

Chapter Nine

Collections

As they move from place to place, Cook's ships locate individual entities in a web of sameness and difference. A catalog of locations, shapes and inhabitants emerges from the narrative, where the proper names and pictures tie together discrete nation-places that exist within geographies, climates, and habitats. The collection is an important aspect of how places are articulated in Cook's voyages — it is through the collection that the points of identity, and specifically the territorial nation-state, are finally fixed, and placed in relation to each other. It is through the collection that all the places of the world become intelligible in a specific way, as clear and distinct biological, geographical and political entities, that are accessible through a globalized system of knowledge.

The pattern of division and combination is not new with the idea of the collection — these have been the key principle of organization over the last four chapters. The discussion of points was organized in terms of coordinates and the coordinate system; of shapes in terms of the detailed and the general maps. The discussion of the nation and the state have focused on how discrete human groups are identified and described. Now, in the next two chapters, we will consider how these nation-states are consolidated, first as parts of a global system of descriptions, and then, in the next chapter, as parts of a global empire.

Collecting was not an incidental part of Cook's voyages; it was an important aspect of the knowledge that the voyages created. Cook and his companions collected views, descriptions, and samples from every place that the ships went (with the exception of places like England). Perhaps the most

important impact of Cook's voyages was simply the amount of information that was accumulated. Even if the voyages had no effect on the basic form that the information took, there were still hundreds of islands and other places in the voyages, and they were all located, encompassed, and described in varying but always-increasing amounts of detail. We should recall that Locke organized his account of European voyages in terms of continents, "lest the distance and variety of places should too much distract the reader, if all lay intermixed."¹ The proper, intelligible way to articulate a collection of places in Locke's world is to articulate all the places along a single line, as a single narrative, with a single theme or topic, so that distance and variety do not confuse either the text or the reader. In Cook's world, on the other hand, the proper way to articulate places in all of their variety is to intermix them on a single ocean, and to allow the reader to follow a variety of paths. Once again, lines become planes, and planes become tables.

One of the publishing results of Cook's voyages is a small book produced by Alexander Shaw. *A Catalogue of the Different Specimens of Cloth Collected in the Three Voyages of Captain Cook* is remarkable if only because it contains over thirty pieces of cloth (tapa, kapa) sewn into the binding. The first eight pages of printed text contain excerpts from the journals of Anderson and Forster. The book ends with two pages detailing the pieces of cloth, listing the item number (which refers the reader to the appropriate sample), where the piece was taken from, some of its characteristics and how it was used. In one case (item #35), the list also notes that it was "presented to Mr. King." There is no indication of who produced the cloth, or, more precisely, the production of the cloth is tied to nations rather than individuals. This collection of cloth, as with collections of artifacts, engravings and narratives, thus follows the practices of

¹ Locke, *The Whole History of Navigation*, in *The Works of John Locke*, Volume X, page 378.

identification based on the territorial nation-state that have been discussed in previous chapters.

But collecting is something more than acquiring, identifying, and describing. The narratives of acquisition are, of course, important ways to establish the reliability of the objects that are included in the collection, but the collection also depends on broader structures of intelligibility, which turn individual objects into parts of a meaningful system of identities. The reader is able to handle the pieces of cloth, to compare them with each other, and out of this collection to create a sense of a larger whole, which can in turn be compared to other samples from other places. Taken together, the collection that was carried back in Cook's ships offers a general image of the Pacific, where each place is located, distinguished, and described within a specific genre. A place in this case is also a place in the collection, and becomes increasingly meaningful in those terms. As George Forster notes near the conclusion of his account of the second voyage,

At other seasons we explored the Pacific Ocean between the tropics and in the temperate zone, and then furnished geographers with new islands, naturalists with plants and birds, and, above all, the friends of mankind with various modifications of human nature.²

Collections, especially of natural curiosities and human artifacts, were very popular in 18th and 19th century Europe. Kippis, writing at the end of the 18th century, suggests one reason why Cook's voyages were so popular for English society, or for natural curiosity itself.

THERE is scarcely anything from which the natural curiosity of man receives a higher gratification, than from the accounts of distant countries and nations. Nor is it curiosity alone that is gratified by such accounts; for the sphere of human knowledge is hereby

² Forster, *A Voyage Round the World in His Britannic Majesty's Sloop, Resolution*, Volume II, page 606.

enlarged, and various objects are brought into view, an acquaintance with which greatly contributes to the improvement of life and the benefit of the world.³

Taken as a *mise en scene* of the globe, the collection is created out of representative or exemplary objects from each of the important places, whether the collection is a king's zoo, a child's book of stamps, a set of spoons placed on a mantelpiece, or a group of botanical samples brought back from an exploration. A new kind of entity, the global collection of national identities, gradually emerges, and different ways of knowing become possible. People no longer travel to places, they travel within the collection.

1. Earlier forms of Collecting

The geographical organization of the cloth pieces, which is one example of many where the fragmented geography of the South Pacific becomes the guiding principle for organizing collections, contrasts in important ways with the rooms full of exotic objects that could be found throughout Europe before Cook's voyages. The collection, in other words, is reorganized in the late 18th century to correspond to the rise of the nation as an analytical concept. As Anthony Shelton notes in his discussion of Renaissance collections:

Pre-Columbian items were few, and included chiefly for comparison with classical or Christian religion. The cultural origins of these items seem to have been of less importance than their broad geographical provenances. Frequently, the civilizations of the New World — Aztec, Toltec, Mixtec, Maya — were conflated, and the inhabitants of distinct city states and regions were subsumed under general rubrics. Paganism provided a primary category, and material examples and cultural practices had importance only in so far as they imparted evidence of its distribution.⁴

³ Kippis, *A Narrative of the Voyages Round the World Performed by Captain James Cook*, page 17.

⁴ Shelton, "Renaissance Collections and the New World," in *The Cultures of Collecting*, page 184

These rooms were not the result of an indifference to the artifacts. Far from it. Such objects were very expensive, were greatly desired, were located in ornate and expansive rooms, and were often the centerpiece of the palace. The collections were also not indifferent to space. The geographical distinctions between Europe and the exotic were crucial to the collection's character. This is the collection of the 17th century orientalist, or the 18th century primitivist, in which the exotic was externally distinguished from Europe, but was internally indistinct. Once again we can hear Johnson's dismissal of the details offered in Cook's voyages — "All savages are the same."

Many collectors accumulated artifacts from Cook's voyages without regard to location or nationality. They were interested in primitive artifacts, which meant artifacts that were not from either Europe or the Orient. The book of cloth samples could be treated in this way. But a different attitude is also evident in Cook's voyages, as can be suggested by the list of specimens at the end of the book of samples. The artifacts that are discussed and illustrated in the voyages are not simply marked as savage or Indian, they are described and collected in detailed and systematic ways. As a result, comparing one nation to another becomes a central concern for those who work within Cook's collection. The nation-place — the natives of different places — becomes the key for understanding humanity and the world.

The practices of collecting that Cook narrates is another instance where the voyages contain discussions of epistemological problems. Just as Cook's voyages describe how to locate places and identify nations, they also describe and exemplify how to collect the resulting information together into a single system that can become the basis for the production of further meaning. In Cook's voyages, the collection is an organization of evidence, of possibilities, of comparisons. There is likewise an ontological shift: the world becomes a

large storehouse of fixed objects which are meaningful primarily in terms of the collection. In other words, the articulation of places in Cook's voyages affirms that the world should be understood not only through the creation of a collection, but also as itself a collection.

2. Collecting Nations

As was discussed in chapter five, in Cook's voyages the nation became an object of scientific study, which acquired a wide range of attributes (population, customs, resources, artifacts) that are all tied together as much by the shared space as the shared nationality. When these nations are arranged together on a single table, it becomes possible to narrate similarities and differences throughout the table, and as a result it becomes possible to ask general questions concerning the nature of the Pacific, of savagery, and of humanity. These correlations and variations all become possible as a result of the collection. In his *Observations During a Voyage Round the World*, Reinhold Forster, for instance, organized the South Pacific as a great laboratory where the interaction of various climates, soils, plants, animals and human beings could be studied.⁵ The introduction to the Admiralty's edition of the third voyage also reflects on this aspect of the voyages. The author, probably Douglas, writes:

... let us not forget another very important object of study, for which they [the voyages of Captain Cook] have afforded to the speculative philosopher ample materials: I mean the study of human nature in various situations, equally interesting as they are uncommon.

⁵ Forster, *A Voyage Round the World*, Volume II, page 226. According to Greg Denning, the early (1950s) analyses offered by Sahlins "belonged to a period in which there was some excitement in the thought of Polynesia as a sort of laboratory in which the observer had some control over the factors which affected the differing evolution of Polynesian societies in their differing environments." — Denning, *Islands and Beaches*, page 285.

However remote or secluded from frequent intercourse with more polished nations the inhabitants of any parts of the world be, if history or our own observation should make it evident that they have been formerly visited, and that foreign manners and opinions, and languages, have been blended with their own, little use can be made of what is observed amongst such people, toward drawing a real picture of man in his natural uncultivated state. This seems to be the situation of the inhabitants of most of the islands that lie contiguous to the continent of Asia, and of whose manners and institutions the Europeans, who occasionally visit them, have frequently given us accounts.⁶

One of the key assumptions in this political narrative is that nations start out as pure, natural entities wholly lacking in cultivation, and it is intentional human change, whether arising from internal or external influences, that moves human beings away from this condition. The detailed articulation of nations and places thus offers a well-organized collection of data with which social scientists and other speculative philosophers can formulate and debate general questions concerning human nature and the nature of human development.

The contrast between Europe and its outside still exists — marked in this passage with the idea of cultivation as it originated in Europe — but the way that the information is organized has changed. Humanity has become fragmented into the places where it lives, and it is here that the history and physics of national identities begins.

In Cook's voyages, and in the first voyage in particular, there are several important images of national collections. Batavia, and to a lesser extent the Cape of Good Hope, offers an ideal of the collection. Batavia and the Cape of Good Hope are the first cosmopolitan cities of the modern world. As Parkinson writes in the first voyage,

⁶ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume V, page 67.

There is not, perhaps, any city in the world that contains a greater variety of people. One would imagine there were assembled, of different human beings, from every nation under heaven, who, for the most part, retain their several peculiar dresses, and are allowed to live after the manner of their respective countries. Of whites, there are Dutch, who are masters; but the greater part of the company's servants, and of the inhabitants, are Germans, Danes, Swedes, and Hungarians; with a few English, French, and Italians.⁷

Parkinson continues the extensive list of national identities with Chinese, Malay, Banjans, and

Here are also Armenians, Persians, Moguls, people from many parts of India, as well as negroes from Madagascar, Mosambique, and all the eastern parts of Africa.⁸

There emerges in these passages from Parkinson's journal a sense of human diversity that is intricately connected to both national and biological identity. The list of words is enough to suggest the diversity, but out of this civic diversity also emerges a sense of the world as a collection of nations. In Cook's first voyage, the most pertinent example of this, again in Batavia, is when Tupia's reactions to the diversity of human identities are recorded. As the Admiralty's account reads:

One of the first things that Tupia remarked, was the various dresses of the passing multitude, concerning which he made many enquiries; and when he was told that in this place where people of many different nations were assembled, every one wore the habit of his country, he desired that he might conform to the custom, and appear in that of Otaheite.⁹

It is not surprising that a navigator so intent on specifying the location and character of nations would understand Tupia's presence in Batavia as a

⁷ Parkinson, *A Journal of a Voyage to the South Seas, in his Majesty's Ship, the Endeavour*, page 175.

⁸ Parkinson, *A Journal of a Voyage to the South Seas, in his Majesty's Ship, the Endeavour*, page 180.

⁹ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume II, page 290.

justification for his articulation of the world. This is how the world is to be put together, and Tupia has enough intelligence and curiosity to take up his place in the diorama. Cook, his crew, and his fellow travellers also take up their place, as members of an English ship. As the image of Batavia suggests, a considerable amount of differentiation can exist within a completed classification system, and as a result the table can celebrate diversity in its own way. Thus, just as the islands in the South Pacific became natural examples of the ideal of a pure people, places such as Batavia and the Cape of Good Hope became a natural, or at least unintended, example of the collection. Cook does not create such a table in his own accounts of his voyages, but one is at least implied by the way that the different nationalities are listed.

The desire to collect samples of natives “from every climate” into a single space, such as has occurred unscientifically in Batavia, would form the basis of a general study by allowing people to notice, at one sitting, the varieties of human existence. For some, the ideal gallery involved the acquisition of live specimens. Consider, for instance, Rickman’s vision in the second voyage of a global science of humanity:

It is now, indeed, too late to lament the non importation of a native from every climate, where Nature had marked a visible distinction in the characters of person and mind. As one in each climate might have been procured without force; when assembled together, they would have formed an academy for the study of the human figure, that would have attracted the notice of artists from every country, more than the celebrated statues of * * * * *.¹⁰

In the late 18th century, the presentation of national diversity became an important theme in English culture. Dichotomies were not enough. One example is the production of *Omai: or a Trip Round the World*, which was a

¹⁰ Rickman, *Journal of Captain Cook’s Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, page 186. The statues that are being referred to by Rickman have not been identified.

pantomime first produced in 1785. As Smith writes:

At the end of the pantomime the procession of the 'nations' included representatives from the Cook, Sandwich, and Society Islands, from Easter Island, and from Kamchatka, Oonalashka (Unalaska), Nootka, and Prince William's Sound.¹¹

The play, in other words, makes the diversity of national identities visible to every person in the audience at one sitting. Jöppien's analysis of the "gallery of nation" books likewise suggests how diverse and important the popular articulations of national identities were in the late 18th century, whether in plays, books, or museums (see picture 17).¹² Thus, by the end of the 18th century, classifying human beings in terms of national species had become an ideal, exemplified, for instance, in dioramas of the South Pacific or illustrations in costume books.

3. The Practices of the Collection

There is a logical structure to the collection in Cook's voyages. The collection begins with acquisition, whether of locations, shapes, or nations. In the published accounts of Cook's voyages, these acquisitions are part of the overall exploration narrative. The ships visit a place, document significant aspects of its inhabitants, collect samples, and label everything accordingly. But these acquisitions do not occur in a vacuum, and even if the narrative is organized primarily in terms of the progress of exploration through space and time, it is also always existing in terms of a different kind of space. The places where Cook is looking for information, and what kinds of information he is looking for, are permeated by a sense of an already-existing whole in relation to which his voyages become meaningful and significant. Cook does not discover coordinates, he does not discover mapping. Rather, he has already found a world that is organized in terms of coordinates and maps, and his

¹¹ Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, page 117.

¹² See Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, page 113.

project is to fill these spaces with information, to clarify his maps, and in the most general way to complete his collection.

But the voyages do more than articulate information on specific places and nations, they also help to articulate, clarify, or at least affirm the structure of the collection itself. For the people connected to Cook's voyages, there are many interconnected collections that guide their activities. As travellers, Cook and his companions operate within the system of coordinates and the articulation of the physical world (islands, reefs, currents, weather patterns and so on). As biologists, Cook and his companions operated largely within the hierarchical Linnean classification system, where the primary goal is to collect individual species that have not been collected before, and to note the existence of already-collected species in different places. As social scientists, Cook and his companions combine the collections of both the navigators and the biologists: collecting nations and sovereignties through a cartographical and physiological description of the native body politics. And what is perhaps most important in all of this collecting is that a single collection emerges, which combines, and often correlates, different kinds of collections into a single system.

Once the collection exists, it becomes possible, if not unavoidable, for people to compare different travel narratives. This relationship between texts is a perfect example of the kinds of intellectual interaction that became possible with the printing press. Eisenstein has argued that

a new kind of collaborative venture in data collection had been set in motion even before laboratory facilities were built or new observational instruments had been invented.¹³

It became much easier to identify inconsistencies between accounts, and to direct future experiments to determine the controversy. In the account attributed to John Marra, for example,

¹³ Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, Volume II, page 520.

Our journalist of the *Resolution* [Marra] remarks, that both men and women wanted one of their little fingers; and Tasman who first discovered that island makes a similar remark. They also agree in their description of the manner of painting their bodies from the waist downwards, but they differ as to their hair, which our journalist says is black and frizzled; Tasman, that some wear it cropt and others long. Our journalists represent the men as bold and resolute, armed with clubs of eight or ten pounds weight, and bows and arrows, and of a fierce and dauntless disposition: Tasman, on the contrary, says, they were wholly without arms, friendly and peaceable.¹⁴

Because this is Marra's narrative of the voyage, the accuracy of his description is implicitly superior, and therefore Tasman stands in need of correction. He has been corrected. With the printing press, it also became possible to produce newer editions of works that corrected earlier mistakes. As Eisenstein notes,

Just as the act of publishing errata sharpened alertness to error within the printer's workshop, so too did the preparation of copy pertaining to architectural motifs, regional boundaries, place names, details of dress and local customs.¹⁵

One of the most important early examples of this process was Munster's *Cosmography*, which, according to Eisenstein,

was first published in 1544, went through eight editions in its author's lifetime and thirty-five more down to 1628. As each edition became bigger, more crammed with data, and more profusely illustrated, each was also provided with more tables, charts, indexes which made it possible for readers to retrieve the growing body of information that was being stored in the work.¹⁶

Cook's voyages, published at the end of the 18th century, were likewise connected to the reproduction and reorganization of information, especially in the compendiums and other books that offered readers a "view of the world." Cook adds places, expands on descriptions, and corrects a large number of mistakes made by previous navigators. In this way, Cook's voyages

¹⁴ Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page 58.

¹⁵ Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, Volume I, page 85.

¹⁶ Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, Volume I, page 109.

are part of much larger intellectual and textual process. As Eisenstein notes,

The 'information explosion in botany and zoology' that occurred during Captain Cook's voyages and the receipt of packages of seeds by Linnaeus from scattered members of the reading public (who hoped they might be immortalized in his next volume), represent later phases of a process that was already under way in the mid-sixteenth century.¹⁷

With Munster's *Cosmography*, the published views of the world existed at the end of a methodological line that began with direct observation, or at least with written accounts sent by reliable observers. While writing allowed these accounts to be transmitted to Munster, the printing press allowed the consolidated results to be reproduced in large quantities and distributed again. Cook's voyages were an important part of this process, if only because they updated or created so much information from so many different places. Which compendiums of information could remain current after Cook's voyages?

In addition to the on-going verification of information, Cook's voyages also participate in the extension of the area contained by the collection. Cook's attempt to complete the map of the world has been discussed in a previous chapter. According to Kippis, who offered an early summation of the value of Cook's voyages,

Before the voyages of the present reign took place, nearly half the surface of the earth was hidden in obscurity and confusion. From the discoveries of our navigator, geography has assumed a new face, and become, in a great measure, a new science; having attained to such a completion, as to leave only some less important parts of the globe to be explored by future voyagers.¹⁸

Yet in hindsight Cook's collection was only an initial run through the world. He did not complete either the mapping or the description of all the places in

¹⁷ Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, Volume II, page 487.

¹⁸ Kippis, *A Narrative of the Voyages Round the World Performed by Captain James Cook*, page 405.

the world, but he did claim to have substantially completed the outline of specific places. But beyond these specific places — Tahiti, New Zealand and Nootka Sound come to mind — the voyages also create a logical structure that anticipates and helps organize further additions, remarks, confirmations, and challenges. He claims in the first voyage that “many islands also must have escaped my pencil,”¹⁹ and throughout the voyages he carefully notes the areas that he had to leave unexplored, due to such reasons as weather conditions or time restraints. In other words, Cook not only affirms a genre of writing, he also creates a system of scientific projects which direct subsequent activity around the world. And so, for instance, in 1788, George Keate published his *Account of the Pelew Islands*. Smith summarizes the work thus:

Keate wrote his book, he tells us, to present ‘a new people’ to the world, a people who were ‘an ornament to human nature’; and to contravert the opinion that the inhabitants of the Palau Islands were inhuman and savage.²⁰

Pelew was a gap in the collected and collective knowledge of the South Pacific, and so Keate’s explorations and writings were both directed to fill it. For the South Pacific, the process of horizontal extension took roughly sixty years. Goetzmann notes that, by 1831, “the British Admiralty concluded that no new discoveries beyond those at the antipodes were left to be achieved.”²¹

As has been shown in the discussion of nations and states, Cook’s voyages are concerned with much more than settling cartographic issues or filling in the blank spaces on the map. The need to provide a full and accurate account of each of the nation-places is also a central concern. In addition to the horizontal extension of the collection, therefore, Cook’s voyages also

¹⁹ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume II, page 200.

²⁰ Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, page 133.

²¹ Goetzmann, *New Lands, New Men*, page 269.

participate in what could be called the vertical extension of the collection, where every place becomes described in greater and greater detail. In the third voyage, for instance, William Ellis notes that

much remains for future navigators; the most perfect account we can produce is at best but a confused piece of work, and what little we can relate is in general confined to a few common articles, such as the dress, food, and manufactures of the natives; everything beyond being little more than conjecture.²²

However, the profession of ignorance in these voyages is coupled with a clear idea of what is not known. These are not vague senses of wonder or monsters at the edge of the map, but a very clear account of what data is missing and where it should be placed. Future navigators are thus directed by the collection, not only to blank areas on the map, but also to blank areas in the description. To offer a complete description, however, does not entail moving beyond the generalities of national identity, it means articulating that national identity in greater detail. The additional information thus tends to reenforce viewing the world in national terms.

The collection of published accounts of explorers thus not only creates a heightened awareness of the gaps in the collection, but also allows later navigators to refer readers to previous accounts, for fear of repeating what has been printed before. The fear of repetition is closely tied to the printing press. Thus who has travelled is less important than who has produced a report. The point is to avoid including information that has already been included in another book. Those books are still available for people to read again. John Marra thus warns his readers that:

As these fruits have all been repeatedly described by former voyagers, it is not our design to tire the reader with repetitions.²³

Any particular element of a place only needs to be described once, assuming

²² Ellis, *Authentic Narrative*, Volume I, page 85.

²³ Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page 53.

that it is described well and that the description is readily available in print. In his account of the second voyage, Rickman likewise notes that:

The people of these islands have already been so well described by Capt. Cook, and Mr. Forster, that what we have now to add, is rather to confirm their accounts than to advance any thing new.²⁴

Likewise, Anderson, being quoted in the Admiralty's account of the third voyage, writes that

To what has been said of Otaheite, in the accounts of the successive voyages of Captain Wallis, Monsieur de Bougainville, and Captain Cook, it would at first sight, seem superfluous to add any thing; as it might be supposed, that little could be now produced, but a repetition of what has been told before. I am, however, far from being of that opinion; and will venture to affirm, though a very accurate description of the country, and of the most obvious customs of its inhabitants, has been already given, especially by Captain Cook, that much still remains untouched; that, in some instances, mistakes have been made, which later and repeated observation has been able to rectify; and that, even now, we are strangers to many of the most important institutions that prevail amongst these people.²⁵

In the late 18th century, the genre of descriptive travel-writing existed alongside a sense of the archival collection. And it should be noted how the same people dominate both of these spheres of scientific activity. In fact, to explore successfully, people needed an archive, and to create an archive, people needed to explore successfully. At the very least, the material organization of the collection required a city, if not a nation, which could take up all of the partial collections and situate them into a single view of the world.

One significant discussion of the social requirements of the collection can be found in a footnote near the beginning of Kant's *Philosophical*

²⁴ Rickman, *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, page 98.

²⁵ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume VI, page 131. Anderson is being quoted.

Anthropology. Living in Königsberg and dreaming of a cosmopolitan world, Kant argues that:

A city such as Königsberg on the River Pregel - a large city, the center of a state, the seat of the government's provincial councils, the site of a university (for cultivation of the sciences), a seaport connected by rivers with the interior of the country, so that its location favors traffic with the rest of the country as well as with neighboring or remote countries having different languages and customs, is a suitable place for broadening one's knowledge of man and of the world. In such a city, this knowledge can be acquired even without traveling.²⁶

The image of the stationary, knowledgeable collector of places is not new in the late 18th century. Daniel Defoe had offered a similar image in *The Compleat English Gentleman*, first published in 1730. Here, Defoe writes that a man may

make a tour of the world in books, he may make himself master of the geography of the universe in maps, atlases and measurements of our mathematicians. He may travel by land with the historians, by sea with the navigators. He may go round the globe with Dampier and Rogers, and kno' a thousand times more doing it than all those illiterate sailors.²⁷

For Defoe, the primary source of information was the printed book. What is different with Kant's image is the sense of the archival collection. The organization of the collection does not arise from the travel narrative as such, it arises from everything being properly labelled, stored and related. The process is both on-going and totalizing.

The organization of the world into peoples and places allows the collection and organization of facts — geographical, biological, social, economic, political and religious — into a single account of the possibilities of existence. But while Cook's voyages may offer a significant example of how these collections and connections are to be carried out, it is important to

²⁶ Kant, *Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View*, page 4.

²⁷ Defoe, *The Complete English Gentleman*, page 225.

recognize at the same time that fragments of Cook's collection can be seen through a wide range of other printed works. Such "views of the world," which attempted to summarize important features from around the world into a single structure, were common throughout the 18th and early 19th century. However, by the late 18th century the general tone of these works has changed.

Consider the shifts and continuities that are evident by considering a set of books, beginning with Thomas Salmon's 1749 work, *A New Geographical and Historical Grammar: Wherein the Geographical part is Truly Modern; and the Present State of the Several Kingdoms of the World is so interspersed, as to render the Study of Geography both Entertaining and Instructive* and then moving to George Millar's 1782 *The New and Universal System of Geography: being a complete history and description* and finally ending with Guthrie's 1795 *Universal Geography Improved, Being a New System of Modern Geography: or a Geographical, Historical, and Commercial Grammar; and Present State of all the Several Kingdoms of the World*. All three books share a common goal: to summarize the world in a systematic way. Each of them organizes the presentation in terms of political dominion — the several kingdoms of the world — which in Europe more or less conforms to the large-scale national identities.

All three books also include maps. Salmon's *Grammar* has roughly 30 maps, which include a world map, maps of the key nations of Europe, and maps of the other continents, with the exception of Australia. This is the map of Johnson and others, where the world outside of Europe fades into homogeneous space, roughly divided into continents. Millar's work includes most of the same maps as Salmon, although there is also a detailed map of India, perhaps indicating greater public interest in the possessions of the East India Company. The map of the globe which begins this book also includes

information collected from Cook's first two voyages, including the map of the Southern pole produced for Cook's second voyage. Millar's compendium, in fact, is interesting for several reasons. Being published in 1782, it exists at a very awkward time for compendium makers. Accounts of the first two voyages of Cook have been published, but the third voyage, while finished, has not been printed yet. Thus, while Millar includes a picture entitled "The DEATH of CAPT^N. COOK at O-why-hee, near Kamschatka, whose discoveries in His Last Voyage, as well as those of his First and Second, will be included in this New & Improved System of Geography," none of the information from the third voyage is included, either on the maps or in the articulations of the various nations. Millar apparently had so little information on Cook's final voyage that he places the Sandwich Islands "near Kamschatka." With Guthrie's 1795 edition, on the other hand, Cook's voyages are triumphant throughout. Not only is there a two-page fold out map of the Pacific, the book begins with an account of the "New Discoveries," which stretches for over 150 pages of the 900-page book, and covers such places as New Holland, New Zealand, the Sandwich Islands, and then ends with "The Palos or Pelew Islands", which is based primarily on George Keate's account of Captain Wilson's voyage in the *Antelope*. Cook's voyages will also arise elsewhere in the book, such as when Guthrie describes the Cape of Good Hope.

There are also other connections between Cook's voyages and the late 18th century compendiums of the world. At the very least, it is important to consider the different forms of justification that occur between Salmon and Millar. The title-page of Salmon's work does not indicate how the information is obtained. Millar, on the other hand, offers a list of explorers whose work is being included:

Captain Cook,	Anson,	Bougainville,	Sharp,	Suckling,	Solander,
Lord Mulgrave,	Forrest,	Ives,	Thickness,	Chandler,	Dr. Cooke,
Wallis,	Wraxall,	Banks,	Algorotti,	Johnson,	Forster,
Carteret,	Hanway,	Coxe,	Drummond,	Twiss,	Parkinson,
Falconer,	Clerke,	Dillon,	Bruce,	Osbeck,	Burnaby,
Byron,	Furieux,	Barretti,	Carver,	Thompson,	Irwin, &c. &c.

Millar's compendium, which includes information from "voyages and travels to different parts of the world from the earliest times to the present year 1782" is created from the accumulation of key explorers, seven of the thirty six being members of Cook's ships, who have travelled to various parts of the world and collected information on the places and people there. The book is a collection of collectors.

One significant difference between these three compendiums is the presence of illustrations. While Salmon's work contains only maps, Millar's work also contains over 90 other plates that depict landscape, events, architecture, livestock and so on from places around the world. Thus facing page 14 can be seen the "HABITS and CHARACTER of the PEOPLE in PERSIA, with the manner of SMOKING, &c. as practised in that COUNTRY." And in the section on "New Holland, New Guinea, and other islands lately discovered," which begins on page 201, a number of pictures that were first published in Cook's first voyage can be found, including engravings of a "morai, or burial place, in Otaheitee," and of Parkinson's kangaroo. The connection between political and geographical space can also be noticed in the book's subtitle, where the world is "divided into Empires, Kingdoms, States, Republics, and Colonies" and "subdivided into Continents, Islands, Provinces, Peninsulas, Isthmuses, Seas, Oceans, Gulphs, Straits, Rivers, Harbours, Deserts, Lakes, Promontories, Capes, Bays, Districts, Governments, Principalities, &c. &c." While the logic of these lists may not even be

coherent, and there is no clarification offered in the text, there is at least a sense that the physical and political objects are intermixed in a single account of the world.

Guthrie's 1795 collection, like Salmon's, only includes maps. The general connection between peoples and places remains, however, in the structure of the narrative. In one section Guthrie offers a "Description of the Country, and its Produce. Some Account of the Natives; their Disposition, Weapons, Ornaments, &c."²⁸ The titles of Guthrie's titles more or less corresponds to the titles in the Admiralty's account of Cook's voyages. The South Pacific has become the model for describing the world. The region has also become one of the most interesting areas of the world. Whereas Salmon was interested primarily in western Europe, and specifically in its political history, with Millar and Guthrie other parts of the world become much more important. In Guthrie, for instance, the description of the South Pacific takes up more space than the description of Great Britain.

Another interesting change can be seen in the maps from the three compendiums, and in particular the extension of the geometrical articulation of political space. The map of France in Millar's work, for instance, has coordinate lines running across the entire map. Salmon's maps, on the other hand, contain coordinate information only on the edge of the map. The difference is subtle, but it is important insofar as it underscores the increased geometric accuracy of the maps (and both Millar's and Guthrie's maps explicitly claim to have improved accuracy). Millar's map claims to be "Drawn from the latest Authorities," which should not be considered mere salesmanship. It should be remembered that it was during the last part of the 18th century that the nations of Europe were remapped with newer instruments and techniques. Thus Millar's map of England refers to "the

²⁸ Guthrie, *Universal Geography*, page 15.

latest and best improvements.” Interestingly, Guthrie’s map of England, published thirteen years later, contains exactly the same phrase, and in fact is a reproduction of the map in Millar’s edition, decorations and all.

These three compendiums were part of a much more pervasive genre that also occurred on the European continent and in the Americas. The claims of newness, the claims of reliability, and the claims of completeness became more and more pervasive, as well as more and more necessary. And Cook’s voyages, far from being a marginal event in a global process, became the epitome of that process. He collects, he is collected, and the structures of his collection come to dominate the subsequent production of books that, along with their readers, can comprehend the world.

The compendiums of the 18th century, while harkening back to earlier printed collections, were also a clear expression of the nature of knowledge. To know is to collect, not as a personal activity, but as part of a collective enterprise that brings together people who are describing a wide diversity of places, but in a standardized way — using the same instruments and organizing the information in the same forms. The creation and influence of Cook’s collections thus depend on a series of institutions and practices that turn direct visibility into a broader system of documentation. The British Museum and a host of other collections not only accumulated artifacts and travel journals, they were also the centers of documentation which bring all the nations of the world into a single view. Also, these institutions help to authorize particular people to study the world in particular ways, first by determining what counts as a proper account of the world, and second by organizing subsequent explorations based on what is already known. As a result, the development of the collection during and after Cook’s voyages connects the acquisition of data with the social and political production of authority and knowledge.

Not only do Cook's voyages create a sense of what can be collected, they also create a sense of how other collections can be incorporated into a single, ever more comprehensive and accurate system. As a result, the collection that is idealized by Cook's voyages is not a single, spatially limited accumulation of data, however well ordered. Rather, there are important collections, such as can be found in the British Museum or the Bibliothèque Nationale, which are themselves only cornerstones of a much larger, more abstracted collection that exists as much in a logical space as a material one. This collection is glimpsed in the catalogs, the discussions of "other writings" and the summaries to be found in various compendiums. Many collections are thus only parts of a single collection that has been imagined and theorized, but has never existed as such.

With the creation and acquisition of identities, the work of collecting not only created territorial nation-states, it also created the place of the collection where these territorial nation-states form the building blocks of a globalized system of identities and differences. The collection becomes a double of the world; for many practical purposes it becomes the world. One indication of this is the way that other books surrounded, affirmed, and fed off Cook's voyages. Consider, for instance, the 1784 publication of Thomas Martyn's *Figures of Non-Descript Shells, Collected in the different Voyages to the South Seas Since the Year 1764*. The book was based primarily on shells in Banks's collection (now part of the British Museum), but also included shells that other people had collected. The result was a more or less comprehensive printed collection of the shells of the South Seas that were available in Europe. And Martyn's book was not exceptional. Rather, the publication of collections was a common genre in late 18th century Europe. Shaw's *Catalogue of the Different Specimens of Cloth* is an example of this genre. Another relevant example, which suggests the extent to which the

collections of nations dominated the representation of human beings is Jehoshaphat Aspin's *Cosmorama: a view of the costumes and peculiarities of all nations*. This book, which was published in 1827, contains pictures of people, one male and one female, from places around the world dressed in national costumes. There are four pictures on each page, and there are over forty pages (see picture 17). The conclusion to this book reads:

Having thus, my young friends, rambled with you pretty well over the whole habitable globe, I shall leave you for a short time, that you may ruminate, without interruption, on the diversities of character which have been brought under your observation.²⁹

One result of printing all of these collections was that the world became available in ever finer, ever more complete, and ever more available articulations. What happens, in other words, is that the collection eventually takes over, and any particular fact, or any specific travel journal, must first come to terms with the already collected world.

4. Boredom and the Collection

The collection that arises from Cook's voyages becomes an ever-more important part of Cook's narrative, to the point where the already-existing collection drowns any interest that Cook may have had for new discoveries, including the chain of islands that Cook names the Sandwich Islands. The table containing the places and peoples of the South Pacific was easily expanded to include the Sandwich Islands and its natives. As Beaglehole notes,

A friend of mine whose critical intimations I value more highly than my own finds Cook's third voyage journal, in its latest appearance, dull: at least, so I infer from the falling away he detects in it from what he calls the fresh vigour of the first and the confident exuberance of the second, 'some tired writing' — to go no further.³⁰

²⁹ Aspin, *Cosmorama*, page 404.

While Beaglehole suggests that Cook was worn out by the time he set sail on the third voyage, the *scientific* weight of the prior voyages is also noticeable in Cook's account. The discovery of islands and the descriptions of peoples had become routine by that time. While the mathematical space of the collection may urge Cook on to other places, the collection has become boring.

Consider Cook's initial description of the first islands that had been sighted from the ship, which occurred as the ships were sailing from the South Pacific (and Tahiti in particular) to the far northern Pacific. In the Admiralty's version of the third voyage, the Sandwich Islands begins with Chapter XI of the sixth volume, describing the events of January 18th, 1778.

We continued to see birds every day, of the sorts last mentioned; sometimes in greater numbers than others; and between the latitude of 10° and 11°, we saw several turtle. All these are looked upon as signs of the vicinity of land. However, we discovered none till day-break, in the morning of the 18th, when an island made its appearance, bearing north-east by east; and, soon after, we saw more land bearing north, and entirely detached from the former.³¹

The patterns of interaction and the comparisons with the much better-known islands in the South Pacific begin almost immediately. Canoes begin coming off from the shore. Cook then writes that "we were agreeably surprised to find, that they spoke the language of Otaheite, and of the other islands we had lately visited" and that "one of them offered for sale the piece of stuff that he wore round his waist, after the manner of the other islands." In these first encounters, Cook is focused on finding associations between the places that he already knows and the one that he is facing now for the first time. And during all of this time, the people on the ships are sounding, looking for anchorage, and analysing the natives, who, according to the published journal, "seemed very mild" and "though of the common size, were stoutly

³⁰ Beaglehole, "Cook the Writer", page 21.

³¹ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume VI, page 176.

made.” The morais that were examined and sketched were “like many of those at Otaheite” to which they bear a “great resemblance.” The trade between the ship and the island was carried out as it was typically done at the other islands. Trifles are exchanged for fruit and pigs, and Cook once again expresses a concern for the spread of venereal disease.

As Cook and his European readers would expect, the natives also steal things, which, according to Cook, “was another circumstance in which they also perfectly resembled those other islanders.”³² And, again as both Cook and his readers would expect, Cook responded to the thefts as he generally did, by pursuing the thief, appealing for help to natives who seem to have authority, and recovering the stolen items or at least extracting some form of pain as compensation.

In short, the account of the Sandwich Islands could, with very little exception, be substituted with any one of a number of places throughout the Pacific. Thus when the Admiralty’s edition reads “one of the natives having stolen the butcher’s cleaver, leaped overboard, got into his canoe, and hastened to the shore, the boats pursuing him in vain,”³³ the readers are being offered a well-rehearsed story with a familiar narrative and moral content. No matter how empty the map, no matter how unexplored the area, the places had become mundane. The nations may be different in specifics, but they are all articulated in terms of a series of global variables, where variations between nations become less evident, and the spatial variations become the primary way to articulate national distinctions throughout the world.

The Sandwich Islands thus were very quickly caught up in well-worn narrative structures. At the beginning of the chapter the islands are spotted

³² Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume VI, page 180.

³³ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume VI, page 181.

and the “first contact” stories are related: the first words, the characterizations of the inhabitants, the exchanges of presents, the thefts and retributions, the sexual relations, the trade for provisions and artifacts, and a general description of “the country.” These are virtually the same stories that Cook has been telling throughout the voyages, and that he will tell in slightly different forms when the voyage proceeds to the shores of the northern Pacific.

The chapter that follows the first descriptions of the Sandwich Islands also corresponds to the general form of the journal. Having presented the narrative of the encounter in the first chapter, the second chapter offers an accounting of the place and the people. The chapter heading says it all:

The Situation of the Islands Now Discovered. — Their Names. — Called the Sandwich Islands. — Atooi Described. — The Soil. — Climate. — Vegetable Productions. — Birds. — Fish. — Domestic Animals. — Persons of the Inhabitants. — Their Disposition. — Dress. — Ornaments. — Habitations. — Food. — Cookery. — Amusements. — Manufactures. — Working-Tools. — Knowledge of Iron Accounted For. — Canoes. — Agriculture. — Account of one of their Chiefs. — Weapons. — Customs Agreeing with those of Tongataboo, and Otaheite. — Their Language the Same. — Extent of this Nation Throughout the Pacific Ocean. — Reflections on the Useful Situation of the Sandwich Islands.³⁴

And with that, the islands have been named, located, described, and compared, not only in terms of the islands of the Pacific, but also in terms of European interests and the natural world. The organization of the description does not make the Sandwich Islands an exceptional place. As with the description of the events, the categories that Cook used to articulate his experiences of the Sandwich Islands are thoroughly unremarkable. Even the chapter headings of this chapter can be more or less lined up with the chapter headings from other chapters, from other places. The natives of the Sandwich

³⁴ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume VI, page 204.

Islands were notable for one thing. As the Admiralty edition reads,

In the course of my several voyages, I never before met with the natives of any place so much astonished, as these people were, upon entering a ship.³⁵

But this does not make them exceptional. People from many places were astonished by the ship, and if the natives of the Sandwich Islands exist at one end of this extreme, they nonetheless exist on a highly populated continuum. It is as if the chapter had existed in a skeletal form for many years, and all that Cook had to do was fill in the same blanks that he had filled in a hundred times before.

The fact that the discovery of the the Sandwich Islands was *not* very significant suggests the extent to which these islands were quickly positioned among already-known places, such as Tahiti and the Marquesas. The Sandwich Islands may have been unexpected, but their discovery was far from surprising or shocking. The Sandwich Islands were not Tahiti; or, perhaps, they were enough like Tahiti that it already had a place that was very similar to it in the taxonomy of possible nation-places.

On February 2nd, 1778, the English ships left the Sandwich Islands and headed towards the North American coast. The ships returned in November, 1778, first sighting land on the 26th. The log continues in the same form. Cook worries about venereal disease spreading to the natives and tries to find a good harbour for his ships. There is a daily accounting of the weather and the provisions that had been obtained from the natives. The most notable thing that happens during his second stay on the island is an eclipse of the moon, which was observed with the requisite instruments and attention. The analysis of the inhabitants of the islands also continues. Cook notes that “These people trade with the least suspicion of any Indians I ever met with”.³⁶ This, of course, is the manuscript version. The Admiralty’s edition

³⁵ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume VI, page 179.

changes the passage to read: “I had never met with a behaviour so free from reserve and suspicion, in my intercourse with any tribes of savages.”³⁷

Cook’s last entry in the ship’s log is also unremarkable. The manuscript reads:

In the after noon I went a shore to view the place, accompanied by Touahah, Parca, Mr King and others; as soon as we landed Touahah took me by the hand and conducted me to a large Morai, the other gentlemen with Parea and four or five more of the Natives followed.³⁸

And had Cook returned, the next entry would likely have included some mention of the morai, or of the people who had gone with him, or of some remarkable occurrence that had happened along the way, or of how something that he saw reminded him of something he had seen further south. Instead, Cook’s entries in the ship’s log ended with his death. But even this did not significantly set the Sandwich Islands apart from other places around the Pacific. As recounted by others on the voyage, Cook’s death occurred while he was trying to recover some lost article by taking a native chief hostage. He had done this on islands throughout the Pacific. And, as usual, the other natives resisted him. Only this time, they succeeded in stopping Cook. But even in this encounter the categories through which the places and people were articulated remained intact. Much like his first discovery of these islands, his death may have been unexpected, but it was not shocking.

In the years that followed Cook’s death and the return of the voyagers to England, the Sandwich Islands became one set of islands among many. Cook had been killed there, but this did not establish a close connection between Cook and the Sandwich Islands. Cook was connected to the Pacific, of which the Sandwich Islands were one place among many that had been

³⁶ Beaglehole, *Cook’s Journals*, Volume III, page 483.

³⁷ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume VI, page 494.

³⁸ Beaglehole, *Cook’s Journals*, Volume III, page 491.

located and described. Nonetheless, the Sandwich Islands became one of the essential places of the Pacific, existing alongside Tahiti and the Marquesas. Everyone who sailed in the Pacific *had* to visit the Sandwich Islands, and the island was a mandatory chapter in the constant reiteration of the places of the Pacific. It was a new place in a table that was more or less full, and the newness of the place was, for Cook, primarily geographical and therefore only worth a standard description. The Sandwich Islands, in other words, had been overtaken by the collection almost at the point when it was first collected.

5. A World of Comparisons

By arriving so late in Cook's collection of the world, the Sandwich Islands were articulated primarily in terms of comparisons. Beyond its existence, Cook found nothing that he took to be really new. The comparisons thus became more and more important to Cook's voyages, and to the larger intellectual processes that were based on the collections. Likewise, the world became more and more intelligible as a world of territorial nation-states all belonging to a single collection, which supported the ever-more dispersed comparisons. With the collection, a vast field of information is created, specifying character types, physical builds, cultural practices, material situations, and so on, which turns the presumption of a single nature into a dispersed articulation of variations or comparisons. More than just organizing data, the collection creates the possibility for a new discourse, not of discovery or identification, but of comparisons. At one point in the first voyage, for instance, Tahitians are placed alongside some inhabitants of South America. One of their garments, for instance,

exactly resembles the garment worn by the inhabitants of Peru and Chili, which the Spaniards call Poncho.³⁹

³⁹ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume I, page 191.

The inhabitants of Tongataboo, on the other hand, behave in a way that exempts their national character from the preposterous pride of the more polished Japanese, and of the ruder Greenlander.⁴⁰

Other artifacts and practices are compared to various European nations. The Tahitians, for instance,

had besides heaps of stones piled up on stages, in like manner as cannon-balls are piled up in European arsenals.⁴¹

Of course, any particular comparison such as this may not be very interesting on its own. It is straightforward and rarely says anything surprising. But this is the nature of Cook's voyages: the accumulation of banal information transforms the world to the extent that comparisons become possible. These comparisons take on a wide range of forms: the presence or absence of something, the sameness or difference of something, the similar functions, looks, practices, customs and so on. Of course, the most common comparisons are between two groups of natives in the South Pacific. Consider, for instance, the summary after the voyage that is offered by Kippis in his *Life of Cook*.

The island of Manglea is full five leagues in circuit, and of a moderate and pretty equal height. It has upon the whole, a pleasing aspect, and might be made a beautiful spot by cultivation. The inhabitants, who appeared to be both numerous and well fed, seemed to resemble those of Otaheite and the Marquesas in the beauty of their persons; and the resemblance, as far as could be judged in so short a compass of time, takes place with respect to their general disposition and character.⁴²

Throughout, the place is the building block of the comparisons, forming the

⁴⁰ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume VI, page 212.

⁴¹ Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page 179.

⁴² Kippis, *A Narrative of the Voyages Round the World Performed by Captain James Cook*, page 299.

nation which is given a “character” or “disposition” that can in turn be placed on the table to be compared with other people. As may be expected, there are a large number of comparisons made throughout both the voyages and the world. The examples do not need to be multiplied in this discussion. What is important here is the way that Cook, by having access to data from around the world, is able to participate, if not create, a globalizing discussion.

The collection that arises from Cook’s voyages thus allows people to connect general human groups to larger, generalized geographical areas. In the end, the detailed articulation of peoples and places is brought into debates concerning the general aspects of human nature. But in these debates, the wide range of comparisons does not fit well with a single and sharp division between Indian and European, or between civilization and savagery. The comparisons spread out over the complexity of nations. The other becomes the different, which is often also the same. And one implication is that, while the values that ground the comparisons clearly privilege specific groups, the South Pacific is not always criticized and Europe is not always celebrated.

6. The Dangers of Relativism

There are two key elements to the comparisons that arise from Cook’s collection: the tendency to compare a wide range of specific attributes rather than nations in their totality and the possibility that any nations can be superior in something. If nothing else, the sheer quantity and diversity works against the truth of any particular set of customs. But what this may entail is that, just as the physical world becomes accurately mapped into a single system of coordinates that increase the security of knowledge, the human world, existing at a similar level of specificity, becomes less secure. As Goetzmann and many others have claimed,

cultural relativism came more naturally as a concept to South Seas adventurers than to

any other group long before anthropologists formalized the term.⁴³

Here, it is important to distinguish the adventurers from the people who collected and reflected on the information that the adventurers brought back to Europe. It was only when the South Seas became a concept, when the articulation of national differences became important, that cultural relativism became possible. In a world of savages and Christians, the term would make no sense. On the other hand, with the move to national diversity, which is central to Cook's voyages, relativism (national, not cultural) becomes possible. There are passages in the Admiralty edition of Cook's voyages that can be read in these terms, such as when Cook and his companions discuss food. When Cook eats Forster's dog during the second voyage, for instance, the Admiralty edition reads:

When I began to recover, a favourite dog, belonging to Mr. Forster, fell a sacrifice to my tender stomach. We had no other fresh meat whatever on board; and I could eat of this flesh, as well as broth made of it, when I could taste nothing else. Thus I received nourishment and strength from food which would have made most people in Europe sick; so true it is, that necessity is governed by no law.⁴⁴

The voyages, by combining detailed descriptions of a wide variety of practices with a sense that these practices are connected to a strong and coherent whole (the nation), make it much easier to believe that there are no universal criteria with which to judge different beliefs or practices. Every nation exists on its own island, and may also exist in its own moral and metaphysical space.

But there are other aspects of Cook's voyages which work against the threats of global relativism, even as the narratives emphasize and extend the descriptions of differences. Cook does not only describe nations and locate them in a collection, he also characterizes that collection in several important

⁴³ Goetzmann, *New Lands, New Men*, page 279.

⁴⁴ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 276.

evaluative terms. The collection of places and peoples, organized through variables, allows for the articulation of global preferences and superlatives. Some places are better than others for specific things, and some places are the best places of all. Rickman thus notes that

we were much disappointed by the performers, who were far inferior to those of the southern islands.⁴⁵

Marra notes that

their baskets were most admired by our journalists, who think they cannot be equalled in the universe.⁴⁶

and that

In shooting the long-bow, or in throwing the lance, they by no means excel; neither are they very dexterous at wrestling; but, at throwing stones, and swimming, they are perhaps equal to any people upon earth.⁴⁷

Cook notes in the second voyage that

nothing can be a more demonstrative evidence of their ingenuity than the construction and make of their canoes, which, in point of neatness and workmanship, exceed every thing of this kind we saw in this sea.⁴⁸

and that

it must be owned, in favour of their cookery, that victuals were never cleaner, nor better dressed.⁴⁹

When describing their stay on one island, Rickman notes that

We also purchased cloth, and many other articles of curious workmanship, the artists of this island, for invention and ingenuity in the execution, exceeding those of all the other islands in the South Seas.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Rickman, *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, page 309.

⁴⁶ Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page 65.

⁴⁷ Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page 206.

⁴⁸ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 222.

⁴⁹ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 184.

⁵⁰ Rickman, *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, page 126.

On the third voyage William Ellis notes that

Imaio is, without exception, the most pleasant of all the Society Isles.⁵¹

while on the second voyage, at the island of Mallicollo, Cook writes that,

had we made a longer stay, we might soon have been upon good terms with this ape-like nation; for, in general, they are the most ugly, ill-proportioned people I ever saw, and in every respect different from any we had met with in this sea. They are a very dark-coloured and rather diminutive race; with long heads, flat faces, and monkey countenances.⁵²

And so on. The collection thus moves from descriptions of difference to the description of rankings, preferences, and superlatives in a wide range of different aspects. Not only are places different, but some places are more or less than others. These evaluations are also frequently moral. In the second voyage, for instance, Cook notes how

I had always looked upon the females of New Zealand to be more chaste than the generality of Indian women.⁵³

As with other preferences and superlatives, sometimes the Europeans fair worse. As Rickman notes,

the grossest indecencies he ever saw practiced while on the island were by the licentiousness of our own people, who, without regard to character, made no scruple to attempt openly and by force what they were unable to effect with the free voluntary consent of the objects of their desire.⁵⁴

On this point, the Cook claims that the New Zealanders are ahead of the Spaniards.

In this decent article of civil economy they were beforehand with one of the most considerable nations of Europe; for I am credibly informed, that, till the year 1760,

⁵¹ Ellis, *Authentic Narrative*, Volume I, page 146.

⁵² Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 31.

⁵³ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 142.

⁵⁴ Rickman, *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, page 163.

there was no such thing as a privy in Madrid, the metropolis of Spain, though it is plentifully supplied with water.⁵⁵

All of these comparisons do not simply articulate relative differences. Behind the comparisons there exists a web of evaluations — sometimes aesthetic, sometimes mathematical, sometimes moral and sometimes theological — that take up the articulations of difference into a system of rankings.

Unlike the absolute exclusion that tends to arise from the division between European and non-European (Orientalism), Cook's articulation of specific variations tends to mix European and non-European peoples in a wide range of categories. Rather than a sharp contrast between self and other, the voyages offer a dispersed comparison of many. Just before describing the physical characteristics of the "ape-like" people of Mallicollo, for instance, the journals contain a positive description of their honesty.

As the ship at first had fresh way through the water, several of them dropped astern after they had received our goods, and before they had time to deliver theirs in return. Instead of taking advantage of this, as our friends at the Society Isles would have done, they used their utmost efforts to get up with us, and to deliver what they had already been paid for.⁵⁶

Cook argues here that the character of the inhabitants of Mallicollo is superior to the character of the people of the Society Isles. It should be noted, however, that these comparisons do not suggest that Cook supported the basic equality of nations. If anything, all nations are unique, but they are all part of a complex system that also includes the European nations. The social diversity between nations thus exists as a parallel to the physiological and geographical diversity, and are, by implication, subject to similar kinds of analysis.

However, while the Europeans are not always superior, it is important to note how different groups of Europeans are judged. Throughout the

⁵⁵ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume I, page 306.

⁵⁶ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 30.

voyages, the key European groups that are either equivalent or below the natives of the South Pacific are the Spaniards and the lower classes of England. At the center of these comparisons, even if not explicitly present, is an idealized class — civilized, cultivated, rational, lawful, powerful — which is, in the end, also closely tied to the idealized countryside of southeast England. As Eve Darian-Smith has noted, in the 18th century

cultivation became an important ontological frame, and, through its linkage to the English garden landscape, translated into a visual aesthetics of power. The imposing of the English garden across the whole of Britain is a dramatic visual and experiential demonstration of how England was conflated with, and came to represent, the greater British nation.⁵⁷

One of the important images that connect Cook's voyages to the ideals of Kent is the garden, and in particular the closely cultivated, geometrically organized garden where a variety of different species of plants were brought together into a single field. Up until the 17th century, gardens were almost exclusively for the production of vegetables and herbs for both food and medicine. In the 18th century, as Darian-Smith notes, the function of some gardens changed. They became places designed for creating an aesthetic experience (whether aromatic or visual) and later for encouraging scientific analyses of plant physiology.⁵⁸ Gardens were one of the first collections to be used for systematic scientific analysis. However, not only was the king's garden at Kew important as a center of scientific and political activity, it also represented an ideal physical, social, and moral existence. Thus when Cook creates a garden for Omai, or when he plants gardens in places around the world, there is more than an immediate practical or scientific goal. He is cultivating the world.

⁵⁷ Darian-Smith, *Bridging Divides*, page 45.

⁵⁸ Darian-Smith, *Bridging Divides*, pages 55 to 56.

Having identified the territorial nation-state, and focused attention on the interaction between the territory, the nation and the state, Cook's collection can offer a wide variety of different territorial nation-states, which are not only subject to analysis as individual entities, but also as members of a series in which variations and correlations can be determined. Cook's voyages offer an early and influential example of the science of the nation-state, where nations are studied through the analysis of social, physiological, historical, climatic and geographical variables. During the third voyage, Cook suggests this use for the information that is being collected from the voyages. He writes in the third voyage of how

a few of the infinite modifications of which a few leading principles are capable may distinguish any particular nation.

Here, Cook is reflecting on the different ways that the natives of the South Pacific inter their dead. He continues by articulating the variations between the places.

The people of Tongataboo inter their dead in a very decent manner, and they also inter their human sacrifices; but they do not offer or expose any other anima or even vegetable to their gods, as far as we know. Those of Otaheite do not inter their dead, but expose them to waste by time and putrefaction, though the bones are afterwards buried; and, as this is the case, it is very remarkable that they should inter the entire bodies of their human sacrifices. They also offer other animals and vegetables to their gods, but are by no means attentive to the state of the sacred places, where those solemn rites are performed, most of their morais being in a ruinous condition, and bearing evident marks of neglect. The people of Atooi, again, inter both their common dead and human sacrifices, as at Tongataboo; but they resemble those of Otaheite in the slovenly state of their religious places, and in offering vegetables and animals to their gods.⁵⁹

One important aspect of the use of information in Cook's voyages is that, while there is considerable diversity between nations, they are nonetheless all

⁵⁹ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume VI, page 229.

part of a single system subject to laws of impact and relation. Bernard Smith has argued that:

In the hundred years after 1768 the Pacific Ocean became one of the finest schools for scientists in the world and stimulated European thought concerning man and nature both in art and in science.⁶⁰

It is through the collection that the articulation of difference can co-exist as aspects of a world that is, in the end, organized by fixed and universal laws. These laws are not only laws of politics, they are also laws of human nature, of cultivation, and of nature. Thus, as nations, states and territories are all tied together, the laws of the world become one. Thus, when Cook notes how “we all agreed, that a South-sea dog was little inferior to an English lamb,”⁶¹ the variations of taste exist within a fixed and universal system of taste, understood as both an aesthetic and a physiological process. What varies are the accidental characteristics of customs and preferences.

Likewise, non-spatial identities such as gender, class, and race, not only become spatialized, they also by implication become part of an over-arching system of variables. But these variables are not simply variations, they are always tied back first to the national identity, and second to a system of laws and underlying physical conditions. The interaction between spatial and non-spatial identities also offers Cook and his companions an opportunity to debate the importance of the material conditions in determining human identity. Cook writes during the third voyages, for instance, that:

I do not know that there is any difference between the produce of this island and of Otaheite; but there is a very striking difference in their women, that I can by no means account for. Those of Eimeo are of low stature, have a dark hue, and, in general, forbidding features. If we met with a fine woman amongst them, we were sure, upon enquiry, to find that she had come from some other island.⁶²

⁶⁰ Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, page 7.

⁶¹ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume I, page 196.

Insofar as the nation becomes the primary focus of politics, and insofar as politics becomes closely associated with both biology and physics, and insofar as both biology and physics become intertwined with the global collection, the character of political discourse changes. Biology and physics establish the nation and the territory as natural, although not necessarily static, entities, and politics becomes the proper organization of functions within and between the territorial nation states. Although there may be variety, there are also ideals — the effective state, the civilized nation — and scientifically grounded ways to move nations towards those ideals.

Cook's voyages thus articulate the issues of human nature with the clarity of a materialist. But in addition to turning the issues of human nature into empirical questions, the voyages also simplify the material world, creating containers which isolate the possible influences, and allow for correlations between geographical, biological and human systems to be determined.⁶³ The organization of the world into territorial nation-states thus forms the basis of a collection which can be used to compare and ultimately explain human diversity. The nations of the world may vary, but the laws of their creation and change do not.

Not only are the nations of the world subject to laws of causality, they can also be grouped together in more general terms. The analysis of the world's nations can thus move from around the table of nations, noticing differences and similarities throughout. Sometimes, these larger groups

⁶² Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume VI, page 83.

⁶³ One of the themes that arises within this conceptual system is a concern for where in the world the English could belong. Here, the concern is not so much with the impact of "other climates" on English identity — the English encounters with these other climates is transitory. The key question, which is the question of colonialism, is to determine the climates that are similar enough to England that the English could live there.

remain tied to spatial divisions. Thus a sense of the South Pacific, of the North Pacific, and of the Pacific all emerge as the narrative turns back on the voyage and sorts the national identities into larger groups. There are general attributes (like species) that have specific attributes that set one place off from another, not only in the grid of locations, but also in the table of identity and differences. On the third voyage, Cook travels for the first time into the northern Pacific. A new series of descriptions and comparisons become possible. First, there is a sense of the northern Pacific.

Their canoes differ but little from those of the other Americans: they are made of the bark of large trees, put together with great labour, and covered with seal-skins... Then, there are comparisons between North West America and New Zealand, which create both a sense of the Pacific as a single entity — a geographical area and a human group — and also a sense of the diversity within this entity. Marra continues:

... they differ much from the canoes in the Tropical Islands, being very wide in proportion to their length, and having a quantity of earth in them, on which, in their fishing seasons, they make their fires.⁶⁴

Ellis writes along the same lines that

The weapons used by them, are spears, pata-patows, and bows and arrows. The spears are of different lengths, and pointed with bone; the pata-patows are made some of wood and others of stone, and nearly of the same form as those of New Zealand.⁶⁵

The larger scale geographical divisions thus become divisions of genus, phylum or kingdoms. But these classifications, even as they are spatialized, are turned into hierarchies where all nations can be place not only in the world and the table, but also on a continuum. There are no absolute dichotomies, but the relative distinctions are entrenched that much more thoroughly.

⁶⁴ Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page 311.

⁶⁵ Ellis, *Authentic Narrative*, Volume I, page 222.

7. Persistence of Otherness

The creation of larger groups of nations in terms of shared characteristics leads to the reemergence of global dichotomies that echo those appealed to by Dr. Johnson and the orientalist. The dichotomy between Europe and the rest of the world, for instance, pervades the voyages. While Cook travels through the table of places, for instance, England is constantly being connected to the ships.

we had not experienced such fare for some time. Roast and boiled geese, goose-pye, &c. was a treat little known to us; and we had yet some Madeira wine left, which was the only article of our provision that was mended by keeping. So that our friends in England, did not, perhaps, celebrate Christmas more cheerfully than we did.⁶⁶

But more than establishing a national connection between England and the ship, these affirmations are also tied to a wide range of basic values that Cook brings to the world, specifically concerning theological, social, and economic ideals in terms of which nations are to be evaluated. When Cook leaves England, his ontological and moral commitments nod at the countryside, and promise to make it the ground on which to judge the world. Cook may be from northern England, and he may be from the agricultural working class, but his ideals are the ideals of the Admiralty, the Royal Society and the landed aristocracy. But not only are specific ideals and prejudices pervasive in Cook's voyages, however, they are also tied to the scientific descriptions of nation-places. It is not simply that Cook appeals to stereotypes, but also that these stereotypes infect the basic categories — the variables, the ideal-types, the general characters, the goals — through which the functional relationships within and between nations can be articulated and compared. As a result, Cook's voyages were important for the rise of English nationalism, not only because they offer the English printed examples of well-documented nations, and examples of how to compare one nation with another, but also because

⁶⁶ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 169.

the entire voyage is permeated with the ideals that, throughout the 18th and 19th century, became articulated as the ideals of the English, and later the British nation. In other words, even if the logic of the collection encouraged a flat table of identities and relative comparisons, other aspects of the description recreated more general forms of otherness. The savage reemerges, not only through Cook's voyages, but also throughout the 19th century, as the thrill of exploring diversity gives way to the desire to enforce conformity. For this reason, the variables that permeate the collection, and allow comparisons between nations from around the world, also create the conditions for global domination which will be discussed in the next chapter. First, however, we will characterize some aspects of these global dichotomies in terms of the collection, as a mapping of national space.

The sharp contrast between Europeans and non-Europeans can be noticed, among other places, in the illustrations to later editions of Cook's voyages, and in particular those published for younger audiences. In 1907, the publisher John Murray offered *The Life of Captain James Cook, the Circumnavigator*, written by Arthur Kitson. This work was reprinted several times over the next two decades. Kitson, at one time the Governor-General of Australia, offers an image of Cook and the voyages that promotes British imperial projects. In this book, Cook's voyages around the world are heroic expressions of British superiority, foreshadowing Britain's rise to world dominance. The interaction between the Europeans and the natives are typically described in terms of extreme stereotypes, progressing along standard tropes of colonial expansion.

In Barrow's edition of Cook's voyages, the division between Europeans and non-Europeans is reworked. The interactions are primarily limited to economics and violence, suggestive of the extreme forms of exploitation that characterized the European and American empires of the 19th century. There

is very little dialog, and the non-Europeans are almost irrelevant to the voyages. Tupia, who sailed on the *Endeavour* from Tahiti on Cook's first voyage up to his death in Batavia in 1770, is barely described. This is significant because Tupia played an important role on the *Endeavour*, serving as a translator throughout the islands of the South Pacific and as a nautical guide for the ship when it was caught in the Great Barrier Reef. By excising Tupia from the voyage in this way, Barrow's account sharpens the distinction between Europeans and natives, and ignores both the reliance of Europeans on the native peoples and the ways in which identities of peoples on the voyages were complicated mixtures that could change over time. The diversity of the collection has again become the pure contrast between Europeans and savages.

The engravings were also elements of the book that reworked how groups of people in the world were articulated. Not only were the pictures often of a lesser quality, the content of the pictures were changed. The first person edition of Barrows's account, for instance, includes four colour illustrations, credited to John Williamson. These new illustrations depict two scenes from the first voyage — Cook formally taking possession of New South Wales and the aborigines setting fire to the grass — and two scenes from the second voyage — two natives dancing at Tahiti and a violent confrontation between the English in the longboat and the natives on shore. There are no coloured illustrations for the third voyage. The first person edition also includes a facsimile of Cook's final journal entry for the first voyage, along with his signature. The other engravings in the two editions are the same. As with other aspects of this edition, the coloured illustrations emphasize the sharply defined, often violent encounters between the English and the natives. Warfare is complemented on the one hand by the extension of English sovereignty and on the other by the European experience of native

entertainments. The representation of places and peoples has been simplified, and the moral status of England in relation to the rest of the world has been emphasized.

Another important publisher in the 19th century was Blackie & Son, who published an account of Cook's voyages edited by C. G. Cash. *The Life and Voyages of Captain James Cook* was an inexpensive version rewritten for younger audiences. There is one black and white picture, at the beginning of the book, which depicts the moment before Cook's death in Hawaii (see picture 19). In this version, the coordinates are all but gone, as are the sexual relations between the Europeans and the natives, and any complaints Cook had of his crew. There are no maps or tables. The book is in the first person, but any dialog that Cook had with other writers or with the people on board is gone. The authorial voice has become clarified, the contrasts have been sharpened, and the description and evaluation of the world has followed suit.

Many of the dichotomies that persisted through the global collection were moral and theological. One can consider, for instance, the way that the relationships between the natives of the South Pacific and the European missionaries was articulated through traditional Christian themes. Bernard Smith, for instance, discusses John Williams, who

had played a remarkable role in the growth of South Sea mission activity after his arrival in Tahiti in 1817. He became famous both in the South Seas and in Britain.

After he was murdered by natives at Eromanga in 1839 he became a kind of protestant martyr, and the example of his life provided a spur to mission work for many years.⁶⁷

The representations of Williams's death, whether in texts or pictures, were organized to emphasize the sharp dichotomy between the Christian European and his native attackers. In one picture, for instance,

⁶⁷ Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, page 318.

Williams, in turning to resist the onslaught, has fallen into shallow water to adopt something like a Lamentation-type pose. The print, however, differs radically from the painting. The reason for many of the alterations is made clear by remarks in Baxter's handwriting on the painting. These remarks clearly sought to make the illustration more amenable to evangelical taste. The natives were to be made darker in complexion; Williams was to be made 'more heavenly'. In the print these directions have been fulfilled and the appearance of the natives has been transformed.⁶⁸

Smith noted similar transformations in the representations of Cook's death, where Cook becomes more heavenly and the native of the Sandwich Islands become more savage (which means in particular that their hair became more frizzled, their skin became darker, and their countenance became more overtly hostile). The result was, in effect, the reaffirmation of the older identity structures that divided Europe and its absolute other.

In addition to the theological division of the world into Christian and heathen, the collection also allowed the division of the world in terms of time. One important way to organize the world's nations that pervades the voyages appeals to time. To George Forster, for instance, some of the islands of the South Pacific offered a living manifestation of this original state. Time, in other words, had become one way to classify space, in which the basic pattern of European history became a classification system for non-European nations. The people who were encountered in the South Pacific were living in a different time, and could thus be meaningfully compared to a prior period in European history, such as classical Greece, ancient Briton, and the Middle Ages. Marra, for instance, writes that

In this custom, however, they are far from being singular; in the infancy of almost every state something of the like kind may be traced. Among the ancient Romans, they placed meat upon the tombs of their deceased friends.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific*, page 321.

⁶⁹ Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page 226.

Not only are the nations of the South Pacific compared to the Romans, they are also compared to the ancient Britons.

The character of the Tahowa of the Ottaheiteans very nearly corresponds with that of Druid, among the Britons.⁷⁰

Time, in other words, has become an attribute of space, and the movement away from Europe is a movement back in time. Of course, mapping nations in terms of time does not line up exactly — simple distance was not the only factor. Nonetheless, the temporal order of development (cultivation, civilization, modernization) became a central way to arrange the nations of the world in a way that reenforced the political and moral status of Europe. Every nation becomes part of a single narrative of development, in which western European countries are at the forefront and the other nations, which exist as living examples of Europe's past, become rightly subjected to Europe through paternalist, if not Darwinist principles. These temporally backward nations must either be helped or replaced by the temporally superior nations. The savage had returned. Unlike Johnson, however, in Cook's voyages the nations who are still living at the beginning of history become important sources of information concerning human nature. These natives are examples of humanity in its infancy, as it were, and thus represent a baseline from which to narrate human history.

The other way that this is articulated in Cook's collection of natives is through the discourse of purity. One set of nations that Cook and his companions are very interested in are those that have never been exposed to European influences. Most of the nations that are encountered in the voyages have already encountered Europeans, often with very unfavourable consequences. But in the voyages there is a desire, sometimes scientific, to encounter places that have never been encountered by Europeans before.

⁷⁰ Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page 227.

Marra, for instance, considers the scientific, and somewhat romantic value of the island of Amsterdam. He writes:

as these people, it is probable, have never but once before been visited by European intruders; their persons may be pure, and their morals uncorrupted, so far at least as respects their nearest connections.⁷¹

The value of the purely non-European nation is also evident in the Admiralty's account of the voyages.

But the islands which our enterprising discoverers visited in the centre of the South Pacific, and are, indeed, the principal scenes of their operations, were untrodden ground. The inhabitants, as far as could be observed, were unmixed with any different tribe, by occasional intercourse, subsequent to their original settlement there; left entirely to their own powers for every art of life; and to their own remote traditions for every political or religious custom or institution; uninformed by science; unimproved by education; in short, a fit soil from whence a careful observer could collect facts for forming a judgment, how far unassisted human nature will be apt to degenerate; and in what respects it can ever be able to excel. Who could have thought, that the brutal ferocity of feeding upon human flesh, and the horrid superstition of offering human sacrifices, should be found to exist amongst the natives lately discovered in the Pacific Ocean, who, in other respect appear to be no strangers to the fine feelings of humanity, to have arrived at a certain stage of social life, and to be habituated to subordination and government which tend so naturally to repress the ebullitions of wild passion, and expand the latent powers of the understanding?⁷²

Cook helps create a baseline (of the absolute absence of Europe). But even during Cook's voyages it was becoming difficult to find such places, and more often than not the primary concern was not to describe the "natural" state as it was to describe the variations from that state towards various aspects of European character, whether religion, economics, or customs. But the society that has experienced Europeans remains a distinct society, only now it

⁷¹ Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page 64.

⁷² Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume V, page 67.

becomes possible to determine what impact civilization (Europe) has had. As will be argued in the next chapter, it is by combining the detailed articulation of nation-places with European attitudes of their own superiority that the 19th century empires became imaginable.

8. The Transcendence of the Collector

But there is another kind of otherness created by Cook's voyages, where the primary divisions are not between nations or races or levels of civilization, but between two fundamentally different relationships to the world. The difference is between the collector and the collected. The division is not necessarily a national division, it exists instead in terms of how a person or a nation relates to collecting and the collection. Cook, of course, is the epitome of the collector, and the institutions that sent him into the Pacific were closely tied to various key collections, such as could be found in the British Museum or the documents in the archives of the Admiralty. Collecting is also an important aspect of Cook's account of knowledge: to understand the world properly depends on creating a proper collection. The key dichotomy in Cook's voyages, then, is the one arising from the ideals of the collection. In fact, there may be two dichotomies here, one between the collector and the collected and the other between the collector and those who do not collect. These divisions are not the same, although in the end the distinction between them fades as those who do not collect become the collection. However, in Cook's voyages both ideals help divide the world.

Rather than the exclusions of privilege that marked the organization of earlier collections, in the late 18th century the collection became part of the public record, to which everyone, in principle, had access and was invited to contribute. However, even if the project of scientific collecting was global and ostensibly public, not everyone participated in the same way. Two notable

groups in Cook's voyages are the Spanish and the natives.

The Spaniards had it more in their power to surmount this bar to instruction; some of them having resided at Otaheite much longer than any other European visitors. As, with their superior advantages, they could not but have had an opportunity of obtaining the fullest information on most subjects relating to this island, their account of it would, probably, convey more authentic and accurate intelligence than, with our best endeavours, any of us could possibly obtain. But as I look upon it to be very uncertain, if not very unlikely, that we shall ever have any communication from that quarter, I have here put together what additional intelligence about Otaheite and its neighbouring islands I was able to procure, either from Omai while on board the ship, or by conversing with the other natives while we remained amongst them.⁷³

The Spaniards, who are recognized as having spent the most time on the island (and thus as having the best information) are not named or placed in the narrative of the collection. Rather, the Spaniards are placed outside of the enlightenment project because they do not contribute to the collective European understanding. The Spaniards are welcome to share in the knowledge, and they have the resources to participate as equals if not superiors, but they have chosen to exclude themselves.

The natives of the South Pacific are judged in similar terms, with a concern for whether they have either the skill or the inclination to collect the world properly. It is simply assumed that these nations cannot actually create a proper collection, because they are not yet civilized, and thus do not have the necessary social resources. What is more important for Cook is whether the uncivilized nations at least try to collect. On the third voyage, Cook notes with some disdain that:

Their not expressing that surprize which one might have expected from their seeing men so much unlike themselves, and things to which, we were well assured, they had been hitherto utter strangers, their indifference for our presents, and their general

⁷³ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume VI, page 132.

inattention, were sufficient proofs of their not possessing any acuteness of understanding.⁷⁴

What bothers Cook the most in these exchanges is that, while the Europeans are very concerned to collect information and artifacts from the natives, the natives are uninterested in the Europeans. The account acquires a moral quality. As Marra writes,

the people they saw seemed indifferent and numerous, scarce thinking it worth while to suspend their ordinary employments but for a moment to take notice of the uncommon structure of so rare an object as an European ship; and here, though the inhabitants must know the place where the strangers lay, scarce any of them for more than a month came to visit them.⁷⁵

Another important theme when evaluating collectors is whether the people can divide the world properly. When testing the natives, for instance, Cook is often interested in the ability to tell Europeans apart. For instance, in the second voyage Cook writes of how

We told several of them, that M. de Bougainville came from France, a name they could by no means pronounce, nor could they pronounce that of Paris much better.

In fact, Cook continues,

they believed that we and Mr. Bougainville came from the same country; that is, from Pretane, for so they called our country. They had not the least knowledge of any other European nation; nor probably will they; unless some of those men should return who had lately gone from the isle.⁷⁶

In the third voyage, Cook remarks that,

Although we do not think that there is a great similarity between our manners and those of the Spaniards, it is worth observing, that Omai did not think there was much difference.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume V, page 191.

⁷⁵ Marra, *Journal of the Resolution's Voyage in 1771 - 1775*, page 37.

⁷⁶ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume III, page 163.

⁷⁷ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume V, page 114.

Omai, by not noticing the obvious (to Cook) differences between the English and the Spanish, demonstrates the superiority of Cook's observations, which offer, among many other things, persistent comparisons between the English, the French, and the Spanish.

But there are also times when Cook is apparently impressed by the intellectual character of the natives — they are curious or desire European curiosities — and so he tests how much they have advanced in their ideas of collecting. As he notes in the first voyage,

finding these people so intelligent, we inquired farther, if they knew of any country besides their own.⁷⁸

Sometimes, the result of these enquiries is disappointing. On the second voyage, Cook notes of how he

took no small pains to know how far their geographical knowledge extended; and did not find that it exceeded the limits of their horizon.⁷⁹

Other times, however, the native world is much more extensive, and Cook attempts to collect the information they have collected. This information is summarized and evaluated, not only in terms of its accuracy, but also its scale. In one passage, for instance, Cook's voice in the Admiralty's edition considers the "catalogue" of places of the natives of Wateoo, with a particular concern for Bougainville's claim that the natives of the South Pacific could navigate over long distances.

These low isles are, doubtless, the farthest navigation, which those of Otaheite and the Society Islands perform at present. It seems to be a groundless supposition, made by Mons. de Bougainville, that they made voyages of the prodigious extent he mentions; for I found, that it is reckoned a sort of prodigy, that a canoe once driven by a storm from Otaheite, should have fallen in with Mopeeha, or Howe's Island, though so near, and directly to leeward. The knowledge they have of other distant islands is no doubt

⁷⁸ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume I, page 361.

⁷⁹ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume IV, page 73.

traditional, and has been communicated to them by the natives of those islands, driven accidentally upon their coasts, who besides giving them the names, could easily inform them of the direction in which the places lie from whence they came, and of the number of days they had been upon the sea. In this manner, it may be supposed, that the natives of Wateoo have increased their catalogue by the addition of Otaheite and its neighbouring isles, from the people we met with there, and also of the other islands these had heard of.⁸⁰

While subsequent research suggests that Cook was wrong, and that long distance navigation was carried out, what is important here is the way that Cook's judgement connects to how he characterizes collecting, and how collecting becomes one of the key ways to know the world. In short, Cook's assumption is that the larger and more diverse the articulation of the world is, the more advanced and intelligent the people are. The greater and more detailed the collection, the more advanced the nation. And in this, of course, Cook and the English become supreme.

With Cook's voyages, with his diorama, with his collection of artifacts, the reader is presented with a picture of the world created out of nations and of all the comparisons that become possible. The collection is not merely accumulation, it is the basis on which it is possible to articulate the relative qualities of things. Relative, that is, to everything else in the collection. Beyond any particular comparisons is the fundamental epistemological claim that nations, existing in the world and the collection, can be compared *at all*. And this possibility Cook's voyages prove with neither hesitation nor, apparently, controversy. The collection becomes a natural and self-evident aspect of knowledge about the world. Likewise, as additional information is published, the form that the information takes remains the same. If anything,

⁸⁰ Admiralty, *Voyages*, Volume VI, page 165. The text is likely from Anderson's manuscript, now lost.

the account of places and peoples becomes that much more entrenched as newer and more accurate measurements of coordinates and more comprehensive descriptions of places are accumulated. The collection, whether manifested in museums or books, comes to exist beyond any specific account of the world, and in many cases it becomes the primary source of authoritative knowledge about the world. But with the creation of all of these fixed national identities, with the creation of the collection and with the increased importance of comparisons for the scientific analysis of humanity, Cook remains transcendent. While the world becomes fixed, he remains in motion, and as the world is turned into a collection, he remains forever the collector, forever the one who has explored the world, and captured it in print. What remains to be done to expand European power throughout the world is to collect the places of the world again, not as objects in the museum, but as objects in the world. The late 18th century collections become a condition for the creation of 19th century empires.