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Table of contents

Editorial

This issue has been a long time in the making. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in spring 2020 disrupted existing ways of doing anthropology and introduced new priorities and timelines. In the meantime, the outbreak of two brutal wars has forced many to reckon with their home regions and/or their fieldsites and interlocutors coming in the crossfire—literal, metaphoric, or both. No wonder everyone has been struggling to meet deadlines—or simply struggling. For *Anthropology Matters Journal*, this has been a period of deceleration, much to the frustration of everyone involved: authors, reviewers, copyeditors, ourselves, and, we imagine, readers. The rate of submissions dropped, emails to potential reviewers frequently remained unanswered, and the turnaround time increased at each step of the process. Yet, more than a paralysing repercussion of multiple, ongoing crises, this development epitomised existing tendencies that had been casting their shadow over early-career academic publishing for quite some time.

In an academic labour market where employability is equated to a 'strong publication record' and where one has no choice but to 'publish or perish,' early(ish)-career scholars prioritise fast-turnaround, high-impact journals to keep up with the cascading requirements of an increasingly competitive milieu. Yet, encounters with the publishing

industry are fraught with obstacles. Some authors are discouraged by the elitist bias of high-impact journals. Others have misgivings about the proliferation of journals that lack rigorous evaluation procedures. Meanwhile, the so-called 'peer review crisis,' whereby fatigued reviewers are increasingly reluctant to accept requests, means that authors trying to build their CVs face excessively long delays. Lastly, journals like *Anthropology Matters*, unaffiliated with large publishers, are entirely run by early-career academics whose predicament is no better than that of the early career scholars they see through: editors, reviewers, copyeditors, and proofreaders are often as precarious and overworked as the authors whose work they consider, foster, and publish.

Anthropology Matters Journal is not a fast-turnaround, high-impact journal—neither by design, nor by virtue of its resources. But we think that what it offers is no less important. Looking back, we are reminded that *Anthropology Matters* was formed out of a collective effort to establish a space of collaboration and experimentation. In the time elapsed between the late nineties and today, academic life and the discipline of anthropology have undergone tectonic shifts that have significantly shrunk the possibility of such a space. And yet, as we prepare to pass on the journal to its future editors, we continue to be inspired by the small student collective that brought Anthropology Matters into existence well over two decades ago, and to admire their cause. Moreover, we remain convinced that open-access journals led by early-career scholars might be more timely than ever—not least to provide an alternative to dominant publishing conventions, resist the culture of hyperindividualism, and cultivate collegiality and intellectual synergy.

Taking our cue from the many associates—allies? comrades?—to whom the journal owes its continued existence, we believe that *Anthropology Matters* is much more than a handful of early-ish career scholars trying to see each other through. Rather, it is a collective, who, throughout the years, have all played their part in bringing early-career scholarship to light. As we discovered, this process can be slow for a few good reasons. Most notably, and as we know firsthand, early-career work often requires more time to develop and extra care to flourish—in today's labour market these privileges are rare. Indeed, the editorial process at *Anthropology Matters* often involves extensive email

exchanges and extra rounds of peer review—which spell out not only added editorial work, but also a space of meaningful cooperation away from narrowly defined utilitarian standards.

In the current issue we have expanded the genres hosted by the journal. Thus, in addition to Trevor J. Durbin's research article on 'Charisma work, microstates and the production of authoritative marine space in Oceania', and Renan Martins Pereira's review of *Ecological nostalgias: Memory, affect and creativity in times of ecological upheavals*, edited by Olivia Angé and David Berliner, this issue features two more types of contributions. First, an interview with Professor Marilyn Stathern conducted by Nora Coman, Ruoyu Qu, Sally Fitzpatrick, and Imke van Bentum, undergraduate students at the University of Göttingen; and second, a conference report authored by Felix Gaillinger, Julia Böcker, Michèle Kretschel-Kratz, and Sarah Mühlbacher reflecting on the event 'Doing kinship by doing law' that took place in Vienna in December 2022.

In the future we hope to see *Anthropology Matters* host other formats too: short ethnographic and theoretical reflections, multimodal essays, film reviews, and any other genres that the journal's incoming editors, authors, and readers might like to explore. These genres most likely do not 'count' under the gaze of hiring committees, although they might if they persist and proliferate. We are convinced, however, that, more than a stepping stone into professional development, an early-career journal should be a place of diversity and inventiveness—features that do not come first in faster-paced, more mainstream publications. We also hope to see *Anthropology Matters* continue to evolve into <u>a platform that combines the freshness and resourcefulness of early-career scholarship with the spirit of horizontal collaboration</u>.

To this end, we would like to extend a call for two new Editors, as well as an Editorial Board consisting of early-career scholars that bring together different ethnographic, regional, and theoretical expertise. We believe that a return to *Anthropology Matter*'s original collective, bottom-up spirit might mitigate the contradictions at the heart of academic publishing and restore its original purpose: that is, to provide a space of mutual

support, intellectual exchange, and ultimately, fun—for as David Graeber once reminded us, 'What's the point if we can't have fun?' In this spirit, as the outgoing editors, we are grateful for, and hope we have passed along some of the kindness we have received from the many people we've worked with throughout these five years: authors, reviewers, copyeditors, proofreaders, advisors, IT support, members of the ASA committee, and the former editors who entrusted us with this task. We hope they've had as much fun as we did.

Ana Chirițoiu and Phaedra Douzina-Bakalaki, outgoing editors

Charisma Work, Microstates, and the Production of Authoritative Marine Space in Oceania

Trevor J. Durbin (Kansas State University)

Abstract

I draw on fourteen months of ethnographic fieldwork in Oceania to formulate the concept of 'charisma work', a type of labour in which the extraordinariness of individuals and their visions for the world are (re)produced and promoted to help legitimise rational-legal power. I focus on how two Pacific Island microstates, the Cook Islands and the Republic of Kiribati, work with Conservation International, an international environmental NGO, to build networks of charismatic people in support of the world's largest marine protected areas. I argue that an aim of charisma work in this case is to attract support and resources to meet the objectives of Pacific Island microstates caught in a double bind of balancing the right to internal sovereignty and the demands of extra-national partners and interests. Building on the work of Paul Ricoeur, I propose that rational-legal systems utilise charismatic processes to support authoritative claims while, at the same time, obscuring the egalitarian origins of institutional legitimacy.

Introduction

Sue Taei[1] wanted to know, before anything else, why I had come to Samoa. In that summer of 2011, she was the Director of the Pacific Islands Marine Program for Conservation International in Apia, and I hoped to speak with her about her role in creating the world's largest marine protected areas, including the Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA) and the Cook Islands Marine Park (later renamed *Marae Moana*). She sat behind a modest desk in a back room of the Conservation International Pacific Island Programme headquarters in Vailima, just up the island from Apia, Samoa. I told the story of my arrival, beginning several years earlier when I found an essay by anthropologist, writer, critic, and teacher Epeli Hau'ofa called "Our Sea of Islands." Through it, I learned about the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), where I had come to conduct nine months of ethnographic fieldwork, and which was within walking distance of Sue Taei's office. In the essay, Hau'ofa persuasively critiqued how development experts and scholars described the Pacific Islands as small and isolated, as politically and economically insignificant, and as a region poised and ever ready to fall off the map of important global affairs (Hau'ofa 1994; see also Fry 1994, 1997). He argued that Oceania was large both because of the mobility of Pacific Islanders and because of developments in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea that had granted massive Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) to many island states. Anyone, according to this way of thinking, could be Oceanian if they cared for the ocean and its inhabitants, because the ocean encompasses everyone.[2] The ocean is in our blood. It is in our food. It is in the weather. It is in the very air we

[1] Sue Taei passed away in January of 2020 following an incurable disease. For the decade I knew her, Sue was a mentor and colleague whom I respected immensely. She shared with me, freely but also strategically, the hidden world of ocean conservation. We had an understanding that I would not write explicitly about some things she shared because doing so may jeopardise her life's work. In this essay, I only publish details that honour our agreement and her legacy.

[2] Later, Taei would echo and agree with this sentiment but emphasise that it was only true for those who deeply cared for the well-being of the ocean and Pacific Islanders.

breathe. We are part of it. We are the ocean, a communion of body and, for some, of spirit. I was hooked. After three years of graduate study, I boarded a plane in Houston and after stops in Los Angeles and Auckland, I arrived in Samoa.

Once I answered her question, Taei appeared to relax slightly. She pulled a glossy, 8.5 x 11 inch, trifold document from a pile on her desk and handed it to me. It was the Framework for the Pacific Oceanscape, a kind of bureaucratic roadmap for institutionalising ocean conservation and Large-Scale Marine Protected Areas (LSMPAs) as an integrating political concern for the Pacific Islands region. Immediately, the cover arrested my attention. Over a photograph of a shark swimming through a school of fish appeared one of Hau'ofa's most powerful, poetic, and well-known passages:

> Oceania is vast, Oceania is expanding, Oceania is hospitable and generous, Oceania is humanity rising from the depths of brine and regions of fire deeper still. Oceania is us. We are the sea, we are the ocean, we must wake up to this ancient truth. (Hau'ofa 1994, 160)

Taei then told me something many of her colleagues already knew. Even more than mine, her life and career had been deeply influenced by Epeli Hau'ofa. The way she spoke about the ocean and its inhabitants often echoed the tropic form and intensity of Hau'ofa's written work. She once told me she dreamed that one day cutting edge ocean conservation and science would be conducted by *vaka*, traditional sailing canoes that have been revived by voyaging societies throughout the Pacific. Her vision for ocean conservation, like Hau'ofa's, was deeply integrative. "Ridge to reef, reef to ocean," she would say, meaning it was all one system that included not only biodiversity but local and regional cultural diversity and connectivity. What she drew upon, in her own terms, was Hau'ofa's *mana*, his extraordinary

ability to articulate a holistic social, ecological, and political vision on behalf of Pacific Islanders[3].

When I returned to my cottage, about a mile up the Cross Island Road from the SPREP campus, I studied the Oceanscape document more carefully. Although it was peppered with quotations from Hau'ofa's writings, the rest of the Framework was anything but inspiring. It was written in a typical bureaucratic style, consisting of objectives, strategic priorities, and actions. The inclusion of a writer like Hau'ofa in a framework document of this type seemed unusual and became a sort of ethnographic puzzle I felt compelled to solve. What, I asked myself, was the connection between Hau'ofa's work and large-scale Pacific Ocean management?

Hau'ofa's presence in the Pacific Oceanscape document later appeared to be part of a broader ethnographically observed pattern—the recurrent adjacency of charismatic figures, emerging large-scale ocean management initiatives sponsored by Pacific microstates, and conservation professionals working for international NGOs. In practice, this meant conservation professionals, mostly working for international NGOs, labouring to promote large-scale ocean management projects by building the international reputations of charismatic figures, such as Hau'ofa. They did this by (re)crafting the leaders' extraordinary visions for a better future, arranging public appearances, and creating promotional media.

I began referring to this form of labour as 'charisma work,' which I define as the practices necessary to produce and promote a charismatic figure and associated extraordinary vision and integrate these with other forms of institutionalised power, especially rational-legal authority.[4] Those who perform charisma work as part of their paid labour, I simply call

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[3] More generally, mana usually indicates the extraordinary and spiritually derived efficacy of an individual. This term, however, is semantically vague. A deeper discussion of mana follows below in the subsection titled 'Charisma and Mana.'

[4] My framing of the issue runs somewhat counter to Dan Brockington's (2009) excellent work on the relationships between celebrity and conservation, where he distinguishes celebrity from charisma by emphasising Weber's statement that charisma consists of face-to-face interaction. Given that Weber

'charisma workers.' Sue Taei was one of a handful of charisma workers in international environmental NGOs based in the Pacific. All were university educated, mostly in New Zealand, Australia, or Europe. All had decades of experience living in the Pacific Islands region. Approximately half would, in some contexts, identify as Pacific Islanders. About half were based in Suva, Fiji, while those working for Conservation International were at the time headquartered near Apia, Samoa. Due to proximity, and respectively to the lack thereof, and the exigencies of rapport and friendship, I was able to follow some charisma workers more closely than others. Even so, whether due to distance, locked doors, or secrecy, much of charisma work was always hidden from view and can only be inferred from its effects.

The purpose of this article is to describe and begin to theorise charisma work. I describe charisma work in terms of its social and poetic dimensions. The social dimension includes how charisma workers discover individuals who are already recognised as charismatic and promote them as charismatic leaders of extraordinary vision in broader, international contexts. The social dimension also includes networking and making introductions on behalf of the charismatic leader, especially connecting them with resources for realising their extraordinary visions. In the poetic dimension, I analyse the poetic devices used to craft the extraordinary visions of charismatic individuals and suggest two perspectives from which the ocean is used as a trope for social solidarity. I call these forms of social solidarity 'the egalitarian ocean' and 'the God position'. In the final sections of the essay, I turn from a descriptive account of charisma work to a theorisation of how charisma work might function within the structural conditions of Pacific Island microstates. To do so, I draw on Paul Ricoeur's work on legitimate domination and my own analysis of *Mapping the Blue*, a documentary film about the creation of *Marae Moana*, to show how charisma work can cultivate a sense of egalitarian legitimacy and then transpose this sense of legitimacy onto

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established his ideal types before the advent of digital mass media, and accounting for more recent sociological work showing how charisma can be more broadly mediated and technologically 'manufactured' (see Glassman 1975 and Bilu and Ben-Ari 1992), I suggest that charisma is better delineated not by mode of interaction but by techniques for legitimising domination.

the hierarchical institutions of the state. I will argue that this transposition is mediated by the charismatic individual who is associated with both egalitarian ideals and the hierarchically organised state. The broader implications of this work beyond the Pacific Islands are significant in that they show how rational-legal legitimacy may be dependent on, and not only opposed to, the cultivation of charismatic authority.

My analysis is based on fourteen months of ethnographic fieldwork, from July 2011 through September 2012, and included nine months as an intern (and later a consultant) with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in Apia, Samoa and five months housed in the Cook Islands National Environment Service offices in Avarua, Rarotonga. In both locations, I worked with the Pacific Islands Programme office of Conservation International. This included collaborative work on a Key Biodiversity Area assessment in the Republic of Kiribati (the Gilbert Islands) and ongoing interaction during the early stages of creating *Marae Moana*. While working in the Cook Islands, I observed meetings of the Cook Islands Marine Park Steering Committee, an interim multi-stakeholder body that advised government on creating a national large-scale marine park. I conducted in-depth interviews with members of the steering committee from government ministries, NGOs, the *Aronga Mana* (traditional leaders[5]), and other interested parties. I also observed public events, including the opening ceremony of the 43rd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting held on Rarotonga.

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[5] "Traditional leaders" is a common English phrase used by both Maori and non-Maori Cook Islanders to refer to Maori leaders with titles of rangaitira, mata'iapo, and ariki. It is also used to refer to the Arona Mana (literally meaning 'group with authority') or the membership organisations of titled leaders, either the House of Ariki or the Koutunui. For more about the emergence of these organisations, see Sissons 1999.

Charisma, 'Mana,' and Charisma Work

The humanistic social sciences have inherited the notion of charisma from Max Weber. Johannes Fabian (1979) argued that Weber conceptualised charisma as part of two broader concerns, first, with the rationalising tendencies of modernity and, second, with the ways power is legitimised and thereby rendered authoritative. As one part of Weber's tripartite typology of legitimised domination, charisma refers to authority granted to a leader based on extraordinary personal qualities. By contrast, traditional authority is justified by perceived historical continuity, while rational-legal authority follows from the legal status of qualified persons carrying out specified tasks. Weber distinguished charismatic authority from both rational-legal and traditional authority in that it is marked by the extraordinary rather than the routine (Weber 1978). The intended use of these conceptual devices, or ideal types, was the analysis and comparison of empirically-derived examples by highlighting empirical divergences from the ideal, meaning no real case should be expected to align with the ideal types themselves. It is to be expected, therefore, that in the real world, the three modes of authority are often hybridised. We know that charismatic authority is not always antithetical to rational-legal authority but rather can be a necessary component of large bureaucratic systems themselves.[6] Therefore, I begin my analysis with Weber's classic typology so I can show how charisma relates to other forms of power and authority. Starting with Weber has two additional advantages. First, it nods toward *mana* (a term used by Taei to describe Hau'ofa) because Weber used ethnographic descriptions of *mana* in his conceptualisation of charisma. Second, Weber's work on charismatic authority was critical for the synthetic theoretical work of Paul Ricoeur, which will become important in the last part of the article.

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[6] See Thorpe and Shapin 2000 for an example of how the charismatic leadership of J. Robert Oppenheimer facilitated an otherwise unlikely collaboration between military and academic bureaucracies.

Charisma and 'Mana'

It is well known that Weber's conceptualisation of charisma was in part derived from Christian theology. A charism, from this perspective, is a gift of the Holy Spirit that renders a person extraordinarily effective in a divine mission. Perhaps less well known is that, as documented by Tybjerg (2007), Weber also drew inspiration from ethnographic representations of *mana*, a term used in many Pacific Island languages that classically translates to supernatural power or extraordinary efficacy. There can be, therefore, a great deal of overlap between *mana* and charisma as analytical concepts within anthropology. For example, both charisma and *mana* are often associated with authority derived from spiritual giftedness and/or extraordinary worldly efficacy (Weber 1978; see also Shore 1982). In the classic ethnographic work utilised by Weber, *mana* is associated with traditional (i.e. chiefly) authority, although this claim is disputed both on the grounds that tradition itself can be subject to visionary innovation and because *mana* is attributed to extraordinary individuals who might lack chiefly titles, such as athletes (Teaiwa 2016), Anglican priests or all believers in some Pentecostal congregations (Kolshus 2016), specific cultural organisations (Tengan 2016), and even the community as a whole (Teaiwa 2016; Tengan 2016). Whatever *mana* once was, it now circulates broadly and through multiple pathways.

Both charisma and *mana* have been seen as conceptually ambiguous, although *mana* may be even more resistant to precise, theoretical conceptualisation (see Faubion 2011). Claude Levi-Strauss agreed and used *mana* as an example of a floating signifier, or a sign for which the signified constitutes a surplus relative to the signifier (Levi-Strauss 2005). A contemporary example of the vagueness and versatility of *mana*, taken from my fieldwork, is a speech given by then Cook Islands Prime Minister Henry Puna in September 2011, at the 42nd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting. He began by paying his respects to the ocean stewardship efforts of Anote Tong, then President of Kiribati, and by acknowledging the importance of the Pacific Oceanscape and Conservation International. After quoting

the Pacific Oceanscape document ("our ocean unites and divides, connects and separates, sustains and threatens our very survival") he proceeded to define *mana* in several related but distinct ways:

> This is our *mana*—where *mana* means our legacy handed down through the generations. We have inherited our great *Moana Nui o Kiva* [the Pacific Ocean] and we must feel the *mana*—the honour and responsibility—of being its stewards. Unfortunately, we have over time forgotten this *mana* that we possess – the *mana* which is our respect for our ocean and have misused our ocean for our own selfish purposes through overharvesting and polluting.

Here, *mana* is ambiguous—at once a legacy, honour and responsibility, and respect, all derived from, or rendered toward, the ocean. It is also something inherited by Pacific Islanders by virtue of their collective relationships with the Pacific Ocean. Clearly, *mana* is still relevant and evoked specifically in relation to large-scale Pacific Ocean conservation.

Importantly, this speech and another like it, given by Puna at the 43rd Pacific Island Forum Leaders Meeting one year later (see below), were subject to rumours that the texts were written by a charisma worker I knew. Henry Puna's chief of staff at the time denied the veracity of these claims. Others suspected this denial was itself untrue, or at least only partially true. Nevertheless, regardless of their accuracy, the rumours are telling in another way: they show that a broader awareness existed within the ocean conservation community of what I am calling charisma work. Some of my interlocutors knew that NGO staff were actively promoting large-scale conservation initiatives by framing them within an expansive Hau'ofian vision and associating both with Pacific Island leaders. In suspecting these speeches were written by a particular charisma worker, they seemed to be extrapolating from previous experiences.

Why Not 'Mana Work'?: The Structural Conditions of Charisma Work

All of this raises the analytical question: why charisma work and not *mana* work? A primary reason is that although *mana* and charisma cannot always be clearly distinguished, I wish to signal that my principal concern in this essay is not with the cultural dynamics of *mana* within Pacific Island communities, although I cannot leave such considerations aside completely. For example, transnational charisma workers obviously must labour within national contexts and, at times, engage local communities. In these local and national Pacific Island contexts, I view *mana* as an object of labour for charisma workers. I mean that charisma workers sometimes find leaders who are recognised within Pacific Islands contexts as possessing *mana* and that charisma workers utilise claims to *mana* in building broader influence for Pacific Island leaders beyond their home countries or even the Pacific Islands region. Specifically, I am mostly concerned with charisma workers employed in international NGOs who are attempting to promote LSMPAs beyond the Pacific in attempts to attract global resources to their own organisations and to legitimise state-based projects located within Pacific Island microstates that do not have the internal resources to implement these projects on their own.[7] Therefore, a central question of this essay is how the *mana* of Pacific Islands leaders is taken up within the structural limitations of Pacific Island states, through the work of a specific class of transnational professionals, in the context of large-scale ocean conservation. It is to these structural conditions that I now briefly turn.

Over eighty percent of all protected ocean space now exists as LSMPAs that measure in the hundreds of thousands to millions of square kilometres each, with the majority designated within the Pacific Ocean (Toonen et al. 2013; Wilhelm et al. 2014). Several of these marine managed spaces either exist in or have been proposed by small island states, sometimes called microstates, that have the internationally recognised authority to declare

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[7] I have analysed the national and community dynamics of this work in another essay (see Durbin 2018).

CHARISMA WORK, MICROSTATES,
AND THE PRODUCTION OF AUTHORITATIVE MARINE SPACE IN OCEANIA

LSMPAs up to the size of their Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs)[8], but lack the internal capacity to create, manage, and enforce these institutions without significant external aid from regional agencies, NGOs, and other development partners. This structural condition makes the rational-legal authority of many Pacific Island microstates vulnerable to extra-state interests by placing them in the double bind of requiring capacity external to the state to realise internal objectives, such as the protection of resources within the Cook Islands EEZ. Hence, the legitimacy of microstate authority, in the case of LSMPA creation and management, rests both on internal consent and external support. A key concern, then, is how Pacific Island states negotiate this fraught situation.

Cook Islands environmental researcher and activist Jacqueline Tepaeru Evans (2006) has argued that a Pacific Island microstate, such as the Cook Islands, can be characterised by a small bureaucratic apparatus relative to its formal rights as a state. I extend this argument by highlighting a tension between the formal authority of microstates to declare LSMPAs (and other ambitious national objectives) and their limited internal capacity to create an LSMPA without help. I argue that microstates rely on the charisma work of organisations like Conservation International to strengthen claims to legitimate authority by cultivating international support that enables the state to meet its declared objectives. As I will show, attempts to gain external support can hinge on representations of local political processes as already legitimate, meaning that outwardly projected representations of internal processes is a critical component of charisma work.

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[8] As defined in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the EEZ extends no more than 200 nautical miles from a country's coastal baseline and confers territorial rights, including resource extraction, and obligations to manage natural resources.

Describing and Theorising Charisma Work

In the remainder of this article, I describe and begin to theorise charisma work. I describe charisma work in terms of its social and poetic dimensions. In the social dimension, I illustrate how charisma workers associate extraordinary individuals with large-scale ocean management initiatives like the Pacific Oceanscape, *Marae Moana*, and PIPA. This, firstly, includes finding and recognising individuals who might be good candidates for charisma work. In all cases observed during fieldwork, charismatic individuals (occasionally those to whom *mana* was attributed at the local, national, or regional level) were not made by charisma workers but rather 'discovered.' That is, in every case I observed, the leaders subjected to charisma work were already recognised, at least by some, as innovative and effective leaders. In other words, charisma workers might grow charisma, but they are given the seeds. As such, the ultimate origin of charisma is taken as given and is beyond the scope of this article.

Secondly, the description of charisma work also includes attention to the labour of arranging introductions between charismatic leaders and those who possess the resources to instantiate their visions for ocean conservation at scale, facilitating appearances at events that will broadcast those visions and produce the mediated presence of the leader. This work necessarily includes the production of promotional material, such as videos and, perhaps, speech writing. Charisma work is the domain of strategic social networking and public relations on the behalf of a charismatic personality. Because these usually hidden processes are difficult to directly follow ethnographically, and even more difficult to write about without betraying sensitive information, I mostly give examples of the already accomplished social dimensions of charisma work. Lastly, through my description of charisma work, I reflect on the specific poetic devices used to craft the extraordinary visions of charismatic individuals by suggesting two ways in which the ocean as a trope expresses social solidarity in distinctly Hau'ofian terms. I call these forms of social solidarity 'the egalitarian ocean' and 'the God position'.

Trevor J. Durbin

CHARISMA WORK, MICROSTATES,
AND THE PRODUCTION OF AUTHORITATIVE MARINE SPACE IN OCEANIA

In the final sections of the article, I turn from a descriptive account of charisma work to a theorisation of how charisma work might function within the structural conditions of Pacific Island microstates. That is, I turn from a relatively direct account of what charisma workers and their products do to an admittedly more speculative discussion of what the systemic consequences of charisma work might be. To this end, I draw on Paul Ricoeur's theoretical work on legitimate domination and my own analysis of *Mapping the Blue*, a documentary film about the creation of *Marae Moana*, to show how charisma work can function politically to cultivate a sense of egalitarian legitimacy and then transpose this sense of legitimacy onto the hierarchical institutions of the state. Specifically, I make the case that charisma work can help produce legitimacy for rational-legal, and specifically Pacific Island microstate authority, by cultivating an egalitarian mode of solidarity and then transposing the resulting sense of legitimacy onto hierarchical institutions through a subtle shift in ocean poetics inherent in charismatic visions. This transposition is effected through the symbolically charged charismatic individual who is associated with both egalitarian ideals and the hierarchically organised state. Furthermore, while I suspect this process can occur within a state as a means of securing the willingness of citizens to be governed, I emphasise the role of charisma work in securing necessary international support for microstate initiatives by *representing* the actions of the microstate as internally legitimate and desirable.

Throughout the article, I continue to make analytical distinctions between the social and poetic dimensions of charisma work. These distinctions are, however, highly entangled in practice, meaning that each discrete section of the essay illustrates both dimensions to some extent. In the next section, I emphasise the social dimensions of charisma work in promoting Pacific Island leaders to, and connecting them with, broader audiences. Specifically, I will focus on the charisma work of Conservation International in the promotion of Epeli Hau'ofa, Kevin Iro, and Anote Tong.

The Social Dimensions of Charisma Work: Epeli Hau'ofa, Kevin Iro, Anote Tong, and Conservation International

Epeli Hau'ofa

Conservation International has had a strong stake in the Pacific Oceanscape from the beginning, which most narratives locate in the creative imagination of Anote Tong, when he was President of the Republic of Kiribati, and with the NGO always, and somewhat ambiguously, adjacent. On 25 August 2012, Conservation International sponsored a press event to raise awareness for the Pacific Oceanscape, an initiative it claimed was the world's largest coordinated effort to protect biodiversity. The gathering was an adjunct to the 43rd Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Leaders Meeting held on Rarotonga and was led by Sue Taei, then the Pacific Islands Marine Director for Conservation International. Taei began by asking participants from media outlets across the Pacific to complete a simple task by finishing the sentence: 'The ocean is _____.' Their responses included: 'The ocean is life.' The ocean is home.' 'The ocean is livelihood.' 'The ocean is a cupboard.' 'The ocean is me.' One respondent offered, 'I am the ocean.' Then, the follow up from Taei: 'Who has read Epeli Hau'ofa?' When several participants raised their hands, she continued, 'The words you said are the same as the words he wrote. His vision is what the Pacific Oceanscape is about.' She ended her presentation with a quotation from the cover of the Pacific Oceanscape Framework document: 'Oceania is vast… expanding…hospitable and generous… humanity rising from the depths… us. We are the sea, we are the ocean…'

Two days later, Prime Minister Henry Puna of the Cook Islands delivered a speech at the opening ceremony of the 43rd PIF Leaders Meeting as the new incoming Forum Chair. Like his speech at the 42nd PIF Leaders Meeting one year earlier, Puna's rhetoric was distinctly Hau'ofian. Moreover, the PIF Forum theme, 'Large Ocean Island States— The Pacific Challenge', was recognised as a direct reference to Hau'ofa's vision (Maclellan 2012). Drawing on the same tropes used by Hau'ofa, the Prime Minister went on to explain that the theme:

…relates to re-thinking our sense of shared identity. As Pacific islanders, we have tended to define ourselves as small landmasses, scattered and separated over a vast body of ocean. From high above, we are but specks in a world of sea: firmly classified in global terms as 'Small Island Developing States' in the 'Pacific Islands Region.' But as a body of collective territories, we are more than three times the size of these countries as individuals: China, Canada, and the United States of America… If we need to break the mould that defines us too narrowly and limits us in any way—then break it we must.[9]

Prime Minister Puna continued to describe the Pacific Oceanscape as a way PIF countries would break the mould by rethinking the spatial scale of integrated ocean management. He also mentioned some of the Pacific Oceanscape's key features, LSMPAs, including PIPA that was also declared with support from Conservation International. In his speech, the Prime Minister officially announced a 1 million km^2 mixed-use Cook Islands Marine Park that was later given the Maori name *Marae Moana*[10] and expanded to 2 million km^2. He framed the marine park as a commitment to the Pacific Oceanscape and ended by urging 'Forum members, donors and partners' to make their own contributions.

To the extent that Hau'ofa's persona and extraordinary vision for Oceania is intentionally cultivated and promoted by Conservation International and others, it is consistent with charisma work as I have defined it. However, Hau'ofa seems to occupy a privileged place for some charisma workers I followed. Indeed, after being taught within Pacific Island institutions of higher education for two decades, Hau'ofa's vision has entered the same 'privileged circuits' of the expert elite he critiqued as being 'preoccupied with the questions of national borders, sovereignty, and dependency' (Jolly 2001: 421). Nevertheless, Hau'ofa is not the only charismatic figure brought into association with large-scale ocean

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[9] For the full context of this speech, see 'Large Ocean Island States - The Pacific Challenge'. Retrieved from http://www.forumsec.org/pages.cfm/newsroom/speeches/2012-1/43rd-pif-opening-statement-by-new-forum-chair-pm-of-cook-islands-hon-henry-puna.html.

[10] Marae Moana can be translated as 'Sacred Sea' (see Durbin 2018).

management initiatives. International NGOs and the charisma workers they employ rely on networks of charismatic people. Conservation International, specifically, promotes the work not only of Epeli Hau'ofa but also Sylvia Earle, Anote Tong, and Kevin Iro, among others. I turn now to this broader network of charismatic figures and examples of how their reputations and visions are crafted and promoted by Conservation International through media campaigns and public events.

Kevin Iro

One of Kevin Iro's best friends told me, 'he's as straight as anyone you'll ever meet. He has a great deal of *mana*'. When referring to Iro, *mana* means integrity, humility, and incessant charitable work in the Cook Islands. It is also associated with his sterling rugby career in New Zealand, where he was an exemplar of hard work and clean living. Even Cook Islanders who have been critical of *Marae Moana*, or of how it has been imagined, tended to qualify their statements with praise for Iro as a person. He was sometimes referred to as the 'marine park founder,' an honorific yet telling attribution of authority to an individual that formally belongs to the state alone. Regardless of anyone's personal opinions about the initiative, no one seemed to doubt that the initial idea, and much of the momentum for the Cook Islands Marine Park, came not from a government agency, NGO, or any other organisation but from an individual without the administrative or traditional authority to undertake such an ambitious project.

Iro first conceived the Cook Islands Marine Park in 2008. At the time, he was a member of the Cook Islands Tourism Board and was most interested in growing this vital economic sector. Traditional Cook Islands culture had been a primary way the state had tried to attract visitors, and their money, at least since the completion of Rarotonga's international airport on 1 November 1973 (Sissons 1999). Still, as far as most vacationers were concerned, one could go to Tahiti or other Polynesian islands and get a similar experience. Iro firmly believed that tourists, especially environmentally conscious travellers, would want to visit 'the largest marine park in the world'. At that time, he wasn't known for being an

environmentalist and had no background in marine science. He only later learned that the Republic of Kiribati had created PIPA, which is approximately the size of California. A mutual friend introduced him to Sue Taei, who had been involved with PIPA and the Pacific Oceanscape, and he began talking with other conservationists both within the Cook Islands and abroad. It was through these interactions that Iro began to see the marine park as a means of serious biodiversity protection as well as a tourism development scheme.[11]

Thanks to media created by Conservation International, the most accessible version of this narrative begins with Iro's growing concern for the health of the ocean. In a promotional video on the NGO's website, the transition from a direct experience of the ocean to ocean mapping, via Iro as a charismatic leader, is evident:

> Kevin Iro: From the age of seven or eight we started coming to the Cook Islands for school holidays, and I fell in love with the place. I moved back [here] with my family. I noticed the change. When I was young, you know, the lagoon was just vibrant. There were so many colours. All the coral was alive. As the years went by, I would say to my family, 'something's wrong out there'. Tourists are not going to want to come here if our water is polluted, if our coral is dying. The Cook Islands Marine Park is a concept I came up with about two or three years ago. We have 2 million square kilometres of ocean that we own. We've proposed to the government that we protect half of that.

> Prime Minister Puna: Kevin was *the driving force*. He convinced me that it was the right direction to move in. As Pacific Islanders it is incumbent on us to show the world that we care about the Pacific Ocean.[12]

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[11] Although conservation and tourism may seem like opposing endeavours, ecotourism is both a fraught and well-established means of trying to protect biodiversity while promoting economic development. Ecotourism can include attempts to reduce the environmental impact of tourism along with financial mechanisms for funding conservation projects.

[12] For the full video, see Conservation International's Spotlight on Kevin Iro, retrieved from

The video ends with the Conservation International logo and the tagline: 'Partnering with local heroes, for global success, so people and nature can thrive'. A hero, I would add, whether in sport or nature conservation, is a charismatic archetype.

President Anote Tong

Former President Anote Tong has been recognised internationally for his environmental advocacy through several prestigious awards and has been the focus of a campaign for a Nobel Peace Prize nomination. In international speeches, he often spoke as a kind of environmental prophet about the impacts of climate change on his country, including sea-level rise and coastal inundation. Like those featuring Kevin Iro, Conservation International has created videos that highlight President Tong and his visionary role in the creation of PIPA, the Pacific Oceanscape, and his leadership on climate change. In one, he describes the dire ecological and climatic situation facing Kiribati that may require its citizens to emigrate en masse. It is fascinating, then, that in invoking this apocalyptic future, President Tong does not refer to his role as head of state. Instead, he conjures a charismatic biblical image, the Moses of Exodus.[13] 'One has no right to leadership', he insists, 'if you cannot lead your people out of trouble.'[14] This is not the authority of office but a right to lead that comes from the capacity to articulate and realise an extraordinary vision of salvation in a time of crisis.

When President Tong spoke at international ocean events beyond the Pacific region, he did so with a similar sense of vision. In a 2014 address to the Our Oceans Conference held

http://www.conservation.org/projects/Pages/marae-moana-cook-islands-marine-park.aspx

[13] It is worth noting that the authority and vision of Moses was God-given. This is not insignificant, and I doubt it would have gone unnoticed in Kiribati, a predominantly Christian country. This is especially true, I would venture, in a country threatened with climate induced flooding, given the well-worn theological connections between the infant Moses (adrift in a basket), Noah's ark, and God's promise to never drown the earth again.

[14] For the full video, see Conservation International's Spotlight on President Anote Tong of Kiribati, retrieved from http://www.conservation.org/projects/Pages/marae-moana-cook-islands-marine-park.aspx

in Washington, D.C., he said:

> My country, Kiribati, has often been referred to as a small island developing state, but in reality, we're a very large atoll ocean state, and my people have been custodians over centuries of the surrounding ocean of around 3.5 million square kilometres. More than twice the size of the largest US state of Alaska.[15]

'A very large atoll ocean state' is a phrase that would have been incomprehensible two decades ago by the kinds of audiences that now applaud it. Here, Hau'ofa's vision of an expansive region and a connective and inclusive ocean is again at work, enabling President Tong to talk about how his country, and Oceania more generally, is leading efforts to protect the ocean because his people have always been ocean voyagers and stewards. He continued to talk about how Kiribati, aided by Conservation International and the New England Aquarium, established, then expanded, PIPA. He stressed the role of Oceania as a global leader in ocean conservation. He spoke about the Pacific Oceanscape, the Cook Islands Marine Park, and Palau's commitment to make its entire EEZ a commercial fishing no-take zone. To great applause, he then committed Kiribati to completely closing off PIPA to commercial fishing by 1 January 2015.

These videos and staged appearances show Kevin Iro and Anote Tong as charismatic leaders. Iro clearly has no formal role within the state. His leadership is legitimised in terms of his extraordinary personal accomplishments in sports, moral comportment, community building, and his vision for making one of the largest marine parks in the world. President Tong's extraordinary vision and role as leader during crisis is emphasised over his role as head of state. Furthermore, while the video examples given here were obviously produced by Conservation International, NGO staff also claimed to facilitate international appearances related to the Pacific Oceanscape, PIPA, and *Marae Moana* for President

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[15] For the full speeches of both John Kerry and Anote Tong, see 'Welcoming Remarks at Our Ocean Conference' at the US Department of State website. Retrieved from https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2014/06/227626.htm

Tong, Kevin Iro, and Prime Minister Puna. Importantly, these representations and appearances are largely intended for audiences beyond the Cook Islands, Kiribati, and even Oceania.

As a form of labour, charisma work re-presents individuals as extraordinary leaders. In the cases of Epeli Hau'ofa, Kevin Iro, and Anote Tong, Conservation International built upon, expanded, and promoted already existing reputations to larger audiences through media campaigns and, in the case of Iro and Tong, public appearances. However, this account of charisma work would be incomplete if it ignored the substantive dimensions of charismatic vision. Charismatic vision is important because the ability to articulate an extraordinary and seductive account of reality and demonstrate efficacy in its realisation is how charismatic authority, itself, is legitimated (see Weber 1978). It is no coincidence, then, that Hau'ofa, Iro, and Tong are associated with an extraordinary, specifically Oceanic, vision for the world. Much of this was illustrated by what these individuals said, as I reported in the preceding sections. In the next two, I will more clearly describe two dimensions of this oceanic vision. The first, what I call the 'egalitarian ocean', uses the ocean as a metaphor for a shared experience of spiritual connection and communitas, or a temporary dissolution of social, especially hierarchical, distinctions among people (see Turner 2008). It is a sense of being within that lends itself to the possibility of equitable forms of solidarity. The second depends on an ascendant trope that I call, following Michael Taussig, the 'God position', in which the unity of the ocean is viewed from above and solidarity depends on the legitimation of hierarchical domination.

The Poetic Dimensions of Charisma Work: The Egalitarian Ocean and the God Position

The Egalitarian Ocean

In his book *What Color is the Sacred?*, Michael Taussig (2009) argues that coping with apocalyptic environmental futures, such as those evoked by climate change, may require

a new understanding of how our bodies are already in constant watery communication with the world beyond our awareness. He claims that the means of expressing unconscious connectivity to our surroundings is an oceanic trope that anchors a poetics of drifting, as if in a sea:

> To thus consciously see ourselves in the midst of the world is to … exchange standing above the fray, the God position, for some quite other position that is not really a position at all but something more like swimming, more like nomads adrift in the sea, *mother of all metaphor*, that sea I call the bodily unconscious [emphasis added]. (Taussig 2009: 13)

Taussig speaks to the power of the sea as a tropic expression of an eco-spiritual reality.[16] This sentiment was also articulated, in a similar idiom, over a decade previously by Hau'ofa, who argued that for Oceanians 'the ocean is not merely our omnipresent, empirical reality; equally importantly it is our most wonderful metaphor for just about anything' (Hau'ofa 1998: 406). Hau'ofa argued that the ocean as metaphor worked in Oceania because the sea is a pervasive experience, and that because it is a ubiquitous material reality, the ocean can act as a trope of connection and integration. It is a sentiment that he did not invent but rather shared and expressed, sometimes through the voices of other artists in Oceania, such as the work of I-Kiribati poet Teresia Teaiwa, who wrote:

> We sweat and cry salt water, so we know

> That the ocean is really in our blood. (Teaiwa quoted in Hau'ofa 1998: 392)

Artists like Teaiwa show that we can know and feel in both emotional and motional senses, both figurative and literal, that our blood is the ocean, that all water is connected and connects all things, and that the ecological is a pathway to the mystical.

This way of thinking and feeling is not restricted to poetry as a literary genre but is also

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[16] Helmreich (2011b) has noted that seawater has played a similar role in social theory.

present in ocean-related diplomacy and conservation events. For example, Sylvia Earle also attended the 43rd PIF Leaders Meeting on Rarotonga courtesy of Conservation International. In the same Pacific Oceanscape media session where I listened to Sue Taei speak about Epeli Hau'ofa, I also heard Earle talk about the ocean as a kind of global circulatory system that, because of her status as a well-respected ocean explorer and researcher, seemed to blur the boundaries between scientific and spiritual representations. She said:

> All life needs water whether you live on the top of a mountain or a desert. If you've never seen the ocean or touched the ocean, the ocean touches you with every breath you take, every drop of water that falls out of the sky.[17]

The journalists in attendance seemed to love listening to Earle speak in this way. She gave great sound bites, but I think there was much more to it than that. When she spoke, inspiration flashed across the faces of nearly everyone in the room. I felt it myself—an energy, a movement that cut through all cynicism and despair, at least for a moment, as we all breathed together of the ocean, so as not to drown.

It is fitting that Conservation International featured the oceanic visions by Sylvia Earle and Epeli Hau'ofa in the same session. Indeed, Hau'ofa knew of Earl's work by the time he elaborated his oceanic vision in The Ocean in Us, published in 1998, and credits her poetic expression of the ocean's connectivity with providing additional support for his own developing vision. At that time, he wrote: "After I re`ad Earle's account, it became clear that the ocean, and our historical relationships with it, would be the core theme [for the Centre for Pacific Arts and Culture]" (Hau'ofa 1998: 403). What I take from this close association of Earle and Hau'ofa in both his own writing and the charisma work of Conservation International is this: while the poetic visions of the ocean as articulated by Pacific Islanders (most clearly Hau'ofa but including Teaiwa, Iro, Puna, and Tong) have their

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[17] An example of journalistic coverage of Sylvia Earle's talk and more context for the quotation can be found here: 'This is the moment'. Cook Islands News. August 26, 2012. Retrieved from: http://www.cookislandsnews.com/item/38541-lsquo-this-is-the-moment-rsquo.

own specific cultural anchorages, they also participate powerfully in a spiritually ubiquitous ocean poetics along with others, such as Earle and Taussig. Indeed, it may be this powerful tropic telescoping out from culturally specific experiences of immersion in the ocean to transcendent oceanic sensibilities that allows charisma work to function as a mode of state legitimisation, but more on this in the last section of the article.

The God Position

The sacredness of the ocean is not only expressed through tropes of immersion and connection from within. What Taussig called the God position is a powerful and perhaps even more pervasive stance from which to convey human unity. I have already shown how Prime Minister Puna and President Tong, following Hau'ofa, evoked the God position by speaking of the largeness of the Pacific Islands from the ascendant perspective of their collective EEZs. I will give one more example from outside Oceania to illustrate the broad spiritual appeal of this perspective. Immediately before Anote Tong spoke at the 2014 Our Oceans Conference, then US Secretary of State John Kerry said the following in his welcoming remarks:

> The fact is we as human beings share nothing so completely as the ocean that covers nearly three quarters of our planet. And I remember the first time I really grasped that notion. It was in the early 1970s when the first colour pictures of Earth from space were released, the famous blue marble photographs. And when you look at those images, you don't see borders or markers separating one nation from another. You just see big masses of green and sometimes brown surrounded by blue. For me, that image shaped the realisation that what has become clichéd and perhaps even taken for granted – not perhaps, is taken for granted – is the degree to which we all share one planet, one ocean. And because we share nothing so completely as our ocean, each of us also shares the responsibility to protect it. And you can look at any scripture of any religion,

any life philosophy, and you will draw from it that sense of responsibility.[18]

The assertion that we share nothing so completely as our ocean is significant. It is an articulation of a global communion through an oceanic substance that, rather than being inside each of us, or each of us in it, is unifying from a perspective Donna Haraway has called a 'view from above, from nowhere' that results from a 'god-trick' (Haraway 1991: 195). Haraway's point is epistemological. Knowledge is always situated and a view from a body. This is similar to Taussig's suggestion that we must trade the God position for the perspective of drifting in the world. However, Haraway's insistence that this transcendent move is a trick is critically important for the last part of my argument in the next section. That is, the view of oceanic solidarity from above is a trick in that it both retains a sense of solidarity that is first legitimised within a vision of the egalitarian ocean and hides the origins of this sense of solidarity.

Theorising Charisma Work: The Transposition of Legitimacy from the Egalitarian Ocean to the God Position

So far, I have illustrated the interconnected social and poetic dimensions of charisma work as expressed in promotional materials and public events. I did so to make two points. First, these perspectives are present, to varying degrees, in the charismatic visions attributed by Conservation International to Hau'ofa, Tong, and Iro. Second, the oceanic tropes that these visions draw upon circulate within and beyond Oceania, allowing the charisma work of Conservation International to be outward facing, that is, intended to attract support from beyond the Cook Islands, Kiribati, and Oceania more broadly. In this section, I attempt to build a theoretical apparatus that can extend these observations and begin to account for how charisma work might function to legitimise rational-legal authority. I argue that it does

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[18] See note 15.

so, first, by cultivating followership through a connective vision of an egalitarian ocean and then by transposing the resulting sense of legitimacy into the hierarchical unity of the God position, thereby creating symbolic support for formal dimensions of rational-legal institutions in microstates. This process is a function of charismatic individuals as symbolic vehicles for both the egalitarian ocean and the God position, while also being closely associated with the state. To anchor this argument theoretically, I must first summarise the work of Paul Ricoeur which shows that the ideological justification of rational-legal authority is ultimately derived from communal origins. I then use this theoretical framework to interpret *Mapping the Blue*, a documentary film featuring Kevin Iro.

The Authoritative Hinge: Ricoeur on Legitimate Domination

In his *Lectures on Ideology and Utopia*, Ricoeur (1986) argues that ideology operates on three functional levels: distortion, legitimation, and integration. He derives the first of these, distortion, from the classic Marxian emphasis on the tendency of the ruling class to express its interests in ruling systems of ideas. Implicit in this notion, however, is the question of how authority, or domination in general rather than class domination specifically, is related to ideology. Through a creative re-reading of Weber, Ricoeur claims that ideology helps legitimise domination by filling a credibility gap between a claim to authority, on the part of an emerging ruling class, and an inherent capacity for belief, initially invested in a symbolic order that sustains group identity, on the part of those ruled. In turn, this question of legitimate domination over a political community raises the implicit problem of that community's formation, identity, and persistence through time and space. Here, Ricoeur turns to Geertz's (1973) essay *Ideology as a Cultural System* to argue that ideology is initially involved in the integration of diverse points of view within a larger cultural system that is prior, logically if not also temporally, to the emergence of an authority. This integrative capacity of ideology as a cultural system is located in rhetoric

and the persuasive capacity of trope to orient people in social and political space.[19]

Ricoeur's interest in the origins of ideology leads him to increasingly broad considerations of how power is legitimised culturally and socially. These concerns converge in 'the concept of the authoritative as the transition from the integrative function to the legitimation of hierarchy' (Ricoeur 1986: 260). The authoritative, here, refers to both the authoritative ideas that render an autonomous politics meaningful and to legitimised domination found in hierarchical social organisation. The authoritative as an analytical category is, thus, a kind of hinge between the poetic and rhetorical basis of legitimate ideas— where new events, things, and concepts become culturally significant to the extent that individuals and groups can be persuaded of their meaning (Tyler and Strecker 2009)— and the potential for authoritative claims to become invested with belief in the legitimacy of individuals or institutions making those claims. The authoritative, therefore, creates conceptual space for thinking between the construction of real or imagined communities, discourses, epistemes, and histories, on one hand, and the hierarchical integration of social, political, or professional strata, on the other.

Ricoeur further proposes that rational-legal authority, in general, must always depend on traditional and charismatic kernels and, through the function of ideology, obscure these sources of power. As a type of authority with radically generative potential, charisma is unique in its emphasis on new authoritative ideas (in the form of the leader's extraordinary vision) and its status as a locus from which new authoritative claims can be made (the personhood of the leader). In short, the charismatic individual is a carrier of both forms of novelty, the embodiment of a generative and authoritative hinge between an integrative symbolic system and social hierarchy. This may become more significant when attempts by a state to create new, or radically amend old, rational-legal institutions lack inherent capacity to inspire belief in the legitimacy of its own claim to authority. We might follow through on Ricoeur's Marxian analogy, in such cases, to say that charismatic individuals

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[19] For an ethnographic account of the rhetorical basis of charisma, see Csordas 1997.

who are aligned with the state may help appropriate surplus belief in legitimacy from the integrative symbolic system to the hierarchical political structure.

Mapping the Blue

A modest empirical window into these dynamics is opened by *Mapping the Blue*, a film funded by the Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation, that follows Kevin Iro, a team of international scientists, traditional Cook Islands leaders, and other stakeholders as they travel to Penrhyn atoll in the Northern Group of the Cook Islands. The film, produced for a global audience, was originally made possible through introductions facilitated by Conservation International. It follows in the tradition of a classic National Geographic documentary and exhibits the same sense of grandeur and significance. One of its foci is the research team's use of SeaSketch, a marine spatial planning software package developed by the company Esri, to record and spatially represent residents' opinions about the Cook Islands Marine Park, the interests of other stakeholders, and other data layers, such as bathymetry and biological diversity. The film begins skimming just above the ocean's surface before cutting to a view of low-lying atolls from an aircraft and a montage of island and sea life. The God position and lived experience are swiftly juxtaposed in ways that are suggestive of seamless transition between the two perspectives.

Iro is portrayed as the progenitor of the marine park, who was inspired by his love of and connection with the ocean.

> Narrator: The Cook Islands Marine Park is the brainchild of ruby league champion Kevin Iro. He spent a lot of his childhood in the Cook Islands, where he grew to love the ocean.

Iro: At the young age, seven or eight, I would spend every day in the sea and in the ocean fishing and out on boats. *It just becomes part of you.*[20]

Later in the film, while standing on the beach with the ocean at his back, Iro draws the outer boundary of the marine park in the sand. The film then cuts to a map of the Pacific region with a similar marine park boundary at its centre. The visual metaphor here is clear. Iro is the creator of the marine park vision and, through him, his extraordinary love of the ocean is transfigured into *Marae Moana.* Iro, in short, is represented as a conduit through which the experiential connection with the ocean becomes ascendant. According to this subtle logic, his role as mediator is also why Iro, rather than any other member of the research team, including traditional leaders, meets with residents of Penrhyn to explain what the marine park idea means and uses SeaSketch on his laptop to record their experiences and opinions. Like Iro, residents talk about how the ocean is an integral part of their identity, but it is only through Iro, and his use of SeaSketch, that their lived experience is transfigured into the God position of marine spatial planning. However, given the technical and political nature of the task, we might reasonably ask why Iro was the best person for the job. At the time of filming, he had little or no technical or rational-legal expertise, hence no bureaucratic authority, and held no chiefly titles, hence no traditional authority. Regardless, it is Iro who is represented as the primary mediator between residents and the state. Near the end of the film, he personally shows the opinions of Penrhyn residents, as represented in SeaSketch, to Prime Minister Puna. Finally, the narrator simplifies Iro's complex mediational role with the reductive claim that 'the Geographic Information System will make it easy for the government to define how to use the marine park'.

The film's ability to smooth over the transposition from the egalitarian ocean to the God position, through Iro's use of marine spatial planning software, may be partly the result of dramatic shifts in how we relate to geographic representations of the ocean. Keen

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[20] For the full video, see 'World's Largest Marine Park: Mapping the Blue'. Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1fTzilnT2zU

observers have noticed that since 1972, images of earth that began as the Apollo 17 'Blue Marble' photographs have transformed from holistic depictions of Spaceship Earth to dynamic and complex, yet virtually navigable, representations via Google Earth and Google Ocean. The former has functioned as a secular spiritual icon that conveys the unity of mankind (Boes 2014). This was the image conjured by John Kerry when he insisted we share nothing so completely as our ocean. Representations by Google, in contrast, allow a curious and apparently seamless transition from ascendance to a personal sphere of experience and back again. As Helmreich (2011a) notes, applications like Google Ocean tend to obscure the God position by transforming images of Spaceship Earth into an individualised perspective that can descend from on high and wander almost anywhere on the planet.

However, this smooth scalar transition is likely fictitious and potentially ideological. Woods (2014) argues that the seamless transitions between scales that we might find in the cinematic smooth zoom effect or, I will add, Google Ocean navigation, ignore scale variance. Scale variance is the idea that 'the observation and the operation of systems are subject to different constraints at different scales due to real discontinuities' (Woods 2014: 133). That scale variance is obscured in virtual experiences of the ocean is interesting, in part because it opens these technologies to analysis of their ideological functions. In a classically Marxian sense of distortion, this would be interesting enough because it allows us to inquire, along with Helmreich (2011a), into the social realities that these representations distort and hide. Scale variance becomes even more significant, however, when approached through the framework developed by Ricoeur. Ricoeur allows us to ask how mapping technologies may participate in transitions from symbolic integration of egalitarian solidarities to the legitimation of hierarchy and how this transition is concealed from those who are willing to invest the former, but perhaps not the latter, with legitimacy. The concealment of disjuncture between the spatial scale of social life, on one hand, and national- or regional-scale mapping projects is, thus, a critical point for questioning the symbolic basis of rational-legal authority more generally.

In a subtle series of transformations and juxtapositions throughout *Mapping the Blue*, Kevin Iro's presence as the leader-user of SeaSketch software allows the experiences and opinions of Penrhyn residents to become not only a simple and authoritative object of state-sponsored technical mapping but also a suasive fulcrum from which to leverage international support for the Cook Islands and *Marae Moana*. Seen in this light, the film is a means for viewers to zoom in on the Cook Islands, feel a sense of connection through the egalitarian trope, and zoom out to the God position of a global observer. An ambition for the film is certainly that the resulting generalised sense of solidarity with the Cook Islands will evoke political and economic support that, channelled through NGOs like Conservation International, will allow the state to meet its formally declared objectives.

Conclusion

Mapping the Blue is a product of what I have been calling charisma work. The film was partially the result of early connections facilitated by charisma workers within Conservation International, who also brought Sylvia Earle to the 43rd Pacific Islands Forum Meeting and produced promotional videos for *Marae Moana* and the Pacific Oceanscape that focused on the charismatic personalities of Kevin Iro and Anote Tong, and that invoked the extraordinary vision of Epeli Hau'ofa. I have described charisma work as a form of labour primarily performed by employees of international NGOs that produces social networks for, creates media representations of, and facilitates public appearances for leaders already recognised in more local contexts. Moreover, charisma workers help craft and promote extraordinary visions of solidarity, both as the egalitarian ocean and the God position.

However, as my Ricoeurian analysis of *Mapping the Blue* indicates, the labour of charisma workers in Oceania reveals an important way in which some Pacific microstates, like the Cook Islands, legitimise their rational-legal authority. That is, charisma workers can help cultivate an underlying capacity for belief in an extraordinary leader, first within a vision of

the egalitarian ocean. The broadly cultivated trust in a charismatic leader is then transferred to the God position through additional representations of charismatic leader. In the case of *Mapping the Blue*, this transference is mediated by representations of Kevin Iro and his use of SeaSketch. Because the God position is a familiar view from within the administrative state, Iro's act of presenting the opinions of the people of the Cook Islands to Prime Minister Puna effects a nearly seamless symbolic transference of trust from the people of the Cook Islands, though Iro, to the state, from charismatic to rational-legal authority. Finally, it is important that the transference of authority is imperceptible to those who are governed. It would remain so without the concepts I have developed here for making it visible.

These tools have been constructed within the specific context of Pacific Island microstates, but we might ask how they can be adapted to better understand structural conditions of rational-legal authority more generally. That rational-legal authority must somehow be legitimised is becoming increasingly obvious where it is faltering, such as when challenged by increasingly influential populist movements. In these cases, the once-settled authority of state institutions may no longer be taken for granted by the governed. Classic sociological sensibilities point toward the increased visibility of charismatic leaders in these instances, when either rational-legal or traditional authority loses legitimacy. However, my description of charisma workers shifts this focus toward processes through which the state might co-opt charismatic authority as a means of re-asserting its legitimate claim to authoritative government. By shifting from charismatic authority as a force opposed to rational-legal authority toward charisma work as an integrative endeavour, political anthropologists and others may gain fresh insights into the workings of power and domination in geopolitically precarious times.

About the Author

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'We don't just live in a connected-up world—our discipline gives us tools to see it with'

An interview with Marilyn Strathern

Nora Coman

Ruoyu Qu

Sally Fitzpatrick

Imke van Bentum

In this written interview from 29 October 2022, four bachelor's students studying cultural anthropology at the University of Göttingen (Sally Fitzpatrick, Ruoyu Qu, Nora Coman, and Imke van Bentum) interviewed Professor Dame Marilyn Strathern, an emeritus Professor in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge, about her research on sociality and gift exchange, gender relations, kinship, intellectual property, audit culture, and bioethics. Strathern is known for her groundbreaking work in feminist anthropology, as well as her research focusing on Papua New Guinea and Great Britain. She has also written extensively on the anthropology of science and technology and the ways in which these fields shape our understanding of the world. Her work is known for its theoretical and ethnographic complexity, which often draws on insights from philosophy and other disciplines.

To Nora Coman, Ruoyu Qu, Sally Fitzpatrick, Imke van Bentum

First of all, let me say how much I appreciate both your interest and your wanting to take things further than was possible in class at the time. Your questions have made me think. Thank you!

What motivated you to choose both archaeology and anthropology at the start of your academic career? And why did you decide to become an anthropologist rather than an archaeologist?

As a schoolgirl in southern England I had the opportunity of digging with a local historical society, which I hugely enjoyed (Roman remains seemed to be everywhere). At the same time, I knew I didn't want to 'be' an archaeologist. We had touched on Rousseau during history lessons on the eighteenth century, and my head was swirling with grand ideas about understanding society. Cambridge University offered a degree course in 'Archaeology and Anthropology' and this seemed like a dream combination. Because of the way the course was structured, the first year included archaeology along with the two anthropologies -- biological (as it was then called) and social; in years 2 and 3 I specialized in social anthropology alone.

As to social anthropology, on the one hand, I had aspirations to get a grip on the notion of society that people seemed to be using in so many senses; on the other hand, once I actually embarked on reading in the subject I then discovered the world of ethnography, and its sudden enlargement of detail by comparison with what I was digging up – tile fragments, potsherds (happy enough as I had been with them) – bowled me over. This was

something else. Radcliffe Brown lured me on the first count; Evans-Pritchard – Nuer cattle bells – on the second.

In comparison to 1987, when you wrote your article 'An Awkward Relationship: The Case of Feminism and Anthropology' [Signs, vol. 12, no. 2], feminism has changed quite a bit (it also now tackles topics such as non-binary gender identity, sexuality, and the interplay of race and gender). Considering these developments, how would you re-read your article from a contemporary perspective? And how would you interpret the relationship between today's feminism(s) and 'the Other'?

What an intriguing question! It is good to see you historicizing this piece of writing, since it is all too easy to forget that we write in relation to the issues and problems of the day, whether consciously or not. That article certainly belonged to a specific moment in time when gender relations were being uncovered for discipline after discipline. In the light of what has happened since, one of the issues to be re-assessed is what I then took to be part of the power of feminist thought, that it itself did not behave as a 'discipline' (which is why it could affect so many). But that is obviously challenged by all the gender studies centres that subsequently sprang up and the dedicated courses that it became possible to pursue.

Such a re-assessment might also point directly to the way feminist thought crossed subject boundaries. Consider the directions that some individual feminist anthropologists took in the turn to technology (including reproductive technologies) of the 1990s, and the more general opening up of interdisciplinary expectations that made it unremarkable for writers such as Donna Haraway to be read by anthropologists. At the same time, as you observe, the field of feminist scholarship was feeding into and drawing from the broad project of critical studies, stimulated especially by Judith Butler, from which anthropologists writing on feminist matters gained fresh momentum. Not only was gender loosened from its binarisms, it was possible to trouble scholarly practices, for instance by queering – or acknowledging the queerness of - diverse formulations of what knowledge is or does. Meanwhile anthropology's comparative project ('cross cultural comparison'), which had

initially provided the study of gender relations so many materials to think with, faded from its former prominence. In brief, if there always was a question mark hanging over the idea of 'a relationship' between feminism and anthropology, nowadays one would need to re-assess the very notion of a relation, at least insofar as there is no compunction to hold steady either 'feminism' or 'anthropology'. Or, to put it otherwise, an initial question might address the circumstances under which each exists as an object of thought (or practice or method or in whatever mode) of the kind that could be pressed into comparison.

Thank you for picking me up on referring to feminism's 'Other'. That was a bit too slick on my part (too easily borrowed from some feminist parlance of the time), but was a way of expressing what I felt were certain political-intellectual stances. It would take a detailed, ethnographic study of today's many feminisms to think through its present day analogy.

In your 1996 article 'Cutting the Network' [Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, vol. 2, no. 3], you mention the scientists who, based on twelve years of team research, created a test for Hepatitis C. When applying for a patent, they conceded that they did not do all the work themselves, having made use of the research that came before; however, since their work presented the defining part of the research, they felt justified in being named as the patent owners. Would you say that the concept of 'cutting the network' can be used in connection with a critical intersectional perspective? For example, could we use it to research who gets credited on a scientific research project that involves dozens or hundreds of scientists, and who gets 'cut out'?

Yes, you are quite right apropos the legal framework of industrial patents, which produces particular kinds of owners to the exclusion of others. In fact your comment anticipates work on scientific and other kinds of authorship that was taking off at the time (questions were being asked about the ownership of academic knowledge and what it meant to be an author). Apropos science research, in particular, this was in the larger context of how

authorial citations build the prestige structures that sustain scientific reputations, with attendant queries on the diverse implications of putting research into the public domain.

Thus people were experimenting with new ways of conceiving a public 'commons' in intellectual property. Meanwhile, this all remains a living issue for scientific journals – I gather that the record for numbers of authors cited for single article at present stands at over 5,000.

However, your questions cast the issue afresh – put it under a different spotlight – by bringing in a critical intersectional perspective. In other words, you are pointing to already existing identities and interests and asking about mechanisms that would include or exclude a name on categorical or personal grounds. This issue is not restricted to research in the natural sciences (which is how English-speakers ordinarily understand 'science'). 'Cutting the network' could indeed encourage enquiry into the kinds of truncations that anthropologists so often have to exercise: for example, whom anthropologists mention in their acknowledgements (interlocutors, helpers, family, colleagues?), or the way in which they dwell on quotations from this interlocutor but not that (knowledge, neighbourhood, expertise, gender?). We cannot avoid such 'cutting' – it would be impossible to say or do anything otherwise. But the image of a network does serve as reminder of how long strings interdependencies can get, so that the notion of cutting a network might lead us to ponder on everything that has gone into a particular selection.

How else can we think about maintaining responsibility and accountability – a major issue in many European academic corners, including in Germany – without falling into the restrictive trap of 'audit culture'?

You have posed a conundrum here that I would love to know how to answer.

Part of the impasse that university academics perceive relates to the previous topic: changing conventions of reward and accountability in scholarship. Another part springs

from the de-professionalization of the academy: what happens when people's efforts cannot be taken on trust (which may or may not be a good thing). And it is all given a new twist by current conventions in which bodies of many kinds are anxious to seek approval from their members, users, consumers, purchasers or whatever (every time you are asked to 'like' something). One might think about what is lost from or gained for the concept of accountability by this ubiquitous search for a positive tick.

Perhaps one way of thinking through some of the issues might be to start with student evaluations of teaching or university experience, and I keep it as my example. Can one do better than simply imagine forms of instant feedback? Is one still interested in assessing 'performance' – and if not, how do junior staff demonstrate their value? (Should evaluations determine career prospects?) What kinds of schemes might be devised that did not add to the pressures of (everyone's) work? How long after a course is given is it appropriate to register its effectiveness? -- Or would it be better to scrap such evaluations altogether? If so, from whose point of view, and how many actors would need persuading: university authorities, funding formula for universities (public or private money), staff-student ratios on specific courses, and so on?

Alternatively, would there be a way of undertaking scrutiny that did not make scrutiny an inevitably administrative task? Two thoughts come to mind. First, in respect of measuring output, however that is understood: by what mechanisms can the teaching-learning process be turned into one of mutual benefit, interest, curiosity, inspiration? Or does mutuality inhibit overt judgment? There are pros as well as cons to impersonal (e.g. anonymous) structures in examinations. Second, in respect of accountability: one might wish to bring ethics (beyond institutional ethics such as research review boards) into the picture. Discussions in anthropology at the time when 'audit cultures' emerged as an object of enquiry also raised the question of self-accountability, and among other things the self may value its disciplinary – or cross disciplinary – identity. Would it help if a larger role were accorded disciplines or subject areas? The idea would be not to conjure up new national overseers but to recognize within the local institution (the university) the heterogeneity of scholarly practices as it impinges on a student's experience.

If you were to embark upon a new research project today, would you prefer to revisit a project from the past or would you choose a new topic? Do you already have a new topic in mind?

Over the period since retirement (13 years now), I have taken on two new projects (more or less in parallel), though both stem from and go back to work done earlier. One was to consolidate thinking about the concept of 'relations' by delving into certain historical as well as contemporary aspects of English and European thought. The exercise turned out to be quite illuminating, at least for myself. The other followed a last, short visit to Mt Hagen in the Papua New Guinea Highlands (in 2015), when I was struck anew by certain properties of their subsistence crops laid bare by climate-exacerbated drought. That has led me to re-think and want to re-describe all kinds of issues from the ethnography of Melanesia: gender relations, kinship, regeneration, life and death, cosmology.

Perhaps I can answer your question more concretely by pointing to an opportunity to devise a new project that actually came my way; this took place over 2019-22. I called it 'Time and the ethnographic horizon at moments of crisis'. It focused on Amazonia as well as Melanesia: retirement had given me the possibility of catching up with certain Amazonianist colleagues, and of thinking a bit about some of the fascinating work that has Amerindian roots. The topic itself related materials from areas of long standing anthropological interest (concepts of time) to some of the kinds of 'crises' by which we mark the present epoch.

What would be your advice for students of cultural anthropology in Europe today?

You are in a subject, if I may say so, that at once draws its thinking from societies and cultures worldwide and respects the thoughts and theories of people that lie beyond its own imaginative horizons. At present I happen to be reading two books by cultural anthropologists, on work undertaken in Ecuador and in Indonesian Papua respectively. The

former deals with what was involved in trying to sue an oil company for environmental contamination, the latter with the ramifications of palm oil plantations for social life in its largest sense. Not on climate change directly, [though] both books address some of the drivers of it. And in the course of cultural analysis, the latter in particular provides brilliant insight not just into people's livelihoods but also into their narratives (their own analyses), which confront some of the assumptions we might bring to such situations.

Neither of these anthropologists lives in Europe, though either could have (they write from the US and Australia), yet their endeavours are not so far away from those of us Europeans. Their ideas and approaches are part of our mental hinterland, as are the ideas and approaches of their interlocuters. Of course your research may be in Europe itself, and it will require as much local knowledge of whatever it is you study as any study does, wherever undertaken, but the resources for thinking through the problems (as in problematics) you encounter is another matter. Such resources may be found anywhere. We don't just live in a connected-up world, our discipline gives us tools to see it with. Look out for intellectual companions and allies – they could come from unexpected places.

But your questions suggest that you already know this! All the best with your studies.

Marilyn Strathern

Doing Kinship by Doing Law?

Conference Report

Department of European Ethnology, University of Vienna, 9-10 December 2022

Felix Gaillinger, MA, University of Vienna

Julia Böcker, PhD, Leuphana University Lüneburg

Michèle Kretschel-Kratz, MA, Humboldt-Universität, Berlin

Sarah Mühlbacher, PhD, Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt am Main

The rigidity of law, according to an early founder of the German-language strand of the sociology of law, signals the domination of the dead over the living (Ehrlich 1913: 323). Legally standardized ideals of action and the actual everyday practice of dealing with the law are not necessarily compatible. Such contradictions become visible, for example, in moments in which there is a struggle for interpretative sovereignty over legal claims. Through a practice-oriented lens, law is woven into relationships between persons, but at the same time it is reinterpreted, contested, acted out, or even rejected in these relationships.

'Doing Kinship by Doing Law?'

CONFERENCE REPORT

The everyday effects of law become tangible in family and kinship relations. Nevertheless, socio-legal studies, as well as gender, family and kinship studies have hardly addressed the intertwining of law, power, kinship, and everyday practices. Under the open question "Doing Kinship by Doing Law?", the interdisciplinary conference at the University of Vienna (9-10 December 2022), organized by the European ethnologist Felix Gaillinger, approached the everyday meaning of law for and in practices of kinship and family making. Thus, it opened a discussion about relations and overlaps between kinship studies, family studies and socio-legal (gender) studies in terms of research subjects, objectives, methods, and methodologies. The participants of the two conference days received insights into research projects from various disciplines such as social and cultural anthropology, sociology, philosophy, legal studies, gender studies and social education. All participants emphasized that processes of family and kinship making and law are closely interwoven, and that lived relationships ground the law.

The conference opened with a keynote by Beate Binder (Humboldt-Universität Berlin) who explored different approaches to feminist legal research in cultural anthropology. Binder argued that an understanding of processes of everyday kinship making in legally structured fields can take different forms and might start at different points, such as in the field of jurisprudence, in legal mobilization, or legal consciousness. According to Binder, law is processual and contested, endowed with power, interwoven with politics and moral orders, but also linked to actors, spaces, situations, and materialities.

Karin Jurczyk (Munich), who gave the second keynote, presented a care-centered conception of family, and asked how it relates to the highly standardized legal concept of kinship. Family, in this understanding, is not so much a given resource, but rather a process that can also take place beyond blood relations. However, kinship is also a legal assignment (usually in status law) that often contrasts with the family as a social reality. Because not every kinship relation is also a family relation and vice versa, it is necessary to examine the legal distinction between kinship and family – especially if it runs beyond lived reality.

According to Jan-Christoph Marschelke (University of Regensburg), notions of collectivity, including conceptions of family and kinship, tend to reify social reality. In order to avoid

this, the conference call proposed to think of collectivity as an open process of *doing* collectivity. This conceptual openness serves to include states of interconnectedness between social groups and actors who allegedly lie outside of family and kinship relationships: neighborhoods, circles of friends, school classes, work teams, and other associations. Marschelke argued that doing family always involves "doing social categories". Conversely, social categories influence concrete practices of doing family and doing kinship in everyday life.

The first panel discussed legal definitions for conceptions of kinship and how these change over time. Legal scholar Fiona Behle (University of Zurich) focused on Swiss parentage law, which regulates the legal assignment of children to "their" parents and therefore constructs legal kinship. She discussed the so-called "two-parent-principle", which prevents multiple parenthood, and pointed out that, although this principle is invoked to argue against parentage law reforms, there is no clear justification for the two-parent-principle itself. Using historical examples, Behle demonstrated that the two-parent-principle only appeared in the second half of the 20th century, when the differentiation between legitimate and illegitimate children was abolished, and repositioned this body of law to propose a broader definition of parenthood.

Julia Böcker (Leuphana University Lüneburg) focused on a law amendment in Germany which created a civil status for miscarried fetuses and addressed its heteronormative implications. Unlike before, when miscarried foetuses were usually discarded as clinical waste, parents are now allowed to register and bury these miscarried foetuses, regardless of the gestation week. On the one hand, Böcker argues, the law amendment leverages more self-determination, choice, and kinship-making after miscarriage. Now affected people decide for themselves what will happen with their miscarried babies or "tissue" and have the option to perform practices of family-making like taking photographs. Yet, on the other hand, the law amendment attributes personhood to lost foetuses and strengthens heteronormative family values on an institutional level. For example, only married heterosexual couples are legally permitted to receive an official certificate of the miscarriage and, thereby, to be acknowledged as ("angel"-)parents.

The second panel on "Queering Law" focused on the intertwining of change and permanence and drew attention to the production of (new) legal kinship relations through parentage law. According to Sarah Mühlbacher (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt), despite multiple processes to improve the parental rights of same-sex couples, inequalities persist. For example, lesbian co-parents still have to adopt their children in order to become legal parents. Mühlbacher addressed the structural conditions that cause such exclusions, and noted that familial notions of care and the concept of solidarity are both premised on the idea of belonging. In families, however, people care for each other in an existential way that excludes non-members. Thus, non-members are deprived of care.

Mona Mokatef (TU Dortmund University), Christine Wimbauer and Julia Teschlade (Humboldt-Universität Berlin) discussed their qualitative study on LGBTQ* family formations and showed how legal injustices influence queer people's everyday family practices. First, the authors elaborated on three areas of (un)acknowledgement and discrimination of LGBTIQ* families in German law. Second, they pointed out different strategies that queer people use to normalize everyday life and deal with these inequalities, and emphasized that these strategies are responses to (anticipated) discrimination, exclusion and devaluation and therefore constitute means of dealing with potential threats, and not (just) an assimilation to heteronormative society.

Legal regulations concerning the notion of family may lead to exclusion and discrimination. In addition, families are all too often not a haven of happiness and care, as Manuel Bolz's (University of Hamburg) contribution made clear. Manuel Bolz's ethnographic research addressed narrations of revenge practices, and paid particular attention to revenge fantasies towards family members, including withdrawing affection, withholding information, or destroying objects, among others. Bolz interpreted these acts of revenge as a means of communication that is functional for biographical work. Bolz argued that revenge becomes a means by which actors restore their ideas of justice, and noted that the figure of the female revenger can be traced back to gendered relations of inequality within the family.

The conference also paid attention to understandings of family as a compulsory community or a compulsory affiliation. Antinatalism and decisions not to enter into any biological or genetic relationship appeared as the ultima ratio of emancipatory family policies — also in view of planetary destruction. Clémence Demay and Mathilde Krähenbühl (University of Lausanne), who conducted an ethnographic study on climate change trials in Switzerland, asked how different actors – activists, lawyers, and judges – take up the theme of "eco-reproductive concerns", and observed the recurring appearance of precarious reproductive futures as a litigation strategy to defend civil disobedience action during trials.

The legal regulation of family enables another socio-politically significant effect. Through family membership and the legal status of a person within a family, wealth and poverty are inherited and passed down. The reproduction of social inequality through law was the subject of the last panel.

Franziska Wiest (University of Cologne) explored conflicts over property in super-rich families, namely in the 0.01 %. The transfer of assets within these families plays a major role in reproduction of global social inequality, and is also associated with certain expectations on the family members. To mediate potential conflicts, these families have complex procedures, such as family constitutions (Familienverfassungen), which lead to further social insularity and closure.

Felix Gaillinger (University of Vienna) focused on young adults who are in a maintenance conflict with their fathers who are obliged to provide financial support through kinship law. In addition to their fathers' refusal to provide financial support, these young adults are also confronted with the withdrawal of welfare state benefits: At the age of 18, the right to advance maintenance payments by state support – a compensatory benefit if a parent refuses to pay maintenance – is abolished, as is legal guardianship by the German Youth Welfare Office. These welfare state regulations create a specific mode of vulnerability that often intensifies young adults' experiences of rejection and forces them to perform emotional work to prevent the conflict from escalating and taking on a violent character.

Social educator Tanja Abou (University of Hildesheim) dealt with the difficulties of young people in the transition from youth welfare to adult life, and the lack of institutional support offered to so-called care-leavers. Because the German system of social services is so deeply couched on the assumption that young people grow up with their legal parents, it ends up creating additional administrative obstacles for care-leavers. For example, when young people apply for social welfare benefits they are often referred to their parents' maintenance obligations. Additionally, young people are often required to pay their parents' debts or funeral costs.

In her closing remarks, Michèle Kretschel-Kratz (Humboldt-Universität Berlin) noted that exploring family forms through law reveals how families – even the supposedly "biological" ones – always emerge through relation work, whether this involves bringing a relation into existence, or being brought into existence through relations. In forming and standardizing categories, law may create and prevent certain relationships, or it may dissolve them, thus having an individualizing and collectivizing effect at the same time. The conference's contributions were united by the effort to investigate this characteristic synchronicity of compulsory community, as well as its legal consequences for insider members and the exclusion, isolation, and non-belonging experienced by non-members.

Michèle Kretschel-Kratz pointed out that the transformative and democratizing potential of family, kinship and law must be explored in concrete moments of legal practice and made three key points. First, it is the entire juridical apparatus behind state law that makes it so particularly powerful and arouses corresponding desires. Law, however, as Beate Binder suggested, is not just another thing enthroned above us; it is always already interwoven with orders of knowledge, moralities, political formats, and social practices. Democratic participation requires a persistence on linking these moments. It must keep an eye on when and how experiences of social movements and marginalized actors with family and kinship are transferred into legal norms and practices, and on what is gained but also lost in doing so.

Secondly, democratic transformation – whether in the course of centering care relations based on solidarity or recognizing fundamental vulnerability – also requires attention to

what Karin Jurczyk described as the pitfalls of freedom. Undoing family, as its flexibilization, pluralization or fluidization, but also calls for the "undoing" of state law as forms of deregulation and decriminalization, bear the marks of bourgeois private autonomy on their face and thus ambivalent distortions of emancipatory concepts such as self-determination or solidarity. In this sense, rather than taking a normative approach to research, we should explore the productivity of law and family, and their interconnections.

This leads, thirdly, to the issue of queering family which means to center the ambiguity of membership as necessarily uncertain and precarious, and to deal with each other in solidarity and care. How can this be done? Which of our familial practices and networks of kin-relations are likely to transgress the structural features of the enclosed, familial norm? When is family an act of solidarity and transgression? And to whom? A hint may perhaps be given here by so-called political marriages and other constellations in which parentage and family law, family-relevant social law, or labor law are used strategically or subversively in favor of transformative futures rather than a private utopia for some. "In this respect, the conference was able to establish an important parallel in the desire for law and the desire for family: We have our problems with both, and yet we cannot simply reject either family or law. On the contrary, they are always objects of political hopes and emancipatory plans for the future," as Michèle Kretschel-Kratz has put it in her closing statement.

Book Review

OLIVIA ANGÉ & DAVID BERLINER, editors, *Ecological Nostalgias: memory, affect and creativity in times of ecological upheavals*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books. 2021, 197 pp.

Ecological Nostalgias: memory, affect and creativity in times of ecological upheavals is an eight-chapter selection edited by Olivia Angé and David Berliner, whose main subject is the overlap between nostalgia and ecology. In particular, the book detects in the subject of nostalgia the centrality of environmental perception and the planetary ecological crisis, adapting nostalgia to the most pungent environmental issues of our time, including climate change, global warming, and systematic destruction of ecosystems. Going beyond the classic spatial and temporal meanings of nostalgia as 'longing for home' (p. 178) or yearning for a 'vanished time' (p. 4), the eight chapters of the book give an ecology-oriented approach to nostalgia. Whereas before, nostalgia was about times and places that did not exist or that people miss, now it is also about natures, ecologies, and environments that are on the verge of disappearing or are being radically transformed.

The research contexts of the book are quite varied, encompassing five different continents (Antarctica, Asia, Europe, North America, and South America); however, the chapters are not divided into sections according to common research themes or ethnographic contexts. Therefore, this review will follow the numerical sequence of the chapters as presented in the book.

In the introduction, Angé and Berliner present the concept of 'eco-nostalgias' or 'ecological nostalgias' considering three fundamental aspects: 1) 'eco-nostalgias' must considerer different 'natures-cultures' (as humans, forests, animals, ice caps, vegetables), 2) 'eco-nostalgias' are not only a representation of the past, but creative and social productive practices, and 3) 'eco-nostalgias' can be politically and economically instrumentalised by institutions, national states, and large capitalist enterprises. In this way, an ecology-oriented approach to nostalgia must consider the environmental relations with other beings, the social creativity of some practices, as well as its historical, political, and economic usefulness.

Roy Ellen opens the first chapter of the book with a critique of American environmental anthropology's neglect of the concept of memory. Roy Ellen analyses how the Dusun people (Malaysia) and the Nualu people (Indonesia) deal with memories of their recent ecological past 'in which what we call tropical rainforest is the predominant material and experiential reality' (p. 30). Kirsten Hastrup, in the second chapter, refers to the Thule people, inhabitants of Greenland's High Arctic, as 'definitely part of a larger world' (p. 46). In a geographic context quite different from the tropical forests where Roy Ellen conducted his research, Hastrup seeks to reverse the isolationist image of the Arctic, analysing the effects of global warming and climate change over the place, its inhabitants, and their 'ecology of mind'. In particular, she analyses the effects of polar ice caps melting on hunters' and scientists' perceptions of the environment in a rapidly disappearing world. The polar ice caps, according to the author, are memory repositories. So, as the ice caps melt faster and faster, the memories of scientists and hunters are also destroyed.

In certain cases, as shown by Roy Ellen and, above all, by Kirsten Hastrup, 'eco-nostalgias' suggests worlds that fall apart. In other cases, however, 'eco-nostalgias' reveal worlds that are being produced, and those which are in a context of global warming is what Madeleine Sallustio analyses in the third chapter. In her ethnography of the 'neo-peasant' initiatives to re-inhabit the mountainous region of Cévennes in south-central France, Sallustio presents how, based on the authenticity of national traditions, 'neo-peasants' turn to

practices and customs of European rural communities 'with the aim of proposing an alternative way of life that is more respectful of the environment' (p. 62).

In a tone of criticism of Western formulations of history, heritage, and nature, Casey High's fourth chapter shows how the conflicts and ecological transformations among the Waorani people in Ecuadorian Amazonia reflect their daily struggles to belong to the land, a concern synthesised in the native concept of *wao ome*. High's objective is to analyse the Waorani's socio-natural relations with territory and memory without appealing to an image solely of loss and isolation of the Amazon. As also seen in the ethnographical analyses of Roy Ellen, Kirsten Hastrup, and Madeleine Sallustio, relationships with territory and memory involve a set of affections and feelings that identifies people and their places, and which is not geographically isolated on Earth, but in creative relationships with the land, forests, rivers, ice cap, animals, etc.

In the fifth chapter, for example, Olivia Angé presents an ethnography of the relationship between potato growers and the environment based on an analysis of *kusisqa* (happiness). In the highlands of Cuzco, Peru, *Kusisqa* is a fundamental element for the realisation of an 'affective agriculture' between humans and vegetables. For Olivia Angé, longing for a past of glory and abundance is part of the 'eco-nostalgias' of rural communities, which are creating new ways of inhabiting the world through numerous affections and sensibilities with the land and other beings.

For Perig Pitrou, life in the countryside and the usual ways of cultivation and production have lost strength in capitalist relations of production. In the sixth chapter, his ethnography seeks to understand how remaining peasants of Mexico, specifically in village communities in the state of Oaxaca, rehabilitate their traditional agricultural rituals, proposing a collective and affective memory shared with plants, waters, and land. Inhabiting the world with stories, ancestors, collectivities, temporalities, and environments is not human-exclusive. Plants, water, land, and other beings have their own sensibilities in the *milieux*, and these environmental sensibilities are an important element to make people remember things in order to construct shared and common realities.

In the seventh chapter, Richard Irvine invests in a description of how post-socialist Mongolia is experience by people according to an essentialist view of the past. The 'eco-nostalgias' documented by Irvine in a school context, among children and artists – poets, specifically –, suggest an idealised 'peaceful countryside' occupied by a society originally identified as pastoral and nomadic. According to Irvine, when thinking based on Mongolia's national history, people are able to 'critically reflect upon the experience of rapid environmental change' (p. 147). By reflecting on their own history and the construction of the nation-state, the informants in Richard Irvine's research are also able to identify what is ecologically different and habitual in the world.

In the eighth and final chapter, Cymene Howe detects, as Kirsten Hastrup did among the Thule people, the following hypothesis: socio-ecological transformations in the ice are simultaneously environmental and mental. In her ethnographic research in several regions in Iceland, specifically in the cities of Sveitarfélagið Hornafjörður, Sauðárkrókur, and Höfn, Cymene Howe suggests that the materiality of ice in the Arctic is a historical and geographical reference. In her words, ice must be seen 'as object, as resource, and as vessel of environmental and social history', but ice also is a source of reflections and perceptions on 'ecohuman futures' (p. 166). For Cymene Howe, as well as for all the authors of the book, nostalgia is an ethnographic concept that reflects a community notion of possible worlds. Remembering things is to establish with memories new connections with both the past and the present, as well as new ways of remodelling and inhabiting the planet. Remembering is not a passive attitude, but a transformative and creative one.

Crossing five continents (Antarctica, Asia, Europe, North America, and South America), relating beings of different 'natures-cultures' (humans, forests, ancestors, animals, ice caps, vegetables) and making plausible stories in which the environment is not a mere object or repository of human action and representation, the eight chapters of the book seek to define 'ecological nostalgias' as a concept open not only to experiences, sensitivities, and idealisations of the past, but to a multiplicity of practices in the present and the future; even though, at the limit of their existence, those practices struggle to perpetuate themselves against the voracity of time. As Dominic Boyer says in the afterword, *Ecological*

BOOK REVIEW

62

Nostalgias is a book about 'the time before collapse' (p. 180). In this way, the main reflections and questions of the book concerning humans and non-humans, nature and society, past and present, and ecology and memory in a rapidly disappearing world suggest new paradigms for anthropology to rethink.

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