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Schneider, Katharina

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ABOVE AND BELOW
AMONG MAINLANDERS AND SALTWATER
PEOPLE IN BUKA, BOUGAINVILLE

Katharina Schneider

Institute of Anthropology

Heidelberg University

Heidelberg,Germany

katharina.schneider@eth.uni-heidelberg.de

This article draws on ethnographic field research in Buka, Bougainville, in order to address the question of multiple models in spatial orientation and the factors that constrain their relative salience. With respect to different Polynesian settings (Tonga and Samoa), Bradd Shore has suggested that a preference for allocentric models may be linked to pronounced social hierarchies. However, findings from other settings (Taumako) indicate that matters may be more complicated. Within the Buka area, I suggest that the relative salience of allocentric and egocentric radiality is connected to people's relative position in local hierarchies. "Mainlanders," who are located "above" in terms of local social hierarchies, rely more strongly on allocentric models, compared to "saltwater people" who are located further "below" and prefer to use egocentric models. I link this finding to the contrast between "mainland" and "saltwater" subsistence activities and show how "mainlanders" adopt a system of allocentric spatial orientation in their everyday activities of gardening, while spatial orientation during "saltwater people's" fishing activities is strongly egocentric.

Keywords: allocentric and egocentric radiality, hierarchy, Buka

Introduction

Bradd Shore (2014), in his discussion of a recently published volume on multiple models in spatial orientation, calls for research on the interdependencies of distinct models and the variables that constrain the salience of one or another. Here, I address this problem from the perspective of ethnographic research conducted in the Buka area, in the northern part of Papua New Guinea's Autonomous Region of Bougainville (see Figures 1 and 2).

Buka Island is separated by a narrow channel from the much larger island of Bougainville, immediately to the south. The Buka area has about 40,000 inhabitants speaking three closely related languages.[1] These people live on Buka and on five small islands. The region has been treated as a single ethnographic area in the
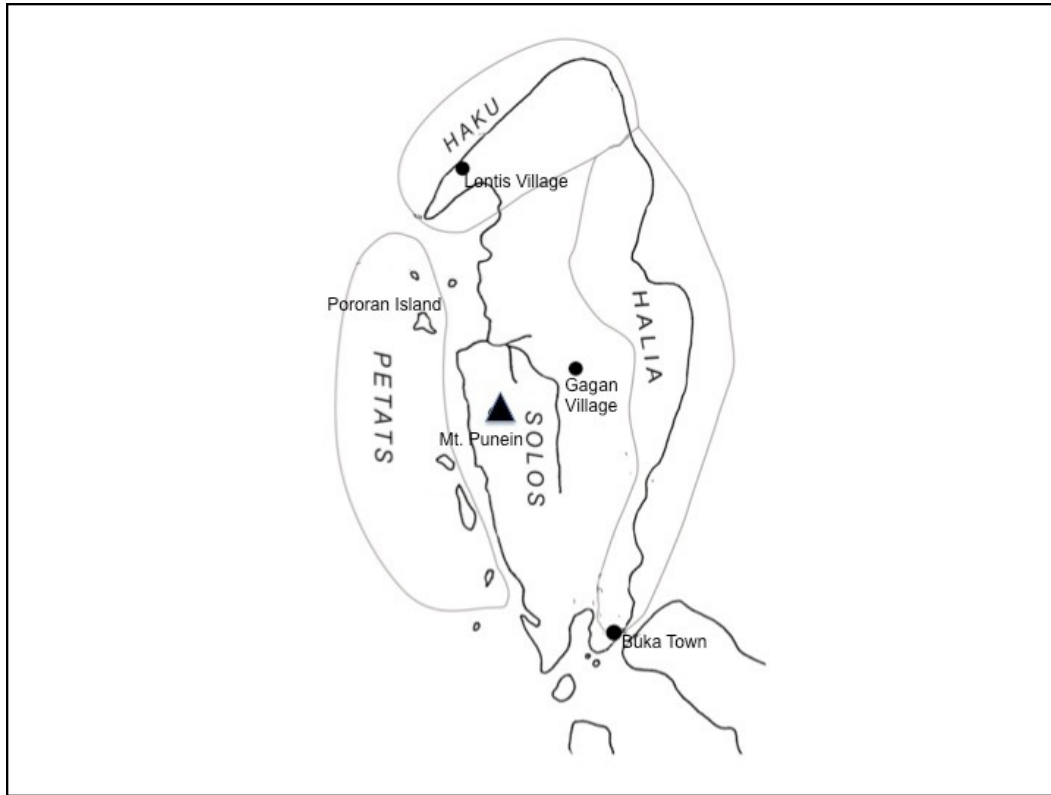
Figure 2. The Buka Area, with names of language groups and research sites. (Map reprinted from Schneider 2012 with permission of publisher.)

literature (Blackwood 1979; Rimoldi 1971; Rimoldi and Rimoldi 1992; Sagir 2003, 2005; Sarei 1974). In the following pages, when I refer to "Buka" or "in Buka," I am calling attention to the region, including the small islands that are home to the "saltwater people." The expressions, "on Buka," "Buka Island," or "the mainland" refer specifically to the large island of Buka and exclude the smaller outcroppings.

According to local oral history, all Buka people come from a single origin point, the mountain of Punein, from which their ancestors descended in the distant past. Furthermore, all Buka people belong to one or another of the area's dispersed matrilineal groups (*pinaposa*), whose members help one another on ceremonial occasions or during times of shortage. The *pinaposa* are made up of two to five *ngorer*, smaller groups of relatives descending from a single known ancestress. Moreover, all Buka people have the same "traditional leadership system," as it is called locally. The *tsunon* and *hahini*, the firstborn son and daughter of the firstborn woman of a local branch of a *pinaposa*, are responsible for peace at their settlement, as well as for maintaining connections to relatives in other locations. They share their ancestral migration histories and genealogical knowledge with their counterparts elsewhere and, thereby, keep memories of a shared past alive. Each local branch of a *pinaposa* has a *tsuhan*, a ceremonial house jointly owned

by its *tsunon*, and these *tsuhan* are connected to each other in complex relations of competition and mutual support. For all these reasons, local people state emphatically, "we are all one in Buka." Equally emphatically, however, they insist on a distinction between "mainlanders" and "saltwater people." The former live primarily as gardeners on the largest island in the area, Buka Island or "the mainland." The latter live on the smaller islands as fishing people and trade their fish with mainland relatives for starchy vegetables. Among other things, mainlanders and saltwater people differ in the ways in which they orient themselves in space. This contrast in spatial orientation is the subject matter of this paper. It also provides the ethnographic impetus for my engagement with multiple models, their relative salience in different contexts, their interrelations, and the variables that determine the relative emphasis each is given.

Buka people, saltwater people and mainlanders alike, rely for orientation on environmental axes that ethnographers have found to be prominent elsewhere in the Pacific: above–below, front–back, seaward–landward, inward–outward. These axes are not congruent with one another, a fact that makes even apparently-straightforward everyday activities spatially challenging (see especially Mawyer 2014; also Feinberg 1988, 2014). Besides these non-congruent environmental axes, both absolute and relative (Bennardo 2002, 2009), or allocentric and egocentric (Shore 2012, 2014; Feinberg and Mawyer 2014) frames of reference have been identified in Pacific settings. Allocentric models assume a "survey perspective," that is, they take what might be called a bird's-eye view. Egocentric ones take the "route perspective"; that is, they conceptualize space from the viewpoint of someone moving through an environment (Bennardo 2014; Shore 2014; Tversky 2003).

Especially interesting in this respect is Shore's (2014) discussion of "radiality," which Bennardo (2002, 2009) has proposed constitutes a "foundational cultural model" in Tonga, and perhaps other parts of Oceania. Radial models, however, come in a number of forms (Ammarell 2014; Mawyer 2014; Feinberg 2014). Among these, Shore emphasizes that we must seek to understand both the contrast between egocentric and allocentric radial models, and the ways in which people tack between them (e.g., Genz 2014). These contrasts and interdependencies may best be understood as an outcome of the mutual constitution of social and spatial cognition, as he argues with reference to his own discussion of radiality in Samoa (Shore 1996) and that of Bennardo in Tonga (2009, 2014). Most noteworthy with respect to my ethnographic material from Buka is Shore's suggestion that the degree of reliance on allocentric and egocentric models may be related to issues of hierarchy. He proposes that radial models are inherently egocentric, with a moving ego as a center. However, in fiercely hierarchical Tonga (Bennardo 2009, 2014), a "perceptual trick" (Shore 2014:385) replaces ego's perspective with that of a sacred, immobile center, and the radial model turns allocentric. To complicate matters further, Feinberg (2014) has found what look like allocentric radial models in Taumako, where the (stable) center is a mountain, but in a setting less hier-

archical than either Tonga or Samoa. The same seems to be true for Buka: people switch back and forth between using an egocentric and an allocentric radial model, the latter centered upon a mountain. Buka mainlanders helped me orient myself by taking an allocentric perspective during my extended visits.[2] In their accounts of their places and the maps they drew for me, they located themselves and their *tsuhan* along "roads" of ancestral migration that connect everyone in Buka to a shared origin point. By contrast, Pororan Islanders, with whom I spent most of my time, taught me to take an egocentric (experiential) perspective with respect to socially salient spatial differences. This difference in spatial preferences maps on hierarchical contrasts, as Shore (2014) suggests, though in this case, they are contrasts within a region. Those further away from the mountain are both lower in rank and saltwater people; those closer to the mountain are mainlanders, and they claim a higher position.

This begs the question of how people develop a preference for one or the other model. Here, I draw loosely upon Feinberg's argument about importance of environmental settings, by which he has explained contrasts in spatial orientation between Anuta and Nukumanu (Feinberg 1988) as well as the occurrence of what appears to be allocentric but non-hierarchical radiality on Taumako (Feinberg 2014). Extending his point and drawing attention to the importance of subsistence activities, I focus on the spatial affordances of gardening and fishing, the prevalent subsistence activities among mainlanders and Pororan Islanders, respectively. Drawing on James Gibson's (1979) ecological approach to perception, Tim Ingold (2000:166) has argued that in practical activity, "the information picked up by an agent in the context of practical activity specifies what are called the 'affordances' of objects and events in the environment (Gibson 1979:127-143)". Affordances are "what an environment offers for the pursuance of the action" (ibid.), and in the process of attending and responding to them, skilled practitioners get to know them (Ingold 2011:11). In their practical activities of gardening, I argue that Buka mainlanders perceive and realize the possibilities of working productively in their gardens by using allocentric models of space. By contrast, the Pororans perceive and realize the affordances of their maritime environment for fishing successfully by using and developing egocentric models. Thus, gardening and fishing afford preferences for an allocentric and an egocentric models of spatial orientation, respectively. I suggest that the differential preference for models of spatial orientation between mainlanders and saltwater people is developed in the context of subsistence activities. The greater appeal for those "above" to employ allocentric and those "below" to employ egocentric models further encourages the reliance of one or the other model.

In this article, I concentrate on one significant environmental axis for spatial orientation in Buka: above–below (*ias–kopu*, Hapororan).[3] The complex interactions of above–below with front–back, seaward–landward, and inward–outward will have to be discussed at a different time, as will its highly specific entanglements with considerations of rank, kinship, and gender. It is sufficient for present

purposes to note that *tsunon* and *hahini* are above ordinary villagers, older siblings are above younger siblings, and men are above women and children. These distinctions are created and expressed in the way that people position their bodies in space, both on ritual occasions and in everyday life. For instance, in Buka as on Anuta (Feinberg 1981:158), people avoid standing when a chief is seated. When they have to pass by a seated chief, they bend down low. Furthermore, women must not point their feet, the lower end of their body, at men, who are "above" them (Feinberg 1988:296).

In the main part of the paper, I discuss two everyday situations in which the contrast between mainlanders' and saltwater people's spatial perspectives become obvious. These are decisions made before going to sleep about the directions in which to point one's head, and way-finding between settlements. In both cases, mainlanders adopt predominantly allocentric, and Pororan Islanders predominantly egocentric, perspectives. I then link this contrast to that between gardening and fishing. I show that each type of activity provides different affordances and different spatial challenges. Preference for allocentric or egocentric models may be grounded in the affordances of different subsistence activities. This alone, however, does not explain the conditions under which people activate these environmental affordances. Here, Shore's argument about hierarchy is helpful: those closer to a ritual center may find the "perceptual trick" of replacing their own perspective with that of an immobile center convenient and attractive; those further away may find an egocentric perspective more useful and more meaningful.

Going to Sleep and the Positioning of Head and Feet

The salience of the distinction of above and below, which is at once social and spatial, may best be approached at a very small scale, that of the human body. In Buka as elsewhere in the Pacific, the head, as the upper end of the human body, is the symbolically charged location of a person's power (see especially Rimoldi and Rimoldi 1992:35). Even small children are prevented from touching others' heads, and they learn quickly to object fiercely to being touched on the head themselves. However, not all heads are equally high. Highest and most powerful are the heads of the *tsunon*, the traditional leaders, followed by the heads of men without the title of *tsunon*, and finally by the heads of women and children. Heads are above even when a body is in a horizontal rather than a vertical position. For instance, people carefully avoid walking by the side of the house toward which the *tsunon* points his head when he sleeps.[4] Women also sleep with their heads in the direction of the men in the house, and they generally ensure that men are above their heads, horizontally as well as vertically.

The head's lofty position[5] is neither inherent in the head nor is it taken for granted. Heads become meaningful points of spatial reference by being carefully "enspaced" by their owners. As people point their heads in the correct direction at night, they elicit from others respect for their heads during their daytime activi-

ties. The care that Buka people take to thus enspace their own and other people's heads is considerable.

An important time for the proper enspacement of one's body in Buka is the moment just before one goes to sleep, both on the Buka mainland and on Pororan. Concerns over propriety, and over a lack of propriety that might anger the ancestors or might expose sleeping women in particular to the danger of sexual assault were often made explicit when newcomers had to be accommodated for the night. These newcomers could be relatives visiting from other locations or children and youth, who often moved between the houses of their relatives within a hamlet. My mainland hosts always told me, usually when showing me where I would sleep, which way to put the mattress (if it had not already been placed for me). It was easy enough to follow their explanations, and soon I could guess when coming to a new place which way I, as a woman, should be sleeping: Within the house, I should not point my feet in the direction of men's sleeping places. Furthermore, if the house was in the vicinity of that of a *tsunon* or of a *tsuhan*, I should not be pointing my feet there. On no occasion was I shown a spot to sleep where it was impossible to meet both requirements. Finally, although this was usually taken care of already if I had met the two other requirements, I should avoid pointing my feet in the direction of any major footpath or road close to the house that might be used during the night. To be on the safe side, I adopted the habit of my Buka travel companions and asked the women of the place I visited where I should point my head and feet when visiting a place for the first time. However, when I returned to a place that I already knew, I would simply lie down the same way as before, and nobody ever objected.

On Pororan, by contrast, working out where to place one's head and feet was a decision that had to be made anew every night. The direction of the men in the house was one criterion here, too. By contrast, the location of the *tsunon*'s house and *tsuhan* appeared not to matter. Instead, Pororan women based their decisions about where to point their heads on their best guess as to the direction in which men would be present that particular night. This kept changing, from night to night, from season to season, and as the men on the island changed the social spots at which they would sit and listen to the radio. Kil, one of my Pororan host ladies, would take as much as ten minutes before going to sleep most nights to work out where she, any grandchildren who were sleeping with us, and I should point our heads. During the season when people go fishing during the day, we usually had several options. We could safely point our feet toward the footpath running down the middle of the settlement to the beach, because nobody should be using it. The only people sleeping across the footpath were Kil's daughter and some children. If there was no gathering at the soccer field in the middle of the village in the evening, we could even point our feet in the direction of the soccer field, Kil reckoned, although she occasionally woke me up later on to tell me to change position because she had heard voices coming from there. During the season when fishermen were passing through the hamlet on their way to and from the

sea at night, our options were more limited. Kil used to find out for us during the day whether any fishermen were planning to use the footpath to get to the sea and back that night. If so, it was important that we point our heads toward the foot-path—which usually meant that our feet pointed in the direction of the soccer field. When, in such nights, the soccer field was busy, too, Kil would think back and forth, order us to move our mattresses around a couple of times, and usually settle for an intermediate position that kept our feet away from both the footpath and the soccer field. That, however, meant pointing our feet toward the cemetery located behind the house. Kil would then spend some time worrying aloud about this, half-addressing the spirits with explanations of the difficult situation we were in.

As these examples indicate, the poles of above and below that people attend to on the mainland are relatively stable and this stability is reinforced night after night, as people orient their bodies in the same way as the night before. On the mainland, the positioning of one's body depends primarily on the positioning of relatively immobile elements in the human landscape: the habitual sleeping places of men in the house, the *tsunon*'s house and the *tsuhan*. Sleeping bodies are oriented allocentrically: with a (mental) map of the place, the problem of how to sleep can be solved once and for all. On Pororan, by contrast, the alignment of one's body at night depends on relatively unstable reference points. These reference points are the bodies of other human beings, most importantly, men. An allo-centric perspective, however, requires stable reference points. When reference points are mobile, an ego-centric perspective is used instead. The contrast already apparent at this minute scale will become more obvious if we consider way-finding.

Way-Finding

Way-finding in an area where above and below are stable and fixed in the land-scape differs, as one might suspect, from way-finding on an island, where the poles of above and below are lodged in mobile people. I use the term way-finding to refer to "getting somewhere," both physically and socially. At a very basic level, way-finding means positioning oneself and moving in space in a way that others recognize as meaningful. At a more advanced level, it also refers to "jockeying for position," or "playing space." Strictly speaking, way-finding includes movements of the most circumscribed kind, including swiveling oneself and one's mattress around as one decides where to point one's head and feet at night. However, in this section, I will focus on activities that are more obviously about working out how to get somewhere: walking from one settlement to another, on the main-land and on Pororan.

Roads On The Mainland

On the Buka mainland, one must "follow the road" when walking within and be-tween settlements. Just taking the shortest route between two points is considered deeply inappropriate. There are roads of different orders on Buka. The "main

road" is the Buka highway, a paved road that runs from Buka Town along the east coast and north coast, all the way to the northwestern tip of the island. It runs parallel to the coast, which is formed by a cliff and a narrow beach underneath for almost the entire length of the road. Settlements line the road on both sides, in many areas almost continuously. Each settlement belongs to one *pinaposa*, one matrilineal group, and is inhabited by its married male members, their wives and children and the old women of the group, while married women of the group and their children live on their husbands' land.[6] Each settlement is further divided into two to five parts, one for each of the *ngorer*, the units of immediate matrilineal kin that make up the *pinaposa*. In some cases, each *ngorer* has its own footpath leading off the Buka main road into its settlement. In other cases, a single footpath leads into the settlement of the highest-ranking *ngorer* of the group and divides further, usually at the *tsuhan*, into smaller paths leading into the settlement of each *ngorer*. Within the *ngorer*'s settlement, the footpath often leads toward the central area, which normally contains the *tsunon*'s house and those of his closest relatives. Smaller paths branch off that lead to the houses of other people. The exact outline of the settlement and its roads depends both on the conditions of the terrain and on settlement histories that are specific to each settlement. The above outline, however, is an ideal that Buka people articulate clearly, and that they try to detect, for instance, when visiting another settlement for the first time.[7]

When Buka mainlanders visit people—usually relatives—in other settlements, they walk along their own footpaths up to the main road, follow the main road, and then turn into the footpath that leads into the settlement of the people they want to visit. Ostensibly, these roads run horizontally across the land. However, Buka people are always moving up or down on them. When visiting relatives, for instance, they say and indicate with body language that they go up to the main road, follow it and then move down away from the main road. They go up again as they approach a settlement and its *tsuhan*, move down as they turn away from the *tsuhan* toward the houses of ordinary people in the settlement, and go up (more or less) as they (more or less) respectfully approach the house of their relative. They assume an upright posture, and women sometimes re-tie their waist cloths (*laplaps* in Tok Pisin) and tuck them in neatly when moving up. They focus their attention on their target, call out to announce their visit, and behave in an orderly manner, generally speaking. On the way down, they relax a little, joke, and, perhaps, chew betel nut along the way.

Besides the fact that walking into any settlement requires both upward and downward movements, not all settlements are equally high. Their relative height depends on ancestral migration histories. These begin, for all *pinaposa*, on Punein, not the highest but one of the highest mountains on Buka Island. This mountain, now uninhabited, is said to be the origin place of all Buka people. The ancestors migrated down from it for reasons that are not further specified, split up, and each made his or her own way down the mountain and along the island's coasts. Each *pinaposa* descended separately and then divided along the way, with

some people remaining higher up along the ancestral migration road and others moving on downward. Within the *pinaposa*, the relative height of the *tsuhan*, the *tsunon*'s house, and the settlement as a whole depends on how close it is, along its particular road, to Punein. Buka people continue to open up new land, sometimes in areas that used to be covered in coconut plantations dating back to colonial times and sometimes in areas that are said to have been inhabited in the past by their matrilineal group but that are now empty. Others acquire the right for themselves and their matrilineal descendants to settle on land belonging to their father's matrilineal group, presumably permanently. Thus, ancestral migration continues in the present. The road of each matrilineal group continues to grow downward.

When people visit relatives belonging to their *pinaposa*, they indicate an awareness of whether they are moving up or down along their *pinaposa*'s migration route, verbally and otherwise. For instance, when going to a settlement newly opened up by a member of the *pinaposa*, women will dress up to show their respect for the inhabitants, but at the same time, they may express curiosity about "that little place of theirs," and they may doubt aloud if it will be viable. If, by contrast, they are moving up their migration route, they may point out to others, especially children accompanying them, that it is important to "walk about properly" now, because one is visiting "a true place, a mountain."[8] With any such visit, they thus re-create and extend further ancestral relations of kinship and of relative rank.

In addition to occupying a particular position along its own group's road, each local settlement of a *pinaposa* is either above or below those of its neighbors from other matrilineal groups. Here, relative height depends on who the first settlers in the area were, and who came later and had to ask permission to settle on the land from the group of the original owners (see especially Sagir 2003). Arguments about the relative ranking of groups belonging to different *pinaposa* can be complex. As a first approximation of the socio-spatial principles at work, it is sufficient to think of the later arrivals as those who had to go up to the *tsuhan* and *tsunon* of the earlier arrivals and ask for permission to stay. Their respectful approach elevated the already existing settlement. This elevated status of the earlier settlers remains as long as the descendants of the new arrivals continue to approach respectfully when they come to visit.[9]

Many Buka Islanders do not know the more esoteric parts of the history of the roads they are walking. However, one must demonstrate some knowledge of the significance of the road for getting anywhere on the mainland, even just physically. Children trailing their mothers will often be instructed how to behave, and why, and if they misbehave—for instance, by not remaining on the road but "running about in the bush"—they may be sent back home. During fieldwork, I was called back on several occasions, or was stopped rather hastily by someone watching me, when I strayed from the road. Once, I accidentally crossed an unmarked boundary between two neighboring settlements where a footpath disap-

peared in a sandy patch between houses. A senior woman came after me, took me by the shoulders from behind, pulled me back across the invisible boundary, and literally walked me out of her own settlement along the road, and then into the neighboring one along the neighbors' road. She made me stop along the way to check if I was dressed properly for visiting neighbors and to remind me that, when walking into other people's settlements, it was polite to call out and announce oneself. She also made it very clear to me that she would not let me walk around on my own in the future, as I had not learned what one needed to know for finding one's way around. Physically as well as socially, my radius was reduced considerably until I learned to "follow the road." This was especially important because I was a woman and my wandering about was perceived to compromise not only propriety but also my personal safety. A male volunteer working in the area, however, was likewise taught which roads belonged to whom, and at which turns he therefore ought to honk his car horn to announce himself to the owners of the place.

To people who have learned the basics, roads appear no longer as a constraint, but as a channel for effective action. Those especially knowledgeable about roads are the *tsunon* and *hahini*. With their knowledge, they take the lead in situations that require cooperation with other groups, whose leaders will only be willing to give support if their relative height is properly acknowledged. Among those occasions is the death of a *tsunon* or *hahini*. For *tsunon* and *hahini*, unusually elaborate mortuary feasts ought to be held, whose organization will exceed the economic capacities of most groups. The deceased's relatives must then work out whom they can expect support from without concerns for politeness (close matrilineal relatives and local residents "below"), and whom they might approach respectfully to ask for help for the feast (those "above"). The death of a person of rank, then, triggers an unusual amount of physical movement of people, and it recreates the old distinctions of above and below between the settlements of different groups.

However, economic contingencies sometimes precipitate a reorganization of above and below that knowledgeable and ambitious *tsunon* readily exploit. For instance, if a group is faced with the death of a high-ranking member at a time when it has few resources, an ambitious *tsunon* of a lower-ranking but richer group may not wait until the other group demands his support. He may, instead, "throw away a little something" to the higher group, and even effectively take over the organization of the feast, without waiting for an explicit request. The group will be forced to acknowledge his generosity from a position that, all of a sudden, appears to be "below." More generally speaking, who is called upon for help, politely or demandingly, depends on the host group's own as well as others' economic capacities, on personal relations of their members, and on a particular *tsunon*'s strategic plans of raising his position and that of his settlement.

As this indicates, roads on the mainland and relations of relative height between matrilineal groups are not entirely static. However, they tend to change

slowly and in a process of careful deliberation, debate and occasionally confrontations about the "true" version of the road. Nevertheless, the upper end of the road —the ancestral center, Punein—always remains in place. Moreover, as people debate which settlement occupies which position along the road, the idea that there is a single road linking the members of a matrilineal group to one another in a definite order and all the way back and up to Punein is reinforced.

Encounters "At Sea"

On Pororan, wayfinding poses different challenges from those on the mainland. Some of the differences are physical: the village is not "neat," and "there are no proper roads," as the mainland women married on Pororan often complain. Pororan has a population density of more than 600 persons per square kilometer. The village feels crowded. "We just stay where there is space," say the Pororans. The houses of different groups of relatives may not be clearly separated. Furthermore, many settlements are inhabited jointly by people who do not consider themselves closely related. Thus, non-related people share roads. Partly in response to a lack of physical space, Pororan Islanders not only stay, but also walk wherever there is space. They often opt for the shortest route to their destination without worrying too much about following established footpaths or even acknowledging settlement boundaries. Their *ad hoc* routes change repeatedly, partly because people change their house sites on the island, and partly because the island itself changes its form. The seaward side is subject to erosion, while on the lagoon side, the tides have heaped up so much sand on one of its beaches that two new settlements have emerged there within the past 60 years.

Along with the physical challenges, Pororan Islanders must respond to an assortment of socio-spatial challenges when finding their way around their place. The relative height of particular houses, *tsuhan*, and entire settlements, relative to the fixed point of Punein "above," is of little concern to them. They, too, claim Punein as their origin point, and the *tsunon* and *hahini* of each group will have learned about the group's migration history from mainland relatives. However, the connection between ancestral migration routes on the mainland and their own everyday movements around their place is attenuated. As they move around the island, they are less concerned with properly acknowledging the relative height of places, dating back to ancestral times, than with establishing the relative height of other people whom they meet along the way. When people walk around in the densely settled village, there will be others whom they meet on the path. Still others will be watching them from a resting place in front of their houses or on the beach and will call out to greet them. In the greeting and response, spatial differences appear, become visible in the posture that people assume (upright and proud, versus bending down, stepping aside, and lowering one's eyes) and audible in the tone and words that are used in the brief conversations that two people may have along a path.

80

The Pororans do not usually presume that they know in advance who will end up "above" in the encounter. In some cases, close personal acquaintance, close relations of kinship, and distinctions of age and gender together make people take on a position above or below unthinkingly. However, in most cases, people have more than one way of reckoning their relation to each other in kin terms. Furthermore, where different aspects of the relation (kinship, relative age, gender) point in different directions, it is not clear who is above and who is below. Finally, in some cases age, wit, and mutual sympathy or antipathy complicate everyday encounters. Thus, in many encounters, those involved cannot predict who will be above and below. How people handle this is a matter of personal temperament, as well as of their best guess regarding the temperament, wit, and intentions toward them of the other person. Some people try to avoid encounters with people whom they are "not clear about" and consult their seniors or, in difficult cases, their *tsunon* about their relation with that particular other person: "Who is he to me," they will ask. Once they have received an explanation, they will be happy to meet that person and will assume the posture and, more generally, the behavior that is appropriate to their position within this relationship: above or below. More confident others, however, may not bother to consult their seniors. They may assume a position above, for instance by offering a distantly related person food or betel nut without waiting for a request. This is called "throwing something away," and the person who accepts the offer—because declining it would be very rude, or perhaps because the recipient is taken entirely by surprise—thereby ends up in a position "below." The person "below" will then wait for an occasion to make a return. Whether this return re-establishes a level playing field, or whether it appears more like a respectful return to a person already firmly above, depends on the relative ability of those involved to turn open-ended situations to his or her own advantage. This can be achieved through body language and the speedy discharge of desired items, and sometimes also through verbal commentaries that reinforce the directionality of one's action. "Go get this. I am giving it to you" makes for a different socio-spatial arrangement from "This is a little bit of fish. I am returning it for what you gave me last time."[10]

Other people again may decide to challenge someone who was "above" in previous encounters, playfully or seriously. The surprise effect may work to their advantage, and although the person who unexpectedly ends up below will not be pleased, others (and there are always people watching those encounters) will likely cheer or laugh. The person who made the leap "up" will rise in their esteem—unless, of course, the person who has been "lowered" is a *tsunon* or a *hahini*, who it would be inappropriate to treat in this way.[11] Children practice with one another, and among adults, this habit of "playing space" continues. Whether one enjoys it (as most islanders do) or not (most mainland women married on Pororan find it confusing), engaging in the creation of space in such encounters is not optional, but unavoidable if one wants to get anywhere on the island, even just physically. I tried ignoring people who called out to me during fieldwork, just to see if this

would be an option, and they came shouting and even running after me to stop me and demand to have their presence acknowledged, either "above" or "below."

Thus, way-finding on Pororan, just as on the mainland, involves learning about and acting appropriately (albeit, creatively) upon one's relations to particular others. Vertical distinctions are created and acknowledged here in the course of particular encounters. Unlike on the mainland, the poles of above and below are associated with particular (mobile) people. They appear through competition between two people meeting along a footpath; they disappear as the two people—the two end points of the above–below axis—move apart and turn their attention elsewhere; finally, they re-appear as other people meet and create new spatial relationships among themselves. This mode of creating socio-spatial distinctions contrasts sharply with those on the mainland, where the poles of above and below are firmly lodged in (relatively stationary) mountains, *tsuhan* and settlement centers.

Roads and Encounters, Allocentric and Egocentric Models

In this section, I have described the contrasting ways in which Buka mainlanders and Pororan Islanders constitute spatial and social distinctions of "above" and "below" in wayfaring. On the mainland, successful way-finding hinges upon a person's ability to locate herself, in real time, on an upward and downward sloping road in a relatively stable landscape, hung up, so to speak, on Punein. Thus, the understanding of an allocentric radial model of "customary" space and society, with the mountain at its apex and with *tsuhan* and settlement centers as nested nodes of diminishing prominence, is crucial to way-finding on Buka. As mainlanders go about their daily affairs, their ego-centered perspectives of the road unfolding in front of them are constantly re-oriented to match what they know, or what others tell them on the way about the road they are traveling.

On Pororan, by contrast, the allocentric radial model with the mountain at its apex is prominent when people talk about Buka *kastom* but far less salient in way-finding. Instead, socio-spatial distinctions emerge in everyday encounters between mobile people whose relative height is an outcome of their encounter, rather than being taken for granted at the outset. The experiential and, indeed, experimental dimensions of way-finding appear more prominent than efforts at aligning everyday movements with the allocentric radial model of space so prominent in accounts of the Buka area. The former are scarcely verbalized and thus difficult to document in language use (Genz 2014; Shore 2014).

Occasionally, Pororan Islanders, too, do some "tacking" between egocentric and allocentric models. For instance, they avoid walking past the wall of the *tsunon*'s house toward which he points his head when he sleeps, while also avoiding unpredictable (or known to be clever and boastful) others along the way. Way-finding, just as the more small-scale swiveling of one's body and turning one's mattress before going to sleep, thus requires both: to be mindful of relatively stable centers as well as mobile others, and to align one's spatially charged, gen-

dered, and ranked body in a socially charged space as well as listening, tentatively, for the movements of others around. Likewise mainlanders engage in creative encounters with unknown others along the road, as when a truck full of Pororan Islanders passes through their village. However, the relative salience of allocentric and egocentric models, open-ended and experimental experience and careful alignment of one's body within socially charged physical space, differs significantly between the two settings. This raises the obvious question of what constrains the relative importance of one or the other in this particular ethnographic case.

My answer, as already indicated, is twofold. First, the Pororans' saltwater surroundings afford spatial perspectives and pose practical challenges different from those encountered in a relatively stable landscape. They afford observations of mobile elements, including fish, drifting rubbish, clouds, and people riding the waves, up and down. "Mapping" these elements, is of little interest to the Pororans. As fishers, they are primarily interested in engaging with these elements, especially the fish, and in maintaining the upper hand in these engagements. Although the question of where to find fish might have given rise to allocentric models, as appears to be the case in other ethnographic contexts (e.g. Hviding 1996), the Pororans downplay their reliance on these models. They emphasize uncertainty and a more flexible approach of adjusting to the conditions one finds at sea, changing routes and fishing spots frequently on a single trip and always being open to "running into fish" even where one did not expect them on their outings at sea. The Pororans thus use an egocentric model of space in their subsistence activities at sea, and this model becomes "socialized" in the islanders' everyday lives. Mainlanders, in the meantime, convert egocentric into allocentric models of radial space in their gardening activities, as I will argue below, and draw upon these models in their way-finding. In the following section, I contrast Pororan fishing activities to gardening on the mainland. I then move on to the final point, the relative appeal of allocentric models to people closer to and further away from a hierarchical center.

The Spatial Significance of Fishing and Gardening

When fishing, as when way-finding, the Pororans encounter others and create vertical distinctions in their encounters, only in this case, their relevant others are fish. The spatial productivity of fishing, which is both extended into and mirrored in human relations, becomes most obvious in trolling for tuna, usually skipjack and sometimes yellow-fin tuna. Women normally do not go trolling. However, if a group of Pororans happens to come across a shoal of tuna while traveling to Buka Town, the men on the boat will throw out the lines. The women will sit still at first and pretend not to be there, until they get caught up in the excitement of the hunt. By then, the men are too busy to mind.

When Pororans go after tuna, they lose track of space and time. Keeping their eyes on the surface of the water, where the tuna come to feed, and just

above, where the birds that indicate the presence of fish fly, they shout directions to the skipper, who will aim to steer the boat directly through the shoal of fish. Following the shoal usually involves a series of sudden turns. By the time one of the men finally tells the skipper to stop because he has a fish on the hook, the people on the boat have usually lost their sense of their position relative to the islands around. At that moment, a vertical distinction emerges between the fisherman, who will have jumped up and will be looking down into the water as he pulls the line in, and the fish. Although the fisherman is, for the moment, in a position "above," whether or not he will "win" is uncertain. The islanders emphasize that the fish on the line could be a shark as well as a tuna, and that this could cause complications. If, however, things go well, a tuna eventually appears underneath the boat, is brought in, and is killed by hitting it on the head with a piece of wood. This leaves no doubt as to who is "above." Once this question is settled, distinctions in physical space re-appear. The islanders look around to see where their hunt has taken them. They often spot islands in directions in which they did not expect them and find themselves much farther out at sea than they should be, given the amount of petrol on board. Then they assess the amount of petrol left and the chances of being able to catch up with the shoal and catch more fish before they decide whether to continue fishing or not.

Every time a fish is pulled up on board, the person who caught it will start thinking about whom to give it to, and how to make the fish productive for creating social distinctions of above and below back on the island. Especially big fish are a great attraction, and a fisherman essentially has two options. He may give the fish to someone of his own choosing, in which case, he will probably try to land at a beach close to that person's house, ideally a quiet beach. Depending on his prior relations to the recipient, he will hand the fish "up" (for instance to his mother) or "down" (for instance to a child to carry to the house of a less well-to-do relative). If, however, the fisherman feels up to the challenge, he may land on a "public" beach, widely visible, enjoy the looks he gets for the fish, and "throw the fish away" to someone who will later have to make a return for it. There is a risk that someone will immediately demand the fish, jokingly or seriously, before it can be "thrown away." The fisherman may then find himself "below" as a result of an encounter with either a more quick-witted or just too firmly higher-ranking other, for instance a *tsunon*. That person will later boast of "pulling" the fish. More likely, however, is another outcome, more favorable to the fisherman: a person walking along the beach unsuspectingly will be "pulled" by the sight of the fish, which Pororan Islanders say they cannot resist. The fisherman, if he likes, "throws the fish" away to that person—who ends up "below" with the debt of a fish that needs to be returned. Fishing is more than a subsistence activity for the Pororans. It is an integral part of the islanders' social life, in which social distinctions are frequently challenged and re-drawn. Encounters with fish both precondition and resemble in important ways encounters between humans in the village, among other things with respect to the spatial distinctions they produce. Spatial

distinctions emerge both in fishing activities themselves, and in transactions of fish at the village that depend upon success in fishing. While other fishers apparently do rely on allocentric models,[12] the Pororans retain the "route perspective" of travelers encountering human and non-human others.

Like fishing for the Pororans, so gardening is an important occasion for the emergence of spatial distinctions for mainlanders. Gardening is women's main occasion for leaving their settlements and pursuing socially meaningful roads beyond the village, often jointly with their husbands but sometimes alone. They walk to the gardens several times a week, for a trek of up to one hour along the main road in some villages or along back roads in some others, and in doing so, walk up and down the stretch of ancestral road on which their settlement is located. Besides trips to the gardens, people usually obtain plant shoots—of banana, taro, sweet potatoes, cassava and various other crops—from the gardens of women matrilineally related to them. Sometimes, these are relatives who live at the same settlement and have their gardens in the same garden areas. But the women I know especially enjoy picking up shoots from the gardens of matrilineal relatives who live further away. They take them back to their own garden for variety, as they say. When the plant bears fruit, they "return" some of the fruit or shoots to the woman who provided the original shoot. Gardening thus stimulates the re-creation of ancestral roads, relations, and spatial distinctions between as well as within villages.

Beyond that, one may speculate—since I have not discussed this matter during fieldwork, a stronger claim would be out of place—that women also contemplate a "map" of these roads when working in their gardens. Judging from conversations I had with women in the gardens, they like to think back to the origins of their plants, as well as thinking forward to the destinations of their fruit. The plant condenses into itself, in the eye of the gardener, its journey from its mother's place, and the return journey that its "children" (fruits or shoots) will make back to that place. When gardening, then, people perceive in their entirety, and construct allocentric models from the roads they traveled, and whose ups and downs they experienced when obtaining the plants and anticipate experiencing again when making a return.

One could go one step further, yet more speculatively. Since women told me that it was good to have many different plants from many relatives and origin places, it appears that they are striving not only to create "maps" of particular roads, which they perceive in individual plants. They seem to be aiming to have, in their gardens, maps of many of their roads and kin relations. I was never given an example of a truly comprehensive map; and it seems doubtful that this would have been possible at the time of my fieldwork, when travel and social contacts were still somewhat limited in the aftermath of the Bougainville Crisis.[13] Perhaps more important than the completeness of the map, however, is the effort that gardeners make at translating an egocentric spatial model and an experience of an

unfolding journey into a map of one or several roads, and thus into an allocentric model of space.

I tentatively suggest that their regular work in the gardens, aided by listening to accounts of ancestral migration, provides mainlanders with the allocentric models that they readily articulate when traveling their roads. If this is indeed the case, then it is no surprise that Pororan Islanders are much more loosely committed to allocentric models. Their gardens are very small by comparison with those on the mainland, and they have a reputation for being lazy gardeners (although this is not entirely justified). In their favored subsistence activity, fishing, they rely strongly on an egocentric perspective. They like to contemplate the unpredictability of encounters between mobile elements of their saltwater landscape, which are sometimes verbalized in fishing stories.

Thus far, I have outlined the divergent spatial perspective that gardening and fishing afford. I have not yet addressed the question of why people adopt certain perspectives and not others. Instead, I have lingered on the affordances because they help us appreciate the different modes of spatial orientation in Buka "from a practitioner's view." Both allocentric and egocentric perspectives are developed in the context of particular subsistence practices in particular environments, and through particular subsistence activities.

My analysis of different subsistence activities affording different spatial perspectives takes inspiration from the argument made by Feinberg (1988) about contrasting modes of spatial orientation on two Polynesian outliers, Anuta and Nukumanu. The same principles of spatial orientation (the division of above and below, front and back, seaward and landward) and of rank (chiefs versus commoners) could be detected on both. However, on Nukumanu, relations of both space and rank seemed to lack the clarity they had on Anuta. Feinberg argued that this is because on Nukumanu, linear spatial axes were deployed in a circular atoll setting, where, if one went far enough in one direction, one would end up back at the starting point. Thus, positions of rank and in space, unlike on Anuta, are interchangeable. Feinberg demonstrated this with reference to such features as house and canoe design.

The contrast between Pororan and the Buka mainland is not that between an island and a circular atoll. Rather, it is between a landscape that is conceptualized as relatively stable and in which spatial distinctions are firmly anchored, and a seascape in which all elements are conceived of as highly mobile (see Schneider 2012 for more detail). On the mainland, Punein Mountain provides a fixed point "above," from which roads and human relations extend downward. These roads continue to grow, as matrilineal groups grow and as people open up new settlements. People re-create these roads as they walk "up" and "down" the roads that link them to particular others. Despite the dynamic quality of the relations further "down," the "top" of spatial relations is fixed. Furthermore, spatial relations in Buka are sufficiently well "emplaced" in the ground—in physical footpaths that acquire their significance through their regular and mindful use—to be relatively

enduring. Finally, although the details of "roads" and relations are contested, the pattern itself is agreed upon. Thus, they can easily be represented in maps and diagrams. Buka mainlanders keenly discussed with me the maps that they saw me draw of their hamlets, added their own, and used them for clarifying relations of matrilineal kinship and rank. Their comments on these maps clearly indicated an allocentric perspective.

On Pororan, above and below appear, in a first approximation, as attributes of mobile human bodies that serve as "landmarks" for the proper alignment of others. In a more refined view, above and below are temporary outcomes of encounters between mobile persons and between persons and fish. These encounters take place in a saltwater setting generally characterized by the mobility of all its components. Distinctions between above and below emerge from encounters between a mobile self and a mobile other. Because the relative spatial distinctions that emerge from such encounters continue to change, maps and diagrams cannot do them justice. An egocentric perspective is more meaningful in this saltwater setting. I have tried to demonstrate how the Pororans engage with fish and with one another through such a perspective.

Hierarchies

There is something distinctively "saltwater" about spatial orientation on Pororan, just as there is something distinctly "atoll" about the spatial ambiguities that Feinberg (1988) found on Nukumanu. However, just as the atoll distinctiveness of Nukumanu is an outcome, not of an atoll environment per se but of the tension between this environment and a particular symbolic structure, so the Pororans' perceptions of their saltwater landscape and of human (and other) mobility are ethnographically specific. As Hviding (1996) clearly demonstrates, not all saltwater people perceive their seascape as particularly mobile.[14] When the people of Marovo Lagoon travel to their fishing grounds, they follow "paths" marked by features of and under the sea. These paths may be hidden to outsiders, but they are clearly visible, unambiguous, and enduring to Marovo fishermen. Presumably, they would lend themselves to map-making and thus to an allocentric perspective. This raises the question of when and under what conditions saltwater people rely on the egocentric perspectives afforded by their environment rather than on the allocentric one that their neighbors and kin on the Buka mainland prefer. Shore's suggestion about the link between spatial perspective and hierarchy is useful here.

Shore (2014) has suggested that, in positing a hierarchical center—a ruler, who retains his immobile central position at his settlement even as he himself moves about—as a spatial reference point, an allocentric perspective displaces that of the subject with that of this ruler. This, he suggests, may account for Tongans rerouting the ethnographer asking for directions through socially salient centers rather than pointing out the straight path to his destination. Direct paths between oneself and another non-center would foreground one's own perspective and eclipse that of the ruler, which would be inappropriate in strongly hierarchical

Tonga. Tongans are used to displacing their own perspective through that of the ruler in their very conception of physical space. In Buka, too, paths tend to lead to the center of the settlement and the *tsuhan*, from where visitors are re-distributed along smaller paths. Although the ultimate center is now empty, it remains the origin point of all roads that link Buka *tsuhan*, and through them, all inhabitants of the area. My hosts on the Buka mainland, all of whom were located relatively "high up" along their ancestral migration routes, took pleasure in "knowing their road" and routing their daily activities and interactions with others through the mountain. They stood chances of thereby ending up "above" those with whom they were dealing. Certainly, they ended up far above the Pororans.

Pororan Islanders, far from the ancestral center, had a much harder time swapping their own perspective for that of the center: their migration routes were so long as to be difficult to learn or deploy to strategic effect in everyday interactions. Moreover, the process of learning them was a bitter one, because in learning one's road, one inevitably learned about one's own, "absolute" inferiority in the Buka landscape, viewed from "above." All *tsunon* and *hahini* on Pororan had undergone this process. Before assuming their position, they had been ritually introduced to their mainland kin and learned the "upper" parts of their migration history from them. When necessary, usually when their group needed support of matrilineal relatives for hosting mortuary rites, they would approach their mainland relatives on behalf of their island kin. Occasionally, they would also visit or invite kin on the mainland to refresh their memory of their groups' relations to mainlanders. In these interactions with mainland relatives, of course, the Pororan side inevitably ended up "below," and their mainland kin were usually adamant about their own superiority. Perhaps unsurprisingly, few islanders wished to participate in these encounters.

For those who are "below" when viewed from an allocentric perspective, an egocentric one is an attractive alternative. Thankfully, fishing and spending time at sea afford Pororans with such an alternative, and with reasons to take a rather dismissive attitude to mainlanders' claims of being "above." The Pororans assume that things come and go: driftwood, fish, islands, and mainland visitors telling them about mountains, roads and ancestral migrations.

Conclusion

Sloping down from Punein, Leitana—the "high land," as Buka was called in pre-colonial times—drops off sharply in the east. In the west, the land disappears bit by bit under mangroves and eventually in the water of the lagoon. In the distance, a couple of small islands sit atop the reef that fringes the lagoon and is fringed in turn by the white crests of the waves where the riff drops off and the open sea begins. Punein is visible from these small islands, though only from their lagoon side. The thick green slopes of the mainland's mountains, often covered in heavy rainclouds, remind those on the island of another world, and of people who are recognized as kin but also fundamentally differ from themselves. Sometimes the

Pororans nod in the direction of the mountain and mention those whom they have not seen for a long time, wondering how they are doing.

Although Pororans are aware of mainlanders' "view from the top," from which they appear far out and below on the periphery, they prefer to engage in their own, peripheral spatial practice. When out fishing in the lagoon, they rarely look up to the mountain. They keep their eyes close to the water's surface, scanning the scene for fish or other mobile beings who are, like them, searching for food at sea. When men are out with heavy line, large hooks, and bait for big fish, a piece of wood is ready at hand, in case their quarry proves to be a shark that needs to be killed by hitting it on the head. Beyond its practical purpose, the gesture clarifies who is above, in an encounter whose outcome is not predictable at the outset. The contest is between fisher and fish. The mountain is irrelevant. On the lagoon, its shadow blends with the colors of the sea, and the ripples refract its contours. Who except mainlanders would say that it is above?

My aim in this paper has been to account for the differences in spatial orientation among mainlanders and saltwater people, and specifically, for the differences in their perception and enactment of contrasts between "above" and "below" with reference to broader Pacific debates about the differences between allocentric and egocentric models of radial space, and about people switching between them. In the final part, I have adapted Shore's argument about the importance of hierarchy for the development of allocentric models of radiality to the situation in Buka, where people closer to the hierarchical center prefer allocentric models, while people further away from it prefer egocentric ones. The largest part of the paper, however, has been taken up with the argument that, if we want to understand how preferences for one or the model are developed, the observation that they are linked to hierarchy may not be sufficient. Extending Feinberg's earlier arguments about the importance of environmental factors and re-working them through the terminology of environmental affordances, I have suggested that the development of a preference for allocentric and egocentric models takes place in the context of subsistence activities. While gardening provides possibilities for a productive engagement with the environment through the use of allocentric models, Pororan fishing activities promote the development of egocentric models of space, including radial space.

I should add that the shifting nature of the Pororans' saltwater life makes it difficult to imagine that things would always have been this way. At sea, centers emerge and disappear, combine, come apart, and recombine. Early ethnographic sources (Thomas 1931) suggest a closer integration of Pororan into Buka ritual cycles before World War II, specifically, in cycles of male initiation. How and why this has changed, and how those changes may have led the Pororans to assume their current saltwater practices, will have to be investigated separately in the future.

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[1] The languages are Solos in the interior and Halia on the east coast and in the Carteret Islands far to the east. Haku, a dialect of Halia, is spoken on the north coast. Petats is spoken on the four atolls just west of Buka, sometimes referred to as the Western Islands. Buka people count Haku as a separate language, but linguists do not. Similarly, Pororan Islanders, with whom I conducted fieldwork, distinguish their own language, Hapororan, from Petats, saying that it is, in fact, a mix of Petats and Haku.

[2] Although I visited various other places more briefly, most of my time on the mainland was spent at the villages of Lontis and Gagan. I am grateful to Roselyne Kenneth for hosting me on the mainland and facilitating contacts.

[3] Rather than switching between different Buka vernaculars, I will use Hapororan, the vernacular spoken at my main field site, throughout the text. The equivalent terms in other Buka languages are closely related. All languages under discussion here belong the the Meso-Melanesian cluster of the Western Oceanic sub-group of the Austronesian languages (Tryon 2015).

[4] The *hahini*'s position does not matter in this regard. People observe other rules in dealing with the *hahini*, but these are less spatially charged than those concerning the *tsunon*.

[5] The answer to what exactly is the opposite pole, below, is only apparently straightforward: the feet. Considering the close association of the head with male and its salience in distinctions of gender as well as of space, other opposite poles come into view. A sustained discussion of this question would exceed the scope of this paper.

[6] Virilocal marriage does not lead to a dispersal of the matrilineal group in this case, because women and their children visit their group's place throughout their lives in order to "know their land" and participate in ceremonial occasions. Men set up their own houses at the group's settlement, while their sisters are married in other places and only come to visit, bringing their children along. After their husbands' death, the sisters, too, will come to live at their mother's place. Not all women of the group return to their land. Some found new local branches of the *pinaposa* elsewhere. The ideal is, however, that women return, and so the group remains focused on this settlement. This system of matrilineal kinship and virilocal marriage is prevalent throughout Bougainville, and is, of course, familiar from other ethnographic contexts, as well. Buka people say that it protects the women of a group, who "continue the line," and thus ensures the continuity of the matrilineage. Women, and especially women of rank, are deemed to be at risk of sorcery from those competing for status and land with their group. Those people are usually the group's immediate neighbours. Women who move in marriage are thus removed from the source of danger. This pattern has persisted, even where cash cropping would have made it more convenient for co-owners to stay together on the land (Nash 1974).

[7] I was told that a maximum of five units could be accommodated within the *pinaposa*'s settlement, one for the head, the two arms and the two legs of the *pinaposa*'s ceremonial house, respectively. If one of the five unit becomes too large and a fraction splits off, ceremonies are held to "expel" them from the pinaposa and its settlement. They move to a new place. In the case I know best, they were integrated in their new place into another pinaposa, which was lacking people and looking for others to help them settle their land. Genealogies were adjusted so as to give the newcomers the status of landowners. Most recently, the Bougainville Crisis has forced some people to leave their homes in the villages, while others have returned from their workplace at the Panguna copper mine and have taken up spots that were empty. In addition, some settlements have absorbed individual immigrants from the Highlands who first came to Bougainville as workers for the Panguna mine. In one case, a *ngorer* offered refuge to a group of West Papuans, one of

whom was a school friend of one of the women of the *ngorer*. In all these cases, the migrants were absorbed into one of the existing two to five units.

[8] In 2004-05, I was told that many people in Buka had "forgotten" about their relations to others in the area, and especially young people would not know any more "how to go" to particular other places. The Bougainville Crisis (1988-2001) had made travel across the Buka area unsafe, disrupting the patterns of mutual visiting, and thus the memory of the details of matrilineal relations. Many matrilineal groups were in the process of re-establishing connections to those whom they still remembered, and they would ask those for further connections that they had forgotten. Where matrilineal kin had fought on different sides in the Crisis, reestablishing relations after the Crisis required formal reconciliation. The process of reestablishing matrilineal connections, and reestablishing the spatial relations of above and below, was slow and painful in many cases. It had not been completed yet by the time of my fieldwork.

[9] As Bill Sagir (2003) has detailed for the Haku area in northern Buka, different *tsunon* promote different versions of ancestral migration stories, and thus of the relative "height" of settlements in the area. This leads to friction between groups, and occasionally to open disputes about what some perceive to be a lack of respect in the behavior of others.

[10] My translation, from a mix of Tok Pisin and Hapororan.

[11] A person trying to "lower" a *tsunon* or *hahini* would potentially anger all those, ancestral spirits as well as humans, who had witnessed the ceremonies in which the *tsunon* or *hahini*'s status was made known.

[12] Though he does not use these terms, I interpret Hviding's (1996) account of fishing in Marovo Lagoon, which involves the pursuit of relatively stable "paths" marked by underwater markers, as implying the use of allocentric models.

[13] The Bougainville Crisis had separated many relatives in Buka for a decade, because road travel was too dangerous, because they supported opposed factions, or both. Reconciliation was still underway in 2004-2005, and some roads were still said to be unsafe.

[14] Nonie Sharp (2002) even argues that the idea of the sea as being in flux is a modern Western one, bound up with particular ideas of open access, and that one must not assume it holds in other settings. As my ethnographic material indicates, there are saltwater settings in which locally specific ideas of flux, or better, of mobility, are significant to people's perceptions of their seascape, and of themselves in it. However, Sharp's point is a further note of caution against undue generalization from this material.

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