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Enlightened Powers

American, French, and British
Interactions in Botany Bay, 1788–1800

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From the editors of this issue

"The most magnificent plant which the prolific soil of New Holland affords is, by common consent both of Europeans and Natives, the Waratah". What is remarkable about this otherwise simple statement? Readers will notice that in a rare moment in history, Aboriginal and European views about the beauty of nature coincided. The release of the first published book on the Australian flora, *A Specimen of the Botany of New Holland* (1793–1795), marks this historical moment. Although the author and botanist James Edward Smith never went to colonial New South Wales and although he published material sent by other naturalists, he vividly wrote what seemed true and natural to him. Was this the view of the enlightened scientist? A view that suggests there is "by common consent" across cultural borders, geographical spheres and despite different perceptions of the world and her creation one same impetus to learn: Men's and women's ability to marvel about the known and to get excited about the unknown.

Inspired by this truth, the editors of the *Australian Studies Journal* follow the axiom of enthusiasm: To marvel, to question, to learn and to spread knowledge. A large part of this special issue has its origin in a Symposium which was held in 2014 at the Interdisciplinary Centre for European Enlightenment Studies at the Martin-Luther-University in Halle (Saxony-Anhalt). The Symposium, organized by Dr. Therese-Marie Meyer, was titled "Enlightened Powers: American, French, and British Interactions in Botany Bay, 1788–1800".

It is the first time that the *Australian Studies Journal* hosts a special, thematically focussed and guest-edited issue. We are delighted to present highly innovative research lying at the core of transnational and comparative studies between Europe, Australia, and America. The special issue shows intricacies and complexities of a fundamentally global world in the late eighteenth century. The contributions discuss the multiple facets of enlightened agencies, ranging from military and political history, over microhistory (*Alltagsgeschichte*) to the history of science, race, and culture. The special issue foregrounds the necessity for more transnational research in order to better understand the complex mechanisms of global, national, and regional histories.

The special issue deeply reflects the aim and scope of this journal to study Australia from multiple and inter-disciplinary angles that see perspectives from the distance not as a reiteration of a 'tyranny' (in this context Eurocentrism) but an essential element of the kaleidoscopic nature in which Australian Studies should be practiced. We therefore explicitly welcome and foster similar endeavours of guest-editing conference proceedings, workshop contributions or any other forms of special issues for this journal. Next to the Symposium section – which partly deviates from this journal's style guide to meet the customs of archive referencing – we also present regular contributions to Australian Studies, including reviews of Antonella Riem's *A Gesture of Reconciliation* (2017) by Professor Dieter Riemenschneider, Mandisi Majavu's *Uncommodified Blackness* (2017) by Dr. Stefanie Affeldt, Regina Ganter's *The Contest for Aboriginal Souls* (2018) by Dr. Lina Pranaitytė-Wergin, and Martina Horáková's *Inscribing Difference and Resistance* (2017) by editor Dr. Oliver Haag.

In his article "If Land was a Head: A Critique of 'Country'", Dr. Mitchell Rolls, cultural anthropologist at the University of Tasmania and President of the International Australian Studies Association (InASA), presents a critical reading of the different notions of head-hunting and country in cross-racial debates in Australia that also exhibit facets of exoticism and racialisation. Mitchell Rolls' outstanding analysis takes up a controversial issue: The author argues "that notions of land and country are readily sentimentalised along the lines of 'the earth is my mother'" whereby "such sentiments also provide a ready means for Aborigines who have never lived on country to nevertheless explain its significance to them". Country is a complex and fundamentally historical terrain that nurtures identity politics and legal debates. It is a concept that is dynamic and peppered with moralisation that render nuanced and differentiated approaches often delicate and thus all the more timely and pioneering. The editors of this issue wish to invite other researchers to join this discussion. In another context, Danielle Norberg's review essay of Richard Flanagan's *Gould's Book of Fish – A Novel in Twelve Fish* illustrates that "the creation of a fictitious counter-narrative questions the established version" of historiography and "opens up new ways of debating history and, thus, enters the very current discussion about Indigenous history in Australia".

Finally, we like to thank Professor Frank Schulze-Engler for the offer to publish his poignant memories of a good friend and colleague, Professor Geoffrey V. Davis who died in November 2018. Geoffrey Davis was known for his extensive expertise in Indigenous and Postcolonial Studies. Our thoughts are with his family.

This issue would not have been possible without Dr. Therese-Marie Meyer's editing of the special section, Dr. Victoria Herche and Dr. Stefanie Affeldt's meticulous technical assistance and layout work, and Professor Beate Neumeier's (Centre for Australian Studies, Cologne) generosity to fund the print copies. The editors' profound gratitude finally goes to our contributors. Our field of Australian Studies may thrive like the beautiful blossom of the Waratah.

Henriette von Holleuffer & Oliver Haag (March 2019)

SONDERAUSGABE
SPECIAL ISSUE

Enlightened Powers

American, French, and British Interactions in Botany Bay, 1788–1800

Symposium in cooperation with the Interdisciplinary Centre for European Enlightenment Studies and the Muhlenberg Center for American Studies, Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg, and the Association for Australian Studies

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Therese-Marie Meyer

Halle, February 2019

Introduction

> It is possible to see the foundation of Australia not so much as a convict settlement, but as an Enlightenment society, dedicated, as were many others, to a social experiment, through the making of a new, ordered society. Convicts had never before been formed into a colony and the challenge before Governor Phillip was the very Enlightenment one of obtaining mastery over the natural world. He was also working out, just as global explorers had in other parts of the world, his relations with the Aborigines, or indigenous people, with whom he enjoined his men to stand in good relations. In all these ways, Sydney Cove was an Enlightenment society. (Outram: 313)

This quote, from Dorinda Outram's *Panorama of the Enlightenment* (2006), neatly captures a great many truths *about* as well as a great many problems *with* the Enlightenment. It also conveniently provides a good starting point with which to introduce this small group of papers. They are the result of a Symposium held in 2014 at the *Interdisciplinary Centre for European Enlightenment* (*IZEA*) Studies at the Martin-Luther-University in Halle (Saxony-Anhalt), thus set at a place dedicated to the study of the Enlightenment. The Symposium was titled "Enlightened Powers: American, French, and British Interactions in Botany Bay, 1788–1800".

To begin, then, with the truths: The eighteenth century, in a quite startling way, was a global period, and the extension of European imperialist aspirations was global, too. The binary enshrined in postcolonial theory between the centre and periphery is, therefore, one that simply does not do justice to the late eighteenth century. Most of its critical verve writes back to the imperialist denigrations which developed after concepts of race, white supremacy, and the religious fervor of Evangelical missions shaped imperial Britain in the nineteenth century. All this lasted well into the twentieth century and, to some extent, even transcended the dissolution of Empire itself. In the eighteenth century, however, it is difficult to see how such a central/peripheral binary would apply to the newly founded United States, the range of the East India Company far into the Indo-Pacific, to settlements such as Rio de Janeiro, Boston, Cape Town or Mauritius. None of these places thought their local issues were peripheral, though some European administrators may have already considered them to be so. In consequence, it would also be an error, in critical terms, to focus only on a Transatlantic binary relationship, which embodies conceptually the consequences of the Cold War and the United States' ties to Europe and Britain – and which thus anachronistically imposes a conceptualization upon eighteenth century studies that can only fail to adequately represent the period. In order to grasp the order of the magnitude of imperialist strategy (or its bungling) in the South Pacific at the end of the eighteenth century, one needs a more extensive, global focus indeed.

An Enlightenment social experiment, then, the colonial foundation at Port Jackson in 1788 may well have been, yet if so, it was an experiment driven by necessity. Where to send all those convicts after the Treaty of Paris (1783) had clarified

once and for all America's rejection of their settlement? At a time of dire poverty, thriving criminal industry and enterprise, and various rebellions within the British Isles, there were a great many convicts to dispose of indeed. Notorious hulk loads full of prisoners, floating on the Thames or off-shore at various harbours, awaited the results of the American War of Independence, during which British courts had simply kept sentencing to transportation, and this became a feature well into the nineteenth century (see Charles Dickens' novel *Great Expectations*). The overflowing short-term confinement facilities that Britain had, in place of a fully formed penal system, additionally bear witness to the government's necessity to come up with a quick and efficient solution to the convict transportation problem. African ports proved too dire a place with tropical diseases and high mortality rates, and survivors' reports caused enlightened shocks and consequent rejections (cf. Christopher 2011). In the slightly longer run, the first penal colony at Port Blair on the Andaman Islands – founded in 1789 almost contemporaneously with Port Jackson – failed for similar reasons, despite moving the site to Port Cornwallis; it was abandoned in 1796 (cf. Vaidik 2010). Transportation was to be a civilized, enlightened move away from the gory consequences of the Bloody Code; exile was not supposed to be, effectively, just a prolonged form of death sentence. Yet this social experiment was also, from the start, a strategic move – and strategic on a global scale. If the British or the French had an interest in Australia, it was because of the access the Bass Strait and the Torres Strait gave to the larger Pacific.

The South Westerlies made the coast of Spanish settlements in Chile closer to Australian settlements than the coast of Cape Town, as Péron noted in his report to the French Government, which finally issued Napoleon's instruction to take the British colony, though in 1810 this order came far too late (Scott: 21; see also Fornasiero 2014). In fact, this strategic position made Australia so uncomfortably close that the Spanish checked up on Port Jackson in 1798, just to be on the safe side (King: 47). It was also of paramount strategic importance to the eighteenth century balance of power because the trade triangle between the West Australian coast, the ports of Mauritius and the Seychelles, and India – with the first Andaman Island convict colony – promised to Britain control over the ungovernable, ongoing exchange of goods with Asian and Pacific riches. Within this geostrategic focus, French and British naval and imperialist ambitions were similar and in great competition, as the successful British invasion of French Mauritius and surrender of the French governor of the Seychelles in 1810–11 testifies. Neither could fully stop the ongoing activities of French privateers, who after the American War of Independence had started preying again on the East India Company naval routes from bases in Madagascar (Piat: 10). The eighteenth century is the time of the rise of naval traffic, and this traffic – so vital to military, economic and diplomatic connections and strategies – was teeming, and above all it was global.

Naturally, the seas being purportedly free for all, American traders, slavers, whalers and sealers roamed the oceans with the rest of the Europeans. American ebony traders, bound for China, were there in the Indo-Pacific, to transport exchanged prisoners of war between the British in India and the French in Mauritius (Flinders: 410, 432). They were there at Governor King's own instigation, David Collins claims, to bring Caribbean rum to Port Jackson (Collins: 186), and thus circumvented the East India Company's attempts at selling their Indian arrack. So one needs to con-

sider this additional US competition to the British and French naval and economic presence in the Indo-Pacific, if one is to understand the balance of the geostrategic implications of the British settlement at Port Jackson.

It also pays well to remember the impact of this global, historical focus on our world today. From the beginning of their first settlements at the Eastern coast of the North American continent, the settlers in the American colonies had thought of themselves as confined towards the West by the Pacific only – certainly not by any lines drawn on the map to designate spaces of white settlement by His Most Gracious Majesty King George III's government. This was, after the royal proclamation of 1763, a territory running only parallel to the Atlantic coast, extending little more than a few hundred miles into the interior. In the sense of the following American drive towards the Pacific, Hillary Clinton's declaration of the twenty-first century as "America's Pacific century" is quite traditional, though it startled and puzzled Europeans at the time (Clinton 2011). Notably, for all the more contemporary bluster of "America First", the Trump Administration's ongoing focus on China, both Korean states, Russia and Japan, to the detriment of its post-World War II Transatlantic focus on Europe, shows this still ongoing change, or, more properly speaking, this ongoing return to the eighteenth century's global focus.

Undoubtedly, though it had the makings of a social experiment, the settlement at Port Jackson had an economic background and a strategic focus. Yet it was founded within the humanitarian concepts of Enlightenment. The accumulation of knowledge was seen as the core of progress, and so the progress of society, industry, and commerce was interpreted as the driving force of civilization. It is important to remember that "mastery over the natural world" (Outram: 313) could in part be bought and sold. It is here that the trade in expedition journals, maps, plants, anatomical specimens, and knowledge, the circulation of concepts and ideas mirrors and follows the circulation of ships. Ships brought books to Port Jackson, and took specimens, drawings, journals, letters, seeds to spread globally again. And more grisly fare: Collections of Indigenous skulls and other human remains have been reclaimed in the last decades from American, British, and European hospitals, museums and university collections, not to forget cultural artefacts. The eighteenth century's Enlightenment has thus not merely laid the foundation stones of global political and economic modernity, it continues to exert a problematic reach into the present as well because the scientific community often pushed humanitarian concerns aside in order to serve scientific and economic interests.

Establishing a new research paradigm is not an easy venture, and will of necessity just scrape the surface of such a vast interdisciplinary project. The papers from this Symposium provide a comparative perspective each, bringing to the table their respective authors' individual expertise. There is a strong focus on historiography, represented by historians from America, Europe, and Australia, but also a focus on cultural studies in the more general sense. As keynote speaker, we were very fortunate to win Professor Cassandra Pybus, Centenary of Federation Medal recipient of 2003 for her service to Australian society and literature, a historian who needs no introduction to Australians and to a great many other international historians. The *University of Queensland Press* considers her rightly "one of Australia's best known and most admired non-fiction writers" (UQP, web). *Black Founders: The Unknown Story of Australia's First Black Settlers* and *Epic Journeys of Freedom: Runaway Slaves*

of the American Revolution and their Global Quest for Liberty (both 2006) opened the field of research into eighteenth century global imperialist history. In her keynote she focuses on the contrasting fates of Black Caesar and John Randall, both originally from America, who had been transported to Australia on the First Fleet. She also stresses the debilitating effects which the New South Wales' Corps' corruption and rum trafficking had on the colony. Nicole Starbuck, an Australian expert on the French explorations of the South Pacific, is the author of *Baudin, Napoleon and the Exploration of Australia* (2013). As Senior Research Associate she also contributed to the ARC Discovery Project "The Baudin Legacy: A New History of the French Scientific Voyage to Australia, 1800–1804". Starbuck presents in her historiographic paper a closer look at French republican views and representations of Aborigines. She argues that the Indigenous population of Port Jackson, from the French ethnographic point of view, was already "tainted" by urbanity, in contact with the British colony and other international (such as American) shipping traffic. To understand the French evaluation of Indigenous life in Port Jackson, one needs to differentiate between their own frameworks of rurality vs. urbanity, local authenticity vs. international mingling.

The German independent historian Henriette von Holleuffer, co-editor of this special edition, general co-editor of the *Australian Studies Journal*, and editor of the German translation of Edward John Eyre's encyclopaedic and scientifically relevant *Journals of Expeditions of Discovery into Central Australia / Expeditionen in den Westen Australiens* (2016), discusses in her paper the pragmatic politics of French and British naturalists, botanical artists and gardeners who explored the Australian flora in the early Australian colony. Her research illustrates "the maintenance of an international academic network that enabled science to continue freely – in times of peace and war". Against the background of ongoing military hostilities, von Holleuffer traces an attempt by scientific correspondents to create a transnational, pacifist community of science, which also shapes their practice of botanical naming. Prior to my own contribution, I had recently edited a new bicentenary version of the first German translation of Matthew Flinders' *A Voyage to Terra Australis / Die Entdeckungsreise nach Australien* (2014). In this special edition's paper, I focus on a triple causality behind the Irish convict rebellion at Castle Hill in colonial New South Wales (1804), more specifically on the question how the interaction between United Irishmen republicanism and Defender Catholicism in the specific context of the Australian colony and with regard to the events before, during and after the rebellion can help explain the iconography of an Ecce Homo statue presented to ex-convict William Davis in 1817.

Cross-currents between these historical, political, social, religious, and scientific interactions opened up in the Roundtable discussion between Cassandra Pybus, Andrew O'Shaughnessy and Jennifer Anderson, which focused on the as yet not fully considered implications of the early American maritime presence in the South Pacific, and on the circulation of individuals between America and Australia following the British loss of the American colonies. Cassandra Pybus has already briefly been introduced above. The other two participants were no less illustrious. Jennifer Anderson, Assistant Professor at Stony Brook University, New York, and author of *Mahogany: The Costs of Luxury in Early America* (2012), brought to the table her expertise on the history of early American trading from Indonesia to the Caribbean

and across the Atlantic, but also on the local Nantucket whaling industry. Andrew O'Shaughnessy, finally, has been Saunders Director of the Robert H. Smith International Centre for Jefferson Studies at Monticello since 2003 and works as a Professor of History at the University of Virginia. He is also a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and elected Fellow of the Massachusetts Historical Society. O'Shaughnessy is one of the foremost American experts on colonial military history and has published extensively on the American War of Independence in its global ramifications, from *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (2000) to *The Men Who Lost America: British Leadership, the American Revolution, and the Fate of the Empire* (2014), to name just the most important publications for the context of this special edition. The Roundtable discussion was open to questions from the public.

We are indebted to the *Hamburger Stiftung zur Förderung von Wissenschaft und Kultur*, whose generous funding helped this project see the light of day, as well as the *Muhlenberg Center for American Studies (MCAS)*, at the University of Halle, that subsidized the original Symposium. Professor Daniel Fulda of the *IZEA* Halle weighed in decisively with his support for our Symposium and deserves special thanks. The *Association for Australian Studies (GASt)* contributed a most interested audience, and Dr. Oliver Haag and Dr. Henriette von Holleuffer agreed to host the publication within the Association's journal in the special edition you, dear reader, now see before you. We are also very grateful to Danielle Norberg and Janet Russell, our two student assistants; Ms Norberg particularly for the transcript of our Roundtable discussion, and both for sustained and efficient support before, during, and after the Symposium event. Most of all, however, I thank the contributors whose patient willingness to embark on this cross-current, global journey inspired all of us.

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Cassandra Pybus
University of Sydney

Revolution, Rum and Marronage

The Pernicious American Spirit at Port Jackson

I find it no small irony to write about enlightenment power at Port Jackson. As a historian who is interested in the nitty gritty of ordinary lived experience in the penal colony, I have found nothing at Port Jackson that looks enlightened.

White Australians would dearly like to have a lofty foundation story about how the nation sprang from enlightenment ideals, such as the American have invented for themselves, which is why Australians don't look too closely at the circumstances in which our nation was born in a godforsaken place at the end of the world that was constituted almost entirely by the brutalised and the brutalising. This narrative is not likely to be found in any popular account of the European settlement of Australia as there is no enlightened power to be found in this tale. Looming over the narrative is the omnipresent, and utterly venal, New South Wales Corps, who ran the colony for their own personal profit for nearly two decades.

My narrative begins on 14 February 1797, when a convict named John Winbow was footslogging through virgin bush about five miles west of Port Jackson in search of a fugitive convict with the singe name of Caesar. Having reached a narrow rock shelter in a sandstone ridge he knew he had found his quarry then and settled down to wait for the outlaw to show himself. Having once made his living as a highwayman, it went against the grain for Winbow to be hunting a fellow outlaw, but the lavish reward of five gallons of undiluted rum was too enticing for scruples.[1] Rum was the local currency at Port Jackson and five gallons represented a small fortune.

That strong liquor should become the currency was certainly not the intention of the founding Governor Captain Arthur Phillip. From the outset he had decreed that there would be no economy of exchange in this new colony at the bottom of the world. There was to be no money, and everyone regardless of their status was to receive the exact same rations. However, the officers of the New South Wales Corps arrived on the Second Fleet with very different ideas. The rapacious bunch of ne'er-do-wells who had taken commissions in the newly raised army corps regarded their exile to this godforsaken place solely in terms of profit.

As soon as their feet hit dry land the New South Wales Corps were dealing in contraband. It was the arrival of the American whaler *Hope* with a large shipment of rum in 1792 that properly set them up. The commanding officer directed the commissary to buy up all 7600 gallons on the ship, which was given to his junior officers to dispense. He gave strict instructions that rum must not get into the possession of the convicts but he might have saved his breath.[2] The officers of New South Wales Corps were no respecter of persons. Having watered down the rum and decanted

1 The reward notice for the death and capture of the outlaw Caesar is reproduced in *Historical Records of New South Wales (HRNSW)*, Vol. 3, 11.
2 Francis Grose to Henry Dundas 9 Jan. 1793, *HRNSW*, Vol. 2, 2.

it into wine bottles, they sold to all and sundry at a profit of 400 per cent. They also used the rum as barter, which allowed them to concentrate all the colony's livestock in their hands.

The purchase from the *Hope* was merely the first of many of speculations with American whalers that brought vast quantities of rum to Sydney. The spirit was made available to anyone for the barter of goods or the issue of promissory notes. Landless labourers would work for rum, ex-marines happily handed over their 25-acre grants in return for the spirit, and farmers exchanged their produce for it. Judge Advocate David Collins lamented that convicts preferred receiving rum to clothing or provisions and they would go to any lengths to procure it.[3] A visiting naval officer sardonically dubbed the New South Wales Corps, the "United Company of Traffic Merchants" and observed that they kept the flow of spirit unchecked by generously extending credit, then calling in their debt at the most auspicious time, just as a promising wheat crop was due.[4] When the crop was harvested, they acted as the broker, buying grain in return for rum, or taking it as repayment for debt, and then reselling it to the commissary at a considerable mark up. Thanks to their complete monopoly of rum all the benefits of trade accumulated in the hands of the officers of the New South Wales Corps. As Judge Advocate Collins sternly lamented, the colony was awash in "this pernicious American Spirit".[5]

The convict bounty hunter John Winbow craved all the rum he could get. Only a few years earlier he had been unloaded like an ox carcass from the stinking hold of a convict transport in the Second Fleet. Scurvy-racked after six months of lying shackled and starved in the ship's hold, he was dragged onto the shore like a dead man, stupefied from the first intake of fresh air. Many of his fellow convicts *were* dead, but Winbow was one of the lucky ones. The native currants that grew around the settlement helped repair his body, but it was the American rum that obliterated his memory.[6] As a convicted felon he had little capacity to pay the exorbitant prices charged by the New South Wales Corps, so reward for the death of the outlaw would be his ticket to oblivion.

His quarry finally made an appearance at dusk. Caesar was a well-muscled man in his late twenties, a good head taller than most in the colony, and he was holding a musket at the ready. But Winbow's musket was already cocked. One close shot brought the outlaw down.[7]

Caesar's death was speedily communicated to Judge Advocate Collins in Sydney who recorded the momentous event in his diary writing: "Thus ended a man who certainly during life, could never have been estimated at one remove above the brute".[8] This was an extraordinary comment for Collins to make. He had been seventeen years at Port Jackson, presiding over numerous incidents of murder and child rape, yet nothing so wicked could be attributed to the dead man, whose only crime

3 David Collins [1798]. *An Account of the English Colony in NSW, with Remarks on the Dispositions, Customs, Manners etc of the Native Inhabitants of that Country*, ed. by Brian H. Fletcher, 1975. Sydney: Reed/Royal Historical Society, 220.
4 The disgusted naval officer was Robert Murray quoted in: John Cobley, ed., 1962–1965. *Sydney Cove: 1788–1800.* Sydney: Angus & Robertson. Vol. 3, 68–70.
5 Collins, 219.
6 See for Winbow's biography and an account of the terrible Second Fleet: Michael Flynn, 1993. *The Second Fleet: Britain's Grim Convict Armada of 1790.* Sydney: Library of Australian History.
7 Hunter to Portland, 3 March 1796, *Historical Records of Australia*, (*HRA)*, Vol. 1, 1788–96, 554–55, for the official report of the death of Caesar.
8 For Caesar's obituary: Collins, 381.

was to take to the bush and steal food to stay alive. Yet Collins regarded Caesar as his particular *bete noir* because he refused to submit to British justice. Caesar was not a white Briton; he was an African American who arrived as a convict aboard the First Fleet transport ship *Alexander,* having been convicted at the Kent Assizes for stealing money.[9] His mock-heroic name, with no surname, strongly indicated he was once a slave and was most likely a runaway from New York, who had come to England with the British army at the end of the American Revolution.[10]

At around six feet Caesar was a head taller than virtually all the Europeans at Port Jackson. Judge Advocate Collins identified Caesar as "the hardest working convict in the country; his frame was muscular and well calculated to hard labour".[11] Caesar might have been one of the first of the new colonists to set foot on Australia in a small work party from the *Alexander* which landed at Botany Bay to cut grass to feed the livestock. The supervising officer, William Bradley reported that there was an African man in the party and he noticed that the Aborigines were especially curious to see this black man among the interlopers assaulting the land with strange weapons.[12] On arrival at Port Jackson, Caesar was allocated as servant to Lieutenant Maitland Shairp, one of a dozen officers who had served in the American Revolution. Bonds forged during that war ran deep, and for black runaways from America who had served with the British, it was a connection stood them in good stead as they began a new life at the other end of the world.[13]

There was never enough to eat at Port Jackson. The settlement may have been surrounded by water with abundant fish, but the newcomers were bewildered in this alien environment and none of them understood the seasonal movements of the shoals. Their nets remained empty. On shore they discovered a few wild berries and sweet leaves from which they concocted an interesting blend of tea for alleviating the worst effects of scurvy, but of little or no nutritional value. Within three months of landing, hunger determined the settlement's pattern of life. This was a particular issue for a powerfully built man like Caesar, who was working as a beast of burden. On 30 April 1788, he appeared in court accused of stealing four pounds of bread from the tent of a fellow convict. Caesar denied the allegation, claiming the bread was given to him by Lieutenant Shairp. The trial record is fragmentary and it does not show whether Shairp's evidence supported this claim or whether Caesar received a sentence.[14] A year later Caesar was in court for another charge of theft of food. Judge Advocate Collins had some sympathy and agreed that Caesar's ravenous hunger "compelled [him] to steal from others, and all his thefts were directed to that purpose". Realising that flogging would fail to deter a starving man, Collins chose instead to extend Caesar's sentence of transportation from seven years to life, shrewdly guessing that while Caesar's powerful body could absorb the blow of the lash, the prospect of a life-time of forced servitude would strike terror in his soul. A fortnight into his extended sentence, Caesar decided that the unknown hinterland was less fearsome than a penal system arbitrated by David Collins.

9 Trial of Caesar, National Archives of United Kingdom (NAUK): ASSI 94/1271, ASSI 31/14.
10 For a discussion of the exodus of runaways from America after the Revolution see: Cassandra Pybus, 2006. *Epic Journeys of Freedom: Runaway Slaves of the American Revolution and their Global Quest for Liberty.* Boston: Beacon Press.
11 Collins, 58.
12 William Bradley,1969. *A Voyage to New South Wales: The Journal of Lieutenant William Bradley RN of HMS Sirius, 1786–1792*. Sydney: Public Library of NSW, 62.
13 For detailed account see: *Epic Journeys of Freedom.*
14 Records of the Judge Advocate's Bench, *State Records of New South Wales (SRNSW)*: 1/296.

Armed with a musket and a cooking pot stolen from a marine, Caesar headed into the wilderness to take his chances. After he was gone Collins noted an increase in robberies of gardens and that someone had taken the lead weights from a fishing net to make shot for a musket. A week later, Collins was highly gratified when Caesar was apprehended at the brickfields. Reappearing in court, he further incensed the judge advocate by expressing complete indifference to his death sentence, claiming that he would "create a laugh before he was turned off, by playing some trick upon the executioner". The subversive notion of hanging as pantomime gave Collins pause. Hanging Caesar would not "have the proper or intended effect", he decided, as the execution of "a mere animal" could not function as a deterrent. He was sent to work in chains on an island in the middle of the harbour which was the site of the settlement's first vegetables gardens. Here Caesar was permitted to supplement his rations with the produce he grew.[15]

By December 1789, Caesar had been released from his chains by his sympathetic marine guards and he made another bolt for the bush taking a week's provisions as well as the canoe used by the marines to get to and from the island. Three days later, William Bradley reported that in the night Caesar had stolen a musket from the settlement. He was at large for six weeks before he was carried back, horribly lacerated by multiple spear wounds to the arms and legs, which suggested the Aborigines were trying to drive him from their territory rather than kill him. William Bradley was present on the day of Caesar's surrender and in his journal he wrote that Caesar told him that he had survived because "when he saw a party of natives with anything on or about their fire, he frightened them away by coming suddenly on them swaggering with his musquet".[16] Once he lost the gun he was attacked.

Under sentence of death he was taken to the hospital to recover from his wounds until he was healthy enough to be hanged. Collins was furious when Governor Phillip gave him a pardon and packed him off to Norfolk Island with a large detachment of 186 convicts.[17] On Norfolk Caesar was given land to clear and farm.[18] Here he formed a liaison with a white convict woman named Ann Poore and they had a daughter, Anne.[19] There was also a son, John, whom he never saw because he was torn away from his pregnant wife and sent back to Port Jackson as part of a large group of male convicts deported from the island.[20] These men were sent away in order to forestall violence against an unruly detachment of the New South Wales Corps who had been deployed to Norfolk Island. These men appropriated the male convicts allotments of land and demanded the sexual favour of the few women on the island.[21]

Collins was not pleased to see the "incorrigibly stubborn black" back again. By December 1795 famine loomed once more at Port Jackson and Collins reported that Caesar had fled into the bush to become the model for and leader of other convict

15 Collins, 58–59.
16 Collins, 73, 76.
17 Collins, 80.
18 Ross to Phillip, 11 Feb. 1791, *HRNSW*, Vol. 1, Part 2, 447. Mollie Gillen, 1989. *The Founders of Australia: A Biographical Dictionary of the First Fleet*. Sydney: Library of Australian History: It is the source for the relationship with Caesar. There are very few marriage records from Johnston's time on Norfolk Island.
19 The birth of Mary-Ann Poore was registered subsequently when she was baptised by Rev. Henry Fulton, see: Register of Henry Fulton, *SRNSW*: BDM, Vol. 4, R5005.
20 Collins, 57, 232.
21 King to Phillip, 19 Sept. 1792; Phillip to Dundas, 4 Oct.1792, *HRNSW*, Vol. 1, Part 2, 653–60. King to Grose, 3 March 1793; King to Sydney, 31 March 1793, King Papers, ML C188. King to Dundas, 10 March 1794, *HRNSW*, Vol. 2, 136–37. For problems over women see: *HRNSW*, Vol. 2, 103–10.

runaways, who he had amalgamated into an outlaw gang.[22] In all probability John Winbow was one of this gang. A government survey to establish the whereabouts of 300 muskets belonging to the crown found that less than fifty could be accounted for. The Governor had a good idea that these weapons were now in the hands of Caesar and his gang. This runaway presented a threat to the penal colony far more dangerous than the hostile Aborigines and what was needed was a reward lavish enough to turn one of his gang into an assassin. Five gallons of rum did the trick.[23]

The outlaw 'Black' Caesar presents the very first instance of that iconic marker of colonial Australia: the bushranger. Historian Russell Ward has gone so far as to suggest that the early convict bushranger embodied more of the Australian character than any other participant in the nation's history.[24] The bushranger has become celebrated in history and folklore, even revered in the person of Ned Kelly with his home-forged suit of armour, who became in novelist Peter Carey's words, "an empty vessel for Australia's wildest dreams".[25] The romantic myth of the bushranger crystallized into the folk ballad that is second only to *Waltzing Matilda* as Australia's national song, *The Wild Colonial Boy,* which celebrates a man *who'd scorn to live in slavery, bound down by iron chains*.

In perpetuating the national myth of the bushranger commentators have missed to claim that tradition is not uniquely Australian. It is in fact an American import. The early convict bushranger, of which Caesar was the prototype, was enacting a long-established tradition among enslaved in the American colonies known as marronage, where slaves would escape into the bush and create marginal outlaw communities in alliance or mutual toleration with Indigenous people. Watkin Tench was a veteran of the American slave colonies and he clearly recognized that Caesar was engaging in marronage. Tench believed Caesar had been trying to ingratiate himself with the Aborigines "with a wish to adopt their customs and live with them: but he was always repulsed".[26] The assassination of Australia's first bushranger brings together the interaction of two key aspects of the pernicious American Spirit at Port Jackson: rum and marronage.

Now, Caesar was not the only slave runaway to fetch up at Port Jackson. They were eleven black convicts on the First Fleet, most of them from America, part of a large diaspora of runaway slaves who attached themselves to the British during the American Revolution. Another of these black Americans was John Randall, originally from Connecticut, convicted in Manchester for stealing a watch.[27] When he disembarked at Port Jackson, John Randall was especially fortunate in being appointed as servant for Lieutenant George Johnston, the Governor's aide-de-camp, who was an elite marine officer with excellent connections. Even before they both took the long voyage to Port Jackson Johnston may have known Randall. Johnston was another officer who had served in the American War, when, as mere boy of 12, he took a commission in the regiment of Lord Percy (later the Duke of Northumber-

22 Collins, 37, 377.
23 *HRNSW*, Vol. 3, 11.
24 Russel Ward, 1966. *The Australian Legend*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 136.
25 "Truth and Consequences", *Time International*, 30 October 2000, 60.
26 Watkin Tench [1789/1793]. *1788: Comprising A Narrative of the Expedition to Botany Bay and A Complete Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson*, ed. by Tim Flannery, 1996. Melbourne: Text Publishing, 116.
27 The 63rd Regiment, originally raised in Manchester and later reconstituted as the West Suffolk Regiment, still had black drummers on its establishment a decade after 1785. Randall's trial was reported in the *Manchester Mercury*, 19 April 1785.

land) stationed in New York. Lord Percy particularly encouraged slave runaways into his service and took some back to England with him.[28]

Once the fleet disembarked, it was expected that local game would supplement the rations, but the native kangaroo was acutely sensitive to danger and moved with astonishing speed. The cumbersome Brown Bess musket was virtually useless for hunting unless handled by a first-rate marksman. The three best shots in the colony were chosen as game-shooters. The Governor and his second in command each employed white convicts as game shooters, but the third convict licensed to shoot game was George Johnson's black convict servant John Randall.[29] These three game shooters were permitted an enviable freedom to move through and beyond the settlement, without supervision, ranging at will through the bush, tracking and shooting kangaroo.

The shooters were often out for days at a time, with bountiful occasion to procure fresh meat for themself and for their close associates. They were regularly included in the Governor's exploratory excursions and John Randall was almost certainly one of the two marksmen who, in April 1788, accompanied Governor Phillip, Lieutenant Johnston and a bevy of officers on the expedition to Broken Bay, north of Port Jackson. He also escorted Phillip and Johnston to Botany Bay in May 1788, and was surely the black tent-carrier mentioned on the third expedition to Broken Bay in August 1788.[30]

By August 1788 there was the chronic shortage of able-bodied workers at Port Jackson and any person who could stand upright and carry a load was pressed into labour. John Randall was a strong man over six feet tall, so it was inevitable he was put to work. No doubt he resented this demotion to a life of hard labour. On 17 October 1788 he and his work mate were charged with disobedience to the master carpenter. Curiously, the charge against Randall was withdrawn the next day, but not against his workmate, indication that this black man had someone of influence looking out for him. That someone was surely George Johnston.

As a strong man with a powerful patron, freedom of movement and regular access to fresh meat, Randall was a cut above any ordinary felon at Port Jackson and an enviable catch as a husband. It is highly significant that within weeks of arrival Randall was married to a white female convict, given that the few women convicts on the First Fleet were almost exclusively taken up as partners by the marine officers and soldiers. Ester Howard was the first of three white women Randall would marry in the course of his life in the colony.

Randall maintained good relations with the Aborigines while he was in the bush with a gun, but his fellow white shooter, convict John McIntyre, inspired a deep enmity among the Aborigines, probably for interfering with their women. One night in December 1790 all three game-shooters were hunting at Botany Bay, south of Sydney and had constructed a hut after the Aboriginal fashion, waiting until dawn to hunt the wary kangaroo. Around midnight, they found themselves surrounded by Aboriginal men with spears. McIntyre reassured his fellow shoots that he knew these men, putting down his musket to walk towards them. Suddenly one of the Aborigines jumped on a fallen log and deliberately speared McIntyre in his left side.

28 The most famous of the black recruits of Lord Percy was the bare-knuckle boxer Bill Richmond.
29 Collins, 108, names Randall as one of the three official game shooters.
30 Phillip to Sydney, *HRNSW*, Vol. 1, Part 2, 191.

The weapon used was specially designed to cause the maximum damage, serrated with a series of stone barbs, attached by gum resin, that broke off and lodged within McIntyre's body. A slow and excruciatingly painful death was guaranteed.

Watkin Tench knew that McIntyre had given serious offence to the Aborigines and told the Governor so, but Governor Phillip insisted that the killing was unprovoked and determined upon a massive reprisal. Tench was instructed to lead an expedition to Botany Bay to bring back the Aboriginal leader Pemulwuy and the heads of another six men. John Randall was one of the two guides for this grisly expedition of fifty men who left at dawn carrying muskets, hatchets for decapitation and bags for the heads. When the over-heated, insect-bitten party finally reached Botany Bay they were unable to find a single Aborigine and they had to trudge back to Sydney, only to be ordered out again. This time Tench instructed his guides to find the quickest route to Botany Bay and the game-shooters led them to a swampy area, which, they advised, was bad to cross but the quickest way. Desperate for the advantage, Tench urged his men on, only to become mired in quicksand. He and his men would have been smothered had not the ropes intended for the Aboriginal victims been used to pull them free. Badly shaken and encrusted with mud, they continued a rapid march to the designated Aboriginal settlement. "To our astonishment [...] we found not a single native at the huts", wrote Tench, "nor was a canoe to be seen on any part of the bay". [31] The Aborigines had been gone for days.

One person who gained an advantage from these farcical events was John Randall. Having failed to lead the head-hunting marines to their quarry, he incurred no personal enmity from the Aborigines and he continued to hunt unmolested. At the same time, he had demonstrated his trustworthiness and loyalty to the Governor, which stood him in good stead. With the arrival of the Second Fleet his circumstances improved even further. He was married for a second time to Mary Butler who arrived on the Second Fleet. Also on that fleet was the New South Wales Corps and Randall was appointed to be the personal shooter for a senior officer, Nicholas Nepean, who was a man with powerful family connections. Randall was permitted to live in absolute independence at Parramatta, armed and at liberty to move outside the settlement. When he finished his sentence in April 1792 he remained in Parramatta, where he was appointed as a shooter for the dilatory Major Francis Grose, commanding officer of the New South Wales Corps who had finally arrived in Sydney for what proved to be a very brief stay.

Grose sought to augment the New South Wales Corps' strength by recruiting a second company from among those discharged marines who had chosen to remain in the colony. Governor Phillip put forward George Johnston as the man most deserving to command this company, and he was given a commission as captain. Randall technically remained the shooter for Major Grose, who had promptly returned to England, so in reality he was George Johnston's man, and George Johnston proved to be the most successful entrepreneur in the corps. As well as benefiting from the officers' monopoly of the rum trade, Johnston had been granted many hundreds of acres and he appropriated cattle from the government herd for his land. He was by far the richest man in the colony and in 1799 he was appointed Governor Hunter's aide-de-camp. Randall came with him.

31 Watkin Tench, *1788: Comprising A Narrative of the Expedition to Botany Bay and A Complete Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson*, ed. by Tim Flannery, 164–176.

He appears to have been living at Government House on the evening of Wednesday 5 June 1799 when a servant at Government House intercepted Randall carrying "sundry plates and glasses" between the kitchen and the gate to the sentry box. Randall gave an ambiguous explanation for this behaviour and the items were returned to the kitchen. That would have been the end of the matter, except that at ten o'clock that night the constable on duty saw Randall sneaking out of the house with more kitchenware. After making a tackle, the constable arrested Randall, the evidence surrounding him on the ground: five whole and two broken glasses.

When the case came before the court a few days later, the judge took a very dim view of a black man who was time-served convict caught stealing from the Governor and his letter to the Governor sternly advised "exemplary punishment" for Randall. The judge was astonished to receive Governor Hunter's response the following morning. The Governor advised that he had received "a petition from Black Randall expressing his sincere contrition" and required the judge to "take the trouble to order him to be liberated".[32] John Randall was illiterate and had been incarcerated in gaol for four days, so clearly some well-placed person interceded on his behalf. Captain George Johnston, no doubt.

Randall continued in his accustomed position for a few months, with Hunter's indulgence, but in November 1799 his circumstances changed when Colonel William Paterson arrived in the colony as the new commanding officer. Paterson carried explicit orders to clean up the abuses practiced by the officers of the New South Wales Corps and the officer most immediately in his sights was George Johnston, who was soon arrested for selling over-priced spirits and sent back to England for trial.[33]

At the time of Johnston's arrest, Randall was living back in Parramatta, where he appeared as plaintiff in a criminal case against a recently arrived Irish convict accused of stealing a pound of tea [a substantial luxury] from his house. Randall stated in his evidence that Kit Murphy had come to his house asking for a gill of "spiritous liqour" and then she drank a lot more before stealing his tea, or so Randall claimed. The constable at Parramatta testified that he often saw the woman "in the habits of intercourse with Randall and she was frequently at his house". Her version was that "Black Randall had been beating her and offering her tea to sleep with him". The assistant surgeon said he found marks of violence on her thighs and knees and the case against her was dismissed.[34]

The magistrates obviously believed that Randall had the capacity to liberally provide large quantities of spirits to the woman who called at his house and to make such an expensive gift of tea. The evidence clearly indicates that Randall was a retailer of commodities and spirits on behalf of an officer of the New South Wales Corps, who always used trusted ex-convicts for this purpose, as a gentleman could not be seen to engage in anything as tawdry as trade. In just this way an ex-convict servant to a prominent military officer could become a wealthy man.

Retailing for the New South Wales Corps kept Randall and his family comfortably housed and supplied with the best goods, but his situation became precarious when Johnston was arrested. With a wife and three children to support, Randall was

32 Court of Criminal Jurisdiction 7 June 1799, *SRNSW*: R655, 8.
33 *HRNSW*, Vol. 4, 82–83, for the arrest of Johnston, and King's sustained attack upon his character.
34 Barbara Hall, 2000. *A Desperate Set of Villains*. Sydney/Coogee, NSW: B. Hall, 193.

hard-pressed. He was forced to take up farming on the land he had been granted years before. In the face of relentless drought, bushfire, and a plague of caterpillars, his harvests were so meagre that he was unable to produce enough food. In the 1800 census he was listed with four pigs, five goats, and four acres planted, but he, his wife and three children were all being fed by the government store.[35] To better his prospects Randall looked to the solution he knew best: the New South Wales Corps.

There had been an increase in the pay for privates and instructions were issued in London for the Corps to recruit more of them from within the colony. Time-expired convicts were allowed to enlist if they were military veterans with a record of good behaviour and required a well-placed person to write a recommendation.[36] Randall was a veteran, but the stolen glasses from Government House presented a problem. He discovered a solution in the unlikely form of the Irish rebel Joseph Holt, who was managing the farm of the New South Wales Corps' paymaster, William Cox, which was close to Randall's land grant. Holt agreed to Randall's proposal that he should buy Randall's grant for a reduced price in return for sending a glowing recommendation to Colonel Paterson.[37]

Paterson was, of course, well aware of Randall as an expert marksman and guide, both useful skills. But Randall had more to offer: he played the flute and drum. Paterson had grand ambitions to establish a regimental band. Randall was readily accepted as a soldier, and he soon held a privileged position as member of the band. To all intents and purposes, playing in the band was all that was ever required of him, although he probably did a bit of game shooting as well.[38] A curious French visitor noted that "a numerous and well composed band" was in concert every morning at the parade ground in front of the officers barracks. Nearby he noticed the officers' mess, which like the band instruments, was financed from the public purse.[39] The most important diversion for the officers was the formal mess dinner, where they and their guests would eat, drink and carouse, while the regimental band entertained them. These dinners were uninhibited affairs and Randall's regular attendance would have afforded him a more intimate interaction with the officers than an ordinary private might normally enjoy.

The soldiers displayed remarkably strong bonds of loyalty to their officers, strengthened by the trickle-down effect from the trade in rum. In turn the officers closed ranks to protect soldiers from being exposed to criminal charges. George Johnston was especially idolised. Randall would not have been alone in rejoicing when Johnston returned to Sydney in December 1801 with the charges against him quashed thanks to his patron, the Duke of Northumberland.

Randall's life in the New South Wales Corps continued to be singularly untaxing: he was never rostered on guard duty, though other band members were and when members of his company were detached to Norfolk Island or Port Dalrymple,

35 Carol J. Baxter, ed., 1988. 1800 Muster Book, *Musters and Lists, New South Wales and Norfolk Island, 1800–1802*. Sydney: ABGR.

36 For the policy on recruitment of ex-convicts see: Collins, 254. King to Bowering, 24 March 1799, *HRNSW*, Vol. 3, 651, and recruitment notice, 24 Nov. 1799, *HRA*, Vol. 3, 593.

37 Joseph Holt, *A Rum Story: The Adventures of Joseph Holt Thirteen Years in New South Wales, 1800–1812*, ed. by Peter O'Shaughnessy, 1988. Sydney: Kangaroo Press, 66–67.

38 For regimental details see NAUK: WO12/9900.

39 The French visitor was Peron, quoted in Tim Flannery, ed., 1999. *The Birth of Sydney*. Melbourne: Text Publishing, 177. For the transaction on musical instruments see the Cox and Greenwood Ledger reproduced in: Pamela Statham, ed., 1992. A *Colonial Regiment: New Sources Relating to the New South Wales Corps, 1789–1810*, Canberra: P. Statham, 106, 140.

Randall always remained in Sydney, lounging about the barracks, or engaged in some informal activity not recorded in the regimental ledger. A senior officer ensured that Randall's soft billet continued and this had to be George Johnston, now promoted to Major. His nice life continued for another eight years.[40]

Successive Governors were impotent to control the officers of the New South Wales Corps and they didn't really try. That changed in 1806/07 when Governor William Bligh took hold of the reins. As a naval officer Bligh was instantly despised. For his part he saw the colony's elite as opportunistic riff-raff who needed to be brought into line. Foremost in his sights were the senior officers of the corps, in particular the outgoing paymaster John Macarthur, who had resigned his commission to become the largest landholder in the colony. Early in 1808 Bligh took the fatal step of having Macarthur arrested for treason, thereby igniting a dramatic coup.

On 26 January 1808 400 soldiers with bayonets fixed marched to Government House led by the regimental band where they put the Governor under arrest. Major George Johnston was declared the new Governor to great public acclaim.[41] For a day or so it was unsafe for civilians unless they indicated their support for the new Governor by posting signs in their windows saying "Johnston for Ever". Two days after the Governor's arrest the colony celebrated around an enormous bonfire at the waterfront, where officers and their ladies mingled happily with the excited soldiers and common folk, while John Randall and the regimental band struck up the tune "Silly Old Man".[42]

The reign of the New South Wales Corps came to an end on the morning of 31 December 1809, when Governor Lachlan Macquarie stepped ashore at the Government Wharf and led the 73rd regiment on an unsteady march towards the parade ground. The regimental band played, though John Randall was not present. He was on the sick list; sick at heart, perhaps that his cosy career in the New South Wales Corps was finished. His patron George Johnston had been sent to England to face a court martial for treason and Randall was discharged on 24 April 1810. For the first time Randall was forced to rely solely on his own resources.

In December he secured a lowly position as one of the constables appointed to patrol the town at night. His job was to keep an eye out for disorderly characters, to ensure that places licensed to sell spirits were shut by nine o'clock, and to arrest anyone found drinking in unlicensed premises. For a man with Randall's history, this was expecting the fox to look after the henhouse. He was abruptly dismissed a year later.[43]

In February 1814, Randall put his land, with house and furniture, up for auction to repay debts. Soon after he accepted employment as the resident manager of a remote 700-acre property at distant Broken Bay. He was still at Broken Bay in 1816 when he was mentioned in the *Sydney Gazette* because his two sons were drowned attempting to cross over to Manly. After that he disappeared from the record.[44] He

40 For the details of Randall's army career in New South Wales: NAUK: WO12/9900, WO12/9901, WO12/9902, WO12/9903, WO12/9904, WO12/9905, WO12/8000, WO 25/642, WO25/1342.
41 For accounts of the coup see *HRNSW*, Vol. 6, 549; Watkin Tench to Edward Macarthur, 2 Sept. 1808, *HRNSW*, Vol. 6, 728; Bligh to Castlereagh, 30 June 1808, *HRA*, Vol. 6, 533.
42 John Ritchie, ed., 1988. *A Charge of Mutiny: The Court-Martial of Lieutenant Colonel George Johnston for Deposing Governor William Bligh in the Rebellion of 26 January 1808*. Canberra: National Library of Australia, 114.
43 Notices 1 Jan. 1810, and 7 Sept. 1811, *HRNSW*, Vol. 7, 479–86, 585–86.
44 *Sydney Gazette*, 20 July 1816.

must have died before 1822, when his third wife Fanny Randall petitioned the Colonial Secretary for her two daughters to be taken into the orphans' home.[45]

John Randall may have eventually come to a poor end, but it is extraordinary that this unlettered black convict who was a serial offender fared so well for so many years at Port Jackson. The unlikely relationship of close patronage between this runaway slave and the elite officer who made himself the Governor, points to the most potent American spirit that influenced the course of events in the early years at Port Jackson: the American Revolution.[46]

45 Petition to Colonial Secretary, 8 May 1822, *SRNSW*: CS R6040, 4/403, 85.
46 The profound impact of the American Revolution on the founding of Australia is explored in: Cassandra Pybus, 2006. *Black Founders: The Unknown Story of Australia´s First Black Settlers.* Sydney: UNSW Press.

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The Baudin Expedition and the Aborigines of 'Botany Bay'

Colonial Ethnography in the Era of Bonaparte

Recording their entry through Sydney Heads in mid-1802, the members of the Nicolas Baudin Expedition made no mention of the Aboriginal men, women and children who must have been watching from ashore or who, according to custom, most likely rowed out in canoes to meet their ships. Neither did those aboard the *Naturaliste*, which arrived ahead of the *Géographe*, express any curiosity about whether their companions, stranded ashore after their dinghy capsized in a storm, had come into contact with the Indigenous people.[1] Their attention was elsewhere: they counted the other vessels sighted ahead in the port, searched for other discovery ships, and, on the quarter-deck, noted the distant sound of a nine-canon salute – the British colonists, they presumed, were celebrating St George's Day (Breton: 4 floreal an X [24 April 1802]). As they sailed toward the colony, the Frenchmen apparently gave little thought to the Indigenous life around them. They were preoccupied, instead, with anticipation of the comforts and company to be found ahead among their fellow Europeans in Sydney-Town.

To what extent did this attitude continue through the following 5-month sojourn? The expedition's pictorial record suggests, as Margaret Sankey points out (2001: 124), that Baudin's artists enjoyed close contact with the Aborigines of Port Jackson and came to view them with a considerable degree of empathy. However, the written records are noted for their paucity of information and brevity. The official ethnography, published by the expedition's "observer of Man", François Péron, is, as Jean Fornasiero et al. (2004: 380), Jean-Luc Chappey (2014: 144–149) and Bronwen Douglas (2014: 136) illustrate, distant, derogatory, and indicative of emergent racialism. On the whole, existing scholarship asserts that, yes; the voyagers demonstrated a certain lack of interest in the Aborigines of Port Jackson. Historians write of a relative ethnographic silence during these months and of views that these Aborigines were no longer in a 'pristine' 'state of nature' and that they were already 'known' by the British (Morphy: 148–163; Fornasiero and West-Sooby: 59–80). I have argued myself that the voyager-naturalists were both disappointed and perplexed, as they perceived these people as being in a liminal state – neither civilised nor savage (Starbuck 2013a: 81–99 and 2013b: 123–133).

Much of this scholarship treats the Port-Jackson ethnographies like those produced from beach encounters; yet, as a result of their colonial context, they might well be considered as constituting a different genre. The colonial context distinctively influenced how the voyagers gathered their knowledge and what meanings they gave to it.[2] To begin with, it was an existing contact zone, already active with

1 While, at the time, none of the staff expressed curiosity about their colleagues' experience ashore, sub-lieutenant Francois Hérisson later recorded that "some savages and an English fisherman shared five or six fish" with the men. *See Journal de Hérisson,* entry 7 to 8 floreal [27–28 avril 1802].

2 On the significance of 'space' in the practice of natural history, see Outram, 'New Spaces in Natural History'.

cross-cultural relationships, understandings and tensions. Joseph-Marie Degérando had wished the voyagers to offer Indigenous people "the pact of a fraternal alliance!", to "take their hand and raise them to a happier state" and, more precisely, to "bring them our arts, and not our corruption, the code of our morality, and not the example of our vices, our sciences, and not our scepticism, the advantages of civilization, and not its abuses" (Degérando: 132). However, the Aborigines of Port Jackson had already been introduced to the 'abuses' of 'civilization' and the corruption and vices of 'civilized' people. Of course, they also were not alone in their contact with the French observers. This was a multifaceted encounter, which involved contact of the Aboriginal inhabitants of Port Jackson and the Baudin Expedition but also of the Indigenous people with other visitors to the port; for example, American merchants and whalers – men of a post-revolutionary nation built on slavery and dispossession; Pacific Islanders, recruited to European whaling and sealing vessels; and the Flinders Expedition, which was planned by Joseph Banks to anticipate French discoveries on the Australian coastline. Most importantly, it also included the settlers, convicts and colonial authorities of Port Jackson (Sankey 2001: 5–36; Nugent 2005: 94–95; Starbuck 2013a: 81–99 and 2013b: 123–133). The Baudin Expedition was surrounded by men and women with their own opinions, anecdotes and commentaries – and some of these served as comparisons to Aboriginal humanity. It is important to keep in mind too that the Aborigines of this region were already 'known' to Europeans – existent on paper and canvas but also on the ground, as colonists bodily and verbally mediated the Frenchmen's ethnographic observations and impressions. Furthermore, the colonial setting, in its physical, social and cultural organisation, altered the focus of their ethnographic lens. As Shino Konishi demonstrates, the European space powerfully evoked Western European standards in the observers' minds (Konishi 2004: 98–115). The context of the colonial town, in particular, had no doubt a crucial influence as well. Naturalists and authorities investigating human diversity in France itself, during the Revolution, treated town populations as neutral, homogeneous; it was to the countryside they looked for data about physical and moral characteristics (Ozouf 1984: 29). For these reasons, it is proposed here that if the Baudin Expedition's Port-Jackson ethnographies are to be understood correctly they must considered specifically as *colonial* observations of Man.

They need also to be unpacked. It is well established that ethnographic representations vary significantly depending on where, when and for what purpose they were written. Bronwen Douglas, in particular, clearly demonstrates the importance of taking these differences into account (Douglas 2003: 3–27). Yet existing scholarship on this particular body of work has tended to *combine* rather than *distinguish* the various types of ethnographic sources which resulted from the Port Jackson sojourn. Compounding this issue is the tendency also to focus on certain records, particularly the ethnographic report Péron published in the *Voyage de découvertes*. Its sense of intercultural distance and disappointment of not understanding the other is characteristic of its genre and has characterised the history of this encounter.

Accordingly, this article interrogates the expedition's records with attention both to the colonial background of this ethnography and to its structural elements. It is particularly focused on clarifying the characteristics of the encounter itself and in distinguishing the nature of the men's views in the context of their official reports. To this end, it considers the relationships between experience in the field of ethnogra-

phy, initial observation and publication while, where possible, comparing the men's attitude at Port Jackson to that demonstrated during the other colonial encounters, at Tenerife, Mauritius and Timor. Naturally, an underlying consideration is also the ideological, 'scientific' and political background of the expedition itself.

The Baudin Expedition and the Observation of Man

The Baudin Expedition, launched in 1800, was representative of the transformation of natural history which had been accelerated by Revolutionary reforms (Bourguet: 802–823; Outram: 249–265; Blanckaert: 117–160; Chappey 2002: 225–380; Jones 2002: 164–175; Harrison 2009: 33–52; Harrison 2012: 39–59; Starbuck 2012: 3–35). Having decided that France no longer needed grand round-the-world voyages of discovery, the *Institut National* designed for Baudin's command a 'direct expedition' to the still largely unexplored south, west, north and Tasmanian coastlines of Australia (Starbuck 2013a: 2). It also appointed to the *Géographe* and its consort the Naturaliste an unprecedented 24 men who were specialized in a variety of disciplines – including naturalists, artists and gardeners. This number included one, medical student François Péron, who after presenting to the *Institut* a paper entitled "Observations sur l'anthropologie", established himself as the expedition's "observer of man". Péron's aim was to test the hypothesis that 'civilization' was detrimental to human health and his work would mark the turn toward the physical anthropology of the nineteenth century. In fact, Baudin's Expedition was the first to carry a self-appointed expert in anthropology, i.e. an 'observer of Man', or anthropological instructions. At the request of the short-lived Société des Observateurs de l'Homme, Baudin was provided with a lengthy treatise composed by Joseph-Marie Degérando which comprehensively detailed questions about 'savage' society and culture and emphasised the concept of a common humanity. He was also given directions from comparative-anatomist Georges Cuvier, intended to guide the collection of anatomical specimens and data that might advance understandings of human diversity (Degerando: 129–169; Cuvier: 171–176).

Indeed, in the preparations for the Baudin Expedition there is clear evidence of what Claude Blanckaert (117–160) describes as a sense of urgency felt by French naturalists to reach a more profound understanding of human nature. Over the course of only a few years, "liberty, equality and fraternity" had been declared, slavery in the colonies had been abolished and the new Republic, embracing all the citizens of France, had been proclaimed *une et indivisible*. French naturalists had looked both within the departments of France itself and beyond for similarity, as Carol Harrison explains (2012: 40), for they had become deeply invested in the concepts of equality and 'civilisation'; indeed, Marie-Noëlle Bourguet argues that French identity had become entangled in the concept of *l'égalité* (1976: 812). However, resistance and violent counter-revolutionary action, particularly in the Vendée, had unsettled many citizens' faith in universalism. What William Max Nelson calls the "colonisation of France" was proving a far more challenging task than authorities had anticipated (Nelson: 73–85). By the late 1790s, as Martin Staum demonstrates, scientific and political authorities sought to "stabilise the Revolution", and that involved investigating

how well its democratic principles were in actual fact suited to the "laws of nature" (Staum 1996).

Chappey explains that, following the return of the expedition to France in 1804, contemporary politics, colonialism and science certainly influenced the published representation of Port Jackson's Aborigines. In the political climate of Napoleon's imperial regime, he writes, universalism and the concept of "noble savagery" were firmly rejected in favour of a view of humanity that was progressively essentialist, taxonomic and biological and which served to justify colonialism and the reintroduction of slavery (Chappey 2014: 139–159). What merits more attention is the extent to which attitudes which predominated prior to the expedition's commencement – attitudes centred on the concepts of universalism and social regeneration – coloured representations produced in, or at least near, the colonial contact zone.

The Colonial Contact Zone: Port Jackson 1802

According to the expedition's records combined with scholarship on the colonial history of New South Wales, the Revolutionary voyagers experienced an extensive and varied encounter with the Aboriginal people of Port Jackson. Their most recent and comparable experience had occurred at the port of Kupang, in Timor. Their first port-of-call had been at Tenerife where, Ronsard points out, "for 200 years there had existed no native inhabitants", and the voyagers had instead observed bodily remains found preserved in caves (Ronsard: 12). They subsequently called in at Mauritius, which had been uninhabited prior to French colonisation but had long been occupied by a large number of African slaves. As the administrators there had refused to acknowledge the National Convention's abolition of slavery in the French empire, these Africans were still enslaved when the Baudin Expedition visited in 1801; unfortunately, the voyagers did not record any reflections on their situation. It was not until their three-month sojourn at Timor, late that year, that Baudin and his men came into daily contact with local Indigenous people. They encountered a diverse society with a 200-year history of European commerce and colonisation. At the British outpost Port Jackson, only 14 years had passed since the arrival of the First Fleet; thus, the Baudin Expedition met the first generation of Aboriginal Australians to experience the establishment of European 'civilisation'.

For the duration of their stay in the British colony, Baudin and the naturalists lodged in Sydney, while the naval officers came ashore regularly to carry out chores and enjoy days at leisure. Consequently, as Baudin noted in a letter to Antoine-Laurent de Jussieu, professor of botany at the *Muséum nationale d'histoire naturelle,* he and his men saw local Aborigines on a regular basis. Although the Indigenous inhabitants of Port Jackson had generally "retreated into the interior as the English penetrated inland", Baudin and his men encountered Aborigines "often, in town, in the villages and on the main roads" (Baudin to Jussieu: 11 Nov. 1802). Pierre Bernard Milius, first-lieutenant aboard the *Naturaliste*, received such frequent visits from the infamous Bennelong that he eventually became 'annoyed' by them. Bennelong had been befriended as a young man by Governor Arthur Phillip and subsequently spent several years in London. His English language skills and familiarity with European ways were therefore particularly strong. Individuals like Bennelong – as well as Bungaree,

who had accompanied Matthew Flinders on the *Norfolk* in 1799 and travelled with him again on his Australian voyage – no doubt interacted more closely with the members of the Baudin Expedition than other local Aborigines and mediated their inquiries about local Aboriginal society. They, themselves, bridged the European and Indigenous societies, as illustrated by geographer Charles-Pierre Boullanger's observation of Bennelong putting on British clothes to enter Sydney-Town and removing them as he returned to his Indigenous community (Rivière: 580). However, an extensive series of fine-grained portraits, each entitled by its subject's name, suggests that at least the artist Nicolas-Martin Petit developed a high degree of familiarity with a number of local men, women and children. One may assume that at least some of his colleagues, who no doubt observed the portrait sittings, came to know these people as well. Petit's fellow artist with the expedition, Charles-Alexandre Lesueur, produced his own sketches depicting Aboriginal people occupying the same spaces as the Frenchmen. In two 'views' of Sydney, he portrayed Aborigines in canoes alongside the French ships and French sailors in their boats, as well as fishing and lighting a fire on Bennelong Point where the expedition's tents were established and French sailors completed their daily chores. And together with colleagues, the artists also found opportunities to produce notations of Aboriginal music and to obtain a sample of an Aborigine's own drawings. Unfortunately, the Frenchmen provide no explanation of the circumstances or negotiations which allowed these valuable contributions to the expedition's anthropological collection, nor even of where the encounters took place: in town, village or bush. However, Lesueur sketched several 'typical' ethnographic landscapes (Smith: 147–148), which may have been based on personal observations made beyond those parts of the region settled by colonists, while Péron mentions sighting smoke from the campfires of the "miserable hordes who inhabit" the "sad shores" of Botany Bay (Péron 1807: 287). A number of the expedition members ventured well beyond the township of Sydney, as far as the Blue Mountains, and would almost certainly have encountered Aboriginal people in various settings and circumstances along the way. In all, over the course of a winter and subsequent spring in Port Jackson, the voyagers had ample opportunity not only to undertake observations of Aboriginal inhabitants but furthermore to gain considerable familiarity with them and their position in the colony as well as to develop feelings, in some balance, of empathy and aversion.

In fact, this sojourn made possible more than ephemeral encounters. A draft report – prepared by Péron for presentation to the professors of the *Institut* National – indicates that the naturalist had formed an ongoing, individual, relationship during these months: a collaboration with a young man named Ourou-Mare, called Bull-dog by the settlers. In an unpublished paper, François Péron mentions that he "kept" Ourou-Mare with him throughout the sojourn, for his skill, it would seem, at catching lizards and snakes. It is almost certain that Péron had arranged for Ourou-Mare to catch those reptiles for the expedition's zoological collection, following the example set by George Caley, natural history collector for Joseph Banks and Péron's acquaintance during the sojourn. Caley himself relied on the knowledge and skills of an Aboriginal companion (Karskens: 260).

A significant part of the Baudin Expedition's experience at Port Jackson, reflected in a few lines, was the original inhabitants' adaption, accommodation and resistance to colonisation. By the early nineteenth century, Aboriginal collectors indeed

played a crucial role in the colony's vigorous natural history economy, not only in the capacity of personal companion but as guides and collectors for any colonial or visiting naturalist. George Caley declared that Aboriginal guides prevented collectors "getting lost and bewildered", they were able to point out the tracks left by animals, and they were "excellent marksmen and quicker-sighted than our people" (Karskens: 260). Moreover, colonists relied on them to obtain the specimens they wished to donate to or use in barter with naturalists. For example, in a letter to Baudin, with whom he was engaged in trade, settler Andrew Thompson wrote: "the cockatoo is lost but I am endeavouring to get another and some young swans from the Natives which if I procure in due time shall be forwarded to you" (Thompson 1802). Nicolas Baudin himself recorded no acknowledgement of collaboration on the part of Aborigines with settlers and naturalists, of their agency as guides and collectors. He did recognise their adaptation in another area when he reported to Antoine de Jussieu that "the natives" had made much further progress in learning the English language than the colonists had in learning theirs (Baudin to Jussieu 1802). Many of the voyagers' own English-language skills were fairly weak – one of Flinders' men commented that he and his French counterparts had had to draw on their Latin in order most effectively to converse; nonetheless, it was undoubtedly more effective for them to use English in their communications with Port Jackson's Aborigines than their own languages. In any case, it was the Aborigines' resistance to the colonial project, rather than their adjustments to it, that seems most strongly to have influenced the Frenchmen's view of the contact zone. As shown further on, the observations recorded in this field are mainly of traditional aspects of local Aboriginal life rather than of Aborigines in the "middle ground" (White 2010), i.e. in the context of intercultural encounter. These native inhabitants had developed strategies for dealing with the incursion on their territories but were by no means embracing European 'civilisation'.

It is worth noting that the Baudin Expedition not only encountered and observed people enduring a process of colonisation but, more precisely, it met them *and* the colonists during a particular moment in that historical process. In 1802, British settlement and dominance over the Indigenous population remained particularly insecure. While a lack of supplies obliged Governor Philip Gidley King to introduce strict rations throughout the colony, and hostility between King and the officers of the New South Wales Corps intensified, the war between the colonists and Aboriginal resistance forces was reaching a climax. These tensions within the colonial project formed a mosaic lens through which the French must have seen Port Jackson's Aborigines. Only a few weeks before the *Géographe*'s arrival in late June, 1802, the leader of the Indigenous campaign to drive out the colonists was hunted down, killed and beheaded at the Governor's orders (King 1802). The Frenchmen must have known the man responsible: Henry Hacking joined the Flinders Expedition during its stopover at Port Jackson (Karskens: 480). Following Pemulwuy's death, a "second coming in" had occurred but continuing tensions were palpable throughout the colony (Karskens: 480). Only twelve months earlier, Governor Philip Gidley King had ordered all Aborigines to be driven back with gunfire from colonial residences. He had next outlawed Pemulwuy himself and not only offered a reward to colonists but also a promise to the local Aborigines that the war would end if they gave him up (Atkinson: 165–166; Karskens: 478–480). His guests could not have

missed the hostility between tribes; between Black and White, and amongst the colonists as well – those who resisted King's orders, such as the colony's naturalist George Caley, and those keen to support it, such as the protestant reverend, Samuel Marsden (Karskens: 479). In early June, around a fortnight after the departure of the *Naturaliste*, and before the expected arrival of the *Géographe*, Governor King had Pemulwuy's head sent to London (King 1802). Such a specimen would have greatly interested the voyager-naturalists – did they see it before they returned to sea, or did King delay its dispatch till they had gone? The only glimpse in the expedition's papers of hostility between colonists and Aborigines is a note by Jacques F. Emmanuel Hamelin, captain of the *Naturaliste*, that he had tripled the number of guards on watch at the ship's observatory, located several miles away from Sydney, towards the Heads, "because of thieves who are not rare here and for whom murder is a sport" (Hamelin: 14–15 floréal an X [4–5 May 1802]). Given that he had just arrived in the port, Hamelin would seem to have been echoing advice or anecdotes from his English hosts, and while he may in fact have been referring to convicts, the statement does more closely correspond with colonial-Indigenous relations and, in particular, colonial attitudes toward Aboriginal inhabitants.

In any case, Hamelin did not go on to report any thefts or attacks on the observatory at Green Point. Neither did any of his fellow voyagers report experiences of hostile behaviour from local Aborigines, in general, during the five months of the sojourn. By all accounts, the prolonged and rich encounter was without incident. It was peaceful, in this sense, but also complex. The French Revolutionary voyagers met Aborigines collaborating and trading with settlers and naturalists, acquiring the colonial language, maintaining their culture and everyday practices despite the encroachment of British society across their country. Many Aborigines had risen up against this invasion. On the whole, the Indigenous society they encountered was one on the fringe, between colonial administration and self-governing ethnic groups.

Observations of Man in the Colonial Space

The observations that Baudin's men made within the contact zone generally did not focus on the Aborigines' native life or circumstances which resulted from the encounter with them. Their records consist merely of remarks that are not only fragmentary but also incidental. In contrast to their reports of beach encounters, the voyagers left no record of their interactions within this zone – of what was said, what gestures were made, who approached who, how, when or where. Perhaps because they involved weeks or, in this case, months of daily sightings and meetings, "the encounter" itself lost its novelty during sojourns in port. Moreover, offering prolonged periods of respite from the life of the ship, these sojourns provided an opportunity to step back from the immediacy of encounter to produce more considered and summative observations. These stays also represented respite from most usual tasks and, consequently, many of the voyagers wrote considerably less or nothing at all during their months at anchor in Port Jackson; indeed, just as they had done at Tenerife, Mauritius and Timor. It would seem safe to assume then that the observations the men actually did choose to record were significant.

On the ground at Port Jackson, according to the documents available, Nicolas Baudin's men wrote about Aboriginal ways often without, or with only minimal reference to the colonial setting (Rivière: 580; Lesueur: undated). Elsewhere, I have posited that this exclusion was deliberate and, moreover, that the men took this approach because they struggled to reconcile the Aborigines' situation and status in the colony with their own investment in the concept of civilization. However, as implied earlier, care must be taken not to project the attitude inherent in Péron's publication back onto the field observations; perhaps these men simply recorded the aspects of Aboriginal life at Port Jackson that interested them most or, more simply still, that they had been best able to observe. Charles-Alexandre Lesueur and geographer Charles Boullanger both described fishing methods, while Boullanger also wrote about hunting and fighting techniques as well as burial, marriage and childbirth practices. Although only reproduced extracts are currently available (Rivière: 580–581), Boullanger's report, in particular, delves into topics not addressed anywhere else in the expedition's body of ethnographic work and provides a unique degree of depth as well. It provides no indication as to how this information was obtained – it may well have resulted from a combination of direct observation, exchanges of knowledge with Aborigines and colonists, and perhaps also reading of existing accounts – but it was written in a direct rather than manufactured style. All the same, both Boullanger's and Lesueur's reports, in their close attention to detail, indicate the authors' genuine interest in these practices while their reasonably objective style suggests that they had also observed, and possibly gathered advice on, Aboriginal life with a degree of empathy.

The same may be said of Nicolas-Martin Petit's drawings from Port Jackson. Not only the final engravings of his portraits, which were published in the *Atlas Historique* of the *Voyage de découvertes*, but, equally, the initial sketches reveal Petit's observation of his subjects' essential humanity. They grant the men and women a nobility and familiarity to European eyes that was not given to Aborigines illustrated in earlier portraits in Tasmania (Fornasiero and West-Sooby 2002: 78).[3] Whereas the Tasmanians, depicted most often with exaggerated features, stereotypical proportions and classical physiques, are almost caricatures, Petit sketched the people of Port Jackson with sensitive lines and shades that produced natural, lifelike, forms as well as individual personalities revealed in carefully-etched, vivid, expressions. This approach was in fact in line with what Cuvier had instructed Baudin's artists to do: in order to advance his own research on human diversity and, more specifically, on the relationship between "the perfection of the mind and the beauty of the face". The comparative-anatomist requested accurate studies that would represent "the true character of the [subjects'] physiognomy" (Cuvier 1978). Moreover, so well does Petit seem to have followed Georges Cuvier's advice that there are sufficient similarities, in facial features and expressions, across his Port-Jackson portraits, arguably, to represent a racial 'type'. If so, however, this type does not correspond neatly with the textual picture of "weak" bodies, "feeble" constitutions and "fierce" characters that Péron would present in the *Voyage de découvertes* (Péron 1824: 452). Rather, these portraits have generally in common a certain sadness or pensiveness

3 The portraits appear in Péron [and Freycinet], 1824 and are reproduced in Bonnemains et al., 1988: 137–180. For further discussion of Petit's portraits of Port Jackson Aborigines, see Jones, 1988: 58; Sankey, 2004: 123–124; Fornasiero and West-Sooby, 2002: 77–78 and Fornasiero et al., 2004: 367. Lesueur's drawings are held in the Collection Lesueur at the Muséum d'histoire naturelle, Le Havre.

expressed in downcast eyes and distant gazes combined with strength and pride in determined frowns and strong jaw lines. The deep scarification and bold ceremonial paints, which – though Cuvier wished excluded – Petit seems to have been at pains to replicate, point to a strong and enduring cultural identity. Ultimately, while they may have represented a 'race', these portraits depicted men and women above all, each of whom Petit had studied closely, attempted to understand, and seemingly appreciated on their individual merits.[4]

While demonstrating a similar focus on universal humanity, Baudin himself forthrightly explained his thoughts on the Aborigines' position in the colony in a personal letter to Governor King. Written during a stopover at King Island, the outburst was prompted in part by a sense of ire that King had sent a party to prevent him from establishing French possession on Tasmania; yet that is not to suggest that it did not reflect the commander's genuine point of view. Baudin likened Aborigines to the peasants of Britain and France and questioned the wisdom of colonising this society while British – and, for that matter, French – society itself was in need of 'civilisation'. "I have never been able to conceive", he revealed,

> that there was any justice or even loyalty on the part of Europeans in seizing [...] a land [...] inhabited by men who did not always deserve the titles of 'savages' and 'cannibals' that have been lavished on them, whereas, they were still only nature's children and no more uncivilised than your Scottish Highlanders of today or our peasants of Lower Brittany, etc., who, if they do not eat their fellow men, are no less harmful to them for all that. It would be infinitely more glorious for your nation as for my own to train for society the inhabitants of the countries over which they each have rights, rather than undertaking to educate those who live far away by first seizing the land that belongs to them and to which they belong by birth. (Baudin to King 1802: 826)

Baudin went on to argue that "the distance" the Aboriginal inhabitants keep from the colonists and their customs had been caused "by the idea they formed of the men who wished to live with them". They had discerned the colonists' "future projects", wrote Baudin, but "being too weak to resist" the newcomers, and afraid of their weapons, they had left their land. "The hope of seeing them mix among you is lost", Baudin wrote to King, "and you will soon be left the peaceful possessors of their birthright, as the small number of them living around you will not last long" (Baudin to King 1802: 826). These thoughts correspond to the comment he had made to Antoine-Laurent de Jussieu; in that letter, however, Nicolas Baudin implicitly relates the Aborigines' retreat inland to the view only that they were "useless and little to fear". In that moment, as he had done in Timor as well and as voyager-observers frequently did in general, Baudin drew on the longstanding stereotype of Indigenous indolence (Cornell 2000: 332; Konishi 2012: 127–142). However, from his more reflective letter to King, it is evident that Baudin had carried to Australian shores concerns about the Revolutionary attempt to regenerate French society – concerns which fed a degree of empathy for the distant 'other' and an ambivalence about European colonialism.

Altogether, these field observations represent diverse angles and degrees of insight. Yet while none embraces the Aborigines as equals of Europeans, Petit's and Baudin's, in particular, imply attempts to look for similarity, and all have in common

4 For example, see the draft sketches reproduced in Baglione and Cémière, 2009: 131, 133–135, 137–138 and Baglione and Blanckaert 2008: 44–45.

a considerable degree of objectivity. They also carry a sense of the observers' familiarity with their subjects, in correspondence with both the nature of the encounter and the Aborigines' position in this contact zone. And, overall, though Baudin's comments are reflective and made in relation to the civilising imperative more than to ethnographic study, these overall are observations of Aboriginal bodies, personalities, practices and fundamental humanity, made effectively in the moment, rather than theoretical evaluations of social progress.

Colonial Ethnography for Publication

The subsequent ethnographies, written at a distance from the memory of encounter and with a view to publication or other official presentation, contrast distinctly with those which had been composed in the field, i.e. on the ground of research. Rather than describing everyday life or cultural practices, providing careful studies of temperament, morality or intelligence, or reviewing colonial relations of power and influence, these reports reflect a preoccupation with civilization. The view that Port Jackson's Aborigines had seemingly failed to embrace civilization clearly underlies each report and is directly stated time and again. For example, botanist Jean-Baptiste L.C. Théodore Leschenault de la Tour remarked: "although, for several years, the natives of the environs of Sydney have been visiting the English ceaselessly and without fear, they are nonetheless hardly less barbaric than before the arrival of Europeans" (Leschenault 1824 [2007]: 108); First-lieutenant Pierre Bernard Milius wrote: "civilization has made no progress among these people in the 15 years the English have inhabited this island" (Milius 1987: 48), and François Péron declared: "they still live amidst war and alarm" (Péron undated). The incongruent perception of civilising progress – or rather the lack thereof – cast Port Jackson's Aborigines in a negative light: in order to explain these peoples' lack of 'improvement', and simultaneously to uphold European colonialism, Leschenault de la Tour, Milius and Péron looked to shortcomings in the people themselves.

By distinctly divergent reasoning, Milius and Leschenault de la Tour both concluded that Port Jackson's Aboriginal people would never advance to a more 'civilized' state. Milius composed his ethnography during the ten years or so following his return to France, by then the heart of the Napoleonic Empire. It was part of his own narrative of the voyage which he clearly intended to publish. Embedded in the chapter that recounts the expedition's sojourn at Port Jackson, Milius' report sets the state of the local Aborigines in stark contrast to the "view of luxury and civilisation" which the British colony otherwise represented. Milius wrote – with reference particularly to male Aborigines – of a lack of "desire" and a "natural penchant" for "indolence" (Bonnemains and Haugel 1987: 48). This claim he attempts to substantiate with specific examples taken from the colonial context. Firstly, revealing the influence of colonists' mediation, he refers to an anecdote Governor King had told about individuals who ran away from domestic service to resume their "indolent" ways – which supposedly involved depending on the forced labour of Aboriginal women. (Ibid.: 48) Both he and King were drawing upon the common notion of Indigenous men's laziness, ignorance and brutality. Secondly, Milius wrote specifically of Bennelong's "repugnance" for European ways. According to the lieutenant,

it was ultimately that negative approach which showed it was "impossible to expect to bring the savages of these lands to any idea of civilization". They were, he concluded, "truly stupid brutes who must be left to live their own way" (Ibid. : 49).

For his own part, Leschenault de la Tour posited a theory centred on his belief in the natural environment's predominant influence over human development. His theory was quite briefly stated at the end of a report he wrote on the botany of 'New Holland'. When or where he composed the piece is unclear: as a result of ill health the young botanist had disembarked in Timor, during the final leg of the expedition's voyage, and finally returned to France 1807 following visits to Java and Philadelphia. The report was not published until 1824, when it was added by Louis de Freycinet, following the death of Péron, to the second edition of the *Voyage de découvertes*. By this point in France, the Bourbon monarchy had been restored and French authorities were looking with envy at British colonial possessions in the Pacific (Dunmore 1969: 386). It was no doubt partly in accordance with this climate that, whereas he had taken a focused ethnographic approach to colonial "natives" in his on-board journal – writing at length on the inhabitants of Timor, if scantly on those of Port Jackson – here Leschenault de la Tour concentrated instead on presenting a people who neither benefitted the British colonial project nor posed an obstacle to Australian colonisation (Undated: 58–88, 185, 187). On the Aborigines of colonial Port Jackson, Leschenault (1824: 107) suggested that "the pressing need to defend their existence" had "destroyed [...] whatever happy moral and intellectual qualities" with which one might credit these "natives". Moreover, he continued: "nature appears to have endowed" these people "with just the sum of intelligence in harmony with the land they inhabit". In fact, in Leschenault's point of view, the problem of the Aborigines' natural environment was insurmountable. There was scant hope, he wrote, that the Aborigines' natural "sum of intelligence" would develop any further for "never, at any time that we had occasion to communicate with them", he declared, "did we notice that degree of curiosity that indicates aptitude and desire for learning".

Similarly, Péron also claimed that the "lack of food, its poor quality, and the labour needed to obtain it" had rendered these "deprived children of Nature" weak and left them to "vegetate" in the savage state (1824: 366–367). However, by contrast to Leschenault and Milius, Péron argued that the condition of these "miserable people" was not fixed. Demonstrating faith in a gradual and organic process of human civilization, Péron imagined the Aborigines eventually forming villages, farming kangaroos, growing stronger, smarter and more morally refined (1824: 367–369). Péron's approach in the voyage ethnography was to rank the peoples he encountered during the expedition according to his calculations of their physical strength and his assessment of their level of social development (1824: 301, 302, 311, 313 and 351–385). The Indigenous people of 'New Holland', who actually comprised those specifically of Port Jackson, were ranked above those of Tasmania but below the peoples of Timor, France and Britain (1824: 359–360). According to François Péron, the differences between these groups had been caused by the advantages or disadvantages of their respective environments – a finding which supported his theory that, contrary to the belief made popular by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, humans do not degenerate but improve with the progress of civilization. Péron even extolled the virtues of the transportation system: He applauded the improved morality and fertility of the convicts and attributed these improvements to the fresh air, varied diet, as well as to

the orderly social organization established by the colonial authorities (1824: 299–300, 303–305). However, his evaluation of the Aboriginal inhabitants was not purely 'scientific'. In the course of putting forward the results of his research, Péron made frequent use of subjective terms and referred far more frequently to existing colonial histories than to examples of his own, direct, observations. He referenced David Collins' *Account of the English Colony in New South Wales* [Vol. 1: 1798; Vol.2: 1802] particularly often to support claims about "repulsive" practices, "barbaric actions" and "flaws in conformation" amongst the Aborigines inhabiting the environs of Port Jackson (1824: 364–366, 368–369). In an early draft that he had planned to present to "Messieurs le Professors" (Péron undated),[5] which he did not in the end find opportunity to present and which he crossed out in heavy lines of ink, Péron did refer to Ourou-Mare and even gave him some praise; however, the memory of a prolonged and what must have been reasonably intimate relationship did not distract him from his argument. "In a word", he wrote, "there is no doubt that exercise and custom has given some advantages to this uncouth and savage man, but alas, one does not envy them: by how much misery, have they acquired them!"

These published ethnographies bore little relation overall to the voyagers' contact experience at Port Jackson; that is, their contact with the Aborigines themselves, as opposed to the British authorities and settlers who claimed to know them. As is typical of edited, published, accounts, these are far more derogatory, distant and general than the observations that were produced within, or at least with fresh memory of, the intercultural contact zone. As colonial ethnographies, more specifically, they are also far more preoccupied with 'civilising' progress and, notably, they are selective to that end: they admit only begrudgingly the Aborigines' English-language skills and give no direct acknowledgement at all of their role in the colonial natural history trade. As Jean-Luc Chappey argues in relation to work of François Péron, they represent personal ambitions and corresponding conformity to contemporary politics above all; indeed, colonial ethnographies, more than their reports about encounters on the beach, lent themselves particularly well to the task of currying favour with an imperialist regime.

Conclusion

From experience to ethnography, this colonial encounter has a more balanced and complex history of contact and ethnography than previously acknowledged. The nature of the expedition's colonial contact was varied, in relation to the elements of Aboriginal life the voyagers witnessed as well as the types of contact they established, from prolonged individual relationships to regular sightings of everyday life. The observers' views were blurred during these months, not only by an inevitably intense reminder of European values and concerns, produced by the colonial built environment and culture, as well as by the intermediation of colonists with their anecdotes, 'knowledge' and warnings. It was also unsettled by the Aborigines' changing role in an intercultural contact zone.

5 Péron's use of the past tense and a very similar tone to that which characterises the ethnographic chapter of the *Voyage* suggest that this document was written following the expedition's return to France.

It is a pity that the members of the Baudin Expedition did not write more directly about the nature of their encounter and at greater length about their observations; however, the paucity of their records is a typical aspect of colonial ethnography. Moreover, what they did leave behind on their contact and observations in this colonial field of research does provide fertile ground for still further study. The fragmentary notes and sketches tell a not-unrelated but significantly different story from that implied in the final reports – that is, reports which are not only more racialist than the earlier, more immediate, observations, as was typical for voyage ethnographies, but which placed the humanity of Australia's Aboriginal people within a colonial frame.

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The Transported Flowers of Botany Bay: Herbarium, Greenhouse or Botanical Ark?

Early Representations of the Australian Flora in the Work of British and French Naturalists, Botanical Artists and Gardeners

Abstract: The story of the transported flowers of Botany Bay cannot be told without referring to one important principle of Enlightenment which is the idea that scientists cooperated in their shared aim to learn and to earn. Science made travelling safer and enabled governments to make use of their new discoveries: unknown territories and exotic species also added empirical findings to the knowledge of that time period. It was easier than before to record and spread knowledge whether it was documented in encyclopaedias or exhibited in the public sphere. The fascination with botany was widespread at the end of the eighteenth century and it demonstrated the interest of enlightened circles in natural sciences in a very colourful way. In this essay, the author explores botanical representations, made by British and French naturalists, gardeners and painters who were pioneers in their field of research: They put Australia's flora on the botanical map and introduced it to a wider public with astonishing results. These pioneers came together in one historic endeavour: to present and to preserve Australia's exotic world of plants in herbaria, in paintings and in gardens. A discussion of the early perception, description and nursery of New Holland's plants in Europe exemplifies important aspects of this particular chapter of Australian history. At the same time it reveals a successful collaboration between British and French botanists during times of war.[1]

"How vain are the hopes of man! Whilst the whole botanical world, like myself, has been looking for the most transcendent benefits to our science, from the unrivalled exertions of your countrymen, all their matchless and truly astonishing collection, such as has never been seen before, nor may ever be seen again, is to be put aside untouched, to be thrust into some corner, to become perhaps the prey of insects and of destruction".[2] When the Swedish botanist and rector of Uppsala University, Carl von Linné (1707–1778) heard that his former student, Daniel Solander (1733–1782), intended to participate in a new research expedition, only a few months after his return from the southern hemisphere, von Linné was not exactly delighted. Daniel Solander and Joseph Banks (1743–1820) had returned to England in July 1771. These two surviving naturalists had accompanied James Cook on his voyage around the world between 1768 and 1771. The famous Swede wrote his letter to the British naturalist John Ellis (d. 1776) in October 1771. At this point in time, he thought that the new discoveries, unknown species brought home to England by Banks and Solander from their voyage to the South Sea, would not receive any critical appraisal in the foreseeable future. In his letter, von Linné voiced his concern by telling John Ellis that Solander's intention to leave Europe once more "has affected me so much, as almost entirely to deprive me of sleep", and he urged Ellis "to do all that in you lies

1 In memoriam of Professor Jan Bender († Portland, Oregon 2018). The author gratefully acknowledges Bender's advice who commented upon an earlier version of this article.
2 Carl Linnaeus to John Ellis, October 22, 1771, in: James Edward Smith, ed., 1821. *A Selection of the Correspondence of Linnaeus and Other Naturalists from the Original Manuscripts*, Vol. 1, 267.

for the publication of these new acquisitions, that the learned world may not be deprived of them".[3]

A Theoretical Approach: The Virtual Greenhouse

The correspondence between Carl von Linné and John Ellis identifies two key questions: How was it possible to learn something about New Holland's exotic flowers, unfamiliar trees and wild shrubs without visiting the unknown continent? And: Who made use of any such botanical knowledge and in which way? These were relevant questions in 1771 as the participation in a scientific expedition was a privilege of only very few people. It must not be forgotten that the expedition of *HMS Endeavour* was the first known voyage to the southern hemisphere devoted exclusively to scientific discovery.[4] It was a high-profile project marking the age of Enlightenment in Europe. Botany was an important field of scientific research, and natural resources were respected for their economic potential by statesmen in many countries.

The greenhouse of Botany Bay was never built. It is a hypothetical concept, rendered by the author who is a historian, and serves as a useful approach to the following analysis which deals with a successful collaboration between British and French botanists in the age of discovery for the benefit of Australian natural sciences. The historian's question behind its hypothetical construction is whether or not any new – botanical or horticultural – knowledge gained at the time could be useful or at least self-serving. The (re)construction of a virtual greenhouse and the display of a selection of Australian plants at the time of their first description at the end of the eighteenth century reflect the way of dealing with the exotic, in general, and with New Holland's flora in particular. Important sources can be found in the first books on Australian flora and in the literature about the earliest experiments of Australian plant breeding in England and France.[5] For this purpose, I explain the hypothetical design of a virtual greenhouse as follows:[6] Its four sides exhibit the lines of botanical

3 Linnaeus to Ellis, October 22, 1771, in: Smith, *Correspondence*, Vol.1, 268.

4 It must be noted that William Dampier's landfall at Shark Bay (Western Australia) in 1699 resulted in the first known description of Australian flora: William Dampier, 1729. *A Voyage to New Holland in the Year 1699.*

5 As this essay focuses on the early representation of the Australian flora in Europe and the transfer of plants to Europe, readers are advised to consult different types of primary sources: (a) the records of the first British and French scientific expeditions to New Holland, (b) catalogues of botanical gardens in England and France, (c) the first known botanical works on the so-called 'general Australian flora'. For a first orientation see: the journals written or/and edited by Arthur Phillip (1789), John White (1790), or Jacques-Julien Houtou de Labillardière (1800). Another important group of primary sources are the catalogues of cultivated plants, compiled by: Charles Louis L'Héritier de Brutelle (1788), William Aiton (1811) and Aimé Bonpland (1813). The third group refers to the category of 'general Australian flora', i.e. works of botanical art and scientific description: James Edward Smith (1793f.), Étienne Pierre Ventenat (1803f.) and de Labillardière (1804–1806) exemplify the group of enlightened scientists and gardeners who compiled the first books on the Australian flora. The author of this essay emphasizes that these works only describe a small selection of relevant research material. Several important collections of Australian flora are held in herbaria in London, Paris, Geneva and Florence. However, research for this essay focussed on a case study: it deals with *knowledge transfer* and knowledge *transformation*, i.e. the establishment of the Australian flora in Europe's cultural and horticultural contexts – a project which was achieved (not merely) by British-French collaboration. Therefore, research was limited to the Australian flora as subject of British and French botanical art and gardening (horticulture). Botanical exploration of New Holland during the age of discovery describes an important subject for research which has created a wide range of published works. In this particular context readers should refer to two carefully selected studies: Roger L. Williams, 2001. *Botanophilia in Eighteenth-Century France: The Spirit of the Enlightenment*, International Archives of the History of Ideas, Vol. 179; Williams, 2003. *French Botany in the Enlightenment: The Ill-fated Voyages of La Pérouse and his Rescuers*, International Archives of the History of Ideas, Vol. 182. For a general orientation: Wilfrid Blunt, 1994. *The Art of Botanical Illustration: An Illustrated History*; Helen Hewson, 1999. *Australia: 300 Years of Botanical Illustration*.

6 An interdisciplinary approach can be found in the following Project Paper: Susan Turner and others, n.d. "Re-creating the Botanics: Towards a Sense of Place in Virtual Environments". The authors of this paper

thinking in the age of Enlightenment *and* the findings of recent academic research about this important issue.[7]

The historical concept of botanical thinking was built on three pillars: (a) the aim to name and describe a new species, (b) the evaluation of its economical value and its possible cultivation, (c) the aesthetic perception of the plant as a living organism or as a painted image. New research has be done on this subject: Therefore, it is necessary to design a hypothetical roof construction – the fourth structure and top – which shelters the case study from the dust of outdated interpretations: (d) its flexible architecture, designed by contemporary academic discourse on the history of scientific illustration (or flower painting) and environmental concern, sheds light on the evolution of Australian botany as a self-serving field of interest.[8] One of these architects who appreciate to work with transparent structures is Judy Dyson (Monash University). In her profound analysis, "Botanical Illustration or Flower Painting: Sexuality, Violence and Social Discourse", Dyson argues:

> Botanical illustration and flower painting are regularly designated as separate genres, one scientific, the other art historical, distinctions that are challenged [here] as problematic given that the art forms share and interrelate in ways that have not been sufficiently considered. [...] However, botanical illustration has a long genealogy that participated in developing cultural concepts of aesthetics, religion, and society long before Linnaean classificatory systems brought about a proliferation of plant illustration in the eighteenth century. (Dyson: 1)

The basic message of Dyson's perception is her advice to read botanical representations, be they verbal or illustrative, as a "cultural text[s]" that transports "associated forms of knowledge", such as social, psychological or political implications (ibid.: 4–5). In this context, I will focus on culturally motivated *transportation* of the exotic together with its rather tangible botanical *translation* into British and French concerted efforts to exhibit and cultivate exotic plants at home – against all natural and logistic obstacles, including administrative barriers.[9]

The "Flower Alliance": Botany Bay on the Enlightened Horizon and the Transparency of British and French Scientific Collaboration

With this analytical approach in mind, the cornerstones of the Australian greenhouse were laid in the vestibules of Europe's powerhouses: London and Paris. The governmental endeavour which brought Europe's natural scientists in contact with the world overseas started with James Cook's voyages in 1768. "Botany Bay" was

investigate "the sense of place in a real-world location". In a rather unexpected way this discussion refers to the process of plant transfer between two locations: a native environment (New Holland) and a virtual environment (glasshouse in a European botanical garden).

7 In this context, enlightened thinking is defined as encyclopaedic research patterns of different social groups and professions which were anxious to shed light on an unknown world of botanical specimens.

8 The *architecture* of colonial botany has a complex design. It can be *re*built by interdisciplinary research: Londa Schiebinger and Claudia Swan, eds., 2005. *Colonial Botany: Science, Commerce, and Politics in the Early Modern World*. The editors of this exquisite analysis stress the complexity of colonial botany by presenting a variety of approaches to their field of research. For example, 14: "Revisiting the history of the objects and practices of colonial botany requires us to think about the ways in which things from far-flung places were amassed, transported, collected, bought and sold, processed, and otherwise put to use. In most cases this concerns the storage and cultivation of specimens in gardens and other collections; colonial botany was also practiced through pictorial representation, indexing and classifying practices, and display".

9 Schiebinger and Swan, 16: "The story of colonial botany is as much a story of transplanting nature as it is one of transforming knowledge".

a neologism created by James Cook in his journal on May 14th, 1770[10] – *and* Botany Bay was a floral wilderness which, due to the landing of the *HMS Endeavour* at the Australian coast in April 1770, lost its isolation. The isolated insulated ecosystem came into sudden contact with an outside world: the Aborigines were puzzled to see a group of collectors who did not collect plants for food but for their research aims. Europe's enlightened naturalists had come from so far only to leave with botanical specimens in glasses and blotting blocks. How could the natives know that, for the foreigners, nature was a matter of exact description and classification? Aboriginal and European perceptions of nature certainly differed from each other and it can be speculated what Indigenous people might have thought when they watched the visitors discovering unfamiliar trees and shrubs, or collecting plants or flowers which the Aborigines had known for thousands of years.

At the end of their first expeditions, Britain and France claimed a share of the early Australian floral collection.[11] Until 1795, at least two major collections of Australian botanical specimens existed in Europe: James Cook's and Daniel Solander's herbaria, with illustrations made onboard the *HMS Endeavour* by their contracted botanists.[12] The other collection consisted of Jacques-Julien Labillardière's (1755–1834) plant materials which he and his French colleague Felix Delahaye (1767–1829) had compiled onboard the *Recherche* and *Espérance* during the search for La Pérouse's lost French expedition to the South Pacific between 1791 and 1795.[13] As the Australian archaeologist and historian John Mulvaney points out: Tasmania's Recherche Bay "was endowed with international significance through its contribution to the identification of Australian flora" (33) when Labillardière and his colleagues left the coast with several thousand of specimens which they had collected during their visits in 1792 and 1793.[14] It was the time of the French Revolutionary Wars (1792–1802). There were strong political tensions between London and Paris, culminating in the War of the Second Coalition in 1798 which came to a temporary end with the Peace Treaty of Amiens in 1802. The years 1788 until 1803 mark the time between the great expeditions to the South Sea made by James Cook, de Bruni d'Entrecasteaux, and Nicolas Baudin. Exactly in this era of military conflict influential patrons and savant botanists on both sides of the channel considered publicising the first important works on Australian flora.

Carl von Linné had assumed in 1771 that British research "will afford a fresh proof that the English nation promotes science more than the French, or all other people together".[15] The most famous British patron of botanical science who came in contact face-to-face with the Australian flora was Joseph Banks. When Joseph Banks

10 James Cook, *Journal: Daily Entries*, May 14, 1770, Transcription of Manuscript 1 (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2004), 236.

11 This essay will not deal with other botanical collections in Europe (such as those created by Austrian or Italian collectors).

12 This statement does not refer to private collections of plant material and botanical drawings; see: Louise Anemaat, 2014. *Natural Curiosity: Unseen Art of the First Fleet*.

13 The French ships of La Pérouse's expedition were last seen at Botany Bay in 1788. La Pérouse's disappearance and the tragic loss of his crew and scientific staff were responsible for the commission of a search and rescue expedition in 1791. The search onboard the *Recherche* and *Espérance* served as another French scientific project: the new expedition under Commander Admiral Joseph-Antoine-Raymond de Bruny d'Entrecasteaux failed to find the lost crew of La Pérouse's expedition but the newly contracted scientists created France's first Australian botanical collection. Again, these ships and most of the crew members never returned to France: the search route ended in Java in 1793. Labillardière, one of the botanists of this expedition, returned to France in 1795.

14 The total number of specimens can only be estimated as the team of botanists and gardeners had collected leaves, flowers, fruits and seeds in Tasmania *and* Western Australia; Mulvaney: 32.

15 Linnaeus to Ellis, October 22, 1771, in: Smith, *Correspondence*, 268.

took over the position of an informal adviser for the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew which had been offered to him by King Georg III about 1772, Britain's strategy of botanical research became visible: During the following years the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew developed into Britain's most famous scientific centre of commercially oriented botany. Joseph Banks worked to build up Kew as a research institution where economic considerations determined scientific work. Description and classification of botanical specimens were part of the enlightened research scheme, but more than this, it was the plan to conduct experiments of acclimatization with the aim to transport plants from one part of the world to another and to grow for commercial reasons (Adams 1986: 136; Brockway). The study of plant diversity and economic botany developed into the main research aim at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew which were first created in 1759 (RBG, Kew webpage). Joseph Banks' work was a two-part project: he acted as patron of science who sent out gardeners to collect plants and seed worldwide and, at the same time, managed the editorial work on the publication of his *Florilegium* by supervising the documentation of the botanical collections of the *Endeavour* voyage. His editorial work which was accompanied by detailed botanical categorization work of Daniel Solander and Jonas Carlsson Dryander (1748–1810), who were both students of Carl von Linné, did not lead to a publication by Joseph Banks during his lifetime.[16] Instead, Joseph Banks promoted the international exchange of knowledge as he "wanted science to continue freely" (Macinnis: 25).

The scientific work on Australian flora shows intensive concentration on the subject on both sides of the channel from the beginning. Interestingly, wartime encouraged peaceful scientific collaboration behind the curtain: The military conflict between France and Britain did not stop secret negotiations and unofficial agreements between naturalists in both countries. This collaboration culminated in the transport of Frenchman Jacques-Julien Labillardière's botanical collection from Java to England in November 1795, and its final release to France as a result of Joseph Banks' intervention in London's old Foreign Office (Hamilton 1998: Chap. 17, 207/ pdf version). When Joseph Banks returned Labillardière's collection he wrote to a friend in France: "I shall not retain a leaf, a flower, or a Botanical idea of his collection" (ibid.). Banks' remark stands for collegial fairness and refers to the sanctity of intellectual property. But it also illustrates a characteristic attribute of enlightened thinking: the challenge for a high degree of transparency in scientific affairs. The author will call this kind of botanical collaboration the *Flower Alliance*. In particular, the term demonstrates the common approach of English and French botanists, gardeners, botanical agents in their joint efforts to publish works on exotic flora – and it emphasizes the work of patrons referring to the impetus created by botanists in the circles of Kew Garden or, for example, in the entourage of the French society at the Royal Park in Malmaison.

It did not take long that the *Flower Alliance* between naturalists from the United Kingdom and France made it possible to discover the novelties of Botany Bay in Europe: Artists illustrated books and decorative items with floral emblems from the Southern Pacific. Horticulturists introduced exotic plants at noble estates. Together

16 The engravings were printed and published for the first time in colour between 1980 and 1990 by Alecto Historical Editions in association with the British Museum (Natural History) in an edition limited to one hundred sets. See also: Brian Adams and Robert Hughes´ ABC film documentary (DVD) of 1984 which illustrates "the massive undertaking in producing a full-colour edition of Banks' *Florilegium*" (DVD cover text).

they built a virtual greenhouse in which New Holland's newly discovered flora, figuratively speaking, could flourish: The compilation and subsequent evaluation of plant collections, the exchange of seeds between botanists and wealthy landowners, and the preparation of publications by patrons and artists followed in due course. This helped to undermine belligerent alliances and guaranteed a certain degree of collegial fairness, in itself an important chapter in the history of Australian natural sciences. Australia's flora certainly was one medium that *transported* the *exotic* into European thinking.[17] We will follow up two examples of knowledge transfer between botanists in Britain and France. One was the way to publish works on New Holland's world of plants, the other to cultivate their exotic flora.

Australia's Specimen: A Challenge for Scientific Performance or Describing the Non-Descript

Voyages of scientific exploration were part of England's and France's endeavours to expand their colonial influence overseas in the late eighteenth century. An integral part of this strategy was the documentation and publication of new discoveries. As a result, the main impetus to publish on New Holland's flora came from the idea of bringing little known plants to the attention of an interested readership in England and France. Mainly three groups participated in this effort: The first group consisted of wealthy men and women who were amateur naturalists and who acted as self-appointed patrons of science. The second group was made up of professionals, academics who had studied botany, or gardeners whose main business was the cultivation of plants. These gardener-botanists normally were hired as botanical assistants to care for the plants on a scientific voyage. The third group consisted of artists and engravers who specialized in botanical illustration.

Botanical specimens from Australia were made part of larger collections with plants from different parts of the world. As a result, the first printed books which dealt with unknown leaves, nuts, and seeds from New Holland were published as part of the general literature on the exploration voyages. They included only scattered references to the Australian flora, as, for example, in the journal compiled by John Stockdale and published in London in 1789: *The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay*.[18] This journal contains the very first published botanical plate of an Australian plant, a depiction of the Yellow Gum Plant: most probably this was based on a sketch made by a First Fleet officer in New Holland although it did not show its natural habitat. The depiction accompanies Arthur Phillip's diary entry of the 26th January 1788 which among other things deals with the treatment of dysentery. Phillip's botanical observation is descriptive and pragmatic by focussing on the red and yellow gum tree's medicinal properties and its healing effects. His notes are also interesting for their anthropological aspects with regard to the use of the tree by the local Aborigines:

> The plant that produces it [a resin] is low and small, with long grassy leaves; but the fructification of it shoots out in a singular manner from the centre of

17 The contemporary use of the term *exotic* refers to a *passion* (= exo*tick*) which encouraged Europeans to cultivate frost-tender 'exotick' plants in the northern climate: "Capturing Flora: A Passion for the Exotick", Travelling Exhibition, Art Gallery of Ballarat (August–October 2014).

18 Arthur Phillip, 1789. *The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay with an Account of the Establishment of the Colonies of Port Jackson and Norfolk Island*.

> the leaves, on a single straight stem, to the height of twelve or fourteen feet. Of this stem, which is strong and light, [...] the natives usually make their spears; sometimes pointing them with a piece of the same substance made sharp, but more frequently with bone. (A. Phillip: Chap. VII, January 26, 1788)

Already one year later it was John White's *Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales* (published in 1790) which presented at least nine descriptions of Australian botanical specimens, created by, among others, artist Sarah Stone (c.1760–1844) and botanical specialist James Edward Smith (1759–1828).[19] These were specimens that the First Fleet Surgeon-General and keen amateur naturalist John White (c.1756/7–1832) had sent back to England. His journal was probably edited by Thomas Wilson and soon translated into German, Swedish and French. Its creation and final publication served two aims, according to the dedication written by the Irish-born John White to his friend Wilson: "Its principal object [is] to afford you some amusement during your hours of relaxation. [...] It may tend to the promotion of your favourite science". In his dedication, New South Wales' "curious cones of trees and other natural productions" were classified as newly discovered plants or so-called "*Non-descripts*" (White: Advertisement). It is interesting to note that the book is full of references to classification work done by foreign botanists: Carl Linnaeus the younger (1741–1783), Joseph Gartner (1732–1791), or Charles Louis L´Héritier de Brutelle (1746–1800). The French connection was noted as relevant, for example, in the Journal's Appendices on "The Peppermint Tree": "The name of Peppermint Tree has been given to this plant by Mr. White, [...]", "undoubtedly of the same genus as that cultivated in some greenhouses in England, which Mr. L'Héritier has described in his *Sertum Anglicum* [1788] by the name of *Eucalyptus obliqua*" (ibid.: Appendices). This book by the French botanist L'Héritier already offered descriptions of rare plants which the author had located in gardens around London in the period of 1786/1787. One was Australia's well-known *Eucalyptus obliqua* which L'Héritier originally located in Nova Cambria [Australis] (i.e. New South Wales).[20]

Yet, the botanists working on White's plant material emphasized that no final determination of their example was possible until they were able to compare both plants in flower. The British reference to L'Héritier's work was notable in two ways. First, botanical classification did not come to an end by comparing fruits, leaves, barks and stamina. Botanical studies were based on the need to collect plant materials from different sources, to learn from knowledge transfer across borders, and to exchange empirical findings with the help of colleagues in London, Paris, Uppsala or other hubs of botanical research. Second, British and French botanists paid respect to each other for pivotal scientific work done by their foreign colleagues.

From today's perspective, academics with a focus on environmental history may argue that the eco-botanical archive of Australia's vegetation, as observed at the end of the eighteenth century, rests on the foundations of Joseph Banks' and Jacques Labillardière's botanical collections of 1771 and 1791. Yet, the concept of an *Australian Flora*, interpreted in an emblematic sense as New Holland's exotic image, leans on two mainstays, of 1793 and 1800: These two works, a British and a French compilation, can be seen as first drafts for a scientifically based documentation of Australian

19 John White, 1790. *Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales with Sixty-five Plates of Non Descript Animals, Birds, Lizards, Serpents, Curious Cones of Trees and Other Natural Productions.*

20 Charles L'Héritier de Brutelle, 1788. *Sertum Anglicum: Plantae Rariores quae in Hortis Juxta Londinum, imprimis in Horto Regio Kewensi excoluntur, ab anno 1786 ad annum 1787 observatae*, Tab. 20.

flora. They appear to be the basic cornerstones of Australia's botanical studies at the time of Enlightenment. The first scientific book "devoted solely to the botany of Australia" is a contemporary synopsis of botanical knowledge about Australia's flora.[21] It reflects both British and French botanical observations in New Holland at the end of the eighteenth century. It came out between 1793 and 1795 under the title: *A Specimen of the Botany of New Holland*, and was intended to

> inform the cultivators of plants concerning what they have already obtained from New Holland, as well as point out some other things worthy of their acquisition in future. (Smith 1793: vii)

The book was published in English by James Edward Smith, and it appeared to be no modest claim when Smith wrote in his preface:

> As the author intends it for the use of his countrymen and countrywomen, it is written in their own language – a language every day growing more universal, and which many circumstances now seem to point out as likely to become the most so of any modern one. (ibid.)

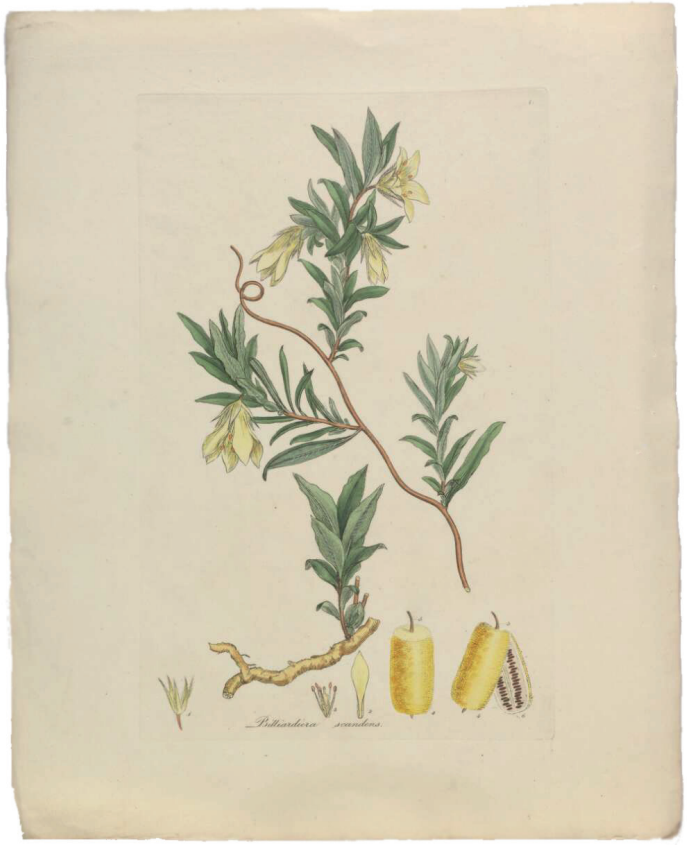
In spite of this statement, Smith and the famous botanical artist James Sowerby (1757–1822), who created 16 hand-coloured illustrations, did not refrain from paying respect to French botanists and their research. In fact, references to the French botanist L'Héritier, whose pioneering work they appreciated, were ample.

In particular, James Edward Smith mentioned the work on the "genus of Eucalyptus, established by the celebrated French botanist M.L. L'Héritier, of whose fate amid the present dreadful convulsions of his country we have for some time been ignorant" (Smith 1793: 39–40). L'Héritier was the first to publish the image of a species called *Eucalyptus obliqua* in 1788. It was created by a famous botanical artist: Pierre-Joseph Redouté (1759–1840). His image preceded James Edward Smith's published illustration of the *Eucalyptus robusta*. This shows that British and French botanists continued their intellectual dialogue through difficult times. It was no coincidence that Smith in his work of 1793 repeatedly points to botanical research done by French botanists when describing a new plant, as another example demonstrates: One of Sowerby's most accurate engravings illustrates the climbing Apple-berry which, according to Smith, was given the name *Billardiera scandens* "in honour of James Julian la Billardière [sic/ ...] now engaged as botanist on board the French ships sent in search of M. de la Peyrouse", and was the "only wild eatable fruit of the country [New South Wales] we are about to illustrate" (ibid.: 3 and 2). Smith notes: "Amid all the beauty and variety which the vegetable productions of New Holland display in such profusion, there has not yet been discovered a proportionable degree of usefulness to mankind, at least with respect to food" except for this plant (ibid.: 1–2). Smith placed the floral plate of the Apple-berry at a prominent place right at the beginning of his documentation.

James Edward Smith's groundbreaking treatment of the Australian flora certainly illustrated Britain's expertise in the field of natural science. It also underlined Britain's aspiration as a colonial power with strong ambitions to expand her influence in science and in politics. However, the endeavour to publish an encyclopaedic work on New Holland's world of plants developed into a French project. When French

21 James Edward Smith, 1793 [Reprint 2005]. *A Specimen of the Botany of New Holland* with figures by James Sowerby, Vol. 1, 57.

Botanist Jacques-Julien Houtou de Labillardière published his impressive work of the Australian flora, this showed a peak of scientific occupation with exotic plants, and it demonstrated that, in fact, "Paris [had become] the center of botanical development" (Williams 2001: 1).

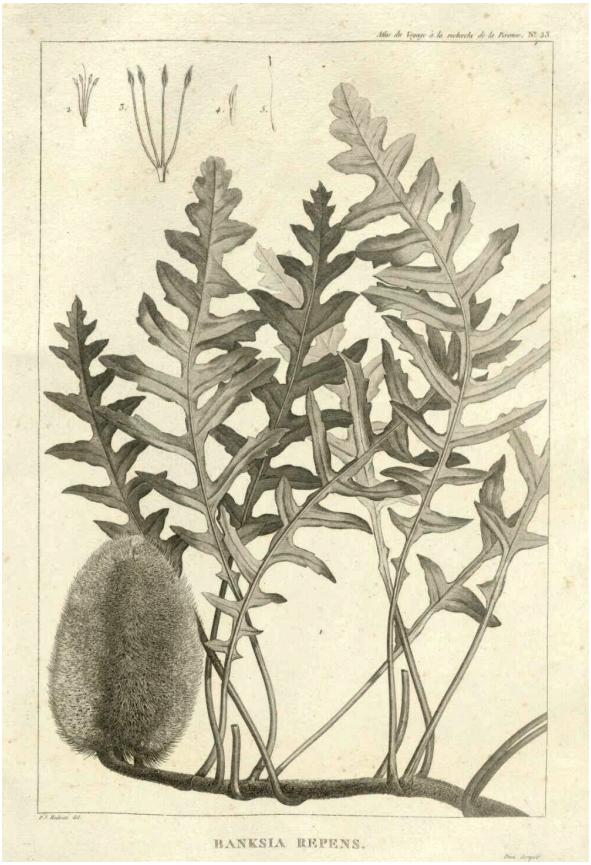


Billardiera scandens.
James Edward Smith.
A Specimen of the Botany of New Holland.
Engraved by James Sowerby.
London: J. Davis, 1794
© Courtesy of National Library of Australia PIC
Vol. 118 #U4097 NK7403

The two volumes of *Novae Hollandiae Plantarum Specimen* were printed in the years 1804 to 1806.[22] They were the results of extensive collection work in Southwest Australia and Tasmania onboard the *La Recherche* during the years 1792/93. Labillardière had assembled hundreds of specimens of Australian flora during his visits with Joseph-Antoine-Raymond Bruny d'Entrecasteaux (1737–1793) to the Recherche Archipelago at the South coast of today's state of Western Australia and Tasmania. Numerous new specimens were described. However, the author later had been criticised for not acknowledging the botanical work of his colleagues Claude Riche (1762–1797), Ètienne Pierre Ventenat (1757–1808), Félix Delahaye (1767–1829) or Jean-Baptiste Leschenault de la Tour (1773–1826) who accompanied Nicholas Baudin (1754–1803), and for giving inaccurate references to locations of collection (Nelson: 159–170). Exactly at the turn of the century, in the year 1800, Labillardière presented first illustrations of certain botanical specimen from Australia in his expedition journal: *Relation du Voyage á la Recherche de la Pérouse*.[23] Although this journal was not conceived to be a botanical compendium, its selected illustrations of Australian flora reflect face-to-face observation by the author himself.

22 Jacques-Julien Houtou de Labillardière, 1804–1806. *Novae Hollandiae Plantarum Specimen*, 2 Vols. For Open Access see: Online Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL).
23 For example: Drawings of *banksia repens* and *banksia nivea* in: Jacques-Julien Houtou de Labillardière, 1800. *Voyage in Search of La Pérouse*, Vol. 1, 466–467.

Habitat research *and* the aesthetic performance of the exotic appeared to be two essential aspects which enlightened botanists tried to satisfy with their publications. This, in particular, was a challenge for botanical artists as well as for gardeners who were on the payroll of state institutions or wealthy landowners. Therefore, it is worth discussing a few examples which support the thesis that all research on the Australian flora remained theory until illustration *and* cultivation would *transport* the exotic into the mind of the people.



Banksia repens.
Atlas pour servir à la relation du voyage à la recherche de la Pérouse. Plate no. 23
Engraved by Pierre-Joseph Redouté.
Paris: H.J. Hansen, 1800; Chez Dabo 1817.

Australia's Flora: Plant Breeding and the Cultivation of the Exotic – a Matter of Prestige

Most of what had come to light about New Holland's plants after James Cook's expedition up to the year 1800 was the work of British and French artists and engravers, but also of agents and their botanical assistants who made seeds and sprigs available. In their work they filled abstract terms of Latin plant nomenclature with vivid colour. French botanists and their contracted artists produced remarkable illustrations of newly discovered Australian flora. In this context, it is worth noting that France's enlightened botanical audience, in particular, was interested in aesthetic principles rather than economic purposes: patrons spent huge amounts of money for their passion. In his fundamental work on *Botanophilia in Eighteenth-Century France*, the American historian Roger L. Williams has shown in a most impressive way that it had been French influence that dominated the development of botanical studies, turning it into "the amiable science" (Williams 2001: 2). It is a highlight of enlightened thinking that the botanists among the French encyclopaedists developed into

defenders of the "assumption that pleasure was compatible with learning" (ibid.). The French approach to botany as "the amiable science" also influenced the image of Australian flora in the early period. Williams argues that "an elegant work of art designed to attract the wealthy botanical amateur dictated the format" of botanical publishing by referring to the French naturalist Louis-Jean-Marie Daubenton (1716–1800). The renowned keeper of the Department of Natural History at the Cabinet du Roi (associated to the Jardin du Roi) and member of the French Academy of Sciences Daubenton "urged that the methodical order [in a bound herbarium] be violated to achieve an arrangement more pleasing to the eye" (ibid.: 148, 2).

The French approach did show that the 'violation' of taxonomic description as the prevailing principle of description in favour of the aesthetic principle of botanical instruction did not necessarily affect scientific demands. Aesthetic botany and horticulture perfectly fit into the artificial habitat of European greenhouses or royal gardens. Aesthetic botany also found its reconstruction on rough copper plates on which able engravers made exact etchings of the specimens from overseas or from grown offspring. Among these talented men who gave shape to the exotic and, thereby, for the first time depicted today's most famous floral emblems of the Australian continent was the famous botanical artist Pierre-Joseph Redouté. As mentioned previously: During his stay at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew in the year 1787, the artist from the small village of Saint Hubert (then part of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg), Pierre-Joseph Redouté, pictured the first Eucalyptus known to be grown in Europe (Hamilton 1999: 21/pdf version).[24] This symbolic act not only illustrated the British-French botanical collaboration in a beautiful way but started the era of prestigious publications on exotic plants, as for example, Labillardière's *Novae Hollandiae Plantarum Specimen* (1804–1806). The compendium includes more than 250 black-and-white illustrations and more than 350 descriptions.[25] Most of the engravings were made by Auguste Plée (1787–1825) and his son Victoire, using drawings which for the most part had been created by Redouté and Pierre Antoine Poiteau (1766–1854). Pierre Jean F. Turpin (1775–1840) and other artists added drawings to the compendium, and Labillardière and Jean Piron contributed sketches which they had made during their visits to the Australian coast.[26] This illustrious team marked the first peak of Australian floral documentation right at the beginning of France's "golden" period of botanical art (Rix: 128–145). Illustrated folios literally helped to step into the virtual greenhouse of Australian flora. Although only a few wealthy people could afford to buy botanical folios, it was the enjoyable moment of looking at botanical illustrations which they shared with others and which opened a window to a new world: What became a matter of prestige – to own one of the rare editions or to be invited to privileged circles which had access to them – promoted the natural sciences, in general, and Australian natural sciences, in particular.

Botanical artists like Pierre-Joseph Redouté or Pierre Antoine Poiteau not only filled the imagination of a far distant natural environment with colour by shedding light on the unknown. From today's perspective, their reconstruction of Australia's

24 L'Héritier, *Sertum Anglicum*, Plate *Eucalyptus obliqua* (created by Redouté).
25 Description of *Novae Hollandiae Plantarum Specimen* by Antiquariaat Junk (Natural History Bookseller): http://www.antiquariaatjunk.com/item.php?item=8716, Accessed 23 March 2015 but in 2019 deleted from the internet.
26 Ibid. Until 2005/6 when Edward Duyker published his biographical research very less information was available about the artist Jean Piron: "Uncovering Jean Piron: In Search of D' Entrecasteaux's Artist", The *French Australian Review*, No. 39, 37–45. For information on botanising and drawing by Piron, see Mulvaney, 'The Axe had Never Sounded', 32.

flora at the beginning of the European immigration presents precious insights into a complex biotope rich in species and nearly untouched by systematic settler cultivation. For example: A likely source of authentic "Australian 'type' specimens" which, in fact, would have equipped a botanical ark with Australian flora (of his time) is Félix Delahaye's collection of dried plant material and seeds (Duyker 2010: 3). According to Edward Duyker it is "now held in herbaria in Paris, Geneva and Florence" (ibid.). However, Delahaye was a gardener and, as a result of his profession, he created the first European vegetable garden in Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) during the same period: in 1792/93. In a metaphorical sense: While Delahaye entered the botanical ark he abandoned it (by changing the status quo of Australia's environment). This left historical documentation of the *status quo* to scientific description and botanical art – preserved by enlightened collectors.

Although Redouté, the master of French botanical art, had to rely on sketches drawn by other artists, he turned dried material from herbaria into vivid representations of flowers and trees. He regarded flowers and plants as individual creatures. This talent made his widely reproduced work very popular. In fact, Redouté's beautiful depictions of the Australian flora were masterpieces characterizing the distinguishing features of New Holland's nature. Many of these watercolours were reproduced and printed in compendiums. Redouté's artful and astonishing output of illustrations, probably more than one hundred, promoted interest in Australia's vegetation on a wide scale (Hamilton 1999: 3/pdf version). Many of the original drafts and paintings are now housed at the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge University and in the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris.

For wealthy people, it certainly was a matter of prestige to gain access to such publications, outdone only by the chance to cultivate exotic plants in their own gardens. The only way to come in touch with exotic flora and their strange features was the access to plants which were grown in the mild climate of French or British gardens, since glasshouses were hardly common.[27] This was characteristic of the age of Enlightenment, in which "everything seemed possible", and the transplantation of exotic plants into European soil was just another experiment (Ingleton Paper). When the offspring of a Banksia plant, an Eucalyptus obliqua or the emblematic Waratah sent out their first leaves, this was a success, a unique moment, in which the exotic became tangible. James Edward Smith, for example, refers to such rare cases by describing the successful nursing of a Waratah: "Only one garden in Europe, we believe, can boast the possession of this rarity, that of the Dowager Lady de Clifford, at Nyn Hall, near Barnet, who received living plants from Sidney Cove, which have not yet flowered. The seeds brought to this country have never vegetated" (Smith 1793: 20).

Another example demonstrates that botanical artists, in particular, depended on the chance to observe unfamiliar plants in real life. Smith mentions the "new and very singular species of Embothrium a plant brought from New Holland flowered last summer, for the first time, at Messrs. Grimwood's at Kensington, from which our figure was drawn" (ibid.: 23). A growing number of British and French parks developed into test nurseries where New Holland's botanical offspring were observed by

27 William Aiton, 1811. *Hortus Kewensis or, a Catalogue of the Plants Cultivated in the Royal Botanic Garden at Kew,* Vol. 2, 36 and 39 (Aiton listed plants from New Holland which were introduced by Joseph Banks, Lee & Kennedy and other collectors or plant agents in 1790/91).

artists and "scientific botanists", as James Edward Smith designated them (ibid.: 3). Landowners and their landscape designers experimented with the construction of so-called hothouses which emerged with increasing shipments of exotic plants to Europe. Prominent nurserymen and plant agents like John Kennedy and his partner James Lee acquired and provided exotic plants for cultivation tests in hothouses and on the pleasure grounds of the nobility. One of the earliest constructions was built by Napolėon's first wife, Joséphine de Beauharnais, at her royal estate Malmaison near Paris. Her exhibition of Australian plants and animals as well as her patronage of famous landscape designers, botanists and artists highlighted this development which had started long before Nicholas Baudin in 1802 sent home new botanical cargo with the *Naturaliste*. The wish to grow exotic plants from New Holland prevailed among the wealthy in England *and* France.

Joséphine de Beauharnais, Napoleon's first wife, and her ambitious project to introduce plants from New Holland in France represented an important concept of dealing with Australia's floral novelties: The promotion of the exotic through aesthetic representation (Ingleton Paper: 2–3).[28] The famous book *Jardin de la Malmaison* which was commissioned by Joséphine de Beauharnais presented impressive illustrations of selected Australian flowers. Many of Pierre-Joseph Redouté's paintings depicted plants which were cultivated in gardens around Paris. However, Joséphine de Beauharnais was also in close contact with scientists and plant collectors in England.[29] Often newly cultivated flowers or seeds had come from British collections. Several Australian specimens which can be found in this compilation were already known to scientists in England and France but were first published in Étienne Pierre Ventenat's *Jardin de la Malmaison* (1803–1805).[30] Ventenat's botanical descriptions and Redouté's colourful paintings represent enlightened thinking in a most impressive way: spreading new scientific knowledge to a wider audience became an important feature. The botanical garden at Malmaison and Ventenat's publication were among the first projects to promote the idea of creating ecological space for Australian flowers, shrubs and trees in Europe: Joséphine de Beauharnais received exotic plant material from England and overseas, and, at the same time, passed plants from her estate to other gardens in France. Toulon's botanical garden received an exotic offspring from Malmaison: the Eucalyptus diversifolius had grown up into an impressive tree by 1814.[31]

Europe's discovery of Australia's flora was the result of remarkable efforts and events: William Dampier's first collection of specimen at Shark Bay in 1699 preceded James Cook's return to England from Botany Bay. Joseph Banks' huge botanical herbarium at Soho Square and Sydney Parkinson's (1745–1771) sketches of plants from New South Wales and their rework by Frederick Polydore Nodder (c. 1751–c.1800) paved the way for a better understanding of New Holland's plant life. These were important steps on the path to wider knowledge and publication. What had started with the primary aim to acquire new knowledge about the genetics of unknown plants finally resulted in two patterns of botanical thinking: the conservation of

28 An important historical source is the edition and reprint of Ventenat's work with coloured engravings originally created by P.-J. Redouté: H. Walter Lack, ed., [Reprint 2004]. *Jardin de la Malmaison – Ein Garten für Kaiserin Josephine*, 37.
29 Lack, *Jardin de la Malmaison* [Reprint], 35, 39–40.
30 Étienne Pierre Ventenat, *Jardin de La Malmaison* (Paris: de Crapelet, 1803–1805): Reprint of the plates in: *Jardin de la Malmaison*, ed. by Lack, 65–305. See also for selected illustrations in the French edition of 1804..
31 Lack, *Jardin de la Malmaison* [Reprint], 35.

plant material for research or cultivation *and* the depiction of the exotic for aesthetic purposes. The French, in particular, followed aesthetic concepts while both, the British and French, were efficient conservators who kept their specimens in herbaria or in nurseries. Art historians will notice that knowledge about the Australian flora mainly followed the aesthetic concepts of French publication.

The unique character and the variety of Australia's flora were made public either as accurate drawings or illustrated plates in books. Later, its flora appeared as colourful paintings on noble tableware, but also as carefully cultivated plant rarities in pleasure gardens.[32] Many of the early Australian botanical paintings, undertaken by British artists, remained in archives for nearly 200 years (Hamilton 1999: 3/pdf version). In the 1980s, the famous series of more than 700 paintings, created by Sydney Parkinson on the *Endeavour* voyage, were finally printed as complete work in *The Banks Florilegium*.[33] However: When we describe the decade between 1790 and 1800 as a period of revolutionary events, this can have another meaning in regard to the establishment of Australian botanical science. In these years, the French and British collaborated in the *re*discovery of Australia's transported plants in herbaria and gardens, and they worked on a continuing "flower chain" from the South Pacific, as the British art historian Jill Hamilton called it.

Therefore, Australian historians may consider this decade an important link between two events: the discovery of the unknown Australian flora was not immediately followed by a period of publication and exact description (in the years after 1770) but New Holland's botanical cargo was seen as exotic treasure which was made public to selected circles in the years 1790 to 1800.[34]

The author of this article wanted to explore the links between enlightened thinking and the "management" of New Holland's early floral collections by British and French botanists.

Research shows that two principles prevailed in the occupation with Australia's flora: accurate documentation and aesthetic illustration. Both tasks served Enlightenment's noble purpose: to explain the unfamiliar and to illuminate the exotic. In the end, the analysis makes clear that there remained a gap between two concepts of two enlightened nations: the concept of collecting (or shelving) Australian specimen *and* the idea of promoting the picturesque of Australian plants. The British and

32 Tableware with exotic flower ornaments can be found at Malmaison castle. See also: Bernard Chevallier, 2013. "Empress Josephine and the Natural Sciences", in *Of Pictures & Specimens: Natural History in Post-Revolutionary and Restoration France*, 2–3.

33 It can only be assumed whether more time-consuming occupations, the economic crisis in the years preceding the Napoleonic Wars or Daniel Solander's death in 1782 had been responsible for this unfinished project which had started in 1773. About that time, Banks had decided to engage a team of artists to finish Sydney Parkinson's and Alexander Buchan's (d.1769) sketches which were made onboard the *Endeavour.* This meant to finish the colour drawings of all relevant plants by referring to the original specimens stored in Banks' herbarium, and finally to produce engraved plates. In the following years, nearly "770 folio plates" of botanical specimens were created, and although Banks at the end of his life had spent a fortune on this project, the first descriptions of New Holland's flora were published by other authors. Yet, it is interesting to note that Banks who was a patron of art and science had a clear understanding of scientific illustration: From the beginning, he did not intend to publish a colour edition of his *Florilegium* as he thought "any colour would be an artistic overlay to what had already been engraved in the copper"; see Adams, *The Flowering of the Pacific*, 176. Brian Adams estimates a sum of more than £ 12,000 (no current equivalent) was spent by Banks to prepare the research results of the *Endeavour* voyage for printing; ibid., 176. For the number of folio plates: ibid., 147 (Adams refers to a correspondence between Joseph Banks and Edward Hasted). See also the film documentation: Adams, and Robert Hughes, *Banks' Florilegium: The Flowering of the Pacific*, DVD.

34 It is interesting to note that the "first known prints produced *in* New South Wales were executed not by a convict artist but by a free settler, John William Lewin (1770–1819) – in the service of science": in 1801. Lewin illustrated insects and birds in their natural habitat. At least one image shows honeysuckers enjoying the nectar of Australian flowers. See: Roger Butler, 2007. *Printed Images in Colonial Australia 1801–1901*, 7.

the French communicated their understandings of the *New World* and her exotic flora in different ways, although not necessarily for different purposes. Science and commerce fuelled the age of discovery. Curiosity and beauty fascinated the educated elites at home. This constellation made it possible that the Australian flora appeared on the horizon of a new group of professionals: the naturalists. Accomplished artists and foreign botanists consulted Joseph Banks and visited his herbaria at Kew; engravers prepared detailed reproductions of Sydney Parkinson's botanical sketches; British nurserymen sold Australian seeds to wealthy landowners in England and France. It required a high degree of scientific transparency as well as skilful diplomacy which brought Australian botany to light. There is evidence that most of the information about New Holland's botanical specimen was shelved during the first years after their discovery – like many of the drawings which were part of the Botanical Albums of the First Fleet.[35]

Nevertheless, it is no accident that James Edward Smith's *A Specimen of the Botany of New Holland* or Étienne Pierre Ventenat's prestigious publication *Jardin de la Malmaison* and Jacques-Julien Labillardière's *Novae Hollandiae Plantarum Specimen*, which are said to be the first general descriptions of New Holland's flora, were British and French editions. These publications highlighted the Australian flora by presenting curiosities and beauties of a far distant continent. Étienne Pierre Ventenat's prestigious publication *Jardin de la Malmaison*, in particular, illustrated that aestheticism was an important part of scientific description, at least if the editor focussed on a wider readership. Ventenat's compilation is a work of art. It presents beautiful images of New Holland's picturesque flora but only the fewest were painted from nature.[36] The nursery of Australian plants required a great deal of botanical knowledge and patience to flourish far away from their native environment.[37]

In the age of Enlightenment everything seemed possible. British and French botanists were united in their goal to experiment with the *exotic*, and, as result, they exchanged knowledge and plants. Ventenat's work highlights this collaboration in a beautiful way; in fact, this collaboration never got cut off during the years of the Napoleonic Wars. About 1800 the French botanist and member of the French *Académie des sciences,* Ventenat, named the offspring of an Australian evergreen climbing plant after the famous British nurseryman John Kennedy: *Kennedia*.[38] John and his partner of *Lee & Kennedy's Hammersmith Nursery* supplied Malmaison park with exotic plants from many countries – complementing "Josephine's ark" in which Australian plants gained a privileged place.[39] The groundwork for the naming of botanical species had been laid in Sweden in 1753: In that year, Carl von Linné had published his work *Species Plantarum* which introduced the principle of binomial nomenclature in botany. Linné's work can be seen as the foundation for a new system for classifying plants which also helped to name the unknown vegetal world of

35 For example, this refers to the Derby Collection of Aylmer Bourke Lambert's botanical drawings (two volumes/ Mitchell Library – State Library of NSW Sydney), see: Louise Anemaat, 2014. *Natural Curiosity: Unseen Art of the First Fleet*, 195.

36 A new era started with Aimé Bonpland, 1813. *Descriptions des Plantes rares cultivées à Malmaison et à Navarre*: At that time, more and more exotic specimen flowered or set fruit in European glasshouses.

37 One example: In 1804, Kew Gardens "received a vast collection of seeds from the unknown parts of New Holland, and are growing plants from seed from the same place sent last winter", Joseph Banks to James Edward Smith, 10 August 1804, 3 pp.

38 'Kennedia Rubicunda', Plate 104 in: Ventenat (1805). *Jardin de La Malmaison* – see plate in: *Jardin de la Malmaison* [Reprint], ed. by Lack.

39 In his book of 2018 Terry Smyth argues that the collection of Malmaison expanded even in times of war because Napoleon guaranteed for the safe passage of ships that carried flora and fauna from Australia: *Napoleon's Australia: The Incredible Story of Bonaparte's Secret Plan to Invade Australia*.

Botany Bay. *Kennedia* describes a genus of plants, comprising 16 species, all native to Australia. Again, this naming illustrated an important principle of enlightened thinking: the maintenance of an *international* academic network that enabled science to continue freely – in times of peace *and* war.

Conclusion

If we come back to Judy Dyson's argument that botanical representations, whether presented in text form or as illustrations, can be defined as "cultural texts" that transport "associated forms of knowledge", then six conclusions can be drawn, (1) from the psychological point of view the un-known, the far-distant and the non-descript of New Holland's world of flowers, fruits and barks attracted scientists and amateurs to create representations of the exotic; (2) that the early description of Australia's flora was not so much a taxonomic event as an emblematic interpretation of the exotic, its charm and colour; (3) that this approach culminated in the symbiosis of flower painting and instructive essays which provided aesthetic design – executed by botanical artists and landscape designers – an independent role in the field of botany; (4) that the overlapping structure of scientific and social networks between capitals, royal courts and patrons provided access to many available resources of the time, across political and military front lines and for the benefit of research; (5) that the import of Australian seeds and their cultivation in Britain and France satisfied scientific curiosity rather than ecological aims, as it appeared to be the only way to *reconstruct* the exotic on European soil whereby, from today's perspective, this critical decision had significant impacts on the environment in Southern Europe; finally, (6) that the hypothesis of an Australian greenhouse, can not be taken as a botanical ark in which the first *transplanted* flowers, shrubs and trees from Australia found shelter but rather as an experiment of enlightened knowledge *transfer* executed by British pragmatism and French aestheticism – this collaboration *translated* the exotic character of Australia's flora into an encyclopaedic approach to Australian-related natural sciences.

In December 1793, the co-founder of the prestigious *Linnean Society of London* James Edward Smith put it this way[40]:

> When a botanist first enters on the investigation of so remote a country as New Holland, he finds himself as it were in a new world. He can scarcely meet with any certain fixed points from whence to draw his analogies; and even those that appear most promising, are frequently in danger of misleading, instead of informing him. (Smith 1793: 9)

By referring to New Holland's plants as "total strangers", Smith emphasized the unique character of this exotic world of flowers, bushes and trees. In today's world, most of us have met these strangers already – as a matter of fact: in Australia *and* Europe. As a result, enlightened circles of today will now have to discuss the conservation (and recreation) of native environments and genetically modified habitats at home *and* overseas.

40 For the history of the *Linnean Society of London* (and important collections), see https://www.linnean.org/the-society.

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Revolutions, Religion and the Castle Hill Rebellion (1804)

Introduction

In 1804, the young British penal colony in Australia experienced its first and last fully-fledged convict rebellion at Castle Hill near Parramatta in New South Wales. The rebels were led by Irish political prisoners, though quite a few English convicts and former convicts joined their ranks. To all appearances, the rebellion was easily crushed by the immediate response of the authorities. Governor Philip G. King dispatched Major George Johnston with 53 soldiers and an unspecified number of members of a volunteer militia from Parramatta. After a brief skirmish, the surviving rebels either surrendered or were captured, and trials of the ringleaders followed in the next fortnight. In the light of the Irish participation, Australian historians currently stress the continuity of United Irishmen politics across the hemispheres (e.g. Hughes 1988; Karskens 2009; O'Farrell 2000; Silver 2002; Whitaker 1994). Undoubtedly, the prominent position of United Irishmen in the Castle Hill Rebellion and in earlier attempts running up to this event is notable.

A mere six weeks after the news of Emmet's 1803 rebellion in Dublin reached Australia, the Castle Hill rebellion responded (Whitaker: vii). Yet Irish ticket-of-leave convicts, who had established themselves on their farms and who, therefore, had something to lose in such a rebellion, joined in instead – puzzling scholars today (see e.g. O'Farrell: 37–38; Whitaker: 114). More than the news of an uprising in a very-far-away Dublin seems warranted to motivate such participation. Moreover, if indeed the rebels had had fighting experience in Ireland prior to their transportation, their breaking up and running away in the face of Major Johnston's line of soldiers is a remaining mystery that contemporaries were only too willing to see as Irish cowardice. Earlier attempts to explain the rebellion by the inhuman situation of the Irish convicts labouring at the government farms have been discredited as well (see Karskens 2009). In more general terms, to quote Jeffrey Alexander, "trauma is not the result of a group experiencing pain. It is the result of this acute discomfort entering into the core of the collectivity's sense of its own identity" (Alexander: 308). To fully explain the extent of Australia's Irish rising in 1804, more is needed than a consideration of the immediate grievance of transportation and its general conditions, an experience the Irish shared with all their English convict colleagues.

A full consideration of the actual situation of the Irish in New South Wales at the time, as well as a detailed look at the tenuous and conflicted relation between the United Irishmen rebellion in Ireland and the Australian convict uprising, will help clarify the events of the rebellion proper, which I will outline at first below. In the light of these considerations, then, the current explanatory model of the Castle Hill Rebellion – a primarily political one (see e.g. O'Farrell 2000; Silver 2002; Whitaker 1994) – will be complemented by two additional motivations, a religious and a judicial one. While the judicial focuses on the immediate context to the convict situation

in the early colony, the religious might answer to the demands of understanding the core of Irish convict identity in Port Jackson. In combination, this triple causality helps to explain a famous relic, William Davis' Ecce Homo statue. Considered one of Australia's icons (Luck: 108–109), this small sculpture of Christ given as a present to the former convict William Davis has featured in a few studies (e.g. Suttor: 20; Whitaker 1996). Reading this statue's Irish Catholic iconography allows me to bring together recent historical research on the Irish Brotherhood rebellion and Irish Catholicism with well-known facts of the Castle Hill uprising.

Historical Prologue: The Rebellion

In 1798, from May to September, Ireland saw an uprising in nine counties against British rule. The rebellion was organised by the Society of United Irishmen, an association influenced by American and French republicanism. A belated French military intervention on behalf of the rebels, with 4000 soldiers, could not stem the tide of the military response led by General Charles Cornwallis on his first assignment after his less-than-glorious return from America. 780 Irish were transported between 1800 and 1802 to Australia (Whitaker: 24). Governor King complained in anticipation to his superiors that these Irish convicts were uniformly "the most desperate and diabolical characters" (qtd. In Whitaker: 24), and to all appearance they tried hard to live up to his expectations. The HMS *Minerva* (arriving in January 1800) brought the first load of Irish rebels with Father Harold sentenced for sheltering a wounded rebel, and General Joseph Holt, a rebel leader, whose hopes of giving information to the British in exchange for an absolute pardon, had been fooled after his arrest. In February 1800, the HMS *Friendship* transported Father Thomas Dixon, a loyalist himself, for his family's involvement in the Wexford rebellion. With a little over 200 transported Irish in these first two shippings the stage was set for unrest in New South Wales.

There are three precursors to the actual Castle Hill Rebellion in 1804, which not only present some of the cast of the rebellion already but also show the strategies the colonial authorities favoured in responding to such a challenge. In part these strategies were repetitive – whenever the authorities felt they were in charge of the situation – in part, however, they exacerbated the conflict. In turn, the actions of the individuals later concerned in the Castle Hill Rebellion are also traceable through the climactic developments towards the rebellion itself in these three abortive attempts.

The first rebellion was planned for Sunday 31st August, 1800 at Toongabbie government farm, a colonial plantation run by convict labour. The plan was to secure Parramatta, killing Reverend Samuel Marsden, Paramatta's magistrate and the Anglican pastor of the penal colony. Then the rebels planned to march on Sydney, there to kill Governor John Hunter (who was due to leave the colony) and Lieutenant-Governor Philip G. King (who had already arrived to replace him). In Sydney they hoped to take over the HMS *Buffalo* with the help of disaffected sailors, and sail for France. Reverend Marsden received a letter warning him of the plot, so it did not eventuate.

Governor Hunter installed a Commission of Enquiry under the future Governor King, a step suggesting not so much a willingness to ease King into his administra-

tive duties as Hunter's desire to escape from being implicated in such troublesome issues himself. Hunter had been recalled in all-but-disgrace and would not have wanted additional troubles to cloud his reputation (he vindicated himself successfully upon his return to London). The Commission "was unable to prove that any of the alleged conspirators was actually guilty of sedition" (Silver: 30), a finding that did not stop sentences of excessive floggings for all suspects involved. Father Harold, suspected of involvement and questioned, refused to reveal names though he admitted knowledge of the plot. He was exiled to Norfolk Island with the ringleaders. Also in response, Governor Hunter formed the Loyal Sydney Association and the Loyal Parramatta Association militias, drawing upon the male free civilian population to support the military.

Before the sentenced and exiled could even be transferred to their new destination, a second rebellion attempt was to hit Parramatta on Sunday 28th September, 1800. The target now was to converge upon the Anglican church service of Marsden himself and "put to death all the gentlemen among the military" (Silver: 38), then liberate those imprisoned for the last attempt, and together starve or fight Sydney into submission, to escape eventually by ship. Again, Reverend Marsden was informed in time, on the 27th, by his convict shepherd. In an attempt to arrive at pikes and muskets, which Reverend Marsden suspected were still hidden away from the first attempt and ready to be used now again, he and Judge Atkins ordered the flogging of two suspects (Silver: 41), to no avail.

A Commission of Enquiry set up by Governor King did not find enough evidence for a capital charge but all involved convicts received excessive flogging sentences; amongst these was William Davis – he of the later statue gift. The ringleaders were to be transported to Norfolk Island. In January 1801, an Active Defence group was formed to supplement the Loyal Associations (Silver: 47). Apparently, King considered the measures taken by Hunter in response to the first rebellion attempt to have been the right in all details – thus the repetition in *quality* – though not efficient in *quantity*. Despite Governor King urging the government in London not to send any more Irish rebels, the HMS *Anne* arrived in February 1801, bearing Father O'Neal/O'Neill, another Catholic priest, who was preventively transported to Norfolk Island. The colonial administration's nervousness seems to have abated half a year later. It extended conditional pardons for well-behaved convicts – amongst those also rebels who had been involved in the two riots – in celebration of the Union of Great Britain and Ireland in 1801 and of the King's birthday (4 June 1801). In July, indeed, the militia was disbanded. Governor King opened a new government farm at Castle Hill in the district of Parramatta with 300 convicts. Then, eight months later, on 26th March 1802, an informant alerted Reverend Marsden to a third rebellion plan.

The targets this time were Reverend Marsden, yet again, the Sydney executioner Richard Rice, and Mr Cox, a farmer and General Joseph Holt's employer, thought to be an informer. In this, as Whitaker has shown conclusively, the rebels were mistaken: Holt himself, in character with his earlier attempt in Ireland to ingratiate himself with the authorities before his transportation, was the actual government spy (Whitaker: 113). Once Parramatta was taken, the rebels wanted to ask the soldiery to change sides and planned to force those who refused to march as human shields at the front of the columns into Sydney. A requisitioned ship would then be sent to rescue those rebels who had by now been indeed transported to Norfolk Island.

The Enquiry Panel once again was set up and sentenced two ringleaders to be flogged. It appears, however, that no additional strengthening of the military was thought to be necessary this time around; the authorities felt themselves secure in managing the rebellion attempts by tried and tested means.

In 1802, HMS *Atlas I*, *Atlas II*, and *Hercules* brought up the numbers of Irish convicts in the colony to over 1200, about a third of the entire population. In a public relations disaster, the end of 1802 further saw Father O'Neal released from Norfolk Island on orders from England as innocent. On the 20th April 1803, after receiving a dispatch from Lord Hobart that suggested the Catholic convict priests be used to educate the convicts and minister to their spiritual needs, Father Dixon was chosen by Governor King to serve as Catholic priest within a very definite set of regulations. He was the only choice, with Father Harold still in Norfolk Island and Father O'Neal already returned to Ireland. Father Dixon took an Oath of Allegiance and Abjuration, and received in turn 60 Pounds annual salary. So the first Catholic Mass was said in Sydney 15th May 1803, fifteen years after the arrival of the First Fleet, and eleven years after the first petition for a Catholic priest submitted by Irish Catholics in Australia to the authorities in 1792 (Suttor: 16). Governor King reported back to England that this decision had "the most salutary effects on the numbers of Irish Catholics we have and since its toleration there has not been the most distant cause of complaint" (qtd. in Whitaker: 93). His relief was to be famously premature.

On the 22nd January, news of Robert Emmet's 1803 rebellion in Dublin reached New South Wales (Whitaker: vii), and a mere six weeks later, on Sunday 4th March 1804, at 7 p.m., a convict hut was set alight at Castle Hill government farm as a signal for the rebellion to begin.[1]

The password of the Castle Hill Rebellion was "Saint Peter"; the rallying cry that of the Wexford rebels, "Liberty or Death", in some renditions with the added "and a ship home". The leaders were Phillip Cunningham, a stonemason and overseer at the government farm, and William Johnston. Both were men with military experience and United Irishmen. They sought the leadership of Joseph Holt, who did not turn them in yet but did not help either, deciding to wait it out. So when the Castle Hill Rebellion started in the evening, its first target was Robert Duggan, the executioner and flogger of the Castle Hill farm, who escaped death only because the pistol fired at his face did not go off. Most convict constables and overseers joined the rebels who started raiding the farms in the vicinity for additional weapons. This netted them about one-third of the colony's armoury. They also gained new supporters. The Loyal Association called together at Parramatta in response feared an immediate attack by the convicts who were seen gathering on nearby Constitution Hill, just above the town. Reverend Marsden immediately left for Sydney by boat, with his wife and three other women and their children. The convict ranks were reputed to be above 400 men at this point. Cunningham apparently drilled his convicts in the early morning hours and then marched towards the Hawkesbury, hoping to swell the insurgents' ranks with Irish Catholic settlers, who formed the majority of the population on the Hawkesbury. They were to next take Parramatta, kill Reverend Marsden (a constant part of any rebellion plan so far) and any military not join-

1 The uprising is very well researched, and the following details are a compilation from various historiographic sources.

ing them, and move on to Sydney. Once Sydney's garrison had been overcome, the rebels hoped to requisition a ship to reach France, yet again another constant.

In Sydney, the alerted Governor King despatched 52 rank and file led by Quartermaster Thomas Laycock Sr, a notoriously violent man, who was discharged from his service as mad in 1806 (Statham: 308). Leaving Sydney barracks alerted, and the militia assembled, the Governor himself rode to Parramatta, giving Major George Johnston command over the military on the way. Like King himself, Johnston was a veteran of the American War of Independence. In the early morning, Governor King and Major Johnston arrived in Parramatta, and King proclaimed martial law, giving his written orders to Johnston, which included shooting anyone who attempted to flee when challenged.

On Constitution Hill, Major Johnston, the infantry and some members of the Parramatta Association found nobody and were thus forced to begin a pursuit into the very hot Monday, towards the Hawkesbury, which ended in the afternoon when the rebels were only about one mile ahead of the exhausted military column. Johnston first sent his trooper ahead, waving a white handkerchief. To slow down the rebels, he was to tell them the Governor was on his way, and they should give themselves up; he returned without his weapon, which the rebels had taken off him. Johnston next sent in Father Dixon (there is no explanation as to where Father Dixon came from but all sources note his presence) to ask them to disarm and give themselves up; Father Dixon failed in this. Upon which Major Johnston rode up himself with his trooper, demanded to see the leaders for negotiations, and returned to bring Father Dixon a second time around. While they were all talking at this second meeting, the troops finally caught up with the convicts and appeared between the trees. At which Major Johnston clapped his pistol to the convict Johnston's head, instantly imitated by his trooper who did the same to Cunningham, and both dragged their prisoners towards their lines, where Major Johnston then ordered his men to fire on the rebels (Whitaker: 108). This initiative of Major Johnston ensured not only an element of surprise and tipped the scale in favour of the army, it was also very much against the rules of war and may have been owed to his somewhat cynical, veteran outlook. The fire exchange took about fifteen minutes, with Johnston noting later that the rebels were not really returning fire and dispersing very quickly. A few were then pursued into the bush and killed in reprisals. The pursuit ended at 4 p.m. (Silver: 105), when some of the last rebels were taken prisoners. Quartermaster Laycock at some point in this skirmish wounded the unarmed Cunningham, who was still unconscious when summarily executed by Major Johnston on Tuesday (Silver: 106). Free settler militia and English convicts then joined in the mopping-up. Fifteen convicts were eventually dead, over 300 surrendered.

On 8th March, nine rebel instigators stood trial, and all were sentenced to death. Reverend Marsden was shocked to find that four of these were Protestants. Seven rebels were flogged 200 to 500 lashes each and 34 (including those flogged) were sent to the Hunter River coalmines, a place of secondary punishment. Father Dixon's permission to read Catholic mass was withdrawn but he continued to minister secretly until leaving the colony four years later to be replaced by Father Harold.[2] Joseph

2 This can be concluded from his application to the Evangelisation Congregation in the Vatican of 19th April, 1804, in which he stated he had been administering the sacraments for two years (qtd. in Wiltgen: 183), which predates his official instalment as the colony's Roman Catholic priest. It is not likely, therefore, that by losing this official British status he would have changed his behaviour. He had, as Wiltgen points

Holt was arrested 21st March, and the investigation revealed he had informed of the rebellion. He was then sent off to Norfolk Island. The Militia had been disbanded, a sure sign of the authorities considering the matter well and truly settled.

Structural elements

The individual targets sought by the rebels in the various run-ups as well as in the Castle Hill Rebellion proper always represented three elements: the colonial administration, its judiciary, and the Anglican faith. It is the complex structure of their objective that shows the triple causality leading to the Castle Hill Rebellion, a feature still awaiting its full appraisal. Thus, added to United Irishmen politics imported from Ireland and targeting the British colonial administration, the second motivational force of the rebels appears evidently that of a perceived miscarriage of justice. It is closely tied up with a third, motivational force, which, I suggest, is Irish Catholicism. As an element of the 1800–1804 rebellions, Catholicism has been largely ignored in contemporary Australian historiography on the ground of two arguments that are repeated incessantly, neither of which, however, holds up to close scrutiny. The first of these arguments is the interreligious character of the leaders of the 1804 rebellion; the four Protestants amongst the nine men that were hung. This is seen as proof of the continuity of 1804 with the United Irishmen of 1798, in their enlightened, republican, secularized focus on national Irish unity across the religious divide.[3] Yet we have no information of the 300-something other participants' denominations and are thus left to guess whether the Catholic/Protestant proportion of the Castle Hill leadership is in fact representative of the group as a whole. There are reasons why it might not be.

By 1798, the extent to which Catholic Defenders had joined the United Irishmen has prompted some Irish scholars to speak of a Catholic take-over of the movement (Atkin: 268). To the Australian colonial government, such intricacies of Irish alliance mattered little. Yet to us the possible involvement of Defenders, with their pronounced "self-consciously sectarian", read: militant, Catholicism (Bartlett: 260), amongst the 1804 rebellion is noteworthy indeed. The password of "Saint Peter" has been seen as in general terms referring to the rebels' religion (Whitaker: 93–94) but might as well be a reference to the so-called Defender Catechism, a question-and-answer password, in which "Saint Peter" features very prominently. One 1795 example, found in Leitrim, reads:

> Q. What do you design by that cause?
> A. To quell all nations, dethrone all Kings, and to plant the true Religion that was lost at the Reformation.
> Q. Who sent you?
> A. Simon Peter, the head of the Church.
>
> Signed, "By Order of the Chief Consul" (qtd. in Garvin: 231)

out, been made Prefect apostolic of the Prefecture apostolic of the Missions of New Holland in 1804 as well (by the Vatican) and would have considered this his actual instalment rather than King's toleration or its later withdrawal.

3 This is, for one, the position of Whitaker's seminal study of the Castle Hill Rebellion cf. Whitaker, 1994; see for an even more extensive view, "transcend[ing] ethnicity, calling and rank", Karskens: 293.

Garvin notes, quite correctly, that this rebel Catechism derives its sentiments from the French revolution, replacing e.g. "Tree of Liberty" with "true Religion" in the first answer (Garvin: 231) but still keeping to a contemporary French (Consular) republican model. As "agrarian terrorists" (Reece: 41), Defenders would be comfortable with hit-and-run tactics. Overcoming constables, firing huts, plundering farms for weapons and ammunition were all within their scope of experience. Facing down a disciplined professional soldiery's firing line was not their strategy. The behaviour of the Castle Hill Rebels thus indicates less professional military experience and more the presence of Defenders who acted deliberately from ambush.

The second line of argument goes beyond such details, and claims a largely irreligious and illiterate Irish peasantry in the eighteenth century (e.g. O'Farrell: 39; Suttor: 18). In this, Australian scholars basically take up mid to late twentieth century Irish historians' view of a pre-Tridentine church in Ireland in the eighteenth century, with a peasant faith incomparable to the post-Famine devout revolution. However, this claim, itself based on the assumed conflict between a national Irish versus a Roman Tridentine devotional practice, has been substantially qualified by recent research into eighteenth-century Catholicism in Ireland (see, for example, Carroll: 150; Hachey: 15). Moreover, Australian scholars' failure to consider the level of education provided by illegal hedge schools in Ireland (cf. MacManus), or the rise of a Catholic press in the second half of the eighteenth century presents an inadequate picture of the Irish convict population. The extent to which "illiteracy" in the late eighteenth century Gaelic-speaking peasantry of the southern counties, as noted by Ian McBride, was then measured by their (in)ability to read an English Bible (in Latin script as well as in a foreign language!) or more strictly by their (in)ability to write, while rural teaching was reading-based, has not been fully considered to date (McBride: 57). All of which should help lay the spectre of the generally irreligious and ignorant Irish peasant to rest.[4]

Reintroducing Catholicism into the Australian picture is not a currently fashionable position in eighteenth century criticism, where, to quote Roger Dupuy writing about the peasant rebellion in the Vendée, "l'historiographie se dégage de l'optique étroite qui accordait au problème religieux une importance primordiale dans le processus du soulèvement". (Dupuy: 113) ["Historiography disengages itself from the focus that granted to religious problems a primary importance in the staging of a rebellion". – Translation TM] Possibly, the swing of the pendulum into an all-secular explanation in Australia is also a reaction to the ultramontane takeover of both the iconic years of 1798 and 1804 especially in the late nineteenth century historical writings of Cardinal Moran. Yet the dismissal of religion, a defining feature of Irish eighteenth century categorization (of self and of other, cf. McBride: 12) may be too hasty, leaving, as it does, several elements of the rebellions, both the Irish and the Australian, unexplained – not least of all the involvement of the Catholic clergy. Additionally, including a critical re-evaluation of the Catholic perspective of the Irish convicts – not a mere rehashing of ultramontane arguments in favour of Irish martyrdom – opens a glimpse into the genesis of a counter-memory[5] to the Austral-

4 This might also help explain the note that was sent around by Cunningham with the rebellion password to alert sympathizers, which puzzles Whitaker who cannot explain why such a note should be sent when the Irish convicts were illiterate (Whitaker: 93–94). They might have been able to read though not to write.

5 "The master commemorative narrative represents the political elite's construction of the past, which serves its special interests and promotes a political agenda. Countermemory challenges this hegemony by offering a divergent commemorative narrative representing the views of marginalised individuals

ian master narrative of the Irish minority's reluctant but inevitable move towards a unified progressive and enlightened Australian nation.

Re-evaluating a Catholic perspective

To start, then, with the immediate response to the judicial situation in the colony: the convicts transported from Ireland following 1798 had legitimate grievances and could indeed claim a miscarriage of justice. No papers were sent with the convicts, shipload after shipload, thus – in the absence of indictments (Whitaker: 23) – colonial authorities assumed the worst of every Irish convict. In turn, naturally, all could claim unjust treatment, even the odd thief. Yet, as the courts martial and assizes following 1798 did indeed, even in official parlance, stand accused of "irregular procedures" (see Silver: 6, 7; Reece: 243; O'Farrell: 28). This phrase means summary justice with no recourse to the law, sentences based on defamation or suspicion, and tortures to extract confessions. The lifetime sentences simply assumed by the Australian authorities were most questionable. Governor King could have erred on the merciful side but as his assumption in the case of Father O'Neill shows he tended not to.[6]

O'Neill/Neal had been given 250 lashes to confess to his knowledge of a plot leading to the murder of a Loyalist spy and, when that had failed, he had been drugged to induce him to sign a ready-made confession (Silver: 19). After his transportation and arrival in New South Wales, Governor King considered him "of most notorious, seditious and rebellious principles",[7] simply on the grounds of being a Catholic priest, and preventively exiled him to Norfolk Island. As mentioned earlier, O'Neill was found to be innocent when his case was reopened and allowed to return home at the end of 1802 on instructions from England (Silver: 70). In a nutshell, O'Neill's precedent did nothing for the Australian authorities' standing with their Irish convict population. It would have come across as (what it was) an admission of judicial error, yet in one case only. So what of the rest?

Convicts considered gentlemen were again and again treated differently by the colonial system, and they were consequently often suspected by the convicts of being collaborators. In the case of Holt, as has been shown, this suspicion was well-founded. It is no surprise then, to find the second failed rebellion attempt calling for the death of all gentlemen among the military. British justice for everybody else, when it was seen in New South Wales under Governor King, did not look well either.

One has to turn to a legal historian at this point, as other Australian historians have been strikingly coy to express the situation. In his seminal *A History of Criminal Law in New South Wales*, Gregory D. Woods states: "Marsden's period as a magistrate at Parramatta coincided with excess and illegality in punishments. [...] Practices akin to torture do not sit comfortably with the profession of the teaching of Jesus Christ";

and groups within the society. [...] While this conception of countermemory shares Foucault's emphasis on its oppositional and subversive character, it departs from his insistence on the fragmentary nature of countermemory. Countermemory is not necessarily limited to the construction of a single past event; it can be part of a different commemorative framework forming an alternative overview of the past that stands in opposition to the hegemonic one". (Zerubavel: 241)

6 Compare to Governor Hunter's more understanding stance in his letters, qtd. in Moore: 134: "The manner in which the convicts are sent out from Ireland is so extremely careless and irregular that it must be felt by these people as a particular hardship, and by government as a great inconvenience".

7 Qtd. from *Historical Records of Australia*, Series I, Vol. 3, p. 9.

and he cautions: "This use of torture in the history of New South Wales Criminal law should not be forgotten" (Woods: 44). In such conditions, Father Harold's noted recalcitrance in cooperating with the authorities before the actual 1804 rebellion got him transported to Norfolk Island. In contrast, the striking clemency that Father Dixon met with after 1804 would have compromised him in the eyes of his parishioners. "In Ireland, history is never forgotten, for in the present, the Irish merely relive a horrible past" (Nolan: 36). The colonial authorities' brutal suppression of any attempted or only rumoured rising from 1801 to 1803 gave Irish convicts over to military justice, which by its harsh flogging regime repeated the Irish experiences of 1796–98. All of this was obviously enough to start a rebellion among those politically minded amongst the convicts, but the violent issue had to be brought still closer to home for the participation of the larger, already settled Irish population of New South Wales.

Early colonial New South Wales was not only a social system dominated, indeed run by the military,[8] it was a "confessional state".[9] It was a conservative Anglican system, even by the standards of the day,[10] enforcing outer conformity as an expression of national unity: King and Church. To those of a lax or irreligious orientation amongst the convicts or settlers, enforced outer conformity was no problem. To practicing Catholics it was impossible, forbidden under threat of excommunication since 1704.[11] There are diverging views of the extent to which church service attendance was enforced. By his 1803 order to confine all people found loitering in the streets in Sydney or Parramatta during the hours of divine service (King: 134), Governor King had very decidedly closed a possible loophole just before the rebellion.[12] After Castle Hill, apparently, Irish convicts would be marched to the church but spared the actual attendance, remaining outside the building for the duration of the service (McGovern & O'Farrell: 7). The very existence of this response indicates the authorities' need to compromise in the face of continuing and substantial Irish Catholic resistance.

Another indicator of Catholic resistance to enforced Anglican conformity is the Irish convict population's refusals of Anglican baptisms, marriage rites or burials.[13] These issues provoke large misunderstandings in current criticism, such as the anachronistic claim to a Catholic lay church prior to 1820 in Australia (Morley, *Catholic Weekly*: n.p.). Few scholars seem aware of the extent to which sacramental powers accrued to the Catholic laity in the Tridentine reforms. In the absence of priests, marriage[14] was easily performed. The clergy's function was merely to bless

8 "a dictatorship, more or less benevolent" (McGovern & O'Farrell: 1).

9 I am somewhat disingenuous in quoting from Gascoigne (20), whose original statement qualifies this phrase a little. As he states it, the early colony's "outward forms bore the imprint of a confessional state where membership of the church and of the body politic were synonymous". If one considers, however, that the colonial penal state in NSW consisted as such of outward forms (e.g., rituals and spectacles of various hierarchical levels of cooperation, coercion, control or punishment), the actuality of a confessional state in colonial NSW is evident and needs no qualification.

10 George III's Act for the Relief of his Majesty's Roman Catholic Subjects (1791) was only adopted in NSW in 1830 (Callaghan: 108). The delay is that of a generation's lifetime for the experience of Irish convicts.

11 *Collectanea S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fidei seu Decreta Instructiones Rescripta pro Apostolicis Missionibus* (Rome: Typographia Polyglotta, 1907), Vol. I, n. 267, p. 91.

12 "[...] the governor [King] was very strict about observance of the sabbath". (Silver: 34; similarly 52)

13 This refers to the burial of an Irish convict named Burn, who in 1792 had petitioned for a priest, after a wake next to his hut. According to Marsden "in the most beastly manner, after the most horrid oaths, curses and imprecations" (qtd. in Quinn: 19).

14 The Trinitarian definition of the sacrament of marriage consists of mutual, openly declared and witnessed bonds between a Catholic man and woman: In order that the different parts of this definition may be better understood, the pastor will teach that, although a perfect marriage has all these conditions, viz. internal consent, external assent expressed by words, the obligation and tie which arise from the

a sacramental union achieved by both partners and such a blessing could be postponed till a priest would become available. Fast, private burials next to convict huts enraged Reverend Marsden as "most beastly", yet to a Catholic, such a burial was preferable to the unhallowed grounds of a heretical church. The situation is even clearer with baptism, which the Tridentine *Catechism* explicitly declares a sacrament that will and should often be given by women (Vol 2. Chap. 2/ n. 12, p. 125), and that, in Catholic theology, does not need the presence of a priest either to be legitimate. This is a markedly different concept to the reformed notion of baptism as the basis of an Anglican community, with the infant "grafted into the church" – as this quote is from the Articles of Faith,[15] the church in question is naturally the Anglican one – by a registered baptism in their respective parish.

Needless to say, once a Catholic priest arrived after decades of absence, he would have his hands full acknowledging and blessing past sacramental status, not to mention that the lack of some form of centralised registration in the case of marriage paved the way to abuses such as bigamy. It is in this context that the often-quoted contradiction between Father Therry's 1820s complaints of the unblessed state of his congregation *and* Father O'Flynn's earlier triumphant reports of the persistent refusals of Anglican baptism, marriage rite and even the solemnity during the enforced church services (e.g. Suttor: 19) resolves into two sides of the same coin.[16]

That Anglican baptismal records are indeed no mirror of the actual baptisms performed amongst the Irish Catholics is apparent in Governor King's demand that Father Dixon should register his baptised flock (and King's obvious relief at such an opportunity to set his records straight): "Remarks - The Births are uncertain and not easily Collected from the Scattered state of the Settlers' Allotments, and Children born of Catholic Parents and not Baptised will be remedied now, as the Priest will keep a Register of the Baptism". (qtd. in Morley: n.p.). To the Anglican governor, children not baptised and registered by Reverend Marsden into the Anglican church, would of course be considered "not Baptised". No register kept by Father Dixon has so far been found.

By refusing the Anglican marriage service, however, the Irish convicts would blend in more easily with the common law marriages that were practiced by English convicts and officially and ardently denounced as concubinage by Reverend Marsden (Quinn: 51). Official views would not (indeed could not) account for such distinctions of doctrine and faith. In the case of the Parramatta district's records, run by Reverend Marsden, one can expect an additional complication. As missionary-minded evangelical pastor, Marsden refused to accept that Irish Catholics were not a part of his congregation or responsibility. As "racially" prejudiced against them,[17] Marsden could only read the Irish defiance that his proselytising efforts regularly met with as diabolical. In his turn, he declared the Irish irredeemably damned.[18] This is echoed in his famous repeated diatribes against Irish convicts, and in his uniform consid-

contract, and the marriage debt by which it is consummated; yet the obligation and tie expressed by the word "union", alone have the force and nature of marriage" (Catechism of the Council of Trent: p. 226). Later pages stress the need of pastors to enforce in their congregation an understanding of the necessity of witnesses and a priest to give full form to the legitimacy of marriage, which however rests in the union of the two partners already.

15 XXVII "Of Baptism". Articles of Religion, *The Book of Common Prayer*, 705.

16 Suttor (19) notes that there was no open disobedience in the military; the Catholics in the 48th regiment always attended. By implication this makes the attendance amongst the convicts more doubtful.

17 Qtd. in O'Farrell, 39: "the most wild, ignorant and savage race"; in 1807 letter to London Missionary Society.

18 Qtd. in O'Farrell, 39: "no true concern whatever for any religion [...] should the catholic religion be tolerated [...] "

eration of Catholic marriages as a state of concubinage.[19] Marsden saw criticism of the Anglican faith as criticism of the state (in all its implication) and, worse, as criticism of the very position which he embodied. He did not tolerate either secular or spiritual criticism.

In short, far from the notions of an irreligious peasantry or an anti-clerical lay church, there was room for the Irish Catholics in early New South Wales to maintain a Tridentine faith in the face of what looked to them like insistent religious persecution. It should not surprise anyone then, as it does O'Farrell for example, that Catholics flocked to the clergy after 1820 in numbers that stunned authorities and priests alike (O'Farrell: 40).

Some historians read Governor King's appointment of Father Dixon as an enlightened concession of Catholic relief; in fact he has even been accused of being much too lenient in this measure (King: 121). It is indeed surprising in its extent considering the rapprochement between King's devout wife and Reverend Marsden (King: 50) as well as King's own stout Anglicanism.[20] It is also, however, a conciliatory gesture with strategic intent. Governor King improved the fortifications of Sydney harbour against the threat of a French invasion, ironically by using as forced labour those very rebels sentenced after the first unsuccessful Irish convict rebellion in 1800 who had hoped to escape to France (Silver: 44). He thus created outward defences with the help of the enemy within the colony. The defence against the enemy within, as King undoubtedly perceived the Irish in New South Wales,[21] consisted of concessions to their Catholic faith. Yet far from being too lenient, King was too reluctant in granting these strategic concessions.

In contrast to Lord Hobart's directives,[22] Governor King did not agree to allow Father Dixon to teach his charges (see his letter to Lord Hobart 9th May, 1803[23]), which meant that the future generation was to be taught Anglicanism in order to be assimilated. Eventually, this would eradicate Irish Catholicism in New South Wales in

19 One of the consequences of Marsden's attitude towards Catholic "concubinage" can be observed in King's establishment of an orphanage, opened on 17 August, 1801, which seems very much a pet project of his wife and Reverend Marsden (who were both running the institution, nicknamed "Mrs King's orphanage"). This abolished the more confessionally neutral "boarding out" model of earlier governors. Far from containing only orphans, girls from concubinage backgrounds were forcibly removed from their morally dubious parents and boarded behind an eight-feet-high stone wall that was erected in Jan 1805, surrounding the orphanage to inhibit illicit contact between the parents and children. 103 girls were in this institution by May 1803. "The children are to be entirely secluded from the other people, and brought up in habits of religion and morality..." as a letter by Mrs. Paterson states (qtd. Bubacz: 68), clarifying that "habits of religion" indicate Marsden's version of Anglicanism. "Establishing an asylum allowed King the potential to 'exile' a large proportion of the young female members of the colony and this withdrawal could be seen as a penalty to the rest of the community and as an opportunity to reform and re-educate the individuals removed". (Saltmarsh: 3)

20 King calls him "a religious man with deep convictions" noting his efforts to "increase public piety" (134). Yarwood is less lenient: "King's despatch reveals with quite breath-taking candour the flaws of the religious policy he carried on from Hunter in attempting to dragoon unwilling congregations to hear the word of God. [...] King saw the state's power as enforcing church attendance and an outward show of virtue. In each case, church and state were regarded as reinforcing each other; the clergy were moral policemen, not evangelical pastors who preached for individual believers the gospel of a loving Christ". (Yarwood: 83)

21 "He had written to the British government about the establishment of batterys [sic!] that 'completely prevent any attack from without' but had argued that 'our exertions must soon be turned to securing ourselves from any attempts of the Irish republicans.'" (King, qtd. ibid. : 110)

22 29.8.1802, *Historical Records of Australia*, Series I, Vol. 3, p. 564.

23 "To employ them as schoolmasters would be giving them the means, were they so disposed, of instilling improper ideas into the minds of their pupils. However, I do not think that would be the case with Dixon [...] . I believe it will be admitted that no description of people are so bigoted to their religion and priests as the lower order of the Irish, and such is their credulous ignorance that an artful priest may lead them to every action that is either good or bad. The number of this description now in the Colony is more than a fourth of the inhabitants. They have frequently felt uneasy at being excluded from exercising their religion, which has been heightened by the idea of having priests among them who are forbid preaching to them'". *Historical Records of Australia*, Series I, Vol. 4, p. 83.

the long run. The Hawkesbury-Sydney-Parramatta circuit allowed to Father Dixon resulted in practice in a Catholic clerical presence one Sunday every three weeks, not exempting the Catholics from the obligatory regular Anglican church service on the other Sundays. To further enforce this regular obligatory attendance, King explicitly forbade Catholics to travel on Sundays to a Catholic mass not in their district.[24] Baptisms and marriages would now be in Dixon's charge, yet there was little possibility of extreme unction or a last confession to the dying unless they managed to die in accordance with Dixon's travel calendar. Catechising as a form of teaching was forbidden, thus in practice making a clerical preparation for the First Communion or Confirmation impossible.

In short, Governor King's concession was too little and too late. It maintained the basic problem, that of an enforced Anglican conformity, in the eye of ultimately unavailable relief. Father Dixon's taking of the Oath of Allegiance and Abjuration and accepting his £60 salary only must have made him look complicit to this scheme. The assumption that Major Johnston brought Father Dixon along as a decoy to his dealings with the rebels, in fact to gain him enough time for his columns to catch up while pretending to negotiate, points to the authorities' awareness of a religious element in the uprising. As well, it points to the lack of spiritual authority, which Father Dixon could ultimately claim over his charges. In a nutshell, it embodies the dilemma of Father Dixon's role as mediator. Dixon's subsequent loss of position and indulgence mirrors that he had failed to act according to the colonial government's plans. This was not about granting one-third of the population their right to practice their faith in an enlightened view of minority rights, this was a concession to prevent imminent rebellions. As the concession had failed, it was withdrawn.[25]

Symbolism, Iconography, and the Enlightenment

In evaluating the impact of the Enlightenment on the early Australian colony, it is easy to be impressed by the experiment of convict transportation to create a civilized settlement – today's metropolis Sydney. Amidst the celebration of enlightened ideas of educating the criminal classes to a life of productivity, cleanliness and moral improvement (cf. Gascoigne: xi–xii), the treatment accorded to the early Irish convicts and their Castle Hill Rebellion is a timely reminder of Pocock's different Enlightenments theories, developed further, for one, in 2004 by Gertrude Himmelfarb. Not some abstract or French philosophical concept of the Enlightenment was transported to Australia, but a very Anglican version of it, actually even retrograde in development compared to the British contemporary situation such as seen in the acts of Catholic relief of 1791. Between the structural pillars of church and King no middle way across denominational lines and cultural borders was intended in Australia. Judging somewhat anachronistically by today's definition of the United

24 "3. As Mr. Dixon will be allowed to perform his clerical functions once in three weeks at the settlements of Sydney, Parramatta and Hawkesbury, in rotation, the Magistrates are to strictly forbid suffering those Catholics who reside at the places where service is not performing from resorting to the settlement and district at which the priest officiates for the day". REGULATIONS TO BE OBSERVED BY THE REVEREND MR. DIXON, AND THE CATHOLIC CONGREGATIONS IN THIS COLONY – ISSUED BY GOVERNOR PHILIP GIDLEY KING ON 19/4/1803. See: *Historical Records of Australia*, Series I, Vol. 4, pp. 104 –105.

25 Since King ordered (12.4.1803) all Catholics to be registered with name and address prior to indulging Dixon, control of those who had registered was quite easy afterwards.

Nations, an ethnic community is threatened with cultural genocide if its population is forcibly removed, if its cultural and religious practices are suppressed by legal or administrative means, and if they are exposed to propaganda against them.[26] All three features clearly applied to the majority of Irish convicts in Australia at the turn of the nineteenth century. This resulted in an Irish discourse of victimisation, in which a statue of Christ could become emblematic for the Irish convicts' fate.

A close iconographic reading of this statue shows the confluence of political, religious and judicial motivations behind the Castle Hill Rebellion. As one inscription states, it was "presented to William Davis in 1817 by his fellow colonists in sympathy for the sufferings he endured for his faith" (qtd. in Whitaker: 36). The seemingly obvious narrative of a martyrdom of William Davis, who was one of the convicts sentenced to 200 lashes in October 1800, is the focus of current views of this statue and its inscription. Anne-Maree Whitaker, however, has significantly dated the inscription to 1951 (37). The iconography of the statue itself tells a more complex story than the ultramontane reading as a relic of Irish martyrdom which this belated inscription tries to fix. It is not a simple equation of William Davis' sufferings with those of Christ (in contrast to Suttor: 20). That would be blasphemous. Yes, it is an *Ecce Homo* statue but no, it is not a depiction of Christ being or having just been flogged as both Luck and Whitaker claim.[27] Such images were titled *Christ at the Column*,[28] and they had a focus on expressing immediate physical pain, embodying the suffering humanity of Christ. They do not show the resigned suffering of Davis' statue. Moreover, *Christ at the Column* statues carry no crown of thorns; the crowning by Roman soldiers to spite Jesus' claim to royalty comes after the flagellation. In contrast, an *Ecce Homo* iconography shows this claim of "Christ the King" explicitly in the crown of thorns, a claim which featured strongly in late eighteenth century debates about a publically Catholic society, be that in the Vendée rising, or in the eighteenth century Irish epithet for Jesus: "King of Sunday"[29] (Carroll: 25).

The *Ecce Homo* iconography further carries the message of corrupt Roman authorities in the normally absent but implied Pontius Pilate whose Vulgate version quote about Christ of John 19:5 is the name given to these statues, "behold the man". It rings an eerie echo of the self-styled Augustan rule of the Georgians, of Britain as the new Rome and of its global empire. The statue thus points to a violent miscarriage of justice by imperial authorities, and it points to this miscarriage being, in an Irish Catholic context, relevant to the notion of Christ as King, the King of Sunday. As such, it ties in with the traditional claim that William Davis was flogged for refusing to attend the Anglican church service[30] which is heightened but also simplified by the inscription's more generalizing claim of suffering for his faith. More

26 Cf. Office of the UN Special Adviser on the prevention of genocide www.un.org/ar/preventgenocide/adviser/pdf/osapg_analysis_framework.pdf additionally lists the forcible transfer of the children of the suppressed group to another group, which echoes of King's orphanage project coinciding with the time frame of the three first attempts and the actual rebellion.

27 "The Ecce Homo statue of the scourged Christ was clearly intended to symbolise the suffering of the Catholics, and its recipient was reputed to have been flogged and locked in the black hole for refusing to attend protestant services"; Whitaker (1996): 37; also: Luck: 109.

28 Christ at the Column with wounds of crucifixion, thorns (sometimes also weapons of crucifixion and ministering angels): *Misericordia* medieval tradition.

29 Traditional name of wells: Ri an Domhnaigh (Ri-an-Dom-knee) dedicated to Christ but also topic of a poem by Tomás Rua Ó Súilleabháin (1785–1848) from Kerry, hedgeschool master and supporter of Daniel O'Connell, 13 in 1798, died in the famine.

30 Disputed on general terms by Whitaker: 37; compare to Order of 4.10.1800 confirming obligatory attendance and sabbath observance, & report 1.03.1804 adding "by respectfully referring your Lordship to the list of punishments inflicted during the year 1803, which I beg to offer as a proof that the morals of the inhabitants and punishment of vice is not neglected". Qtd. in Yarwood: 82.

importantly, the complexity of the statue's iconography voices a coded counterclaim to the Anglican church's monopoly in colonial New South Wales.

Conclusion

It is in this triple causality that the long-term impact of the rebellion at Castle Hill on Australia can be found – an impact very likely not intended, as the demand for "a ship home" seemed to dismiss the colonial project in its entirety.[31] At the back of demands for justice stands the assurance of a right to fair trial, of *habeas corpus*, and thus of a long-lasting impact of English common law in Ireland which was extended by the United Irishmen to their expectations of the Australian colony. At this point, colonial New South Wales fell far short of such expectations, but the eventual abolition of the military jurisdiction and the growth of law in Australia can be also seen as a form of abjection of the judicial abuses evident in the Castle Hill Rebellion.

The other long-term consequence of the cry for liberty or death was the emergence of a liberal Catholicism from the underground in the 1820s, a Catholicism which did indeed employ Enlightenment discourses of liberty and universal religious toleration (Gascoigne: 31), before, in its turn, giving way to the rise of ultramontane and Irish national Catholicism that still dominates Australian perceptions of the Irish in the nineteenth century.

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31 O'Farrell: 38, "against the very fact of Australia".

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Roundtable and Discussion: Americans in the South Pacific

Edited by Therese-Marie Meyer, Danielle Norberg, Henriette von Holleuffer & Oliver Haag

Prof. Dr. Cassandra Pybus (University of Sydney)

One of Australia's most famous historians, Cassandra Pybus opened this field of global research with her seminal publication on escaped American slaves in the First Fleet, *Black Founders* (2006).

Prof. Dr. Andrew O'Shaughnessy (Saunders Director of the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies, Monticello; University of Virginia)

Andrew O'Shaughnessy is one of America's foremost military historians. His study *The Men Who Lost America* (2014) examines the British military administration during and after the War of Independence.

Prof. Dr. Jennifer L. Anderson (Stony Brook University/ State University of New York)

In her study of the early colonial American trade in the Caribbean and South Pacific, *Mahogany* (2012), Anderson explored the American drive for luxury goods and their social, environmental and political impact.

Chair: Dr. Therese-Marie Meyer

Transcript: Danielle Norberg

Cassandra Pybus: I do want to begin by making the point because it's not a point that is often made: that New South Wales – Port Jackson and the Colony of New South Wales – is a product of America, it's a product of the American Revolution, in many ways which we can explore. But I think that Australianists have these core [beliefs], a sort of narrow focus of the Colony and the Empire – not even the Empire – the Colony and the imperial part of the Empire and seeing everything in terms of that – you know – that passageway. Not even really paying that much attention to the long trip and the various routes that it took to get there. But for all the talk about how this was part of the Second British Empire and, you know, whatever strategic possibilities this place at the bottom of the world may have had, at the time this was

not figuring in the way people thought. What they were thinking of is where they could get rid of their 'riff-raff' now that they couldn't send them to America. And so this place that Captain Cook had discovered, or bumped into, at the bottom of the world was the place that they settled upon. And they would not have done that if America had remained a richer market, they would not have had any reason to do that. And this is not to say that Australia wouldn't have turned into a nation of some kind, probably French, at a later date, but I think it's – we can thank the fact that it turned out to be a nation born of the flotsam and jetsam of London street life. We can owe it to the American Revolution, yes. And so I'll just open with that.

Jennifer Anderson: Great. I am going to talk a little bit about the characters that have been introduced already, the American whalers. But before I do that I want to thank first of all Tess for the invitation, it's been wonderful to visit, I have enjoyed meeting everybody that I have had a chance to talk to. And I also want to say that it is really a treat and an honour for me to get to participate in a panel with two scholars who have, to my mind, really transformed the way we think about and teach in particular the American Revolution. I certainly talk about it with my students as a much more global event, often to their disconsternation. I don't even think – I made a new word up – to their consternation, to their dismay, to their surprise, to learn that there is a much larger context than those thirteen original colonies that are often emphasized. So there are a couple of themes that sort of have emerged from our discussions today that I am going to pick up on with regard to the American whalers, thinking about connections between the global and the local, thinking about modes and knowledge production in this so-called Age of Enlightenment, as well as the way in which we see people on the move, ideas on the move, and increasingly natural materials as they are increasingly commodified being put on the move.

In my case, it had been the American whalers who'd bring all of these threads together in interesting, sometimes unexpected ways. So when I was thinking about how to talk about this I immediately realized I needed a map to kind of quickly help put the Australia piece of this into the larger context because American whaling really begins as a very local affair. In fact, in my very neighbourhood, in Long Island, along the coastal regions of New York and New England, where, when the very first European settlers arrived, one of the things they observed were whales disporting themselves in the waters right off the coast, and they observed native Americans hunting them oftentimes, salvaging whales that had been washed up on the shore and then also doing some whaling from small boats, canoes, very close to the coast. And in the earliest land negotiations with Native peoples access to whales (which the colonists talk about as being washed up by Providence, a gift from Providence) how those are going to be disposed of, is negotiated in some of the earliest land treaties, along discussion of land.

A great example of this is Wyandanch, a Sachem, who negotiates for part of Long Island with Lion Gardiner, one of the earliest settlers. In 1659 they set up a treaty where he – Gardiner – is granted access to all the whales that wash up except for the tail and the fluke, the fins which the Indians retain the rights to. And that begins as an interesting negotiation between almost equals. But very quickly, in the end of the eighteenth, beginning of the nineteenth century, you see that balance of power shifting as Native people are increasingly pushed out of the lands that they had traditionally held and come into colonial relationships with the English and, to some

degree, the Dutch, in New York, in ways that push, and begin to increasingly preclude the kind of subsistence agriculture and hunting and gathering particularly along coastal regions. And, of course, access to whales, which traditionally they had kept a hand in. You see this relationship transformed in the way in which the English tap into the knowledge that Native people had about the whale species in and around the coastal waters and their expertise in the labour of catching whales and harvesting them.

You might think that the English would quickly try to assimilate this knowledge – and to some degree they do – but what is very interesting is that in many of the communities along Long Island and up along the Coast area, Connecticut and right up through Massachusetts, the Native people continued to be intricately involved in whaling, providing part of the labour. And soon they are supplemented by enslaved Africans, who are also providing part of this mixed labour force. So you have Native people working alongside enslaved Africans, working alongside the sons of many of the middle-level New England families. And a place like Nantucket is probably the most famous whaling community because it was pretty far offshore and there really was no other enterprise. They can't cultivate the land there, they cultivate this production of oil derived from the sea, so to speak. The thread that has to be woven through this story is one of people's ecological relationship to this natural resource because as they are hunting more and more whales, the whales become scarcer, they become savvier about where to go. They get to change their migration patterns, and it is an ongoing project of knowledge production as whalers begin to learn and adapt and increasingly go deeper and deeper into the Atlantic in search of, initially, the species they are familiar with.

So the people that really begin to know the ocean, the Atlantic Ocean, best are these men out there in pursuit of the Leviathan. And you see them basically expanding out from coastal zones through the North Atlantic, where some Europeans had done whaling earlier, and then down the coast of Brazil, and if you can kind of imagine in your mind's eye their sailing vessels coming down, hitting up the whale feeding grounds along the eastern coast of Brazil, that becomes in the 1780s a major area where people are hunting sperm-whale in particular, used for high-quality lighting and oil. And then as whalers begin to tune into the beginning of the China trade and reports come back about whales being spotted in those waters, they work their way down under the tip of South America and begin working their way up the coastal zones of Chile and Peru. And then expanding out further and further into the Pacific, first into the waters in and around Australia, right?

There is this very interesting period, that Cassandra has been looking at. The main outsiders that are going to the trouble to traverse these waters are these whalers. And they are stopping off on and around the South Sea Islands, in New Zealand, in Sydney and later other smaller ports as well and basically beginning various kinds of exchanges. The rum, of course, as the classic example, for what do they have to sell? They quickly figure out what is going to be merchantable. But on some of the South Sea Islands we see these Westerners as the first to encounter South Sea Islanders: It was a pretty rough crowd they probably encountered, bringing with them diseases and other kinds of social problems that – as you know – have long-term consequences. And the other thing that I think is very fascinating is: We also see the influences going in more than one direction. So there are very interesting accounts

of Native American whalers who jump ship and stay and in some cases actually intermarry. We do not really have numbers yet to quantify this, and there is actually a lot of scholarship going on right now to try and get a better sense of how many of these Native American whalers were there and how many enslaved Africans. Those coming out of Nantucket actually were free, there was a Quaker community. So one of the things we see, as the whalers go into the Pacific, is that the ships get larger and the crews get bigger. It means more men are required and so it tends to be more and more inexperienced people. [Also] more and more drawing from the diaspora of the Pacific region itself. So we get Hawaiians and eventually South Sea Islanders on the ships, working alongside these New England Indians and enslaved Africans or free black men. And because they are the ones with experience they are able to gain rank and status sometimes aboard ship, sometimes gaining officer status, and in a few cases actually becoming captains although that was rare. But that was made possible by the fact that there is this incredibly cosmopolitan work force, in which their expertise becomes increasingly valuable.

The other thing I would say about that transfer is that it's not just the fact that they are able to make a successful voyage – although it becomes increasingly difficult to do that as the whales begin to get overhunted even in the vast Pacific – but you also see whalers contributing to a larger project of knowledge production. For example, beginning even with Franklin in the Atlantic when he was trying to map the Gulf Stream. One of his sources of information were people who had been out there traversing that and learning the currents and patterns. Similarly in the Pacific – whalers provide an information source to scientists and others. So the last two things I'd mention before my time is up is... what is going on in terms of ongoing research. We are really at the moment at a point where we are trying to document and quantify a little bit better how many of these whalers end[ed] up staying. And there is a wonderful brand-new book I just got my hands on, by my friend and colleague Nancy Shoemaker: I can recommend this to you if it's a topic of interest, in which she draws together historic documents, basically trying to trace this development that I am sharing with you.

And then the last section focuses on whalers who intermarried in New Zealand with Maori women. And basically they became part of the community and [were] embraced and sometimes treated as persons of status which is such a different experience to what you described about free black men encountering in Australia. But it is fascinating because those families with this Native American heritage, they go back to doing this kind of whaling that their families had done for generations before. Then as they settle in, the second generation continued to be whalers, and then they slowly shift from whaling over to sheep-herding. I think it is very fascinating that they are remembered in the oral histories that Nancy Shoemaker did with some of these families as being among the fastest, with greatest stamina and the hardiest of sheep-herders. That they could take the wool off a sheep in record-time – and I thought after wrestling with whales in the Pacific, Australian sheep might be small gain. So I will finish with that.

Andrew O'Shaughnessy: Thank you. Well, I'd like to add my thanks to Doctor Meyer. This is tremendous, and I'd also like to thank the sponsors as well and the sponsor institutions. I have to say, I was particularly intrigued when she asked me to participate because she said she wanted me to speak about the connection between

the American Revolution and the founding of Australia. And I had always felt intuitively that there was a connection but I had never found any material on the subject, and no one confirmed this to me until I met Cassandra Pybus. And she was the first to formally talk about the subject. But it is still not a subject that has been systematically studied. Cassandra has already discussed and suggested one connection. And that is the connection between maroonage and runaway slaves in Australia and the iconic bushman. And I heard a lot about this project while it was in inception. She was a fellow at Monticello and she did a wonderful article called: "Mr. Jefferson's Faulty Mathematics", in which she looked at the runaway slaves from Monticello and what had happened to them. It was called "Faulty Mathematics" because Jefferson much exaggerated the numbers of slaves who ran away, not just on his own plantation but in Virginia generally. She showed clearly: What was unusual about this phenomenon is that people were running away as families. It wasn't single men, they were leaving as units. This really was a case of self-emancipation. And then I was fortunate enough to go to Australia, where we co-hosted two conferences in two consecutive years, and to be sitting with Cassandra, drinking Martinis overlooking Sydney Harbour. And you had one of the great views in the world with the Sydney Opera House, and then suddenly the whole story became more meaningful because Cassandra started to describe Billy Blue and how he'd had the rights of the crossing of this harbour. And it all became much more meaningful and much more important.

I want to now just sketch out other links between the American Revolution and the founding of Australia. Remember this has not been much studied, but is one of certain subjects, I think, one would necessarily need to cover. One of you could write this book, yes, and it is remarkable to me that it hasn't been. Especially given the modern-day interest in Australia in the United States. But one of the first things that I think is quite striking is the fact that the exploration of the Pacific and Australia was coterminous with the preliminaries of the American Revolution. But even more remarkably, it continued during the war. Cook's third voyage occurred during the American Revolutionary War. And it was conducted by the British Navy. Now, the reason I find that really very remarkable is that the British Navy was overstretched at the time. This was the only war in the eighteenth century where they were outnumbered by the French and the Spanish Navy. And they were trying to convoy all of their ships. Their trade had to be convoyed because of American privatiers who I would liken really to militia at sea. Governors in the Caribbean said American privatiers were like fleas, they were everywhere and they necessitated the British protecting their trade.

The person responsible for these voyages was the Earl of Sandwich, he was the head of the Navy at the time. The official title was 'First Lord of the Admirality'. If you think you have heard the word 'sandwich' before, the snack, it is actually named after him because of his habit when he was working hard – or it has to be said, playing hard as well, he was a great gambler – of just putting meat between bread, and eating it. He was not leaving his table to go off and have a meal. But Sandwich was fascinated by exploration. It was very unusual because most aristocrats in this period did what was known as the 'Grand Tour of Europe'. The Grand Tour always consisted of a visit to France, but most significantly to Italy, largely to look at classical ruins. He instead did a tour of the Mediterranean, he got a yacht,

and he visited places like Egypt, and he later wrote up descriptions. He was very early on interested in the Middle East and Egypt, and especially Turkey. And it was Sandwich who helped to be the patron of these voyages, who, for example, provided Joseph Banks, as the botanist, and who took a particular interest in the scientific information. Indeed, Sandwich after the war was the one who was really interested in documenting Cook's voyages and collecting the information and systematically publishing work on voyages and explorations. So that is the first connection that I think [is] important. This exploration continues actually during the war when the British Navy really could not afford the shipping.

The second is the role of convicts in the founding of Australia. Before the American Revolution, the convicts were going to America. This is often forgotten. We imagine that this is something that starts post the American Revolution. Some fifty thousand convicts went from England to America. Georgia was the last of the thirteen colonies to be settled and set up by the British. The man who set that up was James Edward Oglethorpe. He set it up as a penal colony. And it was very utopian: There was to be no slavery in its original charter, and the idea was to reform convicts who would be sent there and they would breed silkworm. That was the original plan. But another major destination was Pennsylvania, where incidentally a large number of the Moravians and German immigrants to America went. And Franklin famously decried the fact that Britain was sending its convicts. He said: "We should send our convicts and refuse to England".

Jennifer Anderson: And rattlesnakes.

Andrew O'Shaughnessy: And rattlesnakes.

Laughter

Andrew O'Shaughnessy: Then during the war, obviously, the convicts could not go to [America], so they were kept in prison ships along the Thames. And this is actually an Enlightenment idea, though we have heard all the horrors of how these people were treated. But we should remember this was an alternative to execution. In some ways it reinforced the criminal justice system because jurors were often unwilling to convict people if they knew that they were going to be hung or executed. But that was an enlightened idea: This was going to improve the penal system. In the immediate aftermath of the American Revolution, you get people like John Howard with new thinking about the criminal justice system, about prisons, and so this was regarded as being enlightened. Now Maya Jasanoff recently did a book called: *Liberty's Exiles*. And in it she talks about the lawless and the different places that they went abroad, and she has marvellous individual stories of where people went. But she argues that they created this spirit of 1783, the new Spirit of Empire.

The trouble with that argument is that the loyalists only really were dominant in the Bahamas and in Canada. They went in significant numbers to those countries. Elsewhere they were a very small minority and it is difficult to believe they really had a significant impact. If you really want to think about who was important from America, especially in Australia, it was the army officers who had served in America. And this is something you mentioned, Tess, which I thought remarkable, and Cassandra has mentioned, and I am sure you are influenced by examples like George Johnston. We know that a lot of people, a lot of the Army officers who served in Australia and Naval officers had served in America but nearly all of them had served in some

capacity during the Revolutionary War, whether it was in the Caribbean or other islands. They had been affected by the American Revolution. The research still needs to be done as to the exact influence, i.e. that on those officers serving in Australia.[1]

But we do know enough about officers elsewhere to make what I think are some likely generalisations about Australia. The most famous British officer to serve in the Empire was Lord Charles Cornwallis. And Cornwallis – unlike all the other British generals who were largely discredited, and even if they had not been discredited, they had gone off into politics with the opposition parties, and had lost the support of George III. – he was one of the few whose career not only survived the Revolution, it was revitalised. And we heard that he suppressed the Great Irish Rebellion in 1798. But he twice served as Governor General of India, and you can make some generalisations about his service in America on the way that he conducted himself in South India. And in a way I believe that would also be true in Australia. But there were many more, for example, Archibald Campbell, who was the only British officer to recover an entire American state, he became governor of Madras. In Canada, Sir Guy Carlton, who becomes Lord Dorchester and returns to become Governor of [the British possessions with the exception of Newfoundland]. John Simcoe, who ran a regiment called the Queen's rangers, went back to command in lower [South Ontario]. Both of them detested the United States and were overtly hostile to the point of really almost trying to trigger a war.

Cornwallis is the one we know best, so I am going to give that example because it is quite clear, his time in America did indeed influence him. And one of the things that might surprise you is that the time spent in America and knowledge of the American Revolution did not cause the British to become more liberal. That was not the lesson that they took away from the American Revolution. Cornwallis, for example, one of the lessons he learned was that you don't want to let a colonial lead become too strong. Once a colonial lead has got used to governing and has participated in the role of governing, they can become confident enough to overthrow you. And most leaders of revolutions, in fact, come from a privileged class, including the Trotskyists and Leninists who came from a privileged class in leading the revolution. And one of the things that Cornwallis did in India, and he was regarded in Britain as a very enlightened figure, is he voted against all the policies that led to the American Revolution: He was one of only six people in the House of Lords to vote against the Stamp Act which was the first tax in America in 1765, and very few people in England at the time opposed it, but Cornwallis was [also] the first to start segregating the Indian Civil Service. So that only whites from England served in the higher positions of power.

It's remarkable, in the eighteenth century, that there had been a huge amount of racial intermixture, if you want to read a fun book on the subject, William Dalrymple wrote a book called *White Mughals* in which he describes these Englishmen with Indian wives, going native and wearing Indian costume. This was not frowned upon. But beginning with Cornwallis it becomes a much more segregated society. Cornwallis also learned a lot of military lessons from his time in America. He argued you must always keep your troops consolidated, the great error is to detach

1 See Therese-Marie Meyer, "'Stuck a Bayonet into the grave & Renew'd their Oath': The American Revolution and the First Fleet", in: Maria O'Malley and Denys van Renen, eds., *Beyond 1776: Globalizing the Cultures of the American Revolution*. Charlottesville, Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 2018. 189–205.

troops because he detached his army to the South where the main British army in New York had become surrounded.

It's Cornwallis, in fact, who really helps the British expand in India and to take much of the South of India. So he's really an important figure in that capacity. So I would say that the chief lesson in the American Revolution for the British was not to be more lenient. And not to be more flexible. They believed that the American Revolution had been caused, in fact, by allowing America to become too autonomous. The policies, the 1760s, the decision to tax America, these policies were in fact – and they are seen as enlightened policies at the time – to try to centralise, to rationalise the government of America. But they are also a result, in a sense, of the fact that Britain had already lost America. The British only had taken power over America. The British were trying – just before the American Revolution – to reassert their authority. Because in the earlier period, in the 1720s and -30s, British officials talked about "sanitary neglect, healthy neglect". Colonial leaders had really become responsible for much of the day-to-day government. Royal Governors were almost token figures because for any money they needed they had to go to the colonial assembly to have it voted. Hannah Arendt argues that the reason why the American Revolution was so successful, comparatively, the reason it did not end in military dictatorship, the reason that it did not end like a lot of South American rebellions, with constant revolutions, was that – thanks to the assemblies, those who had been in nursery as future statesmen, – Americans essentially had not had to reinvent the wheel: They had already been governing themselves in the first place. And that was what the British wanted to prevent in Australia.

Cassandra Pybus: Well, they certainly were very successful at it. And I mean, I have very little to add to that, that pretty well sums it up. I would say the influence of the American Revolution was really in that early period, when you have the people that I talked about who arrived on the First and the Second Fleet. Well, the First Fleet. By the time you start having, what I refer to as the rapacious 'riff-raff', who make up the officers of the New South Wales Corps, basically young officers buying their way into the army and the only regiment they can get into. They don't bring anything with them except, you know, for their venality and their desire to make good. And this does pretty well become a pattern in Australia. You asked a question about George Johnston and why he would come back. Well, what I was to suggest to remember: He comes back because – not only because that is the only place he is going to be a rich man – but he's got a family there, and his wife was a convict woman. He eventually married her, but I mean a lot of them did [marry their convict mistresses]. Marriage was not something that they took too seriously in the New South Wales Corps. But he would never have been permitted to have – I mean for a while this convict woman was the Lt.-Governor's wife [for a couple of months] in New South Wales. He would never have been permitted to have a woman like that as his acknowledged wife, and his children would have had no status at all. So there is that.

And it is the same with John Macarthur who was the Grand Man of colonial Australia but in England, of course, he'd be nobody because his father was a bodice-maker. 'Jack Bodice', his nickname was. So one of the things that is decidedly different about New South Wales and then later the other colonies of Australia, there really is no colonial elite of the kind that develops in America because they are either ex-convicts and so therefore indelibly marked or they are people who managed to

buy their way into regiments which gets them into Australia. I mean, what more can you say? And so it is that the early connection to the American Revolution is not insignificant, because some of the lessons learned by the imperial overlords trickle down. The most, probably the first and most important one is this: There will be no slavery. Now that may seem – if you would say that to Australians they would be wondering why you would bother to make the point: because it sort of would never cross their mind, not being students of slavery like me, that it's the obvious thing to turn one of these colonies into a slave colony. But from the outset – and certainly Arthur Phillips was absolutely determined about this and with support from [Evan] Nepean – there will be no slavery.

Now, of course, you could argue that having people work in chains and whipping them with a hundred, with a thousand lashes is pretty well akin to it. But after a few years they were free, they were given land, they could make their own lives, they could return to Britain as we know from reading *Great Expectations* [by Charles Dickens]. But the New South Wales Court, John Macarthur in fact does try to introduce a system whereby the convicts become, are actually slaves though they weren't sold as such as they were in the American colonies. And they will have none of this: There will be no slavery. And once people have served their time, nominally at least, they are members of – and their children are – freeborn from the word go, and do not suffer any ill effect of being the children of felons. This is quite significant in that it doesn't develop a resentful and rebellious population, apart from the poor downtrodden Irish, who are just treated like animals, basically. I was so shocked when I started to read the way in which – when the Third Fleet arrived – those Irish convicts had been treated, treated worse than animals, and the way in which they were spoken about, as if they were subhuman in some way. But this is a deep British prejudice against the Irish, this isn't anything to do with the fact that they are convicts. But even the downtrodden Irish, apart from Ned Kelly and a few others, don't develop a strong resilience, [i.e.] resistance.

And so, Australia of all of the British colonies has always struck me as the most quiescent. The most forlorn, tugging, which is curious given that it is – it was not made by pre-settlers. It wasn't made by people who struck out from Britain to create a new Commonwealth, or to create a City on a Hill, it was made by forced labour, in the majority of cases by people who were forced to go there, under horrendous circumstances. And yet all the [research] work that has been done on the convicts makes it very clear: that they fared so much better. Should they happen to survive the voyage, and the first six months of colonisation, of scurvy, ill treatment and various things? They were fed so well, and they were; they fared so much better than they could possibly have done as free people in Britain, and more importantly, their children did spectacularly well. I mean one of the interesting things, the Scottish prisoners, who arrive are all basically under five feet, but their children are six feet and above, they just shoot up to the size that Scots are mentally.

Laughter

Cassandra Pybus: The Scots being a tall race – and so the general effect is one of being a basically egalitarian society in which the elite is transitory. They circle around the Empire, the elite is the imperial elite. That means you are not very self-conscious. They are not developing an ego of rebellious colonial underclass or a haughty colo-

nial elite. The closest you get to a haughty colonial elite is 'Jack Bodice' or Macarthur. And you know, he understands. And George Johnston also. They understand only too well that they owe everything to their patrons in England. And then as long as they are off in Australia with their convict wives (not that John Macarthur has got a convict wife), but with their dubious backgrounds, and so forth, their patrons will look after them and look after their interests. But they shouldn't come back to England and expect to have a place in that society. I think that's one of the important things about this; this thing that has puzzled these radical-strain historians: Why Australia is so well behaved, so quiescent. Why, it constantly goes off to fight imperial wars! It couldn't wait, those colonials couldn't wait to get off to fight. I can't remember which is the first ridiculous episode that they go off to fight in. And even today, [27th September, 2014] our current conservative prime minister, following in the footsteps of John Howard, an earlier conservative prime minister, has very determinedly defined the Australian character in terms of its involvement in British overseas-wars.

Andrew O'Shaughnessy: There used to be a bad-taste English joke: "That there is one thing about the next war: A lot of Australians will get killed".

Laughter

Cassandra Pybus: And we're proud of it.

Andrew O'Shaughnessy: It's partly because also there is a constant influx of people from England. I was very struck with the First World War statistics, such a high percentage were actually born in Britain. And so migration is constant. Would you say, though, that this distrust of the leaders may have been one factor why they didn't encourage loyalists to settle in Australia, as sort of free Englishmen?

Cassandra Pybus: I think that something that Maya Jasanoff put her finger on – and she is probably right, and I found it myself, too, – that the British are deeply distrustful of the loyalists. They don't really want them in their own backyard and they are not really keen on sending them anywhere else. I mean, to come back to the loyalists, it's another thing, the reason they don't first send convicts to Australia: They send them to the west coast of Africa. And even before that, they tried to send them to British Honduras and Nova Scotia, and that doesn't work out for piles of reasons, and so then they hit upon the bright idea that they'd send them to the west coast of Africa.

No, they basically sent them to the slave ports, the forts on the west coast of Africa where they work for a brief time before they die. You know, alongside enslaved Africans. And to the horror of the commander of Cape Coast Castle, the Africans see white men in chains, being beaten and made to work – what are they? – we'll have no control over them! – we can't have that! But that wasn't what stopped them doing it.

Basically, what stopped them doing it was that some of them came back. I mean those that survived. I mean most of them, they died. But some of those who managed to get back to England from the west coast of Africa, were then promptly put on the First Fleet and sent to Australia. James Matra, who was on Cook's first voyage had gone to Evan Nepean – I think it was Nepean – and said: "The loyalists – You know, we've got to find a place for the loyalists. We should send them to this wonderful place that Banks has described as being; you just stick a piece of corn in the ground and it goes wild, it's so fertile". And they weren't interested in doing any-

thing for the loyalists, and in fact they didn't want to have a colony that was going to be settled by loyalists because they were tainted by the American spirit.

Andrew O'Shaughnessy: They were just as troublesome.

Cassandra Pybus: Just as troublesome. But there was somewhere that you could send your convicts where they wouldn't come back!

Laughter

Cassandra Pybus: They couldn't come back! And who cared whether they will die? That was the least of their concerns. And basically, liberals in Parliament were outraged at the idea that you were going to send people all the way to Australia because, you know, it was a death sentence.

You may as well hang them. The problem was, you couldn't hang them all. You talk about the Enlightenment, and there was a bit of that, but fundamentally, it was a logistical problem. You simply couldn't hang all the people that had capital sentences. As it was, there were people strung up on giblets all around them. You couldn't hang them all. If they all went to Australia and died...

Jennifer Anderson: Problem solved.

Cassandra Pybus: Or, you gave them picks and shovels and said: "Go become farmers". Taking up these pick-pockets and whores off the streets of London and send them off to New South Wales to become farmers. The fact that it worked is a miracle. It is extraordinary. And it is down to, a lot of it is down to Arthur Phillip: that it did work. Because basically he ensured that – and again, here's that whole business about following the Word of God – everyone got the same ration, which in the eighteenth century is extraordinary.

Jennifer Anderson: Pretty amazing.

Cassandra Pybus: Extraordinary thing. And again, when the New South Wales Corps arrived, they really wanted to put an end to that. They can't do it until Phillip is gone, then they got a more pliable governor. So there is that kind of egalitarianism, which for all who refer it to the American Revolution, there never was in America. But it's the egalitarianism of the bottom of the barrel. Basically, they were all the bottom of the barrel in one way or the other. They were all 'riff-raff'. Some of them are free 'riff-raff', and some of them are convict 'riff-raff'. And some of the convicts are elite as well. But not many of them. And they are so tainted by the fact that they have been convicted that their elite status is deeply undermined as far as going back to Britain is concerned. So, making sure that New South Wales and then the subsequent colonies do not become like America is part of the imperial project, there's no doubt about that.

Jennifer Anderson: One thing I wanted to come back to with my whalers, is that the American Revolution has a big impact, in particular in the wake of it where you see England trying to reassert control over the Empire, in particular trying to close down trade with these former colonies. And so one of the first things they do, is they ban American ships (and that is mainly American whalers) from Australian waters. And there's an immediate upcry about that in Australia because they want that, they want...

Cassandra Pybus: They want the rum.

Jennifer Anderson: They want the rum. And they want that trade engagement. Yeah, and so there is *that* impact, where you see this faraway policy-making body imposing economic policies of the same sorts that had caused problems in North America. So the lesson wasn't particularly learned there. But that reverberates, of course, for these whalers back in New England, in two dimensions. Not only is it cutting off their access to these Australian areas that they had been traversing now for many years. It also in a sense interrupts their most important market, i.e. London and England, for their whaling products. And there is a wonderful attempt by John Adams, who was serving there in a diplomatic role to try and convince Parliament of their misguided policies by basically telling them: "The streets of American cities are all lit with whale oil. Do you want to be in the dark here in London, with thieves and villains running in the streets?" And apparently they were okay with that because they persisted in this policy for quite a few years, to the extent that these Nantucket whalers who had always been in a very ambivalent spot, especially during the Revolution, basically suspected by both the Americans and by the English of being disloyal, – they tried to be neutral – they're Quakers, were hard up. On top of having these trade connections to England and to the new United States. So, there's actually a group of whalers who go to England and try to convince – this is under Pitt – to set them up in a British territory so they could become British whalers. And that made them really popular in the United States...!

Laughter

Jennifer Anderson: And interestingly, one of the reasons, supporting this restrictive policy, was: "Well, how are we ever going to develop as good a British whaling corps if we don't support British whalers and exclude these Americans?" Who, for a lot of reasons you can discuss, were more adept at whaling and producing a better product. And they tried to negotiate a deal to either settle in England, they discussed Nova Scotia, they discussed a couple of possible different locations for this new English whaling colony. Finally, they get fed up that the English aren't meeting all of their demands and they go to France and establish their new whaling colony which is short-lived in the end, thanks to the French Revolution. But it's very interesting how these different politics kind of play out from one locale to another, across this vast space.

Therese-Marie Meyer: I would like to open this point to the discussion. One comment was, I think, straight about what you said about the whaling crews being so mixed ethnically, and about the American pernicious spirit that they're delivering. Because obviously, according to the literature, the spirit can be both: It can be wrong but it can also be the experience of that kind of mixed ethnic American 'riff-raff' intermingling probably too closely with your own 'riff-raff'. And far more closely than you actually want.

Jennifer Anderson: Cosmopolitan.

Therese-Marie Meyer: Yes. Obviously that does not reverse this process. There are books...

Cassandra Pybus: Two authors.

Therese-Marie Meyer: I do not know whether egalitarianism is the better word. But it is something of a likeness that these people, the 'riff-raff', the sailors and the whaling crews and the convicts would recognize amongst themselves. If only either

of them would want it. And that they are all, in a way, either of them, transported elsewhere. Quite a lot of sailors, not just the Navy, but even merchant sailors – you did have them 'press-ganged', regularly in the Navy, right? But quite a lot of sailors in the merchant ships were also spirited away, or had been 'shanghaied', as the latest movement says. So they were not actually where they wanted to be. Neither were the convicts. None of them were where they wanted to be. Soldiers very much were not where they wanted to be either. I am just reminded of the Hessian Soldiers bursting into tears during the American Revolution. They were not where they wanted to be, very definitively. Much to the puzzlement of some Americans who saw them. So I think, could you comment on that maybe – on the similarities that seem to open up here?

Andrew O'Shaughnessy: What I have are two books, this well-known one by Vincent Brown, he is an African-American scholar, *The Reaper's Garden*. And *Many-Headed Hydra* [by Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker], they have got a lot of people there together who do not belong with each other.

Laughter

Andrew O'Shaughnessy: I don't know. You may dismiss them as all 'riff-raff' but they are very aware of distinctions between them, especially racial distinctions. So in many ways one might feel retrospectively, they should have been allies. But you feel that, too, often in the American South, almost to the present, the very poor whites and blacks want to feel some common mission. But it has been possible to divide them... the classic divide and rule. The status of whites was dependant on the sense that there was someone underneath, below them.

Jennifer Anderson: I think that I agree with what you are saying, and at the same time there is sort of a counter-current where you see these moments of opportunity that emerge for people, as you were describing, who would never have had possibilities in other places and times. And whether it's the Hessian Soldier who stays and becomes a wealthy Pennsylvania landowner. Or, I mean, I am thinking about my woodcutters in Belize. Many of them were convicts. Many of them got wealthy cutting down mahogany trees in South America and they are shipping them to Australia to make fancy furniture, in places like that deforested scene Tess showed. So there is this, it sets the whole world in motion, people and stuff and natural resources. It's such a remarkable period for that, I think.

Cassandra Pybus: Certainly one of the things that I picked up very early on when people started to ask me about their ancestors, you know, who must have been African, and how to explain this, was: These were whaling ships that came first into Sydney and hugely into Hobart, into Van Diemen's Land. There, I've got pictures of the River Derwent, it's just, a forest of masts, and they are all American whaling ships, with their highly mixed racial crews. When they got to New South Wales they realized that there was no slavery. So this was the one place in the whole maritime world where they could jump ship, and they did. And so in the Rocks in Sydney (and there is a little area just like the Rocks in Hobart, too): there were these marooned African-American communities. And you find them all the way through the Pacific apparently, according to [the maritime historian] W. Jeffrey Bolster [*Black Jacks*]. Then there is the other issue about the whaling ships and their involvement with Indigenous people all through the Pacific. They were there in New South Wales by the time

the First Fleet arrived. They'd been working up and down the coast already. How many Aboriginal people had they co-opted into their project? I mean, once whaling started in Australia they co-opted Aboriginal people into it, so I am sure that the American whalers did so, and they probably continued also, at a later time: We know that Tasmanian Aboriginals ended up in New Zealand. There was that: The influence of the American whalers on those two maritime ports of Hobart and Sydney cannot be overestimated. And white Americans jumped ship there, too, because they saw that there was an opportunity to make a kind of life for themselves there that they would not have had in what was already a highly class-stratified society in New England.

Jennifer Anderson: I have a student right now who is working on the Hawaiian diaspora of native Hawaiians who get drawn into this and the whalers' [trade] – that trade becomes interconnected with some of the China trade involving sandalwood and furs from the Seattle-Vancouver area. And in each of those places there are people that leave traces behind and connections behind. It's amazing.

Cassandra Pybus: Speaking of marooned communities, there is, of course, a convict community, an escaped convict community in India. I think that seven years only after the First Fleet had arrived, the first escaped convicts had hidden away, [i.e.] secreted themselves into India.

Jennifer Anderson: The sailor that I mentioned ends up in New Zealand: He was a sailor who had basically committed a mutiny against his captain and then he and his co-conspirator were put off the ship, and, you know, there they are, they make a new life for themselves. And make the best of a bad situation.

Cassandra Pybus: To the point of your question – there is one thing I wanted to say, the native Americans on whaling ships: There was an outbreak of smallpox in the first eighteen months that decimated Aboriginal tribes around Sydney. And there has been a long discussion about whether or not it was, has been deliberately triggered or not, but there is no way that they couldn't have kept the variola alive on the First Fleet. So it was there already, smallpox, but only one person at Port Jackson died of smallpox. And that was a Native American.

Therese-Marie Meyer: Interesting.

Cassandra Pybus: Now, the question is: Who is this native American and what was he doing? A native American sailor on this awful whaling ship?

Jennifer Anderson: It could have been one of my New England Wampanoag, or a Shinnecock – absolutely, yeah.

Cassandra Pybus: So.

Jennifer Anderson: It's wild.

Cassandra Pybus: I think it is Collins who makes the observation. And you think: "How is it that we have gone for over two hundred years and nobody has asked the question: 'Who is this native American? What is he doing in Port Jackson?'" And you know, that is exactly what we are talking about: This extraordinary polyglot. To that extent Marcus Rediker and his co-author [Peter Linebaugh] are right about the *Many-Headed Hydra*, it's just a fact, place this. This polyglot kind of maritime Australia, being at the bottom of the world and being an island and being hugely influenced by maritime currents of all kinds. And it means that you do get this kind of transient underclass. Transient underclass fetches up there quite comfortably.

Therese-Marie Meyer: I don't know which one of you [was the first....].

Audience Question: Okay, I am trying to collect my thoughts. Because I thought we feel very different: [I] fit here, under the level of space – of spacial explorations, and on the one hand there are such things as the concept of the realm, which you mentioned, the concept of the utopian city, Georgia, and on the other hand we have a maritime region that is hunted for whales. Which does not actually concentrate necessarily on one particular spot, as you explained already but it actually rose across the seas. What I was wondering in the first place, is: Can we in some way, for the American whalers, use the border myth that extends over the borders of that country, to that, possibly newly established "country" in the maritime realm – unlike those penal settlements which are constricted to one particular spot in Australia. Can such mythical categories again also reflect on the way, as of course the British fleet followed particular routes? I would suspect, rather than roving across the seas...

Therese-Marie Meyer: Exactly.

Audience Question: As they have been driven away, as they are trying to get away from routine.

Jennifer Anderson: I can speak to that because in preparation for this I was inspired to go and read some actual whaling logs to see what they had to say about Australia. And I was reading a particularly interesting – not a log say – but a diary that had been written from a slightly later period by the wife of a whaler. She is describing the route that they took. And she describes coming up sort of around basically between New Zealand and around the west side of Australia, and she is describing the space and she says something to the fact, "Well, we weren't really interested in Australia", and I was like: "Well, that's not helpful" and I am like "Wait a minute", and: "Doesn't that tell you how they are perceiving the space?" They are interested in the watery realm, that is their hunting-ground, and the land is peripheral to them, in so far as it is their support, you know, they would stop off to get fresh supplies, or water, or wood. But they are conceptualizing the space completely differently than somebody who is coming with an eye towards settlement or so.

Audience Question: At some point the penal colony actually stopped existing. ... Did they go for the same route? Up north, west, south? In the respective [carriers] in which they had landed? How did they sort of map their new world?

Andrew O'Shaughnessy: What is the country about?

Audience Question: How did they sort of map their new space, was that dictated by land speculators who had land to sell?

Cassandra Pybus: No, well, I suppose there was always an interest in finding, in getting the sense and finding all around Sydney, and finding decent farming country. But basically it was organised explorations from the very beginning. And then the convicts were forever making themselves boats to find an escape and they mapped a lot of the northern coast. They would get up there and find out what was there; and then be driven out for one reason or another. But the way out, obviously, is by boat. And so there is this constant attempt to steal boats, or to make boats, and, you know, you only have to look at the map to see what kind of boat you [will] need.

The most famous one is the one that gets to Batavia. A family basically managed to steal a boat and get all the way to Batavia, Indonesia. But, generally speaking, this is unsuccessful. Because there are not that many free settlers and it is a vast amount

of land around Sydney, which doesn't really have anybody left on it because they have all died of smallpox. They sort of just parcel out small amounts of land. There is not the sort of pressure to expand that you might expect. Exploration is a very kind of individualistic thing in Australia. You get these kind of heroic explorers who set out to find what is there. And they find – what do they find? Desert. And Aborigines who spear them.

Audience Question: We were talking about egalitarianism under Arthur Phillip who put out the same rations to everyone, but from the very little bit I have read: His soldiers seemed to be very discontent with that. And basically, to be numbered with convicts, and be told they are worth as much as a convict? I was wondering, how it was compared to New England where society was stratified already.

I would have argued it was not an egalitarian society that was established. ... but as soon as it was possible through the circumstances that people would really diversify and would have social stratification and do it by whatever means possible. So you have different powers, going against each other, at different ideas – I want to elaborate a little bit. Already in 1830, you have got people who would not have had a chance in England, definitely, but who are even more posh, more well-mannered, who look at the clothing much more exactly than they would have in England because they knew they have to give some signification of 'We are different'. So that you've got a new kind of elite, and not this egalitarianism of settlers, soldiers, convicts.

This basically disappears as soon as there is a means to do so. So it is pretty much a nice idea but it happens to be a different time of the founding of a nation where you would not just be that equal. It just looks like it because there are similarities. You are welcome to disagree but...

Cassandra Pybus: No, I agree with you entirely, I mean it is human nature, let's face it, to want to distinguish yourself as being richer or better or something. Well, the point I was trying to make is, it's not kind of codified. I mean, George Johnston's wife is a convict and nobody holds that against her in New South Wales. In the eighteenth, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century that is unthinkable, really. And one of the uppermost people, Simeon Lord, who is probably in urban Sydney the richest man, is an ex-convict with very lowly beginnings in England. And so the thing is, money talks, nobody is suggesting for one moment that that is not the case.

But there is not what you get in Virginia – Virginia being the place I am most familiar with of the British American colonies – you get a colonial aristocracy there. And that doesn't happen in Australia. And you get it in the Canadian colonies, too. That there is not an attempt to create a kind of hereditary elite. But money talks, there is no doubt about that. And of course, if you've got money, if you've got it, flaunt it!

Jennifer Anderson: Did distinctions emerge between people of mixed race and as you say are there differences between native-born and second-generation Creole the way you have in New Spain? Those kinds of distinctions?

Cassandra Pybus: The distinction is made and it is very clearly made and I claim it is no racial distinction, the distinction between everybody else and the Indigenous people.

Jennifer Anderson: Then that is not a regional distinction.

Cassandra Pybus: Because it is not. If it is a racial distinction, it is a distinction about indigeneity, and not skin colour. Because otherwise you can't explain the people who are dark-skinned and who are not discriminated against, in any way. The expectation is, that they are. But they are not. And so, I mean you think: What is it about Aborigines? Well, the thing is the Aborigines have got something that the newcomers want. So they turn them into kind of vermin.

Jennifer Anderson: But do you get a mixed population?

Cassandra Pybus: No, you don't. Not very much at all. For a start.

Jennifer Anderson: That is very unusual.

Cassandra Pybus: The Pacific Islanders, they would give their women, ... so . The first kind of tension that happens between the Indigenous people and the colonial ones, is over women. And so inevitably there is some conflict, especially as the Aboriginal people become weaker and more dependent. There is much more exploitation of the Aboriginal women then. But there is very little evidence of mixed-race children.

Jennifer Anderson: In just about every other colonial context you get these individuals who are sort of in-between kind of people, who are of mixed race. And they often emerge as a sort of third class, between the native people and the colonisers.

Cassandra Pybus: Well, again, the children of Aboriginal women are likely to stay with the Aboriginal mother and within the tribe and that went well into the twentieth century when the Governors intervened and would start taking them away. So there is not a mestizo class that develops in Australia, no.

Audience Question: Why not go native?

Cassandra Pybus: Some people did that.

Audience Question: Sorry, it basically boils down to the making of a nation. You have different people from different societies, basically the outcasts of their times, exiles to Australia...

Jennifer Anderson: I am not sure they wanted to assimilate all these newcomers.

Audience Question: Yes but they were all, in a way, newcomers. Why not?

Jennifer Anderson: In the Native American context there were, especially among Algonquin communities, there were traditions even before colonisation of how to assimilate people from outside groups. There was a great deal of ritualised adoptions, for example. One of the interpretations, when John Smith arrives in Virginia and Pocahontas intervenes to supposedly save his life, is that he did not realise that he was being integrated into their community. So I don't – were there similar mechanisms? It sounds to me like the Aborigines were more assimilating.

Cassandra Pybus: One of the things you need to understand is the thought of the isolation of the island-continent at the bottom of the world: in that the Indigenous people had no concept of there being other people who might come and want what they had. And so first they are kind of curious, interested, curious. But then it becomes apparent that these people are going to take their hunting grounds, and that is when you get the resistances lead be Pemulwuy.

But the problem is: the smallpox decimated the tribes around Sydney and that weakened the capacity to fight back. And from then it is like, it's almost like a constant pushing back, pushing away, on the understanding that the country is so vast,

and these are nomadic people, and they don't water crops, and they don't put up fences and all the rest of it.

Audience Question: It's a question of establishing territory. I was raised as an Australian so I know that others consider Aboriginal men and women as inferior. Whenever you see a woman who is not clothed and she happens to be alone or see a man who is considered wild and he speaks a completely different language... because they are "so inferior"...

Cassandra Pybus: Well, yes, there has been a whole argument about it, actually. The theory of 'Terra Nullius', which is – the land is empty. Sure, it's got these people on it, we can see who they are, but they are not using the land. There is books and books and books written about this thing because at the time the concept of law was being codified to consider issues about: Who actually owned this place?

And so this theory of 'Terra Nullius' was very convenient which was: Nobody was owning it because they weren't using it. And that again is a good enough argument for considering them to be like wild animals and therefore you can just kill them. And you know, when they get into the way, I mean you do not go out and eradicate the foxes, the wolves because they are there. You are starting to eradicate them because they are killing the sheep. And it was the same thing. Once they started fighting back of just trying to get some food, then they became vermin.

But the point that I was trying to make about not being racial issues – that racism as we think about it, as we talk about it – tends to be about skin colour. Black versus white. That is not what the issue is. This is about, so, sure, they were black, and they were different, they are wild, they are savage, but basically the problem is that you've got to eradicate them or to completely subjugate them in order to have what they think they own, their land.

Therese-Marie Meyer: I just have to say this. Last night at dinner Cassandra was saying this: It is about one third of the officers who have been to America. And I was saying: No, it is far... far more.

So I thought, okay; and what Andrew was saying before, that this really has not been looked at and that indeed the experience of the American War was very different depending on what particular side... you were for or where at the time you were at. There was this massive difference between the war in the Caribbean and the war in the North: around Quebec. And at Yorktown versus the Southern States. And I was wondering: This seems to me crucial, what I looked at with David Collins. The way that Bunker Hill and what he experienced there influenced his actions in South Africa afterwards.

So please some of you historians, just find out where these worthy officers have been. You see I am going to throw this titbit at you, it's a titbit that is for all three of you. There's one man there who is actually an acquaintance of Governor Philip King, a man who has Evan Nepean speaking at his trial. King met him in Jamaica, when King was lieutenant on a ship: Ship got into a hurricane, was completely damaged and ended up in harbour for one year, stuck in Jamaica, in Kingston, they were repairing the ship. This was when they met. This man has Evan Nepean and Lord Nelson speaking at his trial. I am talking, pointing out what connects Edward Despard with King this far, who was at [the settlement of] Belize, which became British Honduras.

Jennifer Anderson: Oh yes, I did a wider work on him.

Therese-Marie Meyer: Famously, at his trial he begged not to be sentenced but to be sent to Australia. And there is this lovely note, apparently, on his application, saying: Impossible. Particularly because, of course, Australia is teeming with naughty Irishmen and he's applied as an Englishman.

Jennifer Anderson: Ireland, he was involved in Ireland, too.

Therese-Marie Meyer: He'd be known, notorious down there. Which gets us back to the place of your colonial elite. You don't want that, you don't want a republican elite developing.

Jennifer Anderson: Oh, that would make a great book if this pirate goes down to Australia, raises hell. And he was married to a native woman. In today's Belize.

Therese-Marie Meyer: Yes. Exactly in former British Honduras. So I think that is a very interesting case that sort of points to the issue of where exactly were these people? As Governor King obviously did, when he came to Australia. He did not have the same kind of experience as George Johnston had or when he was in New York, or all that David Collins saw when he was at Bunker Hill.

Cassandra Pybus: No, not that I am aware of.

Jennifer Anderson: I am going to have to round up a grad student. Or I'll do it myself. It's so interesting.

Therese-Marie Meyer: So I have to say... There is a big pile of work to get into. Anybody else here who feels inspired to? Thank you very, very much.

Very inspiring for all of us. I am certainly teeming with ideas here. I hope you will continue tonight with those discussions.

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"If Land was a Head: A Critique of 'Country'"

Abstract: This paper considers specific cultural practices and beliefs and contemplates the western rejection of exotica (head-hunting) in one instance, and the exotifying of land (increasingly referred to as country) in the other. The paper will argue that while the precise meaning of head-hunting remains elusive to aliens (even other head-hunters from different cultures), just as the full meaning of land or "country" to Aborigines remains elusive to aliens (including Aborigines from different regions), there are contiguities between Indigenous understandings of heads and Indigenous understandings of country. Contrary to the taking of heads the paper then argues that notions of land and country are readily sentimentalised along the lines of "the earth is my mother", and that such sentiments contribute to broad support for Aboriginal land rights. Such sentiments also provide a ready means for Aborigines who have never lived on country to nevertheless explain its significance to them. A broad sweep of contemporary interests – concern for the environment for example – intersect with customary beliefs relating to country and are reified in local communities, which in turn influences how specific cultures are understood and which aspects of culture should be conserved.

Keywords: Land; Country; Aborigines; Head-hunting; Settler; Belonging

Introduction

The practice of head-hunting, both imagined and actual, has long attracted interest. This interest varies from sensationalist to sensitive informed analysis and continues to do so. Beyond the ubiquitous travellers' and adventurers' tales and similar of supposed encounters with macabre exotica, a vast body of more sober anthropological (and other) literature addresses head-hunting. In the latter its practice in numerous and otherwise distinctive cultures – Polynesian, Melanesian, Torres Strait Islander, and elsewhere – is explicated. Unsurprisingly the explanatory rationale for this ostensibly confronting cultural pursuit differs across the cultures that practiced it, as did the associated conventions, techniques, rituals and behavioural patterns. Insofar as there is any commonality to be found, it lies in the profound significance attributed to its practice. It was not a mundane exercise. The taking and keeping of heads was meaningful, and much of that meaning was realised through symbolic abstraction, no matter the import of the bodily artefact itself. The precise meaning of head-hunting, however, in any given culture remains elusive to aliens and continues to be the subject of scholarly debate, and like any cultural phenomena whose broader relevance manifests in symbolic abstraction, its practitioners might not be able to articulate its full significance. Alluding at least in part to this Renato Rosaldo, in his renowned introduction "Grief and a Headhunter's Rage", argues that "ritual in general and Ilongot head-hunting in particular form the intersection of multiple co-existing social processes" (Rosaldo: 11). Kenneth George argues for the necessity of grounding analyses of head-hunting

> in the social and historical contingencies of a lived-in world, and in the practical effects of ritual discourse. For example, care needs to be taken to read, and thus theorize, "existential" predicaments so as not to overlook the political and social strains that give birth to them. (George 1996: 68–69)

The storing, maintenance and use of skulls, the need for fresh heads and the practices of and ancillary preparations towards obtaining them had relevance to social, cultural, economic, political, spiritual, religious, and historical affairs; was related to trade, warfare, cultural identity, land tenure, fertility, fecundity, personal growth and maturation; "it effected the functioning of local society" (Dureau: 89), and these functionalities were dispersed through and authenticated by "intricate symbolic webs" of meaning (Geertz: 195); [see also for example (Dureau), (Rosaldo), (Harrison), (Sheppard *et al*), (Aswani 2000a), (Aswani 2000b), (George 1991), (George 1996), (Keesing)].

Except for isolated incidents, head-hunting as an enduring cultural practice has largely ceased. Many cultures, however, revere this aspect of their past and thus it continues to resonate and have significance (and function) in local webs of meaning. Its erstwhile practice is even celebrated in children's books (see for example Laza). If culture becomes manifest in "socially conditioned repertoires of activities and thoughts" (Harris: 62), and is realised symbolically in social relations, and reverence for a past practice of head-hunting is integral to this symbolism then the relevance of the practice continues. The locus of activities and thoughts once intrinsic to the actual practice of head-hunting and the maintenance and storage of skulls is now transferred to and articulated through other cultural mechanisms and handed-down knowledge of the tradition.

Country

One could almost seamlessly insert "land" or "country" as a replacement for "heads" in the above without jeopardising meaning. For Indigenous Australians "country" too is resonant with the same sweeping significance across social, cultural, economic, political, spiritual, religious, and historical affairs; one's affinity to country very much effected (and effects) the functioning of local society and country's significance was and is intricately bound to symbolic webs of meaning and ritual discourse. With a greater or lesser degree of comprehension, this much is popularly understood. It is taken as axiomatic that the relationship Aborigines have with the land is special, unique even, and its mention almost always carries with it the weight of reverence.

For those Aborigines long removed from their ancestral lands the locus of activities and thoughts that once adhered to their country is similarly articulated through other cultural mechanisms and handed-down knowledge of the relevant traditions. Just like the full significance of head-hunting (or almost any cultural phenomena) in local webs of meaning remains unknown and perhaps unknowable, what the land or "country" means to Aborigines is likewise beyond reach, perhaps even to Aborigines themselves. Nevertheless, many have attempted to capture something of its essence. Among those most regularly cited is that of Stanner's (1991), the anthropologist:

> No English words are good enough to give a sense of the links between an aboriginal group and its homeland. Our word "home", warm and suggestive though it be, does not match the aboriginal word that may mean "camp", "hearth", "country", "everlasting home", "totem place", "life source", "spirit centre" and much else all in one. Our word "land" is too spare and meagre. We can now scarcely use it except with economic overtones unless we happen to be poets. The aboriginal would speak of "earth" and use the word in a richly symbolic way to mean his "shoulder" or his "side". I have seen an aboriginal embrace the earth he walked on. To put our words "home" and "land" together into "homeland" is a little better but not much. A different tradition leaves us tongueless and earless towards this other world of meaning and significance. When we took what we call "land" we took what to them meant hearth, home, the source and locus of life, and everlastingness of spirit. At the same time it left each local band bereft of an essential constant that made their plan and code of living intelligible. (Stanner: 44)

Writing in 1976, Aboriginal leader Galarrwuy Yunupingu poignantly stated "The land is my backbone. [...] My land is my foundation. [...] Without land, I am nothing" (Yunupingu: 9). There are almost endless similar examples. Implicit in such descriptions is the drawing of a contrast between the thickness of meaning that the land has for Aborigines, and the thinness, even crass, meaning, or to be more precise, function, that land has for settlers. It is now a commonplace that for settlers land is a commodity to be bought and sold. For Aborigines on the other hand, "country is a living entity with a yesterday, today and tomorrow, with a consciousness, and a will toward life [...] country is home, and peace; nourishment for body, mind, and spirit; heart's ease" (Rose: 7). Although more and more Aboriginal claimants for land are stressing its necessity in meeting economic needs such needs remain buttressed by the claimant's casting as "*homo religiosus* rather than *homo economicus*" (Beckett: 207). These tensions are evident in the Queensland Labor government's recent re-introduction – March 2018 – of a vegetation management Bill to parliament that would ban broad-acre clearing of vegetation. The Bill provoked an angry response from Richie Ah Mat, the chairman of the Cape York Land Council, who accused the government of "talking black but acting green", and proclaimed it

> a vicious piece of legislation that goes against the grain of closing the gap. Our people, 20 years ago, were just starting to get our land back. Now they've cut us below the knees with this new piece of legislation. We don't want to be sitting in the backyard as blackfellas, with no opportunity, and this is what this law is doing. It is robbing my people of an opportunity to create economic development and sustainability for the rest of our lives. (cited in Elks & McKenna)

Farmers and pastoralists too argue that the legislation will stifle agricultural production, but green groups are arguing the legislation affords too little protection of valuable habitats, including the Great Barrier Reef that is impacted by farmland runoff (see Elks & McKenna).

The richly drawn intimate affiliation between Aborigines and country and its contrast with the supposed superficiality and crudely materialistic attitudes towards country of settler Australians is accepted as a given requiring no substantiation. It is shorthand for something widely held to be self-evidently true. Yet from as early as the seventeenth century the psychopathological condition known then (and until the twentieth century) as nostalgia has been described by physicians. Related to homesickness and melancholy, it arose when an individual became ill and pain-ridden because they were no longer on their native land or feared not being able to return

to it (Rosen: 340–341). Beyond loss of appetite, insomnia, fever, insanity and even death could result (Rosen: 341, 342, 343, 346). The rupture from homeland precursing emotional and mental disorders that could find expression in various organic pathologies (even death) bespeaks of an affinity to one's homeland more substantial than country as a mere exchangeable commodity. Although observed previously it was Johannes Hofer in 1688 who provided the first detailed account of the condition and who named it "nostalgia". His case study was based on Swiss troops serving in France (Rosen: 341). As the centuries rolled on, this disorder was "recognised by physicians all over Europe as occurring among various ethnic and social groups" (Rosen: 349–352). Home-sickness manifesting more profoundly as a pathological condition arising from distance from one's native land, appears to be a condition to which all are susceptible.

Nevertheless, the occasional attempts to explain the sense of belonging that settler-Australians have for country can attract harsh criticism. Critiques often raise the appropriative nature (intent is alleged) of settler Australians supposedly indigenising themselves. Having dispossessed Aborigines of their land, now settlers seek to supplant Aborigines by they themselves becoming Aboriginal. As Emma Kowal notes,

> [a]ny exploration of non-indigenous belonging in the Australian nation-state is considered by definition to be at the expense of Indigenous belonging. From this point of view, Indigenous claims are automatically diluted, dissolved or negated when mentioned alongside other kinds of belonging. (Kowal: 177)

Ken Gelder's critique of Peter Read's *Belonging* (2000) is in this regard an exemplar (Gelder; see also Probyn). Gelder is highly critical of attempts by settlers to explain their "deep relationship" to country, and of Read's framing of these attempts. The issue here is not whether Gelder's concerns are justified or the merits or otherwise of Read's *Belonging*. It is the scepticism, cynicism and suspicion that non-Indigenous / settler proclamations of their own profound sense of place and belonging provoke. Furthermore, Indigenous claims to a "deep relationship" to country do not suffer the same scrutiny. So a self-proclaimed "urban, beachside Blackfella, a concrete Koori with Westfield Dreaming" (Heiss: 1), is able to write without provoking so much as a murmur that although spending most of her life on Gadigal land in Sydney, hers is the rural "voice of a Wiradjuri woman aware of where she will always belong" (Heiss: 3), and that Wiradjuri land is her "country" where her "spirit belongs and will finally rest" (Heiss: 3). Again, there are many number of similar examples (see Grieves: 11, 21 and *passim*). The invocation of "country" and immutable spiritual ties to it is a device Aborigines use to unite themselves with a trait immediately evocative of a seemingly authentic Aboriginality shared with a deep ancestral past. Whereas Gelder is highly critical of historians who have "enacted the fantasy of indigenising the 'non-Aboriginal'" (1), he is mute on the devices that Indigenous people distant from the outward markers of Aboriginality (language, lifestyle, their ancestral country, and so on) use to indigenise themselves. Gelder's political engagement (and his review of *Belonging* is advocacy), constrains his theoretical commitment (in this review at least).[1]

1 Gelder's critique of *Belonging* long predates Heiss's *Am I Black Enough for You*. Heiss is used here as an example to show how Aborigines too deploy notions of having a "deep relationship" to "country". How to reconcile critical theory with political engagement and advocacy is an important, complex but necessary challenge. It is an issue that anthropologists have struggled with albeit without resolution. It remains

Invoking "country" and one's sense of belonging to it in a spiritual sense works because it resonates with something that many – Indigenous and non-Indigenous – sense, often in a visceral way, in their own feelings for certain places or a place. These feelings arise from multiple factors, including comparatively recent socio-historical association. This is no less true for Aborigines as it is for others. To take but one example, the reverence that Tasmanian Aborigines have for Wybalena on Flinders Island, an island which had not been inhabited for four and half thousand years or so, arises from the devastating consequences of their forced and temporary re-location there in the nineteenth century (see Ryan: 219–252). Taking another example, the lifescapes of work and experience tie settlers to land in ways that far transcend its understanding in arid economic terms, as a mere exchangeable commodity. As Nicholas Gill and Kay Anderson have revealed through their fieldwork with pastoralists in Central Australia and the Top End,

> the pastoral body and land permeate each other through physical co-presence and labour. [...] Pastoralists [...] came to gain not only knowledge of the physical features and layout of the land, but also to develop a way of knowing that provided them a place within it. This knowing is specific to their mode of land use and occupation, and arises in part from the variability of the land. (Gill and Anderson: 3)

The pastoralist's sense of place, as it is for other settlers, is rich, deep and informed (see Gill: 49, 50). As Keith Basso (102) has argued in another context, "landscapes are always available to their seasoned inhabitants in other than material terms. Landscapes are available in symbolic terms as well". The salient point is that proclamations postulating a uniquely Indigenous sense of belonging work because the sentiments informing these postulations are recognisable and even familiar in the same way that the proclamations concerning the "deep relationships" that arise through the taking of heads are not. It is easy to emote about the land and one's feelings towards it, for sentiments along these lines to be mutually intelligible and for that emoting to have a foundation of some if varying substance. It is less easy (for many anyway) to emote, at least in a mutually intelligible feel-good heart-warming sense, about the necessity of taking and keeping human heads. In these instances the factors that led to the valorisation of a distinctive relationship to land and ultimately the cessation of the practice of head-hunting following contact with Europeans, exemplify how colonial encounters "made particular practices or customs emblematic; different encounters produced different referents for what was characteristic of a place or a people" (Thomas: 214). As Nicholas Thomas posits, this is a

> political contest [...] that is manifest not only in the process of selecting aspects of past heritage or present custom that are to be privileged in the construction of ethnic identity, but also in radical rejections of what is local and traditional. (Thomas: 214)

By way of illustrating another way in which the broad appeal of the seductiveness of land is harnessed for strategic ends, the rise of the Green movement internationally and its successes is partly attributable to humankind's capacity to emote about places, even those we have not been to (see for example Read 1996: 127–131). The renowned Tasmanian nature photographer Peter Dombrovskis's iconic image

highly contested terrain (see Sylvain). Literary scholars, however, have shown little appetite for confronting this challenge.

of Rock Island Bend on the Franklin River is widely held to have swung popular opinion against the damming of the river during this fiercely contested early 1980's federal election campaign.[2] The power of this image is not reliant upon familiarity with the section of the Franklin River depicted. Comparatively few have seen it first-hand. Tim Bonyhady argues that photographs "address a need for information in a way words cannot do. They show us what was at stake" (Bonyhady 1); (see also Read 1996: 127). In this instance what was and is at stake is provoked by the arousal of feelings towards places, elements of which are widely shared, recognised, and familiar.

Feeding into today's perception that the Indigenous relationship to the land is uniquely deep and that of others exceptionally shallow is the widely held belief that Aborigines' impact on the environment was minimal. In popular parlance they trod lightly wherever they went. This was not an artefact of available technologies, small populations, but the outcome of an ethics consciously geared towards sustainable exploitation of the environment. Bill Gammage introduces his *The Biggest Estate on Earth* (2011) with "This book describes how the people of Australia managed their land in 1788. It tells how this was possible, what they did, and why. It argues that collectively they managed an Australian estate ..." (Gammage: 1). Further, "[m]anagement was active not passive, [...] *committed to a balance of life*" (2 my emphasis). The coupling of Indigenous peoples with a consciously directed environmentalist ethic is a standard repertoire in critiques worrying about environmental degradation, habitat destruction, and loss of flora and fauna. In this respect Indigenous people are costumed according to the needs and interests of others, as well as strategically donning themselves in the costumes laid out for them. It was in this guise that "the Indian was introduced to the American public as the great high priest of the Ecology Cult" (Martin: 157).

> Habitually coupled with its opposite, the Nonecological [sic] White Man, the Ecological Indian proclaims both that the American Indian is a nonpolluting [sic] ecologist, conservationist, and environmentalist, and that the white man is not. (Krech III: 22)

Aborigines, with the now common refrain that they belong to the "oldest country" and possess the "oldest [continuing] culture" (Colbung in Grieves: 25), have assumed the mantle of exemplary environmentalists, usurping the Native Americans in this respect. As Annette Hamilton argues, "the litany of 'a culture over 40,000 years old' stands for the notion of sustainable continuity against the destruction of 200 years of white settlement" (Hamilton: 22). The ease with which the notion of Indigenous environmental responsibility – whether Native American or Australian Aborigine – arising from management practices decisively implemented for the purpose of "living in harmony" with the natural world can be categorically refuted – notwithstanding the ostensibly more benign Indigenous exploitative practices – has not mitigated the enduring force of this perception (see Rolls 2003; McCarthy: 1–5).

The long duration of Aboriginal occupation of Australia – now postulated to be somewhere between 50,000 and 65,000 years – is also pointed to as a contributing factor underlying the "strong connection" to landscape that Aborigines express, and the importance of the land to them. A typically sober scientific report based on DNA

2 The image appeared in full-page newspaper advertisements ahead of the 1983 federal election. It was captioned "Could you vote for a party that would destroy this?"

evidence – sufficiently sober for it to be published in *Nature* – states dryly in the "discussion" section that

> [t]he long-standing and diverse phylogeographic patterns documented here are remarkable given the timescale involved, and raise the possibility that the central cultural attachment of Aboriginal Australians to "country" may reflect the continuous presence of populations in discrete geographic areas for up to 50kyr. (Tobler *et al*.: 183)

Newspaper reporting of this research was less restrained. Stephen Fitzpatrick, *The Australian*'s Indigenous Affairs Editor, asserted that this research "corroborat[ed] scientifically for the first time the basis for indigenous understanding of ancient links to country" (Fitzpatrick). One of the researchers, Alan Cooper, was also less restrained in his comments for this newspaper, stating that the research "helps explain why there's such a strong connection to the landscape, and the critical importance of being on country" (cited in Fitzpatrick). In commentary there is always the danger if not the temptation to step beyond one's area of expertise. Asserting that the "deep relationship" that Indigenous people have with country is evidenced in all its complex entanglements – scientifically corroborated indeed – by biological markers indicating long and stable habitation is an example of overreach absent from the pages of the report in *Nature*. However, this slipperiness that uses scientific evidence to buttress sociocultural formulations attracts scant criticism when it is consistent with received and popular wisdom. Postulations characterising the Aboriginal relationship to country as being unique and profoundly deep are now, it is claimed, underpinned by nothing less than DNA evidence, the very evidence which in popular understandings is irrefutably authoritative. As Catherine Nash warns in another but related context,

> [w]hen the dominant model for understanding inheritance is genetic, genealogical explanations for personal and collective character can easily slip into the language of genetic essentialism, which thereby explains and naturalises social practices, structures values and relations. (Nash: 35)

Anthropological Influence

Marshal Sahlins noted how the term "culture", formerly the province of anthropologists, has been appropriated by Indigenous peoples and used as leverage against nation states.

> The cultural self-consciousness developing among imperialism's erstwhile victims is one of the more remarkable phenomena of world history in the later twentieth century. "Culture" – the word itself, or some local equivalent, is on everyone's lips. Tibetans and Hawaiians, Ojibway, Kwakiutl, and Eskimo, Kazakhs and Mongols, native Australians, Balinese, Kashmiris, and New Zealand Maori: all discover they have a "culture". For centuries they may have hardly noticed it. (Sahlins: 3)

There is a rich lode of anthropological literature describing the cultural elements of Indigenous peoples. The affinity between Aborigines and their country is part of this anthropological lode. In contrast there are few anthropological or ethnographic studies of non-Indigenous peoples seeking or revealing the rich cultural detail of

their relationship to country. As David Trigger states, white settler farmers "are not usually 'natives of choice' in anthropology" (Trigger: 404). For this reason there is scant anthropological or ethnographic material on how white settlers "acquire authenticity in relation to place" (Rata: 234). On the other hand, anthropology has given Indigenes an extensive literature that can be mined vis-à-vis their 'feeling' for country, as well as the terminology and conceptual frameworks enabling articulation of this relationship.

Hence in a similar fashion to how Indigenous peoples are now self-consciously cultural, having learnt well the anthropologists' stock-in-trade (see Sahlins: 3–5), many Australian Aborigines (among others) now self-consciously articulate their enduring bonds to country. Writing of the influence of the Yolngu in advocacy for Aboriginal rights, Bain Attwood (344) explains how "they had produced an understanding of their world through dialogue with anthropologists and anthropologically trained missionaries over several generations". And just as "culture" has become a somewhat meaningless but nevertheless a strategically deployed catch-all that sees proclamations that something (practice or behaviour) is "cultural" rarely challenged (see Rolls 2011), so too are the claims of bonds to country rarely challenged. This is so even when those bonds rest on supposed innate senses arising from biological heritage no matter how distant, rather than knowledge gained from intimacy with the country claimed. White settlers learn and scholars naively reinforce that cultural distinctiveness and an abiding affinity to country are the privileges of Indigenous Australians.

This is not to deny that the "sense of the links between an aboriginal group and its homeland" (Stanner: 44) is anything but unique. Perhaps, though, the sense of links between *any* group or individuals of that group and their homeland or places of significance to them are unique, and that the English language is not furnished with words – recalling Stanner's statement vis-à-vis Aborigines that "[n]o English words are good enough ..." (Stanner: 44) – that adequately convey the profundity of this sense either. As discussed earlier, the term nostalgia was an attempt to explain the significance of the malaise of homesickness and its aetiology, but it is inadequate as an explanation – particularly in its current rendering as a sentimental longing or wistful affection for something past – for the sociocultural substance underlying the emotional depths which people feel for place or places. Hence lacking a body of relevant anthropological and / or ethnographic literature to draw on to help elaborate the non-indigenous sense of country however defined, attempts to do so are often rudimentary and clumsy, leaving them open – as previously described – to spirited critique.

Similarly, the language used by those attempting to explain the emotional and spiritual depths of their feelings for country is frequently inadequate and can appear sentimental and naïve. Indigenous explanations of their emotional and spiritual ties to country are just as often equally sentimental and naïve – "the earth is my mother", for example – nostalgic even for an imagined past. However, because Indigenous explanations rest on dense records of evidentiary material from which there has been seepage into the public realm, credulous assertions of spiritual ties to country are seldom questioned. The wider community 'know' of the 'substance' underpinning such claims.

The little research there is into settler notions of belonging points to equally profound emotional, cultural and social depths buttressing feelings for country. Michele Dominy's *Calling the Station Home* (2001), based on research with New Zealand's South Island high-country farming families, is one of the few anthropological texts explicating the relationship between settlers and their land. As Gerard Ward (331) states in his review of this text, Dominy reveals how these settler families have come to know country "as an intimately named landscape, saturated with meaning". In her review Elizabeth Rata (234) writes how Dominy sets herself to the anthropological task of understanding "the process by which groups acquire authenticity in relation to place" and that the high-country farmers "families' affinity to land is voiced in the complex interplay of social practices and symbolic forms". Dominy (3) explains that her research aimed to

> explore what it means to come to belong to a place. [...] I examine place not as setting, but as what high-country folk call "country", a physical space invested with cultural meaning, a site of intense cultural activity and imagination – of memory, of affectivity, of work, of sociality, of identity. I examine place as it is conceptualized [sic] endogenously not merely as scenery or panorama, but as habitat, as in inhabited and deeply culturalized landscape.

As mentioned in brief above, the geographers Gill and Anderson in their fieldwork with the pastoralists of the Northern Territory have also explained the various processes through which pastoralists achieve their authenticity in respect to place and arrive at their sense of belonging. Such work as Dominy's, Gill's and Anderson's avoid hierarchical assignations of belonging in which the Indigenous is profound and spiritual and the settler superficial and materialistic. They also do not posit settler belonging at the expense of Indigenous belonging. Trigger (405) writes how Dominy concludes that "cultural identity [...] cannot be understood in simple one-dimensional or binary terms; Maori and Pakeha farmer identities are entwined together in a fluid relationship whereby both draw on the other's traditions". It is telling that post-colonial critics like Gelder who discern exploitative appropriation in works like Read's *Belonging* and who are contemptuous of the supposed superficiality of settler expressions of their feelings for place do not engage with the more scholarly research on settler belonging. Were they to do so their critiques, if their politics would allow, might be more tempered.

It is ironic that "what is widely understood as worthy in what is 'Aboriginal'" (Merlan 1998: 169) is so closely tied to an entity – land, country – that evokes a sense of knowingness or at least familiarity among so many. Francesca Merlan explains how Aboriginal worthiness "is assumed to involve certain distinctive and traditional forms of social relations – in respect to place, dependence on the countryside for survival, intimacy with it, reproduction of personhood in relation to it, and so on" (Merlan 1998: 169). Merlan explains how this assumption constitutes an acceptance of "an economy of values of cultural authenticity" (Merlan 1998: 169–170). What I am suggesting is that an influential reason why there is such demotic acceptance of this particular suite of economy of values of cultural authenticity is because it is based on an entity – the land or country – which has meaning that resonates beyond Aborigines. Although writing in the context of the Western Apache, Basso's discussion on the relationship between discourse and landscape is relevant to any community apprehending the physical environment in which they work and dwell.

> [W]henever the members of a community speak about their landscape – whenever they name it, or classify it, or evaluate it, or move to tell stories about it – they unthinkingly represent it in ways that are compatible with shared understandings of how, in the fullest sense, they know themselves to occupy it. (Basso: 101)

There are many traditional Aboriginal practices that westerners view with abhorrence, and these practices are not "widely understood as worthy in what is 'Aboriginal'". If a culture was to assert its authenticity on practices deemed unworthy, such as head-hunting practices and prowess as a number of cultures once did (some still do), change was demanded of their "economy of values of cultural authenticity". In this respect rather than seeing the land or country as uniquely Indigenous, it could be argued that country has become the talisman of universal Aboriginal authenticity on the basis that it reflects "mainstream emphasis on Indigenous identity and being" and perhaps more cynically, as a way of managing postcoloniality (see Merlan 2014: 297, 297–298).

Conclusion

Of course the land is the basis for many modes of production essential to survival in ways that decapitated heads, arguably, are not. It is the land (and sea, lakes, rivers etc.) from where we draw our nutritional sustenance. Nevertheless, whether or not the land is more productive in a functional sense than the taking of heads in respect to the maintenance of the sociocultural institutions that are essential for survival – that "intersection of multiple co-existing social processes" (Rosaldo: 11) and "the practical effects of ritual discourse" (George 1996: 68–69) – is by no means straightforward. The issue here though is how the relationship to land *and* heads and the function of land *and* heads is described and explained and the demotic acceptance of land having special meaning for Aborigines, not whether or not land is more or less productive at a sustenance level than taking heads. Writing of *Calling the Station Home* Rata states that Dominy's "contribution is to suggest the need to explore the ways in which Pakeha ways of elaborating the symbolic nature of land are shared with Maori although expressed differently" (Rata: 235). In Australia and just as for Aborigines, settler Australians too enjoy an affinity with land that arises from that complex of social practices and symbolic forms. Although the nature of that complex differs – in terms of social practices and the symbolic abstraction through which this complex gains its profound significance – it is not a difference that can be arrayed in a hierarchy, in either degrees of authenticity of belonging or degrees of significance / depths of feeling. Merlan argues how

> [e]mphasis on culture and its maintenance [...] has intensified concern with how culture is to be understood and conserved. This, in turn, stimulates many processes of the mimetic sort, in which representations of Aboriginal practices – including how practices are to be understood as "Aboriginal culture" – come to play a material role in the shaping of Aborigines' lives. Aboriginal people, of course, participate in these processes in various ways. (Merlan 1998: 226)

The dispossession of Aborigines from their lands and the necessity of restitution – notwithstanding significant returns of land under the Northern Territory Land Rights Act, other land rights acts, Native Title legislation, Indigenous Land Use

Agreements, and other forms of "handback" – makes land a potent issue. Drawn into the social and political contestation over unresolved issues pertaining to loss of land, are the anthropological constructions of what land means to Aborigines. To be authentically Aboriginal one must be able to demonstrate 'authentic' ways of belonging, and those ways by necessity need to be distinguishable from the 'inauthenticity' of settler belonging. The 'special' relationship that Aborigines are said to enjoy with land (more eloquently expressed as "country") has reified into an essential element at the core of Aboriginality.

The innocuousness of claiming a profoundly spiritual attachment to country facilitates an uncritical general acceptance. So too does the fact that emotional ties to place or places – even imagined places – is a shared feature of human experience. The distinctive and esoteric nature of Aboriginal 'belonging' is lost in the more generic sentiments of universal experience, but it is this generic understanding that has enabled those distant from the cultural esotery where distinctiveness is made manifest in specific socio-cultural contexts and the concomitant complex of symbolic abstractions to assert an Indigenous relationship to country and the inference of participatory experience in this complex. Drawn into this complex are a raft of external concerns. Most prevalent are anxieties arising from environmental issues such as destruction of delicate ecosystems, loss of biodiversity, protection of native flora and fauna, global warming and so on. Peculiarly western notions underpinning our contemporary environmental consciousness are reified in local Indigenous expressions of their relationship to country and its management. This contributes to how the broader community understands these cultures and which aspects of those cultures are deserving of their support and conservation. Moreover, this has material influence, in that certain aspects of cultural esotery – those that enjoy popular support even if only as a rhetorical device to critique the west – are emphasised, even exaggerated. If, however, the range of characteristic Indigenous traits is secured through a practice offensive to delicate western sensibilities – the taking of heads for example – measures to force cessation of the practice are implemented. Only the constituent elements of Indigenous cultures that are acceptable to western sensibilities are granted leave to flourish.

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Rezensionsessay
Review Essay

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Indigenous History in *Gould's Book of Fish*

Fiction 'in memoriam'

Introduction

The debate about Aboriginal history in Tasmania has become emblematic of the treatment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and how their history is evaluated. The essay "From Terror to Genocide: Britain's Tasmanian Penal Colony and Australia's History Wars" by Madley (2008) bears witness to this unresolved issue:

> Despite over 170 years of debate who or what was responsible for this near-extinction [in Tasmania], no consensus exists on its origins, process, or whether or not it was genocide. (Madley: 78)

Other publications – such as Theodore Dalrymple's "Why Intellectuals Like Genocide" from 2007 or the now infamous work by Keith Windschuttle from 2002 *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History: Van Diemen's Land, 1803–1847* – highlight the vehemence and emotion involved in the argument (cf. Madley: 77). More so for Aboriginal people; Brewster (3) quotes various voices on the subject of a living memory who say that as long as the conditions of the past are the conditions of the present, the past is not past; that victors can afford to forget while the 'losers' cannot; and that Aboriginal remembrance is a living experience of the past. Stephens (n.p.) states that the urge to rewrite Australia's history appears to be driven by politics rather than a desire for truth and refers to *The History Wars*:

> Whether it involves the Stolen Generations or the head of state, native forests or the family, immigration or diplomacy, arguments over public policy keep returning to the legacy of the past. Australian history is now part of the political vocabulary. (Macintyre: 219–220)

For this reason, every public contribution to this heated debate bears taking note of. *Gould's Book of Fish – A Novel in Twelve Fish* [hereafter: *GBF*] by Richard Flanagan entered this discourse with its publication in 2001 and went on to win several prizes. Using general historical facts[1] as a backdrop and the sublime watercolour sketches of fish by the historical William Buelow Gould (c.1801–1853) for his "demented Tasmanian fable"[2] Flanagan makes "a consummate use of fiction to carry [...] some of the darkest truths or corruptions of our history".[3]

By rewriting history in the novel *Gould's Book of Fish* the author reframes the narrative of powerless victimisation of the Aboriginal peoples in Tasmania and

1 For example, the penal settlement in Macquarie Harbour, and Sarah Island as its headquarters, existed from 1822 to 1833 (cf. Wiese: 101–103). This is where *GBF* is set, however, with marked differences to the historical reports. Incidentally, the story takes place within the time-frame covered by Windschuttle's publication.
2 From *The Age* (Melbourne), quoted on the cover of *GBF*.
3 From *Australian Book Review* (Melbourne), quoted on the cover of *GBF*.

restores agency to them. Entering the ongoing debate about Aboriginal peoples, he thus transgresses the stereotypical deadlock which history has put contemporary Aboriginal people [and 'Whites'] in.

Truth Created – Fiction and Historiography

How could Indigenous history as portrayed in *GBF* contribute something of worth beyond mere poetic imagination and entertainment? This question is important considering that *GBF* opens by setting historiography and story-telling at arms: The "story discredited itself so completely that [...] the museum's experts congratulated me on the quality of my forgery" (17), recounts Sid Hammet, the protagonist persona of the first chapter. The story is "not at all the [...] thing a good book should be" (14) according to the accepted conventions of writing, e.g., "a book that never really started and never quite finished" (*GBF*: 14). It tells of "mundane" events and at other times "stories [...] of matters so cracked that at first I thought it must be a chronicle of dreams or nightmares" (14), as the narrator further reveals. So why engage with pure phantasmagoria looking for Indigenous history?

The novel itself while seeming "to concur with the known facts" does so "only long enough to enter with [historians] into an argument" (16). Professor da Silva, consulted as an expert, sees the argument as won by history when he says, "[h]istory, Mr Hammet, is what you cannot see. History has power. But a fake has none" (*GBF*: 18). The novel contests that, deploring that the professor "looked for truth in facts not in stories" (20). For, on the one hand, it turns out later in *GBF* that the facts are meticulously forged (cf. 282–286), hence, also fictional: "a necessary clerical invention" that "accord[s] with expectation" (284).

The concept by Giambattista Vico summarised in the phrase *verum factum* supports the idea that history, or 'truth', is something created, and then is taken as fact to substantiate the main-stream historical narrative:

> Vico [...] observes that, "for the Latin, *verum* (the true) and *factum* (what is made) are interchangeable" [...], that "the true is precisely what is made" [...]. In other words, human beings make their own truths. (Price: 35)

This also means "that the men who are the agents in history are *in some sense* identical with the men who later write that history" (Pompa qtd. in Price: 35).[4] Flanagan avails himself of this idea; what is fake and what is true cannot necessarily be distinguished, or are one and the same. Hegemonial historiography is seen as real; in that sense it does have more power than a marginalised 'fake' story.

On the other hand, the criticism of looking "for truth in facts not in stories" (*GBF*: 20) implies that there is a different kind of truth to be found in stories that cannot be found in facts. Some reasons for this are excluded: The book as a fraud makes no sense, as the narrator says, because it does not confirm preconceptions (cf. 21); in other words, it is not sellable, contrary to the fake history Sid Hammet imbues the forged antique furniture with, namely, with the "type [of stories] that pay" to deliver a "sense of security – national, individual, spiritual" (*GBF*: 9). In doing so, the

4 Perhaps this explains the finale that Sid Hammet, the twentieth century narrator ends up being revealed as a persona of Gould in the Afterword (404). He is as much an agent in the history of Gould as Gould himself.

author is clearly taking a stab at hegemonic historiography that writes to clear away "a bad conscience about [those in] power and their wealth and everybody else's lack of it" (ibid.).

But the Professor da Silva accords it potential among the "inglorious [...] history of Australian literary frauds. 'That one area [...] in which Australia can rightly lay some claim to a global eminence'" (*GBF*: 21); referring to fakes that became national literature and so influenced the collective memory, or identity, of Australians.[5] It follows that fakes do have a certain power as Price substantiates in *History Made, History Imagined*:

> In other words, historical discourse creates a sense of communal identity, of shared experience, of a collective past. [... F]ictional discourse does not vitiate the veracity of the historical truth depicted; rather, fiction helps history realize the possibility of bringing into being a "standing-for" operation that broadens the horizons of the reader's understanding of the past. (Price: 29)

Price's position is endorsed when Sid Hammet accuses the Professor of taking history as "a pretext for a rueful fatalism about the present" (*GBF*: 20). This is where fiction steps in:

> Humankind must be able to "feel *unhistorically*", [Nietzsche] argues, if it is to be creative and forge new, life-giving values. But, he is careful to add, "the unhistorical and the historical are necessary in equal measure for the health of an individual, of a people and of a culture". (Price: 32)

The creation of a fictitious counter-narrative questions the established version and opens up new ways of debating history and, thus, enters the very current discussion about Indigenous history in Australia. In addition, the non-linear concept of time reflected in the novel,[6] the "book that never really started and never quite finished" (14), helps situate it in a kind of *continuous present* that is informed by a past still active in everyday perceptions and discussions of the issue.[7] It doesn't relegate it to a finished end and mirrors the on-going debate. As such *GBF* enters an arena in which history is still in the making.

Grounded in History – Truganini and Sal

> British policy and local Whites' actions almost annihilated Tasmania's Aborigines. From 1803 to 1847, settlement policies, murders, abductions, massacres, and incarceration reduced them from thousands to less than 100 "full-descent" Aborigines. (Madley: 104)

The legalised extermination of Aboriginal people, called the Black War, meant that after 1876 only 'mixed-race' survivors remained in Tasmania (cf. Madley: 78). This date became famous for the death of Truganini (c.1812–1876) who is seen as the last

5 I.e. *Durer: Innsbruck, 1495* by the invented poet Ern Malley.

6 Time itself is under discussion in *The Colonisation of Time* where Nanni speaks about colonial constructions of 'Aboriginal time' (59–84) according to which the lack of time-keeping according to European standards was also a marker of primitivity.

7 Holgate (4) arrives at the same conclusion: "In *Gould's Book of Fish*, the consistent overlapping between the novel's framing story involving Sid Hammet and Gould's narrative creates what Weir aptly describes as 'the postcolonial present,' given that there is no distinct separation between the fictional present and the historical past. By fusing time in a circular movement, the text serves to remind the reader that the postcolonial present is defined by its colonial past, that the human actions in Gould's time created consequences that are still being felt in the reader's time".

living 'full-descent' Aborigine in Tasmania.[8] Truganini was born in Van Diemen's Land as daughter to the chief Mangana and consequently is described as a 'queen in her own right' (cf. Cronin). By the age of 17 she had lost many of her relatives to European colonisation; her mother had been killed by sailors, her sister abducted by sealers, her uncle shot by a soldier, and her 'fiancé' murdered by wood-cutters. She acted as a guide for the Whites and as a spokesperson for her people (cf. Ryan and Smith). From the mid-1820s on, the beginning of the Black War, she remained under governmental supervision through Robinson (who also appears in *GBF*); and was forcibly relocated in 'settlements' where she watched many of her people die. Her skeleton was on display in museums for about half a century – against her express wish (cf. Shaw). The Tasmanian Government states on its website that knowledge about her is common: "Truganini is arguably the most well known name in Tasmanian women's history. Her life epitomises the story of European invasion and the clash of two disparate cultures" – as does the fictional life of Twopenny Sal.

In the foreground of numerous references to the Black War in *GBF*,[9] Twopenny Sal [Sal] becomes the contrasting figure which is read against Truganini: They share the same life-time;[10] Sal also is "obviously a Van Diemonian native" (*GBF*: 145), a 'full-descent' Aboriginal woman who grew up as daughter of Towtereh, the chief of the Port Davey people (cf. 219).[11] Her life also is marred by destructive encounters with Europeans. She is abducted by sealers while her child is killed, and watches her tribes-people and other Aborigines die (cf. 218). She falls prey to the civilising mission of a religious group, bartered away to a Quaker family by a sealer for "some axes & sugar" (145), then left "in the care" of the Commandant of the penal station "in exchange for a solemn promise of moral & spiritual enlightenment" (147). This civilising mission included being made to wear European clothes (cf. 323) and working as a "domestick" (147) in squalid living conditions (cf. 241) – very typical of the treatment of many generations of Aboriginal women. Just like Truganini's, Twopenny Sal's identity is changed, the Europeans rename her, among them Robinson. Just as some sources claim that Truganini had sexual relations with Robinson (cf. Brantlinger: 214), Sal is also depicted as an object of sexual desire or use (cf. *GBF*: 145).

Comparing the historical Truganini with Twopenny Sal shows that the fictional character represents typical elements of Aboriginal history as explained below. Beyond that, Sal also stands for the survival and activities of Aboriginal peoples in modern times:

> Aboriginal women's autobiographical histories are corporeal histories of the gendered and racialised body that has been placed under surveillance, disciplined, silenced and condemned to poverty. Their histories are of rape and abuse, childbearing and motherhood, extended family networks, the absence of male partners, arduous physical labour and political activism. *As such they embody the history of the making of modern Australia, and the survival of Aboriginal culture into the twenty-first century.* (Brewster: 5, emphasis added)

8 Cronin sets the record straight in a newspaper article from 1937: "Trucanine is usually credited as having been the last full blooded Tasmanian aborigine. [...] The melancholy distinction of being the last full-blooded Tasmanian aborigine belongs to 'Little Sal,' who died at American River some years after Trucanine".

9 The reader is confronted with the Black War directly in the opening chapter of Gould's narrative, the second chapter "The Kelpy".

10 While Twopenny Sal's age is never mentioned, the fact that *GBF* takes place at Sarah Island, the headquarters of Macquarie Harbour's penal settlement places them as adults in the same time-period.

11 Because Sal is depicted as his daughter, she also would be a queen by the same logic applied to Truganini. Incidentally, Towtereh also is a historical figure.

Regaining Control over Fertility, Motherhood, and Her Natural Heritage

Moving towards a more detailed analysis, the developments of Sal's character will be traced as they cover themes at the heart of a people's survival, such as regaining control over fertility, motherhood, and the cultural heritage.

In *GBF*, Robinson, historically the Protector of the Aborigines, names Twopenny Sal "Cleopatra" (323). "Robinson insisted on giving his charges European names [...]. Many of the new names express a patronizing racism – Neptune, Romeo, Queen Cleopatra, and so forth" (Brantlinger: 214). Cleopatra was the head of a subject nation. She is defined in common perception by using her alluring sexuality to manipulate those in power. However, more balanced historical accounts describe her as a politician under duress.[12] Beyond the sexual subjugation implied here, it is of importance to note that it was common to change the names of slaves (cf. Handler and Jacoby: 692–693), in essence, an action of depersonalising domination.

Robinson claims Sal danced obscenely and had sex with the devil (*GBF*: 218), a common idea of the time (cf. Liewald: 56). Robinson represents the dominant European rulers' view of the Aborigines as hellish, almost subhuman creatures.[13] The historical and the fictional narratives, however, both recount murder, rape, and slavery. Sal's story reflects this; her child is killed by having its brains bashed out by the sealers even though she offers herself in exchange for the baby. The sealers enslave her nonetheless (cf. *GBF*: 218). She acts as a protector of her family, but is powerless.

To add to her horrors, Sal reportedly killed the offspring between the sealers and herself (cf. 218), but the novel indicates that it is likely that she has kept what Gould thinks of as his baby (cf. 260, 323).[14] Historically, cases of infanticide were reported (cf. Gray et al.: 83–85). But this must be seen in the framework of a tribe caring for a child – probably such infants together with their mothers would not have had a chance of survival without tribal support. On an allegorical level, it shows the refusal to breed the white, to let foreignness invade Sal's family. The tribe or family are a thing apart and kept apart.[15] The novel presents the question of infanticide through Sal ambiguously (cf. 323).

Sal's past, so typical of European domination, takes a different turn in the novel. In her sexual encounters domination is undercut to a certain extent and dependencies (i.e. those of Aboriginals on Europeans) questioned. Sal is shown to act for herself within the imposed frame of male domination by Europeans, for example, when she decides to change sexual partners for better provisions (*GBF*: 193, 273) or when she steers the regular sexual encounters:

> The Mulatto would bend over & throw her skirt onto her back [...] & merely ask that [the Commandant] be quick, as she had matters to attend to. The Commandant would [...] feign a triumph they both knew to be illusory. (*GBF*: 245)

12 Note the parallel: "Robinson [...] called Truganini 'Lalla Rookh'" (Brantlinger: 214). "Lalla Rookh" is the title of an Oriental Romance with a princess of the same name as the heroine, published in 1817 by Moore.

13 For in-depth discussions, see Brantlinger who names various racial theories and publications in *Dark Vanishings*, and van Toorn who discusses "The Terrors of Terra Nullius: Gothicising and De-Gothicising Aboriginality".

14 Miscegenation, an obsession of the nineteenth century, is a subject Young looks at in detail in *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*.

15 But see chapter V. for inclusive actions of Sal.

Part of regaining control over her (sexual) life includes fertility,[16] and even beyond that motherhood. Twopenny Sal gives birth to at least one more child (cf. *GBF*: 260, 323) and adopts orphaned black children; they become "hers" even while she still lives in the settlement (cf. 193, 328). Her care extends beyond her biological offspring to tribal networks.[17] Instead of losing children, she gains children. Sal takes action in increments, first within a subjugating system, then outside of the system. In the end, Sal rejects the life the Europeans devised for her as a domestic servant and sexual worker. She leaves the settlement for the bush. There she reclaims her natural heritage by first going shoeless and then getting into almost "naked"/native garb together with her children, "three small girls & a young boy" (cf. *GBF*: 328).[18] She passes on her heritage to her offspring, including the 'mixed-race' baby. Gould calls them "[b]eautiful beyond compare" (328), thus attributing the height of perfection to them.

Brewster (42) describes that in recent generations women have started to occupy a more prominent role in communal as well as in family life and quotes Sally Morgan:

> In a lot of Aboriginal families, actually, the women are very strong. In many families I know they carry the weight of the family [...] In most Aboriginal families there is always at least one strong female character [...] who holds everything together.

The character developments of Sal mirror developments of Aboriginal people who are increasingly active in the public arena, moving out from under European domination and trying to regain their cultural heritage in the last decades. Sal is the representative, the mother or queen of the nation. She stands for these queen-like matriarchs (synecdoche) that work to sustain the community despite all the influences of colonialism.

The Science of Bones

Bones present a very current concern of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. To this day, they are still fighting for the sacred remains of their ancestors to be returned from collections in Australia and overseas.[19] *Entfremdete Körper: Rassismus als Leichenschändung* is an anthology by Wulf D. Hund that expounds on the racism inherent in the travesty of dominating even in death. "Underlying the Enlightenment's epistemology was natural history's taxonomic system of classification" (Holgate: 8). This drive for classification lead to the wide-spread collection of bones and skulls, also in Australia. The interpretation of measurements between skulls from different continents often served to justify claims of European superiority, which anchors Flanagan's critique in reality as will be shown.

16 This is also significant in the colonial context, venereal diseases transmitted to Aborigines initially through contact with the Europeans had the potential to impact fertility (one allusion to sexually transmitted diseases can be found in *GBF*: 245, remarkably, Sal is spared), this and other colonial influences also contributed to the fact that in the second half of the nineteenth century too few children were born to sustain the Aboriginal population numbers (cf. Gray et al.: 88–91).

17 Cf. Gray et al. (85–86) who relate that a wider sense of family is pervasive in Aboriginal societies, often with whole classes of people being called "mother", "father", etc.

18 The statistical quota of 3 males to 1 female in 1836 is reversed here (cf. Malley: 89).

19 Cf. http://arts.gov.au/indigenous/repatriation includes a list of the most current successes of the government programme to repatriate Indigenous sacred remains and objects.

In *The Enlightenment and the Origins of European Australia*, John Gascoigne lays out how blatantly unsuccessful British attempts at 'improving' the Aboriginal people had basically been given up by the 1840s (cf. 163). This occurred together with a shift towards a biological basis to explain racial differences, seeing them as "innate and, consequently, unlikely to be amenable to change – thus undercutting the whole project of 'improvement'" (164).[20] He mentions how, in 1822, Barron Field used Blumenbach's work in physical anthropology to argue that "all the Aborigines of Australia (including Van Diemen's Land) belonged to 'the degenerate Ethiopian character'" (165).[21] Gascoigne remarks that the racial overtones evident even then are apparent in Field's conclusion "that the Australians will never be civilized [...]" (ibid.). Gascoigne explains further that Samuel G. Morton, an American medical professor, gave physical anthropology an overtly racist dimension when he argued that the human races could be arranged in a hierarchical order according to the capacity of their skulls; in turn, John D. Lang, a Presbyterian minister and politician in Australia, referred favourably to Morton's opinion that some races were the outcome of "a process of decline" – hence, suggested Lang, "the extreme degeneracy and degradation of the Aborigines of Australia" (cf. Gascoigne 165). It is against the "historical context [...] of the violent movement of the frontier across nineteenth century Australia converging with the intellectual frontier of contemporary science" (Turnbull: 2) that these issues in *GBF* can be understood.

In *GBF*, this racist disdain through so-called enlightened and rationalist science is modelled by Lempriere, the doctor of the penal settlement. "The Surgeon [...] embraces the 'up-and-coming' field of phrenology in the belief that this will ensure his acceptance into the Royal Society" (Holgate: 8).[22] Turnbull describes the historical value of Aboriginal bodies in terms of their potential to enhance an individual scientific reputation. Besides detailing the precise monetary values of Aborigines' 'qualities' as 'specimens' (cf. 10), he also shows how these served as "a unique and persuasive currency, to obtain rare specimens of fauna [including body parts] from other parts of the globe", and even more so as Aboriginal bodies became a desirable commodity in dwindling supply (cf. 10). The close connection with the question of genocide is hard to overlook:

> There was also anxiety as to whether science could be provided with sufficient Aboriginal bodies of high racial purity to meet its needs. Since at least the 1830s it had been argued in scientific circles that the Aborigines were 'dying out' before the advance of European 'civilisation'; by the late 1860s it was seriously questioned whether, in a generation or so, the Aboriginal race might not be extinct.[23] (Turnbull: 3)

In the novel (cf. 215–221) and in historiography (cf. Gascoigne: 159), Robinson's civilising attempts coincide with the death of most of the Aborigines under his care.

20 In *GBF*, the sign on a grog shop summarises everything about the civilising scheme: "an exasperated white woman [...] scrubbing as hard as she could a black baby in a wooden tub who smiles back at her", the name of the shop is the *Labour in Vain* (cf. 76). This catches "the spirit of the island precisely" (77).

21 This nomination is based on Blumenbach's classification of the peoples of the world into five groups (without implying a racial hierarchy) drawing on comparative anatomical studies (cf. Gascoigne: 165). "Blumenbach's skull from the Caucasus region" (301) is referred to in *GBF*.

22 A historical parallel can be found, for instance, in Edward Ramsay, curator of the Australian Museum: He used Aboriginal bodies to receive recognition from European scientists, and was promised a nomination as a member of the Anthropological Society in 1883 (cf. Turnbull: 9).

23 For these connections, see the essay by Antje Kühnast: "'In the Interest of Science and of the Colony': Truganini und die Legende von den aussterbenden Rassen".

The tragedy gains momentum through the realisation that only then enough bodies are provided for Lempriere's scientific endeavours in phrenology (cf. 228).

> The pseudoscience of phrenology – the measuring of human skulls to determine people's character and mental capacity – is arguably the most grotesque facet of the novel.[24] [...] The Surgeon enthusiastically tells Gould of phrenology's capacity to help science 'MAKE GREAT ADVANCES IN ITS UNDERSTANDING OF HUMANITY IN ITS SUPERIOR & INFERIOR FORMS,' and 'PARTICULARLY IN REGARD TO VANQUISHED & INFERIOR RACES' (227).

Holgate doesn't mince words when he calls phrenology an attempted rationalisation of racism, and says that it represents the extreme consequences of European imperialism and the attempted genocide of the cultural Other (8).

Lempriere collects Aboriginal skulls and has between forty and seventy black heads "pickling" in barrels (cf. *GBF*: 223). He ends up being annoyed with the heads as they will not sink but keep talking back at him: "But in death as in life, the black heads remained a force with which to be reckoned" (*GBF*: 224, cf. 229, 233). Even in death, the novel suggests, the Aboriginal peoples have a voice that cannot be silenced. Jo Jones (cf. 119) emphasises that by making visible the remnants of traumatised bodies (including tagged and classified Aboriginal bones), there is the recognition by the novel of the incontestable reality of violence against the body, and of the reality of certain events, such as genocide, that occurred on the Tasmanian frontier.

While not condoning the reasoning, Turnbull makes a case that these nineteenth-century scientists understood themselves to be yielding to scientific progress and thus, ultimately, moral necessity by providing knowledge likely to serve the higher good (cf. 11–12). He concedes that a few of them, other benefits notwithstanding, might have acted "in the belief that the scientific knowledge to be gained from procuring and examining Aboriginal bodies would increase the happiness of the descendants of the Aborigines [...]" (13), especially in view of the widespread belief that the Aborigines were fast approaching extinction and could not be saved (cf. 11). Lempriere gives expression to this belief:

> 'I'LL NOT DON GRIEVING BLACK[25] FOR YOU – I AM A PATRIOT NATURALIST, &, LIKE ME, YOU WILL MAKE SACRIFICES FOR SCIENCE – FOR THE NATION.' [...] He yelled, how the past was the past, but his interest was the future & how overjoyed they ought be at the prospect of working together on such a mighty project of Science [...]. (*GBF*: 231)

Lempriere literally tries to beat his humanitarian reasoning into the (barrels with) Aboriginal heads with a stick (cf. 231) in a state of what Holgate calls a "mixture of barbarism and failed idealism" (7): "'I LOVE YOU–DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?' he was now blubbering. 'OUT OF LOVE–ONLY LOVE–DO I DO THIS FOR YOU'" (*GBF*: 232).

An instance of dramatic irony ensues when Gould takes Sal's advice in how to dispose of Lempriere's bones so Gould will not be charged for Lempriere's accidental death; Gould adds Lempriere's skull to the Aboriginal ones in the barrels that are

24 Historical realities taken up in *GBF* often seem unreal and absurd. Holgate (7) remarks, "it often seems as if historical realism has transgressed into the fantastic. [...] However, the actual conditions [...] were so brutal that Gould's fictionalised world plausibly passes as fact, the grotesque becoming an everyday reality".

25 This is an allusion to the so-called Black Armband view of history: "The battle over the Bicentenary [of Australia's first European settlement] was fought between those who wanted to celebrate Australian achievement and those whom they accused of imposing a hairshirt. The Black Armband denoted the excessive gloom that enveloped the national achievement" (Macintyre: 218).

sent to London for examination (*GBF*: 248). The skull is taken for that of a Tasmanian Aborigine and a scientific report claims it to be "an entirely separate species, one possibly [...] approaching the mere animal" (cf. 301304). Only in his death does Lempriere really become of "use to Civilisation" (231) – a future he envisioned for the Aboriginal skulls – by undermining the validity of biased science. Moreover, the "Surgeon is also stripped of his humanity and subsequently trapped forever in text" (Whitmore: 12) – a system of his own devising. In *GBF*, this story-line reverts the historical racist tragedy of Truganini's bones and all other Aboriginal bones that have been on display.[26] Holgate (8) gives the reversal in *GBF* a positive note:

> Yet the subtext of *Gould's Book of Fish* is that, despite the best efforts of European scientists, things that are distinctly Australian defy categorisation, and that they have an intrinsic value irrespective of European definition or assessment.

Meeting the Other

For the remainder of this paper, a closer look will be taken at the relationship between Gould and Sal and how the interactions between an Aboriginal woman and a White man are recast. First in terms of 'the Other', then on terms of shared decolonised space, all of which is permeated by a strong symbolism that lets the two people stand for the contact of disparate cultures.

Desire for Enlightenment

"The term of the Other springs from Lacanian psychoanalysis and can be understood as difference that rouses insatiable desire" (Liewald: 37). This is expressed as sexual desire in *GBF*. For example, Gould quotes a poem as written by Goethe in the heat of passion, "The inaccessible/ Here becomes reality / [...] / The Eternal Feminine / Draws us on" (192).[27] Before Gould even tries to catch up with Sal in the bush, literally and figuratively, he makes her into an abstract concept because he is not able to cope with the immediate person in front of him.

The Other is not understood, is exotic and erotic (cf. Liewald: 38, Kerr: 126–127). This is expressed through the *focalizer*, Gould; no inside view of Sal is given. Gould is enamoured with Sal, but uncomprehending of what she is: "the more I loved her, the more mysterious she became to me" (*GBF*: 274). The Other arouses passion while the 'same' (the white woman) leaves Gould limp (cf. 269).

In the novel, reason, a central tenet of the Enlightenment, is contrasted with love and feeling: "But the truth was that Twopenny Sal had somehow got into my head" (269, see also 192). Gould cannot get the object of his love out of his head, the seat of reason. He feels that something exists between Sal and him that renders him impotent towards the white woman. This makes him "feel all angry because it wasn't

26 Against her express wish her remains were kept for scientific purposes and on display for half a century, before being buried about 100 years after her death (cf. Ryan and Smith: n.p.).

27 From the last lines of Goethe's *Faust II* "Das Unzulängliche, / Hier wird's Ereignis; / [...] Das ewig Weibliche / zieht uns hinan".

rational & I wanted to please myself [...] & I knew it just wasn't going to happen & none of it stood up to Reason" (270).

The Enlightenment as 'the age of reason' stands for a quest for knowledge and for rational, scientific thought which is supposed to further the progress of humanity. However, "Enlightenment" is a euphemism used by Gould to describe sexual encounters. Gould is revealed as a European with repressed love who cannot name it directly. A further instance occurs when Gould chances across the journal of Matt Brady, a bushranger famed as an anarchist. Gould looks for anything "that might fundamentally threaten the System" of the penal colony and finds "nothing. Only page after page of more pathetick affirmations of love between a white man & a black woman" that leave him feeling "queasy" (*GBF*: 350). He overlooks that this is exactly what threatens "the System", or that he might even be so entrenched in this system that he hates so much. Gould cannot understand the meaning of the sentence: "To love is not safe" (ibid). A conception of a shared life that changes in the process, "the whole something other than either in the merge [...] growing old together" sounds like "nonsense" (ibid.) to him. Musings on love is all he finds, when he hoped to find a revolutionary plan. In consequence, his hope for substantial change is "extinguished" (351). But while he falls asleep in the love nest of Matt Brady and his Aboriginal partner, with "Brady's book of indigestible love" at his side, he comes to the point where he prepares himself "to abandon the shell of who & what I was, & metamorphose into something else" (352). The process which began to be set in motion when he sleeps with Sal (cf. 275) comes to a critical point here. This progression in *GBF* supports the notion that meaningful interaction with the Other calls one's own identity into question (cf. Kerr: 126–127):

> That day, the more I loved her [Sal], the more mysterious she became to me. I began with certainty; [...] I ended in doubt, both as to who she was &, even more shockingly, as to who I was. (*GBF*: 275)

However, "dancing the old Enlightenment [...] death & at the same time its transformation into new life" (*GBF*: 275) is pivotal. The orgiastic 'little death' means the loss of identity,[28] but by losing his white identity Gould has the chance of gaining a new kind of identity and the knowledge Sal possesses. While sleeping with Sal, Gould sees "in her face an impression of absence; it was perhaps this more than anything else that lent her – at least to me – a certain serene profundity. Her eyes seemed so full of wisdom" (*GBF*: 274) that he is excluded from (cf. 327). The novel rejects the Enlightenment concept of reason as a measure of progress by insisting on other forms of knowledge that need to be experienced (cf. Jones: 118–119).

The fictional narrative also seems to take up observations made by postcolonial theorists, such as the tension that exists between a sense of natural purity and a corrupted civilisation (Fanon qtd. in Liewald: 55): "When the whites feel that they have become mechanized, they turn to the men of color and ask them for a little human sustenance".

Robert J. C. Young shows how, according to one concept of the Enlightenment, the qualities of gender were transferred to race (i.e. masculine and feminine races), so that the desire of white males for 'black and yellow' females could be seen as con-

28 Cf. "petite mort, n". *OED*. The *OED* gives a quote by A. Koestler: "The corresponding self-transcending component in the sexual relation is [...] the depersonalization (*la petite mort*) of the orgasm".

sistent: "sexual difference has been translated into the sexual division of race, so the white male's object of desire has been relocated across the racial divide". In the 'natural order' of things, the white male remains at the top regarding gender and racial hierarchies (cf. 111–113).[29] But Gould is not on top, he ends up feeling childlike and terribly ashamed of his lack of knowledge (of the Other), not even having bothered to find out Sal's Aboriginal name – a realisation which is driven home when he is in close proximity to Sal, "nestling his nose into her back" (*GBF*: 327), partaking in the female warmth she provides.

It makes sense that Flanagan picks up Enlightenment ideas repeatedly in *GBF*, as from 1788 to 1850, when European settler Australia was largely formed, the worldview of the Enlightenment was highly influential (cf. Gascoigne: 169), and as similar concepts of progress still influence policy-making (cf. Jones: 115).

It is interesting therefore that *GBF* poses a contrast to the ideals of European Enlightenment of improvement (i.e. moral, civil, agrarian, and legal) and of civilisation that served as the primary justification for establishing dominion in Australia.[30] While the subject of European domination pervades *GBF*, the novel still reverses the historical ideals of improvement and civilisation: Enlightenment is not brought to the Aborigines but to the Europeans, and it is only possible through real, physical encounters with the Other. Who influences whom in the end broaches the issue of agency. Sal remains the more independent of the two; it is her actions and decisions that determine the encounters between Gould and herself.

The Enlightenment project, like all creeds, could be used for control as well as liberation (cf. Gascoigne: 14). Flanagan proposes in his novel that it can go both ways. But he also acknowledges the historical tragedy: The reality of loss hits only when the other (culture) is gone and it is too late. The protagonist recognises: "And I who had taken her so for granted, missed her much more than I thought possible" (*GBF*: 160).[31]

The Bonfire as a Site of Decolonisation

In the end, it is necessary to ask what new perspective *GBF*, as literary fiction, provides on historical events, as Doro Wiese does in her essay (cf. 135). She posits that this new perspective may allow readers to imagine and relate to stories that could have been part of Tasmania's past, as well as allowing for encounters that lead to a shift in power relations (cf. 135–136) towards an "inclusive present and future" (125). Flanagan conceives a storyline in which Aboriginal people allow Europeans into their world – in spite of the havoc the intruders wreak:[32]

29 Tacey (cf. 51) talks about the Australian psyche and says that Australian consciousness has constructed itself as masculine in the archetypal sense, but that this masculinity is exaggerated and hollow, and serves merely to mask the sense of inner weakness and vulnerability.

30 To not misrepresent Flanagan, it should be mentioned that various authors (e.g., Holgate: 10, Jones: 115, 127) point out correctly that Flanagan critiques the way Enlightenment ideas were misused to dominate and control, but that he still upholds liberal Enlightenment ideas.

31 This is also a dynamic that is active in science, especially anthropology and related fields, the dilemma of destroying what is being explored. This was also the case for Aboriginal skulls and bones, these so-called "desiderata" (from the Latin: objects of desire) gained in value once it had been understood that they would become rarer with the 'races dying' out (cf. Turnbull: 7–8).

32 Again, this is contrary to the historical fact of the European invasion of a *Terra Nullius* where Aboriginal people quite literally did not count, and obviously were not taken into consideration (cf. Mohanram: 142–143).

While they are in the bush,[33] Tracker Mark, a male Aborigine who is greatly disfigured by pox and cruelty inflicted by Europeans, reaches out, and touches Gould (cf. *GBF*: 324–325), "something that [Gould] would never have anticipated" (324). Sal inscribes cicatrices on Gould that symbolise "Palawa" (Aboriginals) and "Numminer" (ghosts/white men) (cf. 271), later she paints him with ochre, as if they "shared something that transcended our bodies & our histories" (333). But Gould is mystified by the meanings: "I only sensed that I knew none of it" (ibid.).

The bonfire Sal ignites is the place where she ascribes a possible new identity to Gould, she would allow Gould to change places with Tracker Mark who has died in the meantime. She makes him Palawa, while Tracker Mark is now Numminer: "'Long time before,' said she 'you were us.' I looked at her & then I couldn't look at her" (*GBF*: 340). Sal and Tracker Mark take Gould into their world, invite him in, and rename him to be part of it. But Gould is incapable of stepping across the cultural divide, of following the Aboriginal woman he loves "into the future" (340–341). This unhappy outcome evokes a sense of loss in the reader, of something that should have happened but did not. Wiese describes a further possible effect on the readers:

> By inventing that which cannot be found in the historical record, the novel *creates a space for the emergence of a collectivity* no longer existing or yet to come. It employs the powers of the false to evoke a "missing people". This power can convey a sense of what is eternally missing *in the present* [...]. (Wiese: 100, emphasis added)

This space for the emergence of a new collective story is indicated in *GBF* through the empty sheets in Brady's journal. Where "the clean, empty sheets" start (*GBF*: 353), Gould begins to write a new story (this is after he has given over his own story to the flames):

> *Orbis tertius,* my first words rendering that third circle in Latin. And then, finally, breaking apart the spider web of [...] memory in which I had become enshrouded [...]. (*GBF*: 353)

The memory of two separate and disparate circles, "Black man, full circle; white man, bisected circle" (*GBF*: 352), is not the foundation of the new story. "Life [is] the third circle" (ibid.) which undoes a memory (history) that hinders the view; Gould realises in naming the third circle that "everyone had the capacity to be someone [...] that Numminer were Palawa & Palawa Numminer" (353), this is where there's life.[34]

In *GBF*, the bonfire constitutes this shared space where memory is broken up and where both circles come together. In itself the bonfire carries a strong symbolic and emotional value for Tasmanian Aborigines because some researchers thought they were unable to start a fire and concluded that they must be even more primitive than other natives [and treated accordingly] (cf. Robinson's diary qtd. in Taylor: 2). So it is significant that Sal sets up the funeral pyre for Tracker Mark. She ignites a bonfire fuelled with registers, letter-books, any written documents that contain the official happenings of the penal settlement, and so she lets conceptions of progress

33 It is to be noted that the bush is firmly fixed as a place that formed the Australian identity and in collective memory also denotes the frontier of European progress (cf. Hansen and Griffiths: 31–32, 37).

34 What is proposed here is fairly typical; Tiffin writes about counter-discourses and that "Post-colonial cultures are inevitably hybridised, involving a dialectic relationship between European ontology and epistemology and the impulse to create or recreate independent local identity" (99).

and European civilisation go up in flames.[35] Sal's fire becomes so big it cannot be contained anymore (*GBF*: 334–340),[36] highlighting the power that is in the hands of an Aborigine. Gould adds his own book – the very book the readers have been immersed in for the last 338 pages – to the fire to be free from his own limited and limiting life story:

> Onto that pyre I threw so many, many words – that entire untrue literature of the past which had shackled & subjugated me [...] – that had so long denied me my free voice & the stories I needed to tell. (*GBF*: 339)

The bonfire becomes a meeting-point for the Aboriginal and the White were they deconstruct the dichotomies, individual conceptions of the world, and the official histories that limit them, which frees them to actually interact and to tell other stories. Deconstructing the past is central for imagining a future together that is not dominated by historical power relations:

> [R]econfiguring the past as 'shared space' is a vital part of a contemporary decolonising process that involves the contestation of national and cultural space in Australia. (Hall qtd. in Liewald: 138)

Price seems to be explaining the objective of *GBF* perfectly when he explains the role of fiction as making action possible in the future.

> The novel, as I conceive of it here, engages in *acts of annihilation* in that it actively destroys the object (in this case, history) as part of a larger project of action. Put differently, the acts of contemplation and perception required of the reader of such novels will bring about the rejection of history – both as actions in the past and as a narrative of the past – and will replace it with notions of a "project-in-course", a continuing unfolding of *narrative alternatives that make action for the future possible* [...]. (Price: 300, emphasis added)

Conclusion

"A novel like *Gould's Book of Fish* intervenes in its own way in the debate" over Aboriginal history (Wiese: 99). In constructing its poetic history Flanagan presents a counternarrative that challenges, debunks, or modifies the accepted narratives of history that are used today to justify political practices in Australia (cf. Price: 303). As shown in chapter two, Flanagan casts doubt upon the whole process of historiography, he "encourages his readers to think of the construction of history" and "whom specific histories benefit" (Whitmore: 14). Reading his work is not meant merely as an intellectual exercise; the individual stories of Sal, and with her of Gould, are in no way a truthful narration, in the sense of closely following all the historical facts, but they establish "the truth of narration that offers a different point of connection to the reader" (Wiese: 105). *GBF* is written 'in memoriam', to give a face to "all those faceless people who have no portraits, who only exist" as a "record, a list" (384). Literature provides a different mode of engagement than non-fiction, namely, a story to which

35 In *Living with Fire*, Hansen and Griffiths describe [bush]fire as the greatest elemental force shaping Australian settlement (v), a key force that has shaped the bush, and Australia itself as a continent of fire (29).

36 This is also an interesting reversal of history regarding the question of who ends who's world (cf. Liewald: 130). The Europeans are described in many history books as bringing the end for the Aborigines' world. But in *GBF* the apocalyptical "inferno" (*GBF*: 340) destroys the European's conception and the civilisation at hand, the penal settlement.

readers "might be able to relate because it makes an affective layer of experiences accessible, because it affects them and is affected by their reading" (Wiese: 106).

The 'faceless of history' are fleshed out in *GBF*; how the 'alternate histories' of an Aboriginal woman and of vociferous human remains are composed is examined in chapters three and four respectively. Chapter three looks at the progressive emancipation of Sal. She begins with more timid forms of protest and then completely throws off European control and regains an independent life. Sal stands for Aboriginal history, but she also has individual agency which does not allow glossing over her actions. She also represents contemporary Aboriginal communities that often have a strong maternal figure at the centre.

Chapter four showcases the implication of Aboriginal bodies under imperialist domination contrary to which the novel stages the collective protests of an Aboriginal headcount which leave a racist science of classification effectively "defeated" (*GBF*: 232). With repercussions on the acknowledgement of Aboriginal rights lasting into present times, undeniably, there is "symmetry & beauty" (*GBF*: 248) in the way 'science' backfires completely in the novel.

GBF does not confine itself to recounting historical events and giving them a liberated twist. Considering that "the novel cannot pass itself off as anything close to historiography" (Wiese: 104), *GBF* cannot "rewrite history", as was attributed to it in the thesis, but its role can be used to add marginalised perspectives and to rethink possible outcomes:

> [N]ovelists can give eyes and voice to the victims of history. They can open a second-order referential realm that examines and considers outcomes that were not realized. (Price: 29)

This twofold function is echoed in the novel:

> It sometimes seemed as if the author of the *Book of Fish,* the storyteller William Buelow Gould, had been born with a memory but neither experience nor history to account for it, and had spent forever after seeking to invent what didn't exist in the curious belief that his imagination might become his experience, *and thereby both explain and cure the problem of an inconsolable memory.* (*GBF*: 22–23, emphasis added)

At the heart of memory work there lies a belief in the relationship between remembering and transformation (cf. Kneebone: 76). In chapter five both of these aspects are inquired into: In the first section, the synecdochal [non-]relationship between Sal and Gould under the shadow of 'Enlightenment' is investigated. What Flanagan portrays, deliberately, is how Gould is caught in the impossibility of imagining a shared life between Aboriginal people and Whites, and the feeling of loss that follows. On the other hand, the novel still opens up the idea of change through real, physical encounters with the Other. In fact, the second section deals with the way *GBF* conceives of an alternate future – in a shared space, provided preconceived ideas are let go of.

GBF is a many-facetted novel whose careful references reveal Aboriginal history as a key subject. The fictional reversals of history re-establish Indigenous Australian people as agents in history, and not as passive victims caught in time, but as able to move beyond history and still existing hurt. However, the novel imagines Aboriginal people inviting the White man into their world, even if he runs up against

cultural barriers. This seems to be a naïve, simplistic idea of a shared, decolonised space. How much sharing really would be possible considering that many Aboriginal societies protect certain kinds of knowledge, knowledge they are not allowed to give to an outsider? Another limitation is evident in the dichotomy perpetuated by *GBF* by portraying Sal as independent and perfect only when she returns to a life unsullied by European influence.[37] This is uncomfortably close to images of the 'noble savage' in an 'original', unchanging state versus brutalised civilisation, a simplistic Enlightenment idea. No middle-ground and no perspective on what it means to be an Aboriginal person in modern times is given.

Still, *GBF* rightfully takes its place among the postcolonial literature that "can be seen as a movement against the ideology, eurocentrism, imperialism and stereotypical construction of the colonial Other" (Liewald: 33). Flanagan is writing, but not raging against the machine – in the hope that it opens up new avenues to any reader who admits along with Gould (*GBF*: 401): "For I am not reconciled to this world".

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37 Tiffin (99) notes that post-colonial literature has frequently been accompanied by the demand for a new or wholly recovered 'reality', free of all colonial taint, and says that such a demand is desirable and inevitable, but also alludes to the contradictions inherent in such a project.

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Rezensionen
Reviews

https://doi.org/10.35515/zfa/asj.32/2018.11

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Antonella Riem

A Gesture of Reconciliation. Partnership Studies in Australian Literature

Udine: Forum Edizioni, 2017. 209 pp. ISBN 9788884209955. EUR 24,00.

Studying Australian literature, in particular Patrick White's novels, has been Antonella Riem's concern since at least the 1980s while her interest in analytical terms like partnership and the creative word can be traced back to essays published in 2004 and 2014 respectively. Both are placed at the centre of the present study that addresses not only the novelist's *Voss* (1957), *The Aunt's Story* (1948) and *Memoirs of Many in One* (1986) but also works by Marcus Clark, Randolph Stow, Peter Carey and Blanche d'Alpuget, well-known representatives of the Australian literary canon of the twentieth century.

Riem has adopted a two-pronged approach that is grounded in theoretical considerations of Riane Eisler (whose *Afterword* concludes the book) and Raimon Panikkar, the one an anthropologist and social scholar, the other a philosopher and theologian, both professing scholarly disciplines that do not immediately suggest their interest in literary criticism. Riem, however, adopts criteria central in their work for her own project to work out a reading of the novels from an ethical and a performative angle. From the ethical point of view, Riem aims to establish whether the work of these white Australian writers grapples successfully with the problem of reconciliation that entails creating a partnership between human beings, man/woman and land, life and cosmos in the face of a dominating political, social and cultural system that had been established by the European colonisers. It determined their relations to the continent, its Indigenous people and also those who would deviate from 'values' such as degenerating and exploiting the 'other', perhaps even deriving pleasure from doing so, and generally, exerting total control over them: control expressed in manifold ways, among them a language that "articulates aggressiveness and a hierarchical attitude" with "positivist scientism prevail[ing]"; a language Panikkar calls scientistic. (16) Partnership, on the other hand, would be grounded in caring for the 'other', in feeling, sympathy, in humanity.

The performative aspect Riem's analyses pursue is linked to the function of language that writers employ, the creative word, as opposed to the scientistic, that relates to "the symbolic, poetic, epiphanic and spiritual power of language" and performs, in dialogical dialogue, "a process of constant transformation and renewal": a "joint search for the shared and the different", as Panikkar puts it (17).

Following her "Introduction" in which Riem briefly and intelligibly outlines the methodological foundation of her detailed character analyses, the main part of her study is introduced by analysing Clark's *For the Term of His Natural Life* as representing "the convict system [...] as a continual battle between partnership and dominator cultural paradigms" (29). The comprehensive second chapter on White's *Voss* and

The Aunt's Story and Stowe's *To the Islands* is a very-well documented presentation of their individual protagonists' "Journeying towards partnership", a journey motivated by their search for self, leaving behind their erstwhile lives ruled by the dominator system to establish a harmonious relationship between self, land and life and to experience the "unity of all things" (71).

In part two, "Shaping Reality in Dialogical Dialogue", attention is shifted from the primarily thematic approach to narratological and linguistic aspects – or 'from Eisler to Panikkar' – in Stowe's *The Merry-Go-Round in the Sea* and *Tourmaline*, Carey's *Bliss*, d'Alpuget's *Turtle Beach* and White's *Memoirs of Many in One*: all of them dense analyses of their authors' achievement to have made "dialogical dialogue [...] shape reality in positive, creative and constructive ways through the creative word". (117).

While *A Gesture of Reconciliation* presents altogether convincing readings of these Australian novels within the theoretical framework chosen, it invites two comments and raises a few questions. Repeated references to the study's theoretical underpinnings are not always necessary, since their function has been outlined from the beginning. More examples would have served to carry the argument of Carey's use of the creative word even more convincingly (131–132). And finally, gestures of reconciliation of the novels' (white) protagonists extended to Aboriginal people, are based on their (and their creators') perception of Indigeneity – which can be read as self-conceived; a projection. Would the inclusion of at least one Aboriginal text not have been helpful to avoid such a conclusion? As much as questioning d'Alpuget's simple confrontation between the western dominator paradigm and Malaysia's "more partnership oriented society"? (163). Nonetheless, Riem's minute analyses and consistent pursuit of her thesis – including the book's well-wrought structure – will be of interest to students and scholars of the twentieth century Australian novel.

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Martina Horáková

Inscribing Difference and Resistance. Indigenous Women's Personal Non-fiction and Life Writing in Australia and North America

Brno: Masarykova Univerzita Press, 2017. 146 pp. ISBN 978-80-210-8531-2. EUR 23.19.

"Is the whole book really written in such a strange style?", one of my colleagues remarked on having read excerpts of Australia's most popular autobiography, Sally Morgan's *My Place* (1987). This colleague took part in a university seminar on 'history, autobiography and gender' and the extract I chose to be read in the group was the only Indigenous Australian text and the only text, I hasten to add, that was not European. The strange style eventually confused all of my colleagues, at first because the text was conceived of as being too narrative, too dialogic and too fictional. Instead of having discussed the construction of gender and race in Morgan's book, we embarked on a discussion of genre, history writing and form: "How is it possible to remember so many dialogues?", asked one student. Another suggested reading it less as an autobiography than a piece of history. Yet another thought of it as a document of anti-colonialism that ought not be approached from a Eurocentric perspective.

Martina Horáková's study, *Inscribing Difference and Resistance,* tackles such questions and would have proven a helpful guide not merely to our discussion on genre and form but also to the different thematic facets encountering readers of Indigenous non-fiction. The book compares Indigenous texts from the United States, Canada and Australia and falls into two major sections – textual claims to difference, on the one hand, and resistance, on the other hand. The former claim is analysed in non-fictional texts by Paula Gunn Allen, Lee Maracle and Jackie Huggins that rely heavily on personal experiences yet are not autobiographies in the narrow sense. In the section on resistance, the author directs focus on the more autobiographical texts by Doris Pilkington, Shirley Sterling and Anna Lee Walters. While the more autobiographical texts seem less experimental in genre than their non-fictional counterparts, Horáková argues, they are similarly communal, exhibiting dialogic rather than individual selves and hearkening back to personal and family experiences. Drawing on Philippe Lejeune's theory of the autobiography as a conflation of the names of the author, the narrator and the protagonist[1], Horáková discusses the limitations of European genre definitions, preferring instead nomenclature that is more inclusive of concepts of inter-generational selves, the re-writing of history and the formation of theory – hence her reading of Indigenous autobiographies as life writing and non-fiction.

The author traces the complexity of Indigenous life writing through scriptotherapy (the efforts of individual and communal healing from colonial trauma through

1 Philippe Lejeune, *Le Pacte autobiographique*. Paris: Seuil, 1996, p. 26.

writing and publishing), the re-writing of history and the articulation of Indigenous feminism. Given the study's exclusive focus on women's texts, the actual relevance of gender becomes less evident for scriptotherapy and the rewriting of history. Although the author mentions particularly female experiences of colonialism described in the texts under study – for example strategies of naming white fathers as a means to highlight gendered aspects of colonialism – gender differences between Indigenous men's and women's life writing could have been analysed more rigorously. The ultimate strength of Horáková's study lies in her cogent analysis of reading Indigenous women's texts not primarily through feminist theory but to decipher them as autonomous formations of sovereign and utterly Indigenous forms of feminism. Drawing on the tensions between Indigenous female intellectuals and white feminists, the author understands Indigenous feminist tradition – however complex and innovative – as grounding in personal experiences of history and sociocultural contexts that function as the source of any Indigenous (feminist) theory. While the formation of feminism in Indigenous non-fiction is complex – ranging from conceptions of an Indigenous (pre-contact) gynaecocracy, the construction of female genealogy and claims to difference from white women – Indigenous feminism is deeply rooted in the autobiographical. As the author analyses, "in order to gain liberation, Native women [...] must critically examine the conditions of their lives and the internalization of racism and sexism. One of the ways to initiate this process is [...] to approach it from a deeply personal point of view and lived experience" (51). Indigenous feminism is neither considered merely oppositional to white feminism nor treated as homogeneous but seen as particularly *Indigenous* in the sense of relating to sovereignty, land rights and cultural difference, rendering Indigenous feminism also distinct from third world and Black (American) feminism.

The transnational comparison between writings from the United States, Canada and Australia also works extraordinarily well for the central arguments of re-writing colonial history, the tackling of trauma and theories of feminism. Anxious to differentiate between the individual sociocultural and historical contexts, Horáková shows the importance of comparative Indigenous studies to understand sovereignty and cultural difference in an intrinsically global colonial environment. *Inscribing Difference and Resistance* is a meticulous and careful study that evades simplistic dichotomies and moralising polemic but offers a nuanced, convincing and highly innovative reading of select Indigenous women's texts as exhibiting Indigenous feminist thought.

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Mandisi Majavu

Uncommodified Blackness. The African Male Experience in Australia and New Zealand

Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017. 146 pp. ISBN 978-3-319-51324-9. EUR 58.84.

"It is OK to be white", a motion put by Pauline Hanson and the One Nation party claims in October 2018.[1] At the same time, 'The Ramsay Centre for Western Civilisation' threatens to invade the critical academic discourse with its pro-'white' agenda,[2] and a senator blocks Australian Research Council grants for research into sociocultural and sociohistorical topics that were to examine, inter alia, issues of cultural and ethnic struggle.[3] While left-wing accounts criticize liberalism for this culmination of nationalist, outright racist instigations and propaganda, other groups see the cause for their day-to-day discriminatory experiences in an intensifying racist atmosphere in society. Amongst them are South-Sudanese Australians, who highlight the interweaving of "increased racialised crime reporting" and their immediate empirical knowledge of racist abuse.[4] Debates surrounding alleged African gang violence, in particular in Melbourne, and its media coverage are an ongoing debate in the outgoing year.[5] These occurrences make all the more evident the necessity of continuing the critical debate regarding the power and weight of 'whiteness' both in the discourse on Australian society and its everyday implementation in the lived experience of Australians.

A new perspective in this discourse is provided by Mandisi Majavu's *Uncommodified Blackness. The African Male Experience in Australia and New Zealand*. In eight chapters – with a "sensitivity to historical contest and political nuances" (12) – the author gives an account of the discrimination against Africans still prevalent 'down under'. He aims to defy the "theoretical silences in the works of white theorists", to oppose the repudiation of 'black scholarship' (23), and challenge assumptions reflecting "Eurocentric interpretations of African cultures as inherently sexist and oppressive" (25). Taking 'race' – "one of the central conceptual inventions of modernity" (11) – as a historical construct expressed in social action, Majavu applies David Theo Goldberg's definition of relational racisms to assess the ramifications of the colonial for the contemporary and to "show that racism still distributes advantages and privileges to whites, racism still pervades the exercise of political power, and in

1 Paul Karp: "'OK to be white'. Australian government senators condemn 'anti-white' racism", *The Guardian*, 15.10.2018.
2 Michael McGowan: "'Western tradition'. Ramsay Centre degree name change proposed in bid to win over academics", *The Guardian*, 16.10.2018.
3 Paul Karp: "'Knuckle-dragging philistines'. Labor targets Liberals for blocking arts grants", *The Guardian*, 26.10.2018.
4 Luke Henriques-Gomes: "South Sudanese-Australians report racial abuse intensified after 'African gangs' claims", *The Guardian*, 3.11.2018.
5 Sophie McNeill, Jeanavive McGregor, and Lucy Carter: "Media coverage of African offenders 'skewed', warns Melbourne chief judge", *ABC News*, 5.11.2018.

settler states like Australia and New Zealand, racism still shapes ideas about history, society and national identity" (11).

The *Introduction* lays out the background of the study, its methodological approach and theoretical goals by criticizing an "under-theorisation" (2) and narrowness in the discourse and the few studies available on the lived experience of Africans in the two countries. His relational analysis of 'whitening' commences with the British occupation. In the case of Australia, 'terra nullius' legitimated the expropriation of the Indigenous population; it also condoned genocidal actions involving colonial violence and the removal of Indigenous children – that is, biological and cultural 'whitening'. The ideology of 'White Australia' continues to inform the contemporary discourse because the "colonial objective to make Australia a white country and for white people still shapes the commonsense understanding of who belongs in Australia and who does not" (6). In New Zealand, where the Indigenous population was considered superior to the Indigenous Australians, disease and poor nutrition were outcomes of the British colonization and affected the decrease of Indigenous people. Here, too, an "unstated white immigrants only policy" (7) fostered immigration from European countries to 'whiten' society throughout the twentieth century.

In both countries a more (in Australia) or less (in New Zealand) explicit 'white only' immigration policy underlined the ideology of 'white supremacy' and aimed at creating a racially homogeneous society. 'Race' was firmly inscribed into everyday life, as part of personalities and institutions; 'whiteness' in the colonies enabled upward social mobility. Based on this ideology, for Majavu "all white people are complicit in larger social practices of racisms"; this was historically expressed "via a pseudo-scientific perspective" (9) and is perpetuated in the form of a 'white'-centred national self-image.

Following Goldberg, Majavu claims that there exists a "body of racist discourse that consists of evolving racist themes and changing racist presumptions, premises and representations", a "manifold of racisms" (9), and asserts that racism neither disappeared with the end of National Socialism or the termination of 'White Australia' nor is it a matter of 'overseas'. Referring to racism's origins in Enlightenment, "modern liberalism is inherently racist because liberalism and racism evolved together"; in other words, "whiteness is the unnamed socio-discursive order that has made the modern world as it is today" (11). Against the background of liberalism's historical association with 'white supremacy' and colonialism, its perpetuation of 'whiteness' functions as "ideals of colour-blindness, raceless world and culture" (39).

The methodology chapter *Conceptual Issues* expands on the utilization of the Africana Studies tradition to "disrupt[ ] the prevailing academic refugee discourse" and the continued association of Africans to a refugee background (15). "[I]nspired by Negritude" and its belief in a shared experience of "black people in the West" regarding racist discrimination (15), Majavu emphasizes the recognition of a common set of experiences in the 'black' diaspora "irrespective of nationality, class and gender" (16). It is based on the socio-historical construction of 'blackness' in Western cultures and the notion of 'white supremacy' as the implicit, underlying principle that resulted in modern race relations.

Majavu introduces his own theoretical concept: the 'uncommodified blackness image'. This targets the deconstruction of 'whiteness' imagining of a diasporic African and interrogates Western stereotypes that associate Africans with disease, pov-

erty and violent masculinity. 'Uncommodified blackness' is therefore the antithesis to 'blackness'. It was made "commodifiable in Western mainstream media and popular culture" through the aspiration for a 'white' ideal by "technologies of whiteness" (18) – expressed in bodily modifications, not least whitening creams, or in a 'destigmatising' of cultural elements, for instance hip-hop and basketball.

The theory chapter *The Genealogy and the Discursive Themes of the Uncommodified Blackness Image* further expands on the concept of 'uncommodified blackness' and its historical origins. Deconstructing the 'white' depiction of "African identity as the embodiment of warfare and the 'heart of darkness'" (29), it seeks to unveil the "racist infrahumanisation and the blatant racist dehumanization that Africans are subjected to in the West" (30). In Majavu's view, this dehumanization morally frames and allows a disrespectful, if not discriminating treatment of the concerned persons. The 'uncommodified blackness image' is based on, inter alia, Western traditions of simianization, racist defamation of African masculinity accompanied by a defeminization of African women, allegations of African backwardness with suspicions of 'black magic'.

From the earliest occurrences in the eighteenth century to contemporary reports about incidents during soccer games or costume parties, the trope of simianization continues to feed into the reception of 'the African' in Western societies. Added to this is the denigrating portrayal of African male sexuality; it, firstly, marks African men as deviant and, secondly, ascertains control over white women. The overemphasis on African men as "deviant, criminogenic, dangerous and fearsome" (34) informs a discourse of a threatening African male presence which, in turn, underlines the necessity of discipline and punishment in the case of (predominantly adolescent) African men. Moreover, the infrahumanization implicit in these discourses legitimises the dismissal of African viewpoints and necessities.

While African refugees as the "embodiment of poverty" (37) are considered the "worst social burden" (36) for European countries, their degrading portrayal fuels notions of European paternalism by perpetuating the trope of the 'white saviour'. Hence, in continuing the 'Othering' of Africans, the "category 'refugee' becomes a label of exclusion" (37) – marking the person as an outsider, an anomaly by emphasizing their 'not-belonging'. The discursive 'integration challenge' then serves as a euphemism for an ostensibly African cultural incompatibility and their pathologisation contributes to the discourse of contamination by declaring Africans carriers of disease.

The four core chapters apply the theoretical background to practice. The data analysis comprises interviews with eleven male participants aged 25 to 75 from Auckland and Melbourne (the cities with the largest number of Africans) who arrived from several African countries more than three years prior to the interviews via refugee programmes. *The Wizardry of Whiteness in White Australia* and *The Whiteness Regimes of Multiculturalism in Australia* discuss Majavu's project data for Australia. By means of four discussion strands in each chapter, the topics covered are 'being a refugee', 'personal encounters with racism and vicarious experience of racism', 'racist bullying', 'denial of racism', 'African masculinity', 'neighbourhood life', 'employment and workplace issues', and 'being Australian' (43, 59). These eight discursive topics are subsequently produced for the New Zealand context in *Technologies of the 'Kiwi' Selves* and *Africans on an 'English Farm in the Pacific'* (75, 93). In a comparative anal-

ysis, the *Conclusion: New Racism in Settler States* draws together the findings from Melbourne and Auckland and deduces general findings for the African experience down under.

As "Settler States of Whiteness" Australia and New Zealand entertain a discourse that "openly condemns discrimination" but subtly reproduces structures that sustain 'white normativity' (108) and, in more or less explicit ways, marginalise Africans. At the same time, 'race' continues to serve "as invisible borderline, demarcating who legitimately belongs or does not belong" (108). Discourses of multiculturalism and diversity deny "the existence of racism" (117); they serve as smokescreens to conceal that "racist infrahumanisation of Africans occurs within a discursive climate of multiculturalism" (111) and cover up the persistent strands of racist infrahumanisation. In a revision of causality, they furthermore serve as legitimations to hold Africans accountable for their socioeconomic status by transferring the blame for the failure of integration to their alleged lack of will and effort to integrate.

This, in turn, leads to the allegations that Africans are uneducated and apathetic and need to be led out of their 'misery' by white paternalism. The label 'refugee', which perpetually sticks to Africans from diverse migratory backgrounds, further emphasizes the derogatory image of Africans as poor, helpless and in need of guidance. They are fixed at an intermediate state: they are at the same time discredited as infantile and uneducated but also as overly physical and threatening. While the child stereotype devalues the African adult, the denial of youth and innocence to African youngsters and adolescents emphasizes their ascribed capabilities to hurt societal structures as criminal and subversive deviants. The 'African male experience' is furthermore shaped by shifting power relations within the private sphere: African men see their masculinity challenged by governmental stipulations and, against the background of idealised white masculinity, blame their anxiety on their women. In contrast to 'white' patriarchy – in Western societies commonly expressed in the public sphere – African men experience difficulties to assert themselves publicly; this is due to an inaccessible job market and the disparaging power of the "dehumanising image of uncommodified blackness" (121). 'Whiteness' asserts itself as the norm: prepared in school and perpetuated in everyday media representation, the image of the Africans is shaped by long-standing stereotypes that associate Africans with "violence, nescience, philistinism", poverty and lack of education (113). In this, "whites enjoy a deep, albeit largely unconscious sense of belonging" (115) that finds expression in questions regarding the 'real' origins of individuals.

The ostracizing of Africans constitutes a prolongation of the historical efforts to maintain Australia and New Zealand as racially homogeneous societies. While their "societal structures operate to exclude, inferiorise and Other Africans" (120) on a daily basis, the "twenty-first-century version of racism is invisible" (48) and, in a rather subtle manner, finds expression in "the celebration of whiteness" (54). In a society shaped by 'whiteness' as the norm, Africans are marked as "visible migrants" (71) and thus became the eternal epitome of the 'Other', the unsteadily, the newly arrived, the stereotyped and marginalised.

Mandisi Majavu's study provides a crucial and relevant insight into a lesser discussed facet of Australian racisms. However, the meticulous reader might be vexed by the overly redundant adduction of Kevin Andrews' denial of the African's immigration ability in at least four almost identical instances (35, 44, 53, and 58). Moreover,

the critical historian finds some weaknesses in the study's colonialistic derivation. While Majavu rightfully bases his theoretical analysis on the history of Western stereotypes, the assumption of an unbroken line of discrimination would have been challenged had the author considered some pertinent sources in his otherwise extensive literature corpus. For the Australian context, most of all the absence of Cassandra Pybus' *Black Founders* is unfortunate. Its findings are evidence of the blurriness of 'colour racism' in Botany Bay and could have forestalled that Majavu's initially presented recognition of a "manifold of racisms" (9) ultimately blur into a mere 'white'-versus-'black' juxtaposition. One of the participants of the interview claimed his Australianness on the fact that "the real Australians are black" (73) – regrettably, this assertion is not taken as an occasion to collapse the European-African antagonism in favour of a more complex dissection of 'blackness' in the Australian colonies.

Certainly, the racism of mainstream Australia has its origins in the sociocultural baggage of the first settlers, and, undoubtedly, 'whiteness' was formalized as a crucial characteristic of Australianness in the Commonwealth of Australia. Nevertheless, the boundaries of 'whiteness' even in the ranks of Europeans were far from clear-cut. Considering the experience of Southern Europeans until far into the twentieth century, the claim that "all Europeans were viewed as white in colonial settings" (8) is simplistic and inaccurate (not only) for the Australian context. It was moreover, the racialization of the English working class that led to a purging of its criminal elements to the penal colony New Holland. Looking at the history of the working class in Australia, it becomes obvious, that crucial efforts had to be made by the European workers to establish their 'whiteness'. During the formative period of the labour movement, the working class had to enforce the 'racist symbolic capital' (granted to their convict ancestors, inter alia, in the punitive expeditions and other attacks on Indigenous Australians) against their capitalistic bosses who preferred to recruit Asian immigrants at lower wages and were deemed 'race traitors' by the increasingly nationalist labour movement of the late nineteenth century.

However, these points of critique are rather meant to emphasize the malleability of 'whiteness' and its delimitations throughout the history of 'White Australia'. They should not diminish Majavu's findings concerning the lived experience of Africans in Australia and New Zealand nor should they discourage the reader from the perusal of an important insight into the historical origins and contemporary implications of the continued discriminatory processes in Australia (and New Zealand).[6]

6 A mayor annoyance – besides the prohibitive pricing of 40 Euro cents per page – not to be blamed on the author is the layout of the book. The abstract and the keywords at the beginning of each chapter make the book seem discerped, like a collection of essays. This is undoubtedly owed to the advance of online publication and eBooks that cater to the asinine idea that one could virtually root out an isolated chapter from any elaborate, consecutive, self-contained study.

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Regina Ganter

The Contest for Aboriginal Souls. European Missionary Agendas in Australia

Canberra: ANU Press and Aboriginal History Inc., 2018. 248 + x pp.
ISBN: 9781760462048. AUD 50.

Regina Ganter's book *The Contest for Aboriginal Souls. European Missionary Agendas in Australia* focuses on German-speaking missions and missionaries, their agendas and impact on Indigenous people. The author draws chiefly on primary source material in German that was not previously accessible in English. The book is furthermore a companion to the author's voluminous and detailed digital publication "German Missionaries in Australia – A Web-Directory of Intercultural Encounters". The major contribution of this book is the comparison of the patterns of different German-speaking missionaries and missions, the translations and thematic groupings of mission records, including analyses of interests that motivated settlers, governments, Indigenous people and individual missionaries.

In Australia, missionary writings were among the first records of contact and to date are making significant contributions to anthropology and ethnography as well as native title claims. The interest in missions has given rise to rather contradictory claims. On the one hand, missions aimed at civilising and assimilating Indigenous people, they assisted the erosion of traditional social structures, they confined Aboriginal people with paternalistic prohibitions and imprisonments and to date keep glossing over their sexual assaults. On the other hand, missions and missionaries are acknowledged as having protected the survival of Indigenous people and their languages against the violence of settler-colonialism, from blackbirding and mass murder. As Regina Ganter claims,

> Under detailed historical investigation, all of these claims are true *to some extent*. In the process of this research, I have gained respect as well as empathy for the missionaries themselves, who were trained in theology to be thrown into force-fields of political manoeuvring; who came to look after souls and were left with the care of bodies. (xi, emphasis in original).

From the nineteenth century onwards, missions entered sites of conflict and settler violence. They struggled with problems of establishing sedentary communities, the much-needed supply of food and accommodation, while in the eyes of their funding bodies their success was judged solely by numbers of baptisms of Indigenous people. Throughout her book Regina Ganter elegantly navigates between these international geopolitical trends and Australian policies while also paying sufficient attention to individuals caught in between.

In Chapter 1, "The Quest for Ecclesiastical Territory – Catholics and Protestants", Ganter engages in the early competitive denominational efforts of missionaries in settler towns after the liberalising Church Act of 1836. The Catholic Church, rein-

venting itself at that time, reached out to the world with new monastic societies and the inclusion of laity in evangelising mission. At the time, *The Society of the Catholic Apostolate* (also known as the *Pallottines*) and the *Missionaries of the Sacred Heart* became particularly active in the Kimberley and the Northern Territory. They created a solid Catholic institutional presence for decades to come. Furthermore, two groups of German Protestant missionaries arrived in the Moreton Bay region and South Australia. The *Zion Hill Mission* and the *Dresden Mission Society* were expected to form the 'Moravian model'. Thus, from the beginning, there was territorial competition, between Benedictines and other Catholics; between Catholics and Protestants, among Protestants themselves, and between English-speaking and German-speaking missions (22).

Chapter 2, "Protestants Divided", presents further detail on how different German confessional orientations and missionary training colleges resulted in tensions in the missions. Splintering mission efforts were influenced by confessional disputes and personal clashes rather than a common purpose. (A united Lutheran church in Australia was formed in 1966.)

Chapter 3, "Empires of Faith", then highlights the relevance of missions as strategic stepping-stones into further territories. It engages in the late nineteenth century colonial acquisitions worldwide and the following competitive increase in missions that lasted through World War I and II. Interestingly, upon carving further into the ecclesiastical territory of northern Australia, Christian missionaries met the so far unacknowledged fact that Indigenous people were already exposed to monotheistic beliefs. Islam had been brought in through trade routes since the seventh century. Likewise, spheres of religious influence had to be renegotiated also in the northwest during the prime of the pearling industry, as it attracted more Asian workers.

With the anti-German sentiment growing during World War I, many families and even townships had to anglicise their names (64). German missions were under major reorganisation to accommodate the concerns of military intelligence. During World War II the whole north was designated a strategically sensitive region (70).

The subsequent end of the mission period coincided with the changing *Zeitgeist* and growing postcolonial movements around the world (72). "There were the citizen aspirations of an increasingly mixed and educated Indigenous population who no longer fitted into the protective mission paradigm" (74). Government's assimilation policy was "clawing back control over Aboriginal people from the churches" by sending their own teachers to the missions (74–75). And there was the renewal within the churches themselves (74).

After these historical insights into the rise and fall of German missions in Australia, Chapter 4, "The Subtle Ontology of Power", turns towards a number of curious factors that facilitated the Christian contest for Aboriginal souls. In contrast to other settlers, missionaries openly engaged with the supernatural and offered "new ways of harnessing and directing preternatural forces" (81). As Ganter notices, "prayer, blessings and worship, with altar boys and priests dressed for a carefully orchestrated ceremony, were easily intelligible to peoples already used to staged rituals and incantations in an attempt to influence the supramaterial world" (81). Missionaries were respected for the power over the non-material world, for the written information from which their knowledge arose, and for the impressive arsenal of rituals and related objects (81). Moreover, missionaries could sometimes heal (e.g.,

use smallpox vaccine, snake oil, blessed water), they obeyed food taboos, used icons inscribed with spiritual powers, and appealed to the spirit world to achieve desired outcomes (96). God's ability to punish also echoed with Indigenous practices of distance killings (97). The missionary convention of referring to each other by symbolic kinship terms (Father, Brother, Sister, Mother) also fitted well with Indigenous expectations of the assimilation of strangers (82, 88). Baptism was a public ritual revolving around the bestowal of a name to signify belonging and relationship with the family of Christ, which was a new world of meaning and influence that devalued age as a marker of respect.

However, the establishment of relationships between missionaries and Indigenous people did not go smoothly. Polygamy was one of the major impediments to adult baptism and one of many ways in which missionary marriage rules deeply disturbed Indigenous social relationships (93–94). Another object of serious reflection to some Aboriginal people was the image of Jesus nailed to the cross: Would it be the way they will be punished as well (97–98)? This fear was not easily reconciled with the message of Jesus' love and the image of a potentially vengeful God (98). Along these lines, Ganter also presents several stories, when the signs of divine providence were used to impress Indigenous people with the strength of the superior force. However, she equally shows how Catholic missionaries, for example, conveniently ignored signs that told them to abandon their plans for missions, such as fever and diarrhoea, getting bogged in a swamp, encounters with snakes or even the monster-birth of a one-eyed goat.

Such "cultural double binds" (especially of burying and marrying traditions) complicated the lives of all mission residents. Missionaries could punish Aboriginal people if they followed traditional obligations, while not meeting such expectations could end in a punishment from the elders (98–99), another reason for why missionaries struggled to recruit Indigenous intermediaries.

Chapter 5, "Engaging with Missionaries", presents these often-ignored local intermediaries in detail. It addresses several anecdotal misunderstandings between missionaries and Indigenous people, especially when missionaries' teachings and their assumptions of cultural superiority were questioned.

Thus, and despite the many resonances of Christian teachings and rituals with Aboriginal cultural practices (discussed in Chapter 4), a middle ground was rarely created. Rather, Indigenous people often felt that "Jesus was always on the team of the white people" (119). Some missions were successful to have a native evangelist who helped convey interpretations across language and cultural barriers. One of the key cultural intermediaries in the Kimberley, for example, was the Aboriginal-Filipino Catholic family of Agnes and Thomas Puertollano. Their story highlights how Filipino lay helpers were instrumental in the establishment of relationships between the mission and Indigenous society, and also of how the discriminating policies of the state government problematized their efforts.

Chapter 6, "The Trials of Missionary Life", then takes a closer look at missionaries themselves. Who accepted the call into mission service and what were their motivations? "The lure of adventure was surely a factor in recruiting young men into denominational development aid" (147). Mission publications, newsletters and autobiographies, exoticized the encounter with foreign worlds, the outback and Aboriginality. The everyday life of missionaries, on the other hand, was not a com-

fortable adventure. "The remote mission workers had to rely on each other for economic, social and emotional support" (158). They faced tropical diseases, deaths of their spouses or children, natural disasters, lack of privacy, social isolation and short supplies of virtually everything. Under such circumstances, "faith needs, after all, to be taken seriously if we wish to understand what powered the mission movement" (169).

Finally, in Chapter 7, "The German Differences", Ganter engages with the 'German flavour' of missions supervised by Germans (176). From German festivities (e.g. St. Martin) and popular hymns to the preparations of specific foods (e.g. *Sauerkraut*, *Mettwurst* or *Lebkuchen*) to the layout of missions in resemblance of German rural villages. Rather than learning English, German missionaries acquired local languages. Here Ganter points to differences in English and German intellectual traditions and underlying approaches to distant cultures (functionalist evolutionary thought vs. the interactionist *Kulturkreis* approach), which also facilitated differing approaches to Aboriginal people (188–191).

Meanwhile, physical punishment is one of the most accentuated criticisms for German missionaries. Ingrained in the idea of the German upbringing, it became an extension of colonial violence and was an expression of new hierarchy and authority (193–194). Which is why, "it seems difficult to fashion a reconciliatory mission history that takes into honest account the intentions, processes and outcomes at play" (211), also in the light of the dysfunctions of missions (e.g. child abuse, sexual misdemeanour).

Regina Ganter has done an incredibly meticulous (and often detective) work in sorting through a massive amount of detailed records of German-speaking missionaries. This book has its clear aim – the focus on German missionaries in Australia – and it attends to it. *The Contest for Aboriginal Souls* makes a significant contribution to studies in Australian history, Aboriginal culture, anthropology, Christian missions, and European colonialism. Together with the recently released edited volume – Peterson and Kenny's "German Ethnography in Australia"[1] – Regina Ganter's book is a timely addition to the gradual translations of recorded Australian history left in German.

1 Nicolas Peterson and Anna Kenny, eds., 2017. *German Ethnography in Australia*. Canberra: Australian National University Press.

Nachruf
Obituary

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Frank Schulze-Engler
Frankfurt

In Memory of a Roving Scholar

Geoff Davis (1943 – 2018)

In the early hours of 22nd November, 2018, three days before his 75th birthday, our teacher, colleague and friend Prof. Dr. Geoffrey V. Davis died in Aachen. He had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer a few weeks before; he underwent an operation that could not save his life, and after a short, hard battle lost out against a deadly antagonist that had taken him by surprise and plucked him out of an exceptional vita activa led with seemingly indomitable energy also years after his retirement. Our thoughts are with his wife Ingrid, his life companion of many decades, who was also by his side during his last weeks.

One of many vivid memories I have of Geoff Davis is that of a lecture on the exploits of the 'roving reporter' Egon Erwin Kisch in Australia delivered at the Conference of the Association for the Study of the New Literatures in English (ASNEL) in Kiel in 2005 (and published under the telling title "'One step on Australian soil and you're history': Nicholas Hasluck's novel *Our Man K.*, Egon Erwin Kisch and the White Australia Policy" in 2007). With his inimitable style combining scholarly erudition, political engagement and ironical humour, Geoff quickly had the audience roaring at the inept attempts of befuddled politicians to keep Australia safe from the 'communist threat' they saw embodied in the outspoken critic of Nazi Germany, and made the former marvel at Kisch's transnational engagement for social justice and his indomitable courage (having been banned from setting foot on Australian soil, Kisch jumped from the ship that had brought him to Melbourne, broke his leg after a six-meter fall, and later successfully engaged in a legal battle for his right to go on a nationwide anti-war lecture tour).

The connection Geoff set up in that talk between German literary history and Australian politics was by no means fortuitous; nor was his interest in social justice and the political role of literature and culture in countries like South Africa. Geoff actually entered academia through German studies; he wrote his PhD on the work of Arnold Zweig, the socialist-humanist writer persecuted by the Nazi regime who emigrated to Palestine and returned to the German Democratic Republic after the end of World War II. Geoff retained a vivid interest in German literature throughout his academic career which soon after came to focus on a quite different province of world literature, however.

Born in Birmingham in 1943 and educated at Oxford, Geoff Davis belonged to an initially quite small group of pioneer scholars who sought to establish the study of what was then still called "Commonwealth Literature" in Germany and internationally. His influence in and impact on this rapidly expanding field soon extended far beyond the position of foreign language lecturer that he held at Aachen University from 1966 onwards. He was one of the founders of the Association for the Study of the New Literatures in English (GNEL/ASNEL) in 1989 and played a major role in

the Association of Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies both on a European level (he was Chair of EACLALS from 2002–2008 and from 2011–2014) and as International Chair of ACLALS from 2007–2010. He was co-editor of *Cross/Cultures: Readings in Post/Colonial Literatures and Cultures in English*, easily the most important and influential book series published in the field, and of *MATATU: Journal for African Culture and Society*, and author of a truly astonishing number of edited volumes, special issues and essays on African, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, South Asian, indigenous and Black and Asian British literatures and cultures. The two-volume *Festschrift Engaging with Literature of Commitment* (Rodopi 2012) pays ample tribute to the extraordinary contribution that Geoff, the "worldly scholar" (as the subtitle of the second volume aptly put it) had made to postcolonial anglophone literary and cultural studies – and testifies to a truly worldwide network of friends, colleagues and mentees that he built up during his long academic career. This career had by no means ended with his retirement; if anything, he had seemed to have become even more energetic, taking on new commitments as editor, conference organizer, and keynote speaker, and continuing his innumerable journeys across the globe that had already turned him into a legendary roving scholar in the 1980s.

In all these years, Geoff Davis truly kept a window onto the world open for many of us in German academia. His cosmopolitan academic interests and his firm commitment to the social responsibility of literature as well as of literary and cultural studies constantly reminded his audiences and readers of the far-flung transcultural and transnational connections linking up Anglophone literatures and cultures across the globe – and of the extraordinary diversity of local and regional contexts in which these literatures have their being in a globalized world. As Arundhati Roy might put it, there is now a Geoff-shaped hole in the universe for all those privileged to have known and to have worked with him. But there is also an inspiring legacy of a scholarly life lived to the full, based on deep and loyal friendship, untiring conviviality and burning intellectual engagement. This we will need to recall as we grope towards understanding our loss.

This text first appeared in *ACOLIT 75* (2018): 2–3

Informationen
Information

Die Herausgeberin der Sonderausgabe | The Guest Editor

Enlightened Powers

American, French, and British Interactions in Botany Bay, 1788–1800

Dr. **Therese-Marie Meyer** is a lecturer in English Literature at Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg in Germany. She is the author of *Where Fiction Ends* (2006), an analysis of the textual construction of fictional author identities in Canadian and Australian literary scandals, and the editor of a German translation of Flinder's journal of the circumnavigation of Australia. She chaired the German Association of Australian Studies in 2013/14. Her research interests include (post)colonial literatures in English, especially from the Caribbean, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, and contemporary British literature. Her current project is a genre study of the Australian convict novel.

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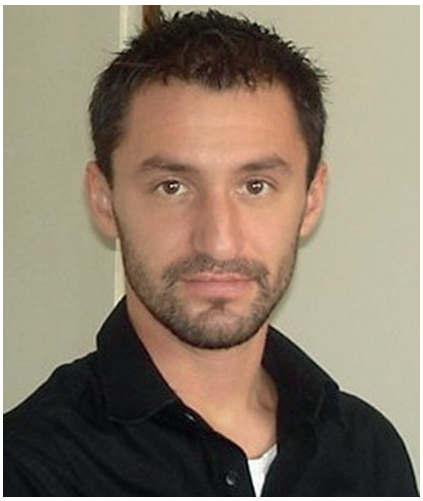
Die Herausgeber | The Editors

Dr. **Henriette von Holleuffer** is a historian. She holds a PhD and M.A. from the University of Hamburg. Her academic research focuses on Australian (Commonwealth) history and the global displacement of refugees. In the past she has worked as a journalist in Sydney, as a research assistant at the University of Hamburg, and as a Public Relations adviser at the Ministry of Nature and Conservation Kiel. She held a DAAD research scholarship for Australia. Henriette has published work on emigration – *Zwischen Fremde und Fremde: Displaced Persons in Australien, den USA und Kanada 1946–1952* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2nd. ed. 2005) – and Australian history. Her latest book publication is the German edition of *Edward John Eyre's Journals of Expeditions of Discovery into Central Australia/ Expeditionen in den Westen Australiens* (Edition Erdmann 2016). The author is in the executive board of the German Association for Australian Studies. She is editor of the web-published Newsletter of the GASt and co-editor of this journal. Contact: adfonteshistory@aol.com



Dr. **Oliver Haag** holds a PhD from the University of Edinburgh and a M.A. from the University of Vienna. He is Research Fellow at Linnaeus University, Växjö, and Research Associate at the University of Edinburgh. His research interests are in the areas of European reception of Indigenous New Zealand and Australian literatures, the history of publishing and critical race and whiteness theory. Oliver has authored numerous articles in journals, such as *Continuum*, *National Identities* and *Antipodes*. He is co-editor of *The Persistence of Race from the Wilhelmine Empire to National Socialism* (Berghahn, 2017) and of *Ngapartji Ngapartji* (Australian National University Press, 2014). Contact: ohaag@staffmail.ed.ac.uk

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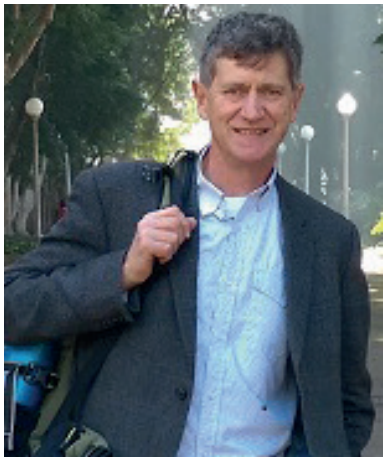
Dr. **Stefanie Affeldt** studied Social Economics at the University of Hamburg and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from the Macquarie University, Sydney. After her post-graduate studies in Cultural and Social History at the University of Essex, she obtained her doctorate in (Historical) Sociology from the University of Hamburg. Her most recent publication, *Consuming Whiteness. Australian Racism and the ›White Sugar‹ Campaign*, examines the entanglement of the political history of Australian nation building with economic, cultural, and social processes. It investigates mechanism of inclusion and exclusion as well as questions of socio-political organisation in the settler society, with a particular interest in the role of mass media and popular culture in the everyday (re)production of ideology. She is a Research Fellow at the Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Transcultural Studies, with a project about multiculturality and racist conflict in north-western Australia: *›Exception or Exemption‹? The Broome Pearling Industry and the White Australia Policy*.

Danielle Norberg is currently completing a Master's in Literary and Cultural Theory at Tübingen University. Previously she did Intercultural European and American Studies with a minor in Psychology at Halle University. Her research on *'The Remains of Decency': Footwear in the Early Australian Settlement* (Bachelor's thesis) was awarded a prize by the Association for Australian Studies. Her research interests include travel literature, material culture, cultural practices relating to spaces and bodies.

Dr. **Lina Pranaitytė-Wergin** is a sociocultural anthropologist. Her research topics include gifts, inalienation, Christianity, food and recipes in Australia and Europe. She has gained her PhD at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle (Saale), where she has ethnographically and theoretically researched reciprocity, beliefs and death practices among Lithuanian Catholics.

Professor **Cassandra Pybus** is a prizewinning author of a dozen books of nonfiction, published in North America, Britain and Australia. As an independent scholar and writer Cassandra has held a number of distinguished academic fellowships. She was an Australian Research Council Professorial Fellow in History between 2000 and 2013 and she has also been a Fulbright Professor in Australian Studies at Georgetown University DC, Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Institute of Historical Studies University of Texas and Leverhulme Visiting Professor in History at King's College, London. These days she lives in the southeast corner of the island of Tasmania.

Professor **Dieter Riemenschneider** taught Commonwealth literature / English Language Literatures at Goethe University, Frankfurt (1971–1999). His main research areas are Indian English, Australian Aboriginal and New Zealand / Aotearoan Māori literature and culture. He edited *Postcolonial Theory: The Emergence of a Critical Discourse: A Selected and Annotated Bibliography* (2004 & 2006); *Wildes Licht, a bilingual anthology of poems from Aotearoa New Zealand* (2010 & 2012); and *Gentle Round the Curves, a collection of his essays on Indian-English literature* (2016). Forthcoming publications discuss "Aotearoa New Zealand Literature in Germany" and "Southern Precarity and its Literary Representations".



Dr. **Mitchell Rolls** is senior lecturer in the School of Humanities, University of Tasmania, Hobart, and president of the International Australian Studies Association. With a background in cultural anthropology, he works across disciplines to draw attention to the contextual subtleties underlying contemporary cultural constructions, identity politics, relationships to place and related exigencies. He has published widely on these issues. His most recent monographs are *Travelling Home, Walkabout Magazine and Mid-Twentieth-Century Australia* (Anthem Press, 2016, co-authored with Associate Professor Anna Johnston), and *Australian Indigenous Studies: Research and Practice* (Peter Lang, 2016, co-authored with Drs Terry Moore, Carol Pybus and David Moltow).

Professor **Frank Schulze-Engler** studied English, History and Political Science in Freiburg and Frankfurt/Main. In 1990 he obtained his PhD at Goethe University Frankfurt with a thesis on *Reluctant Intellectuals: Writers, Literature and Society in East Africa 1960–1980* (published in German). In 2001 he obtained his second PhD (Habilitation) in English Studies at the Faculty of Modern Languages, Goethe University Frankfurt with a thesis on *Shared Worlds: Experiences of Globalized Modernity in African, Asian and Caribbean Literatures in English*. From 1999 to 2001 he was a temporary professor at the English Department of Hanover University. In 2002 he was appointed professor of New Anglophone Literatures and Cultures at the Institute of English and American Studies at Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt. From 2005–2009 he was President of the Association for the Study of the New Literatures in English (ASNEL). He is editor of the ASNEL Newsletter ACOLIT and co-editor of Matatu: Journal for African Culture and Society.

Dr. **Nicole Starbuck** researches the history of exploration, cross-cultural contact, colonialism and theories about human diversity in France and Oceania. She is the author of *Baudin, Napoleon and the Exploration of Australia* (Routledge, 2013) and a number of articles and chapters including "'Naturally Fearful': Emotion, Race and French-Papuan Encounters, 1818–30", *Journal of Pacific History*, 51 (4). From 2008 to 2016, Nicole taught undergraduate courses in world history, colonialism, the French Revolution, and Napoleonic France at the University of Adelaide. She is currently an Honourary Associate Investigator with the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions and an adjunct academic at Flinders University.

Zeitschrift für Australienstudien Style Sheet

1. All papers will be **peer-reviewed**.
2. **Length**: For an essay: 6,000 words are recommended (including bibliography), for reviews: 1,500 words. A Review Essay is allowed 2,500 words.
3. **Format**: Please keep text formatting to an absolute minimum. No underlining or boldface, for emphasis please use *italics*. Please do not indent new paragraphs and do not paginate.
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10. **Illustrations / photos / reproductions**: Please provide your illustrations in an adequate quality as a *separate file* (TIFF, JPG or PSD). Based on the print target dimensions, the *minimum requirement* regarding resolution is 300 dpi for grey scales. 400 dpi for colour images, and 600 dpi for line drawings, reproductions of tables and charts.
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