

Diasporic Deracination and “Off-Island” Hawaiians

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In 1894, a year after the US-backed overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom,¹ August Jean Baptiste Marques—a French physician and founder of the Portuguese-language newspaper *O Luso Hawaiiiano*—published an article in the *Journal of the Polynesian Society* titled “The Population of the Hawaiian Islands,” which asked in its subtitle, “Is the Hawaiian a Doomed Race?” (Marques 1894, 23). In answering that question, Marques focused on important topics needing further consideration at the time: the rapid depopulation of “full-blood” Hawaiians and underestimated counts of the so-called half-castes, whose numbers actually were increasing. He surmised that “this race was . . . condemned to utter extinction in a very short lapse of time, an idea repeated as a certain fact of many would-be authorities who ought to know better . . . the broad notion of the impending extinction of the Hawaiian race is, to say the least, premature.” Furthermore, Marques argued, “it is quite safe to conclude that the mere point, that the foreigner happens to outnumber the native, cannot allow the former any just preponderance over the latter, nor does it diminish the native’s sovereignty.” He also noted that such eager notions about the decline of the Hawaiian population in the Islands did “not allow for any estimate of loss from emigration.” Marques described “emigration” as “the most obscure factor of Hawaiian decrease, about which one can proceed only by conjectures, as all available official statistics fail to throw the faintest lights on it, and no documents are known to exist, by which the numbers of aborigines could be ascertained, who did leave the country at any time, whether to return or not” (1894, 256–258, 263).

Today, over a century after the publication of Marques’s article, Hawaiians are facing very similar issues—deracination linked to issues of movement, migration, different forms of outnumbering, and the appropriation

of their Native positionality.² To deracinate is to displace a people from their own territory, place, or environment—literally, to uproot. This is an enduring problem for off-island Hawaiians, because forms of Hawaiian deracination are produced *through* out-migration from Hawai‘i and Hawaiian diaspora.³ On one hand, there is a common misunderstanding that any and all who once lived in Hawai‘i are, therefore, “Hawaiian.” On the other hand, when Hawaiians who have never lived in Hawai‘i identify themselves as Hawaiian and invoke their specific connections, the politics of reception is often such that the listener will expect them to have been “born there.” The confusion between (or conflation of) Native-ness and nativity is persistent and often defended on the grounds that “Hawaiian” is a term similar to “Californian” (as a state residency designation). However, people seem to have varied investments in such configurations of Hawaiian-ness that go beyond mere nomenclature. Related to this is the common declaration, “In Hawai‘i, they’re all mixed anyhow,” which is, too often, extended to the notion that “[therefore], they’re all Hawaiian”—or worse, that there are no Hawaiians (left) at all.

In an attempt to address this predicament, I focus here on what I consider to be three linked factors that contribute to this process of deracination, as defined above. The first is the invisibility of off-island Hawaiians—to each other, to Hawaiians in Hawai‘i, and to non-Hawaiians both in Hawai‘i and on the North American continent. This invisibility has self-reproducing effects and stems from a lack of baseline knowledge about Hawaiian history and presence outside of Hawai‘i. The second factor is the appropriation of Hawaiian identity by non-Hawaiians, especially those who refer to themselves as Hawaiian once they have left Hawai‘i. The third factor comprises the overdetermined narratives about Hawaiian race mixing, which would have Hawaiians disappear to become just another racial minority without sovereignty rights attached to indigeneity or prior, unextinguished nationhood status.⁴ Notions of Hawaiian racial hybridity are not merely descriptive nods to the fact that the 2000 US Census confirmed that Hawaiians are a diverse people, where approximately two-thirds claimed at least one other race or ethnicity, while about half that number identified themselves as Hawaiian only (Ishibashi 2004, 10). The characterizations of Hawaiian racial hybridity can be traced to a long line of discourses that work to efface Hawaiian indigeneity—and the implications of these discourses are tied to state strategies of land dispossession aided by defining people (on their way) out of existence. This process of deliberate deracination has everything to do with Hawai‘i being

figured as a US military, economic, political, and cultural possession. If Hawai'i's indigenous people, culture, and political history are not recognized, can one really wonder why Hawaiian identity seems up for grabs to non-Hawaiians?

The political implications of these three processes are increasing in magnitude and severity, as evidenced in a recent wave of lawsuits challenging the constitutionality of all Hawaiian-specific funding sources and institutions, such as the Office of Hawaiian Affairs; all federal funds for Hawaiian health, education, and housing; and the state Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and the lands they manage. A multiracial group of plaintiffs in the case of *Arakaki v Lingle*, for example, charge that these institutions are racially discriminatory because they violate the US Constitution's Equal Protection Clause. These suits have led to increased political tensions on the islands and surfaced shortly after the US Supreme Court ruling in *Rice v Cayetano*, which struck down Hawaiians-only voting (which was also limited to those Hawaiians who are residents of Hawai'i) for the trustee elections of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, based on the Fifteenth Amendment's guarantee that the right of US citizens to vote shall not be denied or abridged on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Needless to say, that ruling laid the essential groundwork for further assaults on Hawaiian lands and people. One can see this ideology at work in the assertions of one of the groups against Hawaiian sovereignty and financial entitlements calling itself "Aloha for All," which appropriates and deploys the Hawaiian concept of aloha for its own anti-Hawaiian aims. As a rationale for its support of the lawsuits, the organization asserts, "It is not in keeping with the spirit of Aloha for the government to give one racial group land or money or special privileges or preferences from which all other racial groups in Hawaii are excluded."⁵

Describing these three processes of deracination, I focus on mapping the particularity, and peculiarity, of Hawaiian out-migration, with glimpses of some specific historical moments. The discursive moves of deracination continue to mask the historical trajectories of Hawaiian presence in North America, which began on the West Coast at least as early as 1785. Lesser known are the Hawaiian out-migration moves made prior to US colonial rule in Hawai'i. The complexity of Hawaiian out-migration necessitates the development of multiple frameworks for studying Hawaiian diaspora. The stakes in understanding out-migration are connected to political recognition, which has become increasingly urgent given the contemporary context of hostility to Hawaiian sovereignty claims—all of which is

further complicated by the existence of off-island Hawaiians and their claims to Hawaiian nation(ality).

TRACING HAWAIIAN OUT-MIGRATION AND DIASPORA

Let us consider some examples of the little-known Hawaiian presence on the continent. Even where I am located in central Connecticut, Hawaiian history is all around me. Dozens of young Hawaiian men were residing here and in Massachusetts as early as 1809, a good decade before the first missionaries (Calvinists) set foot in Hawai'i. Indeed, their presence in Connecticut prompted the emergence of the Foreign Mission School in Cornwall, which is remembered more as an early American Indian boarding school, and served as a key impetus for the Sandwich Islands Mission sent by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Dwight 1990).

Researchers Tom Koppel and Jean Barmann have each written about Hawaiians living in British Columbia during the 1880s, chronicling their struggles to contribute to the new world around them, and to build lasting communities (Koppel 1995; Barmann 1995). George Quimby's research examined Hawaiians' prominent role in the fur trade from 1785 to 1820 in the Northwest American (Quimby 1972). He noted that Hawaiians not only worked in many parts of the Pacific Northwest but some also traveled the canoe route from the western end of the Columbia River to the shores of Lake Superior (Quimby 1972). Janice Duncan detailed the life ways and labor of Hawaiians between 1788 and 1850 on the Pacific Coast (Duncan 1972). She described them as the "minority without a champion," because they encountered many hardships, including racial discrimination and other barriers to their long-term well-being. Hawaiian labor included herding sheep and cattle, producing lumber, farming, fishing, and working on canoes and the York boats that brought furs into Fort Vancouver (Duncan 1972, 5). Duncan noted that some Hawaiian women were also brought aboard ships as servants to white British and American captains (Duncan 1972, 2-3). In addition, David Chappell's rich work details the varied presence of Hawaiian seamen aboard North American ships (1997).

For better or worse, some Hawaiians played key roles in colonial history. For example, a Hawaiian man is said to have hauled down the Spanish flag in Monterey, California, in 1818. Newspaper accounts include him as one among eighty Hawaiian subjects of Kamehameha I who "served

as sailors and marines in the Navy of the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata of South America” (McClellan 1926, 26). This was thirty years before Commodore John D Sloat lowered the same flag to raise the Stars and Stripes, declaring California a US territory.

Scholar Richard Dillon has written about “Kanaka colonies” in California, tracing Hawaiian out-migration to 1838 when Hawaiians accompanied John A Sutter—a Swiss general who helped settle the US colony of California (Dillon 1992). These Hawaiians later became known as “Sutter’s Kanakas” who mined the gold rush, and hence, contributed to the genocide of American Indians that was hastened by the gold seekers. Sutter’s diary notes that the group consisted of Hawaiian women as well as men (Kenn 1955, 4). Charles Kenn has written about the descendents of those same Hawaiians and their integration with Maidu Indians (Kenn 1956).

The Rev Samuel C Damon also wrote about Hawaiians in California as early as 1849 and 1850 (Damon 1863). Is it any coincidence that this travel to California followed the so-called Great Mahele—the division and privatization of communal landholdings under Kamehameha III—when many Hawaiian commoners found themselves landless? Damon noted the alliances and marriages between Hawaiians and American Indians, and, perhaps surprisingly, that Hawaiians even worked to convert the Indians to Christianity. He recounted a story about spending a night with his party among a group of those whom he called “kanaka miners,” who were digging upon the South Fork of the American River just north of Sacramento. He recalled, “They gathered around us in a manner we shall never forget. Upon leaving, several forwarded small quantities of gold dust to their families and friends on the islands” (Damon 1863, 10). Perhaps this is one of the earliest recorded instances of remittances as migrant payments from one country to another.

In an 1866 newspaper article, the Reverend Damon noted that the prior year, over four hundred Hawaiians went aboard US whaling ships. He recognized the importance of their labor but also the hardships they endured due to US laws that denied to them support or relief if they were to fall ill—in which case they were to be discharged in Hong Kong, Sydney, or Tahiti, that is, in any port where there was an US Consul (Damon 1866, 108).

In an 1868 letter, the Rev J F Pogue wrote about his visit to a group of Hawaiians cohabitating with American Indian people in Colfax, California. Pogue was impressed that even while they live meagerly on grain,

berries, and fish, the Hawaiians pulled together \$25.00 to contribute to his traveling expenses (Pogue 1868, 69). He expressed dismay that some of those he met with in the town of Vernon weren't living the Christian way, but he linked it to their poor living conditions: "I asked them if they did not wish to return home. They said they had not money to take them home. They evidently do not wish to return to Hawaii, though I know they would be better off there than in California" (Pogue 1868, 69).

A similar summary was recounted by Marques about the time that King David Kalākaua visited the states in the 1880s (Marques 1894). The king and his sister Lili'uokalani, who later became queen of the Hawaiian Kingdom, made a visit to San Francisco. Hawaiians living in the city at the time "gave both of them enthusiastic receptions and made a fine display of numbers. When asked whether they had lost all 'aloha' for their native land, they replied that they had not, and would be glad to return, but that it offered no inducements, no chance to gain their living, so that having large families to care for, they had to stay where they were" (Marques 1894, 266, fn 1). Marques's scenario provides us with an early example of off-island Hawaiians supporting the sovereignty of the kingdom and their identification with that nation regardless of their location.

In a very different case, the migration of fifty Hawaiians to Utah in 1899 was brought about as a direct result of their conversion to Mormonism. They went to build their homes in what they considered to be Zion (Woronick 1974; Atkin 1958; Gregory 1948). Only two years later, a number of Hawaiians there appealed in distress to the US consul general to assist them in returning to Hawai'i. Some had broken away from the Mormon Church and insisted on staying in Salt Lake City rather than Skull Valley where most of the Hawaiians resided and some had passed away. The 1892 *Report of the Minister of Foreign Affairs* for the Kingdom of Hawai'i described the condition of indigent Hawaiians in Utah as eager to leave before another winter (Hawaii Department of Foreign Affairs 1892, 55-57).

There are many other little-known and under-researched cases of Hawaiian presence in the continental United States, for example, the role of Hawaiians in the Civil War; the time the revolutionary Robert Kalanihiapo Wilcox spent living in San Francisco; the experiences of the Royal Hawaiian Band traveling to the continent to tour the West Coast and eventually Texas, Kansas, and New York (at the height of Jim Crow segregation, no less); and the case of William Heath Mahi Davis, an intriguer who ran trade circuits between Honolulu and the West Coast, and even

took credit for founding the modern city of San Diego (after marrying into the Spanish gentry). Imagine how many more stories have yet to be uncovered.

That many more stories remain to be uncovered is suggested by the inscription of Hawaiian names on continental places (which simultaneously marked the land with their presence and contribute to the erasure of the indigenous place names). In Oregon are towns called “Aloha” and “Kalama,” as well as the “Owyhee River” and “Owyhee Ridge” (Burtnett 1947; Clark 1934). The “Owyhee River” runs through Mountain City, Nevada, and Mountain Home, Idaho.⁶ California has “Kanaka Glade” in Mendocino County, “Kanaka Creek” in Sierra County, “Kanaka Dam,” in Yuba (Dillon 1995, 17), and, more recently, “Hawaiian Gardens” in Orange County.

In terms of twentieth-century history, there is an extreme paucity of material on out-migration and the social conditions for Hawaiians living outside Hawai‘i. Other than general statistics, which do not reveal much about Hawaiian lives or the specifics of off-island dwelling, very little ethnographic work exists on these communities.⁷ Publications about these groups have been journalistic in nature and focus mainly on cultural activities. While the existence of hula hālau (schools or groups), canoe clubs, voluntary organizations, and events such as festivals and concerts do serve to lessen the invisibility of Hawaiians residing in the continental United States, none of the groups involved are exclusively Hawaiian.

At least one-third of Hawaiians are geographically dispersed outside of Hawai‘i. The 1990 US Census counted the total Hawaiian population at only 211,014, with 34 percent residing on the continent and 16 percent of that number living in California (Barringer and others 1993, 274). By the 2000 census, 40 percent of all Hawaiians counted in the United States were residing outside of Hawai‘i (Ishibashi 2004, 12).⁸ However, the specifics of these movements are difficult to measure because Hawaiians moving from Hawai‘i to the continental United States do not cross (recognized) national boundaries.

Hawaiian out-migration has occurred in at least three significant waves since World War II, spurred by economic struggles and a lack of employment opportunities in Hawai‘i. During Hawai‘i’s territorial period, there was substantial Hawaiian military migration and postwar settlement after discharge. After statehood in 1959, another surge of migration had different implications for Hawaiians, who were then moving from a state

within the union (albeit a union that remains contested by the thriving independence movement in the islands).

In the 1970s, a third wave came as a result of development, when multinational and foreign investments led to a steady boom in tourism. Developers evicted, dispossessed, and displaced many Hawaiians and other locals to make way for the building of residential subdivisions, hotel complexes, and golf courses. With an increase in US militarism, more land appropriations for military installations in the islands also contributed to higher rates of migration to the continental United States. Paul Wright noted that Hawaiian dispersal has resulted “in large part from the disproportionate number of Hawaiians who join the armed forces,” at a rate that was “double the [US] national average” (Wright 1983, 18). After they returned from service, many of these Hawaiians were unable to find employment in Hawai‘i. Wright pointed out that, among local people who moved away from Hawai‘i during this time, “Hawaiians were more dispersed than other groups” (Wright 1983, 18). In 1975 Wright surveyed two hundred Hawai‘i-born 1964 high school graduates, residing outside of Hawai‘i, who had left the islands for college, military service, employment opportunities, or to be with a continental-born spouse. Of all the Hawai‘i-born groups surveyed who had out-migrated during that time, Wright found that Hawaiians not only had the lowest occupational, educational, and income levels in Hawai‘i but also had these same socioeconomic profiles after relocation.

Out-migration in the 1990s was linked to the swelling economic pressures of a multinational tourism, continued civil rights abuses of Hawaiian land trust obligations, and the state and US government’s refusal to recognize Hawaiian assertions of sovereignty. Hawaiians can now be found in all fifty states. Except for those 65 and older, Hawaiians living in Hawai‘i—especially families with children—are more likely than those on the continent to live in poverty (Malone and Shoda-Sutherland 2005, 6). Furthermore, Hawaiians in Hawai‘i are more likely to be unemployed, while those on the continent are more likely to have white-collar jobs (Malone and Shoda-Sutherland 2005, 4–5). In addition, Hawaiians in Hawai‘i are less likely to have a college degree (25.6 percent) than those on the continent who are significantly more likely to be enrolled in college or graduate school (39.7 percent) (Malone and Shoda-Sutherland 2005, 8). Hawaiians are now more likely to move to places where other Hawaiians, particularly family members, already reside, which tend to be

in largely impoverished states in the western United States, including Nevada. As Las Vegas has become the hot spot for Hawaiian out-migration (Leff 2002; Downes 2002), some people chuckle with surprise. But how often do we consider that site in relation to its own tourist economy, where Hawaiians work in hotels and do entertainment gigs to secure affordable housing? There are other sites of risk and gamble, not as easily recognized as Las Vegas, that Hawaiians are cultivating as home, including places in Texas, Idaho, and Arizona.

The 2000 US Census revealed that Hawai'i's economic struggles in the 1990s contributed to mass departures from the islands to the continental United States at a rate that led all fifty states, surpassing even the rural states such as South Dakota and West Virginia in net migration losses (Hurley 2003). Between 1990 and 1999, the *net* domestic migration for Hawai'i was 99,371 (that is, 99,371 more individuals migrated out of Hawai'i than migrated in). More than 201,000 residents left the state of Hawai'i during the period 1995–2000, when the net domestic migration for Hawai'i was 76,133 (Hurley 2003).⁹ However, population forecasts for the state of Hawai'i estimate that the Hawaiian population within the continental United States will more than double between 2005 and 2050 (Malone 2005, 11). Within Hawai'i, the Hawaiian population is expected to increase by nearly 300,000, while in the continental United States the number will nearly triple, reaching nearly 450,000. Taking into account these trends in out-migration, the proportion of Hawaiians who reside in Hawai'i will likely decrease from 59.7 percent in 2000 to 54.4 percent by 2050 (Malone 2005, 11).

On-island nationalist discourses that privilege “rootedness” on the land over Hawaiian “routedness” away from the islands also contribute to off-island Hawaiian invisibility. As James Clifford has suggested, indigenous peoples may claim diasporic identities as indigenous peoples who have (been) relocated rather than as immigrants (1997, 253). Hawaiian out-migration is all too often regarded as an unsavory exception rather than a very common occurrence. Their on-island counterparts often charge those away from Hawai'i with abandonment (Kauanui 1998). Even among Hawaiians who actually left Hawai'i, there is not always a meaningful understanding that Hawaiians who may have never lived in Hawai'i can and do cultivate vital links to Hawai'i as “home.” Recognizing Hawaiians outside of Hawai'i who are in this position can help to strengthen sovereignty rights based on indigeneity, by acknowledging that even those not in residence have national or citizenship claims. A com-

mon characteristic of Hawaiians on the North American continent is a sense of loyalty to Hawai‘i as an ancestral land base. There is often also desire for an eventual return or relocation—sometimes framed as redemption. But those who once lived outside of Hawai‘i and have since returned to the islands do not always share their memories of time away. For example, I have met many Hawaiians who have resided elsewhere and never told me so themselves, as if they prefer this part of their lives to remain “closeted.” Perhaps the current neocolonial forces and the subsequent uncertainties of collective Hawaiian political status have put people on the defensive—with things to prove besides indigeneity, such as connectedness and belonging. There is rarely, if ever, an acknowledgement that multiple generations of Hawaiians never “left” Hawai‘i—but were born abroad.

A 1939 *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* article reported: “Hawaiians Visit Hawaii: In Isles for First Time.” The story begins with the question, “When are Hawaiians called malihinis [foreigners]?” The answer is: “When they have never seen Hawaii.” Under a striking photo of a family of eight, including a Mrs Pai and her brother, is a story of two generations of Hawaiians who were arriving from Vancouver to see Hawai‘i for the first time. Mrs Pai had been born in San Francisco, California; her children, in Portland, Oregon. She made the journey to Hawai‘i to meet her husband, who was also Hawaiian. He had been raised in Hawai‘i but later traveled to the West Coast, where the two had met. The article noted Mrs Pai’s first response to Hawai‘i where she declared: “It’s swell . . . I’m going to stay here until I die.” Commenting about her parents who had out-migrated she was quoted as saying simply: “My father and mother wandered like they all do.” The article acknowledged the specificity of one Hawaiian family’s “return” migration, including multigenerational movement, various sites of arrival, and ongoing bonds between Hawaiians and Hawai‘i. This is one among many diaspora stories illustrating a bond to Hawai‘i as homeland. It is not at all unusual, but to many people, such a genealogy of identity and movement takes more effort to fully comprehend, or even apprehend.

DISCOURSES OF HAWAIIAN HYBRIDITY

In other contexts, struggles over identities and identification are evinced in the increasing demand for an adjective to describe “Hawaiian.” Thus one now sees a range of signifiers marking the term, such as “native

Hawaiian,” “real Hawaiian,” “indigenous Hawaiian,” and even “Hawaiian Hawaiian.” Moreover, this problem seems particular to Hawaiians—for instance, no one has to say “Samoan Samoan” or “indigenous Samoan,” or “original Samoan.”

Of course, there are also Hawaiian language descriptions to mark racially mixed Hawaiians, such as “hapa haole” (literally, half white or half foreigner). By 1849, that term came into common usage to describe Hawaiians with European ancestry, even though it was not a category on the census,¹⁰ and by 1850, only about five hundred hapa haole existed in Hawai‘i (Lind 1955, 22). By 1853, “nearly a thousand persons, or slightly more than one percent of the total population, were listed in the census as “Hapahaole” or “Part Hawaiian” (Lind 1955, 22). As Clarence E Glick wrote in his 1970 study, “Interracial Marriage and Admixture in Hawaii”: “Even in 1853, the distinction between Hawaiians and part-Hawaiians was imprecise. The 983 ‘half-natives’ listed [on the census] must be regarded as persons who had the social position of ‘half-native’ rather than as the entire number of part-Hawaiians” (Glick 1970, 278). Those among Hawaiian elites who benefited from the social positions of their white fathers identified as hapa haole, which implied a degree of privilege and status, regardless of (or in addition to) their mothers’ genealogical status (Glick 1970, 280). Those children were “not regarded as a distinct racial or social group, although they were frequently referred to as hapa haoles” (Glick 1970, 278). By 1866, “Natives and Half-castes” were divided in the census data (Marques 1894, 257–258; Schmitt 1968, 74). Glick further specified that the term “half-caste” was used from 1866 to 1890, in the last census of the independent Hawaiian kingdom.

“Part-Hawaiian” also held strong currency throughout the second half of the twentieth century, but has taken a backseat to the terms “Kānaka Maoli” (real or true people) and “Kānaka ‘Ōiwi” (people of the bone), which are more common today because they emphasize Hawaiian indigeneity without referring to “parts” and otherwise quantifying Hawaiian ancestry. The emergence of these terms can be attributed to the contemporary indigenous nationalist struggle and the Hawaiian language recovery movement.

For Hawaiians, dominant narratives about racial mixing come into play in disempowering ways as part of a colonial genealogy produced by governmental officials, sociologists, and physical anthropologists. Scientific studies of the 1930s gave life to the concept “hybrid Hawaiian,” creating a semblance of sameness under a banner of mixedness. This mak-

ing, mapping, and identifying of Hawaiian hybrid bodies was not simply an attempt to understand the genetic makeup and changing racial compositions among Hawaiian people. These studies were sites of production—where Hawai‘i’s emerging multiracial visibility marked a new body of knowledge with its own epistemological logic in a rapidly changing Hawaiian social landscape. Hawaiianess was made sense of through a reconstitution of racialized notions of what makes a Hawaiian and was then reinserted into multiracial Hawai‘i’s wider material and symbolic process, where it was then inscribed onto a new pluralist body politic.

In effect, the meanings of Hawaiian indigeneity were removed through a negating form of multiracial re-admittance. Hawaiians were described as “ultimate hybrids,” a “mix of the peoples of the world,” and the “neo-Hawaiian American race” (Dunn 1928; Adams 1933, 1937; Gulick 1937). This re-admittance of multiple backgrounds was not solely about re-conceiving the “Native” but also worked to transform and “nativize” the so-called “yellow peril” during times of US exclusion of Asians. Drawing from these scientific works, federal policy makers developed and proposed the notion that the mixed-race population in Hawai‘i served to neutralize racial tensions between different (agricultural) laboring peoples and thus created a more cooperative group of citizens for territorial governance. For example, William Atherton DuPuy, the executive assistant to the US Secretary of the Interior, commented on these “new Americans” in his 1932 account, *Hawaii and Its Race Problem*. According to DuPuy, the people were “fitting into that scheme of self-government born to blue-eyed people in the other side of the world and previously experienced by few of those who contributed to these strange intermixtures of blood” (1932, 115). Further, he predicted that “there ultimately must be a fusion . . . Hawaiian-American” composed of “something near one-third Japanese, one-fifth Filipino, one-ninth Portuguese, one-tenth Hawaiian, one-twelfth Chinese, one-fifteenth Anglo Saxon, with a sprinkling of Korean, Puerto Rican and what not” (DuPuy 1932, 115, 117). In another popular account, eugenicist Sidney Lewis Gulick even imagined a “super race” in Hawai‘i, described in the title of his book as “the coming Neo-Hawaiian American race” (1937).

Perhaps this “hybrid Hawaiian”—represented as the ideal (although multiracial) citizen—calmed American anxieties that had been raised by earlier reports of Hawaiian depopulation and Hawai‘i as a site of rapid miscegenation. These studies can be seen as attempts to “undo” the Native body politic—once recognized as sovereign—and reconstitute it as a new,

assimilable body, a diverse amalgam of citizens. The discourses of vanishing, dissolving, and diluting Hawaiians relied on the presumption of both cultural and biological assimilation that lies at the core of blood racialization.

The very category of “Hawaiian” seems to have been anticipated as eventually developing into an all-inclusive term that would serve as a geographical designation, rather than a specific racial category that would imply indigeneity. To give a personal example, I am almost always asked if I am *from* Hawai‘i. When I answer that I am Hawaiian from California, the person I am telling will (more often than not) say something along the lines of, “Oh, well, with a name like that, I thought you were from Hawai‘i.” I repeat that I am indeed Hawaiian, but the person still looks puzzled. Today, when people say they are “Native Hawaiian,” in a North American context, it is unclear whether they specifically mean it to mark their indigeneity, or their residency. They could be non-Hawaiian and meaning that they were born in Hawai‘i—and thus, in one sense, “native” to the place—which is especially problematic, given the fact that the term “Hawaiian” has historically and legally been reserved to mark aboriginality. Or they could be Hawaiian and using the term “native Hawaiian” in its most narrow and legalistic sense—to mark themselves as meeting the federal and state definitions of “native Hawaiian” by meeting the 50 percent blood quantum criterion. Because the “one-half” standard endures as the legal definition of “native Hawaiian,” stemming from the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1920, Hawaiian people are now classified into two categories, the “fifty percenters” (“native Hawaiians”) and the “less than fifties” (“Native Hawaiians”) with a capital “N.” To complicate matters further, in Hawai‘i it is common for people to use the terms “part-Hawaiian” to refer to Hawaiians of mixed racial descent, and “Hawaiian” to refer to those who are indigenous but not obviously mixed.

Hawaiian genealogical practices are a persistent and contestatory mode of identification that circumvents displacement, identity appropriation, and state racialization through imposed blood quanta criteria (Kauanui 2004, 2002, 1999). These practices mark Hawaiians as distinctly connected to Hawai‘i. Even in light of the divisions between Hawaiians who meet the 50 percent rule and those who do not, Hawaiians still tend to privilege genealogy over blood quantum and include as Hawaiian anyone who has *any* Hawaiian ancestry, especially to distinguish between Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians.

IDENTITY APPROPRIATION AND DERACINATION

Outside of the islands, Hawaiian identity appropriation is persistent and pernicious. In Hawai‘i, “local” is the most salient category to mark those who have had a long presence in Hawai‘i, whether they are indigenous or have a plantation labor history, as opposed to “mainlanders,” especially “haole” (white people). But outside the islands, “Hawaiian” has come to stand in for “local.” Too often, Asian Americans who are local to Hawai‘i yet not of Hawaiian ancestry (nor even in the habit of claiming a “Hawaiian” identity while residing there) tend to employ the category of “Hawaiian” to define themselves once they are off-island. Curiously, some of these non-Hawaiians “pass” as “Hawaiian” among mainlanders who don’t know the difference. It is that difference that I want to mark here. This complicity in being “mistaken” for being Hawaiian is profoundly problematic because it wittingly contributes to the erasure of Hawaiians as a people.

When Hawaiians themselves question non-Hawaiian claims to Native identity, the appropriation is usually defended on the grounds of being “Hawaiian at heart” (Hall 2005), a notion that must be historicized to trace when it gained currency in Hawai‘i. “Hawaiian at heart” is a variation of what American Indians term the “wannabe syndrome.” The concept of “Hawaiian at heart” is inextricably bound to the commodification of Hawaiian culture within a multinational tourist complex that thrives in a place where Hawaiians are outnumbered and do not hold self-governance over Hawaiian trust lands. “Hawaiian at heart” survives on nostalgia and longing, and the off-island permutations of this form of cultural appropriation need careful interrogation.

Many times, non-Hawaiians enable the elision of Hawaiian presence through their own articulation of cultural awareness. For example, in San Francisco, there is a monthly bulletin of Hawaiian events called the *Kapalākiko Calendar* (“Kapalākiko” being a Hawaiianized term for “San Francisco”).¹¹ Produced by two Asian American locals from Hawai‘i, the calendar is an impressive staple of information about Hawaiian events for those in the continental United States. At the top of each issue of the newsletter appears the following motto: “The Aloha spirit is not for us to own, but is something to be shared.” But one has to wonder who exactly counts as “us” in that motto. It almost seems a coded way of suggesting that “the aloha spirit is not for *Hawaiians* to own, but something for *them*

to share.” And Hawaiians might agree. But what does it mean that non-Hawaiians are advancing this claim? Like the bumper stickers in Hawai‘i say: “No Hawaiians, no aloha.” That is, without Hawaiians, this too is a form of cultural appropriation.

It seems that such claims to Hawaiian identity may evince more about the ambivalence among Asians from Hawai‘i in relation to Asian America than it does about Hawaiianness. We need some fine-tuned approaches to understand this phenomenon. Scholar Jonathan Okamura has written about the formation of “local” identities in Hawai‘i in an attempt to explain “why there are no Asian Americans *in* Hawai‘i” (Okamura 1994; emphasis added). In other words, the compound identity does not hold much currency in light of the persistence of the “local.” With an eye toward his foundational work, it also seems appropriate that we detail why there seem to be few Asian Americans *from* Hawai‘i, either. These identity assertions seem to concern questions of place and belonging—neither of which deserves to be discounted or trivialized. Perhaps these assertions and appropriations reveal growing anxieties about the Hawaiian sovereignty movement. However, how effective will identity appropriation stand in for sorting out these complex claims to locality? Appropriation itself is a stand-in act that further supports and hastens the denial of indigenous recognition to Hawaiians and further displaces them as a people. Nor are Non-Hawaiians always acting alone in this move of identity appropriation; there is some troubling Hawaiian complicity.

I have heard Hawaiians lament, “The Hawaiian race is dead because our bloodlines and gene pool are dead end.” To substantiate this claim, one cultural authority who is a hula instructor located in Oakland, California, pointed out that we now have “Mexican-Hawaiians” and “Black-Hawaiians” (which I consider to be two good California mixes!). I reminded him that it is genealogical lineage that connects Hawaiians to each other—and, by familial relationship—to the Hawaiian ‘āina (land). In common contemporary reckoning of Hawaiianness, a Japanese, German, Mexican, Black, or Chinese lineage does not dilute a Hawaiian one. Even though “blood” has evolved into a metaphor for ancestry in Hawaiian contexts, as an administrative technique referencing blood is quite different from Hawaiian genealogical practices. Blood modes are exclusive while genealogical ones are usually inclusive. As a classificatory logic, calculating blood quantum serves to fragment by dividing parts of a whole, and severs unions by portioning out blood “degree.” Genealogy—

whether through hānai (traditional adoption) or birth—is what defines Hawaiianness.

I have heard many non-Hawaiians in California tell me, for example that they are the ones saving Hawaiian “culture” and that they are doing more for this cause than Hawaiians are. They point to their knowledge of hula and ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language). It is noteworthy that the majority of students who take either hula or Hawaiian language courses in off-island locales are non-Hawaiian, especially along the West Coast of the continental United States. Few seem to realize that the fact that many Hawaiians do not hula or speak Hawaiian language has everything to do with a historically specific form of cultural dispossession through colonialism and US assimilation policy that upheld a ban on teaching Hawaiian language as a primary mode of instruction. Hawaiians learning Hawaiian language today often do so as an act of recuperation, reconnection, and repossession. And it should go without saying that the notion that Hawaiians must perform hula to count as Hawaiian (as if everyone in our past knew, or should have known, hula) is ridiculous. Nevertheless, Native language recovery and hula have both been central to the Hawaiian Renaissance, our cultural revival, and also to Hawaiian studies scholarship.

The performance of Hawaiianness by non-Hawaiian through the display of cultural forms may seem innocent, but in some cases it appears to be a sinister attempt to “do Hawaiian culture better than Hawaiians.” In a Native American context, Miwok writer Wendy Rose has written about the anatomy of “whiteshamanism,” calling those that pose as Indians “the Great Pretenders” (Rose 1992). Rose noted the perverse commonality of whiteshaman performers, who aspire to embody the Indian while in effect “becoming” the “real” Indian, even when actual native people are present. Native reality is thereby subsumed and negated by imposition of a “greater” or “more universal” contrivance (Rose 1992, 405). As Rose has cautioned, if Indians are said to “‘no longer really know’ or at least lack access to their traditions and spirituality (not to mention land tenure), then it follows that they are no longer ‘truly’ Indian. If culture, tradition, spirituality, oral literature, and land are not theirs to protect, then such things are free for the taking” (Rose 1992, 407). This is all about occupation, consumption, appropriation, and commodification.

Non-Hawaiian claims to Hawaiian identity are related to colonialism as a form of cultural usurpation and dominance, a way of further dis-

placing the displaced. Those who misrepresent themselves as Hawaiians perpetrate a form of fraud, while Hawaiians who do not learn hula or speak Hawaiian, for example, are rendered unreal. Apparently for those that demand a performance, simply *being* Hawaiian is insufficient.

CONCLUSION

Various forms of deracination continue to discount Hawaiian histories and contribute to a tension between diasporic and on-island identities. In closing, I am putting out the call for a broad research agenda that accounts for Hawaiian movements in their respective contexts of conditions, periods, reasons, and desires, to allow us to better account for Hawaiian presence on the North American continent. But this agenda should not be centered on the migration itself, nor on the supposed impending “return,” to challenge the notion that Hawai‘i is where Hawaiians must be—all the while recognizing our place of belonging there too and supporting the indigenous sovereignty claims, wherever we reside. We need multiple diasporic frameworks that reckon with indigeneity, the persistence of homeland, and Hawaiian connections to other people who have their own claims to Hawai‘i as home, to illuminate Hawaiians off-island subjectivities.

In addition, Hawaiians who have had experiences outside of Hawai‘i can and should incorporate their histories of mobility into their genealogical recitations as part of their personal heritage to reclaim those travels and movements as part of their Hawaiianness.

* * *

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Notes

1 Regarding the overthrow, see Trask 1993, Hasager and Friedman 1994, and Lili'uokalani 1964.

2 I use the term “Hawaiian” for “any individual who is a descendent of the aboriginal people who, prior to 1778, occupied and exercised sovereignty in the area that now constitutes the State of Hawaii,” as per Public Law 103-150, passed by the US Congress on 28 November 1993. The year 1778 marks a time when it is assumed that there was no one other than Hawaiians present in the Islands. I also use the term “Native” interchangeably with “Hawaiian” and capitalize Native to mark it as a political category, like “Black.”

3 Throughout this essay, I deploy/employ the adjective “off-island” to describe Hawaiians living outside of Hawai‘i on the North American continent. The term “off-island,” when used while in Hawai‘i, usually refers to someone who is not on the particular island where they usually locate themselves, as in “No, Nani’s off-island on O‘ahu [and not Kaua‘i] today.” My use of it to refer to Hawaiians who are diasporic may raise questions, but it recognizes the fact that many American Indian and First Nations peoples recognize their continent as Great Turtle Island, and thus another island, albeit outside of the Hawaiian archipelago. In addition, the common usage of “off-island” while on island presumes a return to one island or another by the person “off-island,” and thus is appropriate to acknowledge diasporic Hawaiians who continue to return, time and again, as part of their ongoing on-island attachments.

4 For more information on contemporary Hawaiian sovereignty claims, see Kauanui 2005a and 2005b.

5 See “Special Entitlements” on the “Aloha for All” Web site (<http://www.aloha4all.org/home.aspx>). The site also declares (on the page titled “Aloha and Equal Protection”):

Hawaii’s gift to the world is the Aloha embodied daily in the beautiful people of many races living here in relative harmony.

Similarly, one of America’s greatest gifts to the world is the principle that all citizens, regardless of race or ancestry, are entitled to the equal protection of the laws. That principle is incorporated into Hawaii’s Bill of Rights, which provides that no person shall be denied the equal protection of the laws because of race or ancestry. That principle also fits perfectly with the Aloha

spirit and, in effect, makes Aloha part of the constitutional law of the United States.

6 As recently as August 2006, a US senator from Idaho introduced a bill in Congress to preserve as federal wilderness more than a half-million acres in Idaho's southwest corner known as "Owyhee," which was Cook's spelling of Hawai'i. The name "honors the Hawaiian trappers who ventured into the uncharted region southwest of Boise in 1818 and were never seen again" (*Honolulu Advertiser* 2006).

7 Notable exceptions include Halualani 2002 and the film *American Aloha: Hula Beyond Hawai'i* (Siebans and Flanary 2003).

8 Of the 401,920 people who self-identified as Native Hawaiian in the 2000 census, only 239,655 live in Hawai'i. Another 162,265 reside in other US states, with 60,048 of them in California (Ishibashi 2004). Although Hawaiians in Hawai'i make up 60 percent of all Hawaiians in the United States, just 20 percent of Hawai'i respondents identified themselves as Hawaiian. The most common race response was Asian (58 percent), followed by White (3 percent). Because individuals could report more than one race, these percentages total more than 100 percent (Ishibashi 2004).

9 See <http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/censr-7.pdf> for more information.

10 Census reports in Hawai'i date back to 1847 and included the categories "Native" and "Half-caste" (Glick 1970, 278)

11 The *Kapalakiko Calendar* of Hawaiian events is published by Kapalakiko Productions, 800 Meade Avenue, San Francisco CA 94124-3554.

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