Seventh ESfO Conference, Verona 10 -12 July 2008

“Putting People First”:

Intercultural Dialogue and Imagining the Future in Oceania

CALL FOR PAPERS

Plenary Sessions

Opening keynote speech MARGARET JOLLY

Panel Discussion: “Putting People First” Fifteen Years On

Raymond Firth Memorial Lecture MARSHALL SAHLINS

General ESfO meeting

The theme for the seventh ESfO conference in Verona 2008 emphasises the pivotal role of intersubjective relations, at all levels of sociality, for contemporary islanders in their daily efforts to imagine desirable futures and ways to achieve them.

The first part of the title, “Putting People First” is inspired by the motto adopted in 1993 by the Pacific Forum in the “Suva Declaration” on Sustainable Development. It reflects Pacific Islanders’ own perception of a fundamental cultural value shared within the region: that of considering the people who form a community as its primary resource. The motto thus implies the articulation of an engaged process of responding to the challenges of our time, with Pacific Islanders’ desire to insist on this cultural prerogative.

The second part of the title, “Intercultural Dialogue and Imagining the Future in Oceania”, links this fundamental theme to those of previous ESfO conferences. We propose to build upon the debate on rethinking the past and on conflicts by turning our gaze to the present challenges facing Oceanian peoples who are striving to imagine their futures.

Intercultural dialogue is a crucial aspect of the promotion of peaceful cooperation between and within countries, and of effective relations at all levels of sociality. Oceania is an interesting site where conflicts, politics and ethnicities interconnect in old and innovative ways. A focus on dialogue and processes of negotiation, grounded in indigenous practice and in the visibility recently acquired, for example, by Pacific women’s groups in harnessing relations effectively, provides precious insights on the complexity of contemporary Oceania, and sparks a rethinking of similar processes in Europe and elsewhere, an antidote to the dangerous stereotypes fed by a view of culture as rigid and monolithic.

The emphasis on “Putting People First” can thus suggest an interesting perspective, weaving together intersubjective relations and the respect for biodiversity, within which to make sense of, and respond to, the controversies and contradictions of our times.

Finally, the routes suggested by the “Suva Declaration” are particularly consistent with the 2008 European Union’s Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

For further information and registration http://esfo2008.dpac.univr.it/

PLEASE NOTE: EARLY BIRD DEADLINE : DECEMBER 17th

July is high tourist season in Verona, early registration and booking is recommended.
Proposed sessions/workshops for 2008 ESfO, Verona:

Session 1: Cultural heritage and political innovation – relations of the state and alternative social movements in Oceania

Session 2: Movement, Place Making and Multiple Identifications

Session 3: The Poetics of Existence: Words and Images

Session 4: Concepts and Unfolding of the Person in the Pacific

Session 5: ‘Expensive’ words – contemporary interpretations of verbal value in Oceania

Session 6: Re-forming the land

Session 7: Culture in performance – probing the possibilities of cross-cultural understanding in tourism

Session 8: Winds of Change or Counter Currents in Pacific Music and Dance

Session 9: Ethnographic Museums at the beginning of the 21st Century: Stakes and Challenges

Session 10: Food, Biodiversity and Livelihoods in Oceania: changes and challenges in a globalized world

Session 11: Islanders' Voices

Session 12: Roy Wagner: Symbolic Anthropology and the fate of the New Melanesian Ethnography


Session 14: EUROFO.doc: European Documentation for Oceanists CANCELLED

Parallel sessions

Session 1

Cultural heritage and political innovation – relations of the state and alternative social movements in Oceania

Knut Rio and Edvard Hviding

From many parts of the world it has been documented how renewed and intensified interest in locally specific things, ideas and social formations accompany, and counteract, the assumedly de-localizing consequences of globalization. In recent years the issue of “cultural heritage” has come to the centre of attention as an important concern worldwide not only among politicians and policy-makers, but also in terms of a more general trend in society towards placing value on locally and historically significant spheres in the face of nationalism and global influence. We believe the Pacific islands region exemplifies this trend particularly well. In this session the potential of local objects, natural resources and concepts to challenge dominant ideas politically and culturally will be explored. There is also a potential here for looking at how “cultural heritage” is transformed from its Western bearings when turning up under new social movements in the Pacific.

In the present-day situation, after coups d’etat and civil war and the deterioration of the nation-state in several Pacific Island countries, alternative movements such as church organizations and locally based hierarchical orders are taking over the tasks of the state. We wish to highlight how desire in such Pacific movements is directed towards retaining autonomy over conditions for local life in a globalized world. We have seen how, in the Solomon Islands, ancestral skulls hidden in forest shrines for generations, and their associated assemblages of pre-19th century objects associated with headhunting, have become powerful means for syncretistic religious-political movements (acting as resource owners) to regulate timber extraction by Asian companies, while simultaneously reaping unprecedented monetary benefits channelled into rural development. In Vanuatu, national debates about “traditional copyright” to woodcarving designs emerge from intensified, profitable local production of objects for a burgeoning metropolitan “tribal arts”
market. Pacific islanders thus explode former definitions of “cultural heritage” by taking on the value of the heritage from the past in the development of new political formations and religious movements.

Issues under consideration in this session will be local idioms of cultural property, claims to copyright, land use and customary political legitimacy and particularly expansions of political and/or religious movements that take up a position alternative to the state. We invite Pacific scholars to draw on their experiences in these matters and highlight what seem to be important social developments in the Pacific islands.

Contact: Knut Mikjel Rio
Department of Social Anthropology, University of Bergen, Håkon Shetelig plass 10, 5007 Bergen, Norway.
+47 55 58 31 12 - Fax: +47 55 58 96 56
knut.rio@bm.uib.no

Edvard Hviding
Department of Social Anthropology, University of Bergen, Fosswinckels gate 6, 5007 Bergen, Norway.
+47 5558 9264 / 5558 9250 (secretary) - Fax: +47 5558 9260
Edvard.Hviding@sosantr.uib.no

Session 2

Movement, Place Making and Multiple Identifications
Elfriede Hermann, Wolfgang Kempf and Toon van Meijl

The aim of this session is to explore changing relations between people(s), places, and identities in contemporary Oceania. Following globalization and large-scale migration in the region the concept of place has acquired different meanings, especially in relation to identity. Place is no longer localized and identities have diversified, which has changed people’s sense of belonging. In this session we seek to examine people’s multiple belongings to places and social networks. The focus will be on personal as well as collective articulations of local attachments, translocal entwinements, and multiple belongings within global contexts and power relationships. The question how mobility and migration impact on the cultural construction of places and identities deserves special attention. In addition, we invite papers on the cultural formation of selfhood through multiple identifications with places and social collectivities. The scope of the session also extends to studies of Pacific discourses on diaspora and displacement. Displacement for present purposes does not have to be viewed solely as a physical movement from one place to another. Rather it can also be construed as a process of alienation from, and devaluation of, one's place in the world, even if one never moves from that place – a process that derives its dynamics from the effects of hegemonic policies and the forces of global capitalism. But the other side of displacement, i.e. place making will concern us no less. Papers analytically addressing the reciprocities of place making and multiple identifications will be particularly welcome in this session.

Contact: Elfriede Hermann
Universität Göttingen, Institut für Ethnologie, Theaterplatz 15, D-37073 Göttingen, Germany.
Elfriede.Hermann@phil.uni-goettingen.de

Wolfgang Kempf
Universität Göttingen, Institut für Ethnologie, Theaterplatz 15, D-37073 Göttingen, Germany.
wkempf@uni-goettingen.de

Toon van Meijl
Centre for Pacific Studies, University of Nijmegen, P.O. Box 9104, NL-6500 HE Nijmegen, The Netherlands.
T.vanMeijl@ru.nl
Session 3

The Poetics of Existence: Words and Images

Borut Telban

Peoples of Oceania have always had a rich repertoire of verbal and visual expressions of their life-worlds. These expressions were not simply reflections of their cosmologies and cultures but were also inseparable from their continuous creation. Whenever some outside information reached a particular community, people addressed these new words and images, mimicked, moulded and modified their meanings, and adjusted them to their current social and cultural understanding of the world. There are, however, stronger external impacts that challenge the habitual existence of local communities, their daily practices and their whole worldview. These include large scale financial investments of foreign companies, the application of new technologies, and the intrusion of different religious movements.

The session participants are welcome to address “traditional” expressive forms: either oral-aural (songs, chants, myths, stories, etc.) or visual (architecture, carvings, paintings, body decoration, etc.). Moreover, verbal and visual expressions are often tightly interwoven and complement each other, as for example, in the actual practice of song-dance, and are firmly embedded in the landscape. Participants are also welcome to address social and cultural changes that alter people’s attitudes towards their “traditional” lore, which leads them towards changes in perception and expression of their life-world. With a particular sensitivity for alterations in verbal and visual expressions in particular contexts one can detect social and cultural changes in their making.

Contact: Borut Telban
Scientific Research Centre, Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts, Novi trg 2, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia.
Borut.Telban@zrc-sazu.si

Session 4

Concepts and Unfolding of the Person in the Pacific

Françoise Douaire–Marsaudon and Laurent Dousset

“Identity” and “person” are not reflections of persistence and permanence, for no identity or person is identical to itself at two places or moments. Inherently relative, these notions are based on a dynamic accumulation of socially and historically produced characteristics that trespass, underpin and divide the individual according to socio-political, socio-economic and socio-historical situations. The idea of the person as a local discursive and conceptual entity and its real-world counterpart (that of actual experiences, individual trajectories, personal agency and interrelation processes) are at least partly – dialectically – tied in particular ways according to their socio-cultural and historical background. To take in account the subjective and existential aspects of the person implies that we also consider the person as gendered. Questioned is not only how Pacific societies construct the sexual dichotomy and which roles are assigned to it, but also how one is becoming (“subject to become” as expressed by M. Foucault or J. Butler) a gendered person in a particular society.

This panel wishes to examine both the local conceptions of, and discourses about the “person” (or the “human being”), as well as these concepts’ applications in actual situations. In view of the many theories that originated from Pacific studies, we invite contributions that analyse discrepancies and congruencies between observable life-situations and its emic interpretations and discourses. While interested in formal and structural aspects of indigenous conceptions of the (gendered) person, we are particularly encouraging papers that analyse actual people’s trajectories and their efforts to comply with – or resist – normative systems within a fast changing world. These perspectives, as we conceive them, have also the ambition to question (and go beyond) some of the classical paradigmatic oppositions used in the field of anthropology (nature/culture; self/society; etc.).
Session 5

‘Expensive’ words – contemporary interpretations of verbal value in Oceania

Susanne Kühling

In any society, words are a powerful resource for strategising, in politics as well as in everyday interaction. In Oceania, where relational agency is “putting people first”, speech and spells, names and notes, texts and tax forms are interpreted in local ways and may be modified in order to fit into the overall patterns of interaction. With increasing literacy, written texts may be privileged to orality in a number of contexts; new forms of speech, like theatre, may gain importance, and – as predicted for more than a century – old words may be forgotten in the new worlds of the islanders. This session seeks to explore the world of words from a symbolic/economic perspective, focussing on both verbal and written words. By focussing on the ascribed value of words and their meaning(s), the underlying notion of knowledge as intangible possession (that only a fool shares carelessly) is a starting point into a variety of topics. An edited volume of Brenneis & Myers (1984) gives examples of contexts in which words can be dangerous. The accelerated speed of language change in Oceania justifies a fresh look at contemporary metaphors and interpretations. The (Melanesian) expression of ‘expensive words’ encompasses both old and new notions of value. It can be used to describe local value, intangible ownership such as navigation, medicine, genealogies, place names etc. Alternatively, it is a metaphor for wealth in a globalised sense: certain words are codes that enable the participation in specific groups (e.g. youth gangs, entrepreneurs, academics) that are associated with “the West”.

If ‘expensive’ words are written down, they may be de-valuated in a number of ways, and there are many examples that give evidence of the need to ‘handle with care’ sensitive information (see e.g. Jaarsma ed. 2002). Spell-books and genealogical drawings are a frozen version of ‘expensive’ words, raising the debate on authenticity in the world of paper, theatre, and research projects. Some words are ascribed to gender, others are not used within respect relationships, like ‘eating’ in the Carolines. When their synonyms are used, they give proof of the speaker’s manners and status as well as the relative rank of the addressed. Such ‘expensive’ words gain their value purely from the social context as they are neither secret nor personal property. Words, when spoken, may mean their opposite, depending on context. Can the written word tell a lie? Can such words be void of value and yet be written in a glossy book? Is silence also ‘expensive’ in certain context?

Official letters, often phrased in a complicated way, are frightfully ‘expensive’ to an islander. An analysis of such documents may show that the use of the thesaurus to replace ‘cheap’ words with ‘expensive’ synonyms is a common practice amongst public servants and aspiring academics. ‘Expensive’ relates here to both the oral sense of ‘rare, unknown’ and to the English ‘elaborate code’. Written words feature in a number of ‘expensive’ contexts, as in Christianity, as cynically described by Epeli Hau’ofa’s short story on a man who (by accident) smoked a page of his Bible and greatly suffered from the spiritual consequences (1983: 35ff; The wages of sin).

The session also invites papers analysing internet sources like chat-rooms, where icons and codes create both ‘expensive’ and ‘cheap’ new words in the fast-typing spontaneity of the world wide net. Pacific graffiti may be another field where ‘expensive’ words are found, e.g. in group-specific code words amongst urban gangs. Islanders’ letters to Western friends often follow a certain pattern with ‘expensive’ and ‘cheap’ passages. I was told by a teenager on Dobu (PNG), and this is the reason for the session’s title, that information on HIV/Aids was ‘expensive’ knowledge that he would certainly not pass on to his mates but keep to himself.
Session 6

Re-forming the land

Tony Crook and Susan Farran

Oceanic, anthropological and legal conceptions of land are under-going reform. Despite constitutional barriers, in some cases, to the alienation of land, pressures for land reform in Oceania are increasingly arising from internal and external agents responding to ambitions for development and the forces of capital. Reforms are at different stages in different Oceanic states, each of which has its own colonial history, particular legal framework, and commitment to international trade partnerships. Moreover, land reforms operate differently when the resources concerned are minerals, forestry, agricultural, riverine, marine or real estate.

As with other ‘social groups’, to appear as ‘landowners’, a collective has to mask their internal differences by eclipsing or cutting other possible connections and identities, and thereby also appear to have wealth at their disposal. These divisions of interest, making land a contested site for cultural and legal claims, may have precedents in kinship, yet they face transformation when encountering capitalist relations founded on the division of use-value and exchange-value. Although the social and legal identity of the person differs in the perspectives of these relations, people are able nonetheless to make these transactions work for themselves.

Some measures designed to meet external expectations, such as leasing, may appear in the short run to fall short of alienation, but questions are bound to arise for some people over the long run. Proposed and enacted land reform measures then, capture much more of social life than just property ownership, and much less than the wider connections people make through land.

- in light of debates over work and labour, possession and property, gift and commodity, does ‘alienation’ remain an appropriate anthropological or legal description of these transactions?
- do Oceanic descriptions of ‘land’ as a source of bodily substance, kinship resource and as a moral, malleable agent with a life of its own, bring into question the usefulness of taking land as ‘tangible’ rather than ‘intangible’ property?
- how do land reforms connect to contemporary urban drift, voluntary disenfranchisement and narratives of there being no land to return to?
- are there precedents in the divisions of kinship (ie paternal, maternal or affinal connections, residence and movement) that are serving as resources for the kinds of claims and counter-claims being made over land?
- as a counterpart to providing new legal definitions, land reform gives rise to new social forms and shapes group membership and definition—does this suggest that provisions in law are being taken on as innovative principles or idioms of kinship?

This session will consider land and its re-formations in the round-drawing together indigenous and exogenous perceptions, anthropological and legal perspectives.

Contact: Tony Crook
University of St. Andrews, Social Anthropology, St. Andrews, Fife, KY16 9AL, UK.
tony.crook@st-andrews.ac.uk

Susan Farran
University of Dundee, School of Law, Dundee DD1 4HN, UK.
S.E.Farran@dundee.ac.uk
Session 7

Culture in performance – probing the possibilities of cross-cultural understanding in tourism

Anke Tonnaer, Franca Tamisari, and Eric Venbrux

Whenever tourism attracts the attention of both scholarly and popular critique, the nature of these reflections usually hinges on ambivalence. Indeed, although many people enjoy travelling, few desire to carry a label as unattractive as that of a ‘tourist’. Nonetheless, the trade of cultural tourism is not only increasing; it has also gained momentum in international diplomatic environments, as for instance UNESCO’s ‘culture programme’ attests to (UNESCO 2006). In this particular programme UNESCO is liaising cultural tourism and ‘intercultural dialogue’ rather boldly, for the straightforward yet essential question of what actually happens in the meeting between indigenous ‘hosts’ and tourist ‘guests’ appears to be generally overlooked in this diplomatic setting. A desire to believe in the benevolence of (sensible) tourism initiatives impedes the posing of epistemological questions pertaining to the possibility of really encountering and comprehending the Other. In this session we will accordingly question the dynamics of the tourist interface by not only exploring what is being shared, but especially how this is shared. In particular, we invite papers that address the performative aspects of the tourist meeting from an ethnographic perspective, in which tourists are perceived no less as the ‘Other’ than their indigenous hosts. The ethnographic scope could include a wide range of social phenomena, from festivals to road-side sales of paintings, from glossy cultural tours to youth movements, from theatre to pop concerts. We are interested in how ‘cultures’, both indigenous and Western, are presented and re-presented on the touristic stage. How do forms of ‘auto-exoticism’ relate to imaginaries of the ‘Other’, and how do these affect their joint performance? How does commercialisation (and objectification) of ‘culture’ relate to the inter-subjective engagement or lack thereof? What other factors (economical, political) may impinge on the interaction? In short, does the interchange allow for creating a deeper insight into one another’s perspectives on the world in which they, tourists and indigenous people(s), in Geertz’s pointed phrasing, are ‘tumbled into an endless connection’?

Contact:  
Anke Tonnaer  
Dep. of Ethnography and Social Anthropology, University of Aarhus, Moesgaard, 8270 Hojbjerg, Denmark.  
etnoat@hum.au.dk

Franca Tamisari  
Studi Demoetnoantropologici, Dipartimento Studi Storici, Ca’ Foscari Università di Venezia, Italy.  
tamisari@unive.it

Eric Venbrux  
Dep. of Cultural Anthropology, Radboud University, PO Box 9103, 6500 HD Nijmegen, The Netherlands.  
e.venbrux@rs.ru.nl

Session 8

Winds of Change or Counter Currents in Pacific Music and Dance

Raymond Ammann

As the winds of change blew across the Pacific over the last 150 years, most music and dance underwent major transformations. Especially during the last 50 years, numerous creations have emerged and thrived that were influenced by far away cultural features. In many places, the original contexts for performing music and dance were altered or abandoned, producing new
contexts such as local and pan-Pacific arts festivals. Whereas many music cultures in the Pacific have adopted foreign instruments or developed foreign singing styles, some musical cultures have demonstrated more reluctance to changing their “grandfathers’” music and choreography.

This session is directed to researchers who specialise in music and dance and to anthropologists who have encountered interesting information in respect to new contexts for performance. We would like to hear examples from the various Pacific communities that easily combine foreign and local music and dances styles as well as examples from communities that demonstrate strong resistance to foreign influences in music and dance. Hypotheses that explain these particularities in terms of social or general cultural features are especially welcome.

Contact: Raymond Ammann
University of Basel, Munsterplax 19, CH-4051 Basel, Switzerland.
raymond.ammann@unibas.ch

Session 9

Ethnographic Museums at the beginning of the 21st Century: Stakes and Challenges
Roberta Colombo Dougoud

From the first half of the nineteenth century a number of ethnographic museums were created with the intention to collect and store the material culture of non-Western populations which were considered to be condemned to disappearance. The objects issued from these vanishing cultures were meant to permit the reconstruction of mankind history. At the same time, before the creation of Anthropological Institutes within Universities, it was inside the ethnographic museums that anthropological knowledge was elaborated. These were at the same time, laboratories of research and centres for teaching.

During the last forty years, ethnographic museums have been seriously questioned. Theoretical, methodological and ethical discussions have re-examined their role and function. Scholars and curators wonder about their even existence. Few years ago, Jean Jamin published an article with the provocative title: "Faut-il brûler les musées d'ethnographie?" (Shall we burn down ethnographic museums?). Trying to solve or simply to avoid a problem of redefinition, some museographic institutions have decided to remove the term "ethnographic" from their designation. Several months after the inauguration of Musée du Quai Branly in June 2006, the debate still goes on.

This session is directed not only to curators of museums, but also to researchers interested in art. The workshop aims to explore the present-day discussion on the role of ethnographic museums, and to investigate the way to go beyond their colonial heritage. Papers should deal with the following issues:

- changing role of ethnographic museums
- politics of representation
- new forms of knowledge sharing and collaboration between ethnographic museums and Oceania populations
- changing dynamics in contemporary art production in Oceania
- place of contemporary art and tourist art in ethnographic museums
- role of contemporary Pacific artists in display of historical and contemporary artefacts
- repatriation of objects
- collections on-line

Contact: Roberta Colombo-Dougoud
Musee d'Ethnographie 65-67 Boulevard Carl-Vog, 1211 Geneve, Switzerland.
colombodougoud@hotmail.com
**Session 10**  

**Food, Biodiversity and Livelihoods in Oceania: changes and challenges in a globalized world**  

_Andreas Egelund Christensen and Christine Jourdan_

The session will consider social, economic and climatic challenges that affect food, biodiversity and livelihoods in the Pacific from three different, but inter-related, perspectives:

1) Local food production systems, crucial to subsistence and survival, become vulnerable when global economic factors challenge their equilibrium: natural resources become depleted, eco systems are disturbed and destroyed, livelihoods are redefined. The question is how islands will adapt to future challenges of globalization and climate change which highly influence the local production system.

2) Niche production and international demands: Many island states are involved in niche productions that often include harvesting of marine resources (tuna, bêche-de-mer, trochus, for instance). Global demands for these often exclusive resources have led to an increasing globalization of small island states through integration in market economies and trade opportunities, and to increasing economic vulnerability of local economies.

3) Foodscape: Social changes have led to the redefinition of what food is, and to the transformation of patterns of food consumption. This is particularly evident when access to food is controlled by access to money and when new desires guide food choices. While social differentiation is revealed by access to food and food choices (for an increasing number of urbanites access to food is a struggle), new ideologies and practices linked to the production and consumption of food reveal changing lifestyles and livelihoods.

The organizers invite contributions on either of these sub-themes, as well as on historical studies of the transformation food production and consumption.

**Contact:**  
Christine Jourdan  
Concordia University  
jourdan@alcor.concordia.ca

**Session 11**  

**Islanders’ Voices**  

_Maria Teresa Bindella and Angelo Righetti_

The session deals with the literatures in English from the South Pacific (Hawaii to PNG via Tonga, Samoa, Fiji, New Zealand, Australia...) since the foundation of "Mana" (Suva, 1976) as well as with the achievements of the performing arts - theatre, cinema, music - in English.

**Contact:**  
Maria Teresa Bindella  
Università di Verona, Dipartimento di Anglistica, Via San Francesco 22, 37129 Verona, Italy.  
mariateresa.bindella@univr.it  

Angelo Righetti  
Università di Verona, Dipartimento di Anglistica, Via San Francesco 22, 37129 Verona, Italy.  
angelo.righetti@univr.it
Session 12

Roy Wagner: Symbolic Anthropology and the fate of the New Melanesian Ethnography

*Sandra Bamford, James Weiner, Joel Robbin, and Justin Shaffner*

With the publication of his latest book, The Anthropology of the Subject, Roy Wagner may be said to have articulated most of the implications of his original conception of a Symbolic Anthropology, first described in detail in The Invention of Culture over 30 years ago. This conception of culture and social process in Papua New Guinea has had extraordinary influence on work throughout Melanesia over the last forty years. We therefore think this is a fitting time to invite anthropologists of Melanesia who have utilized all aspects of Wagner’s theory and the ethnographic insights he has offered on the Daribi and Barok religion, symbolism, and life world in their own ethnographic analysis of Melanesian societies, to assess what Wagner’s work, and the New Melanesian Ethnography it played a foundational role in launching, have contributed to anthropology in general, and to speculate on the future of one of cultural anthropology’s most powerful conceptualizations in the last century.

Contact: Sandra Bamford
University of Toronto at Scarborough 1265 Military Trail, The UTSC Dep. of Social Sciences, Toronto, Canada.
*bamford@utsc.utoronto.ca*

James Weiner
ANU, PO Box 82 ,ACT 2605 Curtin, Australia.

Joel Robbins
University of California, San Diego, Dept of Anthropology
9500 Gilman Dr. La Jolla, CA 92093-0532 San Diego, USA.

Justin Shaffner
University of Cambridge, Dep. Social Anthropology, Free School Lane, Cambridge CB2 3RF, UK.

Session 13

Waves of Oceanic Change:
History, Identity, Politics, Religion and Media.

*Giovanni Bennardo and Margit Wolfsberger*

The captivating world, geographic, human, and cultural, that characterizes the Pacific ocean is as fast moving and changing as the waves that shape its never resting aquatic world surface. This session tries to capture snapshots of this world in eight different moments and places. The intention is to record some of the present changes so that we might be able to forecast patterns and directions toward which this oceanic world is moving.

The first contribution by Margit Wolfsberger touches on an historical and poignant example of ‘globalization’ and ‘transnationalism’ that is bound to provide insights into contemporary similar phenomena. The second contribution by Sela Taufa focuses straightforwardly onto contemporary ‘globalization’ as two different groups of Polynesian immigrants to Europe cope with their newly found transnational and social situation. The third contribution by Viola Carmilla illustrates the relevance of traditional exchange practices in a diasporic Samoan community in New Zealand.

The fourth contribution by Hone Sadler dovetails with the previous ones and focuses on historical and crosscultural issues within a Polynesian country regarding funerary practices. Local and global ideologies of space contribute to the formation of what Rapa Nui is today and will be in the future.
This fifth contribution by Olaug Andreassen is followed by Giovanni Bennardo’s assessment of the contemporary debate between monarchy and democracy in a riot stricken Kingdom of Tonga. Then, Jonathon Prasad depicts Fijian dissent to recent coups as articulated in a local religious movement. Anders Rasmussen explores personhood and material things in Papua New Guinea. Finally, Darrell Tryon investigate new identity formation phenomena embedded in new linguistic practices emerging in New Caledonia.

The scholarly contribution to this session provide a necessary lens for those interested in gaining a better understanding of contemporary changes in Oceania. We also hope that the limited knowledge provided may help in generating considerable insights into the near future of this area of the world.

Contact:  
Giovanni Bennardo  
Northern Illinois University, Dept. of Anthropology, 109 Davenport, 607 S. Mathews, Urbana, Illinois 61801, USA.  
bennardo@niu.edu

Margit Wolfsberger  
University of Vienna, Dep. For Social and Cultural Anthropology, Universitätsstr. 7/NIG, 1010 Vienna, Austria.  
margit.wolfsberger@univie.ac.at

Session 14  
EUROFO.doc: European Documentation for Oceanists  
Arlette Apkarian  
CANCELLLED

The documentary resources about Oceania are very scattered among European countries and among a wide range of institutions. These resources include forms and types of information containers that are of various nature. Some resources may only cover some Pacific countries, others the whole of Oceania or Australia; some focus on particular topics, others are multidisciplinary. Hence, European researchers and lecturers working on the Pacific are inclined to search for documentation in centres located in countries in the Pacific, often without considering to query existing resources in Europe. The question relevant for this first workshop is thus to display what, at the present time, are the documentary resources available for Oceanists in Europe and to engage in discussions regarding future actions to be taken to increase a better knowledge about the resources available. The establishment of a European documentary network for Oceanists is a collaborative solution that should be considered in the light of long term relationships and exchanges between documentary centres.

The aims of this network are manifold:  
- develop further meetings for librarians, archivists, persons in charge of oceanist collections, etc,  
- spread information about resources (free/official/online publications) and about acquisitions,  
- develop opportunities for systematic exchange of documents (working/research/discussion papers...), and  
- collaborate in mutual competences.

Through the multiplication and diversification of these actions, the main aim has the specific purpose to increase the value and the publicity of Pacific collections in Europe and, through the network, to increase the efficiency of documentation within the scientific activity.

We invite participants to this one-day workshop to present a paper responding to one or several of the following questions. Which are the geographic areas covered by particular collections? What sciences, disciplines or topics are particularly concerned by the collections? What are forms (maps, written, audio/visual records) and the types (archival materials, books, newspapers) these collections in? What are the conditions of accessibility? And last but not least, what are the developmental projects concerned with the collections.

Contact:  
Arlette Apkarian  
The CREDO chief-librarian.
arlette.apkarian@univ-provence.fr