Chapter 5

The turn of the century: from Edward Edwards (1791) to Otto von Kotzebue (1824)

1. June 1791: Edward Edwards searching for the mutineers

In 1790, the British Admiralty learned about the mutiny on the *Bounty*. Captain Bligh and his companions, who had been disembarked by Fletcher Christian in Tongan waters, made their way in their small canoe to the East Indies and from there back to England. The authorities immediately set up a punitive expedition. Captain Edwards’s orders were to search for the mutineers and bring them back alive to stand trial. At the beginning of the 20th century, Basil Thompson located Edwards’s journal and published it together with the narrative of the surgeon of the expedition, George Hamilton (only the surgeon’s narrative had been published in 1793 and, since then, had never been republished) (Thompson ed. 1915).

Edwards’s 1791 Pacific route took the ship *Pandora* through the Tuamotu group towards Tahiti (missing by a few miles the sighting of Pitcairn Island, where Fletcher Christian and his mates had taken refuge, while other mutineers had stayed on in Tahiti). Edwards captured the mutineers who were in Tahiti and took the small boat, a tender, that the men had just built (their plan being to attempt a crossing to the East Indies). He divided his men between the *Pandora* and the tender. Then he left Tahiti with the intention of finding out which of the islands might be sheltering the other mutineers. Those who had stayed in Tahiti did not know where Christian had gone, since Christian himself had not had a precise plan when he left Tahiti. But Edwards searched for the missing mutineers in the wrong direction, constantly westwards, in the Society group, in the Cook Islands, in Tokelau, and then in Samoa.

On arriving in Samoan waters, the *Pandora* lost sight of the tender. The ship sailed to Tonga, came back to Samoa, then sailed to Uvea (Wallis), the Santa Cruz Islands, Torres Strait, and the East Indies. The last part of the journey was made on small boats after the *Pandora* was wrecked on the Great Barrier Reef off the north coast of Australia.¹ Meanwhile, the tender left Samoa for Tonga and then

¹ Four mutineers out of the fourteen taken prisoner in Tahiti, and more than thirty members of the initial crew of a hundred and thirty men were drowned. The most famous survivor among the prisoners is James Morrison, whose journal, written in London while awaiting trial (Morrison told his narrative to a minister who wrote it down), has become the main source of information on pre-contact Tahiti.
it too sailed westwards, through the Fijian islands, before reaching the East Indies, where the whole expedition was reunited.

The contacts in Samoa were very brief (Thompson ed. 1915: 49-52, 55-6, 129-31, 136, 166).

2. Contacts at sea

‘Had never seen a ship before’

On 18 June 1791, Edwards sighted Savai’i. Sailing along the north coast on the following day, looking for fresh water, he came in contact with ‘the natives’ (apparently at sea) and was able to ask for information about the location of rivers. He also had contact with a Tongan named ‘Fenow’ (Finau). Edwards noted that this man was ‘a relation of the Chief of that name of Tongataboo Fenow said he had seen Captain Cook and English ships at the Friendly Islands, and that the people of this island [Savai’i] had never seen a ship before they saw the Pandora’. Hamilton adds: ‘Here we learned the death of Fenow, king of Anamooka, from one of his family of the same name, who had a finger cut off in mourning for him’ (a practice observed by many travellers among Tongans, as we shall see in Lafo nd’s narrative). ‘After trading a whole day with the natives, who seemed fair and honourable in their dealings’, the expedition went on to Upolu on 21 June.

Samoans approached in canoes, and Edwards noted that they had ‘dye[d] their skins yellow’. This was turmeric, used on ceremonial occasions (van der Grijp n.d.), for example on the bride’s skin for the marriage ceremony. The question then arises: had the Samoans applied the dye for the purpose of meeting the Papālagi’s boat? Hamilton also notes that ‘Some of them had their skins tinged with yellow’ and adds: ‘Neither sex wear any clothing but a girdle of leaves round their middle, stained with different colours. The women adorn their hair with chaplets of sweet-smelling flowers and bracelets, and necklaces of flowers round their wrists and neck’. If this were so, we must conclude that the presentation was ceremonial, for no such floral adornment of the head and the neck was used for ordinary fishing. Moreover, as the Pandora stood in open sea and not in the lagoon, the presence of women cannot be explained by fishing activities, since they did not normally participate in any fishing beyond the lagoon (assuming that what we know of 19th-century practices can be applied retrospectively to the 1790s).

A woman on board

Hamilton continues his narrative:

On their first coming on board, they trembled for fear. They were perfectly ignorant of fire-arms, never having seen a European ship
before.\(^2\) They made many gestures of submission, and were struck with wonder and surprise at everything they saw. Amongst other things, they abounded with aromatic spiceries, that excelled in taste and flavour the most delicate seed-cake. As we have never hitherto known of spices or aromatics being in the South Seas, it is certainly a matter worthy of the investigation of some future circumnavigators.\(^3\) We traded with them the whole day, and got many curiosities. Birds and fowls, of the most splendid plumage, were brought on board, some resembling the peacock, and a great variety of the parrot kind.

One woman amongst many others [in the canoes] came on board. She was six feet high, of exquisite beauty and exact symmetry, being naked, and unconscious of her being so, added a lustre to her charms; for in the words of the poet, ‘She needed not the foreign ornaments of dress; careless of beauty, she was beauty’s self’.

Many mouths were watering for her; but Captain Edwards, with great humanity and prudence, had given previous orders, that no woman should be permitted to go below, as our health had not quite recovered the shock it received at Otaheite [where numerous sexual encounters had occurred, followed by venereal disease in the crew; see *ibid.*, p. 123]; and the lady was obliged to be contented with viewing the great cabin, where she was shewn the wonders of the Lord on the face of the mighty deep. Before evening, the women went all on shore, and the men began to be troublesome and pilfering. The third lieutenant had a new coat stolen out of his cabin; and they were making off with every bit of iron they could lay hands on.

It now came on to blow fresh, and we were obliged to make off the land. Those who were engaged in trade on board were so anxious, that we had got almost out of sight of their canoes before they perceived the ship’s motion, when they all jumped into the water like a flock of wild geese; but one fellow, more earnest than the rest, hung by the rudder chains for a mile or two, thinking to detain her.

This evening [21 June] at five o’clock, we unfortunately parted company, and lost sight of our tender.

\(^2\) On the contrary, this attitude of fear once on board the ships proves that they had heard the stories of contacts with the Papalagi. As for the ignorance of firearms, I have already commented on this European misconception.

\(^3\) It was probably the palusami, cooked coconut cream in taro leaves, which is considered a delicacy, an offering of value (as such it may have been offered to the Papalagi), and which has a kind of spicy taste, although there are no ‘spices’ in Samoan cuisine such as peppers or chillies.
‘First Contacts’ in Polynesia

‘The savages attacked them’

After cruising for two days in search of the tender, the *Pandora* left for Tonga. Months later, when the crew of the *Pandora* met up with the crew of the tender in the East Indies, they learned that the contacts between the Samoans and the latter continued and took a violent form. Edwards makes no mention of it, but Hamilton notes in his narrative:

They informed us, [that] the night they parted company with us, the savages attacked them in a regular and powerful body in their canoes; and their never having seen a European ship before, nor being able to conceive any idea of fire-arms, made the conflict last longer than it otherwise would; for, seeing no missive weapon made use of, when their companions were killed, they did not suspect any things to be the matter with them, as they tumbled into the water. Our seven-barrelled pieces made great havoc amongst them. One fellow had agility enough to spring over their boarding-netting, and was levelling a blow with his war-club at Mr. Oliver, the commanding-officer, who had the good fortune to shoot him.

On not finding the ship next day, they gave up all further hopes of her, and steered for Anamooka.

We have no other details about this attack, but we can at least apply to it the same kind of analysis that I used to interpret the violent incident involving conflict between a group of Samoans and members of Lapérouse’s expedition.

Tutuila: ‘they have murdered them’

The *Pandora* returned to Samoa on 14 July. Due to southerly winds, Edwards had decided to renew the search for the tender and try to obtain some information about the mutineers. Edwards now sighted the Manu’a group. Several canoes approached and some of the Samoans tried to board the ship. He prevailed upon them to do so. The Samoans ‘brought very few things in their canoes except cocoanuts [*sic*], which I bought, and then gave them a few things as presents before they left the ship, and after making the necessary inquiries [about the mutineers] as far as our limited knowledge of the language would permit us…’.

Edwards then proceeded to the West, arriving at Tutuila on 15 July: ‘We found the same shyness amongst the natives here as at the last islands, but a few presents being given to them they at last ventured on board’. No details are given. Edwards mentions that he made his usual ‘inquiries after the *Bounty* and tender and making presents to our visitors’, then steered to the west and again neared the shores of Upolu.

Hamilton adds just one detail: ‘Here [at Tutuila] we found some of the French navigator’s clothing and buttons [which the British probably noticed being worn
by some of the Samoans]; and there is little doubt but they have murdered them’. The first edition of Lapérouse’s journal was not yet published and it is unlikely that Hamilton would have received a copy from the French authorities. He was therefore just guessing and he was not to know the extent to which the label of ‘murderers’ applied to the Samoans would soon spread throughout Europe, once the story of the ‘massacre’ became known following the 1797 French publication of Lapérouse’s journal.

The beads

For his entry of 16 July, Edwards notes that his crew ‘had frequent communication with the natives, but could get no information’ (relative to his search). He then notes the presence of the beads: ‘we saw a few of the natives with blue, mulberry and other coloured beads about their necks, and we understood that they got them from Cook at Tongataboo’.

Without adding anything further, Edwards indicates that he stood southwards and was again making for Tonga. Hamilton provides nothing more by way of information. No landing is precisely described and we may infer that all contacts had been made at sea.

3. 1791-1824: the avoidance of Samoan shores

Apparently, for thirty-three years, practically no Papālagi boat came to Samoa. The story of the ‘massacre’ of 1787, widely known after 1797, kept everyone away.

There had been a brief call at Tutuila, in 1802 (Gilson 1970: 67) or maybe a little later (Linnekin 1991: 16), by George Bass, ‘supplier of provisions to Botany Bay’, formerly a surgeon, who came on a British ship and who ‘found the Samoans he encountered friendly and receptive’. This visitor met there an Englishman who had deserted from an American vessel at Tonga (Eua) in 1795 or 1796 (about which no other details are given); we have noted that by that time, Tonga already had a number of beachcombers, but not Samoa. This man told Bass that the Samoans were ‘friendly’ and that the killings of 1787, which resulted from a misunderstanding, were an isolated event (Linnekin *ibid.*).

From a journal whose author is unknown, we know that in 1823 a call was made at the Manu’a group, by a party in search of provisions, and one man was nearly kidnapped by the Samoans (Gilson *ibid.*), as Jackson was seventeen years later in the same place (we shall return to Jackson’s narrative). In 1824, a whaler called at Samoa, also for provisions, and according to Gilson (*ibid.*), it was ‘probably the first vessel of its kind to do so’.

Thus, apart from the brief visit of Bass, it seems that after Edwards’s visit in 1791 no visitors came until 1823 and 1824, the year which marked the arrival of Kotzebue. Edwards had dared to come because he still had no information as
to Lapérouse’s fate (we have seen how his surgeon Hamilton had only put forward as a hypothesis the possibility of a murderous attack on Lapérouse’s crew) and in fact it was his official duty to visit all the island groups, whatever the cost, in his search for the mutineers of the *Bounty*.

4. April 1824: Otto von Kotzebue. First exchanges

The year that saw the first whaler calling at Samoa for provisions was the same year that a Russian expedition of exploration led by Kotzebue visited the region, although Kotzebue passed by rather rapidly and stayed cautiously out at sea. The Russian captain reminds his readers, at the beginning of his narrative of his encounter with the Samoans, that these people were supposed to be ‘most ferocious people… [who] murdered de Langle … although they [the French] had loaded the natives with presents’ (Kotzebue 1830: 258). But, as he suffered no general attack, his own account, once published in English in 1830, made a useful addition to the few whalers’ accounts of the mid-1820s-1830s and let it be known that, after all, a peaceful contact with the Samoans was possible.

Kotzebue had already sailed twice around the Pacific, with Krusenstern and with Chamisso. On this first voyage around the world as a captain, he sailed westwards after his Tahitian stay, came in sight of the Manu’a group on 3 April 1824, and turned towards Tutuila, following the route of Lapérouse. He anchored at the same place, off Asu. Expecting to see hundreds of canoes surrounding him, as had been the case for Lapérouse, he was surprised to see just one canoe approaching with only three men on board. He made signs to them to come aboard his ship.

Only one of the Samoans responded. He cautiously climbed along a rope, just to have a look on the deck, but did not jump down. He presented some coconuts and received ‘as a counter-gift a piece of iron which he pressed against his forehead as a sign of his gratitude, inclining his head a bit in doing so’. Kotzebue correctly interpreted the ‘sign of gratitude’. This is a formal way of receiving a gift and is still practised today. It means that the receiver thereby considers himself to be ‘wrapped-in’ by the gift of the donor (see chapter 10). It is a way of giving the donor a superior position. One can also think of the ‘abasement’ rite, *ifoga*, where the self-abasing party places a fine mat over his head (Tcherkézoff 2002).

The Samoan then began a long and impassioned speech, pointing alternately at the land and at the ship. Soon many other canoes arrived: ‘we were soon surrounded by the descendants of the barbarian murderers’ (Kotzebue 1830: 258). A number of Samoans climbed along the side of the ship but the Russians forced most of them to stay out, with blows and the threat of using their bayonets. Only a few were allowed to jump on board. According to Kotzebue, they immediately rushed to seize everything they could and showed what they
had found to their companions who stayed down in the canoes. All of them were shouting.

But there was one of their number on board the ship who adopted a very formal attitude. Several times he raised the gifts above his head, and uttered a number of sentences that made all the other Samoans burst into laughter. Kotzebue believed, wrongly, that he was a chief. More probably he played a kind of clowning role, in the well-known Samoan style of *fale aitu* (‘house of spirits’). A further indication that this was the case was the gesture of one of his companions who nipped the bare arm of one of the sailors and made signs which seemed to Kotzebue to suggest ‘that such food would be very palatable to him’. Inevitably, Kotzebue then introduces a long passage on the horrors of cannibalism. He was unaware of the fact that the Samoans did not practice cannibalism, but that many of their legends depict spiritual beings (*aitu*) or mythological chiefs who would have done so in the distant past. The gesture witnessed by Kotzebue might again have been a *fale aitu* joke.4

Kotzebue also notes that ‘the glass beads they obtained from us they immediately hung over their neck and ears’ (*ibid.*: 265; no other details). So it seems that the beads were still in great demand. But, apparently, this was also true of iron, since the first gift of a piece of iron was formally acknowledged: the few beachcombers must have made the Samoans aware of the usefulness of iron tools.

5. The presence of ‘women’: young virgins

About the women, Kotzebue says only:

In the canoes, we saw a few women who were all very ugly: these disagreeable creatures gave us to understand that we should by no means find them cruel. They were … as little dressed [as the men were]. Their hair was cut short off [sic] with the exception of two bunches stained red, which hung over their faces (p. 266).

His judgement—‘ugly, disagreeable’—is of course in the vein of Bougainville’s account of Samoa. Kotzebue also came to Samoa after Tahiti, and the approving references to the latter served to cast all the other islands in an unfavourable light. He also had in mind that he was among ‘the most ferocious people… who murdered…’ and who appeared to practise cannibalism. As well, probably in the light of Lapérouse’s account, he was convinced that the ‘women’ were ready to grant their favours.

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4 Similar behaviour on the part of the Kanak people was reported by the French when they arrived in New Caledonia-Kanaky in 1793, and Bronwen Douglas’s interpretation is that the gestures, the facial expressions, whistling and the like, showed that an act practised in local wars was here being performed as an ironic display (Douglas 1999a: 81).
It is quite possible that the females made some sexual gestures, which ‘gave us to understand…’. But who were these ‘women’? The last remark on their hair ‘cut short off with the exception of two bunches’ gives us the answer. From 1830, the year of the first missionary visit, and through the 19th century, we know with complete certainty that this very specific style of hairdressing was used only for virgin girls once they were ready to be presented as a bride to a high chief. We will meet this type of presentation again in the narrative of Captain Erskine.

We can surmise that, had he landed, Kotzebue would have been invited to the same ‘marriage’ scene that the French of 1787 experienced. In any case, we should remember that the ‘women’ who, from the canoes, were making some kind of gestures that the Russians interpreted as sexual advances, were virgins presented as brides. This would seem to have applied to all of these ‘few women’ whom Kotzebue ‘saw in the canoes’.

6. More exchanges and moral judgements

In his narrative, Kotzebue then returns to the bartering context. He notes that the ‘few fruits’ brought by the Samoans ‘were exchanged for pieces of iron, old barrel hoops, and glass beads; on the latter especially they set great value’. The Samoans also began to show their wooden clubs and to ask for glass beads, but Kotzebue immediately thought that an attack was being prepared. More canoes were approaching. Some of the Samoans were standing up in the canoes and making long speeches. Kotzebue thought that he heard an ‘angry’ tone and saw ‘menacing gestures’, especially when ‘at length the screaming and threatening with clubs and doubled fists became general’. He decided to set sail (pp. 266-7).

‘Animal-people’

As this point he had been very close to ordering his men to shoot: ‘One slight signal from me would have brought death and destruction upon those animal-people’ who were screaming and waving their clubs (ibid.).

The language of Kotzebue, even if motivated partly by his impression of the ‘massacre’ which the French had suffered, also reminds us that we are no longer in the 18th century with Bougainville, Cook or even Lapérouse. A new trend characterises the very end of the 18th century and the entire 19th century. It saw the rise to dominance of a racist discourse in which some human ‘races’ were considered less human than others. This was new and in sharp contrast to the prior meaning of ‘races’ in the sense of human ‘varieties’ or ‘nations’. For the application of these theories to the Pacific, Dumont d’Urville’s invention of the

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5 See Schoeffel (1979: 407-10, 426) and Mageo (1994) for references to various sources for this style of hairdressing.
name ‘Melanesia’ in 1831 (the ‘Black Islands’, the islands of dark-skinned people), is of course the classic illustration of this major shift in European thought.\footnote{See Blanckaert (1998), Douglas (1999a, 1999b, n.d.); Tcherkézoff (2003a, n.d.), and the following chapter on Dumont d’Urville’s visit in Samoa.}

**Other exchanges and the beginning of the barter**

A short stop off Tutuila, again at sea, allowed a number of canoes to come near the ship. The occupants offered their catch of fish. Then Kotzebue anchored off Upolu and the same offerings took place, but no other details are given (p. 268). Then, on 5 April, Kotzebue came near the shore of the small island of Manono, between Upolu and Savai’i.

Numerous canoes arrived, with offerings of fruits and pigs. The Samoans seemed not to understand why Kotzebue prohibited them from climbing on board. They attached their offerings to the ropes that were hanging from the deck. In one hour, ‘60 large pigs’, lots of fowl and ‘vegetables and various fruits’ were obtained ‘for some pieces of old iron, some strings of glass beads, about a dozen of nails. The blue beads seemed to be in highest estimation’. Two strings, and sometimes only one string, of these beads were enough for a large pig (pp. 275-6). The Samoans also brought with them tamed pigeons and parrots, which sat on the hand of the owner.

At some point, a ‘great canoe’ arrived, surrounded by smaller ones, which drew the attention of all the natives. They called out: ‘Eige-ea Eige’ and hastened to give place. The canoe was rowed by 10 men; in the fore part, on a platform covered with matting, sat an elderly man, cross legged, holding a green silk European parasol. His clothing was a very finely plaited grass-mat, hanging like a mantle from his shoulders, and a girdle round his waist. His head was enveloped in a piece of white stuff (pp. 277-8).

The Chief came on board with three attendants and asked for the ‘Eige’ (p. 279). He was not tattooed, as Kotzebue noted, which could indicate either that he was the supreme chief of Tonga, *Tu‘i Tonga*, visiting Samoa (the word that has been given here for ‘chief’ was Tongan: *eiki*)—which is doubtful—or a very high-ranking Samoan chief, such as Tamafaiga (Krämer [1995: II: 22] and Gilson [1970: 71] both advance this hypothesis). Tamafaiga indeed reigned over Manono at that time; shortly after this meeting, Tamafaiga was succeeded by Malietoa Vaiinupo who himself received the pioneer missionary John Williams in 1830. No one could touch these very high chiefs and make them bleed (as always happened during tattooing), and the same thing applied to the Tu‘i Manu‘a, the highest chief of the Manu‘a group of Samoan islands.
The use of Tongan speech to foreigners, something which other visitors to Samoa also noted in the same period, as we shall see, may be due to the fact that the Tongan language was, to the Samoans, the language of relationship with the outside world, since all the non-Samoans in Samoa were either Tongans or European beachcombers who came mostly from Tonga. At that time, even if European visits to Samoa were nearly unknown, Tonga, known as the ‘Friendly Islands’, had long been an established and, indeed, a much appreciated port of call for Europeans.7

Kotzebue tells us that this elderly man made him understand that he was the Chief of the ‘Flat Island’. This name is already used a few pages earlier by Kotzebue, who follows Lapérouse’s terminology: it was Manono island (p. 271). The Chief had ‘three fine pigs, which he called boaka, and some fruits’ deposited at the feet of Kotzebue (the word used for ‘pig’ is Tongan). He also took hold of Kotzebue’s elbows and raised them, while saying—in English this time—‘very good!’ The Russian captain gave him hatchets, a coloured silk handkerchief and two strings of blue beads. Using signs, the Chief asked if these items were for him and, being assured that they were by Kotzebue’s reply, he jumped up and repeated ‘very good, very good’. He put the strings of beads inside a finely woven basket that he had with him and took out of this basket a Spanish dollar. Kotzebue understood that the Chief wanted to know if this could be used to buy more beads.

We can see that the idea of barter and of commerce was now established in Samoa. But it came from Tonga. When Kotzebue asked the Chief where he had got this dollar from, the Chief pointed to the south. Kotzebue thought that this indicated ‘Tonga’. The Chief seemed to explain that he had navigated there, that he had met a boat from whose ‘Eigeh’ he had got the dollar and the parasol. The Chief also indicated by signs that he knew the effect of guns and muskets: he pointed to a gun, said ‘puaa’ imitating the sound, then closed his eyes and let his head hang down (p. 282).

7. ‘Very good waraki’ (women)

The Chief then pointed at the shore and took Kotzebue over to the railing. He pointed at ‘the women’ in the canoes ‘whom he called waraki, shook his head,

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7 At the end of the 18th century, the international centres in Polynesia were of course Tahiti and Hawaii, and then Tonga. The story of European contact in Tonga dates back to 1616 and 1643 (with the Dutch). It continued with the visits from Wallis (1767); with Cook’s expeditions (1773-74, 1777) which brought in all sorts of iron tools, European textiles, and domestic animals as well as new edible plants; and with the French and the Spanish in the early 1790s. The first deserters from American merchant ships appeared in 1795, the first missionaries in 1797. Five years later, there were at least fifteen Englishmen, with firearms, living in Tonga, and some Tongans had already experienced life in Australia (Ferdon 1987: 281-5). If the Samoans were still the sole inhabitants (together with some Tongan visitors or ‘adopted’ settlers) of the Samoan islands, they had nonetheless heard innumerable stories about encounters with the Papalagi. These they heard from the Tongans, and hence most probably in the Tongan language.
and said “not very good”. Then he pointed to the island and said in a kind tone: “very good waraki”…’. The word ‘waraki’ is certainly not a Samoan word nor does it appear to resemble any Tongan word. As this Chief seemed to have had close contact with Papālagi in Tonga, he could have heard English-speaking visitors describe the women or girls who were presented to them as ‘whores’.

Kotzebue made him understand that he was not interested. The Chief again took hold of his elbows and several times said: ‘Marua! Marua!’ Then, from the canoes, all the Samoans joined in repeating this same word. The word recorded by Kotzebue could be the Tahitian word for ‘thank you’, mauruuru roa, brought to Tonga by the Europeans. We have already noted that most of the visitors who came to Western Polynesia stopped first in Tahiti. The LMS missionaries followed this path five years later, extending their action to the west from their base in Tahiti, and using the Tahitian and Rarotongan languages.

8. Last exchanges

Off Savai‘i, Kotzebue also made a brief stop, noting only one incident among the exchanges that took place. One man, from his canoe, seemed to offer a pig. A bag was handed down to him containing European gifts. When the bag was hauled up, there was no pig inside but a dog instead. Kotzebue thought he was being cheated. But here again, it is possible that the man thought it wiser to use a Tahitian form of gift (dog meat was considered a delicacy in Tahiti, but not in Samoa). Or indeed, as on the first day, this may have been a fale aitu kind of joke. The evidence is too scanty to allow us to draw any firm conclusions.

So ended the last visit to Samoa of a round-the-world scientific expedition of ‘discovery’. The next expeditions to call at Samoa, although still pursuing scientific studies, would also have a military aspect, in whole or in part (Dumont d’Urville, Wilkes). Besides these organised and heavily armed expeditions, another kind of visit was to become frequent and would have a lasting impact: the commercial vessels of the merchants and the whalers had already begun penetrating Samoan waters.