

# CHOROGRAPHING THE VANUATU AQUAPELAGO

Engaging with performatively constituted specificities of place

THOMAS DICK

Southern Cross University, Wantok Foundation and Further Arts  
<tom.dick@scu.edu.au>

## Abstract

This article applies the concept of aquapelagic assemblages to an understanding of artistic and cultural expression in Vanuatu. Using the radical interdisciplinarity of a chorography, I explore the ways that ni-Vanuatu cultural practices such as water music and sand drawing manifest themselves as components of aquapelagic assemblages. Building on Epeli Hau'ofa's idea of the Pacific as a "sea of islands" (1993) this article continues a project that privileges the voices of ni-Vanuatu artists and cultural producers. A sand drawing is presented as a chorographic inscription of multiscale Oceanian ontologies informing an analysis of the livelihood aspects of human and non-human (inter)relations in-between, throughout and with islands, shores, seabeds and waters. This chorographic approach foregrounds the multiscale dimension of aquapelagic assemblages and the interdependence of different aquapelagic assemblages with 21st Century globalised industry, science, and development. A case study of the Leweton community, featured in the *Vanuatu Women's Water Music* DVD, shows that the framework of aquapelagic assemblages has value for revealing the creative processes in generating innovations in local art forms and the step-by-step process of commodification of intangible cultural heritage.

## Keywords

Chorography, water music, aquapelago, aquapelagic assemblage, sand drawing, multiscale, Vanuatu

## Introduction

In recent issues of this journal, Fleury (2013), Cashman (2013), and Maxwell (2012) have contributed to the development of the concept of an aquapelago and aquapelagic assemblages (Hayward, 2012a, 2012b). Elsewhere, Hayward (2015) starts to expand the discussion of aquapelagic assemblages, exploring "the nature of cultural production within and expressive of them" using the example of the Leweton community, from the north of Vanuatu, and their 2014 DVD production *Vanuatu Women's Water Music* (henceforth *VWWM*) (see Dick, 2014). This article picks up on some of the interdisciplinary themes raised by these authors to analyse temporal specificities of ni-Vanuatu contemporary cultural expression and assess the congruence of the

## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

aquapelagic conceptual framework for the Leweton village and the broader ni-Vanuatu community.

Before introducing and situating the field research that informs this article, it is necessary to introduce some terminology. Hayward (2012a) has introduced the term aquapelago, as a contradistinction to the use of the term archipelago, so as to privilege the marine-side of integrated dynamics involving human and non-human (inter)relations in-between, throughout and with islands, their shores, seabeds and waters. These dynamics, what Hayward calls “aquapelagic assemblages”, are defined as performed entities that are premised on human presence:

*existing in a location in which the aquatic spaces between and around groups of islands are utilised and navigated in a manner that is fundamentally interconnected with and essential to social groups' habitation of land and their senses of identity and belonging.* (Hayward, 2012a: 1)

As alluded to above, Fleury proposes the addition of the term ‘maritory’ to the aquapelagic lexicon to refer to the depth of the marine space, identifying its “three dimensionality and multifunctional verticality” as its principal characteristic (2013: 2).

According to Maxwell, aquapelagic assemblages imply “a radically interdisciplinary writing of the meanings of place” (2013: 23). Seas as places, he argues “are multiple and complex, known and unknown in their specificities... The concept of the aquapelago lays these knowings in front of us, inverting familiar figure-ground logics” (ibid). Maxwell suggests these knowings might be better understood as a maritorial *chorography*, derived from the Greek *khora* for ‘region’<sup>1</sup>. Reflecting on the heuristic, possibilities that emerge from the confluence of these ideas, both Maxwell and Hayward point towards a methodology that it is sensitive to alternative ways of conceptualising the indivisibility of society and nature, the nonrepresentational, performance and land/sea scapes:

*Chorography, in Maxwell's words, “renders (a) place in (its) chiasmatic idiosyncrasy, setting subjective and objective epistemologies into productive dialogue”... In accomplishing this, it also prioritises a thorough recognition of and engagement with specificities. Chorography is therefore particularly congruent with aquapelagic analysis since each and every aquapelago is differently constituted and temporally fluid.* (2012b: 4-5 - my emphasis)

This chorographic “engagement with specificities” of place, “the primacy of a specific locale as a generative context” (Hayward, 2015: 116) for performance of the aquapelagic assemblage, helps to situate the research that informs this article. Working with the terms referred to above, I will argue that Vanuatu, located in the north western corner of the Coral Sea and consisting of a Y-shaped group of some 70 inhabited islands and another 13 that are uninhabited, can be characterised as an aquapelago (see Figure 1). Vanuatu’s maritory has an estimated seawater volume of 1,700,000 km<sup>3</sup>. It is located at the juncture of undersea tectonic plates on the Pacific Ring of Fire, to the north of New Caledonia, to the west of Fiji, and to the southeast of the Solomon Islands.



Figure 1. Map of Vanuatu (source: Wikipedia Commons)

Neither Hayward nor Maxwell provide any methodological detail as to what might constitute a maritorial chorography. Following Derrida and Eisenman (1997) and Lukermann (1961), Olwig provides a starting point, suggesting that chorography seeks to present “the relational way in which place is experienced in the passage of a journey

## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

from place to place or, more vicariously, in the passages of a narrative” (Olwig, 2008: 1849-1850). Thus, based on over a decade of fieldwork and practice – a conflation that reflects what Bolton (2003: xv) terms “participant engagement” – both in Vanuatu and with ni-Vanuatu producers ‘on tour’ internationally, I draw on observations, interviews, reflections and textual analyses to contextualise the production and expression of types of intangible cultural heritage and deepen the concept of aquapelagos as performed entities. In particular this article attempts a chorographic inflection of people, place, and power.<sup>2</sup> Many of the insights that inform this article were crystallised during a journey “from place to place” (Olwig, 2008) in the north of Vanuatu from Santo, through Malekula (Vao, Lakatoro, Uripiv), to Ambrym, and back to Santo. In each island location, I reflect on the ni-Vanuatu chorographic engagement with place and how this inflects the specifics of the production and expression of intangible cultural heritage in an aquapelago, and through the prism of artistic production, the trajectories.

From a particular reading of this journey (that is to say, from *my* particular reading of this journey, as it is a journey I shared with my ni-Vanuatu adopted family) it is consistent with Tawa (2002) who refers to chorography as “a praxis of spatial articulation ... the experience also functions as a way of construing and actualising country—of recreating and remembering it, of orchestrating and reconstituting its fractal parts” (2002: 49).<sup>3</sup> The journey was constituted by a range of trajectories that intersected to form specific arrangements. Elements of the narrative of this journey are affectively conveyed in two pieces of creative non-fiction and a documentary film.<sup>4</sup> I am conscious of the fact that the insights I draw in this article reflect my historically situated perspective as a white, Australian, middle-class/aged, tertiary-educated male, but also that of what Borofsky (2000) called an “Outlander” (in tongue-in-cheek contradistinction to an “Islander”). I was aware of the utility, the productive tension, that exists between these two loose categories. At the same time that I was learning about ni-Vanuatu “ways of knowing”, producing films, taking notes, writing stories, etc, for my own projects, I was also being made use of in projects belonging to those to whom I was affiliated through adoptive familial bonds. These included Islander projects (and also projects belonging to other Outlanders and yet other projects belonging to Islanders from other Islands) that I participated in as an adopted brother(-in-law), uncle or son and as a means of funding, promoting and broadcasting particular activities, messages or ideas. In the context of this productive tension the first section introduces my chorographic approach showing that sand drawings are a valuable tool for understanding Vanuatu as an aquapelago. The second section will explore the multiple scales of Islander reality, connecting and mediating the human and the non-human actants and providing a context for the case study and discussion that follows. The final section of this article will focus on an analysis of the Leweton group and the performative specificity of their practice of water music from a political perspective – concerning power, people and place.

### Sand Drawing

While on my journey through Malekula and Ambrym, at the end of 2007 and the beginning of 2008, there was much talk about sand drawings as people prepared for the 2008 Malampa Sandroing Festival (Sandrawing Festival of Malampa Province) on Ambrym Island.<sup>5</sup> Sand drawings have an ephemeral quality antithetical to the Western treatment of classical art: framed, hung, restored and preserved. In Vanuatu, the designs work in tandem with stories, kinship systems, navigation and orientation

## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

techniques, ancient and modern histories, flora and fauna, and current events. Geismar (2013: 5-7) relates the process whereby sand drawing was elevated to the status of a national icon – a process in which I was peripherally engaged – and added to the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. A person tells a story and creates a figurative representation of that story using material from the liminal space between the land and the sea as palette, paint and performance space. Using one finger, s/he traces a continuous, graceful pattern usually via a circuitous, opaque route. The act is *imagined and performed*, material and abstract, tactile and dynamic, analogue and analogous. This quintessentially aquapelagic practice often results in a delightful moment of awareness for the viewer when s/he finally recognises the figurative element of the drawing. The idea of it shimmers fleetingly before the tide rises and washes away the patterns, leaving new ones and old ones merging into the wet sand. Or if not the tide, then a flick of the artist's hand and the pattern disappears from view. But it can leave a strange new pattern merging in the viewer's mind – a pattern with its own chimeric quality – leaving questions about what exactly “the arts” means. Clearly sand drawings are ephemeral and performed, but they are also *dynamic* in a way that makes them more like dance than drawing. As Geismar observes, the fact that sand drawings are “a mnemonic for exchange and movement rather than a static representation” suggests (in the context of a comparative perspective of intellectual and cultural property) that their relational nature “draws on a formal understanding of property (and heritage) as a medium of exchange rather than a bounded object, a vehicle for relationships rather than a terminus for ownership” (2013: 6-7).

Attended by over 400 guests including participants, domestic and international visitors, the Malampa Sandroing Festival featured thousands of sand drawings. The sand drawings that were exhibited as a formal part of the festival program were performed in and around a clearing in the village of Sesivi, where a cluster of temporary shelters of bamboo, sago palm and pandanus leaves had been constructed. These structures provided some cover from sun and rain for the artists, who performed their sand drawings in the porous black volcanic composite of sand and ash – including many contemporary designs such as images of aeroplanes, and the Statue of Liberty. One of the notable aspects of the festival was the spontaneous sand drawing that happened outside of the formal festival program. People of all ages were drawing in the black sand all over the village, on the beach, and on the roads (all of which are unsealed on Ambrym). Many of the sand drawings triggered intense discussion and debate and sometimes controversy.<sup>6</sup>

Several months after the festival, I returned to Ambrym to produce the documentary film *Lon Marum*. One of the young men from the village where we were based, Emyotungan in West Ambrym, was Tio Massing. One day, high up on Ambrym's volcanic caldera, with rain and wind curtailing any possibility of productive film work, Tio, myself and the rest of the crew started showing each other some sand drawings (while the wind and rain were strong enough to prevent capturing quality digital recording of audio-visuals, it was not so bad that we couldn't practice sand drawing). I am a singularly maladroit artist and having attempted sand drawings many times in the past I knew there was little point in trying again – the cursive, repetitive patterns appeal to me as a concept more like language rather than as a visual ‘drawing’. Undeterred, Tio showed me a series of children's sand drawings of diminishing complexity, finally ending with a version of the sand drawing shown in Figure 2, showing three flying foxes eating a breadfruit. The drawing Tio showed me actually had four flying foxes and during the course of our exchange he created other versions with two flying foxes. I was instantly captivated by a kind of cognitive dissonance, presumably reflecting both a simplicity:

## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

the empty space in the wings (most sand drawings are dense with complex patterning), the unmistakable figurative flying foxes; and a complexity: the spatial orientation – with each of them hanging “inwards”, the shared overlapping of wings, the sense of arbitrary nominality (how many flying foxes can fit in a circle?). This was intensified by the gendered figure-ground logics whereby one might see the phallic shapes of the flying fox inside the circle as consuming masculinities; while an inverted reading might see the unenclosed tail of the flying foxes inviting or perhaps permitting a penetration (of ideas?) from the unbordered exterior thus encompassing a diversity of ontologies, a pluriverse of uneven trajectories (Bennett, 2005) as each set of eyes perceives the enclosed amniotic interiority of fruit in the middle and the unenclosed exteriority of the ‘background’.

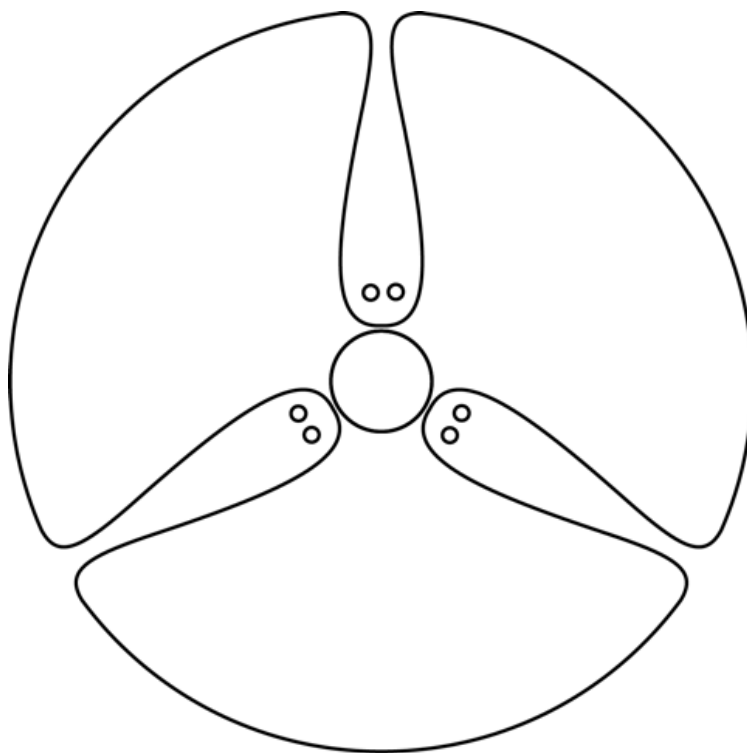


Figure 2. A Chorograph: Digital Representation of a Sand Drawing of Three Flying Foxes Eating a Breadfruit (A version of this drawing was first shown to me by Tio Massing on Ambrym in 2008. This version created by Ben Foley, 2015).

### Multiple Scales

I propose that the sand drawing of the three flying foxes in Figure 2. is a chorographic representation of the journey, described above, that informs this article (and indeed a chorographic representation of the article itself), The more I looked at this picture, the more I felt that my looking at the picture was somehow inscribed in it, not an unreasonable assumption given that I had actually changed the figure by adding in (or taking away) one of the flying foxes. I considered the possibility of endless fractal

## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

inscriptions<sup>7</sup> repeating the drawing inside the inner circle of the breadfruit – and the circles of the flying foxes' eyes. In this reading, the central fruit suggests a differently situated knowledge and pedagogy (it is a children's sand drawing) of, for example, seasonal harvest patterns, maritorial/territorial/aerial migrations, and other epistemological patterns of Islander existence. Presented in this non-linear way, the theory and knowledge can be understood to be embedded in the sand drawing (Jolly, 2008: 5) – an ontological view of the world where as Epeli Hau'ofa writes, “most of our sources of history are our oral narratives inscribed on our landscapes... Our natural landscapes then are maps of movements, pauses, and more movements... Sea routes were mapped on chants” (Hau'ofa, 2008: 44). Hau'ofa's words bring to mind the principle of the stationary canoe in ocean travel – that is, that an Oceanic navigator frames the islands, stars and seas as moving around the stationary canoe (Fagan, 2012: 63; Jolly, 2007).<sup>8</sup> Teaiwa (2014) draws on Hau'ofa's ideas cited above arguing that:

*a reading of our landscapes and seascapes—spaces that are the products of multiscale processes in both contemporary and deep, geological time—is necessary to better explore our Pacific histories... We can expand Hau'ofa's proposal to include our reading and framing of the contemporary stakes of globalization and the intense interconnectivity of the twenty-first century. This requires material, corporeal, grounded, and symbolic readings across disciplinary boundaries, geographic areas, and temporal contexts (2014: 119).*

In her remarkable work on the history of mining of phosphate on Banaba (Ocean Island) makes a powerful and pragmatic argument that “our studies of the global, be highlighted with respect to peoples, commodities, and landscapes with multiscale, relational, and temporal depth” (2014: 112). This echoes Leitner and Byron's argument that “a multi-scale politics implies operating simultaneously at multiple scales at multiple sites to expand the geographical and political reach” (2007: 122). Teaiwa presents a contemporary Islander ontology, a relational perspective that implicates the reader in the performative and the molecular specificities of Banaban landscapes and seascapes, the colonial “discovery” of phosphate and the impact that the global distribution of phosphate (and its use as a fertiliser) has had in places such as Australia and New Zealand and the corresponding impact on the island, people, and culture of Banaba.

I read the sand drawing in Figure 2 as a chorographic inscription of multiscale Islander ontologies that can inform an aquapelagic analysis – that is, an analysis of the livelihood aspects of human and non-human (inter)relations in-between, throughout and with islands, their shores, seabeds and waters. Following the ideas of Hau'ofa and Teaiwa described immediately above, a chorographic approach foregrounds the multiscale dimension to aquapelagic assemblages (in Oceania, at least) and the interdependence of different aquapelagic assemblages with 21st Century globalised industry, science, and development. In moving ahead with a fractal, multiscale, chorographic approach to aquapelagic assemblages, I am conscious of Teaiwa's critique of scholars who “focus more on presenting an architecture or metaphor for what they are observing, rather than considering the real impact of multiscale connectivity and what this means for people who inhabit other ontological realities” (2014: 245). I propose that an aquapelagic analysis is far from an intellectual abstraction, instead the next section of this article will attempt to move through the multiple scales of indigenous Oceanic connectivity as a way of contextualising and grounding some of the “real impacts” on the livelihoods of

## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

the Leweton group and their chorographic engagement with “other ontological realities” (in this case, an ocean cruise liner in the tourism industry). Concerned as I am with establishing the idea of aquapelagos and seas as places, it makes sense to start with the “rich yet messy co-presence of the values of roots/trees and routes/boats” (Baldacchino, 2012: 23) before revisiting the Oceanic imaginary described by Hau'ofa (1993) and Jolly (2007).

The “sea of islands” is an important trope for contemporary Oceania. In scholastic commentary on indigenous identity in Vanuatu (and perhaps many aquapelagos) a commonly cited ‘tension’ is that of emplacement versus mobility, roots and routes (Baldacchino, 2012; Clifford, 2001; Jolly, 1999; White and Tengan, 2001). This particular trope is encapsulated in an idiomatic metaphor from the island of Tanna in the south of Vanuatu that is heavily gendered (see Jolly, 1999; Lindstrom, 1990). Tannese identity is embodied in the tree and the canoe – man is tree, rooted, and the canoe is his community and connections: “place provides a man with his roots; a canoe travelling on a road grants him the allies necessary for his survival and reproduction” (Bonnemaison, 1994: 321). The “road” that Bonnemaison refers to here is not a terrestrial road populated by Tannese men lugging a canoe along on their shoulders; rather it denotes the ramifying paths, trajectories that a man may take in his life by venturing in his canoe onto the sea.<sup>9</sup> The metaphorical actants are both human (man, and his allies in survival and reproduction) and non-human (tree, roots, canoe, road, sea) in this deeply interconnected assemblage that creates identity. The man is the tree, the tree is the canoe, the canoe is the community, the road and the sea from which man sources his means of “survival and reproduction”. In this metaphorical characterisation, the integration of human and non-human actants and their expression within aquatic spaces aligns to the defining characteristics of an aquapelagic assemblage, ie of it being “fundamentally interconnected with and essential to the social group’s habitation of land and their senses of identity and belonging” (Hayward, 2012a: 5).

Hau'ofa (1993), presents a powerful argument against the “belittlement of Oceania” (1993: 14) and a defence of the diversity of Pacific Island ontologies principally against a “Western imperialism” (ibid: 10), perhaps heightened by the use of (uninverted) figure-ground logic, that contracts the Pacific into ‘tiny’ nation-states excised from the sea around them. This excising of the island from the sea denies the profound human interaction with the ocean in precisely the ways that Hayward aims to address, and is, in part, the result of what he describes as the “centuries of use and the accretions of meanings” of the term archipelago (2012a: 5). Hau'ofa argues that these colonial borders were, from a Pacific Islander perspective, “not imaginary lines in the ocean, but rather points of entry that were constantly negotiated and even contested”.

More recently, with the waxing and waning of Western imperialism, other imperialist aspirations are drawing new imaginary lines, creating the absurd situation where Oceanians/Melanesians are North American, French, or Asian. In particular, West Papua, a Melanesian ‘nation-in-waiting’ on the western half of the island of New Guinea, has been occupied by the Indonesian military since 1963. The points of entry between these two regions, Asia and Oceania are still contested – in the words of leading West Papuan thinker and activist, Rosa Moiwend:

*Papuans want political independence and at the same time they demand recognition of their basic rights as indigenous people living on their customary land ... For example there is nonviolent resistance by the Amungme and Kamoro to the U.S owned Freeport gold and copper mine;*



## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

*a campaign for economic justice by women market sellers; and, nonviolent resistance by the Malind Anim indigenous people to the Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate, a ... land grab by Indonesian and transnational corporations that will displace hundreds of thousands of indigenous peoples (MacLeod and Moiwend, 2014: 179-183).*

These three examples of nonviolent resistance to imperialism are indicative of “the real impact of multiscale connectivity”. West Papua often does not feature on maps of the Pacific any more, and many Pacific non-government organisations (NGO) are unable to deliver programs inside Indonesia – or if they are, they are delivered through an Asian-oriented office.

Jolly counterpoints the contingent cartographies of imperialism in Oceania (informed by ethnological typology) with indigenous “genealogical histories” (2007: 514-515; also see Kame’eleihiwa, 1992: 23-24). Alternative histories are finding audiences beyond their locality as chorographic accounts of the people of the Pacific identify and connect in “anachronistic and prophetic” ways, undermining imperial boundaries, reflecting fundamentally different spatiotemporal realities and articulating an indigenous *longue durée* (Clifford, 2013: 42). These genealogical histories connect “places and peoples through the spatiotemporal language of kinship” (Jolly, 2007: 514) and in doing so they form the basis of claims over aspects of material (land, for example, see Jolly, *ibid*) and immaterial culture (water music, see Dick, 2014: 398-399; Wessergo, 2014). Drawing on Hau’ofa (both in terms of his writing of genealogical histories, and his work promoting creative exchange at the Oceania Centre for Arts and Culture) ni-Vanuatu artist, author, and musician, Marcel Meltherorong has recently created a genealogical history for a different purpose, but which may have implications for regional approaches to West Papuan sovereignty. Meltherorong is from a specific aquapelagic assemblage that incorporates the island of Vao, the waters around it, and a section of land that stretches up the hills directly across from the island of Vao on the north east coast of Malekula (for a comprehensive ethnography of Vao see Layard, 1942). The first time I visited Vao was with Meltherorong a few months prior to the Malampa Sandrawing Festival. During the days Meltherorong prepared for a coming-of-age ceremony for his son, while I tried not to get in anyone’s way. In the afternoons we prepared kava for some of Meltherorong’s family, or for ourselves while we discussed our plans for producing films, festivals and other creative practice, and in the nights he took me hunting for flying foxes – another activity for which I displayed no aptitude. In recognition of his standing in the artistic community (he has published two novels, directed and produced one feature documentary film, scored another, and performed internationally as a musician), Meltherorong was recently invited to co-curate an installation for the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA) for their flagship contemporary art project, the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT). While working with the Vanuatu-based NGO, Further Arts, and in discussion with QAGOMA and Further Arts staff, Meltherorong conceived the project entitled ‘Yumi Danis (We Dance)’ for APT8 in 2015.<sup>10</sup> As co-curator of this installation Meltherorong has written an artistic treatment of the proposed installation titled ‘From the Land of Papua’. This unpublished document is a chorography in its own right; a poetic reimagining that integrates elements of history, archaeology, anthropology, mythology, and personal reflection:

*The oppositions between the preservation of customs and ancient rituals, against the emergence of a western system, when legends are the written*

## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

*history in the dance and the science directed it into other way, these are a constant struggle into indigenous mind trying to find a role to play in this new way of life. But in many ways the dance, and the art in general, is building up a capacity, a safe sphere, where we have a possibility to safely accumulate what we are, inspired by others, and “trans-dance” it. In fact, we all are creating a safe sphere along our lives, it’s vital for an individual. In other view that’s how dance or art, safe keeps our cultural sphere, as different identities living in different islands on one Ocean. (Meltherorong, 2014: 1)*

The ‘Yumi Danis’ project continues an ongoing relationship between Meltherorong and QAGOMA. In 2009 Meltherorong was invited to participate as a musician and artist in the sixth edition of the APT. During the course of his participation in this project, QAGOMA staff interviewed Meltherorong. Elements of this interview formed a significant part of a chapter that was later published in a volume titled ‘Songs of Resilience’ (Dick and Meltherorong, 2011). Some of Meltherorong’s comments in that interview are relevant here to further explicate his understandings of the aquapelagic assemblage. Echoing Hau’ofa, Meltherorong conceptualises the Pacific as a regional assemblage: “the ocean unites us as one Pacific and this unifying force is very strong. We are a very strong culture – we are water but we are a continent” (quoted in Dick and Meltherorong, 2011: 108). Meltherorong encapsulates this idea in the notion of “Wan Solwora - (literally ‘One Saltwater’) it means one ocean, one people” (quoted in Dick and Meltherorong, 2011: 106, parentheses added).<sup>11</sup> Meltherorong extends the idea of a fluid continent, and following Bonnemaïson, Maxwell, and Fleury, he vertically overlays the concepts of road and sea, integrating the tectonic poetry of Hau’ofa and Huffman:

*Knowing that our ancestors used to travel from islands to islands not caring about the name of the country, I maintain that the region was more than just five nations of Melanesia, it was a route inviting or safeguarding people to meet the neighbor, in fact the ring of fire is the road followed by many when the land of Papua was the land of wars and terror. So many did the long journey on the sea by canoes to reach the islands of Isa Tabu (Isa Tabu = the Holy place) where Queens and Kings can provide them refuge. Stories reports that those monarchs departed on nine Keanu to explore the rest of the Pacific Ocean.<sup>12</sup> (2014: 1)*

Throughout this text, Meltherorong describes an indigenous subjectivity in which the human actants, the voyaging ancestors, are the embodiment of the contemporary “indigenous mind”. He *collapses* the non-human actants (road, the sea, the ring and the fire, the route) into a conduit that is at once terrestrial, marine and submarine, as though these categories do not even exist. Tensions and “struggles”, clashes of culture, Meltherorong evokes a sense of science and (European) history being actants that have *changed the course* of the canoe, and changed the names of the landmarks. We have the image of the contemporary “indigenous mind” emerging from a storm, disoriented, still capable of navigating but finding herself under a different sky, in a different sea, with unfamiliar landmarks. And intriguingly, “the art” (as opposed to the “the arts”) emerges as the vehicle “to safely accumulate what we are, inspired by others, and “trans-dance” it”.

Meltherorong has focused his working life on generating a livelihood from his creative practice (see Dick and Meltherorong, 2011) with some measure of success. As can be

## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

seen from the passages above, his creative practice incorporates and inscribes his multiscalar identity, not just as a man from Vao, or a ni-Vanuatu, but as a member of an Oceanic aquapelago that includes West Papua. This resonates with the Japanese concept of *shima* which describes an island as much more than the terrestrial: “*shima* is livelihood... a work of imagination” (Suwa, 2012: 13).

As this article spirals through the multiple scales of Oceanic connectivity, seeking performatively constituted specificities of place in Vanuatu, the focus shifts from the broad *wan solwora* imaginaries of Hau’ofa and Meltherorong, from the questions of geopolitical imperialism where “real impacts” on people’s livelihood is understood in terms of survival and freedom from torture, towards the idea of livelihood inflected by a mercantile analysis of power – the impacts of economic imperialism/neo-liberalism specifically for the Leweton community, the performers of the water music.

### Livelihood

I have described the generative context for the establishment of the Leweton cultural village in an earlier publication (Dick, 2014) but in summary, the Leweton village was established in 2008 when Sandy Sur from Merelava, an island in the far north east of Vanuatu brought together the members of his extended family living in and around Luganville, the second largest town in Vanuatu with a population of 13,167 (Vanuatu National Statistics Office, 2009) on the northern island of Espiritu Santo. In Luganville, just as in the capital of Vanuatu, Port Vila, the customary structures of many of the nation’s 130 different language groups are interacting with each other and with the exogenous structures of expatriates from Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan, France, and a range of other places. The Bislama term *kastom* is a catch-all phrase for the endogenous customary structures of law, religion, economics and/or governance in ni-Vanuatu communities. It is used to ‘characterize their own knowledge and practice in distinction to everything they identify as having come from outside their place’ (Bolton 2003: xiii). As Geismar writes, the interactions between *kastom*, tourism and art are extremely complex:

*fusing together often polarised categories of thought and spheres of ni-Vanuatu experience. Joining together the national and the local, the urban and the rural, the customary and the commercial, contemporary art powerfully represents ideas about being indigenous in contemporary Vanuatu to outside observers. (2009: 72)*

Sur galvanised the Leweton group around the performance of a range cultural expressions – principally the *ëtëtung* (water music), but also more common activities such as terrestrial dance, string band music, and the preparation of food and kava. Hayward argues convincingly that the Mwerlap water music practices are generated by and re-generative of a specific aquapelagic context, stating that:

*the aquapelagic aspects of Mwerlap interaction with the “heterogeneous assemblage” of the coastal environment that they generate through livelihood activities can, in the context identified by Wessergo, be seen to be culturally inscribed in the semiotic structure of their percussion practice.” (2015: 119)*

## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

Drawing significantly on my research with members of the Leweton community (Dick, 2014; Wessergo, 2014) Hayward (2015) identifies the cultural production of water music being in and of aquapelagos and aquapelagic assemblages, specifically in relation to the *VWMM* DVD. Hayward also stresses the livelihood aspect of the aquapelagic engagement of the Leweton community. In both cases Hayward is convincing, but limits his analysis to the semiotics involved in the expression of intangible cultural heritage (the literal articulation of aquapelagics) and to the aesthetics of its (re)production in the DVD (the immersion of bodies in water, and the stylistic decisions of the film makers). For example Hayward observes that:

*Despite the addition of a song layer to the percussion compositions, the sound mix and visual track of the VWMM DVD privilege water percussion as the focal element. The shot choices and montage of the overall production and the particular compositions performed (twenty-two in all) emphasize and document the nature of ensemble and individual percussive action, showing such action as the generator of the percussion impacts seen on the surface of the water and heard on the soundtrack. The last phrase is carefully worded as the DVD is very much a composed and mediated representation of the live practice of water percussion (rather than a documentary record of particular live performances). (2015: 124-125)*

In the following section I endeavour to illuminate the discussion of multiscalar chorographics above with reference to the intersecting trajectories of, on the one hand, the Leweton community, and, on the other, a cruise ship operator. In doing so I will further develop the ideas that Hayward touches on above (cultural production and livelihood) configuring these performative practices in chorographic relation with the "laws and political institutions of the various peoples" (van Paassen, 1957: 8).

### Case Study

With reference to the discussions above regarding genealogical histories, the establishment of the Leweton village was also the culmination of a grassroots place-and-history-making project, whereby the community claims customary rights over the *ëtëtung* and "links the songs, to place, through language, creating a genealogy of the water music innovations" (Dick, 2014; see also Leweton Cultural Group, 2014). Following Arac, this is an example of a "critical genealogy" that, with "precise attention to... the opportunities offered for voice, script and instruction, by whom, to whom, and for what purposes... will allow the nuance, detail and differentiation that make a history and set proper limits to a theory" (Arac, 1987: 21-22).<sup>13</sup>

Out of the multitude of emergent dynamics at play in the Leweton/*ëtëtung* history, two are apposite to an analysis of the "proper limits" of aquapelagic assemblage as a conceptual framework for understanding cultural production in Vanuatu. First is the amniotic imminence of the newly innovated musical form of *ëtëtung* as a nuanced, detailed and differentiated specificity – a particular musical style or genre. Second is the recognition of the exploitative potential of the performed specificity of the 'critical genealogy' of *ëtëtung* – the commodification of a product as livelihood. I use the terms commodifying/commodification in the sense of transforming something that was previously non-commercial into a commodity that can be bought and sold as opposed

## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

to ‘commoditisation’, being the generification of an existing product. The importance of this distinction will become apparent.

Without undermining the agency of the Mwerlap diaspora, the arrival of tourists by boat (first on yachts, then on cruise ships) was an important step in the process of revaluing the water music. Thus the cruise liner industry is a “generative mechanism” (Bhaskar, 1998) in the establishment of the Leweton village. Cashman (2013) concludes that the new cruise liners represent the antithesis of the aquapelagic approach for their passengers as they are designed to mediate and often prevent interaction with the ocean. However, from the perspective of the Leweton community, the cruise ship is an extremely important element in their assemblage – one that facilitates many other connections (tourists, money, etc) and opportunities.

According to its website, Carnival Corporation (Carnival) is “the largest cruise company and one of the largest vacation companies in the world” (2015). With a range of cruise itineraries that include Vanuatu, Carnival and its ‘sister’ lines, such as P&O Cruises, and competitors, delivered more than 240,000 people to Vanuatu in 2013. A 2014 report, partly funded by Carnival titled “Assessment of the Economic Impact of Cruise Ships to Vanuatu”, claims that the cruise companies, their passengers and crew spent 34.6 million Australian dollars, henceforth Au\$) in Vanuatu during that same period. But according to Sur none of this was spent at the Leweton Cultural Village – none of the cruise ship tourists were coming to Leweton at all. I was surprised at this because on several occasions between 2008 and 2011 I had seen many hundreds of tourists from cruise ships enjoying the water music and other performances at the Leweton village. Over the course of several months, Sur, and other members of the Leweton community, explained to me the breakdown of their relationship with Carnival (and their agent in Vanuatu, Adventures in Paradise, which is a tourism operator based in Port Vila, with sub-agent in Luganville). The story goes back to 2012, when tourists from the cruise ship were regularly coming to the Leweton village. Many of them would purchase their ticket for the Leweton show from Carnival either on board the cruise ship or online prior to leaving (for approximately Au\$45). But other tourists from the cruise ship were finding their own way to the village (for example walking around town and then getting in a taxi) and buying their ticket directly at the village entrance (for approximately Au\$10). Inevitably, some of the tourists (who paid the higher price) resented the fact that they were paying the industry mark-up. Ensuing complaints to the cruise ship management resulted in the Luganville-based sub-agent for Carnival informing the Leweton village that they had to either price-match the Carnival entry fee of Au\$45, or alternatively restrict entry exclusively to Carnival tourists. The Leweton community refused to accept these terms on the grounds that the water music and other elements of their performance are *kastom blong mifala* (“our cultural heritage”) and no third party has the right to dictate pricing or entry restrictions in relation to *kastom*. Eventually, Carnival stopped conducting tourists to Leweton. But the power and value of the water music was evident in the ongoing demand for this ‘tour’. To meet this demand, Carnival/Adventures in Paradise entered into a new arrangement with another cultural group who can perform a variation of the water music – the Turgor group – who reside next to the Leweton village.

The Turgor and Leweton groups are all part of the same Gaua/Merelava diasporic family. When Turgor originally became the preferred provider of the ‘tour’ there was no objection from Leweton. However, the Turgor group had not formally established itself as a tourist destination or spectacle, it had minimal infrastructure, and the tour experience they offered was not as organised or polished as the Leweton version which

## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

had been refined over many years. With no marketing collateral of their own (or at least none of any value from the perspective of the tourists) all of the Leweton material (photos, videos, even the name "Magical Water Music Experience" a term registered by the Leweton group, etc) was being exploited to market the Turgor 'experience'. This had the effect of diminishing the value of the (now) shared brand. The Leweton group, with so much invested in their brand, was challenged to respond. But how? Kinship obligations, social morés, contemporary customary politics and a desire for friendly relationships with one's neighbours, made it impossible to challenge Turgor directly. It was not Turgor that was misusing the marketing collateral of Leweton anyway. It was Carnival who was (and still is) using images of members of the Leweton group and the physical features of Leweton village to advertise the Turgor tour.

Sur and the Leweton group sought advice from the Intellectual Property Office of the Republic of Vanuatu, and eventually initiated legal proceedings to prevent Carnival using the Leweton images. Unsatisfied with the capacity of the government to intervene or regulate, and unwilling to continue to bear the costs of ineffective legal representation, Sur confronted Adventures in Paradise in Port Vila directly resulting in a public argument but no change in policy. The situation is nuanced. Both Leweton and Turgor support each other's right to perform the water music. But what is not nuanced is the continuing use of representations of Leweton people and places to advertise the Turgor tourism product by the cruise ship liner and its operators: Carnival, Adventures in Paradise, and the sub-agent in Luganville. At the time of writing, "Magical Water Music Experience" is advertised on both Carnival and P & O Cruises websites.<sup>14</sup> The Leweton response has been to take a long view and mitigate the damage to their brand in the short term while letting the natural market forces and a process of attrition resolve things in the long term. The challenge for Leweton is structural. The absence of effective, locally-oriented, government regulation of the tourism industry in rural Vanuatu exacerbates the power imbalances between local, ni-Vanuatu operators and national and international companies and increases a reliance on heuristic approaches to industry development and forces villages like Leweton to negotiate self-regulation with multi-national corporations. A further challenge is the Leweton perception that there is an absence of effective, locally-oriented legal alternatives.

The reliance on heuristic processes become more salient when we consider the hybrid institutions that appear in Vanuatu such as the Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs (MNCC) and the VKS. The Leweton group resolved to more carefully manage the value of their product and the rights over the use of their brand. Failing to resolve the issues in the Leweton/Carnival controversy above through advocacy or jurisdictional processes, Sur returned to Merelava, and consulted with elders, chiefs, leaders, and the broader community. The result of these discussions was that Sur was mandated by the Merelava *nasara* ('tribal' authority) to secure the rights to the Leweton collateral and performance of *ëtëtung* in Luganville and Port Vila through both statutory incorporation with the Vanuatu Financial Services Commission and customary governance processes through the MNCC. This is an ongoing process and is the subject of future research collaborations between the author and the Leweton and Turgor communities.

## Discussion

My geospatial description of the Vanuatu maritory in the introduction to this article is drawn somewhat obliquely from a suggestion in Hau'ofa's much-cited article, namely

## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

that some of the smallest Pacific Islands are the largest countries on Earth if we judge them by the size of their Economic Exclusion Zones (EEZ) (1993: 13). Following this inversion of the figure ground logic we can formulate a different calculation for the size of island nations such as Vanuatu based on a pro rata of the ratio of surface area to water volume for the Coral Sea versus Vanuatu with information sourced from CSIRO (2011). If the surface area of the Coral Sea is 4,791,000km<sup>2</sup> and its water volume is 11,470,000km<sup>3</sup>, and the surface area of Vanuatu is 12,294km<sup>2</sup> (but its EEZ is 710,000km<sup>2</sup>), then Vanuatu's water volume is roughly 29,384km<sup>3</sup> (and the EEZ includes 1,699,791km<sup>3</sup> of ocean water volume). Perhaps what is more important than the fidelity of the measurements is what this way of framing Vanuatu (ie as a maritory) reveals about the possibilities of inverting the existing thinking that compartmentalises island states into isolated land masses. Closely tied to the Law of the Sea, Vanuatu lays maritime claim to 24 nautical miles (nm) of contiguous zone, 12 nm of maritory (preferred here to the oxymoron 'territorial sea'), and 200 nm of continental shelf and EEZ. These facts, which along with the enormous volume of water in its zone noted above, and its 2,528km of coastline, are rarely presented in anthropological, sociological, and cultural studies, but challenge the reader to visualise a different semiotic and spatial mental picture of Vanuatu – one that has implications for the leaders of Vanuatu as multinational corporations seek new forms of imperialism applying pressure to aquapelagic resources through deep sea mining, land and property development, fishing and shipping licences.

Speaking of the myths and stories of the peoples of Oceania, Hau'ofa articulates an Islander *longue durée*:

*Their universe comprised not only land surfaces, but the surrounding ocean as far as they could traverse and exploit it, the underworld with its fire-controlling and earth-shaking denizens, and the heavens above with their hierarchies of powerful gods and named stars and constellations that people could count on to guide their ways across the seas. Their world was anything but tiny. (Hau'ofa, 1993: 6)*

The reverberations of this poetic rendition of Oceanic history can be felt in the words of Kirk Huffman, the former curator of the Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta, who describes the Pacific Ring of Fire as an unstable fundament of the Vanuatu maritory and suggests that there is art embedded deep under the continental shelf “with active volcanoes on land and under the sea, the land itself moves: islands appear and disappear, some are believed to be the handiwork of particular spirits or spiritual powers, there are few larger 'artistic canvases' in the world” (Huffman, 2000: 1). Indeed, Huffman's characterisation of the tectonic palette, the formulation of the land (supra- and submarine), as an “artistic canvas” underpins the idea of a sand drawing as a chorographic tool for a Vanuatu aquapelagic analysis. A chorographic analysis being as it is “radically interdisciplinary” (cf Maxwell, 2012: 23) is valuable in understanding the “real impacts of multiscalar connectivity” for indigenous Pacific Islanders. Incorporating critical and historical genealogies (Arac, 1987; Kame'eleihiwa, 1992), as well as the poetics of creative cultural expression, this chorography allows an analysis to maintain specificity across scales. However, as Teaiwa reminds us, to truly acknowledge diverse ontological realities, we need to acknowledge that in indigenous epistemologies and ontologies, poetics are never just poetics” (2014: 119). The porousness of Banks Islands communities and complex trade and exchange networks make it very difficult to know precisely where the water music originated but they have articulated the critical

## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

genealogy of the innovations to the *ëtëtung* (Dick, 2014). To paraphrase Sur, there is a clearly articulated pedagogical aspect that underpins the Leweton group's operations on multiple scales, and while the *ëtëtung* is not attached to any specific ritual or ceremony, it is still an important part of the intangible cultural heritage of the Mwerlap diaspora and the Leweton group – a part that is critical to the Mwerlap reading of place and the:

*processes of difference and differentiation in conjunction—such as specific conjunctions between landform, climate, hydrology and ecology. They point to certain situational dispositions which have a propensity, and which can be used to procure certain efficacious outcomes. (Tawa, 2002: 46).*

But, as Teiawa as shown in relation to the mining of phosphate on Banaba, and as evidenced (to a much lesser extent) in the Leweton/Carnival case study, the capacity of indigenous Islanders to procure certain outcomes with regard to *the propensity of the place*, can be diminished in engagements with multinational corporations that inhabit unfamiliar ontological realities. Drawing on case studies in Africa and North America, Comaroff and Comaroff provide a caution that is particularly apposite to the Leweton Carnival case study, namely that:

*the current age is one in which the fiction can no longer be sustained that "the political" is apprehensible as an autonomous domain, with sovereignty over material life; that politics and economics, inseparable as never before, are anchored together at once in the market, the law, and the meaning of personal identity. (2014: 255)*

In this context, we can read from Cashman's study that despite the fact that the aquapelagic quality of of the Leweton village (and the broader Vanuatu and Pacific Island assemblages) attracts tourists to cruise tourism, the cruise ships themselves are "the antithesis of the concept of the aquapelagic assemblage" (2013: 9). Awareness of this preexisting, ontological schism between Carnival – seeking to commoditise/generify the water music – and the Leweton village and its chorographic engagement with liquid place, may mitigate future interactions. The controversy with the cruise ship relates to the hybrid strategies that Sur and the Leweton community have implemented on a provincial and national level. These strategies are "hybrid" in the sense that commercial strategies/institutions are constantly interacting with customary strategies/institutions. Following Latour, this is both a scientific and a technological process – a process in which the Leweton community are acting as scientists and engineers busy at work on their "controversial topic" (Latour, 1987: 4). Understanding the specific instance of the cruise liner as an entity in an aquapelagic assemblage – from the perspective of the Leweton cultural village helps in revealing the inner workings of the forces at play in the emergence of local tourism industries. But it does not make problems easier to solve. Regardless of the theoretical and conceptual framing, commodification and commercialisation are problematic challenges on practical levels. The chorographic tools employed in this study can provide a richer and deeper perspective on the controversial work of cultural production (creating art[forms] and developing industries) foregrounding the ineluctable confluence of the emotional, the aesthetic with the cognitive in the Pacific.



## Conclusion

Using a toolkit from actor-network and assemblage theories and the radical interdisciplinarity of a chorography I have shown that the framework of aquapelagic assemblages has value for revealing the creative processes in generating innovations in local art forms, the step-by-step process of commodification of intangible cultural heritage, and the inner workings of (post-)colonial controversies. The chorography foregrounds the diversity of ontologies as though through a kaleidoscope – a view finder of dissolving differentiations and collapsing categories of Enlightenment epistemologies – that reveals “the specifics of places and the mesh of actants that perform them/in them at particular moments” (Hayward, 2012b: 5). Further, building on the work of indigenous scholars of Oceania, I have demonstrated that a chorographic approach to aquapelagic analysis can reveal the multiscalar dimensions of the metaphorical (and physical) maritory of Oceania: imagined as some of the largest nations on the planet, as submarine tectonics and volcanoes, a porous borderless cosmology of canoes following paths marked by the stars. Throughout this article the imagining and the performing of the aquapelago have been teased out as key processes that reflect the diversity of ni-Vanuatu cultural expression. I have conducted an introductory chorography of iconic, evanescent and ephemeral cultural expressions from Vanuatu: sand drawing and water music – together the terms dance and loop with cognitive dissonance – but they peel mellifluously with emotional and aesthetic resonance. In this sense it can be said that the Vanuatu aquapelago is one of many sites in a multiscalar indigenous Oceanic assemblage. The chorographic process, enabled by an understanding of the performance of aquapelagality, makes visible elements of relationships and processes in ways that can privilege diverse ontologies. For the Leweton group, operating in the tourism industry has yielded rich rewards. But the chorographic process reveals the limitations of commercial interaction, in particular the negation and denial of ontological heterogeneity, which create challenges that require heuristic responses in the local community and on the national level.

## Endnotes

---

<sup>1</sup> Maxwell proposes the term “thallasochorography” though I suspect “thalassachorography” or at least “thalassochorography” would be a more accurate rendering of this neologism.

<sup>2</sup> Many of the insights that inform this article, were germinating during the period 2004 to 2008 as the Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta (Vanuatu Cultural Centre – henceforth VKS) and the Vanuatu Credit Union League implemented the Traditional Money Banks Project. The principal objective of the project was to maintain and revitalize living traditional cultural practices while stimulating the generation of cash income. Subsequently the partners formed a relationship with the National Council of Chiefs and with the Prime Minister – the key strategic alliance that led to the Government’s declaration of the Year of Traditional Economy in 2007. This initiative was extended into a second year in 2008. (See: Huffman, 2005; Regenvanu, 2009; Rousseau & Taylor, 2012)

<sup>3</sup> My role in the process of actualisation of country was principally that of witness or audience – I was actualising the actualising. Undoubtedly I was embedded in the process, and I embodied a fiscal payload of agency but the trajectory was glancing. It was made clear to me that under certain circumstances, it was possible that my role could be something other than audience, and that I was expected to engage as though this

possibility might at any moment be actualised, but ultimately, it was others who were actually actualising country.

<sup>4</sup> See: Dick (2015), Talevu and Hosni (2012) and Thomas (2014).

<sup>5</sup> A video of Marcel Meltherorong performing a sand drawing while in Australia for the Asia Pacific Triennial is available online at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=I745gjx5D-4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I745gjx5D-4). For more information see Dick and Meltherorong (2011).

<sup>6</sup> One sand drawing from West Ambrym featured two 'towers' which some people assumed was a commentary on the imminent arrival of mobile phone technology embodied in the construction of two telecommunications towers on Mene Hill, Ambrym; others were adamant that the image depicted the "twin towers" of the World Trade Centre in New York.

<sup>7</sup> This idea of the endless fractal inscription of indigenous reality is informed by Teaiwa (2014) "The land is the people, is the money, is the superphosphate, is the farm, is the grain, is the cattle, is the development, enrichment, and pollution or destruction of lands, seas, and the numerous forms of life dependent upon them." (2014: 112)

<sup>8</sup> It also brings to mind Salman Rushdie's "sea of stories and ocean of notions" (Rushdie, 2000: 205).

<sup>9</sup> Use of the word 'road' here is figurative, and is perhaps derivative of the Bislama term *rod* (literally 'road') which can mean road, path, way or manner, track, trail, transport, fare, freight, along with a multitude of other meanings when used in relation with other words for example the past-oriented *klinim rod* = clean the road make peace, start anew; present-oriented *sperem rod* = hit the road, wander idly, unemployed; and future-oriented *karem rod* (*tekerod*) = get going, take off.

<sup>10</sup> Both Meltherorong and I are, at the time of writing, members of Further Arts Committee. For the period 2012-2014 Meltherorong was engaged as Artistic Director of Further Arts. I also participated in the conceptual development and delivery of this installation.

<sup>11</sup> Picking up on this theme, the Oceania National Olympic Committee also adopted this slogan (Oceania: Wan Solwora One Team) to rally support for this overarching body in the lead up to the 2012 London Olympics (VASANOC, 2012). There is also a group of performance-based artist/activists in Aotearoa who perform under this name.

<sup>12</sup> Elsewhere in the text Isa Tabu is identified as the Solomon Islands, and in personal comments Meltherorong has specified that this 'myth' relates to the Lake Te Nggano (also Tegano), the largest inland body of water in the Pacific, on East Rennell, Solomon Islands.

<sup>13</sup> For a genealogy of the term "performance genealogies" see also Roach (1996) and Balme (2007).

<sup>14</sup> See:

[www.pocruises.com.au/findacruise/shoretours/Pages/ShoreTour.aspx?ShoreTour=LU1-000](http://www.pocruises.com.au/findacruise/shoretours/Pages/ShoreTour.aspx?ShoreTour=LU1-000) and [www.carnival.com.au/shore-excursions/magical-water-music-experience.aspx](http://www.carnival.com.au/shore-excursions/magical-water-music-experience.aspx) - accessed August 10th 2015.

Bibliography

Arac, J (1987) *Critical Genealogies: Historical Situations for Postmodern Literary Studies*: iUniverse

Australian Bureau of Meteorology and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (2011) *Climate Change in the Pacific: Scientific Assessment and New Research*' (v2 Country Reports ), Canberra: ABM and CSIRO

Baldacchino, G (2012) 'Getting wet: a response to Hayward's concept of aquapelagos', *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* v6 n1: 22-26

Balme, C.B (2007) *Pacific Performances: Theatricality and cross-cultural encounter in the South Seas*, London: Palgrave Macmillan

Bennett, J (2005) 'The agency of assemblages and the North American blackout', *Public Culture* v17 n3: 445

Bhaskar, R (1998) 'Philosophy And Scientific Realism', in Archer, M.S, Bhaskar, R, Collier, A, Lawson, T and Norrie, A (eds) *Critical Realism: Essential Readings*, London: Routledge: 16-47

Bolton, L (1999) 'Radio and the redefinition of kastom in Vanuatu', *Contemporary Pacific* v11 n2: 335-335

----- (2003) *Unfolding the Moon: Enacting Women's Kastom in Vanuatu*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press

Bonnemaison, J (1994) *The tree and the canoe: history and ethnography of Tana*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press

Borofsky, R (2000) 'An Invitation, in Borofsky, R (ed) *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts : An Invitation to Remake History*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press

Cashman, D.W (2013) 'Skimming the Surface', *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* v7 n2: 1-12

Clifford, J (2001) 'Indigenous articulations', *The Contemporary Pacific* v13 n2: 467-490

----- (2013) *Returns : Becoming Indigenous in the Twenty-First Century*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press

Comaroff, J.L and Comaroff, J (2014) 'Ethnicity, Inc.: On the Affective Economy of Belonging', in Urban, G (ed) *Corporations and Citizenship*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 249-266

Derrida, J and Eisenman, P (1997) *Chora L Works*, New York: Monacelli Press

## Dick – Chorographing the Vanuatu Aquapelago

---

Dick, T (2014) 'Vanuatu water music and the Mwerlap diaspora: Music, migration, tradition, and tourism', *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* v10 n4: 392-407

----- (2015) 'Reflections on Vivid Vagabondage I: Malekula', *Coastlines* n5, Lismore: Southern Cross University: 133-140

Dick, T and Meltherorong, M (2011) 'Dovetailing Discourses of Emergent Resilience in Vanuatu', in Brader, A (ed) *Songs of Resilience* v3, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press: 97-120

Fagan, B (2012) *Beyond the blue horizon: how the earliest mariners unlocked the secrets of the oceans*: New York: Bloomsbury Publishing

Fleury, C (2013) 'The Island/Sea/Territory. Towards a broader and three dimensional view of the Aquapelagic Assemblage', *Shima: The International Journal of research into Island Cultures* v7 n11 : 1-13

Geismar, H (2009) 'Contemporary Traditions: Museum artifacts and creativity in Vanuatu', in Stevenson, K and Webb, V.L (eds) *Re-presenting Pacific Arts*, Bathurst: Crawford House: 70-89

----- (2013) *Treasured possessions: Indigenous interventions into cultural and intellectual property*, Durham: Duke University Press

Hau'ofa, E (1993) 'Our Sea of Islands: A Beginning', in Hau'ofa, E, Naidu, V and Waddell, E (eds) *A New Oceania: Rediscovering our sea of islands*, Suva: School of Social and Economic Development, The University of the South Pacific in association with Beake House: 2-19

----- (2008) 'Pasts to Remember' in *We are the Ocean; Selected Works*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press: 60-69

Hayward, P (2012a) 'Aquapelagos and aquapelagic assemblages', *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* v6 n1: 1-11

----- (2012b) 'The constitution of assemblages and the aquapelagality of Haida Gwaii', *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* v6 n2: 1-14

----- (2015) 'Sounding The Aquapelago: The Cultural-Environmental Context of ni-Vanuatu Women's Liquid Percussion Performance', *Perfect Beat: The Asia-Pacific Journal of Research into Contemporary Music and Popular Culture* v15 n2: 111-128

Huffman, K (2000) 'Traditional 'Arts' in Vanuatu', arTok Pacific Arts, online at: [www.abc.net.au/arts/artok/issues/s200543.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/arts/artok/issues/s200543.htm) - accessed August 10th 2015

----- (2005) *Traditional Money Banks in Vanuatu*, Port Vila: Vanuatu National Cultural Council

Jolly, M (1999) 'Another time, another place', *Oceania* v69 n4: 282-299

----- (2007) 'Imagining Oceania: Indigenous and Foreign Representations of a Sea of Islands', *The Contemporary Pacific* v19 n2: 508-545

----- (2008) 'The south in Southern Theory: Antipodean reflections on the Pacific', *Australian Humanities Review* n44: 75-99

Kame'eleihiwa, L (1992) *Native land and foreign desires: Pehea Lā E Pono Ai?*, Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press

Latour, B (1987) *Science in action: How to follow scientists and engineers through society*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press

Layard, J (1942) *Stone men of Malekula*, London: Chatto and Windus

Leitner, H and Byron, M (2007) 'Scale and the Limitations of Ontological Debate: A Commentary on Marston, Jones and Woodward', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* v32 n1: 116-125

Leweton Cultural Group (2014) *Vanuatu Women's Water Music* [DVD and booklet], Luganville, Espiritu Santo: Wantok Musik Foundation and Further Arts

Lindstrom, L (1990) *Knowledge and power in a South Pacific society*: Washington: Smithsonian Institute Press

Lukermann, F (1961) 'The Concept of Location in Classical Geography', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* v51 n2: 194-210

MacLeod, J and Moiwend, R (2014) 'West Papua: "We will be free"', in Dey, A (ed) *Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns*, London: War Resisters' International: 179-183

Maxwell, I (2012) 'Seas as Places', *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* v6 n1: 27-29

Meltherorong, M (2014) "'From the Lands of Papua" Yumi Danis (We Dance)', 8th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art - Curatorial Statement, Brisbane: Queensland Gallery of Modern Art

Olwig, K.R (2008) 'Has 'geography' always been modern?: Choros, (non)representation, performance, and the landscape', *Environment and Planning A* v40 n8: 1843-1861

Regenvanu, R (2009) 'The traditional economy as the source of resilience in Melanesia', paper presented at the Lowy Institute Conference 'The Pacific Islands and the World: The Global Economic Crisis', Brisbane, Australia

Roach, J (1996) *Cities of the dead: Circum-Atlantic performance*, New York: Columbia University Press

Rousseau, B and Taylor, J.P (2012) 'Kastom Ekonomi and the Subject of Self-Reliance' in Venkatesan, S and Yarrow, T (eds) *Differentiating Development: Beyond an Anthropology of Critique*, Oxford: Berghahn: 169-1856

Rushdie, S. (2000) *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, Harmondsworth: Penguin

Suwa, J (2012) 'Shima and Aquapelagic Assemblages', *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures* v6 n1: 12-16

Tawa, M (2002) 'Place, Country, Chorography: Towards a Kinesthetic and Narrative Practice of Place', *Architectural Theory Review* v7 n2: 45-58

Teaiwa, K.M (2014) *Consuming Ocean Island: Stories of People and Phosphate from Banaba*, Bloomington: University of Indiana Press

Thomas, V (2014) 'Lon Marum—People of the Volcano', *American Anthropologist* v116 n1: 180-182

van Paassen, C (1957) *The Classical Tradition of Geography*, Groningen: J. B. Wolters

Vanuatu National Statistics Office (2009) 'National Census of Population and Housing' Port Vila: Ministry of Finance and Economic Management

VASANOC (Vanuatu Association of Sports and National Olympic Committee) (2012) 'Oceania: Wan Solwara One Team Spirit', online at: [www.foxsportspulse.com/assoc\\_page.cgi?c=2-3858-000&news\\_task=DETAIL&articleID=20008391#](http://www.foxsportspulse.com/assoc_page.cgi?c=2-3858-000&news_task=DETAIL&articleID=20008391#) - accessed August 10th 2015

Wessergo, W.W, Dick, T and Sur, S (2014) *The History of the Leweton Cultural Village*, Sydney: Wantok Musik Foundation, Further Arts, MAD Publishing

White, G.M and Tengan, T.K (2001) 'Disappearing worlds: Anthropology and cultural studies in Hawai'i and the Pacific', *Contemporary Pacific* v13 n2: 381