

38. Pacific Knowledge(s) as Model to 'Educate the World'? Re-gional Potentials in Times of Crises (Workshop)

Janne von Seggern, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg

Anita von Poser, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg

Regional Group „Oceania“

Discussant: Dominik Schieder, Universität Siegen

Contemporary Oceania is entangled in numerous political as well as environmental crises. In this context, many Pacific island societies claim that concerted efforts against local threats caused, for example, by climate change, should be central to international political interests. At the same time, Pacific Islanders actively oppose the instrumentalization of Oceania as a venue for disputes over global spheres of influence and an area of imposed expertise. Consequently, there are ongoing discussions on what kind of 'legitimate' knowledge should be at the core of educational practices and measures to counter challenges such as environmental hazards, resource exploitation, or processes of political destabilization in the islands. As part of such discussions, Indigenous communities potentially define 'valuable' knowledge and expertise in different ways than local, and foreign politicians, academics, and other (inter)national professionals.

This workshop focuses on ethnographic encounters of Pacific Islander epistemologies and their practical implications, for example, in the process of seeking solutions to urgent crises. We invite contributions by scholars whose ethnographic work sheds light on local knowledge-making practices and reflects and assesses its educational potential. In this light, we are also interested in contributions that ponder the role of the researcher's capacity to be actively engaged in various forms of, and dialogues between, knowledge-making processes in the field. In its broadest sense, the workshop aims to reflect on how to put Pacific knowledge on the global map and if and how it can function as a model to 'educate the world'.

Contesting and Reclaiming Knowledge of Garamut/Slit-drum

Alphonse Aime, Divine Word University Madang

Garamut (the Tok Pisin word for slit-log or slit-drum, sometimes referred to as slit-gong), one of the most prestigious and sacred objects of some groups of people in Papua New Guinea, has become a misunderstood object as a result of colonial intervention and definitions. This misunderstanding continues today. These

definitions have obscured the cultural meanings which were originally embedded in the livelihood of the people. Therefore, there is a call for earlier scholarly work to be critically analysed whether they have created a legacy of indigenous people losing their cultural knowledge. This is a challenge to the existing framework of anthropological studies that have placed emphasis on *garamut* primarily as musical instruments. I will argue that the slit-drum is much more than a hollowed piece of log that produces a sound but rather an object that is enmeshed with social and political life. Since the days of ancestors, *garamut* have played a significant role in Papua New Guinea in constructing peoples' social and kinship structure. There were different distinctions and use of *garamut*; from spirit *garamut*, to clan *garamut*, to private *garamut* which were used as general purpose, and *garamut* used during feasts and performances or for the sending of messages.

Songs, and Other Offspring. Creation, Valuation, and the Circulation of Knowledge in Melanesia

James Leach, Aix-Marseille University

This presentation will draw on ethnography from Madang Province in Papua New Guinea to illustrate principles underlying the creation and valuation of knowledge. The connection between musical and artistic creators and their creations offers a startling vocabulary of connection and detachment, while investigations into the preservation and documentation of *kastom* and traditional knowledge demonstrate how such knowledge is constantly made relevant to contemporary concerns and endeavours. I will suggest that to understand the place and importance of Melanesian knowledges requires understanding how different 'knowledge aesthetics' form parts of different political economies of value.

Anthropological Knowledge Production in Oceania. Regional Potentials for a Decolonisation of Western Academic Anthropology

Juliane Neuhaus, Universität Zürich

In Oceania, as elsewhere, power relations in knowledge production have been highly debated for many decades. Oceanian anthropologists have developed challenging proposals to decolonise anthropology and academia in Oceania at large. Nevertheless, insights from this region do not figure prominently in recent theoretical discussions about coloniality and decolonisation "about the subaltern" (Grosfoguel 2007, 211). By focusing on the long-lasting Oceanian discourse, this talk aims to contribute to the decolonisation of Western academia by proposing an anthropology "with and from a subaltern perspective" (*ibid.*). Drawing on recent

online research, and experiences with teaching the anthropology of Oceania, this article familiarises a European readership with Indigenous anthropologists from Oceania, and their struggles with our discipline. It looks at Indigenous scholars' reflections about and propositions for different ways of knowledge production and Indigenous research methods. The article concludes with suggestions to further the decolonisation process within Western academia.

Researching family farming, lifestyle and health: small scale practices for global challenges

Desirée Hetzel, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Arno Pascht, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

Matthias Kowasch, Pädagogische Hochschule Steiermark

Smallholder farms produce about one third of the world's food and are an important contribution for food security. In Oceania, family farming, fishing and fruit picking do not only contribute to nutrition of local communities but are also important for ceremonies and environmental protection. However, smallholder farming is increasingly challenged by transformation of production means, infrastructures and by changing lifestyles and diet behaviours. In times of multiple crises, people returned to growing food locally during the border closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic, for example in Vanuatu. Nevertheless, only few multidisciplinary studies exist about cultivation knowledge and practices in South Pacific islands, about different varieties and especially the innovative and dynamic characteristics of family farming. The EU-funded FALAH project aims to enable exchange on knowledge related to family farming, lifestyle and health in Pacific Island countries, considering rapid socio-economic transitions and climate change. It supports exchange between researchers from various disciplines from the South Pacific and Europe. We will discuss how social scientists can contribute to enhance the understanding of family farming in Pacific Island countries and beyond. Moreover, we question education patterns about potentials of family farming for more sustainable futures in an era of global environmental changes.