Assembling the Transpacific: History, Theory, Ethnography
A Presentation by Philipp Schorch

Wednesday, November 5, 6:00-7:30 pm
Kama 201, Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies,
University of Hawai‘i at Manoa

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indigenous curatorial practices at Bishop Museum, Hawai‘i.

This presentation approaches the Transpacific as a relational space to complicate the Euro-
American distinction between ‘centre’ and ‘rim’. It argues for a synthesis of history, theory
and ethnography to investigate how the Transpacific continuously becomes assembled,
disassembled and reassembled. Historically, the talk draws on collaborative research on the
Cook/Forster collection held at the Georg-August-University Göttingen, Germany, which
deployed the Māori concept Mana Taonga to frame and analyze globalizing processes from
an indigenous perspective. Conceptually, the paper introduces an edited volume, Transpacific
Americas, which places a systematic focus on contemporary and historical linkages between
the Americas and the South Pacific. Ethnographically, it sketches out an ongoing
collaborative research project conducted at the Bishop Museum, Hawai‘i, on indigenous
curatorial practices that are aimed at, and informed by, the (re)development of indigenous
skills and the (re)formation of transpacific indigenous networks.

Sponsored by American Studies Department & Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies
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