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## Introduction

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# Resistance and Resilience



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Throughout the Pacific region, people are faced with changes in economic, political, religious, cultural and ecological domains. These changes are often described in the light of confrontations between local and national-global spheres in which different, and also divergent, histories and historicities, political and legal structures and perspectives, as well as value systems, meet in conflicting or even incompatible ways. On the one hand, these changes appear as the encounter between a significant cultural and linguistic diversity – also deemed customary or traditional modes of being – and more dominant and homogenizing global forces, be they material or immaterial. On the other, these processes are also viewed in terms of the glocal or as contributing to glocalization (Robertson 1995), when individuals and groups increasingly espouse multi-layered forms of identity in which so-called global modes of thinking and doing are embedded in renewed perceptions of local and regional specificities.

In both these perspectives, recent history is seen as a process of competition and struggle, emerging with colonization when people increasingly experienced the presence and impact of more or less imposed and exogenous structures and institutions through concepts such as Christianity, nation-state, democracy, constitution, development, capitalism or neoliberalism. Local understandings of such concepts and processes involve reconfiguration and standardization of hierarchies, values, rights and obligations and are often interpreted as a loss of cultural or ethnic specificity. In many

cases, this confrontation is locally enacted or mediated by the presence of the state and its apparatuses – administrative institutions, non-governmental organizations and developmental and economic initiatives – which create opportunities for some people while disempowering others.

Concepts such as ‘transculturation’ (Ortiz 1995 [1940]) or ‘structures of conjuncture’ (Sahlins 1981) are relevant in this realm. In many cases, these have been measured by investigating the field of (symbolic) representation, with particular emphasis on depicting the complex relationships between Christianization and local belief systems (e.g. Barker 1990, Robbins 2004) or between the social values inherent in local economies and those of the global market (e.g. Gudeman 1986), to mention just those two areas of anthropological interests.

However, groups and individuals do not systematically, deliberately and compulsively struggle to connect or reconcile these two levels of reality, the local and the global. Indigenous peoples have also developed other means to achieve, pursue and reproduce their material and immaterial conditions of existence, in particular through what could be called forms of resistance and resilience which either cross the local-global divide or resourcefully reinterpret it for their own and purportedly local benefits.

In this book, we therefore aim to go beyond the ‘local-global’ dichotomy and investigate phenomena from a somewhat different but complementary perspective. We suggest that glocalization remains a useful analytical concept as long as its local and global constituents are not systematically and hermetically opposed. An important domain in which this can be observed, as Emde’s and Nayral’s chapters in this volume illustrate, are the endeavours in the field of women’s rights, which can be made without denying traditional or cultural values and institutions. We thus focus on communities’ and individuals’ own agencies and perceptions of what it means to resist forms of change or to regain the practice of power. However, we also suggest the need to challenge the opposition between local value systems and externally acquired means of action in order to understand the contemporary Pacific. Whatever their definitions – and we will return to these below – forms of resistance and resilience reflect processes in which the material and immaterial means of action, conventionally deemed to be either local or global, are not the core of social constraints. They seem in fact to be secondary in understanding social dynamics. It is not so much the interplay between the local and the global as constituted blocs that we believe to be relevant, but the multi-dimensional dialectics integrating both as objectified means of action that hold our attention.

The initial idea for this book emerged during an ESfO (European Society for Oceanists) event on political anthropology in Bergen in 2012. Our aim was to discuss various approaches through case studies covering

different regions of the Pacific. Tackling topics and regions as diverse as gender and politics in New Caledonia, historicity and utopian thinking in Vanuatu, iconographic forms of resistance in Australia, villagers' quest for just redistribution of royalties in Papua New Guinea or the means of integrating while simultaneously rejecting the state in French Polynesia, this book is an investigation into the ways in which groups and individuals can develop specific strategies in response to external legal, political, economic and social systems and their forms of standardization. It analyses both the pressures and the transformations these so-called exogenous systems can engender for local sociocultural structures and practices, as well as underlining the necessity of investigating local divisions that emerge through these processes. Thus, in so doing, we also question the immaterial and material means through which the labile limit between the exogenous and the endogenous is continually thought out and modelled.

On the other hand, since the rationale underpinning processes of distinction between the exogenous and the endogenous is increasingly becoming a locus for peoples' renewed self-definition, the volume above all proposes a revisiting of the concepts of resistance and resilience themselves. Hereby, it avoids concentrating on the local-global perspective as the sole analytical tool of contemporary political and economic struggles. Before we discuss these attempts and their implications further, we need to frame the meanings of these concepts as conveyed in the social sciences and humanities and beyond.

## **Resistance or Resilience?**

If anthropological research has been familiar with the concept of resistance, at least since the late 1970s and 1980s (see Seymour 2006), that of resilience has been less explored. Let us first turn to resistance.

'Resistance' or 'subaltern studies', emerging among others during the anti-colonial and counter-culture movements and later inspired by Foucault's (1975 and 1976) research on power and authority in and through prisons and the history of sexuality, have been concerned with the analysis of counter-hegemonic processes. Interestingly, resistance in these terms was not so much analysed as a social movement, but as individuals' or small groups' acts of disobedience or insubordination, in particular after Scott (1987) argued that resistance usually occurs in everyday, concealed forms. Cargo cults and millenarian movements (see Lindstrom 2004: 26), as well as the 'invention of tradition' (e.g. Keesing 1994) or cultural revitalizations (e.g. Fenelon and Hall 2008) have, in this context, also become different forms of resistance.

However, as Seymour (2006) fittingly notes, the theoretical apparatus of subaltern studies has been precarious because of the very object of their research. If power and authority can only persist when their legitimation has been socialized and internalized by each individual, thus producing acceptance by those dominated (Gramsci's cultural hegemony), then why should resistance emerge in the first place? As so often in anthropological theory, the solution lies in finding intelligible ways of bridging the gap between individuals' motives, intentions and agencies, and sociocultural systems (see Strauss and Quinn 1997, in particular p. 256). Indeed, as Seymour (2006: 305) again underlines: 'Explanations of resistance that focus only upon structures of political economy and dominant cultural discourses without theorizing how relationships of power are experienced, transmitted, and changed by individuals in their everyday practices, are both dissatisfying and inadequate' (Seymour 2006: 305).

We can nevertheless for the moment agree to understand resistance as deliberate acts of insubordination and defiance by individuals – who, if efficient, may aggregate into groups – towards established or emerging forms of domination. In this sense, as Abu-Lughod (1990: 42) puts it, we should use 'resistance as a *diagnostic* of power' and discard romantic and nostalgic views (also see Macintyre's concluding chapter in this volume) which see resistance as an almost institutionalized means of the powerless or as a production of the culturally oppressed. As Burton's chapter shows, what may appear as forms of resistance or resilience to potential political asymmetries from one perspective may indeed, from another, reveal themselves as loci of new economic inequalities.

We need to return to Foucault here before moving on. Let us recall that for many of his readers (such as Abu-Lughod, 1990), *The History of Sexuality* (1976) marks the beginning of the author's work on power and resistance. It is indeed in this volume that he wrote the famous sentence 'where there is power, there is resistance' (the original is 'où il y a pouvoir, il y a résistance', p. 125). To some extent, however, taking this quote out of Foucault's wider intellectual project is misleading. For Foucault's understanding of the notion of power (and through this of resistance) is one that departs from institutionalized forms of domination (see Canavèz and Miranda 2011). Power, he writes, is not something you can acquire, pilfer or share but reflects the interiority of complex social and historical situations (Foucault 1976: 123–24). As Foucault himself wrote about his own work (published under the figurehead of Maurice Florence in 1984), his aim was to engage in a history of the critique of thought and knowledge through the analysis of the conditions in which certain things or subjects become objectified and to explore how through this process they are deemed 'true' and become a substance of knowledge, that is, power. It is when things

or subjects become objects and thus the matter of knowledge that they constitute forms of domination.

To better understand Foucault's ambition, we need to recall that he situated his work within the domain of the philosophy and history of knowledge and that his understanding of the notions of 'object' and 'thing' or 'subject' is specific. Indeed, objects are the ideas, concepts or abstractions which describe things and subjects of the real world (see Marion 2010 for a general discussion). Power relationships in Foucault's terms are the movements and processes that objectify certain phenomenological occurrences ('things' or 'subjects') in generic and socially determined classes of thought ('objects'). Both power and resistance are, in Foucault's terms, not so much the exertion of and opposition to violence and domination in physical or symbolic terms by particular individuals or groups that control (or not) material and immaterial resources. They are rather the historical and social processes that provide certain forms of knowledge with the quality of truth. In this sense, research inspired by Foucault on institutionalized forms of power and tangible expressions of resistance has to some extent misrepresented the author's original ambition, disentangling power and resistance into separable and adverse social phenomena, neglecting the fact that both are simply temporally and spatially disparate aspects of the same process. Our earlier critique of the ways in which the local – positioned as an inherent form of resistance – and the global – simplified as expressions of power – have too often been divided into adverse or dialectical forces has to be considered in the same vein.

Not surprisingly, the confusion between power in its tangible or institutionalized forms and power as a pervasive meaning defining process has to some degree been responsible – in particular from the 1980s onwards – for a certain disenchantment with the anthropology of resistance, subversion, dissidence or counter-discourse and counter-hegemony. Ortner (1995) in particular underlined the lack of ethnographic perspective in these approaches, which are missing what Geertz (1973) had called the necessary 'thickness' to produce understanding (p. 174), as well as the absence of any investigation of internal conflict in many resistance studies (p. 177). Her conclusions reflect the necessary precautions we have stressed when interpreting Foucault: 'for the moment I think resistance, even as its most ambiguous, is a reasonably useful category, if only because it highlights the presence and play of power in most forms of relationship and activity' (1995: 175). Indeed, a few pages later (p. 180) she reminds us that understanding resistance is essential in the analysis of people's own forms of inequality and asymmetry (see Burton's and Dousset's chapters in this volume for examples).

Before we discuss the notion of resilience and consider it in the light of what we have expressed so far with respect to resistance, let us recapitulate

what has already been suggested. The notion of resistance has reflected various meanings and objects of study throughout the literature. Generally speaking, it has been understood as the symbolic and physical refusal and undermining of established forms of domination. Feminist anthropology and the (usually Marxist) study of subversive action are among the most important currents in this respect. When the concept is considered from these perspectives, we need to ask to what and by whom resistance takes place. However, if domination is socialized and legitimized by way of belief systems and social institutions, the very existence of resistance becomes a problem per se. It reveals itself to be either a place for questioning the relationship between the 'individual' and the 'collective' (or between practice and social institution), or it must be seen as inherently embedded within, and constitutive of, power itself. The former suggestion is construed from Seymour's work (2006), whereas the latter refers back to Foucault's. In any case, the analysis of forms of resistance cannot be insulated from that of 'power', be it as forms of domination or embedded in the autochthonous history of thought and truth, as per Foucault. In both perspectives, resistance proves to be a (or even *the*) dynamic and transformative process pertaining to the emergence or reproduction of power. We will return to these considerations after having explored the notion of resilience, since we believe it is the articulation of the two concepts that produces heuristic added value.

The definition of resilience has involved even more complexities. Originating in the physical sciences,<sup>1</sup> it describes in rather general terms the capacity of a body to regain its original shape after external or internal physical impact or exertion of force. Resilience is here a property of matter and structure. The notion made its way into archaeology (see below), psychology,<sup>2</sup> the environmental sciences, geography and human geography where it has become a concept increasingly used to explain adaptations to changing urban and rural conditions, in particular when dealing with risks such as natural disasters.

Contemporary usages of the concept in the social sciences and humanities emerged after the 1960s and early 1970s from the ecological sciences when Holling reintroduced it in his famous 1973 paper. Similar to its meaning in the physical sciences, Holling applied the notion to describe the 'measure of the ability of [these] systems to absorb changes' (1973: 17). Working on 'interacting populations like predators and prey and their functional responses in relation to ecological stability theory' (Folke 2006: 254), he realized that there were multiple states of stability as well as non-linear forms of functional responses. Ecological, and later socio-ecological, research has thereafter focused work on resilience following various perspectives (see Folke 2006 for an overview and discussion),

<sup>1</sup>Pacific Realities: Changing Perspectives on Resilience and Resistance"

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understanding the concept in general terms as encompassing two aspects: the capacity to absorb shocks and still maintain function, as well as that for renewal, re-organization and development. While these studies have to some degree been able to relativize the implicit or explicit assumption that the normal 'state' of systems is stability, and while they have introduced a proportion of dynamics and malleability, in resilience studies stability nevertheless remains the core of the problem. Be it in developmental approaches or perspectives that analyse social learning as a means to adaptation (Clark et al. 2001), resilience is a process in which stability is the expected outcome and where the former is the means through which the latter, be it reached in a singular or in multiple states, is regained. We may here recall similar and former approaches known in anthropology, such as Rappaport's (1968) view of culture as an equilibrium-based system, or the many discussions and publications which attempted to define the 'carrying capacity' for human groups.<sup>3</sup> We shall return to some of the anthropological approaches later in this introduction.

More recently, Keck and Sakdapolrak (2013) have reconsidered the literature making use of the notion of resilience in the social sciences. They remind us that there have been important warnings against an uncritical use of the concept in order to understand social phenomena (Cannon and Müller-Mahn 2010), because it renaturalizes society in terms of a mechanical ecosystemic approach which imposes a vision of stability as being the historical purpose of social processes. Keck and Sakdapolrak however reject the warning and consider that 'Social resilience retains the potential to be crafted into a coherent analytical framework that, on the one hand, is able to incorporate scientific knowledge from the tried and tested concept of vulnerability and, on the other hand, is forward-looking and opens up a fresh perspective on today's challenges of global change' (2013: 6).

As we can read in these lines, their understanding of resilience is still heavily inspired by the ecological approach. This is reconfirmed through the usages these authors have identified and the definition (they call it 'dimensions' or 'phases' of research) they suggest for resilience. The first reflects the coping capacities of actors and systems in which resilience has something to do with persistability. This conception is directly inspired by the ecologist Holling's (1973) initial suggestion according to which ecosystems reveal non-linear dynamics with multiple states of stability. In the social realm, this coping capacity is measured through the reactive or absorptive aptitudes people adopt to overcome immediate threats. As Keck and Sakdapolrak (2013: 10) write, 'the rationale behind coping is the restoration of the present level of well-being directly after a critical event'.

The second dimension of resilience that research reveals is the adaptive capacities of actors and systems, which include processes of 'social

learning' from previous disasters. The core of this perspective remains that of equilibrium. However, what has become the focus is the notion of an 'adaptive cycle', geared towards incremental change (proactive and preventive measures), to conserve the current state of well-being.

Finally, the last domain concerns actors' and systems' transformative capacities. This relates to people's ability to draw resources and knowledge from the 'wider socio-political arena (i.e. from governmental organizations and so-called civil society), to participate in decision-making processes, and to craft institutions that both improve their individual welfare and foster societal robustness toward future crises' (Keck and Sakdapolrak 2013: 11).

While Keck and Sakdapolrak's paper has the great advantage of summarizing and clarifying an important body of literature, the fundamental problem with resilience is not solved in their contribution. Indeed, equilibrium, camouflaged by the undefinable notion of 'well-being', remains at the core of the intellectual apparatus, relinquishing the possibility of processes of resilience not necessarily being adaptive or minimizing risk. Even when capacity for resilience is placed at the actor's and thus the individual level, it is considered to act for the sake of the system as a whole.

Indeed, in compliance with these perspectives – and comparable to what we have written above with respect to the relation between resistance and power – resilience is recurrently considered to be a property of systems themselves, related to how communities (be they human or animal) respond to disturbances such as natural catastrophes, migrations or displacements, dwindling resources, etc. But the system and its stability remain the main issue of resilience research.<sup>4</sup> If, as many authors suggest, resilience is about the reduction of vulnerabilities, it is obviously, we suggest, the vulnerability of those that dominate in a social context ('a system') that is at stake.

In the Pacific and beyond, the notion has therefore also become part of the language of policymaking and is now commonly used by governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations active in the domains of risk management, development and sustainability (for example, the Asian Development Bank 2013, Jha et al. 2013 for the World Bank and Australian AID). Building and evaluating the capacity for resilience in communities has become one of the measurements that may or not trigger economic and political support.

In most of these approaches – and we will come back to this important point below – it is not particular or individual elements, practices or strategies that are considered resilient. Indeed, we have seen above that resilience is understood to be a property of a system. Some anthropologists, such as Read (2005), have recently followed similar paths, attempting to discuss the idea of 'resilience and robustness of human systems' in rather general and generic (aka holistic) terms.

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This characteristic appears to be introducing a fundamental difference between the concept of resistance and that of resilience, as if they were counter-intuitive and antagonistic processes. While we have seen above that resistance implies individual practices aimed against an existing 'system', resilience, quite the opposite, is considered to refer to entire sets of complex relationships which attempt to reproduce the system or regain some kind of stability. Resistance drives for change. Resilience attempts to counterbalance change. But can we not think of forms of resistance that are resilient, or of processes of resilience that are also an expression of resistance?

If the above has some validity, then the analysis of resistance and resilience, as well as of their relationship, intrinsically becomes a problem of distinguishing areas, perspectives and levels of inclusion or exclusion: one of context and scale of reference, of level of practices, and of the rationale of motives and their potential consequences. When resistance and resilience refer to the same scale or level of inclusion, they appear as two sides of the same coin, as Musharbash's chapter shows. In other circumstances, for example when we consider emerging economic or political inequalities among fellow residents in local communities, such as in Dousset's and Burton's chapters, forms of resistance and attempts at or processes of resilience may operate, and even act against each other, on different levels of reference (also Macintyre's chapter). It is this complex interplay between scales of resistance and scales of resilience, and their complementarity or antagonism, which the chapters of the present volume explore. But let us return to the notion of resilience and further explore how it has been used as a heuristic or conceptual tool in other disciplines in order to better define the scales of applicability we have just mentioned.

## **Resilience as a Heuristic or Conceptual Tool**

In archaeology, the concept of resilience was supposedly introduced by Redman (2005: 72, see also Redman and Kinzing 2003): '[R]esilience theory seeks to understand the source and role of change – particularly the kinds of change that are transforming – in systems that are adaptive'. The authors thus retain the main underlying features of resilience present in the ecological disciplines, but provide it with more open and dynamic characteristics. Predominantly interested again in ecological adaptation, the author identifies four key features underlying his assumptions:

Change is neither continuous and gradual nor consistently chaotic. Rather, it is episodic with periods of slow accumulation of 'natural capital', punctuated by sudden releases and reorganizations of those legacies.

... spatial and temporal attributes are neither uniform nor scale invariant; rather, patterns and processes are patchy and discontinuous at all scales.

... ecosystems do not have a single equilibrium with homeostatic controls; rather, multiple equilibria commonly define functionally different states.

... policies and management that apply fixed rules for achieving constant yields, independent of scale and changing context, lead to systems that increasingly lose resilience – that is, to systems that suddenly break down in the face of disturbances that previously could be absorbed.

Change is not an even, nor a completely uncontrollable, process but is rather patchy and discontinuous. While so-called systems do not have a state of equilibrium, the latter remains a central notion. Additionally, external intervention is seen to disrupt capacities for resilience. In this environmental and archaeological perspective of resilience, we rediscover the old functionalist and holistic approaches of former anthropological schools: the system is more than the sum of its elements (or individuals) and stands in a state of equilibrium. It is ‘coherent’, proceeds through internally motivated changes or adaptations and is enclosed within itself. Hence external interventions can break down the equilibrium of the entire system as well as its capacity to remain what it is ‘supposed to be’: resilient (see for example Koffi et al. 2014). In other words, as long as the system is ‘intact’ and out of external actors’ reach, resilience to impending changes dissolves the notion of change itself. Obviously aware of this intrinsic contradiction, Redman explains that ‘In contrast to the 1970s-style systems theory ..., resilience theory emphasizes the inevitability of both stability and transformation. Neither stability nor transformation is assumed to be the norm; rather, systems are seen as moving between the two in what has been termed an *adaptive cycle*’ (2005: 72, original emphasis).

Similar problems emerge when the concept of resilience is applied in the economic and political sciences, even though some writers have attempted to rescale the notion of resilience away from a system perspective and more towards individuals’ and communities’ capacities to withstand societal and ecological shocks (Cantoni and Lallau 2010). Alexander (2012), for example, revisits the model of the ‘collapse of complex societies’ proposed by the historian and anthropologist Tainter (1988). The latter suggested that societies become more complex as they solve problems, but that, eventually, the advantages or benefits derived from this increased complexity become equivalent to the resources needed to actually keep the system in place. Therefore, the complexity gained through problem-solving increases (and not decreases) the need for energy and resources, which in the long run leads to a society’s collapse.

Alexander suggests that there is another social model available, one that aims at ‘resilience through simplification’ (2012: 2). He also considers that ‘problems that exist for any given society are often a value-laden function of their perspective or goals, not externally imposed challenges that arise independently’ (2012: 10). In other words, and we believe this to be a central point, ‘problems are not objective phenomena that exist independently of humankind’, but are ‘the product of a particular worldview’ (2012: 10) and, we are inclined to add, particular social and historical contexts.

We believe Alexander’s contribution to be important here because he departs from the adaptive processes and cycles at which resilience is supposedly aimed. For archaeologists, ecologists, environmentalists or economists, resilience is a system’s capacity to evolve following a fairly universal axiom: the maximization of ecological and economic efficiency as defined by economic rationalities. Alexander, however, introduces a relative or cultural perspective and brings resilience closer to actual social processes and actors. Aims, motives, practices or means are value-laden in such a way that forms and processes of resilience cannot be expected to systematically lead to an increased efficiency as defined by models thought to be ‘objective’ or ‘rational’.

The relativity of motives and processes of resilience as described by Alexander also draws the notion much closer to that of resistance, as already alluded to above. Indeed, if the capacity of resilience is considered in the light of particular hierarchies of social values, we must also grant that, depending on whose perspective we are observing, resistance is a form of resilience and resilience is the capacity for resistance. It is all, we suggest again, a question of perspective, a matter of scale.

## The Problem of Scales

In the anthropological literature as well, many uses of the notion of resilience are in one way or another tied to the systemic aspects of the relation between the social and the environmental and thus do not systematically distance themselves from the ecological, geographic and archaeological approaches mentioned earlier. Miller and Davidson-Hunt (2013), for example, suggest that ‘resilience is inherent to living landscapes and the place of human beings as one agent among many’. Resilience is here again the adaptive capacity of a system as a whole, in which ‘natural’ and ‘cultural’ aspects of existence are not as such distinguishable (see Descola 2005) and worldviews not necessarily human-centred (see Viveiros des Castro 2012), to regain some sort of internal equilibrium.

A somewhat different but still systemic angle, also bringing resilience closer to resistance, is adopted by Smith (1994) when discussing

the relationship between ethnic group and nation. For this author, resilience denotes the resurgence of a nationalistic consciousness and self-identification:

The twentieth century, and more specifically its latter half, has seen an unexpected revitalization of ethnic ties, and an unforeseen resilience of nations and ‘nation-states’: unexpected, because statesmen, social scientists and many educated people were convinced that nationalism was a spent force after the horrors of two world wars, and that humanity had outstripped ethnic (or ‘tribal’) ties in an era of regionalism and increasing global interdependence...; unforeseen, because that same global interdependence appeared to be eroding the bases of the nation-state and leading humanity towards a genuine cosmopolitanism. (Smith 1994: 721–22)

To escape the systemized perception of resilience and resistance described earlier, which has been able to advance our understanding very little other than to suggest that somehow societies obviously live in their environment with some form of durability (or not), we need to clarify the problem of scale, as well as the multi-dimensional aspects of both concepts. Several distinctions need to be underlined here: who is talking (scale of reference), what is he or she talking about (scale of practice), and why is he or she talking (scale of motives)?

What we would like to propose with the first question, ‘who is talking?’, is the rather simple fact that both resistance and resilience are not only analytical concepts, even though as we have seen their definition continues to entail certain difficulties. They can also reflect emic practices conceptualized by Indigenous peoples themselves as well as by regional, national or international organizations speaking in their names.<sup>5</sup> Who is to decide if a practice is resistant or resilient? If we orient the perspective towards Indigenous means which we end up translating as forms of resistance or resilience, then the latter are not only revealed to be conceptual tools, but also possess a heuristic aspect that needs to be isolated and distinguished. An intuitive temptation is to interpret resistance as reflecting emic dispositions, while looking at resilience as a more analytical and theoretical (and exogenous) concept. However, as we mentioned above (in the case of ‘invention of tradition’, for example) and as the chapters of the volume will illustrate (in particular Ghasarian or Dousset), if we depart from a system-driven approach and concentrate more on endogenous processes, then resilience also reflects forms of representations and value systems which are the pragmatic, motivated and conscious aims of Indigenous practices themselves. Efficiency and adaptation are here not necessarily the untold goal. In these cases, the characteristics we have proposed to describe resistance are not idiosyncratic and could just as well portray resilience.

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The second important question, ‘what is he or she talking about?’, points to the multiple spheres of resistance and resilience. As we have mentioned in the first part of this introduction, the case studies in this volume illustrate that the means and aims of both processes are not necessarily locatable at either the local or global level, nor do they describe the local level as a coherent and uniform body of representations and practices. For example, the people of Rapa, an island in French Polynesia, do not think twice about integrating elements of the state apparatus in order to resist its hegemonic pressures (Ghasarian’s chapter). Similarly, Kanak women deputies in Ouvea, New Caledonia, deliberately use customary practices when acting on the local council (Nayral’s chapter). Envisioning a futuristic and global city is the means through which inhabitants of South Malekula in Vanuatu have attempted to resist what they consider hegemonic pressures and to imagine a different collective future (Dousset’s chapter). Aboriginal people of the Central Deserts in Australia have resisted the semantics of foreign imagery in producing responses based on material of identical quality and comparable semiotics as that of the state itself (Musharbash’s chapter). The means available to resist or to become resilient are therefore not necessarily of the same scale or scope as the values towards which resistance is directed or at which resilience is aimed. Resilience is here not tied merely to a delimitable ‘system’: the means of action are sourced beyond the local sphere.

Furthermore, resistance and attempts at resilience can involve values or people that stand in multiple levels of relationships, sometimes complementary, at others oppositional. These attempts can be internally addressed, for example in the case of Malekula (Dousset) where both resistance and resilience become ways of engaging in narratives of self-definition. They can (in some cases additionally) be externally addressed, for example the Warlpiri people who resist external state representations (Musharbash), the Rapa people who resist the hegemony of the state apparatus (Ghasarian), or Papua New Guinea villagers who have to deal with and accept internal hierarchies to address external pressures and opportunities (Burton). Or they can be transversal, where criteria other than locality or shared history, such as gender and equality (Emde) or gender and political engagement and commitment (Nayral), are the domains involved.

Finally, we need to ask, ‘why are they talking?’, or what are the aims of local forms of resistance and efforts at resilience? Is resilience a condition, a situation, or is it a social, cultural and political projection? None of the case studies in this book discuss resilience or resistance as efforts limited to reconstructing past states of being or social structure as such. However, what are at stake are the various projections into the future, projections that are informed by the multiple historical references available. The Kanak

thinker Tjibaou's phrase 'our identity is ahead of us' (Tjibaou 1985 in Togna 1995: 141) illustrates this imperative. Forms of resistance lie within movements of resilience, and forms of resilience are available to people in the shape of creative means to envisage or reproduce distinguishable identities, be they local, glocal or global.

## Chapter by Chapter

Christian Ghasarian's chapter takes us to French Polynesia and, in particular, to the isolated island of Rapa. He analyses the ways and means through which the inhabitants of Rapa have resisted hegemonic control of their island despite the legalistic and colonial attempts of the French political and legislative system to transform collective belongings and ownership into private ownership. The Rapa example demonstrates that resistance, to maintain or gain some form of resilience, does not necessarily have to be limited to endogenous means but can draw on a plurality of references and resources. Thus, as we suggested above, it bridges the local-global dichotomy when it comes to empowering local communities. For the forms of resistance Rapa people have developed in this realm have not circumvented the integration of external means, some of them even intrinsic to the colonial powers. While the island's inhabitants have created new institutions or adapted traditional decision-taking means to the colonial and post-colonial context, they have also quite consciously reinterpreted these in specific ways and supplemented them with traditional conceptions from the island itself. The author shows how local resistance to globalizing forces – a resistance that periodically exhibits itself in movements of resilience – has been made easier by the island's extreme isolation and its distance from decisional centres. Distance and the insufficient infrastructure, considered to have negative impacts in some aspects, have also provided the people of Rapa with time: time to negotiate and imagine a resistance to the colonial powers while profiting from some of their benefits. Here elements of global culture are not systematically rejected. The extensive kinship networks and obligations that tie Rapa people to each other have allowed for extensive movement between the political centres and the island: material and immaterial movement that, for example, has made access to education or health care easier.

In his chapter, Laurent Dousset analyses the utopian and partly imposed project of building a futuristic metropolis on the island of Malekula in Vanuatu in the light of the historical changes and migratory movements the community has experienced in the last 100 years. If resilience can be understood as the sociocultural and political project people imagine and want to engage with themselves, then every historical period (pre-colonial,

colonial and post-colonial) conveys its own processes of resilience and engenders its own forms of resistance. In his analysis, resilience and resistance are antagonistic and complementary at the same time, both being elements of social dialectics and dynamics, particularly in contexts in which people envisage contemporary being. He argues that in these terms both resilience and resistance are therefore inherently relative to each other. Those who in certain historical contexts and material conditions aim at resilience consider themselves to be authentic, to be aiming to discover the historical and cultural truth and to be envisioning a sustainable future. Opposing this hegemonic attitude, others necessarily engage in attitudes and actions of resistance. Perceptions and interpretations of the past, and the type of historicity that people espouse also define people's will and capacity to be either resilient or resistant. These processes are the tangible components of multiple ways of envisioning the future of collective being.

Yasmine Musharbash investigates in her chapter Australian Aboriginal people's reactions to the Northern Territory National Emergency Response, called the 'Intervention.' One of the consequences of the intervention was the erection of signs prohibiting alcohol and pornographic material on Aboriginal lands. The author investigates these signs and Aboriginal reactions to them which she qualifies as mimetic strategies. Analysing various forms of material responses, such as graffiti on signs or the erection of new signs, the chapter illustrates how actions of resistance do not necessarily target the entire system of representation attempting to impose itself on local communities but resist their material forms of communication. The Warlpiri people of the Australian Central Deserts have imagined ways of replying and resisting with the very means and words of the intrusion they are contesting.

Mélissa Nayral explores the effects of the implementation of the French Parity law on men-women relationships in Kanak New Caledonia, analysing the arrival of women deputies on the council of Ouvéa Island. This law, which was first elaborated in and for the context of metropolitan France in 2000, had significant consequences on the composition of the New Caledonian political scene from its first year of implementation two years later. In fact, in spite of a significant and acknowledged involvement in past political activism, there had never been any Kanak women on candidate lists or, if there were any, they were not high enough on them to be elected. With this law, the state made it compulsory to have an equal number of men and women on each list, hence allowing many Kanak women into this arena. The case she considers shows that being a Kanak woman involved in local politics is in itself a demonstration of resilience as, for the Kanak, politics is traditionally for men only, despite the views of opponents and more global recommendations aiming at equality between the sexes. More

specifically, it analyses what the status of woman deputy entails when it comes to gender standards and social hierarchies and how being a woman deputy can turn out to be both an act of resistance (to a more traditional hierarchy where men are clearly above women) and a process of resilience leading to a future situation in which men and women are to be equal in politics. Her analysis illustrates the embeddedness of these two notions as well as perhaps their complementarity, for at times resistance seems to be a condition of resilience. In fact, she also argues that the definition of these concepts is very much a matter of perspective as a single situation can sometimes be interpreted in terms of both resistance and resilience.

Sina Emde analyses in her chapter the discourses and agencies deployed in a complex political domain: that of women's rights during and after the coup in Fiji. The coup's aim was to install a vision and an ideology of ethno-nationalism which would elaborate on so-called traditional power hierarchies and thus exclude from consideration and decision-taking processes entire social groups, such as the Indo-Fijians or activist groups in the realm of human or women's rights. From a general perspective, the state's aim, or at least the aim of those who instigated and supported the coup, was to gain a nation-wide resilience re-establishing what they believed to be traditional forms of power and structure. The analysis illustrates the fact that forms of resistance and processes of resilience are not limited to the confrontation between local value systems and imposed global ones. It also shows how resistance transcends established communities to embrace dispersed principles which integrate aspects of international values into local lifeways. Indeed, women's rights movements are heavily inspired by global processes with respect to notions of equality, while nation-states attempt to reintegrate differences thought to be based on traditional power structures. Forms of resistance and resilience are here multi-scaled and moving both ways, from the local to the national or global and vice versa.

In his chapter, John Burton summarizes resilience as the quality of being able to maintain a distinct ethnicity in the face of externally imposed change. He reminds us, however, to question the ideological position according to which processes of resilience intrinsically produce positive outcomes. As he shows, in the context of extractive industries, social mapping is carried out to determine the key stakeholders and guarantee justified and appropriate distribution of compensation or royalties. Discussing these processes in three mining complexes (Ok Tedi, Porgera and Hidden Valley), Burton demonstrates that, far from being what had been thought of as processes for equity and justice, superficially conducted determinations and negotiations and the biases introduced in these settlements by key indigenous actors themselves are at the origin of inequalities, injustices and conflicts. Local communities, he concludes, are therefore faced with three



possible scenarios. First, the fact of not having leaders, key persons, puts the community in danger of being left out by the state apparatus. Second, having an overtly aggressive leader in a community's external dealings puts the community in danger of conflict with neighbouring groups. In the light of these problems, Burton writes, villagers are willing to take a third option and put up with the excessive demands of these key persons who can embody their capacity for resistance and resilience.

Martha Macintyre's contribution is a chapter in its own right, but also an epilogue and a conclusion at the same time. While returning to the various chapters of this book and recalling her own observations and analyses in Papua New Guinea, she convincingly argues for precaution when engaging with the notions of resistance and resilience. The danger and the temptation are to perceive these concepts through a nostalgic lens, a lens in which the persistence of so-called traditional aspects of life are interpreted as forms of resistance or as processes of resilience in order to return to a largely imaginary and holistic past: nostalgia for the tropics, Trouillot's 'savage slot'. As she writes, 'what endures can entail the agency of the nostalgic colonised seeking to reclaim an imagined, integrated past whose desires for holism are often as romantic as those of anthropologists or tourists'. Depicting and valuing the persistence of cultural features or the resilience to regain them is 'a way of holding fast to essentialist primordialism', she continues. Indeed, as several chapters of this book show, what is considered a resilient process for certain people may trigger actions of resistance by others, such as the 'cultural' persistence of forms of masculine domination and violence towards women.

As we have seen, the concept of resilience is now being used in many scientific disciplines and fields. Its domains of application have significantly increased since its initial use in the physical sciences. The definition is being extended to designate the most varied practices and the notion has come to reflect polymorphic and multi-dimensional processes describing in very general terms the capacity of a body, be it conceived of as social or physical, to regain a state of equilibrium after undergoing internal or external impact, dysfunction or trauma. The notion of impact, which some authors prefer to that of 'stress', 'crisis' or 'trauma', is inherently linked to the notion of resilience itself.

Many authors argue that its definition must include exposure to a context of adversity in relation to a threat or significant stress, be it individual or collective, social or symbolic (Gilligan 2000, McCubbin 2001, Théorêt 2005), to which resistance has been insufficient or ineffective. Another criterion used to identify processes of resilience is the observation of a 'positive' adaptation and reaction to the experienced impact, a process often labelled as one of resistance. According to this perspective,

resilience does not imply oblivion or omission but rather reflects the will to overcome trauma and engage with the present and the future in an active manner (Koffi 2010). The chapters of this volume each illustrate these processes in their own particular way.

However, if the concept of resilience is to survive in the anthropological literature, then it must incorporate the fact that the 'system' or the 'stability' it refers to and the 'holism' it seems to articulate need to be understood as diverse endogenous and exogenous representations that may or may not trigger and legitimize certain social values and strategies for some, but that also henceforth engender forms of resistance by others. Resilience is a property of matter, as physical science claims, but the matter in which anthropology and the social sciences more generally are interested is diverse and multiple, multi-layered and contextual, never completely systemic and never really holistic. Thus, if resistance is a diagnostic of power, resilience is a diagnostic of endogenously or exogenously imagined 'systems'. Together, they constitute the means through which futures are imagined from subjectively reinterpreted pasts.

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## Notes

1. There seems to be some discussion about the first usage of the notion of resilience or resiliency in the post-Latin era. This is not the place to enter into these considerations (but see Alexander 2013). Let us simply mention that Francis Bacon (1627) seems to have been one of the first to talk of the possible resilience of echoes in his study of sound.
2. In psychology, the notion was introduced in the Anglo-Saxon world by Emmy Werner through a study commenced in 1954 (Werner, Bierman and French 1971), analysing the capacity of abused and mistreated children in Hawaii to overcome their traumatizations (Werner and Smith 1982).
3. Rindos (1984), for example; but see a discussion of the difficulties in Brush (1975) and Dewar (1984) as well as below in this introduction.
4. Norberg and Cumming's (2008) work confirms this holistic and deterministic-mechanical approach, understanding resilience as the quality and quantity of disturbance a system can absorb while remaining in an identical state.
5. For example, the UN programme for Development in Ecuador describes its initiative as 'a partnership for resilient communities' (<http://equatorinitiative.org/index.php>).

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