Introduction

European expansion into the south-western Pacific region from the beginning of the nineteenth century followed closely in the wake of the exploratory voyages of the previous century. Fascinated by the different cultures they encountered, some Europeans recorded their impressions of Indigenous people in pictorial and written forms while others collected examples of local material culture, these ‘curios’ representing tangible reminders of people and places. Indigenous people were equally curious about the Europeans who arrived by sea in large sailing ships. On the south-west coast of eastern New Guinea, oral tradition records the arrival of the first ‘white men’ in sail boats, locals initially believing that the Europeans were the returning spirits of their ancestors. By contrast, in northern Australia, the new arrivals were probably viewed as potential traders because the region was frequented by trepang-fishers from island south-east Asia, a tradition that had been on-going since...
at least the mid seventeenth century. Art forms, in particular, were a means of individual or group expression, revealing aspects of contact with Europeans and other outsiders. For instance, Aborigines of western Arnhem Land transformed rock surfaces with painted images of foreign watercraft and depictions of foreigners (Asian and European) while in places like Torres Strait, New Guinea and the Solomon Islands locals engraved or painted some of their material possessions with an array of contact imagery, including ships, Christian motifs and sometimes, firearms.

This chapter focuses on the extent to which contact with Europeans impacted on indigenous material culture of northern Australia and the south-western Pacific region. Our study uses museum collections, particularly those of the British Museum (BM), Australian Museum (AM), Macleay Museum (MM) and Queensland Museum (QM), to show how increasing exposure to Europeans and their material goods during the nineteenth century led to changes in form, decoration and function of some aspects of indigenous material culture. On the whole, the museum collections suggest that although local responses to contact varied from place to place, a pattern of shared motifs is clearly discernible. Ship imagery is particularly prevalent, as are depictions of Europeans. Our survey focuses on these two introduced motifs as a way of revealing and highlighting common themes of indigenous artistic expression as a result of contact.

**Sailing boats, steamers and pearling lugger**

*Northern Territory coast*

British surveying vessels entered the tropical waters of northern Australia from the beginning of the nineteenth century. While some of these boats and their crew had brief interactions (sometimes hostile) with local Aborigines, it was the British settlements established on the Cobourg Peninsula between 1827 and 1850 which ushered in a period of more sustained contact with Europeans. A military garrison, Fort Wellington (1827-1829), located in Raffles Bay preceded that called Victoria (1838-1849) at Port Essington, both settlements having extensive contacts with the local Iwaidja people and other groups from nearby parts of western Arnhem Land.  

The settlement of Victoria at Port Essington, in particular, received many European visitors, nearly all arriving by sea (the exception was the overland expedition led by Ludwig Leichhardt which arrived in December 1845). Aside from warships stationed there, 78 boats entered the harbour between 1838 and 1849. As a result, there were many opportunities for local Aborigines to observe European vessels of different types, sizes and rigging. Moreover, prospects for trading with the foreigners were also considerable since the settlement was sometimes filled with visitors (for example vessels like HMS *Rattlesnake* were usually manned by a complement of 180 men, including officers).

Museum collections and historical records show that at least some of the visiting mariners were keen to take away mementoes of their visit in the form of local weaponry and other articles of interest. A collection of fish-spears, spears, spear-throwers and a club gathered by Lt. JMR Ince of HMS *Fly* in c. 1844, now in the British Museum, provides a typical example. While none of the objects in Lt. Ince’s collection reflect contact with Europeans in terms of decoration or otherwise, a spear (Oc1847,0827.25) tipped with a piece of glass collected by Sir Everard Home of HMS *North Star* in around 1843 shows that local Aborigines were experimenting with European materials. This is also confirmed by archaeological evidence.

Occasionally, more unusual objects, like the ‘drone pipe’ (*didjeridoo*), a musical instrument made from a length of bamboo, were collected. One such drone pipe collected from Port Essington in c.1844 by an unknown naval officer is also now in the British Museum (Oc1855,1220.177). This example carries faint traces of what appears to be horizontal bands (possibly red ochre) of decoration along the length of the pipe. In contrast, among the ethnographic collections of the Macleay Museum is a bamboo drone pipe (Figure 1) (attributed to Port Essington) which is engraved with three European-style sailing boats (two gaff-rigged cutters and possibly a fore-and-aft schooner or ketch), letters and some symbols, one of which appears to be a representation of the Broad Arrow, a symbol used to mark British government property during the 1800s.

The depiction of the Broad Arrow on the Macleay drone pipe suggests that it may have been made before 1850 for the symbol would have been visible on stores and equipment (and possibly on the uniforms of
convicts) at the British settlements of Fort Wellington and Victoria. The types of sailing vessels represented (two cutters and possibly a schooner) further supports this attribution as they are types of boats known to have visited Port Essington during the period of British occupation.

While the Port Essington settlement of Victoria was broken up in November 1849, the establishment of Palmerston (later renamed Darwin) in 1869 led to renewed interest in the region. Pastoralists moved into the Cobourg Peninsula from the mid-1870s, and they were followed by the occasional natural history collector employed by either museums or wealthy private collectors. While the acquisition of scientific specimens was the primary goal of such field collectors, they usually supplemented their collections with ethnographic artefacts (e.g. weapons, ornaments and bags) which they gathered during the course of their travels.

Bark paintings also feature in the collections of cultural material made by natural history collectors and others during the 1800s. There are 28 paintings from the Port Essington area, either known from the ethnographic literature or extant in museum collections, mostly with depictions of turtles, goannas, crocodiles, snakes and human-like figures. One painting, which is known only from a photograph taken between c. 1877 and 1885, reflects contact with outsiders (Figure 2). This painting, featuring a canoe and a boat on which three human figures stand appears to be a depiction of an Indonesian prau (identified by the

Figure 1. Detail of decoration on a bamboo drone pipe (didjeridoo) attributed to the Port Essington area, Cobourg Peninsula, Northern Australia. Collector unknown, collected c. 1838-1877, 114 x 4.8 cm. The pipe is engraved with three European-style sailing ships (two gaff-rigged cutters and possibly a fore-and-aft schooner), letters and some symbols, including perhaps a representation of the British government Broad Arrow. Courtesy of the Macleay Museum, University of Sydney (ETM.1080).

Figure 2. Photograph of a group of artefacts, including a bark painting showing a canoe and an Indonesian prau. Photographer: Paul Foelsche, c. 1877-1885. AA96 Foelsche Collection, South Australian Museum Archives.
tripod mast) and therefore it would seem that the people depicted are probably South East Asian or Macassan traders rather than Europeans.

Around the same time that the photograph referred to above was taken, a group of Aborigines from the Port Essington area were recruited to work in the Torres Strait pearling industry (Europeans began pearl-shell fishing in Torres Strait in 1869). The circumstances surrounding the recruitment of the group in 1877 was to become the subject of intense scrutiny and allegations of kidnapping were laid against the master of the pearl vessel Gem, Captain Francis Cadell. Later, in 1881, a reported case of kidnapping of local Aborigines from Goulburn Island and the adjacent mainland by a schooner involved in Torres Strait pearl-shell fishing prompted further enquires. A unique rock painting of a nineteenth-century pearling lugger (Figure 3) in the Wellington Range, south of South Goulburn Island, may be associated with one of these little-known events.

**Torres Strait**

In contrast to the situation in northern Australia, neighbouring Torres Strait was the centre of a thriving pearling industry by 1880. A region whose peoples probably first encountered Europeans in 1606 when the Dutch ship Duyfken and Spanish vessel San Pedro passed through the Strait, a new phase of contact with Europeans followed the arrival of HMS Providence in 1792. European shipping traffic increased gradually during the early part of the nineteenth century providing the occasional opportunity for some locals to trade artefacts and food produce with passing vessels and their crew. The charting of the Strait by the survey vessels HMS Fly and HMS Rattlesnake in the 1840s further opened up the region to maritime traffic. However, it was the arrival of pearl-fishers in 1869 which led to an influx of foreigners and boats. Within a decade, more than 100 pearling luggers were working in the Strait and these were largely manned by Pacific Islander and Asian crew. Despite that, depictions of any type of foreign watercraft are rare on articles of Torres Strait Islander material culture and entirely absent in the rock art.

While there are instances where a canoe or fishing scene was incised on a tobacco pipe or stone spinning-top, these were not common decorative motifs. In terms of non-indigenous watercraft, a similar pattern emerges in Torres Strait rock art where there are no depictions of European sailing ships from 56 recorded rock art sites while canoes feature in at least six recorded rock art sites in Torres Strait. This is in stark contrast to the dozens of depictions of foreign sailing vessels documented on the rock walls of north Arnhem Land and Groote Eylandt.

Even though historical references show that Torres Strait Islanders were trading items like bows and arrows with Europeans from as early as 1792, collections of artefacts obtained during the first half of the nineteenth century are scarce. A collection obtained in 1836 by Commander Lewis of the schooner Isabella and presented to the Australian Museum in the same year was believed to have been destroyed by fire in 1882, although recent research has uncovered some 19 artefacts (18 arrows and a pubic cover) as possibly belonging to this collection. Other collections of objects, like those made by Lt. JMR Ince and expedition naturalist JB Jukes of HMS Fly in 1844-1845, are held in the British Museum. Together with a few items gathered by their colleague Lt. Riske now in the Bristol Museum these objects originate from either Darnley (Erub) or Murray (Mer) islands.
Although these pre-1850s collections are devoid of contact imagery this does not necessarily reflect what was going on at the time. For example, an ink line drawing of an European ship by a Darnley (Erub) Islander was collected by John Sweatman of HMS Bramble in the mid-1840s (Figure 4). If this particular sketch was produced in response to a request from one of the visiting seamen is not known although it is clear that Islanders were sometimes sketching of their own free will. For instance, Jukes relates that when his colleague Mr. Millery retrieved a note-book that he had left on Mer by mistake he found that a local had sketched ‘a rude caricature of himself [Millery] in one page, with a hat on, and a pipe in his mouth’.19

In contrast, post-1850s collections of indigenous material culture from Torres Strait contain some objects with European sailing ships depicted on them. By far the largest collection from this period is that made by the natural scientist and ethnologist Alfred Cort Haddon in 1888-9 and 1898 which numbers around 2,000 items.20 Extremely well documented, the Haddon collections provide a large body of material with which to compare earlier collections made by others between 1850 and 1888 and dispersed between the Macleay Museum, Australian Museum and Queensland Museum in Australia.

Taken together, these museum collections offer an insight into the changes that were occurring to cultural material in Torres Strait, especially during the second half of the nineteenth century. Most noticeable is the readiness with which Islanders incorporated foreign materials into traditional art forms and articles of body adornment. For example, coloured glass trade beads and strips of red cloth were particularly popular and were used to decorate pearl-shell chest ornaments and cassowary feather head-dresses while introduced pigments, such as the laundry whitener known as Reckitt’s Blue, was frequently used to enhance the patterns of woven straps of necklaces, and other items.21

Representations of European boats appear occasionally on the upper flat surfaces of stone spinning tops (kolap) in Torres Strait. While various kinds of beans were used as spinning tops by Islanders throughout the region, the use of stone tops was confined to the Miriam people in the eastern islands.22 The latter were made from a type of fine-grained volcanic ash predominately found on the island of Mer and it was there that Haddon observed their popularity in 1898 (on one occasion Haddon saw around 30 tops spinning at the same time).23 The upper (and sometimes the lower) surface of tops were typically painted with some sort of design representing a variety of subject-matter (e.g. animals, abstract, human-figures wearing traditional head-dresses and masks).

From a sample of around 30 stone spinning tops originating from the island of Mer, we found only two tops depicting non-indigenous watercraft.24 A European boat is painted in red ochre on the upper surface of one top in the Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Accession no. 1925.656) while another top reportedly featured a pearling lugger.25 Although the latter cannot be located today (Haddon states that he gave the top to the British Museum in 1889), a detailed description of it exists. Haddon stated that it depicted a pearl-sheller’s lugger, ‘containing a pumping-engine with its handles and the tender; below is the diver holding a bag in one hand and the life-line in the other; the air tube is also drawn’.26 The top, which may yet turn up in some other museum collection, is one of the few indigenous artworks...
depicting the pearling industry which, along with the activities of missionaries (who arrived in 1871), eventually brought about immense socio-cultural and economic change to the island group.

European ships also feature occasionally on bamboo tobacco pipes and containers dating from the late 1800s. Collections, such as those made by JB Jukes and Lt. Ince during the voyage of HMS *Fly* in the mid-1840s, suggest that traditionally tobacco pipes were either devoid of decoration or sometimes decorated with engraved geometric designs (compare Oc1846,0731.2 and Oc1846,0809.1, both in the British Museum). Later examples are usually ornamented with naturalistic representations of animals and/or complex geometric patterns. More unusual forms of decoration (e.g. an island in profile) were sometimes applied to pipes but these appear to date from the 1880s. One earlier example features a two-masted boat as well as a feathered head-dress, mythological figures (koimai) and various animals (e.g. a dog, dugong, snake, turtle and sharks). This tobacco pipe, collected on the Cape York Peninsula of the Australian mainland between c. 1865 and 1876, is clearly of Torres Strait origin. A small bamboo container (burar) from Mer collected by Haddon in 1898 also has several European boats and pearling luggers engraved in punctate lines.

**Papua New Guinea**

Papua New Guinea was another region where locals shaped lengths of bamboo into functional objects like tobacco pipes and containers. A recent analysis by Torrence and Clarke of tobacco pipes from Central Province collected between 1876 and 1920 suggests that locals were increasingly decorating their pipes (and lime containers) with designs resembling traditional body tattoos or clan motifs. This trend emerges from about 1880, only a few years after sustained contact with Europeans began. Torrence and Clarke argue that since earlier historical references to pipes indicate that they were not usually decorated it would seem that locals were choosing to maintain and assert their cultural or clan identity within a period of profound change. The end product was probably also more aesthetically appealing to the European collector.

A bamboo lime container collected in around 1883 by the collector and curio trader AP Goodwin is an exception to the trend in that it illustrates contact with European watercraft. It was described by Goodwin as a lime container ‘carved by an artist… who has seen a Steamship and other vessels of differing rig.’ The steamship may have been a representation of the missionary vessel *Ellengowan* which transported missionaries and provisions to south-eastern coastal villages from 1874 to 1881 (it first visited the Papuan Gulf district in 1879). For coastal communities between Port Moresby and Kerepuna, the *Ellengowan* was a source of the highly popular ‘trade’ tobacco (*kuku*) and from as early as 1876 the steamer was called by locals the ‘*lakatoi kuku*’ or ‘Tobacco ship’ (*lakatoi* or *lagatoi* being the Motu name for their large trading canoes).

Along the coastal strip of the eastern Papuan Gulf, the Elema peoples experimented with new imagery, forms and materials. Here we find some remarkable indigenous artistic expressions of contact with Europeans and their material goods. For example, the introduced pigment Reckitt’s Blue (see above) was sometimes used to enhance decorative elements on ceremonial boards (hohao) (e.g. a hahao board (E256) in the Australian Museum collected by TF Bevan in c.1885-1886 is decorated with Reckitt’s Blue). One type of mask in particular lent itself to the incorporation of non-traditional imagery. This was the eharo dance-mask which was typically topped by spectacular representations of fish, birds and other animals. Two examples vividly express local responses to introduced technology and watercraft. A representation of an European lantern tops an eharo mask (AM E23153) collected from Parimomo village in 1915 while an eharo mask topped with a cutter in full sail was photographed by the anthropologist FE Williams in 1931 (Figure 5).

Further evidence of the Papuan interest in foreign watercraft is reflected in a series of drawings of steamers and ships made by Misi, a local of Port Moresby, in 1898 (Haddon 1904). While the subject matter of these drawings may have been suggested by Haddon (or perhaps one of his colleagues), one image is particularly striking because of its detail as the steamer’s propeller, the funnel, lifeboats, windows and the captain at the wheel are all depicted (Figure 6). Three flags are also depicted on the steamer, one of which appears to be a representation of the Union Jack.

Similar representations of the Union Jack also appear on a bamboo tobacco pipe (Oc,+1603) from southern Papua which entered the
British Museum in 1882 (the designs are pyro-engraved). The pipe may represent an isolated attempt by a local to record the image of the flag largely associated with British Royal Navy surveying vessels and warships that occasionally visited the south-east coast of New Guinea before the creation of a British Protectorate in November 1884.

Solomon Islands

In the Solomon Islands contact imagery is evident across a range of objects and includes depictions of ships, European firearms and Christian imagery (the first missionaries arrived in 1848). Firearms were probably first introduced into the region by American whalers or itinerant traders during the 1830s or 1840s. Later historical sources confirm their popularity amongst locals who used them in head-hunting raids.37 Their popularity is reflected on some articles of local material culture, including objects seen in the field by Europeans during the late 1880s. For instance, during his time in New Georgia in 1892-1893, Lt. Boyle Somerville of HMS Penguin saw a figurative post in front of a Eruo shelter for war canoes that had been carved from a tree, the crooked bough of which had been used to represent the arm of the figure; the hand held a ‘carved revolver … pointed for firing’38 (a sketch of this figure in Somerville’s hand survives in the Pitt Rivers Museum). Rifles also feature on a decorated paddle collected from Makira (Santa Anna) in around 1885. The blade of the paddle is decorated on both sides; one
side features four European sailing ships (Figure 7) as well as what appears to be a small steam launch with five seated figures while the other side contains a complex pictorial narrative (Figure 8). The latter features a number of male figures, some of whom appear to be engaged in fighting with rifles and short axes with metal heads (‘trade’ axes).

Closer examination of the battle scene suggests that at least two of the rifles depicted are of the Snider-Enfield variety, with breech loading lock.

The Union Jack was another introduced European motif occasionally incorporated into the designs of traditional body ornaments and utilitarian articles, including beaded waist belts and arm ornaments made by Solomon Islanders in the 1800s. A waist-belt woven entirely from coloured glass trade beads and featuring the Union Jack survives in the collections of the British Museum (Occ.+5541). Accompanying documentation suggests it was one worn by a chief and was made from beads procured in trade with a Queensland schooner before 1891.

**Depictions of Europeans**

Depictions of Europeans on indigenous material culture from the region under review are relatively rare. For the most part, such representations are usually identifiable by the European-style clothing (e.g. trousers, uniforms and hats) they are wearing. In north Australian rock art this is also the case but hats (as well as pipes) appear as a very important indicator that the person depicted is either of European origin or an outsider. In many parts of northern Australia and some parts of Southeast Asia Europeans are indicated by a hand-on-hips posture. Many paintings of European ships have crew depicted, invariably wearing distinctly European styles of hats and often smoking pipes. This appears to have been a trend both in the 1800s and the early to mid-1900s (e.g. Figure 3) and there are some paintings of ships with hat-wearing European crew standing on deck up to 150 km inland.

Solomon Islanders were also fascinated with European-style hats. One visitor to New Georgia in the early 1890s observed that European hats, along with all sorts of garments, ‘are in great demand’. In areas where there was a strong tradition of wood carving, some locals incorporated European-style hats into traditional art forms. However, it is with the production of objects that Solomon Islanders began making for trade with passing foreigners where European influences are most obvious. Among the articles produced for trade with outsiders were the large, sometimes even full-size ‘realistic’ style sculptures of locals. The bust of a young Solomon Islander in the National Gallery of Australia is a fascinating example of the melding of traditional wood carving style with Victorian influences.

![Figure 7. Paddle from Makira (Santa Anna), Solomon Islands, collected by C.F. Browne, Government Agent on the Labour trade vessel, Sybil I, in 1884. (First side of blade showing European ships). © Queensland Museum (E4508).](image1)

![Figure 8. Paddle from Makira (Santa Anna), Solomon Islands, collected by C.F. Browne, Government Agent on the Labour trade vessel, Sybil I, in 1884. (Second side of blade showing male figures, some of whom are engaged in fighting with rifles and short axes with metal heads). © Queensland Museum (E4508).](image2)
In Torres Strait, there is some evidence that locals occasionally decorated material possessions, including valued objects, with figures wearing European-style clothing. A stone spinning-top from the island of Mer is a good example (BM Oc,.3435). The upper surface of the top is decorated with a male figure wearing trousers, the legs of which are rolled up; the figure holds a large bottle (probably of alcohol) in one hand. Regrettably, the head of the figure is now mostly obliterated although an 1887 watercolour sketch (BM Oc2006,Drg.408) shows a faint outline around the head region, possibly suggesting that the figure wore a hat. The missionary Samuel Macfarlane (who collected the top) considered that the figure was supposed to represent an European as did British Museum curator CH Read, who was the first to describe and illustrate it. The stance of the figure, with hand placed on hip, is a posture noticed in relation to other indigenous depictions of Europeans (see above). Another top, also from Mer and collected by AC Haddon in 1898 shows a man in European clothing (possibly a naval uniform) with a snake biting his shoulder.

Museum collections with holdings from south-eastern Papua New Guinea suggest that depictions of Europeans on material culture are extremely rare. Two roughly pyro-engraved human figures (one with hand on hip possibly representing an European male) appear on a bamboo tobacco pipe collected in 1884. Yet in places like the Solomon Islands, where bamboo lime containers were traditionally decorated with stylized designs (e.g. geometric motifs and frigate birds) we found that European derived motifs are more common. There is evidence that by the late 1800s some lengths of bamboo were being decorated with an array of contact motifs, including Christian imagery (e.g. Christian crosses) and even depictions of Europeans. For example, a bamboo container in a private collection is profusely decorated with incised animals (e.g. bird, pig, fish and sharks) as well as stars, hearts, flowers and designs reminiscent of body (facial) tattoos. One motif appears to represent a Christian altar, or perhaps a reredos, a screen or wall decoration at the back of an altar.

Even more remarkable is a bamboo container in the British Museum which is decorated with a number of different scenes, including a village scene, a ship and two boats, as well as foreigners (Europeans) in various poses (Figure 9). These include a male figure sitting in a deck chair looking through a set of binoculars while another is shown waving with his hat. Two Europeans are shown sitting back to back; the male figure is reading a newspaper while his female companion holds a folded parasol. Another male figure sits in a deck chair reading a book. The object originally belonged to the Methodist missionary, the Rev. George Brown who visited the Solomon Islands three times between 1879 and 1901 and was involved with the establishment of a
mission station at Roviana in the western part of the British Protectorate in 1902.50

An old label stuck onto the container reveals that it was collected from the southern part of Malaita Island and that it was an imitative etching (the label reads “Malaita, S. Imitative etching”). We suggest that the label provides important clues to both the container’s decoration and meaning. In short, we believe that the decoration may represent an indigenous interpretation of an European drawing or sketch. Indeed there is contemporaneous evidence that Solomon Islanders were interested in the sketches that Europeans produced. For example, Lt. BT Somerville noted that among New Georgia locals, ‘European drawings are a great source of pleasure to them’.51 Somerville also referred to, ‘a native drawing by one man, which was deliberately intended as a portrait of another. It was drawn as a sort of joke, in imitation of one of our officers who had just made a recognizable portrait of one of the natives, which had pleased them a good deal, and of which they fully appreciated the likeness.’52

One of the most interesting examples of indigenous material culture that embodies changing traditions is a turtle-shell mask from Torres Strait which is topped with a European-style, broad-brimmed hat, now in New Zealand’s Te Papa Museum (Figure10). This mask appears to be unique and may well be a representation of a particular individual (possibly European) (note the ‘bags’ which appear underneath the eyes). The style of the mask suggests that it was made by an Eastern Islander (compare with that collected from Erub Island by JB Jukes of the Fly in c. 1845 and now in the British Museum, Oc1846.0731.3).53 Although the reason for its making remains unclear, the mask in Te Papa is an example of a type of object that Torres Strait peoples are known to have traded with Europeans from the early 1830s.

While there are other Torres Strait masks in museum collections that show European influences (e.g. one from Mabuiag in the British Museum is made from iron; see Oc,+3277), the turtle-shell mask in Te Papa reflects more than just a change to the form of an object traditionally used in dances and ceremony. It is a spectacular example of how contact with Europeans altered the form and function of traditional indigenous material culture. Another object in the British Museum is equally striking, albeit for different reasons. This is a Victorian-style ladies bonnet from Samoa made entirely from thin plates of turtle-shell which Queen Victoria presented to the British Museum in 1841 (Oc1841.0211.12). Like the turtle-shell mask in Te Papa, the turtle-shell bonnet may have been a specially commissioned piece. Nevertheless, both objects encapsulate European contact and its impact on indigenous material culture.

Conclusions

This survey highlights a number of important trends and changes to indigenous material culture from across northern Australia to southern Papua New Guinea and beyond to the Solomon Islands and other parts of the Pacific after the arrival of outsiders, particularly Europeans. In terms of new imagery, depictions of the newly arriving people, and the vessels that brought them from across great expanses of water, was particularly important. The detailed nature of the imagery suggests not only artistic skill but also an intimacy and fascination with the outsiders, their watercraft, their clothing, and of the goods exchanged with them in trade. We can only guess at the multitude of stories, layered with both group and individual experience, told in relation to these images.

Today they are testament to a period of culture contact and change that
transformed the lives of their makers and their descendants in profound ways. They also are a reminder of the reverse gaze of history and Indigenous commentary on the new peoples arriving to and occupying traditional lands.

ENDNOTES
8 Ibid., pp.72-73.
10 A.D. Gore to J. Douglas, Letter (26 November 1877), Colonial Secretary Correspondence, COL/A254; 78/652, Queensland State Archives: Brisbane; J. Douglas to Beddome, Letter (26 November 1877), Colonial Secretary Correspondence, COL/A254; 78/652, Queensland State Archives, Brisbane.
11 Reported case of kidnapping at Goulburn Island, 1881 (Telegram), COL/A325; 81/4889, Colonial Secretary Correspondence, Queensland State Archives, Brisbane.


For a detailed catalogue of Haddon’s collections see D.R. Moore, The Torres Strait collections of A.C. Haddon, London: British Museum Press, 1984. Ibid., see for various examples.

Haddon, Reports, vol. IV, 1912, p. 314.

Ibid., p. 316; pl. XXVIII, fig. 1.

See Haddon, Reports, vol. IV, 1912 and Moore, The Torres Strait collections of A.C. Haddon, for a range of spinning-tops.

Haddon, Reports, vol. IV, 1912, p. 360.

Ibid.

See A.C. Haddon, The Decorative Art of British New Guinea: A study in Papuan Ethnography, Cunningham Memoirs 10, Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1894, p. 31, fig. 10.

Haddon, Reports, vol. IV, 1912, p. 383. This pipe is now in the British Museum, registration number: Oc,+477.

For illustrations and descriptions of this container see Haddon, Reports, vol. IV, 1912, p. 123; fig. 153 and Moore, The Torres Strait collections of A.C. Haddon, no. 239 and pl. 28.


Ibid., pp.186-187.


F.E. Williams, Drama of Orokolo: the social and ceremonial life of the Elema, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940, p. 266.


A. Cheyne, A description of islands in the western Pacific Ocean, north and south of the Equator: with sailing directions: together with their productions, manners and customs of the natives, and, vocabularies of their various languages, London: J.D. Potter, 1852, p. 64.


See May et al. 2010.


See Cheyne, A description of islands in the western Pacific Ocean, 1852, p. 64. Cheyne noted several articles that were suitable for trade with peoples of the New Georgia group in the Western Solomon Islands, including ‘cheap straw hats’.


For example, see nguzunguzu canoe-prow figurehead illustrated in C. Howarth and D. Waite, Varilaku: Pacific Arts from the Solomon Islands, Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2011, p. 101.
Somerville, ‘Ethnographical notes in New Georgia’, 1897, p. 378; also see Howarth and Waite, *Varilaku*, 2011, for several examples.

This bust (NGA 2007.431) is illustrated in Howarth and Waite, *Varilaku*, 2011, p. 49.


This spinning-top is illustrated in Haddon, *Reports*, vol. IV, 1912, p. 384, fig. 378.

An illustration of this tobacco pipe appears in Torrence and Clarke, ‘Creative Colonialism’, in press, p. 185, fig.7.5.


Ibid.

For an illustration of the mask collected from Erub Island, see Jukes, *Narrative of the surveying voyage of H.M.S. Fly*, vol. 1, 1847, p. 178.