Chapter 8. Speaking of Places: Spatial poesis and localized identity in Buli

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Introduction

This paper seeks to explore the nexus between language, space and identity.[1] It does so by focusing on the frequent use of orientational or deictic words in Buli language and relating it to the processes of identification. Spatial deixis seems to be relevant to the processes of identification at two levels: those of individual subjectivity on the one hand and those of cultural identity and differentiation on the other. In this discussion of the relationship between the perception of space and forms of identification I hope to suggest a possible connection between the numerous descriptive analyses of orientational systems in eastern Indonesia (Adelaar 1997; Barnes 1974, 1986, 1988, 1993; Taylor 1984; Teljeur 1983; Shelden 1991; Yoshida 1980), the discussion of subjectivity and the role of deixis in phenomenological linguistic theory (Benveniste 1966; Bühler 1982; Lyons 1982; Fillmore 1982), and broader debates on the spatial processes operative in cultural identification.

The basic argument is that the same linguistic conventions for spatial orientation in Buli function to posit both individual subjectivity and cultural identity. At the former level, spatial deixis establishes the speaker as a "locative" subject with a defined but relative position in the world. The subject necessarily occupies a place in space and, in most acts of speaking, posits this.[2] I shall argue that subjectivity in Buli is posited continually in speech through spatial deixis. At the broader level of cultural identification, however, space is laid out in absolute terms. Here, space terminates in certain culturally significant "heterotopias" (Foucault 1986), that is, places of important symbolic difference to Buli. Deixis establishes through these heterotopias a spatially grounded, moral sense of cultural identity. Arguably, "cultural identity" is better described as a localized sense of belonging (Appadurai 1995). If this is the case, one needs to determine how this localization of a "sense of belonging" is established. As I shall try to show, the "spatial poesis" that locates the subject as a positioned social agent also creates the basis for a spatially defined sense of cultural belonging. Thereby I hope to inscribe the discussion of spatial orientation within the recent theoretical critiques of anthropology for its assumption of an "unproblematic link between identity and place" (Gupta and Ferguson 1992:7). I suggest looking at spatial deixis, the intersection between discursive space and

spatial praxis, as an avenue for engaging the social and historical construction of the link between identity and place in Buli.

The direct impetus for my interest in deixis came not only from anthropological theory but also from repeated difficulties in coming to grips with the system of spatial orientation in Buli during fieldwork in the Buli village of Waiflí between 1991 and 1993. I will describe one instance of these conceptual difficulties below, not just as a convenient allegory for introducing the Buli terms of spatial orientation but also because, in retrospect, it was my own confusion in instances such as the one described below which prodded me to think about the dynamic and poetic function of space in constructing selfhood and cultural identity.

Buli is an Austronesian-speaking group of about 5,700 people dispersed in nine coastal villages on the east coast of Halmahera in north-east Indonesia. Traditionally, Buli people are horticulturalists and fishermen with a subsistence economy relying mainly on sago and coral fish. However, integration into a wider market economy promoted formerly by Dutch colonial officers, now by Indonesian state officials and a motley group of Chinese, Bugis and Buton entrepreneurs, has meant an increasing dependence on cash crops like copra and cocoa as well as on the commercial exploitation of the ocean, in particular of anchovies, bêche-de-mer and sea shells. The Buli language is one of seven Austronesian languages spoken in the northern part of the Indonesian province of Maluku (known in English as the Moluccas). While the southern part of the island of Halmahera is populated by Austronesian-speaking groups such as Buli, Maba, Patani, Gane (Gimán) and Weda (Sawai), the northern and more populous part of the island is inhabited by Papuan-speaking groups, the most prominent of which are Tobelo, Galela and Loloda. Until their abolition by the Dutch, two sultanates, Ternate and Tidore, had nominal political dominion over the island of Halmahera. Both sultanates derived their power from their control of the lucrative trade in cloves which, over the centuries, had lured traders from Asia and Europe to their ports. While the northern part of Halmahera claimed loyalty to Ternate, the southern part of the island, including Buli, paid tribute to the Sultan of Tidore.
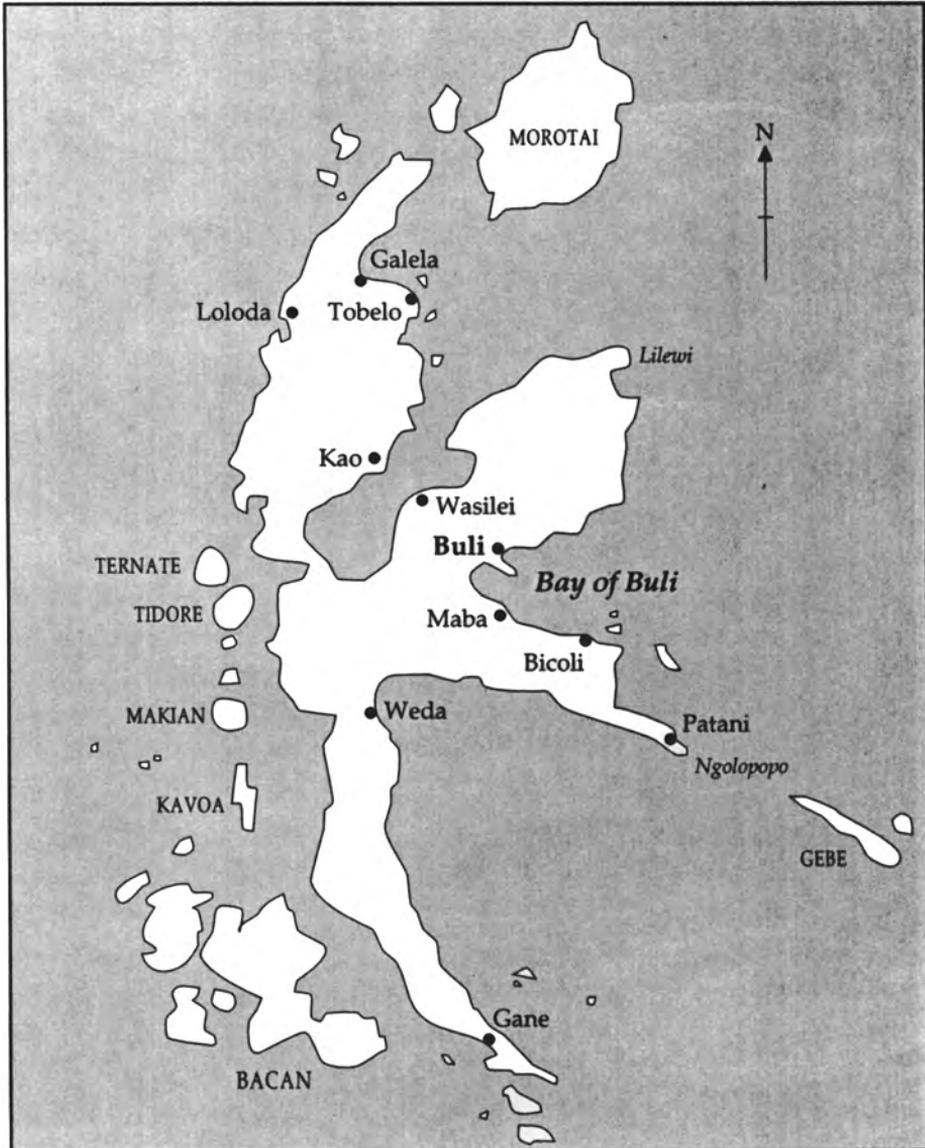
Map 1. Halmahera, showing the Bay of Buli

The Spatial Conditions of Subjectivity in Buli

Let me, as promised, introduce spatial deixis in Buli with a story. One day I went fishing with Lingoro and his son-in-law, Enes. We set off before dawn and headed straight for a well-known fishing spot near the island of Femlawas. The island lay in the mouth of one of the numerous small bays on the east coast of Halmahera and the fishing spot, a deep coral reef hidden from the eye, lay between the island and the oval shore of the bay. The canoe was drifting with

the wind and spun around itself in a slow dance but Lingoro kept us in place over the reef with the occasional wiggle of his paddle from his seat in the bow of the canoe. Suddenly, his line was bitten off deep below, probably by a toadfish whose sharp, parrot-like beak is a scourge to any fisherman without proper metal tackle. The fish were otherwise biting well at the time and Lingoro was eager to get his hook replaced, so he asked me, slightly impatiently, to hand him his box of hooks "on the landside" (*Moce yanik awil poléi tasá*). At the time the canoe's slow rotation had me facing a promontory of the mainland, while I had the island of Femlawas roughly to my right. The coastline of the mainland of Halmahera continued from the promontory in an arc almost 180 degrees to my left and was visible even as I turned around to look behind me. I could in other words see land to all sides. I sensed I was surrounded by land and could not decide where "the landside" might be. As I began rummaging around to all sides looking for the hooks, Lingoro realized, after twice repeating: "No, to the landside!" (*En pa, poléi, poléi!*), that I would never find his hooks in time and he scrambled across the outrigger to get the box himself. It was hidden under a pandanus mat on my left-hand side which pointed in the general direction of Watileo and the other mountains of the interior of Halmahera.
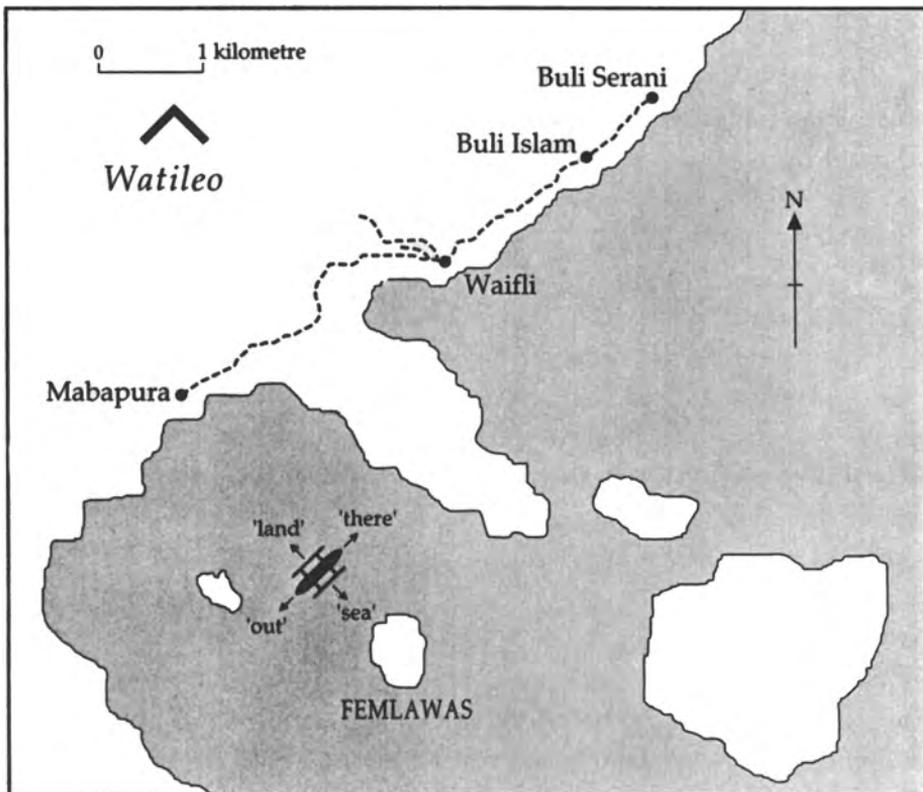
Map 2. The central orientational axis, Buli

With a new hook attached and his annoyance abated, Lingoro explained that neither the island to my right nor the arc of the bay curving both ahead and behind us counted as being "on the landside". What to me seemed an arbitrary spatial designation in a vaguely similar landscape, to Lingoro was a necessary directional indication as precise as a pointing index finger. As it turned out, however, it was not an absolute one: the exact direction of the landside was a function of our location. Thus, when later on we put onto the beach on the island of Femlawas to roast a few fish for lunch, Lingoro ordered Enes to the "landside" to gather firewood. In going to the "landside" towards the centre of the small island, Enes headed in a direction exactly opposite to the "landward" direction of a few hours earlier when we were out at sea.

By the standards of its other Austronesian neighbours, there is nothing unusual or particularly complicated about deictic terms of space in Buli. Similarly, surprise and confusion such as mine in coming to terms with an Austronesian spatial system has not gone unreported in the anthropological literature (for example, Barnes 1974:84; Barraud 1979:26; Firth 1970:191). After fieldwork in Kédang off the east coast of Flores, Barnes (1974) was the first anthropologist working in Indonesia to take an analytical interest in the orientational system he encountered, although the complexity of spatial terms had been remarked upon by Dutch missionaries since the nineteenth century (for a mention of Buli terms, see Maan 1951:91). It goes for Buli, as for Kédang, that the application of a particular spatial marker (such as for instance "on the landside") is not consistently oriented toward a particular feature in the landscape, as I had vaguely expected. Rather, as one's position in space moves, so too do the possibilities for assigning features in the landscape to act as reference points. Deictic terms are oriented and applied within a matrix of space that changes as one moves around it.[3] My fishing story sought to illustrate this point. Not every region of the mainland qualified as being "on the landside". In the canoe at sea, neither promontories nor lowland areas of Halmahera counted as "landside". Only the narrow direction of the central mountains could appropriately be designated as "landward" in this instance. This does not mean that the mountains always define "land". Instead, the allocation of a given locative, such as "landside", depends on one's own position in space and not on cardinal points that remain the same wherever one is. In the outrigger at sea, the "landside" was in the direction of the central mountain range of Halmahera, because here the spatial reference was the island of Halmahera. Once we landed on Femlawas, the spatial reference had shifted to this small uninhabited island and "landside" was therefore naturally defined by its central point.

Basic Orientation in Buli

As in most other Austronesian societies (Adelaar 1977:1) as well as in many Papuan languages such as those of north Halmahera (Taylor 1984; Yoshida 1980),

the landward and the seaward directions form the central orientational axis in Buli.[4] This axis is always complemented by other axes. In Buli, five sets of locatives are used to order orientation within the social world. Apart from "landside" (*poléi*) and "seaside" (*poláu*), the two most used are: "up" (*puis*) and "down" (*pap*) and "inside" (*pomúl*) versus "outside" (*potá*).[5] The lexeme *li*, literally meaning "place" and found in many place names,[6] is used in the locative *polí* to mean "over there". It is employed in a vague sense as opposed to *mantane* ("here") but it also occurs as a locative related to the directionals *lalí* ("towards there") and *malí* ("towards here").[7] The fifth deictic set denotes movement "upstream" (*solat*) and "downstream" (*yeli*) but this is used less often, mostly when moving in the forest where paths almost always follow streams and waterways. On the coast, this set coincides with the "landward"-"seaward" axis. These five axes define different points of orientation that are not fixed locations in physical space but are, as the story above illustrated, dependent upon the contextual location of the speaker in space. If we take a speaker located in an ideal centre of the village of Waiflí as an example, the world is spaced around the speaker (who is represented by a circle) (see Figure 1).

As a rough guide one could say that the landward-seaward axis runs perpendicular to the coast, while the upward-downward axis runs parallel to the coast. The two axes are mutually organized so that when one faces the coast, downward is to one's left. However, it is important to remember that this is not a generally valid schema for orientation. It is correct only from a position in the village of Waiflí. Although one follows the upward direction as one approaches Waiflí from the north along the coast, it is strictly speaking not possible to go in an upward direction once one enters the village. As we shall see, this is because the village defines the most "upward" point within the Halmaheran world. Instead *potá* ("outside") takes over briefly as the designation for one's southerly direction, but one is quickly cut short on one's walk to the "outside" along the beach by cliffs and mangroves. Instead a path takes the traveller in a direction towards the "landside" across the large promontory to the south of Waiflí until one emerges near the village of Mabapura on the other side. In general terms, the "landside" is the direction of the forest and refers in particular to two forest paths that follow the small village stream to the coconut groves, sago swamps and cassava gardens that separate the village from the forest. "Over there" (*polí*) is a medial location which from the ideal position in the centre of the village is situated between the "inside" and the "down" positions (see Figure 1). In the village *polí* is the location of the village primary school and further sago groves.
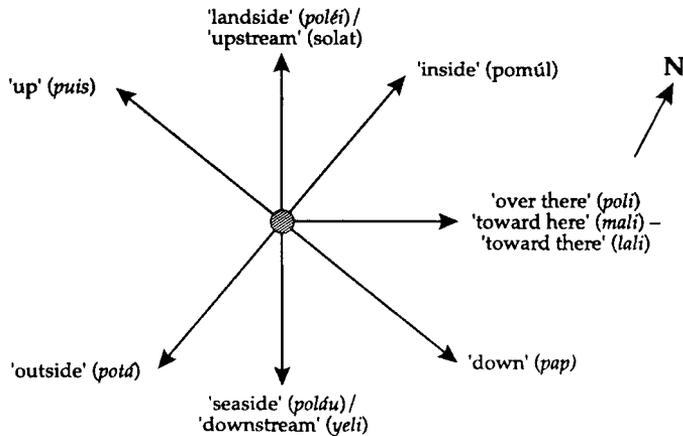
Figure 1. Matrix of spatial location in the village of Waiflí

Within the village, the "seaside" indicates the direction of the beach. If one answers that one is "going seaward" (*fan laláu tane*) to the greeting "where are you going?" that is an inevitable part of social interaction, it is generally understood as a polite euphemism for going to the beach to relieve oneself. The seaside is, of course, also the direction of the ocean itself with its resources of fish, turtles and sea shells. While both the sea and the land are exploited in the traditional economy of Buli society, there is a greater degree of reliance and emphasis on the sea and this is reflected in the different degrees of comfort associated with the spatial domains of land and sea, respectively. As one man explained it: "the sea is open: you can see all around. The forest is closed and dark, you just have to be afraid". The conception of the forest as a "closed" domain one enters "into" is also harboured in the word for "forest", *ai loló* , which literally translates as "tree-inside-of". The logic of the land as a closed, dangerous space and the sea as an open, safe space also motivates the approximation of "inside" to the "landside" and "outside" to the "seaside" in the context of orientation within the village (see Figure 1).

Relative Distance and Movement in Deixis

The directional terms I have mentioned here are combined with two other types of orientational devices that help locate objects and actions in the world. The first type is a prefix that indicates movement in relation to the speaker. It occurs in three forms: *la-*, *ma-* and *po-* and is attached to the deictic root words such as "land" (*lei*) and "sea" (*lau*). *La-* (which also occurs in the form *na-* in for instance *nap*, "downward" and *nais*, "upward") describes a centrifugal movement away from the present position of the utterance. *La-léi* means, for instance, "in a direction towards the landside away from the present position of the speaker". *Ma-* could be called the centripetal form and indicates movement towards the speaker. Therefore *ma-léi* means "from a point in the landward direction moving

towards the speaker''. Finally, *po-* indicates that no movement of significance in relation to the speaker is occurring. This was the form used in Figure 1. *Po-léi* means (as in case of the fishing hooks) ''somewhere in the region defined as landside from the speaker's current position''. It may refer to an immobile object or person or to a person whose movements remain within a domain that is seaward from the place of the utterance. The second type of directional device, inevitably combined with locatives in deictic or pointing phrases, is a demonstrative that gives a sense of relative distance from the speaker. These demonstratives come in three forms: *tane, nea, na*. *Tane* means ''here'' and indicates very close, usually tactile, proximity; *nea* implies relatively close proximity somewhere beyond easy reach, while *na* denotes relatively far distance.

If we add these two types of devices, the radial prefixes and the distal demonstratives, to the orientational schema of Figure 1, we get movement, distance and direction as illustrated in Figure 2. Again, this is not a general representation of abstract space, but a depiction of how space would unfold from a particular position (somewhere in the centre of the village).

Placing Things and Using Space

Locatives, radial prefixes and demonstratives marking distance are combined to express relative position, distance and direction of movement. So, for instance, *poláu tane* means ''on the seaside close to my present position''. *Nap nea* means ''in a downwards direction some distance away from my present position and moving away''. *Pap na mais* means ''on a distant location down there but moving towards my present position in the upward region''. Objects and events are almost invariably situated spatially in this fashion, which is especially clear in noun phrases such as:
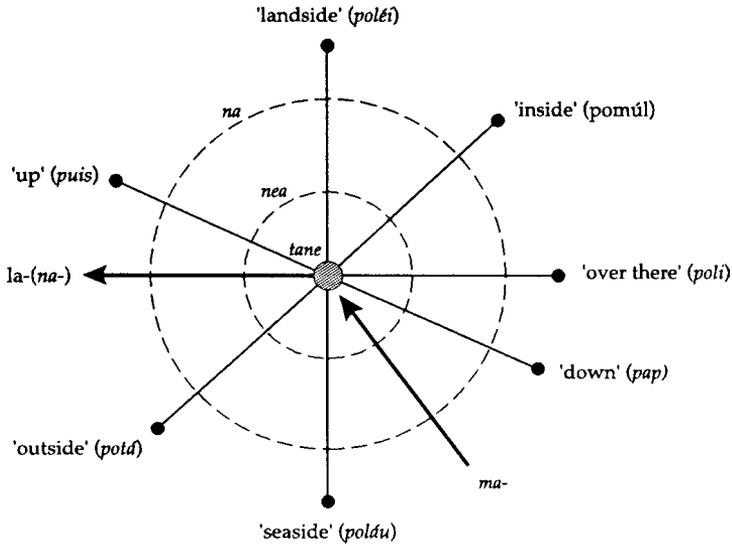
'landside' (poléi)

na

'inside' (pomúl)

'up' (puis)

nea

tane

la-(na-)

'over there' (poli)

'down' (pap)

'outside' (potá)

ma-

'seaside' (poláu)

Figure 2. Movement, distance and direction in Buli deixis

Nim	eta	ca,	ya	i-sispe	i	poláu	nea'
Your	knife	the,	I	1s-stick in the wall	it	on the seaside	close there

"I stuck your knife in the wall over there on the seaside."

In one short sentence the relative positions of speaker and knife as well as the distance between them are situated in relation to the landscape around them. The speaker is inland from the knife, which is some distance away (out of reach) towards the beach. There is no need to point; the location is pin-pointed without gestures. The sentence also presumes that the addressed person (the owner of the knife) occupies a position within the same spatial co-ordinates (in this case "landside" and "seaside") that makes it possible for the owner of the knife to triangulate the position of the knife by knowing his or her own position in relation to the speaker. The owner of the knife knows the knife is located "to the seaside" a short distance from the speaker. Intuitively, the owner of the knife also knows his or her position and distance relative to the speaker. With these two bits of information, the owner will be able to know the position of the knife with relative precision.

Because the relative location of interlocutors and objects referred to (as well as the relative distance and movement, if any, between them) is always implied in speech, language posits space in a profound, ontological sense. Language, by definition, does so within a discourse situation. The ultimate referent is therefore not an isolated subject but, rather, a moving, speaking actor relative to another actor. Since space in this way is posited in dialogue, the ultimate referent of

spatial location is the shared space of the interlocutors: my place in the world is intelligible only in relation to the common space that I share with other people. Within this space, however, my location differs from that of others. Points in the landscape help me situate myself, but they do not do so absolutely, nor are they the ultimate fix points for anchoring myself in the world, for as I move so do my spatial points of reference.[8]

In the introduction to his *Outline of a theory of practice*, Bourdieu (1977:2) makes a distinction (as a metaphor of theoretical objectivism and his own practice theory, respectively) between orientation with the aid of a map and what he calls "practical mastery" of space. While the former type of orientation is based on a Cartesian notion of space with privileged positions and cardinal points, "practical mastery" relies firstly upon "the system of axes linked unalterably to our bodies, and carried about with us wherever we go" (1977). Practical mastery or the ability to know one's way around is achieved by bringing together these bodily defined axes and "the axes of the field of potentialities" (1977). In his interesting article on the role of mental maps in orientation Alfred Gell rejects, wrongly I think, Bourdieu's notion of "practical mastery" as an example of an "ego-centric" notion of space. As an argument for his rejection, Gell asserts that "[w]e are obliged at all times to locate our bodies in relation to external coordinates which are unaffected as we move about" (1985:279). I think it pays to return to Bourdieu's original formulation again to see where Gell's rejection of him lost its bearings. Bourdieu is not dismissing the idea of reference to external criteria in orientation. At least this is what I take his notion of "the axes of the field of potentialities" to be in fact referring to. The interesting point in connection with my presentation of Buli deixis is the difference between Gell's "external coordinates" and Bourdieu's "axes of a field of potentialities". The former implies a static space with a uniform spatial grid, the latter what Barnes (1988) has called a "moving space" where the generation of spatial reference itself is context dependent. It is as axes of a field of potentialities defined by one's place in space that the Buli locative terms as shown in Figure 1 should be seen. In defining one's relation to objects and other people within this field of potentialities, one has to align the field to one's own bodily axes as illustrated in Figure 2. Spatial orientation in Buli is thus neither a Euclidean space of absolute reference points nor an egocentric universe completely independent of traits in physical space. The question is whether these extremes are, in fact, "real" alternatives, or whether they do not each portray their own kind of exoticism. While the latter certainly paints a romantic and orientalist picture when applied to non-Western types of spatial perception, the former exaggerates the rational, Euclidean nature of the everyday practice of space in the "West".[9] Although Buli notions of space are different from those in the "West", we might ourselves not always be as Euclidean as philosophers and anthropologists tend to portray us. Only rarely in everyday life do we rely on the fixed cardinal points of the

compass. Most of the time we orient ourselves by a much more relative, bodily kind of deixis by which we manage to locate ourselves in the world without employing the fixed points of north or south (but see Barnes 1985:210 for an example). The most obvious examples are such deictic words as "here" and "there", "left" and "right". However, for all their obviousness, the role of these and other deictic words in language is not as straightforward or unimportant as one might assume. In fact, deixis plays a crucial role in the linguistic mediation of our selfhood.

Space, Subject, Body

For Emile Benveniste, the French linguist, subjectivity is constituted only in and through language. In language we achieve our subjective sense of self through the act of speaking and this linguistic subjectivity becomes the foundation of subjectivity outside language as well (1966:263). Subjectivity is established by the necessity in every language to identify who speaks, either through a personal pronoun ("I" in English) or through verb modality (1966).[10] The linguistic act of "pointing out" the speaker is so fundamental, argues Benveniste, that a language which does not have the capacity to identify the person speaking cannot be understood. Benveniste's contention is that the speaker comes to think of him or herself as a subject through the linguistic obligation to say "I". However, personal pronouns cannot achieve the task of installing subjectivity on their own. Deictic words that establish the temporal and spatial location of the speaking "I" are indispensable for the task of installing subjectivity in a "here" and "now" (1966:262). Without constant reference, either implicitly or explicitly, to the temporal and spatial location of the "I" in speech, language would be just as unintelligible as it would be without the personal pronoun. At least this is the assertion of the German psychologist and linguist Karl Bühler.[11]

In an utterance the speaker makes, according to Bühler, a threefold reference. Firstly, the speaker posits him- or herself as a speaking individual, designated by the personal pronoun "I". Secondly, the speaker refers to a temporal dimension in the utterance, such as by using verb tenses or employing words like "tomorrow" or "last year". All such temporal references are ultimately anchored in and defined from the "now" of the utterance. Thirdly, the speaker places the utterance in space with deictic words like "this", "there" or "left". Again the reference point of spatial deixis is the place of the utterance, the "here". In Bühler's terminology "origo" is this fixed point in space, time and individuality that the utterance creates by establishing the identity of the speaker ("I"), a position in space ("here"), and a moment in time ("now"). An illustration of Bühler's (1982:13) threefold location is given in Figure 3.
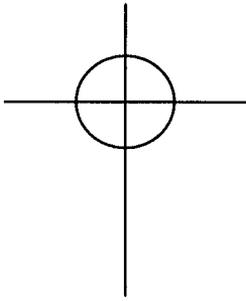
Figure 3. Bühler's deictic "origo"

The central circle representing the origo is the point of conflation of the dimensions of time and space in each individual enunciation. The "I-here-now" of the origo is the individualization in discourse of the temporal, spatial and social dimensions of life that posit the individual and make its speech intelligible by locating its fix-point. In other words, language posits subjectivity which is, in turn, necessarily located in both time and space. It is in this sense of perspectives from an origo that I suggest Figures 1 and 2 should be understood. The circle indicating the limits of the Buli deictic word *tane* in Figure 2 corresponds to the "I", "here", "now" origo in English. *Tane* is interesting in this connection because it has several connected meanings. In addition to meaning "here" (where it also occurs as *mantane*) proper demonstrative, *tane* may also mean "this" and as a temporal demonstrative it may mean "now" (Maan 1940:110). Since *tane* means both "here" and "now", it defines the temporal as well as spatial origo of Buli deixis. The Buli sentence *yai tane*, "I am here-now", would thus encapsulate the origo of Buli utterances in the same way that the implicit reference to "I", "here", "now" does in English. Yet, the obvious difference is that the Buli origo exists within an elaborate deictic matrix where the meaning *tane* is not fully developed without the locatives of "landside", "seaside", "up", "down". In English, on the other hand, the "here" of the origo is merely opposed to a vague "there" outside the domain of the speaking "I". *Polí*, "in a spot over there", may be in vague opposition to the "here" (*tane* or *mantane*) of the speaking subject, but it is also a definite region on the horizon of the subject, the exact location of which rotates and shifts as the subject moves through space. The Buli subject is, in other words, situated in a conceptual matrix of practical space, the specific appearance of which depends on the placement in space of the origo of the speaking subject.[12] In Buli deixis there is thus an emphasis on the relevance of spatial context. In orientation, the "landside" is never an abstract direction in space but always a particular location from a particular place.[13] The origo of the speaking subject is tied to a conventional matrix of space, without privileged nodal points, that nevertheless links all subjects within a common perception of space. In Buli, spatial orientation is the social practice of known space, and deictic orientation is the constituting act of the subject within this practical space. Space is always conceptualized from particular places. These particular places are the origos of speaking subjects, at once determining the exact appearance of space and determined by the conventional relationship between "landward", "seaward", "upwards", "downwards", "to the inside".

Although subjectivity is thus established through language, it does not exist there alone, but is only "real" through its link to bodily existence. By necessity, the "I" always speaks from a "here" and "now", which we all intuitively know "in our bones", as it were, and which we tend to make the implicit "zero point" when we speak of "other" times and places.[14] Speaking of "other" places and times is, one might say, the essential way in which the contours of the "I" are established. The deictic location of the subject in the "here" and "now" necessitates an awareness of the spatial and temporal limits of the speaking "I" as a physical subject. Deixis (and the subjectivity fixed in time and space because of it) relies, in other words, on the ability we all have to feel our body in relation to our surroundings. This body-space interaction Bühler calls *Körpertastbild*, the "representation of a corporeal feeling of the world". The *Körpertastbild* is none other than "the axes we take with us wherever we go" to which Bourdieu referred. Bourdieu's departure point is identical to that of Merleau-Ponty when the latter argues that it is only through the primordial spatiality of our bodies, which is fundamental to our being-in-the-world, that we are able to perceive the world (Merleau-Ponty 1962:206).[15]

Cultural variations in the sense of located subjectivity arise, then, from the different ways in which the embodied awareness of one's place in space is absorbed by the symbolic conventions of spatial orientation: how the bodily subject dissolves into the linguistic conventions of its spatial surroundings. If one accepts this premise, an interpretation of the culturally constituted self can ensue from an analysis of spatial categories with as much justification as from the study of socialization, myth, or ritual. To use the above example again, it is in Buli a concrete spatial object, a body, which occupies a position in relation to the knife, the sea (and, by implication, the other spatial directions) and the knife's owner. A sense of being a subject derives from one's intuitive knowledge of how the borders of one's own bodily existence, defined by the outer limits of the *tane* (here), extend into the wider co-ordinates of the world to all sides. Space in Buli poses a subject of a particular type, namely one connected to the directions of "sea", "land", "up", "down", "inside" and "outside", and in every utterance a spatial distinction to objects and other people is enunciated or at least implied. In locating the knife, the speaker also posits himself within a particular spatial universe where his position is related to, yet distinct from, the position of other interlocutors. My inability to find the fishing hooks was not merely an inadequate understanding of a spatial system but also, more profoundly, a reflection that I was not being a competent Buli subject. In retrospect, my disorientation was comparable to the condition of personal or existential vertigo that Heidegger (1962:233) describes as *Unheimlichkeit*", a concept meaning both "uncanniness" and "not-being-at-home". This feeling of anxious discomfort with one's Being and one's relation to the world arises when the everyday taken-for-granted absorption in the conventions of one's

surroundings suddenly becomes ambiguous. For with the inability to locate objects in the world, the spatial location of one's own existence (the "there" in "Being-there", *Dasein*) is thrown into chaos and one loses one's sense of comfort, of feeling at home. Spatial deixis in Buli provides, I suggest, the taken-for-granted conventions for a secure absorption of the subject in the world. It establishes the "there" of things in the world and, more importantly, the "there" of the subject's own existence. In this sense, I was not just unable to find a particular object, I was also not a securely situated subject in the Buli language universe.[16]

Seeing the World From Buli

Just as deixis is involved in the production of subjectivity, it is in extension also instrumental in the production of what Appadurai calls local subjects, "actors who properly belong to a situated community" (1995:205). Spatial deixis, in this sense, is involved in the production of locality which, following Appadurai, may be defined as a sense of socio-spatial belonging attached to a domain of social immediacy and interaction. Seemingly just a linguistic device for orientation, spatial deixis is in Buli also a technique for the cognitive and moral maintenance of the spatial limits for interaction and cultural identification. To quote Appadurai, the reproduction of such a social spatialization "that is simultaneously practical, valued and taken-for-granted depends on the seamless interaction of localized spaces and times with local subjects possessed of the knowledge to reproduce locality" (1995:207). Spatial deixis guarantees the seamlessness of such interaction, because spatial reference is among the most self-evident of all speech acts, seemingly just a verbal "pointing" to an already existing objective space.

The directionals and locatives of Buli deixis have so far only been described as they operate in day-to-day interaction in the village of Waiflí and its close surroundings. However, deictic words extend into the wider world as well. These extensions end in final points in the social landscape from where movement in that direction is no longer possible. If, for instance, one follows the coast from Waiflí to the northeast, one moves in a "downward" direction (*nap*) until one reaches Cape Lilewi at the northeast tip of the Central Halmaheran peninsula. Rounding this cape along the coast one will begin to move "toward the inside" (*namúl*) until one reaches Kao. All villages north of Kao such as Tobelo and Galela, however, lie "over there", when seen from Waiflí. Cape Lilewi is, in other words, the final extension "in the downward direction", Kao is the final point for movement "towards the inside", while Galela and Tobelo are the farthest points for travel "over there" (see Map 1).

If, instead of leaving Waiflí along the coast, one moves into the forest, it is termed moving "inland" (*laléi*) until a point somewhere in the central mountain range of the peninsula. If one continues beyond this vague point towards the coast on the other side of the peninsula and the villages of Dodaga and Wasilei,

inhabited by a mixed Maba and Tobelo population, one moves "over there" (*lali*). "Landward" is also the direction towards the Maba villages on the coast southwest of Waiflí as far as the small Buli village of Tewil. Beyond Tewil all villages along the coast until Cape Ngolopopo on the southeast peninsula of Halmahera are in the direction "towards the outside" (*natá*). This includes, for instance, the coastal villages inhabited by Bicoli people. All places beyond Cape Ngolopopo, such as Weda, are again toward the "landside".

Two directions still need to be mentioned: the "upward" direction and the "seaward" direction. From Waiflí it is impossible to move in an "upward" direction and remain within the known, proximate world of Buli people. Although one moves "upward" from Cape Lilewi to Buli, the village of Waiflí is itself the endpoint for "upward" movement along the coast. This is said to be related to the proximity of the village to the mountain of Watileo, an important signifier of Buli identity, but no one I talked to could explain this correlation in any detail. "Upward" is, however, also the generic direction of the world at large. All distant places whether America, Ambon, Jakarta, Africa or Japan are in an "upward" direction when seen from Waiflí. In addition, the southern tip of Halmahera including Gane and the islands along the Halmaheran west coast (Bacan, Makian, Kayoa but excluding Ternate and Tidore) are also in an upward direction. Also the islands to the east of Halmahera including Irian Jaya are "upward". While the "upward" direction is generic for all distant places, the "seaward" direction is highly specific. Apart from a few uninhabited islands off the coast of Waiflí, the seaward direction refers only to the islands of Ternate and Tidore, the islands of the formerly dominant sultanates of North Maluku. When viewed from Waiflí, and again taking an ideal centre of the village as my example, the canonical directions on the Buli horizon may be represented as in Figure 4.
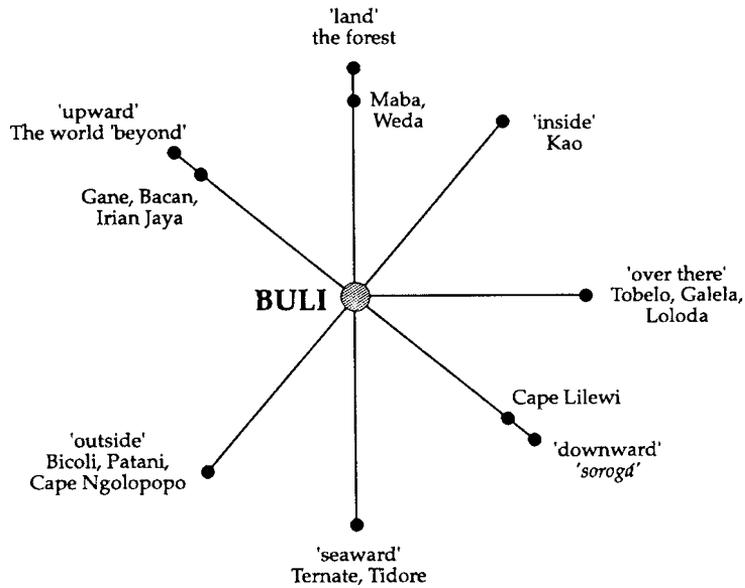
Figure 4. The spatial extensions on the Buli cultural horizon

The logic of these directional applications is partly related to the conventional route one travels to get to each place. Thus to get from Waiflí to Weda one usually goes to Maba by boat and then crosses the central range to the southeast. Logically then, Maba and Weda are points in the same direction associated with the crossing of the peninsula through the forest. The association of the "landward" direction with the forest generally and Maba and Weda specifically is therefore partly encoded in the practice of moving toward these corners of space. Similarly, the fact that the villages of Bicoli and Patani are referred to as "to the outside" is probably related to the raids (known as *hongitochten* in Dutch) on Papuan villages along the coast of what is now Irian Jaya by Central Halmaheran villages during the rule of the Tidore Sultan. For Buli boats, the villages of Bicoli and Patani, each being a local political centre inhabited by a representative (*sangaji*) of the Tidore Sultan, were traditional stopping places on the coast to Cape Ngolopopo. Preferring to travel along the coast rather than on the open sea, the cape was a natural jumping-off point to the island of Gebe for onward travel to the Papuan coast. This route meant that the boats were only rarely out of sight of land on the long journey. Bicoli and Patani were the last villages on Halmahera the crew would see on these symbolically very important and hazardous journeys to the faraway regions of Papua, and this fact may account for part of their association with Cape Ngolopopo "on the outside". But the practicalities of routes travelled and the conventions of a spatial practice associated with certain places only account for part of the logic of these spatial canons. More importantly, the association of certain directionals with particular

places in the social landscape highlights these places as significant points in a moral space.

The Political History of Moral Space

There is a clear distinction between places in the "upward" direction and places indicated by other directionals. The distant world in general, known only hazily from hearsay, lies uniformly in the "upward" direction. A young boy thus once asked me: "Is your town close to Japan or is it still further up?" (*anim pnu ca dahle Jepang lai, fare nais fawé tiná* ?). The upward direction is the region of the brave exploits of the *hongi* raiding expeditions recounted in myths. It is also the region from where strange events and people are telecast on the public television set in the nearby administrative village of Buli Serani every night. This domain is not only "beyond the sea" geographically, it is also politically beyond the realm of the sultanate. From the earliest days of the clove trade the "upward" region was from where increasing numbers of ever more powerful traders arrived at the sultanates by ship, laden with riches beyond the imagination of local Malukans. The traders introduced into the existing network of raids and trade (in which iron implements and slaves circulated) new currencies like Chinese porcelain, brass artefacts and silver coins that Buli people began to obtain on their Papuan raids. Despite this indirect link within an incipient world market, the "upward" region — as defined spatially by the outer limits of sultanate rule — remained the foreign and distant, and this domain of social space was and still is beyond the known world of most Buli.[17]

The "upward" domain is thus both socially and morally distinct from the rest of social space: it is the foreign, the distant, the invitingly prosperous yet treacherous unknown. In order to explain this distinction, I find Alfred Schutz's (1967:xxvii) differentiation between consociates and contemporaries useful. Consociates are those people of whom one has direct, face-to-face experience. Consociates are people with whom one either has or is likely to have direct social contact. They constitute one's "immediate world" (*Mitwelt*). Contemporaries, on the other hand, are strangers of whom one is aware but who inhabit the farther, anonymous regions of the world of which one has only indirect knowledge. With one's contemporaries one has no immediate social contact. The anonymous contemporaries make up one's "surrounding world" (*Umwelt*) which is stratified according to levels of anonymity (Schutz and Luckmann 1974:80) —the farther away the strangers live, the less one knows of them and the less one knows, the greater the social distance. With one's con-"sociates" one shares a locality — a spatially defined feeling of belonging, while with one's con-"temporaries" one shares only the fact that they live simultaneously with oneself. One shares the same social time but contemporaries inhabit a distinct, residual region of social space.

The Bay of Buli is to most people in Waiflí the horizon of their immediate world (*Mitwelt*; see Map 1), since only relatively few have been as far as Tobelo or Ternate. To the villagers of Waiflí, it is really only the neighbouring Buli and Maba villagers in the bay that are their consociates. The multiplicity of spatial directionals between Cape Lilewi and Cape Ngolopopo expresses this familiarity with their immediate world. The fact that other places within the Halmaheran area are still spatially distinguished by varying locatives reflects a fairly intimate cultural knowledge of these areas. Beyond this known and in cultural terms proximate area, a uni-dimensionality dominates. The world of contemporaries is thus spatially divided into two domains; on the one hand the island of Halmahera outside of the Bay of Buli in which a multi-dimensional spatial grid testifies to its relative social proximity and, on the other hand, the world beyond where only one dimension, the "upward" direction, exists. The importance of the Halmaheran area to Buli, attested to by the variety of locatives, is a manifestation of the political and symbolic importance of the reign of the Ternate and Tidore sultanates which tied this area into a spatially complex but symbolically interpretable world.

The unknown nature of the "upward" direction is repeated and its negative moral qualities opposed in the "downward" direction. Nap refers to a "downward" movement both in the normal vertical sense and the horizontal sense of being a particular direction in social space. It is the direction you take when you walk along the coast from Waiflí to Cape Lilewi on the northeastern point of the peninsula some 110 km away. Lilewi is as far "downwards" as it is possible to go from Buli and still remain within social space. However, *sorogá*, the place of the spirits of the dead (*smengit*) is also said to lie "down below". A riddle (*cagulu*) plays on this "downward" location of *sorogá*:

Cagulu!:	*N-celi*	*puis*	*dunia*	*i,*	*n-amtuli mali*	*sorogá*	*i*
Riddle!:	3s-eat	up	world	it,	3s-sleep in	sorogá	it

This is a riddle!: he eats "up" in this world and he sleeps in the land of the dead.

The answer to the riddle is: the mangrove crab (*kakaróu wat*), because the crab is said to hide *down* in the mud of the mangroves at night from where it preys on small fish that it has to come *up* to eat. Playfully, the riddle equates the directional opposition between "up" and "down" to that of "this world" and *sorogá* (the land of the dead). Here then *sorogá* is placed below/down in a vertical sense — in the mud or in the ground. This vertical notion of down in relation to *sorogá* is probably associated with burial, a practice which places the deceased closer to his or her final destination, *sorogá*. *Sorogá*, however, is "downward" both in a vertical and a horizontal sense. In general, graves are thus oriented in the "downward" direction parallel to the coast. One might say that the vertical plane and the horizontal plane of canonical social space merge

in the "downward" direction of *sorogá*. *Sorogá* is both "underground" and "beyond Cape Lilewi", as one can deduce from other burial practices. In pre-Christian times, before plank coffins began to be used, people were buried in canoes whose ends had been cut off and sealed. In the canoe, plates, knives and cloth were arranged with the corpse for travel to *sorogá* and the deceased would clutch a small amount of money for the expenses on the way. The canoe would take the deceased to *sorogá*, placed simultaneously "downward" and "seaward". The only possible exception to a "downward" orientation of the grave is thus a "seaward" orientation. That "down" was somewhere beyond the sea is also evident in the custom that siblings of a newly deceased person would cut down young banana plants and fruit trees from the garden of the deceased and throw them into the stream. The immature plants would drift off (*myaling*) to *sorogá* where they would arrive with fully ripened fruits.[18] *Myaling* ("to drift away") is used as a general metaphor for the disappearance (*amyangis*) of something. To float "downstream" (*yeli* as opposed to *solat*, upstream) corresponds to the seaward direction (*laláu*). In order to reach "down to *sorogá*", the trees must float first "downstream" and "seaward" to a point beyond the sea in the "downward" realm of the dead. To do so the plants must follow the "downward" direction parallel to the coast to Cape Lilewi and then continue this "downward" movement beyond the ordinary borders of social space. *Sorogá* is, in other words, the spiritual extension of the "downward" direction of socio-mythical space on a vertical as well as a horizontal plane. It opens up at the juncture of the "downward" and the "seaward" directions. The mythical "down" of *sorogá*, like the unknown "upward" region of space, lies somewhere beyond the sea. The ocean that bends "upwards" to America also bends "downwards" to *sorogá*.

Many people still think of *sorogá* as the place of the dead, but the progressive conversion of Buli people to Christianity since 1901 introduced a competing notion: dead Christians go to the heaven of the Christian God, a locality for which the Malay near-homonym *surga* is used. In contrast to the "downward" direction of the Buli place of the spirits, however, Christian heaven is situated in an "upward" direction in the sky (*nais langit*). Conversion to Christianity has thus meant a relative transfer of symbolic significance from the "downward" towards the "upward" direction. A parallel displacement towards the "upward" region has happened in the field of political power. Until the first decades of the twentieth century, the two sultanates, Ternate and Tidore, located "on the seaside", were the ruling political sites of North Maluku. Although their actual power was ephemeral and had been constructed as political dominance only as a result of centuries of colonial indirect rule, the sultanates held great symbolic significance for people in the Halmaheran peripheries, a significance they retained even after their formal abolition in 1912. However, with the advent of World War 2, Indonesian Independence and the consistently centralist policies of the

New Order government since 1967, Buli people have increasingly been made aware that the sultanates have vanished and with them the political significance of the "seaside". Instead, political power is now wielded from the "upward" places of Ambon and Jakarta. Ironically then, Christian conversion over the last ninety years and the late colonial and post-Independence period have signified a symmetrical spatial shift. With Christianity and national administrative centralization, political and divine significance has shifted outside the known, proximate and multi-dimensional world of North Maluku to the unknown, unidimensional domain "up there". The spatio-symbolic world of Halmahera depicted in Figure 4 has thus been increasingly emptied of significance as the mythical and political content of the "downward" and "seaward" directions has been watered down and shifted to the "upward" region outside the Halmaheran realm.

However, as was the case with the Christian displacement, the shift of power to the "upward" region that has accompanied political modernization and national independence is neither completely successful nor unequivocal. Although Tidore has lost much of its former significance, Ternate remains the economic centre of North Maluku, and it is through the town of Ternate that cash crops leave the area and consumer goods arrive. As was the case during sultanate rule, it is today still the "seaside" domain that mediates between Buli and the outside (or, to be precise "upward") world. Politically, the Indonesian nation-state has derived much ideological benefit from portraying the post-Independence administration in North Maluku as a continuation of sultanate rule. Thus, the administrative borders of the two present-day regencies (*kabupaten*) in Halmahera largely follow the former lines of allegiance to the two sultanates of Ternate and Tidore, and it is often stated that the regent (*bupati*) has merely replaced the sultan. The reestablishment of these administrative borders was part and parcel of the attempt to use the sultanates, abolished by the Dutch in 1912, as political legitimization for the Indonesian claim to Dutch New Guinea (Irian Jaya).[19] In 1956 at the height of the Indonesian campaign, Tidore was made the capital of Central Halmahera and the still Dutch-controlled New Guinea. Tidore also functioned as headquarters for the military part of the campaign. The choice of Tidore was politically significant, for the Indonesian claim to Dutch New Guinea rested in the main on the political construction, created and exploited over centuries by the Dutch, that the Sultanate of Tidore through the mediation of the tribute raids that ensued from Central Halmahera had had traditional sovereignty over large parts of Papua. After the Indonesian struggle for political control over Dutch New Guinea had succeeded, Central Halmahera including Buli was made an administrative area in 1967 in a move that effectively recreated the spatial extensions of the Tidore sultanate. Central Halmahera was eventually recognized as a formal regency (a sub-provincial district) in 1990 as part of economic plans to promote and facilitate the exploitation of natural resources (timber and

minerals, in particular) in the area. The re-establishment was, in addition to being politically successful and economically beneficial to the provincial government, also ideologically effective. Locally in Central Halmahera, the symbolic legitimacy of this political reestablishment of the sultanate borders by far overshadows any critique of the detrimental effects of logging and mining in the area.

Tradition, Modernity and Spatial Involutions

According to Buli mythology, the power struggles between the sultanates were fought in the Bay of Buli between the two guardians and warriors of Ternate and Tidore: Tobelo and Buli, respectively. The Tobelo population in the area were traditionally, like Buli people themselves, nomads and some Tobelo still retain this mode of existence despite intense pressures from logging and government settlement programmes. These nomads, referred to as *Kapat* or *Gibiyaban* in Buli and known to the outside world by the derogatory appellation "*Tugutil*", are still feared by Buli people for their alleged proclivity to kidnap women and kill men who venture into the forest. Along with dangerous forest spirits the Tobelo nomads make the forest and the "landside" in general a "space of danger". The traditional enmity between Tobelo and Buli is therefore spatially expressed as an opposition between the coast occupied by Buli and the forest (or land) occupied by Tobelo people. The coastal mode of life of Buli people signifies, in turn, a mediating position between the Tobelo warriors of the Ternatan sultanate, on the one hand, and the Tidore sultanate in need of protection, on the other. The "seaside" is, as we saw, the direction of the sultanates of Ternate and Tidore. The exclusive use of a specified spatial direction clearly reflects the symbolic importance of these two sultanates for Buli villagers. The fact that the traditional warriors of the Sultan of Ternate and the enemies of the Buli, the Tobelo forest-dwellers, are associated with the "landside" derives its valency from the opposition to the Sultan of Tidore "on the seaside". Tobelo warriors of the Ternatan Sultanate associated with the dangerous landside are in other words opposed to the Sultan of Tidore, associated with the safe "seaside".[20] The most important axis in the Buli spatial conception of the world (landside-seaside) is thus used to express what is the essential feature of their cultural identity: their role as bellicose guardians of the "seaward" Tidore Sultanate against the treacherous Tobelo nomads on the "landside". Moral space is in this way simultaneously the inscription of a particular political history and the manifestation of a cultural self-identity.

While the symbolism of the land-sea axis expresses an ideal interpretation of the traditional place of Buli society in the world, the landside also contains within it contradictions that mirror the ambiguous relation of Halmaheran societies to modernity in general and the West in particular. Just as the spatial shifts affecting the "downward" and "seaward" directions speak to changes

accompanying Christianity, colonialism and Indonesian state centralization, a symbolic linkage between the "landward" and "upward" directions form an incipient interpretation of modernity. Deep inside in the forest, days of hard travel beyond the "*Tugutil*", an illusory people known as Yawas or more commonly by the North Moluccan Malay term Biri-biri is rumoured to exist.[21] Biri-biri are mythical white descendants of the Portuguese driven out of North Maluku by the Dutch during their struggle for control of the clove trade in the seventeenth century. They retreated, so the story goes, into the forest where they regressed into an animal state, growing fur and losing the ability to speak and make fire. Now they roam the forest killing wild pig and deer and consume their prey raw. Although they are not an immediate threat — they live far inland and generally avoid outsiders — they belong to the unsettling array of beings associated with the forest and the landside. These descendants of former Western colonialists constitute a curious spatial opposition to the "upward" region in terms of primitivity and modernity.

Buli people are well aware that most important decisions affecting them are decided by the government "up" in Jakarta and Ambon. Little has, in other words, changed from the time of direct colonial rule when the Dutch "up" in Batavia (and ultimately "up" in Holland) ruled the island. "Up" is, however, not just the site of political power, it is also the region from where the Indonesian government promises great things will come. The ideological emphasis on the benefits of development and modernity thus has a spatial location, seen from a Buli perspective. Modernity is the movement of things from "up" there to "down" here. The "upward" region is the advanced, modern domain of high technology, cars and riches and at the village level these objects are seen as the quintessential trappings of Western society. Whereas Westerners (*Orang Barat*) "up there" represent the goal of economic ambitions, one particular type of degenerate Westerner also inhabits the interior of the landside. These animal-like creatures belong to the proto-typical mythic time known as "the Portuguese era" (*jaman Portugis*). They are a contemporary manifestation of the mythic past, dwelling in the recesses of the space of danger that the "landside" represents. White people are, in other words, located in two dramatically different domains, each domain associated with a particular slice of time. They are found on the dangerous "landside", the only remaining creatures of a "long-ago". As living descendants of a colonial history, Biri-biri represent the ultimately "primitive" and "backward" (labels often tagged on Halmaheran villagers by more "aware" government officials). These Western descendants are both in evolutionary and historical terms at the point of origin. But Westerners also inhabit the unknown "upward" region of social space, a region that represents an equally mythic political promise of a millenarian economic future.[22] The political millenarianism surrounding "development" in political discourse is given further direction by Halmaherans, many of whom witnessed the affluence and lavishness of American

and Australian soldiers at the end of World War 2. The development programmes of the government seem naturally to promise the West as the goal of economic progress. The relation to the West is, in this sense, truly mythic: Westerners are in spatiotemporal terms both the point of origin and the intended destination.

To sum up, one could say that space in Buli conceals simultaneously a mythological reality and a political history. The immense changes which Buli, along with other North Malukans, have experienced since the arrival of the first Europeans in 1511 have all found a place within the same spatial arrangement. The spatial universe of Buli accommodates a multitude of effects of these political changes in the main spatial realms of the "seaside" and the "landside", the "above" and the "below", the "inside" and the "outside". Space is inherently heterogeneous, and distinctions in space become meaningful only in relation to their mythical content and the values associated with the various spatial regions. Michel Foucault (1986) has coined the term "heterotopia" to describe spaces within the social world that are set apart and are made to function as fields for a particular kind of power relations that also penetrate the space not marked as different.[23] In Buli the canonical fixed extensions of space are heterotopic in this sense. The sultanates "on the seaside", *sorogá* "downward", Tobelo nomads "landward", the (modern) world "upward" and Patani "out there": each represents a specific difference in relation to Buli society. Each of the heterotopias is a complete place unto itself, located in a specific region of space to which it gives meaning. The heterotopias are not free-floating signifiers, however. They orient themselves towards and draw their significance from their relation to specific aspects of Buli life. Waiflí is itself a heterotopia of sorts, because the village is the highest (most "upward") place within the proximate, known world of Halmahera. It is, in a sense, the logical, if not actual, jumping-off point for travel into the unknown "upward" region.

The relations between the heterotopias and Buli are expressions of everchanging and sometimes contradictory power relations. Each heterotopia thus has a history; each responds to specific changes that have taken place in Buli, the topia to which they all constantly re-orient themselves. Space, in this sense, is not another dimension from, or at an angle to, time. In space, rather, time and social change are organized into meaningful difference. Simultaneously expressing change and condensation, space, at this level, presupposes and takes for granted cultural identity. Spatial heterotopias set up the contours of a "cultural identity" by establishing Buli as the conventional point of reference for a spatial view of the world: "for all us who speak Buli the world extends like this!" Through the symbolic installation and moral maintenance of heterotopias, spatial deixis establishes "locality" in Appadurai's sense of the word as a "structured sense of belonging". This spatial view of the world is itself a condensation of the changing heterotopias of the past. Inevitably out of sync, it is from this condensation, a spatial type of "mythic reality" (Sahlins 1985),

that the present is engaged. Ironically, it is by virtue of being out of sync that the power structures of the present are made to seem legitimate and tolerable. The regent appointed by the central government is invested with the same kind of authority that the Dutch-installed sultan had in the past. At the same time, the spatial shifts of political power have highlighted how North Maluku, in former times both prominent in the European imagination as the Spice Islands and crucial as an economic centre in the Malay archipelago, has been increasingly marginalized. Now power has shifted irreversibly to the unknown "upward" realm of space as Buli people struggle to find new means of differentiating and understanding the peoples of this residual realm of space.

Conclusion

The omnipresence of spatial deixis in language, a common trait of most Austronesian languages, functions in two, seemingly contradictory, ways in Buli. At the level of practical orientation, spatial references are relative to the individual speaker. At this level, people take their co-ordinates with them wherever they go within a differentiated matrix of space. It is the differentials of location between speaker and listener, conceptualized within the shared space of the dialogue situation, that make orientation possible. In the heterotopias of the Buli world we see, however, the construction of a set of canonical, fixed topoi: Tidore is "to the seaside" of Buli and America is "upwards". Rather than contradicting the relative space of practical orientation, the conventionality of these heterotopias is the effect of a different dialogue situation. Instead of differing in their spatial location, as the speaker and the owner of the knife did, two Buli interlocutors speaking about Tidore share the same location in a spatially differentiated, conventional layout of the world beyond Buli. In the spatial reference of this dialogue situation, the common location implies a shared spatio-cultural identity. The same spatio-grammatical vocabulary that serves to orient Buli owners and borrowers of knives in this way functions to assert their common cultural identity and history when the topic of conversation is Tidore or America. The two "levels" that I initially distinguished are therefore not opposed: in referring to space in daily discourse, "locative" subjectivity and a cultural "locality" are established by the same linguistic processes. Locative subjectivity and cultural locality are analogous aspects of the same spatial representations of the world, each giving meaning and value to the other.

To put it plainly, language needs to refer to space constantly, and this constant reference creates the contours of two very different but connected entities: "selfhood" and "cultural identity". In Buli deixis one finds a "spatial poesis" in the original sense of the Greek word *poiein*, "to create or generate". In making use of space and in talking about it, Buli people generate a spatial view of the world that defines its moral, social and practical potential. Whether necessary

or accidental, notions of both subjective and cultural identity are therefore constructed, at least in part, through the reference to space in language.

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Notes

[1] I have benefited greatly from readings of this paper in its various stages of completion by Professor James Fox, Dr Michael Young, Dr Penny Graham, Vibeke Asmussen, Andreas Roepsdorff and Dr Poul Pedersen. The ethnographic material was collected during fieldwork in Indonesia between 1991 and 1993. I would like to thank the Indonesian Academy of Sciences (LIPI) and Pattimura University in Ambon for their co-operation and kind assistance during this period.

[2] The usual definitions of deixis underscore this relation between speaker, enunciation and place. Julia Kristeva, for instance, defines deixis as "all the words that situate and indicate the act of enunciation and are intelligible only in relation to it" (1989:334).

[3] The contextual quality to deictic words entails only apparent contradiction. As Barnes rightly points out "[t]heir application in an immediate context may seem inconsistent with their use in another, but this is because reference points change" (1974:83). The deictic words that indicate spatial direction are therefore "truly abstract terms for ordering space" (1974).

[4] The literature on orientational systems is enormous and the subject of folk orientation has been of seemingly inexhaustible interest to academics since Haugen's founding article on Icelandic orientation (1957). A preliminary and by no means representative list of references, including both general theoretical works and analyses of local Austronesian systems, might contain: Covarrubias (1937); Jensen (1947-48); Gladwin (1970); Fox (1973); Downs and Stea (1977); Hobart (1978); Pick and Acredolo (1983).

[5] For the sake of simplicity I use the locative form here, indicated by the prefix *po-*. As we shall see later, different types of directionals are formed from the root of the locative word by adding other prefixes.

[6] For instance, the name of the village Waiflí means "Place (-*lí*) of the Sagobark Pail (*waif*)".

[7] In the Buli language word stress is usually but not always on the penultimate syllable. I use the acute accent to indicate stress if it is not on the penultimate syllable. Thus, *malí* (with stress on the last syllable) is distinct from *mali* (where the word stress is on the usual penultimate syllable). Whereas *malí* is a directional term with the meaning "towards here", *mali* is a preposition, meaning "in", "on", "at", "from". *Mali Tobelo* for instance means "in or from Tobelo". Accordingly, the sentence *mali au malí* means "from you towards here/to me".

[8] The cognitive implications of this type of orientation have been the subject of some debate (Barnes 1988, 1993; Gell 1985, 1986; Hallpike 1979, 1986). The debate still stands, somewhat acrimoniously (see Hallpike 1986), between whether "primitive" peoples have totally different, less abstract, ways of perceiving space (Hallpike 1979) or whether we are all — "primitive" and "civilized" — in fact Cartesian and Euclidean in regard to space (Gell 1985). In my view the problem with this debate is that it regards cultural differences of spatial articulation as fundamentally cognitive rather than based on differences in discursive and social practice (see also Barnes 1988:106). Cognitive exoticism or universal "non-token-indexical" Cartesianism seems to me a poor and unnecessary choice.

[9] See also Barnes (1988) for a critique of the academic tendency to invoke the figure of the rational Westerner when describing cultural differences in spatial orientation.

[10] Benveniste writes: subjectivity is

the emergence into being of a fundamental property of language. "Ego" is he who *says* "ego". Here we find the basis of the "subjectivity" which is determined by the linguistic status of the "person" …[l]anguage is only possible because each speaker sets himself up as a "subject" by referring to himself as "I" when he speaks (1966:260, my translation, emphasis in original).

[11] The founding text by Karl Bühler on the subject of deixis is the second part of his general book on language theory from 1934. Sections from this second part of the book were translated and reprinted in 1982 under the title *The deictic field of language and deictic words*. The text probably remains the most important on the subject of deixis.

[12] Although the origo or zero-point of deixis is ultimately ego-centric in Buli as in any language (Lyons 1982:121), the Buli conception of space is not ego-centric. It is indeed one's position in space that determines how one's world pans out from the origo, but the spatial directions in a given place are always the same and remain the same whether one is there or not.

[13] This conception of space is topomnestic in Bühler's sense (1982:27), a type of deictic orientation in which the emphasis is on the necessity of orienting oneself within a shared space. Of course, use of the compass also depends on topomnestic space, in the sense that everybody needs to believe in the authority of the shared spatial conditions set up by the compass and be able to project themselves into its privileged viewpoints. The difference is, of course, that Buli language in daily social practice does not allow any privileged sites or viewpoints. It insists rather on the relevance of every given site of enunciation. The listener needs to be able to project him- or herself into the position of the speaker in every speech situation that takes on its deictic character (its actual spatial layout) as a result of its present location in space, not because of such set parameters as cardinal points.

[14] In every act of speaking, deixis demands, as Fillmore puts it, that the speaker "implicitly takes his or her own body, or that of his interlocutor as a 'deictic centre'" (1982:37).

[15] The universal bodily basis for the perceptions of space is what prevents a radically relativist position on the question of subjectivity. Although subjectivity is related to language and deictic perceptions of space, linguistic representations of space are grounded in embodied spatial perception. The deictic

systems of other languages are not as foreign to ours as they may seem at first blush because of this corporeal experience of space (Bühler 1982:26).

[16] I do not wish to claim that Buli locative subjectivity is ontologically singular. Different as the spatial dimensions of this universe may seem from a Western point of view, they are by no means unique among Austronesian societies. In fact, there is among Austronesian societies a structural similarity in their spatial systems that transcends the otherwise great cultural and social variation among these societies (Barnes 1988:113). Therefore, it is not surprising that Buli people easily translate local spatial terms into North Moluccan Malay. North Moluccan Malay is a regional dialect with long historical roots in Maluku which is closely related to the standard Indonesian language. The North Moluccan Malay spatial equivalents are used on a daily basis in communication with non-Buli speakers in neighbouring villages. Most of these non-Buli speakers are people from other parts of Halmahera with similar systems of spatial orientation. The increased incidence of bilingualism and language shift associated with the introduction of national education and electronic media therefore do not seriously affect the outlines of the spatial schema.

[17] One interesting exception to this equation of the "upward" direction with territories outside sultanate rule is the southern tip of Halmahera and the islands of Kayoa and Bacan, all of which are designated as "upwards". These areas were under the rule of the Sultan of Ternate. This also includes Bacan which was originally a separate sultanate but which effectively came under Ternatean rule in the sixteenth century. Buli people would have had little knowledge of and contact with these areas, not only because of political enmity but also due to the logistics of sea travel around Halmahera. The combination of favourable winds and higher population density has favoured travel north around the island. The relative Buli ignorance of these "upward" southern areas of Halmahera still holds today. Contact with the economic centre of Ternate is almost exclusively mediated north around Halmahera through the fast-growing town of Tobelo, rather than around the southern tip of the island. The combined social distance in terms of economy, cultural knowledge and political allegiance probably accounts for the allocation of these South Halmaheran areas as "upward" along with other distant places.

[18] One friend and informant claimed that this reversal from old to new in *sorogá* occurs with all things that we humans throw away or lose. As objects decompose or disappear from our world, they appear as new in *sorogá*. The destruction of the valuables of a deceased was also practised in pre-Christian times among the Tobelo of North Halmahera, although the notion of renewal has not been mentioned as part of the motivation for doing so (Hueting 1922:142; Platenkamp 1988:154).

[19] After Indonesia formally gained independence in 1949, Holland maintained control over the western half of Papua, known as West Papua to the supporters of OPM, the still active resistance movement against Indonesian rule. In the mid-1950s Sukarno intensified his claims to the area as part of his expansionist campaign for an Indonesia "from Sabang to Merauke". Military clashes ensued for several years until Holland in response to US-led pressure through the UN Security Council agreed to give up the area. A care-taking force from the UN temporarily took over control before handing it over to the Indonesian army in May 1963. According to the agreement of transferral, free elections by 1969 were to determine whether West Papua was to become independent or remain as part of Indonesia. In 1969, in an orchestrated election in which only 1025 selected "representatives" of the population participated, it was decided to remain as part of Indonesia.

[20] In this context it is unimportant that Ternate is also located "on the seaside", for in Buli the only manifestation of this sultanate was the attacks on hunters and travellers by its forest-dwelling Tobelo warriors.

[21] This rumour is not only circulating amongst villagers. Based upon data from the provincial Department of Social Affairs, the 1987 regency census estimated the size of the Biri-biri population to be an outrageous 2,116! At the beginning of my fieldwork the regency head, Dr Bahar Andili, urged me to investigate this population, because of the handful of Western anthropologists who had conducted fieldwork on Halmahera during the 1980s, nobody had obtained satisfactory information on this group.

[22] The millenarian character of the political promise for a better economic future ensues from the mantra-like ring to the word "development" (*pembangunan*) in political discourse in Indonesia. With certain political reservations, the technocrats in the Indonesian government have embraced a conception of economic progress that largely and implicitly has the West as a model. Therefore the millenarian character of the relation to the "West" arises not from any millennial expectations peculiar to Buli or Halmahera but from an attitude of the New Order government that might well be termed a "third-world cult of the modern" (Taussig 1987:278).

[23] Foucault's examples of heterotopias include prisons, hospitals, cemeteries, theatres, museums, brothels and colonies. In Western society they are all ''other spaces'' for particular kinds of disciplinary power that contain the internal ''other'' within a wider space of normalcy.