



ISISA

Newsletter

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EDITORIAL

This issue starts off with the announcement of the extended deadline for abstracts for the 16th *Islands of the World* ISISA conference in Leeuwarden & Terschelling, The Netherlands.

You can also read about upcoming conferences and experiences of other ISISA members as they attend conferences or visit/work on islands around the world.

Remember that the Newsletter is only what you make it. We encourage anyone who has something to say, or share about Islands, Island Studies or Book Reviews about Islands, to send them over to me for the next issue.

Kindly send over contributions for the July 2018 Newsletter by not later than June 15, 2018.

Thank you for your continued support and contributions.

Anna Baldacchino

Extension for submitting abstracts for ISISA 2018 – New deadline is 15 January 2018

The 16th ‘Islands of the World’ conference

The changing future of islands

Leeuwarden & Terschelling, the Netherlands

from 10 to 14 June 2018



We have received nearly 100 abstracts and proposals for panel discussions. Because we would like to give everyone the opportunity to join this interesting conference, we have decided to extend the deadline for submitting abstracts to 15th January 2018.

To submit an abstract click here: [abstracts form](#).

The preliminary programme and all background information regarding the conference can be found at the website of the [Waddenacademie](#).

Up to 10 Student Scholarships of 500 euros each are available – make sure to have your abstract accepted before applying – deadline is **20th January 2018** :
https://www.waddenacademie.nl/fileadmin/inhoud/pdf/01-Waddenacademie/Symposium_Leeuwarden_2018/ISISA_Student_Scholarships_2018.pdf

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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China's Zhoushan Archipelago: How I Got There and Why You Should Go

Adam Grydehøj

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In March 2017, I finally landed in mainland China. I had been circling the country for years, racking up visits to Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau but never actually achieving my desire to visit the islands of mainland China (yes, I am aware of the paradox).

If I told you that my fascination with China began as an insignificant offshoot of my youngest son's fascination with Japanese movies and then thrust itself to the surface of my academic consciousness as a result of a highly critical peer review of one of my articles concerning Svalbard (Norway), that would probably raise more questions than it answered.



Dinghai Harbour, Zhoushan (© Adam Grydehøj, 2017)

So, suffice it to say that I have been fascinated with China for a while now. My growing interest in Chinese islands was nourished by the realisation that although mainland China had a vast array of offshore islands spread out along its coasts, Chinese islands and Chinese researchers played very little role in the international field of island studies. (Taiwan has, of course, long fostered an active island studies community.) Inasmuch as China is discussed in island studies, it tends to be discussed as ‘the other’, an actor that participates in international relations involving islands elsewhere. Even today, I am constantly reminded of this othering perspective due to my dual research into Greenland and Chinese islands: If I tell someone who is familiar with Greenland that I also study China, the inevitable assumption is that I study specifically how China relates to Greenland and the West. There is very little sense of an internal Chinese island consciousness, of lives being lived and policies being made on China’s own islands.

That, however, is changing. The November 2017 issue of *Island Studies Journal* included a hefty special thematic section on ‘Islands of China and the Sinophone World’ (<https://islandstudies.ca/node/526>), and September 2018 will see the first truly international and truly academic island studies conference take place in mainland China (more on this below).

This brings us back to March 2017, when I landed in Pudong International Airport in Shanghai and at last met my ‘little brother’, Huan Zhang (Assistant Professor at the Department of Architecture & Planning, Zhejiang University). Huan had first contacted me in 2014, while he was still a PhD student. At last, we had met! But there was no time to chat: Our destination, Zhejiang University’s Ocean College on Zhoushan Island in the Zhoushan Archipelago, was a 4.5-hour drive away, we had a meeting with university officials in 5 hours, and the queue at the airport McDonald’s (have to feed the American guest!) was 5 minutes long.

I won’t bore you with the details of the meetings with university officials or even my public lecture on Greenland at Ocean College. Frankly, my main job was to look pretty and not act too goofy. The long and the short of it is that plans were made for an island studies conference with the theme of ‘Islands, Resources, Tourism and Society: Sustainable Development under Globalization and Urbanization’ (www.islandcities.org/icua2018.html), which will take place in Zhoushan on 26-29 September 2018. This conference is part of Island Dynamics’ Island Cities and Urban Archipelagos series.

Look, I’m involved in a lot of conferences. I know the art of ‘selling’ conference concepts. Island Dynamics conferences in niche locations (Svalbard, Pongso no Tao, Greenland, the remotest of remote Shetland) are easy to ‘sell’: as long as the locations aren’t so niche that the researchers who I want to participate have never heard of it. I was bitterly disappointed last year when it became clear that my arduously planned, labour-of-love sustainability conference on Russia’s Far East island of Sakhalin would need to be cancelled due to lack of interest from the international scholarly community. Part of this lack of interest I put down to political tensions involving Russia, but I suspect that the main reason is that most potential delegates had simply never heard of Sakhalin, and – unlike places such as Svalbard and Greenland – the appeal and romance of Sakhalin couldn’t be summed up in two pithy sentences or warnings about ice storms and polar bears.

As John Gillis notes in his *Islands of the Mind* (2004, p. 153), “Most locations which now qualify as remote exist within a certain zone of accessibility [...]. Places that are inaccessible are disqualified, but so too are those reached too quickly and easily. In this modern age, remoteness is constituted of just the right mixture of time and space.” The same goes for familiarity: A place requires just the right degree of mystery to be the proper setting for an adventure. If an island is so mysterious that you have never heard of it, then it will have little power to draw visitors. This was the case for my ill-fated conference on Sakhalin.

I confront the same challenge with the September 2018 ‘Islands, Resources, Tourism and Society’ conference in Zhoushan. As with Russian islands, Chinese islands are not within the wider island studies consciousness; as with Russia, China as a whole is not the most attractive destination for most potential delegates; and Zhoushan itself is a complex, difficult-to-essentialise archipelago. But this is a labour of love that I’m not giving up on.

So, let me tell you a bit about Zhoushan.

Zhoushan is the largest coastal archipelago in mainland China, stretching across the entrance to one of the world’s most traversed aquatic spaces, offshore from the major cities of Shanghai, Hangzhou and Ningbo. Zhoushan (population 1,100,000) is home to China’s largest fishery, houses part of the busiest harbour in the world (Port of Ningbo-Zhoushan), and has become a major innovation hub as a result of central and provincial government development policy. Nevertheless, the Chinese public generally regards Zhoushan as peripheral and remote. The archipelago’s militarily strategic location meant that outsiders have long conceived of it primarily in terms of its relationships with other places (in some sense akin to Taiwan’s Matsu and Kinmen archipelagos). Furthermore, Zhoushan’s vicinity to yet geographical distinction from major centres of power and population on the mainland has meant that it has served as a popular tourism destination for many centuries. This has included nature tourism and beach tourism, yet Zhoushan’s real claim to fame in the Chinese consciousness is the small island of Putuoshan, which is held to be the abode of the Bodhisattva Guanyin and is regarded as one of the four sacred mountains of Chinese Buddhism. Religious tourism to Putuoshan remains so strong that the service sector providing for Buddhist pilgrims to this beautiful island is a major component of the economy of Zhoushan as a whole.



Putuoshan, Zhoushan (© Adam Grydehøj, 2017)

From sparkling skyscrapers to fishing villages, from Chinese vernacular urbanism to oversized mock-Western European townhouses, from Buddhist monasteries to industrial parks, from speculative development of a university campus to speculative development of ‘theme’ islands aimed at mainland consumers, Zhoushan has it all. This is a beautiful, vibrant archipelago: but it is conceptually messy, impossible to essentialise without betraying the lived realities of the islanders themselves.

Let’s face it: I can’t *really* explain Zhoushan to you or do it justice. The only solution is for you to join us at the ‘Islands, Resources, and Society’ conference in September 2018. (Here’s the website again, in case you forgot: www.islandcities.org/icua2018.html.)

A Master of Arts in Island Tourism at the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada (Starting in August 2018)

Jim Randall

Coordinator, Master of Arts, Island Studies Program

Chair, Executive Committee of the Institute of Island Studies

UNESCO Co-Chair in Island Studies and Sustainability – jarandall@upei.ca

The University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI) on Canada’s Atlantic coast is recognized as the world leader in delivering a quality Island Studies education. For the past 15 years, it has successfully offered a thesis-based Master of Arts in Island Studies program. For more information on this program and the stories of its graduates, see <http://www.upei.ca/arts/what-our-graduates-say>. Now, for the first time, we will be offering a course and work-study Master of Arts in Island Studies program, specializing in Island Tourism and designed to make it easy to complete, from your home or on the UPEI campus.

ISLAND TOURISM: Tourism on many islands is one of the largest employers and fastest-growing sectors. This program is designed to meet the needs of current and future island-based tourism industry managers, executives, and other professional and public-sector employees. Graduates will develop their analytical, research and management skills to a standard that will allow them to excel in this growing sector. Graduates will develop a firm understanding of the specific challenges and opportunities associated with tourism in both warm and cold-weather island tourist destinations. The practical experiences associated with this program will allow students to work with professionals in the tourism sector to gain knowledge in the industry that complements the knowledge gained in the classroom. Employment opportunities for graduates include positions in travel agency and tour operating companies, the heritage sector, official tourist organizations, branding and marketing companies, and local or national government and

other (including regional and international) organizations where knowledge of the tourism sector is important.

COURSES IN THE ISLAND TOURISM PROGRAM: Students are required to complete ten (10) courses over a two-year period. The following eight (8) courses are required:

IST 6110 - Strategies for Economic Development for Small Islands

IST 6230 - Islands and Tourism

IST 6240 - Approaches to the Management of Island Tourism

IST 6010 - Themes and Perspectives in Island Studies

IST 6040 - Research Methods and Design for Island Studies

IST 6200 - Communications Management and Island Issues

IST 6210 - Theory and Practice of Island Research I

IST 6220 - Theory and Practice of Island Research II

The remaining two courses can be taken from our current suite of on-line or face-to-face Master of Arts Island Studies courses (see <http://www.upei.ca/programsandcourses/island-studies>)

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Applicants must have a passion for islands. Despite the emphasis on island tourism, an island studies degree stresses integration and interdisciplinarity. Students with undergraduate degrees and experience in a diverse range of subject areas, including the social sciences, natural sciences, management and the humanities, are encouraged to apply. More specifically, students must have successfully completed an undergraduate degree with a minimum average of 70% or equivalent over the final two years/60 credit units/ 120 ECTS (in Europe) of that degree (consult the UPEI Academic Calendar or check with the UPEI Registrar's Office for the grading equivalencies at other educational institutions). The application must also include letters of reference from two individuals familiar with applicants' capabilities and potential, a sample of your writing, a brief essay indicating stating why you are interested in this program, and a current resumé/curriculum vitae. Applicants whose undergraduate degree was not taken in English will have to meet the English language standard at UPEI. Conditional acceptance to the post-graduate program may be made upon achieving the required language standard, after completion of a Graduate English Academic Preparation program at UPEI.

LAYOUT OF THE PROGRAMME:

- August 2018: New students will come together face-to-face for two weeks at the UPEI campus in Prince Edward Island to take Themes and Perspectives in Island Studies (IST6010). This will allow you to get to know your instructors, your classmates and learn about your university, all on the beautiful shores of Prince Edward Island. Students at a distance are welcome to stay on PEI to complete the remainder of their program taking a mixture of online and face-to-face courses.

- September-October 2018: All on-line courses are delivered in 6-week blocks. Your first online course will be Research Methods and Design for Island Studies (IST6040).
- November-December 2018: Islands and Tourism (IST6230)
- January – February 2019: Strategies for Economic Development for Small Islands (IST 6110)
- March – April 2019: - Approaches to the Management of Island Tourism (IST6240)
- May – June 2019: The Theory and Practice of Island Research I (IST6210) is the first of two work-study experiences for students. These experiential courses consist of 35-40 contact hours with an island tourism organization and supplemental online instruction. These project-specific experiences might be at your home location, on PEI or at other sites.
- September 2019 – April 2020: Over the next eight months, you will register in another two online courses, each delivered in 6-week blocks.
- May – June 2020: The second work-study experience course - Theory and Practice of Island Research II (IST 6220) - can be undertaken at the same or a different organization as the first work-study experience.
- July 2020: Students will come together for a second two-week period on Prince Edward Island to complete your program. Your final course will be Communications Management and Island Issues (IST 6200). At the end of this course there will be a celebration of your achievements and an informal graduation ceremony.

Cost of the Program: The cost of this unique program is competitive with other high-quality post-graduate programs. Half the students will receive scholarships and bursaries. For more information on this innovative program and opportunities for admission, please contact the Program Coordinator Dr. Jim Randall at jarandall@upe.ca. Students applying by March 31, 2018 will receive first consideration for scholarships and bursaries. Future cohorts are also planned in the areas of Sustainable Island Communities, and International Relations & Island Public Policy.

Greetings from Pohnpei

Miriam de Graaff

I am writing to you from my new desk at the regional office of Pacific Community (SPC) on Pohnpei, where I will be working for the next 4 months. I study International Land and Water Management at Wageningen University, in the Netherlands. During this last year of my study I will be mostly abroad, for an internship and thesis research. During the previous months I had been making arrangement for this internship at SPC, which was sometimes stressful. The time

difference made it difficult to communicate directly, flights would only go out on Monday, my visa application was not secured until the very last moment... It was not easy!

But, I would do it all over again for this experience. The moment that I looked out from the aeroplane window on my way to Pohnpei, and saw the island emerge from the mist and the ocean, I was overwhelmed and in awe of the beauty of this world. That overwhelming feeling was short-lived, because the welcoming people and relaxed atmosphere on the island made me adjust very quickly. I often get asked the question: “Did you have a culture shock?” I think I will get a culture shock when I get back home to the Netherlands, where everyone keeps running around to achieve more and more. Here, I can just focus on two things: (1) enjoying the island and (2) my research.

I just started out and I have the next two weeks to decide on the topic for my research. I am glad I have the time to figure out the topic, because this place is unlike any other place I have been so far. The crops are different, the climate is different and the agricultural practices are different. On the first day, I attended a workshop about the creation of a municipal market. There are privately owned markets here where local food is sold and there used to be a municipal market, but for some reason it stopped running and now squatters live in the building. This is a topic that I am interested in. What I am most interested in is the change from the subsistence lifestyle to a Westernized lifestyle. Subsistence farming to commercial farming. Is it something that can be enforced by creating a market opportunity or can a market only work if the communities want to grow crops to sell? And if a municipal market is something that the community wants, what should it look like? I really like what the Mayor of one of the municipalities on the island suggested. He mentioned that a market could be more than selling crops for money. Crops can also be traded for other goods and services, like it used to be. It is a meeting point, a place where people go to connect. It can enforce food security, decrease the dependency on imported food and contribute to a more healthy and diverse diet.

I really look forward to the rest of my time here and I hope to give you an update on my research in the next newsletter!





Conference in the Faroe Islands – May 2017

Pete Hay

I was at the Kangaroo Island conference in June/July 2017, and had a thoroughly fine time. Though an Australian, I'd not previously been to Kangaroo Island. I arrived by campervan, having taken three days to get there, and set about renewing relationships with old friends, and making new ones. But one thing astounded me. I'd just returned from an islands conference in the Faroe Islands, and it seemed that almost no-one at the ISISA conference, nor, from scanning the electronic discussions, anyone in the wider ISISA community, was even aware of this earlier conference. And in retrospect I can see that there was minimal awareness of ISISA or ISJ among the attendees of the Faroes conference, too. It occurs to me, then, that ISISA members might be interested in an account – a highly subjective account – of the conference in the Faroe Islands that only barely preceded ISISA's Kangaroo Island conference.

'The Tower at The End of The World' was a lit fest/academic conference hybrid, along the lines of PEI's 'Message in a Bottle' and a subsequent 'conference' on the Isle of Man (though I'm unsure whether the organisers of 'The Tower At The End Of The World' were aware of these organisational precedents). 'The Tower at The End of The World' was a 'conference' on island literatures, then, held at The Nordic House in the Faroese capital, Torshavn, and attendance was by invitation. I travelled from Tasmania, and had by far the longest odyssey to get there. It took

me 2 days, arriving at 10 at night, and I was on my feet presenting at 2.30 the next day – on Tasmanian literature and the unifying (and discordant) themes apparent within it.

But I should de-personalise this, and tell you about the conference. Title: ‘The Tower at The End of The World’. Four themes: Place, Memory, Language, Power. Each theme had a Keynote presenter, with two other papers, after which a discussion panel convened, in which the academic presenters were joined by three of the creative writers. The papers were unfailingly interesting, though adherence to the theme was not often apparent, especially in the case of the first two themes. A clear distinction was made between ‘academics’ and ‘creatives’, though many of the academics also had creative credentials, and possibly most of those present on the basis of their literary output also had academic credentials. I was an ‘academic’ and presented under the banner of the second theme: Memory.

The ‘creatives’ came into their own in the evening, with readings in Torshavn’s fine National Theatre. Many of the authors customarily wrote (and spoke) in a language other than English (whereas all the academic presentations were delivered in English), and most chose to read in her/his native language, with an English translation on a revolving screen behind them. I loved it – it reminded me that the human voice is itself a musical instrument. In fact, the high point of the entire event, for me, was the very last of the readings – a Donna Morrissey rant against the stupidity of programs aimed at retraining displaced fishermen in the wake of the collapse of the cod fishery.

And we had fun. What a spray of islands the Faroes are! Even under fog and rain the beauty of the place caught the breath. Closer to home, old Torshavn was an emphatic step back in time. For the conference itself, The Nordic House was a superb venue. The fine Faroese scholar, Bergur Ronne Moberg, assembled the academics, and the great Icelandic novelist, Sjon, the literary practitioners. And we mingled nicely – it was great to encounter, listen to, and talk with academics and writers largely unknown to me. In fact, only the Caribbean writer, Jamaica Kincaid, and the Newfoundland novelist, Donna Morrissey, had previously lodged within my purview.

Finally, I should note that through it all ran the shadow of the great Faroese writer, William Heinesen, dead now, but demanding the recognition in the Anglo world that he commands in its Nordic equivalent. This was emphatically a Nordic ‘conference’, and I became aware that within the Nordic countries there are parallel scholarships and literatures. But this conference, held, now, almost three months ago, remains unknown to most within the ISISA community. It is time, I think, that the rich vein of Nordic island studies came to feature more prominently within global island studies.

New Research Project: Island Care Solutions

Rosie Alexander
Careers Manager | *Manaidsear Dhreuchdan*

The issue of an ageing population and the challenge of providing effective care services to these populations is common to many small island communities. With this in mind, a new research project has just got underway in the islands of Orkney in the UK investigating potential innovative community led solutions to the provision of social care for older residents. The research will focus on the smaller non-linked isles of Orkney and consider the needs of the communities, the existing strengths and potentials of these communities, and will scope out models of care practice in other communities that could be adapted to the Orkney context.

The research is being carried out by Rosie Alexander (ISISA member and treasurer) with Robert Gordon University. Rosie is actively seeking information from other island communities across the world who have an interest in this topic, and would particularly welcome information about communities who have experimented with different ways of providing care for older people. Please feel free to contact her on: rosie@rosiealexander.co.uk The project will finish in Spring 2018.



Island Studies Journal (ISSN: 1715-2593) was set up in 2006 as a freely downloadable, peer reviewed, scholarly and interdisciplinary journal dedicated to the study of islands and island life.

ISJ is institutionally housed at the Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island, Canada: www.islandstudies.com

ISJ is, since June 2012, the official journal of ISISA and, since 2013, the official journal of RETI (the network of island universities).

Manuscripts to be considered for publication are welcome at: isj@upei.ca Website: www.islandstudies.ca/journal

Letter of Thanks

Dear Godfrey, Anna and the Conference Organising Committee,

We would like to once again congratulate and thank you all very much for the fantastic experience at the ISISA Conference on Kangaroo Island.

It was a truly magnificent event and one we not only enjoyed immensely but felt we learned a great deal from, in such wonderful company. It was both educative, uplifting and inspiring and we are most grateful for our involvement. It was a delight to meet so many wonderful delegates and spend time with them.

Our apologies for not corresponding sooner but our commitments with our National Science Week events and ongoing Dolphin Watch commitments gave us little time for such important communications.

Once again, our grateful thanks for such wonderful organisation, planning, teamwork, effort and hard work, creating such a truly memorable conference and an experience we will treasure.

With kind regards,

Tony & Phyll Bartram



Elections to the [ISISA Executive](#) will be held during the “Islands of the World’ Conference in June 2018.

Members on the ISISA Executive serve for a term of four years, which is renewable.

A ‘call for nominations’ will be published in January 2018.

Please consider stepping forward to serve. The position will take up your precious time and energy, but would land you considerable benefits, as you help shape the direction of island studies.

Godfrey Baldacchino

ISISA President

You can also reach ISISA through:

Listserv: isisa@yahoogroups.com

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Isisa-International-Small-Islands-Studies-Association/126009170815354>



Twitter: <https://twitter.com/intsisa>



ISISA website: www.isisa.org (includes blog)

