



Indigenous group warn against black magic

Ambae killings may have been sanctioned by chief

Four sorcery suspects also face intentional homicide charges

contributing to the development of the country

Sorcery Act 1971,
Being an Act to prevent and punish evil practices of sorcery and other similar practices, and for other purposes relating to such practices.

Preamble
There is a widespread belief throughout the country that there is such a thing as sorcery and that sorcerers have extraordinary powers that can be used sometimes for good purposes but sometimes for evil purposes, and because of this belief many lives have been lost and property has been destroyed.

“Constitution should provide provision for witchcraft”

Chief Wass
“In my village a lot of people infected but they didn't know about it... They thought it was a curse.”

Six men arrested over the killing of brothers

LAW REFORM COMMISSION of PAPUA NEW GUINEA

By Esther Tinning

NATIONAL PARLIAMENT

witchcraft cases court not only offence to make but wanted without a

Sorcery and Witchcraft-Related Killings in Melanesia: Culture, Law and Human Rights Perspectives

5 - 7 June 2013



General Information

Conference venue

[Great Hall, University House,](#)

1 Balmain Crescent

The Australian National University, Canberra

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This conference is being hosted by the **State, Society and Governance in Melanesia** Program and the **Regulatory Institutions Network**, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific, The Australian National University.

We would like to thank the following organisations for their generous support:

AusAid

Research School of Asia and the Pacific

The ANU Gender Institute

Background

Sorcery and witchcraft beliefs and practices exist in many communities throughout the world, and are particularly associated with social stress and dislocation. Although some aspects of sorcery and witchcraft beliefs and practices are, it is argued, functional or even beneficial for communities and individuals (e.g. in maintaining social norms or indigenous cosmologies) they can also lead to a range of negative social consequences. These include brutal attacks and even killings of alleged practitioners, civil unrest and warfare, criminal activity, and the fostering of a pervasive culture of insecurity, fear and envy in the context of uneven economic development. Very little of the voluminous, largely anthropological, literature on sorcery and witchcraft considers how these negative consequences can be addressed in policy and practical terms. This conference, focusing on the Melanesian countries of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, is intended to begin to fill this gap. It will bring together academics from varied backgrounds including law, anthropology, gender and human rights, as well as policy-makers, legal officers, human rights activists, members of church organisations and non-governmental organisations from the Pacific Islands region. The aim is for participants to engage in a constructive dialogue to develop practical and workable solutions to the negative societal issues posed by belief in sorcery and witchcraft, and particularly the problem of sorcery and witchcraft-related killings.

Although sorcery and witchcraft beliefs and practices are widespread in Melanesian countries, how their peoples and governments respond to them varies widely, as will be explored at the conference through the presentation of a range of comparative case studies. Speakers will outline both successful and unsuccessful strategies and interventions utilised by state institutions, church groups and organisations, civil society and local communities.

The conference and workshop is being organised and funded by the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Program and the Regulatory Institutions Network. The organisers are grateful to the Research School of Asia and the Pacific at The Australian National University for its significant additional funding support, and also the ANU Gender Institute for its support.

Program

Please note that unless otherwise specified, all presentations will be 20 minutes long with 10 minutes for questions and half an hour for general discussion at the end of each session.

WEDNESDAY 5 JUNE

- 8.30** **Registration** (tea and coffee)
- 9.00-9.15** **Welcome – Veronica Taylor**
- 9.15** **Introduction – Richard Eves and Miranda Forsyth**
- 10.30** **Morning tea**
- 11.00-1.00** **Nicole Haley** – *Changing Nature of Witch Trials in Lake Kapiago District, Hela Province.*
John Himugu – *The Belief in Witches Amongst the Huli People of the Hela Province, Papua New Guinea.*
Jack Urame – *Sorcery Witchcraft and Gender Antagonism in Papua New Guinea.*
Dan Jorgensen – *Preying on Those Close to Home: Witchcraft and Public Violence in Telefolmin.*
- 1.00-1.45** **Lunch**
- 1.45-3.15** **Johanna Whiteley** – *The Peril of a Christian Sorcerer: The Church of Melanesia and Sorcery Accusations in West Gao, Santa Isabel, Solomon Islands.*
Tobias Schwoerer – *Sorcery and Contemporary Warfare in the Eastern Highlands of Papua New Guinea.*
Thomas Strong – *Disagreeing with Witchcraft: Steps Toward Making Local Criticisms Heard.*
- 3.15-3.45** **Afternoon tea**
- 3.45-5.15** **John Burton, Theresa Phillips and Rachael Lennie** – *Failing to Articulate the Causes of Poverty: Witchcraft and Human Behaviour in the Bulolo District, Papua New Guinea.*
Lawrence Foanaota – *Sorcery and Witchcraft as a Negative Force on Economic and Social Development in the Solomon Islands: The Toabaita Case.*
Monica Paulus – *A Personal Account.*

THURSDAY 6 JUNE

- 8.30** **Registration** (tea and coffee)
- 9.00-10.30** **Laurent Dousset** – *Sorcery, Poison and Politics: Strategies of Self-Positioning in South Malekula.*
John Taylor – *Sorcery and Human Security in Vanuatu: An Ethnographic Approach.*
Salmah Eva-Lina Lawrence – *Witchcraft, Matriliney and Gender in the Milne Bay Province, PNG.*
- 10.30** **Morning tea**

- 11.00-1.00** **Anthony Regan & James Tanis** – *Sorcery and the Changing Dynamics of Conflict and Peace-building: Bougainville 1988-2013.*
Philip Gibbs – *Why Not? Church Strategies for Reducing Witchcraft-Related Killings in Simbu Province, Papua New Guinea.*
Deborah van Heekeren – *Hiding Behind the Church: Understanding the Persistence of Sorcery in Christian PNG.*
Christine Stewart – *The Courts, the Churches, the Witches and their Killers.*
- 1.00-1.45** **Lunch**
- 1.45-3.15** **Hon. Nixon Duban MP** – *Presentation on Sorcery and Witchcraft in Papua New Guinea.*
Nick Schwarz – *The Sorcery Act Dilemma.*
Mel Keenan – *The Western Legal Response to Sorcery in Colonial PNG.*
- 3.15-3.45** **Afternoon tea**
- 3.45-5.15** **Ravunama Auka, Kathwa Umpake, Barbara Gore, Pealiwan Rebecca Koralyo** – *Sorcery and Witchcraft-Related Killings in Papua New Guinea: The Criminal Justice System Response.*
Nanai Puka Areni – *Sorcery and Witchcraft: The Excuse for Criminal Acts in Papua New Guinea.*
Daiana Buresova – *Comprehensive and Integrated Gender Law Reform – A Real Solution for Addressing Sorcery Incidences in PNG.*
- 5.15-5.45** **Slide Show – Vlad Sokhin and Jo Chandler**
- 6.00 – 7.00** **Public Lecture – Dame Carol Kidu** – *Sorcery: A Reality Beyond Rational Logic.* (Law Link Lecture Theatre [7], Law Building, Fellows Road)

FRIDAY 7 JUNE

- 8.30** **Registration** (tea and coffee)
- 9.00-10.30** **Nancy Robinson** – *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: Statement on Sorcery-Related Killings.*
Derek Futaiasi & Philip Kanairara – *Offence of Sorcery: Brief Overview from Solomon Islands.*
Beverleigh Kanas – *What is Sorcery in Vanuatu?*
- 10.30** **Morning tea**
- 11.00-1.00** **Lilly Be'Soer** – *Women's Human Rights Defenders Respond to Sorcery Related Torture.*
Clara Bal – *Kumo Koimbo: Accounts and Responses to Witchcraft in Gor (Chimbu Province, PNG).*
Siobhan McDonnell – *Chiefs Without Nakamals: Can Chiefs be Better Supported to Manage Community Tensions around Nakaimas.*
- 1.00-2.00** **Lunch** – *Screening of Nambang Komuniti Gavanans Projekt- Lamap, Malakula (Vanuatu)*
Conference ends

Abstracts and Speakers' Details

WEDNESDAY 5 JUNE

Richard Eves (State, Society & Governance in Melanesia Program, College of Asia & the Pacific)

Bio: Richard Eves is an anthropologist who has published widely on issues of social change in PNG. Richard's work deals with contemporary issues in Melanesia, straddling the boundaries between anthropology, development and international health, with a particular focus on gender, violence and the AIDS epidemic. He also has wide experience consulting on issues of health, AIDS and gender-based violence in PNG, having been a research advisor on two AusAID funded projects and a consultant for Caritas Australia. He has undertaken qualitative research in numerous provinces, including Western Highlands, Chimbu, Western, Eastern Highlands, Morobe, Milne Bay and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. In 2008, with Leslie Butt, he co-edited the important volume, *Making Sense of AIDS: Culture, Sexuality, and Power in Melanesia* (2008), a collection of anthropological papers on how the epidemic is being understood and responded to in Melanesia. Much of his current research and writing focuses on gender — in particular on forms of masculinity and how to engage men in the prevention of violence against women.

Miranda Forsyth (Regulatory Institutions Network, College of Asia & the Pacific).

Bio: Miranda Forsyth is a Research Fellow at RegNet in the College of Asia and Pacific at ANU. In February 2011 she commenced a three year ARC Discovery funded project to investigate the impact of intellectual property laws on development in Pacific Island countries. Prior to coming to RegNet, Miranda was a senior lecturer in criminal law at the law school of the University of the South Pacific, based in Port Vila, Vanuatu for eight years. Miranda's research interests include legal pluralism, customary law, and South Pacific criminal law. She is the author of *A Bird that Flies with Two Wings: Kastom and State Justice Systems in Vanuatu* (2009) ANU ePress.

Nicole Haley (State, Society & Governance in Melanesia Program, College of Asia & the Pacific) – *Changing Nature of Witch Trials in Lake Kapiago District, Hela Province.*

Witchcraft and Sorcery killings have been a feature of the social and cultural fabric of Kapiago Sub-District through the colonial period to the present. The killings of today however are not the same as the killings of yesteryear. This paper explores changes in the context, agents and victims of sorcery accusations in this district from the pre-colonial and colonial times to the present nation state. Drawing on the work of previous ethnographers and my own extensive fieldwork in the district I argue the present killings do not reflect the "traditional" nor even "colonial" characteristics of witchcraft and sorcery killings but reveal a change in group organisation in the region as well as a changed understanding of gender and power relations.

Bio: Nicole Haley joined SSGM in 2006 and was appointed Convenor of the Program in January 2010. Nicole originally came to ANU in 1994 and graduated with a PhD in Anthropology in May 2003. Her thesis entitled *Ipakana Yakaiya: Mapping Landscapes, Mapping Lives - Contemporary Land Politics Among the Duna*, was awarded the 2002 ANU Crawford Prize for Academic Excellence. Nicole is co-editor (with Ron May) of a book entitled *Conflict and Resource Development in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea* (2007) and of a forthcoming collection on the 2007 Papua New Guinea General Elections. In 2007 she coordinated the first ever domestic observation of the Papua New Guinea General Elections and is co-author (with Ray Anere) of The 2007 *Papua New Guinea National*

General Elections Domestic Observation Report (2009). Nicole is currently writing about electoral politics and local political cultures in PNG.

John Himugu (Institute of PNG Studies) – *The Belief in Witches Amongst the Huli People of the Hela Province, Papua New Guinea*.

The aim of this Paper is to show how deep rooted the belief is, and how tribal leaders solve witchcraft related problems based on their own customary beliefs. There are four types of witches the Huli people believe in. The witch spirit enters a normal person and makes one into a witch. A person is identified as being a Witch by observing the external signs such as seeing strange animals around her house, or by the signs of split personality problems, such as giving two conflicting answers almost simultaneously.

People who live with witches take control measures to protect themselves. This includes telling the witch what will happen to her if her spirit hurts other people. The relatives of the confirmed witches can also remove the spirits. This includes traditional or church exorcism. The witch can also be killed by way of killing an animal that appears in the vicinity of her place of residence. It is believed the Witch woman dies at the exact time that animal dies.

The Huli leaders know when, why and how witches attack their victims. This principle is used when determining whether the victim in question was indeed attacked by the alleged witch or not. They also have first aid techniques which can be used by the relatives to save the person attacked by witches. Finally in Huli traditional witch trial procedures, the leaders demand proof as witch-attacks on the part of the accuser, and the confession if any from the accused witch, and the accountability requirements on the part of the witch and her relatives, and any sign of negligence on the part of the victim. These are all considered and applied in handing down the decision. Finally the good point in this presentation is, hardly anybody gets killed for being a witch in the Huli area because the community learn and use the above rules based on custom.

Bio: John Himugu is an ethnographic researcher at the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies. He has done research on sorcery and witchcraft beliefs of the Huli of the Hela Province, where he comes from. He was one of the working committee members on the PNG Constitutional and Law Reform Commission Team appointed to look into the sorcery and sorcery related killings in Papua New Guinea and has travelled widely to get public opinion on the matter.

Jack Urame (Melanesian Institute, Goroka, PNG) – *Sorcery Witchcraft and Gender Antagonism in Papua New Guinea*.

Belief in sorcery and witchcraft is deeply engrained in the various cultures of PNG. Widely across the country people continue to hold onto the belief and practices and accept as fact that events like sickness, death and disaster are caused by evil mystical powers. Depending on which cultural group people are from, they believe that either women or men or both men and women can possess evil powers and use them to harm others. On the other hand sorcery and witchcraft beliefs can be used to exhibit power and influence over others, particularly over marginalized people in society such as older women and other defenceless people.

The gender aspect of the belief continues to be an important factor across societies in PNG. This creates animosity and social tension within and between families and social groups. Many people, particularly women have been victimized by the belief. Some have been tortured and killed under horrific circumstances. Others have been evicted from communities and are left destitute. In the Highlands where the belief in witchcraft power is very strong the majority of those accused are women. The churches and the government face a big challenge on how to deal with the issue.

This paper investigates the link between gender antagonism as embedded in the cultural, social and ideological belief system and the abuse of power in PNG. It seeks to discuss implications of male/female relationship and how a cultural assumption that women are dangerous to men influences male hostility towards women when dealing with sorcery and witchcraft issues.

Bio: Jack Urame is Director of the Melanesian Institute, Goroka, Papua New Guinea and has been working there as a social and cultural researcher since 2006. He is a Lutheran pastor and comes from Simbu Province, PNG. He has studied theology and social sciences, and holds a Bachelor of Theology and Master of Arts in Social Sciences specializing in Melanesian studies. Between 2006 and 2008 he was engaged on the major research project undertaken by the Melanesia Institute on sorcery and witchcraft.

Dan Jorgensen (Department of Anthropology, Western University, Ontario) – *Preying on Those Close to Home: Witchcraft and Public Violence in Telefolmin.*

The idea that witchcraft beliefs are innocuous, if socially useful, was discarded by anthropologists long ago and has been overshadowed by the growing incidence of witch-killing in many parts of the world, including PNG. These days, the real issues are less about the epistemology of belief than about the human problems created by anti-witch violence.

Recent anti-witch attacks in Telefolmin (Sandaun) led to several deaths and the flight of families from their villages in fear of their lives. This violence has much in common with similar events elsewhere in PNG, including beatings and public torture of accused witches, some of whom were subsequently killed. But there are important differences as well: accusations do not have a misogynist cast (all the targets of the attacks were men), and the witchcraft at issue is attributed to non-indigenous sources. Finally, as in many PNG instances, there has been a striking failure of police to prosecute homicides arising from witchcraft accusations, a fact that has led to widespread local concern.

In this paper I present the Telefol cases in comparative context, with a focus on the relation of perpetrators to their victims and to the community at large. In the process I will argue that certain aspects of the regional economy combined with a generic witchcraft discourse and the effective absence of the state have helped foster a lethal crisis in the relation between rural villagers and male youth.

Bio: Dan Jorgensen has done ethnographic work in Telefolmin off and on since the mid-70s on a range of topics, beginning with the traditional men's cult and its mythology. For the last twenty years he has focused primarily on Telefol engagements with evangelical Christianity and with PNG's mining economy. His most recent project is on mobile phone use in interpersonal networks.

Johanna Whiteley (Department of Anthropology, London School of Economics) – *The Peril of a Christian Sorcerer: The Church of Melanesia and Sorcery Accusations in West Gao, Santa Isabel, Solomon Islands.*

The conversion to Anglicanism upon Santa Isabel is recognised as one of the Melanesian Mission's glowing success stories (Kolshus 2007: 303). Yet this story has a more shadowy sub-plot, namely, the longstanding battle waged within the Church against the practice of sorcery. Attention to these darker corners of the Anglican Church's history on Santa Isabel reveals that spiritual warfare against sorcery was both the preoccupation of powerful Christian agents (English missionaries and indigenous Anglican priests), and subject to repeated revival among the lay population (White 2001: 111). It is into such a context that I arrived in 2010 to undertake twenty months of anthropological fieldwork among Anglicans in the West Gao district - a region renowned for its ancestry of powerful sorcerers. Yet sorcery

accusations permeated not only the genealogies and life histories of my interlocutors, but the very fabric of Christian life in the present.

After undertaking a brief review of the history of the Anglican Church's relationship with sorcery on Santa Isabel, the paper will provide an ethnographic account of a series of recent events that occurred in West Gao during my fieldwork and escalated into what can only be called a "community crisis." This part of the discussion consists of three sections: a review of the activities of the Melanesian Brotherhood (an Anglican religious Order) who undertook a "mission" on Santa Isabel in 2009 to combat sorcery; a "vision" received by a Church Youth-group member who, in 2011, arrived in West Gao to reveal to villagers that their community was a hot bed of sorcery; and finally, the controversy that arose later that year after a resident of the same village received a divine "gift" to heal sorcery-induced illness. In conclusion it is suggested that the apparent contradiction raised by the notion of a "Christian sorcerer" in fact poses one of the most compelling realities for Anglicans in West Gao.

Bio: Johanna Whiteley is a PhD student in social anthropology at the London School of Economics and Political Science in the United Kingdom. In June 2012 she completed twenty months fieldwork in Gao District, Santa Isabel Province, Solomon Islands and is now writing up her thesis.

Tobias Schwoerer (Department of Social Anthropology, University of Lucerne) – *Sorcery and Contemporary Warfare in the Eastern Highlands of Papua New Guinea*.

In the eastern districts of the Eastern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea, where sorcery is held to be predominantly practiced by males, sorcery-related violence is mainly an inter-community affair. This contrasts starkly with recent portrayals of sorcery- and witchcraft-related killings in Papua New Guinea's media in which angry mobs single out usually defenceless (and often female) individual victims. Violent retribution for deaths attributed to sorcery in the Eastern Highlands is often directed against whole communities, and not just against individuals suspected of conducting sorcery. Sorcery-related violence thus has the propensity to quickly spiral out of control, escalating to large-scale inter-community warfare often causing further casualties. Sorcery and sorcery accusations are the most dominant triggers for inter-community warfare in the Eastern Highlands. In an ethnographic survey I conducted in 2006 on armed conflicts since 1975 among the Fore, Auyana and Tairora in the Okapa and Obura-Wonenara districts, the majority of cases of armed conflict were directly connected to sorcery. In my presentation, I will focus on this under-studied nexus between sorcery and collective armed violence. I will first present an overview on changing sorcery beliefs among the Fore, Auyana and Tairora, portray their ongoing preoccupation with sorcery, and then discuss the results of my survey on armed conflicts. On the basis of detailed case studies, I will show how warfare was triggered by sorcery and sorcery accusations, indicate the underlying causes, and sketch the difficulties and challenges local leaders face in trying to mediate and mitigate such conflicts.

Bio: Tobias Schwoerer is a lecturer and research assistant in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Lucerne, Switzerland. He conducted field research in Papua New Guinea between 2005-2007 among the Fore, Auyana and Tairora for his PhD dissertation on *Processes of Pacification and the Elimination of Traditional Warfare in the Eastern Highlands of Papua New Guinea* and in 2009-2010 among the Wampar in Morobe Province. He received his M.A. in history and social anthropology from the University of Zurich, Switzerland.

Thomas Strong (Department of Anthropology, National University of Ireland) – *Disagreeing with Witchcraft: Steps Toward Making Local Criticisms Heard*.

In the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, not all people in communities acquiesce to accusations of witchcraft or to retributive violence against accused witches. Often, witchcraft

accusation divides communities by gender, generation, or denomination. But the people, who are often groups of young men, who foment "attacks" on witches are able to draw on powerful forms of "symbolic domination" (e.g., forms of divination, ritualized village courts) in order to quell dissent and threaten those who might be repulsed by or opposed to attacks on the accused. A further consideration is that some kinds of evangelical sermon focus on mystical violence: the threat of witches is preached about in order to bring people into the fold. Other churches are less focused on the "demonic," and do not therefore promote the idea of witchcraft so centrally. In this context, the social field of witchcraft accusation, mystical violence, and response is divided and complex. What has to be found are ways to support people in communities who oppose acts of retributive violence against the accused, to find discursive resources that work for them when they oppose these acts and that may empower them to help "stand up" to the crowd that may be demanding a violent attack on a witch. In 2001, a major witch-hunt engulfed my Eastern Highlands field-site following the death of a prominent man. After the witch hunt, many women came to see me to talk about how this is the "way the men always treat us." And some men came to tell me about how what had happened was a "violation of human rights." There are people in the highlands who want to stop violent witch hunts. How can they be supported?

Bio: Thomas Strong received his BA in anthropology at Reed College in 1994. Between 1998 and 2003, he carried out ethnographic fieldwork in Papua New Guinea for 20 months, yielding a Ph.D. from Princeton University in 2004. Between 2008 and 2012, he has also conducted fieldwork and "capacity building" work in east Africa. Prior to his lectureship at the National University of Ireland Maynooth, he was a visiting lecturer at the University of Helsinki, and a research associate at the University of California (San Francisco) and the University of Wisconsin (Madison).

John Burton (Resource Management in the Asia Pacific, College of Asia & the Pacific), **Theresa Phillips & Rachael Lennie** – *Failing to Articulate the Causes of Poverty: Witchcraft and Human Behaviour in the Bulolo District, Papua New Guinea.*

Paanga, sanguma in Pidgin, is feared as deadly malevolence among the communities of Watut Rural LLG, one of six local government areas in the Bulolo District. Beliefs in *paanga* and "witch-killings" are known from before WWII, a major incident being the murder of a woman called Pingi at the village of Sapanda in the late 1930s. The repercussions – the arrest of the killers, their jailing in the New Guinea Islands, and their return after the war – prompted the community to split in two. A splinter group left Sapanda in 1954 and founded a satellite hamlet some 8km from Nauti village, on the fringe of habitation and at the edge of the deep forest leading to the summit of Mt Naiko.

Thirty years later, CRA discovered what is now the Hidden Valley gold mine at Mt Naiko and the Sapanda settlers were recognised as one of two lead groups among its landowners. It is a conundrum for local onlookers that a banished people was elevated by the Provincial Court from marginal status to those with highly privileged access to royalties, employment at the mine, and village infrastructure improvement.

As an external observer undertaking social baseline studies in this area the 1990s, I found that all communities in this area were experiencing levels of mortality – through all age groups and in both sexes – not reported since the "depopulation of Melanesia" era. However, belief in *paanga* was so pervasive it overwhelmed the ability of local health staff to make any progress at all in rural health extension.

I recently resurveyed the communities with a small survey team as a part of a social impact update. Deaths in the 2000s, as difficult as the team found it to believe, were even worse than they were in the 1990s – and in the meantime health outreach in Watut Rural had collapsed completely. No world region, wracked by conflict or otherwise, reported by the

UNDP in 2011 had Oxford MPI (Multidimensional Poverty Index) scores as depressed as we were able to calculate.

The paper looks at how fear of *paanga* not only condemns people in Watut Rural to misread the causes of their poor health, short lives and overall poverty but adds to, and in many respects encapsulates, the other underdevelopment pathologies in Watut Rural – almost universal adult illiteracy, gender-based discrimination, and collapsed presence of the State. It has shaped the geography of settlement, contributes to the escape from justice of the perpetrators of crime, prevents vulnerable sections of communities from insisting on equality of access to benefits, and acts as a brake on political expression.

Bio: John Burton has been at the ANU since 2004. He studied prehistory at BA level, acquiring field experience in England, France, Germany and Norway, followed by a masters degree in Biological Computation. He came to the ANU as a Commonwealth Scholar in 1980 to study with Jack Golson on a topic in pre-contact (c1920-1933) mining and trade networks in Western Highlands Province, Papua New Guinea. In 1985 he moved to the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Papua New Guinea, and taught courses in human origins, research methods, cultural ecology and economic anthropology. From 1991 to 2001 he worked as a consultant, specialising in social mapping and the social impacts of mining at Ok Tedi, Kutubu, Lihir and Hidden Valley; and development assessments in Papua New Guinea. In 2001-2003 he was Senior Anthropologist for the Torres Strait Regional Authority.

Lawrence Foanaota (Adjunct Senior Research Fellow, School of Arts and Social Sciences, James Cook University) – *Sorcery and Witchcraft as a Negative Force on Economic and Social Development in the Solomon Islands: The Toabaita Case.*

The aim of this paper is to discuss the topic of sorcery and witchcraft as a negative force on economic and social development in Solomon Islands. The discussion is expected to focus on specific examples from Toabaita society, in North Malaita, Malaita Province, Solomon Islands. Currently, in this part of the island, some communities are really afraid, concerned and also angry about the negative impacts this is causing on their social lives, families and businesses. In some instances it is hindering or slowing down people's aspirations for development and improving their lifestyle. Three examples known in the Toabaita language as *Nafa*, *Arua*, and *Lufiniwai* will be discussed in this paper in order to shed some lights on its application or transmission from one person to another, its effects on aspects of the economic and social development in the society and the kind of reactions people usually show when someone is believed to have died or a business has gone under because of sorcery or witchcraft. The discussions will also look at the preventive methods people use to protect themselves from its effects as well as the kind of treatments they might apply on those who may be affected. Generally, sorcery and witchcraft as a negative force is practiced by both old and young men and women to kill others, make businesses fail, cause fear and disharmony and contribute to broken relationships in families, communities or tribes in Solomon Islands contemporary society.

Bio: Lawrence Foana'ota OBE is one of the founding members and the first Chairman of the Pacific Islands Museums Association or PIMA Executive Board since its establishment and registration as an NGO Regional Organization in 1999. He holds a Museum Management Certificate from the East-West Center, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, Honolulu, Hawai'i, a BA Degree in Anthropology from the University of Auckland in New Zealand and an MA Degree in Material Culture (Research) from James Cook University of North Queensland, Townsville. He has just completed a research project on the "Abuse of the Culture or Kastom of Compensation Payment Practices in Solomon Islands Contemporary Society" in early 2012 in collaboration with the Bergen University in Norway and James Cook University of North Queensland in Townsville and is an Adjunct Senior Research Fellow with the School of Arts and Social Sciences at James Cook University of North Queensland in Townsville.

Monica Paulus (Human Rights Defender) – *A Personal Account*.

Bio: Monica Paulus is from Simbu Province in Papua New Guinea. She is a Human Rights Defender, working with Highlands Women's Human Rights Defenders in Papua New Guinea. For ten years she has worked as a volunteer, assisting victims of sorcery where possible. As a victim herself, she decided to stand and help others who are helpless. While doing this she went through a lot of accusations and attacks from the community, but this did not stop her.

Monica provides meals and accommodation for victims when they look for safety, and help them seek police assistance. She also refers those who have been attacked to the hospital for medical attention. But if the victim feels that it's unsafe for them to stay, she documents their story and sends it to United Nations Human Rights Commission Advisor in the country, to apply for urgent action funds. So far with that fund she has relocated six victims, in two different provinces. Furthermore, she travels to the places where the victims are and finds out about their situation, provide counseling and talking to them about how to manage their case. She also assists international researchers, especially from UNHRC, OXFAM, UNDP, AusAID, to interview victims and expose the issue internationally.

Vlad Sokhin (Photojournalist)

Since the beginning of 2012, Vlad Sokhin has been working on a photo-documentary project "Crying Meri" about violence against women in Papua New Guinea. During several trips to the PNG Highlands (working independently, in collaboration with journalists and documenting human rights abuses for the UN) he has photographed and filmed survivors of sorcery attacks as well as perpetrators, trying to document both sides of the problem. During his presentation, Vlad will talk about his project and will show the photographs and videos he captured while working on sorcery related violence issues.

Bio: Vlad Sokhin is an award winning Russian documentary photographer and photojournalist, residing in Australia. His work has been exhibited and screened in the United States, Australia, Russia, Portugal, Georgia, Thailand, Lithuania and Turkey, including VII Agency gallery in New York and the Visa Pour L'Image photo-festival in Perpignan (France). He has received various awards and his work has been published in international newspapers and magazines, including *National Geographic*, *GEO*, *International Herald Tribune*, *Marie Claire*, *The Global Mail*, *The Age* and others.

Jo Chandler (Independent Journalist)

Bio: Jo Chandler is a Walkley-Award winning journalist with a particular interest in researching and writing stories from PNG. In recent years she published a number of in-depth articles focusing on PNG health and social issues, mining and development impacts, women's issues and human rights. During a long career in newspapers (*The Age*), she filed news and features also from Antarctica, Africa, Afghanistan and rural and remote Australia. Now working as a freelance reporter and writer she is exploring emerging online opportunities for longform journalism, maintaining a focus on the Pacific, and looking particularly at issues related to climate change, society and human rights. She is an Honorary Fellow at the Alfred Deakin Research Institute.

THURSDAY 6 JUNE

Laurent Dousset (EHESS, School for Advanced Social Studies, Paris & CREDO, Centre for Research and Documentation on Oceania Marseilles) – *Sorcery, Poison and Politics: Strategies of Self-Positioning in South Malekula*.

After independence, cases of poisoning — or at least of accusations of poisoning — have undergone an impressive recrudescence in South Malekula, as elsewhere in Vanuatu and in many post-colonial situations. Some commentators link the phenomenon to a context of political insecurity and instability in which authority and its forms are questioned (Rodman 1993, Geschiere 1988). Others have a more generic approach and see in sorcery the necessary process of identifying the intentionality of social perturbations (Clément 2003). In most of these studies, be it from a historical and political or from a cognitive perspective, sorcery is seen as a correlative of unstable and disruptive situations, or as producing such situations; if not both at the same time.

The aim of this paper is to question these positions. Sorcery may also involve strategies and processes of redistribution and of reorganisation of political legitimacy and practice in local contexts. Thus, while accusations of poisoning may be disruptive for the individual, this is not systematically the case from a sociological point of view. Following Bloch's study of sorcery among the Zafimaniry of Madagascar (1998), I argue that sorcery or poisoning in South Malekula are directly tied to questions related to the domestic unit and its change over time and in space; and in particular the change of its area of political and discursive influence. What is more relevant in anthropological terms than sorcery and associated practices of poisoning themselves, are the public announcements and the identification of *accusations* of poisoning. In a context in which legitimacy is questioned and where traditional and imposed forms of leadership collide and are redefined, accusations of poisoning seem to be deployed when processes of coalition and competition reorganise the frontiers of domestic groups and their positioning in the political landscape.

Bio: Laurent Dousset is A/Prof at the EHESS (School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences, Paris-Marseilles) and is currently director of CREDO (Centre for Research and Documentation on Oceania), hosted at the Aix-Marseille University. Since 1994 his fieldwork is Aboriginal Australia, in particular with dialectal groups of the Western Desert, where he has been analysing social organization and land tenure, first contact history, social changes and the confrontation of Aboriginal and Western ontological systems. Since 2008 he is also undertaking fieldwork in Vanuatu, in particular in the southern part of Malekula, where he is working on land tenure, political representations and ethnohistory. He has written over 30 papers in journals and book chapters, and published several books, among which *Assimilating Identities* (2005, Oceania Monographs), *Mythes, Missiles et Cannibales* (2011, Société des Océanistes) and *Australian Aboriginal Kinship* (2011, Pacific-Credo Publications). He has recently edited another book with S. Tcherkézoff, *The Scope of Anthropology: Maurice Godelier's Work in Context* (2012, Berghahn).

John Taylor (Department of Anthropology, La Trobe University) – *Sorcery and Human Security in Vanuatu: An Ethnographic Approach*.

Sorcery (*nakaemas* in Vanuatu) belief is ubiquitous in Vanuatu and is intimately related to health and governance. Sorcery beliefs and related knowledge also impact on local responses to illness that incorporate traditional (*kastom*), Christian and biomedical healing systems. Sorcery accusations are a key factor in much gender-based and other forms of structural violence. What is more, sorcery belief and related practices appear to be linked to modernity and to increasing economic inequalities, as is the case across Melanesia and in parts of South East Asia and Africa. Despite the extremely negative impact of sorcery belief and behaviour on human security, however, there is very little acknowledgement of this

within the development, governance or healthcare sectors. Likewise, despite the existence of legislation against sorcery practice, outside of the Christian contexts that themselves provide a key basis for sorcery belief, very few attempts have been made to understand or deal with the negative impacts of sorcery. This paper considers the relation of sorcery and sorcery-related violence to issues of human security in Vanuatu, including especially in the areas of governance and public health. In doing so it offers some initial observations regarding the role that an ethnographic approach can play in better understanding these issues.

Bio: John Taylor (PhD (ANU), MA (Auckland)) has research interests focused within the Pacific region, including New Zealand, and in Vanuatu where he has been conducting field research since 1999. His work is influenced by a range of critical theory, and is guided by the capacity of participant-observation and ethnography to directly engage the situations and struggles of everyday life and reveal deep understandings of ourselves in relation to others. He is currently exploring themes relating to the historical and contemporary transformation of masculinities in northern Vanuatu, particularly in terms of colonial and neo-colonial relations of power, including the sacred powers of Christianity and sorcery. He is also researching and writing on tourism and cultural heritage, for instance in writing about some spectacular northern Vanuatu rituals and cultural events, the participation of ni-Vanuatu within Vanuatu's burgeoning tourism industry, and the activities of tourists and the dynamic nature of tourism photography.

Salmah Eva-Lina Lawrence (Culture, History & Languages, College of Asia & the Pacific) – *Witchcraft, Matriliney and Gender in the Milne Bay Province, PNG.*

Despite early Christianization, belief and practice of witchcraft continues to be prevalent in this primarily matrilineal province, and throughout PNG the flying witches of Milne Bay are legendary. In Milne Bay itself, where violence against women is much less than in the Highlands, witchcraft is said to empower and contribute to the value in which women are held. This presents a radically different position to that of the Highlands where most of the recent witch-burnings have occurred. This case study of witchcraft/sorcery and gendered dimensions in Milne Bay Province will address what witchcraft means to people from Milne Bay by considering: i) historical encounters between Papuan missionaries and sorcerers in the early 20th century; and ii) and present day experiences of a local government councillor, a pastor, and a community worker from the Bwanabwana and the Alotau areas, focusing on how they deal with claims of witchcraft and their success in addressing grievances. The case study demonstrates that Christianity has been adopted, adapted, perhaps even co-opted – practitioners/believers see no paradox in ascribing benign magical powers to god and malign to the devil acting through human beings in the form of witches and sorcerers. It also demonstrates that witchcraft is perhaps part of a cosmology. Policy prescriptions which heed these fundamental aspects of Melanesian life are more likely to succeed especially when such solutions are generated with the participation of those who are affected.

Bio: Salmah Eva-Lina Lawrence is a PhD candidate at the Australian National University. After a decade long career with a global business advisory firm for which she managed practices in London, New York and Sydney, she left to pursue other interests. She has undertaken work in international and community development to enhance gender rights, working primarily in Papua New Guinea and in Afghanistan with UNIFEM. Her research focus is within her matrilineal culture of the Milne Bay Province of Papua New Guinea, which has historically provided a framework of an egalitarian, different-but-equal ethos of rights balanced by responsibilities which colonization and Christianity have done little to diminish. Her dissertation for a Master International and Community Development (Deakin University) positions this matrilineal model as indigenous best practice in gender relations. She has a BA (Hons) in Political Studies, Philosophy and History from the University of London, a Masters

in Business Administration and a MA in International Relations (International Political Economy and Global Governance) both from Deakin University.

Anthony Regan (State, Society & Governance in Melanesia Program, College of Asia & the Pacific) & **James Tanis** (International Relations, College of Asia & the Pacific) – *Sorcery and the Changing Dynamics of Conflict and Peace-building: Bougainville 1988-2013*.

This is a case study of the changing role of sorcery in Bougainville during both the Bougainville conflict (1988-97) and the period since the peace process began (mid-1997 to 2013). Beginning with a brief discussion of sorcery in Bougainville before the conflict, it outlines the changing roles of and reactions to sorcery starting with the early stages of the conflict. The forms of sorcery then attracting most attention were widely regarded as the preserve of older men, and in some areas many were killed on suspicion of sorcery. Conflict resulting from such killings was a significant factor in the emergence of the Bougainville Resistance Forces. Since the peace process began, perceptions have changed, and an overview of developments in that period will conclude with discussion of the widely reported sorcery-related killing in Nagovis in April 2013. The presenters will comment on the broader debates about sorcery in PNG, and challenge some of the stereotypes involved in that debate.

Bio: Anthony Regan studies the law and politics of constitutions, and the design of the state as part of post-conflict political settlements and peacebuilding efforts. Since 1981, he has lived in PNG for various periods totalling 18 years, including over 2 years in Bougainville. He has worked in Bougainville for over 30 years, including work as an advisor to Bougainville parties in the peace process (1997-2001) and in the Bougainville constitution-making process (2002-2004), and as an advisor to the Autonomous Bougainville Government (2005 to present). He has published extensively about Bougainville.

Bio: James Tanis comes from the Autonomous Region of Bougainville in Papua New Guinea and was a guerrilla fighter during Bougainville crisis the war. He has been heavily involved in the peace-process and served as Vice President of Bougainville People's Congress, Minister for Peace and Reconciliation in the Bougainville Interim Government and finally as the President of Bougainville Autonomous Region. James enrolled in GSIA in 2012 Graduate Diploma program and will complete his Masters in International Affairs this semester. After graduating he intends to return to Bougainville and work on the preparations for Bougainville referendum. James is also keen to continue studying if he finds opportunities for more studies.

Philip Gibbs (Secretary of the Commission for Social Concerns for the Catholic Bishops Conference of PNG/Solomon Islands, Research Advisor for Caritas (Australia) – *Why Not? Church Strategies for Reducing Witchcraft-Related Killings in Simbu Province, Papua New Guinea*.

Reports from Amnesty International and the Law Reform Commission highlight how witchcraft-related killings cause great fear and social disruption in the Simbu province. I have noted how changing ingrained cultural attitudes and practices requires a multidimensional approach that will influence behavior, establish trust and develop a collective response to protect others (Gibbs 2012). Though some deaths in Simbu do lead to witchcraft accusations, torture and killing, many do not. Why not? What factors contribute to situations where there is a funeral without public witchcraft-related accusations?

The Catholic Church in the Kundiawa Diocese in the Simbu Province has developed a strategy with five related components: (1) helping people broaden their understanding of the causes of illness and death, (2) early intervention before or during a funeral, (3) Promoting law and order in communities, (4) Fostering faith to influence attitudes and emotions (5) Immediate family members taking ownership. Using several case studies, this

paper will consider the effectiveness of this strategy and how it might provide useful insights for policy-makers and the wider civil society.

Bio: Philip Gibbs is an SVD missionary priest living and working in PNG. He is Secretary of the Commission for Social Concerns for the Catholic Bishops Conference of PNG/SI and a Research Advisor for Caritas (Australia). He has published on sorcery in the Sepik: (with Josepha Wailoni) "Sorcery and a Christian Response in the East Sepik," in F. Zocca (ed.), *Sanguma in Paradise*. and on witchcraft in Simbu: "Engendered Violence and Witch-killing in Simbu," in M. Jolly, C. Stewart and C. Brewer (eds.) *Engendering Violence in Papua New Guinea*.

Deborah van Heekeren (Department of Anthropology, Macquarie University) – *Hiding Behind the Church: Understanding the Persistence of Sorcery in Christian PNG*.

Christian conversion in the Hood Point villages was so successful that an indigenous pastorate emerged by the early 1960s. From the beginning it was the pastors who were in the best position to access the power of the new Christian god which was merged with the power of the ancestors and of sorcery. This paper considers the assumption that the long-term success of the Christian churches in some parts of Papua New Guinea—in this case the Vula'a area of the south-eastern coast—will eliminate or even regulate the "magical" practices that encompass what is nowadays commonly described as sorcery. While church authorities prohibit sorcery and often impose strict sanctions, it is also widely acknowledged that men seeking prestige and influence turn to the church, and that some of them are sorcerers who "hide behind it". Most deaths continue to be attributed to sorcery. The fear of sorcery and the need to counter it with other sorcery eclipses Christian proscriptions and we might suppose other forms of prohibition. This double-aspect—that sorcery is not always conceived in negative terms—is essential to understanding its force and the fear that it fosters but also allays. Fundamentally sorcery is a form of power. More precisely—and fairly typical in Melanesia—it is based on knowing how to access a realm of non-human power. It follows that the churches (and perhaps other institutions) which are the seats of new forms of power in Melanesia will facilitate rather than eliminate sorcery.

Bio: Deborah Van Heekeren has worked with the Vula'a people of south-eastern Papua New Guinea since 2001. She received her PhD from the University of Newcastle in 2004 and is currently a lecturer in the Anthropology Department at Macquarie University, Sydney. Her publications include *The Shark Warrior of Alewai: A Phenomenology of Melanesian Identity* (2012) and a number of peer reviewed journal articles and book chapters.

Christine Stewart (Culture, History & Languages, College of Asia & the Pacific) – *The Courts, the Churches, the Witches and their Killers*.

This paper examines the changing approaches of the PNG courts to instances of witch-killing throughout the country. The early colonists found sorcery pervading the entire lives of the colonised, and sought to stamp it out. It was assumed that with education and the benefits of civilisation, belief in sorcery and the killing of sorcerers would die out. But short sentences were given witch-killers by the colonial courts because those charged were believed to be too primitive to understand the rules of the imported law. During the decolonisation period, a measure of acknowledgement was afforded sorcery beliefs by the passing of the *Sorcery Act* 1971 which, while not committing to any real belief in sorcery, sought to distinguish "innocent" from "forbidden" sorcery. The practice of "forbidden" sorcery was banned, and could be raised in a retaliation case as an act of provocation. Upon Independence, courts appealed most frequently to human rights infringements in condemning sorcery killings, but over the last decade judges have come to rely less on human rights principles and more on Christian teachings to condemn sorcery killings. Despite hopes at Independence for the development of a legal system based in custom and governed by human rights, the judicial

approach to these killings has become a matter of competing belief systems, which the courts see as mutually exclusive and the people frequently do not.

Bio: Christine Stewart was awarded her PhD in Gender Studies of PNG in 2012, building on a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) from Sydney University and a Bachelor of Laws from University of Papua New Guinea. She has worked for many years in PNG and elsewhere in the Pacific in the fields of law reform and legislative drafting, and brings a wealth of experience in these fields to her academic work. She is currently a Visiting Fellow with the ARC Laureate Project Engendering Persons, Transforming Things: Christianities, Commodities and Individualism in Oceania in the School of Culture History and Language, College of Asia Pacific, at the Australian National University.

Hon. Nixon Duban MP (PNG Police Minister) – *Presentation on Sorcery and Witchcraft in Papua New Guinea*

Sorcery and witchcraft, despite the advent of modernization and Christianity, is a traditional cultural phenomenon that is prevalent in all parts of Papua New Guinea society. Almost all Papua New Guineans would acknowledge at varying degrees the existence and practice of sorcery and witchcraft. This phenomenon is well captured in a monograph by Franco Zocca, a Divine Word Missionary and ordained Catholic priest on the widespread use of witchcraft and sorcery in PNG (Zocca, ed. 2009). Not only that this monograph and other literature capture the wide spread of such practice in PNG, but also the almost tolerant attitude towards such activity and explanations on the actual dynamics thereof.

In the recent months the alarming increase in the sorcery and witchcraft related killings, and especially that of women and children, has spurred this cultural phenomenon outside of its quiescent arena. It has only now tipped the law and order scale. In fact the brutal killings associated with this phenomenon has knee-jerked both the political leaders and other stakeholders in PNG demanding extreme remedying measures.

What has actually gone wrong and why the reactions now? Without condoning it, sorcery and witchcraft had been intrinsic part of life in PNG. Have the past measures and the measures now taken by the government been adequate? What is the current attitude of the government towards this phenomenon and will this deter such practices, especially if these are inbuilt in the society? These are some of the questions that this paper seeks to address.

Bio: Nixon Phillip Duban comes from the Ari tribe of Madang Province. Ari tribe has a strong association with sorcery and witchcraft in Madang District. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree with major in Political Science from the University of Papua New Guinea. He is currently the Police Minister with the O'Neil/Dion government of Papua New Guinea.

Nick Schwarz (Melanesian Institute, Goroka, PNG) – *The Sorcery Act Dilemma*.

At the time of writing, PNG's Constitutional Law Reform Commission is entering its third year of a review of the *Sorcery Act of 1971*. Pressure to revise or repeal the Act came (and still continues) with distressingly regular reports of extrajudicial seizures, interrogations and executions of alleged sorcerers and witches. Critics of the *Sorcery Act* claim that it is not helping to stop these killings or that it is even encouraging them, and that it is an anachronism. The Melanesian Institute (of pastoral and socio-cultural research) was one of the instigators of the review, having in recent years extensively researched contemporary sorcery and witchcraft beliefs in PNG, and sorcery and witchcraft-related accusations and killings. Melanesian Institute staff are often invited to speak about these issues with church and community groups, and the Melanesian Institute's director has been involved in the Constitutional Law Reform Commission's public consultations during the present review process. This paper discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the Sorcery Act and presents the most common questions and objections raised by Papua New Guineans we have spoken

to about plans for sorcery law reform, and evaluates some possible responses to these questions and objections.

Bio: Nick Schwarz is an Australian working in the Melanesian Institute research department. He spent his first 16 years growing up in Papua New Guinea (1969-1985), and returned to work at MI in 2009. He has Masters degrees in Physiotherapy (Griffith University) and in Health and International Development (Flinders University). He authored the Melanesian Institute's Occasional Paper No. 14: *Thinking Critically About Sorcery and Witchcraft: A Handbook for Christians in Papua New Guinea*.

Mel Keenan (Monash University) – *The Western Legal Response to Sorcery in Colonial PNG*.

From the beginning of the colonial project in what is now Papua New Guinea, Anglo-Australian administrators had to craft a response to crimes directly related to the ubiquitous indigenous belief in sorcery: as early as 1893, its practice was declared a criminal offence under a colonial Ordinance. The paper will examine the legal response of those administrators – policy-making, the legislative process, law enforcement and curial decisions – whereby they applied the imported common law framework to the issue of sorcery-related crime. Colonial administrators did make efforts to establish how sorcery operated to maintain social equilibrium within tribal groups by reference to the evolving discipline of anthropology. However, this recognition was effectively limited to the sentencing process, in that sentences were relatively light for murders arising from the sincere belief that the victim was a sorcerer. The paper will consider whether the practice of this weak legal pluralism contributed to what would appear to be the contemporary inadequacy of the *Sorcery Act 1977*: on the one hand, the *Sorcery Act* gives belief in sorcery normative status by enshrining it in legislation, as it aims to “prevent and punish evil practices of sorcery and other similar evil practices”; on the other, it operates on the assumption that acts of sorcery can effectively be dealt with by western processes of law enforcement, rules of evidence and judicial decision-making.

Bio: Mel Keenan is the Principal Legal Officer at the NSW Electoral Commission. He has previously held senior legal and policy positions with the Legislative Assembly of NSW, the NSW Aboriginal Land Council and the NSW Law Reform Commission. He is currently enrolled in the LLM by research at Monash University, which is formally to be upgraded to the PhD in late 2013. At this stage of his research, this paper is naturally exploratory in nature, introducing to the Conference the viewpoint of the legal historian.

Ravunama Auka, Kathwa Umpake, Barbara Gore, Pealiwan Rebecca Koralyo (PNG Office of Public Prosecutor) – *Sorcery and Witchcraft-Related Killings in Papua New Guinea: The Criminal Justice System Response*.

The Office of the Public Prosecutor (OPP) in Papua New Guinea (PNG) is empowered by the Constitution to undertake the prosecution function of the State in the superior courts of Papua New Guinea. The Prosecutors of the OPP are therefore responsible for the conduct of trials in the National Court and appeals in the Supreme Court across Papua New Guinea – a role that places the Prosecutors in a position of responsibility for seeking justice for both victims and persons accused of sorcery-related killings.

In a panel presentation, the OPP will outline the historical and more recent response by the criminal justice system to sorcery and witchcraft-related killings. Through analysis of case studies, Prosecutors from the OPP will demonstrate the observable trend of the increasing number and increasing levels of violence in sorcery and witchcraft-related killings in Papua New Guinea. The response by the criminal justice system to these killings will be discussed along with perspectives from the OPP Prosecutors as to the future role of the criminal justice system in responding to sorcery and witchcraft-related killings in Papua New Guinea.

Bio: Ravunama Auka is the Deputy Public Prosecutor (Courts) of Papua New Guinea and is from Kapari Village, Abau District, Central Province. Mr Auka has held the position of Deputy Public Prosecutor of the OPP for 18 years and has been in the employ of the office for a period of 32 years. A graduate of the University of Papua New Guinea with a Bachelor of Laws in 1980, Mr Auka was admitted as a Lawyer of the Courts of Papua New Guinea in 1981 following successful completion of the post-graduate training for admission (Legal Training Institute, PNG). In 1991 Mr Auka was attached for a period of six months to the Commonwealth Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions in Sydney; successfully completed the Victorian Bar Readers Course in November 1997; and represented the Papua New Guinea OPP at the Australian Association of Crown Prosecutors Conference in 2012. In addition to broad and extensive experience of conduct of trials in the National Court, Mr Auka has responsibility for conduct of all criminal Appeals in the Supreme Court of Papua New Guinea.

Bio: Kathwa Umpake is from Tuta Village, Kainantu, Eastern Highlands Province and is a Senior State Prosecutor and the Prosecutor in Charge of the Goroka office of the OPP. Mr Umpake was admitted as a lawyer of the National and Supreme Courts of Papua New Guinea in 1988. This followed Mr Umpake's graduation from the University of Papua New Guinea with a Bachelor of Laws in 1987 and successful completion of the post-graduate training for admission (Legal Training Institute, PNG) in 1988. Mr Umpake joined the OPP in 1989 and has extensive experience in prosecuting all types of OPP prosecution matters in superior courts in Goroka and across Papua New Guinea.

Bio: Barbara Gore is from Mukone Village, Gumine District, Chimbu Province and is currently a Senior Legal Officer with the OPP. Ms Gore was admitted as a lawyer of the National and Supreme Courts of Papua New Guinea in 2008 following graduation from the University of Papua New Guinea with a Bachelor of Laws and successful completion of the post-graduate training for admission (Legal Training Institute, PNG). Since admission as a lawyer, Ms Gore has worked with the OPP, initially in the Port Moresby office and in the Goroka office from early 2012. In mid 2012 Ms Gore was attached for a period to the Queensland Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. Ms Gore has conduct of all types of OPP prosecution matters in the superior courts in Goroka and circuit areas across Papua New Guinea.

Bio: Pealiwan Rebecca Koralyo is from Mambisanda Village, Wapenamanda District, Enga Province and is currently a Legal Officer with the OPP. Ms Koralyo was admitted as a lawyer of the National and Supreme Courts of PNG in 2010 following her graduation from the University of Papua New Guinea with a Bachelor of Laws and successful completion of the post-graduate training for admission (Legal Training Institute, PNG). Ms Koralyo has been with the OPP since admission and currently holds a position in the Port Moresby office in which she is responsible for the prosecution of family and sexual violence matters. In this role, Ms Koralyo is also responsible for OPP law reform activities in the area of gender based violence.

Nanai Puka Areni (PNG Constitutional Law Reform Commission) – *Sorcery and Witchcraft: The Excuse for Criminal Acts in Papua New Guinea.*

Sorcery is an entrenched cultural belief throughout Papua New Guinea. Every death is believed to be associated with sorcery or witchcraft, leading to horrendous torture and eventually death of the suspected sorcerers. In recent years, the media has regularly reported brutal sorcery-related killings attracting criticisms from both local and international human rights groups. In September 2011, the Papua New Guinea Constitutional and Law Reform Commission (CLRC) completed an exhaustive nation-wide consultation on the review of the Law on Sorcery and Sorcery Related Killings, visiting 18 of the 20 provinces in PNG. The responses from the public have confirmed what the courts have said over a long period of time, that, the perpetrators in sorcery-related killings cannot use "sorcery", as an excuse

for the brutal and in-human crimes committed against people. The *Sorcery Act 1971*, was the primary Act under review, which the Commission concluded should be repealed in its entirety due to its inappropriateness and ineffectiveness in addressing sorcery and sorcery-related killings.

This paper presents the findings of the CLRC and explains the reasons for the recommendations adopted by the Commission.

Bio: Nanai Puka-Areni is the Director-Constitutional Law with the PNG CLRC since April 2010. She graduated from the University of Papua New Guinea in 2000 and worked in the area of public interest law in the private sector before joining the Government. She holds a Masters of Law from the University of Queensland and my areas of interests are Human Rights, Constitutional Law, International Law, Alternative Dispute Resolution and Gender.

Daiana Buresova (Regional Rights Resource Team, Secretariat of the Pacific Community) – *Comprehensive and Integrated Gender Law Reform: A Real Solution for Addressing Sorcery Incidences in PNG.*

This paper argues that a comprehensive and integrated gender law reform approach is critical to effectively addressing all forms of Violence against Women in Papua New Guinea; including those acts of violence committed under the classification of "sorcery". In addition, this paper discusses that an urgent review of and repeal or removal of the PNG *Sorcery Act of 1971* (enacted before independence) must be undertaken to ensure that gender based crimes are not "hidden" under the guise of cultural practices, and also to ensure that relevant laws are in accordance with human rights and gender based good practices. The work undertaken by the PNG Constitutional Review and Law Reform Commission is critical to this exercise. Any law reform exercise on this front must ask these hard questions – Why are the vast majority of "sorcery" related crimes perpetuated against women and children? Is this aspect of culture, a factor that has long been used as an excuse to perpetuate violence against women with impunity? Are underreporting and weak enforcement greater contributing factors to the under-utilisation of both the *Sorcery Act* and/or the *Penal Code* in situations where women and children have been violated? How can the law be an effective change agent of attitudes and subsequently behaviour? Is a whole of government/community approach more needed to address acts of violence against women and children committed as "sorcery"?

Dame Carol Kidu - Sorcery - A Reality Beyond Rational Logic

This presentation will be a personal and anecdotal reflection on the reality of sorcery in the lives of people in 21st century Papua New Guinea. It will draw primarily on her experiences and observations while living in Motu society for over 40 years.

Bio: Dame Carol Kidu, (a teacher by profession) retired from Papua New Guinea Parliament in 2012 after 15 years in politics. She was the Minister for Community Development for 9 years and finished her political career as Leader of the Opposition. She focused on legislative and policy reform for social development in PNG with a human rights based approach to development and a focus on marginalised and/or vulnerable populations. Since retiring from politics, she has continued international and regional commitments and has also established CK Consulting Ltd. Dame Kidu has been awarded three Honorary Doctorates. She was awarded Dame of the British Empire in 2005; the PNG International Woman of Courage Award by the Secretary of State of the United States of America in 2007; Pacific Person of the Year in 2007 and was the recipient of the Regional Rights Resource Team Pacific Human Rights Award for her contribution to promoting the rights of Pacific Islanders in 2008. She was honoured by the French Government with the Cross of Knight in the Order of the Legion d'Honneur in 2009.

Dame Kidu is on the Board of the Commonwealth of Learning, the International Advisory Board of the Cairns Institute, and a non-resident Fellow of the Lowy Institute, Board Member of the Pacific Institute of Public Policy. She was a member of the UN Pacific Commission on AIDS and also of the Global Commission on HIV and the Law. She is presently a member of the High Level Taskforce on ICPD 2014 and beyond. She is a Patron to many organisations, including Australian Volunteers International.

FRIDAY 7 JUNE

Nancy Robinson (Regional Representative, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) – *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights: Statement on Sorcery-Related Killings.*

Bio: Before joining the United Nations Nancy Robinson taught at universities in the US and abroad, notably, Yale, Stanford and Bryn Mawr College. Her experience with the UN includes peacekeeping missions in Guatemala and Haiti as well as work with the UNDP, UNICEF and ILO in Guatemala, Haiti and the Central African Republic. Nancy was Deputy Representative of the OHCHR in Mexico City, Mexico and her last post was in Haiti.

Derek Futaiasi & Philip Kanairara (Solomon Islands Law Reform Commission) – *Offence of Sorcery: Brief Overview from Solomon Islands.*

Sorcery is an offence under state law and custom. The *Penal Code* states any person who performs any magic ritual or has in his possession; any article associated by any class of persons with harmful magic is guilty of a misdemeanour. Its maximum penalty is two years imprisonment or 40 dollars fine. A problem of sorcery is that it's hard to prove; therefore it is unlikely to ever result in a successful prosecution. A customary law ordinance in Guadalcanal also criminalises sorcery and establishes a body to hear sorcery cases. Its definition for sorcery is same as that in the *Penal Code*. The penalty is a fine not exceeding 1000 penalty units and performance of customary ceremonies. It also provides methods to prove sorcery.

In 2012, Isabel Provincial Police Commander stated that unlawful activities related to sorcery have increased. In 2010 relatives of a dead man burnt down two homes in Central Kwara'ae, because it was suspected their relative died of *kelema*. In East Kwaio, in 2009 a pagan priest was stabbed to death because he was suspected of practising sorcery. In 2007 in Bokororo, angry tribesmen of a dead man burnt down nine houses over an alleged sorcery attack by an opposing tribe.

This paper will discuss sorcery in the *Penal Code* and the ordinance. It will also provide an overview of people's views on sorcery recorded during 2008 consultation on the *Penal Code*. It will end with some options for reform of sorcery.

Bio: Derek Futaiasi graduated with LLB (2008), PDLP (2009) and LLM (2012) from the University of the South Pacific (USP). He is a Senior Legal Officer with the Solomon Islands Law Reform Commission (Commission).

Bio: Philip Kanairara graduated with LLB (2006), PDLP (2008), PDL (2011) and LLM (2012) from USP. He is the Principal Legal Officer with the Commission. The Commission is currently reviewing the Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code of Solomon Islands.

Beverleigh Kanas (Vanuatu Law Reform Commission) – *What is Sorcery in Vanuatu?*

On February 2013 the Vanuatu Law Commission received a reference from Hon. Ralph Regenvanu MP on sorcery and witchcraft. The reference was supported by the Tanna Nikoletan Island Council of Chiefs and the Presbyterian Church of Vanuatu. It was stated that the section 151 of the *Penal Code* (CAP 135) regarding witchcraft and sorcery as criminal offences was unsatisfactory and out-dated. Crimes relating to and resulting from sorcery and accusations of sorcery are becoming more prevalent in Vanuatu. This also leads to other crimes such as murder, assault and destruction of property. Sorcery is recognized as a major obstacle to sustainable development for communities; therefore, it is important to develop appropriate laws and legal mechanisms to better assist the nation to deal with sorcery and sorcery accusations. Armed with this information, the Vanuatu Law Commission

will now analyze the legislation relating to sorcery and witchcraft and develop an issues paper.

Bio: Beverleigh Kanas obtained a law degree from USP in 2004, completing her professional diploma in legal practice in 2005. She started working as the Compliance Officer with the Department of Fisheries soon after graduating, later moving on to a short contract with UNICEF to review the national laws and identifying the gaps in these laws when compared to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. She was then involved with a Commission of Inquiry for Prisons and soon after was employed as a Magistrate. In July 2012 she joined the Vanuatu Law Commission as a legal researcher.

Lilly Be'Soer (Human Rights Defender) – *Women's Human Rights Defenders Respond to Sorcery Related Torture.*

Women in the Highlands region of Papua New Guinea experience alarmingly high rates of family and sexual violence. Research by women's groups highlights the complexity of violence experienced by women including the impact of tribal conflict, cultural practices such as polygamy and sorcery-related torture. There is increasing evidence that victims of sorcery-related violence are largely women and other marginalized groups. Incidences of sorcery-related torture are frequently when there is a death or someone falls ill. These inhuman actions are happening under the noses of leaders and community members with nothing being done to address the problem. Much of the torture perpetrated is hard to understand and comprehend.

Voice for Change conducted a survey that gathered information about women who had experienced sorcery-related violence. This survey showed that women accused of sorcery experience extreme and inhuman violence including: physical violence; having body parts chopped off; being wounded by axes, bush knives and iron rods; having petrol poured over their body and set alight; being buried alive; and girls have been raped. Many women have died as a result of torture. Victims also often lose property, homes, and land. In the absence of a significant government and community intervention to prevent and respond to sorcery-related violence, Women's Human Rights Defenders (WHRD), such as Voice for Change, have taken a lead. Initiatives lead by WHRD's can be difficult to sustain with limited support and resources from government and the international community.

Voice for Change is a women's organization based in Jiwaka Province who provides support to survivors of sorcery-related and other forms of violence against women and trying to build alliances with communities to prevent such practices and work towards building safer communities. Voice for Change has started a dialogue with the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) who works in partnership with local women's organizations to create empowering and transformative change for women. IWDA is currently designing a model of support to effectively support women's led and community responses to violence against women in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea.

Bio: Lilly Be'Soer is the founder of the women's human rights NGO, Voice for Change, in Papua New Guinea. Lilly has been a victim of tribal conflict and is also a survivor of polygamous marriage. She is currently raising five children alone. She defines herself as "a women's human rights defender" and has taken a lead in facilitating mediation in tribal conflicts and wars. In 2010, Be'Soer was awarded a Pacific Human Rights Defenders Award. Most recently, she has helped negotiate a peace agreement to resettle 500 internally displaced people.

Clara Bal – *Kumo Koimbo: Accounts and Responses to Witchcraft in Gor (Chimbu Province, PNG).*

In this paper, I describe my own and other people's experiences of witchcraft or sanguma in the Kundiawa-Gembogl district in Chimbu Province, Papua Guinea New Guinea, and I explain what solutions are being tried by the Gor people of the district. Belief in sanguma is widespread among the Gor, and accusations of witchcraft are common, and these generally result in beatings, torture, killings and expulsions from the area. The Gor community's response to social problems, violence and law and order has been to formulate the Community Base Laws and Policing document. Among the many issues that this document seeks to address is sanguma, and this paper examines how the community is dealing with the problem.

Bio: Clara Bal is from Chimbu Province and has a degree in PNG Studies and International Relations from Divine Word University in Madang. She has been conducting research on the Gor community's local governance structure and has recently undertaken a review for Caritas (Australia). She has recently visited Canberra for the SSGM Pacific Research Colloquium.

Siobhan McDonnell (Culture, History & Languages, College of Asia & the Pacific) - *Chiefs Without Nakaimas: Can Chiefs be Better Supported to Manage Community Tensions around Nakaimas.*

In the March 2007 riots in Port Vila, three people were killed, 140 arrested and a two week State of Emergency declared. The subsequent Commission of Inquiry report linked the riots to inter-island "ethnic" tensions between people from Tanna and Ambrym around the practice of *nakaimas* (the *kastom* practice of what can loosely be described as "sorcery"). At the handing down of the report into the riots in June 2011 Jacob Kapere, member of the Nikoletan (Tanna Council of Chiefs) and Port Vila Council of Chiefs named sorcery as the biggest source of tension in Port Vila. Speaking to the media, Chief Jacob Kapere said: "Sorcery is a reality. It is the biggest threat instilling fear among the public that surpasses the fear felt when prisoners escape from prison. For us [Tanna people] last year too many of our young people died and we have our suspects and fears".

After land, the practice of *nakaimas* (the *kastom* practice of what can loosely be described as "sorcery") represents one of the biggest sources of conflict in Vanuatu, and often *nakaimas* accusations are related to land tensions. Responsibility for mediating disputes related to the practice of *nakaimas* often rests with chiefly authority structures. However, these structures rarely receive any support from the state, or civil society to help them identify how best to deal with these issues and what links, if any, can be created between the chiefly system and the criminal legal system.

This paper will discuss a series of cases related to sorcery that have occurred in Lamap, Malekula. It will also discuss the community governance project run by the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, and led by Siobhan McDonnell and Marcelin Abong, to help strengthen chiefly structures so as to better manage community conflict. In particular, the project focused on defining the jurisdictional boundaries of work between the three separate Chiefly structures that operate in Lamap, and creating clear links between these structures, women, youth and church organisations. An evaluation of the project has shown that it was successful in strengthening local chiefly structures. This paper will consider what, if any, implications this project has had for dealing with *nakaimas* issues in the Lamap community, and what lessons may be learnt to better support chiefly structures to deal with these fraught and complicated issues.

Bio: Siobhan McDonnell is a legal anthropologist who spent 10 years working as an academic and advisor on land and governance issues in Indigenous Australia before beginning a Phd on land issues in Vanuatu 5 years ago. In the two years she lived in Vanuatu she worked on land and governance issues. Siobhan is currently the Legal Advisor

to the Minister of Lands, Ralph Regenvanu. Siobhan McDonnell also has an ongoing position as the Legal Advisor in the Vanuatu Cultural Centre and a Land Law advisor to the Attorney General of Vanuatu. She has provided legal advice on Land and Environmental issues, Carbon Trading and World Heritage issues in Melanesia to the World Bank and a number of NGOs. She is an occasional lecturer at the Australian National University and the University of the South Pacific.

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