

**Centre for Pacific Studies, University of St Andrews &
Bergen Pacific Studies Research Group, University of Bergen**

***North Sea-South Seas*
3rd Annual Research Workshop**

St Andrews Golf Hotel
St Andrews, 23rd-25th March 2011

Programme

Wednesday 23rd March BPSRG arrive, St Andrews Golf Hotel, 40 The Scores
St. Andrews. Tel: 01334 472 611

Thursday 24th March

9.00 - 9.30

Coffee & Welcome

9.30 - 11.00 Session 1.
Dialogues with the field

9.30 - 10.00 Edvard Hviding

10.00 - 10.15 Cato Berg

10.15 - 10.30 Jara Hulkenberg

10.30 - 10.45 Simon Kenema

10.45 - 11.00 Discussion

11.00 - 11.30

Coffee Break

11.30 - 1.00 Session 2.
Developments of Change

11.30 - 12.00 Tom Mountjoy

12.00 - 12.15 Emilka Skrzypek

12.15 - 12.30 Kristine Sunde Fauske

12.30 - 12.45 Stephanie Garling

12.45 - 1.00 Discussion

1.00 - 2.00

Lunch

2.00 - 3.30 Session 3.
Possibilities of Christianity

2.00 - 2.30 Annelin Eriksen & Knut Rio

2.30 - 2.45 Hildur Thorarensen

2.45 - 3.15 Craig Lind

3.15 - 3.30 Discussion

3.30 - 4.00

Coffee Break

4.00 - 6.00 Session 4.
Methodologies of Modernity

4.00 - 4.30 Anthony Pickles

4.30 - 4.45 Susan Farran

4.45 - 5.15 Rolf Scott

5.15 - 5.45 Tony Crook

5.45 - 6.00 Discussion

7.00

Dinner, No 40 Bistro

Friday 25th March

9.00 - 10.30

Roundtable - future plans

10.30 - 11.00

Coffee & BPSRG depart

Abstracts

Session 1. *Dialogues with the field*

Edvard Hviding

Indigenous knowledge and vernacular education: going on-line in Solomon Islands

Based on my anthropological research over the last 25 years in the Marovo Lagoon of Solomon Islands, I will discuss interactions between local development aspirations and introduced agendas of biodiversity management, and argue for increased dialogue between local and global ways of knowing and classifying biodiversity. In encounters between local and non-local knowledge there appears to be much potential for making meaningful connections between (1) Western science, (2) agendas of environmental sustainability and (3) knowledges and aspirations of local people. I will illustrate such connections by reporting on a UNESCO initiative based on my Environmental Encyclopedia in the Marovo language that also contains English translations and scientific identifications. This book, containing more than 1,200 entries and a large number of colour photos, is now used in a new approach to environmental education in the schools of the Marovo area, with an aim to prepare youth for sustainable rural lifestyles, while also fulfilling national Solomon Islands policy to promote vernacular education of both local and global relevance. In 2010 the book was launched in an online, wiki-type version that contributes to a pioneering effort underway in Marovo Lagoon of rural internet-based vernacular education involving the OLPC (One Laptop Per Child) project.

Cato Berg

Niabara: The war canoe from Vella Lavella, Solomon Islands

This presentation details a process of 3D digital documentation, and subsequent presentation in the field, of a highly significant cultural heritage object from the Melanesian South-West Pacific, held in the ethnographic collections of the British Museum. The object, which dates from about 1910, is a 12-metre plank-built war canoe from the island of Vella Lavella in New Georgia, Solomon Islands. The project combines an initial historical research phase, 3D laser scanning in the British Museum, digital model building by University College London, and anthropological fieldwork involving digital re-patriation. As a multidisciplinary effort involving anthropologists, laser scanning engineers, and indigenous cultural activists, this is an innovative project that seeks to re-present a large object of lasting and valuable cultural heritage to people of Solomon Islands, and that feeds into contemporary debates on virtual museums and repatriation issues.

Jara Hulkenberg

Living 'the Fijian way' in the UK: how migration sustains traditional lives

This project will examine the social workings and implications of the migration of indigenous Fijians to the UK. It will show why Fijians migrate, and why and how they maintain 'the Fijian way of life' (na ivakarau ni bula vakaViti) in the face of the challenges of life in a new country. Irrespective of their situation and location, Fijians relate to one another according to kinship and hierarchy, which are fundamental elements for understanding Fijian conceptions of personhood, society and what it means to belong to a place. The project examines forms of Fijian social organisation structured by kinship and hierarchical relations and their associated obligations, asking how these are maintained (and transformed) when socio-economic conditions are altered through migration processes. By acknowledging the centrality of kinship, reciprocal exchange, and tribute in Fijian lives this research can start to rethink Pacific migration processes.

Simon Kenema

Reconstructing Sociality in Panguna: Mining, Landscape, Identity Politics and Fractured Relationships

It is commonly accepted within mineral resource relations discourse in PNG that the Panguna mine was closed largely due to avarice and inequality and a combination of other factors. It is also widely believed that the lack of indigenous participation and massive social disruptions in traditional social life were the principal precipitators to the cessation of mining operations in Panguna. This research project therefore attempts to investigate local notions of 'inequality' and cosmological interpretations of 'equality' in Nasioi communities adjacent to the Panguna mine.

Since the inauguration of the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) in June of 2005, the aura of general optimism about the possible resumption of mining has markedly increased. The research is largely framed within this context and sets out to investigate 'what has actually changed' that has now seen a dramatic shift in the local peoples' desire for a return to mining. The research intends to investigate how local conceptions of benefit and marginality are politicized to construct particular types of persons, places, and identities.

Session 2. *Developments of Change*

Tom Mountjoy

Playing with knowledge: Local conceptualizations of the 'development agenda' of soccer in Solomon Islands

Through participation in soccer, Solomon Islanders establish meaning and presence at individual, community and national levels. Bypassing traditional stereotypical notions of the 'weak state', still propagated by the foreign media, this presentation intends to present civil society through the lens of sporting practice as an essential part of the modern social history of Solomon Islands. The practices and multiple discourses surrounding soccer are seen to challenge certain mainstream theories of development, knowledge, and uniformity of standards which take their starting point in institutions and ideas ascribed in the logic of Western modern sport configuration.

Emilka Skrzypek

Sustainable Development, Corporate Social Responsibility and Agreement-Making at the Frieda River Copper Mine, Papua New Guinea

With a background in Sustainable Development and a strong inter-disciplinary interest in Social Accounting, I am looking at the emergence and negotiation of relations between the Frieda River Mine's host community, the corporation developing the project, the impacted down-river stakeholders and the PNG government. My project analyses the encounters between ideas of knowledge and cosmology through a focus on how personal and social responsibility is conceived by different parties, and how this 'baseline' conceptualization of social relations has informed expectations and subsequent actions. It offers a fine grained examination of the potential that stakeholders on all sides perceive in Sustainable Development programmes and Corporate Social Responsibility policies as vehicles or leverage points for shaping the government, landowner, business and civil society cases currently being formulated and negotiated through formal agreement-making and the informal 'social license to operate'.

Kristine Sunde Fauske

Big, Small Places - Constructing place(s) in Vanuatu

I address a local discourse about "smol aeland" (Uripiv island on the coast of Malekula) versus "big aelan" (Lakatoro, the urbanized centre of Malekula) and the capital of Port Vila in Vanuatu. I argue that these three places are valued differently within the totalizing process of nation-building, and the paper discusses how these values play out around Uripiv Island.

Stephanie Garling

Evolutions or Revolutions? Interaction and Exchange at the Post-Lapita 'Transition' in Island Melanesia

In the closing centuries of the third millennium BP there was an elusive transformation in the archaeology of Island Melanesia. On the one hand, the western part of the region saw the final 'demise' of the Lapita Cultural Complex—the archaeological signature of the last major human migration event in world prehistory—and on the other, striking new styles of pottery decoration flowered across the region, the much debated and yet ill-defined 'Incised and Applied Relief' (IAR) ceramic tradition. Based on my doctoral research on the Tanga Islands, New Ireland Province, Papua New Guinea, my proposed monograph tackles the crux of the largely polarized 'Post-Lapita Transition' debates: How did these island communities interact? How and why did interaction change? Are Lapita and Post-Lapita related? Did the IAR Tradition really exist? I take a novel multipronged approach that considers both archaeological and anthropological theories and brings much-needed new evidence from Tanga. I track interaction through a variety of data sets: some orthodox in Pacific archaeology (the style and composition of pottery; obsidian; faunal remains), one novel (red ochre) and another under-utilized (rock-art). My findings reveal that each

line of evidence produces its own distinctive pattern(s) of interaction. By overlaying these patterns and teasing out their match and mismatch—and their ‘evolutions’ and ‘revolutions’ from Lapita—I aim to provide a richer understanding of the complexities of interaction, exchange and cultural change at this pivotal time.

Session 3. Possibilities of Christianity

Annelin Eriksen and Knut Rio

The world according to Jimmy – visions about Ambrym development and unity

This paper refers to an Ambrym visionary whose great ambition is to create ‘development’ on Ambrym island in Vanuatu. His activity of producing a total account of Ambrym *kastom* in book-form and his ambition of building a cement factory for producing brick houses testify to certain ways of conceptualizing social process, religious constellations and the production of both a better man and a prosperous future. We will present mostly raw materials from our conversations with him, as well as a bigger context where he is also allegedly a sorcerer with the capability of shape-shifting.

Hildur Thorarensen

Indigenizing Christianity through local narratives

The Survival Church of Vanuatu is an independent Pentecostal church that broke out of the Presbyterian mission church on the island of Nguna in the 1980s. In 2009 I conducted six months of fieldwork in two of the church’s branches, one urban and one rural.

The Survival Church has a particular way of linking its own local origins with different narratives, such as *kastom*-stories and modern myths. I will argue that through these narratives the church can be seen to break with both the past mission churches and with the pre-Christian times. In discussing some recent anthropological debates on Christianization, cargo cults, everyday folklore and ethno-theologies in the Pacific I will show how the Survival Church can be seen to represent forms of local and indigenized Christianity.

Craig Lind

Being Born Again: Christian Conversion and Rearticulation of Kinship

Among Paamese communities in Vanuatu, Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) converts regularly complain about, and resist taking part in, what they describe as expensive and wasteful life-cycle exchanges, on the grounds that they are no longer obliged to because they have been ‘born-again’. Paamese Presbyterians, on the other hand, insist that a person cannot be born twice in their lifetime – that is, a person cannot change the conditions of their birth and the obligations that this presents for them towards others. Such differences in opinion lead Presbyterians to complain that SDA are selfish, disrespectful and, in thinking only of themselves, morally pervert and destroy bonds of kinship. Focusing on such contestations raises two important points: Firstly, it presents a sound ethnographic basis for enquiry about the extent to which religious conversion, presented as ‘being-born-again’, offers new ways of configuring the terms in which a person might view and express their kinship with others. Secondly, and following from this, attention to differences stress that the reduction of Christianity to the singular in anthropological accounts will sometimes be “at the expense of both ethnography and theoretical insight” (Pálsson 1994: 902).

Session 4. Methodologies of Modernity

Anthony Pickles

No Chance: Preliminary Understandings and Methodological Experiments of a Project on Gambling in Papua New Guinea

Gambling in the urban Highlands of New Guinea proved not only endlessly stimulating, but threw up methodological conundrums which forced invention. Dealing with the history of a lively landscape of card games without documentary data led to indigenous diagrammatisations which are themselves a commentary on movement, genealogy, social history and kinship itself; The inability to literally watch people as they distribute their winnings secretly across Town stimulated a distribution game which in turn excelled all expectations in terms of data; fascination with concealment elicited a fruitful concentration and revealed a lively discourse on pockets which goes

some way to contemporising the discourse on string bags. Reversing the polarity, large scale surveys and their numerical data of a conventional type may yet yield much more as a result of concentration on indigenous enumerative techniques. I will discuss the issues raised during my fieldwork, how these were address, and what this tension might bring to light.

Sue Farran

Free trade agreements; intellectual property traditional knowledge and challenges from and of development in Pacific island countries

WTO membership considerations, PACER Plus, EU-ACP trade agreements and other bi and multilateral trade overtures are putting increasing pressure on existing intellectual property law regimes in Pacific island countries. At the same time it is becoming increasingly evident that existing laws are inappropriate and ineffective in safe-guarding traditional knowledge and the outcomes of that knowledge. Despite initiatives to develop intellectual property laws that are more suitable for the region, as in other areas of legal reform geared to meet development aims, traditional/customary approaches to the management of these resources are in danger of being swamped by the trade/aid tide.

Looking at agriculture, health, education and climate change, the aims of this project are to identify potential or existing synergies between state based intellectual property regimes and customary ones in order to suggest possible routes for the harmonious development of laws that maximise the benefits of such regimes while minimizing the disadvantages.

Rolf Scott

Cosmonauts in the learning

The presentation analyses a basic course in Hawaiian Voyaging, for “want to be Hawaiian voyagers” and that takes place in Hilo, which is the capital of the largest Hawaiian Island, Hawaii.

The stated goals of the course were to give insight into voyaging skills and basic seamanship, of whose full mastery are exclusive to a handful of Hawaiian master navigators. Thus the course was also a formalised test, and the first step along the road to become a crewmember, captain or navigator on a Hawaiian voyaging vessel.

However, the non-stated implicit meanings of the course, were also to repositions the participators in cosmos, and teach them how to re-orientate themselves and their Hawaiianess, towards a culturally speaking - increasingly substantial, modern and individualised future. As such, these voyaging novices were learning to become focused cultural agents, and as will be argued, cosmonauts in the learning.

Tony Crook

The Passivity of Modernity: Computer Knowledge and Machine Operations at the Ok Tedi Mine, Papua New Guinea

This experimental working paper is framed in dialogue with two recent theoretical contributions to an important debate seeking to characterize the attributes of ‘modernity’ in Melanesia: both Joel Robbins and Bruce Knauft describe a widespread cultural, social and personal passivity, and take these as the pervading effects of, and responses to, the forces of a globalizing modernity. The paper takes up these questions through an analysis of what it means for machine and computer operators to be passive, reactive or aggressive: in their interactions with the machine system through which copper and gold are milled and extracted from ore, *and* in their interactions with other workers performing their various jobs. This working paper is experimental in the sense of developing an earlier analysis, and in the sense that some of the analytical terms are only intended as temporary supports, and work as a means of returning to the wider question.

Participants

St Andrews:

Tony Crook, Senior Lecturer
Stephanie Garling, Postdoctoral researcher
Fiona Hukula, Doctoral researcher
Jara Hulkenberg, Postdoctoral researcher
Simon Kenema, Doctoral researcher
Craig Lind, Postdoctoral researcher
Anthony Pickles, Doctoral researcher
Adam Reed, Senior Lecturer
Emilka Skrzypek, Doctoral researcher
Christina Toren, Professor

Bergen:

Cato Berg, Postdoctoral researcher
Annelin Eriksen, Associate Professor
Edvard Hviding, Professor
Thomas Mountjoy, Doctoral researcher
Knut Rio, Professor
Rolf Scott, Doctoral researcher
Kristine Sunde Fauske, Doctoral researcher
Hildur Thorarensen, Masters student
Eilin Torgersen, Masters student

Northumbria:

Susan Farran, Professor

Aberdeen:

Daniel Belik, Doctoral researcher