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Labour mobility and diaspora: An overview of Solomon Islands' historical regulatory experience, 1850s-2013

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

Abstract

With less than 4,500 of its population of around 600,000 living overseas in 2013, the Solomon Islands ranks 138th in the world for diaspora formation. At these levels the scale of the diaspora as a proportion of population (0.8 percent) remains lower than it was in the early 20th century, when more than 5,000 Solomon islanders were compulsorily repatriated from Queensland under early Australian Commonwealth legislation. This working paper retraces and reframes the history of Solomon Islands labour mobility and diaspora formation since the 1850s, considering it in relation to the wider institutional and macro-regulatory machineries of three phases or regimes of economic, trade and mobility regulation. These regimes are referred to in this paper as: 1.liberal imperial, 2. national territorial and 3. international neoliberal. We argue that Solomon Islanders' participation in labour mobility has been substantial under all three phases, but that international mobility and diaspora formation only developed significantly under the liberal imperial regime. Even then, however, its development proved precarious. The ways regional actors and governments acting within the different regimes have framed and segmented labour markets continue to powerfully shape mobility and diaspora outcomes. The paper concludes with a discussion of the implications of the situation to date for future economic development and security in Solomon Islands.

Introduction

With just 0.8 percent of its global natal population living overseas, the Solomon Islands (Figure 1), a Pcific archipelago, ranks 138th in the world for diaspora formation as a proportion of population: a total of less than 4500 persons within a population just under 600,000 in 213 (Bedford et al. 2014). At these levels, the scale of the diaspora as a proportion of population remains much lower than it was in the early 20th century, when 5,000 Solomon Islanders living and working in Queensland were compulsorily repatriated under early 'White Australia' legislation (Corris 1972). Compared to island states in the northern and eastern Pacific, the small diaspora is exceptional when compared with over 50% of Samoans and 85% of Cook Islanders living offshore (Lilomaiava-Doktor 2009, Cook Islands Government 2012).

Figure 1: The Solomon Islands

This situation is not changing substantially either. As Bedford et al. (2014) show, any increase in Solomon Islands net migration to regional destinations Australia and New Zealand in recent years has been low, with a cumulative net gain of Solomon Island-born permanent and long-term migrants in the two countries of less than 600 over the decade 2003/4 to 2012/13. This is despite shifts in the international context including wider liberalisation (or, as below, neoliberalisation) and rising internationalisation and movement of most production factors (labour, capital, and commodities).

Globally, migration rates are rising, albeit with distinctive local and regional patterns of acceleration and deceleration. Currently, the Solomon Islands shares its low diaspora status with Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Vanuatu, other Melanesian states which also saw extensive international labour mobility in previous times. These and other small diaspora countries share several common features such as low remittances, limited relation between training and skills at home and wider labour markets, large underemployed young urban populations, and international scholarships restricted to a small elite. From this regional similarity arises too a wider perception that whatever they did in the past, Melanesian people are not as intrinsically mobile as, for example, their Polynesian neighbours.

This paper sets out to reframe and explain this anomaly by investigating the core developmental and governmental contexts they emerged in. Rather than locate the explanation primarily within cultural framings, it takes a cue from the extent (and the fate) of the 19th century diaspora and sets out to reframe Solomons' mobility in terms of wider regulatory arrangements around international and western Pacific regional political economy and regulation of labour movement. The paper investigates labour mobility and migration not primarily as a social or cultural factor, but in terms of the opportunities and constraints emerging from contemporary capitalism and its regularising of market arrangements, securing and governing of territories, and incorporating populations. It argues that it has been the wider regimes of labour market regulation internationally, and the ways these have interacted with Solomon Islands contexts, that best explain the patterns and extent of Solomon Islands diaspora. The core features and time periods of these regimes: liberal imperial (19th and early 20th century), national territorial (mid 20th century) and international neoliberal (late 20th and 21st century), are elaborated broadly below.

The paper argues that many Solomon Islanders have been active participants in labour mobility within each of the three regimes. Their participation has, however, been somewhat delayed, restricted in various ways, and certainly instigated within strongly assymmetric economic and power relations, to which the Solomon Islands has been somewhat marginal. This delay and marginality has indeed shaped structures of expectation about mobility, investment in education, and development assistance, both within and outside the country. Looking forward to what might change, we sketch the kinds of new opportunities that might arise in the current regulatory framework and how young Solomon Islanders might be positioned differently in relation to territory, borders, citizenship, and labour market regulation to be a part of these wider patterns of mobility.

This paper is one in a series the authors are writing to set the scene for a substantial, closely researched analysis of factors that have shaped and will shape patterns of mobility and diaspora in the western Pacific, with particular reference to the Solomon Islands. Seeking to explain current situations and foreshadow future developments in both internal and international mobility of Solomon Islanders, these papers reach back into the history of each of the following dimensions:

1. Cultural economy including 'subsistence affluence' (Fisk 1982[1]), circularity, cultural patterns and the prominence of *internal* diaspora
2. Mobility within wider regulatory regimes and contests associated with international political economy, and historical institutional arrangements (markets, security, protection and territory)
3. The challenges of post conflict development of skills capability, including co-production, aid dependence and patrimonialisation, with special reference to education

Analytic framings

Mobility within wider regulatory regimes, the second dimension listed above, is addressed in this paper. Preliminary analysis is framed around the regulation of labour markets and related mobilities and securities. Markets, as Karl Polanyi (1957) famously described, were never simply free: they were always constructed within regulatory frameworks that enabled them to function securely and, to an extent, predictably. Regulationist analyses (Kenny 1999, Peck 1996) developed to try to explain the ways in which capitalism regularised itself, and did not simply lurch from crisis to crisis. They

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[1] Subsistence affluence is Fisk's (1978) summative term for the ability of Melanesian rural/ village production systems to provide a high and secure level of subsistence within a context of surpluses of labour, land and product. These were not the subsistence systems that are frequently associated with grinding poverty in the literature.

focussed attention on the particular configurations (social, institutional, and spatial/ territorial) within which capitalist relations were embedded (Peck 1996). Related analyses of places peripheral to capitalist development (of which the Solomon Islands is a clear case) described the ways these places did and did not get incorporated into capitalist relations and colonial hegemonies (Wolf 1997). Historical institutional analyses have focused in further on the ways regulatory framings reflected elite interests and compromises, which again meant that it was not just raw market power or participation that shaped outcomes: it was also the ways rules and institutionalised control over populations and resources shaped these market forces and their outcomes (Pierson 2004).

Elements of all of these 'regulatory' perspectives inform this paper. Following Jamie Peck (1996), it takes as its starting point the view that labour markets and associated mobilities are especially embedded in social and regulatory framings (regimes) related to place and space. It focusses attention on institutional arrangements securing mobility of capital and the factors of production and making allocations of factors and property durable and legal. Our analysis investigates the ways these frameworks afford status, protection and rights to individuals, locales and populations and the ways these have shaped the configuration and segmenting of labour markets and managing and securing of mobility pathways. Mobility duration and extent, directionality and circularity, regularity and legality are all powerfully shaped or determined by these regulatory framings. As Peck (1996: 29-32) describes, the ways individuals and groups are framed and managed in relation to labour markets and their peripheral institutions (schools, social security systems, aid programmes) determine whether individuals and groups will be invested in, and be seen as long term prospects for transition to citizenship and full labour market participation. Regulatory framings shape whether migrants will see their contingent status in relation to the labour market maintained or moved beyond, and whether wider diaspora formation is in fact possible.

When this paper refers to 'governing' or 'institutional' arrangements, then, it is these broader senses, related to the wider development of capitalism and its embedded social relations, that are being mentioned. Despite this weighty structural framing, however, the paper sets out to retain the strongly empirical insights from earlier studies of Pacific labour mobility (Corris 1970, Moore et al. (eds) 1990), which show considerable levels of agency on the part of island peoples themselves, usually willing participants in the opportunities afforded. The wider market and social regulation are framed in a fairly standard periodization, and these show how in the Solomon Islands labour mobility and diaspora formation were both enabled and constrained within three periods:

- Liberal imperial regulation at the frontier c.1850-1906. Regulatory and security arrangements evolved around adventurous trade and exchange, resource extraction and intensive-extensive agricultural production in plantations, much of it for metropolitan consumption. Security concerns involved great power rivalries and mission concerns for protection of mobile workers and local societies. Pacific migrant workers were framed/segmented as hardy, tropically adapted circular migrants living in plantation focussed settlements, working contingent to but still within regional markets.
- Territorially or nationally embedded regulation: early 20th century-early 1980s. Regulatory arrangements evolved to secure development of national productive factors, including labour. The focus was on independent national development within system of nation states emhasizing, for a time, full (national) employment and social welfare, urban industrial and state development.
- Neoliberal national economic development: early 1980s–present. The focus in this period is on labour as enabling the supply side of economy: global competition for skills, new opportunities for young, independent, skilled migrants, but strict management of unskilled labour migration,

full cost recovery and outsourcing of process management, amidst rising concerns about migration and job security, and a wider regional security focus.

Part 1: Liberal imperial regulation at the labour frontier c. 1850-1906

The liberal imperial trading regimes that developed from northern European bases from the 17th century onwards had, by the early 19th century, developed a virtually global reach. This reach was driven at its edges by extractive and commercial entities and privateer traders or labour brokers, seeking to leverage considerable price differences for a range of high demand commodities, luxuries, and production factors, including plantation labour. Enabled by shipping systems that rapidly expanded extraction and exchange of factors including labour (Belich 2009), much of the trade was underpinned by metropolitan markets for oils and proteins provided by expansive pastoral and plantation agriculture. Explosive settlement of temperate agricultural zones was fuelled by substantial labour demand, so that settler colonies including Australia and New Zealand became 'working men's paradises', with high wages and high rates of asset ownership. The indentured labour trade operated at the edges of settled agricultural, extractive and plantation island capitalist production, using the same trading networks, but compensating for the problems achieving mass (European) labour settlement in tropical zones (Newbury 1974, 1980). Demand was huge, rewards for traders high, but supply of labourers was a more fickle business, even when its terms and conditions became relatively stable. Government of the labour trade typically followed in the traders and brokers' wake, securing its domains and regulating its excesses.

The expansion of the 19th century Pacific labour trade was a considerable exercise, with island and other labour shipped throughout the Pacific especially to Fiji, Samoa and New Caledonia as well as to countries on the rim: Australia and even Costa Rica and Peru in tiny numbers. As Corris (1973, 1) describes, "from 1863 to 1914 the islands of the western Pacific served as a vast labour pool for European enterprise in Queensland and a number of Pacific island colonies. In those years, about 100,000 went as indentured labourers… about one third… [of whom] were Solomon Islanders". In this movement, young male labourers in their teens from the western Pacific were in the forefront, travelling from what became 'Melanesia' (Crocombe 1991, 1994; Lawson 2013) into the eastern Pacific, and even Guatemala (see Figure 2). Their travel coinciding with a lifecourse period of minimal economic and social obligations within the village.

Some 62,000 'South Sea Islanders', mainly from Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, came to Queensland alone between the 1860s and the early 1900s (Leckie 1990, Munro 1990, Moore, Leckie and Munro (eds) 1990, Lewis 1996). "About 10,000" Solomon islanders went to Fiji and 18,735 to Queensland between 1871 and 1904 (Corris 1970, 334-337), of whom around three quarters returned home. In parts of the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu) and Malaita (which contributed just over half of all Solomon Islands' labour migrants (Moore 2013, 4)) the combination of indenture and staying on saw considerable depopulation of males living within a few kilometres of the coast (Morrell 1969). Most young men in these locales participated in indenture in the first half of their adult life (Bennett 1987). Across much of the Solomon Islands in the second half of the 19th century many young men (and their kin) would have considered their options in the labour trade.
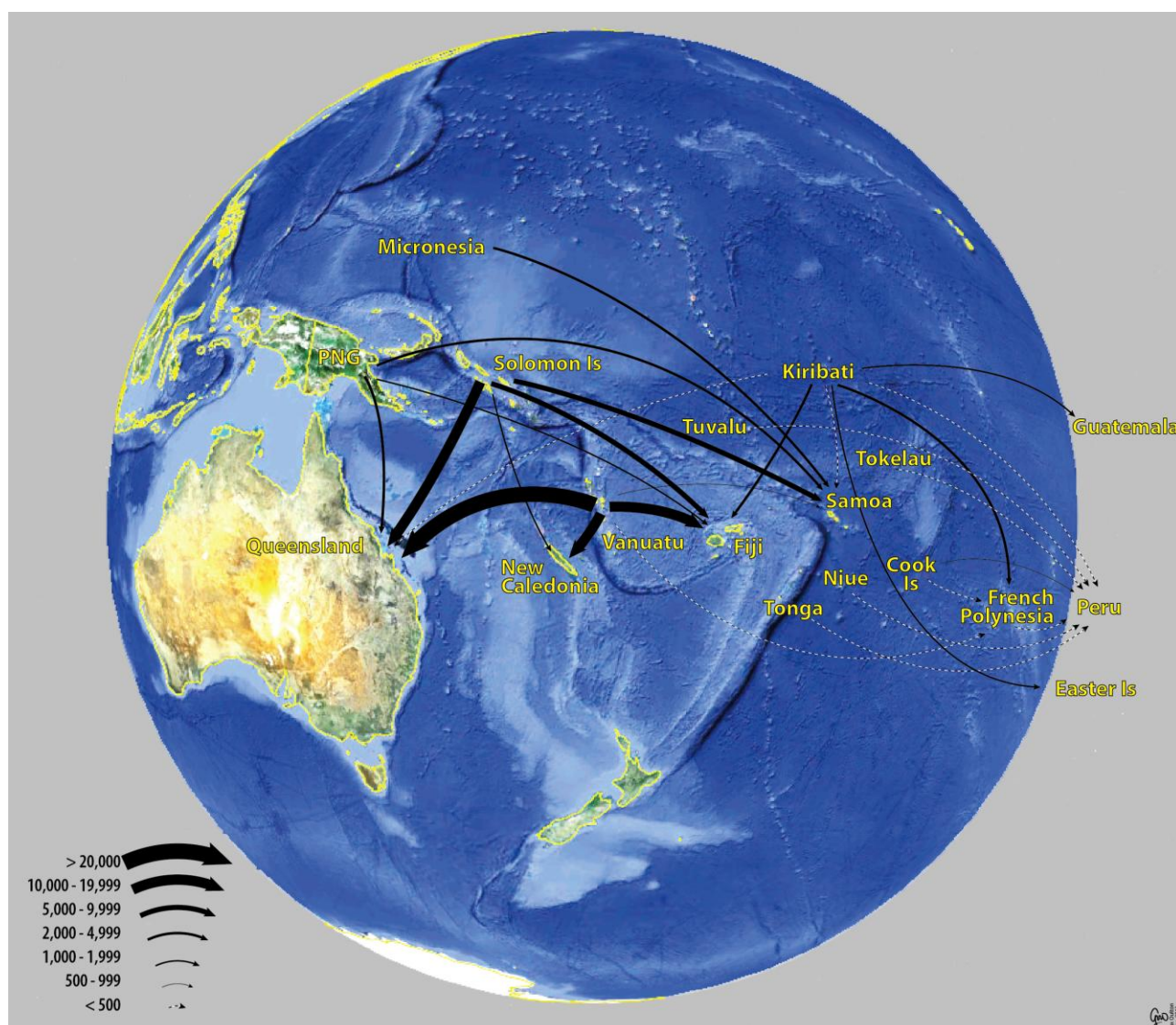
Figure 2: Major International Migration flows in the south western Pacific, 1860-1910

The Pacific rim provided, then as now, a major set of staging points for long as well as short distance mobility. Although many migrants relied mostly on kin and themselves for support (including Chinese migrant workers), imperial mobility arrangements helped. In French Indochina, labourers from Vietnam were moved across major cultural divides to plantations in Cambodia and nickle mines in New Caledonia. There was also the movement of more than a million Indian indentured labourers to work in mainly sugar estates from St Kitts to Suva, again largely within British imperial regulatory framings. By identifying these workers primarily in terms of their inclusion within wider empire, and within that empire's trade protections rather than just within labour development of nation states, this regime afforded limited liberal subjecthood and secure mobility to Pacific peoples.

In this wider mobility context, both settler and mobile circular labour populations were significant. Then as now, the two blurred over time, with many 'circular' migrants becoming often marginal settlers. Solomon Islanders' movement was mostly circular, befitting mobility related to people whose travel was always profoundly grounded in relationship. That said, the numbers staying on 'out of time' were not insignificant. As stated above, around one in four Solomon Islands labour migrants stayed on in Queensland (Corris 1972).but most were compelled to return under forced repatriation from 1906. In its heyday, this mobility was expansive, and more than a little 'Oceanic', in some of the

sense of this term Epeli Hau'ofa taught us to recognise[2]. This was above all else a regional trade, its patterns strongly related to economic development in proximate locales, particularly Queensland and Fiji. Any naturalness or convenience of this regional labour arrangement, however, would soon be swamped by wider geopolitical pressures.

'Blackbirding' as the new slavery? Liberal contracting, social segmentarity and mobility

From the outset, indentured labour for plantations was based in local labour shortages, asymmetries of labour costs and the existence of a group of people with the means of transport (boats) willing to trade or arbitrage across these asymmetries. Cane and cotton labour were intensive and gruelling; in the Americas, extensive plantations were represented as only possible on the basis of coerced labour (Thomas 1987, 182-195). These same shortages and asymmetries in labour cost and conditions had underpinned centuries of slave trading across the Atlantic. Like Atlantic slavery, Melanesian labour mobility was geared to supporting development of extensive, proto-industrialising agricultural production on plantations and estates: cotton, sugar, coconuts, cattle as well as extractive industries. Melanesian indenture segmented the labour market, giving it a lower 'contingent' tier (see below) with a distinctive set of rights, leaving migrant labourers largely, though by no means entirely, resident in discrete, peri-plantation camps beholden to employers for many aspects of basic provision. Rights of these workers as migrants, residents or citizens, however, were not closely defined in law or practice until the early 20th century. As regulatory framings changed, and the political power of southern Australian regions came to dominate policy framings, Pacific labourers would again become vulnerable.

Frameworks that did govern were not however inconsequential. After a rough start which did involve kidnapping, rogue operators and violent overseers, the Pacific labour trade was institutionalised as a 'frontier liberal' form of labour subordination and segmentation, involving contracting within nominally liberal 'rule of law' framings. It was a business that "required the substantial consent of all concerned, which was, in a considerable measure, forthcoming from the islanders who were involved with it" (Scarr 1967, 139, cited in Corris 1973, 4). Government agents were deployed on ships, and Australian courts and officials regulating the trade on the spot sometimes exercised their powers effectively. Island labour thus formed a core part of what Peck (1996) calls the 'contingent labour force' operating around and integrated into a regional (as opposed to merely national) labour market. They were an element in the shared structure of *empire*, rather than within the exclusive taxonomy of *national* citizenship status. This contingent imperial labour status offered more rights than illiberal slave regimens, including the right of safe return. Thus unlike Atlantic slavery, the Pacific trade from the outset involved high expectation of circular return into powerful communal bonds. Crucially, in labour market segmentation terms (Peck 1996), it thus offered all involved a status outside the regular labour market, to which its members could be re-consigned when their desirability to that market diminished.

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[2] Hauofa (1993: 8) "'Oceania' connotes a sea of islands with their inhabitants. The world of our ancestors was a large sea full of places to explore, to make their homes in, to breed generations of seafarers like themselves. People raised in this environment were at home with the sea. They played in it as soon as they could walk steadily, they worked in it, they fought on it. They developed great skills for navigating their waters, and the spirit to traverse even the few large gaps that separated their island groups. Theirs was a large world in which peoples and cultures moved and mingled unhindered by boundaries of the kind erected much later by imperial powers. From one island to another they sailed to trade and to marry, thereby expanding social networks for greater flow of wealth. They travelled to visit relatives in a wide variety of natural and cultural surroundings, to quench their thirst for adventure, and even to fight and dominate"

Like Atlantic slavery, indentured labour migration in the western Pacific transformed local, social and family relations in the village leaving, for example, women increasingly tied to domestic work and basic provision, while tilting the balance of local political and ritual power to males who could bring back status acquiring assets, including weapons with which to redefine relations with neighbours (Wolf 1997). The incentives to go were large, but so too were the costs in terms of loss of local productive and security capabilities. Intermediaries used a mix of incentives and inducements to convince individuals and families to let their young men contract and travel for work and income. But many simply signed up, seeing this kind of work as a rite of passage and opener of possibilities (Keesing 1978; Bennett 1987). In fact, indenture arguably worked well in the segmentary social contexts of Melanesia (Oliver, 1951). Partly on this basis, 'Melanesians' became the preferred providers to plantations partly because 'wantokism'[3] was highly segmentary, flexible and amenable to circular, group mobility, and well suited to the male workcamp/gang required for landclearing and extensive cultivation. Flexible segmentarity had other unexpected effects. Contingent labour market and population segmentation led to the establishment of horizontal social bonds between different groups of labourers as South Sea Islanders or more often 'Kanakas' and the formation of a loose sense of regional identity and rivalry linkages supported by a shared language, Pidgin (Crocombe 1994). Increasingly, the labourers also shared Christian faith and community. These horizontal social bonds extended into other 'black' communities in Queensland, Fiji, and Samoa, and were likely a factor enabling circularity to be broken in those countries leading to considerable numbers staying on 'out of time'.

At the same time, 19th century liberal migration settings designed for imperial subjects offered opportunities to labourers who had completed contracts to stay on, and establish themselves in Australia. For the ones who had joined the indentured trade partly out of alienation or conflict at home, staying in Australia meant avoiding renewed stigma and they were ones most likely to stay (Moore 1981). So too were the entrepreneurial, those best able to create new wantok links, spiritual and wider engagement in the labour context. It seems then that any stereotype that attributes directional mobility to some characteristic of peoples from Polynesian peoples but not in those from Melanesia needs to be questioned.

Liberal empire and the security and protection of subjects: Ideologies and practices of protection

Liberal empire thus differed from illiberal or absolutist empire in several important dimensions. Absolutist empire, as practised by Iberian powers in the Americas, was based on fairly simple submission to global (divine and royal) authority, involving an absolute surrender of control, and often of land, liberty, labour and life to empire's royally empowered agents. Liberal empire was more nimble (though it too could be brutal in its subordination of indigenous populations), rooted in naval power and unequal exchange underpinning seaborne trade. It facilitated this through its advancement (and often enforcement) of private rights and freedoms in relation to person and property. This applied to the rights of British subjects in the first instance but, gradually and contingently, indigenous and even mobile populations were placed under imperial protection. Liberal ideals are now popularly regarded as universal: the universal human rights of citizens and individuals. But as we have already seen, liberal governing arrangements were in labour market practice highly segmentary and differentiated, practically tiered in favour of the what we might call the "full liberal subject", and the protection of his

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[3] 'Wantok' is a common Pidgin term across Melanesia for a person from the same language group. It is also used as an expression to signify common identity with people from the same local area, same island or, in contexts where Melanesians are overseas, the same island group or country.

rights. As is usual in the formation of institutional frameworks, these arrangements were set up primarily to enable the economic development of dominant imperial or commonwealth actors and agents. Contracts, property and citizen rights were to the fore, not actual living arrangements and labour situations of contingent populations.

The liberal, frontier-imperial regime was always a compromise between high governing ideals (or indeed ideologies) and the everyday adventurism, often rogue, with which commercial and colonial agents approached the places and spaces they sought wealth in. At the centre of empire, legal charters framed the rights of adventurers and their limited liability companies, in terms of rights of property and monopoly (at least among metropolitan subjects) over commercial domains. 'Liberty' was supposed to operate 'within the law', but in reality capital and labour frontiers operated well ahead of frontiers of government and, in terms of enforcement, 'the man on the spot called the shots' (Galbraith 1960, Lynn 1982). Nonetheless, various extensions of 'protection', citizen rights and associated security considerations generally followed early frontier extraction and trading relationships at some distance.

Within this overall ambit, imperial annexation, treaty, dependency and protectorate options for governing territory were variously applied. Under this wider, variegated *pax Britannica*, a good deal of semi-autonomous mobility could occur, and horizontal links between protected groups could emerge. The prospects, then, of these people becoming full liberal state citizens were variously defined, with a good deal of seepage across boundaries and status. Questions, however, about the particular status of currently or previously *indentured* labour, particularly in relation to slavery and later to full citizen labour, remained an issue.

In the mid 1800s, the fight against slavery had been the great political success claimed by British evangelical Christianity, and it remained one of their large policy preoccupations. In the 1860s when the Solomons labour trade began, Britain's own abolition had yet to spread even as far as its former United States colony. For a powerful and committed group of evangelicals in and around the Colonial Office and London Missionary Society, the fight against actual slavery, as well as protection of those involved in mobility for labour, was very much an ongoing mission. Certain missions had powerful support in the Colonial office, at least when it came to drafting, if not enforcing, rules. When there was violence affecting missionaries and their followers, mission outrage was conveyed directly to the heart of the British colonial administration.

Protection, then, was an important element in liberal empire as it practically developed. It was conceived in terms of imperial subject status. The strongest protection, in this view, would come from becoming full British imperial subjects: hence some of the priority given this status in the region's most substantive liberal colonial arrangement, the Treaty of Waitangi, which (mal-)formulated colonial sovereignty in New Zealand. There is no doubt the liberal framework empowered and enabled the mobility of its most favoured subjects. As AJP Taylor (1970, 1) famously described, writing in the 1960s when these arrangements would have seemed even more exceptional:

> Until 1914 a sensible, law abiding Englishman could… live where he liked and as he liked. He had no official number or identity card. He could travel abroad or leave his country forever without a passport or any sort of official permission. He could exchange his money for any other currency without restriction or limit. He could buy goods from any country in the world on the same terms as he bought goods at home. For that matter, a foreigner could spend his life in this country without permission and without informing the police*.*

But, as in the case of the New Zealand Treaty, full status as liberal subjects was rarely, if ever, granted or enforced in relation to British colonial subjects. Weak, locally variant elements of protection of

vulnerable populations, along with practical subordination of rights to governmental process and British legal usages, persisted in both law and its enforcement. Historically, this kind of asymmetry is common. As feminist critiques of liberal governance have made clear, the universality of liberal subjectivity and sovereignty is routinely circumscribed in reality. As Pateman (1988, 90) and Brown (1995, 135-196) discuss, liberal governance of the 'vulnerable' or 'dependent', or those with dependants, usually had an element of disablement in order to protect. Independence and associated individual rights of, as opposed to dependence for, mobility, security and political participation are rarely fully ascribed to these subordinated subjects. Reading accounts of interactions between labour diasporas and colonial interlocuturs in the late 19th century it is difficult to escape the notion that there was a persistence of the 'adult-boy' trope of colonial relations. Such colonial tropes, including views of colonised peoples which "other" through infantilization ('boy', innocence)[4] leave such subjects doubly vulnerable, especially in terms of legal, territorial and mobility rights. It too gave them an identity (a village living innocent) outside the formal labour market, to which they could be re-consigned: the classic position of actors in the contingent labour market. For populations including the Solomon Islanders, who never had more than protectorate status, vulnerability to shifts in imperial structure and related labour legislation would prove considerable.

Emergence of the Solomon Islands as a frontier protectorate

Government, territory and security are intrinsically linked especially when power relations and territorial borders are unclear, contested or threateningly permeable. The Solomons Islands first substantial territorialisation within the lens of imperial European governance was as a British protectorate in June 1893. Protectorate status everywhere was, as Munro and Firth (1986: 65) put it, typically "a function of great power diplomacy". One also might argue that it was a function of great power securitization, although within somewhat loose and provisional parameters. Colonial 'protection' took many forms, including military, cultural, and moral with the latter having particular relevance in the context of British opposition to slaving for "the abuses of the Kanaka labour trade" (Fry 1948, 116).

Nineteenth century protectorates in the Pacific were colonial power *lite* and liberal. They involved a narrow three or four way arrangement (British vs foreign powers, local commonwealth governments and finally locals) involving carefully limited trustee responsibilities. Where the protection was declared more or less unilaterally by Britain it was directed primarily *against* a third party although protection for settlers and annexes also usually figured. In 1892, the scramble to draw imperial lines of allegiance and security on maps was well underway. Protectorate status ultimately came in a domino cascade across the Pacific that started with the Gilbert and then the Ellice islands. German labour recruiting was active across the boundaries of the 1886 agreement, and its recruiters were effective, not least because they were willing to supply guns to recruits (Munro and Firth 1986, 67). They wanted trade to continue either under British auspices or their own expanded control. The British hand was forced. Either they annex or, as Salisbury argued, they hand over the islands to the Germans (Munro and Firth 1986, 65-7). In the face of Colonial office reluctance the islands were annexed.

It was logical that the Solomons would be next. Delivering such a large chunk of the Western Pacific into the hands of one Britain's chief colonial rivals was ultimately unacceptable. It would invite vehement protests from Australia and New Zealand who "would look on it as a breach of faith

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[4] Other important colonial identity tropes are the savage, the noble savage, and the sexualised or marriageable/domesticable dusky maiden.

portending surrender in all directions to Foreign Powers" (Colonial Office minute of 9 Jan 1892, cited in Munro and Firth (1986 footnote 13)). Fears that the French might, in turn, make claims over the Southern Solomon Islands drove Britain to "take up her territorial options" (Munro and Firth 1986, 67) in the Solomon Islands in 1892. Munro and Firth (1990, 100) sum the effects of the new regional security regime on labour mobility as reflecting the growing territorialisation of trading arrangements emerging elsewhere as a result of imperial rivalry.

> The European mobilisation of labour supplies was characterised by a shift from 'free trade' to a 'mercantilism' in which the colonial state increasingly became the regulator of recruiting. More precisely, the Western Pacific labour market became more and more Balkanised as successive colonial administrations prevented or limited recruiting for outside destinations.

As a colonial protectorate, the Solomon Islands would see some *unilaterally* decided widening of powers of jurisdiction over foreigners and locals (Munro and Firth,1986). In the Pacific, the powers of the biggest 'man on the spot', the High Commissioner in Fiji (significantly, *not* the governors of New Zealand or Australian states), were gradually expanded, ahead of wider extension of protectorate status. The line of authority would stretch down to District Commissioners who would have an immediate responsibility for regulating both local trade and local violence. The role of control and security in expanding empire is most neatly captured in a letter from Western Pacific High Commissioner Sir F.H. May, 8 December 1911:

> It will, I think, be conceded that one of the cardinal principles upon which the administration of a new country should be based is that the "Pax Britannica" must be enforced. It is useless to endeavour to educate a savage people in order to lift them to a higher plane of civilization unless it is demonstrated that the Government can and will make the King's peace respected. (May to Harcourt, 8 December 1911. Cited in Boutilier 1979: 44)

The effective reach and developmental capability of British empire would however wane markedly through the 20th century. Protectorate dependency status would ultimately mean that after the Second World War, with the decline of British imperial reach, the Solomons would be on a 'Commonwealth' path to territorial independence that would offer a much constrained set of opportunities compared to Micronesian and Polynesian islands. Links to Australia based on plantation economies and primary production wage labour arrangements had by World War I been almost entirely erased, and nothing has replaced them over the last 100 years. Local trading, plantation, logging and now mining interests notwithstanding, the significance of the Solomon Islands to the Australian economy as a whole became miniscule.

Part 2: Territorially embedded labour mobility: expulsion, national pacification and internal diaspora

*Pax Brit*annica would ultimately be enforced in the Solomon Islands, and with it would come new patterns of internal mobility as this section will describe. More important to the wider development of diaspora, however, would be the 'horizon shift' to territorially focussed development by major regional players, especially Australia, which at the end of the 19th century was moving to consolidate its dispersed colonial settlements into a federal economic and security entity.

Australian territorialisation of national interests in the context of wider liberal Empire was early by colonial standards. It followed only North and Bolivarian Latin American colonial states in this national refocusing of the economy and government. Territorialisation of national sovereignty was

also highly selective, retaining a British Imperial priority (for trade and security), while quickly excluding 'coloured' labour from Melanesia and Asia. Security threats were central to federation (Trainor 1994, Griffiths 2006). Crucially, they were perceived as being both external and internal. Externally, the immediate threats were rival European colonial powers who were annexing Pacific territories. More vague, but no less fear-raising were Chinese interests, present after the gold rush of the 1870s as migrant labour, but whose presence was widely regarded as a harbinger of a much deeper and ultimately territorial 'Yellow Peril'.

Pacific Islanders, by whom were meant Melanesians working almost entirely in Queensland, were also seen as an internal threat by a combination of interests, including organised labour, but more powerfully by political leaders who saw indentured labour as the harbinger of an ethnic underclass roughly equivalent to the US post emancipation Black population. Speaking to one of the legislative priorities of the first federal Parliament, the Pacific Islands Labourer's Act of 1901, the first Australian Prime Minister, Edmund Barton quoted Charles Henry Pearson, "the outstanding intellectual of the Australian colonies":

> When he [the black labourer] multiplies, the British race begins to consider labour of all but the
> highest kinds dishonourable, and from the moment that a white population will not work in the fields,
> on the roads, in the mines, or in factories its doom is practically sealed. (Commonwealth
> Parliamentary Debates, 1901-2, vol. IV, p. 5504 [5]).

The argument that strong, fully free (white) labour must not be demoralised and undermined by an ethnic class of worker prepared to work for much less had considerable traction across politics (Griffiths 2006). As Corris (1972, 1) summed, "No bill had an easier passage through the sessions of the first Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia". From the outset the national parliament stamped its authority over old state regulatory domains. In Queensland elite business interests, especially in the sugar cane industry, had been able to resist demands for white worker monopoly and suppression of international recruitment. But under Federation Queensland could no longer be exceptional. As the Pacific Island Labourers' Act, passed alongside the Immigration Restriction Act 1901, makes clear, Queensland cane workers were now subject to a national labour regime designed to protect white worker's rights. The Pacific Island Labourers' Act 1901 involved the imposition of a strict quota followed by expulsions (Corris 1972, Moore 1981). In pockets around sugar towns like Mackay small numbers of Solomon Islands migrants who were permitted to stay found cultural respite in closer relationships with embattled indigenous peoples, and in time a new creolised identity as 'Sou'sea Islanders' evolved (Moore 1981).

Australian federal integration thus had crucial implications for wider patterns of regional economic integration, and especially for Solomon Islanders' inclusion in regional economies. In Queensland, following Federation in 1901, local elite (sugar) interests in developing regional labour markets, including Melanesia, were quickly poleaxed in favour of an orientation which established territorial Australia as the primary 'region' to be engaged. This radically refocused regionality shifted discretion and control over newly 'international' mobility and labour market integration to the Australian capital (then Melbourne), where it has remained ever since, regardless of the physical proximity of Queensland and the Solomons. For Melanesians, organic regional and social development based on physical proximity of available labour and forty years development of 'bridging' cultural devices (including pidgin, churches, land leasing/ sharecropping and even political organisation) were severed, and remain so to this day. Regional mobility did not collapse immediately. Initially, Fiji remained open as a destination: many migrated and remained, in the absence of forced repatriation, after

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[5] The quotation is from Pearson's National Life and Character: A Forecast, London 1893. Cited in Corris (1972, 237).

opportunities were closed off to Solomon islanders (while opened, briefly, to South Asian migrants). For years after, rumours would circulate about the reopening of these markets, and visiting traders and ships would be asked, by way of opening the conversation, whether Queensland or Fiji were once again 'open' (Corris 1972).

Narrowing regional and local security horizons: 20th century plantation mobility, internal pacification and Indirect rule

If Australian territorialisation of the economy to national scale development was early, the Solomon Islands has been globally late. Within Melanesia, the focus of security and mobility shifted from great power economic and territorial rivalry to internal pacification, slowly expanding indirect rule administration and enabling fragile plantation concession and labour arrangements. Overall, these emphases tended to reduce labour frontiers and mobility horizons. Territorial economic integration in the Solomon Islands would remain light, at least until the enormous ruptures and shifts in regional security and imperial power around and after World War II (Brookfield, 1972). To this day, the extent and desirable levels of national territorial integrity remain issues for debate.

Pacification as well as the management of mobility and economic development were linked from the outset. A major task for 20th century colonial development was making imperial outposts economically self sufficient (Cowen and Shenton 1996). This required a range of developments along with a basic integration of land and populations into economic production and taxation. In the Solomon Islands, this required plantation development, concessionary access to land, and significant numbers of mobile workers. Integral to the whole system was introduction of a head tax, which would both pay the direct costs of government and security, and drive young men into paid labour. Institutionally and administratively, light handed colonial governance meant the ensconcement of the colonial indirect rule system, as codified across the Empire by Lugard's (1922) manual *The Dual Mandate*. The Dual Mandate (the mandate to rule came from mutual or dual benefit) was developed initially by Lugard and his peers for African colonial contexts including the District Officer with his powers across executive, security, and juridical areas and the subordinated and recast local chiefly system, with its area chiefs, village headmen and 'assistant boys' acting as the physical presence of the colonial order locally. When this encountered serious local opposition, as it did in Malaita in the 1920s, the full force of colonial policing could be applied. The extent to which these arrangements localised and sedentarised leadership and indigenous government in the Solomon Islands can be debated. However, it was the expatriate district officers and their retinues who were mobile in this regime.

This kind of system was implemented across most of the Solomon Islands by the early 20th century. Pacification led to an end of headhunting in the Western provinces (Zelenietz 1979) and, in turn, saw extensive plantation development with large international actors, including the Lever Brothers investing heavily. Malaita, however, remained the exceptional element and, in the colonial view, the last frontier for pacification. Arms were banned from returning British labour ships from 1884 but were still supplied by German and French recruiters. The *Maria*, a German vessel recruiting for Samoa, provided "a snider rifle and ammunition for each labourer who recruited" (Boutilier 1979, 47). As a result, Malaita in the early 20th century saw 30 years of intensified internal conflict, and in some parts, most adult males possessed rifles, usually antique, but well-tended and functional. The conflict had impacted back on the labour trade, with recruiters' boats a frequent target for retributive payback. The uneasy fragmentation of Malaitan life generated a reputation for unregulated, unpunished violence, which offered, in turn (and especially where missionaries or traders were the victims), a moral license for protectorate intervention.

Labour mobility had spread more rapidly than Christianity in some parts of the 19th century Pacific and Malaita was one such place. Malaitan's participation was cross-frontier, managed by indigenous gatekeepers or passage masters. In fact it was not until the trade stopped, and the need emerged for an internally mobile labour force, that Malaitan pacification ramped up. Repatriation from Queensland and the end of the Fiji labour trade in 1911 raised fears that returnees would either suffer from or add to the perceived lack of Malaitan pacification. But it also brought back to northern Malaita both indigenous Malaitan missionaries and their Australian patrons in what became the South Seas Evangelical Mission, and later again the Malaya Timber Company (Moore 2013). Many returnees preferred to establish new, Christian villages on the coast.

In the meantime, the 'endemic' nature of 'murder with impunity' provoked the Colonial administration into a range of innovations, including the establishment of a permanent government presence, a native police force at Rarasru on Auki harbour, and after a couple of false starts, the appointment of a highly capable District Officer, William Bell. Although Bell's personal dynamism resulted in the suppression of ritual killing, regulation of rogue labour trading and taxpaying across much of Malaita, it was his own killing at the hands of Kwaio leaders that led to the invasion, desecration and demoralisation of the most significant enclave of Malaitan colonial resistance (Keesing and Corris 1980). The tax did motivate plantation movement, wherein 'the recruiting ships followed the tax-collecting party like vultures' (Keesing and Corris 1980, 80). However, the Solomon Islands plantation economy suffered from fairly acute labour shortages for much of its lifespan (see Bennett 1987).

Circular labour mobility, then, was sustained by the post-Queensland internal plantation economy, but it was also contained within local contexts. Between 1913 and 1940 just under 38,000 Solomon Islanders were recruited for work on plantations and labour was drawn from islands throughout the archipelago (Bennett, 1987; Shlomowitz and Bedford, 1988). Although pacification saw an internal movement of many 'bush' people to new coastal locations alongside their 'salt water' neighbours, other processes of mobility, such as urbanisation or extensive movement for education were largely absent (Bennett 1987).

Inside SI national independence, internal diaspora and labour market isolation: Dislocated dimensions of post WWII regional arrangements

World War II instantiated an enormous rupture of the Solomon Islands population and mobility containment, which radically and permanently changed its mobility patterns (Brookfield, 1972). Japanese invasion led to forced labour while American responses created unprecedented opportunities for workers willing to move to their military base in Guadalcanal. Between Point Cruz and Henderson airfield, a vast and well paid labour market opened for young Solomon Islanders. Again, Malaitans were at the forefront, mobilising wantoks to grasp the new labour and mobility possibilities. But in wider context, post war moves towards independence for the Solomon Islands came at a time when international labour mobility (except out of Europe) was historically low. As elsewhere in the post World War II colonial world, national governance in the Solomon islands grew up in the shadow of waning metropolitan influence and the imperative to develop independent, territorially standalone national capabilities and identities.

In the metropolis and Pacific-rim regional economies, the Keynesian/ Fordist paradigm emphasised industrial development and full employment of national workforces. Security arrangements also shifted from being imperial to being based in independent alliances to other states: alliances which by no means necessarily included labour mobility in the ways liberal empires with their extensions of limited citizenship rights had allowed. Australian national industrial and labour force development

focussed on large cities in south, while developing plantations in the north recruited polyglot European and south Asian workers, mechanised and, later still, casualised. Agricultural and industrial labourers from Europe and, in New Zealand's case, the eastern Pacific, flooded into Australasian cities, found well paid jobs, developed chain migration on a significant scale and formed active diasporas.

As the tide of American and British interest in the Pacific receded, and as Australia focussed its developmental and labour interests elsewhere, it was countries with direct links to other powers (eg France) or to the new regional economies (especially New Zealand's) that saw horizons expand, significant movements of people, and accelerated diasporic and urban development. Solomon Islands links to Britain were, in labour mobility terms, completely ineffectual. Solomon islanders would emerge as full national citizens bearing liberal rights within their national territory, but in a context where the national entity was not able to sustain economic or social development in its regions, or manage the centralised asymmetries and tensions emerging from internally contained mobility. The new Pacific mobility came to be dominated by Polynesian labour going to factories in South Auckland, and the industrial growth generated by the long boom and import substitution. The eastern Pacific's urbanisation, then, would happen in largest measure outside the islands themselves. (see, for example, Connell and Lea, 2002).

The horizon for Solomon islands mobility and urbanisation was much closer to home. As independence loomed in the 1970s, there were several factors leading to the absence of mobility possibilities in the Solomon Islands' independence settlement. Most immediately, a recession induced by the 1970s "oil crisis" was creating some backlash against Pacific labour mobility. In Solomon Islands, as in PNG, Kiribati and Tuvalu, independence was rushed by a colonial power with largely unilateral scope to decide and offload responsibilities. Its net effect was to effectively re-inscribe territorial boundaries as containers of populations, especially since in all of these former protectorates and trust territories, independence did not bring any special mobility quota status typically available within parts of the eastern and northern Pacific, except that Solomon Islanders can still enter the distant UK with a visa on arrival. It is, however, not clear that the Solomon Islands would have been better off with a more direct Australian link. This had not delivered much by way of access to Papua New Guineans despite the direct colonial connection. Within the Solomon Islands, however, internal rural circulation and rural-urban mobility was substantial, as it was across the Pacific (Bellam, 1970; Chapman, 1970, 1975, 1976; Frazer, 1981, 1985; Friesen, 1986). Mobility and diaspora formation across cultural and linguistic boundaries were active too; but like all mobility since Fiji closed as a labour site, it happened entirely within the scale of the Solomon islands as a territorial entity.

Across the 'post-colonial' world, development of national capitals and the formation of formal bureaucracy from the centre outwards loomed large, enabled by post-colonial aid. Government and its sites expanded in generally planned if not sustainable ways. As the site of the international port and airport, the national hospital, education institutions and government, the scale of organisation in Honiara soon dwarfed that anywhere else, albeit that the bulk of the population, including Honiara dwellers, retained a basic loyalty to the village and island (Friesen, 1993, 1994). Those prepared to move to work for any period of time were again presented with unprecedented opportunities for income, saving, rentier activity, and even asset ownership, albeit that the alienated land on which the city was built was and still is government leasehold. Predominant circularity of mobility within the Solomon Islands now shifted from plantation work to 'rural-urban' mobility, a process which is documented in extensive and elaborate essays (including two specifically on the Solomon islands by Bathgate and Frazer) in Murray Chapman and Mansell Prothero's (1985) classic collection *Circulation in Population Movement: Substance and Concepts from the Melanesian Case* (recently been re-issued by Routledge as one of their 'Routledge Revivals').

Honiara was a magnet of attraction for many Solomon Islanders in the 1970s and 1980s. A landmark study by Chapman (1970, 1976) considered the multiple motivations for mobility, including employment, church business, visiting relatives/wantoks, or just 'going walkabout'. Movements ranged in duration from daily to long-term, and Honiara was often a central node for those moving from the Weather Coast of Guadalcanal for any substantial length of time. Fraser's (1981) Ph.D. thesis considered the way Malaitans, especially young men, were 'olo raon long taon' (wandering around town), in some cases looking for employment and in other cases, performing various social roles beyond the restrictions of village life. Friesen (1986, 1993) demonstrated the ways in which residence and employment in Honiara were significant options within the livelihood strategies of Choiseul households, resulting in both long-term residence for some, and shorter-term circular mobility by other individuals. Beyond Honiara, significant labour migrant destinations included the provincial capitals, plantations, logging camps and mission stations and schools.

Significant internal diaspora into and around Honiara generated deepening challenges, which the post-independence state became increasingly less able to deal with. Circular mobility researchers, including Murray Chapman, were well aware that the dominance of national scale and the enshrinement of the liberal principle of unlimited individual *internal* mobility in the Solomons' national constitution raised fears of insecurity, to the point where in Chapman's words "the guarantee of individual freedom of movement in the Solomon Islands constitution seems so contradictory for a clan-based society as to threaten the very existence of a young nation-state" (Chapman 1991, 286). As Chapman illustrates in his own text, the fears could scarcely be publicly named, but everyone knew they related to Malaitan diaspora, which now had increased significance because it was contained in national boundaries of responsibility, community and security.

The regulatory response, then as again now, has been to try to create rural development, 'securing village life' in Scott MacWilliam's (2013) terms. However, economic geography and concentration of capital and development would get the better of government plans. Mobile workers would not be sedentarised in rural settings, albeit that the mobility horizons of all but an international scholarship elite were still national. What access to Honiara and the development of a powerful internal diaspora did not enable was access to the pathways to wider diaspora that pre-dated and accompanied independence in many other parts of the Pacific.

In sum, Australia's re-territorialising of labour and closure to Pacific mobility was an early example of a wider international regulatory restructuring around national territorial economic development: a re-territorialising which would have a huge impact on Solomons' diaspora formation. The high point of this regimen in the late 1970s coincided with the Solomon Islands joining the independent nations club very late. Islands and countries that maintained stronger links to former colonial and hegemonic powers, and especially those that had developed diasporas or skilled mobility-enabling education systems (eg Fiji) under the territorial regime, would soon emerge in much better positions to take advantage of the new and resurgent opportunities for mobility that would emerge in the neoliberal regulatory regime. Polynesian mobility into Australia, for example, would burgeon in the neoliberal period, whereas Solomons mobility would remain globally low.

Part 3: Neoliberal, security oriented labour mobility

The later 20th century saw growth in international trade and migration, partly enabled by a resurgent liberal orientation to movement of production factors (though labour was always the exception). This shift has been characterised as distinctively *neoliberal*, in a range of dimensions. Neoliberal

governance has involved using the powers of the nation state as well as of some international agencies, such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to secure both international and national market arrangements (Harvey 2005). National states in this context have become competition states, seeking to maximise national advantage in an open trading system. This orientation has had powerful implications for mobility of labour, especially in policies aimed at increasing and managing the supply of skilled (and unskilled) labour in richer economies. Overall, it has made more governments actively pro-immigration, both circular and directional, competing to recruit young, skilled migrants, using sorting metrics like points systems, priority skills categories and working holiday visas for young people to select migrants on strongly economic lines.

At the same time, global mobilities and the difficulties of some states, regions and populations in adjusting to the new conditions have meant a deeper set of fears around both migration (especially movement of asylum seekers) and populations of unstable or 'failing' states. Popular anxieties in these areas (often involving workers in skill areas most vulnerable to international and mobile labour competition) have been amplified by political actors, resulting in the considerable elaboration of policies and management mechanisms around borders. Again contemporaneously, intervention into conflicted territories and 'failing state' contexts has become more common. Solomon Islanders' mobility has been profoundly shaped by all these aspects.

The Solomon Island crisis of internal diaspora and its governance

Burgeoning settlement in and around Honiara, dominance of Malaitans within state machineries, issues with distributing development beyond Honiara, and an inability to sustain and develop provincial government (and the withdrawal of the state under fiscal crisis and neoliberal structural adjustment reforms), all provided ingredients for the 1997-2003 conflict and crisis known as 'the tensions' (Fry and Kaubutaulaka, 2008). By 2003, the tensions had developed characteristics that elsewhere in the world had led to a 'liberal peacemaking intervention', prompting Australia to ultimately respond to requests for help from the Solomon Islands through the Regional Assistance Mission Solomon Islands (RAMSI). This mission, led by Australia with significant Pacific participation especially from New Zealand, has significantly recast Solomon Islands' regional relationships.

In the regional security context, the RAMSI intervention has been clearly defined by Fry and Kabutaulaka (2008) as instantiating a new Australian (and to an extent international) practice and doctrine of 'cooperative intervention', within what we would describe as an "inclusive securitization" of the region of smaller archipelagic state relations to the north and northeast of Australia. Whatever the drivers of conflict on the ground, Australia's intervention was justified (or critically explained) along several lines. In the midst of rising fears about an "arc of instability", punctuated dramatically by 9/11, the Bali bombings, and terrorist groups building bases in 'failed states', the RAMSI intervention enabled deployment of a regional coalition, legitimated by repeat local requests and validated by its immediate success in stopping the worst manifestations of lawlessness. Even if it has not dealt with underlying causes of conflict (mobility and urban/ periurban settlement, centralisation and non-dispersion of development rents), RAMSI contained the conflict and allowed a sense of security and other dimensions of a 'peaceful' life in and around the capital to emerge. It also led to a resurgence of internal mobility. Great attention been given to restoration of core state function capabilities, in security, justice, public finances, health, education and the 'machinery of government, financed by unprecedented aid commitments (see Craig and Porter forthcoming). Yet, it is still not clear that either government or the Solomon Islands police will be able to deal with resurgence of settlement issues, and provide opportunities for the growing population of young people, with and without formal

education, seeking paid employment. Moreover, national policies, and to a lesser extent donor policies, have favoured rural development.

Thus even as urban, internal diaspora and ungoverned development of the urban and periurban areas accelerate, no international actor is proposing serious investment in urban development or infrastructure to cope with the growing internal diaspora. Nor, beyond some minor programs, are government or donors doing much to enable wider mobilities of the kind that might create a demographic release valve for internally-driven tensions. So far then, the tensions have both raised security fears and increased engagement, so that Solomon Islanders' actual physical proximity to Australia now matters again, in ways that have been much less visible for a century. But the tensions and the regional response have not led to policies for labour mobility that would address the core issue of contained, limited opportunities and almost exclusively internal diaspora formation. Perhaps, as Hugo (2012) argues, moves towards policy coherence across development, security and migration areas (recognising migration's potent development role) will add the needed impetus needed to see openings made for Solomon Islands mobility.

Neoliberal and security framings as obstacles to or enablers of mobility?

On the one hand, neoliberal arrangements mean that borders are open for those with skills, and that Solomon Islanders, as full national subjects in an international order, can now compete for migration places on what looks like a level playing field. Across multiple aspects of migration, marketised and privatised arrangements are increasingly dominant. Internationally, the competition for skilled migrants, temporary migrants from rich countries willing to do casual work, and fee paying students has seen a range of barriers rapidly demolished. Points systems and skill priority areas enable remarkable mobility for those with both cultural and social capital. A growing migration industry competes to provide outsourced services would be migrants able to pay (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Nyberg Sorenson, 2011). Race is no longer a selective factor, but core constituent factors of ethnicity are. Beyond this, neoliberal arrangements are highly selective, stacking the game in favour of a new liberal subject: either someone young, skilled, mobile independent and without dependents (Brown, 1995); or someone with networks, training or diaspora links to sponsoring employers; or someone unskilled, but willing to have their mobility securely circularised.

Currently some potential migrants from the Solomon Islands fit within these categories, and can afford to access them. Yet, most young Solomon Islanders are not well equipped to pay international fees or compete for thehigh-skilled kinds of jobs. The educational and economic development framings built into the neoliberal regime powerfully segment the contingent labour market in ways that leave Solomon islanders on the outside, even for its best educated and most mobile young people. What is more, Solomon islanders do not have access to working holiday visas available to young people from many Asian and most European countries. Nor are they able to self-fund their way into courses in Australian or New Zealand which offer opportunities to transition from student visas to residence. Without more investment in formal training to bridge credential gaps, and some kind of preferential treatment in international mobility, the trickle of Solomon Islands migrants is unlikely to grow, leaving the pressures on internal resources and security to develop further.

On the other hand, as in earlier times, circularity again seems to be a viable option. Solomon islanders are sought after workers in New Zealand's and Australia's seasonal labour markets. They have managed to make the recruiting regime work for them, at wantok, organisational and international diplomatic levels. Once again, Solomon islanders emerge as liberal contractors and efficient, available labour in a circular labour regimen focussed on agricultural work (Bedford 2013; Hay and Hawes

2012). In these arrangements they are subject again to some special protections and constraints which operate to segment them in, rather than out of, the contingent workforce. The difference between the current neoliberal regime of circularity and the old one, however, is in the ability of those completing their time to turn their new cultural links and capital into ongoing residence or other transitional arrangements. Neoliberal circularity operates in a tighter regulatory regime than liberal circularity, and looks set to continue to do so. By doing so, it has so far avoided political backlash, and generated real returns for workers and communities (Bedford 2013; Gibson and McKenzie 2011; McKenzie and Gibson 2010). But it also enables workers to be employed on a highly commoditised basis, without consideration of their longer lifecourse development and needs, or indeed their potential contributions. How the seasonal opening can be built on, then, will be the subject of much discussion.

Beyond this, although its extent remains small, there is a small business and professional diaspora developing in cities across Australia and other Melanesian countries (Bedford, et al. 2014). Melanesians, amongst others, are using these networks to explore a range of opportunities, through study linked to part time work and potential sponsorship by employers seeking skilled workers. This pathway is very significant in Australia as migration regulation has progressively moved to enable demand side factors, such as individual employer needs, to grow alongside the wider neoliberal supply side focus.

Meanwhile, it remains true that security issues are creating obstacles to labour related mobility and development. The nature, size and effects of these, we suggest, are not entirely understood within the wider development community, meaning that overall policy incoherence around mobility remains the norm. Western Pacific political and security relationships have developed considerably in recent years, with RAMSI being one significant example. Australia's coastline is now just another line of a more elaborate defensive security (including border security) regime which reaches out and into other sovereign territories in the region. Within this domain -- Australia's 'backyard' or 'neighbourhood' -- the prospect of instability is framed as a sovereign threat, to be tackled and processed before its results can be manifest on the mainland. Australia's immediate northeastern security boundary has effectively been shifted outwards to include the Solomon Islands. This neighbourhood security orientation sits firmly alongside (and in some tension with) neoliberal commitments to maximising the potential gains from migration and labour mobility. It is in this tension that crucial parameters of potential Solomon Islands labour mobility and diaspora formation now sit. Here, the security orientation can be seen as restricting opportunities, even for short term travel.

Balancing security and labour mobility issues, and making sure they enable rather than work against each other, is a core challenge for all governments. Securitization is perhaps the side of the challenge more immediately able to be developed. As Wilson and Weber (2008, 124) note in relation to Australian and wider border security "[the] securitization agenda is operationally apparent through the amplification of surveillance practices on and beyond the border". They note that "Advance passenger processing, the compilation of databases of 'high risk' travellers, the biometric identification of asylum seekers and biometric passports are all developments that evidence and simultaneously reinforce the increasing securitization of mobility" (Wilson and Weber 2008, 124). Long before they head to the airport, would-be holiday-makers are now subject to a raft of measures designed to pre-empt irregularity, but which have the clear effect of (unilaterally) discouraging travel of all kinds. For would-be migrants of any variety, the border is now effectively neither Brisbane, nor Honiara. The system is not transparent, at least on the Solomons' side of the dispersed border and its multiple 'sites of airport'; but many points before that. Solomon islanders have to negotiate visa application procedures which can unpredictably throw up requirements that quickly become obstacles, such as

that a tourist visa applicant must supply six months of an Australian sponsor's bank account details to show they can afford their role. Whether damage to would-be vacationers' mobility plans is deliberate or collateral, the effect can be highly discouraging of even temporary mobility.

The deepening securitization of border mobility can also strengthen a longstanding asymmetry, or a segmentation of mobility: a two class system where one class travels unimpeded, while the other must negotiate extraordinary and often invisible and non-transparent barriers. As Wilson and Weber (2008) underline, strategies of punitive pre-emption and creation of irregularity traps lead to a kind of 'social sorting' – the filtering of individuals in relation to coded categories of high or low risk' or, into an institutionally segmented mobility. Adey (2004) describes this as involving 'kinetic elites and kinetic underclasses', and Bauman (2000, 221) calls it "the extraterritoriality of the new global elite and the forced territoriality of the rest"[6].

Physically conspicuous as they currently are in many Australian rural contexts, Solomon islanders are also susceptible to focussed policing and enforcement efforts around temporary visas, as might be suggested by roadblocks and arrests in rural areas west of Brisbane (Solomon Star 2012). But perhaps wider security considerations, including the need to secure peace and stability within the Solomon islands, will also drive a widening of the pathways and deepening of investment in Solomon Islands young people and their participation in regional markets. Perhaps too some sense of the widened borders will see an inclusion of Solomon islanders within segments of the Australian and New Zealand contingent labour market, rather than practical exclusion through application of universal neoliberal algorithms. Australia and New Zealand's seasonal worker schemes certainly demonstrate increased official awareness and attention to opportunities for circular labour mobility from Pacific neighbours (World Bank 2006, Bedford 2013). In a range of international fora, this special relationship and its unique characteristics (including the youthful nature of Melanesian populations) is being increasingly recognised[7]. Overall, the emerging development-security nexus may have more to offer Solomon Islanders looking for labour mobility.

Summary and conclusions: development, mobility, security

We see strong positives in Solomon Islanders' inclusion in Australian migration framings for seasonal workers, and also in Australia and New Zealand's deepened investment in and understanding of Solomon Islands' security and development. Both signal that this is no ordinary relationship, and that it is one which Australia and New Zealand will need to pay closer attention to in the future if the relationships are to be well managed to everyone's benefit. As in the past, we suggest that labour mobility will be central to these relationships, and to the contribution they make to opportunity and security in Solomon islands.

This paper has suggested that notwithstanding the small size of the Solomons diaspora, Solomon islanders' mobility within labour markets has always been significant. In this mobility, international framings and local capabilities have always been important determinants, with local and international economic and security concerns both enabling and constraining or shaping patterns of movement. No doubt in the current paper salient aspects of all this have been too lightly sketched (for example, gender, age and cultural dimensions of labour mobility), and need further development. But we think it is clear that there have been significant opportunities for and interest in labour migration in all three

[6] cited in Wilson and Weber (2008: 125)
[7] See for example the report of the Oxford International Migration Institute from its Auckland workshop on scenarios for Pacific migration: http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/

periods. Opportunities are opening again through contemporary seasonal work arrangements, albeit on a much smaller scale to date, and so far without possibilities for staying on 'out of time' as residents.

In the early 21st century, careful management of circular labour migration is more obvious than appears to have been the case for much of the late 19th century mobility. The technologies, resources and regulatory capability involved in 'responsibility to protect' or 'preventive pre-emption' limned in this paper have their 19th century counterparts (protectorate status, trusteeship, regulation of labour traders, expulsion of workers), but by comparison with today's arrangements, these were crude and sometimes brutal machineries. Neoliberal policy settings can clearly work in concert with security concerns to constrain mobility in ways 19th century liberal settings never did. There are scenarios in which Solomon Islands mobility could be highly constrained, and with it, international diasporic benefits and enablements.

But security events such as World War II, and potentially the ethnic tensions and RAMSI can point the way to different imaginable futures and different mobilities. These mobilities can, in turn, point the way beyond tensions and a primary orientation to security in development programmes and policies, international and government alike. As RAMSI Special Coordinator Nicholas Koppel said at the Fourth Australia-Solomon Islands Business Forum in Brisbane Oct 19, 2012, "RAMSI's transition is a clear signal that …. Solomons is a country that no longer needs an extraordinary intervention involving a foreign military force and an interventionist, post-conflict model of development assistance"[8]. Perhaps a reconsideration, then, of migration, development and security aspects together will see the developmental ones come more to the fore. Beyond some framing work (World Bank 2010, 2012), we have yet to see what a Pacific or Solomon islands development model that recognises international mobility as a core element in economic, social and security development looks like. There remains, then, a great deal of room for the kinds of discussions which together can frame a new regulatory arrangement for labour, mobility and security in the western Pacific.

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[8] http://www.ramsi.org/media/news/ramsi-transition-a-sign-of-solomons-success-special-coordinator-.html

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