



UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN

BERGEN PACIFIC STUDIES RESEARCH GROUP

Workshop, October 18th at the University of Bergen, 10 am – 4.30 pm :

‘Urban life and articulations of modernity in the Pacific’

We often find it hard to conceptualize truly urban indigenous populations in Pacific nations, and this challenge does not only go for academics but also governments and authorities of development aid and intervention. This workshop addresses the need to understand *what the urban is*. What is it that constitutes urban sociality? Where are the institutions that configure that form of sociality? Do the inhabitants of towns and cities in the region really understand themselves inside a transitional space, in between town and village, or do they acknowledge that their town life is structured by institutions of a truly urban character, removed from rural values and moralities? In what way do they engage with institutions such as hospitals, prisons, supermarkets, hotels, companies, justice and policing, and does this engagement demand for certain types of behavior or personality? And on the other hand, how does this relate to competing or alternative institutions that are especially flourishing in town - such as chiefly leadership and justice, indigenous churches, healers and magicians etc?

The urban localities of the region have come to be cross-roads for the multiple currents of the contemporary world. In this contested field, all the issues that Pacific anthropology have been following all along - such as the relations and tensions between tradition and church, men and women, person and kinship, master and servant, or nation and state - might be realigned and reconstituted.

The presenters for the day are drawing mostly on Vanuatu materials, but in the discussion we encourage a wider comparison within and outside the region of Oceania.

PROGRAMME:

Chair: Edvard Hviding, University of Bergen

10.00 *Introduction* by Edvard Hviding, University of Bergen

10.30 Annelin Eriksen and Knut Rio, University of Bergen

Port Vila: Squatter settlements, nationhood and memories of colonialism

11.00 Laurent Dousset, CREDO

Dreams about modernity: A utopian city in South Malekula, Vanuatu

11.30 Cato Berg, University of Bergen

The making of urban chiefs: power and exchange in Honiara, Solomon Islands

12.00 – 13.30 LUNCH – Restaurant Brød og Vin

13.30 Alice Servy, CREDO

Usage and representation of money in Seaside Tongoa: Perceptions of a Vanuatu's urban community through its socioeconomic relations

14.00 Lamont Lindstrom, University of Tulsa

Urban Tannese: Local Perspectives on Settlement Life in Port Vila

14.30 Daniela Kramer, London School of Economics

Documentary Film: *Now I Can See: Tingting blong sam boys long Taon*

(55 min.)

15.45 *Discussion*

19.00 DINNER – Bambus Restaurant Marken