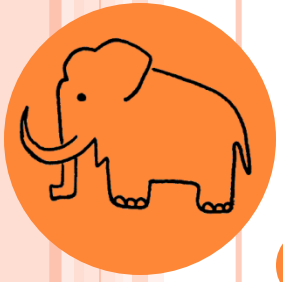
Elephants in the Pacific?
or
The Future is Urban. Really? Even in the Pacific? So What?



John Connell

University of Sydney

November 2010

Images and Idylls

- Post Cards from Paradise
- Dichotomous Cities
- Urban Pacific

“During the past few years the South Pacific territories have undergone rapid and large-scale urbanization. A steady stream of migrants has been flowing from the rural areas into towns that are, for the most part, ill equipped to absorb the newcomers, to house them and to provide them with the basic necessities of life.”

(South Pacific Commission, *Regional Seminar on Health and Social Panning and Urbanization*, 1970, p. i)

Pacific Urbanisation and Its Discontents

Squatters evicted on Suva outskirts Fiji Times 2010

PNG Capital ranked among world's worst
Radio NZ International 2009

Port Moresby boom town in dire need of planning The National 2010

GROUP URGES CARE WITH PORT VILA SQUATTERS Radio NZ International 2010

Honiara feeling effects of rural neglect Solomon Star 2010

PNG's overburdened Madang growing too fast: Squatters fouling the town PNG Post-Courier 2010

Urban drift worries Fiji's Lomaiviti Province Fiji Sun 2010

POOR SANITATION PLAGUES SUVA SETTLEMENTS Fiji Times Online 2010

Survey finds prostitution provides income in Fiji Fiji Times 2010

Why Cities?

- Administration / Economic Growth

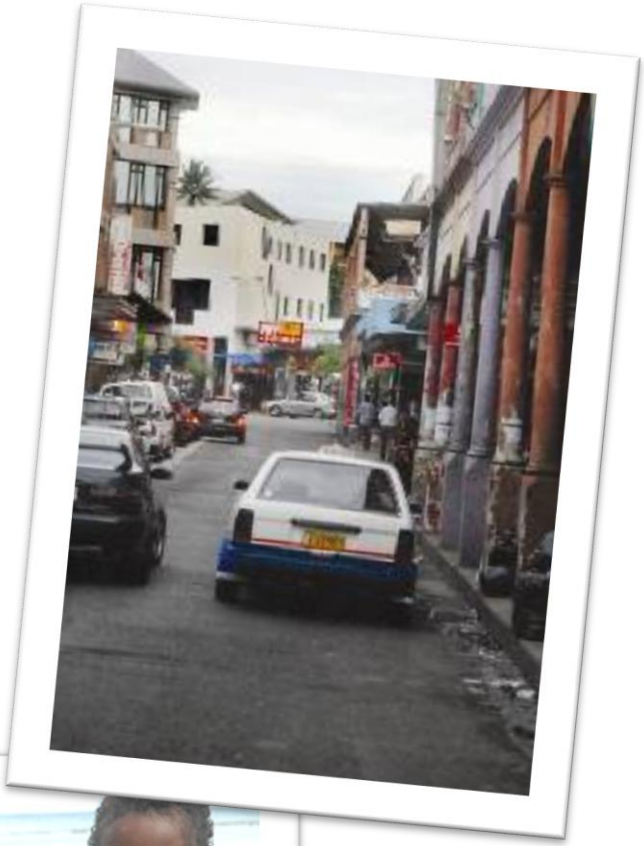
- Migration =

  Employment

  \+ Services

  \+ Expectations

- Natural Increase/ Urban Fertility?



Urban Growth

- Half the Pacific is Urban

- Polynesia, Micronesia ---- Melanesia (*)

Migration

- Internal
  - Employment
  - Services
  - Environment
- Towards permanency?

Issues

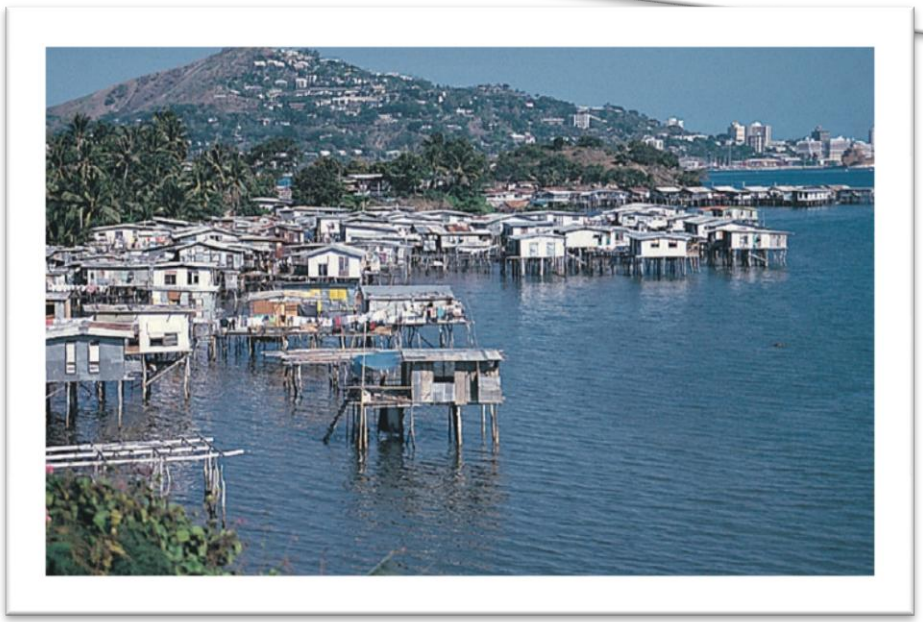
- Land
  - Settlements
- Housing
- Employment
  - Bulgy Youth
  - Formal and Informal
- Incomes and Safety Nets
- Social Order
- Environment and Health

Land

- Tenure
- Scarcity
- Sale

Housing

- Settlements
  - %?
  - services and employment
  - education and health
  - microfinance
  - marginal places … tenure
- Formal Housing Provision
- Rents



Employment

- From formal to informal
- Unemployment
- Youth

Incomes

- Formal and Informal
- Expenditure: school fees, rent, kero, food
- Safety Nets
  - romancing the family
- Social discontent
  - Chuuk ‘ public sharing and private hiding’
- Poverty of Opportunity

Social Order

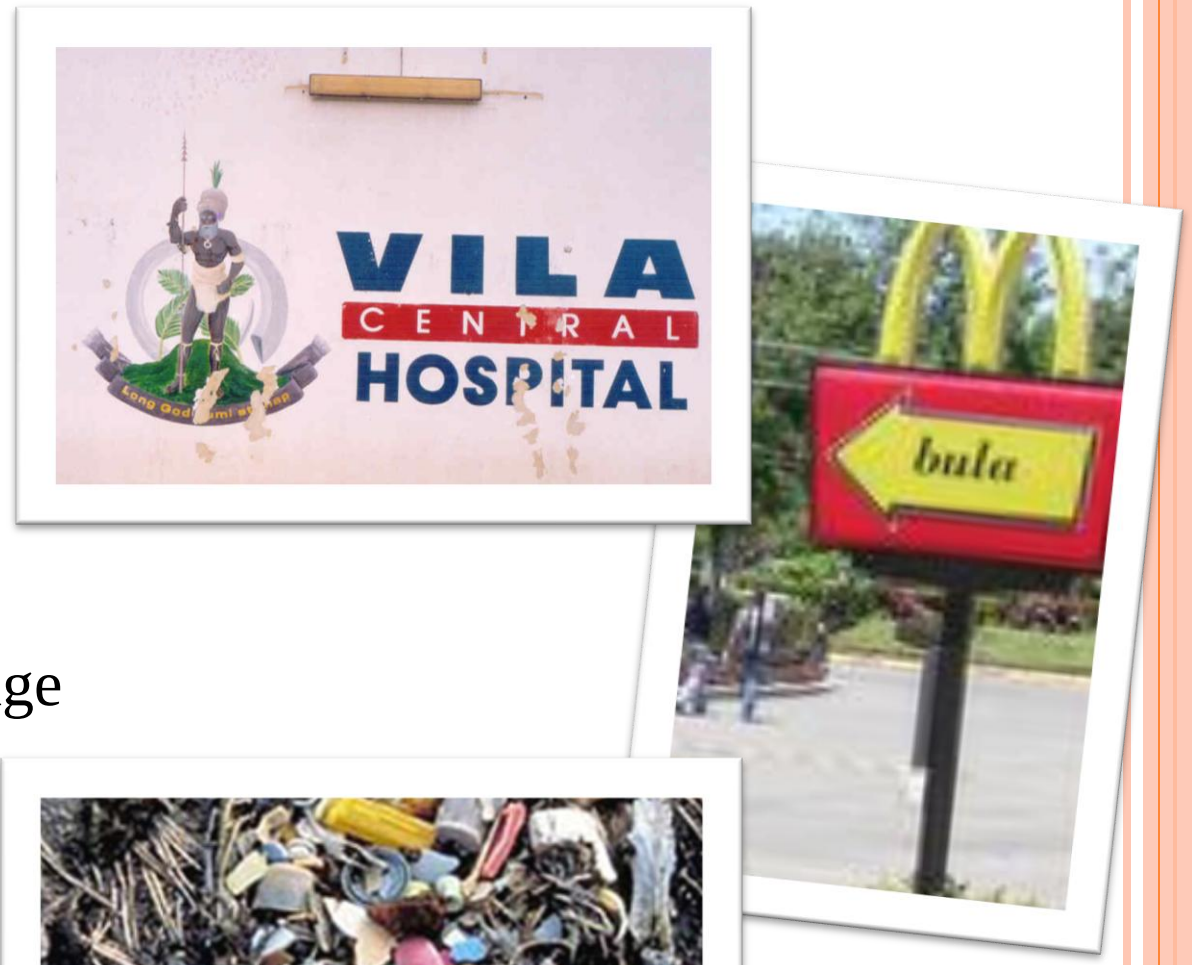
- Crime … raskols and MPs
- Symptoms and Structures

The Fractured City

- LA in the Pacific
- Strangers in a fractured city, and an age of entitlement

Environment

- Health
  - HIV/AIDs
  - MDGs
- Nutrition … ET
- Transport
- Water, sewage, garbage
- Recreation
- Climate Change

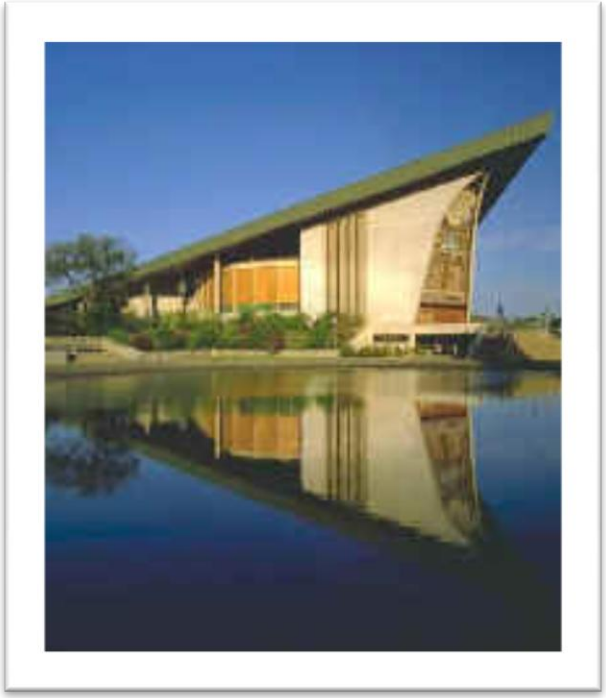


Urban Management

- PUMAs
  ... and chiefs?
- Urban Plans
- Land use
- Coordination
- Institutional Strengthening

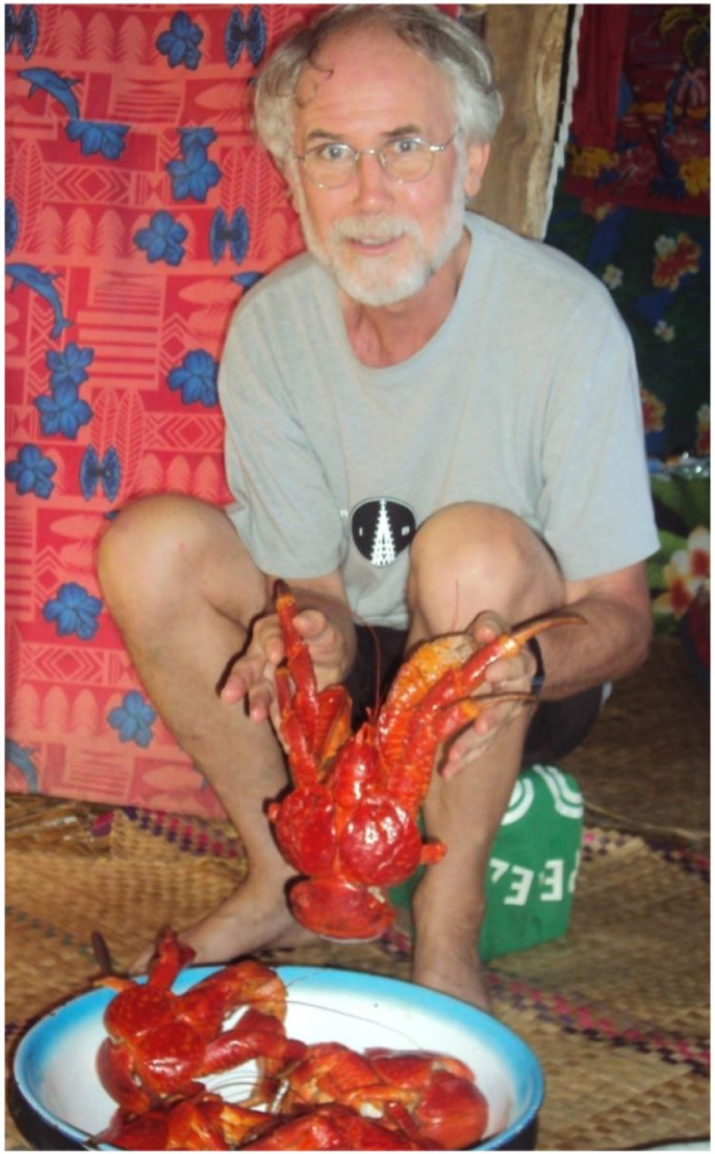
The AWOL State

- Governance and Politics
- Big men, matais and wantoks … and women?
- Parties, philosophies and pork barrels
- Democracy?
- Isomorphic mimicry
- Planning and Urban Bias



Island Economies

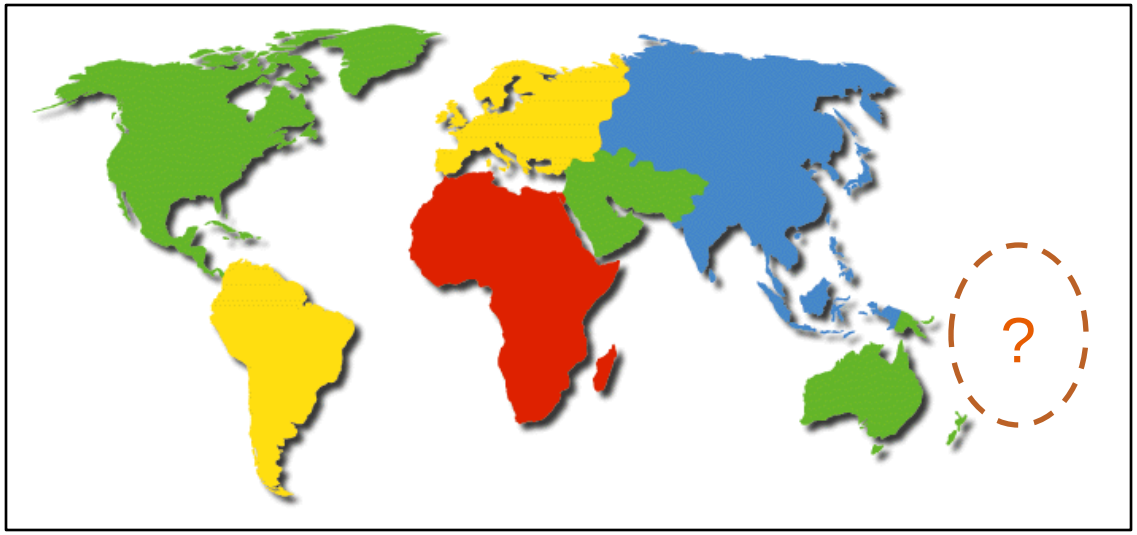
- A Mirage of Development?
- Large states in post(?) – conflict crisis
- Tinkering and Aid Fatigue
- Culture Anyone
- The View from Aniwa



JOSHUA IAUTU
ISAVAI VILLAGE
ANIWA
JOSHUA IAUTU

PICs, BRICs and CIVETs

- Sachs, Collier and UNCTAD
- Mauritius in another ocean?
- An Asia-Pacific Viewpoint
- From Shanghai to Tarawa
- Better than PIGs?



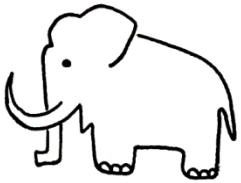
International Migration –The Outward Urge

- History
- Culture of Migration (TNC of kin, remittances, MIRAB..)
- Polynesia, Micronesia (CFA)…. Melanesia
- Outward Urge

- Degrees as Passports
- Skill Loss ….. RM?

Policy and its Discontents

- Absent data - but even more absent policy
- Employment
- Housing …. back to site and service?
- Services …. funding?
- Policing the City?
- Managing the City? National Urbanisation Policy?
- Democracy and Civil Society



The Elephants Come Home to Roost

Towards a Conclusion ...

Thank You