

Institution: University of St. Andrews

Unit of Assessment: Social Anthropology (24)

a. Context

The Department of Social Anthropology **defines impact** as effecting, facilitating or participating in improvements to quality of life, as these are understood by our research subjects who, as individuals and communities, are the key end-users of our knowledge. Other users are those who impinge on the life-worlds of our research subjects, including: the 3rd Sector (NGOs, voluntary organizations and charities); the Policy Community (national and international government and their agencies); the Business Sector (developers, entrepreneurs); the Public Sector (schools, libraries, health and social service agencies); and the Academic Sector (students and publishers).

Impact is born out of social interaction. For our key end-users this is delivered by way of trusting, reciprocal relations whereby a piece of anthropological research becomes a matter of local 'ownership', with a recognised local or personal relevance. For other end-users, impact includes delivering evidential knowledge of local, regional, national and international life-worlds. **Impact is therefore measured** in terms of the ways and extents to which those with whom we interact come to know something that effects significant change in their lives. Areas include cultural reproduction and enrichment, quality of life and social cohesion, welfare and well-being; also improvements in professional practice and policy-making. The Department has had a tradition of impactful research that predates the REF, representing a sustained commitment to public engagement.

The context for encouraging impact at St. Andrews is provided by the research centres and clusters within the department, as identified in REF5. These interact with end-users as follows:

- *The Centre for Amerindian, Latin American and Caribbean Studies (CAS)* offers a unique nexus of expertise on **regional subaltern communities**, demonstrating anthropological purchase on contemporary issues including disputes over indigenous territory, environmental degradation, historical change, and cross-ethnic and cross-class alliances.
- *The Centre for Cosmopolitan Studies (CCS)* concerns itself with issues of human rights and individual freedoms, and ethical relations within contemporary liberal democracies. There has been major consultancy work for the **UK Government Office for Science** on policies to do with future British identities. National and international associates bring especially close ties to commensurate work in Danish, Norwegian and Canadian contexts.
- *The Centre for Pacific Studies (CPS)* works closely with government (**The European Commission**) and has developed a wide knowledge-exchange partnership through FP7 funding. Positive impact has been made in the domains of: gender violence; agreement-making in the PNG mining industry; gambling and risk taking in PNG and elsewhere in the Pacific; climate change in the Solomon Islands; and cultural heritage in Tonga.
- *The Africa and Middle East research cluster* concerns itself with the urbanising, youthful and growing populations of the global South, and their diasporic communities, achieving impact on life-conditions through close cooperation with **local community organizations**.
- *The Medical Anthropology research cluster* impacts on **institutions of health provision and the social services** through outreach work regarding the international adoption of children in Scotland, and the quality of NHS primary and secondary care in Scotland.
- *The Visual/Material/Sensory research cluster* impacts primarily on issues to do with sustainable development, heritage, art and textiles (primarily in Central Asia and South America), through **public conferences, museum exhibitions and artistic exchanges**.

b. Approach to impact

Our approach to impact is that this must concern the people with whom we work enjoying significant improvements in their quality of life. This is dependent upon the social relations of individual fieldworkers with particular research subjects, and with those who have influence over the latter's lives. Impact is approached as being part-and-parcel of general research excellence, therefore, with an additional emphasis on appropriate **dissemination of results**, and on a **practical and recursive engagement** through which those results re-enter the lives of both research subjects and power brokers. Highlights of impactful relationships developed by staff include:

- encouraging international public interest in sustainable development, and on art, textiles and heritage in Central Asia; establishing networks of co-workers in 'UN Women', Kyrgyzstan NGOs and the Central Asian Craft Association (**Bunn**).
- dealing with indigenous knowledge exchanges in PNG and, in particular, the social and

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cultural impacts of the management of Ok Tedi mine. A solution to the 'Min Problem' has been formulated as a transferable anthropological method, and been communicated widely: to government, industry, and sustainable development lobbies (**Crook**).

- collaborating with the Archives Municipales de Bordeaux, leading to a public exhibition on 'Henri Gaden and French Colonialism' that will also tour Senegal (**Dilley**).
- impacting on sustainable development through policies on agrarian, rural development, gender inequality, poverty and tradecrafts in Ecuador; also the managing of environmental sustainability (e.g. carbon emissions) by Scottish Local Authorities (**Ferraro**).
- training European policy-makers and workers to deal with Roma issues through the Roma Studies Programme at the Central European University (**Gay y Blasco**).
- producing a *National Geographic Channel* documentary, *Decoding the Incas* (2012), translated into 25 languages and shown in 143 countries; providing expert commentary on the *History Channel's* 12-part series, *Mankind: The Story of All of Us*, viewed by more than 50 million people in 150 countries and in 35 languages (**Hyland**).
- influencing the policy of the UK Government (Dept of Science) in the field of 'Identity Futures' (identifying trends concerning globalisation, technological advance, economic uncertainty and migration); and on public debates on multiculturalism in Canada (**Rapport**).
- informing the media practitioners of INTEL's research arm, 'Peoples and Places', about blogging; also instructing the Henry Williamson Literary Society and Journal (**Reed**).
- advising the European External Action Service concerning their proposed policies on gender violence in the Pacific (**Toren**).
- serving as expert witness in cases dealing with West Indian migrants (**Wardle**).

Our institutional research culture at St. Andrews is also instrumental in our achieving impact. Most importantly, there is a *Departmental Impact Fund* of £10,000 to support initiatives and activities towards impact in particular field areas, complemented by an annual *Research Fund* of £1,300 for each member of staff. Staff can also be awarded a 50% reduction in undergraduate teaching loads in order to facilitate the development of particular impacting projects.

Beyond the Department, the University's *Knowledge Transfer Strategy 2008-13* coordinates impactful activities and responses across the institution. There is a *Knowledge Transfer Centre* (KTC), providing support to staff for disseminating research results and skills beyond academia, as well as being a point of contact for external queries concerning University expertise. Particularly relevant here is an appreciation of 'intellectual property' and its licensing, at the KTC, that includes (anthropological) knowledge on quality of life as well as commercial or technological innovation, and a sensitivity to the intellectual property already 'owned' by local end-users. In addition, the *University Press Office* shares its expertise in promoting the results of anthropological research, with one senior manager (Gayle Cook) being specifically tasked with this mediation. Finally, financial resources are provided by the University for the advertising and hosting of the Social Anthropology Department's programme of public lectures: the Ladislav Holy Memorial Lectures.

The University's *Schools Liaison Office* assists our impact on pre-university level students in Britain. The University organises three-day residential events, 'Teaching Together', aimed at a cross-fertilisation of knowledge and skills between university and school teachers. Social Anthropology participates in this programme, as well as contributing very successfully to the University's new interdisciplinary Evening Degree aimed at expanding access among mature students. This connects closely to school-liaison initiatives by the department itself. A funded outreach role has been created at a local High School, the *St. Leonards Associate Researcher*, to which anthropology doctoral students have won appointment (Juan Barletti, Philip Kao). Their responsibility is to deliver lectures to Sixth Form IB students, employing materials drawn from the Department's research and teaching what an anthropological perspective provides.

The *Scottish Information Commission and Commissioner*, responsible for enforcing Scotland's freedom of information laws and informing people about their rights to public services, are also based in St. Andrews. Since the formation of the new Scottish Parliament, issues of Scottish identity, quality of life, representation and governance, have been increasingly debated. We capitalize upon our location as a Department to maintain good links with the Commission and Commissioner, demonstrating the informative role that anthropology can play in these debates: improving a Scottish quality of life through policy and education that is anthropologically informed.

The *Departmental Director of Research* also has an important mediating role with this

institutional framework, offering information and advice and ensuring coherency of approach.

c. Strategy and plans

Our goal is to bring social anthropology to bear on the quality-of-life concerns of our research subjects as these can be leveraged through local, policy, community, governmental and educational engagements. We are also well placed to impact on debates about Scotland's future, through high-profile RAI, ASA and STAR events hosted by St. Andrews which engage a broad public audience.

Strategy to effect our goals call for an appreciation of context, and a precise knowledge of the diversity of these between the local and the global. We therefore plan for maximum impact of our current and future research primarily at the level of research centres and clusters. More exactly:

- *The Centre for Amerindian, Latin American and Caribbean Studies* plans its research to impact primarily on *community justice*: including law-making on land use in Bolivia and the Tipnis road development; the reinstatement of traditional legal systems and rights in Andean highland and lowland contexts; providing expert judgments on cases concerning indigenous peoples of the Amazon. Increasingly, expert advocacy is also provided on the social and legal situations of migrants from the region to Britain.
- *The Centre for Cosmopolitan Studies* identifies three strategies. First *research publications* are tailored to reach a wide audience. *Social and Cultural Anthropology: The Key Concepts* is the paradigm here, a textbook now going into a third edition. Second: *consultancies over new policy directions* e.g. serving on the Lead Expert Group of the (UK) Government Office for Science's project on the 'Future of British Identity' and planning further collaboration with the Government Foresight Team. Third: *tenders for practically orientated research funds*, e.g. CCS hosts Dr Suzanne Grant's Medical Research Council project, 'Organisational Culture in UK General Practice'.
- *The Centre for Pacific Studies* plans impact through its Knowledge Transfer function in the new European Consortium of Pacific Studies (ECOPAS). The strategy here is to develop of regional policies concerning climate change and gender issues. Witness the 'Pacific Connections' High Level Panel at the European Development Days event in Warsaw, 2011, co-organized with the Pacific Division of the European Commission's European External Action Services. This was the first ever EDD High Level Panel organized by academic researchers, and the first such event open to the public. The plan is to further develop the impact of CPS research on European policy in the Pacific through the Centre's research network and research-policy interfaces.
- *The Africa and Middle East research cluster's* plans concern impacting upon the continuing effects of a colonial past. A strategy has been to focus has been upon how history and photography of empire can impact upon contemporary 'postcolonial' relations. Also the effecting of a public dialogue between 'metropolitan' and diasporic cultures (in France and Britain as well as Africa and the Middle East), and between elites and an urban poor.
- *The Medical Anthropology research cluster* plans further impact on the organization of social services in welfare states. The strategy is for joint projects with the Social Dimensions of Health Institute (Dundee), and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, that concern the practicalities of managerial change and institutional standardization.
- *The Visual/Material/Sensory research cluster* plans impact by way of linkages between Scottish craftspeople and those in developing areas: Kyrgyzstan, Ecuador. A project bringing together Kyrgyz and Scottish basket-weavers aims to explore creative synergies in community sustainability, practical learning and innovation.

d. Relationship to case studies

The case-studies relate to two key domains for strategizing impact at St. Andrews: the nation-state, specifically Scotland in the world; and global governance, specifically European Union policy. Bringing together Kyrgyz and British craft producers, and their publics, and bringing European bureaucrats and Pacific islanders together in a knowledge exchange, are examples of the way in which we endeavour to improve quality of life (as perceived by our research subjects). Also how impact is deemed a part of ongoing social interaction: an aspect of social relations.

The case-studies derive from two of the main drivers of the department's research culture: the Centre for Pacific Studies, and the Visual/Material/Sensory research cluster, building on existing research relations. Our impacting work as a whole during 2008-13 has derived from existing projects in public engagement; but the case-studies have also benefitted from the allocation of specific funds and thus represent investments made by the Department as a whole.