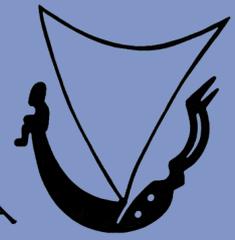


ESFO 2010

EXCHANGING KNOWLEDGE IN OCEANIA



5TH - 8TH JULY
UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS



CENTRE FOR
PACIFIC
STUDIES

EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR OCEANISTS, 8TH CONFERENCE ST ANDREWS, SCOTLAND, 5-8TH JULY 2010

Call for Papers

Paper proposals are now invited for the Working Sessions described below, each of which has space for ten participants. Delegates should contact the relevant Working Session organizers, with their paper proposal including name, affiliation and an abstract of up to 250 words (all in rich text format). Delegates should plan for presentations of up to twenty minutes long, leaving ten minutes for discussion.

Delegates will be able to register, book accommodation, meals and events etc and make payments through the conference website on-line shop. Delegates are reminded that registration and the acceptance of a paper are separate matters.

Deadline for submission: 14th December 2009.

Conference Package

The University of St Andrews operates a 3-Star Hotel during the vacations, and ample accommodation in en suite double rooms has been block booked for conference delegates, and negotiated at a favourable rate. An all-inclusive conference package will be available at £90 per person per day including bed, breakfast, optional dinner and a daily delegate rate element covering refreshments, lunch and a contribution to room and equipment hire.

The British Open golf tournament is due to take place immediately following the ESfO 2010 conference, and preparations will be in full swing and the town full with visitors. Delegates are advised that any remaining alternative accommodation vacancies will already be at a premium.

Conference Fee

As usual, a conference fee is also payable as a contribution towards the organizational costs: early-registration rates of £125 (Full) and £70 (Reduced), will rise to £150 and £80, respectively, at the end of January 2010.

Conference Website & Registration

See <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/esfo2010>

Enquiries:

esfo2010@st-andrews.ac.uk

Conference Theme: Exchanging Knowledge in Oceania

At the end of the 7th ESfO conference, Verona 2008, a round-table of Pacific Islands academics forcefully urged their colleagues to take seriously the consequences of the theme '*putting people first*': they wanted academics to acknowledge the obligations activated by their relations in Oceania, and to recognize the responsibilities to Oceanic peoples, to the Academy and to Civil Society that come with the exchange of expert knowledge. Simply put, knowledge transfers work both ways, and *they wanted academics to act*.

Academics face similar calls from Governments, Research Councils, Industry and Policy-Makers to demonstrate explicitly the usefulness of their expert knowledge, and increasingly, 'Knowledge Transfer' or 'Knowledge Exchange' activities, such as user relevance and public engagement, are key conditions of research funding. Demand for exchanging knowledge into useful activities from all sides entails new conceptual frames and working relations that derive their force from different rationales. Consequently, the exchange value of academic knowledge is becoming determined by the use value others see in it. These moves risk instrumentalizing knowledge and envision re-making anthropology as a science of prescription, rather than a technique of description that acts through re-writing concepts.

Clearly, the moment creates an opportunity for new kinds of social relations in Oceania for the twenty-first century. But these various calls to act will involve facing up to serious questions in re-imagining the continuities of our own academic traditions, and of our relations in Oceania. Can we imagine new collaborative forms of academic practice? How might we best re-describe anthropological methods, relations and knowledge to respond to the aspirations of the 'knowledge transfer' agenda? Whether from a position inside or outside a University, what forms of academic practices, relations, ethics and roles are emerging in contemporary Oceania?

Perhaps we might look for answers by addressing a contemporary dilemma that Oceanic peoples and Oceanist academics share: How to re-describe and transfer knowledge and so make their cultural resources useful, effective and resilient in the contemporary world? We might begin by looking at the kinds of 'knowledge' at stake.

Questions arise for peoples in the region over the paths to take in creating social forms relevant to current contexts. Development ambitions and legal terminologies are shaping and eliciting new forms of indigenous social life—through which people also continue to act out their own social analyses of these encounters. What kinds of cultural connections are being made by Oceanic peoples growing up in such a 'post-tradition' epoch? What transfers, transformations and appropriations are people making between old and new sources of cultural knowledge?

Questions also arise for academics who have bodies of traditional cultural resources of their own to deal with. What uses are perceived for detailed literatures when research subjects appear increasingly to share fewer continuities with those peoples, practices or places? What kinds of connections between contemporary theories of social life and the rich ethnographic record are anthropologists claiming?

Knowledge exchange in Oceania has always involved two-way traffic. In asking about the emergent properties of reciprocity, responsibility and obligation constituted in academic research relations with Oceanic peoples, what leads and lessons can we draw from the solutions that Oceanic peoples are fashioning for themselves out of this contemporary dilemma? Equally, what roles and capacities are Oceanic peoples fashioning for academics who are interested in the region?

ESfO conferences are renowned for gathering together academics based in different regions of the world: *Exchanging Knowledge in Oceania* aims to put this gathering of inter-personal and conceptual relations to work in examining what kinds of knowledge transfers between bodies of knowledge are currently going on in Oceania, and what kinds of emergent relations are being formed.

List of Working Sessions

Full and further details below, and at www.st-andrews.ac.uk/esfo2010

WS6-1 Exchanging knowledge ON Oceania: archives, libraries and digital resources

Arlette APKARIAN (CREDO) & Judith HANNOUN (CREDO, MAP)

Contact: documentation@pacific-credo.fr

WS6-2 The Pacific Islands and Asia: New Knowledge Encounters for the 21st Century

Niko BESNIER (Amsterdam)

Contact: n.besnier@uva.nl

WS6-3 Public and Private Engagements: Anthropology Beyond the Sacred Grove

Colin FILER, David MARTIN, James WEINER (ANU)

Contact: James.Weiner@anu.edu.au

WS6-4 Pacific Anglonesia / Franconesia

Ingjerd HOËM (Oslo) & Serge TCHERKEZOFF (CREDO)

Contact: i.hoem@online.no

WS6-5 Anthropology of Value in Oceania

Susanne KUEHLING (Regina) & Andrew MOUTU (Adelaide)

Contact: susanne.kuehling@googlemail.com

WS6-6 Configuring the 'Urban' in Melanesian anthropology

Adam REED (St Andrews)

Contact: ader@st-andrews.ac.uk

WS6-7 Voices in Contemporary 'Cargoistic' Discourse

Michael W. SCOTT (LSE)

Contact: m.w.scott@lse.ac.uk

WS6-8 State Constitution and its Alternatives in Oceania

Jaap TIMMER (Macquarie) & Anna-Karina HERMKENS (Nijmegen)

Contact: jakob.timmer@gmail.com

WS7-1 The "Newness" of New Media in Oceania

Ilana GERSHON (Indiana University) & Joshua A. BELL (Smithsonian Institution)

Contact: igershon@indiana.edu

WS7-2 Land, laws and people in the Pacific

Susan FARRAN (Dundee)

Contact: S.E.Farran@dundee.ac.uk

WS7-3 Transforming concepts of aging in the contemporary Pacific

Verena KECK (Heidelberg & Frankfurt) & Anita VON POSER (Heidelberg)

Contact: verena.keck@t-online.de

WS7-4 Capacity Building : Critical analyses of the new model for knowledge transfer in Pacific Development.

Martha MACINTYRE (Melbourne) & Heather YOUNG-LESLIE (Hawaii)

Contact: hyleslie@hawaii.edu

WS7-5 Bridging Boundaries: The Circulation and Localisation of Christianity in Oceania
Fiona MAGOWAN (Queen's, Belfast) & Carolyn SCHWARZ (State University of New York)
Contact: schwarca@potdam.edu

WS7-6 Future selves in the Pacific – projects, politics and interests
Will ROLLASON (St Andrews)
Contact: wr21@st-andrews.ac.uk

WS7-7 Perceiving Pacific Peoples: Race and Gender as Categories of Analysis in European Interpretations of Oceania
Marja VAN TILBURG (Groningen)
Contact: m.w.a.van.tilburg@rug.nl

WS7-8 Ecologies of climate change: addressing new challenges for Pacific Island livelihoods
Sofia VOUGIOUKALOU (Kent)
Contact: S.A.Vougioukalou@kent.ac.uk

WS8-1 Interrogating Interventionism: Antinomies of Conflict and Intervention in the Western Pacific
Matthew ALLEN (ANU) & Sinclair DINNEN (ANU)
Contact: matthew.allen@anu.edu.au

WS8-2 Education, Collaboration, Reciprocation: Exchanging Knowledge in Settler and Non-Settler States
Melissa DEMIAN (Kent)
Contact: M.Demian@kent.ac.uk

WS8-3 Resources, Individualism and Neoliberalism in Melanesia
Nick BAINTON (Queensland) & Alex GOLUB (Hawaii)
Contact: n.bainton@smi.uq.edu.au

WS8-4 Village and town in Oceania
Holger JEBENS (Goethe University Frankfurt) & Alexis VON POSER (Heidelberg)
Contact: jebens@em.uni-frankfurt.de

WS8-5 Models of Health in Oceania: Publics, Policy and Advocacy
Mike POLTORAK (Kent) & Gaia COTTINO (Roma)
Contact: msp@kent.ac.uk

WS8-6 Kinship: knowledge, practice, theory and comparison
Christina TOREN (St Andrews), Simonne PAUWELS (CREDO) & Lorenzo BRUTTI (CREDO)
Contact: ct51@st-andrews.ac.uk

WS8-7 Knowledge exchange between Oceanic peoples and European museums
Fanny WONU VEYS (National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden)
Contact: wonu.veys@volkenkunde.nl

Further Details of Working Sessions

WS6-1 Exchanging knowledge ON Oceania: archives, libraries and digital resources

Arlette APKARIAN (CREDO)
Judith HANNOUN (CREDO, MAP)
Contact: documentation@pacific-credo.fr

Exchanging knowledge *IN* Oceania also implies exchanging knowledge *ON* Oceania. From early reports by western explorers and missionaries to contemporary publications, the amount of available information on and for Pacific Island societies and scholars is considerable. The existence, use and sharing of these archives, documentation, printed publications, audiovisual and digital material are of central importance for research and teaching, but also constitute significant resources for local communities in the Pacific in critically documenting or re-documenting their history. These resources, however, are often scattered among a wide range of institutions, insufficiently known or documented, or of difficult access. It is necessary to close these gaps in providing a space for exchange and discussion among actors in the domain of collecting, archiving, documenting and making available these resources. Exchanging knowledge is an important aspect in the continuous availability of tools for research and teaching on and in Pacific societies. It is also a means to establish a network of exchange and interconnectedness of actors in these domains of competence.

It is necessary to take inventory of existing resource repositories, be they large collections or highly specialized resources, and make this inventory available to the wider community. These repositories can be of different kinds, each involving problems that need to be addressed. The first kind consists of “traditional” paper resources and includes libraries collecting published and unpublished material. The generally observed decrease in funding opportunities available to such libraries and documentation centers has in some cases increased the degree of domain- or area-specialization in resource acquisition policies, and thus creates the need for establishing networks of exchange and of sharing information. Paper libraries are also limited in their capacity to produce information to Pacific Islanders and distant researchers. Some libraries and documentation centers have thus engaged work into digitization of their material. These processes however produce new questions with which we have to engage. Indeed, the second kind of resource repositories are digital and include textual and audiovisual storage and deployment of material. While this type of resource significantly increases the capacity of accessing knowledge, it also involves new important problems. The number of digital archives and publications is increasing significantly and are likely to become important resources for future generations. However, they also face questions with respect to rights of access and confidentiality, as well as the needs for the elaboration of user-friendly storage and access interfaces and tools, which have become new tasks for librarians and archivists.

WS6-2 The Pacific Islands and Asia: New Knowledge Encounters for the 21st Century

Niko BESNIER (Amsterdam)
Contact: n.besnier@uva.nl

The Pacific Islands and Asia have been intimately linked to one another since prehistory. During the colonial era, these links took the form of substantial population movements from South and East Asia to various Pacific Islands, which have resulted in an important Asian presence in the contemporary Pacific that has raised questions in the region about locality and belonging, sometimes in dramatic fashion. At the dawn of the new millennium, the connections between the two regions are undergoing an extraordinary renewal, shedding a novel light on the past as well as the present. Examples of these new ties are new labour migrations from regions of China to Pacific Island countries, the migration of Pacific Islanders to Asia countries, the consumption of cultural products from Asia in the islands, the substantial increase in trade between the two regions, and new forms of political and economic involvement in the Pacific by Asian powers seeking the develop transnational sphere of neo-colonial influence. These material and symbolic dynamics have created new forms of knowledge encounters embedded in and elaborated through encounters between peoples, nations, products, symbols, business practices, and political engagements.

Some of this knowledge production has been characterized by positive affect (e.g., the popularity in the islands of Filipino soap operas, Hong Kong films, and martial arts of various origins), while others have been tense (e.g., violence against Chinese immigrants). While these emergent forms of knowledge have been the objects of commentary in various quarters, they have only recently been subjected to serious ethnographic examination. Yet knowledge encounters between the Pacific Islands and Asia are particularly interesting because they defy in many ways the Euro-American-centered fashion in which encounters with both the Pacific Islands and East Asia have commonly been defined, particularly since the end of World War II. The session addresses comparatively whether the distinction between Euro-American and Asian encounters with the Pacific Islands is more or less strongly drawn in different Pacific communities, and seeks to evaluate the forms that they take locally. Pacific Islanders, for example, may draw in some contexts a strong distinction between Asian and Euro-American peoples, but in other contexts collapse them, seeing Asian and European interests, products, symbols, and business practices as essentially the same. This working session provides a forum for the exploration of the implications that various manifestations of the encounter between the Pacific Islands and Asia have for the experience of living in “a sea of islands.”

WS6-3 Public and Private Engagements: Anthropology Beyond the Sacred Grove

Colin FILER, David MARTIN, James WEINER (ANU)

Contact: James.Weiner@anu.edu.au

Many anthropologists in Oceania, as elsewhere, are now engaged in providing advice (often confidential) to private companies, government agencies or non-government organisations on the best way to manage what might broadly be described as 'community affairs', or various forms of organisational engagement with a range of constituencies and publics. Some are also engaged, more or less enthusiastically, in debates about matters of public policy, not only from within universities through their academic writings, but also from a range of other positions, and through writing for non-specialist audiences, including through the mass media. Some are engaged in both of these activities, and in the process are confronted with awkward methodological, political and ethical questions about the relationships between consultancy and advocacy, between anthropological knowledge and other forms of knowledge, or about the obligations owed to their 'subjects', their clients, and a range of other interest groups. But other anthropologists regard such forms of engagement with deep suspicion, and they raise other awkward questions. Is it right and proper for anthropologists to advise or speak for anyone except people who are unwilling or unable to pay them for doing so? Do anthropologists have an obligation to oppose the oppression of 'our subjects' and the marginalisation of 'our discipline' by the black beasts of development, globalisation, capitalism and neo-liberalism? Are the forms of knowledge which anthropologists derive from their work as consultants or advisers -- whether to wealthy and powerful organisations, to bodies formally representing 'conventional' anthropological subject communities, or to relatively powerless NGOs -- to be treated as a valuable contribution to the discipline, as the basis for engagement with a wider public, or as a form of anthropology inevitably tainted by practical, non-intellectual, concerns that should be hidden from public view? Is an 'applied' anthropology a necessarily inferior anthropology or a practice which hardly even deserves to be considered anthropology at all? On the other hand, if it does have credibility and legitimacy as a form of the discipline, should universities be making more of an effort to promote it as a career path alongside the more conventional academic route? In this working session we invite contributions from anthropologists who would like to answer such questions in light of their own public and private engagements or their observation of engagements made by other anthropologists.

WS6-4 Pacific Anglonesia / Franconesia

Ingjerd HOËM (Oslo)
Serge TCHERKEZOFF (CREDO)
Contact: i.hoem@online.no

In this workshop we invite participants to explore indigenous models of sociality in their interaction with Anglophone versus Francophone spheres of influence in the Pacific (that is, in post colonial and still colonized Pacific countries). We wish in particular to explore the combination of effects between indigenous representations, knowledge and practices/forms of sociality on their own, and the differences of that same indigenous input when it met and was confronted with/and confronted Anglo versus French presence.

Obviously, these connections and interactions have different forms, and different impact over time, and in different sectors of society. We wish you to take this complexity into account by inviting papers with empirical focus on the emergence and interaction of different models (Indigenous, Francophone [France, French Territories] , Anglophone [British, American, Australian, New Zealander, etc.]) and with an eye to how these models inform and are shaped by a variety of societal sectors and institutions.

To illustrate we ask you present papers on the following or related issues:

1) to compare the differences (and similarities) of ways of expressing cultural identity and of planning strategies for nation-building; for achieving independence/autonomy (in the case of Pacific "Territories" still colonized or "in association" with a formerly colonial power); for achieving standards of "good governance" and "sustainable development" (in the case of independent Pacific countries); strategies in Pacific countries churches.

Related topics: –in colonial times: indirect rule versus assimilation, etc.; strategies of christianisation (Catholic/Protestant)

–in contemporary and present times: strategies for political and economical "influences" in the Pacific; strategies from long time established Churches and more recent (Pentecostal etc.); approach to "other" cultures (again: universalism of an assimilationist type versus (sometimes extreme) relativism; approach to mono/bi/multi languages in the school system, in the official spheres.

2) to compare, in the discourse of social sciences, the differences (and similarities) of the Anglophone and the Francophone approaches, analyses, methodologies, in the past as well as today, in discourses from the West *as well as* in discourses from within the Pacific.

For example:

– in the distant past: contrasted (or not) ways of inventing "Oceania", "Pacific", inventing the regions of that area, constructing and mis-constructing this part of the world as a "culture area"; managing and representing 'first' and early encounters with indigenous peoples of Oceania;

– Indigenous ways of representing and managing relationships with various kinds of 'others', indigenous models of sociality and place, including models of 'totality', (e.g. Samoan and Tokelauan concept of the world as *lalolagi*, "below the sky", and of social place, *tulaga* etc.)

WS6-5 Anthropology of Value in Oceania

Susanne KUEHLING (Regina)
Andrew MOUTU (Adelaide)
Contact: susanne.kuehling@googlemail.com

The conference theme of exchanging anthropological knowledge calls for an engagement with anthropological theories of exchange and an anthropology of value in Oceania. We invite papers that discuss the entanglement of old and new forms of exchange, the way valuable objects are distributed, consumed or evaluated in different tournaments of value. We are particularly interested in the ambiguities and driving forces behind contemporary exchange including but not limited to resource extraction, museum collections, tourism, HIV, mobile phones, new infrastructure, Western education, and Christianity.

Exchange practices of Oceania have inspired sophisticated theorisation of sociality in general and have helped us rethink Western conceptions of gender, personhood, knowledge, meaning, and value. Oceanic exchanges appear prominently in Malinowski's *Argonauts*, Firth's notional spheres of value, Mauss' theory of the gift, Sahlins' *Stone-age Economics*, and Godelier's models of political types, Gregory's gift and commodity economies and M. Strathern's theory of gender. Some of these works proceed from an assumption that value emanates from a human propensity to execute comparative judgements about particular states of affairs and others reveal a concern with the problem of measurable relations sanctioned by a general law of equivalence. While Godelier and Annette Weiner have focused on alienable and inalienable possessions, Munn builds on objectification for understanding the transformation of value and Foster advocates a theory of value without equivalence. Graeber's recent study links value with creative action rather than meaning and contemplation. We believe that it is timely to meet and discuss the more recent inspirations that have motivated our recent projects and theories.

In Western societies, the notion of value is often evoked by an isomorphism between money and language. Words are commonly identified with coins such that one may expend words as one may spend money. Like coins, words are minted and may lose their value due to over-circulation. But images of isomorphism are logically bound to encounter a problem of commensurability: how does one measure meaning as one might calculate value? This discourse leads into interesting questions about the relation between value and comparison itself, the connection between measurement and existence, enumeration and rationalisation - it might even rejuvenate an interest in the nature of sign and perception.

If we consider the notion that value also hinges on emotions and their expression, it appears to be positioned at the core of personhood, bridging personal experience and commonly accepted practice and morals. Consciousness as well as space and time and their attendant models of knowledge play a critical role in shaping the way ideas of value are conceptualised. We are looking forward to exchanging ideas and data on the variety of Oceanic exchanges, objects, and motivations.

WS6-6 Configuring the 'Urban' in Melanesian anthropology

Adam REED (St Andrews)

Contact: ader@st-andrews.ac.uk

This working session will explore the role of 'the urban' in Melanesian anthropology. Specifically, it will examine the historical and current place of urban ethnography in the debates and conventions of anthropological analysis in the region. Working session members will be invited to reflect upon the failure to adequately account for urban life in much ethnographic writing and the failure to include accounts of that urban experience in many anthropological representations of Melanesian peoples and societies. As well as providing ethnographic content on particular urban locales in the region, working session contributors will be asked to examine how that material challenges the analytical conventions of Melanesian anthropology. Can the lessons of the urban be read back in order to provide a critical reinterpretation of ethnographic work from the region? What do we mean by the 'urban' in Melanesia? As well as ethnographic papers on the subject, the working session would welcome other disciplinary approaches; in particular, historical and geographic engagements with the urban in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu or New Caledonia. As well as obvious linked topics of interest, such as migration, residence and employment, working session contributors will be asked to think about the study of townscapes or cityscapes, the role of money, the figure of the stranger, issues of speed and temporality (city in day and city at night), the place of maps, names and transport in urban imagination, the importance of urban institutions, nationhood and modes of governmentality. As part of this focus, contributors will be asked to reflect upon the agencies and qualities assigned by ethnographic subjects themselves to urban centres in the region. Rather than just treating the town or city as a backdrop or environment in which new social forms of interaction occur, the working session is also concerned to explore what it might mean to think through these places. Can one speak, for instance, of Mosbi logic or Vila action or Honiara thinking? More broadly, we will examine whether Melanesians, like many other urban subjects, necessarily know the urban by first reifying towns as persons, ascribing them certain characteristics or peculiar atmospheres. Finally, contributors will be asked to reflect upon how their work, and Melanesian anthropology more broadly, might challenge the paradigms of urban studies and urban theory. This includes the question of what distinguishes an anthropological interpretation from other disciplinary analytics and what the role of ethnography might be in our theoretical elaborations.

WS6-7 Voices in Contemporary 'Cargoistic' Discourse

Michael W. SCOTT (LSE)

Contact: m.w.scott@lse.ac.uk

Anthropologists continue to document various forms of discourse in diverse Pacific Islands contexts that clearly resonate with a rich but problematic ethnographic archive on so-called 'cargo cults'. Often, however, there is no longer—or never has been—a 'cult' or a 'movement', only talk: personal accounts of strange experiences; localized interpretations of biblical prophecies; allegorical understandings of traditional narratives; popular rumours; veiled speech; decodings of political rhetoric; conspiracy theory-like explanations of delayed development and of anomalous events.

How should anthropologists who encounter such discourses describe and share knowledge about them? How should we mark the similarities—and, in some cases, the historical links—between current discourses and past movements without over-identifying the two? How can we draw productively on a knowledge base seen by many as stigmatized and stigmatizing? Above all, how can we best take such discourses seriously as expressions of the sustained problem-solving reflections and profound religious and emotional investments of our Oceanic interlocutors in ways that they will value?

Stephen Leavitt has proposed 'making cargo personal' through 'detailed discussion of individual cases, with close attention paid to what the person actually says.' Taking up this proposal, this session invites papers that present sustained analysis of one or more cargoistic discourses and explore a variety of approaches to re-describing this kind of ethnographic data. Proposed papers might address, for example: accounts of paranormal experiences or abduction-like encounters with agents said to control extraordinary powers and wealth; speculative syntheses between narratives or ideas received from older movements and newer discourses (e.g., UFOlogy, conspiracy theories, New Age and esoteric philosophies); attempts to test or investigate cargo-associated rumours; running jokes about such rumours or past movements; carefully worked out theological understandings of current political situations and future expectations; trajectories from doubt to conviction or vice versa regarding cargo hopes; expressions of uncertainty and perplexity about claims connected to such hopes.

Although studies relating to cargo-oriented ritual practices or organized movements will be welcomed, the session aims to elicit studies from urban as well as rural contexts where discourses that intersect with the cargo archive tend to be socially amorphous, heterogeneous, intimately and quietly held, or even unique to one person. By bringing such personal accounts together the session will ask what new themes, genres, and tropes may be emerging in the ongoing transformation of such discourses and with what broader processes and issues they may be engaging today.

WS6-8 State Constitution and its Alternatives in Oceania

Jaap TIMMER (Macquarie)
Anna-Karina HERMĲENS (Nijmegen)
Contact: jakob.timmer@gmail.com

This working session investigates past and contemporary forms of constitutionalism that consider and propose alternatives to State constitution in Oceania. We welcome papers that explore popular and official claims and forms of authority that are presented as constitutions for alternative forms of governing a political community. How have alternative constitutions been created and maintained? How are alternative states legitimized and identified with realms of justice, violence, the sacred, or the natural? Inquiries into alternative state constitutions based on realities and perceptions of religious and social authority and sovereignty, broadly defined, from colonial times to the present are encouraged.

In our western understanding constitution refers to the document outlining the principles, laws and regulation according to which the state is to be governed. During the tumultuous times of state formation in Europe and North America, people with visions about new forms of disciplined life and a constitution were inspired by a variety of stable and unstable sources including Christian beliefs, old European thinking about democracy and state, and experiences with kingdoms and anarchy. In the course of colonization the importance attached to State constitution was spread widely, often casting new light on older forms of principles for ruling a community. Inevitably, alternative constitutional imaginings also evolved.

Not surprisingly then, alternative state constitutions are generally about the establishment of fundamental principles for governing the affairs of a community, often in disagreement with the current State. These fundamental principles are most often grounded in interpretations of customary regulations and religion. Alternative state constitutions are best understood with a view of history as dominated by periods of normative and normalized statelessness punctuated by short- or long-lived dynastic, colonial and postcolonial states, each leaving their wake deposits of constitutional imaginings.

This kind of constitutionalism has received little attention in anthropology in general and is overlooked in recent volumes on the anthropology of the state (Stepputat 2001, Das and Poole 2004, and Sharma and Gupta 2006). Constituting alternatives to State constitution concerns an activity that opens up a powerful window on the pluralism and injustices of the postcolonial state and the sources of its instabilities. It also may cast light on how disgruntled groups employ constitutionalism as a strategy to extract power and resources by accommodating its principles.

WS7-1 The “Newness” of New Media in Oceania

Ilana GERSHON (Indiana University)
Joshua A. BELL (Smithsonian Institution)
Contact: igershon@indiana.edu

Pacific communities have traditionally innovated and engaged different forms of media, whether dog’s teeth valuables or rituals. These myriad forms remain integral to the networks of communications and relations throughout the Pacific. Today the new media technologies of the Internet, mobile phones and social networking sites provide another venue for innovation and continuity. Within the Euro-American context, historians of media have demonstrated how new media sparks exaggerated fears that intimate connections will be harmed when a technology is introduced. Thus part of the “newness” of new media is an often-repeated expectation that new forms of representation will disrupt established social organization. Within this working session we hope to explore how the “newness” of new media is experienced in the Pacific, ranging from how communities have and are responding to the introduction of writing to the introduction of mobile phones and social networking sites. Two themes guide these ethnographic explorations: the “newness” of new media for dialogue and the “newness” of new media for representation.

The first theme explores the ways new media is understood to change how dialogue and dissemination are intertwined. In */Speaking Into the / Air*, John Durham Peters argues that in the Euro-American context, people historically feared new media because every new medium alters a precarious balance between /dialogue/ (dyadic conversational turn-taking) and /dissemination/ (broadcasting). As new media becomes incorporated into daily life, each technology becomes valued accordingly. People see each new technology as changing how dialogue or dissemination occur, introducing new possibilities and new risks to communication. In this working session, we ask: how are the ways previous Pacific peoples’ understandings of how dialogue and dissemination were interwoven affect how people responded to new media? How are people’s epistemological assumptions and social organization shaping how they incorporate particular communicative technologies?

The second theme examines how new media becomes grounds by which Pacific communities can challenge misrepresentations, and assert their identities. If new media enables new forms of collaboration and participation, how then has it enabled communities to manage more effectively how their representations travel? What new forms of creative play have emerged in the process, and how have older forms been extended? If the materiality of media matters as argued by Webb Keane and others, how have these new media forms altered or continued existing representational economies? Whose networks are being extended or cut in the process? To what extent is new media understood as re-structuring previously established forms of exchange and knowledge circulation? How have these evolving relationships shifted the ways in which ethnography is being, and or should be done?

WS7-2 Land, laws and people in the Pacific

Susan FARRAN (Dundee)

Contact: S.E.Farran@dundee.ac.uk

Influences of globalisation and modernity are placing greater emphasis on individual economic wealth accumulation and related pressures to derive economic benefits from customary land and related resources. Forms of customary land tenure are seen as being inimical to this form of development and economic advancement for Pacific island countries especially where such tenure is only one among several possible forms of land regulation in plural legal systems. Expression of this view point can be found in publications and articulations of policy of external funding agencies. For example, the Australian government policy for its 2006 AID programme identified fundamental reform of land tenure a priority, and also published *Pacific 2020*. In 2008 AusAID, published *Making Land Work*, which although recognizing that land represents an important 'safety net' for many Pacific islanders, many of whom no longer enjoy security of tenure, the document is essentially Eurocentric in advocating that land policies and institutions must be reformed to promote social and economic development.

Although there is considerable rhetoric about 'building bridges' between introduced law and customary law; maintaining and respecting a 'dual' system of land tenure; or 'harmonising' the apparently disparate approaches to land in order to provide the appropriate environment for economic development, all too often the approach of policy makers and aid donors seems to be that customary land tenure should make way for, or adapt to, introduced forms of land tenure, e.g. leases, contractual licences and freehold estates.

The drive for commoditization of land and land reform is not however just due to external forces. Within Pacific island countries changes in land tenure patterns and customs are taking place. Some of these changes are embraced voluntarily – if not by all then by some, others are imposed. Often, however, the impact of these changes, on social organisation, economic health, and the equitable distributions of access to and use of land is unconsidered. In particular the potential for internal conflicts between indigenous people embracing different forms of land use and tenure are ignored, with the focus being invariably on the polarities of tradition and change, customary forms and laws and introduced forms and laws, thereby failing to recognise the compromises, hybridisation and adaptations that may be taking place.

This working session invites papers from a variety of disciplines with the aim of building a better understanding of customary forms of land tenure and land dispute resolution, directed at considering how development might be informed by indigenous laws and customs, rather than driven by western-capitalist concepts and rules.

WS7-3 Transforming concepts of aging in the contemporary Pacific

Verena KECK (Heidelberg & Frankfurt)
Anita VON POSER (Heidelberg)
Contact: verena.keck@t-online.de

Twenty-five years after the landmark study by Counts and Counts (1985), *Aging and its Transformations: Moving towards Death in Pacific Societies*, aging in contemporary Pacific societies is still an urgent and appropriate subject to be analysed – especially in the context of globalisation.

In every society, cultural notions of age and aging are decisively shaped by the indigenous concepts of person- and selfhood. Social role, status and gender, social and material security and welfare, intergenerational relations, changed family compositions and ethnicity are some of the factors that influence the different situations of older people in the contemporary Pacific. Simultaneously, phenomena such as transregional as well as transnational migration, increasing urbanisation and global forces of various kinds shape their experiences.

The transfer of cultural knowledge within societies, from older to younger people, has changed tremendously. Especially younger people feel themselves lured by modern, more highly esteemed forms of economic and technological knowledge and also generally by the Western ideas propagated in schools. In terms of acceptability, these newer forms of knowledge seem to be displacing local, so-called 'ancestral' or 'traditional' forms of knowledge. As a result, older people – keepers of traditional knowledge and experts once held responsible for shaping the social, moral and political life-world – increasingly experience a degradation of their status.

Due to ongoing demographic changes and health transitions, Pacific groups and individuals are confronted with new challenges concerning social issues and health in the context of aging. Especially for older people in Pacific towns, perhaps with restricted income and lacking old-age pensions and the care and support of family members, being old can be a humiliating and bitter experience.

This working session will address these transforming concepts of aging in contemporary Pacific societies from a broad range of theoretical and ethnographic perspectives. Papers exploring the perception of aging in the specific contexts of shifting life-worlds are invited. We suggest a question that may work well to embrace the papers in this working session in a broader sense: What do local actors, young and old alike, expect with regard to aging when they either turn towards or reject new forms of economic, technological, political or biomedical knowledge?

WS7-4 Capacity Building : Critical analyses of the new model for knowledge transfer in Pacific Development.

Martha MACINTYRE (Melbourne)
Heather YOUNG-LESLIE (Hawaii)
Contact: hyleslie@hawaii.edu

Pressures for outside agencies to effect change and demonstrate efficacy to donors have escalated in the last decade. Recipients' objections to tied aid, liberal ideals of partnership and recipients 'owning the project', neo-liberal concerns over external donors' provision of funds for infrastructure, wages and revenue –all have generated new development objectives that emphasise recipients' capacity to manage and sustain programs. These objectives are especially prominent in projects, whether bilateral or NGO-sponsored, where previous failures have been attributed to a lack of knowledge, skills and expertise among the local beneficiaries. Corruption, incompetence and other failures of governance, construction and infrastructure building delays, lack of local support, project failure – all may be attributed to inadequate knowledge, skills and/or management expertise.

“Capacity Building” and “Training” are the new standards for most development endeavours. They have gained prominence in aid-projects on law and justice, peace-building, governance, transportation, environmental conservation, HIV, and health systems strengthening. The aim is to enable and inspire selected people to appreciate the particular project's objectives, to mobilise others to engage in activities required by project implementation plans, to adopt project timelines and accountability structures, and to make the advisors redundant. Likewise, foreign corporations embrace the rhetoric of capacity building in their efforts to localise their workforce. In addition to apprenticeships and training to gain industrial skills and qualifications, companies conduct short courses that encourage workers to adapt to Western employment practices and ideologies. The enthusiasm for capacity building has encouraged AusAID to develop a training program to teach development practitioners how to be Capacity Building Advisors.

This new knowledge transfer-as-development model has yet to receive critical examination. Undoubtedly a medium through which Western ideals of efficiency and efficacy as well as liberal democratic notions of empowerment are meant to be established, in practice, is capacity building significantly different from prior modes of knowledge transfer? How? Does it equalise the power imbalances between counterparts as claimed? How are capacity building advisors experienced by their counterparts? Where is capacity building going, what might it become?

Our session will critically and constructively examine capacity building's ideals and effects in specific settings. We invite papers from people who have worked on projects where capacity building has been paramount and welcome co-authored papers with capacity builders, their counterparts or donor-partners; papers based on specific project observations and evaluations; papers offering theoretical analyses of the principles and practices of this new model for knowledge transfer.

WS7-5 Bridging Boundaries: The Circulation and Localisation of Christianity in Oceania

Fiona MAGOWAN (Queen's, Belfast)
Carolyn SCHWARZ (State University of New York)
Contact: schwarca@potdam.edu

Today, Christianity provides an overarching framework for the social and moral actions of Oceanic communities and their diasporic counterparts. However, as global cultural flows permeate social borders and variously fragment and reconfigure the moral basis of religious identities and social interaction, many Oceanic peoples and organisations which hold to some sense of absolute moral engagement, have had to confront the increasing complexity of multiple external interests. These societies have been presented with an ongoing dilemma: 'how to maintain a coherent world-view and steadied social engagement while acknowledging the pluralism of the modern world' (Hefner 1998:98). In such pluralistic entanglements, Christianity is often not restricted merely to matters of the spirit, but it may create or mediate competing political agendas and bring about new ways of being in and knowing the world. Government mediators, politicians, welfare organisations and anthropologists heighten the complexity of these developments, as they try to make sense of and engage with their moral beliefs and choices. Their interactions inevitably create diverse models of moral action through which choices and views are shaped by fluctuating power differentials.

In relation to these broad themes we invite contributors to this working session to consider the questions in one of the two areas below:

1. The general and local dimensions of Christianity through issues of conversion:
 - How do Christian converts maintain their integrity in local settings and how must they adapt to fit with local traditions?
 - In converting to Christianity are Oceanic peoples breaking from indigenous pasts, continuing those pasts or both?
 - To what extent do converts conceptualise Christianity as a new source of cultural knowledge?
2. The relationship between the transmission and transformation of Christian knowledge and practice across Oceania through processes of exchange and the negotiation of identity:
 - How is Christianity being exchanged among Oceanic peoples and to what extent does this contribute to the formation of new identities and social relations?
 - What are the key contributions that the study of Christianity in Oceania can make to anthropological theorising about personhood and identity; cultural exchange; and the relationship between global and local orders?
 - In what ways is the transmission and transformation of Christian knowledge and practice shaped by anthropological engagements, agendas and relationships with Oceanic peoples?

WS7-6 Future selves in the Pacific – projects, politics and interests

Will ROLLASON (St Andrews)
Contact: wr21@st-andrews.ac.uk

For Pacific people in the early 21st Century, the future is uncertain and contested. Longstanding concerns with what the future will be like - salvation, the millennium and economic transformation for example – are joined by new prospects – state failure, climate change, ecological crisis and pandemic disease. If we want to explain what is happening in the contemporary Pacific, we need to make an account of what Pacific people are doing to secure their futures.

The questions for scholars of the Pacific are twofold: how do Pacific people imagine the future; and how are they acting today to shape their lives tomorrow? This requires critical engagement with notions of self and notions of time and the future. What is 'the future' and how is it imagined – as a temporal process, an apocalyptic end-point or an ethical challenge, for example? Who are the people who engage this future and how are they imagined in its terms – as subjects of development, as sinners needing redemption, as alienated and excluded for example?

At present, the ways in which scholars phrase our explanations of Pacific life consistently neglect Pacific people's own attention to the future. On one hand, accounts authored from the perspective of development and governance impose their own versions of the future on others' projects and aspirations. While models of culture provide diverse starting points, all of these are transformed into a more or less uniform future of modernity. On the other hand, anthropological accounts of Pacific people's political and ethical projects usually account for present happenings in terms of the past. Despite an extensive literature dealing with economic aspirations, millennial predictions, political fears, and other concerns with the future, we usually explain the present in terms of the traditions – historical or cultural – that seem to produce it.

We therefore face a conflict of interest in the way we approach social life in the Pacific. On one hand, Pacific people must live with their futures in mind, guiding and shaping their projects and aspirations. On the other, scholarly accounts of the Pacific anchor those people in the past. The challenge for this working session is to explore ways in which scholarly approaches to Pacific people's lives might make use of indigenous approaches to the future as analytical and explanatory frameworks for understanding what is happening in the Pacific now. Papers will explore the specific dimensions of particular imaginations of the future, as well as the means by which Pacific people transform themselves and their lives to meet and control that future.

WS7-7 Perceiving Pacific Peoples: Race and Gender as Categories of Analysis in European Interpretations of Oceania

Marja VAN TILBURG (Groningen)
Contact: m.w.a.van.tilburg@rug.nl

Recent research suggests that in the first half of the nineteenth century 'race' came to replace 'gender' as the dominant category of analysis in European interpretations of Pacific Islanders. Various scholars have pointed out the importance of gender for eighteenth-century voyagers: Margaret Jolly showed that the treatment of women was crucial in European evaluations of western-Pacific societies. Later, Nicholas Thomas argued that gender was used to create the constructs of 'Polynesia' and 'Melanesia'. Recently, Harriet Guest stressed the centrality of gender to notions of civilization and savagery in European discourse on the Pacific. During this era race remained – to cite Bronwen Douglas – 'ill-defined', and elicited 'ambiguous practices'. Only in the nineteenth century did race come to be deployed systematically, and physical differences come to embody cultural differences among Pacific Islanders.

This working session will address the question of whether the above interpretive shift conveys actual historical developments. Did 'race' actually have a place in eighteenth-century assessments of the Pacific? Were Pacific Islanders really perceived differently from other non-Western peoples – after all, Enlightenment philosophers raised issues of race with regard to Africans, both slaves and non-slaves? Furthermore, did 'gender' really lose its relevance in the nineteenth century? Or has the eighteenth-century change in sexual identities obscured our view? Have the 'modern' perceptions become so pervasive, so familiar that we overlook them?

And if the interpretive shift does describe actual historical developments accurately, why did this change occur? Was this the 'logical' outcome of the eighteenth-century natural sciences? Was it brought about by nineteenth-century social theory and its tendency to marginalise gender? Or did western metropolitan thought play only a minor part and did the shift reflect actual changes in the Pacific, perhaps mirroring different types of voyagers or reflecting different types of experiences with indigenous peoples, resulting in different types of reports?

This working session will discuss whether and how 'race' and 'gender' are used to interpret and assess Pacific peoples – from every disciplinary angle possible.

WS7-8 Ecologies of climate change: addressing new challenges for Pacific Island livelihoods

Sofia VOUGIOUKALOU (Kent)

Contact: S.A.Vougioukalou@kent.ac.uk

The environment of the Pacific Islands is changing with significant impacts on local livelihoods. Climate change and weather extremes such as sea level rises, coral bleaching, droughts and cyclones increase the vulnerability of small island populations. It is poor people, particularly women and children who bear the burden disproportionately as it is those groups that form the majority of rural populations. International organizations, government bodies and NGOs have highlighted the need to i) monitor the impact of climate change on terrestrial and marine ecosystems ii) identify its social and economic impact and iii) develop effective adaptation schemes that incorporate the integrated management of natural resources.

Nevertheless, socio-environmental change is not a new phenomenon. Historical trends in migration of people to and from islands, remote island depopulation and urban growth have contributed to the development of new and dynamic 'indigenous knowledge systems' that adjust to change and incorporate innovation. Dynamic knowledge systems associated with changing biodiversity patterns are particularly complex and make very valuable, however frequently overlooked, contributions to the climate change agenda.

Contributions to this working session will address the impact of environmental and climatic change on biodiversity and knowledge systems and seek to identify the role that Pacific Islanders play in maintaining the resilience of island ecosystems and viable communities. We will seek to address the three thematic areas identified above and at the same time highlight the role of local knowledge systems and coping strategies: how are local accounts -- of the causalities involved that have led to change -- being articulated?

This working session will be looking not only at how traditional environmental knowledge and practice relating to food, medicine and agriculture is embodied but also how it is maintained, developed and transmitted within island cultures and across transnational networks. We seek to problematise concepts of 'paradise' and 'isolation' as well as ideas of 'traditional' and 'local' knowledge, highlighting the dynamic nature of traditional practices in the context of environmental change. Contributors are encouraged to include a range of perspectives and geographic/cultural case studies of changing human-environmental interactions that address the following issues: environmental change and livelihoods, natural resource use, and within this context traditional knowledge and its transmission. Finally, this working session aims to explore the policy implications of such research, considering its significance to food and health security; and the fostering of viable communities in dynamic landscapes.

WS8-1 Interrogating Interventionism: Antinomies of Conflict and Intervention in the Western Pacific

Matthew ALLEN (ANU)

Sinclair DINNEN (ANU)

Contact: matthew.allen@anu.edu.au

The postcolonial nations of the western Pacific – Melanesia – have increasingly become the loci of foreign ‘intervention’ projects. These interventions have varied in scale, objective and ambition. Some, such as the *Strongim Gavman* program in Papua New Guinea appear to be largely pre-emptive in objective, while others, such as the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, are overwhelmingly reactionary. The new, muscular, and essentially Australian-led approach to the ‘problems’ of the region represents a distinct departure from the previous ‘hands-offs’ policy, prompting its labelling as the ‘new interventionism’.

The notion of ‘the state’ has been central to these intervention projects. The new interventionism variously seeks to build the state, to rebuild it, to strengthen it. Underpinning this state-centrism are ‘global’ liberal and securitised discourses of conflict and development. Developing-country conflict and instability are seen as primitive and barbaric. An aberrant abomination; a departure from the civilised path to modernity, stability and democracy. Conflict must, therefore, be eradicated wherever it raises its illiberal and dysfunctional head; wherever it breaks out like a virulent contagion. The liberal institutions of the state and their bedfellow, the free market, are the primary therapeutic prescriptions, buttressed by the rule of law, enforced, as required, by foreign police and soldiers. This is the ‘liberal peace’, the new global template for dealing with developing-country disorder.

What do ethnographic perspectives have to say about the new interventionism in the Western Pacific? What, in turn, do anthropologists, ethnographers and other scholars engaged with issues of conflict, state-building and nation-building in Melanesia have to offer wider international debates about development, conflict and intervention? Can war and peace be meaningfully separated in the Melanesian context? What are the ‘causes’ of what Bruce Knauft coined the ‘new wars’ in Melanesia? What is the appropriate way to respond to them? How are the new interventions perceived and responded to locally? When violent conflict does occur, how can the demonstrable potential for it to result in positive social transformation best be harnessed?

We invite papers that address these and related questions with reference to case studies from Melanesia broadly defined (thus including Timor Leste in the northwest and Fiji in the southeast) and, as far as possible, debates within the international comparative literature.

WS8-2 Education, Collaboration, Reciprocation: Exchanging Knowledge in Settler and Non-Settler States

Melissa DEMIAN (Kent)

Contact: M.Demian@kent.ac.uk

'Exchange theories,' Nicholas Thomas has argued, 'in their emphasis on reciprocity, have always marginalized, in a paradigmatically liberal fashion, questions of power.' Similarly, the proposition that knowledge is 'exchanged' in Oceania carries with it a different set of expectations depending on whether the context of exchange is construed as an aggregate upon an indigenous past, or an attempt at recovery of this past. Both positions are contentious, carrying as they do the freight of historical exchanges that may be read simultaneously as exploitative, expansive, creative, destructive, inequitable, profitable, or indeed unintelligible.

The consonances and dissonances between these perspectives are emphasized further by the differences in experience between the settler states of the Pacific and those whose government and population are constituted by an indigenous majority. This working session aims for an investigation of how contemporary knowledge exchanges in Oceania – in contexts of education, collaboration between scholars, consultancy and research practices – continue to reflect, and reflect upon, what it means to transmit knowledge in an environment where the colonial encounter is construed either as consigned to history, or an ongoing dilemma of everyday life.

The working session therefore invites papers that engage not only with the 'power' that attends Pacific knowledge exchanges in both expected and unanticipated ways, but with the way that contemporary political forms shape the flow or stoppage of these exchanges. Settler states such as New Zealand/Aotearoa and Hawai'i, overseas territories such as American Samoa and New Caledonia, and independent states such as Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu each present a distinctive politics of the way knowledge is thought to emanate from the past or project into the future. Fiji offers an atypical case in which the non-indigenous half of the population are not descendants of settlers but of indentured labourers; Tonga offers another in that it was never colonized and is the only constitutional monarchy in the Pacific.

The inflections of local hierarchy and political history will affect differently, in each of these environments, who is entitled to certain categories of knowledge and under what conditions they may come to be so entitled. It is never enough to speak simply of reciprocity in knowledge transactions: the intention of this working session is to ask how such transactions are an intellectual or economic practice in some contexts, and a political practice in others.

WS8-3 Resources, Individualism and Neoliberalism in Melanesia

Nick BAINTON (Queensland)

Alex GOLUB (Hawaii)

Contact: n.bainton@smi.uq.edu.au

Resource development and extraction plays a major role in the economic development of many countries and local communities across Melanesia and the wider Oceania region. Throughout Melanesia large-scale mining and oil and gas projects have typically generated profound economic, political, cultural and social transformations among local indigenous communities. Such areas have provided classic sites for the analysis and understanding of cross-cultural approaches to land and resources and to rapid social and cultural change.

In recent years new corporate compliance regimes have assumed greater prominence throughout the extractive industries. For instance, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards and voluntary best practice codes like the International Council of Mining and Metals (ICMM) sustainable development principles require companies to pay closer attention to social and cultural impacts, and to the longer term, post project future of their host communities and countries. While analysts and critics continue to debate whether companies genuinely engage with the agendas of sustainable development, corporate social responsibility and accountability, much less attention has been given to the ways in which host governments and local communities have engaged with these international discourses. Local communities and governments will inevitably seek to maximise the opportunities for economic development that arise through large-scale resource extraction projects, but it is also worth considering how (and whether) these international languages are (re)framing resource relations within and between various stakeholders.

New elites, local civil society groups, landowner organisations and the different tiers of government are increasingly appropriating these discourses in novel ways. Combined with the growing ubiquity of discourses of human rights, evangelical Christianity, and regimes of aid and governance which demand 'accountability', this is often recasting the individual in a central role on the road to prosperity and well-being. The shift from collective benefits to individual benefits and responsibility is pronounced. Many Melanesians now imagine operating within the economy, particularly around resource development projects, as individual agents – as businessmen and women, managers, and the owners of natural and economic capital. Moreover, the landscape and natural resources which underpin operations are often simultaneously a point of convergence and epistemological divergence between extraction companies and indigenous communities. We might therefore consider the interplay between these international linguistic technologies and the transformation of local cosmologies and the reappraisal of the value of cultural resources.

We invite papers that explore the intersections between resources, individualism and neoliberalism in Melanesia. We ask people to think about the ways in which different cultural, economic and natural resources are reconsidered and put to new uses to constitute individuals and new forms of sociality that are relevant to changing contemporary contexts.

WS8-4 Village and town in Oceania

Holger JEBENS (Goethe University Frankfurt)
Alexis VON POSER (Heidelberg)
Contact: jebens@em.uni-frankfurt.de

In many parts of Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia 'the village' is a rather recent invention, created under or after colonial rule, but has since invoked a sense of belonging, nostalgia and security. 'The village' has been and continues to be constructed vis-à-vis 'the town', which is considered to be a foreign place inhabited by strangers that alienates former consociates once they have moved there. Often, the town still bears connotations of an imposed order and limited freedom, which have endured from colonial times to independent governments. Yet, the village also may be seen as a place of permanent social control. In any case, an opposition of mutually dependent categories or domains emerges that can be seen as an aspect of the cultural perception of Self and Other. The other sphere is often constructed in a way that highlights deficiencies in contrast to the own, known sphere. New categories, such as local versus regional, provincial, national or even global constitute new screens for the projection of ideas and thus also continually re-shape the notion of Self.

This working session will compare and analyse visions of 'the town' that circulate in villages (and are expressed in different forms) as well as visions of 'the village' that circulate in towns (and are expressed in different forms). Attributes of each domain can prove to be highly ambivalent and, in face of an uncertain future, new meanings may emerge. Global warming, for example, poses a threat to coastal and island villages thus jeopardizing the image of security similarly as the lack of possibilities to generate pecuniary surplus in times when money is becoming increasingly important even in remote parts of the Pacific. Moreover, the perspectives of peoples traversing and thus mediating between the two spheres will be addressed as they contribute to specific processes of exchanging knowledge. Those returning to the village after a long time of living in town, often through their financial standing, become opinion leaders and are challenging existing power relations in the village.

Contributors are encouraged to address diverse notions of town and village in a changing social environment with a focus on recent ideas, narratives, artefacts and practices from all parts of Oceania. Similar phenomena as well as differences from the diverse locales shall be discussed.

WS8-5 Models of Health in Oceania: Publics, Policy and Advocacy

Mike POLTORAK (Kent)
Gaia COTTINO (Roma)
Contact: msp@kent.ac.uk

The growing need for generalized Oceanic models of health to guide policy and interaction with Oceanic clientele in diasporic contexts, provides both a challenge and opportunity for anthropology. Engaging with such models places us at a critical and collaborative nexus linking a diverse group of organisations and actors, areas of anthropological and development interest and new modes of communicating knowledge. It also provides an opportunity to satisfy anthropologists' ethical desire to improve as well as theorise the health of Oceanic peoples, and to do so in areas of wider public interest.

How do we engage with Oceanic (Pacific) models of health? Should we contribute to their formulation despite the challenge to the ethnographic tendency to particularize and localize health? While they may be a distillation of diverse publics' strategies to address health, or idiosyncratic to particular community representatives, they do offer a basis for policy engagement and wider advocacy and activism. Do we follow the encouragement to understand the wider development, health policy and health systems challenges linking Oceanic countries and influencing the need for models, and that draw us into interdisciplinary and grey literatures? Or do we embrace anthropological advocacy, greater involvement with NGOs and desire for increased accessibility to diverse Oceanic 'publics'? To what extent does this Oceanic version of a wider anthropological push for public and applied anthropology suggest the need for more visual, filmic and internet based strategies and involvement with Oceanic medias?

This working session welcomes papers on current health issues such as HIV / Aids, communicable disorders, diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular disorders and mental illness in relation to the multiple strategies to address them and in terms of the wider transnational influences on the formulation and use of models of health. We also welcome case examples of more personal interventions in improving health. Through comparison of such cases and case studies of anthropological interventions in Oceanic health we hope to suggest new modes of intervention.

WS8-6 Kinship: knowledge, practice, theory and comparison

Christina TOREN (St Andrews)
Simonne PAUWELS (CREDO)
Lorenzo BRUTTI (CREDO)
Contact: ct51@st-andrews.ac.uk

In the Pacific, kinship is generally understood to come under the heading of 'knowledge that counts'. The objective of the proposed workshop is to arrive at an understanding of contemporary kinship in an area of the Pacific where deep historical links provide for a close and useful comparison. The major focus is on Fiji, Tonga and Samoa but we would also welcome papers concerning nearby island groups such as Tokelau, the Cook Islands, Tuvalu, Niue. It seems likely that the variations these offer could even help us to avoid stressing the often heard opposition between Fiji and the Polynesian world.

We ask potential contributors to take kinship as their focus. For example, one might take as a starting point kinship vocabulary in a particular area and the scrutiny of particular kinship relationships such as brother/sister, mother's brother, father's sister, eldest or elder sister, etc. In this case, a number of contributions each concerning a different area may enable us to examine whether it makes sense to say, contrary to the opposition mentioned above, that "kinship is the same in Fiji, Tonga and Samoa" and whether it is indeed necessary to qualify any such statement with the rider "at least in eastern Fiji". It would be instructive were we able to compare kinship vocabularies and relations for eastern and western Fiji. The analysis of ritual practice (both domestic and public) as well as day-to-day relations between kin in Fiji, Samoa and Tonga (and elsewhere) will of course also be welcome in order to understand better what is of importance here.

Other questions too will be helpful for establishing comparisons. What kind of transformations is kinship undergoing as people move from rural to urban locations, from island to mainland? What difference does religion make? Are different forms of Christian practice, for example, transforming kinship in different ways? Which are the relationships that remain untouched? Are unaffected kinship relations key relations or are they, on the contrary, of no great concern? Thus, while kinship is our focus, we would expect that any given paper may present an analysis embedded in a discussion of, for example, sociality and personhood, or place, or Christianity, or movement (including migration within country to foreign shores). We anticipate that the various contributions will enable us, in the course of the workshop, to arrive at a regional comparison of kinship and its implications with the objective of demonstrating at once the transformations kinship undergoes, its contemporary ramifications, and how it figures in indigenous theories of social life.

WS8-7 Knowledge exchange between Oceanic peoples and European museums

Fanny WONU VEYS (National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden)

Contact: wonu.veys@volkenkunde.nl

Over the past decades museums have become of increasing importance in shaping cultural politics, both at the national and international level. As opportunities for encounters, dialogues, and sharing of information have grown more frequent, museums have reacted by adopting different strategies within their own institutional traditions. Granting indigenous and source communities access to collections and archives, for example, contributes to their documentation; commissioning indigenous artists promotes and continues local artistic cultures and complements the institution's collections; and expressing native voices and rights to cultural difference is facilitated through the participation in exhibition and scholarly events.

The inclusion of native voices in Oceanic and North American institutions is well documented with tribal museums in which members of a specific group present their own culture (the U'mista Cultural Centre in Canada, Gab Titui Cultural Centre in the Torres Strait Islands, the Vanuatu Cultural Centre). Some national museums represent and embrace the cultural politics of peoples within the country's borders (Te Papa in New Zealand, the National Museum of Australia). Finally, other museums aim to encompass peoples with a shared cultural heritage (the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington).

This session aims at discussing the far less publicised European situation. Attention will be oriented towards general issues regarding cultural politics in different European countries both on a governmental as on a museum and community level. The role museums can or should play in matters of virtual and real repatriation are specifically considered.

Papers could deal with the following issues:

What are the forms of knowledge shared?

How do ethnographic museums and peoples represented by their collections collaborate?

What issues exist surrounding virtual/digital repatriation versus (long-term) loans?

Who is repatriating (governments, museums, ...) and to whom (governments, museums, communities, individuals,...)?

How do museums deal with repatriation of human remains versus culturally important objects?

How do ethnographic exhibition projects incorporate the perspectives of members of the represented cultures and their descendants both in the exhibition process as in the displays themselves?

What are the collaboration types developed between European museums and local institutions/museums?

How do colonial encounters fit into stories told by indigenous peoples about objects and exhibitions?

How does one engage with historic material while acknowledging contemporary indigenous situations?

The working session welcomes papers from museum professionals and anthropologists as well as those working with collections and collaborating with Pacific peoples and institutions.