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Cultural Tourism and Post-Colonialism in Hawaii

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Cultural Tourism and Post-Colonialism in Hawaii

An Honors Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for Honors Studies in Anthropology

By

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Anthropology

J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences

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“So when I write or when I talk about Hawaiians I talk about them in present tense. Because there weren’t [just] Hawaiians “back then” [but rather,] there are Hawaiians today. There are our Hawaiian ancestors, from our past—our forefathers. But when I talk about Hawaiians I talk about them in present tense. Because we are still here. In fact, there are more of us! We are all mixed these days, but we are still here. We are still a thriving culture”

--Adriana Kalama

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Figure 1: *Plumeria* Flowers

Introduction: Once in a Lullaby

Ha`aheo ka ua i nâ pali

Proudly swept the rain by the cliffs

Ke nihi a`ela i ka nahele

As it glided through the trees

E hahai (uhai) ana paha i ka liko

Still following ever the bud

Pua `âhihi lehua o uka

The `ahihi lehua of the vale¹

The air is fragrant with the exotic perfumes of an island breeze, carrying with it the saltiness of the sea, the lush coolness of the jungle, and the sweetness of the *plumeria* flowers that fall lazily from the trees. One of these blossoms is tucked behind my ear—the left side, to convey my singleness, or so I was told by the man driving the trolley which brought tourists from one hotel to another. “The left ear is for single, the right ear for taken..... and one in the middle if you’re charging!” he told us. I noticed my friend

hastily moving her flower after hearing this. Flowers are everywhere, dripping from the trees, drifting on the breeze, and floating in the water. Some purple orchids had even been set out in a vase on the white tablecloth—a bright display of tropical beauty for us to enjoy as we dine.

<i>Aloha `oe, aloha `oe</i>	<i>Farewell to thee, farewell to thee</i>
<i>E ke onaona noho i ka lipo</i>	<i>The charming one who dwells in the shaded bowers</i>
<i>One fond embrace,</i>	<i>One fond embrace,</i>
<i>A ho`i a`e au</i>	<i>‘Ere I depart</i>
<i>Until we meet again</i>	<i>Until we meet again²</i>

Boats are returning to their moorings in the harbor. I watch tired mothers shepherd hungry children and husbands from the pier, weary and ravenous from the day’s touring excursions on the island. Many families continue on down the street towards Captain Jack’s or the Hawaii Pizza Company. Some inquire about the wait at the Pioneer Inn, as it is the closest to the harbor.

<i>‘O ka hali`a aloha i hiki mai</i>	<i>Sweet memories come back to me</i>
<i>Ke hone a`e nei i</i>	<i>Bringing fresh remembrances</i>
<i>Ku`u Manawa</i>	<i>Of the past</i>
<i>‘O `oe nô ka`u ipo aloha</i>	<i>Dearest one, yes, you are mine own</i>
<i>A loko e hana nei</i>	<i>From you, true love shall never depart³</i>

An old structure, the Pioneer Inn preserves a nostalgia for the days of whaling and plantations. Since the turn of the 20th century, it has stood on the corner closest to the harbor, weathering the trade winds for more than a hundred years. The building captures an old traditional charm that has long eluded the more modern sections of the island. The Pioneer Inn prides itself on retaining the best of the old and combining it with the modern luxury of air conditioning and convenient location--plus, fine dining and live entertainment by local Hawaiians! The walls are painted a deep tropical green, framed with decorative white trim around the eaves, balconies, and the huge, wrap-around porch. It is upon this porch where we sit now, listening to the deeply resonant voice of a Hawaiian musician accompanied by the bright mellow sounds of his ukulele.

Maopopo ku`u `ike i ka nani I have seen and watched your loveliness

Nâ pua rose o Maunawili The sweet rose of Maunawili

I laila hia`ia nâ manu And 'tis there the birds of love dwell

Miki`ala i ka nani o ka lipo And sip the honey from your lips⁴

We recline at ease in our chairs, watching the sun tracing the edges of the islands, gilding each mountain. It leaves a path of diamonds on the crest of every wave and ripple leading to the horizon. It is almost as if a golden road to heaven expands before us. Perhaps we truly have drifted “Somewhere over the Rainbow,” as the lyrics of Israel Kamakawiwo’ole suggest.

*Somewhere over the rainbow
Way up high
And the dreams that you dreamed of
Once in a lullaby*

*Somewhere over the rainbow
Blue birds fly
And the dreams that you dreamed of
Dreams really do come true ooh oh⁵*

The Hawaiian performer is perhaps ten feet from our table performing a simple, but lovely medley. He is the picture of Hawaiian: overweight, holding his tiny ukulele, clad in brightly colored clothing, patterned with tropical flowers and leaves. He sits before us, creating music as warm and mellow as melted butter. A sort of tropical hypnosis comes over me. I feel as if everything that has happened no longer matters. I can forget the weight of the burdens I have been carrying, and just for this moment, breathe. I try to soak in every ounce of beauty, but soon find my neck aching from not knowing which way to look. Behind me loom the western mountains. They rise endlessly into the sky, every gulch and peak illuminated by the angle of the sun. Above me, peaking through the branches of the banyan tree is an impossibly azure blue sky. The colors are so incredible on the island. It is as if I am truly seeing them for the first time. Whether it is the lack of pollution, or perhaps the fertile volcanic soil that makes the greens so verdant and the blues like lapis lazuli, I cannot say. I can only revel in its beauty, wondering.

*Someday I'll wish upon a star
Wake up where the clouds are far behind me
Where trouble melts like lemon drops
High above the chimney tops
That's where you'll find me*⁶

The Pioneer Inn also has the best view of the banyan tree. Over a hundred and fifty years old, the tree's vines and branches extend for over an entire city block, creating a jungle in the city square. Every tourist to pass through has carved his or her initials upon the bark of the tree in hopes that their names will remain, growing with the tree, and stretching sustained through the centuries. I wonder if perhaps in another hundred years, someone will read their name and know that So-and-So loved What's-Her-Name once upon an island dream.

*The colors of the rainbow, so pretty in the sky
Are also on the faces of people passing by
I see friends shaking hands
Saying, "How do you do?"
They're really saying, "I...I love you"*⁷

The orange sun sinks into the water, its dying light breaking into a thousand colors. Across the bay, barely eight miles away, the clouds ensheath the island of

Molokai like a mysterious gilded cage, forever retaining its secrets and separateness. I scan my eyes along the line of the horizon, where blue meets blue. To the left is the smaller island of Lanai, mostly uninhabited and owned by one lucky, rich man. I wonder if he sits on its western shore, or at the top of the mountain looking out on the world, realizing how fortunate he is. In the foggy distance, barely discernable in the evening haze, is Kaho'olawe.

*Tall is the tale of the mischievous one,
Who fished out all the islands and captured the sun!
His deeds and tasks I will unmask so that you'll understand,
That before there was a Clark Kent there was a Hawaiian Super Man!*⁸

The performer amuses the restaurant with a rousing chorus of “Hawaiian Super Man.” A popular hit, it details the misadventures of the “mischievous, marvelous, magical Maui,” the demigod namesake a beautiful island. I find my leg bobbing along to the catchy rhythm. Looking around, I notice some diners are recording this song with their iPhones and digital cameras. This is surely a piece of the Islands that they will want to take back to accompany their stories. After all, is this not the anthem of the island? I can imagine the excitement on their faces, “yes Carol dear, the island of Maui is named for the trickster god Maui. I know all about him now. There’s even a song about it! Here-listen! Look at this guy—can’t you just *tell* that we were in Hawaii?!” By the end of their trip, every tourist ought to be able to sing along....at least to the chorus.

Mischievous, marvelous, magical Maui, Hero of this land!

The one, the only, the ultimate—Hawaiian Super Man!

Ma-au-u-i! Ma-au-u-i! Oh Ma-au-ui! Hawaiian Super Man!

*Ma-au-u-i! Ma-au-u-i! Oh Ma-au-ui! Hawaiian Super Man!*⁹

The waiter returns with our meals. I recall something CS Lewis once said, “there's nothing to beat good freshwater fish if you eat it when it has been alive half an hour ago and has come out of the pan half a minute ago” (C. S. Lewis 1994). I have to agree with him, I think to myself as I enjoy the warm flaky texture on my tongue. Looking around, other diners seem to be enjoying their own meals just as much. My mother and I each try a bite of each other's food, and argue over who picked the best meal tonight. Though the sun is sinking, the air is still warm, and the wide woven blades of the porch fans are a welcome assistant to the breeze. I look out again at the sunset, not wanting to miss a moment. It changes so quickly, and is so different each night as it sinks below the horizon. In the pause between songs, I can hear the ocean more clearly for a moment. Nothing can quite compare to that sound: the ocean waves rushing and shushing like a lullaby over the lava rocks.

Ua mau, ke ea o ka aina, i ka pono, o Hawai'i

Ua mau, ke ea o ka aina, i ka pono, o Hawai'i

(The Life of the Land is Perpetuated in Righteousness)

*If just for a day our king and queen
Would visit all these islands and saw everything,
How would they feel about the changes of our land?¹⁰*

In a moment, the simple beauty and exotic charm breaks into a thousand jagged pieces. Something has changed. A very different sound now wafts in the breeze. The bright and sunny mellow of the ukulele has died. This new sound is dissonant, eerie, causing the hairs on my arms to rise. My stomach tightens with unease as I try to identify the source of the change. Any feeling of levity or relaxation I might have been experiencing before is ruined. I lower my fork and knife to the plate and wipe my mouth with a napkin. My brow furrows as I try to discern what is happening. A moment ago I was listening to a native Hawaiian performing a song for the white folks as they ate dinner on the veranda. I perk up my ears and suddenly find myself witnessing something far more significant.

*Could you just imagine if they were around
And saw highways on their sacred grounds,
How would they feel about this modern city life?¹¹*

This can't be right. It is something so contrary and taboo. Yet...it is something I feared all along. My face burning, I start to turn slowly...not wanting to draw attention to myself. I begin listening to this Hawaiian man sing about a different story. This story is not one of a lush and lively tropical paradise filled with beautiful women, or of a happy

and welcoming people smiling at their visitors. This story is about the aching heart of a crushed people mourning for all they had lost.

Tears would come from each other's eyes

As they would stop to realize

That our people are in great, great danger now

How, would they feel, could their smiles be content, then cry

Cry for the gods, cry for the people

Cry for the land that was taken away

*And then yet you'll find, Hawai'i*¹²

The hypnotic beauty of that night was shattered with this song, “Hawaii 78.” Looking back upon that evening, I remember my thoughts churning. Though this song was certainly not new to the Islands, it was new to the tourists. Performing it in the Pioneer Inn felt *kapu*, or taboo. Perhaps in other more local settings it would not be out of place, but here, deep in the heart of a tourist town? Beneath the banyan tree? How could the performer justify playing such a song? After all, it is his job to entertain, not to perturb. Certainly some kind of *kapu* had been breached. Everything I had been told to believe had changed. It had been shattered in that one moment. Though I wanted to believe it was not true, that this island paradise was real, it was something I had feared all along. Ironically, this song was also made famous by Israel Kamakawiwo'ole —the same man who responsible for “Hawaiian Super Man” and “Over the Rainbow/What a

Wonderful World.” It seems this man had much to say about his island, ranging from praising its beauty, his pride living there, to the more uncomfortable emotions that no one wants to talk about. Indeed, it seems that the songs that actually make it into the tourist settings are carefully selected. They are played over and over in shopping malls and restaurants. Tourists are intended to buy into this idea of an island paradise, where the people are welcoming and nothing ever goes wrong. It is this idea that keeps them coming back year after year, and telling their friends. Imagine the impact if that spell of perceived paradise was broken. It would have serious financial ramifications for the tourist industry if they could no longer package, label, and sell paradise.

Israel Kamakawiwo’ole, or “Iz,” had been involved in the *Aloha Aina* movement. This movement in the 1970’s was part of a larger current—one which has come to be called the Hawaiian Renaissance, a time of rediscovery of the Hawaiian culture, language, and heritage. It was also a time of expression of loss for the land that should rightly belong to the Hawaiian people. “Hawaii 78” was written by a collaboration of several artists but made famous by Iz. It became the soundtrack reflecting on the sorrow of Hawaiian people, the mantra that motivated them for change; the words are laced with guilt, carefully aimed at the white man’s heart. In the lyrics, the author muses, imagining their reactions if king and queen could return for a day and see all the Hawaiian Islands and what they have become.

Could you just imagine they came back

And saw traffic lights and railroad tracks,

How would they feel about this modern city life?¹³

That night in the Pioneer Inn, the performer's demeanor had barely changed. He was not shouting these lyrics angrily or glaring at the white people filling the restaurant. Instead, he seemed to be filled with a deep, quiet sadness. No longer could I be a passive tourist, enjoying the picture being painted for me. My eyes had been opened to a much deeper current in Hawaii. It is not one that is heard at the *luau* or shopping in the Whalers Village. It is one that echoes from the slopes of the volcanoes and reverberates in the very ground. A deep, low humming, unnoticed by most, but strong, and ceaseless, beating like the drums of the ancients in the heart of every Hawaiian.

Tears would come from each other's eyes

As they would stop to realize

That our land is in great, great danger now¹⁴

The diners around me did not even pause in their meal. I looked around at each of them, carrying on their conversations, digging eagerly into their *mahi mahi* and *mai tais*. Despite the change in the atmosphere, they continued gazing out at the sun sinking into the sea, comparing photos, and not even noticing the gravity of the quiet political protest taking place before them.

All the fighting that the king had done

To conquer all these islands now these condominiums

How would he feel if he saw Hawai'i nei

How, would he feel, would his smile be content, then cry¹⁵

From that night on, back in August 2013, Hawaii never looked the same for me. The paradiscal images that I had bought into seem like an old postcard, thin and faded. When I gaze across the bay at the other islands, I do not see a romanticized beauty. I see an ancient homeland torn asunder, but I also see those who are trying to restore it. When I look at Kaho'olawe now, I see more than just a lovely photo opportunity. I see a painful history and a struggle to regain something that was lost. It was this series of events that moved Iz to create his version of "Hawaii 78." It was his reaction not only to the destruction that took place on Kaho'olawe, but also to the loss of land that was supposed to be preserved for Hawaiians in perpetuity.

In this thesis, I explore tensions that arise between tourism and Hawaiian self-representation. I discuss the history of Hawaiian tourism and how it has contributed to the way that Hawaiians are perceived today. Through interviews with Hawaiians, locals, and tourists, I explore the relationships and tensions between these three groups. In addition, I provide an example of an alternate approach to cultural tourism in Hawaii. Using this example, I show how Hawaiian culture is finding revival and preservation in modernity.



The banyan tree, too, is different now. I do not see a photo opportunity or a playground or even just a beautiful historical tree. Though there is a long tradition of carving names upon the tree, especially for romantic partners, lovers are not the only ones who frequent the area of the banyan tree. Beneath its branches, a less romantic story is unfolding. The homeless—or *houseless*, as they prefer to be called according to one of my informants, congregate in the shelter of the tangled boughs, talking story and discretely exchanging contraband. Nervous parents hurry their children along, past these rough and shady looking folk, toward the more inviting side of the street where the souvenir shops are. Less than three hundred feet from the entrance to the Pioneer Inn is the foundation of Kamehameha's brick palace. It was the first Western building constructed for him. According to the plaque and local lore, it was intended for his favorite wife, but she refused to live in it, choosing a traditional Hawaiian structure instead. When I visited this construction, I first wondered why I was the only one interested. Then, as I watched from a nearby rock, this site was the gathering place for all

the houseless Hawaiians. Each evening, as the sun is setting, they gather there. They play drums, dance, sing, and talk story. From the sheltered porch of the Pioneer Inn, I could still hear the drums beating. Few tourists venture to this point near the harbor. I was cautioned by several people when I inquired about the location. They told me it was not that interesting and not worth going, as if this gathering of houseless Hawaiians was not something a tourist should be concerned with. There is so much pain that is so easy to gloss over and ignore. Young children are taught by their parents that when touring, avoid the edges of the boundary. They are taught not leave the safety and beauty of what has been constructed for their benefit. If they do, they might not be happy or satisfied with what they see. That is why they train their children to look the other way, and stay on the other side of the street. However, if they were to stare it in the face, even the unpleasant parts, they might find themselves having a much deeper understanding of what is really happening in Hawaii.

Unfortunately, Hawaiians are used to being overlooked. Few tourists would even dream that the performers throwing fire and shaking their grass on stage would feel anything but thrill and delight to be there putting on a show. Few see past the swaying hips to notice that the *hula* girl has a vacant, far away expression or that the fire dancer's cries could mean anything more than an expression of tribal masculinity for the entertainment of tourists. However, one only has to find the edge to peel back the glossy veneer. In those places where the spell is broken or its construction can be witnessed, that is where one may begin to understand the real story behind the mask. From these experiences, one can begin to hear their stories and know their pain: poverty, loss of language, health, drug use, and more. As their native land is being transformed from a

sacred landscape into a tourist theme park, does this mean that the Hawaiians are merely the entertainment, the attraction, the simple, happy performers? Has their culture been reduced to what is preserved in tourist presentations? Is there any room left in Hawaii for the Hawaiians?

*Cry for the gods, cry for the people,
Cry for the land that was taken away,
And then yet you'll find, Hawai'i...*¹⁶

Despite its melancholy tone, “Hawaii 78” does not end in hopelessness. It ends with an acknowledgement that in spite of the yoke of colonialism and transformation of their homeland into an attraction, that Hawaii lives on. By the way-- that’s *Huh-VY-ee*, not *Hah-WHY*. If we are going to start to peel back the veneer and get things straight, we can start by addressing Hawaii and its people by their proper name.

Look Back, Move Forward

Several theoretical strains drawn from anthropology, tourism studies, history, and performance theory are helpful to interpret cultural tourism and Hawaiian identity. The work of anthropologist Jane Desmond is especially relevant to this ethnographic example. Desmond’s theories of embodiment, display, and identity can be used to describe the way that “Hawaiian” bodies become signs of the “ideal native.” Her work explains how a once sovereign nation came to be reduced to a single icon, and how Hawaiian culture has been bought, sold, and misrepresented by the idealized. In *Culture by the Pound*,

anthropologist Davydd Greenwood describes how the meaning of cultural activities for local people can be changed by the presence of an audience, particularly if the activities are produced, regulated, or altered. Tourism in Hawaii is a massive audience to Hawaiian culture. There is pressure to produce experiences for the benefit of the tourist, but the loss of the native (Greenwood 1977:173). Sociologist Dean MacCannell and anthropologist Edward Bruner propose different definitions of authenticity. MacCannell suggests that in order to find the “real” and “authentic” one must get backstage (1999:96). Bruner believes that there is no real backstage, but rather that there are different layers and versions of authenticity (2006). Both of these theories are useful when interpreting tourist spaces in Hawaii. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblet’s expert eye for museums is useful in analyzing the private collection at the Island Tide Hotel. Her theory of the illusion of authenticity and the impression of an unmediated encounter describes the way that tourists consume Hawaiian performances (1998:55). Renato Rosaldo’s theory of imperialist nostalgia can be applied to the way that tourists from a conquering nation long for the culture they helped destroy. In addition, Rosaldo’s theories can be used to interpret how nostalgia lends innocence to racial discrimination in the Hawaiian Islands (1989:68). The theories of Leah Dilworth, expert in American studies and tourism, about the ways in which Native Americans in the Southwest have been portrayed through Western imagination and primitivism parallel the way that mainlanders think about Hawaiians (1996:4). Finally, folklorist Richard Bauman’s theory of emergence provides a means of analyzing the nature of performance. This concept is useful in describing the way that Hawaiians can live emergently by practicing their culture in a modern society (1977:38).

This thesis is based on library research as well as three weeks of intensive ethnographic field work. Personal experiences during my first week in Hawaii transformed a vacation into an investigation of tourism and Hawaiian identity. I began building a network of possible informants and seeking out sacred locations on and off the tourist map. Though much can be gleaned from library research, my work required deeper insight into how tourists see and experience sites as well as how Native Hawaiians try to represent themselves and fit within the tourist capitalist machine. I was awarded an Honors College Research Grant in 2014 that allowed me to return to the Hawaiian Islands to conduct independent fieldwork for an additional two weeks. My methodology includes formal and informal interviews and participant-observation. I conducted general surveys of locals, Hawaiians, and tourists. Interviews were documented by recording the audio or intensive note-taking. I was able to locate key informants from the local population by building relationships with locals at church, restaurants, tourist shopping areas, and local businesses. While local and tourist interviews were obtained without difficulty, the native perspective proved more elusive. My research was conducted on four different Hawaiian Islands. These ranged from more touristic places like Oahu, to more exclusive and remote locations that required travel on a ferry or through the jungle to access. Informal interviews on the secluded Island of Molokai yielded the first uncensored encounter with Native Hawaiians. On a more developed Island, I stumbled upon the Island Tide Hotel after a conversation with a tourist at the mall. She insisted I see it for myself. After several days of observation at the Island Tide Hotel, which included note-taking, photography, and observing various performances, I began interviewing the staff and guests. I made arrangements to access the hotel's private museum and tour the grounds.

From there I was able to procure an interview with the hotel's director of hospitality, Hawaiian activities, and guest services. Our interviews continued for several days. I participated in some of the classes in "Hawaiianness" taught at the Island Tide Hotel. I also worked extensively at the Luxury Island Hotel where I conducted interviews of the employees and guests in the hotel and on the nearby sacred grounds. It took two weeks to track down the hotel's very busy cultural coordinator, but the endeavor was well worth it. He spent more than half of his day in an interview with me. He provided excellent insight from his personal experiences as a native Hawaiian working for the tourism industry. Throughout the following year, I remained in contact with most of my key informants via phone calls and emails. In this way I was able to continue to interview them and verify information throughout the duration of my research.

The first part of Chapter One provides a brief political history of Hawaii, focusing particularly on the controversies surrounding annexation and statehood, the loss of Hawaiian identity, and revitalization. The second part of Chapter One provides a comparison of contemporary local and native perspectives. I describe current issues concerning Hawaiians and Hawaiian image in relation to tourism.

Chapter Two examines an ethnographic case study at the Island Tide Hotel. I discuss the methods that are being used to assuage tensions between the guests and hosts. I also show how the Island Tide Hotel has modernized Hawaiian culture within the hospitality industry.

Chapter Three examines the efforts of the Island Tide Hotel to modernize the Hawaiian tradition of the *Makahiki*. I analyze the private museum that is dedicated to this

undertaking and how the employees of the hotel find meaning through connecting with the past.

In this thesis I explore tensions between Hawaiian self-representation and tourism. I uncover the roots of modern complications with tourism in Hawaii by examining how history has been written from the point of view of the conqueror, the imperialist, and later, the tourist. I explore the tensions between locals, natives, and tourists and analyze the role each of these plays in the construction of Hawaiian identity.



Figure 3: Maui's northeastern bays on the road to Hana

Chapter One: Hawaiian Political History

Part One: Serving Two Authorities

Long ago, on a starry night, seven people landed a canoe on the volcanic shores of Hawaii. It was here that the people who would become Hawaiians made their home, developing their ingenuity, complex social systems, and sacred customs. This existence would be shaken by the arrival of the man who would be revered with the honor of a god¹⁷ and change the face of Hawaii forever: Captain Cook. Whether or not the Hawaiians actually believed the Europeans to be gods, the fact that this story is still told makes it important. Even if a clear understanding of how the natives interpreted Cook's arrival cannot be proven, the story illustrates an important point. This event in 1778 marked the end of the untouched life of the ancients. From this moment on, every

Hawaiian was forced to contest with two authorities, traditional and foreign. Cook's account describes one encounter between the British and the Hawaiians that exemplifies the tension of this relationship. Once, some Hawaiians were engaging in commerce with the European ships from their canoes. They became caught in a dangerous position between honoring the strangers and venerating their highest chief. The people were prostrate in their canoes in the highest regard for the visitors, who they may have believed to be of divine association (Sahlins 1985:104). Meanwhile, their supreme chief who was also due the highest courtesy was approaching on his double canoe. The people could not move from their positions of supplication, and so they were cut down by the boat of their oncoming chief (Sahlins 1985:138). This was a situation that would become familiar to Hawaiians throughout subsequent centuries: caught in the middle of a power play. The struggle between foreign and native would continue for the next two hundred years. It would result in an ultimate showdown between imperialism and nativism, the consequences of which would dictate the future of two nations: the Hawaiian Kingdom and the United States.

America's interest in the islands began with the quest for sandalwood and souls as the missionaries began arriving to share Christianity with the Hawaiians. In the late 1800s, Japanese and other immigrants travelled to the islands seeking work on sugar plantations. It was shortly after this that American interests moved to annex the nation of Hawaii. In 1893, Queen Liliuokalani was originally able to gain President Cleveland's understanding and stave off annexation for a time, pending investigation (Tate 1965:234). However, it was not long before the Hawaiian Islands were transformed into a territory of the United States of America in 1900. Fifty-nine years later, Hawaii became the fiftieth

state to join the Union. Following statehood was a surge in Hawaiian tourism, as Americans began marketing the wonders of their newly acquired islands. During the 1970s and 1980s, the breathtaking landscapes of Oahu appeared in living rooms across the nation on TV shows such as Hawaii Five-O and Magnum P.I. From the outside, this seemed to be a natural progression of events: the discovery of an island nation and its native people leading to ultimate adoption by the greatest power in the world. The U.S would take Hawaii under its wing, educating its people, developing its land, and refining the Pacific gem that had been added to the crown of America. Everyone was to benefit from the “altruism” of colonialism. The United States secured its strategic military foothold in the Pacific, now claimed the profitable sugar plantations, and the budding tourist industry. In return, Hawaii was brought into the twentieth century.

This seems to be a bright and hopeful future; yet, sometimes happy endings are too good to be true. Could there be more to this story than the happy addition of a new state? Where are the voices of the Hawaiian people? What do they think of this assimilation? Is there more to the story that only Hawaiians can tell? In order to understand the spirit of the Hawaiian people today, it is necessary to know how the current status came to be. Hawaii was once a sovereign nation; today it is a tourist destination. Did all the people and its culture just disappear, or have they found a way to acculturate themselves into modern Hawaii? Do Hawaiians recognize the persistence of any kind of authenticity, or has American influence and tourism pushed out the native with high rise condominiums and souvenir shops? Does the Hawaiian culture still exist, or is it now only a remnant that can be glimpsed in fading petroglyphs and aloha print shirts? How did a thriving island nation become eclipsed by colonialism and annexation?

These are questions that must be answered in order to understand what really happened to the Hawaiians, where they have gone, and if they are still here.

At the time of the arrival of Cook, the Hawaiian Islands operated under a system similar to that of feudal Europe. Society was divided into three groups which each had different claims to land, the tenants of the land who were the native people, the chiefs, and finally the government (Tate 1965:166). The Hawaiian Islands were governed by the kings according to ancient traditions until Kamehameha III created a constitution that divided the government into three ruling entities, much similar to the government of the United States. Kamehameha III was well aware of the looming threat of foreign encroachment, and so to secure the future of his kingdom, he attained the recognition of the Hawaiian Kingdom as an independent entity in 1843. This acknowledgement came from the highest powers of the time, including the assurance of President Tyler of the United States (Tate 1965:23).

The progression of the Hawaiian kingdom continued peacefully until the Bayonet Constitution of 1887, when a group of American businessmen formed an armed militia, the Honolulu Rifles. They surrounded the palace and arrested King Kalakaua's head of cabinet, Walter Gibson. Under threat of bodily harm, they forced King David Kalakaua to dismiss his cabinet and replace them with key members of the rebellion (National Archives and Records Administration 2003). This new council forced King Kalakaua to sign a new constitution which limited the power of the monarch—the Bayonet Constitution. Among the authors of this constitution were lawyers Lorrin A. Thurston and Sanford B. Dole. Both men were in favor of deposing the Hawaiian Monarchy and bolstering Hawaii's induction into statehood. The new constitution stripped the king's

executive power, and gave Thurston great authority as Interior Minister and Dole as a justice of the Supreme Court of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

King David Kalakaua's successor, Queen Liliuokalani, worked to counter the effects of the Bayonet Constitution. She attempted to revert to the last legal state of government before the influence of the rebels. These rebels, which included Dole and Thurston, were inflamed when Liliuokalani tried to pass a new constitution. They felt that the time for annexation had come.

King David Kalakaua had formerly implemented a Reciprocity Treaty in 1875 concerning sugar trade with the U.S. (National Archives and Records Administration 2003). This treaty allowed sugar and other Hawaiian products to have free access to the American markets. In return, King Kalakaua granted the U.S. the land that would become Pearl Harbor. This treaty resulted in enormous American investment in Hawaiian products, particularly sugar. However, in 1890, the McKinley Tariff sharply increased the tax on foreign goods by nearly 50% in order to protect American products from foreign competition. This affected the Hawaiian sugar industry so strongly that it sent the Islands into a recession. American plantation owners began to look towards annexation as a way to eliminate this problem (Tate 1965:284).

The Honolulu Rifles, now calling themselves the Annexation Club, agreed that drastic action was necessary (Tate 1965:115). Using the American military as leverage, the rebels successfully forced Liliuokalani from her throne under protest. After seizing key government buildings, they declared the Provisional Government of Hawaii and elected American Sanford B. Dole, who had been serving as a member of Queen

Liliuokalani's Privy Council, as President. One of their first orders of business was to send a treaty of annexation to the U.S. in 1893 (Tate 1965:258).

President Harrison accepted the treaty from this new government and sent it to the Senate for approval (Harrison 1893). Harrison believed that Liliuokalani had been dethroned because "the Queen's Government was so weak and inadequate as to be the prey of designing and unscrupulous persons. The restoration of Queen Liliuokalani to her throne is undesirable...and would be accompanied by serious disaster and the disorganization of all business interests" (Harrison 1893). Luckily, Harrison was soon succeeded, and word reached President Grover Cleveland of the illegal proceedings in Hawaii, particularly that of the involvement of the U.S. military. This led to his rejection of the treaty and the appointment of Special Commissioner James Blount to scrutinize the details of U.S. involvement in the revolution in Hawaii (Cleveland 1893). Cleveland had found concerning differences between the documents sent by the Provisional Government and those sent by the Queen. For example, President Dole claimed that neither the U.S. nor its military was in any way involved with the overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy—facts which Liliuokalani's documents contradicted (Cleveland 1893). Further investigation determined that the U.S Navy and diplomats assigned to Hawaii were culpable for the violation Hawaii's Sovereignty in addition to international laws, and that the United States could indeed be held responsible (Tate 1965:234). Cleveland admitted that the "military demonstration upon the soil of Honolulu was itself an act of war" (Cleveland 1893). He then sent Minister Albert Willis to Queen Liliuokalani in order to reach a desirable conclusion—to the terms of which Queen Liliuokalani graciously agreed. Besides Sanford B. Dole, the offenders included U.S officials such as American

Minister John L. Stevens who had ordered U.S. troupes to seize the Hawaiian Government (Tate 1965:242).

Special Commissioner Blount noted that “the revolution did not rest upon the will of the majority...Native Hawaiians who signed petitions for it did so under pressure from the sugar planters...furthermore, there was not an annexationist who would dare to submit the question to popular vote” (Tate 1965:235). However, President Dole and his cabinet refused to relinquish power on the grounds that the U.S. had no business meddling in the Hawaiian domestic affairs. Hence, Dole and the Provisional Government declared the islands to be the new Republic of Hawaii, which was shortly acknowledged by the U.S. (National Archives and Records Administration 2003).

During the attack on the palace, Queen Liliuokalani had yielded to the rebels in order to avoid violence. It was an act of good faith, trusting that the United States government would promptly correct the situation so that order could be restored without bloodshed. She dispatched a letter to the U.S. via U.S. Minister Albert S. Willis to the Secretary of State, Walter Q. Gresham concerning “the condition of restoration of the Hawaiian Kingdom Government” (Willis 1893). In this letter Liliuokalani expressed her faith in the justice of the President of the United States, stating that she “desired to put aside all feelings of personal hatred or revenge and to do what is best for all the people of these Islands, both native and foreign born...”(quoted in Willis 1893). Queen Liliuokalani generously offered amnesty to those responsible for the mutinous revolution, if the United States would only recognize reinstatement of the former, legal Hawaiian Government.

Despite President Cleveland's anti-imperialist attitude, the prospect of annexation was becoming a popular interest among the American public. Hawaii offered a valuable foothold in the Pacific. This was a strategic military position, particularly during the Spanish-American War. If the U.S. annexed Hawaii, it would solve the problem of keeping out foreign powers. Annexation would also allow for the sugar conflicts to naturally resolve when Hawaii became part of America. Though President Cleveland had intervened to end the attempted revolution, half a decade passed without any fulfillment of his promise to reinstate the Queen and the constitutional government of Hawaii.

In 1897, President McKinley attempted to enter into a treaty with those responsible for overthrowing the monarchy. However, his attempts were thwarted due to protest from Queen Liliuokalani and her citizens, including a petition signed by more than half of the Hawaiian Kingdom. Though such protests by the Hawaiian people momentarily delayed annexation, U.S. involvement in the Spanish-American war again piqued American interests in Hawaii's advantageous military position. In 1898, the Newlands Resolution, was passed to annex Hawaii as a territory of the United States (National Archives and Records Administration 2003). McKinley appointed Sanford Dole as Governor of the Territory of Hawaii in 1900, and a military base was established on Oahu (Tate 1965:307). From that point on, the United States has remained in Hawaiian Islands, a highly controversial action which the Hawaiian people deem to be occupation.

Today, there remains much debate about the manner in which the Hawaiian Kingdom became a territory of the United States of America. The U.S. Department of State Office of the Historian website contains the following message regarding the

annexation of Hawaii in 1898: “Notice to readers: This article has been removed pending review to ensure it meets our standards for accuracy and clarity. The revised article will be posted as soon as it is ready” (Annexation of Hawaii). Clearly the United States is aware of the controversies surrounding annexation. Perhaps the continued protest of the Hawaiian Kingdom has spurred further investigation of the events leading up to statehood. The Hawaiian Kingdom is still waiting for the United States to make good on its promise.

Twentieth Century

During the first half of the twentieth century, tourism and sugar became Hawaii’s most important industries. Plantations thrived, fed by the labor of immigrants from many countries including Korea and Japan. During the 1920s, Waikiki became a hot spot for tourism with the help of the ocean liner (Desmond 1999:4). By the 1930s, the radio program, *Hawaii Calls*, began broadcasting live music from Waikiki to the American public. The bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941 resulted in a time of martial law in Hawaii (Tate 1965:276). After the end of World War II, tourism in Hawaii was bolstered when soldiers wanted to return to travel the Islands with their families. As air travel became more popular, the tourist industry in Hawaii had to swell to accommodate the influx of visitors. Eventually tourism came to replace sugar and pineapple plantations.

Meanwhile, for sixty-one years, Hawaii had been in a state of liminality. The Islands were betwixt and between--neither a sovereign nation, nor a fully represented state, but as a territory of the United States. Giles Scott-Smith, Professor of Diplomatic History of Atlantic Cooperation at Leiden University, describes how Hawaii had limited

governmental representation for over sixty years, which is a particularly lengthy period of liminality (Scott-Smith 2004:246). One reason statehood was delayed was that the Islands' population was highly mixed with indigenous and Japanese (Scott-Smith 2004:253). In addition, many Hawaiians, to this day, feel that they were betrayed by the United States when President Cleveland failed to reinstate the Hawaiian Monarchy following investigation of the actions of the Provisional Government and the U.S. military's involvement.

Hawaii was finally admitted as the fiftieth state in 1959. Details surrounding the election are controversial, a fact which has not been forgotten by the Hawaiians. The ballot's only options were either to keep Hawaii as a territory, or admit it as a state; there was no option for independence, therefore there was little choice for the Hawaiians (National Archives and Records Administration 2003). Given the choice between the two, statehood provided the representation that the islands had been lacking.

President Johnson anticipated that Hawaii would serve as the ultimate example of American politics. At the time of the election, full blood Hawaiians made up a minority of the population (Scott-Smith 2004:253). At the time of annexation in 1959, the Asian population was among the largest percent of the Islands. Almost fifteen years had passed since the end of World War II and the internment camps, but many Americans still struggled to accept the Japanese within their own borders. Because Hawaii was a state of an extremely mixed population, particularly Asian, statehood would prove that the U.S. could embrace a variety of cultures in harmony (Scott-Smith 2004:253). Thus the State of Hawaii began to stand for unity between Asians and Americans. However, as Scott-Smith

points out, “what is curious about this image of Hawaii is the absence of the Hawaiians themselves” (Scott-Smith 2004:254).

During the first part of the twentieth century, several petitions demonstrated the Native Hawaiian’s unfavorable view of statehood. The island of Ni’ihau, which was inhabited solely by Native Hawaiians voted overwhelmingly against statehood. According to Hawaiian informants, Hawaiians were not allowed to vote at this time unless they owned a certain amount of land. However, the land laws were changing against Hawaiians, especially as they continued to intermarry with the non-Hawaiian population. In 1921, about 200,000 acres of land were set aside for the Hawaiians. Originally, to live on this land, one had to qualify by proving 10% Hawaiian blood quantum, but the U.S disagreed with this proposal, and instead insisted on 50% blood quantum. However, in today’s cosmopolitan world, each intermarriage decreases the potency of Hawaiian blood per individual. To the Hawaiians, there is a direct message from America in this “equation for displacement.” Few meet the strict qualifications of blood quantum required to live on the land that was set aside for them; most are unable to inherit their ancestral lands. One of my informants described how Hawaiians refer to this situation as being as “houseless.” The Hawaiians have a home, yet they are unable to live in it, thus they call themselves “houseless” rather than homeless.

Hawaiian Renaissance

During the economic shift from plantations to tourism, the Hawaiian Renaissance began. For Hawaiians, the 1970’s were a period of self-rediscovery. This era would see great cultural victories, revivals, as well as incredible feats. For example, in 1976

Hawaiians constructed Hokule'a, the Canoe. It was an authentic reconstruction of Hawaiian navigation technology. Hokule'a proved the ingenuity of the Hawaiians, and would journey to Tahiti and back using only the stars (Finney 1979:203). According to Native Hawaiian informants, the Hokule'a proved that not only did the ancient Hawaiians sail from their ancestral home, but they had also sailed *back*. This proved that their voyage was not an accidental drift, but an intentional destination. The canoe was a source of great cultural pride for Hawaiians. It sparked resurgence in all manner of Hawaiian culture (Finney 1979:203). This time of cultural re-awakening and political protest became known as the Hawaiian Renaissance. This movement fought to preserve the traditional essence of Hawaii in light of a surge of *haoles* (non-Hawaiians) due to the coming of age of air travel, in addition to the closer relationship to the mainland of the U.S. (Ogan 1984:189). Music played an important role in this movement, just as it did in the mainland during the 1970s and 1980s. The Hawaiian people had come to realize that their current plight was not a permanent condition, but it could be alleviated if political and social change were to come to pass. Music could generate a powerful unity while actively preserving traditions such as language, rhythms, dance, chants, and poetry. Verbal art became a means of disseminating political, cultural, and social ideology. George Kanahale is credited with coining the name "Hawaiian Renaissance" during a speech he gave about cultural resurgence (Lewis 1984:41). Kanahale's words were vital to the movement:

Some had called it a psychological renewal, a 'purging of feelings of alienation and inferiority. For others it is a reassertion of self-dignity and self-importance....What is happening among Hawaiians today is probably

the most significant chapter in their modern history since the overthrow of the monarchy and loss of nationhood in 1893. For, concomitant with this cultural rebirth, is a new political awareness which is gradually being transformed into an articulate, organized but unmonolithic movement.

(quoted in Lewis 1984:41)

From annexation up until this time of renaissance in the 1970s, Hawaiians felt that their culture had been misrepresented. *Hapa-haole* music is a genre that was created by adding Hawaiian themes to popular American musical styles (including jazz, foxtrot, ragtime, etc). These forms featured lyrics in English, “vocables” (nonsense lyrics) that sounded Hawaiian (Bauman 1977). These songs included “Sweet Leilani,” “Lovely Hula Hands,” and “My Little Grass Shack.” This syncretic and blended music was featured on *Hawaii Calls*. In time, after years of broadcasting over the radio and gaining general approval, even Hawaiians themselves seemed to forget that this *hapa-haole* music was not their own, but what Lewis describes as a recycled genre (Lewis 1984:42). Today, it still has such a reputation; it is the white-man’s version of Hawaiian music. *Hapa-haole* music was widely popular from the 1930’s through the Hawaiian Renaissance. It is still played today, evoking a nostalgic mood that tourists associate with “Old Hawaii.” It was the Hawaiian Renaissance spurred Hawaiians to rediscover their language, chants, and prayers, and through the creation of new music, to correct what many viewed as a non-authentic, historical anomaly.

Traditional Hawaiian dance, *hula*, had also been misrepresented by American media during the mid-twentieth century. This new form of *hula*, or “cooch” as it came to be called, did not accurately embody the spirit of Hawaiian culture. Particularly in

Hollywood, the traditional *hula* became sexualized. Vaudeville and movies prostituted the dance, turning it into a sexual display that lacked traditional essence and movement (Lewis 1984:42).

During the second part of the twentieth century, Hawaii's younger generation was adrift in this time of *haole* immigration and tourism. Throughout the 1970s, they began seeking cultural resurgence as a means of finding their cultural roots (Lewis 1984:41). The Hawaiian Renaissance can be traced to their desire to connect to their authentic Hawaiian traditions. Their search for cultural revival resulted in new Hawaiian music created within the traditional forms. For the first time, Hawaiians were writing new music instead of replaying old Hawaiian songs and *hapa-haole* music (Lewis 1984:43). It marked an auspicious moment of cultural revitalization and emergence.

Another important issue during the Hawaiian Renaissance was the dispute involving Kaho'olawe. Hawaiians protested the United States military using Kaho'olawe, one of the smaller islands, as a bombing test site. This tiny island was once a cultural center, full of archaeological remains and other significance to the Hawaiian people. Kaho'olawe means bright rebirth, and it was this island that the Hawaiians looked toward as they visualized and fought to protect their future. The Hawaiian Renaissance marked the awakening of Hawaiian pride and the creation of a Hawaiian voice.

During the 1990s Native Hawaiians achieved several cultural victories. The movement to protect Kaho'olawe was rewarded by a presidential order from George Bush in 1990. It effectively halted military targeting of the island and placed the island under state control. A few years later, Bill Clinton signed a resolution regarding the Hawaiian Islands on the one hundredth anniversary of the overthrow of the Hawaiian

Kingdom. It was an Apology Bill for the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

Though the Native Hawaiians were grateful for this admission of guilt on the part of the U.S., the president only apologized; he did not offer to make good on the promise from long ago to reinstate the Hawaiian Constitutional Government. However, the Apology Bill expresses the hope of Congress that there can be reconciliation between the Hawaiian people and the United States Government (103rd Congress 1993)

Chapter One Part Two: Comparing Local and Native Perspectives

Tourism cultivates a certain image of Hawaii. While this image may be based in truth, that truth has often been eclipsed, exaggerated, or removed from context and significance. Under these circumstances, it is quite difficult to deconstruct the image that has been assembled by tourism. Though much of this image has been distorted for the sake of entertainment, it is based on a kernel of truth. One might argue that it has also been slanted to leave behind scandals and bad feelings. Because of this, it is necessary to consider the words of those not involved in tourism in order to access a more accurate image of Hawaiians and Hawaiian culture.

In my research, I discovered that there are three principal groups interacting in Hawaii today. The first group is the Native Hawaiians, who are descended from the ancestral population, related by blood and culture to various extents. The second group call themselves “locals.” These are people who now live in Hawaii who are not native. They may have moved to the islands, or were born there. Because they live there full time, they have a better understanding of this place than the third group, the tourists who visit the islands for pleasure. Their time in the islands is limited and recreational.

Interacting with each of these groups was essential to remove biases and see through the distorting lens of tourism. Hawaiians, locals, and tourists each have a unique view of Hawaii today. Therefore the most accurate picture can be pieced together through understanding each of these. History has not been on the side of the Hawaiians; rarely is the native side of the story told. The best way to create a snapshot of the modern relationship between Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians (tourists and locals) is to begin with personal accounts from each of these groups. I found that the locals were split into two

groups: those who thought highly of the Hawaiians and those who did not. Because of this, I have decided to include an example of each. These accounts will then be compared to the native voice. This should not be taken as a rebuttal to the first two accounts, but rather considered as another valid picture of current events seen from a different perspective.

“Local” Perspectives

Jonathan Wake has been a local for many years. Today, he works in a small shop in a tourist town on the Islands. Years ago, Jonathan used to be a different man, but his life was changed after he experienced a brush with death. Since then, he started “living on the edge.” He has taken journeys across the wilderness of Alaska and into the forests of Hawaii. Since he has already experienced death, he is unafraid of it. Jonathan finds meaning in living, as he says, “beyond the edge. I have been protected. I used to fight bears, kill dogs...you don’t mess with a guy who eats bears. I’ve been protected. I’m not afraid of death because I’ve already died and I’m not scared.”

Mana is the ancient spiritual essence of the islands. Its sacred presence was worshipped and channeled by ancient Hawaiians. They used sacred stones, or *pohaku* to channel its power (James 2001:17). When a child was born, the parents would bring the umbilical cord as an offering to the *pohaku*, believing that it would absorb the *mana* from the stone and supply the child with the spiritual force for the entirety of his or her life (James 2001:18). Since the arrival of tourism, much has changed on the landscapes of Hawaii. Many sacred stones have been removed or relocated. Few keep their original

sacred context. No longer are *heiaus* the tallest manmade structures on the islands. Sacred sites have been paved over for hotels, fine dining, and other tourist activities.

In his travels, Jonathan has come to know the wilderness of the Islands well. After becoming in tune with his spiritual side, he claims he was able to detect the presence of *mana* near the Seven Sacred Pools of Hana beneath the light of a silver moon bow stretched overhead. He has also experienced *mana* in an ancient village he discovered, near a road where the rental cars are not covered and the grass grows long and wild. There, Jonathan could feel the *mana* in the air.

Jacky Miller is also a local on Hawaii. Jacky first came to Hawaii to visit her sister, before moving to Hawaii permanently. She has lived in the Islands for thirty years now. She works for the State and so has a certain valuable perspective. She also works at a store that sells only Hawaiian products, many of them traditionally made. She has had up-close experience with the darker side of the Islands through her son. For many years he was homeless; drugs cost him a high price. Thanks to the support and love from her church, Calvary Chapel, which is a non-denominational Evangelical church, Jacky and her son were able to pull through some tough times and find a greater family to lean on. Jacky is very involved in her church, appreciative of all that its members have done for her and her family. Living on the island for so long, Jacky has had a good sense of the changes that have taken place in the Islands over the last forty years.

View of the Hawaiians

Each of these individuals has a different opinion of the Hawaiian people and what it means to be “Hawaiian.” Jonathan defines Hawaiians as the race of people who was here,

but today make up less than one in one hundred people (from a blood quantum perspective). He describes the physical traits of Hawaiians in overtly racialized (and highly stereotyped) terms, as “tall, stocky, huge hands, overweight, beady eyes, curly hair if Samoan.” Jonathan also describes Hawaiians as “maladapted” to modern Hawaii. He recounts their financial troubles. In addition, he believes they are susceptible to “violent tendencies” and “thug-like behavior.” Feelings of resentment and entitlement are, according to Jonathan, also problems. He offered this example: “because Hawaiians do not want to get jobs, they have to double mortgage their grandpa’s homes and then foreclose. Then they stand outside throwing rocks and yelling at the people living there now because that is ‘their’ house.” It is Jonathan’s belief that the Hawaiians do not realize that they should feel sorry for such behavior, and that is why they get themselves into further trouble. He referenced another example of Hawaiian crime in which the Hawaiians would slit the screen doors and steal the baubles off the night stand while tourists were sleeping. Other concerns included that the police had been covering up the violence and disappearances for the sake of tourism. Jonathan offers an explanation for this troubling behavior. He believes that it is related to an ancient practice of cannibalism. According to him, because of this, Hawaiians have suffered genetic susceptibility to drinking, “gluttony,” and violence.

To Jacky, “Hawaiian” is neither a race nor a nationality, but someone who is born in Hawaii. However, she does acknowledge that to get into Kamehameha schools, one must have 50% Hawaiian blood and that certain housing accommodations also require a blood quantum as well. (In fact, the Kamehameha schools will take any child capable of proving Hawaiian ancestry).

Jacky believes that Hawaiian culture is in resurgence. She allowed that their experience may have been similar to the Native Americans, but not to the same degree. Hawaiian culture has faced both good and bad repercussions from the missionary era. The missionaries forced them to stop practicing *hula* and to make changes in their lives. Though this affected the culture, “[it is now] back and strong,” according to Jacky. Immersion schools have had a wonderful, positive effect. There were none when she came in 1976, but now there are many. Students are learning about Hawaii in Hawaiian. Along with the language, cultural knowledge is also passed on. Jacky mentioned the missionaries and the trader ships that arrived in ancient Hawaii. She spoke of how the Hawaiians would trade the missionaries sandal wood for small bits of iron. The significance of this practice was that the Hawaiians wanted to “move forward.” No one was forcing them to fetch wood and trade, Jacky argued; rather, it was their design and their intention to progress.

View of being a non-Hawaiian local on Hawaii

Both of these informants have spent long years on Hawaii, and are therefore qualified to give an account of their experiences as Caucasian locals. Being a white local on Hawaii is challenging, according to Jonathan. He loves it, but it is not always easy. He speaks of a troubling tradition that he called “Beat Up *Haole* Day” which is apparently a Thursday tradition. His sister, who works at a school up country, has been beat up three times due to her non-Hawaiian ethnicity. (What Jonathan describes as a weekly tradition is a term coined by the media to describe specific incidents in which a local or Hawaiian and a white individual got into a physical altercation. This is a buzzword used to label

these events rather than an actual weekly occurrence.) Though Jonathan was not speaking of all Hawaiians, he does believe that there are some serious issues that have developed. He warns, “when they call you *haole*, they are calling you N—[redacted]. Not negro-- N...They hate white people just for being white. Well they don’t know me. They don’t know where I came from.” Jonathan spent a long time describing his take on the modern relationship between locals and Hawaiians. He believes that Hawaiians have a strong feeling of entitlement and that there is little that white people could ever do to make up for it. Hawaiians would always hold it against the whites that they had stolen their land.

According to Jacky Miller, she felt welcomed by the Hawaiians and the locals when she eventually moved to the Islands, however she did not feel welcome as a tourist. Jacky and her family came to the islands to go camping in 1976. Her sister was familiar with the locals and so they spent a lot of time with them. However, she and her husband did not feel welcomed until he pulled out his harmonica. She described how the locals felt they were being invaded by their presence. However, once her husband pulled out his harmonica, they all sat around playing harmonica together, Hawaiian and *haole*. Thus, Jacky and her husband were accepted into the community.

Jacky defines “*haole*” quite differently. She believes the term is not an insult, but a point of pride, and mentions that her sons have shirts that say “*haole*.” According to Jacky, “if you look it up in the dictionary, it means foreigner to this land, and that’s what we are...if someone had some negative feelings about being a *haole*, I would just say that being prejudice is just not something that’s right. We’re all God’s children, *haole*, black, Hawaiian.”

Melting Pot vs Gumbo Pot.

In the early 1900s, the phrase “melting pot” became affiliated with the heterogeneous flood of immigrants entering society and the belief that all the cultures could blend and meld successfully as one. This term is complexified when applied to the many different ethnic populations that live in Hawaii, including Japanese, Korean, Hawaiian, American, Philippine, and more. Jonathan Wake was of the opinion that Hawaii was a gumbo pot, a melting pot that failed to melt. It was this that resulted in all the racial and ethnic tension that exists today. Jonathan had this to say about the gumbo pot: “Hawaiians don’t want us here, they hate anyone who comes here, But they came to this island on a canoe same as everyone else.”

Jacky believed that Hawaii is a melting pot. However, she did acknowledge that there are certain groups who felt differently. Jacky also had some interesting comments on the island of Molokai. The general feeling on Molokai is that its residents want Hawaii to secede. Jacky noted that this feeling is not confined to Molokai; though it is stronger there, it is common among Hawaiians throughout the islands. She says that becoming part of the Union was not really a decision for the Hawaiians, which perhaps justifies them to feel the way they do about being a part of it today.

However, Jacky is also optimistic about the blending and sharing of custom and culture. A fascinating example was how the institutions on the island have come to embrace a great number of traditions. Employees of the state get off work not only on regular holidays such as Christmas, but also Hawaiian holidays. She described the King Kamehameha Day Parade, a beautiful, historical display representing all the islands and their colors through feathers and flowers. Beautiful women dressed in satin and velvet

ride on horses prancing down Front Street. Jacky describes how she was breathless when one of these women turned to her, and her horse bowed as the woman offered “Aloha.” These festivities are enjoyed by all the locals, not just Hawaiians. Local cheerleading or boy scout groups will also participate in this inclusive event, “it’s not just Hawaiians and *haoles*, there’s probably more Philipinos.” Jacky describes Hawaii as a melting pot, and that anyone who thinks otherwise is “in negative land.”

View of tourism and its effects

These two informants commented on the effects of tourism in the islands. According to Jonathan, tourism probably has not affected the presence of *mana* too much. However, he acknowledges that *mana* is something that one must have a certain mentality and understanding to appreciate. Overall, Jonathan does not mind tourism, as it has caused some great things such as jobs, and allowing the travelers to share in the experience of an “alternate reality.” It is rather ironic that Jonathan has such appreciation for Hawaiian culture, but little for the modern Hawaiians. He shows an understanding and awareness of *mana*, a deeply indigenous concept, yet refuses to see the greater structural inequalities that generate his resentful views of Hawaiians. Jonathan is a walking contradiction. He wears a style of woven necklace he refers to as “Hawaiiana” (which, according to him, is a type of ancient Hawaiian art which he has mastered) and sells ukuleles to tourists while simultaneously disseminating his resent for the Hawaiians.

Jacky Miller believes that the feelings of unwelcome felt by outsiders have much improved since her visit in 1976. It is worth noting that this visit took place right around the time of the Hawaiian Renaissance. She also believes that tourism has brought about

good things, including money, creating a better life for the Hawaiians, and allowing them to “have homes and families.” Hawaiians were also instrumental in the establishment of hotels. Jacky commented on how they did not want outside *haoles* to come to Hawaii to manage the hotels, they wanted the Hawaiians to be the managers.

Jacky Miller does not find tourism and commodification of Hawaiian culture to be a problem. On the contrary, she believes that tourism is a way of highlighting and sharing the culture. Selling *tikis* to tourists is a physical bit of culture that she can pass on to other people. Rather than profit, the purpose is educating the tourists and sharing in an opportunity to understand. She finds working in the Hawaiian store to be personally enlightening.

The Image Hawaiians Want to Portray to the World

According to Jacky, “*aloha*” is the image that Hawaii wants to send to the world. She defines *aloha* as “doing good, doing right, honoring and respecting one another.” She believes that concept of aloha is also relevant to Christianity along with *pono*. *Pono* is “good, like righteousness, do the right thing.” That is the message they want to share with tourists. It is a message of love and caring and mutual respect, which is highly relevant for Hawaii today.

Jacky has several hopes for the future of the Islands. She feels that Hawaii is behind in recycling, and wants to have more politicians who really care. She would like to see parents caring more about their children and hopes that someday everyone will not have to work two jobs. She does feel that politicians are in touch with, and concerned about Hawaiians. In response to the negativity she says, “There are people trying you know, to

help the Hawaiians...because the feelings you are talking about, you know, the negative feelings...there's lots of programs going on to help them." Jacky's concern for the Hawaiians is no doubt genuine, however, it has underlying tones of paternalism. Not all locals regard Hawaiians in this way, although the line between concern and paternalism is fine.

These two informants offer revealing snapshots of Hawaii today. They are two different people with access to different social and economic circles; their input is valuable in its diversity. However, a third voice is needed in this discussion. For now the tourist gaze will be omitted, given that the tourist does not have authority to speak for Hawaii. Thus now we will turn to the one voice that is most absent from history: the emic, native perspective. Perhaps this voice can add some clarity and mediation, but ultimately understanding from the other side of the road. What is it really like to be a Hawaiian today? How has this changed over the years? What is being done to enact change? What are the obstacles to progress?

The Native Perspective

Theo Kalani is not only Hawaiian, but also a cultural practitioner of the Hawaiian culture. To him, this means "I go home and I practice my language, chant my chants, sing my songs, and dance my dances, study my history." Through this lifestyle, Hawaiian culture continues to be emergent. As a cultural advisor for one of the most important hotels in Hawaii, the Island Luxury Hotel, Theo is in a position that he hopes to continue to use to better the future of his people. Being in this position is precarious; while it means he is able to convey a message about the Hawaiian people to the visitors, if it is

not done correctly, there can be heavy consequences. As he comments, “there is a fine line between hospitality, commerce, culture, and community. A hard balance.” Theo must find a way to balance the cultural image he creates without selling it.

Theo was born on the island but did not find his Hawaiian identity until he was thirty-five. He left the island in favor of California, where he spent several years. He returned to the island in 1981 during a transition in his life. It was during this time that he came to understand firsthand the Hawaiian concept of looking backward in order to move forward. Now, he looks back to his “DNA,” and his ancestors to understand who he is and his place in this world.

Theo has helped bring change to the treatment of sacred ancient sites. In the 1960’s, all over the islands, hotels were displacing Hawaiian burial grounds. These were conscious transgressions, as the developers received many warnings from Hawaiians—it was known that dunes were preferred for ancient burial. The Sheraton displaced the remains of a heiau or sacred temple (James 2001:41). In those days, remains were handled with little regard, often in buckets or bags that could be dumped nearby. At this time, according to Theo, Hawaiians had no voice, no rights to stand up, no matter what desecration their ancestors underwent. When the Luxury Island Hotel, which Theo would come to work for, began construction, thousands of remains and artifacts were displaced, despite the fact that the site was a known burial ground. Luckily, these events coincided with the Hawaiian Renaissance. According to Theo, The Hawaiian people gathered together in protest until at last an agreement could be reached between the governor and the hotel. Theo explained how the Luxury Island Hotel was moved up the hill in order to avoid further desecration. The sacred ground is not only the resting place of thousands of

Hawaiians, but also the site of the most ancient roadway. Now, it is maintained in perpetuity, and only a native Hawaiian conducting a cultural event may set foot there. This victory was extended to all ancient burial grounds. Today, extensive testing must be done prior to construction; if anything is found, construction must cease. Theo acknowledged the involvement of the ancestors in this victory, “they’re greatest battle was in death rather than life. They showed themselves with purpose at the right time. Because they exposed themselves, from now on everything will be protected.”

Anthropologist Edward Bruner describes how tourists’ expectations are often quite high. The comforts a tourist expects to find at his destination are the same or better than the ones he left behind (Bruner 2005:14). Theo commented, “We were in such a rush to accommodate [tourists and business] that we forgot who we were. Changed the sense of place.” Theo comments extensively on the “sense of place” in Hawaii and how it is constructed. It is the way that an individual structures their thoughts about their location. Hawaii is an ancient homeland with a sacred landscape, however, tourism can often replace authentic realities with constructed ones. Today, when a tourist arrives at the airport, he sees places like Walmart, Panda Express, Krispy Kream, and McDonalds, “everything he left is the first thing he sees when he gets here, and the last thing he sees when he leaves the island.” In this way, the sense of place has been pushed aside in favor of convenience. Bruner comments, often attractions are tourist bubbles, or areas that are constructed entirely for tourist purposes whether or not they are authentic (2006:17). These bubbles also control and limit what is seen by the tourist, restricting them to the “approved” zones. This negatively affects the way that people come to think of Hawaii. It

is easy to forget that the island is not a theme park, but a place of deep and ancient history.

Theo had a suggestion for part of the solution. Their airlines have a captive audience for five hours on the flight over. It is not uncommon to show footage of the destination on these flights, but what would be even better are documentaries and explanations of cultural practices. In this way, tourists' whole trip to Hawaii could be framed not as a place of amusement where hospitality is expected, but as an ancient homeland with cultural issues that travelers should be sensitive to. This could be an enriching experience, however as Theo points out, "airlines would rather sell that piece of primetime . . . than invest it."

Among Theo's experiences is the complicated relationship between the guests and the hosts of Hawaii. Theo has received a lot of pressure from travelling groups. Often, these groups want an experience that is "Hollywood...that's not even Hawaiian" and yet Hawaiians and members of the hospitality industry are expected to give it to these guests anyway. The expectation is that the Hawaiian hospitality has to obey the wealthy individual in a relationship more similar to servant and master, or boss and employee than guest and host. This results in some uncomfortable, high pressure situations. Often, Hawaiians can be perceived as performers and actors, rather than individuals. Theo provided an example of this relationship. One day, a man came to Theo and asked Theo to burn down the trees on the sacred ground so that this man could see the ocean from his house. To this, Theo responded "Hey that's a great idea, why don't you burn down your house so I can see my mountain?"

It is a sad reality that the guest-host relationship has been inverted in Hawaii. Rather than the guest coming to have a valuable cultural exchange with the host, the guest has become the boss and the Hawaiian host is expected to obey. It can be easy to forget that not every Hawaiian is affiliated with the hospitality industry. Theo laments of what is lost in this relationship when there could be so much good to come from such an exchange:

[T]his is why when my granny says come and eat, you come and eat. This is why you never turn your back to the ocean. Little simple things that can be done that are not. People come over thinking it's a winter wonderland or Disney world and they get hurt.... You are the guest. If you come into my home, you don't come here and tell me how I am supposed to live. No, you come here and you accept us. If I go to your home, I will live as you expect me to live.

Unfortunately, Theo feels increasingly that the progress that was once achieved is being reversed. For example, during the aftermath of 9/11, "people wanted to be grounded. They were interested in spirituality and wonderful things," while today they have returned to this whimsical, magical, imagined Hawaii. Tourists have exchanged meaning for entertainment, and entertainment becomes something they expect from every Hawaiian.

Like *tiki* key chains and aloha t-shirts, Hawaiian culture has come to be commodified. Hawaiians are often valued for what they contribute to the tourist industry (Desmond 1999:2). This can make employment and life in general difficult for Hawaiians. Theo compares this experience as a bookshelf. Hawaiians are expected to be

available for hire in the entertainment industry, but on a temporary basis. Whatever kind of Hawaiian is needed that day, dancer, artist, vender, speaker, is pulled out for as long as they are useful and then put back, expected to disappear as soon as their worth has expired.

Official Hawaiian ethnicity is determined by blood quantum. The United States requires 50% Hawaiian ancestry in order to qualify as a Native Hawaiian. Theo has 30% blood quantum, therefore he is classified as a non-Hawaiian (or native Hawaiian).

However, Theo identifies himself as practitioner of the Hawaiian culture. As one who practices Hawaiian culture in his daily life, Theo considers himself an expert in his field. However, it seems that heritage and experience have come to be meaningless without the proper paper work. Theo's abilities have been questioned because he "lacks three letters after [his] name." Because Theo has no higher education in Hawaiian Studies, he is not recognized as a professional. An issue here is that authenticity is being determined by the wrong party. The United States is setting the standards for who is authentically Hawaiian, and who is not. As a result, people like Theo must formally educate themselves in order to make up for the deficit in their blood.

According to Theo, there are 1.8 million acres set aside for Native Hawaiians. During the annexation of Hawaii, it was proposed that the qualification for "Native Hawaiian" be 10%; however, the new government refused, setting the blood quantum at 50%. Theo points out that over time in this cosmopolitan world, there will be no more "Native Hawaiians." At 49%, an individual no longer qualifies as an heir of the land. Theo calls this an equation for displacement, "even if I did qualify at 75% and I get my land, then when I marry outside my race, when I die, my children are out because they

are not ‘Hawaiian.’” To Theo, this seems to be an intentional trap set for the Hawaiians, as it would only be a few generations before no one at all qualified to live on the land. As he says, “the basic message is this: marry your own kind or you will disappear.” Theo did mention that there are some who are trying to get the blood quantum lowered in order for the Hawaiian people to survive. This is why Hawaiians do not consider themselves “homeless,” but “houseless.” Their nation provided them with land, but the US government forbids them from building a house on it.

This can be a discouraging reality for many young Hawaiians. These feelings of inadequacy surely filter in to the drug problems, or incidents of violence against *haoles*. Being a Hawaiian youth on an island full of tourism can be a discouraging lifestyle. The struggle over the land is one that has been so confusing for the Hawaiian people as a whole. Many have given up in frustration and anger. Because Hawaii’s primary income is from tourism, it can be difficult for Hawaiians and locals to succeed financially. The cost of living is enormous. Real estate is a hot commodity prized for vacation homes and ocean front properties. Imagine the financial struggle of a young family trying to compete in this market of millionaires. Theo agrees with Jacky’s observation that most locals and Hawaiians have to work more than one job. This can create a tough circumstance for teenagers under normal circumstances. On Hawaii, these young people also have to deal with peer pressure from all the visitors that come to their island. They see kids their age with the latest technology, cell phones, and tablets. They see a disparity in this which can create class and racial division. As Theo said, “Hawaiians are have-nots. I’m just being honest. Stats, experience, everything, shows that they are at the bottom of the economic level, but the top of the crime.” Theo acknowledges the existence of the problem of

Hawaiian crime mentioned by Jonathan. However, Theo paints this not as the violent tendencies of a people not far removed from cannibalism and savagery, but as the result of social-economic tensions that happen to fall along racial divisions.

Regarding the issue of statehood, Theo had some interesting comments. As he pointed out, Hawaii is not a state legally, as admitted by two Presidents of the United States. They have apologized, but no one will hold them accountable. As for voting, scant few Hawaiians or Asians had the right in the days of annexation. In Theo's words, "The people of Hawaii voted yes. But the Hawaiian people voted no." Even today, many Hawaiians and other residents of Hawaii feel that their votes are useless. As Theo describes, because of the time difference, "by the time we vote the election is over and we already know the results. Polls are being closed in east coast and major states. Our votes don't make any difference at all."

Different factions of indigenous Hawaiians hope for different futures. Many want cessation. Others call for a nation within a nation. This would declare the Hawaiians Native Americans, but that is not the term with which they identify. As for the history of US relations with Native Americans, Theo points out, "the quality assurance is not so good." In addition, the Native Americans suffer from alcohol and drug abuse, unemployment, poor education, and other issues, none of which are exactly incentives for a Hawaiian to want to become a Native American.

Theo mentioned how the United Nations and the World Council have also declared US actions toward Hawaii during annexation to be acts of war in addition to the presidents' acknowledgment. Theo says that because of this, the Hawaiian lands should

be returned. He says that this is by no means an anti-United States movement, but rather an anti-abuse of power effort.

Despite the myriad of difficulties faced by the Hawaiians today, Theo wanted to focus on the positive. Hawaii is a culture in resurgence. The Hawaiian language is returning as children become speakers, and in turn become teachers(Lipp-Green 1997). Classrooms are now embracing nontraditional teaching methods that appeal more to Hawaiian children's forms of learning. As Theo said, learning in a classroom is a Western concept, not a Hawaiian one; it is not in the children's DNA to learn from a book when they can learn from the outside world. More hands-on methods are becoming popular for children who do not succeed in traditional classrooms.

Perhaps Theo can mediate between the contrasting views of the locals. As a native Hawaiian living in Hawaii and practicing Hawaiian culture, Theo is able to assess the challenges, setbacks and victories of the Hawaiian people. He has perspective on the troubled youth of Hawaii and calls them to be better. Jonathan Wake shares information about the struggles involving Hawaiian people; Theo can narrate the other side of this story. He acknowledges some problems with Hawaiians, but also poses other issues to do with non-Hawaiians. Theo can bring light to the events mentioned in the introduction—according to him, the feelings of anger and frustration (which were plain in the message of the performer at the Pioneer Inn) are actually not intended for the tourists or locals. Rather, they are intended to be a reminder to those who have the power to change. This could be interpreted as the US Government, or even fellow Hawaiians who need to remember these events in order to assuage their effects. Tourism and colonialism have impacted the Hawaiian culture and shaped its history. This history can only be told truly

when considered from all sides, including the conqueror and the conquered. Jacky and Jonathan's perspectives offer valuable insight about what it is like to be a non-Hawaiian local living in post-colonial Hawaii. Theo's story describes the life of a modern native Hawaiian and the residual effects of colonialism and tourism upon the native population. The combination of these viewpoints yields a more complete understanding of the relationship between locals and Hawaiians today.



Figure 4: Aerial view of two of Hawaii's volcanoes

Chapter Two: The Island Tide Hotel as a Modern Hawaiian Community

The Island Tide Hotel situates itself at the head of an unfolding history. This hotel has a unique relationship to its past. Hawaiian history is not only important, but relevant in the day-to-day lives of its employees. The Island Tide Hotel creates an environment where ancient Hawaiian culture can live and thrive today. Though the past is important, the hotel community does not live in it. The Island Tide Hotel represents a continuing heritage rather than a dead history. The Hawaiians who work there think of the hotel as a ‘home’ for the Hawaiian culture--a place where Hawaiians come together and where their culture can recreate itself, flourish, and welcome guests. Like a home, it is a place of exchange, enlightenment, and mutual respect. For the Island Tide Hotel family,

“Hawaiianness” starts in the heart, with the instillation of a set of values. The management of Island Tide Hotel recognizes that Hawaiians are not only the ancient people who used to live on the Island. Modern Hawaiians are just as legitimate as their ancestors, especially when they practice cultural heritage at the Island Tide Hotel.

The term “home” has different meanings to the different groups present in the hotel. The culture is alive in this space, but the employees are paid to keep it living. They do not behave as they would in their own homes. Their job is to make the tourists feel at home. However, staff members do relate to each other more personally and individually than a typical corporate business. The relationship between staff members has familial aspects. However, the hotel is not where they live. The hotel is a temporary home for the guests. The employees are paid to make them feel welcome and at ease. They work to create a laid back environment where Hawaiian culture can dictate business and inter-employee relationships.

MacCannell suggests that “real lives” only exist “backstage” (MacCannell 1999:96). Because tourism “involves an obvious intrusion into peoples’ lives...the people being observed gradually come to construct backstages in a contrived an artificial manner. ‘Tourist spaces’ are therefore organized around what MacCannell calls ‘staged authenticity,’” (1976:91). On the other hand, Bruner’s theory suggests that there is no real “backstage” area. Instead, there are many layers and definitions of authenticity (Bruner 2006:5). Over time, there has been “a shift from mass consumption to more individuated patterns of consumption,” (Urry 1990:14). I argue that since this shift, tourists have begun seeking the “backstage” experience of Hawaii at places such as the Island Tide Hotel. Tourists do not travel to Hawaii to stay in generic hotels like the Double Tree or

the Holiday Inn. They come seeking a unique experience, assuming that the “backstage” reality exists (MacCannell 1999:96). Tourists come to the Island Tide Hotel hoping to find this ‘real’ experience of Hawaii.

Creating a Modern Hawaiian Community

At the Island Tide Hotel, Hawaiianness and authenticity start with staff members themselves. The hotel does not discriminate with its employees. There is no requirement for the staff members to have Hawaiian ancestry. However, for someone to qualify to work in their *Ho’okipu* Department (Hospitality Department), he or she must possess general knowledge of the Hawaiian culture in addition to some type of musical ability. Adriana Kalama, who is the Director of Training *Po’okela* (which means “excellence” and also refers to the cultural program at the hotel) and *Ho’okipa* (Hospitality and Guest Services) explains that musical talent is required because “our department is charged with providing Hawaiian activities.” She explains that although there is no requirement for the employees to be Hawaiian, many of the staff members have at least one Hawaiian ancestor. She says that the hotel offers those people an opportunity to connect to their heritage. Other employees are not Hawaiian at all. Adriana described to me that a Hawaiian “does have the ethnicity,” however, there are also those who are interested in learning about and participating in the culture. She says, “there are some who don’t have the blood quantum, [yet they behave in a caring way]. [This type of person] allows people like us to practice our ethnicity. [These people] come from the mainland but somehow find this connection through learning in the classes offered here—*hula*, speaking, even *thinking* Hawaiian—they are part Hawaiian too.” According to this

definition, partial Hawaiian identity may be acquired by those who are interested in promoting the culture and helping it to grow.

By this definition, one could be “Hawaiian” without actually being a native Hawaiian. How far does this extend? It includes the employees, who are learning and partaking in Hawaiian culture. If the guests are also learning and participating in the special classes that are offered, then there is the possibility that they too can become “part-Hawaiian.”

Every member of the staff, regardless of background or ethnicity, receives training in “Hawaiianess.” A waitress at a *luau* may repeat a tired, memorized greeting, but at the Island Tide hotel, Hawaiianess is not just an outward act for the benefit of the guests. Several of my key informants attested that being Hawaiian starts at the heart. They described how true Hawaiianess comes from a system of values instilled within the workers which is then shared with the guests. This perspective is a circulating narrative at the Island Tide Hotel. Adriana explained how the goal of the employees is to actually *live* as Hawaiians from the inside out. She described how the general manager of the hotel found that the best way to start this process was through management by Hawaiian values.

How does one attain these values in order to become holistically Hawaiian? If Hawaiianess starts at the heart, the transformation must come from within the individual. Adriana related how the manager of the Island Tide Hotel turned to the theories and work of Dr. George Kanahale, scholar, civic leader, and spiritual father of the Hawaiian renaissance, as a model for how to achieve this goal within the context of the hotel. In his book, *Ku Kanaka: Stand Tall, A Search for Hawaiian Values* Kanahale

seeks to define Hawaiian values and their relevance today, as well as reconcile the past with the present (1986:8). Kanahele's intent was to "creat[e] an agenda to follow which can allows us to benefit today from the truths that Hawaiians lived by yesterday" (Kanahele 1986:8). Kanahele believes that "there is a clear correlation between one's understanding of their culture and history and the understanding of one's values...[through this] synthesis... we may live richer, more satisfying lives, drawing upon deep and abiding strengths in the ways of our ancestors" (Kanahele 1986:8). Kanahele suggests that the key to living "the good life" today and being in harmony within is through reconciling the past to the present. Hawaiians need to realize that their "ways/beliefs/values are still valid" (Kanahele 1986:8). Much like Theo Kalani, Kanahele is looking to the past to guide the future.

Kanahele refers to "the Ghost of Inferiority." For Hawaiians, "racial inferiority was the enemy of pride in Hawaianness... racism was the most deadly pathogen [that was ever brought to the Islands" (Kanahele 1986:21). He claims that every Hawaiian is born with this inferiority complex. Most Hawaiians have a divided past, both *haole* and Hawaiian ancestry. History has been told from the perspective of the *haole*—a history that is easy to access. However the Hawaiian half is missing. Reconciling these two halves of personal history, "...offers resolution, harmony, richness, and enhancement ...to life. Through reconciliation and discovery...Hawaiians [can] reconcile their ancestry especially if that conflict [between *haole* and Hawaiian] flows through their blood" (Kanahele 1986:27). Kanahele believes that there are still benefits to be reaped from the ancient Hawaiian value system. The things Hawaiians valued then are not so different

from the things they value today. By reconciling the past, Hawaiians can achieve wholeness within themselves, and discover how to be Hawaiian from the inside out.

Implementing Hawaiian Values

Growing Tensions

During the early 1900s, the Hawaiian landscape, not the *hula* girl, was the popularized image (Desmond 1999:6). Racialized “‘scientific’ discourses and visual representations combined to produce the idea of Hawaiians as ‘ideal natives’”(1999:4). In the 1920s, tourism was officially established in Hawaii with “a formal system of tourist infrastructure—hotels, travels companies, a tourist service bureau, special tourist publications, [and] new vigorous advertising on the mainland” (Desmond 1999:4). By the 1930s, advertising, music, and Hollywood solidified the idea of the Hawaiian native before tourists ever reached the Islands. *Luaus*, *hula* shows, and other live performances were staged in hotels (1999:4). By World War II and the 1940s Hawaiian natives were idealized through visions of “soft primitivism,” which depicted Native Hawaiians as “graciously welcoming to outsiders [who present] visitors with a non-threatening, alluring encounter with paradisiacal exoticism” (1999:4). Hawaiian identity had been taken out of the hands of the Hawaiians. It is a part of their history that has been silenced. The 1960s were the beginning of mass tourism in Hawaii, particularly Waikiki. The tourist industry was rapidly expanded during this era.

According to Adriana Kalama, back in the 1960s, flights from the mainland were more constant, and Hawaii was promoted by Hollywood. This

created an influx of tourism, which the Islands had to accommodate. New hotels were constructed, each claiming its own private section of beach. This did not sit well with the locals, who felt that tourism was encroaching on their sense of place. George Kanehele describes Hawaiian attachment to place:

Almost every significant activity of [a traditional Hawaiian's] life was fixed to a place. No genealogical chant was possible without the mention of personal geography; no myth could be conceived without reference to a place of some kind; no family could have a standing in the community unless it had a place; no place of any significance, even the smallest, went without a name; and no history could have been made or preserved without reference, directly or indirectly, to a place (Kanehele 1986:175).

It was a common feeling throughout the Islands, that the sense of place had been trespassed, causing locals to resent the tourist. This feeling was particularly potent following the Hawaiian renaissance of the 1970s and 1980s in “the strong anticolonialist sentiments of some branches of Native Hawaiian sovereignty movement” (Desmond 1999:6). During this time, the general manager of the Island Tide Hotel began looking for a solution to this problem. Clearly the tourism was going to remain a fixture in the Islands, so a means of coexisting between local, native, and visitor needed to be found.

The management of the Island Tide Hotel decided to look at this as an opportunity. In the words of an employee:

A hotel brings guests from all over the world. Are we going to let them keep thinking that Hawaiians are just entertainers? That the girls run around in coconut bras and grass skirts? Hawaiian culture has so much more--the innovations that they made, [even] isolated in the middle of the ocean! So how do we share that, how do we let our guests know? How do we provide better guest experiences? We must teach the employees.

In order to address this situation, the *Po'okela* program was created.

Modernizing Hawaiian Values

Ke Kula O Ka Po'okela, or *Po'okela* for short, means School of Excellence. It is a program designed by George Kanahele to incorporate Hawaiian values into the workplace. The program was implemented at the Island Tide Hotel in 1986. Adriana Kalama, Director of Training *Po'okela* and *Ho'okipa* described the process of implementing *Po'okela*. This program began when the general manager brought George Kanahele to the hotel. He thought Kanahele's philosophy might help ease some of the negative attitudes that were growing in the tourist industry.

In order to implement *Po'okela* at the Island Tide Hotel, the first step was to develop a set of values to live and work by. In order to be Hawaiian from the inside out, the entire staff was included in this process. According to Adriana Kalama, an employee involved in establishing the program, *Po'okela* means "Management by values rather than management by objectives. Our evaluation system is based on these values. It is still

a corporate way of doing things, but instead we have made it very Hawaiian.” Adriana continued, “Values are not black and white. There are ways to deal with employees on individual basis. [If there is a problem, we do not do] ‘strike one’—But instead, ‘why did it happen,’ ‘what are the circumstances,’ ‘knowing your behavior do you abide by this when you work.’ It is managing by culture, not objective.” In this way, the management can relate to employees on a more personal basis which resembles kinship. This style of management also allowed the general manager to creatively organize the hotel during the economic downturn so that no employee had to lose their job. In fact, according to Adriana, a number of older members of the staff volunteered to retire early so that no one had to be fired. She says this is the kind of familial loyalty that is generated by the *Po’okela* program.

According to Adriana, when the *Po’okela* program began, Kanahele led focus groups of the employees. Each group separately determined what values were important. Despite their separation, each group ended up selecting the same values. Adriana recalled how Kanahele told the employees that since everyone had the same values, they should work together within the confines of those values.

Adriana described how George Kanahele helped the staff to compose a mission statement. Kanahele then revised the document, but the employees wanted to keep it in their original words, even though it was grammatically incorrect. Adriana said that Kanahele did not object because he felt it was important for them to speak with their own words. Ancient Hawaiians values included “Spiritual attunement with the gods, harmony with the cosmos and nature, loyalty to leaders, unity with companions, physical and mental health, personal achievement, hospitality, generosity, and *aloha*” (Kanahele

1986:12). The values of the Island Tide Hotel turned out to be quite similar to those of their ancestors.¹⁸

Adriana Kalama described the process of selecting values. The staff members from every department of the hotel divided into groups. Each was encouraged to select four Hawaiian values that they wanted to live by. Adriana Kalama, head of the Hospitality Department and the *Po'okela* Program, provided the example of the cleaning staff, who valued community, honesty, trustworthiness, and patience. From these self-selected values comes their code of conduct—acceptable behaviors that relate to upholding the values of the department. It was important to the sense of community that these values and mission statements did not just come from the top. They were formulated from the common values of the entire staff, which brought them together as a Hawaiian community celebrating Hawaiian values. Thus the Island Tide Hotel had begun to embody the vision of George Kanahele.

Participating in Heritage

At the Island Tide Hotel, everyone is encouraged to participate in the Hawaiian heritage—from the meanest of employees to the general manager and even the guests themselves. Providing such an inclusive experience poses quite a challenge. As Adriana admits, “It takes a lot of investment of time and money...[Yet] our general manager insists after all these years that this is our direction. It’s the right thing to do. It is not the easiest thing, but for us, it is right.” The challenge of *Po'okela* is to discover how the Hawaiian culture fits within the hospitality industry.

After defining values, the next step of *Po'okela* was to develop an employee enrichment program which would educate them about the Hawaiian culture. Adriana described how this was achieved by creating classes that the employees were required to attend every quarter. These classes ranged from Hawaiian language, music, plants, navigation, to the arts of *hula*, and more. According to Adriana, the Island Tide Hotel has recently celebrated its 75th *Po'okela* class. Each class had to be taught approximately ten times in order to account for the employees' schedules. Needless to say, it was an enormous undertaking with monetary consequences. However, Adriana said that the manager deemed the ends to be worth the means and continued integrating Hawaiian culture into the workplace.

Po'okela also has the connotations “to bloom” and “to discover.” Adriana believes that these classes provide an opportunity for the employees to discover skills they never knew they had. In addition, it is an adventure into the past—an opportunity for Hawaiians to *be* Hawaiian. As Adriana explained, eventually the employees began to take over teaching the classes. In addition to merely learning about Hawaiian culture, the employees learn how Hawaiian culture can be relevant and meaningful in a modern world.

Adriana Kalama described how the employees participate in the hotel's entertainment. In celebration of May Day, the *Ho'okipu* (Hospitality) Department, sought out performers from each department. According to Adriana, the May Day performance took place in the courtyard. The favorite performance turned out to be the dancing housekeepers. At the end, each member of the audience was given a *plumeria lei* handcrafted by the employees. In addition to Hawaiian holidays, Adriana says that the

employees also celebrate every Friday as a community. Since it was suggested by the talented housekeeping department, every Friday morning, every department comes to the lobby where there is singing and *hula* dancing. Adriana called this event Aloha Fridays Singing. Adriana also mentioned that the staff has recorded two CDs. These opportunities provide another way for the employees to give back to their Hawaiian community through sharing and practicing their talents.

The Tourist Experience

Tourists who stay at the Island Tide Hotel have a unique experience. The hotel is a place where guests come not only to vacation and relax, but also to receive enlightenment. The Island Tide Hotel can be considered a tourist border zone because it is a place where the guests and hosts have a “contract” to meet and share in an exchange of culture (Bruner 2005:17). Guests find entertainment, relaxation, and tropical settings at the Island Tide Hotel. However, because the owner of the hotel has not been open-handed with the finances, tourists do not necessarily find luxury. Regardless, key informants from the staff believe that the Island Tide Hotel has a much more meaningful experience to offer for those who recognize it.

At the hotel, welcome is everywhere. When guests arrive at the hotel, they are received by the gracious staff. They are informed of opportunities like the *Ohana* Welcome Breakfast that can help them get acquainted with their surroundings. On the weekends, they enjoy the Aloha Fridays Singing. Every staff member they meet is garbed in aloha print and adorned with *leis*. The nightly shows in the courtyard give guests an opportunity to watch and learn from the Hawaiian cultural practitioners.

Like the staff members, guests are encouraged to participate in the Hawaiian community. Classes in Hawaianness are available daily and open to any tourist staying at the hotel. According to Adriana, the staff believes that Hawaiian values and traditions are not just relevant for Hawaiians. Guests have a chance to truly experience the exotic “other” up close and personal. Classes include *lauhala* weaving, language, *kukui* bracelet making, *lei* making, *hula*, *hula* aerobics, *ukulele*, pareo tying, pineapple cutting, and more. These classes demonstrate practical ways that Hawaiian culture can be useful to non-Hawaiians. This is an example of Mary Louise Pratt’s “contact zone”, a “space of colonial encounters,” (1992:6) and Bruner’s “border zone,” a “distinct meeting place between the tourists who come forth from their hotels and the local performers, the “natives,” who leave their homes to engage the tourists in structured ways in predetermined localities for defined periods of time” (2006:17). In these spaces, Hawaiian culture is simultaneously emergent (Bauman 1977) and a “coproduction” in which Hawaiian cultural practitioners and tourists engage (Bruner 2006). This is especially meaningful for the employees who are creating culture in these exchanges.

The Island Tide Hotel prefers a “hands-on” approach. Educating the guests in Hawaianness is a way of making culture tangible. Classes offer guests an opportunity to do more than just appreciate Hawaianness from afar. They actually have the opportunity to participate and perform the culture themselves.

The Island Tide Hotel has a unique way of showing its appreciation of guests. Adriana described how the night before they leave, guests receive a special invitation to come down to the lobby for a special ceremony. Each person is presented with a *lei* of *kukui* as the staff sing. Adriana Kalama described how the tragedy of 9/11/01 had

affected everyone, and caused many people to be afraid of travel. However, some visitors still chose to come to the Island Tide. Adriana explained that the general manager wanted to show his appreciation for these guests; he had done all he could to ensure that no employee lost their job during the hard times. He was so grateful for those travelers who helped the hotel survive during this time. He asked the employees to brainstorm a way to thank them, and the *kukui lei* ceremony was born.

Adriana described how the *kukui*, or candle nut, represents enlightenment. The nuts come in several different shades, each with different symbolic association. White *kukui* are associated with knowledge. Adriana said that the *kukui lei* became an addition to the employee uniform. To celebrate every year that an employee has worked and studied at the Island Tide Hotel, he or she receives another white *kukui* to symbolize the deepening of their knowledge. The tradition was also extended to guests. Adriana explains that the employees “like to start traditions with guests because we are totally based on tradition here.” As she says, it has become a way for the hotel to welcome back those who return, and recognize their continued enlightenment. Each year, guests bring back their *leis* and the process of learning and sharing continues.

During the *kukui lei* ceremony, there is a special song that plays in the background. It is accompanied by a ukulele and the lifting of the employees’ voices. According to Adriana, the song was written by a former employee who was terminally ill. Adriana sang the Hawaiian lyrics, and then translated them to English: “I am giving you this very beautiful *lei*. As beautiful as it is, it reflects the person who is receiving it. You are just as beautiful and cherished.” The song was performed and recorded by employees,

who sing it live at the ceremony. This tradition is a uniquely Hawaiian way of honoring the guests.

The Narrative of the Island Tide Hotel

Space and Time: A Walk through History

The layout of the Island Tide Hotel community is structured as the continuation of Hawaiian heritage, through history into the present. This narrative is represented by the architecture and design of the hotel. It frames the guests' experiences as they walk through ancient history into emergent¹⁹ Hawaiian times.

Many guests arrive at the hotel via the trolley which takes visitors on a loop to nearby hotels and shopping centers. The trolley helps restrict tourists' gaze to the tourist bubble (Bruner 2006:16). A tourist bubble is an area created to meet the expectations of tourists. It is comprised of fine dining, four-star hotels, the best views and beaches on the island, places to book excursions, and town squares showcasing cultural activities. This area is constructed for the benefit of the tourist, highlighting the "best" of the culture. It is an edited, performed space comprised of many layers. The tourist bubble is a space that is designed especially to meet the needs and expectations of the modern tourist. The trolley helps maintain the boundaries of this bubble. These visitors do not travel by car in the local streets, but are directed and subtly restricted to the "acceptable" locations via the trolley. The stops include only hotels where tourists can stay the night, and shopping malls where they can entertain themselves during the day. This also reflects a diurnal pattern of tourism mentioned by Bruner in *Culture on Tour*, tourists spend their days out shopping or on schedule excursions (2006:10). At night they return to their hotels or nearby restaurants for wining and dining by the sea. Nightly entertainment, such as *hula*

shows, live music, or *luaus*, is also a part of this pattern. The trolley is a nostalgic piece that is “out of time.” Its wood paneling creaks with every bump and turn. The vintage style creates a yearning for “Old Hawaii.” The trolley functions as a vehicle that not only moves tourists through space, but time as well. Though each guest who pays for their stay at the hotel also pays for transportation on the trolley, no money ever exchanges hands between the tourist and the driver. This furthers a stereotype of “Hawaiian hospitality.” Though each guest pays for their trolley rides in advance, because there is no direct payments when they climb aboard, tourists feel that they are being provided with a generous service. In fact, many choose to show their generosity by adding some cash to the driver’s tip jar. The trolley is mainly restricted to the back roads, because its older construction is not suitable for modern streets. This also allows the trolley to avoid traffic jams and city bustle. One of the trolley’s destinations for guests and evening entertainment-seekers is the Island Tide Hotel

The Island Tide Hotel is an evocative example of reconstructed Hawaii. The hotel is located in a popular tourist area in the Hawaiian Islands. The grounds are situated on an exquisite beach with a lovely view of the surrounding Islands. Construction on the hotel began in the early sixties. Today, the architecture still reflects the style of this decade. The owner of the Island Tide Hotel lives in South Korea and is therefore out of touch with the hotel’s needs for renovations. Unfortunately, this has resulted in very limited remodeling. The most recent project was to replace the carpet and only the carpet. The result is that the Island Tide may fall short of many tourists’ high expectations of luxury. However, rather than letting this impact business, the hotel management chooses to embrace the historical nature of the hotel. Though the buildings may at first appear to

be dated, the management uses a modest budget carefully to construct a meaningful experience for its guests. Though some tourists with higher expectations may be initially disappointed with the lack of luxury, Adriana Kalama says that they report afterward that the experience of the hotel is much more meaningful than mere comfort and class. Most guests return year after year to the Island Tide. Clearly there is something charming and alluring about the Island Tide Hotel that the Hyatt and the Ritz do not possess.

The Island Tide Hotel recreates history so that guests can literally walk through it. As museum expert Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett observes, “In situ displays are immersive and environmental...at their most fully realized...they create a virtual world into which the visitor enters” (1998:4). Such an experience is created at the Island Tide Hotel. Guests arrive on their time machine, the trolley, and the hotel takes them on a journey through the ages. There are several different towers and smaller buildings that make up the Island Tide Hotel. Each building is named after a surrounding island: Maui, Molokai, Lanai, and Kauai. The buildings are in a formation suggesting their namesakes’ geographical articulation. It is a metaconstruction of the tourists’ experience: an island within an island. The front sign of the Island Tide Hotel is surrounded by flaming torches, and tall, untrimmed native trees. After disembarking from the trolley, and crossing the street towards the hotel, a massive volcano is the first thing visitors see. It is situated about 20 yards from the entrance. The volcano is made from Hawaiian volcanic rock, making it a smaller replica of its mother form. The lava rocks are held fast in their cone shape by cement the color of ash, also a local resource. From the beginning, Island Tide Hotel literally constructs itself from the pieces of Hawaii. It calls to mind the natural and fiery beginnings of Hawaii. The volcano is brought to life with a spurt of water from



Figure 5: The volcano at the entrance to the Island Tide Hotel

its crater, lighted orange to lend the appearance of lava. This volcano is the beginning of the journey through the Island Tide Hotel and through the history of Hawaii. The volcano is surrounded by a lush Eden of *plumeria* trees. It is as if the Island has just been born amid the fire and stone, and the lush rainforests surround the slopes of the fiery mountain. Furthermore, the volcano and the garden are on an actual “island” created by the driveway. The garden is surrounded by pavement as Hawaii is surrounded by the sea. Just as the sea brought the first canoe of people to Hawaii, the pavement brings the visitors as they arrive from the trolley. From their first glimpse of the hotel, visitors can walk in the footsteps of the ancient Hawaiians as they first saw the wonders of the Islands.

Crossing this symbolic ocean of pavement, guests journey onward in time from the day the Island was forged in the volcanic fires. Looking left, visitors see a canoe, nearly identical to the one that brought the first seven Hawaiians. Near the canoe are

several large lava rocks, reminiscent of *pohaku*—sacred stones of the ancient ones. Van James, author for the Bishop Museum and recipient of a Ka Palapala Po’okela Award for Excellence, describes *pohaku* as “the bare bones of a once flourishing civilization”(2001:8). These stones were multi-purposed. According to James, “some represent individuals transformed into stone, while others serve as dwelling places for specific spirit beings or gods” (2001:9) Among such *pohaku* are *Wahine Pe’e and Pu’u Pehe*. *Pohaku* had special religious resonance. They had both physical and numinous significance including boundary markers, “jumping-off places” for the soul to travel to the next world, and served as indicators for where a deity, spirit, or ancestor could be contacted (James 2001:18). These sacred stones were physical inscriptions in the landscape signifying a greater spiritual threshold. *Pohaku* could even be associated with specific genders (James 2001:19). These were often sites of offerings and prayers, some of which are held sacred to this day. On the Island of Molokai, on a mountain overlooking the leper colony at Kalaupapa, is *Kauleonanahoa*, the Phallic Rock. Hawaiian legend tells of a time in which Molokai had been ravaged by war which had drastically reduced its population. Due to the death of the warriors, the women of Molokai had no means of producing the next generation. The gods told the *kahuna*, priest, to send the women to *Kauleonanahoa*. The *mana* of the *pohaku* was so potent that every woman returned home pregnant and the Island of Molokai was saved (James 2001:139). Though tourism on Molokai is extremely limited, the site today is a popular stop for the tour busses on Molokai. The *pohaku* is often adorned with offerings of *leis* and *ti* leaves. Sometimes cans of soda or other odd items are left as more spontaneous



Figure 6: *Pohaku Wahine Pe'e* and *Pohaku Moemoe* in the shrubbery gardens of a golf course

offerings for those who are moved by the *mana* of the site. Hawaiians today still hold sacred *Kauleonahoa*. They warn female tourists and visitors of its potency. As I began to hike the trail to the site, a local Hawaiian woman took me aside and urged me not touch the *pohaku* for fear that I myself might become pregnant.

Though the stones at the Island Tide Hotel have no particular sacred significance, they are a reminder and a reconstruction of the ancient customs observed by the first people of Hawaii. The canoe sits on a lawn that is blocked off with a small wall of cemented lava rocks. A small plaque reads “Cultural Display Only: Please Do Not Sit on Canoe.” This warning could represent reflecting on the past as something that can be fragile, in need of careful preservation, and not to be touched by careless hands.

Looking forward, one sees the pillars of the hotel, made from carefully stacked lava rocks. They are stacked as painstakingly as those of the ancient *heiaus* (temple). Lava rock was used by ancient Hawaiians in most constructions, including *heiaus*,

fishponds, and houses. This form of building was the most durable. The remains of many of these wondrous lava rock constructions can be seen today. The largest and most famous temple in the Hawaiian Islands is the *Pi'ilanihale Heiau*. Its foundation measures 415 by 340 feet and covers three acres (James 201:114). This enormous *heiau* is believed to have been built by the highest chief of Maui, Pi'ilani. He is credited with united all of Maui under one rule, resulting in a time of peace and prosperity (James 2001:114). The *Pi'ilanihale Heiau* is comprised of lava rocks fitted finely together. This painstaking process has ensured the survival of the temple through time.

Lava rocks were also used to construct other ancient wonders including the fish ponds. Hawaiian fish ponds are ingenious constructions, "Hawaiian fish ponds are unique in their design and construction. Nowhere else in the Pacific has such an efficient, practical, and productive system of aquaculture been developed" (James 2001:27). The design of the ponds included a causeway for water to enter and exit the pond. A type of "*makaha*," or "wooden sluice gate" was used to filter the fish that were allowed to pass in and out of the pond (James 2001:27). Smaller fish could swim through into the pond where they found nourishment. Once they had been well fed they could no longer fit through the sluice gates to escape. Hawaiians fish ponds showcase the intellect of the ancient Hawaiians. In these fish ponds, Hawaiians could plant taro, which was a staple of the Hawaiian diet (James 2001:29). The taro would thrive in the fish pond and the fish would feed from the roots of the taro. Fish ponds were a refined integration of aquacultural and agricultural systems.

The entrance to the Island Tide Hotel showcases Hawaiian mastery of construction and agriculture. The front columns appear as their ancient counterparts ones

did, untarnished by time. They proudly support the roof of the building. Beneath the portico, the floor is made from stone tiles of red, blue-gray, and light gray—lava tones. Walking in between the first set of pillars, one sees two potted palms sit at the base of each pillar. The guests have moved from the untamed, raw, newly born Hawaii into the age of domestication and farming. Ancient Hawaiians recognized a variety of medicinal plants and herbs. Many of these can be found around the grounds of the Island Tide Hotel. In fact, according to one of my informants, the hotel offers guided tours of the grounds that focus on the plants that were domesticated by the ancient Hawaiians to be used in remedies.

An informant was happy to point out the plants and their uses. One of the plants that grow on the grounds of the hotel is the *kukui* nut. This plant has many practical uses. Its oil can burn for hours, but is also good for the skin. The flowers of this plant can be used to cure oral sores and the sap is good for sunburn. *Ti* plants also grow in the garden of the Island Tide Hotel. To ancient Hawaiians, this plant warded off evil and brought good fortune. Today, *ti* leaves are used to wrap fresh foods before they are cooked. *Ti* leaves are also fashioned into *hula* skirts. Another important plant is the breadfruit tree or ‘*Ulu*. This tree was so important to the ancients that they brought it with them when they first came to Hawaii. The breadfruit is high in carbohydrates and calcium. It can be cooked in many ways, treated like either a potato, or bread. ‘*Ulu* can be baked, marinated, stir-fried, or steamed.

The potted plants and columns constructed of lava rock at the entrance to the Island Tide Hotel represent paramount achievements of the first Hawaiians to master their land. Continuing forward, beneath the next set of columns are seven potted plants,

signifying the continued mastery of farming. To the right is a garden, showcasing a few domesticated plants.

Next to the open door of the hotel is a wooden desk with a sign reading “bell desk/valet services.” A woman is seated here, while a man stands by. Both wear uniforms of aloha print. They stand here at the gateway to “Hawaii,” the Island Tide Hotel, to graciously welcome the guests from across the sea. They are enacting an ancient stereotype that Hawaiians are known for--their graciousness, particularly as hosts happy to welcome guests here on their homeland.

Jane Desmond, expert in gender, embodiment, and social identity as well as transnational relations within the U.S., observes how Hawaiians are often figured “as ‘ideal’ native who are graciously welcoming to outsiders and who present visitors with a nonthreatening, alluring encounter with paradisiacal exoticism, a ‘soft primitivism’” (Desmond 1999:4). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett comments “in its more benign mode, the panoptic takes the form of hospitality, a host welcoming a guest to enter a private sphere” (1998:55). The Hawaiian is seen to welcome the foreigner into the exclusive, behind-the-scenes experience of Hawaii. This association of the “welcoming” Hawaiian has is fueled by tourism.

Because of this common assumption, Hawaiians are viewed as “happy” people who welcome the intrusion of tourism and are happy to be a part of the U.S. This has come to be inseparably subsumed into the perceived Hawaiian identity. Whenever travelers are greeted with aloha, receive a warm welcome from the bellman, or a mint on their pillow, they attribute it to the “kind” and “generous” welcome of the Hawaiian people. In reality, the traveler pays the hospitality industry for such courtesies. They are

in no way a signifier of cultural identity. In fact, many of the individuals who work in the hospitality industry are not Hawaiians. Desmond describes how “during the first three decades of the twentieth century, tourist advertisements, postcards, and popular journalism...ignored almost completely the complexity of Hawaii’s demographics” despite large waves of immigrants that were intermarrying with the Hawaiian population (1999:8). It seems that this tradition continues more than eighty years later. Travelers and mainlanders continue to disregard Hawaii’s diversity while assuming that the multicultural employees of the hospitality, entertainment, and tourism sectors must all be “Hawaiians” and that their behavior is significant of such.

The front of the building is a row of shuttered windows. The shutters are made of glass, stretching from floor to ceiling. They are framed in thick trimming and painted white and green. They create a feel of stepping into an old plantation house. It is neat, clean, and breezy. Above the entrance way, a white sign with green letters reads “Island Tide Hotel.” Ambient Hawaiian music plays from a radio.

As guests step inside the lobby, they are bombarded with a wonder of sights, sounds, and smells, sharing in the wonder of Captain Cook and his crew when they first beheld the Hawaiian Islands. In this moment, some guests may experience a form of “imperialist nostalgia” (Rosaldo 1989:68) that here may more appropriately be called discoverer’s nostalgia. Rosaldo notes that “agents of colonialism—officials, constabulary officers, missionaries, and other figures from whom anthropologists ritually dissociate themselves—often display nostalgia for the colonized culture as it was ‘traditionally’ (that is, when they first encountered it)” (1989:69). In a sense, tourists are “agents of colonialism” because they too “[bare] witness, and have participated, as relatively minor

players, in the transformations taking place before our eyes” (Rosaldo 1989:87). Tourism as a whole has changed the culture and economy of Hawaii. In this way, each individual tourist is an agent of greater changes. As agents of change, tourists often long for the very thing that they have helped destroy. Entering the lobby of the Island Tide Hotel, where Hawaiian culture is encapsulated (Bauman 1977:36), triggers feelings of nostalgia in tourists, as well as a yearning for what has been lost due to the “civilizing process (Rosaldo 1989:72). Those who have participated in the process of change (for however brief a time) experience these feelings. These agents of changing the local culture use nostalgia to assuage guilt, in addition, “a mood of nostalgia makes racial domination appear innocent and pure” (Rosaldo 1989:68). Tourists prefer to situate themselves as innocent bystanders when in fact they are the heirs to a society that is based off wealth acquired from the Hawaiian Islands through colonialism. Guests approach with the mindset of the discoverer. Observing the plantation-style shutters, which are the last sight before entering through the front door, might awaken the agency of colonialism within these guests. It is with this mindset that they enter. Walking through the entrance of the Island Tide Hotel resonates with landing on Hawaii’s shores for the first time. It recreates the moment Captain Cook and his crew first laid eyes on the Hawaiian Islands, strewn before them like a cluster of pearls, ripe for the taking. Because the moment of discovery is recreated, the term “discoverer’s nostalgia” is more appropriate to describe the specific yearning felt by guests when they first pass through the front doors of the Island Tide Hotel.

Natural Hawaii has been brought into the lobby and tamed for the visitors. The furniture, décor, and fixtures are all made to look as “natural” as possible. The dominant

colors are green and red. A warm breeze rushes through the open lobby. Walking in, the room opens up through the back to a courtyard. Most of the furniture is carved from beautifully grained wood. This includes chairs, desks, couches, tables, walls, cabinets, light fixtures, and more. There is very little plastic or metal. To the right is a welcome desk, paneled in solid wood. The potential of Hawaii's forests can be seen in its polished surface, carved and shined to perfection. Behind the desk works a Polynesian woman, a *plumeria* flower in her long black hair. She wears a blue floral printed blouse. In the center of the desk stands a vase with a potted orchid. Continued mastery and domestication of the Island's resources were not only for the most basic of needs, but also for beauty and pleasure.

To the left of the entrance is an entire wall of *hula* dancers' portraits honoring the victors of the annual *Hula O Na Keiki* Soloist competition is held each year at the Island Tide Hotel. According to Adriana Kalama, the hotel's cultural specialist, this will be the competition's twenty-fifth anniversary. In her words, "The hotel created, manages, conducts, and finances our *Hula O Nā Keiki* Soloist Competition." According to Adriana, *halau hula*, *hula* schools, from all over the world come to perform from places like Japan, Las Vegas, California, and other Hawaiian Islands. Adriana described , "the judges of this auspicious competition as "world renown *hula* judges that have judged many competitions like Merrie Monarch, *Ku Mai Ka Hula*, *Ia Oe E Ka La*," and more. Participants must undergo an interview as well as perform a Hawaiian chant and a solo in modern or traditional style.

The lobby of the Island Tide Hotel dedicates a wall as tribute to the winners of this competition. Beneath each photograph is a small plaque bearing the individual's

name and the year of their victory. The images are in sepia tones, with very subtle color hues—clearly the workings of Photoshop. Though images are obviously modern (as evidenced also by the dates on the plaques) they are being framed as part of an ancient and modern tradition that continues through *hula* performances at the Island Tide Hotel.

Often, a vacation in Hawaii is validated by one experience: Hawaiian *hula* dancers. A *luau* is the “essential” piece that is needed for the trip to be worth-while. Jane Desmond, who combines Hawaiian anthropology with her own experience as a dancer, notes how the symbol of the *hula* girl has become the “destination image” for Hawaii since the 1930s (1999: xx). The experience of the “*hula* girl” is quintessential. This image has been widely circulated in media, pictures, news, historical narratives, including “everyday commodities like canned goods, playing cards, and serving trays” (1999:6). Popular culture has been saturated with the *hula* girl, constructing the association both consciously and unconsciously. Tourists and non-tourists alike purchase the commodified image of the *hula* girl on everything from lamps to party decorations. No backyard *luau*



Figure 7: Wall of victors of the *Hula O Nā Keiki* Soloist Competition at the Island Tide Hotel

is complete without plastic grass skirts and coconut bras. The *hula* girl is the honored guest of the party. Thus, when Hawaii is brought to mind, it is immediately associated with this reinforced icon.

The *hula* girl destination image that has come to “signify Hawaiianess” has a certain appearance. In Desmond’s words, “the female *hapa haole* (half –Caucasian) ‘look’ emerged as a sign of the ‘ideal native’ (1999: xxii). The particulars of this appearance are lost on tourists. They do not look at the Hawaiian dancing girl as mixed-race, but rather an acceptable representation of Hawaii and Native Hawaiians. This “look” has been idealized. It represents Hawaiian history as told from the view of the tourist--the outsider. The *hula* girl represents the colonial process of refining race. During the 1920s and 1930s, when the *hula* girl image first became popular, Hawaiian culture was being used to distinguish the Hawaiian Islands from other similar destinations (Desmond 1999:7). The culture was embodied through the natives. Unfortunately, at this time, “racial discourses...provided crucial linkages of body (race) and culture, which was conceived of not only as a set of social practices but also as a marker of a moral, intellectual, and ethical development for a whole people” (Desmond 1999:7). The dominating theories involved complicated hierarchies which presented Europeans as the ultimate society. According to Desmond, when compared to other non-European groups, Hawaiians ranked surprisingly well in such hierarchies. She attributes this not only to the fact that Hawaiians were “brown,” not Asian, or black, but also to racial discourses, and the manner in which Hawaii was taken over by the United States in 1893 (1999:7). As Desmond points out, up to the 1930s, “tourist advertisements, postcards, and popular journalism...ignored almost completely the complexity of Hawaii’s demographics”

despite large waves of immigrants that were intermarrying with the Hawaiian population (1999:8). However, parallels were constructed between Caucasian and native women in popular culture. Desmond describes the effects of this process:

This nativized the white women, whitened the Hawaiian, and in general, feminized Hawaii as a destination ...by the 1915-30 period a vision of the “hapa haole” (a person of half-white, half-Hawaiian descent), epitomized by the half-white *hula* girl, emerges as the ideal, literally embodying the fantasy of the nativizing trope, melding the two bodies into one. (1999:8)

This icon is always gendered female. Rarely is there a “*hula* boy,” on tourist souvenirs or memorabilia. The female *hapa haole hula* dancer has come to stand for the experience of Hawaii. Her appearance calls to mind the mellow lull of ukuleles, the sweetness of *mai tais*, and the thrill of swimming in secluded lagoons. Desmond notes how “from the beginning, this enabling discourse of the ideal native was ‘raced’ and ‘gendered’ in particular ways: female, not male, and ‘brown,’ not ‘black,’ ‘yellow,’ or ‘red,’” (1999:5). When these ideas are merged with colonialism they can “produce imaginaries that merge the feminine and the exotic” (1999:5). “*Hula* girl” is a loaded term. She is a sign which “simultaneously symbolizes bodily presence (‘native,’ ‘woman’) and cultural enactment (Hawaiianness) and stands for the destination image of Hawaii” (1999:5). Desmond highlights the importance of bodies that are “marked” performing marked behaviors which flaunt their association and thereby encourage social categorization and the commodification of these bodies.



Fig. 8: Subtle color hues

Because of the pervasiveness of the *hula* girl icon, the experience of the *hula* girl has become the ultimate validation of Hawaiian vacations. Therefore, tourists seek out the *hula* girl as a sign that they are indeed in Hawaii. Viewing a *hula* performance, participating in a *luau*, and taking pictures of and with the *hula* girl are ways to legitimize the Hawaiian experience. Desmond discusses how tourists consume *luaus* and other shows as if they are performances of the “traditional” and “naturally occurring behaviors” (Desmond 1999: xvi). In other words, when tourists watch *hula* shows and attend *luaus*, they are seeing what they assume to be Hawaiians behaving naturally like Hawaiians. As Desmond notes, narrative is replaced by spectacle and “performers become signs of Hawaiian ‘natives’ whether or not they themselves have any Native Hawaiian ancestry” (1999: xx). These shows are performed as if they are not done for the tourists benefit. Tourists view them as if they have stumbled upon actual Native Hawaiians actually doing these activities rather than local peoples, Hawaiian or not, that are being paid to entertain. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, expert in museums and performance, concurs that “live



Figure 9: The grace of the *hula* dancers is preserved in soft sepia tones.

displays, whether recreations of daily activities or staged as formal performances, also create the illusion that the activities one watches are being done rather than represented, a practice that creates the illusion of authenticity, or realness. The impression is one of “unmediated encounter” (1998:55). Tourists observe the performance as if it were a private experience just for them rather than a mass, lucrative, product to be consumed.

The *Hula O Nā Keiki* wall of portraits at the Island Tide Museum illustrates how modernity connects with the past. In the *Hula O Nā Keiki* competition, there are two victors each year, one boy and one girl. They are titled either Mr. or Miss *Hula O Nā Keiki*. Their name, title, year of victory and *halau* are inscribed into the plaque beneath each photo. Across the years there is very little difference between images. Each photo shows a performer in motion. Their bodies are executing complicated choreography with elegant grace. Some stand tall with their arms up and out, gesturing at the heavens.

Others are suspended in moments of nimbleness, balancing on one foot. Each competitor is clothed in traditional *hula* costume. Every performer wears a headpiece, bracelets, and anklets made of greenery. Several appear to have floral accents. Boys as well as the girls wear full skirts of grass. Behind every dancer is a different view of the ocean or the lava rock point in the distance. From these different angles, it is clear that there is much movement going on either on the part of the performer or the photographer. Each performer might be dancing in a slightly different spot, or moving about as they were photographed, causing a slightly different background in each picture. Natural elegance is emphasized. These pictures do not need color to be beautiful. The background is in a soft focus. Without the distraction of color, each performer, with bare arms and legs, blends into the natural setting. These images take on a romantic theme. Reduced to sepia tones, the color of each individual is not discernable. Nor is the competition limited to Native Hawaiians. In some photos, subtle hues of color appear. They may not be noticed at first glance, they only reveal themselves upon closer examination--a verdant tint to a head piece, a ghost of yellow on a skirt. Glancing again, they disappear. The alterations to these photographs are indicative of their modernity. Yet they are tinted sepia to invoke the traditional. The subtle hints of color serve to symbolize a modern connection to the past. The competition requires each performer to demonstrate their knowledge of the past by chanting in Hawaiian. Then each competitor may choose to dance in either modern or traditional style indicating the *Hula O Nā Keiki* pageant's connection to heritage and modernity.



Figure 10: *Konane* board

Opposite the wall of *hula* competition pictures is an excursion desk. Behind it, along the wall is a wooden ledge. On it sit several rounded lava stones draped with *leis* and carvings, displayed like offerings. Two small carved *tikis* sit behind a basket on the lower shelf of the ledge. There is a pair of old fashioned wooden desks with two wooden stools with red leather seats in front of each. It is here that tourists may book their own adventures upon the island and decide what destinations lie ahead of them and what risks they will take. Guests sign waiver forms with pens attached to plastic flowers.

The *Ohana* Fun Center is also on the left. Behind a tall wooden desk is a wall of lighted pictures featuring things to do and see around the island such as *hula* shows, ziplining, and dolphin cruises—all family approved. A sign on the front of the desk features a tropical background and a vintage Hawaiian girl with starfish framing the words: “You’re invited: *Ohana* Welcome Breakfast.”



Figure 11: The *Hale Papamū* houses the *Konane* board in the courtyard of the Island Tide Hotel

In the center of the lobby, there are several pieces of furniture clustered around a wooden pillar. The surface of this table is made from interlocking wooden pieces that give the appearance that they are woven together. Upon this table sits a large, volcanic, rounded stone. It is about two and a half feet across and two feet wide. On the surface of the stone, red, black, and white round stones sit in grooves indented into the surface of the stone. This is an ancient board game sitting on a modern table. It is the central feature of the lobby and is not roped off, indicating that modern tourists are intended to engage with the pieces of ancient Hawaiian culture. The game, according to Adriana, is called *Konane*. She describes it as “a strategy game played by the chiefs to sharpen their war tactics. It is played like a game of checkers.” During a game of *Konane*, players are forbidden from speaking to each other in order to better simulate warfare. The stone that forms the game board is called the *papamū*. There is another *Konane* game board in the courtyard of the hotel. It is sheltered by a small structure with a thatched roof called *Hale*

Papamū: House of the *Papamū*. It is a tiny shack that holds two benches and the *papamū*. Adriana commented that most of the players are curious children.

To the right of the *Konane* board in the lobby is an alcove section with a door to the Kanehele Room. To the right is another alcove. Either wall is made of stacked lava rocks, as if framing this part of the room for a special purpose. In this alcove is a rough stairway that has been created out of stacked lava rocks. The stairs go upward to the left, not really leading anywhere, and clearly not for actual use. However, they symbolize a journey. On each stair is placed a drum and several potted plants. It is as if one is making an ancient journey up the slopes of Haleakala with the Hawaiians. The real journey, however, is more symbolic. At the top of each lava rock wall is a speaker. This area is used for the *kukui lei* ceremony, in which the staff bid farewell to the guests until they return.

To the left of the alcove is a modern storefront. It is a jewelry store selling the “traditional” Hawaiian heirloom bracelets. These bracelets are made from a variety of metals, depending on the depth of travelers’ pockets. They can be as affordable as fifteen dollars or as expensive as five hundred. Into each bracelet is hammered *plumeria*, *maile* leaf, or Hawaiian scroll designs, which feature a pattern of graceful waves and curls. According to legend (and any vendor) Hawaiian Heirloom Bracelets are a Hawaiian tradition, passed down from mother to daughter to granddaughter and beyond. Sellers tell a legend that the concept of the Heirloom Bracelet was created by Queen Liliuokalani herself. According to this legend as told by one vendor, these bracelets used to be used to convey ancient Hawaiian stories. The bracelets became a tradition for a woman to receive on her wedding day. A modern twist includes the option of melting down old jewelry to

be shaped into an Heirloom Bracelet. In this way, family heirlooms can be given new life in a new form while being “green.” Tourists can purchase their own Hawaiian Heirloom and begin a Hawaiian tradition in their own family. In so doing, tourists may bring back a small piece of Hawaii that can collect its own oral tradition as the story is told and retold. Some people even have their names translated into Hawaiian and engraved onto the bracelet. Whether or not the legends are true, the oral tradition is sold along with each bracelet. When tourists purchase a Hawaiian Heirloom Bracelet, they are buying a piece of history and legend. When someone has their name engraved in Hawaiian, it is a symbolic translation of that individual into Hawaiian legend. They are recreating themselves within Hawaiian tradition. It is quite meaningful that these bracelets are sold at the Island Tide Hotel, a place that encourages visitors to learn about, celebrate, and participate in Hawaianness.

The legend of Hawaiian Heirloom Bracelets has been passed down through



Figure 12: Drums line the stairs in the alcove

generations, just like the bracelets themselves. Regardless of whether or not these oral traditions are attached to actual events, Hawaiian Heirloom Bracelets have become authentic because of their mass production. According to MacCannell, “the work becomes ‘authentic’ only after the first copy of it is produced. The reproductions *are* the aura” (1976:65). The Hawaiian Heirloom Bracelets are in MacCannell’s fourth stage of sacralization, mechanical reproduction. (1976:63). This indicates that there is some value an authenticity in the original Heirloom Bracelets that is worth reproducing in copies. MacCannell suggests that “society does not produce art: artists do. Society, for its part, can only produce importance, “reality,” or “originality,” of a work of art by piling up representations of it alongside” (1976: 65). The sheer popularity of the Heirloom Bracelets can attest to the importance that society has attached to these pieces. Their value is more than the aluminum or platinum from which they are forged. The bracelets have come to symbolize an authentic piece of Hawaiian oral history—a manufacturable connection to the past.

Hawaiian culture is reproduced in the milieu. For example, at the Island Tide Hotel, the uniform of the employees includes *aloha* print shirts for the men, and dresses for the women. Often, female employees wear their hair down and flowing, perhaps with a *plumeria* tucked behind one ear. Each individual wears a *kukui*, or candlenut necklace. This uniform recreates gendered form of traditional Hawaii.

The Kanahele room is in an alcove off the main lobby next to the jewelry stores. The Kanahele room functions as a theatre. It is a wing Weekly magic or dancing shows take place in this theatre. Magic shows may seem out of place in the Island Tide Hotel,

however, Adriana describes how the management carefully considered the concept of magic in Hawaiian culture:

From the beginning we raised the question of how magic ties into the Hawaiian Culture. After many years, the show has evolved from a perspective of myth and magic to the new production to be launched shortly of the big steam boats arriving in Hawai'i. The show currently features the works of all the magicians that came to Hawai'i and taking on the scenes of what was happening in Hawai'i during those days. So, it's a bit of a stretch in tying in the culture, but then again, the Boat Days are also a part of our Island heritage.

The original version of the magic shows focused on the role of magic in Hawaiian legend. Today the show features a more modern part of Hawaiian history. Through the 1920s and 1930s, large steamer ships would arrive in the islands laden with tourists. According to an informant, these "Boat Days" came to be Island-wide days of welcome and celebration. The magic shows highlight the work and history of the magicians who also arrived on these steamers.

Though these magic shows do not specifically feature Hawaiian culture, they do share a part of the Islands' history and heritage while offering fun for the whole *ohana*. Because of these reasons, the management of the Island Tide Hotel hosts these shows weekly.



Figure 13: The stage in the courtyard is lined with *tikis*

The Courtyard: A Halfway Point

The courtyard of the Island Tide Hotel is constructed as a “natural” place where the guests and hosts of Hawaii come to meet and share in cultural performance. This meeting of cultures can be compared to Edward Bruner’s analysis of Mayers’ Ranch discussed in *Culture on Tour* (2005:38). The courtyard is a space that has been created to stimulate this exchange. A variety of activities occur in this courtyard space. During the day, it is an outdoor classroom for guests who are interested in taking classes in Hawaianness. By night, it serves as a theatre where local Hawaiians come to perform their culture. Here, tourists, guests in the Hawaiians’ home, gather at tables on the patio before the stage. The Hawaiian hosts come out to meet them from the stage.

The Hawaiians at the Island Tide Hotel are demonstrating that Hawaiian constructions of indigenous “culture” are ever-emergent and accomplished via

performance (Bauman 1977:38). They have found a way to live Hawaiian culture at the hotel while also performing it for the benefit of guests. Within the Island Tide Hotel, Hawaiians “exhibit themselves retrospectively and prospectively” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblet 1998:5). Tourism is a catalyst for the revitalization of Hawaiian culture. It is also an opportunity to reconstruct Hawaiian identity through self-representation within the Island Tide Hotel. The culture is still being practiced in addition to being performed for the benefit of the audience. Even behind the scenes, when tourists are not present, the relationships between employees and management function within the precepts of Hawaiian culture. As Adriana Kalama explains, this means that the hotel observes “management by values rather than management by objectives. Our evaluation system is based on these values. It is still a corporate way of doing things, but instead we have made it very Hawaiian.” The hotel does not merely put up a front of Hawaianness, but actually functions according to Hawaiian tradition at an administrative level.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblet notes, “heritage is a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblet 1998:7). Reproducing Hawaiian culture for the benefit of tourism is also a way for the Hawaiian community to safeguard selected traditions through revitalization. Though the Island Tide Hotel is a business, it is also a reproduction of a Hawaiian community. The goal of the hotel is not merely profit; it also seeks to safeguard Hawaiian values and traditions through practice and reproduction.

Often, Hawaiian culture is treated as a commodity. Because it can be “produced,” it can be bought, sold, and consumed. In some cases, onlookers do “alter the meaning of the activities being carried on by local people” (Greenwood 1977:173). The presence of an audience can affect the perceived authenticity of the performance, “by implication,

anything that falsifies, disorganizes, or challenges the participants belief in the authenticity of their culture threatens it with collapse” (1977:173). Culture that is performed for its own sake is different from culture which is performed for an audience. Onlookers complicate the ways in which performances occur. Often they become more structured, scheduled, and sensationalized. This occurs in tourism, particularly at events like the *luau* which are so removed from their original context that they no longer hold meaning for those who perform them.

From conversations with employees and management at the Island Tide Hotel, this does not seem to be the case. In fact, several informants attest that they have found *more* meaning in their heritage through the *Po’okela* program. Adriana Kalama, director of the *Po’okela* program, described how employees who are non-Hawaiian have found ways to identify with Hawaiian culture by learning Hawaiian language, arts, and technology. Adriana describes how these people have become “part Hawaiian.” Perhaps the reason that the management and employees do not feel that the meaning of Hawaiian culture has been lost through its commodification within the Island Tide Hotel is that the employees feel they have agency. They have a say in what tradition they will study and collaborated in the authorship of the mission statement. Therefore, each individual participates in the structuring of culture within the hotel. The Hawaiian culture retains context at the Island Tide Hotel because it is authenticated by Hawaiians.

Before the implementation of the *Po’okela* program, there was tension between the tourists and hotel staff. Adriana related how the “local people came to resent the tourist.” Hotels had laid claim to the best beaches and forbidden locals to enter. Tourists arrived with stereotypical expectations of Hawaiians, reinforced by the wide circulation

of the destination image *hula* girl. Adriana explained how tourists assumed that every Hawaiian was an entertainer and that the Hawaiian girls ran around half naked. During this time, much of the meaning of Hawaiian culture had been lost in fantastical versions of what it meant to be Hawaiian. According to Adriana, the hotel manager realized that the tourist was there to stay, so a more symbiotic relationship needed to be created between the guest and the host. As Adriana says, “we cannot be angry with the guests for something they do not know. So how do we share that? How do we let our guests know?” The *Po’okela* program was instituted as a means of first educating the employees in Hawaiian culture so that they might in turn educate the tourists and assuage the damage that had been done to the image of Hawaiians. Through the *Po’okela* program, meaning was reestablished.

In *Imagining Indians in the Southwest*, Leah Dilworth explores how Native Americans have been mythologized through “ethnography, tourism, reformist strategies...modernist art, and poetry” (1996:3). She reveals how Western civilization imagines and sensationalizes the native through the concept of “primitivism,” which “has existed, in Western cultures at least, since ancient times. It depends on a comparison between some standard of ‘civilization’ and ‘others’ thought to be somehow simpler and has traditionally functioned as a kind field on which ‘we’ write fantasies about ‘them’” (1996:4). Hawaiians became the subjects of the colonial imagination. Popular culture depicted them as the “noble savage” living in an Edenic world (Dilworth 1996:4). Primitivism imagines “that things were more whole, more harmonious at some time ‘before’” (Dilworth 1996:3). American popular culture imposed this imagining upon Hawaiians, leading to the production of *hapa haole* music during the 20th century, which

pictures Hawaiians as simple, sexualized, savages who welcome strangers to their exotic playground.

When cultural primitivism is practiced by those outside the group in question, it “has long lasting social and cultural implications” (Dilworth 1996: 3) Recalling Davydd Greenwood’s words, “by implication, anything that falsifies, disorganizes, or challenges the participants belief in the authenticity of their culture threatens it with collapse” (1977:173). One of the implications of idealizing the Hawaiians was the loss of their culture. The language was nearly snuffed out, returning now only by careful, deliberate preservation. Hawaiian music became a lost art. Until the Hawaiian renaissance, there was no production of “Hawaiian” music. The only Hawaiian-made music was recycled versions of older traditional songs with scant new material. Meanwhile, *hapa haole* songs usurped the position of “Hawaiian” music. *Hapa haole* music was an invention for the tourists. It incorporated the kitchy *hula* girl and her swaying hips as well as vocables which were intended to sound Hawaiian but lacked real substance. George H. Lewis describes the *hapa haole* genre in the journal *Popular Music*:

[Hapa Haole music is a] series of ‘phoney’ Hawaiian songs, many with nonsense lyrics that were supposed to ‘sound’ like the Hawaiian language, such as the Al Johnson hit, ‘Yaaka Hula Hickey Dula.’ Appearing as well were songs that were pointedly demeaning to the Hawaiian, such as Harry Owens’s ‘Princess Poo-Poo-ly Has Plenty Papaya’ which manages to both assert that Hawaiian women are free and unselective in bestowing their sexual favours and to titter at, and belittle, this image at the same time. (1991:56)

Hapa haole music was the result of outsiders creating fantasies about Hawaii and Hawaiians. It was responsible for perpetuating and circulating a series of stereotypes about Hawaiians. Outsiders “made it their business to represent cultures to people outside the region” (Dilworth 1996:2). It was not until the Hawaiian renaissance that Hawaiians began harnessing the power of music to express their opposition to such fantastical portrayals, as Lewis notes:

Until then [the Hawaiian renaissance]—the early 1970s—Hawaiian music of this century was mostly commercial. It was heavily influenced and produced by the mainland American Recording industry and oriented for consumption by tourists and those on the mainland who wished to create and preserve a cartoon image of the islands as a lush, vacation playground, populated by smiling natives whose childish simplicity was matched only by their earthy friendliness and welcome of visitors from afar. This image was clearly an alien one for Hawaiians, reflecting as it did the dominant ideology of mainland American culture and the tourist industry, even as it trivialized and, at times, openly ridiculed the Hawaiian identity. (Lewis 1991:56)

Since the intervention of the Hawaiian renaissance, Hawaiian music has experienced revitalization. In addition, steps have been taken to preserve Hawaiian heritage. The Island Tide Hotel responded to the revitalization that was occurring with the implementation of the *Po'kela* program which celebrates Hawaiian self-identification.

The Island Tide constructs the experience of the hotel as an ongoing conversation, rather than something to be gazed upon. The hotel management mediates the objects, people, places, and performances that will be gazed at. Though the experience of Hawaiian culture at the hotel is structured as beautiful and romantic, it does not portray the “noble savage” or the “primitive” (Dilworth 1996:4). It blends tradition and modernity. There are no savages to civilize at the Island Tide Hotel. Instead, it is a place where both modern and ancient aspects of Hawaiian culture can be performed, not by authentic “tribal” natives, but as part of an emergent heritage (Bauman 1977:36). The overall narrative of the Island Tide Hotel is the blending of modern and ancient culture into a meaningful experience for both the audience and the performer.

The patio area of the courtyard features a stage, seating area, and bar. The bar area is constructed to look like a small Hawaiian house. Its roof is made from dried palm branches, and four carved *tikis* make the pillars that hold the roof. This house is literally held up by tradition, its four corners supported by the Hawaiian gods.



Figure 14: The *tiki*, or *akua*, towers over the courtyard

Next to the bar, near the stage area, is a towering wooden *tiki*. This *tiki* sits on a five foot pedestal. The *tiki* itself is fifteen feet tall and five feet around. Adriana commented that the other *tikis* on the grounds lack the significance of this one, functioning primarily as decorative pieces. The giant *tiki* was hand carved from *koa* wood in 1963 by a *kapuna*, or elder, and Hawaiian cultural practitioner. The artist, Adriana explained, would prefer to refer to the statue as *akua*, which means godlike, or an image of a god, because *tiki* is not a Hawaiian

word. Despite this, the restaurant, bar, and grill all have *tiki* themes. Adriana explains that she is “okay that we use *Tiki* instead of *Akua* because in Hawaiian, *Akua* also means god or god like. It would be a misnomer to use that term these days since ungodly behavior can be observed on occasions, especially at the bar...if you know what I mean!” Thus, the *Tiki* Terrace, *Tiki* Grill, and *Tiki* Bar have not been renamed *Akua* Terrance, *Akua* Grill, and *Akua* Bar.

The giant *tiki*, or *akua*, holds special significance. Wonder is defined by Stephen Greenblatt as “the power of the displayed object to stop the viewer in his or her tracks, to

convey an arresting sense of uniqueness, to evoke an exalted attention” (1991:42). The *tiki* statue is an object that inspires wonder. It is the dominating feature of the courtyard, towering over the guests and employees alike. The statue’s age alone would be enough to endear it to the hotel, however, this piece has further meaning. The statue was carved from a single log of *koa* from the Big Island. It is a reminder or attachment to another Hawaiian Island. The piece was carved painstakingly over a period of four months. Adriana mentioned that since it is now fifty years old, special steps are being taken to fortify and preserve it “for another fifty years.” Those who enter the courtyard find their eyes immediately drawn to this piece. It demands attention and stokes the imagination. The statue calls to mind a sister Island that cannot be seen on the horizon, yet is preserved in remembrance by this piece.

The *Tiki* Bar is situated to the left of the stage and seating area. The audience sits in patio furniture made to look like bamboo. The multi-level stage is at the front of the viewing area. The first level has a single table in the middle, set up for the night’s performance. To either side of this platform are three-foot *tikis*. The second level is framed by a proscenium arch of lava rocks. Palm trees are visible in between the columns supporting the arch; nature is welcomed into the performing space. Bright flowers and plants are also welcome on stage. Each night at the Island Tide Hotel, a free *hula* show is performed at 6pm, with live music to follow. These performances are often by local groups or the employees of the hotel.

The Grounds: A Place of Participation

All throughout the grounds of the Island Tide Hotel are Hawaiian structures and material culture. These range from drums, canoes, games, pavilions, and more. The grounds are the space where tourists spend their day. At their leisure, they may interact with these objects and spaces. The Island Tide Hotel promotes a hands-on experience, allowing the tourists to spend a day in the life of a Native Hawaiian. The Island Tide Hotel reserves space to display the ingenuity of the Hawaiians. There is also a private museum that displays the incredible material culture of the ancient Hawaiians recreated by modern hands.

Conclusion

The Island Tide Hotel is a modern Hawaiian community. Within this community, relationships between staff members more closely resemble kinship. The more experienced educate those who are less experienced, so that skills can be used, protected, and passed on. Like a community, the hotel has a special regard for its “ancestors,” those employees that have come before them. They are invited back and remembered for their service to the hotel and commemorated on the anniversary of the hotel’s establishment. As a community, each member made a contribution to the guidelines that the staff agrees to live and work by. Those who show outstanding Hawaiian qualities are rewarded. Those who possess talents are recognized and given opportunities to share them. Adriana recalled times when the economy began to affect the hotel. In any community, sometimes sacrifices have to be made. The general manager tried to find more creative ways to keep the staff employed. Some older employees offered to retire early in order to keep the

community together. Adriana Kalama, head of the *Po'okela* program, described how the values selected by the staff are put into action. Each value begins with “ho’o,” which in Hawaiian means “to cause to happen.” Adriana provided several examples including *ho’okipu* (hospitality), *ho’malu* (protection), and *ho’okuliana* (responsibility). As she said, “[we] put ‘ho’o’ in front of all these words because it is not static. You have to cause it. You need to bring it to life and make sure it exists. Without the ‘ho’o,’ the value would just sit there...It has to continue. But it takes effort. You have to insure it, you gotta make it live.” In this way, these values are not passive beliefs, but active values. The most important thing to recognize is that this Hawaiian community is emergent, it does not merely rehash antiquated, inaccessible culture like *happa-haole* music once did. The hotel has brought living, modern Hawaiians together in a community that shares values, recognizes talent, affords opportunity, and fights together through hard times. With the help of Dr. Kanahale, the Island Tide Hotel has rediscovered Hawaianness by regaining their ethnic pride and identity. The employees of the Island Tide Hotel have found ways to make their heritage relevant to their lives every day. In Adriana’s words:

A culture has to live. A culture isn’t just a culture and then it dies. Many people say, “Where are the Hawaiians?” But Hawaiians come in many different colors. If you look at my husband, he has blue eyes and fair skin. You’d think he was from Arkansas as well, but he is Hawaiian--he is brown on the inside! So when I write or when I talk about Hawaiians I talk about them in present tense. Because there weren’t [just] Hawaiians back then because there are Hawaiians today. There are our Hawaiian ancestors, from our past—our forefathers. But when I talk about Hawaiians I talk

about them in present tense. Because we are still here. In fact, there are more of us! We are all mixed these days, but we are still here. We are still a thriving culture.

The Island Tide Hotel has become a place for Hawaiians to live in the “present tense.” Through the incorporation of Hawaiian values, history, personal gifts, and traditional ingenuity, the Island Tide Hotel has provided one of the most meaningful opportunities for modern Hawaiians. This community has learned to use tourism as an opportunity to share and embody their culture. With more communities like this one, the tensions between Hawaiians and their tourist guests would come to a natural resolution, structuring an environment of cultural sharing rather than one that struggles to live up to the high expectations of tourists.

As the visitors leave the Island Tide Hotel, they walk back through the front door, passing the canoe, the columns, and the volcano, and they are reminded once more of how the Island Tide Hotel is part of a continuing history. It is a history that the management hopes will continue, not just as a place of cultural exchange, but as an emergent Hawaiian community. The last words from the Island Tide Hotel to its guests are inscribed upon the back of the sign that welcomed them on the day they arrived: *A hui hou...Until We Meet Again.*



Figure 14: The farewell sign



Figure 15: Sailing in the sunset

Chapter Three: Modernizing the *Makahiki*

The season of *Makahiki*, which begins in October or November and continues through February or March, celebrates the Hawaiian god Lono and his time upon the Islands. In *Ku Kanaka: Stand Tall*, Kanahale tells an ancient story about Lono traveling to Hawaii with his wife, whom he later kills out of jealousy (1986:89). Lono dared Hawaiians from across the islands to wrestle with him if they could. Then, he built a canoe to sail to Tahiti. The Hawaiians filled his canoe with provisions and offerings, and before sailing away, Lono promised to return one day (Kanahale 1986:104). According to Kanahale, the *Makahiki* served five purposes for the ancient Hawaiians. First of all, it marked the beginning of a new year. Second, the *Makahiki* began the harvest time. Third, the *Makahiki* was a time to collect taxes. Finally, it outlawed warfare and allotted time for the competitive games to take place (1986:104). Each of these events relates to the

earthly life of Lono. Today, most Hawaiian hotels and businesses recognize the *Makahiki* in some way. Adriana said that it is typical for most hotels to set aside a day for Hawaiian games. However, as Adriana said, “*Makahiki* was not a day. It was a season that lasted [four months,] from the rising to the setting of the Pleiades constellation.” Adriana described how the Island Tide hotel chose to observe the *Makahiki* through a four month hotel-wide endeavor into ancient Hawaiian ritual and material culture.

Worthy of the Chief

The *Makahiki* was a time of taxes and offerings. To modernize this tradition, the Island Tide Hotel staff decided that each department should declare a certain Hawaiian craft to master and reproduce. As Adriana explained “[These crafts were to be made] so well as to be befitting of the king. And at the end of that season, we will be ready to present to the king what we have made.” The season begins with a special ceremony during which each department declares what craft it is they are going to create. Adriana recalled some departments had chosen to make Hawaiian games, paddles, feather work, or musical instruments. Each department had chosen a craft that was meaningful to them. The security department chose to master weaponry. The general manager had chosen to a *poi* pounder from volcanic stone, because he said that as general manager, he felt it was his responsibility to “feed” the employees.

Ancient and Modern: Gifts and Opportunity

Every *Makahiki* offering had to be created according to strict guidelines. An employee described how each department was required to use 60% ancient Hawaiian

techniques, but was allowed to use 40% modern methods. This is another example of how the Island Tide Hotel is not a community that is stuck in the past, but one that views itself as emerging *from* it. If any employee had a gift or talent, they were encouraged to use it to contribute to their project in order to make it “worthy of the chief.” Adriana felt that this was one of the most important aspects of the tradition because it helped people access their Hawaiian heritage and find a place for Hawaiian values in their lives.

The results of the first *Makahiki* were bountiful. The completed objects were gathered together to display in the museum which features only items made by the employees. The security department crafted a variety of Hawaiian weapons by hand. They had chosen a particular piece of Hawaiian culture that they recognized as meaningful in their daily lives as part of the Hawaiian community at the Island Tide Hotel. The culinary department crafted a series of bone fish hooks. They used bones from the hotel kitchens, just as the ancient Hawaiians would have used the bones of the whale. Adriana remembers one of the kitchen workers showing off her handiwork shouting “Look what I made! I made this!” Each project is completed over the course of several months, the duration of the *Makahiki*, and so it is a proud moment when the product is finally complete. Adriana explained why this *Makahiki* tradition is so important to their hotel. As she explained, it is an opportunity:

[*Makahiki* is a time to] pull down employee barriers, and we become real people [to each other]. We are not just here to do our jobs. We realize that everyone here has a talent or a desire to learn something. ...So we have opportunities for them. We dedicate time for them to learn something new. They can come to work on something at

their lunch time, or their boss will tell them ‘go ahead, you can go on work time,’ not only to work on their *Makahiki* project, but also to take free *hula* classes, or study Hawaiian language etc...

If ever an employee has a desire to learn something new, the Island Tide Hotel staff will work to locate someone within its staff who can teach them the skill. If no one can be found, Adriana said that they will turn to the larger Hawaiian community outside the hotel. For example, Adriana told a story of a woman from the kitchen:

[She] was $\frac{3}{4}$ Hawaiian, $\frac{1}{4}$ Japanese, and had never done anything “Hawaiian” in her life until she came to this hotel... We brought in a couple people from the community, and it just so happened that she fell in love with adze making. Now an adze is used like an ax. They would use it to chop down trees and hull the canoes, but, you have to find a particular stone; it must be the right one. Then you have to sand it and everything. This woman worked with this *kapuna* from the community and even after the project was done, she kept working with him, and kept learning about stone making. She was near to tears when she was able to finish her project adze.

Makahiki has greater results than just the beautiful handicrafts, it allows the Hawaiian community to prosper and practice its culture. By sharing and teaching selected indigenous arts, important traditions are revitalized.

The Museum

The Island Tide Museum is located in one of the hotel buildings adjacent to the lobby. The museum space is made from a repurposed hotel room. The furniture has been removed and replaced with a series of tables. A few photos hang on the wall. Only the employees have access to the museum today. It used to be available to guests, but few would sign up to see it. Now tours are given as-needed or by special request. Each object is out in the open, available to be carefully touched by viewers.

Moving through the Museum

Items are displayed on tables against each wall. Every table has a cloth on which the items are displayed by category. Walking in, the first table is on the right against the wall. It holds some toys are made from small stones, half shells of coconuts, or leaves. There is one child-sized adze. The next table displays weapons. To either side of it, wooden paddles and spears are set up on end. In front of these is a large wooden drum.



Figure 16: *Kahili* in the Island Tide Museum

In the middle of the floor are several boxes. These are full of *Makahiki* offerings from previous years. Inside are woven matts, bottles and musical instruments fashioned from gourds and twine, and woven baskets. In others are feathered items, made from chicken or pheasant wings. On the left side of the room is a smaller table covered in a red velvet drape. On this table are two small drums. To either side stand tall, rust colored *kahilis*, royal standards that were created by attaching colorful feathers to a staff. According to Kanahele, in Hawaiian tradition, “an object’s value is based on its sacred value,” this means that “feathered capes were the most valuable of all material objects, and therefore extremely *kapu*, only the highest members of nobility could wear them” (1986:43).

To the left is the *kapa*-making table. To one side are small colorful bowls carved from stone. Some hold tiny berries used in making paint. A small paper label bears the items' name and an occasional short explanation. Tiny carved wooden pieces and *kapa* cloth are labeled "bark cloth and implements." Behind these items is a framed explanation of the *kapa*-making process. Adriana modeled how to use some of these items. Some of the beautiful *kapa* cloth has been decorated with native designs. It is framed behind the display.

In the corner is a small table with a patterned cloth. It displays a *poi* board and pounders. This display is particularly eye-catching. Poi is made by mashing taro into a liquid or paste. It is a staple of the traditional Hawaiian diet. Behind the *poi* board and pounders is a decorative stand that holds six red and gold *kahilis*. These are kingly feathered rods. The displays are hand crafted by the employees. Adriana recounted how a member of the housekeeping department offered her drawing abilities to decorate the *kahili* stand with a pattern of vines and leaves burned into the surface.

Each project was completed as a group effort. Depending on each employee's talents, certain steps were completed by one person, and then continued by the next employee. One worker described the benefits of this process, "By doing this we're learning many things--not only about the Hawaiian culture, but also we are learning about patience, how to work as a team, and how to trust one another." Another employee commented "Once you start on a project, somebody else can do more, or somebody else has *this* [skill] to contribute. We are discovering that the [housekeeping department] is not just here to clean."

The next table displays a series of fishing nets, hooks, and wooden bowls with a small label. There is a book opened to a specific page to provide further detail for those who are interested. This table cloth is also black. Near the door is a framed picture of a young Hawaiian boy dressed as King Kamehameha.



Figure 17: Fishing nets

Resonance and Wonder

In his seminal essay, “Resonance and Wonder,” Stephen Greenblatt defines *resonance* as “the power of the displayed object to reach out beyond its formal boundaries to a larger world, to evoke in the viewer the complex, dynamic, cultural forces from which it has emerged and for which it may be taken by a view to stand (1991:42). to convey an arresting sense of uniqueness, to evoke an exalted attention (1991:42). Both resonance and wonder, “the power...to convey an arresting sense of uniqueness, to evoke an exalted attention,” are present in the Island Tide Hotel Museum

(Greenblatt 1991:42). Greenblatt argues that signs of accidents or “marks of literal fragility” on the artifacts can be resonant because these so-called “wounded objects” display “signs of use, marks of the human touch, and hence links with the openness to touch that was the condition of their creation” (1991:44). In most museums, visitors are not allowed to touch the artifacts. However, if a guide is present guests at the Island Tide Museum may gently handle the objects. Of course, these are not ancient artifacts, yet they are fragile nonetheless. The scrapings and scratches on their surfaces are witnesses to the hands that carved and shaped them. When looking at these marks, it is easy to picture an employee learning the craft from his or her *kapuna*. This is an image that evokes a connection to the past and the “cultural forces from which [the object] has emerged” (Greenblatt 1991:44). This resonance would differ greatly in uninformed individuals who might mistake these items for ancient artifacts. The individuals that made the objects likely have a special kind of resonance with their own piece, knowing exactly the patience, time, and understanding it took to create.

A few pieces in the museum stand out as especially “wondrous.” The *kahilis* are long rods with beautiful plumes of red and gold feathers along the upper third. According to an informant, the *kahili* is a symbol of Hawaiian *ali'i*, Hawaiian nobility and royalty. It is the standard of chiefs and royalty, a kingly symbol. They are believed to be conductors of *mana* and sacred power (Kanahele 1986:43). According to Kanahele’s description, *kahilis* are highly valuable objects because they are highly sacred (1986:43). These towering plumes create a sense of wonder and exalted attention. They immediately draw the eye and hold it. Their bright colors stand out among the wood, stone, and twine, just as the *ali'i* they symbolize were singled out from the Hawaiian people. The large



Figure 18: Weapons

weapons also inspire wonder. They are one of the first things seen from the door. They are taller than all the other items except the *kahilis*. As weapons, they create a sense of danger and excitement. They bring to mind images of ancient Hawaiian natives fighting wars in the jungle, and spearing fish, or boars.

There is some room for improvement in the museum. Utilization of an unoccupied hotel room might be a constraint on the museum collection and the number of visitors. Perhaps in the future the hotel will be able to expand its display of the *Makahiki* offerings to a separate museum construction somewhere on the property. Such a building would be right at home in the courtyard, however, financial constraints make such a construction unlikely. According to Adriana, the owner of the Island Tide Hotel does not live in Hawaii and is not in touch with the concerns of the hotel and its needs. Thus the budget will not gain approval for all but the most necessary of renovations, like the

carpet. Until finances can be appropriated, the museum will likely remain housed in its own private hotel room, a permanent guest of the Island Tide.

Master Narrative

The master narrative of the Island Tide Museum is one of native survival, emergence, and relevance. It is a testament that Hawaiian technology and tradition are as relevant and important to the Hawaiians as the American Dream and iPhones are to Americans. James Clifford, expert in critical and historical analysis, history of consciousness, and author of the now classic article “Four Northwest Coast Museums,” might refer to the Island Tide Museum as a “manifestation of cultural vitality” (1991:215). Clifford’s piece considers four museums and weighs the value of an indigenous community museum against larger more technological museums. Though these museums have unique benefits, they cannot compare to the effect of the indigenous museums. He valued the smaller, indigenous community museums for what they could give back to the community. The master narrative of the Island Tide museum is not imperialistic (Westerners imposing their views on the Native Hawaiians); the narrative itself is native, the product of Hawaiian minds. Like Clifford says of the four British Columbian museums he examines, “in crucial aspects [the museum is] not [a museum] at all: [it is] continuations of indigenous traditions of storytelling, collection, and display” (1991:215). The Island Tide Museum does not tell a story of contact, missions, imperialism, annexation, or statehood. It tells the story of a continuing native tradition that is as relevant to modern Hawaiians as cars and iPads are to westerners. Through the

Island Tide Museum, the Hawaiians are telling a story about themselves as native people with ingenious technology and a proud heritage.

The Grounds as a Museum: Child of the Canoe

During the third year of celebrating the *Makahiki*, the Island Tide Hotel staff undertook their most memorable project: the canoe. The act of creating a canoe already had deep meaning for Hawaiians. Using ancient methods to carve out a tree created a meaningful connection to their ancestors. In addition, Hokulea was sailing around the world bringing recognition to Hawaiian ingenuity. Creating a canoe was a sign of Hawaiian resilience and solidarity. The Island Tide Hotel wanted to be a part of it.

The Story

The story of the creation of the canoe has quickly become legendary for the Island Tide Hotel. It is a story that the Hawaiians of the Island Tide Hotel tell themselves *about* themselves (Geertz 1973). Adriana Kalama was happy to recount it. Years ago, a young boy told his father that he wanted to make a canoe out of the tree that stood on their land. The father turned to his son and said “Son, I do not have the tools to make this tree into a canoe, but maybe someday someone who does will come.” Meanwhile, in 2010, the Island Tide Hotel had selected a tree for their canoe. They had prepared for the proper Hawaiian protocol including a ceremony and a blessing of the tree. Just before the ceremony began, they received a call from the owner who forbade them from cutting it down. Because of this confusion, the hotel had to cancel all the events planned, and the staff needed to find a new tree in two weeks. A member of the staff came across a tree

that was standing on the side of the road, over a hundred feet tall. The staff approached the owner of the land who said, “You don’t have to pay for the tree at all, I want to give it to you, but I want you to name the canoe after my son.” The owner was the father of the boy, who had recently passed away from cancer. Through the canoe, his father said, the boy has lived another life.

Becoming Legend

Like the previous *Makahiki* undertakings, every member of the staff (nearly three hundred people) shared in the canoe project. Adriana described how each person had something special to offer. Using their different skills and gifts, the canoe was brought to life. Because of this story was so beloved by the Hawaiians at the Island Tide Hotel, and Hawaiians in general, the event was documented as a television special which aired on Thanksgiving and Christmas of that year. It would also go on to be featured on Hawaiian Airlines, according to Adriana. When the canoe was seaworthy, the staff, together with



Figure 19: Photo of the boy who wanted to build a canoe, hanging on the wall of the museum

the parents of the boy, rolled it to the beach and pushed it out into the waves. The boy’s parents had been holding onto his ashes for years, but at last, from the deck of the canoe, surrounded by a loving Hawaiian community, they poured the ashes into the sea. Today, the canoe rests in the courtyard of the Island Tide Hotel. It is marked with a plaque that tells the story, the legend, of the boy and his father.

In the museum, a simple photograph hangs on the wall. It shows a young boy, clothed in a cape of red and yellow feathers. His hands are folded and brought to his lips; his head is bent in prayer. The picture was taken on a May Day long ago. He played the king in the celebration. Before the festivities, he wanted to say a prayer and the moment happened to be captured by a photographer. The “child of the canoe” has become a legend at the Island Tide Hotel. The canoe on the grounds of the hotel tells his story. The photograph captured on May Day hangs enshrined in the museum as a quiet monument to a moment that changed many lives. Thus the museum is also a memorial to an Island Tide legend, the boy who wanted to build a canoe. Through constant retelling of the story, the enshrinement of the picture in the museum, and the spectacular canoe that attests to the truth of the legend, the story of the boy and the canoe has been mythologized.

Looking Back to Move Forward: Redefinition and Healing

The Island Tide Museum was created to prove the relevance of Hawaiian culture to a modern day society with western biases. The employees of the Island Tide Hotel find great resonance through the mastery and recreation of ancient crafts. The museum reflects the Hawaiian notion that to go forward, one must look back, just as Theo Kalani tells the Hawaiian youth to “look to your DNA” in order to find their identity. In the museum, the ancient ingenuities are celebrated through mastery of ancient crafts and the creation of modern reconstructions. This process is greatly resonant and personally meaningful for the hotel employees who participate. The Hawaiians of the Island Tide Hotel create a master narrative of pride in their heritage, which they *chose to accept*

despite opposing western views of modernity. Hawaiians and part-Hawaiians could have chosen to embrace their European heritage, but instead they are choosing to value and venerate the ancient Hawaiian ways, recognizing them as worthy in spite of imperialist propaganda. In a way, the Island Tide Hotel and Museum are working to counteract the “Ghost of Inferiority” that haunts Hawaiians to this day (Kanahele 1986:21). The Island Tide Hotel is a place of redefinition and healing where the Hawaiian community inside and outside of the hotel can unite to tell their story according to their own chosen native terms.



Figure 20: The sacred point at the Luxury Island Hotel

Epilogue: Who's Steering Your Canoe?

How would they feel?

Would their smiles be content, then cry?

Cry for the gods, cry for the people

Cry for the land that was taken away

And yet you'll find Hawaii²⁰

I will forever remember my conversations with Theo Kalani. In the sweltering heat, where the even the breeze is not enough to stave off my sweating, he is at ease. He reclines in his chair, perfectly at home. He introduces himself to me with a monologue that I can see is familiar to him, the introduction that he uses in his “Sense of Place” class:

Let's start your journey. How should I begin...My name is Theo Kalani. I am a cultural practitioner, which means that I go home and I practice my language, chant my chants, sing my songs, and dance my dances, study my history. My purpose is to find out who I was to determine who I am. Once I determine who I am, I can set a path to figure out who I want to be in the future.

Theo pauses, as if in deep thought. Then he continues:

I use all these things of old, from my gut, from my mind and my genealogy, and then when I come to work I have my iPad and my MacAir and I have all these new bridges that I can post from...hopefully make plans to what will be for our people. Hopefully have an influence to what will be, for our people and the hospitality industry—which is a huge *huge* part of what happens every single day in Hawaii.

Theo has leaned forward, sitting on the edge of his chair. He rests on hand upon his thigh and lifts the other to point at me. “If it is not done correctly, we lose everything. That is my fear. We want to make sure we convey a message, sometimes strong, that we *cannot* lose a sense of place. We have to keep that intact.” Theo’s resonant voice casts a spell in the morning heat. It reverberates with deep, heavy memory through the empty banquet hall and dancing with the trills of the birds from beyond the open windows. When Theo speaks, you listen.

Theo describes a double standard within the hospitality industry. He comments that Hawaiian art is everywhere, “on airplanes, menus, walls, carpets, everywhere, but the instant a Hawaiian puts it on their body, suddenly its unacceptable.” Theo tells how such

cultural tattoos must be covered up to work at the hotel. Yet, as a cultural specialist for the Luxury Island Hotel, Theo is allowed to display his. He continues, “just because you put Hawaiian art on a Hawaiian—that is the truest form—it is unacceptable. That’s not Luxury Island standards. I can do it because I am a cultural advisor, but that’s it. Nobody else can do it.” Theo’s tattoos tell the story of his genealogy. He explains how he has tried to advocate for his fellow employees, justifying that outsiders are trying to impose their standards on Hawaiian bodies, where they have no place.

At the start of the interview, Theo mentioned that I was meeting him at a moment of transition in his life. Because of this, he said he would let me know if anything should be kept *kapu*, secret. Now as the sun angles through the window panes, our conversation continues, wearing away the morning. Through our exchange, he has become more comfortable and open. He speaks freely and passionately of things close to his heart. He says to me, “thank you for your interest in this topic. I think that it is something that needs to be shared.” Theo continues, discussing “the trickle-down effect of culture intact, culture influence, culture overwhelmed, and now what happens to the culture?” The answer is disheartening.

I describe one of my first nights on the Island, at the Pioneer Inn. That was the night that the tropical illusion was shattered when the Hawaiian performed “Hawaii 78.” I asked Theo if this is truly how Hawaiians feel about tourism. Theo answers with an apology. He says, “that message was not meant for tourists, it was meant for government leaders, regarding how they sold the land. They don’t realize how they are changing the place so quickly. The message is for leaders who are ‘making investments for our future,’ but who don’t realize how much they are changing things now...” I am heartened to hear

his reply, as I am walking the line between tourist and anthropologist. Theo goes on, “You got the message—from the first event at the Pioneer Inn. You are the .0001%, 99.999 don’t get the picture.” Theo recognizes that tourism was never going to leave the Islands. That is why he felt it was so important for Hawaiians to retain the sense of place before they lose it all. Theo does not believe that tourism needs to perpetuate the “whimsical Hollywood” image of Hawaiians. He says, “tourists’ definition of a good Hawaiian vacation is how many tick marks do you have on your brochure...” He hopes that tourists will recognize that those “whimsical fantasies” are not Hawaiian, but how Hawaiians are paid to be.

By this time, Theo and I have been talking for several hours. I have abandoned any note taking, knowing that it will all be recorded. We have switched chairs and scooted closer together as the conversation now turns toward troubled Hawaiian youth. I explain the encounter I had with Jonathan Wake and his view of Hawaiians as trouble makers and lay-about. Theo admits that some of the Hawaiian youth do experience a sense of entitlement, but to them he says, “that’s bullcrap. You become part of the statistic; you don’t become part of the solution. So I encourage our kids to stand up and fight for something.” Theo has a speech that he gives in such times, one he says his own kids have needed before:

My spiel to them is this: If you are Polynesian, you are here today because you have an ancestor who came across the ocean. On that canoe, there were only so many seats, so that ancestor was chosen for his or her expertise—they survived. You need to go find out what expertise it was, and use your DNA for a better part... You survived because they survived.

Look backwards and you will find out who you were. You occupy a seat on that canoe. Don't sit and say, "you owe me."—*You* owe your ancestors! Look back to those challenges that your family, ancestors, had to face so that you could be here.

Theo's advice is a call to action for all Hawaiians. He believes that the key to surviving in modernity is in their past.

After several hours spent with Theo, he invited me to join him for lunch. He led the way through the hotel gardens to a pool-side bar and grill where our conversation continued over sweet tea, flatbread, and ice cream. As we spoke, we overlooked the ancient burial grounds and the sacred point. Theo was filled with a sense of duty. He was protective of his culture as he was of his daughters. Several hours in Theo's company were not enough. He was happy to continue our correspondence over the next year. He was always thrilled when he received my emails, and his responses overflowed with passion. In January, I received an email from him with a blessing for the New Year, "Peace, Health, and Poi to all for 2015!"

*As I traveled from place to place,
Some familiar and some strange
To hear the ancient chantings of our home,
As I listen to the stories,
My eyes have seen the glory,
So lets us raise our voice
In song to save our land!*

*All Hawaii stand together
It is now and forever
To raise our voices
And hold our banners high
We shall stand as a nation
To guide the destinies of our generation
To sing and praise the glories of our land²¹*

At places like the Island Tide Hotel, Hawaiians like Adriana Kalama and Theo Kalani have been working as liaisons between with tourists and locals for decades in order to achieve deeper mutual understanding. Their goal is for tourists, locals, everyday Americans, and Hawaiians themselves, to gain respect for each other and to realize the relevance and brilliance of the Hawaiian culture in modernity. With their continued work, it is hoped that stereotypes and racism will be eradicated and the imagined, faded nostalgic image of Hawaii replaced with one of a continuing, thriving culture.

Here the Hawaiian notion of “looking back” is helpful. By recognizing the harm that has been done by annexation, tourism, and continuing racial bias, Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians can work together to heal the wounds from past grievances and to finally leave them behind. However, it is up to the next generation to determine whether to repeat the cycle or change it. In the words of Theo Kalani, consider “who is steering your canoe.”

Rather than dwelling on the past grievances, Adriana describes how it is time to celebrate the ingenuity of Hawaiian culture. As *Hokulea*, The Canoe, travels across the

world, the world will recognize Hawaiians. It will not be for their dancing girls nor their sunsets and “photo opps.” It will be for their choice to surge forward into modernity, while keeping the old ways close to the heart. Hawaiians need not cease being Hawaiians in order to succeed in this world. Rather, their values and beliefs can become powerful guiding forces.

Theo Kalani attests that by “looking to their DNA” Hawaiians find a powerful reservoir of culture knowledge and pride. Never has there been a better time for Hawaiians to find relevance and significance in their lives based on a knowledge and respect for their ancestors. Hawaiians like Theo Kalani hope that young Hawaiians will begin to recognize the pride in their heritage in order to find their way. Drugs, alcohol, and poor education still plague the community, but if more young Hawaiians can discover their purpose, perhaps these problems will be lessened. Communities like the Island Tide Hotel are training grounds that allow opportunities to sharpen and celebrate Hawaiian traditions. If the tourist industry can progress into the modern age and recognize the Hawaiian Islands as a homeland full of cultural memory and significance rather than floating islands of luxury, then Theo believes that Hawaiians will cease to be seen as “books on a bookshelf” to be taken out when they are needed as entertainers, guides, or dancers, only to be “put back on the shelf when they have served their purpose.” Theo hopes that Hawaiians will be recognized as having far more uses than those that specifically pertain to tourism; they are not born to be hosts.

It is disappointing that racial bias continues to be such a pervading issue in Hawaii. There are many who support the philosophy of Jonathan Wake, that Hawaiians are “mal-adapted,” “delinquent,” and “violent.” This racialized discourse is extremely

harmful; it is also admittedly, detrimental to progress within the tourist industry.

Unfortunately, Jonathan has a loud voice and a large audience. Several hundred people pass through his shop each day, and it is located in the heart of one of the largest tourist areas in the Islands. Jonathan is often one of the first locals tourists come into contact with, and therefore a strong force that frames their entire experience in the Islands. Once they have heard Jonathan's racialized speech, tourists are bound to notice those incidents that "prove" Hawaiians are "ungrateful, unintelligent thugs" prone to violence, even if those incidents are few. Jonathan is by no means alone in his opinions. There are many locals like him scattered through the islands, and many tourists have the misfortune to encounter them before they encounter a true Hawaiian.

The Hawaiian culture has been hijacked by tourism. People like Jonathan Wake are quick to disparage the culture and its people, meanwhile, Jonathan's livelihood--his shop in a high-traffic tourist area--depends upon the commercialization of Hawaiian culture. He is content to spout antiquated racialized discourses to his tourist customers despite his own reliance upon the Hawaiian heritage.

The dialogue is skewed, but Hawaiians are willing to set the record straight. Despite Jonathan's derogatory interpretation of "*haole*," Adriana offered a counter-interpretation from an actual Hawaiian. Jonathan equated "*haole*" to "n—." However, Adriana offers another translation. In Hawaiian, *haole* means literally "without breath." Adriana shared the history of how the word was misconstrued from the beginning. Europeans assumed that *haole*, "without breath," was a word used to describe the paleness of the "whites." What the history of *haole* really refers to is that the European strangers did not offer the Hawaiian greeting of breathing *aloha*. Breathing *aloha* is an

ancient Hawaiian custom which involves two individuals who are familiar or intimate. This gesture is accomplished by pressing their foreheads and noses together while breathing in each other's breath. In this way, they exchange *aloha*. In contrast, when he arrived, the European held out his hand in greeting, thus earning the name "without breath." The term *haole* has come to refer generally to all non-Hawaiians. However, it is not a derogatory reference. Theo commented on the skewed nature of history as told from the point of view of the conqueror, "who is steering your canoe, the new history writers or you who go right to the source and come talk to me? The people. That is the correct source. Thank you." It is hard to gain a clear understanding of how greatly the Hawaiian image has been altered until allowing an actual Hawaiian to set the record straight.

"Ho'olilo" is a Hawaiian word which means "to cause transformation or change." As Adriana Kalama says, "without the ho'o, it just sits there." Change is not passive, it must be incited, "caused to happen." In this cosmopolitan world, Theo Kalani believes the time is right. As a nation, the United States has come to move past many stereotypes and biases, making amends with peoples it has wronged. It is to be hoped that the Hawaiians will not be forgotten in this process.

For too long, Hawaiian image has been subjected to the whimsical fantasies of outside parties. A cheesy *hapa haole hula* dancer come to represent the proud nation that was once ruled by King Kamehameha I, King David Kalakaua, and Queen Liliuokalani. After decades of being silenced, the Hawaiians have begun to speak again. Despite broken promises, the perpetuation of racialized discourse, the loss of their land, and the theft of their identity, Hawaiians are proud to be Hawaiians. They have revitalized their

language, preserved ancient chants, re-mastered the arts, protected ancient burial grounds,
and reconnected with their heritage. They are ready to steer their own canoe.

*Within stone walls and cities of refuge we learn the sacred ways
Upon Waipio's valley floor the ancient battles rage
From the barren slopes of Kaho'olawe to the shores of Kahana Bay
We shall claim our lands from the Barking Sands to the Valleys of Hanalei*

*All Hawaii stands together
It is now and forever
To raise your voices
And hold your banners high
We shall stand as a nation
To guide the destinies of our generation
To sing and praise
The glories of our land²²
And Yet You'll Find...Hawaii*

Appendix A: Hawaiian Glossary

Akua: god or godlike

Ali'i: member of the noble or ruling class, chief or chiefess, aristocrat, royalty

Aloha: love, affection, compassion, blessing, mercy, charity, kindness; to remember fondly; greeting, hello, farewell

Aloha aina: deep love of the land, patriotism

Da kine: pidgin, loosely translated for “right on”, however may be similar to “whatchamacallit” or “thingamajig” or etc. verb or noun, extremely versatile; a place filler used in pidgin.

Halau hula: a school for *hula* dance

Hale Papamū: house of the *papamū*; small structure sheltering a game of *Konane*

Hapa-haole: person of mixed ethnicity, one who is half Hawaiian and half non-Hawaiian, particularly one who is half-white

Haole: literally “without breath,” a word the first Hawaiians used to describe the Europeans when they did not return the gesture of breathing aloha. “Without breath” is commonly mistaken to refer to whites, insinuating that non-Hawaiians are pale because they do not breathe

Heiau: a Hawaiian temple

Hokule'a: a sailing replica of an ancient Polynesian canoe, double hulled voyaging canoe

Houseless: a term used by Hawaiians to refer to their nominal possession of Hawaiian land which they are unable to inherit, bequeath, or construct on unless meeting 50% Native Hawaiian blood quantum

Hula: a Hawaiian dance often accompanied by chanting, poetry, and drums

Kahili: a feather standard which is a symbol of Hawaiian royalty

Kaho'olawe: literally “Bright Vagina” or “Bright Rebirth,” the smallest Hawaiian Islands, used as target site for US military during World War II

Kahuna: priest

Kapa: ancient Hawaiian style of cloth made from bark

Kapu: taboo, sacred, or forbidden.

Kapuna: elder, one who guides by spiritual wisdom, ancestor, the generations that have come before who are there to act as guides through difficult times

Konane: a strategy game similar to checkers, played by chiefs to hone war tactics

Kukui: candle nut, an oily nut which was used as fuel and light, symbol of enlightenment

Lei: a garland or necklace of flowers, feathers, leaves, or shells that is given as a symbol of affection and honor

Malama aina: care for the land, associated with sustainability and independence

Mana: spiritual, divine, supernatural power or essence that gives power and authority, present in the Hawaiian Islands, believed to be concentrated in especially sacred sites

Maui Komohana or Mauna Kahalawai: Western Maui Mountains, House of the Waters or House of the Moon, the older volcano on the island, older sister to *Haleakala*, or House of the Sun

Makai/Mauna: Hawaiian understanding of directions, rather than right and left, there are *Makai* and *Mauna*. *Mauna* means “towards the mountain” and *Makai* means “toward the sea”

Ohana: family, kinship

Plumeria: a fragrant, five-petaled flower most commonly used for *lei*-making; it comes in many different colors including white, white and yellow, fuchsia, orange, plum, and pink.

Pohaku: sacred stones, many of which had special purposes including channeling *mana*

Poi: a dish made from taro root

Pono: righteousness

Tiki: a non-Hawaiian word that has come to stand for a carved statue of a Hawaiian deity

Appendix B: Island Tide Mission Statement

At the Island Tide Hotel, we embody the Hawaiian meaning of hospitality, *ho'okipa*, and we share the *aloha* spirit with our guests while providing quality service. This spirit comes from the heart, shows in our faces, and is a part of our daily work life. Weaving together our Hawaiian heritage and our local lifestyle, we care for our guests in many thoughtful, personal ways which bring them back to us again and again.

We at Island Tide Hotel strive for excellence, *po'okela*, in everything we do. We are professionals and treat each other with respect, courtesy, honesty and fairness. We believe in informality which encourages open and direct communication.

We cherish a happy place where we have fun and smile both in our hearts and our faces; a place where we are recognized and rewarded for our achievements; a place where we can use our creativity and our unlimited potential to become whatever we want to be; a place where we can build a career and security for our families. We also recognize the importance of our community as we gladly respond to its call for support throughout the year.

Although we come from different places and ethnic backgrounds, our commitment to common goals and values keep us together as a family. This strong sense of family is the pillar of our strength. We prize the traditional values of love, respect, and *kokua*. We demonstrate this in our willingness to help one another whenever needed. We believe that *alu like* or working together as a family is the basis for achieving *po'okela*.

We appreciate the beauty of our hotel and our island surroundings and we realize that we must preserve it for ourselves and our visitors. We, at Island Tide Hotel recognize the

need to enhance our sense of place for the *mana* of the land, its Hawaiian past, present, and future, because this is the essence of our being the most Hawaiian hotel.²³

End Notes

¹ Lili'uokalani, HRH Queen. *Aloha Oe, Farewell to Thee*. 1878.

² *ibid*

³ *ibid*

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ Kamakawiwo'ole, Israel. *Somewhere Over the Rainbow: The Best of Israel Kamakawiwo'ole*. Mountain Apple Co., 2011.

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ Kamakawiwo'ole, Israel. *Facing Future*. Universal Music, 2011.

⁹ *ibid*

¹⁰ *ibid*

¹¹ *ibid*

¹² *ibid*

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ *ibid*

¹⁵ *ibid*

¹⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷ The debate between Marshall Sahlins and Gananath Obeyesekere poses some important questions to the study of anthropology. Robert Borofsky offers a summary of these concerns: "To what degree...do the present cultural practices of identity demand a rethinking of anthropology as ethnographic effort? Who has the right to speak for whom in politically volatile arenas today?...How does one evaluate conflicting claims about someone else's past?" (2000:422).

Marshall Sahlins argues that the death of Captain Cook was not murder, but rather the culmination of the *Makahiki* practice. He posits, "the killing of Captain Cook was not premeditated by the Hawaiians, but neither was it an accident, structurally speaking. It was the *Makahiki* in an historical form" (Sahlins 1985:104) Sahlins concludes that "Cook's death at Hawaiian hands ...could thus be described as the ritual sequel: the historical metaphor of a mythical reality" (1985:104). In other words, according to Sahlins, Cook was a personal, historical representation of the Hawaiian deity Lono; whether or not they actually believed him to be divine, he represented the god in the ceremonial progression of the *Makahiki*.

Obeyesekere's response to Sahlins was a two part argument. The first point posited that the association of Cook with the god Lono was not based on Hawaiian myth, but rather European ideals. Obeyesekere summarizes this point thusly, "To put it bluntly, I doubt that the natives created their European god; the Europeans created him for them" (1992:3). According to Obeyesekere, framing Cook as a European god was a result of "conquest, imperialism, and civilization (1992:4). Obeyesekere doubted whether or not modern, westernized anthropologists could hypothesize about an ancient culture without inserting the propaganda of imperialism. In addition, he questioned who has the right to speak for the ancient Hawaiian culture, and whether Sahlins was capable of knowing their minds. Robert Borofsky points out how Obeyesekere "emphasized transcultural aspects of Hawaiian thought (in relation to practical rationality), [while] Sahlins focused on its cultural-specific qualities"(2000:420).

Perhaps it is not possible to conclude whether Sahlins's or Obeyesekere's methods were more precise in calculating ancient thought. The answer can only be hypothesized, yet never proven. Regardless, the story of Cook and the Europeans is still told, and illustrates an important situation in which the Hawaiians would frequently find themselves—the power play between nativism and imperialism.

¹⁸ See Appendix B for Island Tide Hotel Mission Statement

¹⁹ Richard Bauman describes all performances as emergent. It is the idea that no two performances are ever exactly alike. In his 1977 essay, *Verbal Art As Performance*, Bauman suggests that the "emergent quality of

performance resides in the interplay between communicative resources, individual competence, and the goals of the participants, within the context of particular situations” (1977:38). At the Island Tide Hotel, the management and staff practice an emergent form of Hawaiian culture by revitalizing ancient traditions and values and making them relevant to the modern business world.

²⁰Israel Kamakawiwo’ole. *Facing Future*. Universal Music. 2011

²¹Pavao, Dennis. *All Hawaii Stands Together*. Mountain Apple Company. 1994

²²ibid

²³ Though this document contains grammatical incorrectness, it was felt by the employees of the Island Tide Hotel that their words should not be corrected or edited in anyway so that they can remain their own. This was agreed upon by the staff of the hotel and Dr. George Kanahele, who helped to establish the *Po’okela* program. In order to reflect the spirit of this document, no grammatical or textual corrections have been made here except italicizing Hawaiian words for the benefit of the reader. I transcribed this from an actual copy of the hotel’s mission statement given to me by Adriana. In order to protect the anonymity of my informants, I cannot cite this document.

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