

there they would stand and bleed and cry, till their Strength was exhausted and they could act the farce no longer. When we got rid of these Tragedians, I soon recovered my Friends and we set down to Dinner together very cheerfully.⁴¹

Whether you view the affair as a Pacific farce or as a Greek tragedy it is not difficult to imagine how the camera crew of say a not particularly friendly nation might have recorded the scene.

Everything points to the fact that so far as the visual events of the voyage were concerned Webber was setting out quite deliberately to construct a peaceful image of the Pacific, and of the peaceable relations of its peoples with the voyagers. Even when he drew portraits; for example, just as they left the Society Islands Webber drew a portrait of a Chief of Bora Bora, with his lance, but when he made the finished drawing he removed the lance. (British Library).

After Cook's death the apparent desire for a suppression of all scenes of violence and conflict continues in the engraving of scenes of the voyages published in the *Atlas* of the official account. Even a face that could recall a scene of great violence is not included. We know that Webber painted a portrait in oils of Kahura,⁴² the Maori chieftain who was responsible for the killing and eating of Captain Furneaux's men at Grass Cove on the second voyage. Cook established beyond any reasonable doubt that Kahura was responsible for the massacre but instead of taking revenge, he developed a respect for his courage and the confidence Kahura placed in him.⁴³ Dr. Joppien has succeeded in identifying one of the portraits now in the Dixon Library, Sydney as a portrait of Kahura.⁴⁴ It is of interest that a portrait of Kahura was among those omitted in the list selected for publication in the *Atlas*. Perhaps the portrait of a notorious cannibal, however much admired by Cook, was not considered suitable for the official account of the voyage.

Nor was a representation of Cook's own death. And when Webber made his famous drawing (Plate 6) which was later engraved by Bartolozzi and published separately in 1784, Webber presented the great navigator in the role of a peacemaker holding out a hand gesturing to his men in the *Resolution's* pinnace to stop firing at the enraged Hawaiians.

If my analysis is correct Cook on his third voyage, at least so far as the visual record was concerned, was constructing an image of himself as a man of peace in the Pacific, a man universally welcomed there by peaceable people. Representations of violent encounters were suppressed or ignored. He could not have known as he left the island of Bora Bora that he would discover another great Polynesian society in the north Pacific unknown to Europeans and that there he would be received as the very incarnation of a god of peace, as the returning god Lono, the god of carnival, of the Makahiki festival.⁴⁵ So it was that Cook was received, as few men have been, into an alien culture