Chapter Two

'Novus Orbis Australis': Oceania in the science of race, 1750-1850

Bronwen Douglas

In December 1828, the leading comparative anatomist Georges Cuvier (1769-1832) made a triumphalist presidential address (1829) to the annual general assembly of the Société de Géographie in Paris. He reminded his audience of the recent 'conquests of geography' which had revealed to the world the 'greatly varied tribes and countless islands' that the Ocean had thus far 'rendered unknown to the rest of humanity'. Cuvier's 'conquests' were not merely topographical: 'our voyagers' in Oceania were 'philosophers and naturalists, no less than astronomers and surveyors'. They collected the 'products' of lands visited, studied the 'languages and customs' of the inhabitants, and enriched 'our museums, grammars and lexicons' as much as 'our atlases and maps'. 'Saved for science' in archives, natural history collections, and lavishly illustrated publications, this copious legacy of the classic era of scientific voyaging between 1766 and 1840 propelled Oceania to the empirical forefront of European knowledge — not least in the natural history of man and the nascent discipline of anthropology which made prime subject matter of the descriptions, portraits, plaster busts, human bodily remains, and artefacts repatriated by antipodean travellers and residents.

History can be a potent antidote to the spurious aura of reality and permanence that infects reified concepts. This chapter and the previous one dislodge the realism of 'race' by historicizing it but do so from different perspectives. Whereas the first chapter is a wide-ranging intellectual history of the invention of the modernist concept of race and the normalization of its science, the present chapter is grounded in a regional subset of the field materials on which theorists drew to illustrate their deductions about human diversity. I consider anthropological deployment of Oceanian examples by a variety of metropolitan thinkers but direct the most sustained attention to works by four major figures who each professed belief in the unity of the single human species and claimed to favour 'facts' and 'induction' over 'system'. They are Cuvier; the French naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc, comte de Buffon (1707-1788); the German comparative anatomist and pioneer anthropologist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840); and the British physician-ethnologist James Cowles Prichard (1786-1848). These men reasoned in historical or taxonomic terms and from
varied ideological perspectives: they debated human relationships to animals and the classification and ranking of human variation; they pondered the origins and development of what the new disciplines of anthropology and ethnology regarded as separate races or even separate species; while their conception and use of the idea of races spanned shifting contemporary spectrums of learned opinion and argument, from humanist to racialist, environmentalist to innatist, holistic to segregative, 'monogenist' to 'polygenist'.

Bridging the global abstractions of such savants and the empirical specificity of voyagers' or residents' narratives were the regional anthropological taxonomies and speculative histories proposed by naturalists who had travelled widely in Oceania as members of scientific naval expeditions. Such men brought general theoretical precepts and a classifying mindset to bear on transient, often confronting personal experience of encounters with actual indigenous people.

Aside from the work of the Germans Johann Reinhold Forster (1729-1798) and his son Georg (1754-1794) who sailed with James Cook (1728-1779) on his second voyage of 1772-75, much of the early anthropology of Oceania published before 1850 was produced by French naturalists who are a primary focus of this chapter. François Péron (1775-1810) was a zoologist on the Australian voyage of Nicolas Baudin (1754-1803) in 1800-04. The navigator-naturalist Jules-Sébastien-César Dumont d'Urville (1790-1842) undertook three voyages to Oceania between 1822 and 1840, the last two as commander. The naval medical officers Jean-René Constant Quoy (1790-1869) and Joseph-Paul Gaimard (1793-1858) served also as naturalists with Louis de Freycinet (1779-1842) in 1817-20 and with Dumont d'Urville in 1826-29; their colleague Prosper Garnot (1794-1838) and the pharmacist René-Primevère Lesson (1794-1849) did so with Louis-Isidore Duperrey (1786-1865) and Dumont d'Urville in 1822-25; while the surgeon-naturalists Jacques-Bernard Hombron (1798-1852) and Honoré Jacquinot (1814-1887) accompanied Dumont d'Urville in 1837-40, together with the phrenologist Pierre-Marie Alexandre Dumoutier (1797-1871).

By probing the relationships between anthropological systems and Oceanic facts and the interplay of deductive and inductive modes of knowing, this chapter illustrates the reciprocal significance of discourse and experience, taxonomy and history for different camps of the burgeoning science of race.

**Buffon and Dampier — 'great variety of Savages'**

The emergence of an embryonic biological concept of race in the 1770s has been ascribed to both the 'natural system' of Carl Linnaeus (1707-1778) and the rival 'natural history' of Buffon. Most naturalists on eighteenth-century voyages to Oceania followed Linnaean taxonomic principles but the region does not figure in his terse classification of *Homo sapiens* into four geographically defined varieties (1758:20-2). Unlike Linnaeus, Buffon (1749a) segregated man from the
other animals as a unique species while his exhaustive geographical survey of 'Varieties in the Human Species' (1749b, III:371-530) drew heavily on travellers' narratives. The shortage of such material on Oceania limited his discussion of the people of that region and dictated significant reliance on the perspicacious writings of the late seventeenth-century English voyager William Dampier (1652-1715). However, in his later Supplément (1777:539-55), Buffon addressed in detail the descriptions of the 'South Sea Islanders' and the 'inhabitants of the Austral lands' published in recent explorers' accounts and in the compendium of voyage texts dating from the sixteenth century assembled by his friend Charles de Brosses (1709-1777), the French littérature and president of the Burgundian parlement. Brosses's work (1756) included a speculative program for discovery, commerce, and settlement in the Terres australes, 'Austral lands', that helped inspire the great French and British circumnavigations of the 1860s.  

Buffon's essay on man has often been interpreted as a methodical classification of humanity into varieties or races: Blumenbach and Charles Darwin (1809-1882) said he had listed six; the historian of anthropology Michèle Duchet discerned a 'spectral analysis of the human species' into 'four principal races'. Such readings are overly categorical since Buffon avoided systematic labelling or formal taxonomy. Rather, the bulk of the work describes the myriad 'nuances' of the multiple 'kinds', 'varieties', 'races', 'nations', or 'peoples' known to him within the single human species. Slotted into this painstaking catalogue between 'the inhabitants of the kingdoms of Pêgu and Aracan' (in what is now Myanmar) and the 'peoples of the Indian peninsula' is a sixteen-page segment discussing the inhabitants of the Malay Archipelago, some western Pacific Islands, New Guinea, and New Holland (mainland Australia). The section concludes with Buffon's reflection that the inhabitants of Formosa and the Marianas Islands 'seem to form a separate race different from all those nearby' while the Papous and other Islanders from around New Guinea were 'true blacks and resemble those of Africa'. With hindsight, these remarks might be seen to anticipate the later racial differentiation of Micronesians and Melanesians.

Yet this anachronistic reading misconstrues both Dampier and Buffon. There is no classificatory sub-text to Dampier's ethnocentric descriptions of the 'great variety of Savages' he had seen on his voyages. There is only comparison rather than implied categorical opposition between the 'Indians' he met in present-day Micronesia, the Philippines, and Indonesia and the 'Negroes' he encountered along the New Guinea coasts. He regarded both as savages with the human potential to become civilized through commerce, though he clearly took relative Negro inferiority for granted. These fairly evenhanded assessments are in sharp contrast to his very negative published impressions of the inhabitants of the west coast of New Holland whose indifference to material inducement led him to question their capacity to become civilized. This was an early statement of
a commonplace nexus drawn by Europeans between lifestyle, material desires, and alleged lack of perfectibility, very often to the detriment of Aboriginal Australians.

It is equally inappropriate to attribute methodical binary intent to Buffon, notwithstanding his presumption of an overarching human division into 'the white race' and 'the race of the blacks', his vaunting of 'the most white', his absolute denigration of Negroes, and his paraphrase of Dampier's harsh words about the people of New Holland. At this point, Buffon later claimed (1777:462, 478), he had sometimes used *race* with the 'extended sense' of 'resemblance' rather than in its 'narrow' genealogical sense. But in practice, his a priori dichotomy of white and black races repeatedly dissolved into overlapping 'varieties' and 'nuances'. The 'descriptions' of Dampier and other travellers provided his evidence 'that the islands and coasts of the [east] Indian Ocean are peopled by men very different from each other' — 'Indians', 'Chinese', 'Europeans', 'true blacks', and others. It was the multiplicity of actual human 'differences' which most impressed Buffon and which he correlated exhaustively with climate, geography, and lifestyle to produce a broadly humanist conclusion: that 'humankind is not composed of essentially different species' but that present diversity was entirely the product of the lengthy operation of (in principle reversible) 'external and accidental causes' on what was 'originally only a single species of men'.

His subsequent reading of recent voyagers' texts on the South Sea Islanders and the people of New Holland only confirmed this judgment (1777:555): 'the great differences' — the main human 'varieties' — were 'dependent entirely on the influence of climate' and specifically on 'temperature'. Temperature determined not only 'the colour of men' but also their nutrition which served as a 'second cause' with profound effects on the (biological) 'nature' of human beings. Here, Buffon was alluding to the theory of environmentally generated, organic, but still theoretically reversible degeneration of species that informed his work on the natural history of man from the 1760s.

**Brosses and the Forsters — 'two great varieties'**

Dampier was acknowledged as an authoritative precursor by the scientific voyagers of the later eighteenth century, most of whom were no more interested in classifying human beings than he had been. The earliest systematic classification of the inhabitants of Oceania was the joint product of Georg Forster and his father Reinhold (1778:ii), self-styled purveyors of 'facts' over 'systems formed in the closet'. In a post-voyage treatise, Reinhold Forster proposed his well-known identification of 'two great varieties of people in the South Seas', one 'more fair' and the other 'blacker'; both seen 'living in the same climate, or nearly so'. This formal binary division of Pacific humanity had been anticipated empirically in Georg Forster's narrative of the voyage which differentiated the Malakulans of what is now north Vanuatu as 'a race totally distinct' in 'form',
'language', and 'manners' from the 'lighter-coloured nation' he had seen in the eastern and central Pacific and in New Zealand (Aotearoa). He speculatively aligned the Malakulans with the 'black race' earlier reported in and around New Guinea and wondered whether 'some other tribes' might be 'a mixture of both races'.

Similar lexical imprecision with respect to the word race is evident in Reinhold Forster's further hypotheses that 'each of the above two races of men, is again divided into several varieties, which form the gradations towards the other race'; that these 'two different tribes' might stem from 'two different races of men', probably 'the two distinct [East] Indian tribes'; and that the 'five races' of the 'fairer' tribe were 'really descended from the same original nation'. His subsequent ruminations on settlement and 'the origin of ranks' in the highly stratified societies of Tahiti, the Society Islands, and Tonga made local differences in skin colour the main ground for supposing that a 'successive' migration of 'ancient Malays' had supplanted 'the aboriginal black race' of 'cannibals' whom he equated with 'the tribe of the Papuas', 'people from New-Guinea, and its neighbourhood', and those he had seen in the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu). Purportedly 'subdued' by their 'more polished and more civilized conquerors', these imagined black aborigines became 'the lowest rank' in Forster's reflections on people he had actually encountered in the eastern and central Pacific Islands. A parallel argument was put by the French navigator Jean-François de Galaup de La Pérouse (1741-1788) to explain the differences between 'two very distinct races' he thought he saw in Upolu, Samoa, in 1787.

At issue here are two modes of thinking about human differences which often intersect but are inappropriately conflated: one, emergent in the late-eighteenth century, is taxonomic and incidentally historical; the other is an older, deeply anti-Negro conjectural history of inevitable displacement of black-skinned autochthones by more civilized, lighter-skinned immigrants. The second, but not the first, was applied to Oceania by Brosses, though he was by no means its inventor. The Spanish navigator Pedro Fernández de Quirós (c. 1563-1615), who had twice traversed the Mar del Sur, 'South Sea', at the turn of the sixteenth century, proposed an early version. He recalled that in Luzon, in the Philippines, there were 'black men' who were said to be 'the aborigines' but who had been driven into remote 'corners' by invading 'Moors and other Indians'. Quirós hypothesized that these 'persecuted' people had sought and found new places to settle in New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and eventually Santa Cruz where he himself saw 'black' inhabitants in 1595. A century and a half later, Brosses prefigured Reinhold Forster, La Pérouse, and numerous others in plotting a displacement narrative to account for a supposed 'difference in the human species [l'espèce humaine]' within the same climatic zone — an anomaly in Buffonian terms. Brosses's conjectural history represented 'the native inhabitants of
Australasie' as an 'old race' of 'frizzy-haired blacks', identical to 'the African negroes', and like them among the 'first inhabitants of the torrid zone'. They were 'a more brutish and savage kind of men [espèce d'hommes] than 'foreign colonies of Malay peoples' who had driven them from 'their possessions in Asia' and gradually 'destroyed the race' — as the Spanish did to the Americans. The blacks retained sole possession only of remote 'Virgin countries', such as New Holland and other 'unknown Austral lands', though Brosses refused 'to believe that any kind of men is totally uncivilizable'.

His geographical division of the Terres australes into Polynésie, Australasie, and Magellanique did not extend to systematic classification of the 'many different peoples' of this 'fifth part of the world' and it is anachronistic to recast it as anticipating subsequent dual ethnological or racial categories. But the teleological presumption of racial dispersal and destruction would haunt the subsequent project of racial taxonomy in Oceania.

Notwithstanding the invidious implications of Reinhold Forster's speculative racial history and chromatic differentiation of Pacific Islanders, his term race was evidently interchangeable with variety, tribe, and nation. A Lutheran pastor, he was committed on scriptural grounds to the conventional position 'that all mankind, though ever so much varied' is 'of one species' and 'descended from one couple'; he did not doubt that all varieties were 'only accidental'; and, like Brosses, he allowed a universal human potential to 'progress' towards 'civilization' or 'degenerate' towards 'animality'. Moreover, his flexible rankings of particular groups of Islanders were contingent on perceived indigenous behaviour and appearance rather than predetermined by biology. Yet as a naturalist, Forster sought to bolster scripture with science by explaining the 'evident difference' between the 'two great tribes' he had seen. Convinced that 'climate alone' could not produce 'any material alteration' in man except over the very long run, he hypothesized that they must be 'descended from two different races of men' and thus were products of 'a different round of climates, food, and customs'. In his narrative, Georg Forster professed agnosticism as to the 'general and powerful influence of climates' on human variation, thereby anticipating his subsequent heterodoxy on the question of human specific unity.

A decade later, in an article on Menschenrassen, 'human races', Georg Forster (1786:64-6) dichotomized the South Sea Islanders in far harsher terms — 'these two so conspicuously different peoples', the one 'beautiful' and 'light brown', the other 'ugly blacks'. In this essay and another of similar date extolling Cook as discoverer (1985b), Forster invoked the inductive authority of his experience as global circumnavigator to lambast the teleological reasoning, deductive logic, and taxonomic terminology of his fellow-German, the philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), who had theorized human Racen, 'races', as permanent, hereditary divisions of a single human species with common ancestry.
fervent advocate for the 'clear-sighted and reliable empiricist' over the 'biased systematizer', Forster rejected both taxonomy and historical speculation on the 'inexplicable' question of human origins, including Kant's presumption of original unity, arguing instead for 'the most subtle nuances' within holistic, immensely complex observable nature.\textsuperscript{28} The term \textit{Rasse}, he argued, was 'thus far undetermined' but was 'synonymous' with \textit{Varietät}, 'variety', which was 'changeable' and 'accidental'. Voyagers only applied \textit{Rasse} to South Sea Islanders when they were 'uncomfortable' with \textit{Varietät} so that \textit{Rasse} should only imply a 'crowd' of people of 'idiosyncratic character and unknown ancestry', such as the \textit{Papuaner}, 'Papuans', and the 'black islanders of the Southern Seas incidentally related to them'. To this point, Forster's explication of \textit{Rasse} was consistent with ambiguous eighteenth-century usages: in its gesture to Buffon's 'extended sense'; and in its echo of Reinhold Forster's equation of 'races or varieties' and conviction that 'all varieties are only accidental'.\textsuperscript{29}

Notwithstanding his empirical credentials and fundamental disagreement with Kant, Forster was no less enmeshed in Eurocentric logic, morality, and aesthetics than the armchair philosopher. The anthropological reflections of both men attest to a shared late Enlightenment faith in progress, reason, and the 'pre-eminence of our civilized society', though both condemned its excesses.\textsuperscript{30} Kant took for granted the 'greater perfectibility' of the white race and argued that a \textit{Volk}, 'people', who were content to be static — such as the Pacific Islanders described by Forster — must be held back by a 'natural predisposition' and were superfluous to general human advance: 'the world would lose nothing, if Tahiti goes under'.\textsuperscript{31} Forster was more equivocal, less consistent, but equally ethnocentric. On the one hand, he allowed a common human capacity for progress: 'the New Hollanders' (whom he had not seen) were the 'most wretched' of all the 'races' which might 'claim to be called human'; yet they were on 'a path to civilization'; and he hoped that European colonial example might stimulate their evident 'skill and capability'.\textsuperscript{32} On the other hand, the abstract figure of 'the Negro in Guinea' was his extreme negative signifier. Convinced of the reality of marked anatomical differences between Europeans and Africans, Forster queried how both could be engendered by 'the same father'; he regarded sexual relations between blacks and whites with 'aversion and abhorrence'; and he pronounced that in structure 'the Negro visibly corresponds far more closely to the monkey genus than the white man'. The New Hollanders — though reportedly 'black' of skin and 'frizzy and woolly' of hair — looked less 'unpleasant' and were presumably more human because they lacked the simian facial features of his Negro stereotype. In a major deviation from the ethos of essential human similitude professed by his father, Buffon, and Kant and at odds (at least in theory) with his own egalitarian revolutionary politics, Forster hypothesized that 'the Negro' might be 'a second human species' — a position
Kant rejected as extraneous and immoral but a portent of the commonplace polygenism of the nineteenth century.33

Yet Forster also acknowledged that an 'ape-like man' is 'no ape' and that whites and blacks were 'closely related'. He rationalized his insinuation of multiple human species in humanitarian terms with the quixotic hope that the strategy of 'separating the Negro from white men as an originally different stock' might encourage whites to assume their paternal duties towards blacks and develop in them 'the sacred spark of reason'. And he reasserted the premise of human specific unity in his essay on Cook whose voyages, Forster claimed, had shown that 'human nature', though it varied with climate, was everywhere 'specifically the same' in 'organization', 'instincts', and 'the course of its development'.34

Blumenbach — 'this remarkable variety'

The critical redefinition of race as a permanent inherited characteristic, the biologization of the concept, and its formal taxonomic differentiation from the categories species and variety were given coherent expression in a series of papers published between 1775 and 1788 by Kant and were concretized from the late 1790s by Blumenbach. Though a pioneer in making the conformation of the skull the key signifier of racial diversity which demanded scientific classification, Blumenbach was also sharply alert to the tension between his ethical insistence on the established doctrine of human unity and the fissive implications of taxonomy or rigid physical distinction of human groups.35 His anthropological vocabulary was always more systematic than Buffon's but it remained versatile through the three Latin editions of *De Generis Humani Varietate Nativa*, 'On the Natural Varieties of Mankind' (1775, 1781, 1795), and only began to harden along racial lines in works published in German at the end of the century (1798, 1806).36

Particularly in the four decades after 1766, scientific voyaging in Oceania supplied much of the empirical material on which comparative human anatomy and the nascent science of anthropology fed.37 This section and part of the next probe the considerable significance of representations and anatomical specimens of Oceanian people in the articulation of Blumenbach's racial thinking. The footnotes to his anthropological writings draw heavily on travel literature, especially accounts of the recent expeditions to the South Seas. In the index to the 1865 English translation of his major works (Bendyshe 1865), no traveller scores more references than do four men with strong Oceanic credentials: Joseph Banks (1743-1820), the chief naturalist on Cook's first Pacific voyage of 1768-71 and President of the Royal Society from 1778; John Hawkesworth (1715?-1773), editor of the first published narrative of Cook's first voyage; and the two Forsters. Blumenbach was an assiduous correspondent, friend, and collaborator of Banks over more than thirty years. He corresponded with both Forsters and was related
by marriage to the son. Blumenbach personally set up and developed the fine
Cook-Forster ethnographic collection still held in the Institut für Ethnologie at
the University of Göttingen and regularly used it for illustrative purposes in his
classes on natural history.38

It was precisely the uneven advent of novel materials from 'novus orbis
australis', 'the new southern world', that forced Blumenbach to expand and
modify his initial quadripartite classification of mankind. In the first edition of
De Generis Humani (1775:41), he had located the second of four geographically
defined varieties — comprising 'dark men, with flattened noses' — in southern
Asia and the Austral lands and islands. By the second edition (1781:52), the
desire to be 'more consonant with nature' saw Blumenbach identify a fifth human
variety spread between the island groups immediately beyond mainland Asia,
which were inhabited by 'men of a uniformly very dark colour, with broad nose,
and thick hair', and 'the Pacific archipelago' which Reinhold Forster had further
subdivided into 'two Tribes'. Forster's dual classification of South Sea Islanders
was thus firmly inscribed in metropolitan scholarly awareness within three years
of its publication. By 1793, in a letter written in English to Banks, Blumenbach
naturalized Forster's 'two Tribes' as 'the two principal Races which constitute
this remarkable variety in the 5th. part of the world': the 'black race' and the
'brow one'.39 By 1795, he had further refined his classification of human
varieties and named them 'Caucasian', 'Mongolian', 'Ethiopian', 'American', and
'Malay'. Citing Banks (via Hawkesworth) as his earliest authority, he justified
the final name on the linguistic grounds that 'this variety of men' mostly spoke
Malay. He did not weight the varieties equally but positioned the Malay as
transitional between Caucasian and Ethiopian — between the purportedly
original 'medial variety of mankind' and one of the 'two extremes' (see Figure 4,
Chapter 1). Far-flung and very diverse, the Malay variety served as Blumenbach's
prime illustration of 'insensible transition' within and between his pentad of
varieties and supplied the final proof confirming his core argument for assigning
'all the varieties of men thus far known to one and the same species'. In 1799, again
referring specifically to the 'Malay race', he summarized his theory of the
formation of human races by the 'degeneration' (meaning 'change') of a migrating
'common stock': the degree of deviation from the white 'primitive figure of the
intermediate race' towards the extremes was relative to the 'stronger or longer
influence of different climates and other causes' on the 'peoples' dispersed around
the world. Thus, whereas the 'extreme' form of the Ethiopian race occurred
'under the burning sky of Africa', this race ran into the Malay race in the 'much
milder air' of New Holland and the New Hebrides.40

The tension between the rival imperatives of human unity, racial diversity,
and the taxonomic impulse is an undercurrent in Blumenbach's discussion of
the Malay variety in his 1795 text but it is patent by 1806 in the equivalent
section of the second edition of *Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte*, 'Contributions to Natural History'. In the earlier work, Blumenbach (1795:319-21) used a series of inductive shifts to distil an internal subdivision of the Malay variety from published voyage narratives. He first observed that Malay speakers themselves varied so greatly in 'beauty and other bodily attributes' that the Tahitians had been divided into 'two different stocks': one 'pale' and European-like in facial features, the other very like 'Mulattos'. He cited two authorities in footnotes: the Frenchman Louis-Antoine de Bougainville (1729-1814) who had circumnavigated the globe in 1766-69 and whose own term 'races' Blumenbach added in parenthesis; and the Portuguese-born Spaniard Quirós who, claimed Blumenbach, had 'carefully distinguished the variety of men inhabiting the Pacific Islands' by saying that some were 'white' while comparing others to 'Mulattos' and others again to 'Ethiopians'. Thus, the second Tahitian 'stock' resembled Islanders further west in the Pacific Ocean, while the inhabitants of the New Hebrides 'gradually' approached the Papuans and New Hollanders, who themselves merged imperceptibly with the 'Ethiopian variety', so that they might 'not unfittingly' be classed with them.

In appropriating voyagers' descriptions of Oceanian people to his classificatory agenda, Blumenbach succumbed to the common historical snare of anachronism, projecting backwards on to earlier representations the seeming realism of his own reifications.\(^{41}\) Bougainville's published *Voyage* — though not his shipboard journal (1977) — did note marked physical differences between two culturally uniform *races* seen in Tahiti and between Tahitians and 'black men' seen further west. Yet he, like his English translator Reinhold Forster, used race in its multivalent eighteenth-century sense.\(^{42}\) Quirós reported a finely discriminated continuum of skin and hair colour and considerable local variety in people he had seen and heard about in both the eastern and western Pacific Islands. However, he did not 'compare' some to the Ethiopians, as Blumenbach thought, deceived by the mistranslation into English by the Scottish hydrographer, Alexander Dalrymple (1737-1808), of Quirós's Spanish adjective *loros*, 'dark brown', as the noun 'negroes'.\(^{43}\) Quirós could not have conceived and Bougainville did not propose a systematic physical typology of Oceanic humanity. Their labels and descriptive terms, though often derogatory and anti-Negro, were conventional, comparative, or experiential rather than regionally categorical (Douglas 2006:10-13). Quirós attributed no specific geographic, racial, or moral coordinates to the human 'differences' he discerned which interested him mainly as supposed signs of the 'vicinity of better governed people' and the occurrence of 'great commerce and communication' — as they would also interest the mid-eighteenth-century compilers of collections of South Sea voyage texts, Brosses and Dalrymple.\(^{44}\)
However a priori, the sequential logic enunciated in 1795 shows the morphological criteria of ‘analogy and resemblance’ — Blumenbach's terms — at work in his taxonomic practice.\textsuperscript{45} Thus far, his occasional, ambiguous usage of the term race and its synonyms tribe, variety, and stock signal the relative lexical insignificance of race, its instability, and its ongoing contemporary genealogical connotations. But in the new edition of *Beyträge zur Naturgeschichte* revised in the light of Kant's biological conception of races (1806:72), Blumenbach reconfigured 'the black Papus ['Papuans'] at New Holland, etc.' as a *Volk* whose 'more or less striking formation' distinguished them from the 'brown' Pacific Islanders so that they had become a 'separate' *Unterarten*, 'subspecies', of the Malay *Rasse*. There is no such passage in the first edition of this work (1790:83). The reformulation, invoking organic difference more than analogy and nuance, brought Blumenbach nearer to the position recently put by the French geographers Edme Mentelle (1730-1815) and Conrad Malte-Brun (1775-1826) who had pioneered the explicit racial division of Pacific Islanders into copper-coloured 'Polynesians' and black 'Oceanic Negroes'. In the process, they challenged Blumenbach's placement of the New Hollanders within the 'Malay race' on the grounds that he had himself acknowledged their characteristic physical similarity to the 'Ethiopian or African race': his 'system', they sneered, was thus undermined by his own data.\textsuperscript{46} The advent of racial taxonomy with respect to Oceania and the dilution (by Blumenbach) or shelving (by Mentelle and Malte-Brun) of the concept of 'insensible transition' between varieties are textual markers of a hardening in prevailing discourses on human differences and the biologization of the vocabulary available for their description and classification.

**Collecting races**

Late eighteenth-century developments in comparative osteology anticipated the growing significance attached to the conformation of the skull by an embryonic anthropology, initially for its own sake (as with Blumenbach) and before long as signifier of the size of the brain (as with Cuvier). Cuvier (1817b:270, 273) neatly encapsulated the diagnostic transition from aesthetics to anatomy in association with a shift in the terminology of human difference: the head was 'the most sure means of distinction' between races because it had been 'better studied' and was 'the basis on which we have always classed nations'; 'today', though, 'we distinguish the races by the skeleton of the head'. The transitional phase is manifest in an official *Mémoire* addressed by the French Académie des Sciences in 1785 to the savants about to embark with La Pérouse on his voyage round the world. The memoir counsels voyagers to extend the 'comparison' of diverse human varieties — a Buffonian innovation\textsuperscript{47} — beyond the usual limits of the 'external characters' of colour, stature, and form and instead undertake 'anatomical researches' into 'internal' variations in the 'form of the bones of the
head'. To this end, they should try to obtain the head and hyoid bones of a representative corpse from every 'nation' which obviously differed in facial or head shape from those of the 'temperate countries of Europe' — this last phrase alluded to the climatic theory of collective human difference also primarily associated with Buffon.  

Blumenbach (1795:198) insisted on the importance of 'careful anatomical investigation of genuine skulls of different nations' in the study of human variety because the skull had structural primacy as 'the firm and stable foundation of the head'. A single specimen (1806:60, 70) — 'my beautiful head of a young Georgian female' (see Figure 4, Chapter 1) — determined his highly ethnocentric verdict on 'the really most beautiful form of skull' and became his metonym for the 'Caucasian race' who, 'according to the European conception of beauty', were the 'most cultivated of men'. It is clear from his correspondence with Banks that the empirical force of particular skulls and portraits was subordinate to his presumptions about what was 'truly national & characteristic'.  

Blumenbach, though, never jettisoned his early attribution of 'almost all' the cranial diversity in 'different peoples' to their 'mode of life' and to 'art'. For exotic skulls and portraits, Blumenbach (1795:v-xlii) owed a major debt to Banks whom he acknowledged fulsomely in the third edition of *De Generis Humani*. A collection of Blumenbach's correspondence with Banks held at the British Library begins with a letter written in French in 1787 outlining Blumenbach's long-term project 'to assemble a collection of skulls of the diverse varieties of the human species' and asking for help in obtaining 'one of these crania of your South Sea islanders'; or 'at least a plaster copy'; 'or a drawing'; 'or just a silhouette'. Banks could not currently oblige with an actual skull but replied that had 'exhorted the Captain & will do the surgeon' of HMS *Bounty*, which was bound for Tahiti, 'to collect cranie for me wherever he touches'. Blumenbach subsequently lamented the 'unhappy fate' of the *Bounty* as a 'loss' for his own 'particular interest' as well as 'for humanity itself'. In 1793 and 1794, Banks's 'generousity' enabled Blumenbach to complete two full sets each of 'Five very choice examples of the principal varieties of mankind' by adding two long-promised 'sculls of both the two principal Races' of the South Seas to an earlier gift of a 'pretious Caribean skull', an exemplar of Blumenbach's American variety (see Figure 4, Chapter 1). The two new skulls were those of an Aboriginal man from New Holland and of a Tahitian woman procured by William Bligh (1754-1817) on his second voyage to Tahiti in search of breadfruit. The forthcoming 'new very much improved edition' of *De Generis Humani* would, Blumenbach told Banks, 'receive his most interesting ornament by a description of this exceeding rare Tahitian cranium'. A further Aboriginal skull was forthcoming from Banks in 1799.
Cuvier reworked the assumption of savants such as Blumenbach that the major purpose of cranial structure was to provide the solid base for surface facial appearance. He upheld the primacy of the 'bony head' as the 'first base' in comparative anatomy, and by extension the science of race, because it signified the size of the brain and hence the degree of 'intelligence': 'in all mammals, the brain is moulded in the cavity of the skull, which it fills exactly; so that knowledge of the bony part tells us at least about the external form of the brain'; 'intelligence, insofar as it can be observed, is in constant proportion to the relative size of the brain'.

In 1800, on behalf of the Institut impérial, Cuvier composed an 'Instructive Note' (1978) for impending voyagers, notably the naturalists about to depart for Australian waters with Baudin, and particularly Péron, a medical student and self-styled 'anthropologist' appointed to the expedition at Cuvier's request as zoologist 'specially charged' with comparative anatomy. The anatomical agenda of the 'Note' resembles that of the Académie’s Mémoire of 1785 but its rationale, tone, and terminology are significantly altered. Cuvier took for granted the anatomical 'differences that characterize the races of the human species' and signalled his emerging racial theory that would attribute the 'moral and intellectual faculties' of entire races to systematic cranial variation. He identified three 'great races of the old continent' — 'caucasic' ('white'), 'mongolic' ('yellow'), and 'ethiopic' ('negro') — and allowed the possibility of three others: one in the polar regions ('brown'), one in the Americas ('red'), and one in the South Sea Islands and New Holland, which 'varies from yellow to black'. The remainder of the text outlines a practical program for the voyage anthropologist whose main duty was to fill the gaps in knowledge about humanity, especially of the 'Papous' of New Guinea, 'who have long been regarded as Negroes', and the inhabitants of most of New Holland, the South Sea Islands, and the Strait of Magellan. 'Anatomical specimens', principally of the 'bony head', were the key to establishing the 'physical and moral' characters of each race. They must be systematically assembled in conjunction with 'numerous true portraits' and 'thoughtful, careful observations made on the spot' — unlike the purportedly unreliable descriptions and ethnocentric drawings made by previous voyagers. In practice, the great difficulty of procuring skulls would increase the importance of 'rigorous' portraits made with 'geometric precision'. Cuvier thereupon outlined strict standards for empirical racial portraiture and collecting that a generation of French voyage artists and naturalists in Oceania would endeavour to follow.

In the event, the artists on Baudin's voyage of 1800-04, Nicolas-Martin Petit (1777-1804) and Charles-Alexandre Lesueur (1778-1846), produced a wonderful series of portraits and ethnographic drawings of indigenous people in Timor, Van Diemen's Land, New Holland, and the Cape of Good Hope — the 'most exact of this genre so far known', claimed Péron. However, the overall
The anthropological legacy of the voyage was mixed, notwithstanding Cuvier's lavish official praise for Péron's research on the 'various peoples' encountered (Cuvier et al. 1806). The experience of 'difficult and perilous' encounters with 'fierce men' in Van Diemen's Land led Péron, author of most of the official voyage narrative, to endorse the bleak opinion that 'men of nature' whose character was 'not yet softened' by civilization were 'wicked' and could not be 'mistrusted' too much. He had embarked on his travels professing a qualified primitivist idealism for the 'robust majesty of natural man'; but believing, with Cuvier, that 'moral sensibility' depended largely on 'physical organization'; and hypothesizing that physical and moral 'perfection' were inversely related. During the voyage, he conducted a series of experiments to test the relative physical strength of different races using a dynamometer recently developed by Edme Regnier to compare the strength of various men and draught animals (Figure 6). In Péron's narrative, the very dubious results of these tests become 'precious' proof of a 'gradation of the social state'. The 'very remarkable weakness' of the 'savages' of Van Diemen's Land consigned them to the 'last degree'. Those of New Holland, apparently not much stronger and 'hardly more civilized', ranked only slightly higher. The next three 'degrees' were assigned in principle to the New Guineans, the New Zealanders, and the Pacific Islanders whom Péron had not seen or tested. He allotted the sixth 'rung' to the 'inhabitants' of Timor and the Moluccas who, despite their 'fairly advanced state of civilization', were 'much weaker' than the English and the French and (presumably) ranked much lower.  

Experience and experiment thus conjoined to qualify Péron's pre-voyage abstract enthusiasm for natural man and make him a passionate advocate for the physical, as well as the moral superiority of the civilized. To this end, his narrative causally links 'physical constitution' with 'social organization' or its supposed 'absence': the alleged physical 'weakness' and 'structural flaw' (excessively thin extremities) of the inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land resulted from the deficient diet and life-style of 'the savage state' itself; an improved 'social state' would promote 'abundance' and transform them physically. At this point, Péron's ideological agenda required a social explanation and he merely toyed with the idea that the structural flaw might be inherent — the result of idiosyncratic 'physical organization'. This constraint vanished later in the text when he made a zoological argument for 'the absolute difference of the races' in Van Diemen's Land and New Holland and added a footnote promising subsequent proof that the former 'differ essentially from all other known peoples'. The phrase arguably implies discrete autochthonous origin, a radical but by no means unthinkable concept for the time given recent publication of the polygenist treatises of the English surgeon and anatomist Charles White (1728-1813) and the French military physician Julien-Joseph Virey (1775-1846). Péron went on to challenge climatic explanations for human variation: the darker skin colour and 'frizzy' rather than 'straight' hair of the Van Diemen's Landers — 'singular
anomalies' given the much colder conditions in which they lived — proved 'the imperfection of our systems on the communications of peoples, their transmigrations, and the influence of climate on man'.

Figure 6: Anon., 'Développement du dynamomètre de Cit en Regnier'.

Péron died young with two projected racial studies unrealized: a 'particular history of the peoples of Van Diemen's Land' and a comparative philosophical history of the 'relationship of the physical and the moral' in the various human races. His voyage narrative nonetheless not only provided empirical sustenance for increasingly negative attitudes towards the indigenous people of Van Diemen's Land and New Holland, both in the metropoles and within the Australian colonies, but put Péron along with Cuvier in the theoretical vanguard of biological, anthropometric, and racialist tendencies in the science of man. Indeed, modern historians see Péron as a forerunner of the 'medicalized' physical anthropology dominant in France in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Cuvier wrote relatively little on man but was a central figure in the emerging discipline of anthropology over more than three decades, not least because, as a perpetual secretary in the Institut de France, he acted as selector, instructor, and zoological commentator in relation to the naturalists on scientific voyages, notably those to Oceania. As with Baudin's expedition, traces of his patronage are scattered through the chain of official instructions and commentaries and echoed in the writings of the naturalists on the Restoration voyages of Freycinet, Duperrey, and Dumont d'Urville. All professed allegiance to the principles
and 'general order' of the taxonomic system developed in Cuvier's 'classic' work on comparative anatomy, *Le règne animal*, 'The Animal Kingdom' (1817a); all took as given his claim for the primacy of physical organization; all endorsed his tripartite classification of 'white', 'yellow', and 'negro' races — 'the most simple', according to Garnot, 'which separates the human species into three great divisions with strongly contrasting characteristics'.

Cuvier’s personal dividend from Oceanic voyaging was privileged access to a wealth of antipodean zoological specimens which helped him ground his science of comparative anatomy and cement his reputation as the pre-eminent taxonomist of his generation. He assured Quoy that he would content himself with 'your leftovers' and 'religiously conserve' the naturalist’s manuscripts and drawings for Quoy to publish himself. However, Quoy later commented privately that Cuvier was not always scrupulous about giving voyagers credit for their discoveries.

**Towards autochthony**

From the first Portuguese and Spanish contacts with the Moluccas, the Philippines, and New Guinea in the early sixteenth century, diversity was a recurrent theme in descriptions of Oceanian people. By the late eighteenth century, the kaleidoscope of skin and hair colour seen in the Pacific Islands by Quirós had settled into the paradox of Forster's 'two great varieties'. On the one hand, it was recognized that cognate language communities — now called Austronesian — were scattered across the vast area from Madagascar to the Malay Archipelago and the furthest Pacific Islands. The Dutch scholar Adriaan Reelant (1676-1718) had discerned this striking linguistic affinity early in the century by comparing published wordlists; Banks established it empirically; the East India Company employee and orientalist philologist William Marsden (1754-1836) confirmed it; and Reinhold Forster joined language to physical form as taxonomic criteria, noting 'a very remarkable similarity' between words spoken by the 'fair tribe' of South Sea Islanders and 'some' Malays. On the other hand, the groups comprising his 'blacker' variety supposedly spoke 'wholly different', mutually unrelated languages despite physical and behavioural commonalities.

The New Hollanders, whom Forster had not seen, were reportedly 'totally different' in appearance, 'customs', and language from both varieties of South Sea Islanders though Georg Forster later allowed that physical and moral parallels between the New Hollanders and nearby 'black' Islanders might suggest 'a certain relationship' or even a common origin, despite very different languages and life styles.

For several decades, Reinhold Forster’s classification of South Sea Islanders, or one resembling it, was rehearsed in much the same humanist spirit by voyagers and savants alike. Signs of significant divergence from this relatively generous, optimistic ethos emerged around the turn of the century as certain naturalists and geographers redeployed Forster’s categories to serve altered agendas. In a
drastic departure from orthodoxy, Virey (1800, I:135-8) drew on travellers' narratives to classify the 'human genus' into five or six 'primordial races' split between two 'distinct species'. His first species included the 'reddish-brown Malay tribes' who were widely dispersed but analogous in 'form, colour, customs, and mother tongue'. The 'Negro or Ethiopian' comprised a second species distributed between two stocks: one, 'more or less black', peopled much of Africa, the 'land of the Papous', and New Guinea; the second, 'blackish olive' in colour, encompassed the 'Hottentots' and the inhabitants of New Holland, New Caledonia, and the New Hebrides whom Virey characterized venomously as 'excessively stupid and brutish' with a 'vile' face, 'elongated like an ape's muzzle', and a 'squashed nose'. The major differences dividing the human genus, he asserted (1800, I:166, 415-19), were 'radical', 'indelible', and 'endemic' to physical organization which was itself largely immune to the 'superficial' influence of climate and other external conditions.

The longstanding concern of geographers to demarcate and denominate the 'parts' and the 'great natural divisions' of the physical globe had usually encompassed current knowledge and speculation about its human inhabitants, as with Brosses. However, later authors not only proposed new geographic nomenclatures for the fifth part of the world but evinced a novel preoccupation to map and classify human types, entangled with emerging ideas of race as innate and permanent. A key figure in this process was Malte-Brun who dismantled Brosses's geography and categorized the region's inhabitants into races: 'black' Oceanic Negroes and 'tanned' or 'copper-coloured' Polynesians. Replacing Terres australes with Océanique, 'Oceanica', he and Mentelle jettisoned Australasie and contracted Polynésie to label 'two Polynesias', separated 'naturally' by the equator and soon to be called Micronesia and Polynesia. Noncommittal about the orthodox 'system of a common human origin' and unwilling to accept Reinhold Forster's argument that the South Sea Islands must have been populated from the west, in the teeth of prevailing winds and currents, they hypothesized that the 'race called Malay' might be 'native' to the Pacific Ocean. A few years later, Malte-Brun formally partitioned Océanique into western (Malay Archipelago), eastern (Polynesia), and central segments occupied by races emergent from two 'very distinct' physical and linguistic stocks: the Malays 'or yellow Oceanians' and the Oceanic Negroes. The central region, comprising New Holland, Van Diemen's Land, New Guinea, and the large archipelagoes immediately to the east, contained the 'most substantial remnants' of the Oceanic Negro race. They were, he suggested, echoing his earlier intimation of an independent islands origin for the Malays, probably 'originary to this part of the world'. Indeed, the differences between the Van Diemen's Landers, the New Caledonians and the Papous were such that he was 'uncertain' whether they were descendants of 'a common stock' or whether each race had originated in situ. As with Péron's ruminations on the 'essential' difference of the inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land
from 'all other known peoples', such insinuations of autochthony signalled the
growing conceivability of the hitherto heterodox idea that the diversity of human
races was fundamental, innate, and possibly original rather than an ambiguous
product of interbreeding or the degeneration of a single species triggered by
migration to new environments.

**Naval naturalists and racial taxonomy in Oceania**

Péron's proposed socio-physical hierarchy was explicitly racial but the relatively
limited geographical span of his voyage made regional racial classification largely
irrelevant to his narrative. Indeed — except with respect to New Holland and
Van Diemen's Land where Europeans were ensconced after 1788 and 1803,
respectively, and Tahiti where missionaries settled in 1797 — the knowledge
base readily available for such an enterprise did not grow significantly between
Cook's last voyage and the resumption of scientific voyaging by France in 1817
after the long hiatus of Empire and war. Cuvier's (1817a, I:94-100) brief catalogue
of the 'varieties of the human species', published that year, was both exiguous
and indecisive about the 'handsome' Malays, who included the South Sea
Islanders, and the 'frizzy-haired', 'black', 'negroid', 'extremely barbarous' Papous.
He complained of insufficient information to identify either with one of his three
great races but thought the Papous might be 'negroes who had long ago strayed
across the Indian Ocean'.

Péron's successors as naturalists on the French Restoration voyages were all
serving naval officers, in keeping with a new policy instituted from 1817 to
circumvent the conflicts with civilian scientific personnel that had plagued
Baudin's voyage. Henceforth, only naval medical officers instructed in natural
history would be formally appointed as naturalists on scientific voyages though
other officers also contributed, most notably Dumont d'Urville. Several turned
their hand to regional taxonomy of the human populations they had encountered,
observed, and studied. The shifts and ambiguities in voyage naturalists'
representations and classifications of indigenous Oceanian people after 1817
provide another index of congealing racial presumptions in the science of man.
However, the influx of new empirical knowledge only complicated the difficulties
of trying to match received theoretical systems with fleeting observations of
baffling human variation or ambiguous affinities and the ambivalent experience
of unpredictable local behaviour.

The first of the new breed of professional surgeon-naturalists were Quoy and
Gaimard who served with Freycinet on the *Uranie* in 1817-20. They
co-produced the official *Zoologie* volume and plates of the voyage (1824a, 1824b),
though Quoy seems to have drafted much of the text. Only eleven of 712 pages
and two of 96 plates were devoted to 'Man', in the shape of a brief scientific
paper on the 'physical constitution of the Papous'. The authors' primary concern
for the skull as 'the bony envelope' for the organs of intelligence recalls Cuvier's earlier instructions to Péron. Though descriptive rather than taxonomic, the paper reveals the uneasy liaison of an a priori racial system and recalcitrant facts. *Papou* was a vexed and ambiguous category.80 From the early sixteenth century, Portuguese and Spaniards had extended the local toponym *Papua* to refer to the 'black' inhabitants of the 'Papuan Islands' and the nearby New Guinea mainland (now in Indonesia); Blumenbach and Cuvier 'generalized' *Papus/Papous* to denominate 'black' Oceanian people collectively; so did Freycinet, Quoy and Gaimard's commander.81 But the naturalists themselves limited *Papou* to certain people they had seen in Waigeo and neighbouring islands and sharpened the term's racial import by differentiating them from the similarly coloured 'race' inhabiting New Guinea itself, said to be 'true Negroes'. The *Papous* posed a racial conundrum for Quoy and Gaimard who could not work out their 'distinctive characters'. They reasoned that racial 'mixing' in a dense cluster of islands must have produced such a 'multitude of nuances' that it was hard to determine the components: in physiognomy and hair, the *Papous* seemed 'to occupy the middle ground' between Malays and Negroes; their skull form was close to the Malays; and their facial angle corresponded to that of Europeans.82

Two engraved plates of skulls of *Papous* plundered from indigenous graves illustrate Quoy and Gaimard's text (Figure 7). They had submitted them 'for examination' to the German physiologist Franz Joseph Gall (1758-1828), founder of the science of the cerebral localization of mental faculties known as phrenology. Gall's influence on Quoy and Gaimard's paper clearly outstripped that of their patron Cuvier, a professional enemy of Gall, and drew a sceptical response from the editors of the *Nouvelles annales des voyages* — one of whom was Malte-Brun — which published the earliest version of the paper in 1823.83 The authors' confident summary of the 'moral and intellectual faculties' of the *Papous* shows how readily phrenological terminology could slide into conventional racial essentialism (1824c:9-11): they had innate 'dispositions to theft'; a 'destructive instinct' so strong as to produce a 'penchant for murder' and the presumption of cannibalism; and a 'tendency to superstition'. Yet the paper's optimistic conclusion — entirely missing from the first published version — is a paradoxical reminder that phrenology could offer a radical technology for personal and racial improvement:84 the *Papous* were 'wrongly considered by clever naturalists to be close to the Apes';85 they were 'capable of education'; and they only needed 'to exercise and develop their intellectual faculties in order to hold a distinguished rank among the numerous varieties of the human species'.

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The racial taxonomy of Oceania gained new momentum from the early 1820s when the recently formed Société de Géographie in Paris offered one of its annual prizes for a memoir on the 'differences and similarities' between the 'various peoples' of the region. Garnot, Lesson, and Dumont d'Urville, who had ranged widely across Oceania with Duperrey on the voyage of the *Coquille* (1822-25), all tackled the theme following their return to France but it seems that no entry was actually considered and the prize eventually lapsed in 1830 without award. These works were self-consciously enunciated in the discourse of an emerging professional science of race by men whose primary vocation was medical, or naval, or both, but who aspired to convert their empirical authority into scientific credibility by reading papers to scientific societies and publishing in their journals (Staum 2003). Like Malte-Brun and following Cuvier, all three men used the term *race* in a modernist biological sense. Their racial pronouncements were at best patronizing, partial, and essentialist and at worst scurrilous. The physicalism and racialism of their scientific agenda are patent in Lesson's (1826:110) published advice to his younger brother — about to sail for Oceania as Dumont d'Urville's assistant surgeon — to try to advance Cuvier's 'wise works in comparative anatomy' by procuring indigenous skeletons: their 'very characteristic facial type' would enable anatomists to draw 'new conclusions from skeletal structure in order to throw light on the races'.

Garnot's first effort (1826-30) was a global classification of 'the human races' along 'simple' Cuvierian lines. In the process, he differentiated an 'Oceanic branch' of the 'yellow race', occupying most of the South Sea Islands, from a generalized

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*Figure 7: Jean Louis Denis Coutant after Antoine Chazal, 'Crânes de Papous'.*
Papou branch of the 'black race' located in the western Pacific Islands, New Guinea, Van Diemen's Land, and New Holland. The 'Oceania's' were typified in the 'well-built' Tahitians whose facial angle was 'as open as that of the Europeans'; the Papous were 'in a way a hybrid variety' characterized by a much more oblique facial angle than Tahitians; those inhabiting New Holland had an even narrower facial angle and were 'without doubt the most hideous peoples known'.

An expanded version of the memoir published in a dictionary of natural history concludes with six engraved plates, four of which deploy images of Oceanian people to typify the 'Mongolic' and 'Ethiopic' races. In a companion piece on the 'Negro', focussing on 'the Negro of New Holland', Garnot (1837:628-30) abandoned the term Papou and reconstituted the 'black race' of Oceania as a 'frightful'-looking branch of the 'Negro race'. A 'very different' physical organization 'from ours' meant that Negroes in general were 'inferior' to the 'yellow and white races' while some were 'uncivilizable' — notably in New South Wales where their organization was 'closest to the Baboons'.

The pharmacist Lesson, who became chief surgeon when Garnot was forced by illness to quit the voyage at Port Jackson, published a far more elaborate regional racial classification. In contrast to Garnot's broad brush, Lesson proposed a convoluted schema that lauded the 'Hindu-Caucasic' Oceanians (modern Polynesians) as 'superior' to all other South Sea Islanders in 'beauty' and bodily conformation and split the 'black race' into two branches distributed between four varieties: the Papouas or modern Melanesians; the 'Tasmanians' of Van Diemen's Land; the Endamènes of the interior of New Guinea and some large Malay islands; and, at the base of the hierarchy, the 'Australians' of New Holland. He represented all these negroes as intellectually and morally deficient but the 'austral Negroes' of New Holland — whom he had only seen demoralized by disease, expropriation, and alcohol in colonized areas around Port Jackson — as sunk in especially 'profound ignorance, great misery, and a sort of moral brutalization'.

In Lesson's work, as in Quoy and Gaimard's, the anomalous appearance and conformation of certain so-called Papous confounded a presumptive racial system and induced tortuous logic and muddled rhetoric. In his contemporary shipboard journal, Lesson confidently assigned 'the natives' of Buka, north of Bougainville, to the 'race of the Papous' on the basis of the 'characteristic' small facial features and bouffant hairstyles of six men fleetingly encountered at sea (Figure 8). In nearby New Ireland, where the vessel anchored for ten days, he described meeting a 'negro race' with 'woolly' hair worn in braids who closely resembled the Africans of Guinea but 'differ much' from their Papou 'neighbours' in Buka (Figure 9). He restated the case for radical difference in a letter sent from Port Jackson to the editor of an official publication (1825:326): the New Irelanders were of 'negro race' and in physical constitution 'quite opposite' to the Papous.
Figure 8: Jules-Louis Le Jeune, ‘Papou de L’île Bougainville Bouca’ [1823].

Figure 9: Jules-Louis Le Jeune, 'n*elle Irlande' [1823].

Yet Lesson evidently thought better of his initial impression since, in his journal, the phrase 'differ much' is crossed out and replaced with 'differ little'. The confusion is compounded in his formal racial taxonomy by shifts between narrow and more generalized meanings of the term *Papous/Papouas* (1829:200-7): between Quoy and Gaimard's specialized sense of 'Negro-Malay' hybrids living on the 'frontiers' of the Malay islands and along the northwest coast of New Guinea; and a broader signification to designate 'negroes' inhabiting the New Guinea littoral and the island groups as far east as Fiji — that is, the modern Island Melanesians. Eventually, in a belatedly published narrative of the voyage (1839, II:13, 35, 56), Lesson conflated the once 'opposite' Bukans and New Irelanders as 'Papouas', 'negroes', or 'Papoua negroes'. Yet this usage was less inclusive than Cuvier's and Garnot's blanket labelling of all 'black' Oceanians as *Papous* since Lesson (1829:200-25) consistently differentiated *Papous* from the 'negro' *Alfjourous* or *Endamênes* supposedly 'aboriginal' to inland New Guinea and to New Holland.

Dumont d'Urville's journal (1822-5) of his voyage as first lieutenant of the *Coquille* remains unpublished but in the year before he left again for Oceania in 1826, in command of the *Astrolabe*, he wrote an unfinished manuscript ([1826]) addressing the essay prize questions. In the process, he split the inhabitants of Oceania into 'three great divisions which seem the most natural': first, 'Australians', 'Blacks', or 'Melanians' ('from the dark colour of their skin'); second, 'peoples of Tonga', the 'true Polynesians', 'adherents of taboo'; and third, 'Carolines'. The 'Malay race properly speaking' at this stage remained outside the classification but the manuscript anticipated in all but names Dumont d'Urville's classic tripartition of Pacific Islanders into Melanesians, Polynesians, and Micronesians.

Quoy and Gaimard served as naturalists on Dumont d'Urville's expedition which crisscrossed western Oceania in 1826-29 and they again co-produced the *Zoologie* section (1830-4) of the official voyage publication. Quoy began this work with a short treatise locating man in Oceania 'in his zoological relationships' as first among mammals. Explicitly taxonomic, he lauded Forster's 'natural' divisions of Oceanian people but reconfigured them as 'two pronounced types', 'the black race and the yellow race'. For Quoy, as for Cuvier and most contemporary naturalists, the primary races were ontologically real and 'very distinct': the differences between them were innate and based in physical organization whereas the differences between the varieties of those races were 'only nuances' produced by external 'modifiers' such as climate, soil, and 'habits'. Since the 'two principal types' of Oceanian people were unmistakable, the anthropological task of the anatomically trained naturalist was to 'grasp the varieties'. Accordingly, Quoy devoted the bulk of his chapter 'On Man' to differentiating each race into the varieties known personally to him and
Gaimard.\textsuperscript{101} This empirical section incorporates long extracts from Quoy's shipboard journal, producing marked tension in the text between his deductive system and circumstantial anecdotes: between a reductive, purportedly objective, but fundamentally racialized theoretical schema and contingent details about the haphazard, idiosyncratic behaviour and appearance of actual human beings.\textsuperscript{102}

Though mainly concerned to catalogue the 'physical characters' distinguishing the admired 'yellow race' (the future Polynesians and Micronesians) from the vilified 'blacks' (the future Melanesians and Australians), Quoy discerned 'no less fundamental distinctions' in 'morals' and 'habits'. He dichotomized responses to Europeans in what would become enduring racial stereotypes: the yellow race welcomed voyagers with trade and women whereas the blacks were isolated, warlike, suspicious, and 'excessively jealous of their women'. These 'defining characters' ensured that one race, with European help, would take 'great strides towards civilization' while the other, 'refusing all contact', would 'stagnate'.\textsuperscript{103} In manuscript notes for his chapter (n.d.a), Quoy drew an explicit, Cuvierian causal linkage between the physical and the moral by attributing intellect and morality to biology: the 'progress' of the 'negro race', he maintained, was thwarted by an 'obstacle in its organization' which ensured its 'inferiority' and could only be overcome by racial crossing. This grim prognosis is at odds with the catholic optimism of Quoy and Gaimard's earlier text (1824c:2, 11) which allows the Papous the capacity for intellectual advance; attributes the 'miserable' condition of people seen at Shark Bay in western New Holland to 'a soil of the most frightful poverty' which had stymied their 'development and perfection'; and asserts their common humanity, since their 'state' was 'still far' from brutish. In dramatic contrast, Quoy's later chapter represents the New Hollanders as barely human — 'a very distinct and one of the most degraded' varieties of the black race — and as possibly a separate species.\textsuperscript{104} This shift in tone and outlook between the 1824 and 1830 texts attests both to a hardening in learned European opinion on human differences in the interval between the voyages and to the authors' more intense and fraught experience of indigenous behaviour on the second.

In 1832, Quoy's commander Dumont d'Urville published a seminal paper synthesizing a quadripartite regional geography and a dual racial classification from the works of his predecessors and his own wide-ranging travels.\textsuperscript{105} Spatially, he divided Oceania into four 'principal divisions': Polynesia, Micronesia, Malaysia, and Melanesia. Like Quoy, Dumont d'Urville claimed to be heir to the 'simple and lucid system of the immortal Forster' but appropriated it to serve a starkly racialized anthropology. He reconfigured Forster's labile varieties into two 'truly distinct races': a 'copper-coloured' race of 'conquerors' had come from the west to destroy, expel, or co-exist and intermix with a 'black race' who were 'the true natives' or at least the first occupants of the region. He distributed the
copper-coloured race between 'Polynesians' and 'Micronesians'; replaced Melanian with the neologism 'Melanesian' to name 'the black Oceanian race'; and consigned the 'Australians' and the 'Tasmanians' to the 'last degree' of his human hierarchy as 'the primitive and natural state of the Melanesian race' which was 'only a branch of the black race of Africa'. He adjudged Melanesians to be 'hideous' in appearance, 'limited' in languages and institutions, and 'generally very inferior' to the copper-coloured race in dispositions and intelligence, except where they had been improved by frequent communications and racial intermixture with Polynesians, as in Fiji. But he saved his most persistent obloquy for the Australians and Tasmanians who were 'probably the most limited, the most stupid of all beings and those essentially closest to the unreasoning brute'.

Not only did Dumont d'Urville (1832:15-20) reinscribe the conjectural narrative of ancient racial migration and displacement proposed by Brosses and Forster but, like Quoy, he reworked it as modern history and colonial necessity: 'organic differences' in the 'intellectual faculties' of races determined a 'law of nature' that the black 'must obey' the others or 'disappear' while the white 'must dominate'.

Dumont d'Urville's racial taxonomy was more concise and economical than his colleagues' long-winded efforts but actual human idiosyncrasy and diversity threatened the integrity of his categories and challenged his racial preconceptions. Again (1832:17-18), the Papous were notable culprits. Like Quoy and Gaimard, he confined them to 'a very small part' of the coasts of west New Guinea and neighbouring islands which he had personally visited and distinguished them from the 'true Melanesians' populating most of New Guinea and the island groups to the east. However, he postulated migration rather than hybridity to solve the mystery of the Papous' affinities and origins: they might be just 'a handsome variety of the Melanesian race' but more likely were relatively 'recent' arrivals from as far afield as Madagascar. A candid passage reveals the aesthetic and discursive power of racial stereotypes, particularly the disagreeable spectre of the Negro and its Oceanic metonym. In Celebes (now Sulawesi in Indonesia), Dumont d'Urville heard that the inhabitants of the interior were Alfourous, a term which 'instantly' brought to mind the blackness, 'frizzy hair', and 'flat nose' of the 'true Melanesians'. 'Astonished' when they turned out in the flesh to resemble figures he had seen in Tahiti, Tonga, and New Zealand, he duly installed Celebes as a likely 'cradle' of the Polynesian race.

Despite such anomalies, Dumont d'Urville's elegant racial classification of Oceania ultimately prevailed and became, with minor modifications, the standard international terminology. Eventually, shorn of his brutally negative caricature of Melanesians — though not of its racial connotations — it was naturalized in modern indigenous usages by Pacific Islanders themselves.
Morality, science, and the lure of polygeny

By the late eighteenth century, many naturalists and philosophers were uncomfortable with the biblical credo of human descent from a single couple even if they avowed, with Buffon (1749b, III:530), that 'there was originally only a single species of men'. A few eminent savants like the Frenchman Voltaire (1694-1778) and the Scot David Hume (1711-1776) flirted with the notion of multiple origins.\(^{107}\) Kant proclaimed an end to the 'hitherto obligatory accepted interpretation of world history as mystical salvation history' and duly proposed a rational, scientific justification for human unity. Prichard, too, insisted that 'all mankind constitute but one race or proceed from a single family' but denied 'religious predilections' and claimed to rest his case on 'distinct and independent grounds', including the supposition, attributed to Linnaeus, that every species was created 'in a single stock; probably a single pair'.\(^{108}\) Among voyage naturalists, Philibert Commerson (1727-1773), who sailed with Bougainville in the 1760s, asserted that 'only a mythologist' could explain how the 'very distinct races of men' could be the issue of 'a common stock' and speculated that 'our good Tahitians', whom he idealized, might be autochthonous. Georg Forster also mocked the 'hypothesis of one single couple' as 'mythology', 'unknowable', and no less problematic than the 'assumption' of human descent from 'several original stocks' emergent in 'different parts of the world'.\(^{109}\)

The writings of nineteenth-century naturalists on Oceanian people are punctuated by signs of both the growing scientific and demotic appeal of polygeny and the countervailing moral and political inertia exerted by the established doctrine, especially over conventional genres. In a popular work, Dumont d'Urville's protagonist flirts with the notion of 'the Australian' as 'half-man, half-brute', condemned to 'perish entirely' because he lacked 'the conditions of amalgamation which might create, like elsewhere, a class of half-breeds'. In his racial taxonomy, directed to a scientific audience, Dumont d'Urville was noncommittal as to whether the three major human races might belong to 'different or successive creations or formations'. Yet, in reprinting this memoir in his official voyage narrative — a very conventional genre — he added a footnote endorsing the orthodox 'opinion' that all races derived from the 'same primitive stock'.\(^{110}\) Lesson's memoir on the races of Oceania (1829:156) likewise acknowledged in passing the 'fundamental premise, that man constitutes only a single species'. But in a later general work on natural history (1847:14-15), he at once maintained that 'the human species is one and indivisible'; insisted that the existence of 'numerous and very diversified' permanent races was 'palpable' and that 'we cannot mistake the real and profound characters of race'; but refused to speculate whether racial diversity was originally created or a product of externally induced 'degeneration'.

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Quoy's strategic vacillations on the issue of human unity pepper his texts. His manuscript journal of the *Uranie* voyage (1817-20) is prefaced by this highminded but evidently sincere statement of intent, indicating his belief at the time in the common humanity of 'the natives' he expected to meet: 'I swear here that I prefer to lose my life than to keep it by killing unfortunates who are barbarians only for want of judgment or civilization'. In keeping with this avowal, his and Gaimard's chapter 'On Man' in the *Zoologie* of the voyage (1824) shows traces of an environmentalist, albeit ambivalent humanism. Yet Quoy's equivalent chapter in their *Zoologie* of the *Astrolabe* voyage (1830) is much altered in tone. Here, he refused to 'engage in conjecture' on the 'origin' of 'the species' which inhabits New Holland' though the term *espèce* was loaded in the context. He admitted as much in a handwritten marginal comment on a personal copy of the volume: 'here I am not too clear. I apparently had in mind the unity of the human species, *in which I do not believe*. At the time, however, either he, Gaimard, or their editors were evidently unprepared to dispute the doctrine openly: the published text sticks consistently to the term *race* whereas Quoy's manuscript draft interchanges *espèce* and *race*, suggesting conflation of the concepts in principle but conscious editorial avoidance of controversial terminology. In a much later manuscript, Quoy took the plurality of human species as given, significantly with reference to the New Hollanders who were always among the populations most likely to be relegated to other or less than fully human status: the handful of 'naked savages' seen 'wandering like animals in search of their food' at Shark Bay in 1818 were 'truly the most degraded species in the world, occupying the last echelon of humanity' — a notably less generous estimation than in his 1824 text. Taken together, such equivocations and about-turns register both a widening acceptance by French naval naturalists of the radical notion of multiple human species, if not separate origins, and their anxious efforts to accommodate the frequently incommensurate demands of intellectual fashion and moral conformity, epitomized respectively in their scientific and naval vocations.

By the mid-nineteenth century, polygenist thinking was pervasive in anthropology in France. Restoration-era constraints on its expression in officially sanctioned literature had receded and professed monogenists were often ambiguously complicit in the by now dominant racial agenda. These patterns were already evident in the voluminous body of scientific material on the people of Oceania generated by Dumont d'Urville's final voyage of 1837-40. The works in question were produced by the phrenologist Dumoutier, who believed in a single human species, and the variously polygenist naturalists Hombron, Jacquinot, and Emile Blanchard (1819-1900), who did not. Dumoutier promoted the key phrenological principles of individuality and the equal mental potential of all human beings while his novel method of casting...
moulages, plaster busts, from living indigenous subjects demanded personal intimacy with likely models and patient negotiation to obtain cooperation from them or their governors (Figures 10 and 11). Yet his mostly unpublished writings on the voyage (1837-40) show a striking disjunction between theory and unsettling experience: expressed humanist values jar with conventional racial essentialism and deeply ambivalent reactions to Oceanian people, especially when they acted in independent or threatening fashion or reminded him of Negroes. Though his phrenological investigations suggested significant differences in the cerebral development of various Oceanian populations, he clearly did not see such variation as innately organic since 'the organization of the brain is the same in all men'. Instead, like the later Buffon, he represented organic differences as the indirect product of external influences — climate, 'the social state', 'the mode of existence', and ancient histories of migration by 'conquering strangers' who successively displaced and dispersed the 'two primitive black races' which, he thought, were probably 'original to the torrid zone' and doomed to 'nonexistence'. One was 'a particular race' which inhabited most of New Holland, was positioned 'at the lowest degree of civilization', and spoke many different languages that 'resemble no dialect of any other human race'. Here, too, an insinuation of autochthony prefigured a whiff of polygeny and the spectre of racial extinction.

Dumoutier's theoretical commitment to ideals of human unity and general improvability jostled in his writings with complacent conviction of European superiority and deep ambivalence about 'primitive black races'. However, few such uncertainties troubled the volumes produced by his surrogate Blanchard or his fellow voyager Hombron. Blanchard asserted that the human genus 'comprises several species'; that they were necessarily 'created in the very countries where we observe them today'; and that there must therefore have been 'a considerable number of original stocks'. Races were permanent while their 'physical' characters were primary, 'rigorously determined', and coincident with their 'moral and intellectual' characters. There was direct correlation between European physical characters and the greatest 'volume of intelligence' but no 'equality' between men since those whose heads were 'contracted on top and in front and elongated behind' and whose jaw bones 'projected' — such as the 'Papous', 'the Australians and Tasmanians', and 'the Negroes of Africa' — were bereft of 'genius or even talent, in the European sense'. On the basis of Dumoutier's skull collection, Blanchard distinguished six 'very distinct types' in Oceania, arranged in a hierarchy of relative physical and moral 'superiority' and 'inferiority'. The 'Malay type', though 'very imperfect' compared to the European, ranked highest and was 'greatly superior' to the Micronesian who in turn had 'the advantage' over the Polynesian. The skulls of the Papous closely resembled the Polynesian type but were 'more degraded'. Dismissing Quoy and Gaimard's portrayal of Papous as 'Negro-Malay metis' and citing Prichard in
support, Blanchard made them the 'true natives' of the lands they occupied from New Guinea to Fiji, a discrete race positioned at 'one of the last degrees of human civilization'. The Australians and Tasmanians were anthropologically 'at the last rank among men', along with the Negroes of Africa, and lacked any 'trace of civilization' or capacity to achieve it.\textsuperscript{118}

Hombron's treatise 'On Man' is a prolix, idiosyncratic effort to reconcile polygeny with divine creation. It is profoundly racialized: the 'several species of men' had separate local creations, were distinguished by 'intelligence', and were grouped into 'three natural families'. The 'family of blacks' belonged 'to the primitive human creations' and continued to occupy 'the most arid and inaccessible' places where their 'conquerors' had not bothered to follow them; the 'copper-coloured' family, which included the eastern Oceanians or Polynesians, emerged subsequently; the 'great white family' was created last as the 'logical consequence of the union of matter and intelligence' to form the link between 'man occupying the last echelons of the human series, and the supreme intelligence'.\textsuperscript{119} However, the rival treatise by Hombron's young medical colleague Jacquinot (1846:36, 375-6) — on 'anthropology' and 'the human races of south America and Oceania' — is a useful reminder that extreme racialism was not a necessary corollary of polygeny and that personal impressions could flout racial preconceptions. An avowed believer that the human genus comprised 'three distinct species', he nonetheless denied the standard representation of 'the black races of Oceania as brutish nomadic tribes, lacking industry and intelligence'. The stereotype hardly applied even to the 'most brutish tribes' of New Holland, whose 'miserable state' resulted largely from the 'sterility of the soil', while in other parts of the country they had shown themselves to be 'intelligent' and as educable as the children of English settlers. The 'Melanians' (Melanesians), he claimed, 'cede nothing to the Polynesians and even surpass them sometimes', especially in 'industry'; conversely, in 'ferocity and perfidy', the Polynesians yielded nothing to the Melanians, as the first navigators had found to their cost.
Figure 10: [J.-B.?] Léveillé after photograph by [Louis-Auguste?] Bisson of Pierre-Marie Alexandre Dumoutier, 'Ma-Pou-Ma-Hanga. Native de l’Île de Manga-Réva, Archipel Gambier (Polynésie)' (1846).\textsuperscript{120}

Lithographed photograph of plaster bust. Photograph B. Douglas.
Foreign Bodies

Figure 11: [J.-B.?] Léveillé after photograph by [Louis-Auguste?] Bisson of Pierre-Marie Alexandre Dumoutier, 'Guenney. Natif de Port-Sorelle, (Comté de Dévon), Côte-Nord de la terre de Van Diemen (Mélanésie)' (1846).\textsuperscript{121}

Lithographed photograph of plaster bust. Photograph B. Douglas.
Prichard — 'one original'; 'three principal groupes'  

Meanwhile, in natural history in Britain, the threat of uncompromising physicalism or proto-polygenist heterodoxy emanating mainly from France was partly repulsed until the mid-nineteenth century by the ideological dominance of Evangelical humanitarianism. Evangelical attitudes to 'pagans' were more bleak and rigid than had been the optimistic Christian humanism of Reinhold Forster and other Enlightenment Reformed Protestants such as Blumenbach, but British Evangelicals shared their fervent commitment to the biblical doctrine of human unity. In Britain before 1850, the science of man was strongly comparative and linguistic, befitting a longstanding philanthropic bent and the label 'ethnology' that it bore in the 1840s. Both values owed much to the influence of Prichard, a devout Anglican of Quaker origins, a follower of Blumenbach, and doyen of British ethnologists for more than thirty years until his death in 1848 (Stocking 1973; 1987:48-53). Prichard was nonetheless not immune to the infiltration of racialized logic and vocabulary into mainstream discourses: by mid-century, physical differences and their supposed moral corollaries were racially definitive for most western Europeans, including humanitarians.

Prichard's work bears a marked antipodean imprint. George Stocking, Jr. (1973:xxxv), who edited a modern reprinting of the first edition of *Researches into the Physical History of Man* (1813), stressed his particular debt to the Cook voyage literature. In this edition, Prichard accorded an axial interpretive position to 'the South-Sea and Indian Islanders' who, he supposed, were 'all propagated from one original' but were 'divided into two principal classes': one, 'Eastern Negroes or Papuas', were 'savages' and probably 'aborigines'; the other, unnamed, inhabited the islands of modern Polynesia and Micronesia and the Malay Archipelago, were 'more civilized', and resembled Europeans. In a long empirical section, these Oceanian people served as primary evidence for his then startling but shortlived thesis that 'the primitive stock of men were Negroes' and that the 'evolution of white varieties in black races of men', via the 'effects of Cultivation or Civilization', was a universal 'process of Nature'. Invoking the particular authority of William Anderson (?1748-78), surgeon-naturalist on Cook's second and third voyages, Prichard argued that the South Sea Islanders, broadly conceived to embrace the Papuas and the New Hollanders, were all 'branches of one stock' but provided 'a fair example of the greatest diversity of the human species, depending on the condition of society, and on the mode of life' rather than 'the influence of climate'.

The glut of information pouring into Europe about non-white people globally meant exponential growth in the length of subsequent editions of *Researches* but a steady decline in the relative empirical significance of Oceania. Yet, in the two-volume second edition, Prichard (1826, I:365-468) continued to foreground the region as the world's most prolific source of 'facts' on the physical history.
of mankind. He now split its 'races of men' into three 'classes': the 'black or swarthy' Papuas had 'woolly hair', remained 'barbarous and unimproved', and occupied New Guinea, the islands as far eastward as Fiji, parts of the Malay Archipelago, and Van Diemen's Land; the 'fairer and less barbarous' Polynesians inhabited modern Polynesia and Micronesia and much of the Malay Archipelago; while the 'Haraforas' or 'Alfoërs' (Alfourous) were 'black', 'extremely barbarous', had 'straight or lank hair', were 'indigenous' to the Malay Archipelago, and occupied New Holland. However, Prichard (1826, I:480-3) ultimately qualified this differentiating agenda by allowing that the Papuan and Polynesian races had some 'remarkable characters in common', notably in language and skull conformation.

Even in the five-volume third edition (1836-47), the 'Oceanic races' retain significant heuristic value, though Prichard no longer considered them 'one stock' but separated them into three 'remarkably' different 'principal groupes'. Only the far-flung 'Malayo-Polynesian tribes' comprised a 'particular race or family of nations' and were relatively 'civilised', though the 'lower class' had 'approximated towards the character of the savage races' through the 'agency of the climate'. His two remaining groups together comprised the 'black races' of 'Kelaenonesia' but were related only through 'uncertain' Asian origin and some behavioural and physical 'resemblance'. The 'Pelagian or Oceanic Negroes' were physically very diverse and 'very inferior' to the Malayo-Polynesians in 'arts and civilisation'. The 'Alfourous' or Australians had a 'peculiar' head shape and no linguistic affinity to the other Oceanic races. These races continued collectively to exemplify 'almost every physical variety of the human species' but were now mobilized in support of a standard climatic-environmental causal theory as putative products of 'the agency of climate and physical influences' on a single migrating species — a position Prichard had first adopted in 1826.126

Oceanic voyage literature remains prominent in the third edition, especially that addressing the racial conundrum of the Papuas. An exhaustive survey of writings on the subject in French and English prompted Prichard to make them 'a particular division' of the Oceanic Negroes, 'a genuine and peculiar' race limited to New Guinea, New Britain, New Ireland, and the Solomons and differentiated both from the 'mixed people' of Waigeo and nearby islands and from the Fijians who, 'though a black race', exceeded the 'more civilised and fairer' Tongans in 'vigour and enterprise'. In the Preface to this edition, Prichard complained of the prevalence of the doctrine of 'an original diversity of races' in recent treatises — 'even' by Cuvier — and in works by 'the most celebrated scientific travellers', including navigators and naturalists on recent French expeditions to Oceania. This was an allusion to Dumont d'Urville, Lesson, and Quoy and Gaimard whose writings Prichard nonetheless reproduced verbatim or paraphrased despite disavowing their purported racial theories. His ongoing obsession with the threat to human unity posed by polygeny presumably sensitized him to their
prevarications on the issue, since neither they nor Cuvier openly professed belief in plural human origins.\textsuperscript{127}

The grand design of Prichard's magnum opus remained unchanged over more than thirty years: he set himself with extraordinary industry and persistence to prove the orthodoxy that human physical differences arose 'from the variation of one primitive type' and that 'all the races of men are of one species', thus refuting the polygenist heresy that such differences were original or 'permanent and therefore specific characters'.\textsuperscript{128} There are nonetheless clear shifts in language, tone, and emphasis from the first to the third editions. Though he consistently avoided systematic taxonomy of the human populations of Oceania, Prichard's division into classes became steadily more racialized. The 1813 text hinges on a broad, historically mutable distinction between savage and civilized while the epithets applied to so-called savages are mostly descriptive and fairly detached. In contrast, the third edition normalizes invidious racial terminology and discriminations: the 'black races in Oceanic Negroland' were 'fierocious and sullen, of savage and menacing aspect'; their 'physical characters' were 'very different from those of the agile, graceful, and comparatively fair Polynesians'; they included some which 'exceed in ugliness the most ill-favoured brood of the African forests, whom they rival in the sooty blackness of their complexion'. Even more disturbing than Prichard's by now conventionally racialized language is the intimation of racial displacement in his conjectural history of the Oceanic 'nations': the black races were the 'aborigines' of Kelænonesia, its 'immemorial and primitive inhabitants' who had spread across the 'austral islands' long before the arrival of the Malayo-Polynesians and were, by implication, exterminated, conquered, or dispersed inland by them.\textsuperscript{129}

**Conclusion**

The wider discursive setting of this and the previous chapter is one of entrenched but embattled holism under siege from emerging innatist conceptions of human difference that increasingly blurred into attributions of racial autochthony and polygenism. As the ontological reality of races firmed during the first half of the nineteenth century, polygeny became more and more conceivable and acquired fugitive appeal even for some professed monogenists. Taken broadly, the century after 1750 saw a steady hardening in the vocabulary and the science of race, though the positions adopted by individual savants and voyage naturalists were neither straightforward nor consistent.

The chapter correlates the emergence of a normal science of race with the asymmetric interplay of two overlapping modes of knowing, one global and deductive, the other regional and empirical. Metropolitan savants deployed travellers' accounts of Oceanians as evidence in support of abstract classifications of human varieties, races, or species. Voyage naturalists constructed regional
anthropological taxonomies by bringing global theories to bear on their own ambiguous encounters with particular Oceanians. In both cases, the taxonomic project objectified and dehumanized actual indigenous people as racial types. Yet, whereas the imprint of encounters was all but effaced in most universal racial systems, voyagers' classificatory efforts were always vulnerable to the mismatch of theory and praxis — the challenge of trying to cram personal experience of a highly varied mix of human physical features, lifestyles, and behaviours into neat racial pigeonholes. This recurrent tension between systems and facts is epitomized in the tortuous attempts by travelling French naturalists to identify and classify the *Papous* or Papuans, culminating in Prichard's late, racially ambivalent attempt to resolve the taxonomic muddle by further complicating it. Prichardian ethnology, allergic to system and heavily reliant on historical detail, would ultimately choke on the surfeit of idiosyncrasy disclosed in the burgeoning empirical literature on exotic people worldwide.

Universal and regional racial taxonomies alike were often bracketed with historical conjecture about racial origins and movements. Anticipated by Reinhold Forster, taken for granted by Cuvier and his disciples, implied by Prichard, the strategic yoking of history and taxonomy became a standard rhetorical ploy as the natural history of man transmogrified into the science of race and a new era of energetic European colonialism blossomed. With respect to Oceania, such histories usually involved speculation about autochthony and migration culminating in racial displacement or extirpation along lines spelled out by Brosses. Reinhold Forster derived his 'two distinct races' in the South Seas from the hypothetical conquest of 'aboriginal black tribes' by 'fairer', 'more civilized' Malay immigrants. In the nineteenth century, a just-so story of the inexorable displacement of primitive blacks by lighter-skinned, *racially superior* invaders developed powerful momentum. Dumont d'Urville's dual typology climaxed in the lethal 'law of nature' that 'the black must obey' the white and yellow races, 'or disappear'. Even British Evangelicals — who long battled to reconcile their dogma that all humanity was equal in the sight of God and equally susceptible to salvation with what seemed to be compelling evidence of the division and unequal endowments of races — explained the peopling of Oceania by two 'decidedly distinct' races in terms of the supplanting of the 'most ancient tribe' of Oceanic Negroes by 'fairer' Polynesians.

More sinister was the slippage from conjectural history to modern prognosis. The purported inevitability of the displacement of inferior by superior races was taken to justify colonial expropriation of indigenous lands and was brutally enacted in the settler colonies of Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, and Kanaky New Caledonia. Still worse, widely-held preconceptions about innate racial characters and inexorable racial displacement intersected with colonial fears and desires to promote a discourse of racial stagnation or extinction with respect to
certain Oceanian people, notably but not exclusively Aboriginal Tasmanians and Australians. Whereas Enlightenment thinkers such as Buffon, Brosses, Blumenbach, and the Forsters had presumed a universal human aptitude to become civilized, their more pessimistic nineteenth-century successors tended to believe, with Cuvier (1817a, I:94), that 'intrinsic causes' retarded the 'progress of certain races' and found their views confirmed in antipodean experience. In a paper read to the Philosophical Society of Australia in 1822, Barron Field (1786-1846), the judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, assigned the 'degenerate Ethiopian character' to 'the Australians' on the basis of 'the skull, the genius, the habits'. He inferred by analogy that they would 'never be civilized', that 'experience is every day fulfilling the reasoning', and that 'our colonization', however benevolent, was likely to produce the eventual 'decay or extermination' of this 'simple race' (1825:196-7, 224-8). Following a visit to Hobart Town in 1827, Dumont d'Urville (1830-3, V:96) predicted that 'the Tasmanian, and later the Australian, incapable of ever being civilized, will end up disappearing entirely' in the face of European invasion, as so many native American and other 'savage peoples' had before them. Even more portentous, after meeting a party of 'black aborigines' near Sydney in 1836, Darwin (1839:519-20) lamented the 'mysterious agency' which appeared to dictate that 'wherever the European has trod, death seems to pursue the aboriginal'. The future theoretical and practical import of this grim, if inaccurate prophecy can scarcely be overestimated.

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Notes

1 ‘The new southern world’ (Blumenbach 1781:52, original emphasis). Latin-English translations are based on Lewis and Short 1879.


3 Blumenbach 1775:40; 1795:322; Buffon 1749a:4-7; 1749b, III:529-30; Cuvier 1817a, I:94; Cuvier et al. 1807:135, 137; Prichard 1813:3; 1836-47, I:9.

4 The terms 'monogenist' and 'polygenist' date from the 1850s but are used here as useful labels for the extreme positions adopted by naturalists during the preceding half century in heated debates over the unity of the human species; see Chapter One (Douglas), this volume.


6 Other partial exceptions to French predominance in the early anthropology of Oceania — though none could match the comparative span of French experience in the region — were the German Georg Heinrich von Langsdorff (1774-1852), physician-naturalist on the first Russian circumnavigation of the world in 1803-6; the French-born German naturalist and littérateur Adelbert von Chamisso (1781-1838), naturalist on the subsequent Russian voyage of 1815-18; the Englishman Charles Darwin (1809-1882), naturalist on HMS Beagle’s global surveying voyage of 1831-36; and the American philologist and ethnologist Horatio Hale (1817-1896), a member of the United States Exploring Expedition to the Pacific in 1838-42 (Chamisso 1821, 1886; Darwin 1839; Hale 1846; Langsdorff 1813; see also Beer 1996; Liebersohn 2006:58-76, 273-88). William Ellis (1794-1872) and John Williams (1796-1839) of the London Missionary Society pioneered the prolific genre of missionary ethnography which dominated Pacific anthropology in the second half of the nineteenth century but few other such works were published before 1850 (Ellis 1829, 1831; Williams 1837; see also Herbert 1991:155-203; Sivasundaram 2005).

7 See Chapter One (Douglas), this volume.

8 Brosses’s interest was avowedly inspired by a letter on the ‘progress of the sciences’ written in 1752 to Frederick II of Prussia by the French polymath Pierre-Louis Moreau de Maupertuis (1698-1759) who promoted the search for the Terres australes as the most urgent and worthy object of royal scientific patronage ([Brosses] 1756, I:i, 2-4; Maupertuis 1768:375-86). See Dunmore 1965-9, I:45-50; see also Ryan 2002 on Brosses’s seminal contribution to the emergence of the anthropology of Oceania in France in the mid-eighteenth century.

9 Blumenbach 1795:297; Darwin 1871, I:226; Duchet 1995:271, original emphasis.


11 Buffon 1749b, III:395-411.

12 Throughout this chapter, as in the Introduction, I retain the French forms Papou or Papoua because inconsistent contemporary French usages do not always translate exactly into English ‘Papuan’.


16 See Chapter One (Douglas), this volume; Douglas 2005:337-8.

17 E.g., Burney 1803-17, IV:388; Cook 1955:417; Forster 1982, IV:632. See also Douglas 2006:7-8, 14, 22.

18 Forster 1777, II:208, 226-8, 231; Forster 1778:228, 276.

19 Forster 1778:228, 276-7, 284, 353-60; La Pérouse 1797, III:229-30.


21 Quiros 1904:38, 143.

22 [Brosses] 1756, II:375-80, original emphasis. Here Brosses echoed Buffon in counterposing the technical and the common meanings (‘species’ and ‘kind’) of the ambiguous term espèce (e.g., Buffon 1749, III:519; 1777:479); see also Chapter One (Douglas), this volume.
Foreign Bodies

23 [Brosses] 1756, I:16-17, 77-80; cf. Ryan 2002:174-84. See the Introduction (Douglas), this volume, for an outline of Brosses's threefold division of the *Terres australes.*

24 Forster 1778:252-84, original emphasis.


26 Forster 1777, II:228; Forster 1778:271-6.

27 Kant 1785, 2001; see Chapter One (Douglas), this volume, for the Kant-Forster debate, see Agnew 2003:92-3; Bodi 1959:352-3; Gascoigne 2007:151-3; Lagier 2004:35-46; Liebersohn 2006:197-208; Strack 1996.


29 Buffon 1777:462, 478; Forster 1778:252, 258; Forster 1786:80, 159-60.


34 Forster 1786:78-9, 163-5; 1985b:280, my emphasis.

35 Blumenbach 1803, I:73; 1806:55-69.

36 See Chapter One (Douglas), this volume.

37 Cuvier often publicly acknowledged natural history’s debt to Oceanic voyagers, as in my introductory anecdote, and on one occasion credited voyage naturalists with having ‘perhaps enriched’ zoology more than metropolitan savants had done (1830:106).


39 Blumenbach to Banks, 1 November 1793, in Banks [1770-1820]: 8098/116-17, original emphasis.

40 Blumenbach 1795:302-22, original emphasis; 1803, I:73, 78, note.

41 See Douglas 2001; 2003:9-11, 23, note 82.

42 Bougainville 1771:16-17, 214, 269.

43 In Dalrymple’s translation of Quiros’s ‘Eighth Memorial’ of 1610 (1770-1, I:164), specifically cited by Blumenbach [1795:321], ‘the people of these countries are many; their colours white, negroes [loros, “dark brown”], mulattoes, Indians, and mixed of one and the other. The hair of some is black [negros], long, and lank, the others curled and woolly, and of others very red and fine’. Cf. Quiros 1973:38-9.


45 Blumenbach 1795:70, original emphasis.

46 Mentelle and Malte-Brun 1804:378, 474, 577, original emphasis; see below and Introduction (Douglas), this volume.


48 [La Pérouse] 1797, I:165-7, 253. Buffon’s *Histoire naturelle* (1749-67) is cited first in the (non-alphabetical) list of works on natural history carried on the expedition and is specifically recommended to the savants by the Académie as the best source of a necessary ‘common method’ for zoological and anatomical description.

49 Blumenbach to Banks, 9 October 1787, 8 May 1793, 8 January 1794, 20 December 1798, in Banks [1770-1820]: 8096/385, 8098/8-9, 213-14, 434-5.

50 Blumenbach 1775:68; 1795:108, 211-23. However, he acknowledged the possibility that ‘peculiar forms of the skull’, initially forged by ‘artifice’, might over time become ‘hereditary’, ‘innate’, and eventually a ‘second nature’ (1795:221).

51 Blumenbach 1795:xxii-xxvi; Banks to Blumenbach, [June 1787] [draft]; Blumenbach to Banks, 20 June 1787, 12 November 1789, 9 June 1790, 9 January 1791, 8 May 1792, 6 April, 1 November 1793, 8 January, 10 March 1794, 12 June 1799, 2 January 1800, in Banks [1770-1820]: 8096/383-4, 8097/134-5, 261-2, 362-3; 8098/8-9, 114, 116-17, 213-14, 216-17; 8099/12-14, original emphasis.

52 Cuvier 1800-5, II:13; 1817a, I:54-5; 1978:174-5.
54 Bonnemains, Forsyth, and Smith 1988; Lesueur and Petit [1807], 1824; [Péron] n.d.: no. 5. The Collection Lesueur of the Muséum d'Histoire naturelle in Le Havre, France, holds nearly two hundred original sketches, drawings, watercolours, and engravings of indigenous people encountered on the voyage, the vast majority in Van Diemen's Land and New Holland.
55 Péron and Freycinet 1807-16, I:237-8, 448.
56 Bonnemains, Forsyth, and Smith 1988; Lesueur and Petit [1807], 1824; [Péron] n.d.: no. 5. The Collection Lesueur of the Muséum d'Histoire naturelle in Le Havre, France, holds nearly two hundred original sketches, drawings, watercolours, and engravings of indigenous people encountered on the voyage, the vast majority in Van Diemen's Land and New Holland.
58 Péron and Freycinet 1807-16, I:163-4, note a, my emphasis.
59 Stocking 1968:34; Virey 1800; White 1799.
60 Péron and Freycinet 1807-16, II:164, 182.
61 Arago et al. 1821; Cuvier 1825, 1830; Cuvier et al. 1806.
62 Deleuze 1816:449; Lesson 1829:154, note 1; Péron and Freycinet 1807-16, II:164, note a.
63 An English translation of the first volume of Péron's narrative was published in 1809.
65 Cuvier to Quoy, 11 April 1829, in Quoy [1820-70]: MS 2510, Dossier Cuvier; Quoy to Julien Desjardins, 25 December 1836, in Hamy 1906:457-8.
66 Banks 1962, I, 370-3; II:240-1; Forster 1778:276-84; Forster 1786:66; Marsden 1782; Rensch 2000:62-72.
67 Forster 1778:238, 280-1; Forster 1855:178.
70 Malte-Brun 1803:547-8; Montelle and Malte-Brun 1804:361-3, 377-8, 463, 474, 577, original emphasis; see also Introduction (Douglas), this volume.
71 Malte-Brun 1810a:2; 1810c:557-8; 1813:226-9, 244-54.
72 Cuvier 1825:177-82; Hamy 1906:457; Ollivier 1988:45-50; Quoy and Gaimard 1824a:[ii]; Staum 2003:105-17.
73 The Uranie visited New Holland, Timor, Waigeo, the Marianas, the Carolines, and Hawai'i.
74 See Chapter Three (Ballard), this volume.
Quoy and Gaimard 1824c:3-6.

[Quoy and] Gaimard 1823:121-6. The later versions of the paper (1824c:7; 1826:33) refer to Gall as 'this celebrated physiologist' but in 1823 he is 'this ideologue doctor' — perhaps an editorial embellishment. Cuvier was a bitter critic of Gall's 'materialist' conception of the mind-brain relationship and dismissed phrenology as a 'pseudo-science' (Gall and Spurzheim 1809; Rudwick 1997:87).

This clause appears only in the final version of the text (1826:38).

'Papuan skulls' (Quoy and Gaimard 1824b: plate 2).

The Coquille visited Tahiti, Borabora, New Ireland, Waigeo, the Moluccas, Port Jackson, New Zealand, the Carolines, west New Guinea, and Java.

Garnot 1826-30:511-15, 518-20. This work was published in Lesson and Garnot's two-volume Zoologie of the voyage of the Coquille (1826-30) and subsequently expanded into an entry on 'Man' in the Dictionnaire pittoresque d'histoire naturelle (1836).

Lesson was a prolific, if repetitive publisher, prompting Quoy (1864-8:140), his senior naval medical officer and sometime patron, to lament his 'too great facility for writing'. Lesson's racial classification cobbled together several mémoires that had been read as scientific papers to the Société d'Histoire naturelle in Paris during 1825 and 1826 under his and Garnot's names. The composite paper was first published in Lesson and Garnot's Zoologie (1826-30, I:31-116) but Lesson claimed sole authorship of all but the final section and republished it as an appendix to his Voyage médical (1829) — the version cited here.

Lesson 1829:157, 164, 168, 203-4, 214, 219. In a footnote (1829:220, note 1), Lesson insisted that his use of the term 'negro' was purely descriptive, referred only to skin colour, and implied no 'analogy' between black Africans and Oceanians (unlike Garnot's usage).

Lesson 1823–4, II: 275, 310, 313.

'Douguainville Bouca Island' (Le Jeune [1822-5]: folio 74).

'New Ireland' (Le Jeune [1822-5]: folio 20).

Lesson 1823–4, II: 310, my emphasis.

Dumont d'Urville borrowed the term Mélanién from the French soldier-biologist Jean-Baptiste-Geneviève-Marcellin Bory de Saint-Vincent (1778-1846) who applied it to the fourteenth and 'penultimate' species in his polygenist classification of the human genus (1827, I:82; II, 104-13).

The Zoologie of the voyage of the Astrolabe in 1826-29 comprises four large volumes and a superb Atlas of 198 engraved plates (Quoy and Gaimard 1833). The expedition visited New Holland, New Zealand, Tongatapu, Fiji, New Ireland, northern New Guinea, the Moluccas, Van Diemen's Land, Vanikoro, Guam, and the Malay Archipelago.

Quoy and Gaimard 1830:16-17, 50-3, original emphasis; see also Cuvier 1817a, I:18-19.

Quoy and Gaimard 1830:18-46.


Quoy and Gaimard 1830:46-9.

Quoy and Gaimard 1830:29, 40; see below.

The published paper, 'On the Islands of the Great Ocean', is dated 'Paris, 27 December 1831' but was read to the Société de Géographie on 5 January 1832 and appeared in the 1832 volume of its Bulletin.

Dumont d'Urville 1832:2-6, 11-15, 18-19.

See Chapter One (Douglas), this volume.


Dumont d'Urville 1830-3, II:628, note 1; 1832:19; 1834-5, II:320.

Quoy and Gaimard 1824c:2; 1830:29-30; Quoy n.d.a: passim; n.d.b:3; my emphasis; see above.

See Chapter One (Douglas), this volume.
Dumoutier published little about the voyage but repatriated a remarkable phrenological collection, still extant, of 51 moulages, plaster busts, and 51 skulls ([1838-40]) and oversaw their reproduction as lithographed photographs in the *Atlas anthropologique* of the official voyage publication ([Dumoutier] 1846). Hombron and Jacquinot, the ships' surgeons, co-authored the 5-volume *Zoologie* of the voyage publication ([Dumoutier] 1846-54) but each independently wrote one of the first two volumes (Hombron 1846; Jacquinot 1846). The title page of the *Anthropologie* volume attributes overall responsibility to Dumoutier but the zoologist and entomologist Blanchard — not a member of the expedition — is acknowledged as the author of the text (Blanchard 1854).

'Man is the same everywhere' proclaimed Gall, the originator of phrenology (Gall and Spurzheim 1810-19, I:xxxv).


'Ma-Pou-Ma-Hanga. Female native of the island of Manga-Réva, Gambier Archipelago' ([Dumoutier] 1846: pl. 2). I had hoped for this and the next figure to reproduce photographs of Dumoutier's original moulages that the Laboratoire d'anthropologie biologique at the Musée de l'Homme in Paris kindly allowed me to take in 2004. However, since my repeated requests for permission to reproduce these images have gone unanswered, I have had recourse instead to the lithographs of the moulages published in the *Atlas anthropologique*.

'Guenney. Native of Port-Sorelle, (Devon County), north coast of Van Diemen's Land' ([Dumoutier] 1846: pl. 22).

Subsequent editions are titled *Researches into the Physical History of Mankind* (1826, 1836-47).

Prichard 1836-47, V:4-5, 212-85. Prichard's neologism 'Kelænonesia' was a correlate of 'Polynesia' and was, he claimed, etymologically 'more correct' and 'more distinct' than the French alternative *Mélanésie*.


Prichard 1836-47, V:4-5, 212-85.

Forster 1778:284, 358-9, my emphasis; Dumont d'Urville 1832:19-20.

E.g., [Greatheed] 1799:lxxxv-lxxxvii; Ellis 1831, I:78; Williams 1837:512-13. See Chapters Six (Gardner) and Seven (Weir), this volume.

Anderson 2002:181-243; Brantlinger 2003:117-63; McGregor 1997:19-59; Rivers 1922. See also Chapters One (Douglas) and Four (Turnbull), this volume.