

Chapter 1

Oceanic Encounters: A Prelude

Margaret Jolly and Serge Tcherkézoff

This volume explores encounters, those encounters between indigenous peoples of the Pacific and foreigners during that *longue durée* of exploration, colonisation and settlement, from the sixteenth century to the twentieth century. By highlighting the idea of encounter we hope to stress the mutuality inherent in such meetings of bodies, and of minds. This is not to say that such encounters were moments of easy understanding or pacific exchanges. As many of the chapters in this volume attest, such encounters, from Quirós' sojourn in Espiritu Santo in 1606 (see Jolly 2007) to Australian patrols in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea from the late 1920s, were often occasions of tumultuous misunderstanding and extreme violence. But, even in the midst of massacre and revenge, there was a meeting of meanings, of bodies and minds, whereby pre-existing understandings, preconceptions from both sides of the encounter, were engaged, brought into confrontation and dialogue, mutual influence and ultimately mutual transformation. We thus prefer the notion of "encounter" to the more common sobriquet – "first contact" – for several reasons (see Connolly and Anderson 1987; Schieffelin and Crittenden 1991; and compare Ballard 2003 [1992]).

Prior Indigenous Encounters: Language, Culture and Power

Firstly, the idea of "first contact" privileges the meeting of Pacific peoples and Europeans, by perceiving these as unprecedented, as "first." This risks occluding all previous cross-cultural encounters between Pacific peoples such as those between Papuan- and Austronesian-speaking peoples or between Fijians and Tongans. As Tryon (this volume) stresses, the past and present patterning of Pacific languages suggests a long history of intensive contact in trade and exchange between Pacific peoples and through the complex processes of indigenous migration and settlement. Such enduring contacts over many millennia brought Pacific peoples speaking very different languages into conversation.

Especially notable here was the contact between the speakers of Papuan and Austronesian languages. As Tryon (this volume) observes, Papuan languages are thought to be ancient: archaeological evidence of Papuan-speaking peoples is dated to 50,000 BP in the interior of Papua New Guinea (PNG); 30,000 in New

Ireland; and 20,000 in Bougainville. Austronesian-speaking peoples by contrast migrated from Taiwan or southern China only about 6,000 years ago, were in New Britain and New Ireland about 4,000 years ago and subsequently dispersed across the islands of Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia (see Spriggs 1997). Although clearly two distinct language families, Tryon stresses the pivotal importance of encounters between the people speaking these separate languages, and in that process their mutual influence and transformation, in both vocabulary and grammar. He cites a good instance of this from the Santa Cruz archipelago of the Solomon Islands, where three Papuan and eight Austronesian languages still coexist and where language contact has induced some striking symbioses in grammar. So, the languages Nendö and Äiwoo retained a typically Papuan verb morphology but adopted the four possessive noun classes which characterise Austronesian languages in Island Melanesia. Similar patterns are clear in the way in which Polynesian Outlier languages in the Solomons and Vanuatu have mutually influenced proximate Melanesian languages.

Such examples of indigenous linguistic encounters raise a key conceptual theme for all cross-cultural encounters: they can generate not just superficial exchanges of meanings, manifest in loan words, but deep transformations in the grammar of understanding the world. So, Tryon (this volume) adjudges that it is hard to confidently classify Äiwoo and Nendö as either Papuan or Austronesian. Thus, the mutual influence and imbrication born of encounter can be so profound that it is impossible to disentangle the pre-existing elements as indubitably one or the other. This linguistic process mirrors broader processes of cross-cultural encounter and exchange, described through concepts such as creolisation, syncretism and hybridisation.

In the process of such indigenous linguistic and cultural encounters, as in later colonial encounters, power was crucial. This is graphically illustrated in another example alluded to by Tryon: the encounter between Fijians and Tongans in the course of trade, cultural exchange and colonisation. Geraghty (1983) has discerned a simplified register of Fijian, “foreigner-talk” used to trade with Tongan neighbours to the east. These trade contacts combined with increasing cultural exchange and patterns of marital alliance. But these Tongan traders/neighbours were also colonists. Tongan chiefs, like Ma`afu, extended the range of their influence to the eastern islands of the Fiji group (Spurway 2001) and, in the process, transformed the indigenous chiefly hierarchy, being later recognised by the British as having legitimate sovereignty in this region.

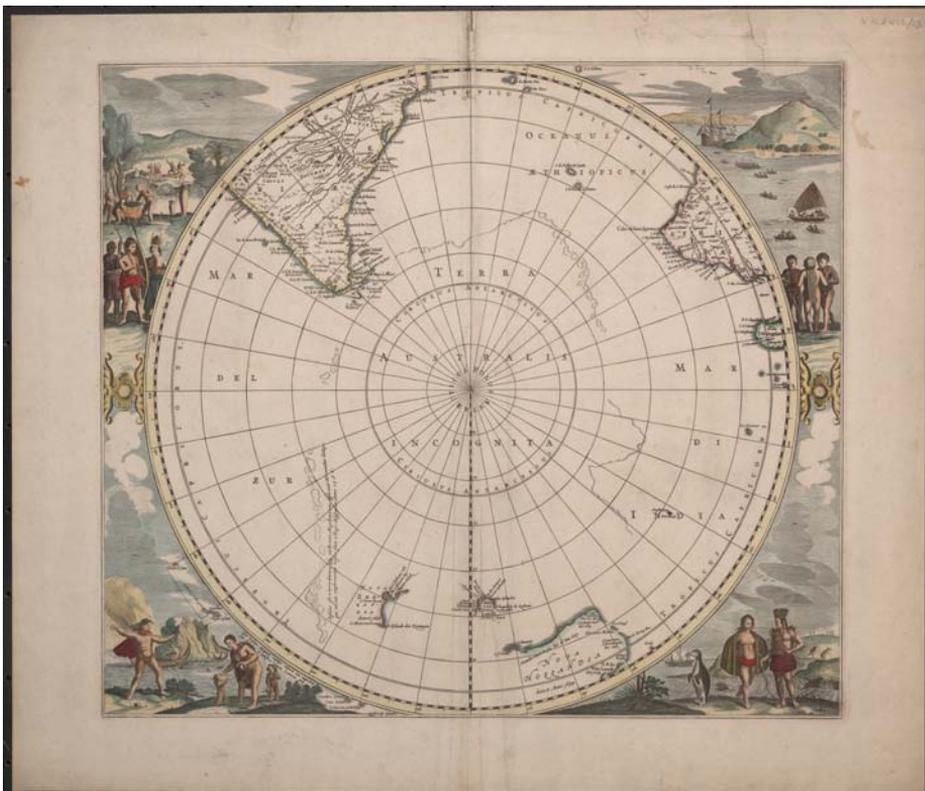
Such earlier encounters between the indigenous peoples of the Pacific in the context of trade, exchange and settlement were perhaps formative in how later strangers or foreigners were perceived and dealt with, although there is much debate as to whether Europeans were perceived as living humans, divine beings, demonic ancestral spirits or simultaneously all three (see Ballard 2003 [1992];

Borofsky 2000; Connolly and Anderson 1987; Jolly 1992a; Sahlins 1985, 1995; Salmund 1991, 1998, 2003; Schieffelin and Crittenden 1991; Tcherkézoff 2004a; 2004b). We consider this debate below.

Before the Brush of Bodies – European Visions

This leads into the second problem we highlight in the concept of “first contact,” namely that, by focusing on physical contact as the critical originary moment, we can forget all those imaginative and mediated encounters which preceded the brush of bodies. There has been much written on “European vision” apropos the way in which the Pacific was imagined prior to and during the first European voyages of exploration. As Douaire-Marsaudon (this volume) expresses it: the islands of the South Seas were “invented” before they were “discovered”¹ by Europeans. Cartographies of the fifteenth and sixteenth century not only envision a great south land, the perduring Terra Australis of European imagination, but a variety of monstrous forms, hybrids of people and beasts (see Hodgen 1964; Smith 1992; Spate 1979).

Figure 1.1. Map of “Terra Australis Incognita (Polus Antarcticus).” Amsterdam: De Wit, 1666.



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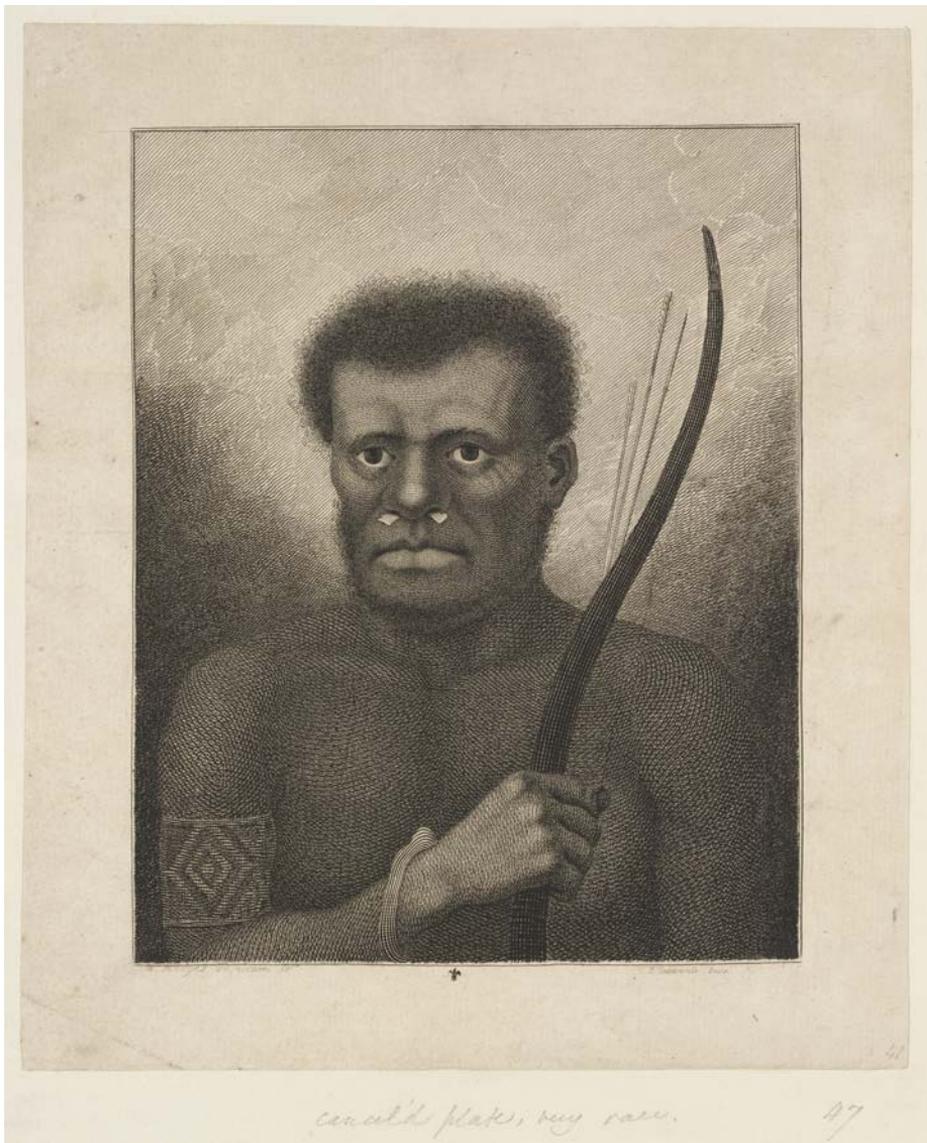
The Dutch and Hispanic voyagers who traversed the Pacific Ocean during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had to confront and reconcile the distance between their imaginary cartographies and the actual island archipelagoes they encountered, as was evidenced by the continuing debates which raged about the size, location and indeed the very existence of the great south land. It has been argued, particularly for the Hispanic voyages of this period, that the simultaneous fervour about finding gold and saving souls so saturates the records, that it imparts to them a rather hallucinatory, dream-like quality (Greenblatt 1991; Spate 1979). Still, as Margaret Jolly (this volume) suggests, this Anglophonic reading of the Hispanic period is questionable (see also Luque and Mondragón 2005). For instance, in the texts and maps of Quirós' voyage in 1606, rather than an exoticist distantiation, we can perceive precipitate attempts at incorporation of these new lands and peoples. The very naming of the island of Terra Australia del Espiritu Santo (in the archipelago now called Vanuatu), suggests its rapid absorption into a Christian imaginary, an absorption amplified by the naming of the European settlement La Nueva Hierusalem (New Jerusalem) and the contiguous river Jordan (see figure 3.3). A similar process of peremptory incorporation pertains to relations with indigenous peoples: they are perceived not so much as distant others but as lost souls who must be saved by the hybrid rituals of salvation and conquest.

Fictional narratives such as *Robinson Crusoe* (Defoe 1859 [1719]) drew on such knowledges of "real" voyages, to plot novel encounters with Pacific places and peoples, and powerfully moulded Western preconceptions (see Lamb 2001). So Daniel Defoe was inspired by the voyage narratives of William Dampier (1667 [1709]) and the story of Alexander Selkirk, the marooned sailor (1712). As Chris Ballard (this volume) argues, travel narratives, such as *Robinson Crusoe*, with its compelling conjunction of shipwreck realism and redemptive allegory, were immensely influential, spawning future generations of creative fictions (witnessed in the genre of *Robinsonades*) and often proving more popular with readers than the narratives of real voyages. Moreover, later narrators of real voyages were in turn influenced by these travel fictions; their narrative conventions and rhetorical devices converged, even as the real world travellers were insisting that their works were not fictions, but rather derived from the painful and arduous processes of "being there" and their careful, disciplined acts of exploration and observation (see, for instance, Johann Reinhold Forster's critiques of metropolitan theorists in his *Observations* (1996 [1778])).

So, from the late eighteenth century, fantastic visions of the medieval and Renaissance epochs were slowly changing in response to the secular sciences of the Enlightenment with their stress on observation, and on the centrality of embodied experience in uncovering the truth of “the other.” Such narratives value the I/eye witness and through their use of the genre of the diary or journal, and detailed description of places, peoples and things, stress their critical distance from the “closet speculations” of metropolitan savants. So, in her consideration of Watkin Tench’s famous narrative of the settlement at Port Jackson in 1788 (now Sydney), Merle demonstrates how Tench (1789) creates “reality effects” by writing an “as if” journal and by melding depictions of events to which he was an eyewitness, with those to which he was not (see Merle, this volume). Although these are distinguished between an “I” and a “we” in the voice of the author, they alike stress the central value of embodied experience and witness in what Denning (1998) has called “the season of observing.”

These values were also central to the changing genres of visual representation, in landscapes, views and portraiture, in which, as Bernard Smith (1985 [1960], 1992; Joppien and Smith 1985, 1988) suggests, neoclassical modes were increasingly challenged by the values of naturalism, realism and ethnographic fidelity (see also Douglas, this volume). So, in the representation of Oceanic peoples, there were passionate debates as to whether portraits were faithful. The case of the *Man of the Island of Mallicollo* is one famous example (see Joppien and Smith 1985, ii: 87–92; Jolly 1992a). The original, “drawn from nature” by William Hodges, presents a man with a bare torso with an arm band and a bracelet holding a bow and arrow (see figure 1.2). In several textual accounts from Cook’s second voyage we are told that Malakulan men wear a large pandanus sheath covering their penes (*nambas* in Bislama), the ends of which are tucked up in a bark belt. Rev Canon Douglas’ sanitised edition of Cook’s journal of the second voyage alludes to this rather as a “wrapper.” Perhaps simultaneously responding to this textual euphemism and to the prevailing neoclassical modes of representing the tapa robes of Polynesian peoples as togas, the final version of the engraving by Caldwell depicts the man wearing another kind of “wrapper”: a *tapa toga* enveloping his robust chest (see figure 1.3). Both Forsters, Johann and Georg (the father and son naturalists on Cook’s second voyage), fiercely criticised such lack of fidelity in this portrait and many other portraits and landscapes (but see Jolly 1992a, 347–8).

Figure 1.2. Man of the Island of Mallicollo, William Hodges, first version.



From *Three voyages round the world, being a complete set of plates of the three voyages ...* Engraved by Francesco Bartolozzi. Reproduced with permission of the Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW [PXD 59/1].

Figure 1.3. Man of the Island of Mallicollo, final version, engraving by J. Caldwell after William Hodges.



From *Three voyages round the world, being a complete set of plates of the three voyages ...* Reproduced with permission of the Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW [PXD 59/1].

And so the question becomes whether, from the late eighteenth century, influenced by the values of an empirical science, European visions were more open to transformation through Oceanic experience than they were in previous periods. Following the early lead of Smith (1985 [1960]), Douglas stresses the “mobile dialectic of discourse and experiences” in her reading of the voyages of d’Entrecasteaux (1791–94) and suggests that it was not so much prejudicial preconception as the contingent experiences of encounter which shaped the diverse but differential assessments of the peoples of the Admiralty Islands, Van Diemen’s Land, Tonga and New Caledonia on that voyage. Rather than a racial plot which anticipated a clear path to Dumont d’Urville’s invidious contrast between Melanesians and Polynesians (1832, 3, 19), she stresses the volatility and fluidity of the notions of “variety” or “nation” (see Jolly 1992a on the Forsters; and Douglas 2003, 2005, 2006). Moreover, she argues that voyage narratives and images often linked a pacific reception by indigenous peoples with good character and good looks, and a hostile, intransigent reception with wickedness and unappealing appearance. So, in some accounts of this voyage, a contrast emerges between the good and simple Tasmanians, and the cunning and treacherous Tongans, which owes more to the contingencies of encounter than any proto-evolutionary presumption about a hierarchy of “races” or “nations.” While acknowledging the ethnocentrism of Enlightenment representations, Douglas contends that references to skin colour, hair and physiognomy are circumstantial and shifty, compared to the “complacent, racially-based assumption of European superiority evident in the nineteenth-century equation” (this volume). This, then, poses the question as to whether rigid racial discourse and prejudicial presumption prevailed over the experiences of actual encounters in later epochs of settlement and thoroughgoing colonisation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (see Stepan 1982; Douglas 1999a, 2005, 2006, 2008, and this volume). Perhaps, as with Anglophonic assessments of earlier Hispanic voyages, we should be wary of ever imputing a closed discourse, which is impervious to experience.

Metropolitan imaginaries and Oceanic experiences were surely always in dialectical relations of mutual influence, and the borders of European fictional fantasies and factual accounts were permeable. So, Chris Ballard (this volume) attests to how late nineteenth-century imaginary explorations of the interior of New Guinea preceded physical exploration. The fictional accounts of Lawson (1875) and Trégance (1892 [1876]) transposed the tropes of colonial travel narratives in Africa to this new locale: imagining fabulous mountains, extensive lakes and exotic communities in hidden valleys, enriched by veins of gold. So, Trégance evokes an “ecological potpourri” of American, Asian and African fauna: tigers, elks, antelopes, buffalo, bison, striped ponies and eagles flying amongst New Guinea’s real “birds of paradise.” The interior peoples he encounters, the “Orangwöks” are shorter, fairer and more civilised than the

more boisterous and blacker Papuans of the coast. Their golden armour protects an inner kingdom with rich but badly managed goldmines. Trégance as hero combines mining acumen and Christian zeal, but also embodies what Ballard (this volume) sees as the preferred protagonist of the period: the explorer-scientist.

Ballard contrasts the naïve form of verisimilitude in Trégance (illustrated in Trégance's map, see figure 8.1) with the fully blown claims to veracity in Lawson's account. In *Wanderings in the Interior of New Guinea* (1875) he finds "parodic" precision, a sustained satire of the conventions of verisimilitude found in the textual narratives and maps of real explorers. His ascent of Mount Hercules, his traversing of savannah plains, his crossing of Lake Alexandrina, his sporadic but violent contacts with Papuans, are all evoked in the cool, remote language of the scientist. Unlike Wallace's Papuans, his Papuans are described as squat and "yellowish," with monkeyish manners and polygamous marriage preferences. They trade with Malay and Chinese and speak a language of Asian origin but, although still respectful of the elderly, have been corrupted and oppressed by the Dutch.

These late nineteenth-century fictions with their exoticist spatial and racial plots proved popular but were vituperated by contemporary reviewers as fraudulent exploitations and subversions of the hard work of serious explorers. So, Captain Moresby, recently returned from his own surveying on the southeast coast of New Guinea in 1875, wrote a long letter to the *Athenæum*, where he "laboured, point by point and page by page, through the least plausible of Lawson's claims" (Ballard, this volume). But, Ballard adjudges, Moresby plummeted into Lawson's trap. Lawson's narrative in its minute detail, restraint and bluff, plain prose mimics the rhetoric and the assumed authority of real travellers, and satirises their pretensions and, indeed, all the gentlemen of the learned societies. And, as in earlier epochs of exploration, such persuasive fictions mould the narratives of the real world travellers, they "play off and plagiarise each other" (Ballard, this volume). As both Ballard and Mosko (this volume) attest, the stories of "real travellers," like the naturalist d'Albertis, Captain Moresby and the Assistant Resident Magistrate Monckton, were indebted to this earlier generation of imaginary explorers. Thus, we may conclude with Ballard that "a diffuse but all-pervasive colonial imaginary draws its strength from the permeability of the boundaries between fictional and factual writing" (Ballard, this volume).

Oceanic Visions

But, there were not just "European visions" and colonial imaginaries but "Oceanic visions" and indigenous imaginaries brought to such early encounters. And we can surely discern similar dialectical processes in the relations of cosmological preconception and the unfolding events of successive encounters from the

perspective of Pacific peoples. So Marshall Sahlins (1981, 1982, 1985, 1989, 1995) has argued, in a series of influential, magisterial works, that we have to consider voyage narratives not as fabulations or imperialist imaginaries, but offering “truths” about the actual events of encounters, and affording insights not just about how foreigners saw and related to Oceanic peoples, but about how Oceanic peoples saw and related to strangers. Contemporaneous voyage narratives can moreover be juxtaposed with indigenous oral traditions (as transmuted into texts by later indigenous authors, missionaries or anthropologists). So, on the basis of Hawaiian oral traditions and nineteenth-century Hawaiian texts as much as the European archive, Sahlins consistently and ever more trenchantly insisted that Cook was seen by Hawaiians as a manifestation of the god Lono. This interpretation has, of course, been hotly disputed by Obeyesekere and others (Obeyesekere 1992; Bergendorff et al. 1988; and see Borofsky 1997 for a review of the debate).

But, as Tcherkézoff (2004b, ch. 9) has demonstrated, that protracted debate has been predicated on mistranslations and misconceptions. The division between humans and gods, fundamental to Judeo-Christian religion is, he argues, inappropriate to the holistic ontology of ancestral Polynesian cosmology. Obeyesekere (1992) had taken Sahlins too literally, as if Hawaiians had equated Cook the man with the god Lono, whereas what Sahlins had rather attempted to show was how Cook had been incorporated as but one manifestation of the divine principle of Lono, a partial and visible manifestation, alongside many other evanescent material embodiments which Hawaiians already deployed in the annual rituals of the Makahiki (Tcherkézoff 2004b, 124–8, 134–9).

The consequences of so incorporating strangers into indigenous cosmologies had real world effects. At its most obvious, the Hawaiian perception that Cook was an embodiment of Lono, and his return at an inauspicious moment in their annual ritual cycle, led ultimately to his death. But, Sahlins has argued for a more generalised model of how foreign powers were mediated and incorporated, and became crucial to indigenous transformations of the socio-political configurations of the “people of the place.” So, he earlier suggested (Sahlins 1985) that congress between European men and Hawaiian women, at the table rather than in bed, was crucial to the disruption of *kapu*, and especially those *kapu* that forbade certain foods to women and enshrined the commensal segregation of men and women. Successive waves of Christian conversion across the Pacific have been seen by Sahlins and many others as the appropriation and indigenisation of sacred powers which first came from “beyond the horizon” (see Jolly 2005a; cf. Robbins 2004).

But can we transpose Sahlins’ arguments about Hawai`i and Fiji to other parts of the Pacific? Were foreigners always seen as embodiments of divine or dangerous forces, if not deified like Lono, then perceived as more modest

“ancestral spirits,” “ghosts” or “goblins,” which is how the Maori first perceived the Dutch, according to Salmond (1991, 87–8). We hope to suggest the risks of undue extrapolation from experiences in Hawai`i or New Zealand to other Oceanic sites, such as Samoa (Tcherkézoff, this volume), Papua New Guinea (Bonnemère and Lemonnier, and Mosko, this volume) and Vanuatu. So, Jolly (this volume) queries Salmond’s confident claim that the people of the archipelago Cook called the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu) so certainly identified Cook and his men as “the ghosts of their forebears and approached them with caution, for such spirits could be malevolent” (Salmond 2003, 265). She suggests that the linguistic and ethnographic evidence is far more uncertain than Salmond allows, and that the word *tomarr* she translates as “ancestor” or “ghost” might equally be the word for peace.

Double Visions and Alternative Senses

Can we, then, combine a European vision with an Oceanic vision to generate the sharpness, stereoscopy, depth of perspective and three-dimensionality appropriate to looking with both eyes, from both sides? Or will this “double vision” generate the other meaning of that term: a visual disturbance, a blurring of view with the haunting spectre of one eye’s vision hanging in a visual field remote from the other? There has been a tremendous stress on vision in cross-cultural encounters in the Pacific from the earliest works of Bernard Smith (1985 [1960]) to those writings of postcolonial theorists preoccupied with the gaze, and others who privilege the visual arts in the histories of such encounters. There is no doubt that vision is a crucial sensibility and that visual materials from both sides of encounters need to be considered alongside words both written and spoken. But, as has been often alleged, vision, the privileged Western sense, is intimately linked to power and control, most notably in those analyses of colonial power, inspired by Foucault, that see the power of the panopticon of Western asylums transplanted into the architectonics of colonial space (Mitchell 1988) and textual and visual encyclopedia of races or castes (see Pinney 1992). Those who have critiqued the more facile uses of theories of the colonial gaze (e.g. Kelly 1997) have often queried an undue or anachronistic association between looking and power, or have insisted on the process of “looking back” or returning the gaze (see Jolly and Manderson 1997, 1–26; Jolly 1997b).

And there may be a larger cross-cultural problem here. The European stress on the visible and the controllable is dramatically at odds with dominant Oceanic philosophies which perceive the visible as but one manifestation, materialisation or embodiment of invisible and ultimately uncontrollable forces (see Thomas 1995 on this, in the context of Oceanic art). So, Tcherkézoff (2004b) argues in his review of the debate between Sahlins and Obeyesekere apropos ancient Hawaiians’ perceptions of Cook that there has been a constant mis-recognition even by anthropologists and linguists of the way in which human beings and

material images (*ata*) of gods (*atua*), although in a sense themselves *atua*, “remain partial and temporary manifestations of the *atua-as-a-principle*” (2004a, 6). Thus, despite the Polynesian celebration of the world of light and form over the realm of darkness and chaos, the truth of the visible can be eclipsed by powerful invisible forces, divine creative and destructive principles. But for Europeans, from the eighteenth century onward, the visible was increasingly becoming linked to the power of the real.

Given this problem of divergent philosophies and values of vision, might we explore other senses in the process of encounter? The trope of “first contact” highlights touch, the brush of bodies. John Kelly (1997) in his analysis of the sexualised violence which Indo-Fijian women experienced at the hands of Europeans and Australians stressed the importance of “grasping” rather than gazing. And more recently, in relation to the global connections of the present, Anna Tsing (2005) has used the metaphor of friction to convey the “grip” of cross-cultural encounters, presumably more mutual and less violent than a “grasp” and suggestive of both attraction and repulsion, of connection and of difference.

The brush of bodies, violent and sensual, is a crucial dimension of most of the encounters we explore. And, as well as looking and touching, there are those other senses which move between and beyond bodies: the oral/aural, the kinesthetic and the senses of taste and smell, often diminished in Western sensoria. The oral/aural perhaps moves encounters away from the distance implicit in “looking” – and especially “gazing” – to listening and speaking, to the processes of faltering translation in understanding speech, music and song.

The narratives of early Enlightenment voyages evince a keen interest in trying to learn the languages of Pacific peoples. Early attempts at recording, classification and analysis, such as that by Johann Reinhold Forster in his *Observations*, laid the foundations of Oceanic linguistics (see Forster 1996 [1778]). On such voyages Tahitian guides such as Tupaia, crucial as navigators and translators in the Polynesian islands where languages were fewer and closely cognate, became far less help in understanding the diverse languages of archipelagoes like Vanuatu or New Caledonia and, of course, Australia (see Denning 2004, 171–5; Salmond 2003, 116–34, 141–5, 153–8; Thomas 1997a, 1ff.). Still, Europeans early attempted to record word lists, such as the word “*Tanna*”, which they wrongly interpreted to be the specific name of this island, rather than the generic name for ground or earth (see Lindstrom 2009).² This island is still known by this word today. Often superficial translations of indigenous words and concepts generated confusion and conflict. So, early in the passage of European voyagers in the Polynesian part of the Pacific, they encountered a variant of the word *taio*. This was interpreted into English as “friend,” but entailed much more than the European understanding of that word, since it

implied a ritual closeness of identity marked by exchanging names and by free use of the others' possessions (Salmond 2003, 193–4, 198–9). So, Europeans were shocked on occasion when their *taio* took their iron tools or their cloth, thinking them no longer friends, but duplicitous, treacherous thieves.

Europeans also speculated as to the meanings of words constantly uttered in their presence and thus about indigenous perceptions of themselves (see Jolly, this volume, on *tomarr*). A common trope in the celebration of mutual understanding was the sharing of song: as in the performance of indigenous chants alongside German lieder during Cook's second voyage on Tanna, or in alternate performances of dance. Although the figure of "dancing with strangers" has been deployed by Inga Clendinnen (2003) as an icon for cross-cultural exploration in Australia, in the Pacific, dance was more often witnessed than imitated by strangers from Europe. And, as Tcherkézoff (2004a, pt 3; 2004b, ch. 10) has shown, the canonical Polynesian dances like the *hula* of Hawai'i or the *heiva* of Tahiti were wrongly perceived as lascivious or lewd. Rather, such displays of nakedness signalled respect for the strangers, catalysing and even celebrating divine unions with them to secure sacred and potent progeny.

Perhaps least explored of all have been the senses of taste and smell, which suggest the permeability of the body and, thus, the risk of cultural mixing or contagion. Europeans had, from the start, adjudged Polynesian fragrances and body oils attractive, while the same navigators had, for instance, expressed a strong disgust when they made contact with the "Patagons" (Bougainville, quoted in Tcherkézoff 2004a, ch. 7). Still, not all Polynesians were thought so alluring. So, in Georg Forster's account of meeting Maori on Cook's second voyage we find a lament about undue mixing, threatened by an unwanted "odoriferous present" of an unguent (possibly seal oil), conferred on the artist William Hodges (Forster 2000 [1777], 1: 98).³

The Passage of Time: Contingent Chronologies, Not Teleological Temporality

The third and final problem which we stress apropos this idea of "first contact" is the problem of temporality per se. What counts as *first*? The nature of subsequent encounters was no doubt influenced by those which came before. So, from the moment of Bougainville's "first contacts" in Tahiti, Europeans had certain preconceptions about that place, of tropical beauty and abundance and of sensuality and "sexual hospitality." It is clear that those voyagers who came later (like Cook on his second voyage) expected to find a place and a people similar to that depicted by Bougainville. But in this case the actual chronological sequence of "first contacts" proves less significant than the sequence of publications of narratives of encounters. Thus, although Wallis "discovered" Tahiti a year before Bougainville did, his narrative was published two years after Bougainville's text. What if the dominant or lasting impression for the

Tahitians was rather that generated in the first days of Wallis' sojourn, when relations were pervaded by violence and war? Indeed, it can be argued that Tahitian women were offered to Wallis and his crew precisely to placate them and to avoid further carnage (see Tcherkézoff 2004a). If Bougainville's men were presented with such sexual "offerings" in an apparently peaceful context it is certainly because Tahitian men had experienced Wallis' cannons shortly before. But Bougainville did not know this and genuinely thought that he had found a land of peace and love, a Garden of Eden that was to dominate European visions for many years (see Tcherkézoff 2004a). As Bougainville's narrative was published first, his vision set the tone for all subsequent ones and when Wallis' narrative appeared, the description of the violence at the start of his earlier visit became an aberrant anecdote, discordant with the depictions of love and peace in the second part, which echoed Bougainville.

Thus, any encounter, "first" or subsequent, moves through a dialogical process which combines preconception with interactive experience, which can confound prior expectations. As Bernard Smith (1985 [1960]) suggested long ago, his intellectual project was not primarily about the projection of European images, such as that of the "noble savage" onto Pacific peoples, but rather a process of showing how European visions changed as a result of experiences in the Pacific and Australia, how exploratory voyages proved crucial in the valorisation of a science of nature and an emergent evolutionism. And, as Tcherkézoff (2004b and this volume) argues, there can be a precipitate passage of phases, whereby the events or understandings of the first moment are confounded or betrayed in later moments, which, given the brevity of many encounters (such as La Pérouse's very brief sojourn in Samoa in December 1787), can induce a heady process of transformation in mutual perceptions. The process of encounter is then not a certain teleology determined by the logic of "first contact" but an emergent and contingent process, which unfolds through the transforming dialectic of action and interaction.

In many European accounts, such as the canonical texts of the Enlightenment period, we can distinguish between generalising typifications (which are often articulated at the moment of voyagers' leaving certain islands) and more dedicated depictions of events and interactions with local people. So, Tcherkézoff (this volume) has discerned a huge gap in the accounts of La Pérouse, between La Pérouse's authoritative summations that Samoan women were "mistresses of their own favours," freely offering sexual hospitality, and his graphic depiction in sentences immediately preceding (and in other accounts) of the forced defloration of young virgin girls in marriages with the strangers (cf. Jolly 1993, 1997a). Whether we see the latter genre of writing as more faithful to the truth of events of the encounter or more likely to yield "countersigns" of "indigenous agency" (see Douglas 2006 and this volume), there is no doubt that unfolding events were never predictable from preconception, on either side.

Thus, to continue with that *longue durée* in the history of sexual encounters in Polynesia, we can witness a transformation from such early attempts to make sacred marriages with strangers in pursuit of divine progeny to exchanges which came to resemble more closely the barter of sex for iron and cloth, the “prostitution” which Europeans wrongly perceived from the outset (see Ralston 1989; Jolly 1997a). By Tcherkézoff’s account (this volume), Samoans and Tahitians did not in the very first sexual exchanges presume a return, but, since Europeans soon offered nails, beads and cloth for the “favours” of young virgin girls, they soon came to expect presents in return for what were initially “sacrifices” enjoined on these girls by their elders. No doubt the increased potency and fertility which Polynesians hoped would be the sequelae to consorting with powerful foreign men was confounded by the dreadful evidence of “the venereal,” which not only brought sickness and death but which starkly reduced the reproductive capacity of women in islands across the Pacific: from Hawai`i and Tahiti to Fiji, Vanuatu, PNG and the Solomons (see Jolly 1997a; Stannard 1989; Bayliss-Smith 2005).

The Unsettled Ground of Knowing: Histories and Ethnographies

Some stories in this volume start with a consideration of those encounters between Pacific peoples that have been usually relegated to “pre-history” (but see Hau`ofa 1992; 2000 for a critique of this division between history and pre-history). We have already distilled some of Tryon’s insights about the deep time of indigenous encounters, as revealed by linguists from the patterns of past and present languages or by archaeologists from traces in the ground. The deep time revealed by archaeological research can sometimes complement but sometimes confound the profundity of genealogical history recounted in the oral traditions of most Oceanic peoples (see Kame`eleihiwa 1992; and Sahlins and Kirch 1992 for Hawai`i; on the interaction between archaeological and oral historical knowledge amongst both Huli of the PNG Highlands and ni-Vanuatu, especially apropos Roi Mata, see Ballard 1995, 2006).

Most stories in this volume go back to the early appearance of European voyagers in Pacific waters. Margaret Jolly returns to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, comparing Quirós’, Bougainville’s and Cook’s voyages in Vanuatu; Serge Tcherkézoff looks at some moments in the eighteenth century in the details of Bougainville and La Pérouse’s encounters in Tahiti and Samoa; Isabelle Merle reads Watkin Tench’s narrative of his stay at Port Jackson in 1788; Bronwen Douglas considers d’Entrecasteaux’s expedition of 1791–94, examining his calls in the Admiralty Islands (PNG), Tasmania, Tonga and New Caledonia; Françoise Douaire-Marsaudon deals with “uncertain times” in Tonga, between 1796 and 1826, a period which postdates early encounters but predates missionary influence.

A trio of chapters deals with more recent moments in the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, but, given the later arrival of Europeans, these are still early encounters for those regions. Chris Ballard considers the way in which fictional narratives by Trégance and Lawson preceded the physical exploration of PNG, by Moresby, d'Albertis and others from the 1870s. Mark Mosko takes up the story in southern PNG, where the Mekeo and Roro encountered and creatively responded to the violence of d'Albertis' and Monckton's exploratory surveys toward the end of the nineteenth century. Similarly, Pascale Bonnemère and Pierre Lemonnier juxtapose the stories of violent encounter as revealed in both oral histories and early patrol reports, between the 1920s and the 1970s, in Ankave-Anga territory, at the borders of the Eastern Highlands, Morobe and Gulf Provinces. As this period of time is much closer to the present, they were also able to record the memories of living witnesses who discovered for themselves the nature of Europeans.

Bonnemère and Lemonnier's contribution to this volume is based both on Australian government archives and remembered oral histories. It poignantly poses the question about the relation between different ways of knowing the past, and between the methods respectively privileged by history (reading the archive), and by anthropology (ethnography in the field). Are the chapters which follow only historical research, based on archives and with knowledge derived only from European texts? No, since most of the authors of this volume are also anthropologists, who derive their knowledge from ethnography as much as archives and who have spent many years living with the peoples they write about. Moreover, most authors claim that their ethnographic knowledge of contemporary Oceanic societies has enabled them to gain a better understanding of the situations alluded to in narratives generated by early European "discoverers."

The possibilities of combining archival evidence with indigenous oral history is, of course, greater when the local witnesses to events are still alive, or they remember stories as told by their parents or grandparents who were such witnesses (as in Bonnemère and Lemonnier's study of the violence of early encounters with the Ankave-Anga of the PNG Highlands). Still, even when events occurred in a past too distant for the oral testimonies of living witnesses, ethnographic and linguistic knowledge acquired more recently brings a different lens to those events, which helps to recuperate indigenous agency, even if we have to hazard speculations about past motivations and strategies. Thus, most authors aspire to a sort of "ethno-history," a history which moves dialogically between the archive and the field.

Reading "Against the Grain": Partial Truths?

Authors of this volume assume that there is a possibility to read past European narratives "against the grain" and to there discern glimpses of what the people

of the place thought when they first encountered newcomers, whom they called *haole*, *papalagi*, *papa`a*, *waet man* or *salsaliri*.⁴ If the potential of a dialogical use of later ethnography and early narratives is posited, it means that, in part, early European narratives can convey, at least sometimes, in some passages, even if in highly mediated form, indigenous insights.

This may seem a rather presumptuous or naïve assertion for two reasons. Firstly, how can we assume the possibility of interpreting what Oceanic people thought about the first Europeans and their strategies in relation to them when we are talking of the years 1606 or 1768, or even 1929? Is this not again succumbing to the Eurocentric view that exotic societies remain immobile, that their cultures are unchanging, frozen in eternal traditions (see Jolly 1992b) and that we can interpret events of the seventeenth, eighteenth or nineteenth centuries through cultural schemes elaborated from ethnographic research in the twentieth or twenty-first centuries?

The answer to this first objection is difficult and complex. Oceanic societies have doubtless always been dynamic, but the velocity of transformation and the rhythms of sociocultural change may differ by epoch and social domain (Tcherkézoff 2005). So, in the Samoan case, the study of the chiefly system suggests marked discontinuity, with major ruptures during the nineteenth century, when “chief” became gradually equivalent to “family head,” during the German colonial period and then during the New Zealand mandate and, again, when chiefly suffrage was abolished in the 1990s (Tcherkézoff 2000). In contrast, Tcherkézoff contends that the material and symbolic structures of the Samoan house have remained virtually unchanged since the first European descriptions (in 1787 by La Pérouse) and the first Western graphic representations (in 1838 by Dumont d’Urville) until the 1980s at least. Thus, Tcherkézoff (this volume) felt authorised to use some contemporary clues about the house, derived from his own ethnography from the 1980s, to reinterpret one aspect of the La Pérouse narratives of the first sexual encounters with the French, as they transpired inside a Samoan house in 1787.

Moreover, sometimes, the “later ethnography” which is used to interpret voyage texts comes not from professional anthropologists but from traders, settlers or missionaries, who were resident shortly after the brief sojourns of the first “discoverers.” So, in the case of Tahiti and Tonga, Morrison and Mariner were Europeans who were there for a long time, mastered the language and were integrated into local society, only a few decades after the early French or British voyagers. In the Tahitian case, the knowledge derived from Morrison’s stay in 1789–91 allowed Tcherkézoff to critically evaluate assertions made by Wallis, Bougainville and Cook on their brief sojourns in 1767–69 (Tcherkézoff 2004a).

A second reason which seems to preclude the possibility of gaining any knowledge from past European narratives is of course their ideological and

Eurocentric bias. No doubt, all of them were written in the service of an authority: the Spanish court who desired to find new lands filled with gold and unsaved souls (see Jolly, this volume); the French and British navigators, naturalists and naval officers, with their “enlightened” but proto-imperialist views (see Douglas, Jolly, Merle, and Tcherkézoff, this volume); and the more overtly colonial and racist agendas of the nineteenth-century fictions and expeditions in PNG (see Ballard, Mosko, Bonnemère and Lemonnier, this volume). Does this mean that these narratives are so biased that each sentence was determined by the Eurocentric agenda of the expedition? This is more or less what Gananath Obeyesekere has implied when, discussing the topic of “cannibalism in the South Seas,” he imputed (1998, 2003) that nothing factual could be sustained, since all such ethnographic information was derived from European narratives of voyagers, missionaries, administrators and, we might add, anthropologists.⁵

But, as some of the chapters of this volume demonstrate, all such narratives yield ethnographic insights, albeit episodically and even if such “descriptions” are insinuated as curiosities, as exotic interludes. Moreover, we can discriminate between genres of writing, between the official, authorised narratives written for the King, the Navy, the colonial administration, the mission congregation or a learned public and those journals written without intention of publication, sometimes as intimate notes for friends and families, which often seem less burdened by preconceived agendas and more open to unfolding and expected events. There is much that can be done by comparing different or rival narratives (see Jolly 1992a; and Jolly, this volume, on Quirós’ 1606 voyage and Cook’s second voyage in Vanuatu); by comparing passages within the same text (as between the generalising depiction and the narration of specific events, for instance, in *La Pérouse on Samoa* mentioned above and Tcherkézoff, this volume) and by comparing representations between texts and images (see Jolly 1992a; Douglas 1999a and this volume). As Tcherkézoff suggests, often the most useful passages or images are those where the author or artist admits that he (it is almost always he) does not understand what is going on, and their textual and visual authority is suffused with, or even subverted by, greater reflexivity and uncertainty.

Many chapters in this volume demonstrate the potential of reading and looking “against the grain,” revealing through deconstructive exercises how “facts” are created from Oceanic experiences and how authorial positions are made authoritative. Such exercises do not entail a nihilistic rejection of the “truths” of such experiences, but the insistence on the partiality of any representation, as both incomplete and inclined to a certain view (see Thomas 1997b). The authors in this volume try to avoid the reinscription of the excessive power of Europeans by seeing Europeans as the authors of compelling illusions or mere fabulations. Such reinscriptions not only risk crediting Europeans with

more power than they had but occlude the potent visions of Oceanic peoples, as Sahlins (1995) has argued so passionately in debate with Obeyesekere.

But what of Douglas' argument about "indigenous countersigns" in colonial texts and images? She elaborates an argument long ago advanced by Smith (1985 [1960]) that the events of Oceanic encounters are central to emergent and changing European representations. She argues that whether the reception of Europeans was pacific or violent was crucial in determining the positive or negative evaluation of the morality and beauty of different peoples, and that indigenous countersigns are "camouflaged" in European representations. So the resistance of Kanak to Europeans (and their alleged cannibalism) is represented in Piron's pencil drawing of "Man of Balade" and Copia's re-presentation as "Savage of New Caledonia hurling a spear" (see figure 6.4). The confrontational pose of the warrior, his penis and testicles prominently displayed, is not just a sign of individual bellicosity but, for Douglas, represents a "countersign of confrontational collective agency," surely an ideal type, though grounded in the facts of Kanak resistance. But although this was contrasted with the hospitality and sociality of the inhabitants of the "Friendly Islands" (Tonga), the open opposition of the Kanak was adjudged more favourably than the stealth and cunning of the Tongans (Douglas, this volume).

Douglas' reading of d'Entrecasteaux's voyage is almost solely derived from the primary voyage sources and contemporaneous metropolitan texts (with some allusions to later secondary sources). Unlike many other authors in this volume she does not articulate these with subsequent historical or ethnographic materials, authored by Europeans or indigenous peoples, since, as she argues, "[t]he details of indigenous motivations, the content of their strategies, the meanings of their words and actions reported in long-ago encounters with European voyagers are now difficult, if not impossible, to recover, even where rich local traditions subsist" (this volume).

Yet, other authors in this volume suggest that this task, though necessarily speculative, is not impossible, as Douglas' argument about "countersigns" here and her attempts elsewhere to recuperate the indigenous agency of Pacific women surely suggests (Douglas 1999b). Tcherkézoff's radically different reading of early sexual encounters in Samoa and Tahiti would not have been possible without the suggestive ethnographic insights of later missionaries and settlers and his own linguistic and cultural knowledge derived from decades of ethnographic research with Samoans. Moreover, it is important to stress that the difference is not just between the European archive and indigenous oral history, since from the nineteenth century, and primarily as part of the process of Christian conversion, Pacific people have also been the authors of written texts, both in Oceanic and introduced metropolitan languages. Noenoe Silva (2004) has recently rewritten the history of Hawaiian resistance to the overthrow

of the monarchy in the 1890s on the basis of the rich local traditions of Hawaiian language newspapers, and Kame`eleihiwa (1992) earlier used Hawaiian language texts as well as European sources in her retelling of Hawaiian history and the dispossession of Hawaiian land.

Douaire-Marsaudon (this volume) explores the complicated ways in which Tongans embraced writing. Not only missionaries but also the beachcombers they deplored were central to the status that writing assumed. Not only the Christian message but also the medium of the Bible, written hymns and catechisms were appropriated and indigenised. Writing, with its power to communicate and control at a distance, was connected to the sacred power of the chiefs and, indeed, invested with a mystical status, as having the capacity to heal as well as reveal. Further west in the Pacific, others have observed how channelling the power of writing has been fundamental to anticolonial and millennial movements in Fiji and PNG (Kaplan 1995; Derlon 1997) and how suspicions that certain parts of texts have been withheld by Europeans or crucial documents have been lost is still a central tenet of many local movements for reparation for past colonial wrongs or restitution of imagined futures (Lattas 1998; Miyazaki 2004).

Graphic Materialities and the Violence of Exchange

In some parts of the Pacific, European writing is linguistically linked to indigenous systems of graphic representation such as sand-drawing, cats' cradle designs, tattooing and designs on textiles and pottery, many of which were also invested with sacred power (see Zagala 2002; Thomas et al. 2005). This raises the further question of how indigenous agency is not only distilled in the words of oral or textual histories but in material forms, which may prove less evanescent than the word. So, as Tcherkézoff suggests, the perduring materiality of the Samoan house and its associated symbolic logic is crucial to his interpretation of early sexual encounters of Europeans in Samoa as enforced sacrificial marriage with virgin girls (cf. Sahlins' (1976) analysis of the link between house form and hierarchy in Fiji). And, in another context, Taylor (2008) has argued for the integral connection between the "two sides" of material forms, the architectonics of the Sia Raga house and the canonical form of red pandanus textiles, with ideas of moiety divisions, of the complementary differentiation between men and women, and indigenes and Europeans.

Material exchanges between Pacific peoples and Europeans were crucial from the first moments, when food, water, wood and indigenous artifacts were exchanged for European cloth, beads, nails or iron tools, to the later patterns of commodification of Pacific products. Early and later exchanges were the origins of the huge collections of Oceanic artifacts and arts that now reside in the museums of Europe, America, Australia and New Zealand (see Jolly 2008b). And these stunning objects can communicate indigenous concepts and values; indeed, they are often celebrated as embodiments of ancestral power and as articulating

the voices of the “ancestors.” The selection of objects for collection was partly moulded by European perceptions and their views of particular peoples (e.g. that ni-Vanuatu were more antagonistic and martial than Tongans – as reflected in the dominance of bows and arrows and spears over textiles from these different archipelagoes in the Cook-Forster collection from Göttingen, for example; cf. Thomas 1997a, 93ff.). But indigenous agency was also crucial in determining which objects were given in exchange. Often, despite the loudest and most violent entreaties, “curiosities” desired by Europeans were not on offer. Moreover, from the earliest encounters we see Oceanic peoples desiring not just European goods (like calico and iron tools) but valued Oceanic things (see Newell 2006). So *tapa* (barkcloth) circulated around the Pacific on the boats of European navigators, whalers and traders. Polynesian barkcloth was especially sought in exchanges on the islands of Malakula and Tanna, indeed more desired than European iron tools, which Tannese, unlike Polynesians, found unappealing (Jolly 1992a). Yet, in later periods, European collecting often transformed into looting, with forceful appropriation of indigenous artifacts and local flora and fauna, often in the context of violent incursions (see Mosko, this volume).

Two chapters in this volume consummately explore the relation between European texts and indigenous oral histories, in their exploration of the violence of early encounters in PNG: Mark Mosko on the coastal Mekeo, and Pascale Bonnemère and Pierre Lemonnier on the Ankave-Anga of the Highlands. Mosko combines a meticulous rereading of the texts by the naturalist d’Albertis (1875) and the Assistant Resident Magistrate Monckton (1998), with deep insights derived from his own long-term engagement with the Mekeo. This is not to suggest a perduring, eternal tradition but, rather, a radical reconfiguration of Mekeo culture consequent on the “pacification” and depopulation that ensued from colonial control. Contrary to other accounts, which take the superior power of European firearms as brutally self-evident, Mosko reveals that Mekeo invested guns with mystical efficacy and identified such strangers with unprecedented spiritual powers akin to sorcerers. He deftly shows how both d’Albertis and Monckton intuited and exploited Mekeo beliefs in their spiritual powers, combining a circus-like showmanship with fearful snakes, threats of poisoned water, the illusory magic of false teeth and the pyrotechnics of gunpowder, with a mythopraxis they owed to Mekeo people. The decimation of indigenous people by introduced disease and firearms was seen by Mekeo as a mystical, moral contest. The dynamics of these early encounters radically transformed Mekeo culture and its hierarchies of chiefs and sorcerers in particular, but ironically also conferred on Mekeo a reputation as culturally conservative and as “traditionally preoccupied with magic and sorcery” (Mosko, this volume).

Bonnemère and Lemonnier offer an exhaustive account of the forty years of “first contacts” between Ankave-Anga and Europeans (primarily Australians) in pursuit of gold, and later government patrols conducting a census of people,

establishing “law-and-order” and trying to spread the cultural influence of the administration. These patrols were sporadic and punctuated by violence from both sides. The peoples of this region, earlier labelled Kukukuku, were thought dangerous and untrustworthy (their resistance was contrasted with the hospitality and open character of other coastal peoples; cf. Douglas, this volume). In some oral histories collected by Bonnemère and Lemonnier, European violence also looms large. But in a meticulous “matching” of the successive events as recorded in European journals and patrol reports, they discern intriguing patterns in the articulation of violence in texts and in different oral accounts drawn from memory. The European accounts in general minimise violence, through keeping silent or diminishing the numbers of dead and wounded (cf. Merle, this volume, on Watkin Tench). The Ankave-Anga accounts, by contrast, differ by generation. Older women who were alive at the time of such encounters talk openly with graphic personal details about experiences of European violence, their firearms and the punitive character of many patrols. But their children who retell their mothers’ stories diminish the violence and rather emphasise the goods that fell from planes in the sky: food, knives and cowrie shells. Indeed, these material exchanges were thought symptomatic of the humanity of Europeans. The authors speculate that this failure to transmit narratives of violent early encounters may have been partly due to the context of elicitation – a deference to their own being European, and even a fear of revenge. The difference between the authority of eyewitness testimonies and secondary retellings might also be crucial (see Ballard 2003 [1992]). Moreover, these later narratives more often link the violence between Ankave-Anga and police patrols to violence with their own neighbours, since outside force was often entangled with and manipulated in internal vendettas and land disputes (especially in relation to the airstrip). The more positive emphasis on material exchanges with Europeans in later narratives perhaps heralds a more welcoming attitude to modernity, although, as the authors stress at the outset, this valley is not only still exceedingly remote and difficult to access, but compared to the neighbouring Baruya, without many marks of modernity or development.

The Place and Time of Oceania

There is a vast and resonating chasm between stories of late twentieth-century encounters in the remote valleys of the New Guinea Highlands and those encounters on the voyages of Hispanic, British and French explorers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with which we open this volume. The papers here collected traverse vast crossings in time and place, a vastness which we hope to echo in our use of the word “Oceanic” (see below). But given that the borders and values of this regional designation have shifted over time, we should briefly explicate our use of it. Up until the 1830s and indeed, well into the nineteenth century, the “South Seas” was the usual designation of the region

we explore in this volume. The word *Oceania* derives from the French designation *Océanie*, used in the texts and accompanying maps of Dumont d'Urville (1832) and reproduced by de Rienzi (1836–37). Debate has focused on how from the 1830s, stronger distinctions were being drawn between the regions of Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia, and how this cartography related to the mapping of Oceanic races, of how place and race were connected. Since this is the subject of much published and forthcoming research (Clark 2003; Jolly 2007b; Tcherkézoff 2003, 2009; Thomas 1997c; Douglas and Ballard 2008) we do not elaborate on this issue here. Rather we highlight how the generic word *Oceania/Océanie* stressed the vastness and centrality of the ocean in this human environment.

Yet, the designation of *Oceania* in this period also included the large land masses of what became PNG and Australia. *Melanesie* in Dumont d'Urville's map did not terminate at the islands of New Caledonia or even the Torres Strait, but rather extended to include Australia (see figure 1.4). Australia was also included in the map of *Océanie* attributed to Levasseur (1854) in a French atlas (following Dumont d'Urville's map of 1832), which, as Thomas notes, was regularly reprinted throughout the nineteenth century (1997c, 146–7). The use of the label "*Oceania*" in English to include Australia and New Zealand persisted long into the twentieth century, as the naming of the Sydney-based journal *Oceania* (founded in 1930 and continuing into the twenty-first century makes clear). Up until the 1970s, collected works with titles like *Anthropology in Oceania* (e.g. Hiatt and Jayawardena 1971) typically included articles on indigenous Australians as well as the Pacific.

But another region appears on the map attributed to Levasseur – *Malaisie* – following again Dumont d'Urville's map of 1832, embracing the islands of what is now the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. So, as Ballard has argued elsewhere (2008), distinctions eastward between Malays and Papuans were, in the nineteenth century, perhaps equally important to the geographic and ethnological borders drawn between Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia. Ballard's chapter (this volume) on the relation between the fictional and physical exploration of PNG reminds us of the centrality of that Malay/Papuan contrast in the work of both the naturalist Wallace and purveyors of travel fiction.

Figure 1.4. Map of “Océanie” by Levasseur after d’Urville’s ethnic divisions.



Océanie, map attribution to Emile Levasseur, from *Atlas universel de géographie physique* (Paris: 1854). Reproduced with permission of the National Library of Australia, Canberra – nla.map-nk2456-79.

Similarly two chapters in this volume (Merle on Watkin Tench; Douglas on d’Entrecasteaux) remind us that Australia was an integral part of the European vision of Oceania in both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Merle observes how profoundly Tench’s ethnography of the settlement of the First Fleet at Port Jackson was influenced by the genres and the rhetorical canons of observation established during Cook’s three voyages of exploration. And Douglas, in tracing the narrative arc of d’Entrecasteaux’s (1791–94) voyage through dissolution and disillusion, faithfully follows his itinerary from the Admiralty Islands (now in PNG), through Van Diemen’s Land (now Tasmania) and Tongatapu to New Caledonia.

Other contributors use a more restricted sense of Oceanic. So, in his survey of the languages of Oceania, Tryon (this volume) includes the Papuan and Austronesian languages, pidgins and creoles and those introduced metropolitan languages like English, French, German and Hindi. He does not discuss the indigenous languages of Australia however, given their linguistic distance from those indigenous to the Pacific. Still, his map of linguistic transformations in the Pacific highlights the significance of the port of Sydney, in relation to Nouméa,

Suva and Papeete in connecting not just the exchanges of goods and people but also, of words and meanings across the Pacific.

This raises the important question of how the region of Oceania has been reimagined and revalorised in our present epoch, by processes of globalisation which are connecting Pacific island and Pacific rim, and by the critical reflections on such processes in the visionary works of the Tongan scholar Epeli Hau'ofa (1994, 1998, 2000, 2008). Hau'ofa evokes the expansive language of the ocean to oppose those discourses of both academy and policy which diminish the Pacific as a series of tiny remote islands or poor failing microstates (as in the perspective of contemporary Australian foreign policy ranged in an “arc of instability”; see Larmour 2005). In defiance of the diminution implicit in developmentalist projects or the partitions created by highlighting the differences between Melanesians, Polynesians and Micronesians, Hau'ofa stresses the connections between Pacific peoples. He deploys the ocean as both material medium of passage and metaphor, stressing the affinities between ancient canoes and jumbo jets as vessels of “world travelling” for Islanders, especially for those Polynesian and Micronesian migrants who constitute such large diaspora in the countries of the Pacific rim (see also Jolly 2001, 2005b, 2007a, 2007b, 2008a).

In conclusion, then, we want to applaud the way in which Hau'ofa has reimagined Oceania, not as a category in European thought, not as an ethnonym conferred by distant others, but as an inclusive and embracing self-identification on the part of Oceanic peoples, which stresses their relations with each other, rather than with Europeans who have been our focus here. We are intensely aware of how a constant stress on the “beach crossings” (Denning 2004) between Europeans and Pacific peoples, as narrated in this volume, can reinscribe colonial relations in the present, and perceive relations between Pacific peoples as always mediated through their connections with Europeans, rather than with each other (see Jolly 2009). This has been powerfully argued apropos the relation between Maori and Pacific Islanders in the context of the contending bicultural and multicultural values in contemporary Aotearoa New Zealand (Teresia Teaiwa and Mallon 2006). Thus we laud parallel projects (e.g. Katerina Teaiwa 2007) that rather highlight indigenous encounters and relations in the pasts, presents and futures of Oceania.

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Notes

¹ We put this in inverted commas throughout, given that it was rather Oceanic peoples who, millennia before Europeans, “discovered” the places of the Pacific.

² As Lindstrom (2009) notes, this has become a just-so story, repeated in many contemporary and later sources (G. Forster 2000 [1777]). The original name *Ipare* (meaning “inland” in deictic opposition to “seaward”) was supplanted by Tanna both in European and indigenous naming.

³ “The man now pulled out a little leather bag, probably of seals skin, and having, with a great deal of ceremony, put in his fingers, which he pulled out covered with oil, offered to anoint captain Cook’s hair; this honour was however declined, because the unguent, though perhaps held as a delicious perfume, and as the most precious thing the man could bestow, yet seemed to our nostrils not a little offensive; and the very squalid appearances of the bag in which it was contained, contributed to make it still more disgusting. Mr Hodges did not escape so well; for the girl, having a tuft of feathers, dipt in oil, on a string round her neck, insisted upon dressing him out with it, and he was forced to wear the odoriferous present, in pure civility” (G. Forster 2000 [1777], 1: 98).

⁴ These are respectively the words for white foreigners in Hawai’i, Tonga, Tahiti and the Cook Islands, the pidgins of PNG, the Solomons and Vanuatu, and the Sa language of South Pentecost, Vanuatu.

⁵ We quote from an earlier discussion by Serge Tcherkézoff:

“As Sahlins warns us, we should not indulge in this ‘post-modernist’ strategy of ‘creating doubts about apparent “truths” by arguing that their status as truths is derived [only] from the regime of power on whose behalf they have been constructed’ (Sahlins 2003, 1). Sahlins further cautions us that for any pre-contact or early contact practice (as for instance in the case of ‘cannibalism’ evoked by Sahlins in this recent article) this deconstructive attitude only obscures the historical practices, without delivering any alternative conclusion:

The allegation that good descriptions of Fijian cannibalism are really bad prejudices of European imperialists has submerged its historical practice in a thick layer of epistemic murk. The deconstructive strategy [followed by Obeyesekere] is not to deny the existence of cannibalism altogether ... rather to establish doubt about it. Not that there was no cannibalism, then, only

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that the European reports of it are fabrications (Obeyesekere 1998). Even so, not all such reports need be questioned. It is enough to create sufficient uncertainty about a few of them so as to cast suspicion on all the rest, and thus dismiss the whole historical record by implication (*ibid.*, 64–5). Literary criticism of one or two European texts, reducing them to some fictional genre such as sailors' yarns, serves the purpose of obscuring the factuality of scores of cannibal events, which then remain unmentioned and unexamined (Sahlins 2003: 1)' (Tcherkézoff 2004a, 201–2).