

JUNE 17-19, 2026

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

Plantation Lives, Gender, and Material Culture: Queen Emma's Networks and the (Post)Colonial Anglo-German Pacific

**Pre-conference Book Talk &
Exhibition Opening
June 16, 2026**

**BONN CENTER FOR DEPENDENCY
AND SLAVERY STUDIES**

RAUTENSTRAUCH-JOEST MUSEUM

ARC DISCOVERY GRANT PROJECT
“Unfreedom, Voices, Redress:
Plantation Cultures of the Western
Pacific” (2025-2028)



© Kokopo, ca 1885. Papua New Guinea Association of Australia Inc. Via <https://pngaa.org/journal/photo-gallery/queen-emma/>

© Robson, R.W. *Queen Emma. The Samoan-American Girl Who Founded an Empire in 19th Century New Guinea*. Pacific Publications, Sydney and New York, 1965.

Program

TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 2026

P26, Poststraße 26, 53111 Bonn

18.00 Pre-conference Book Talk (in cooperation with the Global Heritage Lab): **“Indenture, Blackbirding and Women’s Cultures of Resistance in the Western Pacific”**

Margaret Mishra, *Women, Indenture, and Resistance* (Oxford UP, 2026)

Kirsten McGavin, *Untethered: Science Fiction and Fantasy from Papua New Guinea* (Kokomo Ink, 2025)

Jasmine Togo-Brisby, *Ungeographic* (Pātaka Art + Museum, 2025)

19.30 Exhibition Opening, with **Jasmine Togo-Brisby**, followed by a reception.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 2026

Senatssaal, University of Bonn, Regina-Pacis-Weg 3, 53113 Bonn

9.30 Opening and Welcome

10.00 Panel 1: Queen Emma’s Lives and Networks

Safua Akeli (Übersee-Museum Bremen): Breaking Barriers; Plantation Lives

Emma Christopher (UNSW): Queen Emma and Thomas Farrell’s Roles in People Trafficking Networks

11.00 Coffee break

11.30 Panel 2: Plantation Workers’ Lives

Emma Thomas (UNSW): Plantation Lives and Racial Capitalism in “Queen” Emma’s Empire

Tobias Goebel (Deutsches Hafenmuseum Hamburg): Visible Traces of Invisible Life Stories: Finding Stories from the Plantations and How They Can (Suggestively) Be Told

12.30 Lunch break

13.30 Panel 3: Literary and Cultural Reflections

Dorothea Fischer-Hornung (University of Heidelberg): Fictionalizing Queen Emma: “There’s something unwholesome about the entire Pacific”

Deirdre Coleman (University of Melbourne): The Lineaments and Limits of Beatrice Grimshaw’s Colonizing Visions of the Pacific.

14.30 Coffee break

15.00 Panel 4: Labour Policing, Resistance and Legacies of Coerced Labour

Tobias Wagemann (ENS-PSL Paris): Early Forms of Colonial Policing on Pacific Plantations: The Case of Queen Emma’s Ralum Plantation (1882-1899)

Sabine Hess (ANU): The Balsa Company Labourers, the Settlers, and the Absent Landowners: Present-day Living and Working Conditions on Balsa Wood Plantations around Kokopo (East New Britain)

16.00 Coffee break

16.30 Panel 5: Queensland Plantation Lives and Legacies

Adele Zubrzycka (University of Sydney), **James L. Flexner** (University of Sydney) and **Jonathan Prangnell** (University of Queensland): Archaeological Evidence as a "Voice" from the Plantation: The case of the Pioneer Sugar Estate, Queensland, Australia (1881-1906)

Imelda Miller (Queensland Museum): *Say Our Name*: Building histories of resilience in colonial collecting institutions.

19.00 Conference dinner, Em Höttche (Markt 4, 53111 Bonn)

THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2026

Senatssaal, University of Bonn, Regina-Pacis-Weg 3, 53113 Bonn

10.00 Film screening: Sana Balai A Tulala Puts Ni Han I Tamlam (Our Journey Back Home) – The Echo of Those Taken

11.30 Panel 6: Pacific Missionary Work and/on Plantations

Christian Lemuel Magaling (University of Bonn): Kirchenmission vs. Freie Mission: Public Morality and the Moral Transformation of the Contract

Joefer B. Santarita (University of the Philippines): Lord, Land, and Labor: Capuchins and the Emerging Plantation Economies in Ponape

12.30 Lunch break

14.00 Panel 7: Communities

Sven Mönter (independent researcher, Cologne): August Engelhardt and the Sonnenorden – Revisited
Hermann Mückler (University of Vienna): Queen Emma, Savior of the Starving Settlers of the Failed Marquis de Rays Project

15.00 Coffee break

15.30 Panel 8: Collecting

Rainer Buschmann (CSUCI): Fluid Networks: Commercial Ethnographic Collecting in German New Guinea, ca. 1885 to 1914

Anneke Nolte (independent researcher, Bonn): Queen, wife, mother, owner: Identifying female traders of oceanic objects in Dr Curt Danneil's collection records

Hanna Wüste (University of Basel): Taking as Rescue – Natural History Collecting Practices within Coerced Labour Networks in Nineteenth Century Oceania

[The workshop ends at 5 pm on this day to enable participants to attend the **annual BCDSS Juneteenth Lecture**, Festsaal Uni Bonn, by **Tsitsi Ella Jaji** (Helen L. Bevington Associate Professor of Modern Poetry, Duke University) – optional]

FRIDAY, JUNE 19, 2026

RJM, Cäcilienstraße 29-33, 50667 Cologne

10.00 Panel 9: Pacific Perspectives and Practices Challenging Colonial Histories and Collections

Anthony Lupai (artist, PNG) and **Katharina Nowak** (University of Tübingen): From Malagan to Plantation Archives: Richard Parkinson, Material Circulation, and Colonial Networks in New Ireland
Julie Mota-Kondi (artist, PNG): [Re] imagining The Papua New Guinean Other[ness] of Plantation Lives Through the Minority Literature From New Britain Island First Nations
Kirsten McGavin (Flinders University): Collections and Culture: Reinterpreting Artefacts from New Ireland Province and Beyond

11.30 Parallel Groups 1 and 2

Group 1 Visit Permanent Exhibition (Guided Tour)
Group 2: "Black Gloves Event"

(Coffee break included)

12.30 Parallel Groups 1 and 2

Group 1 Visit Permanent Exhibition (Guided Tour)
Group 2: "Black Gloves Event"

13.30 Lunch and wrap up

End of conference 15.00

This international workshop is organized by the **Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies**, the **Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum**, and the **ARC discovery grant project** "Unfreedom, Voices, Redress: Plantation Cultures of the Western Pacific" (2025-2028).

Conference Organizers:

Prof. Dr. Pia Wiegink (BCDSS) wiegink@uni-bonn.de

Dr. Oliver Lueb (RJM) oliver.lueb@stadt-koeln.de

ARC Project Team:

Prof. Penny Edmonds (CI, Flinders University), **Prof. Deirdre Coleman** (CI, University of Melbourne), **Prof. Dr. Pia Wiegink** (BCDSS), **Dr. Margaret Mishra** (University of the South Pacific), **Dr. Oliver Lueb** (Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum Cologne), **Imelda Miller** (Queensland Museum)

Workshop Venues:

Tuesday evening: **P26**, Poststraße 26, 53111 Bonn

Wednesday & Thursday: **Senatssaal**, University of Bonn, Regina-Pacis-Weg 3, 53113 Bonn

Friday: **RJM**, Cäcilienstraße 29-33, 50667 Cologne