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## **Intersecting Inequalities, Moving Positionalities: An Interlude**

Margaret Jolly

### **Introduction**

The breadth and depth of Martha Macintyre's scholarship and humanity are celebrated across this volume. As a long-term colleague and friend, I am honoured to add some words that, although they were invited as an 'Afterword', are perhaps better described as an 'Interlude', that sits between the feast of scholarly reflections presented in the preceding chapters and some more personal engagements yet to come. These include a biographical interview between Martha and Alex Golub, some moving and hilarious tributes to her and a long, enticing list of Martha's publications to date—an assortment of after-dinner treats, if you like. Anyone who has had the pleasure of feasting at Martha's table, in addition to reading her writing, will appreciate the aptness of the gastronomic analogy.

Following the diversity of a dozen chapters and the elegant integration offered by Neil Maclean in the Prologue and Nick Bainton and Debra McDougall in the introductory chapter, I offer my own exegeses and distillations of connecting themes. I highlight three critical characteristics of Martha's scholarship to which the authors in this volume attest and have engaged with in various ways. First, I witness her staunch and sustained critique of inequalities—in particular, gender and class and their

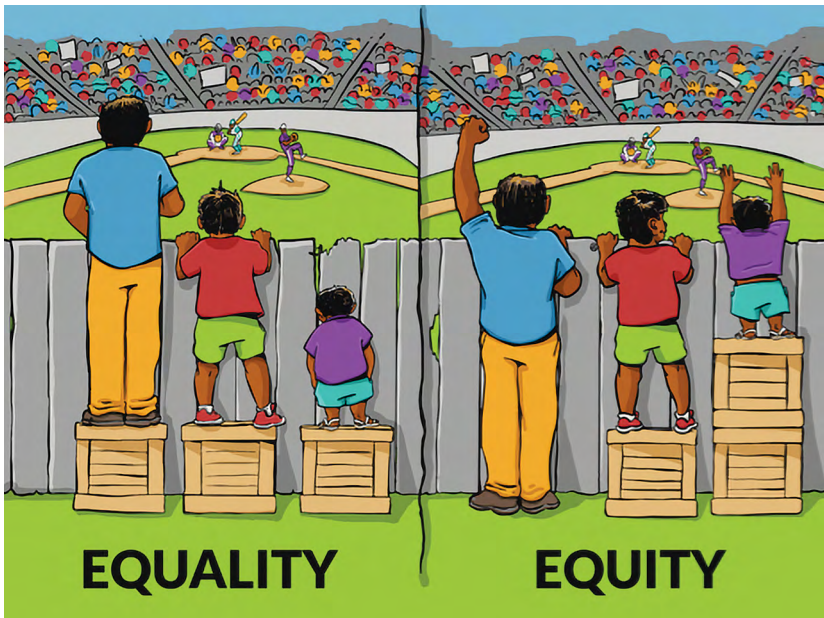
intersection in Papua New Guinea (PNG). This has manifested in her intimate ethnographic work, in which she has shown how those aspects of matriliney in Milne Bay that enhanced women's power in the past have been eroded by the male domination inherent in colonialism and capitalist development, particularly in extractive industries. It is also apparent in her writing on the persistence of gender inequalities across PNG, as indigenous and exogenous patriarchies have creolised to create novel and, sometimes, more malign forms of male domination—for example, in her argument that the beauty and danger of indigenous masculinities were remixed in the figure of the Melanesian Rambo (see Macintyre, 2008; Maclean, this volume). Second, I observe how, from her very first writing, in collaboration with Edmund Leach on a classic volume on the *kula* (Leach & Leach 1983), in her bibliography of the *kula* (Macintyre, 1983a) and in her own ethnography of Tubetube (e.g. Macintyre, 1983b) she has exposed the chimera of closed, persisting cultures, conceived in antithetical opposition rather than relation to foreign influences. This, as Maclean elaborates in the Prologue, was fundamental to her critique of the dichotomy of the gift and the commodity and of Marilyn Strathern's influential *The gender of the gift* (Macintyre, 1995; see also Jolly, 1992). This view was also fundamental to our collaboration (Jolly & Macintyre, 1989), which argued that any idea of an unchanging domestic domain in the Pacific was at odds with the dramatic reconfigurations of indigenous domesticities catalysed by colonial economies and Christian conversions. Third, I observe how Martha has always positioned herself as a critical anthropologist, sustaining a strong ethic of ethnographic fidelity to her interlocutors in many sites and challenging lingering romanticisation of culture in provocative scholarly analyses and revealing reports, often in the fraught contexts of researching extractive industries and gender violence in PNG (e.g. Macintyre, 1995, 2011, 2012, 2017; Macintyre & Spark, 2017).

## In/Equality?

Any consideration of inequality must rely on a vision of what equality is or might be. However, I do not dwell on the protracted debates about this in the canon of Western philosophy and political science or in grand theories about the alleged difference between hierarchical holism and egalitarian individualism, proposed by Louis Dumont (see Jolly & Mosko, 1994; Strathern, 1987, 1988). Rather, I merely note the extraordinary difficulty

of pursuing equality in a global context in which inequality is deeply sedimented and exponentially expanding. As the editors observe in their introductory chapter, ‘we are witnessing its extensification globally and its intensification locally’ (Bainton & McDougall, this volume).

Liberal theorists in Western contexts have often differentiated between equality of opportunity (given diverse, unequal origins) and equality of outcome (of equal endpoints). More recently, some corporate primers and even some neoliberal feminists have distinguished equality (which entails that everyone is at the same level) and equity (which denotes impartiality or lack of discrimination). Simple poster charts, now available online, suggest that equality is about sameness and quantity, whereas equity is about quality and fairness (see Figure 1). Such linguistic niceties in English and conceptual oppositions focusing on the rights of individuals within states, corporations or communities may occlude the deeply structural inequalities of our world, the sedimentation and the intersection of gender, race and class.



**Figure 1: Commonly used image depicting the difference between ‘equality’ and ‘equity’.**

Source: Interaction Institute for Social Change (Artist: Angus Maguire).

In the early anthropology of PNG and the broader Pacific, there existed a tendency to contrast the allegedly more egalitarian polities of the Western Pacific ‘Melanesia’ and the more hierarchical polities of the Eastern Pacific ‘Polynesia’. In the introductory chapter, the editors allude to Sahlins’ influential antinomy of big man versus chief (1963)—the first based on personal generosity and redistribution and the second derived from inherited genealogy and divine power. This seemed consistent with a claim that Eastern Pacific polities were more advanced and proximate to European civilisation than the Western Pacific, a story that had roots in the gendered racial logics of early European exploratory voyages (see Jolly, 2012), but that also persisted in popular stories of cultural evolution prevalent in some anthropological writings into the twentieth century, at least (for a critique of this, see Hau’ofa, 1975; for a RePresentation of Melanesia, see Kabataulaka, 2015). Sahlins, at least, saw the irony in reversing the imperial ‘time’s arrow’, observing that Polynesian chiefdoms were more akin to feudal lords and Melanesian big men closer to capitalist entrepreneurs.

A library of subsequent ethnographies and comparative analyses refuted this simplistic dualism, documenting the presence and sometimes collapse of many hierarchical chiefly systems in the Western Pacific, both hereditary and achieved, and the crucial importance of performance and not just inheritance in all forms of power, albeit a chief, a big man, a great man, a big shot (e.g. Godelier & Strathern, 1991; Martin, 2013). Increasingly, claims of ‘egalitarianism’ in the Western Pacific and the masculinist bias in such formulations have been challenged—by evidence of both profound gender inequalities in many allegedly ‘egalitarian’ societies in PNG (e.g. Jolly, 1987) and of those rarer women who were acknowledged as ‘big women’ or chiefs (Zimmer-Tamakoshi, this volume).

## Intersectionality

Equally foundational to this volume, if implicit rather than explicit in most of the chapters, is the notion of intersectionality. American lawyer and civil rights activist Kimberlé Crenshaw is usually credited with coining the concept (1991). Crenshaw developed a robust sense of how, in the particular context of the United States (US) legal system, identifications of being black and being a woman intersected and interacted. Her insights proved profoundly important in both critical race studies and intersectional feminism. She popularised the concept in public addresses and TED

Talks, stressing its salience and urgency in confronting contemporary inequalities in the US. However, there were also precursors, such as the British socialist feminist scholars who opposed the essentialism of white radical feminists—they were effectively arguing for the intersectionality of gender, race and class. Writers such as Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias (1989) have spoken of the need to think beyond the additive terms of layered, multiple oppressions, to analyse how inequalities have interacted and mutually shaped one another. Also in 1991, Australian feminist scholars published a volume, titled *Intersexions*, that was inspired by similar visions and values (Bottomley, de Lepervanche & Martin, 1991), in which I published a chapter reflecting on the politics of feminism in Vanuatu, in the context of colonialism and decolonisation (Jolly, 1991).

The editors of this volume aspire to develop an intersectional approach to inequality in the Western Pacific, akin to that recently espoused by Holly Wardlow (2018) in her research with Huli women in the PNG highlands. In opposition to those who lament an undue fixation with ‘suffering subjects’ in anthropology (Robbins, 2013), they instead argue that this is an urgent need, given the ‘increasingly harsh conditions that characterise many rural and urban settings’ (Bainton & McDougall, this volume) due to the exponential expansion of inequalities. Their poignant opening vignettes—juxtaposing the PNG government’s purchase of a posse of Maseratis for foreign dignitaries visiting the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting, while young children were dying in a resurgent polio epidemic—consummately evoke the surreal horror of the situation. They allude to Crenshaw’s model of a traffic intersection, a junction of fast-moving inequalities, but suggest a more Oceanic image of a person caught in the vortex of converging currents. Like them, I see intersectionality, not as a grand theory, but rather as a practical prism that distils, reflects and refracts a complex reality.

## **Indigenous and Exogenous Inequalities: Gender and Generation, Race and Class**

In its subtitle, this volume privileges what some have seen as the ‘holy trinity’ in formulations of intersecting inequalities—gender, race and class. On first glance, we might conceive of gender as an indigenous inequality (in addition to the inequalities of generation or elder/younger, also discussed in this volume). We might consider race and class to be

exogenous since they originate in white colonialism and capitalist modes of development. However, as Martha Macintyre's corpus has demonstrated and several chapters in this volume reveal, indigenous inequalities of gender and generation have also been changing dramatically, partly through interaction with these introduced inequalities of race and class.

This is clearly revealed in Debra McDougall's chapter on the Solomon Islands, which examines a vernacular language education movement on the island of Ranongga. In this context, race is relevant in that the English language introduced by diverse white colonial agents still occupies a privileged position in the formal education system. This primacy disadvantages rural children in particular; they often feel humiliated by the difficulties of learning in a foreign language and may leave school functionally illiterate and, thus, unable to compete for the few jobs available to young Solomon Islanders. The vernacular language movement, named the Kulu Institute and headed by Dr Alpheaus Zobule, now has a beautiful campus and over a thousand students per year. Its pedagogy involves a challenging exploration of the structure of the local language and a well-sequenced series of lessons taught in an intensive format. This has enabled students to perform far better in their formal studies that are taught in English. Students have described their lessons in English as trying to eat raw food as compared to their cooked, digestible and delicious lessons in the vernacular.

McDougall reveals the dynamics of gender and generation involved in the movement, its students and the local context. The first leaders were three local men who had the autonomy to leave their families to catalyse the movement; they were later joined by women teachers, and there has been a recent influx of female students, as numbers have grown. Boys and girls have responded differently to their educational experiences at school and in the movement. Young men were often angry about being taught in English, feeling that they were being 'ruined' by this and suggesting that such humiliations led them to lives of dissolution and crime. Their education at Kulu instead gave them a sense of self-respect: as one young man said, 'it was as though I was freed from prison' (McDougall, this volume). Girls evinced far less anger about school and a greater sense of heightened opportunity, although they are still more disadvantaged than boys, in terms of familial support for their schooling; they are engaged in far more domestic work than boys and bear the risks of possible pregnancy and of gender and sexual violence while at, or travelling to, school.

However, these gendered differences are also deeply generational. The grandfathers and fathers of these boys moved into positions of respect and authority in accordance with the expanded opportunities for men in the colonial and postcolonial periods. As male power expanded with the incursions of copra plantations and logging, women were more focused on their gardens, domestic life and local authority. The grandmothers and mothers of girls now attending school experienced far more barriers—barriers that have now been redressed by both government and aid policies directed towards gender equality. Young women now sense far more opportunities and husbands and partners are increasingly seen as more dispensable in forming families; McDougall (this volume) cites Macintyre (1988) on the ‘dispensable husband’ of Tubetube oral tradition. Some young men experience a sense of worthlessness due to being so excluded from domestic responsibilities and satisfying work and may express anger in response (the negative agency of ‘fuck you’). An interesting alternative is emergent in charismatic Christian revivals, in what McDougall terms the ‘gentle patriarchy of Pentecostalism’ (McDougall, this volume; see also Cox & Macintyre, 2014), which puts men at the centre of domestic life. As Macintyre consistently insisted and McDougall affirms, ‘contemporary patriarchy is not a holdover from traditional patriarchy’ (McDougall, this volume; see also Cox & Macintyre, 2014).

John Barker’s analysis of marriage and gender relations among the Maisin of Collingwood Bay, Oro Province, similarly reveals that what may appear as ‘tradition’ may not be indigenous, much like Macintyre’s ‘better homes and gardens’, which have been dramatically reconfigured by colonial influences and Samoan missionaries in Milne Bay (Macintyre, 1989). Based on a conjoint exploration of Anglican mission archives and Maisin oral histories, he charts the dramatic changes in marriage and gender relations precipitated both by Christianity and economic circumstances. In his view, these changes derived from friction between the basic values believed by white Anglican missionaries and Maisin people to be inherent in marriage. Marriage was a preoccupation of high church Anglican missionaries, who saw it as a sacrament with crucial ramifications for church membership. It was a lifelong commitment, ordained by God, to both the partner and the church; therefore, divorce caused excommunication. Conversely, Maisin people saw marriage as akin to all reciprocal exchanges, wherein exchange partners shared their inner selves with each other through the materiality of food and valuables.

The contemporary shape of Maisin marriage is the result of both historical friction and accommodation. Early Anglicans distinguished legitimate marriage from Maisin ‘concubinage’ (particularly polygyny) and lamented the ‘laxity’ of Maisin married life, given the prevalence of affairs. They punished sexual exchanges between adolescents at mission boarding schools and excommunicated couples who were living sinful lives. Later Papuan missionaries were more forgiving and ended excommunication. However, the shape of Maisin marriage was also moulded by other external influences. The global flu pandemic of 1918–1920 (locally perceived as sorcery) elevated the desire for fertility, as did the child bonuses paid during the colonial period. The head tax on adult males and their recruitment as labourers to work on plantations and then as carriers in World War II all influenced marriage and gender relations.

The Indigenous diarchy (*kavolsabu*) between the feasting, peace-making clans and the warrior clans, between elder brothers and younger brothers, was transposed onto the relationship between the church and the congregation, which was enjoined to offer respect. The church was seen to be effecting peace, by stopping conflicts over contested betrothals and marriages. Infant betrothal had waned by the 1950s; however, some polygynists persisted. Today, full *kastom* weddings are rare; Christian weddings are rarer still. Couples often wait until they have several children before they seek the church sanction to bless their union as Christian. The Anglican campaign to impose Christian marriage had wider implications for gender relations, given the ontological equivalence of woman and man before God. Still, this entailed both sharing and segregation. Whereas the London Missionary Society and the Methodists focused on the married couple and domestic life, high Anglicans (like the Catholics) focused on collective hierarchies. The male-dominated church and the Mothers’ Union functioned as an auxiliary that both supported the clergy and challenged its hegemony, instituting a female hierarchy in which older women exerted power over younger women.

Changing relations of gender and generation are also central to Laura Zimmer-Tamakoshi’s chapter on the Gende of the PNG highlands. She shows how the *longue durée* of Gende life has been influenced by complex historical processes: their enforced movement northwards as exiles in tribal warfare, their changing positions as mediators in networks of trade moving from north to south between Chimbu and Gende, the impact of male urban migration, coffee growing and roads and, most recently, the regional position of Gende in relation to extractive industries



(e.g. Ramu Nickel and Marengo Mining). This example clearly shows how inequalities generated between and within ethnic groups by the dynamics of mining, the declaration of the zones of those affected (as defined by the PNG state) and the formation of landowner groups interacts powerfully with gender and generational dynamics.

Zimmer-Tamakoshi observes dramatic shifts in both gender and generational dynamics, due to the emergence of class differences. In her earlier work, she witnessed more egalitarian and agreeable relations between men and women. Young women were taught about sexuality and birthing and about their rights as individuals and in relation to their husbands' claims. Moreover, through the practice of *tupoi*, Gende women were able to redeem their brideprice through the hard work of raising pigs and accumulating valuables and cash. This led to increased authority and control over land belonging to their own and other clans and control over pig herds. Zimmer-Tamakoshi has witnessed the power of both big men and big women, who alike promoted the wellbeing of the collective.

However, during her fieldwork in the 1980s, she also observed how young men were suffering from long periods of bachelorhood and, thus, not attaining the status of full adults. Older men were inclined to invest in migrants and returning labourers rather than their sons, which generated intergenerational conflict. However, the arrival of mining ended this bachelorisation, as young men secured jobs in and around mining sites, used their newfound wealth to pay their own brideprice (and even take several wives) and to cement their land rights through payments to their fathers. These changing generational dynamics have also generated new gender dynamics, whereby young women are increasingly seen as the property of their husbands and, as brideprices increase, women find it harder to redeem their brideprice. Marriages are increasingly concentrated around the Ramu Nickel site—this is to narrow ties and concentrate claims for royalties and other benefits. There are fewer jobs for women in mining and any jobs are also less well paid. Women also often experience conflicts with co-wives.

Zimmer-Tamakoshi sees these intersecting processes as generating a new moral economy. There has been a fracturing of Gende society, which she describes as 'unnerving generational splits' (Zimmer-Tamakoshi, this volume). Young men invest their hopes for the future in mining, even though they also acknowledge it as destructive and unsustainable. Increasingly, men evince a selfish desire for the pleasures of sex and alcohol;

‘Boys’ as old as 40 rent hotel rooms and pay sex workers, emulating the style of those corrupt politicians that they often criticise. Women who have secured new wealth (e.g. Betty) have started local enterprises such as trout farms—these are often still dependent on family labour. However, the differences between her glamorous large house and the ‘smoky huts of her sisters’ (Zimmer-Tamakoshi, this volume) are palpable. Local critics killed all her fingerling trout. This is not ‘open class war’, suggests Zimmer-Tamakoshi; however, there clearly exists extreme sensitivity about differences that emerge from the cash economy (see Gewertz & Errington; Bainton, this volume).

## **Class, *Landonas* and the Moral Economy of Extraction**

Several chapters raise questions about these new socioeconomic inequalities, the language of class and the pivotal place of extractive industries in both the PNG economy and what has been termed the ‘moral economy’. As the editors astutely observe, although class has exogenous origins, it has assumed a very distinctive form in the Western Pacific. John Cox observes that the distinction between the ‘élites’ and the grassroots is still predominant in discussions of emergent class distinctions in PNG. However, he does not resile from discussing the ‘middle class’ and their problematic relationship to the ‘grassroots’. As the botanical metaphor suggests, poorer people are often thought to be immobile and their material desires seen as naive and greedy. This contrasts with the spatio-temporal mobility and legitimate modern desires of urban elites, exercised in shopping malls, watching TV, imbibing the internet and prosperity gospels in Pentecostalist churches.<sup>1</sup> This is apparent in newspaper articles and media reports about fast money schemes in which middle-class investment is legitimated (even though few have gained even meagre financial rewards), whereas the poor are accused of having a ‘cargo cult mentality’.

In deploying the old colonial trope of ‘cargo cult’, the postcolonial middle class have (according to Cox) ‘weaponised’ it, justifying their own accumulation of wealth as a sign of their economic and moral discipline

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1 In a reversal of the same class-based dualism, the life of the rural poor can also be romanticised as harmonious and non-violent (a fantasy that is belied by many of the chapters in this book).

while critiquing the laziness or poor discipline of the poor. Schemes such as the Personal Viability scheme operating at Lihir (see Bainton, 2010) legitimate the refusal of kin obligations on the part of the wealthy and mystify the structural inequalities created by the mine with neoliberal notions of individual opportunities. Moreover, as social collateral becomes financialised, it undermines pre-existing social safety nets and converts kin relations into ones of paternalist patron-clientage (see Cox, 2018).

Even when middle-class Papua New Guineans manifest good intentions to help rural kin pay school fees, contribute to medical or funeral needs, pay brideprice or to establish locally beneficial development programs, the ensuing dependency often co-exists with a sense of moral superiority in doing good. This sits in parallel to the ‘sentimental cosmopolitanism’ promoted by big international non-governmental organisations (BINGOs) in fundraising for aid, argues Cox (this volume). Mobile phones and social media make it far more difficult to refuse poor distant kin and fears may be stoked that, if they fail to be generous, they will incur revenge of material or divine kinds. However, if money is used in what is perceived as ‘bad’ ways or if development projects fail, it is the poor rural kin who are ‘scolded’ like children and blamed. This occludes the failure of the PNG state to meet the basic health and education needs of its citizens.

Colin Filer also debates the discourse of class in his fascinating study of the mining workforce in PNG, pondering whether they can be described as either a ‘national proletariat’ or a ‘labour aristocracy’. Based on an exhaustive survey of 285 wage-earners working or previously employed in the mining industry, he addresses several questions. The first was posed by the original World Bank funders who commissioned the study with the question ‘what were good jobs for development?’—this was framed in terms of their broader social value rather than the income generated for the individual. It is difficult, observes Filer, to view mining jobs as good for development, given that a very high dependency on mining and petroleum co-exists with PNG ranking very low on the human development index in the region. The other questions addressed by Filer are whether the ‘enclave’ development of mining sites is reflected in mining workers being socially detached from others and whether mining jobs do have positive social qualities akin to jobs in health and education.

This survey generated a series of fascinating findings. I will focus on those about gender, the moral economy of giving to kin and class consciousness. First, it is apparent that, despite the often-attested absence

of women in mining, there is a growing percentage of women employed at provincial, national and international levels and, increasingly, in technical and managerial roles. Second, it emerges that most of those surveyed, both women and men, were heavily engaged in a remittance economy, redistributing their wealth to kin and others. They could not emulate an opulent lifestyle nor evince what has been called ‘possessive individualism’ because they (both men and women) were redistributing rather than accumulating wealth. The variation between individuals in how much was redistributed depended on the size of the pay packet—this likely meant that men remitted more. Finally, Filer adjudges an absence of class consciousness among these mining industry workers and, perhaps especially, among women. Although the results of the survey were not definitive, they seem to suggest that women working in the mining industry were less likely to join trade unions, more compliant and less recalcitrant in relation to bosses and less likely to leave their employer for a better job.

It proves interesting to compare the national scale, quantitative survey and interview methods of Filer’s study with Michael Main’s more ethnographically focused study of the Huli people of the PNG highlands. This is a region that has been dramatically reshaped by the promise and the disappointment of the large PNG Liquefied Natural Gas (PNG LNG) project. This was, as Main relates, supposed to generate bounty both for the national economy and, particularly, for those living proximate to the project and most affected by it, such as the Huli people. Although there have been some benefits in compensation and royalties to those men adjudged to be landowners and the arrival of PNG LNG has assisted the formation of the separate Hela Province, both national and local benefits have proved to be profoundly disappointing. At the national level, profits have been siphoned off by corrupt politicians and held in offshore accounts, while local dynamics have reconfigured political economies in a way that Main describes as a passage ‘from donation to handout’ (this volume).

He suggests that Huli people evince a strong ethos of both materialism and individualism in the pursuit of inequality; however, in this chapter, we see this manifest only in men. He deploys a distinction drawn by a much earlier ethnographer, Robert Glasse, between two types of Huli leaders: those relying on expert genealogical knowledge used in land disputes and rituals and those who, by individual ability and volition, accumulated wealth and, thereby, social status. He acknowledges that

both forms of leadership excluded women. These two forms of male authority are manifest in the respective careers and the speeches of Allan Anjo and Andersen Agiru—the first more reliant on expert genealogical knowledge, whose truth claims were widely respected, and the second inspired by visions of wealth through materialist modernist development, and who credited his own speech with prophetic efficacy. However, in the next generation, male authority has been reshaped by the experience of the PNG LNG project and the two forms converge; expert knowledge about land and genealogy may form the basis for capturing significant wealth from the PNG LNG project and translating this into political authority. Further, Main suggests that, as elsewhere in the Western Pacific, the position of paramount chief has been newly created to justify elite pre-eminence in a period of turbulent conflict and intense economic competition.

Nick Bainton's chapter moves our focus to the Lihir goldmine in New Ireland Province and highlights the crucial connections between those inequalities generated between the mining company Newcrest and all Lihirians and those inequalities among Lihirians, on the basis of their location in regions more or less affected by the mine. He consummately analyses the situation on Lihir in terms of Polanyi's notion of the 'double movement' of increasing marketisation (which is dependent on the myth of a self-regulating market free of state intervention) and a counter-movement against marketisation (which insists on the sanctity of land and labour). This clearly resonates with the widespread claim in PNG, and the Western Pacific more broadly, that 'land is life' and with resistances to the enclosure and commodification of land and the destruction of the environment, not only on the basis of class interest.

In Lihir, this counter-movement is expressed in the periodic, almost annual, practice of closing down the mine through the use of the *gorgor*—an indigenous taboo whereby a male authority places a ginger plant imbued with sacred potency to ban the use of a resource (e.g. a garden or a fruit tree) or to enforce a boundary. The *gorgor* has been repurposed to 'menace' the mine, scaling up this symbol of male authority, imbuing it with potent new meanings and avoiding the violent conflicts of blockades and destruction that occur at other PNG mining sites. The *gorgor* evokes the irreparable loss felt by the *landona*—a novel individual and collective identity emergent in the context of PNG's extractive economy (Filer, 1997). The separation of people from their land and the consequent destruction and pollution can never be truly compensated. Mine closures

are often effected to secure promises—the cash compensation, royalties, company equity, business contracts or community development of the Integrated Benefits Package agreement—or to protest the dust, noise and light of the mine and its pollution of soil, rivers, reefs and ocean. As Bainton argues, a seemingly extractive ethos is imbued with a clear moral message, with parallels to the ‘moral economy’ E. P. Thompson discerned among the English working class. The *gorgor* represents a way for Lihirians to demonstrate that they are not humiliated beggars; they are landlords, not tenants, and patrons, not clients. Protests are not only about accumulating wealth, but also about demonstrating local power. There exists a mutual incomprehension between the company and Lihirians—cash is offered, health and education benefits are given (where the state has failed miserably); however, this will never suffice to compensate the irrevocable loss experienced.

However, not all Lihirians experience this equally. Those more proximate to the mine receive more benefits, according to the protocols of the nationally regulated zones of entitlement. Consistent grievances are expressed about the unequal distribution of benefits and the unequal burdens imposed. Some relocations, such as that of Kapit village, failed miserably and people are now experiencing difficulties with housing and gardens and with food and water insecurities. Such differences may be manipulated by the company, exacerbating the atomisation of Lihir.

Susan Hemer’s chapter examines the health dimensions of inequality in the Lihir group of islands, with a particular focus on tuberculosis (TB). Globally, TB is a marker of poverty and, as Paul Farmer has suggested, a symptom of the structural violence that is inherent in global health inequalities. In PNG, TB is resurgent, and drug-resistant forms of TB have also emerged, particularly in Daru (which has provoked selfish concern in Australia about the biosecurity risks due to its proximity to the Torres Strait). Hemer argues both that inequalities shape TB and that TB compounds inequalities in Lihir. The development of the gold mine (from 1997 to the present) has been accompanied by improved infrastructure, a ring road around the island, increased opportunities for waged work, improved health and education and an influx of migrants. The health care in Lihir (i.e. on the main island, Niolam, in the local language) and particularly that available at the Lihir Medical Centre (LMC) is among the best in the country. However, the rates of diagnosed TB are increasing, although it is unclear whether the increase is due to higher infection or better detection. There exist some differences by age

and sex; infants, teenagers and elderly show peaks of infection, but men are more likely to be diagnosed than women. Hemer discerns a link to poverty; for instance, two teenage girls who were diagnosed with TB were both daughters of poor unmarried mothers. However, the main inequality is that experienced between those who have access to the LMC facility, which has superior facilities for detection and treatment, and those who do not—between those in the north-east and those in the southern and western parts of the main island of Lihir.

Hemer detects another important inequality in the politics of knowledge about and treatment of TB. This is part of a broader problem in global health care, whereby the broader primary health focus on improved nutrition, water and sanitation and better education is displaced by a narrower biomedical focus on the disease itself and preventive chemotherapy. Programs directed to narrower biomedical ends are more easily funded and monitored by quantitative methods (see also Foale, this volume; Lepani, 2012). This leads to a focus on the individual and their clinical diagnosis rather than broader structural determinants. On Lihir, health workers tend to focus on the individual responsibility of patients to comply with complex and protracted chemotherapy regimes. This leads to victim blaming and may deepen the inequalities existing between health workers and their patients in a way that compromises recovery and wellbeing.

## **Moving Positionality and Increasing Precarity: The Ethics of Ethnography**

Finally, I distil and connect several chapters in this volume that address the positionality of the anthropologist, questions of ethnographic fidelity and authority and persisting inequalities of race in the creation and dissemination of knowledge.

The chapter co-authored by John Aini and Paige West confronts these problems directly. John Aini is a New Ireland man who has long been involved in the work of the local, environmentally attuned non-governmental organisation (NGO) Ailan Awareness and also a long-time collaborator with Paige West in her ethnographic work on dispossession and environment in New Ireland (see e.g. Aini & West, 2018). West's wider work on coffee production and the politics of ecology and

conservation in PNG has been suffused with a decolonising sensibility and method (West, 2006, 2012, 2016). Through a forensic examination of the documentation of visits by young white researchers working with environmental NGOs or arriving as university graduate students, they demonstrate how locals such as Aini can bear large material and social costs in providing advice and hospitality. Either from her office at Columbia University in New York or while travelling herself, West is often involved in mediating these requests and brokering some of the more naive and excessive presumptions of these novice researchers. Aini and West demonstrate that the production of their knowledge entails dual exploitation—one grounded in the racialised inequalities between whites and PNG people and the other between BINGOs and local NGOs, which is similarly racialised.

Through the analysis of anonymised email correspondence, they show how the good intentions of these young, white people (who wish to work on urgent environmental issues) are regularly vitiated by an ignorance of the local situation and a presumption that local NGO staff have the time and resources to smooth the passage of their visit. Aini and West reveal the sheer quantity of time, hard work and mobilisation of both material resources and social networks expended in arranging the transport, accommodation and feeding of such folk—some visitors fail to acknowledge or even notice their indebtedness. Much of this work is not paid or calculated in commodity terms; therefore, it becomes invisible, and visitors are able to simply construe it as ‘island hospitality’. This, they argue, occludes the profound inequalities of race and class that underlie the creation and dissemination of knowledge. This echoes the way in which Amelia Moore (2019) has exposed the confluence between environmental science and climate change tourism in the Bahamas.

This raises questions not only about short-term or novice research visitors, but also the long-term relationships created between anthropologists and their hosts. In their introductory chapter, the editors adjudge that much anthropological knowledge and anthropological careers are also grounded in ‘debts that cannot be repaid’ (Bainton & McDougall, this volume). The long-term connections that anthropologists have sustained with the peoples of their primary field sites—embodied by Martha Macintyre and several senior authors in this volume—are cherished and celebrated by the discipline. However, some authors in this volume honestly acknowledge that this does not ensure continuing congenial relations, particularly in situations of conflict and economic precarity. Laura Zimmer-Tamakoshi



describes how one of her studies of ‘ancestral gerrymandering’ among the Gende in the context of the Ramu Nickel mine was angrily disputed by young men who had downloaded her work (which is now available online). The pervasiveness of the internet and social media means that anthropologists are now held even more accountable for their representations of the people who host them—their hosts may not necessarily agree with such representations.

The chapter by Deborah Gewertz and Frederick Errington, respected senior ethnographers of the Chambri people of the Sepik and the Duke of York Islanders in East New Britain and analysts of class in PNG (Gewertz & Errington, 1999), reveals the perils of doing ethnography in situations of economic precarity. They relate the disturbing story of their time living in a Sepik settlement on the edge of Madang. In contrast to the efflorescence of customary exchanges afforded by mining wealth in Lihir (see Bainton & Macintyre, 2016), they witnessed a ‘stingy egalitarianism’ borne of economic precarity; as they express it, ‘Melanesian life on life support not steroids’ (Gewertz & Errington, this volume). This precarity derives from the marginality of these settlement residents in an increasingly commoditised economy—they are not beneficiaries of mining wealth and have no trade flows or easy connections back to Chambri kin living in villages. Indeed, many who had settled near the town to access money, schools and hospitals did not wish to return to villages where they feared their rights to land would not be recognised. They have neither a social safety net nor support from a government in which neoliberal principles of ‘user-pays’ prevail. Food is scarce and not shared, incomes are uncertain, and settlement life is unpredictable. Jealousy exists, both of the material success and the sociality of others. A ferocious insistence on levelling, an ‘egalitarianism’ that constrains and vilifies individuals who do better than others, has emerged as a survival strategy. Expressions of jealous rage erupt in collective outbursts of violence on the part of drunken young men (see also Zimmer-Tamakoshi; McDougall; Jorgensen, this volume).

When Gewertz and Errington arrived to stay with their host (Paul), their very presence and their obvious white wealth presented problems. Although they avoided the display of alluring material goods, the very fact that their hosts were now eating meat and gaining weight caused jealous words and, ultimately, violent conflicts. They swiftly decamped to a hotel to quieten the resentment; however, menaces and threats against their hosts persisted. Quite rightly, the authors view their presence as causing a major disruption in an ongoing moral economy. Their long-term relations and

congenial reciprocity with other Chambri people in the past could not protect their hosts or themselves against the jealous rage provoked by inequality in such a situation of extreme precarity. As the authors suggest, the lives of these Chambri people living on the edge of Madang are not only economically precarious but also culturally diminished, without the language and the distinctive knowledge and power associated with being ‘Chambri’.

In her chapter, Melissa Demian poses the question of the shifting positionality of the anthropologist in both her own life trajectory in PNG and that of Martha Macintyre. Her reflections were prompted by a conversation with a woman in an NGO office in Lae; this woman noted the differences between the power of women in the matrilineal region of Milne Bay, where Demian first worked, as compared to those parts of PNG where men assume sole entitlement to land and ‘block women’s spiritual power’ (Demian, this volume). Demian plays with Macintyre’s reflections on possession in her classic paper on the ‘semi-alienable pig’ (Macintyre, 1984) as she poses the problem of the ‘semi-alienable anthropologist’. She suggests that PNG people see Martha and herself both as white foreigners and as embedded in place, linked by language and familiarity to specific locales. However, what happens when the anthropologist shifts locales? Further, what happens when the anthropologist is Papua New Guinean?

For Demian herself, the shift from Milne Bay to Lae involved not only a shift in place and language but also a shift in her source of funding and in her modes of listening and reporting. A shift in location can also entail a shift in scale—for example, from a more local ethnographic to a national scale (from the perspective of Port Moresby), which is a move visible in Macintyre’s own trajectory and published corpus. However, inspired by Marilyn Strathern (1991/2005), Demian queries a simple nesting model of scale, showing how similar relations or antinomies can recur at successive scales (e.g. men/women or young/old) and suggests that scaling up can represent both loss and gain.

Demian brings these ideas into her study of women in Lae town who are seeking to make their urban lives safer and more satisfying. She alludes to the way in which Europeans imagined towns as both white and male. Anne Dickson-Waiko’s writings (e.g. 2007) on how PNG women were often excluded from towns and the commodity economy in both colonial and postcolonial periods is relevant to this. This legacy persists, in that PNG women sense that modernity is less available to them—they do not

possess the same freedom to romance, drink and gamble that men do. They are imperilled by the violence both of male gangs and the police. Men fear the untrammelled freedom of women in town and try to constrain them through forms of physical and symbolic violence.

Whereas Demian engages Macintyre in relation to location and spatiality, Dan Jorgensen engages with questions of time and historical change posed for him by Macintyre's history of changes in *kula* (1983a) or the changes consequent in mining in Misima and Lihir (Macintyre, 2011). He records dramatic changes in the lives of Telefomin people living near the giant Ok Tedi gold and copper mine and its hinterland in Sandaun and Western Province. In 2011, in the wake of the unexpected death of a prominent man at an airport on his way home, a number of village youths (The Boys) engaged in widespread intimidation, public torture, murder and rape of those they accused of killing him using witchcraft. These Boys were disaffected, uneducated and unemployed young men who were getting high not just on the marijuana they were cultivating and selling but the dangerous *datura* vines ('devils trumpets'), which are endemic in the region. They menaced their victims with axes, bushknives, sharpened iron rods and guns. They particularly targeted those people who had returned to home villages for Christmas and who were wealthier, educated urban dwellers. Initially, police did not intervene, citing lack of sufficient men and resources. The youths were eventually arrested and charged; however, in the absence of the victims' bodies, the charges were eventually discharged by a judge. This violent episode had permanent effects, fragmenting communities and causing many to flee in fear. However, as Jorgensen notes, partly due to the restraint of the victim's family—who wanted to 'put the past behind them' (Jorgensen, this volume)—similar episodes of youth violence did not recur or become normalised.

The second crisis involved the El Niño drought, which had devastating effects on agriculture in this region (as in many parts of PNG) and coincided with the closure of both the Ok Tedi mine and the Tabubil township, which had been the residential and service hub for the mine. This resulted in the widespread movement of families back to home villages, where kin were already struggling with the severe effects of the drought. Ostensibly, the drought was the cause of this closure, because the Fly River (which had been the passage for ore going out and supplies coming in through the port of Kiunga) was no longer navigable. However, as Jorgensen shows by outlining the complex history of the ownership of the mine and the tensions between its commercial and social mandate,

this suited the company and, ultimately, the government. The government gained control of Ok Tedi Mining Limited in this period to focus on maximising profits by making the evacuation of the town a permanent eviction and instituting a fly-in fly-out system of engaging workers, despite this being a long-contested system in PNG. However, in the years since this crisis, it seems that the social mandate of the mining company and the vision of town as a centre of development in Western Province has been reanimated and the future of Tabubil as a residence for local families has now been re-envisaged.

In exploring the conjunction of these two crises, Jorgensen reflects on how we might consider change, beyond the dualisms of old and new, and a teleological view that involves retrospectively on times past and prospecting on times to come. The work of historian Koselleck on temporal horizons (2002) and Chris Ballard's critical work on Oceanic historicities (2014) are both relevant here. However, Jorgensen instead seeks inspiration in processual anthropology and an ethnography of the present, as espoused by Sally Falk Moore. How can ethnographers deal not only with regular and durable cycles of events but also with irregular and evanescent phenomena, such as those that more often engage journalists? Further, how in this age of connectedness across time and place can ethnographers such as Jorgensen complement their embodied insights with the ephemera of 'news' gleaned from phone calls and social media?

In his chapter, Simon Foale offers a reflection on how anthropology's ethnographic method and qualitative research is often devalued by those who espouse the superiority of sciences that are based on quantitative methods and large datasets. Simon began his professional life as a marine scientist but later pursued a PhD in anthropology and collaborated with Martha Macintyre on a range of projects, which brought the perspective of political ecology to the study of environmental movements and conservation dynamics in the Western Pacific (e.g. Foale & Macintyre, 2005).

In his contribution to this volume, Foale singles out conservation biology, suggesting that it rules supreme in the marketing of iconic images to promote environmental awareness and action—for example, turtles, dugongs and coral reefs. He critiques the neofunctionalism of conservation biology and how coral reefs are inaccurately portrayed as crucial for fisheries. In fact, reefs are deficient in nutrients; therefore, they constitute poor fishing grounds, as compared to other parts of the ocean. They are biodiverse but unproductive compared to other fishing areas.

He is particularly critical of those ‘opinion leaders in coral reef science’, who sought to dilute the importance of coral bleaching caused by carbon emissions and warming oceans by ‘framing it differently’, casting it as only one of the ‘multiple drivers of coral reef destruction, along with fishing of herbivorous fish and sediment and nutrient runoff’ (Foale, this volume). Such analyses led to austerity programs, the declaration of no-take marine protected areas and huge uncompensated costs for many very poor, and often landless, fishing people in low-income countries. Such paradigms led to the development of resilience theory (e.g. at the Stockholm Resilience Centre)—this, as with the use of resilience in other contexts of climate change, puts the emphasis of responsibility on the local poor rather than the global rich whose emissions are the primary cause (see Jolly, 2019a; McDonnell, 2019). According to Foale, this ‘studiously ignored the role of colonialism and global capitalism in driving poverty and environmental destruction in the global economic periphery’ (this volume).

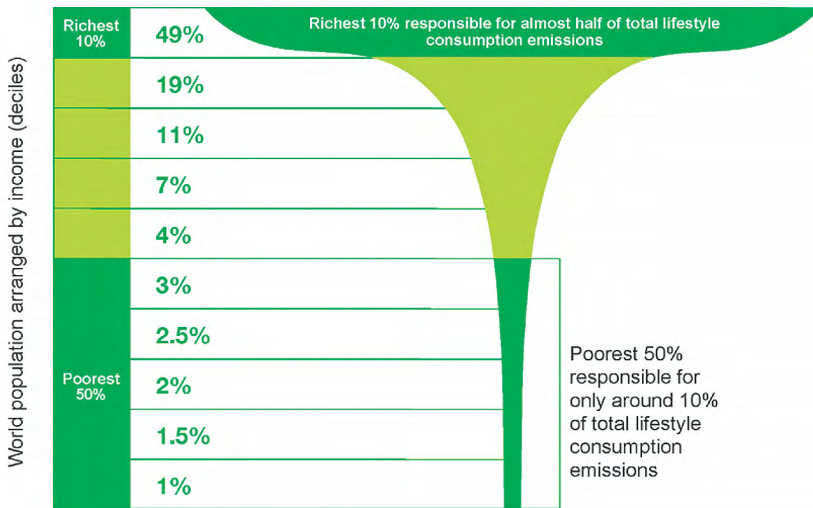
Moreover, by claiming to speak on behalf of other species or entire ecosystems, environmental scientists may also intervene in ways that have negative effects on other human beings. He expresses alarm and dismay at the ‘undeserved hegemony of natural scientists’ (Foale, this volume) in cross-disciplinary projects. He contends that natural scientists are often ‘wantonly oblivious to power/knowledge relations’ and perpetuate a reductionist and managerialist colonial science (Foale, this volume). They appropriate, dumb down and marginalise the insights of social scientists and, particularly, anthropologists.

Foale’s specific case studies form part of a wider critique of how the ‘hard’ natural sciences are wielding ever-greater hegemony over the ‘soft’ social sciences and humanities with claims that only quantitative methods and large datasets constitute legitimate ‘evidence’. This complements the work of Sally Engle Merry (2017) on the seductions of quantification. Foale sees this epistemic inequality as being buttressed by the neoliberal character of contemporary universities and the administration of research funds by governments and international agencies. The pervasive metric fixation in higher education management and research funding abets the hubris and hegemony of the natural sciences. He proposes only partial solutions; anthropologists must collaborate more and adopt a more strategic approach to publishing, grant-writing and communicating our knowledge to broader public audiences to enhance impact. However, would this entail further capitulating to the hegemony of natural science models?

## The Fossil-fuelled Inequalities of Climate Change

Foale's insights into the deeply unequal relations between natural scientists and anthropologists engaged in research on the environment are deeply disturbing for those of us who are struggling to redress the inequalities inherent in the current global crisis of climate change. As I see it, the global inequalities created by the fossil-fuelled capitalist overdevelopment (see Figure 2) of the world are both cause and consequence of our current climate emergency (see Jolly, 2018, 2019a, 2019b). However, it is difficult to raise resistant hope when sceptics and deniers of climate change are wilfully spreading disinformation (with the support of fossil-fuelled interests). The urgency and gravity of the situation surely require a coalition between scholars and activists and between natural and social scientists, involving epistemic equality and mutual respect (see Jolly, 2020).

The papers in this volume are intensively, although not exclusively, focused on PNG (McDougall's chapter focuses on the Solomon Islands). This intense focus is justified, not least because PNG is the primary place in which Martha Macintyre conducted her research. This primary focus perforce raises comparative questions about how, given the dominance of extractive industries in PNG's past, present and envisaged future development, the country will fare as the global climate crisis intensifies and dramatic shifts continue in the proportion of global energy supplied by fossil fuels compared to renewables such as solar, wind or hydropower. Other independent states in the Western Pacific have also witnessed the burgeoning inequalities and environmental devastation that are consequent on capitalist models of overdevelopment. However, for example, in Vanuatu, the gender and generational inequalities of land commoditisation and dispossession are linked to an economy that is dependent on tourism, real estate speculation and tax haven schemes and the corruption of a shadow state (see McDonnell, 2017), rather than the extractive industries of logging and mining. These divergent modes of capitalist development have likely generated differences in how gender, race and class inequalities intersect that we do not have space to further explore here (however, see McDonnell, Allen & Filer, 2017; Patterson & Macintyre, 2011; Chapter 1, this volume).



**Figure 2: Percentage of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by world population.**

Source: Gore (2015).

However, it remains clear that all these independent states of the Western Pacific—PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu—are embedded in broader patterns of global inequality in their experience of climate change, whereby those poor who produce the least carbon emissions are also those who suffer the most. We are all painfully familiar with the iconic, globally circulating images of sea-level rise and king tides engulfing the low-lying atolls of Kiribati, Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands. However, as dire as this situation is, the consequences of climate change across the Pacific reach even further. Sea-level rise and coastal inundation and erosion are also being experienced on the coasts of high, volcanic islands, including those in PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. This threatens freshwater sources and imperils major food crops (e.g. taro and yams) with greater salinity. Changing patterns of rainfall and seasonality and droughts of greater severity and frequency disturb the patterns of growing and harvesting those garden and tree crops on which many peoples of the Western Pacific still rely for daily food. The warming and acidification of the ocean bleach and kill protective coral reefs. Increased storm surges, floods and more intense and frequent cyclones and hurricanes devastate crops and houses, cause landslides and threaten both lives and livelihoods.

At the Pacific Island Forum in Tuvalu in August 2019, the assembled Pacific leaders issued a radical and solidary declaration that climate change was an existential threat to all people of the region. They insisted that

this was their pre-eminent concern for future security, more important even than the geopolitical rivalry, which captures primetime attention in Australia (see Jolly, 2019b; Teaiwa, 2019). Given this, the indifference and condescension shown by the Australian government at Tuvalu—the attempts to dilute the words of the final communiqué and the cheap racist and sexist quips by Australian politicians and shock jocks afterwards—has been extraordinary (see Regenvanu, 2019). Climate sceptics and critics of the Paris Agreement, who argue that Australia contributes only 1.3 per cent of the world’s global greenhouse emissions, must confront the harsh reality that (per capita) we are one of the worst polluters in the world. Moreover, our greenhouse emissions are rising and will exponentially increase with the opening of large mines at Adani and in the Galilee Basin in Queensland. Australia’s national government must make fundamental changes to its climate change policies and work urgently to reduce its emissions—this is clear to all in the Pacific. It is for this reason that the preferred diplomatic language of Australia as a close neighbour to the Pacific (or even, in Scott Morrison’s evangelical Christian vision, ‘family’) has such a hollow, false resonance in the region (Kabutaulaka & Teaiwa, 2019; McDougall, 2019). Such language obscures the deep inequalities between Australia and the Pacific, inequalities that derive from colonial legacies but still lie at the heart of the contemporary climate emergency. Therefore, the perpetuation of ‘unequal lives’ might continue in ways that are even more tragic than those we are presently witnessing.

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