands. Some had secondary level educations, and a few attended colleges and universities outside of the Solomon Islands. Most people born after the island's conversion in the 1930s had spent long periods living away from Sikaiana both in schools and in occupations. Most Sikaiana people were fluent in Pidgin English, the lingua franca of the Solomon Islands, and many young men told me they were more comfortable conversing in it rather than the vernacular. Again, as of 2019, the Sikaiana language was not longer used in everyday conversations.

This changing social situation has an important impact on Sikaiana music. In discussing the songs below, I use the term "traditional" to describe the non-western genres that existed before the arrival of the Christian missionaries in 1929. Songs composed and performed after 1929 in these genres will also be labelled as "traditional". This use of the term "traditional" belies Sikaiana's complex history of interaction with neighboring islands and Europeans before 1929. Songs and styles introduced after 1929 and ultimately derived from Western European culture, I will describe as "Western" or "Western derived". This latter term belies the fact that many of these genres have been transformed in the Southwest Pacific, in the Solomon Islands and on Sikaiana.

The Vocabulary of Music and Songs

The Sikaiana verb *pese* corresponds with oral performances described by the English verb, 'sing'. The word *anu* is both a noun and verb corresponding with the English term, 'dance'. All dances that I saw have some kind of musical or singing accompaniment. The word *mako* was used by older Sikaiana people to mean 'songs with gestures or movements'. In the 1980s, however, the term *mako* has been generalized to include all performances that are sung (*pese*), including songs without movements and those composed for the guitar. (A traditional prayer form, the *kai tae*, were chanted or evoked using the verb *lani*, rather than the verb *pese*.) *Ako mako* refers to each and all of the following aspects of song performance: composing, memorizing and singing. In other contexts, *ako* means to 'learn' or to 'teach'. *Aauna* is the noun for the movements and

gestures of actions that take place during a dance; the causative form, *hakaauna* means to practice, teach or make gestures. (I collected only one term for a specific movement; *hakapepele* describes the motion of twisting and lowering the body from the knees, a frequent movement in the dances performed by young girls.)

At song festivals and dances, enthusiastic singing is described by the stative verb, *too*. Before singing a song, people call out “*hakatoo!*” the causative form of *too*. *Anumana* is an organized dance. In the 1980s, these organized dances, most often for younger people and performed to the guitar, followed evening feasts or parties (*kai*). *Hakamolimoli* describes the process of performing a dance in one neighborhood (*kaaina*) or location, and then moving to the next neighborhood or location to perform another dance. During my stays, this is done on festive occasions such as the Christmas holiday.

The most frequently used instruments were the drum (*puloto*), which was beaten during some traditional dances, and the guitar (*kitaa*), which was played by younger people. The drums were made from large metal biscuit containers. Guitars were all manufactured outside of the Solomon Islands, imported and sold in trade stores in Honiara. Both the drum and guitar were ‘struck’ or ‘rung’ (*lliki*). (*Lliki* means ‘to strike with a hand-held object’, and also to ‘ring-up’ on the telephone.) There were some ukuleles (*ukalele*), but the guitar was more popular. The term *pahu* is mentioned as an instrument in one faery tale (*tala*). Some informants said it was a Jew’s harp; others said it is a bamboo flute. I never saw either played during my stay. Sometimes a manufactured mouth organ (similar to ones I had as a child) was played to accompany English songs and guitar compositions. A conch shell (*puu*) was blown (*ili*) on special occasions and for announcements.

Some Sikaiana song genres are composed, *hatu* (from PPN **fatu*), including *siva*, *sau*, *tuki*, *tani*, *olioli*, *saka*, *mako hakatanitani* and songs for the guitar (*kitaa*). Most composed songs are attributed to a specific composer(s), describe specific individuals or events, often interpreting them in terms of Sikaiana values. *3 Composed songs often include metaphors or figurative speech, *hulihulisala*. (*Huli* means ‘to turn’; in this context, *sala* means ‘wrong’ or ‘different’.) Some Sikaiana people explained the term *hulihulisala* by referring to the “parables” in the New Testament. Sometimes, like the parables in the Bible, *hulihulisala* is used to expand or intensify a composer’s meaning. *Hulihulisala* is also used to disguise meanings in songs that describe illicit behavior such as adultery, or to disguise criticism of another person. If the song is

critical of someone, and its meanings understood, then those being criticized often will compose a reply (*sui*, literally `exchange, trade', or *hakappili*, literally `to answer back'.) Other song genres are not associated with any particular composer. These include genres with ritual significance including *kai tae*, and *suamele*, or songs that originated in other islands, such as *mako o te henua*. Some songs associated with ritual ceremonies, such as *tuki* and *kai tae hakatele*, contain words whose meanings were known only to traditional ritual leaders and are no longer understood by living Sikaiana people.*4 The *mako o te henua* have been learned from neighboring islands, and although the words are recognizably Polynesian, they were not always understood. Several Gilbertese (Kiribati) songs were sung on Sikaiana, notably the *kalana* and the *mau tolotolo*.

In traditional song composition, different types of verses are named: *mua*, *akoako*, *liaki*, *tutalua*, *tualua*, *hhati*, *haopuku*, *puku*. *5 It is not necessary to have all these types of verses in a song. An *akoako* and several *puku* provide the central structure for many songs. (In other usages, *ako* means to `teach' or `learn', *akoako* often means to `practice'; *puku* is a mound.) The *akoako* introduces the theme of the song and is repeated throughout the song. The *puku* are the different verses of a song which are not repeated. Thus, a song begins with an *akoako*, followed by the first *puku*, then the singers repeat the *akoako* and sing the second *puku*. *Mua* (literally `before') occurs before the *akoako* and is sung at the very beginning of a song. But unlike the *akoako*, it is not repeated again. In some songs, there is a *hhati* (literally `split') that follows the *akoako* and a *liaki* (literally `scatter') that follows the *hhati*. The *haopuku* (*h hao* means `to pack into') precedes the *puku*. In some songs, the different *puku* consist of only a single word or short phrase, and the *haopuku* is the unchanging verse that encompasses each *puku*. Some songs have a second verse similar to the *akoako*, called *tualua*. The *tualua* is similar in structure to the *akoako* but different in content. (*Lua* also means "two.") The first time that a tualua is sung, it is preceded by a *tutalua* that is not sung when the *tualua* is repeated. The structure of the *tualua* and *tutalua* parallels the structure of the *akoako* and *mua*.

Culture Change and the Contexts for Songs

Sikaiana culture has changed dramatically over the past 50 years (as of 1993) and these changes affected songs and music. In traditional Sikaiana society, songs were an integral part of sacred events, special ceremonies, and informal entertainment. After the island's conversion to Christianity in the 1930s, traditional rituals and ceremonies were replaced by Christian rituals and ceremonies.

During one traditional ceremony, the *puina*, men and women divided into separate groups to compose songs that criticized the opposite sex, or taunted a spouse by praising a secret adulterous relationship. During the period that songs were being composed, one group went to the western islets (Muli Akau) while the other group stayed on the main islet (Hale). Upon rejoining on the main island, each sex presented their songs to the opposite sex. A similar ceremony, *hakatoo pakupaku* was performed on main islet without going to Muli Akau. The Christian missionaries discouraged the *puina* because the ceremony praised adultery and caused hostility. A modified form of the *puina*, the *uiki hakamalooloo* was performed during school holidays in the 1940s, the (vacation or rest week'). In recent years before the 1980s, there have been very few performances of this ceremony. One was performed in 1969 to commemorate the American landing on the moon. Two have been performed since then, including during my stay in 1981. Because many people have spent long periods away from Sikaiana, they are not familiar with traditional music. Already in the 1980s, mature young males preferred performance styles ultimately derived from exogenous musical styles, including songs composed to the guitar, folk and rock music heard on the radio, and a modified form of Western style intersexual dancing.

During my stays in the 1980s, most spontaneous performances of traditional songs occurred when people have been drinking fermented toddy (*kaleve*) or other alcoholic beverages. At these times, people told me that the traditional songs are sung "inaccurately" or in an abbreviated form. There were other occasions for the performance of traditional songs, often they involve rehearsals and occur when traditional Sikaiana culture is being displayed for an important visitor to the island.

Young girls often rehearsed dances that were performed at special feasts or at the visit of an important official. I was told that many of these dances were not indigenous to Sikaiana, rather they were learned from other Polynesian islands. A Kiribati (Gilbertese) woman married to a Sikaiana man occasionally organized rehearsals and presentations of dances that I assumed to be from Kiribati or the Kiribati communities in the Solomon Islands (not to be confused with the late 19th century Gilbertese immigrants to Sikaiana).

The performance of traditional songs intensified from November through early January, which was a festive season on Sikaiana. A week in November was spent celebrating St. Andrew, the patron saint of the Sikaiana church. Two consecutive weeks were spent celebrating Christmas and New Year's. During these weeks, people were prohibited by the church from most work activities and were expected to participate in celebrations including dancing, singing and drinking.

When I first arrived on Sikaiana in November 1980, the island's males gathered together to practice traditional dances for the coming holiday season. Older men organized these sessions expressing the fear that Sikaiana traditions were being forgotten and supplanted by guitar music and Western dancing. (My arrival and interest in traditional culture may have been another stimulus.) Although many young men participated in these sessions, they preferred to play the guitar or listen to tape recorders when they had a choice.

In November 1981, partly at my initiative, the men and women of the island divided into separate groups to perform a modified *puina*, without isolating themselves at each end of the atoll. Most of the island's population participated in this event, and it was a frequent topic of conversation and interaction for several weeks.

Traditional songs were rehearsed as part of special presentations, such as the arrival of an important visitor (the Bishop of Malaita visits every year on St. Andrew's Day). In early 1982, the Sikaiana people prepared for the arrival of the Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands by rehearsing several traditional songs, including the *kai tae hakatele*, some *suamele* and *mako o te henua*.

Traditional dances were also performed during the exchanges (*penupenu*) that accompany a marriage. Goods were exchanged between the families of the mothers of

the bride and groom, and between the families of the fathers of the bride and groom. When each family makes its presentation, they engage in traditional dances to the drum (*puloto*). Occasionally, these dances were performed following a feast or party. Finally, traditional songs and dances were performed at the instigation of anthropologists. Hugo Zemp recorded some Sikaiana songs at Red Beach prior to my arrival in the Solomon Islands. Several times, groups gathered together and rehearsed traditional songs to be recorded by myself as part of my ethnographic research. As mentioned above, the spontaneous performance of traditional songs was most frequent when people are drinking alcoholic beverages and men preferred to be at least slightly inebriated when performing. People claimed, however, that as recently as 20 years before my time there (in the 1960s), Sikaiana people celebrated festivals by dancing and singing for long hours into the evening without alcoholic stimulation. During my stays, drinking was an integral part of most festive celebrations.

The Sikaiana women were more active participants than the men in performances the island's traditional songs and dances. Perhaps because their opportunities for drinking were restricted, they were more enthusiastic participants when they sober. For example, during festive weeks people move from neighborhood (*kaaina*) to neighborhood putting on performances. Most often, these groups consist of women. In the 1981 *puina*, the women's presentation of their songs was better organized than the men's. Women were more active participants in the rehearsals and presentations for important visitors to the island.

New Songs and Music on Sikaiana

During my stays in the 1980s, it seemed increasingly difficult for the Sikaiana people to sing and compose in the traditional styles. However, several popular musical styles have been introduced in the 50 years before my arrival. At church services, people sang English hymns from an English (Anglican) hymnal, and children sing Sunday School songs. (There were church hymns written in the vernacular, but, perhaps due to inaccurate translations, they are rarely sung.) Sikaiana men learned a variety of American and English songs which they sang when drinking, including "You Are My Sunshine," "Pack up your Troubles," "The United States Marines Marching Song," and "There is a Church in the Valley."

The guitar (*kitaa*) was introduced onto Sikaiana in the late 1960s, and during my stay was a very popular expressive form for unmarried young men (*tamataane*) and women (*tamaahine*). This music was considered to be appropriate for unmarried people, usually interest decreased when a person becomes married. Guitar songs were composed in the Sikaiana language and, as in traditional composition, often used metaphors (*hulihulisala*) to intensify meanings or disguise criticisms and secrets. These songs were played at dances between young men and women, which occurred as frequently as several times a month. This intersexual dancing, termed *hula*, was introduced onto Sikaiana in the 1970s. In traditional society, men and women did not dance in this fashion. Sikaiana parents often complained that guitar music and dancing was responsible for immoral sexual behavior and the breakdown of some Sikaiana traditions.

Although guitar music is not traditional and often used western tunes, it is indigenous in many respects. The choice of the vernacular for composition is not insignificant. Many of the young men who composed and sang the songs claimed to be more fluent in Pidgin English than the vernacular. In describing specific events in the vernacular, guitar songs represented a music style that is oriented to the Sikaiana community. Moreover, Western rock and folk music was available on tapes, but they were not played at organized dances.

Young men preferred to perform guitar music when they have been drinking, although sometimes they sang sober. Young women, whose drinking was curtailed by local regulations and convention, enjoyed singing to the guitar when the sober. Several times during my stay groups of young people recorded guitar songs on cassettes and sent them to Sikaiana relatives and friends in other parts of the Solomon Islands.

Finally, tape recorders and radios were ubiquitous on Sikaiana. People listened to the Solomon Islands Broadcasting System (SIBC) which had programming that includes relatively contemporary Western rock and folk music. People also played this music on tape cassettes.

Song Genres

The following list of terms defines the song names and genres that I collected during my stays on Sikaiana. In collecting data about these terms, I relied on my informant's definitions of these song genres. I have not done an independent analysis of tunes or verse style. Several genres are archaic and informants differed in describing genres. I have included song types about which I have limited information in a separate section following the list below.

KAI TAE are ritual prayers that were sung to specific spirits (*aitu*, *tupua*). (*Kai* means 'eat'; *tae* means 'shit'.) Unlike the other performances listed in this paper, the verb *pese* is not used to describe the performance of a *kai tae*. Instead, the verb *lani* is used: *lani tona kai tae*, 'chant his prayer'. The *teika lle* is a ceremony performed when a large fish or whale was found beached on the reef. As the fish was being taken ashore, *kai tae* were sung to the various spirits (*tupua*) who were believed to inhabit different locations of the reef. *Kai tae* were also sung in the island's central ritual house (*hale aitu*). Some *kai tae* still remembered.

KAI TAE HAKATELE is a specific traditional prayer that was sung as part of the *manea*, a ceremony performed when the central ritual house (*hale aitu*) was rebuilt. The etymology of *kai tae* was explained above; *hakatele* means to 'make run or flow'. This prayer is quite long and has several different sections. During my stay in 1982, many of the island's older people gathered together to rehearse a performance of this prayer for the visit of the Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands. After disagreements about its proper wording, a form was agreed upon, rehearsed, and performed. (My recollection is that the term *pese* was used to describe the performance of this form rather than *lani*, see *kai tae*). The words and their meanings are obscure. I was told that only the ritual leaders understood them.

KALANA is a specific song with dance actions that depicts combat. This song was brought to Sikaiana by refugees from the Gilbert Islands in the 19th century. The *kalana* is rarely performed at present, and does not seem to be widely known.

MAKO HAKATAHAO were sung for amusement. The ones that I heard were very repetitious and seem to have little meaning. *Hakatahao* means ‘to make play.’ At present, these songs are sung very rarely.

MAKO HAKATANITANI are traditional love songs; *hakatanitani* literally means ‘to make cry.’ I do not know whether or not this term refers to a genre of songs with a distinct verse and tune style, or whether it refers to the content of songs with different verse and tune styles.

MAKO O TE HENUA literally means ‘songs of the land (or island)’. They are a large number of songs with movements that originated in other islands. In some songs, the words are Polynesian but not always Sikaiana. In other songs, the words could be Sikaiana but the meanings seem obscure or very simplistic. The oldest living women during my stay, Fane Telena, remembers learning and singing these songs on informal occasions in the evenings with her foster father when she was a young girl. Fane was probably born about 1900. These are still performed on festive occasions including the arrival of the Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands to Sikaiana.

MAU TOLOTOLO is the name of a specific song that was brought to Sikaiana by Gilbertese refugees in the late 19th century. It is performed as part of a ceremony involving fosterage. People gather in secret and go to the house of someone who has a foster child. They sing the *mau tolotolo* as they approach. If they sing the song “correctly” (since it is in Gilbertese, it is difficult), they may demand labor or material goods from the foster parents. The foster parents are obliged to meet these demands in order to prove their love for their foster child. I heard that one had been performed recently before my arrival. I saw one performance during my stay, but the performers did not sing the song accurately.

NAHA are songs that recount events that occurred during a legendary invasion of people from *Tona*. In legend, this event took place about 12 generations ago and resulted in a massacre of the Sikaiana people. The Sikaiana associate these invaders with the island of Tonga, but *tona* also means ‘south’ in many Polynesian languages. I collected very

few *naha*, although it is possible that they are still sung, especially when older people are drinking.

OLIOLI is a genre of composed (*hatu*) songs with a different tune and verse style(s) from *sau*, *siva*, and *saka*. It is performed without dance motions. *OLI* means 'to swing back and forth'. They were performed at the *puina* and on other secular occasions. Like *siva* and *sau*, at present, they are composed rarely and sung occasionally when people have been drinking.

SAKA is a genre of composed (*hatu*) songs from pre-Christian times that are lascivious and praise a secret sweetheart or lover (*hina*). They have the same tune as a *tani*. After their arrival in 1929, the missionaries discouraged the composition and performance of these songs. In the 1980s *Saka* were still known and performed occasionally, especially when older people were drinking. Due to their ribald content, they should not be performed in mixed company, especially in the presence of true or classificatory cross-sex siblings (*kave*). So far as I know, none were composed during my stay.

SAU are a genre of composed (*hatu*) songs with a tune and verse style that was described to me as similar to, but slower than, *siva*. *Sau* were often composed during the *puina*, introducing a theme that was elaborated in several *siva*. *Sau* are still sung, especially when people are drinking, and are composed occasionally such as the song feast in 1981 described earlier.

SIVA are a genre of composed (*hatu*) songs with a tune and verse style that is similar to the *sau*. At the *puina*, a *sau* introduced a theme that was elaborated in several *siva*. At present, *siva* are still sung when people are drinking or during rare performances of the *puina*. On those rare occasions when people compose in traditional style, my impression is that they prefer to compose *siva* rather than *sau*, because *siva* are faster paced.

SUAMELE are songs with dance actions. The words of the *suamele* are archaic and not fully understood. (I was able to obtain a plausible translation for one *suamele* from an intelligent man familiar with other Polynesian languages). In traditional society, the *suamele* were performed towards the end of the *teika lle*, a ceremony performed when a large fish washed ashore on the reef. Men and women broke into separate groups along the shore, faced each other, and then did a series of *suamele* moving to different locations along the shore (*hakamolimoli*). At present, suamele are still known and performed at holiday festivals, the arrival of an important visitor, or other special occasions.

TANI were funeral dirges or laments composed at the death of person by his/her relatives in order to commemorate important events in that person's life. *Tani* were no longer being composed in the 1980s but some are still known. At present, there are a few *tani* that seem to be especially popular, usually they are sung when people are drinking.

TTANI KKAI are short parts in faery tales (*tala*) that are sung. Sometimes the tune of a *ttani kkai* is used for another song.

TAU were sung in ritual houses (*hale henua*) at a special ceremony called the *kunaaika*. This ceremony is no longer performed, and I do not fully understand its significance. I was unable to collect a *tau* during my stay.

TUUHOE were associated with long distance voyaging (*holau*). *Tuu* means 'to stand'; 'hoe' is the word for paddle. There are two *tuuhoe*, associated with two legendary heroes, Semalu and Kaetekita who are reported to have travelled long distances in outrigger canoes about 12 generations ago. Parts of these songs are sung when people are drinking; an entire performance of both *tuuhoe* can be obtained with rehearsals.

TUKI are composed (*hatu*) songs that had ritual significance in traditional Sikaiana society. They were sung in the ritual houses (*hale henua*) and by mediums to summon

their ancestral spirits (*aitu mate*). I was able to collect several during my stay, although informants disagreed about whether some should be called *kupu* or *tuki*.

I have very limited information about the following songs.

AASI is the Mota term for ‘hymn’. Mota was the official language of the Anglican missionaries in the Solomon Islands until the late 1930s and many elder Sikaiana people learned Mota in mission schools. I didn’t hear this term used often.

HAKATELETELE VAKA is a song (or song style) sung to commemorate long distance voyaging (*holau*) and as a ritual aid for men who were engaged in this pursuit. *Hakatele* means to ‘make run, sail or flow’; is an ‘outrigger canoe’. I was able to collect only one example of this form. One informant claimed that the example I collected was actually a *kupu* associated with Savaiki, one of the ritual houses (*hale henua*).

KUPU are ritual prayers associated with the ritual houses (*hale henua*). Informants differed about whether certain songs should be called “*tuki*” or “*kupu*”. As discussed above the *vaka hakatelele* was described by another informant as a *kupu*.

MAKO MAHAMAHA are sung during the *teika lle* ceremony which is performed when a large fish or whale is beached on the reef. The word *tau* is used to describe the act of performing these. I was able to collect several.

OLITANA. This term was collected late in my stay from an elderly informant who claimed it was a type of prayer to control the weather.

SEA, in my understanding, is not a song genre but rather one particular song that was learned from the Ontong Java people.

CONCLUSION

Songs and music were an integral part of Sikaiana social life, and changes in social life are reflected in the musical styles. By the time of my stays in the 1980s, there had been a “recontextualization” of many traditional song genres. (See Barrere, Pukui and Kelly 1980 for an example of this process from Hawaii). During my stays in the 1980s, songs that were integral parts of rituals and ceremonies in traditional Sikaiana society were rehearsed and presented to outside visitors (and anthropologists) as representative of Sikaiana traditional culture or *kastam* (a borrowing from the English word “custom”). For example, they were performed when the church’s Bishop arrived and when the Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands visited Sikaiana. On informal occasions, drinking alcoholic beverages had become a frequent context for musical performances.

New musical styles have been incorporated into Sikaiana society. During my stays in the 1980s, the guitar music and intersexual dancing were accepted with enthusiasm by younger people. The music composed to the guitar represented the integration of an exogenous musical style with an indigenous style. Many tunes were derived from Western songs, but the composition is in the vernacular, builds upon an indigenous style of metaphorical expression (*hulihulisala*), and often described specific events and individuals in terms of indigenous values. Although guitar music was a viable expressive form among young people, I thought that Western folk and rock music may become increasingly important for the Sikaiana people.

NOTES

1. I spent 33 months among the Sikaiana people, mostly on Sikaiana and in Honiara between 1980 and 1993. Funding for this research was provided by the National Science Foundation, and material costs for a lexicon of the Sikaiana language was provided by the Australian Cultural Preservation Fund.
2. I did not collect specific data about several important contexts for singing. For example, I never studied the hymns sung in church. I did not keep notes of the songs that people sang when they were drinking, nor did I study the dances frequently rehearsed and performed by the young girls as part of feasts and presentations for

important visitors. I recorded some songs after rehearsals by the Sikaiana people. With the help of Sikaiana people, in particular Dr. John Kilatu, I transcribed the words of these songs and translated them. I have no transcriptions of tunes. I did make a systematic effort to get information about the terminology of songs and musical styles.

There are several times when I did extensive recording of songs. In mid-1981 several older people born before World War II rehearsed and performed some traditional songs that were composed in their lifetimes. In November and December of 1981, I participated in sessions when men gathered together to compose songs as part of a modified *puina*. On Easter 1982, I sponsored a rehearsed performance of traditional songs by the islands' older women. I also made several recordings of traditional songs at various other times under informal circumstances. For data about traditional song composition, I am especially indebted to Reuben Tenai, Dr. John Kilatu, and Fane Telena, among others. Beginning in March and April of 1981, I began collecting transcriptions of words, translations, explanations and recordings of songs composed for the guitar. This effort continued throughout my stay. I did not analyze the tunes. For this data about guitar songs, I am indebted to Duke Laupa and Frank Saovete among others.

3. The Sikaiana pronoun system marks the relationship between the composer of the song and the person the song is about. Sikaiana has two classes of personal pronouns, an `o' class and an `a' class (in other Polynesian languages these are often described as "dominant" and "subordinate" or "inalienable" and "alienable".) The "o" class of personal pronouns mark possession of body parts, social relationships and part-whole relationships (e.g. the walls of a house); the "a" class marks possession of material objects (tools, food, etc). A composer refers to a song he/she has written with the "a" form (*tana mako*) and the person for whom the song was composed (whether the song is complimentary or critical) with the "o" form (*tona mako*).

4. In other contexts, ritual language often was obscure or unintelligible. During spirit possession, the familiar spoke in an unintelligible language that had to be interpreted. At present, although many Sikaiana people are not completely fluent English, church services are conducted in English, although they may understand the parts of the liturgy that are being performed.

5. This system of verse terms was given to me for the composition of *sau* and *siva*. My notes indicate these terms also apply to the verses of *saka*, *tuki*, *tani*, and *tuuho*, but

not to *olioli*, *mako o te henua* and *kai tae*. I never heard these terms used for songs composed for the guitar. These terms were collected without detailed analysis of specific songs, and these definitions must be considered tentative.

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