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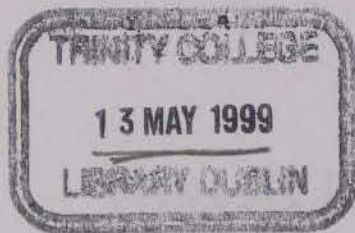
Neil Hegarty

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English
of the University of Dublin, Trinity College,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor in Philosophy.**

September 1998

University Subjects:

Exploration and Culture Contact
in the South Pacific 1764-1773



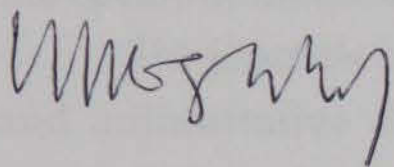
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A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English
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Neil Hegarty

Dublin, 1998

Summary

This thesis examines representations of exploration and culture contact in the South Pacific in the years 1764-1775. It takes as its primary texts the journals and writings kept by the British explorers of the Pacific in these years, when four expeditions were sent by the Admiralty to the region: those of HMS Dolphin (1764-1766), HMS Dolphin (1766-1768) and HMS Swallow (1766-1769), HMS Endeavour (1768-1771), and HMS Resolution and HMS Adventure (1772-1775). Although the motives for these voyages were often ostensibly scientific, the commanders of these expeditions were under instruction to discover the great southern continent, *terra australis incognita*, the existence of which was well-nigh assured in the European imagination. Consequently, the underlying motives for the voyages were economic – to bring the last area of the world unknown to European eyes within a global, and hence European-dominated, system of trade and commerce.

The journals of exploration historically have exerted undue influence as stable and authoritative documents of record. They have served as the basis for the construction of an homogenized history of the Pacific which has emphasized Enlightenment virtues of tolerance and benevolence, epitomized in particular in the figure of James Cook. This history has flattened out the variety of narratives and experiences which were part of the process of culture contact. This thesis, however, explores the manifold ways in which the journals expose the presence of instability and ambivalence within these ostensibly confident narratives of power and authority.

The discussion emphasizes the intersection of the textual and the material, thus bridging the gap between the material experience of culture contact and analysis of literary representations of that contact. Chapter One discusses the importance of economics, noting that it was commercial imperatives which originally prompted the European exploration of the Pacific. The idea of exchange is analyzed, and its *relativity* emphasized. The classic idea of colonial exchange is encapsulated, as Stephen Greenblatt notes, 'in the European dream, endlessly reiterated in the literature of exploration [of] the grossly unequal gift exchange: I give you a glass bead and you give me a pearl worth half your tribe'.¹ It is this

¹ Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 110.

fundamental idea of value which is questioned in this chapter, which begins to unravel the textual stability of the journals and the suppositions which underline their narratives. Chapters Two and Three continue this mingling of the textual and material, discussing the body as a site of instability and ambivalence. The journals' attention to sexuality is investigated, in particular the concentration on the idea of deviance and transgression which informs notions of Naval discipline. This attention to sexual/racial transgression is applied to both the sailors on the ships of exploration and to the islanders – both these groups are the focus of attention in the form of a fear of sodomy and miscegenation. This fear and anxiety underscores the idea of a *range* of marginal groups, this destabilizing the unity of the category of 'colonizer'. This idea of marginality and discipline is further explored against the context of the idea of disease, which highlights this idea of disunity or instability. The fear of miscegenation, of sexual 'contamination' is repeated in the context of disease, which is a literal contamination of the body. The idea of the tattoo, a self-inflicted contamination of the secure, white body by the sailors, emphasizes the absence of that cultural purity which is essential to the unified idea of the colonizing imagination. This blurring of the idea of civilization itself is explored in greater detail in the final chapter, which notes the contradictions inherent in the notion of civility and the inability to construct a secure duality of civility and barbarism.

This thesis, then, explores the presence of ambivalence within (proto-)colonial narratives. It notes the instability of the category of 'colonizer' and the extent to which the sailors, ostensibly part of the colonizing mission, are as much a focus of disciplinary attention as the people of the Pacific. The exploration journals have been read in order to theorize that which Foucault has called the 'archaeology of silence',² although not in an attempt to recover the lost experiences of the indigenous people of the south Pacific – as Greg Dening notes, the Pacific is indeed a 'silent land' in these terms.³ Instead, this thesis is *local* in emphasis, exploring both the absence of a record of articulation and the textual instability of the exploration journals.

² Michel Foucault, Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason (London and New York: [1967], Routledge, 1995), p. xiii.

³ See Greg Dening, Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent Land, Marquesas 1774-1880 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1980).

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Many friends have had a hand in this thesis throughout its writing, whether by providing encouragement, conversation and criticism, or just tea and sympathy along the way. While I cannot thank by name all those who have helped and encouraged me, I should like to acknowledge my fellow tutors in Room 3160, who have provided support and gossip within Trinity; to thank David Murphy, Maria Scott and Catherine Toal for their assistance as readers in the final stages of writing; and to acknowledge with gratitude the computing expertise of Orlaith O'Sullivan. I want especially to thank Kerry Sinanan, whose assistance and input throughout have been crucial; and Sarah Ryder, who has been obliged to live with this thesis since its inception, and who has never complained. My particular thanks also to Peter, Claire, Kevin and Mark Hegarty, and Gary Butler, Frances Power and Bernadette Provost, for all their encouragement; and to Louis Butler, Anna Hegarty and Beren Maddison, who have helped me to keep everything in perspective. Last and most, I thank my mother and father, Maureen and Charles Hegarty, for their faith and unquestioning support.

Dublin, September 1998

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For my parents

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Introduction

Here also the eye sees, the ear hears, but the real meaning of what is seen and heard is supplied not by the senses but by the understanding, which interprets what is heard in the light of its own peculiar experiences and associations.¹

This thesis discusses representations of the process of exploration and culture contact which took place between British sailors and the people of the south Pacific in the years 1764-1775. Between these dates, five voyages were undertaken by the Admiralty: those of HMS Dolphin under the command of John Byron (1764-1766); of the Dolphin again, this time under the command of Samuel Wallis (1766-1769); her sister ship, HMS Swallow under the command of Philip Carteret (1766-1769); of HMS Endeavour, under the command of James Cook (1769-1771); and of HMS Resolution and HMS Adventure, again under the command of Cook (1772-1775). Some of these voyages 'discovered' little of note, others became the first European ships to encounter eastern Australia and chart New Zealand and the islands of the south Pacific. The aims of the voyages were to chart a vast region of the globe which remained outside European knowledge, and to establish trade and commerce with this region and its people. The vessels were also under instruction to discover a land, *terra australis incognita*, which did not exist, and later to prove that this land was an empty myth, that little possibility of enrichment lay in the Pacific.

Consequently, the history of the exploration of the Pacific is both related to, and fundamentally different from, the history of colonialism elsewhere in the world. This is not to imply that colonialism was everywhere similar in nature, for as this introduction will outline presently, postcolonial studies has developed a model of contact which attends to the complexities, subtleties and *local* nature of contact and

¹ Bipin Chandra Pal, *Soul of India*; quoted in Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 48.

colonialism. Rather, this thesis argues that the exploration of the south Pacific, in common with European exploration the world over, was indeed largely motivated by the impulse and demands of economics, and in particular by the possibility of the discovery of the southern continent, which had historically signified boundless wealth to the collective European imagination. Nevertheless, Pacific exploration is distinguished by the fact of a general absence of those commodities and resources which rendered a region valuable and exploitable to the European imagination. The islands of the south Pacific (with the exception of those on the fringes of south-east Asia) lacked minerals, silks and spices. The south Pacific also lacked large populations which might be enslaved, and indeed any large expanse of land itself, and was moreover at the very farthest limits of supply lines, at the point at which superior firepower and military strength might not be enough to counterbalance the effects of ill-health and an insufficiency of men.

The south Pacific, consequently, was distinctive in that it presented a characteristic absence and intangibility to the incomers. This intangibility can be connected with the gradual questioning and deconstruction of the colonizer/colonized binary which has marked the evolving discourse of postcolonial studies. As many theorists have noted,² such a system of binary oppositions has been responsible for a neglect of particular agency in favour of a general, sweeping theory, which speaks of the 'colonized' and the 'colonizer'. Ann Laura Stoller writes:

[E]ven where we have probed the nature of colonial discourse and the politics of its language, the texts are often assumed to express a shared European mentality, the sentiments of a unified, conquering elite [. . .] even when we have attended to concrete capitalist relations of production and exchange, we have taken colonialism and its European agents as an abstract force, as a *structure* imposed on local practice. The terms *colonial state*, *colonial policy*, *foreign capital*, and *the white enclave* are often used interchangeably [. . .] colonizers and their communities are frequently treated as diverse but unproblematic, viewed as unified in a fashion that would disturb our ethnographic sensibilities if applied to ruling elites of the colonized [. . .] the assumption that colonial political agendas are self-evident precludes our

² See, for example, Stuart Hall, 'When was the "Post-Colonial"? Thinking at the Limit', in *The Post-Colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*, Iain Chambers and Lidia Curti eds (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 242-260.

examination of the cultural politics of the communities in which our colonizers lived.³

This system of binary oppositions which originally characterized the theorization of colonialism has been gradually challenged and dismantled in the last ten years. Whereas early theorists developed the notion of a colonizer/colonized opposition, postcolonial studies have decisively moved towards a model which recognizes that the notion of the victim suggests too stark a relationship between the indigenous people of a given region and the newcomers to that region. Nicholas Thomas writes:

It is misleading even to attribute uniformly to colonizers an imagining of, or a will to, total dominance: colonial rule was frequently haunted by a sense of insecurity, terrified by the obscurity of 'the native mentality' and overwhelmed by indigenous societies' apparent intractability in the face of government; even if colonial knowledge often took the form of a panoptical, encyclopaedic appropriation of indigenous customs, histories, relics and statistics, such displays of intellectual rapacity were frequently accompanied by a kind of despair, which found the space and social entity of the colony to be intangible, imperceptible and constantly untrue to the representations that might be fashioned of it.⁴

In much the same way as eighteenth- and nineteenth-century colonial discourse relied upon the stereotype in its constructions of otherness, so analysis of colonialism itself tends to reflect certain conventional images.⁵ Thomas remarks that the word colonialism brings immediate associations with 'intrusions, conquest, economic exploitation and the domination of indigenous peoples by European men'.⁶ Consequently the ravages wrought by the imperial project lead to colonialism being viewed and discussed in a way that does no justice to the immense complexities of the term. A neglect or refusal to discuss colonialism in anything but the most general manner results in the construction of colonial discourse as a stable and unified narrative and leads to the elision of questions of, for example, influence,

³ Ann Laura Stoler; quoted in Nicholas Thomas, Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), p. 13.

⁴ Thomas, Colonialism's Culture, pp. 16-17.

⁵ See Homi Bhabha, Location of Culture (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), esp. pp. 66-67, for a discussion of the stereotype in colonial discourse.

⁶ Thomas, Colonialism's Culture, p. 1.

complicity and collusion. As the passage quoted above illustrates, the image and the reality are by no means identical. Ironically, both colonial discourse and critical analysis of colonialism can share certain tendencies which make it impossible to explore the nature of colonialism.

Stuart Hall notes 'the many ways in which colonization was never simply external to the societies of the imperial metropolis. It was always deeply inscribed within them – as it became indelibly inscribed in the cultures of the colonized.'⁷ An approach which blurs or erases the heterogeneity among *either* side experiencing the colonial process immediately oversimplifies any discussion of colonialism. It fails to recognize the extent to which the narratives and institutions of modernity were profoundly influenced and altered by the experience of culture contact. Each chapter in this thesis turns repeatedly to discuss the notion of instability within colonial discourse, to analyze the impact of the Pacific encounter upon the metropolitan society, and to emphasize the connectedness of these topics. In this way, the detail of the colonial project is explored in its necessary fluidity.

Hall writes:

By 'colonization', the 'post-colonial' references something more than direct rule over certain areas of the world by the imperial powers. I think it is signifying the whole process of expansion, exploration, conquest, colonization and imperial hegemonization which constituted the 'outer face', the constitutive outside, of European and then Western capitalist modernity after 1492.⁸

The term 'colonialism' is inextricably linked with associations of conquest and occupation, and with fundamental, root-and-branch destructions or reconstitutions of indigenous cultures. This thesis employs the term 'proto-colonization' throughout to acknowledge the historical fact that the voyages of Pacific exploration were not expeditions which immediately resulted in conquest and occupation; as we have

⁷ Hall, 'When was the "Post-colonial"?', in Chambers and Curti (eds), The Post-colonial Question, p. 246.

⁸ Hall, 'When was the "Post-colonial"?', in Chambers and Curti (eds), The Post-colonial Question, p. 249.

noted, the sheer size and incalculability of the ocean, and its relative lack of resources would have rendered immediate occupation, even if desired, unfeasible. The exploration of the Pacific is historically distinctive, therefore, in that contact was privileged, not always with the corollary of control. The overt emphasis was upon *observation* which facilitated an evolving practice of anthropology, so that the process of exploration may be seen to intersect with the developing eighteenth-century discourses of classification and taxonomies of the natural world. Consequently, the south Pacific became as a laboratory allowing the practice of such discourses of observation even as overt colonization in the form of this root-and-branch destruction (for example the Atlantic trade in slaves) was proceeding concurrently in other regions of the world. It was of crucial importance that the Pacific, or rather the unknown region where the South Seas and their sprinkling of islands were found to lie, be uncovered to the investigating European eye, so that a global or planetary order of knowledge, and reality itself, might be established or reconstituted. This thesis investigates this ostensibly confident developing discourse and notes the problematization in its *practice* in the Pacific. The 'proto-colonization' which is referred to in this thesis both describes this establishment of a corpus of knowledge which is itself significant, and also highlights the function of this knowledge in laying the groundwork for the increased European penetration of, and influence over, the Pacific and its peoples. Settlement by European colonists of Australia began in 1787 and New Zealand in the 1830s, but for the most part, the islands of the Pacific were not formally annexed (or in the case of Tonga, not annexed at all) until a nineteenth-century age of high imperialism and changing geopolitical formations rendered the Pacific strategically important and the site of rising tension between various Great Powers engaged in political manoeuvres. Nevertheless, the social and cultural cost of the European presence in the Pacific from the moment of first contact between the crew of HMS Dolphin and the people of the Society Islands in 1767 was immense, the impact traumatic and immediate.⁹

⁹ Europeans, of course, had visited the Pacific before the Dolphin touched at Tahiti in June 1767. In

The introduction of a range of European influences, from imported infectious and sexually-transmitted diseases to evangelical Christianity, upon the indigenous peoples of the Pacific was very significant. While the 'fatal impact' school of thought has now been largely discounted – as Rod Edmond has noted, the idea of a fatal impact of European ideology upon fragile Pacific societies disallows the notion of indigenous agency and fails to acknowledge the extent to which Pacific societies adapted to change¹⁰ – the influence of this collision of cultures was profound. The voyages of exploration established a flow between Europe and the Pacific which would have drastic effects upon the latter, and consequently, it is appropriate to describe the arrival of British vessels in the Pacific in the 1760s as signifying the beginning of a process of disruption, as the forerunner of a later, systematic colonization.

This thesis is concerned to highlight this notion of the 'flow', the extent to which the process of culture contact significantly influences the newcomers and their culture as well as that of the indigenous people. As Ania Loomba has noted, by the early part of the twentieth century, colonialism held sway over eighty-six per cent of the globe, and 'this fact alone reminds us that it is impossible for European colonialism to have been a monolithic operation.'¹¹ This discussion emphasizes the locally-mediated nature of colonialism, and in terms of the exploration of the south Pacific allows a contextual reading of the process of culture contact. It brings

the context of this thesis, however, the arrival of the *Dolphin* is significant, in that it marks the beginning of a process of *continual* interaction between the islanders and European incomers. The Spanish and Dutch presence in the Pacific, though dating back several centuries, was limited in scope; in any case, the islands of the south Pacific remained 'undiscovered' by Spain and the Netherlands. Although Tasman touched at New Zealand in 1642-1643, he failed to adequately chart the archipelago, which remained essentially unknown to Europeans until the arrival of Cook in 1769. See the 'Introduction' to J. C. Beaglehole (ed.), *The Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1955), for a useful summary and overview of the European presence in the Pacific before the voyage of Byron (1764-1766).

¹⁰ Edmond writes: 'Recently, Pacific historian and anthropologists have emphasized the resilience and continuity of Pacific societies . . . [F]ar from being wiped out, they adapted and survived, often conceding less than contemporary missionary accounts, for example, were prepared to admit. Historians of the fatal impact school have read their western sources too uncritically, mistaking the intention for the effect.' (Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997], p. 10).

¹¹ Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, p. 15.

together, that is, an understanding of the cultural, political and philosophical background of Enlightenment Europe, of the particular circumstances of the sailors and the Royal Navy as community, and of the already existing societies of what has become known as Polynesia. As well as highlighting the impact of one economic and cultural order upon the other, it seeks to foreground the fact of the existence of cultures before the British arrival in the South Seas. The Pacific has been one of the most systematically colonized regions of the world, if one understands by this an erasure of previous histories and existing cultural formations. The search for, or return to, a previously existing or 'pristine' culture pre-existing the onset of colonization, is undesirable but also futile, and this is especially visibly so in the case of the islands of the Pacific, memorably characterized by Greg Dening as a 'silent land'.¹² Nonetheless, this thesis will consider the (in)ability of postcolonial theory to uncover the experiences, history and sense of *agency* of a (proto-)colonized people.

Clearly, then, this thesis reads the process of Pacific exploration in post-structuralist terms, emphasizing the multiplicity of historical narratives and the subjective nature of so-called master narratives. The journals are examined in the understanding that ideology is necessarily and of its very nature incomplete, that colonial ideology cannot be construed in terms of a monolithic and all-powerful force and there is a danger in considering the exploration journals as documents under ideological control, of constructing a model of ideology that conforms to this simplistic notion. 'It is in ideology that we live, move and have our being' writes Louis Althusser,¹³ yet although ideology is all-pervasive, it nonetheless generates its own instability. In this instability is identified the ironic potential for liberation that is generated by, and exists within, the structure of ideology itself. In their formulation of Althusser, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe note: 'Every

¹² See Greg Dening, Islands and Beaches: Discourses on a Silent Land, Marquesas 1774-1880 (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1980). Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak notes that current political, cultural and economic realities can be lost in the search for a pristine past. ('Can the Subaltern Speak?', in Alan Williams and Laura Chrisman (eds), Colonial Discourse and Postcolonial Theory (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester, 1993), pp. 66-102.

¹³ Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses', in John Storey (ed.), Cultural Theory and Popular Culture (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester, 1994), p. 159.

ideological formation is constituted through and against a constitutive antagonism and is, therefore, to be understood as an effort to cover over or "suture" a set of contingent relations. Because this ideological suturing is never complete, that is, because it can never establish itself as a necessary or comprehensive set of connections, it is marked by a failure of complete determination, a constitutive emergency, that emerges within the ideological field as its permanent (and promising) instability.¹⁴ It is the incompleteness, therefore, of ideological formations, their continual process of 'suturing' and 'weaving', that leads to the potential for reformulations. This promising reformulation of ideological power has repercussions in the context of our argument. The journals may attempt self-consciously to elaborate upon a desired ideological narrative, but insofar as ideology is always incomplete and insofar as a journal can never, in any case, wholly replicate an ideological standpoint, they necessarily escape fixity and stability.

The particular narratives examined in this work are the journals which describe the process of culture contact from the point of view of the commanders of the ships of exploration, Cook, Byron and Carteret, together with the journal of the master of the *Dolphin*, George Robertson. These journals are the principal source documents utilized by this thesis, but are crucially supplemented by references made to the many other, 'unauthorized' journals kept by some of the (literate) sailors themselves, and to the official Admiralty instructions and orders which guided the route and actions of the ships' commanders. Accordingly, this thesis has been able to draw upon all manner of sources in order to construct an idea of exploration and culture contact which attends to the varied strands and narratives which constitute the historical experience. The re-examination of indigenous experiences which this thesis outlines is supplemented by analysis of the experiences of the sailors themselves, who like the indigenous people, have been excluded from dominant narratives of history. By focusing upon the textual instability of the exploration

¹⁴ Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*; quoted in Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 72.

journals, this discussion highlights the existence or production of a plurality of histories and the relativity and conditionality of the dominant accounts of the process of exploration and culture contact.

This discussion has been informed by Foucauldian analysis, although it is also aware of its problems and limitations. It is concerned to trace the manner in which Michel Foucault's theories on power and the individual can – contrary to the views of some critics¹⁵ – be applied in a colonial context. The discussion returns throughout to the notion of the human body as a focus for the application of power and discipline. It is concerned to establish the disciplinary and ideological efficiency of these applications, but also to illustrate the manner in which the very ideological terrains chosen by an emergent colonial discourse – for example, notions of purity, of sexuality and race – can be seen to generate reverse or dissenting ideas of power. In particular, it employs Foucault's conception of the weave of power relations in order to challenge the notion that (proto)colonial textual and cultural power is dominant and all pervasive, analyzing the instability latent within authoritative Naval narratives and codes of behaviour even before the moment of contact, and the cultural strategies of resistance employed by the people of the Pacific. In the context of the Pacific, as this thesis will argue, power can indeed be understood to be applied vertically, but also to exist 'everywhere, not because it embraces everything but because it comes from everywhere'.¹⁶ Similarly, critics have frequently condemned the 'eurocentricity' of Foucault's writings, but this thesis analyzes the workings and ideology of the Enlightenment in Europe in order to expose the latent instability which exists within a proto-colonial discourse. In this sense, the concept of *Europe* can be usefully employed in analysis without engaging in generalization.

Sara Mills has noted the importance of Foucault's work in allowing a 'focus on the way that larger scale discursive frameworks played a role in colonial

¹⁵ See Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, esp. pp. 43-57, for a analysis of the Foucauldian influence upon colonial discourse theory.

¹⁶ Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality Vol I: An Introduction* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990), p. 93.

activity.'¹⁷ This emphasis upon notions of monolithic or institutional power may be criticized for disallowing the idea of individual agency, and this thesis, through numerous examples, is concerned to demonstrate the always incomplete nature of institutional power. Mary-Louise Pratt has written that 'the imperial metropolis tends to understand itself as determining the periphery'.¹⁸ She notes that the task of the colonizer was:

[To] produce what they themselves referred to as 'information'. Their task [. . .] was to incorporate a particular reality into a series of interlocking information orders – aesthetic, geographic, mineralogical, botanical, agricultural, economic, geographic and so on.¹⁹

The following discussion, however, employs Pratt's notion of 'transculturation' in order to emphasize the impact of this 'information' and knowledge gathered during the voyages of exploration upon the (proto)colonizing culture.²⁰ Furthermore, Foucault's theorization of the movement of power problematizes the model of a monolithic structure of discursive authority, and in so doing demonstrates the shortcomings of a selective analysis of the concept of 'discourse'. In what Pratt has called the 'contact zone', 'social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly symmetrical relations of domination and subordination',²¹ the *flexibility* of power is shown. This thesis delineates the relationship between larger discursive frameworks and local and elastic movements of power relations, and in so doing demonstrates the utility of Foucauldian ideas of power and discourse in a (proto)colonial context.

¹⁷ Sara Mills, *Discourse* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), p 122.

¹⁸ Mary-Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel-Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 4.

¹⁹ Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, p. 125.

²⁰ The later work of Edward Said, for example, also emphasizes what Pratt has called 'transculturation'. See, for example, his reading of Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*, which analyzes the presence of the slave trade as a trace in the narrative. (See *Culture and Imperialism* [London: Chatto and Windus, 1993], esp. pp. 95-115.)

²¹ Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, p. 4.

After 1690, a trickle of 'voyages' began again, was stimulated and grew into the great eighteenth-century stream of publications which, next to theology, so largely met the serious mental needs of an increasingly literate population.²²

The texts of this thesis were written by the ships' commanders, officers and crew. They were presented as eyewitness reports, written 'on the spot' and with all the authority that such reports carry. This thesis, however, emphasizes the instability of these documents, instability which in part lies in their origin and production. The journals were in fact continually rewritten and edited, often at a considerable distance in space and time from the events described. They existed as multiple copies, now held in archives scattered across Britain, New Zealand, Australia and other countries, and the journals which are extant consist of layers of textual alterations. The various documents were conveyed to London whenever the opportunity arose – Cook, for example, sent off his despatches to the Admiralty in the keeping of Dutch and Portuguese vessels from locations as varied as Batavia, Madeira, Rio de Janeiro and Cape Town:

In the PM I went up to Town in order to put on board the first Dutch Ship that Sails a packet for the Admiralty Containing a Copy of my Journal, a Chart of the South Sea, a nother of new Zeland and one of the East Coast of New Holland [Australia]. (At Batavia; October 24, 1770)²³

The Admiralty technically owned all documents maintained on the voyages, and the sailors were under instruction to surrender their journals at journey's end. Such orders, however, were impossible to enforce, and frequently the Admiralty wish to produce an 'official' or authorized account of each voyage was foiled by the rapid publication of unauthorized accounts, designed to cash in on the phenomenal

²² Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. lxxiv.

²³ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, pp. 435-436.

popularity of such tales of exotic lands on the far side of the globe. Beaglehole notes one such account, published as the journal of James Magra of the Endeavour crew:

This thin quarto of 130 pp. was the first account of the voyage to see the light, rushed into print by the publishers with a preface dated September 28, 1771, not much more than two months after the Endeavour's return [. . .]. The volume got a rather frosty reception from . . . the Right Honourable the Lords of the Admiralty [. . .]. No doubt the bookseller's money jingled.²⁴

Beaglehole claims that the tone of Cook's first journal is fundamentally different from later writings, suggesting that he had no idea that his records would meet with an appreciative and eager audience, and that his later journals are considerably more self-conscious. This may or may not be the case, but there is little doubt that the majority of journals were written with publication, and hence financial gain, in mind.

This thesis is, of necessity, located with temporal and spatial precision. The south Pacific, and in particular the experience of culture contact in Tahiti and New Zealand, is the focus for discussion, and the discussion ends with the conclusion of Cook's second voyage in 1775, by which time the south Pacific had been charted and mapped, and the existence of *terra australis* had been disproved. The early voyages were especially concerned with (dis)proving the existence of the southern continent and consequently can be seen to form an organic body of exploration. By extension, the writings which emerged from these voyages also form an imaginatively and philosophically cohesive body of work, particularly in regard to the impact these journals had upon the reading public and strategists of Europe. Cook's third voyage (1776-1780) was substantially larger in scope and was, moreover, significantly different in tone and intent, and the journals of the voyage bring together the vexed

²⁴ Beaglehole (ed.), Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771, pp. cclvi, cclix.

issue of the death of Cook in Hawaii, the quest to discover the Northwest Passage and contact with the people of what is now Canada, Russia and the United States. Increasing the scope of this thesis to include the third voyage and the issues arising from it would necessarily blur its focus, and prove detrimental to the clarity of the whole.

The structure of the thesis emphasizes the economic origins of the voyages of exploration, opening with a discussion of the significance of commerce in the exploration of the Pacific. The remaining three chapters broaden this initial focus so that economic and cultural analysis are woven together, although an understanding of the presence of an economic metanarrative remains. This analysis highlights the manner in which the textual ambivalence which is considered throughout this discussion is present in a wavering form, manifested in continually *shifting* contexts. While order (whether conceived of in terms of naval discipline or textual authority) requires disorder to perpetuate itself, and while it can be argued that the space of this disorder is always anticipated and therefore controlled, our discussion emphasizes that the objects of this attention are required to continually refocus, concentrating now on the sailors on the ships themselves, now on the actions and behaviour of the islanders. In this way, the focus of the thesis remains on the workings of the colonial discourse, but highlights the manner in which an ambivalence of address may be seen to work. As a result, the idea that contestable spaces are always allowed for and always anticipated is significantly undermined. Recent theorizations of the ambivalence of colonial discourse have been criticized for their relatively inflexible and total nature and for their emphasis upon the notion of a general 'colonial subject'.²⁵ As Loomba notes, '[T]hus, ironically, the split, ambivalent, hybrid colonial subject projected [. . .] is in fact curiously universal and homogenous – that is to say, he could exist anywhere in the colonial world.'²⁶ This

²⁵ In the case of Homi Bhabha's work, for example, the idea of the 'colonial subject' tends to be foregrounded, and as Loomba has noted: '[D]espite the accent on hybridity and liminality, Bhabha generalizes and universalizes the colonial encounter.' (Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, p. 178.)

²⁶ Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, p. 178.

thesis, however, accentuates what can be termed a *taxonomy of ambivalence*, arguing that it is not only the instability of an evolving colonial discourse but its unfocused or *mobile* nature that must be emphasized.

The opening chapter, then, explains the commercial aspirations underlying this and other colonial endeavours, and contextualizes the imperial power relationships which characterize the political history of Europe in the middle of the eighteenth century. It analyzes the production of ambivalence as it is manifested in economic terms, and the journals' response to the economic circumstances in the Pacific. Issues of discipline and control are emphasized in Chapter Two, which analyzes the representation of sexuality in the journals and its intersection with discourses of race and the nation. This chapter draws together the representation, in terms of sexual transgression or deviance, of the sailors and islanders in order to emphasize this idea of a continually shifting focus of ambivalence. This discussion is continued in Chapter Three, which focuses upon the idea of the body as carefully policed or bounded space, and the manner in which this order is destabilized by the presence, both literal and metaphorical, of disease. The final chapter sets the discussion against a wider context of Enlightenment Europe, and explores the extent to which the fundamental contradictions and tensions latent within the Enlightenment project are manifested within the journals themselves.

One

Commerce and Exchange

This chapter will discuss the issues of commerce and cultural exchange raised by the second voyage of the *Dolphin* (1766-1769) under the command of Samuel Wallis, and by James Cook's first and second circumnavigations of the globe. HMS *Endeavour* left England in August 1768, returning almost three years later in July 1771; the second voyage, undertaken by HMS *Resolution* and HMS *Adventure*, began in 1772 and ended in 1775. These voyages are notable for, among other things, sustained contact between British sailors and the people of the Society Islands, and the charting of the New Zealand and eastern Australian coastlines. An analysis of the journals written during the voyages highlights the significance of commerce, exchange, and trading relations in the Pacific, and illustrates the extent to which commerce, lying at the heart of the imperial project and understood as the facilitator and *raison d'être* of the colonial process, may be read as latently ambivalent. The journals function as part of a process of imaginative assimilation of the lands and people they describe, and this chapter investigates the ideology of commerce in mid eighteenth-century Britain and reads the journals in order to explore their reaction to this ideology.

The eighteenth-century voyages of Pacific exploration were publicly motivated by anthropological and scientific concerns. As we will see, for example, the *Endeavour* voyage was, in part, motivated by science – the observation of the transit of Venus across the face of the Sun. As the introduction to this thesis has noted, however, the exploration of the Pacific was largely prompted by *economic* ambitions. Even in the case of the early Spanish explorers, publicly motivated by the desire to spread the Gospel, the discovery of gold and spices remained the prime

objective. Following the return of Mendaña to Mexico in 1569, for example, Spanish administrators noted dismissively:

In the course of their discoveries they found no specimen of spices, nor of gold and silver, nor of merchandise, nor of any other source of profit, and all the people were naked savages.¹

Similarly, the Earl of Egmont, First Lord of the Admiralty (1763-1766) discussing the possible settling by Britain of the Falkland Islands, acknowledged the strategic importance of the archipelago in commanding the approaches to the Pacific. At all times policy was formulated with an eye upon commerce, as Egmont noted:

[. . .] the great importance of this Station, which is undoubtedly the key to the whole Pacifick Ocean. This island must command the Ports & Trade of Chile, Peru, Panama, Acapulco, & in one Word all the Spanish Territory upon that Sea. It will render all our Expeditions to those Parts most lucrative to ourselves, most fatal to Spain, & no longer formidable, tedious or uncertain in a future War.²

The following discussion develops this argument that commercial considerations were the fundamental and primary motivations for the voyages of exploration, that the ambition to discover exotic lands on the far side of the earth and to encounter the fabled *terra australis* in the South Seas was motivated by a will to establish new markets and trade in new commodities.³ As we will see, not only was this evolving colonial discourse in the Pacific latently and fundamentally ambivalent and unstable, but this ambivalence became in fact an *ordering* principle, in the sense that

¹ Quoted by Lord Amherst of Hackney in the 'Preface' to *The Discovery of the Solomon Islands* (London, 1901); in J. C. Beaglehole (ed.), *The Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1955), p. xxxix. The experiences of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century explorers, however, usually paralleled the experience of Tasman in New Zealand in 1642 – contact was usually short, violent and commercially fruitless. Magellan was killed while strategically over-reaching himself in the Philippine islands in 1521; Mendaña had 'some pleasant meetings with the island head-hunters and many bitter clashes' in the Solomons in 1568; Mendaña and Quiros' discovery of the Marquesas in 1595 was again marred by violence and bloodshed.

² P.R.O., S.P. 94/253, f. 238; quoted in Helen Wallis (ed.), *Carteret's Voyage Around the World 1766-1769* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1965), p. 10.

³ As Chapter Four argues, even the observation of the Transit of Venus was informed by notions of strategy and of nationalist rivalry.

out of disorder, an ideological order is constructed. While the chapters which follow locate this notion of ambivalence in a variety of cultural contexts, then, this discussion of commerce focuses primarily upon the fundamental instability of the process of economic exchange, an exchange which included goods, people and even cultural systems conceived of in terms of commercial potential. It argues that the act of exchange itself complicates the notion of the victim/victor relationship which is frequently taken to characterize culture contact, and consequently that the meeting of Europe and the Pacific cannot be reduced to a polar opposition of proto-colonizer and colonized.

An analysis of the descriptions by Cook and George Robertson, master of the *Dolphin*, of the landscapes and peoples they and their crews encountered reveals the problematic nature of these categories of colonizer and colonized. These descriptions point to a complex and ambivalent relationship between the writers' roles as 'scribes' or chroniclers of the expeditions, and their positions as independent sailors and observers. The tone of these documents is significant – they purport to be eyewitness accounts, recorded 'on the spot', when in fact they are written up and edited at a distance in time and space from the events described. In spite of their polishings and editings, however, the journals reveal and reflect the historical complexities of eighteenth-century imperialist sensibilities. An analysis of the categories of commerce and trade permits us to bring into sharp focus the tension underlying these 'official' documents of record and the contested meanings of empire. This discussion, accordingly, concerns the extent to which the voyages may be seen to *represent* Britain, the degree to which the journals, which act to inscribe new lands and their inhabitants within an already existing ideological paradigm, *both* serve as projections of the cultural preoccupations, and imperialist aspirations, of eighteenth-century British society, *and* reflect the doubts and anxieties of that society. It analyzes the extent to which culture contact and commercial relations are mutually influential, suggesting that the processes of culture contact itself unsettles an apparently confident imperialist narrative.

The journals of the Endeavour, Resolution and second Dolphin voyages are read here in a way which analyzes the textual treatment of the lands and peoples the ships 'discovered', and which considers whether the economic/cultural commerce between sailor and islander in fact amounted to an exercise in appropriation. Section Two below provides a historical context for the discussion. It investigates the extent to which the exploration of the Pacific was informed by the ongoing economic and commercial systems and movements of the day, in particular the persistent search for new markets and the influence of the slave trade in the establishment of European economic pre-eminence. Sections Three and Four then fully discuss the issues laid out above. Section Three considers the journals' treatment of the commercial potential of land, comparing the construction of Pacific landscapes in the Endeavour and Dolphin journals; and deals with questions of property and the role played by natural science in the exploration of the Pacific. The final section, signalling the focus of the remainder of this thesis, considers the significance of the commercial transaction and the relativity of the idea of value and exchange in different cultural contexts. It analyzes the voyage narratives in terms of their dealings with the indigenous inhabitants of the Pacific, considering in particular the idea of the mutability of economic identity. It also discusses the figures of Omai and Tupaia, Tahitians brought from their home by the Europeans in order to be exhibited in the colonial centre. These islanders were explicitly figured as commodities, and the investigation of exchange and value in this section ends by considering the (in)stability of this construction.

In a word, the whole earth is the market of Britain; and while we remain at home safe and undisturbed, have all the products and commodities of *the eastern and western Indies* brought to us in our ships and delivered into our hands . . . Our island has put on quite a different face, since the increase of commerce among us . . . In a word, commerce is the first mover, the main

spring in the political machine, and that which gives life and motion to the whole, and sets all the inferior wheels to work.⁴

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of trade and commerce within mid eighteenth-century British society. Forty years before Napoleon described Britain as a 'nation of shopkeepers', commerce played a central role within the evolving British nation-state. The relationship between the nation-state and the world of commercial relations was a symbiotic one, not only mutually beneficial but mutually vital. At a time when the British nation-state was still in the process of evolution and consolidation, the forging of links between its constituent parts was of the greatest importance. By mid-century, Britain was the largest free trade area in Europe; consequently, trade enabled both the strengthening of the link between Scotland and England, and on a more general level, the promotion of a notion of 'commonwealth', of the greater good delivered by means of commerce. The role of nationalist sentiment can be seen most clearly, perhaps, in the attitude struck towards foreign commercial activities in general and French (and Irish⁵) goods and manufacturing in particular. Contemporary prints and cartoons blamed French imports and commercial activity of all kinds for all manner of ills within the British body politic.⁶

⁴ A. S. Catcott, *The Antiquity and Honourableness of the Practice of Merchandise: A Sermon* (Bristol, 1744), quoted in David Dabydeen (ed.), *The Black Presence in English Literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), p. 26. Linda Colley writes: 'The *Present State of Great Britain* (read by virtually everyone who mattered) opened with the ringing assertion that "Next to the purity of our religion we are the most considerable of any nation in the world for the vastness and extensiveness of our trade". Some forty years later the same chapter omitted any reference to religion and simply told the reader that "Our trade is the most considerable of the whole world. And indeed, Great Britain is, of all other countries, the most profitable for trade". Abundant trade was not just materially desirable: for Britons in this period it was proof positive of their status as the freest and most distinctively Protestant of nations.' Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 59; quotations from *Magnae Britanniae: or, The Present State of Great Britain* (1718; 1755).

⁵ In the latter half of the eighteenth century, restrictions placed on Irish exports to Britain and North America led to a growing sense of Irish grievance against Westminster and to a developing sense of nationalism among both Catholic and Protestant Irish. Ultimately, boycotts and growing discontent led to the enactment of laws easing the British restrictions on Irish commerce. Paul Langford notes that, to the British government, the sight of Irish Protestants threatening rebellion (at a time when the first empire was disintegrating) was 'almost incredible'. (Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 546). While the Irish situation could be controlled in a way that dealings with France could not, it was, as a *de facto* 'internal' problem, perhaps more profoundly threatening and unsettling.

⁶ Kathleen Wilson notes the appearance at this time of a series of cartoons depicted a 'materialist

As noted later in this thesis, the strongly xenophobic current within British society at this time found expression in contemporary popular culture; moreover, it was encouraged as a means of fostering nationalistic sentiments.

The voyages considered in this thesis were undertaken in the aftermath of the Seven Years' War (1757-1763), which, of all the eighteenth-century international conflicts, had the greatest repercussions for the European balance of power. This war was, in common with every European war in this era, essentially a *commercial* undertaking, and as Paul Langford remarks, 'every peace was a continuation of war by economic means'.⁷ The military struggles of these years were the result of international rivalry, although the economic hegemony of Europe as a whole had already been established. French and British economic supremacy was dependent not only on maritime power and control of intercontinental exchange, but on the Atlantic trade in slaves – in such a way was their national economic machines fuelled and sustained. Robin Blackburn notes:

For a considerable time the conjunction of slavery, colonialism, and maritime power permitted the more advanced European states to skew the world market to their own advantage. What has been called the 'European miracle' in fact depended not only on the control of intercontinental exchange but on the profits of slavery. The latter also helped to furnish some of the conditions for a global industrial monopoly.⁸

A glance at the social and economic changes of these years highlights the influence of the Atlantic trade. The role of slavery in sustaining the economies of the North American colonies led to a greater demand of goods from the imperial centre and so the colonial trade ensured that the domestic economy remained buoyant.⁹ The slave

nightmare' – the flooding of the British market with shiploads of foppish and effeminate goods designed to weaken and contaminate a vigorous society. See Wilson, *Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 191-192.

⁷ Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, p. 3.

⁸ Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern 1492-1800* (London: Verso, 1997), p. 6.

⁹ Blackburn writes: 'The colonial trade broke the prior pattern whereby England possessed only one exportable manufacture: woollen goods. The colonies imported nails, pots, buckles, implements and utensils of every description, together with a variety of textiles. The Navigation Acts not only channelled plantation products to the metropolis, but also ensured that the plantation colonies

trade was consequently closely tied to the project of Pacific exploration – it largely underpinned the economic power which fuelled consumer demand which in turn drove the turbines of exploration and imperialism.¹⁰

The stake held by the wider community in the forging of empire was considerable. This interest manifested itself in many ways, for example in the large scale emigration (and transportation of convicts) to the thirteen North American colonies. Such movements naturally led to an increasing interest in, and knowledge of, British overseas possessions on the part of those citizens with family connections – actual, tangible links – to the empire. At the same time, the altered patterns of consumption outlined above had substantial repercussions. As trade with the empire increased, such commodities as tea and sugar, once outrageously luxurious, became standard fare, and caused hackles to rise at the same time ('Were they the sons of tea-sippers, who won the fields of Cressy and Agincourt, or dyed the Danube's stream with Gallic blood?').¹¹ Neil McKendrick remarks that 'it was not the desire to consume that was new but the ability', and notes the demand 'for what was new and exciting and modern';¹² Samuel Johnson wrote drily at the time, 'In a few years we shall probably have no common folk at all'.¹³ While it is doubtless going a

became major customer for English goods.' (The Making of New World Slavery, p. 268). This in turn fostered the spread of capitalist market relations and to consumer appetite for all the commodities the world had to offer and *this* in turn led to a sustained impetus for exploration and conquest.

¹⁰ This description of the consequences of slavery is necessarily limited and simplified – it is important, for example, to emphasize that there existed no single, homogeneous entity named the British economy – but illustrates the economic and consumer pressures which fuelled the exploration of the globe. The stimulation of consumer appetite was directly linked to the European penetration of the unknown parts of the world. It demonstrates what Blackburn has called 'the power of the drawing room' in commanding global resources, and consequently the complicity of the British consumer in the Atlantic slave trade. In such an economic climate, questions of morality were largely ignored. David Dabydeen notes that the 'brutal economic rationale' which underpinned the trade in slaves was 'indicative of the materialist mood of the age, one which saw profit as the main criterion of behaviour, and morality only as a secondary consideration'. (Dabydeen, 'Eighteenth-Century English Literature on Commerce and Slavery', in Dabydeen (ed.), The Black Presence in English Literature, p. 28. Also see this essay (esp. pp. 32-33) for examples of contemporary justifications of slavery on the part of writers who 'could not reconcile their belief in the civilizing effects of commerce to the barbaric realities of the slave trade'. (p. 32).

¹¹ Jonas Hanway, A Journal of Eight Days Journey from Portsmouth to Kingston upon Thames (London: 1756); quoted in Langford, A Polite and Commercial People, p. 645.

¹² Neil McKendrick, 'Introduction' to McKendrick, John Brewer and J. H. Plumb, The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England (London: Hutchinson, 1983), p. 2.

¹³ Samuel Johnson, quoted in Peter Mathias, The Transformation of England: Essays on the Economic

little too far to claim that sugar and tea were the great levellers of eighteenth-century British society, one notes the manner in which commerce and the empire assumed a greater, *tangible*, relevance in the lives of the population at large. Commerce meant more than simply trade – it signified progress, becoming identified and implicated with the Enlightenment project of universal knowledge.¹⁴

The 'aggressive' consumption and 'acceptance of modernity' referred to by J. H. Plumb was generated and fed by the empire. A changing social and economic environment reflecting the developing financial power of the 'middling' classes was manifested in many ways. The investment in the empire by this section of society,¹⁵ and the compact between government and the world of commerce, were sealed in the course of the Seven Years' War. In order to finance this hugely expensive conflict, the British Government was obliged to raise vast sums of money. Nancy Koehn remarks, 'How did it do this? Through trade, trade and more trade, both at home and abroad'.¹⁶ Koehn continues:

Ministers saw clearly that in large measure Britain owed its military victory and its position in the global order to the power of commerce and the changing, growing economy that undergirded it. This collective understanding shaped imperial policymaking after the war. Most of those who formulated and enacted these policies agreed that the burgeoning economy of empire was to be managed to geopolitical ends – towards maintaining and expanding the commercial and fiscal foundations of power.¹⁷

and *Social History of England in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Methuen, 1980), p. 302.

¹⁴ Langford writes: 'Commerce . . . suggested a definitive stage in the progress of mankind, as evidenced in the leadership of western Europe and the manifold social and cultural consequences thereof' (*A Polite and Commercial People*, p. 2). See also J. H. Plumb, 'The Acceptance of Modernity', in McKendrick et al (eds), *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, p. 316).

¹⁵ Wilson defines the 'middling classes' as 'men and women of moveable property with an income between £40 and £400 per annum' (in *Sense of the People*, p. 210). It is worth noting at this point that considerable evidence exists which demonstrates the anti-imperial sentiment which existed in the country at this time. Dabydeen notes that, such was the close relationship between commerce and imperialism, growing unease at the pollution and brutalization, the 'selfishness and hardness of heart' caused by commercial activities (including slavery), also influenced the manner in which the empire was viewed. Although the empire led to greater wealth in Britain, this wealth did not trickle down and the poor remained poor (or became more mired in poverty as a result of the inflation introduced to Britain as a result of commercial activity). See Dabydeen, *The Black Presence in English Literature*, pp. 26-43.

¹⁶ Nancy F. Koehn, *Power of Commerce: Economy and Governance in the First British Empire* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994), p. 6.

¹⁷ Koehn, *Power of Commerce*, p. 8. See also John Brewer, *Sinews of Power: War, Money and the*

The war acted as a means of crystallization of the nation's political objectives - solvency and a trade surplus.

National policy objectives such as those outlined above did not, however, always and inevitably result in a sense of national unity. The populist mood of the country, easily whipped up to demand the conquest of swathes of territory and sometimes far removed from the essential pragmatism of government policy, could generally not be counted upon to reflect what were sometimes perceived as government policies which lacked economic or imperial 'ambition'.¹⁸ Government strategy, however, was informed in part by a fear of *over-ambition* and of acquisition:

It is with whole nations as it is with private men; an accumulation of possessions only serves to increase a violent desire for still greater acquisitions. Every conquest opens new views; and the imagination already grasps the mines of Chile, Peru and Mexico . . . by a thirst of military glory we seem to have entirely forgot that moderation and equity which always gave this nation the greatest weight in Europe . . . [W]ith respect to the conquests which we have already made with such unparalleled success, are we not embarrassed how to preserve them?¹⁹

Consequently, government policy was often forced to hold a line against a populist call for greater national glory, which was less emphatic about the importance of trade and which, if heeded, would lead the nation to overstretch itself. Strongly

English State 1688-1783 (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989). Brewer writes that 'the British viewed war as far more than a matter of honour. It was also a question of property and profit'. (p. xxi).

¹⁸ Those sections of the press, for example, which worked to an oppositional agenda, greeted with outrage the decision of the government to return to Spain and France certain territories (including Manila and several Caribbean and North American islands) ceded to Britain by the Peace of Paris. The government arguments, that the country stood to gain more by not extracting every concession it possibly could from France and Spain, and could not seek to humiliate France further without risking military exhaustion itself, cut little ice with opponents. See Langford, A Polite and Commercial People, pp. 347-352, for a description of the Peace of Paris.

¹⁹ James Marnott, Political Considerations, being a few Thoughts of a Candid Man at the Present Crisis (London, 1762); quoted in Nancy Koehn, Power of Commerce, pp. 55-57. Marnott cites the example of Spain, in the sixteenth century the greatest country in Europe but in the eighteenth century weakened and its power undermined as a direct consequence of reliance upon the gold and silver of its vast South American empire. The choice was between an empire of trade or one of vast territories, and for Marnott, that choice was an obvious one. Generally speaking, however, the division was not so clear.

nationalistic attitudes to trade and commerce led, ironically enough, to divisions within the nation between those who sought endless national self-aggrandizement and more cautious elements.²⁰ For all this, however, it is clear that, internal tensions notwithstanding, the vital role of commerce in maintaining a sense of national wellbeing and influence was – generally – acknowledged in the country.

Kathleen Wilson writes:

The imperial project existed to maximize trade and national power . . . and colonies were considered crucial to the 'empire of the sea' that contemporaries believed Britain had, or should have, dominion over. This vision, predicated upon a mixture of an adulterated mercantilism, nationalistic anxiety and libertarian fervour, was clearly both rose-coloured and self-serving, mystifying or obscuring the brutal, exploitative and violent processes of 'trade' and colonization (including the immensely profitable trade in slaves) and homogenizing the differences among various forms of British dominance in the New World (and the Old). Nevertheless, it was immensely attractive to domestic publics, who seemed fervently to subscribe to its view of the essentially fair-minded, just and paternalistic nature of the British, as opposed to French or Spanish, empire, and the former's ability to 'tame the fierce and polish the most savage', civilizing the world through commerce and trade.²¹

²⁰ Kathleen Wilson notes that 'opposition writers had reiterated mercantilist arguments about the ubiquitous benefits that accrued to the nation from the growth of trade and colonies . . . [I]t was but a short step to assert that those most committed to the expansion of commerce were pursuing the good of all British citizens, whereas those most diffident about untrammelled imperial expansion were dedicated to its subversion'. (Wilson, *Sense of the People*, p. 158). Consequently, it is possible to see the manner in which the issues of trade and commerce were employed in order to foster an oppositional politics. This said, however, it is clearly inadequate to present the debate as 'oppositional' in any clear-cut way – such pressures as changing patterns of consumption, for example, muddied the waters, insofar as increased commerce and the increasing demand for goods and commodities inevitably put pressure on the doctrine of mercantilism, espoused (generally speaking) by the 'opposition' voices mentioned by Wilson. It should also be noted that the effects of war were hardly universally positive – trade was clearly damaged, sometimes in the short term, sometimes fatally, as a result of international conflict. On balance, however, governmental symbolic investment in its foreign policy and actual investment in its navy enabled trade to flourish. In that sense, as Linda Colley notes, 'it was actually trade which was parasitic on the resources of the nation state'. (Colley, *Britons*, p. 68.) John Brewer remarks of the idea of mercantilism (defined as 'the pursuit of a favourable balance of trade, together with the protection and encouragement of strategically important commerce and trade' [Brewer, *Sinews of Power*, pp. 167-168]) that, while commercial policy was naturally informed by certain economic precepts, these precepts do not amount *per se* to a coherent and comprehensive economic *method*. Instead, Brewer suggests, 'mercantilism' amounted to a rather general ideological framework, a 'loose and flexible structure whose configuration changed over time' (Brewer, *Sinews of Power*, p. 170), adapting itself to changing situations and exerting less systematic influence over government policy than has been suggested. Systematic or not, however, the influence of mercantilist logic was pervasive, and it clearly reflects the attitude towards the empire and towards economic activity current at this time.

²¹ Wilson, *Sense of the People*, p. 157.

Wilson notes that the empire in 1760s Britain was visualized essentially as consisting of white, free-born subjects, co-existing in a mutually beneficial relationship with the mother country. Print culture was partially responsible for the formation of this image; many of the most prominent writers of the time, including Addison and Smollett, were personally involved in the slave trade and the North American plantations;²² and newspapers, through painstaking description and reporting, encouraged a widespread fascination with the movements of commodities to and from Britain, to North America and territories further afield.²³

Naturally, such reports aided an imaginative purchase on the colonies, fostering the image of an 'imagined community' of traders and merchants and colonists, farms and plantations abroad and small businesses at home as part of an intricate and well-oiled machine working towards the greater good. The enormous power of such images may easily be seen; we can visualize the manner in which the realities of colonial trade and commerce could be effaced through (to use Wilson's term) 'rose-coloured' narratives. To take the example of sugar again, its trade and use by an ever-growing section of the population bound the ties of nation ever closer, and helped to sustain an image of trade and commerce as fundamentally *enabling*. Commerce, that is, was conceived of as leading to the export of British goods, British civilization – decency, tolerance, an enlightened attitude to all things – and British power and influence around the globe. It was an attitude by no means held within Britain alone, as the following remark from Voltaire illustrates:

²² Dabydeen notes: 'Addison, Defoe, Cleland, Steele, Swift, Pope, Prior and Smollett, among others, were in one way or another connected with the world of commerce. Addison, for instance, was a commissioner of trade and plantations . . . Smollett, once a surgeon on a slave ship, married a colonial slave-owning heiress' ('Eighteenth-Century English Literature on Commerce and Slavery', in Dabydeen (ed.), *The Black Presence in English Literature*, p. 28).

²³ For example, Wilson writes, '[N]ewspapers in commercial and trading centres such as Newcastle, Norwich, Liverpool, Birmingham and Bristol . . . coaxed and shaped their readers' involvements, both material and ideological, in war, trade and imperial expansion . . . The structures of these papers reflected a mercantilist world view in which trade and the accumulation of wealth appeared to be the highest national and individual good. The progress of wars in Europe, America, Africa and the East Indies; the comings and goings of merchant ships, often with lengthy lists of the products of their laden bottoms; prices, stocks and bullion values; and advertisements for luxury goods from international and colonial markets – tea, coffee, chocolate and tobacco; calicoes, and silks; wines, rum and spirits; fruits and seeds, furs, exotic birds and plants – could together account for one-third of the contents of individual issues of newspapers in the outports.' (Wilson, *Sense of the People*, p. 157.)

Trade, which has made richer the citizens of England, has helped to make them free, and this freedom has, in turn, enlarged trade . . . [I]t is trade which has gradually created the navy, thanks to which the English are masters of the seas . . . Posterity might be surprised that a small island, which has from her own only some lead, tin, Cutter's earth and coarse wool, has become, thanks to its trade, powerful enough to dispatch in 1733 three squadrons . . . to the uttermost ends of the earth.²⁴

At the same time and unavoidably, society within Britain would be altered:

Nothing has wrought such an Alteration in this Order of People, as the Introduction of Trade. This hath indeed given a new Face to the whole Nation, hath in great measure subverted the former State of Affairs, and hath almost totally changed the Manners, Customs and Habits of the People.²⁵

An inevitably changing structure of society, however, was the price to be paid for the developing commercial and imperial life of the nation. Edmund Burke, writing in the aftermath of the Seven Years War, was bluntly straightforward in his evaluation of the importance of the empire and the role and function of the colonies:

We have a great empire to rule, composed of a vast mass of heterogeneous governments, all more or less free and popular in their forms, all to be kept in peace, and kept out of conspiracy, with each other, all to be held in subordination to this country; while the spirit of an extensive and intricate trading interest pervades the whole, always qualifying, and often controlling, every general idea of constitution and government.²⁶

Again, one sees the extent to which the empire was imagined as a free and fair commonwealth; again, one notes the place assigned to the colonies in the greater scheme of things. George III was no less frank than Burke, praising Parliament:

[for] extending and promoting the trade and manufactures of Great Britain, and for settling the mutual intercourse of my kingdom and plantations, in

²⁴ Voltaire, *Lettres Philosophiques* (1733); quoted in Koehn, *Power of Commerce*, p. 66.

²⁵ Henry Fielding, 'An Enquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers, With Some Proposals for Remediating this Growing Evil' (London, 1757), p. xi; quoted in Koehn, *Power of Commerce*, p. 26.

²⁶ Edmund Burke, 'Observations on the Late State of the Nation' (London, 1769), in *Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke* (Vol. 2), Paul Langford ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), p. 194; quoted in Koehn, *Power of Commerce*, p. 101.

such a manner as to provide for the improvement of the colonies on a plan of due subordination to the commercial interests of the mother country.²⁷

Linda Colley notes, however, that the general chorus of approval regarding trade is deceptive. In terms of status, men of trade remained behind men of property in the social pecking order, and while 'broad-acred members of parliament virtually always spoke approvingly of commerce, they spoke of it as a worthy occupation indispensable to the well-being of the nation, not as their occupation, and not as their children's occupation if they could help it'.²⁸ This, however, simply serves to underscore the strength of the relationship between commerce and the nation-state – the state of dependency was exceptionally engrained, the mutual benefits plain to be seen.

It is against this global pattern of trade and commerce that the exploration of the Pacific must be set. Commerce was of the greatest importance in maintaining the political unity of Britain and its position in a globally expansionist Europe. Questions of commerce cannot be viewed in isolation from the Atlantic trade in slaves; the slave trade was responsible for underpinning the prosperity of the British North American colonies and consequently of Britain itself. Slavery made possible a boom in the domestic economy, a more systematic application of the principles of a market economy and a purchase on the idea of consumerism by a growing proportion of the population with what might now be called 'spending power'. This brief sketch of the development and working of a tentative new market economy illustrates the complex web of economic relationships which existed in the middle of the eighteenth century. The new consumer-minded 'middling class', the slave traders (and other traders), the growing number of readers and writers, the politicians of Britain – all of these were linked within an ideology of progress and of national and individual prosperity, which operated at a remove from any concept of morality. Many issues were generated as a result of this discussion, including (for

²⁷ Quoted in *The Parliamentary History of England* Vol. 16, p. 234 (London, 1806).

²⁸ Colley, *Britons*, p. 60.

example) moral questions of the complicity of the people as a whole in the slave trade. This chapter, however, is concerned to investigate the extent to which the voyages of exploration reflect in their planning and execution the ideology of the society they represent. The following sections engage with the ambivalence revealed in the journals' representations of the landscapes and people of the south Pacific. The journal narratives reveal a keen interest in the economic potential of the newly 'discovered' lands. An analysis of the journals' economically speculative descriptions of the landscapes encountered by the ships of exploration reveal an amount of *internal* questioning which results from the discrepancy between anticipated discoveries (of the fabled *terra australis*) and actual discoveries. Although these journals *may* be read as largely conventional in their attitude to the landscapes encountered, and to their economic potential, this conventionality is by no means consistent.

The voyages of Pacific exploration that began with John Byron's voyage on the *Dolphin* in 1764 (that ship's first circumnavigation of the globe) in the immediate aftermath of the Seven Years' War, mark a decisive break with past attitudes towards the region. Hitherto, the Pacific had figured in the British strategic imagination as a source of silver and gold, an ocean fringed by wealthy Spanish cities, and traversed by Spanish galleons transporting precious cargoes from Manila to Mexico. The exploits of British buccaneers from Drake onward held a cherished place in the national imagination. Attempts earlier in the century to map and chart the Pacific had been abandoned – Anson's ill-fated expedition of 1740 had been one of two planned surveys of the South Seas, but Spanish sensitivity forced the Admiralty to scale down the one and abandon the other.²⁹ Government hesitation

²⁹ The episode illustrates the extent to which the history of Pacific exploration cannot be separated from the Atlantic slave trade – as Glyndwr Williams writes, 'The British government was forced to recognize the strength of Spanish feelings, and its anxiety not to upset the delicate negotiations

was supplemented by a general feeling of unease concerning the very idea of commerce in the Pacific. The economic calamity of the South Sea Bubble of 1720, although it 'had little to do with the overseas trade, actual or potential, of the South Sea Company',³⁰ meant that British commerce was not, generally speaking, favourably disposed to the idea or practice of trade with the Pacific region.

With the end of the Seven Years War, these attitudes changed, and official government policies began to catch up with the actions of the buccaneers and with the *imaginative* colonization of the ocean which, fuelled by stories of fabulous wealth, expansive lands and exotic inhabitants, had proceeded apace throughout the eighteenth century. The gradual decline of mercantilism and of Spanish power enabled the British government to construct a policy toward the Pacific which was systematic, based on notions of trade and commerce rather than piracy and buccaneering.

Ostensibly, the motivation for Cook's first and second voyages was scientific and transcended national boundaries. Philip Edwards notes that the Endeavour voyage was partially concerned with the observation of the transit of Venus and with:

[C]ontributing to an international scientific archive: of serving the advancement of knowledge about unknown or little-known countries and oceans – about the people, the flora, the fauna, the terrain, the climate – and providing information about harbours, tides, winds, landfalls, for those who would follow and enlarge the bounds of human knowledge still further.³¹

The increasingly close links between the Admiralty and the Royal Society also demonstrated the role of apparently strategically-innocent science and geography in

concerning the *asiento* and other issues led it to drop the proposed expedition – 'for the present' and without giving up the 'Right to send Ships for the discovery of unknown and unsettled parts of the world'. (Williams, 'Buccaneers, Castaways and Satirists: The South Seas in the English Consciousness before 1750', in Jonathan Lamb (ed.), 'The South Pacific in the Eighteenth Century: Narratives and Myths', special edition of *Eighteenth Century Life*, 18, 3 (November 1994), p. 126.

³⁰ Williams, 'Buccaneers, Castaways and Satirists', p. 126.

³¹ Philip Edwards, *The Story of the Voyage: Sea Narratives in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 7-8.

the voyages. At the Society's bidding, seamen and adventurers were dispatched to chart and gain knowledge of the globe:

It being the Design of the *Royal Society*, for the better attaining of the End of their Institution, to study *Nature* rather than *Books*, and from the Observations, made of the *Phenomena* and Effects she presents, to compose such a History of Her, as may hereafter serve to build a Solid and Useful Philosophy upon; They have from time to time given orders to several of their Members to draw up both *Inquiries* of Things Observable in forreign countries, and *Directions* for the Particulars, they desire chiefly to be informed about. And considering with themselves, how much they may increase their *Philosophical* stock by the advantage, which *England* enjoyes of making Voyages into all parts of the World, they formally appointed that Eminent Mathematician and Philosopher Master Rook, one of their Fellows, and Geometry Master at Gresham College, to think upon and set down some Directions for *Sea-men* going into the *East* and *West-Indies*, the better to capacitate them for making such Observations abroad, as may be pertinent and suitable for their purpose; of which the said Sea-men should be desired to keep an exact *Diary*, delivering at their return a fair copy thereof to the *Lord High Admiral of England*, His Royal Highness the Duke of York, and another to *Trinity-House* to be perused by the Royal Society.³²

It is certainly the case that Cook's voyages were widely accepted to be scientific in nature – other European navies were issued with instructions not to molest the Endeavour, for example – but for all the altruism and apparent idealism, the voyages of Pacific exploration in these years were planned according to the needs and dictates of economics. Indeed, the subtext of both the above quotations illustrates this agenda. It could reasonably be argued that the voyages of Pacific exploration were deeply influenced by commercial and colonial ideology. They were, on one level, missions dispatched to find and claim, if possible, the great southern continent, *terra australis*, for Britain, to exploit its resources and open new markets for British goods. Although the voyages were a state enterprise, they share many of the essential characteristics of the *commercial* voyages of the time. Of the Atlantic commercial voyages of the mid-eighteenth century, Robin Blackburn writes:

³² *Philosophical Transactions* Vol. I; cited in Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific 1768-1850: A Study in the History of Art and Ideas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 8.

The ideal ship's master possessed integrity, managerial skills, commercial judgment and good seamanship . . . the ship itself was a productive enterprise and an investment; its operation required skilled co-ordination, a disciplined methodical workforce.³³

The vessels of exploration were managed along the same lines. Greg Dening has argued persuasively that the naval vessel was a delicately balanced mechanism and the ship's community a complex organization which demanded of its captain not only considerable seamanship but also finely tuned managerial skills. Dening argues, for example, that the 1789 mutiny on the *Bounty* took place, not so much because William Bligh was excessively brutal or violent but rather because he failed to take into account the subtle nuances of space and language which were of the greatest importance on board ship – because he was not a skilful manager of men.³⁴ Similarly Cook displayed, in his early career at any rate, both good seamanship and managerial skills.³⁵ Chapters Two and Three explore in more depth these issues of power, discipline and ideologically-inflected judgment which inform naval management.

In the light of earlier observations regarding the connections between imperialism, war and commerce, it is worth noting comments by Adam Smith on this connection of personality and management. Writing of the relationship between war and commerce, Smith notes that 'the man of real constancy and firmness, the wise and just man who has been thoroughly bred in the great school of self-command, in the bustle and business of the world, exposed, perhaps, to the violence and injustice of faction, and to the hardships and hazards of war, maintains this control of his passive feelings upon all occasions'.³⁶ The Pacific voyages, which so

³³ Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery*, p. 232.

³⁴ See Greg Dening, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty* (Cambridge: Canto, 1994).

³⁵ Gananath Obeyesekere (among other critics) argues that Cook's judgment and managerial skills had largely deserted him on his third and final voyage, and that he relied on brutality rather than skill and judgment to enforce order. See Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking in the South Pacific* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

³⁶ Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, III, 3, 25; cited in Hiroshi Mizuta, 'Moral Philosophy and Civil Society', in Andrew Skinner and Thomas Wilson (eds), *Essays on Adam Smith* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 126.

captured the public imagination, were followed with especial interest by those who had benefitted from earlier expeditions (although, as will be seen, the Pacific could justifiably be considered a commercial disappointment); and it can be argued that they functioned as 'trailblazers', establishing the dimensions of the ocean, its possible points of refuelling, harbours and so on, for the merchants and traders who would follow.

Wallis' survey of Tahiti in 1767, following his arrival on board the *Dolphin* in June of that year, opened to the Admiralty gaze a land already imaginatively assimilated in the guise of *terra australis*. Robertson's journal is characterized by glowing descriptions of the landscapes encountered and of the commodities contained therein:

– the Interior part of this country is very Mountainous but their is beautiful valeys between the Mountains – from the foot of the Mountains half way up the Country appears to be all fine pasture lands, except a few places which seemd to be plowed or Dug up for planting or sowing some sort of seed – from that to the very topes of the Mountains is all full of tall Trees but what sort they are I know not but the whole was Green. (June 20, 1767)³⁷

Tahiti becomes assimilated at a stroke as storehouse, resting and watering place, and repository of wealth and riches. From the moment of contact, issues of value and worth are emphasized. The 'Instructions' issued to James Cook on the eve of his first voyage clearly illustrate the preoccupations of the Admiralty:

You are to proceed to the southward in order to make discovery of the [southern] continent above-mentioned until you arrive in the latitude of 40°, unless you fall in sooner with it [. . .] If you discover the Continent above-mentioned either in your Run to the Southward or to the Westward as above directed, You are to employ yourself diligently in exploring as great an Extent of the Coast as you can; carefully observing the true situation thereof both in Latitude and Longitude, the Variation of the Needle, bearings of Head Lands, Height, direction and Course of the Tides and Currents, Depths and Soundings of the Sea, Shoals, Rocks &c and also surveying and making Charts, and taking Views of such Bays, Harbours and Parts of the Coast as may be useful to Navigation [. . .] you are also carefully to observe the Nature

³⁷ Hugh Carrington (ed.), The Discovery of Tahiti: A Journal of the Second Voyage of H.M.S. *Dolphin* Round the World, Under the Command of Captain Wallis R.N., in the Years 1766, 1767, 1768, Written by her master George Robertson (London: Hakluyt Society, 1948), pp. 139-140.

of the Soil and the Products thereof [. . .] and in case you find any Mines, Minerals or valuable stones you are to bring home Specimens of each, as also such Specimens of the Seeds of the Trees, Fruits and Grains as you may be able to collect . . .³⁸

– and so on exhaustively. So far as the inhabitants of these new lands are concerned:

You are likewise to observe the Genius, Temper, Disposition and Number of the Natives, if there be any, and endeavour by all proper means to cultivate a Friendship and Alliance with them, making them presents of such Trifles as they may Value, inviting them to Traffick, and Shewing them every kind of Civility and Regard; taking Care however not to suffer yourself to be surprized by them, but to be always upon your guard against any Accident. [. . .] You are also with the Consent of the Natives to take possession of Convenient Situations in the Country in the Name of the King of Great Britain . . .³⁹

The views of the Admiralty, therefore, are entirely clear; the 'Instructions' represent an attempt at laying the foundations for colonization. The great southern continent, already imaginatively colonized for hundreds of years,⁴⁰ was to be as fully charted and known as possible, and assimilated into the European global picture.

These attitudes, however, are not as confident as they might appear. Jonathan Lamb writes:

Underneath all explorations of the Pacific . . . there is a principle of uncertainty at work that transforms intentions, actions and reports into the opposite of what they were meant to be, leaving the strictest and most chaste accounts sounding like *Gulliver's Travels* [. . .] Because it was a huge ocean with no settled boundary, at least to the south, it fostered dreams of plunder, mining, pearl fishing, and trade that slid easily . . . into the fantastic structures of credit finance, of which the South Sea Bubble of 1729 is the most exemplary instance. Debt and dream combined, then, in an orgy of speculation that had no other limit than the capacity of investors to believe the truth of what they imagined to be true.⁴¹

³⁸ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, pp. cclxxxii-cclxxxiii.

³⁹ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. cclxxxiii. The 'Instructions' proceed to outline, in some detail, the course Cook should follow, in order to cover as much of the southern ocean as possible, to 'fall in' with and chart New Zealand (then only imperfectly known), and to generally find out as much as possible about the southern lands, their wealth, fertility, harbours and general economic potential.

⁴⁰ See, for, example, Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, for a description of the European imaginative construction of *terra australis*, the southern continent.

⁴¹ Lamb, 'Introduction' to 'The South Pacific in the Eighteenth Century: Narratives and Myths' (Lamb

The ships of exploration entered a region already firmly textualized as abounding with wealth and riches. Supplementing the knowledge of the actual Spanish trade in silver from the Philippine islands and Mexico, were the fantastic myths of *terra australis*, and the varied accounts of the earliest European voyages into the Pacific, all combining to create an alluring picture of a region overflowing with fertility and mineral wealth. Robertson's journal describes the land of Tahiti as seen from the deck of the Dolphin in terms more appropriate to heaven, detailed and richly sensual, rapturously describing vivid colours and heady scents coming off the shore. Robertson's journal demonstrates a belief that Tahiti is part of the southern continent ('We now supposed we saw the long wishd for Southern Continent, which has been often talkd of, but neaver before seen by any Europeans' [June 19, 1767]); even when (almost immediately after this reference) the document begins to speak of 'the island' (following communication with the islanders), Robertson maintains a belief in the existence of *terra australis* south of Tahiti. In a sense, however, this enthusiastic description of Tahiti can be read as *compensatory*, attempting to make amends for the failure to discover the southern continent. Robertson was well aware that the journey might well be viewed as, in one sense, a failure; as his entry of July 28, 1767 shows, he was angry at the decision by Wallis to sail west towards home and not south to make fresh discoveries:

This orders Griefd me Greatly and several of our Young Gentlemen who was all in hopes of seeing York Island [Moorea, close to Tahiti itself] and staying there for some days. We likeways hoped to have our cureosity Gratified, with a sight of the Southern Continant where I think their is a very great Probability of finding something that will be of great service to trade and commerce. [. . .] At this time I must own my heart was Grived when I reflected that it was now to all Appearance out of my Power to be able to give my King and Country an Accurate description of the Extent of this Countrys.⁴²

ed.), p. 2. See Robert Markley, 'Defoe, Capitalism and the Romance of the South Seas' (also in the above volume) for more on the South Sea Bubble phenomenon.

⁴² Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 233.

After all, in place of *terra australis*, the existence of which was well-nigh assured in the European imagination, the Dolphin and later the Endeavour anchored off a modestly-sized island. This island was undoubtedly beautiful and Elysian and (as will be seen in Chapter Two) the sailors may have been thrilled at the sight of exotic and sensual inhabitants. Ultimately, however, Tahiti was no more *than* a modestly-sized island, with limited commercial prospects. As Paul Carter notes in relation to Cook's first voyage:

The chief discovery of the *Endeavour* was its discovery of nothing or, rather, of the non-existence of a great southern continent: from an empirical point of view, this can only be construed as a failure.⁴³

Tahiti was important in strategic terms, acting as refuelling point and safe harbour, but of itself could not generate great wealth or trading prospects; the trade that went on (incessantly) during the ships' stays was conducted primarily as a means of maintaining health and a supply of food. Laura Brown writes of the British trade with the West Indies that 'the Indians' goods are at best a small factor in the real economic connection between England and the Caribbean; they serve primarily as a synecdoche for imperialist exploitation'.⁴⁴ Without collapsing the spatial and historical differences between the Pacific and Caribbean, much the same could be said for the first contacts between British vessels and Pacific islanders.

Given that the journals are the product of a mercantilist society in which 'trade and the accumulation of wealth appeared as the highest national and individual good',⁴⁵ the failure to locate attractive commercial possibilities – as opposed to strategically important harbours – is significant. The journals inevitably contain a subtext of disappointment, particularly when one remembers that the history of British involvement in the Pacific was a romantic one of daring raids on

⁴³ Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay: An Essay in Spatial History* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1987), p. 23.

⁴⁴ Laura Brown, 'The Romance of Empire', in Brown and Felicity Nussbaum (eds), *The New Eighteenth Century* (New York and London: Methuen, 1987), p. 52.

⁴⁵ Wilson, *Sense of the People*, p. 72.

Spain's American ports and piracy on the high seas involving galleons laden with gold and silver. By way of sharp contrast, the islands and lands charted and visited by the Endeavour and Dolphin contained water, hogs and coconuts. Robertson, for one, attempts to make amends for this sense of disappointment by emphasizing the strategic value of Tahiti:

There is another advantage in Settling King Georges Island, which is this, if our good freinds the Hollanders Should again Attempt any of our settlements in the East Indias [a reference to a Dutch attack on the British in India in 1759], this will serve as a Back Door to let us in amongst ther Spice Islands, as its only a Seven weeks run from this Island to the heart of their Spice Islands, which is not near so well fortified and protected as the Dutch India Company Endeavour to mak the World Belive.

[. . .]

I am apt to think *that the intention of our voyage was to discover some convenient place, where their was a good safe harbour, that a small fleet could lie in, with safety* [. . .]. We have been fortunate enough to procure what was wanted, as Port Royal bay is a place, where a small fleet can lie in with perfect safety. (July 28, 1767; my italics)⁴⁶

The difference here is between the public rhetoric and sense of mission surrounding the voyages, and the private reality, between a collective narrative and the individual subject. The narrative voice speaks against a background of implicit discontent, ideological disorder covered over only by the sexual commerce which is the dominant feature of relations between sailors and islanders. Indeed, the only commerce which was perceived to be successful and which lived up to all expectations was sexual commerce. As the following chapter argues, however, even this process was far from being simple and unambiguous. This economic discontent is the silent subtext of the descriptions by Cook and Robertson of the lands visited in their voyages, acting catachrestically to cut into the ostensibly authoritative or 'truthful' narrative. Reading the journals in this manner complicates the idea that they are simple and straightforward projections of (an already complicated) proto-colonizing ideology.

⁴⁶ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 242.

On one level, of course, the sailors are portrayed as busy consumers throughout the journals. Leaving aside the question of sexual commerce, to be discussed in Chapter Two, the crews endlessly gather objects to themselves, as noted by Cook in the journal to his second voyage:

All the others [islanders] came empty in respect to refreshments, but brought with them some arms such as Clubs, darts &c which they exchanged away, indeed these things generally found the best Market with us, such was the prevailing Passion for curiosities, or what appeared new. As I have had occasion to make this remark more than once before, the reader will think the Ship must be full of such articles by this time, he will be mistaken, for nothing is more Common than to give away what has been collected at one Island for anything new at a Nother, even if it is less curious, this together with what is destroyed on board after the owners are tired with looking at them, prevents any considerable increase.⁴⁷

Such passages portray the sailor as classic consumers, jettisoning their commodities at regular intervals in order to make room for more. These commodities, however, have the status of toys or 'curiosities', and are essentially valueless. They also lead, however, to discord among the ship's crew. Nicholas Thomas notes the manner in which 'collecting' accentuated the already deep (and officially hierarchized)⁴⁸ divisions among the crew. Writing on Cook's second voyage, he remarks upon the difference between the 'collecting' of artifacts engaged in by the sailors, on the one hand, and the officers and civilians on the other. While the sailors were constructed as collecting for the sake of it (the bad habit of the much-maligned 'virtuoso'), the naturalists and others collected in the name of 'Science', with the intention of formulating theories and establishing classificatory systems. Thomas quotes Johann Forster, one of the members of the scientific community travelling with Cook:

⁴⁷ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1969); quoted in Nicholas Thomas, *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture and Colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1991), p. 125.

⁴⁸ See Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language* for more on the shipboard divisions which characterized the eighteenth-century navy.

Today a Saylor offered me 6 Shells to sale, all of which were not quite compleat, & he asked half a Gallon brandy for them, which is now worth more than half a Guinea. This shews however what these people think to get for their Curiosities when they get home, & how difficult it must be for a Man like me, sent out on purpose by Government to collect Natural Curiosities, to get these things from the Natives in the Isles, as every Sailor whatsoever buys vast Quantities of Shells, birds, fish etc. so that the things get dearer & scarcer than one would believe, & often they go to such people, who have made vast Collections, especially of Shells, viz. the Gunner & Carpenter, who have several 1000 Shells; some of these Curiosities are neglected, broke, thrown over board or lost.⁴⁹

Such entries, by 'men like' Forster, are part of a movement to exclude the common sailors, portrayed as motivated by 'capricious passions and a base desire for financial advantage',⁵⁰ from an evolving empirically-based, and authoritative, discourse of anthropology. Forster's outraged disgust at what he considers to be the greed and stupidity of the consumer-sailors echoes contemporary land-based writings, as in the following extract which rails at the soullessness of modern life, and at the greed of consumers in general (and the Bristolian consumer in particular):

Foul as their streets, triumphant meanness sways,
And groveling as their mud-compelling drays. [. . .]
In all his sons the mystic signs we trace;
Pounds, shillings, pence, appear in every face.⁵¹

These are examples of the ambivalent attitude towards commerce, of reservations concerning its influence. Contemporary commentators were well aware of the threat posed by the economic empowerment of a hitherto emasculated section of the population. On land, these comments are dressed in the language of disapproval – of greed, vulgarity and selfishness. By sea, they are hidden behind the language of Science. In each case, however, what is exposed is the intervention of

⁴⁹ Johann Forster, *Journal*, pp. 555-557; quoted in Thomas, *Entangled Objects*, p. 141. Thomas notes that Forster accuses the sailors of envy and jealousy, of 'mean, grovelling passions' which contrasts sharply with his own project founded on reason, and which interfere with an otherwise successful mission.

⁵⁰ Thomas, *Entangled Objects*, p. 141.

⁵¹ R. Lovell, *Bristol: A Satire* (1794); quoted in Dabydeen, 'Eighteenth-Century English Literature on Commerce and Slavery', in *The Black Presence in English Literature*, p. 37.

the idea of class in the fictional notion of national unity. Commerce itself had the potential to destabilize the status quo – the sense, based upon class-based fears, was of the sailors as constituting an economic threat. This is not simply an illustration of textual and ideological instability; it is also a manifestation of what can be termed a *taxonomy of ambivalence*, in the sense that the location of this threat continually shifts in focus. In this case, a notional order is threatened from within, and the object of scrutiny becomes the sailors themselves.

This question of *value* is central to this discussion. In the first place, there is the question of the value of the text itself. These journals are notably unstable documents. As has been noted elsewhere, they were subject to considerable rewriting and editing; they appear to be written as eyewitness accounts yet in fact were largely written up after the voyage or at any rate a considerable period of time after the events described, with the effect that each entry was coloured with hindsight.⁵² Consequently the sense of objectivity and of weighty authority, the sense of an official history, is compromised. This 'colouring' of the description of the voyage has repercussions for one's reading of the description of the lands and landscapes encountered.

The descriptions of the land in the journals is problematic, arguably betraying considerable ideological vulnerability. Cook's journal, which contains descriptions of the Society Islands, New Zealand and Australia, unsurprisingly emphasizes the economic potential of all three lands. As will be seen, however, these descriptions, though painstaking and thorough, are scarcely indicative of the assured proto-colonizing imagination working through the commercial possibilities. In his 'Description of King Georges Island', Cook carefully fulfils the 'Instructions' to the letter, though it is noticeable that this description of the landscape of Tahiti, in keeping with his general style, is considerably more practical and less rapturous than were the descriptions of Tahiti made earlier by Robertson. The latter, as

⁵² Beaglehole's definitive edition of Cook's journal of the Endeavour voyage was itself compiled from four different source-journals and a number of fragments.

Chapter Four argues, describes Tahiti in tones influenced by Christian and classical notions of Eden and Elysium, although even these descriptions can on occasion be economically speculative:

From the great variety of Agreeable Smells, which the land winds brought off in the Evenings, espetically when the first of the breeze was attended with a little refreshing Shower of Rain, I am apt to think their is some sort of Spicerys such as Cinnamon, Cloves or Nutmeg, but this is only conjecture. (July 28, 1767)⁵³

Cook is more thoroughly sober and descriptive:

The soil is rich and fertile being for the most part well stocked with fruit trees and small plantations and well water'd by a number of small rivulets of excellent water which come from the adjacent hills [. . .]. The tops of most of the ridges and mountains are barren and as it were burnt up with the sun, yet many parts of some of them are not without their produce and many of the Vallies are fertile and inhabited. [. . .] The produce of this Island is Bread Fruit, cocoa-nuts, Bananoes, Plantains, a fruit like an apple [. . .] All these articles the Earth almost spontaneously produces or at least they are rais'd with very little labour, in the article of food these people may almost be said to be exempt from the curse of our fore fathers; scarcely can it be said that they earn their bread with the sweat of their brow, benevolent nature hath not only supply'd them with necessarys but with abundance of superfluities [. . .] For tame animals they have Hogs Fowls and Dogs the latter of which we learnd to eat from them and few there were of us but what allowe'd that a South Sea Dog was next to an English Lamb [. . .] I must once more return to the Island before I quet it altogether, which, notwithstanding nature hath been so very boutifull to it yet it doth not produce any one thing of intrinsick Value or that can be converted into an Article of trade, so that the value of the discovery consists wholly in the refreshments it will afford to Shipping in their passage through those seas and in this it may be greatly improved by transporting hither horned cattle &c. Pumpkins have got a footing here the seeds of which most probably brought hither by the Spaniards [. . .] we also gave of these seeds and the seeds of the Pine Aples to several of the natives and as it cannot be doubted but what they will thrive here and will be a great addition to the fruits they allready have. (July 13, 1769)⁵⁴

On one level, descriptions such as these certainly represent a strategic exercise in imaginative appropriation. Cook carefully charts the harbours, tides, marine life, crops actual and potential and so on (in far greater length and detail

⁵³ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 232.

⁵⁴ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, pp. 121-122.

than reproduced above); there is no doubting the influence of such description.

Robertson is capable, of course, of equal pragmatism:

[. . .]he [Mr Gore] Likeways brought of some pices of Rock which he said he Supposed Containd some sort of Metal the peces of Rocks was Black and very Weighty, the whole was deleverd to the Capt. and I hope when tryd at old England they will turn out to be of great Value . . . (July 26, 1767)⁵⁵

[. . .] Mr Gore went four or five mile up the River side, where he found cotton, Ginger, Indigo, and many oyther things growing, that we knowd nothing of before, besides some pices of Rock which hade the appearance of Metal in them, I dare say most Men, as well as I will allow that this discovery of Gore and his party was sufficient to Excite any Mans Cureosety, to go a little further in to the Country in hopes of finding some of the Rich Metals, which South America, under the same paralels of Lattd. contains. There must certainly be a very Great Pearl fishery, about King Georges Island, as they use Pearl Oyster Shell for most uses [. . .] The Only ornaments which we are Certain that their ladys wear is Pearls, indeed some of our People that went a trading says they thought they wore some oyther shining trinkets in their Ears. (July 28, 1767)⁵⁶

These reports, brought to London, read and digested by Admiralty and government officials, led to the incorporation of the island of Tahiti (as refuelling point, harbour, bountiful storehouse) into the western or global economy. Similarly, Cook's contact with New Caledonia on the second voyage carefully notes the fertile areas in an otherwise infertile island (and betrays a certain discomfiture at the evidence of sophisticated irrigation and land management):

Between those advanced hills and the ridge we were upon is a large Vally through which ran a Serpentine river which added no little beauty to the prospect. The plains along the Coast on the side we lay appeared from the hills to great advantage, the winding Streams which ran through them which had their direction from Nature, the lesser streames conveyed by art through the different plantations, the little Stragling Vilages, the Variety in the Woods, the Shoals on the Coast so variegated the Scene that the whole might afford a Picture for Romance. (September 7, 1774)⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 222.

⁵⁶ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, pp. 231-232.

⁵⁷ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure*, p. 534.

Yet the disappointment outlined previously is plain to be seen – the *usefulness* of Tahiti may be undeniable, its *potential* may be clear, but its limitations are also obvious, and keenly felt. Cook's entry on New Caledonia makes this disappointment relatively explicit:

Indeed were it not for the Fertility of the Planes and some few Spotts in the Mountains the Country would be called a Dreary waste, the Mountains and other high places are for the most part incapable of cultivation, consisting chiefly of solid Rocks, the little soil which is upon them is scorched and dried up with the Sun . . . the Country in several respects bore a great affinity to some parts of New Holland [Australia] . . . (September 7, 1774)⁵⁸

Cook's attitude to the islands of New Zealand, which he reached some three months after the Endeavour's departure from the Society Islands, is quite different. Where Tahiti is perceived as of limited usefulness, New Zealand is clearly a candidate for colonization. For the most part, his description of the land echoes that of Tahiti, with the same descriptions of the seas, crops and general potential:

With respect to *Tovy poenammu* [the South Island] it is for the most part of a very Mountainous and to all appearances a barren country. The people in Queen Charlottes Sound, those that came off to us from under the Snowey Mountain [the Southern Alps] and the fire we saw to the SW of Cape Saunders were all the inhabitants we saw of the whole Island. But most part of the Sea Coast of *Aeheinomouwe* [the North Island] except the SW side is well inhabited and altho it is hilly mountainous Country yet the very hills and mountains are many of them cover'd with wood, and the Soil of the planes and Vallies appeared to be rich and fertile and such as we had an opportunity to examine we found to be so in a very high degree and not very much encumbered with woods; it was the opinion of every body on board that all sorts of European grain fruit &c would thrive here. (March 31, 1770)⁵⁹

It is noticeable, however, that while Cook's general description of the mountains and plains of New Zealand is similar in tone to that of Tahiti, he does not limit himself to mere (albeit painstaking) description. Instead, Cook is considerably more interested in projections of utility, in anticipating what might be done with these lands, by far the largest of the Pacific islands. His consideration of the potential of New Zealand

⁵⁸ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure*, p. 534.

⁵⁹ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 276.

is in sharp contrast to his treatment of Tahiti, with the journal full of advice for the Admiralty concerning likely colony-sites:

[Was] this Country settled by an Industrious people they would very soon be supply'd not only with the necessarys but many of the luxuries of life [. . .] In the woods are plenty of excellent timber fit for all purposes excepting Ships Masts and perhaps upon a close examination some might be found not improper for that purpose

[. . .] Should it ever become an object of settleing this Country the best place for the first Fixing of a Colony would be either in the River Thames or the Bay of Islands, for at either of these places they would have the advantage of a good harbour and by means of the former an easy communication would be had and settlements might be extended into the inland parts of the Country, for at a very little trouble and expence small Vessels might be built in the River proper for the navigating thereof [. . .] So far as I have been able to judge of the genius of these people it doth not appear to me to be attall difficult for Strangers to form a Settlement in this Country. They seem to be too much divided among themselves to unite in opposing . . .⁶⁰

Throughout the journal, Cook exercises his power of naming. In the case of New Zealand, the effect of this exercise of power is particularly clear, in that most of the names he gave to geographical features are unchanged today. On one level, the issue here is one of discursive power – whether or not this textual and cultural inscription of the landscape of New Zealand constitutes an act of imaginative colonization. From the passage quoted above, this appears to be the case – appears indeed to be a singularly clear-cut example of inscription of the land in such a way as to appropriate it for the Admiralty and, ultimately, a wider reading audience. Consequently, it may be argued, this is cultural appropriation without exchange, the land 'consumed' by its colonialist reader and constructed as commodity.

Simon Schama writes that:

Landscapes are culture before they are nature; constructs of the imagination projected onto wood and water and rock . . . once a certain idea of landscape, a myth, a vision, establishes itself in an actual place, it has a certain way of muddling categories, of making the metaphors more real than their referents, of becoming, in fact, part of the scenery.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, pp. 276-278.

⁶¹ Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (London: Fontana, 1996), p. 61.

Homi Bhabha has identified the manner in which the English weather has been put to ideological use – encouraging 'memories of the "deep" nation crafted in chalk and limestone, the quilted downs, the moors menaced by the wind, the quiet cathedral towns', and the 'daemonic double: the heat and dust of India, the dark emptiness of Africa'.⁶² In a similar way, the treatment of the landscape in the exploration journals encourages a comparison between English and Pacific topographies. The eighteenth century was notable for the increasing interest shown within British society, and in particular within aristocratic circles, in the notion of the landscape as a kind of cultural commodity, an object of consumption. As will be seen below, this idea of the landscape can also be noted in the journals' attitude to the Pacific islands, in particular the notion of 'improvement' which caused sweeping changes to the great English estates at this time.

On another level, however, this question of discourse is linked *directly* to that of commerce, in the sense that the speculation in land and landscape is emphatically part of a clear-sighted *economic* rather than a cultural fascination. The journals are engaged in a very precise exercise in 'sizing up', as it were, portraying the landscape in terms of its future value and prospective function in the marketplace. According to Alan Bewell, this attitude contained in the journals reflects a general European ideological attitude to the territories with whom they came into contact in the eighteenth century. He writes:

Neither people nor places were seen as natural givens, as being fixed, but instead were viewed each as being largely constructed by the other. Rather than viewing people or nations as free cultural agents, they were frequently interpreted in terms of their capacity (either limited or unlimited) to adapt to, use, or transform the physical environments within which they lived. [. . .] Nature was not seen as a fixed entity, but as something that, to a greater or lesser extent, could be modified or 'improved' by human culture and technology. [. . .] This idea of the constructed character of peoples and places [. . .] is the primary geographical idea of the latter part of the eighteenth century.⁶³

⁶² Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 169.

⁶³ Alan Bewell, 'Constructing Places, Constructing Peoples: Charting the Improvement of the Female Body in the Pacific' in 'The South Pacific in the Eighteenth Century: Narratives and Myths' (Lamb ed.), pp. 44-45.

Bewell notes the crucial imagined primacy of Europe and England, which were:

increasingly seen as occupying the centre of the geopolitical map, not for religious reasons, but because they were viewed as the best built environments . . . regions where the physical environment and the people who inhabited it had mutually transformed each other to maximum advantage. 'Improvement' thus became the gauge by which societies were more commonly differentiated, as writers evaluated the degree to which a geographical region displayed the technological and social capacity of an indigenous people to transform it physically to meet their needs.⁶⁴

One can see here, then, the mingling of the discourses of aesthetics, economics and science (in particular botany, as will be shown below). The georgic ideal of labour and fertility manages both to celebrate British economic success and to cast a speculative eye over other, less fortunate, territories; consequently, the fine ambivalence of Cook's journals on this point is usefully illuminated, and adds to the sense of uncertainty which underlies these documents and which complicates any attempt to construct the journals as stable projections of European ideology. These uncertainties, then, belong with a series of related complications, in particular the idea of textual instability which stems from the 'extraordinary lack of clarity'⁶⁵ which is the result of confusion as to supposed readership and from extensive rewriting of the journal from a spatial and temporal distance.

The question of the role of botany and natural science in the process of colonization has been much debated, in particular its part in the colonizer's charting of other lands and their economic and commercial significance. The practice of botany is often perceived to be one of the main conduits of imperialist influence, and the voyage of the *Endeavour* in particular has been analyzed for its part in the appropriation of the lands of the Pacific. The voyage was conceived in part as 'the first organized and thoroughly equipped voyage of botanical exploration',⁶⁶ and no

⁶⁴ Alan Bewell, 'Constructing Places, Constructing Peoples', p. 46.

⁶⁵ Edwards, *The Story of the Voyage*, p. 7.

⁶⁶ W. T. Stearn, *The Botanical Results of the Endeavour Voyage*; quoted in Richard Hough, *Captain James Cook: A Biography* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1994), p. 2.

voyage to the Pacific following it had quite the same emphasis on botanical issues. The fact that there were botanists on board at all says a great deal for the progression into respectability of the science – in the first half of the eighteenth century, botany had been widely regarded 'with good-humoured contempt as a pursuit of bugs, beetles and mummies'.⁶⁷ As the century wore on, however, its value increased as politicians and planners recognized its use in domesticating otherwise alien landscapes, its function in integrating new lands into the discourse of knowledge. There can be little doubt that part of the newfound respectability of botany was the result of this recognition that it acted as an aspect of commerce. Banks was seen as 'turning the fruits of botanical exploration to imperial advantage'.⁶⁸ This said, there is every indication that Banks himself saw the trip as a form of self-aggrandizement, as an extended version of the Grand Tour; there were unkind comparisons made between Banks and the 'virtuoso' or collector, often characterized as rich good-for-nothings who collected merely for the sake of collecting.⁶⁹ Banks, however, was no virtuoso, as his subsequent career and influence demonstrates. It was Banks, for example, who was the prime mover behind the celebrated Bounty voyage, which had orders to collect breadfruit plants from Tahiti and to transport them to the West Indian plantations in the understanding that they would act as excellent food for the slaves and consequently save money on food imports. Such examples demonstrate the importance attached to botany at this time, and the extent to which it is implicated in a greater economic/imperial plan. Since the British demand for cotton and tea, for example, was growing steadily, and since Britain could not produce these commodities itself and the national wealth was consequently being drained, it was economically sound for tea and cotton to be grown in British-controlled territory. Hence the significance

⁶⁷ John Gascoigne, Joseph Banks and the English Enlightenment: Useful Knowledge and Polite Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 58.

⁶⁸ Gascoigne, Joseph Banks and the English Enlightenment, p. 9. Upon his return, Banks became director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew.

⁶⁹ Banks wrote, 'My Grand Tour shall be round the whole globe'; quoted in Gascoigne, Joseph Banks and the English Enlightenment, p. 60.

of botany – it provided the initial means of *knowing* in extensive detail the plant life and agricultural potential of each colony or potential colony. By building on the knowledge produced by the botanical survey, policy-makers could decide on reorganizations to be implemented. The notion of agricultural engineering, of 'improvement' (mentioned earlier), could in theory be writ large, applied at colonial level just as much as at local level. The Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce (the very title of the Society is significant), for example, is clear as to the benefits:

The Society, influenced by the tenor and spirit of sundry acts of parliament subsisting for more than a century past [is] of the opinion that to encourage in the British colonies the culture and produce of such commodities as we must otherwise import from Foreign Nations, would be more advantageous to the navigation and commerce of this kingdom, than if the like things could be raised on the island of Great Britain.⁷⁰

Cook's journals are peppered with such botanical speculations:

In order still to know better these two usefull Plants [the tea plant and the spruce, from which beer was made] I have added a Drawing of each, the account I have given of them and their use will hardly be thought foreign to this Journal. It is the business of Voyagers to pass over nothing that may be usefull to posterity and it cannot be denied that these would if ever this Country [New Zealand] is settled by a Sevelized people or frequented by shipping. (May 11, 1773)⁷¹

Such speculative remarks concerning, for example, the fertility of New Zealand and the potential of its forests (the question of timber resources and standing forests being one which loomed large in the calculations of successive British administrations in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries⁷²) fits well into this paradigm of botanical and commercial utility.

⁷⁰ D. G. C. Allan, 'Notions of Economic Policy Expressed by the Society's Correspondents', in *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 106 (1958), pp. 800-804.

⁷¹ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775*, p. 138.

⁷² See Schama, *Landscape and Memory* for a fascinating discussion of the significance of forests and woods in the British national psyche, and the measures taken to ensure a continual supply of timber for the naval dockyards.

Cook's description of New Zealand, in fact, conforms in general to this model of evaluative speculation. The first landfall, off the east coast of the North Island, is dismissively christened 'Poverty Bay' because, Cook remarks, 'it afforded us no thing we wanted' (October 11, 1769).⁷³ Further up the coast he remarks that 'the soil both of the hills and Vallies is light and sandy and very proper for produceing all kinds of Roots but we saw only sweet Potatous and Yamms among them' (October 29, 1769);⁷⁴ and at Queen Charlotte's Sound he describes the land as consisting 'wholy of high hills and deep Vallies well stored with a variety of Excellent Timber fit for all purposes excepting Ships Masts for which use it is too hard and heavy'.⁷⁵ Throughout, he has an eye on possible harbours and sites for settlement, as the following entries, from the journals of the first and second voyages, make clear:

Six Leagues within Cape Colvill under the Eastern shore are several small islands, these Islands together with the main seem'd to forme some good harbours; opposite to these Islands under the western shore lies some other Islands and it appear'd very probable that these form'd some good harbours likewise. But even supposeing that there were no harbours about this River, it is good anchoring in every part of it, where the depth of water is sufficient, being defended from the Sea by a Chain of large and small Islands . . . (November 24, 1769)⁷⁶

This bay . . . lies on the West side of Cape Brett. I have named it the *Bay of Islands* on account of the great number which line its shores, and these help form several safe and Commodious harbours wherein there is room and depth of water sufficient for any number of Shipping, the one we lay in is on the SW side of the South westernmost Island that lies on the SE side of the Bay. I have made no accurate survey of this Bay, the time it would have required to have done this discouraged me from attempting of it, besides I thought it quite sufficient to be able to affirm with certainty that it affords good anchorage and every kind of refreshment for Shipping . . . (December 5, 1769)⁷⁷

⁷³ 'It affords us no fresh water, or at least that we could find, or anything else to recommend it'. (Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 172). Beaglehole notes that the area is in fact fertile and rich.

⁷⁴ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 186.

⁷⁵ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 247. The use of language – the land is 'well-stored' with goods – is striking.

⁷⁶ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 210 (close to the modern city of Auckland).

⁷⁷ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 218.

As there is no port in New Zealand I have been in that affords the necessary refreshments in such plenty as Dusky Bay, and altho' it lies far remote from the tradeing parts of the World, nevertheless a short account of the adjacent Country and a discription of the bay may not only be acceptable to the curious reader but may be of some use to some future Navigators for we can by no means till what use future ages may make of the discoveries made in the present . . . (May 11, 1773)⁷⁸

Accordingly, on one level Cook's Endeavour journal conforms to Mary-Louise Pratt's model of the 'imperial eye', the 'Eurocentred form of global . . . or "planetary" consciousness'.⁷⁹ It is undoubtedly an exercise in appropriation, reaching its apogee in the claiming of the land for the Crown:

After I had set the different points &c, we erected upon the top of the Hill a tower or pile of stones in which we left a peice of Silver Coin, some Musquet Balls, Beeds &c and left flying upon the top of it a peice of old pendant [. . .] After I had thus prepar'd the way for seting up the post we took it up to the highest part of the Island and after fixing it fast in the ground hoisted thereon the Union flag and I dignified this Inlet with the name of *Queen Charlotte's Sound* and took formal possession of it and the adjacent lands in the name and for the use of his Majesty, we then drank Her Majesty's health in a bottle of wine . . . (January 27/31, 1770)⁸⁰

According to Pratt, such descriptions of the landscape accord with an attitude that renders an 'unimproved' country meaningful 'only in terms of a capitalist future' and demonstrate the role of science – in this case, the role of a mingled botany and geography – in the facilitation of a commercial imperialism. The idea of a commercial 'gaze' is a powerful one, bringing in its wake ideas of the omniscient viewer with what Margaret Hunt calls a 'wide-angled view of the world'.⁸¹ Insofar as the Endeavour journal is concerned, there is a strong case for its application to the treatment of the landscape; as we will see in the following section, however, its

⁷⁸ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775*, p. 131.

⁷⁹ Mary-Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel-Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), p. 5.

⁸⁰ Beaglehole (ed.) *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 243.

⁸¹ Margaret Hunt, 'Racism, Imperialism and the Traveller's Gaze in Eighteenth-Century England' in *Journal of British Studies* 32, 4 (October 1993), p. 354.

application to the treatment of the indigenous people is considerably more problematic, complicating any attempt to define the attitudes of the author.

Yet even so far as the treatment of the landscape is concerned, the doubts latent in the journal are clear to be seen. In this section, we have seen that the journals' surveys of the lands encountered combine science and economics in reasonably assured and in many ways conventional descriptions. This assurance, however, is questionable on a number of counts. It is marked (or marred), for example, by the recognition of failure referred to earlier – the understanding that the Pacific will not prove to be a veritable treasure-house of commodities – and it is by no means clear that the attitude of Cook, for example, to the lands he encounters is quite as confidently speculative as might be expected. It is ironic that the detail with which Cook describes the landscapes before his gaze is the feature of his writing which demonstrates the ambivalent subtext of his journals. While clearly, as has been seen, this may be read as deeply ideological (describing the lands and their 'goods' for possible colonization and economic exploitation), these minute descriptions may also be read as the words of a neutral and ideologically *unmotivated* observer. Such a reading suggests a refusal to classify on the part of Cook which stands against the classificatory impulses referred to earlier. Paul Carter remarks:

Cook offered future travellers an accurate chart, an outline of names, but the essence of these texts was that they did not sum up a journey, but preserved the trace of passage. They were open-ended; their very accuracy invited further exploration, pre-empted premature possession. They . . . created a cultural space in which places might eventually be found. [. . .] the integrity of his travelling kept open (indeed opened up) the possibility of other ways of possession. The world view embodied in his naming practice stood at odds with the aims of imperialism.⁸²

Carter's view is a controversial one and takes little account, perhaps, of the complexity of the journals and of the manner, detailed above, in which Cook's journals were very far from being 'open-ended'. It is revealing, however, of the

⁸² Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, p. 33.

ambivalence of the *observer*, an ambivalence which will be elaborated upon in the following section.

This chapter has introduced the idea of a latent ambivalence with regard to commerce which threads the journals' descriptions of the landscapes encountered. This uncertainty will be expanded on in this section, which analyzes the dealings between British and islanders as outlined by Cook and Robertson. With each new land encountered by the British came a new relationship. This section argues that the different relationships between British and Tahitians, Maori and aboriginal Australians reveals the gulf existing between the two sides on questions of commercial value and exchange, and illuminates a previously obscured ambivalence as the journals contemplate notions of conditionality of value, economic and cultural relativism and indigenous agency.

The indigenous inhabitants and the sailors became known to one another through commercial dealings and the wider practice of exchange. This commerce took different forms, and as Chapter Two will demonstrate, the most striking was the sexual exchange which dominated, for example, the stays of both Wallis and Cook at Tahiti. Sex is noticeably less of an issue in dealings with the Maori, though even here it is very much present. Banks notes, for example, that certain Maori women were 'as great coquets as any Europeans could be & the young ones as skittish as unbroke fillies'.⁸³ In New Zealand, commerce generally took a more conventional form, and this section examines the role played by commerce in both Tahiti and New Zealand (together with Australia) in the light of the above discussion.

Although at first sight the 'Instructions' given to Cook are relatively measured in tone, they accord with an attempt to construct a taxonomy within which the

⁸³ Quoted in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 187.

islanders may be located, and consequently are closely related to the attempts to appropriate alien landscapes to the European mind. These instructions were ostensibly part of an Enlightenment project of knowledge and were motivated by a wish to establish peaceable relations. However, they were in addition an element in the drive to secure immediate commercial relations. The Admiralty document instructs Cook, with regard to the southern continent, 'with the Consent of the Natives to take possession of Convenient Situations in the Country in the Name of the King of Great Britain' and to show the indigenous people 'every kind of Civility and Regard'.⁸⁴ Similarly, there is a relatively benign tone to the Instructions regarding Tahiti – there are orders to cultivate friendly relations with the people and trade with them for such necessities as food and water. Cook was aware of the 'Hints' (in fact orders, included together with his other 'Instructions') offered him by the Earl of Morton, then President of the Royal Society, which included the following:

To exercise the utmost patience and forbearance with respect to the Natives of the Several Lands where the Ship may touch.

To check the petulance of the Sailors, and restrain the wanton use of Fire Arms.

To have it still in view that shedding the blood of those people is a crime of the highest nature:– They are human creatures, the work of the same omnipotent Author, equally under his care with the most polished European; perhaps being less offensive, more entitled to his favor.

They are the natural, and in the strictest sense of the word, the legal possessors of the several Regions they inhabit.

No European Nation has a right to occupy any part of their Country, or settle among them without their voluntary consent. Conquest over such people can give no just title; because they could never be the Agressors.⁸⁵

These 'hints' link self-conscious Enlightenment values of benevolence and tolerance with the idea of economic and commercial necessity. In this context, commerce with the islanders is not only desirable but *vital* to the wellbeing of the ship's crew.

⁸⁴ 'The Instructions', in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. cclxxxii.

⁸⁵ "'Hints' offered to the consideration of Captain Cook, Mr Bankes, Doctor Solander, and the other Gentlemen who go upon the Expedition on Board the *Endeavour*', in Anne Salmond, *Two Worlds: First Meetings Between Maori and Europeans 1642-1772*, (Auckland and London: Viking, 1991), p. 112.

Consequently, it is of the greatest importance that violence be minimized or eradicated altogether in order for commerce to smoothly proceed.⁸⁶

While it is very clear indeed that the indigenous peoples are constructed as inferior to the British, these further instructions are most notable when viewed in hindsight, that is, with knowledge of the actual events. They are in themselves less than remarkable – even the concrete assurance given that these lands actually belong to their inhabitants until such time as they give up their claim is not so very striking when one remembers the manner in which various indigenous groups *did*, or were perceived to, give up their claim to their land.⁸⁷ Robertson's journal notes that Wallis has issued instructions that the islanders be treated with respect; this 'respect', however, fails to last:

[. . .] all the country people behaved very insolently, non of them would trust any of the men with any of their things untill they got nails or toys from them, then several of them would push off and keep all and oythurs caried their insolence so high that they struck several of our men, this our seamen was very unwilling to put up with, but the Capt. having given strict orders, that no man should hurt or molest them, untill we tryed their tempers, this made our men put up with their ill behaviour for a short time.

[. . .]

At same time they were attempting to board the cutter, I then found it was too leat to treat them with tenderness . . . I therefor orderd the serjent and one of the Marins, to wound the two most resolute like felows . . . this orders was Compleyed with and the one was killed which the serjent fired at, and the oyther was wounded in the thigh, and both fell overboard . . . (June 21, 1767)⁸⁸

⁸⁶ These hints might be regarded as the result of an enlightened attitude to other races, were it not for what comes later: 'Therefore should they in a hostile manner oppose a landing, and kill some men in the attempt, even this would hardly justify firing among them, 'till every other gentle method had been tried. There are many ways of convincing them of the superiority of Europeans, without slaying any of those poor people – for Example – By shooting some of the Birds or other animals that are near them [. . .] Opening the mouth wide, putting the fingers towards it, and then making the motion of chewing, would sufficiently demonstrate a want of food.' In time, the 'hints' take on a surreal air: 'They should not at first be alarmed with the report of Guns, Drums, or even a trumpet. – But if there are other Instruments of Music on board they should be first entertained near the Shore with a soft Air.' ("*Hints*", p. 112)

⁸⁷ In the case of Tahiti, for example, the last 'King' of the island – king as a result of European meddling which upset the delicate balance of power – drunkenly renounced his claim; the last Queen of Hawaii was ousted in an American-prompted coup; the Treaty of Waitangi, the 'final' settlement in New Zealand, was never wholly honoured by the British and is still enormously controversial today.

⁸⁸ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, pp. 143, 145.

Similarly, the official orders given to Cook, the orders governing the voyage, may have been the first step in the erasure of existing cultural formations; it is necessary, however, to study the actions of the crew of the Endeavour on the ground, to engage with the actual actions and their consequences *at that moment*. The moment of first contact between the British and Maori in 1769, for example, differs little from the meeting of the Maori and Tasman's crew in 1642 – the alien ship anchors in a strange bay and contact takes place which results not in exchange but in violence and bloodshed. In both cases, the need for goods is not met; the vital importance of establishing commercial relations is highlighted by the absence of such a relationship. On this occasion the blood of the indigenous people is spilled:

The Coxwain of the pinnace who had the charge of the Boats . . . fir'd two musquets over their heads, the first made them stop and look round them, but the 2nd they took no notice upon which a third was fired and killed one of them on the spot just as he was going to dart his spear at the boat . . .

[. . .] one of them snatched Mr Greens Hanger from him and would not give it up, this encourag'd the rest to be more insolent and seeing others comeing over to join them I order'd the man who had taken the hanger to be fired at, which was accordingly done and wounded in such a manner that he died soon after . . .

[. . .] this oblig'd us to fire upon them and unfortunately either two or three were kill'd, and one wounded, and three jumped over board, these last we took up and brought on board . . . (October 9, 1769)⁸⁹

This litany of violence and bloodshed is marked by Cook's well-known and defensive journal entry of the following day:

I am aware that most humane men who had not experienced things of this nature will censure my conduct in firing upon the people in this boat nor do I my self think that the reason I had for seizing upon her will att all justify me, and had I thought that they would have made the least resistance I would not have come near them, but as they did I was not to stand still and suffer either my self or those that were with me to be knocked on the head.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, pp. 170-171.

⁹⁰ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 171. Banks's entry for that day reads: 'Thus ended the most disagreeable day my life has yet seen, black be the mark for it, and heaven send that such may never return to embitter future reflection'.

It may be argued that Cook's actions at this point, and on several occasions subsequently, are 'wrong' and essentially acknowledged to be so, precisely because he has instigated a contact which is not exchange. While his description of his dealings with the inhabitants of Matavai Bay are ultimately satisfactory to all parties, his dealings with the Maori begin badly. Death is no exchange, and there can be little profit by it. Laura Brown's notion of 'commodity fetishism' – 'for exchange value to be taken as the defining category in all relationships'⁹¹ – is useful in this context; and it provides an insight, perhaps, into the very great defensiveness of Cook with regard to the deaths at Tuuranga-nui (Poverty Bay). His initial failure to establish good relations with the Maori bodes ill in economic terms, for if peaceable contact cannot be established, then not only will stores and water be more difficult to come by, but *profits* will be affected – survey of the land will be less thorough than it needs to be and consequently planning for the future more difficult.⁹² Similarly, Robertson's journal betrays a sense of frustration with the slow pace of trade, which hampers both the exchange in goods and discoveries in general:

This Day the Capt gave strick Orders to the Gunner not to let any of our man go across the River, nor to allow above two or three of the Natives to come on our side, neather was he to allow any of the man to trade with the natives, but to carry on all the trade himselfe, this made our trade go on slowly and prevented discoveryes of all kinds for some time. (June 28, 1767)⁹³

In the journals of both Robertson and Cook, attempts are made to gain, in a general sense, a total knowledge of the indigenous people; more specifically, attempts are made to establish advantageous commercial relations with them. This

⁹¹ Laura Brown, *Alexander Pope* (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1985), p. 13.

⁹² Salmond notes that exchange of sorts took place at Poverty Bay: 'The Endeavour journal keepers and artists described a number of individuals; hair-styles; clothing styles (which included the use of penis strings); personal decoration; facial tattoo; [. . .] All the same, these first encounters between Cook's men and Maori people had been short, suspicious and violent, and not a great deal was learned about life on shore . . . the Tuuranga-nui people described the discharge of muskets as 'waititiri, or thunder', and reported feeling ill when these 'atua' (supernatural beings) simply looked at them. On the whole, the local people must have been profoundly relieved when on the morning of October 11, the Endeavour raised its anchor and sailed south out of the bay.' (Salmond, *Two Worlds*, p. 138). See Salmond, esp. pp. 119-138, for a detailed description of the incidents at Poverty Bay.

⁹³ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, pp. 168.

sense of total control would follow the absorption of the inhabitants within this exchange relationship. Further evidence can be seen, for example, in the documentation in the Endeavour journal of the Maori language of New Zealand and the anthropological speculation into their origins and their relationship with the other Pacific peoples with whom the British had come into contact ('we have always been told that the same Language is Universally spoke by all the Islanders and this is a sufficient proff that both they and the New Zelanders have had one Origin or Source but where this is, even time perhaps may never discover' [March 31, 1770]).⁹⁴ In effect, this effort at classification and ethnological enquiry functions (in an echo of Cook's reaction to Tahiti and its clearly limited commercial prospects) as a *compensatory* attempt, and arguably partially succeeds.

As Chapter Two will demonstrate with regard to sexual relations between the people of Matavai Bay and the crew of the Dolphin, the islanders were in control of the exchange process, to the extent that they controlled the prices within that localized Tahitian economic unit (for example demanding more and more iron in return for sex and actually threatening the physical integrity of the Dolphin as a result). The journals of Robertson and Cook also show that in terms of other, non-sexual, aspects of commodity exchange, the people of Tahiti and New Zealand remain very far from being simply victims of a rapacious proto-imperialist force. Nicholas Thomas notes the manner in which, very frequently, the indigenous inhabitants are presented as being driven by greed, as essentially the authors of their own destruction:

The fundamental implication is that their 'loss' of their own culture and political autonomy is the result of the fatal attraction of European goods: the people are innocent but hopelessly greedy. Assymetry is thus constituted in the nature of first contact rather than through a history of subsequent engagement, as a consequence of later imperial intervention and annexation. The power difference is recognized from the very start by the indigenous people themselves and is thus not an effect of the actual application of force or violence later on.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 288.

⁹⁵ Thomas, *Entangled Objects*, p. 85.

This implies a certain conception of the indigenous people, a conception of agency (or lack of it), which is not borne out by the facts. In the case of the Endeavour visit to Australia (1770), for example, Cook's relationship with the aboriginal Australians was characterized by the actual frustration of his attempts at exchange and commerce. Attempts at the establishment of a commercial relationship were thwarted by a failure of reciprocity, an absolute lack of interest in the beads and glass offered to them:

However we could know very little of their customs as we never were able to form any connection with them, they had not so much as touch'd the things we had left in their hutts on purpose for them to take away [. . .] Mr Hicks who was the officer ashore did all in his power to entice them to him by offering them presents &c but it was to no purpose, all they seem'd to want was for us to be gone. (May 6, 1770)⁹⁶

Consequently, Cook's attempts to locate or classify the peoples with whom he comes into contact meet with a rebuttal, a refusal of mutuality and a refusal to be classified. Notably, Cook meets this failure, not with the sense of 'despair' noted by Thomas,⁹⁷ but with a series of ethnological observations. Unable to absorb the aboriginal Australians into an already established hierarchical structure of cultural and commercial value, Cook is forced to simply show an interest in them outside of any classificatory system. It cannot be said that they *refuse* to become part of a system of classificatory exchange; rather, the journal entries describe an exchange that is solicited but does not take place. The question of agency in this respect is a difficult one – the suggested economic transaction is not *rejected* but simply ignored, raising questions concerning power and exchange. This is no clear-cut case of indigenous assertion of agency, but it may be argued that the total nullification of a power relationship is the most effective form of rebellion, and that the consequences – psychological demoralization – the most significant. While it is not possible to read

⁹⁶ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 312.

⁹⁷ Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, pp. 16-17.

the intentions of the aboriginal Australians from the description of the incident in Cook's Endeavour journal, it is possible to infer a great deal about the British reaction. Significantly, Cook does not respond by simply echoing Dampier's disparaging conclusions that the aboriginal Australians 'are the miserablest People in the world . . . they differ but little from Brutes.'⁹⁸ Instead, he describes their physical appearance; any philosophical musings are far from judgmental or classificatory, simply noting that they stand outside of the Endeavour's exchange systems:

In short they seem'd to set no Value upon any thing we gave them, nor would they ever part with any thing of their own for any one article we could give them; this in my opinion argues that they think themselves provided with all the necessaries of Life and that they have no superfluities.⁹⁹

Given the fact that these journals are written at a distance in time and space from the events described, and given the fact that Australia is represented as 'unknowable', Cook appears concerned to display considerable knowledge of, for example, New Zealand in order to compensate for a visible lack of knowledge elsewhere. Consequently, the one territory is described topographically, linguistically, taxonomically, *comprehensively*, while the other is not digested in any real sense whatsoever. Cook is able to present a reasonably thorough report on New Zealand and its society, while he fails to document the aboriginal Australians in anything like the same detail.¹⁰⁰ The Maori are represented as considerably more sensible than the aboriginal Australians – as the following passage illustrates, they are deemed more practical, more aware of the benefits of iron and of English as opposed to Polynesian cloth:

⁹⁸ Dampier, quoted in Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, p. 126.

⁹⁹ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 399.

¹⁰⁰ In this context, it is useful to note that the first British settlement at Sydney endured a desperate and harsh beginning precisely because, for the colonists, and for those who planned the expedition of the First Fleet, the environment was utterly *unexpected*. Indeed, the colonists found Botany Bay to be inhospitable and unsuitable as the site of a settlement, and were obliged to move along the coast to Port Jackson (Sydney harbour). See Robert Hughes, *The Fatal Shore: A History of the Transportation of Convicts to Australia 1787-1868* (London: Pan, 1987) for a description of the first European settlement at Sydney.

They seem'd to have some knowlidge of Iron for they very readily took Nails in exchange for fish and some times prefer'd them to any thing else which was more than the people of any other place would do, they were at first fond of paper but when they found it spoild by being wet they would not take it, nor did they set much Value upon the cloth we got at Georges Island, but shew'd an extraordinary fondness for English broad Cloth and red Kersey which shew'd them to be a more sensible people than Many of their Neighbours. (February 6, 1770) ¹⁰¹

Notwithstanding the efforts of the journal writers to co-opt the inhabitants of Tahiti and New Zealand into a controlled economic exchange structure, the latter also abundantly demonstrate their empowered status, their ability to cope with, and profit from exchange. The journals of Cook and Robertson manifest the extent to which the islanders are both outside of, and in control of, the process and *meaning* of economic and cultural exchange. An example is the description in Robertson's journal of the actions of Parea, the 'Queen of Tahiti'. Robertson is keen to emphasize the friendship displayed by Parea towards her British guests, amiability which is continually manifested in the giving of gifts and other incidents of unequal exchange:

[. . .] This I am certain of this Great Woman has been our good freind ever since the first day that she came onboard our Ship, as a proof of this Since that time we have got near three times the quantity of all sorts of refreshments, that we did before we became aquanted with her; and the whole of the Natives has placed a mutch greater confidence in us nor they did before . . .

[. . .]

When our boats came allong side we hoisted in the Water, and got in some Hogs, fowls and fruit, which the Queen made our people a present of, without accepting of any present in return [. . .] she wept and cryd, in my oppinion with as mutch tenderness and Affection as any Wife or Mother, would do, at the parting with their Husbands or children. (July 27, 1767)¹⁰²

Parea's actions and her strategic purposes, are discussed in greater detail in the following chapter. In this discussion, it is important to note that Parea's actions were political, in the sense that the continued presence of the Dolphin was useful to

¹⁰¹ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 247.

¹⁰² Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, pp. 168.

her in terms of political power and authority. At this point the gift, freely given, both introduces the unsettling idea of indigenous agency, and disturbs the fundamental meaning of value itself. In terms of agency here, Pratt's notion of the 'imperial eye', though useful and valid in very many respects, is also troubling. Thomas remarks that 'any theory which recapitulates the pioneers' ideology of vacant or passive spaces for European conquest and achievement must falsely diminish the prior dynamics of local systems, their relative autonomy, and their capacity for resistance'.¹⁰³ The local operations of power enabled a subversion of the relations of exchange which the British attempted to impose; the angry passage from Forster's diary, quoted earlier, demonstrates the extent to which the islanders cannot be categorized as mere victims. There is, for example, the question of the *value of things*, an issue which potentially destabilizes existing conceptions of exchange and trade.¹⁰⁴ As Thomas notes, '[I]n reality . . . technology is dependent upon cultural knowledge: even relatively specialized tools do not have specific purposes inscribed in them, and purposes and uses are variously relevant and recognized. [In the case of, for example, an axe] the cultural uses of some axes seem to have fallen beyond the obvious and intrinsic purposes we would recognize . . .'.¹⁰⁵ The introduction of the notion of conditionality of value is radically destabilizing, intervening on the most fundamental level in Western conceptions of economic stability; as Marshall Sahlins notes, it emphasizes 'the authenticity of other modes of existence'.¹⁰⁶ Marcel Mauss's theorization of the significance of the gift is also helpful in this respect, describing as it does the indigenous exchange systems operating on a parallel line to that of the

¹⁰³ Thomas, *Entangled Objects*, pp. 205-206.

¹⁰⁴ See, for example, Thomas, *Entangled Objects*, which discusses these ideas in detail.

¹⁰⁵ Thomas, *Entangled Objects*, p. 87.

¹⁰⁶ See Marshall Sahlins, 'Cosmology of Capitalism: The Trans-Pacific Sector of the World System', in Nicholas Dirks et al (eds), *Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 414. Sahlins' paper is largely concerned with this idea of the conditionality of value. He notes that goods were accumulated and then given away in order to reinforce existing balances of power. Of the Kwakiutl people of modern British Columbia, he writes that authority and power were acquired 'not by consuming the riches of the market economy, as though to inflate their own persons, but by ostentatiously giving goods away, in a manner that signified the incorporation of other people' (p. 435). See in particular pp. 435-438 for a description of the alternative symbolic and social uses to which western goods were put throughout the Pacific.

newcomers. In the journals, any other exchange systems are entirely invisible, but inform each incident of exchange and commerce between indigenous inhabitants and sailors. Mauss's notion of the gift emphasizes the existence of social systems which are entirely independent of the idea of 'market' economics. Instead, as Mary Douglas writes:

Gift complements market in so far as it operates where the market is absent. Like the market it supplies each individual with personal incentives for collaborating in the pattern of exchanges. Gifts are given in a context of public drama, with nothing secret about them. In being more directly cued to public esteem, the distribution of honour, and the sanctions of religion, the gift economy is more visible than the market. Just by being visible, the resultant distribution of goods and services is more readily subject to public scrutiny and judgments of fairness than are the results of market exchange. In operating a gift system a people are more aware of what they are doing . . . ¹⁰⁷

Thus the significance of objects – the axe, for example, mentioned above – alters according to the context. This fluidity of signification was entirely unknown to the British newcomers; and throws new light on virtually every instance of exchange and commerce recounted in the journals. In particular, the much-repeated idea of value is opened to renewed interrogation. The comfortable assumption that islanders would trade food or cloth or other necessities and cultural artefacts for the famed glass beads or various knick-knacks – an assumption repeated through the years – is overturned as one considers the idea that objects assume a significance according to the values of other cultures, and this 'value' is not easily comprehended. Similarly, Cook's accounts of the gifts given freely by various islanders takes on a different significance, as in the following passage:

Lastly the Chief sent me the Inscription engraved on a small peice of Pewter which I had left with him when I saw him in 1769, it was in the same bag I had made for it together with a peice of counterfeit English coin and a few Beads given him at the same time, this shews how well he had taken care of the whole . . . (September 4, 1773)¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Mary Douglas, 'Introduction' to Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies* (London: Routledge, [1950] 1990), p. xiv.

¹⁰⁸ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775*, p. 216.

Mauss writes of Maori law:

What imposes obligation in the present received and exchanged is the fact that the thing received is not inactive. Even when it has been abandoned by the giver, it still possesses something of him. Through it the giver has a hold over the beneficiary . . . the thing given is not inactive. Invested with life, often possessing individuality, it seeks to return to what Hertz calls its 'place of origin' or to produce, on behalf of the clan and the native soil from which it sprang, an equivalent to replace it.¹⁰⁹

The islanders' actions are sophisticated and complex, governed as they are by two separate ideas of value. On the one hand, as previously mentioned, they are in control of the transaction and are well aware of the value of, for example, iron:

In the morning I went again to the Indians and carried with me various articles which I presented them with, most of which they received with indifference except hatchets and spike nails, these they seemed to value very much. (April 7, 1773)¹¹⁰

Moreover, the exchange of iron and other useful products was subject to inflationary pressure as their value and desirability increased. On the other hand, their actions are influenced by entirely different concepts of power, in the sense that their gifts are tied firstly to the idea of obligation:

We were no sooner at Anchor at the entrance of the Harbour than the Natives crowded round us in their Canoes bringing with them Hogs and fruit the latter of which they exchanged for Beads and Nails, the former we refused to take as we had already as many on board as we could dispense with, some however we were obliged to take as several of the principal People brought off little Pigs and put them into the Ship and Boats lying a longside together with Plantain Plants by way of welcoming us to their Country & to shew us their friendly disposission. (September 8, 1773)¹¹¹

Secondly, their gifts are linked to the idea of value, notions incomprehensible to the Europeans. In both ways, they are far from the greedy and foolish victims of popular

¹⁰⁹ Mauss, *The Gift*, pp. 11-13.

¹¹⁰ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775*, p. 117.

¹¹¹ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775*, p. 223.

lore. It is worth noting that the links to the African experience of slavery are clear.

As Blackburn remarks:

Persistent European representation of the slave trade portrayed African merchants and chiefs as lacking rational concepts of economic value. Africans, dwelling in the realm of fetishes, had no grasp of the true value of material things . . . Europeans suggested that Africans were so in thrall to fetishistic notions that that would part with slaves for baubles. In fact the notion that an African captive could be acquired for a handful of beads was fanciful . . . ¹¹²

Although this combination of differing systems might be taken to be an abandoning of systems of trade which had operated for centuries within island societies and between Pacific communities,¹¹³ it is perhaps more indicative of a flexibility and adaptability of response on the part of indigenous peoples which is very frequently not taken into account. There is also the question of theft – the incidents of theft which repeatedly take place, for example, manifest the cultural chasm which exists between western and indigenous notions of property. The event which eventually was to cost Cook his life on Hawaii involved theft, persistently the greatest irritant in Cook's dealings with the Pacific islanders. In his first voyage, it is no less visible. Soon after his arrival at Tahiti, Cook notes in his journal:

I was very much displeased with them as they were daily committing or attempting to commit one theft or another when at the same time (contrary to the opinion of every body) I would not suffer them to be fired upon. (June 14, 1769)¹¹⁴

A few weeks later he notes 'the islanders' natural thievish dispossession which we could not at all times neither bear with or guard against' (July 13, 1769). That which Jonathan Lamb calls 'the vexed question of mine and thine'¹¹⁵ simmered more or less continuously, punctuated by various crises, the greatest of which involved the theft

¹¹² Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery*, p. 386.

¹¹³ See, for example, Thomas, *Entangled Objects*, for a discussion of trade in the Pacific up to and after the arrival of Europeans.

¹¹⁴ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 101.

¹¹⁵ Lamb, 'Introduction' to 'The South Pacific in the Eighteenth Century: Narratives and Myths' (Lamb ed.), p. 5.

of the Endeavour's quadrant. This flexibility of attitude towards questions such as property signifies the very real difficulties of understanding faced by the British, the moment when the response is incomprehensible and consequently where power becomes contestable. It is possible to identify moments where this contest erupts into the ostensibly unproblematic proto-colonizing narrative of the journals, entirely overthrowing a sense of a settled meaning. This section ends in a discussion of one such event, which crystallizes the uncertainty latent in the notion of commerce and exchange.

This event involves the figures of the islanders brought from the South Seas by the ships of exploration. The history of these islanders, as we will see, forms a tangible link to the idea of consumer culture and to the discourse of slavery which forms a subtext to the history of Pacific exploration. Robertson's journal signals the idea of the transportation of islanders to Britain as exotics; indeed, he describes the metamorphosis of one particular islander at the hands of the sailors:

Mr Furneux and I rigged out Jonthan with a compleet Sute of Cloathes, shoes etc. we hade plenty of devertion showing him how to put all the Cloathes on, espetially the Bretches they puseld him worst of all [. . .]. After dinner he went ashoar in his English dress and seemd Extreemly happy when our Boat Landed him, he called to some of the country people to carry him out for fear of weiting his shoes [. . .]. What became of this Jolly young fellow afterward we know not, as we neaver saw nor heard anything more of him, we supposed the young mans freinds was afraid of his going off with us, and hade orderd him back into the country to prevent him – I am almost certain that this same Jonothan would have come with us mutch sooner nor stayd behind hade this man come with us, I dare say he would have soon learnd the English Language . . . (July 13, 1767)¹¹⁶

The Endeavour brought away the islander named Tupaia from Tahiti when it departed that island in July 1769. It was intended that Tupaia be brought to England, there to be displayed as a curiosity and an ethnographic wonder; it was also intended that he be useful to the ship on its way home, perhaps acting as translator in its dealings with the people of other islands:

¹¹⁶ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 193.

For some time before we left this Island several of the natives were daily offering themselves to go away with us, and as it was thought they must be of some use to us in our future discoveries, we resolved to bring away one whose name is Tupia, a Cheif (*sic*) and a Priest: This man had been with us the most part of the time we had been upon the Island which gave us an opportunity to know some thing of him: we found him to be a very intelligent person and to know more of the geography of the islands situated in these seas, their produce and the religion laws and customs of the inhabitants than any one we had met with and was the likeliest person to answer our purpose; for these reasons and at the request of Mr Banks I received him on board together with a young boy his servant. (July 12, 1769)¹¹⁷

These, then, are Cook's reasons, and all of them eminently pragmatic. Banks is rather more revealing:

The Capn refuses to take him on his own account, in my opinion sensibly enough, the government will never in all probability take any notice of him; I therefore have resolved to take him. Thank heaven I have a sufficiency & I do not know why I many not keep him as a curiosity, as well as some of my neighbours do lions & tygers at a larger expence than he will probably ever put me to; this amusement I shall have in his future conversation & the benefit he will be of to this ship, as well as what he may be if another should be sent into these seas, will I think fully repay me. (June 12, 1769)¹¹⁸

Banks, then, anticipated the importation of the wildly exotic into the metropolis. In this way, he figures the colonial centre as a zoological garden, a garden where the exotic and fantastic might be observed at close quarters without the slightest danger or fear – only a thrill of excitement. As it transpired, Tupaia never met this unhappy fate of exhibition. He died at the Dutch base at Batavia some eighteen months later, as the Endeavour was returning home. Cook describes him as a 'Shrewd, Sensible, Ingenious Man, but proud and obstinate which often made his Situation on board both disagreeable to himself and to those about him and tended much to promote the deseases which put a period to his life' (December 26, 1770).¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 117.

¹¹⁸ Joseph Banks *Journal*; quoted in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 117, n..

¹¹⁹ Beaglehole (ed.) *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 441.

As well as being a middleman, then, Tupaia may be figured as a *commodity*, symbolizing Otherness in general and his Polynesian culture in particular. A strong argument may be constructed for seeing Tupaia as a victim – indeed, his story is a peculiarly poignant one. When viewed alongside the figure of Omai, however, that of Tupaia becomes transformed. Omai, the more famous Tahitian brought to England by Cook at the end of his second voyage, demonstrates the idea of curiosity which motivated what is fundamentally a trade in humans. Omai was feted by London society, met the King, was painted by Joshua Reynolds and generally enjoyed a high profile during his stay in Britain. The treatment and construction of both Omai and Tupaia is notably similar, although the former made it to Britain and the latter did not. Both are constructed as symbols of the alien; this *otherness* is accordingly bounded and described without being eliminated – again, like a beast in a zoo. These islanders were used as objects, as part of what James Clifford has called a 'collected culture'. Clifford sees this sort of ethnographic collection as 'governed by the psychology of gathering and accumulation, which depends upon the abrupt separation of the collected object from its original context and deployment in a secondary field of value which is rigorously demarcated from the first'.¹²⁰

The role played by Omai, however, is considerably more complex than this. His presence in the metropolis, whilst provoking excitement and curiosity on the one hand, also provided, as E. H. McCormick notes, the catalyst for a counter-discourse. Shortly after the Tahitian's arrival in Britain, a letter was printed in a London newspaper, purportedly written by a South Sea islander:

You had better have said, that all those who are not conversant with European manners are Savages . . . [W]e practice those virtues you only teach; are enemies to luxury, strangers to adultery, constant to our wives beyond European example . . . never go to war but from a principle of self-preservation or self-defence, practice the virtues of humanity and benevolence in a degree that would do honour to the noblest monarch in Europe; and whilst we entertain the most sublime ideas of an Almighty

¹²⁰ Quoted in Steven Connor, *Theory and Cultural Value* (Oxford and Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1992), p. 248.

Being, do not cut the throats of each other for differing in the manner of worshipping him.¹²¹

The figure of the South Sea islander is utilized in this case in a spirit of opposition. Significantly, it is an example of what Mary-Louise Pratt has called 'transculturation' -- the impact of colonization upon the colonizing culture. There is by no means a sense of indigenous agency in the above quotation, nor is the portrait of Tahitian society objective or informed in any meaningful sense. Nevertheless, it signifies a sense of unease which has been generated in the metropolis as a result of the process of culture contact. In terms of transculturation, the presence of a Tahitian islander (even one rendered silent) generates an oppositional or alternative discourse which destabilizes the secure and confident narratives which inform the exploration journals. While the passage quoted above remains an example of the voice of a (proto)colonizing culture, that voice is shown to be far from unified. The figures of Omai and Tupaia overflow, in this sense, the bounds of significance which have been set. Consequently, Banks' vision of a collection of curiosities is offset in part by the alternative uses which are made of the figure of the indigenous islander. The above quotation is a clear example of the ideological deployment of an object, in this case, Omai, and illustrates the manner in which the economic and commercial arguments outlined in this chapter can be broadened into a wider, cultural discussion.

This section, therefore, has highlighted the inconsistencies latent in the attempt to assimilate these Pacific territories within an existing paradigm of economics. A strong critical case may be made for seeing the journals as the forerunners of an emergent process of colonization -- Cook, for example, systematically attempts (with a good deal of success) a thorough survey of New Zealand and its resources -- but there are too many inconsistencies contained within his method, too many lacunae within an apparently systematic survey, for this to be

¹²¹ *London Chronicle* July 28-30, 1774; quoted in E. H. McCormick, *Omai: Pacific Envoy* (Oxford and Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 98.

entirely successful. Instead, it may be argued that these classificatory attempts, by their inconsistent and *unsystematic* nature, together with the manifest failure of the British crews to fully understand the cultures with whom they came into contact, and the (equally manifest) ability of the indigenous populations to evade imaginative control, point to a system of cultural exchange over which the proto-colonizing mind has rather less than absolute control.

Greg Denning writes of the experience of culture contact between Tahiti and the West:

Possessing Tahiti was a complicated affair. Indeed, who possessed whom? Native and Stranger possessed each other in their interpretation of the Other. They possessed one another in an ethnographic moment that got inscribed into text and symbol. They each archived that text and symbol in their respective cultural institutions. They each made cargo of the things they collected from each other, put their cargo in their respective museums . . . because each reading of the text, each display of the symbol, each entertainment in the histories, each viewing of the cargo enlarged the original encounter, made a process of it, each possession of the other became a self-possession as well. Possessing the other, like possessing the past, is always full of delusions.¹²²

This chapter has argued that qualities of conditionality and fluidity form an integral part of economic and cultural exchange. It has demonstrated that the process of culture contact cannot be simply categorized as the beginning of a history of victimisation – 'the west's imposition on the rest'. On one level, it is entirely appropriate to discuss the history of culture contact as a history of European influence upon a given area, in that the voyages are part of an expanding process of classification and study. However, on another level, a *local* level, it is apparent that overall categories – whether they be 'Europe' or 'commerce' or 'economics' – fail to

¹²² Greg Denning, 'Possessing Tahiti', in *Archaeology Oceania* 21 (1986); quoted in Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 153.

recognize the local complexities of a given situation. That is, it may be acceptable and relevant to refer to the economic and nascent imperialist inter-national strategies of eighteenth-century Europe, but this should not mean that the subtleties of a situation, on the ground as it were, can be elided. In the very act of writing, Cook, for example, exposes the ambivalence of (proto-)colonial discourse. While on the one hand the journal fulfils the function required of it (the lands with which the Endeavour comes into contact are surveyed and assessed), on the other, it fails to fulfil this function through the assertion of stable categorizations with respect to either of the communities involved, or the institutions of contact themselves. Similarly, the journals expose an incoherence in the constructed national voice, demonstrating that the site of ideological attention continually refuses to be pinpointed in a simple notion of exchange as a duality.

A distinctly modern sense of a plurality of cultures informs the journals, and this leads – perhaps inevitably – to the communication of a sense of agency among the 'observed' peoples. The subtleties of the exchange process, the absence of a market economy in the western sense of the term, work to profoundly undermine the journals' (often painstakingly detailed) descriptions of the process of commerce. Paul Carter writes that Cook 'offered future travellers an accurate chart, an outline of names, but the essence of these texts was that they did not sum up a journey, but preserved the trace of passage. They were open-ended; their very accuracy invited further exploration, pre-empted premature possession'.¹²³ Carter's comments fail to recognize the extent to which Cook's journal entries are deliberate and systematic surveys of the land, with commerce and colonization as the ultimate end; they do, however, recognize that Cook's writings are influenced by a largely unarticulated and unrealized ambivalence, with the idea that 'other cultures are no more to be grasped singly and whole than ours is'.¹²⁴ At the same time, the implicit variety of the 'colonial subject' challenged the assumption of authority invested in European

¹²³ Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, p. 33.

¹²⁴ Connor, *Theory and Cultural Value*, p. 247.

models of commerce and exchange. The following chapters develop the idea that the ambivalence of colonial discourse is elaborate, complex and varied in structure and application, and is generated as a result of multiple tensions.

Two

Sexuality, Race and Authority

The voyages of Pacific exploration spawned a vast array of documents, from the authorized logs and journals carried off by the Admiralty at the conclusion of each voyage to be utilized in the planning of new imperial forays, to the cheaply printed and produced texts which were hugely popular on the streets and which were based on the journals and diaries kept by the common sailors which escaped Admiralty scrutiny. There exist, for example, seventeen extant chronicles of the Dolphin voyage which is the focus of much of this chapter. The peculiarities of these voyages and the unusual situation of the ships' crews make an analysis of these journals especially fruitful. They are the records of voyages undertaken by an institution, the Admiralty, at the very heart of the British imperial adventure, with its own powerful and systematic mythology of prowess and purity, a mythology which echoes the vigorous narratives of imperialism. The large number of documents produced as a result of these voyages was crucial to the dissemination of an idea of the Pacific in the public consciousness. The 'unauthorized' journals (largely written up after the voyage) were produced with an idea of financial gain in mind, for their authors were aware that they were tapping into a public demand for tales of exotic lands on the far side of the globe.¹ This idea of financial gain was also clearly understood by the Admiralty, whose instructions to the ships' commanders invariably included a demand that all journals be confiscated upon return to Britain – a demand impossible to enforce. Immediately, then, the journals take their place within a wider economic and strategic plan.

¹ See Bernard Smith, *European Imagination and the South Pacific: A Study in the History of Art and Ideas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), for an analysis of the European public reaction to the reports of the Pacific and its inhabitants, brought back by the explorers.

This emphasis upon textual authority reflects the wider concern to maintain a hierarchy of social authority on the ships themselves. As Greg Dening has noted,² the ship's community was delicately poised and complex, and its hierarchical structure contrasted sharply with the myth of a fraternal, holistic community. The contrast between 'authorized' journals, which would be edited and published with Admiralty support, and 'unauthorized' documents, cheaply published and sold on the streets, usefully highlights this hierarchical principle.

This crucial notion of hierarchy was rigorously enforced and codified in the Articles of War. The Articles highlight the principle of discipline which informed all social relations in the ships of exploration and illustrate the position of the *body* itself as the focus for this discipline. This idea of discipline is invoked to bind the heterogeneity of the ships' crews into a common ideological impulse. This homogenizing desire is challenged, however, by this very emphasis upon discipline. The normalizing will which is seen in the Articles emphasizes the carefully bounded, secure and productive body and explicitly outlaws all practices which challenge this conception of somatic order. In particular, the attention paid by the Articles to questions of sexuality and perceived deviance and transgression usefully illustrate the potential power of sexuality to expose the flaws in this totalizing logic. The prohibition of the act of sodomy in the Articles, for example, serves an ideological purpose by asserting a particular moral order; it also metaphorically highlights the economic and commercial rationale of the voyages of exploration – in that male-male sexual relations are inherently unproductive, they are therefore intrinsically disordered. The body emerges, then, as a site of the struggle between discipline and subversion. It symbolizes the holistic idea of community *and* the breakdown of this idea; the location of a constructed notion of moral virtue *and* the degradation of this notion. The journals show that any idea of a homogeneous community exists only in rhetorical form or in the imagination; the 'unauthorized'

² See Greg Dening, Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the Bounty (Cambridge: Canto, 1994).

journals present other narratives, other aspects of the voyages which have been edited or written out of the official records. This idea of transgression is present in the context of same-sex relationships on board the ships; and in terms of the idea of miscegenation and inter-racial sexual relationships.

Ideological and textual instability in the journals are present in a variety of contexts, both internal to the ships' crews and within the discourse of culture contact itself, illustrating the existence of what we have called a taxonomy of ambivalence. In terms of culture contact, discussion focuses upon the journal of George Robertson, master of HMS Dolphin, which under the command of Captain Samuel Wallis touched at Tahiti on June 19, 1767.³ Her arrival in the Society Islands, following a difficult navigation of the Magellan Straits and a long, thirsty voyage westward through the Pacific, marked the moment of first contact between Europeans and Tahitians. Robertson's journal occupies a significant space, not only in the sense that it describes this moment of culture contact, and not only in the sense that it is one of only a limited number of documents which relate this significant moment of contact (all from a European point of view). Robertson's journal stands as a document of record, imbued with enormous significance. It was crucial that Robertson render his observations and intercourse with the islanders as *knowable*. As will be seen, however, a gap existed between actions 'on the ground', as it were, and their description in the pages of the journal. The instability latent within the naval body politic is accentuated by the experience of contact itself, and the entry of the racial other to supplement the sexual other. Although this racial other serves an ideological function, the actual idea of miscegenation – as an assault on the purity and security of the body – is threatening and deeply disturbing to the security of the exploration journals. The descriptions of incidents of sexual relations between

³ It was not this vessel's first circumnavigation of the globe – John Byron's voyage in the Dolphin, between 1764 and 1766, saw the discovery of a number of islets and the deaths of a number of sailors from scurvy, malaria and other diseases, but was remarkable for very little else. As commentators have noted, he seemed to be concentrating on sailing back to England as quickly as possible, and the exploration angle suffered somewhat as a consequence. See Robert Gallagher (ed.), Byron's Journal of his Circumnavigation 1764-1766 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1964).

sailors and the people of the Pacific highlights an incoherence within these narratives – they both condemn and implicitly approve of such contacts, and this chapter argues that this is symptomatic of a *national* incoherence.

The 'official' and ideologically vital narratives of identity and community are altered by the particular needs and circumstances of exploration and culture contact. This discussion aims to align these issues of identity construction with the discourse of sex and sexual relations that form such a visible element within Robertson's narrative. The category of sexuality in general, and its intersections with nationalism, race and the construct of the 'deviant', produced a space in which homogenizing notions of identity were contested. In terms of the key interrogative issue here, that of sexuality, the formulation of a codified law impelled the formation of sexualities which evade attempts at policing and control. That which is unlawful inevitably became eroticized; moreover, in that these moral or legal transgressions were not inevitable, they suggest an evasion of a bounded structure of control. Issues of sexuality are analyzed in terms of power – as Foucault notes, 'We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth.'⁴

The voyages of exploration, as national embassies, fulfilled the important function of sustaining the notion of a martial and vigorous nation-state. This need was significant in that it was generated by the presence of a persistent discourse of 'effeminacy' which, it was claimed, was contaminating the springs of national vigour. In his Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Time (1757), John Brown

⁴ Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison trans. Alan Sheridan (Harmondsworth: [1975], Penguin, 1984), p. 194.

writes that a nation afflicted by weakness was 'a nation which *resembles Women*'.⁵ The perceived weakening of the national character, according to this widely held view, was the result of this perceived 'effeminacy' of the ruling aristocratic class. It should be stressed that Brown's opinions were not universally held in the Britain of the time – such opinions, in fact, generated much heated discussion – but they encapsulated a public debate which, as will be seen, was ongoing in mid eighteenth-century Britain, and which was given fresh impetus by each foreign policy setback. This notion of effeminacy was the result of the foreign policies developed, and overseas adventures undertaken, by the British state in the mid-eighteenth century. In particular, the struggle with France for economic and imperial mastery sustained the debate surrounding the question of national strength and virility in these years.⁶

⁵ John Brown, *Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Time*; quoted in Kathleen Wilson, 'Citizen, Empire and Modernity in the English Provinces, c. 1720-1790'. *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 9, 1, (Fall 1995), p. 74.

⁶ A brief study of eighteenth-century European history shows a succession of wars between Britain and France. The two countries, great powers on sea and land, were, as Linda Colley notes: '[. . .] at war between 1689 and 1697, and on a larger scale and for higher stakes between 1702 and 1713, 1743 and 1748, 1756 and 1763, 1778 and 1783, 1793 and 1802, and, finally, between 1803 and the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. And these were only the most violent expressions of a much longer and many-layered rivalry.' (Colley, *Britons: Reforging the Nation 1707-1837* [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992] p. 2.) These wars included the Nine Years' War (1689-1697), the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713), the War of the Austrian Succession (1743-1748) and the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). The rivalry between Britain and France was for pre-eminence in Europe, North America, and, at the beginning of the age of imperialism, on a global level. Generally speaking, the result of these wars was to increase British influence. In the case of the Seven Years War, this increase in influence translated into a substantial increase in British-controlled territory. Canada (together with Florida, Minorca, all lands east of the Mississippi and other areas) was brought indisputably under British rule, and the so-called 'First British Empire' reached its height. Britain was also, however, left politically isolated in Europe. See Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), for a good general discussion. See esp. pp. 347-353 for an analysis of the Peace of Paris and its consequences. Although the Scottish and English crowns had been united since early in the seventeenth century, the Act of Union was far from being a seal-setting exercise on the new British state. Jacobite rebellions continued until the middle of the eighteenth century, the most organized and most famous of which was the 'Forty-Five', when an army was mustered in Scotland in the summer of 1745 and, under the command of Prince Charles Edward ('Bonnie Prince Charlie'), pushed as far south as the English midlands. This final great uprising in support of the Stuarts ended in April 1746, with the overwhelming defeat of the Jacobites at the battle of Culloden. Ultimately, neither this nor any of the other Jacobite uprisings ever posed a serious threat to the status quo; nevertheless, they provide an indication of the extent to which the British sense of nationhood remained far from settled. Hence the long century of wars – the British nation, if not forged, was certainly consolidated, in war and imperial rivalry. The antipathy between the British and French governments led to the formation of a strongly developed sense of English nationalism (helped by the issue of religion, of course – French Catholicism serving to bolster an already strong sense of Protestant identity). See Gillian Russell, 'Theatricality and Military Culture: British Army Camps in the 1770s' in Jonathan Lamb (ed.), 'The South Pacific in the Eighteenth

While successive administrations attempted to harness the nationalist sentiment inevitably generated by the struggle, these same governments were persistently the focus of criticism for incompetence, weakness, political timidity and 'effeminacy'.⁷ This discourse of national discord is of the greatest importance, in that it signifies a lack of coherence at the metropolitan centre at this time of imperial development.⁸ Empire was held to be the answer to the nation's problems, yet it was precisely this imperial discourse that led, for example, to the weakening and ultimately to the

Century: Narratives and Myths', special edition of *Eighteenth Century Life* 18, 3 (November 1994), for an insightful discussion of the influence of the military in British society at this time. It is useful to note that versions of this antipathy between French and English occur repeatedly in the exploration journals. The following extract from John Byron's journal describes a game of cat-and-mouse between Byron in the *Dolphin*, and Bougainville which took place in the Magellan Straits in February 1765. It illustrates the extent to which the law of the sea was suspended; Byron's greatest wish is that the French will run aground:

'I was resolved if possible to speak with this Stranger & ask him the reason he followed us in the manner he had done for these 2 days past. I was in great hopes she would have run ashore upon one of the Banks between Point Possession & the first Narrow, for the Navigation is extremely difficult to those who are not well acquainted. But the misfortune was, the [British] Storeship kept so far stern that she served as a pilot to the Stranger' (Robert Gallagher (ed.), *Byron's Journal of his Circumnavigation* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1964], p. 66).

⁷ Successive national governments, however, did not fully maintain control of events. The long years of war had led to the development of an overtly masculine and militant version of national identity which differed from the official government line in several important ways. The contested space of nationalism at this time provides an insight into the tensions inherent in the mid-eighteenth century British State, tensions generated in the clash between naturally pragmatic government policy and a populist imperialism. Successive governments were disinclined to sponsor an overtly aggressive and expansionist foreign policy merely for the sake of it – instead, as Kathleen Wilson notes, they were more inclined to: '[. . .] endorse an essentially nonresisting, passive version of political subjectivity and patriotism that located political authority solely within a Parliament whose sovereignty was absolute and in a ministry which protected Parliament from domestic and foreign threats'. (Wilson, 'Citizen, Empire and Modernity', p. 74.) Consequently, while the policies of the Whig governments of the 1740s and 1750s may have been forceful, another more militant ideology was current which was broadly oppositional, and which constructed the governing (aristocratic) state ideology as acting against the interests of the people, notably in its management of British foreign and imperial policy. Opinions came from a variety of quarters, including private correspondence and a series of lobby groups including merchants; it was also espoused and expressed by a substantial section of the large and energetic newspaper and periodical press of the day. Such broadly oppositional publications constructed a very distinct view of citizenship, to which its readers were assumed to belong – it was a version of the national identity which: '[P]rivileged the claims of the white, trading and commercial classes to political status while excluding a range of "effeminate" others who threatened their supposedly distinctive goals: not only the French or francophilic but also the aristocratic, the foppish, the irrational, the dependent and the timid. [. . .] For example, in the virulent national political debates over the nature of the aristocratic that resounded in the 1740s through 1760s, "effeminacy" denoted a degenerate moral, political and social state that opposed and subverted the vaunted "manly" characteristics – courage, aggression, martial valor, discipline and strength – constituting patriotic virtue. (Wilson, 'Citizen, Empire and Modernity', p. 76.) See Colley, *Britons* for further material.

⁸ See Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England 1715-1785* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 137-236, for a discussion of the relationship between 'effeminacy' and Empire in mid eighteenth-century England.

collapse of the Newcastle administration late in 1756. The response of later governments was to pursue a more aggressive, more 'masculine' policy, a response which would bear fruit in the Seven Years' War and its aftermath. Pitt's administration, which followed that of Newcastle, pursued vigorous policies against France on the continent and in North America, leading to the sweeping gains of the Seven Years' War. It is of the greatest significance, however, that the government was tarred with this brush of 'effeminacy'. The nebulous category of the effeminate could be expanded to include all manner of marginalized identities – as Wilson notes, 'the 'effeminate' could take in just about any social, religious, ethnic or political category; as she puts it, 'Scots, "sodomitical peers" and incestuous women exerting secret influence at Court' were only some of the effeminates present in British society at the time.'⁹ Nonetheless, the category was also associated with government itself, and it was against this background of lingering doubt that the history of Pacific exploration was written.¹⁰

A sense of national vigour and masculinity was accomplished by promoting the ship and its crew as rigorously efficient and capable, the microcosm of the nation. Individual instances of indiscipline were often ignored if they fell within the

⁹ Wilson, 'Citizen, Empire and Modernity', p. 77.

¹⁰ In the 1750s, for example, opinions were being voiced to the effect that the Whig administrations of the 1750s had lost control of foreign and imperial policy, and that the country was being enfeebled as a result. This fear informed the reaction to the loss of Minorca to the French in 1756, which became symbolic of a loss of health, leading to a flood of commentary analyzing the growing weakness of the British body politic, and pinning the blame upon a growing aristocratic degeneracy and 'effeminacy'. This version, then, saw elements within the State itself, elements which revelled in their aristocratic degeneracy, as threatening the health of the nation. (Significantly, this weakness was linked to a growing French cultural influence in aristocratic circles.) The following extract from the correspondent 'Britannicus' in the London Evening News is one example of the vigorous polemical tone of such debate: 'Have not our Colonies been over-run by a barbarous Enemy, for Want of proper Assistance? Is not our Mediterranean Commerce now suppressed by the shameful loss of Minorca? Are not our Rights, Lives, Liberties, now brought into a very precarious Situation by such unconstitutional Measures, as introducing a Foreign Army, and neglecting our own Militia? [The loss of Minorca could not be looked upon as] an uncertain Event of War, but as a certain Event of the Treachery, negligence, or Incapacity of those who were entrusted with Power, more than Sufficient to have Preserved it'. (Excerpt from letter in the London Evening Post [August 24, 1756]; in Wilson, Sense of the People, pp. 183-184.). The antidote to national weakness was perceived by this vigorous strand of political opinion (voiced both within Parliament and outside its walls, in the Press, in pamphlets and in private correspondence) to be an energetic imperial policy, and an aggressive subtext to this national debate spoke of government incompetence, corruption and weakness as the reason for imperial failures.

boundaries of this image of an efficient male machine. During Cook's second voyage, for example, there were numerous instances of (often extreme) shipboard violence, involving sailors wielding knives and hammers. This violence, despite its negative effects on the efficiency of the crew, was acceptable and tolerated:

[. . .] I therefore begged them to go to bed, but they procured a hammer & chisel & began ripping the Hinges of my door. I then put my clothes on & went out of my Cabbin, the first I met with was Mr Burney whome I took by the Coller & put down on the Arm-chest. They all come upon me & I was forced out of the steerage where this happened & felt several blows on my head & the Surgeon thretened to strike me with the hammer which he had in his hand, but the Capt coming put an end to the scuffle.¹¹

This incident illustrates the extent to which casual male violence was considered a natural part of shipboard life, very typical and perfectly acceptable, even when it resulted in serious injury. The contrast between the response to this incident, on the one hand, and other, less ideologically acceptable, actions is marked. As we will see with the example of sodomy, some violations of bodily integrity are perceived as acceptable while others are unacceptable and indeed unspeakable. The reaction to the sexual, *public* and treacherous crime of sodomy could not be more violent; while it is dealt with as a disease, other somatic violations were considered to be part of the normal life of the ship. Casual male violence was acceptable in that it was contained, presenting no threat to the authority of the captain. The issue of authority was central and the journals highlight the figure of the captain standing as the unquestionable arbiter of power. For example, Cook's second voyage found him cruising the waters well inside the Antarctic Circle, until he eventually persuaded himself to go no further south:

I will not assert that the bare attempting of it would be a very dangerous enterprise and what I believe no man in my situation would have thought of. I, whose intense ambition leads me not only farther than any other man had been before me, but as far as I think it possible for man to go, was not sorry at meeting with this interruption, as it in some measure relieved us from the

¹¹ J. C. Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1969), p. 155.

dangers and hardships inseparable with the Navigation of the Southern Polar Region.' (January 30, 1774)¹²

This passage expose a preoccupation with power, emphasizing the image of the lonely figure at the apex of the command structure, exercising a sweeping authority over the lives of the sailors. They betray the extent to which power and authority on board the ships were self-consciously wielded in imitation of monarchical systems of government; the authoritarian principles of the Navy are consequently underlined. These examples illustrate the systematic nature of the masculine ideology that permeates the ships of exploration; other examples of fostering a robust image of masculinity include the preoccupation with maintaining health and physical well-being, one of the dominant themes of the voyages and of Cook's in particular. There was continual experimentation with different foods in an effort to keep scurvy at bay and, as the journals recount in repetitious detail, the decks and holds of the ships were constantly aired, 'smoaked' and washed in vinegar to ward off disease. On a practical level, the naval authorities were concerned to keep their sailors alive, the better to further the colonial process. On an ideological level, the strong and healthy individual body kept the body politic strong. As Foucault has argued, rigid power structures *produce* instability. The power wielded unquestioningly by the ship's captain, for example, originated in and also generated a fear of mutiny. The necessity of having healthy sailors was continually threatened by illness, not only that of scurvy but also sexually transmitted diseases. The healthy body, consequently, was a sign of power working; crucially, this was endangered by the threat represented by sodomy, a threat founded in ideas of non-productivity, pleasure, immorality, yet a category fundamentally and historically unmentionable.

As with sodomy, miscegenation was a sign of disorder, this time inscribed on the body by colour. The alien presence in the national body also invokes the *racial* other, thus demonstrating the close connections between questions of sexuality and

¹² Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775*, p. 323.

race. Contemporary attempts to valorize an acceptable range of identities led to the marginalization of large sections of society; a pervasive and prominent aspect of public discourse at this time was concerned with creating an exclusionist space of citizenship.¹³ This discourse of marginalization intersects with the issue of race, manifesting the fear of the other which motivates these proscriptions on contact. As Paul Langford notes, xenophobic sentiments were widespread in mid-eighteenth century England, and common to all social groups:

The xenophobia of the English was a subject of repeated comment on the part of visiting foreigners. At moments of national crisis, notably in wartime, it was predictably unrestrained. The paranoid poet Christopher Smart half-consciously satirized the patriotic mania of the Seven Years War in his *Jubilate Agno* with a celebration of his cat Jeffrey - 'For the English Cats are the best in Europe'.¹⁴

England functioned as 'mother country' for a range of colonial immigrants, from Irish and Scots to West Indians and North Americans, as well as a small but settled black population.¹⁵ The effect of this steadily increasing foreign, and in

¹³ Women, of all of the subject groups which fell outside this policed space, were the most excluded. It is worth noting that, even in post-1789 France, the 'revolutionary and antihierarchical principle of equality in difference was never meant to extend to women.' (Michael McKeon, 'Historicizing Patriarchy: The Emergence of Gender Difference in England 1660-1760', in *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 28, 3 [Spring 1995], p. 315). Their use to the State was perceived to be severely restricted as a result of biological, physical and emotional limitations (though of course the figures of the mother and the wife were held up as models); Elizabeth Colwill writes of this period, 'Man owed homage to the mother, above any other woman.' ('Woman's Empire and the Sovereignty of Man', in *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 29, 3, [Spring 1996], 270). Ultimately women could not be entirely useful political subjects – at most they could function as auxiliary ones. It has been noted, however, that they were not only able to establish a political subjectivity of their own, but had this subjectivity recognized by the State itself, albeit it in a somewhat negative manner – that the fact that women were prosecuted for sedition and treason in these years marked an acceptance by the government that they were political subjects. In any case, the State had itself weakened its claim to a strict, unchanging order of things in which subjects had their place, with the Revolution of 1689, which saw the deposition of James II. This episode illustrated the tacit admission by the State that principles such as dynastic inheritance – written in stone up to that time – could, in fact, be disregarded. As Michael McKeon notes, 'In the Hanoverian Settlement of 1689, England's rulers agreed that dynastic inheritance, and the patriarchalist principles on which it is based, may be overridden by pressing circumstances.' ('Historicizing Patriarchy', p. 297). In this case, the circumstances which saw the deposition of James involved the danger of a Catholic on the throne.

¹⁴ Quoted in Langford, *Polite and Commercial People*, p. 320.

¹⁵ In the eighteenth century, Britain had also established a reputation as a haven for oppressed groups from mainland Europe, for example French Huguenots. These groups differed in a variety of ways from colonial 'others' – Huguenots, for example, were Protestants persecuted by the French State, and thus obvious candidates for British protection, while Jewish refugees were historically alien but also historically containable.

particular, non-white, population was to generate anxiety stemming from the fear of racial outsiders. The process of 'forging a nation' as described by Linda Colley was thus problematized, as it was forced to digest the fact of the presence of groups who simply could not be assimilated into an imagined homogenized national identity. In seeking to define the British nation in relation to other different nations, it also produced divisions within its own boundaries.¹⁶

In terms of sexuality, the notion of miscegenation and fear of the contamination of the bloodline was powerful and pervasive. The very *concept* of miscegenation constituted a threat to the developing eighteenth-century emphasis upon rigid classification. That which is classified may be contained; as we will see, however, the fact of miscegenation subverts comfortable theories of classification. The question of sexuality in Enlightenment Britain can appear to be an uncomplicated one. Popular perceptions of sex in the eighteenth century are that it was seen as a pursuit supremely natural, and much valued as life-enhancing, instinctive, pleasurable. And sex was certainly open and visible as part of the culture

¹⁶Although the British nation could be said to have been forged in the experience of war and upheaval, 'the presence and resistances of those whose Englishness and Britishness could not be taken as self-evident demonstrated that the continual reinventions of the nation and of the terms of national belonging could not be capricious or elastic enough to accommodate all of the "others" within.' (Wilson, 'Citizen, Empire and Modernity', p. 80). This tension jarred with attempts to construct the business of empire as providing prosperity at home and abroad alike.

In fact, the business of constructing an empire was more of a traumatic experience than is generally realized. The 1750s through to the 1770s, as we have seen, were characterized by a sense of incoherence in public discourse, which stemmed *both* from military success and imperial expansion *and* from particular failures in the area of foreign policy. The Peace of Paris, which marked the end of the Seven Years War, saw British control of Canada finally established, and (as has been noted) other large areas also ceded to Britain. Of the period from 1763 until the American Revolution, Linda Colley writes: 'the British were in the grip of collective agoraphobia, captivated by but also adrift and at odds in a vast empire abroad and a new political world at home which few of them properly understood. It was a time of raised expectations, disorientation and anxiety, in which demands for change on the one hand, and denunciations on the other, came from the peripheries of Great Britain itself and from the peripheries of the empire as well. (Colley, *Britons*, p. 105. Colley suggests that Britain only resolved these tensions in the aftermath of the American Revolution, when the traditional and familiar sense of embattled identity took over from disorienting 'agoraphobia'. [see *Britons*, p. 144]). That the effect of both domestic and foreign policy was a decrease in confidence and ideological control demonstrates the close relationship between those theories which argue against totalizing or normalizing conceptions of history and identity. The nature of that relationship can be seen in the parallels between dominant attitudes to women and to other marginal groups. Many critics have noted the liminal nature of female citizenship in mid eighteenth-century England. (See, for example, Colley, *Britons*, pp. 237-282; Wilson, *Sense of the People*, pp. 212-228). The 1760s witnessed a cultural backlash against 'sodomites'; mid-century England also saw anti-Irish riots and anti-Jewish sentiment, to name only two.

of the time.¹⁷ Public tolerance of an open culture of sexuality, notably in the cities, and especially, of course, in London, was high. Sexual indulgence was likely to be *treated* indulgently, and a general feeling was widespread that sex was intrinsically good for the health of the body politic. Accordingly, it was a prominent part of printed and written culture.¹⁸

Yet in fact the attitude to sex was far from being as uncomplicated as this.

Roy Porter notes:

In sexuality, as in matters of child-rearing, personal freedom and government, Enlightenment belief in liberty and indulgence had well-defined limits, its own pressures and intolerances, contours and chiaroscuro . . . [F]irstly, the much-banded freedoms were to apply principally to males. Male Enlightenment attitudes were highly ambiguous with regard to women.¹⁹

Cultural and legislative attitudes were also highly ambiguous with regard to the poor and the young, and, as we will see, to certain groups of men. However, as far as *racial* outsiders were concerned (for example, groups such as the well-established black communities of Liverpool and Bristol) there was less ambiguity. At the end of the eighteenth century, there were approximately ten thousand black residents of

¹⁷ For a vivid summary of the public nature of eighteenth century sexuality, with its swarming prostitutes on London streets and conspicuously low décolletage, see Roy Porter, 'Mixed Feelings: The Enlightenment and Sexuality', in Paul-Gabriel Boucé (ed.), Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Britain (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982).

¹⁸ Roy Porter refers to that quintessentially eighteenth-century text, Fanny Hill's Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure. Though undoubtedly racier than most, it was scarcely atypical, and Porter remarks that Fanny Hill, in accordance with the positive and civic feelings associated with sex at this time, 'conceived of herself as some sort of national utility'. (Porter, 'Mixed Feelings: The Enlightenment and Sexuality', in Boucé, Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century England, p. 13). Paul Langford quotes the opening line of A Tale of Two Cities in order to illustrate a general attitude towards the 1760s and 1770s: 'It was the best of times; it was the worst of times'. (A Polite and Commercial People), p. 567. He also quotes the Bishop of Bristol, Thomas Newton: 'It was an age of novelty and singularity, of pride and vanity, of luxury and pleasure, of venality and corruption, of licentiousness and wickedness'. (The Defects of Police the Cause of Immorality [London, 1775], quoted by Langford, p. 567). Langford goes on to speak of contemporary moralists describing London as 'a capital city infested with over-sexed 'Dames', of footmen employed for their sexual prowess . . .', depictions of 'chaste models of womanhood . . . seduced from the duties of wife and mother by the corrupt atmosphere of the city in which they lived' (p. 587).

¹⁹ Porter, 'Mixed Feelings: The Enlightenment and Sexuality', in Boucé, Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century England, p. 15.

Britain. As Folarin Shyllon notes, various discriminatory legislation was enacted through the eighteenth century, all designed to circumscribe black freedom:

It was in Lincoln's Inn Hall one winter evening after dinner in 1729 that two Law officers of the Crown issued the infamous 'Yorke and Talbot joint opinion' to the effect that a slave did not become free on coming to England, did not become free by baptism, and finally, any owner might compel his slave to return with him to the West Indies or America. Although the opinion was overruled in the Somerset case by the Mansfield decree, the 1729 opinion issued at Lincoln's Inn Hall remained the slave owners' Bill of Rights and the slave hunters' charter, and made every black man, woman and child unsafe and under imminent threat of removal by force into slavery, until Emancipation in 1834.²⁰

The idea of sexuality becomes the site of intersection of these racial others and 'internal' liminal groups. In 1772, Edward Long (called by Shyllon 'the father of British racism') remarked:

The lower class of women in England are remarkably fond of the blacks, for reasons too brutal to mention; they would connect themselves with horses and asses, if the laws permitted them. By these ladies they generally have numerous brood. Thus, in the course of a few generations more, the English blood will become so contaminated with this mixture, and from the chances, the ups and downs of life, this alloy may spread so extensively, as even to reach the middle, and then the higher orders of the people, till the whole nation resembles the Portugese (*sic*) and the Moriscos in complexion of skin and baseness of mind. This is a venomous and dangerous ulcer, that threatens to disperse its malignity far and wide, until every family catches infection from it.²¹

Bridget Orr notes that attitudes to miscegenation were still fluid in the mid-eighteenth century – there was not yet a cultural consensus that it constituted absolute depravity.²² In English society itself, there were certainly many instances of

²⁰ Folarin Shyllon, Black People in Britain 1555-1833 (London, New York and Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 5. The Mansfield 'Decision' was not, in fact, binding. (Shyllon also notes that the first piece of racially discriminatory legislation in England was passed in 1596, during the reign of Elizabeth [see Black People in Britain, p. 93]).

²¹ Edward Long, Candid Reflections (1772), quoted in Bridget Orr, "'Southern Passions Mixed With Northern Art': Miscegenation and the *Endeavour* Voyage", in Lamb (ed.), 'The South Pacific in the Eighteenth Century', p. 124. Orr notes that this candid reflection, though extreme, was by no means solitary.

²² Orr's essay "'Southern Passions Mixed With Northern Art'", notes that while cross-racial relationships were proscribed in certain of the American colonies (mainly in the south), and unknown

cross-racial couplings; they may have provoked violent reactions in certain quarters, but they *were* tolerated. The passage above, consequently, is not representative of a general contemporary view of miscegenation, but it is nonetheless significant on several levels. It figures sexuality in terms of disease, but is most notable for its dehumanizing rhetoric, which lends to brutal treatment and oppressive legislation a guise of seamliness. It also employs the two persistent tropes of female lasciviousness (embodied in the Hottentot female) and the deep cultural fear of black sexuality. Much could be written on the extent to which nineteenth-century racism is prefigured and anticipated in the passage, but perhaps of the greatest significance is the manner in which class and race are linked in order to associate the (internal) lower orders with the black, alien other. Sexuality is here constructed as a space to be policed or disciplined for the health and well-being of the body of the nation. Anxiety concerning potential and actual miscegenation reveals the links between a discourse based upon fears of female and lower class sexuality, and one based upon racial fear.²³ It also emphasizes the fear of black sexuality in general, a fear which was accentuated by British involvement in the Atlantic trade in slaves. Inter-ethnic sexual relations between black women and white men connected with issues of property and ownership; and the presence of a settled black population in the outports made this issue tangible and visible on the streets of British cities. In this way, these issues of black sexuality and of inter-ethnic sexual relations moves beyond the *particular* fear of black male sexuality and its connections with white European women into what can be termed a *generalized* anxiety.

The fact of miscegenation profoundly problematized Enlightenment concepts of race. Nicholas Hudson notes the eighteenth-century belief that humankind was divided into only four or five main races, with Africans, for example, classified as a

in the Caribbean, they were permitted in the New England colonies, 'and in Nova Scotia were actively encouraged by the colonial authorities' (215). Orr concludes that '[A]ttitudes to miscegenation thus varied widely from colony to colony, from colony to metropolis, and in relation to different groups' (p. 215).

²³ As Bridget Orr notes, miscegenation is a nineteenth century term, but 'the complex convergence of race, sexuality and sexual difference occurred earlier'. (Orr, "'Southern Passions Mixed With Northern Art'", p. 212).

single stock. The Enlightenment imagination, writes Hudson, 'had become dominated by the picture of great continental land masses, each apparently with its own colour of human'.²⁴ Accordingly, the notion of the nation, then in the process of being 'forged', was compromised as a result of internal difference. There was a general attitude that Europe contained a substantially greater amount of racial variations than other regions (or continents), which accounted for the number of political units on European soil. The sexual mingling of races, however, compromises European classificatory models – as Mary Douglas notes, 'sexual behaviour is important in preserving the purity of caste'²⁵ – and also symbolizes the increasingly complex nature of racial theories at this time. Racial theory, writes Nicholas Thomas:

[I]s much more than a textual version of an emotion such as hatred: it presumably postulates races that have a certain unity and origin, that are meaningful as entities and that can thus be ranked; it ought to be seen as a discourse that engages in conceptual and perceptual government, in its apprehension and legislation of types, distinctions, criteria for assessing proximity and distance, and in its more technical applications – in, for instance, notions stipulating that certain forms of labour are appropriate to one race but not another. Racist discourse may often indeed be manifested personally, in responses of displeasure, fear or antipathy, but these should be understood as subjective internalizations of non-subjective ideologies, rather than the emotional springs from which the latter flow. In any case, though the discourses are manifested in personal attitudes, they also embody theoretical codifications, disquisitions and justifications that objectify these personal responses by grounding them in a condition of the negro or the savage that is inferior and contemptible in its nature, rather than merely something different that a white person instinctively despises.²⁶

Miscegenation threatens this scheme of things, this 'certain unity and origin', by introducing instability to an ostensibly established and secure discourse of identity-formation. Inter-racial relations explode the notion of an origin, as well as challenging the idea that certain groups, races or populations share certain

²⁴ Nicholas Hudson, 'From "Nation" to "Race": The Origin of Racial Classification in Eighteenth-Century Thought', in *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 29, 3 (Spring 1996), 255.

²⁵ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concept of Pollution and Taboo* (London and New York: Routledge, [1966], 1988), p. 125.

²⁶ Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Travel, Anthropology and Government* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), p. 79.

characteristics and habits. The attempt to 'close down the range of identities' fails as a result of miscegenation – at a stroke, identity is problematized, the looked-for sense of national cohesion is confounded, and, perhaps most importantly, an element of mutuality between various marginalized groups, is introduced. As Judith Butler puts it, laws, 'in seeking to confine, prohibit or regulate certain practices, in fact provide the discursive occasion for resistance, resignification and potential self-subversion of that law'.²⁷ The journals show that these attempts at regulation, codified in the Articles of War, in fact help to establish the identities of a range of others. That which exists as a (deviant) theoretical category is subsequently portrayed in the journals as *fact*.

In conclusion, then, it can be seen that the attempt at the construction of a settled, unified national identity, based upon the principles of masculinity and militancy, and dependent on the subjugation of women and of the colonized other, is in fact subject to subversion from within.²⁸ Central to this process of subversion were notions of sex, race and gender; while female sexuality could be controlled, up to a point, through the institution of marriage, inter-racial sex and male-male sex were altogether less controllable. The following section of this chapter elaborates upon the instances of potential ideological instability which have been outlined, and presents a reading of the exploration journals which is informed by this notion of sexuality as ideologically destabilizing.

²⁷ Judith Butler, Bodies That Matter (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p. 109. Heidegger's maxim also comes to mind: 'A boundary is not that at which something stops . . . the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing'.

²⁸ The figure of the slave Equiano, who published his autobiography in 1789, is helpful in this respect, as an example of the discourse of resistance; his narrative is a graphic illustration of the arbitrary violence and cruelty of slavery, and the lack of freedom which formed the experience of the black resident of Britain; it also illustrates the possibility of actual and textual resistance: "'Then", said [Captain Doran], "you are now my slave". I told him my master could not sell me to him or to anybody else. "Why", said he, "did not your master buy you?" I confessed he did. "But I have served him", said I, "many years, and he has taken all my wages and prize money, for I got only one sixpence during the war; besides this I have been baptised; and by the laws of the land no man has the right to sell me." And I added, that I had heard that a lawyer and others at different times had told my master so . . . Upon this Captain Doran said I talked too much English.' (Olaudah Equiano, The Life of Olaudah Equiano [Harlow: (1789), Longman, 1988], pp. 58-59.)

Journal writing represented an exercise in control. The authors of the journals, as chroniclers of a first discovery, recorded the environment and conditions on the understanding that the documents thus produced represent the sum total of knowledge of that environment. Consequently, these texts were self-consciously authoritative, purposeful and controlled; there is a sense in which they work to assert a settled confidence and authority, a single chronicle of history. In a sense they are, to paraphrase Foucault, the 'perfect disciplinary apparatus', seeking to 'make it possible for a single gaze to see everything constantly'.²⁹ On one level, the journals can be understood to function as useful examples of an evolving colonial discourse, as ostensibly confident documents recording a nation's knowledge, power and authority.³⁰ The journals were designed to signify the power of the nation, in the same way as the ships' crews were designed to function as symbols of the nation, speaking with one voice. The scope for an alternative *record* of history to the ones recounted in these documents is extremely limited, in that the journals represent the only historical chronicle of culture contact in the Pacific. This section explores the extent to which the authority and coherence of these records can be questioned, particularly with regard to sexuality and issues of race. It analyzes the emphasis placed by the Naval authorities upon the principles of community and identity, their use of the concept of sexual dissidence as a means by which these principles might be policed and maintained, and the journals' (non-)representation of this concept of sexual dissidence. It outlines the generation of this dissidence by the Articles of War

²⁹ Foucault, Discipline and Punish, p. 173.

³⁰ This veneer of confidence, however, masks the great difficulties presented by the journals, and brings to the fore issues of community and identity. The authority of the journals seems assured, but in fact these texts resonate with ambivalence. Stephen Greenblatt writes of the process of exploration and culture contact: 'Textual authority is fraught with particular difficulties, not only because of perennial tensions in overburdened command structures, but because of the immense distance from Europe of the newly discovered lands and consequently the immense problem of verification, a problem exacerbated by the strangeness of the stories that had to be told. ('Introduction' to New World Encounters [London and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993], p. xvii.)

itself, and argues that this establishment of otherness and dissidence within the body of the Navy itself both supported and undermined these principles.

Nation and Admiralty rhetoric emphasized the idea of the maritime community as a 'band of brothers' and representatives of the nation. In addition, the sailors' lives were regulated to a very great extent by the structure of mutuality which characterized civil society but which existed in a more vital and concentrated form in the ship's community. Traditionally constructed humanist history seeks to fix and to establish these crews as part of a single, harmonious narrative. In the context of the exploration of the Pacific, this conception of history is reflected in the scholarship of J. C. Beaglehole, the Pacific historian par excellence. For example, Beaglehole continued the myth and cult-like attitude to Cook; his monumental editions of Cook's journals remain authoritative reference points in the study of the Pacific, and consequently overshadow the very many other journals which are in existence. It can be argued that the tendency towards this particular reading of history is one held not just by a dominant colonial discourse, but also by those who seek to establish a dualistic relationship between colonizer and colonized, dominant and dominated. This version of history locates the sailors within, and as part of, a greater group identity which a confident dominant discourse aims to establish. Within this identity they are essentially voiceless. However, as Thomas notes, 'colonial projects are construed, misconstrued, adapted and enacted by actors whose subjectivities are fractured – half here, half there, sometimes disloyal, sometimes almost "on the side" of the people they patronize and dominate, and against the interests of some metropolitan office'.³¹ Consequently, it is this position *within*, that calls to be examined. The sailors occupy a liminal space in a narrative which is part of this linear, horizontal narrative of history, a process initiated by the ostensibly dominant culture to create a normalizing discourse of the 'people'. This accords with the need to create a national aspect to these voyages, to bring the will of the nation behind the imperial will. Naval regulations, however, emphasized separation, a

³¹ Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, p. 60.

society wedded to the idea of hierarchy. The structure of shipboard society was complex, subtle and in many ways fraught, with a theatrical atmosphere permeating each vessel and characterizing social interaction. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the British navy began to develop an emphasis upon discipline and hierarchy. The stratification of the shipboard community was rigid, but oddities in rank remained, which served only to accentuate already existing tension. The best example of ranking anomalies is that of the anomalous position of the midshipmen (the 'young gentlemen' of the journals) who were literally in the middle, neither of the officer class yet emphatically not common sailors. Consequently, while the 'well-oiled machine' of the ship certainly existed, there is a useful distinction to be made between the day-to-day running of the ship and a genuine sense of community which did not necessarily exist alongside it. The most famous example to be cited in this context is of course that of the *Bounty*, which functioned as a working ship perfectly well and which was fulfilling its mission, also perfectly well, but inside which structures of community eventually and catastrophically broke down. Consequently, a contradictory situation existed in that social relations within the ship were ostensibly firmly structured, inflexible and well-ordered, with the boundaries between the classes or ranks held to be inviolable. John Byrn writes that the officers: '[were] expected to distinguish themselves from the masses they governed by their education and civility. In so doing, they were to set dignified examples which the lower orders of the maritime community would respect and emulate. Moreover, they were to display a genuine sense of *noblesse oblige* and so display a fatherly concern for the health and well-being of their charges'.³² The journals are indeed peppered with instances when this paternal concern was

³² Byrn, *Crime and Punishment in the Royal Navy*, p. 20. An emphasis was placed upon ceremony, which was regarded as vital in maintaining both the strict hierarchy of the ship and a sense of cohesion, the presence of which could not be taken for granted. Every member of the crew performed his role, aware of the importance to discipline of doing so. Each sailor, as N. A. M. Rodger remarks, operated within certain limits: 'The company of the ship was divided into many overlapping, ambiguous and untidy ways, some ill-defined by the regulations and some not mentioned at all. Shipboard society was a complex world in which each person's place was defined by many invisible and subtle distinctions. (N. A. M. Rodger, *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy* [London: Fontana, 1988], p. 16.)

demonstrated, as in the following examples from Cook's second voyage (1772-1775).

The first is part of the record of the initial cruise into Antarctic waters, early in 1773:

[. . .] The air being excessive cold, the Crew however stand it tolerable well, each being cloathed with a fearnought jacket, a pair of Trowsers of the Same, and large Cap made of Canvas and Baize, these together with an additional glass of Brandy every Morning enable them to bear the Cold without Flinshing. (January 4, 1773)³³

The second comes from Cook's journal of two years later, as the voyage neared its end:

We had been a long time without refreshment, our provisions were in a state of decay and little nourishment remained in them than just to keep life and soul together. My people were yet healthy and would cheerfully have gone wherever I thought proper to lead them, but I dreaded the scurvy laying hold of them at a time when we had nothing left to remove it. Besides, it would have been cruel in me to have continued the fatigues and hardships they were continually exposed to longer then absolutely necessary, their behaviour throughout the whole voyage merited every indulgence which was in my power to give them. (February 21, 1775).³⁴

The following quotations, for example, amply demonstrate that the idea of a cohesive community on these ships is sometimes very far from the truth. The first is taken from the journal of Andreas Sparrman, ship's botanist on James Cook's second voyage (1772-1775). Writing of the threat of shipwreck, Sparrman (in what Beaglehole characterizes as a 'prim little paragraph') remarks:

I should have preferred, however, to hear fewer 'goddamns' from the officers and particularly the captain, who, while the danger lasted, stamped about the deck and grew hoarse from shouting. I have sailed with captains capable of imposing the most perfect obedience and the most delicate manoeuvres without swearing and I am convinced that under the circumstances in which we found ourselves the same results could have been achieved with fewer oaths.' (August 18, 1773)³⁵

³³ Quoted in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure*, p. 73.

³⁴ Quoted in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure*, p. 647.

³⁵ Andreas Sparrman, quoted in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure, 1772-1775*, p. 200.

A few months later, on the same voyage, the naturalist on board, Johann Forster, describes a scene of mountainous seas and general uproar:

To complete this catalogue of horrors, we heard the voices of sailors from time to time louder than the blustering winds or the raging ocean itself, uttering horrible volleys of curses and oaths. Without any provocation to serve as an excuse, they execrated every limb in varied terms, piercing and complicated beyond the power of description. Inured to danger from infancy, they were insensible to its threats and not a single reflection brindled their blasphemous tongues.³⁶

The behaviour of the crews, together with the rest of the Navy, was governed by the Articles of War, which were designed principally to inspire fear and threaten death.³⁷ The formulation of the Articles of War speaks volumes about the attitude taken towards the sailors by their superiors, the implicit fear which underlies the sense of naval mutuality and community. The ships of exploration were an extreme example of the isolation of the naval vessel – they and their occupants were almost never in port, almost never in communication with anyone else and were even more than usual in the navy, a community utterly drawn in upon itself. This feeling of

³⁶ Johann Forster; quoted in Beaglehole (ed.), Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775, p. 281.

³⁷ The Articles are full of capital offences, with clauses describing acts of treason against the monarch (many capital offences) and proscribing outrages against morality and the established religion. The tally of these capital offences grew as the eighteenth century progressed. The enormous powers of the captain gave him a wide choice of horrific punishments, most of which have passed into popular myth. The version of the Articles referred to throughout is that edited by N. A. M. Rodger (1982). John Byrn notes that 'it was an actual offense to transgress [these regulations] – all intercourse between men and officers was conducted with rigid formality' (Byrn, Crime and Punishment in the Royal Navy, p. 95), so that social divisions which existed on land were actually magnified by the ceremony and protocol of maritime life. At the same time, these boundaries and divisions were sufficiently unsystematic to have a certain element of the ambiguous; consequently there existed a persistent element of tension. It is important to stress that the difficult, strained and cramped life on board the eighteenth-century ships of exploration made it vital to those in positions of power to enforce a complex and regimented system of control. The fundamental tenet of submission was utterly inviolable – hence any breach of this rule (for example, the mutiny on the *Bounty* and later the *Nore* and *Spithead* mutinies of 1797) was punished with extreme brutality. What is notable about this system of violence, however, was not so much the sheer amount of capital offences or the hair-raising and dramatic punishments, as the *way* in which discipline was enforced, the *tone* it used. Greg Dening notes that the structure of discipline was carefully 'clean, clinical, ordinary, formal. It was impersonal, leaving no indebtedness to leniency, no distracting anger at excesses. It was theatre of discipline, not of law' (Dening, Mr Bligh's Bad Language, p. 44). The mistake, he goes on, was to employ violence excessively and to apply it personally. It was felt to be crucial to preserve distance between captain, master and 'young gentlemen' on the one hand, and the main body of sailors on the other. This distance was essential in maintaining a discipline acceptable to the men. They expected rigorous discipline; they did not expect anger or emotion.

isolation was accentuated by the general attitude of civilian society to the sailors. As Greg Denning remarks, mariners constituted a race apart, 'numbered neither with the living nor the dead'.³⁸ They were also viewed by the public as akin to children, 'improvident, intemperate, profligate' and as a source of idleness and contagion;³⁹ they constituted a profoundly marginalized social group. By extension, the spectacular nature of the punishments codified in the Articles emphasizes this marginalization. At a time when the nature of discipline became internalized and when public punishment became less common, Naval discipline remained largely unresponsive to these changes, underlining the isolation, particular circumstances and unique culture of the ship and its crew.⁴⁰

The numerous parallel journals expose the many silences and gaps in the 'official' narratives of history and question the assumptions and structures subsequently established by a constructed linear model of history. They provide instead a literal example of historical multiplicity, and by extension illuminate the disciplined nature of this discourse of 'community'. The notion of the 'imagined community' which was created by those in power was ideologically vital but also contradictory in nature. As far as the writers of the 'authorized' journals are concerned, the sailors function as a part of the ship, integral and vital, but possessing no more individuality than does a cog in a machine. While the aim of these homogenizing narratives is to manufacture a sense of cultural cohesion, the result is to marginalize and to render liminal the experience of the sailors, and consequently

³⁸ Denning, Mr Bligh's Bad Language, p. 56.

³⁹ See, for example, Joshua Marsden's Sketches of the Early Life of a Sailor. 'As for the common sailor, 'His song, his bumper and his sweetheart (perhaps a street-pacing harlot) form his trio of pleasure. He rarely thinks, seldom reads and never prays . . . Speak to him about the call of God, he tells you he hears enough of the boatswain's call . . . If you talk of Heaven, he hopes he shall get a good berth aloft: is Hell mentioned? he jokes about being put under the hatchway.' (Marsden, Sketches of the Early Life of a Sailor [Hull, 1812]); quoted in E. P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (London: Gollancz, 1963), p. 62. Similarly, Beaglehole, writing in our century as editor of the authoritative version of Cook's voyages, described the men thus: '[. . .] the men were ordinary British sailors of the time, the majority in their twenties, not very civilized: the sort of men on whom an anthology of abuse could be culled from the pages of George Forster, so savage, brutal, drunken, insensitive and blasphemous that one wonders how even a kindly Deity permitted the ship to put to sea.' (Beaglehole (ed.), Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775, p. xxxiii).

⁴⁰ See Foucault, Discipline and Punish, for an analysis of the changing nature of public discipline and punishment in eighteenth-century Europe..

to assist in the formation of a group awareness, a sense of identity. Their potential for individuality or self-awareness as a group is not taken into account; it is invisible. This invisibility itself generates a site for subversion within the logic of this argument. Considerable emphasis is placed upon the power of sight – seeing, as in Mary-Louise Pratt's formulation of 'imperial eyes', as possessing, seeing as fully comprehending – and consequently that which is invisible or unseeable is uncontrollable and a threat. Nicholas Thomas employs the anthropological writings of Pierre Bourdieu to argue against the 'mechanics of the model', noting that 'a variety of normative social theories suppress something crucial: the competence of the actors'.⁴¹ The multiple parallel journals provide a literal manifestation of this competence, and illustrate the means by which a linear, horizontal model of history may be rewritten.⁴² They enable the sailors to write out of this invisibility, functioning as the means by which knowledge and control are removed from the grasp of a disciplined and bounded history. Although not outside of the institutions of economics and power, the rank-and-file could respond critically to it, in a way that their peers in civilian life, with their livelihoods more dependent upon participation in these institutions, could not. Their sense of identity, carefully separated from the influences of civilian life, developed in a distinct manner in the hothouse environment of a small, cramped sailing ship. Similarly, the elaborate rules of shipboard life may have defined status and bounded the freedoms of the sailors, but they also defined the reach of the institution, which, to a very great extent, was

⁴¹ Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, p. 58.

⁴² It is precisely this issue of authority that provides a vantage point on the tensions and ambivalence of the ships' companies. Any discussion regarding the journals immediately generates tension, as the aims and tone differ according to which class of journal is being analyzed. The text is, by and large, highly unstable. Philip Edwards has noted the 'extraordinary lack of clarity in all major voyage-accounts' (Edwards, *The Story of the Voyage: Sea Narratives in Eighteenth-Century England* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994]) p. 7) stemming from uncertainty as to the potential audience, the need for scientific information on the one hand and for a more populist tone on the other. Authors were operating in an environment which both cedes power and removes it. That is, there is an awareness of deliberate silence – as Greenblatt suggests, it is in the author's gift to report or not report this or that occurrence to his masters – but also an awareness of an ultimate lack of control. In the case of the authorized journals, the text being created will be taken from the author and become the property of the Admiralty, while the other, unauthorized, journals will be fundamentally altered before they are made public. The more a single voyage is analyzed in its textual multiplicities, the more unstable and plural become the narratives.

obliged to be part of the structure of mutuality previously mentioned. The distinctive circumstances of naval life accounts in part, perhaps, for the code of discipline which was such an integral part of naval life. The persistent sense of mutual dependency between the captain and his crew reveals the necessarily incomplete nature of control and the consequent sense of threat underlying ostensibly hegemonic systems of power. Consequently, the intrinsic presence of mutuality can be directly linked to the spectacular forms of discipline functioning in the Navy at this time.

In analyzing codes of behaviour with regard to the key categories of sex and race, it is perhaps less revealing to consider the particulars of the naval discipline of the time, and more interesting to consider the intent behind such an elaborate system of control as the Articles of War. The sense of fear which underlies the official narratives of the Navy is betrayed by the Articles. The punishments laid down and carried through with all the elaborate ceremony of the Navy betray this fear by writing upon the body of the victim, literally marking or branding the subject. Michel de Certeau writes:

Every power, including the power of law, is written on the backs of its subjects . . . Books are only metaphors for the body. But in times of crisis, paper is no longer enough for the law and it writes itself again on the bodies themselves.⁴³

The environment of the ship constitutes such a potential crisis, as the poise of any desired ideological stability as represented by the voyages is persistently unsettled. Accordingly, the reaction of the homogenizing discourse is to assert the primacy of its law, and to attempt to constitute an oppositional movement. The classification of crimes (the Articles of War), and the very process of writing and subsequently publishing the story of these voyages act as an attempt to control and document the subject; as the passage quoted above suggests, this attempt at control was made manifest in the literal inscriptions of the bodies of the sailors, in the form of the lash

⁴³ Michel de Certeau, The Practice of Everyday Life, trans. Steven Rendell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 140; quoted in Lamb, The Rhetoric of Suffering, p. 12.

and the other grim punishments practised by the eighteenth-century Navy. The law, codified and refined for maritime life in the Articles, was designed not to repress criminal desire but to inscribe itself on the body:

The law is manifest, as the essence of their selves, the meaning of their soul, their conscience, the law of their desire. In effect, the law is fully manifest and fully latent, for it never appears as external to the bodies it subjects and subjectivates.⁴⁴

It becomes, literally, incorporated. It is the case, however, that the space which is never entirely filled by complete systems of control can be utilized in order to exploit the anxiety and reveal the instability of the totalizing narratives of the journals.⁴⁵

The sailors occupied a critical space within the institution but were not of it, and consequently the notion of an alternative identity or sense of community takes root. Partha Chatterjee remarks upon the potential of the idea of community to

⁴⁴ Foucault, Discipline and Punish; quoted in Judith Butler, Gender Trouble, p. 135.

⁴⁵ Later in this thesis, it will be shown that attempts to control the sailors through punishment and bodily inscription, for example, are vividly subverted by the sailors through use of the art of tattooing. The journal of John Elliott, ship's lieutenant on Cook's second circumnavigation, provides an admirable example of the means by which the sailors overturn structures of control. In his journal, Elliott records his admiration for the warriors of the island of Bora Bora (admiration not shared by Cook himself). He notes that the male islanders: '... had particular marks tattooed on the legs etc. We therefore called them the Knights of Bora Bora, and all our mess conceived the idea of having some mark put on ourselves, as connecting us together, as well as to commemorate our having been at Otaheite (Tahiti)'. (Harriet Guest, 'Curiously Marked: Tattooing, Masculinity and Nationality in Eighteenth-Century British Perceptions of the South Pacific', in John Barrell (ed.), Painting and the Politics of Culture [Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1992]). Accordingly, the sailors had a star tattooed on their left breast and christened themselves the 'Knights of Otaheite', a society, notes Elliott, at first intended to be secret. This nautical version of freemasonry is curiously at odds with the naval ideology of mutuality, and as Harriet Guest remarks: 'The tattoos Elliott describes seem to mark the appropriation of what are conceived of as signs of ethnic and national identity to a secret and exotic position that is excluded from customary or national definition. The notion of a brotherhood of knights seems to allude to that sentimental fondness for Gothic institutions which is important to, for example, Edmund Burke's conception of custom, but here those chivalric orders are identified with the esoteric orders of the men of Bora Bora, and they thus seem to stain the Europeans with a kind of exotic perversity of domestic and national identity. Several of the Bounty mutineers were distinguished by the badge Elliott describes, and one of them combined this star with the tattooed mark of a "Garter round his Left Leg with the Motto Honi Soit Qui Mal Y Pense"'. (Painting and the Politics of Culture, p. 131). The act of tattooing undermines the duality of the colonizer and the colonized, problematizing the attempt to construct an opposition between the civilized and the primitive, and also highlights the extent to which ideas of alternative communities or identities existed among the crews of these vessels. See Chapter Three for a detailed discussion of the significance of tattooing.

disturb, noting that it dogs the steps of discourses that appear comfortably assured, leading 'a subterranean, potentially subversive life within [them] because it refuses to go away'.⁴⁶ Bhabha adds that it interferes with the 'grand globalizing narrative of capital' and the impulse to homogenize, which, in the context of the journals, is radically disabling.⁴⁷ In this context of power, deterrence, watchfulness and dreadful punishment, Foucault's writings on the nature of sexuality are useful. As the Articles make clear, it was misdemeanours in the arena of sexuality that were most savagely punished and sexuality that was constructed as the most uncontrollable area of human experience, the most prone to deviance. Sexuality was also firmly yoked to economics and trade, the ultimate reason for the voyages in the first place, 'through numerous and subtle relays, the main one of which is the body – the body that produces and consumes'.⁴⁸ Consequently, sexuality is explicitly linked with an evolving discourse of colonialism. Foucault also makes explicit the link he perceives between sexuality and control, noting 'specific mechanisms of knowledge and power centring on sex' which were not fully developed but effective. One of these, he writes:

was a psychiatrization of perverse pleasure -- the sexual instinct was isolated as a separate biological and psychical instinct; a clinical analysis was made of all the forms of anomalies by which it could be afflicted; it was assigned a role of normalization or pathologization with respect to all behaviour; and finally, a corrective technology was sought for these anomalies.⁴⁹

Deviancy is produced in order for society to protect itself.⁵⁰ This echoes what Thomas calls the 'overstatement of colonial hegemony', that all power is held and

⁴⁶ Partha Chatterjee, 'A Response to Taylor's "Modes of Civil Society"', in Public Culture (Princeton: Princeton University Press, Fall 1990), p. 130; quoted in Homi Bhabha, The Location of Culture (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 230.

⁴⁷ Bhabha, Location of Culture, p. 230.

⁴⁸ Foucault, History of Sexuality Vol. 1: An Introduction (Harmondsworth: [1978], Penguin, 1990), p. 107.

⁴⁹ Foucault, History of Sexuality, p. 107.

⁵⁰ Accordingly, sexuality, constructed as it was as a site of danger and possible threat, became conceived of as a location of power and, within the construction of identity politics, the most important means of establishing and constructing identity. According to Foucault, however, this construction of sexuality as dangerous and uncontrollable *itself* functions as a means of control. The visualization of sexuality as the site where an essential identity is constructed and maintained, he

wielded at will by the colonizer, and that the European exploration of the world was part of the means by which Europe measured and understood itself.⁵¹ As has been outlined above, however, this conception of the colonizer failed to allow for differences within an apparently monolithic structure. In terms of the incompleteness of ideology mentioned earlier, this leads to a reading of sexuality as a category the meaning of which fluctuates. Monolithic structures, such as the history of British colonial expansion in the Pacific, are continually open to the possibility of instability, as a consequence of this ideological lack of comprehensiveness. 'Meanings are returned to circulation, thereby becoming the more vulnerable to appropriation, transformation and reincorporation in new configurations. Such in part are the processes whereby the social is made and remade, disarticulated and rearticulated.'⁵²

The Articles of War established parameters of acceptable behaviour, fixing the body as the site of struggle and punishment. The preoccupation with sodomy and the death sentence stipulated as a punishment for this act is evidence of the ostensible success of this process. The Articles of War, revised in 1749, state bluntly:

Penalty of Buggery: If any person in the Fleet shall commit the unnatural and detestable Sin of buggery or Sodomy with Man or Beast, he shall be punished with Death by the sentence of a Court-martial.⁵³

Death did not inevitably follow, however. Naval records frequently record the crime being punished by severe floggings; occasionally, these floggings were so very severe that the end result was death in any case. N. A. M. Rodger notes, for example,

argues, has been so successful that 'whenever it is a question of knowing who we are, it is this logic that henceforth serves as our master key. Sex, the explanation for everything'. (Foucault, History of Sexuality, p. 78.). Similarly, the construction of acceptable sexualities was part of a means of establishing control. A normative sexuality was constituted in order that other sexual identities could be produced which would fall outside certain limits. Foucault writes: 'The deployment of sexuality has its reason for being, not in reproducing itself, but in proliferating, innovating, annexing, creating and penetrating bodies in an increasingly comprehensive way.' (Foucault, History of Sexuality, p. 107).

⁵¹ Thomas, Colonialism's Culture, p. 46.

⁵² Jonathan Dollimore, Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Freud to Foucault (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991), p. 87.

⁵³ Articles of War (1749 revision).

one case of sodomy which attracted 'the extraordinary sentence of one thousand lashes, which if delivered all at once, rather than divided into two or more instalments at long intervals as was the practice with severe flogging sentences, would have been equivalent to death'.⁵⁴ Although the letter of the law was not always followed, however, sodomy remained the ultimate example of public demonization.⁵⁵ Before the nineteenth century it signified a whole range of identities and actions, being associated in Renaissance times with heresy and witchcraft and, in the eighteenth century, with treason. The sodomite, as Jonathan Dollimore remarks, 'though not an identity in the modern sense, could and did denote subject positions or types: he precisely characterized deviant subject positions as well as denoting the behaviour of individuals'.⁵⁶ The sodomite, in a very literal sense, is a pure signifier. As a word, it is to all intents and purposes *indefinable*, empty of meaning yet 'a site of radical semantic abundance'.⁵⁷

Sodomy, historically, has been unmentionable, unthinkable, beyond the boundaries of thought and discourse. It has been a 'spacious word',⁵⁸ making a space available for all manner of transgressions, and working together themes of the body and the nation. The first attempt at definition in English law comes in the reign of Henry VIII, when the term came to be associated with an abandonment of Protestant virtues. The foreignness of the term was emphasized, in particular the Italian origins of the word, and the act of sodomy was portrayed as something originally unknown in England, shipped in from the continent. It was also at this time that it made the crossover from being a Church crime to being a secular or civil crime, although it

⁵⁴ Rodger, *The Wooden World*, p. 227.

⁵⁵ This failure to carry through the prescribed death sentence was part of a general twofold operation in dealing with acts of sodomy. On the one hand, and overtly, extreme severity could be employed in dealing with offenders; on the other hand, and covertly, it was frequently tolerated, reflecting the widespread practice of sodomy which existed in various circles. Arthur Gilbert quotes the following anonymous British naval officer: 'To my knowledge, sodomy is a regular thing on ships that go on long cruises. In the warships, I would say that the sailor preferred it.' (Statements of a British naval officer, unfortunately not dated, quoted by Xavier Mayne in *The Intersexes* (1910) in Arthur Gilbert, 'Buggery and the British Navy', in *Journal of Social History* 10 (1976-1977), p. 73).

⁵⁶ Jonathan Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence*, p. 239.

⁵⁷ Butler, *Bodies that Matter*, p. 208.

⁵⁸ Christopher Craft, *Another Kind of Love: Male Homosexual Discourse in English Discourse 1850-1920* (London, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), p. 6.

continued to be publicly associated with Sin, as the following passage from Edward Coke's Institutes of the Laws of England (1644) illustrates :

Buggery [the meaning of the words buggery and sodomy words are largely interchangeable] is a detestable and abominable Sin, among Christians not to be named, committed by carnal knowledge against the ordinance of the Creator, and order of Nature, by mankind with mankind, or with brute beast, or by womankind with brute beast.⁵⁹

In legal terms, this is unacceptably vague. 'Carnal knowledge' is not explicated and, as Christopher Craft notes, 'the operations of a practical jurisprudence would require more specific detail'.⁶⁰ This detail is not forthcoming, either then or later. Sodomy becomes indescribable and indefinable; it stands against the laws of both Providence and Nature. Arthur Gilbert writes:

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the number of buggery trials was directly related to whether or not England was at war. After the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-13) and the Seven Years' War (1756-63) there were few trials and no executions for sodomy. Between 1756 and 1806, fear and assiduous prosecution of sexual deviance was a wartime phenomenon.⁶¹

In the eighteenth century, William Blackstone, in his Commentaries on the Institutes of the Laws of England (1769) goes further than this, declaring that sodomy ranks second only to murder in the list of wrongs that can be committed against a living person – only the taking away of life is more heinous. Thus the body itself, and the whole concept of the somatic, becomes a physical and ideological focus for the concept of transgression. Sodomy violates the security of the body and is a still deeper malignity than rape, abduction and dismemberment, the other dreadful crimes identified by Blackstone. It is 'the infamous crime against nature', and 'the very mention of it is a disgrace to human nature'.⁶² Sodomy was a public act of *treason*, a violation of the communal body or body politic and an outrage against

⁵⁹ Edward Coke, The Third Part of the Institutes of the Laws of England (1644), quoted in Craft, Another Kind of Love, pp. 58-59.

⁶⁰ Craft, Another Kind of Love, p. 8-9.

⁶¹ Gilbert, 'Buggery and the British Navy', p. 86.

⁶² Blackstone, Commentaries on the Institutes of the Laws of England; in Craft, Another Kind of Love, p. 215.

the laws of King and Nation. It is a fascinating fact of naval history that prosecutions for sodomy invariably rose sharply in wartime, and spectacularly in the aftermath of the Nore and Spithead mutinies of 1797. This construction of the sodomite foreshadows the later nineteenth and twentieth-century classification of the homosexual, the sodomite with a settled identity, as naturally inclined to passion and ill-discipline, and to treason, the result of a tendency to form secret brotherhoods and to associate with foreigners. Through history, sodomy has been used to refer to everything from leprosy and paganism to a refusal to write in the vernacular. And yet, as Jonathan Goldberg comments, 'the term sodomy remains incapable of exact definition'.⁶³

Individual instances of the physical act of sodomy are difficult to identify in the journals. As a general rule, the ship's captain tended to either ignore any evidence presented to him or to punish the offender for 'uncleanliness', presumably partly in the pragmatic knowledge that sodomy meant either death or severe flogging, both of which deprived the ship of a much-needed pair of hands. As a result, a reading of any of the journals reveals myriad instances of sailors being flogged for uncleanliness. It is impossible to know what this means, and futile to speculate. Such evidence as does exist is contained, not in the official documents, but in the parallel manuscript-journals kept by the sailors themselves. Byron's voyage (1764-1766) provides an example. The entry below, written late in 1765, is taken from the manuscript-journal of William Robinson, midshipman on the *Dolphin*, but is duplicated in many of the other parallel logs of the voyage:

Friday 27 December 1765: Punish'd Samuel Holding Marine with running the Gauntlet for Attempting to Commit Sodomy.⁶⁴

⁶³ Jonathan Goldberg, *Sodometries* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), p. 18.

⁶⁴ William Robinson, 'A Journal of the Proceedings of His Majesties Ship *Dolphin*, the Hon. John Byron Commanding Commencing May 6, 1765 to the date here of June 1, 1766' (Public Record Office, ADM 51/4535), p. 144; see also Joseph Harris, 'A Journal of His Majesties Ship *Dolphin*, Commencing March 29, 1764 and Ending January 21, 1766' (Public Record Office, Adm 51/4535); and William Grosvenor, 'A Journal of His Majesties Ship *Dolphin*, the Hon John Byron Commanding Commencing Sep 9 1765 and Ending May 31 1766' (Public Record Office, ADM 51/4535).

This terse entry is of some interest, not merely in that it demonstrates that such activities did in fact go on (and in the most difficult of circumstances!) but also because of the fact that it neglects to give any more details. There is no mention, either in Robinson's journal or in any of the others, of the other partner or whether the act was consensual. Exactly the same thing was to happen again only a few months later on the same voyage, as the Dolphin passed St Helena on the run home. The following entry, from the manuscript-journal of midshipman William Grosvenor, describes the incident in the same strikingly terse and descriptively unproductive manner:

25 March 1766: Read the Articles of War to the Ship's Company & Punish'd by Runing the Gauntlet James Vickous for attempting Sodomy.⁶⁵

Again, such evidence is backed up in the other journals kept by the sailors; and again, the official journals are silent on such happenings. Byron's journal for March 25, 1766 tells a tale of woe concerning a damaged rudder, a collision with a whale which damaged the creature but not the ship, and the death of Thomas Madison, 'a very clever Young fellow' who was the carpenter's mate. There is no mention of James Vickous. Similarly, Byron's journal says nothing of Samuel Holding, and the only hint one might otherwise receive is the note, some three months later, that Holding deserted the ship at the Cape of Good Hope. These examples question the authority of the journals, constituted as historical fact, in this case stripping Byron's journal of its claim to be the reliable and authoritative record of the Dolphin's circumnavigation of the globe. The manuscript-journals, as alternative and parallel narratives, provide an opportunity to read multiple versions of history; they consequently strip the monolith 'history' of much of its force and authority and highlight the instability of the proto-colonizing imagination. They present evidence which complicates that which Thomas calls 'mindlessly particular conventional

⁶⁵ William Grosvenor, 'A Journal of His Majesties Ship Dolphin...' p. 150.

colonial history, which fails to move beyond the perceptions of whichever administrators are being documented'⁶⁶.

It is important to demonstrate the existence of evidence that sodomy was a fact of naval life, and that it did not simply exist in the realm of the imagination as a category or focus for anxiety and fear. It is possibly more significant, however, to investigate the manner in which these relationships were figured, constructed and circumscribed by the official narratives. Alan Sinfield remarks:

The goal of analysis . . . is to see what the category of sodomy enabled and disenabled and to negotiate the complex terrains . . . the point is hardly who did what with whom, but what was perceived as being done and the anxieties that informed such bonding.⁶⁷

This appears to contradict Foucault's model, in that Sinfield suggests that the possibility of illicit sexual acts generated anxiety; in reality, however, there is no contradiction, for in attempting to strengthen social control and its own position, the discourses of control also spawned a 'reverse discourse'. Whereas previously, sodomy was a shadowy category, now it was enabled to speak and construct an identity for itself, to establish itself as 'homosexual'. This accords with Foucault's theory of power as 'everywhere, not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere', not from above but instead forming 'a dense web that passes through apparatuses and institutions',⁶⁸ generating resistance as it moves. Power, he writes, is above all *productive*. The attempt to proscribe certain acts functions as a means of liberation. Ultimately, the refusal of a normative identity leads to a rearticulation of subjectivity. In the case of the official journals, the speech of the sailors is lost or occupied by the authorized narrative, as in this passage from Byron's log:

I called all Hands upon Deck & informed them that I was not immediately bound to the East Indies as was imagined but upon some certain Discoveries

⁶⁶ Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, p. 60.

⁶⁷ Quoted in Goldberg, *Sodometries*, p. 19.

⁶⁸ Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, pp. 95-96.

which was thought might be of great importance to our Country and that the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty were pleased to promise them double Pay with several other *advantages* if they behaved themselves to my satisfaction. They all expressed the greatest Joy imaginable upon the occasion & assured me that there was no Difficulties they would not go through with the greatest chearfulness to serve their Country & obey every Order I should give them.⁶⁹

The sailors are given little choice. It is difficult to imagine what other answer they could have given, but most striking is Byron's construction of them as similar to eager children. They are appropriated; their identity is formed for us. Similarly, Cook, writing in the journal of the second voyage, is happy to lavish admiration on the docile crew, telling us of their reaction on being told they are to spend another year cruising the Pacific:

[I]t is hardly necessary to say that the Seamen were always obedient and alert and on this occasion they were so far from wishing the Voyage at an end that they rejoiced at the Prospect of its being prolonged a nother year and were soon enjoying the benefits of a milder Climate.⁷⁰

When it is clear that the ships *cannot* endure another winter at sea, Cook constructs the decision as proceeding from his own wisdom and moderation. The sailors, by contrast, are written as entirely lacking in these qualities and as rather feckless – no hint here that on ships as small as the *Resolution* and *Discovery* the men would be just as aware as their captain that neither they, their ship nor their stores could face a further year in the South Seas:

We had been here a long time without refreshments, our Provisions were in a state of decay and little more nourishment remained in them than just to keep life and soul together. My people were yet healthy and would cheerfully have gone wherever I thought proper to lead them, but I dreaded the Scurvy laying hold of them at a time when we had nothing left to remove it. Besides it would have been cruel in me to have continued the Fatigues and hardships they were continually exposed to longer than absolutely necessary, their behavior throughout the whole voyage merited every indulgence which was in my power to give them.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Gallagher (ed.), *Byron's Journal of his Circumnavigation 1764-1766*, p. 27.

⁷⁰ Quoted in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775*, p. 328.

⁷¹ Quoted in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775*, p. 647.

In such passages as these, one sees the unfolding of an authoritative history which constructs Cook as classic Enlightenment hero – humane, compassionate and sensitive, as well as a great leader. The sailors, meanwhile, are not given the space in which to establish subjectivity or an identity of their own – the space is occupied by the dominant, official Admiralty voice which controls the means of expression. The processes of silencing and appropriation, then, can be traced on board the very ships which, in one context, function as symbols of colonial oppression and certainly as carriers of colonial power. This linking of the position of the sailors – who function as part of the colonial process in spite of their own marginality – to that of the colonized subject, demonstrates the inappropriateness of a version of postcoloniality which relies on manichean opposites. It also illustrates the interconnectedness of European and Polynesian discourses and displays the part played by the parallel journals in undermining the coherence of the authorized narrative. Because the sailors were in the business of serving King and Country, they were removed from a growing criticism of the development of masculinity in eighteenth-century England – the developing disapproval of what was considered 'effeminacy' among proto-middle class men, caused by too little time spent in healthy and masculine pursuits such as farming and too much time spent sitting in alehouses and in conducting trade. Discourses of masculinity have an institutional dimension, with the law providing, as Richard Collier notes:

[N]ot simply a set of usages for discourses of masculinity which are located structurally but also a clearly defined institution with its own methods, objects and practices. Discourses of masculinity, in other words, have had an established and entrenched link with the histories of power and knowledge of law.⁷²

This focus on sexuality and masculinity within colonial discourse enables a rereading of the nature of European expansionism. Consequently, contemporary theories of sexuality have a part to play in developing the theorization of

⁷² Richard Collier, *Masculinity, Law and the Family* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 43.

postcoloniality in general and the analysis of these journals in particular. Historically, the dilemma of marginal sexualities has been that of all such groups – whether to engage in a critique from the margins, with all the risk which this entails, or to enter into already existing structures, with all the compromises which result. Both strategies, of course, are concerned with representation, and the link between theorizations of sexuality and postcoloniality in this context is consequently clear. Both strive to interrogate models of history which they had no part in setting up. In this particular context, the anxious dwelling upon the dangers of sodomy reflects a fear of disintegration. The strident threats of punishment present in the Articles and the sheer visibility of the category of sodomy at this time in fact obscures its true significance – while it could be quite happily discussed as a symptom of aristocratic immorality and more significantly of lower class corruption and depravity, it could scarcely be discussed at all in connection with the evolving middle class. Lee Edelman writes:

[D]iscursive representations of the violability of the middle class gentleman's body too dangerously threatened the identity of that emergent figure whose ideological construction was bound up so closely with autonomy and interiority, with the principle of his inalienable economic property in himself.⁷³

Edelman goes on to make explicit the 'connotive overlay in sodomy's cultural construction of an anxiety and autonomy', suggesting a challenge to 'the bourgeois gentleman's most valuable and hence most anxiously defended property: the interiority that both signals and constitutes his autonomous subjectivity, and thus the authority whereby he controls the meaning of his signifying acts'.⁷⁴ Sodomy becomes overlaid with an enormous sense of menace to the autonomy of the middle class body, at the same time as it remains 'one of the least specific practices in the whole history of sexuality'.⁷⁵ As sodomy becomes the ultimate forbidden act,

⁷³ Lee Edelman, Homographesis: Essays in Gay Literary and Cultural Theory (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 261.

⁷⁴ Edelman, Homographesis, p. 126.

⁷⁵ D. A. Miller, 'Sontag's Urbanity', in October 49 (Summer 1989), p. 93.

codified in order to establish authority all the more firmly and to act as a condemnation-in-advance of lower-class morals, it spawns a movement which is ultimately uncontrollable and which acts to destabilize the site of power. It reveals a deep-seated paranoia, and it reveals the power of the signifier to overflow any boundaries set for it. Later, this emphasis upon the integrity of the middle-class body found its ultimate expression within the Victorian construction of the bourgeois man, the man of trade, as natural man, and it is vital to record that such a symbol was therefore in operation during the high point of British colonialism. The preoccupation with sodomy betrays a lack of confidence and an incoherence at the foundations of an emerging colonial discourse, unsettling its requirement that it be accepted as unquestioned, unitary, authoritative and universal.⁷⁶

The notion, then, of the 'imagined community' which relies upon an image of a unity or fraternity, a well-structured and well-oiled machine, is a constructed one. The contemporary portrayal of a naval fellowship did not allow for the existence of tensions within the conception of identity, generated in part by the structures and traditions of the community itself. This instability latent in the maritime community reflected the tensions within the society of mid eighteenth-century Britain. Similarly, the notion of an identity posited upon an inclusive/exclusive binary itself led to the creation and valorization of other identities. In the context of our argument, the work of the State can certainly be seen to be repressive, but this repression generated resistance of its own. In theoretical terms, the effect of State power, in Foucault's definition, was to create a space in which those subjects deemed marginal were able to assert their own subjectivities. The effort to establish control was always fated to be, at the very least, less than successful, in that the dependence of authority upon either conquest or consent reveals its weakness. Resistance to conquest is always possible, while to require consent demonstrates the weakness of what Carole

⁷⁶ See also Rod Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 69-70, for a discussion of the European reaction to the institutional homosexuality of Hawaiian society, which falls outside the scope of this thesis. Edmond notes that 'the European male body was conscious of being visible to Hawaiian male desire and does not seem to have squirmed under that scrutiny.' (p. 70).

Pateman terms 'the sexual contract'.⁷⁷ Sexual politics, consequently, illuminates the vulnerability of a discourse dependent on an effacement of subjectivity.

In Robertson's journal, the stability and security of the narratives of culture contact and consequent emergence of colonial narratives may be questioned through an interrogation of the position of the author and the practice of writing, and through the category of sexuality. Robertson's journal works to textualize Tahiti, to construct it in terms of the exotic and thus of absence, and thus on one level to incorporate it within western systems of exploitation. This section considers the problematic issue of the role of the author, and the gaps revealed in an apparently secure discourse as a result of an interrogation of Robertson's position and practice of writing. The problematic attitude towards sex which is visible in the narrative, particularly inter-racial sex and the idea of miscegenation, reveals a fundamental incoherence on the part of this 'official' document. Particular attention will be paid to the figure of Purea, the islander imagined as 'Queen of Tahiti' by the crew of the *Dolphin*. This section considers the attempt to assimilate her within western models of myth, and argues that the failure of this attempt reveals a profound inability either to understand or to contain the indigenous other.

The exploration journals functioned, self-consciously, as part of the process of textualization – knowing the Pacific and transmitting that knowledge to their European readership. In this context, it is important to emphasize that Robertson's journal was an official Admiralty document, with all that this implies in terms of power and representation. The process of discovering and naming, of creating and

⁷⁷ See Kathy Jones, *Compassionate Authority: Democracy and the Representation of Women* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993); see also Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988). Nicholas Hudson writes, 'In Mary Poovey's words, 'the epistemological category "woman" was actually not subordinate to or derived from the category "man", but the basis of that category'. The dependence of the male individual upon the woman he variously pursued and denied, betrayed his own entrapment in the terms of a binary opposition that denied man the independence that was meant to define him.' (See Hudson, 'From "Nation" to "Race"' p. 280.)

manipulating reality, was not only the means by which the Pacific was made known but the means by which it was incorporated into western models of power and authority. The fact, for example, that popular conceptions of the South Seas were and are so closely associated with images of sex, is largely due to the description brought back by the first European explorers. Consequently, it is possible to appreciate the considerable power wielded by these documents, which are the sole records of the process of contact between Europeans and Polynesians. The journals carried a further weight of significance in that they were charged with redeeming the process of colonial expansion which, in these years, was beginning to lose its sheen.⁷⁸ Robertson's journal, necessarily attempting a construction that aimed to be stable and confident because of its status as a record, concerns itself greatly with the alien nature of the islanders and supplies much evidence of their sexual and cultural/racial otherness. The fundamental ambivalence of authorship implicit in this document, however, problematizes any attempt at uncritical reading.

Hugh Carrington, the editor of Robertson's journal for the Hakluyt Society, writes:

Robertson's description of the island, although superficial and even trivial in comparison with those of Cook and Banks, has chronological interest as a record of the initial impact made by the advent of Europeans upon a Polynesian people of mature culture. That this impact was limited in scope was due to the brevity of the Dolphin's stay and to her captain's lack of curiosity.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ As has been seen, the expansion of the empire in the years following the Seven Years' War led to a questioning of the morality of imperialism. For example, Peter Hulme, in *Colonial Encounters*, gives an example of the backlash against the process of expansion in the Caribbean. The 1772-1773 British campaign against the Caribs of St. Vincent led to loud condemnations of the government, for engaging in hostilities 'against a defenceless, innocent and inoffensive people' (*Parliamentary History* XVII, pp. 389-390, in Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean 1492-1797* [London: Methuen, 1986], p. 248). This should not be taken to mean that the differences between British actions in the Caribbean and Pacific can be elided. It is, however, useful to set the discussion within a wider context. It may certainly be argued that the figure of an explorer like James Cook, who was constructed as a classic Enlightenment hero (moderate, kindly, farsighted and possessed of patience and wisdom), functioned as the means by which the process of imperialism could be polished and redeemed. See, for example, Gananath Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) for a discussion of the processes of mythmaking with regard to the figure of Cook.

⁷⁹ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 281.

This is scarcely fair to Wallis, who was ill for most of the voyage; it also bears the mark of the fatal impact theory (that the South Seas societies were as near perfection as it was possible to get, and the Europeans destroyed this innocent, edenic world). It is true that Robertson's comments are more than occasionally superficial, but his journal is notable – it was written with a popular audience in mind and is consequently 'lively, detailed and valuable',⁸⁰ not least in its descriptions of the sexual commerce that took place between the Tahitians and sailors.

In a dualistic reading that views the British and Polynesians as stable and secure representations of their respective cultures, Robertson's initial entries describing the island and its people reflect an assured expansionist imagination at work. The journal is at great pains to distinguish between the landscape and the indigenous population. On the one hand, the island is described in great detail and with approval; the portrayal highlights both the appeal of the island and its alluring exoticism and emphatic *otherness*:

All the way that we run allong shore we saw the whole coast full of Canoes and the whole Country hade the most Beautifull appearance its posable to Imagine, from the shore side one two and three miles Back their is a fine Leavel country that appears to be all laid out in plantations [. . .] from the foot of the Mountains half way up the Country appears to be all fine pasture land except a few places which seemd to be plowd or Dug up for planting or sowing some sort of seed – from that to the very topes of the Mountains is all full of fine Trees [. . .] the whole is Green. This appears to be the most populous country I ever saw, the whole shore side was lined with men, women and children all the way we saild allong [. . .] the country in the bottom of the Bay [the isthmus connecting the two halves of the island of Tahiti] has the most beautiful appearance, its not near so high as the east end of the island and appears to be all pasture land – except a few miles from the beach that's full of cocoa and oyther trees.' (June 20, 1767)

Then, setting the seal on a veritable paradise, he notes that this new land appears edenic indeed, thus fusing potent ideas of sexual innocence and productivity without labour:

⁸⁰ Edwards, *The Story of the Voyage*, p. 93.

This ought to be the winter season, if such there be – butt there is not the least Appearance of it to be seen, all the Tall trees is green to the very tope of the Mountains. (June 20, 1767)⁸¹

The descriptions of Tahiti becomes even more rapturous a few days later, as the island is described in a way that renders it almost heavenly:

[A]ll night we hade a fine pleasant land breeze, which brought off a fine agreeable smell, which made several of us suppose their was spicerys Growing here, eather in the Low Grounds or on the High Mountain [. . .]. I and several more onbd has often vewd the Sides of the Mountains at sun rise and seen great numbers of trees bearing Flowers of various Colours which must certainly bear some sort of fruit unknown to us . . . ' (June 25, 1767)⁸²

In these passages, Robertson's hyperbolic, sensual language – vivid colours and heady fragrances – is descriptive of a semi-divine land. The language employed is erotic, the landscape sexualized. It is significant, in relation to the journal's attitude towards racial otherness, that it is this *exotic* element which emphasizes the attraction of the landscape of Tahiti.

Within the logic of any dualistic reading, therefore, Tahiti is incorporated neatly within a western representation dating back to classical times – the notion of the great southern continent, overflowing with wealth and with fertility. Robertson is at pains to note the careful cultivation (pastures, plantations, 'fine leaval country') of a lush land, available for exploitation. Indeed, Tahiti was always imagined in terms of production and appropriation, as it was written into the voyage plan (as part of the ghostly *terra australis incognita*) as a necessary refuelling stop even before the Dolphin left Britain; in this way, the island is incorporated into the capitalist paradigm as part of the assumption that wealth already exists – 'if it is not already in circulation then it is in Nature'.⁸³ Tahiti, then, constructed in terms of Nature, already exists within a global model of economics.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, pp. 140-141.

⁸² Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 157.

⁸³ Jon Stratton, *Writing Sites: A Genealogy of the Postmodern World* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester, 1990). Stratton writes: 'Wealth, here, applies in the first place to goods, from agricultural goods to gold, rather than to money [. . .] It was normal in mercantilist theory to describe wealth as treasure.'

It is worth noting that Robertson's description of Tahiti differs markedly from earlier descriptions of the landscapes of New Zealand and 'New Holland' or Australia. While William Dampier's contact with north-west Australia (1688) described blasted, barren landscapes, a country imagined as a *tabula rasa*,⁸⁵ Tahiti is figured as inviting and overflowing with fertility and potential wealth, as passive, vulnerable to exploitation and feminized, and at the same time as in some way alien and other. The island exists only insofar as it serves the purposes of the newcomers, as storehouse or granary. Moreover, it is in effect viewed as powerless or prone, in a manner which accentuates the journal's implicit emphasis upon sexualization of the landscape. Tahiti is *textualized*, with, for example, the descriptions of orchards and plantations signifying fertility; as Simon Ryan notes, 'to posit the land as text is to claim its readability and hence to claim power over it'.⁸⁶

(p. 24).

⁸⁴ For example, the Instructions issued to Wallis at the beginning of the voyage make clear that the Dolphin was going in search of the unknown, and that Robertson must make it known:

'Whereas there is reason to believe that lands or Islands of Great Extent, hitherto unvisited by any European Power may be found in the Southern Hemisphere between Cape Horn and New Zealand, in Latitudes convenient for Navigation, and in Climates adapted to the produce of Commodities useful in Commerce; and

Whereas His Majesty . . . conceiving no conjuncture so proper for Enterprizes of this nature at a time of profound Peace, hath signified unto us . . . His Pleasure that an attempt should forthwith be made to discover and obtain a complete knowledge of the Land or Islands supposed to be situated in the Southern Hemisphere as before mentioned:

We have, in consequence thereof, caused the ship you Command . . . to be fitted . . . in all respects proper for such an Undertaking.' (Introduction' to Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, pp. xxii-xxiii.)

⁸⁵ See William Dampier, *A Voyage to New Holland &c* (London, 1703). For more on the imagining of Australia in myth and by the early explorers, see Simon Ryan, 'Inscribing the Emptiness: Cartography, Exploration and the Construction of Australia', in Chris Tiffin and Alan Lawson (eds), *De-Scribing Empire* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994).

⁸⁶ Ryan, 'Inscribing the Emptiness', in *De-Scribing Empire*, p. 126. Robertson goes so far as to straightforwardly dismiss the notion that Tahiti might be bypassed. As he rules out the possibility of sailing on towards Tinian, some four thousand miles away to the north-east, he remarks on the impossibility of leaving Tahiti alone: '[. . .] if we had been so silly as to set out for Tinian, we should have arrived in as great Distress, as the late Lord Anson did if not worse, besides the disagreeable reflections of seeing a fine beautiful country full of inhabitation, that never was discovered by any European before this date.' (June 21, 1767). One must naturally allow for the undeniable truth of this passage – it would indeed have been 'silly' to have set sail for Tinian under these circumstances. This passage nonetheless manages to compress into a few lines elements both of the imperial imagination (the wealthy, densely populated land, ripe for exploitation) and the sense of this voyage as *quest*, engaged in purely for the sense of honour and glory. See Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 142. Byron also landed at Tinian, with most of his crew suffering from scurvy after a long and desperate voyage across the Pacific. The scurvy was quickly dealt with; the crew then began dying of tropical diseases. Anson had landed at Tinian in 1741 and his description (largely untrue) of a fertile and

On the other hand, however, the initial contact with the islanders is far less favourable. While the landscape is figured in economic terms (as providing valuable resources, as part of an already existing structure of economics whether it liked it or not), and in sexualized terms (as a land luxurious, inviting and open to possession), first contact with islanders ostensibly accords with the familiar patterns of hostility and fear. In the same manner as Dampier described a series of confrontations with the aboriginal Australians, and Abel Tasman a violent, bloody episode with the New Zealand Maori, Robertson's journal constructs the islanders as irrational and threatening, and the first violent episode occurs with dreary predictability: on June 20, 1767, the second day of the visit, the ship's boat is surrounded by the islanders' canoes 'which made us suppose they meant to Attack her'. The sailors' superior firepower is employed and the islanders retire, wounded. Episodes such as these are described as a transaction, however, the terms of which the islanders clearly do not understand:

[A]t the same time they were attempting to board the cutter, I then found it was too late to treat them with tenderness especially as the ship took no matter notice of us, altho they saw the whole transaction very plain, had there been a nine-pound fired over their heads, perhaps it may have frightened them from hurting us – But that not being done I thought myself under the necessity of using violent means, I therefor orderd the serjent and one of the Marins, to wound the two most resolute like fellows, that was in the boat which first Boarded us, this orders was Complied with and the one was killd which the serjent fired at, and the otyher was wounded in the thigh, and both fell overboard . . .⁸⁷

The islanders are constructed in terms which are designed to render them impervious to reason. This is in sharp contrast to the sailors, who apparently use violence only when driven to it,⁸⁸ and whose actions are motivated by reason and

temperate island of pastures and meadows led to the island being incorporated, like Tahiti itself, as a potential refuelling point. This discrepancy between description and reality appears persistently in the history of Pacific exploration, most notably, perhaps, in the tales of giants inhabiting Patagonia, repeated by a stream of sailors who negotiated the Straits of Magellan. See Helen Wallis, 'The Patagonian Giants', in Gallagher (ed.), *Byron's Journal of his Circumnavigation 1764-1766*, pp. 185-196.

⁸⁷ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 144.

⁸⁸ The incident is preceded by a period when the British, although apparently severely provoked, act reasonably and calmly. The narrative is designed to illustrate the rational manner in which the crew

tolerance. Much is made of Robertson's reluctance to use force; the final decision to fire *at* the islanders is only taken after muskets have been fired over their heads, and the episode appears designed to show that the sailors acted in sorrow rather than anger. The passage, however, shows evidence of being rewritten, and it is fraught with ambiguity. The evidence of rewriting points towards a need to *justify* violence, and this in turn problematizes the construction of the islanders as 'other'. Instead of the apparent clean division of self and other, the journal constructs otherness but also *similarity*, the recognition of Polynesian cultural value.

The latent ambivalence of the emergent colonizing imagination, already noted above, soon becomes apparent on two counts – on the one hand, in the journal's description of internal discord on board the Dolphin, and on the other in its representation of the sexual contacts between islander and sailors. Firstly, the desired stability and coherence of Robertson's journal is very clearly endangered as a result of his detailed description of the power struggle which became a distinctive feature of the voyage. The purposeful and confident authority of the Dolphin has been compromised by internal discord. The longstanding illness of Wallis led to a power vacuum, which was never satisfactorily filled by any one officer – instead, Robertson's journal is laced with references to quarrels and tension of one kind or another, of sharp exchanges, and of unkind descriptions of the first lieutenant, William Clarke (habitually referred to as 'Mr Knowall' or 'Old Groul'). The following passage, describing the reaction to the Dolphin striking a reef, is typical:

[. . .] I therefor applyed to the Capt. for orders to do that which was best for the ship, but before the Capt. could give me a proper Ansuer, Mr Knowall interrupted him, and tould me on the publick Quarter deck, that this misfortun was intirely owing to my wholesom Advice, and now I should know the danger of Contradicting him, when we shall soon be in the Enemys power I should know better – this speech made my heart ake - but the time was improper to Answer him as he diserved, I therefor tould him we would find another time to dispute that point, but now was the time to study the safety of the ship, I therefor desired the seamen to fill all the sails, as the ships head was to the sea, at same time I axt the Capt. if he Approved of what I did, he said he did, but Mr Knowall disaproved of this and laid hold of the

of the Dolphin act. See Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, pp. 139-144.

Weather fore Brace to hall it in, but his strength was not Equall to his ill nature, and no man assisted him.⁸⁹

As the centre of an elaborate shipboard power structure, Wallis ought to be the pivot around which the power relationship moves, but instead of an authoritative presence, there is division and dissent.⁹⁰ This tension persisted throughout the Dolphin's stay at Tahiti and it leads to the sense of a breakdown, not only of discipline and authority on board, but also of textual authority. If Robertson's journal is read, and self-consciously written, as part of an incorporative strategy, this strategy is fundamentally undermined by the loss of a sense of fellowship and unity of purpose. The purposes of the visit become obscured by these unpleasant personal vendettas; it becomes difficult to attend to the report of a new land and its strange people when descriptions of 'Old Groul' and his like stalk the pages of the journal. It may be argued that the internal confusion and power vacuum on board the Dolphin is symbolic of a more profound sense of ambivalence in the strategies and writing of culture contact.

This ambivalence is clearly present in the descriptions of sexual contact between sailors and islanders which are a prominent feature of Robertson's journal. The document's textual ambivalence becomes equally conspicuous, and, as one further interrogates the representation of the Tahitians, the narrative resonates with problems. Robertson's entry of June 23, 1767, reads as follows:

[The men] returnd back to the Water side, and brought a good many fine young Girls down of different colours, some was a light coper colour Others a mulatto and some almost if not altogeather White – this new sight Attract our mens Fance a good dale and the natives observed it, and made the Young Girls play a great many droll Wanting [wanton] tricks.⁹¹

The otherness of the islanders is emphasized. In this case, the islanders are various dusky shades; the passage calls to mind Bhabha's description of the indigenous

⁸⁹ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 150.

⁹⁰ For a detailed description of this elaborate power structure, see Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language*.

⁹¹ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 148.

other constructed as 'almost the same but not quite [. . .] almost the same but not white.'⁹² The female islanders are represented as depraved, brandishing their sexuality for all to see, and in this sense they fit certain representations of black female sexuality circulating in mid eighteenth-century Britain. In a discussion concerning notions of female sexuality in nineteenth-century art and science, Sander Gilman remarks on the eighteenth-century origin of many of these ideas. For example:

[The Comte de] Buffon commented on the lascivious, apelike sexual appetite of the black, introducing a commonplace of early travel literature into a scientific context. He stated that this animallike sexual appetite went so far as to lead black women to copulate with apes. The black female thus comes to serve as an icon for black sexuality in general.⁹³

As Gilman notes, these ideas of overly developed sexual urges are located, by the second half of the eighteenth century:

within a discourse of medical 'facts' which argued that black female voluptuousness is "developed to a degree unknown in our climate, for their sexual organs are much more developed than those of whites."⁹⁴

They also carry unmistakable echoes of Edward Long's linkage of lower class and black sexuality, his comments (presented as fact) that the lower class women of England 'would connect themselves with horses and asses, if the law permitted them'. Yet the above excerpt from Robertson's journal makes clear that the black indigenous female islanders are *also* seen as eminently desirable by the non-officers in the ship's crew. It is at moments such as this that one perceives the extent to which Robertson's journal is subject to 'slippage'. On the one hand, Robertson

⁹² Bhabha, 'Of Mimicry and Man', in Location of Culture, p. 89.

⁹³ Sander Gilman, 'Black Bodies, White Bodies: Towards an Iconography of Female Sexuality in Late Nineteenth Century Art, Medicine and Literature', in Henry Louis Gates (ed.), 'Race', Writing and Difference (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 231. Gilman goes on to argue that the association of black sexuality in general and female black sexuality in particular stretches back to the middle ages.

⁹⁴ J. J. Verrey, Dictionary of Medical Sciences (1819), quoted in Gilman, 'Black Bodies, White Bodies', p. 231. For a vivid description of this interest in black female sexuality and how it manifested itself in European museums and medical discourse, see this essay, esp. pp. 233-237.

occasionally adopts the style (a few years later adopted more systematically by James Cook) of Enlightenment explorer and anthropologist. On the other hand, the journal will (more than occasionally) entirely drop this proto-ethnology and lapse into what may best be described as prurience and earthy description.

Robertson's attempts at scientific analysis, his assumption of the elevated and dispassionate tone of the 'official' observer, manifests itself in such passages as the one quoted below. This entry, of July 6, 1767, witnesses a move from ethnological musing on the origins of the Polynesians to a discussion of skin colour:

I think it is reasonable to suppose the people of this island has in time come from the same quarter of the world [east Asia] – there is three distinct colours of people here, which is a thing most difficult to account for of anything we have seen, the Red people are ten times more numerous nor the Mustees [a cross between white and quadroon, that is, seven-eighths white] which is a Medium between the Whitest sort and the red or Indian Colour and the Mustees are near ten times as numerous as the Whitest sort.⁹⁵

Such scientific classification, however, is generally much overshadowed by relaxed description of the earthy (for example Robertson's entry of 7 July 1767, which relates how 'the old trad [that is, sex] went on merrily').⁹⁶ It is certainly the case that the (many) cases of sexual contact are described in ways which reflect the relish of the sailors at the expense of any disciplinary disapproval. While Robertson's journal describes, with the mildest amount of censure, how the island elders use their young women in order to build bridges with, and hence contain, the British, he is emphatic that it was, in fact, these very sexual relations that set the seal on the good relationship which developed between the two sides. Regardless of the issues of skin colour, sex becomes a mode of diplomacy:

The old men made them [young Tahitian women] stand in Rank, and made signs for our people to take which they lyked best, and as many as they lyked and for fear our men had been ignorant and not known how to use the poor young Girls, the old men made signs how we should behave to the Young women . . . all the sailors swore they neaver saw handsomer made women in

⁹⁵ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 179.

⁹⁶ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 178.

their lives, and declard they would all to a man live on two thirds allowance, rather nor lose so fine an opportunity of geting a Girl apiece – this piece of news made all our men madly fond of the shore, even the sick which hade been on our Doctors list for some weeks before, now declard they would be happy if they were permitted to go ashore, at same time said a Young Girl would make an Excelent Nurse, and they were Certain of recovering faster under a Young Girls care nor all the Doctor would do for them, we past this Night very merry supposing all hostilitys was now over and to our great joy it so happend. (June 27, 1767)⁹⁷

Bridget Orr, writing of the reception accorded to the exploration journals by London literary circles, notes the unease generated in the metropolis by the journals' descriptions of the moral standards of islanders and sailors. This unease was manifested in the London periodicals, as shown in this excerpt from the Critical Review (1773):

What deserves more to be regretted, by those who are studious of contemplating human nature in its most uncultivated state [is that] we are . . . left ignorant of the reasons on which the moral conduct of these extraordinary islanders is founded. If in some actions they are subject to any degree of restraint, it seems to be the effect of custom and prejudice, rather than of religion and virtue; and their ideas of vice, if any such they entertain, appear to be circumscribed within so narrow bounds, as amount to the utter exclusion of moral duty.⁹⁸

Orr analyzes John Hawkesworth's bastardized Account (1773)⁹⁹ of Byron, Wallis and Cook's voyages of exploration in order to illustrate the sheer amount of sexual commerce which went on between the two sides. One need not, however, have recourse to Hawkesworth in order to note the extent to which this commerce dominated, and it is possible to argue that Robertson's attitude points up the 'innate subversiveness of sex'.¹⁰⁰ During the Dolphin's stay at Tahiti, sexual desire and sexual attraction, crossing racial boundaries, act as eruptive and transgressive forces,

⁹⁷ Carrington (ed.), Discovery of Tahiti, pp. 166-167.

⁹⁸ Critical Review (October 1773), p. 7; quoted in Orr, "Southern Passions Mixed With Northern Art", p. 213.

⁹⁹ John Hawkesworth, An Account of the Voyages Undertaken . . . for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere . . . by Commodore Byron, Captain Wallis, Captain Carteret and Captain Cook (London, 1773).

¹⁰⁰ Tiffin and Lawson (eds), De-Scribing Empire, p. 7.

working as profoundly unsettling checks on the colonial imagination, and threatening the authority of the colonial paradigm. They point to a practical refusal of the ideological prohibition on sexual contact with the other. In this context, it is significant to note that island women not only engaged in sexual relations with the newcomers, but in fact were known to sail away with them to other islands.¹⁰¹

The ambivalence which marks Robertson's journal is never satisfactorily worked through, but on balance his generally positive, or at least non-condemnatory, attitude towards the sexual exchanges between the islanders and sailors subverts the widely accepted 'moral' standards seen to be endorsed by, for example, Cook. Robertson's journal subverts the construction of miscegenation as contamination and danger, and bypasses questions of morality, such as that posed by the Critical Review above. In tone and content, Robertson's journal repeatedly implies opposition to such moral standards and suggests contradiction and an alternative version of what constitutes decency and morality. The sexual exchange is figured as an exchange for the benefit of both parties:

At Noon we returnd onbd and found our traders hade but very indifrent success, they only brout off four pigs a few fouls and some fruit, I was told by one of the Young Gentlemen [midshipmen] that a new sort of trade took up most of their attention this day, but it might be more properly called the old trade, he says that a Dear Irish boy one of our Marins was the first that began the trade, for which he got a very severe coving [thrashing] from the Liberty men for not beginning in a more decent manner, in some house or at the back of some bush or tree, Padys Excuse was the fear of losing the Honour of having the first. (July 6, 1767)¹⁰²

The implication of such a passage is not unproblematic. It is apparent (as has been clear throughout) that Robertson's self-representation may be contrasted with his representation of the lower-ranked sailors. There is an implication that Robertson himself, a junior officer, would not act in such a manner; he responds to, rather than initiates, contact, and he portrays his fellow officers as acting in the same manner.

¹⁰¹ See Edmond, Representing the South Pacific, p.13; see also David Chappell, 'Shipboard Relations Between Pacific Island Women and Euroamerican Men, 1769-1887'; in Journal of Pacific History, 27, (1992), 131, 141.

¹⁰² Carrington (ed.), Discovery of Tahiti, p. 180

For all the antipathy between the two men, even Clarke ('Old Groul') is included among the ranks of 'gentlemen', as the following passage makes clear:

At Noon all hands came onbd to Dinner, and our freind Jonothan [an islander so christened by the ship's crew] came off in a Canoe with four men paddling him and two very handsom Young Girls, which he brought off to Dinn with us. We immediately got in Jonothan and the two Mustee Girls and carryed them all through the Ship, and showed them everything that was curious supposing them to be his two Sisters, but when he came down to the Gun room, he made us understand that he brought them off Agreeable to his promis, in order to make up matters with Mr Clark he offerd him the choice of eather. (July 10, 1767)

(Clarke declines.)¹⁰³ Robertson's own contacts are extravagantly gallant, and this is especially the case in his dealings with Tahiti's 'Queen', the islander named Purea, who afterwards figures in Cook's journals and who, together with 'Omai', the Tahitian brought to London by the Endeavour,¹⁰⁴ becomes central to the South Sea myths which were woven in the metropolis.¹⁰⁵ The common sailors, by contrast, are *not* represented in the same manner, as illustrated above in the portrayal of 'Pady' and his lack of self-control. Nevertheless, it could not be said that the tone of the above passage is condemnatory – instead, and significantly, it is indulgent. Robertson's journal not only fails to buttress the important ideological categories of unity and stability (through its emphasis upon internal dissension within the crew of the Dolphin), but also further fissures this notion of unity through the implicit links established between elements of the ship's crew and the islanders. 'Pady' and the voracious island women, after all, are linked by a common sexual thread; in the

¹⁰³ Carrington notes, 'We are not informed of Mr Knowall's Tahitian judgment of Paris. Apparently he spurned them, but they found other consolation'. (*Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 190, n.). The original cause of the disagreement between Clarke and 'Jonothan', as described painstakingly by Robertson, involved Jonothan's use of a tablecloth as a napkin at table. The incident, though petty in itself, illustrates well the lengths to which the ship's officers went in order to maintain a degree of gentility. According to Robertson's journal, Clarke 'endeavoured to make the man understand how impolite it was to use the cloath'. In order to compensate, Jonothan 'made signs to poor Growel who was still on the fret that he would bring him a fine young Girl to sleep with him.' (p. 188). The whole incident is an indication of the extent to which sex became the common currency between the Tahitians and the British.

¹⁰⁴ See E. H. McCormick, *Omai: Pacific Envoy* (Auckland and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).

¹⁰⁵ See, for example, Robertson's entry of July 22, 1767, for an instance of this elaborate gallantry. (*Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 215).

same way lower-class British women and black women are linked by discourses of sexuality and specifically bestiality. Robertson's journal bespeaks uncertainty, and this ambivalence manifests itself on a number of levels. It attempts to function as representative of a stable and unified narrative by presenting the islanders as straightforwardly alien, but undermines this stability through its implicit (and non-condemnatory) linkage of sailors and islanders; it undermines elements of its own authority through its clear sympathy with the idea of sexual exchange. While Robertson is clear about his own non-participation in such scenes, his tone lacks gravity; of most significance is the failure of the journal to reflect the authority it supposedly represents. In reality, and significantly for the purposes of this argument, it is the largely silent and altogether shadowy figure of Wallis himself who, like Cook after him, stands as moral exemplar, and this potential locus of coherence is relinquished as a result of Wallis's weakness and lack of authority.¹⁰⁶

The idea of authority and its well-being looms large throughout Robertson's description of the Dolphin's visit to Tahiti. The following entry, dated July 21, 1767, clearly shows the extent to which authority (and indeed the actual physical structure of the Dolphin) could be threatened by the trade in sex:

[. . .] the Carpenter came and tould me every cleat in the Ship was drawen, and all the Nails carryd off. At same time the Boatswain informed me that the most of the hammock nails was drawen, and two thirds of the men oblidge to lie on the Deck for want of nails to hang their hammocks, I immediately stopt the liberty men, and Calld all hands, and let them know that no man in the Ship should have Liberty to go Ashoar untill they informed me who drawd the nails and cleats, and let me know what use they made of them but not one would Acknowledge that they knowd any thing about drawing the Nails and Cleats, but all said they knowd what use they went to.

Then some of the Young Gentleman tould me, that all the Liberty men carryd on a trade with the Young Girls, who hade now rose their price for some Days past, from a twenty or thirty penny nail, to a forty penny, and some was so extravagant as to demand a Seven or none Inch Spick, this was plain proof of the way the large nails went.

¹⁰⁶ As Orr writes of sexual commerce between the Endeavour crew and the Tahitians, 'Cook is conspicuous by his absence, but serves as crucial silent standard against which the varieties of exotic, feminine and aristocratic deviance are measured.' (Orr, "Southern Passions Mixed with Northern Art", p. 218).

I then Aquanted the Capt. of what hade happend, and he orderd me to stop their Liberty, untill I found out some of those who hade drawn the cleats, then to aquant them and he would order them all to be punishd . . .¹⁰⁷

This particular incident is resolved (a scapegoat is found and made to run the gauntlet), but illustrates the tension and resentment which could build among the crew. (Robertson notes, in this case, the 'great murmuring' among the main body of the sailors). Behind this squabbling over nails and 'Cleats' and sexual exchange lies the fear of an absolute loss of authority – that is, the fear of mutiny.¹⁰⁸ Miscegenation and the mingled discourses of sex, race and class, generate a fear both of actual, and of ideological disorder.

The case of Purea, however, presents complications. Her associations with Cook's Endeavour voyage (1768-1771) have been much commented upon, with special emphasis placed upon her relationship with Joseph Banks, botanist on Cook's first voyage. Contemporary writings in particular were much exercised by the hints of sexual intrigue between Banks – later president of the Royal Society and a central figure in British Society – and Purea (called 'Obarea'), anointed by the sailors as Queen of Tahiti.¹⁰⁹ Robertson's representation of Purea, and the manner in which her relationship to the British is figured in sexual terms, are of great significance for this discussion. Purea, it can be argued, is constructed in a way which relates her to both Yarico (the dominant contemporary figure of the wronged woman) and to Dido (her classical equivalent), and Robertson describes her in a manner which appears to compensate, to a degree, for the ambivalence and uncertainty which exist in the remainder of his journal.

The story of Yarico and Inkle, as Peter Hulme writes, is 'the product of no single authorial consciousness but rather a story that English society chose

¹⁰⁷ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 208.

¹⁰⁸ As discussed in Chapter One, the complex social structures on board ship were designed to foster a sense of cohesion; they were also rigidly constructed on *class* lines. See Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language*.

¹⁰⁹ Orr's essay, "'Southern Passions Mixed With Northern Art'", contains a detailed discussion of the contemporary literary and journalistic representation of Banks' dealings with Purea.

persistently, over a period of seventy years, to tell itself'.¹¹⁰ The story of Inkle, a shipwrecked English trader, and Yarico, the native woman who falls in love with him and is eventually sold into slavery by him, appeared repeatedly in plays and poems until the first decade of the nineteenth century. Although critics have commented that this myth justifies masculine colonialist exploitation,¹¹¹ other versions of the myth exist which highlight the pragmatism of Inkle and his betrayal of Yarico.¹¹² The myth is firmly rooted in the Caribbean, but, as will be seen, has much relevance in a discussion of the history of culture contact in the Pacific. Hulme's account describes the extent to which sentimental literature in general, and the myth of Inkle and Yarico in particular, plays on the themes of pure love, and a pure society destroyed by European corruption.¹¹³ Robertson's journal devotes a great deal of space to dealings between Pura and the Dolphin's crew, and his descriptions are largely concerned with representing Pura as a smitten and vulnerable female. Consequently, one sees the extent to which the untranslatable nature of culture contact leads Robertson to mediate his description of the islanders through already existing models of writing. In the same way as Robertson creates *himself* as a character (since his journal is edited and rewritten from a temporal and spatial distance), he models such characters as Pura on already existing figures. The following passage (July 27, 1767) illustrates the extent to which his chosen model for Pura is peddled:

¹¹⁰ Hulme, *Colonial Encounters* p. 228. Hulme notes that versions of the Inkle and Yarico also appear in other European literatures at this time.

¹¹¹ See Martin Wechselblatt, 'Gender and Race in Yarico's Epistles to Inkle: Voicing the Feminine Slave', in *Studies in Eighteenth Century Literature* 19 (1989), pp. 197- 223.

¹¹² See, for example, Frances Seymour, Countess of Hertford, whose poem 'The Story of Inkle and Yarico. A Most Moving Tale from the Spectator' emphasizes the brutality of the entire exchange. It allows Yarico to articulate her grief at this betrayal:

'O let me not in slavery remain,/ Doomed all my life to drag a servile chain!/ It surely cannot be! thy generous breast/ An act so vile, so sordid must detest', and concludes:

'Not all she said could his compassion move,/ Forgetful of his vows and promised love;/ The weeping damsel from his knees he spurned,/ And with his price pleased to the ship returned.' (in Roger Lonsdale (ed.) *Eighteenth Century Women Poets: An Oxford Anthology* [Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1989], pp. 106-109).

¹¹³ Hulme, *Colonial Encounters*. As Hulme notes, the story of Inkle and Yarico is firmly rooted within the western tradition of sentimental literature. 'The great theme of sentimental literature is sexual love and one of its great topoi is the frustration of that love' (p. 229).

At 4 P.M. the Queen came Onboard to Endeavour to make us stay some Days longer nor we intended; at her first coming onbd She appeared very Merry and brought of a Very fine Good present of live Stock, but the instant that the Capt. made her understand that we was to sail at Sun rise, She appeared greatly Concerned And made Signs for us to stay ten days before we took our departure from her fruitful plesent Island, but the Capt. was positive to Sail next morning therefor orderd the Ship to be unmoord, that we might be ready to sail the Sooner in the Morning.

When this Great Woman could not preveal with the Capt. to stay ten days, she came doun to nine Eight Seven Six and five days, and when she found that he was still was for going in the Morning at Sun rise, She immediately Weept and Cryed for some minutes, then made all the freindly Signs that she could posable think of to induce us to stay only two days longer, bur the Capt. would not be prevealed on by her Entreatys, but still made Signs that he would sail at Sun rise, this positive resolution of the Capts. affected this Great Woman beyond Expectation, when she found that all her intreatys hade no Effect She immediately burst out in Tears, and Cryed and Weept in such a manner that few men could have helpt pitying her.

[. . .] when she found all her tears and intretys could not preveal with us to say two days longer she made signs that she would stay and Sleep Onbd all night, that she might have the pleasure of our Company while we was to stay, but this freindly plan of hers was disapproved of, and she was made to understand that she must go ashore but to pleas her we indeavoured to make her understand that we would soon return to her beautifull Island - this seemd to please her a little, and we all gave her a few presents and let her know that the Boat was ready to go Ashore, but the instant she went into the boat she fell again a Crying and sheading tears the same as before. In my oppinion this Grief of hers proceeded from nothing but her unwillingness to loss our freindship and good Company . . .¹¹⁴

Robertson's narrative never explicitly relates the figure of Porea to the mythic Yarico and Dido. Instead, reflecting the history of culture contact, Porea is written into European cultural narratives. Implicit in the journal's representation of Porea is an overwriting of her identity. She is portrayed, like Yarico, like Dido, as the deserted woman; hence her position becomes one of a victim and eminently containable, deeply embedded in historical narratives. It is this attempt at possession that is of particular significance in the context of this argument, particularly the extent to which it erases the sense of agency of Porea, her independence of word and deed.¹¹⁵ Robertson's presentation of Porea's actions exports a view of Tahiti, and of

¹¹⁴ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 225-226.

¹¹⁵ Carrington notes that Porea doubtless had very good reasons for wishing to keep her (over-

Tahitian womanhood, which was to become dominant; the later flurry of writing and scandalous reports concerning 'Obarea' and the Endeavour crew, and the Tahitian attitude to sex, has its basis in journals such as that of Robertson, particularly as they were written for public consumption. Purea's own perceived lascivious nature is by no means overlooked, and her character is constructed in such a way as to distance her from her more pure and noble kinswomen, Dido and Yarico, as the following passage (July 22, 1767) makes clear:

When I again went into the Captns cabin the Queen took it into her head that I was painted [tattooed] after the manner of her country therefor wanted to see my legs thighs and Arms, and rather nor disoblige her I showed her all, which greatly surprised her and she would not beleve that I showed my skinn until she felt it with her own hands, she then wanted to see my breast which I likewise showd her, but it surprised her most of all my breast being full of hair, she supposed I was a very strong man and Certainly of Age not painted, she then began to feel my thighs and legs to know if they hade the strength that they seemd to have, I then put my legs in position that they both felt stiff and strong which made her look very hard in my face and calld out with admiration Oh, Oh, Oh [. . .]

She Eyed me all around and began to be very merry and cheerful and if I am not much mistaken by her Majts. behaviour afterwards this is the way the Ladys here trys the men, before they Admit them to be their Lovers.¹¹⁶

Extraordinarily physical scenes such as these set the stage for the encounter between Banks and 'Obarea', and underline the fact that, no matter how apparently elevated

consuming) guests in the vicinity and research has indeed shown that her motives were entirely political. Orr notes research which suggests that Purea's motives were political. 'Beaglehole, for example, cites Arii Taimai and Henry Adams' *Memoirs of Arii Taimai e Marama etc.* (Paris, 1901) and Teuira Henry's *Ancient Tahiti* (Honolulu: *Bishop Museum Bulletin* 48 [1928]) as sources that provide evidence of the Tahitian context in which the voyagers appeared. These accounts suggest that the actions of Purea . . . were governed by her desire to maximize the political position of her son.' (Orr, "Southern Passions Mixed with Northern Art", p. 230). It is ironic that Purea, symbolic of the colonial female other, was motivated by maternal love, that most approved of quality. Similarly, her generous hospitality is consistent with the pragmatic indigenous stance identified by Hulme. 'The native position', he writes, 'was, as far as can be judged, entirely consistent. Strangers were dealt with hospitably, fed and honoured, until their attentions could be assessed. Transients and traders would be welcomed, and if appropriate, alliances entered into. Settlers, rivals for limited resources, would be sent on their way or shot' (Hulme, *Colonial Encounters*, p. 149). Although a description of the attitude of native Americans and Caribbean islanders, Hulme's assessment has much bearing on the case of Tahiti. Gananath Obeyesekere makes similar points with regard to the attitudes of Hawaiian islanders. (See *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook*).

¹¹⁶ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, pp. 211- 212.

the indigenous woman is perceived to be, she is nonetheless constructed as other, and to some extent or another, as depraved.¹¹⁷

The figure of Purea, however, breaks into and exposes the fictions of history – it becomes possible to construct her as radically subversive. On the one hand, Purea, as textually represented, acts as a standard example of the politics of domination and appropriation; she is 'overwritten' by other narratives, and, unlike the many instances in Robertson's journal where he is clearly at a loss as to the motives of the islanders, his description of Purea's various actions appear notably clear-cut. On the other, however, she functions as a symbol of the impossibility of possession. Throughout the descriptions of his dealings with Purea, one is aware that the narrative is entirely constructed by Robertson – there is an absolute lack of mutuality or exchange. Because modern scholarship has established that Purea had a political agenda all of her own, the journal's description of her behaviour may be read in an entirely new light. Purea is operating within a political context of which the observing British are entirely unaware and, as a result, her representation within the journal is shot through with incomprehension; she is unreadable. Consequently, the implicit links established to the eminently non-threatening figures of Dido and Yarico are severed. Instead of operating as a legible text, the figure of Purea becomes inscrutable. Writing his journal in the knowledge that it was an official and highly significant document, Robertson was confronted with the necessity to make it entirely legible – consequently, one sees the extent to which Purea's illegibility functions as radically threatening to the coherence of the journal narrative. Purea's actual illegibility leads to the illumination of a discrepancy between the journal's sense of power and authority, the 'truth' of its narrative, as it were, and that which may be read as an implicit loss of control in this narrative. Consequently, this ambivalence enters into the apparent unquestioning and normalizing descriptions

¹¹⁷ It is interesting to note that the other current Queen, Britain's Queen Charlotte who was wife to George III, presented as sharp a contrast to Obarea as is possible to imagine. Paul Langford calls her 'positively strait-laced'. Certainly she was the very model of virtue, and doubtless comparisons were drawn between her and her depraved, antipodean other. See Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, pp. 578- 583, for a description of Britain's royal and moral family.

and history of Robertson's journal, and, as a result, its assurance and order are necessarily undermined by its representations and mistranslations. The journal in general, and in this particular case the description of Purea, is written¹¹⁸ as History, but this history is shadowed by a discourse of which it is barely aware and over which it has no control.

Therefore, although the journal attempts to quantify and contain both sailors and indigenous people, forces of sex, race and class which are at work, subvert these attempts at control. Robertson's journal works towards a goal of assimilation and *knowledge*, and to a limited extent, this objective is fulfilled. However, the journal's construction of the islanders is problematic, in that the narrative undermines the systems of morals and representation necessarily inherent in British naval expansion. This is indicative of the internal divisions in the 'institutions' in which the Dolphin was embedded – Navy, exploration and foreign policy. The journal's treatment of sexual relations is ambivalent and problematic, and underlines a loss of narrative control, a loss made manifest in the figure of Purea, who stands as a metaphor for the future ambivalence and limited nature of the British discourse of assimilation and systems of knowledge.

The category of sexuality can be seen to both support and undermine settled and secure concepts of identity. The discourse of sexuality intersects with, and impacts profoundly upon, such discursive areas as race and nationalism, to the extent that none of these areas can be read in isolation from each other. The politics of identity formation crucially depended upon the establishment of secure and bounded categories and consequently the Naval rhetoric valorized the notions of security and purity. In part, these ideas are supported as a result of the establishment of binary

¹¹⁸ Written both 'on the spot', as it were, *and* in England. Robertson's journal shows evidence of much revision.

oppositions which suggest contamination and taint; hence, the oppositional and 'unnatural' creation of deviant sexualities such as sodomy, and the emphasis upon a fearful notion of miscegenation and racial contamination. As this chapter has demonstrated, however, such ideological constructions are undermined within the journals themselves, which fail to maintain a necessary coherence. This incoherence manifests itself in several ways. Robertson's journal is striking in its ambivalence towards the ideologically crucial maintenance of an acceptable sexual order, and in its failure to condemn sexual transgressions. Secondly, the ideology of transgression and prohibition itself generates instability, in that the establishment of the boundary or fence indicates not a binary relationship of inside/outside or black/white, but rather the interconnectedness of the limit and the transgression – as Foucault writes, '[T]he limit and transgression depend on each other for whatever density of being they possess: a limit could not exist if it were absolutely uncrossable and reciprocally, transgression would be pointless if it merely crossed a limit composed of illusions and shadows'.¹¹⁹

The sexual and sexual-racial transgressions outlined in this chapter are themselves generated by an attempt to assert ideological and narrative control; consequently, this chapter has demonstrated that while the ideology of an evolving colonial imagination is in many ways successful and energetic, it is by no means monolithic. This argument distances the debate from the binary opposition of colonizer/colonized, in that the proto-colonizer is itself realized as a complex and ambiguous category. The idea of a taxonomy of ambivalence is well illustrated, in that the focus of attention is seen to continually shift from the sailors to the islanders and back again, unable to settle or fix on a single point of attention. The point has been, therefore, to demonstrate the ambivalence of colonial discourse in all its shifting and complex mechanisms. The analysis of the imaginative construction of and prohibition on sodomy, together with the emphasis upon the discipline and the

¹¹⁹ Michel Foucault, 'Preface to Transgression', in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice* ed. Donald Bouchard, trans. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1977), p. 35.

policed body, for example, has demonstrated the failure of any notion of community. In the case of Robertson's journal, this chapter has highlighted the extent to which this evolving colonial discourse failed in its attempt to construct totalizing narratives. Robertson's position is unusual – he is an officer on board the *Dolphin*, but the very space within which certain power relations *should* be operating is itself exposed to uncertainty. The journal is produced against the background of a struggle for power and the subtext of ambiguity which is so visible a feature of the voyage is repeated in the narrative itself. Robertson's journal *may* be read as a secure description of the moment of contact with Tahiti, but his document is fissured by a range of textual inconsistencies and doubts. It is constructed as an eyewitness account, a weighty document of record, but shows evidence of substantial editing and self-censorship, of alterations and changes made long after the *Dolphin* departed from Tahiti; consequently, its status as a full and fair history or record is undermined. It is perhaps the very features upon which Robertson dwells that provide the greatest insight into the underlying problems and textual ambiguity of the journal. The passages which pertain to sex and the sexual relations between the islanders and sailors problematize and, indeed, subvert the enabling power structures within which the narrative attempts to move. Sexual relations between the two sides represented a significant violation of moral codes, a failure to abide by a principle which figured the other, in sexual and racial terms, as deviant. Robertson's journal, consequently, may be read as a narrative which implicitly links the indigenous subject, who is constructed as sexual other, with those internal marginalized or liminal groups who are *also* constructed as other, emphasizing the degree of mutuality between these groups. The discourse of sex enables a blurring of the distinction between self and other, indicating the absence of a clear opposition between the dominant and dominated. Instead, it may be demonstrated that there exists a play between the two, which is symbolized by the sexual act itself – the *literal* blurring of self and other. The categories of sex and sexuality provide the means by which notions of a settled, established identity, attempts to establish

secure and hegemonic power structures, and ideas of the binary relationship between self and other, may be interrogated. These ideas of ambivalence and textual ambiguity are further developed in the next chapter.

Three

Disease and the Body

This chapter investigates the representation and construction of disease and illness in the exploration journals. In discussing the ideological construction of transgressive or errant sexuality, Chapter Two highlighted the limited nature of disciplinary control, and this chapter develops this argument, focusing upon the body itself as a space of conflict and attention. As we have seen, the ships of exploration are run as micro-societies dedicated to efficiency and order and this chapter, in discussing the continual attention paid by the journal narratives to issues of health and bodily integrity, analyzes the application of this order to the bodies of the sailors themselves. Ideas of contamination and infection – understood to be a threat to *all* society unlike the constructed space of transgressive sexuality discussed in Chapter Two – are interrogated through an analysis of the body as an ideological battleground, a surface upon which signs of disease, authority and control are inscribed.

The journals illustrate the ideological importance of preserving an image of the body, a central concern and subject of debate and controversy in eighteenth-century cultural discourse, as a smoothly working model and image of rationality; and the manner in which disease becomes co-opted into this image of power and authority. The journal narratives construct the body as a citadel, with the skin as first line of defence. This construction of the bounded and inviolable body, and of the skin – the 'key signifier of cultural and racial difference'¹ – as surface, emphasizes

¹ Homi Bhabha, The Location of Culture (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 78.

both an ideological utility and fragility. In understanding the readiness of eighteenth-century culture 'to make the body a subject'², this chapter investigates the extent to which the body, in both its physical being and in philosophical terms, influenced discourses of power and control, and questioned implicit philosophical notions of somatic integrity and wholeness and, by extension, Enlightenment discourses of rationality and power.

This discussion outlines the significance and representation of disease in mid eighteenth-century Britain, examining the medical developments of the time and their connections to increasingly systematic applications of state and institutional power from the middle of the century onwards. The perceived and constructed links between disease and disorder are investigated, together with the imagined ability of disease to undermine and destabilize society and the reaction or compensatory moves against this fear. Chapter Two discussed the ideological tendency to identify the outsider, both within and without society, as a means of sustaining and strengthening a notional 'natural' order of society and discipline. This chapter, in noting the ideological utility of the concept and sign of disease, continues this analysis, examining the manner in which disease is represented in the exploration journals themselves. It investigates the extent to which exploration is implicitly likened to developing medical understanding of the body, the links between identification of the outsider in civilian life and in naval life, and the extent to which the journals are concerned to construct an idea of what Foucault has called the 'docile body'. While the body is subjected to discipline and ideological control and discourses of disease function as a means of maintaining this control, these meanings also result in the

² Aileen Douglas, *Uneasy Sensations: Smollett and the Body* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. xv.

questioning of these ideas of order, with issues of disease working to problematize an apparently ordered ideology of exclusion and inclusion. This discussion investigates, for example, such issues as the representation of venereal diseases in the journals, their status as apparent pollutants of 'pristine' Pacific cultures, and the extent to which the journal narratives themselves generated a fluid debate in their reporting of such issues. Similarly, it explores whether the image of the tattoo, in identifying the outsider *as* outsider, and thus perpetuating the insider/outsider opposition, might also subvert or unsettle, helping to displace this binary. The following reading of the journals argues that discourses of disease can be constructed as both supportive of and threatening to, the stability of the (proto-) colonizing narrative.

One must . . . note another process . . . This is the emergence of the health and physical well-being of the population in general as one of the essential objectives of political power. Here it is not a matter of offering support to a particularly fragile, troubled, and troublesome margin of the population, but of how to raise the level of health of the social body as a whole.³

The idea of disease, which formed an important motif in eighteenth-century Britain, connected with and influenced the shape of many other discourses during the century – national, economic, naval and philosophical. Rich and poor alike participated in a complex and involved ideological construction of the role of disease and, by extension, of health within society and the nation. The model of the body has always been linked to an image of society, healthy or sick, and as Susan Sontag has noted, disease functions as a fruitful metaphor, using military language in

³ Foucault, 'The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century', in Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977 (Brighton: Harvester, 1980), p. 170.

descriptions of the body in order to create an ideological representation of the state of a given society at a given time.⁴ The body provides an entry point to a wider political and philosophical discourse. More particularly, physicality, the health and well-being of the body came to be seen as crucial for overall moral stability of the individual and of the body politic – as Robert Wokler writes, 'Just as the human body came to be perceived as determined by its physical constitution, so moreover did the body politic'.⁵ Linking the integrity of the body to that of the state locked the notion of disease into a greater, and very complex, ideological framework. Disease, on one level, became explicitly linked to the idea of disorder on many connected levels.

In part, the impact of notions of disease upon the collective imagination is the result of the profound importance which questions of disease, and by extension questions of health, had in the day-to-day life of every British subject and in the life of the nation-state. The issue of public health became one of pressing importance as the eighteenth century progressed and medical knowledge and society evolved.⁶ Although fear of disease has been a natural and omnipresent phenomenon within all societies throughout history, in Enlightenment Britain it was uniquely significant, connecting with fundamental notions of social identity and stability. Terry Castle notes the rational world imagined by eighteenth-

⁴ Sontag notes an inevitable historical description 'of society as a kind of body, a well-disciplined body ruled by a head'. (See Sontag, Illness as Metaphor; AIDS and its Metaphors (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991), p. 92.

⁵ Robert Wokler, 'Anthropology and Conjectural History in the Enlightenment', in Christopher Fox et al. (eds), Inventing Human Science: Eighteenth-Century Domains (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1995) p. 47.

⁶ As Roy Porter notes, death remained a 'terrifyingly common event in Enlightenment Europe. Despite the disappearance of bubonic plague, the great infectious diseases such as smallpox, typhus, typhoid, diphtheria, remained extremely virulent; most were quite invulnerable to medicine in the pre-bacteriological age. Epidemics of killer diseases were commonplace, and average life expectancy remained under forty. [. . .] War claimed many victims . . . and – witness the penal system – the *ancien régime* in many ways held life cheap.' (Roy Porter, 'Death', in John Yolton (ed.), The Blackwell Companion to the Enlightenment (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p. 116.

century philosophers, 'a world made up of discrete forms, of rigid categories and hygienically polarized opposites'.⁷ Disease struck at the heart of this imagined social order, the more so as a result of its visibility, which increased as the beginnings of industrialization led to the rapid growth of London and other cities. Freud has written that '[B]eauty, cleanliness and order obviously occupy a special position among the requirements of civilization'.⁸ The infrastructure of British cities, however, had never been designed with any idea of public health or systematized order in mind and those diseases which had struck urban populations regularly throughout medieval times, continued to plague the cities into the eighteenth century. Daniel Defoe's graphic A Journal of the Plague Year⁹ – fictitious but partially based upon reports of the spread of the Plague through Marseilles – describes a horrifying, overcrowded London and is noteworthy not only for its factual style but also for its illustration of the significance of disease and death in the public psyche.

The fear of disease existed at many different levels. Most obviously, it was an everyday part of life among the urban poor, with such diseases as smallpox transmitted with ease in cramped and unsanitary conditions. Contemporary scientific treatises suggested that these particular contagious diseases (for example smallpox and measles) were accompanied by a more general contagion or filth rising balefully from the natural world which settled not only in the bodies of the urban masses but also in their clothes and homes. These separate contagions rose together and were fostered by the already contaminated city.¹⁰ The effect of such theories was to increase fear of the swelling numbers of the urban poor. As Barbara Maria Stafford

⁷ Terry Castle, Masquerade and Civilization (London: Methuen, 1986), p. 102.

⁸ Sigmund Freud, Civilization and its Discontents (London: Hogarth, 1975), p. 40.

⁹ Daniel Defoe, A Journal of the Plague Year (London: [1722] The Folio Society, 1992).

¹⁰ An example of one contemporary treatise is that of James Carmichael Smyth, The Effect of the Nitrous Vapour, in preventing and destroying Contagion (1799); quoted in Barbara Maria Stafford, Body Criticism: Imagining the Unseen in Enlightenment Art and Medicine (London and Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1991), p. 293.

notes, however, disease in the early modern period knew no class boundaries:

The ubiquitous presence of dirt and excrement, noxious vapours, vitiated atmosphere, adulterated food in markets or fairs, made it more difficult to shield an inviolable group or community from the perils of admixture. No class was immune from the vision of outsiders parading their abject penury and deteriorating flesh in the street. The city, then, was the archetypal milieu of evil and death, the site of shocking squalor and sick air.¹¹

Accordingly, although diseases such as smallpox clearly ravaged the poor more regularly and to more dreadful effect than the wealthy, the *imaginative* effect of disease was profound on rich and poor alike. Among the educated, the idea of disease formed a connection with ancient Greece and Rome,¹² and one consequence of this was to complicate the very notion of the progress of humanity and its ability to control or subdue the forces of nature. Eighteenth-century Britain, for example, collectively possessed in oral and written form the history and luridly apocalyptic consequences of such incidents as the bubonic plague. Medieval and Renaissance Britain underwent several such attacks and they were perceived to strike at the very foundations and supports of society itself, resulting in an absolute and total collapse of order. The following passage vividly illustrates the imaginative impact of disease upon social structures:

Once the plague is established in a city, normal social order collapses. . . . the stench rises in the air like tongues of flame. Whole streets are blocked by mounds of dead . . . the scum of the populace, immunised so it seems by their frantic greed, enter the open houses

¹¹ Stafford, *Body Criticism*, p. 291.

¹² Connections were made between contemporary Britain and such historical events as the plague which ravaged Athens during the Peloponnesian War of 431-404 BC (see Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* [Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988]). On one level, such direct connections were doubtless gratifying and ideologically significant, forming as they did a direct link to classical times. The notion of progress, however, is also clearly problematized, in that contemporary society is apparently as susceptible to plague and disaster as that of classical Greece.

and help themselves to riches they know will serve no purpose or profit . . . the remaining survivors go berserk . . .¹³

Inevitably, we have substantially less evidence of the imaginative impact which disease had upon the illiterate urban masses, although an oral culture of charms and cures remains. In general terms, medicine at this time had a dual role. Advances in medical knowledge were clearly being made and, as will be seen later, functioned to signify progress. Evidence exists also, however, which suggests that the medical profession in eighteenth-century Britain worked against a background of substantial scepticism on the part of patients, a scepticism which seems justifiable when one remembers the evident shortcomings in medical training in mid-century England.¹⁴ As Wokler notes, medicine was equivocal as an Enlightenment role model, perceived in part as 'a cul-de-sac of quackery. The standard Enlightenment joke . . . was that the sick died not of disease but of the doctors'.¹⁵ Lady Mary Wortley Montagu appeared to concur with this opinion. In her description of the immunizations against smallpox which she pioneered (and which will be discussed presently), she writes:

I am Patriot enough to take pains to bring this usefull invention into fashion in England, and I should not fail to write to some of our Doctors very particularly about it if I knew any one of 'em that I thought had Virtue enough to destroy such a considerable branch of their Revenue for the good of Mankind, but that Distemper is too beneficial to them not to expose to all their Resentment the hardy wight that should undertake to put an end to it. Perhaps if I live to return I may, however, have courage to war with 'em.¹⁶

¹³ Antonin Artaud, *The Theatre and its Doubles* (Montreuil, London and New York: Calder Press, 1970), pp. 14-15.

¹⁴ Roy Porter notes that by the middle of the eighteenth century, many of London's premier physicians (a substantial number of whom were Dissenters) had received their training in Scotland or on the continent. The quality of training at Cambridge and Oxford (the two medical schools in England) was lamentably low. 'Overall', writes Porter, 'Georgian England failed to provide medical training adequate to its needs.' (*Disease, Medicine and Society in England 1550-1860* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995], p. 29.)

¹⁵ Wokler, 'Anthropology and Conjectural History', pp. 60, 74.

¹⁶ Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Letter of April 18, 1717, in Isobel Grundy (ed.), *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu: Selected Letters* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1997), pp. 158-160.

On a purely somatic level, the body was rendered visibly contaminated. Those diseases which were most feared did not always kill, but invariably left their mark on the sufferer. As Stafford notes of smallpox, it 'literally transfixed and transfigured the eighteenth century'.¹⁷ In sharp contrast to modern medicine, the body was acknowledged to be ill only when the ailment in question became manifest or *visible* (signifying the Enlightenment privileging of vision) and consequently the skin became crucial as signifier not only of disease but of an idea of difference. It became the sign of stigma. Smallpox, for example, left the skin pitted, pocked and ridged. An array of venereal diseases manifested themselves as weeping sores or scabs, 'unnaturally livid as talc or as red as an unfused mosaic of pustulant boils';¹⁸ once contracted, as the following contemporary quotation illustrates, they were generally perceived to be incurable – or, to employ appropriate militaristic language, unstoppable:

When the venereal disease is diffused through the whole habit, and taints the skin and flesh with serpiginous eruptions; when pustules and pocky warts beset the forehead, sides of the face, lips, chin etc., when scabbs and spreading tetter, affect the arms, breast, shoulders, back, and thighs; when foul ulcers occupy the neck, limbs and legs, as if dogs were gnawing of them [one might be assured] of a broken constitution.¹⁹

In this passage, the diseased and vile is controlled through the use of a familiar metaphor. It is significant that the words and metaphors suggest an assault from the outside; in this way, the possibility that the body has an inside, removed from the realm of the *knowable*, need not be confronted.

¹⁷ Stafford, *Body Criticism*, p. 295.

¹⁸ Stafford, *Body Criticism*, p. 294.

¹⁹ John Wall, *Plain Directions for the Cure of the Venereal Disease. Together with Efficacious and Approved Remedies, adapted to Every Symptom of the Disorder* (1764); quoted in Stafford, *Body Criticism*, p. 299.

The signs of disease manifested on the skin blur the notion of containment and purity, the division of self and other which was developing in a social and cultural context within an emerging modernity. As Terry Castle notes:

Rational individualism, the discourse of Descartes and Locke, predicates the discrete nature of bodies, their differentiation from one another and their classifiability. Within . . . rationalist ideology, the body is rendered impermeable . . . [A]mbiguous or hybrid forms, forms that reach beyond themselves and are neither one thing nor another, are rejected.²⁰

This loss of bodily purity, or rather the visibility of this loss, was of great significance in terms, as noted earlier, of its impact upon notions of progress and the usefulness of medicine. It also ushers in that which Aileen Douglas has termed 'a cultural awareness of *embodiment*',²¹ an attention to the physical body and a mindfulness of its significance. The influential medical dogma of physiognomics, which evolved during the eighteenth century, supported this idea of visible defilement and lent yet greater emphasis to the notion of the skin as signifier. Physiognomics, as Stafford writes, was 'body criticism', the exposure of the body to a *possessive* ideological gaze. As corporeal connoisseurship, it diagnosed unseen spiritual qualities by scrutinizing visible traits. This art or science 'supposedly divined what untrained eyes could never see about a person's character'.²² The repercussions of this reading of the body are manifold. The persistent Enlightenment yearning for the authentic, pure and *explained* paradigm, for transparency and legibility, is reflected in the doctrine of physiognomics. This idea of legibility, however, is also problematized in that physiognomics suggests that an element about the body resists reading, and requires a trained interpreter. It is clear both that

²⁰ Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization*, p. 103.

²¹ Douglas, *Uneasy Sensations*, p. xv.

²² Stafford, *Body Criticism*, p. 80.

this doctrine must inevitably posit a correct or healthy or perfect model against which to judge all other bodies and minds, and that the body would become as a laboratory specimen, to be viewed and judged. The extension of this argument, accordingly, is that character and identity are *also* open to judgment; as will be seen, physiognomical doctrine could be employed on a political level, in order to isolate certain groups and categories within society. It is also clear that physiognomics implies a discourse of liminality and marginality (the skin, the boundary of the body, as ultimate signifier) which has great ideological potential.

On a philosophical level, the discourse of disease and illness was riven by contradiction. From biblical times, incidents of individual and mass illness have been linked to the notion of punishment, a judgment upon a given society.²³ Yet this idea of punishment was by no means perceived to be shameful; as Foucault notes, pre-modern sufferers of disease were not stigmatized because they represented the idea of liminality itself and were therefore valued as a sign of the presence of God. Writing of the figure of the leper, Foucault writes:

If the leper was removed from the world, and from the community of the Church visible, his existence was yet a constant manifestation of God, since it as a sign both of His anger and of His grace: "My friend", says the ritual of the Church at Vienne, "It pleaseth Our Lord that thou shouldst be infected with this malady, and thou hast great grace at the hands of Our Lord that he desireth to punish thee for thy iniquities in this world".²⁴

That which Sontag terms 'shameful, isolating disease'²⁵ came later, with modernity. In particular, venereal diseases were brought under the rubric of a moralizing Christianity, while the use of militaristic language

²³ One of the earliest and best examples is of course the case of the biblical plagues inflicted upon Egypt as punishment and retribution.

²⁴ Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, trans. Richard Howard (London: [1967] Routledge, 1995), p. 6.

²⁵ Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*, p. 13.

(sometimes overtly nationalistic, sometimes aimed within) contributed forcefully to the discourse of a normalizing, homogenized society and, by extension, to the marginalizing of the ill.²⁶ This process links with a specific ideology of, or attitude to, the marginalized in general and the diseased subject in particular – that as 'creatures of the borders . . . they simultaneously have and do not have an identity, and hence they battle over attempts to settle on a definition of what they are'.²⁷ This construction of an embattled subjectivity which is applied to the nebulous and hazy 'ill' or 'diseased' (with all that this is perceived to mean) is of great significance, in that it evokes Enlightenment preoccupations with certainty, normality and integrity and, by extension, their failure in the face of the discursive instability of this time.

On a political level – perhaps the most significant level of all – the linkage of body and state made the image of an assailed or damaged body a highly potent one, informed and propelled by nationalist requirements. There existed a greater European imagination, in which the continent was perceived to be naturally and eternally free of disease, a space that sickness penetrated or entered from without. Below this, however, the notion of disease was explicitly linked to nationalist sentiment, to the ideological need to protect against perceived threat from without. This link with nationalism was not *systematic*, in that the State was not always wholly committed to the establishment of a national system of applied health care; nevertheless, the eighteenth century saw a gradual but unstoppable movement towards State intervention in the arena of health and illness. Indeed, it can be argued that it was the intervention of numerous non-

²⁶ Sontag writes, 'The effect of the military imagery on thinking about sickness and health is far from inconsequential. It overmobilizes, it overdescribes and it powerfully communicates to the excommunicating and stigmatizing of the ill.' (AIDS and its Metaphors, p. 179).

²⁷ Dennis Todd, Imagining Monsters: Miscreations of the Self in Eighteenth-Century England (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 135.

state bodies such as the Quakers and other philanthropic groups in the area of health and illness that confirms the genuinely national nature of the debate.²⁸ Sontag has noted the construction of 'illness as the enemy invading the body fortress . . . [D]isease is seen as an invasion of alien organisms, to which the body responds by its own military operations';²⁹ and the metaphorical significance of such a construction are clear. While Sontag is writing specifically of modern medical terminology,³⁰ it is significant that these constructions of disease and ideology can also readily be applied to eighteenth-century Britain. The most dreaded diseases entered from without; syphilis, for example, was always and essentially a foreign disease:

[Syphilis] was the 'French pox' to the English, *morbus Germanicus* to the Parisians, the Naples sickness to the Florentines, the Chinese disease to the Japanese.³¹

Chapter Two has analyzed the persistent imagining of national contamination which, influenced by notions of blackness and barbarism, accompanies the question of sexuality. Similar notions of contamination and purity displayed on the skin, on the surface of the body, inform the issue of disease and health. As will be seen, this perception of foreignness is manifested in an extreme form in the journals, but also problematized

²⁸ As Foucault notes, 'Rather than being the product of a vertical initiative coming from above, noso-politics in the eighteenth century figured as a problem with a number of different origins and orientations, being the problem of the health of all as a priority for all, the state of health of a population as a general objective of policy.' ('The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century', in *Power/Knowledge*, p. 168.)

²⁹ Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*, p. 95.

³⁰ Sontag's essays *Illness as Metaphor* and *AIDS and its Metaphors* are largely concerned with an exploration of the metaphorical associations of AIDS, cancer and tuberculosis.

³¹ Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*, p. 134. Further, suggests Sontag, the pain and suffering felt by Europeans is invariably imagined as many times greater than that felt by 'outsiders'. As Rod Edmond notes, the arrival of leprosy in the Hawaiian islands was popularly linked to Chinese immigrants. See Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 195.

in a way that highlights what we have previously termed the taxonomy of ambivalence.

Yet this political reading of the connections with the emergent nation-state is far from clear-cut, for the 'foreign' analogy was also wielded within the state. The mass of the urban poor were also subject to this construction as alien, foreign and, by extension, threatening. In writing of the relationship between the state and the subjects it represents, Elaine Scarry notes that the nation-state *itself* inflicts suffering upon the bodies of its subjects. Commenting upon the 'extremity with which or the extreme literalness with which the nation inscribes itself on the body' she writes:

Not only is a specific culture absorbed at an early age by those dwelling within its boundaries, but . . . the nation-state will without notice continue to interact on a day-to-day basis with its always embodied citizens. It might even be argued that the attributes of a particular political philosophy, its generosities and its failures, are most apparent in those places where it interacts with, touches or agrees not to touch the human body . . .³²

The case of eighteenth-century Britain illustrates this intervention at a somatic level, manifest in various obvious or oblique ways. The first immunizations against smallpox were initiated in 1721³³ and became widespread in the 1760s. The government began limited social

³² Elaine Scarry, The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 111.

³³ The first immunizations were undertaken under the supervision of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who learned the technique of limited infection during her visit to Turkey (1714-1715). Lady Mary writes, 'A propos of Distempers, I am going to tell you a thing that I am sure will make you wish your selfe here. The Small Pox so fatal and so general amongst us is here entirely harmless by the invention of engrafting (which is the term they give it). There is a set of old Women who make it their business to perform the Operation. Every Autumn in the month of September, when the great Heat is abated, people send to one another to know if any of their family has a mind to have the small pox. They make partys for this purpose, and when they are met (commonly 15 or 16 together) the old Woman comes with a nutshell full of the matter of the best sort of small-pox and asks you which veins you please to have open'd. She immediately rips open that you offer to her with a large needle . . . and puts into the vein as much venom as can lye upon the head of her needle, and after binds up the little wound with a hollow bit of shell, and in this manner opens 4 or 5 veins . . .'. (April 17, 1717; in Grundy (ed.), Lady Mary Wortley Montagu: Selected Letters, pp. 158-159.)

improvement schemes and these were augmented by various private middling class philanthropical movements which resulted in the foundation of hospitals and asylums in the expanding cities. It is significant, however, that these limited improvements, implicitly exercises in control,³⁴ were always and explicitly linked to the national good. The project was to maintain national health at a time of repeated foreign adventures for the British state. It was no accident, for example, that moves to contain the ravages of smallpox gathered pace in the last years and immediate aftermath of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), nor that government preoccupations with population figures and the birth rate were based upon a comparison with the equivalent French statistics.³⁵ Health and illness became *politicized*, intertwined with issues of national foreign policies, commerce and a nascent imperialism; the ancient notion of the body politic was subtly altered to suit the policies of the age, and to sustain a developing structure of order and control.

The movement of the state against its own citizens, however, is clear both in the policies and imaginative discourse of the time. The linkage of infectious diseases and the urban poor, who were perceived to be wallowing in filth, demonstrates the implicit association of the poor and sick with treachery and the notion of the 'enemy within'. The officially-sponsored movements to promote public health may at first sight appear to contradict this theory, but in reality, the two are closely linked. These measures brought improvements to public health including hospitals, but they also brought the introduction of, for example, asylums, specifically designed to segregate those citizens perceived as mad from the 'normal' majority. Even hospitals, founded as a result of philanthropy,

³⁴ See, for example, Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Harmondsworth: [1975], Penguin, 1984).

³⁵ Paul Langford notes that 'the preoccupation with manpower was at times overwhelming'. See Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1837* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 637.

were institutions which brought or herded together the ill (that is, the *visually* ill, those with the stigmata of sickness visible on the skin), usually in conditions which encouraged the further spread of disease. The principles of social geography can be seen to have been extended to these institutions, with the sick or diseased a recognized sub-grouping within the greater society.

The ideological impact of disease, then, and the manner in which disease was constructed and utilized, are clear. The links between notions and constructions of disease and discourses of commerce and sexuality, discussed previously, are also especially clear. The well-being and requirements of the emergent nation-state, its foreign policy and its global aspirations link these areas of discussion. What is also evident, however, is the ambivalence of such constructions of disease. The identification, construction or isolation of various marginalized groups during this period implied a distinct anxiety regarding identity. That which Stafford has called 'the Enlightenment rhetoric of corruption'³⁶ underlines or betrays this insecurity, for amid a contemporary proliferation of discourses – scientific, geographic, economic, sexual – the concept of authenticity and of a centred identity was exposed to very great pressure. Alexander Pope, for example, highlighted in his writings his understanding of the ideological workings of the day. As the butt of jibes, the result of his 'misshapen' body, he responded by problematizing the inside/outside polarity, highlighting the fact that 'his diseased body, and his recognition of the limitations it signals, is much to be preferred to the moral disease . . . that afflicts most members of society, and to their inability even to perceive that they are sick'.³⁷ Disease, in that it is a natural phenomenon, is potentially common to all, and therefore disturbs this inside/outside

³⁶ Barbara Maria Stafford, *Good Looking: Essays on the Virtues of Images* (London and Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1997), p. 58.

³⁷ Todd, *Imagining Monsters*, p. 295.

dichotomy, highlighting the manner in which ideological and textual ambivalence can be understood as continually altering focus. The following sections investigate the extent to which the exploration journals reflect or question the complex metaphorical constructions of disease which have been outlined.

This section examines what Michel Foucault has called 'the docile body' and its representation in the exploration journals. Foucault writes:

The classical age discovered the body as object and target of power. It is easy enough to find signs of the attention then paid to the body – to the body that is manipulated, shaped, trained, which obeys, responds, becomes skilful and increases its forces. The great book of Man-as-Machine was written simultaneously on two registers, of which Descartes wrote the first pages and which the physicians and philosophers continued, and the technico-political register, which was constituted by a whole set of regulations and by empirical and calculated methods relating to the army, the school and the hospital, for controlling or correcting the operations of the body.³⁸

This section investigates the manner in which the discourse of disease both bolsters and undermines this thesis of body-politics fashioned by Foucault. It examines the manner in which the exploration journals portray the idea and fact of disease and the extent to which notions of contamination and pollution are employed ideologically. By analyzing the actual, symbolic and metaphorical importance of the skin, the role it plays and significance it carries, this section investigates the idea of the body as site of struggle between discourses of purity and pollution. Through an examination of both medical or *actual* disease, and perceived or *portrayed* disease (in particular the figure of the tattoo), it examines the way in which

³⁸ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 136.

the idea of disease functions problematically, both signifying difference and questioning the means by which this difference is established.

The voyages of exploration can be compared, on a very obvious level, with the developing discourse of, interest in and understanding of the body in these years. As the various circumnavigations of the globe resulted in increased knowledge of the Pacific and its inhabitants, so the medical advances of the eighteenth century made the body increasingly understood, both the whole and its parts. As Roy Porter notes, the tendency grew in medical circles to view diseases taxonomically, mirroring the developing tendency towards classification in natural history. 'Such taxonomies', he writes, 'reinforced a growing conviction that diseases truly were distinct entities, possibly localizable, possessing an ontological status perhaps analogous to chemical elements'.³⁹ Refined use of such techniques as magnification and dissection rendered more visible previously hidden regions of the body and uncovered to the eye the myriad organisms which caused disease and sickness. This idea of an increasingly comprehensive somatic knowledge also emphasizes the link between the disciplined, ordered and docile body and the machine:

The knowledge of man (saith the learn'd Verulam) hath hitherto been determin'd by the view or sight, so that whatsoever is invisible, either in respect of the fineness of the body itself, or the smallness of the parts, or of the subtilty of its motion, is little enquired; and yet these be the things that govern Nature principally: How much therefor are we oblig'd to modern industry, that of late hath discover'd this advantageous Artifice of Glass, and furnish'd our necessities with such Artificial Eyes, that now neither the fineness of the Body, nor the smallness of the parts, nor the subtilty of its motion can secure them from our discovery?⁴⁰

³⁹ Roy Porter, 'Medical Science and Human Science in the Enlightenment', in Fox et al (eds), *Inventing Human Science*, p. 60.

⁴⁰ Henry Powers, *Experimental Philosophy in Three Books: Containing New Experiments Microscopical, Mercurial, Magnetical* (1664); quoted in Stafford, *Body Criticism*, p. 348.

This rhetoric of geographical discovering can be connected to that of somatic uncovering, and illustrates the manner in which questions of bodily form, bodily anxiety and bodily soundness and wholeness impact significantly upon the discourse of exploration and proto-colonization. Earlier, we have seen the extent to which the security and integrity of the vessels of exploration were compromised as a result of sexual interaction between the crew of the *Dolphin* and the people of Tahiti. Nails became the goods in a form of pragmatic barter and, as a result, the hull and internal structure of the ship (and for that matter the relationship between captain and crew) was placed under considerable strain. The integrity of the ship was threatened as a result of the influence of sex and of trade. In the same manner, one may investigate the issue of *bodily*, and by extension ideological, integrity; in other words the extent to which sickness may be read as signifier of textual and ideological insecurity and ambivalence.

Certainly, disease was a major preoccupation of the voyages, both in terms of its presence and its absence. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the 'Instructions' issued to Cook at the beginning of the Endeavour voyage, describing the routes the ship must take and so on in copious detail, are commerce-oriented. There is, however, a fundamental recognition that the voyage stands or falls on the health of the crew. Of the search for *terra australis*, for example, the Instructions read as follows:

But if you should fail of discovering the Continent before-mention'd, you will upon falling in with New Zeland carefully observe the Latitude and Longitude in which that Land is situated, and explore as much of the Coast as the Condition of the Bark, the health of her Crew, and the State of our Provisions will admit of, having always great Attention to reserve as much of the latter as will enable you to reach some known Port where you may procure a Sufficiency to carry you to England . . .⁴¹

⁴¹ J. C. Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1955), p. cclxxxiii.

The Admiralty perceived disease as enough of a significant threat (the enemy within) to establish early in the century institutions and methods dedicated to dealing with this problem. It was at this time, for example, that the first specifically naval hospital, the Haslar Hospital (1746), was founded at Portsmouth. Consequently, we can observe at work several different conceptions of the body. On one level, a developing discourse of concern for the health and welfare of the crew is visible; on another, however, this is political, part of a definition of the body as property and ultimately controllable. Naval doctrine in this case agrees with Francis Hutcheson, that 'each individual is made, previous to his own choice, a member of a *great body*, and affected with the Fortunes of the whole'.⁴² The intention of such institutions as the Haslar was to combat the effect of various diseases which were perceived to pose a threat to the health, well-being and vigilance of the nation-state. Paul Langford notes:

In 1763 it was calculated that whereas only about 1500 sailors had been lost in action against the enemy, some 133,708 had been lost by disease and desertion. These figures are scarcely credible but they suggest something of the contemporary concern with the problem.⁴³

Measures to ameliorate the situation had been taken in the naval and military spheres well before they were applied to civilian society. Certainly, this increased emphasis in health, as manifested for example in the establishment of the Haslar, demonstrates the naval understanding of the use-value of the body of the sailor. Health became a vital component of exploration, of war, of overseas endeavour, of national aggrandizement. In

⁴² Francis Hutcheson, Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections (1728); cited in Douglas, Uneasy Sensations, p. 15.

⁴³ Langford, A Polite and Commercial People, p. 631.

this way, the health, control and well-being of the body feeds *directly* into the areas of commerce and imperialism.

There is, however, a curious parallel between naval efforts to eliminate scurvy through reliance on better diet and civilian efforts to tackle smallpox through a programme of immunization. In both cases, the benefits were well known and provable, but they were not systematically applied until several decades later. There are other significant parallels between civilian and naval practice. In particular, the image of the hospital or asylum as an institution confining the sick or otherwise deviant extended to the navy in the image of the ship as floating institution. Of the notion of the containing or isolating institution, Sander Gilman writes:

A new myth arose out of the need to contain the mentally ill within some structure that would isolate them from the world – the image of a ship on which representative mad people are confined. Beginning with Sebastian Brant's *Ship of Fools* in 1494, this image became a standard means of separating the outsider from the world of the 'sane' observer . . . [I]n the sixteenth century the mad were the explorers, such as Columbus, and they were condemned for disrupting the stable image of society.⁴⁴

The ship of exploration, then, may well have been constructed in Admiralty or state discourse as emissaries of the nation-state, but the situation is in fact more subtly nuanced. Gilman notes, for example, that eighteenth-century continuations of the Ship of Fools theme were set in asylums, and gives the example of William Hogarth's *Rake's Progress* (1735), which, significantly for our discussion, includes representations of a 'lunatic scientist figuring longitudes on the wall and a mad astronomer observing the heavens'.⁴⁵ Such public constructions of some of the great

⁴⁴ Sander Gilman, *Disease and Representation: Images of Illness from Madness to AIDS* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 22. See also Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (London and New York: [1965], Routledge, 1995), esp. pp. 3-12, for a description of the significance of the Ship of Fools in medieval and Renaissance Europe.

⁴⁵ Gilman, *Disease and Representation*, p. 65. The significance of astronomy can be seen, for example, in the fact that the observation of the transit of Venus was the ostensible and

naval preoccupations of the time – the mastering of longitude, for example, and the role of astronomy – as less than sane, are especially striking and significant. They highlight the fact that the sailors of the Navy were emphatically marginalized and often explicitly linked in public discourse and visual images (which impacted greatly on a largely illiterate public consciousness) to the marginal in civilian society.

Scurvy was, above all, the naval disease. Descriptions of scurvy indicate the extent to which such a disease acted as 'leveller', striking at officers and crew indiscriminately. By extension, they also indicate, as will be seen, the manner in which disease *both* interrupts *and* consolidates settled narratives. The problem of scurvy, a persistent threat to sailors since antiquity, had become increasingly pressing as a result of longer and longer voyages undertaken by European powers. In this sense, scurvy became an essentially colonial *bête noire*, continually and persistently (and with no regard for national boundaries or naval insignia) checking and interfering with the imperial projects of an assortment of European nations. The voyages of Byron and Carteret are particularly striking in their portrayal of the ravages of the disease:

Our Coco Nuts failing, my People begin to fall down again in the Scurvy. It is astonishing the effect these Nuts alone had on those afflicted with that dreadful disease. Many that could not stir without the help of two Men & who were in the most violent Pain imaginable, their Limbs as black as Ink & thought to be in the last Stage of that Disorder were in a few days by eating those Nuts (tho' at Sea) so far relieved as to do their duty, & even to go aloft as well as they hade done before. (July 21, 1765)⁴⁶

They [the sailors] were infected by scurvy to such a degree that the teeth of most men were loose or hade fallen out; their gums were black and swollen and their legs as blue as lazuli. (December 19, 1767)⁴⁷

public reason for the Endeavour voyage.

⁴⁶ Robert Gallagher (ed.), *Byron's Journal of his Circumnavigation 1764-1766* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1964), p. 116.

⁴⁷ Report of the authorities in the Dutch East Indies who received Philip Carteret and the

Scurvy causes the connective tissue of the body to fail, so that it *literally* dissolves or falls apart; this dissolution is violently written, in blue and black, on the skin itself. In Longitude, Dava Sobel vividly describes the ravages of scurvy upon the human body. The sailors' normal diet deprived them of Vitamin C:

[. . .] and their bodies' connective tissue deteriorated as a result. Their blood vessels leaked, making the men look bruised all over, even in the absence of any injury. When they were injured, their wounds failed to heal. Their legs swelled. They suffered the pain of spontaneous haemorrhaging into their muscles and joints. Their gums bled too, as their teeth loosened. They gasped for breath, struggled against debilitating weakness, and when the blood vessels around their brains ruptured, they died.⁴⁸

Descriptions of swollen bodies, black or 'blue as lazuli' undermine a sense of the body as human and recognizable. By extension, they highlight possible limits to Foucault's notion of the socially constructed or 'docile' body. Significantly, such descriptions of the ravages of disease upon the body also challenge Foucault's perception that madness became the single most important social threat and object of attention. The very social flexibility of disease, its ability to afflict all strata of the population both physically and *imaginatively*, continued throughout the eighteenth century and to the present day. Foucault notes that 'the mockery of madness replaces death and its solemnity',⁴⁹ but the fascination and fear of the diseased or disintegrating body was very real, especially in the concentrated and closed world of the ship, in which death for some might

vessel he commanded, the ill-named HMS Swallow. The report goes on to draw attention to the dire state of the ship: 'The ship was very dirty inside and on the outside overgrown with grass, moss and shaggy vegetation'. ('Resolution of the Council at Macassar', in Helen Wallis (ed.), Carteret's Voyage Around the World 1766-1769 [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1965], p. 378.)

⁴⁸ Dava Sobel, Longitude ['The True Story of a Lone Genius Who Solved the Greatest Scientific Problem of his Time'] (London: Fourth Estate, 1998), p. 14.

⁴⁹ Foucault, Madness and Civilization, 15.

very easily lead to death for all. The fear of nothingness which Foucault claims to circulate is nothingness-in-madness, 'experienced from within as the continuous and constant form of existence';⁵⁰ in the journals, however, the fear experienced is of a death physical and corporeal rather than rational or cognitive.

Although sea-scurvy had frequently been linked to dietary inadequacies, it was at this time also associated with the foul malodorous atmosphere so much a feature of eighteenth-century sailing ships. Various techniques were proposed for addressing this problem, the most significant of which came from the inventor Samuel Sutton, who devised methods of adequately ventilating ships and who spoke of seeing sailors:

so dangerously ill, for want of fresh air, that they were put ashore to recover their health; and the ships to which they belonged, stunk to such a degree, that they infected one another. In compassion to my fellow creatures, I thought myself obliged to do all that was possible for their relief in these unhappy circumstances.⁵¹

Given his associations with progressive policies in the area of maritime health, it is ironic that this theory of filthy airs is highly visible in the journals of Cook. His descriptions of all three voyages are peppered with descriptions of washing and 'smoaking' the decks and interiors of his ships and this is often used as evidence, not only of his scrupulous hygiene and consideration for his men's health (as it undoubtedly was) but also of his status as Enlightenment hero, modern and scientific. This will be investigated later in this argument, but for the moment it is sufficient to say that the theory of the link between foul air and scurvy had its origin in fundamentally mediæval conceptions of bile, phlegm and other bodily

⁵⁰ Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, 16.

⁵¹ Cited in Arnold Zuckerman, 'Scurvy and the Ventilation of Ships in the Royal Navy: Samuel Sutton's Contribution', in *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 10, 2 (Winter 1976-77), p. 230.

humours.⁵² For our argument, it is significant that this theory is directly related to the theory of foul air mentioned previously, which portrayed the urban poor as existing in a vile environment of self-generated and ineradicable vapours and disease. That the sailors on the ships of exploration should be portrayed as living in the same noxious environment makes highly explicit the link perceived between the feared and despised urban masses and the common sailors. The marginality of both groups is very apparent. The idea of disease was often used in this sense in order to render sailors as symbols of social disturbance, the better to maintain discipline. Such a discursive move, however, highlights again the manner in which the disciplinary gaze continually alters its point of focus. It is also significant that although disease functions symbolically and imaginatively, it is *also* physical and corporeal; the undeniability of the fact of disease significantly undermines the security of this class- and race-inflected structure which connects the marginal – sailors and islanders.

This discourse of marginalization partially results in the containment of a perceived threat, but also fractures the apparent unity of this proto-colonial adventure. The sailors functioned within a complex ideology of doubling, at once representing the nation-state *and* signifying its lack of unity, in that they operate as objects of the authority of the nation-state. There can be no doubt that Cook, for example, at least partially invests in this notion. The figure of Cook functions as the observer who continually monitors those subjects under his control. Consequently, he is represented as eyes and ears of the state, exerting control over the bodies of the sailors as part of the continual process of intervention theorized by Scarry. In the following passage, for example,

⁵² Zuckerman writes, 'The human body, taught Hippocrates, contained the humours blood, phlegm, black bile and yellow bile . . . [H]ealth was viewed as a state in which the humors were in proper combination and harmonious interaction; illness the preponderance of one or more over the others'. (Zuckerman, 'Scurvy and the Ventilation of Ships in the Royal Navy', p. 224.) These were scarcely theories which are associated with Cook.

the sailors are as children or less intelligent adults, to be handled carefully and skilfully:

The Sour Krout the Men at first would not eat untill I put in pratice a Method I never once knew to fail with seamen, and this was to have some of it dress'd every Day for the Cabbin Table, and permitted all the Officers without exception to make use of it and left it to the option of the Men either to take as much as they pleased or none atall; but this pratice was not continued above a week before I found it necessary to put every one on board to an Allowance, for such are the Tempers and dispossitions of Seamen in general that whatever you give them out of the Common way, altho it be ever so much for their good yet it will not go down with them and you will hear nothing but murmurings gainest the man that first invented it; but the Moment they see their Superiors set a Value upon it, it becomes the finest stuff in the World and the inventor an honest fellow. (April 13, 1769)⁵³

At the same time, he is carefully concerned to maintain the health of the crew and to keep scurvy and other diseases at bay:

... as I intended to sail in the morning some hands were employ'd picking of Sellery to take to sea with us, this is found in great plenty and I have caused it to be boild with Portable Soup and Oatmeal every morning for the Peoples breakfast, and this I design to continue as long as it will last or any is to be got, because I look upon it to be very wholesome and a great Antiscorbutick. (October 28, 1769)⁵⁴

In the PM the people returnd from hauling the Sain having caught as much fish as came to 2 1/2 pound a Man, no one on board having more than another, the few greens we got I cause[d] to be boild a mong the Pease and makes a very good mess, which together with the fish is a great refreshment to the people. (July 1, 1770)⁵⁵

This paternalistic concern echoes the careful philanthropy of civilian life which is designed to maintain the health and well-being of the nation-state. Both policies are fundamentally economic in nature, operating according to the principle that short-term investment is

⁵³ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 74.

⁵⁴ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 185.

⁵⁵ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 354.

substantially outstripped by long-term gain. This principle may be sometimes overt, sometimes latent, but is continually present throughout the public discourse of health and disease at this time. The emphasis placed upon Cook's preoccupation with dietary supplements and variation arguably stems from an essentialized notion of an ethical and virtuous hero. It may, however, be read rather differently. The following extracts from the Endeavour journal, for example, can be figured as fundamentally motivated by economics and concerned, above all, with efficiency:

It may be asked why I did not proceed directly for that place as being the Rendesvouze, the Discovery of a good Port in the Southern part of this Country [New Zealand] and to find out its produce were objects more intresting, it is quite immeterial whether that Adventure joins us now or a Month or two hence. Mention has already been made of sweet wort being given to the Scorbutick People; the Marmalade of Carrots alone was also given to one man and we found that both had the desired effect in so much that we have only one man on board that can be called ill of this disease and two or three more on the Sick list of slight complaints. (March 29, 1773)⁵⁶

Also began to Brew Beer with the leaves & branches of a tree which resembles the Americo black Spruce Inspissated Juce of Wort and Melasses; now I have mentioned the Inspissated juce of Wort it may not be a miss to inform the reader that I have made several trials of it sence we left the Cape of Good Hope and find it to answer in a cold climate beyond all expectations [. . .]. I judged that with the addition of the other articles it would make a very wholesome Beer and make up for Want of Vegetables which this place [New Zealand] did not afford and the event proved I was not mistaken. (April 1, 1773)⁵⁷

This emphasis upon the physical bodies of the sailors, then, signifies *both* a practical concern for health and welfare on the part of Cook which cannot be doubted, *and* an assertion of ideological control and practical shipboard order which is fundamentally economic in nature.

⁵⁶ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1969), p. 111.

⁵⁷ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775*, p. 114.

'Disorder', writes Mary Douglas, 'spoils pattern'.⁵⁸ The various journals of exploration manage the question of (dis)order in very differing ways. On one level, there is a reworking of Foucault's identification of the docile body:

By the eighteenth century, the soldier has become something that can be made; out of a formless clay, an inapt body, the machine required can be constructed; posture is gradually corrected; a calculated constraint runs slowly through each part of the body, mastering it, making it pliable, ready at all times, turning silently into the automatism of habit . . . a body is docile that may be subjected, used, transformed and improved.⁵⁹

On another level, however, this idea of the subjected or controlled site of the body is problematized. As Aileen Douglas notes, the sheer visibility of physical discourse in eighteenth-century Britain is striking. In particular, at a time when representation or discussion of the working class experience was generally subject to curtailment, discussion of physicality, including working class physicality, was in-depth and widespread. Douglas' analysis is of the eighteenth-century novel, but it is clear that the exploration journals are equally detailed in their discussion of the body and its ailments. Consequently, the journals can be seen to problematize or complicate Foucauldian conceptions of somatic-political power and control, in that physicality complicates a distanced ideological portrait of the controllable and bounded body.

This said, however, even this notion of physicality is used in a manner which inverts a sense of the positive utilization of the body. The sailors function as a potential threat to be contained and arguably, this is in itself ideologically proactive – the sailors become symbols of social

⁵⁸ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London and New York: [1966] Routledge, 1988), p. 94.

⁵⁹ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 135-136.

disturbance, the better to maintain discipline.⁶⁰ The effects of scurvy upon the human body, noted earlier, function as a highly efficient means of identifying the diseased corpus, constructing it as the alien and dangerous, the opposite of the healthy and virtuous. The body ravaged by scurvy is, in a sense, stripped of its unity, echoing the Cartesian image of the erosion of somatic humanity. The effects of scurvy, for example, can be seen to be mechanical – the failure of a vital component of the body, as a cog fails in a machine. Scurvy was also ideologically *useful*, in the sense that largely it could be contained and its effects reversed (and seen to be reversed) with comparative ease. As seen above, Cook's preoccupation with hygiene and diet functions proactively as a means of maintaining shipboard discipline and control. The endless round of cleansing and 'dosing' works as one of the main motifs of Cook's circumnavigations, acting essentially as a notably visible ritual. The captain, ministering to his men, thereby increases significantly in status; correlatively, further power drains from the crew. The following passage from the journal of Charles Clerke is glowing in its praise of Cook's rituals of hygiene:

We've now arriv'd at a Port with a Ships Crew in the best Order that I believe ever was heard of after such a long Passage at Sea – particularly if we come to consult Climates; this happy state of Health was certainly owing to the Extraordinary indulgencies of Govern't of Crowt (sauerkraut), Wheat, Malt &c &c together with the strickt attention paid by Capt Cook to the Peoples Clenliness.⁶¹

In this sense, the figure of Cook as rational and scientific leader and Enlightenment hero is significantly bolstered. Beaglehole notes approvingly that:

⁶⁰ As Douglas notes of Roderick Random, 'Society functions by making monsters of some men'. (Uneasy Sensations, p. 45).

⁶¹ Cited in Beaglehole (ed.), Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775, p. 111 (fn.).

The uniqueness, the originality of Cook was in the reduction to a sort of passionate system of his determination to replenish and vary his supplies, together with his eagerness to experiment and record. Experiment was in the air . . . and Cook went to work with enthusiasm.⁶²

This said, it is ironic that Cook's gradual loss of judgment (notably in his final voyage) can possibly be attributed, as Greg Denning speculates, to a vitamin deficiency, this time of Vitamin B.⁶³ It is also ironic that the key to the prevention of scurvy was already understood, notwithstanding the 'experiments' undertaken by Cook and the Admiralty. The following comments by the colonial authorities at Macassar in the Dutch East Indies on Carteret and his voyage illustrate the fact that Carteret, at least, knew the significance of citrus fruit, and by extension imply at least some degree of doubt regarding Cook's 'scientific' and well-informed mind:

We therefore ordered the meal and refreshments which we had taken with us to be fetched from our boat, inviting him [Carteret] to share it with us, which he accepted willingly, asking for some lemons for his sick men, which were brought to them and sucked out immediately.⁶⁴

It is possible, then, to concur with Beaglehole regarding Cook's 'originality', and certainly possible to agree with 'his eagerness to experiment and record'. Nonetheless, it is striking that it was not Cook but Carteret – at the time the least highly regarded of all the Pacific explorers in

⁶² Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. clxvii.

⁶³ See Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language*, pp. 162-163. Beaglehole notes that, by the beginning of the third voyage, Cook's 'faculties had been stretched to the uttermost' (*Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775*, p. xxxi). Of Cook's loss of judgment, Gananath Obeyesekere writes: 'One of the most interesting accounts of Cook's irrational violence was written by George Gilbert, whose father served Cook in the second voyage. A naive seventeen-year-old midshipman, Gilbert idealized Cook and was appalled at the violence he saw unleashed. The journal was meant to be published but was not. . . . [M]odern writers, including Beaglehole and Sahlins, refer to it but not to its contents. . . . [I]t is still barely used by scholars, as if there is a silent conspiracy to stifle works that provide criticism of Cook.' (Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking in the Pacific* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992], p. 203.)

⁶⁴ 'Resolution of the Council at Macassar', December 29, 1767, 8 AM, in Wallis (ed.), *Carteret's Voyage Around the World 1766-1769*, p. 378.

the 1760s and 1770s – who is able to identify precisely the item needed to counteract scurvy.

The visibility of the symptoms of scurvy illustrate the extent to which the skin is used as signifier of difference. Cook, for example, is constructed as the archetypal leader and hero, and therefore by extension as possessor of health and vitality. Diderot, with a philosophy much influenced by developments in Pacific exploration, writes that '[O]n the entire surface of the earth, there is not a single man perfectly constituted, perfectly sound. The human species is only a mass of individuals more or less deformed, more or less ill'.⁶⁵ However, this is by no means how reality is constructed. Instead, Cook becomes the control as in an experiment, the norm against which difference is measured. He functions as scientific observer, noting the onset of illness and administering the antidote or solution to that illness, and as physician or scientist, possessed of knowledge and power over the body on view, a body crucially constructed as legible.

This representation of order works against the understanding that disease – unlike sodomy, for example, which is a *constructed* evil – is naturally random and beyond absolute control. The repercussions of this fact are apparent in George Robertson's journal of the Dolphin voyage (1766-1769). Robertson's journal documents with some candour the course of his rancorous relationship with William Clarke, the first lieutenant, referred to throughout as 'Mr Knowall' or 'Old Groul' and (if we will believe Robertson) generally detested by the entire ship's complement. The bitter relationship chronicled in the journal is significant for our purposes in several ways. Firstly, it is clearly a power struggle as well as a matter of personal loathing – and originating in the indistinct relationship of power and authority characteristic of the vessels of exploration.

⁶⁵ Diderot, *Eléments de Psychologie* (1778); quoted in Stafford, *Body Criticism*, p. 296.

Secondly, that power struggle is sparked as a direct result of the long-term sickness of Captain Samuel Wallis himself, who often appears as no more than a shadowy figure in Robertson's journal. His lack of authority is continually communicated, as for example in the following extracts, which detail the long cautious reconnoitre of the north coast of Tahiti (June 1767) before the first landing was made. After describing one of several incidents which resulted in the death of islanders, Robertson writes:

After this non of them [the islanders] Attempted to come near our boats, and we soon got Onboard, I then tould the Capt. my reason for not sounding, and like ways informed him that it was imposable to Land, any way near Pleasant Valey without weating the Peoples Arms – he then axt what was best to be done, and I proposed going to examin the bay which he saw the night before, as that was on the lee side of the low point . . . the Capt seemd very agreeable to this proposal but soon after rejected it, being oytherways adviced by another officer . . . (June 21, 1767)

[. . .]

The Capt now being very bade and not able to keep the Deck, he conculted with his Officers what was best to be done, our first Lieut. [Clarke] was likeway bad and not able to do duty upon Deck, but thought himself very Able to Advise, what Advice he gave the Capt. at this time I know not, but I afterwards found it was Opposite to mine, at a time when it hurt me greatly, but I believe it turned out to be for the good of us all, as it made me do what I should not have done so willingly at Another time – this makes the old proverb Good, that evil designs is sometimes productive of Good – I should not have mentioned this hade it not been for to clear myselfe of some reflection which this knowing man made afterwards . . . (June 23, 1767)⁶⁶

In both these extracts, the figure of the captain is not only reactive but without any realistic measure of authority, and so a power vacuum is formed which various members of the crew strive to fill. On occasion the orders of the sickly captain are visibly overruled:

⁶⁶ Hugh Carrington (ed.), *The Discovery of Tahiti: A Journal of the Second Voyage of H.M.S. Dolphin Round the World Under the Command of Captain Wallis by George Robertson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1948), pp. 145-146, 148-149.

I therefor applyed to the Capt. for orders to do that which was best for the safety of the ship, but before the Capt could give me a proper ansuer, Mr Knowall interrupted him, and told me on the public Quarter Deck, that this misfortun was intirely owing to my wholsom Advice and now I should know the danger of Contradicting him, when we shall be soon in the Enemys power I should Know better – this speech made my heart ake . . . I therefor desired the seamen to fill all the sails, as the ships head was to the sea, at same time I axt the Capt if he Aproved of what I did, he said he did, but Mr Knowall disaproved of this and laid hold of the Weather fore Brace to haul it in, but his strength was not Equall to his ill Nature, and no man assisted him. (June 23, 1767)⁶⁷

The sickness of the captain has the potential not only to expose latent tension within the ship's crew, but also to interfere profoundly with morale:

At this time the Capt was very bade and the Secant Lieut. began to complain, who was a Gentele Agreeable well behaved Good man and very humain to all the Ships company, this disheartned the most of the Ships company very mutch seeing both the Capt and Secnt Lieut very bade, and the first [Clarke] beginning to recover, who was heartely hated by all Onbd, this unhappy tempered man, seemingly took a delight in crossing every Officer onbd except the Gunner who was his favourite. (July 18, 1767)⁶⁸

Incidents such as these are sprinkled throughout Robertson's account, illustrating the manner in which the fact of sickness threatened the discipline and unity of the vessel, and therefore the very viability of the enterprise itself. Sander Gilman writes:

Illness is a real loss of control that results in our becoming the Other whom we have feared, whom we have projected onto the world . . . [H]ow we see the diseased, the mad, the polluting, is a reflex of our sense of control and the limits inherent in that sense of control.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 150.

⁶⁸ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 202.

⁶⁹ Gilman, *Disease and Representation*, p. 2.

Robertson's journal portrays this potential loss of control. The image of the captain as bearer of disease is disabling, but, crucially, not fatally so. Rather it is the case that Robertson's journal is significantly less authoritative than those of Cook. There is the fact that he is not *commander* of the Dolphin; and there is the fact that he permits the authority of the document, as a naval record, to be undermined by airing what are, on one level, petty and ugly grievances. This is not to lessen the significance of the power struggle which is most certainly caused on the Dolphin as a result of the infirmity of Wallis. It is fair to say, however, that the impact of the document, its historical *weight*, is greatly lessened. The (self-) representation of the players results in such a journal having both considerably less contextual authority that it might otherwise possess and also much more immediacy and interest to the general reader. In contrast, Cook's journal is in this sense rather more correct. Consequently, the sense of a revolt within the symbolic order is contained. Although it is the integrity of the captain himself which is under threat, his body which labours under the sign of disease, there is a sense in which this threat, though significant, is perceived to be contained.

In Robertson's journal, the intervention of the nation-state, or of national interest, is everywhere apparent. This intervention takes many forms, but inevitably is part of a construction of the supreme importance of the quest, the voyage itself, over the interest of the individual. This is most visible, perhaps, in the description in Robertson's journal of the prolonged delay before the crew of the Dolphin are permitted to land on Tahiti in June 1767. As the ship sights the peaks of Tahiti, Robertson writes:

This made us all rejoice and fill us with the greatest hopes Imaginable, we now lookt upon our selves as relived from all our

distresses as we was now almost Certain of finding all sorts of refreshments on this great Body of Land. (June 19, 1767)⁷⁰

Two days later, the Dolphin remains lying off the coast, after episodes of bloodshed and violence. Robertson describes painstakingly the lush and verdant landscape of the island and the heady scents coming off the land, in sharp contrast to the dreadful state of the crew. Nevertheless, rather than have the expedition be ambushed on Tahiti and thus run the risk of ultimate failure, the suggestion is floated to sail on to Tinian, some four thousand miles away in the western Pacific:

At this time our Capt. and first Lieut was both bad, and about thirty seamen in the Doctors list, some of which was so bad, that he Expected Death to seize them soon, if timely relief was not to be found, on this pleasant and delightful lyke country . . . Oythurs suposed nothing could be hade without blows and made a great many Iddle supositions, with respect to the Savage disposition of the Natives and some thought it imposable to Land here, the natives being so numerous and thought it best to run on to Tinian, it being a place where we was sure of procuring all sorts of Refreshments, without runing the least risque of Loseing eather of our lives, Ship or Boats, or to attempt to Land here, or anchor any way near the shore, where thousands of their canoes could surround us, it was suposed to be the greatest Risque of Loseing the Ship and all of us – but happy for the sick and Afflicted, it was resolved on to try landing here, before we bore away for Tinian, which we after found out to be four thousand two hundred and forty six miles from this country – so that if we had been so silly, as to set out for Tinian, we should have arrived in as great Distress as the late Lord Anson did if not worse . . . (June 21, 1767)⁷¹

Despite the perilous condition of the ship's crew, struck by scurvy, there is a genuine debate (motivated in part by genuine fear) as to the wisdom of landing on Tahiti – the security of the ship and the success of the voyage remains paramount.

⁷⁰Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 135.

⁷¹ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 142.

The sickness of such symbolically crucial figures as Wallis, however, also impacts upon the binary of sailor and islander. Previously in this thesis we have noted the extent to which the imaginative construction of the Pacific preceded its actual colonization by hundreds of years. Consequently, although the journals describe the moment of actual contact, certain colonialist models can be said to apply. In particular, the fear of cultural contamination, which has been perceived to be a specifically Victorian construction, is also visible in the journal narratives. This fear took the form, as Chapter Two outlines, of a preoccupation regarding sexual pollution. The journals demonstrate a fear of contamination by the diseases of the Pacific; they also (and much more visibly) betray a preoccupation with the diseases carried on board ship. Discourses of sex, disease and nationalism intersect at the site of the body, whether that of the islander or the sailor. Rod Edmond notes:

The legible evidence of western diseases on blemished native bodies haunted writing about the Pacific from the early moments of contact. Whenever Cook returned he found signs of his previous landfall on the inhabitants' bodies, and all his efforts at controlling spread of the 'Venereal' were nugatory . . . Not only did the cycle of infection and reinfection produced by Cook's many landfalls in the course of three voyages threaten the good order of his ships, but its physical symptoms were a palpable sign of the contaminating power of European civilization.⁷²

The sailors returning home after the second Dolphin voyage spread tales of a pristine and healthy paradise in the South Seas. These tales were related to a audience already expecting fabulous stories of the great and wonderful southern continent, and consequently happy to receive news that a lost paradise did indeed exist on earth. Consequently, both in Britain and in France (whence Bougainville returned in 1768 with similar

⁷² Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, p. 194.

reports), the myth of the South Seas rapidly became constructed as reality. Such stories made the impact of actual events all the more significant.

Cook's initial survey of Tahiti in 1769 is at pains to describe the rigorous hygiene of the islanders:

They always pluck out a part of their beards and keep that that remains neat and clean. Both sexes eradicate every hair from under their armpits and look upon it as a mark of uncleanliness that we do not do the same . . . They are a very cleanly people both in their persons and diat always washing their hands and mouth immidiatly before and after their meals and wash and bathe themselves in fresh water three times a day, morning noon and night . . . (July 13, 1769) ⁷³

Combined with this is an equally close description of the diseases carried by the islanders, and, as it were, their *latent* uncleanliness; it can be argued that the one in fact magnifies the dramatic effect of describing the other:

Another custom they have that is very disagreeable to Europeans which is eating lice a pretty good stock of which they carry about them; however this Custom is not universal for I seldom saw it done but among children and common people and I am persuaded that had they the means they would keep themselves as free from lice as we do . . . The inhabitants of this island are troubled with a sort of Leprosie or scab all over their bodies, I have seen men women and children, but not many, who have had this distemper to that degree as not to be able to walk; this distemper I believe runs in familys because I have seen both Mother and child have it. (July 13, 1769)⁷⁴

There is a significant intersection of themes in this single passage. On the one hand, it may be read as simply scientific and anthropological, the writings of a rigorous observer. Clearly, however, there are also other thoughts present. The apparent contradiction between the first passage and the second indicates not only the relativity of perceptions of hygiene on the part of the sailors and islanders (akin to the relativity in notions of

⁷³ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 125.

⁷⁴ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 125.

exchange discussed in the previous chapter), but also the ideological construction of hygiene generally. That is, the islanders are constructed as *naturally* primitive, backward in spite of anything they can do, lacking even the means to keep their bodies free from lice; and *naturally* diseased, with leprosy (glossed by Beaglehole as 'probably *oovi arii*, or chief's leprosy', not true leprosy⁷⁵) a congenital, hereditary, ineradicable disease which is native to these people. The association of the islanders with leprosy also brings to bear the burden of the powerful iconography of this disease. Leprosy had been largely supplanted in Europe by other, more virulent diseases by the middle of the eighteenth century, but was still symbolically potent.⁷⁶ Although unspoken, the counterpart of this natural state of latent uncleanness is, by implication, the clean European who is able, through simple technology (the comb), to maintain bodily health.

Although such comparisons go some way towards neutralizing the discursive effects of disease, they do not wholly contain them. Although the journals construct an image of a naturally or latently diseased people, they also reflect the anxiety of Cook regarding imported, alien diseases – imported, that is, by the sailors themselves. In New Zealand and Australia, the sailors and indigenous people mingled only to a limited extent. Tahiti, however, became a kind of stage upon which the issues of sexual relations and disease were played out in public. The issue of venereal disease is raised very soon after contact is made between the Dolphin and the people of the island. According to Robertson's journal, the ship's authorities are at pains not to communicate any form of venereal disease to the

⁷⁵ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 125.

⁷⁶ Leprosy (or Hansen's Disease) spread through the Pacific only in the nineteenth century and came to be seen as a wholly indigenous disease. Edmond notes the symbolic significance of the Hawaiian leper colonies, and the increasing tendency on the part of European commentators to moralize the disease, 'a just punishment for a corrupt and diseased society' (196). Leprosy generated all manner of fictional accounts of the Pacific in which it, and other diseases, figured prominently. See Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, esp. pp. 194-222. See also Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, esp. pp. 1-7, for a description of the imaginative power of leprosy.

indigenous population, even if this means confining the crew on board ship. Soon, however, they realize that this is impractical and, it is implied, dangerous. The following passage illustrates this fear, as well as the close connection between issues of commerce, sex and disease:

. . . we then Consulted what was best to be done, some was of the Oppinion it would be best to detain the Liberty men some day, oythers said that it would be ruining all trade to keep them onbd and the Doctor who was certainly a man that took the greatest care of his patients Affirmed that the keeping the Liberty men confind onbd the Ship, would ruin their health and Constitution for said he, any thing that depresses the mind and spirits of men must Certainly hurt them, we sent for a few which was in the sick list, and Examind them, and threatned to stop their liberty . . . this effected the poor unthinking fellows so mutch, that we immediately saw a visible change in their Countenance, which plainly confirmd what the Doctor said was very Just – we therefor agreed to prevent them as mutch as posable from takeing Nails and toys Ashore with them – we likeways put a very necessary Question to the Docter, who Affirmed upon his Honour that no man onbd was affected with any sort of disorder, that they could communicate to the natives of this beautiful Island. (June 9, 1767)⁷⁷

[Written in red ink and different hand at the bottom of the page – 'No Venereal']

There exists, then, a double ideological movement of figuring the new lands and their inhabitants as *both* pristine *and* diseased. Again, this foreshadows elements of nineteenth- and twentieth-century discourse concerning the Pacific, that the ocean was both beautiful and sick, possessed of an intangible element lacking and needed in Europe itself, but also threatening death to Europeans through disease.⁷⁸ In part, this echoes the eighteenth-century notion that the body wielded considerable power and influence over the mind. Dennis Todd writes that 'it was a piece of moral orthodoxy that our imaginations could make us act like beasts by subjecting us to the impulses of our sensuous, passionate, bodily natures.

⁷⁷ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 186.

⁷⁸ See, for example, Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*. Edmond notes that the writings of Jack London and R. L. Stevenson persistently portray the ocean in this light.

. . . [P]eople feared their bodies exercised a prominent but indefinite power, one that called into question the integrity of the self.⁷⁹ The consequence is to illuminate the fear that contact with the alien or unfamiliar results in an assault on (self-)identity. One can see the immensely complex interweaving of ideological blame, guilt and defensiveness.

In the exploration journals, the question of the potential contamination of what is figured as a pristine island culture is dealt with in part by attaching blame for the act of contamination onto others, as well as by highlighting diseases pre-existing in the population. Throughout the journals, the origins of the venereal diseases and other introduced illnesses spreading through the Tahitian population are discussed and ascribed to various European, in particular French and Spanish, sources. The various entries of Cook's journals are particularly notable for their preoccupation with this issue. The first visit to Tahiti shows that the encroachment by Europeans has already left its mark on the people of the island:

This Day and for some days past we have been inform'd by several of the Natives that about 10 or 15 Months ago, Two ships touched at this Island and stay'd 10 days in a Harbour to the Eastward . . . they likewise say that these Ship[s] brought the Venereal distemper to this Island where it is now as common as in any part of the world and which the people bear as if they had been accustomed to it for ages past. We had not been here many days before some of our people got this disease and as no such thing happen'd to any of the Dolphins people while she was here that I ever heard of I had reason . . . to think that we had brought it along with us . . . (February 6, 1769)⁸⁰

Cook's anxiety is clear, and turns at once to defensiveness. His sailors, it is implied, are essentially blameless in this regard – instead, it is the islanders themselves who are facilitating the spread of disease:

⁷⁹ Dennis Todd, *Imagining Monsters*, pp. 106-107.

⁸⁰ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 99.

. . . I may safely say that I was not assisted by any one person in ye ship, and was obliged to have the most part of the Ships Compney a Shore every day to work upon the Fort and a Strong guard every night and the Women were so very liberal with their favours, or else Nails, Shirts &ca were temptations that they could not withstand, that this distemper very soon spread it self over the greatest part of the Ships Compney . . . (February 6, 1769)⁸¹

In any case, Cook writes, 'now I have the satisfaction to find that the Natives all agree that we did not bring it here'.⁸² As Beaglehole notes, however, the disease discussed above was not a sexually transmitted disease in any case, which renders irrelevant the wrangling and anxiety attending this discussion. Instead, it was the ailment called yaws, endemic to the Pacific, which was similar in its symptoms to syphilis and which responded to similar treatment, but which was entirely different in nature.⁸³ Clearly, then, what is noteworthy is not the genesis or origins of this disease but rather the *perceptions* surrounding it. Cook's journal entries fret on the point – while the Endeavour must be seen to be innocent of contaminating the islanders, 'this is of little satisfaction to them that must suffer by it in a very great degree and may in time spread it self over all the Islands in the South Seas, to the eternal reproach of those who first brought it among them'.⁸⁴ Later entries are at pains to mention the Spanish presence in the Pacific and so implicitly link the perceived contamination of the islanders to another source;⁸⁵ and other

⁸¹ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 99.

⁸² Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 99.

⁸³ Beaglenote notes the debate on this subject which continued furiously until this century. See Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 99, fn 4. See also Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, Appendix I, 'The Introduction of Venereal Disease into Tahiti'. Carrington writes that the question of the introduction of venereal disease into Tahiti 'became a subject of almost international importance, with verbal clashes at long range between Wallis and Bougainville' (284) and writes that 'it is impossible that Cook's sailors originally brought the disease to Tahiti.' (p. 287).

⁸⁴ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 99.

⁸⁵ See Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, pp. 99, 100 (June 6 and 11, 1769).

contemporary writings also make the link between diseases and other Europeans:

Monsieur Bougainville had been here before us with two ships and brought the French disease among the poor people. (London Evening Post, August 29, 1771)⁸⁶

As Beaglehole notes, the ravages of venereal diseases were accompanied by other, swifter illnesses introduced by Europeans:

There was in fact a cataclysm to be reckoned with. Cook's departure from the island on his third voyage was . . . followed by an epidemic of dysentery which made frightful ravages, wiping out whole families, while for twenty years venereal disease, working more steadily, contributed beyond anything else to depopulation . . .⁸⁷

Clearly, however, the ideological impact of sexually transmitted diseases was equally great.

Three years later, Cook links the Spanish again to illness, and the French to the introduction of venereal disease. It is significant, however, that the islanders, by this stage, have identified different diseases with different European nations:

The Otaheiteans complain of a disease communicated to them by the people in this [Spanish] Ship, they say that it affects the head, throat and stomach and at length kills them; they dread it much and were constantly enquiring if we had it. They call it by the name of the communicator *Apa no opep-pe*, just as they call the venereal disease *Apa no Britannia* or *Brit-tanee*, notwithstanding they to a man say that it was first communicated to them by M. de Bougainville, but I have already mentioned that they thought M. de Bougainville as well as we came from Britannia and that they had not the least knowledge of any other European Country. I mention this as a fact which accrued to me and not with any view of exculpating the English from bringing this disease to the isles and fixing it on the French; the name the natives have given it together with what M. de Bougainvill has said on the subject will, in my

⁸⁶ Cited in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, Appendix VII, p. 653.

⁸⁷ Beaglehole (ed.), 'Note on Polynesian History', in *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. clxxvi.

opinion, father it upon the English, howsoever innocent they may be. (September 17, 1773)⁸⁸

Despite his protestations to the contrary, he is of course attempting to disavow responsibility for the 'Venereals' being introduced. This is an example of a doubled inscription – the nation attempts to avoid accusations of (literal) body inscription in order to maintain the ideal of the scientific and peaceful quest to the Pacific. In spite of these attempts, however, the nation is visibly inscribed on the bodies of both its own subjects and of the indigenous people of Tahiti – although ironically, as has been pointed out, the signs of disease are in fact native to the Pacific and consequently the issue has rather more to do with perception than fact. This doubling movement emphasizes again what we have called a taxonomy of ambivalence, where we see the movement of (proto-)colonial ambivalence, continually shifting in focus and attention from one group to another, from sailors to islanders and back again.

Cook's ultimate conclusion that 'venereal disease' is in fact native to the Pacific, however, echoes and feeds the contemporary pseudo-science of physiognomics. Cook writes:

The more I have enquired into and considered this subject, the more I am led to believe that these people had the venereal disease among them long before they had any commerce with Europeans or at least some disease which is very near a kin to it, for I have heard them speaking of people who have died of the disorder, which we interpreted to be the Pox, long before that time [. . .] These people are, or were before the Europeans visited them, very subject to scrofulous diseases, so that one seaman might easily mistake one disorder for another. (September 17, 1773)⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775*, p. 231. Beaglehole writes: 'Bougainville's remarks were as follows: 'I am yet ignorant, whether the people of Taiti, as they owe the first knowledge of iron to the English, may not likewise be indebted to them for the venereal disease, which we found had been naturalized among them [. . .] Columbus brought this disease from America; here it is on an island in the midst of the greatest ocean. Hath the English brought it hither?' (pp. 231-232).

⁸⁹ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775*, p. 232 (fn).

The idea of an already existing native illness which marks and scars the body carries implications even greater than those traced hitherto. Instead of the pristine islands of the Pacific, it becomes possible to represent the ocean as naturally degenerate and polluted, and consequently as posing a threat to the incoming Europeans.⁹⁰ Again, such suggestions foreshadow the settled nineteenth-century discourse of the diseased Pacific. The way is prepared for imperialist incursions which could be justified or validated by following the logic that naturally degenerate cultures must make way for those guided by rigour and laws.

The contradiction, then, is readily apparent. The difference between the indigenous Pacific islanders and the incoming Europeans is articulated in terms of a distinction constructed around disease and the legibility of the body. Cook's response to disease is partly that of the scientific observer, identifying and classifying the causes or genesis of the diseases suffered by his crew, and one sees the manner in which these diseases are ascribed firstly to other European nations and eventually (and with relief) to the natural state of the Pacific and its people. The South Seas become *productive* in this sense, generating the difference which enables those involved in the voyages of exploration to fully articulate their own identities. This representation of the sick or diseased other, however generates ambivalence, in the sense that the idea of disease renders the body – partially – illegible. Stafford has noted the 'yearning characterizing much of the eighteenth-century mentality . . . the wish to know intimately the unseizable other'.⁹¹ It is clear that the trope of disease, for all its

⁹⁰ This discourse arose while Europe debated whether the Pacific was in fact strategically and economically worth colonizing. Ultimately, the feeling largely was that it was not worth the expense, and colonization proceeded erratically, reluctantly and (in the case of Britain) largely at the prompting of the colonial governments in New Zealand and Australia.

⁹¹ Stafford, *Body Criticism*, p. 1.

ideological consequence, is also generative of excess in that it afflicts both Self and Other, undermining the illusion of opposition and difference.

This excessive potential of disease is especially apparent when one investigates the significance of the skin and its role in this discourse of disease and illness. The skin, as has been noted, functions as the most palpable signifier of difference and disease – at this time, illness could not be discovered until it was manifested on the surface of the body in the form of welts, boils, lesions and so on. The fundamental principles governing all somatic narratives, however, were those of bodily integrity and legibility:

[The body] was a site for the display of purity and pollution. As a complexly bordered zone, it was amalgamated from a nexus of physiological and psychological processes . . . it could signify physical nothingness in contrast to spiritual wealth. The somatic, then, provides a point of entry into a larger physical and moral universe. Master metaphors were invented to grasp the body's overt forms and covert functions, to denote its intermediate status between heaven and hell.⁹²

It is, then, a site or text to be dissected and read. It is also, by implication, to be compared to an existing model of the healthy or perfect body, the touchstone against which all other bodies are measured. Clearly, however, such bodies are little more than fantasy – in reality, the eighteenth-century body was open to all manner of scars and pockmarks and invasions, including, ironically, those designed to save and protect the body:

[I]noculation was the incision of the skin to introduce the venom of smallpox into a channel of flesh. For its opponents, the insertion of this contagion was like permitting the enemy to penetrate the walls of a town during a siege. Lichtenberg compared all visible diseases to structural 'breaks' in the sufferer's corporal facade. The architectural analogy between gaping holes and somatic apertures colored Shaftesbury's description of a mind weakened by the assault of improper ideas, boring a hole 'for all to enter and take possession'.⁹³

⁹² Stafford, *Body Criticism*, p. 16.

⁹³ Stafford, *Body Criticism*, p. 162.

This discourse of bodily integrity, then, carried the greatest significance. Visible bodily aberrations, whether generated as a result of disease or otherwise (as in the case of the tattoo), remained the ultimate signifier of difference, and an affront to civilized values:

We are born for one another; we must avoid possessing anything shocking, & even if one were alone in the world, it would not be proper to neglect one's body to the point of allowing it to become deformed; this would be going against the very intention of the Creator.⁹⁴

The process of tattooing, it can be argued, works to unsettle such conceptions of the security and purity of the body. As a literal inscription of the body, the tattoo both literally and metaphorically echoes the constructions of disease and purity outlined in this chapter. It upsets the physiognomical linkage of the surface appearance and inner being of a subject, and consequently the dominant medical ideologies of the time. The fact of a white European tattooed body was radically unsettling, figured as it was as a deliberately contaminating act. As commentators have noted, the discursive linkage of tattoo and virulent disease was quite explicit – Stafford notes, for example, that both smallpox and syphilis 'were compared to unnatural tattoos or "artificial impressions" scarring the body'.⁹⁵ Tattooing is only the most *literal* way in which the body is drawn into this discourse of contamination, control and self-awareness, the most literal way in which it becomes a kind of battleground.

Tattooing was (again literally) drawn into the discussion of contamination and disease through comparisons to skin disease. Robertson explicitly (and significantly, given the connections between sex

⁹⁴ Nicolas Audry, *L'Orthopaedie* (1741), I, pp. xxvi-xxvii; cited in Stafford, *Body Criticism*, p. 220.

⁹⁵ Stafford, *Body Criticism*, p. 298.

and disease discussed above) links the tattoo to developing sexuality in Tahitian culture:

They have a very particular Custom in this country which is this at the age of Sixteen they paint all the man's thighs Black, and soon after paint curious figures on their Legs and Arms, and the Ladys seems not to exceed the age of twelve or thirteen when they go through that operation. I suppose they look upon themselves as men and Women at the age of sixteen and twelve.⁹⁶

'Tattooing', writes Alfred Gell, 'resembles a dermatological complaint and has been the subject of learned dermatological discussions, very much as if it were a somatic illness . . . [F]rom the dermatologist's point of view, tattooing is a self-inflicted skin disease'.⁹⁷ Further, the tattoo has been and remains a signifier of difference; as with literal disease, the tattoo signifies the moment at which the body becomes constructed as foreign and other. The tattooed bodies of the *Bounty* mutineers, as Denning notes, signified a difference which, in the context, marked them out as alien, dangerous, subversive.⁹⁸ In Tahiti, following the coming of the Gospel to the Society Islands, the art of tattoo was proscribed as un-Christian, and quickly became associated with sailors and other marginalized groups – in effect, it became a badge of difference, and has retained its associations of dirt and lack of hygiene (regardless of the facts) to the present day. This reflects what Mary Douglas has called 'pollution effects' – the idea that images of disease, pollution and death cluster around socially challenging phenomena, punishing 'a symbolic breaking of that which should be

⁹⁶ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 211.

⁹⁷ Alfred Gell, *Wrapping in Images: Tattooing in Polynesia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 19, 37. Gell, in fact, posits a theoretical model whereby tattooing can be 'caught', disease-like, as a result of social forces. See Gell, p. 20.

⁹⁸ Denning, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language*, pp. 35-36. A good example is the reaction of the Captain Edward Edwards and the crew of HMS Pandora (sent from Britain to capture the *Bounty* mutineers) to the tattooed bodies of those mutineers who had remained on Tahiti. The journals and histories describing the arrival of the ship at Matavai Bay tend to agree on the sense of shock and deep affront felt at the sight of the deeply tanned and elaborately tattooed bodies of the mutineers.

joined or a joining of that which should be separate'.⁹⁹ The excess generated by disease, then, threatens on the one hand bodily identity and on the other the crucial notion of racial/cultural opposition and separation. The tattoo becomes linked to notions of the contamination or tainting of the blood (the whole body), as well as the visible marking and tainting of the skin (the surface of that body).¹⁰⁰

The situation, then, foregrounds the tattoo, and thus the skin itself, as the signifier of difference. The tattooed sailors of the Pacific voyages of exploration represent, on one level, a refusal or evasion of the narratives of nation, and it is clear that this unsettling act is perceived as such – the tattoos of Joseph Banks, for example, received a great deal of unsympathetic attention on his return to England. The transgression can be said to occur when the skin is marked by the subject *voluntarily* and not by force, when the European body takes on the sign of otherness by choice. Tattooing in this way functions as the 'unmaking' and 'remaking' of the body, consequently intervening in cultural/racial discourses of otherness. The skin becomes a margin or boundary where the discourses of proto-colonizer and islander mingle – an example, in other words, of a form of unsettling or challenging cultural hybridity. The action of tattooing undermines the model of the clean, carefully controlled and carefully bounded body. The tattoo can be figured as a manipulation of identity, mingling that which should remain apart. In this sense, it interweaves discourses of race and sexuality with discourses of disease, acting as a means of appropriating other bodies. Consequently, as Castle writes:

⁹⁹ Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, p. 104.

¹⁰⁰ For a luridly vivid description of the process of tattooing, and the fear it could generate among Europeans and Americans, see Herman Melville, *Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life* (New York and Cambridge: Library of America and Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 253-257. The non-tattooed body is compared to a 'human canvas' (p. 253) or blank sheet of paper: 'The idea of engrafting his tattooing upon my white skin filled him with all a painter's enthusiasm: again and again, he gazed into my countenance, and every fresh glimpse seemed to add to the vehemence of his ambition . . .' (p. 255).

[T]his in turn hinted at another, greater, indiscretion: the collapse of ideological polarities, those divisions around which culture itself was organized. For when the human body escaped its own boundaries, and disobeyed the laws of metaphysics by becoming its own opposite, the body politic, the civil body, was also affected. The fundamental logic of culture – the logic of categorical opposition – was subverted.¹⁰¹

It is worth noting that Cook himself describes the art of tattooing in some detail but largely objectively and scientific, in the manner of the meticulous observer. The following observation of the Tahitians is one example:

Both sexes paint their bodys Tattow as it is called in their language, this is done by inlaying the Colour of black under their skins in such a manner as to be indelible . . . [T]heir method of Tattowing I shall now describe. The Coulour they use is lamp black prepared from the smook of a kind of Oily nutt used by them instead of Candles; the Instruments for pricking it under the skin is made of very thin flat Pieces of bone or shell . . . (July 12, 1769)¹⁰²

With the Maori, his tone is largely similar, though he permits himself rather more room to theorize, and there is also a note of criticism regarding the pain involved:

The figures they mostly use are spirals drawn and connected together with great nicety and judgment; they are so exact in the application of these figures that no difference can be found between the one side of the face and the other if the whole is mark'd, for some have only one side and some a little on both sides, hardly any but the old men have the whole tattowed. From this I conclude that it takes up some time perhaps years to finish the operation which all who have begun may not have perseverance to go through, as the manner in which it must be done must certainly cause intolerable pain . . . [T]heir custom for mourning for a friend or a relation is by cuting and scarifying their bodies particularly their Arms and breast in such a manner that the scars remain indelible

¹⁰¹ Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization*, p. 77.

¹⁰² Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 125.

and I believe have some signification such as to shew how near related the deceas'd was to them. (March 31, 1770)¹⁰³

The art of tattooing indicates the different approaches to the Pacific islanders and Europeans. In general terms, for the latter the tattoo was perplexing and ultimately threatening, a transgression of the boundaries and margins of the body and hence a challenge to established categories of selfhood and subjectivity. It is clear, for example, that Cook (for all the apparent tone of scientific detachment in the examples quoted above) is describing an act of considerable ideological significance, involving issues of appropriation and contamination. It is also clear that the tattoo functions as a means of significantly fracturing the ostensible unity of the incomers. The fact that both the 'gentlemen' on board the ships (Banks for example) *and* the ordinary sailors, could equally inscribe or contaminate their bodies, undermines the rigid naval hierarchy which has been analyzed elsewhere in this thesis. Similarly, the journals illustrate the extent to which the sailors employed their tattoos as a means of empowerment, an implicit challenge to the visible signs of authority in naval life. Harriet Guest notes the use of tattoos as signifiers of transgression:

John Elliott, who travelled on the second circumnavigation, recollects in his memoirs of Tahiti that he and his companions particularly admired the warriors of Bora Bora -- men whom Cook thought troublesome and anarchic. Elliott writes that these men had 'particular men had marks tattooes on the Legs etc. We therefore called them the Knights of Bora Bora, and all our mess conceived the idea of having some mark put on ourselves, as connecting us together, as well as to commemorate our having been at Otaheite.'¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 286.

¹⁰⁴ Cited in Guest, 'Curiously Marked: Tattooing, Masculinity and Nationality in Eighteenth-Century British Perceptions of the South Pacific', in John Barrell (ed.), *Painting and the Politics of Culture* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 131.

However, the tattoo can also be associated with submission to social structure. This underscores the point made in Chapter One regarding cultural relativity. As Mauss theorized the significance of the gift and of exchange, so in the context of the tattoo it is possible to note this relativity. For the cultures of what became known as Polynesia, however, tattooing was a complex response to various social situations and was consequently of the greatest personal significance in each case. As Alfred Gell notes:

In the Polynesian setting, tattooing had an intrinsic functional efficacy as a means, a linking element in the sequence of social intention, action and result. . . . As a technical means of modifying the body, tattooing made possible the realization of a particular means of subjection which, in turn, allowed for the elaboration and perpetuation of social and political relationships of certain distinct kinds . . . Tattooing (and, conversely, non-tattooing where tattooing is expected and normal) is a very specific and recognizable way of modifying the body, and, via the body, reconstructing personhood according to the requirements of the social milieu.¹⁰⁵

The Polynesian system of tattoo, then, may be related to the manifold means of bodily discipline imposed upon the (proto-)colonizing subject.

The issue of tattooing becomes part of the persistent debate concerning the notion of inversion. Ideas of inversion and subversion discussed in connection to the tattoo relate to the issue of the effect of such ideas. As Castle writes:

The basic question is whether an imagery of inversion . . . has an inoculating or an infectious effect on collective consciousness. Is it possible, as Barthes has suggested, to "immunize" the collective imagination "by a small inoculation of acknowledged evil . . . [O]ne thus protects it against the risk of a generalized subversion". Others have held the view put forth most succinctly by Charles Lamb, "We dread infection from the representation of scenic disorder".¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Gell, *Tattooing in Polynesia*, p. 3.

¹⁰⁶ Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (1957); Charles Lamb, *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb* (1912); cited in Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization*, p. 88.

It can be argued that the initial crime of the Bounty mutineers was accentuated, and the punishment magnified, by the sight of white skin gone native; and that the ideas of contamination and disease which are linked to that of the tattoo are part of a greater ideological construction designed to maintain stability.

This section, then, has demonstrated the extent to which ideas of disease and sickness are utilized in order to maintain a status quo. The image of the diseased body is ideologically useful, identifying the outsider in order to bolster the symbolic and social order. We have also seen, however, that this construction can be understood as insecure, in the sense that the outsider or diseased other can never be wholly co-opted. Robertson's description, for example, of the dramatic (or dramatized) power struggle on board the Dolphin is significant as a representation of the instability generated as a result of sickness; similarly, the discussion of the representation and impact of venereal diseases has demonstrated the extent to which *representations* or *perceptions* of disease can differ. Finally, the image of the tattoo manifests the instability inherent in and generated by the notion of disease. The tattoo, imagined as wilful self-contamination, intrudes significantly into the settled and managed discourse of self and other.

This chapter has sought to further develop the notion of discursive instability in the history and writings of the proto-colonizing power. It has demonstrated that the image of disease has historically been employed as a means of promoting ideological security. In contrast to the ideological formations of sexual deviance discussed in Chapter Two, disease is an actual, tangible threat rather than a constructed one. In the Pacific context,

disease itself, the sick or diseased individual, was identified as alien, outsider, a threat to economic and disciplinary stability, but also a means of sustaining and redefining the existent order. This chapter has demonstrated the extent to which this construction of disease functions in a visible sense; and conversely the manner in which the idea and fact of disease questions or destabilizes this order of things – as in, for example, the power struggle related in Robertson's journal which is precipitated by the illness of Wallis. The *materiality* of the body disturbs the stability of the terms in which it is encoded by the narrative. The idea of the tattoo, for example, not only focuses attention upon the body as (il)legible 'text', but also highlights the extent to which the body may be seen to be possessed in various ways. In other words, the body is not only carefully bounded and wholly controlled, it is also *debatable*. If certain models of the body cannot be taken for granted, then neither also can the stability and confidence of certain accounts of society which predicate themselves on these models. Although the notion of the 'docile body' remained useful and largely valid in the period of eighteenth-century Pacific exploration, it was also problematized in that the body and skin became an ideological battleground, in which notions of legibility and marginality were redefined and expanded. The skin became a surface to be inscribed, and this inscription was undertaken not only by the state itself but also by the subject, as an act which was significantly empowering and which questioned, by implication, the very definition of contamination. Diseased or tattooed, the body became a site of hybridity, a space in which notions of inclusion and exclusion and the inside/outside binary were challenged, and their ordering authority often usurped. In particular, the foregrounding of the body highlighted the manner in which the site of (proto-)colonial ambivalence consistently slid or oscillated between islanders and sailors. To contemporary regimes of authority, these groups

were together perceived as a threat, in a form which intersected with ideologically crucial notions of class, race and sexuality. While the journals participated to a very great extent in the ideological construction of otherness-through-disease, they also manifested the inevitable instability of these ideological structures.

Four

Science, Religion and the Questioning of Civility

The issues outlined in the previous chapters, those of commerce and exchange, of sexuality and race, and of the disease and the body, all formed fundamental building blocks in the establishment of the categories of civility and civil society during the formation of the Enlightenment. This chapter, developing this theme, argues that the widespread notion of the Enlightenment as an Age of Reason, particularly scientific reason, has failed to acknowledge the extent to which this notion of 'reason' is influenced by, and incorporates, Christianity. The categories of religion and reason not only influence each other, but cannot in fact be separated from each other; God and religion remain fundamentally unquestioned presences within the exploration journals, in spite of their relative invisibility in the journal narratives themselves. While the journals are characterized by an increasingly distinct discourse of anthropology, science and natural history, the fundamental influence of God and of Christianity upon the rational renders impossible an attempt to separate the two, and impossible to establish a binary relationship between reason on the one hand, and religion on the other. The journals illuminate the urge to order and classification, and show that this conceptual unity embraces both religion and science, fusing elements to form a constructed ideal of *civility*. This attempt at fusion, however, generated a number of tensions, displayed for example in the crisis of Christian doctrine exposed by science; in the marvels exposed by the Pacific explorers; in the otherness which consistently appears and which must consistently be incorporated into the existing order.

In the following section, this conception of the rational and its position within the order of things is explored in greater detail. The chapter analyzes a number of

instances in the exploration journals in which the mingling of the Christian with the 'rational' may be detected. In particular, it discusses the foundational nature of Christian doctrine in the journals; the nature of the journals' rationalism and in particular their reflection of an evolving discourse of anthropology; and consequently the notion of civility and barbarity represented in the journals. This discussion is concerned with exploring the limits of this relationship, with investigating the tensions and contradictions implicit in the journals' rationalism and with questioning the extent to which religion contradicts or is found to be at odds with the scientific discourse and rationalism of the journals. Much of this thesis has concerned itself with discussing the ideological instability of the journals and has argued that they *both* underscore master ideologies of economic, sexual and somatic order and control, *and* expose the discursive insecurity latent within these narratives. This final chapter continues this discussion, exploring in particular the extent to which the fundamental contradictions and tensions latent within the Enlightenment project are manifested in the journals themselves. In terms of the idea of assimilation within an eternal order, this chapter questions the extent to which this order is undermined by a fundamental ideological incoherence which displays the shortcomings of any desired total system.

The Enlightenment ushered in a period of uncertainty for religion in Europe . . . On the basis of the characteristic Enlightenment suppositions that reality is rational, and that this rationality may be apprehended by humanity, it was argued that whatever lay behind the various world religions was ultimately rational and thus capable of being described and reasoned rationally.¹

Modern historians of the Enlightenment have frequently highlighted the notion of the eighteenth century as an uncomplicated 'Age of Reason', characterized by a linear progression away from conceptions of the universe based upon Christianity

¹ Jan Golinski, 'Religion', in John W. Yolton (ed.), Blackwell Companion to the Enlightenment (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p. 447.

and towards a model influenced by rationalism and science.² This simplified notion of the Enlightenment, however, fails to account for the complexity, intricacy and *breadth* of eighteenth-century thought, substituting instead a notion of a unified movement and smooth philosophical progression. Max Weber has 'described as "rational" the process of disenchantment which led in Europe to a disintegration of religious world views that issued in a secular culture'.³ This separation of the rational and Christian, however, was considerably more nuanced than that suggested by Weber's stark division. Instead, the relationship of the rational and Christian reflects the mutability of both categories and their evolving definition in eighteenth-century British culture; it also suggests the instability of the idea of civility which was the product of this relationship.

The presence of Christianity in this culture should not be understood as simply existing alongside the rational, although at one level this indeed is partly the case. Religion played an overt and highly visible role in eighteenth-century British political and national life, and it can be demonstrated that the century witnessed an extraordinary flowering of religious ideas and movements.⁴ The very category of 'Christianity' was immensely broad and flexible, the precepts of established Anglicanism mingling with folk-based urban and rural custom, as well as with the rituals of other Christian churches. According to Linda Colley, it was this Christian, and specifically Protestant, identity which remained the single most important means whereby the British nation was consolidated after the union of Scotland and England in 1707. It is clear that other factors helped to separate and distinguish

² See, for example, Peter Gay, The Enlightenment (London and New York: [1966], Norton, 1977); Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Belief in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England (London: [1971], Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1991).

³ Jürgen Habermas, 'Modernity's Consciousness of Time and its Need for Self-Reassurance', in The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), p. 1.

⁴ As Dorinda Outram notes, the eighteenth century saw the birth of Methodism and many other sects and denominations, and the generation of powerful reforming movements within all the main Christian denominations, demonstrating a considerable intellectual vigour at the heart of religion. She writes: 'The century is one of powerful multivarious religious debate and innovation, which certainly cannot be encapsulated in Voltaire's famous battle-cry of *Ecrasez l'infâme*: wipe out the infamy of organized religion'. See Outram, The Enlightenment (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), esp. pp. 31-46.

Britain from its continental neighbours – its status as an island, the continued rapid urbanization of both the Scottish and English populations, and the frequent wars with Catholic Spain and France are some examples – but it was *Protestantism* which proved the common link:

War played a vital part in the invention of a British nation after 1707, but it could never have been so influential without other factors, and in particular without the impact of religion. It was their common investment in Protestantism that first allowed the English, the Welsh and the Scots to become fused together, and to remain so, despite their many cultural divergences . . . It was the coincidence of the island's pan-Protestantism and its successive wars with a Catholic state that did most to give it what Eugen Weber calls a 'true political personality'.⁵

Within Britain, the Catholic Church continued to play a useful role as a signifier of the enemy within.⁶ The Church of England continued as the established church (although it lacked the systematic institutionalized power with which it has sometimes been credited),⁷ and the sovereign retained his place at its head and as 'Defender of the Faith'. The ascendancy of the Anglican religion and the government and monarchy with which it was intricately connected was confirmed beyond any doubt by the failure of the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. This rebellion had been in a sense the last significant or overtly *religious* confrontation between England and

⁵ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 368, 369. Ironically, however, a certain degree of Scottish political independence was retained following the Act of Union, in the form of the General Assembly of the Scottish Kirk. The Assembly became a sort of pseudo-Scottish parliament. See Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 325. Knud Haakonssen writes: '[Scotland's] leading men were siphoned off to London as supporting cast in an alien and distant political play, leaving Scotland and her national capital with an empty political stage. The vacancy was filled to a remarkable extent by a kind of replacement politics that expressed itself in developing and supplementing older schemes for economic development and renewal, as well as in the life of the law and the politics of church government. Forced by circumstances, Scotland thus delivered dramatic proof that issues such as these could make up a *public* life, could be dealt with in a public process not unlike the political process but with a measure of independence from politics in the narrower sense.' ('Introduction' to *Political Essays of David Hume* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994], p. xvi.)

⁶ See Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People*, esp. 291-296, for a description of religious discrimination at this time, and of the place of Catholics, Jews and Dissenters in eighteenth-century Britain.

⁷ See Jane Shaw, 'Religious Experience and the Formation of the Early Enlightenment Self', in Roy Porter (ed.), *Rewriting the Self: Histories from the Renaissance to the Present* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 64.

France; European wars from then on, as Chapter One has argued, were visibly economic in nature. Nonetheless, the presence of religion and religious differences continued to play a significant part in the internal and inter-national confrontations.⁸

The relationship between the spheres of rationalism and Christianity was not *parallel*, however, but rather intertwined. Christianity in the eighteenth century

⁸ Moreover, the influence of Christian thinking connected with a range of economic, cultural and social discourses. In economic terms, the imprint of a variety of Christian discourses can be detected which considerably influence the ideological attitude to the peoples of the Pacific which is manifested in the exploration journals. For the present, it is sufficient to demonstrate the close connections which exist between Christian doctrine and the evolving capitalism of these years. There was no shortage of commentators (then as now) seeking to divide Christianity from economic issues. H. M. Robertson quotes Thomas Wilson's *Discourse of Usury* (1572) as an example of the gulf which is perceived to exist, or which (apparently) ought to exist between economic capitalism and religion: 'Merchants doings must not thus be overthwarted by preachers and others, that can not skill of their dealings. And thys over great curiositie of some to meddle in other mens matter, I muste tel you plaine, it is even the verie right waye to undoe al in the ende'. This gulf, according to Robertson, is perceived to gape wide between the Christian and the secular worlds, 'To most people today the typical 'capitalist' is a purely secular creature who, far from regarding his daily occupation as a religious calling, sees no reason for religion to meddle with business affairs at all . . . Perhaps he resented the claims of religion to act as a moral witness in the affairs of everyday life.' (H. M. Robertson, *The Rise of Economic Individualism*; in Mark Casson (ed.), *Entrepreneurship and the Industrial Revolution* [London: Routledge/Thoemmes Press, 1996], p. xiii.) Max Weber, in his theory of the Protestant work ethic, argues that the expansion of commerce and trade in post-Reformation Europe, and the onset of the Industrial Revolution in northern Europe, can be linked directly to the influence of Protestantism. Weber's theorization of the Protestant work ethic is controversial and has been strongly criticized, but it does help to usefully illuminate the intersections of Christian ideology and issues of proto-colonial discourse, and also helps to illuminate the extent to which the secular and Christian are connected in economic terms. In particular the notion of the elect, discussed at some length by Weber, connects with ideas of race and progress which preshadow Darwinian notions of natural selection, and also strongly influence contemporary economic discourse. In terms of the latter, eighteenth-century Protestantism considered commercial success to be a sign of election. Calvinist orthodoxy stressed that election was decided before birth and that it could not be won. It could, however, be deduced – that is, prosperity on earth might be viewed as signifying prosperity in the afterlife. Accordingly, discipline and austerity were viewed as morally desirable. As Steve Bruce writes, 'Put together the new secular notion of vocation, the stress on diligence, the anxious need to avoid sin, the keenness to see success as a sign of election and the parable of the good steward, and we can see the basis for a new character and a new attitude towards work and accumulation. In fact, we can see the spirit of capitalism'. (Steve Bruce, *Religion in the Modern World: From Cathedrals to Cults* [Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996]) p. 18.) Bruce also acknowledges that this apparent Protestant ethic was not alone responsible for the creation of conditions in which capitalism developed. It is important, for example, to note the relationship between Calvinist-influenced economics and the colonial adventures of the day. Bruce highlights contemporary attitudes to commercial endeavour, and in particular the 'painstaking and unglamorous business of making a decent profit; not a huge profit, just a decent profit. They [contemporary Protestant merchants] governed their lives with an attention to discipline, to avoiding the dangers of sloth, intemperance and over-indulgence of the senses, and they tried very hard to impose such disciplines upon their employees'. Moreover, the influence of the Calvinist notion of the 'elect' modified by a greater utilitarianism influenced the evolving racist ideology of the mid-eighteenth century and in particular anticipated Darwinian notions of natural selection. It can be argued that the connections between the overtly Christian and the secular are clear, in that notions of a chosen, pre-destined people fed into economic, nationalist and colonial discourses, and helped to shape the response to other societies and cultures.

confronted a worldview in which religious-based structures of power were replaced by equally vertical, but civil, notions of power and authority. Although the Enlightenment altered medieval conceptions of authority in favour of Reason and the secular world, it is crucial to realize that the model of Reason established is by no means one disconnected from the Deity. The idea of Reason explored by the philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment, for example, was in fact closely related to, and rooted within, the idea of the divine. The two categories were mutually influential, and together influenced the formation of the idea of civility; by extension, their complex and unstable relationship rendered the idea of civility which resulted as equally unstable. Within Scottish Enlightenment thought, the extent to which Christian ideology was profoundly influential *and* the extent to which it was questioned, highlights this instability. According to John Locke (1632-1704), Reason and liberty were fundamentally Christian in nature. His construction of the relationship between God and human subjects and between humanity and the universe were explicitly based upon an understanding of God as omnipotent and all-seeing. Locke's notions of liberty and equality were not modern in our sense of the word. Instead, as Adam Seligman notes, they relied upon an understanding of equality as resting 'upon their individual responsibility to God, which is what gives validity to the metaphysical reality of Locke's state of nature . . . [T]here is for Locke no worldly authority that is intrinsically legitimate. All authority in this world is derived ultimately from God'.⁹ Rational thought was thus underpinned by the Divine, but later in the eighteenth century, thinkers moved away from what Seligman calls 'Locke's vision of an unproblematic and rationalized theology'.¹⁰ The presence of an all-seeing, all-knowing God was replaced by an attention to a moral

⁹ Adam Seligman, *The Idea of Civil Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 23. Ian Harris adds: 'In short, Locke supposed that God willed man to glorify Him, whether by worship or by the maintenance of society, so that the rational and the moral coincided in content'. (Ian Harris, *The Mind of John Locke: A Study of Political Theory in its Intellectual Setting* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994], p. 30).

¹⁰ Seligman, *The Idea of a Civil Society*, p. 25.

'inner-worldliness; and the idea of the Divine itself was fundamentally questioned by such writers as David Hume:

As philosophy was widely spread over the world, at a time when Christianity arose, the teachers of the new sect were obliged to form a system of speculative opinions; to divide, with some accuracy, their articles of faith; and to explain, comment, confute and defend with all the subtilty of argument and science. Hence naturally arose keenness in dispute, when the Christian religion came to be split into new divisions and heresies [. . .] sects and philosophy, in the ancient world, were more zealous than parties of religion; but in modern times, parties of religion are more furious and enraged than the most cruel factions that ever arose from interest and ambition.¹¹

The influence of the relationship between religion and the rational can be seen to be fundamental despite the increasing emphasis upon the importance of empiricism and its relation to a developing discourse of science. According to Francis Bacon (1561-1626):

The sovereignty of man lieth hid in knowledge; wherein many things are reserved, which kings with their treasure cannot buy, nor with their force command; their spials and intelligencers can give no news of then, their seamen and discoverers cannot sail where they grow: now we govern nature in opinions, but we are in thrall unto her in necessity; but if we would be led by her in invention, we should command her by action.¹²

¹¹ 'Of Parties in General', in *Essays, Moral, Political and Literary* (1741); quoted in Haakonssen (ed.), *Political Essays of David Hume*, p. 39. Religion was certainly considered by some to be 'a form of pathological disorder' (Golinski, 'Religion', in Yolton (ed.), *Blackwell Companion to the Enlightenment*, p. 448), and incidents such as the catastrophic Lisbon earthquake of 1755 which flattened most of the city and killed over ten thousand churchgoers attending morning Mass, resulted in a wave of unease across Europe which supplemented already existing doubts. The Lisbon earthquake not only galvanized such critics as Voltaire to question the Christian ideal of a merciful God, but also focused attention on the increasing efforts of the established churches to link faith to *reason* itself. Outram writes: 'Over a hundred years of conflict since Luther had demonstrated to many the impossibility of convincing others of religious truths either by appeals to the authority of the churches, or to revelation, supernatural knowledge of things spiritual which could only be told to man by God through specially chosen human channels such as the prophets. Many in all religious denominations became anxious to construct a version of their faith which could be apprehended by human reason, which would thus be accessible to all men alike' (*The Enlightenment*, p. 39). Finally, ecclesiastical and secular ideology had been closely linked since medieval times, with the writings of Thomas Aquinas particularly instrumental in establishing the ascendancy of the divine law. Aquinas was concerned to integrate temporal/political and divine law, with the latter as the ultimate, the 'natural' end or model. As Seligman writes: 'In the Thomistic system, the divine law did not contradict or annul the law of nature (or the existing political order) but came to supplement it. Consequently, the ends and purposes of the Political Order – of the State – were firmly tied to those of the divine law, of furthering the moral ends of Christianity.' (Seligman, *The Idea of Civil Society*, p. 19).

¹² Francis Bacon, 'In Praise of Human Knowledge', in *The Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. Basil Montagu

Bacon's writings, which proved influential for the later *philosophes* of the eighteenth century, advocated the separation of science and theology and rejected the unquestioning acceptance of authority. His advocacy of the role of empiricism and observation as a means of accumulating knowledge inaugurated a philosophical movement in which the importance of order and of reason were recognized as paramount.¹³ Bacon's notion of the careful collection of data as a means of establishing knowledge and control led (for example through the offices of the Royal Society, which acknowledged the influence of Bacon in its establishment and ethos) to such undertakings as the voyages of exploration. This adumbration of the rational is characterized by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer as 'the dissolution of myth and the substitution of knowledge for fancy . . . Whatever does not conform to the rule of computation and utility is suspect . . . [F]rom now on, matter would at last be mastered without any illusion of ruling or inherent powers, of hidden qualities.'¹⁴

According to Adorno and Horkheimer, this attention to the empirical results in a patriarchal relationship between the mind of man and the nature of things. 'What man wants to learn from nature is how to use it in order to dominate it and other men. That is the only aim. [. . .] Power and knowledge are synonymous'. The Enlightenment will to knowledge, they suggest, results in a desire for knowledge, not for its own sake but 'to do the business'.¹⁵ The place of religious belief in this new

(London, 1825), Vol. I, p. 254; cited in Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (London and New York: [1966], Verso, 1997), p. 3.

¹³ Bacon strongly advocated empirical methods of accumulating knowledge, but was aware of the dangers associated with rigid empiricism. Instead he proposed a controlled movement from observation and experiment to theory, and from there to practice 'ascending to axioms and descending to norms'. (Brian Vickers, 'Francis Bacon', in Yolton (ed.), *Blackwell Companion to the Enlightenment*, p. 51.)

¹⁴ Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, pp. 3, 6.

¹⁵ Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, pp. 4, 5. The influence of Enlightenment ideology upon subsequent Romantic writing can be discerned. See, for example, 'Tintern Abbey' which meditates upon the power relationship between the poetic mind and the natural world. In this poem, arguably, Wordsworth asserts that the natural world exists, and has life and being, only in providing sustenance for the human imagination:

'For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour

philosophical paradigm was clearly a problematic one, particularly in relation to this developing emphasis upon the importance of empiricism. On one level or *overtly*, the traditional Christian emphasis upon faith and obedience clashed with an evolving Enlightenment emphasis upon empiricism as the path to knowledge.

The relationship, however, is considerably more complex than this stark binary would suggest. The notion of a 'total' relationship pervades both poles – the religious ideal of a loving God and His unquestioning subject echoes that of a sovereign mind and its relationship with Nature or the world. Early Romantic philosophy took this relationship to its conclusion, in subjugating the influence of the natural world to that of the human mind. In general terms, Enlightenment thought can be constructed as both echoing and supplanting the authoritarian religious discourse of earlier times; echoing, in that this discourse of mastery and authority continued to exist in a different form; supplanting, in that it 'dissolves the injustice of the old inequality – unmediated lordship and mastery'.¹⁶ Adorno and Horkheimer note that 'man's likeness to God consists in sovereignty over existence, in the countenance of the lord and master, and in command'.¹⁷ They continue:

The individuality that learned order and subordination in the subjection of the world, soon wholly equated truth with the regulative thought without whose fixed distinction universal truth cannot exist.¹⁸

Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thought; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.' ('Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey', 88-103).

¹⁶ Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, p. 12.

¹⁷ Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, p. 9.

¹⁸ Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, p. 14.

Moreover, the nature of the relationship between reason and religion is not merely one of similarity. Rather the connections were complex and mutually sustaining, in that Christianity both enabled, and was enabled by, the development of reason and science. The instability of both categories is most strikingly evidenced in the fact of the nebulous nature of the concept of science in the eighteenth century. Outram, noting that the very *term* science was not coined in Europe until well into the nineteenth century¹⁹, writes that '[T]he intellectual status of science was contested, its institutional organization often weak, and certainly thin on the ground, and the nature of its relations with the economy often tenuous'.²⁰ Inquiry into nature was carried out under the title of 'natural philosophy', and these inquiries were overlaid by, and referred back to, an unquestioned notion of God as the centre of all things – 'the whole point of "natural philosophy" was to look at nature and the world as created by God, and thus as capable of being understood as embodying God's powers and purposes'.²¹ The self-conscious linkage of reason and religion led to an increasing emphasis upon the importance of science, as the 'evidence of the senses'.²² The function of science in asserting a theologically founded worldview was to demonstrate that the universe existed as logical, 'reasoned' and above all, ordered, thus proving the existence of a single mind controlling all things.²³ Therefore the categories are themselves unstable as well as

¹⁹ As Outram notes: 'There was no word specifically to describe enquiry into nature, or its practitioners. This should alert us to the extent to which 'science' was not yet separated out from other intellectual areas, nor were its practitioners readily distinguished from practitioners of other forms of intellectual enquiry. Enlightenment normality was typified by Voltaire, who worked on a popularization of Newtonian mathematical physics, while also producing plays, poems, short stories and political criticism; or by Diderot, whose speculations on the organization of nature, and the nature of human perception occurred in the midst of other enquiries and discussions, such as those contained in *Rameau's Nephew* or on colonization in his *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville*. (The Enlightenment, p. 49.)

²⁰ Outram, The Enlightenment, p. 48.

²¹ A. Cunningham and P. Williams, 'De-centering the Big Picture', in British Journal for the History of Science 26 (1993), pp. 407-432.

²² Outram, The Enlightenment, p. 50.

²³ This does not mean, of course, that the existence of a Deity was unquestioned. Hume (1711-1776), to give one example, was concerned to destabilize the suppositions upon which this idea of a universal order was founded. Hume notes that what was conceived of as order could *also* be seen to be merely the impressions of the human mind – that order is little more than an (ideologically founded) mirage, a succession of illusions. (See David Hume, A Treatise on Human Nature (1739),

mutually sustaining and the idea of civility which emerges from the relationship is also unstable as a result.

This section, then, has noted the formation of a concept of civility which is informed by both the rational and the Christian; and the extent to which these categories are themselves indistinctly defined. The Enlightenment was indeed an Age of Reason but, as the quotation reproduced at the beginning of this section suggests, this does not imply a breach with notions of an all-powerful Divinity. Rather than signifying such a full breach with earlier concepts of order and authority, God becomes *internalized* as it were, existing in nature itself and thus legitimizing the workings of science; consequently, reason and science can be understood to function beneath an overarching religious structure which is itself rational. The remainder of this chapter investigates the workings of this relationship and considers the conscious connections forged between the evolution of a civilized society and the influence of religion. A definition of civility is asserted which both differs from, and is an extension of, pre-Reformation notions of civilization and barbarism, and the following section investigates the means by which this definition is applied to the Pacific and its peoples. By contrast, it also considers the limits of the intertwined relationship between Christianity and reason and the extent to which tension between these categories reflects an instability within a developing discourse of colonialism.

Secret

Whereas we have, in Obedience to the King's Commands, caused His Majesty's bark the Endeavour, whereof you are Commander, to be fitted out

esp. Books I, IV, Chapter VI.) As Seligman notes, Hume '[S]imply tore asunder the unity of Reason and moral sentiment upon which the whole tradition of civil society had been based'. (Seligman, *The Idea of Civil Society*, p. 37.) As John Yolton notes, Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* 'which attacked a number of religious ideas, were, on the advice of friends, not published during his lifetime'. (John Yolton, 'David Hume', in Yolton (ed.), *Blackwell Companion to the Enlightenment*, p. 235.)

in a proper manner for receiving such persons as the Royal Society should think fit to appoint to observe the passage of the Planet Venus over the Disk of the Sun on the 3rd of June 1769, and for conveying them to such Place to the Southward of the Equinoctial Line as should be judged proper for observing that Phænomenon . . . You are hereby requir'd and directed . . . to receive the said Mr Charles Green with his Servant, Instruments and Baggage, on board the said Bark and proceed in her according to the following Instructions . . .

You are at all opportunities when the Service upon which you are employed will admit of it, to make such farther Surveys and Plans, and take such Views of the Island [Tahiti], its harbour and bays, as you conceive may be useful to navigation or necessary to give us a more Perfect idea and description than we have hither to received of it . . .²⁴

At first sight, such passages as the Instructions above, given to Cook before the Endeavour voyage, appear to be representative of the practical and secular concerns of the journals. The journal writers, by no means always careful to maintain an appropriate tone in descriptions relating to religion or associated matters, are clearly much more disposed to allow a secular tone to dominate. The following passages, describing the marking by the sailors of the Christian feast of Christmas, illustrate this tendency. Cook entirely ignores the significance of the day in 1769, as he skirts the northern cape of New Zealand, and Banks notes only:

As it was the humour of the ship to keep Christmas in the old fashiond way it was resolvd of them to make a Goose pye for tomorrow's dinner. [. . .] Our Goose pye was eat with great approbation & in the Evening all hands were as Drunk as our forefathers usd to be upon the like occasion. [. . .] This morn all heads achd with yesterday's debauch. (December 25, 26, 27, 1769)²⁵

Johann Forster's rather sour description of Christmas Day 1773, spent in high polar latitudes, is another example:

This being Christmas-day, the captain according to custom, invited the officers and mates to dinner, and one of the lieutenants entertained the petty officers. The sailors feasted on a double portion of pudding, regaling themselves with the brandy of their allowance which they had saved for this occasion some months before-hand, being sollicitous to get very drunk

²⁴ J. C. Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1955), pp. cclxxix, cclxxx.

²⁵ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour*, p. 227 (n.).

though they are commonly solicitous about nothing else. (December 25, 1773)²⁶

The previous Christmas, again taking place against the backdrop of ice and chill seas, has been equally festive – a feast day indeed, but emphatically not in the religious sense of the word:

Mirth and good humour reigned throughout the whole ship; the crew of our consort [the Adventure] seems to have kept Christmas day with the same festivity, for in the evening they rainged alongside of us and gave us three cheers. (December 25, 1772)²⁷

In such extracts, Christianity would seem to have a limited function in the journal narratives. It appears as little more than a ghostly presence in the dominant rational narratives of the Enlightenment, informing but not influencing in any *meaningful* way; Christianity, when it is visible at all in the journal narratives, frequently appears to be rhetorical or gestural, providing a rubber stamp of moral authority to a purely secular notion of order. The Articles of War usefully illustrate this limited function. The discourse of the religious and civil were publicly mingled and intertwined in eighteenth-century British political life, and the prologue to the Articles of War blends temporal and spiritual authority in a strikingly complete evocation of the loci of public political authority in the eighteenth-century nation:

Commencement of the Articles: And for the regulating and better Government of his Majesty's Navies, Ships of War, and Forces by Sea, whereon, under the good Providence of God, the Wealth, Safety and Strength of his Kingdom chiefly depend; be it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That from and after the twenty-fifth day of December one thousand seven hundred and forty-nine, the Articles and Orders herein after following,

²⁶ Beaglehole (ed.), Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure 1772-1775 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1969), p. 310.

²⁷ Beaglehole (ed.), Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure, p. 66. Beaglehole notes that 'mirth and good humour' among the sailors is translated by Forster as 'savage noise and drunkenness'. Of Christmas Day 1768, on board the Endeavour, Banks notes: 'All good Christians that is to say all hands got abominably drunk so that all night there was scarce a sober man in the ship, wind thank god very moderate or the lord knows what would have become of us'; in Beaglehole (ed.), The Life of Captain James Cook (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1974), p. 160.

as well in Time of Peace as in Time of War, shall be duly observed and put in Execution, in manner herein after-mentioned.²⁸

The Prologue evokes the spiritual Almighty together with the King, (His representative on earth) and the members of both Houses of Parliament, also drawn from both secular and ecclesiastical life. Although such passages clearly illustrate the close connection (outlined by Colley) between Protestantism and the State in eighteenth-century Britain, this attention to the religious appears on one level to be symbolic, and thus of limited significance.

The *foundational* importance of Christianity, however, is crucial, and is evidenced, for example, in the public determination of the Articles of War to maintain a level of morality and religious observance on Naval vessels:

I

Publick Worship to be performed: All Commanders, Captains and Officers, in or belonging to any of his Majesty's Ships or Vessels of War, shall cause the publick Worship of Almighty God, according to the Liturgy of the Church of England established by Law, to be solemnly, orderly and reverently performed in their respective Ships, and shall take care that Prayers and Preaching, by the Chaplains in Holy Orders of the respective Ships, be performed diligently; and that the Lord's Day be observed according to Law.

II

Penalty of profane Swearing &c: All Flag Officers, and all persons in or belonging to his Majesty's Ships or Vessels of War, being guilty of profane Oaths, Cursings, Execrations, Drunkenness, Uncleanliness or other scandalous Actions in Derogation of God's Honour, and Corruption of good Manners, shall incur such Punishment as a Court-martial shall think fit to impose, and as the nature and Degree of the Offence shall Deserve.²⁹

These instructions (pious in tone and at odds with the reputation of the eighteenth-century Navy as generally foul-mouthed, violent and irreligious) function as a gestural inscription, publicly and self-consciously written over the true business of the Navy in general and the ships of exploration in particular. At one level this indicates the common division between theory and practice, and indeed it could be

²⁸ N. A. M. Rodger (ed.), Articles of War (Havant: Kenneth Mason, 1982), p. 20.

²⁹ Rodger (ed.), Articles of War, p. 22.

convincingly argued that the journals' acknowledgment of religious ceremonies marking Sundays and Christian high days is less than systematic; for the most part, such descriptions are simply absent.³⁰ It is, however, precisely the *theory* which is significant, and indicative of the foundational nature of Christianity. The descriptions of 'divine service' actually taking place, however, are equally revealing. On the Endeavour voyage, Cook sets sail with the (rather wistful) 'Hintes' of the Royal Society on board, and the following extract from that document suggestively connects the power of the Deity with the ship's captain, usefully reinforcing both an established macrocosmic and microcosmic or naval ideal of authority:

Ships of so small a rate, not being furnished with Chaplains, it were to be wished that the Captain himself, would sometimes perform that office and read prayers, especially on Sundays, to the Crew; that they may be suitably impressed with a sense of their continual dependence upon their *Maker*, and all who are able on board, Passengers and other should be obliged to attend upon such occasions.³¹

As far as the journal descriptions themselves are concerned, however, Cook notes once or twice that a religious service indeed took place, but his brief comments are more in the manner of an anthropological observer who notes the behaviour of the indigenous people. The relationship between religion and the civilizing mission, however, are clear; Cook's comments imply that even a spectatorial presence can have a positive cultural effect:

This day we performed divine service in one of the tents in the Fort where several of the Natives attended and behaved with great decency the whole time . . . (May 14, 1769)³²

The same incident is related at greater length by midshipman Robert Molyneux, who observes (as Cook does not) that service is led by the Endeavour's surgeon and

³⁰ It is possible to argue, of course, that this is an indication of the absence of religious services at the heart of shipboard life.

³¹ James Douglas, President of the Royal Society, 'Hintes offered to the consideration of Captain Cooke, Mr Bankes, Doctor Solander, and the other Gentleman who go upon the Expedition on board the Endeavour'; in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour*, p. 515.

³² Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour*, p. 93.

not by its captain. Although not contrary to the letter of the law of the Articles of War, it is against its spirit, and certainly contradicts the counsel of the Royal Society. Molyneux writes:

AM one of the Ships tents being decently fitted for the occasion, Divine Service was Perform'd by Mr Monkhouse the Surgeon; as many of the Principal Natives were admitted as we Conveniently could & there was a vast concourse of People without the Fort, the whole was conducted very Quietly those in the Tent doing as we did kneeling, standing or sitting they understood perfectly that we were Parowing the Etuah that is talking to God this they easily comprehended as they themselves worship an Invisible & Omnipotent Being. (May 14, 1769)³³

Molyneux notes that these services occurred on successive Sundays during that visit to Tahiti, raising the prospect that they were rather in the nature of performances, undertaken for the benefit of the indigenous populations. It is of course possible to argue that Cook was concerned with saving the souls of the indigenous people of Tahiti, but such speculations can be supported with little or no evidence. Indeed, the whole tone of his journals would emphatically contradict such a conclusion; there is little indication that Cook was a man of any religious conviction. It is, however, precisely the public nature of divine service that is of significance. The *performance* of the Christian ritual acts as a spectacle, a public assertion of civilization in the face of an alien culture.

Similarly, the role and function of religion in the history of European imaginings of the Pacific and in the discourse of Pacific exploration is foundational in nature, and functions as a means of asserting the influence of an implicit universal order. The experience of contact itself is described in Christian and biblical terms and assumes a generalized moral order. The journals show the influence of a version of morality and reason influenced by Puritanism, in which strategies aimed at promoting security and well-being become moral in their own right. The many descriptions of violence on the part of the incomers can be constructed accordingly

³³ Robert Molyneux, 'Remarks in Port Royal Bay in King George the third's Island', in Beaglehole (ed.), Voyage of the Endeavour, p. 557.

as *ethically* correct. Robertson's journal carries a particularly striking passage in which both the superior aggressive abilities of the Dolphin's crew, and the strategies used in describing an ethically suspect situation, are exposed. Describing a clash between the sailors and islanders, he notes:

While this skirmish lasted all the Bay and tops of the Hills round was full of Men Women and children to behold the onset and I dare say in great hopes of sheering all our nails and Toys, besides the pleasure of calling our great Canoe their own, and having all of us at their mercy, to ill or well use as they thought most proper – but in place, when they came all runing down to receive their Victorious friends, how terrible must they be shockd, to see their nearest and dearest of friends Dead, and toar to peces, in such a manner as I am certain they neaver beheld before – to Attempt to say what this poor Ignorant creatures thought of us, would be saying more upon me than I am able to perform.

Some of my messmates thought they would now look upon us as Demi Gods, come to punish them for some of their by past transgrations . . . (June 24, 1767)³⁴

This passage illustrates the public nature of the journals, written as they were with a home audience very much in mind. The question of the morality of killing the natives is veiled by a distinct note of relish. A careful hierarchy of comprehension operates, one in which the lower position of the indigenous people is confirmed by their lack of military expertise. Significantly, and not for the first time in his journal, Robertson is able to render the islanders as inarticulate, merely by refusing the descriptive challenge. Earlier, he has reacted to confrontation in which the islanders also suffer by suggesting it would 'take the pen of Milton to describe',³⁵ thus absolving him of the responsibility of describing and justifying the scene. In the above passage, he dwells momentarily on the *spectacle*, but the experience is effectively elided. Instead, he moves swiftly on from this scene into a realm of speculative cultural anthropology and indigenous morality in which the questions raised cannot be answered. He refuses the responsibility of the author and in so

³⁴ Hugh Carrington (ed.), *The Discovery of Tahiti: A Journal of the Second Voyage of H.M.S. Dolphin Round the World Under the Command of Captain Wallis by George Robertson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1964), p. 156.

³⁵ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 154.

doing the islanders are doubly silenced – their experience is unrepresented. The basic role of the author to record and to witness is refused or *voided* by Robertson at this crucial and difficult moment, and this refusal signifies a moral discomfiture.

This discomfiture surfaces throughout the repeated descriptions of contact and is dealt with in a number of ways. The most obvious strategy is the appeal to self-interest, which Cook uses on a number of occasions, for example in the famous episode at Poverty Bay (Tuuranga-nui), New Zealand, as the Endeavour makes contact with the Maori for the first time:

I order'd a Musquet to be fired over their heads thinking that this would either make them surrender or jump over board, but here I was mistaken for they immidiatly took to thier arms or whatever they had in the boat and began to attack us, this obliged us to fire upon them and unfortunatly either two or three were kill'd, and one wounded, and three jumped over board, these last we took up and brought on board, where they were cloathed and treated with all immaginabe kindness and to the surprise of every body became at once as cheerful and as merry as if they had been with their own friends . . .

I am aware that most humane men who have not experienced things of this nature will censure my conduct in fireing upon the people in this boat nor do I my selfe think that the reason I had for seizing upon her will att all justify me, and hade I thought that they would have made the least resistance I would not have come near them, but as they did I was not to stand still and suffer either my self or those that were with me to be knocked on the head. (October 10, 1769)³⁶

Such instances, it can be argued, have a double focus. In the first place, they are demonstrative of a pragmatism which lies at the heart of the voyages and which rests upon an understanding of the value of the commodity and of economics. In other words, it is vital for the well-being of the crew and for the success of the voyage that control and trade – in whatever guise – be established. Secondly, and as an extension of this pragmatism, they present a version of morality based upon the division between civilization and barbarism, which is influenced by the doctrines of Puritanism. In his introduction to Weber's *The Protestant Ethic*, Anthony Giddens notes the Puritan idea that 'the highest form of moral obligation of the individual is

³⁶ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, pp. 170-171.

to fulfil his duty in worldly affairs. This projects religious behaviour into the day-to-day world, and stands in contrast to the Catholic ideal of the monastic life, whose object is to transcend the demands of mundane existence'.³⁷ The violent actions of the Endeavour and Dolphin crews are consequently rationally and morally defensible in that they guard their own good and well-being. This reasoning connects with Weber's identification of the worldliness and the cumulative nature of Protestant philosophy, which contrasts with the cyclical morality characteristic of Catholicism, and in which the idea of 'duty' assumes central importance. Such actions and attitudes as those reproduced above – *investing* in the stability and security of the crew – highlight the close connections between the economic rationale which underpin the voyages of exploration and their moral and rational ideological framework.

This linkage of the moral and economic can also be noted in the search for the southern continent, *terra australis incognita*. The exploration of the South Seas was influenced by the culture contact between Renaissance Europe and the Americas, and in particular connects with the Spanish blending of moral purpose and economic speculation in the conquest of the Aztec and Inca empires. *Terra australis* became an imagined counterpart of the actual lands of gold in central and south America. The tales of both the southern continent and later of the (f)actual ocean itself were significantly influenced by religious themes and ideas. The history of European exploration in general and that of the Pacific in particular is littered with such references, the best example being that of the voyage of Mendaña, who founded his soon-abandoned new Jerusalem in the Solomon Islands (1567), complete with river Jordan and full biblical and Christian paraphernalia. The myth of the southern continent was a complex one, cluttered by all manner of other influences. Christian ideas of Paradise blended with classical myths of the Golden Age of earthly Elysium. As Neil Rennie writes:

³⁷ Anthony Giddens, 'Introduction' to Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (London and New York: [1930], Routledge, 1992), p. xii.

The myth of the Golden Age was also blended with other myths . . . which sought to locate in a geographical present what was lost in a historical past, and it would become the classical counterpart of the Biblical myth of Paradise, with which it was also blended, and which likewise took a geographical as well as a historical form, in the belief in the continued existence of the terrestrial Paradise.³⁸

Rennie notes in particular what he calls the 'long tradition of primitivism' in classical Greek literature which spoke of a 'golden race of mortal men':

These lived in the reign of Kronos, king of heaven,
And like the gods they lived with happy hearts
Untouched by work or sorrow. Vile old age
never appeared, but always lively limbed,
far from all ills, they feasted happily.
Death came to them as sleep, and all good things
Were theirs; ungrudgingly, the fertile land
gave up her fruits unaided. Happy to be
At peace, they lived with every want supplied,
rich in their flocks, dear to the blessed gods.³⁹

The similarity to future descriptions of the people and landscape of, for example, Tahiti is striking. As noted in Chapter One, such descriptions of the Pacific islands are fundamentally speculative in nature, observing in order to exploit more efficiently in the future, and carefully noting the extent to which the indigenous inhabitants worked or tilled the land. On the one hand (as in the case of Tahiti), the new land 'gave up her fruit unaided', thus contributing to the perception of an edenic land in the South Seas. On the other (as in the case of New Zealand), the land was visibly less fertile and the people visibly less benign, and thus fallen from a state of innocence and grace. Both cases, however, imply a standard of civility, against which various levels of barbarism or rudeness (existing on a number of levels) may be measured. The opposition between a constructed opposition of barbarity and a notion of civilization which has been imaginatively informed by Christianity is

³⁸ Neil Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts: The Literature of Travel and the Idea of the South Seas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 5.

³⁹ Hesiod, *Works and Days*, in Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts*, p. 5. See Rennie, esp. pp. 1-7, for a fuller discussion of the Christian and classical representations of unknown parts of the globe.

accentuated in the discourse of contamination latent within European representations of the Pacific. As the discussion of disease in the previous chapter has noted, the latter-day Eden was contaminated at the moment of contact. The loss of physical purity can be associated with the introduction of western diseases to the Pacific, but the indigenous people were also associated with a loss of *spiritual* purity which was associated with the Christian notion of the fall, the loss of Eden. The implication of the journal-writers is that the people of the Pacific vary in their proximity to Eden. The New Zealand Maori, for example, are 'fallen' in a way that the Society Islanders are not:

One day at Tolago I saw a strong proff that the women never appear naked at least before strangers. Some of us happen'd to land upon a small Island where several of them were naked in the water gathering Lobsters and Shell fish. As soon as they saw us some of them hid themselves among the rocks and the rest remained in the Sea untill they had made themselves aprons of the Sea weed and even than when they came out to us they shew'd manifest signs of Shame and those who had no method of hiding their nakedness would by no means appear before us. (March 31, 1770)⁴⁰

The closeness of this story to the biblical version of the loss of innocence and Eden is unmistakable. As in the story, the indigenous people cover their nakedness in order to hide their shame before an authoritative gaze. In both cases, however, and in spite of the journals' ethnographical descriptions of dwelling places, the people were perceived to be fundamentally unattached to the land. This perception connects again with classical myth, in particular to the idea of the Scythians, who become a flexible signifier of a general barbarity. The figure of the nomad, connected to the Scythian, is ideologically crucial in that it justifies occupation and the efficient use of land which has hitherto been unworked or under-utilized.

Consequently it is possible to note both the extent to which the category of barbarian is ideologically informed, and the means by which the European imagination functions as part of a process of assimilation. We can see that the new lands, when they were eventually uncovered to the European gaze, were regarded

⁴⁰ Beaglehole (ed.) *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 280.

according to pre-existing models. Of 'the most famous of beginnings', Stephen Greenblatt notes that Columbus was careful to rename each new island he encountered;⁴¹ when Mendaña landed in the Solomons and later in the Marquesas (1595), his first actions in both places was to order the singing of the *Te Deum*, symbolizing an incorporation of these lands into an already constructed paradigm. By extension, the religious place-names bestowed on these lands (for example Santa Cruz and the Jordan) further this process of assimilation, of imaginative absorption. As Nicholas Thomas notes:

[T]he behaviour in moments of initial contact on the part of the *conquistadores* in America and Spanish explorers elsewhere in the world can be seen to accord with a unitary model: peoples encountered on the beach, whose prior natures were of no special interest, were baptized and dressed, while indigenous place names were effaced by Christian names: Pentecost, Santa Christina, Madre de Dios, Espiritu Santo and so on. Names derived from the holy calendar at once incorporated new lands into a Christian geography, and commemorated the course of discovery.⁴²

This business is able to proceed regardless of the *actual* experience of the European explorers. In the case of Mendaña, for example, the fledgling Spanish colony in the Solomon Islands is unable to be sustained (or to sustain the enormous weight of its own expectations) and is rapidly abandoned. The imaginative occupation of the Solomons, however, proves to be extraordinarily durable, so much so that the express target of many European expeditions is the rediscovery of these

⁴¹ To the first island which I found, I gave the name *San Salvador*, in remembrance of the Divine Majesty, Who has marvelously bestowed all this; the Indians call it 'Guanahani'. To the second, I gave the name *Isla de Santa Maria de Concepción*; to the third, *Fernandina*; to the fourth, *Isabella*, to the fifth *Isla Juana*, and so to each one I gave a new name'. (Selected Documents Illustrating the Four Voyages of Columbus, trans. and ed. Cecil Jane, 2 Vols. [London: Hakluyt Society, 1930], i, p. 2; quoted in Stephen Greenblatt, Marvelous Possessions: the Wonder of the New World [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991], p. 52.)

⁴² Nicholas Thomas, Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), p. 73. As Rod Edmond notes, the idea of the beach as meeting place is a favoured one of many writers, but the case of the Pacific is rather different, in that this image works less well. The coral reef, notes Edmond, helps to gently blur the division of sea and land in the Pacific, and the actions of the indigenous people frequently had the same effect: 'Tahitians and Marquesans often swam out to meet the ships, clambering aboard before they had anchored and breaching that solemn encounter of first meeting on the beach so frequently represented by writers and painters as pregnant with beginnings.' (Edmond, Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 13.)

apparently wealthy islands, themselves named after the fabulously rich biblical Solomon. Moreover, it can be argued that although the naming-process undertaken by the British is secular in nature, the outcome is the same – the new lands nevertheless are subject to an attempted imaginative colonization, particularly in the sense that the ceremony of naming (like that of journal-writing itself) is in all cases for the benefit of an absent European audience and emphatically not for the indigenous inhabitants. The process of absorption is disguised by a rhetoric of gift-giving, in which the secular and the Christian are closely related.⁴³ By extension, therefore, the process of culture contact in the eighteenth century and in the Renaissance share similar characteristics. In this case, the act of re-naming symbolizes the giving of gifts – those of Christianity and civilization. In both cases, the subtext of the process is that the indigenous people will lose everything in order to gain everything – in order to gain admission to a world of civilization and correct values, and ultimately in order to gain salvation. In the case of the Pacific, moreover, the journals must be read in the knowledge that the first missionaries arrived in the Society Islands less than thirty years later. The idea of civilization, therefore, is profoundly bound together with that of Christianity. The journals amply demonstrate that the cause of 'civilization' is perceived to be as just and exalted as the Gospel was to the Spaniards in America. Indeed, Greenblatt's vivid description of the coming of the Word to the New World is startlingly reminiscent of the first European ventures into the Pacific. Without collapsing the temporal, spatial and cultural differences between the two experiences, the fundamental attitudes remain similar:

[The Europeans'] culture was characterized by immense confidence in its own centrality, by a political organization based on practices of command and submission, by a willingness to use coercive violence on both strangers and fellow countrymen . . . With a very few exceptions, Europeans felt powerfully superior to virtually all of the peoples they encountered.⁴⁴

⁴³ In contemporary pictorial representations, Cook is frequently constructed as giving gifts to the indigenous people he encounters.

⁴⁴ Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, p. 9.

Greenblatt's argument centres on the religious confidence of the Spanish newcomers (based on a 'cult of a male god . . . in which the male god's flesh was symbolically eaten. Such was the confidence of this culture that it expected perfect strangers to abandon their own beliefs, preferably immediately, and embrace those of Europe as luminously and self-evidently true').⁴⁵ Yet the eighteenth-century exploration journals demonstrate abundantly that the same characteristics of confidence and implicit and explicit violence apply in the case of the opening of the Pacific to the European gaze.

This thesis has already noted the description of Tahiti in Robertson's journal in terms more appropriate to heaven, complete with vivid colours and heady scents. As Rod Edmond notes, the people of the Pacific were constructed in latently religious terms, inhabitants of the new Eden, 'peaceful, beautiful, sensual, self-sufficient and naturally wise'.⁴⁶ Bougainville's characterization of the Society Islands as the 'new Cythera' helped to establish the Pacific in the public reckoning as an unveiled paradise. The association of the Pacific peoples with ideas of beauty and purity has been well documented in this thesis, for example in their perceived sexual innocence and primitivism,⁴⁷ and in their easy and leisured lifestyles as inhabitants of bounteous and fertile islands which (like Eden itself) need no labour to be productive:

All night we hade a fine pleasant land breeze, which brought off a fine agreeable smell, which made several of us suppose their was spicerys Growing here, eather in the Low Grounds or on the high Mountains, for my owen part I am partly in that Oppinion still, that their is some sort of spicerys growing on the side of the mountains . . . I and several more onbd has often vewd the sides of the Mountains at sun rise, and seen great numbers of trees bearing

⁴⁵ Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, p. 9.

⁴⁶ Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, p. 8.

⁴⁷ This conception of the culture of the peoples of the Pacific was made especially notorious by Diderot, through his theorization of the 'Noble Savage' in the *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville* (1772). As has been noted, however, Diderot's espousal of sexual liberation (as ostensibly practiced by the Tahitians) was theoretical only and by no means applied univerally (and certainly not in his own life or that of his family).

Flowers of various Colours which must certainly bear some sort of fruit unknown to us . . . (June 25, 1767)⁴⁸

Such descriptions of intensely beautiful and lush landscapes, as we have seen, litter the journals, underlining their connection to classical mythology and to Christian discourses of paradise, and by extension to paradise lost. In the *Odyssey*, the hero gazes on the rich land of the Cyclops:

For it is not a bad land at all, it could bear crops in season, and there are meadow lands near the shore of the gray sea, well watered and soft; there could be grapes grown there endlessly, and there is smooth land for plowing, men could reap a full harvest always in season, since there is very rich subsoil. Also there is an easy harbour, with no need for a hawser nor anchor stones to be thrown nor cables to make fast; one could just run ashore and wait for the time when the sailors' desire stirred them to go and the right winds were blowing.⁴⁹

As Greenblatt notes, Christian descriptions of overwhelming beauty, such as the visual feast confronting the Pacific explorers as they coasted Tahiti, are always and inevitably accompanied by a shadow discourse of loss and grief. This discourse enters the Pacific at the precise moment of contact, and demonstrated earlier, all paeans of wonder and praise at the physical beauty of the Pacific are balanced by its imagined sickness and corruption. In religious terms, the theme of paradise lost consistently and emphatically informs the journals.⁵⁰ A process is underway which is concerned to *account* for all that passes before the eyes of the incomers – in Mary Louise Pratt's term 'imperial eyes', charting, describing and classifying – but always under a general and latent rubric of an unquestioned and confident universal order.⁵¹ Such descriptions function as part of a process of absorption and as part of the assertion of an order of things which places a notional civilization at its head.

⁴⁸ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 157.

⁴⁹ Homer, *The Odyssey* IX, ii, 250-286; in Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean 1492-1797* (London: Methuen, 1985), p. 155.

⁵⁰ Indeed, Greenblatt's descriptions of Columbus in the New World in many ways startlingly echo the Pacific exploration journals. See esp. *Marvelous Possessions*, pp. 77-79, for an analysis of Columbus' description of the new lands of the Caribbean.

⁵¹ See Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992).

Significantly, even ostensibly scientific or anthropological descriptions of the Pacific can be seen to be akin to visions of the 'imagined' Pacific, and demonstrate the interconnectedness of Christianity and science. The consciously 'modern', scientific and ethnological discourses characteristic of the exploration journals reflect this assimilating imagination. Consequently, although the British practice of culture contact and perception differs significantly in tone from earlier, Catholic models, the impulse remains the same. Thomas has noted that, in the case of the Spanish experience of Central and South America, indigenous belief systems were apprehended to be not alien or fundamentally *different* but in fact distorted or *wrong* versions of Christianity itself.⁵² The exploration journals of the British, by contrast, appear to be carefully ethnological in nature. The belief systems of the peoples with whom the sailors come into contact were engaged with to some degree and with a reasonable amount of sensitivity, as the following extract illustrates:

At 2oClock this Morning departed this Life Mr Alex Buchan Landscip Draftsman to Mr Banks, a Gentleman well skill'd in his profesion and one that will be greatly miss'd in the course of this Voyage, he had long been subject to a disorder in his Bowels which had more than once brought him to the Very point of death and was at the same time subject to fits of one of which he was taken on Saturday morning, this brought on his former disorder which put a period to his life. Mr Banks thought it not so adviseable to Enterr the Body a shore in a place where we was utter strangers to the Customs of the Natives on such occasions, it was therefore set out to Sea and committed to that Element with all the decencey the circumstance of the place would admit of. (April 17, 1769)⁵³

⁵² Thomas takes as an example José de Costa's *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* (1588):

' . . . Indian practices are apprehended primarily as false versions of Christian ones, and the religious activities and institutions that were described are explained as the work of the devil, who seeks constantly to counterfeit and imitate God. "[H]e hath not only counterfeited in idolatry and sacrifices but also in certaine ceremonies our sacraments, which Iesus Christ our Lord hath instituted and the Holy Church doth use, having especially pretended to imitate in some sort the Sacrament of the Communion . . . The Mamaconas of the Sun, which were a kind of Nunnes of the Sunne, made little loaves of the flower of mays, died and mingled with the blood of white sheep, which they did sacrifice that day; then presently commanded that all strangers should enter, who set themselves in order; and the Priests, which were of a certain lineage, descending from Liuquiyupangui, gave to every one a morsel of these small loaves, saying unto them, that they gave these peeces to the end they should be vnited and confederate with the Ynca and that they advised them not speake or thinke any ill against the Inca . . . "' (Joseph de Acosta, *The Natural & Moral History of the Indies*, [1604]; quoted in Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, p. 77.) As Thomas notes, this version of confronting foreign cultures 'refrains from according otherness any original distinctiveness'. (p. 76).

⁵³ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 81.

Cook's description of the religion of Tahiti continues this careful anthropological tone, although the cultural practices he describes are clearly influenced by the Christianity of his own culture. The following extract from the Endeavour voyage illustrates the formation of a body of knowledge (which will become authoritative) upon the most sketchy of foundations:

Having given the best account I can of the manners and Customs of these people, it will be expected that I should give some account of their Religion, which is a thing I have learnt so little of that I hardly dare touch upon it, and should have pass'd over it in silence was it not my duty as well as inclination to insert in this Journal every and the least knowledge I may obtain of a people who for many centuries have been shut up from almost every part of the world. They believe that there is one Supreme God whom they call [Here is inserted a blank space] from him is sprung a number of inferior Deities *Eatuas* they call them, these they think preside over and intermeddle in their affairs . . . the Mories which we first thought were berrying places are wholly built for places of worship and for the performing of religious ceremonies in. (July 13, 1769)⁵⁴

Moreover, this fund of cultural 'knowledge' was rapidly disseminated throughout the public sphere, as the following newspaper extract illustrates:

Their religion [that of the people of Tahiti] acknowledges one Supreme Being, whom they conceive to be too great to attend to the prayers of man – they therefore invoke him through mediators, who they believe are, in general, their great men departed. They don't kneel to an image, they only offer up a sacrifice of everything they mean to partake of – "*saying, sure the Deity has a right to an offering of what he gave*". [. . .] *The origin of man* they believe to be from a chosen pair made by the great God – and that we are all descendants of them – that the Deity formed the earth of continents and isles – and that the Europeans who visit them are of the great land – but that when he had formed the sea – he towed the great earth by a string upon it, which going so quick made many parts to break off – and those composed islands.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 135.

⁵⁵ 'An Authentic Account of the Natives of Otahitee or George's Island, Together with some of the Particulars of the three years voyage lately made by Mr *Banks* and Dr *Solander* in the years 1768, 1769 and 1770', in *General Evening Post*, July 29, 1771; quoted in Beaglehole (ed.) *Voyage of the Endeavour 1766-1769*, p. 647. See also the careful descriptions of the island's religious infrastructure: 'They have a kind of altar in their principal place of residence, composed of very large stones -- it is of pyramidal form -- to which you ascend by steps -- and the stones are so very enormous, that it as much surprizes one how they were got together -- as Stone-henge on Salisbury Plain. Upon the summit of this altar is the beak of an extraordinary bird -- and the one of a very large fish . . .'. (p. 647).

Such extracts can make no claim to extraordinary subtlety, but are distinctive in that they signify a reasonable engagement with the intricacies of this alien culture.⁵⁶ The question of their *accuracy* is, of course, quite another matter – the extract reproduced above, for example, is undoubtedly (and understandably) Eurocentric in tone, speaking as it does of the great land to which the newcomers belong, and arguably also influenced by Protestant dogma, in the description of the priests as quasi-Catholic mediators. Nevertheless, it illustrates an engagement with Tahitian myths of origin, an awareness of Pacific geography and ancient history and a religious philosophy which would be unthinkable in, for example, the case of the Spanish *conquistadores* in South America. As will be noted later in this chapter, it can be argued that this approach begins to signify the conclusion of the religious frame of reference and the beginning of a new model of approaching otherness, dominated by natural history which, while relatively open and plastic in the eighteenth century, would solidify into a more utilitarian guise, including racism, in the nineteenth century.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Cook's records of his visits to the Society Islands and New Zealand are laced with such close or painstaking descriptions of the marae and built religious environment, as these descriptions of Tahiti illustrate: 'On every point was a Morai and several inland all ornamented with carved work, some with the images of men standing on each others heads, others with a kind of lattice work on the top of which were the figures of Birds &c [. . .] Near this place stands the Morie of Oamo or Obarea, a wonderfull peice of Indian Architecture and far exceeds every thing of its kind upon the whole Island, it is a long square of stone work built Pyramidically, the base is 267 feet by 87, the breadth and length at top is 177 feet by 7, it riseth by large steps all round, like those leading up to a sun dial, there are 11 of those each 4 feet high which makes the whole height 44 feet . . .'. Following a long, rigorous description of the marae ('the greatest in Tahiti and indeed in all Polynesia' according to Beaglehole), Cook goes on to draw the culture of Tahiti into an Enlightenment conception of modernity: '. . . [I]t appear'd to have been built many years ago, being in a state of decay as most of their Mories are, from this it should seem that this Island has been in a more flourishing state than it is at present, or that Religious customs are like most other nations, by these people less observed.' (June 27, 30, 1769; in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 113.) George Robertson is equally keen to describe the intricacies of indigenous religion and conjecture on the importance of the marae of Tahiti: '. . . We supposed this to be some place of Worship, with the appearance of several burying places closs by it, and some Images rudely carved out of large trees, and set up closs by the building, which I suppose is an Altar, where they erect funeral piles to burn the bodies of the Dead, but this is only conjecter . . .' (July 6, 1767; in Carrington (ed.), *The Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 178.) As Beaglehole notes, this 'conjecter' is incorrect.

⁵⁷ See, for example, Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, esp. pp. 77-104. See also Nicholas Hudson, 'From "Nation" to "Race": The Origin of Racial Classification in Eighteenth-Century Thought', in *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 29, 3 (Spring 1996), pp. 247-264; and Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, esp. pp. 7-8.

The journals provide ample evidence of this attempt to conceive of the world – from the sky above to the inner workings of the body – in terms of an overarching universal order which incorporates and classifies all activity and all sights. As we shall see, however, they also serve to demonstrate the limits of, the sense of a subtle fraying of, this universal order. This order can be clearly seen even in the self-conscious economic and political aims of the voyages. The circumnavigations of Byron, Carteret and Wallis, for example, were economic and strategic in nature.⁵⁸ As for Cook's first voyage, the place of the rational and scientific appears secure. Cook's name for mathematical precision had, after all, been already established in the Newfoundland surveys of 1763-1767. The Endeavour was sent at the behest of the Royal Society in order to observe the transit of Venus across the face of the Sun and thus to calculate the distance of Earth from Venus and from the Sun. Consequently, the voyage was implicated in a public discussion of mathematics and astronomy which is the very epitome of Enlightenment progress. As Beaglehole notes, in his Life of Captain James Cook:

We find ourselves, and Mr Cook, plunged suddenly into the middle of eighteenth-century science, or the post-Newtonian branch of it . . . The primary purpose of the voyage now envisaged . . . concerned the world not in itself, with all its detail of land and water, but the world of the universe. The method was to be astronomical, to determine not the latitude of a cape on an island in the north-west Atlantic [a reference to Cook's mapping of Newfoundland], but the dimensions of the universe.⁵⁹

At first sight, the observation of the transit of Venus in many ways stands as exemplar of the Enlightenment preoccupation with scientific advancement, and by implication, the relative irrelevance attributed to religious dogma. It also acts, however, as a potent symbol of the insecurity and fragility of this advance, and of the implication of this 'advancement' within a greater order. The transit would occur

⁵⁸ As the Instructions accompanying all the voyages illustrate, the objective was the discovery of *terra australis* and the goods contained therein. See Helen Wallis (ed.), Carteret's Voyage Round the World 1766-1769 (Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1965), esp. pp. 6, 302-306; Robert Gallagher (ed.), Byron's Journal of his Circumnavigation 1764-1766 (Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1964), esp. pp. xliii-lxii; Carrington (ed.), Discovery of Tahiti, pp. xix-xxiv.

⁵⁹ Beaglehole, The Life of Captain James Cook, p. 99.

in 1761 and 1769, and then not for over a century, and a simple case of overcast skies would foil the opportunity for the advancement of science which it offered. Edmund Halley was aware of the great opportunity and its potential for failure. Speaking to the Royal Society in 1716, he said:

I could wish that many observations of this famous phenomenon might be taken by different persons at separate places, both that we might arrive at a greater degree of certainty by their agreement, and lest any single observer should be deprived, by the intervention of clouds, of a sight which I know not whether any man living in this or the next age will ever see again, and on which depends the certain and adequate solution of a problem the most noble, and at time not to attained to. I recommend it therefore again and again to those curious astronomers who, after I am dead, will have an opportunity of observing these things, that they would remember this, my admonition . . .⁶⁰

The transit of Venus acts as a strikingly fertile symbol of progress, but also of fragility and insecurity. Clearly, a successful observation would be a triumph for human science, symbolizing the advances already made and those yet to come. Parallel to this, however, is a notion of the limits of human ability, the innate powerlessness of humanity when confronted by nature. Consequently, this apparent symbol of the scientific contains within it the seeds of its own instability. The convergence of the apparently distinct categories of faith and reason are underscored in the idea of the importance (and in time necessity) of the witness or observer. The Royal Society, closely involved in the planning and execution of the Endeavour voyage, insisted that all claims to new knowledge or scientific breakthrough be witnessed in order to ease verification. Jane Shaw notes:

Members of the Royal Society asked how claims – especially competing claims – were to be established as knowledge. They asked: What was to count as knowledge or 'science'? [Hence, the importance of] constructing what Steven Shaplin calls 'material, social and literary technologies' for the conduct of experiments and the production of knowledge. Prominent among these technologies were the performance of experiments in a public space (the scientist's lab rather than the alchemist's closet), the testimony of witnesses present at those public events and the means of ensuring that these witnesses

⁶⁰ Edmund Halley, *Philosophical Transactions* XXIX (1716), p. 460; quoted by Beaglehole, *Life of Captain James Cook*, pp. 100-101.

were reliable (that is, were of the right educational and social rank, and the right gender), and the development of clear scientific prose for describing those events for people not present (virtual witnessing).⁶¹

The observation of the transit of Venus by the Endeavour crew conforms entirely to these precepts. It is conducted in public and in adequate surroundings, rendered as secure as possible and confirmed by other nearby observations:

This afternoon we set up the Observatory and took the Astronomical Quadrant ashore for the first time, together with some other Instruments. The Fort being now finished and made as tenable as the Time, Nature and situation of the ground and materials we had to work . . . I now thought myself perfectly secure from any thing these people could attempt. (May 1, 1769)

We are now very busy in preparing our Instruments &c for the Observation and instructing such Gentlemen in the use of them as I intend to send to other parts to Observe for fear we should fail here. (May 30, 1769)

This day I sent Lieutenant Gore in the Long-Boat to York Island with Dr Munkhouse and Mr Sporing (a gentleman belonging to Mr Banks) to observe the Transit of Venus, Mr Green having furnished them with Instruments for that purpose. Mr Banks and some of the Natives of the Island went along with them. (June 1, 1769)

Very early this morning Lieutenant Hicks, Mr Clerk, Mr Petersgill and Mr Saunders, went away in the Pinnace to the Eastward, with orders to fix upon some convenient situation on the Island and there to observe the Transit of Venus – they being likewise provided with Instruments for that purpose. (June 2, 1769)⁶²

Cook attempts to ensure that the observation does indeed take place in the scientific laboratory as opposed to the alchemist's closet, observed by the available experts and witnessed by available laypersons. His own experience acts as a control, with the other expeditions functioning as back-up experiments. To crown all, the actual experience passes smoothly indeed:

This day prov'd as favourable to our purpose as we could wish, not a Cloud was to be seen the whole day and the Air was perfectly Clear, so that we had

⁶¹ Shaw, 'Religious Experience and the Formation of the Early Enlightenment Self', in Porter (ed.), *Rewriting the Self*, p. 69.

⁶² Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, pp. 87, 96, 97.

every advantage we could desire in Observing the whole of the passage of the Planet Venus over the Sun's disk . . . (June 3, 1769)⁶³

Not even Nature, normally red in tooth and claw, can mar the experience. Clearly, the scientific credentials of the observation appear to be entirely sound, and in this case, human fragility is seen to be overcome. The narration of such incidents as the Transit of Venus demonstrate an anxiety to assert a sense of control over potentially wayward events. The transit, as a particularly visible instance of the dialectic between man and nature, highlights an implicit recognition of the *impossibility* of total control or total knowledge.

It is significant that it is in the crucial figure of the observer and witness that the influence of Christian, and specifically Protestant, doctrine may be discerned. As Shaw notes, 'Many historians have argued that the Protestant emphasis on an individual's authority in observing and interpreting knowledge for him- or herself was crucial for the development of the modern scientific method'.⁶⁴ The Christian template laid against such notions of scientific experimentation demonstrates the close relationship between the two. The preparation and observation of the transit of Venus is illustrative of the attempt to construct what Foucault has called the 'perfect disciplinary apparatus'. As Foucault notes, the 'success of disciplinary power derives no doubt from the use of simple instruments; hierarchical observation, normalizing judgement and their combination in a procedure that is specific to it, the examination'.⁶⁵ This idea of the 'perfect disciplinary apparatus' applies as much to the practice of organized religion as to science, in that discipline and observation are intrinsic to the workings of religion, regardless of denomination. Cook's efforts to construct a secure fort and the secondary expeditions to observe the transit exemplify this disciplinary movement; ironically however, this painstaking attempt

⁶³ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 97.

⁶⁴ Shaw, 'Religious Experience and the Formation of the Early Enlightenment Self', in Porter (ed.), *Rewriting the Self*, p. 64.

⁶⁵ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Harmondsworth: [1975], Penguin, 1984), p. 173.

at what can be termed a total observance betrays the instability of the scenes under description. The influence of an ostensibly alien discourse of Christianity serves to magnify this instability. Both discourses, it can be argued, are concerned to establish a means of centred discipline and control. As Thomas notes of Christian theology, 'Given the basic tenets of Christian theology – the unity of Creation and the prospect of a Second Coming – humanity had to be regarded as a single population, and one that was prospectively wholly Christian.'⁶⁶ The transit of Venus functions as a useful metaphor for this process. As Foucault notes, such scientific instruments as the telescope and microscope worked both literally and metaphorically towards a goal of total knowledge:

Side by side with the major technology of the telescope, the lens and the light beam, which were an integral part of the new physics and cosmology, there were the minor techniques of multiple and intersecting observations, of eyes that must see without being seen; using techniques of subjection and methods of exploitation, an obscure art of light and the visible was secretly preparing a new knowledge of man.⁶⁷

The Pacific, however, evades this goal of total knowledge. Rod Edmond has written that 'the Pacific was, and in a debased sense remains, a place of dreams',⁶⁸ an unknown space which lured the European imagination with fantasies of gold and silver. In a sense, however, the position of the Pacific at the limits of understanding and knowledge renders it significantly resistant to the full and total knowledge which was the basic requirement of European explorers at this time. Writing of the process of cartography and its emphasis upon factual accuracy and perfection, J. Hillis Miller notes that 'a place is either there in a given place or it is not there'.⁶⁹ Clearly, this remark resonates significantly in the space of the Pacific, in that *terra*

⁶⁶ Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture*, p. 73.

⁶⁷ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, p. 171.

⁶⁸ Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, p. 6.

⁶⁹ J. Hillis Miller, *Topographies* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 203; quoted in Penny Fielding, 'No Pole nor Pillar: Imagining the Arctic with James Hogg', *Studies in Hogg and his World* 9 (1988, forthcoming). It is also worth noting that Pitcairn island was chosen as a safe refuge by the Bounty mutineers precisely because it was both 'there and not there' – it existed indeed, but its position on the charts was incorrect.

australis existed vigorously in the collective European imagination while existing not at all as a physical or geographical entity. This intangibility, however, is also evident in the journals, in which the scientific triumph of mapping the South Seas is consistently interrogated by the significant failures of scientific understanding. On the one hand, for example, the mapping of the New Zealand coastline in 1769-1770 and the fixing of its latitude and longitude may be seen to be a marvellous feat of precision; on the other, every skilful act of cartography is balanced by an admission of the intangibility of the ocean and its features. The best examples of this intangibility are the repeated 'sightings' of the ghostly southern continent which turn out to be cloudbanks on the southern horizon, and which inform the journals of Pacific exploration as a whole until Cook lays the myth of the southern continent to rest during his second voyage. The following extract from the Dolphin's second circumnavigation (1766-1768) illustrates the house of cards which may be erected upon a mythical, non-existent land. George Robertson moves from a description of the usefulness of Tahitian flora and fauna to a series of speculations which take in New Zealand and Australia (two lands essentially uncharted by Europeans at the time of the journal entry [1767])⁷⁰ and on to an even more speculative theory of the movement of goods (and by implication people) from the East Indies into the Pacific:

We also saw great numbers of Hogs and Young Pigs runing along shore, and great plenty of Fowls and fruit of all sorts, the Hogs here appears to be a chaines [Chinese] breed, non of them above Eighty or a hundred pound weight, and the fowls are the same as ours in England, how Eather come to be transported here I know not, unless the high Mountains which we saw to the Southward of this place, be a part of whats called New Zealand, which I am apt to think it is – in that case both might reasonably be suposed to have come

⁷⁰ William Dampier touched on the coast of north-west Australia in 1699, while New Zealand was briefly encountered by Abel Tasman in December 1642. Neither land was systematically charted by Europeans until the visit of the Endeavour in 1769-1770. See also Anne Salmond, *Two Worlds: First meetings Between Maori and Europeans 1642-1772* (London and Auckland: Viking, 1991), esp. p. 62, for a brief discussion of the possibility of a Spanish or Portuguese 'discovery' of the New Zealand archipelago in 1526. This intriguing, controversial and as yet unproven hypothesis was first floated by Richard Hervé, *Chance Discovery of Australia and New Zealand by Spanish and Portuguese Navigators between 1521 and 1528* (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1983), and is supported by the 'Dieppe' maps of the sixteenth century (which arguably mark the East Cape of New Zealand) and by local Maori accounts.

first from the Continent, to Summatra, Java and New Holland [Australia] and in time from that to New Zealand and from thence here . . .' (July 5, 1767)⁷¹

Penny Fielding has remarked that mapping is 'a fundamental epistemological exercise in the making of social organization, and [. . .] the stability of such organization rests upon a concomitant stability in the relationship between the figurative (maps) and the spatial (places)'.⁷² The mirages which figure in journal descriptions of the Pacific usefully illustrate the manner in which both the physical space and the people of the Pacific repeatedly foil attempts at establishing an authoritative discourse of exploration and knowledge. Miller claims that 'topography is a logocentric practice through and through . . . [I]t depends for example on the law of non-contradiction'.⁷³ The journals, however, demonstrate that this may be so in theory but not in practice, and that attempts to unproblematically apply the confident and developing science and logic of the time to the Pacific (or other 'limited' areas) must prove problematic.

In the eighteenth century, the notion that a paradise yet existed on earth was of course scarcely a widespread theory, but its trace remained upon contemporary narratives of exploration. In this way, travel can be seen to be in part nostalgic, searching for a prelapsarian world to contrast with the fallen world of contemporary Europe. At the same time, the quest for a more pure and untouched land did not prevent this process of religion-influenced exploration from going hand-in-hand with violence, in the Pacific as elsewhere in the world. Neil Rennie, for example, notes of Mendaña's visit to the Marquesas that he 'stayed a fortnight, teaching the Marquesans to make the sign of the Cross and shooting them'.⁷⁴ Similarly, the very naming techniques of the British, which are classic instances of absorption, can be read as evasions of a total order. The naming practices established by Cook and

⁷¹ Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 179.

⁷² Fielding, 'No Pole nor Pillar: Imagining the Arctic with James Hogg', (forthcoming).

⁷³ J. Hillis Miller, *Topographies*; quoted in Fielding, 'No Pole nor Pillar: Imagining the Arctic with James Hogg', (forthcoming).

⁷⁴ Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts*, p. 41.

others are resolutely secular in nature, in contrast to the practice of the Spanish explorers of the Renaissance, in the Pacific and elsewhere, which was to christen newly discovered lands with saints' and other religious names. It is noteworthy that the British eighteenth-century explorers of the Pacific tend to name rather more routinely, eschewing the religious for the resolutely secular. Cook's chart of New Zealand, compiled in 1769-1770, is perhaps the clearest example, with its mixture of the mundane (Poverty Bay, Cape Turnagain, North Cape, Cape Table ['this point I have named *Cape Table* on account of its shape and figure' (October 12, 1769)]⁷⁵) and the Naval ('I have named it *Hawke's Bay* in Honour of Sr Edward first Lord of the Admiralty' [October 15, 1769]).⁷⁶ These names are in themselves, of course, indicative of a process of inscription and of claiming, and this is at its most conspicuous, perhaps, in the following passage, describing the claiming of what is now Cook Strait, between the North and South Island of New Zealand:

After I had thus prepare'd the way for seting up the post we took it up to the highest part of the Island and after fixing it fast in the ground hoisted thereon the Union flag and I dignified this Inlet with the name of *Queen Charlotte's Sound* and took formal possession of it and the adjacent lands in the name and for the use of his Majesty, we then drank Her Majesty's hilt in a Bottle of Wine and gave the empty bottle to the old man (who had attended us up the hill) with which he was highly pleased. (January 31, 1770)⁷⁷

The old Maori man who has accompanied them to the crown of the hill can be seen to be the indigenous observer, witness to this act of possession. The entire ceremony takes place for the benefit of a world elsewhere, but in legal terms the presence of the original inhabitants helps to support the case for a smooth and valid transferral of possession. As Cook himself notes, however, the Maori clearly failed to understand the importance of such a ceremony. On the Endeavour visit to New Zealand, Cook had erected a cairn on a neighbouring hill 'and left in it some Musquet balls, small Shott Beeds and whatever we had about us that was likely to

⁷⁵ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 174.

⁷⁶ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 178.

⁷⁷ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 243.

stand the test of time'. (January 26, 1770)⁷⁸ On the second visit to New Zealand, he climbs the same hill and finds the cairn he has constructed dismantled. The Maori, he surmises, have taken it apart in order to discover goods hidden within:

The hill we were upon is the same I was upon in 1770 on which we then built a tower of Stones which was now leveled to the ground, done no doubt by the Natives with a view to finding some thing hid in it. (November 15, 1773)⁷⁹

Such an incident demonstrates the latent fracture in this discourse of possession – the indigenous people do not so much offer resistance as refuse and thus disturb the very basis of understanding. Thus the process of naming is connected with the process of exchange theorized by Mauss and discussed in Chapter One – although the action of naming and thus claiming continues, and although the names remain the same, the absence of any degree of *mutual* understanding and of a common frame of reference effectively blocks the attempts by the British to name and incorporate.⁸⁰

The developing discourse of ethnology works to assimilate or absorb, but also indicated further the extent to which the idea of control has only limited success. Ethnology, and later anthropology signified both an increasing interest in the definition of Man and the possible limits of control in regard to understanding. One of the more visible example of this tension, perhaps, concerns Byron's speculations on the origins and place of the fabulous giants of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, encountered in the passage of the Magellan Straits in 1764. The Patagonians were *not* giants, and the remarkable persistence of these stories throughout the eighteenth-century (confirmed repeatedly by eyewitnesses) is testament to the power and

⁷⁸ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 240.

⁷⁹ Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure*, p. 290.

⁸⁰ See also the history of the pennant left by Wallis to signify British possession when he departed Tahiti in 1767: 'The later history of the pennant is known. Purea (the 'queen of the island') took "the British pennant left flying at Matavai by Captain Wallis . . . to her Marae of Mahaiatea, and seems to have converted it into her Maro Ura (sacred girdle) with which her son was invested".' (*Memoirs of Arii Taimai* [1901], p. 109; in Carrington (ed.), *Discovery of Tahiti*, p. 162.)

influence of the wondrous and miraculous at this time. Byron's reaction is practical in the extreme:

The first thought that will occur to every good Christian is, that this race of Giants ought to be exterminated, and their country colonized; but I have already mentioned the great utility that may be drawn from them in the light of Slaves.⁸¹

In the context of exploration and culture contact, the Christian notion of the miraculous or revelatory ironically provides an opportunity for science and reason to reassert their primacy. In the Enlightenment world 'made up of discrete forms, of rigid categories',⁸² scientific analysis of the extraordinary provided a means by which the primacy of scientific fact might be asserted. On the one hand, then, the eighteenth century saw the number of certified miracles in Europe fall precipitously, the result of a tightening and centralization of power by the Church which is itself indicative of its flexibility in the face of changing conceptions of authority and order.⁸³ On the other, this self-conscious linkage of the Church and religion with scientific discourse, with facts, with evidence, led to the emergence of tension. While Christianity asserted the unity of Creation and the idea of the universe as one under the stewardship of God, the sight of a *various* world, a world of difference, presented a challenge. Ethnology and natural history found evidence for the inaccuracy of the Christian myth. Although the response was the evolution of total systems such as those inaugurated by Carl Linnaeus and Georges-Louis Buffon, such systems could not wholly account for discursive problems nor allow for ideological tensions.

Outram notes:

Buffon argued that the human race was a unity, and that if some humans looked different from others, they did so only because of contingent factors such as climate. Buffon's work could hardly be pressed into evidence by

⁸¹ John Byron, 'An Account of the Giants Lately Discovered, in a Letter to a Friend in the Country', July 1766; in Gallagher (ed.), *Byron's Journal of his Circumnavigation*, p. 200. As Helen Wallis notes, the legend of the Patagonian giants originated in Magellan's visit to the region in 1520 (p. 185).

⁸² Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization* (London: Methuen, 1986), p. 102.

⁸³ See Lorraine Daston, 'Marvelous Facts and Miraculous Evidence in Early Modern Europe'. (*Critical Inquiry*, 18, 1 [Autumn 1991], pp. 93-125.)

anyone who wished to argue that African Negroes or American Indians were in some fundamental way different from, and inferior to, Europeans. Buffon's contemporary, the Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus (1707-78) argued, however, in his 1740 *Systema Naturae*, that it was possible to divide man between four different classificatory groups: white Europeans, red Americans, black Africans and brown Asians. But in his 1758 edition of the same work, he introduced new groups into his classificatory analysis of the human race: wild men, pygmies and giants. Such examples show the tentative and unstable character of Enlightenment attempts to classify members of the human race . . .⁸⁴

These problems and tensions can be glimpsed in the journal descriptions of the perceived barbarity of the Pacific islanders. Commentary on the Pacific in these years is characterized by an increasingly close and moralistic attention – a symptom of a sought-for total system – paid to certain of the social habits and customs of the indigenous people, particularly with regard to the practice of anthropophagy. The cannibal has traditionally been represented as dwelling geographically on the margins of the world, and metaphorically on the very edges of the human, as close to the beasts as may be – as Peter Hulme notes, the term cannibal stands as emblem of 'ungenerate savagery'.⁸⁵ From classical times, it has stood as signifier of radical difference, barbarism (the 'man-eating savage' of Herodotus) poised against civilization. Moreover, as Hulme notes, the cannibal is invariably 'ferocious' and the term is never neutral – 'the meaning of the term "cannibal" is "ferocious consumption of the human flesh"'.⁸⁶ The journals of both the Endeavour and Resolution voyages displayed considerable ghoulish interest in the question of the eating habits of the Maori, and were at pains to demonstrate their proof that cannibalism illustrates a 'pecking order' of cultures. Cook's own journals are relatively measured, preferring to limit his accounts to description,⁸⁷ but his sailors are considerably more

⁸⁴ Outram, *The Enlightenment*, p. 75. Outram notes also, 'Linnaeus in the end still saw nature as a whole, as a harmonious and balanced system created by God' (p. 58). Ania Loomba notes that Linnaeus based his system, in part, upon South Indian Ezhava classification systems. See Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), and Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism 1600-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

⁸⁵ Hulme, *Colonial Encounters*, p. 3.

⁸⁶ Hulme, *Colonial Encounters*, p. 84.

⁸⁷ There was not one of us that had the least doubt but what these people were Canabals but the

sensationalist, among other examples dwelling on lurid descriptions of the 'horrid midnight repasts' of the Maori,⁸⁸ the reputed devouring of children and various methods of cookery:

. . . we saw one of the Bodys and two arms with flesh upon them which we saw them eat this is the first Proof Possitive we have had of the Inhabitants being CANNIBALS and I belive these are the only people who kill their fellow creatures Puerly for the meat which we are well Assured they do by their laying in wait one for another as a sportsman would for his game and they carry this detestable crime so far as to glory in carrieing in their Ears the Thumbs of those unhappy sufferrrs who fell in their way . . . (January 17, 1770)⁸⁹

The division between barbarism and civilization is argued more subtly, however, by Banks, who takes the practice of cannibalism as evidence of the irrationality of the Maori and their lowly place in the order of things:

Nature through all the superior part of creation shews how much she recoils at the thought of any species preying upon itself [. . .] Among fish and insects indeed there are many instances which prove that those who live by prey regard little whither what they take is of their own or any other species; but any one who considers the admirable chain of nature in which Man, alone endowed with reason, justly claims the highest rank . [. . .] Whoever considers this I say will easily see that no Conclusion in favour of such a practice can be drawn from the actions of a race of beings placed so infinitely below us in the order of Nature.⁹⁰

In this extract, the implied place of the Maori, judging from their cannibalistic tendencies, is related to those of fish and insects in the natural hierarchical order. Similarly, Cook is concerned to distinguish the Maori, for example, from other

finding this Bone the sinews fresh upon it was a stronger proof than any we had yet met with, and in order to be fully satisfied of the truth of what they had told us, we told one of them that it was not the bone of a man but of a Dog, but he with great fervency took hold of his fore-arm and told us again that it was that bone and to convence us that they had eat the flesh he took hold of the flesh of his arm with his teeth and made shew of eating.' (January 17, 1770; in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 236.)

⁸⁸ Sydney Parkinson (natural history artist on the Endeavour), in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 237. As Beaglehole notes, 'Mr Parkinson had read too deeply into romance; the Maori epicure would have been shocked at the idea of waiting till midnight' (p. 237).

⁸⁹ Richard Pickersgill (Master's mate), in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 236.

⁹⁰ Alexander Mackay, *A Compendium of Official Documents Relative to Native Affairs in the South Island, Vols I and II* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1873), p. 314; in Salmond, *Two Worlds*, p. 278.

societies because of their cannibalistic traditions. His descriptions and analysis, however, are at the same time influenced by other and earlier classifications – custom and belief. Banks' comments signify the presence of an evolving discourse of science, which at one level can be squared with a total system of knowledge, but which at another *exceeds* this system. That is, they are informed by a particular notion of civilization, and they illustrate the presence of a developing discourse of race and classification which was to become fully established in nineteenth-century high imperialist discourse. Banks' comments indicate the extent to which the Pacific islanders were conceived in a manner which both did and did not question their humanity. They were implicitly likened to non-human forms of life, thus challenging the implicit Christian maxim that all humans are potential Christians and thus potentially open to salvation. Ultimately, anthropology and natural history could not accommodate this fundamental Christian message. Journal descriptions of cannibalism sit on the cusp of the modern and pre-modern. As Outram remarks, '[I]n this respect, the Enlightenment, as in so many others, hardly presented an agreed agenda'.⁹¹

A preoccupation with the facts and myths of cannibalism underlined the subject's ideological potency within a developing discourse of colonialism. Descriptions of cannibalism were bound up with notions of civility and barbarism in a way which both helps to bolster and to expose the notional order discussed in this chapter. Cook remarks that progress and civilization will not come 'especially if that nation hath no manner of connections or commerce with strangers for it is by this, that the greatest part of the human race has been civilized, an advantage which the New Zealanders, from their Situation, never have had: an intercourse with Foreigners would reform their manners and polish their Savage minds, or were they more united under a settled form of Government they would have fewer enemies consequently this Custom would be less in use, and might in time be in a manner

⁹¹ Outram, *The Enlightenment*, p. 75.

forgot'.⁹² At a stroke, the process of European exploration of, and commerce (of all kinds) in, the Pacific is justified as benevolent and in the best interests of all. Cook's remarks illustrate that savages are not an undifferentiated mass. While the Maori, for example, are constructed as essentially barbarian, this savagery is tempered by their nobility of spirit. In comparison, the Australian aborigines have none of this nobility, placing them at the bottom of a notional league-table of progress. Claude Rawson notes the tendency, in description of the cannibal, to think in clichéd terms of 'natives round a fire cooking a missionary in a pot'.⁹³ Cook's journal illustrates that descriptions can be considerably more subtle than this, while maintaining an ideological slant which is based upon an intertwined emphasis on reason and Christian doctrine, which represents or confirms the primitive nature of the indigenous other. Alasdair MacIntyre writes:

It is of the essence of reason that it lays down principles which are universal, categorical and internally consistent. [. . .] Hence a rational morality will lay down principles which both can and ought to be held by *all* men, independent of circumstance and conditions, and which could be obeyed by every rational agent on every occasion.⁹⁴

In this case, ideas of economics and commerce link with a notion of 'civilization' in order to establish a totalized or universal conception of morality or rectitude. It is in laying down this standardized notion of what constitutes civilization that Cook emphasizes the relative barbarity of the Maori, and for that matter of every other alien culture with whom he comes into contact. Consequently, although Cook's attitudes have traditionally been viewed as 'enlightened', it can be argued that this 'enlightenment' is strictly relative. As MacIntyre notes, the standardized notions of morality and civilization derived from the writings of a

⁹² Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure*, p. 295.

⁹³ Claude Rawson, 'Savages Noble and Ignoble: Natives, Cannibals, Third Parties and Others in South Pacific Narratives by Gulliver, Bougainville and Diderot', in Jonathan Lamb (ed.), 'The South Pacific in the Eighteenth Century: Narratives and Myths'; special edition of *Eighteenth-Century Life* 18, 3 (November 1994), p. 169.

⁹⁴ Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Philosophy* (London: Duckworth Press, 1981), p. 43.

group of *philosophes* who shared 'a specific . . . historical background. [They were] the inheritors of a very specific and particular scheme of moral beliefs' which stemmed from the notion of a shared Christian past.⁹⁵

The notion of cannibalism represents an assault upon the body undertaken in a way which distinguishes it from carefully constructed rational or rationally sacrificial methods of bodily control. Foucault has outlined the manner in which the body of the deviant became subject to increased and panoptical control and discipline in eighteenth-century Europe. In terms of both microcosm and macrocosm, increasingly sophisticated means of control and surveillance impacted upon the life of the subject, and rendered earlier public punishment and torture unnecessary.⁹⁶ The act of anthropophagy erupts into this changing discourse of control and authority, challenging the notion of bodily integrity which lies at the centre of western rationalist discourse. Whereas the notion of an assault upon the body is perceived to be fundamentally transgressive and must therefore be managed in carefully ritualized ways – whether scientific or Christian – cannibalism represents what Fielding calls 'unregulated incursions on the body's frame', which 'trouble the subject's dependence on the body as a primary means of recognizing self: the delimitation of the individual from the space that surrounds it'.⁹⁷ The violation of the western taboo upon the consumption of human flesh leads to the sharp response which can be seen in the journals, but in reality, the threat of cannibalism lies not so much in its attack upon the body, but rather in the fact that the correct methods whereby this attack can take place are disregarded. As Fielding

⁹⁵ MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, p. 42. As MacIntyre notes, certain common characteristics, which crossed national boundaries, could be noted between Enlightenment thinkers. The idea of a common Christian past, for example, was shared by philosophers as diverse as Diderot, Hume, Smith and Kant. They agreed on a vision of morality based upon notions of promise-keeping and the importance of the family and of marriage. Although all of the above liked to consider themselves to be radicals, they were all moral conservatives. While, for example, 'Diderot professes to believe that basic human nature is both revealed in and served by what he portrays as the promiscuous sexuality of the Polynesians [. . .] he is very clear that Paris is not Polynesia.' Moreover, in his own life 'he is a conventional bourgeois moralist with as staid a view of marriage, of promises, of truth-telling and of conscientiousness as any adherent of Kantian duty'. (*After Virtue*, p. 47)

⁹⁶ See Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

⁹⁷ Fielding, 'No Pole nor Pillar', (forthcoming).

has noted, 'the spilling of blood is so transgressive of bodily integrity that it must be carefully managed by either scientific or religious ceremony'.⁹⁸ It is therefore the case that anthropophagy or cannibalism transgresses in part as a result of its very visibility and lack of subtlety. In part also, it does indeed dissolve (in the most literal fashion) the boundary between subject and object, thus uniquely challenging cherished western notions of subjectivity. It is against such ideas that the journal-writers react, asserting a norm or touchstone of decency and morality to set against the unnatural and immoral practices of the indigenous people. As Robinson Crusoe uses the sight of cannibalism in order to assert his own 'civilized' or European status, so too do the journal writers describe the practice in order to reinscribe the duality between civilization and barbarity.⁹⁹ It is also worth noting that this motif of 'unregulated incursions upon the body's frame' reappear throughout later Pacific discourse.¹⁰⁰

The massacre of Grass Cove in New Zealand, in which a boatload of sailors from the Adventure crew were killed and eaten by the Maori, is the best known and also the most instructive of the cannibalism-related incidents. The description is as ghoulish and prurient as one might expect, with particular attention paid to a description of the remains of the sailors, as severed hands and single shoes litter the ground:

⁹⁸ Fielding, 'No Pole nor Pillar', (forthcoming).

⁹⁹ 'I looked up with the utmost affection of my soul, and with a flood of tears in my eyes, gave God thanks that had cast my first lot in a part of the world where I was distinguished from such dreadful creatures as these'. (Daniel Defoe, *The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (Harmondsworth: [1719], Penguin, 1985), p. 172; quoted in Hulme, *Colonial Encounters*, p. 198.

¹⁰⁰ See, for example, 'Mauki', Jack London's shocking tale of somatic violence and revenge. Edmond writes: 'In 'Mauki', the eponymous Melanesian hero who keeps escaping from the English company to which he is indentured is finally placed on Lord Howe Island under the control of the sadistic Max Bunster, whose main instrument of power is a mitten made of ray fish skin, traditionally used as a wood file in smoothing down canoes and paddles. The first time Bunster uses it on Mauki the skin is fetched off his back from neck to armpit; thereafter the half-healed surface is regularly "raked raw" by sweeps from the mitten. Mauki awaits his opportunity, and when Bunster is convalescing from an attack of black-water fever takes his revenge. He begins with Bunster's face, sweeping the skin from his nose, forehead and cheeks, and then moves systematically over his body. Eventually a "hideous, skinless thing came out of the house and ran screaming down the beach till it fell in the sand and mowed and gibbered under the scorching sun"'. (Jack London, 'Mauki', in *South Sea Tales*; cited in Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific*, p. 210.) Edmond notes that such tales dramatize the 'sadistic nature of economic exploitation in the western Pacific'; they also, however, effectively use the skin as a signifier of subjectivity and its violation as an assault upon this subjectivity.

We went ashore & searched the Canoe where we found one of the Rullock [rowlock] parts of the Cutter & some Shoes one of which was known to belong to Mr Woodhouse, one of our Midshipmen, who went with Mr Rowe – one of the people at the same time brought me a piece of meat, which he took to be some of the Salt Meat belonging to the Cutter's Crew – on examining this & smelling to it I found it was fresh meat – Mr Fannin (the master) who was with me, supos'd it was Dog's flesh & I was of the same opinion, for I still doubted their being Cannibals: but we were soon convinced by most horrid and undeniable proofs – a great many baskets (about 20) laying on the beach tied up, we cut them open, some were full of roasted flesh & some of fern root which serves them as bread – on further search we found more shoes & a hand which we immediately knew to have belonged to Thos. Hill which we had got done at Otaheite with a tattow Instrument [. . .] Such a shocking scene of Carnage & Barbarity as can never be mentioned or thought of, but with horror [. . .] we brought on board 2 Hands – one belonging to Mr Rowe, known by a hurt he had received in it the other to Thomas Hill as before mentioned, & the head of the Captns Servant [. . .] we found none of their Arms or Cloaths except part of a pair of Trowsers, a Frock & 6 Shoes – no 2 of them being fellows.¹⁰¹

Cook's own description of the cannibalism of the Maori is considerably more measured, but is equally significant and revealing. He is at some pains to describe the Maori as, if not quite civilized, then not wholly barbarous:

I have often been asked, after relateing all the circumstance, if I had actually seen them eat human flesh my self, such a question was sufficient to convince me that they disbelieved all I had said or formed a very different opinion from it, few considers what a savage man is in his original state and even after he is in some dergree civilized; the New Zealanders are certainly in a state of civilization, their behaviour to us has been manly and Mild, shewing allways a readiness to oblige us; they have some arts a mong them which they execute with great judgment and unwearied patience; they are far less addicted to thieving than the other Islanders and are I believe strictly honist among them-selves. This custom of eating their enemies slain in battle (for I firmly believe they eat the flesh of no others) has undoubtedly been handed down to them from the earliest times and we know that it is not an easy matter to break a nation of its ancient customs let them be ever so inhuman and savage, especially if that nation is void of all religious principles as I believe the new zealanders in general are and like them without any settled form of government; as they become more united they will of concequence have fewer Enemies and become more united and then and not till then this custom may be forgot, at present they seem to have but little idea of treating other men as they themselves would wish to be treated, but treat them as they think they should be treated under the same circumstances. If I remember

¹⁰¹ James Burney, *Journal*, in Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure*, pp. 750-752.

rightly one of the arguments they made use on against Tupia who frequently expostulated with them against this custom, was that there could be no harm in killing and eating the man who would do the same by you if it was in his power, for said they 'can there be any harm in eating our Enimies whom we have killed in battle, would not those very enemies have done the same to us?' I have often hear them listen to Tupia with great attention, but I have never found his arguments had any great weight with them . . . (November 23, 1773)¹⁰²

Cook is concerned here to identify religion as fundamental to civilization and government and as a vital factor in civilizing and polishing a people. The religious ideology underpinning this extract is at its most evident as Cook notes that the Maori have no place in their culture for the fundamental Christian image of loving one's neighbour as oneself. Cook surmises that religious belief has little if any part to play in Maori society:

With respect to Religion I beleive these People trouble themselves very little about it. They however beleive that their is one Supream God whome they call [here a blank is inserted] and likewise a number of other inferior Deities, but whether or no they Worship or Pray to either one or the other we know not with any degree of certainty. It is reasonable to suppose that they do and I beleive it, yet I never saw the least action or thing a mong them that tended to prove it. (March 31, 1770)¹⁰³

For Cook, consequently, the implication is that the people of New Zealand are locked in a cycle of barbarity, a cycle which Christian Europe has apparently broken as a result of the consolidation of reason and religious strictures. It is important to note here the influence of reason – civilization and religion are partners in a momentum towards progress. The presence of cannibalism is ideologically useful, in that it assists in the consolidation of a notion of community – that of the ships and their crew – that was on occasion placed under pressure. The fact of cannibalism starkly delineates the boundaries between savagery or barbarism and civilization. The medieval notion of the body politic is a potent image in this discourse of savagery; cannibalism after all poses a threat to the very integrity of the

¹⁰² Beaglehole (ed.), *Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure*, p. 295.

¹⁰³ Beaglehole (ed.) *Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*, p. 286.

body. Hulme notes the irony of the relationship between cannibalism and Christianity, and the upsurge in acts of violence against non-Christians in Europe. Following the Lateran Council of 1215, the Eucharist was conceived as the actual body of Christ, thus copperfastening the unspoken relationship between Christendom and the cannibals outside its walls.¹⁰⁴ Although the Reformation altered the fact of consumption for Protestants (the body and blood of Christ were *symbolically* consumed) the irony remains in the sense that the act of communion is as fundamental to Protestantism as to the Catholic Church. Furthermore, notes Hulme, 'what is to be feared from cannibal devouring is dispersal of corporeal integrity'¹⁰⁵ – a potent symbol of horror and ironically the fate which awaited Cook, whose body was filleted and dispersed throughout the island of Hawaii.¹⁰⁶ The figure of the cannibal is part of the maintenance of a civilization/barbarism duality which justifies violence and oppression; it is ironic, then, to note that Enlightenment valorization of the individual itself acts to destabilize the stability of the notion of the body politic. As Maggie Kilgour notes: 'The old image of the body politic created the sense of a world of essentially related members whose identities were determined, and controlled, by their social roles. With the rise of individualism, that body is also broken, its members scattered as atomlike individuals, so that society has to be re-membered in a new way'.¹⁰⁷ The fact of cannibalism, in this case, serves to illuminate the inherent contradictions within the project of Enlightenment.

¹⁰⁴ Hulme writes: 'From the middle of the thirteenth century to the end of the fifteenth, Jewish communities were massacred all over Europe and the massacres frequently followed charges of anthropophagy. The *pattern* is important: boundaries of community are often created by accusing those outside the boundary of the very practice on which the integrity of that community is founded. This is at one and the same time both a psychic process – involving repression and projection – and an ideological process – whereby the success of the projection confirms the need for the community to defend itself against the projected threat, thereby closing the circle and perpetuating it.' (Hulme, *Colonial Encounters*, p. 85.)

¹⁰⁵ Hulme, *Colonial Encounters*, p. 194.

¹⁰⁶ Gananath Obeyesekere notes that the British at length recovered some parts of Cook's body: '. . . both hands identified by a scar in one of them; the whole length of the metacarpal bone; the skull minus the scalp and the facial bones; the scalp with the hair cut short and the ears adhering to it; the bones of both arms with the skin of the forearms hanging on them; the thigh and leg bones joined together but minus the feet'. (*Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking in the Pacific* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992], p. 89.)

¹⁰⁷ Maggie Kilgour, *From Communion to Cannibalism: An Anatomy of Metaphors of Incorporation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 144.

Cannibalism serves as emblem of the ultimate threat to individualism, coherence and being – it shreds and devours the body.¹⁰⁸ In this way, the cannibal is constructed as deeply and fundamentally barbaric. At the same time, the Enlightenment thinkers were themselves perpetrating an assault upon values which were intrinsically part of the Navy in particular, and of a stable society. The irony and the fundamental contradictions are clear to be seen.

While these issues of civilization and of barbarism epitomize the extent to which colonial discourse intervenes and occupies the space of the colonized subject, they also indicate that this intervention is not simply one way. The description of cannibalism, for instance, exemplifies the degree to which contact necessarily involves a degree of cultural exchange and cultural influence. The experience and description of cannibalism impacts significantly on the understanding and behaviour of both incomers and indigenous inhabitants. In what Mary-Louise Pratt calls the 'contact zone',¹⁰⁹ interest in the subject of cannibalism illustrates the process of cross-fertilization characteristic of culture contact. The description of cannibalism which appears in the journals, in other words, is a variant of what Pratt terms 'autoethnography'¹¹⁰ – the intervention of an observed people in the metropolitan modes of understanding.

Cannibalism existed in pre-contact New Zealand (although it is thought to have appeared only after AD 1500 and mainly as a result of localized overcrowding¹¹¹) but after the arrival of Europeans was both perceived and practiced in a different way. Gananath Obeyesekere suggests that 'both the British and the Maori are fascinated by the same event: the Maori by the British enquiry about their practice of cannibalism, the British by the fantasy'.¹¹² Thus both

¹⁰⁸ As Kilgour notes: 'The cannibal is the individual's "alien" against which he constructs his identity, and whose threat to that identity is represented by literal consumption'. (From Communion to Cannibalism, p. 147.)

¹⁰⁹ See Pratt, Imperial Eyes.

¹¹⁰ See Pratt, 'Transculturation and Autoethnography: Peru, 1615/1980', in Francis Barker, Peter Hulme, Margaret Iverson (eds), Colonial Discourse/Postcolonial Theory (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994), pp. 25-45.

¹¹¹ See Salmond, Two Worlds, p. 39.

¹¹² Gananath Obeyesekere, 'Contemplation of an Event in the Death and Resurrection of James Cook,

indigenous people and incomers were touched and influenced by their interaction on this point. As Obeyesekere notes:

New Zealand scholars generally believe that Cook was treated by Maoris as a kind of god (or goblin); if so, it is possible to believe that the crew were also divinized in some form or other. But the problem with this hypothesis is that it also Europeanized Maori cannibalism, for it is virtually certain that the Maoris, unlike the Europeans, did not consume the body and blood of their deity. The coming of the British is a new and traumatic event in their history. British ethnographic inquiries produced a new discourse on cannibalism, totally unexpected by the Maori.¹¹³

Cannibalism does not exist as an uncomplicated or ideologically *neutral* concept – instead, its practice (like its image and association) is always already outlined. The absorbed interest of the British in the practice of cannibalism led to alterations in Maori behaviour; in this sense, the civilization/barbarism binary quite breaks down. It is possible to argue that the theory and practice of cannibalism is in fact partially crafted by the incomers – the ultimate taboo is in fact husbanded and fertilized by the hidden and proscribed interest in it.

This section has demonstrated the contradictions latent within the Enlightenment project and, by extension, the incoherence which is a fundamental aspect of the Pacific exploration journals. It has shown that, in many very obvious ways, the journals reflect the shifts and progressions within Enlightenment thought – the increasing attention paid to hitherto unquestioned Christian ideology, the development of a distinctively modern discourse of science which prefigures that of the nineteenth century – and has noted the profound and enabling influence of Christianity both upon an era too often considered as 'Age of Reason', and upon the notion of civility as a whole. In demonstrating the proximity and mutual dependence of the relationship between secular and religious worlds, it has shown that both overtly and unconsciously Christian doctrine is employed in order to ease the process of proto-colonization and to justify the acts arising from this process.

Explorer'. *Critical Inquiry* 18, 4 (Summer 1992), p. 638.

¹¹³ Obeyesekere, "British Cannibals", p. 644.

Notions of morality, for instance, are the justification for acts of violence against the indigenous people if these are considered to be necessary. This close relationship, however, can be seen to be one which generates ideological incoherence. While the journals at times demonstrate a distinctively modern conception of the Pacific and its peoples (as in, for example, the developing discourse of ethnology which distinguishes these documents from earlier, Renaissance exploration texts), this conception is by no means consistently maintained. The journals' descriptions of the Pacific are of cultures wholly exotic and yet altogether familiar, brought within longstanding Christian and classical paradigms of both utopia and corruption. The blurred focus betrayed by the journals, the result of a mingled discourse of the modern and pre-modern, signifies fundamental contradictions at the heart of eighteenth-century discourse. In the final analysis, it signifies an anxiety that the cherished and crucial division of the civilized and the barbaric cannot, in fact, be maintained.

Any reading of the exploration journals is necessarily informed by the knowledge of the arrival of the Gospel in the Pacific thirty years after the *Dolphin* touched at Tahiti. The journals reveal the influence of Christianity in the process of exploration and demonstrate the connections between earlier, overtly religious forms of colonialism and the ostensibly scientific eighteenth-century voyages of exploration. The imprint of Christianity on the Pacific has been very considerable – in the nineteenth century, the Pacific islands were among the most thoroughly evangelized regions of the world, and this chapter has sought to make visible the close connections between the beginnings of European exploration and the bringing of the Gospel a generation later. Christianity and colonialism have ever been closely related, impacting traumatically (though not fatally) upon the indigenous culture:

Instructions

to the Missionaries appointed to proceed in the *Royal Admiral*
to the Pacific Ocean

Beloved Brethren,

You have devoted yourselves to the Service of our Lord and Saviour, in a Work, which is, perhaps, the most important, and the most arduous, that can devolve upon his Disciples. We trust that, instead of laying a claim to distinguished regard for engaging in Missionary labours, you are duly thankful to the Providence of God, which affords you the means and opportunity of doing so; and are earnestly seeking from the Lord, that abundant measure of grace, without which, you will only expose yourselves to Ruin, and the Gospel to Reproach – 'Who is sufficient for these things?' – Our hope respecting your spiritual preservation and success, is grounded, on a conviction that the Grace of Him who hath called upon you, is sufficient; and that His promises cannot fail of their accomplishments.

[. . .]

Pray, and strive, against pride, Ambition, Vanity; against Anger, Resentment, and Insubordination; against a party Spirit; and all the Carnal Lusts, which so many, and so great temptations will tend to cherish. May the mind of Christ be evident in you, that you may be fit representatives of the prince of peace, and worthy messengers of his Gospel!

[. . .]

Neglect no means to bring them [the islanders] acquainted with the Word of God, especially in the first instance with the History of Christ and his holy precepts. These have such a stamp of divine dignity, that we may hope, if translated into the language of Heathens, they would be felt by them to be of heavenly Origin. It is on the Word of God that we may peculiarly hope for the blessing of His Holy Spirit.¹¹⁴

This link between Christianity and colonialism demonstrates the justification of analyzing 'Europe' (though to a limited extent) as a unified category. The binary historically established between a much-vaunted civility, and the barbarism of the indigenous people has its origins in both classical myth and Christian narratives. The journals highlight the extent to which the 'civilized' and the Christian inform each other, and consequently the kinship (in spite of temporal and cultural differences) between the overtly religious colonialism of the Renaissance and the

¹¹⁴ C. W. Newbury (ed.), *History of the Tahitian Mission 1799-1830, Written by John Davies, Missionary to the South Sea Islands* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Hakluyt Society, 1961), pp. 9, 10, 18.

economically inspired global expansion of eighteenth-century Britain. They also demonstrate that the instability of the ideologically vital opposition between civility and barbarity may be undermined. It is clear that to a very great extent the journals both participate in and question traditional representations of Europe and its others. In particular, the discussion of the role of cannibalism in asserting this ideologically informed binary has highlighted the manner in which this signifier of the alien and barbaric escapes, in a sense, the bounds set for it. The journals' discussion of the barbaric and its attack on the coherence of the body and thus on subjectivity, ironically results in a questioning of the secure idea of the civilized, suggesting that dominant (indeed classic) notions of otherness may be destabilized. The construction of the idea of civilization is undermined as a result of this tension between its founding principles. This manifests again what we have called a 'taxonomy of ambivalence', which in previous chapters, has been examined in the light of the shifting focus of attention between sailors and islanders. The tension between the rational and Christianity, however, exposes the instability at the foundations of civility itself.

Conclusion

The journals of Pacific exploration functioned within the construction of a traditional, linear history of Europe conceived of in terms of an enlightened project. The story of the opening of the Pacific to European economic, strategic and political influence has largely depended upon these narratives, which emphasize stable and consistent ideas of community and national unity, of authority and of discipline. Homogeneity is the key in this construction of a history, which strives to flatten out the variety of narratives and experiences which are part of the process of culture contact. Instead, the idea is emphasized of the 'imagined community', the shared communal past or common experience. Similarly, Enlightenment values of benevolence and tolerance were highlighted, and embodied in particular in the figure of Cook, the classic Enlightenment hero. The potent notions of the holistic Naval fraternity and of the ships as national embassies, were part of a portrayal of the voyages as stable, consistent and secure projections of the national will itself. The single, dominant history represented in the journals was consciously moulded by the Admiralty, which sought to censor and exclude problematic versions of that history. Consequently, on one level the journals function as effective examples of the idea of a global narrative, erasing alternative or problematic versions of history. This thesis has sought to highlight the problems and tensions which exist within these ostensibly secure narratives. While the result of this dominant and authoritative history is to emphasize the notion of a duality of colonizer and colonized, the giver and receiver of European benevolence, the category of colonizer can be shown to be as unstable and fragmented as that of the colonized; by extension, the one cannot exist in isolation from the other.

Ania Loomba has recently noted that 'many critics of postcolonial theory have blamed it for too much dependence upon post-structuralist perspectives. They claim that the insistence on multiple histories and fragmentation within these perspectives have been detrimental to thinking about the global operation of capitalism . . .'.¹ The arguments set out in this thesis have detailed the manifold ways in which poststructuralist concepts of the workings of power and textuality enable a fundamental questioning of the assumptions of capitalism, economics and colonial discourse. The notion of fragmentation can be applied to capitalism itself, so that (as this discussion has outlined) these ostensibly confident and stable ideas of economic value are refracted through a lens of cultural relativity. This reinterpretation or rereading thus exposes ideas of value and of capital to unimagined pressure, and consequently, the very notion of a global order of capitalism is reworked.

By extension, this reinterpretation also successfully challenges the charge that poststructuralist conceptions of power (as pervasive and flowing throughout society) are disabling. As this discussion has noted, the Pacific islands have been more systematically or *emphatically* colonized, and their oral histories and traditions exposed to greater strain, than any other region of the globe. Throughout, this thesis has stressed the notion of a 'silent land', the irrecoverable indigenous experience. The exploration journals, however, demonstrate that Foucault's conception of a web of power relations show that colonial power was never held entirely by the colonizer. This category was fragile, riven with contradictions and fundamentally unstable, as were the preconceptions and values brought by the newcomers. This emphasis upon the instability of the 'colonizer', together with Mary-Louise Pratt's notion of transculturation and the flow of influence between cultures, signifies the latent power of these 'silenced' cultures. Manifestly, they do not speak; they do, however, leave a trace or shadow upon the texts which have been the subject of this discussion. Stuart Hall has noted the manner in which 'differential temporalities and

¹ Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), p. 13.

histories have been irrevocably and violently yoked together² by the experience of colonization, and this discussion has emphasized the mutuality of this influence.

Throughout, this thesis has emphasized the *material* and its impact upon representations of culture contact. It has explored issues of materiality of the body, of the strain placed upon notions of community and identity by, for example, the tensions inherent in naval life. This emphasis upon materiality – and principally upon the materiality of the body – functions to bridge the divide which exists between the material conditions of (proto-)colonial rule and analysis of literary representations of that rule. Loomba notes:

On the one hand, we can see the power of texts and read power as a text; on the other, colonialism-as-text can be shrunk to a sphere away from the economic and historic, thus repeating the conservative and humanist isolation of the literary text from the contexts in which it was produced and circulated.³

The necessary assertion of the significance of the economic, the social, the historical and the material, removes this apparent gap between representation and reality. Each of the four chapters in this thesis has sought to achieve this linkage of materiality and textuality by emphasizing both the economic and the cultural.

Chapter One has shown that economics are vital to the process of (proto-)colonization. The origins of the voyages of exploration are economic, notwithstanding their ostensible scientific genesis. The compulsion to (dis)prove the existence of *terra australis* originated in curiosity, but also in strategic and political will and primarily in commercial need – the importance of establishing new markets at a time of unprecedented economic growth and geo-political rivalry. The journals illustrate effectively the ideological power and influence of the market at the onset of the age of capitalism and of European expansion. They also, however, effectively illustrate the fragility of this ideological dominance and the importance of

² Stuart Hall, 'When was the "Post-colonial"? Thinking at the Limit', in *The Post-colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*, Iain Chambers and Lidia Curti eds (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 253.

³ Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, p. 97.

understanding the notion of economic relativity. The journal writers' notions of value and exchange can be read in a manner which fundamentally destabilizes orthodox ideas of the meaning and significance of commerce and exchange. The crucial process of speculation represented in the journal narratives, consequently, is never wholly secure.

Chapter Two has questioned the constructions of community and identity formulated in the journals. Sexuality intersected with race and class in a manner which highlighted the connections between the sailors and the indigenous people of the Pacific, thus undermining the security of the category of colonizer. The construction of the idea of sexual deviancy sustained the notion of the 'imagined community' and yet also sustained the class-based divisions which were a latent feature of these naval communities. The discipline to which sexuality was subjected in the Navy also manifested the ideological importance of racial purity and the impossibility of this idea; it highlighted the fear and knowledge of 'disunity' which informed the construction of the Naval disciplinary apparatus. The racial hierarchy which informed Enlightenment thinking concerning race was emphatically destabilized by the fact of miscegenation, which made tangible fearful visions of contamination of the bloodline, of the stock of the nation. As the journals illustrate, this fear is very real, and yet miscegenation is often tolerated, manifesting a problematic in the workings of authority. This idea of marginality and discipline has been further explored in Chapter Three which emphasizes the notion, already established in relation to the idea of sexuality, of the body as a focus of tension and ambivalence. In Pacific exploration, the crucial issue of bodily security was systematically undermined in relation to real and imagined disease. The skin became 'the interface between the self and the world',⁴ and the absence of somatic purity, signified by the contamination of the skin by disease and the self-inflicted marks of the tattoo, paralleled the absence of that cultural purity which was essential

⁴ Terry Collits, 'Theorizing Racism', in Chris Tiffin and Alan Lawson (eds), *De-Scribing Empire: Post-coloniality and Textuality* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 65-66.

to the unified idea of the colonizing imagination. Anthony Pagden writes that 'to the traveller and the colonist, what was on one side of the ocean remained stubbornly insulated from everything that was on the other'.⁵ The tattooed body brought back to Europe, however, is an instance of a cultural impact, of the presence of the new, alien and profoundly unsettling in the metropolis.

The security of this imagination became compromised by the tattoo which problematized, overwrote and contaminated the secure, civilized white body. Similarly, the fact and fear of disease itself destabilized, in a more practical and literal sense, the security and confidence of the voyages themselves.

The idea of a blurred division between an imagined 'civilization' and 'barbarism' has been further developed in the final chapter, which demonstrates that the the idea of civility itself is ambivalent and contradictory in origin. The representation of the Pacific in the journal narratives in particular, and in European culture in general, was based upon a particular idea of civilization and society which embodied reason, law, science. These notions could then be set against an evolving idea of Pacific societies as ungoverned by these principles, and thus could set the stage for a gradual economic, political and ideological absorption of the Pacific and its material and human resources. This vital idea of civilization has been shown to be destabilized from within, for example in the discussion of cannibalism in this final chapter, which demonstrates that the binary of civility and barbarism is laden with tension and contradiction.

Our readings of the journals illustrate the mechanisms which were employed to cover this instability. In the first place, there were the practical strategies of the Admiralty, which seized and appropriated as many written versions of these voyages as it could, and which sought to provide authoritative versions of the voyages and their discoveries. At the same time, the stress upon discipline emphasized the importance of regimented power structures, of authority and of the

⁵ Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 4.

maintenance of a coherent national identity. Instability and ambivalence were covered or obscured by emphasizing empiricism, observation, science, increasingly developed methods of classification, the 'facts' which were generated by contact. We can see, therefore, the evolution of this increasingly monolithic historical version of the exploration of the Pacific, one which laid stress not upon occupation and enslavement but upon principles of humanity, tolerance and benevolence. This highlighting of notions of 'truth' and scrupulous and precise reporting assisted in the creation of a system of representation which was aggressive, selective and highly absorptive. Representation and textuality were used as weapons, foreshadowing the later systematic use of force in the conquest and appropriation of territories. The journal narratives anticipate this textual and physical violence in that they posit certain notions pertaining to ownership, to possession, to *rights*. Conversely, however, they also reveal the limits of this power.

This thesis, then, has explored the manifold ways in which the journals of exploration expose the presence of instability and ambivalence within ostensibly confident narratives of power and progress. This instability demonstrates a continually shifting focus of attention, dwelling now upon the sailors, now upon the islanders encountered; and thus underscores effectively the fragility of colonial power and authority. This mobility of focus we have called a taxonomy of ambivalence, and the unruly subjects of this discussion – race, class, sexuality, the people of the Pacific, the sailors who interact with them, the textuality of the journals themselves – highlight in fundamental ways both the impossibility of the unified category of the colonizer and the instability of the colonizer/colonized duality. The exploration journals have been read in order to theorize that which Foucault has called the 'archaeology of silence' and in so doing have demonstrated that the issue cannot be theorized in terms of victor and victim. These categories dissolve in the face of a continually shifting ambiguity, for as the exploration journals show, the one is the other, or rather, these stable and established categories by no means exist – the sailors, for example, function as an intrinsic and vital part of the (proto-)colonizing

mission, while at the same time they are the focus of the disciplinary gaze. Consequently, this discussion has not been an attempt at a triumphalist uncovering of a plurality of histories. Such histories cannot be recovered – the Pacific is indeed a 'silent land' in these terms – but this thesis has explored both the absence of the record of articulation and the textual instability of the exploration journals. Consequently, the aims of this thesis have been neither celebratory nor expansive but rather *local* in emphasis – to point out the many threads which constitute a cultural history.

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