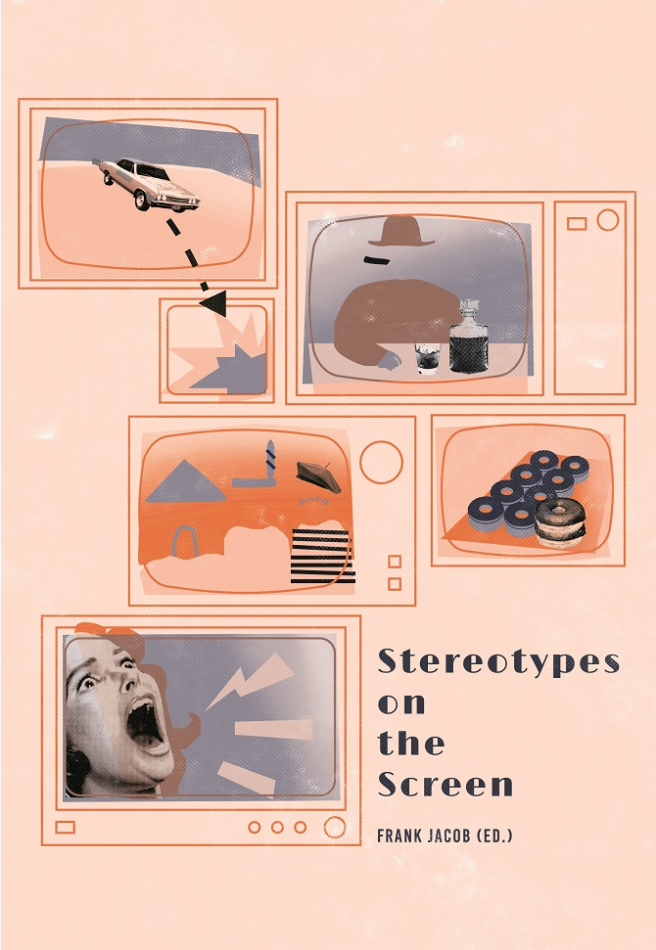
Entertainment - Journal of Media and Movie Studies

Vol 1 (2016)

Stereotypes on the Screen



"An Exotic Anchor of Freedom": Depictions of the South Seas as Paradise in the Bounty Movies

Frank Jacob

To cite this article:

Jacob, F. (2016). "An Exotic Anchor of Freedom": Depictions of the South Seas as Paradise in the Bounty Movies. *Entertainment - Journal of Media and Movie Studies*, *1*, 25–39. Retrieved from https://ejournals.epublishing.ekt.gr/index.php/entertainment/article/view/15958

2.
"An Exotic Anchor of Freedom": Depictions of the South Seas as Paradise in the *Bounty* Movies

Frank JACOB

Introduction

The Mutiny on the *HMS Bounty* is perhaps the best-known mutiny in world history. Descriptions of the historical events were published early on,[1] notably by William Bligh (1754-1817), himself the captain of the ship.[2] The story of the mutineers has been seen as an emblem for rebellion against an autocratic ruler and remains so even today; but it also produces a particular stereotype of the South Seas as a sphere of freedom and happiness, one where men might find relief from the hard life aboard a Royal Navy ship, and where they might enjoy the love of a beautiful Tahitian woman. The image of the South Seas, initially the result of an "ambiguous interplay of . . .[a]. . .gendered racial system, idiosyncrasy, experience and indigenous presence in the production, reproduction and reading of such pictures,"[3] is mainly based on the images and descriptions provided by Captain James Cook (1728-1779), the first European to explore this "exotic" sphere.

Following Cook's first voyages, artists came to play an essential part in creating the public image of the South Seas as exotic islands, as the likes of Tahiti and the other Marquesas Islands within French Polynesia, so much so that the "expanding pictorial corpus became a purportedly mimetic adjunct to increasingly radicalized conceptions of human

---

[1] Sir John Barrow, *The Eventful History of the Mutiny and Piratical Seizure of HMS Bounty: Its Causes and Consequences* (London: Murray, 1831).

[2] William Bligh, *A Narrative of the Mutiny* (London: Nicol, 1790).

[3] Bronwen Douglas, "Science and the Art of Representing 'Savages': Reading 'Race' in Text and Image in South Seas Voyage Literature," *History and Anthropology* 11:2-3 (1999), 176.

similarities and differences."[4] These stereotypical images have remained in the public consciousness; and in the 20th century they were adapted to the cinematic screen, where palm trees and naked South Sea beauties recalled the sailors' desire for sanctuary in a world parallel to the English ship at sea where they were routinely subjected to brutal punishments by officers on-board. Additionally, American interest in the South Seas was stimulated by several novels about this region, among them Frederick O'Brien's *White Shadows in the South Seas* (1919),[5] the narrative of which "helped to set off a wave of popular interest in the islands and cultures of the South Pacific," and provided "American readers with a desperately needed chance to leave behind traumatic memories of World War I and escape to the plan-fringed beaches of solitary islands."[6] MGM would in 1928 release their silent adventure film directed by W. S. Van Dyke, based on O'Brien's writings and bearing the same title that envisioned "not only the multiple and conflicting dimensions of the American image of the South Pacific but project[ed] the idea of otherness in the American imagination, revealing the deep-seated uncertainties that arise when Western selves and 'native' others collide."[7]

Despite the fact that O'Brien's tale was not the only source for South Sea movies in the first decades of the 20th century, the story of the *HMS Bounty* and its mutineers did nonetheless becomes far more emblematic and much more familiar among a wider popular audience. Consequently, the *Bounty* movies proved most influential in the creation of a particular and nuanced image of the South Seas. Nor should we forget that the narrative events themselves led to several movies focusing on the fate of Fletcher Christian, William Bligh, the crew of the *HMS Bounty* on the one hand and on

---

[4] Ibid., 177.
[5] Frederick O'Brien, *White Shadows in the South Seas* (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2006).
[6] Jeffrey Geiger, "Imagined Islands: White Shadows in the South Seas and Cultural Ambivalence," *Cinema Journal* 41:3 (2002), 98.
[7] Ibid., 99.

the natives of Tahiti on the other. Taken together, five films were produced between 1916 and 1984; all would describe the South Seas by relying on stereotypic representations arising within writings that long pre-dated them. Not surprising, the resultant image matched the preconceived expectations of the audience: exotic spaces, freedom, and love. In short, the films themselves depicted a paradise in staunch contrast to the harsh environment of the ship under the tyrannical rule of Captain Bligh.

At this point, it is perhaps necessary to analyse the three American productions, namely *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1935, directed by Frank Lloyd; 1962, directed by Lewis Milestone) and *The Bounty* (1984, directed by Roger Donaldson) to elucidate the particular manner in which the South Seas was depicted. Doing so allows for a larger discussion of the generation of these stereotypes created by the writings and paintings of the late 18th and 19th centuries as they were perpetuated in theatres around the world. By comparing the three works with eyewitness reports from the first voyagers to the South Seas, we might then question whether a steady and continuous image of region and inhabitants alike is, in fact, sustained. Important to this discussion, the combination of the sailors' story on the *HMS Bounty* itself and their sense of relief found on Tahiti that provides a basis of success on the screen, as each film combines these images in a manner that could easily be understood and received by the audiences, namely within the suffering of daily life and the steadfast longing for a trouble-free life in paradise.

***Mutiny on the Bounty* (1935)**

The first two *Bounty* movies (1916, directed by Raymong Longford; 1933, directed by Charles Chauvel) were Australian productions and therefore had a rather minor impact in the United States, but the 1935 Lloyd production starring Clark Gable as Fletcher Christian and Charles Laughton as William Bligh, remains a classic in American cinema. The movie opens

with a foreword, intended perhaps for those within the audience who might not yet be familiar with the story:[8]

> Foreword
>
> In December, 1787, *H.M.S. Bounty* lay in Portsmouth Harbour on the eve of departure for Tahiti in the uncharted waters of the Great South Sea.
>
> The *Bounty*'s mission was to procure breadfruit trees for transplanting to the West Indies as cheap food for slaves. Neither chi nor breadfruit reached the West Indies. Mutiny prevented it – mutiny against the abuse of harsh eighteenth century sea law. But this mutiny, famous in history and legend, helped bring about a new discipline, based upon mutual respect between officers and men, by which Britain's sea power is maintained as security for all who pass upon the seas.

The foreword sets forth the different levels of the film that would follow. First, the mission of the *HMS Bounty*, to bring breadfruits (*uru*) to the West Indies, is explained, while pointing to the perspective of the mutineers as people who had no option but to take action to end the abuses of their officers. It also underlines the changes subsequent to the incident, claiming that the power and strength of the modern British navy was a sole consequence of mutual respect, therefore establishing from the beginning Bligh in a negative light.

Before the journey begins, Christian must forcefully recruit sailors. In a tavern he finds some suitable men, who are immediately pressed into the service of His Majesty's Navy. When the new sailors ask where the ship is supposed to sail, they are shocked by the answer: "The South Seas? But that's the end of the world." Whereas for the common man, there was no stereotypical image as of yet, there does seem to be a cultural interest in Tahiti, as indicated by Sir Joseph's having sent Roger, a young officer, ahead to the island to compile an encyclopaedia of the Tahitian language.

---

[8] *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1935).

Irrespective of forced recruitment or cultural interest, all the men on the Bounty share one point in common: they agree that they are sailing to the end of the world. Before they set sail, a number of traders attempt to sell them goods. Most notably, a woman suggests that a sailor buy a necklace for ten shillings now, asserting further that in the South Seas he could buy an island with it. Their exchange underscores an intellectual and even racial superiority held by the white sailors, who believed themselves easily capable of tricking the "backward" natives of the South Seas.

Thus, many of the sailors begin their journey with dreams about a new world they might have heard about but which remains shrouded both in mist and mystery. They must first, however, come face to face with the strong hand of Captain Bligh, who rules the ship as a dictator, by using violence. Even before weighing anchor we see him punish a sailor with lashes – although the man is already dead. The image underscores Bligh's violent nature from the start. During the journey, yet another sailor is subjected to two dozen lashes for having struck a superior officer. It is perhaps helpful to recall that punishment was assumed to be a natural part of life aboard ship at that time. Recall the historical case with Captain Cook, who became enraged over the "disappearance of ship's property. […] In pursuit of property, Cook was losing all sense of propriety,"[9] and he punished the sailors for theft by lashes.[10]

Especially from the American perspective, however, a British officer's punishing ordinary men must have invoked a sense of inequality, recalling for example that moment when the founding fathers of the United States finally escaped British rule by declaring independence in 1776. Christian, who warns Bligh against being too harsh on the sailors during a

---

[9] Jonathan Lamb, "Making Babies in the South Seas," *Victorian Studies* 49:3 (2007), 485.

[10] Captain Cook's Journal, 4 June 1769, http://southseas.nla.gov.au/journals/cook/17690604.html.

journey of 10,000 miles – for fear that the ship would become a "powder keg" – is thereby already installed as the incarnation of liberalism aboard the ship. Their struggle intensifies when Christian refuses to sign the inventory report for the ship; Bligh had earlier bought food of lower quality and had falsified the report for his own financial gain. An eruption of this tension, however, is pre-empted as they arrive in Tahiti. There, the sailors face a situation as described by Cook and his "senior scientist," Joseph Banks.[11] "A great number of the natives in their canoes came to the Ship and brought with them Cocoa-nuts," and all of them "came to us with all imaginable marks of friendship and submission."[12] In contrast to the negative depiction by Cook, who reported that "it was a hard matter to keep them out of the Ship. as [sic] they clime like Munkeys, but it was still harder to keep them from Stealing but every thing that came within their reach, in this they are prodiges expert,"[13] Banks recognized that the sailors "depended on the natives who had on all former occasions been both able and willing to supply us with any quantity of Breadfruit."[14]

---

[11] Bronwen, 157. *Joseph Banks' Journal*, 28 June 1769. http://southseas.nla.gov.au/journals/banks/17690628.html. Banks writes: "From this place many Canoes came off to meet us and in them some very handsome women who by their behaviour seemed to be sent out to entice us to come ashore, which we most readily did, and were received in a very friendly manner by *Wiverou* who was chief of the district which was called *Owiourou*. He ordered his people to assist us in dressing our provisions, of which we had now got a tolerable stock about 30 breadfruit some plantains and fish, enough to last us two days. I stuck close to the women hoping to get a snug lodging by that means as I had often done; they were very kind, too much so for they promised more than I ask'd, but when they saw that we were resolved to stay they dropd off one by one and at last left me jilted 5 or 6 times and obliged to seek out for a lodging myself."

[12] *Captain Cook's Journal*, 13 April 1769, http://southseas.nla.gov.au/journals/cook/17690413.html.

[13] *Captain Cook's Journal*, 14 April 1769, http://southseas.nla.gov.au/journals/cook/17690414.html.

[14] *Joseph Banks' Journal*, 28 June 1769.

The same developments are depicted in *Mutiny on the Bounty*; a positive perspective , however arises from the depiction of the islanders, whose chief Hiti Hiti welcomes the captain, as other natives provide coconuts to the sailors, something they had never before seen: unfamiliar with this tropical fruit, the sailor, opening the nut and surprised to find milk in it, can but exclaim: "Milk, it's milk. Captain they must have cows here that lay eggs." In contrast to the feelings of his men, Bligh reminds us that they have travelled to Tahiti to gather breadfruits for Jamaica. Put differently, the men ought discard their belief in paradise for their sole purpose for being in the South Seas depends upon a higher calling, duty. Likewise, to punish Christian for his behaviour, Bligh forbids him to leave the ship.

The following scenes survey life on the island. We see natives cultivating, harvesting, fishing, and preparing coconuts for food, as well as women making flower necklaces, all images that thereby strengthen a sense of the exoticism of island life. The *HMS Bounty* itself becomes an expression of this exoticism when it is decorated with flowers by the natives. Hiti Hiti also explains more about life in Tahiti to Roger—as a land where the people have no need money to enjoy a fulfilled life. The chief is finally able to demand that Christian be allowed on the shores of the islands, where the English officer genuinely finds paradise, not solely in the landscape, but also with Hiti Hiti's granddaughter. They fall in love, and Christian admits, "What a contrast to the ship." Christian is ordered back to the ship by Bligh but remains on the island for one more night before swimming back. As with later movies, native songs and dances are featured. While the "native dance [can be seen as] an embodied, animated, and ephemeral social practice,"[15] it remains unfortunate "that the salvage of dance

---

http://southseas.nla.gov.au/journals/banks/17690628.html.

[15] Valerie Weinstein, "Archiving the Ephemeral: Dance in Ethnographic Films from the Hamburg South Seas Expedition: 1908-1910," *seminar* 46:3 (2010), 224.

through the medium of film is not possible"[16] and that their depiction remains stereotypical for most spectators, who have no idea about the traditional meanings inherent in the dances we see.

More to the point, Tahiti is revealed as an island inhabited by the most beautiful women-- only be partly true, for as Cook himself described them, the women of Tahiti were from his perspective very masculine.[17] For the sailors as well as the spectators, however, beautiful and exotic women became an essential part of the South Seas and the ideal of a Tahitian island paradise. Despite the enjoyment of such a pleasant life, an end comes when Bligh commands the sailors back on board so that they might follow their duty and ship the breadfruits to Jamaica.

It comes as no surprise, however, that in order to provide these plants with sufficient water during the journey; the captain cuts the water rations of the crew. The sailors, thus, are returned to the harsh reality of life on ship. Mutiny ensues, and Christian returns to Tahiti, where he will father a child with Hiti Hiti's granddaughter. Bligh himself leads the loyal crew members to Timor and returns to hunt Christian for his betrayal. The former gathers his fellow mutineers and their wives, to sail to Pitcairn Island, where the group burns the ship and establishes a new settlement. And while parts of the depiction of the history of the mutiny were changed in the later movies, depictions of the South Seas remain largely the same.

Mutiny on the Bounty **(1962)**

The production of 1962, with Marlon Brando as Christian, Trevor Howard as Bligh, and Tarita Tumi Teripaia as the exotic beauty Maimiti[18] is perhaps the best-known version of

---

[16] Ibid., 238.

[17] *Captain Cook's Journal*, 28 April 1769, http://southseas.nla.gov.au/journals/cook/17690428.html.

[18] She would later become Brando's third wife.

the *Bounty* plot on the screen. The conflict between Christian and Bligh here is also based on a class conflict between the captain, who has received his first command, and the nobleman Christian, who brings two ladies when he first boards, dressed as he is more like a casanova than an officer of the British Navy. Bligh also takes the chance to make some extra money by stealing cheese. In contrast to the movie of 1935, here Bligh wants to sail around South America to show his skills and gain recognition from the admiralty for the faster delivery of the breadfruits to Jamaica. However, he also has to take the route around South Africa, as the crew is unable to pass Cape Horn. They eventually arrive in Tahiti and are greeted by a joyful and promising world as it is represented by the natives, who come to the ship in their canoes.

In contrast to Hiti Hiti in the 1935version, the Tahitian chief here arrives at the shore in a large ship and is shown wearing a colourful and majestic suit of feathers. The natives are depicted as far more "primitive," for the chief does not speak English himself and is overly impressed by the Western presents. However, they agree to grant Bligh the breadfruits for his misison. After that, we see the same depictions of Tahitian life as before. Exotic fishing techniques are shown, as well as dances and traditional songs. The performance by Teripaia is famous, and made her a symbol of "exotic sex appeal" in the 1960s. After her performance, it seems only natural that Christian should fall in love with her, but the couple's first kiss is not easy, as the Tahitian woman does not know about this Western practice. Bligh needs good relations with Hiti Hiti, and consequently orders Christian to have an intimate relationship with Maimiti. In general, the sexual perspective of the Western–native interrelationship is underlined in the movie, as it is said that the Tahitians accept sex as a sign of good will. Naturally, the white sailors were also attractive because their skin colour was exotic for the Tahitians. These contacts are not imaginary: Captain Cook

also reported them. However, he also reported physical consequences that were not depicted in the movies:[19]

> Tuesday 6th This Day and for some days past we have been inform'd by several of the Natives that about 10 or 15 Months ago, Two Ships touched at this Island and stay'd 10 days in a Harbour to the Eastward calle'd Ohidea the Commanders name was Toottera so at least they call'd him and that one of the Natives / call'd Orette Brother to the Chief of Ohidea, went away with him; they likewise say that these Ship[s] brought the Venerial distemper to this Island where ^ it is now as common ~~amongst them here~~ as in any part of the World and which the ^ people bear with as little concern as if ~~it~~ ^ they had been accustom'd to it for ages past. We had not been here many days before some of our people got this disease, and as no such thing happen'd to any of the Dolphins people while she was here that I ever heard off, I had reason / notwithstanding the improbability of the thing / ~~the~~ to think that ~~some in the Endeavour had brought it here~~ we had brought it along with us which gave me no small uneasiness and I did all in my power to prevent its progress, but all I could do was to little purpose ^ for I may safely say that I was not assisted by an one person in ye Ship, and ~~I~~ was oblig'd to have the most part of the Ships Compney a Shore every day to work upon the Fort and a Strong guard every Night and the Women were so very liberal with their favours, or ~~that~~ else Nails, Shirts &C[a] were temptations that they could not Withstand, that this distemper very soon spread it self over the greatest part of ^ the Ships Compney; but now I have the satisfaction to find that the Natives all agree that we did not bring it ~~first~~ here.

Despite such possible problems, the relationship between Christian and Maimiti is depicted in the best possible way. Exotic screens, sunsets, white beaches, clear water, and palm trees further drive home the exotic nature behind the image of Tahiti.

The remainder of this iteration follows the traditional *Bounty* plot, although the mutiny is represented as more the consequence of the personal struggle between Christian and Bligh that erupts into mutiny only after a struggle over the

---

[19] *Captain Cook's Journal*, 6 June 1769, http://southseas.nla.gov.au/journals/cook/17690606.html.

treatment of an ill sailor. After that, Christian takes over the ship and returns to Haiti and later to Pitcairn Island. Despite the same basic storyline, the 1962 *Mutiny on the Bounty* ends differently. Here, Christian thinks about returning to England to seek the decision of a court. It is his men who torch the ship to prevent his return. While trying to save the ship, the former officer is hurt and finally dies with the sinking of the ship. This ending differs from all the others, primarily because Christian cannot accept living forever in the exotic world and wants to return to civilization, although that means facing a possible death penalty. The Tahitian or South Sea paradise therefore remains something that is seen to be spectacular and peaceful for a while, but not something that could become a real home forever.

***The Bounty* (1984)**

Another approach was chosen for the 1984 version. Mel Gibson as Christian and Anthony Hopkins as Bligh are friends in the beginning, with the latter demanding that the younger man be his officer on board. The movie, however, also depicts the exoticness of the South Seas, starting with a sunset and a dawn in this setting, showing palm trees and beaches as well as the ocean in the moonlight. The movie uses a flashback as Bligh describes the events to a commission. It seems clear that Bligh, who also chose the route around Cape Horn, at first desired to achieve fame, like Cook did before him. The captain is friendly to his men at the beginning, but as the mission fails, and they have to take the longer route around Africa, first officer Fryer (Daniel Day-Lewis) is accused and demoted and Christian becomes first officer. Aside from those differences with regard to the plot, Tahiti itself remains the exotic paradise which also offers sexual freedom.

The sailors talk about the women of Tahiti, and statements like "All they wear is tattoos, in wonderful places" show that imagination about nudity, sexual openness, and exotic beauty were all parts of the common sailor image of the

South Seas. Of all three versions of the plot we look at here, nudity is shown most explicitly in *The Bounty*. The welcome by the natives is here sexually intense, with the seamen facing many near-naked Tahitian beauties who are waiting for them to come ashore. Nudity did indeed seem to be quite common in Tahiti, as Sidney Parkinson, a member of Cook's crew described it:

> we saw a favourite game, which the young girls divert themselves with in an evening dividing themselves into two parties, one standing opposite to the other, one party throws apples, which the other endeavours to catch. The right of the game I am not acquainted with; but now-and-then one of the parties advanced, stamping with their feet, making wry mouths, straddling with their legs, lifting up their cloaths, and exposing their nakedness; at the same time repeating some words in a disagreeable tone. Thus are they bred up to lewdness from their childhood, many of them not being above eight or nine years of age.[20]

Cook appears in the movie, as Chief Taina asks about him and his death, but Bligh uses the legend of the immortal Captain Cook to secure his personal situation. The chief gets a mirror as a present from King George, and in return Bligh is supposed to have sex with one of Taina's women. The dances are shown in this version of the *Bounty* plot again, and they are also sexually loaded. Another element which also seems to be the fulfilment of a stereotype is the diet of the sailors, who eat exotic fruits all the time; but fruit was not the only food on Tahiti, as Captain Cook reported:[21]

> We refused to except of the Dog as being an animal we had no use for at which she seemed a little surprised and told us that it was very good eating and we very soon had an opportunity [sic] to find that it was so, for M[r] Banks having bought a basket of fruit in which happend to be the thigh of

---

[20] Sidney Parkinson, *Journal of a Voyage to the South Seas, in His Majesty's Ship, The Endeavour.* (London, 1773), http://southseas.nla.gov.au/journals/parkinson/063.html.

[21] *Captain Cook's Journal*, 20 June 1769, http://southseas.nla.gov.au/journals/cook/17690620.html.

> a Dog ready dress'd, of this several of us taisted and found that it was meat not to be despise'd and therefore took Obarea's dog and had him immediatly dress'd by some of the Natives in the following manner. They first made a hole in the ground about a foot deep in which they made a fire and heated some small Stones, while this was doing the Dog was Strangle'd and the hair got off by laying him frequently upon the fire, and as clean as if it had been scalded off with hot water, his intrails were taken out and the whole washed clean, and as soon as the stones and hole was sufficiently heated, the fire was put out, and part of the Stones ~~was~~ were left in the bottom of the hole, upon these stones were laid Green leaves and upon them the Dog together with the entrails, these were likewise cover'd with leaves and over them hot stones, and then the whole was close cover'd with mould; after he had laid here about 4 hours, the Oven / for so I must call it / was open'd and the Dog taken out whole and well done, and it was the opinion of every one who ~~eat~~ ^ taisted of it that they ~~n~~Never eat sweeter meat, ~~and~~ we ^ therefore resolved for the future not to despise Dogs flesh. It is in this manner that the Natives dress, or Bake all their Victuals that requires it. Flesh, Fish and fruit.

The plot continues in much the same manner as before: Christian falls in love with a native woman; however, he also adapts the cultural habits of the native population. He gets tattooed, a motif already known from O'Brien's *Atolls of the Sun* (1922), in which a white man falls in love with a native beauty and gets tattooed to become accepted by the "other" community.[22] Christian gets married to the woman, but Bligh desires to leave Tahiti to finish his mission. He starts to punish the men to keep up the discipline. Having left the island, the captain decides to sail around South America once again, but the men are no longer willing to follow his orders just to achieve his personal fame.

The mutiny begins, and Bligh has to find a way back to civilization. Christian returns to Tahiti, battling in the process against other natives who are unfriendly to intruders and kill one of his sailors. But Taina decides that they must leave, as he fears the might of the British Navy, which will demand the mutineers be punished. The journey of the

[22] Geiger, Geiger, "Imagined Islands," 99.

mutineers also ends at Pitcairn Island, and Bligh is judged not guilty for the mutiny. The image of Bligh is much more positive than in the other two movies, and Christian is driven only by his love for the Tahitian woman, not by a personal conflict with the captain. Tahiti, however, remains an "exotic anchor of freedom" in all three movies. The men are relieved from the discipline of the ship, and they experience happiness: in all three cases, it is mainly this which drives them to become mutineers.

Conclusion

Mutiny on the Bounty (1962) is probably the best known of the three movies; however, the image conveyed by all three versions is the same. Tahiti is a South Sea paradise, an exotic place where men can find happiness. All three movies use stereotypes, which might also be expected given their audiences: beautiful women, flowers, exotic plants and fruits, dances and sexual liberty are the main tropes in all three movies. Consequently they create a positive image of "otherness". Although that image is not always historically correct, as our review of Cook's reports has shown, it is exactly the image the audience expects.

The movies that show the fate of the mutineers, consequently, also establish the reproduction and chronological conservation of the stereotypes that have for generations been connected with Tahiti. Christian is always awaited by an exotic beauty, while the return to the *HMS Bounty* is always the end of the freedom that was to be experienced on shore. The antagonism between those two spheres also helps to create this positive reading or screening of Tahiti, where life seems to be simple and beautiful, and above all better than on the *HMS Bounty*. The image of an "exotic anchor of freedom" is created mainly through this bipolar depiction and the use of Western stereotypes; not by a decent look into Tahitian history and culture itself. The *Bounty* movies are indeed a sequel to the many literary works from the 18th to the 20th centuries which created a sphere of

dreams, driven above all by misinterpretations or glorifications of the South Seas as a paradise on earth.