

**ERRATUM:
CAPTAIN COOK AS NAVIGATOR AND NARRATOR,
A REAPPRAISAL**

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My recent article charted some changes that accompanied the transformation of James Cook from a navigator into a polite author.¹ Though taciturn, Cook was not at first at a loss for words: on his first voyage, he coped with the challenge of describing flora and fauna by occasionally adapting the journal of Joseph Banks, an experienced naturalist. Though Cook did not acknowledge these borrowings, he modified them so that they unambiguously reflected his subjective perspective.

My description of subsequent changes in Cook's authorial practice contained two errors of fact, namely that Cook did not cite a borrowing from William Wales's journal, and that this occurred on his final voyage (Percy 1, 24). It was on his *second* voyage that Cook began explicitly to acknowledge such borrowings. When sickness confined him to the beach on Easter Island, he used and acknowledged the journals of others. But some more "literary" borrowings were not acknowledged. And more than once the antarctic landscape reduced the aspiring author to an uncharacteristic if fashionable speechlessness (Percy 22).²

Assuming the additional roles of author and naturalist, Cook the navigator struggles for an appropriate vocabulary. On his second voyage, he concludes a summary description of birds with the statement that "I am neither a botanist nor a Naturalist and have not Words to describe the productions of Nature either in the one Science or the other" (Cook 615). His final voyage journal shows his increasing confidence as a naturalist (Percy 22) and, in a passage explicitly adapted from Anderson's journal, his rejection of some seamen's terms like "Mother Careys goose." Yet Cook can supply no new

term to replace what is “known to Seamen [and even to Anderson] by the name of Elephant fish” (Percy 23-24). Such subtle shifts and gaps make the already silent seaman a particularly elusive subject.

NOTES

1. Carol E. Percy, “‘To Study Nature Rather Than Books’: Captain James Cook as Naturalist Observer and Literary Author,” *Pacific Studies* 19, no. 3 (September 1996), 1, 24 [hereafter cited as “Percy”].

2. James Cook, *The Voyage of the Resolution and Adventure, 1772-75*, vol. 2 of *The Journals of Captain James Cook on His Voyages of Discovery*, ed. J. C. Beaglehole, Hakluyt Society extra series 35 (Cambridge: For the Hakluyt Society at the University Press, 1961), cxxi-cxii [hereafter cited as “Cook”].