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INDIGENOUS SELF–DETERMINATION AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

Norman Meller
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

A political scientist examines the parallels between Hawai'i and the Northern Territory of Australia with respect to statehood and the self-determination of their indigenes, including a consideration of the bases on which the indigenous right of self-determination rests and of the questions associated with its implementation.

In mid-1998 I was interviewed in Honolulu by an Australian legislator engaged in the drafting of a constitution for the Northern Territory. The explanation for the visit could only remotely be traced to historical happenstance —that Captain Cook introduced the Western world to the existence of both Australia and the Hawaiian Islands. Rather, the visit was attributable to the parallels between that territory's current search for statehood within Australia's federal system of government and Hawai'i's experience as the last incorporated territory of the United States before becoming a state in 1959. I had helped to compile the supporting data necessary for the framing of Hawai'i's constitution, and later, after Hawai'i's admission, had participated in a number of the actions necessary to reshape what had been a subordinate territory into a functioning, coequal member of the American federal union. Much of this experience was related in a book I had long ago published, the contents of which constituted the reason for the Australian's visit.[1]

It would perhaps be instructive for those not familiar with Hawai'i's long course toward statehood to know that on at least seventeen different occasions, starting in 1903, the Hawaii Territorial Legislature had petitioned the U.S. Congress for admission, only to be denied.[2] Finally, despairing of the Congress ever adopting an Enabling Act, which would authorize the territory to prepare for statehood, Hawai'i took matters into its own hands and in

1951 presented Washington with a state constitution drawn by elected delegates and approved by its voters, evidence that the islands were able and ready to become a state.[3] Admission followed in 1959, but only after a second plebiscite required by the Congress demonstrated that Hawai'i's electors approved of statehood and consented to the constitutional changes demanded by the Congress. In view of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, this history becomes pertinent because there were territorial legislators of Hawaiian ancestry who participated in the statehood drive from its very inception.[4] The percentages of Hawaiians' votes that were affirmative or negative in the plebiscites are unknown. The Hawaiian sovereignty movement today faults the whole process for not observing the criteria of international law providing for formal decolonization of non–self-governing territories and for continuing to deny the indigenous population full scope of self-determination to this day.[5]

There are vast differences between Hawai'i and Australia's Northern Territory, including the cultures of the indigenous people who inhabit each and their histories of political participation. Unlike Hawai'i, where indigenous inhabitants had a political role from the days of discovery, "until mid-20th Century Aborigines played little part in Australian politics."[6] Indeed, Aborigines lacked legal status as full citizens until then.[7] But the very making of this statement calling attention to the differences between the areas highlights their commonality: both have sizable indigenous minorities, which provides the raison d'être for this essay. Although Aborigines comprise less than 2 percent of the total Australian population, they form a quarter of the Northern Territory's.[8] (Larger absolute numbers of Aborigines live within the boundaries of some of the Australian states, particularly Queensland, but they comprise only small proportions of the respective states' inhabitants.) Similarly, persons of Hawaiian ancestry outside of Hawai'i constitute only small minorities where found, even though their numbers may even exceed those within the state. Indigenous Hawaiians living in the Hawaiian Islands comprise about one-fifth of the state's people.[9]

The indigenous cultures of both Hawai'i and Australia spiritually identify with land, so for them it cannot be treated as merely an economic commodity: people belong to the land rather than the converse. Given this importance, traditional rights to land are frequently the pivotal issue around which politics turn in both areas, notwithstanding the disparities between them. During the Hawaiian monarchy the Great Mahele sought to replace the Hawaiian system of traditional land titles with one of allodial land rights.[10] On the other hand, in Australia the courts are only now recognizing the existence of Aboriginal land rights. Despite this difference, the issue contributes a commonality that influences the shape of indigenous self-determination in both areas.

When I was contacted by my Australian visitor, I inquired about the steps being taken to involve Aborigines in the political process of constitutional formulation. The responses were evasive.[11] I was mindful that the flourishing of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement occurred *after* statehood and has subsequently assumed many forms. Some of its advocates stridently demand not only internal self-government for Hawaiians but complete separation of Hawai'i from the United States to form an independent nation.[12] In view of the marginalization of Aborigines in Australia, and in anticipation of their raising objections similar to those now being voiced in Hawai'i, after my visitor left I initially turned my attention to consideration of what might have been done differently to afford the Hawaiian Islands' indigenous population a distinctive voice, which could suggest minimal safeguards against comparable challenges in Australia.[13] From this evolved a more fundamental question, the examination of which occupies much of the balance of my discussion here: What is the compelling logic on which self-determination for indigenes rests, which, as well, underpins the process to be adopted by Pacific peoples for implementing it?

Until colonialism was discredited, the metropolitan nations of the Western world had divided up between them and governed the island areas of the Pacific as colonies. After World War II, beginning with Western Samoa in 1962, one Pacific island polity after another had become either politically independent of its former administering metropolis or entered into varied relationships that enabled them to exercise augmented powers of self-government, even if not completely independent as sovereign nations. The rhetoric that accompanied this change cloaked the entire movement as being "anti-colonial" in nature, with the result that limitations on indigenous self-rule became categorized as expressions of colonialism. For Hawai'i, this conveniently encompasses the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy through the connivance of the armed forces of the United States, the short interregnum of the Republic of Hawaii while awaiting congressional action on annexation, the next half-century-plus of territorial status, and now the integration into the Union as a state.[14]

Meaning of "Indigenous"

> The history of self-determination is bound up with the history of popular sovereignty, as proclaimed by the French and American Revolutions . . . [that] people living in a geographically distinct part of an existing state who are not content with the government of the country to which they belong should be able to secede and organize themselves as they wish.[15]

The League of Nations introduced the term "indigenous" as identifying populations that required protection under the League of Nations Covenant. This term much later entered into United Nations Fourth Committee debates on decolonization.[16] Subsequently a gradual consensus developed among the members of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the U.N. Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities that indigenous peoples enjoyed a natural right of self-determination and that "as a specific form of exercising their right to self-determination, [they] have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, including culture, religion" and so forth.[17] But while the term "indigenous" has emerged, it has no accepted, established definition.[18]

If one were to accept the thesis that there are two basically distinctive cultures in the world, one of the metropolitan societies and the other indigenous,[19] Pacific peoples would fall within the latter, thereby so establishing their right to self-determination. However, this proves too facile, for it is too all-embracing. For illustration, neither the i-Kiribati resettled in the Solomon Islands by the British government before the Solomons became independent[20] nor the Banabans who acquired the island of Rabi in Fiji on which to live after rapacious phosphate mining had literally consumed their original home island[21] would be treated as having "indigenous" rights of self-determination in their adopted island abodes. Nor would they be entitled to protection as minorities against ethnic discrimination by the Solomons and Fiji governments, respectively.

To take another tack and settle on a definition of "indigenous" as limited to only those who are descendants of the original inhabitants of a particular Pacific island may introduce hazardous problems for the future. Before the Maori arrived in New Zealand, it is claimed there had been other peoples resident, the Moriori (some of whom were still found in the Chatham Islands on first Western contact). To Hawaiians' sovereignty claims as indigenes, objection has yet to be raised on the basis that prior to the arrival of their canoes in the Hawaiian Islands from the south about the beginning of the Christian Era, a small, dwarfish peoples—the Menehune—were apparently dwelling there. They were probably pushed into the mountainous interiors, leaving massive dressed-stone works that to this day mark their presence on the island of Kaua'i. In Micronesia, the Carolinians point to the existing names of geographic areas on the island of Saipan as proof that they had preceded the Chamorros, casting doubt on the claim of the latter to be the initial inhabitants of the Marianas.

In short, rather than necessarily turning on original habitation, indigenous status involves a number of elements relevant to the purpose for which the delimitation is being made. These include both objective criteria such as

agreed-upon historical continuity and subjective factors including self-identification. With respect to the right of self-determination, an acceptable working definition could posit "indigenes" as

> a group of people who fulfill the following criteria:
> —they are descendants of a people who lived in the region prior to the arrival of settlers coming in from the outside, settlers who since have become the dominant population;
> —they have maintained a culture which is different in significant aspects from that of the dominant population;
> —they are, as a group, in an inferior position in the country concerned, in political and economic aspects.[22]

To compound the ambiguity surrounding the meaning of "indigenous" status and attributing corresponding rights, it might be pointed out that during the long, active period of the Bougainville revolution there was no external championing of this attempted secession from Papua New Guinea as a classic case of an indigenous people's exercising its right of self-determination. The Nasioi speakers who claim the land on which the controversial Bougainville Copper Limited mine was developed furnished the core leadership of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army. The ancestors of those Nasioi speakers arrived millennia before settlers ancestral to the users of quite unrelated languages to the north reached Bougainville. After Western contact, a copra-plantation colonialism instituted by German and then Australian growers contributed to the fractionating of the Nasioi speakers. The marked social consequences that followed were later echoed in various ways by the intrusive effects of the hordes of construction workers with their different cultural backgrounds who descended on the island to erect what was to be the world's largest open-pit mine. Its undertaking required the leasing of a vast acreage of Nasioi land for both the mine and for the governmental administrative headquarters of the Panguna area. The relocating of the individual landowners and even small villages introduced further disruption. Although the ore would be dug from Nasioi land, its content of gold and copper would belong to the state under Australian (and later Papua New Guinean) law—not to the surface owner. Fanned by displacement, dissatisfaction with compensation payments, and many other irritating factors, violence broke out and the Papua New Guinea government sent in the police mobile squad with the Papua New Guinea Defence Force. Peacekeeping by the police degenerated into outright jungle warfare. Now the dark-skinned Bougainvilleans found themselves arrayed against the "redskin" troops of the "mainland," and secessionist sentiment mounted. These various elements cumulatively lend

support to the claim that the Nasioi speakers as an indigenous people were entitled to assert their right of self-determination—in this case, secession. Nevertheless, the Bougainville revolution was never seriously viewed in that light and continued to be treated as a non-indigenous matter, internal to Papua New Guinea.[23] The explanation for this probably lies in the struggle not falling within the normal colonial paradigm.

Other Grounds for Self-Determination

Besides reliance upon the abstraction of natural right, that is, an inherent right of all indigenes, a people's claim to self-determination may also rest upon other grounds, moral as well as legalistic in nature. As a political and economic minority, many culturally disorganized and living in poverty, indigenes may disproportionately populate the prisons and jails, and suffer a high incidence of serious diseases and truncated life spans, thus constituting living proof of social injustice. Change of political status through self-determination, on the premise that it will counter indigenous demoralization and lead to rehabilitation, thus becomes a humanistic imperative.

Recalling the horrors of history serves as reinforcement for this moral right. For Aborigines, "disease, murder, and starvation by isolation from natural resources eliminated the great majority of the population"[24] and massacres continued up to the 1920s and 1930s.[25] Although the Hawaiians did not suffer so physically traumatic an experience, the decline of the Hawaiian population and the overthrow of the monarchy in 1893, followed by annexation near the turn of the century, are claimed to have profoundly undermined the Hawaiian culture, helping to destroy the Hawaiian people's sense of community. The overthrow also logically underlies what may be regarded as the Hawaiian sovereignty movement's legal claim. The deposing of Hawai'i's last queen occurred with the connivance of the United States, and the annexation that followed occurred against strong opposition registered by Hawai'i's indigenous population, evidenced by a 566-page petition of that day containing some 21,000 Hawaiian signatures.[26]

At the time of the overthrow, the Hawaiian monarchy enjoyed diplomatic relations with the various Great Powers, including the United States, all pledged to honoring the existence of the monarchy. A report prepared for the Working Group on Indigenous Populations that is now before the U.N. Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities —where it will be reviewed and edited—considers the overthrow as having taken place unlawfully.[27] Similarly, the apology of the United States to the Hawaiians in U.S. Public Law 103–105 recognizes the suppression of their inherent sovereignty.[28] Although at this late date few seriously support resto-

ration of the monarchy and elevation of a descendant of the deposed queen to the throne,[29] the present status of Hawai'i as a state of the United States may be subjected to review on the world scene. Meanwhile, all these elements lend a legalistic character to claims for Hawaiian self-determination as sought by various components of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement.

Another manifestation of the legalistic character may be found in the contractlike relationships that are relied on to support indigenous claims. In New Zealand, stemming from reconsideration of the Treaty of Waitangi, the courts have determined that under the treaty the Crown owes a fiduciary duty to the Maori tribes.[30] For enforcement, recourse is to political action rather than judicial decision. The government has recognized various claims for traditional lands and fishing rights and, although accompanied by protests, has entered into a number of multimillion-dollar settlements with Maori tribes.

In the United States, from their inception the colonies had to deal with the Indian nations found within their borders; initially, agreements and colonial laws controlled these relations. The U.S. Constitution (art. 2, sect. 2) established that the judicial power of the United States extends to treaties. The provision has long been applied to treaties with the American Indians. By virtue of the many treaties entered into between the federal government and Native American tribes, and also the voluminous legislation enacted by the U.S. Congress under the rubric of its constitutional power "to regulate commerce . . . with the Indian tribes" (art. 1, sect. 8), it has become the practice to regard American Indian rights and obligations positivistically, as legally premised, rather than as stemming from some inherent indigenous character of the American Indian, and recourse is to the courts for interpretation and enforcement, almost as though dealing with a contract. In Australia, no treaties were negotiated with its indigenous peoples, and prior to the *Mabo* v. *Queensland* case there was no Australian recognition of Aboriginal law and land rights.[31]

In the case of Hawaiians, who are not tribal like the Maori or Australian Aborigines, the U.S. Congress has yet expressly to identify them as encompassed within its constitutional power as it does the "Indian tribes." Notwithstanding, the Hawaiians have enjoyed many benefits under federal laws adopted for American Indians, and the executive branch has consistently treated Hawaiians administratively in the same manner as Indian tribes.[32] However, no treaty was ever entered into between the Hawaiians and the United States, for Hawai'i was incorporated into the Union by a joint resolution of the Congress, signed by the president, thus giving it the force of law. Both the Reagan and the Bush administrations questioned the constitutionality of enacting special monetary provisions solely for Hawaiians as being a

race-based classification violative of the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution.[33] The issue is not resolved.[34] Although Hawaiians continue to receive various forms of federal assistance paralleling that given American Indians, there has been a hesitancy to push the issue to constitutional closure.

In Australia, a number of statutory royalty payments are made to Aborigines or for their benefit, frequently for the mining of lands claimed by them. A very rough equivalent exists in Hawai'i, where "ceded" lands are required by federal law to be held in trust and used for a number of designated purposes, one of which is for Hawaiians of at least 50 percent indigenous heritage. (Currently, state statute earmarks 20 percent of ceded land revenues for Hawaiians, although the amount remains in dispute.) These were public or crown lands during the monarchy, and can be traced through the short-lived republic and the period of the territory to the present state. The sovereignty movement regards these lands as part of the Hawaiian heritage. More immediate to the issue of self-determination, both in Australia and Hawai'i specific lands have been identified that might become the corpus with which to begin building a sovereign entity.

As a result of the *Mabo* decision in 1992 and the following judicial rulings, all rejecting Australia's prior refusal to recognize the existence of Aboriginal law, indigenous land claims have assumed major economic as well as political significance in Australia. Coincidentally, at the same time as the Australian decision, the *P.A.S.H.* case introduced a comparably unsettling element into Hawai'i's land law with similar repercussions.[35] Tucked away in Hawai'i's statutes had long been protection of rights Hawaiians had customarily and traditionally exercised for subsistence and cultural purposes, a guarantee later added to the state constitution in 1977 (art. 12, sect. 7).[36] These rights included access for fishing, hunting, gathering, and water, an access to private land thought to be terminated once fee-simple title had been acquired. Now it appears that these rights on unimproved lands have been resuscitated by judicial decision, except insofar as they may be limited by regulatory state statute, so that absolute title to land is no longer a surety in Hawai'i. One of the potential consequences of the *Mabo* and *P.A.S.H.* judicial decisions has been to provide added political leverage for the indigenous movements seeking self-determination in the two respective areas.[37]

Forms of Self-Determination

Turning to another aspect of the subject, there is not one form of political status but a variety from which indigenes may choose when expressing their right of self-determination. Indeed, in Australia the very designation "self-

determination" initially raised by the Whitlam Labour Party government for Aborigines proved so disturbing to the conservative Liberal–Country Party coalition—"because it smacked too much of real autonomy"—that upon regaining power in 1975 the conservatives attempted to reduce emphasis on status change by substituting the phrase "self-management."[38]

Actually, the concept "self-determination" suggests enough flexibility to encompass a wide range of self-governmental forms, indeed even metamorphosing from one status to another over time, such as from initial internal self-governance to ultimate complete external sovereignty. The Chamorro people of Guam furnish an example of such a stepped approach. Today, they are seeking U.S. commonwealth status, which they view as a strategic step to obtaining greater self-government from the U.S. government until they can resolve among themselves whether as the next step they favor complete independence for Guam, statehood, or some other, indeterminate status.[39] Any step toward constitutionally entrenching indigenous self-government needs to be carefully considered, for it can have both positive and negative consequences. Potential benefits may be outweighed by constitutional permanence that may eventually prove too narrowly confining.

If merely expressed in the form of a demand to regain a sovereignty that was usurped by the presently dominant people, an indigenous people's claim of right to self-determination can be ambiguous. The demand may refer only to redress through seeking internal sovereignty or it can be as broad as a call for an independent status equivalent to that of any sovereign nation. The Hawaiian sovereignty movement may serve as illustration of this breadth. Presently in Hawai'i there are almost innumerable groupings of Hawaiians, each advocating its own version of self-determination, but they roughly fit into three categories. One category seeks an entirely separate and independent Hawai'i, as previously mentioned; for these groups sovereignty is a complete transfer of power and a return of Hawai'i to the world community of nations. Another part of the movement seeks internal sovereignty, that is, a "nation within a nation" status, much like the American Indians enjoy in the mainland United States. The third segment does not advocate any specific status or structural changes in government, whether internally or externally; rather, it primarily supports much of the status quo so long as action is taken to redress the wrongs suffered by the Hawaiian people.[40]

The U.S. courts early ratified the constitutionality of the separate status of American Indian governments with limited sovereignty. In contrast, an Australian court has expressly rejected the possibility of a subordinate sovereignty for Aboriginal peoples within the overall Australian nation. However, in view of the recent decisions on Aboriginal rights, the logic of this case may no longer hold.[41] Canada, under the rubric of provisions in its constitu-

tion and its treaties with its "First Nations," has negotiated with the Inuit in the Yukon and Northwest Territories to set up separate nations within these territories.[42] Even in the absence of such provisions, it is not inconceivable to consider Australia establishing an Aboriginal nation within its Northern Territory. With respect to the Aborigines, there appear to be enough differences between the territory and the rest of Australia to provide a basis for supporting such distinctive action,[43] that is, if dissonances due to tribal differences do not contravene.

The negotiations ending the U.N. Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands furnish another illustration of the ambiguous nature of "sovereignty." As the Micronesians sought to exercise self-determination, they steadfastly continued to assert that they had never lost their sovereignty, despite the long interim under Spanish, German, Japanese, and American rule. On their part, the American negotiators insisted that the "sovereign independent status called for by the [Micronesian] draft Constitution" was "clearly inconsistent" with the subordinate character of the "free association" envisioned by the United States.[44] Ultimately, the Federated States of Micronesia succeeded in retaining its proposed constitution unchanged, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Belau enacted comparable constitutions, and all three emerged onto the world scene as freely associated states. (The Northern Marianas, the remaining portion of the trust territory, opted for commonwealth status within the United States.) Notwithstanding that the United States retains military access rights, and to protect American security may require the associated states to deny access to other countries, the United Nations regards them as independent and they are seated as full members in the General Assembly along with all of the other sovereign nations.

The federalism known to both Australia and the United States is normally regarded as embodying a dual sovereignty, with state government enjoying a degree of autonomy and self-government in ways that require sharing of powers with the central government. This formulation does not ignore the existence of a wholly separate tier of functioning local government, but rather elides it as merely being the creature of the states. In some areas of Australia, such as in the Northern Territory, in addition to statutory local government there are Aboriginal communities performing municipal-type functions servicing the needs of Aborigines within their areas. Today in the United States it is being suggested that the boundaries of federalism as now practiced have expanded from dual to quadruple sovereignty, so that the old formulation is no longer applicable. This reinvented construct of federalism consists of a partnership among federal, state, local, and Indian tribal governments.[45] Applying this reformulation to Australia, federalism would be viewed as involving recognition of the role of Aboriginal councils and other

forms of semiautonomous Aboriginal communities, thereby incorporating Aboriginal government as well as the other three levels into Australia's federal system.

Implementation

> Broadly, there are two components, or connotations, associated with self-determination: one is structural and the other is procedural. The structural component contains implications for different forms of self-government and autonomy. The procedural component is equally important: it implies the right to negotiate as equals for a controlling interest in those structures.[46]

The process of implementation also deals with who is to have the right to negotiate and, as well, the physical and jurisdictional boundaries for the new entity being created. Of course, implementation is not politically divorced from the structural component but pragmatically may be viewed apart for purposes of analysis.

If completely independent nationhood is not the status sought, of initial importance is the question of where the new entity is to be placed jurisdictionally within the constitutional structure of the existing polity. Reference has already been made to the Canadian negotiations designed to create two new indigenous entities, one hived off from the Northwest Territories to form the self-governing territory of Nunavet but remaining under the Canadian federal government, and the other to exist geographically dispersed within the Yukon in the form of fourteen separate reserves, but additionally exercising powers and bearing responsibilities of the Yukon government.[47] In the case of Hawai'i, some participants in the sovereignty movement contest the legitimacy of the present State of Hawai'i and so are not amenable to action that would purport to have the state's constitution as the instrument creating a self-governing Hawaiian entity.

It should be noted here that Hawai'i's constitution already makes provision for a degree of indigenous self-governance and also identifies land dedicated to the welfare of Hawaiians. The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), almost a fourth branch of government, run by a board of indigenous Hawaiians elected solely by them, manages OHA assets for their benefit.[48] Another agency, the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands—whose history as the Hawaiian Homes Commission goes back to territorial days and was folded into the state constitution at statehood—administers 200,000 acres of homestead lands set aside by the U.S. Congress for Native Hawaiians. With careful attention to the nuances of the terminology chosen, for this is a sensitive

matter to many of those now benefiting under these constitutional provisions, it is not inconceivable that these two existing agencies and their assets may be merged into a new indigenous entity by constitutional amendment that would also incorporate supplementary governing structure for the new entity. However, without federal action recognizing both the new entity and ratifying the state's transfer of the trust obligations already imposed on it under federal law, such a scenario would face certain objection by most proponents of Hawaiian sovereignty.

As noted, one of the practical questions that must be resolved is identifying the discrete geographical area to be encompassed within the territorial boundaries of the indigenous entity. The Canadian negotiations conveniently furnish examples of two different approaches, one carving out a contiguous territory and the other specifying dispersed areas for inclusion within the new entity. Because the Hawaiian monarchy once claimed jurisdiction over islands no longer within the state's boundaries, some sovereignty advocates demand that these islands be included within any restored Hawaiian nation, again making Hawai'i whole. When the U.S. government returned the island of Kaho'olawe to state jurisdiction, after long keeping it off-bounds for use for target practice over the protest of Hawaiians objecting to the despoiling of an area traditionally held sacred, the Hawai'i State Legislature directed—by statute—that the island be transferred in the future to the "sovereign native Hawaiian entity upon its recognition by the United States and the State of Hawai'i."[49] The symbolism of this action resonated loudly within the sovereignty movement. Whatever the future may bring, one area destined to be included within a Hawaiian nation has thus already been identified, even before any formal negotiations on this possibility have opened.

The procedure of determining who is qualified to negotiate for self-determination can be fraught with complexity, as illustrated in Hawai'i. Under the monarchy, non-indigenes could be citizens and possess voting rights, so a few in Hawai'i propose that people other than indigenous Hawaiians should be able to participate fully in the sovereignty movement if they are so inclined. This position does not appear to command strong support in the sovereignty movement, and is to be distinguished from recognition of the pragmatic need at some stage in the formation of a Hawaiian nation for non-indigenous citizens of Hawai'i to be involved in shaping the changes proposed insofar as they will be affected.

The converse of this—limiting participation solely to indigenes—also is not a simple matter to resolve, particularly in Hawai'i. At the outset, a unique complication introduced by the U.S. Congress highlights the more generic question of whether part-blooded indigenes are to be considered qualified to participate. Congressional statute has muddied the waters by introducing

a definition of "Native Hawaiian"—one must be of at least 50 percent Hawaiian ancestry to be eligible to receive certain designated benefits, such as homestead leases. Since this much smaller group has been singled out by the federal government and may be the most negatively affected, is participation to be restricted just to Native Hawaiians, or are they to be protected by assuring them of at least concurrent majority rights so they can veto whatever may be negotiated by other Hawaiians if they disapprove? And if the eligible group is expanded to include all persons of indigenous Hawaiian ancestry, no matter how minuscule their blood quantum, may it still be geographically limited by requiring residence or even physical presence in the Hawaiian Islands to vote? Two referendums, one conducted in 1996 by the Hawaiian Sovereignty Elections Council, a body created by the Hawai'i State Legislature, and another in 1999 under nongovernmental auspices, allowed to vote all persons claiming any Hawaiian ancestry under oath, whether or not a citizen of the state or the United States and regardless of residence. Since there are likely more persons of Hawaiian ancestry outside of the state —and maybe outside of the United States—than within, the potential universe of participants was daunting. However, the 1996 referendum drew only a scattering of responses from Hawaiians outside of the state[50] and the 1999 vote, due to a small turnout, apparently even fewer. Hawai'i's experience from this falls squarely within the standards for resolving the implementary question of who is to be deemed qualified to participate as an indigene: self-identification as being indigenous (group consciousness) and group recognition as one of its members (group acceptance). Beyond this, political discourse must resolve all else.

Two final matters of implementation remain for consideration. One concerns whether a satisfactory range of status choices is being offered to indigenes. The other raises the question: When people other than indigenes participate in registering choice, are the indigenes to enjoy concurrent majority powers, that is, the ability to ratify or reject the final product regardless of a non-indigenous vote approving it?

If only a limited range of choices is permitted, as in Hawai'i where the vote on statehood was either approving statehood or (inferentially, at that time) perpetuating territorial status by voting no, dissatisfied indigenous voters who disapprove of both may logically raise the objection that they were denied full opportunity for self-determination. However, when the dissatisfied assert that the range of choices available should have specifically included the option of independence, they are on disputatious grounds. In the negotiations with the Micronesians prior to the agreement on free association, the United States adamantly refused to include independence as one of the negotiable options. Notwithstanding, the United Nations approved

the termination of the trust territory and admitted the three new Micronesian polities into membership.

The majority of those who participated in drafting Hawai'i's state constitution were non-indigenous; the same applied when later constitutional conventions proposed amendments. Hawaiian indigenes comprised minorities of all those who could vote on both constitution and amendments. To the extent that this involved matters peculiarly relevant to indigenous Hawaiians, provisions may have been adopted of which they disapproved but on which they were outvoted. No institutional mechanism existed to separately record the indigenous position on any such provision nor to encourage continued dialog toward resolution when material disagreement was disclosed. In the absence of any such arrangements, the whole process is vulnerable to the charge that it constitutes a denial of self-determination.

On reviewing Hawai'i's experience in becoming a state, and contrasting the heady euphoria of that period with the stridency of Hawaiian sovereignty movement advocates for self-determination, it seems to this commentator that the difference can primarily be attributed to a changed view in democratic polities about their indigenous populations and the latter's claim of inherent rights. Assimilation no longer provides the pattern by which all policy is to be cut. Modern petitions and demonstrations—witness the setting up of the Aboriginal tent embassy on the lawn of Parliament in Canberra to embarrass the Government[51] or the more recent massing of Hawaiians on the 'Iolani Palace grounds in the center of Honolulu to protest the overthrow of the monarchy and Hawai'i's admission into the American Union a full century ago—provide ample proof that political leaders and organized politics must now anticipate and accommodate indigenous efforts aimed at securing self-determination. If repetition is to be avoided "Down Under" of the challenge that has already been raised in Hawai'i, Aborigines must be afforded opportunities of involvement in ways appropriate to expression of their varied desires for self-determination.

Coda

This article was prepared for submission in late 1998. In the interim, on 3 October 1998, a referendum was held on the question: "Now that a constitution for a State has been . . . endorsed by the Northern Territory Parliament . . . Do you agree that we should become a state?" Among other provisions, the proposed constitution called only for future "harmonisation of the customary law with other law in force," including matters of Aboriginal governance, and that through negotiations and consultations.[52] A bare majority of 51.3 percent voted no, which has been interpreted not as the rejection of the

notion of statehood per se, but to uncertainty over relations with the commonwealth government and disagreement over the provisions of the proposed constitution. Significantly, the urban area (predominantly non-Aboriginal) was two-thirds opposed.[53]

Later, after the Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs of the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory was instructed to inquire into measures for facilitating statehood, it found the Aboriginal position desired that distinct from—and prior to—considering statehood, a "framework agreement" be negotiated "aimed at addressing the social and economic disadvantages of Aborigines." In its report the committee recommended that "the Northern Territory Government commence discussions as soon as possible to explore the development of a framework agreement." It also recommended that "specific priority be accorded to commencing the process of recognition and integration of Aboriginal customary law within the broader legal system" and this need not "await the re-commencement of the Statehood process."[54]

NOTES

1. Norman Meller, *With an Understanding Heart: Constitution Making in Hawaii* (New York: National Municipal League, 1971).

2. Paul C. Bartholomew and Robert M. Kamins, "The Hawaiian Constitution: A Structure for Good Government," *American Bar Association Journal* 45, no. 11 (November 1959): 1145.

3. Actually this was not revolutionary: fifteen territories had held state constitutional conventions without the U.S. Congress previously having adopted statehood-enabling legislation.

4. The Hawaii Territorial Legislature from 1901 until the mid-1920s had a majority of indigenous Hawaiian members in each of its two houses. Then legislators of *haole* or Portuguese ancestry became the largest component, subsequently followed by those of Asian ancestry. Both legislative houses have always included indigenous Hawaiian members. See Norman Meller, "Centralization in Hawaii," Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago, 1955: 281–283, table 9, "Ethnic Composition of Legislature (Territory of Hawaii)."

5. For distinction between the two rights of self-determination, see Jon M. Van Dyke, Carmen D. Amore-Siah, and Gerald W. Berkeley-Coats, "Self-Determination for Non-self-governing Peoples and for Indigenous Peoples: The Cases of Guam and Hawai'i," *University of Hawai'i Law Review* 18, no. 2 (Summer/Fall 1996): 623–643. For Hawai'i, see also Noelle M. Kahanu and Jon M. Van Dyke, "Native Hawaiian Entitlement to Sovereignty: An Overview," *University of Hawai'i Law Review* 17, no. 2 (Fall 1995): 427–462.

6. Christine Fletcher, *Aboriginal Politics* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 1992), 1.

7. Only by 1965 had all states and territories in Australia awarded Aborigines the right to vote. C. D. Rowley, *Outcasts in White Australia,* 2d edition (Ringwood: Penguin, 1972), 401, 415. It required a federal referendum in 1967 to count Aborigines in the Australian census. Kingsley Palmer, "Government Policy and Aboriginal Aspirations," in Robert Tonkinson and Michael Howard, eds., *Going It Alone* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 1990), 166.

8. Peter Read, "Northern Territory," in Ann McGrath, ed., *Contested Ground* (St. Leonard's, N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin, 1995), 296.

9. Norman Meller and Anne Feder Lee, "Hawaiian Sovereignty," *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 27, no. 2 (Spring 1997): 170.

10. Lilikalā Kameʻeleihiwa, *Native Lands and Foreign Desires* (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1992); John Chinen, *Great Mahele, Hawaii's Land Division of 1948* (Honolulu: University Press, 1958).

11. As illustration, no reference was made to the Aboriginal Convention, which in 1993 called on the Northern Territorial government to suspend further consideration of the territory's becoming a state until Aborigines reached agreement. Heather Brown and Darryl Pearce, "National Aboriginal Constitutional Convention Report," in Christine Fletcher, ed., *Aboriginal Self-Determination in Australia* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 1994), 107–110.

12. Meller and Lee, "Hawaiian Sovereignty," 199.

13. Actually, on consulting the holdings of the Hamilton Library, University of Hawaiʻi, it was found that comparable challenges are already being readied in Australia. For example, see Fletcher, *Aboriginal Self-Determination.*

14. Tom Coffman, *Nation Within* (Honolulu: Epicenter, 1996); Haunani-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter* (Monroe, Me.: Common Courage Press, 1993); Haunani-Kay Trask, "Hawaiians, American Colonization, and the Quest for Independence," *Social Process in Hawaii* 31 (1984/1985): 122; Noel J. Kent, *Hawaii: Islands under the Influence* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1982).

15. Asbjorn Eide, "Internal Conflicts under International Law," in Kumar Rupesinghe, ed., *Ethnic Conflict and Human Rights* (Tokyo: United Nations Press, 1994), 27.

16. Russell Barsh, "Indigenous Peoples: An Emerging Object of International Law," *American Journal of International Law* 80 (1986): 373.

17. Article 31, in the draft contained in annex to Resolution 1994/95 of 26 August 1994 of the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, entitled "Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples" (E/CN. 4/1995/2–E/CN.4/Sub. 2/1994/56), 113.

18. Barsh, "Indigenous Peoples," 173.

19. Ranginui J. Walker, "Colonization and Development of the Maori People," in Michael C. Howard, ed., *Ethnicity and Nation-Building in the Pacific* (Tokyo: United Nations University, 1989), 152.

20. Peter Larmour, "Alienated Land and Independence in Melanesia," in Institute for Polynesian Studies, *Proceedings of the 1982 Politics Conference: Evolving Political Cultures in the Pacific Islands* (Lā'ie, Hawai'i: Brigham Young University–Hawai'i Campus, 1982), 216–218.

21. Hans Dagmar, "Banabans in Fiji: Ethnicity, Change, and Development," in Howard, *Ethnicity and Nation-Building,* 198.

22. Eide, "Internal Conflicts under International Law," 28. Frequently used as a working definition for the purposes of international action is the formulation of Jose R. Martinez Cobo, *Study of the Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Populations* (U.N. ESCOR, U.N. Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, U.N. Doc. E/CN. 4/Subd. 2/1986/7/Add. 4), par. 379–81.

23. See generally Eugene Ogan, "The Bougainville Conflict: Perspectives from Nasioi," discussion paper, *State Governance Melanesia* 49, no. 1 (1998) (Canberra: Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University); and Jill Nash and Eugene Ogan, "The Red and the Black: Bougainvillean Perceptions of Other Papua New Guineans," *Pacific Studies* 13, no. 2 (1990): 1–17.

24. H. C. Coombs, *Aboriginal Autonomy: Issues and Strategies* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 19.

25. Ann McGrath, ed., *Contested Ground* (St. Leonard's, N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin, 1995), 19.

26. Coffman, *Nation Within,* 272–287.

27. Reported on in *Honolulu Star-Bulletin,* 11 August 1998: A-1.

28. *U.S. Statutes at Large,* vol. 107, part 2: 1510–1513. See Bradford H. Morse and Kazi A. Hamid, "American Annexation of Hawaii: An Example of the Unequal Treaty Doctrine," *Connecticut Journal of International Law,* 5 (Spring 1990): 407–456.

29. The constitution of Ka Lahui Hawai'i (the Nation of Hawai'i), probably the largest organized sovereignty movement group, recognizes as a symbolic monarch Kalokuokamile II, providing continuity with the Hawaiian monarchial tradition.

30. Paul G. McHugh, *The Maori Magna Carta: New Zealand and the Treaty of Waitangi* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1991).

31. *Mabo* v. *State of Queensland* (1992), 66 ALJF 408.

32. Richard H. Houghton III, "An Argument for Indian Status for Native Hawaiians—The Discovery of a Lost Tribe," *American Indian Law Review* 14 (1989): 21–23.

33. Stuart M. Benjamin, "Equal Protection and the Special Relationship: The Case of Native Hawaiians," *Yale Law Review* 106 (December 1996): 537–612.

34. *Rice* v. *Cayetano,* a case before the U.S. Supreme Court, holds the Fifteenth Amendment precludes limiting Office of Hawaiian Affairs elections to only Hawaiians, and may necessitate action to resolve the issue.

35. *Public Access Shoreline Hawai'i* v. *Planning Commission* (1993), 79 Haw. 246.

36. Anne Feder Lee, *The Hawaii State Constitution: A Reference Guide* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1990), 67.

37. Coombs, "Aboriginal Autonomy," 200–218.

38. Tonkinson and Howard, *Going It Alone,* 68.

39. Guam Commission on Self-Determination, "Changing Our Political Status: Commonwealth Now," advertising supplement to *Pacific Daily News,* 27 October 1997.

40. Meller and Lee, "Hawaiian Sovereignty," 177–181. For another survey of forms taken by the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, see Samuel P. King, "Hawaiian Sovereignty," *Hawai'i Bar Journal* 3, no. 7 (July 1999): 6.

41. Garth Nettheim, "International Law and Sovereignty," in Fletcher, *Aboriginal Self-Determination,* 71–84.

42. Paul Tennant "Strong Promises on Paper: Treaties and Aboriginal Title in Canada," in Fletcher, *Aboriginal Self-Determination,* 177–190.

43. Peter Reed, "Northern Territory," in McGrath, *Contested Ground,* 296–297.

44. Norman Meller, *Constitutionalism in Micronesia* (Lā'ie, Hawai'i: Institute for Polynesian Studies, 1985), 319.

45. William A. Galston and Geoffrey L. Tibbetts, "Reinventing Federalism: The Clinton-Gore Program for a New Partnership among the Federal, State, Local, and Tribal Governments," *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 24, no. 2 (Summer 1994): 23–48.

46. Cliff Walsh, "Insights and Overviews," in Fletcher, *Aboriginal Self-Determination,* 194.

47. Russell Mathews, "Reconciliation of All Australians: Towards Aboriginal Self-Government," in Fletcher, *Aboriginal Self-Determination,* 199–200.

48. Lee, *Hawaii State Constitution,* 177–179. Also see n. 34 above.

49. *Hawaii Revised Statutes,* Sect. 6K–9, 1933 Suppl.

50. Meller and Lee, "Hawaiian Sovereignty," 183 n. 69.

51. H. Collins, "Aborigines and Australian Foreign Policy," in C. Bell, H. Collins, J. Jupp, and W. D. Rubinstein, *Ethnic Minorities and Australian Foreign Policy* (Canberra: Dept. of International Relations, Australian National University, 1983), 198.

52. Report of the Statehood Convention of the Northern Territory, Schedule of Alterations to Final Draft Constitution: Resolution 6, Clause 2.1.1.

53. Communication of Ms. Julie Nickolson, Executive Officer, Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, Legislative Assembly of Northern Territory, 7 May 1999.

54. Recommendation 3, Executive Summary and Recommendations, Report of the Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs: 27 April 1999. On Internet: www.nt.gov./lant/committees/.

"MI LES LONG YUPELA USIM FLAG BILONG MI":* SYMBOLS AND IDENTITY IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Andrew J. Strathern and Pamela J. Stewart
University of Pittsburgh

In Papua New Guinea there is a constant interplay between senses of national identity and senses of local identity that is of particular relevance to debates in the contemporary Pacific. In the domain of symbols of identity there is also a two-way appropriation from the local to the national and from the national to the local. We argue that the latter process works most strongly and thereby modifies the process of creation of an overall national sense of identity. The incorporation of the national into the local in turn influences the process of the production of locality itself. Contemporary issues of intellectual property rights also enter into struggles over identity. These processes are illustrated with a number of case studies, including the conflict presented in Papua New Guinea newspapers regarding ownership of the design of the national flag.

* *"I'm tired of you people using my flag."*
—*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier,* 16 September 1998

THE FORMATION OF NATION-STATES and the development of national senses of identity have become topics of considerable interest in Pacific anthropology, as elsewhere in the world, and are well exemplified in Robert Foster's edited collection of studies (Foster 1995). These studies indicate that the attempt to create a national identity may be constructed in terms of either "modernity" or "tradition" (or indeed varying combinations of these notions), thus redeploying notions used as analytical labels by an earlier generation of social scientists. Discourses of this kind may radiate outward and downward from centers of political and economic power, and may become transformed as they are reinterpreted and reused in local contexts. Indeed, we argue in

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this article that the reappropriation of national-level symbols at the local level is itself one of the biggest problems for those who are trying to bring a national ideology into being. Michael Herzfeld has pointed to the shift from indexicality to iconicity that accompanies the translation of symbols from embedded local contexts to disembedded national ones (1992:107). Here we are interested in the reverse process: when symbols are reclaimed, reviewed, and retaken into local levels. In the process, the local level itself acquires a nonindexical, iconic quality. The extreme case of this is when an individual reclaims a national symbol. This is precisely what happened in an incident in Papua New Guinea recently.

The title of our article reflects one instance of conflict that occurred in conjunction with Papua New Guinea's Independence Day celebration in 1998. The "original designer" of the country's flag threatened to pull down the nation's symbol, disrupting Independence Day ceremonies on Parliament Hill, in the national capital city of Port Moresby, as a protest unless she was compensated in a form she thought appropriate (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier*, 15 September 1998). This incident is just one of many that touches on issues of intellectual property rights, on how artistic and other symbols are used to express national and local forms of identity in Papua New Guinea today, and how individual wishes are sometimes thwarted. More generally, it represents a major stumbling block in the construction of a national sense of identity, that is, the reappropriation of national symbols at local, regional, and even individual levels. It is this issue of the appropriation and reappropriation of symbols that concerns us here. Processes of appropriation are not necessarily orderly. They can be contingent and idiosyncratic, as we will show.

This article will follow some of these processes in a number of contexts, comparing national- and local-level processes. An earlier study, by Monty Lindstrom based on materials up to the end of the 1980s,[1] deals with a similar range of issues from the viewpoints of a diverse range of persons who have contributed to "an elite discourse of national identity produced by a small minority of urban, Western-educated Papua New Guineans" (Lindstrom 1998: 142). Lindstrom adds: "How, or if, the large majority of village Papua New Guineans . . . might imagine their nation I am less able to assess" (ibid.). In our article we are interested in shifting backward and forward between the local and the national levels, and we draw both on the kinds of literary materials (e.g., poems, letters to newspapers) deployed by Lindstrom and on firsthand field materials from two areas in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, Hagen and Duna. We also carry forward many of Lindstrom's topics into the late 1990s, when some of the dynamics regarding cultural issues had changed. Our movement between the urban and the rural and between the elite and the ordinary villagers is in line with the approach advocated by Joel

Migdal: "There is a need constantly to look back and forth between the top reaches of the state and local society" (1988:xvi). We will return to Migdal's ideas toward the end of this article. We wish to emphasize that we are not primarily concerned with typological criteria, that is, whether Papua New Guinea "is" a nation-state or not. Migdal appeals to the criterion of homogeneity, writing that "nation-states have grown out of powerful societies" (ibid.: 16). In Papua New Guinea the levels of local diversity would preclude any simple appeal to such homogeneity as the basis for "the nation" today, although clearly the process of nation-making does involve the introduction of common institutions of government and associated social values. The present study does not pretend to place a label on the stage this process has reached or to set up any "ideal type." We are more concerned with the processes themselves.

The major process with which we are concerned is the appropriation of symbols, that is, the way in which cultural elements and motifs are taken and used to stand for a sliding scale of local and national values. Of course, they may stand for both levels simultaneously. Our overall argument is that in practice the local level tends to encompass the national level, rather than the reverse. The reasons for this rather counterintuitive conclusion are two-fold, having to do with both the indexical/iconic contrast and the character of the symbols themselves. Briefly, at state level governments and other agencies attempt to appropriate local customary images and redeploy them, infusing them with national meanings and thereby in a sense detaching them from their local anchorage points. However, in this process of detachment some of the meanings and their contextual force are inevitably lost. For example, partly in deference to the first prime minister, Sir Michael Somare, the national Parliament building was constructed with architectural motifs reminiscent of the sacred cult houses of the Sepik area, Sir Michael's home province. But the visual effect achieved is arguably one that faces outward, to visiting tourists and dignitaries, rather than inward, to the parliamentarians themselves and the ordinary populace. A further difficulty is that while the state attempts to appropriate symbols from the customary and "traditional" worlds of local societies as trappings for its own legitimacy, the state is essentially a modern creation and infusing its modern character with customary forms proves to be awkward. Conversely, local leaders have often been keen to import modern elements, associated with the government and the wider world, into their own contexts in order to bolster their positions. Where this fits with the aspirations of their electorates they have been able to do so successfully. In the process the national-level activities and meanings become "domesticated" and localized. Per contra, at state level the process of creating a national image out of "traditional" elements is constrained at least partly

by the "gaze" of international observers and wider concerns and is therefore enmeshed in the larger dilemmas of globalization. This in itself constitutes a complex problem relevant to our discussion, but we cannot take it up in detail within the bounds of the present treatment of our topic (for one survey, see Kelly 1995).

Historical Overview

Papua New Guinea is a country of huge contrasts between its tropical coastal lands, riverain estuaries, and montane interiors. It is also a country of great diversity and depends on air services and shipping for much of its communications network. Its people are horticulturalists, fishers, traders, and hunters, exploiting different ecological niches. They have been widely introduced to cash cropping, business, plantation agriculture, manufacturing, mining, Christian churches, and parliamentary democracy. The face and the inner being of the country have been molded by many influences, including nearly one hundred years of colonialization prior to independence in 1975.

The local societies and cultures within Papua New Guinea show a considerable range of customary differences within certain lines of broad uniformity. Local territorial groups, often fiercely autonomous, were yet linked by numerous trading, ritual, and intermarriage ties. Political systems varied from chiefships to "big-man" systems of achieved leadership through prowess in exchange, oratory, and warfare. Where elaborate exchanges were not present, a congeries of systems based often on ritual precedence were found, sometimes described as "great-man" systems (Godelier 1986). Colonial authorities appointed their own officials, some of whom later became village councillors when local government was established. In analyzing contemporary politics most attention has been paid to big-men politics, since bigmanship has frequently been parlayed into the figure of the modern politician who wins support by his standing in exchanges and his capacity to disburse new forms of wealth and privilege (money and jobs) to his supporters. Parliamentary democracy is quite strongly established but contains within it strong elements of patronage now referred to in the literature as "*wantok*ism," the practice of assisting kin/local supporters/members of one's language or "ethnic" group in gaining success. Ethnic and class relations are equally subsumed under this category of *wantok,* which emerged with the development of Tok Pisin as a language. *Wantok* ("one talk") is someone who speaks the same language but can be extended simply to mean "friend" or "political ally." It signals also the development of "ethnicity" in a context of change, where people of different languages mix in urban settings and expanded horizons of social similarity and difference are created and negotiated: the familiar construction of difference out of an apparently homogenizing situation.

An earlier optimistic stress on what we might call "local versions" of nationalistic policy-making has tended to be swamped subsequently by the need to organize businesses in conformity with external standards and practices and by a growing realization that "Papua New Guinean ways," even if based on ideals of a communitarian kind, can also lead to problems of "corruption" through "*wantok*ism" and the siphoning off of money to kin and local factions (see King, Lee, and Warakai 1985; Samana 1988). At the same time, relations within and between social classes are emerging, bringing with them new societal stresses, especially in urban contexts (Gewertz and Errington 1999).

Symbolic Expressions of Identity

The first wave of governing politicians in Papua New Guinea, including prominently Sir Michael Somare and Sir Albert Maori Kiki, was well aware of the importance of creating institutional structures at a national level that could contribute to nation-building. However, the institutions created have been enmeshed in the same problems generally outlined so far: the problems of creating a national set of images from a mosaic of local cultures. Even in cases where the state has deliberately promoted the creation of its own legitimate symbols, such as in the design of the national flag, there has been a contrary centrifugal pull in the construction of meanings.

National cultural institutions within Papua New Guinea include a National Museum, National Theater Company, National Arts Center, and the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies (IPNGS), the last of these being charged with all forms of cultural preservation and development as well as (at various times in the past) with the regulation of access to Papua New Guinea by outside research workers. These institutions have all survived, though plagued by changes in regulations and severe shortages of funds and staff. While widely appreciated, their success in contributing to a *popular* as opposed to an *elite* national consciousness has been somewhat circumscribed. "Nation-making" often means something quite different for urban as against rural citizens, and elite nation-making tends to be concentrated in the national capital city where all these institutions were first established. The Raun Raun Theater, set up in a provincial capital, Goroka, has had a good deal of success at the village level by touring and presenting skits that contribute to health awareness issues and the like (see Wanek 1996:57–62 on theater groups and other national cultural institutions). Efforts have been made to set up provincial-level centers for culture and the arts also, and the IPNGS holds national literary competitions, mostly from school entries. The framework for "culture" in nation-making has been in place; its realization has been made difficult by countervailing forces that have tended to obliterate, transform, or devalue

the kinds of "customary" indigenous culture envisaged in these institutions' charters. One conflict that has emerged is between "pagan" and "Christian" versions of culture, founded also on new versions of "tradition" versus "modernity" (see Lindstrom 1998:159).

We argue that in contexts of this kind acts of *appropriation of meaning* are what enable the construction of symbols that mark identities. Robert Foster's edited volume, *Nation Making: Emergent Identities in Postcolonial Melanesia,* presents discussions on the multivalent, continuously shifting entity of the "nation" (1995). LiPuma's contribution to the volume points out that nation-making is inseparable from global and local pressures (pp. 33–68) and Foster looks at the process of constructing national identity through the consumption of or desire for consumable goods that also link the nation to global flows of resources (pp. 151–181).

The process of nation-making involves a deliberate attempt to create meanings, institutionally as noted above, and by the design of elements such as flags. The PNG flag is divided transversely into red and black triangles, with a bird of paradise in the top red sector and the Southern Cross in the lower black sector. Its aim is to represent Papua New Guinea (the bird of paradise) in the wider Pacific (the Southern Cross, which figures also in the flags of Australia, New Zealand, the Solomon Islands, and Samoa). The flag has sometimes been used as a symbol of peace to halt fighting between warring groups in the interior highlands. It has also been made the subject of idiosyncratic interpretations.

Jeffrey Clark reports that young men from Pangia in the Southern Highlands Province held the red part of the flag "to represent Europeans (known as 'redmen' in Pangia), the black color representing Papua New Guineans" (1997:78). In this interpretation each part contains a portion of the other, in what Clark calls "the expression of an ideal egalitarian encompassment," such that "Red/European contains the bird of paradise/Papua New Guinea; black/Papua New Guinean contains the Southern Cross/Australia." Clark calls this interpretation "an iconic representation of colonial history," going along with these Highlanders' dislike of their own government and their wish for the return of the white men and their rule. On the other hand, he cites quite a different interpretation made by a man from Bougainville Island, on which a fierce separatist movement developed after 1988. For this man the red part referred to the mainlanders ("redskins" to him) and the black part to Bougainvilleans (dark-skinned), and he indicated that the two parts might fall apart; he also expressed annoyance that the red was above the black (ibid.:90). For him, then, the flag was an icon of his own ethnic view of a fragmenting nation, rather than a symbol of unity. The example is significant.

The symbol of the flag has, however, been positively incorporated into

certain exchange and conflict resolution contexts. For example, Merlan and Rumsey describe a 1982 instance from the Nebilyer Valley in which a women's club *(ab klap)* used the flag to mark a truce between two fighting groups in the area (Merlan and Rumsey 1991). Carrying the PNG flag, the women from the Kulka tribe's women's club marched onto a battlefield between two opposing sides. They distributed foodstuffs to the men as well as soft drinks, cigarettes, and a small amount of currency (from the club's funds) to both of the sides involved in the conflict, and then they planted the flag on the battlefield and told the warriors to go home, which they eventually did (ibid.:156–197).

Another example comes from the central Hagen area. A large compensation payment was being given to the extended relatives of a young woman killed by her husband's co-wife in 1998. A foreman carrying the PNG flag preceded a procession of those relatives onto the *pena* (ceremonial ground) where the compensation payment was to be made. Behind the flag came a horse led by its bridle, giving the occasion a further aura of national-level symbolism gesturing toward an atmosphere of grand modern civil occasions involving royalty. (The horse, however, like a cow that was also led in, was destined to be given away and eaten.) The marchers were singing out in a traditional manner as they followed behind the national banner, which was subsequently displayed on a raised platform from which the two sides (the receiving and the giving) made their speeches. All of this symbolism formalized the occasion and linked it to the idea of the province and the nation as an integral part of the local occasion itself. This point is important, similar to that made by Peter Sahlins that national identities may be created more "from the local process of adopting and appropriating the nation" than from state-based actions (1989:9, quoted in Cohen 1994:132). However, another interpretation is that in such events national symbols are taken back into local contexts and are used in pursuit of local aims. The process can go even further.

Like all symbols, the PNG flag means different things to different people and can stand for various things depending on circumstances. Recently, during the twenty-third Independence Day celebration in 1998, Susan K. Huhume "led a group of concerned women to Independence Hill" where the then acting prime minister, Michael Nali, foreign dignitaries, and other celebrants were gathered at a flag-raising ceremony (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier*, 16 September 1998). *The National* newspaper reported that Mrs. Huhume had designed the flag in 1970 as a seventeen-year-old still in school. This report went on to say that her design was accepted and the flag bearing it was raised for the first time in 1971 at a ceremony before twenty thousand people in the capital, Port Moresby (*The National,* 14 September 1998). She

was reported to have said that she was "the mother of PNG's distinctive bird of paradise flag but [that she] has been forgotten by the Government . . . [and that the government had] thrown her in a rubbish bin" (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier,* 15 September 1998). The *Post-Courier* account went on to say that she had petitioned Prime Minister Bill Skate in April 1998 to request a "commission" or "entitlements" (reported to include a pension, a house, and a car) for her design work on the flag. In addition Skate's chief of staff, Sir Dennis Young, was reported to have written to her, "In fact, the state has honoured you and your name by accepting your design, and your satisfaction and pride should be to see your God-given gift to design adopted as our national flag." These comments were reported to have prompted Mrs. Huhume to respond, "I am tired of you (government) using my flag. You can create your own design and a new flag. I want my flag back. It's my property" (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier,* 16 September 1998). The report stated that she complained that she had not been sufficiently recognized for her contribution to the imagery of the nation and was especially hurt because she had not been invited to flag-raising ceremonies like the one on Independence Day: "The only time I ever had the opportunity of raising the flag was in Konedobu in 1971 and after that I have been left out. But my heart cries every time people talk about the flag-raising because it is my baby and a product of my hands" (ibid.). The issues surrounding this case are ones that can be described as intellectual property rights but they are also issues of identity and emotion. The notion of ownership, at least partially, of the iconography on Papua New Guinea's flag arises because of the contribution to its design. But issues of this sort are complex and no clear definitions can be provided on exact "ownership." It is also not clear from the newspaper reports who the "concerned women" were, but presumably they were Huhume's kinsfolk and associates.

On a smaller scale, similar occurrences are taking place daily in field situations when anthropologists and archaeologists work with local people. In 1998 we heard of one villager seeking payment from a colleague of ours for a picture taken of him in the 1970s when he was a paid worker on an archaeological dig in the Hagen area. The photograph had recently appeared on an academic poster from the PNG National Museum that was circulated within Papua New Guinea and Australia in 1997. The request for payment was clearly related to the picture's recent public use on the poster, a new situation, but also to a traditional idea, that if a delayed request for a payment is made, the payment asked for can be larger because of the lapse of time since the original gift was made. The increment that has notionally been produced as a result of this passage of time is like the child of the original giver, making it

necessary to repay the gift with "interest." In both this instance, then, and that cited above, persons are claiming that a return is due to them since they are like a parent who has "produced" a child for others.

Language and Literature as Tools in Nation-Building

Nation-states need to create and popularize their symbols. Such symbols can be reinterpreted "downward" to the local or regional levels by selective appropriation. The same is true of language and history, two other elements seen as needed for nation-making. In terms of languages, English certainly functions as a national language, but it inevitably functions also as an internationalizing language, linking Papua New Guinea to the world in a way the two linguae francae—Tok Pisin and Motu—cannot.

The contribution language makes to identity may explain why Tok Pisin is popular in local contexts even among the elite who speak English: it links them in an internal solidarity vis-à-vis others and identifies them with the majority of their kin. Yet Tok Pisin, in turn, is not used as a mark of high status. In other words, no single language can combine all the nation-making functions that are needed. Furthermore, there are the extremely numerous local languages that have made Papua New Guinea a special target for classificatory linguists. Identities are still partly tied to these languages, and language shifts into Tok Pisin or English are accompanied by senses of rupture in identities. The issue of whether local vernaculars should be taught in schools (bastions of English) shows that contention can arise here. Local languages can be thought of either as contributing to local and thus national authenticity or as a threat to a common national identity, which must be based on the "new" language of English. Tensions of this kind between the purely local and the purely (inter)national are not easy to resolve and often reflect the state's attempt to be both modern and traditional at the same time.

The contrasts between these images of tradition and modernity lead to a sense of contradiction in the minds of Papua New Guineans themselves, who find it difficult to know whether to be ashamed or proud of either their indigenous cultures or their progress and standing in the contemporary world of modernity (see Carrier and Friedman 1996). This sense of contradiction also inhibits the development of national consciousness, as shown in literary productions (cf. Lindstrom 1998:165).

Gilian Gorle recently examined the sentiments of a set of the intellectual elite of Papua New Guinea who were writing just prior to, during, and just after independence (the period 1969 to 1979). This literary survey says much about the internal conflicts that individuals were experiencing in the light of

rapid changes. She suggests that these writers "worked to shape social change by challenging existing attitudes and raising people's consciousness of their unique cultural heritage" (Gorle 1995:80).

Gorle points out that the background to these literary works was a policy of literary nationalism. In 1969 a Literature Bureau was established to produce stories, biographies, and other literary forms that could be used in the classroom in an effort to engage students in the learning process (ibid.:84). One of the goals writers were aiming for at this time was to attempt to create a sense of national identity through local cultural heritage appreciation and through introspective examinations such as are found in Bernard Narokobi's essays, *The Melanesian Way* (1983; see also Gorle 1995:86).

Often these writers expressed the conflicts of their own desires as they selectively accepted or rejected various elements of change that came into their country from outside. Some of these writings reflected the sentiments of local villagers, while many resonated strongly with the voices of dissatisfaction and confusion of the literary elites who were, because of their particular education, removed from the local context and thereby alienated from full incorporation into local structures of community. It is in this context that the familiar theme of nostalgia coupled with alienation emerges.

Most of the texts that Gorle examined from the 1970s portray "Western influences" as unfavorable (Gorle 1995:94). She quotes from John Kadiba's 1974 poem, *The Widening Gap*, which clearly expresses this:

> Not only are we separated
> By distance in space and time,
> But in way in living [*sic*],
> In experience,
> In thought,
> In outlook.
> As the years move on,
> The gap grows,
> Inevitably,
> Unintentionally,
> Unwillingly,
> Sadly,
> But somehow it happens. (Ibid.:96)

Many of these works were meant to foster a sense of commonality among all Papua New Guineans through expressing shared fears and concerns about the uncertainty of what change would bring and through support for pride in traditional cultural values. But due to the great diversity of Papua New

Guinea's societies, the cultural values that are acknowledged are generally local ones, which may or may not be shared by a wider set of Papua New Guineans. These literary works often promote social change while noting the enormous difficulties that can arise when change is too rapid and forms of local cultural knowledge are unable to cope with incoming influences. As forms of protonationalist literature they reflect the problems, rather than the victories, inherent in the historical processes they depict.

Gorle also examined later PNG literature and its impact on social change that occurred during 1979 to 1989, a period marked by a reduced output of literary works. In this study she used as her source material essays, unpublished drama scripts, and letters to the editor of the *Times of Papua New Guinea.* Her survey revealed that the corpus of works had a less hostile tone to it and seemed to be more future looking (Gorle 1996:55). Many of the letters to the *Times of Papua New Guinea* were concerned with services and development within the country and questions on which parts of the country received what types of services. In addition, concerns about the environment and land use were raised. These are issues that raise questions of national versus local identity and of ownership spurred by globalizing influences such as mining and logging. The environmental and social impacts of these industries are enormous. Issues of land ownership are invariably contested and tied to local disputes. Alterations to the social structure are profound as "outsiders" come into an area to work with no long-term concern for the local communities. Often these areas become arenas for prostitution and alcohol overconsumption. Although money is brought into the region, the local people and the companies often struggle over how to use these funds "properly." Hence, in these contexts also, local identities tend to be most forcefully articulated, in opposition to influences that are identified with state-based policies.

Christianity as Nation-Builder

In addition to the mining and logging that have come into Papua New Guinea, another import into the country that has profoundly altered the ideological environment is Christianity (see Barker 1990). Papua New Guinea is constitutionally "a Christian country," although its constitutional wording recognizes both Christianity and ancestral custom (see Lātūkefu 1988 for a careful discussion of ways in which Christianity and custom may be in conflict). Christianity has been and continues to be a force toward defining nationhood while at the same time very clearly strengthening local senses of community. As Christian sects moved through the country, a process of reinscription of local forms of religious beliefs and values took place. Indigenous groups have retro-

spectively developed objectified notions of what their cultures were like and these semireified images often intertwine with introduced Christian beliefs to produce new images of local identities (see, for example, Lattas 1998; Robbins 1998a, 1998b; Stewart and Strathern 2000). The paradox of a religion that officially promotes wider senses of identity yet also produces new senses of local distinctiveness has been remarked on by Papua New Guinean writers themselves.

Christianity as a unifying force in Papua New Guinea was discussed earlier by Bernard Narokobi, who examined a variety of cultural, philosophical, political, and religious questions he thought warranted Papua New Guineans' concern. Among his thoughts, some of which have been compiled in *The Melanesian Way* (Narokobi 1983), was the idea that, on the one hand, "with Christianity, we extend our loyalties, affections, love, and understanding beyond our clan, village and racial communities. This is real unity." On the other hand, "the Christian churches do not in fact present themselves as a unifying force. On the contrary, they re-emphasise division and disunity" (ibid.: 138–140). This appears to be a comment on disputes among the different churches, in contrast to the common ideology of Christian love they supposedly shared (see, for example, Strathern 1993; Strathern and Stewart 1999).

It is remarkable how many communities have a strengthened sense of local identity promoted by affiliation through the churches. Often several churches coexist within a community, for example, Catholic, Lutheran, or Assemblies of God, which also divide the community along new lines so that sections of the community may be divided along congregation lines or family members may belong to different churches.

One of the fastest-growing movements that has entered into Papua New Guinea is that of the Charismatic Christians, many of whom teach that the world is soon going to end, in 2000/2001 (Stewart and Strathern 1997, 1998a, 1998b, 2000). These teachings represent the influence of globalizing factors; contain images derived from America, Europe, and elsewhere; and adapt themselves to a myriad of local concerns wherever they spread.

The churches in Papua New Guinea have in general made profound alterations in traditional practices in all aspects of sociality. Lindstrom refers to the problem of "wife-beating" (1998:162); and more recently, the Papua New Guinea Council of Churches has called for members of Parliament to formulate legislation to eliminate the practice of polygamy in Papua New Guinea (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier,* 12 March 1998; *The Independent,* 11 September 1998). The Individual and Communication Rights Advocacy Forum supports this move, stating that polygamy

> breeds violence, creates instability in the family, leads to social problems between families and communities, and creates competing

> interest between women. In fact as a result of the conflict arising out of the polygamy situation, women often engage in fights with other wives which has led to an increasing number of wives killing the "other woman". The custom of polygamy is also repugnant to the principles of humanity. The practice of polygamy only leads to social problems and disrespect for women in the relationship. Today, most polygamous marriages existing in Papua New Guinea are not practiced according to custom. But custom is being used by men as an excuse to have more than one woman. (*Papua New Guinea Post-Courier,* 12 March 1998)

In March 1998 the Reverend Leva Pat Kila, general secretary of the PNG Council of Churches, called on all Christian lawyers to use their expertise to assist in drafting the necessary legislation to outlaw polygamy *(The National,* 24 March 1998). Whether this legislation will be put forward and passed is yet to be seen.

In a criticism of the movement to ban polygamy by church groups, women's organizations, and several members of Parliament, Dr. Andrew A. L. Lakau has argued that preservation of customary practices such as polygamy is important because "only when all of us take worthy customs and traditional wisdom as the corner-stones of our individual pursuits and collective efforts, will we avoid the mess we are in now" *(The National,* 13 October 1998). This is just one example among many of the debates over what is customary practice and which customary practices the nation of Papua New Guinea wants to retain currently. The issues are as difficult as they were in the 1980s. For example, in the Hagen area where we conduct research, it was customary practice to take revenge on a neighboring group by raping their women, stealing their pigs, and burning their property. Many arenas of practice from the past have been abandoned or modified over time, so there is a problem of a temporal baseline for what is supposed to be "traditional."

Another, less widely noticed arena in which the Christian churches have had a substantial impact is on exchange practices. In Hagen the *moka,* a nexus of competitive exchanges, was an underpinning component of life that was never fully supported by the churches. Polygamy was an integral component of the system since it was one of the most effective ways for a man to be assured that he could produce enough pigs and raise sufficient wealth to propel himself forward in *moka* exchanges. Nowadays the *moka* exchange system has gone through dramatic alterations, having steadily declined over the past ten years. The old *moka* exchange has been essentially replaced by large, single, unilateral compensation payments for killings and most recently by increased competitive brideprice prestations (Stewart and Strathern 1998c).

In 1998 we observed a further twist on all these shifts. While people

openly declared on the whole that the *moka* was dead, at the same time coalitions of leading men were beginning to infuse into the Charismatic Christian ritual cycle elements of bigmanship that were highly reminiscent of the past. For example, these men were planning that their own future baptisms would be public events, demonstrating their own status and simultaneously boosting the prestige of the church, which would cause others to convert (a classic phenomenon in Pacific history). Such baptismal events were being marked above all by the building of expensive new churches (viz. cult houses), the slaughtering of pigs (viz. sacrifices), and the making of eloquent speeches to large crowds (reminiscent of the rhetorical expertise of big-men in *moka* exchanges), as well as the necessary acquisition of vehicles to transport supporters. As in the past, these men were aiming to gain political prestige within the community as well as gaining spiritual blessing—in the past the Female Spirit and the ancestors bestowed these favors, now God does. The wives of these men were engaged, as in the past, in raising the pigs that would be needed at the grand baptismal events. These women were also raising money for the occasion through the sale of coffee from their trees.

The death of *moka* coincides with the birth of Christian ways, but these ways are then adapted so as to reproduce many of the essential patterns of the *moka*. What begins as the development of new forms of custom and identity tied in with national-level concerns is once more transformed back into local agendas.

Law as Symbol of National Identity

Further questions arise regarding the relationship of "law" to the nation, paralleling the questions about "custom" and "religion" and indeed intertwined with these, via the issues raised at local levels.

John Nonggorr, professor of law at the University of Papua New Guinea, discussed his ideas about the place of religion in PNG law in a column for the *National* (13 October 1998):

> In PNG, we can find religious beliefs reflected in custom, under the English common law and even under the Constitution and other statutes. . . . Many Christian rules and principles find their way into laws of countries in which Christianity is the religion that is practiced there. This is the case in PNG. . . . Religion itself means a belief in the existence of a supernatural ruling power which is the creator and controller of the universe or the world. . . . If you extend this meaning of religion to some of the customary beliefs that different groups in PNG hold and practice, you will agree that we do have our dif-

> ferent religious beliefs in our customs. Therefore, our different customs of the many tribes have in them religion. Custom is part of our legal system now. Therefore, our tradition-based religions are part of the law in the sense that they are part of our customs and customs are a part of the underlying law. . . . In almost all customs of our people in PNG, people believe that you must not do wrong to others. For example, you must not steal from others, you must not kill others or you must not say bad things about others. It is also recognized that you must do good to others—you must freely give to others in need, you must help to look after your family, relatives and clan members, etc. There are common beliefs in custom that those who do good will be rewarded in some ways while those who do bad will be punished. . . . This establishes that religion is already a part of the laws of PNG. It is a part of the laws of PNG in that customs, which are based on PNG's religious beliefs, are a part of our laws. That is the first way in which religion is a part of our laws. The second is through the English common law. . . . The third way in which religion is part of the laws of PNG is through statutory law. The clearest example is the Constitution of PNG. . . . In summary then, it is clear that religion is part of the laws of PNG—as part of custom, the English common law and the Constitution and other statutory laws.

Professor Nonggorr works his way through here to the point that religion enters into customary law in Papua New Guinea and elsewhere and, therefore, that Christianity can enter into such law. With this platform he goes on to declare that "in almost all customs of our people in PNG, people believe that you must not do wrong to others." But who are the "others"? The clearest feature of customary practices everywhere is that they are socially relativistic. For example, it may be bad to steal from one's own close kin but okay to do the same to unrelated enemies. Colonial law was introduced precisely to break down this social partitioning of customary ethics, and Christianity in some ways does the same. Yet both have had to appropriate the idioms of kinship to survive.

This statement of "custom" transforms a relativistic reality that held in small communities to the entirety of Papua New Guinea, thus projecting it as a national symbol. It in fact constitutes a remarkable act of appropriation "upward" in scale, lifting the local to the national and attempting to create the latter in the image of the former, a common process worldwide (see, for example, Eriksen 1993; and, again, Herzfeld 1992). Such a strategy is diagnostic of national agency; local concerns operate differently.

The debate over whether a law should be passed to ban polygamy, as discussed above, is one example of many in which Papua New Guinea must decide if the practice is repugnant to humanity and thus should be legislated against or not. Colonial law did not prohibit polygamy but it did proscribe certain other practices, such as sorcery and witchcraft (Ordinance No. 22 of 1971). Fears of sorcery and witchcraft practices are on the rise in many areas of Papua New Guinea today. In Aluni village in the Duna area, the local councillor, K., asked us in 1998 if we could help him to argue that a law should be passed against witchcraft after a number of people had been supposedly killed by witchcraft in Aluni and the neighboring village of Hagu (Stewart and Strathern 1999). The councillor had not been made aware that a law already existed against witchcraft. His confusion stemmed from the problem of how to know which parts of custom enter into law and which are, or should be, forbidden by law, since witchcraft is certainly a customary practice. His confusion was also perfectly genuine, as we have seen, since debates about what customary forms are nowadays acceptable are increasingly entering into contemporary politics at the national level. His interest lay in applying these debates to the problems of his own area.

Senses of National and Local Identity

Theorists of nationalism have often pointed out that nations need a narrative with which to identify, a narrative that is also supported by commemorative rituals. Papua New Guinea has its Independence Day on September 16 with festivities organized at national, provincial, district, and local levels. Clark, however, points out that these celebrations are not always viewed positively at local levels, at least in parts of the Highlands (Pangia, Tari) where the original opposition to independence and the Pangu Party is still remembered (1997). In Aluni, a part of the Duna area north of Tari (Southern Highlands Province), in 1991 people said they were glad to be visited by outsiders (whites) and had been angry with Michael Somare for driving them away with the program for localization (indigenization) of work positions. In general, Papua New Guinea lacks a single "oppositional narrative" to colonial control; independence was gained faster than many in the Highlands in the 1970s wished it to be and has since failed to deliver to them "the goods" of affluence, prosperity, and order that they individually and collectively desired.

Some of the confusions over local and national identity were reflected in the 1991 Independence Day celebrations in Aluni. A burlesque performance depicted the first arrival of whites into the area, reflecting a mixture of ideas that the local people hold in identifying with the symbols of modernity (in the performance represented by the image of the *kiaps,* government patrol

officers) and the symbols from the precolonial past that still prevail even in the heavily Christianized present (represented by the image of a Tsinali man from the backwoods on the other side of the Muller Range near Aluni). When the representation of the *kiaps* paraded to the celebration area followed by the representation of the Tsinali tribesman (walking on stilts), everyone present broke out in uneasy laughter. The burlesque, an expression of the Duna people's desire for what is "modern" while still being tied in many ways to their old customs, attempted to create an amalgamation of the two during the celebration of national identity (see also Otto 1993 on tradition and innovative transformations thereof).

Errington and Gewertz describe a similar performance, a Jubilee drama, which celebrated the coming of the first missionaries to Karavar Island in the Duke of York Islands off the northwest coast of New Britain, Papua New Guinea (1995:77–106). But in that case the prime minister came and made speeches as an integral component of the overall event, which, in retrospect of independence, contextualized the conversion of pagans to Christianity as a nation-making event that Errington and Gewertz neatly refer to as "the Invention of Nontradition."

Delving even farther back than precolonial times, there is a possibility that prehistory could form in part a uniting charter for the nation, for example through claiming an early site for agriculture, reputedly nine thousand years old, at Kuk in the Western Highlands Province and making it into a significant national or international site (Mangi 1989; Strathern and Stewart 1998). Such ambitions, however, run up against local aspirations and ambitions that do not necessarily fit with national ones.[2]

There are therefore problems with symbols (e.g., the flag), with the national language, and with the lack of a unifying narrative of struggle in relation to nation-making in Papua New Guinea. These are compounded by problems of the state structure itself in achieving pervasive salience in people's consciousness and lives. The largely unconscious processes of commodification—leading to "possessive individualism," "subjectification" in the Foucauldian sense, and further to the creation of forms of individual identity defined in terms of the state (e.g., citizen, voter, taxpayer, right and duty-bearing unit of responsibility and agency)—are all certainly in train in contemporary urban society and among the elite. But the distinction between nation and state is important here. It is the state that promotes commoditization and subjectification, and in doing so the state also acts as a conduit for globalizing influences. But these two processes by themselves do not automatically lead to the creation of a strong national consciousness at either the political or the cultural level. Rather, nationalism and strong senses of identity generally arise in circumstances of adversity, struggle, and opportunity. In Papua New Guinea

such forms of at least temporary attachments have arisen by way of opposition to the state itself and its projects (cf. May 1982). Groups, for example, may demand very high amounts of compensation for natural resources such as oil or gas; they may oppose foreign loggers who have state backing; they may block roads and airstrips to insist on their demands, treating the state itself in some ways like a rival clan, though with a clear realization of the different scales of issues at stake.

The history of Papua New Guinea is also marked by a series of separatist or near-separatist movements, the most serious of which has occurred in Bougainville and has centered on issues of mining revenues and environmental pollution. (After many false starts, accords tentatively laying down the basis for Bougainville's return to the Papua New Guinea state were reached in the latter half of 1997, almost ten years after the Bougainville Revolutionary Army declared secession. The lengthy process of tentative reincorporation into the state continues.) The state is fissile for several reasons: first, the division into provinces provides a basis for separatist tendencies, especially if natural resources are at stake; second, the state does not easily maintain its claim of sovereignty over these resources; and third, the predominant bigman forms of leadership lead to audacious local attempts to challenge state authority. These same patterns have led the Highlands provinces in the last twenty years or more to experience severe problems of intergroup fighting, which further challenge the state's monopolistic control of force. Possessive individualism spills over into illegal gang activity, and "law and order" problems interfere with government services and capitalist development alike.

These conditions have led commentators to describe Papua New Guinea today as a "weak state." Without entering into this issue in detail, we wish to point out here that such a "weak" situation could be countered only by a "strong" sense of the nation as a set of people, but we have seen already the reasons why this is not the case. Another useful way of formulating this problem is made by Peter Larmour, arguing that "civil society" needs to include associations such as clans that are not a part of state structure as such (1992:107). We need to ask here, however, whether the weakness of the state is largely due to external, global factors or to internal difficulties, or if these two categories are inextricably intertwined. Much of the instability, as well as the revenue, in Papua New Guinea comes from the influx of global capital through investment in plantations, factories, mines, and other forms of production. But some of the problems arise from factionalism in national politics that resembles local forms of factioning and from the constitution of local societies themselves: their strong localism, the renewed production of this localism in response to both threats and opportunities from outside, and the propensity of groups in the Highlands to resort to violence as a means

of pursuing their ends. This propensity has been aggravated further by increases in scale, leading to confrontations of at least a notional kind between whole council areas, whole provinces, or even islanders versus mainlanders in the case of Bougainville. At the local level, external and internal factors are certainly intertwined also.

Robert Foster has argued that one form of globalizing influence that has molded a sense of the PNG nation is advertising, which promotes mass consumption of particular goods. "Advertisements become important vehicles for the imagination of a community of consumers whose shared consumption practices and ideals put them in experiential unison with each other" (Foster 1995:15). Although advertisements and consumption of common goods do produce a sense of commonality among Papua New Guineans, this sense of identity often overflows beyond the boundaries of Papua New Guinea into the global arena. Mass media also produce a sense of national identity, but this too rapidly expands into a global sense of one's place outside of Papua New Guinea. Christian influences in effect do the same.

Weak State, Strong Societies?

Joel Migdal has discussed many of the analytical issues addressed here under his general rubric of "strong societies and weak states" (1988). Migdal does not discuss nationalism or the concept of the nation in relation to the state as one of his central focuses, but he does introduce some useful concepts that apply well beyond his two main case studies of Sierra Leone and Israel as "weak" and "strong" states respectively. He cautions against the simplistic use of his concepts, noting that opposing scholars may have been looking for strength or weakness "in different realms" of state activity (Migdal 1988:8). This is a valid point. He goes further and observes that states often have a dual nature. They can have "a formidable presence in their societies, but many have experienced faltering efforts to get their populations to do what state policy makers want them to do." He adds: "States are like big rocks thrown into small ponds: they make waves from end to end, but they rarely catch any fish" (ibid.:9). This observation must apply, *a fortiori,* in cases where there are essentially "states without nations," as John Kelly puts it (1995:256).

Migdal depends on the state's ability to change forms of social behavior in accordance with its policies as his main criterion for "strength." Strong local societies, with their own local values that oppose those of the state, resist the state's efforts to impose its values and thus limit the growth in strength of the state itself in Migdal's terms. Some of the phenomena we have reviewed fit this model, for example, the tendency of local groups to pursue their interests through warfare or to make unwelcome demands for compensation

from the state or from international companies that pay taxes to the state and contribute heavily to Papua New Guinea's revenue.

However, other aspects of the situation fall outside of this specific weak state/strong societies scenario. In the various rural areas with which we are familiar, the issues that people complain about are the failure of governments to deliver the kinds of services, in terms of health, education, and sustainable business development, that they seek and the government professes to promote. This is not an inability of the state to bring about changes in behavior patterns but its inability to keep its own promises. In the sphere of law and order many people wish that the police and courts could be more efficient and more forceful in dealing with criminals, especially the gangs of rascals that nowadays are as inconvenient to the general populace as they are to local businesses and visiting tourists. Again, this is not a case of a strong local society defying the state as such, but of local people calling on their own politicians to address their problems. In fact, members of Parliament (MPs) have been given exceptional resources to make their influence felt in their electorates by the provision of special rural development funds they can personally disburse to meet such local needs. With 109 MPs and each MP since 1995 controlling K1 million, this program ties up a huge amount of money in networks of political patronage. Local people complain that the money is improperly siphoned away to the personal benefit of the MPs or their immediate factions. In some cases the people are not even aware that these funds exist. Accusations of corruption abound. This particular problem again falls outside of the strong societies/weak state scenario, except that it does reflect the tremendous demands placed on politicians by their local supporters and in that sense shows how local concerns can subvert national policies. Yet the government itself is providing these funds to politicians in order to secure power and support at the national level.

To disregard these complex interactional processes that enmesh national and local levels together would be a mistake. Equally, it is insufficient to argue, in the vein of latter-day dependency theory, that international lending agencies such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are solely responsible, through their demands for structural adjustment of the economy, for driving a wedge between nation and state. Such a formulation begs two questions: (1) whether the concept of the nation would otherwise be unproblematically strong and (2) whether the International Monetary Fund or World Bank demand such adjustments solely to suit themselves or also partly in response to phenomena such as crony capitalism and its Papua New Guinea analog, the "*wantok* system."

In other words, the dynamics of governmental practices must be included in our analyses. Here Migdal has made a very useful contribution with

his analyses of "the politics of survival" (e.g., the politicization of bureaucratic positions) and "the triangle of accommodation" between state leaders, implementors, and local politicians (1988: chaps. 6 and 7). Particularly the latter concept offers a further way of discussing the national- versus local-level issues that concern us, for example, how national policies become transformed when implemented at the local level through the need to effect negotiated compromises.

Local versus National

The general problem of nation-making appears to be entering more strongly than ever before into people's historical consciousness, a sign that an awareness of the question of national consciousness has begun to form. We suggest that its major axis, in a country of such diversities, will continue to be that of local versus national identities. This issue can be related to the work of Arjun Appadurai, who in a series of writings both problematized and reestablished the older focus on local social structures and cultural patterns (1988, 1990, 1992). Questioning the concept of "locality" and "the local" in the contemporary world, he first proposed the alternative concept of the "ethnoscape": the study of the networks formed by people across various boundaries, whether state, regional, or local. Second, he argued that we must be prepared to study the historical production of local (and national) categories: not to take locality for granted and use it as an *explanans*, but to regard it as an *explanandum*, the product of sets of negotiated, contested, and contingent actions. Appadurai thus introduced fluidity at the heart of the supposedly durable. This is, in fact, an important analytical moment.

The examples above were chosen because they illustrate our argument that it is the *appropriation* of symbols that is crucial to study. More particularly, this appropriation is taking place more effectively downward rather than upward, that is, from the national to the local. While the drive of elite persons and organizations is often to create the national out of the local, the drive from the local level is the reverse, to recreate the local out of the national, even if this means that the local level is imaged in terms of national-level symbols.

First, the national cultural institutions have perforce used local or regional cultural forms for their attempts to produce a national consciousness. They have made creative efforts to transform these local materials into national ones, but the people continue to view the products as at least partly local.

Second, national symbols are susceptible to being reinterpreted in local terms, as in Clark's example of the national flag in Pangia. The iconic character of visual, material symbols means that their physical dimensions and

qualities can be given different symbolic meanings. Their very aptness for reinterpretation subverts their officializing use in contexts of nation-making.

The two "positive" examples of the use of the PNG flag from the Hagen area can also be reanalyzed in these terms. The participants might have used the flag in a context of peacemaking simply because it appeared to them in that light. But equally plausible is the argument that what the participants were doing was to bring into play a marker of power and claim their own special relationship to it, so that they effectively localized its power. They claimed it for themselves, that is. Building on Peter Sahlins's point, then, about "appropriating the nation," we argue that people are producing a new version of their own locality cut from national cloth, rather than simply assimilating themselves into the nation.

The elements of this process at work are also seen in the contexts of national law, religion, and politics. In politics, the prevalence of patronage clearly transforms the national into the local and introduces factionalism simultaneously at both levels. In the context of law, popular attempts of leaders to find laws that suit local problems, such as witchcraft, would soon run into deep difficulties if the leaders demanded, say, the execution of witches; but punishments of this kind may indeed be among their aims. Such local aims would run stubbornly counter to the project of nationalizing the local, as found in Professor Nonggorr's commentary quoted above. In religion, the success of the law against polygamy will depend largely on ways in which arguments at local levels present the pros and cons of the debate, although here local and national perceptions are likely to converge over time with the decline for other reasons of older forms of exchange and the rise of church-building enterprises. The churches showing the most rapid growth and greatest vitality are ones that openly embrace the local level by referring to each congregation as a "local church" (this is the practice of the Assemblies of God, for example).

In all of these examples we see that local identities are just as much "produced" through negotiation with and appropriation from wider levels, including the national, as the other way around. Indeed, we advocate reversing the ordinary trend of thinking that supposes we are seeing the production of the nation or nationalism to the view that we are seeing the reproduction of the local through the national: surely an image derived from the "goods and services" image of colonial administration in the colonial past. This is neither a "bottom-up" nor a "top-down" form of analysis. It is, however, in accord with Appadurai's strictures. We call it the "national into local" model. The local is reinscribed with national symbols. Conversely, however, the national finds it hard to inscribe itself with local ones. Local groups set themselves up as icons of themselves, dressed in borrowed symbols. Essentially the problem here derives from conditions of exchange. People see the state

and the national symbols that go with it as a resource, a source of gifts. They do not see themselves as happy donors of gifts to the state or the nation.

Equally it is not plausible to argue that the national is simply reappropriated and made a part of the local. The very fact that a national symbol such as the flag is brought into a local event such as a compensation payment means that a two-way process is in train: the local event is given additional meaning through association with a national symbol, while the meaning of the national symbol is partially transmuted into something local. Separating the levels here is not analytically feasible. We have, however, made a nuanced argument that on the whole the more lively process consists of "localizing the national" rather than "nationalizing the local." Such an argument is in line with that of Alexander Wanek, in his interesting experimental ethnography that unites a "microscopic" study of the tiny community of Nauna in Manus Province with "the context of a modern nation-state" (1996:vii).

Wanek notes in his treatment of "culture as political tool" that when appropriated into national-level agendas cultural items appear as "a bricolage containing *fictitious*, *defused*, or *reduced* traditions" (ibid.:119). Such a bricolage can, of course, acquire vitality over time if successfully linked to shared experiences. At the local level, when items are appropriated from the national repertoire, they at once enter a realm of immediate experience and are enriched by this. Clearly, we can conceive of the overall form of the relationship between local and national levels as dialectical, the one eliciting the other and leading to progressive changes over time. All we have suggested here is that local appropriations are vital and worth studying and that the dialectical patchwork that emerges is rather complex.

Similar conclusions can be drawn from study of the Fuyuge, a population of about fourteen thousand living some one hundred kilometers north of Port Moresby in the Papuan hinterlands (Hirsch 1990:22). Eric Hirsch discusses the substitution of betel nut bunches for chiefly bones in Fuyuge blessing rituals. Catholic priests had discouraged the exposure of bones, and betel nut was used instead, gathered at least in part through visits to the capital city of Moresby. Betel nut was already part of Fuyuge culture, the large kind known as *solon* treated as "having person-like qualities" (ibid.:29). Hirsch argues that its relatively novel use in chiefly rituals is a way of associating the Fuyuge with the metropolis and therefore also is a part of the process of constructing a "national culture" through consumption practices. These are probably correct inferences. However, it is worth noting that betel nut also has local significance for the Fuyuge. Indeed, Hirsch reports that in the rituals the Fuyuge chiefs speak of putting the foot of the *solon* nut, imported from Moresby, on the ground "so he will stay here," that is, feel at home (ibid.). The exotic is thus localized, or in our terms, appropriated.

In a later paper, Hirsch discusses how a Fuyuge leader named one of his

gardens "Taurama," after a shopping area in Port Moresby, in some fashion assimilating his garden to the metropolis (Hirsch 1995). Here too the reverse was also happening, and in the process the metropolitan name acquired a transformed meaning, becoming an appendage to, and a component of, the leader's prestige locally in a world where prestige is gained by holding ceremonies in particular places (ibid.:202). (We are not concerned here with Hirsch's further arguments about rural-urban transformations of personhood and subjectivity, although these are related to our topic.) Hirsch suggests individual consumerism conflicts with the perspective of the ritual village; but national culture could in principle be constructed out of either or both of these. Debbora Battaglia's study of the urban yam festival sponsored by elite Trobrianders in Port Moresby in 1985 indicates how the festival was designed to bring a sense of "home" into the urban setting by staging a *kayasa* or festival based on the competitive gardening of yams (1995). Here, then, the village values were transported into the town and incorporated, to some extent via the media, into a context of national culture. The festival's meanings were both conserved and transformed, we may say, and values both local and metropolitan urban (which may equate with national) were expressed.

Conclusion: Inscriptions and Reinscriptions

Appadurai's arguments have influenced many ethnographers and theorists. They are built on, for example, by the contributors to Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson's edited volume *Culture, Power, Place* (1997). Beginning with a critique of the "peoples and cultures" view, Gupta and Ferguson point out that while the critique is generally accepted its meaning for ethnographic practice "is still very much in the process of being worked out" (ibid.:3). They note that "cultural territorializations (like ethnic and national ones) must be understood as complex and contingent results of ongoing historical and political processes. . . . It is these processes, rather than pregiven cultural-territorial entities, that require anthropological study" (ibid.:4). Relativizing locality in this way requires working against a "metaphysics of sedentarism" (ibid.:6, quoting Liisa Malkki), gendered associations of the local with the primordial-feminine (ibid.:7, referring to the work of Doreen Massey), or generally "a nostalgia for origins"—all forms of essentialism (see also Carrier 1992). Identity thus becomes "a mobile, often unstable, relation of difference" (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:13), and identity and alterity are produced dialectically. In their second essay in the volume, however, Gupta and Ferguson rightly address an irony that has been widely observed and demands attention: that while social scientists are busy deconstructing essentialism, people "out there"

are even busier reconstructing it. "The irony of these times is that as actual places and localities become ever more blurred and indeterminate, *ideas* of culturally and ethnically distinct places become perhaps even more salient," the authors observe (ibid.:39). "Territoriality is thus reinscribed at just the point it threatens to be erased" (ibid.:40).

It is at this point that the anthropological project finds itself again, we suggest. The process of reinscription is basically the same as previous processes of inscription, though scale and focus may shift. In other words, the production of locality bears comparison with the production of ethnicity or nationhood if we look at it in terms of the appropriation of meanings and the processes of power that make such meanings accepted: sliding scales, constant themes. This is not to argue that the appropriations are exactly the same at all levels. Also, some inscriptions are harder to make than others. But it is to argue that selective appropriation is always at work. And this point bears on the discussion of the significance of globalization.

Globalization is supposed to produce homogeneities: of cultural forms, of economic practices, of patterns of production and consumption. Yet heterogeneities are respun out of such uniformities precisely by acts of selection and emphasis that stress either commonality or difference. Hence the production of identities at all levels takes place by means of such acts of selection. International uniformities of patterns of consumption of goods, then, do not necessarily preclude the development of ideas of national identity, since such ideas may center on another set of symbols or may metonymically associate global and national symbols, as when a commodity is advertised by a person in traditional attire. The problem in creating national symbols lies not in the availability of symbols but in the degree to which they are taken back into their local contexts and in how these local contexts themselves feed on and grow from national ones. Indeed, as our title indicates, such symbols may even inhere in individual contexts, leading to unilateral demands on the state, and the attempted reappropriation of the prime national symbol by its first maker.

NOTES

1. Lindstrom's excellent essay came to our notice early in January 1999, after this paper was substantially completed in September 1998. We thank Geoff White for drawing our attention to it. As Lindstrom notes (1998:180), his paper was first presented in June 1990 to an East-West Center Conference in Hawai'i on Cultural Policy and National Identity in which White and others, including two leading Papua New Guinean scholars, Wari Iamo and Jacob Simet, took part. His materials therefore largely relate to the 1980s or earlier.

2. Lindstrom also quotes John Muke on this point. Muke is an archaeologist who has argued that for Papua New Guinea "a common identity must be sought in the unwritten

past" (1985:65–66, quoted in Lindstrom 1998:146). It is interesting that the latest archaeological work at the Kuk site in which Muke and others are involved is complicated by the contested claims over the "heritage" uncovered there (Muke 1998; Strathern and Stewart 1998).

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POVERTY AMONG PACIFIC ISLANDERS IN THE UNITED STATES: INCIDENCE, CHANGE, AND CORRELATES

Dennis A. Ahlburg
University of Minnesota and *University of Southampton*

Although poverty in the United States increased over the 1980s, it decreased for Pacific Islanders. But the incidence and severity of Pacific Islander poverty remained greater than that of other Americans. Poverty among Pacific Islanders declined because their attachment to the labor market increased, as did average education and work experience. The article shows that remittances may increase the poverty of some sending households and plunge other households into poverty. Also, the poverty of elderly and single-female-headed Pacific Islander households is so severe that increased welfare and Social Security payments do not lift them out of poverty. Raised are a number of unresolved issues about the meaning of poverty and the economic status of elderly households.

Over the 1980s, both the percentage and the number of people in the United States who lived in households with an income below the official poverty level, and who are thus classified as being poor, increased. In 1980, 13.0 percent of the population lived in poverty; in 1990, 13.5 percent of the population did so. The rates were unequal by race and ethnicity. The rate for whites in 1990 was 10.7 percent; African Americans, 31.9 percent; Native Americans, 30.9 percent; Hispanics, 28.1 percent; and the rate for Asian and Pacific Islanders was 12.2 percent (Danziger and Weinberg 1994:37). Over the 1980s the rates for whites, Native Americans, and Hispanics increased, while the rates for the other groups, including Asians and Pacific Islanders, declined. However, insights into the economic condition of Pacific Islanders that can be gained from statistics based on Asians and Pacific Islanders are

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limited, as Asians make up much of the group and have very different socioeconomic characteristics than Pacific Islanders.

For the individual, poverty is associated with poor health, a relatively low level of education, exposure to social stress and crime, and diminished economic prospects. Growing up in a poor household increases the chance that an individual will experience poverty as an adult (Gottschalk, McClanahan, and Sandefur 1994:100). At the national level, poverty and rising inequality have often been viewed as the necessary price of increased economic efficiency as the economy adjusts to the rigors of the new international economic order. After the necessary adjustment, economic benefits should be shared more widely. However, some economists have begun to question the belief in a necessary trade-off between efficiency and equity, as others have long doubted the belief in eventual "trickle down." For example, a recent study of fifty-six countries concluded that rising inequality, which is often accompanied by increased poverty, may harm economic growth. Inequality may cause either real or perceived social and political conflict (as it does at the individual level) and may lead to government policies that retard economic growth (Persson and Tabellini 1994).

Because they have higher levels of poverty than other groups in American society (30.3 percent in 1980 compared to 13.0 percent for all Americans and 20.5 percent in 1990 versus 13.5 percent), Pacific Islanders are at greater risk of suffering the negative consequences of poverty. But what are the extent and severity of poverty among Pacific Islanders? How did they change over the 1980s? And what factors affect the probability that a Pacific Islander household will be in poverty? These are the questions to be addressed in this study.

Data

The data used to address these questions are taken from the Public Use Micro Sample (PUMS) of the 1980 and 1990 censuses of the United States. The 1980 PUMS is a 1 percent sample of the U.S. population and the 1990 PUMS a 5 percent sample. Pacific Islanders are defined in this study on the basis of the race questions in the census. The focus of the study is on Polynesians, Melanesians, and Micronesians who came to the United States as migrants or are the descendants of migrants. As a consequence, Hawaiians are not included in the analysis. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census (1993), Hawaiians were 58 percent of 365,024 Pacific Islanders in the United States in 1990. Samoans were 17 percent, Tongans 5 percent, Fijians 2 percent, and Guamanians 14 percent. Palauans, Northern Mariana Islanders, and Tahitians were each less than one-half of 1 percent of Pacific Islanders.[1]

The majority of Tongans (61 percent) and Melanesians (78 percent) were born outside the United States and are first-generation migrants. Only 23 percent of Samoans and 18 percent of Micronesians were foreign-born, so most of these individuals are second- or higher-generation migrants (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1993).[2]

The unit of observation is the household headed by an individual sixteen years of age or older, now referred to by the Bureau of the Census as the "householder."[3] The 1980 PUMS yields 143 households headed by a Pacific Islander (other than a Hawaiian) sixteen years or older, and the 1990 PUMS lists 1,168 such households. Of concern is whether income from all sources is sufficient to raise the household above the official poverty level.

It should be noted that, while I refer to Pacific Islanders as a group, there are sizable differences among groups of Pacific Islanders and also among different locations for a particular group. For example, the poverty rate of Guamanians, Melanesians, and Micronesians in 1990 was only 50 percent of that of Samoans and Tongans, and poverty rates of Pacific Islanders in Hawai'i were about twice those in California. The size of the PUMS sample is too small to carry out a separate analysis for each group and each location.

Table 1 reports some descriptive statistics regarding the samples of householders for 1980 and 1990. The sample for 1990 is large, but that for 1980 is small. Since there is so little information available about the poverty situation of Pacific Islanders in the United States, I present the information for 1980, recognizing that it may lack precision and that differences between 1980 and 1990 in individual characteristics may reflect the small size of the 1980 sample.[4]

Between 1980 and 1990 the average age of Pacific Islander householders rose by two years, average work experience rose by a little less than two years, and average years of education rose by about one-third of a year. The incidence of a work disability rose by a little over two percentage points, and the percentage who spoke English well or very well was constant.[5] There were no notable changes in occupational distribution. Average weeks worked in 1989 were more than in 1979, and average hours worked per week were higher, yielding a larger number of hours worked in 1989 than in 1979. Most of these changes were such that poverty could be expected to fall, which it did.

There are clear differences between the average householder in 1990 and the householder of a household that is in poverty. The householder in poverty has 6 percent less education, is 77 percent more likely to have a work disability, is 8 percent less likely to speak English well or very well, is twice as likely to be female, is more likely to be a white-collar worker than a blue-collar worker, and is likely to work fewer than half the weeks per year and hours per week of the average householder. Most of these differences remain statistically significant in the multivariate analysis discussed below.

TABLE 1. **Descriptive Statistics on Pacific Islander Householders Sixteen Years of Age or Older: 1980 and 1990**

	1980		1990	
	All	In Poverty	All	In Poverty
Age (years)	36.7	37.8	38.8	37.6
Education (years)	11.9	11.2	12.3	11.6
Work experience (years)	18.8	20.6	20.5	20.1
Disability (percentage)	7.7	13.9	10.0	17.7
Speak English well or very well (percentage)	93.0	86.1	93.0	85.3
Female (percentage)	20.3	44.4	24.1	44.6
Occupations (percentage)				
Service	15.4	13.9	15.1	19.5
Farm	1.4	2.8	3.9	4.3
Blue-collar	37.1	22.2	37.3	24.7
White-collar	46.2	61.1	43.7	51.5
Weeks worked	37.9	17.4	38.4	19.4
Hours per week	33.7	14.8	34.9	19.8
Annual hours	1,551	566	1,628	707
Sample size	143	36	1,168	231

Sources: Calculated from 1980 and 1990 PUMS, U.S. Bureau of the Census.

The Measurement of Poverty

Before moving to a discussion of the incidence of poverty, it is useful to be clear on the definition used. The definition of poverty used in this study is the federal definition established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. The core of the definition is the amount of money needed to purchase a least-cost nutritionally adequate food plan. Since on average families spent one-third of their budget on food, the poverty level is roughly three times the value of the core food budget. The poverty line varies for each household depending on its size, the presence of children under the age of eighteen, and the age of the household head (under sixty-five years and sixty-five years old and over). For example, in the 1990 census the poverty level for a family of four was $12,674. For a family of four with two children, it was $12,575. The average household in the sample had 4.3 members, more than one person more than the average for the whole United States. To establish poverty status, the total income of each household or unrelated individual in the sample was compared with the appropriate poverty threshold. If total

income was less than the cutoff, the household or individual was classified as being in poverty.

The above definition of poverty has been criticized for overestimating poverty, because it does not include noncash benefits such as food stamps and Medicaid, and it does not take into account improvements in the quality of commodities over time. In the case of Pacific Islanders, it excludes in-kind transfers such as food from family in the United States and from those at home. If Pacific Islanders receive cash transfers but do not report them in the census form, then their poverty status will be overestimated.[6] However, households may overstate the size of these transfers to save embarrassment at not receiving them (Ahlburg 1991:24). Ethnographic studies of resource flows among Pacific Islander households in the United States are needed to resolve this and other issues that arise from this study.

The official definition of poverty has also been criticized for underestimating poverty. Families now spend less than one-third of their income on food, so it is argued that the poverty multiplier should be greater than that used. A higher multiplier would increase the proportion of the population in poverty. The definition also ignores differences in the cost of living. Many Pacific Islanders live in high-cost states such as Hawai'i and California, and thus the poverty figures reported here that are based on the national poverty line may understate their "true" poverty level.[7]

Neither of these criticisms questions the fundamental approach used to establish the poverty line. Amartya Sen (1985, 1987), however, has argued that such measurement schemes use the wrong metric. He argues that they are concerned with "opulence" (income or commodity possession) rather than with the essence of human well-being, which is *being* well. Poverty should be concerned with fundamental "capabilities" such as being able to live long, being well nourished, being healthy, being literate, having personal and political freedom, and the like.[8] Such an approach seems more consistent with a Pacific viewpoint, where money per se does not generally dominate other considerations.

Research has shown that the official poverty line has the highest correlation with other definitions of poverty among eight commonly used absolute, relative, and subjective definitions of poverty (Hagenaars and de Vos 1988: 219). The official poverty line is a key policy variable, used in the United States and elsewhere (including Fiji, Vanuatu, and other Pacific islands) for the allocation of funds and the targeting of programs. The concept of poverty is one that Pacific Islanders can relate to. For example, a recent survey carried out by Richard Brown and collaborators asked respondents if their parents and their spouses' parents were poor. Respondents had no problems replying to

TABLE 2. **Poverty in Pacific Islander Households: 1980 and 1990**

	All		Employed Head	
	1980	1990	1980	1990
No. of persons in households	65,100	99,560	49,300	74,719
No. of persons in households in poverty	19,700	20,440	7,700	9,720
Percentage in poverty	30.3	20.5	15.6	13.0

Source: See Table 1.

the survey question; that is, the response rate was high (Brown and Walker 1995). In addition, the recent study of poverty in Fiji used the concepts of absolute, relative, and subjective poverty in data collection without encountering difficulties on the part of respondents (Government of Fiji and UNDP 1997).

Faced with these different approaches, one must decide whether to accept the official measure of poverty as a useful, although imperfect, measure of "poverty" or to reject it out of hand as inapplicable to Pacific Islanders. I choose to accept it as one useful measure of the condition of Pacific Islanders in the United States and as a rough guide to the challenges they face. Pacific Islanders in the United States are part of American culture, just as they are a part of their home island culture.[9] The same as other Americans, their "capabilities" or "well-being" are affected by income, although not necessarily defined by it. Low income in the United States makes it harder although not impossible for an individual to acquire at least some important attributes of "well-being."

The Incidence of Poverty

Table 2 presents data on the incidence of poverty among Pacific Islander households as reported in the 1980 and 1990 censuses. Since income data in the census refer to the previous year, the poverty data refer to 1979 and 1989. More Pacific Islanders lived in poverty in 1989 than in 1979, but a smaller percentage of Pacific Islanders were in poverty: 21 percent compared to 30 percent. Thus, the growth in the number of Pacific Islanders in poverty was due to a growth in the number of Pacific Islanders, not to an increase in the incidence of poverty. The decrease in the incidence of poverty was counter to the national trend, which was an increase in poverty from 13.0 percent to 13.5 percent. It was also counter to the change for some other minority

TABLE 3. **Pacific Islander Poverty by Age of Householder: 1980 and 1990**

	Age Group					
	16–25	26–35	36–45	46–55	56–65	>65
1980						
No. of persons in households	8,200	26,200	13,900	13,500	2,400	900
No. of persons in households in poverty	2,800	8,900	3,600	3,400	400	600
Percentage of age group in poverty	34.1	34.0	25.9	25.2	16.6	66.6
Percentage of those in poverty	14.2	45.1	18.3	17.3	2.0	3.1
Sample size	24	58	27	21	8	5
1990						
No. of persons in households	8,820	35,680	25,620	17,440	7,440	4,560
No. of persons in households in poverty	2,840	8,760	3,500	2,520	1,560	1,260
Percentage of age group in poverty	32.2	24.6	13.7	14.4	21.0	27.6
Percentage of those in poverty	13.8	42.8	17.2	12.4	7.6	6.2
Sample size	146	441	263	177	87	54

Source: See Table 1.

groups: an increase for American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut individuals from 27.5 percent in 1979 to 30.9 percent in 1989 and from 25.7 percent to 28.1 percent for Hispanics. Poverty among African Americans declined slightly, from 32.5 percent to 31.9 percent. For whites it increased from 10.2 percent to 10.7 percent (Danziger and Weinberg 1994:37). The last two columns of Table 2 show that the incidence of poverty among employed Pacific Islander households also declined.

Table 3 reports Pacific Islander poverty data for 1979 and 1989 by age of the householder. The incidence of poverty is highest for young householders (ages sixteen to thirty-five) and for the elderly (over sixty-five years). The incidence of poverty dropped considerably over the 1980s for all age groups except those fifty-six to sixty-five years of age. The 1980 estimates for those

TABLE 4. **Pacific Islander Poverty by Gender and Marital Status of Householder: 1980 and 1990**

	Male		Female	
	Married	Single	Married	Single
1980				
No. of persons in households	51,000	2,000	3,400	8,700
No. of persons in households in poverty	11,900	200	1,600	6,000
Percentage of group in poverty	23.3	10.0	47.1	69.0
Percentage of those in poverty	60.4	1.0	8.1	30.5
Sample size	104	10	8	21
1990				
No. of persons in households	69,740	8,240	7,140	14,440
No. of persons in households in poverty	10,440	1,860	1,940	6,200
Percentage of group in poverty	15.0	22.6	27.2	42.9
Percentage of those in poverty	51.1	9.1	9.5	30.3
Sample size	741	146	72	209

Source: See Table 1.

fifty-six and older should be viewed with considerable caution, because they are based on only a small number of observations. A certain amount of caution should be applied to all of the other 1980 estimates as well, since the sample sizes for these age groups are also small.

The incidence of poverty is greater in Pacific Islander households headed by women, in particular those headed by an unmarried woman. Fully 69 percent of individuals in single-female-headed households were in poverty in 1979 and 43 percent in 1989. Single women and those living in their households constituted slightly more than 30 percent of all Pacific Islanders in poverty in both 1979 and 1989, although they were only 13.4 percent of Pacific Islanders in 1979 and 14.5 percent in 1989. The incidence of poverty is also high in families headed by women whose husbands were not present in the home at the time of the census. Over the 1980s the incidence of poverty declined for each household type shown in Table 4 except those headed by

single males. In contrast, for the United States as a whole, poverty increased slightly for these groups (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1992:460). For example, the poverty rate for single mothers with children rose from 42 percent to 44 percent. Again, the declines for Pacific Islanders must be viewed with caution for household types where the sample size is small, that is, all except married male households.

Children in Poverty

One of the major policy concerns about poverty is its effects on the life chances of children. To obtain estimates of the percentage of children in poverty I shift my analysis of the PUMS data from the household to the individual. Such an analysis shows that poverty among Pacific Islanders in the United States falls disproportionately on children: 27 percent of all Pacific Islander children (younger that eighteen years of age) in 1989 lived in households below the poverty line compared to 21 percent for all Pacific Islanders. Pacific Islander children were also more likely to be poor than other children in the United States: 27 percent compared to 20 percent for all children in the United States (Danziger and Weinberg 1994:37). Although 53 percent of Pacific Islander children who lived in poverty lived in married-couple households, only 20 percent of children in such households lived in poverty, whereas 63 percent of Pacific Islander children living in female-headed households lived in poverty.

The Correlates of Poverty

The incidence of poverty is a function of both economic and demographic characteristics of individuals and households. Poverty may be related to a lack of human capital (education, work experience, language skills) sufficient to obtain a job with adequate pay or to a shift in the demand for labor. In the 1980s there was a shift in demand in the U.S. economy toward higher levels of skill and from higher-paying manufacturing jobs to lower-paying service jobs (Murphy and Welch 1993). It is also related to demographic events such as marital disruption and unmarried childbearing (Moffitt 1992; Danziger and Weinberg 1994; Garfinkel and McClanahan 1994; Ahlburg and De Vita 1992).

Reported in Table 5 are results of a regression of the variables commonly identified in the literature to be associated with poverty (see, for example, Danziger and Weinberg 1994) that are available in the PUMS. The first column shows the regression coefficient, the second the standard error, and the third marginal effects. Since the dependent variable, poverty, is a zero-

TABLE 5. **Determinants of Pacific Islander Poverty: 1990**

	Coefficient	Standard Error	Marginal Effect (percentage)
Education	–0.094	(0.024)**	–2.0
Age	–0.016	(0.005)**	–0.4
English	–0.478	(0.170)**	–10.3
Disability	0.405	(0.157)*	8.7
Head employed	–0.976	(0.117)**	–21.0
Spouse employed	–0.608	(0.145)**	–13.1
Occupation			
Service	0.311	(0.143)*	6.7
Farm	–0.048	(0.255)	–1.0
Blue-collar	–0.166	(0.122)	–3.6
Household type			
Married/kids	0.359	(0.207)	7.7
Single father	0.165	(0.303)	3.6
Single male	0.655	(0.378)	14.1
Single mother	0.921	(0.226)**	19.8
Single female	0.470	(0.346)	10.1
Nonfamily	0.957	(0.221)**	20.6
Household size	0.084	(0.027)**	1.8
U.S.-born	–0.824	(0.172)**	–17.7
Year of immigration			
1980–1984	–0.381	(0.169)*	–8.2
1970–1979	–0.706	(0.146)**	–15.2
1960–1969	–0.762	(0.178)**	–16.4
Before 1960	–1.054	(0.225)**	–22.7
Constant	1.815	(0.470)**	
Log likelihood	–428		
Restricted log likelihood	–580		
Chi-square (21)	306**		

*Signifies statistical significance at at least the 0.05 level

**Signifies statistical significance at at least the 0.01 level

one variable (a household is either not in poverty or it is in poverty), probit analysis is used, because ordinary least squares is inappropriate with a binary dependent variable. The major problem with applying ordinary least squares to the binary dependent variable poverty is that the probability of being in poverty is not constrained to be between zero and one (see Griffiths, Hill, and Judge 1993:738–740).

The marginal effects in this case are the effects of each independent variable on the probability that a Pacific Islander household will be in poverty. For example, the marginal effect of a continuous variable such as years of

education indicates that each extra year of education possessed by the head of the household decreases the probability that the household will be in poverty by 2.0 percent. The marginal effect of each dummy variable such as English language proficiency, whether the householder is employed, whether the householder has a disability, whether the spouse is employed, household type, job type, and being U.S.-born is measured relative to that of the category omitted from the regression. For English language, it is speaking English well or very well relative to speaking it less well or not at all; for service, farm, and blue-collar occupations, it is being in these occupations rather than in white-collar occupations; for employed head or employed spouse, it is being employed rather than not; for disability, it is the presence of a disability rather than not being disabled; for being U.S.-born, it is being born in the United States rather than being born elsewhere (presumably in the Pacific Islands); and for each household type shown, it is this type compared to a married couple without children. For example, holding the effects of the other variables constant, a female-headed household with children was 19.8 percentage points more likely to be in poverty than a household composed of a married couple without children. These estimates assume that the factors that affect the probability of being in poverty are those shown in the tables. If there are other factors that affect this probability and they are correlated with the factors being considered, household type for example, then the estimated effects are biased. That is, they are either too big or too small.

The overall model is statistically significant as indicated by the chi-square statistic, and the fit of the model is superior to that of reasonable alternative models.[10] Most of the variables in the model were statistically significant (determined by asymptotic *t* tests), most at least at the 0.01 level (signified by ** in Table 5) and the remainder at least at the 0.05 level (signified as * in Table 5). The factors that determine whether a Pacific Island household is in poverty are similar to those that determine the poverty status of other American households: employment, human capital (education and language proficiency), no disability, and household structure.[11] Not surprisingly, they are also the factors that determine whether a Pacific Islander is employed and whether he or she has a "good" job (see Ahlburg 1997b).

In 1990, employment was a major factor in avoiding poverty. If the householder was employed, the probability that the household was living in poverty was 21 percent lower than if the head was not employed. If the spouse of the householder was employed, the probability was 13.1 percent lower. If employment and the other variables shown are held constant, each extra year of education possessed by the householder reduced the probability of the household being in poverty by two percentage points. Households headed by older individuals were less likely to be in poverty, each extra year of age

decreasing the probability by about one-half a percentage point. Speaking English well or very well had a large impact on the incidence of poverty. Those in a household whose head spoke English well or very well were 10.3 percent less likely to be in poverty than those in households where the head spoke English less well. The economic importance of education and English language proficiency for all Pacific Islanders reinforces an earlier finding by Robert Franco. He found that low educational attainment and language problems contributed to the high unemployment of Samoans in Hawai'i.[12]

The only occupational group with a higher incidence of poverty than others was services. A householder who was employed in a service occupation was 6.7 percent more likely to be in poverty than if employed in another occupation.

The household structures associated with a higher incidence of poverty were single female with children and nonfamily households (individuals unrelated by blood or marriage). Households headed by unmarried women with children and nonfamily households are about 20 percent more likely to be in poverty than other households even after controlling for other factors that affect the incidence of poverty. It is not clear whether the structure of the household causes poverty or poverty causes the form the household takes. There are arguments made and data presented for both directions of causality (see McClanahan and Booth 1989; Moffitt 1992). Some argue that welfare payments lead to behaviors such as lower work effort and single-parent families that lead to poverty (Murray 1984). Others challenge the existence or importance of such effects. Moffitt (1992) considers the evidence and concludes that, although welfare does have some disincentive effects, they are sufficiently small that increases in welfare will not increase the number of families in poverty. It is also possible that both are caused by some third factor, such as family background. Finally, larger households are more likely to be in poverty than smaller families. Each additional household member increases the probability of poverty by about 2 percent.[13]

Recent immigrants, those who entered the United States in or after 1985, are significantly more likely to be in poverty than Pacific Islanders who immigrated before 1985. If other factors are held constant, those who immigrated before 1960 were 23 percent less likely than new immigrants to have been in poverty in 1989. The corresponding figures for those who immigrated between 1960 and 1969 are 16 percent; for those who entered the United States between 1970 and 1979, 15 percent; and for those who entered between 1980 and 1984, 8 percent. While these differences could reflect differences in abilities, education, and experience, their trend indicates that they could reflect the time it takes to adjust to the U.S. labor market. Pacific Islanders

who were born in the United States were 18 percent less likely than those born overseas to be in poverty. These differences could reflect differences in the quality of their education and training, or differences in other factors. These findings support the observation made by Michael Levin that, for Pacific Islanders, "the farther from the Pacific Islands in time, space, and orientation, the more integrated into American society [they become]" (Barringer, Gardner, and Levin 1993:311–312).

A comparison of the regression results for 1990 and those for 1980 (not shown) reveals that the improved situation for Pacific Islanders resulted primarily from an increase in the advantageous effects of education, age, and English language skills on avoiding poverty and the fact that Pacific Islanders acquired more education and the age of household heads increased. Although the percentage of Pacific Islander heads of household who spoke English well or very well did not increase, the importance of the English language skills they had increased significantly, thus helping to reduce poverty. A decline in the size of households contributed to a decline in the incidence of poverty, but a rise in the percentage of households headed by single mothers at a time when the impact of this characteristic increased tended to increase the incidence of poverty.

The Poverty Gap

The number and percentage of individuals living in poverty provides a notion of how extensive poverty is among Pacific Islanders, but how intensive is their poverty? The poverty "gap," the difference between household income and the poverty level, gives an indication of the intensity of poverty among Pacific Islander households, and the gap per person gives an even better indication of the intensity of poverty for a member of that household. In 1979, the poverty gap for the average poor American was $1,660 (in 1989 dollars) compared to $2,476 (in 1989 dollars) for the average poor Pacific Islander. In 1989, the average Pacific Islander household in poverty had an income deficit of $2,450 per person compared to the U.S. average of $1,870 (see Danziger and Weinberg 1994:33 for U.S. averages). Thus, not only did the proportion of Pacific Islander households in poverty decline over the 1980s, but the intensity of poverty per household in real terms also declined, although the intensity per person declined only slightly.

The income required to lift all Pacific Islander households out of poverty (the total poverty gap) in 1979 was $28.5 million dollars and in 1989, $50 million dollars. To put these sums in perspective, they are equal to 7.6 percent of total Pacific Islander income (excluding Hawaiians) in 1979 and 3.7 per-

cent of the total income in 1989. Thus, the relative scale of Pacific Islander poverty declined over the 1980s because of growth in overall income earned by Pacific Islanders rather than an improvement in the income deficit per poor person.

Remittances, Social Programs, and Poverty

Pacific Islanders in the United States and elsewhere commonly send remittances back to relatives in their country of origin. Remittances have been studied widely, but most of the attention is focused on the size of remittances, their duration, and what they are spent on (see, for example, Ahlburg 1991; Brown and Connell 1993). Little, if any, attention has been paid to the impact of remittances on the sending household. For example, in the in-depth studies of overseas Polynesians by Pitt and Macpherson (1974) and Small (1997), only passing mention is made of the impact of remittances on the senders. Similarly, the studies by Shankman (1976 and 1993), Ahlburg (1991), Bedford (1991), and O'Meara (1993) have little to say about the impact of remittances on their donors. Barringer, Gardner, and Levin speculated that "if remittances were to show up in the income and poverty statistics, the economic situation of Samoans would look even worse [than it already does]" (1993:313). Franco (1985) reported cases of malnutrition among Samoans in Hawai'i as a consequence of meeting remittance claims. James (1993) concluded that such claims can result in the migrant household being in debt for months or even years.

Although estimates of remittances are not available from the census, their value can be estimated from a number of other sources. Ahlburg (1991) estimated that the average level of cash remittances per migrant in the United States was about $1,000 for Tongans and $700 for Samoans, and Brown and Connell (1993) estimated that remittances per household from Australia to Tonga and Western Samoa were $1,083.[14] Brown and Connell (1993) argue that cash remittances significantly underestimate the remittance claim placed on a household. They estimated average cash remittances plus unrecorded remittances in the form of cash carried, goods sent and carried, and other payments made on behalf of the migrant to be $2,513 per household. Ahlburg reported that most studies of Pacific remittances conclude that the average household remitted from 12 percent to 15 percent of household income (1991:25–26). With a median household income of $30,000 in 1989, this finding implies remittances of $3,600 to $4,500 for the average household. The sending of remittances is also widespread. For Tongans, about 90 percent remit, with 75 percent of those with incomes below $7,500 remitting.

TABLE 6. **Illustration of the Impact of Remittances on Pacific Islander Poverty**

Remittances	Additional Families in Poverty	Additional People in Poverty	Percentage of Those Already in Poverty
$1,000	400	1,360	6.7
$2,000	740	2,670	13.1
$3,000	1,360	5,750	28.2
$4,000	1,960	8,100	39.6
$5,000	2,240	10,160	49.2

Source: Calculations by the author.

For Samoans, the respective figures are 70 percent to 90 percent, and around 50 percent for low-income earners (Brown and Walker 1994).

To throw some light on the possible effect of remittances on poverty among Pacific Islander households, the following exercise has been carried out: I calculated how many additional households in 1989 would fall below the poverty line if each sent $1,000 in remittances, $2,000, and so on up to $5,000 per household. The results of this exercise are shown in Table 6. Remittances of $1,000 per household in 1989 would cause a further 400 households to fall below the poverty line; this would add 1,360 persons to the poverty roll, almost 7 percent of the number of Pacific Islanders who are already on it. Each additional $1,000 of remittances would add a further 350 to 620 households (1,320 to 3,100 persons). Thus, at least in the United States, many Pacific Islander households live close to the poverty line. The payment of average remittances can force many of them into poverty and those already in poverty even deeper into poverty.

Welfare payments may help raise a household out of poverty. In particular, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) payments are designed to raise the income of single mothers and their children. However, there is debate over whether welfare helps or hinders those it is designed to help. To see whether increased welfare payments would have much of an effect on Pacific Islander poverty, I calculated the number of households headed by single mothers that would be raised out of poverty by an additional welfare payment of $1,000 or $2,000. In 1989, an additional $1,000 payment would raise an additional 100 households out of poverty (5 percent of single-mother households and 2 percent of all Pacific Islander households in poverty). A $2,000 payment would move 180 households out of poverty (10 percent of

single-mother and 4 percent of all households in poverty). Such increases would be large in comparison to the direct AFDC benefit for a single-parent family of three people of about $4,500 in 1991 (Danziger and Weinberg 1994:39). Even these small effects are overstated because of "leakage" from welfare payments. Because of disincentive effects, it takes a transfer of $1.60 to raise the income of a recipient by $1.00 (Moffitt 1992). Thus, changes in the welfare system are unlikely to have much of an effect on Pacific Islander poverty, and welfare is unlikely to explain much of such poverty. This finding holds more generally. Danziger and Weinberg (1994) found that in 1990 cash transfers moved only about 10 percent of female-headed families out of poverty.

Poverty and the Elderly

When the income sources of elderly Pacific Islander households are examined, the reasons for their deep poverty become obvious. One-third of the households reported no source of income at all. By far the most important source of income was Public Assistance. Half of the households received Public Assistance (mean $3,924), while one-third received Social Security (mean $3,169), 17 percent had income from some form of employment (average $4,640), and 10 percent received income from a retirement fund or some "other source." Reliance on the state for reported income is clear: two-thirds of households received income from some government source. Another contributing factor is the presence of children in households headed by the elderly. The average elderly household contains one child under the age of eighteen years, and the average poor elderly household contains 1.4 children. Some elderly households have as many as five or six children.

Increased Social Security payments over the last twenty years have been found to explain a large part of the decrease in poverty among the elderly in the United States (Weinberg 1987; Danziger and Weinberg 1994). Additional Social Security payments of $2,000 in 1989 to elderly Pacific Islander households would have had little impact on poverty, raising only 40 of the 360 elderly Pacific Islander households out of poverty. The average poverty gap for these elderly households was $7,334. An increase of $1,000 or $2,000 is quite large. For example, in 1992 the annual benefit level for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), a means-tested program, was $7,596 for a couple (Danziger and Weinberg 1994:39). For Pacific Islander elderly households in poverty in 1989, their poverty was sufficiently deep that they were relatively untouched by even large increases in Social Security.

The data on the elderly raise several unanswered questions. First, since only 6 percent of elderly households reported income from a source other

than the government or themselves (through work or a retirement plan), did they receive no income from family and relatives, or did they not report such income? Second, if almost one-third of elderly households lived in poverty and one-third of these had no reported source of income, how do these households survive? Third, why is it that individuals with higher incomes are less likely to head their own households when it is those with the lowest income that most need the economic security of being a part of a larger household? Fourth, despite advantages for the elderly and the children of intergenerational households, what are the economic implications for the elderly, and is the economic future of the children compromised? An unquestioned element of the "Pacific way" is that the elderly are respected and supported. The data from the census are therefore surprising. Further quantitative and qualitative research on Pacific Islander households is needed to investigate these puzzling results and establish the types and amounts of support provided to the elderly.

Conclusion

While the incidence of poverty in the United States increased in the 1980s, it declined for Pacific Islanders, although it was still considerably higher than the national average. The observed decline in poverty was most likely associated with increased employment, earnings, and hours worked by Pacific Islander householders. These were in turn associated with gains in average educational attainment and work experience, factors associated with a lower probability of a householder earning less than the poverty level (Ahlburg 1997b). Other factors that contributed to the decline in poverty were a reduction in average household size and an increase in the average number of income earners per household.

While the incidence of poverty decreased, the number of Pacific Islanders in poverty increased because of growth in the population. The severity of poverty for those in poverty was considerable and decreased only slightly in real terms over the decade. Poverty occurs when household income is insufficient to cover a basic minimum standard of living. However, Pacific Islander households often send a portion of their income back home to relatives, so their disposable income may be less than that measured in the official poverty calculations. An exercise illustrated that the sending of remittances by those above the poverty line could significantly increase the percentage of Pacific Islanders living in poverty. Other exercises suggest that poverty among Pacific Islanders would not be greatly affected by increases in either AFDC or Social Security payments. There are several troubling aspects of the poverty of the elderly: a large proportion of elderly households have no reported

income at all; relatively few report any source of income other than the government or themselves; and those with the lowest incomes are more likely than those with higher incomes to head their own households.

Poverty has considerable negative effects on the welfare of Pacific Islands individuals, families, and households. Although an inescapable welfare "trap" does not exist in the United States, those who are raised in poverty are more likely to experience poverty as adults than those who are not. Thus, the overrepresentation of children in poverty is particularly troubling. The keys to avoiding poverty are clear: work and productive attributes such as education and English language proficiency, which increase the chances of employment and increase earnings.

Although this analysis contributes to an understanding of poverty as defined in the census, it has several limitations that should be kept in mind. It assumes that all income is correctly reported in the census; otherwise, estimates of poverty are biased. In-kind transfers are believed to be more important among Pacific Islanders than in the general population, and the extent of poverty is believed to be overestimated. However, the impact of intrafamily transfers on measured poverty depend on the size of these transfers and the incomes and location of those sending and receiving such transfers. Without knowledge of transfers among Pacific Islander households, one cannot know whether the estimates of poverty reported here are too high or too low. This study has uncovered significant poverty among elderly Pacific Islanders. It is not clear how such households survive given their reported income. Further statistical and ethnographic study is needed to increase knowledge of coping strategies used by poor households, particularly among the elderly, and of resource flows among households. Finally, researchers need to know how Pacific Islanders view poverty. Does the approach used here approximate, at least roughly, perceptions of categories of "well-being": that is, poor and nonpoor? Can better measures of poverty and well-being be constructed? Should attempts be made to do so?

NOTES

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1. These data are based on the census race question but some groups identified, such as Northern Mariana Islander, are not distinct racial groups.

2. These percentages are likely too low for at least two reasons. The first is a tendency to report that one is born in the United States to avoid immigration problems, and the second is a Bureau of the Census coding procedure that treats American Samoans and certain groups of Micronesians as born in the United States. Thanks to Michael Levin for pointing this out to me.

3. One person in each household is designated the "householder." The householder is, in most cases, the person, or one of the persons, in whose name the household is owned, being bought, or rented and the one whose name is listed as person one on the census questionnaire. If there is no such person in the household, any adult household member fifteen years or over can be designated the householder. Households are classified by type according to the sex of the householder and presence of relatives. A family household is composed of persons living together who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. Nonfamily households are composed of a householder living alone or with nonrelatives only.

4. It is difficult to compare the sample data to the published census data, because the latter are for all Pacific Islanders, not just householders, and generally present distributions, not means or medians. Average education of householders in the sample is the same as that for Pacific Islanders twenty-five and over in the census, and the percentage of householders who spoke English well or very well is within three percentage points of the census figure for persons eighteen years of age or older (Barringer, Gardner, and Levin 1993). Since education and English language proficiency are both important determinants of earnings and poverty, these similarities give some confidence in the 1980 sample despite its size. For a discussion of the social and economic characteristics of Pacific Islanders in the United States, see Ahlburg and Levin 1990 and Barringer, Gardner, and Levin 1993.

5. The figures for English language proficiency may be overstated, since they are self-reported data. In a study of Samoans in Southern California, Shu and Satele (1977) found that, although only 8 percent of the sample reported that they were unable to speak English, about half of the respondents either were not fluent in English or could not speak it at all. English language proficiency also varies among Pacific Islanders. For example, in 1980, 96 percent of Guamanians, 87 percent of Samoans, and 74 percent of Tongans reported that they spoke English well or very well (Barringer, Gardner, and Levin 1993).

6. The census question on sources of income includes an item for "financial assistance from outside of the household." Such assistance includes periodic payments from non–household members but excludes gifts or sporadic assistance. It is thus likely that the amount of remittances received is underreported, but the extent is unknown.

7. In 1990, 51 percent of Samoans, 45 percent of Tongans, 82 percent of Fijians, 51 percent of Guamanians, and 28 percent of Palauans lived in California, while 24 percent of Samoans, 18 percent of Tongans, 4 percent of Fijians, 25 percent of Palauans, and 4 percent of Guamanians lived in Hawai'i (Barringer, Gardner, and Levin 1993:275).

8. A related view, although with different policy prescriptions, is expressed by Rahnema (1992), who criticizes what he calls poverty based on "materialities." He is concerned with how perceptions of what constitutes poverty vary across cultures and over time and with how the "poor" perceive their own situation. He believes that "the answer to imposed forms of material poverty are to be found in people's own ethical and cultural approach to poverty" (p. 171) and calls for a form of "voluntary" or "convivial" poverty (p. 172).

9. In 1990 in the sample, 44 percent of those born outside the United States had become citizens. In 1980, 60 percent of Western Samoa–born migrants were naturalized, whereas 30 percent of Tongan and Fijian migrants were naturalized. Naturalization may indicate a sense of wanting to identify with the United States or an acceptance of at least some of the values of the United States. It may also indicate the economic benefits associated with citizenship.

10. A number of measures of goodness of fit have been proposed for models with discrete dependent variables, such as the one estimated here. One measure, the likelihood ratio index, is an analog to the *R*-square of the conventional model. It is bounded by zero and one; however, values between zero and one have no natural interpretation. If all of the slope coefficients are zero, then the likelihood ratio index is zero. As the fit of the model improves, the value of the index increases. The equation in Table 5 has a likelihood ratio index value of 0.23. Another measure of goodness of fit is the percentage of correct predictions the model makes. The model in Table 5 correctly predicts 96 percent of those not in poverty and 41 percent of those in poverty. A reasonable naive alternative model that is often used to check the usefulness of the estimated model is one that predicts everyone is in poverty if the sample proportion in poverty is greater than or equal to 0.5 and no one is in poverty if the sample proportion is less than 0.5. This naive model predicts 100 percent of those not in poverty but none of those in poverty. The model estimated here produces several significant influences on the probability of being in poverty and makes 37 more correct predictions than the naive prediction model. See Greene 1993:651–653 for a discussion of these measures. A more reasonable "naive" model is to generate a random draw for each household with a probability of 0.8 of not being in poverty and a probability of 0.2 of being in poverty. The fitted model also performs considerably better than this naive model.

11. I carried out a similar analysis of poverty in the state of Minnesota, a state with a predominantly white population. Compared to the average Minnesotan, Pacific Islander householders were penalized much more heavily for lower education, lacking English language skills, lacking jobs, and being single mothers. The marginal effects for Pacific Islanders were at least twice the size of those for the average Minnesotan (Ahlburg 1997a).

12. Franco's conclusion holds more generally. Using the PUMS data for all Pacific Islanders, I estimated employment equations separately for male and female householders. Each year of education increased the probability of employment of males and females by 0.6 percentage points. Speaking English well or very well increased the probability of employment for men by 4.3 percentage points and for women by 11.7 points.

13. The poverty of large families is probably underestimated for at least two reasons. First, the definition of poverty is based on household size but has the same cutoff for households of nine or more. Pacific households can be larger than nine persons, and so

the income needed to avert poverty is underestimated. Second, large Pacific households are likely to have a higher ratio of adults, and their consumption demands are greater than the representative household that has a higher ratio of children. The average Pacific Islander household had one more person than the average American household, and the average Samoan household had two more people. In addition, while in the average American household only 4 percent of people were "other relatives," in the average Pacific Islander household 10 percent of the members were "other relatives." For Samoans 13 percent were "other relatives," and for Micronesians 12 percent were "other relatives" (Barringer, Gardner, and Levin 1993).

14. My estimates were based on national accounts data and data from a number of surveys of receiving households. The estimates of Richard Brown and his collaborators are from surveys of sending households. See Ahlburg 1991 for a discussion of the various estimates.

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BOOK REVIEW FORUM

Stephen F. Eisenman, *Gauguin's Skirt.* London: Thames and Hudson, 1997. Pp. 232, 110 illus., notes, index. US$29.95 cloth; $24.95 paperback.

Review: Elizabeth C. Childs
Washington University
St. Louis

Of Stephen Eisenman's recent book, two important things need to be said. First, this is a book any scholar interested in Paul Gauguin should read, as it is an ambitious effort to counter modernist hagiographies of the artist by placing his art and life in the specific cultural moment of fin-de-siècle colonial Polynesia. This may also be a book best read twice, as Eisenman engages and provokes the reader, and some of his stimulating interpretations expand under a second read; others become less convincing upon reflection. In short, this is a book with which to have an extended conversation.

Second, it must be observed that while Eisenman's style as a writer is engaging, his methods are somewhat inconsistent, perhaps because his audiences and scholarly goals are multiple. Depending on the readership of the volume, this diversity may be seen as either evidence of authorial creativity or a stumbling block to communication. I have heard the book variously described as a revisionist monograph, a theoretical sampler with a monographic focus, and a romantic, personal travelogue of a postmodernist art historian.

In fact, it is some of each of these things. Eisenman's goal has been to make his text accessible across the disciplines of art history, anthropology, and biography. The author's evident sympathy and passion for his subject are very much to his credit. Nonetheless, at times his text seems more diffuse

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than synthetic as it strives to speak on levels both general and particular to so many audiences. As the students in one of my seminars on Gauguin unanimously observed, Eisenman's insights might have been better served in the format of a few focused scholarly articles, rather than in an eclectic group of chapters. Yet whatever one's taste in modes of scholarship, Eisenman's ambitious text clearly deserves our considered appreciation.

In his introduction, Eisenman sorts out the complex strains of Gauguin scholarship over the last thirty years. Such a survey of the literature, especially in an area as rich as Gauguin studies, necessitates abbreviating generations of work, or one's own study would become nothing more than a bibliographic essay. (The regrettable absence of a scholarly bibliography in the book attests, no doubt, to the editor's desire to market the book to a general audience.) Yet Eisenman moves past a few key authors too quickly. He rightly lauds the late Bengt Danielsson as the first author to debunk the artist's idyllic views of Polynesia and to track down substantial primary evidence of the historical Gauguin. Indeed, Danielsson is the only author before Eisenman to seriously consider the fascinating evidence of the growing anticolonialism of Gauguin's later years.[1] But Eisenman's conclusion that Danielsson found Gauguin "a keen and insightful observer of Polynesian society" (p. 17) stretches the point too far, in an effort to help establish Eisenman's own goal of recuperating Gauguin as sensitive to native culture.

Danielsson, a Swedish anthropologist who lived in Tahiti from 1953 until his death in 1997, delighted, both in person and in print, in measuring the precise distance between Gauguin's artistic representations of Polynesia and the historical and cultural reality of fin-de-siècle Tahiti. Danielsson's work as Gauguin's historian surely does not so much position the artist as "a committed protagonist of Tahiti and its people," as Eisenman claims (p. 17), but rather seeks to clarify the specific biographical, geographical, and ethnological facts surrounding the life and career of the most mythologized European to live in fin-de-siècle Tahiti.[2]

Another key figure who deserves more nuanced credit in Eisenman's introduction to Gauguin scholarship is the British scholar Griselda Pollock. Cited by Eisenman for "failing to heed the post-colonial injunction to listen to subaltern voices" (p. 19), Eisenman faults Pollock for treating Gauguin's Tahitian *vahine*s as a mere variation of a European formula of orientalism (p. 19). For Pollock, Gauguin substantially overwrites his model with his art: "Teha'amana's body [in Gauguin's art] is not represented in its social and historical and cultural particularity."[3] Although Pollock, unlike the more sympathetic Eisenman, reads Gauguin as an uncompromising sexual imperialist, her essay nonetheless opened the very debate about Gauguin and postcolonial theory that Eisenman pursues. Although the text of her published lecture

lacks original research into the culture of fin-de-siècle Tahiti, Pollock does respectfully consider the position of the subaltern—raising questions of what we can and cannot know about the historical Teha'amana (Gauguin's young Tahitian lover) in the face of a limited historical account.[4] She also achieved in much earlier work a groundbreaking reading of the cultural context of Gauguin's Breton primitivism, in an essay published in 1980 with Fred Orton.[5] Although Eisenman does not cite this article, his own discussion of Gauguin's encounter with the modern Brittany of the fin-de-siècle—where villages held religious pardons that were at once observations of faith, invitations to tourism, and rituals that were modern expressions of "local kinship ties and a newly emerging ethnic solidarity" (p. 36)—clearly benefits from Pollock's historicist debunking of the antimodernism of the school of Pont-Aven.

Finally, in Eisenman's review of those writers who have studied "the iconographic particularity and formal specificity of Gauguin's Tahitian artworks" (p. 19), he rightly praises the work of Richard Field, Ziva Amishai-Maisels, Jehanne Teilhet-Fisk, and others. But to then implicitly underscore the originality of his own project by saying those authors have "little recognized Gauguin's success in representing fin-de-siècle . . . Tahiti" (p. 20) is unfair, particularly in the case of the distinguished work of Teilhet-Fisk, whose published dissertation appears only once thereafter in Eisenman's endnotes. Teilhet-Fisk made numerous extended research trips to French Polynesia (as well as to Rapa Nui, Aotearoa, the Cook Islands, and western Polynesia) over the period 1970 to 1981, and her work on Gauguin was informed not only by considerable firsthand research, but also by her knowledge of the work of anthropologists Bengt Danielsson and Robert Levy, and of Ralph White, who assisted her with the Tahitian language. Her firsthand experience of the Tahitian culture thus far exceeds that of any other American art historian writing on Gauguin. In her careful observations of the many aspects of Polynesian religion and social practice that Gauguin represents in his art, in her exploration of what remnants of traditional practice might have been available to him in the 1890s, and in her discussion of the popular diffusionist theories of the origins of the Polynesian race, Teilhet-Fisk clearly grounds the artist in the specific historic milieu of late nineteenth-century, or neotraditional, Tahiti. Her discussion is not framed by the use of any postcolonial theory, as is Eisenman's, but her ethnographic and historical research is superb and deserves to be ranked with that of Danielsson as a key secondary source for Gauguin studies. Her book, for example, makes the important connection that also served as a launching point for Eisenman's first chapter (p. 28), and a key point used to ground his interpretations in his second chapter (p. 94ff.)—namely, that when Gauguin descended the plank at the port of Papeete, his dress and long hair inspired locals to mock him as a *mahu,* or

"third-sex figure."[6] Given his scholarly generosity on so many other points, it is surprising that Eisenman omits any reference to Teilhet-Fisk's earlier discussion of this crucial episode of Gauguin's interaction with indigenous culture.

The first chapter of *Gauguin's Skirt,* "Exotic Scenarios," is a hybrid, a condensed biographical narrative of Gauguin's life up to his second departure from France for Polynesia in 1895 woven into a survey of popular nineteenth-century scientific theories of racism. This heady mélange strives to introduce the general reader to large areas of specialized knowledge, as Eisenman elucidates the complex hybrid that was Gauguin himself: "at once esthete, bohemian, decadent, colonist and 'an Indian from Peru' " (p. 77). The biographical narrative is the essential ground for this eclectic mosaic, and as in any condensed version, Eisenman has had to select the salient facts from a rich and diverse life. His lively account is useful in its context but passes too lightly over a crucial episode in the formation of Gauguin's exoticism. Eisenman characterizes Gauguin's trip to Martinique and Panama in 1887 as a brief visit curtailed by illness (p. 44). He subsequently dismisses it in favor of a lengthy discussion of Brittany, which was in his view "Gauguin's most significant flirtation with the exotic prior to his trip to Polynesia" (p. 33).

While a discussion of Brittany is essential for this artist who worked there over a five-year period, Gauguin's excursion to Martinique with the artist Charles Laval merits greater attention in any analysis of Gauguin's exposure to the ideology of colonialism and to the practice of racism. Indeed, from this trip Gauguin emerged with firsthand knowledge of the pleasures and hardships of an artist confronted with colonial life. The intense tropical light, and the native population of Martinique, inspired numerous works by Gauguin between 1887 and 1891, from paintings to sculptures, ceramics, pastels, and prints.[7] Vincent van Gogh's letters offer rich and varied testimony to the central position of Martinique, and the Caribbean generally, in Gauguin's emerging formulation of the ideal life of a European artist in a "Studio of the Tropics." Gauguin's fantasies prior to his departure for Tahiti thus fed on exotic travels to Arles, Brittany, and Martinique, as well as on the earlier memories of his Peruvian childhood (now better understood due to the biographical research of David Sweetman),[8] and the crucial period he spent as a young man in the French merchant marine. In Eisenman's necessarily brief overview of Gauguin's development, the complex origins of Gauguin's, Bernard's, and van Gogh's evolving concept of the Studio of the Tropics begs for expansion. This should be achieved in the catalogues of two forthcoming exhibitions.[9]

In seeking to link Gauguin's enterprise with fin-de-siècle preoccupations with race, nationality, and imperialist nostalgia for seemingly "vanishing" cultures, Eisenman suggests that Gauguin adopted some methods of the modern

ethnographer: "Less intellectually and financially prepared than Bronislaw Malinowski for ethnographic immersion, Gauguin nevertheless undertook to surround himself with native life and culture" (p. 62). In support of Gauguin's sensitivity to native culture, Eisenman offers examples of how the artist depicted Tahitian women wearing both missionary dresses and *pareu* (p. 20); how in a particular painting, Gauguin depicts the way women weave baskets (p. 64); how "like the twentieth-century ethnographer undertaking fieldwork, Gauguin surrounded himself with native life and culture and began to collect materials" (p. 62). These observations can be understood as part of a continuing effort to correct a modernist art history that for too long isolated Gauguin as the Parisian artist, the Symbolist, the Frenchman—an art history that before the 1960s largely ignored Gauguin's interactions with Polynesian culture. A forceful correction of this type was previously advanced by Teilhet-Fisk, who has argued at length that Gauguin was a "lay-anthropologist" who understood that "Tahitian society at the turn of the century was rich in the use of myth, metaphor, superstition, and the personification of natural phenomena."[10]

Yes, at the heart of Gauguin's modernist primitivism lay his radical decision to live and work in what to him was an exotic world. But Eisenman, perhaps in his desire to rescue Gauguin from the ire of postcolonial critics, makes these points at the expense of occasionally losing sight of the obvious, namely, that Gauguin was, in spite of the impact of his Tahitian experience, still also a Symbolist European artist, whose primary aesthetic goals were generally quite far from those of ethnography. Unlike Catlin or Bodmer earlier in the century, who consciously strove for exactitude in recording details of the indigenous populations they encountered, Gauguin's practice was simply not guided by scientific goals of precision, documentation, consistency, statistical sampling, or comprehensiveness; nor was his overall goal, in spite of some of his rhetoric, to educate his French audience about the "vanishing" cultural patrimony of their colonies. He aspired perhaps to attract, mystify, intrigue, titillate, shock, confuse, or to conjure dreams—but surely not to educate. Moreover, as has been openly recognized since Danielsson, any skills of daily living Gauguin developed in the traditional Tahitian milieu (language, food acquisition, and so forth) were marginal and inconsistent at best. His native retreat at Mataiea on the southern coast was hardly a choice made in search of pure "ethnographic immersion"; it was in fact a colonial center (as Danielsson pointed out at length), literally in the shadow of the Catholic church, and a crossroads of Chinese commerce.

Furthermore, we are now learning that rather than staying there a full two years after his arrival in 1891, as has long been presumed by Danielsson and subsequent scholars, within a few months Gauguin soon moved back again

to Paea, only thirteen miles south of Papeete on the western coast, where he had spent several weeks with his French colonial friend Gaston Pia just after his arrival in Tahiti in 1891.[11] In short, to position Gauguin, particularly in his first Tahitian trip, as an early ethnographer is to give him too much credit and to mythologize him once again on new grounds. Contemporaries such as the bishop Monseigneur Tepano Jaussen (who collected oral histories as well as the native objects he displayed in the Mission Museum in Papeete until 1892) fall far more appropriately into a model of late nineteenth-century ethnography.[12] Eisenman comes closer to the mark at the end of chapter 2, where, on the one hand, he claims Gauguin functioned as an ethnographer "recording mentalities and cultural practices . . . today . . . dismissed as extinct," but on the other admits that to call him an ethnographer "is not quite right, for it implies the passive stance of a spectator" and Gauguin strove to combine his European and Polynesian ideas into "a hybrid art" (p. 147).

If one seeks an example of a Euro-American undertaking a specifically ethnographic enterprise in Tahiti in the same years, a fascinating case study is the American historian Henry Adams, who privately published the memoirs of the royal Teva clan following his four-month stay in Tahiti in 1891.[13] His traveling partner, the American painter John LaFarge, could also be fairly described (albeit in limited terms) as more of an ethnographic painter than Gauguin, as he often made notations in the margins of his watercolor studies of the names and even the exact body measurements of his Polynesian models. Gauguin, as an artist, openly fused the data he gathered in colonial Tahiti with the imaginative vision of a Symbolist. What clearly separates Gauguin from the larger agenda of early modern ethnography was his desire not only to make evident, but to celebrate the subjectivity of his observations and knowledge.[14]

Eisenman's central chapter, "Sex in Tahiti," contributes one of his provocative arguments as well as the rationale for the striking title of the book. Eisenman argues that Gauguin had no fixed sexual identity in Polynesia and that he freely compared the Polynesian *mahu* with its European counterparts, such as the *inverti* and the androgynes. In this milieu, Gauguin created a hybrid art "that mirrored his own liminal stance on the contested border of sexual and colonial identity" (p. 147). In considering Eisenman's evidence here, several questions arise. He has done a fine job of canvassing early European travel accounts in search of the *mahu,* and he also makes a plausible suggestion that the photograph from the Miot Album (reproduced on p. 105) may represent two *mahu.* Yet he vaults past Gauguin's era to the present to position the *mahu* in Tahitian society, citing his own observations of *mahu* in a bar one evening in a luxury tourist hotel (p. 106). I will leave to the professional anthropologists the question of whether or not this "field"

method of gathering contemporary evidence to interpret the historical record is valid; I will just note my own position as a historian that such experience seems irrelevant to determining the meaning of the *mahu* to Gauguin in rural Tahiti in the 1890s and also that it lends a tone (from my point of view, an unfortunate one) of romanticized travelogue to the argument.

Moreover, in evaluating the impact of the *mahu* on Gauguin's work, one would wish for more visual evidence to be found in the art. The two paintings that best support his argument visually come not from the first Tahitian period, when he is first mocked as a *mahu* and occupies an obviously liminal position between the Tahitian and the French colonial world; nor do they come from his return trip to Tahiti, when he is refining the text of *Noa Noa* with his account of his passing desire for his native guide. Rather, the *Bathers* of 1902 and *Marquesan Man in a Red Cape,* also of 1902, were painted not in Tahiti at all, but near the end of the artist's life in the Marquesas, when he was most successfully "immersed" in a native culture and was frequently seducing, as Eisenman later points out (p. 176), teenage girls whom he had "saved" from the Catholic church. Is there other evidence for his continued interest in the *mahu,* or even for the presence of any *mahu*-like figure in Marquesan society? Eisenman's leap from sexual practice in one Polynesian society to that of another needs more justification.

Eisenman proposes that because Gauguin was perceived as displaying some *mahu*-like behavior (he had long hair for a few weeks; he spent a lot of time with native women; he worked as a craftsman), his sexuality was in question by the Tahitians from "the moment he stepped off the boat" (p. 111). It follows, continues Eisenman, that his "sexual indeterminacy . . . may thus have permitted him a form of cultural intercourse . . . a chance for rich and compelling artistic engagement . . . that few male colonials were ever granted" (p. 112). Perhaps Eisenman is here assuming too much about how "sexually liminal" Gauguin would have appeared to the locals. The verbal jests showered on him by a few Tahitians in Papeete upon his arrival were surely balanced, if not outweighed, over the course of the next months, and the next twelve years, by the ample evidence he soon gave to his heterosexual preferences—cutting his hair almost immediately, he took up in Papeete with one *vahine,* and then lived openly with several Tahitian women. He allegedly bragged to local models of being the *tane,* or husband, of the nude in Manet's *Olympia,* and he exhibited pornographic photographs on his door to frighten off pious Catholics. Even if other behavior may have led him to be perceived as "effeminate" by locals, that would not necessarily have marked him as *mahu.* Tahitian *mahu* neither lived with nor married women. As anthropologist Robert Levy has pointed out:

> an effeminate man can be described as *huru mahu* or *mahu*-ish, but he nevertheless is assumed to be in general an "ordinary" kind of man, involved in standard male activity and, if not engaged in normal heterosexual practices (although most are assumed to be), certainly *not* engaged in the *mahu*'s type of homosexual behavior. Either one is a *mahu,* or one is not.[15]

Eisenman's proposal that Gauguin was intrigued by the open presence of the "third sex" in Tahiti is a largely convincing idea. Yet his related proposition that locals received Gauguin as a sexually liminal being after his arrival, and thereby he experienced greater "cultural intercourse," seems much harder to accept.

Eisenman's final chapter, "Death in the Marquesas," opens by addressing not death but the prevalence of colonial resistance in fin-de-siècle Polynesian life. Indeed, in Gauguin's surprisingly neglected career as a journalist contributing to *Les Guêpes* (1899–1901) and *Le Sourire* (1899–1900), there is ample evidence of his growing antagonism to colonial authority. These texts comprise a rich index to Gauguin's participation in colonial culture and still are in need of extended analysis. Eisenman pries open the contradictory position of Gauguin, the colonist who both enjoys some of the prerogatives of his position (a government job, colonist friends, a forum in the white newspaper) and, yet, like Albert Memmi's classic formulation of the left-wing "colonizer who refuses,"[16] longs to escape his colonial identity by assimilation, but must instead settle for a state of perpetual compromise.

One of the best contributions of *Gauguin's Skirt* comes in Eisenman's discussion of Gauguin's liminal position as an anticolonial Frenchman living in the Marquesas in 1901–1903. Here, Eisenman's research in the Archives d'Outre Mer in Aix-en-Provence and in police archives and journals in Tahiti greatly enriches our understanding of Gauguin's swan song in his tropical paradise. His fresh accounts of the colonial government's disapproval of Marquesan practices of sexuality and marriage, and its irritation with the anticlerical and tax-evading "bad colonist" Gauguin, open our eyes to the complexity of that much mythologized episode of the artist's final "escape." This is a welcome expansion of Danielsson's first assertions of Gauguin's anticolonialism.

In the final three sections of his third chapter, Eisenman produces what is perhaps his most controversial text. Here, as he makes an abrupt shift into dramatic narrative, we discover the reason for the journalistic chapter title, "Death in the Marquesas." These sections, which trace the final months of the artist's life, reassert the study not only as a monograph, but as fictionalized biography. Sample sentences include: "Beneath the rhythmic clang of

mission bells, the artist heard his own irregular heartbeat; amid the ambient perfume of frangipani, he smelled the rankness of his own body" (p. 177); and "Gauguin's eyes drifted away from the mirror before him. . . . His eyelids became heavy and he fell into a waking dream" (p. 191). Why such a histrionic focus on his final days, and in particular, on the day of his death? Doesn't this reinscribe the artist back into the very modernist canon of solitary dead geniuses from which the author strove to distance him in the first two sections? Why does Eisenman partake of the very strain of celebratory, romantic biography critiqued so passionately by Abigail Solomon-Godeau in 1989?[17]

This is not to say that biographical speculation cannot be a powerful tool for the historian. I can think of no more compelling entry into the creative dilemma faced by the historian in establishing the relative meaning of facts than the hall of mirrors constructed by Simon Schama around Benjamin West's painting *The Death of Wolfe* in the volume *Dead Certainties (Unwarranted Speculations).*[18] But there the historian openly reveals both his own subjectivity and that of historical accounts as he offers us multiple representations and points of view of the same key events, and forces us to weigh the multifaceted potential of representation.

As one concludes *Gauguin's Skirt,* one wonders why, after so many excursions into theory, colonial history, and analyses of works of art, we are brought back with almost morbid relish to the point of the body's decay and the disintegration of the artist's spirit. These pages are haunted with previous literary conjurings of Gauguin by Somerset Maugham, Victor Ségalen, and other Gauguinophiles. A death scene may be an obvious conclusion to a novel, but as rendered by Eisenman in the previous two chapters, Gauguin's is a tale that should be read only partly—and even then advisedly—as biographical. The author's return to the larger issues of his study (the connections between colonialism and primitivism) and to the status of present-day Tahiti in his brief conclusion only partly ameliorates his voyeuristic rendering of the death of an artist apparently done in by his own patterns of excess. One had hoped here for more studied reflection on Gauguin's ambivalent anticolonialism and for less of a literary invasion of a moment that was ultimately a private one, even for a famous artist.

Eisenman's interesting final pages, which attempt to link the Gauguin of 1903 with that of 1995 (the time of his research trip to Papeete) are, alas, too brief to address the diverse measures of Gauguin's meaning to today's Tahitian. His anecdote about a Tahitian's adapting to local use the title of Gauguin's painting *Where Do We Come From?* merely opens up for us this intriguing question. The legacy is surely partly aesthetic, as demonstrated by the Musée Gauguin, funded by the French government, that now displays a few

original paintings and stages occasional exhibitions to the obvious pleasure of locals and visitors alike. But there is also the crass and pervasive presence of the bottom-line Gauguin business, the economic exploitation of the legend, to the benefit of both Tahitians and French bureaucrats. One observes this in the local market that proffers Gauguin T-shirts, the stores that market reproductions of his paintings printed on folding fans and *monoi* oil bottles, the dozens of Gauguin stamps on sale as philatelic souvenirs. The bounty of such patrimony is not without its costs, which can be witnessed in the visibly ambivalent local response to the new luxury cruise ship bearing the artist's name that capitalizes on the artist's fame and the Western myth of paradise to attract wealthy clients, bringing a much-needed infusion of foreign cash into a sagging tourist economy. A proposal now circulating for a new gallery of contemporary art, featuring modern art by indigenous artists and visitors alike, would make a more fitting tribute to the artist. But for now, that remains as much a dream as Gauguin's "Studio of the Tropics."

It is a pleasure to teach Stephen Eisenman's book, as it continues to provoke a great deal of discussion in seminar, more than most of the Gauguin scholarship published in the last decade. On the eve of the many forthcoming centennial observations of the artist's life, *Gauguin's Skirt* leaves us well poised to ask further important questions about this exceptional artist and his "tangled colonial dance" with the vibrant culture of fin-de-siècle Polynesia.

NOTES

I would like to thank my students, who participated in my Gauguin seminars during the falls of 1997 and 1998; I have profited greatly from our lively discussions of *Gauguin's Skirt.* I would also like to thank my research assistant Nicole Myers for her work on the Tahitian *mahu.*

1. More information on Gauguin's anticolonialism is found in the later revised, French edition of Danielsson's book, *Gauguin à Tahiti et aux Iles Marquises* (Papeete: Les Editions du Pacifique, 1975). In this volume, see also bibliographic entries under Danielsson (Bengt, and Bengt with Marie-Thérèse) for essays and exhibition catalogues published in the late 1960s and early 1970s that also address Gauguin's anticolonialism.

2. For examples of Danielsson's pointed exposure of the ethnographic inaccuracies in Gauguin's representations of Tahitian mythology and practices of daily life, as well as his malapropisms of the native language, see his *Gauguin in the South Seas* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1966), 109, 122, 134, 168, 169, 203, 206.

3. Griselda Pollock, *Avant-Garde Gambits 1888–1893: Gender and the Color of Art History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), 48.

4. Ibid.; see, for example, her caption to illustration 3, or note 39, in which she stresses Teha'amana's agency in rejecting Gauguin upon his return in 1895.

5. Griselda Pollock and Fred Orton, "Les Données Bretonnantes: La Prairie de Représentation," *Art History* 3, no. 3 (1980): 314–344.

6. Jehanne Teilhet-Fisk, *Paradise Reviewed: An Interpretation of Gauguin's Polynesian Symbolism* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983), 29.

7. See Karen Kristine Rochnitzer Pope, "Gauguin and Martinique," Ph.D. diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1981.

8. Although the account by Sweetman is somewhat flawed by its sensationalist psychosexual interpretations of some of Gauguin art and behavior, there is fine original research here into the early periods of Gauguin's life. See David Sweetman, *Paul Gauguin: A Complete Life* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).

9. In 2001, the St. Louis Art Museum organized *Vincent van Gogh and the Painters of the Petit Boulevard.* In the fall of 2001, Douglas Druick and Peter Zegers of the Art Institute of Chicago will curate a major exhibition on the relationship of van Gogh and Gauguin.

10. Teilhet-Fisk, *Paradise Reviewed,* 174.

11. Evidence for this move is found in letters soon to be published by Victor Merlhès. Oral communication with Gilles Artur, director of the Musée Gauguin, Tahiti, June 1998.

12. See, for example, Jaussen's treatise based in part on the *rongo rongo* boards he had collected in Tahiti: "L'Ile de Pâques: Historique et écriture," *Bulletin de Géographie Historique et Descriptive,* no. 2 (1893): 240–270.

13. Henry Adams, *Tahiti: Memoirs of Arii Taimai e Marama of Eimeo, Teriirere of Tooarai, Terrimui of Tahiti, Tauratua I Amo* (Paris, 1901).

14. On the tendency of classic ethnography to deny the subjectivity of the writer/observer, see James Clifford, "On Ethnographic Authority," in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 21–54.

15. Robert Levy, *Tahitians: Mind and Experience in the Society Islands* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 133.

16. See Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (Paris, 1957; reprint Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), esp. 41–44.

17. Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Going Native: Paul Gauguin and the Invention of Primitivist Modernism," *Art in America* 77 (July 1989): 118–129.

18. Simon Schama, *Dead Certainties (Unwarranted Speculations)* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991).

Review: Margaret Jolly
Australian National University

Fraying Gauguin's Skirt: Gender, Race, and Liminality in Polynesia

Introduction

Fraying Gauguin's skirt? My title is in conversation with the recent book by Stephen F. Eisenman, *Gauguin's Skirt.* The skirt is not just a reference to the fact that during the ten years or so he spent in Tahiti and the Marquesas Gauguin habitually wore a *pareu* around his hips. In reconstructing and reinterpreting the life and the art of Gauguin, Eisenman portrays him as a liminal figure, not just inhabiting that limen of the beach Greg Dening perceives as the privileged space of most Pacific history (1996) but a person liminal by gender and sexuality as well as race.

Eisenman retells the wonderful story of Gauguin's arrival in Tahiti on 12 June 1891—dressed up like that performer he had relished at the Universal Exposition in Paris two years before, Buffalo Bill.[1] Jénot, a French naval lieutenant, was there to witness him striding down the gangplank, "his long, salt and pepper hair falling in a sheet on his shoulders from beneath a vast brown felt hat, with a large brim, like a cowboy's. . . . That very day Gauguin was renamed *taata vahine* (man-woman)" (p. 27). Gauguin soon learned of his novel notoriety, and after a few weeks cut his hair. It was not just the heat. With short hair and white linen suit he perhaps entertained a vain hope of appearing more acceptable to fellow French colonists. He was certainly less subject to jeers from Tahitians, especially women who fell about on that first day, jeering (p. 111). But, suggests Eisenman, not only did Gauguin remain an outsider to the society of the French administrators and settlers, he remained liminal in the eyes of locals throughout his successive Polynesian sojourns.

Here I consider Eisenman's portrait of Gauguin not so much in relation to the huge corpus of literature that his art and life have generated (Danielsson 1966; Teilhet-Fisk 1983; Amishai-Maisels 1985; Thomson 1987; Sweetman 1995), but rather in relation to some critical reappraisals of the last decade or so. For, as James Clifford evokes it, in much recent scholarship

> the image of Gauguin the romantic has been unceremoniously displaced by Gauguin the imperialist. Anti-colonial critics now portray the artist's alienation from Europe, and his many strident attacks on French bureaucrats and missionaries as avant-garde rebelliousness operating safely within the imperial system. (1997:3)

Moreover, feminist art historians like Abigail Solomon-Godeau (1989) and Griselda Pollock (1992) have not only subjected his "purportedly free and innocent love affairs with many young women to withering scepticism" (Clifford 1997:3), but have argued that his portrayal of Polynesian women in paint, in clay, in wood, and in words is pervaded by sexist objectification, verging on violence.

Feminist Stories of Gauguin

For Solomon-Godeau (1989) Gauguin's primitivism was not so much a stylistic choice as a mythic proclamation. He and several contemporary commentators projected a myth of his life, as the Promethean artist, discovering the true self, the savage within. It has been retold often. She views his telos as a fantastic quest for difference and distance, both geographical and temporal. In Brittany, in Martinique, in Tahiti and finally the Marquesas, he pursues the archaic and the anterior.

Primitivism of course occludes the specificities of time and place, by evoking a stasis, an origin, beyond time and historical process. Solomon-Godeau contends that this primitivist telos intersects with Gauguin's exoticist quest in Polynesia. The beyond and the before are both gendered—constantly evoked through women's bodies. Just as in Brittany it was predominantly images of women in their blue and white costumes, attending ancient religious rituals, that conjured the archaic, so in Tahiti it is predominantly women's bodies that evoke the original, the primordial (Solomon-Godeau 1989:123; cf. Brooks 1993; Perloff 1995).[2]

Solomon-Godeau thus sees Gauguin as living out a white male fantasy in Tahiti in endless pursuit of that which was "never more," unable to reconcile himself to the realities of colonial presence and indeed the nasty condition of his own decaying body. For her, Gauguin's Tahitian text, *Noa Noa,* is a self-serving fabulation of experience.[3] The quest in that book, for deeper space and purer race, is, in my reading, self-consciously presented as an interior quest, which remakes him. "I was indeed a new man: from now on I was a true savage, a real Maori [*sic*]" (Gauguin 1985:22; cf. Gauguin 1978).[4]

This quest for the "new man," the "true savage" for Pollock (1992) reveals the intimate connections between the values of creativity and vocation and the release of masculine sexuality in 1890s avant-garde art. Gauguin's rejection of an etiolated European civilization in the name of a primitive paradise is, for her, both masculinist and imperialist: "Personal liberation through an unfettered sexuality and aesthetic refreshment through an appropriative and exploitative multiculturalism" (Pollock 1992:8). She casts him as the archetypical sexual tourist. His avant-garde art, though ostensibly antiestablishment,

is, she claims, emblematic of the development of a more capitalist mode of art practice, through publicity and critical promotion, a process that required packaging the self of the artist. Pollock portrays Gauguin not just as pillaging "the savages of Oceania" as Pissarro once claimed, but as "taking" women in his life and in art.

Eisenman's Reinterpretation

Eisenman's reinterpretation offers four challenges to such feminist stories of Gauguin. First, he complicates the account of a white man "going native" through coercive heterosexual relations with Tahitian girls. He does this, not so much by echoing Gauguin or his collaborator and co-editor of *Noa Noa,* Charles Morice, that the girls were willing or that a girl of thirteen in Tahiti was "the equivalent of eighteen or twenty in Europe" (Gauguin 1985a:28). Rather, Eisenman destabilizes Gauguin's identity as a man, and indeed the identity of his erotic objects of desire as simply women. He thus infuses the myth of Gauguin with gender and sexual liminality.[5] Second, Eisenman wants to distinguish Gauguin's earlier "exoticism" from his more mature "primitivism," by suggesting that rather than keeping the alluring "other" woman inscrutable and at a distance, Gauguin struggled, even if falteringly, to understand them and through them the Tahitian language and culture. Third, rather than the story of a dreamy primitivist, denying history and finding the savage within, Eisenman suggests that Gauguin's work betrays the actuality of life in late nineteenth-century Tahiti and the Marquesas. Finally, he suggests that Gauguin's art and writing represented a powerful critique of French colonialism that is foundational for contemporary Polynesian nationalisms. These four moves to rescript the story of Gauguin are connected. I will discuss them in turn.

The Limen of Gender and Sex

Eisenman not only suggests that Gauguin was seen by locals as a man-woman, he also suggests that he was attracted to men, that Gauguin "had no fixed sexual identity," and indeed that the Tahitian girls in his bed and on his canvas were women-men. There is a singular evocation of homoerotic desire in *Noa Noa,* which Eisenman and most of the reviewers of his book recount. On this walk into the deep forest of the island interior to cut rosewood for his carvings, Gauguin is guided by Josefa, a young "faultlessly handsome" Tahitian man, who leads the aging, stumbling artist forward.

> Both of us went naked, the white and blue *paréo* around the loins, hatchet in hand. . . . My guide seemed to follow the trail by smell

> rather than by sight. . . . With the suppleness of an animal and the graceful litheness of an androgyne he walked a few paces in advance of me. And it seemed to me that I saw incarnated in him, palpitating and living, all the magnificent plant-life which surrounded us . . . a powerful perfume of beauty. Was it really a human being walking there ahead of me? . . . Was it not rather the Forest itself, the living Forest, without sex—and yet alluring? (Gauguin 1985a:19)

Then follows a disquisition, added in later editing, against the "cinctures and corsets" of civilized women, the "bizarre ideal of slenderness," and the way European women are kept in a state of nervous weakness and muscular inferiority. He celebrates the ease of intercourse that derives from the similarity of Tahitians, "something virile in the women and something feminine in the men." From this philosophical detour, the text returns to the path: "Why was it that there suddenly rose in the soul of a member of an old civilization a horrible thought? The fever throbbed in my temples, and my knees shook. But we were at the end of the trail." His guide turns to make the final crossing of the brook and faces him. "The androgyne had disappeared. It was an actual young man walking ahead of me. His calm eyes had the limpid clearness of waters" (Gauguin 1985a:20).

Eisenman predictably makes much of this extraordinary passage. But he reads it not just as the surfacing and subsiding of a repressed homoeroticism, but rather as shedding light on "gender liminality in *fin de siècle* Tahiti[6] and on the complex question of the interaction of European and Oceanic sexualities" (p. 119). Before their walk in the forest Josefa had been seeking erotic advice from Gauguin. Says Eisenman, "An adolescent Tahitian male seeking sexual knowledge from an exogenous *mahu* is himself perceived to be an androgyne who, by virtue of that very status, exposes the degraded nature of the other's sexual identity" (p. 119). Eisenman thus assimilates the walk in the forest to Gauguin's broader philosophical quest for sexual ambiguity, androgyny, even sexlessness. The vision of sexlessness was perhaps his artistic ideal, but hardly one that typified the life.

And how ambiguous was Gauguin in Tahitian eyes—was he, as Eisenman intimates, seen as a *taata vahine* or *mahu*? Beyond that first walk down the gangplank in cowboy gear with long hair, there is little evidence that Tahitians viewed him as anything other than a man. Eisenman suggests he was subject to teasing and taunts, but cites only a much later incident in the Marquesas. A blind and withered old woman approached him and felt his face and explored his body. "When it reached the navel the hand parted the skirt and carefully squeezed the male member. 'Pupa', *(popa'a)* she exclaimed with a grumble, then went off" (quoted in Eisenman, p. 109).[7] Gauguin explains she was complaining that he lacked the scar of adult circumcision common

to Marquesan men. Eisenman suggests she was mocking him as she would a cousin-in-law or a *mahu.* This is a rather fine line of speculation, for the woman's disgusted utterance—*popa'a*—rather identifies him as a foreigner, an uncircumcised white man, liminal by race rather than gender. Perhaps she thought he was deficient in terms of Marquesan masculinity and he felt so, but do her tease and his unease warrant his identification as a *mahu*?

Although Eisenman has immersed himself in the anthropological debates about gender and sexuality in Oceania and most especially about gender liminality in Polynesia, he seems not to have conceded the main points of difference between Tahitian notions of gender and sexuality and those that prevailed in France in the 1890s. Niko Besnier has noted how European observers fixate on the homosexuality of the *mahu* (1994), but that, by itself, homoeroticism between men renders neither of them *mahu,* nor is it seen to compromise their masculinity or render them effeminate. A *mahu* is distinguished by homosexual acts, usually giving fellatio to non-*mahu* men, but also by acting "like a woman." A *mahu* dresses like a woman, does women's work, and assumes female gestures, postures, and linguistic styles. Early reports suggest that *mahu* plucked their beards, grew their hair, tied up their genitals, and sung and danced with women. In the era when *tapu* prohibitions separated men and women, they ate with women and children and slept in the same quarters. They plaited mats and made *tapa* with women. In the past they were attached to chiefly households where they performed both domestic and sexual service. *Mahu* also provided food for chiefly women and acted as their attendants and servants (Watts 1992). Although the links to *tapu* restrictions and to chiefly rank have long disappeared, *mahu* persist in contemporary Tahiti, where they are distinguished from *raerae,* who like Western gay men have sex with each other but whose gender identity is seen as less "like a woman" (Besnier 1994; Elliston 1997).

The evidence Eisenman evinces for Gauguin as *mahu* is slight. Neither his dress, his work, nor his sexuality marked him as other than *taata.* Wearing a skirt, or *pareu,* in no way complicated his gender identity as a man in Tahiti. In this period ordinary Tahitian men and women all routinely wore *pareu,* as we can see from the wonderful historical photographs in Eisenman's book. On formal occasions, such as going to church, women wore long gowns while men wore trousers or even a stiff woolen black suit. I doubt that Gauguin ever donned a muumuu. It may have been that wearing a *pareu* induced a sense of gender ambiguity in Gauguin's view of himself, but this is hardly evidence of how Tahitians saw him.

Gauguin relied on his succession of lovers and wives, or in their absence French landladies or servants, to do his domestic chores—his cooking, wash-

ing, cleaning. He also relied on his wives through their work and their kinship exchanges to complement his meager diet—at first tinned foods, white bread, beans, and macaroni bought from the Chinese storekeeper Aoni—with fish, breadfruit, taro, mangoes, and bananas (Danielsson 1966:99). After all, his vocation was to be an artist. I find no hint that his work on canvas, or in clay or wood, was seen as feminine work, yet Eisenman imputes that it was: "as a foreigner with evident *mahu*-ish tendencies (craftwork was generally considered feminine)" (p. 112). Later, in stressing the mutability of sexual and racial identity in colonial Polynesia, Eisenman not only associates Gauguin with *mahu,* but again claims his art was seen as feminine. "A *mahu* who is mercilessly mocked in one context can be fully embraced and respected in another; a Frenchman who is teased and travestied in Papeete may gain a measure of respect when he exercises his feminine, artistic abilities in a small town some distance from the colonial center" (p. 119).

But what makes Gauguin's artistic abilities feminine? I see no evidence that his work on canvas was equated with women's textile work, beating or marking *tapa* or plaiting pandanus, or with sewing or quilting. His carving and sculpting was probably closer to the ancient arts of men. Contrary to Eisenman's interpretation of this incident (p. 133), his young friend Josefa/Totefa, in declining to try to use Gauguin's tools to sculpt, does not insinuate that this is a feminine craft but rather that "I could do things which other men were incapable of doing, and that I was *useful to others*" (Gauguin 1985a: 18).[8] He expressly distinguishes him from other *men,* but it is Gauguin who finds it remarkable that an artist is seen as a useful human being and Eisenman who equates this with the *mahu* notion of service. Perhaps if he had beaten *tapa* or plaited pandanus his art would have occasioned a different construction. Eisenman also suggests that his preoccupation with painting women is a sign of a lack of adult male company. Yet there is evidence of several friendships with adult men, indigenous and expatriate, reported by Danielsson (1966). There were reasons other than quotidian proximity that prompted Gauguin primarily to paint women.

Gauguin's vigorous heterosexual life surely suggested that he was very much a man. He first went in voracious pursuit of lovers in the bars and the market of Papeete and then was given a succession of young girls as wives by Tahitian and Marquesan families—Teha'amana from Fa'aone, given by both her natural and adoptive parents; Pau'ura a Tai, of Punaauia, on his return to Tahiti; and Vaeoho, from Hekeani Valley near Atuona when he moved to the Marquesas (Danielsson 1966:195, 256).

It may be that back in France Gauguin was aware of the new languages of sexual "types"—the *persilleuses* (effeminate male prostitutes), *amateurs* (men with a taste for boys), and *inverti* (those who Charcot and Zola declared

were a distinctive third sex). He associated with a group of artists and poets, some of whom like Verlain and his former lover Rimbaud, were labeled *inverti* (p. 95). Like Verlain he cut an ostentatious figure—dressing up variously as a Breton fisherman, an Inca, a Magyar, and a Maohi. But whether such costumes constituted "a form of drag" (p. 98) and whether by simply associating with homosexuals he was inclined to be one is doubtful. Gauguin's pursuit of sexual liberation in France seems relentlessly heterosexual. In Pont Aven, Arles, and Paris there is a suite of mistress/models but no suggestion of male lovers.

Thus reframing a portrait of Gauguin as the heterosexual tourist by evoking his sexual ambiguity seems rather stretched. But what of the feminist portrait of Gauguin's corporeal and imaginative relations with Polynesian women as violent appropriation? Solomon-Godeau (1989) and Pollock (1992) cast his Polynesian wives, lovers, and models as victims of his voyeuristic gaze as much as they were victims of the fatal impact of French colonialism. Yet there is much evidence that several women, for reasons of their own, joined him with some alacrity. Perhaps they were unaware that he was not a rich, powerful Frenchman but mired in cycles of penury and profligacy, rapidly moving not so much beyond as down the social hierarchy of white colonial society. There is also evidence that these women were not so passive in their dealings with him as he might have desired and fantasized.

Many quote his words, in a letter to Seguin of 1897: "Just to sit here at the open door, smoking a cigarette and drinking a glass of absinthe, is an unmixed pleasure which I have every day. And then I have a fifteen year old wife who cooks my simple every-day fare and gets down on her back for me whenever I want, all for the modest reward of a frock, worth ten francs a month" (quoted in Solomon-Godeau 1989:127). But elsewhere he confesses to feeling timid and even terrified by the beauty, pride, and willfulness of young women. Titi was dispatched not just for her "mixed blood" but because she had sophisticated tastes for good gowns and Chinese food. The beloved Teha'amana and other women at first refused to sit except in their Sunday best, long gowns—those "hideous muumuus" in Solomon-Godeau's phrase, for her hallmarks of the pervasive power of Christianity and modernity. Teha'amana left him for her relatives on several occasions and took other lovers during their years together. Still, she was tearful at his departure to France in 1893 and willing to resume relations with him on his return in 1895 despite an intervening marriage with a young Tahitian man, Ma'ari. She went to meet him but took fright at the sight of his running syphilitic sores and quickly returned to her indigenous husband. Pau'ura, however, consented to live with him at this time. Unlike Teha'amana, she had many relatives close at hand, and often spent more time with them.

In the Marquesas, in his fifties, despite his obvious ill health and ulcerated body, he was able to find yet another fourteen-year-old girl from a remote valley to be his wife. In exchange she and her parents received not just yards of chintz, muslin, calico, ribbons, lace, and thread but a sewing machine. In the Marquesas, he had sex with many others in his "House of Pleasure" including the red-haired Tohotaua, the wife of Hapaunai. No doubt all of these women were at great risk of contracting the syphilis with which he was long afflicted.

Pollock in her 1992 lecture attempts a re-identification with Teha'amana as "the historical Tahitian woman, a subject of her own history" rather than "only as the object of representation in a Western art history" (1992:10). Elsewhere I suggest that this rhetorical aim proves rather elusive (Jolly 1998), since Pollock is disinclined to treat Teha'amana's eagerness to be with Gauguin or *her* lack of fidelity to *him* as signs of agency. Like Solomon-Godeau, Pollock tends to portray Teha'amana as victim of Christianity, colonialism, and ultimately Gauguin.

Thus, despite Pollock's noble intention, there is little in her lecture that addresses the complex particularities of life in 1890s Tahiti, which Eisenman at least attempts. She too primarily discusses Teha'amana less as a historical subject and more as an object of representation in Western art history. Like Solomon-Godeau she focuses our attention on *Mana'o Tupapa'u* (The Specter Watches Over Her) of 1892. So let me now consider what they say about this painting and then ponder Eisenman's alternative appraisal. But first let us hear what Gauguin had to say. This is a picture with which Gauguin anticipated some trouble. In a routine example of epistolary bad faith, he writes to his wife Mette (whom he kept in the dark about Teha'amana and all the others until the publication of *Noa Noa*) to explain and to justify the circumstances of its composition.

> I have painted a young girl in the nude. In this position a trifle more, and she becomes indecent. However I want it in this way as the lines and the movement interest me. So I make her look a little frightened. This fright must be excused if not explained in the character of a person, a Maorie [*sic*]. This people have by tradition a great fear of the dead. One of our young girls would be startled if surprised in such a posture. Not so a woman here. . . . Here endeth the little sermon, which will arm you against the critics when they bombard you with their malicious questions. (Quoted in Pollock 1992:68)

And later, in a revised edition of *Noa Noa,* he writes,

> One day I was obliged to go to Papeete. I had promised to return that evening, but . . . I didn't get home till one o'clock in the morning. . . . When I opened the door . . . I saw [Teha'amana] . . . motionless, naked, belly down on the bed; she stared up at me, her eyes wide with fear, and she seemed not to know who I was. For a moment, I too felt a strange uncertainty. Her dread was contagious: it seemed to me that a phosphorescent light poured from her staring eyes. I had never seen her so lovely; above all, I had never seen her beauty so moving. And, in the half-shadow, which no doubt seethed with dangerous apparitions and ambiguous shapes, I feared to make the slightest movement, in case the child should be terrified out of her mind. . . . Perhaps she took me, with my anguished face, for one of those legendary demons or specters, the *tupapa'us* that filled the sleepless nights of her people. (Gauguin 1985b, quoted in Eisenman, p. 120)[9]

As Eisenman suggests, this text and the image constitute a "veritable encyclopaedia of colonialist racism and misogyny" (p. 120)—the presumption of the emotive, superstitious native woman and the association of her dread with his rekindled desire.

Both Pollock and Solomon-Godeau view her terror as her terror of Gauguin. Moreover, they juxtapose this naked woman of color with other female nudes of the time. Pollock, like many others before her, compares the picture to Manet's *Olympia* of 1863. Gauguin was so impressed by that picture that he painted a copy in 1891, which he took to Tahiti and of which Teha'amana is said to have asked, "Is that your wife?" Pollock sees Manet's painting as being about the tension between the white woman, a prostitute masquerading as a courtesan, and the unnamed black female attendant who, as in many Orientalist pictures, signifies license or sexual excess.

But how then is Teha'amana to be seen—as both prostitute and maidservant? Pollock has no doubt that she was perceived as a prostitute by European viewers (in contradistinction to Teha'amana's own probable perception of herself as a wife). She could not be seen as a wife by a European audience. She was too young and, especially in that posture, too available. But, Pollock suggests, whereas Olympia is linked with the venality of modernity, Teha'amana is associated with the promise of sex given as part of nature's bounty: "A warm, naked childlike body, offered freely, according to local patriarchal customs, was taken, recorded, debased, and aesthetically reworked, rendered distant and different, through its color, the synonym of infantile superstition against which the European man can maintain his fictional superiority: rational, in control, creative" (Pollock 1992:47).

This might describe Gauguin's state of mind, but it is clearly not the only associations that a viewer familiar with Western art might make. Eisenman rather attends to the boyishness of the figure and what Pollock calls the *"a tergo"* posture. He discerns a lineage connecting her not just to Olympia but to the *Hermaphrodite,* that figure in antique marble of which Lady Townsend said it was "the only happy couple she ever saw." Like this famous sculpture in the Louvre (probably by Bernini), this figure "reclines on a mattress, crosses her legs and exposes her face and buttocks to the viewer" (p. 121).

But Eisenman claims that Gauguin is not just plagiarizing or recycling European sources, but is responding to Polynesian cosmology, with its stress on the interconnectedness of male and female, between light and everyday life *(noa)* and darkness and spirit *(mo'a).* Contra to Pollock's viewing, Teha'amana is not alone. She is accompanied by that specter, the spirit of the dead. And although Gauguin's representation of the *tupapa'u* as an old woman is rather odd, the evocation of spirit as incandescent light is more proximate to Tahitian notions. Ultimately the picture is about the union of Teha'amana and the specter, the indissoluble connection of light and dark, "either she thinks of the ghost or the ghost thinks of her" (p. 129). Eisenman sees Gauguin here struggling to reconcile the dialectical relations of Polynesian dualisms—of light and dark, male and female, matter and spirit—with his own painting practice, with his own theory of color. Thus the picture is elevated to a metaphysical plane that seems to transcend the mire of the sex and the color of bodies. But this elevated, spiritual quest connecting Polynesian and European religiosity also depends on a view of Gauguin as involved in translation and not just exoticist projection.

Gauguin as Ethnographer

There has long been debate between those who see Gauguin as maintaining an exoticist ignorance of Polynesia and those who see him as attaining a deeper understanding of language and of culture. Solomon-Godeau (1989) and Pollock (1992) follow Danielsson (1966) in stressing Gauguin's linguistic and ethnographic ignorance and incapacity. Indeed, Danielsson suggests that the titles of some of his earlier works are pidgin Tahitian, with inaccuracies of orthography, spelling, and basic grammar. Eisenman is rather inclined to follow Teilhet-Fisk (1983) in suggesting that Gauguin's understanding of the Tahitian language and of Polynesian myth and art was rather better. Indeed, they both claim him as an early ethnographer.

Gauguin was doubtless never fluent in Tahitian or Marquesan. In his first rural locale he relied on Chief Tetuanui, who was very pro-French and spoke French fluently (Danielsson 1966:92). He too had attended the Universal

Exposition in Paris (although whether he saw either the Symbolists or Buffalo Bill is not known). Gauguin never attained more than a basic, quotidian command of Tahitian. In a letter to his wife Mette he lamented that he lacks her skills in learning language. It may be that his move to French titles for his later works was an admission of his linguistic deficiencies.

But Teilhet-Fisk (1983) earlier discerned other ways in which Gauguin absorbed Tahitian culture through published texts, visual art, and material objects. Many of his paintings have backgrounded figures derived from Polynesian mythology, often merged with images from Java, India, or Egypt, but still suggesting an intimate knowledge of local myth and oral traditions. Moreover, she meticulously traced his use of Polynesian motifs and techniques of carving. His paintings, sketches, and carvings abound with patterns and figures modeled on Marquesan wooden bowls and war clubs or derived from Maori houses he saw in Auckland en route to Tahiti in 1895. Eisenman follows Teilhet-Fisk's argument that Gauguin was an ethnographer but elaborates this by stressing that in his quest for reconciling local and universal meanings Gauguin sought the mythic values of androgyny.

Gauguin as Visual Historian

Third, Eisenman defends Gauguin against the charge of egregious exoticism, of failing to depict Tahiti as it was rather than the dreamworld of his imagination. Indeed, Eisenman suggests that Gauguin eschewed the racist exoticism of Pierre Loti and progressively developed a far more nuanced and sophisticated primitivism, which both critiqued civilization in Europe and lamented the terrible local effects of colonialism. After all, Gauguin often painted women in what Solomon-Godeau dubbed "those hideous muumuus" (1989:125). What we witness in his early paintings from Tahiti, as in photographs of the period, are women in flowing and flattering gowns.

Eisenman makes much of these early, more formal portraits. As against the nudes that evoke a more primordial or mythic space, they suggest for him colonial hybridity (see Clifford 1997 for a critique). Although palpably different than the nudes, they are not just about benign "mixture" or hybridity, for these very portraits are also typifying—displaying the predicaments of Tahitians as a "diluted" or even a "dying race."

Gauguin's concessions to historical realism are rare and surely the opposite of what he aspired to do. (It is paradoxical that Solomon-Godeau and Pollock crucify him for his lack of realism!) Nowhere are there images of the town of Papeete, except for *Ta Matete* (The Market), an extraordinary picture of women parading in the market, drawn in imitation of an Egyptian frieze. He painted several portraits of settler women, he caricatured government officials in cartoons, and in his last days in the Marquesas he painted a

singular portrait of a nun. But nowhere does he register the presence of Europeans together with Tahitians in his pictures, except that of his own person in self-portraits. Perhaps he represented the morbid sign of modernity as Pollock implies. His pictures are surely seeking not historically specific or realist meanings but mythical ones—searching for Polynesian or Indo-European origins, or a theosophically inspired admixture of them.

Foreign and Local Radicals

Finally, Eisenman vaunts Gauguin's anticolonialism and, especially in his last years in the Marquesas, his alliances with and support of natives in resistance. Yet, as Eisenman has to concede, his credentials as an anticolonial critic and activist are, at best, uncertain. He arrived in Tahiti with a letter from the French government authorizing his mission and his second-class passage was paid. He was initially well received by Governor Lacascade, and even at first admitted to the upper echelons of Cercle Militaire, that club for officers and gentlemen amid the banyan trees in Papeete's largest park, where they could sip their aperitifs and look down on the townsfolk (Danielsson 1966).

Gauguin quickly descended from this. He sought and, after much delay and deliberation, was ultimately given free passage back to France in 1893. Although denied several sinecures by the colonial government, he was constantly badgering them for such positions, and desperately sick and poor in his later years he even settled for a menial position as a draftsman in the Office of Public Works.

His polemics had a moving set of targets: native chiefs, Chinese immigrants, colonial authorities, the Protestants, the Catholics. In his last years he became increasingly embroiled in disputes between the colonial authorities and the local settlers and between the Catholic and Protestant parties. From August 1899 to 1900 he produced his own scandal sheet, *Le Sourire,* but then terminated that to edit *Les Guepes* (The Wasps), the propaganda instrument of the Catholic party. His invective on their behalf was extraordinary given his own recent tracts castigating the role of the Catholic church in the corruption called "civilization." But even more extraordinary was the ease with which he switched sides in his move to the Marquesas. There he befriended the Protestant cleric Vernier, who along with Ky Dong, a Vietnamese Buddhist revolutionary in exile, gave him medical advice and assistance. Here the Catholic bishop, Martin, was rather the butt of his calumny: not only was he excoriated with words, but Gauguin sculpted a monstrous image of him as Father Lechery, complete with phallic horns on his head and in close proximity to Therese, a sculpture of a near-naked woman resembling Martin's domestic servant and alleged mistress.

In his years in the Marquesas, his political efforts did assume a more vig-

orous defense of indigenous interests, against taxation, against the prohibition of alcohol, and against the forced sending of children to schools. But colonial resistance and self-interest comfortably folded into each other. His agitation against schooling was doubly successful; not only did the numbers in classes plummet, to the worried consternation of the authorities, but he thereby "rescued" a bevy of young women from the surveillance of the nuns and was able to lavish them with seductive attentions and invitations to his House of Pleasure. Eisenman tends to equate Gauguin's life of sexual liberty, drinking, and play as equivalent to Tahitian eroticism and laziness as alike acts of anticolonial resistance. This again might be too generous. The persistence of eroticism in daily life and song and dance, the refusal to send kids to school or to labor on plantations *were* important aspects of anticolonial resistance by Tahitians and Marquesans.

But what was the force of Gauguin's example? Can we see him as party to an anticolonial alliance? I am inclined to a more pessimistic reading of him as an avant-garde rebel within an imperial system. His position in this system was not, as Clifford imputes (1997), "safe," for in his final months he was in peril not just from penury, ostracism, and syphilis but jail. Do these grandiose acts of a foreign rebel constitute exemplary forms of anticolonialism? Does a focus on Gauguin as anticolonial hero rather obscure the indigenous taproots of resistance?

I find it very hard to accept Eisenman's plotting of a straight line of connection between Gauguin's rebellious, primitivist postures and contemporary anticolonial, antinuclear, and nationalist movements in Polynesia. Eisenman suggests that Gauguin's interrogatives, "Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?" have "gone native." His book ends with a depiction of lunch with a number of Tahitians prominent in independence politics. He quotes his Tahitian interlocutor, Joinville Pomare (direct descendant of Tahiti's last queen and leader of the Pomare party, one of the main pro-independence political parties). He maintains that Gauguin's questions remain pressing today. Tahitians now still ask themselves, "Who are you? Where do you come from? Where is your family? Where is your land? Where is your future?"

Eisenman fails to register the differences between Pomare's questions and those posed by Gauguin's captions to his vast canvas. Pomare does not so portentously construct the Tahitian self in terms of agonized, abstract questions about past, present, and future or the collective objectification "what are we," where the "we" slides between a marker of racial specificity and panhuman universality. Rather, Pomare poses his questions in a way that relates self to family and to land, a far more concrete, genealogical, and grounded spatiotemporal reference.[10] Eisenman not only unduly assimilates these questions to those of Gauguin, but sees them as expression of a pan-Pacific quest for identity, derived from European nationalist models.

> In Tahiti today they indicate the migration of an old European ideology to a new geographical and cultural context in which self-definition has become the necessary precondition for political solidarity and the attainment of economic autonomy. Gauguin's achievement was thus to have taken primitivism—born in the brains of Rousseau, Diderot and the rest—and transported it physically to the colonies where it might eventually do some good. (P. 205)

This is an extraordinary claim. Pacific movements for self-definition and autonomy take shape in relation to colonial forces, but they are born in the brains of Pacific peoples rather than those ancient *philosophes* of Paris. Nationalist movements have indigenous as well as exogenous origins; they are not just transplants of Roussean primitivism nor just the preferred hybrids of postcolonial theory, but local plants, which are constantly replanted and regrafted but that have deep roots that thrive in local soil. Tradition does not have to be ancestral and originary to be indigenous; it is remade by successive generations (see Jolly 1992). Tahitians may have read and imbibed Rousseau and Diderot in the course of their Francophone education, but it is Eurocentric hubris to see these French philosophers as the only or the primary source of contemporary Tahitian moves for independence (for example, see Firth 1987; Finney 1992).

Many anticolonial movements, even as they align with environmentalists in opposing military testing, even as they join forces with Greenpeace, are ultimately in argument with that "state of nature" that imagines people as but part of a beautiful, wild place. Perhaps the promotion of that image of the "state of nature," that arcadian ideal of tourist pleasure, mists over the harsh history of these islands, so long dominated by French colonial and military interests.[11] I doubt Gauguin inspires many contemporary Tahitians who are struggling to resist rather than perpetuate those interests.

NOTES

1. Gauguin had seen Buffalo Bill perform at the Universal Exposition in Paris in 1889. He is alleged to have returned several times and to have been especially interested in the fencing and boxing. This was also a space where he witnessed not just re-creations of villages from the colonies but indigenous peoples making traditional crafts. He encountered a number of Asian, African, and Pacific women in this locale. His work was also exhibited there at a café near the showground, called Café des Arts, as part of an Impressionist and Synthesist show (see Pollock 1992:13, 46).

2. Solomon-Godeau's position has been criticized by both Brooks (1993) and Perloff (1995). Brooks argues that her argument fails to do justice to the disruptive force of Tahitian sexuality in Western discourse and the way in which Gauguin's art, far from representing the untainted, exotic Tahitian woman, rather reveals how colonial and Christian

power sullies her through the commodification of sex and the new notion of sin. Brooks's stress on the pervasiveness of the figure of Eve (rather than Venus) and the salience of broader Christian narratives and icons in Gauguin's Polynesian pictures is warranted. Moreover, anticipating Eisenman's argument, he highlights both Gauguin's homoerotic temptation and his metaphysical pursuit of androgyny. But ultimately, Brooks is too generous in his assessment of Gauguin's reflexivity, his critical capacity to transcend the antinomies of savagery and civilization, and his initiation of a new genre of representing the body, beyond the old clichés of the nude. Perloff (1995) also depicts Gauguin not in pursuit of typifying ethnic essences but cross-cultural mixtures. She situates his work in the context of a fin-de-siècle preoccupation with degeneration and corruption. Like Brooks she stresses the importance not just of Christian narratives of sin but Gauguin's iconography of corruption derived from Symbolists like Redon. Lizards in lieu of serpents, dogs instead of foxes, and flowers echoing peacock feathers—such recurring motifs are portents of guilt and corruption in a world of alleged innocence, beauty, and bounty. So the Polynesian paradise Gauguin evoked is after, not before, the fall. Perloff stresses the colonial and masculine sources of decadence, of brooding malaise and decay, in a way that ultimately implicates Gauguin rather than exempts him, as Brooks tends to do, on the grounds of Gauguin's declared self-consciousness. For an excellent reappraisal, see Waldroup 1998.

3. The genre of the book is rather uncertain. Some seem to read it as a journal or a traveler's diary. I am inclined to read it rather as autobiographical fantasy novel or allegory.

4. Sweetman (1995) and other biographers note Gauguin's claims to ancestry from Indians in Peru, where he went with his mother as a child. Gauguin constantly confuses the term Maori with Maohi, the name for indigenous Tahitians preferred by those who support nationalism in the present.

5. Rather more persuasive is Eisenman's argument that in his art Gauguin pursued a quest for the liminal, the ambiguous, and the androgynous. In the simplest terms we might see this in his own claim that sexual difference in Tahiti was less marked than in Europe, "something virile in the women and something feminine in the men" (Gauguin 1985a:20). To the European eye the very bulk, squareness, and muscularity in his portrayals of Tahitian women might indeed render them masculine. In this Gauguin's women differ markedly from the pink flesh and the roundness of women's bodies in the paintings of Hodges or Webber, artists on Cook's voyages.

6. This very term suggests that Eisenman transposes European temporalities of "epochs," and more specifically "the end of a century" in Paris, to the history of colonial spaces like Tahiti.

7. This woman later appears as a grotesque, gnarled, reptilian hunchback merged with the memory of de Haan, his Dutch Jewish friend, in his picture *Contes Barbares* (Primitive Tales).

8. Note I am here using the edition translated by O. F. Theis (Gauguin 1985a) rather than that used by Eisenman (Gauguin 1985b).

9. My edition of *Noa Noa* has a slightly different rendering, including the alternative name for Teha'amana, Tehura:

> Tehura, immobile, naked lying face downward flat on the bed with the eyes inordinately large with fear. She looked at me, and seemed not to recognize me. As for myself I stood for some moments strangely uncertain. A contagion emanated from the terror of Tehura. I had the illusion that a phosphorescent light was streaming from her staring eyes. Never had I seen her so beautiful, so tremulously beautiful. And then in this half-light which was surely peopled for her with dangerous apparitions and terrifying suggestions, I was afraid to make any movement which might increase the child's paroxysm of fright. How could I know what at that moment I might seem to her? Might she not with my frightened face take me for one of the demons and specters, one of the Tupapaus, with which the legends of her race people sleepless nights? Did I really know who in truth she was herself? The intensity of fright which had dominated her as the result of the physical and moral power of her superstitions had transformed her into a strange being, entirely different from anything I had known heretofore. (Gauguin 1985a:33–34)

10. This critical speculation, which I first wrote in February 1998, has been dramatically reinforced by my subsequent reading of Elliston's brilliant doctoral dissertation on Tahiti in May 1999 (Elliston 1997). In the midst of her compelling analysis of gender in both quotidian life and the languages of nationalism, she recounts this same conversation over lunch with Joinville Pomare, where she was both a guest and a translator for Eisenman. She reports Pomare as saying "That one! . . . He took eight year old girls to his bed! . . . Oh his paintings are beautiful, but the man!" Clement Pito, a member of Pomare's political party, complained that "Gauguin took our language and put it in his painting." And in elaboration, he protested the very process of translation and misrecognition I criticize. Elliston quotes Pito thus: "The questions in the painting—who are you, where do you come from, where are you going—those are our questions. . . . But [Gauguin] put them in the painting and generalized them . . . he changed the questions. . . . One asks 'Where are you going?' and he changed it [to] 'Where are we going?' One asks 'Who are you?' and he changed it [to] 'Who are we?' One asks 'Where are you from?' and he asked 'Where are we from?' " As Elliston observes, Pito's criticism was not just that Gauguin appropriated the quotidian questions that Tahitians ask strangers when they meet, but that he subverted them. By substituting the third-person plural "we" for the second-person singular "you," he changed the questions into the classic existential questions of French intellectual thought and effectively displaced such angst from the French onto Polynesians. This substitution is even more extraordinary when we consider that "we" in Tahitian differs from the vague English equivalent, having both an inclusive and exclusive and dual and plural forms. I find the echoes between my own critical speculation and Elliston's extended report of the conversation extraordinary. Even more extraordinary is that Eisenman does not allude to this criticism by Pomare or Pito, critiques that effectively challenge his own Eurocentric translations as much as that of Gauguin.

11. See Teresia Teaiwa's essay on Bikini for a compelling argument about the links between militarism and tourism (1994) and writing on Hawai'i by Trask (1993).

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Review: Teresia K. Teaiwa
Victoria University
Wellington

A Preface for Natives

Do you think of him as a French colonist or as a Tahitian (p. 204)? This surprising question about Paul Gauguin's identity, directed by Stephen Eisenman to a Tahitian in the 1990s, is a good example of the overwhelming sense that this book leaves with me. A feeling that the author is grasping at straws —or grass as the case is here. Why on earth would a Tahitian think that *Gauguin* was Tahitian? In only a little more than a hundred years after his arrival are Tahitians that confused and ignorant of history? Or was Gauguin just really good at fitting in? By Eisenman's and a whole host of other scholars' assertions the latter is not true. And as a person of the nineties himself, we trust that Eisenman would not answer the former positively.

Instead, it seems that Eisenman's question reflects a tendency among some

whites to flirt with identity and the identities of others. To toy coquettishly with the idea of going native. To hope somehow that they might be mistaken for a native—if only temporarily. To bond. Or at least to make a connection. A friend. I have no right to doubt the depth of meaning in the exchanges Eisenman had with Tahitians on his visit. What I would love to see is the book written by a person who survived after asking me, "Do you think of Harry Maude as a British colonist or as a Banaban?" Unfortunately, most of us islanders do not take scholarly investigators seriously enough. So instead of sensibly ignoring, or more appropriately punching, the person who asks us such inane and insulting questions, we show off a little bit.

> Pomare then cited Gauguin's manifesto painting: "Who are you? Where do you come from? Where is your family? Where is your land? What is your future? These are the questions we ask each other all the time here in Tahiti. (P. 205)

And what does the scholarly investigator say—not to your face—but in the safety of pages that you probably will never read?

> Oceanic peoples have always been vitally concerned with lineage and genealogy, yet Pomare's questions would probably not have been asked by Tahitians of Gauguin's day. "Where do you come from? Who are you? Where are you going?" are specifically European primitivist questions. (P. 205)

The scholarly investigator asserts that he knows more about what your ancestors thought than you do. (In which case, perhaps he *does* think that you are confused and ignorant of history.) The scholarly investigator asserts that your epistemological base—lineage and genealogy—has nothing to do with philosophy or great philosophical questions. The scholarly investigator usurps what you believe or what you made up for the interview or what you in fact have wondered about from time to time, and he reassigns it to *them.*

These are not your questions. These are *their* questions. *Theirs.* Remember that. Always remember that. "Like Gauguin . . . the native peoples of the Pacific refused to become relics and pass into the tomb of history" (p. 195). *Like* Gauguin? This book might anger you. It may amuse you. Or it could bore you.

An Attempt at a Review for a More General Audience

Part of the value of *Gauguin's Skirt,* according to its author, is that it brings together three ideas that cannot be found—together—in the existing litera-

ture: (1) Fin-de-siècle Tahiti—despite its small population—had a rich, complex, and resilient culture; (2) nineteenth-century Polynesians, like their contemporary descendants, were more often active antagonists of than passive witnesses to French imperialism; and (3) Paul Gauguin was well aware of the Polynesians' cultural and political perspicacity and represented it in his art (p. 15).

Eisenman attempts to illustrate Gauguin's sensitivities by rereading his paintings, correspondences, memoirs, and other art historians' interpretations with an eye toward evidence of complexity and hybridity. Visually, the book's major emphasis is juxtaposing Gauguin's paintings alongside photographs of Tahitians and Marquesans at the turns of both centuries. The purpose of doing this, it seems, is to establish a certain archival authenticity for Gauguin—as if he needed it at this point!—and the author also takes the opportunity to prejudice the reader's reading by imposing his narrative commentaries on the photographs.

This review takes on two issues raised by Stephen Eisenman in *Gauguin's Skirt:* first, the author's argument for a reading of gender liminality in Gauguin's person as well as his work; second, the author's argument that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Gauguin was pioneering a theoretical framework called "critical primitivism" that would eventually converge with indigenous rights movements of the late twentieth century. While this is perhaps the first work on Gauguin to draw explicit connections between the cultural politics of fin-de-siècle and contemporary Tahiti, Eisenman's central arguments are problematic and weak. This review tackles the issues by way of examining the correspondence between the book's title and its content.

> As soon as Gauguin disembarked [at Papeete], he attracted the stares of the natives, provoked their surprise, and also their jeers, above all from the women. . . . What focused attention on Gauguin above all was his long, salt and pepper hair falling in a sheet on his shoulders from beneath a vast, brown felt hat with a large brim, like a cowboy's. As far as the inhabitants could remember they had never seen a man with long hair on the island. (P. 27, quote from P. Jenot)

This book should have been called "Gauguin's Hair," because Eisenman takes the incident recounted above as the originary moment of Gauguin's marginalization in Tahiti. Gauguin soon cut his hair, but according to Eisenman the damage to his reputation had been done: from that moment onward he would remain on the peripheries of both colonial and indigenous societies in Tahiti. What is difficult to believe about this anecdote is that Tahitians had

not seen a man with long hair before. Eisenman does not clarify whether there was really a general scarcity of long-haired men in fin-de-siècle Tahiti, whether long hair was unusual on European men only, and, if long hair was not acceptable on Tahitian men, how and when that taboo emerged. Later on Eisenman discusses two of Gauguin's paintings, *Bathers, 1902* and *Marquesan Man in a Red Cape, 1902,* both of which depict native men with long hair; inexplicably, he does not comment on this detail (pp. 101–102).

While Eisenman does not directly problematize the issue of long hair as a signifier of gender, he does discuss the complexity of Tahitian responses to perceived gender liminality.

> The *mahu* is an ancient traditional role, but its particular shape and content changes according to historical circumstance. The ritual castigation of Gauguin as *taata vahine* in 1891 suggests, indeed, that the improvisatory ingeniousness of Tahitian culture was fully operational during the fin-de-siècle. Far from genuflecting before white man and genius artist, the women and children in Papeete harbor were armed with sharply pointed verbal spars, directed precisely where they knew they would do the most damage. (Pp. 108–109)

But Eisenman's whole take on the *mahu* is problematic. Is *taata vahine* equivalent to *mahu?* He translates both as "transvestite" and then as "third-sex figure" (p. 28). His slippery handling of these terms is disconcerting. A transvestite is someone who cross-dresses, regardless of sexual preference or practice; therefore, a transvestite is not a third-sex figure because transvestitism is simply a performance of gender in which gender remains a binary construct. Eisenman is heavily invested in promoting the "third-sex figure," but scouring feminist anthropology, he appears frustrated by dualistic constructs of gender and dimorphic constructs of sex.

Marilyn Strathern's articulation of Hagen sex/gender practice and performance in Papua New Guinea, however, seems to support his case. But he much too quickly goes on to generalize, "Sex in the Western Pacific . . . is less an identity than a means for understanding the world," and by implication generalizes the case to Polynesia (p. 94). Still intent on finding "nondimorphic sex and gender positionings" and "multiple-gendered subjectivities," Eisenman offers an example from Nigeria where daughters can be turned into sons and women can take other women as their wives.

Am I quibbling over semantics when I argue that we are still left with dimorphic and dualistic terms? There is no third, fourth, or multiple sex or gender in his examples; there are only two sexes and two genders—just a bit of traveling between them. Eisenman would counter, however, that certain

dualisms can imply a liminal third term (p. 130). Describing the painting *The Day of the God,* 1894, he suggests that Gauguin's representation of water functions as a "third term of representation between material and spiritual realms," just as the *mahu* provides a third term between feminine/female and masculine/male roles (p. 133). Yet Eisenman still makes no attempt to test the correspondence between the two English terms, transvestite and "third-sex figure," and the Maohi terms *taata vahine* and *mahu.* He even goes so far as claiming that the *mahu* cannot be considered an institution because "there are no hard and fast rules of comportment, behavior or function, and there can be little doubt that the forms and patterns of Tahitian sexual identity and behavior have changed over time" (p. 106).

Without reexamining his definition of what constitutes an institution—is the family, then, no longer one?—and without resolving his definition of a *mahu,* Eisenman introduces two more contemporary Maohi terms, *raerae* and *pitae.* A *raerae* is a Maohi transvestite/"third-sex figure"/*taata vahine*/*mahu* who works as a prostitute, while a *pitae* is a Western-style/*popa'a*/white homosexual (p. 107). The *raerae* and *pitae,* however, appear to have little theoretical or historical relevance to his thesis, and only add to the gratuitous and exhibitionist character of his work.

Eisenman goes on to hastily assert in a parenthetical statement that Gauguin had tendencies that were considered "*mahu*-ish" by Tahitians: "craftwork was generally considered feminine" (p. 112). Eisenman does not pause to ponder how Tahitians understood Gauguin's work as a sculptor, which was, and still is, considered a purely masculine privilege in Polynesia. It is Eisenman's conjecture that Gauguin was excluded from the world of men, and that the world of women, children, and *mahu* was the only one to which he was allowed access. To make his argument that Gauguin was seen as a "third-sex figure," Eisenman confidently claims that women and children do not gossip with men—if they had seen him as a man, they would not have gossiped with him.

What Eurocentric logic is this? Are or were gender relations in the Pacific, and especially in Polynesia, ever so rigid? It would seem highly unlikely that the majority of Polynesian men would want to cut themselves off from "the coconut wireless." Eisenman is not very specific about the possible inhabitants of this world of women, children, and *mahu* to which Gauguin may have been given access. He gives us no evidence at all that Gauguin did in fact spend time with *mahu;* all we have is Gauguin's confession of a delirious erotic fantasy about a young man (pp. 113–114).

Teha'amana, Gauguin's first Tahitian concubine, is the most substantive character we have, and even then, Eisenman alludes only vaguely to "her complex family origins" (p. 70). Teha'amana's liminality is what should be of

interest here, not Gauguin's, but Eisenman bypasses the opportunity to explore those "complex family origins." I believe that rather than gender liminality being the cause of Gauguin's marginalization in Tahiti, it was more simply his abrasive behavior and cultural incompetence (in both French colonial and Tahitian worlds). So maybe Gauguin's hair really was not the issue, but calling the book "Gauguin's Hair" would have more accurately captured the fetishistic fervor of the artist and some of his fans.

Gauguin's questionable gender liminality, however, is not the sole point of Eisenman's book: "From the moment Paul Gauguin set foot on Polynesian soil on 12 June 1891, a tangled colonial dance was begun" (p. 27). "Gauguin's art, like his thought . . . enacted a colonial two-step. . . . (E)very aesthetic and political breakthrough was followed by a setback" (p. 204). This book, then, might have been better titled "Gauguin's Two-Step." In his attempt at hybridizing anthropology and art history, Eisenman has tried to be as diplomatic and fair yet accurate as possible in describing the intentions, actions, and reputations of an artist who moved "peripatetically" (this term and its conjugates appear regularly in the text) across centuries, cultures, and ideologies. Eisenman's work practically enacts a tangled dance of its own—necessarily, almost, but unsatisfactorily. I think this is a problem for much writing on hybridity and liminality: we often fall victim to the tangled contents of our objects of study. Hybridity breeds hybridity, messiness breeds messiness; but must it be so?

Part of the problem in this case is that if Gauguin was enacting a two-step, Eisenman is trying to accompany him with a waltz. By this I mean that Eisenman is not only trying to keep up with Gauguin's peripateticism, but he is insisting on including an additional "step"—to pay homage to the native or indigenous factor. The result is an awkward (and often uncited) exhibitionism of native information (for examples, pp. 66, 60–70, 111, 112, 203) and an embarrassingly gratuitous tokenism of native informants (for examples, pp. 108, 124, 204–205). So *Gauguin's Skirt* seems to have been misnamed. The title, I believe, is intended to signify Gauguin's gender liminality; the specific deployment of the "skirt" in the title, I am guessing, is also an allusion to the author's thesis that Gauguin was not only seeking an authentic primitivism (signified by the skirt), but was engaging in a "critical" primitivism of his own.

Eisenman traces the genealogy of Gauguin's primitivism to the general milieu of exoticism in nineteenth-century Europe. Here, Eisenman is at his most incisive, helpfully elucidating some of the features of this powerful ideological framework: he describes exoticism as a "preference for difference combined with more or less willful ignorance of historical and cultural particulars" (p. 29) and goes on to elaborate how it was, "for Gauguin as for many others, an elaborate rhetoric of dreams, forgetfulness and withdrawal

from modernity" (p. 36). Reasonably enough, European primitivists found a convenient object in their own rural "others," and Gauguin's Breton period provides interesting fodder for reflection.

> "I like Brittany," Gauguin wrote during his second visit to the region in 1888, "it is savage and primitive. The flat sound of my wooden clogs on the cobblestones, deep, hollow and powerful, is the note I seek in my paintings." . . . Gauguin sought to marry his increasingly anti-empiricist and anti-naturalist art to a culture that, he believed, was equally resistant to the onward rush of positivist thought and material progress. (P. 33)

What if Gauguin had stayed in Brittany? Would it, like Tahiti, be the ultimate exotic destination today? But in the logic of exoticism, Gauguin could not have stayed in Brittany, "for the more one is immersed in the exotic, the more one discovers sameness, and the more one seeks ever greater difference" (p. 38).

Hence, Tahiti (and later the Marquesas) and what Eisenman describes as Gauguin's eventual intellectual progression from racist exoticism to "a dialectical understanding of race and exploitation" (p. 78). "Gauguin's achievement was thus to have taken primitivism—born in the brains of Rousseau, Diderot and the rest—and transported it physically to the colonies where it might eventually do some good" (p. 205). How could primitivism do more good in the colonies than in Europe? Primitivism, Eisenman seems to believe, manages to avoid the ahistoricism of exoticism and misanthropy of racism. The etymology of the word "primitive" is innocent, and from its earliest usage it simply referred to that which was "first, originative and basic." Primitivism, thus, is a "quest for knowledge of the primitive—of the pre-civilized, of otherness, of that which is basic, original and essential to humans, of what has been lost and what gained in the creation of civilization." It has only been in the past half-century, Eisenman confidently asserts, that the term has been used pejoratively (pp. 78–79).

Eisenman's use of chronology here is misleading, however, because he uses the "dialectic understanding of race and exploitation," which he admits Gauguin only achieved shortly before his death, to introduce the notion of a critical primitivism, as if the latter was the natural parent of the former. The question remains, how could primitivism do more good in the colonies than in Europe? And we find our answer in Gauguin's (however erratic and self-contradictory) anticlerical and anticolonial activism in Tahiti and the Marquesas. It is not so much the facts of Gauguin's life but Eisenman's analysis that is problematic, then.

One of the historical facts that Eisenman brings up is that the French Communards of 1871 were deported to New Caledonia. How does knowing this help us rethink (in his terms) the relationship between "critical primitivists" and actual "primitives"? Eisenman says, "There [in New Caledonia] the European communists would receive their chastisement from the true primitive communists" (p. 84). This deft rhetorical twist conceals an appallingly irresponsible distortion or ignorance of the historical record (shades of Eisenman the exoticist), for it was the "true primitive communists" (the Kanaks) in New Caledonia who received brutal "chastisement" from the European communists, and not the other way around (Tjibaou 1996; Spencer, Ward, and Connell 1988; Ounei 1985).

With this initial confusion of the historical relationship between "critical primitivists" and actual "primitives," Eisenman leaps into present-day fin-de-siècle Tahiti with more troubling interpretations:

> In Tahiti, the very same primitivism that functions to attract tourists is also used to foster Maohi solidarity and to stimulate resistance to French colonial domination. Pareus, outrigger canoe races, native dance competitions, tattoos and pagan ceremonies at rebuilt maraes . . . are all primitivisms designed to appeal to *popaʻa* sensibilities; they are at the same time, however, expressions of Maohi pride and anti-colonial commitment. (Pp. 202–203)

Although Eisenman is probably well-intentioned, his overwhelming desire to affirm indigenous culture leads him to remarkably uncritical theoretical practices and conclusions. For one thing, he collapses *pareu,* outrigger canoe races, native dance competitions, tattoos, and pagan ceremonies at rebuilt *marae* (absence of the *"s"* as a *popaʻa* signifier of the plural is intentional here) as if they were a single phenomenon without differing histories of invention, survival, or revival. Eisenman also naively glosses these phenomena as "primitivisms designed to appeal to *popaʻa* sensibilities; they are at the same time, however, expressions of Maohi pride and anti-colonial commitment."

We are left to ask, which *popaʻa* sensibilities? French colonial, French radical, Christian, secular, demi, tourist, Anglophile? And then, which particular primitivisms go with which sensibilities? And is there no possibility that any of these phenomena *(pareu,* outrigger canoe races, native dance competitions, tattoos, and pagan ceremonies at rebuilt *marae)* was not designed to appeal to *popaʻa* sensibilities? Are we able to transcend the contradiction between being designed to appeal to *popaʻa* sensibilities and being expressions of Maohi pride and anticolonial commitment? Isn't it a tad too

romantic to think of *all* of these "primitivisms" as expressions of Maohi pride and anticolonial commitment? Aren't some of them simply trendy—expressions of either Yuppie or New Age culture in Oceania? Hollow signifiers of difference? This is not to say that there are no authentic expressions of Maohi pride and anticolonial commitment. But just because you observe a native wearing a *pareu,* paddling with a canoe club, performing in a dance group, sporting a tattoo, or worshiping at a rebuilt *marae,* one cannot presume that you understand their political or cultural standpoints.

Like Pomare, we need to reproduce and transform "Gauguin's manifesto": " 'Who are you? Where do you come from? Where is your family? Where is your land? What is your future?' These are the questions we ask each other all the time here in Tahiti" (p. 205). *Unlike* Eisenman we will not mistake these questions for "specifically European primitivist questions." These are *our* questions. *Our* questions. Remember that. Always remember that.

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Response: Stephen F. Eisenman
Northwestern University

(Anti) Imperial Primitivist: Paul Gauguin in Oceania

> By a remarkable process, the arts of subjugated backward peoples, discovered by Europeans in conquering the world, became aesthetic norms to those who renounced it. The imperialist expansion was accompanied at home by a profound cultural pessimism in which the arts of the savage victims were elevated above the traditions of Europe. The colonies became places to flee to as well as to exploit.
>
> —Meyer Schapiro, "The Nature of Abstract Art," 1937

Introduction—Primitivism and Modern Art

The relationship between modern and so-called primitive art has been a subject of artistic and critical interest for more than a hundred years. Cubists and Expressionists at the beginning of the century saw in the traditional material cultures of Africa and Oceania the forcefulness, directness, and naïveté they were seeking in their own paintings and sculptures. They emulated the styles and materials of indigenous art and sometimes described themselves as savage and instinctual in their own creative processes and procedures. Conservative critics in Europe and the Americas—especially those attached to court, or state-sponsored schools or academies—similarly saw affinities between primitive and modern artists; to them, however, this was evidence of the delirium, degeneracy, or atavism of the latter.

Primitivism was thus an ideological weapon with which progressive and reactionary European and American cultural forces fought to gain legitimacy or to determine the pace and trajectory of cultural modernization. The celebration or denigration of primitive art was often a gauge of a group or subculture's position on other issues, such as women's suffrage, the social question, and imperialism. Yet in the course of these ideological and cultural struggles, the impact upon tribal or colonial peoples of metropolitan artistic appropriation was rarely considered. Indeed, the sympathetic observation and imitation of indigenous arts was accompanied, in most cases, by a studious avoidance of the original values, meanings, and contexts of the native works, thereby easing the course of Eurocentrism and imperialism. The instances in which avant-garde artists actually involved themselves in anticolonial struggles, traveled to indigenous communities, or engaged themselves in serious and sustained research concerning native cultures were very few, though these did occur.

Probably the first dialectical analysis of the relation between modern and primitive art is found in the 1937 essay by Meyer Schapiro quoted above. Though Picasso, Matisse, Kirschner, and their contemporaries celebrated, collected, and imitated pre-modern African and Oceanic art, Schapiro observed, they nevertheless tended to devalue its intellectual and historical complexity. In addition, he writes, these artists were largely indifferent "to just those material conditions which were brutally destroying the primitive peoples or converting them into submissive, cultureless slaves."[1] We are more aware today that the history of colonialism has been one of active cultural and political resistance, not passive submission to European power, but Schapiro's acknowledgment of modernist complicity in imperialism was extremely bold in its day. In subsequent decades, it spurred considerable self-

examination among scholars and artists in New York—Schapiro's base of operation—and elsewhere.

At about the same time that Schapiro was exploring the significance of primitivism for the development of modern art, the Surrealist poet and impresario Andre Breton was undertaking his own, more sustained and engaged interrogation of the matter. In 1931 he decried the alliance between modernization and imperialism represented by the *Exposition coloniale internationale à Paris* and helped organize a Surrealist "Anti-Imperialist-Exposition."[2] The Surrealist counter-*Exposition* juxtaposed photos of notoriously brutal French colonial officers and exploited African railway workers in order to undermine the anodyne *negrophilie* that colored the emerging alliance of modernity and fashion. Also included were recordings of Polynesian songs and, in mockery of the display of "primitive fetishes" at the official fair, some "European fetishes."

The exhibition, not surprisingly, was derided by visitors (the few who attended), but Breton and his colleagues were not deterred from their principled antagonism to French imperialism. In 1945, at the dawn of the epoch of decolonization, Breton stated that the Surrealists stood shoulder to shoulder with "peoples of color." He added: "First because it has sided with them against all forms of imperialism and white brigandage . . . and secondly because of the profound affinities between surrealism and 'primitive' thought."[3]

Breton's words are more critical than they might at first appear. The poet generally rejected Henri Levy-Bruhl's popular notion of a pre-logical primitive mind in favor of insistence on the intellectual parity of so-called primitives and moderns. This point of view was reinforced by close acquaintance with the views of his longtime friend Claude Lévi-Strauss. "Savage thought," Lévi-Strauss stated in Surrealist fashion in 1961, is just like modern, abstract and scientific thought, it "proceeds through understanding, not affectivity, with the aid of distinctions and oppositions, not by confusion and participation." Lévi-Strauss contrasted the creativity and suppleness of indigenous scientific thought with the narrow classificatory system of modern Western society: Its "supremely concrete . . . theory of the sensible order provided the basis of the arts of civilization (agriculture, animal husbandry, pottery, weaving, conservation and preparation of food, etc.) . . . and continues to provide for our basic needs by these means."[4] The political significance of this posture for Breton and like-minded artists and poets was thus clear: it meant consistent support for indigenous peoples and participation in antiracist and anticolonial struggles in France, the Caribbean, Algeria, Vietnam, and elsewhere. "Freedom," Breton wrote in honor of Ho Chi Minh in 1947, "is a Vietnamese Word."[5]

During the 1950s the pace of writing that concerned modernism, primitivism, and imperialism slowed, though a number of artists from among the European and American avant-gardes—the Abstract Expressionists, l'Art Brut, and CoBrA for example—took aggressively internationalist approaches to art making and ostentatiously emulated indigenous (less often now termed "primitive") art styles from the Americas, Africa, and Oceania. In addition, the great U.S. poet Charles Olson, along with others associated with the arts collective at Black Mountain College, explicitly rejected the prevailing nationalism and ethnocentrism of the age. Olson's literary pantheon, for example, included the Popul Vuh and works by Rimbaud, Neruda, and Mao. The music of Cage and the combine-paintings of Rauschenberg, similarly nurtured at Black Mountain, also pointed beyond U.S. and European sources; these artists' emphases on process and multiplicity were explicitly derived from both Native American and Buddhist forms. For them, as for a new generation of art historians, indigenous artworks, like modern ones, were understood to have an aesthetic, not simply a ritual or religious function; each was therefore available for the same kinds of sustained formal appreciation and susceptible to the same kinds of critical analyses.[6] There was also often a political component to this aesthetic cosmopolitanism: recognition of the value of indigenous art and cultures during these years seemed inevitably to lead to support for anticolonial struggles.

Since the 1960s, there have been vastly more efforts in the United States and Europe at constructing genuinely international works of art and literature, and dozens of studies—in several disciplines—devoted to exploring the nature and history of modern Western borrowings from the art of small-scale societies, indigenous communities, tribes, conquered civilizations, and colonial cultures. In the 1970s, a revival of interest in the evolutionary and materialist writings of Lewis Henry Morgan and Frederick Engels—notably by the anthropologists Eleanor Burke Leacock, Richard Lee, and Stanley Diamond—gave renewed legitimacy to the word "primitive." From a sometimes crude cliché, even racist slogan or epithet, "primitive" was changed into a term with both sociological specificity and political saliency.

An understanding of past or present primitives—of humans living in circumstances that approached those that prevailed during a historical stage of primitive communism—helped native peoples and their supporters in the present recognize and articulate the inhumanity and ecological destructiveness of capitalist civilization. "Primitives were a complex lot," writes the Native American scholar and activist John Mohawk. "Within that complexity lies a whole realm of consciousness which modern society finds unacceptable, indeed dangerous."[7]

I shall not attempt to review here the vast recent literature on primi-

tivism and modern art, except to note two things: first, that much of it has overlooked precisely the redefinition of the terms "primitive" and "primitivism" effected by Schapiro, Surrealism, Lévi-Strauss, and evolutionary Marxism; and second, that some of the most impassioned, if not always cogent, reevaluations of the issue have arisen from considerations of the life and art of Paul Gauguin. Indeed, part of my ambition in writing *Gauguin's Skirt* was to situate the French artist in precisely the intellectual and artistic lineage sketched out above.

I am thus naturally disappointed that my critics—Childs, Jolly, and Teaiwa—have failed to reckon with this cultural and political history. If they were to do so (and my little book can be their guide), they would discover that Gauguin's ostentatious embrace of sexual and racial hybridity or *metissage* reveals him to have been an anti-imperialist primitivist, albeit one who was sometimes hypocritical and often ineffective. Nevertheless, his political impact—especially on the Marquesas at the very end of his life—was not insignificant, and it does not surprise me that some Maohi people today invoke his name when they want to describe political actions or modes of life that stand outside colonial law or bourgeois convention. For a white man to disavow his race privilege or for an ostensibly heterosexual man to avow same-sex desire was then—and remains today—an act of political courage that merits attention.

Gauguin Myths

Until the 1980s, interpretations of Paul Gauguin's life and work were often badly disfigured by Eurocentrism and misogyny. In the accounts of Robert Rey in the 1920s, John Rewald in the 1940s, and Wayne Andersen in the 1960s—to mention just three out of dozens—Gauguin was described as a virile painter-hero, who was courageous in his willingness to abandon a decadent civilization and prophetic in his recognition of the international salience of modernism.[8] Questions about his possible complicity with colonialism were simply never asked in these books and articles, and his sexual politics was similarly ignored.

Yet much of the recent scholarship devoted to Gauguin—the product of a generation of writers schooled in feminism and postcolonial theory—is almost equally flawed, though it begins from very different premises. In their basic outlines the arguments of Griselda Pollock, Abigail Solomon-Godeau, Hal Foster, and Nancy Perloff are compelling.[9] They generally describe Gauguin's sojourn to Polynesia not as an heroic escape from European bondage, but as a purposive act of imperial piracy. Armed with bank draft, paintbrush, and syphilis, Gauguin pretended an attachment to indigenous Tahiti but re-

mained deeply wedded to the values of his own sex, class, nationality, and race. His superior airs and independent means, not to mention his poor language skills, isolated him from native Polynesians. While they were occupied with subsistence fishing, gardening, and plantation labor, Gauguin busied himself gossiping, kibitzing, carousing, and painting. The particular commodities he produced—oil paintings, drawings, wood carvings, block prints—were fancy export goods as valuable as vanilla and copra but obtained with much less visible effort. Indeed, what distinguished Gauguin from other colonials, these authors basically stated, was only the greater intensity and brazenness of his greed, libertinism, drunkenness, deceit, and racism.[10]

Gauguin's life and art, from this point of view, played an important role not just in the construction of modernism, but in the manufacture of a colonial ideology of primitivism that treats Tahiti as nothing more than a sun-filled land of beaches and bikinis, the erotic template for a white, masculinist dream of *far niente.*[11] Without Gauguin, it is implicitly argued, there would be less sexism in modern art and popular culture; without him, colonialism would have one less pillar of support; without him—who knows—there might even have been no Moruroa, poisoned site of three decades of French nuclear weapons tests.[12]

The new Gauguin paradigm, however—represented here by Childs, Jolly, and Teaiwa—resembles in one key respect the very colonial mythology it seeks to counter. Like many fin-de-siècle and later European travel writers, government administrators, ethnologists, and art historians, these recent scholars implicitly suggest the existence of timeless and ineradicable cultural differences between whites and Pacific peoples, failing to recognize that Tahitians (like everyone else) are constantly engaged in the work of constructing identity out of the raw materials of their own and others' heritages. To ask when an emigrant becomes a native is not, as Teresia Teaiwa states, an "inane and insulting" question, but one that is asked and provisionally answered daily by native Tahitians whose parents and grandparents are from France, China, the United States, and Britain, as well as from Tahiti, Moorea, Huahine, Bora Bora, Fiji, the Tuamotus, and Tonga.

Many of the Tahitians I met during my visit in 1995—including members of two of the leading indigenist and pro-independence parties, Pomare (named after the last royal family) and Tavini Huiraatira No Te Ao Maohi (Polynesian Liberation Front)—had quite complex ancestries; some were clearly first-generation native. In fact, the question of how one became (and stayed) a Maohi fascinated me during my visit. When I asked one highly respected figure in the Tavini party—a prosperous, middle-aged Maohi man of obviously Chinese heritage—if I could ever become a Maohi, he at first laughed at me. I had only been on the island a couple of weeks, and my

speech, clothes, and manner marked me at once as a bourgeois American. But after a few minutes of discussion, he answered my question seriously, saying that if I lived among the Maohi for a long time I might become one of them. There would obviously be many more prerequisites for my Maohi ethnogenesis than just the passage of sufficient time, but the malleability of identity and the plurality of culture seems to be a staple of much Oceanic thought and practice.[13]

Fin-de-siècle Tahiti was scarcely less marked by immigration, shifting identity, and cultural *metissage,* as indicated by the number of Salmons, Henrys, Branders, Jameses, and Stevensons in the last royal household. Nineteenth-century Tahitians had no prohibitions against racial exogamy—nor a concept of race for that matter. Indeed, it was French settler society, not the indigenous population, that was terrified by the specter of racial mixing and by what they saw as the inevitable decadence or degeneracy that would result. It was precisely Gauguin's penchant for hybridity that caused greatest political anxiety among secular and religious authorities in Tahiti and the Marquesas and led to the artist's fatal ostracism from settler society. In the end, Gauguin was deemed to have "gone native" and therefore to have become a traitor to his country, his sex, and his race.

Going Native

It is important to remember that "going native" in the late nineteenth century did not have the antic and anachronistic connotations it has today; it was not like retiring to Belize or living off the grid. To "go native" or to become a racial hybrid (in French, *encanaqué*) had extremely pejorative connotations among whites.[14] It meant one had undergone both a physical and moral transformation and degeneration and become a kind of race traitor. The closest English equivalent to calling someone *encanaqué* is the brutal American epithet "nigger lover" with all its associations of sexual and racial depravity and disloyalty.

Robert Louis Stevenson, a traveler to Tahiti in 1888 and a resident of Samoa from 1890 until his death two years later, described white men's fears of becoming Kanakaized in his *South Seas Tales.* In "The Beach of Falesa" (1892) the protagonist, a rough and ready trader named John Wiltshire, is always at great pains to distinguish himself as a white from the lowly Kanakas. He says of the missionaries on the island: "I didn't like the lot, no trader does; they look down on us, and make no concealment; and besides, they're partly Kanakaized, and suck up with natives instead of other white men like ourselves."[15] A little later Wiltshire (who is married to a native woman named Uma) says to the minister Mr. Tarleton: "I'm no missionary, nor missionary

lover; I'm no Kanaka, nor favorer of Kanakas—I'm just a trader; I'm just a common, low, Goddamned white man and British subject, the sort you would like to wipe your boots on." Wiltshire may be poor, dirty, and ignorant, he says, but at least he is white and British! At all costs he wishes to evade the sobriquet by which he is certainly known to the settler elites: someone who is Kanakaized or *encanaqué.*

The danger of becoming Kanakaized is also the central theme in W. Somerset Maugham's famous novel *The Moon and Sixpence,* published in 1919 and loosely based upon the life of Gauguin. The protagonist, an artist named Charles Strickland, moves from London to Paris to Tahiti, marries a native woman called Ata (the name means "laugh") and establishes a household in a remote corner of a tropical forest. There the two live in promiscuity and squalor until the artist dies of leprosy. In the novel, Strickland's every artwork is touched by his disease, that is, his morbid embrace of the primitive, even a simple still life of a bowl of fruit. Here is how the painting—probably inspired by one of Gauguin's late Tahitian still lifes, like *Still Life with Sunflowers and Mangos,* c. 1901—is described by the narrator of Maugham's novel:

> There were sombre blues, opaque like a delicately carved bowl in lapis lazuli, and yet with a quivering lustre that suggested the palpitation of mysterious life; there were purples, horrible like raw and putrid flesh, and yet with a glowing sensual passion that called up vague memories of the Roman empire of Heliogabalus. . . . It was enchanted fruit, to taste which might open the gateway to God knows what secrets of the soul and to mysterious palaces of the imagination. They were sullen with unawaited dangers, and to eat them might turn a man into a beast or a god. All that was healthy and natural, all that clung to happy relationships and the simple joys of simple men, shrunk from them in dismay; and yet a fearful attraction was in them, and, like the fruit on the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, they were terrible with the possibilities of the Unknown.[16]

Here we see the sexist myth of Gauguin in the making. In Maugham's novel, Strickland proudly violates the laws of nature by marrying a Kanaka woman, living in the primeval forest, eating the native food, wearing *pareu*s, walking barefoot, and having hybrid children (one dies, the other goes off and becomes a seaman, a homeless wanderer). He has gone native, polluted his very flesh and blood, and so must die from his trangression. By Maugham's day the terrors concerning degeneration that haunted fin-de-siècle

writers like Max Nordau and Gustave Le Bon had begun to subside and could now more easily become the stuff of pulp fiction. In Gauguin's day, however, degeneracy was perceived to be a threat to the very existence of the native population and therefore to the prosperity and stability of the colonial order itself.[17]

Degeneracy and Depopulation

There is abundant evidence for the anxiety about depopulation in the colonial record for the years spanning Gauguin's stay in Polynesia. Secular and religious authorities in Papeete and Paris were deeply concerned about indigenous depopulation and the viability of the plantation economy. In 1902 Governor Edouard Petit in Tahiti sent a communiqué to the minister of colonies in Paris, stating that he was witnessing in the Marquesas "the end of a race."[18] Villages that once had five to six hundred inhabitants now had between twenty-five and fifty. During the previous year there were just fifty-four births compared with one hundred-eighty deaths, and little could be done to arrest the decline. It was feared a similar demographic collapse was occurring elsewhere in Polynesia. By 1906 the indigenous population of Tahiti was less than seven thousand and that of the Marquesas less than three thousand according to government records. The decline was attributed to numerous causes including venereal disease, alcoholism, consumption, leprosy, flu, and elephantiasis. One factor, however, predominated in fin-de-siècle accounts: indigenous decadence and moral corruption, abetted by race mixing. Governor Gallet wrote to the Ministry of the Marine and Colonies in Paris in 1898 that the natives of the Marquesas were "primitive and perverted beings" who entirely lacked family structure.[19]

The theme of moral laxity and sexual degeneracy is found in official tracts and popular narratives alike. In the central marketplace in Tahiti, wrote Edward Reeves in 1898 in *Brown Men and Women,* "it is a matter of evident congratulations when a girl [of 16] goes off with a Frenchman; all the old ladies [in the marketplace] squatting before the stock of nicknacks, and everyone else—man, woman and child—look pleased at the increase of business."[20] In a book titled *In the Strange South Seas,* Beatrice Grimshaw wrote that women in Polynesia live only for luxury, adopting "almost as a national profession, a mode of life to which the conventionalities forbid me to give a name."[21] In his travel narrative *Chez les Maoris,* Levacon writes: "What we would call restraint or decency in our countries, is something completely unknown to the natives down below. There prostitution has attained the status of an institution, or better still, it has become a religion."[22] These texts and dozens more like them should alert us to the ideological and political

significance of hybridity, *metissage,* mixing, and decadence in fin-de-siècle Oceania.

Gauguin as Sex and Race Traitor

One of the central theses of my book was that much to the consternation of colonial authorities, Gauguin positively trumpeted his own immorality and degeneracy, that is, his embrace of multiple and often conflicting identities of sex and race. The story I told began in France: just prior to his departure for Tahiti in the summer of 1891, Gauguin was pilloried on the front page of *Le Figaro* for being sexually perverse, for being what would today be called "queer"; the critic Fouquier described him as belonging (along with Verlaine) to a circle of *"insexuels"* and *"ephebes"* "who want nothing but to retard the French nation."[23]

In Papeete just a few weeks later, Gauguin was similarly perceived as sexually deviant: native people teased and taunted him with calls of *"taata vahine"* (man-woman) on account of his long hair, peculiar leather-fringed costume (derived from the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show), and simply his general ostentation. He seems to have flirted with every woman he saw but also enjoyed the intimate company of much younger men or boys, including the Frenchman Jenot and the Maohi Totefa. Back in Paris and Brittany in 1894, he regularly extolled the beauty and seductiveness of the young men he had known in Tahiti. It was during that same brief return from exile that he was attacked and badly injured on the docks at Concarneau by a pair of rough seamen. In the existing Gauguin literature the reason for the beating remains a mystery, but to me it looks like a hate crime: he was dressed in his Persian cap, bejeweled blue cape, and white gloves, and he carried a hand-chased silver-knobbed cane. He was accompanied by his black-skinned Javanese lover Anna and their pet monkey.

I do not think (and never stated in *Gauguin's Skirt*) that local people in Tahiti or the Marquesas thought him a *mahu,* but they likely detected in him —as whites did in France and as the native women and children at the Papeete harbor did—certain *mahu*-ish tendencies. (All the recent Oceanic and cross-cultural evidence indicates that Elizabeth Childs, citing Robert Levy,[24] is wrong to argue that "either one is a *mahu* or one is not." The fact that some men gradually change from being *mahu*s to being heterosexual husbands, for instance, indicates that an intermediate status exists.) Admittedly, Gauguin did not wear women's clothes, but his frequent assumption of the *pareu* in place of *popa'a* suits would have feminized him in the eyes of whites and thereby diminished his masculine, white prerogative among natives.

Margaret Jolly correctly notes that art and craftwork do not fall into the category of women's labor, but then neither does painting or drawing on paper and coarse linen fall clearly within the province of men. The very absence of clear gender signifiers in the mixed labor Gauguin performed during his more than ten years in the Pacific—he was a journalist, bureaucrat, gardener, and day laborer in addition to an artist—is precisely the point that needs to be stressed. Just as significantly, Gauguin's own interest in mixed or hybrid sexualities is vividly apparent in his writings and paintings. He spoke of himself as a "young girl" in some notes and letters, assumed a female guise while working as a journalist in Tahiti, and wrote at length about androgyny. In several Tahitian pictures, he misrepresents the town of Paea where he lived as Paia (*paʻiʻa,* a term that, as Levy states, is used to describe lesbian sex)[25] and later puts the word into the mouth of young Totefa.

In Gauguin's most important picture from his Brittany period, *Vision after the Sermon* (1888), he represented himself as a woman. Moreover, the large, central figure in arguably Gauguin's most important work—*Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?* (1897)—is a feminine boy, or a masculine girl, or possibly a *mahu.* The seductive and cross-dressed figures in *Marquesan Man in a Red Cape* (1902) and *Bathers* (1902) are almost certainly *mahu*s, as a number of art historians including Teilhet-Fisk have noted. The inability of Childs, Jolly, and Teaiwa to accept these obvious facts indicates that queer theorists and historians have not made as many inroads in Pacific studies as we might think.

In Tahiti and the Marquesas, Gauguin's class and racial position, like his sexual status, was unlike that of any other settler. Let us just say he was aggressively hybrid. He painted, drew, cast pots, and carved blocks of wood but was not regularly in the employ of any colonial official or big planter. Though he repeatedly tried to gain entry into colonial and military high society, he just as regularly insulted its rituals, customs, and habits. Though he acted as if he was much above the station of mere bureaucrats, tradesmen, or laborers, he generally lived no better than they and suffered periods of real economic hardship. In the Marquesas, he dressed and drank orange wine like a native and became *tayo* (entered into an indigenous name-exchange relationship) with his neighbor Tioka. He antagonized gendarmes and Catholic church officials and worked hard to thwart government agents in their attempts to order and police native behavior. He also made special efforts to prevent the internment of native children. That effort is especially salient here, since the colonial policy was specifically crafted to combat what was considered native sexual license, racial mixing, and degeneration.

In an effort to preserve the race and buttress the economic viability of the colony, officials in Tahiti and the Marquesas established an archipelago

of public and private schools in the 1880s. The purpose of the schools, as the native people well knew, was not liberal education but the segregation of children from the moral viciousness of their families and from Kanakaized whites. "It is not necessary at this time to give the children a proper education, but simply to save them, during their early years, from debauchery and the rampant destruction of morals" that occurs in the company of their families, wrote Admiral Bergen in a letter from 1880 first proposing the establishment of religious and secular schools.[26]

Less than two decades later, a system of schools was established nearly everywhere in Polynesia. Instruction generally included morals and hygiene, as well as French language, history and geography, natural science, physics, math, agriculture, drawing, music, gymnastics, and manual arts and crafts.[27] In Tahiti children from ages six to fourteen were required to attend secular school from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. each day. In the Marquesas exceptionally, the schools were all run by the Catholic church and children were required to board, the better to protect them from what Colonial Inspector 1st Class Andre Salles called "indigenous institutions."[28]

Not surprisingly, this policy of forced assimilation—which parallels contemporaneous practices of indigenous internment in the United States, Australia, and elsewhere—led to widespread animosity and resistance. A note written by a gendarme named Picquenot to Salles summarizes the situation. The native people are "absolutely fixed" in their opposition to these schools, he wrote, but we must nevertheless assert our "moral authority" and "isolate [children] as long as possible from their families, and from the savage manners that rules them." He continued, "It will probably suffice to publicly oppose the concerted campaign of Goguin [(*sic*), and the others] against the schools."[29]

Though Paul Gauguin was clearly allied with native people in opposition to the colonial policy of forced assimilation, he was not immune to the colonial rhetoric of degeneration. He was in fact, scandalously, its very apostle. Intimate with the poets called the *"maudits,"* member of the larger class of artists and writers called *"les decadents,"* Gauguin read with avidity the works of Poe and Huysmans and embraced degeneracy as a weapon with which to attack chauvinism, militarism, and anti-Semitism, what he called: "breeches morality, religious morality, patriotic morality, the morality of the soldier, of the gendarme. . . . The duty of exercising one's function, the military code, Dreyfusard or Non-Dreyfusard. The morality of Drumont [the anti-Semite], or Deroulede [the extreme nationalist]. The morality of public education, of the censorship. Aesthetic morality . . . " In Tahiti and especially in the Marquesas, Gauguin felt himself to be a decadent among the decadents. He painted the fabled Tahitian Epicurians—the notorious, aristocratic Areois class—several times, as in *Te Aa No Areois* (1892) and *Te Arii Vahine* (1896),

and praised their erotic and cannibal heritage in his diary/novel *Noa Noa* and other texts.

In the spring and summer of 1902, less than a year after his arrival in the Marquesas, Gauguin's rebellious violation of sexual and racial norms became transformed into actual politics. Although in poor health, he undertook to assist Marquesan men and women in their efforts to resist the internment of native children in convent schools. "Monsieur Gauguin," wrote Special Corporal Charpillet in a secret communiqué to the colonial administrator in Papeete, "despite the difficulty he experiences walking, has not hesitated to go by himself to the beach in order to try to convince the natives to remove their children [from the convent boarding schools] and argue that the law cannot oblige parents to send them." Charpillet continued:

> On Wednesday, August 20, some indigenes came to find me—to be precise the ones named Tenefitu and Makahooni from the valley of Vaitahu—and said: "Why did the gendarme of Vaitahu say to us that we must bring our children to school if it is not the law? Gauguin came to us on the beach and said we could take them back home." All I could do was tell them that the Governor, during his recent visit, said the population had to send their children away to school. Despite this, the indigenes have taken back their children. . . . Thus the schools are empty.[30]

A year later, the situation remained grave. The efforts of the gendarmes to enforce school attendance, writes Charpillet, have largely failed, with the result being that

> Our authority has been undermined. M. Gauguin makes public speeches . . . against the schools. And the parents hold back their children. Is it because of love? Can love, even maternal love, exist in a place where children are given away to others at the very moment of their birth? It is more like brutishness [than love] since the parents make use of their girls at an early age. These are the habits that Gauguin and his consorts favor.[31]

Indeed, Gauguin sought to encourage native Marquesans in the kinship and sexual practices that Monsignor Martin and successive colonial governors believed would lead to decadence and death. In April 1903, just a few weeks before the artist's death, Colonial Inspector Salles reported to the Ministry of the Marine and Colonies in Paris:

> The Marquesan natives continually indulge in drunken orgies in remote parts of the valleys. On such occasions, groups of forty-fifty persons fill the largest containers in their village with orange wine, and sometimes even use a canoe for the purpose. The men and women, completely nude, will then drink and drink, fight and copulate. The gendarmes know that it is very dangerous to arrive in the middle of such a feast. The painter Gauguin, who lives in Atuona and defends all the native vices, sees in these savage scenes no more than a simple amusement necessary to the well being of the natives.[32]

In fact, Gauguin saw these orgies as more than a "simple amusement"; he saw them as acts of indigenous insolence and independence and as expressions of an emancipatory sexual and racial degeneracy. Gauguin's very artistic project, which involved the ostentatious embrace of decadence in its many forms, encouraged him to assist the native people of the Marquesas in their successful resistance to the French colonial policy of sequestering children in Catholic boarding schools. Within a few years the policy was in fact reversed.

Conclusion

I did not intend *Gauguin's Skirt* to be a vindication of Gauguin. In the book, and elsewhere, I discussed the artist's many political failures and what can only be described as his frequent bad faith. He was cruel to his wife and children, showed a reckless disregard for the health of his Tahitian lovers, and was duplicitous in his dealings with church and state authorities. Gauguin was also highly deceitful—even in notes and journals largely written for himself. A more important failure, however, from the judgment of art history and anthropology was his crude representation—in words and images—of a unified or synthetic archaic ur-culture and religion combining elements from Buddhist, Tahitian, and Christian religions. The results of this crude diffusionist and evolutionist perspective are seen in such pictures as *Te Nave Nave Fenua* (1892), *Mahana No Atua* (1894), and the aforementioned *Where Do We Come From? . . . ,* as well as in the artist's unpublished treatise "The Modern Spirit and Catholicism."

This is precisely the bad primitivism and bad universalism condemned by Meyer Schapiro in an essay from 1947 called "The Fine Arts and the Unity of Mankind":

> The assumption that there is in art an easy path to unity and an immediate insight into remote truths about the minds of distant

> peoples may stand in the way of the desired unity. Conviction that rests on immediate intuitive experience is obviously dogmatic and inflexible. The belief in fixed psychological characteristics of races, the notion of humanity formed of antagonistic breeds with distinct, inherent psychological dispositions, owes more perhaps to the insights of historians and critics of art than it does to biologists or scientific students of human behavior. And the consequences of such beliefs we see in the fruits of imperialism and nationalistic policy. The perception of essential cultural and racial traits in art has done more to divide than unite mankind.[33]

Gauguin often appeared to grasp at just such an easy, intuitive understanding of Maohi culture and history and to claim he had found the mythological missing link that united all world religions. Yet the remarkable thing of it is that Gauguin was a far greater artist than he was anthropologist, and the subtlety and complexity of the works belies their sometimes crude religious essentialism.

The proof of this contention lies in the artworks themselves, which I have not been able to discuss here. But I would like to make one more comment about the relation between the art and the life: Gauguin's art demanded such a life as the one he lived. It is an art that is restless, interrogative, and rebellious, and one that draws upon art historical tradition while at the same time seeking to destroy the very religious and political foundation upon which that tradition was built. It is an art too that is highly impure—in its range of vivid and dissonant colors, its attention and inattention to such things as modeling, anatomy, and perspective, its engagement and refusal of narrative and anecdote. An art such as this demands a life lived on a border or in a liminal space between different cultures, sexes, races, and traditions. Gauguin was in this sense the true painter of colonial Tahiti, and his art gives us a picture of parts of that world that would otherwise be invisible.

NOTES

1. Meyer Schapiro, "The Nature of Abstract Art" (1937), reprinted in *Modern Art, 19th & 20th Centuries: Selected Papers* (New York: George Braziller, 1978), 201.

2. Herman Lebovics, *True France: The Wars over Cultural Identity.* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1992), 105–111.

3. Andre Breton, *What Is Surrealism?* ed. Frank Rosemont (New York: Pluto Press, 1978), 256.

4. Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 268.

5. Breton, *What Is Surrealism?* 339.

6. See, for example, *Art and Aesthetics in Primitive Societies: A Critical Anthology,* ed. Carol F. Jopling (New York: Dutton, 1971).

7. John Mohawk, "In Search of Noble Ancestors," in *Dialectical Anthropology: Essays in Honor of Stanley Diamond,* ed. Christine Ward Gailey (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1992), 33.

8. Robert Rey, *Gauguin* (Paris, 1928); John Rewald, *Gauguin* (New York: Hyperion, 1938); John Rewald, *Post-Impressionism: From Van Gogh to Gauguin* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1956); Wayne Andersen, *Gauguin's Paradise Lost* (New York: Viking Press, 1971).

9. Abigail Solomon-Godeau, "Going Native," *Art in America* 17 (July 1989): 119–128, 161; Griselda Pollock, *Avant-Garde Gambits 1888–1893: Gender and the Color of Art History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993); Peter Brooks, "Gauguin's Tahitian Body," in *Body Works: Objects of Desire in Modern Narratives* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 163–198; Hal Foster, " 'Primitive' Scenes," *Critical Inquiry* 20, no. 1 (Autumn 1993): 69–102; Nancy Perloff, "Gauguin's French Baggage: Decadence and Colonialism in Tahiti," in *Prehistories of the Future: The Primitivist Project and the Culture of Modernism,* ed. Elazar Barkan and Ronald Bush (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 226–229.

10. Let me very briefly highlight a few more of their specific arguments: According to Pollock, the passage from France to the South Seas was a self-conscious, and successful, marketing ploy—an "avant-garde gambit"—that drew upon a well-established tradition of artistic exoticism. Gauguin hatched a plan, connived with like-minded French dealers and patrons, exploited guileless Tahitian natives, and made racism and misogyny the sine qua non of advanced European and American art for the next two generations.

In Hal Foster's eyes, however, the late-nineteenth-century victory of white, masculine prerogative appears less complete. He argues that Gauguin's flight from France provided the artist an opportunity to reexperience the primal scene of psychoanalytic lore. In this case, however, the tableau was primitive rather than domestic, and its cathected subjects were not mother and father but a series of other structural oppositions: white and black skin, male and female, gay and straight, and nature and culture. Though Foster suggested that Gauguin's project entailed a partial "dis-identification with white, patriarchal, bourgeois society," the critic emphasized how paintings of the nude functioned as "compensatory fantasy that bespeaks a feared *lack* of . . . mastery" (" 'Primitive' Scenes," 76). In other words, Gauguin's paintings failed to represent the racist self-assurance of the white European male, but not for lack of trying. Indeed, the very scale and relentlessness of the artist's colonial ambition reveals the concomitant scope of the antihegemonic threat posed by the colonies. There is something at once malicious and pitiful about Foster's Gauguin; the artist attempted to ride the crest of a wave of imperialism and patriarchy, but was instead dashed on the fin-de-siècle shoals dubbed "the crisis of masculinity" (ibid., 102).

11. The literature on these debates is large and growing. A good introduction is found in R. D. Anderson, *France, 1870–1914* (London, Henley, and Boston: RKP, 1977), 141–156. See also Lebovics, *True France.* On imperialism in Tahiti, see Jean-François Baré, *Tahiti, les temps et les pouvoirs: Pour une anthropolgie historique du Tahiti post-européen* (Paris: Editions ORSTROM, 1987).

12. On French nuclear policy in the Pacific, see Robert Aldrich, *France and the South Pacific since 1940* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), 302–341.

13. The question is highly vexed, of course; considerable distinctions must be made between, for example, Maori and Hawaiian cultures. Cf. Marshall Sahlins, *How Natives Think, About Captain Cook for Example* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 241–251. On hybridity in the contemporary Pacific, see Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994) and *In Oceania* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997). Also see the many exemplary publications of Margaret Jolly, including *Family and Gender in the Pacific: Domestic Contradictions and the Colonial Impact,* ed. Margaret Jolly and Martha Macintyre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

14. Pierre-Yves Toullelan, *Tahiti Colonial* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1984).

15. Robert Louis Stevenson, *South Sea Tales,* ed. and intro. Roslyn Jolly (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 35.

16. W. Somerset Maugham, *The Moon and Sixpence* (New York: Dover, 1995), 160.

17. For further references on this, see *Gauguin's Skirt,* 222 n. 27.

18. Archives d'Outre-Mer, Aix-en-Provence, SG Oc. carton 98, H39.

19. Quoted in *Gauguin's Skirt,* 167.

20. Edward Reeves, *Brown Men and Women, or, the Strange South Seas in 1895 and 1896* (London: Swan and Sonnenschein, 1898), 56.

21. Beatrice Grimshaw, *In the Strange South Seas* (London: Hutchinson, 1907), 112.

22. Toullelan, *Tahiti Colonial,* 63.

23. Ibid., 97.

24. Robert I. Levy, *Tahitians: Mind and Experience in the Society Islands* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 130–141.

25. Ibid., 141.

26. Archives d'Outre-Mer, SG Oc. carton 98, H31.

27. Archives d'Outre-Mer, SG Oc. carton 98, H39. See also Office of the Irish Messenger, *Workers in the Vineyard: The Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny in Tahiti and the Marquesas Islands, 1844–1946* (Dublin: OIM, 1950).

28. Archives d'Outre-Mer, SG Oc. carton 64, n.p.

29. Ibid., Q.3, p. 6.

30. Quoted in *Gauguin's Skirt,* 170. It should be noted here that the Marquesas absorbed a number of ex-Communards and other radical exiles, and that Gauguin may have been thought to belong to this community. The artist was, for example, close friends with Ngyen Van Cam, who was transported to the Marquesas in 1898 from Saigon, where he had been imprisoned for sedition.

31. Archives d'Outre-Mer, SG Oc. carton 64, Q.3.

32. Quoted in *Gauguin's Skirt,* 161.

33. Meyer Schapiro, *Worldview in Painting—Art and Society* (New York: George Braziller, 1999), 240–241.

REVIEWS

Ben Burt and Christian Clerk, eds., *Environment and Development in the Pacific Islands.* Pacific Policy Papers, no. 25. Canberra: National Centre for Development Studies, Australian National University; Port Moresby: University of Papua New Guinea Press, 1997. Pp. xiii, 299, illus., maps, references. A$20.

Reviewed by Cluny Macpherson, University of Auckland

THIS IS A COLLECTION of eighteen papers intended to promote European–Pacific Islands links. Most focus on the theme that the same European-Pacific linkages that cause so many of the Pacific's human and environmental problems may also be sources of solutions. Most of the papers were originally presented at a conference organized in 1995 by the Pacific Island Society of the United Kingdom and Ireland and by the United Kingdom Foundation for the South Pacific. The remaining papers are invited responses to arguments in the original chapters.

The collection is wide ranging and contains groups of papers on the relationships between environment and development: sustainable economic development, the control of development, logging and forestry, mining, fisheries management, land-use values and land-use options, local culture and human development, ecotourism, health and development, the difficulties in planning for the future, and the possibilities presented by European-Pacific linkages. All attempt to relate general bodies of theory to practice within the Pacific context.

The book's value lies first in its review of a series of contemporary themes

in the general area of environmentally appropriate human development within the Pacific context. It is also especially valuable for its presentation of quite different viewpoints on a number of topics; one finds back-to-back chapters by authors with divergent views on the same general themes. Thus one finds side by side Sitiveni Halapua's and John Cameron's analyses of the possibilities and constraints on sustainability; Max Henderson's and Colin Filer's assessments of the possible role of forestry in Papua New Guinea; Tim Bayliss-Smith's and Paul Sillitoe's evaluations of the role of land-use values in defining development options; John Cameron's and Andrea Tuisovuna's analyses of the possibilities and limitations of public-health strategies; and, finally, Tom Spencer's and Christian Clerk's views on dealing with and managing uncertainty in the global environment.

These "exchanges" are particularly valuable for teachers who seek a range of views on certain key themes in environmental development. For example, in the first of three related contributions, Sitiveni Halapua—a development economist from the Pacific Islands Development Program at the East-West Center in Hawai'i—sets out a comprehensive, growth-led, government-managed, consensus-based model for development. In a rejoinder, John Cameron, from the School of Development Studies at the University of East Anglia, argues that "experience suggests that augmenting existing government machinery is neither necessary nor sufficient for sustaining, recovering and enhancing either the ecological or the human quality of existence. . . . Much larger questions of governance cannot be avoided" (p. 33). In the third of this set, Suliana Siwatibau—a development consultant currently based in Vanuatu—offers another vision of a development policy removed from government institutions, instead fueled by an informed, empowered populace assisted by a network of local and global nongovernmental organizations.

The three papers do more than outline parameters, programs, and future possibilities. Even more importantly, they reflect the ways in which disciplinary backgrounds, professional experiences, political philosophies and agendas, client expectations, and the daily realities of each of the authors constitute the political realities that render the debate so complex. The development economist heads a program that routinely brings him into contact with heads of governments who define and judge that program. His "clients" are constrained by the need to recognize and adopt Asian Development Bank, International Monetary Fund, and World Bank agendas to ensure funding for their policy programs, and he must in turn deal with these realities. To do so he must necessarily set aside the widespread evidence of corruption and questions about governance within Pacific governments. The academic can, from the freedom of academia, point to the continuing degradation of the

environment and the roles Pacific governments, driven by growth-based definitions of development and the need to support local elites and multinational interests that keep them in power, have played in the steadily worsening situation. Because his "clients" seek nothing more than a comprehensive, informed analysis, the academic is free to argue that to expect governments to perform any differently is somewhat naive without concern for the real political consequences of the approach. In the third paper an economist provides an interesting and frank profile of the influences that collectively define and plan development in the contemporary Pacific. She too shares the view that governments should not alone be entrusted with these programs and argues for a coalition of informed and empowered local and international interests that can play a significant role in the development of equitable, sustainable development.

In these papers, and throughout the other exchanges, one gets a real sense of the complexity of the issues confronting those who seek to engage in the debate about sustainable development in the Pacific. Anybody who thought that the debate might be simple should read this collection, not because it offers a prescription for sustainable development, but because it alerts the reader to the obstacles that must be overcome to make any progress at all in this crucial program.

Per Hage and Frank Harary, *Island Networks: Communication, Kinship, and Classification Structures in Oceania.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Pp. xx, 296, tables, illus., maps, notes, references, index. US$60 cloth.

Reviewed by Mac Marshall, University of Iowa

This is a curious book, at once passé and avant-garde. Its authors simultaneously till fields long abandoned by contemporary sociocultural anthropology and provide fertile ground for future developments in archaeology, ethnology, and historical linguistics. In good measure, these contradictions derive from the current contradictory and fissiparous moment in which the discipline of anthropology finds itself, with core epistemologies (including the "four fields") discarded or under attack, and with contending camps of true believers lobbing shells at one another from behind rigid and fervently defended barricades. In this environment, book reviewers risk using certain words or phrases that others may employ to consign the work under review to one "side" or the other of the current canon wars. I hope to avoid this problem; however,

I believe that it is necessary to situate the present volume within the changing fashions of anthropological theory and method so as to assess its potential contribution, and in doing this I will not be able to avoid using certain "charged" words.

Two monumental and highly influential books in anthropology were published in 1949: George P. Murdock's *Social Structure* and Claude Lévi-Strauss's *The Elementary Structures of Kinship.* The former represented the culmination of a cross-cultural labeling, classifying, natural-history type of anthropology that used statistical correlations among isolated variables (characteristics of societies) to reach scientific generalizations based in part on models of social evolution; its focus was especially on systems of kinship terminology and social organization. The latter drew on structural linguistics and inaugurated at least a quarter century of serious anthropological exploration of structuralism; its focus was especially on systems of marriage and alliance. In the years following publication of these two books, both statistical cross-cultural comparison and structuralism were found seriously wanting, and they have long since been replaced in the theoretical mainstream of sociocultural anthropology.

The authors of the volume under review ground their analysis in a set of anthropological problems that derive from Murdockian and Lévi-Straussian approaches (indeed, the book is dedicated to Lévi-Strauss). Their creative contribution is to demonstrate how a form of qualitative mathematics called graph theory (itself a branch of geometry; Kemeny 1959) provides a set of analytical methods that offer precise, clear, parsimonious solutions to a set of structural, historical, and comparative problems. The problems they examine are located geographically in Oceania, with Micronesian examples prominently represented.

The authors note in their preface that this is their third co-authored book "in a comprehensive program of research on applications of graph theory to anthropology" (p. xv). Hage comes to the partnership from anthropology; Harary is a mathematician who has contributed to graph theory since the 1950s. Their first joint book, *Structural Models in Anthropology,* appeared in 1983; the second, *Exchange in Oceania,* was published in 1991. Graph theory applies most easily to network problems in anthropology, providing formal models (algorithms, theorems, corollaries) for representing and analyzing various relationships among sets of entities (individuals, kin groups, islands, societies, and so forth). As their title indicates, the authors intend their book to be "a general contribution to network analysis in anthropology" (p. xvii).

The book is organized around six graph theoretic models. Following an introductory chapter, in each of seven chapters one of these models is applied to a particular problem illustrated by data from Oceania. For example,

chapter 2 uses the graph theoretic model of trees to examine "a Micronesian prestige-good system" (the Yapese Empire) and to explore " 'recursive dualism' in Austronesian classification systems." Likewise, in chapter 5 they employ search trees to describe "The Marshallese Conical Clan" and to conjecture about "The Devolution of Social Organization in Nuclear Micronesia." The book ends with a brief conclusions chapter (five and a half pages) that simply summarizes what has gone before and argues for the "clarity and insight" that can be gained "by drawing the graph of an empirical structure" (p. 265).

So what is wrong with this? From one perspective, "everything," and from the other, "nothing at all." In the poststructuralist, postmodernist, deconstructivist debates that have engulfed contemporary anthropology (and, especially, sociocultural anthropology), many of the assumptions and presuppositions that one must make in order to use graph theory seem untenable, even quaint. From this perspective, all knowledge is humanly constructed and it can only be partially grasped through the (always situated and biased) position of each particular observer. But even as the above debates have rattled, revolutionized, and perhaps even revitalized anthropology—strengthening the discipline's ties to the humanities in the process—others have reiterated their belief that anthropology is something quite different. From their view, the world exists independent of "the social construction of reality," it can be studied using a positivist scientific paradigm, and it can be known objectively (discovered) independent of the particular observer. Interestingly, given the kinds of graph theoretic applications illustrated in *Island Networks*, this latter position holds much greater sway today in archaeology, biological anthropology, and some branches of anthropological linguistics than it does in sociocultural anthropology. Indeed, Knauft makes a strong case that "[b]y the late 1980s and early 1990s . . . cultural anthropologists had become wary of structure in *any* guise and wary of culture as an overly integrated and positivist entity" (1996:128; emphasis in original). Apropos the opening sentence of this review, structuralism has become passé, and in a poststructuralist time structural models derived from graph theory have little application to what are perceived to be the central concerns of contemporary sociocultural anthropology.

If this be so, then how can this book also be avant-garde? Certainly, if we look at anthropology as a whole rather than at sociocultural anthropology alone, many of the problems Hage and Harary engage fit nicely into contemporary work. For instance, their several analyses of voyaging and trade networks, patterns of island settlement, and the locations of trade centers connect well with current concerns in Pacific prehistory. Although he presumably did not have access to *Island Networks* at the time he wrote his new

book, *The Lapita Peoples* (1997), Patrick Kirch cites and makes use of Hage and Harary's earlier volume, *Exchange in Oceania* (1991). This suggests that ideas presented in *Island Networks* will fit easily into on-going analyses of Lapita networks and other "hot" topics in the archaeology of Oceania (indeed, Hage and Harary briefly engage archaeological studies of the Lapita cultural complex on pp. 45–50, 87–89, and 121–122).

The authors demonstrate (pp. 52–66) that "all the dialect groups of the Tuamotus are joined in a single connected network" (p. 66), and that these dialect groups correspond to marriage isolates. As they note, "Networks such as this one offer rich possibilities for interdisciplinary research in demography, populations genetics, linguistics, and anthropology, with many useful applications of graph theoretic models" (p. 66). Such cross-disciplinary work has an important place in contemporary anthropology—particularly in biological anthropology and biocultural medical anthropology.

Many contemporary sociocultural anthropologists have sought ways to move beyond the bounded "society" or "culture" construct of bygone days, to study such things as regional systems or transnational migrations. To the extent that graph theoretic models can be employed to analyze systems of this sort (and there appear to be many ways in which this might be done), an argument could be mounted that such models offer an avant-garde formal methodology for ordering, visualizing, and examining the congeries of variables that must be taken into account in such studies.

One way that graph theory may enrich anthropology is illustrated at numerous points in *Island Networks* where the authors develop hypotheses/suggestions/proposals/conjectures based on the logical properties of these formal models (e.g., chapter 6, pp. 165–203). In such cases, rather than being just a tool for data analysis, graph theory also may contribute to the formation of educated guesses ("hypotheses") that subsequently can be researched and explored on the basis of empirical data.

For the Pacific Islands specialist there are occasional frustrations when the authors rely on limited or outdated material for their illustrations (e.g., the vignettes of Micronesian societies on pp. 142–162, or reporting that Yapese social organization is based on double descent, p. 31). There are also a few gaffes (e.g., locating Ra'ivavae in the Southern Cooks instead of French Polynesia, p. 60). And sometimes they simply make an assumption without much evidence to back it up (e.g., "We do not necessarily assume that the Marshalls were the first islands to be settled [in Nuclear Micronesia] but only that PNM [Proto-Nuclear Micronesian] society was best preserved and represented there," p. 146). But these are minor points, given the primary purpose of the book.

The volume is filled with 121 figures illustrating different graphs, along

with 10 tables and 4 maps. The text is laced with numerous technical statements of algorithms and such from graph theory that are somewhat difficult to wade through for the uninitiated (even if perhaps essential to the technical integrity of their presentation).

As indicated above, this book is a potentially useful demonstration of ways in which one major branch of qualitative mathematics can inform questions of interest to anthropologists. It will find greater resonance among archaeologists, historical linguists, and biological anthropologists than among most sociocultural anthropologists, although I have suggested some ways it may prove of interest to this last group as well. It is unlikely to be used in most classroom situations but should be an essential acquisition for major research libraries.

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Reviewed by Keith Lawrence, Brigham Young University–Provo

As a teacher and scholar of early American literature, I am profoundly troubled by the construct of North American history that marginalizes the experiences of indigenous peoples of Canada and the U.S. mainland and altogether ignores the histories of native Alaskans, Hawaiians, and "Trust Territory" Pacific Islanders. And so I enthusiastically accepted the invitation to review Professor Campbell's *"Gone Native" in Polynesia: Captivity Narratives and Experiences from the South Pacific,* perceiving in its title the promise of discussions that would broaden my understanding of white American and Euro-

pean colonialism in the Pacific during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, stimulate my appreciation for how indigenous peoples met or answered white colonial practices and ideals, and challenge my conceptions of or knowledge about the Euro-American captivity narrative.

"Gone Native" in Polynesia is best at meeting the largely intuitive demands of its preface. In the preface, Campbell accurately describes the subjects of his book as "beachcombers"—nonfantasizing and nonidealistic white males "who were caught in the slipstream of European [and American] expansion" —rather than as "captives." These beachcombers, Campbell asserts,

> were pragmatic, often desperate men, frequently with an abhorrence of "savages," and no desire to cut themselves off forever in a remote and isolated island location. Their experiences were neither born of traditional European mythmaking nor did they lend any support to such myths. They underwent extraordinary experiences only in the sense that they were out of place, dislocated, participating in a way of life and events that, however novel for them, constituted someone else's mundane, ordinary existence. To their own contemporaries, their lives seemed exotic but not generally interesting. (P. x)

This initial "exoticism," Campbell suggests, is, for the contemporary ethnohistorian, compounded by two centuries of change in European, American, and Pacific societies; by the tendency of the popular imagination to romanticize the past; and by historians' predilections for demystifying history, uncovering its "dreary ordinariness" and "sickening brutality." Campbell's announced purpose is to retrieve in his book "the contours of culture contact between 'civilized' and 'primitive' in the remotest, most isolated parts of the globe through the lives of men that became detached from the former and incorporated into the latter," reflecting "the diaphanous interface of remote cultures coming into permanent contact for the first time" (p. x).

"Gone Native" in Polynesia is divided into three sections. The first is the shortest, defining more fully Campbell's "beachcomber" type and, in context of the ventures that initially brought Europeans (and Americans) to Polynesia, providing generalized descriptions of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Polynesian culture. The second section comprises the previously uncollected and largely unknown histories of eleven beachcombers, histories painstakingly assembled by Campbell from autobiographical and biographical narratives, newspaper notices, and other public documents. In the third and most problematic section of the book, Campbell devotes a short chapter to each of five topics: "Becoming a Beachcomber," "Becoming a Polynesian," "Immigrant Role," "Cultural Modifiers," and "Beachcombers and the World."

Although the beachcomber histories are brief (the shortest is barely two

pages; the longest, just over seven), and although Campbell provides no clear rationale for having settled on the particular accounts he finally includes in his work, these histories constitute the most objective and salient portion of Campbell's discussion. While their clear focus is on "beachcomber culture" rather than on the respective South Pacific cultures into which each beachcomber intrudes—those of Tahiti, the Marquesas, Hawai'i, Tonga, and Fiji—crucial details of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Polynesian history nevertheless emerge, details relative to family and community life, to martial and economic undertakings, to personal and social ideals, to religious beliefs, and to deepening connections between Polynesia and the West. To Campbell's credit, there is at least a representative degree of variety in the narratives he has chosen, both in terms of beachcomber ethnicity and of depth and length of beachcomber assimilation. Seven of Campbell's beachcombers were British (James Morrison, Edward Robarts, George Vason, William Mariner, James Read, John Twyning, and William Diaper), three were Americans (William Torrey, John Young, and David Whippy), and one was Swiss (Peter Hagerstein). Four of the beachcombers remained permanently in the South Seas (Hagerstein, Young, Whippy, and Diaper), five returned to their native countries (Morrison, Torrey, Vason, Mariner, and Twyning), one went on to Asia (Robarts), and one had an unknown end (Read). Taken together, the histories substantiate what is perhaps Campbell's most important argument: that while "the first arrival on the beach of a white man" was the harbinger of "changes in Polynesian society," the actual "facts of cultural change were entirely due to the perceptions of the Polynesians." That is, the culture, technology, and ideology of whites were measured for "usefulness and desirability"; and even for those things deemed useful and desirable, it was the Polynesians—and not the whites—who, for at least the first sixty or seventy years after the first intersection of cultures, primarily determined the nature and rate of any exchange (pp. 154, 155).

Campbell's second major argument is less persuasive. Because the "process of acculturation and assimilation" was "irrational rather than cognitive," Campbell writes, "most beachcombers were more like refugees than free immigrants" (p. 155). His use of the term "refugee" is accurate, even profound; but the term is not sufficiently differentiated or explained by Campbell to enable it to bear the full implications of its own meaning—and so his argument appears flat if not indeed facile. The crux of the problem is, I believe, in Campbell's insistence on calling the beachcombers "captives," on his using the terms "beachcombers" and "captives" synonymously. Campbell thereby finds justification for linking his own construct of the white beachcomber to the captivity model provided by Irving Hallowell's dated analysis of white captives of American Indians (1963).

But the simple fact is that Campbell's beachcomber histories finally share

very little with American Indian captivity narratives. As defined by Vaughan and Clark (1981), Axtell (1981), Clifton (1990), Derounian-Studola and Levernier (1993), Burnham (1993), Demos (1994), and others, the American Indian captivity account is a white socioreligious parable about the respective worlds of Native Americans and white Europeans, a parable arguing not simply the superiority of the latter to the former, but portraying Native American captors as degenerate and satanic agents engaged in a moral death struggle with God's elect, the Christian whites, who, because of the prideful backsliding of their spiritual communities, are required of God to be chastised and humbled. In referring to his beachcombers as captives, Campbell must ignore both the large body of work on Indian captivities *and* the fact that his beachcomber histories have none of the metaphorical or metaphysical underpinnings of the genuine captivity account. (Besides, unlike white captives on the mainland, the beachcombers were confined to their respective islands not so much by native peoples as by the Pacific Ocean.)

In my view, then, Campbell's second argument *should* have been that the beachcombers were neither "free immigrants" *nor* "captives," neither victimizer nor victim, neither powerful nor entirely powerless. Instead, they were quite accurately refugees, agenda-less castaways who, while recognizing their utter dependence upon their "foreign" hosts, nevertheless seemed to expect the sanctuary they indeed received. Perhaps Campbell's interpretive miscues spring, in part, from his choosing to summarize the history of each beachcomber rather than letting the men speak for themselves—even where autobiographical narratives exist, as in the cases of Morrison, Robarts, Torrey, Twyning, and Diaper. (To be fair, more than one-third of Campbell's history of Diaper comprises quotations from Diaper's 1928 history, *Cannibal Jack,* but this is the clear exception among Campbell's eleven histories.)

Another reason for Campbell's interpretive lapses is suggested by his admitting in his preface that "so many years have passed since I began and initially completed this work, that probably none of my benefactors and partners in conversation will remember anything about it" (p. xi). The great majority of the secondary sources cited by Campbell were published during the 1960s and before; a handful come from the 1970s. But (save five articles published by Campbell himself between 1981 and 1989) Campbell cites only three secondary sources appearing since 1980: articles by Bargatzky (1980) and Sahlins (1994) and a book by Dening (1980). Thus, Campbell's theoretical foundations—where they exist—are more than twenty years old. For example, Campbell ignores the theoretical work of more recent ethnohistorians like Clifford and Marcus (especially their *Writing Culture* [1986]); Crapanzano (1986); Tyler (1987); Becker (1988); Mascia-Lees, Sharpe, and Cohen (1993); and Benson (1993)—writings that would have helped guide Campbell through the interpretive minefields inherent in century- or centuries-old texts.

At the very least, I believe, the perspectives inherent in such works would have kept Campbell from the "ethnocentricities" and illogicalities sprinkled throughout his book. These include his tendency in part 2 to use the phrase "gone native" as a tonal pejorative, where his language conveys implicit respect for or sympathy towards "respectable" beachcombers who choose to remain in Polynesian cultures but who, in fundamental ways, hold themselves aloof from them. They also include, in part 3, his finally unsupported claim that beachcombers were "quite untouched" by "romanticism or primitivism" (p. 85)—especially when he notes, just pages later, that Polynesians were characterized from the mid-1700s on as a "handsome smiling people eager to trade" and that Polynesian shores boasted "young, healthy-looking, and frequently uninhibitedly naked women eager to trade their charms" (p. 88). (It never seems to occur to Campbell that, in their apparent indifference to Polynesia, his beachcombers may simply have become inured to the exotic. After all, they were, in most cases, wanderers for whom Polynesia was simply another stop on a long journey.) Campbell's "ethnocentricities"/illogicalities also include the tension between his model of the beachcombers as "captives" and his description of them late in part 3 as "voluntary outcasts" (p. 141); and his assertion that, from the perspective of white society, the primary consequence of the beachcomber experience was to reveal "the unease about license that every thinking person in Western society tried to both deny and repress" (p. 141).

Too, in his own discussion of assimilation, Campbell more or less sidesteps the long and robust tradition of assimilation theory, from Robert Park's well-known "race relations cycle" of the 1920s through the postcolonial musings of such scholars as Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Benita Parry, Rey Chow, Ruth Frankenberg, and Lata Mani. This leads to rather curious judgments in part 3, as when he declares that "the nearest modern equivalent of the beachcomber is the anthropologist who isolates himself or herself from his or her own kind and lives among his or her chosen community for a time" (pp. 95–96); or as when he reduces assimilation options to a "settled" conformity to the new culture, an indifferent conformity to it, a "bored resistance" towards it, or an "active resistance" to all it was or represented (see p. 98); or as when he suggests that the cultural conformity of beachcombers could be measured by appropriate changes in "dress and mundane behavior," deference to the values of the new culture in the face of "moral dilemmas," "mastery of the language," and tattooing (p. 99)—or, worse still, when he repeats as fact such insidious stereotypes as that Fijian women "considered it a distinction to be the wife of a European," or that Samoan women wanted European husbands "partly for the novelty" but also because white men "were reputed to be kinder to their wives and to work them less hard than their native counterparts" (p. 108).

Despite its flaws, Campbell's work represents an important contribution to studies of the South Pacific. In compiling, editing, and annotating the histories of white European beachcombers, Campbell presents a pioneering account of some of the earliest cultural intercourse between Polynesians and white Europeans; section 2 of his book will be invaluable to researchers with similar interests. We anxiously await the publication of a companion piece by scholars who will continue the struggle over such sophisticated issues as acculturation, assimilation, colonization, ethnic transferability, "home," "history," and "identity."

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BOOKS NOTED

RECENT PACIFIC ISLANDS PUBLICATIONS: SELECTED ACQUISITIONS, JUNE 1999–FEBRUARY 2000

THIS LIST of significant new publications relating to the Pacific Islands was selected from new acquisitions lists received from Brigham Young University –Hawai'i, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Bernice P. Bishop Museum, University of Auckland, East-West Center, University of the South Pacific, National Library of Australia, Melanesian Studies Resource Center of the University of California–San Diego, and Secretariat of the Pacific Community Library. Other libraries are invited to send contributions to the Books Noted Editor for future issues. Listings reflect the extent of information provided by each institution.

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CONTRIBUTORS

Dennis A. Ahlburg, Industrial Relations Center, Carlson School of Management, and Minnesota Population Center, University of Minnesota, 321 19th Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55455, U.S. Fax: (612) 626–1335. E-mail: dahlburg@csom.umn.edu

Elizabeth C. Childs, Department of Art History and Archaeology, Washington University, Box 1189, One Brookings Dr., St. Louis, MO 63130. E-mail: ecchilds@artsci.wustl.edu

Stephen F. Eisenman, Department of Art History, Kresge Hall 244, 1859 Sheridan Rd., Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 60208–2208, U.S. E-mail: s-eisenman@northwestern.edu

Margaret Jolly, Gender Relations Centre, Division of Society and Environment, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, Canberra, ACT 0200, Australia. Fax: (61-2) 6125–4896. E-mail: margaret.jolly@anu.edu.au

Norman Meller, Department of Political Science, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Honolulu, HI 96822, U.S. [DECEASED]

Pamela J. Stewart, Department of Anthropology, 3H01 W. Posvar Hall, 230 S. Bouquet St., University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260, U.S. Fax: (412) 648–7535. E-mail: pamjan+@pitt.edu

Andrew J. Strathern, Department of Anthropology, 3H01 W. Posvar Hall, 230 S. Bouquet St., University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260, U.S. Fax: (412) 648–7535. E-mail: strather+@pitt.edu

Teresia K. Teaiwa, Pacific Studies, 6 Kelburn Parade–Rm. 203, Victoria University of Wellington, P.O. Box 600, Wellington, N.Z. Fax: (644) 463–5159. E-mail: tteaiwa@matai.vuw.ac.nz