PACIFIC ISLANDS DIASPORA STUDIES

Michael A. Rynkiewich
Asbury Theological Seminary

IN THE LARGER WORLD of diaspora studies, the Pacific Islands barely receive a mention.[1] This is unfortunate because the story of the migration, settlement, and adaptation to new locations by Pacific Islanders is ancient, legendary, and an integral part of anthropological history. This special issue contributes to the conversation about diaspora by presenting rich narratives that establish the Pacific Islands as a fruitful area of inquiry.

Diaspora studies have blossomed during the last two decades with the establishment of various institutes[2] and university programs.[3] As in any relatively new academic discipline, there is still a lot of diversity in the concepts used to describe and analyze diasporas; there are also lively debates about appropriate theoretical frameworks. As this collection demonstrates, Pacific Islands diaspora studies are positioned to contribute to the field in unique ways.

It is not that migration is new. Nomadism is a time-honored vocation for the human species, as hunters, fishers, and gatherers moved from place to place in search of resources for food and medicines, tools and weapons, clothing and decorations. Movement involved a sense of anticipation, and sometimes desperation, with the belief that there was something better over the horizon, and a creativity that could recognize and exploit opportunities. Even after a portion of the human species adopted gardening and agriculture, some people were pushed and others pulled in migration patterns that continually reshaped the social landscape. The settling of the Pacific Islands is, indeed, a fascinating part of the human story, with an

early dispersal to Australia and New Guinea, and later dispersals through the islands of Melanesia, Micronesia, and the far-flung islands of Polynesia.

It is, rather, that the technologies of migration are new. The current state of communication and transportation, as well as contemporary ideologies of immigration, call for new models for studying human dispersion. The earliest anthropological models were part of a school of diffusion studies that sought the origin and traced the movement of cultural traits, ideas, and objects—sometimes as if these cultural products could move independently of people. Later models deployed the concept of acculturation to explain how migrants adapted to new environments. Here the focus was on the degree to which migrants assimilated to a new social context and in the process contributed to cultural homogeneity. Incidents of resistance or syncretism were construed as interesting aberrations in the process.

With improved technologies, migration has taken on a new shape. Movement is easier and quicker; connection and exchange with homeland communities is richer and more complex; and the ability to maintain difference in most host countries is greater than ever before. Thus, the dynamics of migration today tend to encourage heterogeneity and hybridity rather than homogeneity. In the distant past, canoe loads of voyagers from what are now known as the Society Islands migrating to the islands now known as Hawai'i became Hawaiians with a memory of a distant homeland (Havaiki). But in the present, Samoans migrating to Hawai'i remain Samoan, stay in contact with kin in Samoa, exchange material goods with them, and frequently travel back and forth. This is indeed a new kind of migration.

Diaspora studies requires a new approach because the diffusion and acculturation models are inadequate to describe, let alone explain, the current movements of people and what is taking place in migrant communities. James Clifford has suggested that, in the present age, a productive perspective on studying culture would emphasize travel and route and that anthropological fieldwork should expand to traveling with people on the move (1997: 25–26). So what is the nature of the discourse that mediates between the memory and values of the home community and the challenges and opportunities of the new environment—between, in J Kēhaulani Kauanui's terms, "rootedness" and "routedness"? (2007, 145).

Definitions of Diaspora

While the ASAO symposium that resulted in these essays purposely avoided getting bogged down in definitional debates, the work represented herein

allows us to consider again what diaspora and the related concept of transnationalism are about. In a recent review of diaspora studies, Stéphane Dufoix avoided settling on a definition of the term "diaspora" either as a noun or an adjective (2008: 4–34). As he noted, some definitions are too broad, including all migration and settlement as examples of the phenomenon; others are so complex that they eliminate some cases that we might want to consider within the diaspora model. For example, William Safran included the notion that people in diaspora idealize their homeland as their only true home, to which they will someday return (1991: 83–93). Although this has been the case in some diasporas, we have several examples in the Pacific where the homeland no longer exists at all (some islets at Bikini), does not exist anymore as remembered (Banaba), or is not idealized (Kapingamarangi). Not all dispersed peoples plan on returning home (for example, the Carolinians on Saipan), and few actually do. When they do, it merits study, as Micah Van der Ryn's study (2012 [this issue]) illustrates.

Etymologically, the term "diaspora" derives from the Greek word for scattered, sown, or dispersed. This is metaphorically helpful when we remember that scattered seeds often take root and grow where they land. In its sociological usage, the term was first applied to the dispersion of the Jews, beginning with their defeat by the Assyrians in the sixth century BCE and continuing during Greek and Roman conquests until 70 CE when all Jews had been expelled from Palestine. This dispersion is the paradigmatic case, and was, even at the beginning, concerned with identity and assimilation. The Jews adopted, to varying degrees, Hellenic culture and language, and they debated at length the issue of Jewish identity. The production of identity, and the presentation of identity—which are not the same thing— have been part of diaspora discussions from the outset. Other historical diasporas include the Armenian and Greek dispersals.

In the twentieth century, the concept of diaspora has been generalized and applied to other cases. Modern instances include Chinese, Indian, and African diasporas. In response, a consensus is developing around a minimal definition that distinguishes diaspora from migration.[4] Diaspora involves the dispersal of a people from a homeland to a host country or countries, the formation of a community within the host country that identifies with the homeland, and the maintenance of links between the diasporic community and the homeland. Ironically, even this minimal definition jeopardizes categorization of the Jewish experience as diaspora, since there was an imagined homeland without a Jewish community resident there. However, there was a lot of "cross-talk" between diasporic communities. Therefore, let us modify the definition as follows: *Diaspora involves the dispersal of a people from a homeland to a host country or countries, the*

formation of a community within the host country that identifies with the homeland, and the maintenance of links between the diasporic community and the homeland and/or the maintenance of links among the diasporic communities themselves.[5]

This definition still begs the question of what a "community" is. The term "diaspora" is often applied in a broader sense to a category of people. Thus, scholars talk about the Latino diaspora, the African diaspora, or even the Muslim diaspora. Clearly, we are now discussing multiple homelands, multiple cultures, and multiple host countries, but the presumption is that these are singular diasporas. A simple test will demonstrate that within these large categories there are a multitude of other identities, such as in the case of the Latino diaspora: Hispanic, Mexican, Puerto Rican, etc. Further, even diasporas from a single homeland may form communities in different lands that do not function as a single face-to-face residential group. Thus, Samoans in New Zealand, Australia, Hawaiʻi, and California all form local communities, but these are linked to one another in what we might call a network of communities.

There is a similar range of variation in the use of the related terms "transnational" and "transnationalism." One use of the concept of transnationalism intersects with diaspora when it describes the links that migrant communities form with other people. The reference here is not to nation-states; rather, transnational refers to connections among people who are neither defined by nor confined by nation-states. Nina Glick-Shiller has argued, "Transnationalism is fully developed only when people establish transnational relationships and interact with persons other than kin, but kin ties are often the foundation for myriad types of non-kin social relationships" (2003, 123).

Although this process does occur, it is not always clear how transnationalism overlaps with diaspora. On the one hand, some scholars emphasize the stable, and perhaps primordial, nature of diasporas. That is, the diasporic people do not mix with others but rather maintain a "purity" based on an idealized homeland, culture, and language. Other scholars emphasize the fluid and constructed nature of diasporas. In this case, the members of the diaspora continually create and re-create multiple, hybrid, and shifting identities, behaviors, and beliefs as they interact not only with the dominant culture but also with other immigrants in their neighborhood. An extreme example is the conversion of some Latino immigrants to the United States to radical Islam (Temple-Raston 2010). This example should remind us that the effects of transnationalism are not homogenous; that is, they can fracture and even create conflict within diasporas. Another example is the engagement of Samoan youths with hip-hop in San Francisco, where they

are building bridges to Latino and Black culture to express their experience, much to the chagrin of their parents (Fonoti 2009). In another context, the Samoan community in Seattle is wary of competition with Latinos and Native Americans for government programs (McGrath 2002, 314).

The use of the term "transnational" is not consistent in the literature. A meaning of the term to which I am sympathetic refers to the transnational flow of ideas, goods, and persons between diasporic communities and homelands (for examples, see Howard 1961; Howard and Rensel 1994). In a review of a book on the Chinese diaspora in Britain (Gomez and Benton 2008), David Parker praised the authors for a work that "historicizes long-distance networks of migration, remittance flow, and cultural interchange between Britain and East Asia" while highlighting "the indispensability of looking beyond national borders for the factors that shape emerging constructs such as the 'British Chinese' category [that] they regard as evidence of the ongoing pull of national allegiances" (2005, 415). Except for Samoans returning home, there is not yet enough discussion in Pacific Islands diaspora studies of the back-and-forth movement between diasporic and home communities.

Variations in Diasporas

By now, it should be clear that the concept of diaspora has been deployed so widely that it is in danger of losing its analytic usefulness. If all migration is diaspora, then why have two concepts? At the same time, there is an acceptable range of variation for every social science concept that groups together phenomena so that their similarities can illuminate particular cases. On the one hand, Rotumans who migrated and lost touch with their kin back home were part of a diaspora (Howard and Rensel 2012 [this issue]).[6] On the other, there are some forms of diaspora that present a complexity that is not commonly discussed in the literature.

The simplest case would be a homeland that is intact and a single community of migrants that has been established across some international boundary. But variations exist in the nature of homelands. As noted earlier, some are no longer habitable (Bikini), or are difficult and expensive to return to (Rotuma, Kapingamarangi, outer atolls in the Marshall Islands). Some have become so remote historically that return is no longer a desirable option (Carolinians on Saipan). In the larger world of diaspora studies, some homelands have governmental regimes that do not favor return; in such cases, overseas communities may agitate for political reform in their homelands. Finally, both real and imagined homelands change over time.[7]

Host countries vary as well, in time as well as in place. Witness the difference between the Jewish experience in Poland from the twelfth through the sixteenth centuries and the experience of Jews in Poland in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some variations emerge in the perspective of the host country toward migrants in general or toward migrants from a particular homeland. Thus, the experience of Micronesians in Hawai'i (see essays by Carucci 2012 [this issue] and Falgout 2012 [this issue]) has not been the same as the experience of Samoans and Tongans in Hawai'i (Morton 1998, 2003; Spikard 1994; Ka'ili 2006).

A second kind of diaspora is the dispersion of one people to two or more countries. Tongans in the United States have a different experience from Tongans who migrate to New Zealand. This kind of diaspora opens up the possibility of communication between dispersed communities, a kind of three-way communication that includes the homeland as one node, migrant community A as a second node, and migrant community B as a third node. This changes the complexity of conversation and the possibilities of contestation. The dispersed Rotuman population (resident in many countries across the globe) carries on a lively Internet discussion about the way things are back home as well as the way things should be (Howard and Rensel 2012 [this issue]).

A third kind of diaspora occurs when people leave one migrant community to form a new one elsewhere in the same country (e.g., Marshallese moving from Oklahoma to Arkansas in the United States) or in another country (e.g., Tongans moving from New Zealand to Australia). This kind of "secondary diaspora" now has a homeland community, a "mother" migrant community, and a "daughter" community. Perspective, connections, and the flow of persons, ideas, and goods all change again. I once asked a Marshallese whom I encountered in Evansville, Indiana, where he was from. He said, "Enid, Oklahoma." I had expected him to name an atoll, but perhaps, in an odd way, he did.[8] Through "secondary diaspora" a kind of "diasporic archipelago" is formed, and this puts Pacific Islands disapora studies into the larger conversation about centers and peripheries in diaspora.

Finally, there is variation in the level of generality and the size of the diaspora. Do the African diaspora and the Kapingamarangi diaspora belong to the same category? In the one case, we have several million people from a whole continent full of countries, and in the other, several hundred people from a single atoll. In the first case, there are many unrelated people speaking a variety of languages and behaving in a variety of culturally informed ways settling in a variety of host countries.[9] In the second case, there is a small group of interrelated people speaking one language and

behaving within a narrow range of culturally informed ways. I propose that Pacific Islands diaspora studies has something to contribute particularly to the study of the dispersion of smaller populations and how they interact with mass society as well as with other diasporic communities.

Thus far, most studies of Pacific Islands diasporas have focused on island or island group of origin. There has not been much discussion of areal (e.g., Polynesian, Micronesian, or Melanesian) diasporas or regional (e.g., Pacific Islands, Oceanic) diasporas. In part, this is a matter of perception by the inhabitants of the host country. In part, it has been an identity choice by migrants themselves. So far, in the Pacific Islands, we do not have the equivalent of an "African diaspora" or "Latino diaspora."

Likewise, unlike the "Muslim diaspora," Pacific Islands diasporas have not been defined by religion, although religion has played a part in the migration of many people to universities, Bible colleges, and theological schools.[10] For example, the diasporic Marshallese community that lives now in Enid, Oklahoma, and that has given rise to daughter diasporic communities in Indiana, Florida, and elsewhere, began with students enrolling at Southwestern Assemblies of God University in Enid.[11] (Later in this essay I discuss the role of the church within diasporic communities.)

Variations in size also raise questions about the "critical mass" required in a migrant community to fulfill the roles and carry out the functions of institutions. Scholars have viewed the Pacific Islands as having been a "natural experiment" in human adaptation to new environments of different sizes, as well as a demonstration of the cultural variations that develop as immigrant communities bringing different cultural resources to bear in new environments.[12] This work can continue now in the study of diasporic Islander communities.

Identity in Diaspora

Identity formation in diaspora involves a range of institutionalized practices, although the process is not completely under the control of the diasporic community as they are variously obligated to the homeland and shaped by the larger community, including other diasporic peoples, in the host land. The homeland may be idealized or may be demonized; it may be distant from or present in the consciousness and practice of everyday life; it may be a patron of the diasporic community; or it may be dependent on the diasporic community.[13]

Anthropologists tend to assume that identity is linked to place, especially in the Pacific (Macpherson, Spoonley, and Anae 2001, 13).[14] The practice of "emplacement" is significant in the construction of identity (Englund

2002, 267; Marshall 2004: 134–37). A variety of practices and rituals may serve to transform the new place: gardening, house building, dress, cooking, producing crafts, and the activities of singing, dancing, and other types of performance. All of these may transform space, beginning with the air itself, which can be transformed by scents (Kuehling 2012 [this issue]), by sound, and by movement.

Identity is a fundamental question for people whose land of residence is not their land of reference. They face different problems than the people back home and thus deploy different strategies for adapting to life in the new land. For some, the problem is how to maintain cultural identity, but since the "other" has shifted, and the boundary has moved, identity takes a different shape than in the homeland (see, e.g., Howard and Howard 1977).

For others, the problem is one of finding a niche for a cultural and ethnic identity in a new sea of diversity. Part of that diversity may include different generations of the same people. As Suzanne Falgout suggests, identity formation may follow different practices in different generations (2012 [this issue]). Indeed, identity choice may be situational; for instance, Kapinga people tend to settle for a generic Pacific Islander identity when the "other" does not have a more descriptive category for them (Lieber et al. 2012 [this issue]). Lawrence Carucci (2012 [this issue]) reports that the Marshallese on the Big Island live with constant vigilance, considering themselves to be under constant threat from the surrounding society. Trying to "fly under the radar," to not attract attention, they avoid public gatherings where their Marshallese identity might be exposed. Similarly, for Samoans in Seattle, Barbara Burns McGrath noted that "the actual frequency of government involvement in family matters is not known, but the fear is widespread" (2002, 313).

The problem, for some, is to minimize identification with other people's stigmatizing identities, as shown in the cases of Kapinga in the United States and Pohnpeians in Hawai'i (Lieber et al. 2012 [this issue] and Falgout 2012 [this issue]). Banabans are insistent that they are not I-Kiribati, whereas Gilbertese claim that they are (Kempf 2012 [this issue]). The Carolinians on Saipan reinvented the ethnic landscape by positioning themselves as "people of our land," thus forcing others to rethink their identity (Kuehling 2012 [this issue]). Identity formation, then, depends on the social and cultural context of those in diaspora but also on what diasporic people themselves bring to the table.

In a review of recent work on ethnicity and Brazilian identity, Jerry Dávila identified a concept that is "fundamental to the study of ethnic minorities in Brazil," specifically "a modification of the continuum between

whites and blacks that has traditionally been used to imagine Brazilian society" (Dávila 2008, 187). Brazilians imagine that their society is composed of a "harmonious mixture of whites and blacks," and it is within this context that diasporas of Syrians, Lebanese, Japanese, and others must negotiate a place. That place seems never to be just "Brazilian," but some hyphenated ethnic designation that perforce perpetually marginalizes the diaspora.[15] The issue here is identification (by the larger society) as it is entangled with identity and the presentation of self in society.

Pacific Islands diaspora studies will mature as analyses of cases of diaspora consider the racial rhetoric of the host society. For example, compare Hawai'i's imagined "Rainbow" society with the various imaginations of California, Arizona, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. On the other end of the identity process, Pacific Islands diaspora studies will mature as more examples emerge of migrants as agents in their own identity formation. McGrath provided four cases of Samoan migrants who manage their own connections with their diasporic community as well as with the larger society in Seattle. In one of the cases she studied, she noted, "Leilani chose to connect with other Samoans, but on her own terms" (McGrath 2002, 311).

The Pacific Islands have already been a major site for theorizing personhood and identity; thus, anthropologists have the ethnographic depth to interrogate identity formation in diaspora. Pacific Islands anthropologists have led the way in asking how the person is constructed, how a person manages multiple identities, and the place of agency and negotiation in identity formation.[16] They are now well positioned to extend these studies in the Pacific Islands diaspora.

Community in Diaspora

The distinction between identification and identity, the emergence of migrants as agents who manages their own connections, and the realization that there are layers of connections with a variety of referent groups are perspectives from which to interrogate the concept of community. As McGrath noted, Pacific Islands diaspora studies reveal the rather slipshod use of the concept of community in social science studies (2002: 320, 333).

There is variation in whether or not migrants form communities at all, how they form communities when they do, and what shape communities take in the host country. Some communities tend to mirror those in the homeland, whereas others are shaped by a different reading of the social structure in a new setting, and some migrants fail to form community at all, at least with other migrants from their own home island. In an earlier

volume, Lieber noted that the Nukuoro who migrated to Pohnpei did not form a viable community, whereas migrants from Kapingamarangi did (1977, 355; see also Lieber et al. 2012 [this issue]). Likewise, in 1961, only one of four enclaves of Rotumans on Fiji replicated anything similar to the community organization of the home island (Howard and Howard 1977).

Institutions and traditions tend to function differently in diaspora than in the homeland. Our older model of the settlement of the Pacific highlighted the importance of the lineal effect and the founder effect. No one ancestor and no small group of founders could carry the full range of diversity from the gene pool, and thus the founding population was necessarily different from the population of origin. By analogy, no one family and no small group in diaspora can carry the full range of customs, traditions, and narratives from a homeland. Insofar as culture is contingent on the resources at hand, there is already in diaspora a reduction or narrowing of cultural resources. For example, in the context of the surrounding community, song and dance may be the most obvious and understandable markers of identity but making and storing fermented breadfruit may drop off the trait list. Adapting to the social and cultural context of the new land means that a selective process occurs where traditions and values are prioritized and accessed differently than in the homeland. Thus, there is the reshaping of tradition to deploy it in a new situation, and that may contribute to an objectification of culture.

It is important to note that families are in diaspora (Gershon 2007), but it is not enough to assume that the concept of "family" continues to include the same category of people that it did back home (see essays by Addo 2012 [this issue] and Falgout 2012 [this issue]). Wider categories of community, such as clan or *kainga,* continue to be important, but one must ask whether or not the meanings of clan and community have changed or, at least, whether the boundaries have shifted. Helen Morton has addressed the question of continuity of custom for Tongans in diaspora; she discovered that families rework the definition and nature of *anga fakatonga* (Tongan customs), while they vary in their adherence to customary practices and differentially (most obviously, generationally) accept or reject certain customs (1998).

In this issue, Falgout writes about "valued customs," and the phrase itself implies a prioritizing process (2012). Kuehling cites the loss of language as significant in the loss of culture yet finds that there are subtle ways to reproduce culture, ways that can be concealed or revealed at chosen times.

Some institutions also operate differently at home than in diaspora. Manuel Rauchholz (2012 [this issue]) has made it clear that adoption by someone living on the other side of a village is quite different from

adoption by someone living across the sea. It is somewhat like the exchange of other objects (including valuables and land); when the object is safe in relationship, and nearby, people do not worry because they have access. But when the valuable (land or child) leaves the exchange system, people begin to resist such transfers.

We already know that institutions, even with the same name, differ according to the size of the island, the density of the population, and the resources available (Mason 1959). Robert Kiste and Michael Rynkiewich (1976), for example, have shown that the incest taboo and marriage rules differ in their expression between a small isolated population (Bikini) and a larger connected population (Arno Atoll) within the same culture area. It should come as no surprise, then that the expression of cultural practices in a diasporic community differs from that in the homeland community.

How do these processes relate to incorporation in the host land? How much do people want to be associated with either community—home or host? What do they have to know to be included? The terms of incorporation into the new community are what J. Kēhaulani Kauanui has called the "politics of reception" (2007, 139). What do people have to do to avoid inclusion, if that is what they want? I constantly heard complaints from Papua New Guineans who had moved to Port Moresby that their *wantoks* (people from the same language area) were waiting by the front door on payday or showing up uninvited, expecting bed and breakfast. These Moresby residents wanted less inclusion and lower obligation to village values. This is such a common and serious problem that there was a popular song of complaint about it: "There Goes My Pay" (Goddard 2005, 13). Then, what is the process of reincorporation into the home community when someone, or a family, or a larger group returns? Where are the shared memories? (Kauanui 2007, 154).

The articles in this collection demonstrate that there is a difference between the way the academy views diaspora and the way the people involved view it. Although social scientists tend to focus on identity and community, people in diaspora may have other discussions. Alan Howard and Jan Rensel (2012 [this issue]) have documented what some of those discussions are, at least between different diasporic Rotuman communities, although not as much with the homeland itself. Their work resonates with a 2005 study by Angel Parham that demonstrates ways in which the use of the Internet creates different senses of place as well as different public spheres. Parham showed that the Internet can undermine the community as well as enhance it, depending on who is using the Internet and how the community is represented there.

Ping-Ann Addo (2012 [this issue]) suggests that Tongans in diaspora are "frequent debaters of tradition." This is in line with the conceptual shift in anthropology toward understanding culture as contingent, constructed, and contested and the recognition of people as agents who navigate and negotiate their way through cultural settings. Addo's work shows that the organization of labor in craft production has changed as has the understanding of money and its relationship to exchange. Traditional patterns of giving are being adapted to a new setting, with the younger generation questioning the giving of so much money to the church, and redefining the circle of "family" within which one must be generous in giving.

Both Addo (2012 [this issue]) and Kuehling (2012 [this issue]) suggest that changing perceptions and uses of money reflect different generational understandings of family and community. The obligations felt by the second generation seem narrower and weaker than the first generation. The sense of family and community is directed more toward the people one sees than the ones left back home. This raises again the question of how children learn culture and the degree to which they learn from parents or peers in diaspora.

Finally, out of the obligations of kinship and the institution of exchange has developed the practice of remittances, that is, sending money from the diaspora to relatives in the homeland. This institution looms large for the economies of some countries; the flow of remittances worldwide reached $250 billion by 2007 (King et al. 2010, 98). Samoa and Tonga rank with Jordan, Lebanon, Senegal, Honduras, and Guyana, if not with the Philippines and Mexico, in terms of the percentage of the recipient country's gross domestic product represented by total annual remittances (King et al. 2010, 98). What shape remittances take, and whether or not they are sustainable, continues to be an important topic (Macpherson 1992).

Religion in Diaspora

Arif Dirlik raised one of the central questions about the intersection of the global and the local in the early twenty-first century: "How can we "make sense of two seemingly contradictory developments. . . : economic and political globalization that is taken generally to point to unprecedented global integration, and the resurgence of religions or, more broadly, traditionalisms, that create new political and cultural fractures, or reopen old ones" (2003, 147). He also raised two issues about diasporas. The first concerns the relationship between religion (whether declining or ascending) and diasporic communities. The second issue concerns the degree to which the processes of diaspora, with or without religion, serve positive functions

for the migrant community (e.g., social solidarity) and the degree to which they engender negative consequences for the migrant community such as conflict, either within the community or between the community and the host land.

In this issue, Wolfgang Kempf (2012) asks about the place of religion and the church in diaspora. He suggests that we do not know the answer because religion (not always the same as the Church) has not been a prominent category in diasporic studies.[17] Dufoix claimed, "Diaspora studies have long neglected the religious factor in favor of ethnicity and nationalism" (2008, 75). Further, "The reworking and transformation of rituals and practices in the migratory context" becomes, in John Hinnells's terms, "the diaspora religion" (Hinnells 1997; Dufoix 2008, 77).

In Pacific Islands diaspora studies, the primary religion is Christianity, as it occurs in a variety of local forms.[18] The church building is a primary site for the enactment of identity, but we have not asked enough questions about how that happens, whether or not it is changing, and, if the Church in Pacific Islands diasporas is declining in importance, what might be replacing it. For example, in this issue, Falgout (2012) observes that the Church is stronger in diaspora for Marshallese and Chuukese than for Pohnpeians. McGrath claimed that, for Samoans in Seattle, "two core cultural values serve to connect Samoans: the importance of family, and the centrality of the church in daily life" (2002, 308).

As an institution, the Church has played a significant role in Pacific diasporas as a site for meeting and celebrating tradition, especially for the first generation (see Carucci 2012 [this issue]; Falgout 2012 [this issue]; and Kempf 2012 [this issue]). But one must also ask whether or not the Church is fading in importance for the second and third generations. Addo (2012 [this issue]) notes that the second generation of Tongans does not feel as obligated to give as large a portion of their income to the Church as the first generation did, that they tend to exchange gifts interfamily and less inter-*lotu* (congregation); thus, there is a narrowing of obligations from the larger community to a more limited definition of family. If the Church is fading as a central institution, then is that a result of secularization, individualism, or acculturation?

The relationship between the Church and diaspora can be strong, as in the case of students migrating to attend denominational schools (as per the examples in endnote 10). The concept of diaspora itself can be part of a new narrative. For example, although the Filipino diaspora is largely motivated by economic necessity, some have interpreted it as a missionary opportunity (Pantoja, Tira, and Wan 2004).[19] The link between Polynesian diaspora and the Mormon Church, both in Hawai'i and Utah, begs more scholarly attention. It would be a mistake, a "conceit of modernity," Dirlik

called it, simply to assume that "religion must disappear in direct propor-
tion to the progress of a modern culture identified with the Enlightenment
goals of science and rationality, and expressed in social, cultural, and
political life in secularism" (Dirlik 2003, 149).

Pacific Islands Diaspora Studies

I have identified five areas where Pacific Islands diaspora studies intersect
with the larger domain of diaspora and transnational studies: definitions
of diaspora, variations in diaspora, and issues of identity, community, and
religion. Every region has a contribution to make, as Sidney Mintz argued
for the Caribbean (1998). What additional questions might be asked for the
next phase of scholarly work in the Pacific?

The refinement of social science models involves a careful cycling
between the specific (ideographic) and the general (nomothetic). The move
from ethnography to ethnology is a long-standing methodological strategy
in anthropology. When a critical mass of ethnographic descriptions has
been built up, it becomes possible to draw comparisons across cultures
and between culture areas. Some of that work is beginning to emerge, as
with the comparisons between various Micronesian adaptations to life in
diaspora—for example, in this issue, Pohnpeians, Chuukese, and Marshallese
as they negotiate their identities in Hawai'i. Others have compared the way
in which Samoans and Tongans handle remittances (Ahlburg 1991; Brown
1998). There certainly seems to be a difference between the way that
Tongans and Samoans have negotiated their place in Hawaiian society and
the way that Chuukese, Pohnpeians, and Marshallese have, yet this has not
been addressed adequately. One research strategy is to begin by drawing
comparisons among the patterns that groups of Pacific Islanders develop
in community organization, sociality, and connections with the homeland
when they move abroad.

More than any other people in the world, Pacific Islanders have
practiced dispersion, albeit in a sea of islands where communities have
sometimes been seen as circumscribed by shorelines, and larger entities are
marked by the imagined boundaries of an archipelago. Migration stories
usually begin with a subset of the larger community that leaves, travels a
long distance, and makes a landfall in another archipelago. The story of the
voyages from Samoa to the Marquesas, from there to the Society Islands,
from there to the Cook Islands, and on to New Zealand is a classic example.
What began as one diasporic community, over time, gave rise to other
groups of migrants who founded communities of their own. The process

continues today beyond the sea of islands, in a series of chain migrations. These "secondary diasporas" eventually form a "diaspora archipelago." The Marshallese have created a diaspora archipelago, with communities on nearly every Hawaiian island, in California and Oregon, Oklahoma and Arkansas, and now Indiana, Ohio, and Florida. Pacific Islands diaspora studies is well positioned to develop a theory of "secondary diasporas" as a contribution to diaspora studies in general.

Gabriel (Gabi) Sheffer made the provocative observation that diaspora studies have emphasized "the 'positive' role diasporas have played in the economic development of their host lands and homelands and the political support they render to the latter," and lately has also addressed "their 'negative' involvement in terrorism and criminal activities on behalf of their homelands and brethren" (2006, 126). In a dramatic way, this exposes the ambivalent position of diasporas in their host countries. They are not clearly under the control of the national government in their new home and, thus, are suspect, particularly in times of crisis. Sometimes they are neither clearly identified nor counted, and their leadership is not easily addressed. The political nature of diasporas has not been fully explored among Pacific Islanders. How do various diasporas relate to their country of origin, their host country, and to relevant international organizations such as the United Nations, multinational corporations, nongovernmental organizations, and transnational religions? For example, some Marshallese triangulate the U.S. government, nongovernmental organizations concerned with nuclear fallout, and lawyers. This will only increase with climate-induced migration where, unfortunately, the Pacific Islands will suffer considerably (Burkett 2011).

Finally, Pacific Islands diasporas exist within a "transnational space" that includes other diasporas, both from other Pacific Islands and from non-Pacific homelands. How do Pacific Islanders negotiate their identity in spaces filled with more recognizable ethnicities? Indeed, how do Micronesians find an identity at all in spaces inhabited by Polynesians, a much better known identity? What is the effect of other communities' languages and customs, songs and symbols on younger generations of Pacific Islanders in diaspora? What kinds of connections might Pacific Islands migrants make with diasporas or ethnic communities from other places in the world?

Exploring the concept of diaspora and its companion, transnationalism, opens an inquiry into the lives of diasporic communities with specific questions about the experience of migration, settlement, and adaptation to physical and social environments. Although we have yet to reap the full

benefits of this particular lens on life, I am confident that the concept is well suited for coming to grips with the multitude of issues, well illustrated in this collection, faced by migrant communities in an increasingly interrelated global world system.

NOTES

1. For example, in Roger Waldinger's foreword to Stéphan Dufoix's *Diasporas,* a list of diasporas is given: "Indian, Armenian, African, Scottish, Dutch, Muslim, Catalan, Cuban, Greek, Mexican, Central American, and southern" (Waldinger 2008, xi), but the Pacific Islands are not on the list. Dufoix himself offered little more, also leaving the Pacific Islands out of his list (2008, 1). The journal *Diaspora* began publication in 1991, but a search of the contents through 2005 (fifteen years) reveals no articles on Pacific Islands. Indeed, the mission statement of the journal lists "traditional diasporas" and "new transnational dispersions," but neither of these includes the Pacific Islands.

2. Especially notable is the International Institute for Diaspora Studies, a division of the Zorgan Institute, which is linked to several Canadian and European universities, and publishes *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies.*

3. More than a dozen universities now boast a BA in diaspora studies. The discipline has become so popular that it has a presence on Facebook: www.facebook.com/group. php?gid=2204871062 (accessed January 26, 2011).

4. Dufoix summarized the evolving consensus regarding the term "diaspora": "The current use of this word, contradictory though it may be, raises issues about the voluntary or involuntary migration of people; the maintenance or the re-creation of identification with a country or land of origin; and the existence of communities that claim their attachment to a place or, to the contrary, to their spatially free-floating existence" (2008, 2). Russell King and his coauthors offered: "Three core criteria help to define a diaspora: dispersion across international space, orientation to a homeland, and a clear sense of common identity sustained through ethnicity, language, and religion" (King et al. 2010, 36).

5. Other definitions include as many as six criteria (Safran 1991) or nine criteria (Cohen 1997).

6. These Rotuman migrants were not unlike the Hawaiians who joined whaling crews, some of whom ended up in the Pacific Northwest (Barman 1995; Barman and Watson 2006; Duncan 1972; Koppel 1995).

7. See Zlatko Skrbis's discussion regarding the lives of Croats in Australia before and after independence from Yugoslavia (1997).

8. Linda Allen's 1997 dissertation reveals diaspora hybridity with the title "Enid 'Atoll'."

9. Indeed, within the African diaspora, one would have to ask, for example, whether the experience of the Siddis (Habshis) of India has any similarity to the experience of

the Garifuna of Belize. Colin Palmer has argued that treating all African diasporas alike risks perceiving them through the lens of one particular diaspora (2000). Paul Zeleza has urged scholars to move away from a single model of African diaspora (2005). Minkah Makalani reviewed the discussion about diversity within the African diaspora (2009).

10. One of the most obvious cases is Brigham Young University in Hawai'i and Utah. However, there are a number of Pacific Islands students elsewhere in the United States. For example, Papua New Guinea students associated with "holiness" denominations have formed the Papua New Guinea Christian Student Fellowship in America, which coordinates gatherings of students from Penn View Bible College (Pennsylvania), Pensacola Christian College (Florida), Hobe Sound Bible College (Florida), Kentucky Mountain Bible College (Kentucky), God's Bible School and College (Ohio), Wesleyan Bible College (South Carolina), Indiana Wesleyan University (Indiana), and Mt. Vernon University (Ohio), among others. (http://pngchristianstudentfellowship.blogspot.com/)

11. Education is obviously an important factor in migration and diaspora. Worldwide, in 2006, a total of "2.7 million people were pursuing higher education outside their own country" (King et al. 2010, 84). See Lieber et al. 2012 (this issue). But neither education nor religion has defined categories of diasporic Pacific Islanders.

12. What difference would it have made if Solomon Islanders and not Society Islanders had discovered and settled Hawai'i?

13. The extent of formality in such obligation to homeland is illustrated by the Greek diaspora in the present day. In September 2010, the Greek government developed a "Diaspora Bond." "[Finance Minister Giorgos] Papaconstantinou said the government plans to try to sell debt abroad, saying there were as many living overseas as in the country itself. 'A Diaspora Bond which will tap the market and the willingness of Greeks abroad to contribute something to this effort is something we want to do. We'll be rolling something like this out sometime in 2011.'" (http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-09-15/greece-may-miss-revenue-target-sell-diaspora-bond-papaconstantinou-says.html)

14. See also Linnekin and Poyer 1990, 6; but compare Siikala 2001: 22–34.

15. Jerry Dávila attributed this concept of "the hidden hyphen" to Jeffrey Lesser (2007) (Dávila 2008, 188).

16. A few references will illustrate this depth and range of identity and personhood studies: Read 1955; Burridge 1979; Iteanu 1990; Josephides 1991; Strathern 1998; Strathern and Stewart 1998; and Hirsch 2001.

17. This is also the claim of Kokot, Toloyan, and Alfonso 2003.

18. We should not overlook Hindus in Fiji or Muslims in the Solomons, however. See, for example, McDougall 2009.

19. This perspective contrasts with a diasporic community that, for example, focuses inward on solidarity in the face of mistreatment by employers, as is the case in the migration of Antillean domestic workers (Dobie 2004: 166–67).

REFERENCES

Addo, Ping-Ann
　2012　Teaching culture with a modern valuable: Lessons about money for and from Tongan youth in New Zealand. *Pacific Studies* 35 (1/2): 11–44.

Ahlburg, Dennis A.
　1991　*Remittances and their impact: A study of Tonga and western Samoa*. Pacific Policy Papers 7. Canberra: Asia Pacific Press.

Allen, Linda
　1997　Enid "Atoll": A Marshallese migrant community in the midwestern United States. PhD diss., Univ. of Iowa.

Barman, Jean
　1995　New land, new lives: Hawaiian settlement in British Columbia. *Hawaiian Journal of History* 29:1–32.

Barman, Jean, and Bruce McIntyre Watson
　2006　*Leaving paradise: Indigenous Hawaiians in the Pacific Northwest, 1787–1898*. Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai'i Press.

Brown, Richard P. C.
　1998　Do migrants' remittances decline over time? Evidence from Tongans and western Samoans in Australia. *The Contemporary Pacific* 10:107–51.

Burkett, Maxine
　2011　In search of refuge: Pacific Islands, climate-induced migration, and the legal frontier. *Asia Pacific Issues: Analysis from the East–West Center* 98:1–8.

Burridge, Kenelm
　1979　*Someone, no one: An essay on individuality*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press.

Carucci, Laurence Marshall
　2012　You'll always be family: Formulating Marshallese identities in Kona, Hawai'i. *Pacific Studies* 35 (1/2): 203–31.

Clifford, James
　1997　*Routes: Travel and translation in the late twentieth century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press.

Cohen, Robin
　1997　*Global diasporas: An introduction*. London: Univ. College of London Press.

Dávila, Jerry
　2008　Ethnicity and the shifting margins of Brazilian identity. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 14 (1): 185–200.

Dirlik, Arif
2003 Modernity in question? Culture and religion in an age of global modernity. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 12 (2): 147–68.

Dobie, Madeleine
2004 Invisible exodus: The cultural effacement of Antillean migration. *Diaspora: The Journal of Transnational Studies* 13 (2/3): 149–83.

Dufoix, Stéphane
2008 *Diasporas.* Berkeley: Univ. of California Press.

Duncan, Janice
1972 *Minority without a champion: Kanakas on the Pacific Coast, 1788–1850.* Portland: Oregon Historical Society.

Englund, Harri
2002 Ethnography after globalism: Migration and emplacement in Malawi. *American Ethnologist* 29 (2): 261–86.

Falgout, Suzanne
2012 Pohnpeians in Hawaiʻi: Refashioning identity in diaspora. *Pacific Studies* 35 (1/2): 184–202.

Fonoti, Dionne
2009 Beats and bridges: Samoan youth and hip-hop culture. Paper delivered at the annual meeting of the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania, Santa Cruz, CA.

Gershon, Ilana
2007 Viewing diasporas from the Pacific: What Pacific ethnographies offer Pacific diaspora studies. *The Contemporary Pacific* 19:474–502.

Glick-Shiller, Nina
2003 The centrality of ethnography in the study of transnational migration. In *American arrivals: Anthropology engages the new immigration,* ed. Nancy Foner, 99–128. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press.

Goddard, Michael
2005 *The unseen city: Anthropological perspectives on Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.* Canberra: Pandanus Books.

Gomez, Edmund Terence, and Gregor Benton
2008 *Chinese in Britain, 1800–present: Economy, transnationalism and identity.* Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hinnells, John R.
1997 The study of diaspora religion. In *A new handbook of living religions,* ed. John Hinnells, 682–89. Oxford: Blackwell.

Hirsch, Eric
  2001 Making up people in Papua. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society* (NS) 7:241–56.

Howard, Alan
  1961 Rotuma as a hinterland community. *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 70:272–99.

Howard, Alan, and Irwin Howard
  1977 Rotumans in Fiji: The genesis of an ethnic group. In *Exiles and migrants in Oceania,* ed. Michael D. Lieber, 161–94. Honolulu: Univ. Press of Hawai'i.

Howard, Alan, and Jan Rensel
  1994 Rotuma in the 1990s: From hinterland to neighbourhood. *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 103:227–54.
  2012 Issues of concern to Rotumans abroad: A view from the Rotuma Website. *Pacific Studies* 35 (1/2): 144–83.

Iteanu, Andre
  1990 The concept of the person and the ritual system: An Orokaiva view. *Man* 25:35–53.

Josephides, Lisette
  1991 Metaphors, metathemes, and the construction of sociality: A critique of the new Melanesian ethnography. *Man* 26:145–61.

Ka'ili, Tēvita O.
  2006 Tauhi vā: Nuturing Tongan sociospatial ties in Maui and beyond. *The Contemporary Pacific* 17:83–114.

Kauanui, J. Kēhaulani
  2007 Diasporic deracination and "off-island" Hawaiians. *The Contemporary Pacific* 19:138–60.

Kempf, Wolfgang
  2012 A promised land in the diaspora: Christian religion, social memory, and identity among Banabans in Fiji. *Pacific Studies* 35 (1/2): 90–118.

King, Russell, Richard Black, Michael Collyer, Anthony Fielding, and Ronald Skeldon
  2010 *People on the move: An atlas of migration.* Berkeley: Univ. of California Press.

Kiste, Robert C., and Michael A. Rynkiewich
  1976 Incest and exogamy: A comparative study of two Marshallese populations. *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 85 (2): 209–26.

Kokot, Waltraud, Khachig Tololyan, and Carolin Alfonso, eds.
  2003 *Religion, identity and diaspora (transnationalism): New directions in theory and research.* London: Routledge.

Koppel, Tom
  1995 *Kanaka: The untold story of Hawaiian pioneers in British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest.* Vancouver, BC: Whitecap Books.

Kuehling, Susanne
  2012 Carolinians in Saipan: Shared sensations and subtle voices. *Pacific Studies* 35 (1/2): 44–89.

Lesser, Jeffrey
  2007 *A discontented diaspora: Japanese Brazilians and the meanings of ethnic militancy, 1960–1980.* Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press.

Lieber, Michael D.
  1977 Conclusion: The resettled community and its context. In *Exiles and migrants in Oceania,* ed. Michael D. Lieber, 342–87. Honolulu: Univ. Press of Hawai'i.

Lieber, Michael D., Willys Peters, Rosita Peters, and Mike Borong
  2012 Kapingamarangi people in the United States. *Pacific Studies* 35 (1/2): 232–51.

Linnekin, Jocelyn, and Lin Poyer, eds.
  1990 *Cultural identity and ethnicity in the Pacific.* Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai'i Press.

Macpherson, Cluny
  1992 Economic and political restructuring and the sustainability of migrant remittances: The case of western Samoa. *The Contemporary Pacific* 4:109–35.

Macpherson, Cluny, Paul Spoonley, and Melani Anae, eds.
  2001 *Tangata O Te Moana Nui: The evolving identities of Pacific peoples in Aotearoa/ New Zealand.* Palmerston North, N.Z.: Dunmore Press.

Makalani, Minkah
  2009 Diaspora and the localities of race. *Social Text* 27 (1): 1–9.

Marshall, Mac
  2004 *Namoluk beyond the reef: The transformation of a Micronesian community.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Mason, Leonard
  1959 Suprafamilial authority and economic process in Micronesian atolls. *Humanités, Cahiers de l'Institut de Science Économique Appliquée* 96 (5): 87–118.

McDougall, Debra
  2009 Becoming sinless: Converting to Islam in the Christian Solomon Islands. *American Anthropologist* 111 (4): 489–91.

McGrath, Barbara Burns
    2002   Seattle *Faʻa Sāmoa. The Contemporary Pacific* 14:307–40.

Mintz, Sidney W.
    1998   The localization of anthropological practice: From area studies to transnationalism. *Critique of Anthropology* 18 (2): 117–33.

Morton, Helen
    1998   Creating their own culture: Diasporic Tongans. *The Contemporary Pacific* 10:1–30.
    2003   *Tongans overseas: Between two shores.* Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaiʻi Press.

Palmer, Colin A.
    2000   Defining and studying the modern African diaspora. *Journal of Negro History* 85:27–32.

Pantoja, Luis, Jr., Sadiri Joy Tira, and Enoch Wan, eds.
    2004   *Scattered: The Filipino global presence.* Manila: Life Change Publishing Company.

Parham, Angel Adams
    2005   Internet, place, and public sphere in diaspora communities. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 14 (2/3): 349–80.

Parker, David
    2005   Going with the flow? Reflections on recent Chinese diaspora studies. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 14 (2/3): 411–23.

Rauchholz, Manuel
    2012   Discourses on Chuukese customary adoption, migration, and the laws of state(s). *Pacific Studies* 35 (1/2): 119–43.

Read, Kenneth E.
    1955   Morality and the concept of the person among the Gahuku-Gama. *Oceania* 25 (4): 233–82.

Safran, William
    1991   Diasporas in modern societies: Myths of homeland and return. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 1 (1): 83–93.

Sheffer, Gabriel (Gabi)
    2006   Transnationalism and ethnohistorical diasporism. *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 15 (1): 121–45.

Siikala, Jukka
    2001   Tilling the soil and sailing the seas: Cadastral maps and anthropological interpretations. In *Departures: How societies distribute their people,* ed. Jukka Siikala, 22–45. Helsinki: Finnish Anthropological Society.

Skrbis, Zlatko
  1997   Homeland-diaspora relations: From passive to active interactions. *Asia and Pacific Migrations* 6 (3/4): 439–55.

Strathern, Andrew, and Pamela J. Stewart
  1998   Seeking personhood: Anthropological accounts and local concepts in Mt. Hagen, Papua New Guinea. *Oceania* 68:170–88.

Strathern, Marilyn
  1998   *The gender of the gift: Problems with women and problems with society in Melanesia.* Berkeley: Univ. of California Press.

Temple-Raston, Dina
  2010   Officials worry about some Latino converts to Islam. National Public Radio, December 9. Available from: http://www.npr.org/2010/12/09/131916271/officials-worry-about-some-latino-converts-to-islam.

Van der Ryn, Fepuleaʻi Micah
  2012   Return migration to American Samoa. *Pacific Studies* 35 (1/2): 252–79.

Waldinger, Roger
  2008   Foreword. In *Diasporas,* ed. Stéphane Dufoix. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press.

Zeleza, Paul Tiyambe
  2005   Rewriting the African diaspora: Beyond the Black Atlantic. *African Affairs* 104:40–41.