



<http://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz>

ResearchSpace@Auckland

Copyright Statement

The digital copy of this thesis is protected by the Copyright Act 1994 (New Zealand).

This thesis may be consulted by you, provided you comply with the provisions of the Act and the following conditions of use:

- Any use you make of these documents or images must be for research or private study purposes only, and you may not make them available to any other person.
- Authors control the copyright of their thesis. You will recognise the author's right to be identified as the author of this thesis, and due acknowledgement will be made to the author where appropriate.
- You will obtain the author's permission before publishing any material from their thesis.

To request permissions please use the Feedback form on our webpage.

<http://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/feedback>

General copyright and disclaimer

In addition to the above conditions, authors give their consent for the digital copy of their work to be used subject to the conditions specified on the Library Thesis Consent Form.

RELATIONSHIPS OF LOVE AND POWER
IN THE HAHALIS WELFARE SOCIETY
OF BUKA

Eleanor Catherine Rimoldi

A thesis submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology,
University of Auckland, 1982.

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the role and status of women in the Hahalis Welfare Society, a populist social movement on Buka, North Solomons Province, Papua New Guinea. The author spent fifteen months in the field, spread over three field-trips between 1975 and 1978.

Welfare Society members in Hahalis Village shared with the author the work of their hands so that she could appreciate the significance of the ground, and the work of their hearts so that she could feel the compassion, love, and positive exuberance that informed their thinking - thus enabling her to understand in some measure the analysis, critique and transformation of Buka culture and society in which they were engaged.

The first chapter of this thesis elaborates the relationship between Hahalis Welfare Society and its historical, and contemporary social/political context on Buka. There is also a discussion of the author's approach to fieldwork on Buka - both in terms of theory and practice.

The second chapter explores the nature of traditional power and leadership which remain central to the philosophy and organization of the Welfare Society. The special importance of matrilineal principles and the brother-sister relationship are explored, as are forms of alliance between lineages and moieties. The qualities of balance and restraint inherent in

the Buka concepts of power and leadership are shown to be under some strain in the contemporary political and economic context.

Chapter Three discusses ritual occasions in relation to the issues raised in the preceding chapter. Ritual is seen as a creative re-thinking of the nature of power, and personal and social relationships - a complex weave that reflects the past, the present, and possible future designs.

Chapter Four centres more directly on the role of women in Welfare Society and their past and present active participation in the development of its philosophy and its practice.

The final chapter explores three issues drawn from the author's fieldwork experience which are discussed in terms of their relevance to Hahalis Welfare Society, and the development of anthropological practice. These issues centre on the subjective stance in anthropological fieldwork, the debate over fertility and family planning, and the problematic interpretation of sacrifice.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was funded by the University Grants Committee and I would like to express my sincere appreciation for their generous support. Their financial backing, along with the steady encouragement and assistance of Professor Ralph Bulmer and the Department of Anthropology at Auckland University, provided the necessary conditions for the successful completion of this work.

There are times when an anthropologist has very special need of a hospitable place - when travel arrangements fail, when illness strikes, or simply for the pleasure of good company. I am indebted to Leo Hannett, Moses and Marilyn Havini, Dr Gordon Smith, Mrs Gladys Rimoldi, June and Ray Thomsett, and Peter Krinks for creating convivial "space" at times when it was most needed.

My supervisors Dr Nancy Bowers and Dr Anne Salmond were of great assistance in bringing order and clarity into this text. Dr Bowers' friendship and support have been invaluable both in and out of the field. It would not be possible here to number the many gestures of generosity for which I am indebted to her.

There are other colleagues and fellow students who have also helped me to develop an intellectual position in relation to my research - most especially Wendy Pond, Garth Rogers, Keith Barber, Michael and Pauline Jackson.

My husband, Max Rimoldi, produced the original study of Hahalis Welfare Society in his 1971 doctoral thesis. This present work would never have been possible without his help and encouragement. The depth of his understanding of the philosophy and practice of Hahalis Welfare Society, and of Buka traditions and social order provide me with the measure of my own work there. I greatly appreciate my advantage in serving an apprenticeship in the field with him.

Although I acknowledge throughout this text the many Hahalis Welfare Society members who were my teachers and guides I hesitate to single them out here again. It is their constant affirmation that they are "one people, united" and although John Teosin, President of the Welfare Society is one to whom I owe a great deal - I am reminded of the strong feeling with which Welfare Society members proclaim - "We are all John". I can only hope that this present work reflects with a minimum of distortion what they have so generously and painstakingly taught me of their lives. Quite apart from their invaluable help as teachers, I must make special mention of Elizabeth, Tehoi, Teresa and Hetsi. Without their loving friendship no amount of instruction would have led to understanding.

I am grateful to Sue Stenner for so efficiently typing this manuscript, to Cyril Schollum and Val Bailey for photographic work, to Sid Keesing for help with tape recordings, and to Caroline Phillips for drawing the map and diagrams.

my mother's sisters - Estelle and Margaret' Miller - have never failed to extend to me their love, support, and encouragement - not least in the final stages of this work.

Finally, a very special thank you must be extended to Simone and Dylan Horrocks, and to Brian Rimoldi who have shared, each in their own way, in this project ... and to Alexander who arrived in time to celebrate its conclusion.

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
ABSTRACT	ii.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv.
CHAPTER I. THE SUBJECT, METHOD AND SCOPE OF THIS INQUIRY	1.
A selective socio-political background.	7.
Cash crops.	20.
Aspects of social organization on Buka.	23.
Method and Approach.	38.
Fieldwork.	60.
CHAPTER II. THE POWER OF <u>TSUNONO</u>	66.
Inheritance and Affirmation of the power of <u>tsunono</u> .	67.
Brothers and sisters.	67.
Cross-cousins.	76.
Fathers and sons.	81.
Traditional aspects of status and alliance in the origin and organization of the Hahalis Welfare Society.	82.
<u>Tsunono</u> - the power and the person.	99.
CHAPTER III. RITUAL AND THE NEGOTIATION OF POWER	111.
<u>Hats</u> .	114.
<u>Menmenaka</u> .	122.
The power of <u>tsunono</u> and rituals associated with menshouses.	129.
The work of the <u>patu</u> .	145.
The problem of poison.	147.
An interpretation of marriage ritual in relation to the power of <u>tsunono</u> .	167.
The <u>popolasa</u> .	169.
The <u>sahana</u> .	186.

	<u>Page</u>
CHAPTER IV.	
POWER AND THE PERSONAL - THE	
NEGOTIATION OF RELATIONSHIPS	203.
The power of <u>tsunono</u> and modern politics.	204.
The <u>tsunono</u> , sexuality and marriage.	216.
Kiau - mentor to John Teosin.	227.
Love and power.	250.
<u>Hatoatong</u> - the resolution of	
contradictions.	264.
The children.	273.
Work.	294.
Jealousy.	306.
CHAPTER V.	
CONCLUSIONS	316.
Subjectivity and individualism.	317.
Population and family planning.	324.
Sacrifice - life and death.	338.
APPENDIX:	
CENSUS AND SURVEY DATA FROM HUTJENA	
PATROL REPORT - 1972/73 BUKA NORTH	
EAST COAST CENSUS DIVISION	352.
BIBLIOGRAPHY	358.
GLOSSARY OF HALIA AND MELANESIAN PIDGIN TERMS	360.
PHOTOGRAPHS	370.

LIST OF MAPS

	<u>Page</u>
I Buka and Selau.	x.
II Hahalis and Environs	following 65.

LIST OF FIGURES

1. John Teosin's matrilineal links to ancestress, Buhin Raku.	following 87.
2. Genealogical links between significant women in this thesis.	following 202.

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Expressions of grief as the women sing and wail at the <u>teitahol's</u> wedding.	370.
2. The <u>teitahol</u> is carried on a platform - her <u>peits</u> sits in front, the child who is "next-in-line" sits at the back.	371.
3. The <u>teitahol's</u> kinsmen confront the groom's kinsmen who offer bride payment of traditional currency hung from a fishing pole.	371.
4. A <u>hats</u> , food sacrifice. The <u>tsunono</u> waits for the flames to rise before placing the basket of food on the fire.	372.
5. The headmen share a feast to celebrate John Teosin's Independence Day Medal.	372.

Map I BUKA AND SELAU

- ♂ MISSION STATION
- ALIENATED LAND
- ||||| LAND OVER 300 FT
- 1 MILE
- WELFARE VILLAGES UNDERLINED
- 1971

