P.I.E.- Peter Lang

CULTURAL CROSSINGS

Negotiating Identities in Francophone and Anglophone Pacific Literatures

À LA CROISÉE DES CULTURES

De la négociation des identités dans les littératures francophones et anglophones du Pacifique

Edited by / Sous la direction de
Raylene Ramsay

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INTRODUCTION

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From first contacts with Europe and the impacts of evangelisation and colonisation through to the present processes of globalisation and what Selina Tusitala Marsh labels 'polynation' or the mutual exchanges and common cause of different Polynesian cultures within New Zealand, the different essays in this book follow the transformations and (re)constructions of traditional Pacific identities. These 'negotiations' of identity are approached from a wide range of perspectives yet all of our authors come to strikingly similar conclusions: the places of encounter – on beaches, in writing, in the retelling of the texts of oral tradition, in the construction of contemporary Pacific anthologies or in postcolonial writing and translation – are sites of complex interaction and degrees of mixing that also involve negotiations of *mana* or power. The outcomes of the complex and shifting socio-political contexts of these negotiations are dynamic and different syncretisms that involve not only recovery or revival of traditional pasts but also the creation of distinctively new hybrid spaces. Two of our chapters interrogate directly the nature of the theoretical concept of hybridity in Pacific contexts.

Anne Salmond's contribution is a vivid retelling of the stories of the successive historical encounters with the indigenous people ("les naturels") of the first European expeditions to arrive in Otaheite/Tahiti (presently part of French Polynesia). From the published 'eye-witness' accounts of such ship's masters or men of science as Robertson, Commerson and Banks, her text weaves the stories of the 18th-century Europeans, Captains Wallis, Bougainville and Cook against the background of complex and different local geopolitical interactions – the struggles for power between rival chiefs. Attempting to look from both sides, her text, too, negotiates the "baffling" character of these initial exchanges to argue that, for both European and Native, the immediate outcomes of contact were mediated as much by prophecy, symbol, and myth as by geopolitical realities and pragmatic needs. This "entanglement" of Polynesian and European mythologies – the Tahitians associating the Europeans with their own god of fertility and war, Oro, and the Europeans seeking the lost continent (Terra Australis Incognita) and the lost Eden of the noble savage – would have a powerful effect on the travel

texts subsequently disseminated in Europe (initially by Bougainville). The glowing account of the new Cythera with its beautiful and sexually generous *vahinés* reinforced both the old (classical) myth of the golden age and the 18th century philosophical versions of the myth of the noble savage, a myth used early (as it would also be much later) to counter the myth of European 'development'. The original sexually explicit dances that were in fact, Salmond points out, often forms of challenge rather than of sexual enticement, the ritual performances of the *Arioi* that so captivated and shocked the first Europeans, found themselves transformed in turn by the gaze of the missionary, the administrator, and the reader, and later, by the marketability of the myth of the 'South Seas'. As later chapters indicate, the 'noble savage' as counter-myth continued to have currency into the present, where it serves writers of both European and indigenous origin.

Alongside Salmond's analysis of the manoeuvring for advantage that now appears to have been reciprocal and of the complex mutual influences "shaping events as they unfolded" (events in which women could be agents or be obliged to play the role of bait, pawn, or goods for exchange), her text also implicitly acknowledges the importance of relative power, for example the role of canon and musket against spear and club or the weight of written record against oral tradition. As Salmond's text acknowledges, it is most particularly the legacy of the writings of the LMS missionary, John Orsmond, transmitted in French by Teuira Henry, his grand-daughter, that constitutes present knowledge of pre-European Tahitian tradition.

Sylvie André's study, too, looks at the mixed character of what Hobsbawm has termed the 'invention of tradition' and, in particular, the relation of such recovery/creation to national aims in societies such as French Polynesia where significant breaks in tradition (such as colonialism) have led to the loss of that Word which once allowed communication with the ancestors. To understand the processes of the reinvention of Tradition in a plural society, André draws on Levi-Strauss's notion of *bricolage*, using the work of the contemporary Francophone writer, Jean-Marc Tera'ituatini Pambrun as her major case study. *Bricolage*, here, is a revaluing and reworking of the 'soul' of the culture, its schemas or deep structures: it is the reworking of the physical roots, mental frames, and knowledge that derive from oral traditions of initiation, within a kaleidoscopic structure, to create a regenerated new cultural entity. Pambrun attempts to recover the mystery and the lost emotion by situating his visionary text in a universe of premonition, magic and dream, a world peopled with enormously powerful beings from the past. However, he does this in French language and his preferred genre is, in fact, for André, not unlike the Western tradition of "le merveilleux",

fantasy or the marvellous. Pambrun's poetic, epic, and symbolic modes of representation weave together name-giving ceremonies, healing spirits, ancient Celtic deities and Christian references seeking to recreate the ruptured continuity between past and present while giving voice to the *génie Polynésien* and meaning to the modern world. However, as also happens in Ihimaera's Māori texts, André points out, mysterious events, the action of ancestors and spirits, are similarly left open in the Mā'ohi texts to more contemporary interpretations.

Viviane Fayaud's close attention to the relationships between cultures in the images in five illustrated editions – from 1898 to 1944 – of Pierre Loti's *Le Mariage de Loti*, the single most influential novel in Europe written by an outside observer (sailor, writer, artist) of French Polynesian society, again reveals the striking movement between ('photographic') reality and dream, this time in the European representations of Tahitian identity. Loti's *Banquet offert par la reine* (Pomare IV) which appears to recall his visit to Moorea, was published in *Le Monde illustré* in 1877, the year of the death of the queen. It portrays a sumptuous, largely Europeanised court, rich dishes, and harmony between two social elites, French officers and Polynesian *ari'i*. Later drawings, as Fayaud demonstrates, appear to have been done in France and to respond to editorial and ornamental criteria rather than to any ethnographic exactness, reinforcing the exotic and edenic Oceanian myth of "calme et volupté". Paradoxically, however, a number of illustrations of Pomare IV and of other important historical female figures (Vaekehu) are far from romantic and Fayaud suggests that these representations of imposing women modelled on photographs have genuine documentary qualities. In her analysis, the 'authentic' illustrations in Jacques Boullaire's 1948 edition again maintain a tension, in this case, between a trivialised and corrupted contemporary urban Polynesia and an idealised, immutable, ancient culture. In the period represented, observes Fayaud, the 10,000 Polynesians were suffering a rapid demographic decline whereas 1,000 Chinese workers entered the country in 1869. Yet no Chinese or Europeans, other than a few passing sailors, are represented to disturb the mythical Polynesian homogeneity of what was clearly already a multicultural society. As in Loti's literary works, the real and mixed character of the country is largely overwritten over by a mythical and feminised pure ethnicity in these illustrations.

Yet, in a further paradox, Fayaud argues that Loti's images were sufficiently non-sensual for Boullaire to need to add naked Polynesian women to Loti's largely insipid scenes. Her text concludes that the historian needs to look as least as closely at the contexts of the enunciation of identity as at the content, at both real and imaginary origins. The success of the 1898 illustrated edition, for example, shows the passion

of Europe for a monocultural, archaic, and mythical Polynesia. As André's study of the literary texts of Jean-Marc Pambrun suggested, this imagined image was subsequently interiorised by Polynesian literary writers.

Béatrice Sudul provides a rather different case study of post-contact cultural syncretism within French Polynesia from a historical perspective. Her essay examines modalities of influence through the introduction and development of writing at the end of the 18th century and the legacy this constitutes for contemporary Polynesian literature. Between 1797 and 1863, the English missionaries of the LMS produced, among other works, a catechism in Tahitian and in English translation, a vocabulary book of Tahitian and a spelling book printed in London. The first translation of the Bible into the vernacular was presented to Queen Victoria in 1838. This writing for religious purposes, and occasionally for daily living (commercial transactions), most often on banana leaves rolled up and tied with a piece of bark, she observes, had produced an astonishing 50 percent literacy rate by 1850. Sudul foregrounds the pioneering and deeply transforming role of the missionaries as speakers, writers, and teachers of the vernacular and their major work in initiating Polynesians (also seeking salt pork and arms) into reading and writing. By 1863, when French missionaries take over, the 'tradition' of *puta tupuna*, "books of the ancestors", with their mix of collective genealogies, mythical stories, information on Pre-European Tahitian society but also biblical commentary, already represents a certain acculturation of the elite. Sudul points out that like the *puta fenua* or book of the land (ownership), the *puta tupuna* was considered to constitute a loss in relation to the richness of recited oral history but also to be authentic. Such writings, she observes, constituted an appropriation of a western technology for the transcription and advancement of the local culture. The essay concludes with a reflection on the significance of orality and on the need to take such historical background into account to better understand the features of contemporary Polynesian literature.

For its part, Dominique Jouve's presentation of the multilingual writings of the Kanak pastoral 'teacher', Waia Gorodé, is similarly a study of indigenous negotiation of the fracture introduced by colonialism, evangelisation and writing and of the dynamic processes that occur in the interstices between cultures. In his unique autobiographical text, *Mon école du silence*, as the eldest son of the chief of the clan, following in the footsteps of his pastor father and grandfather, Waia Gorodé demonstrates on the one hand that evangelisation follows customary pathways in Houaïlou and on the other, that writing is now also a means of expressing a self, its emotions and thoughts. According to Jouve, Waia's rememorisation of former ceremonies of mourning, his magnify-

ing recollection of early Kanak ("grands et beaux dans leur sauvagerie comme leurs dieux de la nature") constitutes a dynamic reformulation of tradition in a fallen present but within the contexts of the future glory promised by the Christian religion.

Jouve's reading of Waia Gorodé finds no dualism in a text that integrates the deterritorialised Christian God and the gods of nature, the Kanak *bao*, less into a hierarchy than simply into different spaces. However, Jouve sees Waia as also attempting to displace the Western opposition between the sacred and the profane: Waia's old angel-gods of nature who are alive as visible or felt presence are, for her, immanent rather than transcendental.

All oral literature, Jouve reminds us, like social relations themselves, is structured by pathways, marriage paths or crossings of the lands of dead, journeys of initiation, of conquest, or for populating lands. Waia's lyric text is similarly a *fil vibè* – a weaving and knotting together of important names organized horizontally. Such Kanak networks remind us of other Pacific writing, for example, of Witi Ihimaera's *Rope of Man*, always spinning, actualising, and bringing into relationship.

The pathways that characterise and organise the texts of Kanak oral tradition are the subject of Emma Sinclair-Reynolds' study of the (re)writing of oral tradition. Focussing once again on the vital importance of the contexts, the socio-cultural and pragmatic contexts of the telling/retelling and reception, Sinclair-Reynolds also observes the power relations between oral and written forms. Her chapter cautions against the potential for the written French forms to take on an authority that might obscure and replace earlier, local, memorised or recited texts. Whereas translations/rewritings of Kanak oral literature introduced through the French education system in the present contexts of identity construction (the Noumea Agreement of 1998 and the shared future or "Destin Commun" it projects) appear to have a decolonising potential, preserving knowledge and creating spaces of shared heritage, this rewriting can also be a way of advancing particular political interests. Drawing on the theoretical equivalence articulated by the translation theorist Lefevere between rewriting and translation, Sinclair-Reynolds takes the multiple layers of translation at work in Leenhardt's founding compilation of oral texts, *Documents calédoniens*, as a first case study. Her text concludes with the possibility that Leenhardt's nata-informants were writing for a European readership or concerned to record particular claims and increase the status of their own group, thereby elevating a local truth negotiated with a listening audience to the status of a general (written) truth.

Sinclair-Reynolds' project included other more literary rewritings by both Kanak and Europeans of selected central texts of Kanak oral

tradition in her study and considered the nature of the cultural mixing they reflected. Sudul, for her part, had concluded her investigation by asking whether ethnic mixing might not be a significant factor in the transformation in French Polynesia in the 1970s of pragmatic and religious writing to contemporary literary writing. This 'emerging' literature whose central themes are the return to Mā'ohi identity, ecological conservation, political autonomy yet which nonetheless permits communication outside of the group and beyond tradition in a private and free space, is, Sudul suggests, largely the product of overseas university graduates from a number of ethnic groups, most particularly the *demi* or mixed-race population. The interest in the new Pacific literatures found its first major echo in the Metropolitan establishment of the *Salon du livre insulaire* at Ouessant in France in 1990 and somewhat later, in the more local festival, *Lire en Polynésie* in Papeete.

Titaua Porcher's chapter extends Sudul's incipient study of contemporary Polynesian writing in French and Jouve's study of Waia Gorodé by comparing the central role played by the themes of 'the earth' and of 'words'/ *parole* in identity negotiation in the texts of Titaua Peu and Chantal Spitz from French Polynesia and in the Kanak poems and short stories of Waia's daughter, Déwé Gorodé. In both Spitz and Gorodé, in Porcher's analysis, human beings, land, and spirit are one. The land, a symbolic figure of the mother, takes on the contours of the feminine body and is valued for its reproductive functions. Attachment to the earth is to an original and sacred place, where the placenta is buried. Engendering, between the body and the earth, a visceral body, enveloping, nourishing, and maternal, as much as it is metaphysical is continuous. In Chantal Spitz's novel, *L'Île des rêves écrasés*, the departure of its sons to fight in distant Europe thus disfigures the body of the maternal Mā'ohi earth as do the French nuclear tests of 1965 and 1995.

The physical connection to ancestral time in both Spitz and Gorodé, to an earth that is 'the blood of the dead', makes the land a space of the inheritance of the past but also a political place of the present. Recovery of the land, it is argued, alone allows recovery of identity. Porcher notes the movement from an imprisoned Word to political 'rebellion'. Moving from the epic breath of orality (Flora Devatine) and the Romantic vision of the traditional past in Chantal Spitz, Porcher also considers the more pessimistic social vision present in the texts of both Titaua Peu and Déwé Gorodé, their de-idealising of a present hybrid "Custom" particularly marked by the prostitution, alcoholism and disintegration of the identity of women. Peu's autobiographical novel, *Mutismes*, like Gorodé's novel, *L'Épave*, however, portrays the roots of women's silence and oppression as residing not only in a present hybrid custom but also in the system inherited from the ancestors. If the role of the

(woman) writer is to restitute full memory in order to construct the future, there can be no absolute idealisation of a 'traditional' society. Despite the paradox that for all three women writers, to be a woman is to remain silent, the role of writing is precisely to say the unsayable, "all the misery of women in the present and in the past" for Gorodé, in order to negotiate a new syncretic identity.

Sonia Faessel approaches the construction(s) of identity in contemporary indigenous writing in the Pacific through a comparison of Déwé Gorodé's *L'Épave* (2005) and Albert Wendt's *The Mango's Kiss* (2003). Both writers, from French New Caledonia or independent Samoa, respectively, explore the possibilities of modern acculturated life and of a (re)turn to tradition. Wendt's historical saga, in Faessel's reading, stages both the conquest by the novel's young protagonist, Pele, of individual identity and the affirmation of her collective Samoan identity. On the other hand, in Gorodé's curious first novel, Tom and Lena share the same name across three generations. Similarly, the uncle (figure of customary power) and the fisherman (figure of the ancestor) are one and the same, past and present. In the savage possession of women by men, abused equally by the genitor-ancestor and by the powerful customary uncle as *maître de la parole*, women are caught in networks (pathways?) that imprison rather than bestow identity. Whereas Wendt's novel shows a historical evolution with Pele mastering the new economic structures as well as integrating traditional community structures and choosing her own husband, even at the risk of dishonouring her parents and custom, argues Faessel, Gorodé's novel continues to circle back to its point of departure. The very founding myth (of the wrecked canoe) like the novel's many dreams and premonitions imprisons the generations of Lena in the net of the fisherman in an inescapable relationship of domination. In Gorodé's novel, where the central scene of women's lives is an incestuous threesome in the *case* or domestic space of the thatched house of a respected man of the *tribu*, that is within a perverse and alienating sexuality especially as this is seen by religion, claims Faessel, free Kanak woman does not yet exist: Lila, Lena and Eva have all lost a young child and thus, she argues, their power as a woman. Eva, who creates a no man's land between the *tribu* and the city and comes to represent the "immense" power of women, is nonetheless tormented by guilt and fear of sin, joins a sect and goes mad. The existential darkness of Wendt's original void, *Pouliuli*, toward which many of his characters are drawn, is replaced in Gorodé, concludes Faessel, by imprisonment in the recurrence of time.

In both novels, Samoan and Kanak, traditional society is no protection against violence and exploitation. However, all is not well either in the world of modern identities. Contemporary life in *L'Épave* is the

superficial vivacity of buying and selling, parading the body, and imbibing (drugs, sex, and alcohol) in the false companionship of the night clubs and bars of Noumea. Similarly, even within Wendt's more positive vision of culture contact, it is Pele's fascination for the vanity of personal power through the possession of wealth, claims Faessel, that leads to her separation from the community and from Tavita, the husband she loves.

Faessel concludes that caught between tradition and modernity, hierarchical and patriarchal power and individual freedom, the negotiation of identity in both of these novels is a difficult and ongoing process – both novels ask questions, neither offers definitive answers. Both are far from idealising tradition. Yet the aim of this comparative reading is clearly to situate Gorodé and Wendt at very different points on the spectrum of rational, continuous, realist, historical narrative most often seen as Western. If individual choice does not lead to happiness for Pele, for Wendt, nonetheless, the integration of cultures appears to be possible and in some cases mutually productive – Mautu discovers a different way of living and learns English through his beachcomber friend Barker, who in his turn learns Samoan, takes a Samoan wife and builds his own *alia* (double canoe). Similarly mixing or hybridity is given more weight in Wendt.

Faessel's study nonetheless notes the diverse sources of both novels claiming that it is from 'world literature' that both the Anglophone and the Francophone writer draw their inspiration – the *Sourates* or Koranic verses in Gorodé, Stevenson, Borges, Camus in Wendt. For her part, Gorodé's (resistant) new hybrid text is remarkable for its use of non-standard registers and genres of French from rap-poetry, lullaby, and street language prose-poetry.

Isabel Moutinho's study of the novels of the East Timorese writer Luis Cardoso presents that writer as directly recognising and indeed attributing value to the hybridity of his society. Questions of language and contexts – the particular character of the colonial past and of the country's recent political history – are again central to the representation of contemporary identities. Moutinho argues that it was the resistance to the second colonisation of East Timor by Indonesia, a brutal military occupation from 1975 (East Timor finally regaining its independence in 2002), that in fact brought any unity of the group as a 'nation' into writing/into being.

In 2002, the political choice of Xanana Gusmão, as first President of East Timor, established two languages for the new multilingual nation, the 'ancient' Tetum and the language of the former coloniser, Portuguese. The four recently published novels of Luis Cardoso, like Gusmão part of a Lusophone intelligentsia, are written in Portuguese. The first

novel, which is set in Portugal, observes Moutinho, deals with the nostalgia for the Portuguese-Timorese Catholic identity bequeathed by the father and by a Jesuit education. Cardoso's novels, however, are, for Moutinho, a clear affirmation of a complex multiethnic, multicultural and uniquely East Timorese society. Unlike Gusmão, who attempted to promote a national cultural and political unity he always called *maubere*, concludes Moutinho, Cardoso's work reflects the struggle with a powerfully internalised 'outside' (Portuguese) identity, recalls the historical internal dissensions in a plurilingual Timor without bitterness, and ultimately affirms a mixed "multicultural" East Timorese identity.

In Cardoso's second novel, *Olhos de Coruja Olhos de Gato Bravo* [Eyes of the Owl Eyes of the Wild-cat], the ancestral traditions of Timor are portrayed without concession to the metropolitan Portuguese reader, as are the ancient and present interracial divisions and prejudices and the past political conflicts between loyalist and belligerent Timorese communities. The double or hybrid character of Cardoso's paternal characters (the catechist devoted to God and yet in submission to the spirits of the land) in Moutinho's reading is underlined by non-standard Portuguese syntactic structures.

Karin Speedy's contribution extends the concept of the double identity and cultural crossings to Hélène Savoie's use of memories, shared myths and the theme of *métissage* as a means of creating a hybrid Pacific Francophone settler voice. The collection of short stories of this fifth generation *calédonienne* or "Oceanian of European origin" as Speedy calls her, mixes the legends of the ancients with those of the Kanak world evoking her strong connection to the islands of New Caledonia and Vanuatu through family history, collective memories, and poetic descriptions of landscapes, both beautiful and terrible. The fear of exile from a Pacific home that drives her narrative, written after the political 'Events' or 'Troubles' of the 1980s, like the evocation of the power of sensory childhood memories, oral family histories, pioneering memories, of heat, mosquitoes, dangers from the isolation of the bush, poverty and fear of the mysteries of the Other (an unpredictable neighbour) or, more recently, of losing one's home evoked by Speedy, are those common to colonial and 'settler' literature. Savoie shares with Kanak writers the denunciation of the wounding of the land in the name of progress by mining and of the unbridled sexuality of the colonial patriarchs on their vast stations. Her work, too, is concerned with the insider-outsider question and issues of identity, particularly in relation to the *métropolitains* from France and repatriated French settlers from Algeria relocating to other French Territories, castigated for their ignorance of the local. Speedy argues that Savoie's representations of the

odours, colours, and wetness of Sydney's King's Cross draw on Kanak myths of the *bao*, the land of the dead; that the writer's intricate *métissage* of cultural and mythical worldviews, along with her powerful evocations of personal memories, bear witness to shared post-colonial Oceanian identity marked by spiritual connection to the land and to the Pacific as centre rather than as a periphery of France.

The question of the weight and purpose of this settler appropriation of Kanak myth in the less specific form of the insider-outsider question is picked up in the essays in our volume by indigenous Pasifika scholars working in tertiary institutions in New Zealand and able, according to Selina Tusitala Marsh, to both "talk the talk of literary criticism" and "speak the language of Pasifika aesthetics". A chapter by Tusitala Marsh analyses the nine-person stage performance by poets from the Pasifika diaspora writing communities in Aotearoa, New Zealand. This "Polynation" performance group enacts and realises ever-shifting cultural identities through the heterogeneous, diasporic, writing of Pasifika stories and songs but, claims Tusitala Marsh, from the *Turangawaewae* (the standing place) "firmly planted" by *Tangata Whenua* (Māori).

Tusitala Marsh repositions the study of the text in the often marginalised genre of performance poetry, considering performance (sound, music, lighting and body movement) and indeed the performativity of cultural identity itself as a new hybrid genre turning simultaneously back to tradition and forward to a mixed future. The recurring line, "I am a Samoan" and "Fast-Talking PI", that acts as a connecting thread throughout the show, for example, is analyzed as a "self-empowering speech act of identity and self assertion" countering stereotype. Demonstrating certain commonalities with indigenous literary production, "Polynation" is seen to communicate alternative subaltern histories and stage challenging personae to take on an ill-informed establishment and its pronouncements, giving its performance a strong political focus and relational impact as in "Street" or "Slam" poetry.

Language modification, for Marsh, is again central. The homogeneity and limitation implied by the term nation is redefined in the name "Polynation", made inclusive, and multiple, by the self-affirming *afakasi*, while it simultaneously neutralises the language of assimilation and racial classification by word-play and rhyming scheme.

> … I'm a bit of both PI
> A chameleon PI
> A hybrid, mongrelized, self-satisfied PI

Despite the positive affirmation of the term "pollination" as cross-pollination, and of a hybridity "widening the palate of the world",

Tusitala Marsh ends her text with an analysis of the ways in which the poems tap into existing Pacific aesthetic – the collective and the oral in the "We" in the refrain, "We are Polynation", both verb and noun: the genealogical context; the mythical references, shared histories of "our first migration"; writing back against stereotypes; using breath and movement in terms of performance interactivity, incorporating the gestures of a calling into a relationship taken from Māori protocol, or using 'orature'/ the "non-formalised, non ceremonial (and therefore under-studied) oratorical rituals practised by common folk" such as gossip, dance, prayer, chant, song and story-telling.

"Polynation" in Tusitala Marsh's analysis is thus ancient breath and new words seeding new worlds as they support the lived realities and hybrid identities of the contemporary Pasifika writer in Aoteoroa/New Zealand, "edgewalker" in an in-between space, lacking clear boundaries, in transition but acknowledging "our kaupapa", the shared identity of the Pasifika poet.

Alice Te Punga Somerville's chapter is similarly a study of her own experience of thinking through or constructing Pacific identities, in her case by using anthologies for teaching a new course on Pacific literature at Victoria University. This experience opens up a set of vital questions. Do anthologies, asks Te Punga Somerville, reduce Pacific literatures to "sound-bites", tiny moments in a far-flung sea (to use colonial metaphor), or rather do they recreate "our sea of islands", the sea that Hau'ofa saw as connecting all Pacific peoples? Moreover, given that collection and display to visitors (non-insiders) underpinned the modes of European colonial expansion, might these not be repeated in the selection and display processes of the anthology?

Literary anthologies in the Pacific have brought a number of Pacific writers into circulation whose relatively short oeuvre would not otherwise have achieved a publishing life of its own. In particular, the recent publication of French Polynesian texts in English translation in *Varua Tupu* has brought parts of the French-speaking Pacific back into the Pasifika fold. On the one hand, then, Te Punga Somerville observes that the form of the anthology, despite being an iteration of the imperialist project of collecting, has served the region… On the other, she recalls the withdrawal of Wendt, Ihimaera, Grace, and Hulme from the 1994 *Faber Book of Contemporary South Pacific Stories* in protest against the position the Pakeha CK Stead had been given as editor, reminding the reader that this decision impacted on the logic and structure, or the selection and very shape of display as indeed on the introduction. Te Punga Somerville's study concludes that the creation of anthologies does indeed constitute a kind of community and a reinforcement of

identification. Her study is less persuaded that efforts by 'outsiders' to give a voice to non-White writers has served the Pacific well.

Deborah Walker-Morrison's discussion of the tensions between voice, image, and text in her production of a subtitled DVD to accompany *Nights of Storytelling*, a first cultural history of New Caledonia in the form of an anthology of texts from the Pacific in translation, engages with a number of the issues raised by Emma Sinclair-Reynolds, Selina Tusitala Marsh, and Alice Te Punga Somerville and in particular the latter's concern to avoid any simple imitation of colonial modes of representing Pacific identities. Walker Morrison's image-track containing archival still photographs, contemporary art-work, and video footage whose aim is to anchor the spoken text in Kanak spaces, may well, she acknowledges, distract from the staging of the strongly performative dimension of traditional Kanak oral literature. Technical constraints and the commercial realities of subtitles, their need for condensation and rewriting clearly conflict with the ethical imperatives of any full and faithful translation of postcolonial and indigenous texts. The multimedia presentation appears to be in conflict with the contemporary call for post-colonial translations to be situated within "a resistant, source-text centred, foreignizing paradigm". However, Walker Morrison's work concludes that 'foreignizing' is not necessarily the only or the best way to respect the indigenous text; contextualising images and graphic text can make indigenous terms concrete and comprehensible and constitute translation gains. Mixed media – video footage, special effects, contemporary art-work, sub-titling and recitation, for example, enable maximum capture of the Kanak particularity of the rap-poetry in alexandrines of Denis Pourawa or Éric Mouchonnière's attempts to go beyond magic realism in his illustrations of the creation story of Teā Kenaké. Productive tensions (hybridity) between cultural specificity and cultural universals can underline the sense of both cultural loss and gain.

In short, a mixture of foreignising and naturalising strategies might well result in bringing artists from different regions (in this case, the Francophone and the Anglophone Pacific) into closer contact through this wider translation.

If the tradition being 'recovered' in Pacific societies is consistently shown to be 'hybrid' in the above studies, by insiders as by outsiders, this hybridity is clearly different in degree from one work to another, a product of different contexts and different syncretisms. In turn, the specificities (and the commonalities) of Pacific writing highlighted in this book by our authors put hybridity theory itself into question – both its singular nature and effects and Bhabha's restless interstitial passage that "entertain(s) difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy".

Raylene Ramsay examines the origins and nature of 'hybridity' as a theoretical model applied generally to diasporic and postcolonial literatures. Her text goes on to consider its usefulness for an understanding of the identity effects of the contact, exchange, and mixing in the specific case of the different groups of 'emerging' literatures in Kanaky/New Caledonia. Whereas identity suggests traditional self-similarity and singleness, hybridity is (post-modern) self-difference, mixing and heterogeneity and indeed, can amount to what Freud designated as *unheimlich*. Biological mixing in New Caledonia has not led inevitably to cultural mixing and miscegenation can be what Young has called a "nervous condition of ambivalence". Moreover, whereas identity is constructed from Derridean difference, "in the gap", in the theoretical texts of Homi Bhabha, for both Gorodés, father and daughter, as for the Kanak playwright, Pierre Gope, despite acculturation and modernity, something distinctively Kanak is still alive "under the ashes of the conch shells". On the other hand, it is evident that the borrowing and adaptation of Kanak myth, from the 'outside', as in Hélène Savoie's settler writing, produces a rather different mix again. Hybridity, Ramsay concludes, is no simple or symmetrical exchange between self and other, no single thing, but the term does provide a useful frame from within which to consider shared but different personal and political trauma in New Caledonian writing, indeed the incommensurability of difference and of identities.

In his study of hybridity in contemporary New Zealand fiction Alistair Fox observes that Bhabha has recoded hybridity as the processes produced in the articulation of cultural difference with cultural value and community interest being negotiated in the interstices. This particular hybridity, he argues, is a symptom of the fluidity and porosity of the postmodern and its theorisations have underestimated the ways in which the practices he observes in the zones of contact within literary texts can work as an agent of change, articulating fears and desires, serving as a 'transformational object'. Following Bakhtin or Young who argue for a model of intentional hybridity or a shifting and eclectic syncretism (as in language creolisation), an hybridity that opens up new space to debate and negotiates new perceptions related to cultural identity, Fox, too, shows that the uses and categories of hybridity are legion, including fusion/miscegenation, splitting (otherness within and blurring of boundaries) or cultural 'translation' as in the work of Salman Rushdie.

The question of the role played by translation in negotiating mixed cultural relationships and identities within postcolonial frames of 'writing back' is followed up in Jean Anderson's reflection on 'resistant' translation in relation to her own work with Francophone and Anglo-

phone literary texts from New Zealand and French Polynesia. Anderson, too, advises some caution in jettisoning specificity in favour of too great a degree of fusion, but also in changing her reader's sense of place in society too dramatically. She elaborates a context-dependent politics of the glossary, reasonable for a distanced metropolitan readership but unnecessary, she argues, in New Zealand where Te Reo/Māori is an official 'first' language. Similarly, the notion of 'receivability' implies negotiating the degree of resistance acceptable to editors, suggests avoidance of clusters of italicised 'foreign' words, limits the full explication of the senses of certain cultural symbols and subterranean references and requires a cautious approach to the translation of relexified passages (non-standard English or French) where the risk factors of creating a language radically different from the norm may simply prove to be unacceptable.

Like Walker-Morrison's, it is Anderson's own practice, her negotiation of identities that leads to a critical re-examination of Venuti's single principle of 'foreignizing' or leaving a degree of strangeness in the finished translation Anderson observes that indigenous writers working in a settler language are already hybridising or practising a degree of foreignisation and writing against a canon. She notes, for example, the underlying patterns of Māori in the work of Patricia Grace or the disconcertingly non-standard and 'lyrical' language in Chantal Spitz's *Hombo*. For the very considerable creativity and the hybrid features of indigenous writing to be well received, concludes Anderson, requires not just excellent creative skills on the part of the translator but also openness on the part of the target audience. In this respect, the translation of emergent writers from less well-known backgrounds, likely to encounter a less flexible reception, needs to be particularly 'receivable'.

This final pragmatically-based text implicitly takes account of the layers of hybridity and yet the specificities that mark individual literary texts, 'national' or group literatures, Francophone, Anglophone (and Portuguese language) writing, and Pacific literature in general. I am very proud to have the privilege of introducing these excitingly original contributions to the emergent understandings of the hybridities and differences that have negotiated and continue to negotiate Pacific Francophone and Anglophone identities and Pacific identity.

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