

provides in turn give only limited answers to the questions of what is available and where. An appendix lists the manuscript sources from the *Coquille*, but without cross-referencing them to the extracts which are included in this volume, or clearly indicating what material has been left out. Nowhere is it explained, for example, why the manuscript account of Poret de Blosseville in Ollivier is significantly different from the same author's account in Sharp.

Ollivier's transcription and translation, however, are excellent, with an impressive control of the many nautical terms used in the journals. The only obvious errors are minor ('tout pour attendre' should presumably read 'tant pour attendre' [p.42]; a 'baguete' (sic) is a 'mallet', not a 'wand' [p.120]). However, a couple of other instances illustrate how subtle decisions of translation can lead to significant changes of meaning. In a description of the *Recherche's* encounter with a group of Maori canoes (p.25), for example, Ollivier translates 'il en est venue une autre' as 'another (canoe) came' instead of 'another left (the ship)' — resulting in a total of five canoes rather than the four that were actually present. Similar ambiguity is apparent in d'Auribeau's comment (p.32) that the stature of the Maori was comparable to that of the Europeans, and that 'elle diffère très peu entre eux'. Ollivier's translation, 'they differ very little in that' implies that the Maori were generally of a similar height to the Pakeha. It seems more probable, however, that the phrase was intended as 'their height differs very little among themselves', i.e. that the Maori were generally of uniform height.

Despite a good deal of interesting material, the minimal editing and rather confusing format of this collection do not make it either as easy to use or as pleasurable to read as it could have been. It is also unfortunate that the quality of one of the essays appended to the documents, a discussion by Anthony Murray-Oliver of the drawings and engravings from Duperrey's voyage, is seriously below that of the rest of the volume. His piece, describing the complex relationships between the works of the artists Chazal, Lejeune, and Tardieu, is so loosely and cryptically written that his meaning is frequently obscure. Comparisons between representations of the various artists (e.g. pp.200, 214) are hard to follow without illustrations of all the works discussed, while the failure to translate captions to some of the pictures will not be appreciated by non-linguists. By contrast, the essay by Ollivier and R.D.J. Collins on the art which emerged from the voyage of d'Entrecasteaux is clear, interesting, and persuasively argued, a model of its kind.

PHILIP TURNER

*Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

*Fragmens du Dernier Voyage de la Pérouse*. Edited and translated by J.Dunmore. National Library of Australia, Canberra, 1987. 2 vols, 101pp., limited edition. Australian price: \$85.

*FRAGMENS*, published in France in 1797, purports to put into print a notebook stolen from the ill-fated *Astrolabe*, one of the two ships which, in 1785-1788, voyaged via Cape Horn to the South Pacific under the command of Jean-François Galaup de la Pérouse. The notebook, containing an account especially of the society the crews discovered in the idyllic south seas and its flora and fauna, habitations, and tools, was described in the preface which introduced its appearance in print as having been stolen by an English sailor whilst the two ships were in Botany Bay. Both ships were subsequently lost on Vanikoro, but La Pérouse had taken the precaution of having his letters and journals forwarded

meanwhile to France from the British settlement: these provided material for an official record of the expedition published, also in 1797, by the French government. The notebook seemed to complement this as an unofficial, but eyewitness, account. In fact it was no such thing. It was, on the contrary, an outright fabrication; one which, by drawing upon the emotions generated by the loss, sought to use the expedition, and the supposed Utopia it had discovered in the Southern Seas, as a vehicle for the propagation of sentiments critical of the contemporary situation in post-revolutionary France. As fictional polemic disguised as true report (in part to sneak past that little post-revolutionary censorship which still existed) it is a clever and a complicated little treatise, and is important to historians of Utopian ideas and their political contexts in general, as well as to those concerned to explain European reactions to Pacific exploration or to recount the literary history of anti-revolutionary sentiment in France (to whose sphere of interest it perhaps most properly belongs).

*Fragmens* has been known until now in only four copies, and any attempt to bring a text so rare and yet so full of interest before a wider public is to be applauded. The present facsimile edition of one copy of the notebook, purchased in 1978 by the National Library of Australia (with the addition of a translation into modern English and a short introduction, notes, and select bibliography) does this, and so is welcome. The translation in particular is strikingly elegant and readable. For working historians, however, it is as a whole a trying little publication, and this for two reasons, both of them rather important ones. First of all, its price renders it a collector's item, and so still relatively inaccessible. Secondly, as a facsimile edition intended primarily as a 'commemorative gesture' in honour of the Australian bicentennial celebrations, its form precludes the sort of annotation and commentary historians and linguists normally demand (indeed need) of editors, and which Professor Dunmore, given larger scope, could certainly have provided. Instead, in the case of the text itself, such matters as obsolete usages and tenses, of great interest to the scholar of languages, or lapses of grammar (p.4, 'les derniers coups de vent avait') or mistakes in spelling (some, such as the misspelling of Robespierre's name, perhaps mischievous), or pretentious literary allusions to the *Aeneid* or *Odyssey* are rendered innocuous (indeed invisible) by the adroit English rendering aimed once again, presumably, at the collector. Yet all of these were probably deliberately contrived and foisted upon the putative author, and they are as such of an even greater interest to the scholar of calculated and sophisticated forgery. No attempt is made to trace in detail possible sources or borrowings, still less wilful distortions or veiled references to contemporary political affairs; yet this dimension is of enormous importance to a proper understanding of literary exercises of this kind.

The commentary and notes are clear and interesting. Both here and in the bibliography we are given, however, again too short a measure. Much has been produced in recent years upon Utopian writings (F. E. Manuel, 1979, J. C. Davis, 1981, R. Brugnago, 1986, the latter bearing especially on France) and even the smallest reference to some of this would have helped to show how important a gap *Fragmens* in fact fills. Catherine Gaziello, *L'Expédition de Lapérouse 1785-1788* (C.T.H.S. Paris, 1984) is a more serious omission. Put at its simplest, this efforts falls, for scholarly purposes, between not two but a whole series of stools; but it does leave some interesting work upon both the text and its context still to do.

VALERIE I.J. FLINT

*University of Auckland*