

PACIFIC CIRCLE NEWSLETTER



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PACIFIC CIRCLE NEWS

The Pacific Circle symposium for the 20th International Congress of History of Science in Liège, Belgium, is now set for July 25th. The schedule of papers is as follows (abstracts will appear in the next *Newsletter*):

- *Exploration and Natural History of the North Pacific*, chaired by **Roy MacLeod**
 - W. Conner Sorensen**, "German Scientists in Russian America"
 - E. Alison Kay**, "Missionaries and the Natural History of the Hawaiian Islands"
 - Jane Samson**, "'That Extensive Enterprise': H.M.S. *Herald's* North Pacific Survey, 1845-1851"
 - Marc Rothenberg**, "'In Behalf of the Science of the Country': The Smithsonian and the Navy in the North Pacific in the 1850s"
- *Science in the Asia-Pacific Region*, chaired by **Fritz Rehbock**
 - Roderick W. Home**, "Humboldtian Imagery and 'The Humboldt of Australia'"
 - Roy MacLeod**, "Post-Colonialism and Museum Knowledge"
 - David G. Frodin**, "Tropical Biology and Research Institutions in South and South-East Asia, 1870-1930"
 - Song Sang-yong**, "Two Kyoto Chemists Divided in Two Koreas"
 - Barry W. Butcher**, "Science in the Back Paddock: The Politics and Economics of Animal Health in Australia"
- *Business Meeting*



A Pacific session, "Field Science on the Pacific Rim," has been assembled for the 1997 meeting of the **History of Science Society**, 5-9 November 1997 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in La Jolla, California. The tentative schedule of speakers (Friday afternoon, 7 November) is as follows:

- **Mike Sfraga** (Univ. of Alaska - Fairbanks), "From Harvard to Hollywood: Bradford Washburn, Interdisciplinary Research and the Exploration of Mt. McKinley, 1946-1960"
- **Peter Neushul** (Caltech) and **Zuoyue Wang** (UC-Santa Barbara), "Between the Devil and the Deep Sea: C.K. Tseng and the Development of Marine Science and Technology in Modern China"
- **Carl-Henry Geschwind** (Johns Hopkins Univ.), "Science California Style: The Case of Earthquake Seismology, 1905-1933"
- **Roy MacLeod** (Univ. of Sydney), "'Strictly for the Birds': The Pacific Ocean Biological Survey, 1963-1971."

of Pacific-Asia interest will be the following sessions:

- "Ocean Science, Spectacle and Politics: Historical Explanations into the Earth's Last Great Frontier," chaired by **Ron Rainger**
- "New Directions in the Cultural History of Chinese Science and Medicine," chaired by **Mario Biagioli**

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- “Empire and Exploration”
- “Science, Industry and Social Vision: Perspectives on the Scripps Institution of Oceanography,” chaired by **Ron Rainger**.

For registration information, contact:

HSS Executive Office
Box 351330
Seattle, WA 98195-1330 USA
Phone: (206) 543-9366
Fax: (206) 685-9544.

The full program of this meeting is available on the web:
http://weber.u.washington.edu/~hssexec/annual/hss_program_1997.html.



It is not too soon to begin thinking about a Pacific Circle presence at the **XIXth Pacific Science Congress** in Sydney: 4-9 July 1999. Anyone wishing to propose a session theme or a paper title is urged to contact **Roy MacLeod** (roy.macleod@history.su.edu.au; fax: [612] 9351-3918).



The *1997 Pacific Circle Directory* was distributed free to members in May. If you did not receive a copy, please contact the editorial office. Copies of the *Annual Report* for 1996 are also available upon request.

We announce with sadness that the Circle's first volume, *Nature in Its Greatest Extent: Western Science in the Pacific* (University of Hawaii Press, 1988), is now out of print. Many copies were lost to water damage—not from a Pacific typhoon but at the New York warehouse of the publisher!

Newsletter editor **Fritz Rehbock** happily reports that he will be on sabbatical during the 1997-98 academic year. Serving as guest editor for No. 19 (December 97) will be Professor **Peter Hoffenberg**, Department of History, University of Hawaii. (Peter's email address is: peterh@hawaii.edu). Thank you, Peter!

With this issue we welcome aboard **Karen Rehbock** as Associate Editor and new Webmaster. Karen has been a consultant and proof-reader since *PCNI* and now takes on added responsibilities of copy input and editing, and maintaining our web pages, which have moved to:

<http://www2.hawaii.edu/~frehbock/pcn/pcn.html>
(Karen's email address is rehbock@ifa.hawaii.edu).
Thanks Karen!



CONGRESSES, CONFERENCES AND CALLS FOR PAPERS

13-19 July 1997. The focus of the **Eighth Pacific Science Inter-Congress** at The University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji, will be “Islands in the Pacific Century.” Organizers expect that “the Inter-Congress will provide an interdisciplinary forum to address specific issues relating to the role of science and technology in the development of islands; review progress and share research findings in key areas in natural and social sciences relevant to islands; review the development, achievements, problems and prospects of Pacific Islands.”

As part of this Congress, the Communicating Science and Science Education Committee of the Inter-Congress has called for papers and/or symposia on the promotion of educational reform throughout the Pacific via the Science-Technology-Society (STS) rubric. The Committee defines STS as “the teaching and learning of science and technology in the context of human experience.” For more information, contact:

Dr. Mahendra Kumar, Secretary-General
c/o School of Pure & Applied Sciences
The University of the South Pacific
P.O. Box 1168
Suva, Fiji Islands
Phone: +679-212691
Fax: +679-302-548
or +679-314-007
email: psa@usp.ac.fj
web: <http://www.usp.ac.fj/~psa>

17-20 July 1997. The conference, “From Myth to Minerals: Place, Narrative, Land, and Transformation in New Guinea and Australia,” has been rescheduled from April to enable more academics from the northern hemisphere to participate. The venue has been changed to the Australian National University, Canberra. Inquiries:

Alan Rumsey
email: alan.rumsey@anu.edu.au

3-5 October 1997. The Graduate Student Conference on Evolutionary Perspectives in the Social Sciences and Humanities plans to bring together students and faculty from many disciplines who are working on a variety of evolutionary issues and models. Speakers will include **David Hull**, author of *Science as a Process*, and **Peter Danielson**, editor of *Modelling Rationality, Morality and Evolution*. The meeting will be held at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. Contact:

Dawn Ogden:

email: dawnvo@unixg.ubc.ca

Chris MacDonald:

email: chrismac@ethics.ubc.ca

18-19 September 1997. A multidisciplinary conference entitled "Science and Exploration: European Voyages to the Southern Oceans in the 18th Century" will be held at the Royal Society of London. Its purpose will be to re-evaluate the context, expectations, and outcomes of Cook's 1768-1771 *Endeavour* voyage. The conference is organized by the **National Maritime Museum**. Inquiries:

Research Administrator

National Maritime Museum

Park Row

Greenwich, London SE10 9NF

United Kingdom

Phone: 44-181-312 6616

Fax: 44-181-312 6722

email: aw08@dial.pipex.com

26-27 September 1997. The Society for the History of Natural History will hold a conference on maritime exploration at Discovery Point, Dundee, where the *H.M.S. Discovery* is moored. In addition to this famous ship's voyages, presentation topics will include the natural history of whaling ships, Antarctic expeditions, and trips through the Bering Sea. Papers may still be submitted.

Contact:

Mike Taylor

Perth Museum and Art Gallery

George Street, Perth PH1 5LB

Scotland

Phone: 01-738 632488

16-19 October 1997. The Society for the History of Technology will hold its annual conference in Pasadena, California, at the Doubletree Hotel. The hosts for the conference include the Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens. Contact:

Prof. Miriam R. Levin, SHOT Program Chair
Program in History of Technology & Science
History Department

Case Western Reserve University
Cleveland, OH 44106

Phone: 216-368-2380

Fax: 216-368-4681

email: mxb67@po.cwru.edu

22 November 1997. "Gentlemen and Players" is the theme of a joint meeting of the **Malacological and Conchological Societies** and the **Linnean Society of London** to be held at the Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly. Discussions will explore the

development and gradual professionalization of malacology during the early twentieth century. Inquiries:

Elizabeth Platts

Phone: 01-982 880396

16-22 March 1998. "Science & Society—Technological Turn" will be the subject of an international conference to be held in Tokyo, Kyoto and Hiroshima, Japan. The conference will provide a forum to discuss the problems of a society undergoing technological transformation and the public's understanding of the science underlying such transformations. It will be conducted in both Japanese and English. The deadline for applications for papers is in October of 1997. (See *PCN 17* for more details.) For more information, contact:

Conference Office

c/o Prof. Shin-ichi Kobayashi

Graduate School of Information Systems

University of Electro-communications

1-5-1, Chofugaoka, Chofu City,

Tokyo 182, Japan

Fax: +81-424-85-9843

email: sts@kob.is.uec.ac.jp

web: <http://hostcinf.shinshu-u.ac.jp/stsconfjp.html>

22-24 March 1998. The South-Central Section of the **Geological Society of America** will hold a Historical Symposium entitled, "Geology and Travel: Historical Perspectives," at its annual meeting at the University of Oklahoma. This topic aims to examine the links between travel and geology through the historical study of geologists' travel experiences. Such a focus will clarify the significance of a geographical understanding of the earth for the geologist and, thereby, enhance our knowledge of how all of the earth sciences have grown and changed through time. Deadline for abstracts will be **28 November 1998**. Inquiries:

Kenneth L. Taylor

Department of the History of Science

University of Oklahoma

Norman, OK 73019

Phone: 405-325-5416

Fax: 405-325-2363

email: ktaylor@ou.edu

web: <http://hoth.gcn.ou.edu/~jahern/scgsa/>

July 1998. The twelfth conference of the **Pacific History Association** will be held in Honiara, Solomon Islands, including four days of sessions and one day of excursions to various cultural and historical sites. **Tom Waitere** of the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) and **Max Quanchi** from the Queensland

University of Technology are the co-convenors.

Inquiries:

Max Quanchi
School of Humanities
Queensland University of Technology
Beams Road, Carseldine, Queensland
Australia 4034
Fax: 61-7-38644719
email: m.quanchi@qut.edu.au

15-20 August 1998. The **Sixth International Congress on the History of Oceanography** will take place in Qingdao, China. Chairman of ICHO VI will be **Zhang Deng-Yi**, Administrator, State Oceanic Administration, Beijing. Hosts of the congress will be the First Institute of Oceanography, State Oceanic Administration of Qingdao, the Association of Science and Technology of Qingdao Municipal Government, and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

The congress will be structured into symposia and parallel sessions, with poster displays as well as oral presentations, and mid- and post-congress tours. Topics of focus will include: (1) the historical development of ocean science with emphasis on the nations and science of the western Pacific and Indian Oceans; (2) international cooperation and exchange in marine science and economics; (3) interaction between the development of marine economics and marine science, overviews of the past and prospects for the 21st century; (4) sustainable development of marine resources and environment, especially in the western Pacific and Indian Oceans; (5) environmental protection and laws in maritime affairs and administration; (6) scientific research on ocean science and technology. English will be the official language of the congress.

A second announcement is to be distributed in August 1997, while 30 November 1997 is the deadline for submission of abstracts. Inquiries:

Mr. Gong-Ke TAN / Ms. E-Mei ZOU
First Institute of Oceanography, SOA
3a Hongdao Branch Road
Qingdao 266003
People's Republic of China
Phone: 86-532-288-3127
Fax: 86-532-287-9562
email: fiokjc@ns.qd.sd.cn

August 1998. The **American Historical Association - Pacific Coast Branch** is calling for papers and panels in all fields of history for its meeting in San Diego, California. Their first proposal deadline is in July, while the final deadline is 31 October 1997. Please send to:

Leonard Dinnerstein
Judaic Studies
Franklin Bldg., #308
University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ 85721-0080 USA

Late Fall 1998. **Finn Aaserud** (Copenhagen), **Helge Kragh** (Aarhus) and **Thomas Soderqvist** (Roskilde) are planning a sequel to the conference on "The Historiography of Contemporary Science, Technology, and Medicine" held at Goteborg University in September 1994. The sequel conference—a working conference with some 30 participants who have experience of writing about contemporary science, technology, and medicine—is planned to take place in Copenhagen. An international advisory panel is being set up. Inquiries: Thomas Soderqvist

Research Professor in Science Studies
Division of Philosophy and Theory of Science
Department of Communication
Roskilde University
P.O. Box 260
DK-4000 Roskilde, Denmark
Phone: + 45 46757711, ext. 2714
Fax: + 45 46757721

9-12 August 1999. The University of Plymouth will host "ECLIPSE 99: Navigational Stimulus to the History of Science," a conference coinciding with the next total eclipse of the sun in England's skies. Participants will examine the impact of navigation on the history of science. For general information as well as the submission of proposals, contact:

P. A. H. Seymour
Institute of Marine Studies
University of Plymouth, Drake Circus
Plymouth, Devon PL4 8AA
United Kingdom

RECENT MEETINGS

10-12 April 1997. The Centre for Asia Pacific Initiatives of the University of Victoria in British Columbia, Canada, hosted a conference on Japanese Popular Culture. The conference was designed not only to increase understanding of Japan's popular culture, but to explore its growing influence on the rest of the world. *Manga* (comics) experts, **Fred Schodt** and **Monkey Punch**, presented two major lectures on the topic.

12-13 April 1997. "Mastering Nature, Mastering the World: Science and Power" was the theme for the meeting of the **West Coast History of Science Society**

at Pomona College. Gender issues and the construction of science in early modern Europe and in the 19th century were primary topics of discussion. **Joan Cadden** (University of California, Davis) presented the keynote address entitled "Mistressing Nature: Questions on Gender and Science from the Middle Ages."

11-13 June 1997. The first **Maury Workshop on the History of Oceanography** was held at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Sponsored by the Naval Historical Center of the U.S. Navy, the workshop brought together 25 scholars and archivists of the marine and earth sciences, from the U.S., Canada, Britain and Russia, for three days of stimulating and productive discussion about the recent past and future directions for research in the history of oceanography. Presentation/discussions included: Keynote Address by **Eric Mills** (Dalhousie University); "What Are We Doing and Why Are We Doing It?" by **David van Keuren** (Naval Research Laboratory); "Oceanography in the Inter-war and War Years, 1918-1946" by **Gary Weir** (Naval Historical Center); "Review of Secondary Historical Sources" by **Helen Rozwadowski** (independent scholar); "Review of Archival Resources" by **Deborah Day** (Scripps Institution of Oceanography); "Cold War and Big Science" by **Ron Rainger** (Texas Tech University); "Consideration of Research Methodology" by **Bill Glen** (U.S. Geological Survey); "Consideration of Historiographical Issues" by **Greg Good** (West Virginia University); and "What Place for History: A Roundtable" by **Naomi Oreskes** (New York University). A summary of the proceedings is to be published. Inquiries should be directed to the co-organizers:

Gary Weir

ngew1@navtap.navy.mil

David van Keuren

dvk@ccf.nrl.navy.mil

20-22 June 1997. The Sixth International Conference of the **World History Association** was held in Pamplona, Spain. Its themes included "World History: Theories and Practice in Europe, Africa and the Middle East," "Crossroads of Global Interaction: The Mediterranean Basin," and "Faith as Reality Representations: Pilgrimages in Global Perspective."

RECENT EXHIBITIONS

"Robert Brown and Matthew Flinders and William Westall aboard the *Investigator*, 1801-1803: An Exhibition" was held during the first quarter of this year at the **Museum of Economic Botany**, Adelaide Botanic Garden, South Australia.

PRIZES AND AWARDS

Dr. **Song Sang-yong** was awarded the Republic of Korea Science and Technology Prize for popularizing science and technology. President Kim Youngsam presented Dr. Song with the prize in April 1997, at the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology in Taejon. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the creation of the Ministry of Science and Technology.

GRANT, AWARD, AND FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Rockefeller Archive Center, a division of the Rockefeller University, invites applications for its Program of Grants for Travel and Research at the Rockefeller Archive Center for 1998. The competitive program makes grants of up to \$1,500 to U.S. and Canadian researchers and up to \$2,000 to researchers from abroad in any discipline, usually graduate students or post-doctoral scholars, who are engaged in research that requires use of the Center. The deadline for all grant applications is **30 November 1997**. Grant recipients will be announced in March 1998. Inquiries about the program and requests for applications should be addressed to:

Darwin H. Stapleton, Director

Rockefeller Archive Center

15 Dayton Avenue

Pocantico Hills

Sleepy Hollow, NY 10591-1598

The grant application, along with detailed information about the Rockefeller Archive Center and a guide to its collections can also be found online at:

<http://www.rockefeller.edu/archive.ctr/>

CYBERNEWS

We hope this information continues to help in your research efforts on the Internet. We welcome any comments, contributions, and suggestions about the contents of **CyberNews**.

As usual, items in **bold** must be provided as is, while items in <angle brackets> must be supplied (without the <s>).

Guide to the History of Science. Professor **Ronald Tobey's** student guide to the history of science is now on the Web. Entitled *Horus Gets in Gear: A Beginner's Guide to Research in the History of Science*:
<http://www.kaiwan.com/~lucknow/horus/guide/tp1.html>

History of Science Society. The HSS has an electronic site for listings of history of science-related fellowships, grants, job opportunities, and prizes. If anyone wishes to post such information, send it via email or send an electronic disk version of the posting to:

History of Science Society Executive Office
 Box 351330
 University of Washington
 Seattle, WA 98195-1330
 Phone: 206-543-9366
 Fax: 206-685-9844
 email: hssexec@u.washington.edu
 web: <http://weber.u.washington.edu/~hssexec/index.html>

Directory of Historians of Physics. A directory of addresses, research interests, and recent publications of more than 400 physicists and historians has been issued by the Committee on the History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742. It can be found on the web at:

<http://carnap.umd.edu:90/chps/chps.html>

H-SCI-MED-TECH is an H-Net mailing list on the history of science, medicine, and technology sponsored by H-Net (Humanities and Social Sciences On-Line) and supported by Michigan State University. H-SCI-MED-TECH is an email discussion list intended for the growing number of scholars who study science, medicine and technology across a wide variety of periods and regions of the world. The aim is to foster communication within and across the disciplines of history, the history of science, the history of medicine and the history of technology, which have become distinct professional fields despite their obvious interconnections. Subscribers will be able to share information about teaching and research, to get news of professional activities (e.g., jobs, conferences, fellowships and grants) and, most importantly, to participate in conversations about matters of common interest—new methods, questions and scholarship.

H-SCI-MED-TECH is free and open to everyone with a mature and abiding interest in the subject. Scholars, writers, teachers, and librarians professionally interested in the subject are particularly invited to join. Like all H-Net lists, H-SCI-MED-TECH is moderated by the editors—**Nina Lerman** (Whitman College), **Kathryn Olesko** (Georgetown University), and **Harry M. Marks** (Johns Hopkins University)—to filter out inappropriate posts, and it is advised by a board of scholars.

To join H-SCI-MED-TECH, send a message to:
listserv@h-net.msu.edu

with no subject line and this body text (on one line):
 sub H-SCI-MED-TECH <firstname> <lastname>,
 <institution>

Capitalization does not matter, but spelling, spaces and commas do. If you have any questions or experience any difficulties subscribing, contact the editors.

H-Net is an international consortium of scholars in the humanities and social sciences that creates and coordinates electronic networks, using a variety of media, and with a common objective of advancing humanities and social science teaching and research. H-Net was created to provide a positive, supportive, equalitarian environment for the friendly exchange of ideas and scholarly resources, and is supported by Michigan State University. For more info on H-Net, contact:

email: H-Net@H-et.msu.edu
 web: <http://h-net.msu.edu>

The Darwin-L Webserver is an international network discussion group for academic professionals in the historical sciences to promote the reintegration of a range of fields all of which are concerned with reconstructing the past from evidence in the present, and to encourage communication among researchers in these fields. Darwin-L is not restricted to the work of Charles Darwin, but rather covers the entire range of palaeontology. Darwin-L welcomes serious academic discussion with special reference to history, theory, and interdisciplinary comparison. It is not an amateur chat-oriented forum, nor a forum for discussion of creationism vs. evolution. More information can be found at:

<http://rjohara.uncg.edu/>

The History of Chemistry. A new mail distribution list has been established by the Chemical Heritage Foundation, the Sidney M. Edelstein Center for the History and Philosophy of Science, Technology, and Medicine in Jerusalem, and the German Chemical Society's History Division. To subscribe, email a message with no subject and only the following line:

subscribe CHEM-HIST

to: maiser@listserv.ngate.uni-regensburg.de

The History of Philosophy of Science (HOPOS)

Working Group webpage is now available at:

<http://kasey.umkc.edu/ac/sci-stud/hopos/>

The International Society for the History, Philosophy and Social Studies of Biology (ISHPSSB) is now available on the web. The webpages contain the latest newsletter, 1997 program information, a message from the ISHPSSB President, instructions for how to subscribe to their listserv, and links to additional

resources in science and technology. The website is located at:

<http://www.phil.vt.edu/ISHPSSB/>

A moderated email list for the ISHPSSB has also been established. Any member interested in receiving mailings should subscribe to the list by sending the following message:

SUBSCRIBE ISHPSSB-L <firstname> <lastname>
to: listserv@tc.umn.edu

Science as Culture. The journal *Science as Culture* maintains a list of forums and sites in the history, philosophy & social studies of science, technology & medicine. It can be found at:

<http://www.shet.ac.uk/~psysc/hpsss.html>

MENDELWEB was designed to show how the web could make possible a multi-level, interdisciplinary explication and exploration of a text like Mendel's *Versuche*. It is a system of linked hypermedia (i.e., documents, images, databases, audio and video files, etc.). The website is located at:

<http://www.stg.brown.edu/MendelWeb/>

Research Libraries Group — HST Database. Free access to the History of Science and Technology Database administered by the Research Libraries Group is now available to members of the History of Science Society. This service is available via the HSS homepage. A username and password are required to ensure that access remains a privilege of HSS membership.

<http://weber.u.washington.edu/~hssexec/>

The Virtual Guide to the History of Russian and Soviet Science and Technology is located at:

<http://web.mt.edu/slava/guide>

SASAKAWA PACIFIC ISLAND NATIONS FUND

Musashimaru is a Tongan! A Report on My Visit to the "Land of the Giants"

On my desk sits a thick book, its cover adorned with a pictorial photograph of three kings and one queen. Published in 1975, the book's title is *The Tongan Constitution: A Brief History to Celebrate Its Century*. It bears a handwritten message dated July 19, 1996: "To Mr. Utagawa, I hope this book will help your understanding of Tonga." The book was presented to me by Ms. Luseane Luani, the journalist daughter of Baron Vaea, Tonga's Prime Minister.

For half a year, I somewhat pretentiously displayed the book without actually reading it. Not long ago, I

finally gave it a good reading through. Not only did I learn about the history of Tonga, but my interest in the country was immensely heightened. Reminded anew that travel is more than just sightseeing, souvenir shopping and exotic cuisine, I set about writing this short account of my three-day visit to Tonga last summer.

From the perspective of Japan, Tonga is a distant country, inconvenient to get to. From Narita, I caught an 8-hour flight to its neighboring country Fiji, whence I took a plane which doesn't even fly every day! to the island of Tongatapu upon which the capital Nukualofa is seated. The country is situated four time zones east of Japan, just on this side of the international date line. It is said that the sun rises on Tonga earlier than on any other country in the world. The hotel where I stayed proudly displayed the sign, "International Date Line Hotel Where Time Begins."

Whatever one might say about Tonga, its people are definitely big. King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV weighs more than 100 kilograms and is 190 centimeters tall. I had hoped to pay the King a courtesy call, but because he was away to the U.S. for a cardiac examination, I met instead with the country's 73-year-old prime minister, Baron Vaea. At first I was at a loss as to what to wear to the meeting. In Japan, King Tupou IV is fondly referred to as the "Naked King." This, however, I knew to be mere folklore. Formal dress I found out is a short-sleeved shirt and necktie. So I went shopping for the proper attire in downtown Nukualofa. I felt more as if I were going around the shops in a village, rather than a capital city. But it must be remembered that Tonga's entire population is only 96,000. When I finally found an M-size shirt, it was more like a Japanese XL. So I had no choice but to swelter in what for me were ridiculously long sleeves.

Prime Minister Vaea is also a giant of a man. It looks as though the theory that Jonathan Swift used Tonga as his model when he wrote *Gulliver's Travels* must be true. The Tongans whom Swift encountered were surely tall people, but not of such large girth. Their tendency to put on weight is a phenomenon of the last 20 years or so. The reason for this became clear to me later, as I shall explain in a moment. In any case, meeting the Prime Minister (who, by the way, speaks impeccable British English) was, it flashed on me, something like facing off with a sumo champion.

We right away became engaged in a lively conversation about sumo. I said that Tongans are well known in Japan for their prowess in rugby and sumo, but that unfortunately no Tongans had reached sumo's upper ranks. Hearing this, the Prime Minister asked me with a look of puzzlement, "But don't you know Penitani, who

is from my village?" Dumbstruck, I turned and ask my travel hostess, his daughter Luseane, to explain. "It's Musashimaru" she said, tossing me a life ring.

"Can that be?" I asked. "I always thought that Musashimaru is an American from Hawaii." He assured me that Musashimaru is a true-bred Tongan. "When he was nine years old, his parents went to American Samoa in search of work, and from there they moved on to Hawaii. His father, Nanu Penitani, came back to his home village in Tonga where he lived in retirement until passing away of a heart ailment in April of last year. I attended his funeral to which Fiamal (Musashimaru) also came. Fiamal is proud to be a Tongan, and we can't help from bragging that he is one of us."

The Prime Minister showed me an article about the funeral published in the country's weekly English newspaper, *The Tonga Chronicle*. A photograph showed two large men in short-sleeved mourning clothes with black skirts standing in front of the Penitani home. They were the Prime Minister and Musashimaru, whom I noticed in the picture to be approximately of the same height and girth.

Tonga, which boasts a 2,000-year history, is the primal abode of the Polynesian people. In the tenth century, the Tongans expanded their sphere of influence to the Polynesian islands of Hawaii, where Musashimaru would grow up.

Tonga was earlier than Hawaii in introducing Christianity (the Methodist religion) and also "modernization" for that matter. The Tongan Constitution, modeled after the constitutional monarchy of Great Britain, was established in 1875, more than 10 years before Japan's Meiji Constitution. Previous to that, Tonga had been a land ruled by gods, kings and taboos. In fact, the English word "taboo" stems from the Tongan "tapu." There were taboos prohibiting all sorts of things: "Don't willfully go out beyond the reef." "Don't catch large fish without permission." "Don't till this land; it belongs to the king who is the son of the gods." Breaking these taboos could mean death for the offender.

Taboos were the product of ancient wisdom spun out of the need for a fixed population to live in a limited space. As a population grows, however, taboo-based customs become a hindrance to progress.

With the exception of the European colonies, Tonga was the first island state in the South Pacific to codify a system of new taboos into modern legal statutes, making it the Kingdom of Prohibitions. The constitution of 1875 was replaced 100 years later by the constitution of 1975. Even the old constitution, however, guaranteed religious freedom, albeit it forbade the propagation of any religion other than Christianity, and prohibited the *ex post facto*

application of law. Another interesting clause forbade village chiefs from hoarding "big fish," such as sea turtles and tuna.

Despite having long enjoyed a constitution, this island kingdom's greatest dilemma has been its limited land area. The combined area of Tonga's 150 islands is about the same as the Japanese island of Tsushima, off the northern coast of Kyushu. Its constitution decrees the ownership of all land to the King, but bestows tenant rights of eight acres, or 3.3 hectares, on each head of household (*pater familias*). These rights are passed on to the eldest son. It is, thus, difficult for the second and third sons to remain in Tonga. This was the case with Musashimaru's parents, who moved to Hawaii. There are currently about 60,000 Tongans working abroad, leaving the in-country population at a "slim" 100,000 or less.

Today the Kingdom is engaged in a nationwide campaign to also slim down its people, who are becoming obese. Compared to people of other races, Polynesians tend to have a high ratio of muscle and bone to total body tissue. This makes them well adapted to sports like rugby and wrestling, which require a high degree of both strength and agility. Looking at the widespread obesity among especially middle-aged Tongans causes one to wonder about the veracity of even this notion of their athleticism. The root cause of excess body weight among the population has been the Westernization of the traditional Tongan diet, which consisted mainly of yams and seafood. One of the primary culprits contributing to this is cheap imports of fat-laced mutton from Australia and New Zealand. At the same time, the nation's seafood resources have suffered a rapid decline because of overfishing, causing their price to spiral out of reach of the ordinary citizen. Amidst these circumstances, the government is advocating exercise, in the form of aerobics, jogging, and other cardiovascular workouts, as the best way to take off pounds. About 1,000 people are taking part in a government-sponsored weight-loss contest, complete with a cash award. There have, I've heard, been valiant individuals who have through this contest lost up to 40 kilograms in a year's time.

— Reizo Utagawa
Managing Trustee, International Relations
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[Note on Author: Reizo Utagawa was born in 1934. He was formerly the Washington Correspondent, Economic News Editor, and Executive Managing Editor of the *Mainichi* Newspaper, which he left in 1988. He was one of the founders of the Institute for International Policy Studies backed by former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone, and is

currently a researcher and executive board member of the Institute. In 1995 and 1996, he contributed this and other articles to *Zaikai* magazine on the general theme of "Seeing Things in a New Light."]

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FILM/VIDEO

"Pacific Passages," produced and directed by **Caroline Yacoe**, **Wendy Arbeit**, and **G. B. Hajim**. 30 minutes. An up-close look at the islands and peoples of the Pacific (Pacific Pathways/Palm Frond Productions, P.O. Box 23296, Honolulu, HI 96823), \$75.00.

"Spirits of the Voyage," produced and directed by Eric Metzgar in association with navigators Jesus Urupiy and Ali Haleyalur and the chiefs and people of Lamotrek Atoll, Yap State, Federal States of Micronesia. 88 minutes. Account of the fragile status of traditional navigational knowledge, arts, and skills in the face of cultural adaptations to changing times. Of special interest is the resurrected navigator rite of passage called *Pwo* (Triton Films, Camarillo, CA).

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