

THE PACIFIC CIRCLE



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PACIFIC CIRCLE NEWS

Business Matters

The Circle's email address is *thepacificcircle@gmail.com*. Please contact the Editor and/or Editorial Assistant should you have any questions, concerns or requests.

The University of Hawai'i Foundation requests that dues or contributions made by check be made payable to "The U.H. Foundation" with "The Pacific Circle" in the memo space. The subscription and dues rates remain steady: US\$25.00 for individuals and US\$35.00 for institutions. Renewal notices will be posted this November.

A friendly reminder: our web site is up and running for past issues, documents from conferences, links to affiliated and complementary groups and a blog with information about events and publications.

Please visit: <http://thepacificcircle.com>

Recent Publications, Honors & Scholarly Activities by Circle Members

John Gascoigne published "From Science to Religion: Justifying French Pacific Voyaging and Expansion in the Period of the Restoration and the July Monarchy," *The Journal of Pacific History* 50:2 (2015), pp. 109-127.

Gregory T. Cushman received fellowships from the Carnegie Corporation and Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society to support two years research for his book project, "The Anthropocene: A History of the Earth Under Human Domination." The project includes field work on Rapa Nui (Easter Island).

FUTURE MEETINGS, CONFERENCES and CALLS FOR PAPERS

19-22 November 2015. Annual Meeting of the History of Science Society, to be held at the Westin St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco, CA. Conference will include papers, panels, posters and roundtables. For information please contact: info@hssonline.org.

13-15 January 2016. 6th International Conference on The History of Medicine in Southeast Asia (HOMSEA 2016), to be held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, and hosted by the Center for Khmer Studies (CKS). Proposals on the subject of the history of medicine and health in Southeast Asia are encouraged. The conference theme

is: “History of Medicine in Southeast Asia: Future Perspectives.” For questions about papers and other conference matters, please contact Laurence Monnais at: Laurence.monnais-rousellot@umontreal.ca.

1-3 April 2016. Annual meeting of the Pacific Coast Conference on British Studies, to be held at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California. Papers and panels on a variety of topics connected to British Studies, including the history of science, are encouraged and welcomed. Please contact Peter Hoffenberg at peterh@hawaii.edu if you would like to be part of a history of science panel, including natural history, exploration and other topics of interest to Circle members. Proposals are due no later than December 1, 2015, and can be submitted via email with a 1-page c.v. to: PCCBS2016@gmail.com.

12-15 April 2016. IXth International Congress on the History of Oceanography, to be held at the Tonsley Campus of Flinders University, South Australia. This is the first Congress to be held in the southern hemisphere and coincides with the 50th anniversary celebrations of the founding of Flinders University, the first Australian institution to offer tertiary studies in oceanography. For information about posters, papers and panels, please contact Walter Lenz at: walter.lenz@dg-meeresforschung.de.

BOOK, JOURNAL, EXHIBITION and RESEARCH NEWS

The Japanese Association for the History of Geosciences Newsletter 17 (2015) includes **Fumihiko Tochinai**, “The Japanese Petrologist Seitaro Tsuboi: His Presence in the Japanese Geological Community,” pp. 2-8.



**SELECTED RECENT and FORTHCOMING
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BOOKS and BOOK CHAPTERS

Coping with Calamity: Environmental Change and Peasant Response in Central China, 1736-1949, by **Jiayan Zhang**, University of Hawai'i Press, 2015.

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"Between the Living and the Dead: Trauma Medicine and Forensic Medicine in the Mid-Qing," by **Tracy C. Barrett**, *Frontiers of History in China* 10:1 (2015), pp. 57-73.

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“Cultural Politics and Medicine: Finding Chagas Disease in Early Twentieth Century Argentina,” by **Ana Maria Kapelusz-Poppi**, *The Historian* 77:3 (2015), pp. 498-517.

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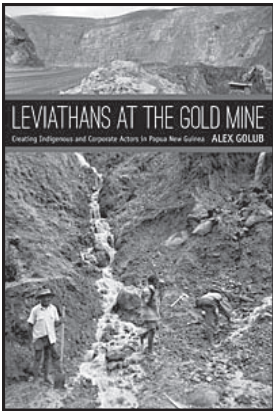
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BOOK REVIEWS



Alex Golub, *Leviathans at the Gold Mine: Creating Indigenous and Corporate Actors in Papua New Guinea*, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2014. Pp. xiv + 247. Figures. Bibliography. Index. Cloth US\$84.95 and ISBN 978-0-8223-5494-9 and Paper US\$23.95 and ISBN 978-0-8223-5508-23.

From the moment a group of Australian gold prospectors and their coastal Papua New Guinean helpers first encountered the people of the vast PNG highlands, a confrontation made famous by Bob Connelly and Robin Anderson’s ethnographic film *First Contact*, relations between foreign extractive industries and local indigenous groups have been the central pivot for framing PNG highlander interactions with the rapacious world beyond. The relationship between “mine” and “native” in the highlands, as elsewhere, is usually portrayed as one of two dichotomies: the oppressive exploiting mine pitted against the noble exploited indigene; or the wealth-bringing engine of development and the underdeveloped, anachronistic, local. Such categorizations are politically useful for concerned parties, and easily digestible for a Western audience, but invariably fail to describe or do justice to the complex array of actors and interests involved.

As the title suggests, *Leviathans at the Gold Mine* by Alex Golub challenges this over-simplistic conception. It also attempts to bridge the gap in

contemporary anthropology between, on the one hand, (Foucauldian) theories of global governance, neo-liberal capitalism, and government surveillance that paint us as more controlled, observed, and over-determined creatures than ever before; and on the other, a (Deleuzian) view of individuals as assemblages of actors who affect their environments and the world in ways which contradict the claimed omnipotence of global structures. By exploring the relationship between the Porgera Goldmine and the Ipili-speaking people on whose land the goldmine sits – the titular “leviathans” – Golub seeks release from this structure:: agency oscillation by asking “is there a better way to do justice to a contemporary scene characterized by both spontaneity and regime?” (p.2). It also probes how individuals shift from being named personalities into abstract entities, like “the mining company” or “PNG Highlander”. It is a key ethnographic problem: how do we show that things like “the state” are simultaneously peopled yet capable of being a machine-like totality?

Central to his answer is Golub’s re-conceptualization of the “leviathan” as a new way of framing the conglomeration of the disparate individuals, groups, interests, social ties, and traditions that we tend otherwise to view as single entities. Golub’s leviathans are not self-contained, self-directed constructs; they achieve legitimacy and potency through mutual interaction and a kind of dynamic mutual definition.

Golub begins, anachronistically, in the middle. In Chapter 1 we are introduced to the Yakitaburi negotiations, in which the mine (majority owned by Canadian Placer Dome and partially owned by the PNG national and provincial governments, together with some local landowners), is seeking an agreement with the Ipili people to expand its waste disposal operations. Golub skillfully dissects the sub-leviathan politics of the negotiations. We see the birth of a rent-seeking privileged class of Ipili men, adept at the art of obtaining contracts, compensation, and other fringe benefits from the mine; intergenerational tension as younger men crave such privilege for themselves; the fuelling of inter-clan and inter-familial client-patron relationships; and the cultural and spiritual impact of the mine on Ipili cosmology. All the while individual Ipili, rather counter-intuitively, desire to be the ones displaced by the proposed waste dump so that they can claim compensation, achieve wealth, and leave an increasingly overpopulated and polluted environment. Thus those who were to be most severely displaced by the Yakitaburi negotiations were its loudest advocates, while those who would be unaffected felt ripped off. Throughout the chapter Golub amply evidences his argument that the intricacy and subtlety of the dynamics of the relationship between the mine and the Ipili are too complex to be explained by the (comforting and familiar) trope of mine-native, oppressor-oppressed relations.

In chapter 2 we step back in time to the “birth of leviathans”, and to a deeper investigation of Ipili history and their contact with the outside world. Golub takes us from “first contact”, where a member of the Australian mining expedition mishears

the local word for the river “Pongema”, and the misnomer “Porgera” is born, through the era of patchy colonialism and ramshackle mining, to the time of Placer Dome establishing its firm extractive grip on the valley in the 1980s. We get a strong sense of the historical incoherence, chaos and ambiguity of “the state”, “the mine”, and “the Ipili”, the latter of which is expanded upon in Chapter 3, where Golub examines life, kinship, and community connections to demonstrate the ambiguity of “being Ipili”, and how this “being” is reshaped by different individuals or groups depending on their interests and context.

Chapter 4 examines the role of the national psyche, which desires both the “development” and the “tradition” tropes that also enable the mining company to craft proprietary expert knowledge (legislation, policy, and national sentiment) about the Ipili. As Golub argues, this process is not unique to Porgera but is a general disconnect between the “urban imagination of the grassroots” (161) and complex vernacular realities.

The book is information-heavy, combining history, anthropology, and Melanesian cultural studies, as it keeps to its word on going beyond simplistic generalizations to reach a more nuanced understanding of the actors in play. It is also interesting in a narrative sense; it is full of vignettes that illuminate the way the Ipili and the mine view each other (for instance, mining officials more than once take a dilettante’s interest in linguistics to demonstrate the Ipili’s perceived ingratitude and dishonesty). Yet, despite the somberness of the Afterword, which argues the Ipili fail in the end to be equal leviathans of the mine, the book is also curiously subdued on the supra-state sanctioned violence that sits behind the mining company’s negotiating strengths. Perhaps this is the problem with turning to science and technology studies for a way between the hoary structure versus agency conundrum: black boxes and networks can be curiously flattening devices in the end.

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Buschmann, Rainer F., *Iberian Visions of the Pacific Ocean, 1507-1899*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, Pp. xi + 292 pp. Figures. Maps. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Cloth: US\$90.00 and ISBN 978-1-137-30470-4.

“Hurray for you who have disinterred his journals! . . . What amazing things might await us in the archives.” (92) Readers of Rainer Buschmann’s new book can shout “hurray” as did an anonymous author, writing in the late 1760s to Bernardo de Iriarte (1735-1814). He emphasized prior Spanish discoveries in the Americas and the Pacific because as the diplomat Iriarte knew, France and England dismissed Spanish

knowledge and claims of Pacific islands. Buschmann began a project to understand Spanish attempts to halt James Cook’s voyages in the Pacific. It became this much broader book that declares “any Spanish vision of the Pacific had to take into consideration the imperial realities of colonial Latin America.” (ix)

Buschmann cites his own archival voyages – this one from the *Archivo Histórico Nacional* (AHN) in Madrid, Spain. Buschmann also visited the famous *Archivo General de Indias* (AGI) and the *Archivo General de Simancas* (AGS). His research even took him to Viso del Marqués in La Mancha, way off the beaten track, to the *Archivo General de la Marina Álvaro de Bazán* (AGMAB). Buschmann even consulted the *Real Biblioteca* (RB) situated in the Royal Palace, which millions of tourists visit but very few know that the Royal Library is open to scholars.

This second book in the Palgrave Macmillan series of “Studies in Pacific History” could intimidate with forty-four pages of endnotes, but the six chapters with an introduction and epilogue achieve the goal of rethinking a globalized Pacific region “over many centuries through trans-regional encounters, networks and exchanges.” Buschmann follows Greg Denning’s distinction, writing about visions of the Pacific in Europe. The book helps us understand how Iberians, especially 18th-century Spanish officials and writers envisioned the territories of the Pacific Ocean, but not visions of the inhabitants in the Pacific.

In the first Chapter, cleverly named “Shrinking Continents and Expanding Oceans,” the main character is Pedro Fernández de Quirós, the Portuguese navigator who sailed in the Pacific with Spanish support to find Austral lands. This chapter offers a “nuanced rendition” of how from Quirós’s voyages and others the Spanish raised serious doubts about the existence of legendary continents in the Pacific Ocean. Buschmann differentiates between encountered knowledge and revealed knowledge. The earlier Spanish explorers spoke from experience, or things they had encountered. Spanish officials in the 1700s defended revealed knowledge from the

past while British and French relied on knowledge that they encountered. Documents in archives reveal change over time, knowledge that is primarily encountered and then used by others in subsequent generations.

In Chapter Two, “On Chronometers, Cartography and Curiosity” – a happy alliteration – the principal protagonist is the Prince of Masserano, Vittorio Filippo Ferrero Fieschi (1713-1777), who served as the Spanish ambassador to London from 1763 to 1772. Plagued by gout and criticized by English ministers, Masserano insisted that the earlier Spanish discoveries in the Pacific were adjacent to Spanish America. The 1713 Treaty of Utrecht also justified the ambassador’s rhetoric of a *mare nostrum*. Buschmann links the diplomacy to a fascinating story about the chronometer in Spain. The ambassador trusted the lunar methods advocated by the British Royal Astronomer, but when the accurate time-piece showed its success, the Spanish sent apprentices to learn how to make more. In addition to the chronometer, Masserano also paid disaffected English sailors to tell officials in Spain about their experiences in the Falkland Islands and the Wallis 1766-1768 expedition into the Pacific.

In Chapters Three and Four, Buschmann narrates the European vision of the Pacific, unfolding in the books, accounts and sources chosen by authors and publishers. Travel writing changed in the late Eighteenth Century, as readers wanted more ethnographic descriptions, asking for more trust from the voyagers. Travel writing became more empirical. Visualization and narration went hand-in-hand with imperial expansion and appropriation. Archives became more organized with the purpose of defending imperial control. Pedro Estala (1757-1815) published over 16,000 pages in 43 volumes in *El Viagero Universal* (the universal traveler). At first a translation of the Joseph de Laporte *Le voyageur française*, Estala eventually added his own selection of Spanish primary sources but still framed the story as an imaginary voyager writing letters to a friend. Iberian visions of the Pacific developed from these very European narratives and always included the vice-royalties of Spanish America. Furthermore, the visions were global, as Estala indicated in his universal title.

Chapters Five and Six focus on two visionary and similar protagonists – Martín Fernández de Navarrete (1765-1844) and Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859). Fernández de Navarrete explored the archives in Spain publishing the documents of Spanish explorers. As a member of the *Real Academia de Historia*, he labored to integrate naval history and hydrographical knowledge into the historical canon. His forty-eight volumes of Spanish primary sources became a publishing classic in 1825, showing the world the extent of Spanish voyages and discoveries since the Fifteenth century. Christopher Columbus’s diary as abstracted by Bartolomé de las Casas is one of the more famous documents. Besides the maritime documents, Fernández de Navarrete also wrote a biography of Miguel de Cervantes, author of *Don Quixote*, which although outside the scope of Buschmann’s book also influenced

the subsequent visions of Spain, peninsular, American and Pacific.

Humboldt also worked as a writer and scholar, appreciating the work of Fernández de Navarrete. He called the collection of sources “one of the most important historical monuments in modern times.” Humboldt traveled in Latin America, although not the Pacific. Buschmann emphasizes that Humboldt tried to connect with voyages going into the Pacific, but eventually spent five years from 1799 to 1804 visiting the Canary Islands, the vice-royalty of New Granada (today’s Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador), Peru, New Spain (soon to be independent Mexico), Cuba and even the United States. Although he downplayed the Pacific Ocean in his writings, he “gave the Spanish vision of the Pacific an international salience.” (190) Humboldt also understood the “Spanish notion of the hydrographic spider web linking colonial periphery and metropole.” (198) The English explorers, Cook and Vancouver, emphasized a fragmented world in want of integration, whereas the two scholars took a decisively global approach. Chapter Six, entitled “On Rediscovering the Americas,” emphasizes that Humboldt stood at the beginning of a planetary consciousness.

In today’s globalizing world, Buschmann looks for connections and continuity. Visions of the Pacific could not be solely about change, disruptions and innovations. European visions of the Pacific, beginning with the explorations of Balboa and Magellan, had to be globally connected, archivally rich and continued from past to present. Spanish visions of the Pacific Ocean are not forgettable history. Buschmann’s book can be a cautionary tale for new empires in the Twenty-First Century Pacific – a reminder about initial visions and early goals, plus connections to other places. For readers of *The Pacific Circle*, outside visions of the Pacific Ocean help to know how others think and what others want, leading to understanding and hopefully a more inclusive vision.

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