

shari'a regulations was aimed at camouflaging or distracting attention away from ongoing and pervasive corruption conducted by the mayor or governor.

On a final note, it seems that shari'a regulation at sub-national levels are problematic. Prostitution, gambling, alcohol consumption are prohibited, but these are already prohibited at the national level through the penal code, so prohibiting them under shari'a regulation at the local level is not really necessary. Reading the Qur'an and paying the zakat (alms or religious tax) are compulsory; and the wearing of Muslim clothing is encouraged. Paying zakat has been regulated under the national law, while reading the Qur'an is not compulsory under Islamic law, but the shari'a regulation at sub-national levels has made it an obligation. This is considered as beyond the requirements of Islamic law. Wearing a veil is regulated in the Qur'an but Islamic law has not established a punishment for those who do not wear a veil—something that shari'a regulation has created, an act considered stricter than Qur'anic requirements. The good thing is that the shari'a regulations here are not concerned with cutting off the hands of thieves, an eye for an eye, or stoning to death. But what concerns me is that the idea of having shari'a regulations is not to improve local government performance. Rather, the institution of shari'a regulations is political and lacks substantive meaning.

Buehler's book, published in 2016, was based on research conducted between 1998 and 2013. His findings highlight the intersection of religion and politics in Indonesia. Indonesia's political situation in 2017 has also confirmed his argument that shari'a regulations at sub-national levels are no longer the main issue. Perhaps, "the opportunist Islamisers" have different games to play, rejecting the non-Muslim candidates, as in the case of the 2017 election for Jakarta governor.

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ARTEFACTS OF ENCOUNTER: Cook's Voyages, Colonial Collecting and Museum Histories. *Edited by Nicholas Thomas, Julie Adams, Billie Lythberg, Maia Nuku, and Amiria Salmond; photography by Gwil Owen.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2016. 348 pp. (Illustrations.) US\$68.00, cloth. ISBN 978-0-8248-5935-0.

At first glance, this might be taken for a coffee-table book. It is large (294 x 258 x 27 mm), with a simple, handsome dustcover. The design is elegant and uncluttered: stout glossy paper, readable type, and excellent (beautifully reproduced) photographs. However, it quickly reveals itself as primarily a vehicle for scholarship, not just for visual gratification, with chapters contributed by the five editors and twenty other specialists. The images serve as counterpoint to, and underpin, the discussions in the text, in a powerful synergy in which the reader is led both visually *and* conceptually around the objects and ideas discussed.

The initiative for the book, as explained in the introduction, was two Cambridge University research projects, one of them eponymous. Both were undertaken in the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (MAA) collections and subsequently in other museums in Europe and the Pacific. Their focus, as in this book, was on “stages of exploration, encounter, evangelism and collecting in the Pacific, [primarily] between 1769 and the 1860s” (26). All have been about the encounters of Westerners with Others, whose artefacts they collected, and inversely, our encounter with those artefacts today.

The sub-title of the book reads like three separate book titles, which highlights the key decisions to take when embarking on a book about artefacts: what to cover, and how to structure it. The traditional approach has been overwhelmingly taxonomic, while here historical and sociological approaches predominate—though detailed taxonomic analysis informs these. The introduction outlines the different strategies adopted for the different sections of the book.

The first part of the book sets the stage. It “outlines the various collections’ histories—their route to the museum ... current theory around artefacts; and ... the other side of the encounter.” The “other side” includes the agency of the owners/makers, and the residual significance the objects carry for their descendants. Also discussed are “the instruments carried on board the European ships, particularly those engaged in voyages of discovery.” Both old and new technologies “are constituted through and are constitutive of social relations” (27).

Chapter 1 discusses the formation of Cambridge’s collections. It traces acquisitions of material collected by Dampier in the seventeenth century, through the collections made on Cook’s three voyages. These were critically important in establishing ethnographic museology. The wealthy Banks sponsored the first comprehensive scientific team for observing, documenting, and collecting, the product of which first captured the Western gaze with the material culture of other societies. Subsequent gifts to Cambridge, particularly of artefacts collected in Fiji by the first British administrators, and the appointment of Baron von Hügel (also active in Fiji) as the first curator of the university’s fledgling Antiquities and Ethnology Museum, further confirmed the Pacific as a major focus of collecting and scholarship. As this book testifies, that focus persists to this day.

Chapter 2 considers indigenous agency in those early exchanges, and notes that their descendants regard the objects in a manner very different from the historical and archival approach Westerners adopt. For them, the objects reveal “alternative ways of being” (55). They are not mere historical curiosities, but vehicles through which the ancestors speak to them still, providing artistic, moral, and social indicators for the ongoing development of the current generation.

Chapter 3 discusses the state-of-the-art instruments on which the

“explorers” relied, and their preoccupation with them and their maintenance (sometimes repairing them after ill-handling by unskilled crew), as well as preserving them from theft and destruction by the people they met. Finally, it notes the manner in which from very early on, these instruments came to be displayed alongside the artefacts brought back from Polynesia (67), a juxtaposition still found in many museums today.

“The second part of the book features key objects ... organized chronologically ... [from] artefacts collected on Cook’s ... voyages, on Vancouver’s voyage and by missionaries and their contemporaries... [Then] in the book’s final section we include a fuller listing of the relevant collections, with further notes on some objects” (27). Here is surveyed a selection of artefacts collected during that early, largely pre-missionary and pre-colonial period. This provides an artist and material-culture student such as myself with not necessarily the most information, but undoubtedly the most pure enjoyment—visually saturated with beautiful images of wonderful objects, and intellectually stimulated to think about each in great detail. Its very diversity makes it impossible to provide a brief review. The artefacts range from personal adornment such as necklaces and breastplates, to headrests, decorative wood-carving, weapons, fans, flywhisks, fish-hooks and samples of barkcloth (tapa). Of course, even in the country-based catalogue of the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at the end of the book, it makes no attempt to be comprehensive. But it still covers an intriguing array of objects from a large segment of the Pacific.

The authors take the now well-established position that artefacts can themselves be seen as social actors. As such, they should be not merely gazed at but also interrogated in terms of their utilitarian, social, and spiritual functions, and whatever symbolism they carry, intentionally or incidentally. In order to do this it is necessary to intricately study the objects themselves to understand “what do artefacts want?” (20). They cite the advice of the pioneering Te Rangi Hiroa that “to understand them [the objects] we must learn their language as expressed through the minute details of technique” (21). This approach yields a particularly valuable aspect of the book, where each object is considered in great detail, and those details are in turn historically and anthropologically contextualized. The picture that emerges is subtle and nuanced.

This book is that too-rare thing, a beautiful object that is also a truly thought-provoking work of scholarship. It deserves a place in every major institutional library, and on the bookshelves of all serious students of Pacific material culture.