

Vanuatu, France and the United Kingdom: museum collections and colonial dynamics

Volume I – Text

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Abstract

This PhD project examines ‘ethnographic’ collections of artefacts from Vanuatu, acquired in a colonial context and now held in museum institutions in France and the UK. It explores the complex narratives and agencies embodied in these artefacts by reframing the approach from artefacts as ‘representations’ of the ‘other’ to a representation of ‘us’ in relation to ‘others’. By considering artefacts as historical sources, the study aims to approach the multiple narratives and complex processes that shape their biographies.

To this end, the research adopts an interdisciplinary approach, combining different analytical tools, theoretical perspectives and methodologies, and considering artefacts not as isolated collections, but as part of assemblages composed of textual materials, photographs, and other sources. A comparative analysis of collections in France and the United Kingdom, the two former colonial nations in Vanuatu, is undertaken, focusing on the types of collectors and objects, while situating them within broader historical and colonial contexts. The research examines museum artefacts in relation to French and British colonial activities in Vanuatu, identifies different patterns of artefact acquisition, and explores how local tensions influenced the movement of artefacts that eventually found their way into museum institutions. By analysing the assemblages of individuals operating in the archipelago during periods of colonial instability, the study uncovers the complex and intertwined narratives embedded in European collections.

Furthermore, the research emphasises the dynamic nature of these artefacts, recognising them as central to negotiations between ni-Vanuatu and European actors. The findings herein highlight the multi-layered nature of agency within museum collections and contribute to a rethinking of approaches to ethnographic collections, that recognise the agency of Indigenous communities in shaping museum collections.

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Statement of the impact of Covid-19

This PhD research started in January 2020, just a few months before the global pandemic and the resulting lockdowns. The unforeseen circumstances significantly impacted the project, requiring several adjustments to the original research plan. With universities, museums and libraries closed, and restrictions on travel and social contact, the early stages of this research were conducted on Teams, Zoom, online resources and museum databases. This period led to a necessary adjustment in the approach of the study. While the research initially focused on Vanuatu artefacts held in smaller museum institutions in France and the UK, restriction of access to these institutions and limited information online, led the project to turn toward the largest institutions that offered digital collections and data accessible online.

As a result, the first year was devoted entirely to database research and gathering historical context about the archipelago - both of which now form large parts of this study. As museums were slow to reopen, initial archival research was undertaken in the National Archives institutions during 2021, as they proved to be quicker to reopen access to collections. However, museum visits could not take place until October 2021, and even then, only limited collection visits were possible due to travel restrictions, reduced museum teams and social distancing measures that continued to affect operations in both the UK and France.

While collection visits had to be extended until late 2022, causing significant delays in the analysis phase, the number of artefacts and museums accessed had to be limited due to time constraints. Fieldwork in Vanuatu faced similar setbacks, being postponed until after the country reopened its borders in July 2022 and further delayed due to administration paperwork, research agreements and visas. The postponed fieldwork also had a significant impact. My time in Vanuatu contributing to reframe my perspective on the collections and my approach to research. However, the time constraints of the PhD left limited opportunities to redesign the study accordingly.

In addition, the isolation experienced as a newcomer to the UK academic environment amplified these challenges. The unfamiliar academic landscape, theories and language, combined with limited opportunities to connect with peers, delayed my development of foundational knowledge and was mentally and professionally challenging.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	2
STATEMENT OF THE IMPACT OF COVID-19	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS	4
LIST OF TABLES	7
LIST OF FIGURES	8
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	11
PREFACE	13
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	15
INTRODUCTION	17
VANUATU AND VANUATU COLLECTIONS	17
MUSEUMS AND THEIR COLLECTIONS	19
RESEARCH QUESTIONS	21
VANUATU IN WESTERN ACADEMIC AND MUSEUM STUDIES	22
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	28
METHODOLOGY AND METHODS	33
STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS	54
PART I VANUATU, FRANCE AND THE UNITED KINGDOM.....	56
<i>Introduction to Part I</i>	<i>56</i>
CHAPTER 1. VANUATU: A LONG HISTORY OF CONNECTION	59
<i>Vanuatu's Long History: from Migrations to the first Colonial Agreement</i>	<i>59</i>
a) Migrations towards Vanuatu.....	59
b) Early Interactions: European Exploration of the Pacific during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries	66
<i>European Settlement in the Archipelago.</i>	<i>71</i>
The Sandalwood Trade	71
Missionaries	75
Plantations, the Labour Trade and Blackbirding	77
<i>The 1870s and the first Naval Agreement (1878)</i>	<i>81</i>
<i>From 1887 and the Naval Convention to 1906 and the establishment of the Condominium</i>	<i>84</i>
CHAPTER 2: VANUATU ARTEFACT ITINERARIES: FROM VANUATU TO PUBLIC MUSEUMS .	90
1. Eighteenth and early nineteenth-century collections in France and the United Kingdom.....	92

Early Vanuatu collections.....	93
2. <i>Mid/Late 19th and 20th Century Vanuatu Collections: Setting the Context</i>	97
Vanuatu artefacts entering museum institutions: statistical analysis.....	98
3. <i>Missionary Collections: Presence vs Absence</i>	108
PART II THE COLLECTORS	113
<i>Introduction to Part II</i>	113
CHAPTER 3: ALPHONSE PINAULT’S ASSEMBLAGE	117
<i>French Military Actions and Pineau’s involvement in the New Hebrides</i>	118
<i>Assemblage Itineraries</i>	120
<i>Assemblage composition in the Musée d’Ethnographie du Trocadéro</i>	123
<i>Pineau’s Ethnographical paper</i>	128
<i>Conclusion</i>	136
CHAPTER 4: PHILIPPE FRANÇOIS.....	138
<i>Philippe François</i>	140
<i>Philippe François’s First Voyage (1888-1891)</i>	142
<i>Display at the Laboratory of Anthropology (1891)</i>	145
<i>Artefact Assemblages</i>	149
Statistical analysis of the François collection	152
<i>Conclusion</i>	160
CHAPTER 5: HENRY BOYLE TOWNSHEND SOMERVILLE	162
<i>Hydrographic Expedition in the New Hebrides</i>	164
<i>Vanuatu assemblage: Unveiling narratives</i>	165
a) Donations.....	165
b) Artefact Assemblage	169
c) Composition of Vanuatu Assemblage.....	173
d) Notes Regarding Somerville’s published materials.....	178
<i>Conclusion</i>	180
CHAPTER 6: LOUIS-JOSEPH BOUGE	181
<i>Louis-Joseph Bouge</i>	181
<i>Vanuatu: A Formative Experience</i>	182
<i>Regarding Vanuatu Collections (1899-1913)</i>	184
a) Field collection to Private collection.....	185
b) Composition of Vanuatu Assemblages	187
c) Public Collection vs ‘Souvenir’ Collection.....	190
<i>Acquisition Practices: Initiating Discussions</i>	195
<i>Conclusion</i>	198

PART III FOLLOWING ARTEFACTS AND VANUATU AGENCY	199
<i>Introduction to Part III</i>	<i>199</i>
CHAPTER 7: FOLLOWING WEALTH VALUABLES	204
<i>Pigs and Associated Artefacts.....</i>	<i>205</i>
<i>Pandanus textiles</i>	<i>212</i>
CHAPTER 8: SOCIAL STATUS EMBLEMS	219
<i>Clubs.....</i>	<i>219</i>
<i>Necklaces from Mele Island</i>	<i>225</i>
CHAPTER 9: EXCHANGE RELATIONSHIPS AND EUROPEAN VALUABLES	231
<i>Testimony of Interactions – Acquiring Artefacts.....</i>	<i>231</i>
<i>Goods/ Commodities for Exchange – European Valuables.....</i>	<i>237</i>
a) Calico.....	238
b) Beads	239
c) Tobacco and Pipes	240
d) Ochre	242
e) Guns and Powder	243
f) European Currencies	244
CONCLUSION	246
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	261
ARCHIVES	282
APPENDICES.....	288

List of Tables

Table 1: The table presents the total number of artefacts considered for each museum, along with the number of artefacts with an unknown date of entry in the museum collections and their representation in percentage terms.....	100
Table 2: The table presents the number of artefacts accessioned as from Vanuatu, organised by decade, in the MQB, BM, NMS, PRM, and MAA, together with overall totals. Cumulative figures are not included.....	102
Table 3: Details of Philippe François' four initial expeditions in the archipelago during his first voyage (1888-1891). The table above is based on the transcription of the diary by Bouyssi (Bouyssi in François, 1888). Expeditions in italics are not included in the transcription of the diary.....	141
Table 4: Table presenting the attributed provenance of artefacts from François's assemblages sold at Tajan, in contrast with the provenance of his assemblages donated to museums.....	153
Table 5: This table provides an overview of the artefacts included in each donation from Somerville to the PRM based on the information provided by the museum. It should be noted that some artefacts were re-accessioned by the museum, corresponding to the most recent entries. In the case of Vanuatu, re-accessioned artefacts were relocated with their actual dates of entry according to the information provided, while other artefacts in the Somerville assemblages were not adjusted.	170
Table 6: The following table provides a summary of the provenance as recorded by the PRM of artefacts from Vanuatu in the Somerville assemblage.	171
Table 7: The following table presents the number of pig tusks accessioned by museums over time.	207

List of Figures

Figure 1: Map of Austronesian Migration from the Bismarck Archipelago (from Bedford and Spriggs, 2019).....	60
Figure 2: Atlas sive Cosmographicae Meditationes de Fabrica Mundi et Fabricati Figurae, 1587 (publ. 1595), Rumold Mercator.	66
Figure 3: Portrait of Elau, a girl from Erromango Island. Artist unknown from Plymouth. BM number Oc,B32.24.© The Trustees of the British Museum.....	72
Figure 4: The map illustrates the principal routes of recruitment for labourers operating in the Pacific region. (Image from Docker, 1970: 4).....	79
Figure 5: Sample of chief's hair (tied up). Donated by Queen Victoria, 1841. BM number Oc1841,0211.30. © The Trustees of the British Museum. See: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/E_Oc1841-0211-30	96
Figure 6: Graph representing the cumulative entry of artefacts registered from Vanuatu for the museums considered. The red dotted line represents the overall artefacts entry registered from the archipelago in the collections of the UK case study museums.	101
Figure 7: The graph illustrates the influx of artefacts into the case study museums' collections in France and the UK, presented as two distinct lines. The blue line represents data from France and the red dotted line represents data from the UK. The data are presented both cumulatively and by decade.	103
Figure 8: Graph illustrating the number of inventoried artefacts from Vanuatu incorporated into the NMS collection by decade. The total number of artefacts is represented in blue, while the fraction received from missionaries within each decade's total is indicated in orange.	109
Figure 9: Illustration showing, on the upper left, the illustration of mask figure 102 in the article published by Age and Pineau (1889:359), on the right, the mask in the MQB, formerly accessioned as 71.1944.0.28X and now accessioned as 71.1890.41.18, and below, plate XVI (MQB n°Z689532), part of a series of drawings preserved in the MQB. ©The photographs are the property of the Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac.	122

Figure 10: The following graph represents the composition of Pineau's assemblages as they entered the Trocadéro over time.	124
Figure 11: Composition of John Higginson's collection which entered the Trocadéro Museum, registered in 1883.	125
Figure 12: Compositions of Alphonse Pineau's collections accessioned by the Trocadéro Museum.	126
Figure 13: On the left, a photograph taken from Deniker's (1891) review of the exhibition; in the centre, a photograph from François' private collection acquired by the MQB at auction in 2005 (MQB no. 70.2005.4.31, © Musée du Quai Branly – Jacques Chirac; see Footnote 69 above); on the right, a photograph of the lecture given by François at the Société de Géographie de Paris on 20 May 1892 (BNF, ref. no. FRBNF43551240, © BNF). These photographs depict ni-Vanuatu from Malekula dressed slightly differently, with the men in the BNF version wearing mats that completely cover their genitals. Since the two photographs are otherwise identical, this suggests that the photograph had been altered before printing to conform to European sensibilities.	146
Figure 14: Former Oceania Hall at the Trocadéro Museum, photographs taken in 1895, photograph credit: 'Society of Photography Enthusiasts (1887–1938)'; MQB inventory no. PV0070360. The same photograph was donated by Leroi-Gourhan to the MET, which is also preserved at the Musée de l'Homme, and is preserved in the MQB under no. PP0001442. ©Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac.	148
Figure 15: Composition of Philippe François's assemblage currently preserved in the MQB.	154
Figure 16: Composition of the overall Philippe François assemblage of artefacts from Vanuatu.	157
Figure 17: Composition of Philippe François' assemblage sold in auction.	159
Figure 18: The pie chart illustrates the composition of the overall assemblage of artefacts from Vanuatu successively donated to the PRM as percentage.	173
Figure 19: The photograph illustrates one of the hair ornaments in the Somerville assemblage, which bears the Somerville former label. It is noteworthy that Somerville describes this artefact as a 'pigtail'. The 'artefact' is catalogued with the PRM as object	

number 1896.33.22. The photographs were taken during museum visits. © Laetitia Lopes.	177
Figure 20: This graph shows the number of objects in the Bouge BM and Chartres Museum assemblages, categorised by provenance according to museum data.	184
Figure 21: The photograph shows a wooden bracelet (84.1.OB.268) from Aoba in Chartres Museum, accompanied by Bouge's notes.	189
Figure 22: The following two pie charts illustrate the composition of Bouge's assemblage in the British Museum and in the Museum of Chartres.	191
Figure 23: This graph shows the number of pig tusks in the collections of the case study museums. MQB is shown in blue, BM in orange, NMS in grey and PRM in yellow. The blue dotted line represents cumulative data for France (MQB) over time, and the red dotted line represents cumulative data for the UK. The dates beneath each column indicate the date of artefacts' accession. The section of dates beneath the columns displays entries by decade.	208
Figure 24: The photograph depicts drums on a dancing ground in Mele and is reproduced from a Burns & Philp booklet (1903) outlining the itinerary at various ports of call.	230

List of Abbreviations

AJCP – Australian Joint Copying Project

ANU – Australian National University

BM – British Museum

BNF – Bibliothèque Nationale de France

CCNH – Compagnie calédonienne des Nouvelles-Hébrides

CFNH – Compagnie Française des Nouvelles Hébrides

CHASE – Consortium for the Humanities & the Arts South-East England

MAA – Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology of Cambridge

MAN – Musée d’Archéologie Nationale

MBAC – Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres

MET – Musée d’Ethnographie du Trocadéro

MH – Musée de L’Homme

MKB – Museum der Kulturen, Basel

MNAAO – Musée National des Arts d’Afrique et d’Océanie

MQB – Musée du Quai Branly Jacques Chirac

NAA – National Archives of Australia

NC – New Caledonia

NH – New Hebrides

PMB – Pacific Manuscript Bureau

PRM – Pitt Rivers Museum

RIMa – Régiment d’Infanterie de Marine

SHD – Service Historique de la Défense

SLNSW-ML – State Library of New South Wales - Mitchell Library

SRU – Sainsbury Research Unit for the Arts of Africa, Oceania & the Americas

TNA – The National Archives (UK)

UK – The United Kingdom

VKS – Vanuatu Kajoral Sental (Vanuatu Cultural Centre)

Preface

My first encounter with the Pacific was in 2013, during a visit to the exhibition “Kanak, l'art est une Parole” at the Musée du Quai Branly. I knew little about this faraway region, apart from the stories I had heard for years about my godfather, who had travelled around the world and finally settled in New Caledonia, never to return. The Pacific was both familiar and foreign to me. The exhibition resonated deeply with my newly begun studies in art history, archaeology, sociology and anthropology, coupled with a first family visit to New Caledonia. After three weeks of exploring the ‘Caillou’, my passion for Melanesia was ignited.

Throughout my university years, the Pacific remained a constant. When I enrolled for my Master’s degree at the Pantheon-Sorbonne University, I naturally focused on the Pacific. During that year, my interest in museums and objects led me to discover the worlds within our institutions. What had seemed so familiar had become unfamiliar. That first master's year and my dissertation on Kanak axes and adzes in museum collections - particularly the “curiosities” made for sale - revealed the complex narrative of these collections and objects. My view of museums as temples of knowledge began to unravel, along with my certainties about these collections, their historicity and my connection to the objects.

After a year of research on the Quai Branly – Jacques Chirac Museum collections with Dr Émilie Nolet and Dr Christophe Sand, I pursued my second Master's degree, studying the perception of New Caledonian collections. This work helped me to understand the complexity of perspectives and the conscious or unconscious histories embodied within museums' collections acquired in a colonial context.

During this journey, Dr Émilie Nolet introduced me to Dr Christophe Sand, who introduced me to Emmanuel Kasarherou, who introduced me to Stéphanie Leclerc-Caffarel, who introduced me to Marie Durand, both of whom introduced me to Professor Steven Hooper and Dr Karen Jacob – and the foundations of my thesis had begun. This path brought me back to Melanesia, some ten years after my first trip to New Caledonia. Like a boar's tusk completing its circle, the journey had come full circle: from Melanesia to collections and from collections back to Melanesia.

In this regard, the research project was formally initiated in January 2020, three months prior to the global outbreak of the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (Covid-19) pandemic. The project was initially funded by the Sainsbury Research Unit, and subsequently received a two-year scholarship from the Consortium for the Humanities and the Arts South-East England (CHASE-AHRC UK), which was extended due to unforeseen circumstances. The research involved visits to archives and museums, as well as a brief period of fieldwork in the Pacific region, which was also supported by CHASE.

As a consequence of the pandemic, it was not possible to undertake museum visits until late 2021. The initial visits were conducted in archival institutions, commencing with the National Archives in Kew in June 2021. Subsequently, a visit was made to the Musée d'Océanie of the Marist Congregation in La Neylière, Pomey (France), and the Œuvres Pontificales Missionnaires in Lyon (France) in July 2021. In October 2021, a visit was made to the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres (France) to examine Louis-Joseph Bouge's assemblage of artefacts, archives, photographs, and library resources. This was followed later that month by an initial visit to the Musée du Quai Branly – Jacques Chirac.

Subsequently, between March and December 2022, further visits to museums and archives were conducted. Each of the following collections was visited on two occasions over the course of several days: the British Museum (March), the Pitt Rivers Museum (July and December 2022), the Musée du Quai Branly – Jacques Chirac (February and December 2022), and the archives at the Centre historique des archives de Vincennes of the Service historique de la Défense (France) (August and September 2022). In February 2023, a professional placement was undertaken at the National Museum of Ireland under the supervision of Dr Aoife O'Brien, funded by CHASE and concluding in June 2023.

Lastly, a fieldwork project in the Pacific was conducted from 14 July to 6 October with the support of CHASE. This project included two months in Vanuatu, where a brief visit to Uripiv in Malekula was undertaken under the guidance of Numa Fred (director of the VKS branch in Malekula), as well as a short visit to Tanna. Two additional weeks were allocated for visits to the archives of the Mitchell Library in Sydney, the archives of the Australian National University, and the National Library of Australia.

Acknowledgements

The journey of completing a PhD thesis may often feel solitary, but it is, in fact, filled with invaluable encounters. Each interaction along this path has played a vital role in bringing this research to life.

My sincerest thanks are first to my supervisors, Professor Steven Hooper and Dr Karen Jacobs, who made this incredible journey possible. Their support, advice and insights have guided me through museum visits, international fieldwork, and long periods of isolation during the pandemic. I am endlessly grateful for their trust and support, which has carried me through challenging moments.

This research would also not have been possible without the generous support of the Consortium for the Humanities and the Arts South-East England (CHASE AHRC UK), whose scholarship enabled me to undertake this work in the best conditions and to support me during the pandemic and afterwards. My gratitude also extends to the Sainsbury Research Unit for their generous support during the first year of this thesis project. My sincere thanks also go to the SRU team and students who provided me with guidance and conviviality, particularly Pat Hewitt, for all her help with documentation and references, to Claire, Clémentine, and Alba, who were my anchors during each visit to Norwich. And a special thanks go to Polly Bence for her support and group study support during the COVID-19 and afterwards.

I also would like to express my deep gratitude to museum teams who made museum visits possible during such a challenging time and shared invaluable insights that shaped my research. Special thanks to Jill Hassell, who is in the British Museum (London), for her help in organizing visits, preparing resources, and offering her expertise throughout my study of the collections. My gratitude also extends to Marie-Laurence Bouvet, Musée du Quai Branly (Paris), for her tremendous assistance in coordinating visits as soon as lockdown restrictions allowed, as well as Dr. Stéphanie Leclerc-Caffarel, Dr. Nicolas Garnier, and Constance de Monbrison (MQB- Paris) whose enriching discussions helped refine my understanding of the objects. At the Pitt Rivers Museum, Dr Nicholas Crowe enabled access and generously provided details about the collections' histories, while Philippe Bihoudé at Chartres extended critical support as I navigated the collections there. My special gratitude also goes to Evelyn Buleghi and Kaitip Kami for their support in accessing the Vanuatu Cultural Centre

collections (Port-Vila), and I also thank the curators at Liverpool and all the other institutions who kindly shared museum data that kept the project alive through the pandemic.

My gratitude goes to Emmanuel Kasarhérou, who initiated my interest in the Pacific, thus initiating the path of this thesis, indirectly through one of my most significant encounters, the exhibition Kanak, *l'Art est une Parole* (Paris) and during occasional discussions. I also want to thank my former teachers at la Paris 1 – Panthéon Sorbonne (Paris), and especially Emilie Nolet and Christophe Sand, who contributed significantly to my interest in the Pacific, and to Marie Durand and Stéphanie Leclerc-Caffarel, whose guidance led me to the SRU and set me on this journey.

In Vanuatu, I owe a debt of gratitude to Matthew Spriggs and Rosemary Leon, who welcomed me warmly and introduced me to local contacts and to kava, and to Stuart Bedford for his insights and for connecting me with Chief Numa Fred, who generously hosted me in Uripiv, Malekula I also thank Henlyn Mala, and Lisa Macdonald, whose guidance helped me through challenges and to navigate Vanuatu with confidence. To Chief Thompson Ambong, sand-writing master Edgar Hige, Chief Rex Roy, and Chief Thomas of Tanna—thank you for sharing your stories and Kastom. A special thanks also need to be addressed to all the Port Vila taxi drivers, with whom I shared kava and stories, which also greatly contributed to my understanding of Vanuatu's culture.

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Vanuatu, France and the United Kingdom: Museum collections and colonial dynamics

Introduction

Vanuatu and Vanuatu Collections

Vanuatu, a Y-shaped archipelago of 83 islands in the Pacific Ocean between Australia and Fiji, is one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world. With 138 recorded languages, 81 of which are still in use (François et al., 2015: 2; Bedford and Spriggs, 2018: 162), the country's population at the 2020 census was 300,019.¹ To overcome language barriers across the islands, a lingua franca, Bislama, has developed over the last century and a half and is now the national language. Previously governed as the New Hebrides/Nouvelles-Hébrides under a joint colonial agreement between France and the United Kingdom, the country gained independence on 30 June 1980, becoming the Independent Republic of Vanuatu - a name composed of two local words, *vanua* and *tu*, meaning land and standing upright, that, according to Marcelin Abong (2013: 6), director of the Vanuatu cultural centre from 2007 to 2014, translates as 'the land where people stand as one'. This marked the end of seventy-four years of joint colonial rule under a unique arrangement called the Condominium (1906-1980), although European colonial control had begun earlier, initiated by the 1878 Naval Agreement between Britain and France. Europeans first encountered Vanuatu during voyaging expeditions in the eighteenth century, with James Cook in 1774, during his second voyage, giving the name New Hebrides to the archipelago, several islands of which his expedition visited. But European settlement only began to take place from 1839, in the southern part of the archipelago. It was in these pre-colonial and colonial contexts that artefacts entangled in the relationships between ni-Vanuatu (people of Vanuatu) and Europeans found their way into European institutions. These collections of Vanuatu artefacts, now preserved in UK and French museums, are the principal focus of this

¹ The National Population and Housing Census is accessible at the following link : <https://vnso.gov.vu/index.php/population-household-census>

study. An attempt is made to place them and their protagonists – their producers, distributors and acquirers – in their historical contexts, as well as to assess their continuing significance, influence and value as ‘heritage’ in the UK, France and Vanuatu.

There is a growing focus in Vanuatu on the past and on notions of heritage, an introduced cultural and political category that nevertheless resonates with local approaches to the past, to the activities of the ancestors and to the concept of *kastom*, a Bislama term connected to custom in the sense of traditional customary behaviour, rituals and values (Jolly, 1994; Bolton, 2003; Rio, 2011). An increasing emphasis on provenance research is responding to growing interest in the return or sharing of cultural collections. Debates over the repatriation of artefacts from the archipelago continue, as evidenced by the ongoing case of the *lengnangulong* sacred stone from Magam village, North Ambrym (DeBlock, 2018: 179–80). The last two years have also seen the Vanuatu Cultural Centre (VKS – Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta, in Bislama), receive back significant pig tusks, a Rambaram mortuary image, two mats from Canada and a range of artefacts from various islands.² The recent 2023 visit to Berlin by VKS Interim Director Dr Richard Shing to examine artefacts in the Ethnologisches Museum of the Humboldt Forum reflects the continuing relevance of these discussions.

Given Vanuatu’s complex colonial history, important questions arise about the meanings, relationships and processes embedded in museum collections from the archipelago that are now in the two former countries that established a colonial administration in the archipelago. The broader global historical significance and ‘weight’ (Harrison, 2013: 5) of colonial legacies is now an important topic of debate, highlighted by contemporary movements such as calls to remove colonial-era sculptures or to rename sites associated with transatlantic slavery (Atuire, 2020), emphasising the idea that current assessments of history continue to shape the present and future, as discussed by Hirsch and Stewart (2005). However, European colonialism was experienced differently in different places, and this thesis is not primarily a

² For pig tusks see: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/322921321712630/permalink/1475121996492551/>; for the Rambaram, see: https://www.dailypost.vu/news/fbi-returns-vanuatu-s-cultural-artefacts/article_9549f06b-b84c-58cf-ab9f-515a6716c366.html; for the two mats, see: https://www.dailypost.vu/news/heritage-mats-return/article_1522f62b-2159-5775-a8d4-263c4772edbf.html; <https://fb.watch/v3NXsZ28aH/>; and for several cultural artefacts, see: https://www.dailypost.vu/news/cultural-artefacts-return/article_6fb7aaa0-640b-11ef-b0ed-93509663faaa.html. There has also recently been discussion about the colonial nature of some island names (see: <https://fb.watch/v3M-5Z9UrC/>).

contribution to current debates and studies regarding the decolonisation of museums, but a case study of the particular and complex relationships and circumstances that gave rise to the accumulation and preservation of Vanuatu cultural materials in museums in France and the United Kingdom.

The interdependence of past, present and future is nevertheless particularly embedded in Pacific Islander cultures, as reflected in the Maori proverb '*Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua*' - '*I walk backwards into the future with my eyes fixed on my past*' (Rameka, 2016). Taylor (2008) similarly discusses this fluid conception of time in his study of Sia Raga cultural practices in North Pentecost (Vanuatu), revealing a complex relationship between time, space, memory and environment. In Motalava, Viennes (1984: 143-144, 148-149) describes how mythical and historical notions of time coexist and are based on "men" or "nature" "events". These combine the mythical (timeless, everything on the same level) and the historical (time thought of in temporal sequence). These anthropological observations illustrate a non-hierarchical and spatially bound concept of time that continues to resonate in contemporary Vanuatu, as evidenced by the reconciliation ceremony in 2009 on Erromango Island that recently brought together the descendants of Reverend John Williams and those involved in his death in 1839 (Mayer et al., 2013). By enacting such a ceremony on Erromango, Erromangans show that past events continue to shape both present and future. This illustrates a non-hierarchical and spatially bound conception of time, in which the 'historical' past remains vivid in the present and extends into the future, while being embedded in the social and geographic landscape as part of the 'mythical' past.

Museums and their Collections

The very definition of 'museum' – the current repository for a large number of artefacts from nineteenth- and twentieth-century Vanuatu– has recently been called into question, as highlighted at the 2019 International Council of Museums (ICOM) conference in Kyoto (Thomas, 2019). The status of some collections has been criticised by Bénédicte Savoy, who, together with Felwine Sarr, wrote the report on the restitution of artefacts to Africa (Sarr and Savoy, 2018). According to a translation provided by Lissant Bolton (2023: 320), Bénédicte Savoy wrote dramatically in a German newspaper that "I [she] want to know how much

blood is dripping from each artwork.”. This statement highlights the need to assess the extent to which colonial heritage reflects violence and exploitation. Some researchers have pointed out that in some cases the return of artefacts is not the primary objective of Indigenous peoples. Rather, there is a broader call for a change in the semantic value attached to these artefacts and, more generally, a change in curatorial approach (Bolton, 2001b; Harrison, 2013). In this regard, a number of museums and museum curators are currently engaged in dialogue with Vanuatu agencies and with ni-Vanuatu regarding the return of knowledge, however that might be defined. These initiatives include the Endangered Material Knowledge Programme (EMKP) administered by Lissant Bolton (2023) and colleagues in the British Museum, and the more recent “Island 84” project run by the Museum der Kulturen Basel to digitise the Felix Speiser Collection, one of the most extensive collections of artefacts from Vanuatu, comprising some 2000 objects, that was partially published in 1923.³

Therefore, in light of the current movement to interrogate the narratives and historical baggage carried by heritage, and in light of the particular historical colonial relationship between Vanuatu, France and the UK, the present study attempts an analysis of the artefacts acquired prior to, and just after, the establishment of the formal Condominium in 1906, a period characterised by particularly high tensions between all individuals present in the archipelago. This thesis aims to explore the relationships and networks that are embedded in artefacts acquired by collectors, and ultimately museums, during this period, while also attempting to reveal ni-Vanuatu attitudes and strategies through an analysis of the agency that can be detected in these collections. As many academic studies have highlighted, restoring dignity requires acknowledging that Indigenous people may have exchanged artefacts through tactical social interactions with European colonisers (Harrison, 2013: 7). This study approaches the Vanuatu collections with this in mind, aiming to unpack the complex narratives that these objects carry, both in their historical and contemporary contexts. I aim to allow ni-Vanuatu the dignity of acknowledging that they had agency in many of these transactions, both releasing and withholding material for different reasons at different times.

³ For Further information regarding the digital project of the Museum der Kulturen Basel, please refer to: <https://www.mkb.ch/de/services/blog/2024/juli-september/island-84.html>

Research Questions

The following research questions have framed the research that underlies this thesis. They also frame the presentation of the thesis in three parts. Many subsidiary questions of course arise, but these are the principal focuses of enquiry.

The main research question is: What information and insights can museum collections of Vanuatu material provide about the colonial contexts in which they were acquired?

From which three more detailed research questions derived, guiding the thesis presentation.

1. In what ways did Vanuatu's particular pre-colonial and colonial/Condominium history affect how artefacts were transacted and became preserved in UK and French museums?
2. What insights do study and statistical analysis of these collections provide into the relationships that generated them, especially between ni-Vanuatu and Europeans?
3. What can study of these collections reveal about ni-Vanuatu agency in their formation in the nineteenth and early twentieth century?

Before embarking on the three main parts of the thesis, this Introduction will review a range of academic literature relevant to Vanuatu, museum studies and the history of collections. The theoretical framework of the study will then be presented, followed by detailed discussion of the methodological issues encountered during the study and the methods employed to achieve it, including statistical analysis of collections that could not be visited for a considerable time (because of Covid-19) during the early phase of research. There will also be discussion of categories, of terminology and classificatory issues. Finally, the structure of the thesis will be explained and outlined.

Vanuatu in Western Academic and Museum Studies

An extensive body of research and publications on Vanuatu have provided the foundation for this study. Until relatively recently, these studies have been carried out by non-Vanuatu scholars, hence my use of the term ‘Western’ in the title of this section. The division into sections here should not obscure the fact that many publications cross disciplinary boundaries. While this review will not cite all these sources, further references will be made throughout the course of the arguments presented. It is essential to situate the historiography of work done in and on the archipelago in order to gain a deeper understanding of the context within which this study is situated.

Anthropological Studies

The culture and societies of Vanuatu have been the subject of numerous anthropological studies, with the earliest of these often considered to be contained in *The Melanesians: studies in their anthropology and folklore* (1891) written by the Anglican missionary, the Reverend Robert Codrington of the Melanesian Mission. This study of Melanesian cultures was based on observations made by Codrington during journeys over many years through the region. However, a small number of published documents by colonial administrators and missionaries that engaged with ethnographic analysis based on their expeditions can be traced back a few years before Codrington’s book. These include *Voyage à pied en Nouvelle-Calédonie et description des Nouvelles-Hébrides* written by Lemire (1884), *La Nouvelle-Calédonie et les Nouvelles-Hébrides* by Le Chartier (1885), the article *Les Nouvelles-Hébrides* written by Hagen and Pineau (1889) and *Les Nouvelles-Hébrides* by Imhaus (1890). However, it was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that anthropological studies dedicated exclusively to Vanuatu were undertaken, with the Swiss scholar Felix Speiser as the first to do so. Speiser arrived in Vanuatu in 1910 and conducted a two-year tour of the islands, with a brief visit for a few weeks to Nouméa in New Caledonia, where he joined Fritz Sarasin. He concluded his fieldwork with a visit to the Santa Cruz Islands to the north, now part of the Solomon Islands. From this extensive fieldwork, Speiser published a series of reports (1913) and a comprehensive ethnographic study, *Ethnology of Vanuatu* (1923). Meanwhile, in 1914-15, the British anthropologist John Layard, a student of Alfred Haddon and W.H.R. Rivers, undertook the second extensive fieldwork in the archipelago,

resulting in an ethnographic study of Vao culture and society, *Stone Men of Malekula* (1942). The photographs Layard took during his time in Vanuatu have been the subject of a recent study by Haidy Geismar and Anita Herle (2011). These pioneering anthropologists were instrumental in raising the visibility of the region among their peers (Stocking, 1985: 80–81), Layard in particular having a more analytical approach to his fieldwork experiences, while Speiser carried out detailed documentation work and made a substantial collection for the museum in Basel. Following Layard, Bernard Deacon, also affiliated with the Cambridge school, undertook fieldwork in the archipelago from January 1926 until March 1927, when he died of Blackwater Fever in Southwest Bay, Malekula, aged twenty-four (Stocking, 1983: 175). The majority of Deacon's fieldwork was conducted in Malekula and Ambrym, the former became the subject of a posthumous publication, *Malekula: a vanishing people in the New Hebrides*, based on his ethnographic field notes, edited by Camilla Wedgwood (Deacon, 1934).

During the course of the twentieth century, numerous anthropological studies were conducted in various parts of Vanuatu, including studies on Ambrym (Rivers, 1915; Guiart, 1951; Patterson, 2001; 2006; Rio, 2009; 2011; 2014), South Pentecost (Jolly, 1994), North Pentecost (Taylor, 2008), the Banks Islands (Vienne, 1984), Ambae (Bolton, 2003) and Tanna (Guiart, 1952; 1956; Bonnemaïson, 1986a,b; 1987; Lindstrom, 1990; 2020). While the aim of the current thesis is not a discussion of anthropological work, the aforementioned academic research provides for a more nuanced understanding of the material culture of Vanuatu in museums and, in some instances, the historical context of artefacts that found their way into institutions in France and the UK. Indeed, there is a longstanding connection between museums and anthropological studies, with artefacts viewed as an integral component of the process of documenting 'others' (Stocking, 1985: 4; Pearce, 1994: 14; Harrison, 2013: 8–9; Kuper, 2023; Stahn, 2023: 121–33). No discussion of anthropological contributions to understandings of Vanuatu cultures can be complete without acknowledging the work of Kirk Huffman, who has contributed numerous articles and catalogue entries over many decades since he began fieldwork in Vanuatu in the 1970s. Some of his work will be reviewed below in the context of museum and collection studies.

Historical and Archaeological Studies

Despite the fact that Vanuatu has been a focus of a range of Western anthropological studies, historians have paid comparatively limited attention to the archipelago. This lack of focus reflects a wider trend in the historical study of the Pacific, which until the 1950s was largely dominated by a Eurocentric perspective. Consequently, a significant proportion of Pacific history has been interpreted through the prism of imperialism and colonialism, thereby limiting the scope for acknowledging the historical agency of islanders. Islanders were frequently reduced to subjects of anthropology, prehistory, or colonial politics, without being acknowledged as pivotal actors in their own extensive historical narratives (Thomas, 1991; 2010). A specifically historical academic interest in the Pacific region underwent a notable shift in the 1950s, particularly with the establishment of a Chair of Pacific History at the Australian National University in Canberra. This shift was largely driven by James Wightman Davidson, who founded the Chair within the Research School of Pacific Studies, introducing an ‘island-oriented’ historical approach (Davidson, 1955). This development, sometimes referred to as the ‘Canberra School’, played a pivotal role in educating a new generation of scholars who contributed to reshaping the understanding and rethinking approaches to the long history of the Pacific (Riou, 2024: 67).

With respect to Vanuatu, an examination of the available resources reveals that no Western historian has attempted a comprehensive history of the archipelago, and even less so one that extends beyond the scope of colonial and imperial perspectives. In this regard, the earliest historians who have incorporated historical perspectives of Vanuatu into their work have focused on the study of Western countries’ colonial, imperial, or missionary policies and endeavours in the region. Consequently, Vanuatu historical perspectives have been inscribed within the broader framework of historical research in the region. The work on the nineteenth-century Pacific labour trade by Dorothy Shineberg (1967; 1999) is a notable example. Early sources that incorporated historical perspectives include those by Bloch (1877), Cauvin (1882), Deschanel (1888), Henrique (1889), Verschuur (1891), Armstrong (1900), Jacomb (1914), and Archimbaud and Vebel (1931). In a similar vein, Aldrich (1990; 2004; 2016) contributed to giving more space to discuss Vanuatu’s colonial situation in the context of transnational considerations. Accordingly, it appears that the only historical studies that have concentrated on the intricate dual colonial situations of Vanuatu with France and with the UK are biographical studies by historians whose ancestors were involved in the

New Hebrides (Cawsey, 1998; Cawsey and Cawsey, 2017; 2019). Consequently, these studies begin with the individual and investigate the influences that shaped those individuals.

From the 1950s, a shift in focus towards the islands led to a new approach to the historical study of Vanuatu. This approach incorporated a greater emphasis on Indigenous and cultural perspectives, facilitating dialogue between these perspectives and Western historical approaches in terms of the interactions between Europeans and the Indigenous population, as well as the colonial relations with and between France and the UK. This approach was outlined by Adams (1984; 1986). By the 1960s, archaeological studies and excavations conducted in the archipelago began to contribute to the inscription of ni-Vanuatu historical perspectives into a deep history of long processes of social interactions.

It is therefore evident that, in addition to the Western study of Vanuatu as part of the colonial and imperial history of France and the UK, a significant amount of archaeological work has been conducted in accordance with a more island-oriented history approach. This has served to challenge previous Eurocentric perspectives and demonstrate the existence of a complex and profound history among the inhabitants of the archipelago and beyond. The earliest professional archaeological research in the area began in the 1960s and 1970s, with the major archaeological excavations conducted by José Garanger (1972) on the site of Téouma (Bedford and Spriggs, 2018: 164). Elizabeth Shutler and Richard Shutler also made a significant contribution to the early archaeology of the archipelago, conducting excavations in the Port-Vila area and the southwest of Tanna, specifically in the Lenakel region (Shutler et al., 2002). By 1980, a shift occurred following the independence of the newly founded republic, which permitted few researchers to continue their work. A developing sense of deep history has enabled Western researchers to embrace a narrative extending beyond the European contact and colonial period. This narrative recognised that Europeans were a recent part of a long history of social interactions with and between Indigenous populations which spanned more than three thousand years (Bedford and Spriggs, 2018; Denham, 2018). Archaeology is increasingly engaging with historical perspectives and the interdisciplinary approaches necessary to conduct research that considers a range of perspectives in order to gain deeper understandings of the historical past (Flexner et al., 2016).

Museum exhibitions and catalogues

While the fields of anthropology and archaeology have engaged with the cultural, social and historical aspects of ni-Vanuatu life, with a notable focus on material culture, until the 1990s museum studies had not devoted a comparable level of attention to Vanuatu. At that stage, anthropologists such as Lissant Bolton (1993) and Kirk Huffman (1996), whose research focused on the relationship between society and material culture and who were pursuing careers in museums, began to engage with museum collections and artefacts on a number of different grounds. Prior to these, material had been included in general survey publications on Oceanic arts, such as by Jean Guiart (1963), and in exhibitions such as *The Art of the Pacific Islands* (Gathercole, et al., 1979), but no dedicated exhibition had taken place. Since the 1990s, the arts and material culture of the archipelago has received increasing attention from scholars who have written extensively on Vanuatu, including Lissant Bolton (Bolton, 1993; 2001a; 2001b; 2015; 2023; Bolton et al., 2013), Kirk Huffman (in Bonnemaïson et al., 1996; Huffman, 2005a; 2005b; 2013; 2021; Howarth, 2013), Haidy Geismar (Geismar, 2003; Geismar and Herle, 2011; Geismar and Mohns, 2011), Anita Herle (Geismar and Herle, 2011), Barbara Lawson (Lawson, 1994a; 1994b) and Eve Haddow (Haddow, 2013; 2019; 2020; Haddow et al., 2018). Archaeologists who, in some of their studies, connect fields such as historical analysis and museum studies in their approach to material culture include Stuart Bedford, James Flexner and Matthew Spriggs.

Some critical representations of culture in museums are expressed through the medium of long-term displays and temporary exhibitions. Although material from Vanuatu has featured since the nineteenth century in displays of Oceanian material in museums in London, Cambridge, Oxford, Paris and many other European places, a dedicated exhibition about Vanuatu did not take place until 1996, with the major international touring exhibition entitled *Vanuatu, Océanie: Art des Îles de Cendre et de Corail* (the English edition was entitled *Arts of Vanuatu*; Bonnemaïson et al. 1996). Significantly, the first version of the exhibition was shown from 28 June to 10 August 1996 in Vanuatu, at the Vanuatu Cultural Centre and Museum (VKS, Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta) in the capital, Port Vila. There it was given the Bislama title *Spirit blong bubu i kam back* (the Spirits of the ancestors return). The exhibition was subsequently displayed in Nouméa at the Musée Territorial de Nouvelle-Calédonie from 3 September to 30 October 1996 and then transferred to Europe, where it was expanded and shown at the Museum für Völkerkunde, Basel, Switzerland, from 15 March to 10 August

1997 and finally at the Musée National des Arts d’Afrique et d’Océanie in Paris from 30 September 1997 to 2 February 1998. It showcased artefacts of significant cultural importance from eighteen museums and institutions in France, the UK, Germany, Switzerland, The Netherlands and Australia. The exhibition catalogue (Bonnemaison et al., 1996), with significant curatorial and museological input from Christian Kaufman and Kirk Huffman, rather than merely introducing the displays, rooms, narratives and artefacts exhibited, was conceived as a significant study of material culture, engaging a large number of researchers and museum professionals with Vanuatu material culture in museums and beyond (Coiffier, 1997).

Although nothing on this scale has been attempted since, three further exhibitions that have focused on Vanuatu culture can be identified at this stage. The first, *Vanuatu Stael: Kastom and Creativity*, was curated by Haidy Geismar at the University of Cambridge’s Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in 2003. The exhibition introduced contemporary artwork commissioned from the Nawita Artists Association in Vanuatu, displayed alongside historic collections (Geismar, 2003). The second is *Kastom: Art of Vanuatu*, which was conceived by Crispin Howarth in collaboration with Kirk Huffman and Lisa McDonald (Howarth, 2013). This was displayed at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra between 8 February and 16 June 2013. The last is in France, where a recent exhibition entitled *Vanuatu: Pouvoir des Femmes* opened at the Musée d’Histoire Naturelle de la Rochelle on 18 October 2024 and is scheduled to close on 19 October 2025.⁴

It is worth noting, however, that Vanuatu culture and material culture from museum collections have been included in several recent exhibitions in France and the UK that have focused more broadly on Pacific cultures. The largest of these was *Oceania*, curated by Nicholas Thomas and Peter Brunt, shown at the Royal Academy in London from 29 September to 10 December 2018, before transferring to Paris as *Océanie*, which was shown at the Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac from 12 March to 7 July 2019 (Brunt and Thomas, 2018). An exhibition focused on an analysis of Oceanic ‘clubs’, entitled *Power & Prestige: the Art of Clubs in Oceania*, curated by Steven Hooper, was shown at Palazzo

⁴ Further details regarding the exhibition are available at: https://museum.larochelle.fr/fileadmin/mediatheque_musee_museum/agenda/2024/20244_semestre_2/Agenda_automne-hiver_2024_.pdf.

Franchetti in Venice from 16 October 2021 to 13 March 2022, and subsequently at the Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac from 8 June to 25 September 2022 (Hooper, 2021). Kirk Huffman (2021) contributed the section relating to Vanuatu.

Theoretical Framework

This interdisciplinary research draws upon anthropological and archaeological theories relating to ‘objects’, a growing body of work relating to the nature of museums and to the status of collections as entangled in historical relationships, often in the context of colonialism.

Theoretical perspectives on ‘objects’, ‘things’ and ‘persons’

The concept of ‘object’ is self-evidently of central importance in the context of studying museum collections, particularly those that are classified as anthropological or ethnographic, or as belonging to similar categories. The fundamental conceptual approach is that objects carry different narratives contingent on the perspectives and cultures that view them. In one Western conceptual framework, ethnographic objects have been regarded as testimonies of other cultures, representing or illustrating the society which made and used them. This perspective emerged during the nineteenth century, a period characterised by colonial expansion (Pearce, 1994: 14) and increasing awareness of the existence of cultures different from those in Europe. The development of theoretical perspectives in archaeology, which also placed objects at the centre of its study, led to a shift in the conceptual approach to things. Objects were no longer regarded as mere representations; instead, they were seen as having meaning in themselves as ‘objects of scientific analysis’ (Pearce, 1994: 15). This shift in conceptualisation of objects contributed to the emergence of a new paradigm that allowed for the study of the meaning of objects, leading to the development of concepts such as Latour’s ‘actor-network theory’ (2005). Among other things, this demonstrated that, in the context of scientific research, the object of study interacts with human actors in a manner analogous to that of humans themselves. This is evidenced by the fact that, as Latour (2005: 10) proposes, both are actors. This theory challenged the previous conceptualisation of a symmetrical approach to human and non-human entities, a perspective also rejected by

Pacific Islanders (see, for example, Jolly, 2017: 77). Consequently, ‘things and/or objects’ are viewed as actors and are thus considered to be profoundly social (Latour, 2005: 10). Another foundational work, *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, edited by Arjun Appadurai in 1986, took the position that commodities circulate in social life and that these ‘things’, which acquire value through their exchange, are themselves a form of political value. This is because the exchange act expresses power dynamics that Appadurai characterises as ‘*politics*’ (Appadurai, 1986: 3). In the same work, Igor Kopytoff extends the conceptual analysis by stating that if things circulate through the exchange process in social life, then the process of exchange involving those things can be seen as an equivalent of having a biography (Kopytoff, 1986: 67). Another major contribution to theoretical debate about the nature of objects/things having social and person-like characteristics and agency was made by Alfred Gell. Building on his earlier work, his posthumous 1998 book *Art and Agency: an anthropological theory*, set out the proposition that ‘*persons* or “social agents” are, in certain contexts, substituted for by art objects’ (Gell, 1998: 5). His contention that objects are the equivalent of persons, or, more precisely, social agents, has had a significant impact on the field of museum studies and material culture studies, not least because it appears to correspond to concepts held by Pacific Islanders, in the case of Vanuatu evidenced by the retitling of the 1996 exhibition discussed above in Bislama as *Spirit blong bubu i kam back* (the Spirits of the ancestors return), implying that the spirits of the ancestors – who are certainly actors in Vanuatu culture – are embodied in the objects and sculptures that composed the exhibition. Furthermore, Gell expanded the social dimension inherent in the concept of the ‘object’ to encompass the agency and identity of individuals within their social contexts. The concept of things as embodiments of personhood thus provides a new framework for approaching objects. In this context, *Thinking Through Things* (2006) by Amiria Henare, Martin Holbraad, and Sari Wastell puts forth the proposition that by moving from epistemology to ontology, theories can be derived from things themselves (Henare et al, 2006: 8). Adopting this approach results in a shift in focus from external theories to internal ones. This is exemplified by the dichotomous discussion in the introduction between ‘worldviews’ and ‘worlds’ (Henare et al, 2006: 10). This perspective situates things within the world as part of reality, rather than merely reflecting the world as a worldview of individuals. This approach encompasses the inherent complexity and plurality that coexists in entities that are considered to be ‘natural’, including things.

These theories have had a significant influence on the methodology employed by researchers when approaching objects. These concepts have subsequently been applied to the social realm, leading to the consideration of objects as entities with multiple meanings and values that extend beyond their economic value. This economic value, in turn, encompasses their social dimension. Moreover, it allows for the conceptualisation of things as ‘person-like’ with agency (Harrison et al., 2013: 5). These transfers characterise the ‘material turn’ that emerged in the 1980s, which has facilitated the acknowledgement of the complexity of ethnographic collections as cultural and historical formations (Carreau et al., 2018a: 14).

Museum Relationships – Relational Museums

The material in question thus provides new insights with regard to museums that preserve ‘things’, especially for museums with collections that have historically been classified as composed of ‘ethnographic’ objects. This shift with respect to the nature of objects has led to the need to examine the nature of objects in the museum context, as well as their meanings (Harrison, 2013: 4), including their transposition into the social realm as active actors in social exchanges, open to considerations of the interactions they have generated and continue to generate. Thus, museums no longer consist only of material things that need to be preserved, but they become a ‘network’ of ‘social collections’ (Gosden et al., 2007; Byrne et al., 2011: 4), in which museums become a ‘contact zone’, a concept originally formulated by Mary Louise Pratt (Pratt, 1991; 2007) and transposed to museums by James Clifford (Clifford, 1997: 188). In this sense, museums become a zone of interactions and processes in which artefacts embody a range of different meanings, including their material and utilitarian meanings, their symbolic meanings and their historical meanings (Pearce, 1994: 12), all of which contribute at different levels to social interactions in the present (Byrne et al., 2011: 4).

Rodney Harrison conceptualised the complex narrative entanglement of museum objects as a ‘Möbius strip’, an illusion of a continuous flat band that loops round, giving the illusion of having multiple faces or sides that can appear in contradictory positions (Harrison, 2013: 25). This metaphor helps to illustrate how a thing can appear both contradictory and multi-faceted and is applied by the authors to the display of objects in a museum. These things

which can exist simultaneously at the centre of contradictory narratives, which ultimately contribute to its unity as a meaningful thing. Oppositional categories that have been used for objects traditionally categorised as ‘ethnographic’ include ‘Indigenous’ and ‘non-Indigenous’, ‘people’ and ‘things’, ‘colony’ and ‘metropole’, ‘primitive’ and ‘civilised’ (Harrison, 2013: 25). As Rodney Harrison argues, all these narratives can be perceived as different perspectives that allow us to approach the complex relationships constituted by these objects at different levels of analysis (Harrison, 2013: 25-27).

In this respect, museums themselves can be seen as relational ‘things’, part of a large network connecting temporality, people and narratives in a complex relational process between things and people on different scales (Gosden et al., 2007: 7). This aspect of museums as relational processes emerged from a project at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford (Gosden and Knowles, 2001; Gosden et al., 2007). This involved a major study of the networks of collections, collectors and artefacts, documenting and statistically analysing the resulting data to increase understanding of the underlying relational patterns. The project was based on the central idea that ‘[...] neither humans nor objects exist beyond the relationships that make them up’ (Gosden et al., 2007: 6-7). The current study builds on this idea by considering artefacts in museum institutions as relational things that, when examined through the lens of relationships, can provide access to the narratives and agencies they carry.

Artefacts as actors and evidence of colonial relationships

As previously mentioned, museums are approached as complex “contact zones,” where “things” encompass a multitude of meanings and values. The itinerary of these “things” contributes to the weaving of a network in the past, from the past, and in the present, contributing to activate and extend the relational process of the museum. An essential aspect of “things” in museums, and especially ‘ethnographical’ objects, is the focus of this research, which is the agency expressed in the social act of exchange (Appadurai, 1986: 5; Lawson, 1994: 21; Gosden and Knowles 2001: 167). This agency led to the acquisition of things by Europeans from ni-Vanuatu, which may be influenced by the historical context and the power dynamics of the “*politic*” (Appadurai, 1986). These things eventually found their way to museums, adding to the museum their layers of embodied meanings and their historical dimension that they carry with them as part of their biography (Kopytoff, 1986).

In this respect, objects can be regarded as bearing witness to significant historical narratives, serving as tangible evidence of past events. This concept aligns with Pearce's notion of "thirdfold meaning," which encompasses the historical significance of objects (Pearce, 1994: 12). A substantial body of recent scholarship has increasingly focused on the role of objects as historical sources, as advocated by historians such as Leonie Hannan and Sarah Longair (Hannan et al., 2017: 18–20), which is also at the core of archaeological studies (Olsen, 2003).

This "historical meaning" is particularly relevant when one considers that "things" are often inherently embedded in colonial relations (Gosden and Knowles, 2001: 6, 9). Consequently, they are shaped by the pre-colonial and colonial context and power dynamics, as evidenced by the museum collections from Vanuatu that were acquired prior to the country's independence. It is therefore particularly pertinent to consider the historical significance of the meanings attributed to objects in museums in the context of the present study. Consequently, rather than merely regarding these collections as cultural artefacts from Vanuatu, the objective here is to comprehend them as reflections of relationships with and between people and communities. This concept is consistent with more recent studies that advocate a shift in focus beyond the study of other cultures (Thomas, 1991: 19), to encompass complex relationships between cultural formations that are themselves changing as a result of those relationships.

Rosita Henry, Ton Otto and Michael Wood approach the value and materiality of these acquired things as "complex phenomena" and "historical processes" that they qualify as "artefacts" (Henry et al., 2013: 35). In Vanuatu, such objects associated with the "past" may be referred to as "artefacts" too. The use of this term was observed during fieldwork in 2023 when engaging in discussion with ni-Vanuatu about museum collections in Europe. The concept of 'artifak' (in Bislama) is articulated by Hugo DeBlock (2018: 4) as relating to the 'recycling' of kastom, a notion applied to the Hawai'i case by Adrienne Kaeppler (2004). This illustrates the re-enacting aspect of the artifak, which DeBlock (2018: 55) associates with "the art of ritual. [...] a marker of ritual life". It is evident that artefacts can be readily associated with "historical processes".

Methodology and Methods

In the course of this study a variety of sources have been used, including written material of various kinds, primary and secondary, both published and unpublished. Additionally, data from museum collections and the artefacts that comprise these collections have been primary sources for the study. The following sections present an overview of the different sources and their specific characteristics, plus a review of the methods used to undertake the collections-based study.

Published Material and Archives

The present study drew upon two principal categories of written sources, namely published and unpublished material, both primary and secondary. A range of sources were consulted, including the scholarly works presented in the literature review above, as well as academic works that have informed the theoretical framework of the study. In addition to these library resources, visits were conducted to archives in the United Kingdom, Australia and France. These included the UK National Archives in Kew, southwest London, the National Library of Australia in Canberra and the Mitchell Library in Sydney. A planned visit to the ‘Archive D’outre Mer’ in Aix-en-Provence in France was unfortunately not possible due to the impact of the pandemic and the time constraints of the thesis project. However, visits were made to the military archives of the ‘Service Historique de la Défense’ in Vincennes, and online archives, such as the ‘Légion d’Honneur’ folders, were consulted. In addition to national archives, museum archives were visited when feasible or when archives were accessible. The principal museum archives visited were in France. These included at the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres, which holds the extensive collections of documents and archives of Governor Louis-Joseph Bouge. Additionally, visits were made to the Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac archives and the digital archives of the British Museum, which were kindly made available to me during the pandemic closure. The archives of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland in London were also visited to view their archives relating to Sir Everard Im Thurn and Boyle Somerville. The historic home of the Somerville family, Drishane House in Cork, Ireland, was contacted to request materials relating to Boyle Somerville. However, based on the information provided, unfortunately no archives relating to his time in the New Hebrides were identified. Furthermore, the archives

of the Musée d'Océanie in La Néyrière, France, and the Archives des Missions Étrangères de Lyon were consulted in order to ascertain information pertaining to Marist collections and missions conducted in Vanuatu during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In both locations, the available information was limited, indicating that the majority of the archival materials may be housed in the Vatican, where there may also be artefacts.

In addition, analysis of existing surveys of Oceania artefacts in museums in France and the UK were consulted, including the survey of Oceania collections in Scotland conducted as part of the project Pacific Collections in Scottish Museums (April 2013 to December 2014).⁵ Another key reference was the 1979 survey entitled *Survey of Oceanian Collections in Museums in the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic* (Gathercole and Clarke, 1979). In France, an inventory of Oceania collections was conducted by Roger Boulay (2007), which resulted in the establishment of a shared database, 'Kimuntu', which records Pacific collections in French museums. However, it should be noted that the website has not been updated for several years. These inventories of Oceanian collections furnished invaluable data that facilitated the identification of museums housing artefacts from the archipelago. This resulted in the delineation of specific museum collections, as well as those belonging to individual collectors. All this archival research guided the selection of those collections deemed suitable for analysis and designated as 'case studies'.

Other significant sources used in the thesis are published accounts of journeys or visits to the archipelago undertaken by individuals – colonial officers and administrators, naval officers, missionaries, planters, traders, travellers, etc. These constituted valuable sources for contextualising artefact acquisition and the complex social interactions at play during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

⁵ The Pacific Collections survey is one of the results of the project, "Pacific Collections in Scottish Museums: Unlocking their Knowledge and Potential", which was supported by the Museums Association Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund. It was carried out at National Museums Scotland, Perth Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow Museums, and Aberdeen University Museums from April 2013 to December 2014. Further information about the project and its outcomes can be found online at the following link: <https://www.nms.ac.uk/our-impact/national-work/training-and-guidance-for-museums/introduction-to-pacific-collections-resource>

Museum collections and assemblages as fieldwork sites

The study of museum collections has been fundamental to this project, although access to them was not possible during the early phases of research. I therefore adapted my approach to study online databases and to conduct statistical analyses of collections and the systems of classification used to catalogue them (discussed below). As previously stated, museum collections are increasingly regarded as intricate networks of intertwined narratives and histories. Each artefact is perceived as a multifaceted entity, with layers of agency, individually and collectively contributing to a distinctive narrative. Moreover, museum collections are regarded as entities that reflect a multifaceted historical trajectory, encapsulating diverse narratives and semantic nuances that evolve over time. Accordingly, in order to unpack the narratives embodied in collections from Vanuatu, the current study approaches the collection from different disciplinary perspectives, as well as at different scales. The latter is defined as a macro-micro approach (de Vries, 2019), whereby a range of perspectives are considered, thus allowing the embodied narratives to be approached at varying levels (Harrison, 2013: 26).

In the present work, the term ‘collections’ will be used to refer to assemblages of artefacts preserved in a museum that have historically been, or still are, classified as ‘ethnographic’ materials, which excludes natural specimens and unmodified human remains. Conversely, the term ‘assemblage’ will be employed when a specific group of ‘things’ connected according to a set of criteria is under discussion (Delanda, 2016: 1-2). An assemblage may comprise not only artefacts but also photographs, archival materials and published works, all of which are linked to a particular donor or collector. This individual is referred to as ‘the collector’, to identify the individual who grouped artefacts (an assemblage of disparate artefacts procured from various locations) which were eventually donated or sold to an institution. In this way the term ‘assemblage’ allows for greater flexibility in the interpretation of artefact groupings and is not subject to the bias associated with the definition of the word ‘collection’, which may imply that the artefacts in question have been actively collected according to specific intentions to acquire sets and series, rather as relatively random acts. In brief, the approach used here is that the ‘collections’ studied are those classified as ‘ethnographic’, which are comprised of ‘assemblages’ of (often) disparate material gathered by particular individuals, referred to as ‘collectors’.

Given that the present study examines assemblages that were acquired by museums in colonial contexts, a first macro-scale analysis takes into account the study of national agendas and colonial histories embodied in the collections. Consequently, the initial scale of analysis approaches collections from the archipelago in museums as a case study, contrasting the entries of Vanuatu artefacts in some museums in France and the UK. A second scale of analysis considers collections in terms of European agendas and their connections to Vanuatu. This consists of a study of relatively large assemblages donated or sold by individuals to museums. The final level of analysis seeks to examine the ni-Vanuatu agency that can be discerned in museum collections. This is achieved by considering artefacts as groupings according to particular functions, conceptual and cultural values of these artefacts in local ni-Vanuatu culture. This last aspect will also consider tendencies over time in terms of the presence or absence of these artefacts in museums. The analysis will consider these trends in relation to the historical context in which these artefacts were integrated into museums.

Macro-scale Museum Case Studies

The initial scale of this study, the more macro scale, is based on a national scale that examined data for Vanuatu assemblages in French and UK museums. Consequently, a list of museums that preserve collections from the archipelago registered as entering museums' collections from the last quarter of the nineteenth and early twentieth century was compiled on the basis of the comprehensive surveys of Oceania collections in France and the United Kingdom. This enabled the identification of central institutions in terms of the quantity of artefacts held from the archipelago, which were deemed necessary for the broad-scale analysis of museums. Additionally, the aim was to ascertain the existence of large assemblages of artefacts given by individuals who had visited the archipelago between 1875 and 1906.

In the UK, the largest collections of archipelago artefacts were identified in the British Museum (BM), the National Museums of Scotland (NMS), the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford (PRM) and the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge (MAA). In France, the Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac (MQB) was identified as the most representative museum in terms of its archipelago-related collections. It should be noted that

the MQB, which opened in 2006, brings together the ethnographic collections of several museums.

The raw quantity of artefacts attributed to Vanuatu in these institutions is as follows. The majority were acquired by museums between 1830 and 2020:

British Museum (BM): 1,469 artefacts

National Museums of Scotland (NMS): 545 artefacts

Pitt Rivers Museum Oxford (PRM): 1,033 artefacts

Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology in Cambridge (MAA): 1,399 artefacts

Musée du quai Branly-Jacques Chirac (MQB): 3,692 artefacts

Once these institutions were contacted to request data on their collections and their online databases were consulted, the large number of artefacts and the quantity of information provided sufficient data for comparative statistical analysis, which is discussed below.

Case studies of ‘Assemblages’

From a broad approach to collections at a national level, this study progresses to an investigation of the museums’ artefact collections at the individual level encompassing artefacts as part of an assemblage. This enables an examination of the intricate relational network in which artefacts are embedded, and an exploration of the agency and narratives associated with their presence in museums. Accordingly, the selected case studies that appear in Part II concentrate on the assemblages of individuals who visited Vanuatu prior to the establishment of the Condominium in 1906. This allows for an investigation of the agendas of these individuals and how they influenced the collections from the archipelago now in museums. As mentioned above, the assemblages under consideration may extend beyond artefacts to a broader range of materials, including photographs, published documents and/or archives.

The case studies selected focus on collectors who have been little studied in relation to Vanuatu’s collections, including colonial administrators, naval officers and academics. These case studies examine the experiences of these individuals in the archipelago and the

materials they donated or sold to museums. The study concentrates on individuals who donated or sold collections which can be considered significant assemblages of artefacts from the New Hebrides/Vanuatu. The case studies were selected according to the size and the 'type' of donor, taking into account the period during which the individuals were in the New Hebrides as well as their reasons for being there.

Four assemblages in museums were identified as suitable for inclusion in this study and considered manageable within the time available. The initial assemblage is that of Lieutenant Alphonse Pineau, which was donated to the Trocadéro Museum in 1889, although it was not formally registered until 1890. The second assemblage is that of Dr Philippe François, which was donated to the same museum in 1893. The third, a series of donations, was made by Henri Boyle Somerville to the Pitt Rivers Museum Oxford, beginning in 1894. The fourth group is more complex and comprises artefacts associated with the French Governor Louis-Joseph Bouge. In 1913, Bouge sold a sizeable assemblage to the British Museum, while a second set was bequeathed to the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres by his widow following her death in 1970.

These four assemblages of artefacts in museums represent some of the earliest large assemblages from Vanuatu to enter museum collections, and as such they are of significant importance in understanding the agency involved in their acquisition. The size of these assemblages also permits quantitative analysis, thereby facilitating comparative discussions between the four collectors with a view to identifying possible patterns or tendencies in the way artefacts were acquired and transferred during the colonial period. It should be noted that the study includes examination of objects seen personally during museum visits, but also, because not all artefacts could be seen, analysis has drawn on museum databases and information gathered during fieldwork in Vanuatu. This last aspect focuses on views expressed by ni-Vanuatu, exploring the presence or absence of certain artefacts in assemblages that had specific cultural values and status. Finally, the thesis aims to propose models for analysing the nature of the relationships that enabled these artefacts to find their way into French and British museums.

Museum Visits

Collections/assemblages were seen and documented during visits to the following museums. In France, twelve objects were examined at the MQB that had been donated by Alphonse Pineau, and fifty-seven that had been donated by Philippe François. Forty-seven objects donated by Emma Bouge from the collection of Louis-Joseph Bouge were examined at the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres. In the UK, seventy artefacts were seen at the British Museum and fifty-four objects donated by Boyle Somerville were seen and documented at the PRM. Accordingly, a considerable proportion of the collector's assemblages were not personally examined. The restricted number of museum visits was precipitated by the outbreak of the global pandemic in 2020, which prevented research visits to museums for a considerable period, after which time museum staff were dealing with a large backlog of requests. Once visits became possible, not all artefacts could be seen and a selection needed to be made in advance. In determining which objects to view during visits, priority was given to those that were not inherently challenging for museum staff to handle, such as spears and arrows. It was therefore resolved that artefacts exhibiting unusual characteristics or lacking information, or images would be accorded priority during museum visits. In this regard, museum constraints were also encountered on a case-by-case basis for certain artefacts, given that some museums possess off-site storage facilities that render viewing artefacts difficult.

In all, a total of 240 artefacts pertaining to the collector case studies in Part II were viewed between August 2021 and December 2022. In advance of each visit, the artefacts were prepared, and I was accompanied by a member of museum staff who was available to provide assistance if required. I was granted permission to handle the artefacts, given that I had undergone training in the handling of objects in museums and in an archaeological context. The museum visits allowed me to gain familiarity with the material composition, dimensions and weight of the artefacts from the archipelago. This allowed for a more nuanced comprehension of the logistical challenges associated with their transportation to France or the UK, as well as how they can be handled. Moreover, the visits allowed for the confirmation or modification of attributions in relation to the functions ascribed to them, as well as enabling the identification of elements that were not discernible in the museum database images. These included engraved patterns (for example, PRM museum number 1903.130.11), smoke patina (MQB museum numbers 71.1883.64.127 and 71.1893.22.4) and

shell rings that were utilised as a substitute for pig tusks (PRM museum number 1896.33.45). Additionally, the museum or collector labels attached to the objects could be recorded, which can facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of an artefacts' movements. This approach is similar to the methodology employed by Angèle Martin, who has documented the labels attached to objects in museums (Martin, 2017).

Comparative Approach as an Analytical Tool

The methodological approach employed in this study is analogous to that developed during the Relational Museum Project at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford between 2002 and 2006. It is characterised by a comparative approach that encompasses both qualitative and quantitative analysis (Gosden et al., 2007: 11-12). The term 'comparison' can be defined as an analytical approach that establishes relations through the association or dissociation of phenomena, employing a range of techniques that facilitate the examination of these relations. These techniques include contrasting, juxtaposing, ranking and translating, which are used to analyse phenomena within or against a defined set, according to their characteristics. Additionally, comparison invokes values, as described by Pelkmans and Walker (2023: 2).

Consequently, comparison elucidates contrasts to clarify phenomena, emphasising singularities, or situating them within broader continuities and/or processes. This approach is of particular importance in the field of modern history, as evidenced by concepts such as 'histoire comparée' and 'histoire croisée', which examine historical events transnationally as part of broader narratives (Kocka, 2003: 39–40). Conversely, the former field is subject to significant methodological constraints, frequently facing criticism for its limited scope and influence beyond the traditional boundaries of historical inquiry (Kocka, 2003: 42). This impedes a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon's intricacies. These limitations have been addressed by the development of another field, known as 'entangled history' or 'histoire croisée'. This incorporates studies and sources from outside the scope of historical sources to capture a more complex picture of the phenomenon under study (Kocka, 2003: 42–43; Werner and Zimmermann, 2003). This conceptual approach to a historical phenomenon, which gained prominence in the 1980s and 1990s, contributed to a broader movement in humanities and museum studies.

These comparative approaches are analogous to those employed in the present analysis of the entangled history of Vanuatu artefacts, which involved museums in France and Britain during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In this respect, one of the limitations of the Relational Museum Project at the Pitt Rivers Museum was its focus on the collections within the museum's walls. This limitation is also highlighted by Bénédicte Savoy and Andrea Meyer (2014a) in a broader assessment. The wider context in which these collections were acquired has not been sufficiently explored. To address this, the methodology of the current study extends the comparative analysis to multiple institutions by adopting a transnational approach that examines colonial collections in a variety of museums of national stature.

Moreover, the present study employs a comparative approach at multiple levels to examine the overarching narratives and processes intertwined within the collections. It is essential to recognise the distinctive historical relationship between comparison and museums, particularly those categorised as ethnographic. This is because comparative methods were initially associated with evolutionary theories. Subsequently, artefacts were regarded as 'testimonies' that encapsulated the essence of societies. They were therefore employed as a pivotal component in the classification of human civilisations according to their purported technological advancement, as reflected in these very objects. However, if the comparative approach was previously employed as a means of advancing Western agendas, it has more recently been utilised in fields such as transnational studies and postcolonial studies, and particularly in museum studies, with the objective of fostering dialogues between objects that might otherwise be overlooked if considered as isolated elements.

The aim of this thesis is to employ a comparative approach to examine the diverse narratives and agencies that shape museum collections, with a particular focus on unpacking the complex relationships within them. The structure of the thesis reflects a comparative dialogue at several levels, beginning with large-scale comparisons of late 19th and early 20th-century colonial dynamics between Vanuatu, France and the UK. National comparisons continue with an analysis of ni-Vanuatu artefacts entering museums in these countries during the same period, which in an attempt to identify potential national agendas within collections.

The study considers different conceptual groupings of artefacts, employing both quantitative and qualitative analyses. The transnational corpus is also considered in terms of ni-Vanuatu agency, examining specific artefacts and their representation in Vanuatu society and their presence in the museum case study. Accordingly, the comparative methodology employed requires an approach to the museum data at varying levels. Firstly, the artefacts must be grouped according to specific characteristics pertinent to the study in question. Secondly, a quantitative representation of Vanuatu's collections must be generated. The statistical data is then subjected to a process of comparison with a more diverse array of information sources, thereby facilitating a more nuanced comprehension of the underlying processes at play in the collection, acquisition and preservation of artefacts in museums.

Statistical Data and Analysis

The generation of statistical data is not merely a technical process; rather, it is a methodology that enables the formulation of broader comparative arguments across a range of analytical scales. Such an approach can reveal trends, uncover singularities, and recognise limitations. Processing quantitative data is a prerequisite for statistical analysis. This data was produced by compiling the information generated in each museum case study, which encompasses the MQB, BM, PRM, NMS, and MAA. This approach is informed by methodologies from prior museum research projects, including *Museums and Source Communities* (Peers and Brown, 2003) and *Collecting colonialism: material culture and colonial change* (Gosden and Knowles, 2001). The following publications, which are embedded within post-colonial discourse, provide a comprehensive foundation for the reflections presented in the current study: *Material Culture and Colonial Change* (Gosden and Knowles, 2001), *Unpacking the Collection* (Byrne et al., 2011), *Reassembling the Collection* (Harrison et al., 2013), and the *Relational Museum* project at the Pitt Rivers Museum (2002-06).

While statistical analysis may provide a broader view of collection dynamics, allowing for the observation of general trends and tendencies, these quantitative insights do not allow for any further conclusions to be drawn. It is essential to contextualise statistical data within a larger narrative framework. This is particularly relevant in the case of the current study, which explores museum and colonial historical perspectives, as well as a biographical approach to the artefacts in question. This biography provides the foundation for analysing

the resulting data. The trends revealed through statistical analysis provide a foundation for further qualitative interpretation; however, they do not themselves offer a complete understanding of the artefacts' complexities. This reinforces the need for a complementary approach that combines both quantitative and qualitative methods, as statistical models alone cannot account for the full range of agencies and narratives that artefacts embody.

Any endeavour to construct a model, whether statistical or otherwise, is constrained by considerable limitations pertaining to the reliability of the data upon which the model is based. This is particularly pertinent in the context of statistical modelling (Petch, 2006: 153) and represents a significant challenge when considering museum collections data. Indeed, museums may be processing information about collections and artefacts that may be inaccurate. While the accuracy of information is a significant issue, the current study addresses this issue and reduces its impact by increasing the number of artefacts – the sample – and the volume of information used to produce the statistical data.

Another aspect addressed in the present study is the investigation of information that exhibited greater variation between museums or was more susceptible to inaccuracy. This approach permits the isolation of those specific types of information that are more likely to be accurate. For example, data regarding the date of entry of objects and collections into museums, often associated with the museum's registration number, can be extracted. While this type of information is generally more accurate, some artefacts may still be inaccurately described or absent from the data set. Such inaccuracies or absences limit the ability to fully utilise the statistical models beyond the general information they may provide, which are patterns and trends rather than precise and static information. Certainly, a comprehensive examination of the dynamic aspects of collections, as reflected in statistical modelling, is not feasible when the proportion of inaccurate information gathered is substantial. This underscores the imperative to collate data to achieve an optimal balance between the number of potentially inaccurate records and those free from such issues.

A further crucial aspect of the methodology used herein is that the information must be formatted in a way that allows it to be extracted. In this regard, the categorisation of artefacts is of paramount importance in the context of statistical analysis. In this regard, collections are grouped according to shared characteristics, which inherently represent a limited

perspective of these artefacts and potentially a bias. For instance, the initial broad categorisation assumed in this study is based on a subject, specifically ‘artefacts’ from Vanuatu in museums in France and the UK. This categorisation combines artefacts with a shared geographical origin. However, the issue of provenance remains particularly challenging. Information pertaining to the provenance of artefacts, particularly at the level of specific islands within archipelagos, can be particularly unreliable. For example, who classified an artefact as originating from Vanuatu rather than New Caledonia, and when? While the provenance of artefacts at the archipelago level (e.g. Vanuatu) is often accurately determined, establishing the precise origins of these artefacts is a more challenging endeavour. The term ‘provenance’ is open to interpretation, with its meaning dependent on the context in which it is used. In the museum setting, it can refer to the place of production of an artefact, or it can be used as a synonym for ‘provenience’, which denotes the location where an artefact was discovered (Flexner, 2016b: 168). Consequently, although provenance is intrinsic to the present study, as the artefacts under consideration are selected on the basis of their association with the Vanuatu archipelago, the problems inherent in the data must be acknowledged and carefully managed during the analysis. In addition, this study extends beyond geographical categorisation by also considering European classifications of artefacts, thereby reflecting upon European agency in the collection and curation processes. In parallel, the study also seeks to engage with artefact assemblages according to Indigenous categorisation and systems of classification.

In order to address the limitations associated with the imprecision of museum records, this study prioritises large, well-documented collections from institutions of national significance. It is therefore reasonable to suggest that collections which have been the subject of more extensive research and documentation efforts are more likely to have accurate records. Furthermore, the statistical data in the current study prioritises information that is less likely to contain significant inaccuracies and builds upon this to approach collections on the basis of information that is present, rather than missing. In this regard, the methodological approach employed in this thesis is comparable to that of a historical study, which constructs its analysis on the basis of the information available, while acknowledging the inherent possibility that the data may be incomplete. Accordingly, the present statistical analysis was constructed on the foundation of available data, prioritising information or categorisations on the basis of the information most likely to be accurate. In this regard, one

analytical perspective that was considered for the statistical representation of the collections was the date of entry into museum collections, which tends to be better documented. By selecting a substantial number of artefacts from these institutions, the study also reduces the impact of missing or inaccurate data, enabling a more reliable statistical analysis.

While statistical analysis allows for the identification of patterns and trends, it must be emphasised that this method is not an end in itself. The quantitative data produced through statistical analysis serves as a tool to highlight broader trends and tendencies within collections. Further qualitative investigation is required to understand the underlying phenomena fully. Therefore, statistical analysis must be supplemented with other methods and resources, including documentation, archival studies and fieldwork, in order to generate hypotheses about the deeper meanings and relationships embodied in museum collections.

Museums, Categories and Classifications

The act of categorisation is inextricably linked to the function of museums as institutions, which are defined by their ability to categorise and classify artefacts and specimens. It is intrinsic to the function of museums to differentiate between items that are deemed valuable to society and those that are not, although these judgments may shift over time. The former are now accorded the status of cultural heritage, thereby necessitating the making of sacrifices by society to ensure their preservation. This is in contrast to the latter, which in the past have not been accorded the same level of importance and are therefore not subject to the same level of protection. Consequently, the classification and categorisation of artefacts has historically been a fundamental aspect of museum practice (Byrne, et al 2011; Harrison, 2013: 12-13). This process has in many cases been shaped by imperial and national agendas, which have influenced the narratives that have developed around ethnographical collections.

It is important to acknowledge that an increasing number of researchers and Indigenous communities have advocated for a reassessment of the Western historical categorisation of artefacts, which was often a legacy of nineteenth- and twentieth-century attitudes that did not encompass Indigenous approaches or classifications (Lonetree, 2012; Harrison et al., 2013; Sully, 2016; Stahn, 2023). More recently, an increasing number of museums are

integrating Indigenous knowledge and categorisations into their documentation and practices (Harrison et al., 2013; Herle, 2003; Stahn, 2023).

The act of categorising objects according to specific and predetermined characteristics necessarily entails the investigation of these characteristics alone, which carries the risk of overlooking or disregarding the inherent complexity of the objects in question. However, if these limitations are taken into account, and the information gathered on a group of things according to particular characteristics is acknowledged and considered, then statistical analysis may help to reveal connections, patterns, singularities or recurrences. These must then be subjected to analysis in the context of the wider information available, which provides the context for the biography of these objects. Consequently, statistics are one of several analytical tools that can be used when attempting to comprehend the intricacies of the network phenomenon of objects in museums. It is important to recognise, however, that statistics are a biased tool that relies on the categorisation and formatting of information. The limitations of this method must be acknowledged, including that a decision to select characteristics for the purpose of grouping things together is inherently biased. This is also the case in the context of museum collections. The term “collection” itself is not neutral. With this in mind, it is evident that museums have a long relationship with classification. This is particularly evident in the case of ‘ethnographical’ collections, which were initially categorised as artefacts displayed or acquired as “fragments of other cultures” (Harrison et al., 2013: 8–9).

Categorisation as Method

A comprehensive examination of the evolution of museums in Britain and France during the nineteenth century is beyond the scope of this study. However, it is essential to analyse the emergence of specific trends during this period, such as the development of new classification approaches applied to ‘ethnographic’ materials. Historically, anthropology, ethnology and ethnography have been closely associated with museums, a relationship that Stocking (1985: 6–8) characterises as the ‘museum period’. Furthermore, museums had a distinctive relationship with the natural sciences and biology, serving as sites for the expression of progressive theories that extended to the arrangement of anthropological artefacts (Bennett, 1995: 78).

Accordingly, artefacts in museum collections were categorised and displayed in line with dominant theories of progress and complexity. The hierarchical categorisation of cultural artefacts was in keeping with the political agenda of the time, which was exemplified by grand exhibitions that showcased technological and industrial progress as representations of a ‘modern’ society (Bennett, 2018; Stocking, 1985). A significant example of this hierarchical vision is the typological representation of progress at the Pitt Rivers Museum (Stocking, 1985: 8; Bennett, 1995: 78-79; 2018: 121-122). Therefore, the ordering of artefacts in museums has reflected a broader ordering of the world.

In light of the long-standing relationship between museums and classification, and the understanding that classifications reflect theoretical perspectives applied to objects in an epistemological approach, the following discussion will consider the categorisations used in the course of the development. It will highlight the underlying narratives of the categories used in the analysis and assess the relevance and rationale for their application in this study.

Categories as Analytical Tools

The statistical approach adopted in the present study includes an awareness of the intrinsic limitations of classifying entities into groups and representing them numerically. Although this approach is inherently biased, it does allow disparate data to be grouped together in a coherent manner, thus facilitating the identification of emerging trends and patterns. These findings must, however, be subjected to further examination through comparative documentation and contextual analysis. Nevertheless, these categories and types of artefact grouping will be employed as methodological approaches in order to investigate narratives and the dynamics underlying them (Bolton, 2001b: 252). The approach is not intended to apply a single method to the analysis of artefacts; rather, it is employed to investigate a specific aspect, which, in combination with other data, contributes to the unravelling of some of the narratives and agencies embodied within the collections. It is important to note that the various categorisations introduced in the following section do not assume any hierarchical relationships. Rather, they are all considered part of the biography of artefacts. For the purposes of analysis, statistical data will be examined across a range of group sizes

to reflect the nuances of the phenomena under consideration. In this context, larger groups may be considered categories, while smaller groups may be regarded as types. It should be noted that this grouping system of artefacts within an assemblage may assume a variety of forms and natures.

Categories of Collector

The selection of assemblages was undertaken according to the size of the collection and the period during which the artefacts composing the assemblages were most likely acquired. Beyond these aspects, criteria regarding the collectors also influenced the selection of the current assemblage case studies, which feature in part II of the thesis. In this regard, specific categories and types of collectors were selected for analysis in order to examine the impact of the colonial situation on the composition of the collections. The collections selected as case studies were donated or sold to museums by the individuals, or their spouses, who visited the New Hebrides prior to the establishment of the condominium. This category of collector can be distinguished from those – secondary collectors – who did not visit the field and acquired artefacts only in Europe. However, it is often not possible to be certain whether all the artefacts forming the assemblage were acquired during the collector's time in the archipelago. Another significant element is the classification of collectors, which in the present study is based on their professional functions. Accordingly, the case studies selected were those of people involved in pre-colonial and colonial administration, including governors, administrators and technicians, as well as naval and military officers, all of whom were to some extent involved in colonial agendas. It is important to note that these categories were not fixed and that some individuals may have held multiple occupations simultaneously. While acknowledging that missionary collections also represent an important 'collector' profile in Oceanian and New Hebrides' colonial history, this study has, however, chosen to focus on prominent 'collectors' whose collections are accessible and connected to the French and British administration of the New Hebrides. Furthermore, these collectors have received comparatively little scholarly attention.

Western Categorisation of Artefacts

In the context of the analysis of the collectors' assemblage, an examination of the composition of the assemblage itself informs and shapes the statistical analysis. To achieve this, European categorisations of Vanuatu artefacts were employed in order to approach nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Western narratives associated with such artefacts. This, in turn, enabled the Western agency in the constitution of these assemblages to be addressed. In this context, broad categories such as body ornamentation and weaponry are given particular consideration and placed in dialogue with collectors' studies and contextual frameworks. Consequently, the categorisation of artefacts is conducted in accordance with what was assumed to be their function during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by non-New Hebrideans. For example, it should be noted that the categorisation of body ornaments is limited to artefacts of a small size that were worn for social or aesthetic purposes. These artefacts could be considered to fall within the European category of jewellery. However, combs are also usually included in this specific category. With these classification systems in mind, ceremonial headdresses or tattoos are not categorised as body ornaments in Part II of the thesis but are instead considered within other historical categories such as religious or ceremonial artefacts.

The specific type of object may also provide further nuance to the arguments, which then refer to the designation of the artefacts, such as a comb, club, bracelet, and so forth. It is crucial to acknowledge that these categorisations are analytical groupings of artefacts that encompass a far more complex reality than is presented here. It is also important to acknowledge that these categorisations reflect only the context in which they were conceived, nineteenth and twentieth century Eurocentric perceptions. While using these categorisations to investigate European influences embodied within the assemblages of artefacts, it is not claimed that they cover the entirety of the complex values, connections, and narratives that these artefacts encompass.

Artefacts as 'Valuables'

The category 'valuable' encompasses a range of artifact classifications based on specific interpretations of the term. This is investigated for each case in question. It is noteworthy that the present study is itself investigating objects that were previously assumed to be

‘valuable’, resulting in their integration into museums. Indeed, museums contribute to the creation of value by establishing a distinction between the things they preserve and the everyday world from which they emerged. The act of classification performed by museums at an initial level contributes to the differentiation between things that hold inalienable value and those that do not.

The confinement of the former in a restricted place contributes to a process of sacralisation. This process, as conceptualised by Dominique Poulot (2014: 10–11, 227), may be understood as a form of ‘patrimonialisation’ or ‘heritage-making’. It builds upon the ideas of Françoise Choay (2007), who explored the transition of a building from its functional value to its heritage status (Choay, 2007: 157–158). However, it focuses specifically on the role of museums in the process of making heritage. The selection of items to be included in this process serves to reveal societal values, thereby contributing to the sacralisation of these items through their incorporation into museums. It is important to note that the values under discussion are not to be understood in economic terms (Morphy and McKenzie, 2022: 2). While this may be a part of the museum’s valuation of its collection, it is also a reflection of the societal value placed on these items. The value of these items is not limited to their monetary worth; it extends also to their cultural and social significance. This is evident in the time and financial resources invested in their preservation. Values may be classified as aesthetic, functional, scientific, ancestral, identity for instances. Consequently, the study of museum collections inherently entails the examination of a collection of things designated as valuable. However, the present study focuses on specific valuable aspects to ascertain the potential power dynamics that may have been at play during the exchanges between ni-Vanuatu and Europeans.

The underlying phenomenon upon which this method is based is that the movement of artefacts is always a social interaction, in which the values placed upon the artefacts are at the centre of the social dynamic, leading to the movement of “things” (Appadurai, 1986: 5; Gosden et al., 2007: 175; Bolton 2021: 123). Consequently, in order to retrace the narratives of the social interactions, artefacts are regarded as a source of information. In order to do so, methods must be developed to unpack the various narratives, which contribute to an understanding of the social interactions that ultimately led to the artefacts being acquired by museums (Henry et al., 2013: 35-36). Consequently, the present study, which examines the

values inherent in the artefacts as reflected by the diverse perspectives and categorisations, led to an investigation of the values attributed to these artefacts, characterising the exchange power dynamic that ultimately resulted in the artefacts being acquired by museums. The preceding categorisations examine artefacts from the perspectives of nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars. However, to investigate ni-Vanuatu agency embodied within the flow of artefacts to museum institutions, this study must consider the cultural values ni-Vanuatu associate with these artefacts. Here, values are understood in terms of artefacts that, in traditional societies in Vanuatu, contribute to the social status of individuals. While acknowledging the cultural diversity of Vanuatu and the fluidity of values, certain characteristics regarding artefacts and their associated values can be observed.

In this respect, the study will focus on a case study of specific types of valuables, to be defined more precisely in Part III. These valuables will include objects intended to move and be exchanged, as opposed to those that are not. Particular emphasis will thus be placed on the movement of artefacts in ni-Vanuatu cultures. The question of valuables and their movement, as well as the complexity of the concept, is addressed through the tension in the dichotomy between ‘alienable’ and ‘inalienable’ artefacts, in relation to Annette Weiner’s notion of “inalienable wealth” (Weiner, 1985). Accordingly, the term “valuables” will be used to refer to artefacts associated with individual and societal wealth, involving notions of movement and social exchange. This approach encompasses various practices related to the movement of these objects. Depending on the type of wealth, restrictions may be imposed, including limitations on access or requirements for movement. Weiner discussed some of these types of objects as follows:

“Therefore, we find two classes of inalienable possessions: those that should never circulate and those that under certain circumstances may be given to others either on loan, as copies, or in return for another object of the same kind. In the latter case, the affective qualities constituting the giver’s social and political identity remain embedded in the objects so that when given to others the objects create an emotional lien upon the receivers.” (Weiner, 1985: 212)

In this regard, an analysis of the presence of specific ni-Vanuatu artefacts in museums, which fall under the category of ‘valuable’ in ni-Vanuatu cultures, may allow us to examine the power dynamics at play during the exchange process between the various actors involved.

However, rather than approaching the dynamics from the sole angle of what Europeans valued in terms of material culture, examining the presence or absence of artefacts that could be considered ‘valuables’ by ni-Vanuatu allows us to consider the agency of ni-Vanuatu in these exchanges, given that the ni-Vanuatu were also actors in that process (Thomas, 1991: 7). Accordingly, the categorisation of artefacts as ‘valuables’ in the present study refers to a selection of artefacts considered as a group. The aim of the artefacts group case studies is to investigate this category of artefacts through an examination of artefacts of various types of ‘inalienable wealth’ within ni-Vanuatu culture.

The current classification relies on complex and fluid notion of value attached to artefacts, to reflect on potential ni-Vanuatu agency embodied in artefacts in museum collections in France and the UK, with a particular focus given to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, the thesis does not attempt to conduct an extensive and comprehensive analysis of values in ni-Vanuatu cultures. The notion of valuables here is approached in order to highlight potential restrictions associated with artefacts, notions which when articulated in regard to museums collections allow us to consider the ‘politics’ (Appadurai, 1986) that is possibly expressed in exchanges with Europeans.

Fieldwork – Reaching Vanuatu

Although the short fieldwork in Vanuatu (two months during the period 14 July to 6 October 2023) is not a central focus of this research, it proved to be a critical aspect, particularly in terms of knowledge sharing and resituating museum collections. It has also facilitated the establishment of links with people and institutions in Vanuatu, with the aim of fostering future collaborations between collection-holders in France and the UK. Besides time in Port Vila, a short visit to Uripiv in Malekula was made under the guidance of Numa Fred (director of the VKS branch in Malekula), and another short visit made to Tanna. However, a primary aim of the fieldwork was to establish contact with the Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta (VKS), to study the artefacts held and displayed there and in its branch museums,⁶ and to understand the policies of the VKS. Another crucial aspect was to engage with source communities beyond European museums, to understand how ni-Vanuatu place value on artefacts and to

⁶ During fieldwork only the Malekula branch in Lakatoro could be visited.

capture realities beyond institutional walls. The 7th Melanesian Arts and Culture Festival, hosted by Vanuatu from 19 to 30 July 2023, provided a unique opportunity to witness the celebration of culture and kastom from different places in Vanuatu, further deepening understanding of the country's heritage.

In this sense, the essence of the museum is to create connections between individuals and societies across time and space. The inherent presence of the past in artefacts suggests that they hold meaning for both the nations that preserve them and the societies from which they were acquired, making them living witnesses to historical processes. The VKS itself is an example of how a close relationship can be built between museum collections and living kastom through the Fieldworker program initiated in 1977 under the influence of Peter Crow, employed at the time with Jean-Michel Charpentier to train ni-Vanuatu in recording their oral traditions, and Kirk Huffman who was the curator of the VKS (Bolton, 1994: 70-72). In addition to exhibiting artefacts, the VKS contributes to the documentation and research of Vanuatu's kastom through its fieldworker programme. This initiative, which extends beyond Vanuatu's borders through collaborations with researchers from Australia (Stuart Bedford, Christopher Ballard, Matthew Spriggs), the UK (Lissant Bolton, Haidy Geismar), France (Frédéric Valentin, Marie Durand, Eric Wittersheim, Monika Stern) and many others, highlights the enduring global connections that link ni-Vanuatu and Vanuatu to other nations, often mediated through material culture. Bolton's work with women fieldworkers to document museum collections is a clear example of how these connections continue to influence contemporary and cultural preservation (Bolton, 2023).

Connecting with contemporary Vanuatu was considered essential, not only to understand the historical significance of the collections, but also to engage with living descendants who continue to value these artefacts. In addition, conducting fieldwork is an ethical imperative to ensure that the research remains grounded in the lived experiences of those who are descended from the original makers. As museum-based research can only provide a limited perspective on cultures far removed from one's own, direct engagement with people and their descendants is essential to fostering a deeper understanding of their cultural heritage.

Structure of the Thesis

Although a substantial number of anthropological, historical and archaeological studies have examined Vanuatu culture, comparatively little research has been conducted on the large quantity of Vanuatu cultural material acquired under colonial influence that is now preserved in museums in the former colonial countries of France and the United Kingdom. This thesis seeks to address this gap in the literature. It is divided into three main parts, which explore Vanuatu's collections from a range of perspectives. Each part focuses on unpacking the narratives within the collections and identifying the agencies involved in their creation, thereby revealing connections between artefacts, networks of relationships and histories.

Part I of the thesis (chapters 1-2) presents a macro-level analysis of Vanuatu, France, and the UK, with the objective of identifying the large-scale potential influences that may be embodied in museum collections through the presence of these artefacts in France and the UK. This part seeks to examine the impact of national influences and narratives by analysing Vanuatu's long history and situating it in a dialogue with the French and British historical contexts shaped by colonialism. This approach allows us to examine the national dynamics of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, demonstrating the distinctive relationship between the archipelago and the two nations. Chapter 1 outlines Vanuatu's long history, which has contributed to the pronounced cultural diversity of the Vanuatu population. It also introduces the notion that Vanuatu has never constituted an isolated archipelago in the Pacific Ocean and demonstrates that Europeans were another contact in a long history of human interaction. The chapter then constructs an account of contacts with Europeans, exploring the distinctive nature of the neutral status imposed on the archipelago and its implications for all actors, both Europeans and ni-Vanuatu. This status influenced social exchanges and, consequently, the exchange of artefacts, and by extension the constitution of collections that would ultimately find their way into museums. Chapter 2 then considers the arrival of Vanuatu artefacts in major museums in France and the United Kingdom, and discusses the local historical contexts in dialogue with the colonial policies and tensions introduced in Chapter 1. In addition, a comparison is conducted beyond the scope of the current research to investigate potential singularities or recurrences. In conclusion, the chapter examines the presence of Vanuatu in France and the United Kingdom, while the preceding chapter examined the presence of France and the United Kingdom in Vanuatu.

Part II (chapters 3-6) provides a detailed analysis of the case studies of individuals involved in the archipelago who acquired artefacts and subsequently transferred them to museums in France and the UK. Accordingly, this section is divided into chapters for each individual collection. It focuses on collectors who travelled to and within Vanuatu between 1878 and 1906, and their agency and motivations behind their acquisition of artefacts and subsequent donations to museums. This part of the thesis traces the biographies of the collectors and explores the ways in which their personal experiences and historical contexts shaped their collections. This part of the thesis employs a more focused approach to collections in institutions, reducing the scale of the analysis to collectors' and the social interactions and exchanges that shaped them. In this way, it contributes to the formation of alternative perspectives on artefacts by investigating the role of the collector within the context of the broader social and historical environment, as previously developed in Part I.

Part III (chapters 7-9) adopts a different perspective, focusing on the potential agency of ni-Vanuatu embodied in museum collections in France and the UK. In order to achieve this, the focus of analysis shifts towards specific objects that hold particular value for ni-Vanuatu. By following these objects, new insights may be gained into the social interactions and exchanges that led to their becoming part of museum collections. This part analyses how the artefacts may reflect the relationships and exchanges between ni-Vanuatu and European actors during the pre-colonial and colonial period. This part employs a different method for categorising the objects, with the aim of aligning them more closely with how ni-Vanuatu might consider them. This approach enables the emergence of new perspectives and insights into the collections. In this way, Part III examines the diverse layers of value and meaning inherent in the objects, with the aim of incorporating the narratives of ni-Vanuatu involvement in the exchanges that led to the formation of these collections. It seeks to demonstrate that artefacts in museums embody not only European intentions but also the agency of ni-Vanuatu. It is suggested that examining them through this lens offers a more profound understanding of the collections' significance.

This structure is intended to allow engagement with both the complex colonial history and the agency of ni-Vanuatu, thereby facilitating a more nuanced examination of the collections and the narratives they contain.

PART I

Vanuatu, France and the United Kingdom

Introduction to Part I

Part I aims to provide a macro-level analysis of Vanuatu, France and the UK, with the objective of outlining the broader landscape in which artefact collections are embedded. This enables an investigation of the macro-level context that shaped social interactions between the diverse actors in the archipelago and Europe. These interactions ultimately resulted in the arrival of artefacts in museums.

In this context, Part I examines the impact of national influences and narratives, presenting Vanuatu's long history in dialogue with the histories of other countries. A specific emphasis is placed on the historical contexts of French and British colonialism. This approach offers insight into the national dynamics of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which have been referred to as the 'Empire Period' (1875-1914). It reveals the distinctive colonial relationships between the three nations, which had profound implications.

The two chapters that compose Part I consider the interactions of individuals within the archipelago in the context of national agendas. However, it is important to acknowledge that the concept of national identity among Vanuatu people in the nineteenth century was not defined as it is today, indeed there was no concept for the inhabitants of the archipelago of belonging to a nation until later. In this text, the term 'Vanuatu as a nation' is used to refer to the Indigenous ancestors of ni-Vanuatu who currently recognise themselves as being part of a nation, namely the independent Republic of Vanuatu. However, while French citizens or British subjects identified themselves as such and, contingent on their status, represented their country, the same did not apply to the inhabitants of the New Hebrides archipelago in

the nineteenth century. Chapter 1 will also address the influence of individuals on national agendas. The references to Vanuatu, France and the UK are therefore not intended to oversimplify the complexity of individuals as forming coherent groups, but rather to define them as influenced by culture and social organisation. This approach allows us to focus the discussion on a wide scale, with a view to identifying the broader context in which all the actors contributing to the movement of ‘things’ operated, and the circumstances under which this occurred.

Chapter 1 employs a macro-historical lens, situating Vanuatu within a long history of arrivals and contacts. These interactions resulted in the formation of a culturally diverse region, with Europeans representing just one of numerous contacts, and relatively late in the archipelago’s history. The chapter then turns to the ‘Empire Period’, during which the colonial tensions between the Indigenous Vanuatu population, the French and the British are explored. These tensions culminated in a distinctive colonial situation, in which the neutral stance adopted by both nations had considerable implications for all actors and shaped the dynamics of social exchange. Consequently, the chapter concentrates on the contexts in which these exchanges occurred.

Chapter 2 shifts the focus of analysis to the trajectory of Vanuatu artefacts within the broader institutional context in which they operated. It initiates a discussion contrasting the first collections from the archipelago with those from the wider Pacific region. This comparison enables an examination of the distinctive trajectory of Vanuatu collections in comparison with that of broader Pacific Island artefact collections in France and Britain. Subsequently, the chapter analyses the patterns of collecting from the nineteenth century onwards, examining the entry of artefacts from the archipelago into major national institutions. The objective is to identify patterns, itineraries and relationships, particularly in the context outlined in the preceding chapter.

To support this analysis, Chapter 2 applies statistical tools to museum collections, identifying common or unique patterns. These patterns are then subjected to analysis within the context of the colonial, local and museum environments. A comparable methodology to that employed by the *Relational Museum Project* (Petch, 2006: 150–152) is utilised in this instance, with the application of statistical tools for the representation of museum collections

in relation to broader documentation.⁷ This enables an examination of the processes inherent in a museum's collections.

However, in contrast to the Pitt Rivers Museum's *Relational Museum Project*, which concentrated on the Pitt Rivers Museum's own collections and employed statistical data to illustrate the provenance of artefacts and their collectors' relations, this chapter adopts a broader perspective. The analysis considers the extensive collections of artefacts from the archipelago that are stored in several museums with national status. The focus is on the evolution of the entry of Vanuatu artefacts over time. In contrast to Chapter 1, Chapter 2 emphasises the presence of Vanuatu in France and the UK, particularly through ni-Vanuatu artefacts and the networks in which they operated.

⁷ For further examples of the statistical data and collections representation employed by the Relational Museum Project, see: <https://history.prm.ox.ac.uk/table-of-contents.php.html>.

Chapter 1. Vanuatu: A Long History of Connection

This first chapter aims to situate the collections within the historicity of Vanuatu by outlining the long history of connections and interactions between the inhabitants of the archipelago over time which have contributed to its extremely diverse cultures. It first emphasises that the Europeans are one contact among many, before introducing the entangled histories of the subsequent New Hebrides, France and the United Kingdom, creating a unique situation in which things found their way to the archipelago and to European countries.

In this context, the chapter draws on the results of archaeological and DNA research to review human settlement of the archipelago over the last three millennia. The more recent history of the archipelago is then detailed, covering visits by early European travellers, the arrival of traders, missionaries and settlers, followed by the establishment of the joint Anglo-French colonial administration and finally independence. Particular emphasis is placed on the discussion of the second half of the nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth century, the period during which most of the Vanuatu collections discussed in this thesis were acquired.

Vanuatu's Long History: from Migrations to the first Colonial Agreement

a) Migrations towards Vanuatu

Archaeological research has shown that human colonisation of the Pacific region was a long process consisting of multiple migrations associated with cultural and biological changes (O'Connor and Hiscock, 2018). Human colonisation of the Pacific islands began with the occupation of what Roger Green defined in 1991 as Near Oceania, the area including New Guinea, the Bismarck Archipelago and the Solomon Islands (Fig. number to be added) (Green, 1991). The first evidence of human arrival in this region was discovered at archaeological sites in the Huon Terraces of Papua New Guinea and dated to between 61,000 and 52,000 BP (Leclerc and Flexner, 2019: 11). By 45,000 BP, populations had reached the Bismarck Archipelago and by 35,000 years ago, the western Solomon Islands, which

researchers believe to mark the end of the first phase of human colonisation of Near Oceania (O'Connor and Hiscock, 2018: n.p).

Later, populations from East Asia with DNA sources linked to Taiwan ancestry (Lipson et al., 2020: 2), referred to by researchers as Austronesian populations, undertook migrations around 4,500-4,000 BP (Denham, 2018: n.p.). These Austronesian populations, belonging to

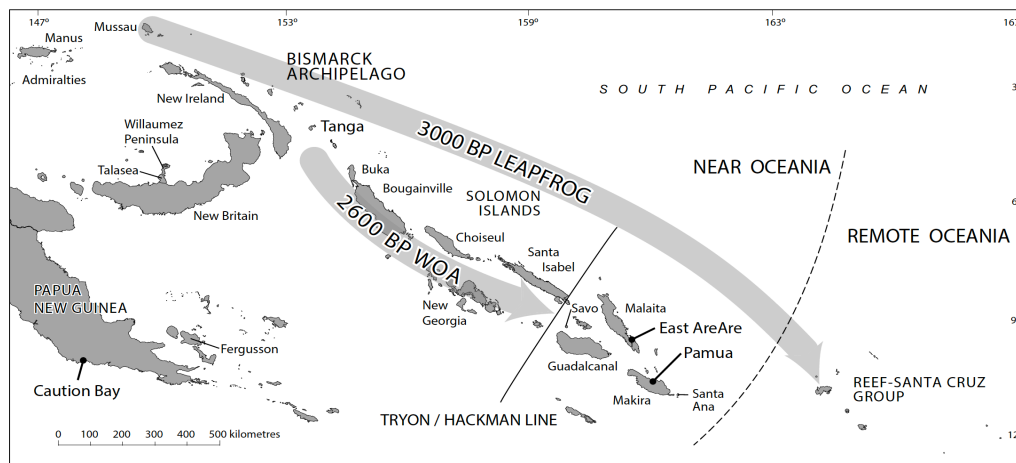


Figure 1: Map of Austronesian Migration from the Bismarck Archipelago (from Bedford and Spriggs, 2019).

the Austronesian language group, are commonly associated with material culture sets composed of pottery, arrows, bows, varieties of stone adzes, a distinctive range of shell ornaments, and tended to be associated with agricultural practices. Archaeological evidence allows us to reconstruct this migration through the islands of Southeast Asia to the north coast of New Guinea and on to the Bismarck Archipelago.

Human settlement in Vanuatu appears to have been achieved by three major human migrations. The earliest archaeological site of Makue on Aore Island in Vanuatu is associated with Austronesian-speaking populations and is dated to around 3,470 and 3,250 years BP (Denham, 2018: n.p.). It notably yields evidence of early Lapita pottery, named after the eponymous archaeological site of Lapita in New Caledonia where this type of dentate-stamped pottery was first identified. This suggests a continuous phenomenon of Lapita migration from the Bismarck Archipelago (Bedford and Spriggs, 2018: 5), in opposition to the hypothesis that Austronesian-speaking populations stopped their migrations for a lengthy period in the Bismarck Archipelago before moving eastwards toward Remote Oceania. Nowadays, thirty Lapita archaeological sites linked to the first human colonisation of

Remote Oceania are known in Vanuatu and a few have been extensively excavated, such as Teouma in Efate and Vao in Malekula. Stuart Bedford and Matthew Spriggs (2018: n.p.) consider that in the last sixty years the archipelago of Vanuatu has gone from being a minor place in studying human colonisation of Remote Oceania to a central one.

Among the most prominent discoveries for the study of ‘the Lapita people’, a cemetery at the archaeological site of Teouma on Efate, is of great importance, as prior to 2004 only eleven burials were known in the entire Lapita culture area. The excavation of this Lapita cemetery revealed sixty-six burials of ninety-four individuals (Bedford and Spriggs, 2018: n.p.) and was dated to the period 3,000-2,800 BP. In addition to providing ‘a statistically robust sample of Lapita individuals for the first time’, forty-four individual bones allowed for dating analysis and extensive collections of fauna as well as material culture were also found (Bedford and Spriggs, 2018: n.p.). Faunal analysis revealed a significant amount of fauna particularly vulnerable to human presence, such as species of now-extinct turtles and birds (Valentin et al., 2014: 383), of which thousands of bones were found (Bedford and Spriggs, 2018: n.p.), suggesting there was no extensive human occupation prior to the arrival of Lapita people. Furthermore, isotopic analysis of the dental enamel of seventeen individuals at Teouma revealed that the majority were residents ‘who had spent at least their childhood near Teouma’, while four individuals were identified as ‘immigrants to the island’ (Bedford and Spriggs, 2018: n.p.).

Excavations revealed evidence of burial practices such as the manipulation of bodies and bones, including skulls and other bones placed in pots. In addition, regular disposal of materials such as pots, pot fragments, shells and conus shell rings were found alongside the burials (Bedford and Spriggs, 2018: n.p.). The archaeological excavations also revealed twelve vessels that were exotic to the region. Nine of these have been associated with New Caledonia, and one ‘very large carinated vessel’ has been attributed to either Malekula in northern Vanuatu or the Solomon-Bismarck region (Bedford and Spriggs, 2018: n.p.).

Archaeological research at Lapita sites in Vanuatu has also shown variations in the duration of Lapita occupation, with longer periods in the north and shorter periods in the centre and south. Consequently, there is a difference in Lapita occupation between the north of the archipelago, which started earlier, and the south, which started later and lasted for a shorter

period. The impact of this process of Lapita occupation from north to south remains to be defined, but interestingly the disappearance of pottery was observed later in the north than in the centre (1,200 BP) and south (2,000 BP) (Bedford and Spriggs, 2018: n.p.; Zinger et al., 2020: 66). Analysis of midden deposits also reveals the evolution of practices. Early midden layers have high concentrations of shell and bone, whereas over time shell and bone became less abundant and pottery sherds, cooking stones and charcoal became more common. Lapita pottery also shows changes, particularly with the simplification of the pattern structure, which is associated with the disappearance of Lapita pottery in mortuary contexts. This appears to indicate a change in the functional use of pottery (Bedford and Spriggs, 2018: n.p.). In addition, pottery found at archaeological sites in Vanuatu shortly after the arrival of Lapita shows signs of regional diversification (Bedford and Spriggs, 2018: n.p.). At Teouma, three ceramic phases have been identified and associated with changes in mortuary practices over time. In their 2014 article '*Evidence for Social and Cultural Change in Central Vanuatu Between 3000 and 2000 BP: Comparing Funerary and Dietary Patterns of the First and Later Generations at Teouma, Efate*', Frédérique Valentin, Estelle Herrscher, Matthew Spriggs and Hallie Buckley refer to these three phases as: (1) the Lapita phase from 3,100 BP to c. 2,800 BP; (2) the Arapus phase (c. 2,800 BP); and (3) the Eruti phase from c. 2,800/2,700 BP to 2,300 BP. According to Valentin and his colleagues, the major ceramic change during the Eruti period was observed particularly in vessels dated to c. 2,500 BP. Alongside the ceramic changes, archaeologists have also found evidence of an evolution in funerary practices, with changes from the Lapita to the Eruti period in "body positioning, bone manipulation, bone collection, ornaments and grave goods" (Valentin et al., 2014: 385).

A second large migration wave to Vanuatu was identified recently in a DNA study published in December 2020 (Lipson et al., 2020). In this article, the authors based their study on ancient DNA from archaeological sites and DNA from living people who identify as ni-Vanuatu. The study suggests that the recently tested ni-Vanuatu and individuals from 2,500 BP share DNA from the same Papuan ancestry. The DNA results also showed that the population that arrived by 2,500 BP with Papuan ancestry had almost completely replaced the previous FRO DNA in the samples. The authors of the article concluded that this second migration replaced or displaced the earlier Austronesian populations.

Interestingly, although people of Papuan ancestry appear to have replaced those with the FRO genome, the Austronesian languages spoken by those with the FRO genome have been preserved, as Austronesian languages are now the main languages spoken in Vanuatu (Posth et al., 2018: 731–740). Furthermore, this study shows that the Papuan ancestral DNA in the Vanuatu population is closely related to the Papuan ancestral DNA found in New Britain and New Ireland. This element, combined with the archaeological evidence found at the Teouma archaeological site - particularly the presence of volcanic obsidian from New Ireland and the changes observed in burial practices during the same period, corresponding to the Eruti phase (Posth et al., 2018: 736; Valentin et al., 2014) – led the authors to suggest that this second migration shared continuity with the previous ones (Lipson et al., 2020: 8–9). Furthermore, the authors highlight that some current cultural practices, such as ‘head-binding and the production of fully circular pig tusks’ (Lipson et al., 2020: 9), are only found in the Pacific among populations that share this Papuan DNA.

A third migratory pattern that occurred in the Vanuatu archipelago over the last 1000 years (Lipson et al., 2020: n.p.) is characterised by the movement of people speaking Polynesian subgroup languages.⁸ This was part of a wider movement in which Polynesian populations settled on small islands in Micronesia and Melanesia, usually close to larger islands with more extensive populations (Flexner et al., 2019: 410). Referred to as ‘Polynesian Outliers’, the populations of these islands share cultural traits and language similarities with Polynesian groups to the east, notably Samoa, which can be defined for the formative period as characterised by “[...] stonework and monumental architecture with political or religious ideologies” and “[...] the use of basaltic stone tools, polished shell pendants and the absence of pottery” (Zinger et al., 2020: 66). Twenty Polynesian outliers have been identified in Micronesia and Melanesia, including Emae, Ifira on Efate, Mele, West Futuna and Aniwa in Vanuatu (Feinberg and Scaglione, 2012: 4; Leclerc and Flexner, 2019: n.p.; Zinger et al., 2020: 64–65). Moreover, Polynesian influences are perceptible in artefacts that have been preserved in museums, such as the shell pendant from Mele Island (for further details, please refer to Chapter 8). These influences are also discussed in nineteenth-century European

⁸ In the nineteenth century, a theoretical division of the Pacific region was proposed by the French navigator Dumont d’Urville (1832), who divided the islands into geo-cultural zones of ‘Melanesia’ from the Greek words *melas* ‘black’ and *nēsos* ‘island’, ‘Polynesia’ from *polus* ‘many’ and *nēsos* ‘island’, and ‘Micronesia’ from *mikros* ‘small’ and *nēsos* ‘island’ (Clark, 2003: 156). While this classification is still used today by the islanders themselves, in the nineteenth century it was intertwined with the racial theories and stereotypes of the period (Cochrane and Hunt, 2018: 2).

accounts of the archipelago and of ni-Vanuatu (Bennett, 1832: 129; Erskine, 1853: 333; Hagen, 1893c: 348; Somerville, 1894b: 370).

In Vanuatu, the Polynesian outliers are classified by Wanda Zinger as a subgroup of the Southern Outliers. Research on these islands, particularly Futuna and Aniwa, has shown that the communities were involved in an extensive network of exchange within the islands of the archipelago and beyond, which contributed to the lessening of Polynesian influence. For example, cultural links had been established between Futuna and Tanna through the sharing of the mythical figure of 'Mahjijiki', the ritual drinking of kava (Zinger et al., 2020: 71) and the development of a similar social system. Evidence of extensive exchange between other non-Polynesian islands and Polynesian islands outside the archipelago has been found with the presence of imported volcanic glass from the Banks Islands found in stratigraphic layers associated with the arrival of Polynesians on Tikopia Island in the Solomon Islands (Tuakamali phase) (Zinger et al., 2020: 69). These examples illustrate a significant and complex network of islands and populations that have shaped the significant cultural diversity of the populations currently living in Vanuatu.

The archaeological site associated with the great chief Roy Mata, now dated to around 1600 AD, yielded a large amount of material culture that was interpreted as showing Polynesian influence. The site was located by José Garanger, based on oral tradition, on the sacred island of Eretoka in Efate. The cemetery consists of 46 burials - of which 19 men, 16 women and a pig have been identified - and shows an organisation in the burials that suggests the existence of ceremonial practices. The individuals were arranged around a central figure, later identified as Roy Mata (see Appendix A). Men and women were positioned differently. The men were lying on their backs, while the position of the women's bodies was less uniform, with some lying on their backs, others on their sides or face down. Archaeological evidence shows that all 46 individuals and the pig were buried at the same time, suggesting a death ritual similar to what is known elsewhere as 'sacrificial accompanying death' (Valentin et al., 2011: 57). Many of the individuals surrounding Roy Mata, who himself was associated with two other individuals, were placed in couples, with a total of 11 couples (Valentin et al., 2011: 57), and items such as shell beads, shell necklaces, pig tusks and shell bracelets were deposited with the bodies during the inhumation process. These types of shell ornaments have also been found in Mele, Ifira and West Futuna, leading

archaeologists to suggest that these items may represent “a local expression of Polynesian identity” (Zinger et al., 2020: 66).

Recent DNA research conducted by Mark Lipson and published in December 2020 has confirmed Polynesian DNA links between the current population of Efate and nearby islands with individuals from the Roy Mata burials and with Polynesian populations (Lipson et al., 2020: 9). This supports the hypothesis of Polynesian migration to Vanuatu already suggested by linguistic and archaeological research. Today, the site remains sacred and can only be visited during the day (Kirch, 2017: chapter 5, n.p.). More recently, in 2008, it was classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Vanuatu archipelago’s central location between the regions known as Polynesia and Melanesia, as well as the many human colonisations and interactions over time, has shaped a highly diverse cultural place. This includes Austronesian ancestry, as evidenced by the significant number of Austronesian languages spoken in the archipelago, recent DNA analysis showing ancestral relationships with populations from New Britain and New Ireland, and more recent Polynesian migrations and influences. All have helped to shape the communities that have encountered European visitors. Several archaeological excavations in the archipelago are still providing data on early material and non-material culture and influences on the archipelago. These data are important for understanding the collections now preserved in museums.

b) Early Interactions: European Exploration of the Pacific during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries



Figure 2: *Atlas sive Cosmographicae Meditationes de Fabrica Mundi et Fabricati Figurae*, 1587 (publ. 1595), Rumold Mercator.

This section is dedicated to discussing the early European visits to the archipelago and their interactions with the ancestors of the ni-Vanuatu who inhabited these islands. In the long history of Vanuatu, these interactions with Europeans are important in understanding the more recent history of the country. Written texts that resulted from these contacts are significant sources of information when read critically in relation to the context of their creation and can assist with our understanding of early interactions between ni-Vanuatu and Europeans. One long-lasting trace that can be noted is, for instance, island and area names, which in some cases have endured since these first contacts with Europeans, even after

independence.⁹ Ethnic and cultural identity can also be based on divisions developed during these expeditions¹⁰ (Bedford, 2017: 4; D’Arcy, 2003).

The first European explorer to reach the archipelago was Pedro Fernández de Quirós in 1606, during his expedition in search of the Terra Australis¹¹ (Celsus and Parsonson, 2011: 111–112; Eisler, 1995), which he believed he had discovered upon reaching a large island that he named Terra Australis del Espiritu Santo (Espiritu Santo Island). Quirós published a brief account of his journey, but it was not until 1904 that an English translation of ‘*The Narrative of the Voyage*’ was completed by Sir Clements Markham for the Hakluyt Society, London (Queirós, 1904). This translation included additional documents relating to the expedition and was supplemented in 2011 by a new study of the voyages, which incorporated new archival materials (Celsus and Parsonson, 2011).

This third Spanish expedition in the western Pacific was supported by the King of Spain and the Pope (Celsus and Parsonson, 2011: 42). This religious and evangelical aspect significantly influenced Quirós’ perception of and interactions with the local people they encountered (Baert, 2011; Celsus and Parsonson, 2011: 102). While initial contact in the Banks Islands at Santa Maria (Gaua) is described as friendly, this was not the case on 9th May 1606 when the Spanish crew arrived at Espiritu Santo, Islanders were killed, including the chief of the area, and three boys were kidnapped to teach them the Gospel and have them spread it upon their return (Celsus and Parsonson, 2011: 308; Lindstrom, 1998: 5). Driven by strong religious fervour, Quirós conducted a lengthy religious service followed by a religious procession and erected a church, naming this new settlement ‘New Jerusalem’ (Dodge, 1976: 22). Relations were complicated by the initial hostile reactions of the Spanish crew, and the expedition, which was intended to establish a permanent station, had to be

⁹ In Vanuatu’s case, island names such as Espiritu Santo or Pentecost were preserved after independence in 1970. Likewise, settlement areas preserved colonial names, such as Port-Vila in Efate or Port Resolution in Tanna. In 1914, Father Suas of the Marist Fathers Catholic congregation already mentioned that particularity, as he observed that Vanuatu people were, in 1914, using names given to the islands by Europeans, either based on European given names or names given by ni-Vanuatu to other islands. He noted that ni-Vanuatu did not use names to describe the islands there were living on, but instead named islands they could see from afar (Suas, 1914a: 245).

¹⁰ In Vanuatu, the notion of being part of a Melanesian culture area is quite strong, as demonstrated during the Melanesian Art and Culture Festivals (MACFEST) of 2023 which was hosted by the country for its 7th edition.

¹¹ The term Terra Australis Incognita has been used since antiquity to refer to a large unknown, but assumed, continent in the southern part of the globe, supposedly balancing the weight of the northern continents. For more information on the concept of Terra Australis, see Eisler (1995).

abandoned after less than a month as they were no longer able to obtain provisions (Celsus and Parsonson, 2011: 105).

This expedition sparked European interest in the area by mapping parts of lands in an unknown part of the world. Queirós also mentioned in his account that he observed other islands as he departed Espiritu Santo, putting in jeopardy the theory that Santo was the Terra Australis (Celsus and Parsonson, 2011: 118).

One hundred and eighty years after Queirós, the French explorer Louis Antoine de Bougainville reached Vanuatu in 1768. This second contact led to the European discovery of Pentecost Island, as well as Aurora Island (Maewo), and an island that Bougainville described as inhabited by men and women suffering from illness, subsequently naming it Leper Island (Ambae (Bougainville, 1771: 246)).¹² This visit expanded the understanding and charting of the area and was the first to suggest that the area was, in fact, an archipelago, which he named ‘Archipel des Grandes Cyclades’ (Bougainville, 1771: 242). Initial contact between Bougainville’s crew and ni-Vanuatu was tense and distrustful on both sides. Despite Islander requests not to do so, the French landed on Pentecost and were met with men armed with bows and arrows. The tension only eased when a single crew member was sent ashore to offer red textiles as gifts. Subsequently, relations became peaceful, with Islanders assisting the French crew in loading small boats with wood and allowing them to collect fruits (Bougainville, 1771: 244). However, as they departed, the ni-Vanuatu began aiming arrows and stones at them from the shore, prompting the crew to fire warning shots to deter them (Bougainville, 1771: 245). In his account, Bougainville observed that drums were played whenever a group of people appeared on the beach, which he initially interpreted as a signal of war between tribes but later speculated that it might have been a gathering signal. However, we can wonder if the drum beating was not to report European presence to the island’s other inhabitants and request support, as other Islanders were seen from afar. This hypothesis is reinforced by Bougainville’s observation that after their departure and the attack, the drum was beaten again, supporting a theory of inter-community communication via drumming.

¹² Pentecost Island was named after the day in the Christian calendar when it was first reached by Bougainville, and is the name still used today.

Their encounter with the second island, Maewo, also proved complicated. As the scout boats made their way towards the island, one of them separated from the group and was soon surrounded by canoes and attacked by the ni-Vanuatu. The conflict led to an exchange of gunfire and arrows before the people retreated inland. Bougainville noted that the drums began beating strongly after this ambush (Bougainville, 1771: 250).

Although the interactions were brief and not entirely peaceful, attempts at exchange were made. Bougainville mentioned that the Islanders from the island he then called Leeper Island (Ambae) refused iron or nails and, according to his account, were unwilling to exchange bows or clubs, agreeing only to exchange a few arrows (Bougainville, 1771: 244–245). Similarly to Queirós, the French explorer paid attention to the material culture observed during these brief encounters, which can be observed in the following extract that he wrote just after leaving Ambae:

“Few women were seen, and they were no less distasteful than the men; they go unclad, scarcely covering their natural parts with a mat; the women also have sashes to carry their children upon their backs. We saw some of the weavings they make, adorned with fine designs dyed in a fair crimson. I noticed that none had beards; they pierce their nostrils to hang ornaments, and wear on their arms, as bracelets, a babirussa tooth or a large ring, which I believe of ivory, and at the neck, plates of tortoise shell, which they indicated are common along their shore. Their weapons are bows and arrows, ironwood maces, and stones thrown without a sling. The arrows are reeds armed with a long, sharp bone point. Some points are squared and edged with small backward-facing barbs, preventing their removal from wounds. They also wield sabres of ironwood. Their canoes approached us not, yet from afar seemed crafted and rigged like those of the Navigator Isles.” (Bougainville, 1771: 245)

The third European explorer to reach the archipelago was James Cook aboard HMS *Resolution* during his second voyage, in 1774. Across three voyages, Cook’s expeditions significantly increased European knowledge of the Pacific region by extensively charting islands, capturing imagery, and inspiring further explorations.

During his second voyage (1772-1775) aboard HMS *Resolution*, one of the purposes of which was to find the mythical Terra Australis (Rigby et al., 2018: 58), Cook reached the

archipelago in July 1774. Cook identified Aurora Island, Espiritu Santo and Ambae, based on descriptions, without landing on them (Cook, 1777: 26). Continuing south, the expedition visited Mallicollo (Malekula), Erromango and Tanna (see map Appendix B). Cook's expedition contributed significantly to more accurate mapping of the islands, which he identified as an archipelago and named the New Hebrides.

While surveying the islands, the expedition had to stop for supplies. While Cook's visit to Tanna was friendly, the encounters at Mallicolo (Malekula) and Erromango were challenging (Cook, 1777: 53; Rigby et al., 2018: 71). On Erromango, conflict led to the deaths of several Islanders, including their chief (Rigby et al., 2018: 71). In general, contact with ni-Vanuatu was tense and marked by conflict, as had been the case with previous explorers.

Cook's exploration of the archipelago was followed by other expeditions. These included the expedition of the French explorer Jean François de La Pérouse, who, inspired by James Cook's voyages, was commissioned by the French King Louis XVI to undertake a major exploration (Goepp and Cordier, 1874: 87). The expedition (1785-1788) was conceived with a dual purpose: to advance political and economic agendas and to pursue scientific goals. In this respect, the La Pérouse expedition, comprising the ships *L'Astrolabe* and *La Boussole*, was notable for the large number of scientists and artists on board. The expedition was initiated by the personal interest of the king, who played a significant role in its conduct, authoring a memoir to guide the entire voyage, from the itinerary to the selection of subjects for study (Goepp and Cordier, 1874: 87–88).

The first contacts with Europeans in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were mostly brief. The navigators anchored for supplies but did not spend much time ashore or develop more than superficial relationships with the local people. In almost all the major interactions with these early Europeans, the explorers came into conflict with ni-Vanuatu and exchanges proved difficult. However, they helped to map an area largely unknown to Europeans, which prepared the way for traders to navigate the Pacific Ocean.

European Settlement in the Archipelago.

As the presence of islands, and maps of them, became more widely known, commercial traders began to turn their attention to islands in the western Pacific, including the New Hebrides. Sandalwood and bêche-de-mer were found there and the islands then experienced a period of regular engagement, sometimes violent, with European traders and other outsiders.¹³

The Sandalwood Trade

The emergence of the sandalwood trade was driven by the strong demand for sandalwood in China, which provided significant financial incentives to acquire it in the islands and take it to China, where it could be traded for silks, tea and porcelain, items commanding high prices in Europe and North America. The sandalwood market had a significant impact on several island groups, notably the Marquesas (from about 1814), Fiji (from about 1806), Hawaii (from around 1811-1828), New Caledonia and Vanuatu (from about 1820 to 1865). From the late 1820s, the archipelago was the main destination for ships looking for sandalwood, especially in the southern islands, particularly Erromango. Large quantities of sandalwood had also been discovered in the Isle of Pines, the Loyalty Islands and the main island of New Caledonia (Shineberg, 1967: 9). The discovery of sandalwood in Espiritu Santo in the 1850s further stimulated the trade (Shineberg, 1967: 9).

The Vanuatu archipelago felt the impact of Australia's evolving market strategy. As early as 1825, Peter Dillon,¹⁴ an Australia-based trader and explorer renowned for locating La Pérouse's shipwreck at Vanikoro in the Santa Cruz Islands, visited Tanna in search of sandalwood, but he was unsuccessful. He then proceeded to Erromango, where he found quantities of the wood, but encountered difficulties in engaging with the Erromangans, reminiscent of the experiences of earlier explorers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Shineberg, 1967: 16). Local tribal rivalries hindered trade with the Indigenous

¹³ Dorothy Shineberg (1967) provides a comprehensive study of the sandalwood trade in the Pacific region, including Vanuatu, with an extensive examination of its markets, its international connections, its actors and its impact on Islanders.

¹⁴ Peter Dillon was a Franco-Irish-born seaman who primarily traded between Sydney, Fiji, New Zealand, and the Society Islands. For more biographical information on Peter Dillon, see the Australian Dictionary of Biography available at: <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/dillon-peter-1978>

population who displayed a distinct lack of interest in European goods and in working for Europeans (Shineberg, 1967: 16). Later traders also encountered comparable difficulties, as evidenced by the experience of Captain Samuel P. Henry,¹⁵ who attempted to overcome them by bringing Tongan woodcutters in 1829 (Shineberg, 1967: 17–18). Despite facing strong opposition and numerous confrontations, later expeditions brought more workers from Rotuma (Bennett, 1832: 120; Lindstrom, 1998: 6; Shineberg, 1967: 18). Erromango became a significant sandalwood hub, sustaining regular ship visits from the late 1820s until 1865, when exploitation ceased (Shineberg, 1967: 9).¹⁶



Figure 3: Portrait of Elau, a girl from Erromango Island. Artist unknown from Plymouth. BM number Oc,B32.24. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

During Captain Samuel P. Henry's second visit to Erromango in 1829 aboard the sandalwood ship *Sophia*, the surgeon George Bennett wrote an account of the expedition (Bennett, 1832). Bennett's journey also resulted in the voyage of a six-year-old girl named Elau from Erromango (Figure 3) to England (Bennett, 1832; Lindstrom, 1998; Shineberg, 1967) and a small donation of artefacts to the British Museum.

Bennett presents an intriguing case in which a tribe on Erromango helped Tongans who were part of European ships' crews to cut wood, while seeking protection from a rival tribe. This alliance resulted in clashes, with Europeans and the "friendly" tribe facing off against their rivals. The alliance appeared to be purely tactical, as once the threat was eliminated, the "friendly" tribes withdrew (Bennett, 1832: 123–124;

Shineberg, 1967: 19–20). This example illustrates how Europeans became entangled in local conflicts, reflecting nuanced power dynamics during these early encounters. Bennett recorded that the news of Erromango's extensive sandalwood resources attracted attention in Honolulu, leading to the arrival of several ships in Dillon's Bay by 1830. These included the schooner *Snapper* with 113 Tongans, the schooner *Dhaule* with 130 Rotumans, the brig

¹⁵ Dorothy Shineberg described him as a "Tahitian born son of a London Missionary Society missionary—a person who, as an old Pacific trader, would have been most interested in news of a sandalwood find." (1967: 17).

¹⁶ Shineberg (1967: 12) identifies three distinct sandalwood rushes, each characterised by heightened activity in the New Hebrides, New Caledonia, and the Loyalty Islands.

Becket with 179 Hawaiians and 100 Rotumans, and the ship *Sophia* with 200 Rotumans (Bennett, 1832: 125). Shineberg commented that “An invasion of four European ships and some 600 Polynesians might well have occasioned a certain amount of alarm” (Shineberg, 1967: 21). The Hawaiians, in particular, aimed not only to cut wood but also to colonise Erromango, attracted by the prospect of wealth from its abundant sandalwood resource (Bennett, 1832: 125; Shineberg, 1967: 21). This episode indicates that interest in trading opportunities in the Pacific extended beyond Europeans.

However, these expeditions ultimately proved unsuccessful, as subsequent ones from Hawaii similarly failed to achieve their objectives. Similarly, expeditions to other islands in the archipelago resulted in conflicts and deaths, which contributed to the negative reputation of the territory known as the ‘New Hebrides’. Shineberg (1967: 23) observes that the islands acquired a reputation as a dangerous place, afflicted by disease and inhabited by “ferocious, treacherous, and ‘desperate cannibals’.” The combination of hostility towards foreigners and in some places a lack of interest in European goods resulted in practical issues for the traders, as they became entangled in local disputes as chiefs competed for power. This was recorded by sandalwood trader Andrew Henry after his first expedition to cut sandalwood on Erromango (Shineberg, 1967: 26).

Shineberg (1967: 24-25) acknowledges instances of friendlier contacts, such as those on Tanna, and individuals such as Cole and Lawler are mentioned as having no difficulty in recruiting labour for ‘trade goods’ on Aneityum, or Mr Kerr’s first officer on Aniwa, who noted the shrewd bargaining skills of the locals.¹⁷

In 1841, a significant sandalwood rush occurred concentrating on the Isle of Pines. This rush encouraged regular visits of sandalwood traders to the nearby Vanuatu archipelago without the installation of permanent stations, and Efate was added to the list of islands providing sandalwood resources by 1842 (Shineberg, 1967: 29–32). In the 1840s, trading bases were established. In 1843, Captain James Paddon established a trading station for sandalwood on Aneityum.¹⁸ Around this time John Icke Kettle, working with Captain Richards on the

¹⁷ The subject of exchanges between Europeans and ni-Vanuatu is further explored in Chapter 9 of the thesis.

¹⁸ James Paddon is thought to have been born in Portsmouth around 1812. He is known to have been the first European to establish a trading post in the Southwest Pacific in Aneityum. He is among the most prominent figures in the Sandalwood trade in the region and established his primary trading post on the island of Nou,

vessels *Marian Watson* and *Vanguard*, established a station on Tanna. In 1844, Captain Robert Town, based in Sydney, dispatched his vessel, *the Elizabeth*, to Vanuatu with the objective of procuring sandalwood for the Chinese market. However, Town strategically established his trading post on the Isle of Pines in New Caledonia five years later, rather than in Vanuatu (Shineberg, 1967: 65, 72).

The establishment of permanent contact also brought an influx of European goods to the archipelago, with the pace of arrival varying in different areas. However, in 1872, when the missionary Hugh Angus Robertson arrived in Erromango to settle, he described a population using iron tools and noted that old stone tools were seen as curiosities from old times (Riou, 2024: 71; Shineberg, 1967: 159).¹⁹ This initial phase of regular or permanent contact with Europeans changed the use of tools, which is often described as a technological revolution (Riou, 2024: 71; Shineberg, 1967: 159).

All of these individuals played a crucial role in the increasingly sustained European presence in the archipelago. Some contributed indirectly by establishing permanent settlements which attracted more Europeans, whereas others, such as the missionary John Williams, were directly involved. Williams had an established connection with Captain Samuel Henry, who was engaged in the sandalwood trade in Erromango and operated from New Caledonia. The correspondence between the trader and the London Missionary Society (LMS) missionary has been documented by Dorothy Shineberg (1967: 32,58). While on his way to join the trader in the Isle of Pines, John Williams stopped in Vanuatu, visiting Tanna and Erromango, where he was killed alongside James Harris (Patterson, 1882: 134). The fractious relationship between the Erromangans and European traders likely played a significant role in the events leading to the death of the LMS missionary on the 19th of November 1839 at Dillon's Bay. Williams' death, characterised as martyrdom, led James Falconer to describe the New Hebrides as the "Martyr Islands, baptized with the blood of our early missionaries, but also as the scene of the most notable triumphs of the Gospel." (Falconer, 1915: 11). Despite dispatching a few Polynesian teachers and attempting to establish a short-lived

Nouméa, in New Caledonia, where a significant number of ni-Vanuatu workers were based (Higginson, 1926: 7). For a more detailed account of James Paddon's life and career, please refer to chapter 7 in Shineberg (1967: 98–108).

¹⁹ H.A. Robertson was a missionary from the Nova Scotia Presbyterian Church who settled in Erromango in 1872 and left in 1912. He gave a large assemblage of 125 artefacts to McGill University's Redpath Museum between 1883 and 1896, which is the basis for Barbara Lawson's study (1994b).

mission on Tanna, the LMS chose not to send further missionaries after that (Flexner, 2016b: 10). However, other Christian denominations decided to pursue evangelical activities in Vanuatu.

Missionaries

The arrival of missionaries in Vanuatu is linked to a broader and more general increase in European presence and interest in the Southwest Pacific, particularly in New Caledonia. This growing presence culminated in France's annexation of New Caledonia in 1853 by General Febvrier-Despoites. Missionary efforts in Vanuatu have followed a distinct pattern, with differences observed between Catholic, Presbyterian and Anglican missions. Missionaries from different Christian denominations began to establish missions towards the middle of the nineteenth century. Initially, the presence of the London Missionary Society was marked by the deaths of John Williams and James Harris in Erromango in 1839. Then, in May 1848, Catholic Father Rougeyron of the Marist Fathers and Presbyterian Rev. John Geddie of the Nova Scotia Presbyterian Church settled in Aneityum (Delbos, 2001: 69; Falconer, 1915; Murray, 1899: 5–11). While the Marist Fathers' presence was brief, with Father Rougeyron returning to New Caledonia within a year, Rev. John Geddie remained, laying the groundwork for future Presbyterian missions (Delbos, 2001: 76–78)

Catholic missionaries remained exclusively in New Caledonia until 1886, when France initiated military action in the New Hebrides (Vanuatu). Under Higginson's lobbying, the French government's request to the Diocèse of Nouméa to resume missionary work in the archipelago prompted the missionaries, to explore possibilities with the support of the French government (Delbos, 2001: 95–96; Shineberg, 1967; OPM archives Lyon, Archives H-50 H01889). This marked the beginning of Catholic missions in the archipelago, although the Catholic Church remained less numerous and supported than the Presbyterians throughout the colonial period. The eventual success of Presbyterian missions in Vanuatu can be attributed to several factors. The longevity of their presence and the active involvement of missionary wives played a significant role. The French Governor Picanon's 1902 report highlights the extensive support and resources provided by the Presbyterians, and the crucial role of missionary wives in educating women and girls and promoting their interaction with the local population (Boubin-Boyer, 2011; Archive SLNSW-ML, PMB 134, Gouverneur

Picanon). George Bourge, Commander of the *Messagerie Maritime*, also noted a few years later (1906) the challenges faced by Catholic missions (Bourge, 1906: 24–26). Another significant difference lies in the organisational structure of the Catholic and Presbyterian churches. While Catholic missions operated under the centralised authority of the Vatican, Presbyterian missions were decentralised, allowing more autonomy in decision-making at the parish level. This distinction is reflected in museum collections, where objects associated with Catholic missions are primarily found in church-owned museums or in the Vatican. In contrast, as will be discussed in Chapter 2, Presbyterian missionary collections are found in museums of many types and in many countries.

Missionaries played a crucial role in establishing permanent European settlement in Vanuatu, although their efforts were not without controversy. Conflicts sometimes arose between missionaries and locals, as evidenced by the punitive expedition of HMS *Curaçoa* in 1865 (Bedford, 2017: 6), following tensions at the New Hebrides Presbyterian Synod meeting.²⁰ The military action against the Tannese, described by Julius Brenchley²¹ and reported by Docker (1970), resulted in violence and destruction, underlining the complexity of missionary involvement in the region.

John Geddie's mission to Aneityum stands out as one of the most successful Presbyterian missions. It lasted forty years and resulted in significant conversions and the establishment of numerous schools²² (Flexner, 2016b). However, many missions were short-lived due to misunderstandings of local customs, language barriers and unintentional involvement in local disputes. Presbyterian missionaries in Tanna and Erromango faced challenges, with some missions ending abruptly due to conflict or tragic events (Flexner, 2016b).

²⁰ Historian Jane Samson documented that in 1875, Lieutenant Franck Henderson of the HMS *Sappho* noted in his journal that while visiting Tanna, he observed projectiles from the Curacoa owned by men. It was reported that these projectiles were regarded as trophies, representing when “Tanna men fight big ship”. Henderson, “Journal Written on HMS “*Sappho*,” p.730-732, quoted in Samson (1998: 136).

²¹ Julius Brenchley published his account (1873) of the expedition. He also brought back objects, some of which are now preserved in the British Museum (See BM online catalogue, artefacts numbers: Oc.+2139, Oc.6475 and 76, Oc.6487 to 96, Oc.6519, Oc.6540, Oc.6548, Oc.6559, Oc.6560 to 66, Oc.6592 to 99, Oc.6601, Oc.6618, Oc.6620, Oc.6623 to 25, Oc.6630 to 34, Oc.6639 to 41, Oc.6645, Oc.6677, Oc.6680.a-n, Oc.6683.a-l, Oc.7915 to 27, Oc.1950+.8 and 9, and Oc.1978,Q.537).

²² James Flexner (2016c: 134–138) mentions that the Rev. John Geddie donated a collection of artefacts from the archipelago to the Nova Scotia Museum, which constituted almost its entire Vanuatu collection, the composition of which he analysed. According to Flexner, John Geddie had a ‘low opinion’ of the material culture of ni-Vanuatu, except for his strong interest in ‘wooden and stone ‘idols’ (natmas)’ (Flexner, 2016c: 134).

While this thesis will not focus on missionary collections as a substantial literature, mostly, if not exclusively, Anglo-Saxon studies have already been conducted and less focus has been given to other ‘types’ of collectors for Vanuatu.²³ However, it is important to introduce missionary efforts and connections to Vanuatu’s history. Therefore, in the next chapter, missionary collections will be briefly introduced, as they represent a significant part of Vanuatu collections in Europe.

Plantations, the Labour Trade and Blackbirding

In the early 1860s, there was a significant increase in European activity and settlement in the islands, marked by the establishment of the first European plantations initiating a ‘land alienation’ phenomenon that reached its peak by the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries (Bedford et al., 2017: 102). The influx was prompted by the growing demand for labour on existing plantations in Australia and was closely connected to the sandalwood trade network, as a significant proportion of these plantations were either directly or indirectly associated with this trade. As a result, there was a notable increase in the movement of Europeans and ni-Vanuatu, but also objects within the archipelago and beyond.

In 1863, Andrew Henry, a trader employed by Robert Town²⁴, who operated a sandalwood station on Erromango, dispatched the first group of indentured labourers to Queensland from Vanuatu. These labourers comprised individuals from the New Hebrides stationed at his establishment (Shineberg, 1999: 15). The same year, Ross Lewin was appointed by Robert Town, well known trader and colonist, as a recruiter of Pacific Islanders for Australian plantations (Lightner et al., 2010a: 41; MacClancy, 1981: 33). Ross Lewin played a pivotal

²³ For some examples of general reflections on missionary endeavour in the Pacific see: Jane Samson (2017); Calvet, (2011); Niel Gunson (1978); Armstrong, E.S. (1900). For missionary efforts in Vanuatu see: Delbos, G. (2001), 854, J.L. (2016a), Haddow, E.K.E. (2020); Lindstrom, L. (2016).

²⁴ Robert Town, born in Northumberland in 1794, was a sailor, a trader and then a colonist of New South Wales, who arrived for the first time in Sydney in 1827. In 1842, he was charged by the firm Robert Brooks & Co based in London to supervise the company branch in the colonies. However, by 1844, Robert Town decided to invest in Colonial Trade and by 1845 was successfully trading sandalwood from Erromango. He conducted business with sandalwood and bêche de mer in New Caledonia, where he tried to establish a station, and in New Hebrides while supervising business from Sydney (Shineberg, 1967: 109–118). He was member of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, owning a large cotton plantation in Townsville on the Logan River in Queensland, which was employing native labour from the Pacific Islands (Lack, 1960: 367). For a more extensive biography, see the chapter dedicated to him in Shineberg (1967: 109–118).

role in labour recruitment efforts, emerging as one of the most active figures in the recruitment network. Described as “the preeminent recruiter of labourers for Queensland in the 1860s and early 1870s” in an article titled ‘Hunting the Blackbird: Ross Lewin and the Royal Navy’ by Doug Hunt (2007), Lewin was deeply entrenched in the recruitment process. He operated within an extensive network, possessing a recruiting license that he delegated to other captains recruiting on his behalf while managing his plantation in Tanna (Palmer, 1871: 11). The intricacies of this system were brought to light in a case in 1869, when Commander George Palmer of HMS *Rosario* investigated the schooner *Daphne*, which held licenses to recruit 50 Islanders but was found with 100 Islanders on board during inspection. The license was issued under the name of Henry Ross Lewin, who was not present on board at the time (Hunt, 2007: 37–38).

A few years later, another significant figure in the late 19th-century history of Vanuatu, Captain Donald Macleod,²⁵ began operating in the region. His journey started in January 1868 in New Caledonia, where he worked for a New Zealand company and began recruiting workers, particularly from the New Hebrides (Vanuatu), for the development of New Caledonia’s colony. He collaborated with John Higginson in this endeavour (Cawsey, 1998: 30–34).²⁶ Following a similar trajectory, Macleod soon became involved in plantation work within the archipelago (Cawsey, 1998). He also emerged as a significant land seller, contributing significantly to Higginson’s efforts to colonise the islands through land acquisitions (Higginson, 1926).

²⁵ Not to be confused with Henry MacLeod.

²⁶ John Higginson was born in England to an Irish father and subsequently emigrated with his family to Australia. He became a central figure in the development of the French colony of New Caledonia for which he received in 1876 his naturalization by the French government. Higginson, who was most certainly fluent in French, also played a significant role in the French colonisation of the New Hebrides from 1871 until his death in 1904 (Pelleray et al., 1922: 66). His most significant impact within the archipelago was through the Compagnie Calédonienne des Nouvelles-Hébrides (CCNH), which he established in 1882 (depeche coloniale illustrée, 1902). (Higginson, 1926: 99; Cawsey, 1998: 221). Through this company, he acquired substantial land holdings, which later became the Société Française des Nouvelles-Hébrides (SFNH) in 1894, with the support of the French government (Higginson, 1926: 60). In 1876, he was naturalised as a French citizen (La Depeche coloniale illustrée, 1902; Higginson, 1926: 10), and was subsequently appointed ‘Commissaire de la Nouvelle-Calédonie’ for the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1878.

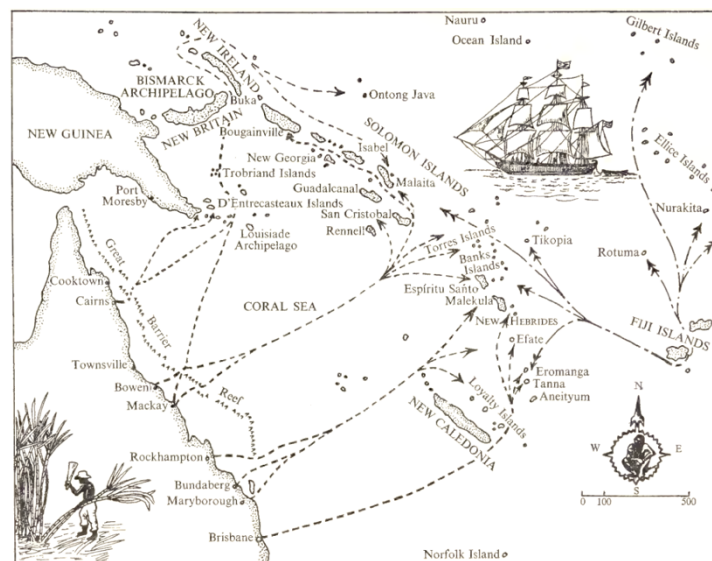


Figure 4: The map illustrates the principal routes of recruitment for labourers operating in the Pacific region. (Image from Docker, 1970: 4).

This practice of ‘recruitment’, which often took the form of kidnapping, is known as “Blackbirding” and was a practice that had significant multilayered impacts. The consequences included an increase in both confrontations and punitive expeditions, as well as leaving many areas either without men, or without a population at all. This affected the density of the population. ni-Vanuatu who were ‘enrolled’ into plantation work had short breaks in their homes, so the population was always fluctuating, disturbing local cultural rhythms and traditions (Lightner et al., 2010b: 71–73).

The establishment of plantations such as maize, coffee, cotton and especially copra on the archipelago was a major factor in increasing tensions between the European settlers and the local population, and also amongst the European settlers themselves (Lemire, 1884: 233; Guiart, 1986; Lightner et al., 2010b: 160). In that particular situation, the ni-Vanuatu found themselves in a position where they were able to influence the power dynamics between the Europeans, on occasion, by acting as a third party.

The largest portions of the plantations established in the archipelago were located on Efate, Epi, Malekula and Santo (Lightner et al., 2010a: 160). Tensions with ni-Vanuatu were mainly about the possession or dispossession of lands which were ‘officially’ purchased not only with currency, but also with guns, tobacco, textiles and other goods (Lightner et al., 2010a: 160). Amongst significant plantations and key actors in regards to Vanuatu history in relation

to France and the United Kingdom but also to New Caledonia and Australia, the following plantations need to be mentioned. In 1867, Ross Lewin settled in Tanna (Van Trease, 1987: 19), thus securing Australia's strong and permanent influence over the archipelago as well as facilitating the influx of labour. A few years later, in 1868, Henry MacLeod (British citizen) started a cotton plantation in Essema Bay in Efate with a certain Trueman (Guiart, 1986: 7). According to Jean Guiart, MacLeod (McLeod) and Trueman "did not live happily together, and in one of their quarrels McLeod shot Trueman, and wound up by shooting himself afterwards" (1986: 7). In 1871, Henry MacLeod sold his plantation to Benjamin Hebblewhite who built a shop with a cotton gin to export the cotton directly to be transformed into textile (Lightner et al., 2010a: 159). In 1875, Andrew Henry, who had been established in the New Hebrides with his family since 1848 in various stations, left Erromango with his family, employees, and ni-Vanuatu workers, to move to New Caledonia and work under the French Government to bring labour workers to the colony (Pelatan, 1889; Shineberg, 1999: 15). Between 1878 and 1880, the first French planter, Ferdinand Chevillard moved from New Caledonia to Efate, where he established a plantation in Vila (Adams, 1986: 46; Lightner et al., 2010c: 159).

In 1884-1885, the Queensland government attempted to abolish the practice of Blackbirding by enacting legislation that sought to regulate the recruitment of labourers by limiting the issuance of recruiting licences (MacClancy, 1981: 36). However, Queensland's economy was overly reliant on the plantation industry, and the impact of this act, when considered alongside the difficulties that the plantations were already experiencing, resulted in the act not being enforced. However, the Premier of Queensland was unwavering in his resolve to put an end to the labour trade. Consequently, he opted to reintroduce the act, this time with the objective of ensuring its enforcement. To this end, the Queensland government made a strategic decision to invest in the sugarcane industry. Subsequently, an influx of farmers into the area led to a reduction in reliance on labourers. The final blow to the industry was delivered in December 1901, when the government enacted the Immigration Restriction Act, also known as the White Australia Policy. This legislation was designed to regulate the immigration of all non-British subjects to Australia. Consequently, the recruitment was to conclude by December 1904. Islanders who had not resided in Australia for a period exceeding twenty years were no longer permitted to remain, with the expectation that they would be deported within the following two years. By 1906, this form of labour had ceased

in Queensland, and the majority of the Islanders had been deported. As asserted by Jeremy MacClancy, a number of ni-Vanuatu were permitted to remain in Australia, resulting in the establishment of communities that persisted until at least 1981 (MacClancy, 1981: 37). While the labour trade had ceased in Queensland, this was not the case in Fiji or Samoan plantations until 1910 and 1913, respectively (MacClancy, 1981: 37).

The 1870s and the first Naval Agreement (1878)

The second half of the nineteenth century was a significant period of French and British engagement with the New Hebrides (Bedford et al., 2017: 99–101). France's annexation of New Caledonia in 1853 was followed twenty-one years later by Fiji becoming a Crown Colony (1874). This added to the existing British colonies in Australia and New Zealand, further intensifying the geopolitical landscape. The strategic location of Vanuatu in the region prompted discussions about which country would gain control over the archipelago.

France's establishment of a convict centre in New Caledonia in 1869 added to the regional pressures (Merle, 2020: 22). A significant actor in the French colonisation of the New Hebrides, John Higginson, a key figure in Vanuatu's colonial history, who started a significant business in New Caledonia that was flourishing by the late 1860s (Thompson, 2000: 40). While travelling to Melbourne in 1871, as he recounts in his memoir, published posthumously by Dr A. Auvray in 1926, Higginson met with several businessmen. During this meeting, M. Greenlaw, director of the Colonial Bank of Melbourne, suggested that Higginson undertook a similar enterprise in Vanuatu to what his associates could not achieve in Fiji (Higginson, 1926: 5). Specifically, Greenlaw proposed that, with the credit backing from investors, Higginson acquire extensive lands in the New Hebrides for the benefit of Australian investors. According to Higginson's account (1926: 6), Sir Julius Vogel, active in New Zealand, committed to securing the necessary funding to establish such a venture in the New Hebrides. The men at the meeting urged Higginson to seize this opportunity swiftly, pointing out that the Presbyterians were already well established in the archipelago, facilitating potential annexation. They were eager to prevent the Catholic Marist missionaries—who held significant influence in Fiji—from replicating their success in the New Hebrides, where, as Higginson (1926: 6) notes, they had persuaded Fijian leaders to

petition the French government for annexation. Higginson opposed this move, seeing the archipelago as a natural extension of the French colony of New Caledonia, where he already had significant business interests. Furthermore, Higginson considered the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) to be under French influence, as New Caledonia's colonial expansion included dependencies, which he considered to include the New Hebrides (Higginson, 1926: 7). As a result, Higginson intensified his involvement in Vanuatu to counter any Australian attempt, making substantial investments and actively seeking French government support for his ventures in the archipelago. This increased involvement led to escalating tensions between the Europeans and, by extension, with ni-Vanuatu.

With France concerned about the expansion of Australian influence in the region, and Australia under pressure from the arrival of convicts in New Caledonia and the Higginson Company in Vanuatu, debates over control of the archipelago reached a peak in the 1870s, with increasing official demands from European settlers in the area, and from Australia. First, in 1874, the death of Ross Lewin, who had settled in Tanna in 1867, resulted in the loss to Australia of incoming labour, highlighting the need for Australia to increase its influence in the archipelago. In the same year, the United Kingdom officially established a colony in Fiji, and the newly appointed governor was asked to extend his jurisdiction to the surrounding islands in the Western Pacific, particularly with regard to recruiting licences (Scarr, 1967: 167). Consequently, European settlers in the New Hebrides petitioned the United Kingdom to extend British jurisdiction, hoping to obtain licences to recruit in the New Hebrides (Scarr, 1967: 167). To evaluate the request, the Governor Gordon dispatched Commodore Goodenough to investigate and ensure that ni-Vanuatu were not illegally recruited to work in the nickel mine in New Caledonia (Goodenough, 1876: 273; 1878: 172; Scarr, 1967: 171). France interpreted this initiative as an attempt to assert control over the archipelago, akin to the annexation of Fiji (Deschanel, 1888: 300). As a result of this tour, Goodenough suggested appointing a consul to supervise activities and to regulate licensing, thereby curtailing illegal recruitment practices (Scarr, 1967: 177). However, Governor Gordon decided against extending licensing jurisdiction to the New Hebrides, prompting European settlers to seek French assistance in obtaining licences (Cawsey, 1998: 138–139; Scarr, 1967: 179). British settlers in Tanna then petitioned the French government in 1875 to assume complete control of the archipelago, to avoid having an illegal status if they continued to recruit (Cawsey, 1998: 122; Pelleray et al., 1922). Australia, pressured by

Presbyterian synods, sought British annexation of Vanuatu in 1877, but the request was declined (Cawsey, 1998: 160–161; Deschanel, 1888: 297–299; Trouillet, 1902: 4).

British jurisdiction in the South Pacific, without annexation of the New Hebrides, was officially established in 1877 through the creation of ‘The Western Pacific High Commission,’ headquartered in Fiji (Scarr, 1967: 176–177). However, due to a lack of financial support, the commission heavily relied on the Royal Navy, leading to conflict within the British administration between the Admiralty and the Colonial Office (Bedford (2017: n.p.). Ultimately, it was determined that the commission would focus solely on British subjects, with Indigenous matters falling under the purview of naval authorities. This arrangement persisted until 1880 when naval officers were designated “temporary commissioners” (Bedford, 2017: n.p.).

British naval officers had been exerting control in the region through regular inspection tours. They took responsibility for negotiating with Indigenous powers, such as chiefs, to address local conflicts (Bedford, 2017: n.p.). The involvement of naval officers in protecting British subjects, regulating the sandalwood trade and traders, and combating the slave trade, as illegal blackbirding was characterised, was evident before the commission’s formal establishment (MacClancy, 1981: 24; Samson, 1998: n.p.). This was the case with naval officer’s published reports, including Captain Erskine’s article in *The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* (Erskine, 1851) and reports by Captain Markham in 1871 in the same journal (Markham, 1871). In 1873, Captain Markham published a volume detailing his experience aboard HMS *Rosario*, entitled *The Cruise of the “Rosario” Amongst the New Hebrides and Santa Cruz Islands: Exposing the Recent Atrocities Connected with the Kidnapping of Natives in the South Seas* (Markham, 1873).

In February 1878, following requests from settlers in the archipelago for the annexation of the archipelago by France or Britain, the two countries officially declared they had no intention to seize control, acknowledging their respective influences and establishing Vanuatu as a neutral territory (Bedford, 2017: n.p.; France Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, 1887: déclaration n°2 et 3; Pelleray et al., 1922: 68). However, the tension between the countries escalated again in the 1880s, reaching a new peak in 1886, after France established

two military posts on Efate and Malekula, deemed essential to protect French citizens (Bedford, 2017: n.p.).

From 1887 and the Naval Convention to 1906 and the establishment of the Condominium

It is therefore evident that in the 1870s tensions between European actors in the Pacific region significantly increased. This was particularly the case in the archipelago, where tensions escalated due to individual enterprises in a region that was not officially ‘colonised’ according to Western international law, even though it was nonetheless affected by colonialist activities. These conflicts intensified among all those living in Vanuatu, as much between Europeans as between Europeans and ni-Vanuatu, leading to open conflict.

Although the situation may appear to have reached a state of relative stability as a result of the establishment of neutral status in 1878, it is important to recognise that a number of significant issues remained unresolved. In the 1880s, John Higginson’s enterprise in Vanuatu witnessed the emergence of a competitive dynamic aimed at swiftly exerting influence over the archipelago and putting pressure on France to act. Higginson had been actively lobbying in both New Caledonia and France, and during the 1880s the number of French settlers and landowners increased significantly, particularly in Malekula in the southeast and the Port-Sandwich regions (Bedford, 2017: n.p.). This was largely due to the activities of the *Compagnie Calédonienne des Nouvelles-Hébrides*, which was founded by John Higginson in Nouméa in 1882 (Deschanel, 1888: 257). Its main goal was to purchase lands and encourage French migrants to settle in the New Hebrides, creating trade stations and developing communications (Pelleray et al., 1922: 68). According to Pelleray, in 1885 French citizens owned 700,000 hectares of Vanuatu (1922: 68). Some of these lands were purchased from British subjects, while other portions were acquired directly from ni-Vanuatu. One of the company’s major acquisitions was the purchase of the McLeod lands by Higginson in 1890 (Guiart, 1986: 9). It would appear that the objective of the society company, or at the very least that of its founder, John Higginson, was to achieve unofficial annexation through the purchase of lands. Consequently, he adopted the commercial strategy proposed to him in Melbourne in 1871, although instead of pursuing it for Australia, he did

so for France. In his memoir, Higginson states that from his point of view the objective was not to engage in trade in the New Hebrides for profit, but rather to gain the trust of the Indigenous population and ‘attract’ them to the company, while providing them with essential goods (Higginson, 1926: 20).

In 1883, a missionary delegation approached the British Foreign Office with a petition requesting that Her Majesty’s government take a more active role in protecting the New Hebrides (Higginson, 1926: 18). This action was likely a response to Higginson’s activities in the archipelago. However, the government indicated its intention to maintain neutrality in the region as the United Kingdom did not wish to engage in actions that would provoke France (Higginson, 1926: 18). In order to counter the increasing French influence, Australians established a foundation in 1884 known as the “Australian New Hebrides Company” (Lightner et al., 2010a; Thompson, 1971: 169–170). By 1897, this entity had merged into the larger company, *Burns, Philp and Co.*, which played a role in financing the establishment of regular steamer lines connecting Vanuatu to Australia (Pelleray et al., 1922: 92). By the end of the nineteenth century, Burns Philp’s company had also incorporated the New Hebrides into its itineraries for tourist expeditions in the Pacific region, thereby drawing further attention and people towards the archipelago, though with other agendas in mind (Burns, Philp & Co, 1903).

In his memoir, John Higginson states that in December 1883 the Australian government resolved to support more active missionary activities in the archipelago with the objective of strengthening Australian influence (Higginson, 1926: 19). In the same year, two Australians initiated the purchase of land, particularly on Malekula at Port-Sandwich. This prompted Higginson to express concern, given that he regarded the island as the most central in the archipelago and Port-Sandwich as its most favourable port (Higginson, 1926: 19). In light of the potential threat of land purchases by competitors, Higginson undertook a visit to Vanuatu, where he held discussions with the ni-Vanuatu chief of the area with a view to preventing any further attempts. Subsequently, in 1885, Higginson travelled to France, as his personal resources were becoming increasingly limited, and he was no longer able to sustain his investment in Vanuatu. He arranged to meet the French Foreign Minister, M. de Freycinet, and M. Rousseau, Secretary of State for Colonies, in order to seek French governmental support. In the following year, he petitioned the French government to

officially annex the New Hebrides. In response to the request, which underscored the challenging circumstances faced by French settlers in the archipelago, exemplified by the killing of two representatives of Higginson's company, France deployed forces to establish military stations, exerting pressure on Australia and, consequently, on the United Kingdom. French troops reached the archipelago in 1886, and two military stations were established, one in Port Havannah in Efate, where most colonial activities were concentrated, and the second at Port Sandwich in Malekula, an area deemed strategically important by Higginson (see Chapter 3). The close link between these military operations and Higginson's business interests was made evident in the deployment of troops at the company trading stations. Higginson also recommended to the French government that they encourage missionary efforts (Higginson, 1926: 27–28). However, this support was only sustained for a brief period of two years.

As a result of these commercial, diplomatic and political manoeuvres, on 16 November 1887, France and the United Kingdom entered a Joint Naval Convention. In this agreement the United Kingdom relinquished any claims over Tahiti, and in return, Vanuatu would become what Higginson described as a 'status quo' area (Higginson, 1926). Following the official establishment of the Joint Naval Convention, the administration of justice, which had previously been divided between the British Admiralty and naval officers, became less straightforward. Despite the implementation of the 'annual tour' to regulate cases, the absence of adequate facilities for the application of the law and incarceration led officers to enforce the law directly, perpetuating punitive practices. As a result, the convention served primarily as a political strategy between France and Britain, with minimal tangible impact on the lives of settlers or the New Hebrides population. The primary means of enforcing 'justice' for the British and French navies remained punitive expeditions (Bedford, 2017: n.p.). The neutrality stance adopted by France and the United Kingdom in relation to the archipelago placed Higginson's company in a vulnerable position. He sought French support for the company and then, in the early 1890s, with the company still burdened with debt, he travelled to London in search of investors (Aldrich, 1990: 133). However, the French government decided to intervene to provide financial support to the company, which resulted in it being renamed in 1894 as the '*Société française des Nouvelles-Hébrides*' (Aldrich, 1990: 133). The company's rescue was an effort by the French government to maintain indirect influence over the archipelago by retaining control of lands and resources and

ensuring a strong French presence. However, in 1904, the company was still facing financial challenges. Following his passing in October 1904, the French and British governments were compelled to address the diplomatic implications of Higginson's family's desire to sell the company due to its large debts, as Higginson owned 90% of the company which itself was owning and exercised control over extensive areas of land in the archipelago (FO27/3696, papers 345-347, 352; FO27/3745, papers 351, 353, 376, 380). It is in that context that the company underwent a second reorganisation (Aldrich, 1990: 133).

Meanwhile, the introduction of the new non-binding agreement between the two countries proved ineffective in resolving the complexities of the situation in the archipelago, due to the inherent inability to establish enforceable regulations. As a result, activities within the archipelago remained largely unregulated, resulting in intense competition among companies, settlers and missionaries, which further amplified the impact on the ni-Vanuatu. In response to these challenges, the Condominium agreement between France and the United Kingdom in 1906 was intended to enhance the involvement of both nations in the management of the region's affairs. The Condominium was formally proclaimed in 1907, when Sir Everard Im Thurn, the 7th High Commissioner of the Western Pacific, delivered a speech at Port Vila in Efate (Cawsey, 2019: 366).

It can be argued that France and the United Kingdom sought to maintain a neutral stance in Vanuatu throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This reflects a broader international policy adopted by nations during that period, which Maartje Abbenhuis (2014) has described as 'Neutrality's golden age' (2014: 2). This period, spanning the years from the Napoleonic War to the First World War, had a notable peak during the latter part of the nineteenth century. The historical concept of neutrality, as discussed here, differs from its modern definition, which often implies a policy of non-intervention. Instead, as illustrated by Abbenhuis, it denotes an active international policy whereby nations take measures to maintain a balance of power, thus preventing open conflicts (Abbenhuis, 2014: 2). This deliberate strategy allowed the major European powers to flourish during the industrialisation and economic expansion of the period. Furthermore, the neutrality policy provided a favourable environment for what is now called globalisation, which was essential for the sustained growth of metropolitan economies.

However, the implementation of neutral policies by France and the UK placed the colonies of the region, Australia and New Caledonia, in direct competition and under heightened pressure. Consequently, they sought indirect means to compel France and the United Kingdom to clarify their stance on Vanuatu, given their mutual wariness. Individuals driven by personal gain often exploited opportunities or increased risks to provoke action from the former colonial powers (Abbenhuis, 2014: 98).²⁷ John Higginson's actions in Vanuatu serve as a prominent example of such behaviour.

In the context of Vanuatu, this neutral policy had substantial consequences, including the spoliation of lands, leading to an intensification of tensions between Europeans, Europeans and ni-Vanuatu, and between ni-Vanuatu. In 1877 and 1887, non-binding agreements were attempted in an effort to pacify the situation, yet both proved ineffective in appeasing the concerns of Australia and New Caledonia regarding the potential dominance of either power in the archipelago. It was only with the formal, binding establishment of the Condominium in 1906 that the situation began to stabilise. This is evidenced by the subsequent tendencies in the museum collections of France and the United Kingdom (see Chapter 2). However, although the situation was beginning to stabilise, it was far from peaceful, and recognition of ni-Vanuatu only came later with the creation of the Joint Court (1910), coupled with the creation of a legal status allowing ni-Vanuatu to be represented in court, which had not been the case before, leading to abuse (Rawlings, 2012: 54). With the creation of the Joint Court, disputes were still numerous, but unlike before its creation, ni-Vanuatu had more recourse against the Europeans. In practice, the Joint Court did not allow a person to plead a case in any language other than French and English, thus perpetuating strong discrimination against ni-Vanuatu (Stevens, 2017: 602).

This chapter has introduced the long-standing cultural heritage of the region and the dynamics of a long history of social interactions. This contextualisation provides valuable insights into the circumstances that prevailed in the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) at the time the objects were acquired, thereby enhancing understanding of the context in which the collectors discussed in the case study (Part II) and, more broadly, the artefacts included in European collections operated. While a significant part of this chapter was devoted to the

²⁷ Maartje Abbenhuis emphasises that neutral policy unavoidably led to the violation from time to time and often is linked to individuals animated by personal gain (Abbenhuis, 2014, p. 98).

historical contextual background of the New Hebrides (Vanuatu), the following section will focus on outlining the framework within which the collections found their way into the museum landscape in France and the United Kingdom.

Chapter 2: Vanuatu Artefact Itineraries: From Vanuatu to Public Museums

This chapter examines the trajectory of Vanuatu objects that were relocated to France and the UK. As has been shown, these two countries established colonial administrations in Vanuatu during the latter part of the nineteenth century, that continued until the country's independence in 1980. This chapter will therefore examine Vanuatu objects in France and Britain within the context of these networks of relationships, as well as national and museum contexts. This wider perspective will provide the foundation for a more detailed analysis to be undertaken in the subsequent parts of this thesis, while also addressing data-related issues that arise in museum studies.

Beyond the practical objective of documenting collections, the process of recontextualising artefacts into a broader perspective has the potential to alter the discourse surrounding them. This approach, as proposed by Nicholas Thomas (1991: 19) seeks to highlight the role of these artefacts as evidence of relationships, rather than viewing them as mere evidence of an 'other culture'.²⁸ By restoring context to the objects, they are no longer perceived as static representations of a fixed culture; instead, they are seen as products of a complex historical period shaped by interactions and exchanges between individuals from Vanuatu, France and the UK, both within Vanuatu and in Europe. These artefacts, historically regarded as curiosities, specimens, ethnographic objects, or more recently as art, exemplify the multifaceted identities and values they have accumulated over time during their 'life,' as demonstrated by Arjun Appadurai (1986: 56–58) and Igor Kopytoff (1986: 90).

Addressing the historicity embodied in these collections seeks to overcome the 'denial of historical reality' often implicit in anthropological work, as argued by Alban Bensa (2016: 7–12), which involves decontextualising people and the information they shared, social and cultural practices, etc., in order to construct anthropological analyses and concepts. While

²⁸ A substantial corpus of literature addresses the relational aspect of artefacts, arguing for re-contextualisation in a broad sense and by considering the multiple meanings and values that these artefacts encompass. This is achieved by fostering a wide range of perspectives. For further insights see: Gosden and Knowles, 2001; O'Hanlon and Welsch, 2001; Gosden et al., 2007; Byrne et al., 2011; Harrison, 2013; Meyer and Savoy, 2014; Jacobs et al., 2015; Carreau et al., 2018; Driver et al., 2021; Hooper, 2021; Morphy and McKenzie, 2022; Stahn, 2023.

Bensa criticises this practice in terms of anthropological analysis and the conceptualisation of the cultural and social practices of the ‘other’, it seems relevant to extend his analysis to the collections used by anthropologists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries either to develop their theories or to represent the cultures of the ‘other’. Although the collections of artefacts from Vanuatu examined in this work were not assembled by anthropologists, they have historically been associated with the fields of anthropology and ethnography. This is evidenced by their categorisation as ‘ethnographical’ collections, which was independent of the intentions of the individuals who acquired them prior to their entering museum institutions. Consequently, similar narratives have been attributed to these artefacts.

This chapter will therefore attempt, through a large-scale and transnational study, to reconnect objects and collections to the broader historical context in which they are embodied, to add temporality, and to recontextualise them beyond the ‘other’ they were once limited to representing. This approach is also an attempt to shift our perspective on these objects from a representation of an exotic ‘other’ to a more complex history of which they are a source (Hicks and Beaudry, 2010: 3).

To this end, the first part of this chapter will briefly discuss early Vanuatu collections in France and the United Kingdom, illustrating the problems and limitations of conducting such an exercise. The second part will then examine the trajectories of collecting during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which correspond to the time frame of this thesis. A broader, large-scale approach will be taken, utilising statistical analysis to examine the history of the collections. This will enable the identification of trends that can be analysed in relation to the historical contexts of Vanuatu, France and Britain. This approach will allow for the identification of the potential agency of the various actors embodied in these collections.

1. Eighteenth and early nineteenth-century collections in France and the United Kingdom

The arrival of material from Oceania in France and Britain can be traced back to the eighteenth-century Pacific exploration expeditions. Nevertheless, the timing and extent of their entry differ from one island to another. While Vanuatu objects were brought to Britain and almost certainly to France, collection trajectories within both countries are different. Nevertheless, based on the available evidence, it seems that artefacts from the archipelago were incorporated into museum collections at a later stage than those from many other islands. A number of hypotheses may be advanced to explain this trend, including the observation that regular social interactions between Europeans and ni-Vanuatu developed at a later stage than in other locations in the Pacific. An additional explanation may be that artefacts from the archipelago were not necessarily correctly identified, and that, in some instances, documentation of artefacts in museums may not extend beyond ‘South Seas’. Accordingly, the present section will approach information from the broader Pacific and South Seas collections to discuss the early presence of islanders’ material in museums, in articulation with the earliest mention of ni-Vanuatu artefacts identified so far.

In the UK, some institutions that received Vanuatu artefacts already existed, such as the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford and the British Museum in London. Until the late eighteenth century, collections from the Pacific were not large in number. However, Cook’s three voyages marked a significant shift in British expeditionary collecting practices, with large quantities of Pacific Island material culture, approximately 2,000 items, being brought back and sparking a strong interest in artefacts from the region, an interest that also manifested itself in paintings and plays (Brunt and Thomas, 2018: 21–22). Substantial material was also brought back to Britain by George Vancouver’s expedition (1791–95) and Oceanian pieces had already entered the British Museum on the return of Samuel Wallis’s voyage in HMS *Dolphin* (1766–68), including a canoe hull from Nukutavake in the Tuamotu Islands (BM: Oc1771,0531.1). The British Museum also received donations of Pacific artefacts from the Admiralty, particularly objects from Cook’s three voyages donated by Cook himself, and also by Joseph Banks (who went on Cook’s first voyage) and by others in 1771, 1775 and 1780 (Braunholtz, 1938: 4). The private museum formed by Sir Ashton Lever, the Leverian Museum or Holophusicum (Kaeppler, 2011), based in Liverpool and then London, also

acquired substantial anthropological and natural history material from Cook's voyages, then referred to as Artificial and Natural Curiosities (Kaepler, 1978).

In France, in contrast, few eighteenth-century collections exist or are documented. It appears that the expeditions by Bougainville, de Surville and Dufresne did not collect in a planned way. The expedition of La Pérouse was lost in Santa Cruz. Only that commanded by D'Entrecasteaux returned with material that can be securely documented (Douglas, Veys and Lythberg, 2018). The destination of material was mainly limited to the King's Cabinet (Carreau, 2018: 81), but a significant lack of object documentation, partly due to the French Revolution, has hindered our ability to trace early materials. It was only in the early nineteenth century, when expeditions were more successful and the nation more stable, that objects were accessioned into institutions, usually provincial museums, either under the impulse of learning societies or by individuals who donated cabinets to their hometowns or places connected to their education.

Early Vanuatu collections

Some Vanuatu material can be identified as having entered British museums during the eighteenth century, principally material acquired during Cook's second voyage visit to the archipelago in July and August 1774. Detailed accounts of visits to Malekula, Erromanga and Tanna are recorded in the journals of Cook (1969: 456-523), Wales (Beaglehole, 1969: 849-63) and Forster (2000: 477-562). Interactions both violent and friendly, and exchanges of local things for European cloth, Tahitian barkcloth and even Tongan fishhooks with turtle-shell points (that material being highly valued in Tanna) are recorded. Only a few of these Vanuatu artefacts can now be identified, largely as a result of research by Adrienne Kaepler (1978: 246-50; 2011: 184-86). Some entered the Leverian Museum, but they are few in number. Others, collected by Forster, were deposited in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, before being transferred to the Pitt Rivers Museum in 1886, two years after its foundation (Coote et al., 1999: 50). These ten objects are all arrows. This possibly corroborates the explorer's account of easier access to arrows for exchange with ni-Vanuatu.²⁹ No doubt other Vanuatu material has lost any associated documentation and is in UK museums, and some

²⁹ See Chapter 1 on the Early interactions with Europeans, and Bougainville (1771: 245–250).

other artefacts will have been traded away by members of Cook's expedition in New Caledonia, which was visited immediately after the New Hebrides. Cook remarked when at New Caledonia, 'the reader will think the Ship must be full of such articles by this time, but he will be mistaken, for nothing is more Common than to give away what has been collected at one Island for anything new at another, even if it is less curious, this together with what is destroyed on board after the owners are tired of looking at them, prevents any considerable increase' (Beaglehole, 1969: 532).

It can be concluded that documented eighteenth-century material from Vanuatu is unknown in France and rare in Britain. This rarity is partly due to occasional tense interactions and difficulties in exchange, as discussed in the previous chapter, but also to loss of associated documentation. In this context, Bougainville's account of his expedition played a notable role in contrasting what he regarded as the unwelcoming ni-Vanuatu from Ambae (Bougainville, 1771: 244–246) with the 'gentle' Tahitians (Douglas, 2014: 97–98; Rigby et al., 2018: 71). It was not until the nineteenth century, after increased interactions with ni-Vanuatu and the involvement of Australia, New Caledonia, the United Kingdom and France, that collections from the archipelago began to appear more frequently in institutions and auction houses.

In France, one of the first recorded collections to include Vanuatu artefacts was the cabinet collection of Auguste Louis Grasset,³⁰ which later became a provincial museum in Varzy in 1862.³¹ Vanuatu objects were among those collected during Duperrey's expedition on the *Coquille* (1822–1825) and Dumont d'Urville's expedition aboard the *Astrolabe* (1826–1829), some of which were purchased by Auguste Grasset in 1847 (Boulay, 2007). This case demonstrates that objects circulated privately at the beginning of the nineteenth century, before becoming part of the founding collection of provincial museums.

The second earliest known collection composed of Vanuatu objects to enter a public museum in France is the collection of Pierre Adolphe Lesson, naval pharmacist on board the *Astrolabe* of Dumont d'Urville's expedition, which had a slightly different provincial itinerary. First

³⁰ For biographical information on August Louis Grasset, see: <https://cths.fr/an/savant.php?id=102534#>

³¹ For more information on the museum, see: <https://varzy.fr/tourisme-patrimoine/musee-grasset/>

donated by Lesson in 1888 to the ‘Société de Géographie de Rochefort’,³² the collection was then incorporated into the Saint-Martin-de-Ré provincial museum, the ‘Musée Ernest Cognacq’. Saint-Martin-de-Ré is a French island linked to Rochefort, which has a deep connection with the Pacific, as the island received French convicts before they were deported to either New Caledonia or French Guiana.³³ This early nineteenth-century collection (1826-1829) must have had a significant private itinerary that has not yet been documented, as it was only in 1888 that it entered the Society’s collection, almost sixty years after the expedition and before it was placed in public provincial institutions at the beginning of the twentieth century. This example illustrates the general lack of information on the itineraries of early Vanuatu collections to and in France.

Another early recorded collection of Vanuatu artefacts is that of Lieutenant Paul Gauvain, who served on Febvrier-Despointes’ ship *La Forte* (1852-1856), which claimed New Caledonia for France in 1853. The collection was then donated in 1858 to the Musée d’Art et d’Histoire of Langres (Boulay, 2007), a museum founded in 1842 on the initiative of the Historical and Archaeological Society of Langres (Brocard, 1898: 93). Another early collection of Vanuatu objects was donated to the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Rennes in 1866, although the donor is not clearly identified, as donations from two individuals were recorded by the museum at the same time. This collection of artefacts from New Caledonia and Vanuatu could either have been donated by Arthur Brizou, a civil engineering contractor in New Caledonia around 1860, or by a person called F. Pierron, about whom little information has been found.³⁴

However, all these cases are early to mid-nineteenth-century field acquisitions that were not accessioned into public institutions until much later in the century. In addition to the limited information on early collections, especially from Vanuatu, it is important to recall that few

³² Rochefort has a strong historical connection to the navy with the establishment during the 17th century of the French ‘Arsenal’ and home to the Naval Academy, which led to a strong connection with French colonial endeavours during the 18th and nineteenth centuries.

³³ For more information about the museum’s current policy, see: <https://www.pop.culture.gouv.fr/notice/museo/M0833>

³⁴ The Brizou and Pierron collection seems to be currently divided between Rennes and Nouméa with artefacts from New Caledonian transferred to the Musée de Nouvelle Calédonie in New Caledonia, see the museum’s online database, and the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rennes with 5 artefacts of which at least three are from Vanuatu. The online database of the museum shows that the club n° 866.8.1 in Rennes was historically attributed to the Solomon Islands, see: <https://collections.mba.rennes.fr/ark:/10946/00223623>.

French expeditions visited Vanuatu in the eighteenth century, and interactions with the ni-Vanuatu were often tense and unwelcome. Thus, the combination of lost information and the absence of objects in the first place serves to explain why Vanuatu artefacts are not represented in eighteenth-century collections in France. However, Vanuatu objects were increasingly entering public institutions by the mid-nineteenth century, with an increase from the 1870s onwards. For example, the collection of Captain Dominique Rumeau was acquired by the Rouen Museum in 1875 (Ferloni and Boulay, 2011: 102). This collection consisted of objects purchased between 1850 and 1869, including 12 objects from Vanuatu, which all fall under the European category of weapons such as clubs, bows, arrows and spears, or parts of them. Similarly, a collection from an unknown collector, including objects from Vanuatu, was incorporated into the Musée Départemental Breton in Quimper in 1877 (Boulay, 2007).

While the trajectory of Vanuatu's collections is consistent with an increasing number of ethnographic and Pacific collections in museums in France and, more broadly, in Western countries (Dias, 1991: 93), it also demonstrates differences in the small number of objects entering public institutions, with only four collections recorded as entering institutions before 1870. In contrast, objects from New Caledonia entered institutions' collections earlier, such as the Victor de Rochas' collection entering the Louvre's Naval Museum in 1860, and the Queen's gift to the British Museum in 1841, a donation that comprised objects from Vanuatu (see Figure 5).³⁵



Figure 5: Sample of chief's hair (tied up). Donated by Queen Victoria, 1841. BM number Oc1841,0211.30. © The Trustees of the British Museum. See: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/E_Oc1841-0211-30

³⁵ The following artefacts from Vanuatu are associated with the 1841 Queen Victoria donation: Oc1841,0211.8, Oc1841,0211.9, Oc1841,0211.14, Oc1841,0211.30, Oc1841,0211.33, Oc1841,0211.33.a, Oc1841,0211.33.b, Oc1841,0211.33.c-e, Oc1841,0211.33.f, Oc1841,0211.33.g, Oc1841,0211.33.h, Oc1841,0211.33.i, Oc1841,0211.34 to 40.

2. Mid/Late 19th and 20th Century Vanuatu Collections: Setting the Context

This section will examine data about Vanuatu material entering museums in the nineteenth century, in an attempt to identify patterns and trends. It will allow for a broader perspective on collections and explore potential agency within them. As this thesis focuses on the intertwined histories of Vanuatu, France and Britain, with objects as important sources, this sub-section will seek to reconnect collections to the wider context of the nineteenth century which saw significant developments in the establishment of museums, the expansion of colonial empires, the rise of great exhibitions, and the advancement of science (Dias, 1991: 94; Raj and Pestre, 2015: 73;157). These developments, coupled with the emergence of anthropology and ethnology/ethnography, led to a substantial increase in ‘ethnographic’ collections entering museums (Dias, 1991: 94). In 1845, the British Museum opened a gallery dedicated to ‘ethnographic collections,’ following the creation of the Ethnological Society in 1843 and the establishment of the Museum Act in 1845 (Thomas, 2018: 53). It marked the first use of the term ‘ethnographic’ in British museum documentation to describe what had previously been characterised as ‘artificial curiosities’ (Braunholtz, 1938: 5). In contrast, in France, the first public ethnographic display opened at the Musée de la Marine in the Louvre in 1850, following administrative changes in the museum’s management and curator (Barron, 2016: 5–6).

While museums in France and the United Kingdom were slowly beginning to incorporate ethnographical displays during the mid-nineteenth century, some dedicated institutions were established in other parts of Europe: in Leiden in 1837, in Copenhagen in 1841 with the Ethnographic Museum of Copenhagen, and in Basel in 1849 (Braunholtz, 1938: 5; Pomian, 2022: 92–93). In France, it was not until the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1878, which had a sizeable anthropological display (Congrès international..., 1880; Gralton, 2013; Mauss, 1913: 822) that a museum dedicated to exhibiting ‘ethnographical’ collections was established with the creation of the Trocadéro Museum (Dias, 1991: 95; Raj and Pestre, 2015: 87). In the United Kingdom, the presence of ‘ethnographic’ collections did not result in the creation of a dedicated museum, as was the case elsewhere (Pomian, 2022: 93). Instead, it appears that an increasing number of museums began to include space for ‘ethnographic collections’.

Vanuatu artefacts entering museum institutions: statistical analysis

In order to examine the representation of Vanuatu and the trajectory of collections in France and the UK, the first step was to look at the collections that entered the institutions in the nineteenth century. One way of approaching the institutional temporality of the artefacts is to place them back in time, but in order to have a better understanding of the wider picture, and in the spirit of the *Relational Museum* project carried out at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford (The Pitt Rivers Museum, 2002), the methodological approach chosen was to examine the large collection through a statistical lens.³⁶

However, a major problem in the study of museum collections lies in the unevenness of their documentation, both in terms of quantity and quality. This can be attributed to a number of factors, including funding limitations, staff interests, and variations in the appreciation and policy regarding the objects in question. Additionally, the interpretation and evolution of these objects may be subject to change depending on the museum, the country and the period. These variations in documentation can significantly disrupt the ability to conduct statistical analysis. Nevertheless, in this analysis the year of entry, i.e. when collections entered the museums, has been taken to be more reliable³⁷ and the few variables can usually be compensated in the statistical analysis. Therefore, it was crucial to work with a large corpus of objects for the results to be more statistically robust and to reduce the effect of documentation errors. To explain this better, if in a collection of 50 objects, 25 of them have no date of entry information or an error, then any conclusion from this corpus would not be valid. If the same 50 objects, of which 25 have unreliable information, are part of a corpus of 600 well-documented objects, then the error will have less significant impact.³⁸ Accordingly, to investigate trends in the accessioning of Vanuatu's collections in museums, it was decided to focus on national museums, which hold a large number of artefacts, providing a bigger sample, from the archipelago, including museums with collections inherited from previous institutions, thus providing a better overview over time. A first step

³⁶ The *Relational Museum* project also resulted in the undertaking of additional, smaller-scale projects at the Pitt Rivers Museum, which in turn led to the publication of several significant works employing similar statistical methodologies. For further details, see Gosden and Knowles (2001), and Gosden et al., (2007).

³⁷ Although collection information is subject to interpretation, the year of entry is also not exempt from this pattern, as museums may be an accumulation of material acquired earlier by previous institutions or collectors. As a result, museums may record either the date of entry of objects into current or former institutions, or both.

³⁸ It is important to note that while the current study focuses on Vanuatu collections entering museums, it should be acknowledged that these objects may have had a life prior to integration into these institutions.

was to identify museums that have substantial quantities of artefacts from Vanuatu. The survey of Pacific artefacts in the UK and Ireland (Gathercole and Clarke, 1979), and the more recent inventory of Oceania collections in French Museums (Boulay, 2007) were the starting point.

As a result, information on the collections of the British Museum (BM), the National Museum of Scotland (NMS), the Pitt Rivers Museum Oxford (PRM), and the Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology in Cambridge (MAA), provided by the institutions, indicates a corpus of 4,446 Vanuatu objects – a substantial sample. In the case of France, only information from the Musée du Quai Branly-Jacques Chirac (MQB) is considered, due to the large number of Vanuatu objects (3,692) that are housed there, gathered from several other museum collections.³⁹ Although other museums in France have collections from the archipelago (as does the United Kingdom), they are far fewer in number (Boulay, 2007), and often remain undocumented in terms of provenance. Hence, the MQB Vanuatu material is substantial enough (at 3,692 artefacts), and the documentation reliable enough, to be statistically analysed.

Accordingly, the corpus used for the statistical analysis of Vanuatu collections was composed, for the UK, of the British Museum (1469 Vanuatu artefacts), the National Museums of Scotland (545), the Pitt Rivers Museum Oxford (1033) and the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge (1399), making a total of 4,446 artefacts available for analysis. Thus, the total number of Vanuatu objects in the corpus (8138), from institutions with the largest Pacific collections in both countries, allows us to mitigate the absence of data from smaller collections in other museums and to compensate for potential errors in the museum information provided. In other words, the corpus is significant enough that it is unlikely that data from smaller collections would change the statistical results to a significant degree. However, it is important to stress that the data from MAA were obtained late in the PhD process and a large number of objects are missing information (see Table 1) which needs to be borne in mind.

³⁹ The MQB collection includes material from the Royal Cabinets, the Geographical Society, the Cabinet of Antiquities, the Anthropological Laboratory Collection of the Museum of Natural History, the Marine and Ethnographic Museum of the Louvre, the Ethnographic Collection of the National Museum of Antiquities, the collections of the Ethnographic Museum of the Trocadéro, part of the collections of the Museum of Man (Musée de l'Homme) and the collections of the National Museum of African and Oceanic Arts.

	Museums case study for the France	Museums Case study for the UK					
	Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac	British Museum	National Museums Scotland	Pitt Rivers Museum	Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology Cambridge	Total UK Case Study Artefacts	Total Overall
Unknown	59	80	0	18	318	416	475
Total	3692	1469	545	1033	1399	4446	8138
Percentage Unknown	2%	5%	0%	2%	23%	9%	6%

Table 1: The table presents the total number of artefacts considered for each museum, along with the number of artefacts with an unknown date of entry in the museum collections and their representation in percentage terms.

The data provided by the museums was sorted and a preliminary analysis of the information was carried out using basic statistical methods and techniques, including the representation of the resulting data in graphs and charts. This approach is analogous to the statistical analysis employed by the Relational Museum project (Petch, 2006: 150–151). In terms of year of entry, this approach involved the segmentation of the information into decades rather than individual years, covering the period from the earliest year of Vanuatu collection entry in 1830-1831 up to 2020. The starting and end years of 1830 and 2019, which are well beyond the scope of this thesis, were chosen to assess the relevance of the approach of examining collection history through the lens of statistics. This approach aimed to determine whether fluctuations during the long nineteenth century were a general pattern of Vanuatu collections, or if there were particularities during a given period. The data were sorted according to decades in order to limit the complexity of the data set and to avoid any potential confusion in pattern identification that might arise from the large number of instances. It also allows for imprecise entry years within decade categories. Another important aspect of the statistical methodology used in this thesis was to classify objects with uncertain entry years as having an unknown year. However, apart from the MAA collection, the number of objects with unknown dates is relatively small compared to the total corpus, allowing for valid statistical analysis.

The tables and graphs were all produced using Excel. Although it was apparent that the number of objects entering by decade was of particular interest, the graphical representation of the data without taking in consideration the cumulating aspect was confusing and not allowing to for identification of patterns (see Appendix H) due to the variations in entries between different decades. To address this issue, a second graph was created using a cumulative approach to present the number of artefacts entering museum collections over time while acknowledging the presence of previous artefacts entries, thereby illustrating the storage dynamics for each museum (Figure 6). The subsequent graph based on a cumulative table mitigated the impression of large fluctuations due to the lack of entries in certain decades and the large quantity of objects entering during others. To validate the statistical method of grouping the information by decade, a comparative graph was produced on a yearly basis (Appendix H), which ultimately confirmed the validity of the methodology, as the trends remained consistent.

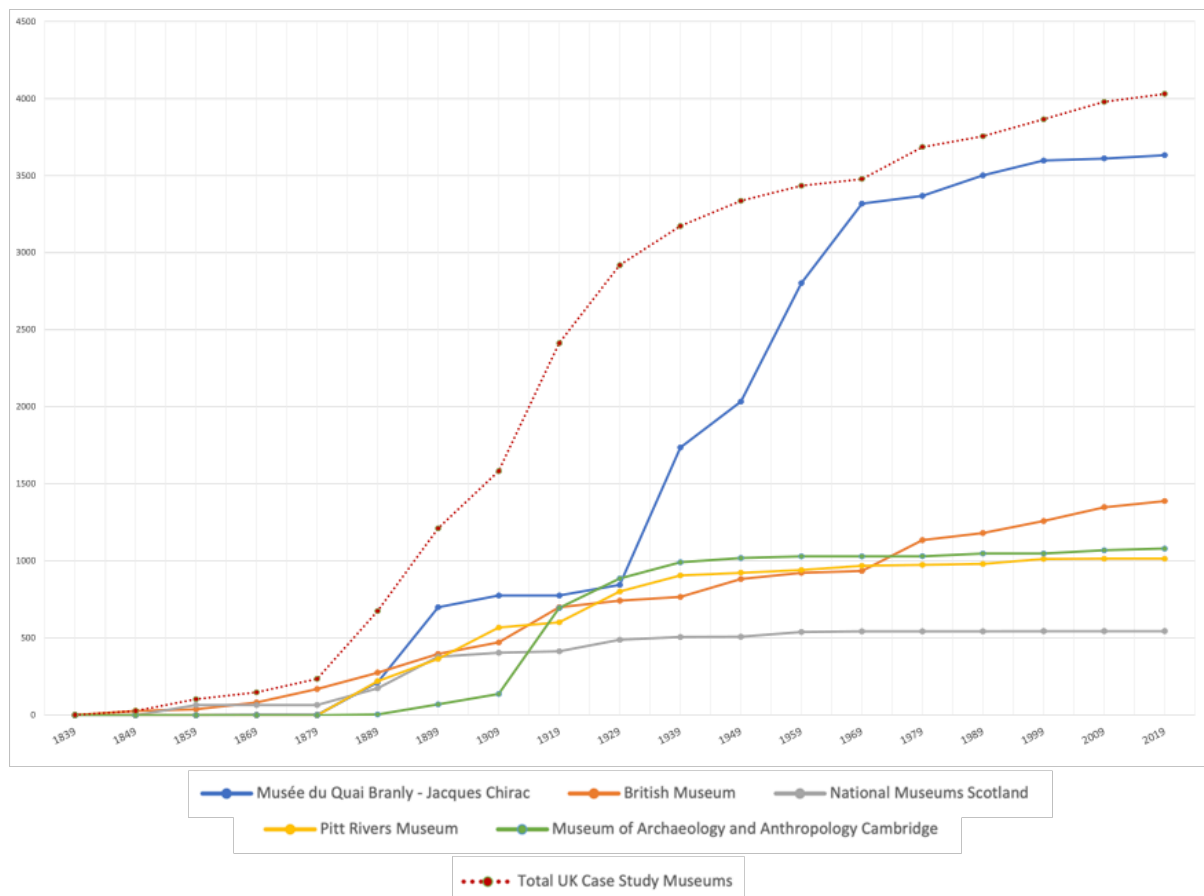


Figure 6: Graph representing the cumulative entry of artefacts registered from Vanuatu for the museums considered. The red dotted line represents the overall artefacts entry registered from the archipelago in the collections of the UK case study museums.

	Museums case study for the France	Museums Case study for the UK					
Decades	Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac	British Museum	National Museums Scotland	Pitt Rivers Museum	Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology Cambridge	Total UK Case Study Artefacts	Total Overall
1830-1839	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
1840-1849	0	27	0	0	0	27	27
1850-1859	0	10	66	0	0	76	76
1860-1869	1	44	0	0	0	44	45
1870-1879	0	88	0	0	0	88	88
1880-1889	211	106	108	221	4	439	650
1890-1899	488	122	205	144	66	537	1025
1900-1909	76	75	26	204	67	372	448
1910-1919	0	227	9	34	559	829	829
1920-1929	70	43	75	199	190	507	577
1930-1939	891	24	18	105	106	253	1144
1940-1949	298	117	2	17	28	164	462
1950-1959	768	39	31	17	10	97	865
1960-1969	515	12	4	28	0	44	559
1970-1979	51	201	0	6	1	208	259
1980-1989	133	46	0	6	17	69	202
1990-1999	96	77	1	33	0	111	207
2000-2009	13	90	0	1	22	113	126
2010-2019	22	40	0	0	11	51	73
Unknown	59	80	0	18	318	416	475
Total	3692	1469	545	1033	1399	4446	8138

Table 2: The table presents the number of artefacts accessioned as from Vanuatu, organised by decade, in the MQB, BM, NMS, PRM, and MAA, together with overall totals. Cumulative figures are not included.

The column summarising the total number of objects entering the collections of the case study museums in (table 2) shows that the largest influx of objects occurred between 1930 and 1939, with 1,144 objects from the archipelago. The next largest entry, with almost 1,000 objects, took place between 1890 and 1899. In contrast, other decades did not exceed the 1,000 items recorded in these two periods. While 1930-1939 saw a high intake in the French case study museum, the decade 1890-1899 saw a more balanced distribution between France and England, with 488 and 537 items catalogued respectively. Notably, despite the significant intake in the 1890s, it was the previous decade, 1880-1889, that marked the most significant increase, rising from 88 items in 1870-1879 to 650 - representing a sevenfold increase. By comparison, the jump from 1880-1889 to 1890-1899 was only 1.5 times.

While 1930-1939 and 1890-1899 recorded the largest absolute numbers, it was 1880-1889 that saw an unprecedented surge in collection entries. The period from 1880 to 1899, marked

by increasing French pressure on the archipelago (see Chapter 1), coincides with heightened tensions in the pre-colonial period, which is the focus of this study.

The ‘museum period’ was part of the historical development of anthropology and which placed objects at the core of cultural study (Stocking, 1985: 4; Pearce, 1994: 14; Harrison, 2013: 8–9; Kuper, 2023; Stahn, 2023: 121–133). This approach made museums the natural ‘homeland’ of anthropological material between about 1840 and 1890 (Sturtevant, 1969: 622). Nevertheless, it was only by around 1890 that anthropology began to flourish in museums by employing anthropological personnel and beginning to support fieldwork; by that time university museums were also well established (Stocking, 1985: 8). However, it is necessary to acknowledge that there are variations observed between countries. For example, in France, it was not until the 1930s that field research in association with the Musée d’Ethnographie du Trocadéro began to be supported by the French government (Bennett et al., 2017: 217; Le Gonidec, 2008: 92; Stocking, 1983: 121–122). ‘Anthropological’

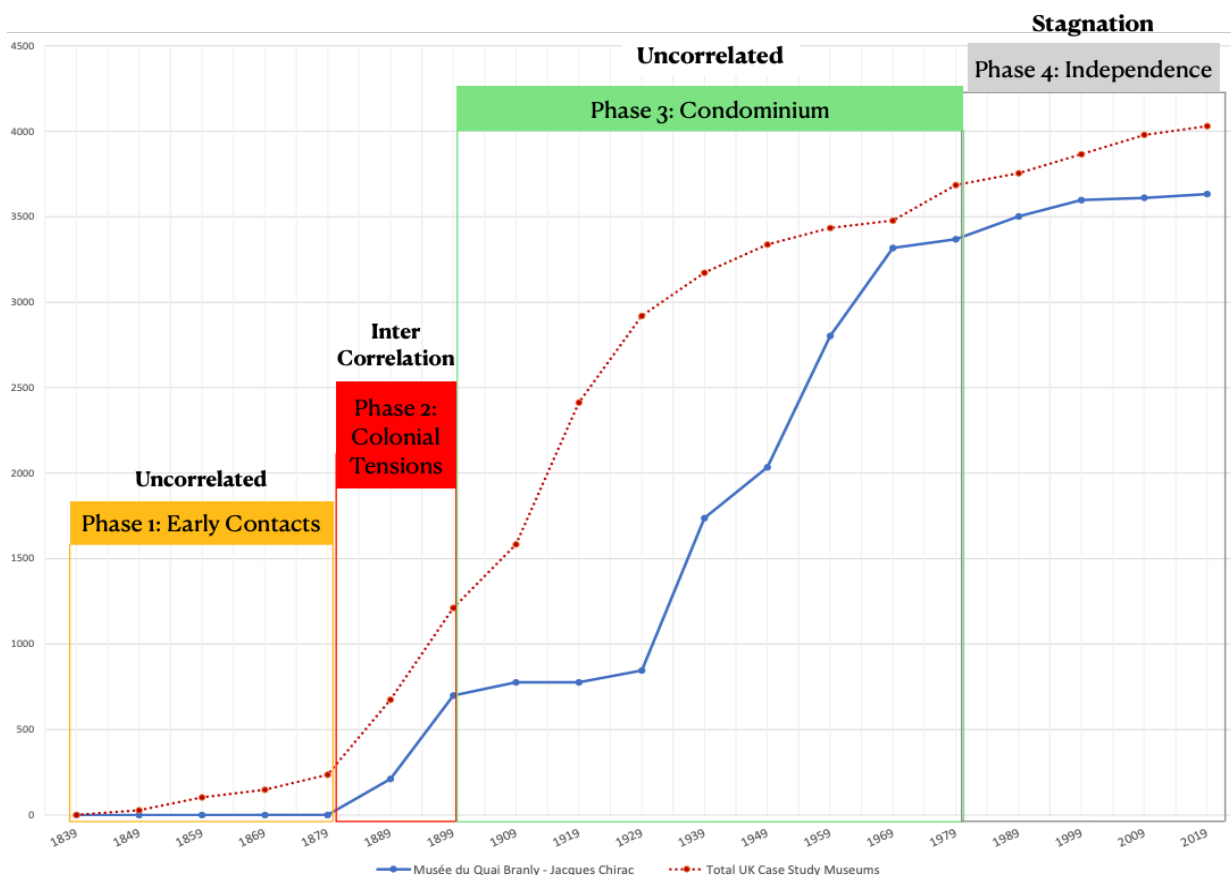


Figure 7: The graph illustrates the influx of artefacts into the case study museums’ collections in France and the UK, presented as two distinct lines. The blue line represents data from France and the red dotted line represents data from the UK. The data are presented both cumulatively and by decade.

collections of material culture in museums retained some importance until the 1920s with the development of the diffusionist schools (Stocking, 1985: 8–9), and while the decline of material culture research in anthropology varies from country to country, it is recognised that overall it began in the 1930s in England, France, Germany and the United States (Stocking, 1985: 8–9). Although the increase in the number of Vanuatu objects added to museum collections between 1830 and 1960 is in line with the general pattern of museum development, it is not sufficient to fully explain the variations observed in the table, which are clearer when the data are presented in the form of a cumulative graph with phases indicated (Figure 7).

In graph (Figure 7), the data from the case study museums are presented by two lines, the red dotted line representing the cumulative data from the UK museums and the blue line representing the French museum of the MQB as a representative case study. While the table allowed the identification of two key decades, the cumulative graph allowed the identification of four trends.

A first phase (phase 1), from 1839 to 1879, can be linked to the early contacts presented in the historical Chapter 1. Looking at Table 2, showing the entries for each museum, we can observe that the earliest Vanuatu artefacts⁴⁰ to enter a museum collection were in the British Museum between 1840 and 1849.⁴¹ This includes 20 objects from Vanuatu as part of the

⁴⁰ A single ‘object’ entered the British Museum collection before 1831, a hank of human hair plaited with vegetal fibres from Tanna, donated by George Bennett, medical practitioner and naturalist, born in Plymouth (England) in 1804, who left England in 1828 for the Pacific, where he sailed on various expeditions until 1831, when he returned to England after his last expedition as surgeon on the ship *Sophia*, during which he sailed to the New Hebrides. Bennett settled in Australia in 1834. For further biographical information, see his entry in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. The ‘artefact’ he donated to the museum is the earliest known ‘artefact’ from Vanuatu to enter the British Museum, for which a recent study has demonstrated its value for intergenerational teaching (Bolton, 2013: 285–286). Similar hair artefacts are catalogued as entering the British Museum at alter dates, including Oc1841,0211.30 as part of the Queen Victoria donations, as well as Oc1856,0709.9 and Oc1856,0709.10 (Lords of Admiralty donations, Sir John Liddell, HMS *Herald*, Aneityum), and Oc.6019. (Admiral Sir Henry M. Denham, 1869, Aneityum), Oc.6055 (1870); and Oc1944,02.1044 and 1045 (1944, Irene Beasley, Tanna). It is worth noting that during the course of the research, no information could be found in the British Museum about possible artefacts from the archipelago associated with Cook’s voyages.

⁴¹ The earliest set of artefacts referred to is the 1841 Queen’s donation composed of the following objects: Oc1841,0211.8, Oc1841,0211.9, Oc1841,0211.14, Oc1841,0211.30, Oc1841,0211.33, Oc1841,0211.33.a, Oc1841,0211.33.b, Oc1841,0211.33.c-e, Oc1841,0211.33.f, Oc1841,0211.33.g, Oc1841,0211.33.h, Oc1841,0211.33.i, Oc1841,0211.34 to 40; a year afterwards, two artefacts (Oc1842,1210.63 and Oc1842,1210.124) are donated by Sir Edward Belcher; and in 1848 there are five artefacts (Oc1848,0712.2 to 4; Oc1848,0712.23 and Oc1848,0712.30) associated to Stiebel Bros, a post office directory for London. For more information, please refer to the online catalogue.

‘Collection of Curious Objects from the South Sea Islands’ donated by Queen Victoria in 1841 and recorded in the British and Medieval Acquisitions (Braunholtz, 1938: 5; 1953: 91; Miller, 1974: 222). In the following years, a few more Vanuatu objects were added to the collections through donations as part of the Christy collection.⁴² These objects were part of the British and Medieval department, in line with the museum’s policy of the time to build a universal collection (Duthie, 2011: 14). The museum also faced internal and structural challenges during this period, which led to the creation of the new department of the British and Medieval antiquities and the expansion of the ethnographic collections (Miller, 1974: 178; Pearce et al., 2000: 20).

The National Museum of Scotland, founded in 1854 as the Industrial Museum of Scotland,⁴³ was the second museum to receive a founding collection consisting of a donation from the University of Edinburgh, of which 43 objects are recorded as being from Vanuatu (26 arrows, eight clubs, three girls’ skirts, three women’s belts, two bows and one adze). Although this gift is recorded as being received in 1854, when the museum was founded, it was initially donated to the University of Edinburgh in 1826 (Haddow, 2013). A few years later, in 1858, the institution received a gift of 23 Vanuatu objects (21 arrows and two bows) from Dr John Ivor Murray.

The second phase, from 1879 to 1899, saw almost comparable increases in the number of collection entries in France and the United Kingdom. This phase can be linked to the growing tensions between Australia and New Caledonia, and therefore between France and Britain detailed in the previous chapter. The correlation between the two lines allows for the hypothesis that collections reflected colonial agendas rather than institutional or national policies.

⁴² Between 1865 and 1886, one hundred and twenty-eight artefacts from the archipelago entered the BM as part of the Christy collection. According to his biography in the BM’s online catalogue, Christy (1810-1865) was a wealthy Quaker businessman who collected ‘ethnographic and archaeological specimens’, which he eventually displayed for visitors in a special room in his home, organised with the advice of the Danish archaeologist Christian Thomsen. Although Christy employed Thomsen’s student Carl Ludvig Steinhauer to catalogue the artefacts on display, no catalogue was actually produced and published during his lifetime. For more information, see the BM’s biography of Henry Christy, available at: <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG122138>

⁴³ For more information on the museum’s history see: <https://www.nms.ac.uk/explore-our-collections/stories/scottish-history-and-archaeology/history-of-the-national-museum-of-scotland/>

The third phase, from 1899 to around 1969, shows non-correlated patterns of acquisition during the Condominium (1906-1980). The dotted British line on the summary graph (Figure 7) shows an initial rapid increase in collections entering museums and then a decline. In contrast, the French line shows a significant dynamic, with many objects entering in certain decades and almost none in others. This non-correlation manifests national agendas in France and the UK and does not appear to have been dictated by events in Vanuatu, as was the case during the colonisation phase of Phase 2. This hypothesis is reinforced by looking at the significant increase in Vanuatu objects entering museums in France between 1930 and 1940, which can be correlated with the opening of the Musée des Colonies, renamed the Musée d’Outre-Mer in 1935 (Pomian, 2022: 112), and the active development of the anthropological fieldwork missions of the Musée de l’Homme (Bennett et al., 2017: 1).

Another significant point to be addressed is what is the likely impact of the Second World War on French acquisitions, with a significant decrease of Vanuatu collection entries for the decade 1940 to 1949 (298), while the decades before (891) and after (768) represent the highest entries of Vanuatu artefacts in French museums (Figure 7). In contrast, the UK case study museums do not show the same tendency, with a steadier entry of Vanuatu artefacts across the period, although it has been decreasing since 1920 (Figure 7). Remarkably, the French case study shows a total absence of Vanuatu collection entries during the decade affected by the First World War (1914-1918), while the British case study represents the highest number of entries (829) for the entry period covered (Figure 7). Two museums, MAA and the BM, contribute significantly to this UK total between 1910 and 1919. A closer look at the collections in these two institutions reveals that each has two significant acquisitions. The major contribution to the British Museum’s figures is the collection of Louis Joseph Bouge, bought in 1913 and including 181 artefacts from Vanuatu. At the same time, MAA acquired the extensive collection of John Layard, donated in 1915 and comprising 265 artefacts from the archipelago.

The British Museum’s acquisition of the collection of the French colonial administrator Louis Joseph Bouge can be seen as an anomaly, given his position and the fact that by then France had an institution that could have housed his collection. However, as the chapter dedicated to his collection (Chapter 6) will show, one of the hypotheses explaining his choice could be related to the fact that he sold his collection and did not donate it. This fact is notable

as it demonstrates the active policy of the British Museum in acquiring objects, including by purchase, a policy perhaps more widely applied in UK museums, as can be seen by looking at the pattern of UK accessions overall (red dotted line Figure 7). In contrast, MQB accessions are more irregular, showing periods of significant shifts in national policy regarding fieldwork, research support and object acquisition. In the absence of state support, French museums often relied on private donations rather than auction house purchases, which would have required a budget for acquisitions (Dias, 1991: 253). Nevertheless, the flat line for acquisitions in France for the period 1910-1919 is remarkable, given the regular involvement of the French in Vanuatu affairs at that time and during the previous decades.

On the other hand, John Layard's collection at the MAA reflects a new academic interest in the archipelago, connected to increasing interest in the Melanesian region.⁴⁴ The collection is the result of a year's fieldwork in Malekula, interrupted by the outbreak of the First World War (Geismar and Herle, 2011: 7), and was initiated by W.H.R Rivers' interest following Felix Speiser's fieldwork in Vanuatu from 1910 to 1912. John Layard joined the expedition following Alfred Haddon's advice (Stocking, 1986: 52). This expedition reflects well the increasing attention of anthropologists to the region, exemplified by the work of Layard's two mentors, Rivers and Haddon (Geismar and Herle, 2011: 7). Both were part of the 'Cambridge School' (Stocking, 1983: 80–81), associated with the lectureship that by 1904 had replaced the previous one in physical anthropology at Cambridge, and which promoted Haddon's policy of extended fieldwork as opposed to the 'rapid collector' behaviour characteristic of previous anthropologists (Stocking, 1983: 80–81).

The fourth and final phase which can be observed is the significant decrease in the number of objects entering collections between 1970 and 2020, which shows an inter-correlation between the French and British lines. This stagnation in accession rates, that began ten years before Vanuatu's independence (1980), is probably linked to the independence process, which also led to political instability in the years before and after, and to a moratorium on

⁴⁴ In the early twentieth century, there was a growing interest in Melanesia among anthropologists, and an increasing number of academics travelled to the region to conduct fieldwork. Besides UK researchers such as W. H. R. Rivers, Maurice Hocart and Alfred Haddon, researchers from Switzerland, such as Fritz Sarasin (fieldwork in New Caledonia) and Felix Speiser (fieldwork in Vanuatu from 1910 to 1913), and from the USA, such as Field Museum curator George Dorsey (fieldwork in Melanesia 1908 to 1909; joined by Albert Lewis for a second fieldwork, 1909 to 1913), resulted in extensive collections of artefacts. For more information on George Dorsey's collection, see the Pacific Islands and Australian Aboriginal artefact survey in the United States and Canada by Adrienne Kaeppler and Amy Ku'uleialoha Stillman (1985: 130).

researchers from 1984 to 1994 (Durand et al., 2024: 35), which affected access by researchers from Western countries and thus also the acquisition of objects. Furthermore, this period is indicative of a broader trend wherein museums were less inclined to collect. This trend can be juxtaposed with the decline of the ‘museum period’ and decreasing interest in material culture by 1960 (O’Hanlon and Welsch, 2001: 2; Sturtevant, 1969: 626), one result of which was an increased presence of artefacts in the market (Stocking, 1985: 9).

It can be observed that the two phases (2 and 4) which exhibit comparable trends between France and Britain can be associated with incidents in Vanuatu. In contrast, phases 1 and 3, which demonstrate notable divergences, reflect the impact of national policies in France and Britain, as well as national particularities associated with ‘collecting’ practices (O’Hanlon and Welsch, 2001: 1–2). It is also important to note that phase 1 is arguably influenced by the difficulties encountered when attempting to trace the provenance of early collections. It seems highly likely that a small number of objects from Vanuatu were incorporated into public museum collections prior to 1830, although the relevant records may have been lost. However, in the early period the number of artefacts from Vanuatu entering France and Britain was limited; it seems more likely that early collections were more numerous in Australia. This assumption is based on the itineraries of nineteenth-century voyages to the archipelago, which often stopped in Australia, combined with the strong Australian interest in Vanuatu colonisation, missionary efforts and the development of significant marketplaces, suggesting the frequent arrival of ships from Vanuatu.

3. Missionary Collections: Presence vs Absence

As previously stated, the profile of collectors chosen for the case studies in Part II will focus on colonial administrators, naval officers or academics, as these groups include individuals who have been little studied in the context of Vanuatu collection studies. However, the nineteenth-century historical context of Vanuatu, France and the United Kingdom was significantly influenced by missionary activities. Consequently, it is essential to provide a brief overview of missionary collecting that took place, although an in-depth analysis of missionary endeavours in Vanuatu is beyond the scope of this work.

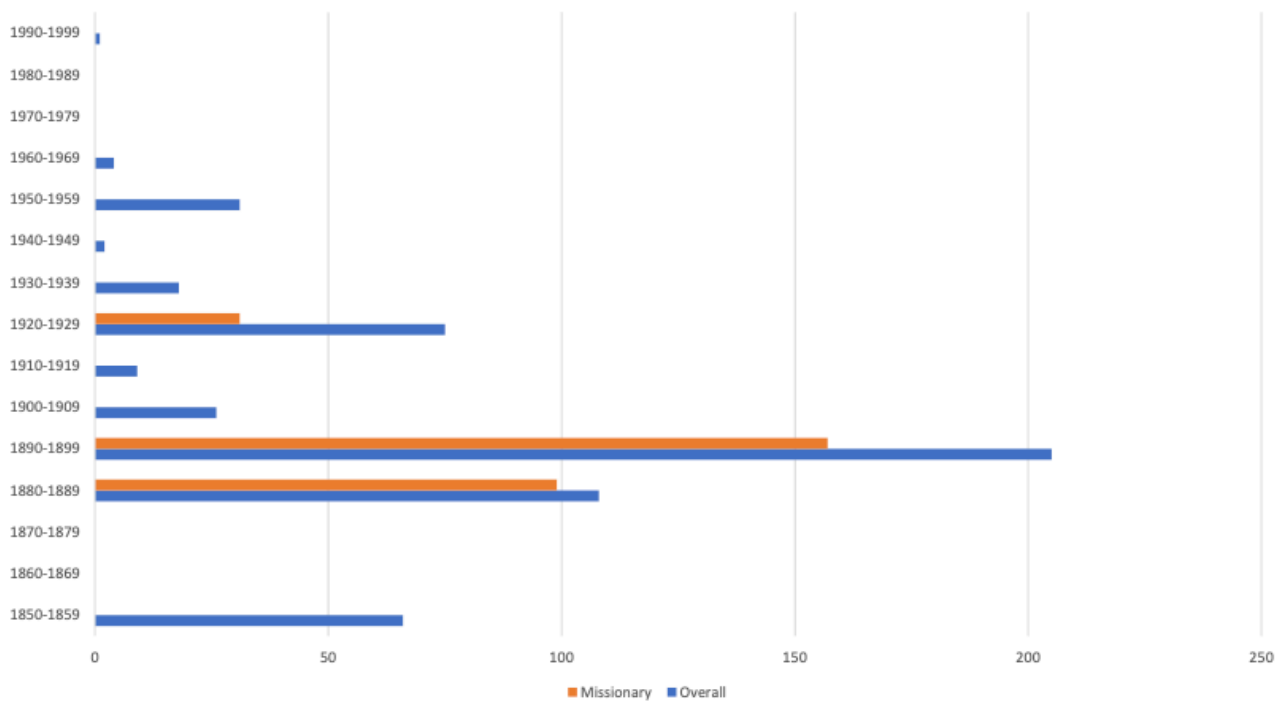


Figure 8: Graph illustrating the number of inventoried artefacts from Vanuatu incorporated into the NMS collection by decade. The total number of artefacts is represented in blue, while the fraction received from missionaries within each decade's total is indicated in orange.

In the previous section, the broader nineteenth-century statistics of Vanuatu's collection records in France and the UK showed a significant increase of artefacts entries from 1880 to the turn of the century in France and the UK. Of the museum case studies presented previously, one that stands out when considering Vanuatu's missionary collections is the NMS. While the museum housed early Vanuatu artefacts from the University of Edinburgh, it was noted that a significant increase in the museum's Vanuatu accessions occurred during phase 2, during colonial tensions (Figure 8). The Vanuatu artefacts that entered the NMS collection between 1880 and 1900 represent approximately 60% (313 artefacts) of the NMS's total Vanuatu collection (545 artefacts of which 82% (256 artefacts) were donated by missionaries (Figure 8). There were no further missionary donations until the decades 1920-1929 (31 artefacts of 75 recorded), which appears to be the last time a missionary donation entered the NMS. It is notable that almost half of the NMS Vanuatu collection was donated by missionaries, which positions it as a distinctive feature when viewing Vanuatu collections held by major museums. However, missionary collections are not exclusive to the NMS and some missionary material was acquired by the British Museum, the Pitt Rivers Museum and the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge University. It is also important to note that missionaries from Anglophone countries involved in Vanuatu also

gave collections to other countries (Flexner, 2016a), including Canada,⁴⁵ Australia⁴⁶ and New Zealand.⁴⁷ The presence of such collections in these countries is not unexpected, as they were all bases for evangelical organisations involved in Vanuatu.

It is of interest to note the significance of the mission collections in comparison to those of other donors of artefacts from Vanuatu, as well as the specific decades during which these contributions were made. The particularity of the NMS Vanuatu collection is closely associated with missionary activities in the archipelago, which began in 1852 with the arrival of John Inglis at Aneityum and the establishment of the first Presbyterian mission station there (see Chapter 1).

The particularity of Presbyterian missionaries in Vanuatu is their connection with Scotland, as illustrated by the prominent involvement of the Scottish Presbyterian Church, among other religious organisations, in Vanuatu missionary endeavour (Proctor, 1999: 349). Another important aspect to note is that the two decades of significant increase in Vanuatu material records in the NMS can be linked to the intensification of colonial pressure over the archipelago, associated with the establishment of Catholic missionaries from the French Society of Mary (Marists). Tensions between Presbyterians and Catholics were already high, particularly in the Loyalty Islands near Vanuatu in New Caledonia and were exacerbated in Vanuatu with the intensification of Presbyterian and Catholics activities from 1886 (Denoon and Meleisea, 1997: 200). This period coincided with the establishment of three Catholic missionary stations in Vanuatu, encouraged by the French government, leading to an increase of Presbyterian mission stations. While Vanuatu artefacts donated by Presbyterian ministers prior to 1886 are recorded in other museums in the UK, it is interesting to note that in the case of the NMS, Vanuatu collections given by missionaries occurred exclusively between 1880 and 1900, the most significant collection of which was donated by the Reverend James Lawrie, of the Free Church of Scotland, who settled in Aneityum in 1878. He made several donations between 1889 and 1898, comprising 252 artefacts.

⁴⁵ One example is the collection of Reverend Robertson of the Nova Scotian Presbyterian Church, which was donated to McGill University's Redpath Museum between 1883 and 1896 (Lawson, 1994a and 1994b).

⁴⁶ See, for instance, Reverend John G. Paton's collection or Reverend Georges Brown's collection in the South Australian Museum (Jones, 1993: 22).

⁴⁷ Te Papa Museum has preserved some Vanuatu artefacts donated by missionaries, such as a drum bought by Reverend William Veitch Milne between 1912 and 1913. More information can be found on the online database at <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/>. To read about Reverend Milne's purchase of a Vanuatu drum, visit <https://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/object/213936>.

The objects and photographs brought back by missionaries were part of the propaganda used to persuade and gain support for missionary efforts, and Vanuatu was no exception. However, as Eve Haddow has shown, priests in Vanuatu were involved in academic networks ranging from archaeology to anthropology. Interestingly, the first missionary report on Vanuatu by John Inglis was published in 1854 in the *Journal of the Ethnological Society of London*. Presbyterian missionaries published a great many papers about the people of Vanuatu, their culture and the missions. In contrast, Catholic missionaries published few accounts of their time in the archipelago, with only the Marist Father Jean Marie Suas publishing two journal articles in 1914 on ethnographic subjects (Suas, 1914a; 1914b). It is not clear how to account for this disparity, but the difference between Presbyterian and Catholic approaches persists when we look at the total volume of missionary collections that entered museums. While Vanuatu missionary collections are represented in museums of national importance in the United Kingdom, this is not the case in France. To understand this better, it is important to recall that the French Revolution, following the confiscation of royal and ecclesiastical property, gave rise to a sense of heritage which materialised in the creation of national collections, museums and monuments. This period also saw the separation of Church and State in France, leading to confiscation of some Church property. In the nineteenth century, missionaries in Britain seem to have had more freedom to dispose of their collections as they wished, using personal networks. By contrast, in France, for the Marist Fathers, arrangements were more centralised and collections were usually required to be sent to the Vatican, the centre of Catholic power.⁴⁸ Although the French state may have been able to influence church policy in the late nineteenth century by providing encouragement and support, both financial and practical, decisions always had to be approved by the Vatican and reports sent there. Today, only one museum of the Marist Fathers exists in France, and this only displays objects from Oceania. This museum, called La Neyrière, was created by Father Patrick O'Reilly in 1971 and is currently run by a team of volunteers devoted to the museum.

⁴⁸ While the Marists working in the Southwest Pacific had no museums in France to display their collections, those working in mainland African countries or in other Congregations had collections displayed in dedicated museums with the Musée des Missions Africaines in 1862 or the Musée de la Propagation de la Foi in 1888, which displayed collections of artefacts from Oceania alongside objects from other parts of the world (Essertel, 2008: 129; Oeuvre de la propagation de la foi, 1888). While the Musée des Missions Africaines was created in 1862, according to Yanick Essertel (2008: 129) it only prospered in 1920, after years of uncertainty, partly due to a law introduced in 1905 that separated the heritage owned by the State from that owned by the Church.

However, the collections in this recent museum are difficult to access at the present time, which hinders potential study of the collection.

This succinct introduction to the artefacts donated to museums by missionaries underscores the distinctive characteristics shaped by the organisational structures of the various churches operating in the archipelago and their historical relationships with nation states. The situations in France and the United Kingdom influenced the distinctive itineraries of artefacts acquired by missionaries. This also influenced the interconnection between colonial agendas and the collection routes of Vanuatu artefacts.

Having considered Vanuatu collections in museums from a broad perspective, and having identified trends from the statistical data that has been assembled, Part II of the thesis will now consider four major collectors, their networks, activities and acquisitions.

PART II

The Collectors

Introduction to Part II

Part II examines Vanuatu artefacts in museums from the perspective of ‘collectors’. This categorisation allows for an analysis of their agency and the influences embodied in these collections of artefacts from the archipelago. The starting point is that these collections are cultural assemblages that originate from the communities from which they come, as well as from the collectors’ communities (Pearce, 1995: 330). In this regard, the collection of artefacts from Vanuatu is considered as part of a collector’s ‘assemblage’. Consequently, artefacts from the archipelago are regarded as part of a comprehensive assemblage of both artefacts and other items, all of which possess the quality of having been either selected, collected or produced by a collector. For the purposes of this study, the term ‘collectors’ is defined as individuals who have acquired artefacts that were subsequently donated or sold to museums.

In order to achieve these aims, four case studies of collectors are presented for analysis, focusing on collectors who were present in the archipelago during the colonial tensions that preceded the establishment of the Condominium in 1906. These individuals procured artefacts which were subsequently donated to museums in France and the United Kingdom. The analysis of individuals who acquired artefacts prior to 1906 is of particular significance in this study, as it allows for an exploration of the relationship between different actors in the period preceding the establishment of the Condominium. In this context, artefacts are regarded as one of several potential sources of insight into social interactions and the contexts in which they occurred (Henare et al., 2006: 4; Hannan et al., 2017: 84-91). This approach acknowledges that social interactions and exchanges are situated within broader contexts that shape them (see Introduction). During these exchanges, power dynamics emerge between all actors, influencing their agency as expressed in social exchanges (see Introduction).

In this respect, assemblages formed by armchair collectors who never visited the archipelago are insufficient for studying these interactions, as their collections lack direct connections to the field and, consequently, to the colonial context and power dynamics at play. Conversely, these assemblages reflect the collector's values, preferences and cultural environment alone, and in such cases the European aspect of the collecting process is the only element that can be perceived. In order to incorporate the impact of the field, it is essential to analyse these artefacts from a perspective that extends beyond that of the collector. This study, therefore, examines artefacts collected by individuals active in the archipelago during the early colonial period, with the aim of exploring the extent to which the 'field' had direct or indirect influences within their collections.

This study draws on a range of resources, including published documents, photographs and other items relating to the collector and the archipelago. In pursuit of a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between the collector, the artefacts, the New Hebrides and ni-Vanuatu, both published and unpublished materials are included alongside the artefacts themselves. Furthermore, photographic materials pertaining to the collectors or associated artefacts facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the collectors' influence and agency, as embodied in their assemblages. Furthermore, relevant archival sources provide additional information.

The collectors in question were French citizens or British subjects, occupying roles such as officers, colonial administrators, scholars, or a combination thereof. The initial case study is dedicated to the examination of the experiences of Lieutenant Alphonse Pineau, who joined a French military expedition in 1886 and spent a considerable amount of time in the archipelago. The second case study concerns the French zoologist Philippe François. François initially studied coral reefs in New Caledonia and subsequently participated in several French expeditions to the New Hebrides between 1888 and 1890, and from June to December, he led a private expedition. The third case study concerns Henry Boyle Townshend Somerville, who served as a hydrographer on HMS *Dart* and contributed to a survey of the archipelago in June to December 1890 and in 1891. The final case study concerns Louis-Joseph Bouge, a French colonial administrator who held the position of Colonial Secretary during the establishment of the Condominium and led an expedition to the islands in 1912. Further details may be found in Bouge's archive on the Condominium

Convention and photo album. The period under examination in these case studies spans from 1886 to 1912, with a nine-year interval between the initial three collectors and Bouge.

The methodological approach is informed by previous methodologies, including the Papua New Guinea Museum and Research Institute case studies (Knowles and Gosden, 2007), which examine artefact assemblages within a colonial context. This approach permits an examination of the ‘structure of colonial culture’ within which these artefacts were situated (Grosden and Knowles, 2001: 167). This approach also enables an interdisciplinary dialogue between different sources, allowing for the use of multiple methods. The artefact assemblages are subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analysis, with museum Excel spreadsheets serving as sources of statistical data. This data is analysed according to various criteria, including the dates of entry and the composition of the assemblages in accordance with nineteenth-century typologies. The categories and types introduced in the general introduction to this thesis are applied here, with a focus on ‘weapons’ and ‘body ornaments’ as defined by typologies of the period (British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1874: 122) and Pitt Rivers’ typological approach. It should be noted that there is a slight discrepancy in terminology between this thesis and *Notes and queries on anthropology, for the use of travellers and residents in uncivilized lands* (1874). In this thesis, the term ‘body ornament’ corresponds to ‘personal ornament’ in the cited guide, which in turn includes head ornament, body ornament, and so forth. The application of these categories enables the artefacts to be repositioned within the theoretical and intellectual framework of the nineteenth century. Although this terminology may no longer be standard, terms such as ‘adornment’ may be preferred where categories remain unchanged or are no longer in use.

To provide a more nuanced view of collectors’ assemblages, artefact types are also examined. Quantitative analysis is extended to broader assemblages in order to explore whether Vanuatu artefacts reflect broader collecting practices or unique interests. This categorisation is based on museum data, with the addition of direct examination of artefacts wherever possible. As previously stated in the introduction, this statistical approach accounts for analytical limitations and allows for a more nuanced discussion of collection composition. Furthermore, the categorisation is considered from a broader perspective in order to facilitate more accurate identification of artefacts such as clubs and spears. The statistical results are

contextualised within the colonial context, and an artefact-oriented analysis is employed to highlight specificities within assemblages.

Although the use of nineteenth and early twentieth century categories to analyse collections is open to debate, it remains a valuable tool for understanding collectors' narratives and their role within the assemblages. It is important to acknowledge, however, that these categories reflect a European perspective that may not be entirely consistent with the original meanings or contexts of these artefacts in Vanuatu. In Part III of this thesis, an attempt will be made to conduct a less Eurocentric analysis in order to further explore the potential ni-Vanuatu narratives and agency within these assemblages.

In the following chapters, several institutions will be referenced using the following abbreviations: Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro (MET), Musée National des Arts d'Afrique et d'Océanie (MNAAO), Musée de l'Homme (MH), Musée du Quai Branly Jacques Chirac (MQB), Musée d'Archéologie Nationale (MAN), Pitt Rivers Museum (PRM), Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres (MBAC) and the British Museum (BM).

Chapter 3: Alphonse Pineau's Assemblage

Pierre Eugène Alphonse Pineau was born on 23 December 1858 in Rochefort (France) and died on 1 December 1927 in Saint-Savinien (France). He pursued a military career, first enlisting in the 3rd 'Régiment d'Infanterie Marine' (RIMa) on 5 May 1879. He then joined the Saint-Maixent military school in 1883, where he reached the rank of sub-lieutenant, before joining the 3rd RIMa in New Caledonia on 1 January 1885. During this period, Pineau was twice sent to the New Hebrides for a few months with other military contingents stationed in New Caledonia. During his expeditions in the archipelago, Pineau acquired artefacts and participated in local social networks, which led to an ethnographic study published as a paper divided in two parts, co-authored with the military surgeon Alfred Hagen, and the constitution of an assemblage of artefacts (86), some of which were drawn as illustrations alongside photographs in the ethnographic paper (Hagen and Pineau, 1889).⁴⁹

Pineau's assemblage, currently stored in the MQB, is composed almost exclusively of artefacts from the archipelago. In comparison to other assemblages that arrived later,⁵⁰ this set is limited in size. However, based on the information currently available, it appears to be one of the earliest assemblages comprising a significant number of artefacts from the New Hebrides to enter museum collections in France.⁵¹ This collection is connected to the two expeditions referred to in the co-authored paper (Hagen and Pineau, 1889) and coincides with the period when a French military expedition was carried out in New Hebrides, leaving New Caledonia on 1 June 1886. The official aim of the military expedition was to provide protection for French settlers in the archipelago, following the murder of a French official in the same year (SHD.15H127.GR9M158).

49 Dr Alfred Hagen was a surgeon based in New Caledonia who appears to have been part of the military contingent sent to the New Hebrides (Hagen and Pineau, 1889; Hagen, 1892a,b,c,d, 1893a,b,c; Cawsey, 1998: 341). From 1890 to 1891, Hagen is employed by the New Caledonia government to supervise the recruiting of labourers from the New Hebrides by French vessels. In 1900 he received the distinction of the French Légion d'Honneur due to his services in the Pacific region, of which his associated folder is available online at: <https://www.leonore.archives-nationales.culture.gouv.fr/ui/notice/179692>.

50 Philippe François, for example, donated 163 artefacts from the archipelago to the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro (MET) a few years later, in 1893 according to data provided by the MQB. See chapter 4.

51 Prior to the Pineau donations, museum collections had already been received with assemblages of artefacts from the archipelago, however, on a more limited scale, with fewer artefacts. The only exception to this is the initial donation by John Higginson in 1883, which included 213 artefacts from the archipelago, of which over 179 were arrows and 19 bows and quivers. A comparative analysis of this assemblage will be presented later in this chapter.

French Military Actions and Pineau's involvement in the New Hebrides

Pineau's military records, as detailed in his *Légion d'Honneur* folder (L2165034), indicate that he was dispatched to the New Hebrides on 1 June 1886 and remained there until 2 November, a period of six months.⁵² His second expedition spanned almost seven months, from 14 March 1887 to 7 October 1887. Pineau's initial journey was associated with the establishment of two French military outposts in the archipelago, including the military station at Port Sandwich in Malekula. It can therefore be argued that his time in the archipelago was constrained by his military obligations, which shaped his itinerary and influenced his social interactions with both European and ni-Vanuatu.

In military orders from the archives of the '*Service Historique de la Défense*' in Vincennes (SHD 15H127 GR9M158 ordre VII.D.33.5.3 and VII.D.33.5.4 Vincennes), Captain Polliart, in charge of a special detachment of thirty-two soldiers from the 38th Company, was instructed aboard the vessel *La Dives* for deployment to Port-Havannah on Sandwich Island (now Efate, in Vanuatu). The document specifies that, upon arrival, Captain Polliart was to proceed without delay to the trading post of the *Compagnie Française des Nouvelles-Hebrides*. This illustrates the vital importance of the trading outpost for both settlers and the military, as well as John Higginson's influence, expressed in the reliance on the French military.⁵³ Furthermore, the letter specified that the Commandant would raise the French flag and work towards the trading post's protection, as well as the protection of the local population. It also outlined a complete prohibition on any actions that might be perceived as aggression, unless the safety of his men or the *Dives* ship were at risk (SHD 15H127 GR9M158 ordre VII.D.33.5.3). This was an attempt to mitigate as much as possible the military actions already perceived as transgressive. Furthermore, the text illustrates the tensions that existed between the various actors present in the field, including ni-Vanuatu, the French, and UK subjects. This hypothesis is supported by the author's evident need to emphasise the necessity for the military contingent to maintain a neutral stance.

52 Alphonse Pineau *Légion d'Honneur* folder is available at: <https://www.leonore.archives-nationales.culture.gouv.fr/ui/notice/299552>

53 As outlined in Chapter 1, John Higginson was a prominent figure in French colonial expansion in the New Hebrides. He was a critical in the history of Vanuatu's colonial period, establishing a major commercial enterprise in New Caledonia that achieved considerable success by the end of the 1860s. The establishment of the two French military stations, as well as the Marist missionary enterprise, was substantially influenced by him (Higginson, 1926: 25–27; Thompson, 2000: 40; Delbos, 2001: 96–98).

Two military stations were subsequently established, and the archives in SHD Vincennes provide comprehensive details regarding the specific requirements of each station, the challenges associated with selecting their locations, and the two military forces that would comprise each station. While the composition of the military force is well established in the archives, the only names thus far provided are those of the captain in charge and, for each station, the lieutenants. In archive SHD 15H127 GR9M158, ordre VII.D.33.5.4, it is stated with precision that Lieutenant Pineau will be working with Lieutenant Henry, who is the same Henry mentioned in the journal of one of the four Marist fathers sent late in the year of 1886 with the military contingent to initiate Catholic missions in the New Hebrides, namely Father Gaudet (Gaudet, 1992: 10–12).

In March 1887, Father Gaudet's Journal of the Malekula mission, established at Bay Banam, makes mention of Pineau (spelled 'Pinault') being placed in charge of the station to replace M. Henry:

“Saturday 19th, My journey to Port-Sandwich: the following morning, the arrival of *La Dives*, the new commander Mr. Daze. Mr. Henry is replaced at the post by Mr. Pinault.” (Gaudet, 1992: 12)⁵⁴

In the same journal, Father Gaudet also provided a detailed account of several incidents that occurred while Pineau was in command. These included accounts of murder cases between ni-Vanuatu, which Gaudet indicated were falling under Pineau's authority:

“Near Port-Sandwich, the murder of a Mallicolo and a Dravail by four Penap, and by four others using a Schneider rifle. Investigation by Lieutenant Pinault. Shortly before, an orphan was killed by a chief to stop the rain.”⁵⁵

This extract illustrates that during his posting to Vanuatu, Pineau engaged in social interactions with the ni-Vanuatu at a time when he held and exercised military authority. Consequently, he was inevitably perceived as having some form of influence in the localities

54 Text in French: “Samedi 19, Mon voyage a Port-Sandwich: le lendemain matin, arrivée de la Dives, nouveau commandant Monsieur Daze. Monsieur Henry est remplacé au poste par Monsieur Pinault.”

55 Original text in French: “*Près de Port-Sandwich, assassinat d'un Mallicolo, d'un Dravail par quatre Penap, par quatre autres a coups de sneider. Enquête du Lieutenant Pinault. Peu avant, assassinat d'un orphelin par un chef pour arrêter la pluie.*” (G, 1992: 12).

where he intervened, which is likely to have influenced his access to certain artefacts and the circumstances in which he was able to obtain them. On 20 April 1887, *La Dives* arrived, resulting in Pineau being replaced by Picard as commander of the station (Gaudet, 1992: 12).

Pineau's expedition resulted in the collection of artefacts and the publication of an article co-authored by him and the military surgeon Dr Alfred Hagen. However, it appears that other individuals involved in the 1886 military expedition also contributed to the historical record, such as Felix Gaillard and Emile Cailliot, who can be linked to the published article or the expedition itself.⁵⁶

Assemblage Itineraries

The precise itinerary of the Pineau collection remains unclear. It seems that the assemblage, which was presented in two donations to the Musée du Trocadéro as “fetishes and warlike symbols; dresses and jewellery; objects for domestic and industrial use; weapons and musical instruments; a canoe and its accessories” (Jacquemin, 1991: 105), was originally intended for the Musée Naval, which was then housed in the Louvre.⁵⁷ This is evidenced by the correspondence between Pineau and the Musée Naval that he initiated in 1888 to ascertain the museum's interest in receiving his donation. Despite the museum's initial interest in the collection, the already considerable number of artefacts in the ethnographic section presented a challenge, resulting in the rejection of the donation. Instead, Lieutenant Pineau was advised to contact the Ethnographic Museum of the Trocadéro (MET) (Jacquemin, 1991: 105).

56 It can be postulated that Eugène Auguste Charles Cailliot, a surgeon in the New Caledonia, was also part of the military contingent dispatched to the New Hebrides in 1886. This hypothesis is corroborated by the correspondence of 19 January 1887, published in the MET Journal, which refers to certain cultural practices at Malekula and the dispatch of artefacts to the museum by Cailliot (1887). Further information can be found in the military file of Eugène Auguste Charles Cailliot, held at the SHD Vincennes (reference GR 5 YE 18072). Similarly, the photo album (n°PA000165) in the MQB with views dated 1887 and entitled ‘*Voyage of doctor Gaillard, surgeon of the national navy, in the New Hebrides*’, provides evidence that Felix Gaillard was also part of the military contingent sent to the New Hebrides. A letter from Gaillard's father to the curator of the MET dated 23 May 1890, which was included within the album, suggests that it may have been acquired by the museum around this time. Further information can be found in the online database at: <https://collections.quaibranly.fr/>.

57 Original text in French : “*Fétiches et emblèmes de guerre; costumes et parures; objets servant à l'alimentation et à l'industrie; armes et instruments de musique; une pirogue et ses accessoires*”.

The MQB database records the various itineraries of the artefacts that constitute the assemblage, with two significant donations that appear to be linked to the MET and subsequently to the Musée de l'Homme (MH). The initial accession of twenty artefacts to the MET was made in 1890, followed by a second donation of sixty-three artefacts, which were accessioned in 1893. Nevertheless, it appears that while the Naval Museum did not intend to accession artefacts from Pineau's donation, some artefacts eventually arrived in the institution (Jacquemin 1991: 104). The only artefacts thus far identified as having been in the Naval Museum is the mat from Efate (MQB n°72.53.317), and it seems probable that this also applies to the mask from MQB, number 72.84.435. While the link with the Naval Museum is well established for the first artefacts, as the database records an inventory number (inventory B, number 3478) from the Naval Museum inventory made by André Morel Fatio, who was curator at the Naval Museum, the link between the Naval Museums and the mask is less tangible and rests on a common trajectory recorded in the database with the previous artefact, with both being transferred to the Musée d'Archéologie Nationale (MAN) and the MNAAO. Furthermore, the correspondence preserved in the archives of the MQB indicates that Pineau donated a skull to the Natural History Museum of Rochefort, the town of his hometown (MQB n°D001172_36080, dated of 12 July 1888).

Pineau had initiated a correspondence with the curator of the MET regarding the publication of the ethnographic study he had co-authored, the associated proof drawings, and the collection of artefacts (MQB archive no. D001172-36080: letter dated 12 May 1888).⁵⁸ Despite the fact that the collection donated to the Trocadéro Museum and currently held at the MQB is documented, no evidence could be found in the MQB archives to suggest that the proof drawings used to illustrate the article were ever held at the museum.⁵⁹ However, a search for a mask depicted in the article but absent from the collection of artefacts donated by Pineau led to the identification of a drawing of the same mask (see figure 9). This ultimately enabled the identification of a set of drawings that were identical to those found in the jointly authored study (Hagen and Pineau, 1889). Nevertheless, the paper is not referenced in the online database, and no link has been established between the co-authors and the drawings. While it is not possible to ascertain the identity of the artist with the

58 The letter transcript and translation is available further down in the section discussing the article. See pp 128.

59 The term "memoir" is used by Hagen to describe the co-authored ethnographical study (Archive MQB D001172_36079).

information currently available, the relationship between the article and the drawings is nevertheless evident. The notes and provenance details associated with the drawings are consistent with those of the article and the artefacts. A further examination of the mask revealed that a similar mask, currently held in the MQB collections under inventory number 71.1944.0.28 X, shows a strong resemblance to the one depicted in the article.⁶⁰ However, as with the drawings, no links have yet been made in the online database between Pineau, Hagen and this object.

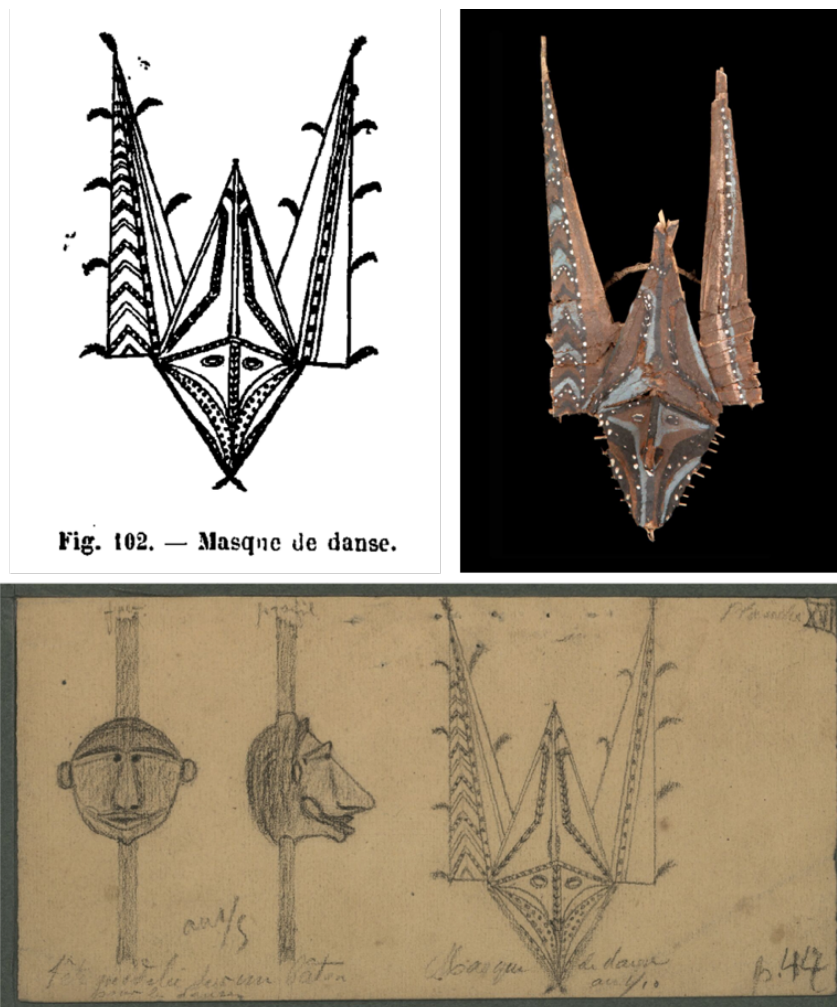


Figure 9: Illustration showing, on the upper left, the illustration of mask figure 102 in the article published by Age and Pineau (1889:359), on the right, the mask in the MQB, formerly accessioned as 71.1944.0.28X and now accessioned as 71.1890.41.18, and below, plate XVI (MQB n°Z689532), part of a series of drawings preserved in the MQB. ©The photographs are the property of the Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac.

60 Following correspondence with the Quai Branly Museum curator, Dr Stéphanie Leclerc-Caffarel, it was confirmed that the mask n° 71.1944.0.28 X was part of Pineau's collection given in 1890. Subsequently, the online database was updated and the mask was reattached to its original museum number, 71.1890.41.18.

Assemblage composition in the Musée d’Ethnographie du Trocadéro

The overall assemblage donated by Pineau to the MET comprises 86 artefacts from Vanuatu, with one from the United States, twelve from the Solomon Islands, one from Papua New Guinea and one from the Samoan Islands.⁶¹ As previously established, there is a strong correlation between the artefacts’ assemblage and the article illustrations with at least eleven of the twenty artefacts of the 1890 donation to the MET which are represented and the same number for the second donations of sixty-two artefacts. This seems to indicate that while the MET published the co-written ethnographical study by Hagen and Pineau, the museum did not at that time acquire the entire set of artefacts represented in the study.

In his correspondence with the MET curator, Ernest-Théodore Hamy, preserved in the MQB (D001172/36080, letter of 12 May 1888), Pineau presents the artefact assemblage proposed for donation as a comprehensive selection, as material resources to support the ethnographic study he intended to publish. This link drawn by Pineau serves to illustrate the significance he attributed to the interconnection between the ethnographic study and the artefact assemblage, thereby suggesting that they were perceived as a unified and comprehensive set. This also indicates that the two donations of artefact assemblages to the MET Museum may not have been the initiative of the collector, but rather a curatorial decision.

61 The artefact number 71.1893.34.44, attributed to the United States, is listed as originating from Hawaii. However, it is probable that this artefact has been mislabelled and is more likely to have originated from Vanuatu, as it is analogous to a seaweed-plaited belt from Nguna Island, North Efate, donated by Henry Boyle Somerville to the PRM (n°1893.27.10) (see Chapter 5). This hypothesis is consistent with the provenance attributed in the accompanying drawings and illustrations in the published ethnographical paper, which indicates the artefact in question as originating from Sandwich Island, one of the previous names for Efate. Artefacts from the archipelago in the Pineau assemblage can be accessed via the online database, where they are catalogued under the following museum numbers: 71.1890.39.14; 71.1890.41.1 to 20; 71.18. 90.63.1 to 7; 71.1893.1 to 74; 72.53.317 and 72.84.435.

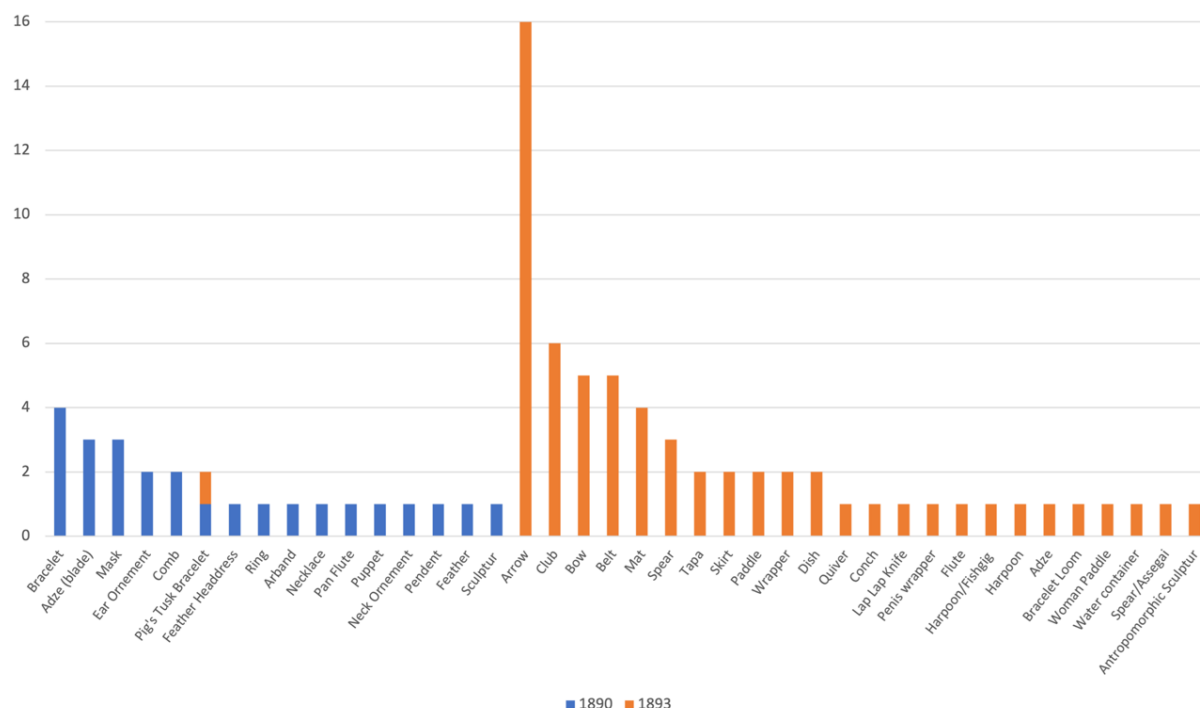


Figure 10: The following graph represents the composition of Pineau's assemblages as they entered the Trocadéro over time.

This hypothesis is further supported by an examination of the composition of the two sets of artefacts received in 1890 and 1893. Examination of the two sets of artefacts reveals that there is no overlap between them, apart from the pig's tusk (see graph figure 10). This indicates that the initial donation was not merely a reduction to represent the entire collection, nor was it a summary; rather, it was a division based on a well-considered selection. It is therefore pertinent to question the rationale behind the division of the collection, particularly given that it was a compilation of artefacts selected to illustrate a study published by the museum. One hypothesis is that the Pineau collection was taken to complete an earlier donation made by John Higginson in 1883.⁶² In contrast to Pineau's collection, Higginson's is characterised by a preponderance of arrows. Out of 213 objects, more than 179 are arrows and 19 bows and quivers. This indicates that 91% of Higginson's 1883 donation is related to archery (see graph figure 11). The remaining artefacts consist of

62 Two further donations from John Higginson were received by the museum in 1890 and 1893. The additional collections are less extensive and have a different composition. It is also important to note that, according to Sylviane Jacquemin (1991: 207), Higginson's donation was compulsory. This was an obligation to repay the French government for its involvement in his business in the New Hebrides through his New Hebrides Company. Further research would no doubt help shed light on this matter.

eight spears, three bracelets, two feather headdresses, a club and a neck ornament. Despite the collection's considerable size, it was likely deemed insufficiently diverse to adequately represent Vanuatu in a national museum. In contrast, it can be observed that although Pineau's overall assemblage also includes, however in smaller numbers, arrows, clubs, bows and spears, none of these were part of the 1890 donation (see graph figure 10 and pie chart figure 12). All artefacts classified as weapons from a European perspective are part of the later 1893 donation. Instead, the artefacts entering the museum in 1890 are predominantly body ornaments and masks. It appears these were likely acquired to complement John Higginson's collection, which was so heavily oriented towards weaponry.⁶³

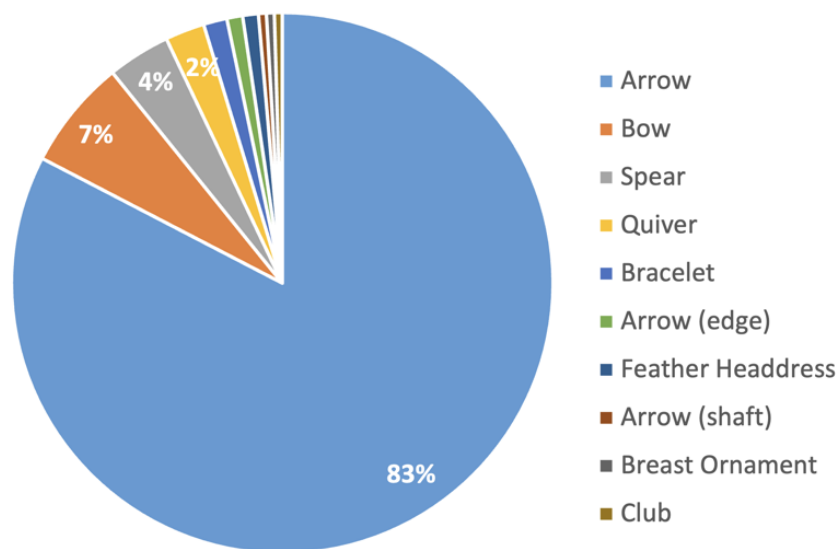


Figure 11: Composition of John Higginson's collection which entered the Trocadéro Museum, registered in 1883.

⁶³ Concurrent with the initial Pineau donation in 1890, another assemblage of 35 artefacts from Vanuatu was donated by Eugène Auguste Charles Caillot and registered in the same year (MQB inventory numbers: 71.1890.39.1 to 3, 71.1890.39.6 to 20, 71.1890.39.22 to 23, and 71.1890.88.1.1 to 71.1890.88.1.11). Similarly, a second donation associated with Caillot was registered in 1893 (MQB inventory numbers: 71.1893.26.1 to 16). It should be noted, however, that a discrepancy has emerged since the update of the online database in September 2024. The Excel information provided by the MQB Museum differs from the online information in that the former lists artefacts associated with Eugène Auguste Charles Caillot as having been donated by Émile Amédée Caillot.

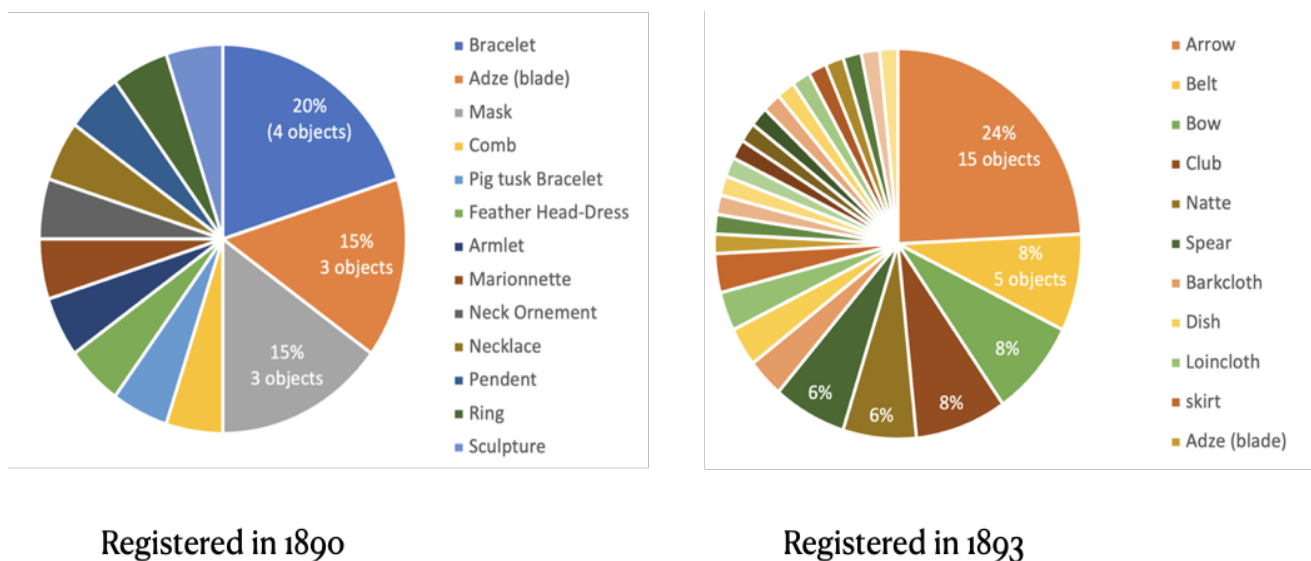


Figure 12: Compositions of Alphonse Pineau's collections accessioned by the Trocadéro Museum.

Higginson's 1883 donation seems to reflect the collector's particular colonial interests, comprising 157 artefacts from Efate Island, 18 from Aoba, eight from Espiritu Santo, seven from Malekula and six of unknown provenance. These areas were under colonial influence at the time, with Efate being the main European settlement and the primary administrative hub of the Higginson Company in New Hebrides. As a result, opportunities to represent the cultural diversity of the archipelago's inhabitants was limited. In contrast, the 1890 donation from Pineau is primarily composed of artefacts from Malekula (nine artefacts), Efate (two artefacts), Aoba (Ambae; two artefacts), Maevo (one artefact), Malo (one artefact) and four unprovenanced artefacts, showing a different distribution of origin places. This pattern also occurs when considering the complete set of artefacts from the two accession years, 1890 and 1893. Pineau's assemblage has a greater number of unprovenanced objects (29), also includes 23 recorded as originating from Malekula (including the nine previously mentioned). This is consistent with the fact that Pineau was initially posted to, and subsequently in charge of, a military outpost on the island, which would have provided him with the opportunity to acquire objects in the field. The remaining assemblage comprises a slightly smaller number of objects from Efate (14), which is consistent with Pineau's military itinerary in the New Hebrides when the military contingent remained in Efate for a period before being dispatched to establish the stations at Malekula. A small number of objects from Aoba, Pentecost, Ambrym, Espiritu Santo, Maevo, Epi, Erromango and Malo are also

included in the assemblage, which could be suggesting that Pineau either participated in a military tour of the islands or acquired them in Malekula or Efate. Consequently, the overall Pineau assemblage enabled the MET to encompass artefacts from various islands, thereby providing a more comprehensive representation of the region.

Furthermore, it is notable that while some types of artefacts in the assemblage are present in numerous other collections, there are particular items that are less common, such as the necklace with MQB inventory number 71.1890.41.14, included in the 1890 donation (further discussion in Chapter 8). A comparable object (BM inventory number: Oc.7922) was acquired by the BM in 1870, having been donated by Julius Brenchley. It is reasonably assumed that Brenchley acquired this artefact between 16 and 18 August 1865, while he was on board HMS *Curaçoa* (Brenchley, 1873: 217-218). A comparable neck ornament was also identified in the Boyle Somerville collection, which was made during his travels to Vanuatu in 1890 and 1891. The provenance indicated for this artefact in Pineau's assemblage is Mele, which corresponds to an island and, more generally, an area in the south of Efate Island. The presence of this artefact may indicate that Pineau visited the area, probably during a French expedition, to gather information on the Port-Vila area and to assess the potential need for a small military outpost at that location (SHD 15H127 GR9M158). A few months after the establishment of the military outpost in port-Havannah, the ship *La Dives* arrived in the area, accompanied by the Marist missionaries Father Le Forestier and Father Chaboissier, who was later replaced by Father Désiré, as well as four individuals from New Caledonia, François, Philippe, Simon and Casimir (Monnier, 1987: 13). Attempts were made for almost a year to establish a mission on Mele Island, but they were unsuccessful. While the mission was ultimately abandoned, it is worth noting that there were already some settlers in the area (Monnier, 1987: 20).

Another noteworthy and uncommon artefact present in Pineau's assemblage is a necklace with a pig's tail attached to it (MQB n°71.1890.41.10). Rare artefacts of this kind are usually found in the collections of individuals who had responsibility or authority, including colonial authority, such as Louis-Joseph Bouge. Subsequently, Felix Speiser also acquired artefacts with pig tails, indicating that individuals with connections to those in positions of authority in the New Hebrides were also able to gain access to such artefacts. This element appears to be exclusively associated with body ornaments, as observed through the examined

collections. Additionally, information gathered during my fieldwork suggests that a pig's tail holds a specific significance. In discussions with Kirk Hauffman, who has done extensive research on Malekula, it became evident that the local population views pig tails as a decorative element. Furthermore, a VKS fieldworker from Tanna has indicated that pig's tails on the island are regarded as valuable symbols of social status and are not accessible to any individual without the requisite status. Moreover, a study of ethnographic material by Bernard Vienne on Mota Lava Island indicates that a specific grade of the secret society of the Suqe is associated with the pig's tail (Vienne, 1984: 347–349), a similar valuation to that found on Tanna Island. It can therefore be surmised that pig tails are items of limited distribution, and their presence in an assemblage may indicate that the individual in question has engaged in specific social interactions with ni-Vanuatu, shaped by the underlying power dynamics. It is also possible to consider the hypothesis that pig tails may have been attached to artefacts by Vanuatu prior to exchange, conferring a distinctive value that was not intended for all.

Pineau's Ethnographical paper

The co-authored article appears to correlate with the assemblage of artefacts donated in two sets to the MET, the publisher of the ethnographic study. In this regard, the published article can be viewed as a component of the assemblage constituted by Pineau, underscoring the necessity to gain a more nuanced understanding of the narratives and connections between the study and the artefacts, as well as Pineau's underlying agendas. The study, entitled *Les Nouvelles-Hébrides, études ethnographiques*, was published in the 'Revue d'ethnographie du Trocadéro' in 1889. It was co-authored by Lieutenant Pineau, who was mainly covering for the Malekula sections, and surgeon Hagen, who addressed mainly aspects relating to Efate (Hagen and Pineau, 1889). This work preceded the arrival of the first collection of artefacts at the MET. It is relevant to mention that in same volume in which Hagen and Pineau's study was published also included a paper on the New Hebrides written by Gustave Glaumont, a colonial administrator who joined Philippe François's expedition in 1889-1890 and who subsequently donated artefacts to museums (see Chapter 4 and Glaumont, 2013). This demonstrates a growing interest at the MET in the archipelago as a result of increasing European presence there.

The ‘memoir’, as Pineau designated it in his correspondence, was intended by the authors to fill the gaps in the scientific documentation of the New Hebrides and to rectify the inaccuracies in previous publications on the archipelago. The text was augmented with a number of illustrations, including drawings of artefacts, the majority of which were included in the assemblage donated in two sets by Pineau to the MET.⁶⁴ The artefacts are currently stored at the MQB in Paris.

The publication includes photographic illustrations, the provenance of which is not indicated in the text. However, it appears that these images are reproductions of photographs taken by Felix Gaillard, a naval surgeon based in Nouméa. The collection of photographs forms part of an album on the ‘New Hebrides’, which was acquired by the Trocadéro in 1890 and is dated 1887. This suggests that Felix Gaillard was one of the three military surgeons dispatched from New Caledonia to New Hebrides as part of the military contingent that participated in the 1886 military expedition. This hypothesis is further supported by the presence in the album of photographs described as representing two military stations, the Port-Sandwich post and the Port-Havannah post, which correspond to the stations set up at Efate and Malekula during the 1886 expedition (see Appendix C, Port-Sandwich). Nevertheless, as with the proof drawings illustrating the paper, there appears to be no record in the MQB online database of the connection between Pineau and Hagen’s ethnographic study and the photographs, or indeed between these and the military expeditions.

In the introduction to the co-authored memoir, the authors provide a general overview of the archipelago and its initial contact with Europeans, as well as a detailed account of the tragic incident that resulted in the death of La Pérouse at Vanikoro in the Santa Cruz islands, a group north of Vanuatu that is now part of The Solomon Islands. Although this episode did not relate directly to the New Hebrides, attention to such a celebrated event was no doubt intended to attract the close attention of the reader. The authors then proceeded to outline European activities in the islands, emphasising the limited knowledge about them at the time of writing. In this context, they present their work as a contribution to the existing knowledge gap, but also as a corrective to published material, with a specific critique of M. H. Le

64 Fifteen drawings could be associated to Pineau’s assemblage of which the MQB inventory numbers for the designated drawings are as follows: Z689530 to 33, Z689538 to 42, Z887643, Z887950, Z887955, Z887957, Z887961, Z887965. Further information can be found at the following link: <https://collections.quai-branly.fr/>

Chartier's book (1885) on the subject.⁶⁵ They accuse Le Chartier of basing his arguments on observations made from the deck of a ship rather than on the ground, according to another individual who was also on board the same ship at the time, a certain 'Mac' (Hagen and Pineau, 1889: 303).

The antipathy expressed towards M. Le Chartier may be less a consequence of actual 'inaccuracies' about New Hebrides, as highlighted by the authors, as their view of his role in the colonisation of Vanuatu and as the colonial officer responsible for the emigration of French citizens to the New Hebrides. Critiques of Le Chartier's text extended beyond those expressed by Pineau and Hagen. Similarly, Imhaus (1890: 6) criticised the accuracy of Le Chartier's account of the anchorage at Tanna. In his 1894 book, Beaune (1894: 154) criticised Le Chartier for comparing the family organisation in Vanuatu, especially in Malo, with the Greek "gynécée" (Le Chartier, 1885: 272). Furthermore, Glaumont (1899; 2013: 79) noted that he had attempted, without success, to locate the ruins described by Le Chartier as the New Jerusalem of Queirós in Santo. These specific emphases by several authors illustrate internal tensions regarding French immigration to the archipelago. Consequently, they highlight the potential agendas that may have influenced Pineau and Hagen's article, which was supported by the artefact assemblages. Furthermore, it can be argued that the tensions over New Hebrides emerged as a consequence of the increasing colonial interest taken in the archipelago by France.

The authors provide a comprehensive list of the islands that constitute the archipelago, thereby emphasising that the study is a meticulous and comprehensive exploration and presentation of the New Hebrides. Although initially presented as such, the article then shifts its focus to two specific island cultures, of Malekula and Efate, which the authors argue can be extrapolated to the entire archipelago, their generalisations about New Hebridean cultures thus letting them fall into the errors that they were criticising in the work of Le Chartier. Pineau presents the cultures of Malekula as the subject of his two expeditions (Hagen and Pineau, 1889: 303), while Hagen addresses the cultures of Sandwich Island (Efate). The two islands are presented as the most significant in the archipelago, places where France had

65 In 1876, Henri Le Chartier undertook a tour of Vanuatu aboard the ship *Tanna*, during which he visited the islands of Aneityum, Tanna, Efate and Erromango. He was obliged to change vessels at Efate in order to proceed further into the archipelago, visiting Epi, Mallicolo, Ambrym, Pentecost, Santo, Aoba and Maewo.

already established a strong presence and held significant colonial interests. In this way, the authors seek to emphasise the importance and relevance of their work by linking it to France's interests and the established presence of its citizens in the region.

The paper then sets forth its argument by discussing Vanuatu's culture through a series of sections based on 'themes' such as "*Religious ideas and beliefs, agricultural practices, costumes and finery, food, housing, art and industry, etc.,*" (see Appendix D), thereby offering insight into the authors' categorisation of Vanuatu's material culture and cultural practices as they were conceived within the context of European scientific culture at the time. It is of interest to compare the approach taken by Pineau and Hagen to that of Henry Boyle Somerville (see Chapter 5), who visited the New Hebrides with the British Navy in 1890 and 1891 with the objective of carrying out a hydrographic survey. Subsequently, Somerville published two papers, one an ethnographic study (Somerville, 1894a; 1894b) as well as a book on his experiences as a 'chart maker' (1928).

A comparative analysis of the three papers (Hagen and Pineau, 1889; Somerville, 1894a; 1894b) demonstrates the contrasting approaches adopted by the authors. In this regard, while linguistics is addressed as a secondary topic following a comprehensive environmental description in Pineau's co-authored study, it is not addressed in Somerville's papers. In contrast, the topic of population decline is introduced, a subject that is not present in Pineau's paper. Similarly, the issue of labour recruitment is treated as a third topic in Pineau's study and is absent from Somerville's articles, although it is addressed later in his book. It can thus be seen that the order of priority is different and arguably extends beyond the academic requirements of each country. Indeed, the above-mentioned topics, which are accorded priority in Pineau's article, are significant considerations in the context of emigration of settlers. It can therefore be seen that the organisation of Hagen and Pineau's article emphasises an agenda that extends beyond the confines of academic interest.

While Pineau and Hagen's publications and Somerville's may diverge on certain points, they also exhibit overlap on others when cultural descriptions and analyses are taken into account. The categorisation of material culture may be approached in a number of ways, for example, by reference to religious beliefs, agricultural practices, clothing and ornaments, food, housing and cannibalism. It is also important to note that the categorisation of material

culture is approached differently in each case. Whereas Pineau and Hagen's article primarily categorises material culture into broader groups, Somerville dedicates a greater degree of attention to this and a multitude of other categories, as will be explained in Chapter 5.

A further noteworthy distinction between the articles is that Somerville's first contribution is more concentrated on specific cultural practices that have had a profound impact on him, and to which he devotes a substantial portion of his work. The second article is more expansive in scope and employs a more traditional reportorial and documentary approach, which would be expected from a naval officer, and follows a more conventional analytical methodology. It is also noteworthy that there is a difference in reliance on illustrations. In contrast to Somerville's limited use of illustrations, Hagen and Pineau employ a more comprehensive visual representation of their subject. Their article is illustrated extensively, whereas Somerville's first article, which focuses exclusively on Malekula, contains only four images. It is also noteworthy that Hagen and Pineau include an extensive word list at the beginning of the article, which demonstrates a practical and detailed approach and concern. In conclusion, an analysis of the articles in question reveals that while Hagen and Pineau's article intends to be a scholarly ethnographic study, it is nevertheless significantly influenced by French colonial interests. This is discernible from the introductory remarks, which express discontent with M. Le Chartier's article for disseminating unreliable information to immigrant settlers, to the practical advice provided, including language tools and ethnographic information on the populations of the two islands where France has strongest interests.

An examination of the archival correspondence preserved in the MQB provides further insight into the rationale behind Pineau's decision to contribute to the article and to assemble and donate the collection as stated in the following letter addressed to the MET curator:

"Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I have been authorised by an official dispatch dated 7th May to publish the memoir on the Hebrides which you are familiar with. It is at your disposal, and I will send it to you immediately if you can have it printed at once, so that you may make your request for the Officer of the Academy Cross on my behalf, in order for this distinction to be granted to me at the time you indicated to me (14th July). I have particular reasons for wishing to obtain it at that time.

I also have at your disposal the collection of all the objects mentioned in our study. I have labelled them all, and they are ready for me to send to you immediately, should you need them for the execution of the plates for your notice, as I mentioned in my last letter, to include in your report to the Minister of Public Instruction, if you believe that by proceeding in this way I may have a greater chance of obtaining a distinction which I greatly desire.

I have been offered the opportunity to publish our study in the *Revue maritime et coloniale*, but if your intervention is sufficient to secure the Academic Palms for me, I will only publish our study in the journal you direct.

I hope for a prompt reply and request that you accept the expression of my respectful sentiments.

A. Pineau

Lieutenant of Marine Infantry”

(MQB Archives n° D001172- 36080: letter dated 12th May 1888)⁶⁶

It is apparent from this correspondence that the article and Pineau’s ambitious desire for distinction are interrelated. Furthermore, the letter indicates that Pineau was motivated to pursue this distinction to advance his career. He articulated a clear intention to obtain it at a specific point in time for reasons that remain unidentified. It is noteworthy that despite Pineau’s presence in the South Pacific, specifically in New Caledonia for a period of 28 months and in the New Hebrides for 13 months, no evidence has been uncovered indicating the publication of ethnographic papers or the donation of assemblages of artefacts from the New Caledonia or any other islands by him, aside from the New Hebrides. It can thus be argued that the New Hebrides assemblage constituted an exception for Pineau, rather than a common practice. Furthermore, it may be suggested that he considered there were perhaps too many people writing about New Caledonia at the time, as opposed to Vanuatu, about which the authors felt little was known. As a result, the latter represented a more favourable opportunity for Pineau to obtain a distinction.

While Pineau used his time in Vanuatu for his own military advancement, it is also evident that he did so in accordance with a long-standing tradition largely observed by captains or higher-ranking naval officers. In doing so, he adopted an attitude befitting his high rank and positioned himself for promotion.

In 1861, the *Revue Maritime et Coloniale* was established and published by the government as a crucial instrument for the maritime and colonial lobby, as well as a pedagogical resource

66 The original letter in French can be found in the Appendix C.

for officers, offering instructions, methodologies, and recommendations. The 1876 edition of the same journal presented a new guide in the form of a translation of two books: the English guide, *A Manual of Scientific Enquiry Prepared for the Use of Officers in Her Majesty's Navy and Travellers in General*, which was re-edited in 1871, and the German guide, *Anleitung zu Wissenschaftlichen Beobachtungen auf Reisen, mit Besonderer Rücksicht auf die Bedürfnisse der Kaiserlichen Marine*, which was published in 1875. The resulting guide was published in two parts under the title *Observations Scientifiques dans les Voyages* (France, Ministère de la Marine et des Colonies, 1876). Its purpose was to assist captains and explorers in the accurate recording of information. The second part of the guide addresses the subjects of ethnology and medical anthropology. In particular, the article emphasises the vital necessity to document the environment in which populations reside. A second area of focus in the article is the necessity for a comprehensive examination of local weaponry. The comprehensive account is regarded as indispensable, as it furnishes invaluable data regarding the demographic characteristics and technological capabilities of the population, along with insights into the cultural practices, military traditions, and electoral processes associated with warfare. Of particular interest are the numerous references to populations from countries in Africa, as well as those in islands in Oceania, with a particular focus on Polynesia and New Caledonia. The guide then extends to other categories, including tools, clothing and body adornment, food and related tools and practices, the beverage industry, social life, beliefs and religion, and “institutions civiles et politiques” (France, Ministère de la marine et des colonies, 1876).

In the late nineteenth century, it appears that a shift occurred, with observations becoming the domain of military surgeons. This shift is further evidenced by the second author of Pineau's article, Hagen, who was also a surgeon, as well as Caillot's collection and study paper and Gaillard's photographic album, both of whom were surgeons operating in the region concurrently with Pineau.

The co-authorship with Hagen was most likely linked to this significant shift in the perceived role of naval surgeon, moving from a reliance on medical expertise alone to a broader recognition of their contributions to naval expeditions. This shift is exemplified by M. D. Olliver's address at the inauguration of the 1864-1865 academic year of the Naval Medical

School in Toulon, where he underscored the expanded scope of the naval surgeon's responsibilities:

“Well, gentlemen, on this solemn occasion, where I have the distinguished and perilous honour of addressing you on behalf of this School, I intend to consider the naval physician from the aspect by which he is least known. I shall endeavour to demonstrate that, through his numerous works, the value of which has been recognised by the Academies, he has made a significant contribution to the advancement of natural sciences and that he has honoured his role as a naturalist, just as he honours his duties as a physician, hygienist, and surgeon.

You will see, gentlemen, that with limited means, under the most inclement latitudes, braving all dangers, overcoming all difficulties, this modest pioneer of natural sciences has collected, preserved, and classified countless materials, which have helped to fill vast gaps. Furthermore, the observations, memoirs, and specialised treatises he has accompanied them with have illuminated problems that, without his efforts, might have remained, perhaps, unresolved.”

(Ollivier, 1864: 9)

In this speech, Oliver establishes the naval surgeon as a significant contributor to a long-standing scientific tradition, as evidenced by this extract, which portrays the naval surgeon as the successor to the naturalist. The crucial role of the surgeon in the field of ethnographic studies during the late nineteenth century was further supported by Quatrefage in his 1884 report for the Paris Natural History Museum. In this report, he states that:

“I believe it is necessary to note that out of ten individuals I have identified as having made the most significant contributions to the chair of anthropology, five are naval physicians. I am pleased to take this opportunity to emphasise how numerous and important are the services rendered to science by a multitude of members of the same corps.” (Quatrefage, 1884 quoted in Patin, 2019, para.1).

It is therefore essential to contextualise the co-authored article on the New Hebrides within this framework. In contributing with Hagen, a figure who was embedded within a larger scientific network and connected to anthropological networks in particular (Patin, 2019, para. 9), Pineau gained access to an academic network that would otherwise have been

inaccessible to him. In doing so, he became part of a long scientific tradition of the most prestigious scientific explorations. It should be mentioned that while Hagen continued to publish papers relating to the archipelago, no further publication such as the ethnographical study paper can be found authored by Pineau, on the archipelago or on any other place to which he was later dispatched. This further reinforces the singularity of the assemblage as a one-off practice, in contrast to the other case studies which will be presented in this thesis. Similarly, no information has yet been found on any possible acquisitions or assemblages in museums associated with Hagen.

Conclusion

The Pineau collection presents an insightful case study from a number of perspectives. Firstly, it can be considered one of the earliest major documented assemblages of Vanuatu artefacts in France. The collection was incorporated into the Trocadéro Museum following its original destination to the Naval Museum at the Louvre. The original collection is now housed at the Quai Branly Museum. The artefacts appear to be tied to an ethnographic study, co-written with the surgeon Hagen, which emphasises their documentary aspect. This is reflected in the composition of the assemblage, with few examples per category and no more than one of each type, thus giving the collection a representative scientific dimension.

Another significant aspect illuminated by the Pineau collection is its connection to the highly contentious colonial context in which some of the artefacts were acquired. Pineau participated actively in the French military contingent dispatched to Malekula in 1886 with the objective of establishing a French military station. This action violated the agreement established in 1878 with the British regarding the New Hebrides. This decisive incident subsequently resulted in both countries reaffirming their neutral stance, which led to the establishment of a new naval agreement in 1887. The circumstances and role of the collector, Pineau, allowed him to gain access to artefacts that were rarely seen in collections of artefacts from the archipelago. The collection thus resulted from a distinct colonial period, during which lobbying and interest in the archipelago in France increased significantly, coinciding with the Universal Exhibition of 1889. The much-anticipated exhibition, which

followed the successful one of 1879, resulted in the establishment of the MET and the advancement of French anthropology.

Another aspect highlighted by the study is the singularity of the ‘single collection’, donated in two parts, that was assembled by Pineau and which is characterised by its distinctive composition. Indeed, this assemblage of artefacts is not inscribed in the collector’s habit of acquiring artefacts; rather, it represents a temporal practice that seems to be correlated with the career of the collector. It is noteworthy that Pineau spent the majority of his time in New Caledonia (28 months) rather than Vanuatu (13 months). However, no evidence could be found to suggest that he donated any artefacts from New Caledonia to institutions during this period. This peculiarity, when considered alongside Pineau’s aspirations regarding his career, indicates that Pineau perceived greater potential for advancing in his career through the increase of knowledge about the New Hebrides than about New Caledonia.

Although Pineau’s New Hebrides collection and the article he co-authored represent the only contributions of this kind known from him to date, it has been demonstrated that Pineau aligned himself with a long tradition of senior military officers or surgeons engaging with individuals and practices of a higher rank than Pineau’s own. In this way, he displayed the attributes that are crucial for advancement and the attainment of new positions and distinctions. The acquisition of New Hebrides material and co-publication of an academic paper appear to be strategies linked to his professional ambitions for distinctions and advancement. This is corroborated by his correspondence with Hamy, the curator of the Trocadéro Museum, and substantiated by his donation of a substantial and noteworthy collection of material to the museum. Upon completion of his duties in Vanuatu, Pineau returned to France with the rank of lieutenant, having been decorated for his services. He would continue to distinguish himself throughout the rest of his career, eventually attaining the rank of general and being decorated with the Legion of Honour (Archives National, Base Léonore, notice L2165034).

Chapter 4: Philippe François

Philippe François was born in Saumur, Maine-et-Loire, France, on 23 November 1859, and died in Paris on 13 March 1908, aged forty-eight, from an illness he had contracted during his expedition to the Pacific. François was a French academic who became involved in colonial affairs in the archipelago, despite having originally not intended to travel to nor to conduct research in the New Hebrides. This case study illuminates the intricate realities of conducting research in the archipelago during the late nineteenth century. Dr. François stands out as one of the earliest trained academic researchers to explore the archipelago, preceding subsequent expeditions by notable figures such as Felix Speiser (1910 to 1912), Rivers and John Layard (1914).

The study additionally offers insights into the academic landscape in France during the late nineteenth century and the New Hebrides' position within it. Furthermore, it provides an understanding of the colonial dynamics that led to the presence of Vanuatu's material culture in France. Partial transcripts of Dr François's diaries from his initial expeditions made by François Bouyssi and published in the appendix of his doctoral thesis, provide additional context for the study of the assemblage of things relating to François's time in the archipelago and shed light on the acquisition of artefacts during one of the most transformative periods in Vanuatu's history.

The assemblage which is the focus of this chapter is the set of objects donated by Philippe François to the Trocadéro Museum and now preserved in the MQB, which, according to the online database and information provided by the MQB, comprises some 163 artefacts from the archipelago, 32 from the Solomon Islands, four from New Caledonia, four from Polynesia and three from Micronesia.⁶⁷ While he donated a large collection of Vanuatu artefacts to the Trocadéro making it the third largest set of artefacts from the archipelago in France at the time, he also kept a large part of his original assemblage. This private Oceanian collection, comprising some 900 artefacts, and a large collection of photographs, were sold

⁶⁷ There is a difference between the online database of 132 Vanuatu objects and the information provided directly by the MQB. This is partly because the museum has access to more information internally, but also because some database entries may include more than one artefact.

at auction, the artefacts in 2002 in a joint venture between the Tajan and Drouot auction house (Hôtel Drouot, 2002).⁶⁸ The photographs were sold later in a second auction in 2005, of which no further information could be found beside the MQB archives relating to the acquisition of an album now in their collection (n°70.2005.3.4, 70.2005.4.1 to 35).⁶⁹ The present study will therefore focus on the Philippe François Vanuatu artefacts donated to the Trocadéro Museum, with an emphasis on a comparative approach between the museum collection and the private collection, based on the auction catalogue, which represents most of the information currently available about them.

In this chapter, the term ‘voyage’ will be used to refer to journeys to the Pacific, while ‘expedition’ will be used to refer to journeys within the region. Various sources will be used to unpack the historical context in which François was involved, as well as the resulting collection of things that came to France as a consequence. The most important sources of information are the letters published in the *Archives de zoologie expérimentale et générale* (1889) which are part of his correspondence with Henri de Lacaze-Duthier.⁷⁰ Another essential source of information is the transcript of a journal he wrote during his expeditions in the New Hebrides and New Caledonia between 6 November 1888 and 3 October 1889 (Bouyssi in François, 1888: 41–185). The journal is currently only accessible through the unique copy of François Bouyssi’s supplementary works of short studies on Giard’s students, which accompanied his doctoral thesis on Alfred Giard. The initial section of the study he conducted on Philippe François introduces him and situates him within the context of the scientific field at the time. The second and most substantial section comprises a transcription of François’s journal, which documents his expeditions in New Caledonia and the New

68 Of the 900 objects in François’s private collection, 370 were identified as from Vanuatu in the auction catalogue and 346 were unidentified, including 258 arrows. Few were illustrated and the current whereabouts of these objects is not known. A spear reappeared recently during the club sell exhibition organised by the Galerie Meyer in Paris from 6 September to 29 October 2022 in response to the exhibition *Power and Prestige. The Art of Clubs in Oceania*.

69 Photographs relating to Philippe François and his mission can be found in the MQB collection. Some appear to have been taken directly by François (n°70.2005.3.4, 70.2005.4.1 to 35), others appear to be reproductions of photographs taken by James Peace (70.2005.3.1 to 116), who worked in the Pacific from 1883 to 1889. Another set of photographs relating to François’ mission was given to the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BNF) as part of the archival donation from the Société de Géographie de Paris and was the result of a lecture given to the Society by Philippe François (Société de Géographie (France), 1892).

70 Henri de Lacaze-Duthier was a distinguished French naturalist and zoologist, as well as the director of several research units where Philippe François undertook his training from 1880 to 1887 (Bouyssi in François, 1888: 10). Additionally, Lacaze-Duthier was the former supervisor of Aimé Schneider, who was Philippe François’ supervisor during his doctoral studies (1885). Further information on Henri Lacaze-Duthier can be found at: <https://cths.fr/an/savant.php?id=100544#>.

Hebrides. Despite efforts to locate the original document belonging to François' family, it could not be found. Attempts to contact the family to inquire about its whereabouts have been unsuccessful.

While Bouyssi's work includes a list of artefacts and photographs from François' collection, it does not discuss the broader colonial context of the New Hebrides or explore the narratives underlying the collection's composition. Comparisons to other collections are limited to a size-based perspective, rather than an analysis of broader significance. Therefore, Bouyssi's study remains focused on François, without examining the narratives embedded in the collection. For simplicity, references to the section containing François's journal transcript will be cited as a chapter in Bouyssi's work, dated 1888 to correspond with the starting year of François's notes. The first part of Bouyssi's work will be referred to by its 1997 publication date.

Philippe François

Philippe François was born on 23 November 1859 in Saumur, France. As his father was an army officer, he travelled extensively in France from an early age due to his father's postings. He graduated in 1882 from the University of Poitiers with a degree in natural sciences, after having initially studied medicine. In 1885, François submitted his doctoral thesis on the nervous system of the Hirudinea,⁷¹ which led to his recognition by Lacaze-Duthier, leading to him to be offered a position as lecturer in zoology at the University of Rennes (Giard, 1909: pLXXXV). In 1888, François left for the Pacific for a first fieldwork to study coral reefs. He returned in 1891. This first fieldwork was supported by Lacaze-Duthier, with whom he had worked since the end of his doctorate and was also supported by the Ministry of Public Education and Fine Arts under Lacaze-Duthier in collaboration with M Louis Liard, in an attempted to promote fieldwork research similar to that practised in the United Kingdom (François, 1889: XV).⁷²

71 The original title in French is "Sur le système nerveux des Hirudinée".

72 Louis Liard was director of higher education and attempted to reform the university system in France during this period see his publication on his reform (Liard, 1890).

Expeditions	Dates	Itinerary information
First Expeditions	24.11.1888 to 29.12.1888	On board the <i>Fabert</i> , a French ship assigned to the Naval Commission, in charge of a punitive expedition against the villages of Paama and Ambrym, where Europeans were recorded to have been killed. It arrived at Port-Sandwich on 26.11.1888 and then visited various villages, including Mériver. From there, the expedition called at: Ambrym, Malo, Canal Second (Santo), Santo, Port Olry (Santo), Torrès Islands, Santa-Cruz, Vanikoro, Ureparapara, Mota, Aurora (Maewo), Aoba (Ambae), Ambrym, Mallicolo (Malekula), Port-Sandwich (Malekula), Paama, Vaté (Efate), Erromango, Tanna, Anatum (Aneityum), Lifou, Maré, Nouméa (29.12.1888) (Bouissy, 1997: 29; François 1888).
Expedition in NC	23.02.1889 to 08.03.1889	On board the <i>Fabert</i> , touring NC
Second Expedition	02.04.1889 to 25.04.1889	On board the <i>Fabert</i> , hydrographic mission, calling at Lifou, Malekula (05.04.1889); Malo (06.04); Second Canal (08.04); Port-Orly Santo (09.04); Aoba (12.04); Second Canal Santo (13.04); Malo, Ambrym and Port-Sanwich in Malekula (15.04); Canal Aoré-Malo (18.04); Efate (21.04.1889). (Bouissy, 1997: 29; François 1888)
Third Expedition	24.07.1889 to 16.08.1889	On board the <i>Saône</i> , Prony Bay NC (24.07.1889), Efate (30.07); Malekula (31.07); Vao and Sgond Canal Santo (03.08); Port-Olry Santo (05.08); Vao and Rano (07.08); Malekula (08.08), Efate (11.08); Lifou (13.08); Canala Bay NC (14.08); Nouméa NC (16.08.1889). (Bouissy, 1997: 29; François 1888)
Fourth Expedition	22.09.1889 to 03.10.1889	On board the <i>Saône</i> , Nouméa and Irony Bay NC (22.09.1889); Lifou (24.09); Efate (25.09); " Menu " island in Epi (27.09); Malekula (28.09); Second Channel and Aoré (30.09); Santo and Ambae (01.10); Malekula (03.10.1889). (Bouissy, 1997: 29; François 1888)
<i>Expedition in the NH</i>	<i>15.06.1890 to 06.12.1890</i>	<i>Expedition on board the MacGregor in the NH not part of the transcript. Gustave Glaumont (1899, 2013) was part of this expedition.</i>
<i>Expedition in NC</i>	<i>22.12.1890 to 10.01.1891</i>	<i>Expedition on the Saône, which is not part of the transcript</i>
<i>Expedition in NC</i>	<i>03.02.1889 to February or March 1891</i>	<i>Expedition which is not part of the transcript</i>

Table 3: Details of Philippe François' four initial expeditions in the archipelago during his first voyage (1888-1891). The table above is based on the transcription of the diary by Bouyssi (Bouyssi in François, 1888). Expeditions in italics are not included in the transcription of the diary.

François undertook a second voyage from 1893 to 1895. During these two travels, François visited many islands and undertook several expeditions (François, 1888: 29–30). Little of his fieldwork was published, and nothing regarding his second voyage has been found so far. In terms of archives, no information could be found regarding the whereabouts of his private archives. Nevertheless, he was considered to have contributed greatly to the understanding and knowledge of fauna of the area. He finally returned in when he joined the *Laboratoire de la Chaire d'Évolution des Êtres Organisés de la Faculté des Sciences à Paris*,

contributing greatly to the flourishing of the Wimereux zoological station attached to the laboratory (Giard, 1909: LXXXV). In March 1908, Philippe François died suddenly at the age of forty-eight, leaving behind family, colleagues and a large collection which was kept and displayed until 2002, when it was sold by his grandchildren as part of their inheritance. The collection was dispersed at auction and the current whereabouts of most the artefacts is not currently known.

Philippe François's First Voyage (1888-1891)

Philippe François' first voyage began in August 1888 when he left France for Australia to represent the French Ministry of Public Education and Fine Arts as a delegate at the Melbourne Exhibition (Rivière, 1891: 115). He spent two months in Australia before travelling to New Caledonia, from where he intended to travel to his final destination, Tahiti, in November (François, 1889: XVIII–XXIII, 1st and 2nd Letters). The purpose of his first voyage to the Pacific was to study the coral reefs in Tahiti for both scientific and navigational purposes and was supported by the 'Ministère de l'Instruction Publique' (Henrique, 1889: 248; Rivière, 1891: 115). However, reading his letters to Lacaze-Duthier, François is not so enthusiastic about New Caledonia, and he cannot help but compare it to his earlier Australian travels. In particular, he stressed the lack of activity in Nouméa and the absence of good coral reefs to study (François, 1889: XX, 1st Letter (L1)). However, his impressions changed significantly after his first expedition on board the French military vessel that toured the New Hebrides.⁷³ In his second letter, Philippe François referred to his stay in New Caledonia as temporary, as he mentioned that although he had arrived in New Caledonia in November, the next departure for Tahiti was scheduled for January 1889. He was therefore considering travelling on board the French navy ship *Fabert*, which was responsible for touring the New Hebrides with HMS *Opal* to ensure the safety of the settlers (François, 1889: XXII–XXIII, L2). In his letter, François mentions that this journey was to carry out a punitive expedition against two villages, one in "Paama" and another one in "Ambrym", where a Swedish and a

73 The French military ship *Fabert* left Nouméa on the 24 November 1888 to tour the islands. It stopped at Malekula, Ambrym, Malo, Canal Segond, Santo in the New Hebrides, and then at the Torres Islands, Santa Cruz and Vanikoro before returning to the New Hebrides, where they called at Ureparapara, Mota, Aurora, Aoba, Ambrym, Malekula, Paama, Efate, Erromango, Tanna and Anatum (Aneituyim). They left the New Hebrides on the 27 December 1888 to return to New Caledonia via Lifou and Maré. Nouméa was reached on the 29 December 1888 (François, 1888: 55-89).

British subject were killed. According to François's letter, the expedition seems to have been rewarding, both in terms of military objectives and in 'notes and documents' (François, 1889: XXIII, L3).

In the fourth published letter, he said that his first expedition on board the *Fabert*, lasting thirty-four days, had taken him to Vanuatu and the Loyalty Islands, Banks Islands, Vanikoro and Santa Cruz. In this letter, François also expresses his fascination with the archipelago and the many possibilities offered to a researcher since so little was yet known (François, 1889: XXVIII, L4). His admiration led him to describe in detail the fauna he observed, shells, animals and people he associated with animals (François, 1889: XXX, L4) showing racial appreciations that would become part of his regular letters and his diary. His preconceptions were most likely influenced by his background as a naturalist, which he applied to the people of Vanuatu, who he presented as dangerous cannibals with a mixture of fascination and enthusiasm, as revealed in the following extract:

“Our excursion lasted thirty-four days; the white-eating ‘Canaques’ received a good lesson. Unfortunately, I was not able to get close enough to them to determine whether English steak had any superiority over Swedish steak. This is a point of culinary natural history I would have liked to clarify.”⁷⁴

Another illustration shows in his diary on the day of his first arrival at Malekula were he state as following: “*Ah, this time, they're real savages!*”⁷⁵ He ends his letter by expressing his change of mind and his intention to stay in New Caledonia, convinced, as he said, that it would make a greater contribution to science, and expresses his intention to continue his visit to the archipelago in order to complete the information he had acquired on the people and culture of the New Hebrides. He also manifests his agreement that his letters be published in order to provide the scientific community with information on the Indigenous population (François, 1889: XXVIII, L4). Hence, from his initial arrival in New Caledonia, the tone changed after his first expedition. It went from a negative view to a favourable one

74 Original text in French : “Notre excursion dura trente-quatre jours; les Canaques mangeurs de blancs reçurent une bonne leçon. Je n’ai malheureusement pas pu avoir avec eux . des relations assez intimes pour savoir si le bifteck anglais avait une supériorité quelconque sur celui de Suédois. C’est là un point d’histoire naturelle culinaire que j’aurais aimé à éclaircir ;” (François, 1889: XXIII, L3)

75 Original text in French: “Ah, cette fois, ce sont de vrais sauvages !” (François, 1888: 57).

as an environment for study, both in terms of the coral reef and the resources available and largely facilitated by the presence of the French navy (François, 1889: XV-XXXIV).

After this first expedition, Philippe François would undertake several others in addition to his work on corals in New Caledonia. His correspondence suggests that his parallel expeditions did not seem to please Lacaze-Duthier, as Philippe François mentioned in the postscript of his 6th letter of 20 June 1889 that he had recently decided to refuse to join an expedition to Vanuatu in order to devote time to his work and obtain some results from his experiments, suggesting that Lacaze-Duthier might have expressed his discontent. In total, between his arrival in November 1888 and his return to France in March 1891, Philippe François took part in five expeditions to Vanuatu and three within New Caledonia (Bouyssi in François, 1888: 29–31; François, 1888: 95–96). Four of these journeys in Vanuatu are recorded in the diary transcribed by Bouyssi (Bouyssi in François, 1888). However, the shape of François' work and his expeditions took a bad turn when, in March 1890, a cyclone destroyed his laboratory in New Caledonia, resulting in the loss of all his research data and results (Bouyssi in François, 1888: 15). These events that took place just one year before his departure for France did not allow him to renew his experiments to produce new results. Philippe François left without being able to complete his work in New Caledonia and he decided to join John Higginson on a final expedition to Vanuatu, which would last almost six months and during which François would cross paths with another collector, Henry Boyle Somerville, who will be considered in the next chapter. This expedition, tied to colonial interests, was sponsored by a private commercial company to travel across the archipelago and acquire land for establishing new plantations, likely under the recommendation of the New Caledonia governor and in collaboration with John Higginson, a prominent French advocate for the annexation of the New Hebrides by France.⁷⁶ No publication or record of this expedition by François has been located. However, some information can be found in Gustave Glaumont's account (1899; 2013) of his journey, as Glaumont was sent by the governor to act as François's secretary. This expedition marked a significant change in François's life in the archipelago and as an academic, as he engaged in colonial affairs while setting aside his original studies. In fact, this shift would be seen as a betrayal by Lacaze-

76 John Higginson was a businessman involved in the mining business in New Caledonia who initiated the development of French plantations in New Hebrides through a company, *Compagnie calédonienne des Nouvelles-Hébrides* (CCNH), which he founded in 1882. For more information on John Higginson see Chapter 1 and Higginson's published memoirs (1926).

Duthier, who had fought for François's fieldwork to be supported by the government and by doing so tried to initiate a reform in the teaching of geology. Compromised for his 'master', he never worked with him again and on his return François had to find another laboratory to work with, naturally turning to Alfred Giard, who represented another branch of the naturalist school in France. This turn by François towards colonial and administrative matters led him to become directly involved in colonial issues during his tour, to the extent that he could be seen as a representative of Higginson's company, *Compagnie Calédonienne des Nouvelles-Hébrides* (CCNH), involved in large acquisition of lands, as evidenced by the Australian station report, which records François' testimony in a conflict case regarding labour recruitment in which his name is linked to the CCNH (File 3113. AJCP Reel No: 3659-3660, p116).

Display at the Laboratory of Anthropology (1891)

A review of the available information found so far suggests that there is no published account by Philippe François of his research activities in Vanuatu or of the anthropological observations that he made during his fieldwork, beside his paper on skull deformation practice in Malekula (François, 1899). This absence is also evidenced in the obituary speeches reproduced in the *Scientifique Bulletin de Université de Paris Laboratoire d'évolution des êtres organisés* (Giard, 1909: LXXXVII). It is exemplified by the lack of public awareness regarding his collection, which, apart from a brief exhibition from 8 to 16 July 1891 at the Anthropological Laboratory of the Natural History Museum (Deniker, 1891; Rivière, 1891) received little attention. François also gave a short lecture to the Société de Géographie the following year, illustrated with photographs, copies of which were included in the Society's collections, which were transferred to the Bibliothèque National de France in 1942. All that remains of this conference are the proceeding and the photographs (Société de géographie (France), 1892).

Despite the donation of a considerable number of artefacts, 163 items from Vanuatu, which constituted a notable addition to the Trocadéro Museum collections at the time, these represented only a minor proportion of Philippe François's wider Pacific acquisitions. This is evidenced by the 1891 exhibition, which showcased a more substantial portion of François' assemblage, and the auctions of his private collection in 2002 and 2005 of which some photographs were acquired from the latter by the MQB (n°70.2005.3.4, 70.2005.4.1 to 35).



Figure 13: On the left, a photograph taken from Deniker's (1891) review of the exhibition; in the centre, a photograph from François' private collection acquired by the MQB at auction in 2005 (MQB no. 70.2005.4.31, © Musée du Quai Branly – Jacques Chirac; see Footnote 69 above); on the right, a photograph of the lecture given by François at the Société de Géographie de Paris on 20 May 1892 (BNF, ref. no. FRBNF43551240, © BNF). These photographs depict ni-Vanuatu from Malekula dressed slightly differently, with the men in the BNF version wearing mats that completely cover their genitals. Since the two photographs are otherwise identical, this suggests that the photograph had been altered before printing to conform to European sensibilities.

Not much information remains from this brief exhibition except for a few reviews published in papers, which presented it as remarkable for the number of objects displayed but short in duration, lasting only a week (Deniker, 1891; Rivière, 1891). While George Henri Rivière's review does not include illustrations, that by Joseph Deniker provides illustrations of some of the artefacts on display, as well as some of the photographs which were exhibited. The two pictures (MQB n° 70.2005.4.33 and 34) are part of the photographic collection acquired by the MQB in 2005, for which François is said to be the photographer. The article also includes three plates illustrating some of the artefacts on display. Of these objects, only the *Rambaramp*, a funerary effigy of Malekula (Bonnemaison, 1996: 46, 221, 352-353; Howarth, 2013: 109; Bedford, 2018: 129), is part of the collection donated to the Trocadéro

in 1893. All the other objects in the illustrations remained with the family and were sold at the 2002 auction. This provides two pieces of information: firstly, the two collections, the one donated and the private one, or at least part of the private collection, were assembled during his first voyage to the Pacific (1888 to 1891). Secondly, it suggests that the artefacts on display were not limited to those that would make up the donation, so it was not an exhibition to show the set before it was donated but rather an ethnographical exhibition based on a fieldwork collection.

In his review of Philippe François's exhibition, published in *La Revue Scientifique* (1891), Rivière observed the remarkable scale and diversity of the display. He described some of the artefacts presented, including weapons, which he described as 'extremely curious'. According to Rivière, French museums, although well represented with weapons, did not yet possess these items. Furthermore, he discussed other rare artefacts, including examples of Santo pottery, of which three were accessioned by the MET collection (MQB n°71.1893.31.2 to 4), and coconut shells. These coconut shells are painted to represent the female breast and worn by men in Malekula during specific ceremonies, such as the Tawas dances in Atchin (Geismar and Herle, 2011: 135). However, as indicated by the auction catalogue of the sale of François's private collection (Hôtel Drouot, 2002: 41, n°204), these breast representations also remained in François's personal collection. Rivière identifies the distinctive characteristics of various types of spears, including those crafted from bone in Santo. However, no further information is provided to enable the spears in question to be identified. In a separate review authored by the French naturalist Joseph Deniker (1891) and published in *Le Naturaliste*, an illustration of a distinctive Santo spear can be found on Plate I. This spear does not appear to form part of the François collection that was donated to the MET. Conversely, a spear depicted in the auction catalogue is closely analogous, indicating that François likely retained it (Hôtel Drouot, 2002: 29-30, n°125). The particular focus on these specific artefacts by two distinct authors seems to indicate a prevailing interest in such objects during that period. This is further supported by the composition of their display in the Oceania Gallery in the Trocadéro (see figure 14) and in Philippe François's house as represented in the auction catalogue (Drouot, 2002).

Rivière is particularly enthusiastic about the photographs included in the exhibition, describing them as an impressive collection and estimating the number of images to be approximately 200. However, recent information from the MQB museum and François' transcript indicate that only a fraction of these images was taken by Philippe François himself.

While Rivière acknowledges the impressive quality and scope of the exhibition, he expresses regret at the absence of zoological specimens brought back by François and the lack of focus on François's research on corals, which was the initial aim of his scientific voyage. Additionally, the article refers to a typology of the artefacts presented, which includes a typology of weapons, spears and arrows. There is a particular focus on Fate/Sandwich Island (Efate), with a notable emphasis on the extensive collection of clubs on display, particularly those from the Loyalty Islands and Efate. This indicates that specific artefacts and their origins were subject to particular scrutiny, including clubs. Furthermore, a definitive section of the article references the exhibition of skulls of ni-Vanuatu from Malekula. Bouyssi states that this constituted part of François's personal assemblage (Bouyssi in François, 1888: 235). Additionally, other human remains were included in the same listing and were presumably donated. At the time of Bouyssi's listing (Bouyssi in François, 1888: 234), these were part of the collections at the Musée de l'Homme.



Figure 14: Former Oceania Hall at the Trocadéro Museum, photographs taken in 1895, photograph credit: 'Society of Photography Enthusiasts (1887–1938)'; MQB inventory no. PV0070360. The same photograph was donated by Leroi-Gourhan to the MET, which is also preserved at the Musée de l'Homme, and is preserved in the MQB under no. PP0001442. ©Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac.

Artefact Assemblages

François's legacy comprises a considerable assemblage of artefacts, both in his private collection and those donated to the Trocadero, amounting to a total of approximately 1,110 objects.⁷⁷ Of these, 533 are estimated to be from Vanuatu, of which 163 are housed in the MQB and approximately 370 were sold at auction in 2002. This substantial number of artefacts rivals the largest collections from the archipelago which were later acquired by renowned collectors such as Felix Speiser and Aubert de la Rüe.⁷⁸ François's diary reflects this energetic pursuit and his 'appetite' for artefacts, often describing his active search for objects. Several entries mention his frustration when he was unsuccessful, and on occasion, he took matters into his own hands, as illustrated in the following extract during a visit to Rano:

“Leaving the squares, we find yourself in narrow streets bordered by little stone walls, behind which are the houses—low huts, rather dirty, surrounded by a small courtyard enclosed with dry stone walls. We see a large temple-hut and step inside. There are some very curious mallets used for knocking out the poca, and, by Jove, we each take one and do our best to hide it in our trousers. That's where a love for knick-knacks can lead the most honest people in the world! [...] But there is nothing to be gotten from the Kanaks in this area [Rano]. All the weapons are hidden, and they claim they have nothing to sell. Their ill will shows that there is something more going on. A settler

77 In his inventory of François's collection, Bouyssi estimate the overall collection as composed of approximately 1500 artefacts (Bouyssi in François, 1888: 228). Nevertheless, the data currently available, comprising the information provided by the MQB museum and the auction catalogue, suggests a lower number. The discrepancy between the current count and Bouyssi's could be explained by a number of factors, including the possibility that some artefacts may have been sold or privately donated prior to the 2002 auction. Additionally, the information provided in the auction catalogue may be inaccurate or insufficiently detailed when considering groups of artefacts. It is also possible that Bouyssi made some inaccuracies in his counting.

78 Felix Speiser was the first scientist to undertake dedicated fieldwork in Vanuatu, conducting research from 1910 to 1912. He assembled a notable collection of approximately 2,000 artefacts from the archipelago and 1,000 photographs, which are currently housed in the Museum der Kulturen in Basel. An inventory of the Melanesian collection is available for consultation at the following link: https://www.mkb.ch/docroot/pdf/MKB-Bestandesliste-Vb-Melanesien_2022_234-MB.pdf. Speiser was acquainted with François and was aware of his collection, as evidenced by the mention of certain artefacts from François's collection in Speiser's ethnographic study of Vanuatu (Speiser, 1923). The auction house catalogue also mentions that Speiser visited François's collection between 1909 and 1910 (Drouot, 2002: 9, footnote 10). Aubert de la Rüe and his wife conducted fieldwork in the archipelago from February 1934 to June 1936. During this period, they also undertook travel to the Wallis and Futuna Islands. During this fieldwork, de la Rüe acquired a substantial assemblage, of which he donated 718 artefacts in 1934. Of these, 650 artefacts are recorded as originating from Vanuatu (18 of which were subsequently donated). For further details on Aubert de la Rüe's expeditions and assemblages, please refer to Durand (2015) and the MQB online database.

was robbed in a nearby village just a few days ago, and they believe we have come to seek revenge for that incident.⁷⁹

However, most of the exchanges mentioned in François's diary are controlled interactions involving objects either displayed in a special place or brought directly by ni-Vanuatu or through requests made by François.⁸⁰ Controlled access by ni-Vanuatu is documented by Philippe François, who often mentioned that ni-Vanuatu either hide objects or refuse exchanges (François, 1888: 135, 167). This aspect of exchanges is further discussed in chapter 9.

When exchanges are completed, goods frequently mentioned by François as his part of the exchange process include textiles (calico) and tobacco, which are also mentioned as trade items for objects (François, 1888: 135). Currency, in the form of coinage, is also mentioned as a valuable agreed for exchanges and in one occurrence François appears to suggest a change in the interaction depending of the currency used, as in the following extract:

“A young man has a beautiful case full of brand-new poisoned arrows. I would really like to have it. I offer him up to three francs. He refuses to part with it. I show a dollar and say that I will give it for a club. An old man rushes to his hut but returns disappointed. He thought he had a club, but it is only a tomahawk [metal axe].”⁸¹

This issue of currency/coinage in exchange for objects is also discussed in Julien Thomas's account of his expedition to Vanuatu in 1886 (Thomas, 1886: 201), which also mentions

79 Original text in French : “Sortant des places, on tombe dans des rues étroites, abordées de murettes en pierre derrière lesquelles sont les maisons, cases basses, assez malpropres, entourées d’une petite cour clôturée de murs en pierre sèche. Nous voyons une grande case-temple, nous y entrons. Il y a de fort curieux maillets à assommer le poca et, ma foi, nous en prenons chacun un que nous cachons tant bien que mal dans notre pantalon. Voilà où l’amour du bibelot peut entraîner les plus honnêtes gens du monde. [...] Mais il n’y a rien à tirer des Canaques de ce pays. Ici, toutes les armes sont cachées, ils prétendent n’avoir rien à vendre. Ils y mettent une mauvaise volonté qui montre qu’il y a quelque chose là-dessous. Un colon a été pillé ces jours derniers dans une petite ne voisine et ils croient qu’on vient pour tirer vengeance de cette histoire.” (François, 1888: 165–166).

80 For some examples, see François (1888: 152, 158, 183)

81 Original text in French: “Un jeune a un bel étui rempli de flèches empoisonnées toutes neuves. Je voudrais bien l’avoir. Je lui offre jusqu’à trois francs. Il ne veut pas s’en dessaisir. Je montre un dollar et je dis que je le donnerai pour un casse-tête. Un vieux se précipite vers sa case mais il revient désappointé. Il croyait avoir un casse-tête, ce n’est qu’un tomahawk.” (François, 1888: 135).

issues related to the type of currency accepted and provides an insight into the power dynamics at play (see Chapter 9).

François's diary also refers to the search for specific artefacts. For example, on 18 April 1889, he mentions Fortuné Lachaise, a copra maker, who was touring the islands in search of spears with bone points for Edouard Batelot, lieutenant and second in command of the *Fabert* (François, 1888: 137–138). Additionally, he noted that Fortuné had presented Batelot with a considerable number of these artifacts, thereby enabling other individuals to collect a few as well. François took two spears, one of which he described as an 'ordinary' spear with multi-edges made of bones, which he said was for the 'governor'. This suggests that he intended to give it, probably as a gift, but no further information is provided. The second spear is identified as originating from the island of Aoré (François, 1888: 137–138). This demonstrates the extensive circulation of artefacts among the diverse settler, academic and military communities. François himself recounts receiving a gift of a 'tsim-tsim' dancing fish from a settler in Malekula (François, 1888: 148), which are likely the two depicted in the auction catalogue (Hôtel Drouot, 2002: 40, n°207) and comparable to the one in the Somerville assemblage (PRM n°1902.21.33 and 34, represented Appendix F).

The numerous references to acquisitions in his diary for the four short expeditions he undertook in the New Hebrides indicate a compulsive collecting process, which is confirmed by the size of his total collection of artefacts (private and MQB). Such an extensive accumulation seems unusual for the 1880s and 1890s, based on the information found on the Vanuatu collection, which could be related to his profession as a naturalist. In fact, Philippe François's collecting practices can be compared to those of a naturalist, who collects and accumulates specimens and thus places himself in the long tradition of naturalist expeditions.⁸²

82 The collection in the MQB comprises 163 objects from Vanuatu, 32 from the Solomon Islands, four from New Caledonia, four from Polynesia, and three from Micronesia, based on information provided by the museum. A difference can be observed between the online database, which shows 132 objects from Vanuatu, and the information provided directly by the museum. This difference arises because museum internal database have more detailed information, and some database references include more than one artefact. In the case of the private collection, 370 objects from Vanuatu are identified based on the auction catalogue, along with 346 unidentified items, including 258 arrows. Additionally, there are 68 objects from

Statistical analysis of the François collection

The extensive collection of artefacts procured by Philippe François from the archipelago was subsequently divided into two parts. The first part, comprising 163 artefacts, was donated to the Trocadéro in 1893, between his return from his first voyage and his departure for his second voyage. A second part of the overall assemblage was kept by the collector as a private collection, comprising approximately 370 artefacts from the archipelago. The assemblage of artefacts donated to the MET therefore represents a small proportion of François's total collection. Given the date of the donation, it can be assumed that these artefacts were acquired during his first voyage (1888-1891). While the same could be said of some of the Vanuatu artefacts in François's private collection, as the illustration and reviews of the 1890 exhibition featured a number of them. However, it cannot be ruled out that François may have acquired some artefacts before embarking on a second voyage to the Pacific and to the New Hebrides, or after his final return to France in 1895. In the course of his second voyage, he seems to have revisited the New Hebrides, undertaking three distinct visits to the archipelago. The initial visit was conducted aboard the *Elsa*, spanning the period from September 1893 to January 1894. A second visit was conducted between June and July 1894, and a final visit was undertaken aboard the *Elsa* from August 1894 to January 1895. However, the Bouyssi transcript of François' diary (1997: 30-31) provides no further information regarding his activities during the second voyage. No further details could be uncovered during the course of this thesis.

In terms of field acquisitions, the four expeditions to the archipelago undertaken by François and recorded in Bouyssi's transcript allows us to identify a total of 151 artefacts. This indicates that either François did not maintain comprehensive records of his acquisitions, or that a significant portion of the artefacts were obtained after the expeditions documented in Bouyssi's transcript. This may have occurred during his final and longest expedition to the archipelago during his first voyage, which spanned six months from June to December 1890 and during which he acted as an agent for private companies. It is also possible that part of his private collection consisted of artefacts acquired during his second voyage to the Pacific, which took place between 1893 and 1895. However, it is not possible to be more precise

New Caledonia, 59 from Santa Cruz, and 57 from the Solomon Islands. The total number of objects in François's collection is estimated at 1106.

about the acquisition of the entire collection on the basis of the information currently available, and without further archival information. Nevertheless, the artefacts preserved in the MQB, which were necessarily collected during his first voyage, provide links to the transcript as well as contextual information, allowing further discussion of the assemblages, the collector's acquisition processes, and the narratives that may be embodied in the assemblage.

Tajan Auction		Collection in MQB	
Number of objects	Provenance	Number of objects	Provenance
370	Vanuatu	163	Vanuatu
346	Unknown (258 are arrows)	36	Solomon Islands
68	New Caledonia	4	New Caledonia
59	Santa Cruz	4	Polynesian Islands
57	Solomon Islands	3	Micronesian Islands

Table 4: Table presenting the attributed provenance of artefacts from François's assemblages sold at Tajan, in contrast with the provenance of his assemblages donated to museums.

While Philippe François acquired objects from the Solomon Islands, the Santa Cruz and New Caledonia, these are limited compared to the number of objects brought back from Vanuatu (see table 4). It is worth noting that a similar pattern can be seen in the collection of Alphonse Pineau (Chapter 3). Although Philippe François spent most of his time in New Caledonia, the number of objects brought back from there is much lower than the number of objects brought back from Vanuatu or even the Solomon Islands, which Dr François visited during his first expedition aboard the *Fabert*. His ethnographic interest therefore seems to have been directed more towards the islands closest to New Caledonia than to New Caledonia itself, where he spent most of his time studying the coral reefs. This may be linked to his enthusiasm for engaging with populations 'less touched' by 'white men civilisation', as expressed in his first accounts, as discussed previously. The number of artefacts from New Caledonia that make up François' assemblage is small compared to other provenances (approximately 72 artefacts in total) (see table 4). It should be noted that the number of objects from New Caledonia donated to the Trocadéro Museum in 1893 is small, only four objects. On the other hand, the same donation included 36 objects from the Solomon Islands and 163 objects from Vanuatu. However, the two sets of objects from New Caledonia and the Solomon Islands are not that far apart in terms of total number, with 93 objects from the Solomon Islands and 72 from New Caledonia. The donation to the Trocadéro Museum is

considerably lower for New Caledonia. This suggests that the Trocadéro museums may not have been keen to accept artefacts from New Caledonia, probably because it was already well represented in the museum's collections.

The provenance of the objects in the MQB collection to places within the archipelago may be difficult to ascertain, as a significant proportion of them are simply labelled as being from Vanuatu, with no further details. However, Rivière's article (1891) mentions that the artefacts that made up the total assemblage at the time, which included what would later become the MQB collection and François's private collection, were primarily from islands of French colonial interest, particularly Espiritu Santo, Malekula and Efate, with a few artefacts from Ambae, Pentecost and Ambrym islands. Given Philippe François's itinerary and the logistical challenges of travelling in Vanuatu from 1889 to 1892, it is logical that he acquired objects mainly from these islands. The transport available to 'white' men was limited and relied heavily, if not exclusively, on military or missionary ships, in line with their agendas.

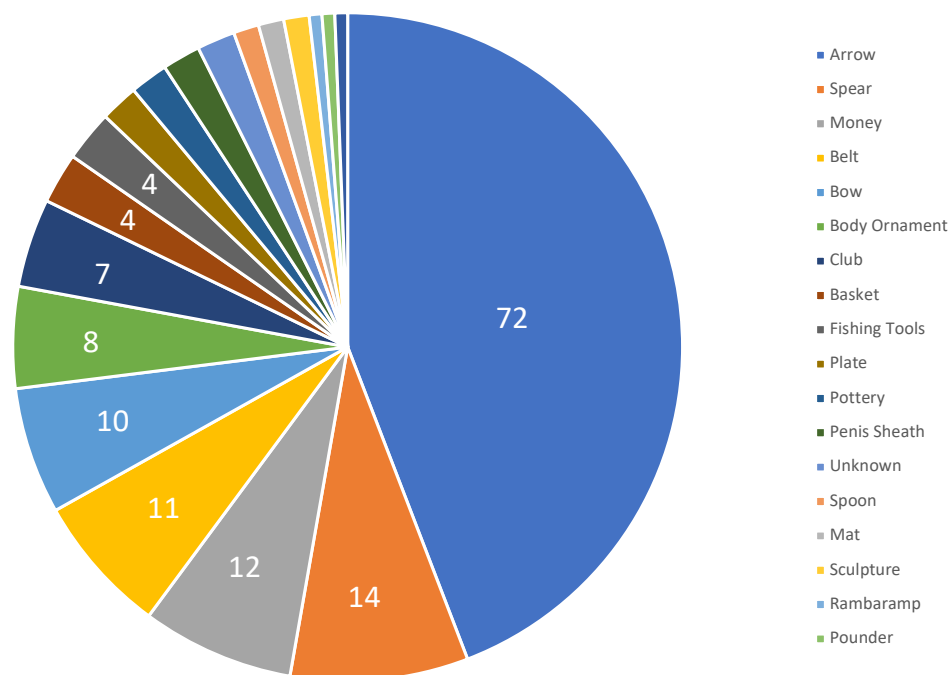


Figure 15: Composition of Philippe François's assemblage currently preserved in the MQB.

The majority of the objects within the assemblage can be classified as weapons, with the majority of these being arrows. Additionally, the collection comprises a variety of other types, including bows, spears, clubs, and slings. Nevertheless, most of the weapons category, as well as the set donated by Philippe François to the Trocadéro Museum, comprise arrows. This preponderance of arrows in Vanuatu collections can be attributed to two factors: firstly, the ni-Vanuatu propensity to exchange these objects, and secondly, the European interest in collecting them for their curiosity value and their ease of transport, particularly given the high cost of transportation at the time.

One might inquire as to why such a considerable number of arrows were accepted by the Trocadéro, given that the museum already possessed a sizeable collection of arrows from previous donations, particularly from John Higginson (see graph Higginson's collection Chapter 3). This may have been due to the growing interest in weapon poisoning in Vanuatu at the time (Imhaus, 1890: 52, Codrington, 1891; Jones, 1892; Ledantec, 1890), which was likely initiated by the increasing presence of Europeans, especially French settlers. This particular attention is also supported by Rivière's review of the François collection exhibition (Rivière, 1891: 116) in which mention is made regarding the poisonous deposit that can be observed on weapons on display. This led to increased attention in France to the archipelago and to the ni-Vanuatu. While the Philippe François collection as a whole (in both public and private collections) is primarily composed of arrows, with at least 490 out of 1110 objects identified as such (including 172 from Vanuatu, 258 with an uncertain provenance, 60 from Santa Cruz, and 20 from the Solomon Islands). It is noteworthy that the subset of Vanuatu artefacts donated to the Trocadéro collection also exhibits a similar distribution, with approximately 44% consisting of arrows. The number of artefacts associated with the European weapons category is comparatively low, with only thirteen spears, ten bows, seven clubs, one quiver and one "sagaie"/"assagai" (MQB n° 71.1893.31.187) identified.⁸³ The reason for this discrepancy between the spears is unclear. One hypothesis is that the artefact may represent a variation in shape or materials in contrast to the other spears. However, no particularities could be identified from the available online information.

83 The term 'sagaie' or 'assagai/assegai' is currently used by the museum to label spear no. 71.1893.31.187 in the MQB. However, the term is most commonly employed to describe spears with iron or metal edges from Africa. This particular spear, however, has a bamboo edge. It has not been possible to find further information justifying the use of this term to describe this particular spear from Vanuatu.

Aside from weapons, that François did not simply sample his entire collection, as not every type of object he brought back is represented in the MQB collection. While some artefacts are shared between the Trocadero set and the private set, such as the *rambaramp* figures or the plates and baskets, others are almost exclusive to one set or the other. For example, in the MQB set, objects associated with traditional exchange and qualified as ‘money’ in the graph are more represented, as well as belts, fishing tools and spoons, while others are almost exclusive to the MQB collection, such as mats, sculptures and penis sheaths. On the other hand, body ornaments are more common in François’s private collection, and combs, axes, adzes and pudding knives, for example, are exclusive to the François private collection. This division suggests that Philippe François curated the set of objects he donated to the museum. This hypothesis is supported by the structure of the set that was donated to the Trocadero Museum. While the François’ museum collection is primarily composed of weaponry (see figure 16), the overall assemblage is characterised by a diverse array of artefacts, represented by a limited number of items per category. The collection encompasses a range of objects such as clothing, agricultural tools, culinary utensils and ceremonial artefacts. This multifaceted representation indicates an attempt at a comprehensive approach based on the stereotypical ethnographic categories of the period outlined in Alphonse Pineau’s article (Chapter 3). Nevertheless, no archives could be found in the museum pertaining to the donation and the collector’s intentions. Furthermore, the lack of information regarding the size of François’s total collection at the time of his donation to the MET makes it challenging to evaluate the extent of the curation of his donation and to estimate the proportion of his collection that was donated to the museum at that time. Nevertheless, it is evident that François did not donate the entire collection, as some of the objects depicted in Deniker’s (1891) exhibition reviews are absent from the MQB and were illustrated in the 2002 auction catalogue

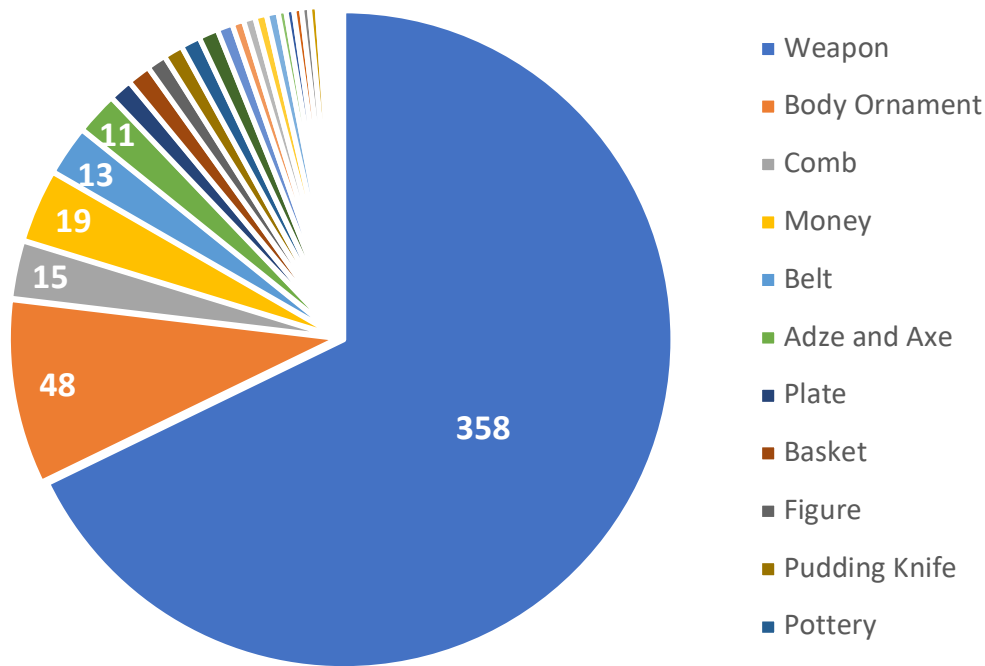


Figure 16: Composition of the overall Philippe François assemblage of artefacts from Vanuatu.

A review of previous collections received by the museum, notably the substantial assemblage donated by Alphonse Pineau, reveals that the collection donated by Philippe François does not include a significant number of ‘unconventional’ artefacts. Notably absent from the collection are necklaces from the island of Mele and objects decorated with pig tails. However, the assemblage donated to the museum comprises a variety of artefacts exhibiting diverse forms, materials, colours and provenance. The collection is therefore characterised by its diversity, in that a variety of artefacts are represented, without any one type of artefact dominating the assemblage outside the weapons category (see graphs). In this regard, the only artefact entry that might be considered ‘unusual’ in terms of its limited presence in the assemblage is the set of five wooden belts from Santo Island (MQB n°71.1893.31.15 to 19). These belts were present in limited numbers and were almost entirely absent from collections in the UK. Only two of these belts, defined by François as ‘cabillot’, are mentioned in his diary, hence suggesting that they were acquired prior to the final expedition as commercial agent (not represented in the table) of his first voyage aboard the *MacGregor*, during which he was joined, at least for a time, by Gustave Glaumont. It seems reasonable to posit that a proportion of these belts in the François assemblage (another one was in François’ private collection) may be associated with Gustave Glaumont, who spent the majority of his time in Santo waiting for François. In her study of Glaumont’s assemblage of artefacts, Elise Patole-

Edoumba in her introduction to the reedition of Glaumont voyages account also suggests the possibility that some artefacts in the François assemblage were acquired by Glaumont (2013: 128). It appears that during this expedition, François, who was then an agent for the Higginson company, purchased land for the Compagnie Calédonienne des Nouvelles-Hébrides (CCNH). Consequently, he was implicated in contentious land ownership disputes, which arguably placed him in a vulnerable position with the ni-Vanuatu and probably also with the settlers. This may have precluded him from accessing certain artefacts. It is also noteworthy that, in general, there is evidence to suggest that François did not spend much time in villages, either during his initial expeditions (see table) or during his final expedition in the archipelago on his first voyage. This hypothesis is corroborated by François's diary (1888) and Glaumont's account (1899; 2013), which indicates that Philippe François did not remain in villages for extended periods. Instead, he moved from one village to another, residing mainly on French naval vessels during his first four expeditions visiting settlers and missionaries. This may have prevented him from engaging with the ni-Vanuatu on a deeper level.

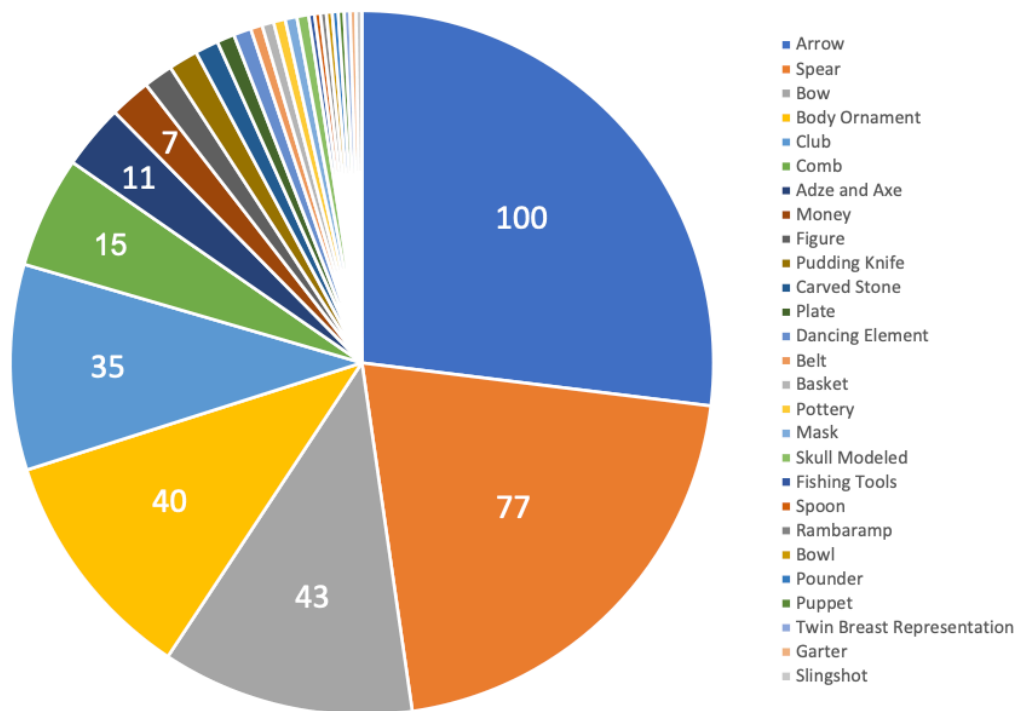


Figure 17: Composition of Philippe François' assemblage sold in auction.

François's private collection comprises artefacts that are also present in other collections and can be identified from the illustrations in the Tajan catalogue (2002). To illustrate this point further, the Malekula dancing head figures (catalogue number 206) in his private collection bear a striking resemblance to those given to the Pitt Rivers Museum by Henry Boyle Somerville (PRM nos. 1893.27.19, 1896.33.45, 46 and 48). Similarly, two iron axes described by François as 'tomahawks' (1888: 135, 140, 178), part of his private assemblage, are artefacts which can be found in large numbers in collections of artefacts from the archipelago donated to museums (Drouot, 2002: 20, n°66 and 67). Two head ornaments (Drouot, 2002: 44, n°225 and 224) were acquired by the Fine Arts Museums of Chartres in 2002 and bear resemblance to head ornaments in the collection of Felix Speiser in Basel (MKB n° Vb3708 to 3715). Other noteworthy examples include a pair of painted coconut breast ornaments analogous to those in High Commissioner Im Thurn's Collection in the British Museum (BM n° Oc1920,0322.39.a-b). These breast representation which were mentioned in one the exhibition reviews (Rivière, 1891: 116), did not enter the MET collection. The fact that all of these artefacts are part of François's private collection rather than the MQB collection suggests that François may have conceived of a 'standard' collection, following the interests, expectations and representations of the time in relation to

the archipelago, while adopting a ‘sampling’ approach with representations of a limited number of artefacts by object type, such as baskets, shell necklaces, etc., and from different locations, destined for the museum as a teaching collection rather than an exhaustive collection.

Conclusion

Although Philippe François was a researcher, his expeditions to Vanuatu were not part of his original research objectives. Therefore, his expeditions to the archipelago cannot be understood in the same way as later academics who travelled to Vanuatu to conduct research. Although his purpose in travelling to the Pacific was not to carry out research in the archipelago, he did adopt an academic approach to the collection he donated to the Trocadero Museum, as can be seen from the composition of the collection (see graph 15). While the collection he donated to the museum appears to have a scientific approach, he never published a study of his observations on ni-Vanuatu culture or described his journeys. The only evidence currently available is primarily the transcript of his diary, which covers his initial four expeditions to Vanuatu during his first voyage. This leaves one remaining expedition to the New Hebrides and the entirety of the period encompassed by his second voyage unaccounted for. Instead, people who had corresponded with him during his time in the Pacific decided to publish his letters in the hope of documenting his findings (François, 1889; 1890). Published in the *Archives de zoologie expérimentale et générale : histoire naturelle, morphologie, histologie, évolution des animaux*, they reveal the academic network to which François belonged and which anchored him in a natural history approach, combined with what could be described as an obsessive collecting process. His extensive assemblage (MQB and private) constitutes one of the largest collections of artefacts from Vanuatu. The entire collection donated to the Trocadéro Museum is a representative one, with different types of objects and islands of origin. It is a balanced collection with an emphasis on weapons, characteristic of the period and observed in the case study of the four collectors. The interest in weapons and the particular attention paid to arrows is not surprising given the strong interest in poisoned weapons at the end of the nineteenth century, which correlates with the project of increasing settlement in the archipelago (chapters 1, 8 and 9) and problems such as difficulty in transporting bulky artefacts, which probably encouraged

collectors to prioritise artefacts of smaller size. It is also important to mention that the significant presence of arrows in François's collection may be explained not only by François's agency but also by ni-Vanuatu, as supported by the transcript of François's diary. Despite François's reliance on ni-Vanuatu agency for access to artefacts, his diary also records at least one instance when he was frustrated that he could not access artefacts, which he referred to as stealing objects (François, 1888: 165-166). However, compared to other collectors featured in this study, such as Louis Joseph Bouge (Chapter 6), François does not appear to have acquired objects on his return, nor did he integrate himself into collecting networks. The comparative study of his private collection and the set donated to the Trocadéro Museum offers a better understanding of François's possible agency within the artefact assemblages, while also revealing potential European values and expectations regarding Vanuatu study collections. It also helps to illustrate the evolution of colonial interactions in Vanuatu as reflected in the artefacts acquired.

While François's diary provides important insights into his experiences and acquisitions in the archipelago, it also reveals the preconceptions and personal testimony of a nineteenth-century European naturalist entangled in colonial agendas. Although this study focuses on material culture and related interactions, it would be beneficial to conduct a dedicated study of Philippe François' encounters, particularly in light of the intimate comments and behaviours described in his diary, which was not intended for publication, as well as his descriptions of ni-Vanuatu women he met on various islands and the few instances in which he mentioned women being hidden. Consequently, this also raises questions regarding the accessibility of women's artefacts to men. In François' diary, there are mentions of occasions when women refused to sell or exchange their belongings during his interactions with them. Therefore, further research is required to examine the presence of women's material culture in museums and to determine the nature of the women's artefacts represented.

Chapter 5: Henry Boyle Townshend Somerville

Henry Boyle Townshend Somerville was born on 7 September 1863 at the family estate of Drishane Castle, County Clare, Ireland. The estate still exists and is owned by a descendant of the family⁸⁴. Somerville received his education at the Royal Academy in Gosport and underwent training aboard HMS *Brittania* before assuming his first naval post on HMS *Shannon* in 1880, during the Chilean-Peruvian War (1879-83). Subsequently, Somerville was deployed to the Egyptian and Chinese wars until he was posted to HMS *Dart* in New Zealand as a hydrographer. His duties involved surveying the coasts of Australia and the Western Pacific from 1889 to 1896, followed by the Eastern Pacific from 1897 to 1900. Thereafter, he was assigned to a vessel in the Persian Gulf.⁸⁵ He continued to travel extensively until his retirement in 1919, and indeed fully until 1923, when he returned to his family estate. On 26 March 1936, he was assassinated by the Irish Republican Army (IRA). Throughout his life, Somerville undertook the publication of ethnographic studies of the people he encountered during his expeditions. He initiated this process with his ethnographic publications on the New Hebrides, which were presented in two parts and were based on his hydrographic mission on HMS *Dart* from June to December 1890 and in 1891 (Somerville, 1894a; 1994b). He continued this endeavour during his subsequent expeditions, for example, with the collection and ethnographic study he published on the Solomon Islanders (Somerville, 1897; Waite, 2000).

Somerville acquired artefacts during his expeditions, which, in the case of Vanuatu, were given to the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford in a series of donations (see table n°5) totalling 130 artefacts from the New Hebrides. This represented a large collection of objects for the archipelago at the end of the nineteenth century.⁸⁶ In addition to his written accounts, in the

84 For more information on the Somerville family estate see: <https://drishane.com>

85 For further biographical information on Boyle Somerville see his obituary (Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, 1937: 149–150) and his biography in the Dictionary of Irish Biography available at: <https://www.dib.ie/biography/somerville-henry-boyle-townshend-a8192>

86 According to the online database, the Somerville collection donated to the Pitt Rivers Museum comprises 792 objects and 81 photographs. 484 are objects from the Solomon Islands, 130 from Vanuatu, 55 from the USA, 24 from Papua New Guinea, 22 from Russia, 13 from Canada, 10 from Peru, 9 from Japan, 9 from Tonga and 5 from Chile. As for the Somerville collection of photographs, 40 are said to have been taken in the Solomon Islands, 23 in Vanuatu, 7 in Tonga, 3 in Samoa and 2 in Fiji. Further information can

form of articles and books, and his collection of material culture, Somerville also made a significant contribution to the photographic documentation of his expeditions. A photographic album attached to Frederick Dack's diary on board HMS *Orlando* and subsequently HMS *Dart* is attributed to Somerville as the photographer, providing evidence of his photographic practice. Similarly, photographs constitute a component of his published works, with some forming part of his collection at the PRM and others in the archives of the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI). However, while the photographs in Dack's report are directly attributed to Somerville, as are identical images that form part of his assemblages, it is not possible to ascertain whether he was the photographer for the remaining photographs. Following the publication of his first ethnographic accounts, which focused on the New Hebrides and subsequently on the Solomon Islands, in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, he became a member of the RAI, which was then known as the *Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*. He was subsequently elected as a Fellow in 1909 and served as President of the Institute from 1933 to 1935 (*Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 1937: 149–150).

This chapter will examine Somerville's assemblage acquired during his time in the New Hebrides from June to December 1890 and 1891, as an assemblage of artefacts, publications and photographs. It will analyse these elements in relation to each other in order to gain insight into the narratives and context in which they were created or acquired. In terms of textual sources, the two articles published by Somerville in 1896 in *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, and his later book *The Chart-Makers*, published in 1928, will constitute significant sources for the documentation and understanding of his collections and his relationship with the various actors at play in the New Hebrides. Furthermore, archival documents from the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI), the National Library of Australia, and the National Library of New Zealand have been consulted and will be employed to document the assemblage of artefacts and images forming Somerville's collection. In addition, reference will be made to his subsequent article, *Ethnographical Notes in the Solomon Islands* (1897), and the study conducted on Solomon Island artefacts in the Somerville collection by Deborah Waite (2000), in order to gain insight into the broader aspects of Somerville's collecting practices and interests.

be found on the Pitt Rivers Museum online database at <https://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/collections-online#/search>.

Furthermore, comparisons will be made between Somerville's assemblage and those of other collectors. This will facilitate the identification of both singularities and common aspects, thereby allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of Somerville's assemblage relating to Vanuatu. In that respect a contrasted analysis with Alphonse Pineau assemblage (Chapter 3) and the Philippe François assemblage (Chapter 4) is particularly relevant, as the three collectors share similarities in terms of their background and context in which they operated. In the case of Philippe François, the two men met during the Efate labour kidnapping affair in 1890, as documented in the Australian Station report. François' complaint on behalf of the *Compagnie calédonienne des Nouvelles Hébrides* (CCNH) was registered and submitted by the captain of HMS *Dart*, (Foreign Office records, 1761-1952 [microform] as filmed by the AJCP, 1890: 134–136).⁸⁷

Hydrographic Expedition in the New Hebrides

The hydrographic survey that Somerville conducted in from June to December 1890 and in 1891 included visits to numerous islands within the archipelago, as documented in his publications and in Dack's Journal (Archive, New Zealand, National Library, MSX-9428). Somerville's published accounts state that the survey began at Efate and the surrounding islands of Nguna, Mau, Mataso, Mai and Mākura, before heading north to the Shepherd Islands group, comprising Tongoa, Tongariki, Ewosi, Buninoa and Valea. Subsequently, the expedition proceeded south of Epi, continuing eastwards along the Malekula coast to Port Sandwich and subsequently to Port Stanley, marking the conclusion of the surveying expedition (Somerville, 1894b: 363; 1928: 186). Somerville's account suggests that HMS *Dart* anchored at Uripiv Island, located just opposite Port Stanley on Malekula, where the Presbyterian mission had recently been established (Somerville, 1928: 188). It appears that the duration of each stop was relatively brief, with the exception of Tongariki, where Somerville notes a stay of approximately one month. This extended period allowed him to

87 The *Compagnie calédonienne des Nouvelles-Hébrides* (CCNH) was created in 1882 by John Higginson. In 1894, it underwent a process of restructuring with the financial support of the French government, which resulted in its transformation into the *Société Française des Nouvelles Hébrides* (SFNH). For further information regarding the company and John Higginson's role in the colonisation of the archipelago, see Chapter 1.

engage in the acquisition of a number of artefacts, which he attributes to the conversion of the local ni-Vanuatu to Christianity (Somerville, 1928: 153-155).

As a result of this expedition, Somerville returned with a number of artefacts and photographs. It would appear that some manuscript notes were provided to the RAI; however, no manuscript relating to the New Hebrides could be located during a visit to the archives in June 2022. A request was also made to the Drishane Castle Townshend Estate for some of Boyle's archives. The reply received did not provide any indication that archives relating to the New Hebrides expeditions were held. Nevertheless, an examination of Somerville's published material provides a rich body of information. The two published articles represent an attempt to report ethnographic observations, while his subsequent book addresses his personal experience of the HMS *Dart* expedition, which will be explored in the following section.

In this context, provenance refers to the geographical association of the objects made by the collector, namely Somerville himself, including locations such as the islands of Malekula, Efate, Meli and Uripiv. It may also include more specific locations such as Port-Stanley, Port-Sandwich, Vila and so forth.⁸⁸

Vanuatu assemblage: Unveiling narratives

a) Donations

The total Vanuatu assemblage of artefacts (130) was donated successively by Somerville between the years 1893 and 1902 to the Pitt Rivers Museum. The initial donation, made in 1893, comprised 33 artefacts, with a strong emphasis on body ornamentation, including shell discs and bracelets, as well as men's belts. The year of this donation coincides with the publication of two articles by Somerville in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*.

Somerville continued to make further donations to the museum, including nine clubs from various islands in 1895. A subsequent donation in 1896 comprised 48 artefacts, constituting

⁸⁸ The various semantic and problematic associations with the notion of "provenance" are addressed in the general introduction to the thesis, in the section on methodology and methods.

his largest donation. It included a significant number of combs (8 out of 10 from the New Hebrides) and was primarily composed of artefacts from the Malekula area, with twenty originating from Malekula Island. It should be noted that no weapons were included in this donation, which was largely composed of personal items such as belts and body ornaments. This donation is also characterized by the presence of the only two pig tusk bracelets in the Somerville Vanuatu collection in the Pitt Rivers Museum, as well as mats, both of which were traditional exchange valuable.⁸⁹ In 1900, Somerville made a small donation of two shell adze blades, and in 1902 he made his second-largest donation of artefacts from Vanuatu to the museum, comprising 37 items, the majority of which were weapons. This donation included all the arrows, bows and spears in the total Somerville assemblage in the PRM (see figure 18.). The museum inventory numbers of two objects indicate that they were incorporated into the museum collection later, one in 1903 and the other in 2008. However, these dates correspond to the instances when the artefacts were re-accessioned into the museum inventory. It appears that the flute from Uripiv (PRM, 1903.130.11) of 1903 was part of a donation in 1893, and the head ornament (PRM, 2008.91.1) was part of the 1896 donation. Accordingly, in the present discussion, these objects are regarded as having been acquired at the initial dates of their entry.

The rationale behind the multiple donations of the assemblage remains unclear, as no documentation regarding the donations have been identified. Additionally, no further information has been found about the assemblage prior to its entry into the museum. This lack of documentation hinders any discussion on whether Somerville donated the entirety of his assemblage. Furthermore, no information could be found that directly relates all the artefacts in the PRM to Somerville's surveying expedition. It is therefore not possible to exclude the possibility that some artefacts may have been acquired after his return from the Pacific. Nevertheless, this possibility remains unconfirmed, as no further information could be found. However, some photographic elements suggest that some of the artefacts were acquired during his journey in the New Hebrides. This is evidenced by the fact that some objects given in later donations are represented in photographs and in the album of pictures of Frederick Dack's diary, which he was writing during his service on board HMS *Orlando* and HMS *Dart*. Some of these objects can be identified in the Pitt Rivers Museum collection. For example, two 'Dancing clubs' (PRM: 1902.21.33 and 34) from Port Sandwich, which

89 For further information, please see Kirk 2005 on the traditional money project and refer to Chapter 7.

were given in 1902, are represented in one of the RAI Somerville photographs and Frederick Dack's album, suggesting that the photograph was taken either in 1890 or 1891, the date of Dack's journal (Archive, New Zealand, National Library, MSX-9428) (see Appendix F). Similarly, the clay figure (PRM: 1896.33.49) depicted in the same photographs was donated in 1896, providing further evidence that much of the collection was acquired during fieldwork and confirming that Somerville did indeed retain his collection upon his return and distribute it gradually. This hypothesis is corroborated by Somerville himself, who, in his 1928 publication, offers a particularly compelling commentary on his relation to his collection and the context of his donations to the museum:

"My collection made at that time, ghosts of a dead savagery, have now, after a purgatorial interval, achieved their heaven in a museum. That is the true destiny of "curios," but the realisation of this fact does not immediately dawn on the young collector. When his cabin has become so choked - with clubs that he is obliged to sleep on deck, and when the spaces between the beams overhead in the ward-room have become so crammed with long spears that meals are no longer endurable owing to the still adherent native smells, and to the million cockroaches that come to live among the wooden weapons, the natural impulse is to pack them all up and send them "home." Perhaps he may have hopes that they will be welcomed there and hung up as an adornment in "the hall." If so, when the collector follows his collection at the end of the commission, he must be prepared for disappointment. The precious and difficultly obtained spears, clubs, poisoned arrows, carved idols, and painted skulls, at first objects of horrified interest to his untravelled relatives, will now be found to have become objects of loathing and of terror, exiled to lofts or cellars, and covered with dust, which every one is afraid to wipe off "for fear of getting poisoned" or other squeamish reason, even that possibly of insulting a South Pacific ghost. No longer "curios," they will have arrived at the stage when they are referred to by (once proud) mothers as "rubbish sent home by the boys," and accordingly have been relegated to the lumber-room. The young collector will therefore find it more satisfactory to send his treasures, properly labelled, straight to a museum. There they will be perennially appreciated and displayed; there they may be hideous, and it will be gladly endured. They may be poisoned, and the curator will cherish them the more. They may be indecent (as is frequently the case), and yet they will bring neither shock nor even ribald amusement to the cold mind of Science." (Somerville, 1928: 155-157)

In this comprehensive extract, Somerville establishes that he donated his collection to the museum, which he describes as the appropriate location for such artefacts. In the selected text, Somerville also exhibits his discontent regarding the contrast between his emotional and intellectual interest in his collection and the growing indifference of his family. Ultimately, the only source of relief appears to be the favourable reception of his collections by a curatorial professional within the museum. The dramatic aspect of the situation is emphasised by the listing of all the critics of disgust expressed in regard to his collection, which is positioned in contrast with the curator's interest, which views the collection as a set of 'treasures' to be displayed. The use of the term 'treasure' to ascribe value to his collection demonstrates the profound emotional significance Somerville attached to it, while also highlighting his satisfaction with the reception his collection received from the museum and its curator, Henry Balfour. Therefore, it can be hypothesised that selling his acquisitions to individuals may not have represented a satisfactory outcome for him. Furthermore, this extract suggests that subsequent donations from Somerville were likely motivated by both his attachment to the collection and the documentation process involved in its management. This is evidenced by his emphasis on the importance of the collector 'properly labelling' their collection before sending it to the museum.⁹⁰ In that respect, Somerville's labels may extend beyond 'provenance' information and may include ethnographical notes and drawings (see figure 19).

The extract also underscores the challenges associated with transporting artefacts in the field, as well as the potential difficulties encountered upon return to Europe. In addition, it prompted reflection on the value of such artefacts in the context of shared history and the emotional attachment that individuals may have to a collection, which could in turn influence the artefacts' itinerary. It is also important to consider the hunting-related semantics associated with Somerville's acquisition practices. In his 1928 account, he refers to Tongariki (Shepherd Islands) as a 'hunting ground,' highlight his 'passion for curios' (Somerville, 1928: 155). He also provides insight into some of his acquisition practices:

"Though the work was stiff and strenuous, the time ashore on Tongariki was pleasant enough. I have a passion for "curios," and the island proved to be a very prolific

90 A comparable emphasis on the importance of the labelling process is evident in Pineau's correspondence with the BM curators (MQB Archives, D001172/36080, letter dated on the 12 May 1888).

hunting ground. When “taking the Book “by the inhabitants put an end to warfare, their hatchets were not buried, but were stowed away, together with spears, clubs, shell-axes, and other delights, in the thatch of the owner’s house. After a little one knew exactly where to look for them, and how much “trade” should be paid for them.” (Somerville, 1928: 155)

In this extract, Somerville also addresses the impact of the conversion of ni-Vanuatu, pointing out that old artefacts no longer in use were retained. Furthermore, he implies that despite the fact that these artefacts were no longer in use, they were not readily accessible. He emphasises the necessity of both time and knowledge regarding their location, suggesting that access was restricted and that an understanding of their value was crucial. This assertion is corroborated by other related testimonies in various published accounts from individuals who travelled in the archipelago (see Chapter 9).

b) Artefact Assemblage

The following section will examine the composition of the assemblage and its successive entries in the PRM, while providing context by situating it in relation to information provided by Somerville in his published material and photographic records. It will investigate the narratives embedded in the collection, while reflecting on their contrast with those of the previously introduced collectors’ assemblages.

Somerville Assemblage Entry by Years in the Pitt Rivers Museum													
	African Countries	Eastern Europe (Mainly Russia)	Europe	Fiji	India	Israel	Japan	North America	Papua New Guinea	Solomon Islands	South and Central America	Vanuatu	Total
1886	1									1			2
1889	1												1
1893												33	33
1894									8	164			172
1895									2	271		9	282
1896	1			2			5			28		49	85
1900								3			14	2	19
1902										5	1	37	43
1903										3			3
1907		20											20
1913								72					72
1916					1								1
1926										1			1
1938			1							1			2
1945	1	2	8								1		12
1946	2	1	6			1	4						14
1951			1										1
1960				1					3				4
1990					1								1
2005								1		1			2
2009										3			3
2013			1										1
2016										1			1
2018									1	2			3
Total	6	23	17	3	2	1	9	76	14	481	16	130	778

Table 5: This table provides an overview of the artefacts included in each donation from Somerville to the PRM based on the information provided by the museum. It should be noted that some artefacts were re-accessioned by the museum, corresponding to the most recent entries. In the case of Vanuatu, re-accessioned artefacts were relocated with their actual dates of entry according to the information provided, while other artefacts in the Somerville assemblages were not adjusted.

As has been seen, Somerville gave a large number of artefacts from places he had visited during his career. Of particular note is the Solomon Islands material, which represents 62% of the Somerville assemblage in PRM with 481 artefacts. The Vanuatu artefacts constitute a significant portion of the overall collection, although far below the number of artefacts from the Solomon Islands, at 17% with 130 artefacts, while North American artefacts represent 10%.⁹¹ The two largest sets of artefacts within the entire collection are those from the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, which are the two areas in which Somerville conducted his first hydrographic surveys. While Somerville continued to travel for his various assignments, it appears that he did not donate or acquire as much as he had previously, according to the information found thus far. The acquisition practices of Somerville during his subsequent expeditions will not be discussed in the current study, as the focus of this

91 The online database and the resulting Excel spreadsheet, as illustrated in the Table 5, indicate a discrepancy of fourteen artefacts, which is likely caused by instances where a single record encompasses multiple artefacts. Nevertheless, this inconsistency does not affect the argument, which considers the total number of artefacts that collectively constitute the overall Vanuatu assemblage.

research is solely on Vanuatu artefacts. However, the hypothesis that Somerville acquired fewer artefacts in his subsequent posts could be supported and associated with the previous discussion regarding his frustration in the appreciation of his collection back home. The inconveniences of collecting when on board ship may also have dimmed his youthful enthusiasm for collecting things in newly encountered places. It should be noted that, in addition to his ethnographic publication on the New Hebrides and the Solomons Islands, Somerville did not publish further ethnographic studies, but instead, later, after retiring from military career, he engaged in archaeological studies.

Geographical Provenance of Vanuatu Artefacts in Somerville Assemblage in the Pitt River Museum	
Malekula	57
Shepherd Islands	46
Efate	10
Epi	9
Santo	4
Pentecost	1
Unknown	1

Table 6: The following table provides a summary of the provenance as recorded by the PRM of artefacts from Vanuatu in the Somerville assemblage.

An examination of the provenances of artefacts from Vanuatu reveals that the two largest groups are almost equally represented by artefacts from the Shepherd Islands (46 objects) and Malekula (57 objects) (table 6). This indicates that the HMS *Dart* expedition may have spent a greater amount of time on these two areas, which aligns with the information presented in Somerville's published papers (1894a; 1894b; 1928).

In consideration of the contrasting provenance, it is pertinent to note that Somerville, in his publications on the New Hebrides, engages in discussions related to ancestral population of the ni-Vanuatu and, on occasion, incorporates personal observations and assessments in his descriptions and analyses. Indeed, in this book (1928), he dedicates entire chapters to Efate, the Shepherd Islands, Malekula, and a final chapter to Uripiv Island, located on the east coast of Malekula, where the survey concluded. A notable contrast can be observed between his portrayal of the Indigenous populations living on Shepherd Island, whom he associates with Polynesian ancestry, and those in Malekula, whom he relates to Papuan origin and therefore

Melanesian ancestry (Somerville, 1928: 141). The contrast in Somerville's writing approach is illustrated by the following extract:

"Polynesians, on the other hand, are brown and beautifully shaped, with strong athletic figures, good-looking intelligent faces, and long wavy black hair. A Polynesian is almost as different in appearance from a Melanesian as an European is from an African. A great deal of this Polynesian superiority was visible in the Shepherd Group natives, and it was shown as well in their greater intelligence and pleasant manners." (Somerville, 1928: 141)

Nevertheless, this search for ancestral population is absent from Somerville's early ethnographical notes on the New Hebrides, which are more oriented towards description and academic account of cultural practices (1894a; 1894b). In contrast, his 1928 book displays a more personal tone and approach in describing his expeditions.

The provenance of the artefacts from Vanuatu can be related to the survey itinerary and to certain contentious episodes that occurred during that period. In this regard, it is noteworthy to mention that some of the places that HMS *Dart* visited are connected to the illegal labour recruiting activities of those on the schooner *May*, who were enrolling labour for Queensland (Fonds FO/Series FO 27/File 3113. AJCP Reel No: 3659-3660: Western Pacific). Foreign Office archives reproducing officer exchanges show that the main area mentioned is Efate, the location where issues arose with the New Hebrides French Company connected to Philippe François. The correspondence also demonstrates that British ships were also based at Port-Sandwich, Malekula, for a long period of time in connection with the recruiting case. Case n°47 (Fonds FO/Series FO 27/File 3113. AJCP Reel No: 3659-3660: Western Pacific: 114) suggests that illegal recruiting was also being conducted in the Shepherd Islands, especially in Tongoa. All these locations correspond to places which can be related to Somerville's assemblages of artefacts and photographs. Furthermore, it is also significant to highlight that HMS *Dart*'s itinerary can be linked to mission stations for two key reasons. Firstly, as Somerville himself stated, missionaries are closely associated with trade, which in turn requires effective mapping. Secondly, missionaries played a gatekeeper role in securing safe passage for surveying teams in the islands (Somerville, 1928: 113).

c) Composition of Vanuatu Assemblage

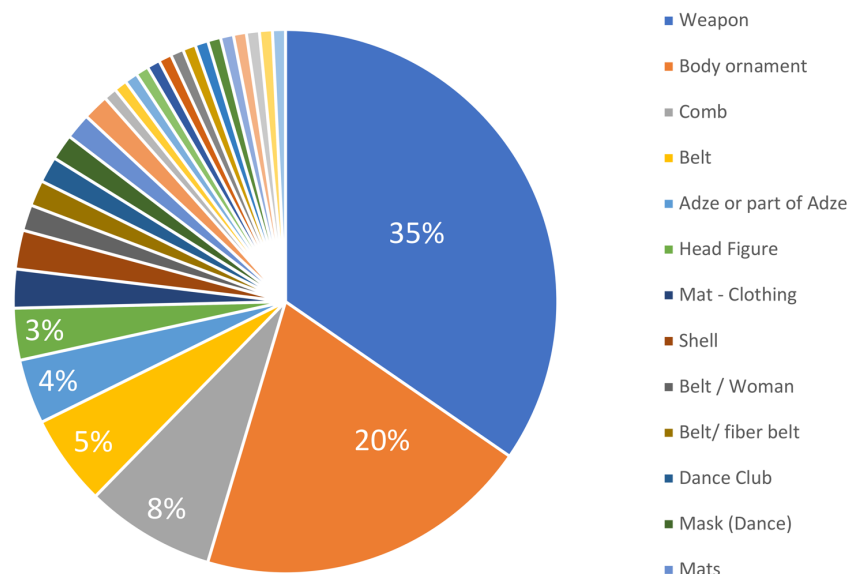


Figure 18: The pie chart illustrates the composition of the overall assemblage of artefacts from Vanuatu successively donated to the PRM as percentage.

The Somerville assemblage is characterised by a prevalence of weapons, a trend observed in the collections of numerous other collectors of the same period (Charpy, 2010: 716-718, 1122). This is evidenced by the complex display of such artefacts in museums and private exhibitions (see Chapter 4, Figure 14). This encompasses the previously referenced collectors, including Alphonse Pineau, John Higginson and Philippe François (see Chapters 3 and 4). With regard to this matter, the material culture from the archipelago provided by Somerville demonstrates that the category of ‘weapons’, which includes clubs, spears, arrows and bows, accounts for forty-five artifacts out of a total of one hundred and thirty (35%) (see graph Figure 18, above).

While weapons are the most prevalent category of artefacts, the specific types of weapons represented in this assemblage differ slightly from those observed in other collector assemblages. Nevertheless, the rationale behind this composition requires further consideration in relation to other assemblages, in order to assess the extent to which the collector’s agency is expressed in this composition.

It is of interest to contrast Somerville's assemblage with that of François, given that they were both in the archipelago at the same time. In François's assemblage, the majority of artefacts in the 'weapons' category are arrows, comprising 172 items, 72 in his private assemblage and 100 items in his museum collection. Bows also represent a substantial number, with 10 in the museum and 43 in his private assemblage. In contrast, the 'weapons' category in Somerville's overall artefact assemblage includes clubs, with 23 representing 17.6% of the collection of 130 artefacts. The François assemblage includes clubs, with only seven allocated to the museum, representing only 7.8% of the total François assemblage and 4.3% of the MET François collection.

When considering the Vanuatu artefacts that were incorporated into museum collections during the late nineteenth century, arrows appear to be represented in a large number of collectors' assemblages and in large numbers (see graphs comparing arrows and clubs in the Appendix H). They represent some of the earliest artefacts from the archipelago. Some of the concerns associated with ni-Vanuatu arrows in the late nineteenth century have been illustrated in the preceding chapters. In this regard, the Somerville assemblage is noteworthy for its limited representation of archery artefacts, which may be indicative of the collector's agency in composing the assemblage. In contrast, there is a greater representation of clubs, which also differs from the other assemblages that have been considered thus far. In this context, the presence of many clubs in Somerville's collections, artefacts that may be more challenging to obtain and transport (as will be discussed in Chapter 9), supports the hypothesis that Somerville's personal interests are reflected in the composition of his assemblage. It is relevant to note that this interest in clubs can be associated to a broader European appreciation for such artefacts, which in the Pacific can be correlated with increased accessibility due to Christianisation (Hooper, 2021: 64-65). With regard to Vanuatu, it can be observed that clubs were not discarded as readily as arrows during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (see supplementary graphs in Appendix H and Chapter 7). It is also the case that arrows were more easily replaced if traded away when compared to clubs. While the number of clubs in Philippe François's collection (both private and museum) is more significant, it is also important to consider the differences between the two collectors' approaches. François can be seen as a compulsive collector (Chapter 4), which is illustrated by the over-representation of arrows in his assemblage. In contrast, Somerville's collection is characterised by a greater number of clubs and a much smaller number of

arrows, which appear to be more accessible. It is also noteworthy that Somerville's Vanuatu club assemblage contains the largest representation of artefacts from different provenances within the archipelago. This can be interpreted as an intention to acquire a diverse range of clubs to represent the variety of this artefact type.

Similarly, the Somerville collection demonstrates a notable representation of combs, encompassing a diverse range of shapes and provenances (see Figure 22 and 23 in Appendix F). In his second ethnographic paper, Somerville (1894b) devotes special attention to ni-Vanuatu hair, emphasising its significance for local people. He illustrates this with examples from several islands, including Tanna, where hair ornamentation or 'style' is traditional hair 'weaving' (Somerville, 1894b: 368). A distinction is made between the hair of men, which is observed to be dressed in a variety of ways and adorned with a wide range of hair ornaments, including combs or feathers, and the hair of women, which is described as typically worn in a shorter style (Somerville, 1894b: 369n). It is also worthy of note that the earliest cultural artefacts from Vanuatu to be acquired by the British Museum was a hank of hair from Tanna (see Bolton, 2013: 285–286; and Chapter 2). The Somerville collection demonstrates the significance attributed to hair, as evidenced by the presence of several combs (see Figure 22 and 23 in Appendix F), sourced from different islands or exhibiting diverse shapes.⁹² Furthermore, the collection includes feather headdresses, two of which bear resemblance to headdresses depicted in photographs of ni-Vanuatu individuals. This includes the artefact PRM n°1896.33.29, which seems to be illustrated in photograph preserved in the RAI (see Appendix F), and artefact PRM n°1896.33.26, which is likely to be the same as the head feather worn by a man in the RAI and HMS *Dart* log book pictures. Additionally, combs and feather head ornaments are present in the collections of the previously referenced collectors, although in smaller numbers. The Pineau collection donated to the MET includes two combs (MQB 71.1890.41.11 and 71.1890.63.3, both from Efate) and two feather head ornaments (feather head ornament MQB n 71.1890.41.15 and 71.1890.63.6). Similarly, Pineau's co-authored article devotes space to a discussion of hairdressing and adornment, illustrated with drawings of combs and feather headdresses (Hagen and Pineau, 1889: 343).

92 The PRM references of the aforementioned combs are as follows: 1893.27.16 (attributed to Malekula), 1893.27.17 (attributed to Shepherd Islands), 1896.33.15 and 1896.33.16 (both associated with Meli Island, Efate), and 1896.33.19 (attributed to Shepherd Islands) - 1896.33.17 (attributed from Malekula) - 1896.33.13 (thought to be from Uripiv) - 1896.33.18 (attributed from Uripiv) - 1896.33.14 (attributed from Efate).

In contrast, the François MET assemblage does not include any head feathers or combs from the archipelago. However, his private collection includes 15 combs (see Drouot, 2002, sets 16 and 17), and no head feathers. Somerville's collection also includes an artefact not seen in the other collectors' assemblages presented thus far (PRM n°1896.33.22). This appears to be composed of a pig's tusk, pigments and what seems to be red wool. It is made in the hair of the owner (see figure19), which leads one to consider the possibility that this artefact composed of human remains might be evidence of similar cultural practices of "intergenerational teaching" as practised in Tanna in the making of the hair dye locks (Bolton, 2013: 285–286). The representation of hair ornaments in the Bouge assemblage (Chapter 6) is comparatively limited, with only two combs associated with the archipelago and no head feather ornament.⁹³ The Bouge assemblage donated to the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres does not include any feather head ornaments or combs. Instead, it features pig tail head ornaments worn attached to the hair.

In terms of artefacts represented in the Somerville assemblage that are less numerous but nonetheless significant, are one carved stone (PRM n°1896.33.53, from Uripiv), which is highly valued and secret in Vanuatu. As a result, it may have been difficult to acquire, as is still the case today. However, this assertion must be considered in light of the fact that Somerville visited locations in Malekula where missionary activity was prevalent, potentially increasing the accessibility of these artefacts. Nevertheless, it constitutes a relatively unique acquisition for a museum in the late nineteenth century, occurring about twenty-four years before Layard's visit to the same site and about fifty-two years before Layard published a comprehensive study of cultural practices in the region (Layard, 1942).⁹⁴ The importance of stones in the region's cultures is a recurring theme, a topic that continues to resonate in Malekula today, as evidenced by discussions with Malekula chiefs during my fieldwork in 2023.

93 It should be noted that one of the two is of uncertain provenance (Oc1913,1115.7 and .9), as evidenced by its association with Papua New Guinea in the database.

94 In Layard's book *Stone Men of Malekula: Vao*, Somerville is mentioned as the first author to have recorded a 'maki' performance at Uripiv, Malekula (Layard, 1942: 29, 335). It should be noted that Layard gives 1895 as the date of Somerville's expedition, a date given to him by Somerville's brother, which appears to be an error.



Figure 19: The photograph illustrates one of the hair ornaments in the Somerville assemblage, which bears the Somerville former label. It is noteworthy that Somerville describes this artefact as a 'pigtail'. The 'artefact' is catalogued with the PRM as object number 1896.33.22. The photographs were taken during museum visits. © Laetitia Lopes.

Additionally, two seaweed woven belts are of particular interest. They are similar to one in the Pineau assemblage acquired between 1886 and 1887 (MQB n°71.1893.34.44; see Chapter 3). Despite extensive research, no information could be found in either academic literature or during fieldwork about these belts. However, Ambong Thompson of the Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta did mention that they were worn by men in Efate. This information would corroborate the provenance indicated for one of the two belts (PRM n°1893.27.10) as being from Nguna, an island situated off the north coast of Efate. The second belt (PRM n° 1896.33.32) is said to be from Tongoa island, which raises the hypothesis that the collection, through the presence of these belts, may represent a remnant of an ancient traditional trade

route between Efate and Tongoa, both islands belonging to the province of Shefa. However, further research would be required to test this hypothesis.

A direct correlation can be established between specific artefacts from the Somerville assemblage at the Pitt Rivers Museum and photographs from the RAI archives, as well as the HMS *Dart* Journal. The clay figure PRM n°1896.33.49 and the wooden dancing ‘club’ PRM n°1902.21.33 and 1902.21.34, which are designated as such in the museum records, appear in the ship’s photographs (Appendix F). Furthermore, these artefacts are referenced in Somerville’s article, where they are designated as “fish” (see museum records and Somerville, 1894b: 373), along with several clubs, which are also photographed on board. The onboard photographs prove that Somerville did indeed acquire artefacts during his hydrographic survey expeditions.

d) Notes Regarding Somerville’s published materials

Somerville’s two papers on the New Hebrides (1894a; 1894b) initiated a publishing practice which continued with the Solomon Islands ethnographic paper published in the same journal (1897). These three papers represent the only ethnographic studies undertaken by Somerville, in contrast to his practice of acquiring artefacts. Considering the composition of the Somerville assemblage in the PRM, it is clear that he continued to acquire artefacts, as he also gave assemblages from other countries or regions for which no published report can be found. He was, of course, a naval officer and not an academic, so expectations about publishing would have been low. As pointed out in the study of the Pineau assemblage (Chapter 3), the structure of Somerville’s ethnographic papers on the New Hebrides is quite different from that of Pineau’s, which approaches key information for potential emigrants to the archipelago that is absent in Somerville’s articles. In this respect, Somerville’s papers go directly into the description of cultural practices, especially in his first paper, which is less academically organised (see Appendix D: Ethnographic Papers). In contrast, his second publication is much more structured. There is also a change in the way ethnographic studies are conducted and published between his two papers on the New Hebrides and the one on New Georgia (Solomon Islands), with the latter appearing to have a more detailed approach. Somerville states before the general discussion that the headings are taken in order from the ‘Notes and Queries on Anthropology’ (Somerville, 1897: 357). This shows an evolution in

Somerville's approach, which is evident in the format of the three articles, which tend to increase in length, but is also reflected in the size of the artefact assemblages, which are far more numerous in the case of the Solomon Islands (481) in the PRM when compared to the Vanuatu assemblage (130). This suggests that Somerville was in a formative period when he travelled to the archipelago as a hydrographer, his first expedition as a military officer. It is therefore likely that, initially, Somerville was attempting to construct an ethnographic study based on his first impressions, as this was his first time in the region.

In her study of Somerville's assemblages of artefacts from New Georgia, Deborah Waite (2000) mentioned that there was an evolution in the structure of Somerville's papers that could be attributed to his increasing contact with anthropologists, who were most likely to influence his thinking about anthropological studies. Waite also noted that Somerville gave lectures at the RAI in February 1893 and January 1894, prior to the publication of his papers, which may help to explain the changes in structure (Waite, 2000: 282).

Somerville also gave a lecture to the Literacy and Scientific Society of Cork on 11 November 1928, the transcript of which is held at the Royal Anthropological Institute in London (RAI Archives, Somerville, *Surveying the South Seas*, 1928: 3). This lecture, delivered in the same year as the publication of his book *The Chart-Maker* (1928) was on the New Hebrides, Tonga and the Solomon Islands. It appears to have been illustrated with a large number of photographic slides, as was the usual practice at the time. It has been seen that François also held a conference/lecture at the Société de Géographie de Paris, supported by photographic material (see Chapter 4). The *Manual of Scientific Inquiry*, 1886 edition, published by the administration and intended for officers of Her Majesty's Navy and travellers, under Article VII on anthropology, stresses the need to illustrate anthropological notes with sketches or photographs, which were then described as "generally available" and "giving better details" (Herchel and Ball, 1886: 226).

Conclusion

This introduction to Somerville's assemblages has made it possible to draw some direct connections between colonial activities and the assemblages of artefacts he collected from the archipelago, as well as to discuss the collector's agency in the collection donated to the PRM. An examination of the composition of Somerville's full assemblage from the archipelago suggests that certain artefacts may reflect his personal choices and appreciation of ni-Vanuatu culture in the various locations he visited during the hydrographic expedition. The disparity in the number of artefacts acquired from Vanuatu compared to those from the Solomons suggests that his Vanuatu collection represents a more formative and selective acquisition process than his approach in the Solomon Islands and is consistent with Somerville's itinerary - the New Hebrides first, followed by the Solomon Islands.

The link between Somerville's photographic and artefact collections, used in his second paper on the New Hebrides, helps to link certain artefacts from the archipelago in the PRM collection to the field and ethnographic records. His book on his cartographic experiences adds perspective to the artefact assemblage by highlighting his interests and narratives about the New Hebrides, alongside insights into his acquisition practices.

While the analysis reveals similarities with previous case studies, it also highlights certain unique aspects, particularly in relation to artefacts that are rare in late nineteenth-century museum collections from the archipelago. In this context, there are some parallels between Pineau and Somerville, raising the question of how their positions on military ships visiting the archipelago and their involvement in specific controversial events may have given them access to artefacts otherwise restricted in other contexts. This privileged status associated with 'man'wa' or 'men of war', as Somerville refers to them (Somerville, 1928: 133, 136, 137, 154, 191), is further illustrated in the following case study of the French colonial administrator Louis-Joseph Bouge.

Chapter 6: Louis-Joseph Bouge

Louis-Joseph Bouge

Louis-Joseph Bouge was born in Toulon on 25 November 1878. Between 1899 and 1913 he served in New Caledonia, eventually as ‘Secretary General of New Caledonia and its Dependencies’, which at the time included the New Hebrides. In 1913 he returned to France for two years, during which time he studied law and sold much of his collection of objects, mainly from Vanuatu, Wallis Islands and New Caledonia to the British Museum. In 1915, after a successful career in the French colonial administration, he was sent to Tahiti as head of cabinet. He was promoted to governor of Tahiti from 1928 to 1930, then served as governor of French Guiana from 1931 to 1933, during which time he was made an Officer of the Legion of Honour in 1932. He was subsequently appointed governor of Guadeloupe from 1933 to 1936, after which he was recalled to France. He continued to be involved in French colonial politics, heading various missions and holding the position of Private ‘Secrétaire Particulier du Ministre des Colonies’ from 1937 to 1939. Throughout his long career, Bouge showed a real concern for the efficiency of administrative action in the colonial context and a profound interest in ‘primitive art’. He was particularly involved in the organisation of the 1937 Paris World Fair. In 1960, Bouge died in an accident at the age of 82, leaving behind his wife, Madame Emma Bouge, who died ten years later.

Bouge demonstrated a particular interest in the peoples and cultures of the Islands he was dispatched to throughout his life. He authored numerous articles published in specialist journals. His first publication (1913) dedicated to the inhabitants of the Wallis Islands (Wallis and Futuna) was published the same year a large assemblage of his collection, including artefacts from Wallis Islands, was sold to the British Museum. The following year, he published a study on three sculptures from Lifou Island in New Caledonia (Bouge, 1914). He is also known for his study of Tahitian grammar (Lovy and Bouge, 1953). Additionally, he contributed to the study of Pacific Islanders’ material culture, as illustrated by his study of Oceanian pounders (Bouge, 1931), and his study of ancient harpoons (1948) but also his contribution to conchological science (Bouge, 1961; Bouge and Dautzenberg, 1913; 1922; 1933).

In addition to his scientific work, Bouge was a renowned collector of cultural objects, books and shells from the places he visited.⁹⁵ The published catalogue of his Polynesian collection at the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres (MBAC) which will be referred as the Chartres Museum or (MBAC) (Guiot and Stéfani, 2002: 4) indicates that he was known to exchange Melanesian objects for Polynesian ones to complete his collections, and to order copies of objects he could not acquire during his stays in the Pacific. While he was a major collector of objects, books and shells, he also actively sought ethnographic information on the artefacts he acquired, especially from the Indigenous population, as evidenced by his notes on the information provided by the Islanders. The archives of the Chartres Museum and the MQB possess notes by Bouge on the material culture of New Caledonia. Some archival material in his private archives in Chartres also provide insights into some of his exchanges. However, there are only a few references to Vanuatu objects. All of his exchanges took place after his return to France, and after he sold at least part of his collection to the British Museum in 1913. Consequently, only the collection given to the Chartres Museum was affected by these exchanges and late acquisitions.

Vanuatu: A Formative Experience

During his time in New Caledonia, Bouge was dispatched on 29 April 1904 to Port-Vila, New Hebrides, to undertake administrative functions. He returned to New Caledonia three years later on 30 April 1907. Therefore, although no archives have yet been found to directly link Bouge to the establishment of the Condominium, he was most likely one of the colonial administrators involved, a theory supported by the presence of photographs of the signing ceremony of the new convention in 1906 in Bouge's private albums in Chartres (Chartres Fine Art Museum, Bouge Archives, Album 6 and G). During this initial period in Vanuatu, Bouge travelled between islands on at least one expedition on board a French military ship to record events and undertake enquiries. All that remains of this journey is a short diary in his private archives, kept in Chartres, which contains information about cases he had to settle

95 According to the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres, Emma Bouge bequeathed 6,000 books, 7,000 pamphlets, numerous archives and iconographies (no details are provided by the museums description) and 53,000 shells from the Pacific and the West Indies. As documented in the catalogue dedicated to the Polynesian collection at the MBAC, 5300 shells from New Caledonia acquired by Bouge were incorporated into the Musée d'Histoire Naturelle de Paris at the end of the 1970s (Guiot and Stéfani, 2002: 4).

and a few drawings of objects that interested him, some of which are now in the Chartres Museum. Three years later, Bouge was dispatched a second time to the archipelago on 12 February 1910 to replace the French resident M. Scoeffler as Commander of the French section of the New Hebrides Militia and Chief of Staff (Chartres Archives, Folder XI, 4°, letter N.13.C.G. 21 February 1910).⁹⁶ On 24 November 1910, he and his wife left the archipelago for Nouméa on board the ship *Le Pacifique* for a thirty-day holiday.

In January 1911, he was finally transferred to the Wallis and Futuna Islands, where he remained until his return to France in 1913. Although no official or private correspondence has yet been found to suggest that Bouge was officially sent for a third time to Vanuatu, among the inventories of his collection, Bouge's papers mention that he bought objects in Vanuatu while taking part in an expedition on board the ship *Kulambangra* some time between April 1911 and April 1912, (Private Archive MBAC, Archive n°7 of 20 January 1911: Folder XIII, 4°). It was during this period, from 1910 to 1912, that Bouge met Speiser during his fieldwork in the archipelago, and with whom he later remained in contact after his return, as evidenced by a letter from Speiser in the archives of the Chartres Museum requesting information about Vanuatu, which shows how much Bouge's knowledge was valued by a professional anthropologist such as Felix Speiser (see letter in Bouge archives in Chartres Museum, 'Box: Vanuatu (à classer)').

Direct connections of his time in the archipelago as a colonial administrator can be found in his collections. From his early arrival in the New Hebrides, Bouge was confronted with murder cases, which he described in his diary and letters. Two cases, the murders of the crew and captains of the ships *Petrel* and *Perle*, which appear in British and Australian archives (FO27/3745-case 218) and in Bouge notes (Bouge Private Archives MBA Chartres, Folder I,B, 10°), had a significant impact on Bouge, as traces of the events are part of his office papers, bequeathed to the Chartres Museum in 1970, but also in his collections of artefacts.

96 M. Scoeffler held the position of Deputy Administrator of the Colonies, serving as Chief of the Cabinet of the Resident Commissioner of France and Commander of the French Section of the New Hebrides Militia ("Administrateur adjoint des colonies, chef du cabinet du Commissaire-Résident de France, et Commandant de la section Française de la Milice des Nouvelles-Hébrides"). Similarly, Bouge's official status was as 'Commandant de la section française de la Milice des Nouvelles-Hébrides et Chef de Cabinet.'"

Regarding Vanuatu Collections (1899-1913)

Bouge collected objects and shells during his time as an administrator in the French colonies. After his return, he continued to expand his collection by exchanging objects or buying them (MQB archive 5AAI/83 - letter exchange Roudillon September 1953 of shells for a plate with stylised turtle head and tail from the New Hebrides). Based on the information currently available, only two institutions are known to hold artefacts donated or sold by Bouge, the British Museum (374 objects) and the Fine Art Museum of Chartres (407 objects), for a total of 781 artefacts, of which 247 are from Vanuatu, making it by far the most extensive section of Bouge's collections (see Figure 20).

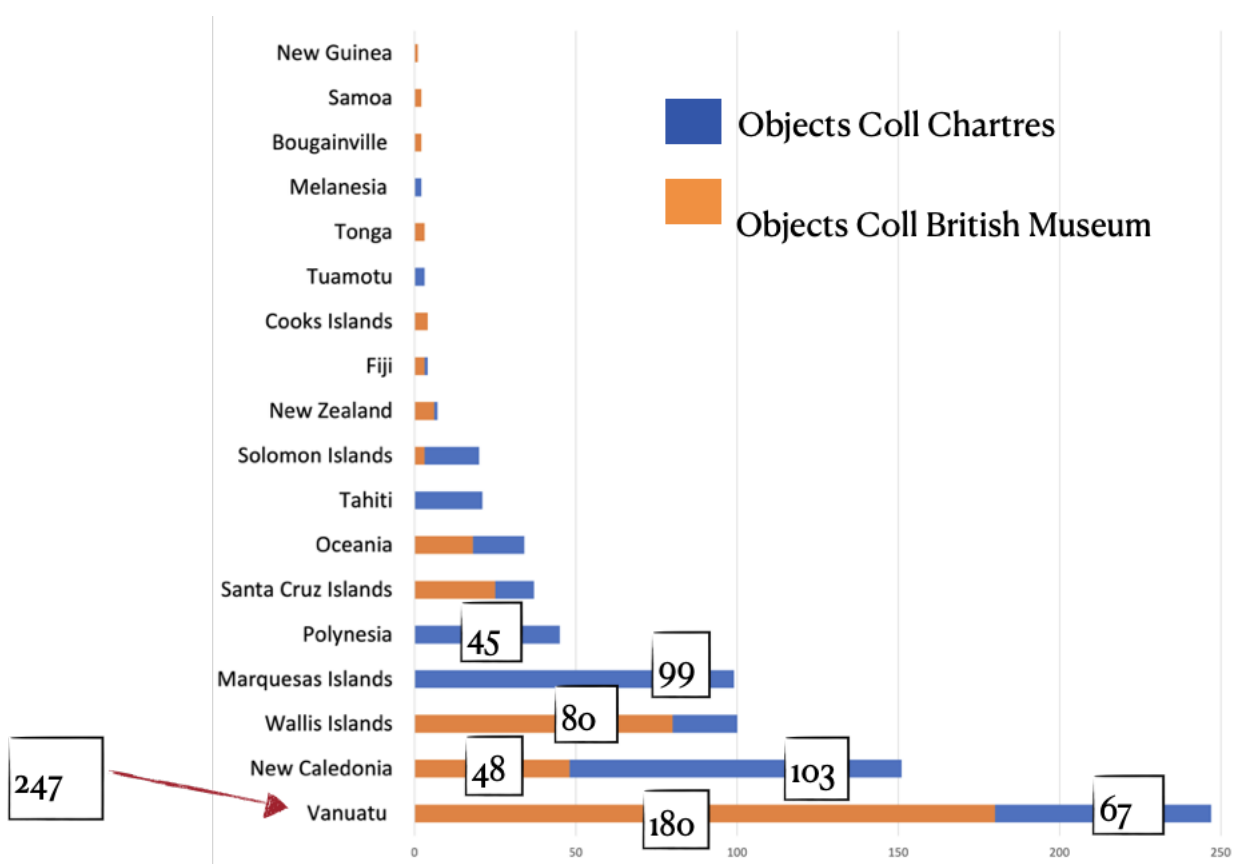


Figure 20: This graph shows the number of objects in the Bouge BM and Chartres Museum assemblages, categorised by provenance according to museum data.

Although the Vanuatu objects are the largest group, very little has been written about this part of his collection and Bouge's time in the archipelago. Bouge's Polynesian collection has attracted the most attention. One reason for this may be that the Bouge collection in France does not consist primarily of Vanuatu artefacts but is dominated by objects from New

Caledonia and the Marquesas Islands. Therefore, without taking into account the British Museum's collection, one might assume that his most important acquisitions came from these two regions. Another reason may be the lack of publications by Bouge on the New Hebrides, which may have led researchers to focus more on the parts of his collection related to his publications, possibly overlooking the material culture of the archipelago and Bouge's relationship to it. It is noteworthy that Bouge's early career was spent in New Caledonia and the New Hebrides, which shaped his later career, his collecting practices and networks.

a) Field collection to Private collection

The British Museum's Bouge assemblage of 374 artefacts was sold to the museum on his return to France in 1913, after he wrote to the curator to enquire if the Museum would be interested in acquiring his collection.⁹⁷ This set can only have been acquired during Bouge's first voyage in the Pacific, was an opportunity to add a large collection from a unique donor to the BM's existing holdings of artefacts from the region. With the integration of the Bouge collection, the BM greatly expanded its already existing Wallis and Futuna collection, and also made a major contribution to New Caledonia, with forty-eight objects associated with him in the online database, making him the third largest donor/seller of New Caledonia artefacts in the BM after H.G. Beasley, Irene Marguerite Beasley and Emma Hadfield.⁹⁸ Interestingly, although the Bouge collection is the most significant contributor to the expanded Wallis and Futuna collection in the BM, it is the New Caledonia set of artefacts that seems to attract attention, as evidenced by a letter from Bouge to the museum responding to the authenticity concern of the New Caledonia artefacts (see BM archives Letters 26 September 1913. Furthermore, this hypothesis of particular attention given to the New Caledonian artefacts is confirmed by the presence in the Bouge archives of a card from the BM curators thanking Bouge for his ethnographic collection and in particular the artefacts from New Caledonia (Chartres archives, box XII. 54°, 'scientific correspondence' file).

97 In the letters held by the British Museum, Bouge does not provide a name, and the reference to the addressee is limited to their status as 'curator'. Consequently, it can only be assumed that the correspondence was with Sir Charles Hercules Read, who at the time held the position of Keeper of the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities and Ethnography at the British Museum (Balfour, 1929: 61; Tonnochy, 1953: 84–85). This hypothesis appears to be corroborated by the letter dated 6 November 1913, which features a manuscript reference to Sir H. Read in the upper left-hand side of the document, above the British Museum stamp.

98 The Bouge assemblage of artefacts from Wallis and Futuna is still today the largest single collector collection from these islands in the BM, with 80 objects out of the 127 recorded in the online database.

Bouge may not have been the largest donor of Vanuatu artefacts, but he was one of the first to donate a large number of artefacts from the archipelago to the museum. In this respect, Bouge's collection may have been of great interest to the museum, which had an active acquisitions policy. In this respect, one might wonder why Bouge decided to sell this set of artefacts to the British Museum in the first place, when a similar museum, the Musée d'ethnographie du Trocadéro (MET), existed in France to house such a collection. It is particularly intriguing when one considers his position as a colonial administrator. No archives have yet been found in France to prove that Bouge tried or did not try to sell the objects to French museums before he reached out to the British Museum. One hypothesis to explain his actions could be that Bouge was looking to sell his collection rather than donate it, which, given the particular financial difficulties the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro was experiencing at the time, would explain why he might have contacted the British Museum directly. Indeed, according to an exchange of letters preserved at the British Museum (archive BM, Bouge Letters: P n°3333, P n°4987 Brit: Ant: ANSR: 10/11/19 – 6 November 1913, ANSR 24/9/13 – 19 September 1913, ANSR 11 Nov 1913 – 10 November 1913), Bouge sold his collection to the museum for £40, the equivalent in 1913 of about 1,010 French francs. This sum was considerably higher than the Trocadéro Museum's annual budget at the time, which ranged from 100 to 200 francs (Dias 1991: 198; Archives F17/3847: comptabilité Musée ethnographie), and thus far beyond what the French National Museum could afford.⁹⁹ Another explanation, which does not exclude the first one, could be that the Trocadéro Ethnographic Museum was in such a bad state at the time that many academics were expressing their concerns in publications. This perhaps persuaded Bouge not to send his collection to the museum. Among the famous French researchers who expressed their concerns was Van Gennep, who wrote in the press that France should be ashamed of such a museum; these concerns were shared by Marcel Mauss, who expressed similar feelings towards the museum in an article entitled "*L'Ethnographie en France et à l'Étranger*," published in 1913 (Mauss, 1913: 822; Dias, 1991: 253; Laroche, 1945: 51). Another factor that may have influenced Bouge's decision to contact the BM and eventually sell some of his artefacts to the museum was his relationship with Charles Woodford, who himself donated a substantial number of artefacts to the BM between 1880 and 1914 (O'Brien, 2011: 73-74). The correspondence between Bouge and Woodford (MBAC,

⁹⁹ see: <http://www.historicalstatistics.org/Currencyconverter.html>

Bouge's archives folder XIII - 4°) reveals a cordial tone and exchanges of artefacts and stamps.

b) Composition of Vanuatu Assemblages

Analysis of the British Museum Bouge assemblage reveals that the material culture of Vanuatu, with 180 artefacts, dominates the total of 374 artefacts sold to the museum. The second-largest provenance is the Wallis Islands (80 artefacts), followed by New Caledonia (48 artefacts) (see graph figure 20). Among the Vanuatu artefacts, a difference can be noted with respect to the previously introduced collections, for example the large presence of ear ornaments from Maewo, which is very likely related to the murder case of the *Pétrel* and the *Pearl*, both described by Bouge in his short diary (AJCP, FO27, File 3745. AJCP Reel No: 3682-3683 File, p 151, Report Australian Stations, Case 216; MBAC, Bouge's archives folder XIII.4°, 24 August 1904). Many of the provenances of Vanuatu artefacts in the Bouge collection can be linked to the 1904 cases. Particular attention has therefore been paid to Malekula, especially South West Bay (Malekula), Ambrym, Ambae and Maewo, which, with the exception of Ambrym, correspond to cases recorded as to where the French military took retaliatory action against ni-Vanuatu (AJCP, FO27, File 3745. AJCP Reel No: 3682-3683 File, p 151, Report Australian Stations).

In this respect, one may wonder if it could be that some of the Ambae mats might have been part of a reparation ceremony, or reparation gifts in which Bouge would have likely participated due to his position. However, no information about a possible ceremony to make amends has yet been found. Similarly, the objects from Ambrym could be associated with visits by Bouge or French ships to Ambrym to settle ongoing disputes with settlers. This hypothesis is supported by objects in the Bouge collection at Chartres which directly mention a case in Ambrym which is most likely related to Admiralty case 213 (FO27, File 3745. AJCP Reel No: 3682-3683, p151). It is also noteworthy that Album 6 of the MBAC, page 22, features four images of individuals from Ambrym, in various poses. This suggests that Bouge may have travelled to Ambrym as a colonial administrator (Bouge Album 6, p22, MBAC archives). This hypothesis is supported by the fact that this album appears to be a more private and personal composition by Bouge. It spans a long period, containing photographs of events such as weddings and various official ceremonies, along with images

of Bouge himself. Additionally, it includes images of settlers' and colonial administrators' houses, as well as photographs of ni-Vanuatu convicts (Bouge Album 6, p24, MBAC archives). Other items, such as Malekula and Maewo-related artefacts, are more likely to be linked to the murder investigations and punitive expeditions that took place in 1904. While no mention of the Malekula cases has yet been found in Bouge's diary, information on the *Petrel* and *Perle* cases is extensive. The hypothesis of direct correlations between Vanuatu artefacts in Bouge's collection and the 1904 cases is strengthened when Bouge's collection in Chartres is considered.

The Bouge collection at the Chartres Museum has a very different history from that of the BM. It was bequeathed to the museum in 1970 by Emma Bouge, Bouge's second wife.¹⁰⁰ She chose this institution to ensure her husband's collection received proper attention and to avoid museums like the Musée de l'Homme, which already had large collections of 'primitive art' on display. Emma Bouge's search for a provincial institution led her to the museums of Toulon, the birthplace of Bouge, but without success. During a visit to her friend Sarah Touze in the Chartres region, who was to be her executor, she met the curator René Gobillot at a piano recital at the Chartres Museum of Fine Arts. Gobillot agreed to receive the bequest on Madame Bouge's terms (Guiot and Stéfani, 2002: 3). These conditions ensured the collection would not be divided and that Bouge's library/office would be recreated as it was to associate the collection with the 'collector' (MQB archives 5AAI/83). In 1970, when the bequest was executed, the Chartres Museum possessed few Pacific Island artefacts, which were preserved in storage and consisted mainly of lithics, weapons, and tools (Guiot and Stéfani, 2002: 3).

The collection was the subject of a major exhibition from July to the end of September 1980, ten years after Emma Bouge's bequest (MQB archive 5AAI/83). The exhibition catalogue introduced the collection as a significant one, acquired during Bouge's time in the colonies, characterised by a large volume of shells (53,000), books (4,500), prints (7,000), archives and artefacts documenting vanished or disappearing civilisations. There seemed to be a

¹⁰⁰ The available evidence does not permit the determination of whether Emma Bouge was present in the archipelago with Louis-Joseph Bouge. However, in an informal discussion with Christian Kaufman, former curator of the MKB, it was suggested that Felix Speiser met with Bouge in the New Hebrides. Additionally, the archives of Felix Speiser in Basel indicate that Bouge was then married to another woman, his first wife. Nevertheless, this information could not be ascertained during the doctoral research.

strong focus on New Caledonia and Tahiti, and considerable attention to the Kanak revolt of 25-26 June 1878, illustrating the event's great impact on nineteenth century France and its lasting influence on the twentieth century museum and its visitors. This supports the hypothesis that the revolt helped to focus French attention on the region and its people, contributing to their presence in salons and major exhibitions (Charpy, 2010: 709). Although some Vanuatu artefacts appear in the catalogue, they are sometimes confusingly mixed with those from New Caledonia. For example, the pig hammer from the New Hebrides (84.1.OB.294,) is shown on a page with three other artefacts from New Caledonia, with only the pig hammer lacking a specified provenance. On the same catalogue page, a shell blade adze is listed as being from New Caledonia, which is in contradiction with the 1970 museum inventory, which records it as being from the New Hebrides. This provenance is still attributed to the artefact today (MBAC n°84.1.OB.291). Such instances may suggest a general confusion or unclear distinction between Vanuatu artefacts and those from New Caledonia. This confusion may be rooted in French colonial narratives and debates in the late nineteenth century, which claimed that the New Hebrides was a natural dependency of New Caledonia, thereby justifying France's claim to the archipelago.

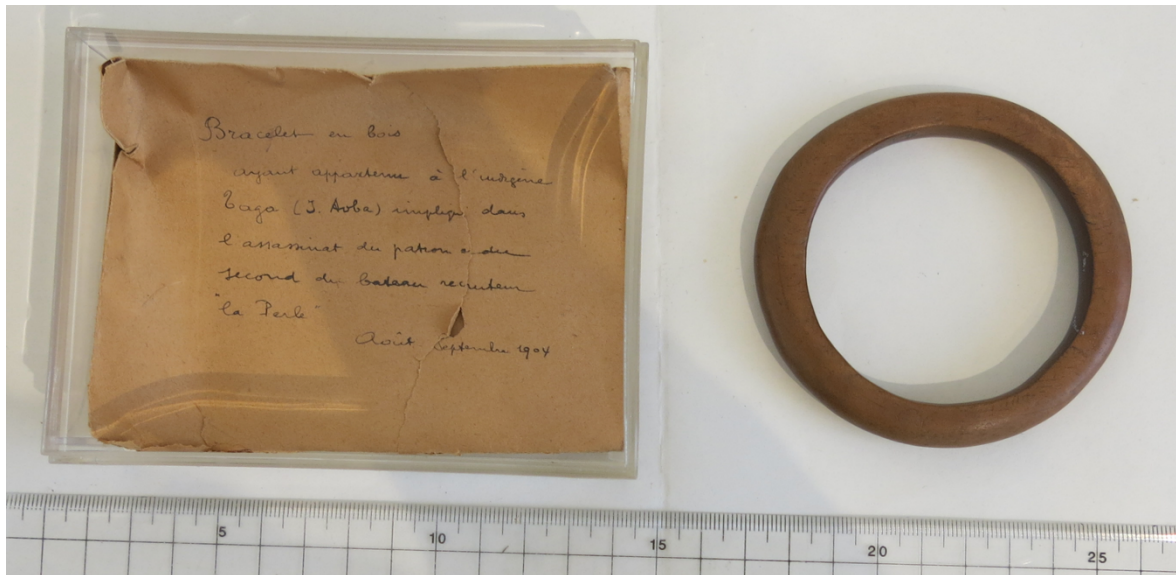


Figure 21: The photograph shows a wooden bracelet (84.1.OB.268) from Aoba in Chartres Museum, accompanied by Bouge's notes.

The bequest of Emma Bouge included a large collection of artefacts, some of which were unique, but also photographs, illustrations, drawings, prints, etc., as well as extensive documents. This documentation was either indirectly related, such as books on material

culture or political analysis, or directly related, such as personal papers associated with the bequest or descriptions attached directly to the objects, such as the wooden bracelet 84.1.OB.268 from Aoba. This bracelet is particularly interesting because, according to a paper written by Bouge and preserved with the bracelet (see figure 21), it belonged to a Vanuatu man named Taga, linked to the first difficult murder case Bouge had to investigate as a French colonial administrator. It occurred during Bouge's first tour of some of the islands as a representative of the French authorities in Vanuatu in 1904 at the beginning of his service there. Bouge described this case in detail in a diary he periodically kept during his expedition and afterwards. The importance of this case for Bouge is demonstrated not only by the large number of related papers he kept, but also by the fact that he kept in his private collection an object he had seized and photographs of ni-Vanuatu involved in the case, all of which were preserved by his wife after his death. The presence of this object, directly linked to a case in which Bouge was involved and described in detail in his diary (Folder I,B, 10°: Notes Néo-hébridaises 1904-1905), in the collection preserved in Chartres underlines the special status of this part of his collection. This hypothesis can be illustrated by analysing the composition of the MBAC collection in comparison with the other part sold to the British Museum in 1913.

c) Public Collection vs 'Souvenir' Collection

Although the two collections are approximately the same size, with 374 objects in the BM and 407 in the MBAC, the percentage of Vanuatu artefacts represented in the two institutions is quite different. Vanuatu is better represented in the BM with 48% (180 artefacts and 33% excluding arrows) than in Chartres with 16% (67 artefacts). The differences continue when looking at the composition of the two sets, suggesting possible differences in intentions and interactions or relationships with the two collections.

In the British Museum collection, while the composition is dominated by weapons, which represent 52% of the Vanuatu set, body ornaments are also prominent, representing 20% of the assemblage. In addition, belts, mats and penis sheaths are each represented by more than one artefact, and a variety of individual artefacts complete the overall assemblage. It is therefore a balanced collection from the archipelago, reflecting an interest in weapons and

personal possessions. It illustrates two major academic interests, weapons and body wearing, while integrating objects beyond these categories (see Figure 22 and Appendix G).

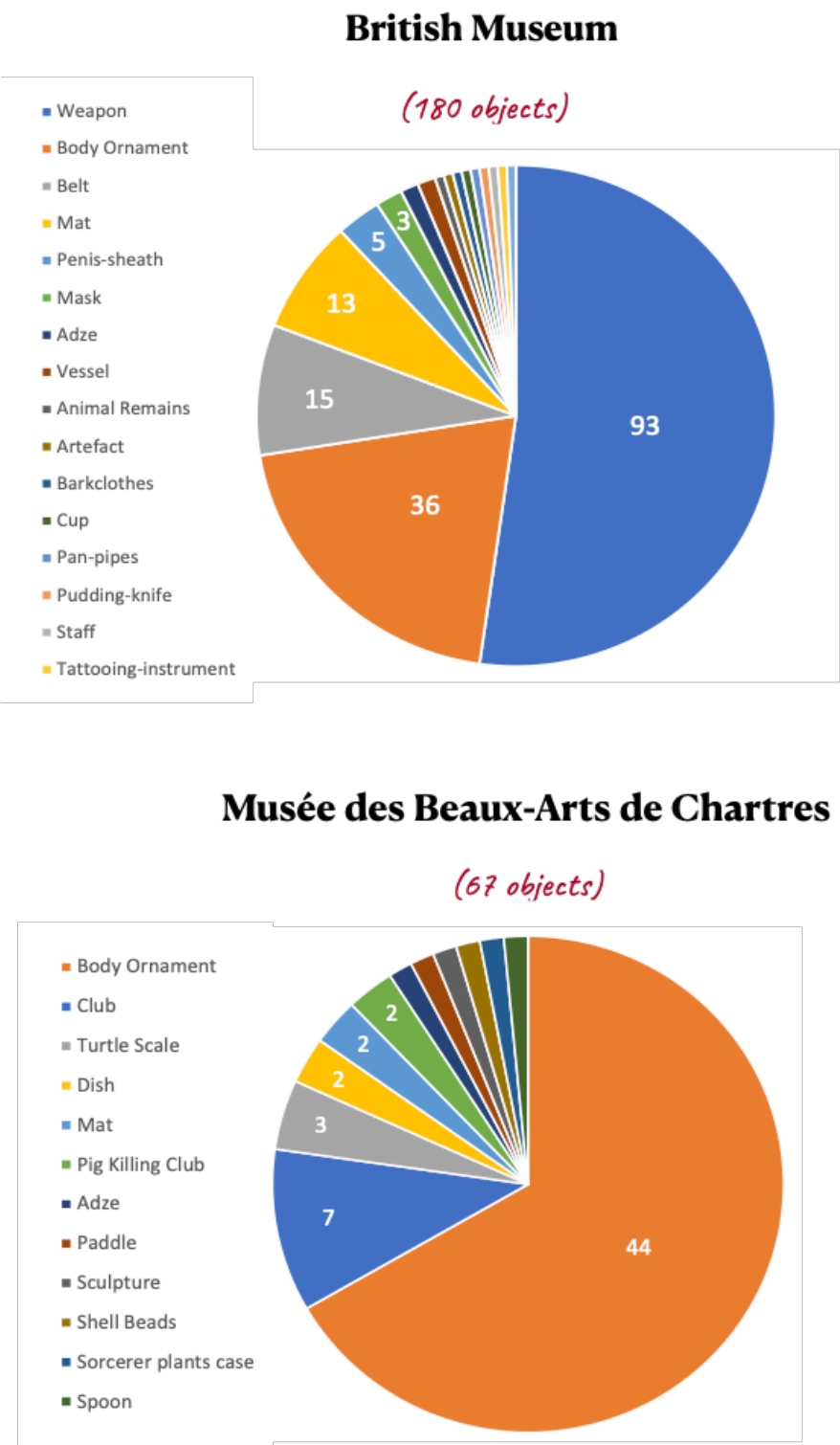


Figure 22: The following two pie charts illustrate the composition of Bouge's assemblage in the British Museum and in the Museum of Chartres.

Overall, it is a diverse collection, encompassing various aspects, including Bouge's interest in craftsmanship, illustrated by the shuttle of a loom from Santa Cruz (Oc1913,1115.343), and cultural practices, represented by tattooing tools from Vanuatu. Craft artefacts from Vanuatu are also present in the Chartres collection, such as turtle shells in various stages of processing, suggesting that they were part of the artefact-making process (MBAC n°84.1.OB.14 and 84.1.OB.145). Santo ceramics (Oc1913,1115.139 and Oc1913,1115.140) are also part of the assemblage sold to the museum, similar to those in the collections of Alphonse Pineau, John Higginson and Philippe François, all associated with French collectors. In contrast, the Somerville assemblage studied in this thesis does not include such artefacts, which may be due to a number of factors. One factor could be the differences in the sites visited as a result of colonial settlement. Another could be the link between archaeology and anthropology in France. It is worth noting that the curator of the Trocadéro Museum at the time, Theodore Ernest Hamy, was a former student of M. A. de Mortillet, who was then professor of prehistoric archaeology at the Paris School of Anthropology (Dias, 1991: 42–46), and who had a great influence on his former student. Pottery is of great importance in archaeological analysis because it serves as an important indicator of cultural identity and is often used to date or identify population movements. The question of pottery making in the Pacific was part of an ongoing academic debate, as evidenced by a report from the Société d'Anthropologie de Paris, which discussed whether the pottery in New Caledonia was of recent or prehistoric origin. Both Mortillet and Gustave Glaumont took part in this debate on the pottery brought back by Glaumont (1895: 41–52; Société d'Anthropologie de Paris., 1895: 72).

In terms of the weapons category of Vanuatu artefacts in the British Museum, arrows represent the majority, accounting for 33%, followed by clubs at 13%. The presence of arrows in the Vanuatu collection is expected, as they were among the earliest artefacts acquired from the archipelago and attracted attention in the late nineteenth century for their 'poisonous' nature, being covered with materials that caused severe infections when used. Arrows are also the most represented artefacts from the archipelago in museums. Conversely, the large number of clubs (23) is unique for Vanuatu (see graph number to be added) and represents a significant accession, even for the British Museum.

In contrast, the set of Vanuatu artefacts at Chartres is strongly dominated by body ornaments, followed by clubs that can be classified as weapons. However, the Chartres collection of Vanuatu weapons is exclusively represented by clubs, which are far less numerous than in the BM (see tables). The remaining part of the collection is made up of various individual artefacts, but in much smaller numbers than in the BM, consisting of necklaces and earrings (18% and 17% respectively), followed by a pig's tusk bracelet, clubs and a turtle shell (11% of the collection each), and then a varying number of objects of various types, but much less represented. When the objects are grouped according to category, body ornaments dominate the collection (67%), including necklaces, bracelets, earrings, etc.

Overall, the objects in Chartres are smaller and easier to transport, an element that takes on particular significance given that Bouge was only at the early stages of his career. In addition, some of the artefacts that composed that assemblage can be related to contentious cases reported in Bouge archives (MBAC Box Vanuatu (à classer) and Notes ethnographiques supplément) and national archives (FO27/3745- case213) Some of these artefacts have direct connections drawn by the collector himself through the presence of notes associated with them (see Appendix G).

Another important component of Bouge's collection in Chartres is the album of photographs, some of which appear to have been taken by Bouge himself. Two other albums are linked to a person identified as Marony, whose photographs on the cover are said to have been taken during an expedition in 1904, the same year as Bouge's (MBAC, Bouge Archives, A5, T1 and T2). These two albums seem to follow a tour of the islands, photographing various islands, but also settlers or places where Europeans died, linking the itinerary to what seems to have been an official tour by British Admiralty ships, responsible for reporting and dealing with the ongoing conflict.¹⁰¹

The other album containing photographs of the New Hebrides is a personal album with pictures dating from 1904 to 1913 (Photographic Album, Bouge Archives, Fine Art Museum, Chartres, Album 6). It contains numerous images of settlers visited during tours of the

101 Marony was one of the settlers sent to Vanuatu as part of a settlement project sponsored by the Australian company Burns & Philp. Marony published a series of articles on the New Hebrides, illustrated with photographs which form part of the album in the Bouge collection (Marony, 1906a; 1906b).

islands, but also of more personal events such as Christmas celebrations or official ones such as the signing of the 1906 Convention. From the people he met to the landscape, album n°6 is a personal itinerary that can be followed from 1904 to 1913. Photographs of the islands of Wallis and Futuna and of his time in Toulon before travelling to the Pacific can also be found in this album. It also appears that some of the photographs taken by Bouge in Album No. 6 (p. 9), were probably removed to be added to the end of Governor Picanon's official report, as indicated by the blank pages labelled "Picanon" from which the photographs were taken. Governor Picanon's report folder also indicates that a photographic report is attached at the end of the main report (Archive SLNSW-ML, PMB 134). The documentary nature of Bouge's private images of his itinerary as a colonial administrator in the South West Pacific reinforced the overall impression of an intimate and memorable collection in the Chartres bequest.

Comparison of the composition and itinerary of the two sets of Vanuatu artefacts in the split assemblage of Bouge suggests that the BM collection is closer to a study collection in that it is a diversified collection with the expected dominant categories such as weapons. However, the large number of objects of some types, such as clubs or ear ornaments from Maevo, suggests a more personal interest or agency of Bouge that could be related to his function as a colonial administrator. Combined with the timing of the donation, just after Bouge's return, one hypothesis is that Bouge selected only some of the artefacts from the archipelago for his personal collection and sold the rest of the collection; this hypothesis is supported by a comparison between the various inventories preserved in Chartres, and the inventory sent to the British Museum. The inventory in his archives supports this idea and shows that an extremely large number of Vanuatu artefacts correspond between the lists of objects for sale in the BM archives and the many lists made by Bouge and kept in Chartres (MBAC Bouge Archives Box XI.4°, collection lists).

In contrast, the Vanuatu set of artefacts in Chartres was not sold but donated fifty-six years later. Furthermore, the collection was kept by Emma Bouge even after her husband's death, which suggests a more intimate connection to the collection. This hypothesis was also confirmed by the composition of the collection, which consisted almost exclusively of body ornaments and more portable objects, but also of objects that could be directly linked to events in the archipelago in which Bouge had to participate as a colonial administrator. This

suggests that the collection preserved in Chartres is a more intimate one, a collection of mementos.

Acquisition Practices: Initiating Discussions

During his time in the New Hebrides and other colonial outposts where he subsequently held administrative roles, Bouge acquired objects through a range of methods, both direct and indirect. In the case of Vanuatu artefacts, the MBAC archives contain some recorded instances of artefact acquisition, particularly through drawings in Bouge's personal diary. These can be directly linked to some of the artefacts in his assemblages from the archipelago. In this regard, the pigtail head ornaments are of particular interest (MBAC n°84.1.OB.311, 84.1.OB.312, 84.1.OB.313), and are represented in Bouge's private collection, which was bequeathed to the MBAC. These artefacts are illustrated in Bouge's diary, and through analysis of his notes, it can be ascertained that they are linked to one of the contentious cases in which Bouge was involved as a colonial administrator. These artefacts appear to be linked to the *Perle* case, a murder case in which a ni-Vanuatu named Taga appears to have been the culprit and owner of the head ornaments. It is also noteworthy that these artefacts are relatively scarce in museum collections. This, coupled with the pig-tail symbolism of the Banks Island secret society 'suqe', suggests that objects composed of such elements are likely to be of high value to the ni-Vanuatu (Vienne, 1984: 347–349). To date, these artefacts have only been identified within the collection of Felix Speiser. Additionally, a pig tail was also observed on a shell necklace gifted to the Trocadéro Museum by Alphonse Pineau two decades earlier (MQB 71.1890.41.10).

Similarly, a wooden bracelet in the MBAC (case number 84.1.OB.305) was accompanied by a note indicating that the bracelet had been confiscated from Taga. This establishes a direct connection with the *Perle* affair. Furthermore, another analogous example is evidenced in the notes left by Bouge and linked to artefacts, including a container of sorcery herbs. It is reported that this container was seized from Chief Malten of Ambrym (MBAC 84.1.OB.305). Despite the absence of direct information in Bouge's archives, the Australian Station Report offers a potential lead in the form of a case documented in the 1904 report concerning the ongoing conflict with ni-Vanuatu at Dip-point in Ambrym (FO27/3745-case213). Additionally, the diary documents instances where Bouge sought artefacts and

encountered rejections regarding the proposed exchange. For instance, he inquired about a necklace belonging to a woman in Malo but was unable to obtain it (MBAC Archives, Box IB-1°, Diary, page 29, October).

Bouge's archives also contain references to artefacts acquired through gifts. On two occasions, Bouge mentioned in his diary that he had received objects, including a bracelet loom, from 'M. Morache' (MBAC, Bouge Archives, Box I.B.10°, diary, page 18 October 1904), which had been brought to him by a 'Manefi boy' from Santa Cruz.¹⁰² Bouge mentioned on page 23 October that the same 'boy' had come to give him some further explanations on how to use the bracelet loom (MBAC Bouge archives, Box I.B.10°, diary, page 23 October 1904;).¹⁰³ This shows how Bouge relied on Indigenous knowledge to document his collections, confirming the description he gave to the BM curator in his letters, as well as demonstrating what objects were circulating between Europeans within the archipelago. Similarly, the entry corresponding to a few days earlier mentions that a person identified as 'Dr' had returned from Epi on the Koné and paid a visit to Bouge, during which Bouge mentioned that he had brought him some shell artefacts that had apparently been given to him for Bouge by another settler.¹⁰⁴ It seems that Bouge received artefacts from various European actors in the archipelago, which raises the question of whether his role as colonial administrator might not have played a role in his receiving such gifts, similar to François acquiring artefacts to give to the governor (see Chapter 4). These cases also demonstrate that artefacts circulated extensively through different exchange processes within the archipelago, each of which was subject to various power dynamics. It also helps to highlight the complexity of identifying provenance in such circumstances.

Similarly, in a note of 18 October 1904 (MBAC, Bouge Archives, Box I.B.10°), Bouge mentions the visit of the photographer Marony, whom he identifies as the photographer on a tour he undertook in 1904 (MBAC, Bouge Archives, Album 5). From this visit, Bouge mentions that Marony came to show him 100 photographs he had taken during his last expedition with the settler Robert Stuart (Mele Island, Efate), in which Bouge had expressed

102 M. Morache is referenced as the director of the French newspaper *Nouvelles Hébrides* and is documented in *La Dépêche coloniale illustrée* as having participated in an expedition commissioned by John Higginson in 1901 (Lemire, 1902: 8).

103 The spelling of the various names may be incorrect, as Bouge's handwriting can be difficult to read.

104 The expression used by Bouge in his diary to describe these artefacts is "objets de parure intéressant en coquillages usés" Bouge diary, dated Saturday 15 October, MBAC Archives, Box IB-10°.

an interest. In this diary entry, Bouge also mentioned that Marony had encountered some difficult moments during the expedition, of which he mentioned that he had come unarmed due to the presence of Stuart, whom Bouge described as “métis” a person of mixed heritage and on good terms with the ni-Vanuatu, which allowed him to get out of difficult situations. It is therefore highly likely that Bouge acquired the photographs that make up Album 6 in the MBAC archives during this visit, illustrating a recurring pattern.

Cases of gifts and exchanges by Bouge are not limited to receiving gifts from settlers but may have extended to a wider network of collectors and colonial administrators, as illustrated by some letters in his archives from Mr Charles Woodford, the British Resident Commissioner in the Solomons from 1896 to 1915. In his letters to Bouge, Woodford thanks Bouge for the stamps he sent him on 15 April 1911 and, in a second letter dated 25 April 1912, for the mats Bouge brought from the New Hebrides for Mrs Woodford (MBAC, Bouge Archives, folder XIII.4°). The friendly tone of these letters suggests that Bouge was already well acquainted with Woodford, whom he had most probably met in the course of his work as a colonial administrator. However, no further information has yet been found in Bouge’s archives to determine more precisely when and under what circumstances the two men met.

Bouge was an active collector, employing his network and every opportunity that presented itself to acquired artefacts. Upon his return to France, he continued his collecting activities, procuring objects from art dealers and exchanging them with other collectors. One example of such exchanges is documented in the archives of the Chartres museum, which reveal that Bouge traded sea shells with ‘Roudillon’ for a plate from the New Hebrides (Vanuatu).¹⁰⁵ Such practice is, as documented in the MBAC catalogue dedicated to the assemblage of Polynesian artefacts in the museum, especially prevalent in Bouge’s assemblage of artefacts from the Marquesas and New Caledonia, and connection could be made with other significant dealers of the time among whom were Adrée Olive, Antony Morris, Charles Ratton and Pierre Vérité (Guiot and Stéfani, 2002: 6).¹⁰⁶ In this regard, Bouge’s activities

105 Although the extract from the archive does not provide further details regarding the identity of the individual with whom Bouge was engaged in the plate exchange, it seems highly probable that the individual in question was Jean Roudillon, an art dealer specialising in the sale of “primitif arts”.

106 Although the catalogue makes reference to Antony Morris, it seems probable that this is in fact Moris Anthony Innocent. Further information can be found in the database on French museum collections: <https://www.alienor.org/collections/personne/47708-moris-anthony-innocent>.

are comparable to other collectors of Oceanic art operating in France during the twentieth century (Charpy, 2010: 711).

Conclusion

The comparative approach, developed between the collection of artefacts sold to the British Museum in 1913 (referred to here as the ‘public assemblage’) and the collection bequeathed by Bouge’s wife after her death (referred to here as the ‘private assemblage’), enabled the identification of a contrasting composition. This provided insight into the meanings and values attached by the collector to the two assemblages. The data, examined in dialogue with the itinerary of the collections and the contextualisation of the situation in which the artefacts were acquired, provided further support for the hypothesis of differentiation between the two assemblages and for the hypothesis of a personal and private collection. This hypothesis was further corroborated by the presence of notes related to specific colonial murder cases that Bouge had to address as a colonial administrator, as evidenced by a substantial number of such notes in his archives. It seems plausible to suggest that these cases occurred shortly after Bouge was posted to the New Hebrides, marking the beginning of his career and time as a newly appointed colonial administrator in the archipelago. The presence of artefacts directly related to this case in a collection kept by Bouge until his sudden death, and by his wife after his death, suggests a profound emotional attachment to these artefacts.

His personal notes, which form part of the archives donated to the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres, allow us to document some of his acquisitions. They also provide references to instances when he encountered refusals from ni-Vanuatu to part with artefacts. These refusals are also observed in the previous case study presented in this work. Bouge’s private archives also make it possible to document what appears to be an extensive network of exchanges, practices that he began in the field and continued in France among networks of experts and collectors. The existence of direct links with cases recorded in the national archives demonstrates a direct link between his acquisitions and his position as colonial administrator, involving Bouge in a complex dynamic of social interactions with both ni-Vanuatu and settlers.

PART III

Following Artefacts and Vanuatu Agency

Introduction to Part III

Previous chapters have explored the layers of colonial history embedded in collections, examining Vanuatu's unique colonial position and its impact on relationships and museum donations. The multi-collector approach further examined the mobility of objects from Vanuatu to Europe, highlighting the colonial policies and agendas they embodied. It did not, however, fully uncover the agency of ni-Vanuatu in European acquisitions and collections. It did, however, help to identify patterns in collectors' acquisitions, their motivations for travelling to and staying in Vanuatu, and their reasons for acquiring, donating or selling artefacts from the archipelago to public institutions. While this study does not focus on European tastes, it does explore the idea that initiating discussions and analyses of artefacts within the European-constituted assemblage could contribute to approaching the ni-Vanuatu agency and the narratives they may carry.

The chapters in Part III approach artefact assemblages by considering specific types of Vanuatu artefacts in museums in France and the UK. This exploration of artefacts as groups, based on characteristics beyond those of collectors or previous conventional museum classification practices (Harrison, 2013: 12–13), challenges the accessibility of artefacts to Europeans and helps to initiate discussion about the agency of ni-Vanuatu within assemblages. This attempt also contributes to the ongoing discussion of historical categorisation in museums, which carries legacies and presuppositions, a concern expressed by Lissant Bolton (2001: 253), who argues for a reflective approach to categories and how they frame the analysis of material culture. Indeed, categorisation is a methodological tool that divides information into groups that reflect or share some characteristic, allowing for a reflective approach. Categorisation is never neutral.

Whilst the previous chapters employed a Western-oriented categorisation of artefacts to explore western perspectives, the following chapters will attempt to approach artefacts closer to ni-Vanuatu cultural and social practices. This approach is also subjective and does not reflect the complexity of Vanuatu's cultural and social practices but is a tool to bring new perspectives to the collection narratives.

Therefore, the premise on which this section is organised is that acquisition exchanges are complex and dynamic actions influenced by a multitude of criteria, in which artefacts represent various values (Bolton, 2022: 123) and play a role in the acquisition process. Nicholas Thomas defines exchange as “the substance of social life” and essentially political because of the power dynamics at play: “Evaluations of entities, people, groups, and relationships emerge at the moment of a transaction; subversion can proceed through the assertion of reciprocity in the face of dominance.” (Thomas, 1991: 7). By looking at some of the valuable material culture involved in these exchanges, the present part of the study explores these dynamics, and their nature as expressed in the process of acquisition between Europeans and ni-Vanuatu. It therefore interrogates the agency of the different actors in this process, in which artefacts play a key role and contribute to the transformative relationship of “person-person, person-object and object-object relations” (Flexner, 2016a: 196).

Consequently, concepts of value and agency are used here to examine the dynamics and influences expressed in some exchanges, including the influence of colonial settlement and power dynamics (Gosden and Knowles, 2001: 168). By looking at artefacts of particular significance in Vanuatu kastom, an attempt is made to consider an assemblage from the perspective of ni-Vanuatu, shifting the discussion from artefacts valued by Europeans to artefacts of significance to ni-Vanuatu that were acquired by Europeans at some point in their lives (Kopytoff, 1986: 66–68).

The valuables considered here are, firstly, the type of things associated with wealth, secondly, artefacts strongly associated with systems of social status change, and thirdly, European goods acquired by ni-Vanuatu. All are valuable. However, they do not necessarily refer to the same value regime (Myers, 2001: 6).¹⁰⁷ The first two categories of Vanuatu

¹⁰⁷ In this context, a value regime is to be understood as a set of values that constitute a more abstract categorisation, as defined by Natalie Heinich (2006: 312).

artefacts are *kastom* valuables. However, the realm, in which they operate are slightly different and imply variations in the context of exchange and restrictions that apply to them. The two types of artefacts mentioned may, to some extent, illustrate the tension and dual existence of different hierarchical organisations operating simultaneously in Vanuatu, exemplified by what Hugo Deblock describes for contemporary Vanuatu as ‘public society’ and ‘secret society’ (DeBlock, 2018: 34). This tension and coexistence of different value regimes is also exemplified by Kirk Huffman’s study of the traditional money of the Banks Islands (Huffman, 2005), in which he discusses the coexistence of Western currency and Traditional money in contemporary Vanuatu.

Similarly, Rio (2014: 170) defines a range of hierarchical domains that coexist and contribute to a complex society with different ranking systems in constant tension. This approach enables the continuous exchange that is essential to achieve great influence (Huffman, 2005: 31-32; Rio, 2014: 170). Historical published accounts also often refer to these different societies. In 1894, in a published account of his time aboard the French naval vessel *Saône*, Beaune mentioned that the number of such secret societies is great and their influences diverse (Beaune, 1894: 178), while Codrington (1891), an Anglican priest of the Melanesian Missionary Society, contributed extensively to the description of the *Tamate* secret society of the Banks Islands.

By examining the presence of such artefacts in museums and case studies of field collectors, the current research suggests that valuable artefacts in Vanuatu cultures were less frequently exchanged with outsiders than artefacts of less value in the traditional system. This is based on the idea that ni-Vanuatu attempts to control and prevent the unwanted acquisition of such artefacts may have been stronger than for the others. Therefore, their presence in the museum assemblage may be significant in a number of ways, some of which will be explored on a case-by-case basis.

In fact, in the specific case of Vanuatu, studies show that artefacts can be subject to significant variations in value depending on whether they have already been exchanged and on what occasions, reflecting what Steiner (2023: 58–59) describes as ‘action-oriented’ value, showing the value of actions, which he also associated with labour mechanisms as value creation. Another example of these variations in value can be illustrated by artefacts

which are created and used for particular rituals, dances, etc., contributing to their value (Rio, 2014: 181; Steiner, 2023: 63). While some examples of artefacts are recognised as valuable in Vanuatu culture, such as some specific mats such as the *sese* in Pentecost, which are used during grade-taking ceremonies, weddings and funerals, these are referred to as ‘money’ mats to encompass the importance of these artefacts in terms of exchange value and prestige (Bonnemaison, 1986b: 320, Walter, 1996: 104). Their value can be expressed as pigs (Bonnemaison, 1986b: 320; Huffman, 2005: 46). However, it is important to recognise that the ‘value’ of these wealth valuables does not mean that their value is static and does change from one person to another, over time and from one place to another.

Given the continuous evolution of artefact values, particularly in colonial contexts involving both Indigenous Vanuatu and European actors, a comparative approach across multiple scales of analysis is necessary to capture the fluidity of values embodied in these objects. A deep understanding of the broader context and associated narratives is crucial to identifying the factors that may have influenced the inclusion or exclusion of artefacts in museums and collectors’ assemblages beyond the scope of ni-Vanuatu agency (Gosden and Knowles, 2001: 168).

Only with an awareness of these elements can an attempt be made to analyse the ni-Vanuatu artefact assemblage with a focus on its agency, as some of the influential factors have been taken into account. This rationale underpins the decision in this study to first examine the assemblages of the field collectors as an entry point to approach potential influential elements, as these individuals were shaped by their agency, culture and political context. By first isolating information from collectors’ assemblages, the study of ni-Vanuatu agency can be enhanced, especially given that many of these collections have, to some extent, lost connections to their contexts of acquisition.

As artefacts are an active part of the exchange or acquisition process, tracking artefacts can provide information about the nature of the relationships involved. In Chapter 7, this question is addressed by examining two valuables involved in social exchange and on different occasions: artefacts related to pig sacrifice and mats. Chapter 8 examines valuable artefacts associated with the status system. Chapter 9 considers European textual evidence of acquisition as well as goods involved in these interactions and exchanges between

Europeans and ni-Vanuatu. By examining the presence of such artefacts in museums and case study assemblages from field collectors, the current research suggests that valuable artefacts in Vanuatu cultures were less available for exchange with outsiders than artefacts of less value in the traditional system.

Chapter 7: Following Wealth Valuables

In Vanuatu, wealth is expressed and based on different values than in Western countries. Whereas in the West one may be considered rich if they have a large amount of money or valuables, in Vanuatu someone is considered rich if they are considered to be rich in wisdom but also in spirit (Huffman, 2005: 31). As various hierarchical systems may co-exist, someone who is considered rich in one system may not be considered so in another, and a person may be associated with more than one society and thus be bound by different obligations and may have influence in different areas. Among these duties, one is often central, the duty to help, of which generosity is an essential part. Generosity is not to be understood here as something given freely, but as a process of exchange in which one is indebted to another, and not necessarily paid with material wealth. Kirk Huffman (2005: 31) has argued that someone can be poor in terms of material wealth and yet be considered rich in Vanuatu, illustrating the primacy of relationships and social obligations over material wealth. These concepts are essential to understanding the social hierarchical systems that define the influence one can have. Poverty in terms of possessions demonstrates generosity and the fulfilment of obligations to help, as seen in various high-status roles such as hereditary chiefs, elected chiefs, 'big men' and 'big women', and other social statuses within hierarchical systems (Huffman, 2005: 31). The achievement of grades in social status is associated with ceremonies in which a large number of valuables are involved, among which are wealth valuables, but also material culture associated with the taking up of the grades, which previous to the grade ceremonies also generate smaller ceremonies and payments involving wealth valuables. Among the various valuables that can be involved in these ceremonies, tangible and intangible, are pigs and especially tusker pigs, money mats, shell money, kava roots, yams, chicken, etc., (Bolton, 2001b: 256; Huffman, 2005: 32; 2013: 292). While these valuables are involved and often displayed in enormous quantities during grade ceremonies, as high status requires high duty, these valuables are also involved in other rituals such as marriage, birth and death ceremonies and continue today (Huffman, 2005: 28).

Pigs and Associated Artefacts

When considering wealth in the archipelago, pigs have a central role in a large part of Vanuatu wealth systems, especially in north and central Vanuatu. However, while their status as a central component may always persist, their role and value may vary. Numerous researchers have worked on Vanuatu grade systems and have approached, to various extents, the involvement of pig sacrifice within these systems, for example, early ethnographers such as Felix Speiser (1923), Bernard Deacon (1934) and John Layard (1942). In this major book, *Stone Men of Malekula*, Layard dedicated a full chapter to discussing the key role of pigs in ritual life and their important value in Malekula cultures, and more especially in Vao Island (Layard, 1942: 240-269). This work is still quoted as a major work and reference by chiefs from Malekula, which was observed during fieldwork in 2023. More recently, researchers such as Margaret Jolly (1994), Bernard Vienne (1984), Joël Bonnemaïson (1986a,b), Kirk Huffman (Bonnemaïson et al., 1996; Howarth, 2013; Huffman, 2005: 2013), John Patrick Taylor (2008), Knut Rio (2011; 2014; 2024) and Stuart Bedford (2018), have contributed to a better understanding of the role of pigs in various parts of Vanuatu. Hence, pigs were and still are of great significance, and their sacrifices, gifts, loans, or donations are still occurring (Huffman, 2005). The notion of the value of the pig is also essential in these processes, as some rituals may require more valuables than others. In that respect, the value of pigs is based on two factors: the breed of the pig and its tusk circle grade (Bedford, 2018: 126). If it is a pig from a European breed, its value will be less than if it is a native breed pig, which would be less than a tusker pig (Huffman, 2005: 41-45). In specific places, other types of pigs may also play a key role in terms of value, such as the intersexual pig or hermaphrodite pig in Maewo, Ambae, Pentecost, Santo and Malo Islands (Huffman, 2013: 288; Layard, 1942: 240), or the hairless pig in Tanna (Huffman, 2005: 43).

A second element to consider in terms of pig value is the number of circles achieved by the pig tusks. For teeth to reach a full circle back in the jaw bone usually takes about seven years (Harrison, 1937: 25; Bedford, 2018: 127). The growth of the tusks allowed by removing the upper teeth of the pig is a process documented by Layard (1942: 240). It is a time-consuming process, as the more the tusks grow and circle, the less the pig can feed itself properly and the more it needs assistance in feeding (Bedford, 2018: 127). While a triple-circle tusk has been recorded (Harrison, 1937: 25; Layard 1942: 41), Stuart Bedford, an archaeologist based

in Vanuatu has observed it is rare to find a tusk making more than one circle (Bedford, 2018: 127).

Given the importance of pigs in Vanuatu culture, it is of interest to consider how many tusks are found in museums. To explore this, a case study will be conducted, drawing on information from museums and collectors to reflect on the potential agency and narratives conveyed by the presence of artefacts directly associated with pigs.

The pig is regarded as the essence of high value, embodying an essential concept of wealth in Vanuatu. By sacrificing a valuable pig and taking its name one can reach the ancestors (Taylor, 2008: 48, 107). And it is by sharing the sacrificed pig that men are recognised by all as wealthy and dutiful persons (Rio, 2014: 179–180, 185). While pigs owned by a chief contribute to his wealth, it is only because of the potential sacrifice of the pig that ‘value’ exists. In some instances, the teeth of the sacrificed pigs can be extracted and worn by men, as well as jaws with tusks still attached can be displayed, but the tooth or the jaw in themselves do not have value beyond the symbol of the sacrifice performed (Layard, 1942: 249). In some cases, especially in Pentecost, the pig jaw of a tusker who died without having been sacrificed can still hold some value (Huffman, 2005: 42).

Although pig tusks themselves do not embody ritual values, they serve as important national emblems and are represented on the national flag of the Republic of Vanuatu, symbolising the central significance of pigs in Vanuatu kastom. It is also noteworthy that the circling of the tusk carries a broader symbolic meaning at the core of the growth and sacrifice of the pig during ritual ceremonies on Pentecost Island:

Like the tusk that is buried in the jaw and reemerges to chart a new spiral course, people who die are buried in the soil of their ancestral foundation places but are also made to return in the “layers” of subsequent generations (Taylor, 2008: 107).

Thus, the tusk symbolises the “flow of departures and returns,” key elements for understanding the ni-Vanuatu perspective on the social realm (Taylor, 2008: 112). This cosmology is crucial to grasping ni-Vanuatu kastom, which is reflected not only at interpersonal interactions but also in artefacts and exchange processes, even with Europeans.

In this context, the notion of time may be perceived differently in Vanuatu: an event regarded by Europeans as part of the past, in a linear understanding of time, would in Vanuatu culture be perceived as present.

Both pig tusks and pig jaws are represented in museum collections. Graph number (see table 7 and Graph 23) shows the entries of pig tusk bracelets in several museums: the MQB, the BM, the PRM and the NMS. It is noteworthy that only one pig tusk entered the NMS, whose collection primarily consists of donations from missionaries and academics (possibly armchair collectors). In contrast, the BM, the PRM and the Trocadéro—museums strongly associated with academia and research—were the earliest to receive pig tusks in France and the UK. These donations were made in 1872 by Charles Frederick Wood, second Viscount Halifax, in 1886 by William Alison Dyke Acland,¹⁰⁸ and in 1890 by Pineau to the Trocadéro Museum (see Chapter 3)

		MQB	BM	NMS	PRM	MQB Cumulated	Uk Cumulated
1880-1889	1886				1		1
1890-1899	1890	2				2	1
	1893	5				7	1
	1894	2				9	1
	1895		1	1		9	3
	1896				2	9	5
1900-1909	1900	2				11	5
	1903	1				12	5
1910-1919	1913		3			12	8
1920-1929	1920				1	12	9
	1925				1	12	10
	1928		1		1	12	12
1930-1939	1935				2	12	14
1940-1949						12	14
1950-1959	1954	8				20	14
	1956	12				32	14
1960-1969	1966	1			1	33	15
1970-1979	1976	1				34	15
1980-1989	1980	2	2			36	17
1990-1999	1994				1	36	18
2000-2009						36	18
2010-2019	2018		1			36	19

Table 7: The following table presents the number of pig tusks accessioned by museums over time.

¹⁰⁸ It is unclear when the Acland gift was made, as the database indicates that the collection was transferred in 1885. However, it is likely that the artefact arrived at the museum between 1883 and 1886, as Acland, the donor, was an admiral who, from May 1883, commanded HMS *Miranda* at the Australian Station and travelled around the New Hebrides.

While artefacts from Vanuatu have been entering museums since the first half of the nineteenth century, only one tusk was donated to the British museum prior to the first Naval Agreement between France and Britain in 1878, which led to an increased military presence in the archipelago. It is noteworthy to mention that the two donors of artefacts assemblages including pig tusks were naval officers who both had at some point responsibilities in exercising authority and maintaining control in the region. As such, both were field collectors with the authority and power to influence local populations, which positioned them in close proximity to Vanuatu chiefs and therefore within the sphere of tusk exchange processes as defined above. A similar donor profile persisted until the 1920s, when donors or sellers associated with museum acquisitions of pig tusks increasingly became ‘armchair collectors’.

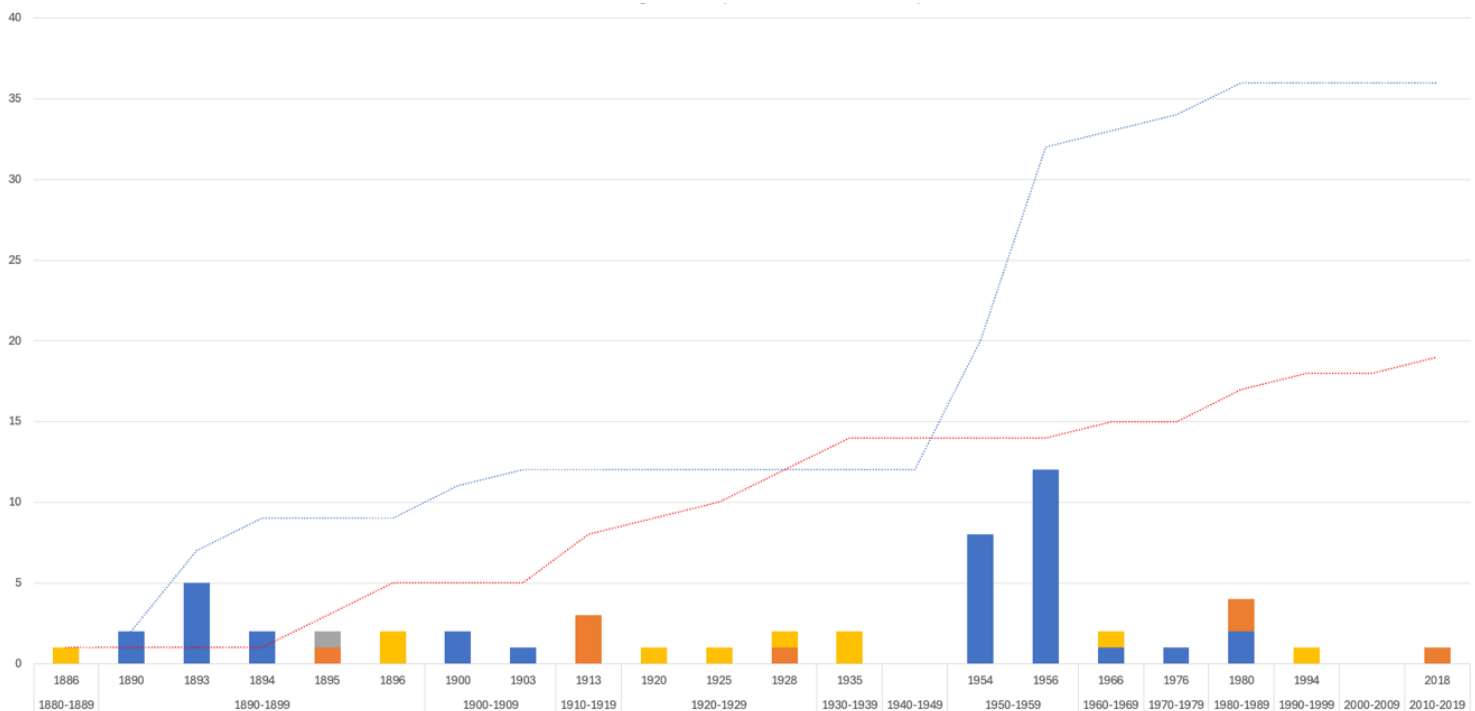


Figure 23: This graph shows the number of pig tusks in the collections of the case study museums. MQB is shown in blue, BM in orange, NMS in grey and PRM in yellow. The blue dotted line represents cumulative data for France (MQB) over time, and the red dotted line represents cumulative data for the UK. The dates beneath each column indicate the date of artefacts' accession. The section of dates beneath the columns displays entries by decade.

The case study museum's data used as resources are from the MQB (3,633 artefacts), the PRM (1,015), the BM (1,389), and the NMS (545), representing a total of 6,582 artefacts from the archipelago. While the denomination changed from museum to museum, pig tusk bracelets were identified based firstly on material descriptions and then confirmed by artefact descriptions. Based on the information provided, 58 pig tusk bracelets could be

identified as entering these museums from 1872. They entered more regularly by 1886 (the date the first pig tusk bracelet entered the PRM) to 2018, of which three have unknown date of entry (two in the BM and one in the MQB). The resulting data were formatted as a table from which a graph (table 7 and graph 23) could be produced to illustrate tendencies. The first element to be noted is that the overall number of pig tusk bracelets in the case study museums is quite low (58) in comparison to the total number of artefacts from the archipelago (6,582), or when compared to other valuables such as mats or clubs.

Overall, it can be observed (see graph 23) that from 1886 to 1903, pig tusk bracelets seemed to enter more regularly in the museum case study collections, while after 1903, the time periods between donations were longer. It can also be noted that, on average, a small number of these artefacts enter museums, with a difference between the MQB and the British museums represented by the PRM, BM and NMS. There are only two moments that see pig tusks entering collections in France and the UK, in 1966 and in 1980, with the latest one being associated with the independence of Vanuatu. Otherwise, it appears that pigs' tusk bracelets entered museums periodically. However, there is a high chance that these are coincidental, or at least no hypothesis could be formulated within the limits of the current study as to potential reasons beyond those patterns. The only element noteworthy in relation to this is that a large gap can be observed in France with no entries of pig tusks from 1903 to 1954. However, this needs to be put in contrast with overall entries of artefacts from the archipelago during the same period and the heavy impact of the two World Wars in collections entries in French museums. The hypothesis was reinforced when taking into consideration the fact that the five pig tusk bracelets entering the British Museum in 1913 were all sold by the French colonial administrator Louis-Joseph Bouge.

Pursuing the analysis of the pattern of entry of pig tusks, it can be observed that a large number of pig tusks entered French collections in 1954 and 1956. The first donation was made by Louis Vésignié, an armchair collector, who was largely involved in collecting artefacts and contributed to the creation of an exhibition room for what he called the 'exotic prehistoric' which opened in 1933 (Chevalier, 2023: 54). His donation in 1954, one of the largest groups of pig tusks, was first donation of such artefacts by an armchair collector. Indeed, pig tusks entering museum collections from the late nineteenth century were mainly donated or sold by people who travelled to Vanuatu. This provides valuable information in

terms of Vanuatu artefacts' circulation and shows that they were available to collectors who had not travelled to the archipelago.

No pig tusk bracelets are recorded as entering museum collections before 1886, so no artefact of this type appears to have been present in early assemblages entering museum collections. However, it is important to recall that while the British Museum already existed, its counterpart in France, the Trocadéro Museum, opened only after the 1878 Paris Great exhibition. The assemblage given by Auguste Louis Grasset in 1862 did not include pig tusk bracelets. Similarly, no pig tusk entered in any of the museum's case studies based in the UK during the same period. Such artefacts only started entering museums later in the nineteenth century, with a first entry in the Pitt Rivers Museum in 1886, initially donated by William Alison Dyke Acland to Oxford University Museum of Natural History in December 1885. Shortly afterwards, thirteen pig tusks are recorded as entering the case museums from 1890 to 1896, of which nine entered in the Trocadéro Museum and are now in the MQB collection.

In 1980, two pig tusks entered both the MQB and the BM. Those entering MQB came from José Garanger's archaeological excavations (MQB number: 71.1980.113.22 D, and 71.1980.113.63 D; Garanger, 1972). The two given to the British Museum (BM numbers: Oc1980,08.1.a-b) have a more contemporary significance as they were donated by H.R.H. Prince Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who was offered them during the independence ceremony at Port Vila on 30th July 1980. In the British Museum online database, more information is provided regarding its origins with extracts from notes associated with the tusker, which says, "*Obtained from Hannington Alatoa. They probably originally belonged to one of the 100 pigs sacrificed in 1979 at Chief Rupert Garae's Hunggwe (grade ceremony) held near Atavoa, eastern Aoba. The tusk curvature is that known in eastern Aoba as Ala (meaning the tusk has circled to begin to penetrate the bone of the lower jaw)*". That donation represents the only donation of pig tusks in the BM since 1928, and no others were donated until 2018, illustrating the particular significance of such artefacts in Vanuatu. Therefore, it appears that there is an evolution in tendencies in pig tusks entering museums reflecting differential access given to such artefacts.

The overall number of tusks in the UK is less than in the MQB collection, which is likely explained by the active immigration policy supported by France by the late nineteenth

century to encourage French citizen to settle in the New Hebrides. In considering the value of the various tusks donated to museums, it can be observed that while no tusks with more than one circle were donated to the BM before the twentieth century and by a British subject before the 1980 independence ceremony, this is not the case in the French institutions. Two tusks with more than one circle were donated by Philippe François (see Chapter 4) and one with a starting second circle was donated by Alphonse Pineau (see Chapter 3). Another with a starting second circle was donated by Caillot in 1893, who was associated with Pineau in the military actions undertaken during the late 1880s. It can be seen that all these individuals share a certain authority, which seems to be reflected in the value of the artefacts to which they had access.

The pattern reflected in the value of the tusks acquired also seems to be reflected in the artefacts that later entered the institutions, with only one tusk with almost two complete circles in the museum case study, and more specifically, donated to the Trocadéro museums (MQB) by Aubert de la Rüe in 1946 (71. 1946.1.2). Only a few have more than one full circle, four in the BM and five in the MQB, and only three in the BM and six in the MQB have a full circle, while two in the BM, seven in the PRM and thirteen in the MQB have less than one full circle.

Therefore, while there are few reports of multi-circle tusks in European literature, there is some evidence of their existence in collections, with the case of the two full-circle tusks in the Museum für Völkerkunde in Basel, donated by Felix Speiser in 1912, testifying to a pig whose tusks successfully reached two full circles. The absence of such cases in the national museums analysed as case studies, and especially among field collectors, suggests that interaction with ni-Vanuatu may not have been good enough to gain access to such artefacts, the high value of which is attested by their rarity in museums but also in Vanuatu. It is important to remember that it takes a pig around seven years to grow such a tusk. It would therefore seem that although the tusks from the sacrificed pig are not of comparable value to those from the living pig, the highest grade tusk may have been considered more valuable to preserve than the previously graded tusk, as such grade tusks are rarely achieved, and this may have led ni-Vanuatu to prevent the exchange of such artefacts and instead allow the exchange of lower grade tusks, albeit in limited numbers. This theory is supported by the presence of an imitation pig tusk in a shell given to the BM by Commander Charles Cross

in 1889, demonstrating the limited access to such artefacts, and hence the fact that most of the valuable tusks entering museum collections were made after the high colonial tensions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (in the BM cf: 2018,Q.110, and Oc1980,08.1.a-b; in the MQB see: 72.1953.1.17, with the sole exception of the tusk donated by Alphonse Pineau to the Trocadero Museum in 1893 (71.1893.41.10).

Pandanus textiles

The second type of Vanuatu wealth artefact to be considered is usually associated with the ‘mat’ category in museums in France and the UK, which includes a wide variety of items. Indeed, the English and French definitions of mat often refer to a fabric used to cover the floor, which applies to some Vanuatu mats. However, the artefacts that fall into this European category fulfil a wider range of functions. To challenge this European categorisation, which fails to capture the wide range of artefacts and perpetuates misconceptions, the term ‘pandanus textile’ or simply ‘textile’ is preferred, as used by Lissant Bolton (2021) in her essay on the value of Ambae textiles in museums. This broader term refers to material and/or technique rather than function and addresses the limitations of conventional museum classifications.

Textiles are found throughout the islands of Vanuatu and, in this sense, are more uniformly represented than, for example, pig tusks. However, there is considerable diversity among the textiles, and their functions and values may vary greatly. Textiles range from those used for sleeping or sitting on the floor to those used as emblems of rank and ‘money’ textiles, and the value attached to each type can vary considerably (Bonnemaison, 1986b: 320).

In this respect, textiles represent a complex and fluid category of artefacts that plays an important role in kastom exchanges and ritual ceremonies, including those for births, marriages and deaths, and other occasions such as reparations or fines (Taylor, 2008: 91). During fieldwork from July to October 2023, textile exchanges were observed on several occasions, including the chiefs’ opening ceremony of the 7th MACFEST, which took place before the official events. During this ceremony, kastom was enacted through the exchange of gifts between the Great Chiefs representing the six regions of Vanuatu (Torba, Penama,

Sanma, Malampa, Sefa and Tafea). In particular, textiles were given along with other artefacts such as pottery, plates, food and pigs.

While not all textiles can be seen as ‘wealth valuables’, some textiles are more associated with this category of artefact than others, while others, such as graded textiles, can be used as valuables to be exchanged, but also donated and borrowed with appropriate compensation (Bolton, 2001b: 261; Huffman, 2005: 46). Some women’s waist textiles, such as *tsip* textiles in Central Pentecost for instance, are considered ‘small money’ (Howarth, 2013: 33) and are worn during ceremonies, which may indicate different grades depending on how they are worn. Another textile from North Pentecost, *bwana* money, is, on the contrary used exclusively as money (Codrington, 1891: 323; Bonnemaïson 1986b: 320; Huffman, 2005: 46; Taylor, 2008: 91).

Textiles are also an important part of everyday life in Vanuatu, and they come in a variety of forms, including sleeping textiles and floor mats, which are still widely used today and largely made by women craftsmen. There are various ways of acquiring textiles, including in Uripiv Island if the artisan is known, by visiting them and buying the desired textile directly with cash in vatu, the Vanuatu currency.¹⁰⁹ In some areas and more international/tourist towns, such as Port-Vila, they can be bought in handicraft marketplaces alongside baskets, which are more often represented and bought (add photo references).

The category of ‘mats’ in museums, treated here as a textile category, includes a wide range of flat-shaped textiles. This makes it difficult to conduct meaningful statistical analysis, as museums often do not distinguish between the functions of these mats. Beyond the problem of documentation, however, there is also the fact that a mat can fulfil different functions during its life. Therefore, while it is not possible to provide a detailed statistical representation based on museum database extracts, and as not all artefacts are represented online, there is still some value in looking at tendencies of presence of such artefacts, but a more precise analysis is needed to fully appreciate the history embodied in these artefacts.

109 The last observation is based on the information given during fieldwork in Uripiv by the daughter of Numa Fred, who was known for weaving textiles.

While these problems with statistical analyses based on museum categories arise as soon as categories are analysed, some artefacts may prove more challenging than others. For example, in the case of pig tusks, an analysis based on bracelet categories would not prove relevant; however, as the material from which the artefacts are made is unique, it is often easy to isolate, extract and statistically analyse it in museum databases. In this case, however, statistical analysis is still only a tool for initiating discussion and investigation and is not sufficient in itself. In the case of textiles, the situation is more complex, as in Vanuatu most textiles are made of similar materials, except in some places where tapa may be used, especially in Erromango, but also in Efate (Bolton et al., 2013: 255, 288; Bonnemaïson et al., 1996: 132). Furthermore, it is not the material that distinguishes the range of functions they encompass. Size can shed light on their functions and potential values, but museums sometimes lack this data, and in other cases measurements are not standardised, which can also pose a challenge. Nevertheless, the length and width of a Vanuatu textile are important indicators of its function and value, and colour and pattern also provide important insights. The categorisation of textiles is therefore more difficult for statistical analysis, although with complete and standardised documentation such tools may become more useful in the future. However, the acquisition patterns and associated provenance of these artefacts can still provide valuable information, especially when supported by more detailed case-by-case study.

Looking at the artefact assemblages of the case study museums (MQB, BM, PRM, NMS), it appears that the earliest recorded textiles are from Efate. This is a woven pandanus textile given to the BM by Julius Brenchley in 1865 (Oc.6634). Another very similar textile in the BM (Oc.1164), originally attributed to the Solomon Islands and recently re-attributed to Efate, was first acquired by Henry Christy between 1860 and 1869. The textile entered the BM collection through his bequest to four trustees of the museum. However, the exact date of accession is not known. The second is a textile (Oc. 5957), also from Efate, collected by a Mr Wright on board HMS *Curaçoa* and donated to the museum in 1869 by A. W. Franks (Bolton, 2013: 276-277). Another textile, a *Singo Tuvegi* from Ambae (Oc.6633), was donated to the BM by Brenchley a year later. From then on, no textiles are recorded as entering the case study museums until 1884, with the entry in the PRM museum of one textile (1884.87.4) said to be from Epi Island. However, online images show a mat very

similar to the *Singo Tuvegi* or ‘sacred small mat’¹¹⁰ textile (Oc.6633) that entered the BM collections in 1869. This textile (1884.87.4) was given to the museum by Augustus Henry Lane Fox Pitt Rivers and was originally given to him by Frederick Dally between 1862 and 1870.¹¹¹ While Frederick Dally appears to have travelled quite extensively in Canada during the nineteenth century, no mention of a trip to the Pacific could be found, suggesting that he may have acquired this artefact as a second-hand purchase from outside Vanuatu.

From then on, textiles entered museum case study collections regularly, although in small numbers, until the First World War. After that, the trends of textile entries in France are close to the trends of the overall collection introduced in Chapter 2, with few entries from 1914 until the 1930s, when an active fieldwork policy was established in the Musée de l’Homme of which the ‘Mission scientifique Dakar-Djibouti, 1931’ is the first enterprise. From then on, Vanuatu textiles began to appear in larger numbers in the Musée de l’Homme, which formed the current MQB collections (see graph number). However, in the case of the UK museums (BM, PRM and NMS), mat entries almost ceased after the First World War, and then only a few entries of mats can be observed in 1931, 1944 and 1954 for the BM; and in 1929 and 1951 for the PRM; which does not fit with the overall trends of Vanuatu artefacts entering UK museums (see graphs in Chapter 2), characterised by a steady increase of materials entering between the 1870s and 1930s when entries slow down again. The contrasting trends highlighted between the two national museums could suggest that collections resulting from donations by people who had been in the archipelago, who were therefore directly interacting with ni-Vanuatu and involved in a dynamic exchange process, appear to have stopped, both at the MQB and at the three case study museums in the UK. It was not until twelve years later that Vanuatu textiles began to enter museums again, particularly the British Museum (see graph).

Looking more closely at the major museum collections of textile assemblages from the archipelago, of which the MQB (132) and the BM (104) are by far the largest, it can be seen that although a large number of grade textiles or ‘sacred small mats’ are represented, with the largest number of these from Ambae in the BM and the largest number from Pentecost

110 Lissant Bolton’s terminology used in the BM online database.

111 Frederick Dally also gave a collection of 41 items to the BM (online database). For further information, see the BM’s collector biography: <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG122621>

in the MQB, there are no big ‘money’ textiles in the BM, whereas three sese textiles can be found in the MQB (70. 2021.10.1 and 70.2021.21.1, both donated by Genevieve Mescam).

Money textiles from Malekula are also recorded in the online database as three headdress money textiles from Malekula acquired by the *Korrigane* Expedition and given to the museum in 1962 (71.1962.1.148-150), another headdress money textile from the Small Nambas region at Malekula (71. 19314.186.340 Oc), and eight Malekula money textiles without further description (six with former collector Robert Chardonnet and museum numbers: 71.1957.2.16-21; and two with former collector Edgar Aubert de la Rüe, 71.1934.186.451-452). The total number of ‘big money’ textiles in the current MQB collections is fourteen. All entered museum collections in France after the 1930s, reinforcing the previous hypothesis of ni-Vanuatu agency in the acquisition process, as no ‘big money’ textiles entered museum collections during high colonial tensions, but much later and in the context of researchers travelling around the archipelago. In contrast, ‘small money’ is represented in both the MQB and BM collections, at least twenty of which are directly associated with singo money textiles in the BM, and forty-three singo and tsip money mats in the MQB, a far greater number of which entered museum collections as early as 1884 (BM no., Oc.6633).

Similarly, turmeric and feathered backcloth mats are represented in limited numbers in the assemblages of the case study museums. Alphonse Pineau’s assemblage includes one textile (MQB, 71.1893.34.70), and another mat in the MQB collection, museum number 71.1893.34.9, misattributed to Malekula due to an attached label indicating Sandwich Island, and therefore attributed to Port-Sandwich, Malekula, instead of Efate Island, which was historically called Sandwich Island. In the Somerville collection, a mat very similar to the above, also made of bark cloth, orange/yellow pigments and feathers, but with a fringe, is associated with Tongoa Island (PRM, 1893.27.4), corresponding to the Shefa cultural area shared by Efate and the Shepherd Islands. It is possible that these artefacts were made in Efate, although they were founded in Tongoa, and that they found their way to Tongoa through exchange. One element of an answer in this regard is provided by Somerville, where in the chapter devoted to his time on Shepherd Island he states that Tongoan islanders have ancestors from Efate Island who migrated to the Shepherd Islands (Somerville, 1928: 140). It therefore reinforces the hypothesis of inter-island networks in which ochre feathered

textiles are likely to have played a role. Another similar artefact from Efate, more specifically attributed to the Ifira Islands, entered the BM collection a little later in 1898, donated by John Jennings (Oc1898,0704.15), but unlike the other artefacts mentioned above, it contains red wool similar to the type described by Lissant Bolton for the region (Bolton, 2013: 276). The presence of turmeric and feathers indicates that these are valuable mats, both important materials, the yellow pigment of which, or ochre, is mentioned early in published accounts by naval officers calling at Efate (Brenchley, 1873: 224; Goodenough, 1876: 293). They all entered collections during the nineteenth century, and no such artefacts entered museum collections until the early twentieth century, coinciding with the period of major colonial expansion in the region (see chapter 1 and Chapter 8). It seems that although they were previously traded, the development of the European presence in the region meant that such artefacts were no longer exchanged with Europeans, as suggested by the strong correlation that can be drawn with the expansion of colonial interest and thus settlement in the region, which seems to have restricted access to some valuable artefacts. Another hypothesis could be that the increasing presence of Europeans and missionaries may have led to the discontinuation of traditional rituals and therefore the use of artefacts, which may have led to their destruction. These hypotheses cannot be ruled out with the information currently available. So far, however, the published accounts of some nineteenth-century travellers tend to show that when artefacts are associated with ancient customs, they are often either sold in order to obtain more resources, such as blades of ancient shell adzes, which appear in large numbers in museum storerooms, or, on the contrary, hidden from the European gaze and not offered for sale. Therefore, although the theory of destruction of material culture cannot be ruled out, the evidence to date points to a restriction of access rather than the destruction of material culture.

Close attention to the valuable textiles that enter museum collections reveals patterns that suggest restrictions on access based on the nature of social interactions. The first study, which examines the types of valuable textiles entering museums and trends in their acquisition, shows variations between museum case studies, but also over time. And the second focuses on the Shefa feathered textile and its limited representation both in number and over time. Both cases highlight the tight control over access to artefacts, as few 'high' valued textiles are present in museum collections, and those that have been acquired were only acquired later in the twentieth century. The study also suggests that patterns of textile

acquisition reflect the evolution of relations between Europeans and ni-Vanuatu, a hypothesis supported by the value and type of textiles entering museums.

Chapter 8: Social Status Emblems

While the previous chapter examined the trajectories of wealth valuables in museum case studies, the following chapter will undertake the same analysis, but with valuables linked to grade status, and thus as part of a system of status change (Bolton, 2001b: 255). These artefacts associated with individuals contribute to the positioning of individuals within social and cultural societies, thus defining their kastom rights and showing their influences. While some of these artefacts could traditionally be either movable objects that may or may not have lost their connection to their original owners, as seems to be the case with clubs, other artefacts seem to have traditionally restricted movement, such as rank status necklaces. Therefore, the present chapters aim to investigate whether similar restrictions can be found in museum collections and whether variations in their presence can also be observed, thus questioning the possibility that different types of restrictions were applied to these artefacts in social exchange with Europeans. While acknowledging the complex dynamics of these artefacts, the study does not intend to lead readers to assume static values and behaviours in the exchange of these artefacts. However, in order for the study to attempt to assess the potential for engaging with assemblages in museum collections in terms of valuables, a degree of generalisation is required to allow the argument to progress and to explore how such analysis might contribute to accessing a more nuanced understanding of the agency at play in exchange between Europeans and ni-Vanuatu.

Clubs

Clubs have traditionally been classified as weapons in European museums. They have been a type of artefact encountered and sought after since Europeans ventured into the Pacific, feeding European imaginations and resulting in elaborate displays in private and public museums. However, the simple term ‘club’ fails to do justice to the multiple roles played by such artefacts in their original cultural settings, such as Vanuatu, where their use as weapons and in combat may have been occasional and incidental, as outlined in a recent publication and exhibition *Power and Prestige* (Hooper, 2021: 30).

Clubs in Vanuatu had, and have, a much a wider range of functions than the classification ‘weapons’ attributed to them in French and UK museums, and they continue to play a significant role in its kastom value. The use of clubs is still common, presumably due to the variety of functions that such artefacts traditionally serve (Taylor, 2013). However, the contemporary use of clubs is not limited to traditional dances, as they can be emblems of grades in the social ranking system in Vanuatu (Taylor, 2013).

While the use of clubs is widespread in Vanuatu, their shape, function, trajectory and symbols can vary greatly, and no single word can be identified to describe them universally. Kirk Huffman illustrates the variety of uses with a list of different terms in common use on different islands, including “nak’p’weng (Mota Lava), aris (North Santo), v’napao (north-west Malekula), na(m) bwir’r (interior south-central Malekula), na(m) bwir’r (interior south-central Malekula); nirom (Erromango) and nawatawha (western Tanna)” (Huffman, 2021: 224). However, as the mention of regions from different islands shows, even within an island, a term does not allow for generic terms to be understood by all. However, some terms are more widely understood than others. Variations can be observed from one region to another, even from one village to another within the same island (Huffman, 2021: 224).

Clubs also have many different forms, and some are part of long-distance exchange relationships between islands (Huffman, 2021: 224), hence they can be found on different islands. The Bislama term ‘nalnal’ refers to clubs (Ramage, 2012:162), but nowadays also refers to ‘status sticks’ and ‘walking sticks’, concepts that Taylor mentions under the term ‘gasigo’ (Taylor, 2008: 47), the same term Taylor uses to refer to the ‘gasigo tatavora’, a form of club identified with Pentecost (Taylor, 2013: 267), which is part of a larger exchange network between Pentecost, Ambae and Maewo islands that integrates pigs and mats and dyeing services (Taylor, 2008: 47). Club exchanges are not exclusively part of the exchange network between Pentecost, Ambae and Maewo, but more widely in Vanuatu; they may be part of the goods sought or exchanged. Examples include exchanges between Pentecost and Ambrym, Malekula and Malo, for example, but also within islands, of which southwest Malekula is a good example (Huffman, 2013: 288). The example of the movement of goods can be quite significant, as it can lead to an increase in the value of artefacts, following the notion of fluid value or non-statistical value. While in North Pentecost, it appears that mobility is part of the high-ranking requirement, artefacts’ mobility may be sufficient. Thus,

artefacts can be seen as embodying high-ranking individuals while endorsing the symbols of long-distance connections in terms of economy and influence required for high-ranking individuals (Taylor, 2008: 49).

In Vanuatu, clubs can be part of the circulation of goods. They can be acquired by exchanging them with the appropriate goods. They can also be acquired through donations, such as the formal gift of a club by the Tanna people to the late Duke of Edinburgh (Huffman, 2021: 225), which illustrates the symbolic and ritualistic nature that can be embodied in such artefacts in Vanuatu. While clubs can be acquired and donated in Vanuatu, it appears that, at least in some regions, clubs cannot be part of reciprocal gift exchanges such as those recorded by Jean Guiart (1951) for the North Ambrym region. However, it is important to remember that while generalisation is rarely appropriate in Vanuatu; some tendencies may persist, thus local observation assists in gaining a better understanding of the areas in which clubs may play a role in Vanuatu. Regardless, if this particularity is shared by a large number of Vanuatu cultures, it would reduce the possibility of acquisition methods used by Europeans to gain access to such artefacts. However, it is important to note that some clubs, although part of long-distance exchanges, still fall within the realm of social ranking systems and, as such, may be emblems of rank achieved, thus tied to the person's identity within his or her social system, making it difficult to give them up, as can be seen in some of the testimonies of collectors from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. On the other hand, as clubs are part of the Vanuatu material culture that potentially could be traded, it is very likely that the prices of such artefacts were consequently very high – prices that some Europeans may not have been willing to pay (see quotation below from Thomas, 1886: 202). Another element that may have also contributed to the complexity of exchange interactions with Europeans is the possibility in some Vanuatu social systems of borrowing clubs, depending on family ties and ceremonies that may require such loans. This increased the mobility of such artefacts and materialised ties between individuals, making them more difficult for Europeans to access. This issue is demonstrated in the following extract of Philippe François's diary transcript:

“I offer a little tobacco and enter the hut. A pig's jaw and a trumpet mark the entrance. Inside, I find two war clubs shaped like a crook. I propose to exchange these items, but they belong to men who have left and will not return until two

o'clock. As for the chief's staff, neither gold nor silver can buy it—it is taboo!
All my offers are in vain. I then go to another village, to my guide's hut. There, I
find a bow and two arrows, which I trade with him for tobacco.” (François, 1888:
68)¹¹²

Looking at the cumulative information provided by the museum case studies (MQB, BM, MAA, PRM and NMS), some tendencies can be observed (see Figure 34 in Appendix H), in particular strong differences between clubs that entered the Trocadéro Museum and then the Musée de l'Homme and the Musée des Art d'Afrique et d'Océanie; and clubs that entered the case study museums in the UK (BM, MAA, PRM and NMS). It appears that the Trocadéro Museum, which was created after the 1878 Universal Exhibition and received artefacts from the archipelago, did not receive any clubs until the 1890s, when some twenty-five were registered, while during the same decade UK museums had each at least that number of clubs in storage, a total of one hundred and thirty-four. The disparity between the two countries in terms of club entry persisted, and by 2020 the MQB museum had 238 clubs, whereas the total number in the BM, PRM, MAA and NMS were 474. It is important to note, however, that while museum entries of artefacts from Vanuatu prior to the twentieth century are less likely to be artefacts acquired on the market and given to the museum by a second party, assemblages entering museums during the twentieth century are more influenced by such variation. Thus, while national differentiation in terms of a ni-Vanuatu relationship with Europeans can be discussed from a broader perspective, as materialised by aggregate statistical data and graphs, by the early twentieth century such discussions were less relevant as Vanuatu artefacts appeared more in auctions. By then, museum collections could be influenced as much by the tastes of collectors who had never travelled to the archipelago, as by field collectors influenced by ni-Vanuatu agency. Thus, for the period of the nineteenth century, the difference between France and Great Britain, although not as impressive, is still quite significant. Even after adding the thirty-five clubs that Philippe François kept for his private collection, only sixty-six are part of the Trocadéro Museum, while at the same time Great Britain had one hundred and thirty-one clubs from the archipelago.

112 Original text in French : “J’offre un peu de tabac et j’entre dans la case. Mâchoire de cochon et trompe à l’entrée. A l’intérieur, je trouve deux casse-têtes en forme de crosse 113. Je propose d’échanger tout cela, mais ça appartient à des hommes qui sont partis et qui ne reviendront qu’à deux heures. Quant au bâton du chef, ni pour or ni pour argent, c’est tabou ! Toutes mes propositions restent vaines. Je vais dans un autre village, chez mon guide. Dans sa case, je trouve un arc et deux flèches que je lui échange pour du tabac.” (François, 1888: 68)

Among the various hypotheses that could explain this difference, one could argue for a difference in terms of acquisition practices and tastes, however, from François's diary transcribed by Bouissy, it appears that on many occasions François faced refusal to sell him clubs, as expressed in the following extract:

“[...] No matter how energetically I use the Kanak words I've learned—bow: bounara, arrows: ara, club: nambat, edible sea urchin: chalichou—I can only get ordinary bows and arrows, despite offering powder and cartridges. However, I came across an old man from the Tsimtsim of Mériver who has a nice club, I know that. [...] But a little further on, I meet a Kanak to whom I make the same requests. This one says he has a club and will give it to me for cartridges. We go to his village. About ten Kanaks are sitting in a circle in the square (exactly what happened to us in Lenakel), armed. I buy, for cartridges, a beautiful bow, a poisoned arrow, and a pigeon arrow with a coral tip but still no club. The one who had promised me a club earlier now pretends not to understand anymore. [...] We continue our journey towards the company, passing through villages. I gather a few more arrows, including a very beautiful one with a fine ironwood tip, as sharp as a needle.” (François, 1888: 116)¹¹³

Such occurrences appear throughout the diary of his expeditions from 1888 to 1890 (François, 1888: 61, 68, 69, 77, 78, 80, 119, 133, 137, 141, 152, 163, 166, 168, 181). These observations of the difficulties in acquiring clubs are not only encountered by François. Similarly, Gustave Glaumont, who was part of one of François's expeditions later in 1890, offers similar observations:

113 Original text in French : ““[...] j'ai beau jouer énergiquement des mots canaques que j'ai appris, arc: bounara, flèches: ara, casse-tête: nambat, oursin comestible: chalichou; je ne puis avoir que des arcs et des flèches ordinaires, malgré les offres de poudre et cartouches. Pourtant je retrouve un vieux du tsimtsim de Mériver qui a un joli casse-tête, je le sais. [...] Mais un peu plus loin, je rencontre un Canaque à qui je fais les mêmes demandes. Celui-là dit avoir un casse-tête et me le donnera pour des cartouches. Nous allons à son village. Une dizaine de Canaques sont assis en rond sur la place (Exactement ce qui nous est arrivé à Lenakel), en armes. J'achète pour des cartouches un bel arc, une flèche empoisonnée et une flèche à pigeon à pointe de corail mais toujours pas de casse-tête. Celui qui m'en avait promis un tout à l'heure fait semblant de ne plus comprendre. [...] Nous continuons notre route vers la compagnie en traversant les villages. Je récolte encore quelques flèches dont une très belle à pointe en bois de fer fine comme une aiguille. ”(François, 1888: 116)

“I couldn’t get hold of any war clubs. The natives refuse to sell them at any price. These clubs are made of ironwood. They say they use them to kill pigs” (Glaumont, 2013: 58).¹¹⁴

It also seems that the increasing presence of Europeans, and especially French citizens, and numerous cases regarding lands disputed at the end of the nineteenth century (see chapter 1) may have led to increasing tension with ni-Vanuatu. Tense relations did not allow French citizens to get access to the same extent to Vanuatu valuables, especially clubs. Philippe François also notes in his diary that although he managed to get access to some of the newly made clubs, he was denied access to the old ones that he considered as the good one (François, 1888: 178).

This raises the question of the notion of nationality and the distinctions made by ni-Vanuatu between British subjects and French citizens. In this respect, the account of Julien Thomas provides us with valuable information.

“I was a new species of white man to these natives; not a “slaver,” nor a trader, nor a missionary, as I had come from the French ship, and the Dayspring had naught to do with any one sailing under the tricolor. They evidently could not make me out, and conferred together as to what mystery this might be. Somebody to make profit out of was their conclusion; for when I expressed a desire to trade for a club, the artless savage wanted tobacco equal to the thickness of his wrist, and four feet long. There was no bargain. Then the chief brought a youth, whom I took to be his son, and offered to sell him to me for two breechloaders, and an amount of ammunition, beads, and tobacco which, according to current market rates, would have bought the whole village. I had no use for him. Finally, they brought me a young girl for inspection; then I thought it time to go and see the missionaries.” (Thomas, 1886: 202)

Whilst Julien Thomas, alias The Vagabond, travelled to the archipelago in 1883 as an Australian representative to investigate the position of the New Hebrides in relation to the annexation of the archipelago; it appears that he experienced a difference in behaviour and apparently prices. Therefore, on the basis of the information currently available, it appears

114 Original text in French : « Je n’ai pu me procurer aucun casse-tête. Les indigènes ne veulent en vendre à aucun prix. Ces casse-têtes sont faits en bois de fer. Ils leurs servent, disent-ils pour tuer les cochons. » (Glaumont, 2013 : 58)

that while previous case studies have shown restrictions in access to artefacts, the current case study shows that there may also be variations in terms of nationality, thus indicating a strong control in the exchange exercised by ni-Vanuatu.

Necklaces from Mele Island

In the case study analysis of the Pineau assemblage donated to the Trocadéro Museum (Chapter 3) and the Somerville assemblage donated to the Pitt Rivers Museum (Chapter 5), a distinctive necklace worn by men raised some questions, of which so far only one other example could be found in the museums contacted for information in the UK and France. This type of necklace is absent in large collections such as those of Philippe François and Felix Speiser. These necklaces consist of a pearl-shell pendant which, according to the observations of nineteenth-century field collectors could be found on Mele Island in the southern part of Efate Island. The earliest descriptions and illustrations of these necklaces can be found in an account published by Brenchley (1873: 217–218) of his 1865 voyage and by Commodore Goodenough (1876: 293), in which both suggest that such ornaments can be found all over Efate along with the use of yellow dye. However, it seems that by 1889 the only mention of such an artefact can be found on Mele Island, Efate. In his 1894 articles, Somerville reports the presence of necklaces worn by men, which he mentions having seen elsewhere (Somerville, 1894b: 370). He also associated the presence of such artefacts with evidence of Polynesian ancestry, which he attributed to the presence of a Fijian colony (Somerville, 1894b: 370). The origin of the ni-Vanuatu was an early discussion for Europeans travelling in the archipelago (Bennett, 1832:129), and soon the case was made for the migration of non-Melanesian populations, especially of Polynesian origin. In the late nineteenth century, Hagen, in an article published a year before Somerville's account, discussed the peculiarities of the Mele Islanders (Hagen, 1893: 348). Another very similar theory was put forward by Captain Erskine in his account of a voyage aboard HMS *Havannah* forty years before Hagen (Erskine, 1853: 333).

“I regretted much that press of time obliged me to curtail our stay at this island [Efate, Fila Harbour], as our slight acquaintance with the people had shown them to be a more interesting race than previous accounts have led us to expect among the New

Hebrideans. Both their personal appearance and language would indicate a stronger infusion of Polynesian blood than is exhibited in the Tanese, among whom our interpreters were almost useless. Here, on the contrary, many pure Samoan words occurred in common conversation, which rendered it not difficult for a person acquainted with any Polynesian dialect to follow their meaning; and the numerals habitually used by them differed little from those of Samoa. It is not probable that the missionary teachers, who have resided here but a few years, could have effected much in the change of language, but we heard a report from them of a large band of involuntary immigrants from Tonga, who had arrived at the windward part of the island more than twenty years before, and of whom two men were known to be still alive: one, by name Sualo, residing at a village near the bay of Pango, was a person of excellent character, and had rendered many services to the mission; whilst another (Niu-Same, or Sour Cocoanut) was living at Olo-tapu, and was accused of having been the instigator of the massacre of the British Sovereign's crew in 1847." (Erskine, 1853: 333)

Recent archaeological excavations and studies in Vanuatu have revealed the presence on small islands near the mainland of populations that share some similarities with Polynesian cultures (Zinger et al., 2020: 64–65, 71). In this respect, similar artefacts, such as the pearl necklaces of the Mele region, have been found in the Teouma excavations (Garanger, 1972: 301, figure 176), showing evidence of a long-standing practice. It seems that, similar to Téouma, Mele is the island where the chiefs of the region have their houses and villages, while their gardens are located on the main islands of Efate.

One of these Mele necklaces (BM inventory number Oc.7922) appeared in an early collection of artefacts from the archipelago donated by Brenchley to the BM, which also including a mat said to be from the island of Ifira (see Chapter 7), both islands being close to Fila (now Port Vila). It is likely that Brenchley, aboard HMS *Curaçoa*, did call at Vila to visit Presbyterian missionaries stationed in the area (Brenchley, 1873: 216-217, 233, 478). The missionaries appear to have had problems with the Mele islanders a year and a half before this visit, as according to Reverend Murray, an attempt was made by Mele islanders to kill teachers in 'the large harbour' of the region in order to steal their pigs (Murray, 1863: 244). It is very likely that the large harbour referred to is Fila (Vila), a hypothesis supported by the fact that, shortly afterwards, ni-Vanuatu from Vila harbour went on a retaliatory

expedition to avenge the attempt on the teacher's life (Murray, 1863: 245–246). Tensions in the region were therefore high, and it was in this context that Brenchley acquired the Mele necklace (Oc.7922). No other artefacts similar to this necklace are known to have entered museum collections in France and the UK until Pineau's donation in 1893 and in 1896 with the donation by Somerville to the Pitt Rivers Museum. No other similar necklaces have been found since.

It should be noted that the period when the artefacts appear to cease entering into museum collections can be linked to the increasing attention of Europeans to this region of Efate. Beginning with the arrival of the Marist Fathers on 12 February 1887, three weeks after the first arrival of Catholic missionaries in the archipelago (Monnier, 1990: 14), the increase of French citizens settling in the region took a turn when the policy was changed to encourage immigration to the archipelago, which can be traced back to 1884 with the publication of guides for governors and captains of naval vessels regarding the recruitment of labour and French citizens emigrating to the New Hebrides (Direction de l'intérieur DuFrenil, 1884; Gauharou, 1884). This increase continued to be encouraged by local demand for government support and the publication of guides specifically aimed at the destination of future settlers (Davillé, 1899; Bourge, 1906: 23, 53). As a result, the plantations and European settlements and activities in Vila and Mele Island continued to grow under the active supervision of John Higginson. It is due to the increase of activities in the region and the presence of a missionary settlement that Pineau travelled to the island (Delbos, 2001: 105–107).

In 1889, Philippe François travelled to the island and noted that European influence was particularly strong in Mele and that it was difficult and expensive to acquire artefacts at that time:

“We attempted to make some purchases. The war clubs were exorbitantly priced. One in particular, quite exquisite, was priced at ten francs. I bargained for a considerable time, and just as I was about to pay, a tall fellow wearing a large grey hat appeared—someone I recognised from my previous visit, a typical Māori figure. He demanded a pound and twenty-five francs, quite furiously.¹¹⁵ I dismissed him

¹¹⁵ In order to appreciate the prices quoted, it is necessary to compare them with goods sold at the time. In an 1899 publication for French emigrants to the New Hebrides, Ernest Davillé listed the prices of European

with all due courtesy. Another man, fully understanding French, feigned ignorance. Clearly, nothing can be gained from these individuals.” (François, 1888: 171)¹¹⁶

By the end of the century, the area was most densely colonised by French settlers and the Société Française des Nouvelles-Hébrides. Company, directed by John Higginson, undertook some construction work to facilitate the movement of goods from ship to warehouse and store (Bourge 1906: 85). In his ethnographic study, Felix Speiser mentioned that the Mele plantations were the most important plantations of the French and had a very high mortality rate among their ni-Vanuatu workers of up to 44% per year (Speiser, 1923: 13, 21).¹¹⁷

It was around this time, when the European presence in the region increased significantly, that some of these necklaces entered museum collections as donations from individuals returning from the archipelago. The latest record of such necklaces entering museum collections in France and the UK is the necklace given by Somerville to the Pitt Rivers Museums in 1896 (1896.33.20). Even in a large collection such as Felix Speiser’s assemblage given to the Basel Museum in 1912, such artefacts are missing.¹¹⁸

goods sold in the archipelago. Regular soap in a pack of sixty-four cost around twenty French francs. Iron tools ranged from two to eighteen French francs (Davillé, 1899: 23-26).

116 Original text in French : « On essaie de faire des emplettes. Inabordables, les casse-têtes. Un qui est très beau, du reste, mais fait dix francs. Je le marchande longtemps et lorsque je vais me décider à le payer, survient un grand gaillard coiffé d'un grand chapeau gris, que je reconnais bien pour l'avoir vu à mon dernier voyage, un vrai type de Maori. Il veut (pour) une livre vingt-cinq francs et les réclame d'un air furibond, je l'envoie promener avec tous les honneurs dus à son rang. Un autre, Qui comprend parfaitement le français, fait semblant de ne pas en entendre un mot. Décidément, il n'y a rien à tirer de ces gaillards-là. » (François, 1888: 171)

117 One hypothesis to explain the sudden significant increase in French colonisation in the area of Port Vila and Mele Island could be linked to a significant crisis in the banana industry due to the destruction of the Jamaican plantations due to natural disasters from 1886 to 1903 (Soluri, 2006: 144) and the destruction of banana plantations in Fiji due to disease in 1895 (Davillé, 1895: 13). While it appears that during the same period banana plantations in Port-Vila were already producing and sending large quantities to Sydney (Beaune, 1894: 253), plantations, some of which already existed on Mele Island, as testified by Hagen (1893: 348) and Davillé (1899: 46), while at the same time immigrant guides published around this time mention the need for prospective settlers who wished to plant bananas to do so in areas well connected to Australia in order to prevent the rapid deterioration of the product (Davillé, 1899: 47), a connection which, according to Bourge, was by then ensured by a ship belonging to a French company, Ballande, based in Bordeaux (Bourge, 1906: 85). It is worth noting that around the same time, the Higginson company began construction work to increase the capacity of the port of Port-Vila and to improve the connections between the port and the storehouse.

118 However, only the artefacts from the Museum für Völkerkunde in Basel, which represent the largest part of Felix Speiser's collection, are considered here. Further research is therefore needed on the smaller assemblages that he donated to at least four other institutions in Switzerland (Kaufmann, 1996: 318–319).

Similarly, no artefacts such as Mele necklaces appear to have been acquired by Philippe François, (see Chapter 4). An element of explanation for this absence can be found in François's diary transcript, in which he mentioned in the Sunday 11th August 1889 entry that 'civilisation' had strongly influenced the Mele Islanders and that he could see numerous European tools in the houses. He also expressed great frustration that any artefact was expensive and that all his attempts to buy artefacts had been unsuccessful, ending his descriptions of his time on the island with great anger towards the Mele Islanders (François, 1888: 171).

While these artefacts did enter museums in limited numbers in the second half of the nineteenth century, this was probably due to the high cost of acquiring artefacts, probably as a result of the increased European presence, which led to an inflation in the price of artefacts. This, coupled with the restrictions that probably applied to such artefacts, would help to explain why the assemblage from Vanuatu that entered museums at the very end of the century no longer included such artefacts. Another hypothesis is that this artefact, which was a body ornament, was initially described by Brenchley as not being worn by everyone; it is likely to have been associated with the social grade system and therefore subject to restriction.

A photograph taken around the turn of the century and published in Burns and Philps' *Tour Guide* (1903) provides further evidence of the apparent destruction of the social and cultural system on the island. This photograph (see figure 24) shows a dance ground on Mele Island with drums completely covered by vegetation. This photograph, together with Speiser's description of the poor state of the Mele plantation, led to the hypothesis that the decline in population, coupled with missionary work and an increased European presence in the region, may have led to a decline in traditional cultural practices. However, similar to the previous case study, while cultural practices may have declined, it does not appear that this led to the sale of artefacts to Europeans on a large scale. Relations with Europeans may not have been sufficiently peaceful due to tensions caused by increased colonisation and plantation activity, thus limiting interactions and the exchange of valuables.



Drum Grove at Mele, New Hebrides.

Figure 24: The photograph depicts drums on a dancing ground in Mele and is reproduced from a Burns & Philp booklet (1903) outlining the itinerary at various ports of call.

Chapter 9: Exchange Relationships and European Valuables

The previous chapter examined ni-Vanuatu agency in exchange relations by considering its representation in museum collections, focusing on the presence of Vanuatu valuable artefacts in the case study collections. The chapter introduced ni-Vanuatu agency through published materials and European accounts of their time in the archipelago. These materials were analysed in terms of exchange descriptions and goods valued by ni-Vanuatu during the exchange process. This analysis will allow an examination of the nature of the sources, alongside the European goods valued by ni-Vanuatu, to consider how ni-Vanuatu agency was expressed and perceived by Europeans.

This chapter will focus on textual materials to provide a complementary source of information by tracing the exchange process and discussing the valuation of European goods from early in the period to the early twentieth century. The first part offers a general discussion of exchanges, while the second part examines the mention of European goods during exchanges. Sources include early naval accounts such as Cook's voyage in 1774 (Beaglehole, 1969), Surgeon Bennett's account of his expedition which called in the New Hebrides in 1829 (Bennett, 1832) and Erskine's accounts as Captain of HMS Havannah which called at the New Hebrides in 1848 and 1851 (Erskine, 1851; 1853). Key sources from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries include Pineau's and Hagen's publications and Philippe François's unpublished diary, plus the various articles and book by Somerville.

Testimony of Interactions – Acquiring Artefacts

The process of exchange has been an essential part of the interaction between Europeans and ni-Vanuatu since early encounters (Cook, 1969; Cook, 1777; Forster, 2000). As navigators explored the oceans to map the world, calling at islands for food, water and materials was always a significant requirement for expeditions, allowing opportunities for interaction and exchange with the islanders. By the second half of the nineteenth century, calls for such provisions were most often made to traders or mission stations who had regular exchange

relationships with ni-Vanuatu. To maintain such exchanges, it was necessary to have goods to exchange as well as mutual interest to do so (Gosden and Knowles, 2001: 168). Early accounts mention beads and iron as early exchangeable materials. However, Cook's account of the visit in 1774 mentions the reluctance to exchange such goods in the islands he visited in Vanuatu.

Cook noted that while ni-Vanuatu seemed to appreciate donations from Europeans (1777: 33, 54), at the same time they did not engage in exchanges for the same goods. Cook also mentioned, in relation to iron tools, that Vanuatu people's lack of understanding of what was being offered by Europeans would lead them to often refuse exchanges as the goods appeared to have no value to them (Cook, 1777: 34). In the same account, Cook also mentioned that interest in European goods varied from island to island, and while interactions were particularly complicated in Erromango, it appears that in Malekula exchanges could be made for 'pieces of cloth' and marbled paper, which were considered valuable (Cook, 1777: 34).

Later in the nineteenth century, George Bennett, a naval surgeon aboard the ship *Sophia*, who was travelling to recruit labour, described a different interest in iron to that initially observed by James Cook. In his account, Bennett mentioned that the ship called at Erromango and sent a boat with New Zealanders on board with "iron hoops" as "gifts" to encourage ni-Vanuatu to come on board. On their return, barter was made with ni-Vanuatu and the iron seems to have resulted in the New Zealanders receiving sugar cane, bows, arrows and clubs in exchange, but failed to persuade the people to have any further interaction with the crew (Bennett, 1832: 120–121).

By the middle of the nineteenth century, further changes were evident in naval accounts. In James Erskine's 1853 account of his tour of the islands of the western Pacific aboard HMS *Havannah*, he mentioned that a trader who had settled on Tanna had dedicated part of his house to trading activities. He also described active exchange trading between that settler on Tanna and ni-Vanuatu based on Erromango:

"He was living in a small wooden house, part of which was adapted for a store for his goods, consisting chiefly of rod and bar iron, axes, muskets, powder, tobacco, and blue beads, of which articles he had landed in November last about 600/. worth.

The objects for which he bartered were sandalwood and pigs, which latter were sent to Eromango (where, it appears, there is a great demand) to be exchanged for the former commodity. The sandalwood received in the course of his trade was piled up in open sheds, awaiting the arrival of vessels; and neither from these, nor from his store, had he lost an article by theft since his arrival.” (Erskine, 1853: 304)

This extract provides important information on the regular exchange of European goods, but perhaps more importantly, it illustrates the value placed on goods within the exchange system between European traders and ni-Vanuatu on Tanna. The traders exchanged European goods for pigs, which they ultimately exchanged for sandalwood with ni-Vanuatu on Erromango Island. Therefore, it confirms that while by the mid-nineteenth century there was a greater volume of European goods in the archipelago, as suggested by the inventory of settlers’ goods stored at Port Resolution, Tanna, it also appears that these goods were not sufficiently attractive to acquire goods from the ni-Vanuatu of Erromango. It also shows the power dynamic that ni-Vanuatu had in the exchange process.

A little further on in Erskine’s journal, he mentioned that while European goods do not appear to be attractive in Erromango, this is not necessarily the case in Tanna. Arriving on the north-west coast, he described a scene in which the arrival of the ship led to exchanges with ni-Vanuatu from Lawaakus village, resulting in rivalry for control with ni-Vanuatu from the village of Lonantum. This scene shows an increasing interest in European goods, while describing the disturbances caused by the introduction of such goods, caused by Europeans calling at islands (Erskine, 1853: 313). The same extract also provides valuable information in relation to goods ‘gifted’ to ni-Vanuatu by those on European ships, with red and white calico being offered, which Ni-vanuatu appears to have reciprocated but without giving more information regarding the goods given in exchange.

It appears that the integration of Europeans into a more traditional ni-Vanuatu market continued throughout the nineteenth century, with further references to pigs being used by Europeans in exchange interactions with ni-Vanuatu. One such instance appears in François’s diary transcript where he mentions a gift of ‘poca’ (pig) from ni-Vanuatu. He wanted to use them as an exchange commodity in Malekula, but he could not get them to travel to the ship (François, 1888: 160). He mentions another acquisition of ‘poca’, in Port

Olry, suggesting that the use of pigs as an exchangeable commodity by Europeans was practised in some areas (François, 1888: 158, 169).

The increasing presence of Europeans in the archipelago in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the establishment of the condominium led to an increase in textual sources providing information on the acquisition of artefacts and hence exchange processes. Various ways are used, from direct exchange with ni-Vanuatu (although there are also numerous mentions of refusals), to acquisition through intermediaries who were ni-Vanuatu gatekeepers, or Europeans and missionaries settled in the archipelago (François, 1888: 77), or even other Europeans touring the islands, who managed to access artefacts that others did not manage to access.

In this respect, the written sources of the time show various ways, including various direct acquisitions to ni-Vanuatu who lived in the areas where the ships stopped. Then there are visits to villages to buy artefacts. Mention is also made of occurrences similar to those described by Erskine (1853: 313) or instances when ni-Vanuatu came to ships to conduct exchanges, which at the same time would prevent Europeans from going ashore (Erskine, 1853: 331). Such occurrences of ni-Vanuatu coming to the ships can also be found in late nineteenth century accounts with some leading to cases of massacre of crews such as the case of the Pearl (AJCP, FO27, File 3745. AJCP Reel No: 3682-3683 File, p 151, Report Australian Stations, Case 2016; MBAC, Bouge's archives folder XIII.4°, 24 August 1904). One might conclude that these occasions do not allow ni-Vanuatu to have agency over artefacts sold to Europeans. However, at least in the late nineteenth century, it seems that ni-Vanuatu always had a say in what they were selling and how they were selling it, either by refusing to sell some artefacts (Glaumont, 2013: 44, 53) or by hiding artefacts that Europeans should not have access to and showing only what could be sold (François, 1888: 166). Numerous examples of such refusals by 'villages' to sell anything can be cited, with a large number in Glaumont's and Philippe François's accounts, among which the following extract shows Glaumont's frustration:

"We have Luganville to the southeast and Bélirou to the southwest. As I am unable to purchase anything in this wretched village, once our men have eaten, I give the signal to depart. Around one o'clock, we leave Tam'batol, passing through Trom'boué and

Neari, small villages located slightly north of Tam'batol. There, I purchase two arrows, a bow, and a small pot, likely acquired through exchange from the North." (Glaumont, 2013: 52)

This passage also shows the intensity of the search. The village visited by Glaumont is of no interest once he learns that he cannot acquire any artefacts, which encourages the group of men with whom he was travelling to quickly leave the village for another, more promising one. At the same time, it could be argued that this was probably due to time and the constraints of being in the archipelago, which was the case in many instances. In the present case, however, Gustave Glaumont was stationed in Santo and in the same area for almost the whole of his two-month stay in the archipelago. Thus, Glaumont's quick lack of interest was not due to time constraints, but rather an illustration of the frenetic search for artefacts that seems to have afflicted travellers and collectors such as Bouge, but also François and his travelling companion (François, 1888: 66, 69; Glaumont, 2013: 43). This behaviour is reflected in many accounts (Le Chartier, 1885: 197-198), as well as in official naval reports. In this respect, François's account often mentions his frustration at finding large numbers of artefacts in houses that he was denied the right to purchase. While one might think that the white men were far more powerful than ni-Vanuatu because of guns and military punitive expeditions, and while to some extent punitive expeditions did indeed pose a threat to ni-Vanuatu, the reality is often about small groups of Europeans travelling from village to village with a limited amount of firepower. It is therefore clear from various accounts of the period covered by this study, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, that people were very cautious about their situation. Somerville stated (1928) that he relied heavily on the missionaries' network and influences to travel as safely as possible, and even then, his party encountered some problems with a village that was on the edge of the missionaries' influence in Efate coast.

Throughout these European accounts, there are repeated references to gifts given to ni-Vanuatu upon contact with them, as well as when passing through villages, a practice that is enacted in Somerville's account of his charting of the archipelago (Somerville, 1928: 113). Such practices were also carried out in exchange for their work as guides, for food and goods, or for help in carrying expedition supplies. It was also practised by missionaries (Paton, 1890: 112) and traders. Europeans were known to pay in goods; Paton mentioned instances

where ni-Vanuatu, with whom he had established a good relationship, offered to work on the church in exchange for European goods, including calico, knives and axes (Paton, 1890: 292).

Other cases of acquisition or donation of artefacts can be observed in the case study collectors, such as Bouge, who, while investigating a murder case, proceeded to arrest ni-Vanuatu and then in their detention took some of their personal effects, which are now in the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres (see Chapter 6). In this particular case, however, it was not exchange that led to the acquisition, but colonial force, as was the case during the various punitive expeditions carried out in the archipelago.

Another case of exchange intervening in particular colonial tensions can be quoted from Somerville's accounts of his surveying of the Efate Islands, during which he encountered problems with ni-Vanuatu, proceeded to arrest the chief of the village involved in the problems and, instead of conducting a punitive expedition against the village as is often recorded, took the man to the mission house of the area to which he was supposedly answerable. The man, after being lectured by a missionary, worked on board the Dart for a few days, during which Somerville mentions that he was treated with the utmost care and was given clothing and food before being released (Somerville 1928:136). All the processes aimed at establishing Pacific and diplomatic relations, as expressed in the following extract:

“Magnanimity of this kind always pays with savages; it is far better than punitive expeditions, which savour of “bullying,” and are, after all, only their own primitive method of “paying out” any one. This was the first time I had seen this other method put in practice, and it was so successful that I have followed it on several similar occasions since. By its means badfella man became goodfella man, and the men of this village became of the greatest use to us during the survey.” (Somerville, 1928:137)

Another acquisition process used by Europeans to collect artefacts was to exchange artefacts among themselves or to ask settlers and missionaries to collect artefacts for them. Philippe François in a few instances attempts to acquire artefacts in this way, although he rarely mentions success in such endeavours (François, 1888: 137). In other cases, donations of artefacts already in the possession of Europeans willing to donate or exchange them are often mentioned (François, 1888: 143, 170) or from other naval or colonial officers also touring

the islands, and sometimes of artefacts from other islands, such as the case in which François, called by the naval ship when it was about to leave Malo Island, vented his anger as he had no time to acquire necklaces, which to relieve his frustration led one of the officers to give him a necklace from the Gilbert Islands (François, 1888: 67).

Some of these processes of acquiring artefacts seem to have continued into the twentieth century, as evidenced by a study by Marie Durand of the collection of artefacts, field notes and archives held at the MQB by Aubert de la Rüe. In this study, Marie Durand mentions three main ways in which de la Rüe acquired artefacts during two scientific expeditions in the archipelago between 1933 and 1934, and 1935 and 1936 (Durand, 2015: 30). The first method of acquisition is direct and consists of acquiring artefacts in the places where the ship stopped, and in the surrounding villages. Another, more indirect, acquisition process was to let it be known that he was looking for artefacts as well as geological and faunal samples (Durand, 2015: 35–37).

Goods/ Commodities for Exchange – European Valuables

This section explores the value of European goods in exchanges with ni-Vanuatu. It examines shifts in the types of goods valued by ni-Vanuatu and how Europeans perceived the values attached to these artefacts. Focusing on European goods as an active element in exchange interactions allows us to consider the agency of ni-Vanuatu and their appreciation of European products.

Early accounts of European encounters with ni-Vanuatu often mention the lack of interest in iron objects, such as Bougainville's account of exchanges with Pentecost Islanders (Bougainville, 1771: 245) or James Cook's account of early encounters, in which he mentions that ni-Vanuatu refused to engage in exchanges beyond initial gifts (Cook, 1777: 76), which he attributed to a lack of value attached to European goods, as ni-Vanuatu were unfamiliar with such items. From the mid-nineteenth century, the increasing presence of traders and then labour recruiters brought more European goods to the archipelago. This influx affected the nature of exchange as well as the goods and their value to ni-Vanuatu. Published journals, memoirs and travel accounts allow for the study of changes in the value

of European goods, with a particular focus on the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, providing insight into social exchange and ni-Vanuatu's evolving appreciation of foreign goods (Gosden and Knowles, 2001: 168).

Exchange processes between ni-Vanuatu and Europeans were complex, with exchanges reflecting the interests of both groups. ni-Vanuatu agency, which appears both in the artefacts that entered European institutions and in the accounts of those involved in colonial interactions, reflects the exercise of control over access to artefacts. By examining the goods valued in exchange and their changing meanings over time and from island to island, this analysis aims to shed new perspectives on the exchange process as expressed in the value of foreign goods and ni-Vanuatu agency in determining their value.

a) Calico

Calico (cotton cloth) was one of the earliest materials brought by Europeans and given to ni-Vanuatu during their first encounters. In this regard, the account of Bougainville landing on Pentecost Island in 1768, despite indications from ni-Vanuatu not to do so, was resolved by gifts of red calico (Bougainville, 1771: 244). Similarly, Cook's journals also refer to the use of cloth in exchanges with ni-Vanuatu and emphasise that they are particularly appreciated in Malekula (Cook, 1777: 34).

In the nineteenth century, references to calico appear more frequently. Although interactions and exchanges remained difficult on some islands, accounts indicate a growing interest in various goods, with cloth, particularly calico, being the most notable.

Textiles were deeply integrated into Vanuatu society as evidenced by the account of Reverend Paton, who assists in reconciliation ceremonies and mentions the various goods exchanged between two tribes in Tanna:

“They stripped themselves of their fantastic dresses, their handsomely woven and twisted grass skirts, leaf skirts, grass and leaf aprons; they gave away or exchanged all these, and their ornaments and bows and arrows, besides their less romantic calico and print dresses more recently acquired. The effusion and ceremonial of the gifts

and exchanges seemed to betoken a loving people; and so they were for the feast but that laid not aside a single deadly feud, and streams of blood and cries of hate would soon efface all traces of this day.” (Paton, 1890: 220)

In this extract, Paton mentioned that a large number of ‘traditional’ valuable goods were exchanged during that ceremony, as well as ‘modern’ calico fabrics, which appear to have entered the local system of valuables appropriate for exchange. Variations in the nature of calico appreciation also appear in Somerville’s account, which states that by the late nineteenth century, ‘fancy floral designs of many colours’ were no longer valuable, but instead ‘yards of calico of the fashionable colour of the time, which was bright red’ (Somerville, 1928: 113). While no further references to patterned calico preferences have been found in the other published material, this aspect, if confirmed, could be of great interest in framing and dating artefacts in museums.

Whereas the previous mention of patterned calico could not be found, there were many references to red and white calico in the published material (Bougainville, 1771: 244; Erskine, 1853: 325; Hagen and Pineau, 1889: 351-352). In this respect, Reverend Paton, in his published account of gifts to chiefs, mentioned among other things ‘strips of red calico and pieces of white calico’, which were reciprocated by gifts of food, which the Reverend tried unsuccessfully to refuse (Paton, 1890: 217-218). Other occurrences may be mentioned of more particular cases, such as the preferences for yellow textiles in Efate Island expressed in Brenchley’s (1873: 217) and Goodenough’s (1876: 293) accounts. Such preferences are probably related to the importance of ochre and/or turmeric in Efate cultures, as expressed and represented on the early yellow tapa brought back and given to the British Museum (BM Oc.6623).

b) Beads

The second item that appears in early accounts of interactions between Europeans and ni-Vanuatu is beads. Cook mentions that beads are part of interactions with people from Tanna (Cook, 1777: 54). However, it is also clear from his accounts that interest in beads was not universal in the archipelago, as illustrated by what he qualified as ‘disregard’ for them during exchanges in Malekula with ni-Vanuatu, in contrast to their interest in red calico (Cook,

1777: 34). References to beads used in the exchange process appear to have been common in published material throughout the nineteenth century, but records of preferences also appeared. In this respect, an account by surgeon Bennett in 1829 mentions that beads are still valued in Tanna at Port Resolution (Bennett, 1832: 141) alongside iron tools and textiles. By the mid-nineteenth century, Erskine identifies preferences for large blue beads that could be exchanged for yams:

“They brought quantities of very fine yams, for which they gladly accepted axes, tobacco, and large blue beads, or even whales’ teeth, out of which some of their ear-ornaments were made.” (Erskine, 1853: 307)

Another interesting aspect that can be developed from this passage is that Erskine included beads in the list of items that could be successfully used in exchanges with ni-Vanuatu. The presence of Europeans in Tanna increased during this period and Erskine also mentions that a trader permanently based in Port Resolution provided beads amongst other goods in exchanges with ni-Vanuatu for pigs which were then exchanged in Erromango for sandalwood, demonstrating a steady exchange network with ni-Vanuatu and the integration of such goods into local exchange networks (Erskine, 1853: 322). The use of beads as barter goods continued throughout the nineteenth century when blue and white beads became incorporated in armlets with various patterns which in Malekula, according to Somerville, were only worn by chiefs on their right arm (Somerville, 1894: 370). This indicates the widespread use of such goods throughout the archipelago by the end of the nineteenth century.

c) Tobacco and Pipes

While calico was an early and widely valued commodity among ni-Vanuatu, tobacco seems to have gained in importance over time. The first mention of tobacco being used in exchange, in Erskine’s accounts of his voyages aboard HMS Havannah, describes the south-west coast of Efate as a place where tobacco was not accepted as a medium of exchange and was put under ‘tabu’ by the local chief (Erskine, 1853: 325). In contrast, Erskine reports a strong interest in tobacco and pipes among the islanders of Port Resolution in Tanna who bartered goods, including tobacco, in exchange for pigs and sandalwood (Erskine, 1853: 322). This

variation in the value of tobacco highlights regional differences in exchange practices. Goods such as tobacco and pipes appear more frequently in later nineteenth-century accounts, such as those of Pineau and Hagen (Hagen and Pineau, 1889: 351-352).

At the end of the nineteenth century, tobacco was one of the resources used most extensively by the settlers and traders, but also by Europeans who visited the islands, as evidenced by the published journals, memoirs and accounts of their travels (Francois, 1888: 73; Somerville, 1928: 133). In various accounts, the mention of tobacco in exchanges encompasses different types of exchanges, including payment for assistance such as guiding or help with carrying things (Speiser, 1913: 214; Somerville, 1928: 113-114), gifts in social interactions, including gifts on arrival and gifts on departure (Somerville, 1928: 182), which were not always accepted (Le Chartier, 1885: 182). Tobacco also appears to have been mentioned as a commodity that could be accepted as payment by the owner or chief, with influence over land when crossing it (Somerville, 1928: 114).

By the 1930s, tobacco seemed to have lost its value, at least on Pentecost Island, as suggested by Aubert de la Rüe, quoted in Durand's study of his collection and archives:

“20 July: [...] Numerous Indigenous people, having come to see the Mousuneu [a Danish ship], brought me axes and mats. The Mousuneu left Pentecost at 2 p.m. for Ambrym, heading to Rhanon on my advice. They had offered me to accompany them to Ambrym, but I declined for various reasons, particularly because we would have been in competition for the acquisition of Kanak objects. It is true that the Danes pay very poorly, which is why the Kanaks bring them few items. They offer tobacco sticks! And on Pentecost, this method has not met with success.” (Durand, 2015: 42)

Therefore, this passage shows that by the 1930s the value of tobacco had declined and was insufficient to acquire some types of artefacts. Although it may have varied from place to place the value appears to have fallen so much that artefacts could no longer be acquired with such commodities (Duran, 2015: 37).

d) Ochre

Unlike calico and beads, and similar to tobacco, ochre appears to have become part of exchanges from the late nineteenth century onwards. The only reference found to ochre during exchanges was by Le Chartier in the following extract, dating to 1876:

“Soon enough, they realised the importance I placed on their possessions, and I could already see myself being ruined by their demands. I had brought with me iron axes, cloth, weapons, powder, and so on, hoping to strike a favourable deal. But, to my great surprise, the men Api preferred pearls and ochre to these exchange items. This latter substance, along with red lead, held immense value in their eyes. Unfortunately, I only had 5 kilograms of it, and I despaired at not having been more foresighted when the ship’s cook came to my rescue—a Malabar, and that says it all! He was as mischievous as all his kind and no less clever than corrupt.

‘But, tommissai,’ he said to me, ‘don’t give ochre to the taïos.’

‘And what should I give them, Sami?’ I asked.

‘Flour. Wait a bit, tommissai, Sami good Malabar, Sami will give you flour, good tommissai.’

To what depths does the love of trinkets drive the unfortunate collector! No, really, it was not honest, but what could I do? I had no more ochre, and the natives possessed such beautiful, curious weapons that, if you shared my passion even slightly, I am inclined to believe you would have done exactly the same. Poor men Api, how much mill ochre I must have given them! They must have thought there was some kind of magic in it when they saw how little effect it had. That mischievous spirit still owes me some grand prayers, but I’ll let him off, as I feel I have been sufficiently rewarded by the possession of my splendid collection. They suspected nothing, and yet, God knows how suspicious they are! One example will illustrate this: for the exchange of a sandalwood club, a man Api demanded a box of gunpowder. I gave him one, but he refused it because the seal was torn, and he claimed the scoundrelly English had put charcoal powder in it.

- ‘But we are French!’

- ‘Oh yes! French good, very good, English no good.’

In any case, he would not accept the box, which, I assure you, had been torn purely by accident. It seems that English travellers had their own share of misdeeds on their

conscience, and the good men Api must have found their case blacker than mine.”
(Le Chartier, 1885: 197-198)

From this extract it appears that ochre was highly valued by the men of Epi. Its importance seems to have been such that Le Chartier underestimated how much ni-Vanuatu from Api (Epi) would offer in exchange for it. Another important aspect to note is the large number of items he brought with him in order to make some exchanges that did not meet with favour from the men of Epi, which seems to have surprised him. An important component that may help to explain such values attributed to the pigment is probably the fact that such elements were already part of inter-island exchanges between ni-Vanuatu (Huffman, 2013: 288-289). Another aspect that can be raised is the racial narrative created to justify the actions of the author and the underlying prejudices that have been found to be expressed in the context of exchanges.

In the assemblages given to the PRM by Somerville, two items are recorded as turmeric, but appear to be ochre, a mineral, rather than turmeric plants. The presence of these two artefacts in the ‘ethnographic collection’ rather than the natural history collection suggests their distinct cultural value, which would support Le Chartier’s observations. Furthermore, in the first account published in article form by Somerville, he mentioned that pigments are largely traded with Europeans, the value of which is suggested to be high enough as emphasis is made on the fact that one can acquire pigs for them, pigs being a great wealth valuable in the archipelago (Somerville, 1894b: 371).

e) Guns and Powder

In the early nineteenth century, firearms had not yet been introduced in all the islands composing the archipelago. However, Erskine did express his concern regarding potential interest turning towards such weapons being widely introduced, when he noted the increasing presences of guns in Tanna (Erskine, 1853: 353). By the 1870s, firearms, especially muskets, appear to have become more common in the archipelago, as observed by Captain Markham of HMS Rosario during his tour of the islands (Markham, 1871: 392). A particular prevalence was observed in the southern islands, which were more heavily

supplied due to the increasing presence of traders and labourers who were providing guns as wages to ni-Vanuatu (Markham, 1872: 239-240).

In the late nineteenth century, there is no mention of guns being used as barter valuables in the case study collectors' accounts. However, there are numerous references to ni-Vanuatu requesting gunpowder in barter transactions (François, 1888: 70). This suggests that the presence of guns was sufficiently widespread for interest to shift to powder for their use, and without which they were useless.

f) European Currencies

By the end of the nineteenth century, published materials indicate a notable shift in exchange practices between Europeans and ni-Vanuatu. Earlier interactions, which focused primarily on the exchange of goods, now start to include coinage/currency as an exchangeable good, as evidenced by accounts of the acquisition of artefacts based on currency (François, 1997: 87). This increasing mention of currency also raised questions about 'rates' and the preference of one currency over another, which, however, seems to have been exploited by Europeans, sometimes to the detriment of ni-Vanuatu (François, 1997: 61).

The increasing presence of the currency is linked to the increasing presence of Europeans and the integration of European goods as part of Vanuatu culture, which was facilitated by increasing access and especially by a growing number of trade stores. In this regard, Julien Thomas highlights the tension of currency interest associated with the stores, as he was advised by Captain Macleod to pay ni-Vanuatu in American dollars, implying a contrast with other forms of payment such as goods, but also other currencies, as he mentioned that they could then buy whatever they wanted in the stores (Thomas, 1886: 201). It therefore raises important questions about the role of stores in the growing economic interactions in the area, which until that time had been characterised by the circulation of commodities.

The integration of currencies became more regular at the turn of the century, with currency preferences changing from the American dollar to the Australian dollar (Durand, 2015: 37). This probably reflects the increasing market between the New Hebrides and Australia (Hagen and Pineau, 1889: 351-352), as demonstrated by increasing shipping by commercial

companies such as the Balland Company, a shipping line established in the 1890s. It also shows an increasing value being placed on European currencies by ni-Vanuatu and the beginnings of standardisation of exchanges between Europeans and ni-Vanuatu.

This chapter has approached the agency of ni-Vanuatu expressed in the flow of objects by examining European accounts of exchange relations with ni-Vanuatu. The analysis demonstrated that the value of European goods was subject to fluctuations depending on the location and over time. The study revealed that calico and beads were frequently highly sought after and retained their value over extended periods, whereas items such as tobacco, pipes and gunpowder were not as rapidly desired and were not universally in demand.

Additionally, the study illuminated instances of reciprocal networks, exemplified by Erskine's account of a trader who established a settlement on Tanna. This trader exploited local interest in European goods to trade with ni-Vanuatu for pigs, which were highly valued in Erromango, where he could then obtain sandalwood to sell on the European market. This example demonstrates the intricate nature of the flow and the network. Similarly, ochre and pigments, traditionally valued in inter-island exchanges, were incorporated into exchanges with Europeans.

The study also revealed numerous references to restricted access to certain artefacts in various circumstances, demonstrating that despite European interest in certain artefacts, they were not always readily available. Even in places where Europeans were well established, such as Efate, artefacts were not necessarily more accessible. For example, François noted that the price of the few artefacts available for exchange was excessively high compared to other places.

In this regard, the analysis of European accounts has proved insightful in understanding the agency of ni-Vanuatu in social exchanges, providing insights into the accessibility of artefacts and the value placed on European goods. It has also shed light on the ways in which ni-Vanuatu adapted and responded to the influx of new objects and resources.

Conclusion

This doctoral thesis examined the potential of museum collections to provide insights into colonial contexts and dynamics. The objective was to reframe the approach to ethnographic collections, moving from a conceptualisation of them as representations of the ‘other’ to an understanding of them as reflections of ‘us’ in relation to the ‘other’ and, as such, contribute to the growing literature that offers more profound and multifaceted understandings of historical museum collections. This perspective considers artefacts as sources that, when placed in dialogue and in contrast with other materials, or when approached under various perspectives, reveal a multiplicity of narratives and complex processes that have shaped their biographies.

This thesis approached museum collections through multiple interconnected perspectives ranging from French and British collectors to ni-Vanuatu agents. Each perspective enriched our understanding of the complex dynamics embodied within artefacts from the archipelago acquired during the colonial period. Throughout its various stages, this thesis addressed the notion of agency by examining the different influences that shaped Vanuatu collections in France and the UK. In that respect, each part of this thesis explored agencies and narratives within the collections by examining museum artefacts at different analytical levels and in dialogue with other sources. This methodological approach proved essential for analysis, revealing the varied relationships, agencies and narratives interwoven with the artefacts’ histories.

Key Findings

In this context, **Part I of this thesis (Chapters 1 and 2)** examined Vanuatu’s distinctive colonial history and analysed the impact of this history in the ways that artefacts entered museum collections in France and the United Kingdom. This section also investigated how the ‘neutral’ stance adopted by both nations contributed to the emergence of tensions between the various actors in the archipelago. This instability, which originated from the ambiguous position adopted by France and the UK, prompted neighbouring actors, particularly Australia and New Caledonia, to seek decisive action in the region.

Chapter 1 acknowledged that Vanuatu's history spans millennia prior to the arrival of Europeans. European migration was the most recent of numerous population movements to the archipelago. The chapter placed emphasis on the resilience and capacity for adaptation of ni-Vanuatu, understood within the context of the Pacific tradition of movement. It examined the ways in which the imposed neutral status gave rise to rivalries amongst the French, British and ni-Vanuatu actors, thereby enabling the last to exercise agency through the strategic navigation of colonial tensions.

Chapter 2 examined the relationship between field collection and museum institutions, focusing on the ways artefacts entered museums. The analysis of overall patterns of acquisition, particularly during the pre-colonial and colonial periods, contributed to identify distinctive patterns and trends. By examining the movement of artefacts into French and British museums and by uncovering intricate institutional processes, Chapter 2 also identified fluctuations which reflect how specific colonial events were as significant as, if not more than, contemporary developments in anthropology. While acknowledging the role of anthropology in shaping museum collections, the findings suggested that the correlation between colonial conflicts and artefact acquisition was not limited to the developments of the field of anthropology.

Part I thus contributed to analyses of the actions of the French and British governments in the New Hebrides, followed by an investigation of the New Hebrides' presence in both colonial nations. This approach allowed for an understanding of the macro-scale agencies and power dynamics at play, identifying patterns in museum acquisitions that correlate with both local Vanuatu contexts and the development of museum anthropology.

Part II (Chapters 3-6) examined museum collections at a more micro level through the assemblages of collectors who operated in the archipelago during periods of colonial tension. The study analysed artefacts in museums together with other materials such as textual sources and photographs associated with the collectors. Through the development of four case studies on collectors, the study helped to reveal important insights into Vanuatu's colonial history and relationships. The study highlighted patterns of similarity between collectors whose connections to colonial or military missions influenced their acquisitions.

Many of these assemblages were closely linked to episodes of tension between ni-Vanuatu and Europeans, reflecting the wider state of colonial instability in Vanuatu where Britain and France maintained a tenuous, neutral stance. This colonial ambivalence fostered heightened competition and uncertainty within the archipelago, affecting both local ni-Vanuatu communities and the collectors operating within these conditions. Museum collections thus became repositories for objects associated with colonial events.

In addition, through the analysis of collectors, a broader picture emerged of common tendencies in the provenance and types of artefacts acquired, which were often a result of repeated visits to particular regions and interactions with both British and French settlers. These patterns suggest an overarching ambiguity of colonial influence, as neither France nor Britain had exclusive control, and a tendency for collectors to navigate both colonial influences. While certain collections assembled by French collectors contained more artefacts from areas where France was more represented, there were no instances of artefacts exclusively found in one country compared to the other. This further supports the hypothesis of large interconnections due to neutral ambiguity. The collectors studied were all early-career professionals and for Pineau and Somerville their time in the archipelago helped to advance their careers as both were promoted to lieutenant. Both published ethnographic studies of the New Hebrides in anthropological journals rather than military journals, although Somerville developed deeper scientific networks and connections than Pineau. The colonial administrator Bouge offered a more nuanced perspective, not publishing ethnographic or linguistic studies of the archipelago, but contributing to zoological studies. Photography also became an increasingly important means of documentation, as evidenced by the presence of photographs in the collections of François, Somerville and Bouge. Pineau was the only exception in this regard, but donations of sets of photographs around the same time as Pineau's donation show a link with the military contingent in which Pineau participated, or others sharing a direct link as reproduced in Pineau's paper. This thesis also demonstrated the high mobility of Vanuatu artefacts within European networks in the cases of François and Bouge, which through the study of their archives showed how these objects served as gifts to governors or higher officers, as such highlighting their role in colonial power dynamics.

Despite the apparent European agency in these collections, evidence from the collectors' case study archives and published materials suggested that ni-Vanuatu actively influenced which artefacts Europeans could access during social interactions. This dynamic challenged the emphasis on collector agency and pointed to another set of narratives embodied in the assemblages of artefacts in museum collections – ni-Vanuatu narratives. As such, the research highlighted the limitations of viewing artefacts solely through collector assemblages, revealing distinctions that align with shifts in colonial presence, but also in terms of cultural constraints associated with artefacts. For example, artefacts from Mele and Efate became scarcer around the turn of the century, while items from other locations increased in collections (see Part III), suggesting a shift in colonial focus. However, as shown in Part III, the complexity of influences in these changes went beyond a possible assumption that Europeans ceased their presences in Mele and Efate, thus justifying the cessation of the flow of artefacts. Instead, it demonstrated an adaptation of ni-Vanuatu to a long and sustained European presence. Furthermore, while the study confirmed known trends, such as the prevalence of weapons in European collectors' assemblages, it also showed that the type of weapon was not necessarily always the result of European agency. This became clear from the presence of arrows compared with clubs in the collectors' assemblage, which was analysed in dialogue with archives and published materials by the collectors and suggests ni-Vanuatu influence on the accessibility of artefacts.

Thus, Part II contributed to providing insights into the complex networks of relationships within and outside Vanuatu, between ni-Vanuatu and Europeans, but also among Europeans. The study also served to highlight the strong entanglement of these assemblages with the colonial context, while highlighting the need for a nuanced view of agency within museum collections. While European collectors played a significant role in shaping these collections, the active role of ni-Vanuatu communities challenges a simple narrative of colonial acquisition. This layered agency invited further exploration as to how local communities subtly influenced these collections, with artefacts serving as more than mere colonial trophies. This perspective set the stage for Part III, where this thesis shifted focus to examine ni-Vanuatu agency through specific artefacts and their representations in museum collections, advancing the analysis of how these objects embody local values and intentions beyond the influence of collectors.

Part III (Chapters 7-9) of this thesis examined the potential expression of ni-Vanuatu agency embodied in assemblages of artefacts with emphasis given to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Therefore, through an analysis of both ni-Vanuatu valuables entering museum collections and European goods acquired by ni-Vanuatu, this section revealed the multifaceted nature of agency in the exchanges and the evolving dynamics between European collectors and ni-Vanuatu communities.

While Chapters 7 and 8 investigated the presence of valuable artefacts in ni-Vanuatu culture that arrived in France and the UK, in an attempt to identify patterns related to ni-Vanuatu agency, Chapter 9 looked at the influx of things from Europeans that were valued by ni-Vanuatu. The rationale of this chapter was therefore to analyse whether ni-Vanuatu had agency in the exchange process, expressed through the goods acquired on both sides, which may have evolved over time in response to local changes.

In this regard, Chapter 7 demonstrated that, while ni-Vanuatu valuables can be found in collections in the UK and in France, overall, the presence of artefacts that are deemed most valuable is rather limited. In this regard, the case study of pig tusks indicated that a limited number of tusks entered museum collections, with even fewer high value tusks. Patterns of fluctuations over time became clear. For example, the presence of graded pig tusks during the period 1878-1906 assembled by collectors in positions of authority and influence over men reflect the particular cultural nature of such artefacts. Unlike pig tusks, textile categories within museums are more complex to capture in a statistical analysis based solely on museum descriptions. However, the study did reveal a greater influx of valuable textiles into the case study collections after the establishment of the Condominium. This can be linked to a more stable situation and an easing of colonial tensions, likely favouring social exchange with ni-Vanuatu, which may have contrasted with the context prior to this period due to colonial competition between France and Britain. In the case of valuables, the study has shown that there are almost no high-value textiles represented in the museum's collection studied for the period 1878-1906 and beyond. The valuables are mainly 'small money' textiles, demonstrating strong control over the valuables exchanged with Europeans.

Chapter 8 discussed the social emblem-type valuables tracked in the museums' case study, and more specifically the presence and absence of clubs and particular necklaces from Mele

Island off the south coast of Efate Island. Apart from a similar control of access to artefacts, the focus on clubs demonstrated a strong disparity between the case study in France and the case study in the UK, which can be linked to restrictions of access based on nationality distinctions. The cases developed through the analysis of the presence and absence of necklaces from Mele Island revealed a strong correlation between colonial activity on the island and, more broadly, in the region of Mele Island, with no entry recorded of such artefacts in the museum collections by the early twentieth century, suggesting that increasing colonial activities may have led to tensions with ni-Vanuatu that disrupted social exchanges, leading to a strong control over access to these artefacts.

The final chapter of this part approached another aspect of the exchanges, namely the European goods valued by ni-Vanuatu, reflecting the active role of ni-Vanuatu in these exchanges. The analysis investigated published accounts of individuals who travelled and/or settled in the archipelago for information on the exchange process and the evolution of values in European goods. In this regard, Chapter 9, has shown that the dynamics of exchange fluctuated quite significantly over time and place. Only one European good mentioned from early encounters and throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries occupied a central role in social exchanges, namely calico and cloth. While goods such as beads continued to be part of exchanges during the period from 1878 to 1906, with some development in terms of beads favoured for their colour and size, other European goods reached their peak during the period from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, such as tobacco, ochre, and gunpowder. During the same period, records of foreign currency as part of exchanges with ni-Vanuatu appear in some European accounts, showing adaptation to the increasing presence of Europeans which led to an increase in access by ni-Vanuatu to Europeans goods through trade stores.

In summary, Part III has contributed to providing evidence of two principal forms of agency expressed in the assemblages of museum collections and in published and unpublished materials. The first form of agency is expressed through a strong control over access to artefacts. This is evidenced by the low presence of certain ni-Vanuatu valuables in the case study museum collections, in contrast to other artefacts. The profiles of the collectors who donated these artefacts also demonstrate this control. This agency is also referenced in a multitude of accounts from collectors and travellers, including military and non-military

personnel, as well as in the notes of the collectors who were the subject of case studies in this thesis. The second type of agency is expressed through the goods valued by ni-Vanuatu in exchanges with Europeans. This was approached through the analysis of the written sources, which demonstrated the changes in what goods were valued in different places and over time. In addition, they have contributed to the discussion in terms of the ni-Vanuatu response to the European presence and the increase in the accessibility of European goods.

Regarding Statistical Methods

Statistical analysis of museum collections allowed the identification of patterns in artefact accession across time and countries, revealing macro-level variations that could be associated with historical, social, and individual contexts. At a more micro level, the statistical analysis contributed to identifying specific patterns for individuals, emphasising some similarities across the collectors' case studies and thus opening the way to possible agencies beyond those of the collectors.

In this study, statistical tools served as an essential method for presenting and analysing museum collections, revealing patterns and trends, and for discussing the absence and presence of artefacts or categories of artefacts. By addressing the fluidity and complex narratives that can be engaged with when applying such tools to the study of collections, this research contributes to the field by demonstrating how statistical data, despite its inherent limitations, can contribute to gaining insight into the histories of these assemblages. The findings confirm that while museum data can be prone to inaccuracies, the careful use of statistical methods allows researchers to explore collections as evolving, interconnected entities. This thesis emphasises that statistical tools do not provide a stand-alone analysis, but rather act as one layer from which broader narratives can emerge or be engaged with. It also shows that while statistical biases exist due to the nature of the data collected, these biases are manageable and can even enhance analysis if openly addressed.

In Part I, Chapter 2, the macro-level representation of artefacts entering museum collections, in dialogue with the local and institutional context, helped to identify patterns of artefact entry. In doing so, the study contributes to a growing literature that explores statistical analysis in museum studies, as undertaken in *The Relational Museum* project at the Pitt

Rivers Museum, by applying statistical tools at different scales and from different perspectives, all constructed in dialogue. In this respect, Part I of this thesis used statistical tools at a macro level in terms of the number of artefacts involved, the time scale considered, and the transnational representation through the examination of collection records in France and the UK. This thesis then used statistical tools at a micro level in Part II by considering data at the collector/individual level through the comparative statistical study of collectors' assemblages, within collectors' assemblages and between collectors' assemblages. The study then used statistical analysis to represent the presence of case study artefacts in museums over time. In doing so, this thesis illustrates the versatility of statistical tools even at a basic level, in enhancing our understanding of the contexts and complexities surrounding museum collections.

In addition, Parts II and III highlight the richness of artefact narratives when considered as part of complex assemblages. By combining statistical data with other sources, including published and unpublished papers and photographs, this study presents a multifaceted view of the agency of collectors as expressed through assemblages, offering a deeper insight into how these assemblages reflect evolving contexts.

This thesis not only contributes to the body of research on Vanuatu collections, but also addresses the complexities of narratives encapsulated within museum collections. Its methodology engages with contemporary issues of agency in museum collections and the nuanced challenges of terminology. In doing so, it supports current perspectives that view artefacts as historical sources and underscores their value as dynamic records of cultural history. Consequently, this thesis not only contributes to the body of research on Vanuatu's collections, but also helps to demonstrate that statistical models are useful tools for interpreting museum collection narratives, not only as aids to visualising trends, but also as mechanisms that, when used rigorously, highlight the biases inherent in museum data. Through its methodology, this analysis addresses the complexity of the narratives embodied in museum collections. It also engages with contemporary issues of agency in museum collections and the nuanced challenges of terminology.

Addressing Limits, Identifying Room for Further Research

While this study has provided insights into the multilayered narratives embodied in museum collections and contributed to demonstrating the value of statistical and interdisciplinary approaches, some limitations must be acknowledged. First, the interdisciplinary approach adopted here, while valuable in highlighting different perspectives on these collections, inherently limits the depth and scope of the analysis. Therefore, while this thesis demonstrates the usefulness of a broad methodological approach, it also stresses the need for further studies at both micro and macro level to contrast and refine these findings. Some generalisations were necessary to frame the research, but these were carefully considered throughout the analysis.

Furthermore, while a substantial portion of the research was conducted digitally using online museum databases, photographs of artefacts, and datasets provided by institutions, on-site visits to collections remained an essential component of the study. Though museum documentation can provide valuable information, certain aspects can only be fully appreciated through direct interaction with artefacts. For instance, handling an object reveals dimensions of its materiality that are otherwise inaccessible: how it fits in the hand, how it feels to hold, how its weight is distributed, and whether that weight suits its intended function. A club, for example, may feel more or less appropriate as a weapon depending on its weight and balance. Similarly, the equilibrium of an arrow can be indicative of its intended use. An arrow weighted towards the tip may have been designed for short-range shooting or for use in ceremonial contexts, such as the killing of pigs during ritual events where pigs are restrained. Conversely, a well-balanced arrow would be more appropriate for hunting.

Moreover, another fundamental rationale for visiting collections is to perceive the physical volume of objects and to observe the manner in which the body interacts with them. This is a phenomenon that is difficult to assess adequately through photographs or descriptions alone. Furthermore, physical examination frequently unveils details not captured in images or documentation, such as marks of use or manufacture, labels, stamps, inscriptions, or other residues. These subtle material traces can be of critical importance to the interpretation of the objects, yet they may be absent from museum records due to the technical challenges involved in their photographic documentation. Consequently, even in a study that places

significant reliance on digital data, physical access to collections remains imperative for achieving a comprehensive understanding of artefacts' materiality and significance.

This study also focuses on the colonial period, examining temporal patterns of collection primarily to understand the period of focus. However, this temporal limitation means that the full complexity of evolving collection trends for Vanuatu artefacts over time remains unexplored. Moreover, while the analysis suggests that the entry of artefacts into museum collections is closely linked to periods of colonial tension – perhaps even more so than the development of anthropology itself – this argument would benefit from comparative analysis with artefacts from other regions in the same museums. Such a comparison would allow for a deeper understanding of specific colonial dynamics in Vanuatu that may have influenced acquisition practices. In addition, the study would also benefit from the comparative analysis of collections assembled by anthropologists who travelled to the archipelago. Some of these collections are substantial, for example, Felix Speiser's collection in Basel or John Layard's in Cambridge. A study of this nature would allow for the inclusion of a distinct category of field collectors not encompassed within the present research. The reason for this is that these anthropologists conducted their work only after a more stable colonial administration had been established in Vanuatu by France and the United Kingdom. Such a research direction would also make a significant contribution to the current study's examination of restricted access, while offering further insight into early anthropologists' perspectives on ni-Vanuatu and their culture.

The limitations of the raw data also need to be addressed. Although the research methodically addressed gaps by identifying and using more reliable data, certain data limitations remain. Provenance as a concept poses significant challenges due to its multifaceted nature. Provenance often becomes complex and ambiguous when analysed at a macro level, especially when examining narratives beyond the museum perspective. The distinction between the provenance that museums prioritise in their acquisitions and displays, and the actual origins of artefacts, becomes particularly pronounced when examining cultural practices or field influences on assemblage composition. Here, precise provenance is crucial as it informs the cultural associations of the artefact.

These considerations highlight both the complexities and limitations of museum data – not only in terms of accuracy and data loss, but also in terms of how artefact-related information is categorised. They highlight the need to reconsider how museums describe and categorise artefacts, as these terms impose narratives that shape our perceptions. As such, this study indirectly engages with ongoing discussions about rethinking the language and data associated with museum collections, recognising that terminology carries implications that can reinforce or obscure the broader cultural narratives of artefacts.

Furthermore, while this thesis has incorporated photographs as a source to enrich the interpretation of assemblages, a focused analysis dedicated to nineteenth- and twentieth-century photography would significantly contribute to deepening our understanding of the colonial context, its representations, and the ways in which ni-Vanuatu were depicted through visual media. Indeed, in the present study, photographs were examined in a limited manner and were primarily employed to enhance comprehension of artefact histories and contexts. Nevertheless, aside from Geismar and Herle's 2011 study of photographs taken by the anthropologist John Layard in 1914, photographs have not been considered a research topic in their own right. The analysis of photographs as a medium for the study of Vanuatu could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how Europeans and researchers perceived the country. The study would also provide information on Vanuatu and ni-Vanuatu during colonial periods, such as the 'colonial archives' concept developed by Elisabeth Edwards and Christopher Morton in the introduction to their study of the relation between photographs in anthropological and historical analysis, highlighting the complexity of narratives embodied in such documents (Morton and Edwards, 2009: 2).

A study of this nature would also acknowledge the potential biases involved. Photographs are complex narratives situated, as described by Haidy Geismar and Anita Herle (2011: 3) in their introduction to a study of photographs taken by the anthropologist John Layard, as products of three stories: that of the photograph itself, the photographer, and the subject. The technical aspects of photographs are also critical, as they can contribute to our broader understanding of the photographs themselves and the context in which they were taken. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge the potential influence of these factors on the viewer's initial interpretation, as they may introduce bias or preconceptions. For instance, Burke (2001: 22) cites the historian of photography Sarah Graham-Brown (1980: 2), who

stated that ‘a soft sepia print can produce a calm aura of “things past”, whereas a black-and-white image may convey a sense of harsh “reality”’. Some historians have questioned whether these pictures can be trusted, and to what extent (Burke, 2001: 21). Therefore, while a photograph may embody a realistic dimension, it is also open to personal interpretation. Hence photographs are complex narratives that are as intricate and interwoven as paintings and objects. These phenomena emerge from intricate contexts and are susceptible to external influences. In this regard, they can be considered ‘historical’ in their own right (Burke, 2001: 23). This underscores the importance of photographic analysis in enhancing our understanding of Vanuatu’s intricate history, as it facilitates access to data that would otherwise be challenging to obtain. Photographs have been shown to provide direct and visible information about the material culture, people and places represented, as well as shifts in the manner in which people or locations are represented in photographic images. Additionally, the impact of technological advancements in the field of photography and the influence of the historical context in which various individuals are depicted are also relevant.

The analysis of photographs taken in Vanuatu would therefore make a significant contribution to our understanding of the archipelago’s history and our interactions with, and perceptions of, the ni-Vanuatu people. Furthermore, it would provide a more comprehensive understanding of their role in the field of anthropological historiography and offer resources for the study of material culture from the archipelago in museums. Additionally, photographs can be of great significance, not only as documents, but also to the descendants of the persons represented, and to cultural practices and landscape memory.

Another area not examined in this research, but which would benefit the study of Vanuatu assemblages, is the question of gender. A close examination of the representation of gender in Vanuatu museum collections could reveal how gender operates, and has operated, in Vanuatu, particularly in relation to artefacts and knowledge. The study would also reveal how gender has been perceived by Europeans and how it is, or is not, represented in the material culture of the archipelago that has been preserved in European countries. These layers of interpretation have the potential to offer insight into whether access to materials and knowledge was constrained by gender divisions in Vanuatu and Europe. The presence of European women in Vanuatu was limited during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This was primarily a consequence of the pre-eminence of non-settler roles, such

as naval officers and traders, which were positions exclusively occupied by men, as was subsequently for a long time the case with anthropologists. These gender divisions in Europe further constrained the inclusion of Vanuatu's material culture in museum collections, as the few positions that might have enabled women to travel to the archipelago were scarce. This situation was further exacerbated by the challenges associated with adjusting to life in Vanuatu, including the prevalence of diseases such as malaria, which resulted in a significant number of deaths and limited the travel of European women and children to the archipelago. Consequently, an analysis of gender representation in museum collections becomes an investigation of gender divisions and constraints imposed both in Vanuatu and European societies. Conducting such a study would contribute to the disentangling of gender representation and gender divisions in Vanuatu and European countries. Furthermore, it would facilitate analysis of the influences and biases related to gender in museum collections and knowledge from Vanuatu. More broadly, it would contribute to highlighting the impact and influence of gender in discussions of knowledge. A study of this kind would be particularly pertinent given that gender roles in Vanuatu frequently determine access to specific cultural knowledge and artefacts. This, in turn, has the capacity to influence which artefacts may have been accessed and/or acquired by Europeans in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The study has also provided evidence of a complex network of exchange of ni-Vanuatu artefacts between Europeans within the Pacific region. This evidence demonstrates how these artefacts were integrated into European power dynamics through gift-giving and exchange. The artefacts that were traditionally involved in Indigenous cultural and social exchanges were thus transposed into European social exchange contexts of gift-giving and social positioning. Further study of the types of artefacts exchanged, the levels within the hierarchies at which they circulated, and the different contexts – both within the 'field' and upon arrival in European countries – would contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how artefacts operated in power dynamics and social exchange within European networks.

Finally, as stated in the introduction, the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on the research project contributed to delaying the fieldwork, which could only be conducted in the later stages of the PhD. This limitation imposed constraints on the extent to which fieldwork findings could be incorporated into this thesis, as well as the scope of what could be planned

and achieved during the time spent in the field. Further research could therefore be conducted on specific artefacts that appeared, through the study, to be less present in museums in France and the UK, as well as in significant collections housed in other European countries, such as the Felix Speiser collection in Basel, Switzerland. A more extensive fieldwork period would also have enabled visits to a greater number of islands, contributing to a deeper understanding of Vanuatu's cultural diversity, an aspect that was only partially approached during the Melanesian Arts and Culture Festival, which took place in Vanuatu during the period in 2023 when fieldwork was possible. Furthermore, the study would benefit from a more in-depth analysis of the collections held by the Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta, as well as from increased engagement with communities regarding the French and British presence in the archipelago during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Engagement of this nature would facilitate the examination of collective memories of the colonial period as well as material culture, whilst simultaneously fostering the sharing of museum collection data with communities within Vanuatu.

In acknowledging these limitations, this study also points towards the potential for further research that could extend the findings of the current study to deepen our understanding of how artefacts serve as sites of complex social, political, and cultural negotiations in colonial and postcolonial contexts.

Concluding Words

In conclusion, this study has contributed to an understanding of how artefacts from Vanuatu that entered museum collections prior to the establishment of the Condominium are intimately linked to colonial agendas at multiple levels. These artefacts can reflect direct expressions of conflict between ni-Vanuatu and Europeans, as well as indirect influences of increased European presence, and reveal access restrictions imposed in response to local colonial tensions. The study highlights how such access control by ni-Vanuatu could be dictated by social positioning or the expansion of European settlements, resulting in an increase in tensions between the various actors, but also an increase in the flow of goods from both sides; this can be seen at various levels within the case study assemblages of collectors (Part II), but also more broadly in museum collections (Part III) through the analysis of valuables.

The study of artefacts from the perspective of their embedded value and the power dynamics that shape their trajectories has also contributed to a shift in perspective on the complex layers of agency expressed in museum collections. This aspect is particularly evident in the current thesis through its methodological approach, which brings together a diverse range of materials and analytical perspectives. This approach emphasises the need to consider artefact collections in museums as complex assemblages, both inside and outside museums themselves. It also challenges the perception of artefacts as isolated elements and encourages a reframing of their role as part of a larger, dynamic process.

This thesis also emphasises the need to approach the study of collections from other perspectives in order to challenge our own perceptions and biases and to consider the potential of other narratives. In this respect, the shift made in the current study from seeing these collections as the testimony of the 'other' to the testimony of 'us' in relation to 'others' is essential, this thesis argues and contributes to a rethinking of 'ethnographic collections'. This approach not only opens dialogue with communities about the 'past', but also recognises that Indigenous communities such as the ni-Vanuatu were not just passive subjects, but active actors who, where possible, navigated these dynamics to their advantage. In doing so, it contributes to the recognition that artefacts in collections are not only the result of European agency, but also that of ni-Vanuatu.

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H-41. Nouvelles-Calédonie (1895-1911). F°1-1895 à F°18-1911

Musée du Quai Branly

Archives relating to collection donated to Pineau

D001172/360779 Letter from A. Hagen

D001172/36080 Letters from Lieutenant Pineau dated on the 12 May 1888

D001172/36080 Letters from Lieutenant Pineau dated on the 26 May 1888

D001172/36080 Letters from Lieutenant Pineau dated on the 17 June 1888

D001172/36080 Letters from Lieutenant Pineau dated on the 12 July 1888

D001172/36080 Letters from Lieutenant Pineau dated on the 24 January 1889

D001172/36080 Letters from Lieutenant Pineau dated on the 6 February 1889

D001172/36086: Letter from the Minister regarding the collection

D001172/36087: Scan of the Musée du Trocadéro inventory book

Archive Relating to Gustave Glaumont

D000939/35297: List of artefacts donated to the Société de Géographie

Archives relating to Philippe François collections

D001062/35187: Scan of the Musée du Trocadéro inventory book

D001062/35188: Letter from François Bouyssi to the museum directory regarding Philippe François assemblage.

D004476: Tajan Auction

Archives associated to Chartres

5AAI/83: Musée de Chartres: fiches descriptives objets, catalogue de la collection Bouge, correspondance, registre d'inventaire, coupure de presse, notes manuscrites.

Musée des Beaux-Arts de Chartres

Box: Notes ethnographiques supplément

Box XI (4°): Collection inventories

Box : Vanuatu (à classer)

Box XIII 4°)

Box XII, 54°)

Box XI 4°

Box IB-1° to 11°

10°: Folder Notes Néo-Hébridaise, Diary

Album 5 et Album 6

Centre historique des archives de Vincennes du Service historique de la Défense

15H127 GR9M158

15H127 GR9M158: ordre 33.5.6

15H127 GR9M158: Ordre F.5.10

15H127 GR9M158: Ordre VII.D33.5.3

15H127 GR9M158: Ordre VII.D33.5.4

15H127 GR9M158: Ordre VII.D33.5.5

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400_021556: Group of boys amidst tall carved ?drums

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Australia

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Series FO 27

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Cote MSX-9428
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Vanuatu, France and the United Kingdom: museum collections and colonial dynamics

Volume II – Appendices

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Dissertation Submitted in Fulfilment for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Sainsbury Research Unit for the Arts of Africa, Oceania & the Americas
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Table of Appendices

APPENDIX A. INTRODUCTION 293

Figure 1: Representation of the Retoka archaeological site, lower floor of the collective burial site, including the burial site of Roy Mata. (Figure 153 in Garanger, 1972: 289). 293

APPENDIX B. COOK EXPEDITION MAP AND ENGRAVING 294

MAPS OF COOK'S ITINERARY IN VANUATU 294

Figure 2: Map of Cook's itinerary in the archipelago. © The National Maritime Museum, United Kingdom. Available at: <https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-540640> 294

Figure 3: The Landing at Mallicolo, one of the New Hebrides (before title). Engraving after drawings by artist William Hodges, is from the official account of Cook's second voyage, 'A Voyage towards the South Pole', published by Strahan and Cadell in 1777. © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London. <https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-152044> 295

ENGRAVING ILLUSTRATING LANDINGS IN VANUATU 295

Figure 4: The Landing at Erramanga one of the New Hebrides. Engraving after a drawing by artist William Hodges, is from the official account of Cook's second voyage, 'A Voyage towards the South Pole', published by Strahan and Cadell in 1777. © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London. <https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-154026> 295

Figure 5: The landing at Tanna one of the New Hebrides. Engraving, after a drawing by artist William Hodges, is from the official account of Cook's second voyage, 'A Voyage towards the South Pole', published by Strahan and Cadell in 1777. Available at: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-135705767>. 296

Figure 6: View in the island of Tanna. Engraving, after a drawing by artist William Hodges, is from the official account of Cook's second voyage, 'A Voyage towards the South Pole', published by Strahan and Cadell in 1777. © National Maritime Museum. Available at: <https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-154030>. 296

Figure 7: The engravings presented here are reproductions of drawings by William Hodges, which were originally published in 1777 by Strahan and Cadell as part of the official account of Cook's second voyage. The engraving portrays a "Man of the island of Tanna". The man is represented with the hair plaited in a style similar to that observed in the BM collections. The two prints reproduced here are located in the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London, with reference numbers PAI4092 and PAI4094, and are available for online viewing. The National

Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London, holds the copyright for these reproductions. Available at: https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-154032	297
Figure 8: “Head ornament made of human hair and vegetable fibre” attributed as from Tanna (Vanuatu) which was given by George Bennett in 1831 to the BM. Museum number: Oc1831,1112.1. © The Trustees of the British Museum.	297
APPENDIX C. CHAPTER 3. ALPHONSE PINEAU.....	298
ARCHIVES	298
Figure 9: Letter from Pineau to the Musée d'Ethnographie du Trocadéro regarding the publication of his co-authored ethnographic study and his collection of artefacts from Vanuatu and drawings of his collection. MQB archive n° D001172-36080: letter dated 12 May 1888.....	298
Figure 10: Order to Captain Polliart to lead a contingent of thirty-two men to the New Hebrides to establish two military stations. Order SDH Archive - 15H127. GR9M158. Order VII.D.33-5- 3, dated 29/05/1886.	298
Figure 11: In this extract, Pineau is mentioned as belonging to the peloton n°2, led by M. Henry and later replaced by Pineau, according to the diary of Marist Father Gaudet (1992:12). Archives SDH: 15H127; GR9M158; Order n°33-5-6, p. 2.	299
Figure 12: The figure represents a photograph from Felix Gaillard's album. The inscription beneath the image describes it as showing the French military station at Port-Sandwich on Malekula. The album is preserved today in the Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, accession number PA0000165. The photograph is the property of the museum and is protected by copyright.....	299
PHOTOGRAPH	299
ADDITIONAL STATISTICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF ALPHONSE PINEAU’S ASSEMBLAGES	300
Figure 13: The table illustrates the number of artefacts from Vanuatu, organised according to type and category, in Pineau’s assemblages in the MQB.....	300
APPENDIX D. ETHNOGRAPHIC PAPERS.....	301
Figure 14: The following table presents a comparison between the structure of the ethnographical paper by Hagen and Pineau and the three ethnographical studies published by Somerville. The structure of the article is represented by the headings that guide the argument. The full references of each paper are provided in the column headings.	301
APPENDIX E. CHAPTER 5. PHILIPPE FRANÇOIS	302

<i>Figure 15: The table illustrates the number of artefacts from Vanuatu, organised according to type and category, in both the Tajan and MQB assemblages.</i>	<i>302</i>
ADDITIONAL STATISTICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF PHILIPPE FRANÇOIS ASSEMBLAGES	303
<i>Figure 16: The table provides data compiled from the Tajan auction house catalogue of the 2002 Philippe François’ collection sale. The list details the artefacts attributed to Vanuatu in the catalogue. This list associates the catalogue numbers with the designation, type, and category used to generate statistical data and graphs.</i>	<i>303</i>
<i>Figure 17: This image shows the second page of the list of artefacts attributed to Vanuatu in the 2002 auction catalogue. The list associates the catalogue numbers with the designation, type, and category employed to generate statistical data and graphs.</i>	<i>304</i>
<i>Figure 18: Provenances attributed to ni-Vanuatu artefacts in François’ assemblages, based on the information provided.....</i>	<i>305</i>
<i>Figure 19: Dr François’ collection: overall composition of weapons from Vanuatu.</i>	<i>305</i>
<i>Figure 20: Dr François’ collection: overall composition objects from Vanuatu in comparison (excluding weapons).....</i>	<i>306</i>
<i>Figure 21: The photographs represent four out of the five belts attributed from Santo Island in François’ assemblage, which are preserved in the MQB. The museum numbers are 71.1893.31.15, 71.1893.31.16, 71.1893.31.17, and 71.1893.31.18. The images are the intellectual property of the Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac.....</i>	<i>307</i>
APPENDIX F. SOMERVILLE ASSEMBLAGE	308
<i>Figure 22: Photographic documentation of Vanuatu combs in Somerville’s assemblage preserved in the PRM. The corresponding museum numbers are as follows: a: 1893.27.16; b: 1896.33.16; c: 1893.27.17; d: 1896.33.19; e: 1896.33.15; f: 1896.33.17; and g: 1896.33.13. The photographs were all taken during museum visits. © Laetitia Lopes.</i>	<i>310</i>
<i>Figure 23: Photographic documentation of Vanuatu combs in Somerville’s assemblage preserved in the PRM. The corresponding museum numbers are as follows: a: 1896.33.18; b: 1896.33.14; c: 1896.33.12. The photographs were all taken during museum visits. © Laetitia Lopes.</i>	<i>311</i>
<i>Figure 24: Extract from: Frederick Dack and (Vice-Admiral) Henry Boyle Townshend Somerville, 1890, Pacific journal and photograph album. A digital copy of the Frederick Dack journal and the Henry Boyle Somerville album is available at: https://natlib.govt.nz/records/36384529 . Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. Ref: MSX-9428.....</i>	<i>312</i>
<i>Figure 25: Somerville, T. B. H. “Collection of Carved Figures against Matting.” Somerville Collection, 1890–1891. Wiley Digital Archives: The Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland - 1. Accessed 02 Jul. 2024.</i>	<i>313</i>

<i>Figure 26: Archival photographs of Somerville’s artefacts on board the ship (RAI) displayed alongside photographs of the corresponding objects currently preserved in the PRM.</i>	<i>314</i>
APPENDIX G. BOUGE ASSEMBLAGE	315
ADDITIONAL STATISTICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF BOUGE’S ASSEMBLAGES FROM VANUATU	315
<i>Figure 27: Drawings illustrating artefacts from Vanuatu, with similar pieces found in Bouge’s assemblage in Chartres Museum. The page is extracted from Bouge’s diary in the Chartres Museum archives (Box I, B, 10°).....</i>	<i>316</i>
<i>Figure 28: Photograph titled ‘Proclamation of the convention of 20 August 1906’, Chartres Fine Art Museum, Bouge Archives, Album 6, p.26 © Image from the album kindly provided by Elric Geraudie.....</i>	<i>317</i>
APPENDIX H. FURTHER STATISTICAL REPRESENTATIONS	318
<i>Figure 29: The graphs illustrate the accession of artefacts by year for the case study museums. The data are not cumulative.</i>	<i>318</i>
<i>Figure 30: Graphs comparing the data modelled by sequences of decades (above) and by years of accession (below). The graphs illustrate that tendencies remain consistent in the two lines, with the UK collections shown in red and the French collections in blue.....</i>	<i>319</i>
<i>Figure 31: The graph illustrates the accession of clubs and arrows by decade in France and the UK. Dotted lines represent arrows, while the solid lines represent clubs. Data for France are shown in blue, and data for the UK are shown in red.</i>	<i>320</i>
<i>Figure 32: The graph represents the accession of arrows in the case study museums by decade. Here, the data are presented cumulatively.....</i>	<i>320</i>
<i>Figure 33: The graph presents the total number of arrows with unknown accession dates in each museum.</i>	<i>320</i>
<i>Figure 34: The graph illustrates the accessions of clubs in each museum case study by decade.</i>	<i>321</i>
<i>Figure 35: The graph presents the total number of clubs with unknown dates of accession in the case study museums.....</i>	<i>321</i>
APPENDIX I. ORIGINAL TEXT FROM LE CHARTIER (1885), TRANSLATED IN CHAPTER 9.	322

Appendix A. Introduction

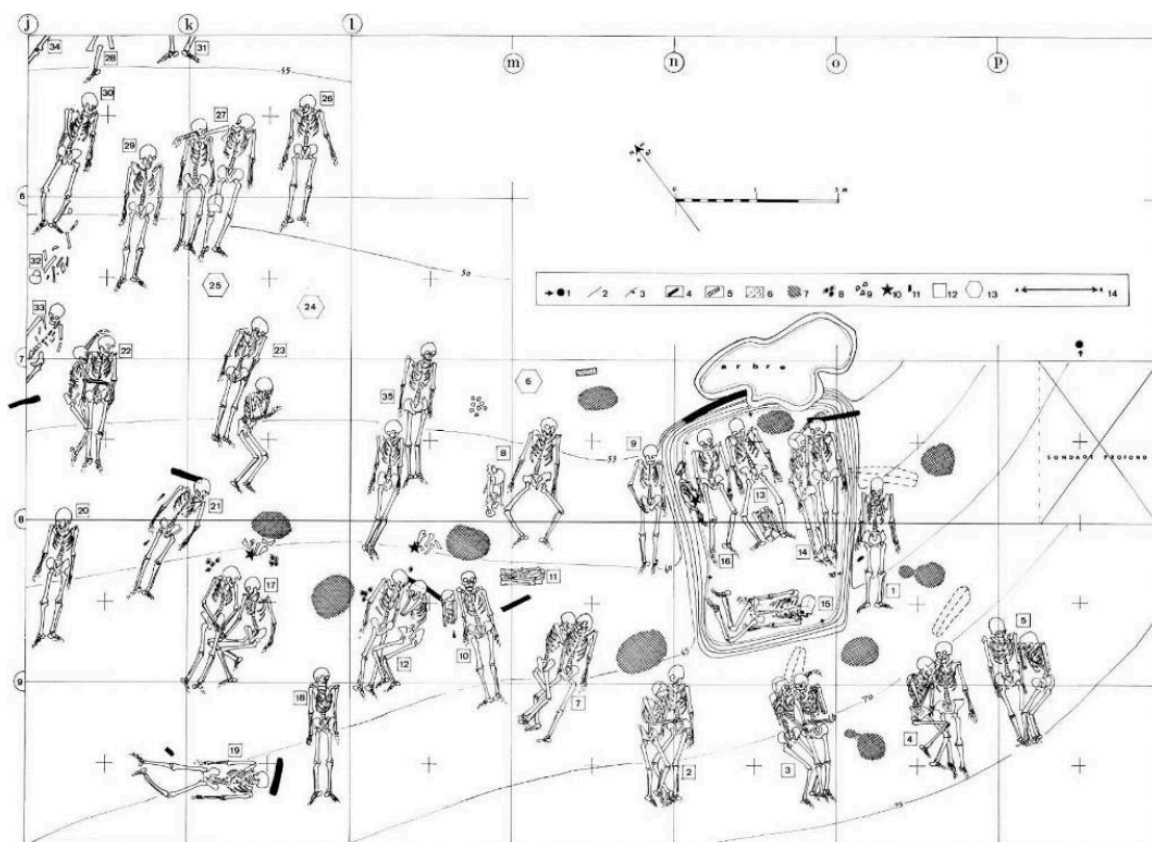


Figure 1: Representation of the Retoka archaeological site, lower floor of the collective burial site, including the burial site of Roy Mata. (Figure 153 in Garanger, 1972: 289).

Appendix B. Cook Expedition Map and Engraving

Maps of Cook's Itinerary in Vanuatu

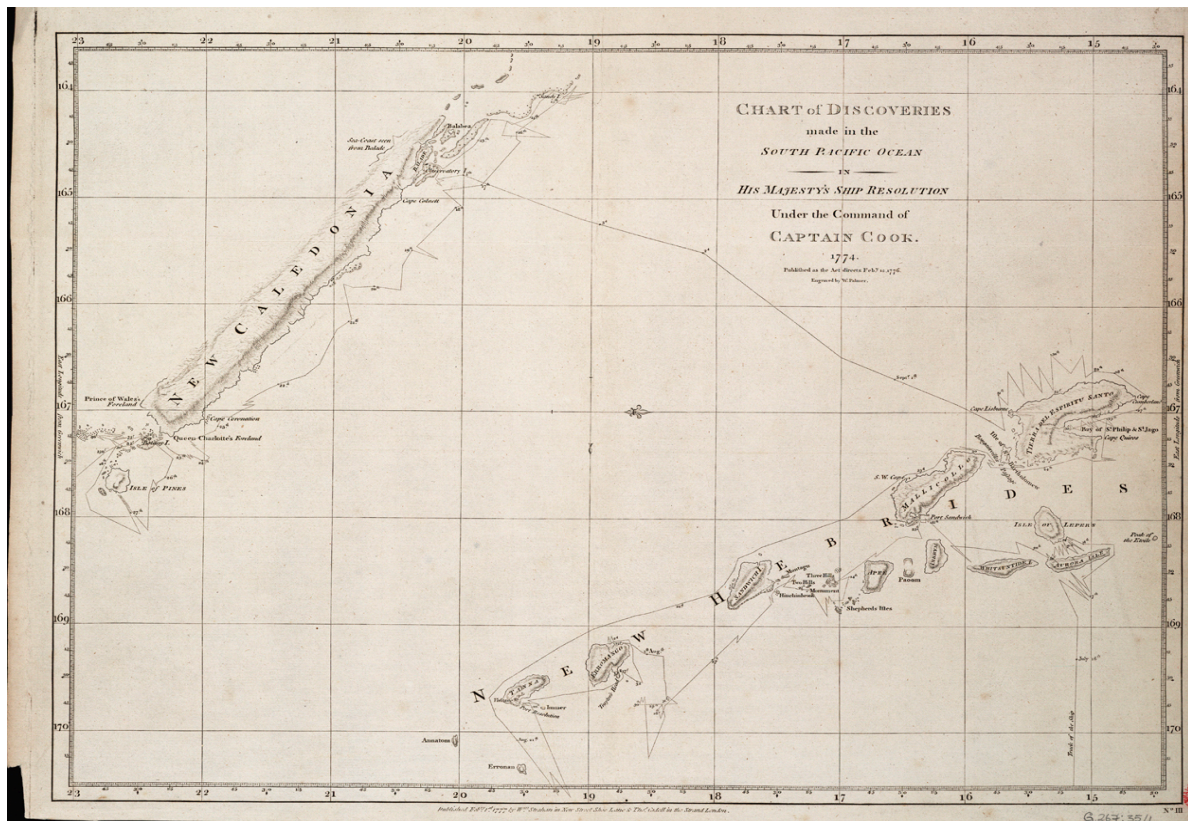


Figure 2: Map of Cook's itinerary in the archipelago. © The National Maritime Museum, United Kingdom. Available at: <https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-540640>.

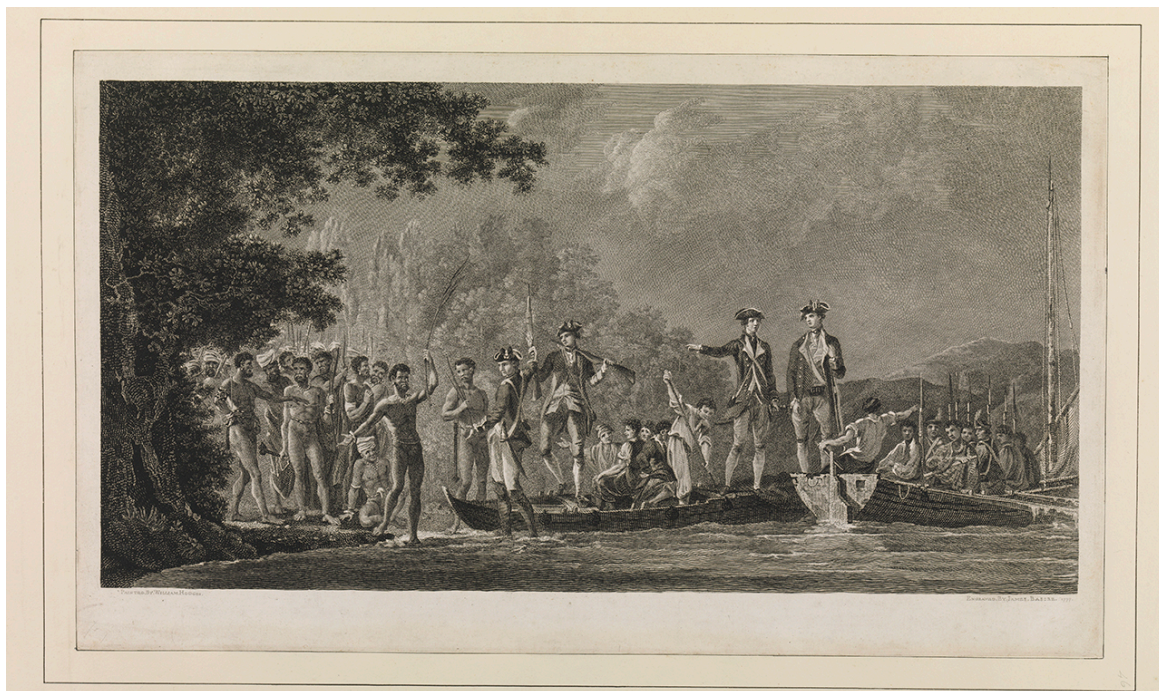


Figure 3: *The Landing at Mallicolo, one of the New Hebrides (before title)*. Engraving after drawings by artist William Hodges, is from the official account of Cook's second voyage, 'A Voyage towards the South Pole', published by Strahan and Cadell in 1777. © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London. <https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-152044>



Figure 4: *The Landing at Erramanga one of the New Hebrides*. Engraving after a drawing by artist William Hodges, is from the official account of Cook's second voyage, 'A Voyage towards the South Pole', published by Strahan and Cadell in 1777. © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London. <https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-154026>

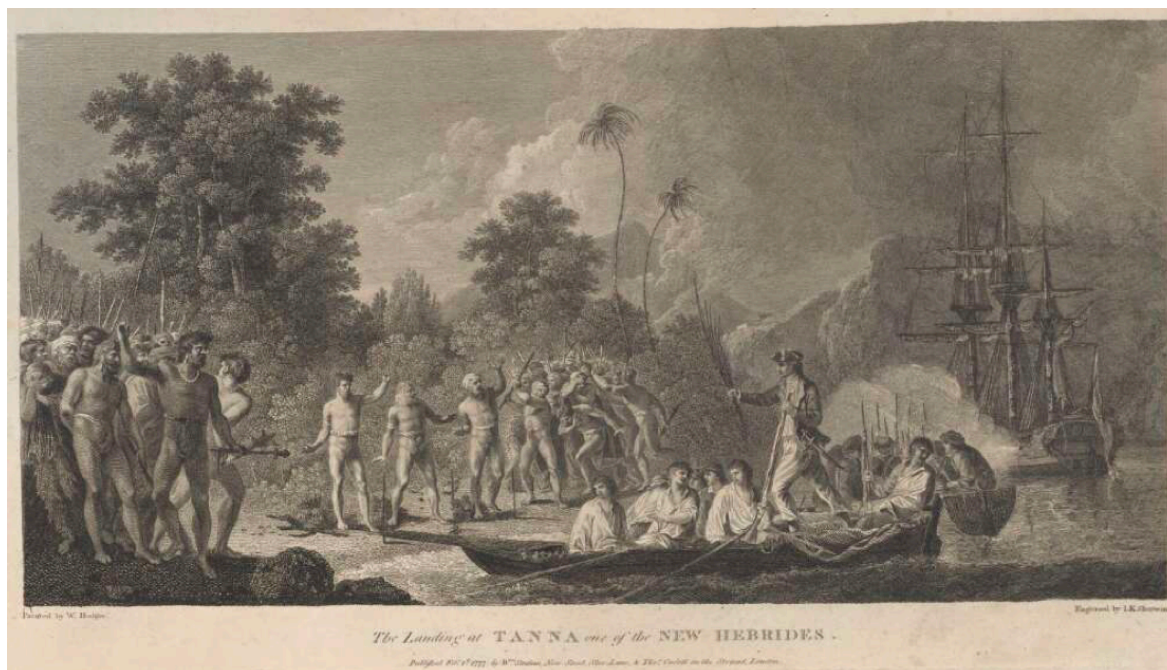


Figure 5: The landing at Tanna one of the New Hebrides. Engraving, after a drawing by artist William Hodges, is from the official account of Cook's second voyage, 'A Voyage towards the South Pole', published by Strahan and Cadell in 1777. Available at: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-135705767>.



Figure 6: View in the island of Tanna. Engraving, after a drawing by artist William Hodges, is from the official account of Cook's second voyage, 'A Voyage towards the South Pole', published by Strahan and Cadell in 1777. © National Maritime Museum. Available at: <https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-154030>.

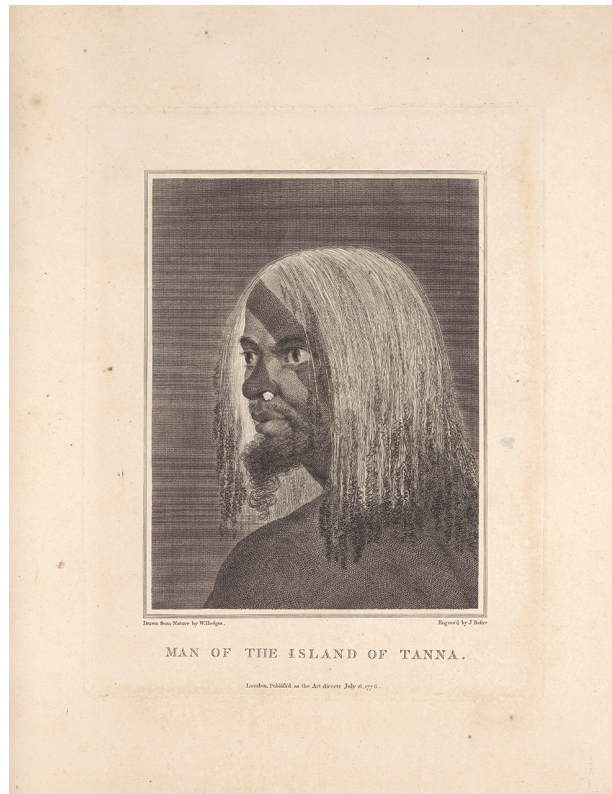
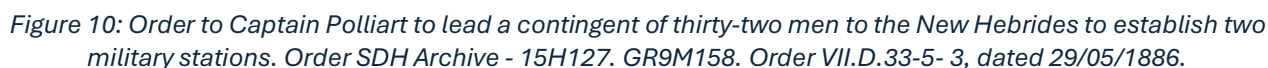
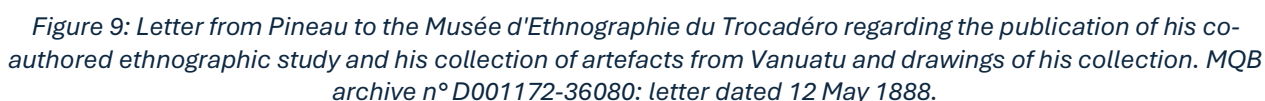


Figure 7: The engravings presented here are reproductions of drawings by William Hodges, which were originally published in 1777 by Strahan and Cadell as part of the official account of Cook's second voyage. The engraving portrays a "Man of the island of Tanna". The man is represented with the hair plaited in a style similar to that observed in the BM collections. The two prints reproduced here are located in the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London, with reference numbers PAI4092 and PAI4094, and are available for online viewing. The National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London, holds the copyright for these reproductions. Available at: <https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-154032>.



Figure 8: "Head ornament made of human hair and vegetable fibre" attributed as from Tanna (Vanuatu) which was given by George Bennett in 1831 to the BM. Museum number: Oc1831,1112.1. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Archives



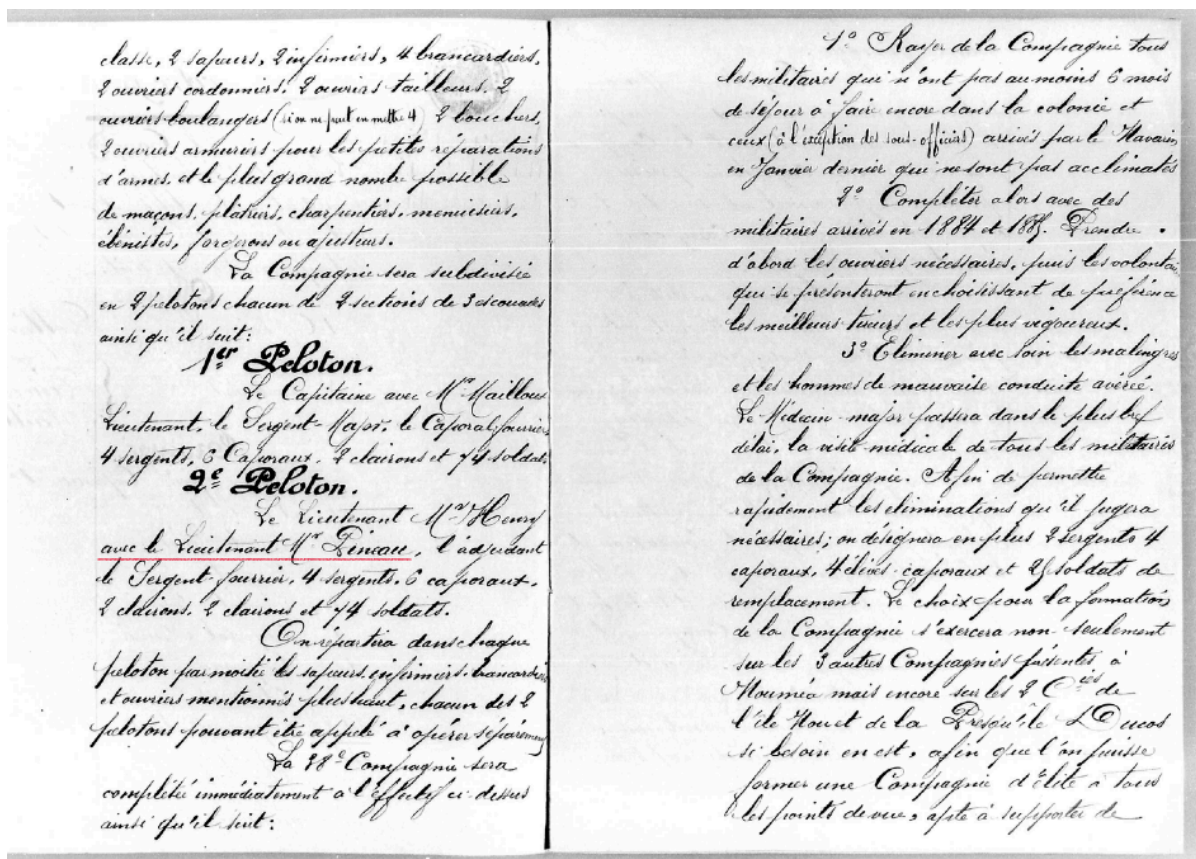


Figure 11: In this extract, Pineau is mentioned as belonging to the peloton n°2, led by M. Henry and later replaced by Pineau, according to the diary of Marist Father Gaudet (1992: 12). Archives SDH: 15H127; GR9M158; Order n°33-5-6, p. 2.

Photograph



Figure 12: The figure represents a photograph from Felix Gaillard's album. The inscription beneath the image describes it as showing the French military station at Port-Sandwich on Malekula. The album is preserved today in the Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac, accession number PA0000165. The photograph is the property of the museum and is protected by copyright.

Additional Statistical Representations of Alphonse Pineau's Assemblages

Vanuatu Artefacts in Pineau's Assemblages currently preserved in the Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac		
Description	1890	1893
Bracelet	4	
Adze (blade)	3	
Mask	3	
Ear Ornament	2	
Comb	2	
Pig's Tusk Bracelet	1	1
Feather Headdress	1	
Ring	1	
Arband	1	
Necklace	1	
Pan Flute	1	
Puppet	1	
Neck Ornament	1	
Pendent	1	
Feather	1	
Sculptur	1	
Arrow		16
Club		6
Bow		5
Belt		5
Mat		4
Spear		3
Tapa		2
Skirt		2
Paddle		2
Wrapper		2
Dish		2
Quiver		1
Conch		1
Lap Lap Knife		1
Penis wrapper		1
Flute		1
Harpoon/Fishgig		1
Harpoon		1
Adze		1
Bracelet Loom		1
Woman Paddle		1
Water container		1
Spear/Assegai		1
Antropomorphic Sculptur		1

Figure 13: The table illustrates the number of artefacts from Vanuatu, organised according to type and category, in Pineau's assemblages in the MQB.

Appendix D. Ethnographic Papers

<p>Hagen, M.D. and Pineau, A. (1889) 'Les Nouvelles-Hébrides, études ethnographiques.', in <i>Revue d'ethnographie</i>, Tome 7. Ernet Leroux. Paris. (Tome 7), p. pp.302-362.</p>	<p>Somerville, B.T. (1894) 'Notes on Some Islands of the New Hebrides', <i>The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland</i>, 23, pp. 2–21. Available at: https://doi.org/10.2307/2842310.</p>	<p>Somerville, B.T. (1894) 'Ethnological Notes on New Hebrides (continued)', <i>The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland</i>, 23, pp. 363–393. Available at: https://doi.org/10.2307/2842087.</p>	<p>Somerville BT (1897) Ethnographical Notes in New Georgia, Solomon Islands. <i>The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland</i> 26: 357–412. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/2842009</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population – Races et Types - Caractères des Habitants • Linguistique • Climatologie- Recrutement des travailleurs ou traite des canaques • Le cannibalisme aux Nouvelles-Hébrides • Organisation politique • Idées et croyances religieuses • Usages agricoles • Costumes et parure • Alimentation • Habitations • Commerce • Arts et Industries • Conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Customs • Chiefs • Religion • Sacred Men • Dances • Rainmaking • Nazarak 	<p>I. General Account of Islands Visited II. Population, Causes of Decreased, &c III. Traditions and History IV. Clothing, Ornaments, &c V. Paintings VI. Dwellings VII. Navigation, Canoes VIII. Fishing, Swimming IX. Weaving and Basket working-class X. Pottery XI. Stone Implements XII. Fire XIII. Food, drinks, &c XIV. Cannibalism XV. Music and Musical Instruments XVI. War and Weapons XVII. Cultivation XVIII. Burials XIX. Boy's Games</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General. • Clothing. • Ornaments. • Chief's Necklace. • Painting and Tattooing. • Habitations. • Navigation. • Swimming. • Weaving and Basketwork. • String. • Pottery. • Dyeing. • Stone Implements. • Machinery. • Fire. • Drawing, Sculpture, and Ornamentation. • Food. • Cannibalism. • Religion and Taboo. • Hope Altars and Graves. • Other Hopes. • Names. • Evil Eye. • Hope Districts. • Amulets. • Morals abd Customs. • Circumcision. • Government. • Music. • Archaeology. • War and Weapons. • Fishing. • Agriculture. • Slavery. • Burials. • Astronomy. • Property. • Trade. • Marital Relations. • Games — Amusements. • Dances. • Communications. • Contact with White Races.

Figure 14: The following table presents a comparison between the structure of the ethnographical paper by Hagen and Pineau and the three ethnographical studies published by Somerville. The structure of the article is represented by the headings that guide the argument. The full references of each paper are provided in the column headings.

Appendix E. Chapter 5. Philippe François

Vanuatu Artefacts in François Assemblage			
	Tajan Auction	MQB coll	Total
Weapon	256	102	358
Body Ornament	40	8	48
Comb	15		15
Adze and Axe	11		11
Money	7	12	19
Figure	5		5
Pudding Knife	5		5
Carved Stone	4		4
Belt	2	11	13
Dancing Element	3		3
Plate	3	3	6
Basket	2	4	6
Mask	2		2
Pottery	2	3	5
Skull Modeled	2		2
Bowl	1		1
Fishing Tools	1	4	5
Pounder	1		1
Puppet	1		1
Spoon	1	2	3
Twin Breast Representation	1		1
Garter	1		1
Rambaramp	1	1	2
Penis Sheath		3	3
Unknown		3	3
Mat		2	2
Sculpture		2	2
Pounder		1	1
Total	367	161	528

Figure 15: The table illustrates the number of artefacts from Vanuatu, organised according to type and category, in both the Tajan and MQB assemblages.

Additional Statistical Representations of Philippe François Assemblages

Tajan N°	Description	Type	Category	Tajan N°	Description	Type	Category	Tajan N°	Description	Type	Category
Tajan93	Adze	Adze	Tool	Tajan181-12	Arrow 181-12	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan172-1	Bow 172-1	Bow	Weapon
Tajan94	Adze	Adze	Tool	Tajan181-13	Arrow 181-13	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan172-2	Bow 172-2	Bow	Weapon
Tajan265	Adze	Adze	Tool	Tajan181-14	Arrow 181-14	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan172-3	Bow 172-3	Bow	Weapon
Tajan276-1	Adze	Adze	Tool	Tajan181-15	Arrow 181-15	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan172-4	Bow 172-4	Bow	Weapon
Tajan276-2	Adze	Adze	Tool	Tajan181-16	Arrow 181-16	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan108	Coupe en bois	Bowl	Bowl
Tajan239-1	Adze Blades 239-1	Adze Blade	Tool	Tajan181-17	Arrow 181-17	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan114-1	Coupes 1 en bois	Bowl	Weapon
Tajan239-2	Adze Blades 239-2	Adze Blade	Tool	Tajan181-18	Arrow 181-18	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan114-2	Coupes 2 en bois	Bowl	Weapon
Tajan239-3	Adze Blades 239-3	Adze Blade	Tool	Tajan181-19	Arrow 181-19	Arrow	Weapon			Body	
				Tajan181-20	Arrow 181-20	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan243-1	"Bracelet" 243-1	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan271	Armlet	Armlet	Body Ornament	Tajan182-1	Arrow 182-1	Arrow	Weapon			Body	
				Tajan182-2	Arrow 182-2	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan243-2	"Bracelet" 243-2	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan272	Armlet	Armlet	Body Ornament	Tajan182-3	Arrow 182-3	Arrow	Weapon			Body	
				Tajan182-4	Arrow 182-4	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan243-3	"Bracelet" 243-3	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan273	Armlet	Armlet	Body Ornament	Tajan182-5	Arrow 182-5	Arrow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan177-1	Arrow 177-1	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-6	Arrow 182-6	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan243-4	"Bracelet" 243-4	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan177-2	Arrow 177-2	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-7	Arrow 182-7	Arrow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan177-3	Arrow 177-3	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-8	Arrow 182-8	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan243-5	"Bracelet" 243-5	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan177-4	Arrow 177-4	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-9	Arrow 182-9	Arrow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan177-5	Arrow 177-5	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-10	Arrow 182-10	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan243-6	"Bracelet" 243-6	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan177-6	Arrow 177-6	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-11	Arrow 182-11	Arrow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan177-7	Arrow 177-7	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-12	Arrow 182-12	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan243-7	"Bracelet" 243-7	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan177-8	Arrow 177-8	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-13	Arrow 182-13	Arrow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan177-9	Arrow 177-9	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-14	Arrow 182-14	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan243-8	"Bracelet" 243-8	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan177-10	Arrow 177-10	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-15	Arrow 182-15	Arrow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan177-11	Arrow 177-11	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-16	Arrow 182-16	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan243-9	"Bracelet" 243-9	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan177-12	Arrow 177-12	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-17	Arrow 182-17	Arrow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan177-13	Arrow 177-13	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-18	Arrow 182-18	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan243-10	"Bracelet" 243-10	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan177-14	Arrow 177-14	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-19	Arrow 182-19	Arrow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan177-15	Arrow 177-15	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan182-20	Arrow 182-20	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan243-11	"Bracelet" 243-11	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan177-16	Arrow 177-16	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan66	Axe	Axe	Tool			Body	
Tajan177-17	Arrow 177-17	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan67	Axe	Axe	Tool	Tajan243-12	"Bracelet" 243-12	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan177-18	Arrow 177-18	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan95	Axe	Axe	Tool			Body	
Tajan177-19	Arrow 177-19	Arrow	Weapon		Ornament			Tajan243-13	"Bracelet" 243-13	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan177-20	Arrow 177-20	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan224	Ornament basketwork	Basketwork	Basketwork			Body	
Tajan179-1	Arrow 179-1	Arrow	Weapon		Ornament basketwork	Basketwork	Basketwork	Tajan243-14	"Bracelet" 243-14	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan179-2	Arrow 179-2	Arrow	Weapon							Body	
Tajan179-3	Arrow 179-3	Arrow	Weapon		"d'élément de ceinture de femmes percé aux deux bouts"			Tajan243-15	"Bracelet" 243-15	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan179-4	Arrow 179-4	Arrow	Weapon							Body	
Tajan179-5	Arrow 179-5	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan98		Belt element	Clothes	Tajan243-16	"Bracelet" 243-16	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan179-6	Arrow 179-6	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan201	Bird Figure	Bird Figure	Figure			Body	
Tajan179-7	Arrow 179-7	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan202	Bird Figure	Bird Figure	Figure	Tajan243-17	"Bracelet" 243-17	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan179-8	Arrow 179-8	Arrow	Weapon							Body	
Tajan179-9	Arrow 179-9	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan165-1	Bow 165-1	Bow	Weapon	Tajan243-18	"Bracelet" 243-18	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan179-10	Arrow 179-10	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan165-2	Bow 165-2	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan179-11	Arrow 179-11	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan165-3	Bow 165-3	Bow	Weapon	Tajan243-19	"Bracelet" 243-19	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan179-12	Arrow 179-12	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan165-4	Bow 165-4	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan179-13	Arrow 179-13	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan166-1	Bow 166-1	Bow	Weapon	Tajan243-20	"Bracelet" 243-20	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan179-14	Arrow 179-14	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan166-2	Bow 166-2	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan179-15	Arrow 179-15	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan166-3	Bow 166-3	Bow	Weapon	Tajan243-21	"Bracelet" 243-21	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan179-16	Arrow 179-16	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan166-4	Bow 166-4	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan179-17	Arrow 179-17	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan166-5	Bow 166-5	Bow	Weapon	Tajan243-22	"Bracelet" 243-22	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan179-18	Arrow 179-18	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan166-6	Bow 166-6	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan179-19	Arrow 179-19	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan166-7	Bow 166-7	Bow	Weapon	Tajan243-23	"Bracelet" 243-23	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan179-20	Arrow 179-20	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan166-8	Bow 166-8	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan180-1	Arrow 180-1	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan167-1	Bow 167-1	Bow	Weapon	Tajan243-24	"Bracelet" 243-24	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan180-2	Arrow 180-2	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan167-2	Bow 167-2	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan180-3	Arrow 180-3	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan167-3	Bow 167-3	Bow	Weapon	Tajan243-25	"Bracelet" 243-25	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan180-4	Arrow 180-4	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan167-4	Bow 167-4	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan180-5	Arrow 180-5	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan167-5	Bow 167-5	Bow	Weapon	Tajan243-26	"Bracelet" 243-26	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan180-6	Arrow 180-6	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan167-6	Bow 167-6	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan180-7	Arrow 180-7	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan168-1	Bow 168-1	Bow	Weapon	Tajan243-27	"Bracelet" 243-27	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan180-8	Arrow 180-8	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan168-2	Bow 168-2	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan180-9	Arrow 180-9	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan168-3	Bow 168-3	Bow	Weapon	Tajan243-28	"Bracelet" 243-28	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan180-10	Arrow 180-10	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan168-4	Bow 168-4	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan180-11	Arrow 180-11	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan168-5	Bow 168-5	Bow	Weapon	Tajan243-29	"Bracelet" 243-29	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan180-12	Arrow 180-12	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan169-1	Bow 169-1	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan180-13	Arrow 180-13	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan169-2	Bow 169-2	Bow	Weapon	Tajan243-30	"Bracelet" 243-30	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan180-14	Arrow 180-14	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan169-3	Bow 169-3	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan180-15	Arrow 180-15	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan169-4	Bow 169-4	Bow	Weapon	Tajan243-31	"Bracelet" 243-31	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan180-16	Arrow 180-16	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan170-1	Bow 170-1	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan180-17	Arrow 180-17	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan170-2	Bow 170-2	Bow	Weapon	Tajan253-1	Bracelet Tajan 253-1	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan180-18	Arrow 180-18	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan170-3	Bow 170-3	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan180-19	Arrow 180-19	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan170-4	Bow 170-4	Bow	Weapon	Tajan253-2	Bracelet Tajan 253-2	Bracelet	Ornament
Tajan180-20	Arrow 180-20	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan170-5	Bow 170-5	Bow	Weapon			Body	
Tajan181-1	Arrow 181-1	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan171-1	Bow 171-1	Bow	Weapon	Tajan231-1	Carved Stone 231-1	Carved Stone	Carved Stone
Tajan181-2	Arrow 181-2	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan171-2	Bow 171-2	Bow	Weapon				
Tajan181-3	Arrow 181-3	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan171-3	Bow 171-3	Bow	Weapon	Tajan231-2	Carved Stone 231-2	Carved Stone	Carved Stone
Tajan181-4	Arrow 181-4	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan171-4	Bow 171-4	Bow	Weapon				
Tajan181-5	Arrow 181-5	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan171-5	Bow 171-5	Bow	Weapon	Tajan231-3	Carved Stone 231-3	Carved Stone	Carved Stone
Tajan181-6	Arrow 181-6	Arrow	Weapon								
Tajan181-7	Arrow 181-7	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan172-1	Bow 172-1	Bow	Weapon	Tajan231-4	Carved Stone 231-4	Carved Stone	Carved Stone
Tajan181-8	Arrow 181-8	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan172-2	Bow 172-2	Bow	Weapon	Tajan28	Votif Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan181-9	Arrow 181-9	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan172-3	Bow 172-3	Bow	Weapon	Tajan29	Votif Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan181-10	Arrow 181-10	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan172-4	Bow 172-4	Bow	Weapon	Tajan30	Votif Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan181-11	Arrow 181-11	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan108	Coupe en bois	Bowl	Bowl	Tajan31	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan181-12	Arrow 181-12	Arrow	Weapon	Tajan114-1	Coupes 1 en bois	Bowl	Weapon	Tajan32	Club	Club	Weapon
				Tajan114-2	Coupes 2 en bois	Bowl	Weapon	Tajan33	Club	Club	Weapon

Figure 16: The table provides data compiled from the Tajan auction house catalogue of the 2002 Philippe François' collection sale. The list details the artefacts attributed to Vanuatu in the catalogue. This list associates the catalogue numbers with the designation, type, and category used to generate statistical data and graphs.

Tajan N°	Description	Type	Category
Tajan33	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan34	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan35	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan36	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan37	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan38	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan39	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan40	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan45	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan46	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan47	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan48	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan41	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan42	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan 43	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan44	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan49	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan50	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan51	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan57	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan58	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan59	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan60	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan61	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan62	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan63	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan64	Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan69	Pig's Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan175	Votif Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan176	Votif Club	Club	Weapon
Tajan15(1)	Peigne	Comb	Comb
Tajan15(2)	Peigne	Comb	Comb
Tajan15(3)	Peigne	Comb	Comb
Tajan15(4)	Peigne	Comb	Comb
Tajan16(1)	Peigne	Comb	Comb
Tajan16(2)	Peigne	Comb	Comb
Tajan16(3)	Peigne	Comb	Comb
Tajan16(4)	Peigne	Comb	Comb
Tajan16(5)	Peigne	Comb	Comb
Tajan 17(1)	Peigne	Comb	Comb
Tajan 17(2)	Peigne	Comb	Comb
Tajan 17(3)	Peigne	Comb	Comb
Tajan 17(4)	Peigne	Comb	Comb
Tajan18	Peigne cérémoniel	Comb	Comb
Tajan19	Peigne cérémoniel	Comb	Comb
Tajan99	"instrument de danse en forme de coque de bateau"	Dancing element	Dancing element
Tajan100	Dancing Instrument	Dancing element	Dancing element
Tajan101	Dancing Instrument	Dancing element	Dancing element
Tajan254	Ears Ornaments	Ears Ornaments	Body Ornament
Tajan203	Anthropo-zoomorphic Figure	Figure	Figure
Tajan109	Flotteur en bambou et poids	Float	Fishing Tool
Tajan23(1)	Fourchette "cannibales"	Fork	Fork
Tajan23(2)	Fourchette "cannibales"	Fork	Fork
Tajan24	Fourchette "cannibales"	Fork	Fork
Tajan25	Fourchette "cannibales"	Fork	Fork
Tajan217	Figure RamBaram	Funerary Sculpture	Figure
Tajan241	"Garter"	Garter	Clothes
Tajan138	Mask	Mask	Mask
Tajan210	Mask	Mask	Mask
Tajan242	Necklace	Necklace	Body Ornament
Tajan262	Necklace	Necklace	Body Ornament
Tajan253-3	Nose Ornaments	Nose Ornaments	Body Ornament
Tajan238-1	Pig's Tusk Bracelet 238-1	Pig's Tusk	Money
Tajan238-2	Pig's Tusk Bracelet 238-2	Pig's Tusk	Money
Tajan238-3	Pig's Tusk Bracelet 238-3	Pig's Tusk	Money
Tajan238-4	Pig's Tusk Bracelet 238-4	Pig's Tusk	Money
Tajan238-5	Pig's Tusk Bracelet 238-5	Pig's Tusk	Money
Tajan238-6	Pig's Tusk Bracelet 238-6	Pig's Tusk	Money
Tajan229	Plate	Plate	Plate
Tajan233	Large Plate	Plate	Plate
Tajan232-1	Pottery 232-1	Pottery	Pottery
Tajan232-2	Pottery 232-2	Pottery	Pottery
Tajan65	Pounder	pounder	Pounder
Tajan20(1)	Pudding knife	Pudding knife	Pudding knife
Tajan20(2)	Pudding knife	Pudding knife	Pudding knife
Tajan21(1)	Pudding knife	Pudding knife	Pudding knife
Tajan21(2)	Pudding knife	Pudding knife	Pudding knife
Tajan22	Pudding knife	Pudding knife	Pudding knife
Tajan68	plat à pudding	Pudding Plate	Plate
Tajan206	Marionette	Puppet	Puppet
Tajan205	Sculpted Figure	Sculpted Figure	Figure
Tajan259	Shell Necklace Money	Shell Necklace Money	Money
Tajan211	Skull modelled	Skull modelled	Skull modelled
Tajan212	Skull modelled	Skull modelled	Skull modelled
Tajan104	Fronde	Slingshot	Weapon
Tajan129-1	Lance 129-1	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-2	Lance 129-2	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-3	Lance 129-3	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-4	Lance 129-4	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-5	Lance 129-5	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-6	Lance 129-6	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-7	Lance 129-7	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-8	Lance 129-8	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-9	Lance 129-9	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-10	Lance 129-10	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-11	Lance 129-11	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-12	Lance 129-12	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-13	Lance 129-13	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-14	Lance 129-14	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-15	Lance 129-15	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-16	Lance 129-16	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-17	Lance 129-17	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-18	Lance 129-18	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-19	Lance 129-19	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-20	Lance 129-20	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-21	Lance 129-21	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-22	Lance 129-22	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-23	Lance 129-23	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-24	Lance 129-24	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-25	Lance 129-25	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-26	Lance 129-26	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-27	Lance 129-27	Spear	Weapon
Tajan129-28	Lance 129-28	Spear	Weapon
Tajan130-1	Lance 130-1	Spear	Weapon
Tajan130-2	Lance 130-2	Spear	Weapon
Tajan130-3	Lance 130-3	Spear	Weapon
Tajan130-4	Lance 130-4	Spear	Weapon
Tajan130-5	Lance 130-5	Spear	Weapon
Tajan130-6	Lance 130-6	Spear	Weapon
Tajan131-1	Lance 131-1	Spear	Weapon
Tajan131-2	Lance 131-2	Spear	Weapon
Tajan131-3	Lance 131-3	Spear	Weapon
Tajan131-4	Lance 131-4	Spear	Weapon
Tajan131-5	Lance 131-5	Spear	Weapon
Tajan131-6	Lance 131-6	Spear	Weapon
Tajan131-7	Lance 131-7	Spear	Weapon
Tajan131-8	Lance 131-8	Spear	Weapon
Tajan131-9	Lance 131-9	Spear	Weapon
Tajan132-1	Lance 132-1	Spear	Weapon
Tajan132-2	Lance 132-2	Spear	Weapon
Tajan132-3	Lance 132-3	Spear	Weapon
Tajan132-4	Lance 132-4	Spear	Weapon
Tajan132-5	Lance 132-5	Spear	Weapon
Tajan132-6	Lance 132-6	Spear	Weapon
Tajan132-7	Lance 132-7	Spear	Weapon
Tajan132-8	Lance 132-8	Spear	Weapon
Tajan132-9	Lance 132-9	Spear	Weapon
Tajan139	War Spear (lance de guerre)	Spear	Weapon
Tajan140	War Spear (lance de guerre)	Spear	Weapon
Tajan141	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan142	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan143	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan144	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan145	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan146	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan147	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan148	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan149	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan150	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan151	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan152	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan153	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan154	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan155	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan156	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan157	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan158	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan159	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan160	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan161	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan162	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan163	Ceremonial Spear	Spear	Weapon
Tajan249	Spoon	Spoon	Spoon
Tajan204	Man Breast Ornament ?	Twin Breast figure	Twin Breast figure

Figure 17: This image shows the second page of the list of artefacts attributed to Vanuatu in the 2002 auction catalogue. The list associates the catalogue numbers with the designation, type, and category employed to generate statistical data and graphs.

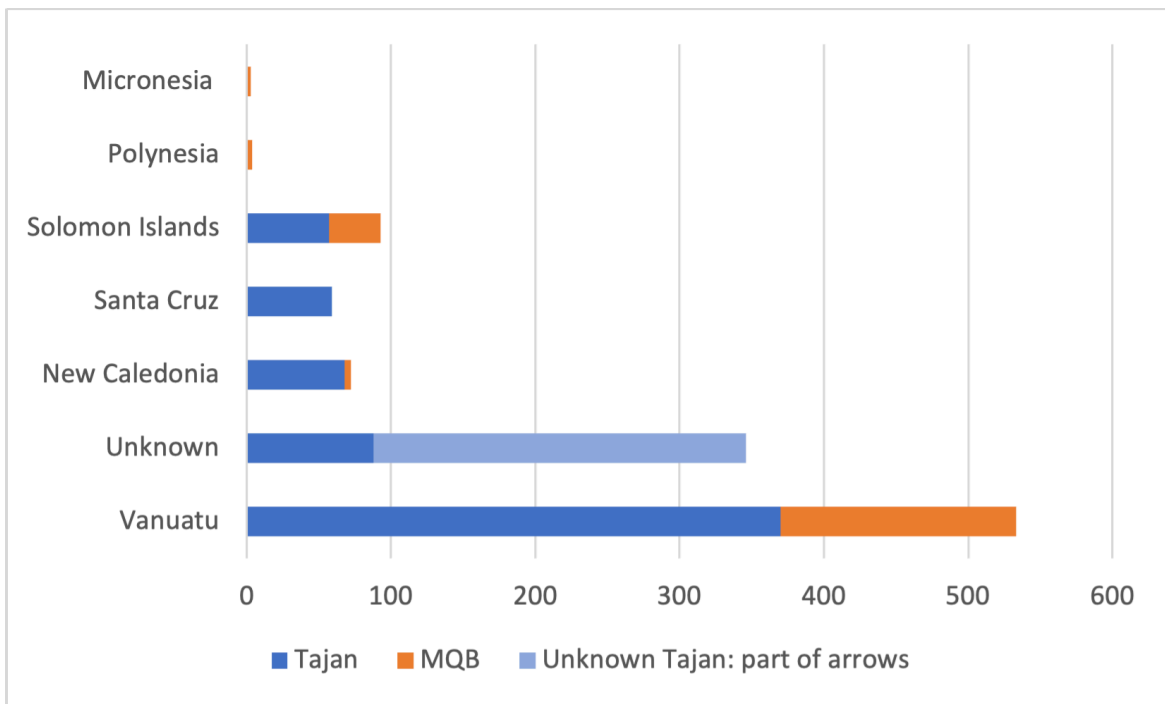


Figure 18: Provenances attributed to ni-Vanuatu artefacts in François' assemblages, based on the information provided.

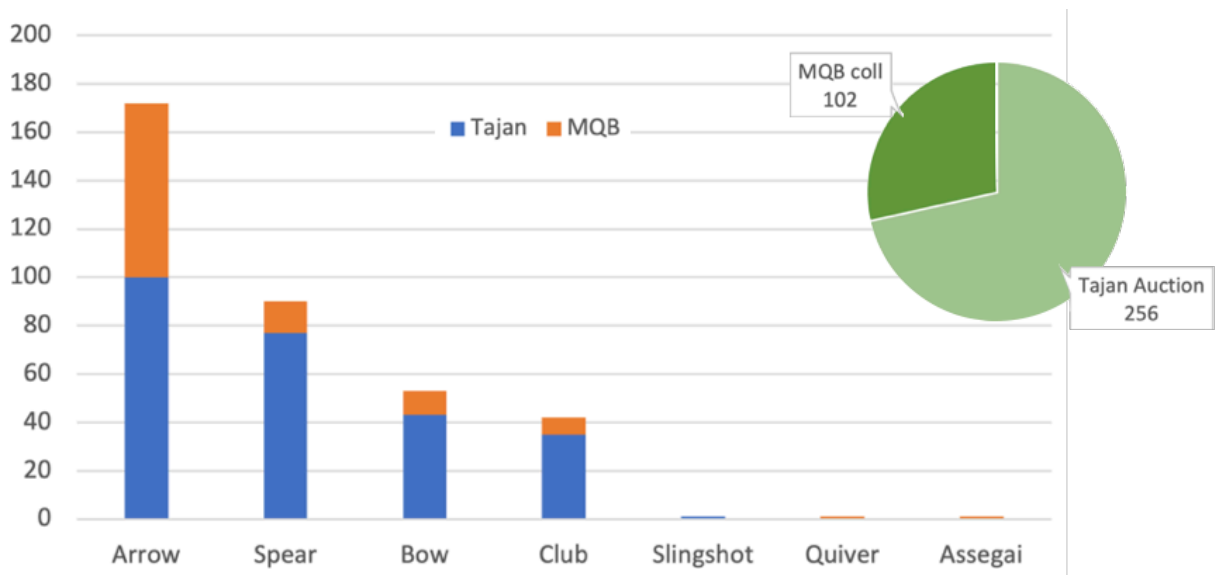


Figure 19: Dr François' collection: overall composition of weapons from Vanuatu.

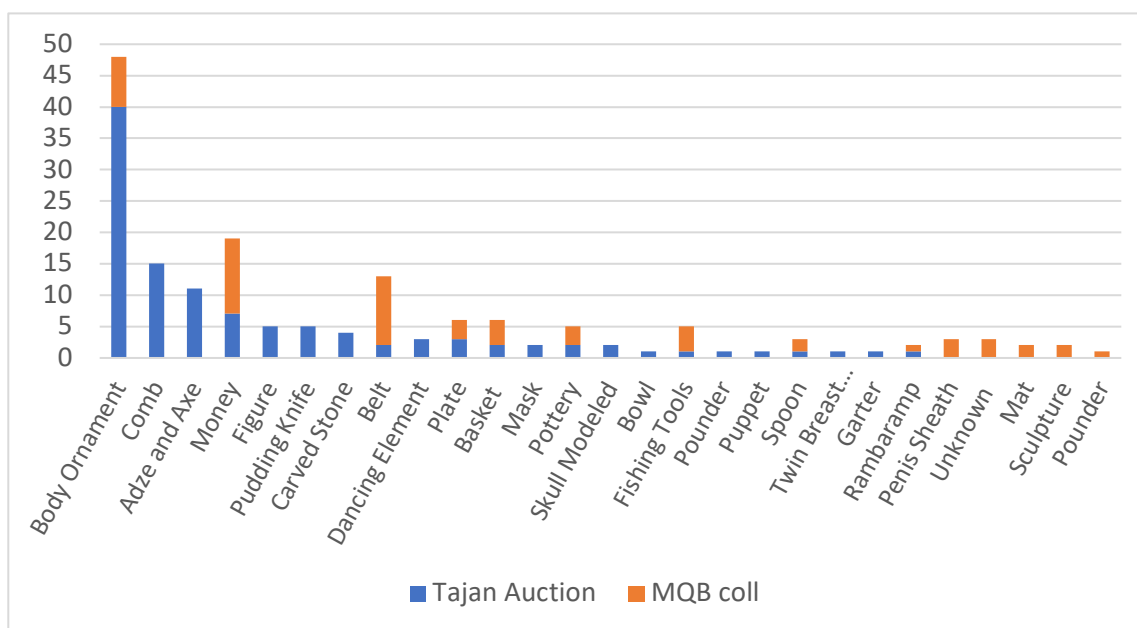


Figure 20: Dr François' collection: overall composition objects from Vanuatu in comparison (excluding weapons).

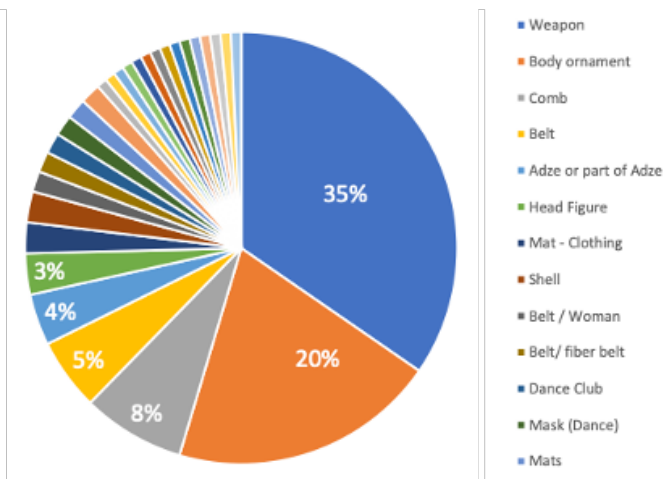


Figure 21: The photographs represent four out of the five belts attributed from Santo Island in François' assemblage, which are preserved in the MQB. The museum numbers are 71.1893.31.15, 71.1893.31.16, 71.1893.31.17, and 71.1893.31.18. The images are the intellectual property of the Musée du Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac.

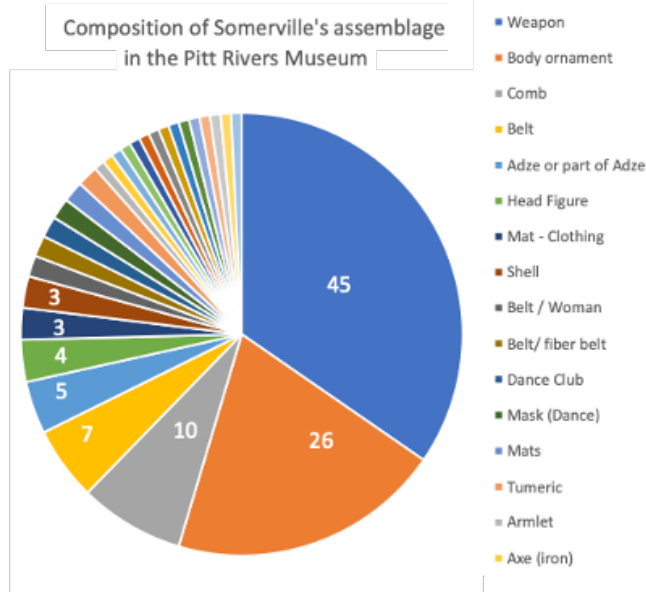
Appendix F. Somerville Assemblage

Vanuatu Artefacts in Somerville's Assemblage in the Pitt Rivers Museums		
Categories	Objects	Number of Vanuatu Artefacts
Weapon	Club	26
Comb	Comb	10
Weapon	Spear	10
Body ornament	Neck Ornament/ Shell disc	9
Belt	Belt / Man	7
Weapon	Arrow	6
Adze or part of Adze	Adze or part of Adze	5
Head Figure	Head Figure	4
Body ornament	Head Ornament / Feathers	4
Weapon	Bow	3
Mat - Clothing	Mat - Clothing	3
Body ornament	Pendant Shell	3
Shell	Shell	3
Belt / Woman	Belt / Woman	2
Belt/ fiber belt	Belt/ fiber belt	2
Body ornament	Breast Ornament	2
Dance Club	Dance Club	2
Mask (Dance)	Mask (Dance)	2
Mats	Mats	2
Body ornament	Pig's Tusk	2
Tumeric	Tumeric	2
Armlet	Armlet	1
Axe (iron)	Axe (iron)	1
Bag	Bag	1
Barkcloth - with Feather t	Barkcloth - with Feather type from m	1
Belt / Dance Accessory	Belt / Dance Accessory	1
Body ornament	Bracelet/ Armband	1
Chicken bone	Chicken bone	1
Dance Puppet - stik with h	Dance Puppet - stik with head figure	1
Body ornament	Elliptical wooden Waist Ornament or	1
Figure - fibres and clay	Figure - fibres and clay	1
Flute	Flute	1
Body ornament	Hair Ornament	1
Body ornament	Head Ornament - Headdress	1
Human Skull	Human Skull	1
Knife (wooden leaf-shape	Knife (wooden leaf-shaped)	1
Mat - Baby carrier	Mat - Baby carrier	1
Body ornament	Necklace - sheel and coconut beads	1
Panpipes	Panpipes	1
Stone (carved)	Stone (carved)	1
Body ornament	String shell beads	1
Wrapper (man)	Wrapper (man)	1

Composition of Somerville's assemblage in the Pitt Rivers Museum
in Percentage



Composition of Somerville's assemblage
in the Pitt Rivers Museum



Composition Somerville Assemblage in the Pitt River Museum

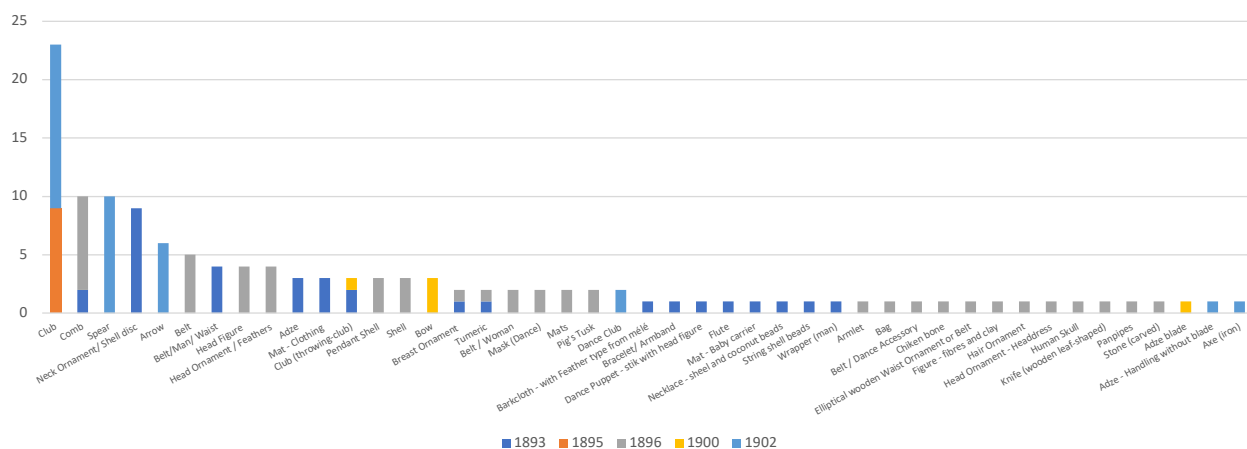




Figure 22: Photographic documentation of Vanuatu combs in Somerville's assemblage preserved in the PRM. The corresponding museum numbers are as follows:

a: 1893.27.16; b: 1896.33.16; c: 1893.27.17; d: 1896.33.19; e: 1896.33.15; f: 1896.33.17; and g: 1896.33.13. The photographs were all taken during museum visits. © Laetitia Lopes.

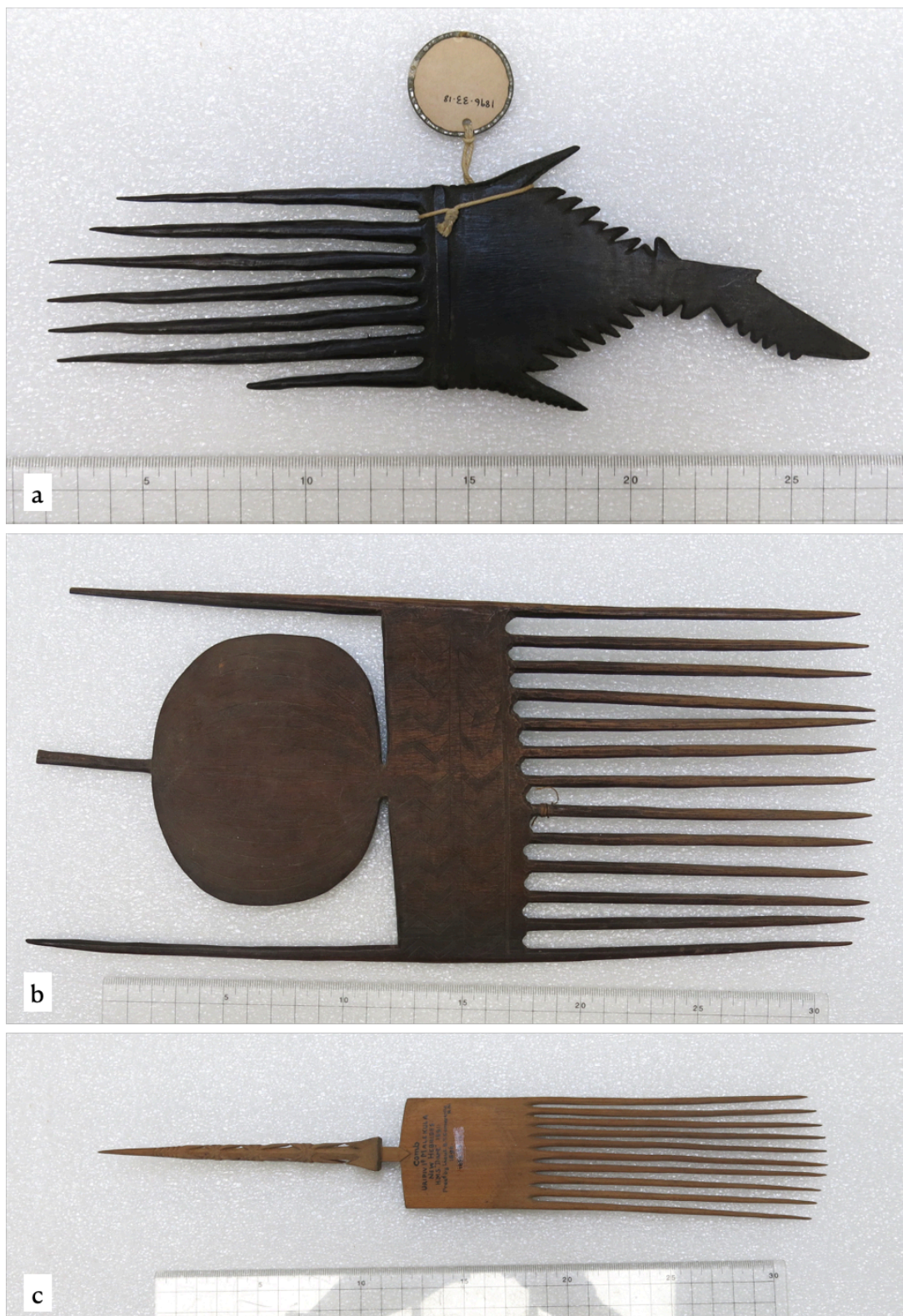


Figure 23: Photographic documentation of Vanuatu combs in Somerville's assemblage preserved in the PRM. The corresponding museum numbers are as follows:

a: 1896.33.18; b: 1896.33.14; c: 1896.33.12.

The photographs were all taken during museum visits. © Laetitia Lopes.

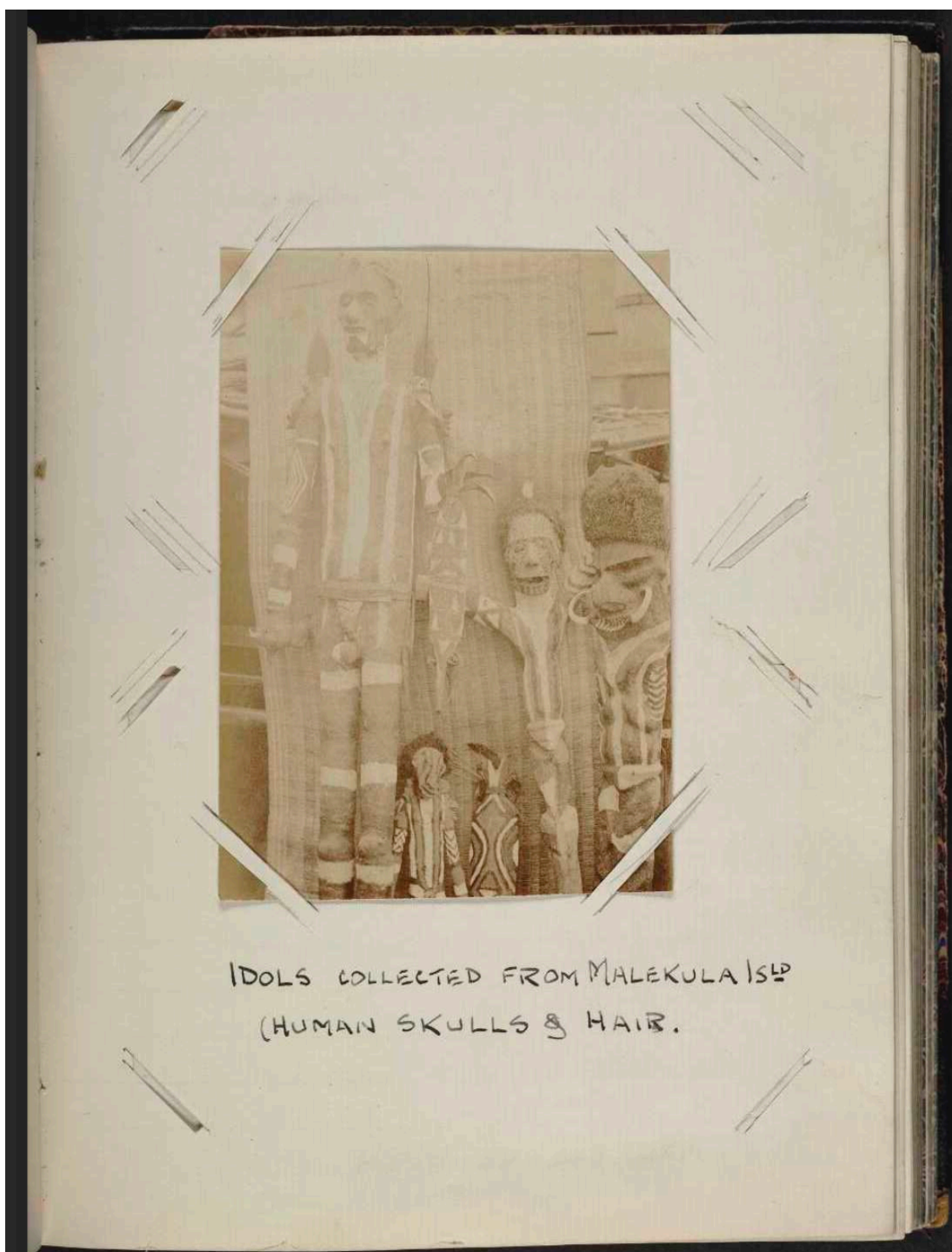


Figure 24: Extract from: Frederick Dack and (Vice-Admiral) Henry Boyle Townshend Somerville, 1890, *Pacific journal and photograph album*. A digital copy of the Frederick Dack journal and the Henry Boyle Somerville album is available at: <https://natlib.govt.nz/records/36384529> . Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. Ref: MSX-9428.



Figure 25: Somerville, T. B. H. "Collection of Carved Figures against Matting." Somerville Collection, 1890–1891. Wiley Digital Archives: The Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland - 1. Accessed 02 Jul. 2024.



PRM 1896.33.49



Figure 26: Archival photographs of Somerville's artefacts on board the ship (RAI) displayed alongside photographs of the corresponding objects currently preserved in the PRM.

Appendix G. Bouge Assemblage

Additional Statistical Representations of Bouge's assemblages from Vanuatu

Vanuatu Artefacts in Bouge set in the British Museum		
Categories	Objects	Number of Vanuatu Artefacts
Weapon	Arrow	58
Weapon	Club	23
Belt	Belt	15
Mat	Mat	13
Weapon	Spear	11
Body Ornament	Ear-Ornament	9
Body Ornament	Armlet	9
Body Ornament	Bracelet	6
Penis-sheath	Penis-sheath	5
Body Ornament	Pig's tusks	4
Body Ornament	Arm-guard	4
Body Ornament	Arm-band	3
Mask	Mask	3
Adze - Celt	Adze	2
Vessel	Vessel	2
Animal Remains	Animal Remains	1
Artefact	Artefact	1
Barkclothes	Barkclothes	1
Comb	Comb	1
Cup	Cup	1
Pan-pipes	Pan-pipes	1
Pudding-knife	Pudding-knife	1
Staff	Staff ~club	1
Tattooing-instrument	Tattooing-instrument	1
Tattooing-mallet	Tattooing-mallet	1
Weapon	Spear-head	1

Vanuatu Artefacts in Bouge set in the Fine Art Museum Chartres		
Categories	Objects	Number of Vanuatu Artefacts
Body Ornament	Necklace	12
Body Ornament	Earring	11
Body Ornament	Bracelet	7
Club	Club	7
Body Ornament	Pig's tusks bracelet	7
Body Ornament	Hair Ornament	3
Turtle Scale	Turtle Scale	3
Body Ornament	Arm-band	2
Body Ornament	Dish	2
Dish	Mat	2
Mat	Pendant	2
Pig Killing Club	Pig killing club	2
Adze	Adze	1
Paddle	paddle	1
Sculpture	Sculpture	1
Shell Beads	Shell Beads	1
Sorcerer plants case	Sorcerer plants case	1
Spoon	Spoon	1

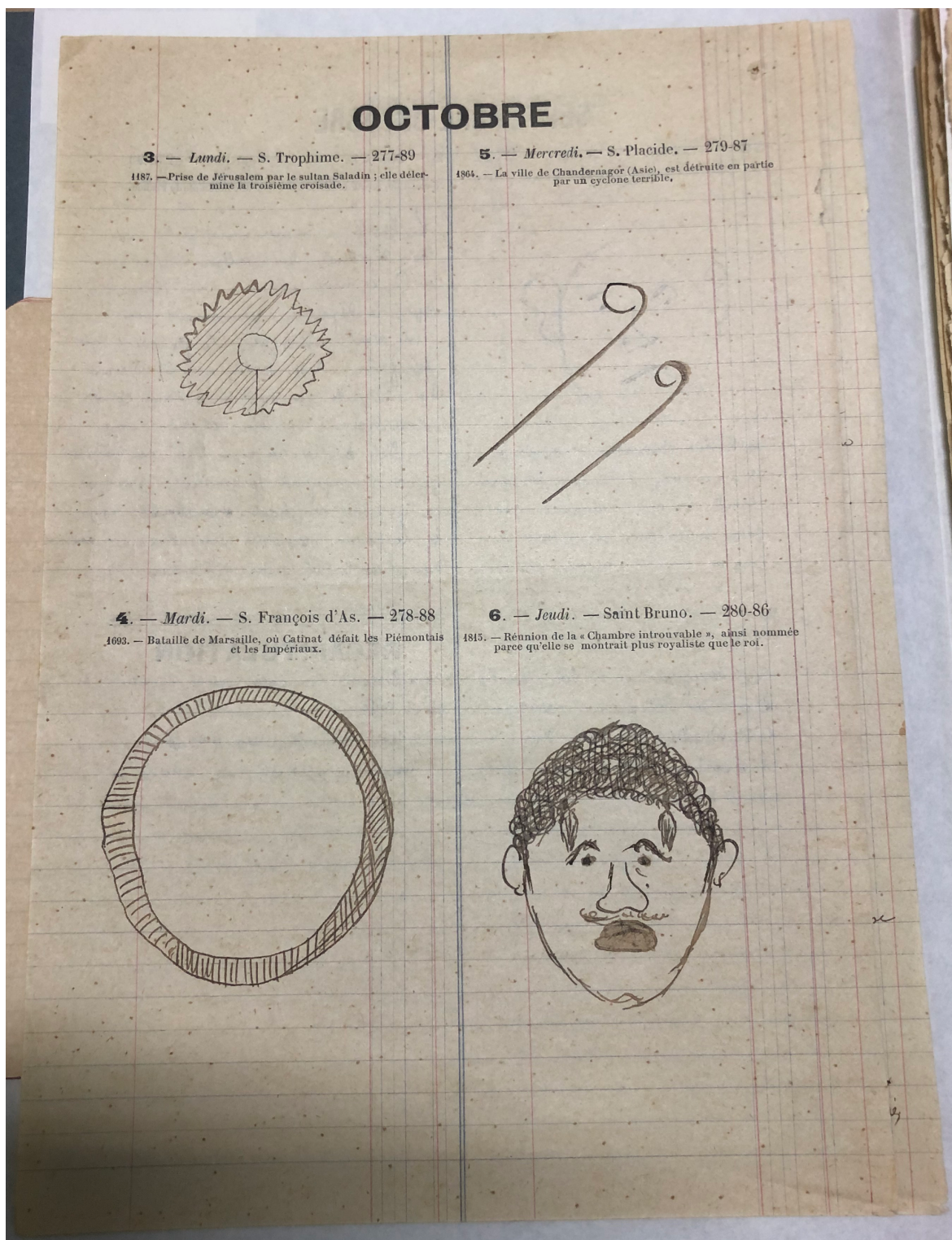


Figure 27: Drawings illustrating artefacts from Vanuatu, with similar pieces found in Bouge's assemblage in Chartres Museum. The page is extracted from Bouge's diary in the Chartres Museum archives (Box I, B, 10°).



Figure 28: Photograph titled 'Proclamation of the convention of 20 August 1906', Chartres Fine Art Museum, Bouge Archives, Album 6, p.26 © Image from the album kindly provided by Elric Geraudie.

Appendix H. Further statistical representations

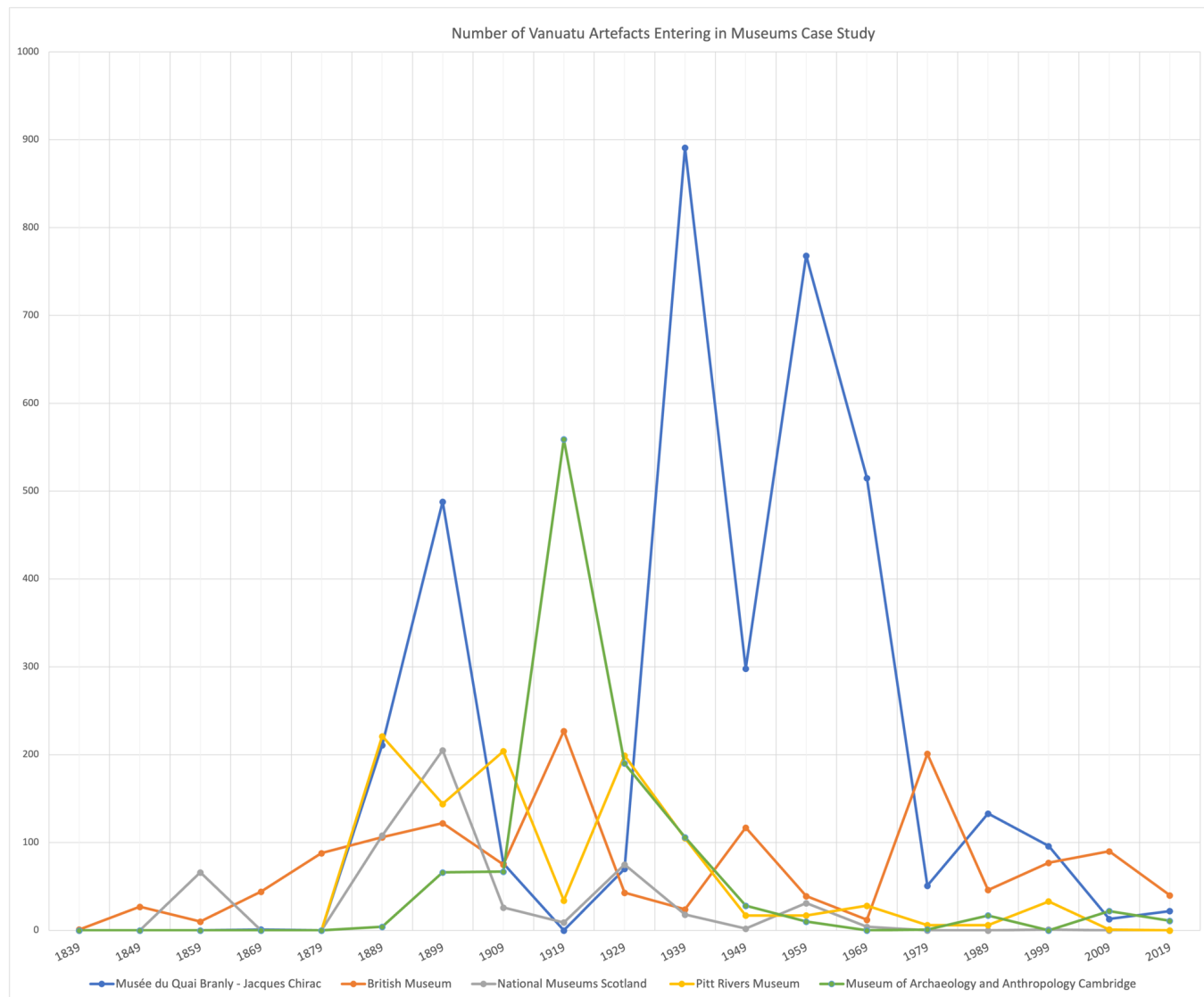


Figure 29: The graphs illustrate the accession of artefacts by year for the case study museums. The data are not cumulative.

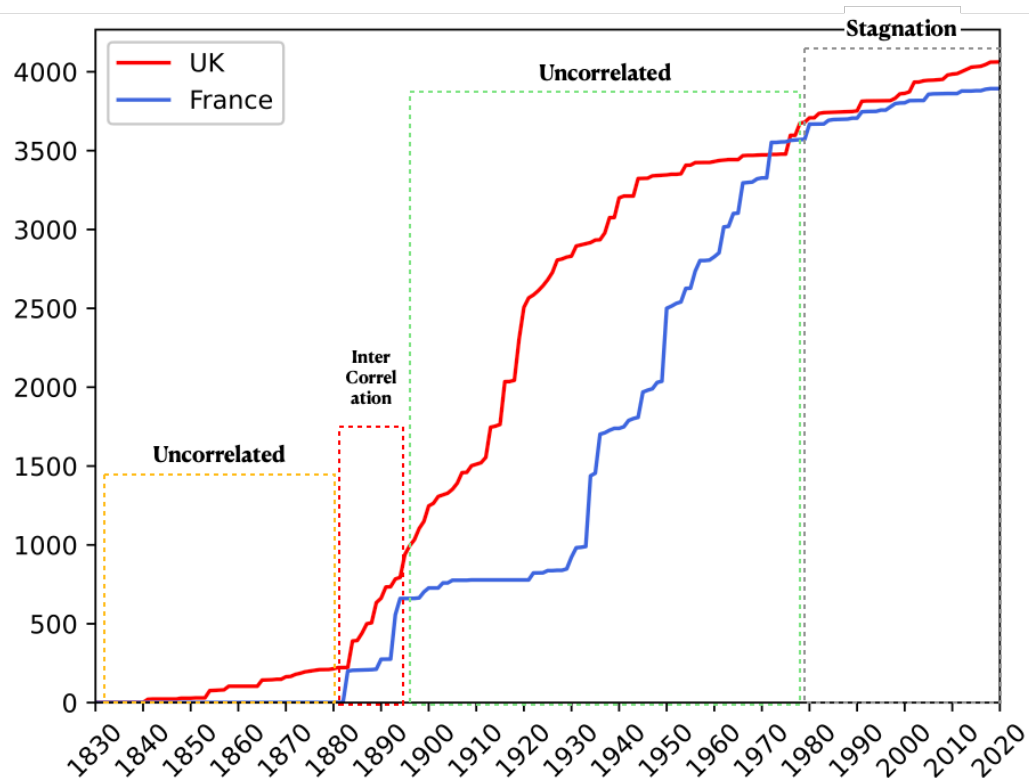
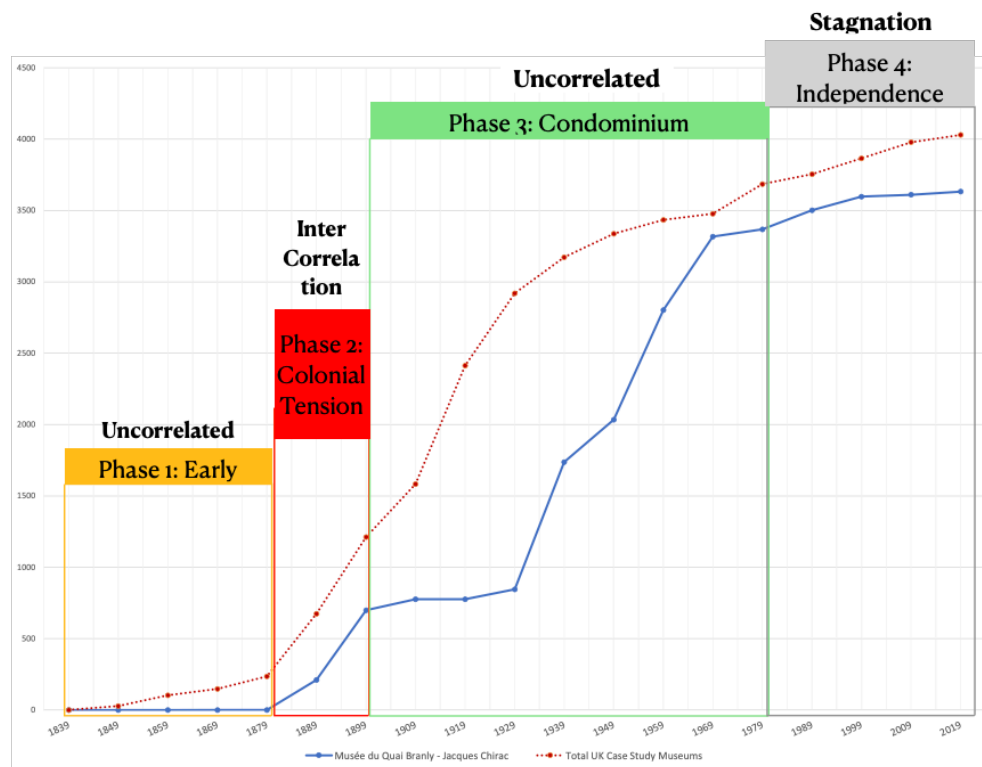


Figure 30: Graphs comparing the data modelled by sequences of decades (above) and by years of accession (below). The graphs illustrate that tendencies remain consistent in the two lines, with the UK collections shown in red and the French collections in blue.

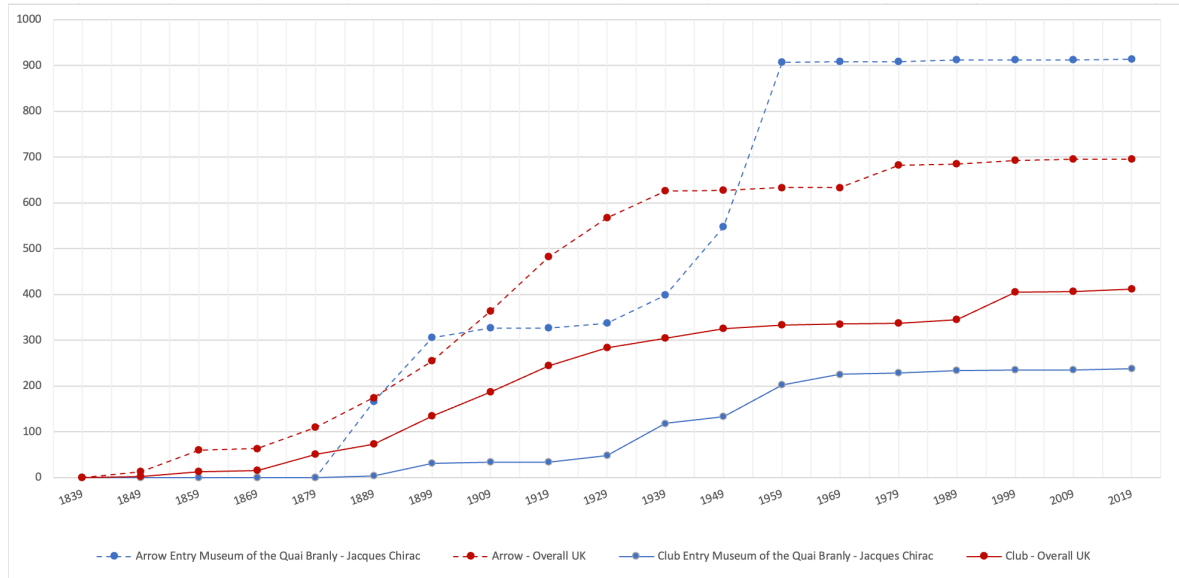


Figure 31: The graph illustrates the accession of clubs and arrows by decade in France and the UK. Dotted lines represent arrows, while the solid lines represent clubs. Data for France are shown in blue, and data for the UK are shown in red.

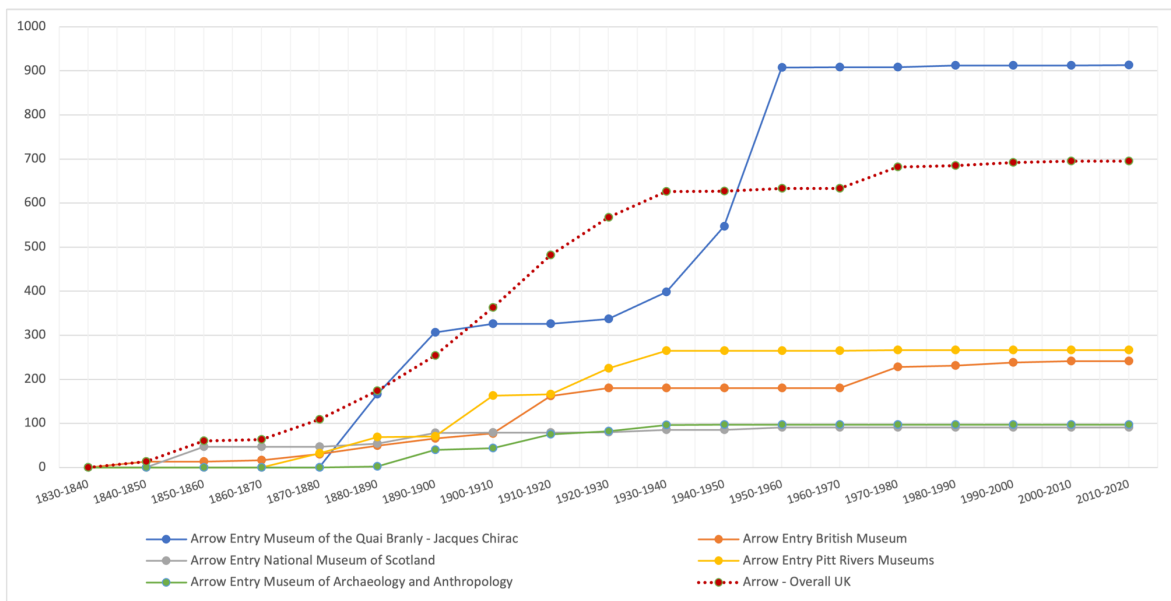


Figure 32: The graph represents the accession of arrows in the case study museums by decade. Here, the data are presented cumulatively.

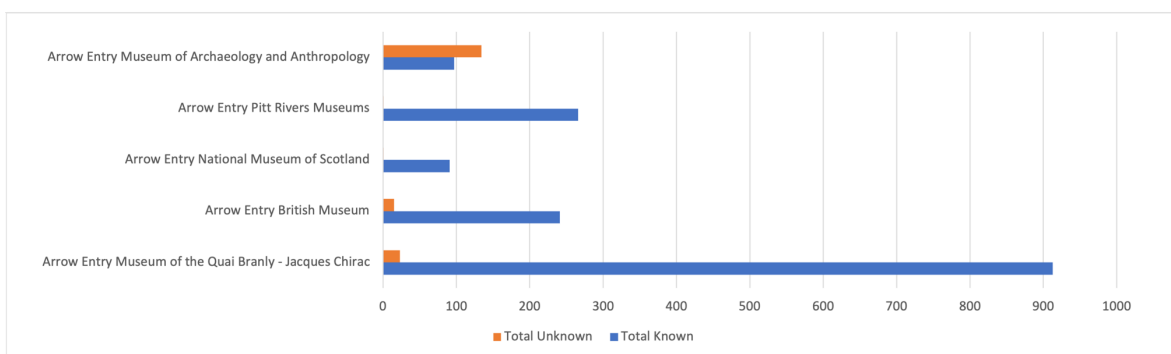


Figure 33: The graph presents the total number of arrows with unknown accession dates in each museum.

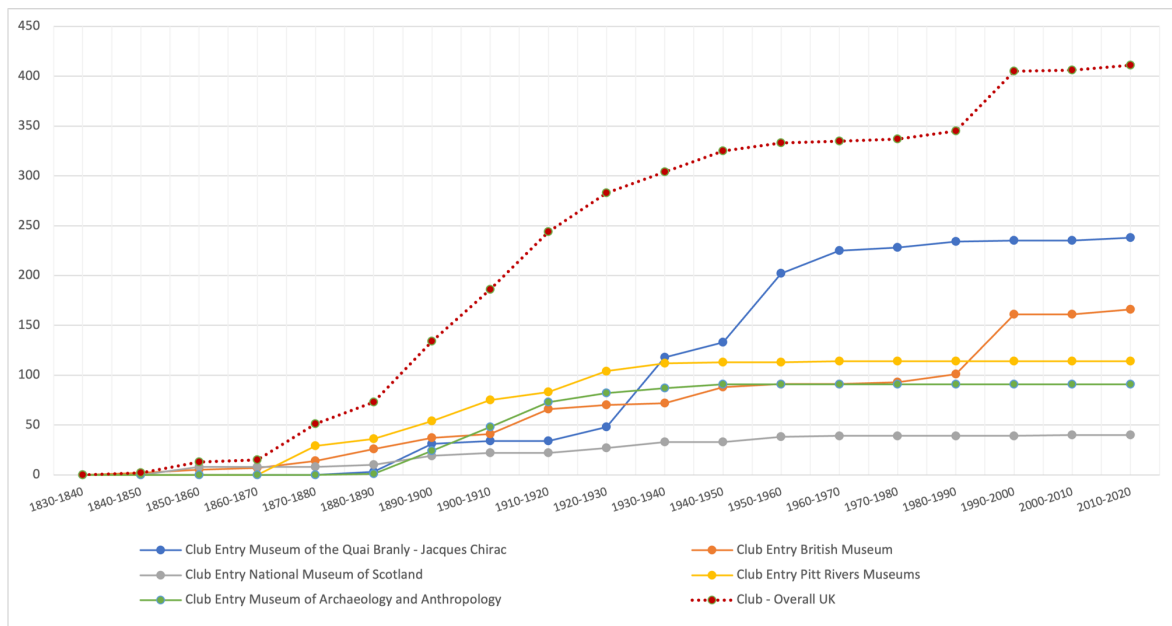


Figure 34: The graph illustrates the accessions of clubs in each museum case study by decade.

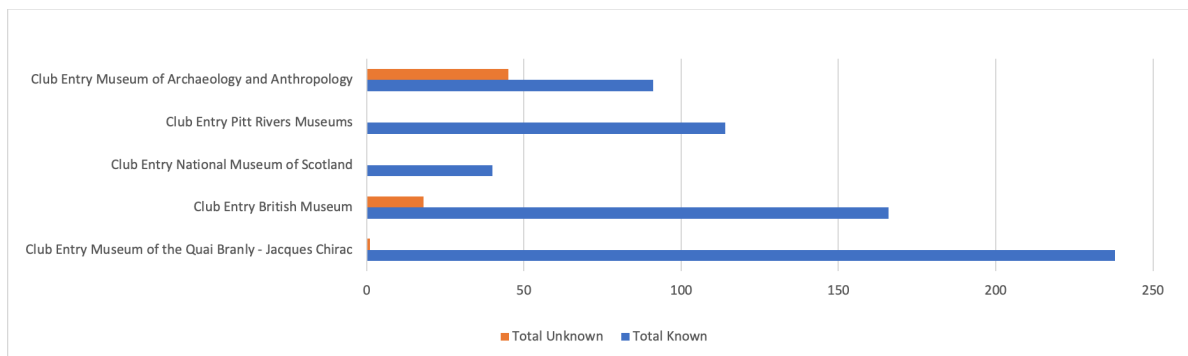


Figure 35: The graph presents the total number of clubs with unknown dates of accession in the case study museums.

Appendix I. Original text from Le Chartier (1885), translated in Chapter 9.

Bientôt ils se doutèrent de l'importance que j'attachais à leur possession et je me voyais déjà, ruiné par leurs exigences. J'avais emporté avec moi des haches en fer, des étoffes, des armes, de la poudre, etc., etc., espérant en trouver une défaite avantageuse ; mais, à ma grande surprise, à ces articles d'échange les men Api préféraient les perles et l'ocre. Cette dernière substance, ainsi que le minium, possède à leurs yeux une valeur inestimable, et malheureusement n'en possédant que 5 kilogrammes, je me désespérais de n'avoir pas été plus prévoyant, quand vint à mon secours le coq du navire, un Malabar, c'est tout dire ! Il était vicieux comme tous ses frères et non moins intelligent que corrompu.

- Mais, *tommissai*, me dit-il, pas vous donne oc' pu aux taïos.

- Et que faut-il leur donner, Sami ? lui demandai-je.

- De la *faïne*. Attendez un peu, *tommissai*, Sami bon malabar, Sami donné de la *faïne* à vous, bon *tommissai*.

A quelles bassesses l'amour du bibelot n'entraîne-t-il pas le malheureux collectionneur ! Non, vraiment ce n'était pas honnête, mais que voulez-vous ? J'en n'avais plus d'ocre et les sauvages possédaient des armes si belles, si curieuses, que, pour peu que vous partagiez ma passion, j'incline à croire que vous en eussiez fait autant que moi. Pauvres men Api, leur en aurai-je donné de l'ocre du moulin !... Ils ont dû croire à un charme en constatant le peu de résultat à l'usage, et l'esprit malin me doit encore de fameuses prières dont je le tiens quitte, du reste, m'estimant suffisamment récompensé par la possession de ma belle collection. Ils ne se sont doutés de rien, et cependant, Dieu sait s'ils sont méfiants ! Un exemple en fera juger : pour la cession d'un casse-tête en santal, un man Api exigeait une boîte de poudre ; je lui en donnai une, mais il la refusa parce que la bande était déchirée et que les gredins d'Anglais y avaient mis du charbon en poudre.

- Mais nous sommes Français, nous !

- Oh yes! French good very good, English no good.

Toujours est-il qu'il ne voulut pas accepter la botte qui, je le certifie, avait été déchirée par pur hasard. Des voyageurs anglais avaient donc, eux aussi, leur tare sur la conscience, et les bons men Api avaient dû trouver leur cas plus noir que le mien.

Extract from Le Chartier (1885: 197-198)