A SEA OF ISLANDS

TROPES OF TRAVEL AND ADVENTURE IN THE PACIFIC 1846-1894

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with images of the South Pacific that were built up in a variety of travel books and adventure stories in the second half of the nineteenth century. The thesis will read this literature alongside the explorer, castaway and missionary narratives that formed the body of Pacific writing up to the 1850s. It will argue that these images are informed by a set of recognisable tropes and narrative traditions, which the thesis will identify through imperial narratives from outside the Pacific. It will discuss the degree to which these tropes continued to dominate representations of the Pacific.

Chapter 2 will examine the influence of images of the American Indians through Herman Melville's *Typee*. Secondary texts used are William Mariner's *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands*, George Vason's *An Authentic Narrative of Four Years' Residence at Tongataboo*, and Puritan captivity narratives from New England.

Chapter 3 discusses Polynesian sexuality and 'interracial' relationships through Pierre Loti's *Tahiti: The Marriage of Loti*, representations of the Mutiny on the *Bounty*, and an imperial tradition of sentimental love stories. This chapter is also interested in links between images of the Orient and the Pacific.

Chapter 4 looks at the children's adventure story writer, W.H.G. Kingston, alongside missionary and travel writing from Fiji, and is particularly interested in images of slavery and Africa, and the altering meaning of savagery in mid-Victorian Britain.

Chapter 5 looks first at the writings of Charles Warren Stoddard, and then at the travel writing and adventure stories of Robert Louis Stevenson, and will explore the differences between the two types of writing, as Stevenson began to seriously challenge in his fiction the tropes that were dominating representations of the Pacific. This chapter will question whether it is ever fully possible to free oneself from these narrative traditions.

'[There is a] gulf of difference between viewing the Pacific as "islands in the far sea" and as "a sea of islands". The first emphasises dry surfaces in a vast ocean far from the centres of power. When you focus this way you stress the smallness and remoteness of the islands. The second is a more holistic perspective in which things are seen in the totality of their relationships.'

(Epeli Hau'ofa, 'Our Sea of Islands')

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It was said of Henry James, who was a close and attentive reader of his friend Robert Louis Stevenson's letters from the Pacific, that he could have taken a First in any Samoan subject. The same could probably be said of my family, and I would like to thank my partner, Eileen Lewis, and the children Joe, Rachel, Daniel, and Gwynne for all their help, support and love, which must at times have appeared to operate on the law of diminishing return.

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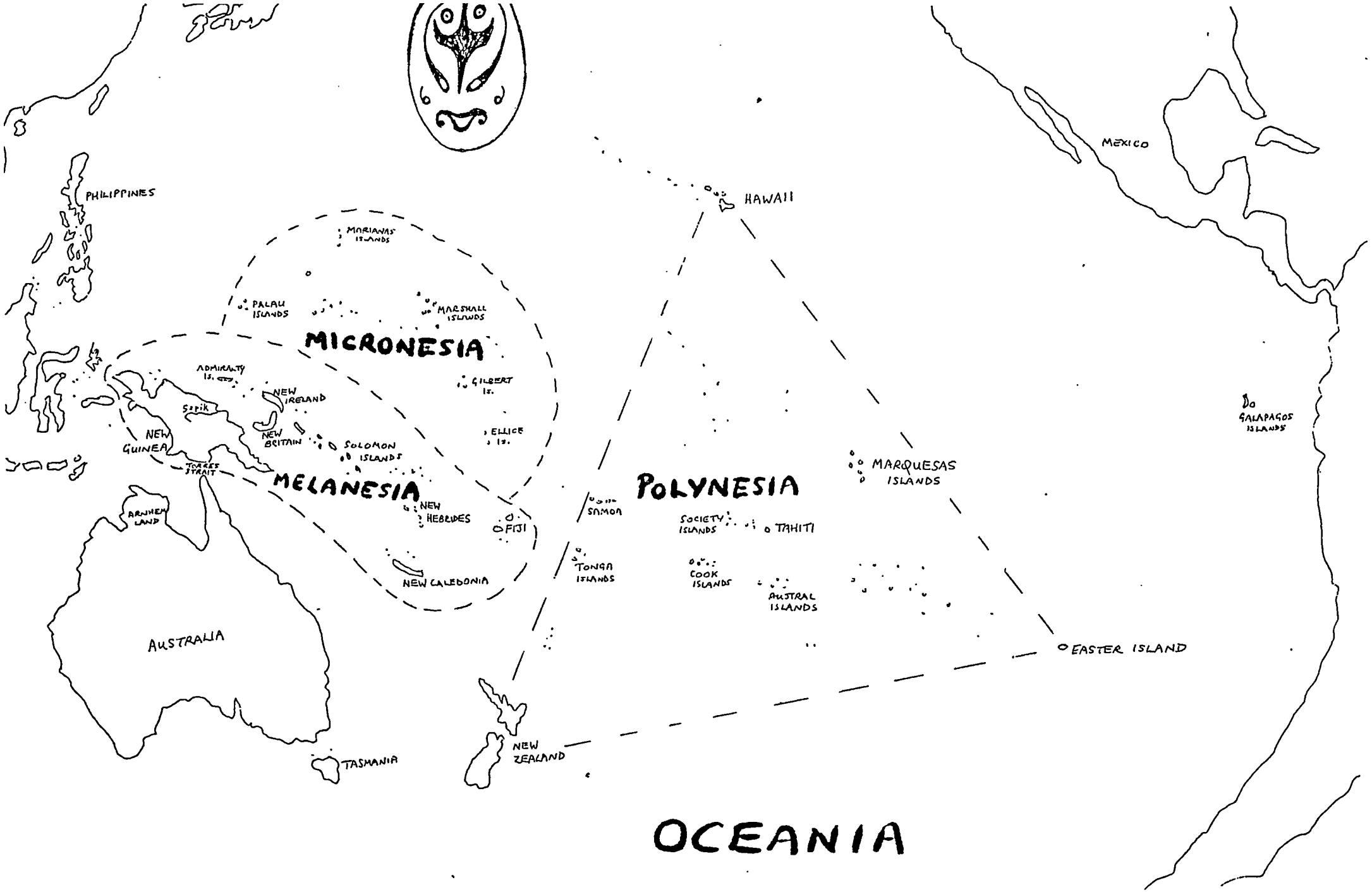
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TAHITI
COOK ISLANDS
AUSTRAL ISLANDS
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MEXICO
GALAPAGOS ISLANDS
OCEANIA

1. Introduction

i. Mapping the Pacific

There are two founding European myths of the Pacific. The first might be called the Myth of the Seductive South Seas, and it began with Bougainville's arrival in Tahiti in 1768, when, as Gavan Daws puts it, 'white men stood upon the beaches of a dream world, embraced their nymphs, and walked into the golden age'.[1] This sees the Pacific as an 'exotic' paradise of sexual freedom, and as with Edward Said's qualification about the European construction of the Orient, one ought never to assume that it is simply 'a structure of lies and myths which, were the truth about them to be told, would simply blow away.'[2] Bougainville's frigate *La Boudeuse* was the second European ship to visit Tahiti. The first, Captain Wallis' *Dolphin*, which had arrived eight months earlier, also enjoyed Tahitian sexual hospitality, but only after an attack on the *Dolphin* had been bloodily dispersed by cannon-fire. It seems probable that when the Tahitians opened sexual relationships with the Europeans it was initially a strategy to reestablish some form of balance of power; it became their way of coping with the 'new' and getting something material from it. But Polynesian sexuality was, as Bougainville records of the Tahitian welcome, both startlingly different and familiar, a delightful mixture, to the Frenchmen, of naive innocence and earthy enthusiasm:

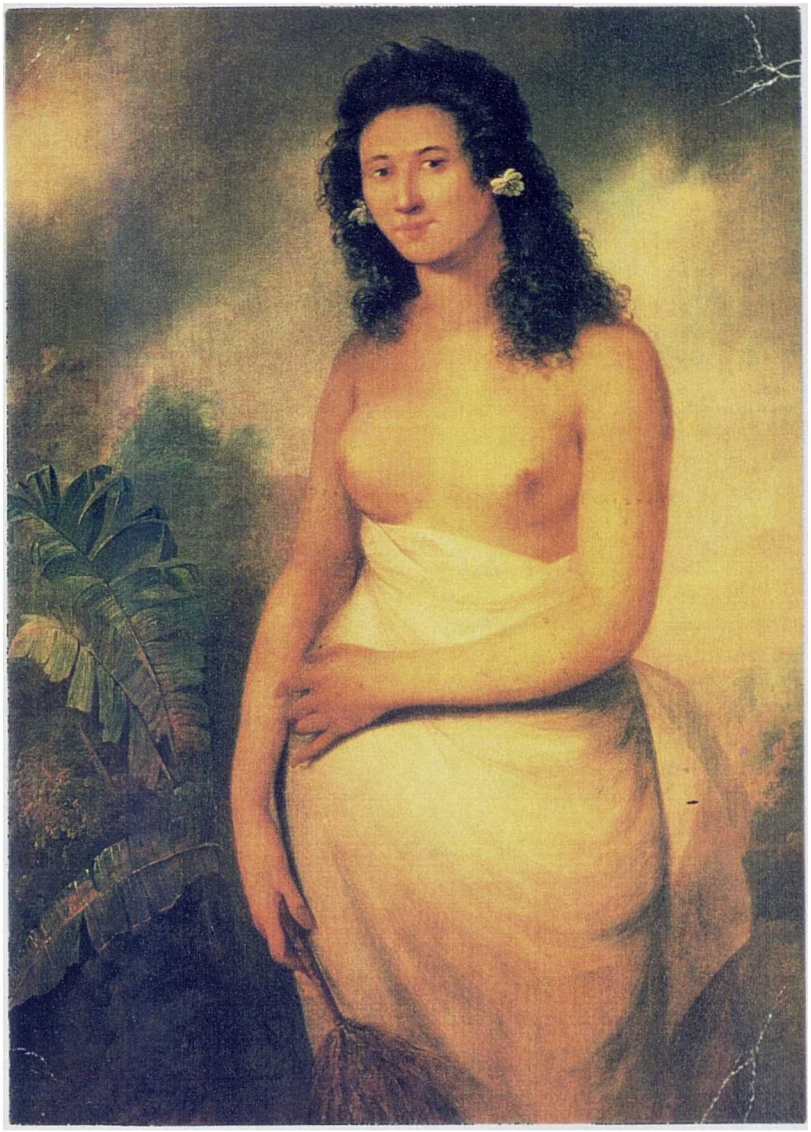

Figure 1. *Poedooa, daughter of Orio, Chief of Ulieta in the Society Islands*, John Webber (1777).

> Most of the nymphs were naked ... they teased us first from their canoes; in this teasing, in spite of their naiveté, we could perceive some embarrassment. Either nature has embellished the female sex everywhere with an ingenuous shyness or, even in the countries where the frankness of the golden age reigns, women appear not to want what they most desire. The men, either more simple or honest, soon explained themselves clearly ... and their unequivocal gestures demonstrated exactly how we were to make [their] acquaintance.[3]

It was during the eighteenth century that classical Greece began to be seen as the origins of European civilisation, and Bougainville describes Tahiti as a version of this Golden

Age: the women are nymphs, and Bougainville names Tahiti New Cytherea, drawing Polynesia and Europe together through the metaphor, popular amongst the early voyagers and artists, which sees Tahiti as Europe's youth. Webber's painting of Poedua, made on Cook's last visit to Tahiti, combines a 'classical' exoticism with a frankly erotic gaze at the implied male viewer (fig. 1). The Seductive South Seas was predominantly a myth surrounding the special relationship between European men and Polynesian women epitomised by the intimate 'exchange' with Poedua. The irony of Webber's painting as an icon of the Seductive South Seas is that it was probably drawn when Poedua and her father were being held hostage in the cabin of the *Discovery*, against the return of two deserters.[4] The myth gained stature in 1789 when the *Bounty* mutineers took arms against the 'tyrannical' Captain Bligh, and sailed away from Tahiti with their Polynesian sweethearts to found their island paradise - and find their own murderous destinies. This myth informs the proto-Pacific romance of a lone European man escaping a rotting civilisation for an idyll amongst the beautiful nymphs in the natural world of Polynesia: the island romances of Charles Warren Stoddard and Pierre Loti, the paintings of Paul Gauguin during the nineteenth century, and the dream of Bali-ha'i in the film *South Pacific*, in more recent times.

The Myth of the Seductive South Seas engaged with the possibility of an alternative life: of leisure instead of work, of a sexuality free from the constraints contained within the Christian indictment of the sins of the flesh, with, in short, the possibility that Europe had found a perfect society existing within a hitherto undisturbed natural world. The Enlightenment's celebration of rationalism and progress did not exclude a romantic yearning for the primitive; indeed, finding what were the fundamental drives of human

nature, which the 'unchanged' primitive was considered to hold, was a basic tenet of Enlightenment philosophy. The unformed Noble Savage living in a state of nature where the physical and moral aspects of sexuality were not in opposition, was part of both an imaginative and a scientific quest.

Slavery, and the human degradation that accompanied Europe's version of it in the plantations of the Americas, had effectively debarred Africans from being seen in any meaningful sense as Noble Savages. Although the Abolition movement used the figure in its campaigns, the nobility of the African 'savage'[5] was seen as tenuous at best.[6] Abolitionist texts constructed Africans as Noble Slaves rather than Noble Savages, and they were seen as loyal, good-hearted and long-suffering - unlike the 'wandering savage' of the American woods. The lighter-skinned American Indians had provided the model for the Noble Savage, but their reputation for nobility could not easily be reconciled with their demonisation by European colonists intent on taking the Indian land. The apparently gentle indigenous Caribbean islanders, who had briefly offered the possibility of another model, had simply 'disappeared' in front of civilisation. In the Pacific, a natural world met the first representatives of civilisation and apparently welcomed them; and European responses were divided between a hope that history could be rewritten, that Europe's 'enlightened knowledge' of Polynesia would not be marked by the violence and oppression of earlier colonising movements, and a sense that the contamination and destruction of the natural world was inevitable: that the Pacific would in turn 'disappear'.

The second founding myth of the Pacific began a little over ten years after the 'discovery' of Tahiti with the death of Captain Cook at Kealakekua Bay, Hawaii in 1779. Cook's

death, as Rod Edmond has put it, 'has become mythologized as the founding moment of Pacific history. It is that beginning which, as Peter Hulme has argued in the North American context, is necessary if colonization is to be justified and its violence disavowed or suppressed. From this point of view the death of Cook is the Pacific's original sin, its fall for which Polynesians must atone.'[7] Cook's reputation as the 'founding father' of the Pacific has endured, and the land around the monument erected at Kealakekua Bay in 1874 remains 'hallowed land', still officially under British rule: it is only recently that the Australian navy has taken over responsibility from the Royal Navy for an annual visit to tend to the monument. The sense of outrage against the Hawaiians at the time of Cook's death was strong. Anna Seward's poem, 'Elegy on Captain Cook', which admittedly was published within a year of his death when feelings were still running high, takes an extreme but by no means untypical view of Hawaii, showing it to be a cannibalistic hell where 'human fiends their dire libations pour', and feed their 'lust of hunger' on the limbs of Cook.[8] The scenario was repeated in other parts of the Pacific with the death and possible cannibalism of the missionary John Williams on the beach of Eromanga in 1839, and again in 1871 when Bishop Patteson was killed on the tiny Melanesian atoll of Nukapu. There were stories of entire shipwrecked crews being butchered and eaten as soon as they reached the shores of the Fijian islands.[9] This is the Myth of the Savage South Seas. It informs the figures of the ferocious chiefs beloved of Victorian children's adventure stories, but it also supplies another key element to the Pacific romance, and this is the lone European's idyll amongst the beautiful nymphs *and cannibal kings* of Polynesia.

Whilst today the Myth of the Seductive South Seas dominates the European image of the

Pacifc, during the nineteenth century the Myth of the Savage South Seas was equally persuasive, and this thesis is concerned with the interplay between them, and the ways in which the two myths were resolved. Few islands were seen by Europeans to be either entirely savage or entirely idyllic during the nineteenth century. There were 'many' Pacifics. Some islands gained particular reputations for treachery, some for cannibalism, and others for endemic war. Some, like Savage Island (Niue), were 'named' on the basis of that important first encounter with the European navigators: the Tongans were apparently plotting to murder Captain Cook who, in a fine historical irony, had named them the Friendly islanders. Even Tahiti, which on the whole has retained its paradisal reputation to this day, was accused of infanticide, human sacrifice and violent war by the first missionaries, and both Cook and Bougainville witnessed human sacrifices on the island.

All of these groups were initially known as 'Polynesia' - many islands. The further, and significant, subdivisions into Micronesia, the small islands, and Melanesia, the black islands, were to come later. Nowadays, it has become popular to describe the geographical spread of the island people from South-East Asia in terms of a Polynesian Triangle drawn between New Zealand, Hawaii, and Easter Island, and including Tahiti, the Marquesas, Tonga, Samoa, the Paumotus, and the Cook Islands. I will be using 'Polynesia' in its eighteenth and early nineteenth century sense: Fiji on the borders of Melanesia, the Gilberts and the Palau Islands in Micronesia, are all Polynesian islands in the terms of this thesis.

There were many different Pacifics, each with their own cultures and histories of

European contact, and there were equally many different perspectives on them. Bougainville's descriptions of Noble Savages living in a Golden Age have a completely different tone to Cook's reports from the Pacific. The exploration journals of Captain Cook have become legendary as models of accurate observation, and Cook's reputation endures today partly through representing all that was best in the Enlightenment ideals of reason and humanitarianism. Cook's biographer, J.C. Beaglehole, describes the intellectual climate of the mid-eighteenth century as a time when 'a man gifted enough in practical ways could add the clarity of science to his own clarity of mind'.[10] The 'great navigator' did, on occasion it is true, see Noble Savages - in one famous entry describing the natives of New Holland as 'far more happier than we Europeans; being wholy [*sic*] unacquainted not only with the superfluous but the necessary Conveniences so much sought after in Europe, they are happy in not knowing the use of them' - but Beaglehole puts this down to Cook's relative newness to the scientific business: 'There are simplicities still in this sailor, one perceives.'[11] Cook's 'naiveté' is made into a strength, into the willingness to learn and grow in stature.

The impulse towards the *study* of the Polynesians was strong from the very beginning. The Master of the *Dolphin*, George Robertson, essayed some tentative theories on the origins of the Tahitians, starting a European fascination with how the islands were populated which culminated in Thor Heyerdahl's *Kon-Tiki* expedition. Cook was accompanied on his first voyage by the distinguished 'scientific gentleman', Joseph Banks, and on the second by the father and son team of Johann Rheinhold and George Forster. Eighteenth century Europe was interested in other societies, and generally confident that they could be understood through observation and categorisation. It was an age which felt

itself to be enlightened and excited by the scientific knowledge that was pushing out the boundaries of the old theologically determined knowledge. As Anthony Pagden has recently shown in *European Encounters with the New World*, the 'discovery' of America had been centrally important to the Enlightenment's sense of liberation:

> In America, it seemed, Europe had not only discovered an unknown geographical space. It had also discovered something about its own past: that the accumulated wisdom of the Ancients might be, if not entirely false, at least seriously flawed. If the knowledge of the Ancients had been so entirely limited in this geographical respect who could know, asked Erasmus as early as 1517, in what other as yet undiscovered ways it might also turn out to have been in error?[12]

The pursuit of knowledge could open yet more worlds to the enquiring gaze of Europe, and the Cook voyages had 'the enlarged and benevolent design of promoting the happiness of the human species', as a biographer of Cook wrote within a few years of his death.[13] Cook's professionalism, his empiricism, and his benevolent interest in, and friendship towards the peoples that he met, have helped to keep him 'an ambiguously un-Imperial figure, despite the consequences of his navigation.'[14]

It is only recently, with the publication of Gananath Obeyesekere's provocative discussion of the mythology surrounding Cook's death, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook*, that this image of Cook as the benevolent founding father of the Pacific has started to be seriously challenged. Obeyesekere sees another side of Cook, one subject to fits of violent temper, brutality, and irrational behaviour - a Kurtz figure that gradually begins to dominate Cook's Prospero persona.[15] Obeyesekere's researches into Cook's third and last voyage, when Cook was under considerable strain on his tenth year of practically continuous exploration, have at the very least cast doubt on Cook's reputation for always being an

objective and trustworthy reporter. New biographers of Cook will have to look closely at the outburst of violence that marked his first contact with New Zealanders, rather than just accept Cook's version of the incident.

Beachcomber and castaway narratives appeared shortly after Polynesia's 'discovery', when whalers, sealers and traders started to work the area. These produced at their best some fine works of ethnography. Although none of the beachcombers were trained observers like the scientific gentlemen on the Cook voyages, their writings were validated by their ability to speak sympathetically about a culture from within: William Mariner's *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands* (1816), written by Dr. John Martin, is one which is still consulted by anthropologists today. It was believed in the eighteenth century that a true picture of a society as an integrated whole could be reached through the careful observation of its parts, and as beachcombers' very survival often depended on their ability to read the power structures of their host societies accurately, their narratives had real ethnographic value. Christopher Herbert has argued recently in *Culture and Anomie* that Martin's attempt to give a true account of another culture through showing Mariner's 'total immersion' in Tongan society, anticipated Malinowski's theorisation of the 'participant observation' that has formed the basis of modern ethnography.[16] Whilst the principle of giving an accurate picture of a society through observed detail was not held to be problematic at the time, Mary Louise Pratt has argued persuasively in *Imperial Eyes* that no such narratives are 'true', but are all prefigured and influenced by, and gain authority from, other accounts and narrative traditions. Going further than this, James Clifford in *The Predicament of Culture* has questioned whether it is now even possible to represent other cultures from the viewpoint of the 'unauthoritative' participant observer:

'Experiential, interpretive, dialogical, and polyphonic processes are at work, discordantly, in any ethnography, but coherent presentation presupposes a controlling mode of authority.'[17]

Other beachcomber narratives, such as renegade missionary George Vason's *An Authentic Narrative of Four Years Residence at Tongataboo* (1810), capitalised on the public's expectation of exotic Polynesia sexuality to produce works of limited ethnographic value, but great sensationalism. There was a long tradition of exciting castaway and captivity narratives associated with Europe's imperial expansion from the fifteenth century onwards, and through the Pacific's popular reputation for beauty and brutality, and the interest generated in the area by the Cook voyages, Pacific castaway narratives proved to be immediately popular. George Keate's account of the shipwreck of Captain Wilson's *Antelope* on Palau, and the crew's welcome by the king, Abba Thule, who helped them build a boat and prepare for their return to Macao, was published in 1783 as *An Account of the Pellew Islands*; it ran to five London editions in fifteen years, was published in Dublin, Perth and Nottingham, and was translated into French and German.[18] As Bernard Smith has pointed out in *European Vision and the South Pacific*, Keates' account is noteworthy both for refraining 'from discussing the sexual habits of the natives or of any encounters between the sailors and the native women that might give cause for criticism', and for the changing 'nobility' of the islanders traced in 'a movement away from physical beauty to the expression of nobility of character'.[19] *The Interesting and Affecting Narrative of Prince Lee Boo* (1789), the son of Abba Thule who came to London with the crew of the *Antelope*, told effectively the same story, but still went to seventeen editions between 1789 and 1827.[20] Both these texts saw the Palau islanders as Noble

Savages, unspoilt people whose natural virtues questioned aspects of civilisation. Seeing the same islanders after his ship the *Mentor* was wrecked off the Palaus in 1832, however, Horace Holden 'was filled with horror by the sight of beings apparently human, and yet almost destitute of the ordinary marks of humanity'. The thought of living amongst them was 'like the contemplation of imprisonment for life in the gloomy cells of a dungeon'.[21] The difference between the perceptions of Captain Wilson and Horace Holden is connected with a range of historical, ideological and sociological forces operating on both sides. One important difference is that virtually the whole crew of the *Antelope* was saved, along with a plentiful supply of firearms, whereas Holden and his friend Benjamin Nute were unarmed and powerless.

The missionary presence was, and still is, highly influential in the Pacific. The London Missionary Society decided to locate its first mission in Polynesia in 1797 partly because of its reputation for gentle savagery. Not surprisingly, Hawaii was not chosen. Narratives of the first group to land in Tahiti from the ship, *Duff*, and an unfortunate smaller party including the errant George Vason that went on to found short-lived missions in Tonga and the Marquesas, started to be published in missionary magazines from 1802 onwards.

The two outstanding studies to be produced by missionaries are William Ellis' account of Tahiti and the Society Islands, *Polynesian Researches* (1831), and Thomas Williams' *Fiji and the Fijians* (1858); John Williams' *Missionary Enterprises* (1838) was also a widely read and popular account of evangelising the South Seas, especially after Williams' 'martyrdom' in 1839. Missionaries were as deeply suspicious of the 'natural life' that

attracted beachcombers as the beachcombers were suspicious of missionary competition for influence with the islanders: when L.M.S. missionaries landed on Tonga in 1796 there was practically open warfare between them and three escaped convicts from Australia. Heroes to some, although certainly not to all of the European public, missionaries tend to be seen as the 'kill-joys' of the Pacific, forcing the nymphs to wear clothes and conform to Christian codes of sexual conduct. There is much truth in this, but missionaries like Ellis and Thomas Williams were fascinated by the cultures that they were engaged in destroying, and their detailed ethnographies pay testimony to this, despite their obvious partiality.

Exploration, missionary and beachcomber narratives formed the body of Pacific literature in the first half of the nineteenth century, and it was drawn on heavily by the later writers of fiction, despite the fact that most had first-hand experience of their own of the islands, and also despite many of the novelists taking issue with the assumptions and ideologies of, especially, missionary writings. Herman Melville, for instance, uses William Ellis' *Polynesian Researches* in *Typee* whilst appearing to question the missionary's authoritative production of knowledge about Polynesian cultures. The main novelists I will be discussing are Melville, Pierre Loti, W.H.G. Kingston, R.M. Ballantyne, Charles Warren Stoddard, Louis Becke and Robert Louis Stevenson. All except the children's novelists, Ballantyne and Kingston, knew the Pacific; two of them were professional writers when they arrived. Melville and Loti came to the area as professional seamen, Becke as a trader; Stevenson and Stoddard, near the end of the nineteenth century when this was more possible, as literary tourists.

The novelists brought their own literary traditions to island narratives. Preeminent was Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), which should rightly have been the first Pacific novel. Based on the story of Alexander Selkirk who was marooned on the island of Juan Fernandez off the West coast of South America, Defoe relocated the island in the Caribbean when telling his archetypal tale of the building of a European colony. In Defoe's novel, the Old World of Europe and North Africa is a place where the familiar and unproductive cycles of piracy, captivity and survival are played out between Crusoe and the ancient enemies of the Christians, the 'Moors'. The New World is a place where resourcefulness and enterprise are rewarded, and the relocation of Crusoe's island within the network of European empire forms an important part of Defoe's strategy for grafting the new ideologies of bourgeois economic expansion onto the old narratives of captivity and romance. *Crusoe* created the narrative expectations of all the island romances that were to follow: encounters with savage and friendly natives, European resourcefulness, the threat to a European identity, the questioning of the values of civilisation, and the inevitable return to that civilisation, morally, if not always materially, the richer.

All of the writers had different agendas, different expectations, and often very different theories of 'savagery'. The European flirtation with Noble Savages hardly survived the eighteenth century: in fact, the experience of the Savage South Seas was partly responsible for the demise of the Noble Savage as a figure of any real integrity in European thought. They could still be seen as Children of Nature, but this implied a far more hierarchical relationship with an adult civilisation, as well as the expectation of childish passions. Theories of human progression which had currency during the Enlightenment were questioned by the 'inability' of the Polynesian savage to 'progress', even when exposed

to the practical examples of European civilisation. 'Europeans have visited them at times for these ten years past, yet we find neither new arts nor improvements in the old, nor have they copied after us in any one thing,' wrote Captain Cook on his last disenchanted meeting with the Tahitians in 1778.[22] Missionaries subscribed to a different view of history, believing that after the Fall humankind had lost its innocence and had suffered the drastic moral degeneration that could be seen at its worst in the 'depraved' practices of the savages of the South Seas. The degeneration theory was not incompatible with theories of progress, for 'nothing prevented the defenders of orthodox theology from viewing history as an unfolding of successively more perfect moral and physical states. After the "fall," in other words, humanity was seen as struggling to regain the perfection it had once lost.'[23] The missionary conviction of the universality and innate improvability of mankind - when God was rediscovered by the sinner - was also put under pressure by the feeling that they would never be able to change the heathen.

Racial theory and racism grew with imperial expansion in the nineteenth century as a way of establishing and retaining authority over the proliferating imperial subjects. When the 'white hunter', Frederick Selous, stood on the ruined walls of the 'lost city' of Zimbabwe in 1893, he was able to interweave theories of racial evolution, degeneration, blood-based theories of 'miscegenation', a Romantic tradition of ruined civilisations, and the European legend of Prester John, with no apparent sense of any contradiction, to account for the glory that was Zimbabwe and the 'inferior' state of the local inhabitants that surrounded him.[24] Fiction anticipated him. Rider Haggard based his fictional 'white hunter', Allan Quatermain, on Selous, and seven years earlier, in *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), he had had Quatermain discover the lost land of Kukuana: just as Quatermain thinks that the

technologically 'advanced' mines and roads of 'primitive' Kukuana could only have been built centuries earlier by Phoenicians, so Selous argues that Zimbabwe had originally been built by a long extinct commercial people from Southern Arabia. Everything was worked out in advance. By the end of the nineteenth century, the eye of the traveller, imperial fiction, history and racial theory were mutually supportive in an affiliated discourse of European control over the Other.

Africa has its own history of European representations, and it would not be true to say that all Africans were seen as dismissively as Selous sees 'the Bantus'. But nonetheless, there was far more of a European consensus about African savagery: by the end of the nineteenth century, in the period of 'high imperialism', savagery was far more firmly tied to colour and had become virtually synonymous with Africa, as it had been with Polynesia a hundred years earlier, and America a hundred years before that. What is particularly interesting about the representations of the Pacific, in the context of this thesis, is that the all-encompassing theories of 'race' through which the history of the world was narrated by the end of the nineteenth century, were only beginning to supersede the older theological and philosophical theories of humankind. The eye of the Pacific traveller was less certain in its gaze on the infinite variety of the islanders.

ii. The Autoptic Eye

My subject in this thesis is the production and circulation of a set of images about the Pacific through the travel writing and adventure stories of the second half of the

nineteenth century. Although travel writing was an enormously popular genre in its own right in the nineteenth century, I share the opinion of Brian Street in *The Savage in Literature* that fiction absorbed the scientific and travel writing of the day, and re-presented its theories to an even wider reading public.[25] This is particularly true of children's adventure stories and the popular fiction that drew widely on the many factual narratives of the South Seas, and drastically simplified the complexity of their representations; but it is true also of the adult adventures, the island romances that form the bulk of Pacific fiction.

Since the appearance of *Orientalism* in 1978, Edward Said's ideas have been a starting point for most people interested in the field of colonial representation and the production of knowledge of other cultures. Said's Foucauldian model of European control over the Orient being exercised through a set of associated discourses which deal with the Orient 'by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, [and] ruling over it', has provided a theoretical framework for postcolonial studies within which imperialism can be addressed as an inclusive narrative; a framework that allows connections to be found amongst a variety of seemingly disparate authors, texts and experiences.[26] Said argues that, 'In any instance of at least written language, there is no such thing as a delivered presence, but a *re-presence*, or a representation.'[27] In the terms of the Orient, writers, travellers, or academics encountering 'new', or 'undiscovered' parts of the East had a canon of existing Orientalist knowledge on which to work. This 'timeless' knowledge of the Orient, Said argues, 'can accommodate Aeschylus, say, and Victor Hugo, Dante and Karl Marx.'[28] A major part of Said's argument is that Orientalism as a structured set of attitudes and images can be traced back

in an unbroken line to early Greek tragedy.

Almost from the time of its first appearance, however, *Orientalism* has been seen as a problematic text for itself replicating and reinforcing Europe's structures.[29] Aijaz Ahmad, in his recently published book, *In Theory*, disagrees with Said 'so fundamentally on issues both of theory and of history that [their] respective understandings of the world ... are simply irreconcilable'.[30] Where Said sees the text shaping history, Ahmad sees Said's emphasis on discursive practices obscuring the facts of historical oppression that made the discourse possible in the first place. Said's notion of a 'unilinear' model of Orientalism stretching back to antiquity is created, Ahmad argues, by Said's determination to provide a 'counter-classic' to Eric Auerbach's account in *Mimesis* 'of the seamless genesis of European realism and rationalism from Greek Antiquity to the modernist moment.'[31] As Auerbach had begun his history of Western Humanist thought with Homer, so must Said start with Greek tragedy, Ahmad writes, arguing that in so doing Said reinforces the notion of a canonical tradition of Humanism, even though he may expose its complicity in the history of colonialism. What particularly worries Ahmad in *Orientalism* is the apparent separation of Orientalism as a 'timeless' European structure with its roots in Antiquity, from the process of colonialism: 'so insistent is Said in identifying [Orientalism's] origins in European Antiquity and its increasing elaboration throughout the European Middle Ages that it seems to be the *constituting element*, transhistorically, of what he calls "the European imagination".'[32] This form of narrative predictability in representations of the Orient is combined with Said's Nietzschean conviction that there can never be true representations, only *mis*representations - a theoretical position to which Ahmad is, indeed, fundamentally opposed.

Influenced also by the writings of James Clifford and Mary Louise Pratt on ethnography and travel writing, I lean more to Said's position on the impossibility of truthful representation. But Ahmad's criticism of *Orientalism* underlines one of the key problems with using an Orientalist model in the Pacific, for whereas Europe had always to an extent 'known' the Orient, the Pacific was 'new', there was no specific academic or popular tradition of representation on which to draw.[33] This is less true of the fiction of the second half of the nineteenth century, which did have a body of literature with which to interact, than it is of the early travel and ethnographic writing. But it is impossible to consider the fiction without taking account of the corpus, and the 'discovery' and representation of Polynesia is, in these terms, more analogous to the Caribbean: similarly, a previously unsuspected 'sea of islands', with fragmented societies, no written tradition, and no possibility of 'writing back' to the European representations. There are again many differences between the Caribbean and the Pacific, not least, in the intentions of the Cook and Columbus voyages, the vastly different sociohistorical situations in the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, and the different forms of colonisation applied to the two areas. What I am particularly interested in, however, are the processes by which something 'new' and 'different' was understood and narrated within an existing framework of knowledge. In *Orientalism*, Said describes the process whereby something:

> patently foreign and distant acquires, for one reason or another, a status more rather than less familiar. One tends to stop judging things either as completely novel or as completely well known; a new median category emerges, a category that allows one to see new things, things seen for the first time, as versions of a previously known thing. In essence such a category is not so much a way of receiving new information as it is a method of controlling what seems to be a threat to some established view of things.[34]

Homi K. Bhabha, in his consideration of this passage, argues that seeing things 'as versions of a previously known thing' is connected with the fetishistic disavowal of difference that is at the heart of an ambivalence towards the Other that threatens to split the authoritative discourse of colonialism apart.[35] The ambivalence felt towards an Other seen both as an object of desire and of fear is central to the nineteenth century discourse of the Pacific, as I have already outlined. Bhabha's psychoanalytic model provides interesting and useful insights into the encounter with the Other, and to the inherently contradictory formation of European stereotypes of the colonial subject. But psychoanalysis is itself deeply imbued with the European cultural assumptions about the Other, and I agree with Tim Youngs' opinion made in his recently published *Travellers in Africa*, that the concepts and language of psychoanalysis are rooted in the late nineteenth century European culture and 'share the images of polarity and affinity, of repulsion and desire, of culture and nature, civilisation and savagery, lightness and darkness, of order and disorder, that characterise contemporary discourses of race, class, and gender.'[36] What I want to develop here, through Europe's 'discovery' of the Caribbean, is Said's point about the tension between what he later describes as *latent* Orientalism, the first-hand experiences of travellers and colonisers, and the *manifest* Orientalism of textual knowledge and expectation, that produces a form of hybridised representation of the 'patently foreign' and 'completely well known'.

I have found Anthony Pagden's discussion of the importance of the 'autoptic eye' in early writings on the New World suggestive in this context, for he develops Said's identification of latent and manifest Orientalism, tracing the conflict between the two forms through the early representations of the Americas. Medieval Europe, Anthony Pagden suggests in

European Encounters with the New World (1993), and his earlier book, *The Fall of Natural Man* (1982), relied for its understanding of the world on two main bodies of text: firstly, and most importantly, on the exegesis of the canon of Biblical and pre-Christian texts, and secondly on an oral tradition of monsters and grotesques that had been recorded as fact by travel writers such as John de Mandeville. The latter 'constituted for many Europeans of the later middle ages a mental "set", a cluster of images which were thought to constitute a real world of nature in the remoter areas of the world where, precisely because they were remote, the unusual and fantastic were thought to be the norm.'[37]

Pagden argues that the traveller has traditionally been able to appeal 'to a category in ancient rhetoric called "autopsy".' This is 'the appeal to the authority of the eye witness, to the privileged understanding which those present have over all those who have only read or been told about it.'[38] The lived experience - 'I was there', 'I saw it, and therefore it is a fact' - is always capable of displacing the textual expectation. When faced with an obvious discrepancy between textual expectation and experience, the text finally had to bow to the evidence of the autoptic eye, to the eye, or 'I' witness.[39] But not without a struggle. In America, Pagden says, this tension between text and experience 'was to dominate the long and bitter struggle over the nature, representation and status of the New World and of its inhabitants.'[40] The outcome of this struggle was to have a significant effect on the understanding and representation of that later New World discovered in the Pacific.

Autopsy is evoked frequently in Pacific narratives. Most of the early ethnographers had no formal training, as I have already said, and it was primarily the fact that they had

witnessed events that gave their narratives authority. James Jackson Jarves wrote one of the earliest Pacific novels, a historical romance called *Kiana: A Tradition of Hawaii* (published in 1857, but first serialised in Jarves' Honolulu newspaper, *The Polynesian* in 1841), which places the first European contact with Hawaii back to a sixteenth century Spanish landing, so providing a mythohistorical precedent for the legend of Cook's reception as the returning Hawaiian year-god, Lono, and a particular explanation for Lono being seen as a *white* god. Jarves declares in the Preface that 'In my youth I spent several years in different parts of the Pacific Ocean, but chiefly at the Sandwich or Hawaiian Islands', and 'I am glad ... to be able to assure my readers of the following facts'. Jarves' romance 'but personifies the truth' because he personally has seen the 'Other traces of [the Spanish] existence [which] are perceptible in the customs, ideas, and even the language of the natives, which last has a number of words strikingly analogous to the Spanish of the same meaning.'[41] Hawaii and its historical past, to Jarves, an accomplished Hawaiian historian as well as newspaper editor and novelist, was essentially knowable, and his intention in the novel is to use the authority of the autoptic eye to make Hawaii's difference familiar to his European readers. Herman Melville, in the Preface to *Typee* (1846), avoids claiming this authority: 'In his account of the singular and interesting people among whom [the author] was thrown, it will be observed that he chiefly treats of their more obvious peculiarities; and, in describing their customs, refrains in most cases from entering into explanations concerning their origin and purposes.'[42] The Typees, to Melville, and for reasons that will become clear in my discussion of *Typee* in the first chapter, can only be knowable in terms of European expectations of savagery.

But just how did the individual observer, the autoptic eye, negotiate the newness of the

Americas? As Pagden suggests, in the New World new knowledge was rarely introduced through conflict and displacement but by a process of negotiation between expectation and experience. This negotiation can be seen on Columbus' second voyage, in the report of Dr. Chanca, who was recording his impressions of the 'Caribs' of Guadaloupe:

> These people seemed to us more polished than those who live in the other islands which we have seen, although they all have dwellings of straw, but these have them much better made and better provided with supplies, and there seems to be in them more industry, both male and female. They had much cotton, spun and ready for spinning, and many cotton cloths, so well made that they lose nothing by comparison with those of our own country.

Yet, Chanca also noted:

> The way of life of these *caribe* people is bestial ...
>
> These people raid the other islands and carry off the women whom they can take, especially the young and beautiful ones, whom they keep to serve them and have them as concubines, and they carry off so many that in fifty houses nobody was found, and of the captives more than twenty were young girls. These women also say that they are treated with a cruelty which seems incredible, for sons whom they have from them are eaten and they only rear those whom they have from their native women. The men whom they are able to take, those who are alive they bring to their houses to butcher for meat, and those who are dead are eaten there and then.... They cut off the male member of the boys they take prisoner and make use of them until they are men, and then when they want to make a feast, they kill and eat them, for they say that the flesh of boys and women is not good to eat. Of these boys, three came running to us, and all three had had their members cut off.[43]

Peter Hulme and Neil Whitehead point out in their introduction to Chanca's report, that 'The distinction which Columbus had begun to draw during the first voyage between the peaceful Indians he met and the ferocious man-eaters he heard about is developed by Chanca and given the beginnings of an ethnographic basis in dress.'[44] Columbus' initial

impression of a Caribbean populated by different 'races' of innocents and monsters is beginning to be ordered, but still works on those basic distinctions. Chanca is working within two textual traditions available to him - the Biblical interpretation of the universe, and the traveller's tale. The initial point of comparison in Chanca's relatively detached opening is with other Carib societies and with Europe: these particular Caribs have rudimentary industry, they have slightly more substantial houses than their neighbours, and they attempt to decorate themselves in order to show some form of communal identity. It is 'natural', then, for this 'primitive' people to follow some form of recognisable progression towards European standards of 'civilisation': they appear to be governed by a divinely ordained progression towards commercialisation, town dwelling and clothing.

Yet that same 'more polished' society also appears to be governed by the contradictory values of cannibalism, systematised 'hetero' and 'homosexual' oppression, and terror. This is the 'monstrous' - 'The way of life of these *caribe* people is bestial' - and it is related to the traveller's expectation of the remote 'natural' world where one would expect to find cannibals and Amazons. The Carib world is initially recognised in the terms of these contradictions: they are similar but different; gentle and monstrous.

The same friction between attraction and repulsion, between familiarity and strangeness, will reappear in the representation of the Pacific. Indeed, Chanca's report from Guadaloupe contains in an unstructured form most of the images of savagery that will dominate the Pacific: the relationship between Spain and the Caribbean is dramatised sexually: it is one between men and women. The women immediately transfer their

loyalty to the Spaniards, acting as their 'native informants': 'We asked the women who were captive on this island what these people were; they replied that they were *caribes*.'[45] The islands are already dying: the Spanish pass by Montserrat because 'the Indian women whom we carried with us said that it was not inhabited, for those of *caribe* had depopulated it'; some islets with fishermen's houses are similarly left behind when the 'Indian women we brought with us said that they were not inhabited'; on 'Burequen' (Puerto Rico), 'we were never able to communicate [with the islanders] because they all fled like people terrified of the *caribes*.'[46] The difference of the Caribs is dramatised through cannibalism and 'unnatural' practices.

iii. Tropical Knowledge.

Chanca develops a discourse on the Caribs by relating them to something 'known'. The islanders are 'like' Europeans in some respects, but they are also 'like' monsters. In Hayden White's description of European colonists' relations with North American Indians, savagery was:

> conceived to be *continuous* with that humanity on which Europeans prided themselves; and it was this mode of relationship that underlay the policy of proselytization and conversion. On the other hand, the natives could be conceived as simply existing *contiguously* to the Europeans, as representing either an inferior breed of humanity or a superior breed, but in any case as being essentially different from the European breed.'[47]

Engaging with similar issues of representation as Said and Pagden, Hayden White has

argued in *Tropics of Discourse* that discourses on the 'new' are themselves 'a kind of model of the processes of consciousness by which a given area of experience, originally apprehended as simply a field of phenomena demanding understanding, is assimilated by analogy to those areas of experience felt to be *already* understood as to *their* essential natures.'[48] The initial response of the autoptic eye when confronted by the 'new' is to understand it as being 'like' something already known.

White argues that all new knowledge, the rendering familiar of the unfamiliar, is essentially tropical in nature, and follows the traditional rhetorical progression of knowledge from metaphor (the naive statement that one thing is like another), through metonymy, synecdoche, to a knowing irony. The word 'tropic', as White points out,

> derives from *tropikos*, *tropos*, which in Classical Greek meant "turn" and in Koiné "way" or "manner." It comes into modern Indo-European languages by way of *tropus*, which in Classical Latin meant "metaphor" or "figure of speech" and in Late Latin, especially as applied to music theory, "mood" or "measure". All of these meanings, sedimented in the early English word *trope*, capture the force of the concept that modern English intends by the word *style*, a concept that is especially apt for the consideration of that form of verbal composition which, in order to distinguish it from logical demonstration on the one side and from pure fiction on the other, we call by the name *discourse*.[49]

The strikingly unfamiliar is initially assimilated into the existing discourse of knowledge by an illogical linguistic 'swerve' that imposes some common point of recognition. Where White's analysis of the relationship between troping and knowledge is helpful here is in his description of the constant tension that exists between the illogical 'swerve' - the emotional response that one thing is like another - and the growth of objective rationality. White uses Jean Piaget's account of the intellectual development of the child[50] as a model

for the way in which the second stage of knowledge is reached when the original illogical metaphor is taken and ordered, and it becomes obvious that something is not simply 'like' something else, but is, in fact, different. The trope is 'deconstructed' into various elements, and at this moment of ordering the mind begins to reach towards a logical understanding of its world. Full understanding is reached with the stage of ironic self-awareness, when knowledge is such that it can question both its own structures and the original, tropic, way of gaining understanding. At this stage, rationality should supersede the inferior, emotional response. But, both White and Piaget argue, this does not in fact happen. During 'the process of development, a given mode of cognition is not so much obliterated as preserved, transcended and assimilated to the mode that succeeds it'.[51] The trope is never actually dismissed from the rational understanding of the world but co-exists with it, providing an emotional level of response that constantly mediates, moderates and informs logical thought.

Anthony Pagden's *European Encounters* describes how, in the context of the European understanding of the Americas, the initial tropic swerve of the autoptic eye was assimilated into the growth of scientific rationalism in the Enlightenment, and given a theoretical framework. Within late Medieval philosophy, the position of the individual was not sufficiently authoritative to upset the canon on its own. As Michel Foucault has argued, the notion of the transgressive individual, the author, was very much a creation of the post-Medieval period, and constituted 'the privileged moment of *individualization* in the history of ideas, knowledge, literature, philosophy, and the sciences.'[52] The valorisation of the autonomous individual evolved gradually, and the autoptic eyes of American travellers had to disturb Medieval systems of knowledge accumulatively. The

greater experience of the Other during the colonisation of the Americas did not reduce its strangeness to Europe, Pagden argues; on the contrary, greater familiarity showed that the apparent points of recognition were often illusory. Equally, what had at first appeared to be 'monstrous' was shown to have its own rationale within Caribbean societies. The Other worked within its own terms if not within the terms of Europe. The universal terms of reference through which Europeans had previously understood the world, and which drew their ultimate authority from the word of God, were inadequate to describe that universe. Pagden argues that a shared interest of Enlightenment philosophers was to evolve theories which could accommodate the difference of the New World. The interest of Enlightenment philosophers and scientists shifted from the interpretations of Biblical texts, to analysing the evidence of nature. God made nature, and nature was universal, and so the apparent contradictions of the world could be resolved through an understanding of nature's laws. Spinoza's *Ethics* (1632) is an early example of this 'project', which was to dominate the Enlightenment:

> Nothing comes to pass in nature, which can be set down to a flaw therein; for nature is always the same, and everywhere one and the same in her efficacy and power of action; that is, nature's laws and ordinances, whereby all things come to pass and change from one form to another, are everywhere and always the same; so that there should be one and the same method of understanding the nature of things whatsoever, namely, through nature's universal laws and rules.[53]

As in Linneaus' 'Great Chain of Being', Montesquieu's 'order of things', and Buffon's 'system of nature', everything in nature is linked to something else, and through applying close observation to a coherent theoretical framework these great ordering principles of the universe can be discovered. In the terms of the representation of the Other, the autoptic eye of the observer is given a scientific authority, and the information it sends

back becomes an integral part of the ordering process. To say that something is 'like' something else within, say, Buffon's system of nature, is not an emotional response, but an empirical observation that places one object in a precise and hierarchical relationship with another.

Marvin Harris has demonstrated in *The Rise of Anthropological Theory* that the roots of nineteenth century anthropology lay in the writings of the Enlightenment *philosophes*.[54] The Enlightenment drew the savage into a universal history of the world predicated on the new understanding of a system of natural laws, and placed the savage at its beginnings. Enlightenment philosophy was instrumental in the process of theorising European society as the goal to which all 'primitive' societies were aspiring: a confusion of evolution with 'progress' that underpinned the theories of 'race' that were to develop in the nineteenth century.

Theories of human progression were current well before evolution was theorised by Darwin in the mid-nineteenth century - indeed, progression was at the heart of the Enlightenment belief in the innate improvability of mankind.[55] Adam Smith's influential Four Stages Theory of human development from savagery to urban industrialisation, was foreshadowed by Montesquieu's earlier classification of the Tupinamba of Brazil as 'savages', as a people who 'have not been able to unite', and distinct from barbarians, who are the pastoralists who have started to live together in organised communities, and distinct again from communities who cultivate the land, and finally, the commercial societies.[56]

The savage was not an unmoving monster, a grotesque derived from the writings of the ancients, but was 'our' collective past. Views on what form that past took varied. The Tupinamba that Montaigne met at Rouen, who influenced his essay, 'Of Cannibals', were only 'barbarous in the sense that they have received very little moulding from the human intelligence, and are still very close to their original simplicity.'[57] The somewhat less empathetic Hobbesian view was that the 'savage people in many places of *America* ... have no government at all; and live at this day in that brutish manner, as I said before.'[58] These were different philosophical perspectives on the same basic assumption: that the origins of European civilisation could be found in America, that 'in the beginning all the World was *America*', as John Locke famously wrote in the second of his *Two Treatises of Government*.[59]

For Locke, the deciding factor in the 'endless variety' of mankind in America and the rest of the known world, could be found 'in one word, from EXPERIENCE.' The particular environmental conditions would influence the individual development of a society.[60] The wild Indians knowing no enclosure would remain as hunters, in Locke's argument, because the endless amounts of land available in America did not force them into making that first movement towards property and political development. The contradictions of America were accommodated in a universalising theoretical framework which allowed the savage to be different but the same, noble and brutish, and progressing but unmoving.

iv. The Death of Captain Cook.

Following White's and Pagden's theoretical models, however, the trope will still be present within this rational framework. The illogical swerve is not superseded by the superior, rational knowledge, but coexists with, and determines it. The monster has been assimilated; the trope has not disappeared, and, I will contend in this thesis, it continues to provide an initial and emotional response in imperial encounters. The trope continues to appear, despite the 'superior' 'rational' knowledge of savagery. I can best illustrate this interaction of emotion and rationality by returning to the death of Captain Cook, and to one part of a current debate on it between the anthropologists Marshall Sahlins and Gananath Obeyesekere. The debate centres on the question of whether or not Cook was taken to be the returning year-god, Lono, on his 'discovery' of Hawaii in 1778, and his return there the following winter. (I am not entering into a detailed discussion of the debate here, but I am using it to demonstrate the power of the trope in rational argument). In *Islands of History*, Marshall Sahlins argues that Cook's arrival and his subsequent behaviour in the Hawaiian islands unknowingly but precisely followed the timing, route and actions of the returning year-god, Lono, during the Makahiki festival -the four month festival which celebrates the advent of the god of peace and production. As his ships slowly circled the islands in the winter of 1778-79, they followed the ceremonial route of Lono before his annual battle with the god of war, Ku, and Lono's departure in a small canoe for the mythical land of Kahiki. The crosstrees of Cook's ships with sails hanging from them even matched the crosspiece of Lono with strips of *tapa* cloth hanging from it. As Cook's arms were 'outstretched' on his arrival in Hawaii, writes Sahlins, 'and the appropriate sacrifices were made, Cook indeed became the image of Lono, a duplicate of

the crosspiece icon (constructed of wood staves) which is the appearance of the god. It was a ceremony of the Makahiki, the great Hawaiian New Year Festival'.[61] Cook, Sahlins argues, became Lono, and shared Lono's ritual death at Kealakekua Bay, the site of the greatest concentration of priests of Lono. 'Death of Cook: death of Lono. The event was absolutely unique, and it was repeated every year.'[62]

To position myself for a moment. I found Sahlins' thesis completely convincing when I first read *Islands of History*. What I found attractive in the theory was the way in which it appeared to return an integrity and a power to the native culture, and had the effect of diminishing the centrality of the Europeans in this version of imperial history: in Sahlins' Hawaii, it was the Europeans who were the naive participants in a narrative tradition that they did not understand. Compare my response as a European to that of the Sri Lankan anthropologist, Gananath Obeyesekere:

> When Sahlins expounded his thesis at one of the Gauss Seminars at Princeton University in 1987, I was completely taken aback at his assertion that when Cook arrived in Hawai'i the natives believed that he was their god Lono and called him Lono. Why so? Naturally my mind went back to my Sri Lankan and South Asian experience. I could not think of any parallel example in the long history of contact between foreigners and Sri Lankans or, for that matter, Indians.[63]

Obeyesekere initially and instinctively recognises Sahlins' theory as being like a whole range of European assumptions about native credulity. Obeyesekere's description of the sequence of his thought processes is probably not meant to be taken absolutely literally, but another stage is reached when he thinks of Sri Lankan traditions: he relates Sahlins theory to his own experience, to something known. In this case, the 'white god' thesis is rejected because it is *not* like anything in his experience of native traditions, but *is* like

other European traditions of the native deification of European explorers and conquerors. Obeyesekere recognises the tropic element within Sahlins' persuasive argument tropologically. His own detailed, and I believe generally convincing, argument is then developed from that initial emotional response.

The Apotheosis of Captain Cook argues that Sahlins' *Islands of History* is flawed methodologically in its reliance on transcriptions of native history: oral testimonies first collected together by early Hawaiian scholars and American missionaries in *Mooolelo Hawaii* (ca. 1838). One of the things I found persuasive in Sahlins' work was the way in which these Hawaiian sources confirmed and explained the empirical details supplied by the British shipboard journalists. *Mooolelo* contains the first Hawaiian account of Cook's identification with Lono, which is later repeated and developed in such works as David Malo's *Hawaiian Antiquities*, Abraham Fornander's *An Account of the Polynesian Races* (1878) and S.M. Kamakau's *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii* (1868). Obeyesekere shows that the identification of Cook with Lono in *Mooolelo Hawaii* had no basis in pre-conquest Hawaiian legend at all, but was specifically a post-conquest myth against Cook begun by William Ellis, and then developed by the early American missionaries. The Cook/Lono story was, he argues convincingly, a 'deliberately constructed "myth charter" for modern evangelical Christianity, and Cook's mythic role is as a symbol of false worship or idolatry that the missions wanted to expunge from its very roots from Hawaiian soil.'[64]

There was already a well-established European tradition of 'white gods' within narratives of European imperial expansion: Obeyesekere points out that 'Cortés and possibly

Columbus were apotheosized; Cortés had a profound impact on the European imagination as the indigenous god Quetzalcoatl, also a god who returns following his disappearance.'[65] Obeyesekere's clear suggestion is that 'white gods' are *all* European constructions, they are all tropes of conquest, and that to quote the supportive 'evidence' of indigenous post-conquest narratives is to ignore that myth is a way of reading history backwards, and also to ignore the undoubted influence that Europeans had on the production and transcription of these 'native sources'.[66] It is fair to say that Sahlins is well aware of Europe's tradition of 'white gods', but he still prefers to see Cook's death as Lono in the terms of a conflation of two ritual moments: 'One could add that Cook's death made a remarkable juncture of the two theologies, since his spirit was destined to play the same role in the one as in the other. Europeans and Hawaiians alike and respectively were to idolize him as a martyr to their own prosperity.'[67]

Where Sahlins' work was most original and persuasive was in fitting the moment of Cook's death into Hawaiian cultural structures. European historians had understood Cook's reception in Hawaii as that of a god, but not his death.[68] The circumstances surrounding the moment of Cook's death are therefore significant to Sahlins' argument. Sahlins appeals to the authority of the autoptic eye in *Islands of History* when he cites the evidence of Webber's painting, the 'Death of Captain Cook' (fig. 2), in his key identification of Cook's actual killer as Nuha, the Hawaiian King's defender:

> In status and appearance, this is exactly the figure of Cook's assassin depicted by John Webber, artist of the expedition, ... We should not ignore the graphic evidence. Indeed, the painting's chief artistic merit is generally acknowledged to be its effort at accuracy. Consider, then, Webber's characterisation of Cook's

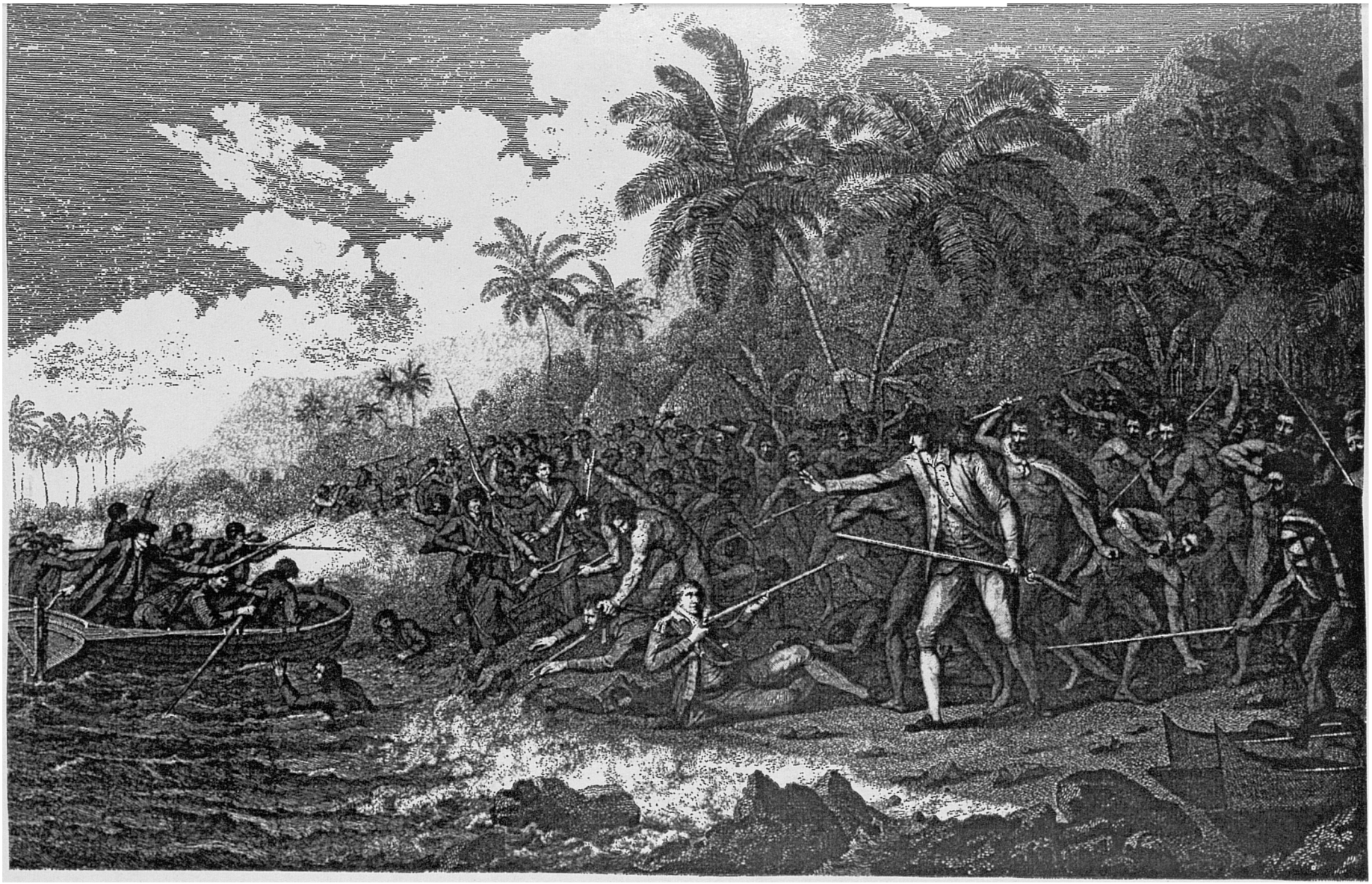

Figure 2. *The Death of Captain Cook*, from a painting by John Webber (1779), figures engraved by F. Bartolozzi, landscape by W. Byrne.

> attacker. He is a young man, of exceptional size and athletic build.[69]

The identification of Nuha is important because at the end of the Makahiki festival the King's champion ritually kills the god as Ku supersedes Lono, and Nuha would thus have been the first to strike down Cook/Lono. The authority of this Hawaiian tradition is supported, for Sahlins, by the autoptic evidence of the British observers. The accuracy Sahlins claims is 'generally acknowledged' through Webber's portrayal of the grouping in the painting which, as Bernard Smith also makes clear in his analysis of the various pictorial representations of Cook's death in *Imagining the Pacific* (1992), follows the drama described by Captain King closely, although neither King nor Webber were eye-witnesses of the incident as far as it is known:

> the two boats offshore, with the marines firing from the more distant, and a couple struggling in the water to gain the boats; Lieutenant Phillips, fallen to the ground, firing at his assailant; Cook about to be stabbed in the back by a huge native as he turns and gestures towards the launch. The gesture is key to the emotional tone of the painting, and is enigmatic. Is Cook waving to Williamson to stop firing and pull in so that he can escape, or is he commanding him to stop firing at the natives?[70]

King's account of Cook's death relied heavily on the evidence of the Marine lieutenant, Molesworth Phillips, who was struck down by a stone and stabbed in the shoulder during the attack. From Phillips' perspective, 'fallen to the ground', it would be reasonable to expect all the Hawaiians to appear large and threatening. Phillips merely describes the assailant as 'a fellow', although it is possible that Webber was working on anecdotal evidence given to him later by Phillips.[71] It is also true to say that most of the early descriptions of Hawaii agree that the Hawaiians were not a diminutive people. But a

'huge native'? Obeyesekere astutely points out in *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook*, that the 'exceptional size' of the Hawaiian has no textual authority whatsoever: in Webber's painting, '*all the Hawaiians depicted there seem to have the same proportions as Sahlins' Nu'a*', (author's italics), and even Cook has a similar physique.[72] Although Smith's book, *Imagining the Pacific* was published after Sahlins' *Islands of History*, the essay on Cook's death, 'Captain Cook's Posthumous Reputation', had first been published in 1979, and Sahlins is possibly influenced by Bernard Smith's description of a 'huge native' when he in turn also sees 'a young man, of exceptional size'.[73]

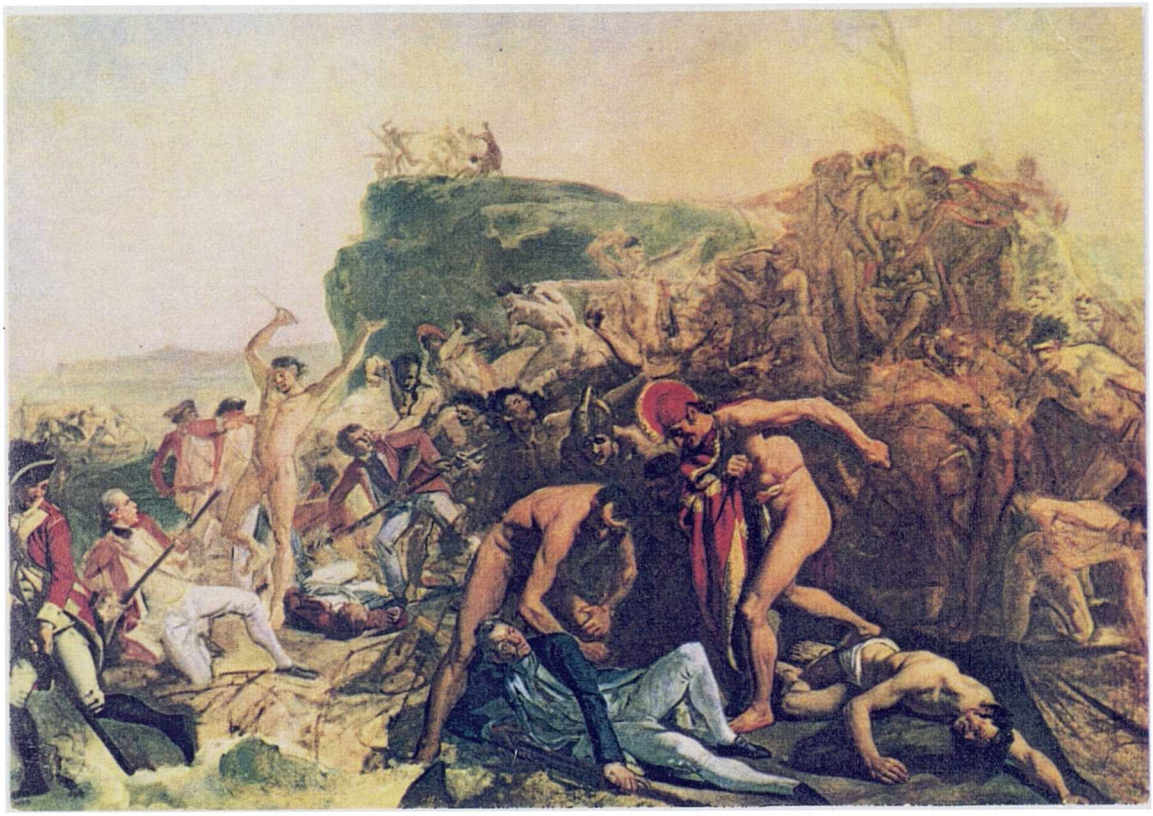

Fig. 3. *The Death of Captain Cook*, John Zoffany (c. 1795).

In the case of Bernard Smith, a possible explanation is that he is considering a number of later paintings of Cook's death, some of which do make the Hawaiians appear to be far larger figures. Zoffany's painting, 'The Death of Cook' (c. 1795, fig. 3), has the two

Hawaiians poised over the prone and passive figure of Cook - an image which is echoed in the left of the painting in the figure of Phillips and his attacker. Webber's representation is being developed into a grand neo-classical history, complete with the tragic hero: further elements are introduced, and the scene is supplied with a wealth of empirical detail, such as the carefully drawn helmet of the Hawaiian. The central grouping is based on Benjamin West's painting of the death of General Wolfe, as well as on Webber's painting. Although not giants, the two Hawaiians are physically well-developed and give the impression of stature and power through their domination of Cook. Smith is possibly reading the structure of the later illustrations back into Webber's text, for the 'fact' that Cook's assailant is 'huge' is useful but not essential to his argument that Cook is being depicted as a martyr-hero. Sahlins, however, has an interest in seeing a native of 'exceptional size', for it is in many ways central to his contention that every event in the death of Cook followed the ritual pattern of the Makahiki. He sees a huge native, perhaps, because he has already decided that one will be there.

There is a further possibility, and that is that Smith's and Sahlins' interpretations of Webber's painting draw unintentionally and independently on a tradition of huge and threatening natives. They read them into the scene because European artistic and literary tradition has given that expectation. It is almost impossible to visualise the death of an imperial hero without the huge native dealing the death blow. Both readers and writers connect with an imperial way of seeing: the death of Cook is not unique to Hawaii, but is repeated endlessly in such iconographic moments of imperialism as the death of General Gordon, the death of the Prince Imperial in the Zulu War, the death of General Custer, and the death of Jane McCrea. It is significant that the two remarkably similar paintings

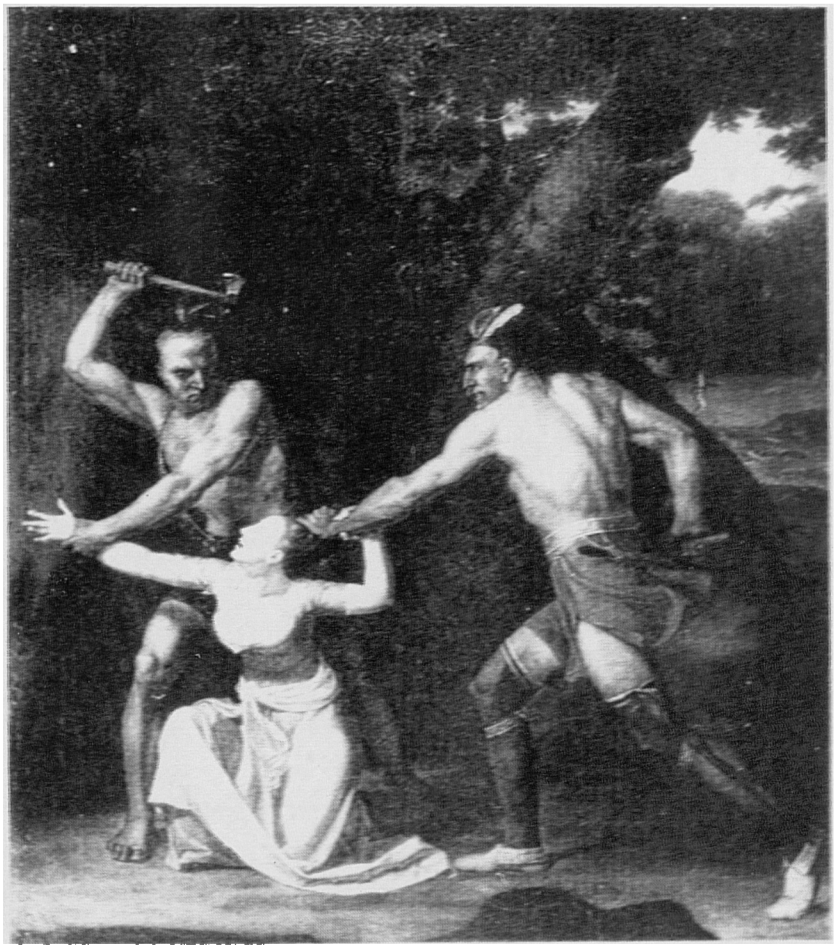

Fig. 4. *The Death of Jane McCrea*, John Vanderlyn (c. 1807).

of the death of Jane McCrea (figs. 4 & 5) were produced independently of each other the artists, Vanderlyn and Smirke to illustrate Joel Barlow's *The Columbiad. A P* (1807).

> Two Mohawks met the maid with grisly brow
> Poor Human Nature! Where's thy boasting now?
> . . . . . .
> She starts, with eyes upturned and fleeting breath,
> In their raised axes views her instant death,
> Spreads her white hands to heaven in frantic prayer,
> Then runs to grasp their knees and crouches there,
> [...] With calculating pause and demon grin,
> They seize her hands and thro' her face divine
> Drive the descending axe...[74]

Fig. 5. *The Murder of Lucinda*, Robert Smirke (1807).

Certainly the text of the poem imposes the grouping, but I would argue that so does the idea itself. It is part of an imperial tradition of visual representation: a trope of savagery that informs figures 6, 7, and 8.

This is paradigmatic of the dominant role of the trope in representations of colonial encounters. The trope strengthens and gathers force with each retelling. Each image is slightly different, for it is specific to the moment or historical situation it describes, but each image connects with existing images. In wider terms, innocence is being brutally disfigured, civilisation is destroyed by savagery. The tropes of savagery provide a way of understanding the specific through the universally understood behaviour of savages.

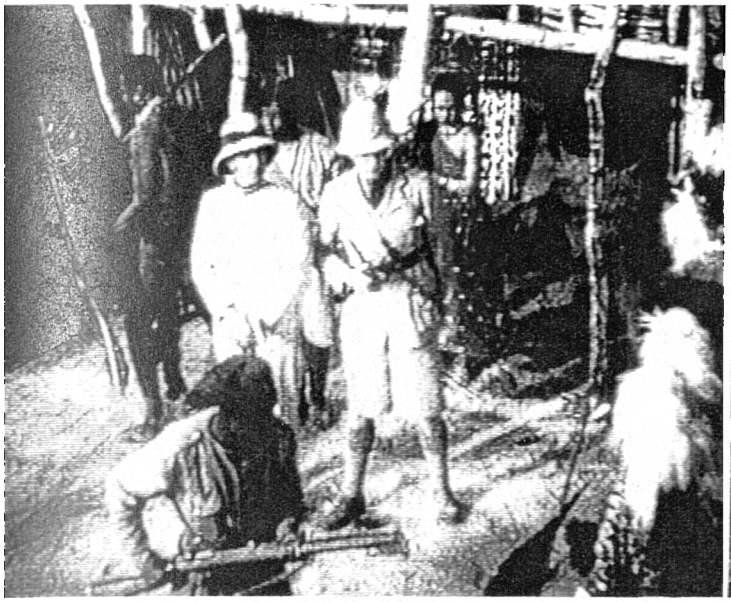

Figure 6 (top left). From *Sanders of the River*, (Zoltan Korda, U.K., 1935). Figure 7 (top right). *The Death of General Gordon*, George Joy (1894). Figure 8 (bottom). The 'massacre' of the Virginia Bay settlers in 1622, from Theodore de Bry's *Grands Voyages*.

The image is understood, I would argue, firstly on an emotional level. The deconstruction comes later, and as in Sahlins' interpretation of Webber's picture, it continues to be influenced by that tropic moment. My intention is to show in the following pages the formation and persistence of these master tropes of the Pacific.

v. Landfalls.

In Chapter 2 I read Herman Melville's novel, *Typee*, alongside the narratives of George Vason and William Mariner, respectively a renegade missionary and an enforced beachcomber in the Tonga islands. I link these to the captivity narratives that started to come out of Puritan New England during the seventeenth century. In this chapter, I look at the important influence of North America and its narratives in understanding the Pacific, arguing that the received knowledge of the American Indians was centrally important to the early understanding of the Polynesians. Although, as I have been suggesting in this introduction, no one text can be seen as an archetype of Pacific writing, Melville was the first writer to map out many of the questions that were to occupy later writers: was the Pacific a sexual paradise or a savage hell? could the Other ever be really known? did the state of nature offer a real alternative to civilisation? and, closely related to this, what was the future of the islands and their inhabitants?

In Chapter 3 I turn to Tahiti, where, as Gavan Daws suggests, the romantic myth of the Pacific began. The French novelist Pierre Loti's *Tahiti: The Marriage of Loti* (1880) is the story of a love affair between an English sailor and a young Tahitian girl, Rarahu, and is an excellent, even perhaps the ultimate, example of the island romance, a genre that

was to dominate European writing on the Pacific. This I link to the story of the mutiny on the *Bounty*, one of the formative and enduring myths of the Pacific, and to the arrivals of the *Dolphin*, and Bougainville's frigate, *la Boudeuse*, the first European ships to arrive in Tahiti. Pierre Loti was himself a French naval officer: the novel is partly autobiographical, like many of the novels discussed in this thesis, and Loti had travelled widely in the Orient and Africa. Here I am interested in drawing out the Oriental influence in representations of the Pacific.

'[A]ccounts of inter-racial sexual encounters play a major role' in French colonial fiction, writes Hugh Ridley,[75] and the relationship between coloniser and colonised is not only eroticised in a novel such as Loti's, but is also an expression of the French theory that the native desired European culture, and that it could be assimilated through sexual integration. The French influence in the Pacific was strong, and the French experience was also different, but the sexual relationship between colonised and coloniser is a trope that is common to French, British and American imperialism, and in this chapter I will explore its implications and assumptions in the Pacific.

In Chapter 4 I show a 'different' Pacific by moving to 'cannibal Feejee' through missionary writings and the children's adventure novels that drew on them. R.M. Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* (1858) is an obvious novel to study in this context, as it is probably the one Pacific book that most Europeans have read at one time or another. It also appears to be the single most popular book in academic studies of imperial fiction or children's adventure novels. I am reminded of Hayden White's strictures on the theme of the Noble Savage, which 'may be one of the few historical topics about which there

is nothing more to say.'[76] Whilst White then goes on to say quite a lot about the Noble Savage, I have decided to concentrate instead on some of Ballantyne's other Pacific novels, and particularly on the adventure stories of an equally popular writer, who is less well-known today, W.H.G. Kingston. I am interested here in the way in which Europe's experience of the slave trade, and the growing importance of Africa as an image of savagery in Europe's racial and imperial discourses of the nineteenth century, influenced the representations of the western Pacific, and Kingston's *Old Jack* (1871), particularly, links the two areas suggestively.

Chapter 5 develops the theme of Polynesian 'homosexuality' that is introduced in the discussion of sexuality in the chapter on Melville's *Typee* through Charles Warren Stoddard's Hawaiian travelogues and fiction - the distinctions blur in Stoddard's work - written in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Although very little of Stoddard's writing is available today, for I am only aware of a couple of short stories that have been reprinted in anthologies of Pacific writing, he was considered in his day to be an authority on the Pacific and its peoples, not least by himself. Stoddard began writing when the Hawaiian islands were becoming more accessible to American visitors, and his series of romantic *vignettes* started the commercialisation of the Pacific 'paradise', and was in at the beginning of the process of 'packaging' remote places that continues in travel writing today.

It was Charles Warren Stoddard who introduced Robert Louis Stevenson, the main subject of Chapter 5, to the work of Herman Melville. Stoddard claimed the credit for encouraging Stevenson to travel, and finally settle, in the Pacific. Whilst this is unlikely,

as Stevenson had first become interested in the Pacific as a boy when he read *The Coral Island* and met its distinguished author,[77] Stevenson is nonetheless the only writer I study to settle in the area - although only for the five years before his early death in Samoa at the age of forty four in 1894. Stevenson was arguably the most perceptive of the European writers on the Polynesians, and was certainly the most receptive and sympathetic to their cultures. In the short time he lived in Polynesia, Stevenson produced a staggering amount of writing: his travelogue *In the South Seas*, a full-length novel, a comprehensive attack on the German influence in Samoa, two novellas, a collection of poetry and a number of short stories - not to mention his long letters to his friend Sidney Colvin that were published shortly after his death as *Vailima Letters*. I concentrate particularly on *In the South Seas*, and the novellas, *The Ebb-Tide* and *The Beach at Falesá*, which continue and bring together some of the themes of travel and adventure that I have been following. Although Stevenson's literary reputation is as a writer of romance, his Pacific fiction is in a harder, more realist mode: he consciously wanted to break away from the tropes that had come to be associated with the South Seas.

'The first experience can never be repeated. The first love, the first sunrise, the first South Sea island are memories apart and touched a virginity of sense', wrote Stevenson in romantic mood as he made his first Pacfic landfall in the Marquesas.[78] Unless James Jackson Jarves was right, and Spanish sailors had been shipwrecked on Hawaii in the early sixteenth century, the Marquesas were among the first Polynesian islands to be seen by Europeans. In 1595 a small Spanish fleet touched at the islands on their way to try to 'rediscover' the Solomons. In a way, their visit set the pattern for later encounters. The Spaniards were struck by the handsome aspects of the Marquesans - one of the youths,

a boy of about ten years old had such an angelically beautiful face 'that I never in my life felt such pain as when I thought that so fair a creature should be left to go to perdition.'[79] But of that first party of Marquesans to approach the Spanish ships, seven or eight were killed, and the killings continued throughout the brief visit with, Quiros reckoned, around two hundred left dead by the time the Spanish left. With the conquest of a large part of the Americas behind them, the Spanish had less need to justify their actions than later visitors. The Marquesans were all heathens, and it mattered little whether they burnt in hell sooner rather than later. A Spanish soldier who shot a man with a baby in his arms with one shot did it to preserve his reputation for marksmanship, not to protect his ship from monstrous savages. The tropes of savagery were not yet fully structured. When Herman Melville reached the Marquesas, two hundred and fifty years later, they were: Seductive South Seas, or Savage South Seas? Happar or Typee?

5. A Note on Language.

The words 'savagery' and 'civilisation' and their many variants will occur frequently. They are central to the way in which the debate on the Pacific unfolded, as I have already indicated. I use the words in their historically specific sense, and they should be read as though enclosed in speech marks throughout.

A similiar *caveat* applies to my use of the word 'homosexual'. As I will argue, 'homosexuality' or 'homoeroticism' played an important part in European responses to the Polynesian cultures. The word 'homosexual' was not invented until the end of the

nineteenth century, nor does it adequately describe the complexity of same-sex relationships in the Pacific. To use one of the Polynesian words, such as the Hawaiian *aikane*, seems to me to have the opposite problem: it has no relationship to European understanding of homosexuality. To use one of the words current in English during the nineteenth century does not appear to me to be desirable, either. The expressions 'gay', 'male/male love' or 'same-sex love' are, I think, unwieldy or inappropriate in the circumstances. I have, therefore, decided to use 'homosexual' as the best term available.

Lastly, I use the term 'European' frequently in this thesis, and by that I mean people of European origins; it thus includes the important American presence in the Pacific, as well as that of Australians and New Zealanders.

NOTES

My practice on endnotes is to cite a reference in full on its first appearance in each chapter, and then to give the name of the author and an abbreviated title thereafter.

1. Gavan Daws, *A Dream of Islands: Voyages of Self-Discovery in the South Seas*, Honolulu: Mutual Publishing (1980), p. 2. Daws is quoting an earlier writer on the Pacific, but he does not say who this is.

2. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, London: Peregrine (1985), p. 6.

3. Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, *Voyage autour du monde*, Paris: Flammarion, p. 186 (my translation.)

4. Bernard Smith, *Imagining the Pacific: In the Wake of the Cook Voyages*, New York: Yale University Press, (1992), p. 210.

5. Please see 'A Note on Language' at the end of this introduction.

6. George Stocking Jnr., *Race Culture and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (1968), Chicago: University of Chicago Press (1982), p. 36.

7. Rod Edmond, 'Pacific Encounters', (a review of Gananath Obeyesekere's *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook*, Bernard Smith's *Imagining the Pacific*, and Anne Salmond's *Between Two Worlds*), *Wasafiri* No 18, Autumn 1993, pp. 62-66, p. 62.

8. Anna Seward, 'Elegy on Captain Cook' (1780), in *The Poetical Works of Anna Seward; With Extracts from her Literary Correspondence*, (ed. Walter Scott), Edinburgh and London (1810), ll. 216 & 220: taken from the National Poetry Database.

9. Cf. Edmund Fanning on the fate of the brig *Union* in, *Voyages Round the World...* New York: Collins and Hannay (1833), p. 325.

10. J.C. Beaglehole, *The Life of Captain James Cook*, London: A & C Black, (1974), p. 127.

11. Beaglehole, *Life*: p. 252.

12. Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press (1993), p. 89. Quoting a letter from Erasmus to the Duke of Saxony.

13. Anon, *Narrative of Captain James Cook's Voyages Round the World; with an Account of his Life During the Previous and Intervening Periods* (1788), London: Milner & Company, p. 2.

14. Ian Wedde, 'Reading Arapawa Island: A History of Ferries', *Us/Them: Translation, Transcription and Identity in Post-Colonial Literary Cultures*, (ed) Gordon Collier, Amsterdam: Rodopi (1992), p. 4.

15. Gananath Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking in the Pacific*, Princeton: University of Princeton Press, (1992). See particularly pp. 3-48.

16. Christopher Herbert, *Culture and Anomie: Ethnographic Imagination in the Nineteenth Century*, London: University of Chicago Press, (1991), pp. 150-203.

17. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, London: Routledge, (1992); James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture. Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*, London: Harvard University Press (1988), p. 54.

18. George Keate, *An Account of the Pelew Islands...composed from the Journals and Communications of Captain H. Wilson, and some of his Officers, who in August 1783 were there shipwrecked in the Antelope, a packet belonging to the East India Company*, London: G. Nicol, (1788).

19. Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, New York: Yale University Press, (1988), pp. 136 & 134.

20. Prince Lee Boo, *The Interesting and Affecting History of Prince Lee Boo, A Native of the Pelew Islands, Brought to England by Capt. Wilson. To which is prefixed a short account of those islands, with a sketch of the Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants*, London: E. Newbery, (1789).

21. Horace Holden, *A Narrative of the Shipwreck, Captivity, and Sufferings of Horace Holden and Benj. H. Nute, who were cast away in the American Ship Mentor, on the Pelew Islands in the Year 1832; and for two years afterwards were subjected to unheard of sufferings among the Barbarous Inhabitants of Lord North's Island*, Boston: Russell, Shattuck, and Co., (1836), pps. 32, 50 and 72.

22. James Cook, *The Journals of Captain James Cook on his Voyages of Discovery*. 3 Volumes, Volume 3, *The Voyage of the* Resolution *and* Discovery, (ed J.C. Beaglehole), London: Hakluyt Society (1988), Part 1: p. 241.

23. Marvin Harris, *The Rise of Anthropological Theory, a History of Theories of Culture*, New York: Harper Collins (1968), p. 58.

24. Frederick Selous, *Travel and Adventure in South East Africa*, London, (1893), pp. 331-339.

25. Brian V. Street, *The Savage in Literature*, London: Routledge (1975), p. 11.

26. Said, *Orientalism*: p. 3.

27. Said, *Orientalism*: p. 21.

28. Said, *Orientalism*: p. 3.

29. Robert Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West*, London and New York: Routledge (1990), p. 126.

30. Aijaz Ahmad, *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures*, London: Verso, (1992), pp. 159-219, and particularly pp. 187-190.

31. Ahmad, *In Theory*: p. 163.

32. Ahmad, *In Theory*: p. 181.

33. Edmond, 'Pacific Encounters': p. 66.

34. Said, *Orientalism*: p. 58.

35. Homi K. Bhabha, 'The Other Question: Stereotype, discrimination and the discourse of colonialism', *The Location of Culture*, London and New York: Routledge (1994), pp. 66-85.

36. Tim Youngs, *Travellers in Africa: British Travelogues, 1850-1900*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press (1994), p. 4.

37. Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnography*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1982), p. 10.

38. Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World: From Renaissance to Romanticism*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press (1993), p. 51.

39. The pun used by Pagden is, he acknowledges, that of Clifford Geertz.

40. Pagden, *European Encounters*: pp. 51-52.

41. James Jackson Jarves, *Kiana: A Tradition of Hawaii*, London: S. Low (1857), pp. 5 & 6.

42. Herman Melville, *Typee* (1846), Harmondsworth: Penguin (1986), p. 32.

43. Peter Hulme and Neil L. Whitehead (eds.), *Wild Majesty: Encounters with Caribs from Columbus to the Present Day: An Anthology*, Oxford: Clarendon Press (1992), pp. 33-34.

44. Hulme and Whitehead, *Wild Majesty*: p. 29.

45. Hulme and Whitehead, *Wild Majesty*: p. 33.

46. Hulme and Whitehead, *Wild Majesty*: pp. 35, 36, & 37.

47. Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*, Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press (1990), pp. 193-194.

48. White, *Tropics*: p. 5.

49. White, *Tropics*: p. 2.

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51. White, *Tropics*: p. 10.

52. Michel Foucault, 'What is an Author?', in *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought* (ed. Paul Rabinow), Harmondsworth: Penguin (1991), pp. 101-120, p. 101.

53. Quoted in Harris, *The Rise*: p. 19.

54. Harris, *The Rise*: p. 8.

55. Ronald Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1976), p. 174.

56. Charles-Louis de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws* (trans. Thomas Nugent), New York: Hafner Publishers (1949), XVII, 10-14.

57. Michel de Montaigne, 'Of Cannibals', in *Essays*, (trans. J.M. Cohen), Harmondsworth: Penguin Books (1958), p. 109.

58. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651), Harmondsworth: Penguin Books (1968), p. 186.

59. John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (1690), (ed. and int.) Peter Laslett, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1988), p. 301.

60. Quoted in Harris, *The Rise*: p. 12.

61. Marshall Sahlins, *Islands of History*, London and New York: Tavistock Publications (1985), p. 106.

62. Sahlins, *Islands*: p. 108.

63. Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis*: p. 8.

64. Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis*: p. 159.

65. Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis*: p. 123.

66. For a full discussion of the debate between Obeyesekere and Sahlins, see Edmond 'Pacific Encounters'.

67. Sahlins, *Islands*: p. 131.

68. Edmond, 'Pacific Encounters': pp. 62-63.

69. Sahlins, *Islands*: p. 130.

70. Bernard Smith, *Imagining the Pacific: In the Wake of the Cook Voyages*, New York: Yale University Press, (1992), pp. 232-233, and generally for an analysis of Cook's death in this chapter, pp. 225-240.

71. Cook, *Journals*, Volume 3: p. 535.

72. Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis*: p. 185.

73. Cf. Bernard Smith, 'Cook's posthumous reputation', in *Captain James Cook and his times*, (eds. Robin Fisher and H. Johnston), Seattle: University of Washington Press (1979), cited in Sahlins: p. 170.

74. Joel Barlow, *The Columbiad. A Poem*, Philidelphia (1807), p. 239. Quoted by Edgerton: p. 485.

75. Hugh Ridley, *Images of Imperial Rule*, London: Croom Helm, (1983), p. 80.

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77. Frank McLynn, *Robert Louis Stevenson, a Biography*, London: Hutchinson, (1993), p. 28.

78. Robert Louis Stevenson, *In the South Seas* (1900), London: Kegan Paul International (1988), p. 2.

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2. The Happy Valley: *Typee*

I begin, not with arrivals, but departures: the first and second are respectively those of a renegade missionary and a beachcomber from Tonga, and the third is Tommo's escape from the Marquesas at the end of Herman Melville's *Typee* (1846). The first passage ends George Vason's *An Authentic Narrative of Four Years in Tongataboo* (1810), the 'autobiography' of one of the first party of missionaries to Tonga, which was written in the first person 'to render the Narrative more interesting' by Solomon Piggott,[1] the Curate of Vason's local church in Nottingham. It was the first book-length missionary narrative to come out of the Pacific, but instead of recording the triumphant success of Christianity, as did the later books of John Williams and William Ellis, Vason's is a cautionary tale of the subversive power of 'the heathen'. Vason was attracted to the islanders, left the mission almost immediately, and 'went native' for three years, becoming, by his account, the Governor of an island in the Vavau group before, fearing 'treachery', he left suddenly on a British vessel.

Vason was an accidental missionary, and was actually a builder by trade. The Directors of the London Missionary Society embraced the sensible principle of demonstrating the practical as well as the spiritual benefits of civilisation, and most of the first missionaries to the South Seas were artisans, the party even including one who was a hatter. Vason

Figure 1. 'George Vason', from Orange's, *Narrative of the Late George Vason* (1840).

was the only one of the missionaries not to take the written examination required by the L.M.S.,[2] and had merely been helping to fit out the missionary ship *Duff*, when he was offered a place amongst the party at the last minute. The account of his departure from Tonga starts as Vason discovers the Tongan plot against him, and by chance sights the British vessel in the bay.

> Sensible, therefore that death would be my inevitable lot, if he could get me into his hands, I used every argument to induce them [Vason's companions] to go to the ship.
>
> At length they consented, but as we approached, [I] had the unhappiness to see her under weigh; and was terribly afraid she would sail without me ... I persuaded them to let me steer; and we soon came up with her, when the natives refused to let me be any longer at the helm, for fear I should run the canoe against the ship.
>
> When we came near, I called out, 'How do you do, countrymen?' But the sailors only laughed at me, as they supposed, from my dress, that I was a native who had picked up some European phrases.
>
> The ship was now just beginning to sail; and the only opportunity of getting out of the hands of these savages was likely to be lost for ever. What should I do? I attempted to call out who I was, but I had been so long unaccustomed to my native tongue, that I perpetually mixed the language of these islands with it: which rendered all I said so unintelligible, as to increase the ridicule and unbelief of the sailors. I jumped overboard, knowing I could easily swim to the ship; when a chief who was near, said, 'get into my canoe, I will take you to the ship.' But no sooner had I entered it, than he turned with me towards the shore. My situation then was almost desperate.[3]

Vason then leaps into the water and swims towards the ship. The broad details of his escape are confirmed in a letter to the Directors of the London Missionary Society by Captain Wilson of the *Royal Admiral* - the son of Captain Wilson of the *Duff*, who had originally dropped Vason with his nine colleagues at Tongatapu in 1797. Wilson describes the sudden appearance of a canoe, '*with one like a European on it*', *trying to* avoid the boat sent to meet it, until the European 'leaped into the Sea, and swam to us'. Vason says that he dived under the canoe to avoid the spears of the Tongans. According

to Wilson, 'Mr. George Veeson ... differed little from a Native in any thing, and could hardly be persuaded to speak English.'[4] The main difference in the two accounts is in the degree of predetermination in Vason's escape. In Vason's account, he arrives in Vavau to become its 'Governor', only to find that his appointment is part of a treacherous plot to kill him - death will be Vason's 'inevitable lot' if he returns to the island; the *Royal Admiral*'s arrival and his escape are pure chance. In Wilson's account, the canoe is seen arriving directly from Haa'pai, a group of islands a day's sail to the south of Vavau; the *Royal Admiral* had been at Vavau for a few days, certainly long enough for word of the arrival to have been received at Haa'pai, and for Vason to have decided to try to escape. Many years after Vason died, as the Governor of Nottingham Gaol as history would have it, an old friend of his recalled as a boy 'sitting up a great part of the night' of Vason's return to hear the story of his escape. In this version Vason had 'succeeded in getting into favour' with the natives by 'instructing them in gardening and planting', but there is no mention of Vason being made a 'Governor' or a 'Chief', which is more the sort of detail a child would remember. Vason's last days on the island, Reuben Young recalled, were distinguished by 'watching at night for rats and vermin to satisfy his hunger' rather than by political success.[5]

The second departure, also from Tonga, is taken from John Martin's *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands* (1816), the story of young William Mariner who, as a boy of fourteen or fifteen, was captured by the Tongans after his ship, the *Port au Prince*, was cut out and destroyed on the orders of the Tongan king, Finau. The two beachcombers never met on Tonga, as Vason had left some years before Mariner arrived, although Vason is mentioned, briefly, in Mariner's book. Mariner was to stay on the island for

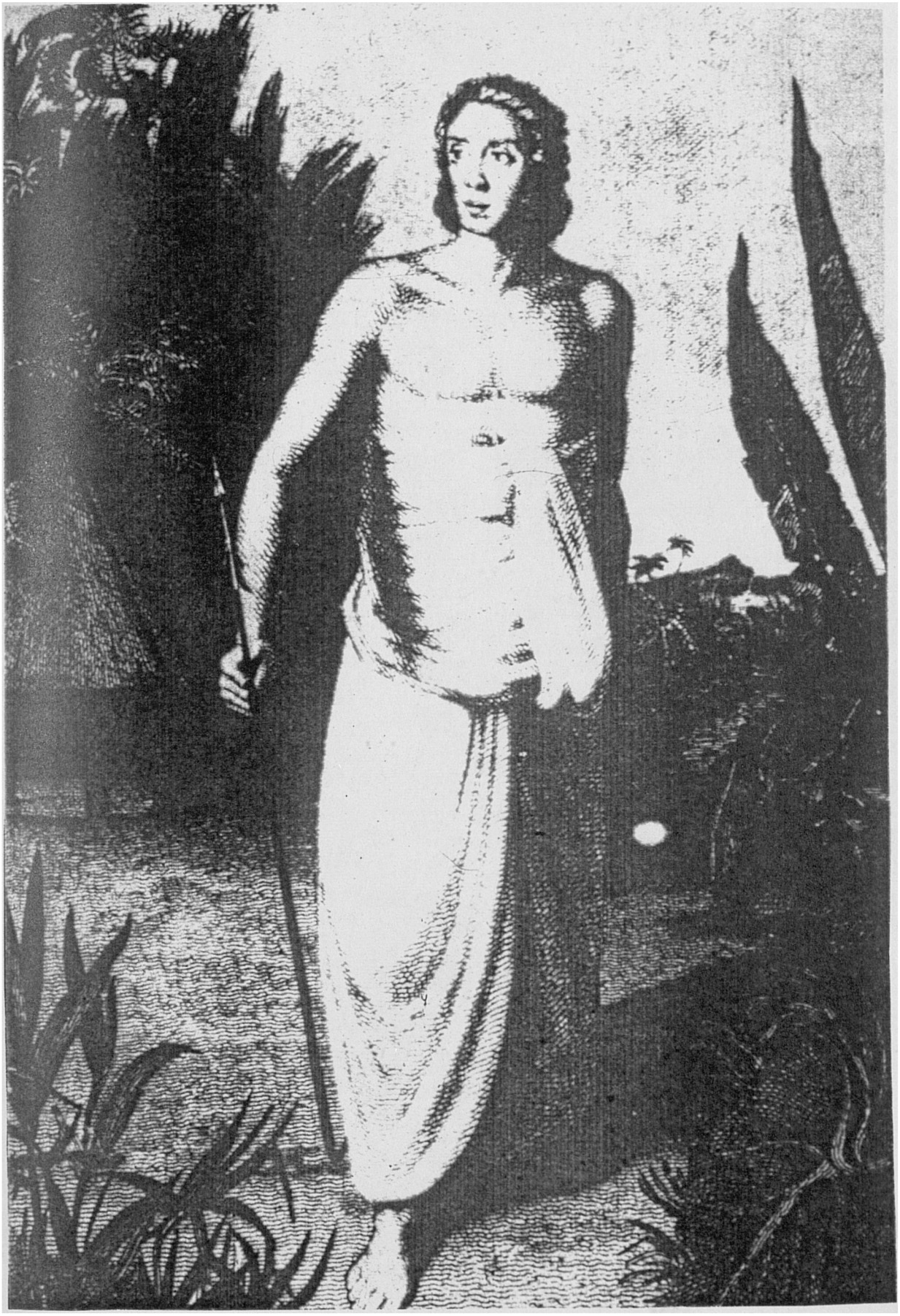

Figure 2. 'Mr. William Mariner in the Costume of the Tonga Islands.' From J. Martin, *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands...* (1816).

nearly five years, becoming fluent in Tongan, and, like Vason, rising to a high position in Tongan society: he becomes the confidant of the King, and owns his own plantation in the Vavau group. His narrative was used by many imaginative writers in the nineteenth century: Lord Byron's *Bounty* poem 'The Island; or, Christian and his Comrades' (1823), Edgar Allen Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket* (1838),[6] R.M. Ballantyne's *The Coral Island* (1858), and *The Modern Crusoe, or King of the Cannibals of the Marquesas Islands* (1869), an anonymous plagiarism of Melville's *Typee* (1846), all had elements of Mariner's story, and there are echoes of it in *Typee*. Mariner's story is far more than just an exciting adventure, however, and is a serious and densely packed ethnography of Tonga, one which is 'still relied on by ethnographers' today.[7]

Mariner, like Vason, seized a sudden opportunity to escape when he saw a European ship whilst out fishing with the men from his estate. The passage begins just as Mariner has ordered his men to steer for the ship.

> After conversing together, and muttering something between themselves, they told Mr. Mariner, that, notwithstanding the esteem and respect they had for him, they owed it as a duty to their chiefs to refuse his request; and upon this, they began to paddle towards the nearest shore. Mr. Mariner instantly demanded, in an elevated tone of voice, why they talked about the fear of chiefs; were they not his servants, and had he not a right to act with them as he pleased? He then took in his hand a musket from behind him, when the man who sat next immediately declared, that, if he made any resistance, he would die in opposing him, rather than allow him to escape: upon this, Mr. Mariner summoned up all his strength, and struck him a most violent blow, or rather stab, near the loins ... he then presented his musket to the other two, who appeared somewhat panic-struck, and threatened to blow out their brains if they did not instantly obey his orders, and pull towards the vessel. They accordingly put about, and made towards her.[8]

The third departure ends Tommo's sojourn amongst the nymphs and cannibals of the

Marquesas in Melville's *Typee*. Like much of the Pacific fiction I will be discussing, there is a strong autobiographical element, and *Typee* fictionalises and extends into some months a brief period, which may have been only a matter of days, that Herman Melville spent in the Marquesas when he jumped ship from a whaler in the early 1840s. The mysteriously injured Tommo gets his Typee 'servitor', Kory-Kory, to carry him to the beach when he hears that a whaleboat is waiting in the bay, finally persuading Kory-Kory to put him on board. The passage begins as Tommo turns back to look at the Typees on the beach:

> After a few breathless moments I discerned Mow-Mow. The athletic islander, with his tomahawk between his teeth, was dashing the water before him till it foamed again. He was the nearest to us, and in another instant he would have seized one of the oars. Even at the moment I felt horror at the act I was about to commit; but it was no time for pity or compunction, and with a true aim, and exerting all my strength, I dashed the boat-hook at him. It struck him just below the throat, and forced him downwards. I had no time to repeat the blow, but I saw him rise to the surface in the wake of the boat, and never shall I forget the ferocious expression of his countenance.[9]

Bill Pearson has suggested of beachcomber narratives in *Rifled Sanctuaries*, comparing them to the 'crudely didactic' writings of missionaries, that it is 'their biculturalism or their ability to walk on the borders of both cultures that makes the experience of actual beachcombers more interesting ... and it is their human sympathy that enables them to cross the beach.'[10] Pearson's description of missionary writing has been indirectly questioned recently in Christopher Herbert's *Culture and Anomie*, which sees a far greater interest in, and ambivalence towards, Polynesian cultures by early missionary ethnographers, as I will discuss shortly.[11] There is much truth in Pearson's comment about beachcombers, however, and their 'biculturalism' is also one of the reasons why

they were taken to provide greater insights than could be gained from the brief visit of a traveller who could only 'give an accurate description of the outside of a building, to which he has no admittance', as Dr. Martin puts it in the Introduction to Mariner's story.[12]

Here, however, are moments of crisis, when the apparent biculturalism of the beachcomber crystallises into a choice between savagery and civilisation, between death and life. The first movement back towards Europe is irrevocable for all three men, completely altering their relationship with the islanders: 'death', as Vason says, would be his 'inevitable lot' if he turns back. These violent crises are rites of passage, narrative devices which allow the beachcombers to be reintegrated into civilisation by thrusting away the savage who seduced, and now claims the European permanently for savagery. In the more overtly racist adventure story, *The Modern Crusoe*, the young hero, Jack, who becomes the King of the Marquesas, and marries three wives, is originally helped to escape from the tyranny on his ship by Koolah, a Marquesan princess, being attracted to a sensual Polynesian world, where 'the zephyrs of the summer sea came breathing on through lofty groves of coconut and palm'. But even Jack's initial rejection of Europe shows that he is already going violently 'native', as he turns to attack the tyrannical figure of the mate during his escape: 'I snatched a spear from her hand, and hurled it with all my force towards the ship. It was my first experiment, but I had the infinite satisfaction of seeing the weapon quiver, head-deep, in the right shoulder of the first mate...'[13] Civilisation and savagery are polarised at the moment of transition: where civilisation permits the transgression of the individual, however, savagery is finally shown to be unforgiving. Within the genealogy of the Pacific, these moments are all connected with

the death of Captain Cook at Kealakekua Bay in 1779, when the welcoming natives turned on the 'god' Lono, and destroyed him. The menace to the European within this trope of departure is physical: the monstrous savage, in other words, provides an uncomplicated way of reading the situation.

I am interested in this chapter in the shared motifs of Pacific beachcomber writing, and the silences and substitutions that, I will argue, are contained within these tropes of departure. In particular, I am interested in the sexualised violence that erupts so dramatically in Mariner's escape when he viciously castrates his Tongan servant. The enduring sexual reputation of Polynesia made it a popular area for Europeans to 'opt out' of civilisation, but the homosexual reputation which the islands held in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries at a popular seaboard level was possibly equally attractive, but has rarely been discussed. This is mainly because it was difficult to talk openly about homosexuality in literature during the nineteenth century, and in fact the term 'homosexual' only started to be used at the end of the century. The 'difference' of Polynesian sexuality, the effect it had on power relations in early culture contact, and the silences, substitutions and tropes of adventure with which it is tackled, are intertwined with the question of the authority of the observing eye of the European narrator.

Christopher Herbert, in his recent *Culture and Anomie*, has used Martin's *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands* to argue that much early nineteenth century beachcomber and missionary writing prefigured the doctrine of 'participant observation' proposed by that later ethnographer of a Pacific society, Bronislow Malinowski.[14] Participant observation, the theorised autoptic eye forming the basis of most modern ethnographies,

is the ability to be able to relate to a culture empathetically, and then to step back and analyse the observed cultural practices. Modern ethnographers, Herbert says, have effaced themselves behind the facade of this method, whereas in much early missionary writing from the Pacific, the struggle between prejudice against heathen depravity and an ethnographic interest and involvement in *a culture* is foregrounded. Mariner is particularly interesting to Herbert, as his responses to the Tongans are almost completely suppressed in Dr. Martin's text, and he becomes the self-effaced image of the perfect Malinowskian field worker. Mariner's intimate knowledge of Tonga can only be reached through the radical destabilisation of his selfhood and his complete absorbtion into Tongan society and language. Herbert argues that the text's main strategy in suggesting the equal cultural validity of Tonga lies in 'the suspension of moral judgement concerning ... [Finau, who destroyed Mariner's ship and killed his colleagues] in the name of close study of his personality in its minutely transcribed social and cultural context.'[15]

James Clifford argues in *The Predicament of Culture* that the 'invisible' participant observer is a myth, for 'Experiential, interpretive, dialogical, and polyphonic processes are at work, discordantly, in any ethnography, but coherent presentation presupposes a controlling mode of authority.'[16] The sheer mass of observed detail authorises Mariner's position in *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands*; in a further sense, the authorisation is provided by Martin himself, who assembles the text from Mariner's experiences, creating order from the observations of the autoptic eye, much as Clifford describes a modern ethnographer ordering a mass of field-work. This is mirrored by the experiential and evaluative narrative voices in Melville's *Typee*: the voice of the alternately frightened and entranced sailor alone in the valley, and the voice of the

detached narrator sitting at his New England writing desk. Vason's text is not only authorised by the presence of Solomon Piggott, but also by the Appendix written 'by an Eminent Writer' - probably Reverend Thomas Scott the Vicar of Aston Sandford in Buckinghamshire,[17] who was responsible at that time for training young missionaries in the Church Missionary Society, and produced a treatise on the missionary movement which echoes some of the sentiments expressed in the Appendix.[18]

James Clifford argues that 'ethnographic writing enacts a specific strategy of authority. The strategy has classically involved an unquestioned claim to appear as the purveyor of truth in the text.'[19] This claim, as I have already indicated, is deliberately made in Dr. Martin's Introduction, as it is by Solomon Piggott. The text has to authorise the observations and veracity of the destabilised beachcomber, who we see gradually losing his European identity and becoming assimilated into a 'savage' society. The extent of the beachcombers' alienation from 'civilised values' could be considerable: Mariner helped Finau to betray and assassinate a political rival, and Vason murdered women and children when he burned down a religious building in which they were hiding during a war. The confessions themselves are a 'guarantee' of the truthfulness of the observer, but they also form part of a narrative expectation that the hero will be brutalised before rejecting savagery and returning to civilisation. I am initially interested in the means by which the hero, the observer, retains the European reader's confidence.

Vason's 'biculturalism' is marked at the moment of his escape by his terror at being both cultures' Other. He can neither be recognised as an Englishman by the English, nor can he pass for a Tongan in Tonga: just prior to his escape he has been recognised in the dark

as a 'pappa langee' (a foreigner), 'notwithstanding I spoke the language fluently'.[20] The transition from one culture to another is made more urgent by a double marginalisation. The sudden disintegration of Vason's authority has as its necessary reverse his apparent success in Tonga: he arrives in Vavau to take up the position of Governor, and just before he discovers the 'plot' to betray him, 'I set off for my little dominion with the greatest joy, already anticipating the happiness I should find in being freed from the inconveniences of dependence, as a resident with a chief; and doubted not, but I should soon bring the island into a cultivated and fertile condition.'[21] Vason moves around the islands creating order from the wilderness, and his Crusoe-like endeavours have become a part of history: 'Although succumbing completely to Tongan ways deplored by the missionaries, [Vason] worked hard and established a model plantation of plantains, taro and sugarcane', writes a recent historian.[22] The trope of the resourceful European is captured in Peterkin's optimism in *The Coral Island* (1858) that 'we'll rise, naturally to the top of affairs. White men always do in savage countries.'[23]

Two of Vason's missionary colleagues lived in a house three miles away from where Vason describes his plantation as being, and they would have had to pass the estate every time they went to 'Moaa' or 'Ahogge' by canoe for their monthly meetings. They mentioned Vason visiting them with the news that he was 'prospering to his own desire in temporal things having received from Muliceemair a large piece of land which lay contiguous to another belonging to Dugonagaboloo [Tu'Kanokupolu] ... both of which comprised a very fine estate which he seemed desirous of improving to the best advantage',[24] but they thought Vason was living on Haa'pai at this time, sixty miles to the north, and do not mention seeing the plantation. Vason describes the estate prospering

for two years, between 1797 and the outbreak of war in April 1799, but the missionary report was dated December 1798, at which point Vason was still only 'desirous of improving' it. Even allowing for the rapidity of tropical growth, there were only a few months for Vason's estate to quadruple in size and grow the fine over-arching bowers he liked to walk beneath.

The term 'plantation' is used by both Vason and Mariner to describe their land, and at the very least suggests that their 'ownership' of land and people is interpreted in terms of slavery. Mariner's *Account*, like Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, is not interested in natural beauty, and John Martin acknowledges in the introduction that 'In respect to natural history, not much has been inserted'.[25] However, there is one exception to this rule, and that is when he describes Mariner's plantation covered with 'shrubs, planted by the liberal hand of nature, whose variegated flowers perfume the air with the most delightful aromatic fragrance; whilst from the lofty branches of the trees, the ear is soothed with the soft and plaintive call of the wood-pigeon calling to his mate.'[26] European possession transforms the land, productivity and purpose enhancing its beauty. This is overturned by Melville whose Tommo and Toby defile paradise, slithering into the remote valleys 'much in the fashion of a couple of serpents', and Tommo leaves no mark of the benevolent civiliser on the land when he escapes from Typee.[27] On the other hand, Melville connects with the trope of the authoritative European when Tommo persuades the Typees to abandon their taboos on women in canoes, and allow Fayaway to sail with him.

Although Charles Anderson's exhaustive study of Melville's sources for his Pacific fiction

does not list Mariner's book,[28] it is possible that Melville had Mariner's escape in mind in this section of *Typee*, for it is probable that the book would have been in the library of the *U.S.S. United States*, the ship that Melville sailed on from Honolulu back to America in 1843. Captain Wilkes, of the United States Exploring Expedition to the Pacific between 1838 and 1842, certainly had it in his ship's library, recording that Tonga already seemed familiar to him through its pages, and he felt 'great pleasure in confirming the admirable and accurate descriptions there given.'[29] Mariner's dictionary lists 'mow-mow', a Tongan word which he also uses in the text, as meaning 'to consume' or 'to destroy'[30] - a meaning that almost precisely mirrors Mow-Mow's actual threat to Tommo. Both Mariner and Tommo agree that their blows are directed deliberately and powerfully: Tommo says he struck Mow-Mow with 'all my strength', Martin describes Mariner's thrust being delivered with 'all his strength'.

Melville's *Typee* is recognisably a part of the Pacific tradition, connecting with, and drawing on existing beachcomber narratives. But it also gains an authority from the wider tradition of what Mary Louise Pratt has described as 'survival literature - first-person stories of shipwrecks, castaways, mutinies, abandonments, and (the special inland version) captivities',[31] and it is particularly Melville's engagement with the images of savagery produced by the Indian captivity narratives of Puritan New England to which I now turn.

Melville employs the structural formation of the captivity narratives which had been largely responsible for working out European responses to the American wilderness and savagery, as Richard Slotkin has argued of the genre in *Regeneration Through Violence*.[32] Indian captivity narratives started to appear during the wars between

colonists and Indians at the end of the seventeenth century, and were the stories with which early Puritan America defined itself against its savage Other. The unstructured tropes of savagery found in Dr. Chanca's report from the Caribbean, for example, began to be formed into a coherent colonial ideology, and one that was becoming available to large numbers of people through the growth of a mass print culture in the eighteenth century.[33] Most Indian captivity narratives used the three part structure of separation from the European community, a period of marginalisation amongst the Indians, and reaggregation into the home community, that are followed in Pacific beachcomber narratives. The very fact that the story is being told presupposes a happy outcome to the testing of the civilised individual in the wilderness, and the return celebrates and reinforces the values of civilisation, allowing each captivity to be read as an allegory of the trials and eventual triumph of the colonial society.

William Bradford's Puritans of Plymouth Plantation wanted land, and they had imagined the Americas to be 'frutfull, and fit for habitation'; but it was also a vast and 'unpeopled' land to them, 'devoyd of all civill inhabitants; wher ther are only salvage and brutish men, which range up and downe, litle otherwise than the wild beasts of the same.[34] Puritan ideology was directed towards establishing a difference between the anarchic wilderness and the ordered Puritan community, and the difference was primarily negotiated in Biblical terms. Captivity narratives dramatised the Puritan fears about their relationship to the natural world, and particularly its inhabitants, drawing the settlers back to the security of their communities and demonising the Indians.

This demonisation is suggested in Tommo's first visit to the Taboo groves when he and

Toby see:

> shoots of flame... illuminated the surrounding trees, casting, by contrast, into still deeper gloom the darkness around us.
>
> While we continued gazing at this sight, dark figures appeared moving to and fro before the flames; while others, dancing and capering about, looked like so many demons.[35]

Finding the heart of darkness is a commonplace of imperial narrative, and frequently, as here, the heart is cannibalistic: both Vason and Mariner witness similar demonic dances when a victorious party gathers for a cannibal feast. In an anticipation of Kurtz's 'unspeakable rites', the hero of *The Modern Crusoe* arrives at the heart of the Marquesan darkness to find a 'public square ... which presented in the centre a ghastly monument in the shape of a pyramid of human skulls, with the faces turned outward.'[36] 'King Bootcher', like Kurtz, is a European who has 'gone native' and the skulls pay mute testimony to what this has involved. The scene in *Typee*, where Tommo and Toby see demons when they think they are witnessing a cannibalistic feast, is a forerunner of the Try-Works chapter in *Moby-Dick*, where the 'Tartarean shapes of the pagan harpooners' pitching blubber into the pots with 'huge pronged poles' have been bathed by the red light from the furnace.[37] The scenes in both *Typee* and *Moby-Dick* draw on conventional Puritan representations of brutish man, like Mary Rowlandson's demonisation of Indians on the first night of her captivity when 'the roaring, and singing and dancing, and yelling of those black creatures in the night, ... made the place a lively resemblance of hell.'[38] James Fenimore Cooper's Indian romance, *The Last of the Mohicans*, a novel much influenced by captivity narratives, and one that Melville was familiar with,[39] gives Rowlandson's image a specifically 'racial' meaning:

> A dozen blazing piles now shed their lurid brightness on the place, which resembled some unhallowed and supernatural arena, in which malicious demons had assembled to act their bloody and lawless rites. The forms in the back ground, looked like unearthly beings, gliding before the eye, and cleaving the air with frantic and unmeaning gestures; while the savage passions of such as passed the flames, were rendered fearfully distinct, by the gleams that shot athwart their inflamed visages.[40]

The flame, to Cooper, is the light of truth that reveals the depravity and disorder beneath the surface attraction of the Indian world. The light confirms the symbolism suggested by the fight between the noble Chingachgook and the evil Magua, when 'the swift evolutions of the combatants seemed to incorporate their bodies into one': all Indians, good or bad, are ultimately demons or serpents to Cooper.[41] In *Typee* Melville turns the scene into a cannibalistic joke about the expectations of the two men who first think they are about to be eaten themselves, and then that they are being tricked into eating '"baked baby, by the soul of Captain Cook!"' rather than the 'mutilated remains of a juvenile porker' that they are actually offered.[42] Melville does not develop the point in *Typee* that he makes later in *Moby-Dick* where Queequeg, Dashoo and Tashtego - Polynesian, African and Indian - are turned into devils by the forking flames. The flame in *Moby-Dick* is a false light, an 'artificial lamp', a metaphor for the distorted language of European prejudice. To elaborate Ishmael's point that language can make anyone appear to be a devil, not simply the three harpooners but the whole crew is bathed in the redness. When Stubb kills a whale, the sun shining on the crimson pool of blood in the water 'sent back its reflection into every face, so that they all glowed to each other like red men.'[43] 'What is called savagery', transcends the colour of skin for Ishmael, and is a part of all human behaviour, for 'Your true whale-hunter is as much a savage as an Iroquois.'[44] Yet it is important to stress here that Melville does not appear to be seriously questioning

the superiority of Europeans, but exposing the demonisation of the Indians.

Although captivity narratives commonly demonised the Indians in order to strengthen communal European identity, the stories are fraught with the doubts and ambivalences of those communities. Puritans came to the New World to gain freedom, and the constraints imposed on individuals in the Puritan communities were often at odds with their burgeoning sense of liberty.[45] The hedge that Cotton Mather imagined surrounding the Puritan communities was there to prevent '*Goings out* as well as *Breakings in.*'[46] Mary Rowlandson's narrative veers sharply between a horror of, and an awareness of human sympathy in her captors: 'Oh, the hideous insulting and triumphing that there was over some Englishmen's scalps that they had taken... One of the Indians that came from Medfield fight ... came to me, and asked me, if I would have a Bible, he had got one in his basket.' Even during the march away from home, which was one of the moments of the greatest terror for the captives, one of the Indians 'set me upon a horse with my wounded child in my lap, and there being no furniture upon the horse's back, as we were going down a steep hill we both fell over the horse's head, at which they, like inhumane creatures, laughed and rejoiced to see it...'[47] The captives' observations of the Indians revealed that they were not simply demons, and many captives chose to stay with their captors.[48] Life in the wilderness proved a very attractive alternative to many of the early European settlers, most famously to the trader, Thomas Morton, who established a trading post at Merrymount in opposition to the New England Puritans. Morton described America in *New English Canaan* as a land of sensual abundance: '[I] discovered, besides, millions of turtledoves on the green boughs, which sat pecking of the full ripe pleasant grapes that were supported by the lusty trees, whose fruitful load did cause the arms to

bend...'[49] Mirroring Bougainville's initial tropic swerve in Tahiti, the Indians were Noble Savages to Morton, Trojans who had found refuge in America after the destruction of Troy by the Greeks. In stark contradiction to the Puritans' desire to retain their communal identity through distancing themselves from the sexual temptations of the wilderness, Morton celebrated liaisons with the Indian women: 'Lasses in beaver coats come away,/ Ye shall be welcome to us night and day', went the song sung around the May Pole erected at Merry Mount.[50]

Tommo's receptiveness to the natural world of Polynesia is expressed sexually, and here Melville not only establishes his clear intention to challenge the Pacific missionary texts which took suspicious or even downright hostile views of Polynesian sexuality, but he also enters into a contemporary American debate on nature and 'man's' response to it. When Tommo lands from the ship, and plunges 'diver fashion, into the recesses of the first grove that offered' he responds to the land sensually, like Morton: 'What a delightful sensation did I experience! I felt as if floating in some new element, while all sort of gurgling, trickling, liquid sounds fell upon my ear'.[51] The land is a vitalising and liberating paradise, the antithesis of the decaying ship, *Dolly*, symbol of an aging and deformed civilisation, with 'the weeds she trails along with her', and the 'unsightly bunch of those horrid barnacles' on her stern.[52]

Nature in *Typee* is deceptive, however, a trap threatening to hold Tommo within a 'valley, with its steep and close adjoining sides draperied with vines, ... arched overhead with a fret-work of interlacing boughs'; an image strongly redolent of buttocks.[53] Polynesian nature is both Morton's sensual garden and Bradford's threatening wilderness, for, as the

historian Francis Jennings has suggested of Puritan shocked and fascinated responses to the sexuality of the Indians in *The Invasion of America*, 'utterest abomination - male homosexuality was tolerated openly, even institutionalized.'[54] Tommo's apparent eagerness to experience nature is itself deceptive, as he sees the beautiful become sinister, often within the same sentence, and this is mirrored by his uncertainties about the islanders: Friendly Happar or cannibalistic Typee? Welcome or destruction? Tommo's capacity to know and understand the Typees is determined by the two expectations of savagery he arrives with.

The state of mind that will allow Tommo to replace the artificial fire with the only true lamp, as Ishmael puts it, can only be found by immersing himself in the natural world, leaving behind the distorted European vision and reestablishing the links with nature that have been lost by civilisation. Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay, 'Nature' (1836) was an important statement of the American desire to create a special relationship between nature and American civilisation. In a famous phrase that could almost be a manifesto for participant observation, Emerson creates the image of an all-consuming eye to describe the artist's enlightened view of nature: 'I become a transparent eye-ball. I am nothing. I see all. The currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God'.[55] Emerson sees nature through the hugely enlarged ego of the I/eye. The vision of the poet brings an appreciation of the 'uncontained and immortal beauty' of Nature, and becomes itself a part of that beauty; the soul is enhanced by Nature, and Nature is in turn enhanced by the progressive soul of 'man', harmonising Nature with a robust American civilisation. The transparent eye-ball's pure vision sees an original truth and beauty in the natural world which mirrors Emerson's perception of the inner good of

'man'. Melville shares Emerson's perception of the importance of clear vision, but disagrees with what he later termed Emerson's 'optomism' [*sic*] about the existence of inner good.[56] Although Ishmael recognises in *Moby-Dick* that the artificial fires of prejudice make everything appear ghastly, the natural light of the sun 'hides not the ocean, which is the dark side of this earth', but reveals a far more sinister mixture of good and evil.[57]

Emerson seeks to express a transcendental way of seeing through a European language which has repressed it; he aspires to free the American mind from the 'courtly muses of Europe' which have corrupted the natural world.[58] Emerson conceives the rejuvenation of civilisation as a spiritual rebirth which will regain a 'child's love' for nature, returning to an original innocence and purity; an image which is echoed in *Typee* by the wounded Tommo being carried around the valley like a child by Kory-Kory. The more disturbing rebirth occurs at the end of *Typee* where Tommo passes through a channel created on the beach between the divided Typees, and recalls his earlier 'baptism' in the stream in Typee by violently thrusting Mow-Mow beneath the water. In *Moby-Dick*, Ishmael can only be reborn through the sacrifice of Queequeg during Moby-Dick's destruction of the symbolic world of the *Pequod*: Ishmael floats from the vortex in Queequeg's coffin, the 'unharming sharks' not threatening, but protecting the enlightened individual. Tommo and Ishmael, as privileged individuals, can only narrate their experiences through the death of 'natural man'.

The symbolism of *Moby-Dick* is complex, but the implication of the final scene is that nature will remain unharming as long as the artist can remain alienated from society,

protected by the symbolic presence of 'natural man' in Queequeg's coffin. The relationship between 'man' and nature is conceived, as it is for Emerson, as accessible through the enlightened individual, but nature and civilisation are powerful and mutually destructive forces to Melville, and the Pacific Ocean becomes a battlefield, a dark place of endings and beginnings. Emerson, however, takes an altogether more commanding view of the relationship between 'man' and nature:

> Nothing will stand the eye of a man, - neither lion, nor person, nor planet, nor time, nor condition. Each bullies us for a season; but gaze, and it opens that most solid seeming wall, yields its secret, receives us into its depth and advances our front so much farther into the recesses of being, to some new frontier as yet unvisited by the elder voyagers.[59]

The image of sexual and philosophical domination resonates with the language of 'discovery', and Emerson had in fact been reading Pacific exploration narratives around the time he was writing 'Nature' and 'The American Scholar'. Scattered through his journals for those years are references to Cook's voyages, the South Seas, and the Tahitians, including the observation that 'In the Marquesas Islands on the way from Cape Horn to the Sandwich Islands 9^{0}S. of the Equator they eat men in 1833.'[60]

Civilised man, in Emerson's image, dominates his submissive feminine partner, who desires and yields to male penetration, allowing mystical secrets of the inner self to be born from the coupling. The image naturalises the rape of other lands as desire, as part of some evolutionary yearning for the higher civilisation. The rhetoric looks outward, westward, always 'to some new frontier', as Emerson's imperial gaze masters all, defining everything outside a strong, masculine civilisation as weak, desirable and available. This

male imperial vision is deliberately evoked and then subverted in *Typee* when Tommo catches his first glimpse of the valley.

> Over all the landscape there reigned the most hushed repose, which I almost feared to break, lest, like the enchanted gardens in the fairy tale, a single syllable might dissolve the spell. For a long time, forgetful alike of my own situation, and the vicinity of my still slumbering companion, I remained gazing around me, hardly able to comprehend by what means I had thus suddenly been made a spectator of such a scene.[61]

The valley is a softly feminine garden enclosed within the harsh masculine surroundings. The experience is initially denied to Tommo's companion Toby who, 'still slumbering', does not have the poetic eye to appreciate the meaning of the view. Toby is adventurous, but not imaginative. The spiritual quality of the valley can only be felt by Tommo, and his sojourn there is clearly conceived as an Emersonian relationship of the privileged individual to the natural world. Tommo wakes to his authority over nature; like Emerson he penetrates the passive and available valley with an apparently all-seeing eye. But the view is unreal and Tommo's mastery of nature is signalled as a delusion: the valley is a 'fairy tale', and as we later discover, his eye understands nothing of the life going on in the valley. The 'hushed repose' of the voiceless natural world is lost when Tommo and Toby finally see the Typees who give 'loose to all their natural vivacity, shouting and dancing about in a manner that well nigh intimidated us.'[62] Tommo's apparent possession of the landscape is later reversed within the valley as he himself becomes the possession and sexual target of the Typees.

Emerson's grand vision is blinkered, and the mastery of nature is only possible if the voice of the 'native' is silenced by the rhetoric of Europe. Emerson ultimately sees the

'Civilized arts' of Europe as 'disagreeable to the wild Indian'.[63] His vision is filtered through his own sense of the European American destiny, and the eye that sees 'all' just cannot see American Indians. Although no Indian hater, Emerson was simply not interested in them as the holders of primitive knowledge: 'We in Massachusetts see the Indians only as a picturesque antiquity', he wrote in his journal for 1845,[64] seeing them as irrelevant to American civilisation. Emerson's vision can only master the beauty of the American woodland by interpreting history racially, and he ignores the Indians as already doomed. As Roy Harvey Pearce argues in *Savagism and Civilisation*, the 'inevitability' of the Indians' decline was seen as a biological weakness that even supporters of the Noble Savage accepted.[65]

Melville's extension of an American debate on nature to Polynesia was helped by the perceived similarities between the two New Worlds. James Fenimore Cooper invented a volcanic island in the middle of the Pacific to use as an allegory of the creation and, as he saw it, the eventual destruction of American society. His novel, *The Crater* (1847), depicts this literally New World as virgin and vacant land caught between the westward movement of civilisation and the eastward progression of savagery.

The similarities were most clearly marked in the representation of the Polynesians. The Bostonian castaway, Horace Holden, understood the 'Pellew' islanders as Indians; they, like Mow-Mow, carried 'tomahawks', and their hair was 'coarse and stiff, and of a colour resembling that of the natives of North America'.[66] Holden's emotional response is given a 'scientific' authority in James Jackson Jarves' *Kiana: A Tradition of Hawaii*, where Tolta, the Mexican priest who is castaway on Hawaii with his Spanish captors,

looks at a deserted village and finds that he:

> was the least affected by the singularity of their position, and seemed in many things to recognize a similarity in the degree of civilization and manner of cultivation, as well as in the articles themselves, to the habits and productions of tribes on the southern frontiers of his own country, though the entire absence of precious metals, and any altars or edifices which indicated the worship of sanguinary deities, puzzled him not a little.[67]

Figure 3. *The Cession of Matavaai*, Robert Smirke (1799).

The Mexicans and the Hawaiians, to Jarves, are similar because they are at the same level of development towards civilisation. Although nowhere stated openly, it is strongly hinted in Jarves' text that the similarity extends to the Mexican betrayal of their white god, Cortés, and the Hawaiian destruction of Cook. Savagery is predictable because at this level of development the passions are not fully controlled by rationality. The assumption that Indians and Polynesians were alike extended into a form of interchangeability in

artistic representations. The painter Robert Smirke was commissioned to illustrate 'The Murder of Lucinda', reproduced in the Introduction, because he had already established a reputation for painting native and European figures by illustrating the cession of Matavai for the London Missionary Society (figure 3).[68] Although the painting is specific to Polynesia, Smirke accurately showing the Tahitian 'King' and 'Queen' being carried on the shoulders of their servants, Smirke's genre painting is also reminiscent of Benjamin West's American *tableau d'histoire*, 'William Penn's Treaty with the Indians' (figure 4).

Figure 4. *William Penn's Treaty with the Indians*, Benjamin West (1777).

Polynesia allowed Melville to explore the American encounter between civilisation and nature amongst a people who were regarded as closely resembling Indians, but without the historical prejudices against them created by greed for land. However, he sees the

evangelisation and civilisation of the Pacific repeating the history of America where 'The Anglo-Saxon hive have extirpated Paganism from the greater part of the North American continent; but with it they have likewise extirpated the greater portion of the red race.'[69] Entering Typee valley represents the opportunity for the enlightened individual to try to free himself from the ideological constraints of language, to distance himself from the oppressive structures of civilisation, and to immerse himself in the sexual difference of the natural world.

The beautiful Fayaway is an icon of Polynesian sexuality. Tracing her descent from Bougainville's nymphs, Fayaway gives birth to a line of Polynesian sexual partners for Europeans: Loti's Rarahu and Gauguin's Tehura are versions of her, as are Charles Warren Stoddard's young Polynesian lovers, and two of the three wives of the Modern Crusoe. The French biographer of the beachcomber Jean Kabris, who was in the Marquesas between 1798 and 1806, tells of Kabris' rescue from certain death by the daughter of a chief, whom he later married.[70] It is possibly this story that Melville repeats in the tale of a ship's captain who 'was only saved from a cruel death' at the hands of the Typees through 'the intervention of a young girl, who facilitated his escape by night along the beach to Nukuheva'.[71] It is more likely that both stories and the affair between Fayaway and Tommo draw directly on a long tradition of liaisons between European men and 'native' women - Dido and Aeneas, John Stedman and Joanna, John Smith and Pocahontas, Inkle and Yarico - in which the woman is so physically attracted to the European man that she betrays the values of her own society in order to protect him. I will develop this aspect of sexual relationships in my discussion of Pierre Loti's island romance in the next chapter.

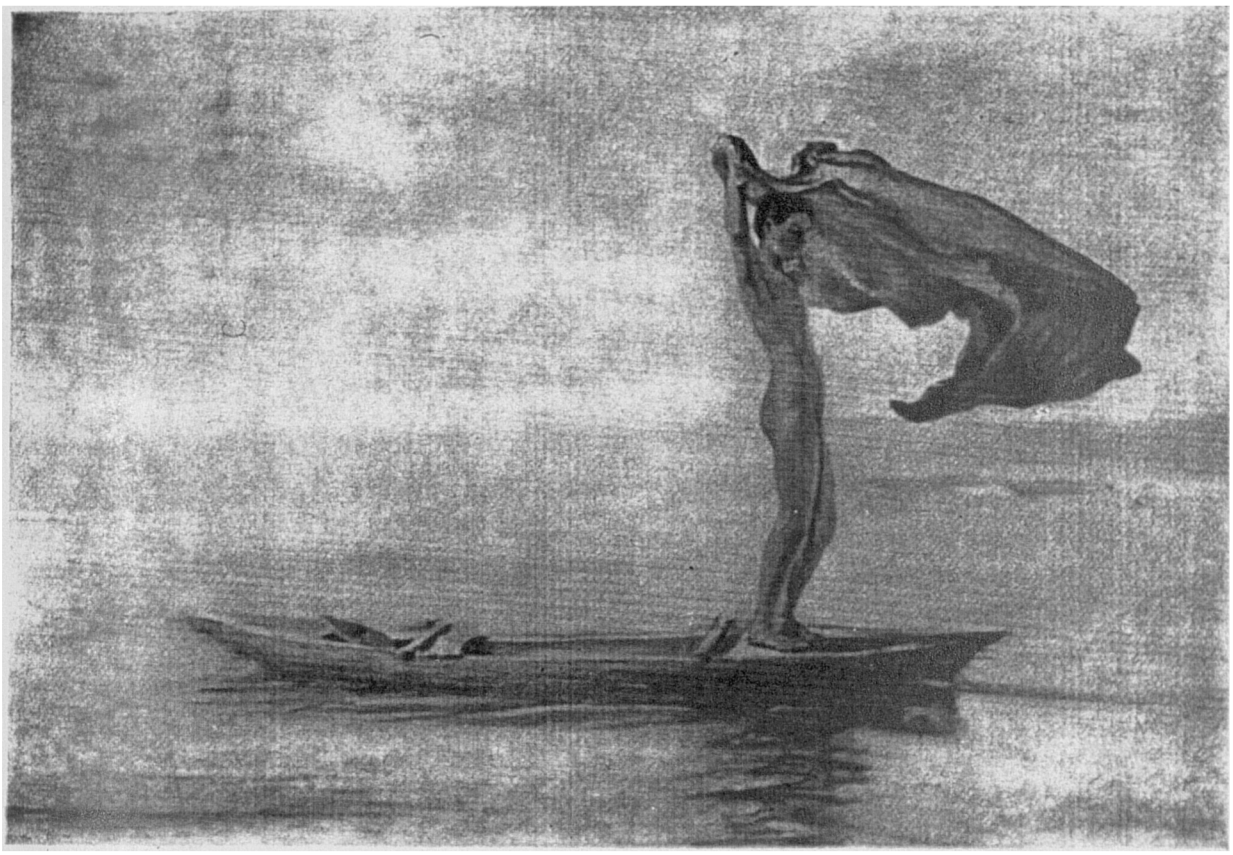

Figure 5. *Fayaway sails her boat. Samoa*, John La Farge (189O).

William Mariner has no reported relationship with a Tongan woman, except being adopted as a son by one of Finau's wives. Vason, however, has an affair with a Tongan woman, a 'kinswoman' of a chief. Although such an alliance is anathema to his fellow missionaries, they attempt to retrieve something from the situation by acceding to Vason's suggestion that he marry her (she is never named by Vason or the missionaries) in the Christian manner. According to Vason, she breaks down during the marriage ceremony, being reluctant to commit herself to a marriage for life. In the view of the other missionaries, she was being forced into a political marriage, for, 'no due affection subsisted between them, but that she was entirely actuated by the fear of Mulicamar [Vason's protector, the chief of the Mooa district] and her parents.'[72] It is difficult to say which version, if either, is correct: Vason's interpretation draws on the view that such

relationships are only ever temporary, and his colleagues' interpretation is clouded by their desire to present a sexual relationship between 'races' as an unnatural act. In support of the missionaries' view, the beachcomber William Diaper, by his own account the proud father of thirty-eight children, describes his sexual frustration in Tonga during the eighteen forties when, despite his great wealth, he 'could not get a wife in an honourable manner, on account of the then existing prejudice against foreigners.'[73] In the mythic relationships, the love of the native for the European burns brightly, fiercely and briefly, symbolising the tragic future of an innocent people drawn to the civilisation that will ultimately destroy them. Business dealings can complicate the relationships, and they are more easily depicted as a romantic attraction that fits in with the expectation of imperial narratives.

The affair with Fayaway plays on this expectation, most notably during the scene on the lake when she removes her robe and acts as a human sail for Tommo's canoe, an unforgettable male fantasy that was unsurprisingly reproduced on canvas (figure 5). But it does only play with it as Melville consistently undercuts the reality of the relationship: on the lake Tommo feels that 'I had been transported to some fairy region, so unreal did everything appear.'[74] By the end of *Typee* when Fayaway stands helplessly weeping in the surf, flanked by the bizarre figures of Marheyo and Kory-Kory, her symbolic value has changed from the promise of integrating Europe and Polynesia in a set of shared, and European, values, to a symbol of the inevitable decline of the savage. She stands rooted to the beach, 'speechless with sorrow',[75] unable to step towards civilisation, and without the language to persuade Tommo to stay in the valley. The gulf is 'racial', as Tommo is able to stand on his own in the boat, and look back towards a crippled, dying 'race'.

Tommo's final perception here is entirely in keeping with the pattern of the novel, resolving his attraction and repulsion towards Fayaway, which acts as a metaphor for larger uncertainties about the relationship between the artist, nature, and civilisation, through the expectation of a tragic end to the affair. But as critics have noted, Fayaway has never convinced as a realistic sexual partner for Tommo,[76] and her failure is also connected to the specific homosexual agenda in *Typee*, which, within the literary constraints of the times, can only be referred to by metaphor and euphemism.[77]

'The fact is,' says Melville with his tongue firmly in his cheek, 'that there is a vast deal of unintentional humbuggery in some of the accounts we have from scientific men concerning the religious institutions of Polynesia.'[78] The humorous linking of religion and homosexuality will become more sinister to Tommo in the context of 'conversion', but here it pokes fun at the seemingly guileless accounts of travellers like the German naturalist, Georg Langsdorff, who visited the Marquesas in 1804, and was singularly impressed by the physiques of the men, comparing one to the 'Apollo of Belvedere,... that master-piece of the finest ages of Grecian art, in which is combined every possible integer in the composition of manly beauty.' 'How much soever the navigators that have visited the South-Seas islands extol the beauty of the women,' Langsdorff concludes, 'I am disposed to consider the men of Nukahiwa as far exceeding them.'[79] Captain Cook described the Tahitian 'Queen Obariea', as being 'about 40 years of Age and like most of the other Women very Masculine', and he hardly differentiates between the sexes at all in his gaze on the 'agreable' and 'gracefull' people.[80] The admiring gaze on the native man is a commonplace of imperial narrative, and one which establishes a 'comforting' power relationship through feminising the male body: but as Melville's pun

suggests, however, the gaze often revealed more than the gazer realised, both about himself and the object of the gaze.

As Robert Morris has shown recently, indirect accounts of *aikane*, institutionalised homosexuality, within the chiefly circles of Polynesia are found in many of the reports of the first European voyagers to the Pacific.[81] Polynesian homosexuality carried none of the stigma of criminality that it held in Europe. Outside the ruling classes there was the *tayo* system of friendship, which did not necessarily extend to homosexuality, but neither did it preclude it. Tommo's *tayo* in *Omoo* is 'a handsome youth, who never could do enough for me', and who shows him 'all the lions; but more than all, he took me to see a charming lioness'.[82] Tommo's other 'retrograde lover' in *Omoo*, Kooloo, spurns him after having 'fallen in love at first sight with a smart sailor'.[83] Referred to with a sometimes heavy-handed humour, male relationships are dominant in *Typee* and in much of Melville's work:[84] Tommo and Toby abscond from the ship like a couple of lovers; Tommo's 'servitor' Kory-Kory works himself up into a jealous masturbatory fervour when Tommo is being oiled by the women; Mehevi presides over his 'Bachelor's Hall' in Typee, the centre of the chiefly circle of the valley, which Tommo also suspects of being the centre of cannibalistic practices.

Robert K. Martin has argued in *Hero, Captain, and Stranger* that shipboard relationships in Melville's novels are poised between the love that Whitejacket feels for Jack Chase, and the oppressive sexuality which drives Claggart to hound and destroy Billy Budd.[85] Sexual oppression is consistently expressed in terms of a cannibalistic appetite in *Typee*: the fate of Pedro, the one-legged cockerel on board Tommo's ship the *Dolly*, is 'sealed.

His attenuated body will be laid out upon the Captain's table next Sunday, and long before night will be buried with all the usual ceremonies beneath that worthy individual's vest.' Captain Vangs, 'will never point the ship for the land so long as he has in anticipation a mess of fresh meat.'[86] Polynesia's reputation for sexual freedom opens up the ambivalent prospect of a non-oppressive relationship that will cross racial and sexual boundaries, intertwined with the virtual repetition of the cannibalistic oppression on board ship. The possibility of a non-oppressive relationship is symbolised in the novel by the strong attraction Tommo feels for the beautiful, wandering, exotically tattooed figure of Marnoo, who appears in the valley immediately after the scene with Fayaway on the lake.

> His unclad limbs were beautifully formed; whilst the elegant outline of his figure, together with his beardless cheeks, might have entitled him to the distinction of standing for the statue of the Polynesian Apollo; and indeed the oval of his countenance and the regularity of every feature reminded me of an antique bust. But the marble repose of art was supplied by a warmth and liveliness of expression only to be seen in the South Sea Islander under the most favourable developments of nature. The hair of Marnoo was a rich curling brown, and twined about his temples and neck in little close curling ringlets, which danced up and down continually when he was animated in conversation. His cheek was of a feminine softness, and his face was free from the least blemish of tattooing, although the rest of his body was drawn all over with fanciful figures, which - unlike the unconnected sketching usual among these natives - appeared to have been executed in conformity with some general design.
>
> ... Traced along the course of the spine was accurately delineated the slender, tapering, and diamond-checkered shaft of the beautiful 'artu' tree. Branching from the stem on each side, and disposed alternately, were the graceful branches drooping with leaves all correctly drawn, and elaborately finished.[87]

Robert Louis Stevenson once wrote of Herman Melville that at his christening 'some influential fairy must have been neglected: "He shall be able to see," "He shall be able to tell," "He shall be able to charm," said the friendly godmothers; "But he shall not be able to hear," exclaimed the last.'[88] Melville's transcription of Polynesian names is

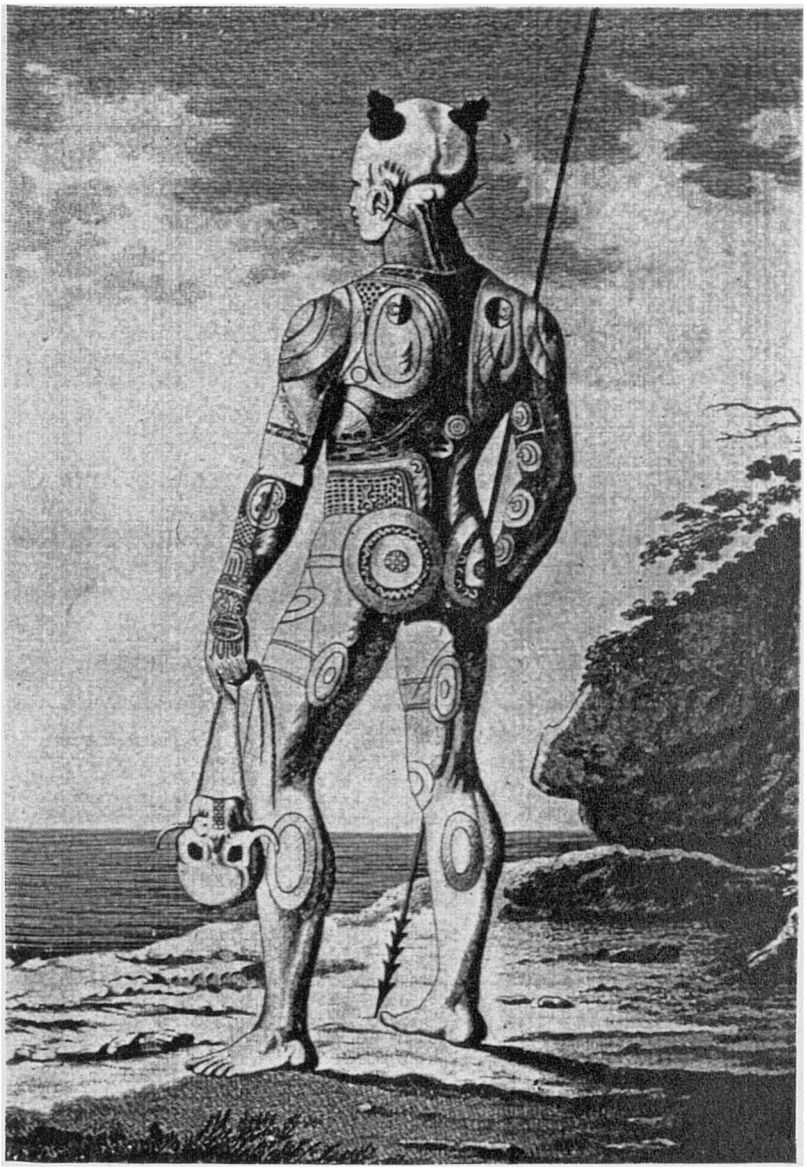

Figure 6. A Marquesan warrior, sketched by an artist on the Krusenstern Expedition in 1803.

notoriously inaccurate, and it is possible here that the beautiful and feminised Marnoo is, in fact, a misheard or misspelt *Mahu*. Havelock Ellis quotes Turnbull, an early missionary visitor to Tahiti, who found 'that "there are a set of men in this country whose open profession is of such abomination that the laudable delicacy of our language will not admit it to be mentioned. These are called by the natives *Mahoos*; they assume the dress, attitude, and manners of women, and affect all the fantastic oddities and coquetries of the vainest of females.'[89] In a more recent anthropological work, *Marquesan Sexual*

Behaviour, Robert Suggs describes a *mahu* as an 'habitual homosexual', for whom 'female company is eschewed almost entirely and male lovers are taken.' Although homosexuality has been officially considered as a mortal sin in the islands since they became converted to Christianity in the nineteenth century, Suggs concludes that homosexuality is still very much a part of Marquesan culture, on both a casual and an institutionalised level.[90]

Whether Marnoo is or is not a *mahu*, he is clearly feminised by Tommo's description. The 'unclad' Marnoo's portrait emphasises the 'oval of his countenance and the regularity' of his 'feminine' features and suggests his vulnerability to the male gaze of Tommo. Marnoo's hair, like Fayaway's, forms natural ringlets, but ones which dance in conversation; despite the reference to the statue of the Polynesian Apollo, which is probably a conscious echo of Langsdorff's 'Apollo of Belvedere', and which gestures towards the familiar 'knowledge' of the Greek cult of the male body, Marnoo's body moves and breathes, whereas Fayaway poses. Where Fayaway's mouth is sexualised as a vagina-like arta fruit, Marnoo's back is the very 'shaft' of an artu tree, spreading upwards from the base of the spine, harmonising 'man' and nature (figure 6). Marnoo is, like Melville, an artist, a story-teller, with the freedom to cross the sexual and tribal boundaries in the Marquesas, and who has crossed 'racial' boundaries by shipping on board whalers. Marnoo's body is a living work of art, but what disturbs Tommo is that the meaning of the tattoos, which 'appeared to have been executed in conformity with some general design', eludes him. Tommo's uncomprehending consumption of the text of Marnoo's body is cannibalistic, and the power relations which Tommo hoped to avoid in the natural world of Polynesia are still part of his cultural baggage.

Tommo yearns for the secrets of Marnoo's body which he thinks will allow him to walk between 'racial' and gendered boundaries, yet still retain his own individuality. But Marnoo's artistic freedom is illusory, his integration of 'man' and nature does not contain truth for he flatters the Typees by encouraging them to 'resist these encroachments [of the French]; reminding them ... that as yet the terror of their name had preserved them from attack'[91] - effectively persuading the Typees to commit mass suicide through a false representation of the French power. Marnoo's tattooed tree is rooted in the buttocks, reminiscent of the threatening landscape that Tommo sees on his first arrival, and suggesting a love that is not regenerative. Marnoo as a symbol of artistic and sexual freedom, ultimately has to fail like Fayaway. Tommo has to be able to assess the social and artistic constraints working on Marnoo in order to provide the intellectual reason for leaving the valley. Tommo retains his ideological superiority over Marnoo, and thus does not need to become involved in the supplementary questions of whether Tommo 'goes native', or why he decides to stay, that would disturb the narrative expectation.

Melville appears to have two basic models for relations between 'natives' and Europeans. There is the beautiful Marnoo: transformed into the imposing figure of Queequeg in *Moby-Dick*, he shares his 'marriage bed' with Ishmael at the Spouter Inn. Then there is the altogether more sinister figure of Babo in *Benito Cereno*, the direct descendant of Mow-Mow, the brutal savage who tries to claim Tommo back to savagery. To the blinkered vision of Captain Delano of the *Bachelor's Delight*, Babo appears to support Benito Cereno, but is actually terrorising him. Delano only sees the truth when, in an echo of Mow-Mow's leap at Tommo, Babo leaps at Benito Cereno escaping in Delano's boat.[92] Mow-Mow's jump at Tommo appears to stay with Melville, for although *Benito*

Cereno closely follows the true story related by Captain Amaso Delano of the discovery of the usurped Spanish slave-ship, *Tryal*, and Cereno did escape by flinging himself into Delano's boat, Melville added Babo's dramatic leap after the European.[93] The beautiful and the brutal savage are actually one: Mow-Mow's tomahawk clutched between his teeth becomes the tomahawk pipe that Ishmael and Queequeg share; Mehavi, the King of Typee, moves from being the noble protector of Tommo, to being his oppressor: the tattoos that fascinate Tommo on Marnoo are ultimately terrifying when Mehavi wants to have Tommo tattooed by Karky: 'Horrified at the bare thought of being rendered hideous for life if the wretch were to execute his purpose upon me, I struggled to get away.'[94]

Something, as Charles Olson suggests in *Call Me Ishmael*, happened to Melville in Polynesia which subsequently affected his behaviour - he cites Melville's brutality towards his wife.[95] What that was can only be conjectured, and certainly the experience of captivity marked many captives permanently.[96] William Mariner changed from a cheerful, outgoing personality to a virtual recluse.[97] Mary Rowlandson appeared to readjust better than some, but she could still 'remember the time when I used to sleep quietly without workings in my thoughts, whole nights together, but now it is other ways with me.'[98] George Vason's later biographer, James Orange, noted 'a sort of paralytic twitching about his mouth', which is designed to suggest the internal scars of his experiences.[99] What that 'something' was, I believe, is related to the changes I have been describing in *Typee* from freedom to oppression, from promise to threat, from beautiful to brutal savage. Central to this is the altered position of Mehavi, whose initial status as protector of Tommo is mirrored in Vason and Mariner by the figures of Mulikiha'amea and Finau.

Mariner is spared from the butchery of his comrades on board the *Port au Prince* when it was captured by the Tongans because 'Finow had taken an extraordinary liking to him from the first moment he had seen him on board...'[100] After his death, Finau's son shares his father's affection for Mariner, and 'actually proposed to give up his dominions to his uncle, and accompany Mr. Mariner to England.' This intensity is explained in the context of the book through the 'natural' attraction of the 'superior' race: it was, Martin explains, 'a sufficient proof that [Mariner] possessed those qualities of mind calculated to inspire a high degree of confidence and friendship.'[101]

After Mariner's capture, he is stripped naked and dragged off some miles to Finau's house. During the journey he is abused and spat on, and his humiliations mirror the torments that form the first part of many Indian captivity narratives, when the captives are dragged away from the home society. When he arrives at Finau's, he is bathed, oiled, and scented, and dressed in fine clothes: treatment which is echoed in the description of a young Tongan bride's preparations for her wedding. It seems probable that, initially at least, Mariner is made to serve as Finau's concubine. The 'deepening and affectionate intimacy' that Christopher Herbert describes growing between Mariner and Finau,[102] reflects the genuine love that appears to exist between them. As Finau's concubine, Mariner is given a privileged position within the chiefly circles - although this is certainly not the same, I would argue, as the familiar European trope of a 'white' chief - and Mariner tries to please Finau by trying to persuade him to follow up a victory won by Mariner's guns, and offering to run back to get Finau's knife when he leaves it behind.

Another possible explanation of Mariner's intimacy with Finau is suggested through Caleb

Cain's discussion of 'Stockholm Syndrome' in relation to the closeness of Don Benito and Babo in *Benito Cereno*. The Stockholm syndrome first came to the notice of psychologists in the 1970s, and is:

> a phenomenon named after a bank robbery in Sweden [in which] ... a hostage often becomes attached to his kidnapper. For his own safety, the hostage takes the kidnapper's side against the authorities. Although on the surface a paradox, the Stockholm syndrome makes sense as a mechanism of self-defense, because if the bond between kidnapper and hostage seems genuine to the kidnapper, he may be less likely to kill the hostage.[103]

As Cain asks of *Benito Cereno*, can Don Benito have been drawn by the circumstances of his capture into the acts of cannibalism and homosexuality that both fascinate and horrify Tommo? Certainly, in *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands*, the text is silent about the possibility, and Finau is desexualised as 'the Father and protector of Mr. Mariner',[104] the intimacy between captor and captive standing as a metaphor for 'the object of this present work [which] is chiefly to describe the inside of this structure' of Tongan society.[105] As I have already suggested, this closeness is moderated in the text through the employment of various strategies which establish Mariner's moral ascendancy over the Tongans, moderating the reader's perception of Mariner's 'disturbing' Tonganisation. The authority of the observer depends to a large extent on that distance being preserved, and here it is useful to link Mariner's narrative authority with the question of his sexual 'chastity'.

Teresa A. Louise's suggestive article, '"My Own Credit": Strategies of (E)valuation in Mary Rowlandson's Captivity Narrative' argues that her 'value' is central to the negotiations for Mary Rowlandson's return.[106] In order for Mary Rowlandson to retain

her worth to her husband, he has to be convinced that he is not buying back 'soiled goods', which is to say that he has to be certain that she has not been raped by the Indians. Rowlandson's status within the Puritan community depends on the believability of her denial of the European expectation of rape, and its threat has to be evoked in order to be denied: when her Indian master gets drunk, 'he called for me. I trembled to hear him, yet I was fain to go to him, and he drank to me, showing no incivility.'[107] The questions of her commercial valuation in the negotiations, her sexual virtue, and her narrative authenticity are intertwined. In Martin's text, the frontispiece illustration (figure 2) shows 'Mr. Mariner in the Costume of the Tonga Islands': he is a European dressing up, showing that he is able to don and abandon the outward trappings of savagery at will; his body is unblemished, unmarked by the experience, and makes an interesting contrast with the illustration of Vason, whose 'depravity' is signalled by the outlandish, and inaccurately drawn, Tongan tattoos. Whilst Mariner may have been affected by the experience of his captivity, his body has not been assaulted by the tattooist's needle, he has remained 'pure'.

Mariner mentions that rape was an unremarkable occurrence after a victory in Tonga, and relates the story of Eliza Mosely, a European woman captured by a Tongan chief, 'Teoo Cava', who was apparently envied for having a 'white woman' as a wife.[108] Her story also appears in Louis Becke's *The Tapu of Banderah* (1901).[109] She had left the island before Mariner arrived and her escape, as reported by the captain of the American brig, *Union*, echoes Mariner's and Vason's. 'Another canoe was observed advancing very quickly from the shore, and to their surprise contained with the others a white woman, standing at the bows.... she suddenly sprang overboard towards the vessel'. Her escape

causes the *Union* to open fire on the canoe, and Captain Fanning dwells on 'the mutilated limbs... the groanings of the dying, and floating bodies' of the Tongans.[110] The violence avenges the imagined, or real, humiliations she has suffered at the hands of the Tongans. The male rape or concubinage of captive European males, however, is more humiliating to Europe precisely because it cannot be spoken about, cannot be annulled through violence.

Figure 7. 'Island women tattooing a sailor to prepare him for becoming a bridegroom' (No date).

The homoerotic gaze on Marnoo centres on his beautiful tattooing, but a striking image in *Omoo* is that of the 'renegade' sailor, Lem Hardy, who is tattooed across his face: 'What an impress! - far worse than Cain's'. Tommo, or 'Typee' as he has been rebaptised, is horrified by the brutal assault on the body which this 'renegado from Christendom and humanity' had 'voluntarily submitted to'.[111] Horace Holden and Benjamin Nute, the captives in the Pellew islands, are also 'compelled to submit to the

distressing operation' by their hosts, although 'we expostulated against it - we entreated - we begged to be spared this additional affliction'.[112] The language that Tommo and Holden use to express their horror suggests a sexual agenda to the operation: Hardy carries a 'mark indelible', he has 'submitted', is dehumanised; Holden also has to 'submit' to tattooing; and tattooing and sexuality are specifically linked in the illustration to *Life on the Ocean* (figure 7). The 'renegade' missionary, George Vason, agreed to being tattooed because he was being noticed sexually:

> I was frequently exposed to the reflections and sarcasms of the young people, especially in the hour of bathing ... for being destitute of that cuticle vesture which modesty has taught the South Sea islanders to throw around them as an excellent imitation and substitute for garments; I mean the Tatoo.[113]

Vason's breech-tattoo desexualises, protecting him from sexual attention. It certainly desexualised him on his way back from Tonga, when he tells of being surprised bathing in America by a group of women who thought his tattoos were trousers. But the tattoo was considered to enhance beauty in Polynesia, and if it is seen as part of an initiation which draws Vason into society, rendering him 'invisible', a further meaning is suggested. Although Vason had had a relative freedom in Tonga when he was able to move between European and Tongan society, he was by now 'alone' on the island. He belonged to no society, being perceived as an outsider by the Tongans, and abandoned by his ex-colleagues; to belong becomes vitally important to him.

Gilbert Herdt has described in *Ritualized Homosexuality in Melanesia*, that the passage from boyhood to manhood over a wide area of Melanesia, extending as far as Fiji (the easterly limit of the study), was marked by 'ritualized boy-inseminating' and male to male

oral sex.[114] Fijian warriors were widely used in Tonga from the middle of the eighteenth century as an élite guard for the Tongan royal families,[115] and it seems at least possible that the warrior caste, to which Vason aspired, and to which Finau belonged, brought the custom with them, if it was not already in place. Robert Suggs suggests that the practice was institutionalised in the Marquesas in the east Pacific. The influence of the Fijians on Tongan culture, both Vason and Mariner suggest, was most clearly seen in the recent introduction of cannibalism. The imaginative association between cannibalism and oral sex has been noted by many critics, and is linked linguistically in some cultures.[116] Tattooing penetrates the body as cannibalism consumes it, Tommo fearing the 'pricking' of Karky's 'strange instruments' as much as he fears being eaten by Mow-Mow.[117] Whilst homosexuality was a taboo subject in Europe, cannibalism and tattooing were not: they were 'acceptable' and 'expected' savage excesses, and ones that were particularly associated with the Pacific.

Although customs in Melanesia are not the same as those in Polynesia, what is common to Vason, Mariner and Tommo is the 'father and protector'. Vason is protected by the chief, Mulikiha'amea, Mariner by Finau, and Tommo by Mehevi. In Melanesian insemination rites the older man protects the boy and yet claims him sexually; following initiation the boy lives with both his wife and the older man, who continues his role as protector. For both Vason and Mariner, the death of the father-figure appears to expose the young man to frightening sexual attention; when Mehevi declines his role as protector after Tommo refuses to be tattooed, Tommo is constantly 'subjected to [other people's] annoying requests, until at last my existence became a burden to me; the pleasures I had previously enjoyed no longer afforded me delight, and all my former desire to escape

from the valley now revived with additional force.'[118]

Let me be clear about my argument here. I am not trying to 'prove' that it was Tommo's fear of aggressive homosexual attention that was the 'real' reason why he fled the valley, any more than I am trying to prove that Mariner feared rape, or that oral sex was part of Vason's initiation into the Tongan warrior caste. It is unlikely that Vason would have been admitted to that group in any case. What I am trying to show, however, is that these forces existed, that lone Europeans could be vulnerable to them, but that the fears are not enunciated in the texts. The motifs of cannibalism and tattooing are part of the tradition of savagery whereas homosexuality is not. Melville makes the acceptable taboos of cannibalism and tattooing in European narrative stand for the unacceptable taboo of homosexuality. A language to describe the threat of sexual humiliation to the European does not exist in such accounts, which are bound up, as Clifford suggests, in the need to retain a narrative authority over the Other. For the male European writer to admit to the humiliation of male rape, or even its fear, would be to radically destabilise that authority, to collapse the gendered power relations implicit in all imperial narrative.

When Tommo thrusts the boathook in Mow-Mow's throat, he silences the savage just as Babo's speechless head is impaled on a spike at the end of *Benito Cereno*, and just as Mariner directs all his strength towards destroying the symbol of his humiliation. In order for narrative authority to be retained, only the European voice can be heard. The real sexual 'difference' of Polynesia, that both attracts and repels Tommo, that humiliates Mariner, has to be pushed beneath the surface, it has to be imagined in the terms of something else, of the monstrous savage. The trope allows the violence to be seen as the

culmination of the testing of civilised man; it is a familiar part of imperial narrative, and ultimately reassures the European reader through offering what is effectively racial 'typing' rather than a threatening cultural difference and narrative instability.

The expectations of beachcomber narratives like Vason's, Mariner's, and Melville's, were formed by the Indian captivity stories of America, and the images of Polynesians were to a large extent based on the experience of American Indians. But differences were being introduced as Europe sought to express Polynesia's inferiority in other ways: Indians were associated in the European imagination with 'war paint', the Polynesians with tattooing; cannibalism formed a significant but not a dominant part of the representation of Indians, whereas it was seen as an inescapable fact of Polynesia; the European response to Indian sexuality was being altered and enlarged; the nomadicism of the American Indians, which was seen as preventing them from progression, was replaced by its opposite: the savage whose immobility, like Fayaway's reluctance to leave the valley and follow Tommo, prevents 'racial' development. The heterosexual attraction of the islands came to dominate representations of the Pacific, and this, ironically enough, is epitomised by Fayaway and Tommo in *Typee*. In the next chapter, on Pierre Loti's *Tahiti: The Marriage of Loti*, I will discuss the development and traditions of, and the racial implications contained within, the romanticised special relationships between island women and Europeans.

NOTES

1. George Vason, *An Authentic Narrative of Four Years' Residence at Tongataboo, one of the Friendly Islands, in the South-Sea, by _____ Who went thither in the Duff, under Captain Wilson, in 1796. With an Appendix by an Eminent Writer* (T Scott?), (ed. S Piggott), London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, (1810), p. vii. A later version of Vason's story was edited by James Orange, *Narrative of the Late George Vason of Nottingham, One of the First Missionaries sent out by the London Missionary Society in the Ship Duff*, Derby, (1840). Further references to the 1810 edition will be shown as 'Piggott', and the 1840 edition as 'Orange'.

2. Records of the London Missionary Society's personal records of the missionaries. *L.M.S. Archives*, Special Collection, School of African and Oriental Studies Library, University of London.

3. Orange: pp. 193-194.

4. Letter from Wm. Wilson to the Directors of the L.M.S., March 15th 1802, At Sea on the 'Royal Admiral'. L.M.S. Archives Box 1, Folder A.

5. 'Reuben Young's Reminiscences of Vason' by 'Merlin', *Nottingham Weekly Guardian*, 30 December 1916.

6. Christopher Herbert, *Culture and Anomie: Ethnographic Imagination in the Nineteenth Century*, London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, (1991), p. 182.

7. Bill Pearson, *Rifled Sanctuaries. Some Views of the Pacific Islands in Western Literature*, Auckland and Oxford: Oxford University Press, (1984), p. 64.

8. John Martin, *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands in the South Pacific Ocean. With an Original Grammar and Vocabulary of the Language. Compiled and Arranged from the Extensive Communications of Mr. William Mariner, Several Years' Resident in Those Islands*, London: J Murray, (1817), 2 Volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 18-19. Further references are to this edition and will be cited as 'Martin'.

9. Herman Melville, *Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life*, (1846), Harmondsworth: Penguin, (1986): p. 332. Further references are to this edition and will be prefixed '*Typee*'.

10. Pearson, *Rifled Sanctuaries*: p. 61.

11. Herbert, *Culture*: pp. 150-203.

12. Martin: p. xiv.

13. Anon, *The Modern Crusoe; or, The King of the Cannibals of the Marquesas Islands*, London: James Henderson, (1869), pp. 12 & 26.

14. Herbert, *Culture*: p. 155.

15. Herbert, *Culture*: p. 181.

16. James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*, Cambridge M.A. and London: Harvard University Press (1988), p. 54.

17. Scott is tentatively identified as the author of the Appendix in the British Museum Library Register of Books.

18. Longmans' Financial Records 1810-1815 - *Longmans' Archives*, University of Reading Library - show that a large number of copies of the book were sent to Messrs. L.B. Seely, the Buckinghamshire publishers who handled Scott's writings, suggesting a particular local interest in the book.

19. Clifford, *The Predicament*: p. 25.

20. Orange: p. 192.

21. Orange: p. 191.

22. Niel Gunson, 'The Coming of Foreigners' in *Friendly Islands: A History of Tonga*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (1977), p. 99. For a similar sentiment in an excellent but brief account of Vason, see K.R. Howe, *Where the Waves Fall*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, (1984), p. 182.

23. R.M. Ballantyne, *The Coral Island*, (1858), Oxford: Oxford University Press World's Classics, (1990), p. 16.

24. 'Journal of Buchanan, Kelso, and Wilkinson', L.M.S. Archives, South Sea Journals, Box 1.

25. Martin: Vol. 1, p. xliii.

26. Martin: Vol. 1, p. 302.

27. *Typee*: p. 79.

28. Charles R. Anderson, *Melville in the South Seas*, New York: Columbia University Press, (1967).

29. Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition During the Years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842*, (1845), Upper Saddle River: The Gregg Press, (1970), 5 Volumes, Vol. 3, p. 9.

30. Martin: Vol. 1, p. 63, and Vol. 2, unnumbered page in the Tongan/English dictionary.

31. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, London: Routledge, (1992), p. 86.

32. Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence, The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860*, Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, (1973), p. 23.

33. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*: p. 86.

34. William Bradford, *History of Plymouth Plantation*, New York: Russell and Russell (1968), 2 Volumes, Volume 1, p. 56.

35. *Typee*: p. 143.

36. *The Modern Crusoe*: p. 34.

37. Herman Melville, *Moby Dick, or The Whale*, (1851), Harmondsworth: Penguin, (1987), p. 533. Further references to *Moby-Dick* are to this edition.

38. Mary Rowlandson, *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (1685), in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, (eds. Baym, Gottesman et al), London: W.W. Norton & Company, (1989), Volume 1, p. 144.

39. Harold Beaver, editorial note to *Moby-Dick*, p. 703.

40. James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*, (1827), Harmondsworth: Penguin, (1988), p. 237.

41. Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*: p. 113.

42. *Typee*: p. 145.

43. Melville, *Moby-Dick*: p. 392.

44. Melville, *Moby-Dick*: p. 376.

45. Michael Zuckerman, 'Identity in British America: Unease in Eden', *Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World 1500-1800*, (eds.) N. Canny and A. Pagden, Princeton: Princeton University Press (1987), p. 126.

46. Cotton Mather, *Decennium Luctosum*, quoted in Slotkin: p. 99.

47. Mary Rowlandson, *A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson*, in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, (eds. Baym, Gottesman, Holland, Kalstone, Murphy, Parker, Pritchard and Wallace), London and New York: W.W. Norton & Company (1989), Volume 1, pp. 141-172, pp. 147 & 145.

48. James Axtell, 'The White Indians of Colonial America', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 1, January 1975, pp. 55-88, p. 83.

49. Thomas Morton, *New English Canaan of Thomas Morton*, (ed) Charles Francis Adams, Jnr., New York: Burt Franklin, (1967), p. 180.

50. Morton, *New English*: p. 280.

51. *Typee*: p. 65.

52. *Typee*: p. 37.

53. *Typee*: p. 65.

54. Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America. Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest*, London: W.W. Norton (1976), p. 49.

55. Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'Nature', in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 3rd. Edition, Vol. 1, London: Norton & Company, (1989), pp. 903-931, p. 905.

56. Written in the margin of Melville's copy of Emerson's *Conduct of Life*. Quoted in Richard Chase, *Herman Melville: A Critical Study*, New York: Macmillan, (1949), p. 196n.

57. Melville, *Moby-Dick*: p. 535.

58. Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'The American Scholar', in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, p. 943.

59. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., (1909), Vol V., p. 407. Quoted by Charles Feidelson Jnr., *Symbolism in American Literature*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press (1953), p. 16.

60. See Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, (eds. Gilman, Ferguson, Davis, Sealts, and Hayford), Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, (1965), 16 Volumes, Volume 5, pp. 24, 288 and 467.

61. *Typee*: p. 91.

62. *Typee*: p. 115.

63. Emerson, *Journals* (1965), Vol. 5: p. 262.

64. Emerson, *Journals* (1965), Vol. 9: p. 175.

65. Roy Harvey Pearce, *Savagism and Civilisation: A Study of the Indian and American Mind*, Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, (1965), p. 147.

66. Horace Holden, *A Narrative of the Shipwreck, Captivity, and Sufferings of Horace Holden and Benj. H. Nute, who were cast away in the American Ship Mentor, on the Pelew Islands in the Year 1832; and for two years afterwards were subjected to unheard of sufferings among the Barbarous Inhabitants of Lord North's Island*, Boston: Russell, Shattuck, and Co., (1836) p. 47. A handwritten marginal note in the 1836 copy of Holden in the British Library, beside the author's discussion of the Pellew islanders' religion, reads: 'Belief in the "Great Spirit" - Indians', suggesting that at least one of Holden's readers also saw similarities.

67. James Jackson Jarves, *Kiana: A Tradition of Hawaii*, London: S. Low (1857), p. 46.

68. Ellwood Parry, *The Image of the Indian and the Black Man in American Art 1590-1900*, New York: George Braziller (1974), p. 59.

69. *Typee*: p. 266.

70. Ferdinand Denis, 'Kabris, Joseph', in *Nouvelle Biographie Generale, depuis les Temps les plus Recules jusqu'a nos jours*, XXVII, Paris (1861), quoted by Jennifer Terrell, 'Joseph Kabris and his notes on the Marquesas', *The Journal of Pacific History*, Volume 17, No. 1, (1982), pp. 101-112, p. 105.

71. *Typee*: p. 61.

72. Journal of Wilkinson, Kelso and Buchanan, October 1798, L.M.S. Archives, South Seas Letters, Box 1, Folder 4.

73. William Diapea, *Cannibal Jack: The True Autobiography of a White Man in the South Seas*, London: Faber and Gwyer Ltd., (1928) p. 236.

74. *Typee*: p. 191.

75. *Typee*: p. 330.

76. Cf. Edwin Haviland Miller, *Melville*, New York: Persea Books Inc. (1975), p. 130.

77. Since writing the first draft of this chapter which looks at a shared set of motifs in *Typee*, Vason, and Mariner, which I argue are concerned with European responses to Polynesian homosexuality, Caleb Cain has published 'Lovers of Human Flesh: Homosexuality and Cannibalism in Melville's Novels', in *American Literature*, Vol. 66, No. 1, March (1994). Cain draws many of the conclusions that I draw in this chapter, although he does not specifically relate *Typee* to beachcomber narratives, nor to my more general argument about textual authority necessitating a silence about homosexuality. Where I have subsequently drawn on his interesting article, I have indicated it in a footnote.

78. *Typee*: p. 235.

79. Georg H. Langsdorff, *Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World during the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806, and 1807*, Carlisle: George Philips (1817), p. 104. Quoted in Cain: p. 29.

80. James Cook, *The Exploration Journals of Captain James Cook in the Pacific as told by Selections of his own Journals 1768-1779*, (ed. A. Grenfell Price), New York: Dover Publications (1971), pp. 30 & 35-37.

81. Robert J. Morris, '*Aikane*: Accounts of Hawaiian Same-Sex Relationships in the Journals of Captain Cook's Third Voyage (1776-80), *Journal of Homosexuality*, Vol. 19, No. 4, (1990), pp. 21-54.

82. Herman Melville, *Omoo,* (1847), London: Dent Everyman, (1923), pp. 157 & 158.

83. Melville, *Omoo*: p. 160.

84. Full a detailed discussion of the theme of homosexuality in Melville's sea novels, see Robert K. Martin, *Hero, Captain, and Stranger: Male Friendship, Social Critique, and Literary Form in the Sea Novels of Herman Melville*, Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, (1986).

85. Robert K. Martin, *Hero.*

86. *Typee*: p. 36. For a full discussion of the theme of shipboard homosexual oppression in *Typee*, see Cain.

87. *Typee*: pp. 193-194.

88. Robert Louis Stevenson, *In the South Seas*, (1896), London: Kegan Paul Int (1986), p. 26.

89. Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, New York: Random House (1936), 4 Volumes, Volume 2, p. 18.

90. Robert C. Suggs, *Marquesan Sexual Behaviour*, London: Constable (1966), p. 83.

91. *Typee*: p. 196.

92. Herman Melville, *Benito Cereno*, in *Billy Budd, Sailor and Other Stories*, Harmondsworth: Penguin (1987), pp. 215-308: pp. 282-283 for Babo's leap into the boat.

93. For Delano's story of his encounter with the slave-ship, see: Amaso Delano, *Narrative of Voyages and Travels in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres: Comprising Three Voyages Round the World; Together with a Voyage of Survey and Discovery, in the Pacific Ocean and Oriental Islands* (1817), Upper Saddle River, N.J.: The Gregg Press Reprint (1970), pp. 318-354.

94. *Typee*: p. 293.

95. Charles Olson, *Call Me Ishmael, A Study of Melville*, San Francisco: City Lights Books, (1947), p. 88.

96. Slotkin, *Regeneration*: pp. 146-180.

97. Martin, Vol. 1: p. xxiii.

98. Rowlandson, *A Narrative*: p. 172.

99. Orange: p. 219.

100. Martin, Vol. 1: p. 55.

101. Martin: p. xl.

102. Herbert, *Culture*: p. 181.

103. Cain 'Lovers of Human Flesh': pp. 44-45.

104. Martin, Vol. 1: p. 310

105. Martin: p. xv.

106. Teresa A. Louise, '"My Own Credit": Strategies of (E)valuation in Mary Rowlandson's Captivity Narrative', *American Literature*, Vol 64, No. 4, December 1992, pp. 655-676.

107. Rowlandson, *A Narrative*: p. 167.

108. Martin, Vol. 1: p. 354.

109. Louis Becke and Walter Jeffrey, 'The Adventure of Elizabeth Morey, of New York', *The Tapu of Banderah*, London: C. Arthur Pearson Ltd. (1901), pp. 224-244.

110. Edmund Fanning, *Voyages Round the World....*,(1833), Upper Saddle River: The Gregg Press, (1970), p. 321.

111. Melville, *Omoo*: p. 26.

112. Holden, *An Account*: p. 101.

113. Orange: p. 179.

114. Gilbert H. Herdt, 'Ritualized Homosexual Behaviour in the Male Cults of Melanesia, 1862-1983', in Gilbert H. Herdt (ed), *Ritualized Homosexuality in Melanesia*, Los Angeles: University of California Press, (1993), pp. 1-82.

115. Gunson, 'The Coming of Foreigners': p. 97.

116. Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*, London: Weidenfield and Nicholson, (1989), p. 105.

117. *Typee*: p. 291.

118. *Typee*: p. 295.

3. Love on an island: *The Marriage of Loti*

> How happy were [the two lovers] in this solitary retreat! tyrannic power now no longer reached them: shut out from the world and all its cares and perplexities; - secure from all the eventful changes attending upon greatness, cruelty, and ambition; - themselves were the only powers they served, and they were infinitely delighted with this simple form of government.[1]

This is Dr. Martin's romantic version of a Tongan legend given to him by William Mariner, telling of two young lovers who escape 'tyrannic power' by hiding in an underwater cave. Mariner himself discovered the cave when swimming in the sea with a party from Finau's court, and, curious at 'seeing some of the young chiefs diving into the water, one after another, and not ris[ing] again', he was shown the underwater entrance by one of them, and taken to '"where Finow, and his chiefs and matabooles, are now assembled."' What little light there is in the cave shines up from the floor, and Mariner's return with a torch of 'gnatoo' illuminates the cave 'tolerably well, for the first time, perhaps, since its existence', allowing him to see that the roof 'was hung with stalactites in a very curious way, resembling the gothic arches and ornaments of an old church'.[2] Martin tries to present Mariner here as the European bringing the light of reason to the dark mystery of the cave, although he is quietly disappointed in Mariner as a representative of 'civilised man', to whom 'it did not occur...to ascertain' how the air in this apparently airlocked place remained fresh.[3]

During Mariner's time, access to the cave appeared to have been restricted to the male chiefly circle, Mariner believing that 'this place is very seldom visited by the natives'.[4] In Tongan legend, however, the cave protected a love between a man and a woman, and it is predominantly through its sexual meaning that Mariner's cave entered European imagery of the Pacific, Bill Pearson writing in *Rifled Sanctuaries* that it appears in at least five of the works he has read.[5]

The Diamond Cave in Ballantyne's *The Coral Island*, however, can carry a multitude of sexual meanings: there only being the three boys on the island at this point, the cave has associations with a male society, not unlike the chiefly circle of Tonga. This does not necessarily preclude the cave symbolising the arrival of sexual maturity: the immature Peterkin being scared to dive underwater on his own, and having to be helped through the passage by the older Ralph and Jack. Yet the cave also protects the boys from being assaulted by the adult European pirates who land on the island, and it briefly holds the children in their suspended state of youthful innocence. In the anonymous *The Modern Crusoe*, Jack and his second Polynesian wife, the 'spiritual' Hivoan princess Kaleetah, hide in the cave when escaping from the islanders who had captured her: the author follows Martin's detailed description of the interior of the cave closely, concluding in a romantic vein that 'it appeared like one of the enchanted caverns you read about in Oriental fairy-tales.'[6]

Lord Byron's *Bounty* poem, *The Island; or, Christian and his Comrades* (1823), as Pearson points out, has two caves: one in which 'the mutineer Torquil initiates the Polynesian Neuha into "passion's devastating joy", and ... [the other in which] she

conceals him from the naval ship sent in pursuit.'[7] The latter, again, follows Martin's description, but enlarges the mystery of the cave revealed in the gleam of Neuha's gnatoo torch: 'There, with a little tinge of phantasy,/ Fantastic faces mop'd and mow'd on high.'[8]

The cave is a womb-like space that precedes knowledge, and in which love is protected from the pressures and prejudices of the outside world. Love may be naive, but a constant theme of love stories is that it conquers all, and love is more attractive when it sucessfully transgresses the established order of things, and more tragic when it doesn't: the love of Romeo and Juliet fatally flouts the interdictions placed on them by the two opposing houses; in Chaucer's age-old comedy of Januarie and May in *The Merchant's Tale*, the cuckolding of the old husband by the young lovers is comic, but also subversive of the social and political order. Love plots traditionally challenge convention - often through the opposition of youth and age - but one of the ways in which love's 'threat' to the establishment is contained is through the marginal space. The space is not necessarily ordered like the outside world, it does not obey the rules of 'normality': in Mariner's cave, the light comes from the floor, and the air is mysteriously renewed; in *The Modern Crusoe*, the cave is an 'enchanted cavern'; Neuha's cave has a 'tinge of phantasy'; and in *The Merchant's Tale*, Damyan cuckolds Januarie in the walled garden where the gods improbably appear. In the context of the transgressive love plots of imperial romance such as *Inkle and Yarico*, John Stedman's affair with the slave-girl, Joanna, and Pierre Loti's relationship with Rarahu, the marginal space allows 'the ideal of cultural harmony through romance', as Peter Hulme says of the Pocahontas myth,[9] to be explored in a contained manner.

In the many island romances of the Pacific, the 'seductive' islands themselves could contain the transgressive element of the plot. The islands were the antipodes of Europe, youth to Europe's old age, sexual freedom to Europe's sexual constraints, a world that turned the rules of civilisation upside down. Romantic islands that were cut off even from each other, remote and isolated 'islands in the far sea',[10] gave the sojourn of the individual European an aura of self-imposed marginality, of willed exile from the rationality of Europe. The mutiny on the *Bounty* gave the romance of the South Seas mythic status, the myth connecting at a fundamental level with centuries'-old epic conflicts between nature and civilisation, with a liberal measure of sex and violence superadded: telling, as it did in the popular imagination, of a crew persuaded to rebel against a lawful but harsh authority by the sensual attractions of Tahiti. The American Revolution had broken out only a few years earlier, and the Bastille fell in the same year as the *Bounty* mutiny, in 1789. The mutiny's rebellion against authority connected with, and also 'contained' in the marginal spaces of the South Seas, these larger movements to replace the old oppressive feudal order with the principles of a secularised, just and egalitarian society.

Lord Byron's loyalties are divided by the mutiny on the *Bounty* in his poem, *The Island.* As James McKusick has argued recently, Byron's abhorrence of the rabble, and his desire for order, surfaces in the early sections of the poem which deal with the mutiny itself.[11] Bligh, the 'gallant chief' whose name was about to be 'added to the glorious roll' after completing his mission to Tahiti, is torn from his bunk by 'the mutineer', who, 'half uncivilised, preferr'd the cave/ Of some soft savage to the uncertain wave', stands over Bligh and 'proclaims the reign of rage and fear'.[12] Byron sets the final acts of the

mutiny on the island of Tubuai, where the mutineers had in fact settled briefly and bloodily before sailing on to the uninhabited island of Pitcairn, although 'Toobonai's' landscape is that of Mariner's Tonga. All the mutineers but Torquil are killed or captured in the poem, Fletcher Christian memorably throwing himself off a cliff: he 'plunged: the rock below received like glass/ His body crush'd into one gory mass'[13] - a moment that McKusick shows that Byron got from a story in Mariner, although it is just possible that Byron was recalling Mary Russell Mitford's *Bounty* poem, *Christina, The Maid of the South Seas* (1811) in which Christian also leaps from a cliff: 'Vain was all help; - the sudden shock/ Scatter'd his brains upon the rock.'[14] Rebellion is punished in *The Island*, but the young lawbreaker, Torquil, who is hidden in the cave by Neuha, still lives on in 'the happy shores without a law', allowing Byron's revolutionary sympathies to be expressed as well.[15]

Although the island of 'Toobonai' also 'had vices - such are Nature's growth -/ But only the barbarian's - we have both', the good and genial 'New World stretch'd its dusk hand to the Old;/ Each was to each a marvel'.[16] Byron works on Polynesia's reputation for a 'primitive innocence' and a special relationship with Europe, and he draws directly on Bligh's account of the intimacy that built up between Europeans and Tahitians during the *Bounty*'s six month stay at the island. Paradise 'Tamed each rude wanderer to the sympathies/ Of those who were more happy if less wise'.[17] Toobonai's attractions are ambivalent in the poem, however: although the mutineers respond better to nature than to the harsh discipline of Bligh, to kindness rather than fear, they are 'tamed', emasculated, and as Tommo fears in Typee valley, they sacrifice intellect to the sensual.

The cave in *The Island* protects Torquil from the British ship sent to recapture the mutineers, and it mainly functions as a quintessence of the natural world, the couple reaching 'a central realm of earth again' when they enter the cave.[18] When Torquil and Neuha come out from the cave, they emerge into a world 'No more polluted with a hostile hue', and they celebrate their rebirth with the islanders: 'such happy days/ As only the yet infant world displays.'[19] The return is both joyous and sinister: the symbolic coupling of a male civilisation and a female nature produces a harmony between Europe and Polynesia, but it does so at the price of effacing the identity and masculinity of Torquil: he becomes Neuha's helpless child in the cave, the infant of 'the infant of an infant world',[20] and when the grotto is named 'Neuha's Cave' by the islanders, the very existence of the European is lost in the act of Polynesian naming. The 'individuality' of the European is consumed by the natural world, which is no more a marginal space than Tommo's Typee.

The story of civilised 'man's' encounter with the natural passions of Polynesia is endlessly repeated in island romances; but the indigenous cultures that Melville, Mariner and Byron see threatening the European, were rapidly coming under direct or indirect European control in the first half of the nineteenth century. The island romances which emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century drew strongly on the tradition of Melville and Mariner, but operated within a different, and less physically threatening Polynesian environment. The romances of Charles Warren Stoddard and Pierre Loti openly display their sympathies with Polynesia, but they are far more confident about their positions within both societies, and they seek ways to rework and adapt the genre to the changed political situation. James Clifford has suggested of 'participant observation' that

'Ethnographic liberals,... have tended to be ironic participants. They have sought ways to stand out apart from the imperial roles reserved for them as whites... Many have in one way or another publicly identified themselves with exotic modes of life and thought or cultivated an image of marginality.'[21] My main text in this chapter, Pierre Loti's *Tahiti: The Marriage of Loti* (1880),[22] is an exotic romance, a genre that flourished for twenty or thirty years either side of the turn of the century, during the period of high imperialism, presenting a sympathetic, often stridently anti-imperial view of a 'remote' world ironically made accessible and safe to the writer through empire. The sexual relationship with the island woman was, in the island romance, the preeminent strategy for the disenchanted imperialist to align himself with the marginalised culture.

Frederic Jameson has argued in *The Political Unconscious* (1981) that realist narrative, which in this context we could apply to such rational discourses of empire as Cook's voyages or Mariner's ethnography of Tonga, 'unites the experience of daily life with a properly cognitive, mapping, or well-nigh "scientific" perspective', whereas romance creates mystery and magic as its area of operation. In Jameson's history of romance, which takes issues with Northrop Frye's notion of 'timeless' and 'natural' rhythms of good and evil structuring the genre, the secular and religious forces of rationalisation in the Medieval European world gradually 'mapped' the areas of mystery and enchantment on which romance depended for its production, and which had once abounded within Europe. 'From this point of view, then,' he continues, 'the problem raised by the persistence of romance as a mode is that of substitutions, adaptations, and appropriations, and raises the question of what, under wholly altered historical circumstances, can have been found to replace the raw materials of magic and Otherness which medieval romance

found ready to hand in its socioeconomic environment.'[23] The editor of the autobiography, *John Boyes: King of the Wa-Kikuyu* (1912), points towards the self-destructive nature of imperial romance which had adapted the Otherness of empire to romance's 'raw materials of magic and Otherness': 'In the days of exploration and discovery, when Captain Cook and such heroes lived and thrived, [adventures] were perhaps common enough; but every year the opportunities of such adventure get more and more remote, and as the uttermost parts of the earth are brought under the influence of civilization will become ever more impossible.'[24] Romance operates outside the borders of civilisation, in areas of mystery and enchantment where the rules of society do not exist, but like imperialism itself, it narrates the imposition of the rational on the mysterious.[25] Here, I am interested in the creation and consumption of the exotic, and the naturalisation of a colonial ethos through the sentimental love affairs between 'native' women and European men in island romances.

Tahiti: The Marriage of Loti is a French novel, drawing on a French imperial tradition shaped largely by its Oriental empire. I do not have the specialist knowledge of particular French literary traditions, nor of French representations of the Pacific, which could easily form an independent study, and I am reading *Loti* in terms of shared European images and traditions, and in seeing the novel as representative of what was to become an important way of talking about the Pacific.

Pierre Loti was the pen-name of Julien Marie Viaud, a young French naval officer who visited Tahiti in 1872 during a tour of duty on his ship, *La Flore*. Just as Herman Melville lengthened his actual time in Typee valley for Tommo, Viaud extended the sixty

days *La Flore* actually spent in Tahiti to a period covering two years in the novel, giving Loti the appearance of a greater authority in his knowledge of the people, and echoing the intimate understanding of an unfamiliar culture associated with beachcomber narratives. It is through Loti's sexual relationship with the young girl, Rarahu, that he proclaims his alienation from the imperial mission, and seeks a privileged understanding of the 'native' way of life: '"If you stayed at Apiré oftener at night," [Rarahu] said to me, "you would learn much more quickly of me, a number of words which the girls who live at Papeete do not know."'[26] The woman, in the familiar trope not restricted to imperial narrative, is the holder of cultural knowledge. Rarahu's 'rare and remarkably poetical feeling' for the mysterious essence of Tahiti can be assimilated by Loti through the coupling of the two bodies. A form of knowledge can be obtained through books, for a dictionary that Loti buys 'opened to me strange views of Polynesia - an unexplored field for reverie and study',[27] but the 'vague or mystic import'[28] of the words can only be truly understood through an intimacy with the primitive that distances the privileged individual from Foucauldian discourses of knowledge and power. The exotic difference of Tahiti is vulnerable to the oppression of 'our hateful colonial civilisation', before which, '...wild poetry flees away with the customs and traditions of the past',[29] and the worlds of Tahiti and Europe are seen as polar opposites:

> Loti was baptized on the 25th of January, 1872, at the age of twenty-two years and eleven days. When the deed was done, it was about one in the afternoon by London and Paris time. On the other side, and the other way up of the terrestial ball, in the gardens of Queen Pomaré, where the event took place, it was near midnight. In Europe it was a cold and dismal winter's day. On the other side, in the queen's gardens, it was a calm, languorous, enervating summer's night.[30]

The 'baptism' of the individual European is a theme that runs through imperial narrative.

In Rider Haggard's African romance, *King Solomon's Mines*, Allan Quatermain is known as 'Macumazahn' by the Zulus, a word which 'means the man who gets up in the middle of the night, or, in vulgar English, he who keeps his eyes open.'[31] Robert Louis Stevenson was proud to be named 'Tusitala' by the Samoans, the name meaning, 'The teller of tales.' The individual gains a greater stature and authority in Europe through being named by the native society, the Zulus showing their respect and admiration for the individual European through the literal interpretation of his qualities. Names in the 'primitive' society are shown to be far more closely linked to the characteristics of the individual. This suggests that the native society is closer to the nature that an effete civilisation is alienated from - a constant strain in Haggard - but it also limits the native society as only able to be literal: savage society is not yet able to think in abstract terms. In the case of Loti, baptism suggests that the individual is giving up his European identity - 'Harry Grant had no further existence in Oceania'[32] - willingly aligning himself with the Tahitian way of life, and being symbolically reborn without the prejudices of Europe. There is a similar baptism in *Typee* when Tommo exchanges names with Mehavi: '"Tommo", "Tomma", "Tommee", everything but plain "Tom". As he persisted in garnishing the word with an additional syllable, I compromised the matter with him at the word "Tommo"; and by that name I went during the entire period of my stay.'[33] But Mehavi is also being shown as incapable of articulating the European name, and Tommo's baptism keeps a distance between Europe and its Other. Loti's baptism shows his sympathy for the exotic way of life, distancing him from the values of his own society, but it simultaneously controls the alignment with the exotic: the individual can reembrace civilisation by returning to his real name. The hardship and danger that Tommo endures to enter and leave Typee valley are replaced by a simple ceremony.

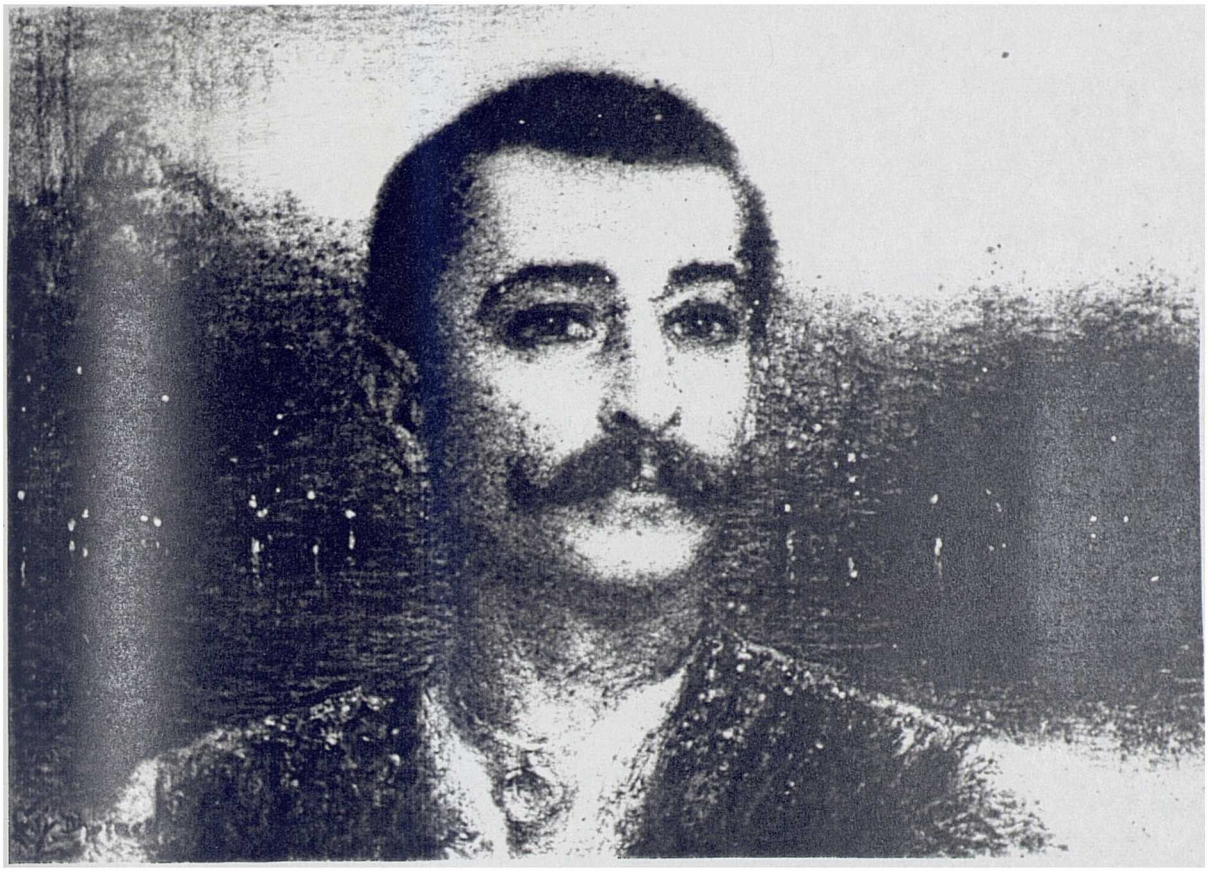

Figure 1. *Portrait of Pierre Loti*, Lucien Lévy-Dhurmer (1897).

During Loti's baptism, Tahiti is Europe turned upside down: a cold, dark London day is, under Tahiti's skies 'starry with southern constellations', a warm, brightly lit summer's evening. Loti's baptism into this world, like Tommo's baptism in the stream in Typee, aligns himself with the difference of the 'calm, languourous, enervating' island - adjectives which represent the beauty and Otherness of the island in the language of sensual decay in the first paragraph of the novel. The Tahitian court is pictured in pastel shades reminiscent of the late nineteenth century Orientalist paintings of Viaud's friend Lucien Lévy-Dhurmer:[34] the rose-coloured silk of the Queen, the 'sweet, pensive, dreamy face' of the Princess Ariitéa, and the gauzy dresses and 'dusky amber hue' of the ladies in waiting subdue the expected vibrance of Pacific colour.[35] There is a deliberate attempt by Loti to evoke the mysticism associated with the 'exotic' Orient in this picture

of the Tahitian court, an exoticism that had become more marked in European representations of the Orient since the defeat of the Ottoman Empire by Napoleon at the Battle of the Pyramids in 1798.[36] Only the Queen of Bora-Bora strikes a discordant note of savagery, strongly reminiscent of a minstrel show, by displaying 'her large cannibal teeth in a broad smile' to Loti. The court is 'naturally' closer to Europe, its air of dreamy sensuality has a fragile beauty too easily corrupted by Europe, and is thus an unsuitable vehicle for Loti to discover the mysterious Otherness of Tahiti.

From the first, the sexual difference of Tahiti had dominated the reports of the early European voyagers. Here on a remote Pacific island Europe 'discovered' a society apparently given meaning by sexuality, but not debased by an Oriental cruelty, nor contaminated by the sexual vices of a European civilisation. 'Therein', writes Roy Porter in his essay 'The exotic as erotic: Captain Cook at Tahiti', 'lies one of the reasons why sexual radicals were so excited when they found a culture whose sexuality was "natural", flourishing within a polity which was not only non-despotic, but was suffused with the aura of innocence and primitive simplicity.' Porter argues that to the French philosopher, Denis Diderot, the natural love of the primitive found in Tahiti was a way of breaking down barriers, a universal human instinct, and one that comes to structure imperial romance. Porter's argument that Cook, the autoptic eye, the rational observer, 'wanted to *defend* the islanders from the myths of exoticism spun by admiring Europeans', connects with the traditional image of Cook as the representative of the Enlightenment, sympathetic to the interests of the islanders.[37] Porter's is an interesting and suggestive essay on the contradictions contained within Europe's expectations of the Other, and of the place of the exotic in the Pacific explorations, but he passes over the discourse of

slavery which was also informing the first European reports of Tahitian sexual freedom.

Women had first been used to distract the sailors during the attack on the *Dolphin* when, according to one Able Seaman, 'Women were Directed by the Men to stand in the Prow of their Canoes and Expose their Bodies Naked to our View'.[38] It was only after the massacre of Matavai Bay, when perhaps scores of Tahitians were killed by the *Dolphin*'s cannons, that sexual liaisons opened between women and the sailors. Not surprisingly perhaps, the sailors misread this sudden change as submission to European military power, for rape completes the humiliation of the conquered in most parts of the world.

In the journal of George Robertson, the Master of the *Dolphin* (who affects a distance from the affairs), the sexual encounters are related with gusto, but Robertson attempts to return the public sexuality which marked a difference of Tahitian eroticism, to the private domain more familiar to Europe: a 'friend' has a swift liaison with a woman when she manages to trick her husband into temporarily leaving the ship, and 'The instant that he was in the water, she immediately stepped into my friend's cabin and laid hold of his coat and pulled him in.'[39] The affair is the popular love triangle in which a sexual 'romp' between the young blade and the lusty wife 'emasculates' the husband, much as Chaucer's Damyan cuckolds Januarie in the pleasure garden. In an imperial context, the scene resonates with the popular European genre of adventures in the harem: the original libretto for Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* was written in 1781, and two other operatic versions of the story of Belmonte and Constanze appeared in the 1780s.[40] In *Die Entfuhrung*, Belmonte rescues his European sweetheart from the harem, but this is an adaptation of a pattern that had formed part of oriental discourse since the crusades. Rana

Kabbana shows in *Europe's Myths of Orient*, that the love of the Muslim princess for the European knight in Medieval romances concentrated less on the military defeat of the enemy, than on 'the degradation of the sultan or emir through the enmity and treachery of his own kin.'[41] The 'Moor' is made to look foolish through the passion of his wife or daughter for the European, he is not destroyed, but the structures of the Orient are ridiculed, and the humiliation of the Moor can be, and was, endlessly repeated.

In Tahiti, however, the affairs also resonated with the language of slavery. One sailor, Henry Ibbott, thought that the Tahitian encouragement of the liaisons - which were probably used to defuse the tense political situation as well as reestablish some measure of Tahitian control over trade - was evidence that 'they want a Breed of English men Amongst them';[42] another, Francis Wilkinson, that 'tho' [the Tahitian women] are not so fair as our English Ladies I think they are infinitely too much so for their copper-coloured Husbands.'[43] George Robertson made the link to slavery specific in his journal, where on the very first appearance of the Tahitian women he wrote that 'some was a light copper colour others a mulatto and some almost if not altogether White.'[44] Later in his journal Robertson developed the point.

> There is three distinct colours of people here, which is a thing most difficult to account for of anything which we have yet seen; the Red people are ten times more numerous nor the Mustees, 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.[45]

Captain Cook later thought that there were only two classes of people in Tahiti, identifying the 'inferior sort' as 'in general Small owing possibly to their early amours',

and also, like Robertson, by colour. The inferior sort, Cook says, who are 'much exposed to the sun' are 'of a very dark brown' whereas their superiors 'are not browner than people who are born or reside long in the West Indias nay some of the women are almost as fair as Europeans'. When he describes the Tahitians on his first visit as all having 'fine white teeth and for the most part short flat noses and thick lips, yet their features are agreable...' he appears to be comparing them to Africans.[46] A discourse of colour and culture is emerging in which the lighter skinned Tahitians are being humanised, whereas this humanisation is not available for the darker ones. The emergence of such a discourse is hardly surprising, for Robertson was an experienced sailor who had spent many years in the merchant service, and as his journal makes clear, he had made voyages to Jamaica;[47] Cook had sailed to the West Indies on the *Eagle* when he was based in the North American squadron during the war with France.[48] Both he and Robertson see an apparently 'free' society perplexingly structured on the familiar lines of a Caribbean plantation society. In the factual story of the mutineers on Pitcairn, a plantation society was created, with the Tahitian men being immediately enslaved to labour on the land, which was divided up between the Europeans. 'The four natives', writes Greg Dening of Pitcairn, 'began to live under violent and reckless oppression'; they 'were flogged, hung up in irons, tortured with salt poured on their wounds (perhaps not for any sadistic pleasure but to ensure such valuable items did not become sick).'[49]

Robertson lightens the colour of the Tahitians, feeling closer to them as he gains a greater 'knowledge' of the island, first describing the 'middle class' as Mulatto and then later as Mustee. These categories were used to assess the amount of 'black blood' in slaves. John Stedman uses a popular doggerel of the mid-eighteenth century in his *Narrative of*

a Five Year Expedition Among the Revolted Negroes of Surinam (1790) to show the 'grading' in a slave society: 'The Samboe dark, and the Mulatto brown,/ The Mesti fair - The well limb'd Quaderoon.'[50] In the second line the order has been reversed for the purposes of the rhyme, and Stedman's Mesti is Robertson's Mustee, 'seven eighths' European. The importance of the grading was that although the impregnation of the female slaves was seen to progressively lighten the 'race' and draw the savage towards civilisation, the 'black blood' kept them at a permanent distance: even the 'whitest sort' of Tahitians are 'not so fair as our European ladies', they are 'almost' white, 'almost as fair' as the sailors.

It was quickly understood by the European sailors that although attracted to the 'white sort' they could only be sexually intimate with the darker ones: 'I must say that the girls which were of the white sort would admit of any freedom but the last, which they would not...' wrote Henry Ibbott;[51] and by Cook's second voyage Cook noted that 'none but common women would yeild to the embraces of our people; not one of the gentlemen were able to obtain such favours from any woman of distinction...' The darker, lower class Tahitians, the 'common sort' who were made 'prity good use of' in Cook's phrase, filled a similar role to the slaves in John Stedman's Surinam, who provided sexual services for their European masters. Loti's Rarahu is of the 'Red people', she is powerless, a natural slave of Europeans and the Tahitian ruling class, and Loti's description of her integrates a sexual intimacy with a 'racial' distance.

> Rarahu's eyes were of a tawny black, full of exotic languor and coaxing softness, like those of a kitten when it is stroked; her eyelashes so long and so black that you might have taken them for painted feathers. Her nose was short and delicate, like the nose in some Arab faces; her mouth, rather too thick and too wide for a

> classic model, had deep corners deliciously dimpled. When she laughed she showed all her teeth, somewhat large teeth of brilliantly white enamel, not yet polished by the wear of years but showing the striations of young growth. Her hair, scented with sandal-wood oil, was long, straight and rather harsh, falling in heavy locks on her bare shoulders. Her skin was of the same hue all over, from her forehead to the tips of her toes; a dusky brown, verging on brick-red, like that of old Etruscan terra-cotta pottery. Rarahu was small, beautiful in proportion and mould; her bosom was purely formed and polished; her arms as perfect as an antique. Round her ankles a pattern was tattooed blue to imitate anklets; across her lower lip were three faint blue lines like those of the women of the Marquesas; and on her forehead a still paler outline of tattoo suggested a coronet. The feature most characteristic of her race was the small space between her eyes which like the eyes of all Maoris were by no means deep-set. When she was laughing and gay this gave her face the mischievous shyness of a marmoset; when she was grave or sad, there was something about her which can only be described as Polynesian grace.[52]

Like Fayaway, to whom Loti refers in the unobtrusive three lines of tattooing like that of the 'women of the Marquesas', Rarahu is a child of nature who points out the corruption of civilisation. She is a toy, a child's companion and an adult lover, her 'purely formed and polished' bosom prefigures the attractions of Gauguin's androgynous Tahitian figures, but her eyes have the 'exotic langour' of an adult. As Clive Wake has pointed out, it is partly Rarahu's innocence and vulnerabilty that Loti finds attractive, and the suggestions of a predatory cat-like adult sexuality that he finds threatening: 'Whereas Loti is willing to make the imaginative effort to penetrate further into Rarahu's primitive mind because it represents something he has lost and wants to recover, he is repelled by her attempts to come closer to him because in doing so she destroys her innocence, and with it, what she stands for.'[53] Rarahu is only attractive to Loti when he can dominate and speak for her: when she attempts to learn English in order to communicate with him, she disturbs that power relationship. Loti sexualises her body, and then qualifies the attraction, alternating intimacy with distance: her 'deliciously dimpled' mouth is 'rather too thick and too wide for a classic model', her scented hair is 'rather harsh' and her brilliantly white

teeth are 'somewhat large'. He draws on existing models of native womanhood - an Arab nose, Marquesan tattooing and Maori eyes, later discovering the Maori 'race's' 'affinity with the red-skin Indians of America'[54] - to see her as parts of a human jigsaw puzzle that the ethnographer fits together, making the strange familiar through the controlling vision of the experienced European. Loti inspects Rarahu's body intimately, and then steps back to see her as 'characteristic of her race', understanding the individual racially, and the race through the individual, moderating intimacy by racial difference. The beauty of Rarahu is not that of the universal woman that Melville sees in Fayaway, but a *frisson* of difference, an incitement of the erotic and exotic.

Although *The Marriage of Loti* has an important autobiographical element, Julien Viaud later admitted that 'I combined many personalities to make only one, Rarahu'.[55] Europe's desire to distance itself from imperialism and slavery means that these icons of 'inter-racial' harmony are continually reaffirmed: 'She *lives*, and still shall live, God bless her!/ Long as the Sea rolls deep and blue', wrote the poet Robert Buchanan of Melville's Fayaway at the end of the nineteenth century,[56] and a recent television programme had an American literary traveller in the Marquesas asking passers-by, 'Est-ce-qu'il y a une jeune fille qui s'appelle Fayaway près d'ici?'[57] One of the attractions to Europe of the *Bounty* myth is that the Polynesian women willingly followed their European lovers into the unknown - although in fact several of the women were abducted. Despite Loti's denial of her existence, many subsequent travellers to Tahiti apparently found authentic Rarahus or her descendants, and her tomb can still be seen on the island.[58] There is also, as Clive Wake suggests, 'the possibility that [Loti] was homosexual',[59] and that Rarahu is not only a composite character, but also a man. Loti's biographer, Lesley

Blanch, says in the context of Loti's sexuality, that Loti destroyed 'many revealing passages of his journals',[60] although quite how Blanch knows that the destroyed passages are revealing, or if they are revealing in a sexual sense, is not quite clear. Any hypothesis of exclusively male Tahitian lovers is also probably wrong. Not because Viaud would have found male relationships impossible in Tahiti - in Charles Warren Stoddard's contemporary short story 'A Prodigal in Tahiti' (1872) the 'remote' interior, away from European control, is a place where love between men still exists without shame[61] - but because *The Marriage of Loti* has an undercurrent of sexual experimentation. When Queen Pomaré questions Loti on his preference for Princess Ariitéa, there is the suggestion of a sub-text on sexual orientation in Loti's comment that 'The old woman revealed by this speech that she had guessed the third, and certainly the most serious of my heart's secrets.'[62] Later in the novel Loti has his only moment of true calm when Téharo 'held my hand between his own, and his presence brought peace to my imagination.'[63] These are fleeting and tentative suggestions only, and the possibility that the alternating desire and distance in the presentation of Rarahu is a metaphor for the young Loti's confused sexuality is intriguing, but impossible to prove one way or the other.

Julien Viaud became fascinated by Tahiti through the letters of his elder brother Gustave, just as Herman Melville had first known the Marquesas through the stories of his sailor cousin. In the novel, Viaud's brother Gustave is Loti's dead brother George/Roueri. Gustave Viaud had been posted to Tahiti as a naval surgeon in 1859, living with a Tahitian woman, Tarahu, until 1860, and when Julien was fifteen Gustave had died at sea whilst returning from Indo-China. Lesley Blanch speculates in *Pierre Loti: Portrait of an*

Escapist, that Gustave's death contributed to Julien Viaud's ambivalence towards imperialism: hating the French imperial power that sent Gustave abroad to die, whilst himself being hopelessly implicated in the imperial mission.[64] Blanch sees Viaud's relationship with the colonised, by contrast, as deeply sympathetic: Viaud's dark eyes are the key to 'that mysterious call of the blood to which he was always to respond when among the people of Islam.'[65] Another possible biographical reading would be that Viaud's ambivalence towards imperial power obscures a greater ambivalence towards the colonised peoples themselves, wishing to make love to them and seeking to exact punishment for the death of his brother, perhaps seeing sex and punishment as synonymous. Both *Aziyadé* (1879) and *Madame Chrysantheme* (1887) have similar formulae to *The Marriage of Loti*, in which an intense love affair between a European man and a 'native' woman is ended when the man leaves and the woman dies, rewriting the fates of Gustave and Tarahu, but connecting with a long narrative tradition of tragic 'interracial' relationships.

Rarahu is first seen by Loti at the pool at Faataoua, a place Viaud was already familiar with through his brother, who had described the romantic setting in a letter to him:

> ...a semi-darkness always reigns there, under those giant, unknown trees; cool cascades and streams carpet the ground with rare ferns... What a pity this delicious isle does not have a door which leads through into the courtyard of our garden - by the honeysuckle arbour perhaps, or behind the grotto of your little lake...[66]

Gustave's sensual dappled scenery of light and shade, warmth and coolness, could stand for any number of European descriptions of the 'natural mysticism', of Polynesia. The extreme wealth that formed an important part of Europe's representation of the Orient was

often transformed into images of an excessive natural world in the Pacific. The grotto had been built for the infant Julien by Gustave, and as a young boy he spent hours dreaming over the pool in the courtyard.[67] Loti later commented on Gustave's letter that 'This notion of a door in our courtyard, linking the grotto with faraway Tahiti, affected me powerfully. My brother had no idea of the dangerous seduction his letters were already exercising over the child he had left so attached to his home, so tranquil, so pious, but whose tropic longings were already in his blood.'[68] It is fairly easy to see why Loti appeared to find the letter such a powerful influence, for within its Freudian associations with awakening sexuality, of leaving the protection of the womb, it links the polarisations of the ordered and contained European world and the disordered and distant wilderness that structure imperial narrative, and enables the visionary to pass freely from one world to the other. The image obscures Loti's desire for the control and knowledge of the Other behind the mystical dawning of 'tropic longings', of sexualised yearnings for enchantment and adventure which are accessible simply by stepping through the door.

The picture of the pool at Faataoua is composed with care by Viaud, (who was an accomplished amateur artist), and has three separate elements: the Melanesian woman, Tétouara, the 'black witch' who orchestrates the sexual 'revels' around the pool; Loti himself, who is hidden cat-like in the long grass surrounding the pool; and the two young girls, Rarahu and her friend Tiahoui, who are suddenly projected onto the backdrop of sexualised vegetation.

> The undergrowth of mimosa and guava-trees in the background of the picture, was suddenly parted; there was a rustle of leaves, and two little girls peered forth studying the situation like two mice peeping out a hole.[69]

The sudden entrance of the two girls draws the eye of Loti and the reader towards a source of energy, breaking the lethargy surrounding the pool where until now the only movement has come from the 'large black velvet butterflies' which 'fluttered languidly past', and where Loti has 'abandoned [him]self to this enervating existence, overborne by the Oceanian spell'. This languorous air of decadent sexuality pervades European images of Oriental harems: Loti, who is now the cat watching the defenceless mice, places himself in the position of the implied European male viewer of the intimacies of the harem in, for example, Ingres' painting, *Le Bain Turc*, or Delacroix' *Women of Algiers* (figures 2 & 3). Loti connects with environmental theories of degeneration to see the immorality caused by the insidious nature of the place, and himself being irresistibly drawn into the decay. Rarahu and Tiahoui pull aside a curtain to give the individual a tantalising glimpse of the regenerative possibilities of nature; but the girls are contained by the curtain, distanced from the observer by the frame. Their look on the adult world is not reciprocal, it does not knowingly return the gaze of the European male, but emphasises their vulnerability. Rarahu looks blindly towards the European, towards her eventual corruption and death: her eyes - 'by no means deep-set', like those of her 'race' - are shallow and empty, not the deep pools of primitive knowledge that Loti seeks. The mysterious attraction of the Orient that Loti has evoked in his picture of the Tahitian court is undercut by Rarahu's disappointingly child-like simplicity.

When Tétouara reveals Loti's presence by 'roughly seizing my arm, my navy blue sleeve with its gold braiding, [holding] it up high above the long grass in which I was lying, and display[ing] it to them with an indescribable twinkle of mischievious fun',[70] the erect 'phallus' is energetically displayed by the black woman, and the girls disappear, just as

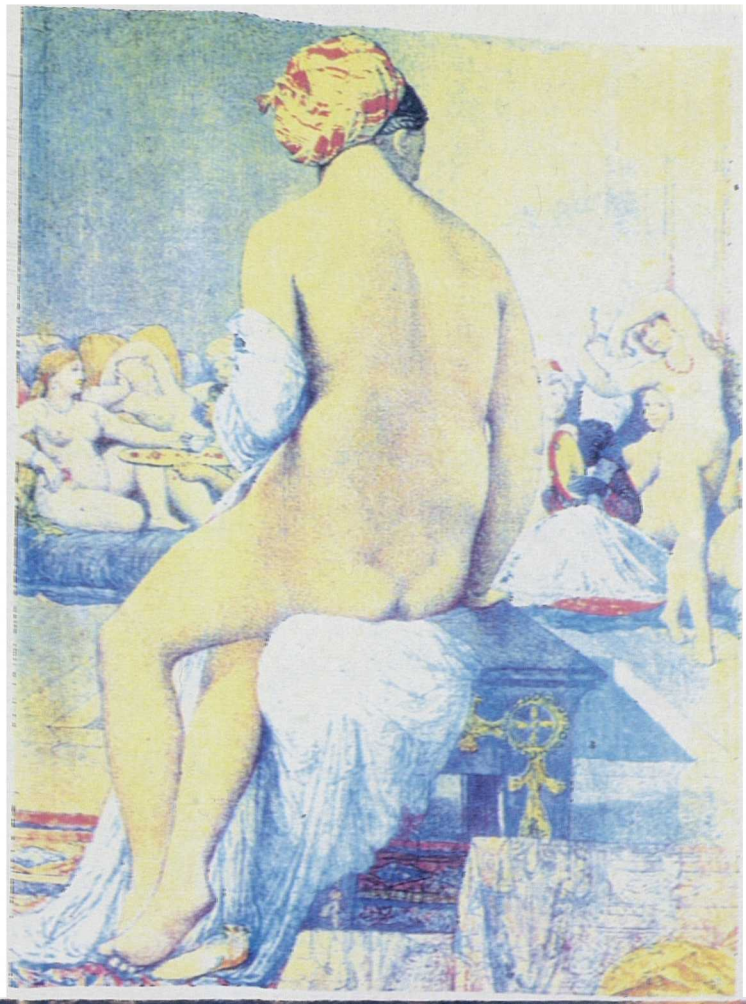

Figure 2 (top). Study for *Le Bain Turc*, J.A.D. Ingres (1862). Figure 3 (bottom) *Women of Algiers*, Eugene Delacroix (1834).

Loti complains that 'wild poetry' flees before the vices of civilisation.[71] Loti has to reframe nature, to reestablish and renegotiate control, as he follows Rarahu to her bower. Loti's pursuit of Rarahu acknowledges his sexual drive, but the responsibility for debasing his 'artistic pleasure' comes from the enlarged sexuality of the black woman. Tétouara drags Loti into the picture, making his sexual maturity explicit, and transposing her sexuality onto the innocence of Rarahu: Tétouara 'strongly urged me to make the attempt' to follow and 'tame' Rarahu.[72]

I have briefly suggested the structural similarity between Orientalist paintings of the harem and Loti's gaze on the pool, and Viaud's use of Tétouara draws on a technique particularly marked in Orientalist art. This can be illustrated by comparing the pool at Faataoua with Gauguin's *Manua tupapau* (1892), Ingres' *Odalisque* (1842), and Delacroix' *Odalisque* (1847). The structure of Delacroix' *Odalisque*, Sander L. Gilman says in his essay 'Black Bodies, White Bodies', became a classic model in nude painting.[73] Given Julien Viaud's interest in the Orient and in art, he is unlikely not to have been familiar with either Delacroix' or Ingres' paintings (see figure 2). However, I am not trying to establish a direct influence, but to show that Viaud is framing Loti's gaze on Rarahu within a recognisably Orientalist structure. In Delacroix' *Odalisque* the reclining figure of a concubine meets the eye of the viewer, whilst crouched before her is a black servant, one of whose 'central functions in the visual arts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was to sexualize the society in which he or she is found'.[74] The same structure can be found in Ingres' *Odalisque* and in Gauguin's *Olympia*, after Manet's painting of the same name. Tétouara, the 'black woman of the Kanack race of Melanesians' dropped by a ship at Papeete 'where she produced much the same effect as

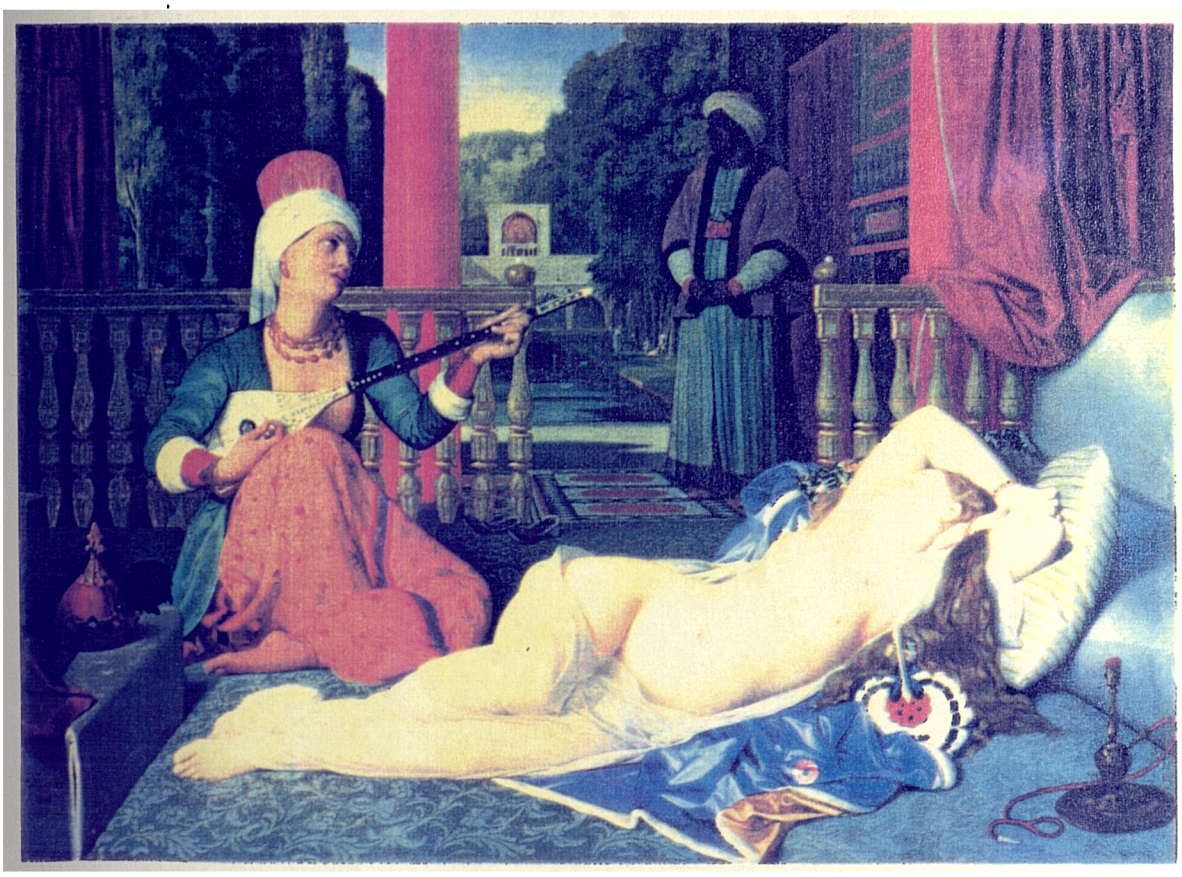

Figure 4. *Odalisque and Slave*, Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres (1842).

a woman from the Congo might among a bevy of English misses', sexualises the revels around the pool in a similar way, or at least, she makes the sexuality explicit.[75] Gilman further argues that by the nineteenth century the sexuality of the central female figure in such a painting is specifically associated with that of the black female; the 'pre-sexual' Rarahu is sexualised merely through the presence of Tétouara, also arousing Loti's savage sexuality.

This structure influenced Gauguin's first integrated use of Tahitian myth and legend in the painting of his thirteen year-old partner, Tehura, *Manua tupapau*, to which Gauguin refers in *Noa Noa*. Gauguin had returned to his hut late one night to find it in darkness and 'Tehura, immobile, naked, lying face downward flat on the bed with the eyes inordinately

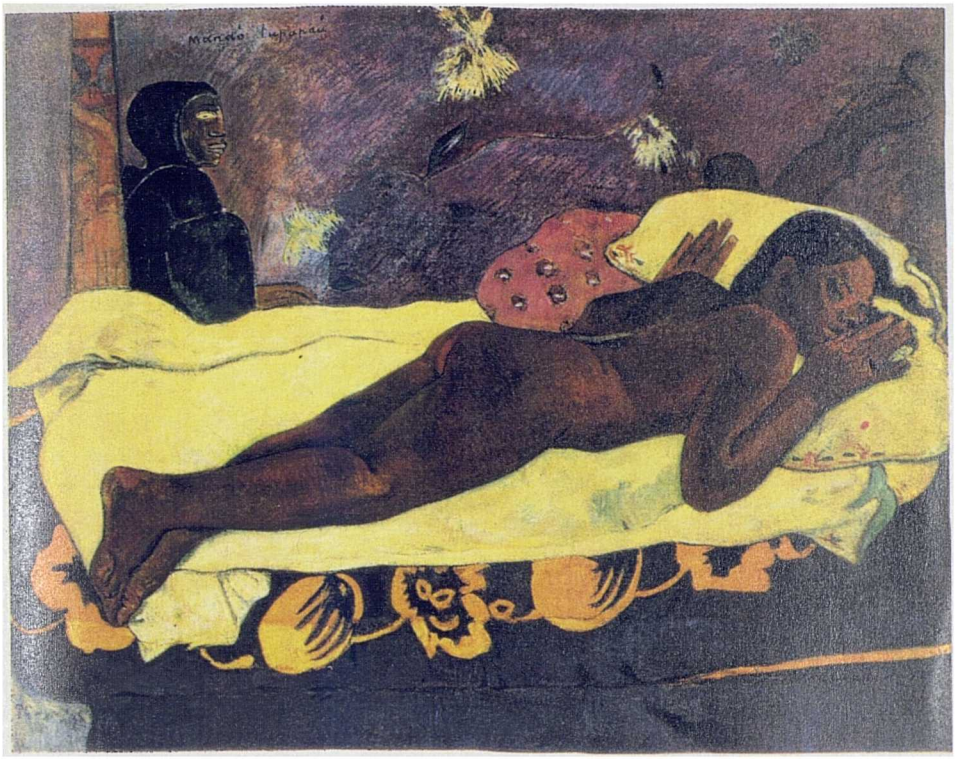

Figure 5. Paul Gauguin, *Manoa Tupapau* (1892).

large with fear.' She fears 'the demons and specters, one of the Tupapaus, with which the legends of her race people sleepless nights.'[76] The *tupapa'u* is the hooded figure on the far side of the bed with its hand resting on the sheet, and Tehura's fear mirrors Loti's comment that the 'The solitude of the woods and darkness terrify [the Tahitians]; they people the wilderness with ghosts and spirits.'[77] The autoptic eye of the sympathetic artist is able to see and translate the mysterious essence of Polynesia for the European viewer. Gauguin refers to the *tupapa'u*, in a letter to his wife Mette, as 'a small figure of a woman' which is made to appear real because Tehura, 'not being familiar with the French spiritist theatres, can't help seeing the actual dead person.'[78] There are two centres of power in *Manua tupapau*, and in the pool at Fataoua, which compete for the female figure; the 'primitive' sexual power of the black savage, and the intellectual power of the European observer/artist who controls and interprets the scene from a position of ironic detachment. Tehura and Rarahu are caught between the destructive claims of

savagery and civilisation, offering the sexual vulnerability that is all that defines them to the European viewer.

The *tupapa'u* gazes at the girl, and its hand points to her buttocks, the central point of the painting, drawing attention to her vulnerable and 'indecent' pose.[79] Her position hides her sex, but the highlighting around the buttocks is at the very least suggestive of 'passage'. She lies face downward on the bed with her hands spread out on the pillow in a gesture of submission. The implied male viewer is 'aroused' by her powerlessness, as Loti is excited by the vulnerability of Rarahu. Tehura is trapped between the gaze of the *tupapa'u* and the artist, and when Rarahu is eventually tracked down by Loti in her natural bower, the 'retired nook' in which she hides becomes a trap 'vaulted over by tall breadfruit trees with their thick leaves, enclosed by acacias, guavas, and sensitive plants.' Within the haven which is also a cage, the symbolism implies, Loti and Rarahu first have sex, for 'The cool water danced noisily over the small polished pebbles, and a murmur from the lower basin came up from a distance, with the laughter of women and Tétouara's shrill tones',[80] as the women celebrate the European's penetration and debasement of the child. As Gauguin's pleasure in Tehura is enhanced by death looking at the girl, so is Loti's through 'le petit mort' of Rarahu's orgasm, which both joins her to Loti, and begins the process of corruption that will finally kill her. There is no escape for the innocent native: left on the island when Loti leaves, she takes to prostitution, or so it is implied by the officer who sees her last: '"She had fallen very low in these latter days - but she was a strange little creature. Wreaths of flowers, always fresh, on a death's-head face."'[81] Natural beauty and death are juxtaposed, the one adding to the 'pleasure' of the other. The death of the sexual partner as a metaphor for the supposedly dying islands

is anticipated by the abandoned and crippled figure of Fayaway, and was to become one of the most dominant tropes of the Pacific, and one which I will discuss in greater detail in the chapter on Stoddard and Stevenson.

The pool and the bower are microcosms both of the novel's plot and its setting: as Tahiti and its court are contaminated by Europe, so the lovers attempt to flee from the imperial corruption of the natural world, only for the blood of the savage to corrupt Rarahu from within - a corruption symbolised by 'Tétouara's shrill tones' being able to penetrate the hidden bower. The plot forms part of a tradition of 'transracial' love stories that had developed alongside Europe's imperial expansion into the non-European world from the end of the fifteenth century. As Peter Hulme has written in the context of the 'transracial' plot of *Inkle and Yarico*, the 'discovery' of the Pacific extended Europe's pursuit of the 'primitivist ideal' into areas other than the Americas, and 'Sentimental sympathy began to flow out along the arteries of European commerce in search of its victims.'[82] The narratives have their modern imperial roots in John Smith's account of being rescued from death by the Indian princess, Pocahontas, although as Hulme shows, the story goes back to *The Odyssey* and Dido and Aeneas.[83] The stories tell of a European, usually alone in the wilderness, or at least separated from his companions, who is saved and protected by the nurturing native. Their love flourishes in some marginal space before the man abandons the pleasures of nature and returns to civilisation. The story is essentially a romanticised captivity narrative, and the return of the European ultimately reinforces the values of the community, as it does in captivity narratives - even when, as in the case of *Inkle and Yarico*, the man sells the nurturing native into slavery. Mr. Inkle's behaviour offends the sensibilities of civilisation, transgressing the boundaries of decent social

behaviour, and so redefining those boundaries; his return to Europe, and Yarico's enslavement naturalise the institution of slavery even as it is condemned as inhuman.

Mary Louise Pratt has recently demonstrated in her analysis of John Stedman's *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam*, a text which articulates many of the conventions of sentimental literature, that the 'transracial' love plots in which the native woman falls passionately in love with the European, are transformations of the commercial and sexual exploitation that existed particularly in the plantation economies of the Caribbean and in colonial Africa, 'whereby European men on assignment to the colonies bought local women from their families to serve as sexual and domestic partners for the duration of their stay.'[84] As Pratt has shown from Stedman's diary of his time in Surinam, comparing it to his published *Narrative*, the commercial element of his temporary relationship with the fifteen year old slave girl, Joanna, has been edited out of the story, or transformed into 'gifts'. Joanna loves Stedman, but refuses to follow him back to England, staying on in Surinam until finally poisoned by a jealous neighbour five years later. 'The allegory of romantic love', Pratt says succinctly, 'mystifies exploitation out of the picture.'[85] The same silence structures Loti's affair with Rarahu, which, like the quasi-official 'Surinam marriage' of Stedman and Joanna, is sanctioned as a 'Tahitian marriage' by Queen Pomaré: a well established custom which 'did not mean a marriage according to European laws, a bond for life', but an arrangement according to 'the manners and customs' of the people.[86] Where the conclusion of Stedman's narrative reestablishes the distance between the plantation and Europe, and *Inkle and Yarico* 'thematizes the breakdown of reciprocity by capitalist greed and highlights contradictions of the ideology of romantic love',[87] *The Marriage of Loti*

draws the 'racial' concerns of the genre into the foreground, mirroring the greater European interest in the concept of 'race' as an explanation for history that was developing during the nineteenth century.

Loti's affair with Rarahu repeats his brother George's marriage to Taimaha, and the final part of the novel is devoted to Loti's search for George's children, whose discovery would confirm the 'blood ties' between Loti, George and Tahiti, and on a symbolic level, the ties between the state of nature and civilisation. 'I, too,' Loti reflects, 'should be glad to live again in Tahiti, in a child which would still be myself, of my blood mingled with that of Rarahu. I felt a strange gladness in the idea of such a bond between us.'[88] Yet Loti's hope that his brother still lives in his children is also a fear of finding permanent ties in the island, knowing that any such children could only 'live again in Tahiti' and not in Europe. John Stedman's relationship with the slave-girl, Joanna, is complicated by the birth of his son Johnny. 'In Surinam', Stedman explains in a footnote about the children of 'mixed marriages', 'all such Children go with the Mother that is if she is in Slavery her Ofspring are her Masters property, should theyr father be a prince without he obtains them by purchase...'[89] and Stedman's main concern after the birth of Johnny is to purchase his son's manumission. It is a central contention of Stedman's that Joanna does not wish to follow him to Europe, nor make any demands on him; as far as she is concerned the 'Surinam marriage' is passionate, but restricted to Surinam.

Loti and Rarahu take a house which stands 'by itself', 'in one of the quietest and greenest avenues of Papeete'. It is an isolated spot, doubly marginalised within the greater isolation of the island itself, 'lost in the midst of [the] vast, immeasurable solitude' of the

Pacific.[90] Unlike Inkle and Yarico's cave which exists between cultures, however, Loti's space is near nature but is more a part of the urbanised colonial environment, and his house has much in common with John Stedman's semi-urban house in his constructed Eden: 'Not Adam and Eve in Paradise could Enjoy a greater Share of felocity [*sic*], than we now did - free like the roes in the forest and disintangled from every care and fashion, we breathed in the purest Ether in our walks, and refresh'd our limbs in the Cooling limpid Streams...'[91] Stedman's paradise is constructed by slaves, it is a part of the plantation system: raw nature in Stedman's text is a dangerous place of swamps, disease and ambushes, and it is only through slavery that the Garden can be created. Stedman declares that 'I love the African Negroes',[92] and yet insists that 'our remaining antiatlantick possessions... can never be cultivated but by Negroes alone'. The question to be answered, he continues, is 'are these Negroes to be Slaves or a free People - to which I answer without hesitation - *dependent*, & under proper restrictions'.[93] The qualities that make 'the African Negroes' attractive to Stedman - their child-like loyalty, impetuousness, and natural love for their masters - are the very qualities that keep them as slaves in need of guidance from the more 'intellectually gifted' Europeans. Joanna's 'strength' as a sexual partner in Stedman's narrative, is that she recognises the 'gulf' that exists between them, and refuses to return with him to England in a declaration of romantic self-sacrifice which acknowledges that their love could not survive within the prejudices of Stedman's home society: 'I am born a low, contemptible Slave, to be your Wife under the forms of Christianity must degrade you to all your Relations and your Friends', she declares, although she has 'a Soul I hope not inferior to the best European, and blush not to acknowledge that I have a regard for you who so much distinguishes me above the rest'.[94] Just as Fayaway is left on the beach, and Mow-Mow is thrust beneath

the water, the trope of the abandoned native ensures that the voice of the native can only be heard through that of the European.

Rarahu, however, seeks to transgress the unspoken boundaries of race and place, asking Loti when they share a moment of harmony on a mountain top, so 'sublimely beautiful that we sat in ecstasy side by side on a boulder, without speaking a word',[95] 'how high should we have to climb to catch sight of your country?'[96] It is Rarahu's clearest articulation of her yearning for civilisation, and it is at that moment that Loti fully understands the racial distance that exists between them.

> All the great features you see are everlasting; they will still be the same hundreds of ages hence, when the Maori race will long since have vanished to be no more than a dim memory preserved in the books of a byegone day.[97]

As Tommo sees the death of the Typees written in the decayed monuments of Typee valley, so Loti, looking down on Tahiti from the heights of his newly discovered racial fastness, sees that the Polynesians are not children of a benign nature, but primitives whose racial extinction is already decided. Nature does not threaten the European, but is converted into the symbolisation of a racial threat. The degenerative nature of the place that Loti fears around the pool, is replaced by the far more sinister decay of the 'race', and like Tommo, Loti finds the prospect terrifying.

> Suddenly a terrifying black bulk came slowly rolling down from Oroena and on to us. It was of the most extraordinary shape, sinister and ominous of aspect. In one instant it had wrapped us in such total darkness that we could not see each other.
>
> ...When this squall was past day was breaking, driving clouds and ghosts before it.[98]

Blackness threatens to destroy them both. Loti's vision on the mountain is not a vision of harmony through nature, but a fear that he will be engulfed by the dark, share the destruction of the 'race'. The clouds that lour above their heads echo the prescient 'clouds piled above the hills [which] made a terribly dark and gloomy background' to Queen Pomaré's first suggestion that he marry Rarahu.[99] The relationship between the Maori and European 'races', nature declares, is unnatural and cannot be transcended by individual vision, for individual aspirations are controlled by 'racial' destiny.

The spectre of disease hangs over the island: Rarahu's little cough develops into consumption; Queen Pomaré and her husband bred 'a race of giants, who all died of the same incurable disease, like those great tropical giants which make all their growth in a season and perish in the autumn. They all died of lung disease...'[100] Loti nervously sleeps in the same room as 'a stranger of supernatural height and build' who turns out to be Tamatoa, the mad son of the Queen, whose 'huge square cannibal jaws' and his large 'savage and grim' head are monstrous reminders of the savage past of the islanders. When Tamatoa looks after Loti, placing a mosquito net over him, and shading his eyes from the light of a lamp, the savage genuflects to the spiritual command of civilisation; yet, like Rarahu's cat who tries to escape from the house, the savage can never be fully tamed, and shortly after tending to Loti, Tamatoa 'evaded the guards and murdered a woman and two children in the garden of the Protestant missionary, and then in the course of one single day committed a series of sanguinary horrors which could not be written down - not even in Latin.'[101] It is 'natural' for the primitive to be drawn to civilisation, but the primitive has to be destroyed in order to protect civilisation.

Stedman's son Johnny complicates the relationship between Stedman and Joanna in that he threatens to make it permanent and intrude into the separate European life that Joanna has 'refused' to enter; after Joanna's death, Johnny comes to England to join his father, who is now married to an Englishwoman, and he is promptly packed off to sea by Stedman. It is as though a child of Sir Thomas Bertram by one of his slave women had suddenly appeared at the gate of Mansfield Park, rendering Edward Said's subtle uncovering of the thematics of slavery in Jane Austen's novel unnecessary.[102] In the same way, Loti's search for George's children is motivated by the fear, and not the joy, of reestablishing contact with his savage kin: 'This child, the eldest son of our house and who is so like my brother George - how strange, is a little savage!'[103] Whilst Loti is waiting for the details of the children's birth which will prove that they are not his brother's children, one of them 'leaned his little brown head against my knees, quite tame';[104] through the juxtaposition of savage and civilised, brown and white, animal and human, Loti becomes conscious once again of the 'radical difference of our races, our ideas and our way of seeing things'.[105]

The morning after Loti's discovery that George's children do not exist, 'was calm and glorious; all the phantoms of the night had fled. I shook off those dismal dreams with an all-pervading sense of physical relief.' Loti can see clearly yet again, and in the symbolically dawning 'early sunshine....I knew how well I still loved this country, in spite of the gulf which had opened before me and the absence of those non-existent ties of blood'.[106] Loti's suffocatingly sentimental love for Tahiti can only exist without ties, without responsibility, and without complications. He gradually comes to realise that the difference between Tahiti and Europe is not simply the spatial distance evoked during his

baptism, but a racial distance that cannot be transcended by the individual. The relationship between the island woman and the European man cannot stand as a model of cultural harmony, because their separate racial destinies override the ideal. Tahiti is reconstructed, in Loti's terms, as a 'knowable' Other in which the expected mystery is revealed to be simplicity, and like the 'anticipated doom to certain death' of the young and consumptive Princess, which 'lent an added charm to ... the last of the race of Pomaré', Tahiti only appears charming to the sensitive individual through its imminent racial extinction.[107]

Although Loti visited Tahiti in 1872, when the island was still, officially at least, only a protectorate of France, his novel was published in 1880, the year that the Tahitian monarchy 'transferred Tahitian "sovereignty" to France and the island became a French colony.'[108] A different relationship to the one that had existed between the early voyagers and the islanders is being negotiated, one that takes account of the greater needs of the colonial society to maintain a distance from the colonised, and yet naturalise civilisation as being a *shared* set of values. Loti creates Tahiti as a feminine society, there being almost a complete absence of male Tahitians in the novel. Unlike George Robertson, whose humiliation of the Tahitian men forms part of his enjoyment of the island, Loti removes any suggestions of resistance, or an indigenous male source of power, from the colonised space. The complex power relationships between coloniser and colonised are simplified and made to appear harmonious through imagining them in terms of a strictly limited romantic passion, and the savage Tamatoa is literally locked away in the interests of dramatising a Tahiti that is 'our' Tahiti.

In one sense, as I have argued, Loti was drawing on, and developing, a well-established body of 'interracial' relationships in sentimental literature. In another sense, the central relationship in *The Marriage of Loti* is part of an already existing image of Polynesian Otherness started by the arrivals of Wallis and Bougainville, sentimentalised in the abandoned figure of Melville's Fayaway, but really dominating the European mythology of the Pacific with the mutiny on the *Bounty*. Where modern interpretations of the *Bounty* myth have tended to be more interested in the psychological drama played out on board the ship between Bligh and Christian, late nineteenth century interest focussed more on Pitcairn Island as a parable of colonisation and of the natural evolution of a hybridised, but predominantly European civilisation.

To the American captain, Mayhew Folger, who found the one surviving mutineer, Jack Adams, and his embryonic colony on Pitcairn in 1808, the island's murderous history took second place to the 'miraculous' rebirth out of the violence of the past of a beautiful, industrious, and innocent young population who 'all speak English, and have been educated...in a religious and moral way.'[109] Folger's report formed the factual basis of Mitford's *Christina*. A slightly later visitor to Pitcairn, Captain Beechey, reported the virtual disappearance of Tahitian customs: 'With great difficulty and much entreaty, the visitors prevailed on three grown-up ladies to stand up to perform the Otaheitan dance, which they consented to with a reluctance that showed it was done only to oblige them. It was little more than a shuffling of the feet, sliding past each other, and snapping their fingers.'[110] The Polynesian culture is gradually being superseded by the 'superior' European, Tahitian ways are becoming simply a dim memory, fading away naturally, and they are already a form of embarrassment to the women.

Louis Becke and Walter Jeffrey see Pitcairn as an image of redemption through love in their novel, *The Mutineer: A Romance of Pitcairn Island* (1898). The 'simple sports', 'simple affections' and 'simple minds' of the Tahitians show them to be less intellectually developed than the mutineers,[111] who take advantage of their power, and the absence of civil law, to establish a rule of terror over the Tahitians. The Europeans abuse their 'responsibility' to look after the Tahitians. The behaviour of both Polynesians and Europeans in this novel is shaped by their historical prejudices. Becke and Jeffrey are not particularly interested in the redemptive power of the children of the 'interracial' relationships, who hardly figure at all in the narrative, but, more in tune with the blood-based theories of 'race' beginning to circulate at the end of the nineteenth century, they are interested in exploring cultural harmony through the mingling of blood through the sexual relationships. R.M. Ballantyne, in his children's adventure, *The Lonely Island, or The Last Refuge of the Mutineers* (1880), not surprisingly ignored the sexual relationships in favour of the children who came from them, thinking it possible to 'trace, in this well-ordered colony, the great root-principles on which the colossal system of the world's commerce and trade has been reared, and to recognise in John Adams the germs of those principles of equity and method which have raised England to her high commercial position.'[112]

What was most significant in the factual representations of Pitcairn was that in the 'neutral' ground the Tahitian women had indeed appeared to have 'betrayed' their own people and willingly helped the Europeans to destroy the Tahitian men. Not one of the Tahitian men had survived, yet at one point it appeared that the Tahitians had the chance of exterminating all the Europeans. In the only surviving account of Pitcairn by one of

the Tahitian women, published in the *United Services Journal* in 1829, 'Jenny' (Teehuteatuaonoa) describes a dramatic Pocahontas-like moment when Jack Adams 'was saved by the women [from the Tahitian men], who were at this time assembled. The murderers, after wounding him, permitted him to take farewell of his wife. The women threw themselves on his body, and at their entreaties his life was spared.'[113]

Teehuteatuaonoa's narrative is a valuable source - Greg Dening points out that it is virtually the only account of the *Bounty*'s voyage from Tahiti to Pitcairn[114] - but as an accurate history of the island it is fraught with as many problems as Jack Adams' various versions of the events. She told her story in Tahitian to Captain Dillon, who according to the *United Services Journal* 'speaks the Otaheitan language fluently'. In Dillon's translation, the first Tahitian woman to die on Pitcairn 'died of a disease in her neck about a year after their arrival,'[115] whereas she actually died of a broken neck when she fell from the cliffs while hunting for birds' eggs. How much Dillon embellished Teehuteatuaonoa's account is impossible to establish, but when he quotes her as saying 'The [*Bounty*] now tacked and stood to the southward, and next morning was close in with the island of Eimeo, about five or six leagues distant from Otaheite'[116] he is clearly drawing on his own extensive knowledge of sailing in the Society Islands, his own nautical language, and not her memory.

Greg Dening has shown in *Mr. Bligh's Bad Language* that the women did not willingly abandon their Tahitian ways but were in fact brutally broken of them by the four Europeans who had survived the initial round of killings.[117] Although English language and customs were indeed privileged on the island, the eventual dominance of English was

due to the power of the written word, for it was on the laws that Adams found in the *Bounty*'s *Bible* that Pitcairn's constitution was founded. After the death of Edward Young, Adams was the only person left who could read and write, albeit painstakingly, and the interpretation and giving of the community's laws and rules rested solely with him. As might be expected, a hybridised society was formed which drew from both Europe and Polynesia. But the early visitors saw this process in terms of a struggle between nature and civilisation that civilisation was largely winning, although the victory, they thought, could never be complete: 'It is remarkable enough,' wrote Beechey, 'that although the female part of the society is highly respected, yet in one instance, a distinction is kept up, which in civilized countries would be degrading', for the Tahitian women insisted on eating apart from the men.[118]

But there is also the question of the women saving the Europeans and helping to destroy the Tahitians, naturalising empire through the passionate yearning of the primitive for civilisation. Frantz Fanon has argued in *Black Skin, White Masks*, that continued humiliation in a colonial situation will eventually create a sense of inferiority, and 'it is because the Negress feels inferior that she aspires to win admittance into the white world.'[119] Within the claustrophobic plantation society created on Pitcairn, the humiliation of the Tahitian men would have magnified the sense of inferiority. The degree of violence that Greg Dening describes being inflicted on the Tahitians did not simply attempt, unsuccessfully, to break the men's spirit, but to degrade and emasculate them in front of the women, and in this it succeeded. European power was partly wielded through the control of native sexuality on the island, and the final humiliation for the Tahitian men was that one of the two women they shared in common was taken from them

when one mutineer's wife died. Later European visitors to the island were amused at the naive and unembarrassed racism of the younger Pitcairners, who would apparently discuss quite seriously with black sailors the evils of being black,[120] and this contempt for blackness almost certainly stemmed from the systematised degradation of the Tahitian men. Following Fanon's thesis, the women's exposure to the continued humiliation of the Tahitians would breed a form of self-contempt in which they, too, saw 'blackness' as being a marker of the inferiority of a dying 'race'. It is also possible that something of the Stockholm syndrome that I described in the context of the captivities of Mariner and Melville could have played a part, the women aligning themselves with the captors as mechanism of self-defence.

The love plots of the island romances of the South Seas, like the love plot of the mutiny on the *Bounty*, allow the relationship between coloniser and colonised to be simplified, and European power to be obscured beneath a tide of sentiment. The South Seas romances gain an authority from drawing on and retelling a tradition that was structured in its colonial context in the 'interracial' narratives that emerged from the plantation economies of the Caribbean. Differences once again emerge. Peter Hulme has noted of the earliest version of the Inkle and Yarico story, that Yarico goes off and gives birth to her child on her own, showing that she may be unfortunate, 'but she is clearly a survivor' suited to, if undeserving of, work in the plantations.[121] The natives of the South Seas are delicate tropical flowers that bloom brightly but briefly, however. In Loti's romance, the islanders are constructed not as healthy producers of goods, but as weak consumers. Although structured by the sentimental imperial writing of the eighteenth century, which was largely concerned with the themes of sex and slavery, Loti's romance was interested

more in the construction of a colonial environment. The savagery of 'brute nature' that drives Tommo from Typee has virtually disappeared in Loti, and the femininity of the island increases. The plantation narratives allowed ideals to be explored 'safely', finally restating the gulf between slave and master as one of physical power. Loti absorbs these structures and ideological positions - which had also provided a way for Europe to understand Pitcairn Island - into other discourses: on 'race', on empire, on the exotic, and on the Orient. In the next chapter I will develop the themes of 'race' and slavery as they appear in the 'Africanisation' of the Pacific in the mid-Victorian children's adventure novels of R.M. Ballantyne and W.H.G. Kingston, who take a far more overtly imperialist stance than that of the 'liberal' Pierre Loti.

NOTES

1. Dr. John Martin, *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands in the South Pacific Ocean. With an Original Grammar and Vocabulary of the Language. Compiled and Arranged from the Extensive Communications of Mr. William Mariner, Several Years' Resident in Those Islands*, London: J Murray (1816), Vol.1, p. 274.

2. Martin, Vol. 1: p. 268 & 270.

3. Martin, Vol. 1: p. 278-279.

4. Martin, Vol. 1: p. 279.

5. Bill Pearson, *Rifled Sanctuaries: Some Views of the Pacific Islands in Western Literature*, Auckland N.Z.: Auckland University Press & Oxford: Oxford University Press (1984), p. 38.

6. Anon, *The Modern Crusoe; or, The King of the Cannibals of the Marquesas Islands*, London: James Henderson (1869), p. 139.

7. Pearson, *Rifled Sanctuaries*: pp. 38-39.

8. Lord George Gordon Byron, *The Island; or, Christian and his Comrades*, in *The Poetical Works of Lord Byron*, London: Oxford University Press (1939), Canto 4, Stanza vii, p. 353.

9. Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492-1797*, London and New York: Routledge (1992), p. 141.

10. The phrase is Epeli Hau'ofa's, used in 'Our Sea of Islands', a paper based on a series of lectures delivered at the East-West Centre, University of Hawai'i, March-April, 1993.

11. James C. McKusick, 'The Politics of Language in Byron's *The Island*', *English Literary History*, Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, Volume 59 (1992), pp. 839-853.

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13. Byron, *The Island*: 4.xil.355.

14. Mary Russell Mitford, *Christina, The Maid of the South Seas; A Poem*, London: F.C. Rivington (1811), p. 120.

15. Byron, *The Island*: 2.i.342.

16. Byron, *The Island*: 2.iv.343 & 2.xl.345.

17. Byron, *The Island*: 2.xl.345.

18. Byron, *The Island*: 4.vi.352.

19. Byron, *The Island*: 4.xv.356.

20. Byron, *The Island*: 2.vii.343.

21. James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art*, Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, (1988), p. 79.

22. Pierre Loti [Pseud: Julien Marie Viaud], *Tahiti: The Marriage of Loti*, (trans. Clara Bell), London and New York: Kegan Paul International, (1986). First published in French under the title, *Rarahu*, 1880. Further references are to the 1986 English edition and will be cited 'Loti'.

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24. John Boyes, *John Boyes: King of the Wa-Kikuyu. A True Story of Travel and Adventure in Africa*, (ed. G.W.L. Bulpett), London: Methuen (1912), p. 7.

25. Jameson, *Political Unconscious*: p. 142.

26. Loti: p. 64.

27. Loti: p. 29.

28. Loti: p. 64.

29. Loti: p. 15.

30. Loti: p. 11.

31. H. Rider Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, (1991), p. 47.

32. Loti: p. 12.

33. Herman Melville, *Typee*, Harmondsworth: Penguin (1986), p. 117.

34. Philippe Jullian, *The Orientalists: European Painters of Eastern Scenes*, Oxford: Phaidon Press (1977), p. 170. Lévy-Dhurmer painted Viaud in 1897.

35. Loti: pp. 17-18.

36. G.S. Rousseau & Roy Porter (eds.), *Exoticism in the Enlightenment*, Manchester: Manchester University Press (1990), p. 39.

37. Roy Porter, 'The exotic as erotic: Captain Cook at Tahiti', in Rousseau and Porter (eds.): pp. 117-144, pp. 118, 120 & 123.

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4. Cannibal Feejee: W.H.G. Kingston[1]

In the Caribbean context, Peter Hulme has described how the linguistically truthful morphology of the word 'cannibal' given in the *Oxford English Dictionary* represses what he terms its 'discursive morphology'.[2] In the Pacific, Fiji became a virtual synonym for cannibalism during the nineteenth century, the islands dividing 'cannibalistic' Melanesia from Polynesia. Something of the same ideological processes that Hulme shows at work in the *O.E.D.* definition of cannibalism can be seen in the description of Melanesia taken from the 1992 *Encyclopedia Britannica*:

> [Melanesia is] one of the traditional ethnographic groupings of the Pacific islands, including (generally from west to east) the island of New Guinea, the Admiralty Islands, and the Bismarck and Louisiade archipelagoes, the Solomon Islands and the Santa Cruz Islands; New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands; Vanuatu (formally New Hebrides); Fiji, Norfolk Island; and numerous smaller islands. The group is separated from Polynesia in the east by the Andesite Line of extreme volcanic and earthquake activity and from Micronesia in the north (along the equator); it is bounded by the Tropic of Capricorn and Australia in the south. Melanesia's name was derived from the Greek *melas*, "black", and *nesoi*, "islands".[3]

It is the sort of authoritative entry we have come to expect from the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and, of course, it accurately describes Melanesia's geographical location, its geological boundaries, and the linguistic derivation of the word 'Melanesia'. The authority comes, in part, from such considered phrases as 'traditional ethnographic grouping', 'is separated' and 'Melanesia's name was derived from', and partly from the

listing of Melanesia's component parts, giving the impression that Europe merely classified what were already self-evident truths. Ideologies often work to obscure power, Peter Hulme argues, by passing off partial truths as the whole story, as 'commonsense' and 'natural'. First and foremost, in this account, Melanesia is isolated by Nature from the rest of Polynesia by the divisions of the earth's surface, 'by the Andesite Line of extreme volcanic and earthquake activity'. The northern and southern boundaries, formed by the equator and the Tropic of Capricorn, suggest that science was again following Nature's lead by enclosing Melanesia within a climactic zone. 'Characteristic of the Melanesian geographic race', the entry continues:

> are dark skin pigmentation, wavy to kinky hair, rugged features, large jaws, and large molar teeth, high incidence of shovel-shaped incisors, presence of blood types B (ABO system) and S (MNS blood-group system).... In the past, Melanesians were classed as Negroid because of their very dark skin and kinky hair, but later studies showed only a very remote relationship, if any. An apparently ancient Southeastern Asian type, the Melanesian race is probably most closely related to the Australoid geographic race.[4]

These descriptions accurately represent the latest state of scientific knowledge of the area and people. Melanesia is contained within those boundaries, Melanesians do have dark skin and wavy to kinky hair. But the 'objective' scientific language of blood-types and systems clouds the silent imposition of a European standard on the descriptions: Melanesian jaws are larger than whose jaws? what exactly are 'rugged' features, and to whom do they appear rugged? The rational discourse of European science has conquered the illogical tropical knowledge of the nineteenth century which saw the Melanesians as a version of Africans, but it restates the images of primitiveness that underpin Europe's perception of 'Negroid'. Melanesia, a word first coined in 1849, unobtrusively becomes

a 'traditional ethnographic' classification of an area known to Europe since the seventeenth century.[5] Even the geographical boundaries of Melanesia were a subject for debate, for in the 1888 edition of the *Encyclopedia* they were described as extending further westwards into the Indian Ocean islands;[6] the missionary Thomas Williams saw linguistic evidence which linked the Malayo-Papuan peoples with Madagascar, and he argued against a body of contemporary opinion which saw Tonga and Samoa in the east as part of the Fiji group.[7] The growing importance of ethnography itself during this period partly reflected a changing emphasis in science from the study of *anthropos*, 'man' in the universal sense, to *ethnos*, the study of national and cultural differences.[8] But chiefly, and this is an area that this chapter will be concerned with, there is no indication that the redefinition of the Pacific, its divisions into Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia, might be connected with major shifts in the very meaning of savagery during the nineteenth century.

K.R. Howe shows in *Where the Waves Fall* that there were two major colonising periods in the Pacific before the Europeans arrived.[9] Thor Heyerdahl's theory that the Pacific islands were populated by drift voyages from South America has been shown by 'modern scholarship in such fields as archaeology, linguistics, and ethno-botany' to be romantic, but wrong; there is, however, still considerable uncertainty about the dates, origins and sequence of the early colonisation of the islands.[10] The question of where the Polynesians came from has intrigued Europeans since the arrival of the *Dolphin*: noting the presence of fowls and a 'Chinese breed' of pig in Tahiti, George Robertson thought that both the people and the animals might have spread from 'Sumatra, Java, and New Holland and in time from that to New Zealand and thence [to Tahiti]'.[11] It has always

seemed something of a 'wonder' to Europe that a 'primitive' people were sufficiently technologically advanced to make the long voyages needed to settle the islands thousands of years before Europe's first oceanic explorations. The notion of 'drift voyages' itself suggests accidental discovery of the islands, a certain primitive technique, but as Anne Salmond has suggested recently in *Between Two Worlds*, the Austronesian peoples that settled island Polynesia probably used navigational techniques that are still used today in island Micronesia.[12]

The first people, Howe considers, probably reached Fiji from Southeast Asia around 1500 BC, reaching Tonga and Samoa five hundred years later. 'Fiji ... is generally regarded as the more immediate place of ancestry for those travellers who moved further eastward into the wide expanses of Polynesia', but it was in Tonga and Samoa that the linguistic and cultural characteristics that are most commonly associated with the island groups of eastern Polynesia evolved over the next thousand years; it was these cultures that colonised the Marquesas around 300 AD, Tahiti by 600 AD, and New Zealand by 750 AD.[13] A debate, prompted mainly by archaeological research into the limited spread of Lapita pottery from Fiji into Polynesia, surrounds the question of how far the Polynesians and the Melanesians can be regarded as different people, and how far Fiji is a form of buffer zone, a hybrid of western and eastern Pacific cultures. The early English missionary to Fiji, Thomas Williams, underlined the enduring nature of this debate when he argued in *Fiji and the Fijians* (1858), that the Fijians should be considered as a completely separate 'race', and not part of the Tongan and Samoan 'races'.[14]

Fiji's cultural relationship to east Polynesia and Melanesia is in many ways a touchstone

of Europe's understanding of the Pacific in the nineteenth century. In the early voyages to the Pacific, Polynesia extended far to the west of Fiji, and north into island Micronesia. The editor of Horace Holden's captivity in 1836, shows the islands beginning to be classified linguistically: the Palau islands, thousands of miles to the west of Fiji, were considered to be Polynesian, but the 'language of the inhabitants of Lord North's Island [in the south of the Palau group] appears to be a new and hitherto unknown dialect of the Polynesian family of languages.'[15] To the early twentieth century traveller, Beatrice Grimshaw, in her travelogue, *From Fiji to the Cannibal Isles* (1907), the difference is 'racial', for the Fijians:

> do not look at all like 'savages,' and again, they have not the keen, intellectual expression of the Indians, or the easy amiability of the Samoan type of countenance. They are partly Melanesian, partly Polynesian in type, and they form, it is quite evident, the connecting-link between Eastern and Western Pacific. East of Fiji, life is one long lotus-eating dream, stirred only by occasional parties of pleasure, feasting, love-making, dancing, and a very little cultivating work. Music is the soul of the people, beauty of face and movement is more the rule than the exception, and friendliness to strangers is carried almost to excess. Westward of the Fijis lie the dark, wicked cannibal groups of the Solomons, Banks, and New Hebrides, where life is more like a nightmare than a dream, murder stalks openly in broad daylight, the people are nearer to monkeys than human beings in aspect, and music and dancing are little practised, and in the rudest possible state.[16]

Grimshaw is partly establishing Melanesia in this passage as the place where no sane person, let alone no sane single European woman, would venture, for as the title of her book suggests, the 'cannibal isles' of Melanesia are precisely where she is going. This in itself is enough to establish her book as being written after Fiji's colonisation by England in 1874, for to the mid-Victorian reader, murder stalked as openly in 'Cannibal Feejee' as it did in the New Hebrides. For Grimshaw, Fijian cannibalism existed as a racial characteristic that could be suppressed but never fully eradicated by the hand of

civilisation: 'One young woman ... caressed my arm in a passion of delight, even going so far as to set her teeth gently in the flesh, and exclaim longingly, "Vinaka na kakana!" (What good food!) I knew that she was too young to have been a cannibal ... but her remark was interesting as an unconscious outbreak of heredity.'[17] Civilisation in Fiji was, thought Grimshaw, 'only varnish-deep', and once 'freed from white control', 'the Fijian ... would spring back like an unstrung bow to the thoughts and ways of his fathers.'[18] Within a controlled colonial environment, the thought of cannibalism was enough to 'interest', but not to threaten the female traveller, and Grimshaw's ironic dismissal of cannibalistic fears mirrors that of the 'lone' West African traveller, Mary Kingsley, who reassured her readers that the 'cannibalism of the Fans, although a prevalent habit, is no danger, I think, to white people, except as regards the bother it gives one in preventing one's black companions from getting eaten.'[19] In Grimshaw's case at least, the humorous subversion of the discursive practices of male imperial narrative does not imply any wish to distance herself from imperialism. The strong argument for the continued need for a colonial presence that is contained in the passage was not coincidental, for Grimshaw's book was commissioned by the Fiji government 'to see just what the native and his life were like, and what value the country might be for possible settlers'.[20] She gives the Fiji government full value for money, advertising that 'many thousands of acres of the best land in all Fiji were to be had', and that 'the complicated and troublesome native laws which had caused so much difficulty about land tenure ... were being swept away'.[21] The book is both a colonial prospectus and a travel romance, and it is interesting that *From Fiji to the Cannibal Isles* was published in New York under the more overtly colonial title of *Fiji and its Possibilities* (1907).[22]

As Eugene and Hugh Laracy have shown in their article 'Beatrice Grimshaw: Pride and Prejudice in Papua', Grimshaw was a product of late nineteenth century Social Darwinism, and her racism was defined by colour. Whilst she could just about tolerate a 'mixed marriage' between a European and a Tahitian in her novel *Queen Vaiti* (1920) - and even in that novel the hero and heroine are killed by an underwater explosion - her attitude towards the Melanesians (she finally settled and farmed in Papua), was uncompromisingly hostile, and denied any form of 'interracial' relationship.[23] 'Miscegenation' in the Dutch East Indies, she wrote, was bringing 'nearer to Holland the fate that befell Portugal and Spain when they forgot the Pride of race.'[24]

Grimshaw shows quite clearly the moral and physiognomical dimension to the 'blackness' of Melanesia that is obscured by the *Encyclopedia*'s definition of the area. When she says that the Fijians don't look like 'savages', she expects the word to carry a specific meaning for her readers. As the historian of anthropology, George Stocking writes, 'In turn-of-the-century evolutionary thinking, savagery, dark skin, and a small brain and incoherent mind were, for many, all part of the single evolutionary picture of "primitive" man, who even yet walked the earth.'[25] By the end of the nineteenth century America was no longer Europe's 'beginnings', as it was to John Locke, and for Grimshaw 'man's' distant origins are to be found in the 'monkey-like' 'primitives' to the west of Fiji: 'It's the gap between these Stone Age creatures and ourselves - the certainty that we are dealing with something almost as pre-historic as the mastodon, as little comprehensible as a crocodile - that makes the horror.'[26]

Grimshaw understood Fiji as a 'racial' melting pot. Like other European observers, she

claimed that the colour of the Fijians became markedly darker in the west of the group. Fiji is *between* Polynesia and Melanesia, in her view; its people draw on two distinct 'racial' traditions, on two distinct 'bloods', and they hold an ambivalent position in her affections, neither fully demonic like the Melanesians, nor entirely like the happy, feckless children she sees in island Polynesia. But even the Fiji islands and the 'hardy' Melanesians are sharing the fate of the 'brown races', who:

> are dying out with fearful rapidity; at their best they never touched the limitless capacities of the Golden Pacific soil. Its richness has always seemed to the original inhabitants an excellent reason for abstaining from cultivation. When the earth produced of itself everything that was necessary for comfort why trouble to work for it.[27]

The 'sad' but 'inevitable' decline of 'the native' in the face of civilisation was a trope that was very much a part of Europe's colonial traditions, but the images of natural death became overpowering within the climate of Darwinian theories of the survival of the fittest, and the colonial expansion in the twenty years either side of the turn of century. Marlow's 'Black shapes [which] crouched, lay, sat between the trees leaning against the trunks, clinging to the earth, half coming out, half effaced within the dim light, in all the attitudes of pain, abandonment, and despair' which he found at Outer Station in *Heart of Darkness*, could be found all over the imperial world.[28] Conrad exposed the dishonest and violent practices that were naturalised in imperial narrative by the trope of the dying native, but he never really questioned the idea that the natives were 'racially' incapable of withstanding civilisation.

For Grimshaw, however, hard work on a European plantation would halt the decay of the

Pacific islander, and Fiji was of a size to allow plantations to be developed, an advantage also noted by Thomas Williams in his description of the Fijian islands: 'The two largest are superior to any found in the vast ocean-field stretching thence to the Sandwich Islands':[29] the large Hawaiian islands were also in the process of being bought up by European farmers in the 1850s. European settlers began to appear in the Fiji islands in numbers in the 1860s, predominantly in a secondary colonising movement from Australia and New Zealand, attracted first by the belief that Britain was about to annex it, and then by the discovery that cotton grew well.[30] 'It is impossible to foretell the future of this group of islands,' ran an article on Fiji in *The Boys of England* in 1875, 'for as yet so much is untried; but at any rate, it may be safely averred that in addition to any before alluded to [sugar-cane, coffee, cotton, English garden seeds] pimento, cocoa, linseed, flax, mustard, and a host of other things will certainly do well in Fiji.'[31] Missionaries, as Grimshaw acknowledges, formed the vanguard of the colonising movement in Fiji:

> By degrees, however, the untiring efforts of the missionaries, both Catholic and Protestant, and the influence of the whites themselves, few as they were, began to make an improvement, and in the early fifties the country was advancing rapidly towards a better state of civilisation, when the rise into power of the infamous King Thakombau, one of the worst monsters of cruelty known since the days of Nero, for a time held back the tide.[32]

Civilisation is as natural and unstoppable as the sea, to Grimshaw, steadily engulfing, cleansing, and rejuvenating savagery. Grimshaw has no time for theories of youthful savage innocence, and her image of old and unregenerate savagery is both the product of the extreme racism of her time, and a partial mirror of the views of savagery held by missionaries like Thomas Williams:

> When the hidden flame bursts forth, [writes Williams] the transition is sudden from mirth to demon-like anger. Sometimes they are surprised into wrath, or vexed beyond endurance; when they throw off all restraint, and give themselves up to passion. The rage of a civilized man, in comparison with what then follows, is like the tossings of a restless babe. A savage fully developed - physically and morally - is exhibited. The forehead is suddenly filled with wrinkles; the large nostrils distend and smoke; the staring eye-balls grow red, and gleam with terrible flashings; the mouth is stretched into a murderous and disdainful grin; the whole body quivers with excitement; every muscle is strained, and the clenched fist seems eager to bathe itself in the blood of him who has roused this demon of fury.[33]

To Williams, the key phrase is 'a savage fully developed', for he believes that the hidden flame reveals the innate depravity in all 'men', whereas a later evolutionist would have seen the physical transformation in terms of the 'savage within' breaking through the veneer of civilisation. Both interpretations see a physical alteration accompanying the moral change. The reference point to Williams is clearly Satan, as the savage metamorphoses into a fiend with red eyes, smoking nostrils and distorted features. Satan develops the 'large nostrils' and red eyes that were part of the iconography of African savagery, and the monstrous savage is beginning to get a racial identity.

For Grimshaw, savagery is distilled into the figure of Thakombau, the unregenerate monster whose evil has to be broken for civilisation to progress. Concentrating 'native' resistance into one demonic figure is a familiar trope of imperialism, and one that, paradoxically, often goes hand in hand with images of a faceless mob of savages. The motif of the monstrous leader implies a native governance that is based on fear and oppression, and allows the future colonisation of the country to be seen as liberation rather than conquest. Captain King, on Cook's visit to Hawai'i saw the relationship between Hawai'ian rulers, people, and the Europeans with an eye to a colonial future: 'but the

Figure 1. *Thakombau, Vu-Ni-Valu, King of Mbau, Fiji*, from *Fiji and the Fijians* (1858).

common people which are generally the most troublesome, are I am afraid here kept in so slavish a subordination to their Chiefs, that I doubt whether they would venture to give us offence without great encouragement in doing so from their Masters'.[34] The figure of Thakombau indeed dominated early European dealings with Fiji, but he carried a far greater complexity in European representations than Grimshaw's simple demonisation allows.

In the early years of the nineteenth century, Tanoa, the father of Cakobau (as I shall spell Thakombau's name, except in quotations),[35] was the ruler of the tiny Fijian island of Bau, and his influence was relatively localised. By the 1850s Cakobau was the preeminent ruler of the Fijian group, taking the title of 'King of Fiji' around this time; after fluctuating political fortunes his government negotiated Fiji's annexation to Britain in 1874 to escape a crippling debt owed to the government of America. Opinion differs on the degree to which Cakobau's rise to power was due to the disruptive presence of Europeans. The beachcomber 'Cannibal Jack', William Diaper, records in his description of the Fijian islands commissioned by Captain Erskine in 1850, that Cakobau employed him to make a thousand musket balls.[36] K.R. Howe dismisses the normally accepted, but Eurocentric, theory outlined by J.D. Legge in *Britain in Fiji*, that the sudden political dominance of Bau was due to its cornering the market in muskets and escaped convicts. Howe argues that 'The vagaries of island politics, the rise and fall of aspiring kings, have to be explained more in terms of customary political ambitions and strategies than in terms of European influence.'[37] Whichever interpretation is the more correct, it is clear that both Cakobau and the Europeans were seeking power and influence contemporaneously, and shared an interest in the centralisation of government.

William Diaper entertained mixed feelings about Cakobau: 'He appeared to me at first to be a very good fellow, and, in fact, he was so to me; but I was not long of discovering him to be a great tyrant to his people.'[38] Diaper, who arrived in the Fiji islands in the late 1830s, staying there off and on until his death in 1893, understands Cakobau within the familiar colonial trope of 'treachery': his appearance of friendliness is a mask that hides his true, and evil, nature. Diaper finally fled from Cakobau without explaining the reason either in the narrative he wrote for Erskine, or in the journals that were published posthumously as *Cannibal Jack* (1928), and it seems possible that Cakobau's 'treachery' is a transferral by Diaper of his own betrayal of the generous hospitality that Diaper records being offered by the Fijian king.[39]

Mrs. Wallis, a New Hampshire woman, the wife of American *bêche-de-mer* trader, who stayed with the Wesleyan missionaries in Fiji during the 1840s, met Cakobau often, describing him as 'tall, rather good looking, appear[ing] fully aware of his consequence, and ... not destitute of dignity.' He was once found at play by Mrs. Wallis, slyly shooting pieces of yam at his wives with a pop-gun, and when accused by one of them, 'his attention would be fixed upon some distant object with the most innocent amusement.' Cakobau is shown here to be affectionate, humorous and human, but his play in the 'harem' is both child-like and a metaphor for an authoritarian and oppressive rule. For this dignified and playful man was also a monstrous cannibal who, Mrs. Wallis relates, once 'ordered a chief to be brought before him; he then commanded his tongue to be cut out, which he devoured raw, talking and joking with the mutilated chief at the same time'.[40] Captain Wilkes of the United States Exploring Expedition, which paid an extended visit to Fiji in 1840, reported that Cakobau 'exhibits much intelligence both in

his expression of countenance and manners. His features and figure resemble those of a European...' But Wilkes also thought he found evidence 'which would serve to prove that the reputation he bears [for brutality] is pretty well founded.'[41]

Cakobau was not simply the monstrous savage he appeared to Grimshaw, but contained extremes of savagery and civilisation that made him paradigmatic of the 'contradictions' in all Fijians to the European missionaries: 'Side by side with the wildest savageism, we find among the natives of this group an attention to agriculture, and a variety of cultivated produce, not to be found among any other of the numerous islands of the western Pacific', wrote Thomas Williams.[42] Fijian physical activity challenged the popular theories of environmental determinism. William Ellis had written of the Polynesians, that their 'indolence ... has long been proverbial', and the innate 'depravity' of the heathen was understood to be increased by the environment:[43] the luxuriant excess of the islands bred indolence, and from indolence came evil. Evangelists who were convinced of the innate depravity of 'man' and his Fall from the state of Grace, could hardly be expected to believe that Europe had 'discovered' a state of pre-Lapsarian innocence in Tahiti. 'I should not have dwelt so long on the distressing facts ... [of brutalities following war], but to exhibit in the true, though by no means strongest colours, the savage character and brutal conduct of those, who have been represented as enjoying, in their rude and simple state, a high degree of happiness, cultivating all that is amiable and benevolent,' wrote Ellis.[44]

In *European Imagination and the South Pacific*, Bernard Smith holds missionary literature largely responsible for the nineteenth century rise of the Ignoble Savage, whose image

'spread widely in contemporary illustrated books and journals of all kinds.'[45] Many missionaries were indeed dismissive of all aspects of Polynesian culture: Captain Wilkes reported that the missionary James Calvert, who wrote Volume 2 of *Fiji and the Fijians* with Thomas Williams, 'did not express himself favourably regarding the natives, describing them as cruel and bloodthirsty.'[46] But as Christopher Herbert has recently argued in *Culture and Anomie*, there was a far greater complexity in missionary responses to Polynesia than Smith's thesis of 'a prolonged dispute between "noble" and "ignoble" theories of savagery' allows, arguing that aspects of Polynesian culture were attractive to them, even though they were committed to its destruction, and that the missionary Thomas Williams, particularly, betrayed worrying sympathies with the Fijians to his superiors.[47]

It is surely significant that Williams, who was torn between a personal admiration for, and an ideological alienation from Cakobau and what he stood for, does not describe the king in his own words, but quotes the description of Captain Erskine:

> It was impossible not to admire the appearance of the Chief: of large, almost gigantic size, his limbs were beautifully formed and proportioned; his countenance, with far less of the Negro cast than among the lower orders, agreeable and intelligent; while his immense head of hair, covered and concealed with gauze, smoke-dried and slightly tinged with brown, gave him altogether the appearance of an eastern Sultan. No garments confined his magnificent chest and neck, or concealed the natural colour of the skin, a clear but decided black; and in spite of this paucity of attire - the evident wealth which surrounded him showing that it was a matter of choice and not of necessity - he looked "every inch a King."[48]

Erskine's description of Cakobau became a model for images of Fiji: his denial of 'negro features' in the king is also used in the 1888 *Encyclopedia Britannica* to suggest that 'negroes' were naturally inferior. In the painting of Cakobau that was made during the

Figure 2. *Thakombau, Vu-Ni-Valu, King of Mbau, Fiji*, from *Fiji and the Fijians* (1870).

visit to Fiji of H.M.S. *Herald*, the 'clear but decided black' is obvious, and Cakobau has dignity and power, his eyes slightly narrowed, assessing the viewer, returning the European gaze on at least equal terms (figure 1). In the engraving of this painting that was used to illustrate the 1870 edition of Williams' *Fiji and the Fijians*, the eyes are far more open, holding nothing back, the mouth smiling slightly, and tinted with red, disempowering Cakobau and turning him into a 'comic stage negro' (figure 2).

The engraving, 'Thakombau, Tui Viti, Chief of Feejee', that illustrates Erskine's 1853 *Journal of a Cruise* is far more obviously influenced by Erskine's description of Cakobau as a version of an Oriental monarch, with the 'appearance of an eastern Sultan.' This develops and makes obvious the suggestion of the harem in Mrs. Wallis' picture of Cakobau at play with his wives. It suggests a certain 'Oriental' magnificence, and even

Figure 3. *Thakombau, Tui Viti, Chief of Feejee*, from Erskine's *Journal...* (1853

Diaper was impressed by the openly displayed wealth of Cakobau, but it also s ggests e streak of cruelty that runs through European representations of the Orient: Delacroix *The Death of Sardanapolis* (1827) shows the Sultan unmoved by the slaughter surround ng him, and Regnault's *Execution without Judgement* (1870) is an icon of swift and crue justice that remains a part of Europe's understanding of the Orient today (figures 3 & 4

The image of Cakobau, probably taken first-hand from Williams' *Fij and the Fij ans*

Figure 4. Eugene Delacroix, *Death of Sardonapolis* (1827).

surfaces in many of the popular representations of the Pacific in the second half of the nineteenth century. R.M. Ballantyne uses Cakobau as the model for the huge chief that Jack fights in *The Coral Island*, his 'hair was frizzed out to an enormous extent, so that it resembled a large turban.'[49] In this case, the description is probably drawn from *Recent Exploring Expeditions to the Pacific and the South Seas* (1853) which repeated Wilkes' account of Cakobau.[50] A version of Cakobau appears again in *Jarwin and Cuffy* (1878) as Big Chief, and in Ballantyne's *Sunk at Sea* (1874), published in the year of Fiji's annexation to Britain, Cakobau makes yet another appearance, and this time he is named Thackombau.

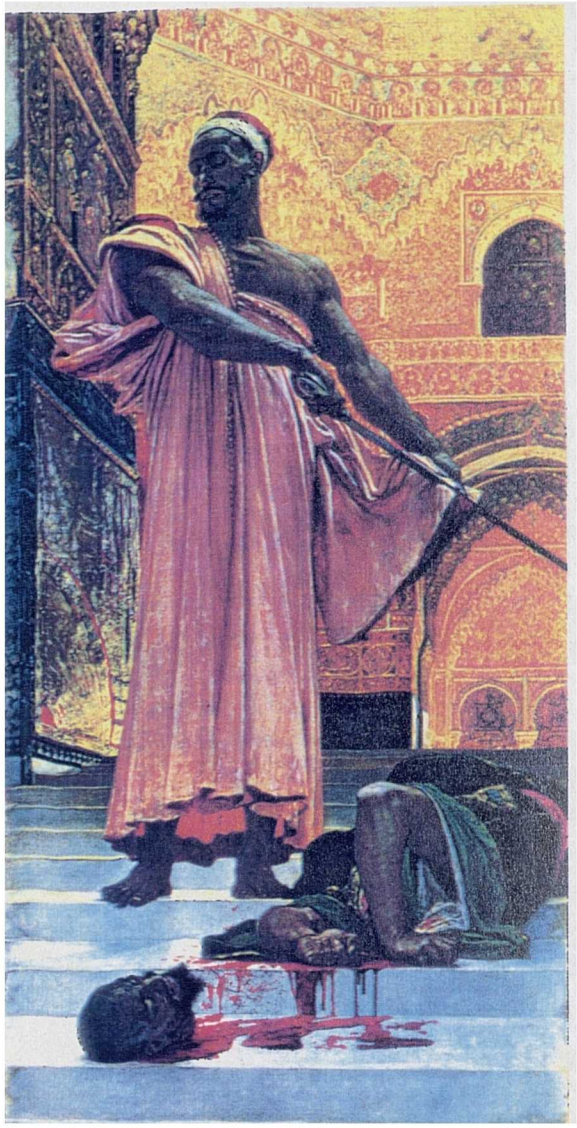

Figure 5. Henri Reignault, *Execution Without Judgement.*

> The chief, for such he evidently was, wore no clothing, except a piece of native cloth round his loins; but his whole body was elaborately tatooed with various devices; and this species of decoration coupled with the darkness of his skin, did away very much with the appearance of nakedness. He seemed as if he had been clothed in a dark skin-tight dress. But the most conspicuous part about him was the top of his head, on which there seemed to be a large turban, which, on closer inspection, turned out to be his own hair curled and frizzed out artificially. Altogether he was an imposing and gigantic fellow.[51]

Cakobau is a curious hybrid here: suggestions of an Oriental turban blend into an evocation of African hair, which then turns out not to be natural but artificially 'frizzed' to appear more fearsome. The tattooing 'clothes' the naked savage, turns the man into

a woman, desexualising and sexualising simultaneously, and making the threatening laughable. Ballantyne omits to include the Fijian practice of face-painting that Williams illustrates with such detail in a colour plate in *Fiji and the Fijians*; it is an odd omission, for face-painting is the sort of savage 'otherness' that adventure story writers would be expected to use. To the missionaries in the Society Islands, tattooing was a marker of savagery, as it was for Tommo in *Typee*, and this is transferred onto the Fijians. Thomas Williams, however, points out that one of the peculiarities of Fiji was that Fijian men were never tattooed, but only the women.[52] Although basing his description on Erskine's portrait of Cakobau, Ballantyne is drawing in other images to create a universal Polynesian savage who is darker, more grotesque, and physically threatening.

When the eponymous hero of W.H.G. Kingston's *Old Jack* (1871) and his friends are cast upon an island in the Pacific, Jack is the first to open his eyes, to find, sure enough, Cakobau staring down at him:

> and, looking up, I saw to my horror a nearly naked savage looking down into the boat with prying eyes from the bank above us. He was almost jet-black, with negro features and a full beard and moustache. His hair was frizzled out to a great size and covered by a brownish turban. Round his waist he wore the usual maro or kilt, with something like a shawl or plaid over his shoulders; and in his hand he held a long formidable-looking spear. From the turban on his head, I afterwards discovered that he was a chief.[53]

Kingston develops Erskine's hint of the Orient by having Old Jack notice Cakobau's turban, and 'keeping up the character I had assumed, [of a madman] I instantly began to salaam, as I had seen the Moors do...'[54] Cakobau later 'becomes' an 'oriental despot' in the novel, when, after his death, 'the late chief's wives' are strangled 'with a sort of

bow-string' - the strip of tapa cloth that Thomas Williams describes being used for the same purpose.[55] Although Kingston uses the popular captivity theme, appearing in this novel to be influenced by the tradition stretching back to Crusade romances of escape from Oriental slavery, it is the blackness and 'negro features' of Jack's captor that engages with the central thematic concern of the novel, through the imaginative link it provides between Caribbean slavery and the Pacific, making, I will argue, Cakobau less of a specifically Fijian figure.

Unlike Loti, Melville and Stevenson, neither Ballantyne nor Kingston had ever travelled to the South Pacific, although both of them, coincidentally, knew Canada, and used the setting frequently in their novels, and Ballantyne visited South Africa. Most of the children's adventure novelists writing in the second half of the nineteenth century used the images of empire available to them from travel, exploration and missionary writing. Inevitably, they tended to reflect and repeat the striking images of Otherness that came out of these texts. Cakobau, as I have already suggested, became an icon of the Savage South Seas, but many other images of monstrosity gleaned from the travel writing found their way into the popular fiction. One striking instance that is repeated endlessly in Pacific fiction is Thomas Williams' story of a canoe being launched over the live bodies of slaves: a more graphic and gory account of this Fijian custom is contained in the narrative William Diaper wrote for Erskine.

The adventure story, as Martin Green has argued in *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire*, was the 'energising myth of empire'.[56] Like the quest romances and captivity narratives that adventure draws on, the central issue is the resolution of the struggle

between the opposing values of the home and the alien society; in imperial terms the struggle between savagery and civilisation. But mid-Victorian imperial adventure did not articulate the confident racial and imperial views that were to develop later in the writings of Beatrice Grimshaw, G.A. Henty or John Buchan. The adventure stories of Ballantyne and Kingston were racist, undeniably, and they were also imperialist. But they were not simplistically so, and not only reflected the ambivalences and contradictions of their sources towards savagery, but they also mirrored the wider uncertainties and contradictions of mid-nineteenth century imperialism.

Few people read W.H.G. Kingston today, or have even heard of him. After his death in 1880, the Kingston Library was launched by the publishers T. Nelson & Sons, reprinting many of his one hundred and sixty titles; twenty were republished in the 1930s, but only one, *Peter the Whaler*, was reprinted after the Second World War.[57] Kingston wrote on a wide variety of subjects: biography, history, swimming, fishing, natural history and yachting,[58] also translating Jules Verne's *Savage Island*, and editing boy's magazines and colonial journals, but it is chiefly as the author of boy's adventure stories that he was known in his day. In *Juvenile Literature As It Is* (1888), Edward Salmon published the results of a questionnaire sent in 1884 to schoolchildren between the ages of eleven and eighteen, asking them, among other questions, 'What is your favourite book?' and 'Who is your favourite author, and writer of fiction?' Over two thousand replies were received from boys and girls attending various types of school. Seven hundred and ninety boys voted on their favourite authors: first came Charles Dickens with 223 votes, and second with 179 was W.H.G. Kingston; in sixth place, following Walter Scott, Jules Verne and Captain Marryat came R.M. Ballantyne with 67 votes. G.A. Henty, who arguably

became the most popular boys' writer of the 1890s, came in joint last with John Ruskin on one vote.[59] Oddly enough, Kingston did not figure so strongly in the list of the children's favourite books, possibly because, as his biographer M.R. Kingsford suggests, despite his popularity he never wrote one outstandingly successful novel.[60] Without *The Coral Island*, who would now remember or read Ballantyne? Equally strangely, however, although island adventures featured strongly in the poll of favourite books, with *Robinson Crusoe* heading the list, and *Swiss Family Robinson* coming second, *The Coral Island* did not appear at all. Polls can be notoriously inaccurate reflections of popular opinion, and it is possible that the results of this poll do no more than illuminate what parents and teachers saw as acceptable fiction for children. However, Kingston appeared to be genuinely popular with his young readers: after his death an appeal was launched in the boy's magazine that he had first edited, *Union Jack*, which paid for a lifeboat named the *W.H.G. Kingston* to be stationed at Watchet, Somerset in 1883.[61]

For every adventure novel Ballantyne wrote on empire, he wrote one with domestic themes; Kingston, however, used imperial adventure more extensively.[62] Kingston specialised in the sea story, his young heroes following, opening up, and being wrecked on the trade routes of empire; but, in his early fiction, he also used the colonisation romance extensively: stories of families who left England to make good in the virgin lands of South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and the Americas. Kingston was Secretary of the Colonial Land and Emigration Board between 1846 and 1856, and served concurrently as the Secretary of the Colonisation Society. During this period of widespread but *ad hoc* emigration Kingston saw his remit as encouraging local parishes to subsidise emigration, persuading the ports of departure to provide decent facilities for the emigrants, and

helping to provide education for their children whilst in transit. Kingston toured the country making speeches supporting emigration and inspecting facilities, and his early fiction mirrored his relatively unproblematic espousal of the principle of colonisation.

In 1856, however, a note of caution appeared in Kingston's final book on emigration, *The Emigrants' Home*. Referring to his first book on the subject, Kingston explained in the Preface:

> My work 'How to Emigrate,' [1850] received such flattering encouragement from the public, that I have been induced to write another tale of a similar character, although not a sequel to the former. Circumstances have much altered since that was composed. Then it was deemed necessary to encourage emigration, now it is perhaps important to restrain the ardour of would-be emigrants. I have, therefore, in the following work, confined myself to two leading objects, I have pointed out the characters who are unfit to succeed as colonists, and I have endeavoured to explain to those who do go forth, the only sure means of succeeding in the new career they have chosen.[63]

J.S. Bratton has noted of the general decline of the boy's colonial romance in the second half of the century, that 'these tales ... tend to be among the least complex and gripping of the boy's books, their excitement becoming increasingly one-dimensional and, one would guess, less and less inspiring, as the familiar motifs became threadbare.'[64] As Kingston suggests, however, there were 'important' political as well as literary reasons why the images of an easy life awaiting the colonists were abandoned by 'responsible' imperial writers. Emigration was a form of personal occupation which did not necessarily acknowledge the imperial regulation of the land; although, paradoxically, imperialism had made the land available in the first place, emigration movements were often markedly anti-authoritarian, as the Puritans in New England had sought to escape persecution in

Europe. The 'freedom' that the nineteenth century emigrant sought was often at odds with the control that the 'mother country' was increasingly being put under pressure by humanitarians, like Kingston, to establish. More significantly, perhaps, there was a steadily increasing level of resistance to further colonial encroachments on indigenous lands. The desire for more Xhosa land to satisfy the demands of new colonists was mainly responsible for the War of the Axe in 1846-47 in South Africa, which began inauspiciously for the colonial invaders, being driven back across the border by an allied Xhosa-Ngqika army.[65] More colonists strengthened the numbers of Europeans in the new colonies, but they also placed heavy demands on the strictly limited amount of land available, and this could only be resolved through armed conquest. From the late 1850s, Kingston's imperial adventures began to stress the difficulties and hardships of the colonies, and whilst he still supported colonisation, the adventures in the wilds of Africa or the ocean wastes of the Pacific were often used to give the boy heroes the strength of character and knowledge to succeed as colonisers.[66]

The quest romance and captivity sequence of exile, ordeal and return supplies the basic formula for Kingston's children's adventures. *Old Jack* begins with the boy hero's alienation from the home society: 'Often have I wondered whether, had a North American Indian, or a South Sea Islander, visited the place, he could have been persuaded that he had come to a land of Christian men. Certainly an angel from heaven would have looked upon the assemblage as a multitude of Satan's imps let loose on the world.'[67] Kingston was passionate about social order, joining the militia during the Chartist demonstrations in 1847-48, and again in 1859, and his adventure stories promote the values of a society ordered on strong religious principles. Jack's quest is, symbolically, to restore

Christianity to the home society, which he does on his return from Fiji by being employed 'to distribute at a low price, religious and other publications among those classes who were accustomed to purchase the most pernicious style of literature, frequently from not having the better offered to them'.[68]

Young Jack (as he then is) loses his father and mother, breaking away from the home community, and allowing the adventure to begin. Kingston was sometimes over-fond of this economical method of getting into the adventure: in *Peter Trawl* (1881) the hero is driven abroad through losing in quick succession his brother, father, mother, his two protectors (the last in a dramatic shipboard explosion), and his job.[69]

Jack's dead parents are replaced in the novel by the kindly but firm Captain of his first ship. Ships in Kingston's novels are metaphors for society, with a well-run and orderly ship as the ideal, and mutineers and trouble-makers being swiftly punished. The surrogate father-figure is also a frequent motif in Kingston's novels. A comment that Kingston made in the Editor's Address to the young readers of the *Colonial Magazine* suggests that the figure is a version of Kingston himself:

> MY DEAR BOYS
>
> I feel that you have begun to look upon me as an old friend and I should like to shake hands with you all round and talk to you, not in the mysterious character of an Editor about whom you know nothing, but as your trusted companion, who would help you to fight your battles and would stick up for you on all occasions ... I think I know exactly what will amuse you, and will give you such information at the same time, as you will find useful...[70]

Juvenile fiction both educated and entertained, and Kingston erred on the side of the

former to the point of homily.[71] His adult mentors lecture the boys endlessly, and their messages are driven home by examples and authorial asides: 'Walter did not need any incitement to labour; but, though he was not aware of it, while he was talking he had actually relaxed his efforts. - (Not an unusual circumstance. People, when talking, too often forget to *do*. There is no lack of talkers in the world. Doers are much rarer. We want our readers to belong to the latter class.)[72] The adult mentor and the adult narrator overtly control and interpret the experiences of the boys. Ballantyne also lectures his readers, but less didactically for he was more ambivalent about authority; *The Coral Island* retains its popularity today partly because it breaks with the tradition of Captain Marryat, Johann Wyss and Kingston, and dispenses with the adult mentor, allowing the boys the appearance of experiencing their adventures themselves.[73]

Kingston's 'twenty-odd novels set in the Pacific', as Bill Pearson describes them in *Rifled Sanctuaries*,[74] make the ocean itself the main setting. The encounters with Polynesian savages are more comparative than confrontational, for his boys rarely spend more than a few days in contact with any particular people. In *Peter Trawl*, the hero meets Sandwich, Strong, Kingsmill, and Pellew islanders, Malayans, and Maoris on his travels. Kingston mainly drew his knowledge of these peoples from fiction, travel and missionary writing, which he then simplified for his readers: reducing Melville's complex response to the Typees down to one sentence, for instance, Peter Trawl's colleague says that the Marquesans 'would have tattooed you all over and turned you into a nigger and made you marry one of their girls'.[75]

Kingston prefers his heroes to avoid direct confrontation with islanders: a typical scene

is played out near the end of *Peter Trawl* where the discovery of savages on what had been thought to be an uninhabited island causes the mate to declare that despite the Europeans' superiority in firearms, 'we will launch the boat at once; we must at all events avoid a fight, and we can't tell how they'll behave if we remain.'[76] Kingston's biographer, M.R. Kingsford suggests that Kingston's refusal to depict conflict with savages shows his 'lifelong abhorrence of violence'.[77] Perhaps it does, but it is interesting to look briefly at the way in which violence against savages is expressed in his fiction, for the need for the violent action demanded by young readers, and the need to promote 'Christian values' of love and forgiveness demanded by publishers and parents created an unusual dynamic in children's adventure novels.

Primarily, violence is dramatised in terms of correction. In the battle on the beach in Ballantyne's *The Coral Island*, the weak natives are defended against the strong by the boys, and Jack's despatching of the large and turbaned chief is transformed into an act of chivalry. This form of resolution is occasionally found in Kingston's novels, but more often the erring native is formally or symbolically executed, as is the evil and unregenerate Antonio in *Saved from the Sea*, who has previously been tried by the Bedouins (figures 6 & 7). More frequently, Kingston uses nature to administer justice and to allow the punishment of the native to be 'enjoyed' without openly encouraging European violence.

Sharks appear to have held a particular fascination as a 'dark' and avenging force of nature for Kingston, as they appear at every opportunity: when young Jim falls overboard in *Peter Trawl*, Peter immediately has 'the dreadful thought ... that there might be sharks

Figure 6 (left). 'The Arabs Discussing Antonio's Punishment', and Figure 7 (right), 'Death of Antonio', from W.H.G. Kingston, *Saved from the Sea* (1860).

about' - although the incident occurs off the east coast of Scotland, which are not noted as shark infested waters.[78] The danger from the deep is not only found in Kingston but in many Pacific adventure novels, where the lack of dangerous animals like lions and tigers on the Pacific islands to test the heroes, is transformed into a threat from the ocean. The frontispiece illustration of *The Three Midshipmen* (figure 8) depicts the mutilation of the innocent black boy, who dies after the shark attack, confident of his salvation: '"Me go, Massa! me go up dere, goodbye," he whispered, and with his hand pointing upwards he fell back.'[79] The illustration appears to be a reworking of the eighteenth century painting, *Watson and the Shark* (figure 9), with the black boy replacing Wilson as the victim. But in Turner's famous painting, *The Slave Ship* (1840), and Winslow Homer's

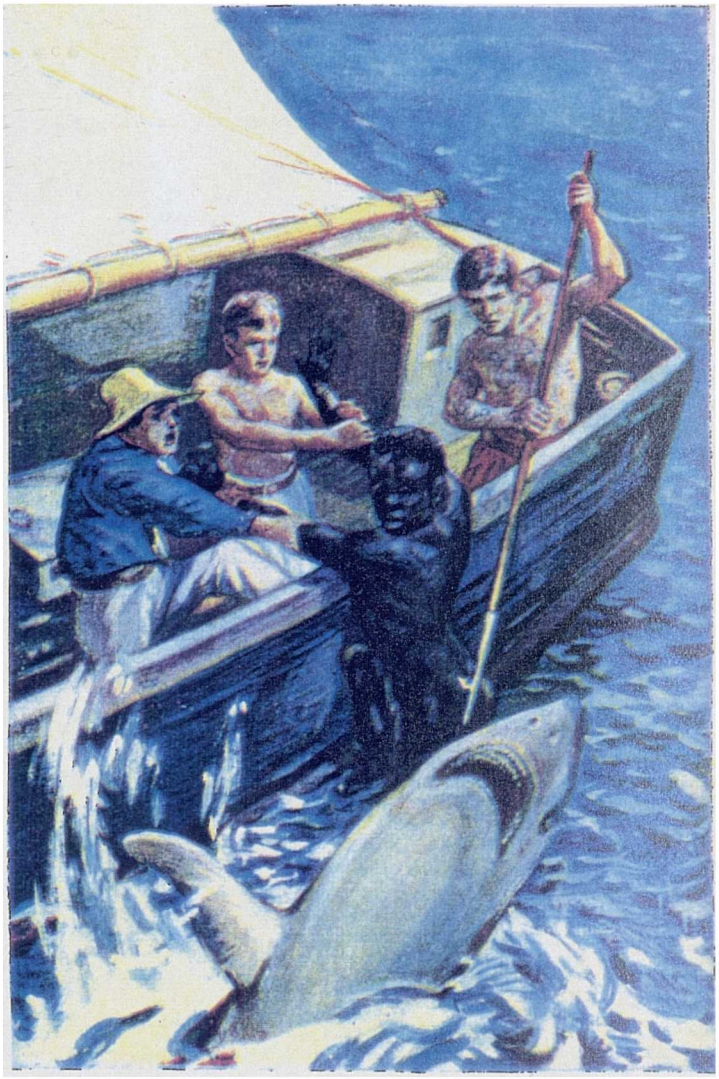

Figure 8. 'White drove the point into one of the monster's eyes', from W.H.G. Kingston, *The Three Midshipmen* (no date, c. 1930s?).

The Gulf Stream (1899, figure 10) there is a similar emphasis on the expectation of the black body being torn apart by sharks. In *The Gulf Stream* the figure of the lone black man has the same impassivity at the prospect of dismemberment as Aphra Behn's Noble Slave, Oroonoko, who imperturbably smokes his pipe as he is castrated, disfigured and finally quartered.[80]

The action in *Old Jack* revolves around images of Caribbean slavery and its aftermath, and moves rapidly from England, via a storm, a shipwreck and a rescue, to a Jamaican

Figure 9 (top). *Watson and the Shark*, J.S. Copley (1778). Figure 10 (bottom) *The Gulf Stream*, Winslow Homer (1899).

plantation where Jack and his Captain are staying as the guests of the owner. Jack is shocked to overhear the planter boasting to the Captain about the torture and execution of escaped slaves:

> Those we caught we punished in every way we could think of. Hanging was too mild for them. Some we burned before slow fires; others were tied up by the heels; and others were lashed to stakes, their bodies covered over with molasses to attract the flies, and then allowed to starve to death. Oh, we know how to punish rebels in this country.[81]

Here Jack finds a society even more cruel and morally degraded than the one he has left: 'Two or three of [the drunken planters] did roll under the table, when their black slaves came and dragged them off to bed; which must have raised them in the negroes' opinion.'[82] It is arguable whether in this case Jack is so much outraged by their behaviour, or simply disgusted by its exhibition in front of the slaves. Whichever is the case, Jack and the Captain side 'naturally' with the Europeans when the plantation is attacked by a party of Maroons - the groups of escaped slaves who had established their communities in the hill-country in Jamaica. The Maroons triumph, and the surviving Europeans are taken prisoner.

The European prisoners are led away to the interior of Jamaica, an o'er grown garden gone to seed where 'all signs of cultivation had ceased, and vegetation revelled in the most extravagant profusion',[83] and they are placed on trial by the Maroon King, an imposing figure who holds the life or death of the prisoners in his hands, and who anticipates the appearance and role of Cakobau. Although the trial is 'a burlesque' - being but an 'imitation' of English justice - the Maroons show a considerable, if chilling, restraint in

their execution of the Europeans. 'I am surprised that the ignorant savage blacks did not torture them as they had themselves been tortured, before putting an end to their existence. Perhaps they wished to set an example of leniency to the civilised whites.'[84] After one of the Europeans is executed, however, the Maroons 'threw his body, after inflicting numberless wounds on it, over the precipice.'[85] Kingston's image of the slaves is rather confusingly torn here between what was basically an abolitionist argument for the natural nobility of the Africans, and showing the savage within. This contradiction riddles the text: can the Africans learn to be civilised, for example, or can they merely imitate, as they are doing in the trial scene? Is their brutality a characteristic of savagery, or have they been brutalised by the Europeans? Kingston's confusion mirrors the various received notions of 'savagery' in the mid-Victorian period that were yet to be fully resolved by racial science and empire in the late nineteenth century.

Although *Old Jack* is set during the Maroon Wars of the early nineteenth century, it is actually concerned with many of the issues that surrounded Jamaica's Morant Bay Rebellion in 1865, issues that, I will argue, further affected the way in which the Pacific was being understood. Paul Gilroy has recently made the excellent point in *The Black Atlantic* that Morant Bay demonstrated, if nothing else, the degree to which the 'marginal' affairs of the empire were a constant and powerful influence on the metropolitan centre.[86] Opinion differs today on whether Morant Bay was a rebellion at all, or a localised protest against government taxation that turned into a riot.[87] Rebellion or riot, nearly twenty people were killed during an attack by protesters on Morant Bay's courthouse, and a further two Europeans were killed in the days following in raids on plantations in the district. It was, however, in its bloody aftermath that Morant Bay gained its

contemporary notoriety in England and its permanent place in imperial history, for, in order to suppress the rebellion, Governor Edward Eyre declared martial law in the district, and nearly five hundred black people and 'coloureds' were shot or hanged, 600 were flogged, and over a 1000 houses were burned by Government troops - not one of whom was killed or injured by the rebels. The Maroons were used by the Government as 'irregulars', and their atrocities at least equalled if they did not exceed those of the regular troops: it seems likely that Kingston's interest in the 'improvability' of the Maroons was prompted by their well publicised violence.

Notoriously, Eyre also arrested one of his chief political opponents in the Jamaican House of Assembly, George Gordon, the son of a plantation owner and a slave woman, who had actually been ill in Kingston with dysentery at the time of the riot, and sent him from Kingston where civil law was still in operation, to Morant Bay, where he was tried and executed under martial law for incitement to riot. Much of the subsequent criticism of Eyre's action turned on his cynical manipulation of martial law in order to get Gordon 'tried' and hanged, and the notion of the Europeans being brought to account for an excess of force is central to the trial scene in *Old Jack*. I am not sure that Kingston intended *Old Jack* to be an allegory of Morant Bay, but I am convinced that the novel was influenced by many of the contradictions between abolition and empire that were raised by the rebellion.

The public response to Morant Bay in Britain was divided between the Jamaica Defence Committee, led by John Stuart Mill, who wished to have Eyre prosecuted for murder, and the Eyre Defence League, led by Thomas Carlyle and John Ruskin, who believed that by

his swift action Eyre had saved Jamaica for Britain and should receive the thanks of a grateful nation. Several recent commentators on the rebellion have noted that public support for Eyre tended to come from the artistic community - Dickens (223 votes in the 1880 poll of young readers), Tennyson (10 votes), Charles Kingsley (28 votes) and Turner, the painter of *The Slave Ship*, were amongst his supporters - whereas the Jamaica Committee boasted the scientists Charles Darwin, Charles Lyall and Herbert Spencer.[88] Morant Bay and the trials of Governor Eyre dragged on for fully six years. The significance of Morant Bay that I want to underline is that it was a rare moment when Britain openly debated its responsibility for the slave trade and the place of humanitarianism in the British empire of the future: in a sense, Morant Bay showed the cracks in a British society still uncertain about its choice of empires.

A number of the British troops involved in Morant Bay had also taken part in the brutal suppression of the Indian 'Mutiny' in 1857-8. The Mutiny still evoked powerful images of the Well at Cawnpore, and the rape and murder of European women, and became a powerful sub-text of the Morant Bay affair: Eyre himself drew the analogy in his first report to the Colonial Office, suggesting that 'the whole [rebel] outrage could only be paralleled by the atrocities of the Indian Mutiny.'[89] Like those of the sepoys, the 'rebel atrocities' in Jamaica were later found to have been wildly exaggerated; but it was by connecting with those fears that Eyre 'justified' his actions: the image of the blood- and sex-crazed savage becoming an increasingly important part of the empire's iconography through Morant Bay's Africans 'mirroring' the lusts of the sepoys.[90]

On one level Kingston clearly approves of Eyre's immediate and direct action to quell the

rebellion, when he has the imprisoned Jack say:

> I could only think of one way ... of escaping. It was that the Government authorities might have heard of the outbreak, and sent troops to attack the rebels. I did not know in those days that those sort of gentlemen considered the art of tying up packages neatly with red tape to be the most important of their official duties, and that they were not so apt to do anything in a hurry of so trifling importance as attempting to save the lives of a few people![91]

I have not been able to trace whether Kingston actively supported one particular side during the Eyre controversy, but he was as we have seen a firm believer in upholding the law. His novels come out in favour of a strong patriarchal order, and Kingston himself came from the landed upper middle-classes, the squirearchy which formed the power base of the Eyre Defence League. Without firm and decisive leadership, civilisation can easily revert to brute nature, is the clear message of his novels, making Kingston a natural supporter of Eyre's action. It is more probable that Kingston was typical of much of English society in finding that the issues surrounding Morant Bay caught him with divided loyalties.

Kingston's sympathies also lay with Exeter Hall, the alliance of largely middle-class, non-conformist, dissenting religions that had been at the centre of Britain's Abolition movement. Exeter Hall formed the nucleus of Jamaica Defence Committee, and one of the reasons that the old Abolition party had been able to mobilise its forces so quickly against Eyre was that it had been partially reformed to campaign against the Confederate states during the American Civil War.[92] The abolitionist, Christian, and humanitarian in Kingston at least believed in the universal rights of 'man', if not in their 'racial' equality: Old Jack calls on the American slave owners to 'raise [the slaves] in the scale

of humanity: treat them as men should men, and not as Christians so called treat the helpless sons of Africa'.[93]

Although slavery was seen as an evil institution by Kingston, it had paradoxically provided Europe with an opportunity to civilise the 'savage', to 'raise them in the scale of humanity.' This had been ignored, he argued, by the planters who 'refused to take any steps to Christianize, to educate, to raise the moral character of the negroes'. The blame for the rebellion is, it is argued, 'not that of the British Government, not that of the nation; but of the planters themselves, of the white inhabitants of the island'.[94] Here, Kingston transfers responsibility from the centre out to the margins, where the planters have 'degenerated' like proto-Kurtzes. Outside the controlling influence of the metropolitan centre, the planters have become absolutely corrupted by their absolute power, and their moral decay, whilst specifically related to slavery, also reflects Kingston's changed attitude towards colonisation. Those who abuse their social responsibilities, as the planters have done, and resist the benevolent power of the mother country, are forces of disorder who have no place in the modern empire. Kingston uses the Morant Bay Rebellion to develop an argument for greater imperial power, to institute formal annexation proceedings.

The degraded planters in *Old Jack*, representatives of the old and independent colonisations, are effectively being sacrificed on the altar of British imperialism. Their deaths appear to absolve Britain for the past, and to make way for an 'enlightened' empire of the future untainted by slavery - represented by Jack and the Captain. René Girard has described sacrifice in *Violence and the Sacred* as society 'seeking to deflect upon a

relatively indifferent victim, a "sacrificiable" victim, the violence that would otherwise be vented on its own members, the people it most desires to protect.'[95] Sacrifice is not concerned with guilt or innocence, he argues: the sacrificial victim is usually an outsider, and symbolically carries the ills of that society, and is frequently reviled, abused and beaten before death, much as Kingston marginalises and blames the planters for the disordered state of the colonial society. Sacrifice, continues Girard, gains its redemptive power through the destruction of the carrier of evil, and unifies society through the communal act of violence on its arbitrarily chosen victim. The destruction of the planters is, I would argue, less about guilt or innocence than about redemption, and the protection and strengthening of the 'new' colonial order.

There is, however, a double sacrifice, a double substitution, in *Old Jack*, for when the Captain and Jack are on the point of execution, their place is dramatically taken by a Noble Slave (who was, inevitably, once a king in his own country), that the Captain once saved from drowning. Kingston intends, I think, the Noble Slave's offer to represent the gratitude of Africans in Jamaica who have been given their freedom, or 'saved', by the newly enlightened forces of empire. The self-sacrifice also connects with the strong narrative tradition of the nurturing native who, like Pocahontas, Yarico, and Pierre Loti's Rarahu, is prepared to ignore the claims of 'race' and lay down his or her life for the European. In the context of the Eyre case, the proffered substitution of the Noble Slave for the two Europeans restates the racial hierarchy of the plantation, if not the slave system. The Noble Slave acknowledges the 'passions', the underdeveloped nature of his people, accepting that order will ultimately have to be imposed on the savages when he advises Jack and the Captain to escape whilst they can, for 'these people's tempers may

change again as rapidly against you as they have lately turned in your favour.'[96]

The last ordeal of the hero in adventure has the greatest relevance to the quest, for it is the means of the hero's return to the home community, and this is formed by Jack's captivity in Fiji at the hands of 'Cakobau'. Whilst all his fellow castaways are killed and eaten by Cakobau, as the plantation overseers are executed, Old Jack is kept 'in the condition of a prisoner, if not a slave', in a savage country defined by slavery: 'when the inhabitants of the tributary or slave states were bringing [Cakobau] their quota of provisions, if he did not think they were approaching his abode in a sufficiently humble posture by stooping almost to the ground, [I have seen him] deliberately take his bow and shoot one of them through the heart.'[97] Slavery and an increasing degree of brutality goes hand in hand with Fiji's growth as an imperial power, the old chief resolving 'to build a fleet of large double canoes, with which to bring the inhabitants of another island under subjection,' and the larger and more powerful Fiji grows, the more canoes that are built, the more slaves that are sacrificed as human rollers to the canoes, and then eaten.[98]

The missionary Thomas Williams had argued that the Fijians 'have had no intercourse with other nations, except as visited by them; and the popular belief is, that they never occupied any country but that on which they now dwell.'[99] He is not clear about, or is not particularly interested in, the precise development of the Fijian culture that by turns fascinates and repels him, for 'enough has been said to prove that the heathenism of Fiji has, by its own uninfluenced development, reached the most appalling depth of abomination.'[100] Williams' thesis is that the Fijians were one of the ten lost tribes of Israel, who, in their isolation, had steadily degenerated from the initially fallen state they

shared with all humankind - this was a popular theory amongst missionaries to the South Seas.[101] Slavery, along with cannibalism, infanticide, endemic war and widow-strangling, are the monstrous results, to Williams, of Fiji's isolation from the rest of the world: they demonstrate the extremes of which all humankind is capable. Williams' argues, quite obviously, that Christianity can reverse the process for the Fijians, and that the day of 'their full deliverance may be at hand.'[102] Old Jack echoes this sentiment, saying that 'among even the Feejee islands, wherever they have planted the Cross, numbers have flocked round it, and in many places the whole character of the people has been changed.'[103] In that sense, Jack's experiences of the horror of the South Seas - for he incorporates all of the more gory details from Williams and Diaper - go to show him the depths to which 'man' can descend and yet be saved, giving his return overt Christian overtones: 'I have told my tale. I have offered many an example of what religion can do, and of what the want of it will produce.'[104] In another sense, Fiji connects with the themes that have been raised by the rebellion in Jamaica.

When Jack is told by the chief that the murders of European castaways are reprisals against the 'white men [who] had often come to those islands in their ships, and kidnapped his people, or shot them down with their guns, or beaten them for some trifling misunderstanding or theft of little importance', Jack tries to reason with the chief, but confesses to himself that 'there was too much truth in his assertion'.[105] Without strict imperial control being imposed on renegade Europeans, the efforts of the missionaries to convert the heathen are pointless. Where Kingston doubts whether the Maroons can ever be fully civilised, so brutalised have relations become through slavery, the Fijians appear to be saveable; and further: Europe is able to redeem itself for the historical brutalities

of Caribbean slavery through its enlightened approach to civilising the South Seas. The humanitarian desire to save the savages from their own deepening spiral of brutal slavery and oppression becomes a reason for the colonisation of the Pacific.

It was partly for the reason that Fijians are seen as 'like' Africans that Thomas Williams insistently denies the 'negroid' appearance of the Fijians that can evoke slavery: the Fijian nose, he argues, is 'well-shaped, with full nostrils, yet distinct from the Negro type'. The westerly Fijian appearance is 'decidedly African, but not Negro'; 'the Fijian is equal in physical development to the islanders eastward, yet distinct from them in colour, in which particular he approaches the pure Papuan Negro'.[106] Williams argues against what is the 'obvious' connection, and for seeing Fiji as something fresh and different - the same 'innocence' that Kingston also needs to find to enable Europe to start afresh. As the 'Reverend' James Orange put it when he was describing missionary work in Africa and the Caribbean: there 'the motive was sinister, and originated in the cupidity of worldly men, and the Christianity they imparted was after the fashion of European Ecclesiastical establishments, which walked hand in hand with the civil power, in paths of invasion, conquest and victory', whereas the evangelisation of the Pacific was succeeding because of 'the entire and simple reliance on the divine blessing in which the great work was commenced'.[107]

Yet it is precisely the 'negro features' of the Fijian chief that Kingston draws out, for it is the common brutality of Fiji and Africa that is part of the meaning of the book. Fiji is both fresh and different, opening up new possiblities for peaceful imperialism, but it is also 'horribly' familiar. The brutality of Fijian society has developed without being

degraded by European slavery, for Fijian slavery and cannibalism predate the European arrival in the Pacific, and is simply applied to unfortunate castaways with the 'tenfold vengeance' of savage passions.[108] The Europeans who raid and abuse the Fijians are only exacerbating the brutality that already exists within the savage. It is at the very moment that Jack empathetically acknowledges the depredations of Europeans in the islands, that the gulf between Jack and the Fijians becomes widest: 'After this occurrence, I was always seeking an opportunity to escape from this blood-stained spot of earth. Whichever way I turned had been a scene of murder, and I loathed the sight of the sanguinary perpetrator of so many atrocities.'[109] Whilst the experience of captivity has given Jack an insight into the European violence in the Pacific, and the evil that will come of it, when the native and European threaten to get on 'intimate terms'[110] in a moment of shared understanding, the savage seems most brutal. The terror that structures Fijian society suggests that the Maroons cannot simply have been brutalised by the Europeans, but were motivated by a deep desire for violence that can only be racial. Whilst the European can be redeemed, Jack is being pulled between a humanitarian conviction that the savage can be civilised, and the realisation that 'race' will prevent it.

The juvenile fiction of Kingston derives from the metropolitan centre; unlike Melville, Loti, or Stoddard, Kingston has no desire to align himself with anything other than civilisation. Like the missionaries, he was deeply suspicious of nature, and if the Pacific showed anything in his works it was that nature had to be ordered by the civilising force of Europe. What makes Kingston an interesting author is that he is so open about his loyalties to the social role of imperialism that he reveals something of the conflicts between empire and society in the mid-Victorian period. He was probably unaware of the

deep ambivalences within himself regarding the 'negro features' of the Fijians, but his position is representative of the larger contradictions of a society trying to resolve a 'benevolent' new imperialism with the violent history of the old; with assimilating a Christian degenerationist view of history into theories of racially determined progression; with reforming civilisation around the ideas of race and culture; with reassessing the meaning of savagery within the scientific and political needs of the times; but primarily with the conflict between the Christian notion of the meek inheriting the earth, and the imperial ethos of conquest. The islands of the Pacific are interesting to Kingston, not because they are 'worth' colonisation in the way that Beatrice Grimshaw was later to find them, but because they are not. They form a New World that allows him to explore his themes of empire 'altruistically', without the complications of land, commerce and history: as an 'idea', as Marlow would put it. Just as violent 'uprisings' like the Morant Bay Rebellion and the Indian Mutiny were hardening the image of savagery in the second half of the nineteenth century, however, so Kingston was being drawn towards what could only be a racial explanation for the widening gulf between savagery and civilisation.

NOTES

1. The expression 'Cannibal Feejee' was commonly used to describe the Fijian islands; it is used by the Rev. James Calvert, who wrote the history of the Fijian mission in the two volume set, *Fiji and the Fijians*, in an introductory letter to Mary Wallis' *Life in Feejee, or, Five Years among the Cannibals*, (1851), Ridgewood N.J.: The Gregg Press, (1967), p. iv.

2. Peter Hulme, *Colonial Encounters: Europe and the Native Caribbean, 1492-1797*, London: Routledge, (1992), pp. 15-17.

3. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, London & Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, (1992), Volume 7, p. 1025.

4. *Ibid*: p. 1026.

5. *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford: The Clarendon Press, (1989), Volume 9, p. 574.

6. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, (1888), Volume 15, p. 835.

7. Thomas Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians* and James Calvert, *Missionary Labours Among the Cannibals; Extended with Notices of Recent Events*, (ed. George Stringer Rowe), London: Hodder and Stoughton (1870), p. 255. Further references are to this edition and will be cited as 'T. Williams' or 'Calvert'.

8. Marvin Harris, *The Rise of Anthropological Theory, a History of Theories of Culture*, New York: Harper Collins (1968), pp. 1 & 16.

9. K.R. Howe, *Where the Waves Fall: A new South Sea Islands history from first settlement to colonial rule*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press (1984), pp. 3-24.

10. Howe, *Where the Waves Fall*: p. 3.

11. George Robertson, *An Account of the Discovery of Tahiti, from the Journal of George Robertson Master of H.M.S. Dolphin*, (ed. Oliver Warner), London: The Folio Society (1955), pp. 71-72.

12. Anne Salmond, *Two Worlds. First Meetings Between Maori and Europeans 1642-1772*, London: Viking (1991), pp. 24-26.

13. Howe, *Where the Waves Fall*: p. 12 & 15.

14. T. Williams, *Fiji*: p. 17.

15. Horace Holden, *A Narrative of the Shipwreck, Captivity, and Sufferings of Horace Holden and Benj. H. Nute, who were cast away in the American Ship Mentor, on the Pelew Islands in the Year 1832; and for two years afterwards were subjected to unheard of sufferings among the Barbarous Inhabitants of Lord North's Island*, Boston: Russell,

Shattuck, and Co. (1836), p. 121.

16. Beatrice Grimshaw, *From Fiji to the Cannibal Isles*, London: Thomas Nelson, (1907), p. 14. Further references to this work will be cited 'Grimshaw'.

17. Grimshaw, *From Fiji*: p. 44.

18. Grimshaw, *From Fiji*: p. 39.

19. Mary Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, London: Virago (1982), p. 330.

20. Letter from Grimshaw to Deakin, 1.10.1908. Quoted by Eugene and Hugh Laracy, 'Beatrice Grimshaw: Pride and Prejudice in Papua', *Journal of Pacific History*, Volume 12 (1977), Part 3, pp. 154-175, p. 157.

21. Grimshaw, *From Fiji*: p. 76.

22. Beatrice Grimshaw, *Fiji and its Possibilities*, New York: Doubleday & Co (1907).

23. Eugenie and Hugh Laracy, 'Beatrice Grimshaw: Pride and Prejudice in Papua', *The Journal of Pacific History*, Volume 12, No. 3, (1977), pp. 154-175, pp. 164-167.

24. Beatrice Grimshaw, 'East Beyond the East', *The Wide World Magazine*, LII (1923-24), p. 30. Quoted in Laracy: p. 164.

25. George Stocking, *Race Culture and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology*, [1968] Chicago: University of Chicago Press (1982), p. 132.

26. Beatrice Grimshaw, *The Wreck of the Redwing*, London (1937), p. 140. Quoted by Laracy: p. 171.

27. Beatrice Grimshaw, *In the Strange South Seas*, London: Hutchinson (1907), p. 56.

28. Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, (1902), Harmondsworth: Penguin (1988), p. 44.

29. T. Williams, *Fiji*: p. 3.

30. Howe, *Where the Waves Fall*: p. 273.

31. 'The Fiji Islands', *The Boys of England*, Volume IV, No. 81, 26.10.1875, p. 44.

32. Grimshaw, *From Fiji*: p. 16.

33. T. Williams, *Fiji*: p. 122.

34. The journal of Captain James King in James Cook, *The Journals of Captain James Cook on his Voyages of Discovery*, (ed J C Beaglehole), London: Hakluyt Society, 8 Volumes (1988) Vol. 3, part 3: p. 524.

35. In the Fijian alphabet transcribed by the missionaries, the letter 'c' is pronounced 'th', and the letter 'b' has an automatic prefix of 'm'. Thus the island of Bau is pronounced 'Mbau'.

36. 'John Jackson' [pseud. William Diaper], 'Feejeean Islands', included as Appendix A in John Elphinstone Erskine's *Journal of a Cruise Among the Islands of the Western Pacific, including the Feejees and Others Inhabited by the Polynesian Negro Races, in Her Majesty's Ship Havannah* (1853), Papakura New Zealand: Southern Reprints, (1987), pp. 411-477, p. 455. It was Christopher Legge who, as far as I am aware, first noted that 'Jackson' was in fact, William Diaper, or the self-styled Cannibal Jack: 'William Diaper: A Biographical Sketch', *The Journal of Pacific History*, Volume 1, (1969), pp. 79-90

37. Howe, *Where the Waves Fall*: p. 259. For the opposite view see J.D. Legge, *Britain in Fiji 1858-1880*, London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd, (1958), p. 10.

38. Erskine, *Journal*: p. 456.

39. Erskine, *Journal*: p. 455. Diaper describes here the hospitality offered to Tui-thakau and his daughter who were 'detained and entertained two months, being supplied with about two hundred pigs every day, besides turtle in great quantities, and fish which were so numerous, that I never saw any other part eaten but just merely the eyes sucked out, and then the rest thrown outside for the dogs.' Diaper gave some of his journals to a missionary, James Hadfield, in 1889, published as *Cannibal Jack: The True Autobiography of a White Man in the South Seas*, London: Faber and Gwyer Ltd. (1928).

40. Wallis, *Life*: pp. 24-5, 225 & p. 31.

41. Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition*, (1845), Upper Saddle River N.J.: The Gregg Press, (1970), 5 Volumes, Vol. 3, pp. 66-67. Wilkes' description of Cakobau is also quoted alongside that of Captain Erskine's, in Thomas Williams' *Fiji and the Fijians*: p. 105. K.R. Howe also draws on these descriptions of Cakobau in *Where the Waves Fall.*

42. T. Williams, *Fiji*: p. 60.

43. William Ellis, *Polynesian Researches, During a Residence of Nearly Six Years in the South Sea Islands*, London: Fisher, Son and Jackson, (1830), 2 Volumes, Vol. 1, p. 450.

44. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, Vol. 2: p. 508.

45. Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, (1988), p. 322.

46. Wilkes, *United States*, Vol 3: p. 169.

47. Christopher Herbert, *Culture and Anomie: Ethnographic Imagination in the Nineteenth Century*, Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, (1991), p. 156.

48. Erskine, *Journal*: p. 186. Quoted by Thomas Williams, *Fiji*: pp. 105-106.

49. R.M. Ballantyne, *The Coral Island*, (1857), Oxford: Oxford World's Classics (1990), p. 173.

50. Eric Quayle, *The Collector's Book of Boy's Stories*, London (1973), p. 52. Quoted by J.S. Bratton in the Introduction to *The Coral Island* (1990), p. xiv, to show that Ballantyne had been given the book of voyages by his publishers for background information.

51. R.M. Ballantyne, *Sunk at Sea. The Adventures of Wandering Will in the Pacific*, London: James Nisbet & Co. Ltd., (1874), p. 71.

52. T. Williams, *Fiji*: p. 160.

53. W.H.G. Kingston, *Old Jack; a Tale for Boys*, London: Ward, Lock & Co. (1871), p. 409.

54. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 411.

55. T. Williams, *Fiji*: pp. 193-194.

56. Martin Green, *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul (1980), p. 11.

57. British Museum Library Catalogue of Books.

58. M.R. Kingsford, *The Life, Work and Influence of William Henry Giles Kingston*, Toronto: The Ryerson Press (1947), p. 181. I am indebted to this work for much of the biographical information about Kingston.

59. Kingsford: p. 194. This questionnaire has also been considered in Bill Pearson's *Rifled Sanctuaries*, and Jeffrey Richards (ed), *Imperialism and Juvenile Fiction*. The full results of the questionnaire are: Dickens (223), Kingston (179), Scott (128), Verne (114), Marryat (102), Ballantyne (67), Ainsworth (61), Shakespeare (44), Mayne Reid (33), Kingsley (28), Lytton (32), Defoe (24), Grant (12), Fenimore Cooper (12), Macaulay and Lever (11), Thackeray, Tennyson, Adams (10), Reade, Braddon, Eliot (9), Wood, Cowper (8), Melville (7), Collins, Longfellow and Anderson (6), Philips (5), Byron and Bunyan (4), Carlyle, Twain, Dumas, Farrar, Aimard (3), Hope, Stables (2), Henty, Hughes, Erckmann-Chatrian, Ruskin (1).

60. Kingsford, *The Life*: p. 194-196.

61. Kingsford, *The Life*: p. 192. Three successive lifeboats kept the name until 1903, but, ironically in view of their namesake's fondness for fictional rescues, they were launched only four times, and saved no lives.

62. British Museum Library Catalogue of Books.

63. W.H.G. Kingston, *The Emigrants' Home; or how to settle. A Story of Australian Life*, London (1856), Preface.

64. J.S. Bratton, 'Of England, home and duty: the image of England in Victorian and Edwardian juvenile fiction', *Imperialism and Popular Culture* (ed. John M. Mackenzie), Manchester: Manchester University Press (1986), pp. 73-93, p.87.

65. Neil Parsons, *A New History of Southern Africa*, London: Macmillan (1982), p. 114. See also Noel Mostert, *Frontiers: the Epic of South Africa's Creation and the Tragedy of the Xhosa People*, London: Jonathan Cape, (1992).

66. Cf. W.H.G. Kingston, *The South Sea Whaler: A Story of the Loss of the 'Champion' and the Adventures of Her Crew*, London: T. Nelson & Sons, (1895), in which the boys finally settle in Australia after enduring shipwreck and hardship in the Pacific.

67. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 9.

68. Kingston, *Old Jack*: pp. 432-433.

69. W.H.G. Kingston, *Peter Trawl; the Adventures of a Whaler* (1881), London: Hodder and Stoughton (1909). Further references are to this edition and will be cited '*Peter Trawl*'.

70. *Colonial Magazine*, (1859), Volume 2. Quoted by Kingsford: p. 180.

71. Kingston was also less careful than Ballantyne in his research, and when *In the Wilds of Africa* was published in serial form he had to apologise for placing alligators in the rivers of Africa when a keen-eyed reader pointed out that they were peculiar to America. *In the Wilds of Africa*, London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd. (1870), p. 247. Eric Quayle shows that the public noticed factual inaccuracies in the description of coconuts in *The Coral Island*, and Ballantyne was careful not to make this mistake again (Eric Quayle, *Ballantyne the Brave. A Victorian Writer and His Family*, London: Rupert Hart-Davies (1967), p. 142.

72. W.H.G. Kingston, *The South Sea Whaler: A Story of the Loss of the 'Champion' and the Adventures of Her Crew*, London: T. Nelson & Sons, (1875): p. 115.

73. For a discussion of Ballantyne's ambivalence towards the roles of savagery and civilisation in *The Coral Island* and its 'sequel', *The Gorilla Hunters* (1862), see Joseph Bristow's *Empire Boys: Adventures in a Man's World*, London: HarperCollins, (1991), pp. 103-109.

74. Bill Pearson, *Rifled Sanctuaries: Some Views of the Pacific Islands in Western Literature*, Auckland and Oxford: Auckland University Press and Oxford University Press, (1984), p. 56.

75. Kingston, *Peter Trawl*: p. 230.

76. Kingston, *Peter Trawl*: p. 308.

77. Kingsford, *The Life*: p. 39.

78. Kingston, *Peter Trawl*: p. 111.

79. W.H.G. Kingston, *The Three Midshipmen*, London: The Boy's Own Paper Office (no date, first published 1860), p. 229.

80. Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko*, in *Oroonoko, The Rover and Other Works*, Harmondsworth: Penguin (1992), p. 140.

81. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 72.

82. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 73.

83. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 84.

84. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 95.

85. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 95.

86. Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, London: Verso (1993), p. 11.

87. P.D. Curtin's *Two Jamaicas: The Role of Ideas in a Tropical Colony 1830-1865*, Cambridge Ma: Harvard University Press (1955), and Bernard Semmel's *The Governor Eyre Controversy*, London: McKibbon and Kee (1962) take the view that Morant Bay was a riot. Gad Heuman's recent history of the rebellion, *'The Killing Time': The Morant Bay Rebellion in Jamaica*, Basingstoke: Macmillan Caribbean (1994) is the fullest account yet of the causes and effects of Morant Bay, and he argues forcefully for it to be seen as rebellion, as organised resistance to imperial rule. Ironically, bearing in mind his rightful condemnation of Eyre, Heuman shares the position of Geoffrey Dutton, whose *The Hero as Murderer: The Life of Edward John Eyre, Australian Explorer and Governor of Jamaica 1815-1901*, London & Glasgow: William Collins Ltd (1967) defends Eyre's response to Morant Bay on the grounds that it was rebellion and had to be dealt with swiftly and harshly.

88. Catherine Hall, *White, Male and Middle Class: Explorations in Feminism and History*, Cambridge: Polity Press & Blackwells Publishers (1992); Bernard Semmel, *op cit*; Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*; and Geoffrey Dutton, *op cit*, provide important analyses of the reactions of the British public.

89. Quoted by Dutton, *The Hero*: p. 279.

90. It is interesting in this context that one of Kingston's relations, Lieutenant Duncan Home received the Victoria Cross for his part in the storming of the gates of Delhi in 1857, but died of his wounds shortly afterwards. Kingsford: facing page 174.

91. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 91.

92. Semmel, *The Governor Eyre*: pp. 87-95.

93. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 97.

94. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 98.

95. René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press (1977), p. 4.

96. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 104.

97. Kingston, *Old Jack*: pp. 415 & 417.

98. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 418.

99. T. Williams, *Fiji*: p. 13.

100. T. Williams, *Fiji*: p. 182.

101. Cf. James Jackson Jarves, *History of the Hawaiian Islands; embracing their antiquities, mythology, legends, discovery by Europeans in the sixteenth century, re-discovery by Cook, with their civil, religious and political history*, Honolulu: C.E. Hitchcock (1847), p. 19, where he quotes Reverend Sheldon Dibble's thesis that 'the Hawaiians are a part of the scattered tribes of the children of Israel', although Jarves himself felt that 'further research and more proof' was needed before this theory could be accepted.

102. T. Williams, *Fiji*: p. 182.

103. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 417.

104. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 433.

105. Kingston, *Old Jack*: pp. 424-425.

106. T. Williams, *Fiji*: pp. 104 & 17.

107. James Orange, *Narrative of the Late George Vason of Nottingham, One of the First Missionaries sent out by the London Missionary Society in the Ship Duff*, Derby (1840), p. 58.

108. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 425.

109. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 425.

110. Kingston, *Old Jack*: p. 419.

5. A true place: Robert Louis Stevenson

> Queequeg was a native of Kokovoko, an island far away to the West and South. It is not down in any map; true places never are.[1]

In a letter to his cousin Bob written during his first Pacific cruise on the yacht *Casco*, Robert Louis Stevenson enthused: 'All the time our visits to the islands have been more like dreams than realities: the people, the life, the beachcombers, the old stories and song I have picked up, so interesting; the climate, the scenery, and (in some places) the women, so beautiful.'[2] He wrote of the proposed book of his travels to his friend and literary agent, Sidney Colvin, that 'nobody has had such stuff; such wild stories, such beautiful scenes, such singular intimacies, such manners and traditions, so incredible a mixture of the beautiful and horrible, the savage and the civilised.'[3] Stevenson came to question his romanticised Pacific, describing his novel, *The Beach of Falesá* (1893), as 'the first realistic South Sea story; I mean with real South Sea character and details of life. Everybody else who has tried, that I have seen, got carried away by the romance, and ended in a kind of sugar-candy sham epic...'[4] This partly reflects the difference that will emerge between his travel writing and fiction, for as Stevenson acknowledged, he found a greater freedom of expression in his fictional stories: 'strange ways of life, I think, they set forth: things I can scarce touch upon, or even not at all, in my travel book'.[5]

Stevenson took pains with his fictionalised Pacific. Robert Hillier has argued recently in *The South Seas Fiction of Robert Louis Stevenson*, that many of the details of Attwater's

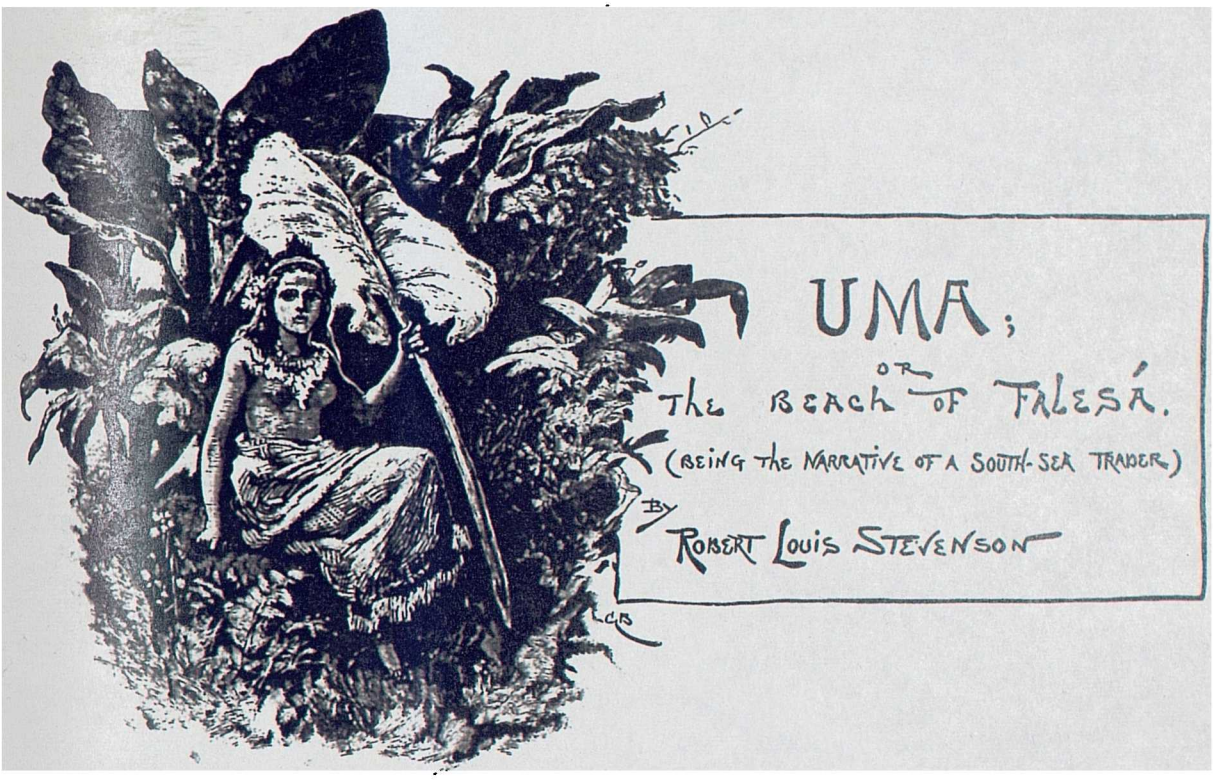

Figure 1. Title and design for serial publication of *The Beach of Falesá.*

island in *The Ebb-Tide* 'repeat descriptions of the arrival of the *Casco* at Fakarava atoll'.[6] Stevenson illustrated his travel letters with photographs from his cruises. *Falesá* was first serialised in the *Illustrated London News* in 1892, and the illustrator based Uma on one of Stevenson's photographs (figures 1 and 2). When Stevenson wrote to Colvin about the illustrations for *Island Night's Entertainment*, the collection in which *Falesá* was included, he expressed himself as 'greatly pleased' with them, but admitted that:

> It is very strange to a South-Seayer to see Hawaiian women dressed like Samoans, but I guess that's all one to you in Middlesex. It's about the same as if London city men were shown going to the Stock Exchange as *pifferari* [Italian bagpipers]; but no matter, none will sleep worse for it.[7]

Figure 2. 'Samoan girl', from R.L. Stevenson's photograph album of the South Seas.

After nearly four years in the Pacific by this point, Stevenson understands that the eye of the experienced South Seayer notices 'difference' where the eye of the European on the other side of the world sees only uniformity. Stevenson's novels are not ethnographies, and although he distances himself from the universalising tendency of the imperial gaze, and is deliberately reworking the romance of the South Seas, he appears less interested here in using his autoptic authority to insist on accurate representation than to establish a difference between those who know the South Seas, and those who do not.

Stevenson was arguably the best, and certainly one of the most perceptive of nineteenth century European writers on the Pacific: he had a sharp eye for detail, an ear for rhythms of speech, was interested in Polynesians and their culture, and in Uma, the native wife of the trader, Wiltshire, in *Falesá*, he created one of the few strong Polynesian characters in European fiction. Stevenson was a man 'relatively free from racial prejudice', arriving in the Pacific 'with an openness unusual for his time', argues John Charlot in a recent article.[8] But there was another side to his attitude towards Polynesians, as Gavan Daws has shown in *A Dream of Islands*: Stevenson the autocrat, demanding unquestioning obedience from the Samoan workers on his estate at Vailima, attracted to Samoa because on the increasingly colonised island, his money and position made an authority over the Samoans 'easy' to establish.[9] Stevenson enjoyed the privileges of the coloniser, and argued for greater rather than less European control: 'That is what we want [in Samoa]', he wrote to Colvin, 'a man that knows and likes the natives, *qui paye de sa personne*, and is not afraid of hanging when necessary.'[10]

Respect for the native cultures was, for Stevenson, intertwined with colonial rule, and

from the beginning of his Pacific travels, he was keen to 'know' the natives. Stevenson originally planned to write the one great book on the South Seas, drawing on the wealth of 'songs and legends' he had collected on his cruises, which will 'tell you more of the South Seas after very few months than any other writer has done'[11] Stevenson set out on the *Casco* with the confident expectation that the South Seas would be readily knowable 'after very few months' to the perceptive eye of the artist. Stevenson outlined the main thematic of his projected book, in an interview as 'the unjust (yet I can see the inevitable) extinction of the Polynesian Islanders by our shabby civilisation. In such a plan I will, of course, make liberal use of the civilised element, but in the most and best the story shall remain distinctively Polynesian.'[12] Here again, Stevenson is working within common imperial tropes in assuming that an 'essence' of Polynesia, something 'distinctively Polynesian', is there to be found, has hitherto not been recorded, and is about to disappear before 'our shabby civilisation'.

The book was never completed in the form he originally intended, and the version we have today, *In the South Seas*, is a compromise, being formed of the series of travel letters he wrote for the New York *Sun*, with some letters excluded, and some material added. The romantic tropes of the Pacific are particularly evident in the Marquesas section of *In the South Seas*. Here are the expected traveller's images of beautiful but dying islands; fear of treachery from the grotesquely tattooed cannibals; rapid moves from alienation to intimacy: 'It is this sense of kinship that the traveller must rouse and share; or he had better content himself with travels from the blue bed to the brown.'[13]

The idea of Pacific travel was changing in the last decades of the century. A new type

of writer was beginning to arrive in the Pacific as it became more accessible for the pleasure cruises of European and American travellers. Stevenson's cruise on the *Casco* was still an adventurous and expensive operation, but in the late 1870s the San Francisco based Oceanic Steamship Company began offering cruises to Hawaii, and in 1883 they commissioned the American writer, Charles Warren Stoddard, to write a travel guide for their passengers. The works of these professional travel writers evoked the leisurely peregrinations of the upper classes: *The Island of Tranquil Delights* (1904) and *Hawaiian Life: Being Lazy Letters from Low Latitudes* (1894) are two titles from Stoddard; Stevenson's *In the South Seas* (1900) was serialised in the New York *Sun* in 1891 as 'Life Under the Equator: Letters from a Leisurely Traveller'; the Earl of Pembroke, who actually was an aristocrat, wrote *South Sea Bubbles* in 1872, and this was the working title of Stoddard's *South Sea Idyls* (1873)[14] until Pembroke's book was published. By an odd coincidence, Stoddard and Pembroke were both spectators at the same Fête Napoléon in Tahiti in August 1870, one that was featured in both their books, although they did not meet.[15] Stoddard's *South Sea Idyls* was published in England as *Summer Cruising in the South Seas* (1873), the name being changed when Chatto and Windus 'disdainfully declared that [they] would never bring out the book under a title so ill-chosen, - one that might suggest verses!'[16] Along with the burgeoning interest in 'cruising' the Pacific that was beginning to supplant the more purposeful 'voyages' of exploration, commerce and science, came the reemergence of Balboa's original name of the South Seas; although the name 'South Seas' was virtually obsolete in scholarly work by 1850, its vague evocation of a soft, balmy warmth was more popular in romantic literature than the more precise 'Pacific Ocean'.[17]

Figure 3. Charles Warren Stoddard.

Stoddard is virtually a forgotten literary figure today, but in his time he was a respected authority on the Pacific: Stevenson described him in *In the South Seas*, along with Melville, as 'one of the two writers who have touched the South Seas with any genius'.[18] Stoddard was at the centre of a 'community' of writers and artists with interests in the Pacific: he was friendly with Mark Twain, who had published a series of travel letters

from Hawaii in 1866, and knew Jack London before London set off on his cruise in the *Snark*; but it is primarily for introducing Stevenson to Melville's writing that Stoddard is remembered today. This happened during Stevenson's trip to the west coast of America to marry Fanny Osbourne in 1879, and is described in Stevenson's novel *The Wrecker* (1892), when Loudon Dodd meets a 'youngish, good-looking fellow, prematurely bald, and with an expression both lively and engaging', the image of Stoddard (figure 3), and leaves his studio '(a happy man) with "Omoo" under one arm, and my friend's own adventures under the other.'[19] Stoddard confirmed Stevenson's portrait of 'that den of mine he pictures in "The Wreckers" [*sic*]', saying that as Stevenson looked round Stoddard's Monterey home, 'almost his first words were: "What a background for a novel!"' - although Stoddard remembered the first meeting taking place in the house of Stevenson's future stepson-in-law, the artist Joe Strong.[20] Stoddard never met Stevenson again, although he remained friendly with Joe and Belle Strong in Hawaii, and the two authors continued to write to each other. Stevenson once referred to an unnamed correspondent who had described Hawaii to him as those 'lovely but *fatil* islands':[21] this so precisely captures the style and the spelling of the slightly dyslexic Stoddard, that he is almost certain to have been the writer.

Stoddard's *A Trip to Hawaii* (1885), the travel guide for the Oceanic Steamship Company, begins with the arrival of 'seven semi-invalids ... in search of life and liberty in a new land', and encapsulates the American writer's style - indeed, much of *A Trip to Hawaii* is taken directly from some of his earlier exotic romances. 'The sea rises in long voluptuous waves and fawns upon the reef, while within the surf the tranquil water is like a tideless river, where only water lilies are lacking; but in their stead, are troops of

Hawaiian swimmers - veritable water nymphs - with a profusion of glossy locks floating about their shoulders...'[22] One of the few recent critical works on Stoddard has described his style as 'spellbinding ... His sentences regularly have a fine rhythm, and some are as scannable as Washington Irving's'.[23] Modern readers are, however, likely to find his style rather precious. The surf always fawns and whispers on the reef in Stoddard's writing, it never thunders, and here he creates a European arrival scene which gestures towards the arrival of Melville's Tommo at Nukuhiva. But Stoddard is writing in a different register to Melville and the early romantic writing on the Pacific. When the 'swimming nymphs' board Tommo's *Dolly*, they inject youth, sexual energy and an attractive, if animalised, disorder into the decaying ship: 'There they hung, sparkling with savage vivacity, laughing gaily at one another, and chattering away with infinite glee.'[24] For Stoddard's arrival, the nymphs are packaged and 'sanitised', the swimmers parading in front of the tourists like a chorus-line; the welcome itself is contained within the protecting circle of the reef, and the scene has none of the energy of the *Dolly*; the sea, 'like a tideless river', becomes a pond as nature is completely controlled by the eye of the European observer. The single most important influence on Stoddard's way of seeing the Pacific is not Melville, bu the poetry of Tennyson. The debilitating luxury of a 'lotus-land' where 'all things always seem'd the same'[25] defines Stoddard's vision of the Pacific, Stoddard using 'It may be we shall touch the happy isles' as the epigraph for *Summer Cruising*. The dream of escaping civilisation in 'Locksley Hall', to the 'Summer Isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea', where the narrator famously and briefly imagines taking 'some savage woman' who will rear his 'dusky race' links both Melville and Stoddard.[26]

The 'fatil' attraction of the islands to one tired of civilisation provides Stoddard with his main theme, and a repackaged captivity narrative his favoured structure. 'Chumming with a Savage', in *Summer Cruising*, tells essentially the same story as half the tales in the book, and it consciously echoes Melville's *Typee*; once again however, the physical threat that is part of Melville's ambivalent response to Polynesia, is missing. The innocent narrator wanders with a European companion, an unnamed Doctor, through the harsh mountain scenery until they come upon 'a glorious valley, inhabited by a mild, half-civilized people, who seemed to love me at first sight. I don't believe I disliked them either. Well! they asked me to stop and I felt just like it.' There he is befriended by a beautiful native boy, Kana-ana, whose 'smile ... was of the nature that flatters you into submission against your will.' The narrator explains to his European companion that '"There was a dear fellow here ... who loved me, and wanted me to live with him"', and the Doctor rides off 'in high dudgeon', leaving the narrator to pursue a life of sensual gratification in the happy valley. 'Again and again [Kana-ana] would come with a delicious banana to the bed where I was lying, and insist upon my gorging myself, when I had but barely recovered from a late orgie of fruit, flesh, or fowl. He would mesmerize me into a most refreshing sleep with a prolonged and pleasing manipulation.'[27] Kana-ana's banana is suggestive, but in 'Taboo - A Fete Day in Tahiti' the sexual symbolism is made comically obvious as the narrator holds 'In either hand ... a mango and a banana', choices between the male and female attractions of the islands. The mango 'seemed to my imagination, a small, flat head, covered with short, blond hair, profusely saturated with some sweet sort of ointment, that I had despaired of feasting on'. The banana, however, forms a 'repast of singularly appropriate mould, being about the size of a respectable mouth, and containing just enough mouthfuls to temporarily satisfy the

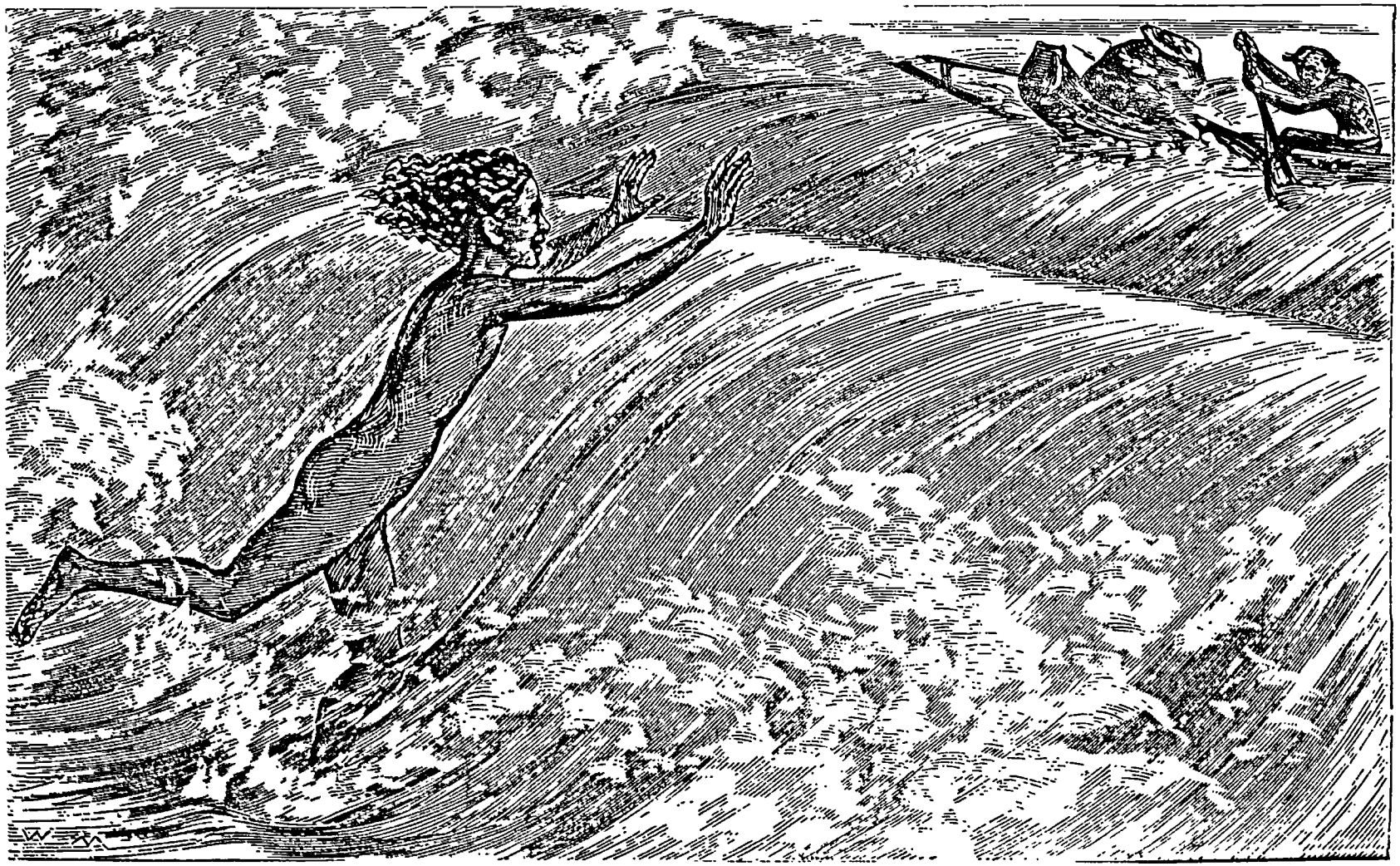

Figure 4. 'I knew if he overtook us, I should never be able to escape again.' Stoddard's escape from Kana-ana.

appetite.'[28]

As it is for Loti, John Stedman, John Smith, Inkle and Tommo, the affair with the native lover is also fleeting, having the 'freshness of an affection as brief and blissful as a honeymoon.'[29] Suddenly fearful of the degenerative effects of living in a society with no culture and no sense of history, for 'these natives do not even distinguish the memory of their great dead, if they ever had any',[30] the narrator abruptly leaves. Kana-ana swims, like a feminised Mow-Mow, after the narrator's rapidly disappearing figure, but 'I knew if he overtook us, I should never be able to escape again. We fairly flew over the water.' (figure 4)[31] Stoddard enlarges Tommo's fear of moral decay, making it the only threat posed by the valley to the European. Months later the narrator returns to the valley to find that the boy has pined and died for the love of the European. Variations on Stoddard's version of the captivity narrative include the story of being cast away on a small desert island with a large and muscular islander, and, bizarrely, an owl, in 'Pearl Hunting in the Pomotous' (figure 5); being swept out to sea with a young islander in 'A Canoe Cruise in the Coral Sea'; and being abducted by a large native: 'Was I not borne down the ravine by a young giant, sleek and supple as a bronzed Greek God, who held me captive in his Indian lodge till I surfeited on bread-fruits and plantain and cocoanut milk?. And then did we not part with a pang - one of those pangs that always leave a memory and a scar? And this happened not once, but often.'[32] Stoddard's fantasies move easily between particular images of the Pacific, Indian captivity narratives, fairy stories, and evocations of Greek beauty.

Stoddard always maintained that his stories were true, and in his diary of a visit to

Figure 5. 'The Pearl-Fisher'.

Molokai in 1884, made eleven years after *Summer Cruising* was published, he refers briefly to the factual basis of 'Chumming with a Savage': 'I hope we may make the circuit of the island for then I shall at least have a glimpse of that beloved vale - Halawa - where that sweetest idyl of my life - Kana-ana, occurred and whither I dare not return save only to glance into it or into the grave of the poetic and youthful past!'.[33] However, as Kana-ana wrote to Stoddard 'in English and such English' in 1884,[34] his death at least was fantasy, and his 'command' of English questions the degree to which he ever was an 'unspoilt child of nature': the very fact that the letter was written at all hints, perhaps, that the relationship was commercial. In the article 'Un Loti américain' for *Révue des Deux Mondes*, translated into English and republished after Stoddard's death in *The Ave Maria*, Therese Blanc recalled pressing Stoddard 'to discover what parts of the "Idyls" were autobiographical; and I was led to believe that he had added nothing, or hardly anything, to his youthful reminiscences...' Stoddard told her, accurately, that he had made five cruises to the South Seas, but less honestly, on '"the last time I paid a visit to Rarahu. I found her", he added in a tone of tender discretion, "I found her a little faded."'[35] Rarahu, as Pierre Loti admitted, was a composite figure who never actually existed, but Stoddard was only one of many to claim to have met her.[36] Although some travellers were probably persuaded by the Tahitians that they had seen Rarahu, Stoddard only visited Tahiti once, and that was in 1870, two years before Loti even arrived at Papeete - had she existed, Rarahu would then have been eleven or twelve.

Stoddard is engaging with the 'difference' of Polynesian sexuality. He is the only nineteenth century writer to make obvious the homosexual attractions of the islands, writing predominantly, it would appear, for a West coast audience: in a letter to Walt

Whitman, he declared that, 'For the first time I act as my nature prompts me. It would not answer in America, as a general principle, - not even in California, where men are tolerably bold.'[37] But this 'freedom', this 'difference', is being narrated through the same old imperial tropes. The death of the native lovers, like the death of Rarahu, is a fantasy on Stoddard's part. He confirms the the decay of Rarahu because it corroborates the deaths of his natives, turning an 'affinity' into pity, and permitting love without responsibility. Whereas Melville's Tommo finally sees Typee homosexuality as an expression of their individual cultural identity, and of the vulnerability of the outsider to it, Stoddard sees Polynesian homosexuality as both 'fun', and as a 'celebration' of the power of Europe; and he gains, like Loti, an increased pleasure from the prospect of the Polynesians' imminent demise. He tells Therese Blanc in his interview: 'They are not for long, anyway, the poor people! When you stroll about on one of those nights too fine to permit of slumber, you hear threatening coughs from the cabins you pass, and seem to be walking over graves half dug!'[38]

Stevenson sees the death of the Marquesans, as had Melville and Stoddard, in the wider context of the 'inevitable' extinction of all native peoples: 'Conceive how the remnant [of the Marquesans] huddles about the embers of the fire of life; even as old Red Indians, deserted on the march and in the snow, the kindly tribe all gone, the last flame expiring, and the night around populous with wolves.'[39] The image was particularly appropriate, for the same fifty years period covered in this thesis, from 1846 to 1894, saw the virtual extermination of the American Indians in a series of campaigns, and the removal of the survivors into ever diminishing reservations. The fire of savagery around which the cannibalistic Typees had danced, and which had illuminated the demonic shapes of the

Indians in Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*, had 'dimmed' within the climate of late nineteenth century imperial expansionism. Stevenson's language sentimentalises the death of the Marquesans, as well as that of the American Indians, seeing the flame of life gently running out of fuel: the biological decay of the natives makes them vulnerable to the hungry wolves of civilisation outside the camp, rather than being caused by the wolves.

The dying native standing as a metaphor for the dying 'race' was a widespread trope of empire, and one which had been associated with the Pacific since the European arrival in Tahiti, Diderot's Tahitian sage calling out after Bougainville's departing ship, 'tu as infecté notre sang' - 'you have infected our blood' in 1772.[40] The image of the dying 'race' naturalises Tommo's abandonment of Fayaway, Loti's of Rarahu, and Stoddard's of Kana-ana. The dominance of the trope reflected the speed and severity with which European diseases swept through Polynesia, and thus could be said to reflect a form of reality. But when Bougainville described the old Tahitian man, the forerunner of Diderot's cynical Savage Sage, who had a 'thoughtful and suspicious air [which] seemed to shew that he feared the arrival of a new race of men [who] would trouble those happy days which he had spent in peace',[41] Bougainville was bringing the expectation of a dying people with him. In Canada, where he had served on Montcalm's staff, Bougainville had pondered on the Indians who were 'brawny men, large and of good appearance' but who could not resist smallpox: 'The Indians fear nothing so much as this disease; in fact it treats them cruelly when they are attacked by it, either because of the lack of proper care, or because of a susceptibility of the blood.'[42] The very perfection of their physique marks them out as doomed: just as the smiling face of the savage hides

treachery, so the surface beauty of the 'race' hides an inner rot, and the trope cloaks the power structures of empire in the language of sentiment.

In the Pacific in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the trope carried particular and more disturbing meanings for Europe through the widespread publicity that had surrounded the Hawaiian 'leper'[43] colony on Molokai, and more particularly, its Catholic priest, Father Damien, who had contracted the disease from his parishioners, and died in 1889. When Stevenson refers in the Marquesan section of *In the South Seas* to lepers 'immured between the surf and the cliffs on Molokai', he could have been fairly certain that his audience recognised the reference. The leper colony on the peninsular of Kalawao on the north coast of Molokai became an icon of the diseased and dying Pacific, and its dead priest a hero of the humanitarian conscience of European imperialism: poems celebrating his heroism had been written as early as 1880 (figure 6).[44] Stoddard had visited the colony twice: once in 1868, before Damien arrived, and again in 1884, when he stayed with the priest. Stoddard was deeply impressed by Damien's heroism, working alone among the lepers, and *The Lepers of Molokai* (1884), which he wrote after the visit, was one of the earliest hagiographies of Damien. Stevenson visited the colony in 1889, just a few months after Damien's death, and Jack London followed his footsteps there twenty years later. The 'Lazaretto', as Stevenson described the tiny peninsular, became part of the tourist round of the Hawaiian islands. It still is, although the voyeuristic fascination with suffering and death which draws people to Molokai is slightly controlled nowadays by the tourists being forbidden to take photographs.

Leprosy, as Gavan Daws explains in *Holy Man* his biography of Father Damien, the

Figure 6. Father Damien, weeks before his death.

Catholic priest of Molokai:

> was the latest of the outside world's curses to be laid upon the islanders together with the blessings of civilization. No one, white or native, knew exactly how or exactly when it arrived. The first authenticated case was thought to date from

> about 1840; and the popular belief was that the disease was introduced from China, or at least was first recognized in the islands by Chinese - perhaps both. In any case, Hawaiians called leprosy *ma'i Pake*, Chinese disease.[45]

There were various forms of leprosy: the worst, 'lepromatous', which Damien caught, writes Daws:

> began with the emergence of the leprosy bacillus, now classified as *Mycobacterium leprae*, in the body in enormous numbers, and proceeded with the invasion and destruction of the skin and mucous tissue of the upper respiratory tract. It resulted in the destruction of facial features, impairment of body functions, bad nerve damage, and the loss of use of muscles. Untreated, the disease might leave its victim deformed, crippled, ulcerated, blinded, his senses devastated, his very ability to breathe threatened.[46]

Daws describes the disease as having been virtually eliminated from Europe by the nineteenth century.[47] Outside Europe, 'and especially in the tropics, the disease continued to be a widespread scourge: white men were simply not conscious of it. But, as the European imperialists of the nineteenth century continually expanded their dominion, it became only a matter of time before leprosy was brought once more within the white man's imperium.'[48] Leprosy was, it appeared at that time, a disease that infected more non-Europeans than Europeans, and medical opinion in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries held that leprosy was an hereditary and 'racial' disease: European commerce could and did spread the disease throughout empire, but it was seen as only threatening the native subjects. With Hansen's identification of the *bacillus leprae* in 1873, however, it was realised that the disease could pass easily between 'races'; indeed, as Gavan Daws points out, Damien's death 'was used as prime evidence of contagion at work.'[49] The difference of Molokai, as an icon of the diseased Pacific, was

that it posed an active threat to Europe, challenging its notions of 'race strength.'

At first, then, leprosy was seen simply as one more of the diseases that would destroy the Polynesians. When Charles Warren Stoddard first visited Molokai in 1868, he fictionalised the visit in what was, even for him, a singularly tasteless and unpleasant version of his standard captivity narrative, 'Joe of Lahaina'. In this story, when the narrator visits Molokai some months after his affair with the beautiful Joe, he is shocked to see peering out at him:

> a face I could not have recognized as anything friendly or human. Knots of flesh stood out upon it; scar upon scar disfigured it. The expression was like that of a mummy, stony and withered. The outlines of a youthful figure were preserved, but the hands and feet were pitiful to look at. What was this ogre that knew me and loved me still?[50]

The ogre is, of course, Joe. Mackay's 'before and after' illustrations (figures 7 and 8) bring out the boy's 'foolish' delight in his own beauty, the prison-like leper colony with Death hovering behind Joe's shoulder, and the voyeuristic 'pleasure' the narrator takes in the sight of the boy simply rotting away. The 'rot of civilisation' corrupting the innocent savages had been a part of the vocabulary of sentimental travel literature from the eighteenth century, but here it has a literal meaning. The trusting native is even now unable to make the association between the narrator and disease, and still adores the figure who has symbolically destroyed him. The language of sentiment packages the horror of disease, turning the human being into a leper, and the disease itself, in Stoddard's story, takes on the role played by the European executioner of Aphra Behn's Noble Slave, Oroonoko, who, 'with an ill-favoured knife', castrates him, then cuts off 'his ears, and

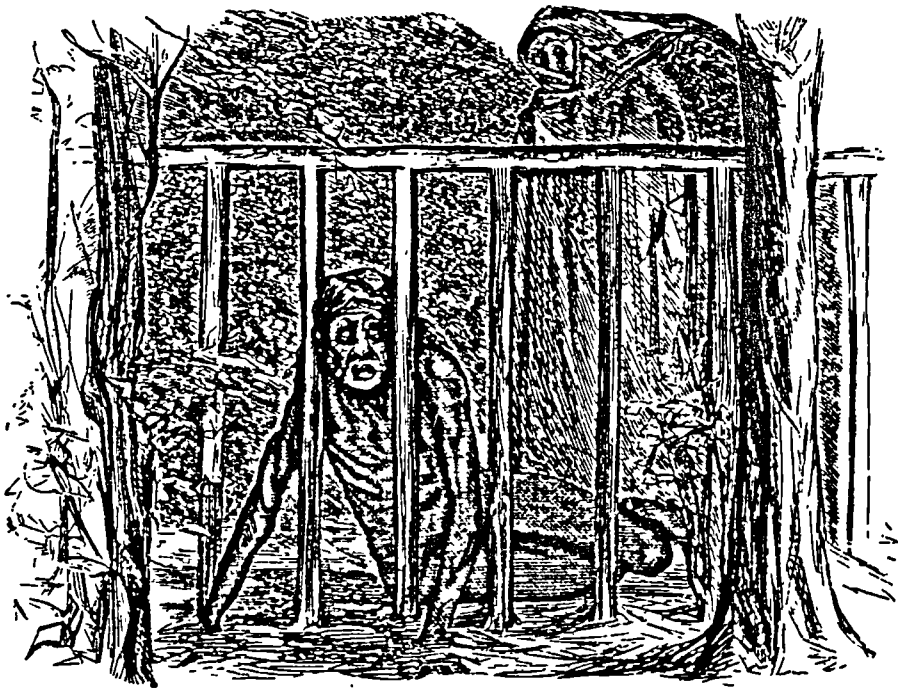

Figure 3 (top). 'Joe was dressed in his best, and quite wild at the entrancing loveliness of the night.' Figure 4 (bottom). 'Joe of Lahaina'.

his nose', finally dismembering him completely.[51] Joe's uncomplaining decay, like Oroonoko's stoicism, highlights the greater sensitivity of the European, who feels the pain even more than the sufferer, and absolves him from blame for the issues of slavery or incarceration, as the sympathetic individual can only look on in horror at the disintegrating native body. The structure of the image is reminiscent of Gauguin's painting, *Manua tupapau*, where Tehura is caught helplessly between the destructive gaze of the European and her racial fate, and this surfaces in Stevenson's first impressions of Molokai: 'Here, then, is a prison fortified by nature, a place where thousands may be quartered and a pair of sentinels suffice to watch and hold the only issues'.[52] Nature and civilisation combine to imprison the diseased people in this imperial trope of the helpless 'race' caught between an inner rot and an external power, and Stoddard's sentimental language is echoed in a verse of the short poem that Stevenson wrote on the day he arrived in Molokai:

> To see the infinite pity of this place,
> The mangled limbs, the devastated face,
> The innocent sufferers smiling at the rod,
> A fool were tempted to deny his God.[53]

The shock of seeing leprosy is assimilated through the trope: he sees the lepers much as he sees the Marquesans dying uncomplainingly; he copes with the suffering by turning it into a familiar spectacle of innocence destroyed.

On Stoddard's fictional visit to Molokai the narrator is able to note complacently: 'the admirable system adopted by the Hawaiian government for the protection of its people'. The community lives in harmony: 'They were not unhappy. I used to hear them singing every evening: their souls were singing while their bodies were falling rapidly to dust.'[54]

In Stevenson's letters to the *Sun*, however, a far more critical picture is painted of these early years, showing the bitterness, arguments and corruption that accompanied the establishment of the colony.

> The lepers, cast out from society and progressively deprived of employment, swiftly de-civilized. *"Aole kanawai ma keia wahi!"* - "There is no law in this place" - was their word of salutation to newcomers; cards, dancing, and debauch were the diversions; the women served as prostitutes, the children as drudges; the dying were callously uncared for; heathenism revived; okolehao was brewed, and in their orgies the disfigured sick ran naked by the sea.[55]

The breakdown of a moral order, with cards, dancing and debauchery, is dramatised as a reversion to savagery, a de-civilization, and it refers specifically to pre-Damien Molokai. By the time of Stevenson's visit in 1889, 'Horror, sorrow, all idea of resistance, all bitterness of regret, have passed from the spirits of these sufferers, and the sick colony smiles upon its bed of death.'[56] The trope of dying innocence still structures the traveller's knowing gaze, but it has been assimilated into an argument for colonisation: the lepers can only be sentimentalised once order has been imposed, once difference has been established through the knowledge that, beneath the 'smiling faces', they are all savages. In Stevenson's letter defending the posthumous reputation of Damien, he claims a greater knowledge of the island than that of Puritan clergyman who had attacked Damien: 'I think ... you have never visited the scene of Damien's life and death. If you had, and had recalled it, and looked about your pleasant rooms, even your pen perhaps would have been stayed.'[57] But Stevenson's autoptic observations of an ordered Molokai are questionable at least: Stoddard records in his diary, five years earlier, the oppression and mistreatment of the lepers by the European helpers and doctors, coming upon 'the energetic doctor spanking one of the larger wretches with a shingle.'[58]

Stoddard made his second visit to Molokai in 1884, by which time it was being realised that leprosy was a contagious disease, and his diary shows that he was not as confident in his racial immunity as he had been on his previous visit. Stoddard marvelled at his own bravery in visiting the island and shaking hands with lepers, and he recorded his breathless excitement at attending a mass at which 'all save the priest and I were lepers.'[59] Ironically, Damien had already caught the disease by this time. The question of physical contact with the lepers had exercised Stevenson before his visit: in a letter to Fanny (who did not accompany him to Molokai) he wrote that 'Every hand was offered: I had gloves, but I had made up my mind on the boat's voyage *not* to give my hand; that seemed less offensive than the gloves.'[60] Stevenson can hardly be blamed for this decision. Simply going to Molokai was a brave thing to do, for he appeared to be extraordinarily susceptible to infection. But not to give the hand was probably the worst insult he could offer the lepers, who as Gavan Daws records, separated from friends and family, craved the reassurance of physical contact. 'For reasons totally incomprehensible to the *haole* [foreigner], Hawaiians were not totally repelled by the disease', writes Daws, 'The touch of the leprous hand did not altogether appal them. They were not as a people, prepared to turn the leprosy sufferer into a "leper" of the Old Testament sort.[61]

Isolation was the only medical treatment for leprosy available in the nineteenth century, but it was a treatment that was imaginatively rooted in the Mosaic laws of the Old Testament which shamed the 'unclean' and drove them from the doors of the community: 'The person with such an infectious disease must wear torn clothes, let his hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of his face and cry out, "Unclean! Unclean!" As long as he has the infection he remains unclean. He must live alone; he must live outside the

camp.'[62] The Old Testament stigmatisation of lepers was, however, at variance with the New Testament ethos of love and forgiveness, personified by Jesus moving among, touching and healing the diseased. The creation of the leper colony on Molokai was publicly defended by the Evangelical Association of Hawaii as Biblical law,[63] but the figure of Father Damien, who was held to follow Christ's example, had by 1873 helped to make isolation a religious issue. It was to this long-standing debate that Stevenson connected when he penned his attack on Protestant attitudes to leprosy in *Father Damien: An Open Letter to the Reverend Dr. Hyde* (1890): 'To that prosperous [Puritan] mission, and to you [Dr. Hyde], as one of its adornments, God had sent at last an opportunity ... I know that others of your colleagues look back on the inertia of your Church, and the intrusive and decisive heroism of Damien, with something almost to be called remorse.'[64] In *Falesá* there is a similar contrast between the Catholic missionary who becomes a part of his flock, and the Protestant missionary who remains outside, delegating his authority to a native preacher. The danger with the Catholic approach, as Stevenson saw it in *Falesá*, was that the priest was likely to 'go native'; the problem with the Protestant missionary, Tarleton's, approach was that the native preacher would be vulnerable to the influences of bad Europeans on the beach. Although Stevenson sees the different approaches firmly within the context of a debate on colonial rule in the novel, his description of the Catholic/Protestant divide over Molokai is reductive, ignoring the fact that the Protestants had maintained a presence in the colony from the beginning, and that no other Catholic priests were anxious to follow Christ's or Damien's examples.[65]

For Stevenson, the Father Damien affair had always raised more important issues than leprosy. His public letter was a deliberate libel on Hyde, but, 'inspired by the

consideration of interests more large', Stevenson was prepared to run the risk of financial ruin in order to expose what he saw as imperialist implications.[66] The Protestant missionaries were products of the separatist Puritan American tradition of the 'City on the Hill'. As I discussed in the chapter on Melville, Puritan notions of communal identity were structured around oppositions, dividing garden from wilderness, Christian from Pagan, good from evil, civiliser from savage, and these notions were ever antithetical to the evangelising spirit, drawing the individuals within the hedge surrounding the Puritan community rather than encouraging them to go out into the wilderness to convert the savages. When the Protestant community originally advocated isolation, Stevenson argues, they meant just that: the lepers should be left on the island without medical attention, and, as he shows in his travel letters, they were expected to be entirely self-supporting. There were elements of the European community who argued that by segregating the diseased Hawaiians, the European community was thoughtfully allowing them to live out the last years of their own racial destiny in a protected traditional culture.[67] Stevenson was not against isolation as a medical treatment, writing in one of his last letters on the Hawaiian islands that he wished he could introduce it 'with a like severity' on 'every isle of the Pacific.'[68] But in his letter to Dr. Hyde, he argued that the isolation policy was also a part of the Protestant inclination to distance itself from all aspects of native culture, and that the Catholic policy was a model for enlightened colonial relations.

Leprosy was a metaphor for the contagion of the 'race' in the eyes of the Protestant community,[69] and it carried 'disturbing' racial and sexual overtones in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Dr. Hyde had described Damien as 'a coarse, dirty man,

headstrong and bigoted.' He was, Hyde continued, 'not a pure man in his relations with women, and the leprosy of which he died should be attributed to his vices and carelessness.'[70] On his 1884 visit to Molokai, Charles Warren Stoddard noted in his diary that 'I was not on the whole impressed with Dr. F's [Fitch's] treatment of the people, and am now more ready to look upon him as a possibly misguided and superficial theorist, and believe that he has not yet begun to establish his theory that leprosy is a fourth stage of syphilis.'[71] It is to this theory that Hyde refers, and with which Stevenson also connects in one of his letters for the New York *Sun*: 'Nothing is less proved than this peril to ourselves; yet it is possible. To our own syphilis we are inured, but the syphilis of eastern Asia slays us; and a new variety of leprosy, cultivated in the virgin soil of Polynesian races, might prove more fatal than we dream'. Leprosy, Stevenson concludes in his Hawaiian letters, 'may well strike terror in the minds even of the distant and unconcerned.'[72]

The morbid fascination of Molokai to the European imaginations was not that it simply reiterated the sentimental commonplace of the virgin corrupted, but that it suggested that Polynesia's purity was deceptive: Polynesia could, in Stevenson's sexual metaphor, hold, grow, and transfer the seed to the coloniser, passing the infection through the bloodstream of empire. Polynesia's reputation for sexual welcome could turn into a sexualised threat, betraying the coloniser's trust in the special relationship, and threatening the 'racial strength' of the European. Linking leprosy with syphilis was always more a reflection of 'folk racism' than of sound medical opinion, an illogical swerve rather than a theory, and Daws shows that the syphilis theory 'had next to no support ... in the medical profession itself' but that the idea carried a form of moral persuasiveness for 'good Christians'.[73]

When Stevenson writes that leprosy may well 'strike terror in the minds even of the distant and unconcerned' he is himself sensationalising the disease, and helping to generate a racial distance between coloniser and colonised. What is also interesting about the Protestant shrinking from the diseased Hawaiians is that the illogical swerve fed into and anticipated the blood-based theories of racial degeneration that would gain widespread currency during the early twentieth century.

Damien's sexual 'misconduct' is defended by Stevenson on two grounds: firstly that Hyde cheapened himself by repeating and circulating the unsubstantiated story: '"if the story were a thousand times true, can't you see you are a million times a lower ___ for daring to repeat it?"'.[74] Secondly, Stevenson argues that in the unlikely event of the story being true, then so what? '[H]e who was so much a better man than either you or me, who did what we have never dreamed of daring - he too tasted of our common frailty.'[75] Damien's heroism was the greater because of his failings, because he was indeed coarse, dirty, headstrong and bigoted. Damien, like Stevenson's fictional heroes, Herrick and Wiltshire in *The Ebb-Tide* and *The Beach of Falesá*, is an ordinary man, unaware of his capacity for heroism. The significance of leprosy to Stevenson lies in its menace to Europe, and through evoking the terror that may strike back from the margins to the heart of civilisation, turning leprosy from disease to racial threat, Stevenson enlarges the heroism of Damien. Damien has an imperial stature because he is able to suppress his fears of contamination, to understand his community, to speak for the inarticulate, to civilise and care for the natives even as they are dying, even as they are surely killing him. The image of Damien as a benevolent imperial figure who fights the prejudices of the Puritan community, depends on Stevenson's employment of the imperial tropes which

create the natives as weak, silent, and deserving of pity on the one hand, and savage and dangerous on the other.

Nowhere in his Pacific novels and short stories does Stevenson make disease the one inescapable fact of Polynesia that it is in *In the South Seas*; nevertheless, disease is present in all of them. But in the decaying figure of Captain Randall in *Falesá*, whose 'body was covered with grey hair and crawled over by flies', Stevenson transfers the image of the dying islands onto the coloniser.[76] Partly, Randall is the rot in paradise, the unacceptable face of a disordered civilisation, which is a familiar enough trope of imperial literature, and one which gathered strength during the increasingly formalised empire of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Like the 'white pirates' in Ballantyne's *The Coral Island*, Conrad's Kurtz, or the renegade European traders in John Buchan's *Prester John* (1910) and Edgar Wallace's *Sanders of the River* (1910), Randall personifies a disease that is destroying itself as well as corrupting the naive natives. Randall accidentally blows his own hand off, and is disintegrating like a leper; his house is on the fringes of the village, closer to a brutal and destructive nature, but also isolated from the community: in *Falesá*, order exists within the native community, and it is the Europeans who are the 'unclean' outcasts who revert to savagery.

'Throughout the island world of the Pacific, scattered men of many European races and from almost every grade of society carry activity and disseminate disease', begins *The Ebb-Tide*, and images of disease recur through the narrative.[77] The three dissolute beachcombers, Herrick, Huish and Davis, are offered the job of sailing the *Farallone* after her European captain and mate have died from smallpox. Herrick is told by Taveeta, one

of the crew of the *Farallone*, how Wiseman and Wishart - Europeans with neither wisdom nor heart - had landed on a well populated Polynesian island, but one that was 'mighty serious' and from which Taveeta could hear the sounds of lamentation. '"I no savvy *talk* that island," said he. "I savvy here um *cly*. I think, Hum! too many people die here." But upon Wiseman and Wishart the significance of that barbaric keening was lost.'[78] Disease strikes European and Polynesian indiscriminately, and the European who does not listen to the islanders, nor treat them as human beings, will not survive.

Herrick's process of redemption begins when he starts to listen to the 'Kanaka' crew of the *Farallone*, when he allows himself to be touched by them, and when he chooses their company instead of that of his two drunken colleagues. Again, the Europeans become the diseased outcasts who threaten to destroy the ship, and the Kanakas become Herrick's means of survival. But Stevenson's creative use of disease in the early sections of *The Ebb-Tide*, serves ultimately to reinforce the 'superiority' of the Europeans: '[the Kanakas] were kindly, cheery, childish souls', and the fact that Herrick 'was held in grateful favour by these innocents served like blinders to his conscience.'[79] Herrick's intimacy with the Kanakas stops abruptly: they simply disappear from the narrative once the *Farallone* reaches Attwater's pearl island. On the island, all but Attwater and two of the native workers have been killed by disease, and the more complex power plays between Herrick, Attwater, Huish and Davis begin. The relationship between Herrick and the Kanakas could go no further: because the Kanakas are depicted essentially as wise children, they cannot play a more meaningful role in Herrick's moral growth. The ship is the familiar marginal space to which the exploration of 'interracial' relationships is restricted, and the Kanakas are killed-off by the growing complexity of the narrative, just as imperial wisdom

holds that natives are too simple to survive in a more advanced civilisation.

The invisible wizards in *The Isle of Voices* are metaphors for a materialistic and rotten imperialism that both plunders Polynesia and strikes down the islanders like a virus: 'the man-eaters huddled back to back and heaved up their axes and laid on, and screamed as they laid on, and behold! no man to contend with them!'[80] Keola, the hero of the story, is caught between his fear of the 'man-eaters', the Paumotan islanders who are protecting him, but who are also intending to eat him, and the wizards who will destroy him; and his predicament allegorises the trope of Polynesia caught between the destructive forces of 'progress' and an equally destructive 'tradition'. The islanders are both literally and metaphorically blind to the danger of colonisation. But they at least fight. Stevenson does not have the islanders staring pathetically at their fate as he did in the Marquesas and Molokai, and he uses disease as a metaphor for imperial power fighting to establish its authority through destroying tradition.

Stevenson predominantly uses disease in his fiction as a metaphor for power: the diseased Polynesian island striking back at the two European sailors in *The Ebb-Tide*, the decaying power of Randall in *Falesá*, and the imperial plunderers on The Isle of Voices. Whilst on Molokai and in the Marquesas Stevenson was to see disease restating the different racial destinies of a strong Europe and a dying Polynesia, during his travels he became fascinated with his experiences of Polynesian power. In many Pacific societies, as Frances Glass has argued in the context of Papua New Guinean societies, '... a code of ethics certainly operates but survival and the power which guarantees it are of prime value, and override, and even make irrelevant, the question of whether power is exercised

for good or evil purposes.'[81] Unadorned personal, communal and state power was celebrated in many Pacific societies. In Europe, power is ceremonialised by the establishment and is shown to be deployed in support of moral qualities: René Girard has described in *Violence and the Sacred* how the 'primitive' desire for revenge is transformed within the European legal system: 'Retribution in its judicial guise loses its terrible urgency. Its meaning remains the same, but this meaning becomes increasingly indistinct or even fades from view.'[82] Stevenson's experiences in the Gilbert Islands gave him fresh insights into power - Polynesian and European - and the results can be seen outside his Pacific fiction. In *Catriona* (1893), the sequel to *Kidnapped* written in Samoa, the court that hangs the innocent James Stewart, 'had the externals of a sober process of law, [but] was in essence a clan battle between savage clans.'[83] The real danger in *Catriona* and in Stevenson's unfinished novel, *Weir of Hermiston*, comes from the colonised Highlanders Prestongrange and Weir, whose barbarity is incorporated into the judicial system. But Stevenson also responded tropologically to native power, and here I am interested in the pressure between 'new' knowledge which opened up new ways of seeing for Stevenson, and a tropological knowledge which directed it into predictable areas.

The question of power dominates the Gilberts section of *In the South Seas*. These chapters consist of an extended examination of two individuals: the ineffective King Tebureimoa of Butaritari, and the strong King Tembinok' of Apemama. Tebureimoa, who resembles the decaying Captain Randall in *Falesá*, is disliked by Stevenson who portrays him in 'oriental' terms as a cruel and dissolute 'rajah' who 'seemed always drowsy, yet always to hearken and start; and, whether from remorse or fear, there is no doubt he seeks a refuge in the abuse of drugs.'[84] Effective power has slipped away from

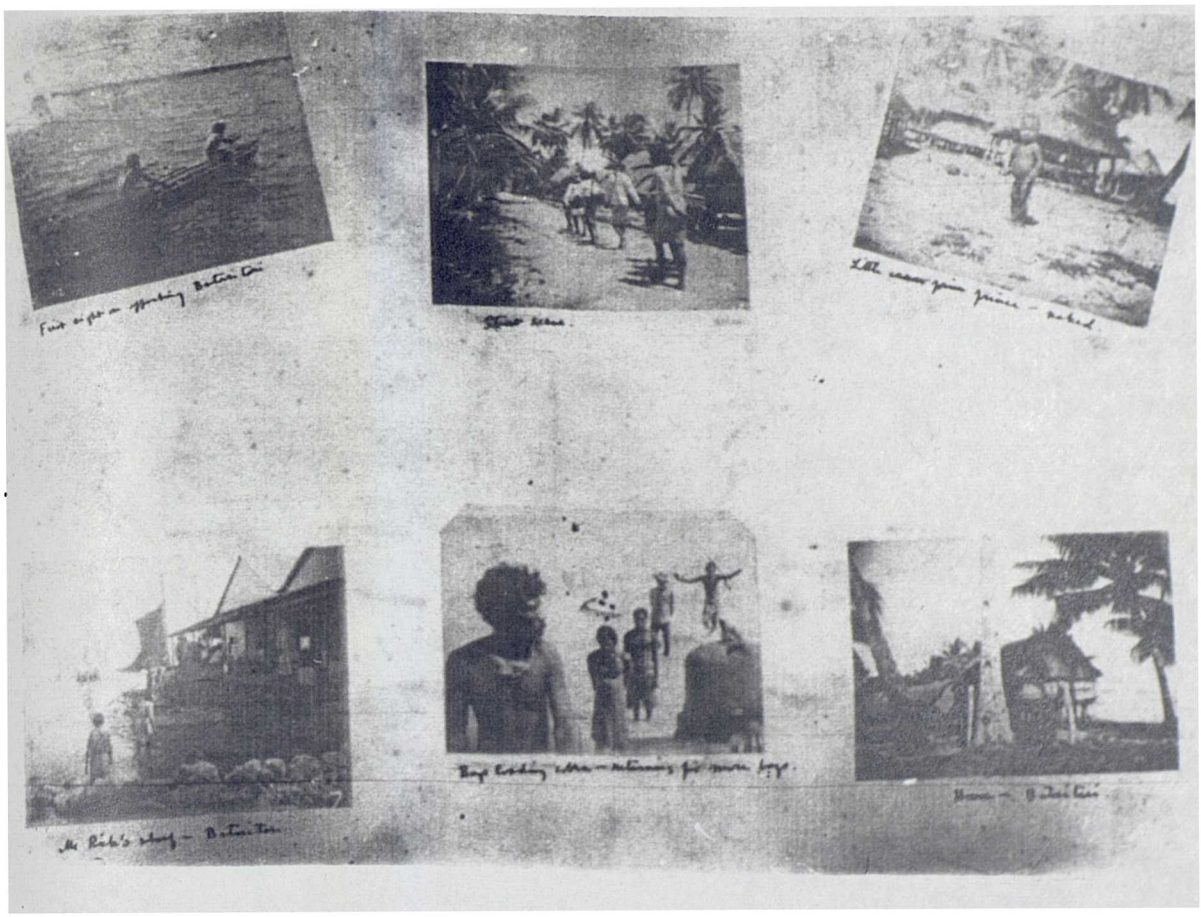

Figure 9. Selection of photographs of Butaritari from Stevenson's album. Adolf Rick's house is in the bottom left.

Tebureimoa and into the hands of his chiefs. In a letter to Adolf Rick, the U.S. Commercial Agent on Butaritari, which was intended to be passed on to the American government in Washington, Stevenson described the disorder on the island: 'shotted pi to s were recklessly fired and stones thrown, and ... natives both men and women fought, bit and inflicted upon each other considerable injuries. On this occasion I have seen all the white residents, and on one occasion the native crown prince himself, greatly alarmed and making no concealment of their fear.' Stevenson is supported by the testimony of Captain Maxwell of H.M.S. *Emerald*, who had reported eight years earlier that 'this was far the most drunken island in the group - indeed no other is anything like it.' Like Stevenson, Maxwell placed the blame for the debauchery on the weakness of Tebureimoa who has

'occasionally tried to stop it by tabooing drink, and by telling traders not to land; but he has no power with either traders or people to prevent it, and he drinks himself.'[85] The importance of the office of king, wrote Stevenson of Tebureimoa, in *In the South Seas*, 'is measured by the man; he may be nobody, he may be absolute; and both extremes have been exemplified within the memory of residents.'[86] Stevenson sees the islanders, like their monarch, in terms of extremes: they are either savage or servile. The continuing persuasiveness of this trope was shown a few years ago in Tony Greig's infamous description of the West Indies cricket team as either arrogant bullies or grovellers. Stevenson is dismissive of Tebureimoa, whose weakness allows their savagery full rein. The brutal rule of his ancestor, Nakaeia, however, had once controlled the subjects: 'Deeds that smell to us of murder wore to [Nakaeia's] subjects the reverend face of justice.'[87]

There are echoes of 'deeds that smell to us of murder' in *The Ebb-Tide* when Attwater recounts the story of the two natives, who he also sees as the two 'types of natives', Obsequiousness and Sullens, one of whom is wrongfully accused of a crime and hangs himself, and Obsequiousness, the real culprit, whom Attwater executes without trial.[88] Although a shocked Herrick accuses him of murder and hypocrisy, Attwater's brutal 'justice' is shown to work in the little colony. As I will discuss shortly, Attwater is far from being an unproblematic character, and we are supposed to mirror Herrick's shock; but, also like Herrick, we are drawn towards Attwater's moral certainty and strength of purpose. The bullying natives respect power, and the servile ones positively invite it: what would be considered brutality in Middlesex - to repeat Stevenson's analogy - is shown to be the only effective way to rule in the colonies.

It was on Apemama, however, that Stevenson engaged in a detailed exploration of the personality of a strong ruler. Stevenson had few dealings with Tebureimoa and hardly got to know him at all personally, moving predominantly in a circle that included the European traders and the Hawaiian missionaries. King Tembinok' of Apemama, however, kept power firmly within his own hands, and with one exception Stevenson and his family were the only Europeans on the island, and got to know Tembinok' well over the two months they were there. Stevenson suggests that the king's decision to allow the party to stay was a special privilege given to the writer. After first meeting Tembinok, and awaiting his decision, 'the second day had come to its maturity before I was informed abruptly that I had stood the ordeal. "I look your eye. You good man. You no lie," said the king: a doubtful compliment to a writer of romance.'[89] The savage sage recognises integrity instinctively, and one more special relationship between a native monarch and Stevenson begins. Stevenson 'collected' several royals on his travels in the South Seas - Queen Vaekehu in the Marquesas, Mataafa in Samoa, David Kalakaua in Hawaii, and Princess Moe in Tahiti - but on Apemama the trope forms a central part of Stevenson's privileged relationship with, and understanding of, Gilbertese society.

Stevenson mentions in passing the only other European on Apemama, 'a silent, sober, solitary, niggardly recluse, of whom the king remarks, "I think he good; he no 'peak."'. Stevenson does not link his own arrival with this powerless individual living 'far from court, and hearkening and watching his conduct like a mouse in a cat's ear', and Stevenson does not even bother to name him.[90] Fanny Stevenson calls him 'Johnny, an inoffensive, dying "poor white," who lives some miles from the village', in her diary.[91] The man was George McGhee Murdoch, an astute trader who eventually became Deputy

Commissioner for the Western Pacific, and he could never really understand Stevenson's hostility towards him, as Murdoch's successor, Arthur Grimble, recalls in *A Pattern of Islands*:

> I never could get George to say much about R.L.S.'s stay on Abemama in 1889. There must have been some deep misunderstanding between the two men. The great and gentle romancer never knew that, but for the intercession of his masterful little fellow Scot, Tem Binoka would have refused to allow the party from the *Equator* to settle ashore.[92]

Murdoch's version is not in itself any more reliable than Stevenson's, and both men are claiming, or having claimed for them, the greater personal knowledge of the king. Grimble suggests that Stevenson's 'sentimental conjecture' about Tembinok' could have been exploded by Murdoch, but to do so, 'George would have had to reveal something of the real nature of his unspeakable employer, and he was too loyal for that.'[93] It is probable that Stevenson ignored Murdoch because having another European on the island not only made his relationship with Tembinok' less unique, but also because he wanted his stay on Apemama to be a pioneering adventure among the savages, seeing one of the last remaining bastions of Polynesian culture: 'Hence the attraction of our enterprise; not merely because it was a little difficult, but because this social quarantine, a curiosity in itself, has been the preservative of others.'[94] The attractions of Apemama to Stevenson are firstly that it is a forbidden place like Molokai, and secondly that his relationship with Tembinok' is privileged: his is to be the only autoptic eye, and one with an unquestioned authority. Murdoch's presence has to be diminished because it effectively questions these assumptions.

Tembinok' built a small village for Stevenson's party, and tabooed the area around it. Tembinok's subjects were not encouraged to speak to the Europeans in any case, in fact Tembinok' considered speaking itself a subversive activity, his definition of a good man being one who 'no 'peak'. Stevenson's family were further alienated from the people when they demanded exclusive use of the fresh water supply near their camp, and how far their isolation was Tembinok's decision or Stevenson's choice is hard to establish. Stevenson was certainly quick to rebuff the advances of what he saw as an unsavoury Europeanised islander, Tamaiti, who had tried to hustle him for gin. Stevenson here uses his special relationship with the king to turn Tamaiti away, saying that he would have to ask Tembinok's approval first: Tamaiti was 'immediately overwhelmed with embarrassment and terror, besought me in the most moving terms not to betray him, and fled my neighbourhood.'[95] Stevenson is understandably anxious to look after his supplies, and honestly records his discomfort at the persistent beggar, but he takes a pleasure in terrifying the man. Like Tembinok', he enjoys playing the bully when he is given the opportunity, and his responses to the Gilbertese are a complex mixture of admiration - for their dancing and singing, for example, which 'they rolled out ... in the great Speak House - solemn andantes and adagios, led by the clapped hands, and delivered with an energy that shook the roof' - and a racialised contempt and fear.[96] It is significant that his thoughts lean towards slavery on Apemama when describing the relationship of the islanders to their monarch: 'The slaves are certainly not overworked'; Tembinok' is 'scrupulous of touching in the least degree the private life and habits of his slaves', and 'Orderly, sober, and innocent, life flows in the isle from day to day as in a model plantation under a model planter.'[97] The Gilbertese are much darker than the Polynesians of the middle and eastern Pacific, and although Stevenson does not draw a

direct analogy between colour and behaviour, his picture of Micronesian slaves is possibly influenced by their greater physical 'resemblance' to Africans. The powerfully expressive singing of the slaves is also part of the iconography of the plantation, like the dying islanders on Molokai, the slaves smile through their suffering, and Stevenson's admiration for the singing of the islanders is by no means incompatible with his discomfort at their servility.

When Stevenson left Apemama, he left the following testimonial for 'any Man of War calling' at the island:

> I have lived on [Tembinok's] island alone with my family for ~~three~~ two months: a circumstance which puts me in a better position to ~~judge~~ speak than any other white man. The kings [*sic*] rule is severe but very salutary. Drunkenness is prohibited, industry enforced, ~~Compared with From what I have seen of other islands in the group, with their drunken quarrels, shooting and stabbing frays, midnight murders~~ civility and honesty are the rule. Compared with other islands in the group, Apemama offers a remarkable example of stability and peace; and a foreign power which should do anything to diminish the prestige of the ruler, would incur a serious responsibility. I ~~must~~ should add that he is a man of quite remarkable intelligence, and highly capable of taking a hint, should one be needful.[98]

Stevenson partly works within the imperial tradition of the good and bad native kings - Umbopa and Twala in *King Solomon's Mines*, or Uncas and Magua in *The Last of the Mohicans* - and, speaking with the authority of the 'lone' eye witness, he compares the order on Apemama with the disorder on 'other islands in the group...' But it is also interesting to note that the tone of the letter is altered by the deletions: the didactic 'must add' becomes a more reasoned 'should add'; his first inclination to 'judge' the islanders is abandoned in favour of the more patriarchal wish to 'speak' for them. His first reaction

is to underline the horror - 'their drunken quarrels, shooting and stabbing frays, midnight murders' - but the fear is moderated by Stevenson, who develops a voice that is neither scared nor crudely judgemental. This is, of course, partly a matter of style, but the voice of the calm and authoritative European is serving to obscure a different response, one that is scared, is judgemental, and is illogically repulsed by the islanders.

As Arthur Grimble perceptively notes, Stevenson romanticises Tembinok'. Tembinok' guards his power jealously: he alone trades with the Europeans, he alone provides for his people, distributing his hoard of tobacco as he sees fit, and his law is legitimated by the rifle - with which he is a crack shot. He terrorises his people, holding their lives so cheap, as Grimble writes, 'that he would shoot them down from tree-tops for the amusement of seeing them fall sprawling'.[99] But Tembinok's thuggery is made into eccentricity by Stevenson: when their cook is about to be disciplined by five rifle shots fired around him, the king waits for the unfortunate wearing 'the woman's frock; as like as not, his make-up was completed by a pith helmet and blue spectacles.'[100]

Naked power justifies itself on Apemama, but Tembinok' is beginning to naturalise power by giving it a genealogy, recording his own grand narrative by writing 'from day to day the uneventful history of his reign.'[101] According to legend, Tembinok's dynasty was founded by the mating of daughter of a king with a shark, a widespread symbol of power in the Pacific. Whereas writers like W.H.G. Kingston would see sharks as a symbol of evil, the missionary William Ellis noted that Polynesian shark worship was inspired by 'the principle of fear, and a desire to avoid destruction, in the event of being exposed to their anger at sea.'[102] Although Ellis is not prepared to see shark worship as other than

false idolatry, he does recognise that it is the *mana* of the shark, its power, that is being worshipped, and not any moral quality. Tembinok' did not believe the literal truth of his ancestry - '"I think lie," is the king's emphatic commentary' - but 'he is proud of the legend',[103] and Fanny Stevenson celebrated it by designing a flag for Tembinok' comprising of 'three cross-bars, red, yellow, and green,' which represented the three islands of his domain, and a 'black shark lying across the bars [which] was meant to be typical of Tembinoka's ancestry.'[104] Stevenson also romanticised the legend in the ballad, 'The House of Tembinoka', in which the union of power and nobility 'Conceived the virtues of a stronger race.'[105]

On the one hand Stevenson responds to the difference of Polynesia, understanding the respect given to power simply because it is power, but on the other hand he plays down the brutality and oppression, and celebrates instead its romantic history. With his 'manly and plain bearing', Tembinok' is the 'only Gilbert Islander in Apemama', different again from the polite and gracious islanders who have 'something effeminate and courtly' about them.[106] This is a further justification for the interest in Tembinok', for he alone, to Stevenson, retains the ancient strength of the 'race', and a study of him is a study of the old Polynesians, as well as a meditation on power and imperialism:

> The more I viewed and admired this triumph of firm rule, the more I was haunted and troubled by a problem, the problem (perhaps) of to-morrow for ourselves. Here was a people protected from all serious misfortune, relieved of all serious anxieties, and deprived of what we call our liberty. Did they like it? and what was their sentiment toward their ruler?[107]

Admiration for the 'triumph of firm rule', and nagging doubts about its long-term effects:

Apemama made Stevenson think seriously about the implications of imperialism, doubting whether power can ever be really humane. Stevenson is questioning whether the benevolence of the imperialist can be detached from the power that allows it to be expressed: Tembinok' can only show his concern for his 'slaves' because they are slaves, and because he insists that they stay that way, entirely dependent on his power to determine who lives and who dies. Stevenson's experiences in the Gilberts confront him with basic questions about the role of Damien on Molokai, the motivations of the sympathetic individual, and the civilising mission, but the doubts are diverted into the same argument on death, depopulation and lack of communal determination that has already been rehearsed in the Marquesas, Molokai and Butaritari. Instead of the thuggery on Apemama illuminating the part terror plays in empire, it restates the trope of the dying islands. There is something lacking in the 'race'; either bullies or cowards, they only understand a display of force; they are naturally servile, but once deprived of freedom they fade and die; even without European empires they would still be vulnerable to their own tyrants. In the final analysis, power follows predictable lines in *In the South Seas*, restating the weakness of the Polynesians. But in his Pacific fiction, the complexities of power are more sensitively handled: in *The Beach of Falesá* Stevenson begins to explore the complexity of relationships between ruler and ruled that he only touches on in his travel book. Through the charismatic but slightly deranged figure of Attwater in *The Ebb-Tide* (1893) he explores the insidious attractions of power.

In the early chapters of *The Ebb-Tide*, the tropes of imperial power are inverted - the disease on the beach, as we have seen, and the degraded and animalised Davis dancing for his supper from some Kanaka sailors, 'as a poor brown Pyrenean bear dances in the

streets of English towns under his master's baton'.[108] This initially destablises imperial assumptions of power, and suggests that the story might in its original conception have gone in a different direction, one more akin to the Polynesian/European power relationships in *Falesá*. But if this is so, it is subordinated to an interest in imperial power on Attwater's island. Attwater has elements of Tembinok' in his character, Attwater clearly aspiring to his preferred method of justice: 'There was an old king one knew in the western islands,' says Attwater, 'who used to empty a Winchester all round a man, and stir his hair or nick a rag out of his clothes with every ball except the last; and that went plump between the eyes. It was a pretty practice.'[109] But Attwater's rule is equally representative of the religious, commercial and military aspects of European imperialism in the Pacific: 'I have had a business, and a colony, and a mission of my own. I was a man of the world before I was a Christian.' As we have already seen, Attwater justifies his Old Testament code through a need for order: 'I gave these beggars what they wanted: a judge in Israel, the bearer of the sword and scourge...'[110]

'At root', writes Frank McLynn in his recent critical biography of Stevenson, *The Ebb-Tide* is 'yet another of RLS's tales probing the nature of evil.'[111] The three beachcombers who arrive at Attwater's island represent, as Stevenson explained in a letter to Colvin, 'Three types of the bad man, the weak man, and the strong man with a weakness.'[112] Whilst the character of Huish is evil, in the sense of being a thoroughly dangerous man, I will argue that *The Ebb-Tide* is less of an examination of good and evil than Stevenson's early works, and rather an examination of how power decides morality.

The Ebb-Tide is a pessimistic work: whilst putting the finishing touches to it, Stevenson

was drawn to reassure Colvin, or possibly himself, that 'I believe in the ultimate decency of things',[113] a belief that the novel appears to challenge. The imperial division of the world into areas of darkness and light is resisted in his fiction: in Stevenson's instructions to the illustrator of *The Ebb-Tide* he wanted Attwater's miniature empire 'entirely overshadowed' by palm-trees,[114] and when Herrick, one of the three beachcombers who had been plotting to murder and rob Attwater, finally sides with him, Davis watches the two of them 'pass together under the shadow of the grove.'[115] Although religious imagery saturates *The Ebb-Tide*, it is unclear whether Attwater represents God or the Devil, for good and evil depend on who holds power: as Stevenson is told on Apemama by one of the king's frightened subjects, '"Suppose [Tembinok'] like you, he good man ... no like, no good."'[116] Attwater has shown that he firmly believes himself to hold the moral high ground. To Huish, however, the impending fight with Attwater is also couched in biblical terms: it is going to be a contest between David and Goliath, and he intends that the vitriol he will throw at Attwater will 'smoke upon 'im like 'ell fire!'[117] It is only the artist, Herrick, who is able to eventually see that morality is decided by force: 'The object of his terror had become suddenly inverted; till then he had seen Attwater trussed and gagged, a helpless victim, and had longed to rush in and save him; he saw him now tower up mysterious and menacing, the angel of the Lord's wrath, armed with knowledge and threatening judgement.' The sacrificial victim becomes the sacrificer, and Herrick 'followed him as the criminal goes with the hangman, or the sheep with the butcher'.[118]

The power to which Herrick ultimately succumbs has a suppressed sexual energy, and this too was an element of Stevenson's fascination with Tembinok'. Stevenson took pride in

gaining the respect of Tembinok's wives who 'admired me with acclamation' when he became the only outsider to grasp the principle of the private version of poker that ruled in his 'harem'.[119] The entry to the harem once more permits a voyeuristic gaze on a forbidden place, and this is certainly part of Stevenson's motivation for gaining acceptance. But Tembinok's harem is the seat of political power, his wives are his trusted inner circle, his Cabinet as well as his sexual partners, and Stevenson's entry is far more concerned with his relationship with the king than his wives, drawing the writer into the circle, and sexualising his political alignment with Tembinok'. Where Tembinok' only truly trusts his wives, Attwater dislikes and mistrusts women even more than men. They threaten his social and racial order: a relationship with a native woman would undermine his authority, and he marries off the only available woman on the island to a man of his choice. But this is more than just resisting temptation. Attwater's island rewrites the image of a marriage between female Polynesia and male Europe; the only intimacies in the novel are between Herrick and the Kanaka crew of the *Farallone*, when Herrick 'was surprised to feel a caressing hand run down his shoulder,' and to hear the voice of one of them 'crooning in his ear...',[120] and the suggested attraction between Herrick and Attwater. Attwater's mild overtures to Herrick - 'I am fanciful ... and I take fads. I like you', and 'You are attractive, very attractive'[121] - are initially resisted by Herrick who is loyal to Huish and Davis at this point, although wrapped in self-loathing for being so. Herrick's eventual return to Attwater, after his failed suicide attempt in the lagoon, is involuntary: 'About three in the morning, chance, and the set of the current, and the bias of his own right-handed body, so decided it between them that he came to shore upon the beach in front of Attwater's.'[122] Herrick symbolically gives up his own manhoood, his own personality, by handing Attwater his gun: the now unsexed Herrick can join

Attwater's desexualised 'harem'.

Herrick's lone return to Attwater's beach does not symbolise the conversion of the sinner, for in the last scene he is dismissive of Davis' new-found religious zeal, but an involuntary compulsion to submit to the ordering symbol of power. Herrick is a 'strong man with a weakness', as Stevenson wrote, and his weakness is primarily that he vacillates: he cannot make up his mind whether to align himself entirely with the crew, or with Huish and Davis; with his fellow beachcombers or Attwater. The crew disappear from the narrative, Herrick is left with a choice of powers, and finally his body and the tide decide which to choose for him; it is a physical decision rather than a moral choice at the end as his body is drawn naturally towards the stronger power. Stevenson was, as we have seen, firmly in favour of a strong colonial rule, of not being 'afraid of hanging when necessary', seeing no contradiction between liking and executing the natives. But in *The Ebb-Tide*, when Herrick submits to Attwater's power, it is both a victory of the *will, and a defeat of ideals: 'There was no escape possible.* The open door was closed in his recreant face. He must go back into the world and amongst men without illusion.'[123] Herrick never does agree with Attwater's harsh justice, but he has to compromise his liberalism - his liking for the Kanakas on the ship, his condemnation of the execution of Obsequiousness - in order to survive.

The Ebb-Tide is concerned with a 'properly' constituted colonial rule, and although this is a theme of the European rivalries in *The Beach of Falesá*, the latter novel is particularly interesting for its exploration of the relationships between European traders and islanders. Stevenson had toyed romantically with the idea of becoming a trader himself for a while,

before he 'reached the Gilberts and got a close look at what the island trade might actually mean. "The rotten pestilential civilization of the traders," another visitor to the Gilberts called it, and Stevenson agreed once he saw it in action.'[124] Stevenson's contemporary, Louis Becke, did it the other way around, and was an island trader in the 1880s before he became a novelist. His first book, *By Reef and Palm*, was published in 1893, which Stevenson read, describing Becke, as he had done Melville, as a 'howling cheese'.[125] Traders, like the beachcombers and castaways before them, were often the only Europeans on an island or a village, and Becke's stories were held to be able to capture the 'essence' of the Pacific: 'The literary world may find their Pacific through the pages of Melville or Stevenson; but in an atoll trader's home or the cabin of a copra schooner, the only island book one will likely find is an obviously much-read Becke.'[126] Power relations are one of the central concerns of Becke's stories, and presumably of his readers in the Pacific. In a letter to his mother, Becke described having 'a serious dispute with the natives or rather with a chief here and his people...', shortly after he established his trading station on Nanumaga, one of the Ellice Islands. Being the sole trader on the island, and confident in the power of his monopoly, 'I closed my trade houses and do not now buy any copra and unless they pay me ten thousand cocoanuts I will leave the island with my trade'.

Part of the mythology of Louis Becke was that he was 'a great favourite' with 'the Island blacks', and his stories tell of mutual respect coming from 'manly' confrontations between traders and their hosts.[127] One of the 'characteristic traits of the beachcomber' writes Christopher Legge, is 'an almost complete absence of what we would call colour prejudice, and a readiness ... to conform to the behaviour and mode of life of his

hosts.'[128] Although Becke's fiction appears to have a similar openness to the 'hosts', Becke had 'a problem' with 'blacks': when he travelled to the West Indies in the early years of the twentieth century, Becke's dislike of the 'culled "gentlemen"' who 'are simply *the* laziest pigs I ever came across' is frequently expressed.[129] He had spent his youth in the Pacific 'blackbirding' with the infamous Bully Hayes; blackbirding was effectively the slave trade reborn, hiring and abducting workers from Melanesia and Micronesia to work on plantations, and Becke's arrogance and contempt for the natives on Nanumaga is at least partly shaped by this experience.

Stevenson's *Falesá* is narrated by Wiltshire, like Becke, an uneducated and prejudiced European trader. Whilst Becke's bigotry is obscured by the contests between strong men, and the romances between European men and island women that form his staple plots, Wiltshire's prejudices are foregrounded by Stevenson. When Wiltshire thinks that he has been tabooed, he goes to Case for advice, little realising that Case has arranged Wiltshire's marriage to the 'outcast' Uma in order to get him tabooed, and so lose his business. '"I don't count this your quarrel," [Case] went on, with a great deal of resolution, "I count it all our quarrel, I count it the White Man's Quarrel, and I'll stand to it through thick and thin, and there's my hand on it."' Case knows his audience's expectations of European superiority, and after Case has pretended to speak to the islanders on his behalf, Wiltshire states confidently:

> That was my speech. I knew how to deal with Kanakas; give them plain sense and fair dealing, and - I'll do them that much justice - they knuckle under every time. They haven't any real government or any real law, that's what you've got to knock into their heads; and even if they had, it would be a good joke if it was to apply to a white man.[130]

Both Wiltshire and Case reflect the prejudices of traders like Becke, viewing the islanders as weak, disordered, naive, inferior and, in the case of the women, available. '"Who's she? ... She'll do"', says Wiltshire on his first sight of Uma, his attitude to a commercial transaction mirroring Case's dismissive, 'You can have your pick of the lot for a plug of tobacco'.[131] Wiltshire, who had 'been for years on a low island near the line, living for the most part solitary among the natives', brings his prejudices with him to the high and beautifully scented island of Falesá.[132] Even when married to Uma, and with several children, he never loses his bigoted attitudes:

> But what bothers me [about his children] is the girls. They're only half-castes, of course; I know that as well as you do, and there's nobody thinks less of half-castes than I do; but they're mine, and about all I've got. I can't reconcile my mind to their taking up with Kanakas, and I'd like to know where I'm to find the whites?[133]

Wiltshire is neither scientific observer, sentimental traveller, nor friend of the natives; he is simply out for the best for himself, and he gives Stevenson a voice that is unconcerned about its racial assumptions, and one which makes the narrative work on two levels of understanding. Wiltshire holds and cherishes his prejudices even as they are being denied by his experiences: no one thinks less of half-castes than he does, but he loves his own children; he is convinced of European superiority, but practically the first European he sees on the island is the decaying Captain Randall; he thinks the islanders are weak, but he notices 'the sweat ran down [Case's] face' under cross-questioning from them about Wiltshire's taboo.[134] Wiltshire is unaware that the certainties of his world are being systematically undermined, and Stevenson uses Wiltshire's racism and materialism to subvert the sentimentalised relations of the beach. He also uses it to explore the friction

between preexisting knowledge and experience that marked Stevenson's travel book. When Wiltshire dislikes 'half-castes' despite his love for his own children, for example, he ironises Stevenson's story in *In the South Seas* of the capsized cutter in the Paumotus, and the man and wife who had to swim for nine hours back to shore: 'Francois, the half-breed, would have desisted and gone down; but the woman, whole blood of an amphibious race, still supported him'. Stevenson need say no more than 'the half-breed' in order to connect with contemporary theories of the weak and sterile products of 'miscegenation'. The phrase is the point of the story: the 'half-breed' is weak, and whilst the 'whole-blood' of the native can be strong in certain situations, eventually 'the more childish side of native character appears' in both of them and the couple will kill themselves by sitting in a draught.[135] Simply recognising that one partner is of 'mixed-race' engages a set of related tropes, and the story develops a predictable momentum of its own. Stevenson reads the incident as a parable of 'blood', and the story 'proves' the foolishness of the 'race', not the bravery of the individual. In *Falesá*, however, the constant exposure of the spuriousness of Wiltshire's racism directs the reader towards a level of truth that is denied the trader.

Initially, Wiltshire responds to the physical difference of the island: 'Here was a fresh experience; even the tongue would be quite strange to me; and the look of these woods and mountains, and the rare smell of them, renewed my blood.'[136] The island symbolises an opportunity for rejuvenation and a new way of seeing that is not fully recognised by Wiltshire, and he immediately drops into existing habits, naively believing that he is welcomed into the European community, and that the island women are mere objects for selection. But later, in the High Woods, he starts to absorb something of the

islanders' response to place: 'We laugh at the natives and their superstitions; but see how many traders take them up .... It's my belief a superstition grows up in a place like the different kinds of weeds; and as I stood there listened to that wailing I twittered in my shoes.'[137] Wiltshire's experiences draw on a 'psychic' experience of Stevenson's in the woods of his plantation at Vailima, which he described in a letter to Colvin.

> A strange business it was, and infinitely solitary; away above the sun was in the high treetops; the lianas noosed and sought to hang me; the saplings struggled, and came up with that sob of death that one gets to know so well... Soon, toiling down in that pit of verdure, I heard blows on the far side, and then laughter. I confess a chill settled on my heart. Being so dead alone, in a place where by rights none should be beyond me, I was aware upon interrogation, if those blows had drawn nearer, I should (of course quite unaffectedly) have executed a strategic movement to the rear; and only the other day I was lamenting my insensibility to superstition! Am I beginning to be sucked in?[138]

The power of Polynesia is not the physical threat of the savage ready to pounce, as Stevenson once feared a sudden rush of 'cannibalistic' islanders in the Marquesas, but its unknowability. 'What scares [a person] worst is to be right in the midst of a crowd, and have no guess of what they're driving at', says Wiltshire, explaining his fears of the crowd surrounding his house.[139] The land is not mastered or known by the European, but has a mysterious force that chokes and immobilises him. Both Stevenson's and Wiltshire's responses describe an erosion of certainties, the unwilling assimilation of an illogical response to the land and people, and a diminution of European rationality. Both 'race' and place hold a 'mysterious' power, and Stevenson replaces the physically threatening Other of Victorian adventure stories with a power that resists logical explanation. As John McLure has recently argued in *Late Imperial Romance*, the creation of the empire as an area of mystery and enchantment was a feature of late nineteenth and

early twentieth century imperial narratives. The imperial mission to order the world was causing the blanks on the map to be filled in, and the chaotic areas needed for imperial adventure were being rationalised out of existence. One response in imperial fiction, McLure argues, was to build on the empire's existing reputation for mystery and exoticism, and to make the mysterious 'essence' of the land and people into 'a point of departure for even more remote realms of the spirit', allowing Marlow's journey, for example, to be both physical adventure and psychical experience.[140]

Stevenson appears to be quite genuine in his sense of a supernatural or spiritual power in the Pacific: during his visit to the Paumotus he is fascinated by the atmosphere of the islands and their stories of ghosts. It was 'in one of my moments of awe, alone in that tragic jungle' above Vailima that Stevenson suddenly had the idea for *The Beach of Falesá*.[141] But although Stevenson recreated an air of irrational and threatening Otherness in *Falesá*, he also found 'the fable too fantastic and far-fetched',[142] and finally resisted the fantastic: 'No supernatural trick at all; and escaped out of it quite easily', he commented to Colvin.[143] The 'wailing' in the high woods that frightens both Wiltshire and the islanders is found to be made by Jews Harps suspended in trees by Case. Similarly, Stevenson suspects that the mysterious noises he hears in the woods above Vailima are made by escaped Melanesian plantation workers who are hiding in caves below the woods.

The irrational in *Falesá*, and Stevenson's sense of a mysterious power of Polynesia, are evoked only to be reduced to something knowable within European terms. Case artificially draws out the sinister aspect of the land, working on the 'superstitions' of the

islanders to protect his workshop in the woods, and creating a place equally frightening to a rational European. It is also only a European who has the power to expose the artifice. Once Wiltshire understands, 'place' ceases to threaten him, although not entirely: 'The fearsomeness of the wood had been a good bit rubbed off for me by Master Case's banjo-strings and graven images, yet I thought it was a dreary walk, and guessed, when the disciples were up there, they must be badly scared.'[144] Although ceasing to be entirely a place of mystery and enchantment, the Otherness of Falesá is never fully explained in rational terms. The 'superstitious' islanders retain their fears, but the strength of Uma is that she believes in *aitus* (devils) and yet still goes alone into the High Woods after dark in order to help Wiltshire: '"Too much 'fraid," was all she said' when she arrives breathless and terrified at Case's cave.[145] Like Wiltshire, Uma retains her own beliefs, even though her experiences show them to be false.

Stevenson moves towards expounding a theory of reciprocity and mutual respect in empire in *Falesá*. After Uma is duped by the mock marriage contract, which reads: '*Uma* ... is illegally married to *Mr John Wiltshire* for one night, and Mr John Wiltshire is at liberty to send her to hell next morning',[146] she announces proudly in the *beche la mer* English of the beach to her new husband, '"Me - your wifie"'. The 'simplicity' of Uma's announcement makes Wiltshire 'ashamed of the marriage', as well as being ashamed to 'be so much moved about a native', and he starts to talk back in *beche la mer*.[147] Although Wiltshire's feelings are about himself rather than Uma here, it is an important symbolic moment, signifying the beginning of Wiltshire's awareness of Uma's humanity, and the discovery of a language for direct communication between European and islander, and in a wider sense, a commercial language which will embrace all Polynesia and all

Polynesians. When Wiltshire arrives at Falesá from the line islands, 'even the tongue would be strange to me', and one of the themes of Wiltshire's early days on the island is his inability to communicate without Case's 'interpretation': because he can't speak the language, he cannot understand the people.[148] Whilst Wiltshire initially sees Uma's *beche la mer* as childish and weak, and as an inferior version of English, the directness of her language matches the strength of her character, and through her language she develops into a metaphor for cultural integration.

Stevenson first seemed to recognise the dynamic potential of *beche la mer* in the Gilberts, where Tembinok's Pidgin is 'so much more obscure, expressive, and condensed'; it is language that is stripped of 'refinements', perfectly expressing the power of its speaker.[149] Stevenson's attitude to the Polynesian that he uses in occasional phrases in *Falesá*, though, is more complex. John Charlot points out that by Stevenson's first visit to Hawaii he was incorporating Polynesian phrases in his stories.[150] I would only partly agree with Charlot's suggestion that Stevenson's use of Polynesian shows his receptiveness to Polynesia, for it is largely used for 'local colour', as it is in Uma's ejaculations. The sporadic incorporation of native words into the text gives authority to the writer, and can be seen in a writer like Haggard or Kipling who suggests his intimate knowledge of the native culture through his knowledge of the language; like Stevenson's comment on the inaccurate illustrations of Hawaiian dresses, it serves to distinguish the traveller from the stockbroker in Middlesex.

Polynesian languages are, Stevenson says in *In the South Seas*, 'hard to speak with elegance', but his admiration for their beauty is undercut by their being 'easy to smatter',

which suggests a certain simplicity.[151] Stevenson was later to study Samoan, lamenting, 'O, Colvin, what a tongue it would be to write if one only knew it'. But even here Stevenson seems to think of the language as both expressive of a fundamental simplicity - the fables translated by an English missionary are 'brief as the books of our childhood, and full of wit and literary colour' - and as overelaborated, for Samoan's 'curse in common use is an incredible left-handed wordiness'. Stevenson observes that 'in the hands of a man like Pratt [Samoan] is succinct as Latin, compact of long rolling polysyllables and little and often pithy particles, and for beauty of sound a dream.'[152] In terms of imperial narrative, Pratt's 'refining' of Samoan is related to Dr. Martin's description of William Mariner's plantation, in which the natural beauty of the land is enhanced by European ownership. Stevenson's admiration for the directness of *beche la mer* is connected to an assumption that Polynesian is wasting away as a meaningful medium of expression through its ever-increasing elaborations. *Beche la mer* is important to Stevenson, firstly because it joins the 'fragmented' Pacific island languages together in a commercial language of empire, and thus assuming the need for universalisation and effacement of difference, and secondly that its directness is more suited to the simplicity of the people. Whilst Uma is a strong character who saves Wiltshire literally and metaphorically, her sharp insights - pointing out that the Bible is unlikely to be much protection against Polynesian *aitus*, as Europe does not have *aitus* - are still within the tradition of the savage sage who can criticise civilisation, and see through its cant, even as its power is recognised.

Falesá is, like *Typee*, a landmark novel of the Pacific. Melville was the first novelist to develop Europe's perception of the brutal and beautiful faces of the Pacific in a structured

way, and Stevenson was the first to really challenge the romance of the South Seas, portraying instead the violence and corruption of European commercial expansionism. But nonetheless, *Falesá* is a novel firmly rooted in the establishment and ordering of a commercial empire. It both challenges the tropes of empire, and it incorporates them in its vision of a 'new' Pacific. When Wiltshire discovers the trickery in the woods, he begins a process of rationalisation that makes the mysterious Other knowable to the European. Stevenson notoriously had a difficulty with the ending of his stories, and Wiltshire's discovery is the moment at which the themes of reciprocity and Otherness are subordinated to adventure, and *Falesá* starts to move towards an adventure novel's closure, complete with the death of the villain and order restored. In the cultural harmony of a new trading empire that is born from the union between Uma and Wiltshire, the Other has to be knowable, and its mystery has to be exposed, thus collapsing the growing complexity of Wiltshire's response to place and 'race'. The ending turns Falesá into the familiar imperial playground, because ultimately that is how the Pacific is being imagined. Wiltshire had promised the missionary, Tarleton, that he would 'deal fairly with the natives', and, as Wiltshire says, 'so I did.'[153] But by this Wiltshire does not mean a 'European' standard, but more Tembinok's idea of fair trade: '"He cheat a litty" - "He cheat plenty" - and "I think he cheat too much."'[154] Wiltshire still defrauds the islanders, but feels guilty about it, and 'although I did well in Falesá, I was half glad when the firm moved me on to another station, where I was under no kind of pledge and could look my balances in the face.'[155] It is 'our' Pacific, a familiar marginal space where civilisation's moral values do not apply, where dishonesty becomes honesty, murder becomes justice, the natives are victims, and love can incorporate contempt. The ending restores a recognisable stability to the world, as finally the natives are freed from

oppression by the actions of the enlightened European, even as they have been shown to have powers of their own. *Falesá* is an anti-romance, which destroys many of Europe's favourite illusions about the Pacific; it shows Stevenson responding to and assimilating the difference of the Pacific creatively, but it also shows that an ironic distance from an imperial way of seeing is still moderated and mediated through the deep tropic structures of imperial narrative.

NOTES

1. Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick*, Harmondsworth: Penguin (1987), p. 150.

2. *The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson to his Family and Friends* (ed. Sidney Colvin), London: Methuen (1899), 2 Volumes, Volume 2: pp. 137-8. Further references to this edition will be cited '*Letters*.'

3. *Letters*: Volume 2, p. 166.

4. Robert Louis Stevenson, *Vailima Letters: Being Correspondence Addressed by Robert Louis Stevenson to Sidney Colvin*, (ed. Sidney Colvin), London: Methuen and Co., (1895), pp. 94-95. Subsequent references to this edition will be cited as *Vailima Letters*.

5. *Letters*: Volume 2, p. 165.

6. Robert I. Hillier, *The South Seas Fiction of Robert Louis Stevenson*, Basingstoke: Macmillan (1989), p. 137.

7. *Vailima Letters*: pp. 239-40.

8. John Charlot, 'The Influence of Polynesian Literature and Thought on Robert Louis Stevenson', *The Journal of Intercultural Studies*, Kansai: Kansai University of Foreign Studies, Number 14 (1987), pp. 82-106, p. 82.

9. Gavan Daws, *A Dream of Islands: Voyages of Self-Discovery in the South Seas*, Hawaii: Mutual Publishing (1980), pp. 163-215. See especially pages 180-181 for this side of Stevenson's character.

10. *Vailima Letters*: p. 273.

11. *Letters*: Volume 2, pp. 129 & 115 to Sidney Colvin and Charles Baxter respectively. A howling cheese is a Stevensonian term of approbation.

12. From a lecture by Mrs Mabel Wing Castle in Arthur Johnstone's *Recollections of Robert Louis Stevenson in the Pacific*, London: Chatto and Windus (1905), p. 103. Cited by A. Grove Day, *Mad About Islands: Novelists of a Vanished Pacific*, Honolulu: Mutual Publishing Co (1987), p. 112.

13. Robert Louis Stevenson, *In the South Seas: The Marquesas, Paumotus and Gilbert Islands* (1900), London and New York: Kegan Paul International (1986), p. 13. Further references are to this edition and will be cited *In the South Seas*.

14. Charles Warren Stoddard, *Summer Cruising in the South Seas*, London: Chatto and Windus (1873), first published in America as *South Sea Idyls*. I will be citing the London edition.

15. Carl Stroven, *A Life of Charles Warren Stoddard*, Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Duke University, USA (1939), p. 142.

16. Th. Bentzon [Mme. Thérese Blanc], 'Charles Warren Stoddard - A French Estimate', *The Ave Maria*, Vol. LXVIII, No. 20, Notre Dame Press, Indiana. First published as 'Un Loti américan: Charles Warren Stoddard', *Révue des Deux Mondes* (1896). Unpaginated copy held in the Pacific Collection at the Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii at Manoa. Further references to this article will be cited as 'Bentzon'. See also a letter from William Dean Howells to Stoddard, 24 February 1873, which proposes the alternative title of *Under the Bread-fruit Tree*. Letter, diaries and papers of Charles Warren Stoddard held in the Pacfic Collection, Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii at Moana, Honolulu, Hawaii will hereafter be referred to as UH Archives.

17. O.H.K. Spate, '"South Sea" to "Pacific Ocean"', *The Journal of Pacific History*, Volume 12, (1977), pp. 205-211, p. 206.

18. *In the South Seas*: p. 26.

19. R.L. Stevenson and Lloyd Osbourne, *The Wrecker*, London: Cassell & Company Limited, (1902), p. 126.

20. Charles Warren Stoddard, *Exits and Entrances. A Book of Essays and Sketches*, Boston: Lothrop Publishing Co., (1903), pp. 24 & 14.

21. *Letters*, Volume 2: p. 133. The last letter from Stevenson to C.W. Stoddard was sent from Bournemouth on February 13 1886, in which Stevenson says that he has recently be rereading Stoddard's *South Sea Idyls*, and found some parts very good indeed (p. 18).

22. C.W. Stoddard, *A Trip to Hawaii*, San Francisco: Passenger Department Oceanic Steamship Co., (1892), pp. 16 & 20.

23. Robert L. Gale, *Charles Warren Stoddard*, Boise, Idaho: Boise State University Press (1977), p. 14.

24. Herman Melville, *Typee* (1846), Harmondsworth: Penguin (1986), pp. 48-49.

25. Alfred Lord Tennyson, 'The Lotos-Eaters' (l. 24), in *Tennyson. Poems and Plays*, (ed. T. Herbert Warren), Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press (1991), pp. 51-53.

26. The line is from Tennyson's 'Ulysses'. See *Tennyson: Poems and Plays*, p. 90; 'Locksley Hall', *ibid*, p. 95.

27. Stoddard, *Summer Cruising*: pp. 30, 32, 34, & 41-42.

28. Stoddard, *Summer Cruising*: pp. 88-89.

29. Stoddard, *Summer Cruising*: p. v.

30. Stoddard, *Summer Cruising*: p. 40.

31. Stoddard, *Summer Cruising*: p. 43.

32. Charles Warren Stoddard, 'The Island of Tranquil Delights', *The Island of Tranquil Delights: A South Sea Idyl and Others*, Boston: Herbert B. Turner & Company (1904), p.20.

33. Stoddard, 'Stag-Racket Bungalow', October 9 1884. This particular diary has been published as *Charles Warren Stoddard's Diary of a Visit to Molokai in 1884. With a Letter from Father Damien to His Brother in 1873*, San Francisco: The Book Club of California (1933), in which, as Stroven notes (p. 124), Stoddard's reference to his affair with Kana-ana has been removed.

34. Stoddard, Hawaiian Diaries, 7 July 1884. UH Archives.

35. Bentzon, *art cit.*

36. Alain Quella-Villeger, *Pierre Loti l'incompris*, Paris: Presse de la Renaissance (1986), p. 50.

37. *Walt Whitman: The Correspondence*, (ed.) Edwin Haviland Miller, New York: New York University Press (1961-1969), Volume 2, pp. 81-82. Quoted in Roger Austen, *Genteel Pagan: The Double Life of Charles Warren Stoddard*, (ed.) John W. Crowley, Amherst: Massachussetts University Press (1991), p. xxvii.

38. Bentzon, *art cit.*

39. *In the South Seas*: p. 34.

40. Denis Diderot, *Supplément au voyage de Bougainville*, (1772), Paris: Garnier-Flammarion (1972), p. 149.

41. Louis A. de Bougainville, *A Voyage Round the World Performed by Order of His Most Christian Majesty in the Years 1766, 1767, 1768 and 1769. By Lewis de Bougainville, Colonel of Foot, and Commodore of the Expedition, in the Frigate La Boudeuse, and the Store-ship L'Etoile*, (trans. John Reinhold Forster), London: T. Davies (1772), p. 220.

42. Louis A. de Bougainville, *Adventure in the Wilderness: the American Journals of Louis Antoine de Bougainville 1756-1760*, (trans. and ed. Edward P. Hamilton), Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, (1964), pp. 8 & 9.

43. I will use the terms 'leper' and 'leprosy' throughout this chapter, as the terms had, and have, specific meanings in European cultures that are intimately involved with attitudes to Molokai. The disease should more properly be know as Hansen's Disease.

44. Cf. Emily H. Hickey, 'Father Damien of Molokai', *Verse-tales, Lyrics and Translations*, Liverpool: W.& J Arnold (1880); and later, Hardwick Drummond Rawnsley, 'Father Damien', *Poems, Ballads and Bucolics*, London: Macmillan (1890).

45. Gavan Daws, *Holy Man: Father Damien of Molokai*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press (1973), p. 74.

46. Daws, *Holy Man*: p. 237.

47. Daws, *Holy Man*: pp. 3-16.

48. Daws, *Holy Man*: p. 7.

49. Daws, *Holy Man*: p. 7.

50. Stoddard, *Summer Cruising*: pp. 109 & 112.

51. Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko*, in *Oroonoko, The Rover and Other Works*, Harmondsworth: Penguin (1992), pp. 73-142, p. 140.

52. R.L. Stevenson, *Travels in Hawaii* (ed.) A. Grove Day, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press (1973): p. 48. Further references to this edition will be cited *Travels in Hawaii*.

53. Quoted in *Travels in Hawaii*: p. 178.

54. Stoddard, *Summer Cruising*: p. 111.

55. *Travels in Hawaii*: p. 55.

56. *Travels in Hawaii*: p. 66.

57. *Travels in Hawaii*: p. 152.

58. Charles Warren Stoddard, *Charles Warren Stoddard's Diary of a Visit to Molokai in 1884*, San Francisco: The Book Club of California (1933), p. 10.

59. Stoddard, *Diary of a Visit*: p. 14.

60. *Letters*: Volume 2, p. 155.

61. Daws, *Holy Man*: p. 78.

62. *The Holy Bible*, Lutterworth: The Gideons International (1988), Leviticus 13, v. 45-46, p. 166.

63. Daws, *Holy Man*: p. 64.

64. R.L. Stevenson, *Father Damien: An Open Letter to the Reverend Doctor Hyde of Honolulu*, in *Travels in Hawaii*, pp. 149-167, p. 153. Further page references to Stevenson's letter to Hyde are taken from this edition, and will be cited *Travels in Hawaii*.

65. For a full discussion of the factual inaccuracies of Stevenson's attack on Hyde, see Harold Winfield Kent, *Dr. Hyde and Mr. Stevenson*, Rutland Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle & Co (1973).

66. *Travels in Hawaii*: p. 151. For Stevenson's self-conscious libel, see for example, the letter from Stevenson to Charles Baxter, Sydney 12 March 1890: 'Enclosed please find a libel: you perceive I am quite frank with my legal adviser; and I will add it is *conceivable* an action might be brought, and in that event *probable* I should be ruined.' *RLS: Stevenson's Letters to Charles Baxter*, (eds.) DeLancey Ferguson and Marshall Waingrow, London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press (1956), p. 264.

67. Daws, *Holy Man*: p. 245.

68. *Travels in Hawaii*: p. 83.

69. Daws, *Holy Man*: p. 134.

70. *Travels in Hawaii*: pp. 150-151.

71. Stoddard, *Diary of a Visit to Molokai*: p. 8.

72. *Travels in Hawaii*: p. 84.

73. Daws, *Holy Man*: p. 133.

74. *Travels in Hawaii*: p. 165.

75. *Travels in Hawaii*: p. 167.

76. *The Beach of Falesá*, in *Island Night's Entertainment* (1893), London: The Hogarth Press, Chatto and Windus (1987), pp. 9 & 85. Further references are to this edition and will be cited *Falesá*.

77. *The Ebb-Tide* in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Other Stories*, Harmondsworth: Penguin (1979), p. 173. Further references are to this edition and will be cited *The Ebb-Tide*.

78. *The Ebb-Tide*: p. 219.

79. *The Ebb-Tide*: p. 218.

80. R.L. Stevenson, *The Isle of Voices*, in *Island Nights' Entertainment*: p. 148. I am indebted to Mr. R.S. Edmond for this insight.

81. Frances Devlin Glass, 'Between Two Cultures: Interpreting V. Eri's *The Crocodile*, *Readings in Pacific Literature*, (ed. Paul Sharrad), Wollongong: University of Wollongong Press for the New Literatures Resource Centre, (1994), pp. 63-73, p. 66.

82. René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, (trans. Patrick Gregory), Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press (1992), p. 21.

83. R.L. Stevenson, *Catriona* (1893), in *Kidnapped* and *Catriona*, Oxford: Oxford World's Classics (1992), p. 346.

84. *In the South Seas*: p. 210.

85. Report of Captain Maxwell of H.M.S. *Emerald*, cited in H.E. Maude, 'Two Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson', *Journal of Pacific History*, Volume 2 (1967), pp. 183-188, pp. 185 & 186.

86. *In the South Seas*: p. 211.

87. *In the South Seas*: p. 213.

88. *The Ebb-Tide*: pp. 266-268.

89. *In the South Seas*: p. 288.

90. *In the South Seas*: p. 287.

91. Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Cruise of the 'Janet Nichol' Among the South Sea Islands. A Diary*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1914), p. 125.

92. Arthur Grimble, *A Pattern of Islands*, London: The Reprint Society, in association with John Murray (1954), p. 226.

93. Grimble, *A Pattern of Islands*: p. 226.

94. *In the South Seas*: p. 285.

95. *In the South Seas*: p. 316.

96. *In the South Seas*: p. 314.

97. *In the South Seas*: pp. 314-315.

98. 'Two Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson', *art cit*: p. 188.

99. Grimble, *A Pattern of Islands*: p. 226.

100. *In the South Seas*: p. 305.

101. *In the South Seas*: p. 300.

102. William Ellis, *Polynesian Researches, During a Residence of Nearly Six Years in the South Sea Islands*, London: Fisher, Son and Jackson (1831), 2 Volumes, Volume 2, p. 178.

103. *In the South Seas*: p. 337.

104. Mrs. R.L. Stevenson, *The Cruise of the 'Janet Nicol'*: pp. 11-12[n].

105. R.L. Stevenson, 'The House of Tembinoka', in *The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson*, London: Cassell and Company (1908), Volume X111, pp. 283-287, p. 285.

106. *In the South Seas*: p. 315.

107. *In the South Seas*: p. 316.

108. *The Ebb-Tide*: p. 185.

109. *The Ebb-Tide*: p. 258.

110. *The Ebb-Tide*: p. 253.

111. Frank McLynn, *Robert Louis Stevenson: A Biography*, London: Hutchinson (1993), p. 464.

112. *Vailima Letters*: p. 303.

113. *Vailima Letters*: p. 298.

114. *Vailima Letters*: p. 263.

115. *The Ebb-Tide*: p. 280.

116. *In the South Seas*: p. 318.

117. *The Ebb-Tide*: p. 286.

118. *The Ebb-Tide*: p., 260.

119. *In the South Seas*: p. 298.

120. *The Ebb-Tide*: p. 218.

121. *The Ebb-Tide*: p. 254.

122. *The Ebb-Tide*: p. 278.

123. *The Ebb-Tide*: p. 277.

124. Daws: *A Dream of Islands*: p. 168.

125. Elsie Noble Caldwell, *Last Witness for Robert Louis Stevenson*, Norman, Oklahoma: Oklahoma University Press (1960), p. 53.

126. H.E. Maude, 'The Writer Who Lived His Own Pacific Romances', *Pacific Islands Monthly* (October 1956), p. 87. See also A. Grove Day, *Louis Becke*, New York: Twayne Publishers Inc (1966).

127. 'Yelwarc', 'Louis Becke' Melbourne *Bulletin*, 18 June 1896, in Louis Becke Collection of Papers, Clippings and Letters from the Mitchell Library, Sidney, held at the University of Hawaii, Pacific Collection.

128. Christopher Legge, 'William Diaper: A Biographical Sketch', *The Journal of Pacific History*, Volume 1 (1966), pp. 79-90, p. 89.

129. Louis Becke, undated (but around August 1902) letter to his wife. Microfilm copy of Louis Becke's Letters from the Mitchell Library, Sidney, held by University of Hawaii, Pacific Collection.

130. *Falesá*: pp. 27 & 29.

131. *Falesá*: p. 8.

132. *Falesá*: p. 3.

133. *Falesá*: p. 86.

134. *Falesá*: p. 30.

135. *In the South Seas*: p. 166.

136. *Falesá*: p. 3.

137. *Falesá*: p. 63.

138. *Vailima Letters*: p. 16.

139. *Falesá*: p. 19.

140. John A. McLure, *Late Imperial Romance*, London: Verso (1994), p. 12.

141. *Vailima Letters*: p. 16.

142. *Vailima Letters*: p. 70.

143. *Vailima Letters*: p. 92.

144. *Falesá*: p. 75.

145. *Falesá*: p. 78.

146. *Falesá*: p. 13.

147. *Falesá*: p. 15.

148. *Falesá*: p. 3.

149. *In the South Seas*: p. 286.

150. Charlot, 'The Influence of Polynesian Literature...': p. 89.

151. *In the South Seas*: p. 8.

152. *Vailima Letters*: p. 48.

153. *Falesá*: p. 86.

154. *In the South Seas*: p. 283.

155. *Falesá*: p. 86.

6. Conclusion

'The principle feature of mythic discourse', writes Edward Said in *Orientalism*, 'is that it conceals its own origins as well as those of what it describes.'[1] There are two aspects to representation: the subject represented, and the discursive practices with which it is represented, and this thesis has been predominantly concerned with the latter, tracing the origins of Europe's images of the South Seas in the narrative traditions, tropes and myths of empire. Dominating the nineteenth century images of the Pacific has been the trope of the dying islander: Diderot's Savage Sage foresees the death of the Tahitian people, accusing the French of infecting their blood; Tommo's Fayaway stands 'crippled' in the surf, torn between progress and tradition; Loti's Rarahu and Stoddard's Kana-ana fade and die, and Joe of Lahaina rots to death. Outside the Pacific, Australian Aborigines, Kalahari 'Bushmen' and American Indians were also perceived as dying: tied to their 'traditional' hunting grounds and ways of life, they were seen as incapable of adapting to the inevitable advance of civilisation.

Stevenson was faced with this narrative tradition, but also with the autoptic evidence that not all Pacific islands that he saw were dying: the 'melancholy of the Hawaiian and the emptiness of his new life are striking; and the remark is yet more apposite to the Marquesas. In Samoa, on the other hand, perpetual song and dance, perpetual games, journeys, and pleasures, make an animated and a smiling picture of the island life.' In

order to account for this apparent paradox amongst a people who are all marked by the characteristic of falling 'easily into despondency', Stevenson argued in *In the South Seas*: 'Where there have been fewest changes, important or unimportant, salutary or hurtful, there the race survives. Where there have been most, important or unimportant, salutary or hurtful, there it perishes.'[2] Stevenson was fond of working out theories, and, as Gavan Daws writes of the ones he developed on the Pacific, they 'were generally sensible if not inspired or wholly original.'[3] Frank McLynn's recent biography of Stevenson comments on his theory of depopulation that 'This "law" receives support from the findings of modern sociology, for it has been discovered that national *angst* or psychosis is most usually associated with the *rate of change* rather than change itself.'[4]

A problem with approaching the image of the dying native - and other dominant traditions of the Pacific - from a tropological perspective is the fact that tropes are partial truths, partial understandings. If tropes were *simply* lies, challenging them would be less problematic, for underneath the false representation would be a true representation waiting to be discovered. The deaths of Rarahu and Kana-ana were false, but they were persuasive tropes of empire firstly because they accumulated an authority through the constant reiterations, as Stoddard agreed that Rarahu was indeed dying: 'The Creeds are believed, not because they are rational, but because they are repeated', wrote Oscar Wilde in 'The Critic as Artist'.[5] Secondly, the tropes were believable because they were reflections of the actual depopulation of the islands. As Stoddard argued in his interview with Therese Blanc, the literal truth of the image of the dying pearl fisher was less important than his attempt to capture through the image the 'essence' of the Polynesians, and their desire to serve the 'higher race'. Stevenson's theory, and McLynn's support of

it, is a response to massive changes that were indeed taking place in the structures of Pacific societies, to the depredations of 'blackbirders', and to the diseases that were still sweeping through the islands. In the context of the changing perceptions of the Marquesas, Greg Dening has suggested that 'By 1863 no one talked profusely of the handsome men and beautiful women on the beach. They remarked instead on opthalmia, skin eruptions, bloated limbs and wasted bodies coughing mercilessly in the corners of their huts.'[6] This in itself is suggestive of the operation of tropological knowledge, for it again shows the *extremes* with which Europe defined its Other: as either beautiful or ugly.

The trope of the dying native works in imperial narrative through deflecting responsibility for the 'depopulation' onto the 'natives' themselves. Europe's responsibility is acknowledged, as it is in Stevenson's theory of change, but it merely serves to underline the weakness of the 'race', its inability to cope with change. In broader terms, the sympathetic individual is prevented from helping by the nature of the native. This trope can be seen operating today in the disturbing pictures of African famines, and the powerful images of genocide in Central Africa. These things are happening, but they are defining Africa as a dying continent: all the sensitive European can do is to pump more money and aid into the continent, and watch it being swallowed up by corrupt governments. It is not surprising then, that in a recent article in *The Spectator* Paul Johnson has argued that what the 'desperately ill-governed', '50-odd independent African states created since 1960' need is a 'new form of imperialism: altruistic, internationally supervised, efficient and tough-minded',[7] just as Stevenson argued for colonial rulers who liked the Samoans, but were not afraid of hanging them, and as missionaries called for

formalised control of the islands. Johnson's Africans are biologically incapable of helping themselves: the American involvement in Somalia will fail, he says, because it 'rests on the baseless assumption that an honest and efficient government of Somalia can eventually be created from among the local politicians.' He was accurate about the American involvement in Somalia failing, even if less than clear-sighted about its motives; but Johnson makes clear both the tenacity of an imperial vision and the part that narrative tropes still play in the European understanding of the world, as cannibalism, disorder, tyranny and vulnerability are evoked in his argument for a new imperialism to save the Africans from themselves.

Frank McLynn's support for Stevenson's theory through the 'findings of modern sociology', cannot be easily detached from this deeply entrenched way of seeing the world. What, in a colonial situation, is being obscured by the native susceptibility to a 'rate of change', and why are Europeans not equally weakened by the massive changes of climate and custom they experience in the colonies? As we saw on Pitcairn's Island, the Tahitian women coped well with the imposed changes, but the Tahitian men died - not through any 'racial' weakness, but simply because they were murdered. In a colonial context, McLynn's claims are little more than hollow punditry, showing the persistence of the trope, as Hayden White suggests tropological knowledge continues to control rational understanding, in *Tropics of Discourse*.[8] But McLynn's application of modern European sociological theory to a nineteenth century imperial situation does raise issues concerned with understanding Europe's encounters with the Other that are pertinent to postcolonial studies.

These matters have become focused in the continuing debate around the death of Captain Cook between Marshall Sahlins and Gananath Obeyesekere, with which I introduced the subject of tropological knowledge. As I write this conclusion, Sahlins has just published in America his reply to Obeyesekere, *How "Natives" Think: About Captain Cook, for Example*, an extract of which has recently appeared in *The Times Literary Supplement*.[9] Examining Obeyesekere's 'irritation' with Sahlins' original lecture on the death of Cook, during which Obeyesekere 'could not think of any parallel example [of apotheosis] in the long history of contact between foreigners and Sri Lankans or, for that matter, Indians',[10] Sahlins argues that 'There is no a priori reason to suppose that the cultures or cosmologies of South Asians afford a special access to the beliefs and practices of Polynesians.' Obeyesekere's 'underlying thesis', he writes, 'is crudely unhistorical, a not-too implicit notion that all the natives so-called (by Europeans) are alike, most notably in their common cause for resentment.'[11] Sahlins' point is a good one, claiming that Obeyesekere's argument replicates the imperialist universalisation of savagery that I have noted in the representations of the Pacific, just as Obeyesekere had argued that Sahlins' was doing the same in theorising the European trope of the 'white god'. As both men are members of the 'Western' academy, it would be surprising if they were not both influenced to a degree by European ways of seeing, despite their different national backgrounds. I acknowledge that the same problem inevitably surrounds this thesis, which will also have been influenced by my own cultural baggage.

There are other important problems raised by the debate. Is it possible to reconsider empire through indigenous myths, traditions and histories, as Sahlins argues, or have they been so affected by the processes of colonisation that they now reflect distorted versions

of imperial tropes? Can postcolonial studies assume that all humankind shares, or always shared, the same type of rational thought, as Obeyesekere argues, or do different societies think in radically different ways? Sahlins argues that Obeyesekere's thesis of a common rationality is fundamentally flawed:

> Distinguishing the practical from the mythical in the same way that the observable is different from the fictional, these oppositions are as foreign to Hawaiian thought as they are endemic to the European habitus. For Hawaiians, the notion that Cook was an actualization of Lono was hardly an unreflected, non-empirical proposition. It was construed from, and as, perceived relations between their cosmology and his history. Hawaiian thought does not differ from Western empiricism by an inattention to the world but by the ontological premise that divinity, and more generally subjectivity, can be immanent in it.[12]

Here the debate engages with the second half of Said's description of mythic discourse: as the distortion of the thing represented. 'We' deny that the Hawaiians recognised Cook as Lono because as non-Polynesians we cannot understand a different type of world view: 'different cultures, different rationalities', Sahlins concludes.[13] One difficulty with Sahlins' argument here is that his thesis of a Cook-Lono identification depends on the existence of a Hawaiian rationality that would make and believe in that assumption, but its existence is to a large extent only discovered through his argument; and we still return to the problem of how we can confidently work within a rationality that can only be 'discovered' through the interpretation of texts and transcriptions that are, at the very least, influenced by the processes of colonisation.

Sahlins, despite his awareness of an Hawaiian rationality, remains far more wedded to the notion of European rational thought than Obeyesekere, whose interpretation of the death of Cook reverses the rational/irrational binaries of imperial discursive practices. I have

tried to show in this thesis, like Obeyesekere, that Europe's understanding of the Pacific was founded on narrative traditions, instinctive reactions, and existing tropes of travel and conquest, rather than on 'rational' thought; again, like Obeyesekere, I have sought to challenge the authority of the European text. The difference between the mythical and the practical in the European adventure stories, travel writing and ethnographies about the Pacific, is not clearly defined. The same illogical tropes of savagery inform all the narratives.

I have argued that Europe brought these tropes with them to the Pacific, and I began by showing that Europe's deployment of images of savagery throughout the conquest of America was the single most important factor in the understanding of the Pacific. Melville consciously used the captivity narratives of Puritan New England for the structure of *Typee*, and he used the representations of American Indians as the starting point for his knowledge of the Typees, just as other writers and artists had done, and would continue to do throughout the nineteenth century. Although differences already appeared in *Typee* - as the emphasis on Indian nomadicism turned into its opposite, the captivity itself shaded into idyll, and sexuality became a far more important issue - Stevenson was still comparing the dying Marquesans with the 'disappearing' American Indians in 1891. But Africa and the Orient also played a major part in understanding the Pacific. As I discussed in the chapter on Pierre Loti, the sexual 'freedom' of Pacific societies had, from the earliest contact between the *Dolphin* and the Tahitians, been narrated in the style of adventures in the harem, and this 'Orientalist' way of seeing Polynesian sexuality was a strong influence on Loti. The 'Africanisation' of the Pacific, which I explored through Fijian missionary narratives and the children's adventure stories of W.H.G. Kingston, was

also dominant in the discourse of slavery that continued to run through representations of Pacific sexuality, from the moment that George Robertson noted of Tahiti that 'There is three distinct colours of people here'.[14] The fantasies of devotion and death in the writings of Charles Warren Stoddard are based on the formative images of the plantation, as much as on the sentimental captivity narratives of the Pacific. Although the colonisation of the Pacific was carried out in different ways to the conquest of America, the colonisation of Africa, and the old conflict with the Orient, the same images recurred, as a Pacific identity was negotiated through existing tropes of empire.

A problem was establishing a genealogy for these patterns, as an image associated with one area appeared to overlap with another. The images of homosexuality that I discussed in *Typee* and the writings of Stoddard, were particular responses to Puritan American condemnation of male love, and homosexuality had been associated with the 'natural life' of American Indians, as it was to be in Polynesia; but it was also 'found' in what Sir Richard Burton was to call the 'Sotadic Zone', a climatically and geographically determined band that included the Mediterranean, Arabia, North Africa, India, China, Japan, North and South America from the Bering to the Magellan Straits, and Polynesia.[15] Quite how Burton saw any form of geographical or climatic unity in this area is unclear, and it is probable that it actually reflects European fantasies about 'brown' rather than 'black' lovers, despite Burton's assertion that the zone is 'not racial'.[16] In a discussion of stereotypes and imperial representation, Homi K. Bhabha argues that 'the *same old* stories of the Negro's animality, the Coolie's inscrutability, or the stupidity of the Irish *must* be told (compulsively) again and afresh' in imperial narrative.[17] Empire universalises savagery: within imperial narrative the 'Negro' can be animalistic,

inscrutable and stupid, all at the same time, just as Burton's Sotadic Zone, within which 'the Vice is popular and endemic' defines savagery through a shared sexuality.[18] This has partly been my point. Tropical knowledge allows all savagery to be understood in broadly similar terms, and one would expect to find the same tropes operating in all areas of imperial activity.

Nonetheless, a recognisable 'identity' is created from these tropes, as certain 'types' come to be particularly associated with one area, and others with another. The Pacific was defined from the 'beginning' as an area of sexual 'difference', and its image has continued to be dominated by sexuality. A European language and an expectation of savage sexuality existed long before Europeans arrived in the Pacific, and the sentimental trope of the 'interracial' relationship commanded representations of the area in imperial narrative. But a major 'difference' of Polynesian sexuality remained virtually unmentioned, except in the romances of Stoddard. As I argued in connection with Mariner and Melville, European cultural attitudes until the middle of the nineteenth century were such that the traveller could not afford to be 'tainted' by the suspicion of homosexuality. The changing understanding of homosexuality and the homosexual at the end of the century is described by Michel Foucault in *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*:

> defined by the ancient civil or canonical codes, sodomy was a category of forbidden acts; their perpetrator was nothing more than the juridical subject of them. The nineteenth century homosexual [however] became a personage, a past, a case history, and a childhood, in addition to being a type of life, a life form, and a morphology, with an indiscreet anatomy and possibly a mysterious physiology.[19]

Prior to this period, Foucault argues, homosexuality was understood only as the 'unnatural' sexual act, and men were punished for committing buggery or sodomy rather than for being homosexuals. As a scientific language developed for talking about homosexuality as an 'aberrant' identity, which in the imperial context can already be seen at work in Burton's descriptions of the Sotadic Zone, Polynesian sexuality was probably being 'cleaned up' by the imposition of European moral values through the missionary movements. Stoddard's homosexual romances appearing to celebrate an affinity with the Polynesians neither fitted the language with which male love could be described by the traveller, nor, probably, reflected as great a cultural reality of Polynesia in the last two decades of the century. I have tried to demonstrate that whilst tropical knowledge is not entirely false, neither does it necessarily present a picture of the society it purports to describe, and images of the Pacific were often controlled by social movements and attitudes that had nothing to do with the Pacific. This was particularly noticeable in the concern with the Morant Bay Rebellion in Kingston's Fijian tale.

Much of the writing I have discussed has been concerned with authority. Anthony Pagden described the traditional authority attributed to the autoptic observations of the eye-witness: something was believed because it had been seen, and the experience divided the traveller from the stay-at-home: the 'South-Seayer' from the stockbroker. 'To sensitive minds', wrote the missionary, Thomas Williams, 'the Fijian is an object of disgust; but as this feeling arises from his abominable practices only, personal intercourse with him seldom fails to produce at last a more favourable impression.'[20] For Williams, the necessary lack of prejudice towards the Fijians would grow with a knowledge of their society and language. Missionaries like William Ellis and Williams, and novelists such

as Ballantyne and Kingston who drew on them, based their understanding of the islanders on theological theories of moral degeneration and a fear of 'natural man', a predication which sat uneasily with Williams' claim for unprejudiced observation.[21]

Melville, Loti, Stoddard and Stevenson were concerned to underline their distance from imperial vision, and to display authorial integrity through an intimacy with the Other. This independence was helped by the sheer distance between Europe and Polynesia. Simply travelling to these 'islands in the far sea' implied a severing of links with Europe and its ways of seeing, or at least of a radical disturbance of that vision, as is made clear during Loti's 'baptism'. Empathising with another culture was dramatised through the relationship with the native lover, which stood in turn for the ability to describe that disappearing culture in an informed manner. The clearest articulation of this was Rarahu's 'rare and remarkably poetical feeling' for the mysterious essence of Tahiti, which could be gained by the European through a sexual mingling of the blood: 'If you stayed at Apiré oftener at night ... you would learn much more quickly of me, a number of words which the girls who live at Papeete do not know.'[22]

I have tried to demonstrate the imperial and racial connotations of the 'special relationship' with Polynesia, showing how the relationships drew on the tropes of sentimental travel literature, and became more 'racialised' within the steadily increasing biologisation of history. The narratives of fatal 'interracial' love affairs were to legitimate the blood-based theories of 'miscegenation' that began with Gobineau's *Essai sur l'inegalité des Races Humaine* in 1854, but which started to be really persuasive after the turn of the century, finally underwriting the Eugenics movement, the 'racial cleansing' of

Hitler's Germany, and South African Apartheid.[23] Secondly, I have tried to question the independence of the autoptic eye. People travel for different reasons - for pleasure, for business, for exploration, for escape - and they travel with preconceived notions and a battery of interpretations of the new and unfamiliar ready to hand. As was seen in Stevenson's Pacific cruises on the *Casco* and the *Equator*, these preconceptions were influenced by the body of Pacific literature that the writers were familiar with, and to which they themselves contributed. But they were also influenced by the longer traditions of travel and adventure that had nothing to do with the Pacific at all. Even a writer like Stevenson, who consciously tried to rewrite many of the tropes of empire in his fiction, could not entirely free himself from an imperial way of seeing.

The tropes of empire are tenacious, and their legacy is found in the Pacific to this day. In Epeli Hau'ofa's paper 'Our Sea of Islands', which the Tongan novelist and anthropologist has described as causing 'a little storm here in Oceania',[24] he describes an Oceania which has come to believe these European images. He focuses on 'a currently prevailing notion about islanders and their physical surroundings that, if not countered with opposite and more constructive views, could inflict lasting damage on people's image of themselves....'[25] According to this belittling view:

> the small island states and territories of the Pacific, that is, all of Polynesia and Micronesia, are much too small, too poorly endowed with resources, and too isolated from the centres of economic growth for their inhabitants ever to be able to rise above their present condition of dependence on the largesse of wealthy nations.[26]

The states of Oceania, and Hau'ofa takes issue in passing with the European division of

Oceania into Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia, have come to see themselves in the image of the fragmented, weak and pitiable islands created by imperial narrative. The tropes of European empire have entered into the current political theories of Oceania. Hau'ofa puts it rather more succinctly in his short story, 'The Glorious Pacific Way', in which the Pacific islands can look forward to their 'new, permanent role as a first-rate, expert beggar' of the aid programmes of European world.[27] For many years, Hau'ofa says, he believed in this role himself, for it 'seemed to be based on irrefutable evidence, on the reality of our existence.'[28] He describes his 'road of Damascus', on which he first started to question his beliefs, being his drive from Kona to Hilo on the Big Island of Hawaii:

> I saw such scenes of grandeur as I had not seen before: the eerie blackness of regions covered by recent volcanic eruptions; the remote majesty of Maunaloa, long and smooth, the world's largest volcano; the awesome craters of Kilauea threatening to erupt at any moment; and the lava flow on the coast not far away. Under the aegis of Pele, and before my very eyes, the Big Island was growing, rising from the depths of a mighty sea. The world of Oceania is not small; it is huge and growing bigger every day.[29]

Restriction and vulnerability is a state of mind created by Europe. The imperial trope of the dying islands is beautifully reversed in Hau'ofa's image of growth and natural power, of new land being forged from the mixing of fire and water. When looked at from this angle, Hau'ofa argues, since the imperialism that restricted inter-island contact and trade and isolated the island groups has finished, 'ordinary' Polynesians have been doing what their ancestors did hundreds of years ago, and crossing international boundaries, developing their own informal island trade and 'establishing new resource bases and expanded networks for circulation'.[30] The actual day to day life of Oceania disturbs the

'official' understanding, and what is needed is a change of perspective, a refusal to believe the imposed tropes of empire. As Mary Louise Pratt has argued in her discussion of the prevalence of narrative tropes in the 'rational' discourses of ethnographic writing, 'Surely a first step toward such a change is to recognize that one's tropes are neither natural nor, in many cases, native to the discipline. Then it becomes possible, if one wishes, to liberate oneself from them, not by doing away with tropes (which is not possible) but by appropriating and inventing new ones (which is).[31]

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