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Tahiti Intertwined: Ancestral Land, Tourist Postcard, and Nuclear Test Site

In this article, I apply ideas from Foucault, Lefebvre, and Soja about *thirdspace*, or space beyond dualisms, to an understanding of “Tahiti” as a complex, intertwined place. For most Tahitians, a sense of place is rooted in land, which individuals describe as a nurturing mother. Genealogical ties to land define personal identities and social relationships. For the world at large, however, the perception of Tahiti is based on seductive, mass-mediated, touristic images. The perpetuation of these images, whose origins go back two-hundred years, has become increasingly enmeshed in the economic and political agendas of the French colonial government. The resumption of nuclear testing in French Polynesia in 1995–96 and the subsequent rioting by Tahitians, which disseminated negative images throughout the world, provide a setting for an analysis of Tahiti that moves beyond dualisms. Tahiti is understood instead as an intertwined *thirdspace*, equally real and imagined, immediate and mediated. [place, colonialism, imagery, tourism, nuclear testing]

The space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and gnaws at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space . . . we live inside a set of relations. [Michel Foucault 1986:23]

There is no “reality” without a concentration of energy, without a focus or core—nor, therefore, without the dialectic. [Henri Lefebvre (1974)1991:399]

In grappling to understand social life, late-twentieth-century scholars have begun to give the same kind of intense analytical attention to space that nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars gave to history. In the past, as Michel Foucault ([1976]1980:70) points out, “space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the contrary, was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic.” As the relative positioning of space and time has become realigned, space has emerged as more central than before and, around it, a new body of literature has developed. This may be in part because, as Foucault (1986:23) states, “the anxiety of our era has to do fundamentally with space, no doubt a great deal more than with time.” Scholars like Foucault have not only recognized the importance of space in understanding social action, but have illuminated new ways of thinking about space, an approach Foucault calls “heterotopology.”

Henri Lefebvre, likewise, in his powerful treatise on the production of space, calls for a “science of space” that overcomes the “abyss between the mental sphere on one side and the physical and social spheres on the other”

([1974]1991:6). He argues for a science that moves beyond mere descriptions of what exists in space or discourses on space to one that gives rise to a knowledge of space and its production ([1974]1991:7). Space, he says, embraces a multitude of intersections. Desiring to create a theoretical unity between fields that are apprehended separately (the physical and the mental), but interact with and influence one another, Lefebvre labels his project the development of a “unitary theory” ([1974]1991:14). He outlines a dyad, from which a triad, or “*thirdspace*” (*il y a toujours l'autre*), emerges.

FIRST SPACE	SECOND SPACE	THIRD SPACE
physical space	mental space	social space
perceived space	conceived space	lived space
(<i>l'espace perçu</i>)	(<i>l'espace conçu</i>)	(<i>l'espace vécu</i>)

It is the *thirdspace* that he desires to understand. Simultaneously physical and mental, concrete and abstract, it emerges from the dialectic of the two. Mental space, formulated in the head, is projected onto physical reality, which in turn feeds the imaginary. Edward Soja (1989:18) refers to *thirdspace* as the habitus of social practices, a constantly shifting and changing milieu of ideas, events, appearances, and meanings (Soja 1996:2).

This idea of *thirdspace*, formulated by Foucault and Lefebvre in France in the 1970s, and applied by Soja in the 1980s and '90s,¹ has had surprisingly little impact on disciplines like anthropology that aim to understand people and environments. Indeed, for much of anthropology's history, place has been neglected. For decades, it was relegated to a

static physical backdrop, a kind of stage-setting removed from human action and interaction—the mandatory first chapter in every early ethnography. Only in the past decade or so have anthropologists come to grips with its complexities, even pleading for a theory of place (Rodman 1992). Yet, their renewed interest in the topic has often only perpetuated the abyss in one of anthropology's own set of dualisms, namely between outsider/insider perspectives. Some anthropologists have deconstructed the powerful concepts of place that outsiders entertain and impose through an assemblage of representations. Tourism industries, for example, produce countless texts and images through which spaces get transformed into, and reproduced as, sites and destinations.² Museum exhibits and theme parks also rely on fabricated settings to provide context and convey messages.³ Likewise, the mass marketing of goods depends on the manipulation of images of places to influence the consuming public. Capitalist markets, while economically needing other peoples and environments, may politically seek to eliminate them through consciously crafted misrepresentations (Williamson 1986).

Others have tried to understand places from the perspective of their inhabitants, noting that places are developed interactively as individuals relate to them, shape them, and create them.⁴ They have connected places to social imagination and practice, to dwelling and movement, and to memory and desire, and have found worlds that are sung, narrated, and mapped (Feld and Basso 1996:8, 11). Focusing on the internally constructed and negotiated nature of place, anthropologists have produced a variety of new descriptive phrases to debunk the old notion of location as static backdrop. These newly perceived spaces are said to be "discursively constructed" (Appadurai 1988), "multilocal" and "multivocal" (Rodman 1992), unconfined "ethnoscapes" (Gupta and Ferguson 1992), and "dynamic multisensual processes" (Hirsch and O'Hanlon 1995). Yet, the hoped-for theory of place has not materialized. Anthropology's recent concern with concepts of place and processes of place making may benefit from ideas about thinspace.⁵

Here I apply ideas about thinspace to explore and understand "Tahiti." In doing so, I move beyond the seemingly contradictory perspectives of Tahiti as either fantasized postcard or inhabited locale, and instead embrace Tahiti as a "habitat of social practices." Tahiti emerges as a complex lived space that is generated within historical and spatial dimensions, both real and imagined, immediate and mediated. Various notions of place, often at battle with each other, nonetheless involve, underpin, presuppose, respond to, and generate one another.

Places of Tahiti

When I began research on the production of place in 1994 (a second field site and research topic for me), I chose French Polynesia as a field location precisely because,

more than most places, Tahiti has a life of its own that dwells in outsiders' imaginations.⁶ While conducting my research, I lived in two different villages, both in the Leeward group of the Society Islands (one of the five archipelagos in French Polynesia).

One village, Fetuna, on the island of Raiatea, is located 25 kilometers from Uturoa, the island's main town and the local French administrative center. Raiatea is heavily influenced by its administrative role, which produces a strong French bureaucratic presence. I chose Fetuna because it was as far away as one could get from Uturoa on the island. Although some Fetuna residents worked in town, most spent their days in the village. There, houses lined an unpaved, poorly maintained, coastal road made of dirt that had been packed with crushed coral and shell dredged from the sea. One day, the *mara'amu* trade winds blew fiercely and the sea thrashed over the road, leaving behind piles of trash that otherwise resided unobtrusively on the ocean floor. Rusty tin cans, plastic bottles, disposable diapers, plastic bags, torn clothes, and broken thong sandals littered the road. Several days after the winds had calmed down, government employees responsible for road maintenance arrived. They sat on top of their yellow road graders and lethargically but methodically plowed the garbage back into the sea. That same road circled the island and, eventually, wider and paved, led into Uturoa where it was flanked by numerous shops selling food, clothing, pharmaceuticals, stationery goods, fishing gear, and other sundries. Upon entering these stores, shoppers were usually greeted by posters and calendars with pictures of sandy white beaches under stunning blue skies, racks of postcards of coquettish, bare-breasted women, or magazines with glossy photos of multicolored fish darting through sparkling turquoise lagoons.

The other village I lived in was Faie, located on Huahine, an island whose inhabitants are known for being proud and independent. The center of Faie was densely packed with colorful houses nestled among trees. At the southern end of the village, the road crossed a small bridge before it climbed a steep hill to a lookout with a magnificent view over the bay and surrounding peaks. Every Sunday, like clockwork, an air-conditioned van full of tourists passed through the village. They came from the *Windsong*, a cruise ship that sailed the waters of the Society Islands, stopping each day in a different port during a week-long trip. In Faie, their destination was a group of "sacred eels" that, according to guidebooks, were the biggest in the world. The eels lived under the bridge, slithering in a stream often littered with debris. The van parked and the tourists, usually wearing designer clothes and clutching cameras, piled out. Tahitian children stopped their playing, shyly clustered nearby, and watched. The guide encouraged the tourists to go into the small store next to the bridge, buy canned mackerel (where, cleverly, the price of mackerel was exceptionally high), and hand-feed the eels.

Most tourists stood at the bridge and asked the guide a few questions about the eels or took pictures, while the more adventuresome among them gingerly stepped into the murky water below, dangling pieces of fish from their fingers. Soon thereafter everyone climbed back into their air-conditioned van and left.

Futuna and Faie are very different from one another, as are the two islands of Raiatea and Huahine on which they are located. Yet, as I lived in each, I was struck less by the difference between them than by a greater, more powerful contrast. As in many tourist destinations, the disparity was between daily life as lived by the local inhabitants (Tahitians working in their gardens, fishing in the sea, visiting with friends, looking at tourists, repairing broken vehicles, or staying in their houses to clean, cook, or watch television) and the seductive images offered on calendars and postcards, and in magazines and guide books, that lured tourists to an exotic destination (perhaps only to be disappointed by such a lackluster experience as tossing greasy mackerel to eels in a dirty stream).

As time passed, I continually wondered about these two different places—to use Lefebvre's terminology—the physical and perceived, on the one hand, and the mental and conceived, on the other. At first I had thought of daily perceived life as existing in a separate realm from the conceived tourist representations. I assumed that Tahitians, other than those few who worked in the tourist industry, remained unaffected by the seductive images. But suddenly, in September 1995, my thoughts changed. On September 5, the French government resumed nuclear testing by exploding a bomb on the atoll of Moruroa, 1,200 kilometers from Tahiti. The next day, riots swept the capital city of Papeete on the island of Tahiti and images of protesters, fires, and looting flooded world television sets and newspapers. The French government's response to the dissemination of these images was tinged with obvious anxiety. I immediately gained new insight. I awoke to the destructiveness that was not only lodged in the exploding bomb but in the postcard images themselves. I began to realize, both through ethnographic research and by studying media representations, how economically motivated, politically manipulated, and consciously constructed the images were. Above all, I understood how deliberately intertwined they were with the French colonial enterprise. Indeed, the production and distribution of images of Tahiti as paradise seem to serve colonial interests by allowing those in power (primarily the French and *demi*, who are people of mixed ancestry whose background is both Tahitian and French, or Chinese, German, English, American, etc.) to convince those without power (primarily Tahitians) that the status quo serves Tahitian interests.⁷ The thirdspace that gradually emerged from my research and growing understanding was a vastly more complex and, above all, political space.

Geo-Politics and Local Habitat

Lefebvre and Foucault are both mindful of the political aspects of the production of space. Lefebvre's science of space stems from his commitment to an understanding of political practices. His theories aim to uncover the political use of knowledge and imply an ideology designed to conceal that use. As he states, "the dominant tendency is towards homogeneity, towards the establishment of a dominated space" (Lefebvre [1974]1991:411). Foucault, in particular, emphasizes a political understanding of space. He reminds us that "the military and the administration actually come to inscribe themselves both on a material soil and within forms of discourse" (Foucault [1976]1980:69). Indeed, he sees the history of spaces as the history of power. "A whole history remains to be written of spaces—which would at the same time be the history of powers . . . from the great strategies of geo-politics to the little tactics of the habitat" (Foucault [1977]1980:149).

For Soja, too, thirdspace is eminently political. It is

a knowable and unknowable, real and imagined lifeworld of experiences, emotions, events, and political choices that is existentially shaped by the generative and problematic interplay between centers and peripheries, the abstract and concrete, the impassioned spaces of the conceptual and the lived, marked out materially and metaphorically in spatial praxis, the transformation of (spatial) knowledge into (spatial) action in a field of unevenly developed (spatial) power. [Soja 1996:31]

In French Polynesia, locally inhabited space is definitely interlaced by dominant, global politics. In today's largely postcolonial world, French Polynesia, more popularly known as Tahiti,⁸ remains one of the few colonies still in existence. Lying half-way around the world from France, French Polynesia is administered under France's Ministry of Overseas Departments and Territories. Under the terms of France's 1946 constitution, the colonies in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans (Martinique, Guadeloupe, French Guiana, and Réunion) became *départements d'outre-mer* (DOMs) with a legal structure and administration that is identical to the metropolitan departments. The colonies in the Pacific Ocean (New Caledonia, French Polynesia, the former Franco-British condominium of the New Hebrides, now called Vanuatu, and—after 1961—Wallis and Futuna) were renamed *territoires d'outre-mer* (TOMs). Territories, unlike departments, are administered by a governor or governor-general. The constitution defined the French Union, the new incarnation of the Empire, in such a way that "the word 'colony,' like 'Empire,' was thereby banished from French constitutional usage" (Aldrich 1993:67). The result, however, was that France established a political presence in all the world's major oceans, with a similar colonial configuration in all DOM-TOMs (see Bensa 1995; Giradet 1972; Price 1998). Indeed, many administrative personnel rotate between DOM-TOMs during their careers. A decade after the 1946 constitution, the need

to maintain a nuclear testing base in French Polynesia, and the desire to link the DOM-TOMs, so they formed a chain of French bases encircling the globe, provided the theoretical pillars of France's international policy in the South Pacific (Aldrich 1993:336).

In French Polynesia, the Constitution of the Republic of France remains the supreme law of the land. The French parliament legislates laws. The French president appoints the chief administrator and most local officials. Paris retains control of defense, law and order, foreign policy, currency, education, immigration, health care, social services, television, radio broadcasting, and newspapers. The degree of autonomy exercised by the French Polynesian government depends on the goodwill of the *métropole*. When it deems such action necessary, the French state can assume direct and near total control (Aldrich 1993:159). The thousands of French soldiers and civil servants in French Polynesia can vote in local elections the day they arrive in the territory.

This colonial grip manifests itself daily in numerous ways. Tahitian children devote the majority of their school day to learning French language, history, and geography. Postsecondary education, other than at the Centre Universitaire de Polynésie Française on the island of Tahiti, is usually limited to universities in France since French is the only language officially taught to Tahitians. Most television broadcasts are through Radio France Outremer (RFO), which represents "the voice of France," and all their employees are paid directly from France.

This position of domination is not without cost to France, which, in 1995, pumped 625 million French francs (U.S. \$1.25 billion) into the economy to maintain it (Benchley 1997:9).⁹ Unlike other colonial relationships rooted in economic exploitation, this one, instead, is motivated by economic investment and national pride.¹⁰ The system is also self-perpetuating. The French payments, upon which the economy depends, are filtered through a system that is controlled by a few families, most of whom are French or demi.¹¹ This well-entrenched, privileged class provides built-in assurance that the economic and political system will endure.

A Reciprocal Relationship with Land

For Tahitians, as for most Pacific Islanders, a sense of place is deeply rooted in land.¹² Both ancient history and contemporary life are grounded in the relationship between people and land, and all that this relationship encompasses, bestows, and justifies. Islands are believed to be born of deities, and an island's topographical features may represent physical attributes of the gods. From the human offspring of the gods come all living things. Genealogies instruct individuals about their spiritual and familial relationship with the land. Above all, it is a reciprocal relationship. People must care for the land because it, in turn,

feeds and provides for them. In precontact times, everyone had access to land, which was jointly owned by extended families (*fenua feti'i*). The population was composed of three main classes: the king, or *ari'i*, and high chiefs who possessed godly powers and owned land that included religious sites; the royal servants, or *ra'atira*, who owned large estates obtained by conquest or granted by the king; and the lower class, or *manahune*, who lived on and cultivated land allocated to them and for which they paid with harvested food (Tetiarahi 1987:47–48). Although this stratified social system no longer exists, land is still the most valuable Tahitian substance. It provides people with the means to survive and care for their offspring, as well as with a moral and spiritual feeling of identity and connection.

The importance of land can be seen in numerous ways today. For example, as pointed out by Raapoto (1994), the central Tahitian concept of '*utuafare*, or household, hinges on a notion of shared family land, including various houses for sleeping, cooking, and eating, as well as trees and plants. He explains that land is both the mother who nourishes her children and the source and marker of identity. As a nurturing mother, land provides food such as taro, yams, and breadfruit. As the place upon which ancestral movements and settlements are imprinted, land connects individuals to their family history through their genealogies.

These beliefs come together most poignantly in the Tahitian custom of a mother burying her child's placenta in the ground (Raapoto 1994). The placenta is called the *pu fenua* (call to the earth). The umbilical cord, which is buried next to the placenta, is called *pito o te fenua* (center of the earth). Marama, a middle-aged woman on Huahine, who had given birth at home to 24 children, explained this practice to me.

The placenta is always put back in the earth. When the child is in the womb the mother takes care of it, but when it is born the mother calls the land to take care of her child. The land will give life to the person by providing food. Now there are lots of pu fenua here because I had many children, plus my children bring their children's placentas. You can bury it and then move away. It doesn't matter because you are still connected to your family's land. [Marama Teiho, personal communication, 1995]

The placenta can also be placed in the ground on land that one does not own. As a Tahitian woman living in urban Papeete told me, "When I asked the doctor for the placenta he had no trouble giving it to me because everyone does that. I had to stay in the hospital five days, so the placenta was put in a plastic bag and refrigerated. Later I put it in the ground next to the house I rent in Papeete" (Manolita Ly, personal communication, 1994).

Some of the general differences I noticed between life on the island of Raiatea (where people are more cash-dependent and reserved) and Huahine (where people are

more self-sufficient and outgoing) were in part the result of different relations between people and land. When originally looking for a field site, I was advised against working on Raiatea precisely because its designation as the administrative center of the Leeward Islands meant that many of its inhabitants came from elsewhere and lived on land they did not own (Pierre Sham Koua, personal communication, 1994). On the other hand, I was told that certain islands, such as Huahine or Maupiti, would be more representative of Tahitian values because Tahitians still owned most of the land. People on Huahine, in particular, are known for their combative spirit when their land is at stake, as evident in the following *paripari*, a style of ancient chant.¹³

Huahine, on whose north shore is *marae* Manunu (the home of the god Tane)
 Huahine, which was divided into ten districts by brothers
 The people of Huahine will fight for their land, their life, their country
 They won't stand there and take what they don't like.¹⁴

A recent example illustrates this. When a Japanese group proposed buying the land around Huahine's Fauna Nui Lake, with intentions of developing a Sea World-type of amusement park, six thousand signatures were quickly collected to halt the project (Chantal Spitz, personal communication, 1995).

Nowhere is the importance of the connection between people, land, history, genealogy, and spirituality more evident than in the many marae that rise majestically from the earth. These are sacred sites of ancient temples dedicated to individual deities that served as portals for the deities to descend to earth. Today, usually all that remains of a marae is a rectangular area that is covered with paving stones, often surrounded by low walls, and a large stone altar at one end. Large upright stones in front of the altar, or elsewhere within the walled area, symbolize the genealogies of the marae's creators. Although marae are no longer used for religious ritual as they once were, they are deeply respected as living memorials. They mark the presence of deities in the landscape. They signify the history of the movement of ancestors who established marae as they settled in new locations. Salmon (1904:3) relates how Ta'aroa, the Tahitian god of creation, is permanently imprinted in the landscape, visible in various marae on different islands. "Ta'aroa's marae was Vaiotaha; his upper jaw rested at Ahutaiterai, on Marae Faretai (on Bora Bora); his lower jaw rested on Tahuea i te Turatura, at Marae Mata'ire'a (on Huahine); his throat and belly, Tetumu and Harura, at Marae Vaearai (on Raiatea)." On Huahine, for instance, the names of the first four sons of the village of Maeva are also the names of four of its marae. Maeva, which has a greater concentration of marae than any other location in Polynesia, is said to be *tu'iro'ohei* (renowned for its deep cultural roots) because it exists on land that has always provided for its inhabitants and is rich in ancestral

history. In addition to these large historical marae, there are smaller, family marae located next to people's houses that still serve as burial sites for family members.

As can be seen, land is pivotal in providing a Tahitian sense of place and identity. Yet, most Tahitians also believe in the spiritual and complementary association between land and sea. "We need both. From the land we get taro, yams, and breadfruit. From the sea we get fish and seafood" (Marereva Tetuanui, personal communication, 1994). Indeed, in ancient times, each island was divided into several wedge-shaped districts, each of which spread from the inland mountains down to the coast. Royal families exercised rights to land for cultivation as well as to coastal areas for fishing (Tetiarahi 1987:48). It is this belief in the complementarity of land and sea that accounts for the Tahitian practice of bringing coral inland to add to the stones at a marae and explains why coral can be found at almost every marae, no matter how far inland it is located (Eric Komori, personal communication, 1995). Yet, Tahitians see the fascination with the sea and the beach, as such, as a trait that is unique to tourists.¹⁵ "Tahitians don't care to live next to the sea or to have a view of water. They see the water all the time. It's nothing special. Tourists are the only ones who crave the water" (Haapa Hautia Dituru, personal communication, 1994). Where, then, does the tourist's desire for a turquoise Tahiti originate?

Images on Europe's Confining Walls

For more than two-hundred years, Europeans, and later Americans, have created a long, continuous line of relatively consistent images in which an idyllic Tahiti is constructed and maintained as its own referent. Like many such narratives that represent stereotypes about the past rather than the past itself, "cultural production has been driven back inside the mind . . . it can no longer look directly out of its eyes at the real world for the referent but must . . . trace its mental images of the world on its confining walls" (Jameson 1983:118).

The earliest images of Tahiti were shaped by European imperialist philosophies and, later, by French colonialist politics. When the French explorer, Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, first arrived in Tahiti in 1768, Jean-Jacques Rousseau had just made the "noble savage" popular in Europe. Upon seeing Tahiti, Bougainville named it "New Cytheria" after the legendary birthplace of Aphrodite, the Goddess of Love, aestheticizing Tahitians through classical reminiscences (Despoix 1996:5). When he returned to Europe with reports of beautiful women with uninhibited manners, visions of sexual abandon swept like wildfire through Paris and London. His French publication of *Voyages* in 1771, followed by the English translation in 1772, provided European men with a vision of earthly paradise and an endless source of dreams. It contained passages such as the following:

They pressed us to choose a woman, and to come on shore with her; and their gestures . . . denoted in what manner we should form an acquaintance with her. It was difficult . . . to keep at their work four hundred young French sailors, who had seen no women for six months. In spite of all our precautions, a young girl came on board, and placed herself upon the quarter-deck, near one of the hatch-ways, which was open, in order to give air to those who were heaving at the capstan below it. The girl carelessly dropped a cloth, which covered her, and appeared to the eyes of all beholders, such as Venus showed herself to the Phrygian Shepherd, having, indeed, the celestial form of that goddess. [Bougainville (1771)1772: 218–219]

A comparison of *Voyages* with Bougainville's original journal (Taillemite 1977), however, indicates the extent to which negative first encounters were rewritten in a positive way for later publication, thus providing us with a classic foreshadowing of the politics of representation. In contrast to the journal notes, which include ample descriptions of European frustrations with the Tahitian custom of "stealing," the published narrative was carefully rewritten in order to appeal to Europeans.¹⁶ Bougainville made changes and additions, such as "references to goddesses, nymphs, noble savages, and the beauty of the landscape" (Claessen 1994:23).

When James Cook visited Tahiti between 1769–77, he took along artists like John Webber, who created intoxicating images that further reinforced European romantic notions (Figure 1). European incorporation and recasting of the romantic was furthered when Cook transported Omai, a Tahitian from the island of Raiatea, back to England, making him the first Polynesian to reside in Europe for any length of time (Baston 1790; Clark 1941; McCormick 1977).¹⁷ Omai became the darling of English society. "Friendly and charming, he was dressed by his benefactors in velvet jackets and other finery. Over the next two years he dined in London's best homes, met the king, learned to shoot and skate and was a favorite with the ladies" (Kay 1997:281). After Omai's celebrity in England, and the exhibition of Cook's ethnographic collection in London, a Polynesian vogue blossomed in Europe. "Travel literature was popular . . . 'Tahitian' verandas were designed for country houses, 'Polynesian' wallpaper was fashionable, and artificial 'South Seas' lakes were built into landscaped vistas" (Daws 1980:11).

In 1789, the mutiny on the *HMS Bounty*, the most notorious in British naval history, further fixed images of legendary Tahiti in the minds of Europeans. During the mutiny, Fletcher Christian set Captain Bligh out to sea in a small skiff and returned to Tahiti with the *HMS Bounty*. Forever after, the name of the *Bounty* has been associated with male adventure and freedom, with shirking the shackles of oppressive government on the high seas, and with finding sexual pleasures under the palms.



Figure 1. *Poedooa (Poetua), Daughter of Oree, Chief of Ulietea (Raiatea), one of the Society Islands*, by John Webber, canvas 57 x 37 in., c. 1780. By permission of the National Library of Australia.

By the turn of the century, a backlash arose to the noble savage images. British Protestant and French Catholic missionaries arrived to subdue a way of life that they interpreted as licentious. They also were opposed to joint ownership of land and tried to convert Tahitians to a land tenure system more in tune with the idea of a Christian nuclear family (Ward and Kingdon 1995). Missionaries slowly became part of a growing colonial presence as English and French vied for possession of new colonies. When two French Catholic priests arrived in Tahiti in 1836, the Tahitian ruler, Queen Pomare IV, immediately expelled them. In response to this perceived insult, a French ship arrived in Papeete in 1838, demanding monetary compensation and a salute to the French flag. At the same time, a French consul, Moerenhout, was appointed to Queen Pomare. In 1842, while she and the English consul were away, Moerenhout organized local chiefs into signing a petition asking to be brought under French protection. A year later, the Queen's flag was lowered and Tahiti was

declared a French Protectorate. Tahitian resistance was strong, resulting in three years of guerrilla warfare (1844–47). During this period, legislators attempted to further dismantle the ancient land system by establishing various laws in the 1840s and '50s that guaranteed the security of real estate transfers. From then on, Tahitians could sell their land with all the risks involved (Tetiarahi 1987:50). In 1880, the queen's son and successor, Pomare V, gave his land to France. The Protectorate was given the name of Établissements français d'Océanie (EFO) and became the French colony it is today.

The arrival of French rule, after a century of romantic images, encouraged European and American writers and artists to make their way to Tahiti to live out, write about, and paint their dreams. Places in literature and art, as Lefebvre ([1974]1991:15) has said, are “enclosed, described, projected, dreamt of, [and] speculated about.” Tahiti was no exception. The list of literati who enclosed Tahiti in their minds and projected their images to the world is great—Herman Melville, Robert Louis Stevenson, Pierre Loti, W. Somerset Maugham, Jack London, Victor Segalen, Charles Nordhoff, James Norman Hall, and James Michener, to name the most prominent.

But none played as powerful a role in creating an enduring vision of Tahiti on the world’s imagination as did the French painter, Paul Gauguin. Gauguin’s interest in Tahiti was first piqued when he viewed exhibits of colonial outposts at the 1889 Exposition Universelle in Paris, and it was later reinforced when he read Pierre Loti’s *Le Mariage de Loti*. In letters he wrote to friends, he reported his affairs with women brought from the colonies (Gauguin 1949: 118) and described his desire to “buy a hut of the kind you saw at the Universal Exhibition . . . this would cost almost nothing” (1949:142). Influenced by both colonial and romantic representations, he embarked on a voyage that allowed him to re-create these representations for others. Penniless in Paris, he sailed to Tahiti to live cheaply while advancing his career and fulfilling his dreams, setting canvases colorfully ablaze with his impressions of Tahiti and Tahitian women. It is important to note that Gauguin’s relocation to Tahiti in 1891 was possible primarily because he was a French citizen and Tahiti was a French colony. Although Gauguin’s artistic accomplishments in Tahiti were complex expressions of the convergence of European decadence and French colonialism (Perloff 1995), he continues to be regarded as a symbol of the simple rejection of European civilization and the embracing of South Seas primitivism. Ever since Gauguin, European painters have flocked to Tahiti to re-create Gauguin-like images on canvases of their own (Jacques Boullaire, Pierre Heyman, Jean Masson, and Yves de Saint-Font, to name only a few).

These nineteenth-century colonial foundations, depicted romantically in late-nineteenth- and early twentieth-century literature and art, solidified and intensified in the

twentieth century. At the outbreak of World War I, Europe’s flourishing economy caused an increase in the ties between France and Tahiti. The EFO exported local products, such as dried coconut and vanilla, in exchange for European manufactured goods. This rapid economic expansion required an increasingly larger work force. Lured by images created in the literary and art world, French colonists flocked to Tahiti in great numbers. By 1911, there were 3,500 French residents (Wheeler and Carillet 1997:23) among a Tahitian population of 31,400 (Newbury 1980:272). As colonists streamed in, images radiated out. In 1913, the EFO government produced their first postage stamp of Polynesian inspiration—a Tahitian woman with a crown of flowers on her head and a hibiscus blossom behind her ear. With this one stamp, the idea of Tahiti as beautiful, seductive, and feminine, but securely under French control, was circulated to the world at large.

World War II brought 4,500 American soldiers to Bora Bora in the Society Islands, which was selected to be the first in a chain of refueling stations across the Pacific. Bora Bora, which previously had no vehicles or paved roads, was transformed by bulldozers, trucks, seaplanes, bombs, ammunition, tents, and prefab buildings (Kay 1997:219). When soldiers returned home after the war, their stories about tropical romance kindled imaginations across the United States. Ever since, Bora Bora has been regarded as one of the ultimate American tourist fantasies.

Stirrings of desire for emancipation from France rumbled through Tahiti after the war. Pouvanaa a Oopa, from the island of Huahine, became the leader of the Tahitian independence movement, serving in the Territorial Assembly and denouncing the French for their treatment of Tahitians as second-class citizens. At the peak of his power, however, his voice was silenced. He was convicted of conspiracy in a plot to burn down Papeete and was imprisoned, first in Papeete (1958–60) and later in France (1960–61), and banned from returning to Tahiti for eight years.

In 1957, the name of the colony was changed to Polynésie Française. Plans were underway for still greater changes.

Mushroom Clouds, Tourism, and Technicolor Visions

A major turning point in Tahitian colonial history occurred in the 1960s. Events took place that both deepened France’s political entanglement with its colony and broadened the worldwide demand for exotic images of French Polynesia. It was the era in which nuclear testing and tourism came of age side-by-side. As seductive imagery became increasingly integral to the political economy of French Polynesia, France was able to reap the bounty of two centuries of these representations and use this to its economic advantage. Prior to 1960, anticipating that Algeria might soon gain independence, France was preparing to

transfer its nuclear test site from Algeria to French Polynesia. In 1963, a year after Algeria became independent, President Charles de Gaulle established the Centre d'expérimentations du Pacifique (CEP) and officially announced that Moruroa and Fangataufa, two uninhabited atolls in the Tuamotu Islands (one of the five archipelagos in French Polynesia), would be the new test sites. In addition, headquarters and support facilities were established in Papeete, on the island of Tahiti, where a large area of coral reef was reclaimed for the construction of new docks to shelter and service the numerous ships required to support and monitor the nuclear tests. While preparations were firmly underway for developing the nuclear testing program, another major change was taking place, namely the construction of an international airport at Faa'a, a few kilometers down the road from Papeete, which opened in 1960. The presence of the airport permitted easier access to Tahiti both for the government, which had begun to transfer equipment and personnel in preparation for the nuclear testing program, and for tourists, who were in search of Gauguin's paradise.

The simultaneous arrival of nuclear testing and tourism served to obscure the intensity of the testing preparations from most residents. As nuclear supplies and personnel were channeled through the airport and harbor en route to the outer islands of Moruroa and Fangataufa, tourists were also arriving on international flights in record numbers. Whereas only 1,620 tourists had come to Tahiti in 1960, a year later, when the airport was open, 8,700 arrived.¹⁸ Tourism, which is by far the most influential industry in French Polynesia, provides the main avenue through which non-French money is introduced into the territory.¹⁹

In 1962, a year after the airport was operational, American film crews descended upon Tahiti as well. Hollywood glamorized the events of the mutiny on the *HMS Bounty* in a three-hour color film starring Marlon Brando and Tarita, a Tahitian woman. In contrast to an earlier, 1935, black-and-white version of the story that had been filmed in Hawai'i (implying that "exotic" locations are interchangeable), the 1962 film was shot on location on Tahiti and Bora Bora, bringing Tahiti—in Technicolor—into movie theaters around the world. The film emphasized the natural beauty of the islands and the physical splendor of Tahitians and thereby continued to feed people's dreams about an earthly paradise and sexual abandon. Technicolor fantasies seemed to slip even closer within reach when, in real life, Marlon Brando married Tarita and purchased Tetiaroa, a picture-perfect atoll forty kilometers north of Tahiti. With the new airport awaiting the arrival of tourists, an Office of Tourism Development luring them in, hotels springing up to accommodate them, and Hollywood's spectacle encouraging iridescent dreams, many forces were set in motion. Travelers' fantasies could now be turned into realities with the simple purchase of an airline ticket.

While the world comfortably embraced this alluring image of Tahiti in the mid-1960s, French military were occupied differently. They quietly, but collusively, changed the name of Moruroa, which in Tahitian means "big lies," to Mururoa, a word with no special meaning.²⁰ France began atmospheric explosions on the atoll in 1966, refusing to acquiesce to the 1963 agreement (by the United States, the former Soviet Union, and Britain) to halt atmospheric tests and to shift instead to underground testing. It was not until 1974 that France moved its tests below ground.²¹ Moruroa, as its Tahitian name indicates, and like the touristic images of nearby islands that distract attention from it, truly embodies deep deception. It appears neither in the French Polynesian phone book nor on airline schedules, and is impossible for nongovernment people to visit. On the one hand, the government claims that the testing poses absolutely no environmental or health dangers. Yet, Tahitians who have worked on Moruroa all recount similar stories of local bans on the consumption of fish from the lagoon and coconuts from the land, and of the death of people following their illegal ingestion of these foods (Peto Firuu, personal communication, 1995; Étienne Piha, personal communication, 1995).²² It has also been mandatory for individuals to carry Geiger counters and wear special anti-radiation suits while there (Constance Cody, personal communication, 1995). In spite of the government's policy of putting a secrecy stamp on all local health statistics (Danielsson and Danielsson 1986:307), it was discovered that, within a decade after testing began, such typically radiation-induced diseases as leukemia, thyroid cancers, brain tumors, and eye cataracts began to appear in alarming numbers (Danielsson 1986:165).

In 1992, French President François Mitterrand declared a moratorium on all testing, which was lifted by President Jacques Chirac in 1995. By the time tests were finally stopped in January 1996, France had conducted a total of 45 atmospheric and 134 underground tests in French Polynesia, with bombs up to two hundred kilotons, more than ten times the size of the bomb that destroyed Hiroshima. Each test cost an average of two billion CFP²³ (U.S. \$20 million) (Sancton 1995:23).

The nuclear testing program and all its ramifications totally transformed Tahiti economically and socially. In addition to pumping money into the territory for the testing program, France injected extra funds and goods to encourage local acquiescence, generating a colonial dependency relationship and artificial prosperity.²⁴ For example, in 1960, military spending in the territory was 4% of the gross domestic product, but by 1966 it rose sharply to almost 80%. In the 1950s, returns on exports were 90% of the cost of imports, but by the early 1970s had slumped to only 10% (Henningham 1992:127–128). Government welfare allocations also began in the 1960s, with the amounts given and the categories of who qualifies steadily increasing over

the years. Television, too, arrived in 1966, the same year as the first atmospheric explosion.

Tahiti's importance as the administrative and economic center of French Polynesia caused many people from the outer islands to migrate to Tahiti, attracted by jobs such as building the new harbor, airport, and hotels, and working in the budding tourism industry. Like many towns in the South Pacific, Papeete was transformed from a sleepy colonial port town to a cosmopolitan city, almost doubling its population between 1960 and 1970. Prior to CEP, most of the population had fed itself by subsistence agriculture and fishing. Within a decade the territory was importing most of its food.²⁵ In the space of a single generation, many Tahitians were transformed into a working-class population that had become almost completely dependent on the money and goods brought into the territory by France. Land, too, slipped increasingly out of Tahitians' control. Some people, particularly those who had been educated in France, took advantage of opportunities to sell titles to their land. The purchasers, often real estate agents, then sold the land to French, Chinese, and other non-indigenous buyers (Tetiarahi 1987:54). One woman described this spiraling descent into dependency and the related loss of land.

Before CEP, Tahitians lived well. They worked in their gardens. They went fishing. They built their houses. After the first test in 1966 Tahitians became dependent on money. Now they need money in order to live. They buy their food. They buy cement and metal to build their houses. Tahitians buy more and more things and how can they pay for everything? They can't. They go to the bank and get a loan. Then how can they pay the bank back? They can't. After a while the bank comes and takes their land and sells it. Who buys the land? Foreigners. Later, where do the Tahitians live? They have no land. No house. They end up living in a tiny shack. Tahitians have gotten lazy. They don't grow their own food anymore. They buy it in the store. If they want Tahitian food they buy it in the market. I go to the market every Sunday to sell my food. Do you know who buys it? Tahitians. Every week I get sad when I see that. [Kim Tai Piha, personal communication, 1995]

The verbal picture Kim Tai painted of her personal experience with increasing destabilization is in stark contrast to the visual images of permanent splendor that are mass-produced to entice the world at large.

The Power of a Camera

With the growing interdependence of France's political agenda, French Polynesia's political economy, and the representation of Tahiti as paradise, it is not surprising that the production of alluring images has become a major industry. Lefebvre has commented on the destructive abilities of illusive imagery. His words apply to the situation in Tahiti.

Images fragment, they are themselves fragments, cutting things up and rearranging them, découpage and montage, the

art of image-making. Illusion resides in the artist's eye and gaze, in the photographer's lens, on the writer's blank page. The visual world plays an integral and integrative, active and passive, part in it. It fetishizes abstraction and imposes it as the norm. The image kills. [(1974)1991:97]

In French Polynesia, the Office of Tourism is the prime producer of these images that "fragment" and "kill." Their images emphasize scenery—sandy beaches, blue skies, colorful fish, fancy hotels—rather than people.²⁶ In a 1994 move to gain more control, Gaston Flosse, the President of French Polynesia, wrote a letter to all government agencies forbidding them to use any images of French Polynesia that were not produced by the government agency Institut de la Communication Audio-Visuelle (ICA) (Paul Auzépy, personal communication, 1995). The Office of Tourism and ICA, however, are not the only agencies to produce and distribute images. It is relatively easy for others to enter the business, as long as they do not sell their images to government agencies.

The individual who monopolizes the nongovernment production of photographic images is Teva Sylvain, a blond, blue-eyed demi, who is the director of Pacific Promotion Tahiti. His seductive images of women, as well as scenery, adorn postcards, calendars, posters, place mats, coasters, address book covers, rulers, cigarette lighters, books, stationery, and envelopes. Several of his images are reproductions of Gauguin's paintings. He credits his father with having inspired his own outlook.

De Gaulle sent my father, Adolphe Sylvain, to Indochina to fight, but with a camera not a gun. His job was to educate the French people about Indochina. From there, he was also sent to the South Pacific. Again, he went as a photographer. Soon after he arrived in Tahiti in 1946 he met a Tahitian woman whom he later married. He kept his position as a war correspondent but stayed in Tahiti, documenting his new surroundings in black-and-white. My father became the first journalist to really publicize the island of Tahiti. He photographed for the *Kon Tiki* expedition and for *Life* magazine. By and by he had four daughters and me. He needed to support his family and did so with his photographs. He wanted to show the paradise aspect of Tahitian life. He was conscious of the contrast between the Tahitian images of a peaceful life and the Western atrocities he still carried with him from the war. He photographed only those aspects that portrayed paradise—the childlike, simple, carefree side of life. [Teva Sylvain, personal communication, 1995]

In 1970, Teva, then sixteen years old, followed his father's footsteps, creating images of his own fetishized view of Tahitian life. Postcard production, which he started in 1974, represents the largest part of his business.²⁷ Every year, one million of his postcards are purchased in French Polynesia, to begin their journey all over the globe. Although he decides on the images, he is guided by sales statistics. As Teva explained to me, "I create images that I think people want to buy. I come up with an idea and then

test it on the market. If an image sells well, I produce more. If something doesn't sell, I take it off the market." His computer program tracks sales of every postcard image and arranges them according to their market popularity.²⁸

Teva elaborated on the marketing strategies specifically for the postcard images of women.²⁹ "Most of the women are not fully Tahitian because the men who visit Tahiti want a woman that they have in their head or in their libido," he confided to me. "They want one who looks like women they are used to. They don't want her skin to be too dark, her nose too broad, or her thighs too strong." As a result, the women on the postcards have an assortment of genetic backgrounds. As Teva pulled a few postcards off the top of a stack on his desk, he told me, "For example, #911 is French, #976 is Tahitian, #977 is demi," and so on. "Look at #911. She is one hundred percent French. But I put the crown of leaves on her head and a coconut leaf basket in her hands to give her a Tahitian look. That's all it takes. Other than those props, there is nothing Tahitian about her" (Figure 2). He explained, "I simply produce what people want because, like my father, I have to feed my family." Although rationalizing that he was only manipulating the market, he seemed very aware that, in doing so, he was also reconfiguring the very image of Tahiti and Tahitian women. He admits that "the women of one's dreams that one admires in my lascivious poses are not found on every street corner" (Sylvain 1994:64).

Although Teva dominates the market, there are others who, like him, play a major role in producing images of Tahiti. Océane Production, which has been in existence since the 1970s, produces and distributes both visual images and music videos of French Polynesia. Eric Laroche, a Frenchman, is the general director of Océane Production. According to him, his business produces "every type of Polynesian image available."

We have stock images in three categories: aerial, land, and underwater. The underwater images are the most important at the moment. We sell them everywhere and anywhere. We are the only ones who sell internationally. We sell to cable channels in Europe and America. We sell the videos in all the hotels and stores in French Polynesia. We sell our videos in many languages. The images are the same, but the language of the narration changes: English, French, German, Italian, and Japanese. Anyone can buy them. We are the most important producers of these images on the market. Our images are not journalistic, but touristic. We produce what tourists want. Mr. Navarro, my cameraman, and I together decide what we want to show. We show only what is beautiful. We show the sea, the mountains, songs, dances, and traditional things. Tourists want images of things they have seen. [Eric Laroche, personal communication, 1995]

The Office of Tourism, as well as entrepreneurs like Teva Sylvain and Eric Laroche, have enormous capacity and capability to create and disseminate images of Tahiti. The consistency of their intent and the forthrightness with



Figure 2. #911, Collection "*Filles des mers du sud*" / "Girls of the South Seas" collection, by Teva Sylvain, photo, 1994, Pacific Promotion, Tahiti. Photo courtesy of Pacific Promotion.

which they discuss their motivation is remarkable. Teva, like his father, wants to help other men find a Tahitian woman, even if she only exists on a postcard or on the pages of a calendar. In perpetuating his father's dream, he encourages others to hold onto their dreams as well. Several times he emphasized how important it is to "keep the myth alive."

For the past two centuries, and until recently, the découpage and montage of images of Tahiti for the world at large has mainly been by the French, Americans, and demi. Although the motives for producing seductive Tahitian imagery have increased in economic and political complexity (for example, from Bougainville's wish to prove the existence of Rousseau's noble savage, to Gauguin's desire to vivify the women and huts he saw at the colonial exhibits, to the Office of Tourism's economic need to lure in tourists), the images have remained unimaginatively similar. What happens, though, when the production of images is removed from this economically and politically motivated sphere and put, instead, into the hands of Tahitians, themselves part of the larger entangled dialogue about Tahiti? What happens when the turquoise veil of paradise is lifted

and, instead, unexpected, more realistic, and even negative, images are revealed and disseminated around the world? Examining such a situation sheds further light on just how integral to the colonial agenda these images and image fragments are. Examining the dialectic between space as perceived by Tahitians and space as conceived by outsiders also enlightens our understanding of how a Tahitian third-space emerges.

The “Events” of September 6, 1995

On June 13, 1995, French President Jacques Chirac ended former President François Mitterrand’s moratorium on nuclear testing by declaring that he would resume testing before the end of the year. The rationale was that additional tests would allow for the perfection of simulation and computer modeling techniques. Within days of President Chirac’s announcement, anti-nuclear protesting began on a scale that was unprecedented in the history of French Polynesia, spreading to all major islands. International media responded swiftly. Writers, television crews, and radio reporters from all over the world descended upon Tahiti. Greenpeace’s anti-nuclear ship, the *Rainbow Warrior II* (the original *Rainbow Warrior* had been blown up by French agents in Auckland in July 1985, killing one crew member), left New Zealand for Tahiti with an international crew representing ten different countries.

A record number of protesters (15,000–20,000 by some accounts) took to the streets in Papeete on June 29, demanding a referendum on the resumption of nuclear testing. These particular protests were initiated by Oscar Temaru, the mayor of Faa’ā and the leader of Tavini Huira’atira, the pro-independence party. Carrying ukuleles, people sat down in the streets. Traffic came to a halt. Papeete was paralyzed (Gluckman 1995). Protesters set up a blockade along the main access roads to the city, which lasted until July 2, the 29th anniversary of the first nuclear test at Moruroa. In the words of one crew member on board the *Rainbow Warrior II*, “The commitment of the people is amazing—sitting all day through 35 degree [centigrade] heat, and then sleeping on hard asphalt all night” (Leney 1995). Protests again erupted on July 14, which coincided with the French holiday of Bastille Day and the height of Tahiti’s annual Heiva (a month-long festival that features dancing, singing, and sporting competitions, arts and crafts, beauty contests, feasting, and partying). The protests were so disruptive that they caused the festivities to be postponed by a week.

Because of near universal moral opposition to nuclear testing in the 1990s, as well as the media’s aggressive coverage of the situation, the entire world was suddenly listening and responding. People burned croissants and stomped on French bread in the United States, picketed French restaurants in Hong Kong, bombed one French consulate and delivered a truck load of manure to another in Australia,

demonstrated in Chile, and held an anti-nuclear rock concert in Belgium (Gluckman 1995). Even in France, former President Mitterrand publicly condemned President Chirac’s decision to resume testing. Yet, in spite of local and global protesting, the governments of both France and French Polynesia remained unresponsive.

Instead, President Flosse invited political leaders, including Oscar Temaru (who refused to go), to a “picnic” on Moruroa July 16–18. A few days later, *La Dépêche de Tahiti*, the main newspaper in French Polynesia, printed a two-page spread about Moruroa and Fangataufa with the headline “Fish from the Lagoon are Delicious.” The article included photos of government officials drinking coconuts, catching tuna, and posing in front of fifty barbecued lobsters. Most prominent was a photo of President Flosse taking a relaxing dip in Moruroa’s lagoon.

In August, several more, but somewhat smaller, peaceful protest marches took place in Papeete. The largest was organized by the Église Évangélique de Polynésie Française,³⁰ whose president, Jacques Ihorai, prayed for an end to the testing. As September approached, the month in which the nuclear tests were scheduled to begin, again hundreds of journalists from all over the world arrived in French Polynesia.

At 11:30 on the morning of September 5, 1995, without prior public warning, “operation thetis” was carried out at Moruroa. The explosion was only slightly smaller than that at Hiroshima. It generated temperatures of several hundred million degrees and pressures of several million atmospheres. The instruments recording the explosion transmitted data for only a billionth of a second before they were destroyed by the blast (Sancton 1995:27).

That night, on the television news, a crowd of reporters fired questions at the director of CEP, Admiral Jean Lichère, who appeared in his crisp white naval uniform decked with medals. He explained matter-of-factly that at 11:30 they had received orders from Paris to push the button. He said that there had been no noise, just a minor shaking of the ground for three seconds, some slight agitation in the sea with waves and geysers, and then everything was calm and “back to normal.” He explained that the test was “for the stability of the world, to insure security for everyone,” and declared that “it will have no significant impact on the environment.” When asked by the angry reporters why he did not test the bomb in France, he responded with the standard phrase, “But this is France!” He then deflected further inquiries by claiming, “One can’t even call this a bomb. It’s nuclear physics.”

Although the Moruroa lagoon gradually quieted down, the explosion sent lasting waves of rage and indignation throughout French Polynesia and the world at large. The following day, 36 hours of uninterrupted rioting, burning, and looting erupted in Papeete and nearby Faa’ā.³¹ It started when some thirty Tahitian women began an anti-

nuclear sit-in on the airport runway and gathered momentum when several hundred Tahitian men joined in (Strokirch 1997:228). When police fired tear gas into the crowd, the confrontation escalated. Protesters drove a bulldozer through the airport, demolishing internal walls and shattering windows, before setting fire to the terminal building, making it unsafe for commercial planes to land or take off for several days. After wrecking the airport, the demonstrators moved into downtown Papeete, torching buildings, smashing store windows, and looting the stores. More than 120 cars were overturned and set afire. Stones, steel barricades, garbage bins, and bottles were thrown at the High Commissioner's office. Police tried to surround

and arrest the demonstrators, many of whom were thrown in jail. Additional military were brought in from France and New Caledonia. Miraculously, only 40 people were injured, although damage was estimated around four billion CFP (U.S. \$40 million).

A phrase that was often used in the media during this explosive period was that the images of the riots had "gone on world tour." And, indeed, they had. For example, the words "Fallout in Paradise" graced the cover of the international edition of *Time* magazine (September 18, 1995). The cover story featured photographs of Tahitian demonstrators kicking and clubbing a French policeman who lay writhing on the ground (Figure 3). The government blamed

■ COVER STORY

FALLOUT IN PARADISE

France's resumption of nuclear tests unleashes riots in Tahiti and condemnation around the world

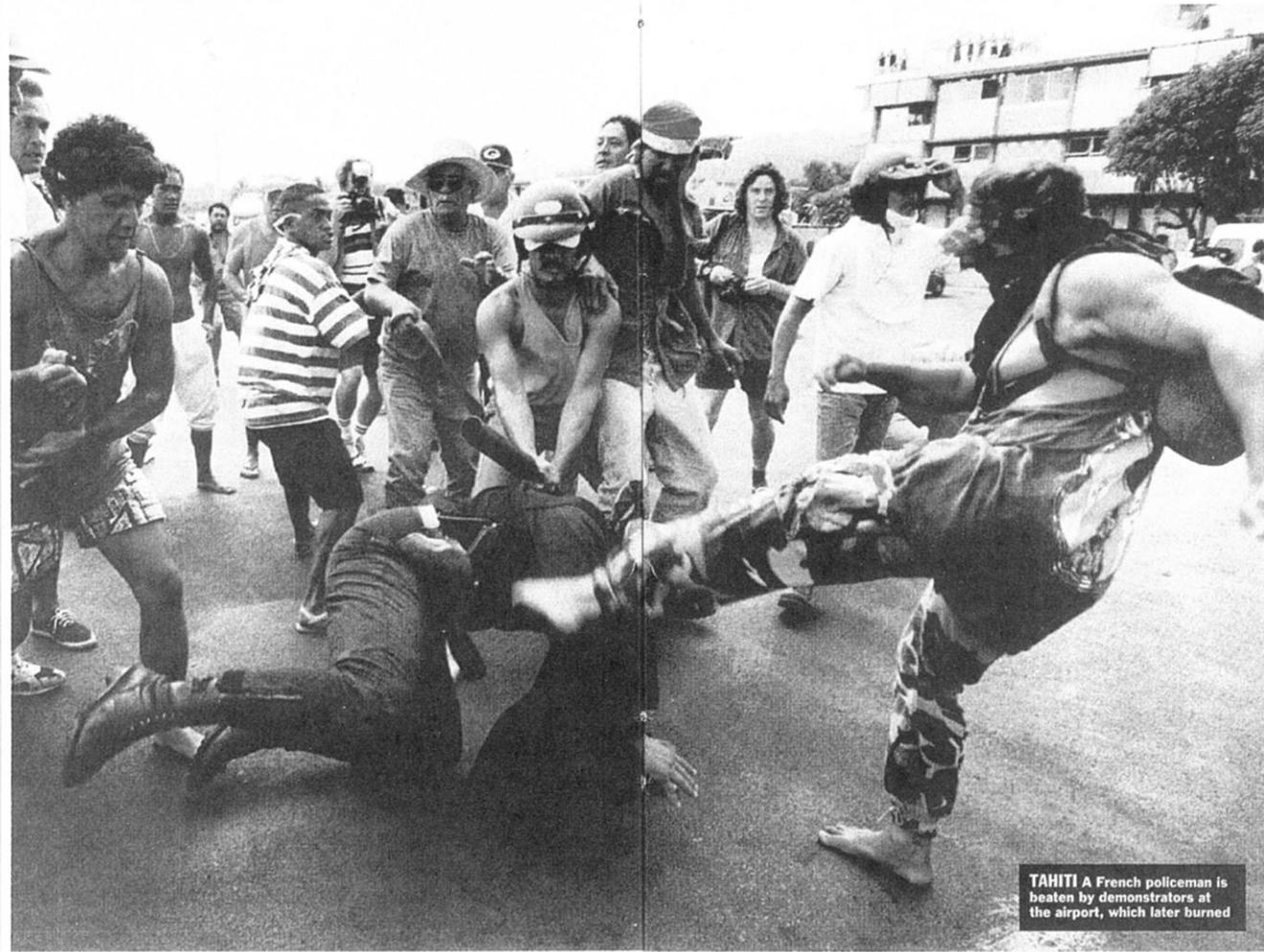


Figure 3. *Time, International Edition*, September 18, 1995, pp. 22–23, photo by François Mori. AP/World Wide Photos.

foreign reporters for the worldwide dissemination of these “ugly” images. Not only was their distribution out of government control, but the images themselves were in complete contrast to what the French government wanted the world to see. News reporters’ photos that traveled out into the world—pictures of men throwing rocks, torching buildings, and clubbing policemen—were a far cry from the pictures of paradise that for so long had been purposefully created and circulated. And what was striking about them, in contrast to the beautiful, peaceful, feminine images, was that they had greater universal appeal. They were of angry, and completely ordinary, people. Although the government found no need to respond to the relatively peaceful protests and blockades of June and July, they responded with great agitation now. As this profusion of negative images spun out of their control, government officials were visibly anxious and attempted to suppress their production. The senior reporter for RFO (the television station) described the government’s deliberate political tactics.

I was at the airport when it was burning. I and others were evacuated from the scene and taken back to Papeete. When I got there I wanted to take my camera and go into town to film the burning of Papeete for television. Instead, RFO forbid me from going. They decided to shut down the office at 8 PM. This was unprecedented. That decision was 100% political. [Erick Monod, personal communication, 1995]

Missiles of Death in their Mother’s Womb

During the following weeks and months, a battle escalated over the control of image manipulation. Exactly one week after the “events” of September 6, *La Dépêche de Tahiti* made direct reference to an image problem when, on the front page, it featured a picture of a postcard, jaggedly ripped in two, with the main headline “The Postcard has been Torn.” Below the picture was a caption that juxtaposed symbols of French wealth against visions of Third World poverty.

Good-bye cows, calves, and broods [a French idiom for wealth] . . . after the world-wide reporting about the riots, television stations created an image of a shantytown. These images make Tahiti look worse than Rio or Haiti. Visitors obviously canceled their vacations *en masse*. The foreign media’s orchestration of the problems and certain journalists’ manipulation of the events are complete. [*La Dépêche de Tahiti* 1995]

Ironically, a cleverly crafted counter manipulation of the situation by French-controlled media, such as RFO and *La Dépêche de Tahiti*, was just heating up. Whereas the nuclear test on September 5 had received minimal media coverage, the demonstrators’ reaction on September 6 launched a media explosion. A special 20-page supplement in *La Dépêche de Tahiti* appeared with the ominous headline “Black Wednesday in Tahiti” (Figure 4). Page

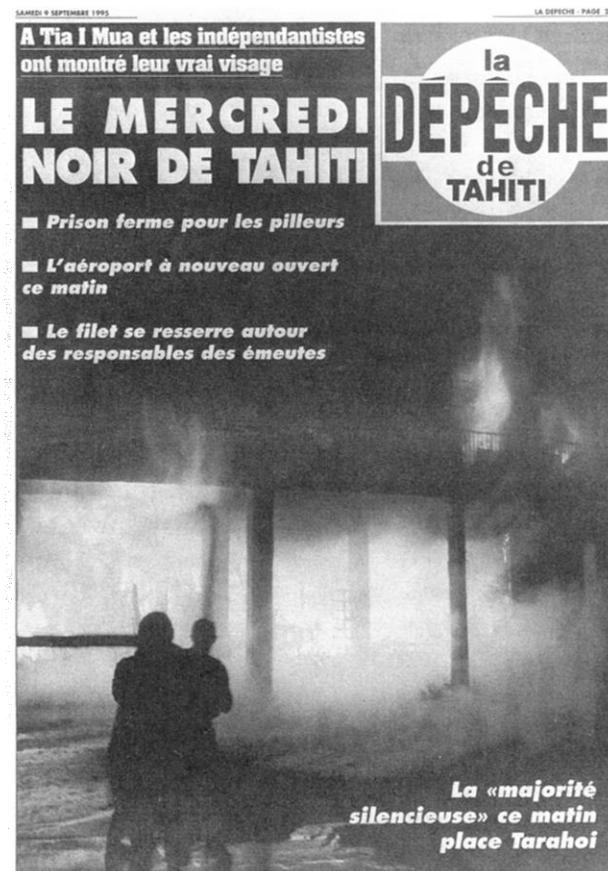


Figure 4. Le Mercredi noir de Tahiti/Black Wednesday in Tahiti, *La Dépêche de Tahiti*, September 13, 1995, p. 29. Photo courtesy of *La Dépêche de Tahiti*.

after page featured images of charred buildings, shattered glass, dismembered store mannequins lying in the streets, Tahitians hurling rocks, Tahitians lighting fires, and police with weapons. Alongside the photos were captions such as “Airline companies, travel agencies, and hotels are all powerless as tourists shun our destination!” (1995a) The same images that had been “manipulated” by foreign media to show the world the ugly side of paradise were now used by government-controlled media to threaten Tahitians into submission.

Yet, there seemed to be a feeling of empowerment on the part of many Tahitians when projecting their own images out to the world. Unlike previous images produced by outsiders of a romanticized Tahiti, these images were truly of Tahitians as they lived in their world. They allowed a voice that was otherwise silenced to be heard. As one man said, “The riots may not be the best way for us to express ourselves, but when we tried peaceful marches, no one listened. The French express themselves powerfully with their bomb. Now we are speaking and being heard” (Hiti Gooding, personal communication, 1995).

The riots were not the only form of communication. Another, less visual, Tahitian way of expressing the denunciation of nuclear testing, and of French politics in general, was in the compositions (solely in Tahitian language) of Tahitian songwriters and singers.³² Angélo Neuffer Ari'itai, one of the leading singers for the younger generation, released a cassette at this time. The words to one song, "Atomic Poison," juxtapose images of a destructive bomb with those of an otherwise nourishing land.

The land is poisoned, the people are poisoned, the sea is poisoned,
 As is the language of our leaders, who claim that the bomb is not harmful.
 The air is poisoned, the fruits of the land are poisoned, the children are poisoned,
 As is the conscience of those who lie, claiming that the bomb is not harmful.
 Atomic bomb, we don't want you.
 You are unwelcome here, on this island, in this land.
 Atomic bomb, we don't want our land to be polluted.
 Atomic bomb, we don't want death here, on this island, in this land.
 Atomic bomb, go away from here, from this island, from this land.

After the first bomb, there was another peaceful march, organized once more by the Église Évangélique de Polynésie Française and led by its president, Jacques Ihorai. Songs (such as the one above), prayers, and silence were used to try and sway the government. The church became a powerful and unifying voice of protest against nuclear testing.³³ In late September, Jacques Ihorai and Ralph Teinaore, the secretary general of the church, flew to France to try to convince President Chirac to cease the testing. Ihorai declared that France did not have the right to explode bombs in the nourishing womb of the mother land. Using an image he evoked often, even when speaking to Tahitian audiences, he explained that Tahitians consider the land to be their mother who nourishes them and that the bomb is like a missile of death in their mother's womb (*La Dépêche de Tahiti* 1995b:21). Even though Tahitians had generally shown little concern about the mythical, touristic images of Tahiti, they reacted passionately when others' behavior violated their own notion of place. When bombs were lodged and exploded deep within their land, their sense of place was profoundly disturbed. Precisely because land is seen as nourishing—a place to bury the placenta of one's child—the burying of a bomb in the land seemed a particularly offensive assault. When Ihorai compared the nuclear testing to the lodging of a missile in their mother's womb, he spoke about a Tahitian experience of place in a way that postcards and guidebooks never do.

Soon thereafter, on Sunday, October 1, at 1:30 in the afternoon, the second bomb was exploded. The detonation had been carefully timed to coincide with the hour when most Tahitians would be in church, a subtle attack on the

church's peaceful but powerful anti-nuclear stance. This time the television coverage was quick and efficient, surgically and cynically wedged between two items of minor interest. There were no riots.³⁴

As time went on, and more tests occurred, the numbers of tourists kept dropping, especially among Japanese and Americans. By November, hotels that usually had 80–100% occupancy had 10–20%. The large Nara Hotel on Bora Bora, which depended on Japanese tourism, was almost empty.³⁵ Whereas previously there had been two weekly flights from Tokyo, now there was one with only a handful of passengers. Tahiti had slipped from turquoise Technicolor to black and gray.

"Everything Is All Right Again"

As nuclear tests continued on the average of one a month for five months, the anxiety intensified for those people who were well entrenched in an economic system that depended on tourism-generated income. Tourism suddenly became a rallying cry and political lever. In an interview about the decline of tourism, Patrick Robson from the Office of Tourism said, "The cancellations are surely due to the riots [not the nuclear tests]. . . . Step by step, we will launch a campaign to replace our image that was shattered" (*La Dépêche de Tahiti* 1995a:24). The campaign to manipulate the images was calculated and unabashed.

Gilles Tefaatau, the supervisor of airport operations and the president of GIE Animation, the branch of the Office of Tourism that oversees tourist activities within French Polynesia, explained that after the tests were over in January 1996, there would be a massive campaign to recapture the market. He said, "The reason tourism is down is because people saw pictures of rioting and burning. In order to rid them of these images, we need to replace these with new, positive images. We need to do the same that the foreign reporters did recently during the protesting, but using the opposite images" (Gilles Tefaatau, personal communication, 1995).

Suzanne Lau-Chonfont, who supervises statistics at the Office of Tourism, discussed the overseas (Europe, Asia, and the United States) marketing strategies.

Now, because of the riots and nuclear tests, there is a conscious change in marketing. There will be counter-marketing in an attempt to capture those people who canceled their reservations. This new marketing will show positive images and will try to communicate the message that everything is all right again. People think, for example, that the airport burned to the ground, but that isn't the case. The images will show that the airport has been rebuilt. They will illustrate that the outer islands weren't touched by the problems and that nothing happened. One of the things that will be highlighted more now is the sea, the sun, and over-water bungalows. [Suzanne Lau-Chonfont, personal communication, 1995]

At about the same time, a promotional campaign with a budget of 545 million CFP (U.S. \$5.45 million) was launched in France to offer tourists “the most beautiful present in the world—Tahiti.” A French singer, Antoine, was to “come to the rescue.” He was slotted for 250 radio spots, all day long, seven days a week, for several weeks. Through seductive song, he would ask people to join him in Tahiti, emphasizing the legendary Tahitian hospitality, the charm and beauty of the natural environment, and the profusion and quality of tourist activities. Tahiti was to become “the pearl of the Pacific.”

President Flosse participated energetically in the campaign. Imagining a Polynesian landscape populated with French personalities, he denounced the protesters as “those who want to fade the colors of Gauguin, extinguish the voice of Jacques Brel, and obliterate the memory of Paul-Émile Victor” (Didier 1995:21). He said, “We want our visitors to know that Polynesia offers itself to them. . . . We are proud to have succeeded in uniting the natural attraction of the South Seas with the security of the western world . . . the object of the present campaign is to make this better known” (Didier 1995:21). As part of his long-term plan he purchased a new luxury, 320-passenger cruise ship to tour the Society Islands, and named it the *MS Paul Gauguin*. It was launched in 1998 and advertised as taking tourists to “worlds so breathtaking even the word paradise seems inadequate” (magazine advertisement by Radisson Seven Seas Cruises, 1998).³⁶

Although the French saw tourism and its “new” marketing images as coming to the rescue, the view of tourism is quite different from the perspective of most Tahitians. As with much else, their response to tourism is, and always has been, filtered through their understanding of land. Tourism has taken their land, destroyed their fishing grounds, and tapped into water sources without giving them much in return.³⁷ They express their outrage through the legal system where, in Papeete, for example, one-third of all court cases pertain to land (Tetiarahi 1987:46). They also communicate their frustration and anger in symbolic actions that speak about, and through, land. For example, Tahitians have refused to sell land that provides access routes to hotels, have blocked hotel water sources, and have even burned down hotels. One of the fanciest tourist accommodations on Huahine, built on prime land and along favored fishing grounds, ignored and rebuffed local residents. When the manager wanted to import staff from France, food from Papeete, and souvenir shell necklaces from the Philippines, Tahitians spoke through land, a powerful force that cannot easily be ignored. As tourists were driven in the hotel van to their \$500 per night over-water bungalows, they bounced painfully into gaping potholes in a dirt road that provided the only land access to the hotel. The Tahitian owners of the land quietly refused to maintain it. The same hotel forbid local Tahitians, other than those

employed by the hotel, from walking on the hotel grounds. When one woman and her friend were asked to leave, she responded, “No, this is our land, not yours. We belong here, not you. You’re the one who has to leave” (Turia Gooding, personal communication, 1995).

Tahiti Intertwined

Foucault, Lefebvre, and Soja have all theorized about spaces/places and how they combine numerous contradictions and ambiguities that, when understood together, generate a complex thirdspace. Here, following their lead, I have explored Tahiti as a place that embraces such ambiguities. I have examined a wide range of beliefs, representations, and events, as well as ways in which they intersect and interact. The list includes elements as seemingly diverse as ancient chants; postcards; the imprisonment of Pouvanaa a Oopa; videos of what tourists crave; colonial changes in a land tenure system; a Hollywood film about the mutiny on the *HMS Bounty*; peaceful protests; eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European imagery of the South Pacific; rioting, burning, and looting; media photos of President Floss relaxing in Moruroa’s lagoon; the lyrics of an anti-nuclear song; the Office of Tourism’s marketing strategies; land claims in court; cruise ships; beliefs about placentas and umbilical cords; Gauguin; potholes; a nuclear testing program; and much more.

Only when eluding the politics of polarity and examining various realms together do the details shed light on a lived, or third, space that is generated from the dialectic, the set of relations in which we live. Indeed, they all involve, underpin, presuppose, generate, reflect, influence, and expand upon one another. Exploring the relationship and tension between local understandings of place and dominant, mass-mediated representations allows for the emergence of a thirdspace that is both real and imagined, immediate and mediated. Whether quietly coexisting, or violently colliding, local Tahitian perspectives and global political agendas are not separate, independently operating realms. They are in constant, daily, intertwined dialogue. On the one hand, visual representations create a meta-language that, while speaking to the world at large, discourages local inhabitants from participating in the discourse. Yet, local voices have their own powerful modes of communicating and, with access to the media, may even end up as a media centerpiece.

Tahitians, on the whole, do not communicate their feelings and ideas about their place with images of turquoise lagoons or bare-breasted women on postcards and posters, or in magazines and guidebooks.³⁸ Instead, they communicate in nonvisual ways that are rooted in a reciprocal relationship with land. They take pride in ancient chants about the historical importance of land. They think about burying their babies’ placentas in the earth to insure their children’s well-being. They research their land rights and go to court

to file land claims. And when their sense of place is threatened—not the postcard image of paradise but the nurturing abilities of land—they speak eloquently. They respond with petition signatures, protest marches, popular songs, purposeful potholes and, when all else fails, a fire set to a hotel, an airport, or even the capital city. All of these acts communicate unmistakably, as one woman said in words, "This is our land, not yours."

In contrast, the meta-language that speaks to the world at large speaks with a somewhat forked tongue. Idealized representations speak past Tahitians in a language of visual imagery that means little to the local population. But, at the same time, these images speak to, and profoundly impact, Tahitians' daily lives. Tahiti as paradise is *not* a benign image. Indeed, the confining walls on which the images are traced and retraced create a claustrophobic enclosure of another sort for Tahitians. Although these images were first created by romantic imaginations to transport Europeans to another world, they soon became willfully employed as a political and economic tool to serve colonial agendas, to attract tourists and their money in order to support the ruling class, and to distract the world from noticing nuclear atrocities. By now they have become an integral and indispensable component of French Polynesia's political economy.

It is clearly the case in French Polynesia that representations of place are enmeshed in politics, and that human lives are ensnared in the politics of representation. One is "never outside representation—or rather outside its politics" (Foster 1983:xv). Images may become weapons of sorts, used to beguile, blind, pacify, incite, injure, or control. While superficially seeming to reveal one place, images may, in fact, serve to conceal a different place. Postcards of bare breasts distract attention from nuclear tests. Guidebook photos of colorful fish darting in crystalline water keep one from noticing government clean-up crews who dispose of trash by shoveling it into the sea.

Tahitians, such as those in Fetuna or Faie, of course, do not live in picturesque ways that match up with touristic representations of Tahiti (see Cizeron and Hienly 1983). Today, only a few years after the events described in this article, people in Fetuna and Faie still go about their daily lives much as before. Garbage is still plowed into the sea in Fetuna. Tourists are still brought to see the eels in Faie. Yet, the thirdspace that emerges at the intersection of worldwide politics, mass media, and local beliefs is where Tahitians, in both Fetuna and Faie, live their social life on a daily basis. For example, the events of September 1995 allowed Tahitians to be heard more clearly than ever before. Nuclear testing generated anti-nuclear protesting. Ugly images infiltrated the world. The government panicked and took measures that enraged Tahitians even more. Today, there is an increasing Tahitian involvement in pro-independence politics. As France's international power is challenged and its "empire" shrinks, the remaining cards France holds—including Tahiti—assume heightened im-

portance. The recent *force de frappe* of France as a declining world power in the mid-1990s contrasts sharply with, but at the same time opens a space for, a greater desire for independence in France's dependent territory.

The Tahitian thirdspace that has emerged in this discussion supports the idea that space can no longer be seen as a fixed entity, or even as an entity that is explainable from one or another point of view. And, as long as anthropologists continue to look at place from one or another perspective—either as represented by outsiders or as generated from within—place will remain uncomplicated and untheorized. Instead, as Lefebvre has concluded, space might better be seen as a medium, a milieu, an intermediary.

Space has now become something more than the theatre, the disinterested stage or setting, of action. Space can no longer be looked upon as an "essence," as an object distinct from the point of view of "subjects," as answering to a logic of its own. Is space a medium? A milieu? An intermediary? It is doubtless all of these, but its role is less and less neutral, more and more active, both as instrument and as goal, as means and as end. The production of space is a generative process, with variations, pluralities and multiplicities, disparities, disjunctions, imbalances, conflicts and contradictions. [Lefebvre (1974)1991:410–411]

Tahiti, as we have seen, is all of these. Ancestral land, tourist postcard, and nuclear test site, Tahiti comprises overlapping and often contradictory fields of experience, representation, and intervention. It is a complex and interwoven, dynamic and intertwined, historical and spatial, generative process.

Notes

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1. Other scholars, like bell hooks and Homi Bhabha, also use the term *thirdspace*, but do so in slightly different ways. Bell hooks (1990) chooses a marginal space that is the location of radical openness and possibility, a space one comes to through struggle. Bhabha (1990, 1994) uses the term for spaces of resistance opened at the margins and firmly rooted in the experience of postcoloniality.

2. See Dorst (1989), Trask (1993), and Vickers (1989), as only a few of many examples.
3. See Kahn (1995), Mitchell (1989), Pemberton (1994), and Rodman (1993).
4. See, for example, Basso (1996), Feld and Basso (1996), Jackson (1995), and Stewart (1996).
5. Although a body of literature exists that discusses the semantic differences between *space* and *place* (see Casey 1996), I choose to circumvent this issue. Feeling that place is a socially created and defined space, I use the terms somewhat interchangeably.
6. See, for example, Claessen (1994), Daws (1980), Day (1986), Despoix (1996), Margueron (1989), Nicole (1993), Rennie (1995), Ritz (1983), and Smith (1960, 1992).
7. The situation in Tahiti is far from a simplified opposition of French vs. Tahitian. As Panoff (1989) states, there is extensive genetic and cultural cross-breeding within the population. Whether one refers to oneself as French, demi, Chinese, Tahitian, Ma'ohi (the Tahitian word for a native person), and so on is only loosely related to genetic make-up. Instead, it can be a political statement. The terms *French* or *demi*, on the one hand, equate roughly with those who are upper class. The terms *Tahitian* or *Ma'ohi*, on the other hand, usually refer to people who are lower class. Politics, not only genetics, can determine one's outlook. It is not uncommon, for example, to find someone whose mother or father is 100% French, and who not only refers to himself as Tahitian but even refuses to speak French or eat French food.
8. "Ask what French Polynesia is or what it consists of and many people would have some difficulty in giving you an answer. Ask about Tahiti, however, and a vision of a beautiful tropical island rising from a deep-blue sea immediately materializes on the map. The reality is that Tahiti is just one island in one of the five island groups which make up French Polynesia" (Wheeler and Carillet 1997:10).
9. Other, but less recent, figures have been considerably lower (see Aldrich 1993:114; Bresson 1993:27; and Henningham 1992:155 for figures from the late 1980s).
10. See Chesneaux (1991), who sees France as a mid-sized world power trying to create itself as a major world power. To describe France's deployment as "colonialism," he says, misses the point.
11. According to Spitz (1991), demi are politically more dangerous than the French because, unlike the French, they are there to stay.
12. See Feld (1996) and Kahn (1996) for other Pacific Island examples.
13. Throughout this article, all information that I received in Tahitian or French, whether by interviewing individuals or seeing or hearing information in the media, has been translated into English. The translations are my own.
14. This translation is from the Tahitian. When expressed in French, however, the references to ancient times and the political messages for today's younger generation are hidden. My English translation of the French version is as follows:
- Huahine, where the north wind blows
 Huahine, in the spray of the waves
 Broken shells in the moonlight
 Obstinate is their pastime.
15. Corbin ([1988]1994) traces the origins of the way coastal landscapes were read as sublime (and no longer repulsive) to around 1750, which coincides with the time when Tahiti was first explored by Europeans. "At the time when Cook and Bougainville were making their travels, the ocean would call forth the image of a 'vast expanse' that was indifferent to human time . . . a place of sublime vacuity whose imagined depth was modeled on the very perpendicular sides of the mountains that often bordered it" (Corbin [1988]1994:127).
16. See Calder et al. (1999) for discussions of how colonial encounters in the Pacific reveal a more contradictory history than that usually described by homogenizing dominant myths.
17. On his first expedition, Cook tried to take two Tahitians back to England but both died on board. During his second voyage he took two more, one of whom was Omai (the other went only as far as New Zealand and then returned to Tahiti). Omai stayed in England for two years until 1776, at which time Cook took him back to Tahiti. The transporting of Tahitians to Europe was something Bougainville had tried as well. Bougainville took Ahutoru to Paris, but Ahutoru was unhappy and, after several months, was shipped back to Tahiti, dying en route.
18. This number continued to grow. In 1966, some 37,300 tourists visited Tahiti and in 1971 there were close to 78,000 (Aldrich 1993:88). Each succeeding year, for the next few years, witnessed dramatic increases in the number of tourists, most of whom were Americans. In 1966, L'Office de Développement du Tourisme (the Office of Tourism Development) was created.
19. Tourism generates 23 billion CFP a year (U.S. \$230 million). The annual tourism budget in 1996 was 800 million CFP (U.S. \$8 million). Of that, 500 million CFP was spent on promotion, advertising, and marketing. The remaining 300 million CFP was for personnel. The tourism industry employs 8,000 people, 32 of whom work directly for the Office of Tourism. (Suzanne Lau-Chonfont, personal communication, 1995; Gilles Tefaatau, personal communication, 1995).
20. Most Tahitians, as well as people opposed to the use of the atoll for French nuclear testing, still refer to it as Moruroa.
21. France was not the only nation to test in the Pacific. Americans carried out a massive nuclear testing program on Bikini and Enewetak atolls in the northern Marshall Islands of Micronesia from 1946 to 1958 (see Gusterson 1996; Kiste 1972).
22. Peto Firuu, like most Tahitians who worked on Moruroa, was attracted by the opportunity for employment. He was given excellent pay, free housing, and food. His particular job consisted of drilling the holes—both on land and in the bedrock under the lagoon—into which the bombs were put. A cement sea wall had to be rebuilt after each nuclear test, he said, because the atoll sank after each explosion.
23. CFP stands for "cour franc pacifique," a monetary unit created in 1945, the value of which is fixed to the French franc. 1 FF = 18.1818 CFP.
24. See Lockwood (1993) for a discussion of this form of financial benevolence on the island of Tubuai in French Polynesia.
25. Food imports rose from 37% in 1960 to 80% in 1989 (Henningham 1992:263).

26. According to French law, previous written permission is needed for the commercial production of a picture of a person.

27. Picture postcards, as a form of cheap communication for the masses, first appeared in the 1880s and '90s. The most popular story of their origin traces their appearance to the 1889 Universal Exhibition in Paris (Geary and Webb 1998; Staff 1966), the same colonial event that fired Gauguin's imagination.

28. He also knows which postcards are purchased by tourists of different nationalities because certain hotels cater predominantly to clientele from specific countries. For instance, postcards that sell at the Nara Hotel on Bora Bora are purchased mainly by Japanese, whereas at the Hotel Bora Bora they are most likely purchased by Americans. "Japanese like to buy postcards with lots of blue everywhere—blue lagoons, blue sky, underwater scenes, fish. Americans prefer sunset postcards with lots of red in them. Europeans buy images that have a more complex composition, such as women dancing or village scenes. Just about everyone likes the naked girls, although the Japanese less so" (Teva Sylvain, personal communication, 1995).

29. Teva employs models, thus circumventing the French law that restricts the Office of Tourism from using images of people.

30. L'Église Évangélique de Polynésie Française, which has been independent since 1963, is the most popular church in French Polynesia, with about two-thirds of Tahitians being members. Its name, in English, is glossed as the Protestant Church, as distinguished from the Catholic Church.

31. Riots had also occurred in late 1983 (triggered by a hotel workers strike) and in October 1987 (resulting from a dock workers strike in reaction to plans to reduce the number of Tahitian dockers). The 1987 riots, in particular, left Papeete looking like a war zone and resulted in the declaration of a state of emergency. "Several dozen shops and businesses were damaged or looted, and eight buildings were destroyed by fire, at an estimated cost of several million Australian dollars" (Henningham 1992:154).

32. See Saura (1998) for his interpretation of these popular songs as a uniquely Tahitian discourse that combines political activism with a spiritual quest.

33. The church took an active role in the protest to communicate that, in contrast to Tavini Huirā'tira's political position, the church kept the anti-nuclear movement separate from the pro-independence movement.

34. By this time many of the protesters were in jail. Tahitians often joked that if tourists wanted to see the "real Tahiti" they should visit the jail.

35. The Japanese were particularly outspoken in their opposition to the nuclear testing as they marked the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in September 1995.

36. Ironically, it is so big that it cannot dock close to many of the islands.

37. See Kent (1993) and Trask (1993) for a similar interpretation of tourism in Hawai'i—as an extension of colonialism.

38. Those who are involved in the tourism industry, of course, perpetuate touristic images on a daily basis. Others,

who support themselves through the craft industry, create objects such as wooden carvings, decorated pearl shells, and *pareu* (colorful cloths that are worn around the body in various styles), that likewise utilize images tourists crave.

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