"We come and go,
but the land is always here.
And the people who love it
and understand it are the people
who own it—for a little while."

Willa Cather, *O Pioneers!*

Senses of Place

Edited by Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso

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Senses of Place

power is given to very few people and comes mainly from dreams and visions. It should also be noted that possession of supernatural power does not necessarily imply the presence of wisdom. As Dudley Patterson's story of the grasshopper plague at Cibecue illustrates clearly, persons with supernatural power sometimes act unwisely.

13. The idea that smooth-minded thinker and wise story character "flow swiftly together" is nicely consistent with other dimensions of the water imagery that pervades the Apache model of wisdom. The fact that wisdom is likened by Apaches to water—and that using wisdom, or drinking it, is considered basic to survival—seems more than appropriate for a people who have lived for centuries in a demanding desert climate.

14. It is just for this reason, I believe, that novelists and journalists are often more successful than academic writers in conveying to readers an unfamiliar sense of place. Rather than trying to describe sense of place, or somehow attempting to characterize it, the former seek to *evoke* it by presenting a host of local details and taking note of their own and others' reactions to them. An implicit aim of this essay is to suggest that similar strategies, suitably modified, can be usefully employed by cultural anthropologists and other social scientists interested in the problem.

15. For several years after Dudley Patterson's untimely death, I sought without success to discuss the subject of wisdom with other members of the Cibecue community. Everyone I approached gave the same reason for resisting my overtures, namely that he or she could add nothing to what Dudley had already taught me. "But how can you be so sure?" I asked one of my Apache friends in the summer of 1985. "I'm sure," Nick Thompson replied. "You had a good teacher. You know what you're supposed to know. Don't get greedy. It's not wise." On that unequivocal note, I let the matter drop and found other things to do.

3

Waterfalls of Song

An Acoustemology of Place Resounding in Bosavi, Papua New Guinea

Steven Feld

The sense of place: the idiom is so pervasive that the word "sense" is almost completely transparent. But how is place actually sensed? How are the perceptual engagements we call sensing critical to conceptual constructions of place? And how does this feelingful sensuality participate in naturalizing one's sense of place? These questions guide my inquiry into the sensing and sensuality underlying how places are named and poetically evoked by Kaluli people of Bosavi, Papua New Guinea. My desire is to illuminate a doubly reciprocal motion: as place is sensed, senses are placed; as places make sense, senses make place. Because sound and an ear- and voice-centered sensorium are central to Kaluli experience and expression in the tropical rainforest, the goal of this exploration is to interpret what I call an acoustemology, by which I mean local conditions of acoustic sensation, knowledge, and imagination embodied in the culturally particular sense of place resounding in Bosavi.

The chapter opens with brief notes on sensation, sound, synesthesia, and soundscapes that provide context for the general framework of my inquiry, that of a social phenomenology and hermeneutics of senses of place. I outline ways in which research on acoustic experience and expression of place has remained relatively underdeveloped and then introduce the sound world of the Kaluli. Next I offer two ethnographic sections on the acoustemology of flow. The first treats Kaluli naming practices to show how the inseparability of rainforest waters and lands is encountered and imagined to be like the flow of voice through the body's contours. This trope of flow is then examined as it appears in poetic song texts, where singing a sequence of named places takes listeners on a journey that flows along local waterways and through local lands. The flow of these poetic song paths is emotionally and physically linked to the sensual flow of the singing voice. Connecting these flowing paths reveals a Kaluli acoustemology of place relations, a fusion of space and time that joins lives and events as embodied memories. The evocative powers of

this acoustemology reach an aesthetic apex in poetic performance, where the expressive flow of the voice merges with the experiential flow of sung placenames to create waterfalls of song, a sense of place resounding.

SENSE, EMBODIMENT, SYNESTHESIA

"Perception does not give me truth like geometry but presences" (Merleau-Ponty 1964:14). What are these "presences" that are given in perception? Merleau-Ponty insisted that they were first the presences of feeling and perceiving bodies, bodies whose sensory experience was never fully sublimated to abstract cognition. Sensations, he urged, were always experienced presences, presences of what later cognitive psychologists and philosophers called an "embodied mind" (Varela, Thompson, and Rosch 1991) or a "body in the mind" (Johnson 1987).

But the senses, the body's "sensorimotor surfaces," are not limited to embodied presences, and they constitute more than experiential sites for establishing points and places of physical and social contact (Straus 1963). Drew Leder's *The Absent Body* (1990) develops this line of critique to ask why, if the body is so central to sensory experience, if it so actively situates the subject, might it also be so experientially absent or out-of-focus. Why is the body not the direct thematic object of one's attention and experience, and why does it recede from direct experience? Leder develops these questions by addressing Merleau-Ponty's observation, made in *The Structure of Behavior* (1963), that "to be situated within a certain point of view necessarily involves not seeing that point of view" (Leder 1990:12). He elaborates: "This constitutes the necessary supplement to the Gestaltist figure-background description of perception. As Merleau-Ponty writes [in *The Phenomenology of Perception,* 1962]: 'one's own body is always the third term, always tacitly understood in the figure-background structure, and every figure stands out against the double horizon of external and bodily space' " (Leder 1990:13).

Leder's conjecture as to why some bodily dimensions are always experientially foregrounded while others are backgrounded relies on the same "figure-ground gestalt to characterize not only the body's field of experience but the structure of the experiencing body itself" (Leder 1990:24). He claims that "these modes of absence arise directly out of the fundamental structure of embodiment," further characterizing "the lived body as an ecstatic/recessive being, engaged both in a leaping out and a falling back. Through its sensorimotor surface it projects outward to the world. At the same time it recedes from its own apprehension into anonymous visceral depths. The body is never a simple presence, but that which is away from itself, a being of difference and absence" (Leder 1990:103; see also Levin 1985; Schilder 1950)

Establishing this complex and multiple presence and absence of the body clearly implicates another interactive figure-and-background, that of the senses. Lived experience involves constant shifts in sensory figures and grounds, constant potentials for multi- or cross-sensory interactions or correspondences. Figure-ground interplays, in which one sense surfaces in the midst of another that recedes, in which positions of dominance and subordination switch or commingle, blur into synesthesia, "the transposition of sensory images or sensory attributes from one modality to another" (Marks 1978:8). Synesthesia points to the complexity of sensory ratios, the rich connections inherent in multiple sensation sources, the tingling resonances and bodily reverberations that emerge from simultaneous joint perceptions (Cytowic 1989). This "medley of the senses bleeding into each other's zone of expectations" (Taussig 1993:57) reveals how "the synesthetic, like the metaphoric in general, expands the horizon of knowledge by making actual what were before only potential meanings" (Marks 1978:254). Taussig's *Mimesis and Alterity* argues that this metaphoric and synesthetic potential recalls mimesis, "the magical power of replication . . . wherein the representation shares in or takes power from the represented" (1993:2). This same metaphoric and synesthetic potential also recalls iconicity, or the ways in which perceiver and perceived blur and merge through sensuous contact, experiencing inner resemblances that echo, vibrate, and linger as traces from one sensory modality to another, present at one level while absent at others, continually linking bodily experience to thought and to action (Feld 1988; Jackson 1989:119–55; Ohnuki-Tierney 1991).

But sensation, sensual presence, is still more than embodiment, more than perceptual figure-grounds, more than the potential for synesthesia. It was Henri Bergson's insight, long ago in *Matter and Memory,* that "there is no perception which is not full of memories. With the immediate and present data of our senses, we mingle a thousand details out of our past experience" (1988 [1908]:33). Hence, "what you have to explain . . . is not how perception arises, but how it is limited, since it should be the image of the whole, and is in fact reduced to the image of that which interests you" (1988 [1908]:40). Bergson's problem—linking the active body as a place of passage to processes of making memory—is developed in Edward Casey's *Remembering* (1987). He writes:

> Moving in or through a given place, the body imports its own emplaced past into its present experience: its local history is literally a history of locales. This very importation of past places occurs simultaneously with the body's ongoing establishment of directionality, level and distance, and indeed influences these latter in myriad ways. Orientation in place (which is what is established by these three factors) cannot be continually effected *de novo* but arises within the ever-lengthening shadow of our bodily past. (1987:194)

Because motion can draw upon the kinesthetic interplay of tactile, sonic, and visual senses, emplacement always implicates the intertwined nature of sensual bodily presence and perceptual engagement.

LANDSCAPE, ACOUSTIC SPACE, SOUNDSCAPE

The overwhelmingly multisensory character of perceptual experience should lead to some expectation for a multisensory conceptualization of place. But by and large, ethnographic and cultural-geographic work on senses of place has been dominated by the visualism deeply rooted in the European concept of landscape. Denis Cosgrove has analyzed how two distinct notions of landscape, both sharing a pervasive visualism, have merged in the West. In the first instance, over some four hundred years,

> the idea of landscape came to denote the artistic and literary representation of the visible world, the scenery (literally that which is seen) which is viewed by a spectator. It implied a particular sensibility . . . closely connected to a growing dependency on the faculty of sight as the medium through which truth was to be attained: 'seeing is believing.' Significant technical innovations for representing this truth included single-point perspective and the invention of aids to sight like the microscope, telescope, and camera." (1984:9)

In the second case, that of landscape as a notion incorporated into the analytical concerns of academic geography, the concept "denotes the integration of natural and human phenomena which can be empirically verified and analyzed by the methods of scientific enquiry over a delimited portion of the earth's surface" (1984:9). Cosgrove argues that these two senses of landscape "are intimately connected both historically and in terms of a common way of appropriating the world through the objectivity accorded to the faculty of sight and its related technique of pictorial representation" (1984:9).

But what of place as heard and felt? Place as sounding or resounding? In contrast to the long history of the landscape idea in both artistic and scientific inquiry and representation, approaches to ways in which worlds are sonically apprehended have shallower histories. Arguing this point, that the "hearsay" of aural-oral experience was never accorded the same evidential or representational primacy as visual "insight," Edmund Carpenter and Marshall McLuhan introduced the notion of "acoustic space" in their journal *Explorations* (1953–59). The term derived from their projects at the University of Toronto Center for Culture and Technology concerning media transformations, specifically the ways the history of orality and literacy could be reinterpreted from the vantage point of electronic communications in the twentieth century. In this context, Carpenter's article on acoustic space was the first statement describing the cultural implications of a directionally simultaneous and diffuse "earpoint," his alternative to "viewpoint" (1960). His later studies (1971, 1973, 1980) went on to relate acoustic space to visual-auditory interplays, as in the way the Inuit experience of spherical dynamic space in the Arctic related to local artistic imagination and process, especially visual puns and depictions of motion, depth, and noncontainment.

The notion of "auditory space" also emerged in the mid-1950s, in an entirely different context. The music philosopher Victor Zuckerkandl (1956), drawing substantially on the philosophy of Henri Bergson and Martin Heidegger and on the psychophysics and the Gestalt and perceptual psychology of William James, Géza Révész, and Erwin Straus, argued vigorously against the notion that music was purely an experience of tone as time. He did so by detailing ways in which space is audibly fused with time in the progression and motion of tones (1956:267–348). While this interpenetration of auditory space and time has not had a general impact on theorizations of space and place, *Music and the External World,* the first volume of Zuckerkandl's *Sound and Symbol* (1956), has certainly had a critical impact elsewhere, as in Kathleen Higgins's vigorous philosophical critique of musical Platonism (Higgins 1991), in anthropological explorations of ritual, music, and sound symbolism in the work of Ellen Basso (1985) and Paul Stoller (1989:101–22), and in Roy Wagner's theoretical essays on symbol and metaphor (1986).

Just as Zuckerkandl the musician influenced anthropologists, Carpenter the anthropologist principally influenced musicians. When composer Murray Schafer organized the World Soundscape Project at Simon Fraser University in 1970, the Carpenter and McLuhan ideas, marginal both in the anthropology of the arts and in cultural geography in the 1950s and 1960s, were introduced to composers and acousticians in a new framework, the study of the sound environment and acoustic communication. Schafer's group began recording, observing, and acoustically analyzing the sonic experience of space and place, especially in Canada and Europe, and developed an analytical vocabulary, a notation system, and a comparative framework for the study of acoustic space and its human interpretation and feedback. This work went under the general rubrics of two terms coined by Schafer, "acoustic ecology" and "soundscape design."

Schafer and his colleagues disseminated their ideas in media ranging from music compositions to radio collages and from technical reports to print and cassette travel journals, all of which led to a general synthesis, Schafer's *The Tuning of the World* (1977). This book has drawn substantial attention to the acoustic complexities of environments, especially northern ones, but its impact has largely been felt among musicians, acousticians, architectural designers, and audio and radio artist-

composer-recordists (for example, see Schafer 1993; Truax 1984; Werner 1992). Acoustic ecology and soundscape studies have had rather less impact on ethnographers, who might study how people hear, respond to, and imagine places as sensually sonic. On the other hand, humanistic geography, deeply impacted by perspectives from phenomenology in the 1970s and 1980s, began to notice the acoustic dimensions of place somewhat less cautiously (for example, Buttimer and Seamon 1980; Seamon 1979; Seamon and Mugerauer 1985; Tuan 1977) but rarely explored them, and never in the fully grounded way that would draw anthropological attention.

The work of the Carpenter-McLuhan-Schafer lineage was not taken up seriously by anthropologists; indeed, it was criticized by those most interested in its consequences for analyzing both the senses and orality-literacy issues (Feld 1986; Finnegan 1988:139–74). Despite its stated concern with sensory ratios, this line of thinking often reified a visual-auditory great divide, one that reproduced some variant of the notion that "seeing is analytical and reflective. Sound is active and generative" (Schafer 1985:96). Such oversimplified rhetoric led most ethnographers to turn their ears and sparked the critical tack taken by Don Idhe, whose phenomenological essay *Listening and Voice* pointed out the futility of countering the historical centrality of visualism in Western analytical discourses by simply erecting an antivisualism (1976:21).

What Idhe called for instead—a call recently echoed by anthropologist David Howes in *The Varieties of Sensory Experience* (1991:3–21, 167–91)—was a reevaluation of all the senses from the standpoint of their interplay. Only then, Idhe and Howes both claimed, could a serious analysis of sound emerge in an adequately experiential or ethnographic way. Given recurring tendencies to essentialize vision as a characteristic of the West (e.g., Ong 1982), in polar opposition to a presumed centrality of sound, smell, and taste that is essentialized to non-Western cultural "others," a reevaluation of sensory ratios must scrutinize how tendencies for sensory dominance always change contextually with bodily emplacement. That perspective informs my position on sound in sensory experience, specifically its implications for interpreting life-worlds of Kaluli people in Papua New Guinea.

TOWARD AN ACOUSTEMOLOGY

If, in perceiving, "our whole body vibrates in unison with the stimulus . . . [then] hearing is, like all sense perception, a way of seizing reality with all our body, including our bones and viscera" (Gonzalez-Crussi 1989:45; compare Idhe 1976:81 and Ackerman 1990:186–90 on ways

sound penetrates the body). Sound, hearing, and voice mark a special bodily nexus for sensation and emotion because of their coordination of brain, nervous system, head, ear, chest, muscles, respiration, and breathing. "The vocal mechanism involves the coordinated action of many muscles, organs and other structures in the abdomen, chest, throat and head. Indeed, virtually the entire body influences the sound of the voice either directly or indirectly" (Sataloff 1992:108). Moreover, hearing and voice are connected by auditory feedback and by physical resonance, the immediate experience of one's presence through the echo-chamber of the chest and head, the reverberant sensation of sound, principally one's own voice. By bringing a durative, motional world of time and space simultaneously to front and back, top and bottom, and left and right, an alignment suffuses the entire fixed or moving body. This is why hearing and voicing link the felt sensations of sound and balance to those of physical and emotional presence.

This position problematizes Abu-Lughod and Lutz's argument that "emotion can be studied as embodied only after its social and cultural—its discursive—character has been fully accepted" (1990:13). Although they assert that "as cultural products [emotions] are reproduced in individuals in the form of embodied experience" (1990:12), it seems unwise to abstract discourse, or the production and circulation of topics through speech styles and genres, from the embodied voice, the site of verbal articulation, the resounding place of discourse as fully feelingful habits. Emotions may be created in discourse, but this social creation is contingent on performance, which is always emergent through embodied voices (see Urban 1991:148–71).

Acoustemology, acousteme: I am adding to the vocabulary of sensorial-sonic studies to argue the potential of acoustic knowing, of sounding as a condition of and for knowing, of sonic presence and awareness as potent shaping forces in how people make sense of experiences. Acoustemology means an exploration of sonic sensibilities, specifically of ways in which sound is central to making sense, to knowing, to experiential truth. This seems particularly relevant to understanding the interplay of sound and felt balance in the sense and sensuality of emplacement, of making place. For places are as potentially reverberant as they are reflective, and one's embodied experiences and memories of them may draw significantly on the interplay of that resoundingness and reflectiveness.

Acoustemology means that as a sensual space-time, the experience of place potentially can always be grounded in an acoustic dimension. This is so because space indexes the distribution of sounds, and time indexes the motion of sounds. Yet acoustic time is always spatialized; sounds are sensed as connecting points up and down, in and out, echo and reverb,

point-source and diffuse. And acoustic space is likewise temporalized; sounds are heard moving, locating, placing points in time. The placing of auditory time is the sonic envelope created from the layered attack, sustain, decay, and resonance of sounds. The placing of auditory space is the dispersion of sonic height, depth, and directionality. Space-time inevitably sounds in and as figure and ground, as comingness and goingness. Its presence is forward, backward, side to side, and is heard in trajectories of ascent, descent, arch, level, or undulation. What these rather abstract formulations suggest, in simple terms, is that experiencing and knowing place—the idea of place as sensed, place as sensation—can proceed through a complex interplay of the auditory and the visual, as well as through other intersensory perceptual processes.

BOSAVI ACOUSTEMOLOGY: BODILY UNITY OF ENVIRONMENT, SENSES, AND ARTS

In common with their rainforest neighbors on the Great Papuan Plateau and in the surrounding rainforest region of Papua New Guinea, Kaluli people hear much that they do not see. The diffuseness of sound is significant in the tropical forest, and the bodily orientation of its inhabitants through hearing, listening, and voicing has strongly impressed itself on ethnographers who have worked in the area (e.g., Feld 1990; E. L. Schieffelin 1976; Sørum 1989; Weiner 1991). Kaluli commonly develop acute hearing for locational orientation. Whether it is used in marked forest activities such as hunting by sound or in mundane ones such as walking along forest trails or attending to the details of the surrounding bush from inside a village longhouse, the locational information available from sound in this environment often greatly exceeds that available from vision, in both variety and salience. Even though one quickly realizes that hearing is the most culturally attuned sense in Bosavi, audition is always in interplay with other senses, particularly in a tense dialectic with vision. This is because much of the forest is visually hidden, whereas sound cannot be hidden. A Kaluli man named Jubi once impressed this on me by analogy. He said that just as the identities of costumed ceremonial dancers, or those of spirit mediums performing in total darkness, are revealed only by the presence of a singing or speaking voice, so the presences of forest places are sonically announced even when visually hidden away.

Acoustic revelatory presence is thus always in tension with visual hidden presence in primal experiences of the forest. Linking experience and expression, this same tension adheres in Kaluli poetic concepts—for example, the intersensory desire to interpret songs, conversations,

arguments, or stories by "turning over" (*balema*) their surfaces to reveal their *heg*, "underneath," or *sa*, "inside." Turned over insides and underneaths reveal the resonant depths, meanings, subtleties, and implications of sounds, song poetics, stories, allegorical speeches, or dance costumes, just as they reveal the hidden presences of forest locales—the significance of the way places are physically shaped, such as the way rocks, waterfalls, mountains, or creeks emerge as presences with meaningful "inside" and "underneath" pasts. Thus the commonplace notion that objects and events are always more than they appear to be takes on a particularly sensual and poetic character when it comes to Kaluli modes of interpreting the depths and dimensions of local experience.

Another way the Kaluli dialectic between what is hidden and what is revealed emerges is powerfully signaled by the intersensory iconic *mama*, "reflection" or "reverberation." *Mama* is one's image in water or in the mirror; it is the close-up reflection of oneself in the eyeball of another, the visual presence of the self apart from the self. It is also the lingering audio fragment of a decaying sound, its projection outward as it resounds by vanishing upward in the forest. Like the fading sharpness of a mirror image, *mama* is the trace of audio memory, fragmentary sonic remembrances as they reverberate. And *ane mama*, a "gone reflection-reverberation," is a spirit, a human absence returning in imagined (often avian) presence. Announced by flashes of sight or, more typically, by conspicuous sounds experienced without the accompaniment of a corresponding visual image, an *ane mama* presence instantly stimulates feelingful memories.

These Kaluli vision-sound interplays are also locationally intersensual to smell. Any number of everyday examples could be cited. It is hard to imagine the trickling of a shallow creek at a stand of sago palms without smelling the aroma of fresh or rotting sago pith; the experience and memory of sago-place presence is deeply multisensory. Similarly, the dense sensuality of evening darkness, with voices overlapping the misting light rains and insects and frogs of the nearby bush, is sensually continuous with smoky aromas that fires or resin torches release into the longhouse and diffuse out into the ever-moist night air. Evoking the diffuseness of this motional sensorium, the processes of sound and smell are incorporated into the same Bosavi verb, *dabuma*, or absorption by ear and nose. Hearing is the unmarked form, the major kind of sensory absorption or taking in; smelling requires marking the odor's name before the verb, such that the action of smelling carries the linguistic feel of "hearing the odor." The metaphoric potential here inversely plays on the familiar Western synesthetic notion that the pleasures of music have long been absorbed as the "perfume of hearing" (Ackerman 1990:202).

At its broadest, the multisensory character of Bosavi acoustemology is suggested by the complexities of everyday practices linking sensory experience of the rainforest to artistic processes in visual, verbal, musical, and choreographic media. These practices are encompassed in discourse by two synesthetic metaphors: *dulugu ganalan,* "lift-up-over sounding," and *a:ba:lan,* "flow." Both are important to Kaluli experience and expression of emplacement. Because I have discussed *dulugu ganalan* in some detail before (Feld 1988), I will here review its importance to the interplay of the senses only briefly and then concentrate on flow. Flow concerns the interrelated sense and sensuality of water flowing through and connecting landforms, as well as the voice flowing through and connecting the thinking, moving, feeling body. It also concerns the hold, the lingering grip, of sound and poetic song, the resoundingness of voice in silent memory. These notions of flow all merge in the performance of the path maps that are a central feature of poetic song texts.

"Lift-up-over sounding" is the metaphoric construct that prescribes and describes natural sonic form for Kaluli people. Calling attention to both the spatial ("lift-up-over") and temporal ("sounding") axes of experience, the term evokes the way all sounds necessarily coexist in fields of prior and contiguous sounds. When applied to the sound world of the rainforest, "lift-up-over sounding" highlights the observation that there are no single discrete sounds to be heard. Everything is mixed into an interlocking soundscape. Forest sounds constantly shift figure and ground to create staggered alternations and overlaps, a sense of sound that is completely interlocked and seamless. One hears no unison in nature. Presence and absence of sound or changes in its direction and dimension coordinate space as intersecting upward and outward. Sounds constantly interact to produce the sensation that one sound is momentarily about to stand out from the others, while at the same time conveying the sense that any primacy is fluid, as quickly lost as it is gained.

In the tropical rainforest, height and depth of sound are easily confused. Lack of visual depth cues couples with the ambiguities of different vegetation densities and with ever-present sounds such as the hiss of water to make depth often sensed as the diffuseness of height moving outward, dissipating as it moves. "Lift-up-over sounding" precisely yet suggestively codes the ambiguous sensation that auditorally, kinesthetically, and sensually projects a space-time: upward *feels* like outward. This placing of sound is at once a sounding of place. One knows the time of day, season of year, and placement in physical space through the sensual wraparound of sound in the forest. This way of hearing and sensing the world is internalized as bodily knowledge, part of the everyday "body hexis" (Bourdieu 1977:87), the naturalized regime of "body techniques" (Mauss 1979 [1935]) basic to routine Kaluli encounters in their world.

Kaluli transform these everyday encounters with acoustic figure-grounds, extending their naturalness from the experience of the rainforest soundscape to their own vocal and instrumental music. Voices and rattles are made to "lift-up-over" like the trees of the forest canopy; sounds of drums and work tools are made to "lift-up-over" like tumbling waterfalls into swirling waterpools. These ideas are elaborated by Kaluli in musical practices favoring dense and layered cooperative singing or sounding that always avoids unison. To create a "lift-up-over sounding," voices or instruments or both must be in synchrony while out of phase. To be in synchrony means that the overall feeling is one 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, even competing, in degree of displacement from a hypothetical unison.

Additionally, "lift-up-over sounding" is created in timbre, by textural densification through a layering of attacks, decays, and fades, of playful accelerations, lengthenings, and shortenings, of the fission and fusion of sound shapes and phrases. Musical parts that interlock, alternate, or overlap create a form of participation that blurs competition and cooperation, mirroring the larger Kaluli tendency toward tense egalitarianism in social activities ranging from speech and work to negotiation, transaction, and exchange.

In concert with these dimensions of musical creativity, face-painting styles visually mirror sonic "lift-up-over sounding" through a parallel figure and ground principle in the texture contrast between shiny and dull and the color contrast between black and red. Ceremonial costumes further exploit textural densification by mixing many types of materials, blending and layering fur, bird feathers, red, black, and white paints, shells, woven bands, bamboo, rattles, palm streamers, and colorful leaves. As the ceremonial dancer bobs up and down in this paraphernalia, layers of "in synchrony and out of phase" sound emanate from his shells and streamers in motion, "lifted-up-over" by his drum, rattle, or voice.

Taking in nature, music, body painting, costume, and choreography, "lift-up over sounding" metaphorically unites Kaluli environment, senses, and arts. In complementary ways, the notion of *a:ba:lan,* "flow," similarly pervades and unites experiential realities of place to its expressive evocation. To illustrate how this happens, I turn first to the routine ways in which Kaluli people encounter, sense, and name places in their world, and then to the ways this flow of world sensing turns into a sensual poesis of place.

FROM SENSATION TO NAMING: PLACING PATHS OF FLOW IN KALULI EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE

The importance of place and placenames to Kaluli everyday experience, discourse, and ritual expression has been a long-standing issue in the ethnographic and linguistic research that my colleagues and I have undertaken in Bosavi since 1966. Edward L. Schieffelin's first work recognized the primacy of Kaluli identification with locality:

> The identity of each longhouse community is not primarily associated with the clan membership of the people who inhabit the *a* [longhouse]. Rather, over a period of time the community becomes bound up with the area it moves about in and comes to be referred to by the name of the locality. Thus for example, lineages of Gasumisi and Wabisi whose communities' successive longhouses have been located in the vicinity of Bagolo Ridge are called Bagolo people. (1976:41)

Moreover,

> place names, including that of the longhouse vicinity, refer to familiar forested ridges, streams that are full of fish, house sites and sago stands where a person has lived most of his life. . . . These places are meaningful because they mark the contexts of one's past experience. Kaluli identify themselves with place names because they see themselves reflected in their lands. (E. L. Schieffelin 1976:44–45)

Bambi B. Schieffelin's discourse-centered ethnography of Kaluli socialization (1979, 1986, 1990; Ochs and Schieffelin 1983, 1984) has not focused thematically on place, but her transcripts of everyday Kaluli family interactions indicate the prominence of place and travel as conversation topics in the circulation of talk about family history, movement, and work activity. Of particular interest is her discovery of how everyday family discourse involves a report citation form in which placenames are preceded by the third-person possessive marker and followed by a verb of staying—for example, *ene Bolekini sab,* "s/he's at her/his Bolekini" (B. B. Schieffelin, personal communication 1990). This form routinely ties place to person, identity to locality, and heightens the affective resonance of placenames. Its prominence in caregiver-child interactions underscores the biographical sense of place Kaluli children are socialized to assume.

My own work on Kaluli poetics (Feld 1990) has concentrated on the ways sequential citation of placenames in texts of song and lament construct improvised or composed maps that evoke memories of events, times, and social relations. The idea of a *tok,* or "path," emerged as one of the key devices of song composition and performance, and my Kaluli

teachers made me well aware of how much the emotional and memorial power of songs depended on their placename sequences. Continuing research reveals how invocation of the notion of *tok* signals a generic set of assumptions about the connectedness of Bosavi places, and with that connectedness, a connectedness of people, experiences, and memories. *Tok* signifies path, passage, canal, a nondirectional entry and exit, an opening in the sense of road, trail, or track. Connection as *tok* involves multiple images: a string of localities, contiguities and continuities of marked space, temporal progression from one place to another. The concept thus grounds the boundedness of places in the figure of their connectedness.

Tok are regularly placed in everyday experiences as Kaluli people travel to and from their home longhouse area, going to gardens, sago places, or other longhouse communities. Time traveling always means time walking on trails, time traversing places both familiar and new, time with others and time alone, time crossing the numerous brooks, streams, creeks, and rivers that section all lands in the Bosavi rainforest region. But Kaluli life also involves daily activities in the immediate longhouse community and its surroundings: socializing at the longhouse, gathering and cutting firewood, gathering water for drinking and cooking, making and repairing net bags, sharpening knives and axes, making and repairing clothing, tending pigs, making fences, hunting and fishing, cutting, planting, weeding, and tending banana, pandanus, vegetable, fruit, and sweet potato gardens, and cooking, distributing and sharing food. All these activities bring Kaluli people together to share and exchange, especially food and talk.

Indeed, one could say that almost every Kaluli social activity is coconstituted in action and talk, and one certainly doesn't get far listening to Kaluli talk without hearing about places. More formal discourse modes, including stories, arguments, negotiations, laments, and songs, equally participate in this pattern, validating the centrality of place to experiential exchange and memory. Central to all this talk is place-naming practices. At the most basic lexical and semantic levels, these practices indicate the perceptual salience of demarcating an exceptionally varied geography, one experienced by engaging with sensual continuities and discontinuities in the surrounding rainforest environment.

Whether a descriptive recounting or a prescriptive instruction, whether talk of home, of the world within reach, of a journey, or of travel, every naming practice involves path making through a coreferencing of specific placenames (henceforth PN) with a generic terminology of place forms. The most basic place form distinction is between *hen,* "land," and *ho:n,* "water." These are named and cited with *hena: wi,* "land names," and *ho:na: wi,* "water names." But the distinction fuses as

much as it distinguishes dimensions of place, because everyday experience in Bosavi always involves a coordinated intermeshing of named lands and waters.

This coordination is well indicated by the subtleties of the most generic names for place forms. For instance, the two most significant types of land formations are *fele* and *do:m*. The term *fele* is related to the word *fe*, "thigh," and refers to a relatively wide, flat expanse of land that rolls off and downward to either side—what Australian bushwalkers, in an instructive metaphoric contrast, refer to as a "saddle" of land. *Fele*, which can also refer to the relatively level area along a ridgetop, are reached from an ascent and lead to a descent at either end. Those conjoined segments of ascent, descent, and roll-off in the land are its "sides," or *do:m*. *Do:m* segments always imply the existence of *fele* above, below, and/or to the sides. *Do:m* has the same phonological shape as the word for "body" in Kaluli, and although this might be accidental, other lexical-semantic and discourse-in-context evidence leads me to believe that the image of the body as "hills" or "sides" connected by "thighs" is quite a primal one for Kaluli speakers.

In any case, *fele* and *do:m* are hardly experienced autonomously as interconnected land formations. They are inseparable from the equally prevalent but far more sensuous presence of waterways. Walking a *do:m* implies a body of water below; once it is crossed, there is another *do:m* to climb on the other side. And *fele* implies one and usually more water *eleb* lying off and below to either of its sides. *Eleb* refers to the place in an ascending or arching elevation where creek water stops. Kaluli paraphrase this as the "head" of the water and say that water "sleeps going down from its head." In other words, water reclines, moves along a body lying down, typically flowing downstream from its slightly elevated "head." Another local paraphrase says that like a person standing upright, water stops and orients up to its "head."

In fact, water stops by moving along the *do:m*, up toward the *fele*. Following the local idiom, Kaluli guides are apt to point out that the *eleb* is not on the *fele* but in the *do:m*. This is another way of saying that the body is like the curves of land between, around, and over which water flows. But this embodied imagination goes farther still, for as these primal landforms are connected like thighs to the body, so the passage of water through them flows like the motion of voice. Voice flows by resounding through the human body, feelingfully connecting its spatially contiguous physical segments, resonating so as to sensually link and stress the whole. Likewise, when water flows through land, it is always multiply connected, always multiply present across and along a variety of relatively distinct, contiguous landforms, linking them and revealing their wholeness.

It is worth inserting here that aside from the obvious correspondences between the forms designated *hen*, "land," and *ho:n*, "water," in Kaluli and English, there are considerable difficulties both in linguistically glossing and in paraphrastically evoking much sense of the distinctness and interconnectedness of *do:m*, *fele*, and *eleb* as either bodily or landscape images. Names like these three inevitably seem far more abstract when one reads about them in English than they must feel to Kaluli people, who experience them directly as signs of the sensual obviousness of place. Part of the difficulty of grasping them comes from the clear lack of visual correspondence between these Bosavi rainforest forms and ones more experientially familiar to Westerners. For while *do:m* are relatively hilly and chestlike, and *fele* relatively flatter and thighlike, these terms do not really mean "hill" and "flatland" in the sense of the English terms, any more than *eleb* exactly signifies the "head" or the "end" of a small creek.

An additional part the problem here is that *do:m*, *fele*, and *eleb* are experienced and distinguished less as purely visual forms and more in a multisensual way by the coordination of walking, seeing, and hearing—the kinesthesia and sonesthesia of shaped place, encountered and learned by the moving, sensing, experiencing body. Surrounded by dense forest, Kaluli acutely attend to the heights, depths, and densities around their tracks through foot- and ear-felt indicators as much if not more than through visual ones. That is, they principally feel and hear whether the land ahead is relatively flatter or hillier than the land behind or to the sides. The land is virtually always wet from rain, so the presence of wetness in the air and the slick, slippery feel of different thicknesses of mud on the feet are central to orienting onself in visually dense places. Additionally, one simultaneously hears what kinds of water presences are above, below, ahead, behind, or to the sides and whether these waterways are diminishing or augmenting in and out of presence. This sensuality of locating and placing, along with its kinesthetic-sonesthetic bodily basis of knowing, is critical to a Kaluli acoustemology, a sonic epistemology of emplacement.

Generic Places and Placing

To continue with generic processes, land and water names often take the form of a specific placename plus a descriptive modifier that specifies the place form (henceforth PN + ___). Although the specific placename can stand alone, as can the descriptive modifier (as an abstract noun), they usually are combined. To take the most generic instances, one often

5

Your Place and Mine

Sharing Emotional Landscapes in Wamira, Papua New Guinea

Miriam Kahn

The experience of traveling to and living in different places provides the methodological anchor and theoretical springboard for anthropology. Indeed, the discipline developed in response to European exploration and the resultant awareness of other places (Hallowell 1965). Yet until recently, the topic of place has been neglected in contemporary anthropological theory. "The problem of place arises, paradoxically, because the meaning of place too often seems to go without saying" (Rodman 1992:640). In general, "there is little recognition that place is more than locale, the setting for action, the stage on which things happen" (Rodman 1992:643).

While anthropological descriptions of place have remained relatively monological, places themselves are fertilized into being through a confluence of voices. Places are complex constructions of social histories, personal and interpersonal experiences, and selective memory. Curiously, it is while anthropologists themselves are most out of place that they attempt to gain an understanding of the place and placement of others. Here I choose to examine concepts of place by focusing specifically on the process of finding one's own place while struggling to understand that of others, for I believe it is in the dialogical dimensions that the tangled threads of perspective unfold most insightfully. I focus on place through the shifting vistas and dimensions of the anthropological encounter, through the ways in which "my" view and "their" view meet at points of inclusion, exclusion, and overlap to create a sense of "our" place.

I examine ideas about place in relation to the people of Wamira, a village of some 450 people on the northern shore of the southeastern tip of Papua New Guinea.[1] The Wamiran landscape resounds for Wamirans with narratives of collective history and personal experience. It provides tangible forms for the mooring of memory. What looks like a river, a hill, or a group of stones may, in fact, resonate meaningfully to Wamirans

as a type of moral landscape conveying messages about human frailties, foibles, and responsibilities. Meaning attached to the landscape unfolds in language, names, stories, myths, and rituals. These meanings crystallize into shared symbols and ultimately link people to a sense of common history and individual identity. Place becomes "something both fixed and fleeting, something you can walk on and something you can speak, a curious and uneasy product of experience and symbol" (Richardson 1984:1).

Places capture the complex emotional, behavioral, and moral relationships between people and their territory. They represent people, their actions, and their interactions and as such become malleable memorials for negotiating and renegotiating human relationships. Places and their stories also become metaphors that are heavily relied upon during social discourse about relationships. They serve as a kind of "veiled speech" (Strathern 1975) through which harsh realities can be softened by oblique reference in order to preserve harmonious social relations. Talking about place becomes a euphemistic way of communicating important messages, such as reminders of social obligations that have gone unfulfilled or of moral responsibilities to feed and care for kin.

It is impossible to talk about place, or to talk about how people talk about place, without encompassing biography, including one's own at the points of social interaction. My understanding of Wamiran place lies most profoundly at the juncture of Wamiran biography and my autobiography. Places blossom, along with my understanding of them, where Wamirans and I connect. Writing about "our" place is to write both intimately and descriptively about differences and commonalities. My approach intentionally combines my feelings and perspectives with those of Wamiran individuals in order to highlight the sense of place as meaningful shared experience. I combine the two perspectives in order to illustrate how much of my growing understanding occurred precisely when our perspectives merged and mingled or diverged and clashed.

Because place is many things and speaks in many voices—individual biography, shared history, meaningful memory, and moral lesson, as well as euphemism—it is constantly shifting, emerging or receding, being accentuated or veiled. But ultimately, places are, for Wamirans as they are for me, profoundly emotional territories.

TWO PERSPECTIVES ON ONE "PLACE"

My anthropological journey began one day in 1976, when I left home and all that was familiar and comforting. I had decided to work in Papua New Guinea precisely because it was the last place in the world in which

I could imagine myself being. Soon after arriving, I found myself one afternoon sitting on the floor of my room at the mission station of Dogura, tossing a coin to decide where to do my fieldwork. After three weeks of visiting various coastal and mountain villages on the eastern end of Papua New Guinea, explaining my presence and my interest in horticultural ritual to people I met and trying to imagine myself in the villages I saw, I had narrowed the choice down to two places: a damp, isolated mountain village and a sunny, expansive coastal village. As I wondered about what seemed to be the arbitrariness of choosing a place to do fieldwork, I realized that I had kept tossing the coin over and over until Wamira—the sunny village by the sea—won.

Obviously, choice of an anthropological field site follows matters of the heart as much as those of the mind. On the one hand, I rationalized that Wamira was the perfect place for academic research. It was large; the irrigation system I wanted to study included the only aqueduct in the Papuan part of New Guinea; the language was the lingua franca of a larger region and knowing it would enable me to do comparative research in neighboring villages—and so on. Yet what continually tugged me in its direction was the fact that the emotional "fit" felt right. Physically, it seemed spacious, breezy, and sunny. The sea was in constant view. Moreover, it was only an hour's walk from Dogura with its ties to the world beyond in the form of an airstrip, a wharf, a post office, and a trade store. And most important, the Wamirans I had met appeared welcoming, emotionally open, and good-humored. I felt embraced by their animated personalities. Thus, opportunistic moments, my personal leanings, and chance elements all came together to produce a fieldwork location.

Soon thereafter, loaded down with possessions that filled a small outboard motorboat, I moved into the village. Although I wanted to stay in the seemingly neutral village rest house, I was ushered away and encouraged to move into the home of Alice Dobunaba and her family. Alice's daughter, then a student at the University of Papua New Guinea, with whom I had talked while I visited the capital city of Port Moresby, had written a letter of introduction for me to use when I toured the region. As a result, Alice felt responsible for my well-being. "You need someone to take care of you," I was told, "to cook your food and to help you with your work." I later learned that in Wamirans' eyes, the rest house was not an option if I was to be integrated into village life by entering a web of social exchanges and relations. The social act of Alice's feeding, caring for, and helping me and my reciprocal obligation to provide her family with trade-store goods were what created my place—not the physical existence of an abandoned government rest house.

Before long, the space that had been cleared for me in the back of her

family's small house took on more definition as Alice and her brother, Aidan Gadiona, assembled what they thought I needed.[2] One day, upon returning from washing at the river, I found Aidan nailing slabs of sago spathe into a wooden frame to construct a wall around my space. He had also cut a window into the woven coconut-frond wall so I would have some light. Young children from the hamlet carried baskets of small, sea-washed pebbles up from the beach and smoothed them into a new, clean, thicker layer of floor under my sleeping mat. Nestled into Alice's family with a space of my own, I felt very much at home.

The final thoughtful gesture that clinched my feeling at home was Alice's decision to write a letter to my mother in New York so she "would not worry about me." In the letter Alice reassured my mother that I was fine because "Wamira was a good place" and there were "plenty of mangoes." Alice's expression of parental concern comforted my mother immediately, although it was only later that I understood the full implication of Alice's message about the quality of the place in relation to food and feeding me.

My feeling at home, however, was countered by Wamirans' expressions of concern. Each day, as I accompanied Wamirans in their daily tasks—washing pots or clothes at the river, gathering food from the garden, going to the market at Dogura, visiting friends—they kept shaking their heads, clucking their tongues in dismay, and mumbling, "Kapore," a word I came to understand as an expression of sympathy and pity. These feelings were always, as they explained, because I was "so far away from my place." They kept explaining (in contrast to what Alice had written to my mother) that "Wamira is a bad place . . . there is no food." Their reaction was most intense when I showed them pictures of my home, family, and friends. I was perplexed by the depth of their concern and why it applied to my settling into Wamira. After all, from my perspective, I had chosen to be there.

No matter how much I tried to assuage their concern, their compassionate laments continued. Even people I passed casually on the path looked regretfully at me and exclaimed, "You are very sad." I adamantly protested, "No, I'm not. Why do you say I'm sad?" Again, they explained, "Because you are so far away from where you belong, far from your family and your home. Someone like you should be in your own place with your family and friends, not so far away all alone." Only much later was I to begin to comprehend the emotional sense of loss and sorrow that being away from one's place triggered for Wamirans.

One day, while accompanying several women who were making a new communal garden, I was serenaded with a song. I listened and watched as tears rolled down their cheeks. When I asked what the song

Figure 5.1. Sybil Gisewa (Alice's mother) and Hilarion Watiwati examining a picture postcard of "my place" (New York). Photograph © Miriam Kahn.

was about, they mournfully explained that it was about being away from home and needing to travel back to the place where one belongs. Later, I recorded and translated the words:

Travel home, your father is calling you
Get up now and go back
Listen to your father's voice
Hear his voice calling you

Your father did not hate you
You walked out of your house all alone
You traveled a long way and you are hungry
Get up and go back to your home

Your father has built a nice house for you
And he is waiting for you
He is watching your road
Get up and go back to your home

Your father is not angry
He is thinking of you
Think about it now
And go back to your father's house

Chorus:
He is calling you to travel home
He is calling you to come to him

I gradually grew accustomed to their constant mutterings of "Kapore," their tears and sentimental songs, and their nostalgia about places, but I continued to be puzzled about what it all meant. Why did they pity me just because I was far from home? In my mind, I was embarking on the adventure of my life. I had visited as many places as my around-the-world ticket would allow while on my way to Wamira. Although hardly settled into Wamira, I was already planning a future field break to the highlands of Papua New Guinea to see still more places. After all, wasn't this what my profession prescribed? Weren't we supposed to go on a kind of pilgrimage on which to find "a sense of the extraordinary that comes when one is temporarily out of place" (Richardson 1984:1)? More than a professional mandate, the desire to experience other places was one of my personal goals. Indeed, the professional requirement of sporadic uprootedness was one of the main reasons I had chosen anthropology as a profession. I was in agreement with its emphasis on the importance of getting at "the comprehension of the self by the detour of the comprehension of the other" (Ricoeur 1969:20). But after having come half-way around the world to be in a particular place, Wamirans were telling me that I wasn't "there." How was I to make sense of this?

The same landscape that surrounded Wamirans with a comforting and meaningful context seemed to present me with a void. Our lack of agreement was obviously due to clashing perspectives. Wamirans and I did not share the same image of their place. I saw it as sunny, sea swept, and inviting. They told me it was a "bad place" because there was "no food." Nor did we share the same sense of the relevance of their place for me as a displaced person. I wanted to be removed from my roots so I could learn to make sense of a different place. They thought I should go back to my family and friends where I belonged. Nor did we even share the same understanding of the personal value of traveling to distant places. For me, travel to foreign places was a necessary, circuitous path

to knowing life and self. For them, the idea of purposefully uprooting oneself was simply beyond comprehension.

Thus, emotionally uplifted by the newness of the place and intellectually puzzled by the reaction I was getting, I settled in, calmed by the sea and mountains, comforted by the walls around me, and energized by the people, to learn about Wamirans and their place. It was their empathy, however, focused on me and filtered through places, that resonated most deeply in our growing interconnectedness.

PLACE AS METAPHOR FOR SOCIAL RELATIONS AND OBLIGATIONS

While I mused about my place in Wamira I was also gaining an understanding of what place meant for Wamirans, an understanding that continued to mature over the next two years. After a month or two of fieldwork, instead of triggering tears and feelings of pity, I became the brunt of their jokes. "*Io!* You are becoming a Wamiran girl," they chuckled. At this point, whenever Wamirans saw me they bombarded me with the very questions they knew I was learning to answer: "Where are you from?" ("Inibuena hamlet," I'd respond); "To which clan do you belong?" ("I'm from Manibolanai clan"); "Who is your mother?" ("Alice"); and so on. My appropriate answers were greeted with fits of laughter that conveyed both amusement and disbelief, comfort and awkwardness. When the laughter died down, they would nod with approval and say, "*Ata dobu,*" meaning "our [inclusive] place." They were acknowledging my efforts to adapt to their customs yet were still puzzled by my desire to do so.

In spite of the raucous encounters that made me feel more accepted, included, and connected, the laments continued, although less persistently than before. "*Kapore,* why did you come? Wamirans are kind, respectful, and friendly. But it is a dry place with too much sun and no water. There is no food. Our land is like stone." For the entire time I lived in the village, Wamirans described their situation as one of famine (*gomara*). Indeed, *gomara* appeared to be the normal condition. Each time I inquired about the perpetual state of "no food" I was emphatically told it was "because of Tamodukorokoro." They explained that Tamodukorokoro, a hairy, ugly ogre, was "their monster" who would have brought them a life of bountiful food, but in their ambivalence between desiring and fearing him, they chased him away. They attribute their fate of having no food to their unfriendly actions toward him. They now have to suffer, destined to what they perceive to be a life of persistent and unalterable "famine." I soon learned that Tamodukorokoro's presence was felt everywhere in the landscape—in tangible features such as rocks and hills and

in intangibles such as the dry climate that bestows insufficient rain.[3] The Tamodukorokoro myth gives credence to the way Wamirans view and experience their place. An abridged version of the myth follows.[4]

> Two Wamiran sisters decide to go visiting inland from the village. Along the way, they meet an old, mouthless woman and her "pet," who is both a snake and a handsome young man. The girls stay and marry the young man. The younger sister eventually gives birth to a child. One day the sisters decide to visit Wamira with their child. On the way back to Wamira they encounter the monster Tamodukorokoro (who some say is the same as the snake-husband from the mountain village). They are both enticed and repelled, and try to rid themselves of him. Each time they attempt to do so, however, he uses magic that draws them back to him. Finally, as they approach Wamira, they run to their brothers' house and ask to be hidden from the monster. But, once again, the monster entices them to find him.
>
> Back in Wamira, the girls' brothers try to kill Tamodukorokoro, under the guise of inviting him to make a garden with them. At each step in the horticultural process, they try to destroy him. They stab his legs with sharpened digging sticks while turning the sod. They surround him with fire when burning off the grass. When the garden is ready to be harvested and they search for fish to accompany the taro (the Wamirans' main food), they try to drown him in the sea. Each time, however, he miraculously escapes as he chants a spell about abundant, festively prepared taro. The Wamiran men feign joy at his return, all the while plotting more ways to annihilate him. Finally, they decide on a plan which entails picking and roasting a fruit called *kumika*.
>
> The next day they all set out, picking *kumika* and collecting stones along the way. They build a stone oven to roast the fruit and coax Tamodukorokoro into sitting down for a communal feast. They call out to the monster using the term *egubeda* (which indicates a trusting relationship based on people having shared food together), and ask him to open his mouth so they can toss in some fruit. They do this twice, but on the third turn toss in a hot stone instead. At that point Tamodukorokoro rises in anger. He snatches his pouch, grabs his two wives, and leaves Wamira. He tries settling in a number of places, but is always tormented by the visibility of Wamira. He decides to cross the bay and settle on Iriwavo (Fergusson Island). There he sits down with one wife on either side of him, all three turning their backs to Wamira. They all turn into stone and are now the three peaks one can see across the bay.

According to Wamirans, the myth explains why their land is hot and dry and produces "no food." They say that if the monster had stayed in Wamira, food would be plentiful. But they were both attracted to and repelled by him and, in their ambivalence, chased him away. They explain that in the act of throwing a hot stone into his mouth, they tossed famine out onto their land. They compare the roasted stone to the parched land where it is hard to grow food, calling their land *latana,* which is the name given to the heated stones of an earth oven—like the oven they built when plotting the destruction of Tamodukorokoro.

Although Tamodukorokoro abandoned Wamira, Wamirans' memory of him and of their failed relationship with him is profoundly felt throughout the landscape. Today Wamirans point to the named places in the environment where various events in the myth took place: where the sisters rested on their journey inland, where they sat down to chew areca nut on their trip back to Wamira, where Tamodukorokoro laid down his bag of areca chewing paraphernalia, the spot on the beach where he was washed ashore after diving for clams, the place where he sat down to sharpen his adze before crossing the bay to Iriwavo, the mountainous peaks on Iriwavo that are Tamodukorokoro and his two wives, and many more. Indeed, the large, fertile garden area behind the village is called Tamodukorokoro. It is fed by an aqueduct, the use of which is surrounded by great controversy and fear precisely because it presents the potential for producing "too much food" (see Kahn 1984, 1985, 1992). As Wamirans cultivate the parched earth under a searing sun, the very name of the ground is a shared symbol of their place and a constant reminder of their unsociable behavior and the permanent predicament in which it put them. Their land and its name link them to "their myth," which maps out and explains the very history and nature of their social relationships.

Not only are events in the myth linked to places, but both mythical events and placenames also revolve around food and feeding. Food is the Wamiran idiom par excellence for talking about social relationships (see Kahn 1986, 1988). As is common in Melanesia, a person's passage through life is traced "in terms of the social and cultural values of food giving/food taking, production/reproduction, and reciprocity" (Fajans 1985:373). "Being hungry" usually expresses both a physical state and an emotional sentiment. For example, in writing about nearby Good-enough Island, Young says that "it is shameful . . . to admit to hunger, for it carries the implication not only that one is a poor gardener, a man of no worth in oneself, but also that one's kin are neglecting their obligations to feed, and one's fathers their obligations to teach" (Young 1971:159).

Likewise, for a Wamiran, "hunger" indicates need and neglect. To feed someone indicates that one cares for them; to fail to do so is a sign of antagonism. In explaining his love for his mother, a man once commented to me, "Of course, I love her. If I didn't she would be hungry all the time." People left alone feel and express their loneliness as hunger. Thus, geographical distance from kin translates into feelings of neglect, loneliness, and hunger. Seen in this light, the words that Wamirans sang to me—"You traveled a long way and you are hungry"—are more than a literal description of the distance I had come or the potential rumblings in my stomach. They imply a profound kind of social deprivation brought about by being bereft of place and context. In sum, places in

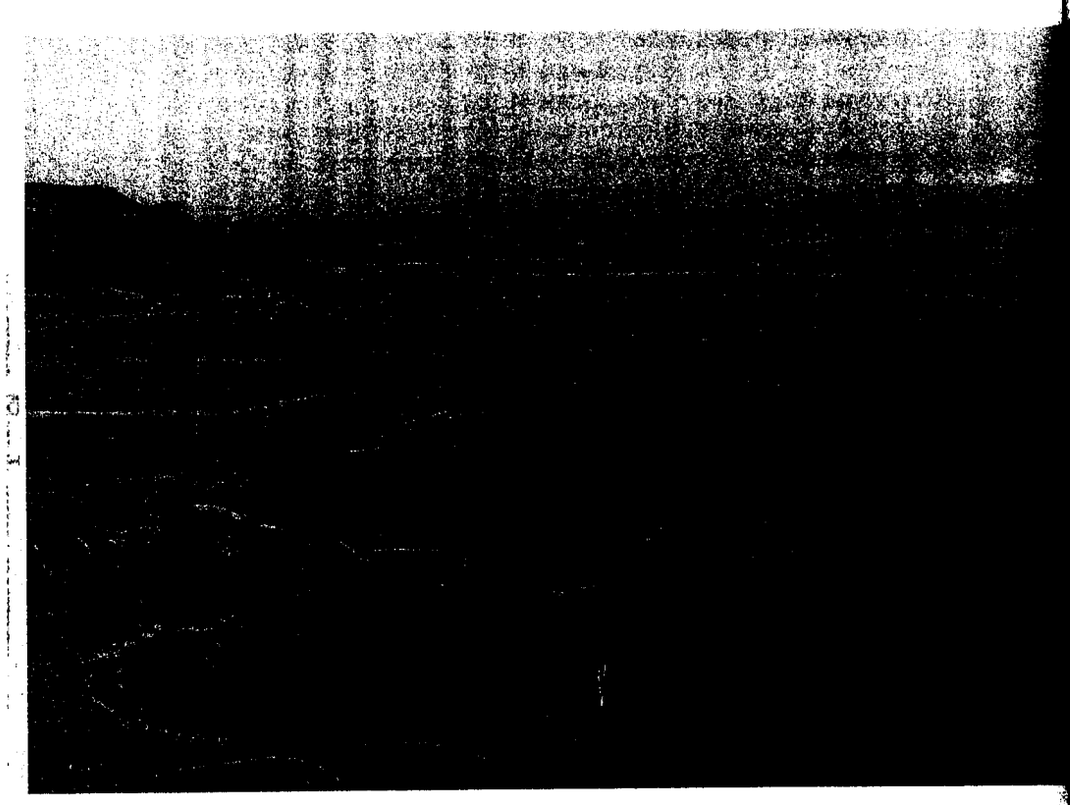

Figure 5.2. Tamodukorokoro, the large fertile plain behind the village of Wamira, with the Dogura cathedral appearing as a white dot on the distant plateau. Photograph © Miriam Kahn.

the Wamiran landscape are more than constant reminders of the Tamodukorokoro myth. They resonate more deeply about the importance of social relations and obligations based on feeding, sharing, and caring for one another. They serve as both mnemonic devices and moral authority.

Other myths provide further illustration of the way in which moral lessons are written into a landscape that rings out emotionally as a constant reminder about sharing food and all that feeding implies. One myth is about two Wamiran sisters, Maradiudiva and Marakwadiveta, who live together. Each time Maradiudiva goes down to the sea to fetch saltwater for cooking, her sister, Marakwadiveta, gobbles up all the food and later tells lies about relatives who, she claims, came and ate it. Feeling hungry and rejected, Maradiudiva walks into the sea and turns into stone. Now, with her stony countenance, she stands all alone in the bay. As the

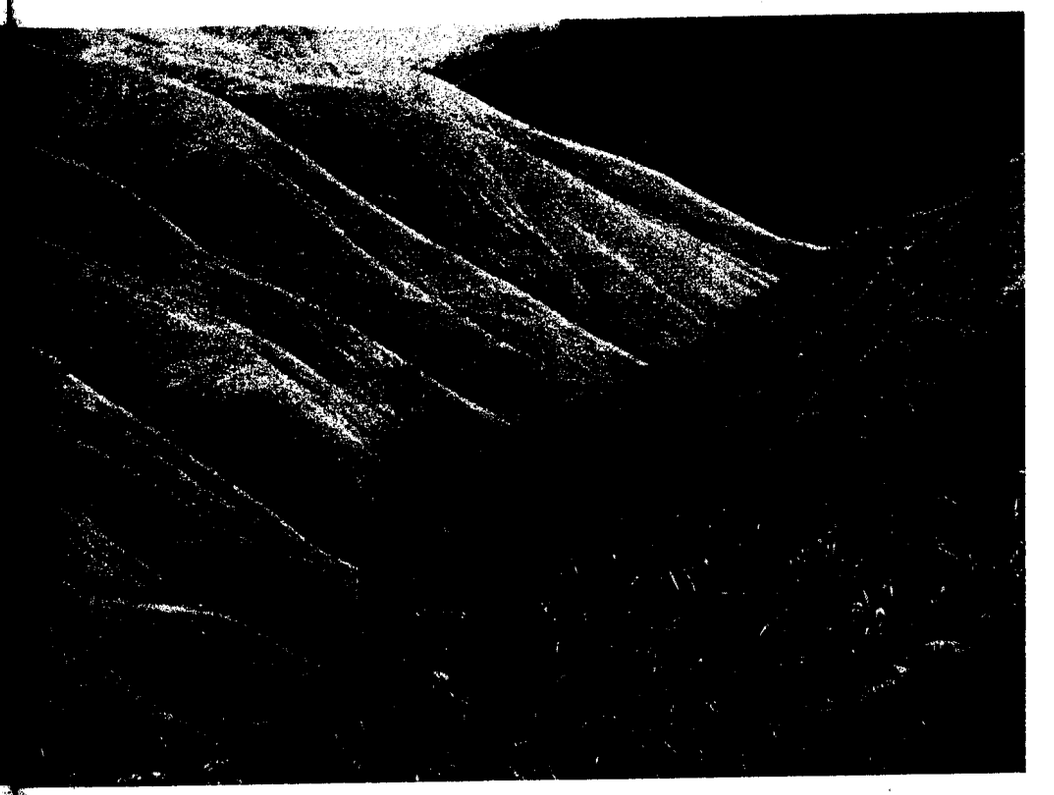

Figure 5.3. The stony figure of Marakwadiveta, amidst the grassy hills high above the village. Photograph © Miriam Kahn.

tide rolls in and out, Wamirans see Maradiudiva rising and descending. She is a constant reminder to all that social life depends on the sharing of food. Her sister, Marakwadiveta, later turns to stone also and today is seen high above the village amidst the grassy hills. She looks out over the sea at the sister she did not feed.

Another myth, from the nearby village of Boianai, describes the origins of the villagers and their ancestral connections to the cassowary. Again, the plot revolves around withholding food. A young woman lives with her husband and child. Her husband goes to the garden every day but returns with only firewood and no food. Being hungry, she boils stones so she and her child can drink the broth from the cooked stones. One day, having endured enough maltreatment, she decides to turn herself into a cassowary and leave. She makes wings from coconut fronds, knee caps from coconut husks, and legs from black palm sticks. When

her husband comes home that evening she spreads her wings and flees. Trying to call his wife back, he hurls stones after her, but to no avail. Today one can still see the stones in the village. There is a massive pile of stones, a full meter high, that is said to have accumulated as each day the hungry woman boiled them and tossed them aside. The rocks that her husband threw at her lie scattered along the path that leads from the village into the mountains.

In these two myths and the Tamodukorokoro myth, stones and other features in the landscape mark the spots where mythical events "took place." But each stone, or each spot, does more than recall the myth. The landscape surrounds the people with a sense of shared history rooted in the past and memorialized in the present through shared symbols. It provides a focus for feelings of common identity as well as a charter for moral action. As villagers walk along paths and look upon the landscape where significant mythical events took place, they are reminded of the importance of social obligations to feed and care for one another—the very thing they failed to do with Tamodukorokoro.

This idea of the landscape as moral lesson is similar to what Keith Basso (1984b) has described for the Western Apaches, for whom features of the landscape take over and perpetuate stories. "Mountains and arroyos step in symbolically for grandmothers and uncles. Just as the latter have 'stalked' delinquent individuals in the past, so too particular locations continue to 'stalk' them in the present" (Basso 1984b:43). It is also reminiscent of what he describes as interior landscapes of the moral imagination:

> Like their ancestors before them, they display by word and deed that beyond the visible reality of place lies a moral reality which they themselves have come to embody. And whether or not they finally succeed in becoming fully wise, it is this interior landscape—this landscape of the moral imagination—that most deeply influences their vital sense of place, and also, I believe, their unshakable sense of self. (Basso 1984b:43)

The Wamiran landscape, as provider of food as well as sense of self, furnishes a tangible trope for talking about social relations, a topic of paramount importance which, because of its potential volatility, can be addressed most effectively if addressed obliquely. To talk about Wamira as "a good place" but a place with "no food" is to communicate the conflicting emotions involved in engaging in social exchanges. "No food," as I learned much later, is a euphemism for not wanting to engage in the tangled web of sociality. Taken to its extreme, as we have seen, social disengagement becomes "hunger."

The desire for social distance can arise at various levels and is phrased in appropriate euphemisms at each level. No food in the landscape, on the communal level, may be reproduced on the group level as no food on the store shelf or on the family level as no food in the house. Thus, when a hamlet leader once admonished his group for lacking cohesive work habits, he did not say they were acting like lazy, thoughtless, selfish people but instead discussed at great length the lack of food on the shelves in the hamlet store. Or, when individual Wamirans arrived at Alice's house asking for sugar for their tea, they were told that there was none (as the bag of sugar was quickly whisked out of sight). "We have sugar," Alice privately explained to me, "but just enough for ourselves, not enough to give."

When Wamirans say their land is like stone, they are communicating more than a casual metaphor. They are recalling "their monster," and in doing so they are conveying messages about the thin line between social cooperation and conflict, sharing and hoarding, caring and neglecting, communal life and loneliness. In asking me time and again, "Why did you come? . . . there is no food," or in oscillating between saying that Wamira is "a good place" and "a bad place," they were telling me, and reminding one another, about the moral dilemmas they faced when I (far from home and "hungry") arrived in their midst. How would they care for me? What would they feed me? And equally importantly, what would they get in return? No wonder Alice wrote to my mother that there were "plenty of mangoes." The letter, while couched in terms of food, was meant to convey information about my physical condition and my emotional well-being. That the ground was covered with fallen, rotting mangoes indicated that Alice was going to fulfill her parental responsibility. I had settled in a land that was "like stone," but, in contrast to their treatment of Tamodukorokoro, Wamirans were, or at least Alice was, going to behave morally. She would feed me—and mangoes, not *kumika!*

ANCHORING GROUP IDENTITY AND RIGHTS THROUGH STONES

As I progressed with my work, I turned to what seemed a standard anthropological task, namely, the drawing of maps. I enlisted the help of Wamirans to tell me about places as I jotted their names and locations on my sketches. But what I thought would be a relatively straightforward exercise took forever because each stone, each tree, each dip in the ground had a name and a story.

In addition to communal landscapes such as those shared through the Tamodukorokoro story, there are also places that provide clans, lineages, and families with sources of identity and proof of their rights. As Margaret Rodman (1987:40) has described it, the greatest insult for the people of Longana, Vanuatu, is to demand, "Where is your place?" So,

too, in Wamira, to be without a place is to exist humiliatingly outside the bounds of sociality. Every time arguments arose among people, the conversation turned to land. "This is my land, my father lived here, you can't throw me out" was an expression commonly heard. To call someone an orphan (*kedakeda*) expressed pity and sadness because it indicated that the individual lacked land and kin, and consequently, food and care.

Connections to one's land are marked tangibly by such things as houses, trees, and stones. Stones and their stories, in particular, are important anchors to the land. Bishop Henry Newton, who visited Wamira in the beginning of the century, noted the importance of stones:

> We were shown various things that had virtues, stones . . . that had an influence on the life and health and prosperity of the people. . . . In all the villages there are stones which are reverenced, and which may not be moved. . . . There are others, short stunted obelisks stuck in the ground with rude markings. All these are really tabu; they may not be interfered with or trouble will follow. Whence they came no one knows, they were here in the time of our ancestors, they remain forever. (Newton 1914:170–71)

The story of Tauribariba, the ancestral founder of the Maibouni clan who is now a stone, provides an example of how clans may be associated with named stones. Tauribariba is by far the most remarkable and spirited ancestral stone in Wamira (see Kahn 1990). Tauribariba turned from a human being to a stone when he first came ashore to settle in Wamira. The story describes the original settling of Wamira by various clans and the establishment of the relationships among them. The leader of the Maibouni clan was Tauribariba, who arrived with his sister, Tauanana. When they were coming ashore, waves thrashed at the canoe and Tauanana fell into the sea. Everyone rushed to get Tauribariba and carry him onto land before he, too, fell into the water. They set him in the center of the hamlet of Irere where he was until 1936. He "lived there and walked around at night." He watched over the taro gardens to protect the food. As I was told the story, Osborne Kaimou, the narrator, said, "But, look, today he is not there! Several years ago my mother's brother was approached by Father John Bodger from the mission station at Dogura. Father Bodger said, 'My friend, are you the chief of these stones?' My mother's brother answered, 'Yes, I am.' Father Bodger said, 'Give us that stone so I can cement it in the cathedral wall.'" When Osborne finished narrating the story to me he wistfully added, "When Father Bodger took Tauribariba he did not just take a stone. He took away our entire identity and spirit."

Tauribariba is a small stone, no bigger than a person's outstretched hand. Before being placed in the cathedral wall, he formed part of a large circle of stones, about five meters in diameter, in the center of the Wamiran seaside hamlet of Irere. His sister is a large boulder, about four times the size of Tauribariba. She sits in the middle of the circle, surrounded by their "children," who are numerous small stones. All of them are believed to have the ability to walk around, and their favorite time to do this is at night. Wamirans say that occasionally new children appear at the shore in the morning. When Wamirans see new children on the beach, they add them to the circle of stones, which thus continually changes in number.

Figure 5.4. The assemblage of stones consisting of Tauanana in the center, surrounded by her children. Photograph © Miriam Kahn.

In 1936, when the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul was completed at Dogura, Father Bodger decided to cement Tauribariba into the pulpit wall alongside other stones from cathedrals in England. The missionaries saw this move as symbolizing the transference of the Wamirans' "worship of stone" to that of God. The following mission record describes the transportation of the stone to the cathedral:

> Two native men from the villages of Wedau and Wamira . . . came up to the Sanctuary, each bearing a large piece of stone or rock in his hands, and presented them to the priest, who took them, blessed them, and offered them at the Altar.
>
> One of the stones was a curiously striped slab of rock resembling nothing so much as a slice of chocolate cake with layers of icing. These two stones were treasured memorials of the old heathen days, one belonging to a special family in Wedau and the other, the striped one, to Wamira. Their present owners or guardians, being Christians, had voluntarily removed them from their places and brought them to God's House. They are set in the walls of the new Cathedral together with stones sent from Abbeys and Cathedrals in England, there to be silent witnesses to the Faith which has proclaimed that God alone is Giver of all good things.
>
> The Wamiran stone is known by the name of Tauribariba. . . . It has been an object of veneration to its owners of many generations, who believed that on its presence in the village depended the prosperity of their gardens and good and plentiful food crops. Those who have inherited the care of the stone are all Christians and have brought Tauribariba also to his resting place. It is safely embedded in concrete and its wandering days are over. Even so have the children of darkness and superstition become living stones in the House of God's building—His Church. (Anglican Archives 1936)

Although the mission account ends with the stone's being "safely embedded in concrete," the Wamiran version of the story is more complex and indicates how the stone, as an important marker of Maibouni identity and a link to the clan's history and land, could not be whisked away so easily. According to Wamirans, that night, after being taken to Dogura but not yet cemented into the wall, Tauribariba "walked back to Wamira."[5] The following day Father Bodger again fetched the stone. This time, he cemented it into the wall upside down with Tauribariba's face turned toward the wall. It was "turned upside down as a symbol that the magic had been emptied out of it, and that it was now fitted to occupy a place in the Christian Church" (Papuan Annual Report 1936–37:5). Ever since, upside down and shackled by cement, Tauribariba has remained firmly and faithfully within the pulpit wall (Kahn 1990:58).

The tug-of-war between the missionaries and the villagers about the placement of Tauribariba indicates the two groups' different perspectives on, and the different values they attached to, markers of place and identity. What to the missionaries was a striped rock resembling a slice of chocolate cake was to members of the Maibouni clan tangible proof of their rootedness and connection to others. It recalled their past, gave them rights to their land, and assured them that their gardens would yield abundant food, which, as we have seen, was needed to nurture social bonds.

Farther down the coast, in Boianai, the Meiakurana clan has rights to an arrangement of stones called Dararugu that, like the Maibouni stone

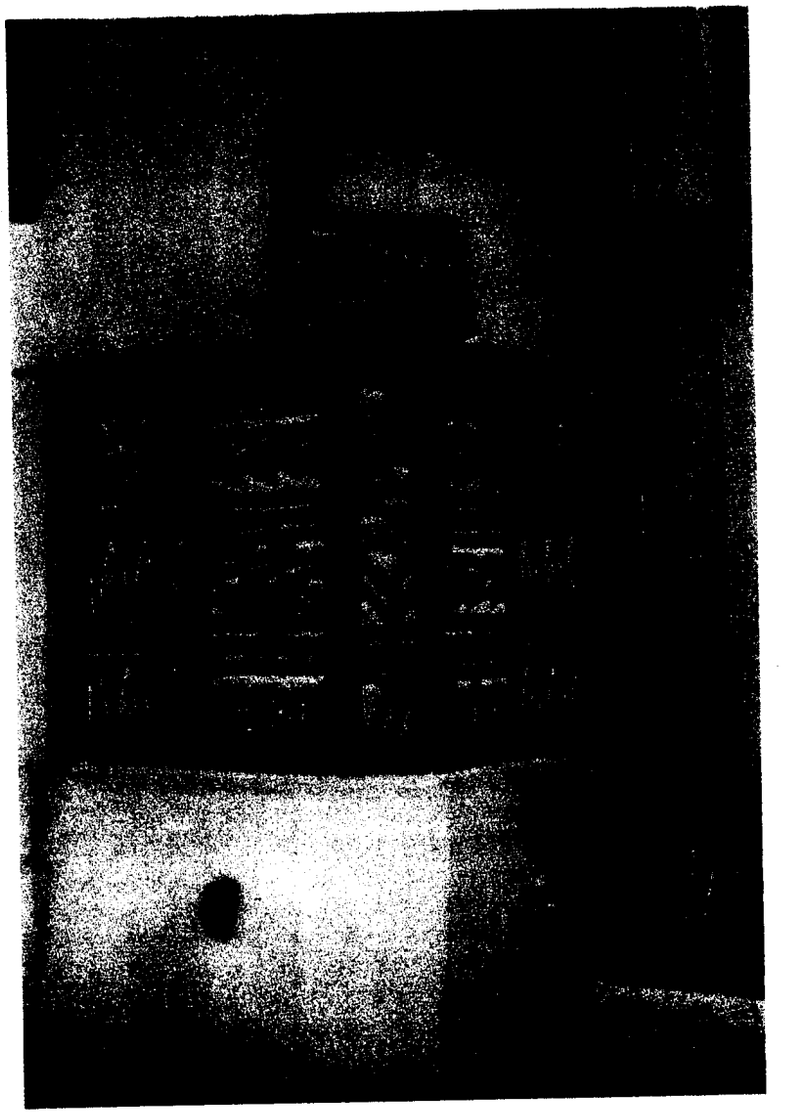

Figure 5.5. Tauribariba (the dark stone) cemented into the base of the pulpit in the Dogura cathedral. Photograph © Miriam Kahn.

circle in Wamira, is also believed to anchor taro in their garden. They explain that the stones assure abundance "by tugging at the roots of the taro to hold it down." After some clan members narrated the story to me, they allowed me to map and photograph the stones if I would do them a favor in return. They wanted me, once I was back in the United States, to have the floor plan of the stone arrangement printed on two dozen rugby shirts. They gave specific instructions. On the front should be my drawing of the stone arrangement, including one of the trees that was near the stones, the name of the stones (Dararugu), and the name of the place where the stones are located (Worewore). On the back should be the name of the clan (Meiakurana) that owned them. The shirts, printed in assorted sizes and colors, should be made in America, a place of "power" in the minds of the owners of the stones.

I learned that they wanted their sacred stones emblazoned on the shirts to ward off jealousy. They told me that many people envied them because they had built a store, which brought in a fair amount of income. Like the Wamiran men who, motivated by jealousy, tried to destroy Tamodukorokoro, some people in Boianai tried to ruin the store. If members of the clan wore images of their stones on their chests, they said, it would be "proof" for all to see that they had the right to act as *gulau* (chiefs). "Our stones are our power," they told me, believing that portable proof of the physical anchor to their land might even allow them to win rugby games.

I returned home, had the shirts made, and mailed them, musing about the ironic twist to the layers of inscription. The clan's "power," originally inscribed upon the land, could be transcribed onto an anthropologist's map and then further reproduced on shirts. Like the wanderings of Tauribariba, Tauanana, and their children, the numerous movements and permutations seemed to enhance, not lessen, the sense of power embedded in place. As the rugby players aggressively skirmished with printed reproductions on their chests, they felt empowered through their association with the original stone markers and the place to which it tied them, all of which was intensified by the stones' brief journey to America.

In both of the examples just given, clans claim identity and gain rights through their association with specific places in the landscape that are marked by stones. In both examples, the markers of place, or images of them, are also transported to new places, with either disastrous or victorious results. Tauribariba was painfully transferred to the cathedral in Dogura. Trying to return home to Wamira, he was removed again, this time forever. Sadness prevailed, as exemplified by Tauanana's retreat into the sea. The map of the Dararugu stones, on the other hand, was taken, by request, to America in order to provide the stones with increased

Figure 5.6. The Dararugu stones in Worewore that anchor taro in the gardens in the village of Boianai. Photograph © Miriam Kahn.

power—to ward off jealous rivals of other clans and allow the stones' rightful owners to succeed with their store and to win rugby games.

In almost every region of Melanesia where stones are markers of past events, they are described as being capable of movement. Andrew Strathern (1979:50) discusses the "itinerant quality" of the stones in the western highlands of Papua New Guinea. Near Buka, in the Solomon Islands, stones are known not only to walk about at night but also to fish, swim, dance, and even grow (Blackwood 1935). As I have suggested elsewhere (Kahn 1990), stones move because mythology and history are negotiable and subject to revision. Wamiran history, like all history, is not static but represents a dynamic, ongoing relationship between past events and the present. Events that are recorded in stone can most easily be brought up to date by the movement of the stones. A past recorded

and enlivened by stones that walk up from the sea, wander in the night, disappear from cathedral walls, or jump from boats bound for Australia is effectively and energetically receptive to alterations and additions. Because a stone can fix events in time, it must, like time, be able to move.

CREATING PERSONAL PLACES THROUGH HOUSES, HEARTH STONES, FRONT STOOPS, AND PIGS

After several months, because a friend was coming to visit and planned to stay a while, members of my hamlet decided to build me a house. The experience allowed me to deepen my social obligations and emotional ties. Unbeknownst to me at the time, it also allowed me to construct magnets for my own stories.

Alice gave me some land for my house next to hers. A house, itself capable of shifting locations (see Rodman 1985), is a locus of social cohesion. A Wamiran house, the posts of which are categorized as male and female and the end wall of which is called the heart, symbolizes the unification of maternal and paternal kin, of clan (matrilineal) and residence (patrilocal) groups, both of whom assist in building it. Like food, a house represents the social ties that nurture. As I watched people build the house, I often recalled the song in which Wamirans sang, "Your father has built a nice house for you," and the way in which houses embody symbols of the nourishment and comfort one acquires through social connections and cooperation. Long before the walls were in place, the hearth was arranged. Three hearth stones were carefully set in place, and food was cooked to feed the workers. As the hearth stones were inserted into the ground, people pointed to another, similar stone, named Kiori, that stood in solitude several feet away in front of Alice's house. It was all that remained of the group of cooking stones—intentionally left as a reminder—from the communal men's house that existed in the hamlet long ago.

Each day, as my house was being built, I fed the workers as payment for their help. When the house was completed I purchased a pig, the meat of which was distributed to all those who had helped. As I was told on numerous occasions, "You now own the land. You killed a pig and fed the workers. Your memory has been made strong." Because I paid for the land according to village custom, Wamirans said, "The house and land are now yours. You can do what you want in your house. You can play your radio very loudly and nobody can complain. We could issue you citizenship papers for Papua New Guinea. If you go away for a while, you have the right to put a fence around your house and put a lock on

it and it would stay like that until you returned. If someone else moved in, you could charge them rent!"

The final anchor for the house, however, was the large, flat, gray stone my friend laboriously carried from the riverbed and placed at the doorstep. Wamirans immediately explained that it would be my *buderi*, a material object that represents emotional events and triggers memories. Eventually I was also given a pig, another *buderi*, that would be kept in my memory after I was no longer in Wamira. Because a pig is usually given the name of the place from which its owner comes, the name chosen for my pig was "America."

Thus, places gradually evolved that had my own stories attached to them. Some places, such as my house, gave me rights—I could blast my radio, I could charge people rent. Landmarks within and around places, such as my hearth stones and front stoop, were moorings for the many memories of my connection to Wamirans. Even my wandering pig became an anchor for emotional meaning. A few years later, in a letter, Alice asked permission to kill my pig for a feast. After the feast she wrote again, describing how they had all wept for me when "America," my *buderi*, was slaughtered. Their tears were emotional outpourings as they thought of me.

A PERSONAL LANDSCAPE ENDOWED WITH EMOTION

The evening before I left Wamira to return to the United States, numerous friends gathered outside to join Alice and me as we sat in the moonlight reminiscing about my stay and contemplating my departure. Anticipating my journey home, Alice said,

> When you are busy traveling, you will have a lot to think and worry about, getting your ticket and catching your plane. But when you are home again sitting in your room all alone, you will think about Wamira and cry. You will tell stories about our place to your friends and play our tapes for them. They will hear everything, but only you will really know. You will cry for Wamira. You will be homesick for Wamira. Only you have been to our place. Only you will really know.

The next morning Alice helped me get my luggage ready. After we had moved my suitcases outside, she went back into the house. I assumed it was to check whether I had left anything behind. Once inside, she turned her back to the doorway and me, facing the place where my possessions had been. As she fondled things I had intentionally left behind, she wailed in a very controlled, melodic voice:

> *Kapore,* my child, who will take care of me now? You stayed here and took care of us. You helped us and now you are leaving. Everywhere I go I will think of you, the places where we walked, the places where we sat, *kapore* my child. This is the house you built. These are your things. We will live in it and think of you. *Kapore.*

As I listened, my mind flashed back to my arrival two years earlier. People cried for me because I was so far away from where I belonged, from family and friends who cared for me. Now they cried for me because I was leaving a place where I finally belonged. "You stayed in Wamira a long time and left your mark in many places," they said, "now you belong here and we are sad because you have to go." The places in which I had done things became bittersweet memorials. Wamirans recalled each place, each event.

> Under that breadfruit tree you first gave Emmaline some tobacco . . . on that hill you helped the Watiwati family turn the sod in their garden . . . at that rock on the riverbank you washed your clothes . . . at that tree stump you rested to eat mangoes on the way home from market . . . there is the garden at Aibodaboda where you sat on top of the fence, causing it to come tumbling down.

The places were not preexisting empty stages to be filled with activity; they took on meaning only when activity gave them form. They blossomed into places of significance through my actions and interactions with others. They reverberated with profoundly emotional shared experiences. The tears Emmaline shed when I compassionately helped her, the pity they felt when they saw me, an inexperienced laundress, pounding my clothes on the rocks, the laughter we all shared when I clumsily broke the garden fence—all these were emotions that infused and created the landscape. A meaningful landscape resulted where my actions had taken place and my memory lingered. I had become Wamiran by literally becoming part of Wamira, not in the communal sense of sharing the Tamodukorokoro myth or in the clan sense of having rights to certain clan land, but in an individual way, when landmarks of my experiences shaped the Wamirans' landscape and triggered their thoughts and feelings. History, biography, memory, and emotion all merged with and settled in the landscape. These places would trigger strong emotions for Wamirans after I had left, because they would be all that Wamirans had as reminders of me. In discussing how places with strong emotional content often evoke loss, Steven Feld (this volume) says that "living far away, one is deeply reminded of places as kin; path connections are like familiar places calling back to you."

It was ironic that after two years, just as I was beginning to blend into the Wamiran landscape, I felt the desire to return to my own cultural place. No matter how content, comfortable, and included I had felt in Wamira, it was not the place that resonated most richly for me. Instead, I began to long for the landscape that connected me to my own roots. From my perspective, I had gone from being in a place I could previously only vaguely imagine to being in a place I somewhat knew. For me, Wamira was an experience that had seeped inside and reshaped me. For Wamirans, much of me and their connection to me became permanently inscribed in their landscape.

GROUNDING MEMORIES AND ESTABLISHING SOCIAL OBLIGATIONS

I went home and thought, talked, and wrote about Wamira. As people had predicted, I cried about it, too. I was, as Alice had warned, "homesick." Thus, a few years later I traveled to Wamira again.

When I arrived back in the village I was startled. I saw that I was already "there." As I walked into my house (now inhabited by Alice and her family), I saw that not only was Wamira inside me but also that I, or bits of me, were in Wamira. My possessions were purposefully kept everywhere as *buderi*. In almost the exact spots where I had left them, I found my kerosene lamp, my dishes and cups, my sleeping mat, my radio, my blue plastic bucket, my old water jug, my pillow, and my metal storage trunk. Even an old tube of toothpaste, squeezed flat and stiff, was stuck in the wall where I used to keep it. The Christmas card my mother had sent Alice three years earlier was on the wall, as was an old calendar she had sent them while I was living there. It was an eerie feeling. Some old people had died. Some children had been born. But my toothpaste tube had remained as untouched on the wall as I had in their memory. I had fixed Wamira in my mind. Wamirans had fixed me in their place.

Wamirans, rather than seeming happy to see me, once again greeted me with tearful faces and exclamations of "*Kapore.*" This time it was because my mother had died back home in the interval between my two trips, and they mourned the fact that I was now an "orphan" (*kedakeda*). Trying to make sense of my leaving home this time, they explained to themselves that I had to come to do my work. Knowing that my financial resources were from the government, they rationalized that my government had made me come. "Why did you leave your father all alone? You should have stayed to take care of him," they reprimanded. When I jokingly commented about how he didn't like to cook for himself, they became somber and concerned. I thought of Marakwadiveta, the stone-faced woman who did not feed her sister and became a rock in the bay. I had not learned my lesson from the landscape.

Several months before I was to leave Wamira on this second visit,

some of the men from my hamlet asked whether my government could "pay" them for having taken care of me. "You have lived in Wamira for a total of almost three years. You helped us and we helped you. Surely there should be something big to remember you by." Ideas were bandied about among the men: a boat, a truck, a tractor—no, something more permanent. Finally there was agreement on a community hall. They had hopes of using it not only as a place where people could gather but also as a place where women could bake bread and where overnight guests could be housed. They fantasized about its being a kind of hotel that might even attract tourists. They discussed how they could earn money and get rich. When I explained that my budget could probably accommodate a small building, they cleverly asked, "Will you come back again in a few years?" "I hope so," I said. "Well, then the community hall will have to be built out of permanent materials that will last forever, not bush materials that will rot." We all agreed. A Wamiran who had done some carpentry in town prepared a list of needed supplies, and Alice and I planned a boat trip to the port town of Lae to purchase what was needed: timber, corrugated iron, bags of cement, Masonite, ridge capping, gutter pieces, nails, hinges, and paint.

We arrived back in Wamira with all the supplies about a month before my planned departure. Disagreements immediately arose about the location of the community hall. I soon understood that the arguments had to do with the symbolic nature of the politics of place and with conflicting emotions of desire and fear that accompanied the specter of prosperity. Once again, I thought of Tamodukorokoro.

In order to follow the gist of the Wamirans' arguments, it is necessary to understand that Wamira is divided into two named wards: Damaladona and Rumaruma. Each is further subdivided into many named hamlets. I lived in Rumaruma, in the hamlet of Inibuena. I wanted the community hall to be for all of Rumaruma, whereas the people of Inibuena had conflicting feelings about whether it should be only for their hamlet or for all of Rumaruma. If it were to be for Inibuena, it would be built within the hamlet. If it were for Rumaruma, it would be placed at Werau, the communal grounds for Rumaruma. Whereas I saw Inibuena as included within Rumaruma, the Wamirans saw it as opposed to Rumaruma. Their conflicting emotions had to do with the idea of wanting abundance but fearing the consequences for individuals should they become prosperous. As is common in Melanesia, prosperity on the part of some leads to jealousy on the part of others. And jealousy, it is thought, leads to sorcery, destruction, and death.

Discussions about the location of the community hall were animated and frequent, lasting for many days.

> King: We will build the house. Mimi spent all her money on it. Now it is up to us to build it. Others won't laugh at us. We are now *gulau* [chiefs, rich people]. Mimi did this for us.
>
> Brian: You should pick the location of the house carefully. Cement will be poured. It will be permanent.

The meaning of these comments was later explained to me. Even though Brian talked about the location of the house, the "inner meaning" of the talk was about money and jealousy. If money was earned from the bread baking or the overnight guests, people would argue about who had the right to it, Rumaruma or Inibuena.

> Nigel: We should speak about the location. Later the people of Inibuena may complain, saying that they took care of Mimi and that the house should have been in Inibuena. If we put it in Werau, will the people of Inibuena later complain?
>
> Jeremiah: Mimi wants the house to be for all of Rumaruma, not just for Inibuena. Her insides are going to Werau. It is her wish. The communal ground will be the chief, no one person will be chief.
>
> Malcolm: Mimi wants the house for all of Rumaruma. It will be put in Werau. Our ancestors were here.
>
> Manson: We have finished discussing the location of the house.

In the same way that people often reconstruct myth through lived experience (see Gillison 1993; Young 1983a), Wamirans seemed to be playing out a contemporary version of Tamodukorokoro when deciding where to place the building. As I soon learned, the community hall, with its potential for producing income from overnight guests or the sale of bread, symbolized wealth and prosperity—all that Tamodukorokoro had forbidden them or, one might say, all that they had forbidden themselves. The dilemma they faced over where to place the building produced mixed emotions like those they had felt about Tamodukorokoro. On the one hand, as the Inibuena people explained, they had taken care of me, and so the community hall should be in their hamlet. Yet if they gained too much prestige from having cared for me and having erected the building, others would be jealous.

Although the community hall seemed to represent what Tamodukorokoro had denied them, there was a major difference. Unlike Tamodukorokoro, whom Wamirans had "chased away," the community hall was to be a permanent edifice—literally cemented into the landscape—that would remain long after my departure. The introduction of permanent materials, cement, and money added new dimensions to their quandary. Job, the most respected elder of Rumaruma, arrived at my house one day to discuss his concern. He was old, he explained, and understood

only about taro, jealousy, famine, and death. But he felt ignorant about money. The younger men wanted the house to bring in money, he said, but he was anxious about the consequences if it did.

I thought that, as Malcolm had announced several days previously, the Wamirans had "finished discussing the location of the house." But when I went one day to watch what I thought would be the pegging of the house site, I witnessed more arguments instead. Some men warned about putting the house too close to the path for fear that people, motivated by jealousy, would slash the walls and ruin the house. Again, I had visions of Tamodukorokoro and how Wamirans had tried to slash his legs. In response, the suggestion was made to move the house slightly farther from the main path. At that point, Henry, whose house was near the proposed site, complained that he didn't want it near his house. Finally, about a week later, a compromise was reached and the house was pegged in a spot neither too close to the path nor too close to anyone's house—a spot that belonged to Manibolanai clan, the clan into which I had been adopted.

Once the decision about its location was reached, the house was erected relatively quickly. When it was finished and my farewell feast was held, several men spoke.

> Jeremiah: Thank you, Mimi, for putting the house up at Werau in the name of Inibuena. When all the people have a good time at Werau, the name of Inibuena will be lifted up as well.
>
> King: You are a very brave woman to put the house at Werau. Thank you for not putting it at Inibuena. If you had put it in Inibuena, then when you returned to Wamira one day you would not find us here. We would all be dead—in the cemetery. That is the custom here. If we make ourselves rich, others will be jealous and kill us.

As the cement was drying on the front stoop of the community hall, I was asked to inscribe my initials in the sticky surface. Henceforth, it was to be called the Mimi Community Hall in my honor. It now became a place with a name and a permanent "mark," all of which were associated with me and my social obligations in Wamira. It was a memorial to the relationships I had already established in the village, as well as a conscious reminder that they be continued even after I left. I was asked to promise that I wouldn't forget Wamirans once I was back in the United States. I was to send money from time to time "for the community hall." And to this day I continue to receive letters with requests and to honor my promise. My anthropological activity had created lasting social obligations, the evidence for which was literally cemented upon the land. As one man remarked, "You poured cement so your power will stay here forever." In pouring the foundation for a permanent structure, I had also

cemented my relationships and obligations. I recalled how the Wamirans had cleverly asked, "Will you come back again? Then the community hall will have to be built out of permanent materials that will last forever, not bush materials that will rot." They were talking about more than building supplies. They were indicating that my relationship with them was permanent, not ephemeral. Our connectedness, and my social obligations to them, will last forever.

CONCLUSION

Although, in the past, place has been neglected in the anthropological literature, it has recently received more careful and creative exploration (Aihoshi and Rodman 1992; Augé 1995; Basso 1984a, 1984b, 1988; Hirsch and O'Hanlon 1995; Kahn 1990; Munn 1990; Myers 1991; Pandya 1990; Parmentier 1987; Rodman 1992; Stewart 1988; Wassman 1991; Weiner 1991). Geographers, too, who have long held place as their central concern, have expressed a renewed interest in the topic by developing a more person-oriented approach to place as landscape constructed through human activity (Berdoulay 1989; Entrikin 1989, 1991; Nir 1990; Shields 1991; Tuan 1991; Yoon 1986). Their approaches take into account the cultural significance of daily interactions between people and environments, or what Berdoulay (1989:130) calls "lived space." There is an attempt to "redirect geographical research toward a concern for the richness of human experience and an understanding of human action" (Entrikin 1989:40).

Anthropologists, in their recent discussions of place, have advanced our understanding of the culturally constructed nature of places. Much of the research in the Pacific Islands that analyzes place from the local perspective rings true for Wamiran points of view. For example, the Maori of New Zealand connect knowledge to specific landmarks, and their attitudes toward the environment are reflected in their proverbs, legends, and myths (Salmond 1982). In Belau, cultural history is interpreted through the naming of places, houses, stones, valuables, and so forth. Social relationships are inscribed in named places, connecting people and things in placed events. The result is a historical topography that gives landscape a human meaning (Parmentier 1987). In Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea, anthropologists have also discussed the idea that life activity is punctuated and recalled by places where people have been (Rodman 1987; Weiner 1991; Young 1983b). In Papua New Guinea, history, in general, is described in terms of relationships between migrations, myths, names, and localities that are recalled in songs, stories, and ritual (Jorgensen 1990). History is most precise when it is geography,

organized spatially rather than temporally. Temporal order is given as the sequence of localities associated with events (Wassmann 1991). Even genealogies are enhanced by the association of persons with events in designated places (Schuster 1991).

For Wamirans, we have seen that the concept of place emerges from social interactions and relationships, whether at the village, the group, or the individual level. Features in the landscape and other markers such as stones, community halls, cement stoops, and even toothpaste tubes, while looking like everyday objects to outsiders, resonate deeply as they link people to ancient myths and current history. They represent connections between people and their common past, links between individuals and their group, or sources of individual identity. They are outer tangible projections of inner emotional landscapes. Both concrete evidence and continual reminder, they can be anchored in stone, printed on rugby shirts, or poured in cement. They can be meaningful to the whole village, one group, or one individual.

Village (or communal) places are uniquely Wamiran and unite people by surrounding them with reminders of connected pasts and common values. These are deeply rooted in mythology and serve as mnemonic devices to recall shared history and to act as moral guides for current behavior. For example, Wamirans all share knowledge of places from the myths about Tamodukorokoro or about Marakwadiveta and Maradiudiva. Communal places are similar to those Basso describes for the Western Apaches, where the meanings of some places are shared by everyone. Even after living in Wamira for three years, drawing its maps and writing its stories, I did not share village places with Wamirans.

Group places, too, remained their own, specific to the clan or hamlet that created and nurtured them. Clan places such as those referred to in the Tauribariba story are also shared, but by a smaller group. Even people who do not belong to the Maibouni clan are at least vaguely aware of the Tauribariba story and its associated places and markers. Places specific to select groups are reminiscent of those described by Karen Blu (this volume): each of three different groups in North Carolina experiences the same place in its own very different way.

Personal places, on the other hand, are continually created whenever meaningful social interactions take place. My personal places, for example, resulted when I engaged in social exchanges with Wamirans. For both of us, personal places were embodied in physical markers that recalled shared stories, acts of compassion, or experiences of loss. Every individual has a number of such places, which occasionally overlap with those of others. They are endowed with strong emotional meaning and

correspond most closely to the places Steven Feld (this volume) discusses for the Kaluli or those Kathleen Stewart (this volume) describes for the people of Appalachia. My own personal places emerged on the Wamiran landscape only when I interacted in meaningful ways with Wamirans, and they have become marked points in a larger journey.

As an anthropologist, I move among places that I imagine, explore, construct, and reconstruct. Unlike most Wamirans, whose territory is more circumscribed, I journey widely in search of places that speak to me. I take my places with me, for places are "tools for the imagination . . . eminently portable possessions" (Basso 1988:102). As Chateaubriand (1803) said, "Every man carries within him a world which is composed of all that he has seen and loved, and to which he constantly returns, even when he is traveling through, and seems to be living in, some different world." Places to which I travel remind me of other places I have known. Each validates my sense of self, articulating with narratives of either personal history or professional identity. In moving among places, I try to capture something of their essence. I recreate them in museum exhibits, lectures, books and articles—as I have done here. But ultimately, places are emotional landscapes, and the most intimate, personal ones are shared with only a few. I think Alice understood this when she told me, "Only you have been to our place. Only you will really know."

NOTES

1. I conducted fieldwork in Wamira in 1976–78 and 1981–82. The research trips were made possible by generous support from the National Science Foundation, the National Institute of Mental Health, the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, and the Institute for Intercultural Studies. Throughout my work on this chapter, my husband, Richard Taylor, provided support and helpful commentary. I especially thank my many friends in Wamira, who walked the landscape with me and recounted the stories attached to the places. My deepest gratitude goes to Alice Dobunaba, Aidan Gadiona, and the late Sybil Gisewa, who created my home away from home. I alone accept responsibility for any misinterpretation of the data.

2. At the time of my first visit, the family members living in the house were Alice Dobunaba, her brother, Aidan Gadiona, and their elderly mother, Sybil Gisewa. Alice's husband was living in the town of Lae. Their daughter, Felicia Dobunaba, lived in Port Moresby, where she attended the University of Papua New Guinea.

3. Wamira lies in a dry belt that extends from Boianai to Cape Frère, a coastal strip some thirty kilometers in length. Within that region, average annual rainfall is only 1,400 millimeters. For this reason Wamirans and other villagers within the region must irrigate their taro, a crop which needs much water.

4. For a complete version of the myth and a structural-symbolic analysis of it, see Kahn (1986:60–73).

5. There are several versions of this event. According to Father Bodger, the stone had not yet been cemented into the wall but was lying on a table in the cathedral (Bodger, personal communication 1978). According to a Wamiran, it had been

cemented into the wall with its face looking out toward Wamira. As I was told, "Tauribariba saw the village and was drawn back to his home." Yet another, more embellished Wamiran version claims that the stone was carried to England and Australia. When it arrived in Australia, it jumped from the side of the boat and swam back to Wamira because "that is where it belonged."

6

"Where Do You Stay At?"

Home Place and Community among the Lumbee

Karen I. Blu

Making comparisons is what anthropologists do. So when I first heard Keith Basso deliver a prepublication version of "'Stalking with Stories': Names, Places, and Moral Narratives among the Western Apache" (1984b), I drew comparisons between the Apaches Basso described and the Lumbees with whom I had worked. On the face of it, the differences seemed stronger than the similarities. Western Apaches have well-established federal reservations and a reputation for conserving their old ways, whereas Lumbees have never had a reservation and have gained only limited federal recognition of their Indianness. Lumbees, like Apaches, have a certain reputation for toughness, but unlike Apaches, they do not maintain highly visible traditions that outsiders can easily identify as ancient and "Indian."

Having heard Basso explain, however, some of the ways in which places are important and are used by Apaches, I began to see that places are important to Lumbees as well, in ways that I had insufficiently appreciated in my earlier work (Blu 1980). This feeling sent me back to rural North Carolina during the very hot summer of 1984 to learn more about how Lumbees talk about places, so that I might better understand their sense of place.[1]

Ultimately, the quest for understanding in one highly particular southern setting led me to ponder larger questions about home places. At first, I considered how Native Americans' relationships to their home places, past and present, get shaped. That consideration, in turn, provoked thoughts about the political ramifications of ideas of home place in national and international arenas. In this way, moving back and forth between local particulars and broader issues in grander settings, I sought illumination as anthropologists so often do. What emerged was my version of what a number of Lumbees told me about their home places, a suggestion that a Lumbee-like model of conceptualizing places might

places, particularly inhabited, is at least one of the ways—it is hardly the only one—in which the received procedures of small-scale ethnography can be brought to bear on the grand complexities that plague that world. It is not a matter of reducing large things to small, the United States to Middletown, General Motors to the shop floor. It is a matter of giving shape to things: exactness, force, intelligibility.

For it is still the case that no one lives in the world in general. Everybody, even the exiled, the drifting, the diasporic, or the perpetually moving, lives in some confined and limited stretch of it—"the world around here." The sense of interconnectedness imposed on us by the mass media, by rapid travel, and by long-distance communication obscures this more than a little. So does the featurelessness and interchangeability of so many of our public spaces, the standardization of so many of our products, and the routinization of so much of our daily existence. The banalities and distractions of the way we live now lead us, often enough, to lose sight of how much it matters just where we are and what it is like to be there. The ethnography of place is, if anything, more critical for those who are apt to imagine that all places are alike than for those who, listening to forests or experiencing stones, know better.

Anthropology, of the family, of law, of exchange, of ritual, of belief, of identity, has always had about it a sort of preludial quality, as if it marks the beginning of something that will reach far beyond the matters under immediate consideration. The anthropology of place, which can fairly be said to have been launched as a sustained and self-conscious enterprise in these pages (as a diffuse, unthematized concern, a sort of background continuo, it has, of course, been around much longer), has the same sort of air, the same kind of promise. One can only faintly imagine what sedulous and circumstantial inquiries like these into the Berlin of divisions and unitings, remembered pasts and suppressed ones, the Singapore of British swagger and officialism turned to Chinese push and discipline, or the Detroit of empty lots, screaming sirens, and boarded stores will bring. But one thing they will bring, if they are indeed ever done, is a grasp of what it means to be here rather than there, now rather than then, without which our understanding will be thin, general, surface, and incomplete.

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