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INTRODUCTION: CHALLENGING COMMUNICATIONS IN THE CONTEMPORARY PACIFIC

Karen L. Nero, Guest Editor
University of California, Irvine

At the risk of appearing to segment cultural expressions and their instrumental intents, the authors of this volume focus on the little-studied intersection of the arts and politics in contemporary Pacific societies. Politics has been a dominant subject in both historical and contemporary studies. The study of Pacific arts lags far behind, hampered both by Eurocentric definitions of "art" and distinctions between "arts" and "crafts," and by the disruption of indigenous production and performance genres by missionization and colonization. Despite recent challenges (see Jewsiewicki 1989), Eurocentric mental constructs continue to influence both lay and academic discourse as well as the Western philosophical traditions that separate "art" from the more mundane area of political institutions, mirrored by anthropological divisions between "political anthropology" and "the anthropology of art." The transformative and constitutive power of artistic expression is well recognized in other parts of the world (see especially Cohen 1981; Cowan 1990; Jara 1984; Mitchell 1956; Nunley 1987; Peacock 1987; Thompson 1974), but neglected in Pacific studies. The literature on the intersections between Pacific arts and politics is fragmentary, dispersed in regional publications at times difficult to obtain, and often of article rather than monograph or book length and depth (for exceptions, see Bateson 1958; Browning 1970; Dark 1974; Dean 1978; Hanson and

Hanson 1984; Keesing and Tonkinson 1982; Luomala 1984; Mead and Kernot 1983; Myers and Brenneis 1984; Poort 1975; Feldman 1986; Schiell and Stephen 1992; Smith 1985; Sutton 1988; Warlukurlangu Artists 1987; Wild 1986).

In 1988, when I proposed the topic of "The Arts and Politics" for an Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania (ASAO) symposium, initial puzzlement at such an incongruous combination soon turned into excitement as participants realized new insights spurred by such a perspective. This volume, strengthened by the addition of Sinavaiana's essay, is the result of the 1990 Kauaʻi ASAO symposium; three participants have published their contributions elsewhere (Feinberg 1990: Rosi 1991; Kahn n.d.). Kaeppler, long concerned with the issues we raise (see especially 1977, 1979a, 1988, 1991b), agreed to offer an epilogue on the anthropological study of Pacific art.

What Is Art?

An initial challenge was the definition of our subject matter. The arts, as defined in the Western tradition, do not exist in many Pacific societies. Where ritual carvings corresponded to our category of sculpture, for example, they were for the most part destroyed during the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century politics of conversion to Christianity. Or they were transported to European and American museums and collections, becoming "art by destination" (Maquet 1971), part of the Western fascination with "Primitive Art" (Rubin 1984; Price 1989; Hiller 1991), and incorporated into the processes through which Westerners defined themselves as opposed to "primitive others" (Cole 1985; Clifford 1988; Stewart 1984; Stocking 1985; Napier 1992). Today those sculptures produced for sale--as local peoples explore new ways of articulating with the world economic system that permeates island structures--risk being denigrated as "tourist art" even though much of what today comprises "Primitive Art" collections was once "tourist art." Many other sculptures that were not alienated are fragile, in fact are designed as impermanent, their eventual disintegration and reincorporation into the forest conceptualized as part of the life cycle of creation and reintegration with the earth and seasons (Davenport 1986; Hauser-Schäublin 1985). Many of the "soft" valuables, such as Polynesian fine mats, suffer on two counts; they are made by women, most of whose creations Westerners rarely recognize as "art," and are of media more usually denigrated as "craft," the category into which most non-Western productions are dumped. Western and non-Western conceptu-

alizations of artistic creations fit poorly together, and are not aided by practices that continue to segregate the display of non-Western arts in special "ethnic," "tribal," or regional art galleries, if not more often in natural history--not art--museums, for example, Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History's new display Pacific Spirits or the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History as the locale for the Australian Aboriginal traveling exhibition Dreamings in 1989.

Rather than too closely defining what art should be, we symposium participants therefore agreed to consider all types of performance and production that are a focus of aesthetic attention within a particular society (Maquet 1971). Our studies draw upon the analytical constructs developed in the study of ritual, symbolism, and semiotics (Firth 1951; Turner 1969, 1974, 1982; Babcock 1978; Bloch 1974, 1975; Geertz 1973; Kapferer 1979b; Kertzer 1988; Moore and Myerhoff 1975; Ortner 1974), and upon the recent literature about performance (Turner 1987; Babcock 1984; Bauman 1977; Brenneis 1987; Fabian 1990; Fernandez 1986; Hymes 1975; Kuiper 1990; MacAloon 1984; Royce 1977; Schechner 1985; Schechner and Appel 1990; Schechner and Schuman 1976; Schieffelin 1985; Turner and Bruner 1988).

Most analytic attention to the political aspects of the arts to date has been on their use in ritual (Schieffelin 1976; Cannadine and Price 1987; Kertzer 1988; Neff 1987). Although the ritual focus is highly important, not all "tribal" arts are concerned with ritual or religion, and the possibility that certain artistic productions may convey new pan-national identities may lie in their location in the mundane, as discussed below. As most scholarly sources on Pacific arts have emphasized the visual arts (Wingert 1953; Bodrogi 1959; Buhler, Barrow, and Mountford 1962; Force and Force 1971; Guiart 1963; Schmitz 1971; Mead 1979; Gathercole, Kaeppler, and Newton 1979; Brake, McNeish, and Simmons 1980; Corbin 1988), we planned to focus on little-studied aspects of performing arts such as dance (see the following essays by Petersen, Pinsker, Flinn, Donner), oratory and literature (Duranti, Sinclair), theater (Hereniko, Sinavaiana, Billings), architecture (Nero; see also Kirch 1990; Rosi 1991; Schuster 1985), and the use of art to create or challenge the political order or sense of identity (essays here by Howard, Jones, Nero, Stevenson; see also Kahn n.d.; Feinberg 1990) or to communicate national goals (Fitzpatrick's article). Yet even these glosses are misleading, for they create the impression that "dance" or "theater" is isomorphic in all cultures. One important characteristic of Pacific artistic productions is their transcendence of neat Western categories, either of subject matter or locale.

The following essays focus upon multimedia creations, ones that span Western genres and that derive much of their power and instrumental challenge through their combination of multiple sensory stimuli--visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile. (Our study could include taste and ingestion, although the political aspects of kava and tobacco use have been well analyzed elsewhere [e.g., Knauft 1987; Poole 1987; see especially Stoller 1989 and Howes 1991 for directions toward an anthropology of the senses].) These multisensory? creations often paradoxically combine "play" with deadly seriousness (Bateson 1972:177-193). For instance, the impact of Pacific dance derives from its proximity. to, and frequent incorporation of, the audience as well as from its combination of media and sensory stimuli: bodily movements, costumes, fragrant and colorful decorations, singing, chanting, musical or percussive instruments, movement through space. Performances and productions are rarely segregated temporally or physically in structures that mark such acts as "art." Certain types of performances may be reserved for certain occasions (such as described in Hereniko's 1990 study of clowning at weddings) or they may as easily appear at new locales. Rarely is theater confined to a stage, and the new Pacific theaters involve the audience in their very creation in ways rarely found in the West. Even though certain genres of dance and singing may be temporally marked by leaders, either for public display and definitions of identity (see the essays in this volume by Donner, Petersen, and Pinsker) or as a form of social control (Flinn's contribution), other dances and songs may be spontaneous or part of normal daily and nightly activities (Burrows 1963).

What Is Politics?

Our group's definition of politics is perhaps equally eclectic, as once again political action and structures may not well fit outsider preconceptions. Rather, we decided to focus on the elements of personal and societal power as structured through social relationships, whether or not formalized, looking at the structures and processes through which power is established, mediated, and maintained. Throughout much of the Pacific these structures are being transformed from within and without, with continued adjustments by local communities as they are incorporated into new states and nations and as these nations develop postcolonial relationships with others. Autochthonous and contemporary political structures often overlap, at times in competition, at times in coordination. A major point of articulation and challenge is through

the arts, fighting via posters and billboards claiming cultural knowledge and continuity with the past (Nero's essay) or with styles of dress and speech demonstrating ethnic heritage to elicit voter support (as Jones describes). New Pacific governments use outside forms (flags, bank notes and coins, uniforms) incorporating indigenous symbols both to validate their entry into the world community and to create and express nationhood.

This volume builds upon current trends in political anthropology toward the study of discourse, and of the alternate and subaltern voices that may challenge leaders of the status quo, and hegemonic traditions (Comaroff 1975; Scott 1985; Comaroff and Roberts 1981; Messick 1987). However, open articulation of opposition is often not possible in small-island societies, so we have expanded the consideration of discourse to include nonverbal media. In order to retain personal and group autonomy in tiny communities it is often necessary' to avoid public and verbal discussions of differences. While earlier studies focused upon the structures of interaction (e.g, Evans-Pritchard 1940), the essays of our participants reflect current political emphases on the processes of political confrontation and adjustment, and on the individual (Vincent 1990; for example, see Godelier and Strathern 1991). The new Pacific countries offer contemporary insight into the processes of nation building (see Anderson 1983); the arts are a central arena of these confrontations (Babadzan 1988; Brandes 1988; Cannadine and Price 1987; Kuiper 1990).

One aspect critical to political expression through artistic means is the relationship of the individual and community to the larger society. Is the community marginalized in relation to the national society at large (see Ferguson et al. 1990), as in the case of the Maori (Mead 1990) or Cook Islanders (Loomis 1984) within New Zealand, or Hawaiians within the United States? Is it now part of a new Pacific Islander nation, such as the many Solomon Islands societies (discussed by Donner and Fitzpatrick in this volume; see also Feinberg 1990)? Or are both internal structurings and relations to colonial and postcolonial powers politicized (as Nero and Petersen note in their contributions)?

Most studies of the interrelation between the arts and politics center either in Africa (Mitchell 1956; Turner 1957; Sieber 1962, 1966; Thompson 1974; Ben-Amos 1989; Jules-Rosette 1984; Jewsiewicki 1989; Messick 1987; Nunley 1987; Arens and Karp 1989) or in Island Southeast Asia (A. Becker 1979; A. Becker and Yengoyan 1979; J. Becker 1979; Rodgers 1985; Keeler 1987; Peacock 1987; Ginn 1990). Early studies linking artistic expressions and political expressions mirrored the

functionalist and structuralist paradigms prevalent in anthropology at the time, seeing art as reflecting and maintaining existing structures (Firth 1951; Adams 1969, 1973; Lévi-Strauss 1963: Forge 1971; Merrill 1987; Munn 1971; Bloch 1974). Similarly, the masked dance performances were seen as a locus of social control (Sieber 1966). Analyses have only recently been moving toward perceptions that dance may serve to challenge colonial structures (Nunley 1987) or oppose members of the dominant society (Loomis 1984). Two early studies, however, documented indigenous peoples' ridicule in their arts of the powerful new whites (Lips 1966; Blackburn 1979).

Contemporary Arts and Politics of the Pacific

Action, Not Reflection: Negotiation of Relationships of Power

A number of themes emerged in our comparative discussions of the intersections of the arts and politics in each of the societies studied. One theme pervades all: in contrast with perspectives that see artistic productions as "set aside"--art for art's sake--we see art as an active agency through which people negotiate relationships of power, not just a passive reflection of such structures. Art speaks of, and draws the audience's attention to, contemporary disjunctions between past and present structures. The artist plays with change, trying on different perspectives, juxtaposing possible solutions, drawing the audience into the process of making sense of the complexities of contemporary experience. Art may be used nonconfrontationally, or as subtle confrontation that depends on the degree of cultural knowledge of the viewer, or as outright challenge. In the case of the warrior dances ubiquitous throughout the region, a particular dance performance may rapidly change from challenge to attack (see especially Schieffelin 1976); in 1992 Papua New Guinea canceled the annual Highlands Sing-Sing, apparently fearing new violence might erupt from the dances in an area not only torn by the difficulties of welding a new nation, but also in the throes of a gold rush.

In the 1970s Maurice Bloch used a linguistic model to explore the relation of formalization of speech, song, and dance patterns to issues of social control, hypothesizing that formalization supported the status quo (1974, 1975). Duranti's essay here extends this model through his study of the ways in which an oratorical genre that is formalized in one context, that of ceremonies, may in another context, that of the political *fono,* be characterized by "informal talk," thus allowing the negotiation

of present and future relationships, and the possibility of change. The same genre in one context is a showcase of polished performance, in the other an occasion for debate.

In her contribution to this volume, Billings uses a theatrical metaphor to contrast two types of performances in the Bismarck Archipelago: the long-established *malanggan* funeral ceremonies of the Tikana of New Ireland and the improvised "Johnson Cult" of the Lavongai people of New Hanover, who, beginning in 1964, voted for President Johnson of America to represent them in the newly formed House of Assembly of Papua New Guinea, in a continuing protest against the colonial and contemporary government.

Sinclair's article analyzes the ways in which contemporary Maori writers are actively negotiating for participation in the processes of defining "Maori" in literary media. No longer leaving the field to Pakeha (white) writers, Patricia Grace and Witi Ihimaera explore the transformations of the Maori as they move from a rural base and the compelling issues confronting them in the urban settings of contemporary New Zealand.

Speaking Dangerously

One of the most powerful uses of artistry is to express dangerous sentiments, ones that could be suppressed if spoken outright, especially in cases where imbalanced power relationships exist both within and between societies. In this volume, such expressions range from challenges to the power structure through clowning and ridiculing the chiefs during ritually set aside occasions (Sinavaiana) to opposition or reflection during periods of social disruption (Nero), often at potential physical risk to the artists (see especially Hereniko in this volume).

The various artistic media are supremely suited to these challenges. By speaking through metaphor and analogy, by speaking with multiple levels that depend upon cultural knowledge to understand the deeper meanings, it is possible to say several things at once, putting the responsibility for decoding the message on the audience. The artist may be anonymous, as in the case of graffiti or billboards. He or she may be costumed to hide everyday identity, or cloaked in the identity of the spirits and thereby given ritual license to speak of dangerous matters. Art may thus be used to provoke viewers into considering the deeper implications of contemporary political issues, with the artist anonymously avoiding the physical repercussions of implying or stating a view contrary to official government policies.

Few ethnographers are also artists, which generally limits our analyses to the anthropological end of the spectrum. However, we are fortunate to have several artists in our midst who bring the special insights and vocabularies of multiple analytical perspectives to this volume: one dancer (Pinsker) and two indigenous poets/playwrights (Sinavaiana, Hereniko). Hereniko discusses why he chose to communicate through the medium of theatre after the 1987 coup in Fiji: in an interview following the full transcript of his play, *The Monster,* performed at the University of the South Pacific at that time.

Creating and Maintaining Personal and National Identity. Including Multiple Identities

Art is used to express, construct, and communicate social identity (see Crawford 1981; Anderson 1983; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Hanson and Hanson 1990). As such it is of vital importance in the creation of the new nations of the Pacific, an important arena for the confrontation and consolidation of past and present traditions. One strength of artistic media is their ability to carry multiple messages to multiple audiences. Performances can communicate new levels of state and national identity to outsiders while simultaneously conveying local district autonomy to insiders, as Petersen demonstrates here in his study of Pohnpeians' manipulation of different meanings in performances representing the newly created Federated States of Micronesia. The multiple messages conveyed through artistic media are especially suited to expressing these nested identities, consolidating at one level while at the same time differentiating on another.

Yet the power of artistic expression may be insufficient to consolidate popular sentiment in the absence of other integrative factors. Such can be seen in Howard's study of one Rotuman's abortive attempt to muster political support for Rotuman separation from Fiji by establishing a cultural movement relying upon arts and performances. To what extent can politicians walk the fine line of demonstrating autochthonous sensibilities while mastering contemporary sophistication where such sensibilities are polarized? Is it possible for new nations to achieve unity through diversity, creating new imaginations of nationhood through artistic and cultural expositions? The contributors to this volume explore these and other issues with regard to the Federated States of Micronesia (Flinn, Petersen, Pinsker), the Solomon Islands (Donner and Fitzpatrick; see also Feinberg 1990), and French Polynesia (Stevenson and Jones).

Resolving Structural Tensions

Art may also be used to defuse or resolve structural tensions. In the cases of new nations attempting to forge a national identity that retains cultural diversity yet incorporates its many societies, a mundane artistic medium may be chosen. Powerful media, such as ancestral masks so central to the societies involved that they could invoke and emphasize differences, are passed over as potential cultural insignia in favor of, for example, the woven media of everyday life. For example, baskets and mats produced throughout the region, yet culturally distinct, may without conflict represent a national identity (for a Vanuatu example, see Keller 1988, n.d.).

Education

An understudied aspect of political expression through the arts is the way they may be used for transmitting cultural knowledge. The power of instruction through dance and music is that it is learned through more than one sense (Kaeppler 1991b), may be only partially verbalized, and is learned by and communicated through and to the entire person, transcending Western body and mind dichotomies. An art form may be learned or performed individually, but its transmittal is more often the coordinated work of many performers and teachers, reinforcing Pacific community-based interactive styles (see also Tenzer 1991). Such styles are often counterposed to the more individualized emphases of colonial and postcolonial instruction. Dance instruction may be used by elders within a society to maintain traditional forms of education, which by demonstration contrast with Western educational institutions' emphases on individual attainment, written forms of transmission, and secular teachers (see especially the Petersen, Flinn, and Pinsker essays). Or one art form, such as weaving, may be read as a structural representation of a society's way of patterning physical and social relationships, which is also demonstrated in its architectural forms and the spatial relationships of buildings, and its social interactions (see Adams 1973; Rubinstein 1987).

Related to the last point, artistic productions may be important media for the continued transmission and reincorporation of local history into contemporary events (Pollenz 1950). Both the ceremonial paraphernalia and the performance carry cultural understandings from one generation to another, and their aesthetic effects enhance the power of this communication (Forge 1973a). Dance, chants, theater, paint-

ings, wood and stone carvings--any of these may be the most important form of local historiography, and their form may be continued today only through projects of artistic and historical preservation where their presentation would otherwise be banned by the church or secular bodies.

Drawing upon the importance of the visual element in indigenous communication, many Pacific nations choose artistic media such as posters for public health education campaigns. In her essay Fitzpatrick explores the multiple messages, both intentional and accidental, conveyed by Solomon Islands' family planning posters and the political contexts of this campaign in both the indigenous value system and that of the international planning community.

The Engendering of Art and Power

Throughout history, artistic productions have been used in the Pacific both as exchange and commodity, in competitions of prestige that themselves mark alliances and political relationships. Recent studies have focused upon the engendering of and balancing of power through the production of valuables (Gourlay 1975; Kirch 1984; Weiner 1989; Linnekin 1988) and the entire realm of the politics of gender in artistic production and performance (Messick 1987; Teilhet 1983; Shepherd 1987), though none have been done in the detail of studies about other regions (Drewal 1983). Gender issues are integral to a number of the essays in this volume, especially those by Jones, Sinclair, and Stevenson.

Future Directions

One major area of the politicization of Pacific arts not touched upon in this volume, and deserving a comprehensive comparative study in its own right, is that of cultural fairs and festivals (see Fischer 1989; also Brandes 1988). This would include the involvement of Pacific peoples in early Western world fairs (see Benedict 1983) as well as in local and pan-Pacific cultural fairs, most notably the Pacific Arts Festival. Developing from regional fairs organized to strengthen and transmit cultural practices long denigrated by colonial powers, such as dancing, the Fourth South Pacific Festival of Arts highlighted the contemporary political import and potential power of artistic challenges. This festival was scheduled to be held in New Caledonia (Kanaky) in 1984 to coincide with Kanaky independence (Babadzan 1988), to be witnessed by all festival participants. At the last minute, while some participants

were en route to New Caledonia, the French government postponed the festival. Held the following year on Tahiti in the French Overseas Department of French Polynesia, the delayed festival was boycotted by a number of Pacific Island nations in protest over continued French colonization of the Pacific.

Another area little studied is the use of song in political protest--a political medium well developed in other parts of the world (Jara 1984). For the most part, the analytical study of Pacific music has focused upon the use of chants to affirm or demonstrate or negotiate genealogical rights, to affirm particular regional histories (Parmentier 1988), or to assess the role of music in interpersonal relationships (Burrows 1963). Perhaps it is only in marginalized societies where ethnicity is politicized that song is used in protest, such as in Hawai'i (Tatar 1987; Stillman 1989; Osorio 1992). More likely, however, such study will await indigenous analysis, for anthropological literature is peppered with references to communications that "could not be translated," such as Burrows's comments on dances performed for Americans visiting Ifaluk: "the texts of these were not given to me; the chiefs lied politely, saying they did not know them" (1963:60).

A related area, represented by Sinclair's essay in this volume but in general underanalyzed, is the richness of contemporary indigenous oral and written literary media. For example, within Micronesia, former Yapese Governor John Mangefel is noted for his satirical wit (e.g., Mangefel 1975), but until recently most Pacific literature courses in Western universities focused upon what outsiders had written about the Pacific, rather than the rich oral and written literatures of the peoples themselves (Subramani 1985).

There are two further areas not touched upon in this volume because they are the subject of a developing literature of their own--the larger political and economic issues raised by producing art predominantly for outsider consumption (Graburn 1976; Kirch 1984; Gewertz and Errington 1991) or in dual systems of production (Koojiman 1979), and the related politicization of museum exhibitions of "Primitive Art" (Mead 1984, 1990) and issues concerning the return of cultural artifacts to their country of origin (Greenfield 1989).

By analytically focusing here on the intersection between the arts and politics, we do not mean to imply that this analysis is inclusive, that the arts may in any way be limited to a political or instrumental dimension. However, since this intersection has been overlooked in Pacific studies, our original intent was to stimulate and support studies in this direction. There have been too few comprehensive studies focusing upon the

various media of artistic productions as an integral part of ethnographic research (but see Schieffelin 1976; Moulin 1979; Bailey 1985; Dark 1974). The success of such endeavors will partly require the continued involvement of Pacific Islanders in setting directions and identifying areas of study; for instance, anthropological literature had generally been silent on Pacific theater and clowning until Hereniko's and Sina-vaiana's doctoral dissertations (1990 and 1992a, respectively) and contributions to this volume. Another factor in the politics of Pacific arts has been the increasing participation by Pacific scholars in defining and articulating the academic field as well as national artistic policies (Foote et al. 1985). Further cooperation between outsider and local researchers, artists, and anthropologists promises a deeper understanding of both past and contemporary political actions through artistic media.