

LONGITUDE AND EMPIRE

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How Captain Cook's Voyages Changed the World

BRIAN W. RICHARDSON



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FOR GORDON

We should note the force, effect, and consequences of inventions
which are nowhere more conspicuous
than in those three which were unknown to the ancients,
namely, printing, gunpowder, and the compass.
For these three have changed the appearance and state of the whole world.
Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*, Aphorism 129

Contents

Illustrations / ix

Acknowledgments / xv

Introductions / 2

The Story / 8

The Book / 12

The Author / 16

1 Points / 20

Rules of Exploration / 22

Points along a Coast / 24

The Coordinate System / 31

Verification of Details / 36

The Possibilities of Location / 41

2 Shapes / 46

Grand Divisions / 48

Extreme Places / 49

The Oceanic Plane / 57

Cook's Turn to Islands / 59

Landscapes and Maps / 66

The Move to Interiors / 75

3 Nations / 78

The Orient, the Savage, and Europe / 79

The Primacy of Place / 84

Studying Nations / 90

Classifying Nations / 101

Explaining Nations / 104

The Savage, the Noble Savage, and the Nation / 107

4 States / 110

Hobbes / 112

Locke / 114

Rousseau / 116

The Scottish Enlightenment / 117

The Native State in Cook's Voyages / 118

Kant / 124

Finding and Creating the Territorial Nation-State / 130

5 Collections / 136

The Cabinets of Curiosities / 139

Collecting Nations / 140

The Practices of the Collection / 142

Boredom and the Collection / 147

The Dangers of Relativism / 154

The Persistence of Extreme Otherness / 159

The Transcendence of the Collector / 163

6 Empires / 168

Cook and Empire / 172

Empire As Collection / 177

Empire As Exchange / 180

Empire As Cultivation / 189

Empire As Panopticon / 192

Conclusions / 198

Notes / 201

Bibliography / 214

Index / 223

Illustrations

- 2 “Captain Cook,” Engraving of Nathaniel Dance’s portrait of Captain Cook, from Walter Besant, *Captain Cook* (London: Macmillan, 1925)
- 4 “A Chart of the Southern Hemisphere,” from Admiralty, *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World: Performed in His Majesty’s Ships Resolution and Adventure, in the Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, 2 vols., ed. John Douglas (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777)
- 20 “A Map of the East Indies,” from William Dampier, *The Voyages of Captain William Dampier*, 2 vols., ed. John Masfield (London: E. Grant Richards, 1905)
- 42 Table of Coordinates from Pascoe Thomas, *A True and Impartial Journal of a Voyage to the South-seas, and round the Globe, in His Majesty’s Ship the Centurion, under the Command of Commodore George Anson* (London: S. Birt [etc.], 1745)
- 46 “Christmas Island,” from Admiralty, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean. Undertaken, by the Command of His Majesty, for Making Discoveries in the Northern Hemisphere, to Determine the Position and Extent of the West Side of North America; its Distance from Asia; and the Practicability of a Northern Passage to Europe. Performed under the Direction of Captains Cook, Clerke, and Gore, in His Majesty’s Ships the Resolution and Discovery, in the Years 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779, and 1780*, 3 vols., ed. John Douglas (London: Printed by W. and A. Strahan for G. Nicol and T. Cadell, 1784)
- 53 “The Ice Islands,” from Admiralty, *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World: Performed in His Majesty’s Ships Resolution and Adventure, in the Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, 2 vols., ed. John Douglas (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777)

- 61 “Chart of the Island of Otaheite,” from Admiralty, *An Account of the Voyages Undertaken by the Order of His Present Majesty for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere, and Successively Performed by Commodore Byron, Captain Wallis, Captain Carteret, and Captain Cook in the Dolphin, the Swallow, and the Endeavour*, 2 vols., ed. John Hawkesworth (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1773)
- 62 “Sketch of the Harbour of Samganooda on the Island of Oon-alaska,” from Admiralty, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean. Undertaken, by the Command of His Majesty, for Making Discoveries in the Northern Hemisphere, to Determine the Position and Extent of the West Side of North America; its Distance from Asia; and the Practicability of a Northern Passage to Europe. Performed under the Direction of Captains Cook, Clerke, and Gore, in His Majesty’s Ships the Resolution and Discovery, in the Years 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779, and 1780*, 3 vols., ed. John Douglas (London: Printed by W. and A. Strahan for G. Nicol and T. Cadell, 1784)
- 65 “Chart of New Zealand,” from Admiralty, *An Account of the Voyages Undertaken by the Order of His Present Majesty for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere, and Successively Performed by Commodore Byron, Captain Wallis, Captain Carteret, and Captain Cook in the Dolphin, the Swallow, and the Endeavour*, 2 vols., ed. John Hawkesworth (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1773)
- 67 “A View of Streights Le Maire between Tierra Del Fuego and Staten Land,” from George Anson and Richard Walter, *A Voyage round the World, in the Years M, DCC, XL, I, II, III, IV, by George Anson, Esq., now Lord Anson, Commander in Chief of a Squadron of His Majesty’s Ships, Sent upon an Expedition to the South-Seas, Compiled from his Papers and Materials* (Ayr: Printed by J. Wilson, 1790)
- 68 “A Chart and Views of Pitcairn’s Island,” from Admiralty, *An Account of the Voyages Undertaken by the Order of His Present Majesty for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere, and Successively Performed by Commodore Byron, Captain Wallis, Captain Carteret, and Captain Cook in the Dolphin, the Swallow, and the Endeavour*, 2 vols., ed. John Hawkesworth (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1773)
- 69 “A View of the Indians of Tierra del Fuego,” engraving by Giovanni Cipriani, from Admiralty, *An Account of the Voyages Undertaken by the Order of His Present Majesty for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere, and Successively Performed by Commodore Byron, Captain Wallis, Captain Carteret, and Captain Cook in the Dolphin, the Swallow,*

- and the Endeavour, 2 vols., ed. John Hawkesworth (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1773)
- 70 “Easter Island,” from Admiralty, *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World: Performed in His Majesty’s Ships Resolution and Adventure, in the Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, 2 vols., ed. John Douglas (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777)
- 71 “Monuments in Easter Island,” from Admiralty, *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World: Performed in His Majesty’s Ships Resolution and Adventure, in the Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, 2 vols., ed. John Douglas (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777)
- 72 “Man of Easter Island,” from Admiralty, *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World: Performed in His Majesty’s Ships Resolution and Adventure, in the Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, 2 vols., ed. John Douglas (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777)
- 73 “Woman of Easter Island,” from Admiralty, *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World: Performed in His Majesty’s Ships Resolution and Adventure, in the Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, 2 vols., ed. John Douglas (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777)
- 78 “Man of the Island of Tanna,” from Admiralty, *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World: Performed in His Majesty’s Ships Resolution and Adventure, in the Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, 2 vols., ed. John Douglas (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777)
- 90 “Man in Christmas Sound, Tierra del Fuego,” from Admiralty, *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World: Performed in His Majesty’s Ships Resolution and Adventure, in the Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, 2 vols., ed. John Douglas (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777)
- 94 “The head of a New Zealander, with a comb in his hair, an ornament of green stone in his ear, and another of a fish’s tooth round his neck,” from Admiralty, *An Account of the Voyages Undertaken by the Order of His Present Majesty for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere, and Successively Performed by Commodore Byron, Captain Wallis, Captain Carteret, and Captain Cook in the Dolphin, the Swallow, and the Endeavour*, 2 vols., ed. John Hawkesworth (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1773)
- 105 “The Island of New Caledonia,” from Admiralty, *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World: Performed in His Majesty’s Ships Resolution and Adventure, in the Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, 2 vols., ed. John Douglas (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777)

- 106 “A View of Bolcheretzkoi in Kamtschatka,” from Admiralty, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean. Undertaken, by the Command of His Majesty, for Making Discoveries in the Northern Hemisphere, to Determine the Position and Extent of the West Side of North America; its Distance from Asia; and the Practicability of a Northern Passage to Europe. Performed under the Direction of Captains Cook, Clerke, and Gore, in His Majesty’s Ships the Resolution and Discovery, in the Years 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779, and 1780*, 3 vols., ed. John Douglas (London: Printed by W. and A. Strahan for G. Nicol and T. Cadell, 1784)
- 110 “The Landing at Mallicollo, one of the New Hebrides,” from Admiralty, *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World: Performed in His Majesty’s Ships Resolution and Adventure, in the Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, 2 vols., ed. John Douglas (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777)
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- 148 “Taheitans, Sandwich Islanders, New Zealanders and Egyptian Merchant & Lady,” from Jehoshaphat Aspin, *Cosmorama: A View of the Costumes and Peculiarities of All Nations* (London: J. Harris, 1827)
- 149 “Danes, Icelanders, Swedes and Finlanders,” from Jehoshaphat Aspin, *Cosmorama: A View of the Costumes and Peculiarities of All Nations* (London: J. Harris, 1827)
- 161 “I Resolved to Make the Chief Alone Fall Victim to his own Treachery,” from John Barrow, *Cook’s Voyages of Discovery* (London: A. & C. Black, 1925)
- 162 “The Fatal Fight with Natives of Owhyhee,” from C.G. Cash, *The Life and Voyages of Captain James Cook* (London: Blackie and Sons, 1905)
- 168 “We Hold a Vaster Empire Than Has Been,” Canadian stamp from 1898

- 184 “The Landing at Tanna, one of the islands of New Hebrides,”
from Admiralty, *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World:
Performed in His Majesty’s Ships Resolution and Adventure, in the
Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, 2 vols., ed. John Douglas
(London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777)
- 185 “The Landing at Erramanga, one of the islands of New Hebrides,”
from Admiralty, *A Voyage towards the South Pole and round the World:
Performed in His Majesty’s Ships Resolution and Adventure, in the
Years 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775*, 2 vols., ed. John Douglas
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LONGITUDE AND EMPIRE

Introductions



An engraving of Nathaniel Dance's portrait of Captain Cook, showing the captain in full naval dress. Cook is pointing to the Friendly Islands on his chart of the southern hemisphere, produced during the second voyage.

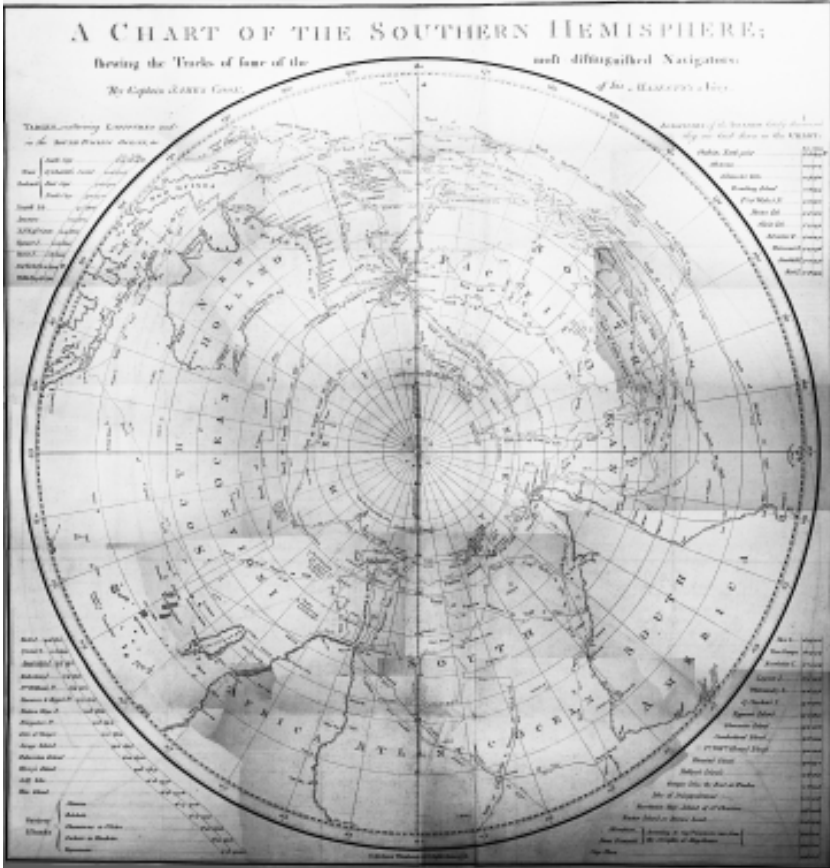
We have all met Captain James Cook.

Portraits, statues, coins, and stamps have offered his likeness for over two hundred years. But we do not simply look at him. The impact of his three voyages into the Pacific, both as a series of events and as published documents, has been much more profound – it is through him, through the ideal that his voyages represent, that we understand how to look with him at the world.

One of the more famous and widely reproduced images of Cook was painted by Nathaniel Dance in 1776, during the time Cook was in England between his second and third voyages. The portrait represents Cook at the height of his glory, surrounded by icons of his success. He is sitting in an austere room with a view of the ocean to his side. The room, no more than a container bordered by the ocean, includes various scientific and naval symbols, such as his captain's jacket and three-pointed hat. While the hat rests on a bound book – one of the printed volumes of Cook's second voyage – Cook's hand points to a map of the Southern Ocean. The printed map, and the lines of Cook's voyages that are traced on this map, mark the central achievement of that voyage and Cook's primary, but far from only, justification for immortal fame.

The painting is a theoretical statement concerning the relationship between knowledge, authority, and the world. The austerity of the room suggests an epistemological ideal, a sense of how the world both ought to be arranged and ought to be known. The room is clean and clear, allowing the objects within to be viewed without the threat of confusion.

Cook is not looking directly at the viewer, but to one side. The connection between Cook and the viewer is not immediate, but is rather organized by a more complex arrangement between Cook and the objects around him. On the table is a captain's hat, which is resting on a book, which is itself resting on a chart. The hat, of course, evokes Cook's naval authority. The book evokes his authority over the texts of his voyages that



A Chart of the Southern Hemisphere, published in the official account of Cook's second voyage. The chart is centred on the South Pole and includes the tracks of Cook and earlier explorers. It was on the second voyage that Cook demonstrated the non-existence of a large southern continent.

were published at the time. The chart to which he points is of the southern hemisphere, an engraved version of which was included in the printed edition of the second voyage. By comparing this map to the chart in the portrait, the reader can determine that Cook's finger is resting somewhere on the South Pacific.

Cook is not simply pointing to his map; he is pointing to the Society Islands, a group of islands which includes modern-day Tahiti. These islands are a focal point for all three of Cook's voyages. Cook was not the first European to report back to Europe on the existence of Otaheite, as

it was then called, but he added several islands in the group to European maps and, perhaps more significantly, his voyages extended European knowledge of what could be found in the islands. It is at this point in the portrait, where printed texts, printed maps, and the peoples and places of the world come together, that the broader conceptual and political importance of Cook's voyages, both as travels and as books, begins to make sense. Cook sits in his abstracted box, holding together global knowledge and power, and the nations of the Pacific are identified, described, and given a place in the world and in the book.

One important aspect of the picture that merits discussion is the direction of Cook's gaze. It is fixed and grave, but he is not looking at the viewer. While he appears to be looking out of his room, he is not looking towards anything in particular. But if we read the picture as part of a larger spatial arrangement, he may be looking back towards the Pacific, establishing a four-way relationship between the map, the navigator, the reader, and the place. We, as readers, are then to follow Cook's gaze, from his map through his vision towards the places he has provided an account of.

Alternatively, given that the ocean is behind him, if Cook is at the Naval Hospital in Greenwich, then his gaze could be directed away from the ocean and towards England, London, the Royal Society, and the palace of King George III. In this case, Cook is not showing the reader the places of the Pacific, he is exhibiting the places that were collected to the authorities that sent him out there in the first place. He is giving an official account of himself, his voyages, and the world, and we, again as readers, are allowed to follow along.

But the picture offers no clear evidence of who or what Cook is gazing at. As a result, we are encouraged to focus on the gaze itself, and whether he is looking at the natives of the South Pacific or the aristocracy of London, it is the gaze itself that fixes our attention. The gaze grounds the claims to truth, but only within a larger epistemological and political context, only within a world of books, of naval authority, of navigational tools, and of austere, purifying rooms that are bounded by the ocean.

THE THREE VOYAGES into the Pacific that Cook commanded between 1768 and 1780 were carried out in the relatively peaceful period in European history between the Seven Years War, which ended in 1763, and the uprisings in the American colonies, which began while Cook was on his third voyage. Unlike those of his predecessors, Cook's voyages into the

Pacific were carried out with little concern for direct military challenges from other European powers. Rather, the challenges that were faced in the voyages arose from the dangers of open ocean navigation and from the interactions with native populations. While the voyages were not part of any recognized military campaign, they were nonetheless full of conflicts, successes, failures, and glory.

As a project to explore the world, Cook's voyages arose from a complex relationship between Cook's intentions, the contemporary interests of various people and institutions in Europe, the narrative forms that voyaging had taken in European literature, and the desire to create a reliable account of the world that could not only be shared with others, but that could also be useful to them for their own projects.

As both official and popularized accounts of the voyages would have it, Cook was sent into the Pacific ocean in response to three key scientific problems. In the first voyage, he was part of a global astronomical experiment to measure the time it took the planet Venus to cross the face of the sun, which would help astronomers determine the distance between the earth and the sun. In the second voyage, Cook was sent to determine with finality the existence or non-existence of a large southern continent. In the third voyage, Cook's goal was to finally determine the existence or non-existence of a Northwest Passage connecting the Pacific and Atlantic oceans.

Yet the three voyages were much more than responses to these specific problems. Building on the ability to determine longitude reliably, Cook's voyages mark a significant shift in how Europeans could know the world. Throughout his voyages, Cook demonstrates first to himself and his crew and then to his readers the existence or non-existence of places; he locates every place in a single, fixed grid of coordinates; he moves away from the continental coastlines into the fragmented plane of the Pacific Ocean; and he travels along watery tracks that prior European navigators could only dream of.

The engagement with the world and the world of knowledge is totalizing. Cook spends most of his time in places that had already been visited by other Europeans, but he incorporates and reworks these discoveries into a single updated description. He settles controversies of position. He describes the inhabitants of various places and notes where his descriptions agree or disagree with those already available. And Cook does this for places all around the Pacific and all along the routes that his ships take,

from Batavia (now Djakarta) and the Cape of Good Hope, to Teneriffe and Brazil. Additionally, even if Cook does not specifically describe a place, he has left a blank space on the map for it that either he or someone else will fill in later.

In the end, Cook's voyages created a mathematical, scientific, and textual vision of the world's places that transcended the opinions and guesses offered by his predecessors. Cook's engagements with prior navigators also affirmed the status of his voyages and accounts of them as the culmination of all the information that was available, to which he added his own observations. As a result, the printed accounts of his voyages also became the ideal representation of scientific exploration literature. More than with any other voyage, Cook's travels and writings represented how an explorer *ought* to give an account of the world – while the voyages contain descriptions of distant places, they also discuss the practical and epistemological conditions under which certain kinds of descriptions are considered to be accurate and complete. Not only do the voyages summarize what has gone on before and offer answers to many of the problems that were posed in eighteenth-century Europe, they also create the conditions for exploration that will dominate the nineteenth century. Cook is concerned with the health of his crew, the relationship between Europeans and natives, the reliability of the newly developed chronometers, the maintenance of a ship and its crew on long voyages, and the nature of a wide range of meteorological, geological, and biological phenomena. In the words of Joseph Conrad, Cook's voyages offer responses to “the problems of our earth's shape, its size, its character, its products, its inhabitants.”¹ The engagement is cosmological, encompassing the world and placing Cook at the centre, as both witness and judge.

The engagement is also moral and political. Cook's voyages, as they become parts of the textual terrain, mark significant reworkings of European discussions concerning humanity and power that support various images of political legitimacy, ethics of engagement, and accounts of global justice. The representations of the world in Cook's voyages have political implications. In Europe, the representations of the places in the South Pacific were used in debates over the limits and character of human nature, over the relationship between science and politics, and over the legitimate use of power, both at home and throughout the world.

One important aspect of Cook's voyages is the encounters with islands and ultimately the idealization of the island as such. Cook's descriptions

of the islands of the South Pacific became a model for describing the world: descriptions grounded on reliable instruments, mathematically demonstrable methods, and verifiable observations. The South Pacific was the first section of the world to be included in the nineteenth-century imperial archive, and this helped to establish the conditions under which the rest of the world would be added. The Pacific also was held up as a mirror for European political ideals, in which fixed territorial and national identities came to play an increasingly important role. The idea of the pure nation was generally imagined as a natural spatial entity because islands had already been discovered, located, and described. What Cook found on the islands of the South Pacific, in other words, was used to idealize the natural political order that nationalists spent the next two centuries trying to create. The specific representations of the geographical and natural world offered to the readers of Cook's voyages were used to rework problems in political philosophy.

The printed accounts and artifacts from the voyages were many things to people in many disciplines. Associated with the scientific studies of humanity sponsored by the Royal Society, and with the *laissez-faire* economics of Adam Smith, the voyages were established as exemplars of an enlightened description of and relationship to the world. Rationalism and capitalism are intermingled throughout Cook's voyages. Also, the voyages contributed to the human sciences, not only in providing data but in exemplifying the form that such a science should take. But Cook's voyages are political treatises by other means, so a discussion of the political philosophy of the voyages will have to approach the question somewhat indirectly.

THE STORY

In keeping with Paul Carter's approach, the focus on the textuality of the voyage suggests that "travelling was not primarily a physical activity: it was an epistemological strategy, a mode of knowing."² Thus "the landscape that emerges from the explorer's pen is not a physical object: it is an object of desire, a figure of speech outlining the writer's exploratory impulse."³ Carter does not distinguish manuscripts from printed books, and he mixes a discussion of texts that are handwritten diaries, recent printed transcriptions, and printed works from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Members of the reading public, however, can only follow the voyages as they exist in print, so the distinction between the library and

the archive is crucial. Our interest in Cook's voyages is not in the explorer's pen so much as the publisher's printing press, the draftsman's etching tools, and all of the material and institutional resources that took the manuscript accounts of the places of the world into the printed page, and persistently presented them to their readers.

One way in which the text of travel narratives can be studied is by analyzing the names that were given to places. Carter writes that "just as the geographical feature it [the name] brings into scientific circulation has its own unique place on the map, so the name occupies a unique place in the text."⁴ Carter suggests that the names in Cook's voyages were neither random nor mathematical – the names were meaningful as markers for specific events in his voyages. In other words, the meaning of the name is not simply referential: "The significance of this overdetermination of meaning does not lie in the direction of Cook's psychology, but in the revelation of the fact that Cook moved in a world of language. He proceeded within a cultural network of names, allusions, puns and coincidences, which, far from constraining him, gave him, like his Pacific Ocean, conceptual space in which to move."⁵ Not only does the printing press help establish precedence in discovery for particular places,⁶ but, by bringing all the places of the three voyages into print, the books also help to create a system of names that covers the world. While landscapes may emerge from the pen, epistemological strategies and publicity also depend on creating printed books out of the written manuscripts. It is only when places from around the world are contained in printed texts that the dialogue with space and about space can be carried on by so many people in so many ways. It is often those who first publish a description of a place who can claim to have discovered it, or at least to have added it to "the map." Likewise, those who provide a superior description of a place can supersede the descriptions offered by those who came before – that is, those who published an account before. The practices of navigation and discovery involve much more than just moving. It is not enough to carry on a dialogue with space; the motion must be documented and those documents must be placed in the textual spaces created within a society of print and navigation.

In *The Songlines*, Bruce Chatwin described the way that aboriginal Australians articulate their relationship to the places between which they travel. Rather than relating to places in the world through a printed map and a published journal, the Aborigines relate to the land through songs,

which are sung as they travel along lines that traverse the land. In theory, at least, the whole of Australia could be read as a musical score. There was hardly a rock or creek in the country that could not or had not been sung.⁷ It is thus through song that the world comes into existence, and that each of the places in the world acquire their location. What the songs do, in other words, is trace the connections between places in the world, organizing the material world into a series of meaningful paths. Rather than being frontiers or borders, the songlines are sections of track over which specific people or groups have control. “Music,” according to Chatwin, “is a memory bank for finding one’s way about the world.”⁸

And so it is with the printed book in Cook’s world. The places and tracks on the page do not arise from songs, however. The regularized beats of the timepieces help determine coordinates, but the ways of knowing the world are very different. Space comes into meaningful existence through measuring, writing, drawing, and printing. The voyages of Captain Cook, in all the varieties of presentation, thus carry the reader along both physically and textually. And just as it is necessary to travel through the song to determine something’s place, so too is it necessary to travel somehow through the text.

Nevertheless, the books produced from Cook’s voyages are not simply continuous narratives. The books include tables of contents, which allow readers to skip from one chapter to another. The books also contain a wide assortment of lists and tables, which offer specific kinds of information all at once. Finally, the books contain landscapes, portraits, and maps, all of which may connect to the narrative, but which organize the information in a discontinuous way. A map provides a picture of a place all at once, and it may represent the progress of the narrative (as Cook’s maps of New Zealand and the Southern Hemisphere do), but it does so in terms of space rather than time. Landscapes and portraits freeze the places and peoples, although they also provide additional information that the narrative can refer the reader to. This is the printed world that Cook’s voyages built.

When Carter describes how Cook proceeded in a “cultural network of names, allusions, puns and coincidences, which ... gave him, like his Pacific Ocean, conceptual space in which to move,”⁹ it must be recognized that a significant amount of this network was based on printed books. The *Endeavour*, the *Adventure*, and the *Discovery* were not simply ships, they were also libraries. Given the availability of books describing the paths

of previous navigators, Cook is able to talk with previous authors, constructing a dialogue within his own narrative, where opinions are compared and debates are engaged. When these works are discussed, the genre of commentary (clarifications, confirmations, corrections, additions) is dominant. In William Dampier's account, for instance, both Joseph Banks, the ship's aristocratic naturalist, and Cook read the first printed European description of Australia. If nothing else, the other accounts make Cook's narrative more complicated than a simple accumulation of experiences over time, whether organized in terms of a travel narrative or not.

Subsequent navigators carried on Cook's process of revisiting places that had already been accounted for – correcting, articulating, and (with greater frequency) updating the information. The most immediate example is George Vancouver, who was the captain of a voyage into the Pacific roughly a decade after Cook. But Vancouver is not exceptional. The Russian navigators Ivan Kruzenshtern (or Krusenstern) and Otto von Kotzebue also refer to Cook, as do the French, English, and Americans. But in this system of citations, Cook's books are perhaps the most important of all, if only because Cook's voyages are the summation and correction of so many previous navigators, and thus form a core collection, a baseline, of texts on which all subsequent navigators can and must build. Cook builds on claims made in Dampier's voyages, but Matthew Flinders, who explored Australia's southern coast, does not. The printed account of Cook's voyages have subsumed Dampier's voyages in ways that Flinders' voyages could never hope to do to Cook's. Whereas Cook collects together a wide range of authors, whose accounts of the Pacific are partial, so that he can create a general image of the Pacific, Flinders takes this general image, finds a space that Cook has left empty, and fills it.

The success of Cook's voyages in the world of books resulted in their being taken as an exemplar whose status throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was unrivalled. For many people, Cook is more than an explorer of the Pacific; he is also the last great navigator and the epitome of what exploration should be. In *Islands of History*, Marshall Sahlins writes of "the place Cook has assumed in Western folklore as a constituting being, responsible for the shape of the world as we know it."¹⁰ Not only did people read Cook's voyages in one form or another, people who wrote travel narratives were often inspired, or at least influenced, by the voyages. Cook's voyages became a model of how to present

both the narrative of the voyage and the information collected. Perhaps none of the forms of information are new, but they are done so well by him that it is these books that became the model, and it is this captain that became the voice of Enlightenment exploration.

THE BOOK

We must never forget that Cook and his voyages exist for the most part in print, that they came into being within a book culture and that they were, as a result, subject to the conditions and opportunities created by the printed word and the printing press. It is not simply that the remnants of Cook's voyages through the world have acquired, as if by accident, a textual form. The voyages and books were the intentional *products* of a book culture and their existence is unavoidably intertwined. Both the shape and the content of the world is inescapably textual – composed of printed words, tables, maps, illustrations, and numbers. It is through the printed book that readers are introduced to Cook and his account of the world.

The creation of the voyages as a series of printed texts depended on a wide range of other institutions and practices that gave books status, made them accessible, and conditioned how they were understood. Publishers are clearly central to the process. Printed books existed well before Cook was born. William Caxton had brought the first printing press to England in 1476, and by Cook's time an uncountable number of different titles had been produced. Some of the most successful of these books had been travel stories. More, Swift, and Defoe had already published and perished, and through the years an extensive print literature had accumulated. Thus, when Cook returned from the South Pacific, there was an already-waiting set of people, institutions, and technologies ready to take his texts, prepare them, and reproduce them as books for a public that had both the capacity and the desire to read them. The presence of Cook's voyages thus depended on the interaction between the reader, the text, and the social structures of reading that help produce both readers and texts.

Cook was an institutional explorer who was supported by key members of the English government, and it was to them that he reported back. His written words were taken over by people connected to the Admiralty, which used its power to organize the voyages, to turn them into public texts, and to use the information for further projects. It was the Admiralty, and Lord Sandwich in particular, who arranged to have John Hawkesworth produce the account of Cook's first voyage, and who decided that Cook

would produce the account of the second with the help of John Douglas. It was also the Admiralty that ultimately decided which astronomers, painters, botanists, and other gentlemen were allowed to go on all three of the voyages. In this way, the Admiralty played an important role as a gate-keeper, determining who could help produce the information that the voyages made possible.

Not only did Cook's version of the second voyage carry the authority of the Admiralty and the King, it also included over sixty engravings that had been produced at the Admiralty's expense. High-quality engravings were not cheap, but they were both important to, and expected in, any serious published accounts of scientific voyages. The physical characteristics of the books, therefore, were significant not only because they made the books desirable, but also because they increased their cultural and intellectual status – these are important, weighty books that ought to be taken seriously. For the second voyage, in particular, the Admiralty helped create the most complete, well-designed printed account of a voyage that had been produced anywhere in the world up to that time. The account of the third voyage largely followed the pattern of the second.

While the Admiralty was focused on publishing the primary accounts of Cook's voyages, it also supported many other books connected to Cook's voyages and to the voyages undertaken after Cook. For instance, the Board of Longitude, which had nominated astronomers for the voyages, also published William Wales's 1777 account of some scientific observations from the second voyage entitled *The Original Astronomical Observations Made in the Course of a Voyage towards the South Pole, and round the World ...* Accounts of other voyages, such as those commanded by Bligh and Vancouver, were also published with Admiralty support.

Another important institution that conditioned the circulation and reception of Cook's voyages was the lending library. Not only was the high-quality production costly, even if subsidized, but print technology had not yet become mechanized, which would allow larger scale and less expensive print runs. In the eighteenth century, as the reading public expanded in size and as reading itself became a common entertainment, lending libraries became more numerous and accessible. One example is the Bristol Library, which was founded in the early seventeenth century and expanded considerably in the late eighteenth.¹¹ According to Paul Kaufman's calculations in his *Borrowings from the Bristol Library, 1773-1784*, the following were the ten most borrowed books during this period:

- 1 John Hawkesworth, *Voyages*, borrowed 201 times.
- 2 Patrick Brydone, *A Tour through Sicily and Malta*, borrowed 192 times.
- 3 Earl of Chesterfield, *Letters to His Son*, borrowed 185 times.
- 4 David Hume, *The History of England*, borrowed 180 times.
- 5 Oliver Goldsmith, *History of the Earth, and Animated Nature*, borrowed 150 times.
- 6 Guillaume Thomas François [abbé] Raynal, *A History of the Settlements and Trade of the Europeans in the East and West Indies*, borrowed 137 times.
- 7 William Robertson, *The History of the Reign of Charles V*, borrowed 131 times.
- 8 Laurence Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, borrowed 127 times.
- 9 George Lyttelton, *The History of the Life of Henry the Second*, borrowed 121 times.
- 10 Henry Fielding, *Works*, borrowed 120 times.

While Hawkesworth's *Voyages*, which contained the official account of Cook's first voyage, was the most popular set of books in the collection, the library also had a considerable number of other books that were associated with Cook's voyages.¹² The Admiralty edition of Cook's second voyage was borrowed 113 times in this period. (The account of the third voyage had just been published in 1784, and it does not occur in the library's holdings list.) Georg Forster's account of the second voyage was borrowed 65 times. Sydney Parkinson's account of the first voyage was borrowed 17 times, as was John Reinhold Forster's *Observations Made during a Voyage round the World*. By comparison, George Anson's *A Voyage round the World* was borrowed 10 times, and Louis-Antoine de Bougainville's *Voyage round the World* (translated by John Reinhold Forster) was borrowed 48 times. Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* was not part of the library's holdings, but this likely indicates the novel's widespread existence in personal libraries rather than its lack of popularity.

Popularity, of course, is not the same as significance or originality. However, when a text's popularity is connected to so many powerful institutions, as the accounts of Cook's voyages were, and when the text is related to profound changes in the way that many Europeans viewed the world, the popularity of the text then becomes a way to gauge the social and intellectual impact of the institutions that produced it.¹³

From the catalogue of the Bristol Library, it is also possible to construct a general image of what the reading public was engaged in during that

period. The most popular genres, even excluding the accounts of Cook's voyages, were the "travel journals to" and the "accounts of" various places around the world, including Genoa, Iceland, Russia, Japan, Greece, and America.¹⁴ For most of these travel books, the journey and the narrative are focused on a specific point that is the goal of the journey and the primary subject of the discussion. This organization was used as much for books about Sumatra as for books about Monmouthshire or Wales. In addition to the books about distant places, the library also housed books about different places in history. These books included the antiquarian collections of detail (of Scottish scenery, of the county of Dorset, and so on) and the multi-volume comprehensive history books (of Britain, of Rome, and of other places).

The Admiralty's accounts of Cook's voyages are somewhat exceptional: they were among the few travel books not focused on specific areas or places, some others being George Anson's *A Voyage round the World*, published in 1764, Louis de Bougainville's *Voyage round the World*, published in English in 1772, and two collections of voyages (one by Alexander Dalrymple, published in 1769, and another by Thomas Astley, published in 1745). In this way, Cook's voyages, much like Goldsmith's *History of the Earth, and Animated Nature*, published in 1774, offered an account of the world that brought many different places together.

The library itself created a similar collection of disparate places. It collected together books of travel and history and presented the world to the library's patrons, with the nations of Europe being described alongside distant places such as New Guinea, Bengal, the European colonies in the Americas, the Moluccas, Madeira, Jamaica, and Egypt. There were holdings lists of one form or another, and the books had to be put somewhere on the shelves. The organization of the books on the shelves was probably not geographical, as if the shelves could correspond to a map, yet the library would nonetheless have created a sense that the reader could access places throughout the world and move from one place to another at will.

One likely organization of the shelves would have been by author. Thus Edmund Burke's *Observations on the State of the Nation*, published in 1769, could have been on the shelf near James Boswell's *An Account of Corsica, the Journal of a Tour to That Island*, published in the same year, or on the shelf just above Hans Sloane's *A Voyage to the Islands of Madeira, Barbados ... and Jamaica*, published in 1707.¹⁵ Even if these books were published years apart and described places that were even farther apart, the library brought

them together and, by lending them to the people of Bristol, made them all accessible to a reading community. The library's collection is thus a statement, not only about the world, but also about the proper organization of knowledge about the world.

THE AUTHOR

Throughout this discussion, we must never forget that Cook was a character, the narrator in fact, in a story. Of course, there was once a time when Cook, as an officer of the Royal Navy, navigated ships from Britain to the South Seas and around the world. But the focus of the discussion here is on the printed texts and on Cook as an authorial voice in those texts. There will be no attempt to determine what really happened in the voyages or what Cook was really like. The issues that have animated recent Cook scholarship, which have been built on the journals, will thus not be engaged with in any sustained way. The focus here will be to determine how the voyages, as printed texts written in first person, with Cook as the main character, imagine the world.

One of the features typical of novels, according to Tzvetan Todorov, is the presence of many voices in the text. There are a wide range of characters who interact throughout a typical novel, giving a much greater sense of a dialogue than occurs, say, with a scientific treatise. In the printed account of Cook's voyages, there are also many voices. However, these voices are related and organized by the first-person voice of Cook, who becomes the sovereign centre around which the other voices are collected, quoted, organized, spoken to, and judged.

The drama of the voyages, it should be emphasized, is the drama of knowledge. As the voyages progress, the reader is offered a history of Cook's own engagements with both the world and previous texts. As the narrator of the voyage, Cook is thus fashioned into an ideal of the rational surveyor, someone who is able to enter into dialogue with alternative accounts (both in writing and conversation) but who retains the capacity to finally judge the truth. He appeals to grids in which he narrates his wanderings through time and space, discovering for himself not only discrete knowable objects, but also how it is possible to know anything.

But Cook does not simply present a true account of the world; he also narrates the process by which he arrives at that account, and the reader is encouraged to identify with this process. In *On Longing*, Susan Stewart

has noted that with the rise of the novel in the eighteenth century, “a new process of reading evolves from this new form of realism, a reading which gives the reader the status of a character. The reader comes to ‘identify with’ the position of Tom Jones, Pamela, Joseph Andrews, with the ‘proper name’ and not with a lesson, a signified.”¹⁶ In the same way, readers are encouraged to identify with particular characters in the voyages, such as Banks, Anderson, and, most importantly, Cook himself. It is through these characters and the information that they provide that the reader is given not only a particular description of the world but also a sense of how proper descriptions of the world ought to be created. As both the author and subject of the voyages, therefore, Cook encourages his readers to see the world through his eyes. At the very least, we become his confidants.

When Cook refers either to himself or to others in the text, the references are couched in a narrative of trust, which is itself tied to the political and economic structures that locate people in different social classes. In the third voyage, for instance, Cook writes, “I am indebted to Mr. Anderson for a considerable share of what follows in this and in the following chapter. In other matters I have only expressed, nearly in his words, remarks that coincided with mine; but what relates to the religion and language of these people, is entirely his own.”¹⁷ Responsibility is, of course, an important aspect of this passage, as is the desire to give Anderson due credit for the information he supplied. But there is also an important strategy here, insofar as the creation of reliable authors is a crucial way to create reliability in an empiricist approach to the world.

While the European gentlemen are brought into the narrative with little or no skepticism, the natives and the sailors are presented as secondary characters (named or unnamed). One of the anonymous books describing the second voyage, attributed to John Rickman, includes the claims that, given the structures of authority, the sailors often were not even able to speak, at least to the officers and the gentlemen. He writes that “among the seamen on board a king’s ship, there are always some expert navigators, whose judgment, ripened by experience, is much to be depended upon; but the misfortune is, that these men are never consulted, nor do they even dare so much as to whisper their opinion to their superior officer. Like gamblers standing by, they can see the errors of the game, but must not point them out till the game is over. This was the real case on board the *Discovery*.”¹⁸ No matter how many people were on

the ship or were met with in the voyages, the number of characters included in the narrative is very small. At times we hear of sailors jumping ship and being brought back, but the accounts that they give of themselves are almost always from the captain's perspective; or, better yet, from the perspective of sovereign authority itself.

By focusing on the legal and sovereign organization of identities in the voyages, Cook is not simply a journalist or an important character. He is also the captain of the ship. Cook's relationship to the voyages, therefore, acquires a more proprietary and strictly representational character. His status depends on a combination of his (political) control over the ship and his (legal) representation of the voyage as such. Cook thus owns the actions of the people on board, and, in a sense, acquires both the responsibility and the credit for what happens. When he writes, "I sailed," we should understand the "I" in terms of sovereignty – the commonwealth that consolidates the identities of its members into a single person. On the ship, he is representing the Admiralty, the King, and the Country to other places. He is also representing the voyages back to the Admiralty, the King, and the Country. He not only commands but must give an account of his commands.

The continued presentation of Cook as the captain and the central author of the voyages is tied to various projects of celebration, in which Cook is portrayed as a great navigator, a humanitarian, a servant of the empire, and a key originator for distant colonies. But the celebration of Cook also ends up being self-congratulatory. Cook became a hero of the British empire. Not only was he directly connected to specific projects, such as the British colonization of Australia and New Zealand, he and his voyages, once again as both events and texts, were also used to cast a long shadow on the nature of British exploration as such. More than just the captain of a ship, Captain Cook, "the navigator without fear and without reproach,"¹⁹ had become an icon. His status made it possible for others to write of the traveller's moral and spiritual relationship to movement in the world. He is deified, even on spots where he remained for only half an hour and did nothing remarkable. Cook has thus become a different kind of explorer, one who sets the stage for the global interactions of the nineteenth century, and one whose account of the world is not read simply because it is entertaining, but also because it is taken to be comprehensive, useful, and true. Cook is given credit, and the act of giving him credit also gives credit to the people and institutions that created and

sustained him. The celebration of Cook's authority throughout the nineteenth century, in other words, is tied to the celebration of specific forms of knowledge and power that cover both the world and the printed page.

But before the celebration could commence, the voyages had to be undertaken, the journals organized, and the results published. Longitude had to be verified, artifacts had to be collected, and everything had to be returned to Europe and turned into a book, a travel journal, in which Cook's voice travels with the reader from place to place, from episode to episode, and from chapter to chapter. Cook is not a fictional character, and while his voyages imagine places, they do not describe imaginary places.