

## Chapter Six

### Shapes

The primary world articulated in Cook's voyages is an extended field of fixed dots. By moving away from the coast, Cook's voyages refigure the world. Not only do the voyages change a world of lines into a world of points, they also allow an exacting articulation of location, where location exists at the intersection of the narrative, the coordinate system, and the printed pages of prior navigators. Longitude and latitude, functioning as mathematical place names, form a structure of possible names well before the human names are either known or created, or even when no other names are practical (where there is no land, for instance). In other words, establishing the coordinate point is an act of pure referencing. But what do these numbers point to? As a geometrical area, the coordinate point ultimately vanishes. The coordinates offer an account of location, but not of shape; in the end they contain nothing.

And so the articulation of places in Cook's voyages also depends on the articulation of shapes, in which the grid is tied to the boundary. The articulation of shapes, specifically in terms of maps, is the second primary way that Cook's voyages are distinct from prior navigators. Not only does he produce a large number of maps, but the ability to measure longitude gives his maps a geometrical accuracy that was unequalled at the time. Each of the maps also becomes part of a general collection of areas, where one map is placed alongside another, or many maps are brought together into a larger area, such as the South Pacific. The maps, in other words, become an important aspect of the general organization of the world's areas. Once Cook is able to move around at will in the coordinate plane of the open ocean, the voyages become concerned with tracing the shapes of the world.

The connection between places and boundaries is quite old. As Hobbes wrote in the 17th century, “nothing can be said to be in a place, but what hath bounds and limits of its greatness on all sides.”<sup>1</sup> A place is denoted by its boundary, its lines, and shape. Places are also understood as containers. In *Physics*, for example, Aristotle defined “place” as a “stationary container.”<sup>2</sup> Where Cook is different, as will be discussed in this chapter, is the scale and the accuracy in which places from around the world are represented. In Cook’s voyages, the appeal to shapes accomplishes two things: it frames the world in very broad terms, and it divides the world into static chunks, which can be arranged, first in terms of coordinates, and then in terms of other attributes. As a result, the place becomes the ground on which social and political identities can be organized. In other words, the shape, articulated in terms of geometrical objects and verifiable experiences, becomes the material ground on which human identities are based. By mapping the shape of Tahiti, Cook is mapping the home of the Tahitians and the dominion of the Tahitian chiefs.

## 1. Grand Divisions

As with most navigators, the largest spatial division in Cook’s voyages is the division between the earth and the rest of the universe. Not only does the shape of the world ground the image of circumnavigation, it also allows the navigator to articulate places in the world as if the world was not moving. Aristotle claimed centuries ago that the place, understood as a container, should be considered stationary. For example, he writes that a boat is considered to be in the river because “it is ... the whole river that is place, because as a whole it is motionless.”<sup>3</sup> Kant likewise notes in *The*

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<sup>1</sup> Hobbes, *Philosophical Rudiments*, page 215.

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle, *Physics*, 212a10. *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, Volume 1, page 360.

<sup>3</sup> Aristotle, *Physics*, 212a19. *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, Volume 1, page 361.

*Metaphysics of Morals* how “Nature has enclosed [everyone] together within determinate limits (by the spherical shape of the place they live in, a *globus terraqueus*).”<sup>4</sup> For Kant, this is a key condition for the possibility of morality, because without this absolute border, people would simply walk away from each other. Cook, of course, appeals to the stars and the planets to determine the coordinates of both ships and places, but through the use of calculations and astronomical tables, the places are ultimately related to each other on the fixed terrestrial sphere rather than to the transient, albeit predictable, location of the stars and the planets. This finitude, and its division into fixed coordinates and a single map, framed the projects of 18th and 19th century exploration. There are only so many places on the earth, and the goal is to find them all, locate them, and describe them. Exploration is a project that will one day come to an end, and it is towards that end that Cook’s voyages travel.

While the sphere helps contain the navigation on the outside of a single object, the sphere also helps Cook articulate the idea of absolute distance. On December 3rd, 1773, for instance, Cook notes how he and his crew “reckoned ourselves antipodes to our friends in London; consequently, as far removed from them as possible.”<sup>5</sup> In this passage, “removed” refers to the distance measured in terms of geometrical length, either through the sphere or as the crow flies. Such a sense of place does not consider the time or hardship necessary to traverse the distance. At that point the ship was in the southern parts of New Zealand, and the journey back to London would have been relatively routine. The voyage from the northern Pacific, which is much closer on the abstracted sphere, would have been much more arduous and time-consuming. But by taking the world as a single geometrical object,

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<sup>4</sup> Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals*, page 121.

<sup>5</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 255.

distance can be abstracted from movement, it can be understood as either a set of numbers or as a table. Either way, locations no longer depend on narratives of travel, but instead depend on other techniques that encourage not only a different sense of location, but also different organizations of the printed page to represent location.

The discussion of the antipodes in the Admiralty's edition may also be a response to a common belief during his time that "things in the southern hemisphere were somehow inverted or at least governed by laws which differed from those governing the northern parts of the world."<sup>6</sup> While he was in New Zealand, Cook was able to show that, not only was the underside of the world not governed by radically different laws, but that it actually closely resembled Britain. Cook's emphasis on his distance from England also helps emphasize the finitude of the earth. This is an important feature of the voyages insofar as it articulates the world as a single, accessible area. The world map is also the map of possible human activities.

Upon the sphere, one of the more important general divisions is between the land and the sea. Rivers and lakes play a role in the articulation of places on land, especially between different sections of the coast. But it is through the division of land and sea that oceans and continents can be specified and named, out of which arises a general outline of the world.

To navigators who were primarily interested in coasting, the division between land and sea was also the division between knowledge and confusion, or between civilization and savagery. The ocean was wild. In *New Atlantis*, for instance, Francis Bacon marks the separation from land as follows:

finding ourselves in the midst of the greatest wilderness of waters in the world, without victual... [we] gave ourselves for lost men, and prepared for death.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, page 48.

Rickman's account of the second voyage likewise adopts a sense of the ocean as a wild, uncivilized and hostile place. When the ships land on Anomocoa, he notes how the

Tents were now carried on shore; the astronomers observatory erected; wooders and waterers appointed; and all the artificers on board employed in the reparations of the ships; not a few being wanting after a voyage of two months, through a tempestuous sea, during which the elements of fire, air, and water, might be said to be in perpetual conflict.<sup>8</sup>

But "wilderness" is not a term that is typically used as a way to articulate the open ocean in Cook's voyages. Rather than being lost, Cook thrives in the absence of landmarks. Just as technological changes in nutrition made every kind of navigation less dangerous, the development of the instruments needed to accurately determine coordinates reduced the dangers of being lost. Coasts remained important, but only as the boundaries, not as the location of travel. Instead of detailing the outline of the continent, Cook's goal was to fill in an ocean, whether with land or water.

## **2. Extreme Places**

In addition to the division of the world into continents and oceans, another key division of the globe in Cook's voyages is narrated during the time spent in the high latitudes, and the high southern latitudes during the second voyage in particular. After spending over a year sailing in and out of the antarctic circle in his second voyage of discovery, Captain Cook writes this much-quoted passage in his journals:

I whose ambition leads me not only farther than any other man has been before me, but as far as I think it possible for man to go, was not sorry at meeting with this interruption, as it in some measure relieved us from the dangers and hardships,

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<sup>7</sup> Bacon, *New Atlantis*, quoted in Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts*, page 44.

<sup>8</sup> Rickman, *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, page 100.

inseparable with the Navigation of the Southern Polar regions. Sence therefore we could not proceed one Inch farther South, no other reason need be assigned for our Tacking and stretching back to the North, being at that time in the Latitude of 71° 10' South, Longitude 106° 54' W.<sup>9</sup>

There is obviously an element of self-promotion here. Cook knows that his journals are going to be published and that his status as a navigator depends in part on the dangers and the successes that have occurred during the voyage. The antarctic, which is the epitome of the extreme place in his world, provides both the dangers and the successes that are necessary, constituting Cook as the explorer who pushed exploration to its limits. The success of the second voyage is built on the claim that Cook is the last explorer to chart unknown seas, and after him such projects become impractical, if not impossible.

In the second voyage, Cook pushes into the high southern latitudes twice, first in late 1773 and then in late 1774, wintering in the South Pacific (primarily New Zealand and Tahiti) from March to November, 1774. The map included with the second voyage, which is centered on the south pole, shows cook encircling the extreme (for this map, see picture 11). The northern hemisphere is not included at all, except as the implied source of the track of the ships. Instead, the voyage alternates between the field ice and the islands of the South Pacific. In other words, just as earlier navigators moved between the ocean and the coast, marking the existence of land, Cook's second voyage moves between mundane and extreme places, tracing the limits of what is humanly possible.

The narrative of the voyage emphasizes Cook's existence at the edge of the world. There are several persistent themes, the first of which is the suffering of the crew. On leaving the Cape of Good Hope, Cook notes how the

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<sup>9</sup> Beaglehole, *Cook's Journals*, Volume II, page 322

“sudden transition from warm mild weather, to extreme cold and wet, made every man in the ship feel its effects.”<sup>10</sup> Not only did the weather kill a large portion of the livestock on board, it foreshadowed the dangers faced when the ships enter the antarctic circle. Some precautions were taken. As Cook writes, in order for the crew to

support this weather the better, I caused the sleeves of their jackets (which were so short as to expose their arms) to be lengthened with baize; and had a cap made for each man of the same stuff, together with canvas; which proved of great service to them.<sup>11</sup>

But the suffering of the crew continued. Scurvy began to occur, and was controlled by various antiscorbutics, such as lemon and malt extracts. The crew also faced bitter cold, not only on deck, but also in their cabins and when they were sent out in the longboats to collect chunks of floating ice for fresh water.

The ships themselves also suffered from the extreme cold. Damage to the ships arose both from the weather and from the ice. The threats existed in different ways, which had specific levels of danger. On the one hand, the weather threatened to damage the ship’s equipment and thus its ability to function.

Next day, the 15th, we had the wind at N. W., a small gale, thick foggy weather, with much snow; thermometer from 32 to 27; so that our sails and rigging were all hung with icicles.<sup>12</sup>

Later, Cook continues this theme by writing that

the worst was, the ice so clogged the rigging, sails, and blocks, as to make them exceedingly bad to handle. Our people however surmounted those difficulties with a steady perseverance, and withstood this intense cold much better than I expected.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 41.

<sup>11</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 48.

<sup>12</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 46.

<sup>13</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 56.

During the second time in the voyage that the ships entered the high latitudes,

The sheaves also were frozen so fast in the blocks, that it required our utmost efforts to get a top-sail down and up; the cold so intense as hardly to be endured; the whole sea, in a manner, covered with ice; a hard gale, and a thick fog.<sup>14</sup>

These tropes, which occur throughout these portions of the book, suggest that the voyage is carried out on the edge of the navigatable world. This extreme area is created through the statistics of the destruction of the ships, and the degeneration of the crew.

A sense of horror pervades this portion of the voyage. The weather suggested the severity of their situation. On the 29th of January, 1773, Cook, the voice of the Admiralty's edition, notes how the weather during the night was "very dark and stormy."<sup>15</sup> During the day, the weather was often hazy and gloomy, which, coupled with the cold winds and the frequent rain, sleet and snow, helps the reader imagine the ships sailing at the edge of the world.

We continued to stretch to the east, with a piercing cold northerly wind, attended with a thick fog, snow, and sleet, that decorated all our rigging with icicles.<sup>16</sup>

The image is fantastic, and it is perhaps no surprise that in these areas of the world and his narrative Cook frequently appeals to romantic imagery.

While the weather and the degeneration of the ships and crew are important for constructing the horror of these extreme places, by far the most

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<sup>14</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 260.

<sup>15</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 65. As an aside, Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1803-1873), published *Paul Clifford* in 1830, which began: "It was a dark and stormy night; the rain fell in torrents — except at occasional intervals, when it was checked by a violent gust of wind which swept up the streets ...." Some work has been done to connect Cook's voyages (and the second one in particular) to poets such as Coleridge. Similar work does not seem to exist yet that connects these voyages to gothic novels. Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, published in 1764, and Radcliff's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, published in 1794, were two early works in the genre.

<sup>16</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 258.

powerful images in the voyages are those of the islands of ice. All the writers of accounts of this voyage spend some time trying to capture these scenes in words. Cook writes, for instance, that

On the 12th, we had still thick hazy weather, with sleet and snow; so that we were obliged to proceed with great caution on account of the ice islands: six of these we passed this day; some of them near two miles in circuit, and 60 feet high. And yet, such was the force and height of the waves, that the sea broke quite over them. This exhibited a view, which for a few moments was pleasing to the eye; but when we reflected on the danger, the mind was filled with horror; for, were a ship to get against the weather-side of one of these islands when the sea runs high, she would be dashed to pieces in a moment.<sup>17</sup>

The dangers of quick destruction existed alongside the dangers of being trapped by a field of ice, where the destruction would have been painfully slow, and equally inevitable. As Cook notes,

Dangerous as it is to sail among these floating rocks (if I may be allowed to call them so) in a thick fog, this, however, is preferable to being entangled with immense fields of ice under the same circumstances. The great danger to be apprehended in this latter case, is the getting fast in the ice; a situation which would be exceedingly alarming.<sup>18</sup>

At the limits of human existence, the antarctic becomes the place where the adventures of open ocean navigation occurs in its purest form. Without the possibility of either help or survival if the ships were severely damaged or sunk, the journals offer an ideal image of the extreme place, in which life is always and absolutely at risk.

These dangers were, however, now become so familiar to us, that the apprehensions they caused, were never of long duration; and were, in some measure, compensated, both by the seasonable supplies of fresh water these ice islands afforded us, (without which we must have been greatly distressed,) and also, by their very romantic appearance,

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<sup>17</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 44.

<sup>18</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 47.

greatly heightened by the foaming and dashing of the waves into the curious holes and caverns which are formed in many of them; the whole exhibiting a view which at once filled the mind with admiration and horror, and can only be described by the hand of an able painter.<sup>19</sup>

There is no safety in this part of the world. However, by the end of the time spent in the antarctic, Cook suggested that he and his sailors had become accustomed to the horrors. In the same passage, however, he emphasizes the inexpressibility of their condition.

The extreme areas to which Cook and his crew are able to navigate thus take on a cosmic tone. The ice fields do not simply represent a wall beyond which further navigation is impossible, they represent the limits of human existence as such. The associations that are invoked frequently acquire a gothic tone. Near the beginning of the second voyage, Marra, the gunner's mate on the *Resolution*, writes that

Some of these islands appeared to be three or four miles in circumference, some more; but by far the greatest number appeared like the ruins of ancient towns, or the fragments of gothic castles.<sup>20</sup>

Later in his journal Marra continues the theme.

Here the ice islands presented a most romantic prospect of ruined castles, churches, arches, steeples, wrecks of ships, and a thousand wild and grotesque forms of monsters, dragons, and all the hideous shapes that the most fertile imagination can possibly conceive. About these islands the penguins are heard continually screaming, and add to the horror of the scene, which cannot be beheld by the most intrepid without some emotions of fear.<sup>21</sup>

The romantic, gothic appearance of these ice islands again helps Cook and his fellow narrators mark the edge of the world, but they are still accounted for. Cook even gives their temporary coordinates and discusses how they could be

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<sup>19</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 75.

<sup>20</sup> Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page 6.

<sup>21</sup> Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page 111.

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At the end of December, 1773, Cook discusses the possibility of moving away from the antarctic ice into the South Pacific.

Under all these unfavourable circumstances, it was natural for me to think of returning more to the north, seeing no probability of finding any land here, nor a possibility of getting farther south.

But the geometric/geographic imperative remained. The Admiralty's account of the voyage continues on this theme:

to have proceeded to the east, in this latitude, must have been wrong, not only on account of the ice, but because we must have left a vast space of sea to the north unexplored; a space of 24° of latitude, in which a large track of land might have lain. Whether such a supposition was well-grounded, could only be determined by visiting those parts.<sup>22</sup>

On December 22nd, 1773, the ships turn to the north for two weeks to run through the empty space on the map. They find nothing, and so, on January 11th, 1774, the ships are turned to the south again, to continue sailing among the fields and islands of ice. Soon after this point, however, Cook finally turns his ship away from the ice.

I will not say it was impossible any where to get farther to the south; but the attempting it would have been a dangerous and rash enterprise; and what, I believe, no man in my situation would have thought of.<sup>23</sup>

Cook has sent his ships as far south as humanly possible to demonstrate that there was no accessible land at the edges. The demonstration, by mixing geometry and danger, was complete. And by turning away, at the extremes of both navigation and his own ambition, Cook is marking the edge of the possibilities of navigation as such. Marra emphasizes this aspect of Cook's second voyage. He writes:

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<sup>22</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 260.

<sup>23</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 270.

But it should seem that navigating those unfrequented seas farther than any navigator had ever before attempted, would by no means content Captain Cook; who, in order to preclude all future conjectures concerning an imaginary continent, has carried his discoveries to the utmost verge of southern latitude, beyond which, it may be presumed, no succeeding navigator will ever attempt to extend his enquires.<sup>24</sup>

Marra also writes of Cook's "prowess in leading his company just so far as they were capable of proceeding."<sup>25</sup> If nothing else, Cook has shown that his ship was appropriately named. Through his resolution, Cook has shown how far it is possible for human beings to go. And, by journeying to the edge of the world and back, he has also proven himself as a heroic traveller.

However, while the voyages suggest that Cook was the last explorer to claim to have gone as far as it was humanly possible to go, the opposite is in fact the case. Cook was more likely the *first* navigator to be able to seriously claim this status. Given that previous navigators were concerned with coasting around continents, the best that they could do is claim that they had gone further along the line than the last person. But the lines continued. But Cook's second voyage sets up a different spatial challenge. Rather than circumnavigation, the furthest it was possible to go was to touch the poles. But making his way to the pole was not Cook's goal.

Not only does Cook go to the extremes, he also wanders throughout the South Pacific in search of islands. With the second voyage Cook creates the world by the description of extreme places, but he also creates it by his movement through the mundane world of the open ocean. Just as the circumnavigators created a sense of the diameter of the world, Cook creates a sense of its area.

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<sup>24</sup> Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page 82.

<sup>25</sup> Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page ix.

The survival of the ships and crew in the second voyage is not only an issue in extreme places, it is also in a space and time that are extended for as far as possible. The move away from the ice fields in Cook's voyages does not simply create the world of possible navigation in abstraction. The voyages also help narrate that world as something that is accessible to others. At the end of the second voyage, Cook summarizes the health of his crew.

Having been absent from England three years and eighteen days, in which time, and under all changes of climate, I lost but four men, and only one of them by sickness, it may not be amiss, at the conclusion of this journal, to enumerate the several causes to which, under the care of Providence, I conceive, this uncommon good state of health experienced by my people was owing.<sup>26</sup>

Rather than the narratives of pervasive death (such as Anson's account of how scurvy destroyed his crew), in the second voyage, Cook makes travel look easy or at least safe. Near the end of the second voyage, for instance, the Admiralty's edition has Cook note

That our rigging, sails, &c. should be worn out, will not be wondered at, when it is known, that, during this circumnavigation of the globe, that is, from our leaving this place, to our return to it again, we had sailed no less than twenty thousand leagues; an extent of voyage, nearly equal to three times the equatorial circumference of the earth, and which, I apprehend, was never sailed by any ship in the same space of time before.<sup>27</sup>

Along the same lines, in the introduction to the Admiralty edition of the second voyage, either Cook writes that,

although discovery was not the first object of that voyage, I could venture to traverse a far greater space of sea, till then unnavigated, to discover greater tracks of country in high and low south latitudes, and to persevere longer in exploring and surveying more correctly the extensive coasts of those new-discovered countries, than any former navigator, perhaps, had done during one voyage.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 263.

<sup>27</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 242.

Cook has not only gone farther south than anyone either has or probably could go, he has also gone farther as such. The second voyage, moving well beyond a simple circumnavigation, was the longest single voyage up to Cook's time. Previous European navigators had taken close to the same amount of time<sup>29</sup> and many other Europeans had spent much more time in total sailing in the Pacific (Dampier and Cavendish being the most notable English examples). But Cook's success, in both the space covered and the lives preserved, was exceptional.

Having survived the extremes, Cook and his readers are left with the ocean and the accessible places that are walled in by the ice and rock. The geographical distinction between the wilderness and the coast has thus been turned into the distinction between the possible and the impossible, and the possible is all that remains interesting. After turning away from the extreme, the focus of the voyage turns to the world that is accessible, and the goal is to turn what is geometrically possible to what is real; that is to say, to create a full and accurate account of the world. After turning from the ice, the Admiralty's account of the voyage reads,

... we undoubtedly might have reached the Cape of Good Hope by April, and so have put an end to the expedition, so far as it related to the finding a continent; which indeed was the first object of the voyage. But for me at this time to have quitted this Southern Pacific Ocean, with a good ship expressly sent out on discoveries, a healthy crew, and not in want either of stores or of provisions, would have been betraying not only a want of perseverance, but of judgment, in supposing the South Pacific Ocean to have been so well explored, that nothing remained to be done in it. This, however, was

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<sup>28</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 15.

<sup>29</sup> Cook's second voyage took a little over three years (July 13, 1772 to July 30, 1775). Anson's voyage, had taken three months longer than Cook's second voyage (September 18, 1740 to June 15, 1744), while Carteret's voyage had taken roughly two and a half years (August 22, 1766 to March 20, 1769).

not my opinion; for, although I had proved there was no continent but what must lie far to the south, there remained, nevertheless, room for very large islands in places wholly unexamined: and many of those which were formerly discovered, are but imperfectly explored, and their situations as imperfectly known. I was besides of opinion, that my remaining in this sea some time longer, would be productive of improvements in navigation and geography, as well as other sciences.<sup>30</sup>

Here, one of the reasons that Cook gives for remaining in the South Pacific is that the ship and crew were too fit and healthy to consider returning home. The ships would return home only when destruction is immanent and recovery unlikely, no longer by ice islands and fields, but by much less extreme dangers to be found on much more mediocre tracks. The account continues with Cook describing his plans for the rest of the voyage.

Since now nothing had happened to prevent me from carrying these views into execution, my intention was first to go in search of the land, said to have been discovered by Juan Fernandez, above a century ago, in about the latitude of 38°; if I should fail in finding this land, then to go in search of Easter Island or Davis's Land, whose situation was known with so little certainty that the attempts lately made to find it had miscarried. I next intended to get within the tropic, and then proceed to the west, touching at, and settling the situations of such islands as we might meet with till we arrived at Otaheite, where it was necessary I should stop to look for the *Adventure* [which by this time had been separated from the *Resolution*]. I had also thoughts of running as far west as the Tierra Austral del Espiritu Santo, discovered by Quiros, and which M. de Bougainville calls the Great Cyclades. Quiros speaks of this land as being large, or lying in the neighbourhood of large lands; and as this was a point which Bougainville had neither confirmed nor refuted, I thought it was worth clearing up. From this land my design was to steer to the south, and so back to the east, between the latitudes of 50° and 60°; intending if possible to be the length of Cape Horn in November next, when we should have the best part of the summer before us to explore the southern part of the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 272.

For some, being mundane is closely connected to being boring or uninteresting. Typically, the sea, much like the plain, offers very little for the eye to see. As Paul Carter notes, at a crucial stage in his argument concerning the spatial organization of Australia,

If at times the sea promises an ease of passage impossible on land, at other times it seems disastrously flat, depressed, pointless.<sup>32</sup>

And pointlessness always threatens the narrative itself.

As Tristram Shandy pointed out, however it might appeal to the traveller, a spacious plain made dreary reading.<sup>33</sup>

But for Cook, the undifferentiated, pointless space was interesting. Every point on the grid was interesting, at least the first time. In his three voyages, Cook is not only looking for land, he is also looking for ocean, and the articulation of empty places in the open ocean is a key element of his success. Of course, Cook is worried about the narrative possibilities of the open ocean.

I must observe that I never made a passage any where of such length, or even much shorter, where so few interesting circumstances occurred. For, if I except the variation of the compass, I know of nothing else worth notice.<sup>34</sup>

But just like the extreme places, the underlying assumption is that after Cook, this kind of exploration will no longer be necessary, and people will be able to focus on the useful and remarkable places of the world. From the extreme, therefore, Cook becomes a surveyor, verifying the claims found in the accounts offered by other voyagers. Once again, the *Resolution* is appropriately named. But at this point Cook is not pushing into extreme places, forcing the question of how far it is possible for human beings to go. Rather, he is forcing the question of how the world should be described.

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<sup>31</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 273.

<sup>32</sup> Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, page 93.

<sup>33</sup> Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, page 245.

<sup>34</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 157.

These attempts at resolution will dominate the remainder of the second voyage and a good part of the third.

### **3. The Oceanic Plane**

As has been suggested above, with Cook's voyages the understanding of the ocean changes. Travellers move from the fear of open ocean to a desire to discover and describe points in an expansive field. Not just a grid divided into abstract points and lines, the ocean is an experienced plane that is narrated and illustrated in many different ways. For the oceanic navigator, the ocean is a container of fixed points, surrounded by coastal lines. The ocean does not simply disconnect the island from the mainland, it creates the possibilities for distinguishing oceans, islands and continents as different *kinds* of spaces. Touching on this image, Joseph Conrad once wondered whether Balboa, the first European to see the Pacific,

perhaps, like a man touched with grace, [had] a moment of exalted vision, the awed feeling that what he was looking at was an abyss of waters comparable in its extent to the view of the unfathomable firmament, and sown all over with groups of islands resembling the constellations of the sky?<sup>35</sup>

The mysticism of the Pacific would last for several centuries. But near the end of the 18th century, the specific image of the Pacific changed. The ability to determine position in the open ocean created an expansive textual space that allowed Cook to focus on the minutiae of travel: the birds sighted, the fish caught, the weather, the water temperature and so on for any location in the world. Cook offers his readers the boundaries of the Pacific and then its contents.

But before this, the narrative offers a sense of motion unlike previous navigators. With the help of his instruments and his tables, Cook could move from one point to any other point in the plane. He could cross the

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<sup>35</sup> Conrad, "Geography and Some Explorers," *Last Essays*, page 5.

tracks laid down by others, and traverse the Pacific in any direction, weather and supplies permitting. It is thus not surprising that Cook's voyages were the first to include an account of the islands of Hawaii, insofar as Cook was likely the first European to intentionally sail up the middle of the Pacific, more or less keeping to a line of longitude.

To put this more emphatically, Cook's voyages *create* the Pacific. Of course, the Pacific had existed well before Cook. But in Cook's voyages the ocean came to exist as a single entity, comprehended in a single travel narrative. With Drake, oceanic travel meant that there would be nothing to write about. With the military adventures of the buccaneers and Commodore Anson, the ocean became tracks of conflict in which the description of places was secondary. Cook's voyages are something different. Through the narration of oceanic travel, especially in the second two voyages, the ocean becomes an extended, narrated plane, where fact and fiction could be distinguished once and for all.

More than relating his own discoveries, which are, in the end, not very numerous, the importance of Cook's voyages rests on the way that they settle the problems that were either posed or created by the discoveries of previous navigators. Roggeveen may have been the first European to land on Easter Island, in 1722, but Cook was the first one to fix the location of the island reliably on the map of the Pacific, and to verify or correct the earlier descriptions. And the same can be said for each of Cook's predecessors, who discovered land, in an ocean that they could not comprehend. And so, soon after moving away from the antarctic ice, Cook and his crew go in search of some land described by Juan Fernandez. They sail to

the latitude 37° 54' S., which was the same that Juan Fernandez's discovery is said to lie in. We, however, had not the least signs of any land lying in our neighbourhood. The ship then wanders in the area; and, after failing to see land, Cook notes

that:

I was now well assured that the discovery of Juan Fernandez, if any such was ever made, can be nothing but a small island; there being hardly room for a large land, as will fully appear by the tracks of Captain Wallis, Bougainville, of the *Endeavour*, and this of the *Resolution*.<sup>36</sup>

Several months later, when the ship is leaving the Marqueses, Cook notes:

I steered S. S. W. 1/2 W. for Otaheite, with a view of falling in with some of those isles discovered by former navigators, especially those discovered by the Dutch, whose situations are not well determined.<sup>37</sup>

From the point where Cook turns away from the extremes of the antarctic ice, therefore, he is engaged in the rectification of places. Fact is divided from fiction, estimations are replaced with definitive accounts, and places are located and mapped with as much accuracy as his instruments would allow. The result represents an edited and verified summation of the places of the Pacific, whose situations are articulated in terms of coordinates and geometrical shapes.

This is Cook's world, or at least that aspect of the world that can be captured by surveying and astronomy. We shall now turn to consider how this world, once framed by ice and continents, becomes an object of intense study. How, specifically, does Cook articulate the Pacific?

#### **4. Cook's Turn to Islands**

In Cook's second voyage, the move away from the extreme edge of the world is a move towards islands. He may have been looking for a southern continent, but the world that is articulated through the voyage is far from continental. As he writes near the middle of the second voyage,

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<sup>36</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 275.

<sup>37</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 305.

all hopes of discovering a continent vanished. Islands were all we were to expect to find.<sup>38</sup>

The manuscript version of the same passage reads:

Having now crossed or got to the north of Captain Carteret's Track, no discovery of importance can be made, some few Islands is all that can be expected while I remain within the Tropical Seas.<sup>39</sup>

There is disappointment in this manuscript passage, which was muted in the official account. In the published version, the islands became more important and more valuable.<sup>40</sup> Some have argued that discovering a continent would have established Cook's place in European history alongside Columbus. However, Cook would not have discovered the continent, its existence having been suggested for centuries. At best, he would have been confirming the discoveries of previous navigators. As it happened, he does confirm previous discoveries, but these discoveries were only islands, and taken as a whole, what Cook discovers is the true outline of the ocean.

Certain islands in the narrative are ephemeral. Cook does not find any land in the time spent in the high southern latitudes, but that does not mean that the ocean is empty.

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<sup>38</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 150.

<sup>39</sup> Beaglehole, *Cook's Journals*, Volume II, page 189.

<sup>40</sup> In the first volume of *Hawaiian National Bibliography*, Forbes notes an interesting variation of this with Rickman's account of the third voyage. The first printing of the book contained a general assessment of the discoveries in the Pacific which referred to "that unfruitful sea, where nothing is to be expected but a few unprofitable islands thinly scattered, and, now and then, as it were by accident, to be touched upon, to reward the toil and hazard of a tiresome and painful search." In many copies of this work, the leaf that contained this paragraph was excised, and a new one inserted which excised this negative assessment of the ocean. See Forbes, *Hawaiian National Bibliography*, Volume I, page 24, entry 33.

We had not stood long to the north-east before we found ourselves embayed by the ice, and were obliged to tack and stretch to the south-west, having the field or loose ice to the south, and many huge islands to the north.<sup>41</sup>

These islands still exist, and are typically described in the same terms as other islands. In the Admiralty edition of the second voyage, Cook writes that:

The ice islands we met with in the morning were very high and rugged, forming at their tops many peaks, whereas the most of those we had seen before were flat at top, and not so high, though many of them were between two and three hundred feet in height, and between two and three miles in circuit, with perpendicular cliffs or sides, astonishing to behold.<sup>42</sup>

Marra even describes the view of ice islands as if they were tropical.

Taking a view from the mast-head nothing was to be seen but a dreary prospect of ice and sea. Of the former might be seen a whole country as far as the eye could carry one, diversified with hills and dales, and fields and imaginary plantations, that had all the appearance of cultivation; yet was nothing more than the sports of chance in the formation of those immense bodies of congregated ice.<sup>43</sup>

But even if it was possible to imagine the islands of ice as tropical, they were not *reliable*: the islands kept moving around and changing shape. They are clearly material — “floating rocks (if I may be allowed to call them so)”<sup>44</sup> — but they are not named, and their position, even if accurately measured, has no place in the charts because the charts only record the locations and shapes of fixed places. And so the high southern latitudes remain empty on the map, and Cook must look elsewhere for islands that can be known. It is only after leaving these ice islands that the map of the world begins to freeze.

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<sup>41</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 257.

<sup>42</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 259.

<sup>43</sup> Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page 125.

<sup>44</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 47.

With the shift from continents to islands, something important happens with the way that places are characterized. Not only does coasting become secondary, not only does the coordinate grid ground the progress through space, but the places become things that are easy to identify and differentiate. With islands, Cook's readers are offered obvious places. The ocean is punctuated by suddenness. Even when islands are expected, already named and already described, there is a clear demarcation. The place is brought into the narrative by a standard series of stages: first of sighting, then of landing, and then of describing. The place becomes a clear and distinct object, and the map becomes a still life. Islands are not only geometrical areas. Throughout his three voyages islands are also compared with other physical objects and even treated as if they were human beings. As will be argued in the later chapters, the clarity of the island, which infects the clarity of the place and all the information organized around it, has a significant impact on the identity and articulations of human social and political arrangements, of the world as a plane of discrete islands collected into a single world system.

One way that islands are identified as discrete entities is by describing them as geometrical objects. All islands are circumnavigated, no matter what their shape. Cook is obsessed with working his way around each island, to determine their shape, to prove that they are in fact islands, to set one island off from another and all islands off from the mainland. Near the end of the second voyage, as Cook leaves the island of Tierra del Espiritu Santo, he praises his own account of the island: "We have obtained the true figure of this island very accurately."<sup>45</sup> The accuracy here is geometrical, and is evidenced in the detailed chart which was included in the book. In describing an island near the Isle of Pines, which they were not able to explore in detail, Cook can at least claim that "we pretty well know the extent of the land, by

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<sup>45</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 88.

having it confined within certain limits.”<sup>46</sup> For Cook, this is the beginning of knowledge. A general outline is followed by a detailed map. The clearest expression of this strategy towards space occurred in the first voyage, when Cook demonstrated to his readers that New Zealand was not connected to a southern continent and was in fact two islands. The Admiralty edition reads:

About this time, the weather happening to clear up, we saw Cape Turnagain, bearing N. by E. 1/2 E. at the distance of about seven leagues: I then called the officers upon deck, and asked them, whether they were not now satisfied that Eahienomauwe was an island: they readily answered in the affirmative; and all doubts being now removed, we hauled our wind to the eastward.<sup>47</sup>

Geometrically articulated, New Zealand now exists as a clear and distinct place. At this point in the narrative, the first volume of Cook’s first voyage ends. The *Endeavour* then heads to the west, after having given this area of the map a definite shape.

Islands have edges, the distance between which can be measured. Inside, this gives the island’s breadth. Outside, it gives the island’s distance from other islands. By distinguishing “this” island from both the ocean and “that” island, Cook is not only separating one set of coordinates from another. He is marking a physical division in which the open ocean is separated from the specific places which will be described in greater detail. *The island, this island, these islands*, all become the basis on which the rest of the descriptions in the voyages depend.

In addition to distinct shapes on a map, islands are also associated with objects of everyday experience. For instance, one of the most common ways of describing the figure of an island is to compare it with a sugar-loaf. The term is not new with Cook. Captain Wallis made the same comparison when he describes Kootahee, one of the Friendly Islands.<sup>48</sup> William Ellis, in the third

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<sup>46</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 128.

<sup>47</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume I, page 398.

voyage, makes the same comparison as the ships sail along the west coast of the Pacific, on their way to England in 1780.

The land we had hitherto seen was moderately high, but we observed a mountain to-day, making like a sugar loaf that was very lofty.<sup>49</sup>

Other comparisons between islands and every-day objects occur throughout the voyages. Leper Isle, for instance, is “of an egg-like figure, very high, and eighteen or twenty leagues in circuit.”<sup>50</sup> During the second voyage, Cook writes that he “can say no more of this island [Paoom] than that it towers up to a great height, in the form of a round hay-stack; and the extent of it.”<sup>51</sup> With these comparisons, Cook does not give enough information for later navigators to reliably identify the places, at least on that information alone, but he does bring the place into the voyages as a tangible, distinct object, which can be located, imagined, analysed, represented and talked about.

As a distinct object, the land also acquires a name. Naming goes hand in hand with fixing shapes on a coordinate grid, but these names are not applied to the coordinates, they are applied to the shapes that are distinguished on the map. The places are brought into the narrative because they are named, which in turn depends on their being brought into the world of shapes.

In the previous chapter we considered how naming was one way to mark off points in a narrative. Cape Farewell, for instance, is where Cook finally leaves New Zealand in the first voyage. But there are many other kinds of names that Cook gives to the places in the voyage. One common

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<sup>48</sup> Admiralty *Voyages*, Volume I, page 492-494. Wallis’s description is discussed in Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume V, page 424, footnote 1.

<sup>49</sup> Ellis, *Authentic Narrative*, Volume II, page 317. The mountain, located in roughly 35° latitude, was likely Mount Fuji. The ships did not touch on the coast of Japan.

<sup>50</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 89.

<sup>51</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 90.

theme connects the place to a person, such as Hervey's Island. Sometimes, as Carter emphasizes, these names are given to honour people who were connected to Cook's career, such as Palliser or Sandwich, or to people of considerable status England, such as members of the royal family or of the House of Commons. At other times, the owner's name is more circumstantial. While the ships were in the high southern latitudes during the second voyage, for instance, Cook notes that:

The northern extreme [of Staten Island, near Cape Horn] was the same that we first discovered, and it proved to be an island which obtained the name of Willis's Island, after the person who first saw it.<sup>52</sup>

Likewise,

To the S. E. the coast seemed to terminate in a high promontory, which I named Cape Colnett, after one of my midshipmen, who first discovered this land.<sup>53</sup>

Other names associate newly identified places with other places, just as Van Diemen used "New Holland" to designate what came to be called Australia. While this kind of naming tends to emphasize the connection between the navigator's home country and the areas that are being explored, such as the New Hebrides, there are others that depend on a grander sense of space. For instance, in the second voyage Cook writes:

I called this land Southern Thule, because it is the most southern land that has ever yet been discovered.<sup>54</sup>

Thule was once a name for Iceland. It is now the name of one of the most northerly islands in the Atlantic, located on the western coast of Greenland in 76° northern latitude. Whichever island Cook was alluding to, the name suggests the global perspective that his naming practices are trying to create.

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<sup>52</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 193.

<sup>53</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 95.

<sup>54</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 207.

Islands are also bodies, which are given features and a personality, and Cook thus often promises to “give some account of the face of the country.”<sup>55</sup> Islands are “friendly,” “inhospitable,” or “savage”. Finally, the island becomes a person, which Cook can relate to as an equal. During the third voyage, for instance, Cook writes of how

A young bull and a cow, and some sheep and goats, were also, at first, intended to have been left by me, as an additional present to Van Diemen’s Land.<sup>56</sup>

The land thus enters into the narrative in specific, often human ways. Cook establishes a dialog with the places, and includes them in the voyages as he would a character in a narrative.

Another feature of Cook’s articulation of the world in terms of shapes is that Cook’s world is a world of identifiable containers. Most of these are islands. When he is coasting, such as along the New Zealand or the northwest coast of North America, bays and headlands dominate over islands. But the way that bays exist in the voyages is not very different from islands. They have shapes that can be mapped and positions in relation to other places around the globe. They are also distinct containers — people live in bays as much as they do on islands. The coast thus becomes a series of containers, well-diversified and almost as hermetic as the islands. Places become containers *in* which other objects exist, whether people, geological formations, plants, or animals. In the second voyage Cook writes of an island as “no more than a few detached rocks, receptacles for birds.”<sup>57</sup> In the first voyage, the Admiralty edition offers a description of an island “with all the bays, harbours, rivers, and islands situated upon it.”<sup>58</sup> And in this way the representations of place proceed throughout the three voyages.

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<sup>55</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume II, page 18.

<sup>56</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume V, page 178.

<sup>57</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 202.

<sup>58</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume II, page 196.

## 5. Landscapes and Maps

Another way that the shapes of places are articulated in Cook's voyages is through engravings, whether of maps or views. As with words, the engravings represent places in a variety of ways, but in Cook's voyages they all contribute to the articulation of places as separate entities. But there are several significant forms that landscapes take, and not all of them create borders.

Traditionally, one way that places are represented in travel journals is in cross-section. Tasman had included many coastal profiles to illustrate the published account of his voyage, which lasted from 1642 to 1643. Anson's account of his voyage contains several cross-sections, including one of the Strait of Le Maire (see picture 3). These pictures, which offered only the rough outline of the land, represented landscapes in a specific way for a specific audience. The cross-sections were important because they offered navigators a way to identify coastlines by sight. The first volume of Hawkesworth's collection likewise included a chart and four views of Pitcairn Island (see picture 5), connected to Wallis's voyage. Together, the chart and the views provided a relatively detailed, if plain image of the island. But, according to Smith, the views from Wallis's voyage "were little more than practical off-shore guides to the identification of new coasts."<sup>59</sup>

No typical coastal views were included in the Admiralty edition of any of Cook's three voyages. Instead, the representations of place are split into landscapes and maps. As with the coastal views, the landscape pictures a place from the side, but without the geometrical detail that was offered in the earlier cross-sections. Bernard Smith has traced an important shift in the landscapes included with the Admiralty edition of Cook's voyages. The landscapes were based on sketches and paintings by Buchan and Parkinson,

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<sup>59</sup> Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, page 18.

and engraved by Cipriani and Bartolozzi. Smith argues that the landscapes in the first voyage conform to the standards of classical landscape painting. The engraving was far from being a faithful representation of either the people or the places in the South Pacific.

Smith has also noted that there is an evident shift in cross-sections, specifically from those produced by Wallis to those produced by Stanley Parkinson, who was the *de facto* landscape artist on the *Endeavour* once Alexander Buchan had died in Tahiti. Parkinson offered views of the coast which were of an order of “accuracy beyond naval standards” (see picture 9). One can notice the reflection of the light on the water and the use of shading to enhance the detailed profile of the hills. While Wallis offers a general outline, Parkinson draws the coast with the accuracy of a botanical draughtsman.

During the second voyage, the primary artist on the *Discovery* was William Hodges. Smith notes that Hodges was

thrust among a circle of professional scientists and seamen all keenly interested in visual phenomena, a circle even less disposed than Banks’s party on the *Endeavour* was to allow the claims of taste to vitiate the truth of observation.<sup>60</sup>

One important feature of the representation of places in the second voyage, which according to Smith can be closely tied to the publication of Joseph Priestley’s *History of the Present State and Discoveries relating to Vision, Light and Colours* in 1772, is that Hodges is much more interested in representing the play of “atmospheric phenomena” on the landscape (picture 13, for example). One feature of Hodges’s landscapes is the emphasis on details, from the leaves of the plants to the dress of the natives.

John Webber, the primary artist on Cook’s third voyage, continued Hodges’s attention to accuracy and detail. The important differences, for

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<sup>60</sup> Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, page 56.

Smith, were the quantity of illustrations that were produced and the range of places and peoples that were included. As Smith notes,

Webber was a prolific worker, and no voyage undertaken in the days before photography ever returned so well documented with pictorial illustrations. Nor had so great an area of the earth's surface come under one artist's observation. From the cold south of Kerguelen's Land to the cold north in Nootka Sound, Webber drew plants, animals, peoples, and landscapes in all their geographical variety — shamen, fetishes, human sacrifices, native masks, Chinese sampans, winter huts in Siberia, temples in Macao, New Zealand cannibals, South African Hottentots, Cook Islands, Society Islands, Hawaiians. The people and the landscapes of all the five oceans of the globe came, as the eighteenth century put it, under his pencil.<sup>61</sup>

In the published accounts of the second and third voyages, the landscape acquires a specific function: to represent aspects of the world that words were unable to capture. As with the descriptions of the ice islands at the extreme edge of the world, Cook appeals both to painting and romanticism when he discusses the appearance of the land. In the second voyage Cook writes that:

The plain or flat land, which lies along the shore we were upon, appeared from the hills to a great advantage; the winding streams which ran through it, the plantations, the little straggling villages, the variety in the woods, and the shoals on the coast, so variegating the scene, that the whole might afford a picture for romance.<sup>62</sup>

The engraving thus complements the words, and to offer a complete and accurate account of a voyage, both of them are necessary. In the third voyage Cook writes:

And, that we might go out with every help that could serve to make the result of our voyage entertaining to the generality of readers, as well as instructive to the sailor and scholar, Mr. Webber was pitched upon, and engaged to embark with me, for the express purpose of supplying the unavoidable imperfections of written accounts, by enabling us to preserve, and to bring home, such drawings of the most memorable scenes of our

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<sup>61</sup> Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, page 109.

<sup>62</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 102.

transactions, as could only be executed by a professed and skilful artist.<sup>63</sup>

While the landscapes are organized around the basic principles of perspective, the paintings, sketches and engravings were seldom composed of sharp lines. The goal was to capture light and life, it was not to provide location or shape. Whereas the geographer's world is built upon completed circles, the landscape artist's world is built upon the horizon. Compare, for instance, the map (see picture 12) and the landscape (see picture 13) of Easter Island from the second voyage. Unlike the maps, these landscapes typically continues off the page, and often mountains are used to frame the picture. The result is a sense of place beyond identification, beyond geometry. The managed space of containers and the sublime nature of the universe thus coexist in the printed pages of the voyages.

If the landscapes become less geometrical, the maps, which also permeate the texts, become more so. Here, rather than landscapes, is the primary way that geographical, national, and political borders are articulated in Cook's voyages. Surveying and mapping were important aspects of Cook's early training and important reasons for his being chosen as the captain. One of the reasons that is often given why Cook was chosen to command the voyages into the Pacific was the skill in surveying and mapping that he demonstrated during the Seven Years War and the period immediately after that spent in Newfoundland. Besant notes that "During these four years [in Newfoundland in the 1760s, Cook] executed a great amount of surveying, and drew charts which are still in use."<sup>64</sup> These maps, along with sailing directions, were published in London by T. Jeffreys from 1769-1770, when Cook was in the South Pacific on the first voyage (see picture 4). The maps,

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<sup>63</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume V, page 93.

<sup>64</sup> Besant, *Captain Cook*, page 42. Cook was not the only contributor to this project, Michael Lane, another surveyor, also contributed information to the final charts and directions.

which include cross-sections, are typical for the period. But they were becoming more and more accurate. Cook's map of New Zealand (see picture 7) was the highest achievement of mapping in the voyages. Given the technological advances in surveying and mapping that occurred just before Cook's voyages, the coast of New Zealand was likely the most accurately mapped coast in the world. It is important to note that it is only after Cook's voyages that large-scale surveys of European coasts based on the new techniques were carried out.

There are significant differences between the maps created by Cook and Wallis. Compare, for instance, Wallis's map of Pitcairn island with the map of Tahiti that is included in Cook's first voyage (see picture 5). The first thing to note is that there are no cross-sections in Cook's voyages. One reason, presumably, is that cross-sections were no longer needed for navigators to identify islands. Instead, navigators could rely on measuring their coordinates, which is the other significant change in Cook's map. In Wallis's map of the Pitcairn Islands, the coordinates are given in the title panel. With Cook, the grid extends over the water.

In *European Vision and the South Pacific*, Bernard Smith focuses on changes in the nature of landscape-painting from the 1750's to the 1850's. Smith, however, does not consider the role that maps played in the representation of places in the voyages. Yet the map not only summarizes information and saves space in the narrative, it also helps convey a different kind of information than can be conveyed by words. The map, in other words, is given the same status as the painting. In the second voyage, for instance, Cook writes that:

The foregoing account of these islands, in the order in which we explored them, not being particular enough either as to situation or description, it may not be improper now to give a more accurate view of them, which, with the annexed chart, will convey to the reader a better idea of the whole group.<sup>65</sup>

The map helps create a sense of space, not only by including geometrical information on various places (coordinates, shapes), but also by presenting that information as a picture. As a result, Cook creates a picture of the world.

An important aspect of Cook's mapping of the world arises from the two different scales in which the maps are presented. The small-scale maps provide the detailed articulation of specific places. An entire island or chain of islands is shown, surrounded by the ocean, the picture frame and the edge of the page. Places are identified in these maps by the absence of other places: the place stands alone, identified as an object that can be subjected to detailed analysis. For this reason, the only detailed maps that are included in the journals are maps of places that have not been clearly mapped before. Otaheite is included, but Teneriffe is not. The Society Islands are included, but the Cape of Good Hope is not. The detailed maps of the other places are located in other books, and the readers can refer to these works as needed.

The large scale map, on the other hand, provides a general picture of the world. The map may still be framed, but the frame indicates something very different. The map of the world is a complete picture whose edges fold back to each other. For these maps, places are identified by the *presence* of other places. The identity arises more from the location and the shape of the place on the map, its coordinates, its spatial relationship to other places. While the detailed maps provide new information, the only new information on these maps is the path of the voyage and any newly discovered places that can be added. Cook's voyages not only fill in empty spaces, they also produce (or at least helps produce) a new printed edition of the world.

Through the engravings, the metaphors, the naming and the grammar, islands become fixed entities which form the basis for Cook's

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<sup>65</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 88.

description of the world. Cook's voyages thus not only offer a specific attitude towards the space of the ocean, which marks his voyages off from their predecessors. The voyages also offer a specific image of the island that is also significantly different. For Cook, an island is certainly distinct from a continent. But it is more than that. An island is a geometrical entity, with fixed borders and a shape, which can often be approximated by a ideal geometrical shape, and which can always be mapped. An island is a thing, in relation to which other things can be placed, whether it is Cook's ship that is placed alongside the island or the vegetation that is placed within.<sup>66</sup>

In English literature, the understanding of the island is dominated by the image of the castaway. *Robinson Crusoe*, for instance, emphasizes the connection between islands and isolation. Crusoe is a solitary figure, separated from civilization. Solitude connects to a series of other ideas, including simplicity and purity. In Hobbes, the mind divides in order to understand.

men divide a body in their thought, by numbering parts of it, and, in numbering those parts, number also the parts of the place it filled; it cannot be, but in making many parts, we make also many places of those parts; whereby there cannot be conceived in the mind of any man, more, or fewer parts, than there are places for.<sup>67</sup>

In the 18th and 19th century, the island became a specific image, an epistemological principle, for these ideals. An appropriate example can be found in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, first published in 1781, where Kant describes the progress of his philosophical text in terms of exploration.

We have now not merely explored the territory of pure understanding, and carefully surveyed every part of it, but have also measured its extent, and assigned to everything

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<sup>66</sup> Conrad's image in *Heart of Darkness* of the ship firing into the jungle is appropriate here. Whereas islands are obvious things that have little or no interior, continents have a depth which separate those on the outside from what is inside.

<sup>67</sup> Hobbes, *Leviathan*, in *The English Works of Thomas Hobbes*, Volume III, page 677.

in it its rightful place. This domain is an island, enclosed by nature itself within unalterable limits. It is the land of truth — enchanting name! — surrounded by a wide and stormy ocean, the native home of illusion, where many a fog bank and many a swiftly melting iceberg give the deceptive appearance of farther shores, deluding the adventurous seafarer ever anew with empty hopes ....<sup>68</sup>

While Kant's image seems closely connected to those that permeate Cook's voyages, specifically in the contrast between ice islands and regular islands, there is a marked difference between the two. In Kant, there are many ice islands, but only one "territory of pure understanding." With Cook, there are many islands, and it is their discovery and proper description that constitutes a true understanding of the world.

## **6. The Ocean Surveyed**

Cook's voyages not only represent places as unproblematic entities that can be reliably located on the world grid. As has been suggested above, the places are also containers which form the basis on which further descriptions of the world can be organized. Having geometrically and physically identified the place, the area takes up a position on the table of identities in which the place is lined up with its geological, biological and human attributes. Having located the containers in the world, the account puts them together, first one chapter at a time, and then collected together as a complete series. To capture the sense of how Cook consolidates places into a single sense of the whole, it may be enough to list the place names that are included in the chapter headings to the three voyages. The place names from the last volume of the third voyage, which contained the account of the voyage after Cook's death, are not included in the list. Some of these names are still in use, many have been changed, and most remain controversial.

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<sup>68</sup> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, page 257.

**First Voyage (33 in total)**

Plymouth	Cape Turnagain	New Holland
Madeira	Tolaga	Botany Bay
Rio de Janeiro	Mercury Bay	Trinity Bay
Strait of Le Maire	the Bay of Islands	Endeavour River
Terra del Fuego	the River Thames	Northern Extremity
Cape Horn	North Cape	of the Country
newly discovered Islands in the South Seas	Queen Charlotte's Sound	New Guinea
Otaheite	Cape Turnagain	Island of Savu
Islands around Otaheite	eastern coast of Poenamoo	Batavia
New Zealand	Cape South	Cape of Good Hope
Poverty Bay	Cook's Strait	Saint Helena
		England

**Second Voyage (56 in total)**

England	High Southern Latitudes	Norfolk Island
Deptford	Easter Island	Queen Charlotte's Sound
Cape of Good Hope	Marquesas Islands	Terra del Fuego
High Southern Latitudes	Island of Santa Christina	Cape Deseada
New Zealand	Madre de Dios, or Resolution Bay	Christmas Sound
Dusky Bay	Otaheite	Cape Horn
Queen Charlotte's Sound	Island of Huaheine	Strait Le Maire
Van Diemen's Land	Ulietea	Staten Land
Otaheite	Friendly Isles	Isle of Georgia
Oaiti-piha Bay	Anamocka	Sandwich Land
Matavai Bay	New Hebrides	High Southern Latitudes
Huaheine	Turtle Island	Cape of Good Hope
Ulietea	The Island of Mallicollo	Saint Helena
Friendly Islands	Port Sandwich	Western Islands
Hervey's Island		Ascension

Middleburg	Tanna	Fernando Noronha
Amsterdam	New Caledonia	Island of Fayal
New Zealand	Balade	England
Queen Charlotte's Sound	New Zealand	

**Third Voyage (112 in total)**

Sheerness	Island Toobouai	Bristol Bay
the North Foreland	Otaheite	Round Island
Deptford	Oheitepeha	Calm Point
Plymouth	Matavai Bay	Cape Newenham
Teneriffe	Eimeo	Bristol Bay
Santa Cruz Road	Huaheine	Point Rodney
Santa Cruz	Ulietea	Sledge Island
Laguna	Bolabola	King's Island
Bonavista	Christmas Island	Cape Prince of Wales
Isle of Mayo	Atooi	Cape Mulgrave
Port Praya	Oneehow	Icy Cape
Coast of Brazil	Sandwich Islands.	Cape Lisburne
Cape of Good Hope	Coast of North America	Coast of Asia
Prince Edward's Islands	Nootka Sound	Cape North
Kerguelen's Land	Beering's Bay	Burney's Island
Christmas Harbour	Kaye's Island	Cape Serdze Kamen
New Zealand	Prince William's Sound.	East Cape of Asia
Van Diemen's Land	Cape Elizabeth	Bay of St. Laurence
Adventure Bay	Cape St. Hermogenes	Beering's Cape
Queen Charlotte's Sound	Point Banks	Tschukotskoi
Wateoo	Cape Douglas	Island of Saint
Wenooa-ette, or	Cape Bede	Laurence
Otakootaia	Mount St. Augustin	Cape Darby
Hervey's Island, or	Cook's River	Bald Head

Terougge mou Attooa	Island of St. Hermogenes	Cape Denbigh
Palmerston's Island	Cape Whitsunday	Besborough Island
Komango	Cape Greville	Norton Sound
Annamooka	Cape Barnabas	Stuart's Island
Hapae	Two-headed Point	Cape Stephens
Lefooga	Trinity Island	Point Shallow-water
Hoolaiva	Beering's Foggy Island	Clerke's Island
Kotoo	Kodiak, and the	Gore's Island
Annamooka	Schumagin Islands	Pinnacle Island
Tongataboo	Rock Point	Oonalashka
Eooa	Halibut Island	Amoghta
Keppel's and	Oonalaschka	Sandwich Islands
Boscawen's Islands	Samganoodha Harbour	Mowee
Vavaoo,	Islands Oonella	Owhyhee
Hamo,	and Acootan	Karakakooa Bay
Feejee	Ooneemak	

These are not simply place names in a list. They are places which are described in some detail and located in relation to other places, both in terms of both the narrative of the voyages and the maps. Comparing the list of places in the table of contents suggests that the articulation of places in Cook's voyages became increasingly expansive and more specific. By the third voyage, it is evident that in the Pacific the account of places has become the most perfected.

When maps, narratives, and tables are all included in a single published volume, one of the first things that is created is a list of standardized spellings. In describing the production of the third voyage, for instance, a footnote mentions that

Mr. Anderson's great attention to matters of this sort being, as we learn from Captain King, well known to every body on board, and admitted always by Captain Cook

himself, his mode of spelling has been adopted on the engraved chart of the Friendly Islands, which has made it necessary to adopt it also, in printing the Journal.<sup>69</sup>

One of the functions of place names within the voyage is to make cross-referencing within and between texts much more intelligible. Cook could have simply repeated the coordinates rather than worrying about names, but that would make the narrative much harder to read, largely because it would make already-mentioned places in the text much harder to recognize.

The clear and distinct identity of places in the narrative has epistemological implications. The islands and bays organize information. As containers, they tie together a wide range of other descriptions of the world. As a result of his voyages, Cook produces an encyclopedia of places, which are described in a standard format. He determines their longitude and latitude, describes the resources and general appearance of the place, and then provides relatively detailed accounts of the inhabitants (their physical character, dress, customs, and religion). Of course, these descriptions are important to all three voyages. What happens near the mid-point of the second voyage, however, is that these descriptions are the most important things that is left for Cook to describe.

In *The Road to Botany Bay*, Paul Carter suggests one way to distinguish the different approaches to knowledge exemplified by Banks and Cook.

For Banks, names enjoyed a simple, Linnaean relationship with the object they denoted. They gave the illusion of knowing under the guise of naming. Cook's names obey a different, more oblique logic, the logic of metaphor.<sup>70</sup>

And he continues,

Rather than iron out the coast, reducing its otherness to a placeless classification, Cook's names served to preserve the space of exploring, to spread the coast out.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume V, page 303.

<sup>70</sup> Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, page 29.

For Carter, the key separations in Cook's world are the ones created at the intersection of space and narrative. But Cook also had the coordinate system and a map of the world, where naming and identifying are closely intertwined. Cook writes, in a way that takes some power away from the importance of spreading the coast out, that:

The latitudes and longitudes of all, or most of the principal head-lands and bays, may be confided in, for we seldom failed of getting an observation once at least every day, by which to correct the latitude of our reckoning, and observations for settling the longitude were equally numerous, no opportunity that was offered by the sun and moon being suffered to escape.<sup>72</sup>

Places are thus classified in various ways that have little to do with the narrative of the voyages as such. The places of the world all have positions in the table — a one-one correspondence. Place itself becomes a basis for the classification of individuals and for the emergence of a sense of the whole. Beyond coastal narratives, Cook constructs a global grid of coordinates and a table of places built on the ideal of the island. And the classification of these islands and their inhabitants is an important aspect of the articulation of the world.

These tables of places, organized through various systems of classification, construct a large-scale view of the world. At the end of the second voyage, Cook claims that

[I am] now done with the Southern Pacific Ocean; and flatter myself that no one will think that I have left it unexplored; or that more could have been done, in one voyage, towards obtaining that end, than has been done in this.<sup>73</sup>

He has completed the account of the places of the Pacific, offering his successors very little significant work to do in this ocean. But Cook's voyages

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<sup>71</sup> Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, page 32.

<sup>72</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume II, page 200.

<sup>73</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 157.

do not offer a complete view of the world. The outline is given, but only a limited number of places are included in any detail. To achieve a complete view, it was necessary to combine the information that was collected on Cook's voyages with information from other texts. Mr. Henry Roberts, a mate on the *Resolution* in the third voyage, notes that,

Soon after our departure from England, I was instructed by Captain Cook to complete a map of the world as a general chart, from the best materials he was in possession of for that purpose; and before his death this business was in a great measure accomplished: That is, the grand outline of the whole was arranged, leaving only those parts vacant or unfinished, which he expected to fall in with and explore.<sup>74</sup>

On the ship's return, Roberts is given the task of creating the official map of the world on which Cook's three voyages were to be drawn, to "give a general idea of the whole," which means, of course, to produce an exemplary map that can be printed and distributed throughout the reading community. In the extended footnote to Douglas's introduction to the third voyage, Roberts lists the sources that he used to create the large scale map. The list is given in full here to show the variety of sources that were used. It should be noted that the construction of the world was created primarily from previously printed texts rather than manuscripts.

First, then, I have followed closely the very excellent and correct charts of the Northern Atlantic Ocean, published by Messrs de Verdun de la Crenne, de Borda, et Pringre in 1775 and 1776; which comprise the coast of Norway from the Sud Hoek, in the latitude of 62 degrees north, to Trelleburg, Denmark, the coast of Holland, north coast of Great Britain, Orkneys, Shetland, Ferro Isles, Iceland, coasts of France, Spain, and Portugal, to Cape St. Maria on the coast of Africa; including the Azores, Canaries, Cape de Verd, Antilles, and West Indian islands from Barbadoes to the east end of Cuba; the north part of Newfoundland and the Labradore coast, as far as the latitude of 57° north.

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<sup>74</sup> Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume VI, page 77, footnote.

Ireland, and part of the coast of Scotland, is laid down from Mr. Mackenzie's late surveys; and the south coast of England from a chart published by Mr. Faden in 1780, taken from M. l'Abbé Dicquemare.

The north part of the coast of Labradore, from the latitude of 57° north, to Button's islands in the entrance of Hudson's Strait, is taken from Monsieur Bellin's chart, as is also the north coast of Norway and Lapland, including the White Sea, Gulph of Bothnia, Baltic sea, and the east coast of Greenland.

The Gulf of Finland, from a large (MS.) chart, now engraving for the use of some private merchants.

The West India islands, from the east end of Cuba to the west end, including Jamaica and the Bahama islands, are from a chart published in London by Sayer and Bennett in 1779.

The south side of Cuba, from Point Gorda to Cape de Cruz, is laid down from Monsieur Bellin, in 1762.

The coasts of Newfoundland, and the Gulf of St. Laurence, from the surveys made by Captain Cook, and Messrs. Gilbert and Lane.

Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, Island of St. John, River St. Laurence, Canada, and New England to the River Delaware, from J. F. W. des Barres, Esq. in 1777, and 1778; and charts published in France by order of the King, in 1780, intituled, Neptune Americo-Septentrional, &c. And from these charts also are taken the coast of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, virginia, north and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida, as well as the interior parts of the country to the east side of Lake Ontario.

The other parts of this lake, as likewise Lakes Erie, Hurons, Michigan, and Superior, were copied from Mr. Green's maps of America: The northern part of this last-mentioned lake is fixed from the astronomical observations made by order of the Hudson's Bay Company, at Mishippicotton House.

The whole of Hudson's Bay I took from a chart, compiled by Mr. Marly, from all the most authentic maps he could procure of those parts, with which I was favoured by Samuel Wegg, Esq. F. R. S and Governor of that Company, who also politely furnished me with Mr. Hearne's Journals, and the map of his route to the Coppermine River, which is faithfully inserted on the chart, together with the survey of Chesterfield

Inlet made by Captain Christopher and Mr. Moses Norton, in 1762; and the discoveries from York Fort to Cumberland, and Hudson Houses (this last is the most western settlement belonging to the company), extending to Lake Winnipeg, from the drafts of Mr. Philip Turnor, made in 1778 and 1779, corrected by astronomical observations. And from this lake, the disposition of the other lakes to the southward of it, and which communicate with it, is formed, and laid down from a map constructed by Mr. Spurrel, in the company's service. The Albany and Moose rivers to Gloucester House, and to Lake Abitibbe and Superior, are also drawn from a map of Mr. Turnor's, adjusted by observations for the longitudes.

The west coast of Greenland, as chiefly laid down from the observations made by Lieut. R. Pickersgill in the Lion brig in 1776, which determine the line of the coast only, as the immense quantities of ice choke up every bay and inlet on this coast, which formerly were, in the summer season, quite free and open.

From the mouth of the Mississippi River, including its source, and the other rivers branching from it; all the coast of New Leon to Cape Rozo, and the western coast of America, from Cape Corrientes to the Great Bay of Tecoantepec, is taken from Monsieur D'Anville.

The Gulf of California I have laid down from a German publication in 1773, put into my hands by Sir Joseph Banks, Bart. P.R. S.; and the western side of it is brought together from a Spanish MS. chart with which A. Dalrymple, Esq. F. R. S. obliged me.

The coast of Brazil, from Sera to Cape Frio, is copied from a small chart of that part by Mr. Dalrymple.

For the southern part of Africa, from the Cape of Good Hope to Point Natal, I have taken the authority of the chart of Major J. Rennels, F. R. S. shewing the extent of the bank of Lagullus.

For the existence of the small islands, shoals, and banks to the eastward of Madagascar, together with the Archipelago of the Maldiva and Laccidive islands; for the coasts of Mallacca, part of Cambodia, and the island Sumatra, I have used the latest authority of Monsieur D'Après de Manneville's publications in the Neptune Oriental.

The coasts of Guzerat, Malabar, Coromandel, and the opposite shore, containing the Great Bay of Bengal, and the Island of Ceylon, and exhibiting the Heads of the Ganges, and Barampooter or Sanpoo rivers, are inserted from the work of the ingenious author of the map of Hindoostan, published in 1782.

The China sea is laid down from the chart published by Mr. Dalrymple; but the longitude of Pula Sapara, Pulo Condore, Pulo Timoan, Straits of Banca and Sunda, and the parts we saw are, as settled by us, together with the east coast of Nippon, the principal of the Japanese islands.

The Jeso and Kurile islands, the east coast of Asia and Kamtschatka; as well as the sea of Okotsk, and the islands lying between Kamtschatka and America that were not seen in the voyage, are taken from a Russian MS. chart, got by us at the island of Oonalashkha.

The northern countries from Cape Kanin, near the White Sea, as far east of the River Lena, I have given from the Great Russian map, published at Petersburg in 1776, including the Euxine; Caspian, and Aral Seas, as also the principal lakes to the eastward; the intent of which is to show the source of the large rivers that empty themselves into the different oceans and seas.

Every other part of the chart not mentioned in this account, is as originally placed by Captain Cook.

The whole has been corrected from the latest astronomical observations, selected from the tables compiled by Mr. William Wales, F. R. S. and mathematical master of Christ's Hospital, for the Nautical Almanacs: from those in the *Mariner's Guide* by the Rev. Doctor Maskelyne, F. R. S. and Astronomer Royal, published in 1763; from the *Connoissance des Tems* for 1780 and 1781; From Professor Mayer's *Geographical Table*; from the *Voyages* of Messrs d'Eveux de Fleurieu, Verdun, de Borda, and Chabet, &c.; from the Table lately published by Mr. Dalrymple for the use of the East India ships; from the *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society; and from the *Observations* of our late Navigators.<sup>75</sup>

Several aspects of this list suggest how Cook's voyages connected to the late 18th century European articulations of place. The first is the connection

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<sup>75</sup> *Admiralty, Voyages*, Volume V, pages 77 to 80.

between Cook and the people and institutions who were associated, whether they knew it or not, with the project, such as Banks, Dalrymple, Pickersgill, Maskelyne, and the Royal Society. It is also significant that information for all of the places around the world was very recent, to the point that the information collected by Cook is far from the newest information. Even the maps of the English, Scottish, and Irish coasts were published within a few years after the *Resolution* and *Adventure* returned to England following Cook's death.

The final thing to notice in this list is that all of these maps have been collected together and corrected in terms of "the latest astronomical observations." Cook had performed similar corrections during his three voyages, where he re-measured the coordinates of key places located by earlier navigators as a way to either verify or correct the earlier observations. The list that Roberts gives of the authorities he consults suggests that the verification and mapping of the world was centered on the Royal Society and the Royal Observatory; and that the accounts circulated between key people throughout Europe.

In the 1770s, the islands and coasts that were explored by Cook were probably the best known places in the world, at least insofar as knowledge is the information acquired by accurately measuring coordinates and carrying out coastal surveys. Cook was one of the first and the best surveyors who could appeal to the practical technological developments arising from the Royal Society, the Board of Longitude and the Royal Observatory. As a result, the maps of places like New Zealand were, for several years, probably the most accurate maps of any place in the world. The task that remained was to remap the rest of the world in the same way that Cook had done in the South Pacific. All the shapes, coordinated together into a single view, thus formed the basis on which information about the world can be organized. The

complementary attempts to identify objects and people, which is the focus of the next two chapters, and to collect those objects and people, which is the focus of the last two chapters, are both based on the geometrical and geographical articulation of places, and in particular on the image of the oceanic island.

## **7. The Move to Interiors**

After Cook and his immediate successors (such as George Vancouver), most of the South Pacific had been explored, mapped, and published by Europeans. From 1780 to 1830, many other voyages had been undertaken by Britain, France, Russia and the United States. Vancouver had sailed around the world and surveyed Hawaii and the northwest coast of North America from 1791 to 1795. Wilkes sailed throughout the Pacific between 1838 and 1842 to map the ocean in greater detail. And then the project was more or less over. There were no new places of any significance to be discovered in the ocean, and there was a general shift towards the exploration, and often reexploration, of continents. In her discussion of the exploration of South America in *Imperial Eyes*, Jean Louis Pratt discusses the way that travel narratives, such as those of La Condamine's expedition carried out during the middle of the eighteenth century, mark the shift from the ocean to the interior. As she notes, there is

a new orientation toward exploring and documenting continental interiors, in contrast with the maritime paradigm that had held center stage for three hundred years. By the last years of the eighteenth century, interior exploration had become the major object of expansionist energies and imaginings.<sup>76</sup>

While navigators can comprehend an island from a single point or several day's coasting, comprehending a continent is a much more extensive project.

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<sup>76</sup> Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, page 23.

A similar argument was made in 1822, when Alexander von Humbolt wrote that:

It is not by sailing along a coast that we can discover the direction of chains of mountains and their geological constitution, the climate of each zone, and its influence on the forms and habits of organized beings.<sup>77</sup>

But in turning towards the continental interiors, it is also evident that the explorers brought their longing for islands. In the interior, places are more likely to be landmarks, such as rivers, mountains and geological curiosities. But the metaphorical space in which they operated remained oceanic. In Africa, the jungle acquires the same status as the desert, as a substitute for the sea. Likewise, as Carter summarizes how the early explorers of the interiors of Australia understood the land:

what unites their narratives is their unusual ambitiousness in attempting to constitute their journeys under the aegis of a single, unifying metaphor: that of the sea.<sup>78</sup>

To Charles Sturt, “isolated hills remind him of islands; he himself is a navigator.”<sup>79</sup> Carter summary continues:

Looking north west from the Main Barrier Range on 8 November 1844, Sturt remarks, “One might have imagined that an ocean washed their base, and I would that it really had been so.” A few days later, looking back at the Barrier Range from the north westerly plains, Sturt could not help feeling a conviction that “they had once looked over the waters of the ocean as they then overlooked a sea of scrub.”<sup>80</sup>

Just as descriptions of the ocean appealed to images of the wilderness, Carter notes how “marine imagery often characterizes wilderness descriptions.”<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, page 24, quote from Humbolt, *Personal Narrative of a Voyage to the Equinoctial Regions*, published in 1822, Volume I, page vii.

<sup>78</sup> Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, page 91.

<sup>79</sup> Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, page 95.

<sup>80</sup> Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, page 95. Quote from Sturt’s 1849 work, *Narrative of an Expedition into Central Australia*, Volume I, pages 176 and 179.

<sup>81</sup> Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, page 289.

But the likeness in difference felt in contemplating the sea as land-like, the land as sea-like, goes deeper than this. It is rooted phenomenologically in our most primitive sensations of earth and water and of their common heritage in the wind filled sky.<sup>82</sup>

Carter wants to equate water and earth, but this is only partially true. Rather, water is equated with desert, and mountains are equated with islands. They are the points of identity on a table that constitutes their distance and their difference. The division between earth and water is thus transposed to a division within the earth itself, between rock and sand.

Exploration is thus understood in terms of islands, even when islands are not there. As a result, the importance of the South Pacific, as an ideal account of explored space, lies not only in the amount of energy and popular interest that it generated as an area of the globe, but also in the way that it became an idealized image of the organization of knowledge about space. The Pacific ocean was a test case for a new epistemology. Carter points to the way that the exploration and colonization of Australia was closely connected to the discovery or creation of natural boundaries.

If, for the explorer, mountains and rivers were both means of getting on, then, for the surveyor, they functioned primarily as natural boundaries.<sup>83</sup>

In other words, the location and character of a place depends on the boundaries which bring that place into existence. With Cook, it is the obviousness of the coast and the island that grounds his description. Sturt does not coast, but he travels on a terrain where hills and islands coincide.

They may rather be likened to a lake, interspersed with islands, clothed with wood. Breton's remark, testifying to the travelling emphasis on boundedness, rather than flatness or openness, illustrates the existential necessity the newcomer felt to differentiate, to delimit and name in order to possess.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, page 92.

<sup>83</sup> Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, page 108.

<sup>84</sup> Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, page 146.

The division of the land into islands was a persistent theme in the European settling of Australia; it was a key feature in the reorganization and acquisition of the land. In *Songlines*, Bruce Chatwin relates a conversation over European imperialism that he had with a Russian living in Australia.

‘Pity we didn’t get here first,’ he said

‘We the Russians?’

‘Not only Russians,’ he shook his head. ‘Slavs, Hungarians, Germans even. Any people who could cope with wide horizons. Too much of this country went to islanders. They never understood it. They’re afraid of space.’<sup>85</sup>

The key problem faced by the English settlers, following in the wake of Cook, was that large areas of Australia had no reliable (or intelligible) geographical boundaries. As Carter notes, “In order to communicate the act of settling Johnstone has to invent a boundary.”<sup>86</sup> The boundary that Johnstone creates is, in Carter’s words, “a potentially nameable zone,” and enclosure that has not yet been clarified by the settler’s axe. In other words, English explorers and settlers framed their understanding of place in terms of natural borders and most importantly in terms of island-like containers.

The final stage to be considered here, as another indication of the continued relevance of Cook’s voyages to modern articulations of the world, is to consider how the search for geographical markers to clearly distinguish one place from another also occurred in Europe. In the middle of the 19th century, G. P. Marsh could claim that the existence of boundaries was a natural and universal process. “Nature left undisturbed, so fashions her territory as to give it almost permanence of form, outline and proportion.”<sup>87</sup> Similar attitudes have been traced in French history by Peter Sahlins.<sup>88</sup> The

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<sup>85</sup> Chatwin, *The Songlines*, page 128.

<sup>86</sup> Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, page 152.

<sup>87</sup> Kuehl, *Beyond Sovereign Territory*, page 1, quoted from G.P. Marsh, *Man and Nature*, 1864. No page reference is given.

islands of the South Pacific, as the epitome of the bounded place, are brought to Europe not only as objects of knowledge, but also as a way of understanding space, which is in turn used to clarify European space. The connection between islands and Europe as states will be discussed in greater detail in a later chapter, where we will consider the concept of nationalism and the territoriality of the sovereign state.

The boundaries in Cook's voyages were generally self-evident, natural, and unproblematic. If they are unclear, he clarifies them. The places in the world are like objects found in a field, and it is this world that forms the ground on which the world is described. With Cook's voyages, the accuracy of the maps improves, but they also acquire additional functions. The shapes come to represent, in detail, the borders of the biological, social, and political space. The coast becomes a natural, self-evident border between peoples, and the shapes of the islands become the shapes of sovereignty. As a result, the island becomes one of the key principles through which information is organized. Likewise, as the culmination of global exploration, Cook becomes the ideal, and it is through Cook, after Cook, that Britain (and Europe) look again to the world, regroup their knowledge, and turn inland to a different kind of ocean.

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<sup>88</sup> See Peter Sahlins's, "Natural Frontiers Revisited: France's Boundaries since the Seventeenth Century."