Collaborative relations, personal aims, and the work of institutions in contemporary Melanesia

EXPLORATORY ONE DAY WORKSHOP

Tuesday 12th September 2006

Holiday Inn, Port Moresby
Papua New Guinea

IPNGS

host institution:
Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies

funded by:
Leverhulme Trust (UK) personal award to James Leach
The British Academy

convenor:
James Leach, University of Cambridge

participants:
Steffen Dalsgaard (Aarhus University), Iinus Digim'Rina (University of Papua New Guinea), Sinclair Dinnen (Australian National University), Colin Filer (ANU), Into Goudsmit, Lawrence Kalinoe (UPNG/James Cook University), Joe Kanekane (Law and Justice Sector Program), Joe Ketan (University of the South Pacific), Rt Hon. Dame Carol Kidu MP, Peter Larmour (ANU), Martha Macintyre (University of Melbourne), Ron May (ANU/National Research Institute), Andrew Moutu (National Museum/Cambridge), Simon Pentanu (UNDP), Almut Schneider (EHESS, Paris), Katharina Schneider (Cambridge), Jacob Simet (National Cultural Commission), Dame Marilyn Strathern (University of Cambridge), Alice Street (Cambridge), William Tagis (PNG Gov), Lee Wilson (Cambridge), Steven Winduo (UPNG), Michael Wood (James Cook University).

Collaborative relations, personal aims, and the work of institutions in contemporary Melanesia

Studies of audit/accountability and their effects on institutions are an emerging field within the discipline of Social Anthropology, a discipline with a long and important relation to the people and cultures of Melanesia. Some social anthropologists from the UK who have had the privilege of having worked in Papua New Guinea, as well as having experienced the effects of audit culture at first hand on their home institutions, view developments around transparency and measurement as highly pertinent to the understanding of modern organisations.

Transparency of operation is everywhere endorsed as an outward sign of integrity; the concept of 'audit' has broken free of its moorings in finance and accounting to encompass all kinds of reckonings, evaluations, and measurements. These new modes of making accountability a pervasive element in institutional endeavour are at once obstructive and enabling of good practice. Despite the increasing use of accountability measures in aid and development funding for emerging states, little is known of their impact on institutions and collaborative work in such contexts, other than the apparent failure on the part of the institutions and states so examined.

The rubric for the workshop frames the possibility of extending emergent analyses of these processes to a place where both established and recent scholarly exchanges have been productive, and where people are increasingly subject to the demands of transparency regimes on a day-to-day basis.

We look to address some of the following questions:

Can one measure the value of relationships? We are used to the idea that personal commitment is a resource for organisations. Here is a further dimension: what about interpersonal ties and relationships? Or do these (necessarily) compete with institutional aims? Starting from this perspective offers a fresh way of thinking about accountability, audit and organisational performance.

How do personal aims and interpersonal relations work out in corporate endeavours (such as State/Public Service Institutions, Administrative Agencies, Development Organisations)?

What are the desired outcomes of collaborative work that require the forging of relationships?

Do these differ depending on whether one looks from the perspective of individuals or the institutions of which they are a part?

Do the principles enshrined in general management approaches exhaust the possibilities of how to make institutions work? What of other commitments that do not get into the guidelines? And what kinds of desired outcomes and positive futures might be obscured by following the organisational principles enshrined therein?

What formulation of protocols would facilitate outcomes that people in contemporary Melanesia might value, and that might elicit their particular forms of creativity?

The workshop will offer an opportunity for an open-ended discussion; the aim is simply to see if there is any interest in taking certain questions and ideas forward. A congenial intellectual and practical atmosphere will be aimed for. People are busy: it will be possible to come for particular sessions. And if you are interested, come!

Timetable

Morning Session: Prepared Papers. The morning session will first introduce the project, its background, and its aims. Then speakers drawn from a variety of contexts and with varying perspectives on institutions, audit, and value will give papers fifteen minutes in length.		
8.30am	James Leach	Introduction: Collaborative relations, personal aims, and the work of institutions in contemporary Melanesia: New perspectives on accountability and possible ways of measuring value.
8.50am	Ron May	Public Sector Reform in Papua New Guinea: a 'Clash of Cultures'?
9.10am	Marilyn Strathern	Organisations and accountability across cultures
9.30-9.45am	**tea break**	
9.45am	Peter Larmour	Corruption, interpersonal relations and institutional ends in Melanesian Leadership Codes
10.05am	linus digim'Rina	Accounting for 'Gifts to the People': reciprocating in the field
10.25am	Joe Ketan	Traditional/Indigenous forms of leadership and current debates.
10.45- 11.00am	**tea break**	
11.00am	Mike Wood	Auditing Logging Concessions
11.20am	Martha Macintyre	Difficult relations: some thoughts on donors, recipients, partners, advisors and consultants.
11.40am	Andrew Moutu	The Tyranny of Privacy
12.00pm	Lee Wilson	Efficacy in Action. A comparative perspective from Indonesia
12.20pm	Sinclair Dinnen	Governing Security – Beyond the Usual Suspects
12.40pm	Alice Street	Kinship idealism and institutional reticence
1.00 – 1.45 pm	**Lunch (available for participants and attendees)**	
Afternoon Session 1: Expert Panel: Commentary and Direction		
1.45pm	Chair: Lawrence Kalinoe (Dean UPNG Law School) Rt. Hon. Dame Carol Kidu MP Ila Geno (PNG Chief Ombudsman) William Tagis (Dept. of Education, PNG) Joe Kanekane (Law and Justice Sector Programme) Into Goudsmit Simon Pentanu (UNDP)	
2.45 – 3.15pm	**tea break**	
Afternoon Session 2: Future Research possibilities, setting an agenda Chair: Colin Filer This session will begin with short presentations by scholars currently engaged in fieldwork which will lead us into an open chaired exploration of the possibilities for the project.		
3.15pm	Steffen Dalsgard	An ethnographic approach to the study of auditing, transparency and the state.
	Almut Schneider	"Personal" relationships and others - questions from the Highlands
open discussion		
4.30pm	**close** **drinks provided**	

Abstracts and Information on Paper Givers

JAMES LEACH

Collaborative relations, personal aims, and the work of institutions in contemporary Melanesia: New perspectives on accountability and ways of measuring value.

Modern institutions developed in the West rely upon notions of the individual as a particular kind of person, shorn of interests and obligations beyond the aims of their institution for the time in which they are employed. Yet it is clear even here that much of people's motivation comes from how their achievements within institutions feed into, and are in turn fed by, developments in their relations to others outside an organisational or institutional framework. Indeed, instead of seeing aspects of the person that are external to the institution as irrelevant, contemporary management practice tends to draw energy from these kinds of motivation; people are allowed 'flexible working practices' to accommodate their individual interests or commitments/family obligations, for example. Also, within workplace settings, it is often people's interpersonal relationships that are relied upon to persuade others to act in particular ways and to achieve certain outcomes. However, modern institutions seem to have to hold ambiguous the value, or at least appear to disengage from, personal aims and relations / commitment to others. This logic is particularly apparent in the growth of notions of audit and accountability, and measurable performance targets for institutions. These forms of accountability are currently spreading around the globe in a 'one size fits all' approach, attached to 'capacity building' and 'development' funding.

This paper provides a framework for interests in the workings of inter-personal relationships in institutions that begins by outlining the above. It goes on to explore in a new setting (that of Melanesia) the implications that ignoring the importance of relationships may have on judging how well institutions function. The paper argues that ethnographic analysis provides opportunities for showing how personal relations in fact motivate, energise, and facilitate particular outcomes, relevant to specific local contexts, and need to be rethought in specific applications as aspects of value creation and not necessarily as its negation.

As convenor and instigator of the conference, the presentation will outline the possibilities for new forms of recognising and incorporating the value of personal relationships into measurements of value and appropriate practice, drawing upon ethnographic work in Melanesia and on collaborations with people in the region. It focuses on the following question: 'what formulation of protocols/targets and best practice would facilitate outcomes that people in contemporary Melanesia might value, and that might elicit their particular forms of creativity?'

James Leach (Research Fellow in Social Anthropology, King's College, Cambridge) has undertaken fieldwork on the Rai Coast of Papua New Guinea, where he has collaborated with Nekgini speaking people to comment upon Intellectual and Cultural Property (Motapure Island Seminar, 2000), as well as documenting knowledge of medicinal and ritual plants in a dual language report (to be published as a book). He has also collaborated with lawyers and academics in PNG on issues of IPR, resulting among other things in a co-edited collection on contemporary ownership practices with Lawrence Kalinoe (Rationales of Ownership, 2001, reissued 2004).

RON MAY

Public Sector Reform in Papua New Guinea: a 'Clash of Cultures'?

Since the very early years of independence, Papua New Guinea has been in an almost continuous state of public sector reform. Yet there seems to be a broad consensus that achievements towards the attainment of the reform objectives - namely, effective decision making and implementation, and efficient delivery of government services in a context which maximizes accountability and minimizes corruption - have fallen well short of their goals. Attempts to explain this shortcoming have ranged from, on the one hand, discussions of the problems of institutional transfer from one (developed) political system to another (less developed), to, on the other hand, suggestions that Papua New Guineans somehow lack the capacity to make government work.

This paper will address some of the issues of public sector reform in Papua New Guinea, as put forward by both its advocates and its critics. It will argue that attempts to socially engineer a Weberian state on an amalgam of Melanesian cultures does pose enormous challenges, but that some sort of viable state-like structure is needed if the wellbeing of ordinary Papua New Guineans is to be maintained let alone improved.

Ron May is an emeritus fellow at The Australian National University, where he is attached to the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia project. He was the first director of what is now NRI and has written extensively about Papua New Guinea politics.

MARILYN STRATHERN

Organisations and accountability across cultures

How can one compare institutions? How can one compare modes of interpersonal relations? This paper offers some preliminary comments on the global growth of auditing regimes and their effect on institutions, especially on the idea of the institution as an organisation. The explicitness with which organisations must think of themselves is at once the basis of their accountability and is held to undermine trust between persons. Conversely, when one gets down to looking at local situations, it often appears that a high level of accountability (duty, obligation, reciprocity) in relationships undermines trust in organisations and their functioning. Is the dilemma inevitable? Some materials from Melanesia are very suggestive on all these points.

Marilyn Strathern (Professor of Social Anthropology and head of Girton College, Cambridge) has first hand experience of accountability and audit in institutions; she has also reflected on some of the implications in the edited book, Audit Cultures (2000). Her reflections have been aided by other -- invaluable -- first hand experience, this being gained in Papua New Guinea, especially in Mt Hagen in the 1960s. At about the time of Independence she was studying Highlands migrants in Moresby and doing research for the Law Reform Commission. She has subsequently collaborated with PNG scholars on issues to do with Cultural Property. She is very proud that the PNG Government honoured her with the 30th Independence Anniversary Medal.

PETER LARMOUR

Corruption, interpersonal relations and institutional ends in Melanesian Leadership Codes

Corruption is famously difficult to define, and there are often differences between law and custom, or between elite and public opinion. Definitions now often turn on a distinction between private or personal interests and the ends of institutions. The World Bank influentially defines corruption as 'the use of public office for private gain'.

The Melanesian constitutions devised in the 1970s are distinct (but not unique) in anticipating current international concerns about corruption. They provide for the enforcement of codes of practice on 'leaders': politicians and senior public servants. Other professions, such as doctors or engineers, also use codes of conduct to try to regulate the professional (and interpersonal) conduct of members.

The dilemmas and grey areas may differ between professions and institutions, and between sectors. Politics, the public service and 'leadership' may not be amenable to regulation as 'professions' (the ICAC, for example has had great difficulty in persuading the NSW parliament to adopt a code, and the Pacific Islands Forum has been trying without much success to persuade its members to adopt leadership codes).

'Corruption' may be the downside of the relationship between personal commitment, interpersonal connexions and the achievement of institutional (or professional) ends. Some types or amounts of personal commitment and interpersonal relations maybe be necessary to achieve institutional (or professional) ends, but other types may frustrate (or corrupt) those ends. How can we tell which?

The paper will look at the way research on corruption and anti corruption has treated the relationship between personal commitments, interpersonal relations and institutional aims. It will suggest what might be learned about the relationship from the operation of leadership codes, the reports of leadership code commissions, and the roles adopted by particular individual commissioners in Melanesia.

Peter Larmour is a Reader in the Policy and Governance program at the ANU, and taught at UPNG in the 1980s. He specialises in South Pacific politics and public administration. He also teaches a course on 'Corruption and Anti Corruption' with the New South Wales ICAC, and coordinated a study of National Integrity Systems in 12 Pacific countries for Transparency International, the anti-corruption NGO. His book Foreign Flowers: Institutional Transfer and Good Governance in the Pacific Islands (University of Hawaii 2005) includes a chapter on the transfer of anti corruption policies.

LINUS S. DIGIM'RINA

Accounting for 'Gifts to the People': reciprocating in the field

Up to now I have provided assistance for a good number of fellow researchers, film documentary makers, and TV producers of skits within PNG, particularly back at my home island. Given my very reliable local knowledge of the people and activities I was often bombarded with even the most obvious of questions. One of the most common prescriptions on my part, and questions on theirs, was make sure 'you bring along a few "gifts for the people" as a response the obvious question of 'what should we bring along'.

Out of modesty, I would automatically revert to the old colonial and even 'racist' valuation of one-to-one exchange of gifts. Which many ways is now judged to be inadequate, unequal and demeaning, as it is often and for very good reasons and/or truthfully said that my partners' resources are limited, and that they could only give so much. So tongue in cheek, I would begin by enumerating such kiddy gifts like pencils, pens, storybooks, etc, hardly appreciated by the adults. And for the adults the items often include tobacco, perhaps a piece of kalico, Swiss knives, even mirrors, and then I would stop there. At that point I could almost hear my conscience moaning with words like 'why cannot you include money?' Then the raging battle takes over. But how much? Say K500? But then, how many should be paid with K500, and how much is it going to be for the rest? On the other hand, giving out money is like encouraging a 'cargo cult' mentality according to a school of anthropology. In the end, the host people remain with 'candies', I walk away with some decent compensation as the 'middle man' and my partners take away a wonderful

collection of films and photos, and sweet generous memories from the South Seas.

This appears a rather innocent and a very natural way of communication until after several experiences, I realised that 'gifts' as a term is heavily laden with cultural values and therefore connotations. Ultimately, it is quantity (money and material goods) at the expense of 'quality social relations'.

My own experience tells me that it is very uncomfortable to even tell partners that the concept of gift (cf. Sahlins, Gregory, Strathern, Carrier & Kuehling) has such a wide ranging semantic field whose loci and goal is 'social relations'. In ways that one, reciprocates equally only within the context. The 'opening gifts' (Malinowski) are necessary in order to 'clear the cobwebs' and establish rapport. The real gift giving should happen on the spot. And therefore one needs to set aside a sizeable section for 'gifts' guided by 'accountability-friendly' apparatus.

linus s. digim'Rina. PhD is a Senior Lecturer and Head of the Anthropology and Sociology department at the University of Papua New Guinea. Has researched in the areas of indigenous knowledge, poverty and food security, social impact studies, and ethnographic history.

JOSEPH KETAN

Traditional/Indigenous forms of leadership and current debates

As a complement to Peter Larmour's presentation, this paper looks at 'traditional' or indigenous forms of governance: how the environment and its resources were managed and conserved for future generations; (2) how decisions on key issues were reached; (3) how wealth (and status) was acquired; and (4) how economic resources were distributed. These issues can be compared or examined in the context of current debates on environmental sustainability, democracy, transparency and accountability (with special reference to leadership, corruption and culture in Melanesia and elsewhere in the South Pacific).

Relevant questions here include:
Were economic resources distributed in a transparent and accountable manner? Were the decisions over such matters reached unilaterally by big-men and chiefs (secretly in men's houses at night) or were they made openly, and in consultation with ordinary people?

Accountability, of course, is a key issue here. Also important is the acquisition and disbursement of wealth, with its apparent leadership implications.

Joseph Ketan is Visiting Fellow in the Governance Programme at The University of the South Pacific. He has previously worked at the PNG National Research Institute (1989-1999) and the University of Papua New Guinea (2000-2004) and is currently engaged in research on governance in traditional and contemporary Pacific societies; electoral governance, and the viability of the nation-state. Most recent work has been on the 2004 LPV by-elections in Papua New Guinea. He has published the monograph 'The Name Must Not Go Down: Political Competition and State-Society Relations in Mount Hagen, Papua New Guinea' (IPS, 2004).

MIKE WOOD

Auditing Logging Concessions

This paper is based on a number of recent reviews of government decision-making concerning logging concessions in the Western Province. I am interested in the way these reviews developed quite specific notions of person, institution and their proper separation and inter-relationship. But these ideas were subject to continuous and often effective challenge by those being reviewed. These 'counter discourses' assumed PNG institutions,

private companies and landowners would co-operate together in a nationalist-developmental framework and would do so independently of external reviewers and regulators. This paper explores these conflicting models of decision-making and the different notions of personal responsibility and obligation that are implicated by them.

Michael Wood is a senior lecturer in Anthropology at James Cook University. He has undertaken fieldwork in the Western Province mainly with Kamula speakers. He has written a number of articles on forestry projects in the Western Province and has more recently started to research aspects of the history of scientific forestry in PNG.

MARTHA MACINTYRE

Difficult relations: some thoughts on donors, recipients, partners, advisors and consultants.

This paper draws on my experience working as an anthropologist in two quite different contexts. First as an advisor on an Australian aid project; second as a consultant monitoring the social impact of a mining project. In the first, the emphasis is on partnership but one has to be also 'advisor' and 'auditor' as it is the advisor who has to constantly fill out the log-frames, report back on 'milestones' etc. and fulfill the aims and objectives of the design of the project in ways that stress 'accountability' to the Australian taxpayer. I shall discuss the ways that relationship between donor and recipient nation states affects the relations between the advisor and the PNG counterpart.

In the second, the consultant's role is to monitor and describe and so one is an interpreter, reporter and analyst - but the expectation by other parties (the mining company, the community and the various factions within it) is that the consultant will mediate and advocate.

Martha Macintyre is an anthropologist who teaches at the University of Melbourne. She has worked on Misima and Lihir studying the impacts of gold mining projects and has also worked as a consultant on two major projects for AusAID. She is member of the board of the International Women's Development Agency.

ANDREW MOUTU

The Tyranny of Privacy

I will take advantage of the recent explosion of anthropological interests with the audit culture (Shore and Wright 1999; Strathern 2000) and the anthropology of organisation (Wright 1994) and policy (Shore and Wright 1997) to address the prevailing concerns about the HIVAIDS crisis in a country such as Papua New Guinea. As a notion, "the tyranny of privacy" is borrowed from Strathern's recent concern with the "tyranny of transparency" (2000) in audit cultures and the paper is an analytical strategy that extends the anxieties expressed by men of Kanganamun village in order to address the current discourse and debate about HIVAIDS in Papua New Guinea. We begin by showing the connection between audit cultures and practices of revelation and concealment underlying the Iatmul initiation ritual. The discussion culminates in an ethical discussion about the nature of privacy that underlies current non-medical approaches towards the HIV/AIDS crisis in PNG.

Andrew Moutu (British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow in Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge) is currently on secondment from the PNG National Museum and Art Gallery where he works as the Curator of Anthropology; for his PhD he undertook ethnographic research on the Sepik River.

LEE WILSON

Efficacy in action: towards an ontological account of political process in Indonesia

This paper begins to explore the ways in which personal and political authority overlap and may be constituted in similar ways in both Indonesian and Melanesian settings. Despite their geographical proximity to each other, scholarly approaches to the ethnography of the two regions have resulted in two distinct schools of thought in which theoretical insights are rarely shared. This in spite of what seems to be obvious similarities in the value of personal relations in institutional practices in both Indonesia and Melanesia. Much of the scholarship on Indonesia has neglected the importance of interpersonal relationships and intersubjectivity in the instantiation of political authority at all levels of Indonesian society.

I argue that an analysis of the interpersonal ties and relationships that cut across the social field in Indonesia brings into view values that are obscured by notions such as 'patron - client' relations. Political competition in Indonesia is to some degree contingent upon conceptions of 'potency'. I contend that this is informed by an ontology that is extremely sensitive to the vicissitudes of interpersonal relationships through which power and authority are consolidated. An emphasis in spiritual practices upon efficacy and agency has a direct analogy with more formal office held under the New Order administration. A bureaucracy in which political authority is to a degree reliant upon being able to negotiate vertically aligned hierarchical relationships. This has important implications for the understanding of forms of political process in Indonesia.

The perceived corruption and nepotism of the Indonesian state is often attributed to the lack of accountability and the opacity of state apparatus. Against these standard measures of institutional good practice, Indonesia is often presented as an example of a 'failed' or 'weak' state. One might observe, however, that accountability is itself a product of social relations. It is underpinned by specific conceptions of person, place, and assumptions as to the value of transparency as a universal ideal. Further, it begs the question as to the forms that the state may take. The distinction between the public and private sphere in Indonesia is blurred, and personal relationships and networks of actors cut across formal bureaucratic structures. I conclude by drawing attention to some ostensible similarities in Melanesia, and suggest that a dialogue between scholars working in Indonesia and Melanesia on forms of political process and governance may prove to be mutually beneficial.

Lee Wilson is a Research Associate at the Centre for Applied Research in Educational Technologies (CARET) at Cambridge University, where he works on the social implications of new technologies in education. He recently completed his PhD in the department of Social Anthropology at Cambridge University. His thesis, on the management and administration of Indonesian martial arts, examines forms of political process in Indonesia. His current research interests include communal violence and vigilantism in Jakarta and Bali, governance and the work of institutions in Indonesia.

SINCLAIR DINNEN

Governing Security - Beyond the Usual Suspects

Much official thinking about the governance of security remains premised on outdated notions of the centrality of state and its formal instrumentalities of law and order. The latter (including police, courts and prisons) have become key institutional pillars in contemporary ideas about state- and nation-building. Within state-centric notions of security, the state constitutes the primary guarantor of security and the central relationship in the governance of security is the abstract and impersonal one pertaining between the individual citizen and the state. In this sense, our thinking about security is often conflated with state power. By

contrast, our subjective experience of security in everyday life is more likely to relate to our membership of networks of relationships and partnerships rather than being exclusively dependent on our membership of the state and the benefits this provides (or not, as the case may be). This is even more apparent in the Melanesian context, given the relative strength of informal kinship networks and concurrent weakness of state structures, although it is by no means unique to Melanesia.

Governance in the western world, including the governance of security, has changed dramatically over the last century and no longer accords with state-centric models. New forms of governing have emerged in which services from education to policing are no longer governed from the top down but instead through networks of partnerships within and across sectors. Governing nodes in these networks include state agencies, business entities and non-governmental organisations, as well as a myriad of community-based resources. The privatisation of security is one of the most obvious and significant manifestations of these changes. Dissatisfaction with the workings of traditional justice systems has also led to important innovations in areas such as restorative justice that, among other things, seek to de-centre and re-personalise processes of conflict resolution. Despite these changes, our intellectual approach to security a remains firmly anchored in state-centric assumptions and, as such, lags far behind the realities of evolving security practice throughout the world. Governments and political leaders tend to reinforce this disjunction through their regular and singular insistence on increased and more effective policing as the standard response to all manner of security problems. Likewise, in developing and, in particular, 'fragile' states, donors and other international agencies reinforce the same message with substantial 'development' resources allocated towards strengthening policing and related law and justice systems. Papua New Guinea fits neatly into this broader global trend.

Set against this background, this paper sets out to explore ways in which our thinking about, and practice of, security can be better aligned in order to more effectively meet the challenges of security currently facing Papua New Guinea. Avoiding dichotomous formulations of formal (state) and informal non-state) justice practice, I shall tentatively look at how different nodes of security governance might be more appropriately configured in a manner that combines learning from small-scale societies in Melanesia and from innovations in security practice that have occurred in other parts of the world. In doing so, the paper will hopefully contribute to how we might re-think the value and utility of interpersonal connections in the realm of security, as well as overcoming their limitations.

Sinclair Dinnen is a Fellow in the State Society and Governance in Melanesia Project in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the Australian National University. He taught previously in the Law Faculty of the University of Papua New Guinea and from 1992-95 was a Senior Research Fellow at the National Research Institute in Port Moresby. He has undertaken extensive research on law and order and conflict issues in PNG and Solomon Islands and is currently working on an Australian Research Council project examining the peacekeeping and capacity-building role of Australian police in PNG, Timor-Leste, and Solomon Islands.

ALICE STREET

Kinship idealism and institutional reticence: the two sides of blood acquisition in Madang General Hospital

This paper explores what happens when social relationships are institutionally recognised as a valuable resource in a Papua New Guinean hospital. Due to a perpetual shortage of voluntary blood donors, Madang General Hospital is dependent upon patients' relatives to donate blood as the need for transfusion arises, and this system takes on a semi-formal

status within the institution. But while descriptions of this process rely on a romanticised view of Papua New Guinean culture, kinship and reciprocity, patients attempting to elicit blood from kin find that the hospital is a difficult place from which to rouse the recognition of others. Failing to obtain the desired response from kin, patients often turn to potential relationships within the hospital. But though kinship relations external to the hospital are perceived as an exploitable resource, hospital workers are more reticent to recognise the potential of relationships within the institution. While patients explore their capacity to engage in new forms of sociality in the hospital, hospital workers fear the sheer number of relationships they might be drawn into, and the kinds of obligations these could entail. Although blood acquisition through kinship is not written up as a protocol for good practice, nor a performance indicator, it's semi-formal status within the hospital points to some of the difficulties and effects of institutionalising relationships as a resource.

Alice Street is a PhD candidate at the University of Cambridge, UK. She recently conducted fieldwork in Madang General Hospital, Papua New Guinea, and is currently writing a thesis about the everyday negotiations between different modes of knowing in the hospital and the emergent social forms of institutional life in Papua New Guinea.

STEFFEN DALSGAARD

An outline of an ethnographic approach to the study of audtiing, transparency and the state

One way to study perceptions of the state is to be involved in actual practices that 'produce' the state. The plan for my coming research of state perceptions in PNG is to work for the Manus Provincial Government. Doing such work as evaluations or surveys for the administration will not only be of value to the administration itself, but will also give unique ethnographic insight into the practices and organisation of bureaucracy as a perspective on relations and perceptions of the state. One of the issues that I expect to be central is how bureaucracy may or may not be informed by notions of auditing and demands of transparency. In international (i.e. western) theories of organisational management openness is seen as a value that generates accountability and legitimacy. However, what would become of the state if all of its institutions were transparent, all of its practices to be known, and nothing kept covert? In Manus as well as other places in PNG, secrecy has been documented by anthropologists to be a vital mode of mobilising support and ensuring authority and legitimacy, and I will hypothesise that the inherent secrecy of the state has helped Manus people accept its institutions.

Steffen Dalsgaard is a PhD student at the Department of Anthropology and Ethnography, University of Aarhus. His current project is on State and Leadership in Manus Province, Papua New Guinea. He has previously done fieldwork in Manus for two purposes: For his MA, which was on ownership, knowledge and cultural heritage, and for the organisation of an ethnographic exhibition in Denmark about Manus canoe building.

ALMUT SCHNEIDER

"Personal" relationships and others - questions from the Highlands

What is there to say about 'personal relationships' , if we consider Melanesian institutions like moka, compensation payments, life-cycle rituals or palem? How do people define the outcomes of these long-term engagements, and what forms do the various relations mobilised in these contexts take? The (Western) concept of 'personal relationship' might require some extending for trying to understand the motivations and obligations integral to these institutions, as well as the relations people find themselves in.

Almut Schneider (M.A. Berlin and Paris), fieldwork in Tambul (W.H.P.) 1997-1999 (on the link of ideas relating to gardening and exchanges among the Gawil speaking people). Currently finishing her thesis at the 'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales' (EHESS), Paris.

WORKSHOP TOPIC

Personal Aims/Interpersonal Relationships: a study of the working of Institutions in Contemporary Melanesia with a focus upon the generation and recognition of valuable outcomes.

Anthropologists have always had an interest in what is usually an overlooked yet vital resource: the value and centrality of social relationships to people's lives. Modern institutions rely upon notions of the individual as a particular kind of person, shorn of interests and obligations beyond the aims of their institution for the time in which they are employed. Yet it is clear from recent work that much of people's motivation comes from how their achievements within institutions feed into, and are in turn fed by, developments in their relations to others outside an organisational or institutional framework.

Indeed, instead of seeing aspects of the person that are external to the institution as irrelevant, contemporary management practice tends to draw energy from these kinds of motivation - people are allowed 'flexible working practices' to accommodate their individual interests or commitments/family obligations. The space given to people's 'personal lives' is considered valuable in generating commitment to the institution, but it is taken as private one. For, in turn, this commitment is supposed to encourage good bureaucratic behaviour, impersonal and effective working in office or workplace without reference to the personal or the interpersonal. Yet any student of institutional behaviour would recognise that it is usually people's interpersonal relationships that are relied upon to persuade others to act in particular ways, to achieve certain outcomes. Taken along with the explicit motivation of career advancement, or the personal prominence that lies behind much individual participation in collaborative endeavour, and certainly institutional employment, the distinction between the personal and the institutional motivations and arenas are blurred. Modern institutions have to hold ambiguous the value, or at least appear to disengage from, personal aims and relations / commitment to others. The motivation to devalue and disengage is particularly apparent in the growth of notions of audit, and clearly defined, measurable performance targets for institutions.

We will investigate the particular issues that arise from these conjunctions in the Melanesian setting. The importance of personal relations will be familiar to those working for public institutions and commercial outfits alike. Yet perhaps it takes an anthropological perspective to show how personal relations in fact motivate, energise, and facilitate particular outcomes. No judgement is made here (at the outset anyway) about desirable or undesirable outcomes. Our study is investigative.

Yet the anthropologists have one strong motivation of their own: they think there is more to say about value creation than can be worked into guidelines and protocols about how value and outcomes are to be achieved -- as in mission statements, performance indicators, guidelines for good practice, achievement targets, all of which come under the general regime of Accountability and Audit Culture. In fact, part of their (anthropologist's) interest is in how protocols and guidelines get written. How does the 'one size fits all' approach work out in practice? Perhaps most interestingly, is there a chance to facilitate or in some small way assist in developing a 'Melanesian way' of writing 'guidelines'? What formulation of protocols would facilitate outcomes that people in contemporary Melanesia might value, and that might elicit their particular forms of creativity?

The Exploratory Workshop wants to question whether the principles enshrined in general management approaches exhaust the possibilities of how to make institutions work. What of other commitments that don't get into the guidelines? And what kinds of desired outcomes and positive futures might be obscured by following the organisational principles enshrined therein? It focuses, then, on what is left out: the clear and vital importance of relations and obligations for people involved in collaborative and institutional projects.