

North Sea – South Seas: The Second Time

Bergen Pacific Studies Research Group
St Andrews centre for Pacific Studies

Workshop, University of Bergen 10-11 November 2009.

Organised by the **Bergen Pacific Studies** Research Group (www.pacific.uib.no), on the occasion of a visit to Bergen by scholars of the **Centre for Pacific Studies**, University of St. Andrews (www.st-andrews.ac.uk/anthropology/centres/cps). It is a follow-up of a similar visit by the Bergen group to St. Andrews in November 2008. Two scholars from the University of Oslo will also be participating in the workshop.

The focus for this meeting is our collective focus on “Pacific Studies”, in an effort to gain some overall perspective on our research activities and their individual and collective contexts. A critical examination of the concepts and contexts of “Pacific Studies” is particularly relevant since both our groupings carry out research and teaching under that regional umbrella, as “Research Group” and “Centre”, respectively. Such an examination of the epistemology and politics of Pacific Studies is also of interest given the particular kind of “peripheral” northern European position our groups have in Bergen and St Andrews, rather than in the conventional main locations of Pacific Studies in Honolulu, Canberra or Auckland. In what ways are the practice and possibilities of Pacific Studies in our peripheral North Sea locations different from what goes on in those regionally located centres, where Pacific Studies are institutionalised on much higher levels and much more closely entangled in everyday regional politics? In what way does the rather exclusively anthropological approach of our two groups differ from multi-disciplinary institutions and approaches?

During the two days we aim to discuss, on the basis of a number of brief presentations in two major panels and in plenary discussion, a multitude of issues concerning comparison, region-wide patterns, and sub-fields such as “Melanesian studies”. Representing an opportunity to create space for discussion, disagreement and development in thoughts, the workshop is organized along two main panels: “The Contemporary Pacific” and “Models of Social Organization”. Plenty of time will be devoted to free discussion.

A special additional session will focus on anthropological documentary film as a particular form of exchange between Pacific Studies scholars and Pacific Islanders.

Participants (with main regional focus indicated)

Visitors from University of St. Andrews

Professor **Christina Toren** (Fiji)
Professor **James Weiner** (PNG)
Dr. **Tony Crook** (PNG)
Dr. **Adam Reed** (PNG)
Dr. **Will Rollason** (PNG)

PhD students
Craig Lind (Vanuatu)
Stephania Bobeldijk (Tonga)
Jonathan Tracey (Solomon Islands)
Edwin Jones (Fiji)

From Bergen Pacific Studies research group

Professor **Edvard Hviding** (Solomon Islands)
Dr. **Knut M. Rio** (Vanuatu)
Dr. **Andrew Lattas** (PNG, Australia)
Dr. **Annelin Eriksen** (Vanuatu)
Dr. **Cato Berg** (Solomon Islands)

PhD students
Rolf Scott (Hawai'i, Solomon Islands)
Kristine Sunde Fauske (Vanuatu)
Thomas Mountjoy (Solomon Islands)

Other group members
Ane Straume, MA (Solomon Islands)
Eilin H. Torgersen, MA student (Hawai'i)
Hildur Thorarensen, MA student (Vanuatu)

Visitors from University of Oslo

Professor **Arve Sørum** (PNG)
Dr. **Ingjerd Hoëm** (Tokelau)

Programme

The workshop takes place at the Bergen University Museum (Main Building/Natural History), in the seminar room located to the left of the museum reception.

Visiting participants all stay at the Hotel Park (<http://hotelpark.no>, tel. +47 5554 4400), which is located on the university campus, a few minutes' walk from the Bergen Museum. A shared taxi from the airport to the hotel is recommended (about NOK 350). **Ane Straume** handles workshop logistics, and can be contacted at +47 932 49916.

Tuesday 10th November

Morning: free for a morning walk of campus and downtown Bergen. Visitors will be picked up at Hotel Park at 10:45 and taken to the Bergen University Museum.

11:00 Tour of the exhibition “Kolonitid” / “Colonial Times”, which has a component on Norwegian involvement in the colonial era in Solomon Islands, Hawai'i and Cook Islands. Knut, Edvard and Rolf will present and guide.

12:00 Workshop opening, by Edvard Hviding
12:00 Lunch in seminar room. Presentation of participants; informal interaction.

13:00 **Introduction:** Pacific Studies: What, Why, Where, and How?
Edvard Hviding

13:30 **Panel I: Studying the contemporary Pacific**
(chaired by Knut Rio)

To what degree does the label “Pacific Studies” benefit us when we address current issues such as corporate economies of logging and mining, institutions of state and civil society, new religious formations, transformations of the individual, local effects of global climate change, and so forth? Are ideas of “localization” or “indigenization” and regionally anchored understandings still valid, or do we increasingly need to seek comparative insights also from elsewhere?

Presenters: Christina Toren, Annelin Eriksen, Andrew Lattas, Tony Crook, Will Rollason.

17:00 Film presentation and discussion:
Screening of *Chea's Great Kuarao* (2000, 57 mins.). Rolf Scott and Edvard Hviding, the filmmakers, talk about the different life stages of the film, which has become somewhat of a national phenomenon in Solomon Islands.
Venue: Department of Social Anthropology. Drinks & Snacks will be provided

20:00 Dinner for workshop participants, at a downtown venue.

Wednesday 11th November

09:30 **Panel II: Pacific models of sociality – a comparative view?**
(chaired by Edvard Hviding)

This panel will discuss the use of local understandings of social models, structures and formations. Recent work has addressed ideas about an absence of group formation, metaphors for social process, the social ontology of kinship, exchange and agriculture, new social formations in-coming institutions such as church, and urban spaces with their own models of social organisation. To what degree are models of sociality/social organisation comparable, and to what degree are they too localized and limited to further a comparative Pacific understanding? One starting point is the edited volume *Oceanic Socialities and Cultural Forms* (Berghahn, 2003), one of the editors of which will open the panel.

Presenters: Ingjerd Hoëm, James Weiner, Arve Sørum, Adam Reed, Knut Rio.

Closing words.

13.00 Lunch, at På Høyden restaurant (on campus)

17:25 Flight Bergen-Aberdeen