

Greg Dening, *Islands and Beaches. Discourse on a Silent Land, Marquesas, 1774-1880*. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1980. Pp. 355, illustrations, maps, bibliography, index. \$27.50.

A new genre of Pacific island history has emerged in Professor Dening's reflective work on the Marquesas (*Te Henua*). Fundamentally, "islands and beaches is a metaphor for the different ways in which human beings construct their worlds and for the boundaries that they construct between them." Every obtrusive influence and artifact has had to cross the island beaches in order to be assimilated, transformed, or discarded by the host society.

Enata, the identity term used by the Marquesans for themselves, and their relations with *Aoe*, their term for foreigners, is the historical scenario constructed over 116 years. The tableau of violence, disease, death, and anthropophagism is unfolded in the author's narrative. Voyager, beachcomber, trader, and missionary barter with *Enata* for their goods, hospitality, labor, and souls, with each group attempting to construct their respective boundaries and terms of transaction. To *Enata*, *Aoe* were outside their traditional systems of rights, privileges and, therefore, were fair game for exploitation by force, chicanery, and furtiveness. To *Aoe*, *Enata* were superficial and callous people without attachment to culture and dispossessed of the emotional depth that true culture brought. To both *Aoe* and *Enata*, fate brought advantage, isolation, and death in a different land.

Relations among *Enata* were also marked with boundaries. *Tapu* was an organizing principle of *Enata* social and physical environment. It defined their personal space and gave a semblance of order and focus to their larger environment. *Enata* possessing *tapu* preyed among the *kikino*, those of marginal social importance, for *heana* (human sacrifices). Such sacrificial feasts expressed *Enata* social action and the ultimate price that one human can exact from another. Though their pantheon contained a vast membership of deities, *Enata* were very selective in their acts of worship, rejecting Christianity as an unwelcomed intrusion into their metaphysical universe. Conversions to Christianity of one sort or another were temporary and fatuous convulsions. Not until the mid-1880s did the *tapu* system decay into oblivion without the ceremony seen in Hawai'i and Tahiti. This and related changes were not necessarily internally induced. Goods coming across the beach came divorced from their mode of production and, as such, changed the relations of production between *Aoe* and *Enata*. The exchange and *tapu* system that went with production disappeared. Firearms made traditional warrior ornamentation irrelevant and superfluous. Ceremonial fetishes decline in importance and imported commodities were of no substitute value.

Unlike in other islands of the Pacific, competition over land between *Enata* and *Aoe* was not a cause of cultural change. The attempts to regulate land by the French colonial administration required a more precise definition of proprietorship rather than a redistribution of property to expatriate entrepreneurs. As demands made by *Aoe* became the prevailing principle of social relations, a policy of domestication of *Enata* proceeded in earnest. Adaptation to *Aoe* ways required modifications in *Enata* behavior, self-definition, and even social definitions in order to maintain the relationship. Although elements of violence and submission were present

in such changing relationships, it is doubtful that competition for resources between *Aoe* and *Enata* developed during this period of time.

Islands and Beaches is an intriguing work product of historical, ethnological, and social theories coexisting in a readable discourse. The bibliography is the most comprehensive to date on the Marquesas and the notation system abates any threat of obfuscation to the narrative. This volume is above all a stimulating interpretation of island history and society.

William E. H. Tagupa
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