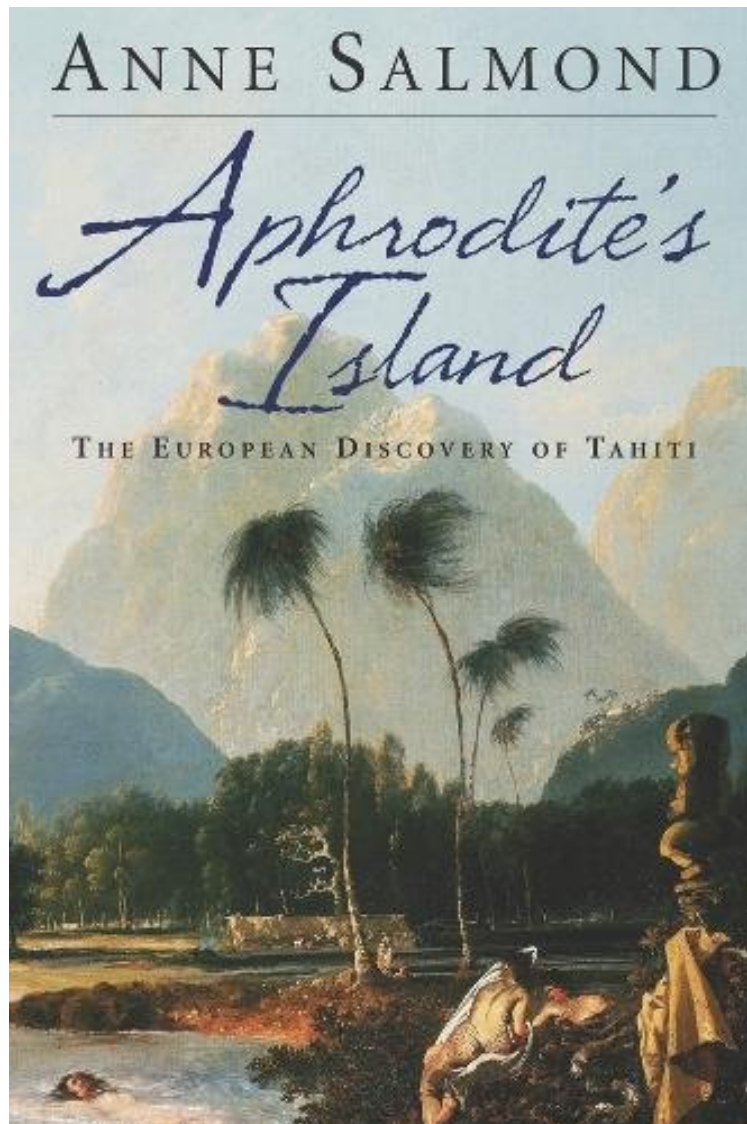


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## Aphrodites Island: The European Discovery of Tahiti

Anne Salmond

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**Anne Salmond : Aphrodites Island: The European Discovery of Tahiti** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Aphrodites Island: The European Discovery of Tahiti:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. good information, bad writingBy pondscumThe premise for this book is quite interesting: it presents a continuous history of Tahiti during the period following first European contact, with a lot of information on local customs, politics, and events that were missed or misunderstood by the Europeans. In reading the journals of the explorers, you only get the European view of things, which was very much influenced by European traditions of myth and political thought. Here you get the Polynesian viewpoint as well. I think Salmond did

a lot of research here and generally conveyed things accurately, as far as I'm familiar with the original sources myself. Some parts of the book are very heavy going because of all the Tahitian names are hard to keep straight, but my big complaint is that the text badly needs editing. There's a lot of repetitiveness in the text that is just sloppiness (mentioning the same trivial factoid 3 times in as many pages, or twice in the same paragraph). And is it really correct by Spanish naming conventions to refer to Jos de Anda y Varela as "y Varela"? I also thought that some chapters could have been really tightened up and made more readable by making a point and citing relevant incidents, rather than page after page of wandering chronological narrative. 12 of 14 people found the following review helpful. all you ever wanted to know and more...By K. Kennedy I picked up this book out of curiosity...knowing absolutely nothing about the exploration of the islands in the Pacific by European explorers in the 18th century. This book is incredibly well researched and full of lots of information, but is still very interesting and kept my attention most of the time. I assumed (correctly, it seems) that the explorers were chauvinistic and exploitative, but what I did not know is that some were actually caring and good human beings who treated the inhabitants as equals and tried to understand them and their cultures. This book taught me a great deal about this subject, and was well worth the time to read it.

*Aphrodite's Island* is a bold new account of the European discovery of Tahiti, the Pacific island of mythic status that has figured so powerfully in European imaginings about sexuality, the exotic, and the nobility or bestiality of savages. In this groundbreaking book, Anne Salmond takes readers to the center of the shared history to furnish rich insights into Tahitian perceptions of the visitors while illuminating the full extent of European fascination with Tahiti. As she discerns the impact and meaning of the European effect on the islands, she demonstrates how, during the early contact period, the mythologies of Europe and Tahiti intersected and became entwined. Drawing on Tahitian oral histories, European manuscripts and artworks, collections of Tahitian artifacts, and illustrated with contemporary sketches, paintings, and engravings from the voyages, *Aphrodite's Island* provides a vivid account of the Europeans' Tahitian adventures. At the same time, the book's compelling insights into Tahitian life significantly change the way we view the history of this small island during a period when it became a crossroads for Europe.

A spellbinding, richly descriptive, and deeply thought-provoking account of late 18th-century Tahitian life and cultural conflict. **STARRED REVIEW**