

SENSES OF PLACE

EDITED BY

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We come and go
But the land is always here.
And the people who love and
understand it are the people
who really mean it
for a little while.

Rock Taken, 95

William Carlos

Ann Anthony

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 "ear-point," 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, Buttner 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 underneath 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 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 constituted 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 co-referencing 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 rela-

tively 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:m*, “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 oneself 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

hears places cited as PN + *do:m*, or PN + *fele*, or PN + *eleb*. In the larger sentential discourse setting, these combinatorial sets may be further enhanced and illuminated by immediately conjoined locative and deictic particles, some of which encode directionality as specifically up, down, above, below, behind, or across. These and additional emphatic and paralinguistic markers all indicate aspects of the direction, elevation, density, and depth of land or water, as well as its experiential and evidential obviousness—for example, whether it is in or out of sight or audition.

Other terms that distinguish significant patterns in land formations are cited as PN + *dugu*, for the foothill area or the lower part of a hill or mountain; PN + *misiyo:*, for a high place rising from a *do:m*; PN + *dagon*, for a visually distinct mountain site or peak; PN + *kuḡun*, for a valleylike area of uncut forest flattening off by the side of a hill or mountain; PN + *bulo*, an obviously flat segment of land on a *fele*. Additionally, the same placename can be attached to several different descriptive modifiers to indicate ways in which a large stretch of land connects to a diversity of specific forms. Several discontinuous places on the same land can have the same PN + form designation, further emphasizing the complexity of abstractly reckoning land strictly through naming.

Other familiar anchors in place terminology indicate lands cleared for living spaces. These include PN + *ba* or *ba-daïdo:*, a clearing or de-grassed clearing, implying the presence of a main longhouse opening onto a cleared yard. This clearing would be connected outward to forest, gardens, and sago areas by customary trails of several different sizes and use patterns, ranging from the ten-foot-wide intervillage tracks (*gamane tok* or *dalaka*, from English “track,” for government road) that signal intensified contact and government presence in the area since the 1960s to the small forest clearing or mud-and-vine trail openings into the forest whose pig or human footprints indicate customary daily travels. These types of tracks lead beyond living, gardening, or familial arenas to forest places progressively *usa*, “within,” or *heno: usa*, “within the land.” They lead away from villages and larger trails toward *ilabode*, “bush,” deep in the forests.

Places are explicitly connected as paths by PN + *tok*, or by attaching a specific placename to a path descriptive like *soso:go:f*, the point where two trails come together, thus locating a place by means of its entry or exit point. Talk about paths also indicates qualities such as how “straight” (*digalo:*), “bending” (*koagelo:*), or completely “meandering” or bending back on itself (*sisiali*) a trail might be, as well as how it might be distinguished by characteristics of forest vegetation or density.

Similarly, land names are made more distinct by markers indicating human impacts. Names attach to swidden garden sites as PN + *ikuwo:* or

PN + *egelo:* (literally “tree-cut” or “plant-planted”), as well as to garden qualities. For example, PN + *asak* indicates a garden edge with planted ridge on the top. PN + *ikuwo:sak* (“tree-cut” + *asak*) indicates the appearance of a double ridge with some trees cut and some left above; hence the appearance of two canopy layers, the lower layer regrown on a hill and the upper layer including original growth on a ridge.

Places where sago palms grow, are felled, and are processed into the staple starch of the Kaluli diet further link human impacts to land tracks and to waterways, particularly small creeks and streams. Sago places are noted as PN + *ma:n kuwo:* (“sago-cut”), and the placename can equally mark the adjacent land or waterway. Like the centrality of longhouse site names in creating the merged time and space of a community, human presence is always relational to named gardens and sago places and thus central to the identity of those who work and live nearby. Memories—of food, work, labor assistance—are magnetized to those names, making place a fused locus of time and space.

WATER

Always heard even when it cannot be seen, water has dramatic visual presence as well, a depth and dimensionality of presence as it travels through places, linking and demarcating them throughout the forest. The acoustic presence of water changes constantly through the seasonal weather patterns, swelling and resounding with every day’s rains. At first a seemingly constant hiss, water’s ever-present varieties of sonic volume and immediacy comprise a multiplicity of subtly differentiated presences. These are instantly felt and interpreted by Kaluli as indexes of the progressive space-time of day and season. In addition to the terms *ho:n* and *eleb*, numerous other descriptives indicate the variety of waterway dimensions and segments encountered every day. These include PN + *kini*, “downstream”; PN + *mogan*, “deep waterpool”; PN + *bese*, a “recess,” a depression or minor pool where water slows; and PN + *sa:*, the “bank” of a creek or river, the edge of water. Waterways are further demarcated as *sisiali*, curved, crooked, or meandering, with constant bends, or *tili*, with no pool, just water flowing downstream. There are specific water forms as well, like *ho:n-si*, a little spring hole where one draws drinking water.

The two most significant waterway forms besides *eleb* are those that link waterways together and mark significant boundaries or land elevation changes. Water PN + *so:k* marks a “conjunction,” a place where two waters come together, and water PN + *sa* indicates a “waterfall.” Because water conjunctions and waterfalls mark boundaries that coordinate land and water forms, they are additionally important for demarcating fishing areas, boundaries, and rights. Waterfall segments themselves are further

marked for both their contour in the surrounding land and their impact on shaping the water below—for instance, water PN + *sa-wel*, “waterfall crest” or ledge; water PN + *sa-mi*, a “waterfall drop-off” or break point; water PN + *sa-mogan*, a “deep waterpool” at the base of a waterfall; water PN + *sa-ko:f*, where water breaks off a *mogan* beneath the fall; and water PN + *sa-ga*, where water rejoins after a split below the fall.

Other ways in which downstream waterways are co-referenced with landforms include water PN + *da:l*, where a water section opens up to flow from a cleared gap; PN + *du*, marking a land or rock bank between two segments of the same waterway; and PN + *min*, where one water breaks into two to rejoin later. When two creeks run roughly parallel over a long stretch of land, thus coordinating land and water features, they are termed *ida:ni galiali*, “two of them lying/staying together.”

But the sensual primacy of water emerges in Kaluli naming practices in another way, namely, through the descriptive prominence of onomatopoeic ideophones for water sound and motion. While these ideophones are common in talk about waterways, they only rarely substitute for either specific water names or for water descriptives. Six iconic patterns convey the sound sensations of the basic water motions:

“falling”	<i>bu, bulu, gu, gulu, gulugulu, gululu</i>
“spraying”	<i>fu, fuga, fuwa:n</i>
“flowing hard/fast”	<i>fo, foo, oo</i>
“flowing light/slow”	<i>tin, tintin, tiya, tiyatiya</i>
“swirling”	<i>go, gogo, golo, gologolo, gololo</i>
“splashing/plunging”	<i>kubu, kubukubu, tubu, tubutubu</i>

Further extensions of these terms use lengthened vowels to iconically mark durative intensity, or syllabic reduplication to iconically mark durative continuity. Additionally, ideophones can attach to regular verbal morphology in talk, as well as attach to special poetically marked aspectual morphology in songs. In a few cases, placenames actually incorporate these sonic ideophones. The waterfall named Gulusa (the *sa* of an iconically named creek, the Gulu) is formed from *gulu* + *sa*, “downward falling water sound” + “waterfall.” Bulusami, the place where the Bulu creek (again, the name is ideophonic) joins the Gamo river below a large waterfall and waterpool, is formed from Bulu + *sa-mi*, Bulu creek + “waterfall-drop edge,” literally, “sound of loud, downward rolling water sound” + “drop place.” In these examples the evocative powers of ideophonic expression enmesh the direct relationship of sound to sense in the voice, forcefully linking everyday sensual experience to the aesthetic depths of poesis.

LAND AS WATER AS LAND

In *The Sorrow of the Lonely and the Burning of the Dancers*, Edward L. Schieffelin notes the connectedness of Bosavi lands and waters:

Most places in the forest are named after the stream that gives the land its contours in that vicinity. . . . The waters, as they turn and fall, generate new localities for every new configuration of the land. The name of a locality carries, in effect, its own geographical coordinates, which place it in determinate relation to the brooks and streams that flow through the forest. (1976:30)

Hence, the experience and naming of Bosavi lands and waters is always interpenetrated. This is most forcefully indicated by the flexibility of attaching landform descriptive modifiers to specific water names and water-form modifiers to specific land names.

Primary examples of this process derive from the many small creeks running along large stretches of land. In the community I know best, a creek named Sulu is not just an abstract watercourse but one whose path connects to lands named Sulu *do:mo*: and Sulu *fele*. Moreover, even though Sululeb (Sulu + *eleb*) marks where the Sulu creek comes to a head, it is equally a name for the arch of land where the Sulu stream ends. And because the hill just beyond this particular place is where members of Bono: cleared land and built their longhouses in the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s, Sululeb is also a longhouse site name and, by extension, the primary referent for people who live there (Sululeb *kalu*, Sululeb people). At the same time, everyone knows that Sulu is quite explicitly a creek, with named places along its banks where there are varieties of sago palms and named waterpools (Sulu *mogan*) and dips (Sulu *bese*), as well as a downstream (Sulu *kini*), a waterfall (Sulu *sa*, Sulu *sa-wel*), and a junction (Sulu *so:k*). What this example indicates is the constant play between specific and general, personal and social, momentary and historical resonances for these names, along with the time-space connections they consummate in place.

PLACENAMES, LINGUISTIC REFERENCE, AND MEMORIAL INDETERMINACY

The formula “PN + form descriptive” names and thereby implements everyday emplacement, anchoring everyday talk descriptions of where one is, has been, or is going. Additionally, tendencies in the formation of placenames hold important potentials related to memory and biography. For the Kaluli, as for the neighboring Foi, “place names act as mnemonics for the historical actions of humans that make places singular and significant” (Weiner 1991:45). Some placenames serve forcefully as short-hands, encapsulating stories about historical or mythical events whose magnitudes vary from mundane to cosmic. Some Bosavi places, for example, are named in relation to mythic origins or events responsible for

establishing taboos. Others are directly constructed as primal sources of spiritual or supernatural power, and stories are attached to these place-names to indicate why the place is avoided in sight or visitation or why certain actions, words, or motions are avoided there, sometimes lest they create resentments or offend mythocosmic beings. Some of these matters are revealed in stories that are variably well known or quite esoteric; others are exposed through the kinds of talk and revelation specific to spirit-medium seances (E. L. Schieffelin 1976:29–45, 1977, 1984, 1985; Schieffelin and Crittenden 1991:58–87; Schieffelin and Kurita 1988).

At the simplest level, name structure itself points toward layers of referential possibilities. An example of the most explicit variety would follow the pattern seen in the placename Hinibululo:wo:, which is formed from *hini* + *bulu* + *lo:wo:*, literally, “earthquake” + “broke open” + nominal, meaning “place where earthquake broke open the ground there.” The place referred to is a dramatically visual and unusual landform, and the event that created this depression is historically rare and at the edge of current historical memory. Because the place in question now follows alongside a major government road outside the longhouse community of Suguniga, there is a clear linkage between the referential semantics of the placename, an event, a placed landform, and stories that are important to the history of a specific community and its members.

Yet semantically bundled placename packages like this one are relatively rare in the Bosavi language. Far more prevalent among names with some overt referential distinctiveness are ones taken to be related to an event or act without specifying a land or water formation itself. These are quite important in local community history. For example, while walking Bono: lands in 1992, I came across places named Baoamisa:n and Baoho:mo:no:. The first is formed from *bao* + *a* + *misa:n*, signifying “ceremonial hunting lodge” + main longhouse (“house” + “head”), that is, “longhouse site where people lived during a *bao a*.” The second, Baoho:mo:no:, is formed from *bao* + *ho:n* + *mo:no:*, signifying “ceremonial hunting lodge” + “water” + “drink,” indicating “drinking place during time of holding a *bao a*.”

The *bao a* was a male ceremonial lodge and a period of seclusion, hunting, esoteric instruction, and homosexual liaisons between men and boys (E. L. Schieffelin 1982). The institution ended in 1964 because of the simultaneous threat to secrecy and call for labor when missionaries arrived to construct the Bosavi airstrip. The lands named Baoamisa:n and Baoho:mo:no: are close to a place named Wogole, the site of the last Bono: *bao a*. As time now (as I write in 1995) approaches thirty years since the last *bao a* was held in Bosavi and thirty-five years since the last one held on Bono: lands, meanings and stories connected with this institution shift considerably in the living population. Names like Baoamisa:n

and Baoho:mo:no: are thus explicit reminders of past presences and activities to which members of Bono: or other communities have varying degrees of linkage or distance according to age, gender, and knowledge of esoteric cultural practices. The names thus ring variably transparent or deep, and lead to stories variably shallow or dense.

More typical yet are names whose referential potential opens out to biographical or historical stories that have complexly varied personal or regional resonances. For example, one morning in July 1992, Ayasilo and I were walking on the government track past the former Bono: longhouse site of Sululeb. As we crossed the Yolo creek I asked him the land name of the hill arching above along the left side of the track. He replied, with a sweeping, nose-pointing deixis (another bodily placing-spacing convention), that the place was called Gasoamisa:n. This was instantly recognizable as a name formed from *Gaso* + *a* + *misa:n*, that is, *Gaso*, a man's name, plus “main village longhouse,” or the “place where *Gaso* built a large village longhouse.” I then asked if there was an “underneath,” a *heg* or “reason” for the name, and as I switched on my cassette recorder Ayasilo remarked (in Kaluli, rather literally translated), “A man named *Gaso*, Wasoba's father's father, a man of clan *Wabisi*, well, long ago, having left *Muluma*, staying here by the *Yolo* he built a big house, later he quit it, left to stay at *Nageba:da:n*, that's all.”

Despite the contextual artificiality (i.e., a direct question elicitation), it is striking to notice how quickly and thoroughly a person and a memorable feature of his life are narratively located in a placed space-time. *Gaso* is generationally linked to an elder man of Ayasilo's father's generation from their longhouse community; he is also linked to a specific clan, to a land name of central historical and contemporary importance to that clan and the surrounding community, to the creek we were just then crossing, to a defining act marking significance and boldness around a man's personal memory, to the people of the former longhouse community of Sululeb, and to another longhouse community involved in a history of fission and fusion with Ayasilo's own. Biographical, geographical, historical, and regional memories are thus encapsulated in and unleashed by the name *Gasoamisa:n*, reciprocally indicating how personal identity is emplaced and how places are central to personal identities. As with the neighboring *Bedamini* described by Sørum (1989:4), “temporality is usually concretized by location, and phenomena of time may be seen as objectivated through this practice. The landscape is also history. Time is located as an immanent part of the topography. . . . time and space must be seen as dimensions of a unified space-time percept.”

Sometimes name structures are referentially descriptive of a land formation alone. In these cases the significance of the name is transparent at one level but in no way obvious at others. For example, *Walaheg* is

formed from *wala* + *heg*, meaning “rock cliff” + “under.” Nothing hints that the place so named is a historically significant cliff overhang in the Sulu *do:mo:*, just to the side of the place where Sulu *sa-wel*, the Sulu waterfall ledge, has its junction with the Sago river. But in fact many stories go with the name, at least for members of Bono: who know that the bones of some of their relatives are scattered under the cliff there. When I went to photograph the Sulu waterfall—one of the most spectacular on Bolekini’s lands—Deina and Hasele took me up to Walaheg. There they told me of the times when bones of Bono: dead were deposited in rock cliffs like this one so that pigs and dogs could not get to them. And our co-presence at the site brought out other contexting stories, like ones about the time when Bono: lived at a longhouse site named Diwailo, and how between that time and the time they moved to Balasawel (recounted backward by longhouse names from the present ones), bones were deposited at Walaheg. This was Hasele’s way of placing a space-time, explaining that we might be looking at the remains of his father’s father, a man named Gulabia, as well as of Gulubia’s peers, perhaps Tulunei, Hewabi, Sowiya:, Kogowa:, Diba:, and Mayowa.

Some placenames have etymological structures hinting that a referential dimension or story of significance might be attached to them, but then further examination indicates that they are largely transparent. A creek called Haidokini could certainly refer to a place downstream (*-kini*) from a *haido* palm tree, but no one presently seems to attach any particular significance to that. And Momayo turns out to be just a creek name, *ba madale*, “for no reason,” with no referential or associative linkage to a place where *moma* flowers are found. Stories or significances might have been associated with these names in the past but have now been lost. Similarly, names referentially formed as PN + *di ko:lo:*, signifying PN + “made” + anaphora, can mean a “place of X’s making” or a “place where X was made.” But questioning the possibility for stories in three or four terms of this type evoked shrugged shoulders more often than not.

The obvious point here is that place significance neither starts nor ends with the linguistic referentiality of placenames. The experiential core of names and naming practices is irreducible to the linguistic structure of toponyms or to the range of modifiers or grammatical markers that can attach to them. While some terms might seem to mark publicly accessible meanings, even those meanings are in no way predictably fixed, not to mention evenly or broadly shared. Whether once held or long held, storied meanings can be equally packed into any name. That is, every place and placename, regardless of linguistic formation and markedness, can and does peg some sort of story for someone, and a broad spectrum of possibilities surrounds the extent to which those

stories are shared, significant, meaningful, or memorable through time for particular individuals or social groups. The meanings of these stories far overshadow whatever meanings may be directly linked to the lexical semantics of the “PN + ___” structure and its overt content. While it might be possible to suggest something of a hierarchy of placename types, say, in terms of the amount of affect loading they could potentially carry—longhouse site names, garden and sago site names, main creeks crossed leading to and from these three kinds of sites, places marking important connections to relatives and friends—in fact there is considerable variation in how names hold and unleash significance. Ultimately, it is processes of experienced activity, including the activity of talk, rather than linguistic structure, physical type, or function, that invests places with memorable depths, laminating living to language.

The semantics of placenames and their attachable descriptive modifiers are thus much more referentially indeterminate than are other nominal lexical domains. Because they are fundamental to the description and expression of experiential realities, these names are deeply linked to the embodied sensation of places. Yet over and beyond reference, placenames and their modifiers are central to implementing sensation through the ways in which verbal invocation brings place into heightened conceptual presence, whether or not a place named is simultaneously experienced in physical proximity. Naming strengthens the naturalness of place, the tacitness of its sensately felt dimensions in thought and action. In the language of Heidegger: “The naming calls. Calling brings close what it calls. . . . Thus it brings the presence of what was previously uncalled into a nearness. . . . But even so the call does not wrest what it calls away from the remoteness, in which it is kept by the calling there. The calling calls into itself and therefore always here and there—here into presence, there into absence” (1971:198–99).

Kaluli naming and storying are highly salient and sociable everyday practices, forms of social participation thoroughly related to other everyday practices such as traveling, working, and visiting. Social identities, indeed, all imagination of relatedness, are enacted in Bosavi through the coordination of talk, work, stories, and other everyday activities, activities that give both sedimented and emergent structure and feeling to the sense of sharing and belonging. Experiential layerings from one’s birth-place to other places lived and traveled actively map place into identity, conjoining temporal motion and spatial projection, reinscribing past in present, creating biography as itinerary.

**SINGING PATHS OF FLOW:
THE POETIC INTENSIFICATION OF PLACE MEMORIES**

Writing about place-naming practices among the Foi, neighbors of the Kaluli along Lake Kutubu, forty-five kilometers northeast of Bosavi, James Weiner urges that “language and place are a unity. The manner in which human action and purposive appropriation inscribes itself upon the earth is an iconography of human intentions. Its mirror image is speech itself, which in the act of naming, memorializes these intentions, makes of them a history-in-dialogue” (1991:50). The thorough naturalness of these memorialized intentions likewise grounds a Kaluli poetics of place. This is essentially to argue that the experiential dimensions we call “mundane” and “aesthetic” are mutually interdependent, that they always involve reframings and emergent sensations. The poetic is an emergent figure that reframes an everyday ground, both strengthening that ground and contributing to its solidity and fluidity. Likewise, the everyday ground stands ready to be reframed, to take on new heights or depths, to evoke more than to signify, to move more forcefully into the realm of feeling and sensation. This figure-and-ground is the central motion of Kaluli song poetics, and the transformation from speaking names to singing them thoroughly heightens the sensuousness of their evocation.

The aesthetic power and pleasure of Kaluli songs emerges in good part through their textual poesis of placename paths. Composed and performed by guests in ritual contexts to evoke tears from their hosts over memories of persons and places left behind, these songs can also be sung during work, leisure, and everyday activities by women and men as they move through and pass time in forest locales. In both ritual and everyday contexts, the songs are always reflective and contemplative, qualities enhanced in each instance by construction of a poetic cartography whose paradigmatic parallelism of path making and naming reveals how places are laminated to memories, biographies, and feelings. To indicate some of the cartographies imagined and realized in Kaluli poetics and song performance practices, I provide a brief account of the three songs sung by Ulahi of Bolekini at the nearby Wo:lu creek that are recorded on the “Relaxing at the Creek” segment of *Voices of the Rainforest*, a compact disk and audiocassette soundscape recording of a day in the life of a Kaluli community (Feld 1991).

WATERFALLS OF SONG

Ulahi’s three songs are all short versions of the most important Kaluli song genres, *gisalo*, *ko:luba*, and *heyalo*. These three genres are melodically,

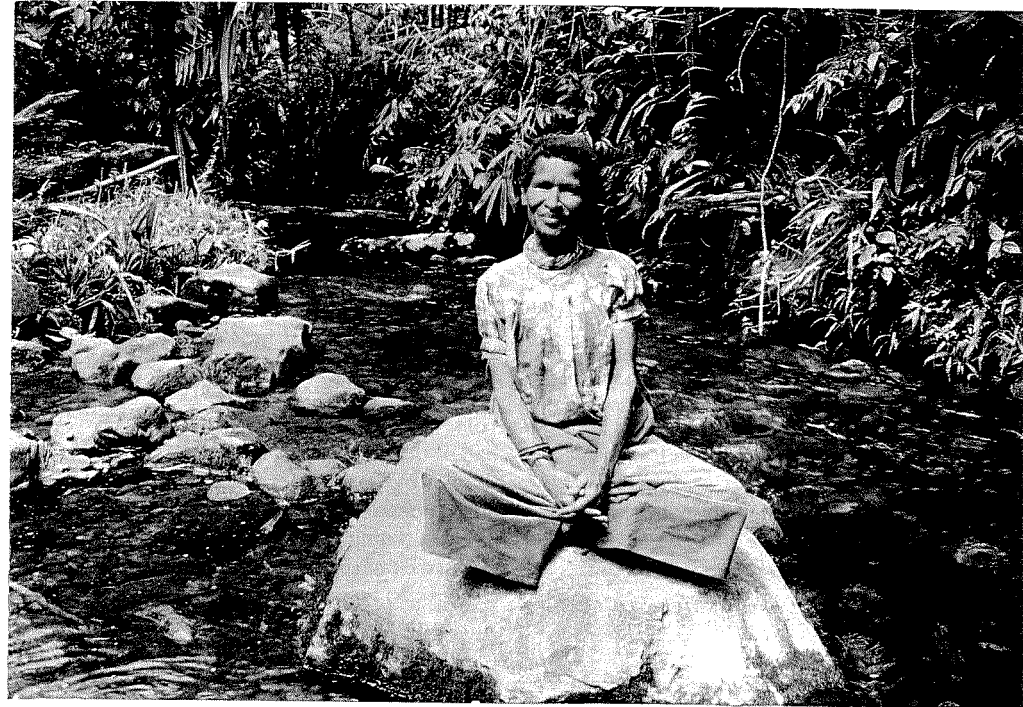


Figure 3.1. Ulahi sings at the Wo:lu creek. Photograph © Steven Feld.

structurally, and historically distinct, but their poetic strategies share the four Kaluli conventional textual and narrative practices called *sa-salan*, “inside speaking,” *bale to*, “turned-over words,” *go:no: to*, “sound words,” and *tok*, “paths.” *Sa-salan*, “inside speaking,” involves strategies for reframing ordinary discourse so that it can implicate only contexts and situations of sadness, loss, and abandonment. *Bale to*, “turned over words,” compliments *sa-salan* through techniques of metaphor, allegory, and obfuscatory veiling. *Go:no: to*, “sound words,” involves a broad range of phonesthemes, of sonic ideophones. And *tok*, “paths,” involves narrativizing the space-time of song as a journey through a progression of named lands and waters, linking quotative and affective imagery with a specific set of places (on Kaluli poetics, see Feld 1990:130–62; on Kaluli ceremonial and song performance genres, see E. L. Schieffelin 1976:225–29.)

Ulahi’s *gisalo* song follows the five-part structure typical of the genre. The song begins with a section called the *mo:*, or “trunk,” and *talun*, or

"lines." This section consists of paired sets of segments. The first segment is a refrain, that is, a text and melody that repeats identically and regularly in alternation with a verse, that is, a segment consisting of slightly changing text sung to a second, unchanging melody. With each repetition of the verse, small portions of the text change; these portions (transcribed in what follows in boldface) highlight the way variation dynamically plays on repetition. After several phrases of development, the entire "trunk + lines" section is poetically and melodically divided off from the remainder of the song. This is signaled by the *sa-gulab*, the "waterfall *gu* sounding," that begins with the paired lines "o" and "e" intoned at length on the pitches that will be the song's tonal center.

After a brief textual development of the *sa-gulab*, the song's next major section is the *dun*, "branches," and *talun*, "lines." It consists of another refrain-and-verse structure, parallel to the one found in the song's "trunk" section. Again, paired sets of segments combine a repeated refrain image with shifting verses. The end of the song's "branches" section is called the *sa-sundab*, the "waterfall knotting" or tying up. It consists of a paired and repeated set of formulaic poetic and musical phrases leading to the final *sa-gulu*, or "waterfall *gulu* droning," completing the song, carrying it off on its tonal center with an elongated voicing of "o" or "e" or both.

The following schematic structure shows the conjuncture of poetic and musical organization in Ulahi's *gisalo* song. The column on the right lists the pitches sung, corresponding to section. Notice the way the song's pitch inventory tapers as it progresses, producing an image of a waterfall.

<i>mo: + talun</i>	[(A + B1) + (A + B2) + (A + B3)]	♩	e-g-a-c-d
<i>sa-gulab</i>	[C]	♩	e-g-a-c
<i>dun + talun</i>	[(D + E1) + (D + E2) + (D + E3)]	♩	e-g-a-c
<i>sa-sundab</i>	[F + G]	♩	e-g-a
<i>sa-gulu</i>	[H]	♩	g

Women usually sing only short *heyalo* or *ko:luba* when working or relaxing. Ulahi, having recently moved back to Bolekini after a long stay elsewhere, told me that the longer process of thinking about a *gisalo* came to mind while she and her husband, Tulunei, were building a new house just above Wa:feyo: hill. Her *gisalo* song was still in the process of composition when she sang it informally at Wo:lu creek. Because of its relatively short length, Ulahi's song is a musical and poetic simplification of the fully elaborated ceremonial *gisalo* model in three ways. First, the song omits a *mo: moso* or "just trunk" section before the *mo: + talun*. A *mo: moso* would typically consist of three to six poetic segments before introducing the actual refrain. Next, the song is simplified by the shortening of the *mo: + talun* to three pairs from the usual five to seven. Finally,

the shortening of the *dun + talun* to three pairs from the usual eight to ten additionally simplifies the structure. One poetic consequence of the song's brevity is that there are relatively fewer places named than one typically hears in a ceremonial *gisalo* song. Moreover, Ulahi's sung places tend, particularly in the *dun + talun*, to be much farther apart than is usual in a *gisalo* song *tok*, which often sings a set of names progressively closer together on the land, or else alternates distant and very close places as the *dun + talun* develops.

A
seyago
 Wa:feyo:-sana selega siliki
 we kidafi ganalabo-
 weo:ba:mo: ganalabo-
 we kidafi ganalabo-

seyak Hooded butcherbird (calling)
 perching in the large *sal* tree at Wa:feyo hill
 calling in the *uf* [another big hardwood tree]
 calling from the close-by *haido* [a lone palm]
 calling in the *uf* there

B1
aowo: nilo: siyo:makaka:mi
 o-o
 Wa:feyo:-sana gola mesa:siyolo
 wo:funa: dok mesa:siyolo-
 Wa:feyo:-sana gola mesa:siyolo

brother, I didn't say anything back to you
 (calling in sadness to brother's anger)
 I'm coming to stay at Wa:feyo: hill waterpool
 coming to stay over the creekside leaves
 I'm coming to stay at Wa:feyo: hill waterpool

A
seyago
 Wa:feyo:-sana selega siliki
 we kidafi ganalabo-
 weo:ba:mo: ganalabo-
 we kidafi ganalabo-

seyak Hooded butcherbird (calling)
 perching in the large *sal* tree at Wa:feyo hill
 calling in the *uf*
 calling from the close-by *haido*
 calling in the *uf* there

B2
ada:yo: nilo: siyo:makaka:mi
 o-o
 Diyo:so gola mesa:siyolo-
 ka:la:na: dok mesa:siyolo-
 Diyo:so gola mesa:siyolo-

ada: I didn't say anything back to you
 (calling in sadness to *ada:*'s anger)
 I'm coming to stay at the Diyo:so: waterpool
 coming to stay as a *ka:la:n* fish
 I'm coming to stay at Diyo:so: waterpool

A
seyago
 Wa:feyo:-sana selega siliki
 we kidafi ganalabo-
 weo:ba:mo: ganalabo-
 we kidafi ganalabo-

seyak Hooded butcherbird
 perching in the large *sal* tree at Wa:feyo hill
 calling in the *uf*
 calling from the close-by *haido*
 calling in the *uf*

B3
aowo: nilo: siyo:makaka:mi
 o-o
 Elade gola mesa:siyolo-
 wo:funa: dok mesa:siyolo-
 Elade gola mesa:siyolo-
 wo:funa: dok mesa:siyolo-

brother, I didn't say anything back to you
 (calling in sadness to brother's anger)
 I'm coming to stay at the Elade waterpool
 coming to stay over the creekside leaves
 I'm coming to stay at Elade waterpool
 coming to stay over the creekside leaves

C		
o-o		(waterfalling, sounding outward from source)
e-		(waterfalling, reverberating back to source)
Kida:n-sagu "A:bo:lo:-"		Kida:n waterfall (calling out) "A:bo:lo" [pig name]
Kida:n-sagu "A:bo:lo:-"		Kida:n waterfall (calling out) "A:bo:lo"
D		
ni ka: wela:ligo:lo:		I keep calling out for my pig
Kida:n-besewela:ligo:lo:		keep calling out where the Kida:n creek dips
"Gayo" wela:ligo:lo:-e		keep calling out "Gayo" [pig name]
E1		
ne dogo misiyo: nela-ba:ba:no:-		I want to see the hilltop
A:ba:lebo: nela-ba:ba:no:-		hilltop over the head of A:ba: creek
A:ba:leb a:ba:l kosa dowabi(ki)		I came to see the lone black palm swaying above
ba:ba:-miyo:wo	A:b:aleb	
e-		(reverberant sound coming back)
D		
ni ka: wela:ligo:lo:-		I keep calling out for my pig
Kida:n-bese wela:ligo:lo:-		keep calling out where the Kida:n creek sinks
"Gayo" wela:ligo:lo:-e		keep calling out "Gayo"
E2		
dogo misiyo: nela-ba:ba:no:-		I want to see the hilltop
So:lo:-sawa:lo: nela-ba:ba:no:-		I want to see So:lo: waterfall ledge
waya kosa dowabi(ki) ba:ba:-		I came to see the lone swaying palm
miyo:wo		
D		
ni ka: wela:ligo:lo:-		I keep calling out for my pig
Kida:n-bese wela:ligo:lo:-		keep calling out where the Kida:n dips
"Gayo" wela:ligo:lo:-e		keep calling out "Gayo"
E3		
kuguno: nela-ba:ba:no:-		I want to see the creek valley
Yagaf: nela-ba:ba:no:-		I want to see Yagaf
akol kosa dowabi(ki) ba:ba:-		I came to see the lone <i>akol</i> spirit tree
miyo:wo		
F		
gululu-lebe		(continuous waterfalling sounds) "gululu"
So:lo:-sawa:l folebe		So:lo: waterfall ledge (surges, sounding) "fo-"
gululu-lebe		(continuous waterfalling sounds) "gululu"
So:lo: sawa:l folebe		So:lo: waterfall ledge (surges sounding) "fo-"
G		
mo fuwa:n-ibo		water (continuous spray sounds) "fuwa:n"
Kida:n sawa:l fuwa:n-ibe		sounding "fu:wa:n" off Kida:n waterfall ledge
mo fuwa:n-ibo		water (continuous spray sounds) "fuwa:n"
Kida:n sawa:l fuwa:n-ibe		sounding "fu:wa:n" spraying at Kida:n-sawa:l
H		
o		(sound of waterfall droning out and on)

Mo: + TALUN

In each A segment of the *mo: + talun*, the first word, *seyago*, announces the presence of a *seyak* or *sagelon* bird, the Hooded butcherbird, *Cracticus cassicus*. This is a highly social bird of village edges whose presence is constant in Bosavi and whose loud, melodious, multipart calls are heard throughout the early morning and late afternoon. Beginning by singing this bird's name invokes its presence; the song's words are thus understood as "bird sound words" or *o:ba: go:no: to*, framing what follows as voiced from a bird's point of view. While this reference is direct and obvious here, it later alternates between background and foreground, when the poetics switch from narratively positioning the song as a bird's voice to positioning it as a text about a bird, a story of a spirit presence.

The bird's initial place image is *Wa:feyo:-sana*. In Ulahi's home region in eastern Bosavi, *sana* is the Ologo dialect variant of the word *do:mo:*, so *Wa:feyo:* *sana* is a hillside above the *Wa:feyo:* waterpool on the *Wo:lu* creek. Lines about staying in a *seleg* tree, calling from a *kidaf* tree, and calling from a *weo:b* tree embellish the depth of *Wa:feyo: sana*, creating a sense of space and movement there. These lines simultaneously mystify the listener and draw his or her attention and anticipation by using Ologo variants for trees more commonly known in the local Kaluli dialect as *sal*, *uf*, and *haido*. The cumulative images of two lone hardwood trees standing on a hill that has been cleared above *Wo:lu* creek and, across the way, one palm left to stand alone while a garden area is cut around it together triangulate ridge, hill, and garden around a creek's bends. The lines simultaneously give a sense of space, movement, area, volume, depth, and the connectedness of places, suggesting ways lives and stories might be written onto the lands there. Places a bird can go and places it calls from are all markers of human living, motion, centering, and leaving.

The B segments of the *mo: + talun* begin with the kin term "brother" + *nilo: siyo:makaka:mi*, which means "I didn't say anything back to provoke or anger you." This is a stock poetic phrase. It implies a self-righteous sense of innocence, as if to say, "I didn't start or fuel your anger." The sense is that it suits the other party to be unjustly angry and unwilling to bury that anger. Kaluli usually paraphrase this line as, "You said something to me but I didn't say anything back to you." Or, "I'm thinking that I didn't say anything to you but you're just cross (*kulufeyab*) with me." The phrase is meant to intensify the feeling states central to song as evocation: states of loss, abandonment, or feeling sorrow, particularly that caused by unjust refusal, anger, or agitation. The use of the pure vocalic sound "o" for a whole poetic and melodic line following this initial phrase serves as a connective, an evocative sigh, a calling out. This both transforms the words to more purely vocal "bird sound words" and

also creates contemplative time and space for the listener, with the effect of underlining the words that were just said, making them reverberate in memory.

The following three lines link the Wa:feyo: hill to the same named waterpool, Wa:feyo: *mogan* (for the Kaluli term *mogan*, Ulahi uses the Ologo dialect variant *gola*, from the swirling sound ideophone *golo* or *gololo*). *Wo:fun* is a kind of weedy, scrubby tree growing to a height of just a few feet alongside the creek at its pool. *Wo:funa: dok* indicates the point just over the top of these dwarf creekside trees. The bird says that it is coming to stay at the waterpool below the hill, coming to stay in these short-tree leaves by the creekside. But this is not a place where a bird can really stay, and so this is instantly a pathetic image, that of a bird who can't find a home, a bird lost in the lower depths of a watercourse rather than homing in the treetops above. Following on the previous image, where a bird cannot stay with its angry brother, these lines make it clear that the bird has no home.

In the boldface alternations of the B verse phrases (B1, B2, and B3), there are three kinds of progressive changes. First, there is a change in the initial word of the phrase, the opening kin/relationship term, from *aowo:*, "brother," to *ada:*, "older sister/younger brother," and then back to *aowo:*. This progression marks a switch to, and then a return from, an intensified form. *Ada:*, a reciprocal relationship term for older sister and younger brother, invokes begging and appeal, carrying the sense that one is calling out sadly; the one called to should feel a deep sense of obligation to respond. Use of this term implies strategic provocation, expectation of action. The switch back to *aowo:*, "brother," implies that this expectation has not been met, that calling for *ada:* didn't get any response, didn't bring the sister any closer to comfort or recognition (on *ada:*, see B. B. Schieffelin 1990:112–35; Feld 1990:24–27).

Second, there is a progression from Wa:feyo: *mogan* to two other waterpools farther down the Wo:lu creek, Diyo:so *gola* (= *mogan*) in B2, and Elade *gola* (= *mogan*) in B3. This progression takes the song along a watercourse that moves out of the living area of Bolekini village. There are a number of waterpools in the Wo:lu creek, but citing these three is particularly effective. Wa:feyo: *mogan* is right beneath the hill where the bird starts out. Diyo:so *mogan* is the last pool of the Wo:lu directly below houses where Bolekini people live. And Elade *mogan* is right above the place on the Wo:lu where it is crossed by the big government track, clearly signifying the crossroads to lands beyond.

Finally, corresponding to these changes in kin/relationship and watercourse terms, there is a progression from the image of the creekside leaves (*wo:fun*) at the waterpool to the image of a tiny scaly fish there

(*ka:la:n* is another Ologo dialect variant, for a fish similar to the kind Kaluli call *yan*), and then back to the image of the *wo:fun* creekside leaves. Understanding this final progression relates more to the imagery of the spirit world, where waterpools and fish signal the presence of *ane mama*, "gone reflections," spirits of the dead. The imagery makes the cumulative and interactive pattern of the three B segments quite explicit: the bird can stay only with fish in waterpools, can stop only by dwarf scrub at creekside; through abandonment, someone has been reduced to the state of a bird, in effect reduced to a "gone reflection," a living absence transformed into a spirit presence.

Taken together, the *mo:* + *talun* segments construct a narrative image of departure and rupture. In the morning, a bird is flying around in Bolekini lands, but someone is angry about the bird's being there. Like moving water, the bird is leaving the village, following Bolekini's main watercourse, with no place to stay on the way, finally arriving at the village edge. Land, water, tree, and place features are joined together with images of loss, indicated as family, bird spirits, places left, places to go toward. All of these are forcefully united through sound and the presence of a bird's voice calling in a progression of verbs linking reported to quoted speech.

SA-GULAB

The *sa-gulab* breaks this narrative and reframes it, first through the sensual pure musicality of its "waterfalling" sound, a drone tonal center incorporating the phonesthesia of outward reaching "o" and returning reverberant "e." This is followed by a major thematic development in the text, expressed by the repeated line *Kida:n sagu, A:bo:lo:-*. This line conjoins visual and sonic images juxtaposing a water name with a phonesthemic descriptive and then a calling voice. The first part of the line, the words *Kida:n sagu*, direct the hearer to imagine a place, a small waterfall of the Kida:n stream where the fall sounds *gu*. This is relatively far from the places just sung in the *mo:* + *talun*, but all Kaluli listeners would know that the "junction," or *so:k*, of the Kida:n is where its waterfall empties into the Wo:lu creek, considerably downstream from Elade *mogan*. So the song now takes a large step outward, creating the expectation that the narrative "branches" to follow will fill in the story of the places linking back to the "trunk."

The second part of the line is just "A:bo:lo:," a pig name. No linguistic marking indicates how to read the juxtaposition of the water name and the pig name; nothing pinpoints whether the pig is at that place, calling from that place, or staying at that place. Nor is there any linguistic marking to indicate that a voice is calling this name out by that place.

The options for interpreting the juxtaposition come not from linguistic semantics but from the poetic juxtaposition of the water placename and the pig name, particularly from interplay of their melodic and performative dimensions.

The melodic contour of the whole line is the key to this interpretation. The rhythmic and melodic structure here is syllabic, that is, one melody tone to one rhythmic pulse per syllable. The tones ascend for the two syllables of the word *Kida:n* (pitches a, c), then descend and hold for the next two syllables, the word *sagu* (pitches a, a). The two words are thus conjoined melodically in an up-over-holding arch (pitches a-c-a-a) that sonically imitates the visual structure of the waterfall in the upper range of the song's melody. Then, after a rest pulse, the melody goes to its lowest tone and from it bounces up a minor third to hold at length on the tonal center for the last two syllables of the pig name *A:bo:lo:* (pitches e-g-g—). These low tones are a sonic icon of the lower-toned human voice; that it is a voice calling out to the pig is performatively keyed by the elongated last syllable. This textual and sonic juxtaposition of two kinds of continuous calling out, that of rushing waterfalls (higher pitches a, c) and that of a yearning voice (lower pitches e, g), is thus iconically marked in the internal ordering and combinatorial patterning of musical material. This relationship remains intact for the remainder of the song, until the calling of water and that of the yearning voice finally merge to become the same.

DUN + TALUN

The *dun + talun* includes three paired refrain (D) and verse (E1, E2, E3) sets. The refrain (an exact-repeating text and melody) is set in a plaintive first-person voice. The voice is calling to a pig, and the phrase is aspectually marked to give the sense of "I keep calling." Time and continuity are thus fused to the motion and space signaled by the directional connection of the placename *Kida:n bese* to the prior places named. Finally, the name of another pig being called is added in the last line. When women take to the trails late in the afternoon to call their piglets, they usually walk along watercourses. The twist here is that now the pigs are being called by a bird making its way along the *Wo:lu* and *Kida:n*. Combining this content with the previous switch from "brother" to *ada:* and back to "brother," it is now evident that the bird voice of the song is a female one.

The three verse alternations E1, E2, and E3 (same melody but changing text; paradigmatic variations indicated in boldface) name, in successive lines, a landform, a corresponding placename, and a tree found there. The first lines progress by naming a mountaintop (E1), another mountaintop (E2), and a valley (E3). The second lines fill in actual placenames

but not precisely the kinds of landforms noted in the first lines, thus supplying surprise and intensifying the poetic impact. *A:ba:leb* (*A:ba:* + *aleb*) is not a mountaintop but a creek head, *So:lo:-sawel* is not a mountaintop but a waterfall crest, and *Yagaf* is not exactly a valley but a steep downhill slope. Citing the place form before the specific place named creates the space-time of moving toward that place. In the first two instances this is done by evoking the flight path of a bird coming toward the actual places from higher ridges; in the last instance it involves the bird's descending through more of a valley to enter the *Yagaf* slope. The third lines all name trees located by the place indicated in the previous line: first, two different lone palms, *a:ba:l* and *waya*, then a huge, buttressed *akol* spirit tree.

The spatial and temporal coordination of the bird's flight progression moves along the path indicated by these three sets of parallel verse segments. This space-time immersion is further heightened by the verb constructions. The first two lines of each verse end with the first-person future verb form "I'll see," often paraphrased by *Kaluli* as "I want to see." The third line of each verse deepens the sense of temporal passage, ending with the conjoined full past form *ba:ba:miyo:wo:*, "came and saw." This is further complicated by the immediately preceding *kosa dowabi(ki)*, a processual aspect indicating that the tree is continuously blowing in the wind. So these verses temporally progress from "coming to see" to "came and saw" images of the bird visiting trees along its path.

The pathos of this imagery is heightened by the fact that the trees in the first two verses (E1, E2) are tall, lone palms, not trees that can be home. Only the *akol* named in the last line of E3—which is also the last line of the whole *dun + talun*—is a spirit tree home, a tree with fruit that is food for a spirit bird. In this section the poesis relies on the sense of listening to the bird's quoted speech. This speech is, of course, metaphoric *bale to*, "turned over words," because trees are the bird's brother. The "want/will see" and "came and saw" indicate that, parallel to the song's trunk, its branches continue the story of loss, of the brother's scorn and the singer's sadness. This is heightened by the final place image, that of the descent down to *Yagaf* and the presence of a lone and very rare *akol* spirit tree there.

SA-SUNDAB + SA-GULU

The imagery of the *sa-sundab* dramatically reframes these branches (as the earlier waterfallo did for the song's trunk) by switching completely to non-narrative poetic resources. The *sa-sundab* evokes three kinds of water sounding: the *gululu* falling and droning sounds of the huge falls of the *So:lo:* and *Kida:n*; the *fo* sounds of their waters pulsing and flowing outward and hard over rocks; and the *fuwa:n* sounds of waters spraying



Figure 3.2. Gulu creek; water flows through land as voice flows through the body. Photograph © Steven Feld.

and anchoring in place. These ideophones fuse the sensation of water falling from above to below, pulsing outward from the pool at the bottom, flowing off and away, and spraying off both rocks and the water's own surfaces. Directly creating the spatial feel of waterfall presence, this phonesthesia of flow equally evokes time, through the sensation of water connection and movement. In addition to fusing this sensate space-time, the *sa-sundab* section draws the song to a close with a placed parallelism, linking together the two main creeks, the So:lo: and the Kida:n, which run parallel, *ida:ni gali:ali*, to join the Wo:lu, substantially defining important connections for Bono: people living at Bolekini. The song then ends with a single droning of the *sa-gulu*, the flowing open "o" that carries the song off with the water as Ulahi's voice fades.

POETICS OF PLACE

Ulahi's song coordinates named places with trees, with light and wind qualities, with sounds, and with affecting acts and quotes. She builds images of a bird following a watercourse, images of departure, of familial rupture. The song's *tok*, its place path, evidences an interpenetration of land and water names, all connected to the poetic resources of "inner speaking," "turned over words," and "sound words." Yet compared with most *gisalo* songs, particularly ones performed during a *gisalo* ceremony, Ulahi's song does not name many places. Its evocative power depends not on the quantity or detail of places named but on their connectedness, on the extent to which they map a place narrative that emotionally resonates with personal, biographical, and historical self-consciousness for Bolekini listeners. Through song, a Kaluli listener is suspended into places, passes along and through them, makes an interiorized macro-tour in the internalized micro-space-time of listening. Path naming creates a context for imaging prior, contiguous, and continuous, though not necessarily linear, sets of placed connections. Ulahi's song, emerging in the making, might end up with almost twice the places and details. But the narrative strategy leads Kaluli listeners to imagine a path of significant connections, creating a rich and coherent *tok*, a path evoking the interplay of presence and absence at Bolekini.

These poetic practices articulate strongly with Keith Basso's general proposal that

placenames are arguably among the most highly charged and richly evocative of all linguistic symbols. Because of their inseparable connection to specific localities, placenames may be used to summon forth an enormous range of mental and emotional associations—associations of time and space, of history and events, of persons and social activities, of oneself and stages in one's life. . . . Poets and songwriters have long understood that economy of expression may enhance the quality and force of aesthetic discourse, and that placenames stand ready to be exploited for this purpose. (Basso 1988:103)

ULAHİ

Understanding the personal and social evocation of Ulahi's song requires some greater sense of her life at Bolekini and of how her biography colors what typical listeners might feel when they hear her sing. The most salient feature of Ulahi's social position at Bolekini is that she is an outsider who comes from a distant area where people speak the eastern, or Ologo, dialect of the Bosavi language. Married into the central Kaluli dialect area as the second wife of a clan Bono: man named Tulunei, her linguistic outsidership is overtly marked by the fact that she pronounces his name Sulunei.

Ulahi's married life has been dominated by her husband's boisterousness, his favoritism toward his first wife, Eyo:bo, and his long history of arguments with his clansmen (on Ulahi and her family history, see B. B. Schieffelin 1990:43–50). Tulunei and Ulahi are in many ways a study in temperamental contrasts. The everyday gentleness of Ulahi's unassuming public demeanor is matched by the emotional depth of her contemplative songs and expressive voice. Tulunei, on the other hand, is a loud and overtly dramatic man whose temper is legend in Bolekini, as is his quick and unreflective tendency toward explosive displays of complaint, demands for attention, and anger, occasionally manifested in hitting his wives, especially Ulahi. That Ulahi has cultivated close and distinct relationships with Bambi B. Schieffelin and me, working as one of our regular transcription and translation assistants since the mid-1970s, has been a pretext for occasional displays of Tulunei's jealousy. His attempts to appropriate trade goods or money Ulahi has earned fall into a larger recurring pattern of agitation and of feeling owed that is a familiar staple of his discourse with the Bono: clan people who have lived at Sululeb (a former longhouse site) and who currently live at Bolekini. In the heat of fallings-out with his clansmen, Tulunei tends to insist dramatically and disruptively on packing his family off to another community. But sooner or later he always becomes embroiled in some altercation in the new place and brings the family back to Bono: within a few years.

When Ulahi's song was recorded in August 1990, the Tulunei family had recently moved back to Bono:s new place at Bolekini. The family was in the process of building a separate house above Wa:feyo: hill, across the Wo:lu creek from the village longhouse. So Ulahi's song emerged in a time of awkwardness, a time of coming back to a place where relations had a history of tension. Additionally, every leave-taking from and each return to Tulunei's place has resonated with a more personal sense of loss and displacement for Ulahi, for it has always been she who has left to settle the anger of marital squabbles. Ulahi's song reflects these experiences and memories of place awkwardness by poetically evoking a map of marginality, a song path about the familiarity of a place that is doubly not home—not the place she comes from, not the place she has settled into without going away, coming back, going away, and coming back again.

GENDERING SONG SPACE AND TIME

Ulahi's song is not just about the awkwardness of being in and out of place. Her reflections are gendered, and this is a unique and innovative dimension to her poetics. She accomplishes this gendering first in the use of *ada:*. *Gisalo* songs typically have the younger brother invoking *ada:* to beg to an older sister or to complain about the lack of responsiveness

from an older sister. The “trunk” of Ulahi's song inverts the appeal to *ada:* so that it is the sister calling to the brother. Once this female voice becomes clear, she strengthens it in the “waterfalling” and “branches” sections by introducing the theme of following and calling for little pigs, a markedly everyday women's activity.

Understanding Ulahi's *gisalo* also requires examining its gendered presence in a space of absence. Men have not staged a *gisalo* ceremony in Bosavi since 1984, and few Kaluli men are composing *gisalo* songs. This is very significant, for *gisalo* is locally invoked as the most Kaluli of all Kaluli expressive forms. *Gisalo* generically means both “song” and “ceremony” as well as the one specific song and ceremony type (of five) that Kaluli consider the most complex and moving. It is also the only one Kaluli claim to have originated. *Gisalo* once shone the brightest cultural spotlight on Bosavi men and their interests in provocation and control. It privileged all realms of male action, with men mobilizing others, singing them into reaction, cultivating spheres of influence, getting brides, and impressing others through dramaturgical provocation and poetic persuasion. *Gisalo* was once the undeniable height of aesthetic and rhetorical action in Bosavi, and as Edward L. Schieffelin's ethnography (1976) shows, it was a quintessentially male show.

These days, however, most young Kaluli men are more active in other ways: mobilizing money, establishing trade stores, developing their rhetorical skills in evangelical Bible classes, and getting labor contracts to work on outside oil and timber development projects. For some men involved in these spheres, or for others more content to watch from the sidelines, the allure of ceremonialism disappeared with their conversion to Christianity, a result of evangelical missionary presence since the early 1970s. Other pressures surrounding the establishment of a more cash-based economy and the escalating financial demands of a bridewealth system present young Kaluli men with new contexts and outlets for evocation, control, and energetic display. No longer is ceremonial participation significant for cultivation of the rhetorical and dramaturgical skills that were once so essential to male presentational style. Composing and singing *gisalo* songs is now an activity most Kaluli men associate with the contribution non-Christian males can make to local ceremonies for Papua New Guinea Independence Day. Thus the significance of ceremonialism to the trajectory of men's lives, with *gisalo* once its pinnacle, has thoroughly waned since the early 1980s.

Meanwhile, Bosavi women traditionally limited their composing and singing almost entirely to the imported and relatively minor *heyalo* genre, although some, particularly women from eastern Bosavi, also sang in the *ko:luba* style. Following this pattern, Ulahi has composed and sung many

heyalo and ko:luba songs; only recently has she felt an interest in composing *gisalo*. This interest is clearly unusual, indeed, extraordinary, and the moment Ulahi began her song at the Wo:lu creek my jaw dropped. My response was hardly unique. The most astonished “ah!” reactions Kaluli men and women made and still make when listening to *Voices of the Rainforest* universally come just as they hear Ulahi sing the first few phrases of this *gisalo* song.

Typically and predictably, women at Bolekini were very positive about the song, usually responding to first hearings with a highly enthusiastic “*mada ko:le sele*” (“really very different!”). But men at Bolekini were suspicious of the song and were made somewhat anxious by it. They all reminded me that *gisalo* are sung by men, and some asked me either privately or publicly why I included a woman singing *gisalo* on the tape. I replied that no men were composing *gisalo*. They shrugged and said things like “*hede ko:sega . . .*” (“true, but . . .”), trailing off into silence. Hasele conceded that the *bale to*, the “turned over words” of Ulahi’s *gisalo*, were *halaido*, “hard,” in other words, forcefully evocative. But since the song was not sung by a man for a ceremony with the aim of provoking another to tears, or by a spirit medium for a seance where it would announce a specific spirit presence, he concluded that this was *defe sa:lan*, roughly, “illustrative talk,” implying that it was just an example, something to indicate the nature of *gisalo* without being a real one. Essentially this is to recognize that Ulahi’s song was a new and different kind of *gisalo*, one of self-expression rather than for social provocation. The story Hasele constructed for himself and other men was that this song was composed to explain to Americans what a *gisalo* was. Some found this a perfectly suitable explanation and adopted it as their own.

Whether or not Ulahi is explicitly talking back oppositionally to her problems of living with Tulunei and finding a place to live, her song is a powerful female intrusion into momentarily unoccupied male expressive space. Yet even though Ulahi is composing and singing in a markedly male genre, the song and its poetic materials are quite continuous with her *heyalo* and *ko:luba* compositional practices of the preceding twenty years. When I asked her about the song, Ulahi herself returned often to a familiar phrase. She said it was a *gisalo ba madale*, a *gisalo* “for no reason” or “to no purpose.” This is a complicated phrase to understand, but one that I have heard Ulahi and other singers use before when referring to reflective compositions. While *ba madale* can mean “with no basis” and be a negative characterization, particularly when it modifies a verb of speaking, it also can mean “just by itself” or “just for itself.” And this is what Ulahi emphasized to me—that her *gisalo* was just for herself: “*nina:li asula:sa:ga: ka sa-molan*,” “Having thought about it alone, I could compose it.” A *ba*

madale gisalo means the song didn’t spring from an agenda to provoke a specific person to tears, as a ceremonial song might. Instead of having a specific evocative purpose directed outward toward another, Ulahi’s song was composed in reflection, for herself only. Rather than being a means of persuasion, her song emerged as something to sing alone, to explore her feelings about coming back to Bono: lands after a considerable time away.

WHAT ARE YOUR NAMES?

Moments after finishing her *gisalo*, Ulahi continued with a second song, a short tag, in the *ko:luba* genre:

<i>wo: wo:</i>	(calling out)
<i>ni America kalu-o-e</i>	my American men
<i>gi wi o:ba-e</i>	what are your names?
<i>ni Australia gayo-o-e</i>	my Australian women
<i>gi wi o:ba-e</i>	what are your names?
<i>ni America kalu-o-e</i>	my American men
<i>wo: wo:</i>	(calling out)
<i>ni America kalu-o-wo: wo:</i>	my American men (calling out)
<i>gi wi o:ba-e</i>	what are your names?
<i>ni Australia gayo-e</i>	my Australian women
<i>gi wi o:ba-e</i>	what are your names?
<i>ni America kalu-o-wo:</i>	my American men
<i>o wo:—wo: wo:</i>	(calling out)
<i>gi wi o:ba-e</i>	what are your names?
<i>ni Australia gayo-e</i>	my Australian women
<i>ni America kalu-o-e</i>	my American men
<i>a:-ye-wo: wo:</i>	(calling out)

As my tape recorder kept running, Ulahi paused, then continued in a singing-quoting voice: “My American men . . . *wo: wo:*” And then she switched to full speaking voice, continuing (rather literally translated):

Well, myself, thinking about it, speaking sadly, I won’t see your place but you see mine, I don’t know your names, who you are? I’m wondering, I’m thinking like that, you people living in faraway lands, listening to me, I haven’t heard your land names, so who are you? That’s what I’m saying. Steve, you, having come before, you can say, “My name is Steve, American man,” but all the others, what are your names? “Many people will hear your Bosavi songs,” you said like that to me before, but thinking about it, singing by myself I’m thinking, what are your names? That’s what I was thinking. I don’t really know the land names, just America, Australia, so I’m sadly singing like that so that they can hear it.

The background and context for these remarks was a conversation Ulahi and I had had as we walked together from Bolekini to the spot on Wo:lu creek where she sang her songs that day. Ulahi asked why I wanted to record her songs again. I replied that this time many new people would

hear the recordings. I couldn't really explain in a Kaluli framework how *Voices of the Rainforest* was to be a serious departure from the limited academic LP releases I had published before (Feld 1981, 1985). It would mean nothing to tell Ulahi that the recording would be published by Rykodisc, a major independent company, or that Mickey Hart, percussionist of Grateful Dead fame, was its producer, or that it would have worldwide publicity, distribution, and sales. And there was no way I could explain how this was going to be the first compact disk, an object no Kaluli had even seen, entirely devoted to music from Papua New Guinea, or that it would be sold at hundreds of stores and played over hundreds of radio networks. These topics, people, companies, and issues, as significant as they might be to academics or general consumers, are entirely alien to the Kaluli everyday experiential world. So I just kept telling Ulahi that many, many people in America and Australia, the two large places that Kaluli have heard about through contact with outsiders, would hear her voice and be very happy about it (on the aesthetics of the recording, as well as the ethical issues about its royalty and ownership politics, see Feld 1992).

Obviously, the sense of both wonder and strangeness promoted by this conversation lingered with Ulahi as she sang her *gisalo*. Her way of continuing the dialogue emerged in her short, improvised *ko:luba* song. Singing in a low, fluid, quizzical, semispoken register, Ulahi contrasted the explicitness of placenames with the mystery of personal names as an essential identity juncture. But her voice, calling out from the side of Wo:lu creek to American men and Australian women, might resound elsewhere as an overwhelming example of the ethnoscapings of "schizophononia" (Schafer 1977), a local noise from the global boombox of "banished difference" (Attali 1985). However the song satisfies a postmodern narcissism that can see only a world of fragmentary reflections off mirrors of its own shattering, there is something exquisitely local and deeply rooted here. Outsider placenames stress what Kaluli poetics always stress, that song paths connect lives and memories near and far, that they acknowledge the simultaneous sense of closeness and rupture that is central to emotionally confronting human loss.

Use of outside placenames is not an oppositional practice here, not a move to subvert or to gain power over others who now dominate. Rather, like all Kaluli songs, this one animates a dialectic of emplacement and displacement and resolves it in a poetics of replacement. Kaluli practitioners of this song path aesthetic, singers whose best songs make their listeners weep, are matter-of-fact about drawing on distant placenames to enhance their own powers of evocation. For at the heart of all Kaluli song is the creation of a dialogic space-time where imagining others by singing their lands takes in their humanity and presence as well as their otherness and absence. This is why Ulahi's song and her

spontaneous commentary so poignantly articulate that wondering, that questioning whether, when we hear her voice, we can possibly feel both her sense of recognition and her sense of loss.

PLACES ARE LIKE FAMILY CALLING OUT

The third of Ulahi's Wo:lu creekside songs is in the *heyalo* genre, a form structured as alternating *mo:*, "trunk," or refrain, and *dun*, "branches," or verses.

<i>mo:</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>nimo sa:iyalena: imolobo:</i>				
Wafulo: <i>sa:iyalena: imolobo:</i>		Weane	Ho:iyo:	Wafulo:
<i>nimo sa:iyalena: imolobo:</i>				
<i>dun</i>	1	2	3	4
<i>kuguno: ge aowo: a:la:lubiyo:</i>				
Ho:iyo:wo: <i>ge aowo: a:la:lubiyo:</i>		Ho:bi	Imano:	Ho:bi
<i>bolo: ge aowo: a:la:lubiyo:</i>		a:ba:lo:	bolo:	bolo:
"trunk"	1	2	3	4
my water cicada is hungry				
at Wafulo: ridge cicada is alone		Weane	Ho:iyo:	Wafulo:
my water cicada is abandoned				
"branches"	1	2	3	4
the valley is like your brother calling				
at Ho:iyo: your brother calling you		Ho:bi	Imano:	Ho:bi
at the bol tree there, your brother calling		a:ba:lo:	bolo:	bolo:

The song alternates four paired sets of "trunks" and "branches." Each repeat of the "trunk" changes the placename of a ridge, repeating the initial image the final time. Each alternating repeat of the "branches" changes the placename of a mountain and a tree there, using the same placename the second and fourth times through and the same tree name the third and fourth times through. Notice the lack of regularity in the repeating names of places and trees, such that the repetition is not too predictable.

The places in this song are situated by the Dibano river, far southeast of the area Kaluli people inhabit. Wafulo:, Weane, Ho:iyo, and Imane are all *hen dagon*, "mountain ridges" over the Dibano river, on lands of Wo:siso: people. Ho:bi is a mountain toward the village of Walagu in Onabasulu country, farther north. The trees mentioned are *bol*, a tall fruiting hardwood, and *a:ba:l*, a thin palm; both always stand alone. Against these places the song juxtaposes visual and sonic images of aloneness, hunger, emptiness, and familial connection. Ulahi says that the "turned over words" or metaphoric potency here is that hunger, emptiness, is like a voice calling out to you, or like a noisy cicada by the

stream. Like the high hiss of water or the churning of an empty stomach, it is a constant, grinding, chilling sound that won't go away. Staying in the valleys beneath these mountain ridges is like your brother calling to you. This is because *kugun*, "uncut forest valley," is like a brother to *daḡon*, "mountain." Closely linked places are like family to each other, so landforms that tower over others call out to one another, yearning to be connected, like brothers.

"LIKE A WATERFALL IN YOUR HEAD"

Taken as a group, Ulahi's three songs in the "Relaxing at the Creek" segment illustrate contrastive ways in which paths of placenames hold and express biography, memory, and feeling. Her *gisalo* song ranges over relatively nearby local places that define part of how a specific person's life connects to an awkward sense of community and its margins. Like the *gisalo* song, Ulahi's *ko:luba* illustrates the centrality of placenames to the poesis of evocation and loss. But it goes farther, linking the power of placenames to the power of personal names to create a sense of identity, near or far, familiar or other. And her *heyalo* song sings a fragment of long-ago and faraway images, evoking the memory of a time and an event, thoughts of others who were moved by it, and thoughts of how living far away, one is deeply reminded of places as kin; path connections are like familiar places calling back to you.

Something important has so far been left out in this account of the evocative powers of place naming and of path memory circulation, namely, Ulahi's performance itself. As she sang, Ulahi sat on the bank of *Wo:lu du*, a rocky segment of land in the middle of the creek, with her son Wano, one of her pigs, and me. But she was not singing just to and for us. She was singing with the *Wo:lu*, singing with water, singing like water, singing about water. This was not a gimmick for the recording. Kaluli men and women often compose songs by creeks and waterfalls; women often sing songs at sago-place creeks or other waterways.

Singing like water is an idea that reverberates throughout Bosavi language and expressive practices. For example, the verb for "composing" in Kaluli, *sa-molab*, concerns hearing and singing inside, "like a waterfall in your head" as Jubi once put it. In this and other cases, the metaphoric potency of water is indicated by the polysemy of all water terminology to the semantic field of song. Composing a song is said to be like the way a waterfall flows into a waterpool. When the words come to your mind and fit the melody, it is like the way a waterfall flows into a pool, holding, bonding, then flowing away. Recall also that the central portion of the *gisalo* song, where its tonal center is established, is called the "waterfalling." This is where it echoes to establish an "o" calling out and



Figure 3.3. The surging foo— of *So:lo*: waterfall that climaxes Ulahi's *gisalo* song. Photograph © Steven Feld.

"e" reverberating back rhyme, and when it pauses before reaching out to its "branches." Likewise, the final one or two lines of *gisalo* are the "waterfalling droning," where the song is carried off by droning "o" and "e," again on the tonal center. And in addition to these ways in which melodies flow like water, the timing and rhythmicity of singing are also forms of flow; the terminology of musical rhythm and meter are polysemic to the pulsing, splashing, and motional qualities of water.

Water flowing through land, experientially embodied as the pulsating flow of the voice through the resonating body, animates the imagination and practice of song, from its melodic and rhythmic structure to its timbral and textural qualities and its evocative power to remain in mind. This is how the performative flow of singing with water and the musicality of singing like water connect deeply with the emplacing textuality of singing about water, following creek paths, evoking their

sonic presence through phonesthetic ideophones. Ulahi once told me that every one of her songs was like a *mogan* on a creek. I take her to mean that every song is a pool, a swirl, something that centers and circles in place for some moments, then turns and flows downstream to mingle and merge in other pools. In this sense, Ulahi's songs, like the Wo:lu creek where she sang them, meander and flow through Bosavi communities, reverberating through Kaluli lives and our own by linking places together and suggesting that these paths always connect stories about people's memories and feelings.

PLACE, EXPERIENCE, EXPRESSION

"While perception measures the reflecting power of the body, affection measures its power to absorb" (Bergson 1988 [1908]:56). Places may come into presence through the experience of bodily sensation, but it is through expression that they reach heightened emotional and aesthetic dimensions of sensual inspiration. Kaluli emplacement involves sensory naturalization of ways water courses flow by moving in and through land, ways land is always in and around water. This emplacement is implemented by bodily analog: voice moves in and *through* the body, but the physical and emotional presence of the entire body is always *in* the voice. Linking what Bergson calls the "reflecting" and "absorbing" powers of the body, Kaluli sing about waterways, sing with water, imagine song as water flowing like an embodied voice. Here the poetics of place merge with the sensuousness of place as soundscape and with the sensuality of the singing voice.

But there is more: flow, water's perpetual record of resounding images, carries and lingers in embodied memory beyond the perceptual immediacy of an actual voicing in performance. So, when standing by a forest waterway and then walking on in the forest, one hears how the water carries on and thus knows that it can flow back into perceptual immediacy as easily as it flowed out of it. This concretely reprises one of Edward Casey's themes in his essay for this volume: "Perceiving bodies are knowing bodies, and inseparable from what they know is culture as it imbues and shapes particular places. It is by bodies that places become cultural entities" (Casey, this volume; see also Casey 1987:146–80, 1993:43–105). Which is to say, places make sense in good part because of how they are made sensual and how they are sensually voiced. Poetic and performative practices centralize the place of sense in making a local sense of place. This is how a poetics flows from everyday experience, and how Kaluli imagination and practice make water an acoustemology of embodied place resounding.

NOTES

Kaluli words are spelled according to the orthography in Feld (1990:17–19). For simplicity in reading here, *o*: signifies phonetic open *o*, pronounced like the vowel in *bought*, and *a*: signifies phonetic epsilon, pronounced like the vowel in *bet*. Other vowels are spelled to approximate close phonetic English equivalents: *i* as in *beet*, *u* as in *boot*, *e* as in *baît*, *o* as in *boat*, *a* as in *bob*. Consonants likewise are spelled to approximate close phonetic English equivalents.

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