The Atlantic World in the Antipodes: Effects and Transformations since the Eighteenth Century

Edited by

Kate Fullagar
CONTENTS

List of Figures ............................................................................................. ix
Acknowledgments ...................................................................................... xi
Introduction.............................................................................................. xiii
The Atlantic World in the Antipodes
Kate Fullagar

Part I: Voyaging

Chapter One............................................................................................. 2
Women of the East, Women of the West: Region and Race, Gender and Sexuality on Cook’s Voyages
Margaret Jolly

Chapter Two.............................................................................................. 33
Convicts, Slaves and Prison Inmates: The Voyage to Australia in Comparative Perspective
Hamish Maxwell-Stewart

Chapter Three............................................................................................ 52
Antipodean Experiments: Charles Darwin’s South Seas Voyages, 1835-36
Iain McCalman

Part II: Investigating

Chapter Four............................................................................................. 70
In Transit: European Cosmologies in the Pacific
Simon Schaffer

Chapter Five............................................................................................. 94
Strange Climes: John MacGillivray and Natural History Collecting
Sophie Jensen
Chapter Six .............................................................................................. 120
Karl Haushofer's Geopolitics of the Pacific Ocean
Alison Bashford

Part III: Befriending

Chapter Seven .......................................................................................... 146
Defending Friends: Robert Codrington, George Sarawia and Edward Wogale
Helen Gardner

Chapter Eight .......................................................................................... 166
On the Trail of Nikolai Miklouho-Maclay: A Russian Encounter in the Antipodes
Sheila Fitzpatrick

Chapter Nine ............................................................................................ 185
Creating the Anthropological Field in the Pacific
Anita Herle

Part IV: Resisting

Chapter Ten ............................................................................................. 220
Facing Empire: Indigenous Histories in Comparative Perspective
Michael A. McDonnell

Chapter Eleven ........................................................................................ 237
Taking Liberty: Towards a New Political Historiography of Settler Self-Government and Indigenous Activism
Ann Curthoys

Chapter Twelve ........................................................................................ 256
Cultural Development and Cultural Observatories in the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States
Katerina Martina Teaiwa

Afterword .................................................................................................. 283
Opposite Footers
Damon Ieremia Salesa

Contributors ............................................................................................. 301

LIST OF FIGURES


Fig. 6-1. “Skizze der Meeresströmungen, Juli—September” from Karl Haushofer, Geopolitik des Pazifischen Ozeans (Heidelberg-Berlin: Kurt Vowinckel, 1938).

Fig. 6-2. “Karte der politischen,” from Karl Haushofer, Geopolitik des Pazifischen Ozeans (Heidelberg-Berlin: Kurt Vowinckel, 1938).

Fig. 6-3. “Wehrgeopolitische Skizze des Pazifik,” from Karl Haushofer, Geopolitik des Pazifischen Ozeans (Heidelberg-Berlin: Kurt Vowinckel, 1938).

Fig. 9-1. Members of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to the Torres Strait on Mabuiag island. 1898. © MAA P.751.ACH1.

Fig. 9-2. The Expedition’s friends and assistants on Mabuiag. © MAA P.704.ACH1.

Fig. 9-3. Gift of food to the Expedition members shortly after their arrival on Mer. 1898. © MAA P.918.ACH1.

Fig. 9-4. Inside the “Anthropological Laboratory” in the former LMS mission house. 1898. © MAA P.756.ACH1.

Fig. 9-5. Layard’s first photograph taken on Atchin. © MAA N.98455.

Fig. 9-6. Carved wooden ancestor figure noted by Layard for its naturalist style, Pwelut, Wala Island. 1915. © MAA N.98707.

Fig. 9-7. Meldektari and Maltset touching a stone nawot, Pwetertsuts ceremonial grounds, Atchin Island. 1914. © MAA N.98466.
CHAPTER ONE

WOMEN OF THE EAST, WOMEN OF THE WEST: REGION AND RACE, GENDER AND SEXUALITY ON COOK’S VOYAGES

MARGARET JOLLY

An Oceanic Turn? Atlantic and Pacific Crossings

This volume constructs a connection between the Atlantic and the Pacific, the world’s two largest oceans. It might be read as part of the recent “oceanic turn” in history. Although there is much to celebrate about the distinctive fluidity of a history abroad on oceans rather than landlocked by continental perspectives, which have arguably dominated Euro-American history to date, we need to be conscious of why and how we conceptualise this connection, these crossings between two oceans. I will return to this problem but first consider the prior question of how we conceive of a region, especially one framed by an ocean.

The regions of our world have been variously named, mapped and envisaged. As many scholars have demonstrated, maps chart historically-changing relations of knowledge and power, and predicate a point of view from the location of a privileged observer. So large tracts of Asia that had previously been designated “Tartary” were, during the course of the nineteenth century, re-named as Near, Middle and Far East, calculated in terms of relative proximity from the locus of Europe, although the calculus of remoteness shifted over time. Similarly, the twentieth-century moniker of the “West” invests a cardinal direction with an ideological and geopolitical value, while the contemporary language of global “North” and “South” denotes regions as richer/more developed versus poorer/less developed and problematically associates geopolitical conceptions with cardinal directions and quotidian notions of “up” and “down.”

The historical geographer Miles Ogborn has written about both the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans in a way that reveals the changing relations of knowledge and power exercised in and over these regions. For him, Atlantic geographies exceed local or national perspectives and are attentive to the longer term of “dynamic circumnavigatory flows,” the movements of peoples, ideas and materials, and the movement of winds and ocean currents in both “violent and productive ways.” The Atlantic is both a place and a time—in European periodisation the moment of early modernity. “It was made through the unequal labour, knowledge and investment of the peoples living around its rim and moving across its depths and shallows from the late fifteenth century onwards.” It was not just a Euro-American place but also one that engaged African men and women as “active contributors to the new hybrid intercultures of the oceanic zone.” Both Europeans and Africans criss-crossed the ocean many times and, “threw a cat’s cradle of voyages across the waves and swells,” and “stitched the margins of the Atlantic world together.”

Ogborn differentiates three epistemologies for Atlantic geographies: “the survey, the network and the trace.” The survey entails comparisons between places and times within a conceived unity, but usually maps territories or nations bordering the ocean rather than charting the ocean itself. The network rather focuses on the changing web of social and material connections; in lieu of a surveyor’s map it graphs a topology of lines and points. The trace is a more particularist account, for example of individual journeys that reveal how “intimate and large-scale histories and geographies intersect in wandering paths and personal transformation.” He considers all three have their flaws and they are not mutually incompatible.

David Armitage also offers a tripartite division, between what he calls the three concepts of Circum-Atlantic history (a transnational history), Trans-Atlantic history (an international history) and, after Thomas Jefferson, Cis-Atlantic history (national or regional history in an Atlantic context). Armitage had earlier proclaimed: “We are all Atlanticists now!” This rousing proclamation has been both celebrated and critiqued. There is a comparable passion in celebration and critique in Pacific Studies, but the echoing cry would not be the spitting sibilants of “We are all Pacificists now!” but, rather, “We are all Oceanists now!”, especially in the wake of the visionary writing of Tongan scholar Epeli Hau’ofa, whose passing we recently mourned.
What's in a Name? Region and Race

People made a home in the world of Oceania and navigated across its waters for millennia prior to European "discoveries" from the fifteenth century: ancestors of indigenous Australians from c. 50,000 BP, of the Papuan speakers of Papua New Guinea, Bougainville and the Solomons from c. 40,000–50,000 BP and of Austronesian speakers who predominate in the insular Pacific from c. 3,000 BP.14 Speakers of all these languages of the Pacific had a variety of names for the ocean they inhabited, evoking both its material liquidity and the space of passage.

The name Pacific is rather a foreign label, first conferred by Magellan who, on his long voyage of 1519–21, found it relatively tranquil (likely compared to the stormy Atlantic he had just crossed). The ocean with its many islands—and, for centuries in European visions, an imagined antipodean continent *Terra Australis Incognita* (from the sixteenth century)—was known in European languages variously as *Magellanica*, *Mar del Sur*, the South Seas, Oceanica and Oceania. As the writings of both Bronwen Douglas and Serge Tcherkezoff demonstrate, albeit in different ways, the preferred labels differed between European languages, and the boundaries of all such regional labels were historically fluid.18 "Oceania" thus earlier included not only all the islands of the Pacific, from what we now call Rapanui to Papua New Guinea, but also insular Southeast Asia, Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand and, in some formulations, even Madagascar.

The labels "Melanesia" and "Polynesia" were applied by Dumont d'Urville in 1832, to distinguish not just regions but "two distinct races" on the basis of "skin colour, physical appearance, language, political institutions, religion, and reception of Europeans." His distinction was patently hierarchical: "black" Melanesians were adjudged inferior to "copper-coloured" Polynesians but superior to those "primitives" closer to the state of nature—Australians and Tasmanians. His distinctions linked region and race while Charles V. Monin's map, drawn after d'Urville, condensed them, overlaying divisions earlier drawn by geographers with d'Urville's divisions of "races of men." Epeli Hau'ofa reclaimed "Oceania" in an anti-racist project that rejected such foreign partitions and deployed the ocean as material and metaphor, connecting all Pacific peoples in both region and rim, in both islands and distant diasporic locations.

As Douglas has persuasively argued, "race" is a slippery and contested word, especially in the late eighteenth century. She suggests that its meaning hardened from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries from a more labile concept that loosely denoted “nation” or “type” to one which denoted the ontological reality of biologically determined hereditary groupings. She glosses this shift as one “from climate to crania.” If race was a slippery and contested word, so too was its conjugation with the concept of region. In some earlier formulations, location, environment and climate were seen to have a strong influence on the character of “races” while in later formulations, biological racial essences were seen to prevail regardless of location.

Women of the east, Women of the west

In this chapter, I explore how, before the naming of d'Urville's "two distinct races," Melanesians and Polynesians, some European voyagers perceived profound differences between peoples and places of the Pacific. Texts and images from Cook's three voyages, and especially the second voyage, suggest differences were made not just on the criteria privileged by d'Urville ("skin colour, appearance, language, politics, religion and the reception of Europeans") but, crucially, on the basis of gender. From the late eighteenth century, before "race" was re-conceived as a natural biological difference, the difference between women and men was already being seen as a natural universal, grounded in sexual and reproductive biology. In the Pacific, this difference was further explored and elaborated by European navigators and scientists. There was a strong contrast made between "the women of the east" and the "women of the west"—that is, between the eastern and the western islands of the Pacific—in terms of women’s physical beauty, the character of their labour, their position vis-à-vis men and, crucially, their sexual receptivity to European men. This contrast was always articulated with a comparison to European women, whom I might dub, anachronistically, as "women of the West." Thus the contrastive figures of exotic women in distant Pacific islands were always triangulated with a third—the figure of European women—and, on Cook's voyages, often English women, "Britannia's daughters," the progeny and producers of the "Island Race" of home.

In navigating this argument, I am conscious of three major reefs, which I try to avoid: the perils of presentism and teleology, an anachronistic use of national rather than archipelagic identities, and the challenge of reconstructing indigenous experiences and realities—of recovering “double vision” through the monocular lens of a plethora of texts and images authored by Europeans.
First, although inspired by Greg Dening’s vision of the relation of past and present as like the double helix of our DNA,26 dialogically connected and inexorably intertwined, I try to avoid presentism or a teleological reading of sources, thereby construing the experiences of late-eighteenth-century voyages in terms of what came later. I am arguing that gender is crucial in delineating a difference between Pacific peoples and places on the Cook voyages, not that this is the same difference or merely anticipates what was later named as Melanesia/Polynesia.27

Second, the differences detected by Europeans were often perceived within island archipelagos as well as between them. Several Pacific archipelagos are still known by names conferred by Cook, but those names now signal a novel unity developed in the colonial and postcolonial formation of nation states and territories: Vanuatu (the indigenous name adopted at independence in 1980, previously Cook’s New Hebrides), New Caledonia (so named by Cook), Hawai’i (named the Sandwich Islands by Cook), French Polynesia (O-Tahiti and Society Islands, per Cook), and Aotearoa New Zealand (a conjunction of an indigenous name and Cook’s New Zealand, an Anglicisation of the Dutch Nova Zeelandia). Distinctions were often made within such island groups, for example between Malakula28 and Tanna in the archipelago Cook called the New Hebrides.

Finally, and most consequentially, there is the problem of the partiality of our sources—partiality in both the sense of incompleteness and of interestedness. It may seem odd to emphasise partiality, given the simultaneous abundance. There are copious primary sources: many voyage texts authored by Cook, several officers and scientists like Johann Reinhold Forster and his son George;29 a vast array of images, ranging from in situ drawings through published engravings, watercolours and oil paintings by several voyage artists—Sydney Parkinson, William Hodges and John Webber—and a huge number of Pacific objects collected by Cook and others, most of which are now held in diverse European museums.30 Secondary sources abound and are growing: more than thirty new Cook books have appeared in the last thirty years.31 The sheer plenty of this material, primarily of foreign authorship, entails certain risks—that instead of true “double vision,” that stereoscopic depth of perspective generated by looking from both sides of such cross-cultural encounters, we rather end up with that other sense of the term: blurred, disturbed and distorted vision.32

Yet it has been argued not only that we can read such European texts and images “against the grain” but also that indigenous agency can be discerned as “counter-signs” in such sources, albeit camouflaged within Eurocentric views and requiring rigorous decoding.33 Moreover, Pacific objects now in foreign museums can reveal as much about the indigenous contexts of and motivations for exchange as they do about the passions and constraints on European collecting of such “artificial curiosities.”34 The dominance of weapons of war from the islands of the western Pacific—from the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) and New Caledonia—as against the more diverse arrays from Tahiti, Hawai’i and Tonga (including many objects created and used by women such as tapa and pandanus baskets and textiles from the latter islands) suggests not just that European representations of the western islands were dominated by views of bellicose men who opposed the strangers with indigenous weapons35 but, too, that women in the western Pacific, such as Malakula and Tanna were far less engaged in exchanges with Europeans than were women in the east.36 Moreover, the perceptions and insights of generations of Pacific peoples remembered in oral traditions, inscribed in texts by missionaries and ethnographers, and authored as indigenous histories and analyses, can be deployed, not to suggest eternal unchanging cultural scripts but, rather, to ensure that our “double vision” is not so much blurred as more deeply stereoscopical.37

In dealing with gender and sexuality on Cook’s voyages, we are dealing with both the embodied experiences of European and Pacific historical agents—“real” men, women, and transgendered people—and with gender as a labile, fertile and changing code: one that, as Strathern has argued for the world of “Melanesia,”38 contextually designates relations, processes and events rather than merely marking the natural essences of sexed bodies. In this Enlightenment period when “nature,” and especially reproductive difference, was being privileged as the universal difference between men and women,39 gender as a code was also being deployed by Europeans in increasingly complex ways to mark not just differences of sex but also of race and class. In contrast to Edward Said’s view, articulated in Orientalism (1978), that colonised peoples such as those in the Middle East were feminised,40 in the Pacific we rather witness that while both men and women of the eastern islands, and especially those of noble rank were frequently feminised (and seen as indolent, voluptuous, vulnerable and accommodating), peoples of the western islands (women and men) were rather masculinised (and seen as hardworking, ascetic, muscular and resistant). Complex gender codes interacted with European constructs of exotic sexuality emergent from voyage encounters, particularly apropos the sexual excess and access imputed to the eastern islands of Tahiti and Hawai’i. In the visions of Pacific peoples, gender and sexuality were no less complex and intimately entangled constructions.41
“European Vision”: From Preconception and Projection to Embodied Experience

Bernard Smith’s magisterial corpus, from European Vision and the South Pacific (1960) to Imagining the Pacific (1992), yields brilliant insights into how the aesthetics of drawing, engraving and painting were inseparable from the colonial relations and discourses of the eighteenth-century Pacific. Smith also establishes how crucial the “discoveries” of Pacific voyaging were in the genesis of scientific empiricism and evolutionary theory in Europe. Moreover, he underscores how central the century inseparable from the colonial relations and discourses of the eighteenth-century Pacific back into how the aesthetics of drawing, engraving and painting were inseparable from the colonial relations and discourses of the eighteenth-century Pacific. Smith also establishes how crucial the “discoveries” of Pacific voyaging were in the genesis of scientific empiricism and evolutionary theory in Europe. Moreover, he underscores how central the century inseparable from the colonial relations and discourses of the eighteenth-century Pacific. As Smith protests in the foreword to the second edition of European Vision, his focus is not so much on how European preconceptions, often developed in the Atlantic world, were projected onto the Pacific but rather on how the embodied experience of the Pacific (in which he included Australia) changed European visions and had profound effects back “home.” Pacific voyaging from the late eighteenth century onwards brought many revolutionary ideas back to Europe, as well as “natural” and “artificial curiosities” and the novel fashion of tattooing.

Perceptions of Pacific women and their relations with men were central to debates that linked constructs of exotic others with differences between contemporary Europeans, all across the Atlantic world, and postulations about past societies, especially ancient Greece and Rome. The Pacific, like the Atlantic, was not just a place but was plotted in time. The figure of woman became a crucial sign in the emergent but still unstable theory of “nature” and in constituting the tension between the tropes of noble and ignoble savages.

As Smith protests in the foreword to the second edition of European Vision (1985), his focus is not so much on how European preconceptions, often developed in the Atlantic world, were projected onto the Pacific but rather on how the embodied experience of the Pacific (in which he included Australia) changed European visions and had profound effects back “home.” Pacific voyaging from the late eighteenth century onwards brought many revolutionary ideas back to Europe, as well as “natural” and “artificial curiosities” and the novel fashion of tattooing.

Perceptions of Pacific women and their relations with men were central to debates that linked constructs of exotic others with differences between contemporary Europeans, all across the Atlantic world, and postulations about past societies, especially ancient Greece and Rome. The Pacific, like the Atlantic, was not just a place but was plotted in time. The figure of woman became a crucial sign in the emergent but still unstable theory of “nature” and in constituting the tension between the tropes of noble and ignoble savages.

As Smith protests in the foreword to the second edition of European Vision (1985), his focus is not so much on how European preconceptions, often developed in the Atlantic world, were projected onto the Pacific but rather on how the embodied experience of the Pacific (in which he included Australia) changed European visions and had profound effects back “home.” Pacific voyaging from the late eighteenth century onwards brought many revolutionary ideas back to Europe, as well as “natural” and “artificial curiosities” and the novel fashion of tattooing.

Finally, women in the eastern and the western islands were contrasted in terms of their empowerment vis-à-vis men. The high-ranking women of Hawai’i, Tahiti, and Tonga were seen as formidable ladies in their own right, sometimes of higher rank than their husbands or brothers, and able to exercise their own rights in exchanges with Europeans—be they material or corporeal. Women in the western islands, by contrast, were seen as subjugated by their menfolk—not only drudges in the fields, but subject to cruel physical treatment and oppressive male domination. This construction of women’s power rebounded on the European perception of the agency of the women in sexual relations with European men. At one extreme, women were seen as licentious and lascivious, even to the point of forcing their sexual attentions upon the sailors. At the other extreme, women were seen to have little or no agency and, regardless of whether they were or were not having sexual liaisons with foreigners, were seen as the “property” of their fathers or other male kin. This слиdes elements of coercion or forcible persuasion in the first scenario and of women’s will and efficacy in the second. In such voyage texts, the “status of woman” and some (but not all) of the gentlemen officers and scientists on board refrained from sexual relations with Pacific women. Cook castigated and tried episodically to prevent his crews from giving way to their “brutal appetites” and thereby spreading deadly venereal diseases. But the erotic appeal and the sexual availability of women were nevertheless critical to the categories formulated by the scientists.

We might also consider the way in which these men related the erotic appeal of women’s bodies to the work women did. In many of the eastern islands high-ranking women in particular were depicted as ample and fleshy both because of the expansiveness of their diet and the languidness of their pursuits. In such places, the main work of high-ranking women was the work of making tapa—a cloth beaten from bark, most usually from the inner skin of the paper mulberry. The beating, formation and decoration of tapa cloth was perceived by European observers not as hard manual labour but as a refined art. The wielding of the mallet was no doubt more strenuous than the insinuation of the needle in embroidery and tapestry by English ladies, but it was classed similarly as a refined feminine art that women did together. By contrast, women in Vanuatu, New Caledonia and New Zealand were perceived as sparse, with “masculine” musculature and sometimes cast as haggard, crippled and deformed because of their hard work: cultivating taro and yams or collecting fern roots, fetching water and wood, with babies on their backs or in their bellies. Their labour was not aestheticised but bestialised; they were described as “pack horses” or “beasts of burden.”

Finally, women in the eastern and the western islands were contrasted in terms of their empowerment vis-à-vis men. The high-ranking women of Hawai’i, Tahiti, and Tonga were seen as formidable ladies in their own right, sometimes of higher rank than their husbands or brothers, and able to exercise their own rights in exchanges with Europeans—be they material or corporeal. Women in the western islands, by contrast, were seen as subjugated by their menfolk—not only drudges in the fields, but subject to cruel physical treatment and oppressive male domination. This construction of women’s power rebounded on the European perception of the agency of the women in sexual relations with European men. At one extreme, women were seen as licentious and lascivious, even to the point of forcing their sexual attentions upon the sailors. At the other extreme, women were seen to have little or no agency and, regardless of whether they were or were not having sexual liaisons with foreigners, were seen as the “property” of their fathers or other male kin. This слиdes elements of coercion or forcible persuasion in the first scenario and of women’s will and efficacy in the second. In such voyage texts, the “status of woman”

and some (but not all) of the gentlemen officers and scientists on board refrained from sexual relations with Pacific women. Cook castigated and tried episodically to prevent his crews from giving way to their “brutal appetites” and thereby spreading deadly venereal diseases. But the erotic appeal and the sexual availability of women were nevertheless critical to the categories formulated by the scientists.

We might also consider the way in which these men related the erotic appeal of women’s bodies to the work women did. In many of the eastern islands high-ranking women in particular were depicted as ample and fleshy both because of the expansiveness of their diet and the languidness of their pursuits. In such places, the main work of high-ranking women was the work of making tapa—a cloth beaten from bark, most usually from the inner skin of the paper mulberry. The beating, formation and decoration of tapa cloth was perceived by European observers not as hard manual labour but as a refined art. The wielding of the mallet was no doubt more strenuous than the insinuation of the needle in embroidery and tapestry by English ladies, but it was classed similarly as a refined feminine art that women did together. By contrast, women in Vanuatu, New Caledonia and New Zealand were perceived as sparse, with “masculine” musculature and sometimes cast as haggard, crippled and deformed because of their hard work: cultivating taro and yams or collecting fern roots, fetching water and wood, with babies on their backs or in their bellies. Their labour was not aestheticised but bestialised; they were described as “pack horses” or “beasts of burden.”

Finally, women in the eastern and the western islands were contrasted in terms of their empowerment vis-à-vis men. The high-ranking women of Hawai’i, Tahiti, and Tonga were seen as formidable ladies in their own right, sometimes of higher rank than their husbands or brothers, and able to exercise their own rights in exchanges with Europeans—be they material or corporeal. Women in the western islands, by contrast, were seen as subjugated by their menfolk—not only drudges in the fields, but subject to cruel physical treatment and oppressive male domination. This construction of women’s power rebounded on the European perception of the agency of the women in sexual relations with European men. At one extreme, women were seen as licentious and lascivious, even to the point of forcing their sexual attentions upon the sailors. At the other extreme, women were seen to have little or no agency and, regardless of whether they were or were not having sexual liaisons with foreigners, were seen as the “property” of their fathers or other male kin. This слиdes elements of coercion or forcible persuasion in the first scenario and of women’s will and efficacy in the second. In such voyage texts, the “status of woman”
as subject or object, as agent or victim in relation to men thus became a crucial index of the passage from savagery or civilisation. This was a commonplace in the writings of both the French and the Scottish Enlightenment and the philosophy of John Stuart Mill and Mary Wollstonecraft.46

In terms of the labels that emerged in the nineteenth century, this might be seen to correspond roughly to the partitioning of “Polynesia” from “Melanesia”.47 In the late-eighteenth century, though, the details of distinctions made by voyagers suggest greater fluidity and flexibility. The Māori women of New Zealand float between these two classes. Although classified “racially” with those of the eastern islands, Māori were seen by Johann Reinhold Forster to be “slipping down” and Māori women were frequently represented in terms akin to those of the western islands. Their appearance is denigrated, their work perceived as arduous drudgery; they are seen as oppressed by men. Their oppression is patent in their sexual availability to Europeans, whereby they are seen as the “property” of their menfolk. They are, to use Johann Forster’s inimitable phrase, “ready victims.”

In what follows, I explore these contrasting figures of Pacific women in the writing of Johann Reinhold Forster and his son George. But I also argue that a focus only on such generalising contrasts fails to capture not just the fluidity and complexity of such adjudications but also the more uncertain character of embodied experience and, integral to that experience, the agency of indigenous people—women and men. A rigorous reading of Cook voyage sources must engage, as many have done,48 a critical comparison of many competing accounts—an awareness of the chasm between generalising pronouncements and the particularities of local, often evanescent experiences, and a passion not just for the visual traces of European maps, sketches, engravings and paintings (and notably those of Tupaia) but also for indigenous creations collected as so many “artificial curiosities.”

I will concentrate my focus on the second voyage and on the differences between the accounts of Johann Reinhold Forster49 and those of his son George. Many of Forster senior’s grandiloquent generalisations in his Observations are at odds not just with daily events depicted in other sources but even with those reported by Forster junior in his A Voyage Round the World.50 Johann had been precluded from publishing an official narrative by the British Admiralty. This ban did not extend to George, whose Voyage was published six weeks before the official account came out under Cook’s name. Its authorship has been long contested. It is based on Johann’s journal and includes opinions therein different from Johann’s own published Observations; sections on Dusky Bay were likely drafted by Johann. George also drew on Cook’s journals. But it elaborates on all these sources and is “essentially George’s composition.” It has a distinctive voice, a lyricism that, Nicholas Thomas adjudges, is only occasionally matched by that of Forster senior.51

Johann Reinhold Forster’s Observations

I now consider some of the broad and general proclamations by Johann Reinhold Forster, in his Observations. I then situate his pronouncements in the light of some events described in George Forster’s Voyage. The magnum opus Observations Made During A Voyage Round the World is different to the daily logs and journals and the published narratives by both Cook and others. It reads as the detemporalised, despatialised, seemingly disembodied writing of the philosopher, the natural historian, the ethnologist. Forster’s comments on the appearance and the position of women and their relations with men lie beside other reflections on the “natural varieties” of the Pacific, the formation of the land and ocean, volcanoes and icebergs, the varieties of flora and of fauna. His text primarily grapples with questions of location, environment and climate and the effects of people migrating between different latitudes. His observations of “nature” were inextricably connected to his theories of “culture” and, more specifically, the changing “nature” of women with social transformations.

The rank assigned to WOMEN in domestic society, among the various nations, has so great an influence upon their civilization and morality, that I cannot leave this subject, without adding a few remarks. The more debased the situation of a nation is, and of course the more remote from civilization, the more harshly we found the women treated. ... In NEW-ZEELAND, they collect the eatable fern-roots ..., they dress the victuals, prepare the flax-plant and manufacture it into garments, knot the nets for their fishing, and are never without labour and employment; whilst the surly men pass the greater part of their time in sloth and indolence: however, these are the least hardships of these unhappy females; for they are not only the drudges of the men, but are not even permitted to punish their unruly and wanton boys, who often throw stones at their mothers, or beat them with impunity, under the eyes and sanction of their fathers; and they are looked upon as beings calculated for the mere satisfaction of brutal appetites, nor treated better than beasts of burden, without being allowed to have the least will of their own: which incontestibly proves, how much men, in a degenerated and savage state, are inclined to oppress the weaker party.52
Forster continues:

The females at TANNA, MALLICOLLO, and NEW-CALEDONIA, were not in a much happier condition; for, though we never knew them to be beaten and abused by their own offspring, they were however obliged to carry burdens, and to take upon themselves every laborious and toilsome part of domestic business. 54

But in the following paragraph:

In O-Taheitee, the Society, the Friendly Isles, and the Marquesas, the fair sex is already raised to a greater equality with the men; and if, from no other reason, from this alone we might be allowed to pronounce, that these islanders have emerged from the state of savages, and ought to be ranked one remove above barbarians. For the more the women are esteemed in a nation, and enjoy an equality of rights with the men, the more it appears that the original harshness of manners is softened, the more the people are capable of tender feelings, mutual attachment, and social virtues, which naturally lead them towards the blessings of civilization. In O-Taheitee, and its neighbourhood, the women are possessed of a delicate organization, a sprightly turn of mind, a lively, fanciful imagination, a wonderful quickness of parts and sensibility, a sweetness of temper, and a desire to please; all which, when found connected with primitive simplicity of manners, when accompanied with a charming frankness, a beautifully proportioned shape, an irresistible smile, and eyes full of sweetness and sparkling with fire, contribute to captivate the hearts of their men, and to secure to them a just and moderate influence in domestic and even public affairs. 55

Forster senior thus derives the status of women, their subjection or esteem by men, from their place in “domestic society”—that is, within marriage or family life. Their domestic elevation is portrayed as initially due to male esteem, but this is seen to catalyse women’s capacity to socialise more generally and exert a broader influence not just in “domestic” but “public” affairs. Johann is patently drawing on his own European experience and the ways in which family life was changing in this period, especially among the emergent middle classes, with the increasing demarcation between domestic and public worlds. 56 His Enlightenment ideal of an egalitarian family is an idyll at variance with the prevailing hierarchies of patriarchal families. His racialised hierarchy is equally patriarchal, of course: the crucial sign of women’s civilised state is their capacity to “learn the great art to please [men]” and thereby win their hearts.

Forster senior thus plots a temporal stadial theory of progress from savagery, through the stages of barbarism, in which the bestial character of women’s labour, their harsh oppression by men and the “mere satisfaction of brutal appetites” is opposed to the refinement, equality and mutual love approaching civilisation. This suggests a dystopian view of the original state of nature as harsh, brutal and debased, closer to Hobbes than Rousseau. As Thomas notes, Forster senior also raises the spectre of degeneration, even in relation to the felicitous Tahitians, insofar as licence, luxury and indulgence portend, as they did for European aristocrats in his view, moral decline and weakness. 57 This temporal plot is complicated by a spatio-temporal plot which situates “nations” not only in relation to their latitude, proximity to the poles, and climate but their proximity to or distance from cultural centres and their imputed origin. “More remote from civilization” is a powerful but suggestive phrase denoting both temporal and spatial remoteness from Europe but also, for those living in the western islands or southern latitudes, remoteness from where he thought they originated, likely in Asia (a prescient speculation since prehistorians now locate the homeland of Austronesians in south China or Taiwan).

In this huge and extraordinary tome, Forster senior established a gradation of Pacific peoples visited on the second voyage.

We chiefly observed two great varieties of people in the South Seas, the one more fair well limbed, athletic of a fine size and a kind benevolent temper; the other, blacker, the hair just beginning to become woolly and crisp, the body more slender and low, and their temper, if possible more brisk, though somewhat mistrustful. The first race inhabits O-Taheitee, and the Society Isles, the Marquesas, the Friendly Isles, Easter Island and New-Zealand. The second race peoples New-Caledonia, Tanna and the New Hebrides, especially Mallicolo. 59

He acknowledged individual diversities within these “two races of men” and perceived several internal varieties “which form the gradations towards the other race” in the descending order distilled in the sequence quoted above. Significantly, these gradations reflected degrees of difference from European bodies, from lighter to darker skin colour, from straight hair to woolly hair, but they were also configured in a gendered hierarchy which saw soft, ample flesh as feminine, and hard, muscled flesh as masculine. The feminine is more appealing and more inviting, but softness is also associated with the dangers of overexcited sensuality, with laziness and luxury, and with an opulence that portends degeneration and decline.
Such “masculine” and “feminine” formations of flesh Forster senior found on both male and female bodies. So amongst the Tahitians he observes that although the chiefly men are tall and of athletic habit, this is always blended with “a degree of effeminacy,” a softness of flesh, which in those who do not work becomes patently feminine. Tahitian commoners, both male and female, are gendered more masculine, not only darker, but with more firm and vigorous musculature. He says of Tongan men, “The outlines of their bodies are not so beautifully feminine, as those of the chiefs in the Society-Isles,” whilst the features of New Caledonian men he thought “strong and masculine.”

Denigrations of the appearance of the women of Tanna and Malakula pervade most narratives of the second voyage: they are “black and woolly haired,” “illfavoured,” “ugly,” “deformed,” although, as I have argued, William Hodges’ drawings and paintings and engravings based on these are far more generous (see Fig. 1-1). There are constant invidious comparisons drawn between the bodies of women of Tanna and Malakula and those of Tahiti in aesthetic adjudications. Johann shared such views. He opined: “The breasts of the women of O-Taheitee, the Society-Isles, Marquesas, and Friendly-Isles, are not so flaccid and pendulous as is commonly observed in negro-women, and as we likewise noticed them in all the Western islands, in New-Zeeland, and some of the females of the lower sort at the Society-Isles.” He attributed these differences not just to breast feeding, but to bodies relaxed by hard work and exposure to sun and air, and to the lack of the gentle constrictions of tapa, which, in “women of quality” served to “keep the breasts high.” High breasts were not only more beautiful but iconic of high rank and cultural elevation.

George Forster at Point Venus, Tahiti

When George Forster arrives in Tahiti on Cook’s second voyage, he is full of anticipation—the voyagers have survived the rough seas, seaboard sickness and the rigours of the southern latitudes. After journeying from the Cape of Good Hope, through the Antarctic Circle, and the southern islands of New Zealand, they sail towards this isle already famed for the beauty of its landscape, the friendliness of its men and the licentiousness of its women.

George’s text, like all the others, romances about the bodies of Tahitian women. Among those who came in canoes to the ships and exchanged their “natural productions” (of fish, coconuts, breadfruit and bananas) for transparent beads and small nails were “several females, pretty enough to attract the attention of Europeans who had not seen their own country-
No doubt women on Tanna and Malakula had far less contact with the strangers and did not have sex with them, but George Forster’s account belies the idea that men were forcibly sequestering them. Alone among the commentators on the second voyage, George Forster tells us of a musical exchange on a balmy evening on Tanna.

We amused them as usual by singing to them, and they became so familiar at last as to point out some girls to us, whom from an excess of hospitality not uncommon with uncivilized nations, they offered to their friends with gestures not in the least equivocal. The women at the first hint of the civility which the men intended to confer upon us, ran off to a great distance seemingly much frightened, and shaded at their indecency.

Hardly jealous sequesters, these men were in fact offering women, but the Tannese women clearly felt no compunction to do what these men suggested—they simply refused and disappeared.

After the usual denigratory details about how Māori women looked to him, George goes on to say,

Our crews, who had not conversed with women since our departure from the Cape, found these ladies very agreeable; and from the manner in which their advances were received, it appeared very plainly that chastity was not rigorously observed here, and that the sex was far from being impregnable. However their favours did not depend on their own inclination, but the men as absolute masters, were always to be consulted upon the occasion … Whether the members of a civilized society, who could act such a brutal part, or the barbarians who could force their own women to submit to such indignity, deserve the greatest abhorrence, is a question not easily to be decided.

But then on 13 November 1773, on a return visit to Queen Charlotte Sound, Forster tells us that the natives supplied them with plenty of fish.
There is not much of a hint of duress here. The "former amours" are resumed without mention of coercion, and To-gheeree is cast rather as singled out by George as having tolerable features, something "soft and feminine in her looks."

As in his father's broader adjudication, there is a pronounced aesthetic dimension in George Forster's hierarchy of women, and a recurring link between the perceived beauty of women and their capacity for volition. However, he quickly disrupts this notion of an idyllic love union in the passage immediately following:

Whatever attachment the Englishman had to his New Zealand wife, he never attempted to take her on board, foreseeing that it would be highly inconvenient to lodge the numerous retinue which crawled in her garments and weighed down the hair of her head. He therefore visited her on shore, and only by day, treating her with plenty of the rotten part of our biscuit, which we rejected, but which she and all her countrymen eagerly devoured.84

What intrigues me is the distance between the generalised representation of Māori women as coercively prostituted by their male kin in Forster the father's overarching theory, and the diversity of situations Forster the son recounts, even as his general claims struggle to conform to his father's adjudications of "vile prostitution." Although, as in the eastern islands, women are also receiving presents, sheets, shirts, iron tools, and spike nails, the very passage of goods for their sexuality suggests that women are here men's "property" in a way quite dissimilar from the representation of the agency of Marorai in Tahiti. The fact that some women are reluctant is taken to suggest that all Māori men are brutal, whereas the fact that some Tahitian women are reluctant does not so implicate all Tahitian men. For the Māori, sexual commerce is a sign of debauchery and the fatal allure of European objects: "we created new wants."85 Sexual commerce in Tahiti was viewed far more ambivalently by Forster senior and others, as a symptom of indigenous debauchery certainly, but also as a sign of liberty and openness to a broader commerce with European civilisation, which, in this locale was perceived as good not bad. So while sexual exchange with Tahitians compromised, it also, paradoxically, constituted their civility. But in New Zealand it is so infamous as to render the Māori debased to the point of being without a "shadow of sensibility."86

“An uncommon degree of voluptuousness”

Sexual relations between European men and indigenous women on Pacific voyages have been far more debated for the islands of Tahiti and Hawai'i than for other islands of the Pacific. As I have telegraphically suggested in a recent essay, there are three dominant interpretations of these relations.87

First, there are those who, like many of the Cook voyage authors, stress the "voluptuousness" and sexual licence of Tahitians and Hawaiians, and thereby stress the licentious agency of the women in sexual exchanges. So David Samwell, while in Hawai'i on the third voyage, claimed: "Indeed we found all the women of these Islands but little influenced by interested motives in their intercourse with us, as they would almost use violence to force you into their Embrace regardless whether we gave them with a Toi for their fathers or whoever brought them on board."88 There is no doubt that sexuality in these islands was celebrated and sacralised, but it was hardly an act of individual free will since, as Samwell suggests, women and young girls were brought on board by their fathers or other kin. This collective dimension of sexual exchange has often developed into what Tcherkézoff has critically dubbed the "sexual hospitality" thesis.89

A second competing but complementary explanation is that these were, as the Forsters adjudged, acts of prostitution. In fact Cook used the spectre of prostitution to defend the women of the eastern islands against the claim they were all prostitutes.90 Married women, unmarried women of high rank, and even those of lower rank, Cook asserted, were not available. Women selling sex were a minority, as in Britain, but unlike in Britain it was not seen as a "crime so deep a die" as to ostracise them from society. Both contemporaneous commentators and later scholars have used the language of prostitution to describe the mutual exchange of shirts and sheets, nails and hatchets, beads and mirrors for sexual acts, not as the exchange of valued gifts but as commodities. Eighteenth-century depictions are saturated with the language of commerce and emergent capitalism. Both Forsters adduce from the gifts of Māori women's sexuality that their persons must thereby have been the "property" of their fathers or husbands. The language of sex as a commodity in commerce has persisted. It is unlikely that indigenous Pacific people understood such early acts of sexual exchange in the terms of an emergent capitalism.

The third explanation, initially made by Marshall Sahlins apropos Hawai'i,91 but elaborated by Tcherkézoff primarily apropos Tahiti and Sāmoa, that these sexual exchanges were rather gifts of young girls to the
strangers who, like Cook, were perceived as high-ranking, powerful, and verging on the divine. Not only does Sahlins attest that Cook was perceived by the Hawaiians as their god Lono, he also suggests that an aura of divinity attached even to the common sailors on board, such that they were perceived to be desirable in a way akin to local chiefs of high rank. He speculates that Hawaiian women were keen to have sexual relations with the Europeans not just for the erotic adventure but because they were perceived to be desirable in a way akin to local chiefs of high rank. He speculates that Hawaiian women were keen to have sexual relations with the Europeans not just for the erotic adventure but because of the prospect of having babies by them. Sahlins imputes that the indigenous motivation a commoner woman would have to bear a baby to a high-ranking or chiefly man was thus transposed onto novel negotiations with the strangers. He quotes a Hawaiian oral tradition which, baldly translated, asks “what woman would not want to plant an umbilical cord of her baby in the crannies of that ship?” Sahlins’ thesis about Cook, much criticised by Gananath Obeyesekere and others, raises another crucial question apropos sexual exchange.

What were the ranks of the women and the European men involved? Sahlins suggests, as do many contemporary commentators like the Forsters, that both were of the “common sort.”

“The low stature of the common class of people”

Tcherkézoff’s exhaustive studies suggest otherwise. There is no doubt that many of the women involved in these exchanges were not commoners but were high-ranking, even noble women and young girls. Marora’i was not alone. Tcherkézoff suggests that high-ranking families were much involved and that both male and female kin forcibly persuaded or even coerced their young virgin daughters to have with the strangers “sacred marriages,” which usually entailed defloration. The babies born of such unions, who would be extremely kapua as the first-born children of virgin girls, would thereby raise the status of the entire family. He sees not Polynesian licence, free will or benign sexual hospitality but “young girls in tears.”

We also need to acknowledge, though, the high rank of many of the European men involved in such liaisons. Captain Cook was offered women in several islands, and although the imputation that he accepted is part of Hawaiian oral tradition, his reason remained unsubverted by sexual passion (although it might have been afflicted with anger, gout, gastric fluxes, or worms). Cook tried to stop sexual relations in Tahiti, in Hawai‘i, in Tonga and in New Zealand because of his own moral censoriousness and because of the deadly spread of venereal disease. There are many episodes where sailors were given the lash and put in stocks for having had sex with Pacific women while knowingly being afflicted with venereal disease. Certainly neither Johann nor George Forster succumbed. Despite their voyeuristic depictions of women, they, like Cook himself, represented these sexual relations as a sign of debauchery, both on the part of Pacific peoples and on the part of the common sailors.

Despite Cook and the Forsters’ insistence on the class dimensions of the trade, engaging those of the “common sort” on both sides, it is patent that a number of scientists and officers were involved: Joseph Banks on the first voyage and Samwell, and likely King and Anderson, on the third. It is interesting, then, that the Forsters rather constantly allude to the crew and the common sailors. This is articulated with the strong sense of class distinction they make between themselves as gentlemen scientists and the common sailors, a distinction also made by Forster senior in contrasting his serious scholarly collection of curiosities from the free-wheeling trade of the sailors. The male hierarchy established in this homosocial world bears far more discussion but, by describing the sexual appetites of the crew as “brutal,” the Forsters signal their proximity to men of the western islands, as alike mired in a state of savagery. Thus the racialised hierarchy of men plotted across the Pacific mirrors the class hierarchy imported from the Atlantic world of the voyagers—a hierarchy inscribed in the very fabric of their vessels, abroad on another ocean.

Conclusion

Both Johann Forster and his brilliant young son George refrained from sexual liaisons with Pacific women and castigated those sailors (but less so officers and gentlemen) who indulged. However, the erotic appeal and the sexual availability of women were nevertheless diacritical to the complicated theories of human progress, degeneration and migration that the Forsters formulated. The racialised hierarchy these men plotted was not disembodied. Their white male bodies were the norm from which difference was marked and their sexual desires and the fraught question of sexual access to Pacific women was paramount. The subjectivity of the indigenous women of the Pacific was frequently forced to fit one of two figures, agent or victim, when there were no doubt elements of free will and coercion in all such sexual exchanges. The discordance between Johann Reinhold Forster’s generalising accounts and his son’s depictions of daily events suggests varieties and uncertainties at odds with any grand, theoretical schema.
I am not arguing that there were no differences between indigenous women's situation in the eastern and western islands of the Pacific. Pre-contact regimes of sexuality and reproduction likely differed widely in their valuation of sexual licence or chastity and fecundity and this surely influenced how indigenous women related to European men. Pre-existing differences were nonetheless exaggerated and overplayed in the service of an abstract model of racialised hierarchy and social transformation. Pacific women were frequently compared with women back home—from the fair, refined daughters of Britannia whom Johann Forster thought even more beautiful than Tahitian women, to those poor women who were forced to make a living as prostitutes in Covent Garden or Drury Lane.

Moreover, the differences between Pacific peoples were articulated with the plots of Europe's own historical trajectory. It has been long observed how Pacific peoples were seen through the figures of Europe's past, assimilated to the mythical and historical personae of classical Greece and Rome—the men of Tahiti compared to Apollo and Brutus, the women of Tahiti likened to Aphrodite and Venus. But connections both Atlantic and utopic and dystopic. Ultimately, these voyages of the late eighteenth century and the texts they produced proved enormously consequential, connecting both Atlantic and Pacific worlds in ways we might describe, after Miles Ogborn, as both "violent and productive."

Notes

20 Chapter


11 This is the contemporary spelling; it was usually known on Cook’s voyages as Mallicollo and later as Malekula. I will use today’s spelling except in quotes.


4 This is the contemporary spelling; it was usually known on Cook’s voyages as Mallicollo and later as Malekula. I will use today’s spelling except in quotes.


33 See Margaret Jolly and Serge Tcherkezoff, “Oceanic encounters: A Prelude.”
32 Oceanic Encounters, 1-36.
29 Chapter London and New York, Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century
28
27
26
25
24
23
22
21
20
19
18
17
16
15
14
13
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1

region and Race, Gender and Sexuality on Cook’s Voyages 29

54 Forster, Observations (1778), 419. Note in the several sentences deleted Forster speculates that women’s very oppression, together with their more “delicate frame” and “the finer and more irritable texture of their nerves” improved their intellectual faculties beyond that of the men.
53 Forster, Observations (1778), 421–22. Forster goes on to say that the kapu constraints, the commensal segregation of women from “their surly lords and husbands” in Tahiti, though of unclear origin, must be a remnant of their former subjugation.
52 See Lenore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class (London: Hutchinson, 1987).
50 Thomas, “‘On the varieties’,” detects a tension between two temporal models: a “particularizing historical geography” and a “general narrative of human evolution.” p. xxxi.
48 For example, see Nicholas Thomas, Discoveries: Anne Salmond, The Trial of the Cannibal Dog.
47 Johann Reinhold Forster, Observations Made During a Voyage Round the World on Physical Geography, Natural History and Ethic Philosophy (London: G. Robinson, 1778).
46 George Forster, A Voyage Round the World in His Britannic Majesty’s Sloop Resolution (London: B. White, 1777).
45 Nicholas Thomas, “Johann Reinhold Forster and his Observations,” in George Forster A Voyage Round the World, eds., Nicholas Thomas and Oliver Bernhof (Honolulu, University of Hawai‘i Press, 2000), xxviii.
44 This derives from only one such incident he observed, reported by Forster, Voyage (1777), 511. See Thomas, In Oceania.
43 Forster, Observations (1778), 418–19; J. R. Forster, Observations Made During a Voyage Round the World, on Physical Geography, Natural History and Ethic
42 Smith, European Vision and the South Pacific; Smith, Imagining the Pacific.
39 See Jolly, “Revisioning Gender and Sexuality”; Tcherkezoff, “A Reconsideration.”
37 Margaret Jolly and Jennifer Newell, “Revisioning Gender and Sexuality,” in Oceania; Smith, European Vision and the South Pacific.
35 Johann Reinhold Forster, Observations Made During a Voyage Round the World on Physical Geography, Natural History and Ethic
34 See Jolly, “Revisioning Gender and Sexuality.”
32 Forster, Observations (1778), 228.
30 Forster, Observations (1996), 162.
27 For the effect of Wallis and Bougainville’s voyages on European views of Tahiti, see Salmond, Aphrodite’s Island and Tcherkezoff, “A Reconsideration.” Salmond persuasively argues that European and Tahitian myths intersected in Aphrodite’s Island.
24 Forster, Voyage (2000), 146.
22 Thomas suggests O-Tai, was not, as Cook and Forster senior suggested a manuhine (often mistranslated as “genity”) but more likely a ra’aiira, a noble or lesser chief. Forster, Voyage (2000), 444. Salmond simply affirms he was a chief and observes that while the amorous officer was emerging from the cabin, Cook was on deck swearing “God damn” as the boat crashed towards the reef: Aphrodite’s Island, 263–4.
21 George Forster elsewhere asserts, like Cook, that it is as wrong to see prostitution as typical of all Tahitians as it is to think it characteristic of the English.
19 Forster, Voyage (2000), xxix.
Forster, 76 Forster, 77 Forster, 75 Cook, 75

One evidently neglected and had a huge excrescence on her upper appearance.” And Forster, Voyage (2000), 87: “One of the wives who had the excrescence or wen on her upper lip, and was evidently neglected by the man, probably on account of her disagreeable appearance.”

Forster, Voyage (2000), 94.

Forster, Voyage (2000), 121. It is interesting to compare this with a depiction of sexual exchanges the next day when the sailors went ashore, with the Captain’s permission, traded for curiosities and “purchased the embraces of the ladies.” Here George Forster is more preoccupied again with the ugliness and uncleanliness of the women; he dwells on their stench and the vermin which crawled in their hair and on their clothes. Again he vaunts his own abstinence and restraint as against the sailors “who could gratify an animal appetite with such loathsome objects.” Forster, Voyage (2000), 123.

Forster, Voyage (2000), 274. See Guest’s extended analysis of the representation of New Zealand in Chapter 5 of her Empire, Barbarism and Civilization.

Forster, Voyage (2000), 121.


Jolly, “Revisioning Gender and Sexuality.”


Cook, The Journals of Captain James Cook, vol. II, 239. Spelling as in the original. Very similar statements are to be found in George Forster’s Voyage and in King’s journal.

S[ince we can hardly charge them with any other vice great Injustice has been done the Women of Otahite and the Society Isles, by those who have represented them without exception as ready to grant the least favour to any man who will come up to their price. But this is by no means the case; the favours of the Married women and also the unmarried of the better sort, are as difficult to obtain here as in any Country whatever. Neither can the charge be understood indiscriminately of the unmarried of the lower class. Much the greater part of these admit of no such familiarities. ... But the truth is, the Women who becomes a prostitute, do not seem on their opinion to have committed a crime so deep a die as to exclude her from the esteem and society of Community in general. On the whole a stranger who visits England might with equal justice draw the Characters of the women there, from those which he meet with on board the Ships in one of the Naval Ports, or in the Purileus of Covent Garden or Dury [sic] lane.

Apropos Hawa’i, see Sahlin, Historical Metaphors; Sahlin, Islands of History.

Sahlin suggests that commoner women perceived foreign men as treating them with greater respect and familiarity than Hawaiian men, in particular by sharing food with them. Exchanges with foreigners were thus he argues crucial in the collapse of the kapu system of segregated eating. Gananath Obeyesekere notes ironically that in their denigrations of the commensal segregations of the tapu/kapu system throughout the Pacific, the Europeans seemed to lack a reflexive appreciation of how their own commensality was hierarchically configured, since no common sailor would aspire to eat at the captain’s table. See Obeyesekere, The Apotheosis.

Obeyesekere, The Apotheosis.


Cook was later implicated by both native Hawaiian writers and missionaries in the spread of venereal disease, with some even imputing that he himself had had sex with local women. David Malo recorded some oral traditions from his elders that suggested not only that Cook was perceived to be the god Lono, but that the female chief Kamakahelei gave her daughter Lelemahoalani to Cook in exchange for iron. This is recorded in Fomander with the words “And Lono slept with that woman and the Kauli women prostituted themselves to the foreigners for iron” (cited in Cook, The Journals of Captain James Cook, vol. II, 469). Beaglehole caustically comments, “Whatever the success the young lady might have had with Lono, it is very certain she could not have had much with Cook” (ibid.).

Debauchery along with the segregation of men and women in eating were, for Forster senior, the flaws in the civilisation of Tahiti.

Salmond, Aphrodite’s Island, 155-6, 163, for Banks’ relation with his “Fame,” Teatia.

Yet George Forster elsewhere rather acknowledges, if in slightly impenetrable prose, that officers as well as common sailors were indulging in sex with Māori women. Witness this observation, Forster Georg Forster’s Werke, vol. II, 469-70.

Each of their huts contained a fire, of which the smoke entirely involved the women. Witness this observation, Forster Georg Forster’s Werke, vol. II, 469-70. But the truth is, the Women who becomes a prostitute, do not seem on their opinion to have committed a crime so deep a die as to exclude her from the esteem and society of Community in general. On the whole a stranger who visits England might with equal justice draw the Characters of the women there, from those which he meet with on board the Ships in one of the Naval Ports, or in the Purileus of Covent Garden or Dury [sic] lane.
their guests, the most loathsome objects in a New Zealander's smoky and
nasty hovel, were eagerly addressed.

CHAPTER TWO

CONVICTS, SLAVES AND PRISON INMATES:
THE VOYAGE TO AUSTRALIA
IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

HAMISH MAXWELL-STEWART

In the wake of his 1832-38 tour of the Australian penal colonies, Quaker
George Washington Walker concluded that the health of prisoners in Van
Diemen’s Land (Tasmania) was generally inferior to that of the working
classes in England. He attributed this not to conditions in the convict
colony, but to the dissolute lives that convicts had lived in the British Isles
prior to their arrest and transportation. In fact, he thought that the “salubrity
of the climate” combined with “the ample allowance of food” and
“moderate labour ... tend in considerable degree to counteract the mischief
thus incurred.” Walker’s positive description of the conditions faced by
convicts is at odds with many popular depictions. Thus, according to the
nineteenth-century convict ballad, *Jim Jones at Botany Bay*, prisoners
exiled to Australia toiled for “day and night in irons clad like poor galley
slaves”—a cycle terminated only by death, whereupon their bodies were
used “to fill dishonoured graves.” By using the testimony of convicts and
the records employed to regulate their lives, it is possible to test Walker’s
hypothesis.

In all, some 139,000 men and 26,000 women were transported to the
Australian penal colonies between the years 1787 and 1868. About one
hundred of the male convicts left a record of their experiences in the form
of a narrative (unfortunately there are no known narratives authored by
female prisoners). One of the most detailed of these accounts was supplied
by Linus Miller, a twenty-two-year-old law clerk from upstate New
York. Miller was unusual in a number of respects. While the majority of convicts
were transported for small-scale petty theft, he was sentenced to life for
participating in an ill-thought-out armed incursion into Upper Canada
launched from the United States. It was not only the political (and, one
The Savage Visit: New World Peoples and Popular Imperial Culture in Britain, 1710-1795, is forthcoming from the University of California Press. She has published articles on various New World travellers, and was Assistant Editor of The Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture, 1776-1832 (Oxford, 1999).

Helen Gardner is a Senior Lecturer in the School of History at Deakin University. Her book Gathering for God: George Brown in Oceania (2006) was shortlisted for the Ernest Scott History Prize in 2007. She has published a number of articles on nineteenth-century missionary anthropology and is currently finishing a book on the spread of kinship studies through Oceania in the 1870s: Finding Kin: The writing of Kamilaroi and Kurnai. Her new project, "Theologies of nation: the churches and the decolonisation of the Pacific," examines the role of Pacific Island missions and churches in the independence of the Pacific Islands in the 1960s and 1970s.

Anita Herle is Senior Curator for Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. Her work on the early history of British anthropology has focused on the interaction between different knowledge systems, the complex intersubjective relations that develop in the anthropological field and the potency of objects and photographs in relational encounters. Her regional interests include Torres Strait, Vanuatu, Fiji and the Northwest Coast of Canada. Her publications include a co-edited volume (with Sandra Rouse) Cambridge and the Torres Strait: Centenary Essays on the Anthropological Expedition (2011) and a recent co-authored book (with Haidy Geismar) Moving Images: John Layard, fieldwork and photography in Malakula since 1914 (2010).

Sophie Jensen is a Senior Curator at the National Museum of Australia. She has curated a range of travelling and temporary exhibitions including Miss Australia, In search of the Birdsville Track and Rare Trades. She was part of the curatorial team behind the Eternity exhibition which opened in 2001. In 2010 she completed a PhD thesis from the Australian National University examining the life and career of the naturalist and collector, John MacGillivray.

Margaret Jolly is an Australian Research Council Laureate Fellow and Professor in Anthropology, Gender and Cultural Studies and Pacific Studies in the College of Asia and the Pacific, Australian National University. Her books include Women of the Place, Kastom, Colonialism and Gender in Vanuatu (1994); Sites of Desire, Economies of Pleasure: Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific (ed. with Lenore Manderson, 1997); Maternities and Modernities: Colonial and Postcolonial Experiences in Asia and the Pacific (ed. with Kalpana Ram, 1998); Borders of Being: Citizenship, Fertility and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific (ed. with Kalpana Ram, 2001); and Oceanic Encounters: Exchange, Desire, Violence (ed. with Serge Tcherkezoff and Darrell Tryon, 2009).

Iain McCalman, AO, is a Professorial Research Fellow in History at the University of Sydney. His books include Radical Underworld (1988); An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture, 1776-1832 (General Editor, 1999); Gold: Forgotten Histories and Lost Objects of Australia (Co-Editor, 2001); The Last Alchemist: Count Cagliostro, Master of Magic in the Age of Reason (2003); and Darwin's Armada (2009). He is currently working on a history of the Great Barrier Reef. In 2007, having served as Director of the Humanities Research Centre (ANU) and President of the Australian Academy of the Humanities, he was awarded an Order of Australia for services to history.

Michael A. McDonnell received his DPhil in History at Oxford University and now teaches at the University of Sydney. He is the author of numerous articles on the American Revolution. His most recent book, The Politics of War: Race, Class, and Conflict in Revolutionary Virginia (published by the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2007) won the New South Wales Premier's History Award in 2008. He also won the Lester Cappon Prize for the best article published in the William and Mary Quarterly in 2006. He is currently working on a book length project entitled Distant Empires: French, Anishinabe and Métis in the Making and Unmaking of the Atlantic World (New York: Hill & Wang, forthcoming).


Damon Jeremia Salesa is currently an associate professor jointly appointed in the History Department, the Program in American Culture, and Asian/Pacific Islander American Studies at the University of Michigan,
Ann Arbor. Born in New Zealand, of Sāmoan and New Zealand parents, he holds a DPhil in Modern History from the University of Oxford (2000) where he was the first Rhodes Scholar of Pacific Islands descent. He has written widely on the history of the Pacific, and on the British and U.S. empires. His publications include Discovering Our Ancestors (UNESCO, 2004) and, most recently, Racial Crossings: Race, Intermarriage and the Victorian British Empire (OUP, 2011).

Simon Schaffer is Professor of History of Science at the University of Cambridge. He recently co-edited The Mindful Hand: Inquiry and Invention from Late Renaissance to Early Industrialization (KNAW, 2007) and The Brokered World: Go-Betweens and Global Networks 1770-1820 (Science History, 2009). He is currently principal investigator on a research project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council: “The Board of Longitude 1714-1828: Science, Innovation and Empire in the Georgian World.”

Katerina Martina Teaiwa is Senior Lecturer in and Convener of Pacific Studies at the Australian National University. Born and raised in Fiji, she is of Banaban, I-Kiribati and African American descent. Her monograph Consuming Ocean Island: a multi-sited historical ethnography of Banaban phosphate is forthcoming in 2012. This work has inspired a permanent exhibition at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, as well as the multi-media installation, Kainga Tahi, Kainga Rua, by renowned New Zealand sculptor Brett Graham, exhibited at the Adam Art Gallery in Wellington in 2003 and Moving Image Centre in Auckland in 2007. She has been a consultant with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and UNESCO on cultural policy, intercultural dialogue and sustainable development.