Chapter 3

The Sediment of Voyages: Re-membering Quirós, Bougainville and Cook in Vanuatu

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Introduction: An Archipelago of Names

This chapter juxtaposes the voyages of Quirós in 1606 and those eighteenth-century explorations of Bougainville and Cook in the archipelago we now call Vanuatu.¹ In an early and influential work Johannes Fabian (1983) suggested that, during the period which separates these voyages, European constructions of the “other” underwent a profound transformation. How far do the materials of these voyages support such a view? Here I consider the traces of these journeys through the lens of this vaunted transformation and in relation to local sedimentations (and vaporisations) of memory.

Vanuatu is the name of this archipelago of islands declared at independence in 1980 – *vanua* “land” and *tu* “to stand up, endure; be independent” (see figure 3.1). Both words are drawn from one of the 110 vernacular languages still spoken in the group. But, alongside this indigenous name, there are many foreign place names, the perduring traces of the movement of early European voyagers: Espiritu Santo – the contraction of *Terra Australia del Espiritu Santo*, the name given by Quirós in 1606;² Pentecost – the Anglicisation of *Île de Pentecôte*, conferred by Bougainville, who sighted this island on Whitsunday, 22 May 1768; Malakula, Erromango and Tanna – the contemporary spellings of the Mallicollo, Erromanga and Tanna conferred by Cook who named the archipelago the New Hebrides in 1774, a name which, for foreigners at least, lasted from that date till 1980.³ Fortunately, some of these foreign names proved more ephemeral: the island we now know as Ambae, Bougainville called *Île des Lepreux* (Isle of Lepers), apparently because he mistook the pandemic skin conditions of *tinea imbricata* or leucodermia for signs of leprosy. This sedimentation of names thus inscribes on this Pacific place the memories of what were evanescent but ultimately consequential encounters with Europeans. In this chapter I consider some of the materials – primarily texts⁴ – from these three voyages: Quirós (1606), Bougainville (1768) and Cook (1774). But I also ponder how these voyages have

sedimented or, more often, evaporated in the place of Vanuatu and the memory of its people.

Figure 3.1. Map of Vanuatu.

Map courtesy ANU Cartographic Services, RSPAS, ANU, Canberra.

First Contact and the Beach: The Limen of Colonialism

In revisioning these voyages I critically consider the trope of “first contact” and the associated idea of “the beach” in the historical anthropology of the Pacific (Denning 1998; 2004). This stress on the limen of the encounter between indigenes and foreigners, between Pacific peoples and Europeans, between Islanders and Outlanders,⁵ still pervades much of the writing about the historical anthropology of the Pacific. Unlike the celebrated “first contacts” of the Highlands of Papua New Guinea (memorialised in the films and writings of Bob Connolly and Robin Anderson (1987), for example) for which we have textual, photographic and cinematic representations, eyewitness accounts of living (or recently dead) Australians and Papua New Guineans, and the accumulations of later oral histories, for these much earlier voyages we have only European documents, images, collected objects and a few traces in the ground of Vanuatu and the memories of its peoples. These voyages, the visits of Quirós, Bougainville and Cook, are not the preferred subjects of indigenous history. Unlike later encounters with labour traders and Christian missionaries, their voyages have left few sedimentations in ni-Vanuatu memory beyond the mnemonic names dispersed among the several islands (but see Taylor 2008; Lindstrom 2009).⁶

In critically considering the trope of “first contact,” I isolate three major problems. Firstly, there is that very presumption of the “first”, the privileging of that originary moment of corporeal touch, the transcendental brush of the encounter which erupts in the flow of time, and which relegates foregoing moments to a kind of cross-cultural zero. This very idea of first-ness, of precedence, tends to occlude all the contacts, both imaginary and corporeal, that came before. On both sides of such encounters there were categorical anticipations and discursive expectations about strangers – from monstrous beings to divine gods. This has been far more thoroughly investigated for Europeans, with debates about how images of non-Western “others” changed from the Medieval or Renaissance periods to the Enlightenment (Fabian 1983; McGrane 1989; Pagden 1982; Salmond 1991) or from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century (see Smith 1984, 1985, 1988, 1992; Jolly 1992; Douglas 1999, 2006, 2008). But there have also been important discussions about the anticipations and expectations of Islanders and of Highlanders in questions about how far Captain Cook was perceived as a manifestation of Lono (Sahlins 1981, 1982, 1985, 1989, 1995; Obeyesekere 1992; Salmond 2003; Thomas 2003), and also, in the continuing controversies about whether and for how long New Guinea peoples saw Europeans as spirits or returning ancestors (Ballard 2003 [1992]; Schieffelin and Crittenden 1991).

Secondly, as well as these generalised questions about prevailing preconceptions – of others as similar and/or different – there are questions of changing perceptions more intimately grounded in the events of encounters. It

has often been asked how European voyagers' perceptions and reactions were dynamically influenced by the unfolding events of which they were part (see Smith 1985; Jolly 1992; Douglas, this volume). Thus, Smith (1985, vii) long ago stressed that his concern was not simply with preconceptions imposed on experience, but how the embodied experience of Pacific places and peoples transformed European visions. For Pacific peoples too, the events of encounters challenged and transformed their perceptions of the "strangers" along an alleged spectrum from divinity to humanity.⁷

But, finally, I want to link the conventional idea of "first contact" to Denning's far more powerful concept of "the beach" (Denning 1998, 2004). Much more than a physical space, Denning's beach is a limen, a place in-between (see Jolly 2009). Throughout his magisterial corpus and especially in *Beach Crossings* (2004), Denning consummately explores such crossings, in which the horizons of conventional meaning, on both sides of an encounter, are displaced, expanded and put at risk: "On the beach edginess rules (hardcopy book-jacket)." But, as in this chapter, the paths of entrance and exit to the beach are typically retraced through the stories of early European visitors, "to reveal what their unseeing eyes were seeing, life on the other side of the beach as the islanders actually lived it" (2004, book jacket). Thus, the privileged crossings for Denning are those canonical cross-cultural encounters *between* Europeans and Islanders. This tends to suppress parallel histories, other crossings, other cross-cultural encounters *between* Islanders. And, moreover, such a stress on the encounters of Europeans and Islanders often reinscribes these past "beach crossings" from the expanded horizons of an optimistic post-colonialism, the promise of living together in new-found equality and reconciliation. And so we should consider how our stories of "first contacts" and "beach crossings" reverberate in the "echo chamber of the present"⁸ (Luker n.d.).

Pedro Fernández de Quirós, 1606: Salvation, Treasure and Phantasmagoria?

The history of the New Jerusalem was a phantasmagoria: Quirós was now in the grip of a religious mania (Spate 1979, 136).

Accounts of Quirós' voyage of 1605–06 are usually structured not just by the limen of cross-cultural encounter but the limen of hallucination.⁹ The pervasively Christian imaginaries of this period are often endowed with a kind of madness by some twentieth-century historians, like Oskar Spate whom I quote above, and by many witnesses on the eighteenth-century voyages, who regularly dispute Quirós' views of the archipelago on the basis of their own experience of "being there."¹⁰ Quirós, like many Iberian navigators from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, is typically portrayed in Anglophone accounts through the figure of the conquistador, as spiritually and materially driven, in dual

pursuit of souls and gold. This perduring portrait of Quirós in Oceania has been recently challenged by two scholars (Luque and Mondragón 2005), who combine a meticulous rereading of the Hispanic archives with an ethnographic appreciation of indigenous perceptions and agency.¹¹

Earlier understandings of this voyage have been heavily reliant on poor and partial English translations of the several voyage texts and subsequent reports (e.g. Markham 1967 [1904])¹² and often lack the cultural contextualisation needed for insightful interpretation. So let me first explore the Iberian context of this voyage and of Quirós in particular, on the basis of Luque and Mondragón's (2005) reconstruction. As they point out, Quirós' voyage of 1606 occurred at a time of "imperial climax and crisis" (2005, 135): the Iberian peninsular was politically united since the Portuguese were yoked to the Spanish imperium, but undue global expansion had also generated insolvency. Quirós, himself of Portuguese ancestry, was an ambiguous product of that epoch of Iberian union and Castilian imperial expansion.

The Pacific Ocean had become a "Castilian Lake," with colonies stretching from Peru to the Philippines.¹³ Quirós was doubtless inspired by the prevailing quest for that great south land, *Terra Australis nondum cognita*, of ancient Ptolemaic and Renaissance cartography (see figure 1.1, Introduction). He perceived the few Pacific Islands "discovered" in the 1590s as insular outliers of that continent and was eager to be the first to chart its coastline. Other motivations for his quest have also been imputed: to find a place for settlement as desirable as the Americas and a fervent desire to save the souls of "Indians."¹⁴

Some scholars have derived his "religious mania" not just from the prevailing ethos of the time but from his previous encounters in the Pacific. When Quirós was the pilot on Mendaña's voyage in 1595–96, Spate (1979) and Jack-Hinton (1969) suggest he experienced a kind of Oceanic epiphany. I quote the latter's citation of Quirós–Bermúdez' account of that moment near the Marquesas when a 10-year-old boy approached the ship in a canoe:

His eyes were fixed on the ship, his countenance angelic, with an aspect and vigour that promised much, of a good colour, not fair but white, his locks like those of a lady who prized them greatly. He was everything that I am able to say with reason about him, so that I never felt in my life such anguish as when I thought that so beautiful a creature should be left to go to perdition (from the Quirós–Bermúdez *relacion*, cited in Jack-Hinton 1969, 134).¹⁵

The profoundly spiritual character of his quest has also been witnessed in the fact that, before he sought the support of the Spanish monarchy for his voyage, Quirós made an extended visit to Rome as a pilgrim in the Holy Jubilee Year 1600 and secured the support of Pope Clement VIII through a persuasive personal

audience. He was also backed by the Spanish Ambassador to the Holy See, with whom he stayed for eighteen months, and leading mathematicians and cosmographers in Rome, who were impressed by his navigational skills.¹⁶

But, as Luque and Mondragón (2005, 138–40) attest, Quirós' religiosity and millennial evangelism also had a more particular origin in the town of his birth, Évora, in the Portuguese province of Piedad. His family, though wealthy, was not noble. This place was pervaded by a "frontier mentality," forged in the reconquest of regions dominated by the Moors and was strongly influenced by radical Franciscans. The latter were dedicated to an emotional spiritual life, modelled on the life of Jesus and in full anticipation of a Paradise on Earth. Their millennial vision was mingled with a proto-nationalism that advocated the liberation of Portugal from Spanish control. Quirós was thus culturally predisposed to an ongoing commitment to the Franciscan Order (he personally recruited Franciscan friars for the voyage of 1606) but an uncertain loyalty to the Spanish Crown. Yet, Spanish support was crucial to his voyage.

In 1603 he obtained authorisation from the Spanish monarch, Philip III, despite opposition from the widow of Mendaña, Doña Isabel Barreto, and her new husband (who fancied himself governor of the Solomons in succession to Mendaña). Spate notes that the king's instructions to the Viceroy of Peru were "couched in unusually strong terms" (1979, 133).¹⁷ The voyage was equipped with two sailing ships: the *San Pedro y San Pablo* as flagship and *San Pedro* as *almiranta* with a *zabra*, or launch, for inshore sailing. The expedition involved between 250 and 300 people (including six Franciscan friars) and had provisions for a year, and seeds and animals for a new settlement. But, as all commentators observe, the seaborne hierarchy was designed to be problematic. There was prejudice from the predominant Spanish contingent against Quirós as a Portuguese; Luis Vaez de Torres, his *almirante* (second-in-command and chief navigator), though superficially loyal, had little respect for Quirós, while the chief pilot Bilboa was reluctant to go at all. Both had major disputes with Quirós from early in the voyage about the best course for navigation.¹⁸ The Spanish aristocrat Don Diego de Prado y Tovar was a volunteer and probably hoped to eclipse Quirós' authority. In Spate's view he convicts himself of "malice, disloyalty, and an unscrupulous determination to exploit his ambiguous status" (133). The rivalrous and rebellious relations between the leading members of this expedition are palpable not just in the contested itineraries but also in the disparities between the several accounts of the voyage.¹⁹

Figure 3.2. Detail from “New Hebrides, Banks and Duff Groups, showing Discoveries of Quiros in 1606”.

NEWHEBRIDES, BANKS AND DUFF GROUPS, SHOWING DISCOVERIES OF QUIROS IN 1606.

Source: Pedro Fernandez de Quiros, *The Voyages of Pedro Fernandez De Quiros, 1595 to 1606*. Translated and edited by Sir Clements Markham. Works issued by The Hakluyt Society, second series No. XIV, Vol.1.

As we can see from figure 3.2, the voyage passed by the islands of Tikopia and Taumako in the Santa Cruz group before reaching the northern islands of what we now call Vanuatu, where we join the voyage. In the several accounts, the spiritual conception of the journey is obvious. When the Spanish navigators first sighted the far northern islands of what we now call the Banks and Torres, they gave them saints' names usually appropriate to the day of their sighting: Mere Lava was San Marcos, Mota was Las Lagrimas de San Pedro, Vanua Lava was Los Portales de Belen, Gaua was Santa Maria or La Virgen Maria. As soon as they came ashore their actions revealed two classic movements of incorporation: the extension of the sacred core of Christendom to this outer periphery through these acts of naming, and precipitate and forcible attempts at salvation.

Their initial contacts were with people on the island of Gaua, a high island with "many palm trees, plantains, verdure, abundant water and thickly inhabited" (Markham 1967 [1904], 236). At first the local inhabitants seemed more enthusiastic for contact than the Spaniards, since "four canoes with unarmed natives" (i.e. men; Markham 1967 [1904], 236) came and offered to take them into shore. When the strangers declined, they presented them with coconuts and other fruits. Later, while the launch was surveying the coast in search of a safe anchorage, a man on the shore jumped into it. Judging from the sign language he used, the Spanish concluded that he asked them as to their origins and purpose. An unnamed Spaniard replied "*Venimos de oriente, somos cristianos, a vos buscamos, y queremos que lo seáis*" – "We come from the east, we are seeking you and we want you to be [Christians]" (Pérez 2000, 245–6).²⁰

The man from Gaua no doubt failed to understand these words, but the actions of the Spaniards were self-explanatory: they seized him and took him on board. They then captured another man and placed him in heavy chains, secured with a padlock. After he almost drowned in an attempt to escape, they took him on board too. Both were treated to a Spanish supper with wine, but in case such delicacies of Christendom proved insufficient enticement, they were placed in stocks overnight.²¹ On board the next morning the captain then

ordered the barber to shave off their beards and hair, except one tuft on the side of their heads. He also ordered their finger-nails and toe-nails to be cut with scissors, the uses of which they admired. He caused them to be dressed in silks of divers colours, gave them hats with plumes, tinsel, and other ornaments, knives and a mirror, into which they looked with great caution (Markham 1967 [1904], 238).

So attired, they were taken back to shore, where they were received by many people, including "a woman with a child in her arms who received the two with great joy" (Markham 1967 [1904], 239). Quirós speculated that she must have been the wife of the first man they captured and that this man was a chief "for

all respected and obeyed his orders" (Markham 1967 [1904], 239). He also claimed that such a good understanding was established that the woman allowed her baby to be held and embraced by the Europeans. The pen portrait of her in the Quirós–Bermúdez account is rapturous; she is painted as a Black Madonna. But this good understanding proved fragile and ephemeral. As they were preparing to depart, those they had befriended gave them plantains, coconuts, sugarcanes, fruit, water and a pig. But some neighbouring people (the Quirós–Bermúdez account speculates, either "envious or angry" because the Spaniards failed to stop and talk with them) attacked with bows and arrows. The Spaniards responded with aquebuses.

After leaving Gaua, they passed the islands of Pentecost, Maewo and Ambae, and then on the coast of Santo they saw "many tawny men very tall with bows in their hands" (Markham 1967 [1904], 241). These men, too, tried to entice them ashore first by throwing fowls' feathers into the sea and then by sending boys as envoys, swimming out to the ships.²² When the sailing ships passed them by, they fired arrows. Finally, on 1 May 1606 they found a safe anchorage in a large and deep bay on the north of this island (the present Big Bay of Santo). Some canoes approached, this time with armed men: the Spaniards fired on them and they retreated. Two days later the two vessels found anchor in this bay, but the tactics which worked on Gaua, namely, to entice or capture, take them on board and send them back "clothed and kindly treated," did not work here.

When a party landed in the launch the next morning, Quirós' desires to "establish peace and friendship based on the good work we intend to do for them" (Markham 1967 [1904], 242) were quickly dashed when a soldier killed a Santo man, cut off his head and foot and hung the severed parts in a tree. Quirós, as usual, dissociated himself from this cruel monstrosity, claiming it was the rash actions of a Moor underling (but thereby also admitting his own lack of authority). The local people were aghast and their "great sorrow" soon turned to revenge, as they attacked the landing party with arrows, darts and stones. They were quickly overcome by guns and cannon fire from the ships and retreated. In a subsequent skirmish an old man, whom the Spaniards took to be a chief, was killed. Thus, proclaims the Quirós–Bermúdez account, was "peace turned into war."

The Spaniards remained at anchor in this bay for some weeks and, despite continuing hostilities with local people, were resolved to transform this heathen place into a site of Christendom and to save some souls by taking them back to Spain. The site of their settlement they called *La Nueva Hierusalem* (New Jerusalem); the large rivers that flowed into the bay: Jordan and San Salvador; the bay itself: the Bay of San Felipe y Santiago (St. Philip and St. James; see figure 3.3). The island was named *Austrialia del Espiritu Santo*. They took possession of the place not just in the name of the King of Spain but pre-eminently

the Catholic Church and the Holy Trinity.²³ As Luque and Mondragón attest, Quirós was “well acquainted with the judicial formulae associated with claims on new territories” and “organised a series of founding acts rich in symbolism and purport” and “mirroring a widespread inclination for the baroque theatrics of his age” (2005, 142).

Figure 3.3. The Site of La Nueva Hierusalem and the Bay of San Felipe y Santiago.

Detail from "*Planos de las Bahías descubiertas el año de 1606, en las islas del Espíritu Santo y de Nueva Guinea y Dibujadas por D. Diego de Prado y Tovar en Igual Fecha*" (Soc. Geogr. De Madrid, 1878).

Source: Pedro Fernandez de Quirós, *The Voyages of Pedro Fernandez de Quirós, 1595 to 1606*. Translated and edited by Sir Clements Markham. Works issued by The Hakluyt Society, second series No. XIV, Vol. I.

Within a day of their arrival, they constructed a church with a small altar under a canopy of leaves with a cross hewn from local orange wood. Then followed the enactment of Christian rituals: mass was regularly celebrated and the rituals of Pentecost (on May 14) and Corpus Christi (on May 25) were performed with extraordinary zeal, with music, dancing, feasting and fireworks. Startled local people retreated further into the bush, unaware that these rites were intended as divine spectacles for them as well as the believers. Quirós described how in the midst of Corpus Christi, on May 25,

[t]he native who was taken from Taumaco²⁴ and was afterwards named Pedro, went about dressed in silk with a cross on his breast, and bows and arrows, so astonished and pleased at all he saw, and at his cross, that

he looked about and showed it, putting his hand on it, and named it many times. It is a thing worthy of note that the cross elevated the mind, even of a barbarian who did not know its significance (Markham 1967 [1904], 261).

As well as encouraging their hostages to take part in such rituals, Quirós set up a complicated machinery of municipal government: magistrates, justices of the peace, a chief constable, a treasurer, a storekeeper, a minister of war and a registrar of mines (Markham 1967 [1904], 254).²⁵ The aggressive and extractive portents of these last titles were soon realised in excursions the strangers made into the interior. They carried off live pigs and chickens, they took roast pigs and tubers from earth ovens deserted by local villagers who had fled. They caught fish, foraged for roots and planted their own crops – maize, cotton, onions, melons, pumpkins, beans and pulses – in a “native farm” close to the shore. And, in addition to making “free use” of the land in this way, they also kidnapped three boys, to save their souls. This was the subject of disputes with the crew: Quirós–Bermúdez reported one sailor declaring “thirty pigs would be better eating than three boys” (Markham 1967 [1904], 256). But Quirós prevailed over this “rude voice” (with its threat of a European cannibal appetite),²⁶ affirming that spiritual incorporation was more gratifying than corporeal gluttony. Relations with local people swiftly deteriorated with these plunderings and kidnappings: they attacked watering parties and attempted to destroy the church. Quirós suspected that several more local people were killed in “encounters with the natives,” but his crew denied this. The capture of the boys clearly distressed and enraged local people and they made several vain attempts to retrieve them, offering pigs and other produce in their stead. But the Spanish were ever wary of ambush and attack, and on one occasion cruelly deceived them by suggesting that they were about to be returned by leaving goats on the shore, but then departed with both goats and boys.

Because of these continuing hostilities and dissent within his own camp, Quirós resolved to leave the bay on the evening of Corpus Christi, May 25, but acceded to the request of his rival Torres that they remain for a day or so in order to catch more fish. This unfortunate fishing expedition got a haul of *pargos* (Markham 1967 [1904], 390, 477). This was probably Red Bass or Red Sea Bream, which proved poisonous, inducing nausea, vomiting and fever in many of the afflicted sailors, who were sick for a week.²⁷ This misfortune fuelled ongoing disputes about the future course of the voyage. They sailed again on June 8, but encountered strong southeasterly winds. Quirós decided to return and build a fort and a brigantine and wait until the seasonal patterns of the winds were clearer. But the pilots could not work up the bay in the prevailing winds (or so they claimed). In the ensuing confusion the two boats were separated. Prado claims there was a mutiny on Quirós’ ship. This may be wishful thinking on his

part, but Quirós at this point had patently lost control and was left to contemplate the perils of insubordination on the long journey home (see Spate 1979, 137–8). Quirós returned to Spain via Mexico, while Torres continued on to Manila, charting his famous course between Australia and New Guinea.

Despite this violent history of kidnap and killing and the internecine strife, both in his account of the voyage (authored by Bermúdez) and in his incessant later memoranda to Philip III, Quirós presented a positive, even idyllic, picture of Vanuatu. This was in part self-justifying suppression of awkward or unfavourable facts and is hotly contested in de Leza's reports. But even allowing for this, the portraits of place and people are rapturous. By this report, the waters of the rivers were "sweet, pleasant and fresh" (Markham 1967 [1904], 264), the earth black and rich, and so fertile as to yield an abundance of food, much of which Quirós named and described (266ff.). In one of his later reports to the court he gave a lyrical evocation of the environment on Espiritu Santo:

For from break of day there is heard from the neighbouring woods a great harmony of myriads of different birds, some appearing to be nightingales, thrushes, buntings, linnets and an infinite number of swallows, paroquets and many other kinds of birds ... The mornings and afternoons were enjoyable, owing to the pleasant odours sent out by so many kinds of flowers, including the orange flower and the sweet basil. From all this I judge the climate to be clement, and that it maintains its natural order (Markham 1967 [1904], 489).

He wrote (incorrectly) there were no mosquitoes or ants and (correctly) that there were no alligators or poisonous spiders or snakes. He did not mention the poisonous *pargos*. He claimed he saw potential quarries of marble – probably the limestone cliffs prominent on the western spur of Big Bay (Luque and Mondragón 2005) – as well as ebony and jasper. He suggested that Big Bay would make a better harbour than any other he had seen in the Pacific or South America. Although, in his view, such an abundant country made the people indolent, he also thought the health of the climate was obvious from the vigour and size of the natives (Markham 1967 [1904], 270) and the fact that they were corpulent and clean. He also thought them "courageous and sociable" and, as is clear from the taking of hostages, eminently capable of salvation. This is apparent in descriptions of one of the boys they captured from Santo, Pablo. Despite the kidnappings and the killings, and their own state of embattlement on Santo, Quirós' hopes for peace coupled with conquest never foundered.

This ecstatic optimism has been seen by Spate (1979) as evidence of his phantasmagoria, his religious hallucination. But as Luque and Mondragón (2005) attest, his religious zeal was not so extraordinary for the period and, indeed, has probably been exaggerated, not least by Quirós himself. His religiosity had its origins not just in the prevailing Catholic worldview of the period but in the

particular millennial vision of the Franciscans, characteristic of his Portuguese home province of Piedad and in the more generalised utopian influences of Ioachim di Fiore and Sir Thomas More. He deployed this utopianism in strategic ways to gain crucial support from Philip III and others. His contemporaneous Spanish critics shared his religious worldview; they did not satirise from the same perspective as modern scholars, often writing from an avowedly secular stance. The dissent of his contemporaries was rather about power relations on the voyage and against Quirós' presumption of total authority. The hyperbole of his later memoranda and reports to Philip III can be read as the desperation of a man whose voyage had failed in crucial ways, who was castigating his rivals' reports, and whose evocations of an idyllic continent were intended not just to interest the Spanish monarchy in creating another colony²⁸ but to rescue himself from the state of dire poverty to which he was reduced in later life.

A more pessimistic and critical interpretation is offered not only by later navigators like Georg Forster on Cook's second voyage (see below) but also by Quirós' contemporaries. The rival reports of Munilla, Torres and Prado y Tovar not only challenge his claims about precious minerals but also offer a far less favourable view of indigenous people as warlike, treacherous and cunning (Kelly 1966, 87). Indeed, Prado y Tovar attacked Quirós thus:

You would give us so much gold and silver that we could not carry it, and the pearls should be measured by hatfuls ... We have found only the black devils with poisoned arrows; what has become of the riches ... all your affairs are imaginary and have gone off in the wind (cited in Spate 1979, 137).

Yet, despite such devastating contemporary critiques of Quirós, both in their distilled later reports and in their journals of ongoing encounters, *all* the Spanish treat both the place and people of Vanuatu as instantly available for incorporation within Christendom: foreign islands are christened with the names of saints; the cross is displayed to heathens, who thereby have the chance of redemption; and if they prove unwilling in their salvation, they can be taken hostage to save their souls.²⁹

But what can the texts of de Quirós' voyage tell us about ni-Vanuatu? Not much, and certainly not nearly so much as the texts and images of eighteenth-century voyagers. These Iberian navigators seem singularly uninterested in the language or the culture of those whose souls they might save. The language of signs suffices, there is no attempt to ask what pre-existing names places or people had – the island we now call Mota is peremptorily called Las Lagrimas da San Pedro (the tears of San Pedro); the man from Taumako becomes Pedro; the eldest boy from Santo, Pablo. Indigenous clothes are not described before they are summarily replaced by silks of diverse colours and plumed hats; local hairstyles are not depicted before men are taken hostage and

subject to Spanish coiffure. There are few depictions of houses and gardens, although the Quirós–Bermúdez account offers detailed descriptions of food. There is almost no attempt to portray indigenous polity and religion, apart from the speculations that the Gaua woman is the wife of a “chief” and suggestions of enmity between neighbouring groups being fuelled by envy about contact with the foreigners.³⁰

The texts of Quirós’ voyage are relatively impervious to “reading against the grain” or of finding traces of indigenous agency. But there are a few glimpses. First, the initial responses of those on Gaua in the Banks were not just welcoming but enthusiastic for contact and exchange. It was exclusively men who came out in canoes, but they came unarmed and with gifts of coconuts and fruits. They were hardly Prado’s “black devils with poisoned arrows” (cited in Spate 1979, 137). Even after the violence of hostage-taking and coerced coiffure, the men of Gaua again offered abundant food – plantains, coconuts, sugarcanes, fruit, water and a live pig – perhaps attempting to placate these forceful strangers. Both on Gaua and on Espiritu Santo, the Spaniards were rather attacked when they passed people by. It was when the Spaniards sailed past, failing to respond to their enticements, entreaties and the young boys sent out, likely as swimming envoys, that the Spaniards were first attacked with bows and arrows. So, we witness an openness for exchange and indeed a strong desire for engagement with the strangers (as against many late eighteenth-century constructions of ni-Vanuatu as insular and bellicose). And, it seems that pre-existing divisions between groups were exacerbated by differential access to the Spaniards: those who were not party to these exchanges were, if we are to believe the Quirós–Bermúdez account, “envious and angry.” But, as the strangers’ actions become more invasive and exploitative – stealing food, water and wood and taking hostages – the islanders’ initial welcome turns to hostile resistance.

The northern islands of the Banks were likely too far distant geographically, linguistically and culturally for news of the strangers to have travelled on canoes in advance of the sailing ships, and so the rather different interactions on Santo were unlikely to have been influenced by the unfolding of events on Gaua. The continuing battles which the Spaniards had around Big Bay derived, in Quirós’ own view, not from the inherent bellicosity of local men, but from their understandable response to the violence of the initial landing, when a Santo man was not only killed but dismembered and his severed parts displayed. This monstrous cruelty, together with the kidnap of the three boys and perhaps the threat of a longer settlement and continuing depredations of gardens and pig herds no doubt all contributed to the ongoing attacks on the Spaniards, which together with the internecine strife resulted in their abandonment of New Jerusalem in late May and June 1606.

In their reappraisal of Quirós' voyage of 1606 Luque and Mondragón conclude that:

the convoluted procedures and overall behaviour of the Spanish men in Big Bay were neither the result of one man's extravagant religiosity nor simply of Spanish arrogance, but encompass overlapping medieval, renaissance and (to a lesser degree) baroque legal and cultural canons which have hitherto been glossed over in scholarly analyses of the earliest European explorations of Oceania (2005, 134).

I concur but stress how Quirós and his Spanish compatriots alike exhibited a particular relation to indigenous people, characterised by a staunch sense of superior spiritual and temporal potency, and an unflagging presumption to hastily incorporate foreign places and peoples into their expanding imperial congregation.³¹

This conforms to how both Fabian (1983) and McGrane (1989) suggest the "other" is represented in Renaissance theology and cosmography. Fabian plots an image that, he claims, dominates the perceived relation of the known Christian and the unknown pagan worlds: a series of concentric circles spreading out from the sacred core of Rome and Jerusalem through the world of the Circum-Mediterranean to the outer periphery of paganism. By the logic of incorporation people are moved from the one to the other by the process of saving souls, or else the space of the sacred core is moved to this outer realm by a process of Christian expansion. Clearly both these movements are abundantly illustrated by the accounts of Quirós' voyage: the place and person of the foreign is rendered rapidly proximate, precipitately incorporated as familiar. Fabian (1983) makes a strong contrast between this pre-modern and modern spatio-temporal logic, evinced in the more secular Enlightenment anthropology (see figure 3.4). He finds the rupture not just in the shift from a pervasively religious to a secular frame but in a shift from incorporation to distantiation: Enlightenment and evolutionary anthropologies by contrast deny the coeval presence of the "savage" or the "primitive" in the time and place of the European self. I will now critically consider this proposition in the later voyages of Bougainville and Cook, but first let me telegraphically situate their voyages in that late eighteenth-century moment in which both imperial power and Enlightenment knowledge expanded.

Figure 3.4. “Modern time/space: distancing” – Fabian’s Plotting of the Other in the Pre-Modern and Modern Periods.

Figure 1.1. Premodern time/space: incorporation

Source: Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object*. Second Edition. With an Introduction by Matti Bunzl. New York: Columbia University Press, 1983, 27. Reproduced with permission of Johannes Fabian.

The “Season of Observing”: Nature, Enlightened Explorations and Imperial Power

Despite the celebrated differences between France and Britain in this period, the cultural and historical background of both voyages is similar and indeed mutually constitutive. France and Britain were rivals in these late eighteenth-century navigations in the Pacific, which combined the new Enlightenment quest for knowledge of nature with imperial projects (Bloch and Bloch 1980; Jordanova 1980, 1989). The relation between that knowledge and that power has been hotly contested from the moment of these voyages to the present (see Smith 1985; Thomas 2003). Whereas Quirós’ voyage of 1606 occurred at the time of Spain’s “imperial climax and crisis,” the voyages of Bougainville and Cook occurred, rather, when the French and British empires were on an upward trajectory of expansion.

Doubtless the evidence of texts, images and objects from these voyages accords with the view that this was the “season of observing” (Denning 1998; cf. Merle this volume) and, indeed, the “season of collecting” (Thomas 1997, 93–132). The vast knowledge of Pacific peoples and places accumulated in this period was legitimated not just by the experience of “being there” but by scrupulous observation and by dedicated recordings of those observations in texts and images and in collecting of objects, flora and fauna, and on occasion Pacific people, like Omai and Tupai’a (see Hetherington 2001; Denning 2004; Jolly 2009). As Smith (1985) has shown, scientific fidelity in observing and recording nature became a predominant value in the drawing and painting of island views, landscapes, flora and fauna and portraits of people.³² This has been much discussed by Smith and many other art historians for Australia and New Zealand (e.g. the botanical drawings of Australian plants by Sydney Parkinson or the portraits of Maori by William Hodges). Textual accounts are no less obsessed with the visual, and with the faithful recording of the look of people and places and the events of embodied encounters.

This stress on observing, recording and collecting is palpable in the materials from both Bougainville’s and Cook’s voyages in the archipelago we now call Vanuatu. But how far did this stress on the faithful representation of the experience of “being there” also entail a tendency to distantiate Pacific peoples as the objects of an Enlightenment gaze? There was a persistent recognition of the shared humanity between observers and observed, but that was increasingly vitiated by a language of difference, of place and race, which kept indigenous people at a distance (see Jolly 1992). And perhaps, as Fabian (1983) has suggested, that entailed not just the denial of shared and coeval presence in the time and place of embodied encounters but a claim that these people inhabited a place and time which Europeans had moved *from*. These late eighteenth-century voyagers were influenced by and in dialogue with philosophers of both the

French and Scottish Enlightenments (see Tcherkézoff 2004a, 2004b, and this volume, on the complex links between Bougainville's narratives and Diderot's theoretical arguments; and Harris 1968 and Thomas 1997, 86–7, on Millar and others of the Scottish Enlightenment). Though divergent in details, most were developing stadial theories of human society, which paralleled the ontogeny of an individual's life from infancy through childhood to maturity (and on occasion civilised senility!). Although these late eighteenth-century plots were distinctive and should not be conflated with narratives of nineteenth-century evolutionism, they shared a common spatio-temporal arc: "others" were relegated to the infancy of savagery or the childhood of barbarism, an anterior time, a more primitive place, and, increasingly, a more bestial race, which Europeans had progressed beyond and eclipsed.

Louis de Bougainville, *A Voyage Round The World*, 1768: "Such an Abuse of the Superiority of our Power"

On his "voyage round the world" from 1766 to 1769 in the frigate *La Boudeuse* and the storeship *L'Etoile*, Bougainville sailed into what he called *Archipel des grandes Cyclades* (see figure 3.5). Here I focus primarily on the English translation of Bougainville by Johann Reinhold Forster, published in 1772. Bougainville sighted and renamed several of the northern islands: *Pentecôte* (Pentecost, named for Whitsuntide); *Île des Lepreux* (Isle of Lepers; as noted above, now Ambae) and *Aurore* (Aurora, because it was sighted at dawn; now Maewo). He also sighted the tiny peak *Pic de l'Etoile* (this was probably named for their storeship rather than its shape, which was rather like a "sugar-loaf" (Bougainville 1967 [1772], 287). On the island of Aurora, as well as the steep shores and dense woods, they observed several natives, all of them men in canoes. Though these canoes followed them along the coast, in contrast to Quirós' experience in the Banks, "none seemed desirous to come near us" (288). Finally, they found a good anchorage on the coast of Ambae, but saw men lined up on the shore with bows and arrows. Despite this forbidding aspect the French decided to land in order to get refreshments (especially for those who were sick with scurvy and "the venereal") and to gain "intelligence concerning the country" (288). Three armed boats preceded the main landing party and, despite initial signs of resistance, they landed unopposed: "in proportion as our people advanced, the savages retired" (289). When Bougainville landed, the advance party was already cutting wood and local men were helping them carry it to the boats.

At first these Ambae men kept their distance with arrows and stones poised, but when the Prince of Nassau (an aristocrat who was travelling with the voyage) advanced alone and proffered gifts of red cloth, the men accepted these and this occasioned "a kind of confidence between them" (Bougainville 1967 [1772], 289). This confidence may have originated in the affinities perceived between such red cloth and valued local textiles, plaited from pandanus, often dyed red, and

used as both male and female clothing and ceremonial valuables (see Bolton 2003; and figure 3.6).³³ Significantly, the Ambae men were completely uninterested in nails and iron (in dramatic contrast to Tahiti) and were loathe to part with their bows and arrows. They gave only a few arrows in return for the red cloth. Once he had laden the boats with fruits, water and wood, Bougainville peremptorily took possession of the islands by burying an engraved sign on an oak plank at the foot of a tree and made a hasty departure. As with Quirós on Gaua, it was at this point that men attacked them, using bows and arrows, ironwood clubs and stones, one of which slightly wounded a French sailor. The French responded with musket fire, at first in the air and then “better directed” (290). Bougainville does not report as to whether anyone was hurt, only that “they fled to the woods with great cries” (290).³⁴

Figure 3.5. Bougainville’s Tracks in 1768.

("Chart of the Discoveries in the South Pacific Ocean made by M. de Bougainville in 1768: Continuation of the Track of the French Ships").

Source: Bougainville, Louise de 1967 [1772] *A Voyage Round the World*. Translated from the French by John Reinhold Forster, Amsterdam. N. Israel: New York, Da Capo Press 1961, faces p.205. Reproduced with permission of ASHER Rare Books, Ijmuiden and the Perseus Books Group.

Bougainville found ni-Vanuatu men bellicose. Moreover, their propensity for war was for him a sign of their state of savagery, though presumably the state of armament of the French party did not condemn them to a similar status. Observing that the first group they met on Ambae appeared to be at war with another group from the western part of the island, he declared, "I believe they

are very wretched, on account of the internecine war, of which we were witnesses, and which brings great hardships upon them" (Bougainville 1967 [1772], 292).

Inter-tribal war was likely a condition of life in pre-colonial Vanuatu, but Bougainville overemphasises the warlike state of the indigenes, as he underemphasises that of the French. He took the rhythms of slit gongs as signs for rallying to battle, whereas slit gongs were used to communicate a wide variety of messages in rituals of rank and in daily life (likely including the unexpected arrival of strangers on curious ships with many sails). Slit gongs were not just "war drums" (see Layard 1942, 310ff). Similarly, Bougainville thought enclosed pallisades might be entrenchments, when they were more likely routine enclosures that kept pigs out of gardens and settlements.³⁵ Moreover, he did not recognise – as Quirós had done – that his own presence and the differential access to exchanges with foreigners probably precipitated greater preparedness for war and aggravated pre-existing differences or hostilities between ni-Vanuatu. In any case, his anxiety about the warlike state of the locals inhibited Bougainville from making another landfall in the group.

As on Quirós' voyage, most of the natives seen were men, standing armed on the shores of islands or sailing canoes tracking the foreigners along the coast. Women were seen but at a distance and were not party to the exchanges of goods or of violence. Unlike Quirós' experience on Guau however, Ambae men were wary rather than enticing and keenly enthusiastic to exchange goods. Interactions on Ambae, at first peaceful, quickly turned violent. The male activity of war thus becomes diacritical in Bougainville's labelling the natives "wretched" or "savage." Their debasement, compared to the noble Tahitians, was apparent to Bougainville in the crudeness of their houses, "into which one could not enter otherwise than creeping on all-fours" (Bougainville 1967 [1772], 292), in the character of their clothes, and especially in their bodies.

These islanders are of two colours, black and mulattoes. Their lips are thick, their hair woolly, and sometimes of a yellowish colour. They are short, ugly, ill-proportioned, and most of them infected with leprosy; a circumstance from which we call the island they inhabit, Isle of Lepers [*Ile des Lepreux*]. There appeared but few women; and they were no less disagreeable than the men; the latter are naked, and hardly cover their natural parts; the women wear some bandages to carry their children on their backs; we saw some of the cloths, of which they are made, on which were very pretty drawings, made with a fine crimson colour (Bougainville 1967 [1772], 290–1).

Figure 3.6. Pandanus red textile from Ambae, plaited and dyed by women but worn by men (“Men’s mat *singo tuvegi*, Ambae, Vanuatu”)

Collection: Museum der Kulturen, Basel, Vb 4486. Photo: Peter Horner. Reproduced with permission of the Museum der Kulturen, Basel.

So, apart from finding the pandanus textiles of Ambae women fine (see figure 3.6), Bougainville's pen portrait of the people of Ambae and their accoutrements is resoundingly negative.³⁶ They are ugly and unhealthy savages, far removed from Quirós' rosy portraits of clean and corpulent pagans. Moreover, as this quote suggests, there is another rupture here, for in the emergent language of race the people of Ambae are portrayed in a language that distantiates them, and as "wretched savages" they are more removed from the Europeans than the Tahitians. As if to clinch this adjudication, Bougainville quotes from Aotourou, their Tahitian guide and interpreter: "Our Taiti-man, who desired to go on shore with us, seemed to think this set of men very ugly; he did not understand a single word of their language" (Bougainville 1967 [1772], 292).

Bougainville's short stay on Ambae was the only landfall. After this, both ships were often becalmed in the waters of the archipelago, "shut up in a great gulph" (Bougainville, 293). They saw canoes crossing from island to island and saw (on what proved to be Santo) fertile ground, great plantations and a red colour in the mountains, which indicated minerals (probably ferric soils rather than Quirós' imagined treasures). Again men approached in canoes but as soon as they were within musket shot would come no closer. Perhaps word about the strangers had spread to nearby islands in the archipelago on the canoe crossings that were part of indigenous exchange circuits. Then, off the west coast of Santo, musket shot was heard from a boat that had come close to the shore and was dangerously proximate to three canoes, from which men were shooting arrows. The boat got free of these canoes. But Bougainville writes:

The negroes howled excessively in the woods, whither they had all retired, and where we could hear their drum beating. I immediately made signal to the boat to come on board, and I took my measures to prevent our being dishonoured for the future, by such an abuse of the superiority of our power (Bougainville 1967 [1772], 296).

They were in dire need of wood, water and fresh food. Bougainville thus sought a deeper anchorage on Santo, and one safe enough to protect his landing craft from attack, but found none. To have landed in such circumstances, he adjudged:

[W]e would have been obliged to have our arms in hand, in order to cover the workmen against surprises. We could not flatter ourselves that the natives should forget the bad treatment they had just received and should content to exchange refreshments (Bougainville 1967 [1772], 296–7).

Summarily leaving Santo and the consequences of these violent exchanges, Bougainville concluded that the inhabitants were of the "same species" as Ambae, "black, naked, except their nudities, wearing the same ornaments of collars, and bracelets, and using the same weapons" (Bougainville 1967 [1772], 297). He takes

a final passing shot at Quirós – Espiritu Santo was no great southern continent but just a larger island in a sea of islands.³⁷

Captain James Cook, 1774 – Distantiation or Incorporation of the “Other”?

On Cook’s second voyage, the *Resolution* and *Adventure* moved through the archipelago for six weeks between 18 July and 1 September 1774 (figure 3.7). As can be seen from the map, the longest contacts were on the islands of Malakula (at a place he named Port Sandwich, July 21–23) and Tanna (at a bay he named Port Resolution after one of the boats, August 5–20). In between there was a brief but violent encounter on Erromango.

This voyage is far more interesting and consequential not just because it was longer and entailed far more interactions with local people but also because we have several excellent sources and much more critical debate around these sources, texts and images. I have already written about the second voyage in Vanuatu: about the tensions between the several accounts, the gap between accounts of events and summarising distillations, the dissonance between texts and images (Jolly 1992) and especially about how women were perceived and related to (in contrast to Hawai’i, Tahiti and Aotearoa New Zealand, see Jolly 1993, 1996b, 1997). I first briefly summarise some of my earlier arguments about European perceptions, in relation to Fabian’s claims about the character of Enlightenment visions of “the other.” I then focus more closely on how we might reconstruct ni-Vanuatu perceptions of Europeans and how such visions might have been transformed by the exchange of words, gestures, goods and especially violence with the strangers.

Fabian (1983) claimed that there was a shift from the language of incorporation to distantiation in Enlightenment anthropology, through a denial of coeval presence. The discourses of secular science and an emergent evolutionism generated an image of the “other” that was more separated from the “us” of civilised Europe, as the space between them was reconfigured as a distance in time or epoch. There was a novel equation drawn between contemporaneous living peoples and the past from which Europe had supposedly progressed, and societies were arranged along a continuum from savagery to barbarism to civilisation (Fabian 1983, 27; see figure 3.4). An emergent language of race seemingly reinscribed that sense of difference and distance. Yet, as I argued earlier (Jolly 1992), it is wrong to conflate the inchoate fluidity of the perceptions of late eighteenth-century voyagers with the more rigid racialist science and evolutionism of many nineteenth-century thinkers.³⁸ And so I juxtaposed the oft-quoted adjudications of Cook himself apropos Malukulans as an “Apish nation” with other voices on that voyage, most notably Georg Forster, who rather asked “who are we to make such ill-natured comparisons between men and monkeys?”³⁹

Figure 3.7. The tracks of the Resolution and Adventure on Cook's second voyage, 1774. ("Vanuatu/New Hebrides Islands, showing Cook's track in 1774").

Source: Nicholas Thomas, *Discoveries: The Voyages of Captain Cook*. London: Allen Lane, 2003, 424. Map © 2003 Jeffrey L. Ward. Used by permission.

A close reading of the several voyage narratives and the magnum opus by Johann Reinhold Forster, *Observations Made During a Voyage Round the World* (1996 [1778]), suggested that, rather than implicating an immutable biology witnessed in the colour of skin, the shape of faces and the texture of hair, far more fluid and contested notions of human difference prevailed in contemporary concepts of “race,” “nation” and “species” and that the value of shared humanity co-existed with such a radical stress on difference (see Douglas 2006). Moreover, the effects of climate and distance from cultural origins were seen to be equally crucial in determining differences between Pacific peoples. The language of progressive evolutionism jostled with a language of devolution and degeneration so that, for example, the Maori were described by Johann Reinhold Forster as “slipping down” because of their isolation, their need to cultivate new crops and the rigours of a cold climate (see Jolly 1993).

I also argued that the pen portraits of the several texts need to be compared with the rather different views suggested by the drawings and paintings of William Hodges and the engravings based on these. In particular the engravings based on the finished version of Hodges’ *Man of the Island of Mallicollo* and *Woman of the Island of Tanna* represent views of ni-Vanuatu men and women which were ennobling and rather flattering, in contrast to the textual laments about ugly, ill-proportioned and disagreeable bodies (see figure 1.3, Introduction, and figure 3.8). Still, there was at least an aesthetic evolutionism (see Thomas 1996, xxviii–xxxv) which typically denigrated the unfortunate Malakulans at the expense of the felicitous Tahitians (see figure 3.9). Since I have elsewhere written much about how perceptions of, and relations with, women were foundational to such views, I here focus on ni-Vanuatu men in four crucial aspects of embodied exchange: words, gestures, goods and violence. I speculate about how ni-Vanuatu perceived the strangers and how the events of encounters unfolding on Malakula, Erromango and Tanna might have shaped the reciprocal perceptions of Europeans and ni-Vanuatu. Let me first situate this in relation to some interpretations by Anne Salmond (2003).

Figure 3.8. "Woman of the Island of Tanna. Drawn from Nature by William Hodges, engraved by James Basire" (likely William Blake in Basire's studio).

Source: James Cook, *A Voyage Towards the South Pole, and Round the World*. London: Wm. Strahan & Thos. Cadell, 1777. Plate No XLV. Reproduced with permission of the National Library of Australia, nla.aus-nk5677-2-s12x.

Figure 3.9. "Omai. Drawn from Nature by William Hodges, engraved by James Caldwell."

Source: James Cook, *A Voyage Towards the South Pole, and Round the World*. London: Wm. Strahan & Thos. Cadell, 1777. Plate No LVII. Reproduced with permission of the National Library of Australia, nla.pic-an7682836.

"Monboddo's Monkeys" and the "Ghosts of their Forebears"

In her most recent magnum opus Anne Salmond (2003) has offered a superb distillation of the three voyages of Captain Cook in the South Seas. There is no doubt that her scholarship, like that of Marshall Sahlins, consummately infuses a dedicated reading of the voyage sources (and a few select secondary sources) with an anthropological sensibility about Pacific cultures. This book, like another text published in the same year by Nicholas Thomas (2003), is designed to be accessible to the general reader and eschews that scholarly style of history writing, "with a protective bristle of footnotes hanging off every page" (Clendinnen 2003, 4). The day-by-day narrative style which Salmond deploys, perforce, tends to smooth over some of the differences emergent between the several sources, in the interests of a more comprehensible and congenial account of experience. The narrative arc of her story is ultimately an epic, which highlights not the conquest and colonialism which ensued in the wake of Cook's voyages, but the "dreamlike quality" of these extraordinary encounters in which "two worlds" collided. Though acknowledging the violence of this collision, especially on Cook's third voyage, she argues for the cross-cultural depth of the encounter and the mutual transformation it effected. So she casts Cook as neither hero nor villain in an imperialist imaginary, but as a man who became more and more Polynesian, not just in the eyes of Pacific people, "our ancestor Kuki," but in his own self-perception. Thus, in lieu of Fabian's contention about the Enlightenment tendency to distance the other from the European self, here the "great navigator" is rather seen as incorporating the "other" as part of himself.

Like the voyages themselves, the book does not drop anchor long in the islands of the western Pacific: a mere twenty pages of chapter 13 are devoted to a depiction of encounters in Vanuatu. That chapter bears the startling title "Monboddo's Monkeys."⁴⁰ Here Salmond offers an elegant summary of the several primary sources and the insights of later commentators. But, like Beaglehole and others before her, Salmond is inclined to be too categorical in imputing meanings and motivations to indigenous people and at times unduly confident about the ethnographic authority of her later sources. Apropos the first encounters off Malakula she says, "These people spoke a language unlike any they had previously encountered, constantly using the word '*Tomarr*', meaning 'ancestors.' According to later accounts, they understood the Europeans to be the ghosts of their forebears and approached them with caution, for such spirits could be malevolent" (Salmond 2003, 265). Later, after an account of the violence between Erromangan men and Cook's crews, which prevented them from landing, she says, "Now that these 'ghosts' had shown themselves to be hostile, they wanted to drive them away, and they succeeded" (268). Finally, on the island of Tanna, she interprets the offerings of food to the strangers in ritual terms, "Paowang and two other elders piled up some bunches of plantains,

a yam and two taro roots marked by four small reeds as an offering to the white-skinned ‘ghosts’” (270). So, the original translation of *Tomarr* as ancestors, ghosts or malevolent spirits has migrated with Cook from Malakula to Erromango, to Tanna.

Yet, as Salmond herself acknowledges, the communication of words and gestures in these early encounters was inflected with great uncertainty, doubt and sometimes outright misrecognition. Their Tahitian guide and interpreter, Tupaia, who had been so helpful in many other islands of the Pacific where cognate Polynesian languages were spoken, was little use as a translator of these very different languages of Vanuatu (see Jolly 2009). Moreover, the languages spoken on these three islands were not mutually intelligible and on each island several different languages (not dialects) were spoken. So, despite the valiant efforts of Johann Reinhold Forster to record vocabulary, there were often mistranslations, misrecognitions and perhaps even wilful deceptions in this faltering communication of words. So, the very name of the island Tanna derives from an early mistranslation. In asking what the island was called, Johann Reinhold Forster pointed to the ground, and his Tannese interlocutors replied with the word *tanna*, which means land or ground in one of the Tannese languages (see Introduction, this volume). Later, a rather more egregious example of the consequences of mistranslation on Tanna is reported. I quote from Salmond’s own depiction of this incident:

On 15 August when Johann Forster was in the forest collecting plants, he came across a nutmeg tree where some pigeons were feeding. He asked his guide the local name of this tree, and thinking that Johann was pointing at the birds, the man told him ‘*guanattan*’ (*yawinatuan* or ‘green pigeon’ in his dialect). Upon returning to the landing place, Johann showed the leaves from this tree to another group of people, who gave it another name altogether. When Johann testily insisted that this was a ‘*guanattan*,’ the guide tried to get his fellow islanders to agree, in an effort to placate the stranger. As soon as Johann realised what was going on, he flew into a rage, yelled that he was being cheated, and according to William Wales, shoved the guide with his foot and spat in his face for giving him false information (Salmond 2003, 274).⁴¹

This incident precipitated a violent quarrel between Johann Forster and Captain Clerke, which I cannot detail here (but see Salmond 2003, 274–5). Yet, this surely suggests that the translation of words and signs was not an exact science and so I am less confident than Salmond that we can unequivocally suggest that Malakulans, Erromangans and Tannese all perceived the Europeans as the “ghosts” of their forebears, returning especially in their malevolent aspect. Let us consider the way in which this word is recorded in the context of the first encounters on Malakula, using primarily the sources of Sparrman (1953), Marra

(1967 [1775]) and *The Resolution Journal of Johann Reinhold Forster, 1772–1775* (Forster 1982).

Green Boughs, Salt Water and *Tumora*, *Towmarro*

On 21 July 1774, as the ships approached the island of Malakula, men waded out into the sea with clubs, bows and arrows in their hands but also waving green branches. After exploring the coast, Cook found a bay that was sheltered by a coral reef and there anchored (at a place he called Port Sandwich; again, after Lord Sandwich). They were approached by several men in canoes waving green branches, dipping their hands in the sea and pouring water over their heads and faces. Here are some excerpts from Marra's account:

The ship was scarce moored before the natives came off in their canoes from the East side of the bay, and many swam from the West side; the distance not above a quarter of a mile. They were of the negroe kind, quite black and woolly headed, poor mean despicable looking wretches, but armed with bows and poisoned arrows, with every one a club made of hard wood flung over his shoulders. ... As soon as they approached the ship, or came near any of the crew, they sprinkled water over their heads, patted their heads with their open hands, crying Towmarro, Towmarro; but offering no kind of rudeness nor misbehaviour of any kind. They kept about the ship, with lights, after it was dark, and when they had sufficiently gratified their curiosity, they went quietly away (1967 [1775], 260–2).⁴²

Sparrman's account offers more on the language of words and signs:

They were remarkable for their cleverness and quick-wittedness, and they could at once grasp and repeat clearly whatever English or any words I spoke. We, on the other hand, had far more difficulty in imitating even a few of their words, which were rich in consonants, and expressed with noise and puffing, as, for instance, Assumbrassum, Bruhmmbrhum and Psoh, the latter being pronounced with an explosion and a shooting forward of the head, not unlike the grimace of an ape. Sometimes they used a hissing sound like that of geese. One of them said he was called Mambrum, another Bonombrooi. I remember that they often uttered a word rich in vowels – *tumora* (1953, 135).

And later:

As a sign of friendship and peace, they poured water on their heads with their hands, and seemed very satisfied when anyone replied to them with the same ceremony. Do these savages worship the watery element, as the Persians worship its opposite, fire? Have they perhaps some conception of water as an emblem of cleansing, purity, and truth for

body and soul or morals, as among the Egyptians and Jews? Or was their self-baptism reminiscent of an ancient rite which was performed and preached far and wide by the disciples of John and Christ for reform and chastity? (1953, 136).

Sparrman's series of rhetorical questions spirals into a sort of ethnographic vertigo. But he is not alone in his sense of puzzlement. And this perplexity and wonder at the strangeness of the strangers was shared by ni-Vanuatu. Alongside that word frequently recorded among the Malakulans (*tomarr*), later in Tanna, many of the voyage sources report another prevalent word – transcribed variously as *hibao* or *hebow*. Says Marra, “When these people make a wonder at any thing, they cry Hebow, and shake their right hand” (1967 [1775], 275). Sparrman describes an early incident on Tanna, when Cook gave an old man in a canoe a mirror, in which he looked many times with astonishment as he fitfully paddled his canoe to shore. There he was surrounded by many other men,

and while they were looking at themselves in the mirror, there were thousands of shrill outcries of ‘*hibao*’, for with this the Tannese announced their wonderment over anything strange that they noticed among us, such as our white faces, clothing, weapons (Sparrman 1953, 143).⁴³

There are many self-conscious reflections by writers on this voyage as to how ni-Vanuatu saw them. So, Marra speculates:

Here we cannot help remarking, that, by the savages bringing every where, upon the approach of the ship, cocoa-nuts, and other fruits, it should seem that they imagined the strangers to be a people like themselves, come from some distant island to visit them; and that therefore, it being usual for such visitors to be in want of such refreshments, it might be the custom for the inhabitants upon their first coming, to supply them; but that when they saw a people totally unlike themselves, and in a vessel too different from any they had ever before seen, it was but natural for them to retreat, not knowing their errand, and dreading perhaps an invasion, or some mischief to befall their country. Something of this kind must certainly have been the case, otherwise it is not easy to account for their coming off in their canoes loaded with fruit, and then retiring back without daring to go near the people they intended to supply (1967 [1775], 269–70).

And so we have the question: were these foods left warily for the strangers as supplications to those who were obviously hungry “white-skinned ghosts” (as Salmond suggests) or were they the offerings of hospitality to visiting human neighbours, whose arrival might presage conflict as well as an exchange of goods? This is not a question that the sources allow us categorically to answer,

and indeed both interpretations might have been simultaneously sustained by ni-Vanuatu as they tried to work out how to respond to the strangers. The strangers were a people “like themselves” but also a “people totally unlike themselves”. I am not dismissing the argument that the strangers *might* have been seen as returning ancestors or ghosts. Indeed, there is much evidence from later oral histories of ni-Vanuatu that, from early European contacts through to the experience of Americans in World War II, powerful strangers are often linked to the category of departed primordial gods or ancestral spirits (White and Lindstrom 1989, 404ff; Jolly 2003).

Certainly, the ways in which both Malakulans and Tannese handled their embodied encounters with the strangers suggests that there was a spiritual as much as a corporeal threat. Indeed, given indigenous aetiologies, corporeal and spiritual danger to the person could hardly be separated. So, as well as the wariness of food being left on the beaches for collection, we also have frequent reports that whenever objects were received, ni-Vanuatu men wrapped them in green leaves and that whenever the strangers touched their bodies, they wiped their skin with these same leaves.⁴⁴ Says Marra:

It is not a little remarkable, that the natives of this island were more scrupulous in taking any thing from the sailors than those of any other nation, and never would touch with their bare hands what was given them, but always received it between green leaves, which they afterwards tied up, and carried upon the ends of their clubs; and if ever any of the sailors touched their skin, they always rubbed the part with the like green leaf (1967 [1775], 275).⁴⁵

This may have been because the strangers were seen as powerful ghosts, but it might also be that exchanges with strangers threatened their own sacred power (and the wrapping was thus a sheath that protected such a loss) or it might be that they were wary that the strangers might attempt to ensorcell them with the residues of their own bodies, through the exchange of sweat or the touch of skin.⁴⁶

Similarly, the “self-baptism” with salt water, which Sparrman describes above, is an act which allows no definitive ethnographic translation. To this day ni-Vanuatu use the medium of salt water not so much for purification as for sacralisation and desacralisation in ritual moments when powerful sacred forces endanger the living. So in some ceremonies after childbirth, for example, infants are taken for baths in the ocean at five-day intervals to strengthen them and to bring them from a state of liminality and danger into the world of the living (see Jolly 1994, 146; Layard 1942, 179). The head is the most sacred part of a person, through which the power of ancestors is transmitted to the living, and thus requires special attention. Salt water is also used as a medium in the transfer of malevolent spirits out the body of a person possessed, in which case the spirit

once exorcised is trapped in a bamboo tube containing salt water (see Jolly 1994, 168–70). Anointing one’s own head with salt water can be seen to strengthen or protect the spiritual state of the person, in a situation of danger, but it does not necessarily tell us that the person was being threatened by a “ghost.”

What, then, of the seemingly definitive evidence that Malakulans called Europeans *tomarr*, a word which Salmond translates as ancestor or ghost? Contemporary linguistic studies of the languages of the peoples of Port Sandwich in Malakula rather record the word *ramač* as the word for ghost or devil and the word *na-tamat* for those islands off the south-east coast of Malakula (Charpentier 1979, 1995). This latter word is very close to the word for “peace” in many of the languages of North Vanuatu, variously *tamwate*, *tamwata*, *tagwata*, *tamate* (see also Deacon 1934, 750, *ni-tamate* “prayer, peace”), while in the Port Sandwich language it becomes *ramar*, which also means “neutral place”.⁴⁷ Is it possible that the Malakulans who apprehensively approached the sailing boats in their canoes were rather uttering this word, invoking peace? This seems implied in Georg Forster’s observation that they were “repeating the word Tomarr or Tomarro continually, which seemed to be an expression equivalent to the Taheitan Tayo (friend)” (Forster 2000 [1777] 2: 480). I am not arguing this contrary case, but rather suggesting that the sources, including the seemingly definitive verdicts of later ethnographers, allow for more uncertainty than Salmond admits.

There are other gestures that the strangers took unambiguously as signs of greeting or peace-making – namely, the waving of green boughs (cf. Tcherkézoff, this volume). Johann Reinhold Forster says this of the Malakulans:

Several a shore & in the boats presented green bows of plants especially the *Croton variegatum* and *Dracena terminalis* Linn: & waved with them towards us: nevertheless the greater part of the people were armed with bows & arrows, & some few with Spears (1982, 565).

Cook reciprocated with the waving of green boughs in return, which seemed to gratify the Malakulans (although whether he chose these precise species is unclear). This mutual exchange of waving green boughs is represented in the engraving of the landing at Malakula as a sign of peaceful greeting and civility. And most of the contemporary commentators were persuaded that this was its meaning. So, Marra describes Erromangans making “signs for the voyagers to land, by waving green boughs, the emblems of peace” (1967 [1775], 266). But the use of the two species of plants named by Forster is suggestive, for both croton and dracaenas are plants used in many islands of the archipelago to mark sacred states (e.g. they are planted in the rites of rank-taking in the *magi*, or graded society, of Malakula) and to cordon off sacred areas (see Jolly 1994, 189ff; Layard 1942, 709). Despite the initial hopes of peace expressed in Malakula, Erromango and Tanna, encounters on all these islands culminated in violent

exchanges. And in these unfolding events it was not just the alleged bellicosity of indigenous men that was to blame but a tendency to violent overreaction on the part of both Cook and his men, vastly at odds with his desire for moderation and “gentle civility” with the natives. I will describe three successive incidents, on Malakula, Erromango and Tanna.

Pacifying Exchanges and “The Power of our *Jus Canonicum*”

On Malakula the ships were at first regularly visited by men in the early dawn, coming aboard unarmed and “swarming up the masts with the greatest readiness and confidence” (Sparrman 1953, 137). When the numbers became too great, orders were given to the boatwatch to restrict the visitors. “One Indian who was motioned away however took the sign in an unfriendly manner” (137). One of the sailors pushed his canoe off with a boat hook and the man shoved back with a bamboo cane. The “Indian” took an arrow from his quiver and was about to shoot with his bow when one of his compatriots already on board leapt out of the cabin window to try to stop him. In the ensuing struggle Captain Cook was called on deck and aimed his gun at the man, who then turned around and aimed at Cook instead. At this point Cook shot him in the head with smallshot:

[B]ut after the wounded man had merely rubbed the wounds on his face a little, he soon plucked up courage again for revenge with a choice poisoned arrow, which he placed in his bow, but was frustrated again with a larger charge of shot [this time from Pickersgill, not Cook] so that his comrades had to paddle away with him (Sparrman 1953, 137).

Another man who fired an arrow at Cook was shot with a musket ball (which missed) and then a cannon was fired, which caused all the Malakulan men to paddle back to shore. Marra claims that one of the men in departing discharged an arrow at an officer and “paid for his audacity with his life” (1967 [1775], 262).

Cook tried to undo the effects of this spiralling violence later that day by landing alone and unarmed and carrying a green branch. The man who seemed to be leader of the Malakulans likewise disarmed and offered Cook a green branch and a pig. From this point onward there was an extended exchange of goods, by which the Europeans hoped to show their willingness to be friends. The Malakulans “did not show any enthusiasm over our iron ware” (Sparrman 1953, 138; and certainly did not try to steal nails like the Tahitians). They showed far more interest in red cloth, marble paper and barkcloth from Tahiti. In exchange for these “few trifles,” the Malakulans offered weapons, but, according to Marra, were deaf to Cook’s entreaties for water and more food. “None of these people brought either flesh or fruit to dispose of; nor could the captain procure more than one lean hog, though there were many within sight” (Marra 1967 [1775], 263).

Although Cook and the Forsters were allowed to do some sightseeing that afternoon around a village where they saw lots of alluring fresh food – piles of yams and many pigs and chickens – they were not offered any (which rather subverts the image of abundant supplicatory offerings to returning ancestral spirits). They were eventually allowed to cut wood, but penetration further inland was refused:

However, we botanists sometimes managed to creep three or four paces inside the edge of the woods from the bare coral beach, and succeeded in hastily gathering a few plants, much as people pull firebrands out of the fire; but soon they motioned us back to the beach, as being impertinent, unjustified, and thrusting violators of their prohibition (Sparrman 1953, 138).

The strangers were vulnerable not just because of their need of wood, water and fresh food but also because of their scientific curiosity. It is unclear what the Malakulans made of their strong desire to collect leaves, but their prohibition on the strangers' movement seems to accord more with resistance to unwanted invasion, or perhaps suspicion of motives of sorcery, than the way in which dangerous ancestral spirits might be treated (see also Mosko this volume).

Later cycles of violence on Erromango and Tanna might again have induced ni-Vanuatu to see these strangers as unwanted and bellicose invaders rather than returning ghosts who had to be supplicated.⁴⁸ In early August, Cook anchored off the east coast of Erromango, taking two armed boats ashore in search of a safe harbour. He disembarked in a bay, carrying only a green branch, and was surrounded by a large crowd of armed warriors. He exchanged a few trinkets for a bamboo tube filled with water, some coconuts and a yam with a man who seemed a leader. But then, when Cook climbed back on board one of the boats, some of the armed warriors grabbed the gangplank while others seized the oars. Cook pointed his musket at the leader, who he thought had betrayed him, but his musket misfired and in the ensuing rain of arrows and spears discharged by the warriors, Cook ordered his men to open fire. Despite the unreliability of the British flints, at least four Erromangan men appeared to have been killed by musket fire,⁴⁹ while only two of the sailors were slightly wounded. Although a "few Indians returned with the captured oars" (Sparrman 1953, 142), it was

considered expedient to teach them to realise the power of our *jus canonicum*, of which they had only heard explosions; therefore a four-pound ball was loosed off at them which, though it fell short of the beach, frightened them so much that not one was seen again. We saw the oars standing against a bush, but with the good breeze that sprang up we preferred to make sail and find some better place (Sparrman 1953, 142).

Finally I want to return again to a violent incident on Tanna that I have discussed earlier (Jolly 1992), especially in relation to the reflexive character of the voyage narrative by Georg Forster (2000 [1777], 1968). In general the stay on Tanna was far more pacific. Cook developed strong relationships with the leader Paowang,⁵⁰ and the procurement of wood, shale ballast and water and the collection of natural specimens, vocabularies and cultural knowledge proceeded in a less inhibited way than on Malakula or Erromango.⁵¹ But a violent incident marred their last days on Tanna. I have earlier observed (Jolly 1992) how Georg Forster's construction of this incident in his narrative reinforced a sense of irony and self-criticism, and I here repeat some of that earlier analysis. It occurred while he and Sparrman were abroad in the interior, on their habitual naturalistic treks, although this time on separate tracks. While strolling through the Tannese countryside observing the varied landscape of field and forest and enjoying the calm of human cultivation Forster is led to reflect on how the Tannese had gradually come to trust them: "Our cool deliberate conduct, our moderation and the constant uniformity in all our proceedings, had conquered their jealous fears" (Forster 2000 [1777], 2: 549. Rather than viewing the Europeans as a base and treacherous enemy, the Tannese now saw them as fellow creatures. Forster then enters into a rapturous reverie about the intimacy they had been accorded:

They permitted us to visit them in their shady recesses, and we sat down in their domestic circles with that harmony which befits the members of one great family. In a few days they began to feel a pleasure in our conversation, and a new disinterested sentiment, of more than earthly mould, even friendship, filled their heart. This retrospect was honourable to human nature, as it made us the benefactors of a numerous race (Forster 2000 [1777], 2: 549).

But coming from the interior on that day they met a woman trembling with fear and then some men, who motioned for them to return to the beach. There they saw two Tannese men holding another who was dead – a musket ball had penetrated his arm and his ribs. This had been fired by a sentry who was guarding the sailors while they were felling wood. A Tannese man had deliberately crossed the boundary line which, as usual, had been drawn to prevent local people coming too close. This man disregarded several warnings, crossed and recrossed and then took aim with a bow and arrow at the sentry who returned the lethal shot (Forster 2000 [1777], 2: 550). Cook attempted to appease the Tannese by putting the culprit in irons (although this act was later undone by Edgcombe, the lieutenant of Marines; cf. Adams 1984, 29–30).

In his description of this violent incident Forster's sympathy for the dead man is clear. He was trespassing across the boundary "perhaps with no other motive at present than that of asserting his liberty of walking where he pleased" (Forster 2000 [1777], 2: 550). Forster thought the Tannese would be justified in

thinking of them as a “cruel and treacherous people who had polluted their island” (550) and was amazed that they took no retribution for the death of this man. He and Sparrman were

struck with the moderation of the people, who had suffered us to pass by them unmolested, when they might easily have taken a severe revenge for the murder of their countryman (Forster 2000 [1777], 2: 550).⁵²

Forster concluded blackly that “one dark and detestable action effaced all the hopes with which I had flattered myself” (Forster 2000 [1777], 2: 551). He then generalised this incident on Tanna to an overall appraisal of the voyage, lamenting the “many rash acts which we had perpetrated at almost every island in our course” (551). Although eager to collect knowledge about all these islands, he thought that this should never be pursued if violence was a likely result. Thus, on Tanna they had to give up all hopes of approaching the summit of the volcano, where “new observations” would have been possible “if the jealousy of the natives had not continually prevented our examining it” (552). Tannese resistance he construed as possessiveness or mistrust, rather than malevolence. Similarly on Erromango, he was not persuaded that people had had hostile intentions in detaining their boat, but thought rather that by levelling a musket at their chief, they had provoked the attack (505). While generally adhering to the opinion that contact with Europeans should be beneficial and improving he concluded that “it is much to be lamented that the voyages of Europeans cannot be performed without being fatal to the nations whom they visit” (505). He was not alone in his critique of the violence on Tanna. “It was most deplorable that, after fourteen days’ sojourn here, on the day arranged for our departure we were compelled to stain the hospitable shore with the blood of a native” (Sparrman 1953, 150–1).

On the Beach, Unsettled Colonies and “Dancing With Strangers”

In Cook’s journal entry for 20 July 1774, he observes that “Off the North end of the latter Island lies a rock above water not far from the Shore” (Cook 1969, 459). The island he depicts here is Pentecost and the rock probably Vathubwe, a place known in Sia Raga cosmography as the island’s “stepping stone,” the ancestral starting point of all humans who arrived on the island and the place where spirits jump off and leave after death. Says John Taylor, “Cook could not have known that his northerly approach, like that of Bougainville before him, enacted the retracing of more primordial itineraries” (2008, 51). According to the voyage narratives, Cook observed Pentecost (Whitsuntide) only from afar, but William Wales imaginatively reconfigured the intensive cultivation of its taro gardens into something more familiar: “imagining one’s self in sight of England, with an extensive View of enclosed Fields before one” (Cook 1969,

459). Despite this prospect of a land available for civilised cultivation, Cook never set foot on the beach or in these “Fields.”

But today on the beach at Aroa there is a local testament to Cook’s arrival, in words carved in stone. Sand has swept over these rocks, the inscriptions are no longer clear, but some Sia Raga insist that Cook himself inscribed them. There are three different accounts of what is written there: “New Hebrides discovered by James Cook–Moon,” “Sun–Moon” or “Captain Cook 1887” (Taylor 2008, 51). One of Taylor’s Sia Raga interlocutors says there is “a picture of a crescent moon,” traces of Cook’s footprints and “a mark from his walking stick” (Taylor, pers. comm., July 2005):

Just as the founding ancestor Bwatmahana and his nemesis Tagaro in their primordial journeys across the island created features in the landscape as signs of their power and passing, so too did Captain Cook leave his mark, appropriately on one of those Pacific beaches crucially situated as a boundary (Taylor 2008, 52).

Despite the contest about the inscription, the fact that the date engraved on the rock is more than a century after our received histories of Cook’s voyage in Vanuatu, and that none of the primary sources suggest Cook made landfall on North Pentecost, this rock is for Sia Raga *dovonana* “memorial and proof” of his arrival. It seems, then, that for some descendants of those who had *no* such embodied contact with Cook, the idea of assimilating the voyages of Cook to the itineraries of their ancestors is compelling.⁵³ There is no such memorial of Quirós or Bougainville in stone or the flesh of memory.⁵⁴ But intriguingly in Sia Raga history Captain Cook is generally thought to have arrived *after* Jimmy, another white man (whose persona seems, rather, to derive from the era of the labour trade).⁵⁵ He was kidnapped, adopted and he assumed the clothes and customs of Sia Raga for many years, before he departed with some later visiting Europeans. The narrative arc of both the story of Cook and the story of Jimmy not only *re-memembers* the voyages of Europeans through the itineraries of indigenous gods or ancestors but also reflects on much *later* entanglements between ni-Vanuatu and Europeans, which were a part of their shared history of colonialism. In Sia Raga idiom, the ways of the place (*alenan vanua*) and those of Europeans (*alenan tuturani*) are *wasi*. As John Taylor has argued in his superb recent book (2008), the same idiom is used to depict the relation of the two moieties, the two sides of a house, or the two halves of a pandanus textile plaited together; they are necessarily imbricated or “stuck, entangled.” They are locked in the tense embrace of both attraction and repulsion. Re-memembering Cook in contemporary North Pentecost Vanuatu is an act of memory saturated with moral and political portent for the present, as Deborah Bird Rose has argued (1984, 2000) for similar stories about Captain Cook arriving in places far from his known landfalls in Australia.

Figure 3.10. The late Bong or Bumangari Kaon of Bunlap in the 1970s

Photograph: Margaret Jolly, taken August 1977. Previously published in Margaret Jolly, *Women of the Place: Kastom, colonialism and gender in Vanuatu*. Chur, Switzerland; Philadelphia: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1994, 4 (Plate 2). Reproduced with permission of Harwood Academic Publishers/Taylor & Francis Books UK.

In my view the memorialisation of Cook as akin to indigenous gods and ancestors is likely not a perpetuation of an indigenous oral history created at the moment of the embodied encounters of 1774 and generalised throughout the archipelago. More probably it is an oral historical reflection on the later centuries of colonial encounters and the way in which Europeans and ni-Vanuatu became “stuck together,” entangled in a shared history. To claim Cook as akin to indigenous gods or ancestors is also to incorporate his power and in a way to domesticate it by making it indigenous. It has, I suggest, the same moral and political portent as the claim made by the late Bumangari Kaon, my interlocutor in South Pentecost in the early 1970s (see figure 3.10) that Europeans are like flighty birds, while ni-Vanuatu are like strong-rooted banyans, precedent and powerful as the “people of the place” (Jolly 1982, 1994). But, whereas Bumangari Kaon stressed the difference and distance between the ways of the place, *kastom* and European ways, Kolombas Todali and the Christian Sia Raga, with whom John Taylor lived thirty years later, embraced that difference within a logic of complementary opposites, which are like the sides of a house or a red pandanus textile, “stuck together,” attracted and repulsed, similar and different.

Thus, we might re-member Fabian’s propositions about the shifting language of sameness and difference, of incorporation and distantiation of others, in European visions from many centuries ago, by looking at how ni-Vanuatu too deploy such languages of shared humanity with, and ethnic and cultural difference from, Europeans. These shifting adjudications are situated in space and time, not just in the sense that they are contextually or historically fluid, but that present or proximate relations can be projected onto a past time or a more distant place. By re-memorising Captain Cook as a later figure in a “beach crossing,” Sia Raga affirm his sameness and his difference. But simultaneously, they proclaim their own precedence as the first people of the place and the powerful custodians of an independent future, in defiance of the compelling power of development and globalisation, arguably the discourses of teleological evolutionism in the twenty-first century.

But, we might ask, are the ways of Europeans and indigenes “stuck together” in quite the same way in places like Vanuatu and Australia, or Aotearoa New Zealand, or Hawai‘i? There is perhaps a rather different resonance in the recirculation of stories of beach crossings in those places where settler colonialism still prevails and where the narratives of exploration are foundational stories in the continuing narrative justification of white settlement. For authors like Anne Salmond (2003) concerned to redress the consequences of colonialism and to push for the values of biculturalism in the present, in her own country of Aotearoa New Zealand, there is surely a desire to move beyond the logic of “two worlds” and “between worlds” to the position where Kuki might become an ancestor of Pacific peoples too. This is a noble aim, but we need to acknowledge how our contemporary political projects might structure our historical and

anthropological imaginations in large and small ways. Perhaps one consequence of the stress on the bicultural agenda, in reconciling Maori and Pakeha in Aotearoa New Zealand, has been a tendency to occlude some of the deeper ancestry between Maori and other Pacific peoples – when they are constructed divergently as “natives” and “migrants”. In such ways, their relationships to each other are defined not through their shared history of ancestral voyages or contemporary connections, but through the narrative of the bicultural nation-state. Their relation to each other is thus mediated by their respective relations to Pakeha (Jolly 2001; Teaiwa and Mallon 2006).⁵⁶ The privileged “beach crossing” is again that of European and Islander (see Jolly 2009).

Recirculating stories of first contact and especially of Captain Cook surely assume a particular local inflection in the context of Hawai‘i and Australia too. The titanic contest between Sahlins and Obeyesekere as to whether Cook was perceived as a manifestation of Lono by eighteenth-century Hawaiians was not just a scholarly debate but echoed in the politics of the sovereignty struggle of twentieth-century Hawaiians in relation to foreign interests and the culture of “militourism” consequent on becoming the fiftieth state of the United States of America (see Teaiwa 1992). At the time of the Sahlins–Obeyesekere debate, a Sydney tabloid ran a banner headline: “Captain Cook Hero or Villain”, and in a review of the latest flurry of Cook books a reviewer in *The Canberra Times* asks “James Cook: benign explorer or invader?” (Fuller 2008). As Nicholas Thomas has observed, scholarly works like popular appraisals “tend to lurch between the celebration of the discoverers and their demonization” as “evil harbingers of colonialism” (Forster 2000, xiv; cf. Williams 2008, 3–4). But, if we are to get beyond this tendency to lurch, we need to acknowledge that moral and political concerns pervade not just the contemporary oral histories of Pacific Islanders but the contemporary textual constructions of scholars. Stories of past Oceanic encounters are remembered in the moral and political relations we construct between those pasts and our presents.

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Notes

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Vanuatu is, of course, an anachronism in that during the three voyages considered in this chapter, the names of the several islands and the archipelago changed from Terra Australis del Espíritu Santo to Archipel des grandes Cyclades, to New Hebrides/Nouvelles-Hébrides. There was no indigenous name for the entire archipelago and no indigenous sense of its unity until the mid-twentieth century in the colonial and postcolonial periods. Although I use Vanuatu as a transhistorical label and even call the people of the place ni-Vanuatu, I prefer this anachronism to the shifting foreign appellations of earlier periods.

² There is some contention about the spelling of this name. As Jack-Hinton (1969) notes, Quirós claimed he had changed the traditional spelling Austral to Austrial in recognition of the royal connection between Austria and the king of Spain. It is possible that on the voyage he actually named the island La Australia del Espíritu Santo, since this name appears in a manuscript which predates the Quirós–Bermúdez *relacion*. In two later reports he writes of *Las Tierras Australes* and *La Australia*. It was given various names by the different members of the expedition, de Prado called it *La Grande Australia del Espíritu Santo*, de Leza *La Parte Austral del Espíritu Santo*, and Torres *Espíritu Santo*, the name it bears today. Luque and Mondragón (2005, 142) are categorical: Quirós baptised the island *Australia del Espíritu Santo*, not Australia, in honour of the Spanish monarch's link to the royal house of Austria.

³ Cook, in this naming, evoked the Old Hebrides Islands off Scotland, just as his naming of New South Wales also evoked the more familiar coastline of his home island.

⁴ As well as texts there were, on Cook's voyage, also many images created and many objects collected. I cannot consider these here (but see Jolly 1992 and Jolly 2008, n.d.).

⁵ I owe this witty locution to Borofsky (2000), who deploys it in the introduction to a collected volume of essays on Pacific history.

⁶ The relation between ni-Vanuatu memories and European projects to celebrate the anniversaries of these early navigators is interesting and important. This was made clear in the process of the celebration of the 400th anniversary in May 2006 in Port Vila, Luganville and Matantas, Espíritu Santo, organised by the Delegation of the European Commission and the Embassies of Spain (in Australia) France and Germany (in Vanuatu). Prior to this event Quirós seems to have been unimportant in indigenous oral histories (Ralph Regenvanu, pers. comm., February 2006). But the processes leading up to this celebration occasioned some local leaders and indeed the government of Sanama Province to revive his memory and, despite abundant evidence of the violence of his sojourn on Espíritu Santo, to recuperate him as the man who first brought Christianity to Vanuatu (see Mondragón 2006; Jolly 2007). As can be seen in the commemorative stamp (reproduced in Jolly 2007, 207), the privileged theme at these events was exchange: the meeting of two cultures, or in Bislama "*tufala kaljai mitim tufala*". For a critical appraisal of these events see Mondragón (2006) and Jolly (2007).

⁷ Both in the debates about the Hawaiians' perception of Cook as Lono and Papua New Guinea Highlanders' changing perceptions of whites there is a tendency to make a categorical distinction

between gods or spirit beings and humans, which – as Denning (2004), Tcherkézoff (2004b) and Salmond (2003) suggest – is at odds with Pacific perceptions. Living humans could be seen as instantiations of the gods, as in the Polynesian perceptions of high-ranking people as embodying *akua*. And even in less hierarchical polities and pantheons, such as the Papua New Guinea Highlands or Vanuatu, living humans were often endowed with a spiritual aspect which connected them with ancestors, and which at death transformed them into “ghosts” or spiritual presences. For a further discussion of this problem see the introduction to this volume.

⁸ Although at risk of mixing metaphors here, I owe this powerful phrase to Vicki Luker, who uses it in her introduction to our co-edited volume *Engendering Health in the Pacific* (Luker and Jolly n.d.).

⁹ There has been some recent work on Quirós’ voyage by both archaeologists (Matthew Spriggs et al.) and anthropologists and historians (Carlos Mondragón and Miguel Luque), to which I am heavily indebted, see below. There are also some excellent essays in the recent book edited by Angleviel (2007); see especially Michel Perez (2007, 169–96) on “Anglo-Saxon double standards” and the neglect of Spain in broader historiographies of the Pacific; Annie Baert (2007, 31–56) on the Iberian expansion and the “clearer zones” and “darker aspects” of events in Vanuatu; and Baert (2007, 31–56) and Mercedes Camino (2007, 57–83) on the construction of an earthly paradise in the context of cross-cultural exchange.

¹⁰ Captain Clerke, of Cook’s voyage of 1774, said: “He has given a most pompous description of this Country in his Memorials to the King of Spain, wherein he solicits the settlement of these Isles, however I firmly believe M^r Quirós’s Zeal and warmth for his own favourite projects has carried him too far in the qualities he has ascribed to this Country” (Cook 1969, 516–7). Georg Forster, also on Cook’s second voyage in 1774, proclaimed a slightly more rational motivation for Quirós’ claims of having found treasure on Espiritu Santo: “I will not pretend to say that they would find great riches of silver and pearls, which Quiros was forced to speak of, in order to engage an interested, avaricious court, to support his great and spirited undertakings. These incitements are not necessary now a-days, when several monarchs in Europe have convinced the world that they can institute voyages of discovery, with no other view than the increase of human knowledge, and the improvement of mankind” (2000 [1777], 2: 561).

¹¹ Luque and Mondragón (2005) are dedicated to explaining the cultural logic of these encounters from the Hispanic side, while forthcoming papers explore them from an indigenous perspective, grounded in recent ethnography and oral history, in both Big Bay and Taumako. Luque and Mondragón (2005, 134) discern the Anglophone stereotype of Quirós not just in specialist texts but in general histories of the Pacific.

¹² To some extent I am still dependent on such partial texts, since I do not have the same access to the definitive documents “which lie scattered across diverse Iberian and American archives” (Luque and Mondragón 2005, 134). Many key Iberian sources long ago translated into English or French suffered from bad translation or inadequate contextualisation. So, Markham’s text (1967 [1904]) uses a nineteenth-century compilation by Zaragoza, which relies on incomplete manuscript sources (Luque and Mondragón 2005, 135). Luque and Mondragón rather rely on a new and definitive Spanish edition (Pérez 2000), based on fuller manuscripts held at the Biblioteca Nacional and Museo Naval in Madrid. Since I have neither the linguistic nor cultural capacity to read these sources, unlike Luque and Mondragón, I am heavily dependent on their reinterpretations and can only partially redress the problems with the English-language sources I cite here.

¹³ This is clearly a critical reference to the title of the influential work by Spate (1979): rather than a “Spanish Lake,” they suggest it was a “Castilian Lake,” since the Spanish monarch was based in the Kingdom of Castile.

¹⁴ Says Colin Jack-Hinton: “It was during his voyage to Santa Cruz as Mendaña’s Chief Pilot that Quirós became obsessed with the idea which was to dominate the remainder of his life; the discovery of the antipodean continent, or *Nuevo Mundo* as he was later to call it, which he believed must occupy a quarter of the globe, and to the supposed inhabitants of which he wished to offer the means for the salvation of their immortal souls. Of Quirós it surely can be said, with little reservation or qualification, that his motives were religious, his interests those of a curious, enquiring, Renaissance cosmographer and explorer” (1969, 133).

¹⁵ Serge Tcherkézoff (pers. comm., November 2002) suggests that this was more likely a girl than a boy, but, although this is clearly consequential, I cannot elaborate on the importance of gender misrecognition here.

¹⁶ Spate comments: “His holy design may have been implanted in his mind by the unforgettable sight of the young Marquesan, so beautiful and yet damned; but if he arrived in Rome as a man with a mission, it was here that he became a man possessed, and his possession held him through humiliating failure,

grinding poverty, and the sickness of hope ever deferred, until death 'saved him from further frustration and humiliation and the Spanish authorities from further inconvenience'" (1979, 133).

¹⁷ Luque and Mondragón (2005, 141) concur that he obtained an unprecedented authority from the "inexperienced but pious Philip III," who had been persuaded both by the prior support given by Pope Clement VIII and Quirós' persuasive rhetoric about the need to take Christianity to the heathen peoples of Terra Australis. But they see this rhetoric of religious zeal as motivated by the desire to oppose Mendaña's widow, Doña Isabel Barreto, and to underwrite an ambitious navigation in a period of stringent financial constraints. He succeeded in gaining personal authority from Philip III and in circumventing approval from the Council of the Indies, being directly financed by the Council of State (2005, 140).

¹⁸ As Luque and Mondragón (2005, 138) recount, Quirós intended to sail straight south-west from Peru, but Torres and Bilbao overrode his instructions and headed north by north-west, a route in which he had to acquiesce given that the prevailing winds were west/north-west. Eventually Quirós directed a due west course toward the Santa Cruz group, known from the Mendaña expedition, where they encountered the outlier of Taumako.

¹⁹ There are seven accounts of the voyage, of which only those of Gasper Gonzales De Leza, the pilot, and Fray Martin de Munilla, the Franciscan commissary, are journals. The other accounts are those of Quirós (actually written by Luis de Belmonte Bermúdez, his personal scribe, cited as Quirós-Bermúdez herein), the narrative of Fray Juan de Torquemada, and brief summaries by the accountant Juan de Iturbe; de Torres and Don Deigo de Prado y Tovar (see Kelly 1966, 1: 6–7).

²⁰ Note the difference between this correct Spanish translation and that offered by Markham: "We come from the east, we are Christians, we seek you and we want you to be ours" (Markham 1967 [1904], 237). I am grateful to Carlos Mondragón for this correction (pers. comm., August 2008).

²¹ There is some doubt as to whether Quirós knew in advance of their being put in stocks; if so, he could not admit it publicly, since this was against the instructions of the court. There is also some doubt about who ordered the barbering.

²² Their status as envoys is implied in this source, but the boys may have been equally inspired by playful curiosity as much as the collective desire for engagement and exchange (John Taylor, pers. comm. by email, July 2005).

²³ Luque and Mondragón (2005, 141–2) observe how Quirós' creation of the Chivalric Order of the Holy Ghost has been most ridiculed, but finds the most likely rationale for this celebration of the Holy Trinity in his devotion to the Franciscan order and in the alluring model of the chivalric knight or paladin, who dominated many popular tales of the time. They also observe that in the first act of formal possession on May 14, as recounted by Quirós-Bermúdez, the land is claimed first in the name of Jesus, God, Mary and then, last, the king of Spain. This was apparently challenged by the Spanish aristocrat Diego Prado y Tovar, who interrupted the scribe and proclaimed in the name of the king. Quirós rebuffed him, thus manifesting what Luque and Mondragón perceive as his divided political and religious loyalties. By naming God and his temporal envoy the pope as precedent in power, Quirós was perhaps deviously securing the potential of a future claim by a sovereign Portugal over Terra Australis, the pope willing (Luque and Mondragón 2005, 144).

²⁴ This is the spelling of Taumako, an outlier of the Santa Cruz group used in this source and it suggests that despite the lack of interest in language and the names of people and places, the Hispanic navigators recorded at least one indigenous name.

²⁵ This ponderous machinery of government has been much satirised, even by his contemporaries. Fray Martin satirised the diversity of knights: "negro-knights and Indian-knights and knights who were knight-knights" (cited in Spate 1979, 137). Spate defends Quirós, suggesting that he was only setting up the usual machinery of a Spanish municipality. Quirós did surely go further than this by instituting a new Chivalric Order of the Holy Ghost, and requiring all to wear the insignia of blue taffeta crosses. Fray Martin wisely declined, but "even two negro cooks were rewarded by their largesse ... for their gallantry and courage. Besides, on that day he granted them their liberty, though they did not belong to him, and what is more they afterwards continued in the self-same state of slavery" (cited in Spate 1979, 136–7). However, as Luque and Mondragón suggest, these contemporary Spanish critics were *not* criticising these rituals from a modern secular viewpoint as "deranged theatrics" (2005, 142), but were, rather, expressing their contempt for the authoritarian ineptitude of a presumptuous Portuguese. Moreover, they suggest that the organisation of the secular authority adhered strictly to the requirements of the Common Law of the period and prevailed in the Indies.

²⁶ See Obeyesekere (1992, 17–8, 139).

²⁷ This fish, which the Spanish called *pargos*, was probably Red Sea Bream (*Sparus erythrinus*) and like many fish in tropical waters is not so much poisonous in itself but seasonally poisonous, if it has been eating plankton, mangrove fruits or has been affected by degraded coral (see Kelly 1966, 1: 233). There is a large literature on this kind of fish poisoning, or as it is now called *cigarateria*. The several accounts of Cook's voyages also report the consumption of poisonous fish in a similar season, on 23 July 1774. This led to acute headache, vomiting, diarrhoea, numbness, swelling and profuse salivation. By a series of experiments with unfortunate dogs, the scientists on Cook's second voyage established that it was the diet rather than the fish that was responsible. Georg Forster observed that the fish acquired this quality through feeding on poisonous vegetables, since the most venomous portion was the intestine. He noted not only that men but also that "hogs, dogs and even the parroquet from the Friendly Isles who dined on it took ill and some died" (2000: 2, 496). A day later he observed that the ship was still like a hospital. Later on in that voyage, whilst fishing off Tanna, they ate the same fish without ill effect.

²⁸ In one of his many later reports, the Memorial 40, he envisaged the New Jerusalem as a city with five large plazas, shaped in the form of a large cross, and of two other great cities: one facing west toward the Philippines, the other east toward Peru. The New Jerusalem was thus envisaged as in the middle of the Castilian Lake (Luque and Mondragón 2005, 146). As Luque and Mondragón (148) attest, this was not the only New Jerusalem of the epoch: Florence and Münster in Europe and several Asian cities were also so proclaimed.

²⁹ Quirós kidnapped four young men from Taumako, but three escaped in the waters off Tikopia, leaving the fourth, whom we know as Pedro, to continue on the voyage (Spate 1979, 135). Of the three boys taken from Santo, Pablo was the eldest. Both he and Pedro died in Mexico in 1607 (Kelly 1966, 1: 265). We do not know the fate of the other two boys.

³⁰ In a recent paper presented at the conference to mark the 400th anniversary of Quirós in Vanuatu, Mondragón notes the paucity of ethnographic depiction and speculation about the peoples of north Vanuatu (2007, 166–7). He notes the contrastive way in which Quirós–Bermúdez and Diego de Prado y Tovar spoke of skin colour, the former were more subtle, the latter vituperatively negative "a very black and ugly people" (Mondragón 2007, 164). Quirós–Bermúdez and others also reported on clothing, weapons, tools and especially pottery as markers of relative cultural sophistication but little about indigenous government, not at all in Big Bay and only briefly on Gaua. But the stress in my reading is less on plotting a cultural or racial hierarchy of peoples and more on plotting a spatial cosmography of Hispanic imperial influence in which Asia and the Pacific were seen primarily in relation to the peoples of the Hispanic colonies in the New World and the Philippines, and typically understood in terms of a providentialist framework that stressed the unity of humanity and the universal potential for salvation through the work of messianic missionaries (Mondragón 2006a, 6–11).

³¹ See the statement by Diego de Prado y Tovar, apropos the people of Big Bay, that "with barbarians such as these you cannot use reason, and we needed to teach them not to be impertinent to the Spanish people, who are the most respected of all the nations on earth" (quoted by Mondragón 2006a, 15).

³² Smith does not thereby suggest a naive naturalism, but a tendency to mediate neo-classical theories of art with "empirical habits of vision" (1985, 3).

³³ I thank John Taylor for reminding me of this possibility.

³⁴ Says Bougainville: "This early departure, doubtless, ruined the project of the islanders to attack us, because they had not yet disposed everything to that purpose; at least we were inclined to think so, by seeing them advance to the sea-shore, and send a shower of stones and arrows after us. Some muskets fired off into the air, were not sufficient to rid us of them; many advanced into the water, in order to attack us with more advantage; another discharge of muskets, better directed, immediately abated their ardour, and they fled to the woods with great cries. One of our sailors was slightly wounded by a stone" (1967 [1772], 290).

³⁵ To be fair, Bougainville does acknowledge that they could not determine whether these three-foot-high pallisades were "intrenchments, or merely limits of different possessions" (1967 [1772], 292).

³⁶ His depictions of men's jewellery – nose ornaments, ivory and pigs' tusks bracelets and tortoise-shell necklets – are presented as curious, and their weapons – bows and arrows (some pointed with bone or barbed), ironwood clubs and stones – are described indifferently. The light and shallow soil of Ambae was thought responsible for the fact that fruits of the same species of Tahiti "are not so fine and not so good here" (Bougainville 1967 [1772], 292).

³⁷ So, Bougainville comments: "I called the lands we have now discovered, Archipelago of the great Cyclades [*Archipel des grandes Cyclades*]. To judge of this Archipelago by what we have gone through, and by what we have seen of it at a distance, it contains at least three degrees of latitude and five of longitude. ... As for ourselves, when we fell in with it, every thing conspired to persuade us that it

was the *Tierra Austral del Espiritu Santo*. Appearances seemed to conform to Quiros's account, and what we daily discovered, encouraged our researches. It is singular enough, that exactly in the same latitude and longitude where Quiros places his bay of St. Philip and St. Jago, on a coast which at first seemed to be that of a continent, we should find a passage exactly of the same breadth which he assigns to the entrance of his bay. Has this Spanish navigator seen things in a wrong light? Or, has he been willing to disguise his discoveries? Was it by guess that the geographers made this *Tierra del Espiritu Santo* the same continent with New Guinea? To resolve this problem, it was necessary to keep in the same latitude for the space of three hundred and fifty leagues further. I resolved to do it, though the condition and the quantity of our provisions seemed to give us reason to make the best of our way to some European settlement. The event has shewn that little was wanting to make us the victims of our own perseverance" (1967 [1772], 298–9).

³⁸ Arguments such as these have been both echoed and complicated in later writings by others, most notably in the volume *Foreign Bodies*, edited by Bronwen Douglas and Chris Ballard (2008). See also Douglas 2006.

³⁹ It is probably worthwhile reproducing these quotes in full. Cook said that the Malakulans were an: "Apish nation, for take them in gener[al] they are the most ugly and ill proportioned people I ever saw and in every respect different from any we have yet seen in this sea. They are rather a Diminutive Race and almost as dark as Negroes, which they in some degree resemble in thier [*sic*] countenances, but they have not such fine features" (Cook 1969, 466). Of Malakulan women he said, "We saw but few Women and they were full as disagreeable as the Men" (Cook 1969, 465), and of Erromangan women, "I saw some few Women which I thought ugly" (Cook 1969, 480).

⁴⁰ This is a reference to the theory of Lord Monboddo who embraced orang-utans in his conception of humanity, although he saw them as degenerated humans who had lost the power of speech. Both Johann and Georg Forster were disputing this theory in the context of adjudications about Malakulans.

⁴¹ According to Lamont Lindstrom, Salmond has misinterpreted these events since *guanattan* does in fact mean nutmeg in Kwamera language spoken around Port Resolution (its contemporary transcription is *kwanetan*). As Lindstrom reminds me, "George has the story as Johann cutting open a pigeon, finding a nutmeg in its craw, and asking a Tannese guide to lead him to a nutmeg tree in return for a mother of pearl shell. The Tannese guy led Johann to a small tree about half a mile away, but apparently this was *not* a kwanetan tree" (Lindstrom, pers. comm. by email, 10 March 2006).

⁴² I have elsewhere (Jolly 1992) used this source to suggest how bodies were perceived in relation to debates about the emergent language of race.

⁴³ Lamont Lindstrom notes that *hibao/hebow* (or in contemporary transcription *epo*) is an interjection still used by Tannese, expressing not so much astonishment, but affirmation to a self-evident statement (Lindstrom, pers. comm. by email, 10 March 2006).

⁴⁴ In a recent paper Lindstrom notes that "A week after Cook's arrival, people were still using leaves to pick up small gifts the English had left on the beach. This was a prophylactic response to alien danger whether or not the Tannese by then took Cook and his crew to be human or spirit" (Lindstrom 2009 forthcoming). Given that the Tannese blocked the strangers' route to the volcano it seems unlikely Cook and his crew *were* seen as ancestral spirits or gods, since Yasur, the volcano, was their abode.

⁴⁵ I cannot resist the continuation of this quote: "Our journalist observes, that, notwithstanding this false delicacy, they gave the sailors to understand, that they eat one another; and one day when the inhabitants about the bay were in motion and many of them marched forth armed to some distant part of the island, those that remained invited the gentleman to feast upon a man that they had barbiqued; which they refused with the utmost disgust" (Marra 1967 [1775], 275).

⁴⁶ Mosko (this volume) suggests that Europeans who were collecting flora and fauna might readily be seen to be collecting material for sorcery. The same speculation might have been made by ni-Vanuatu about naturalists, like the Forsters. Sorcery material often include the detritus of the body of the person to be ensorcelled, together with powerful leaves drawn from particular plants.

⁴⁷ Of course, we cannot rule out the possibility of linguistic change and of the movement of peoples. But if the same people as those resident in Port Sandwich were there two hundred years ago, it is unlikely that there would have been a shift from *ramač* to *tomarro* (Tryon, pers. comm., November 2003). Let me also reflect on the difficulties of such decontextualised translations of single words, especially in the context of a contemporary cosmology dramatically influenced by Christianity. In Sa, the language I learnt in South Pentecost in the 1970s, *tegar* denotes an ancestral spirit in its malevolent aspect (for which the word *adumwat ensanga* is also used). Such spirits, however, are particularly associated with the spirits of the recently deceased and distinguished from the *adumwat* of earlier generations, one's forebears and the more primordial ancestral creator beings, which are more often

seen as benevolent and benign and less likely to menace dramatic irruptions in the lives of the living. However, in the course of conversion to Christianity there was a tendency to collapse all ancestral spirits, both benign and malevolent, into the negative category of devils and ghosts (see Jolly 1996a).

⁴⁸ Salmond says that according to the descendants of these “armed warriors”, they “also took Cook and his men to be ancestor spirits” (2003, 267). Her ethnographic authority for this is oral histories told to the twentieth-century naturalist Evelyn Cheesman and recorded in *Camping Adventures on Cannibal Islands* (1949); (see Salmond 2003, 474, n. 9). Curiously she does not refer to any works on Vanuatu by anthropologists, foreign or indigenous, published in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. But her use of this singular source poses the crucial question of the relation between eighteenth-century perceptions of Cook and the constructions of later generations of ni-Vanuatu.

⁴⁹ Although Sparrman claims that two of them were not killed and crept out of the way among the bushes. He also elaborates that one sailor was wounded by a blunt pointed spear that pierced through the upper lip, while the second, Master Gilbert, was hit by an arrow in his chest, which “scarcely penetrated the skin” (Sparrman 1953, 142).

⁵⁰ As Lindstrom notes in a recent paper, many of the names for men recorded by Cook and the Forsters are still current, though differently transcribed: Paowang (Paw-yangom), Georgy or Yogai (Iokai) and Yatta (Iata). He also notes that some of the names suggest men came in from Futuna, e.g. Fannokko (Fanoko) and the White Sands area. The word lists collected by the Forsters are from three different languages: Kwamera from around Port Resolution, White Sands language and Futunese (Lindstrom 2009 forthcoming).

⁵¹ They had more difficulty in obtaining food, since, as Lindstrom notes, in August people would have been busy clearing and burning fields to plant new yams and their previous yam harvest would have been almost exhausted, except for seed yams. Cook did receive a small pig (Lindstrom 2009 forthcoming), and several sources suggest plantains and some yams were received.

⁵² Lindstrom has raised the question as to whether such moderation might be explained by the fact that this man was perhaps a visitor from the White Sands area or from Futuna, and therefore not seen as their “countrymen” (Lindstrom, pers. comm. by email, 10 March 2006). Still, as the sources suggest, two Tannese men did cradle the dead man.

⁵³ In his superb discussion of landscape and memory on Tanna, Lindstrom notes how Tannese conflate the name of Cape Cook and Captain Cook and suggests “Captain Cook for example is not some distant or forgotten historical personage. Instead he has become a Port Resolution rocky projection who has always already been recalled in this landscape of memory” (Lindstrom 2009 forthcoming).

⁵⁴ But subsequent to my original writing of this sentence a very large memorial to Quirós was erected at Big Bay on Espiritu Santo, by Europeans, with generous funding from several European governments and the European Commission, in May 2006 on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of his voyage (see Mondragón 2006; Jolly 2007). Whether Quirós will be re-membered in ni-Vanuatu memories over generations is moot.

⁵⁵ But, as John Taylor suggests (pers. comm., July 2005) these views are likely to change with the imminent introduction of new history curricula in the schools of Vanuatu (Lightner and Naupa 2005).

⁵⁶ Note the critique which I advanced of Te Papa Tongareva (Jolly 2001) is no longer appropriate to the refurbished Pacific Islander halls, as described by curator Sean Mallon at recent conferences in Canberra (“Pacific Cultural Heritage in Australian Museums and Galleries: A Regional Dialogue”, 22–23 November 2007) and Paris (“Exhibiting Polynesia: Past, present, future,” Musée du quai Branly, 17–18 June 2008).