

NOTES ON THE COST OF LIFE IN MODERN HAWAII:
A REVIEW OF NOEL J. KENT'S
HAWAII: ISLANDS UNDER THE INFLUENCE

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Put most succinctly, this is a book about the transformation over the past quarter-century of a society once based economically on plantation agriculture into a "society of tourism," in which the resources of its people are mobilized into the service of an all-consuming "visitor industry" which, although immensely profitable to investors based in centers of economic decision-making far removed from that society and to their most effective agents based in the society itself, visits upon an increasing number of its people a burden of increasingly unbearable weight.

As political *analysis* this vision of Hawaii's distant and recent past, and of the futures that may be imminent in it, is unlikely to engage the minds of the present generation of Hawaii's movers and shakers, whether in government or the "private" sector. It is much more likely to seem altogether alien to their practical concerns. Nor is it likely to warm their hearts in its role as potential political *myth* inviting embrace by the people of Hawaii. Instead, it is much more likely to outrage them, if they do not find it merely irksome or boorish. How it will be received by other constituents of Hawaii's body politic, who experience themselves more nearly as moved and shaken, is a more open question. And it is in the openness of this question that the primary significance of the work is to be found — for the movers and shakers, for the author himself, and for the moved and shaken whom both address.

The book should be evaluated in each of these aspects — as both analysis and potential myth — first of all because *any* such serious attempt to understand an ongoing political reality and then to share that understanding with its makers and bearers should be seen in each of these manifestations of the consciousness that authors it. To speak of myth in this context is, of course, to refer not to some ancient or otherwise alien "myth" which in our unfettered enlightenment we have exposed as the enslaver of our ancestors or our contemporaries in more benighted cultures, but to refer instead to *effective* myth, powerful myth, myth which orders and accounts for the political experience of a people and reveals its prospects for creating its own history. In this context all serious political analyses of a society in process invite political understanding, and given that understanding, invite political commitment as well. This is true whether the vision articulated in the analysis is "established," even if inherently liable to challenge and eclipse, or is

instead antithetical to the established understandings and commitments, and proposed in the hope of eclipsing the established myth in the brighter light of its own dispensation.

The only political analyses which escape this dual fate are those which are generated from a perspective wholly untouched by concern with any human interests at all, or written in language so arcane as to elude recognition by anyone at all as his or her own. Try as many political scientists will to achieve this result, by way of gaining immunity from the charge of failing to be properly "disinterested" or "objective," few if any entirely succeed. So much the better for political analysis, because the analysis that would entirely succeed by these standards would not be a political analysis at all, would be instead not merely non-political but anti-political. And in this context, let it be said loudly and clearly, Kent's work is unquestionably a political analysis, and is therefore likewise a contender for mythic status in the hearts and minds of the people of the society whose political life it would reveal to view.

Beyond these general considerations, however, Kent's work should be assessed as both analysis and myth for the very particular reason that Kent himself would evaluate it from both of these perspectives, and invites his readers to do the same. His business in this work is not only to *see* the political reality of Hawaii and then to *show* his readers what he sees, but also quite explicitly to *move* them to embrace new prospects and new commitments in the light of what he has seen and shown them. He tells us straightforwardly enough that he wants his work to serve as at least a "humble beginning" to the creation of the kind of "political economy" that scholarship about Hawaii needs if it is ever to provide "a comprehensive, incisive analysis of the dynamics of past and contemporary social, political, and economic development," something that "can be used to critique existing scholarship" and for which "the serious student of Hawaiian society [now] looks in vain." With equal directness he tells us that he wants his work to serve "as a *catalyst* to help ignite people to play a creative role in the great social dramas of our time," and "as a means to *empower* them in their struggles." He wants it to "open a door that has been closed too long" through which, to extend his metaphor, they can and will move in the light of the prospects its opening puts before them in place of what may now seem a bleak and impenetrable wall that is becoming bleaker and more impenetrable with each passing decade of modern Hawaii's political development.

Certainly Kent would argue that there is historical truth in his analysis. While he disavows any claim that his work is in any way "definitive", or even that it can stand as a "genuine academic history of Hawaii", he is confident "that the historical analysis at the core of the study is both accurate and clearly argued." It is clear, of course, that he regards his work as an *interpretation* of Hawaii's political and

economic history, thereby acknowledging his role as mediator between the reality he would understand and the symbols in terms of which he would understand and have others understand it, and disavowing the role of disinterested mirror, a role with which he believes some students of Hawaii's history have too easily credited themselves, declining as they have to recognize that "a variety of interpretations might exist." So the truth of his analysis is presented as interpretative truth. But this is not to reduce the stature of his work to that of mere opinion, to use the idiom of modern journalism and its resolution of the problem of knowledge into the distinction between "fact" and "opinion", a distinction which is itself regarded as fundamentally unproblematic. It is instead political analysis: hard-won, anchored in a serious examination of relevant documents and experience — for Kent is no less a citizen than he is a student of Hawaii — and consistently self-conscious about the role of the framework of concepts and values that both enables and informs the resulting interpretation, making it possible in the first place, and in the second place giving it the shape and texture which sets it apart from the contending interpretations.

But beyond his confidence in the historical truth of the analysis he presents, in the region where analysis and myth come together with dynamic import, there is Kent's own characterization of this nexus in his belief that the very *validity* of his work is to be found in its efficacy as catalyst for igniting and empowering the people of Hawaii. Not perhaps all the people: not the movers and shakers, not those already entrenched in power, already witnessing their own private interests embodied in public rhetoric and public policy, but instead the "ordinary people," perhaps especially the "disenfranchised", with whom he identifies and who now face the bleak wall in which he would open a liberating door.

In this context the issue posed by his work is not merely whether or not it contains historical truth — even though it surely does — but whether or not or for whom, among the people of Hawaii, the vision in which his analysis is embodied will be *true enough*: true enough for them to embrace it as an image of the Real and the Good and therefore as a source of new commitments to transformation both in themselves and in the public world in which the meaning of their membership in Hawaii's society makes itself known to them; true enough because it gives them an account of their experience in and at the hands of that society that they can recognize as their own, and in which their lives are redeemed beyond any value the prevailing mythology can give them; true enough, in short, to be embraced as myth, and therefore as the matrix for a genuinely new politics for modern Hawaii.

It is not difficult to understand why the movers and shakers of modern Hawaii will not warm to the embrace of this potentially mythic analysis of the political system whose command posts they now occupy, but two reasons may loom large enough as occasions for outrage to reduce all others to the status of petty annoyances. Assaulted in their vitals by these dragons, all remaining insults may seem to them little more than fleabites by comparison.

The first of these dragons is embodied in the fact that both in its intellectual origins and in the primary themes and categories of analysis it employs — and despite the truth in Kent's statement that it was "first formulated in the 1960s to explain the widespread failure of development strategies in the Third World" — the "dependency framework" on which the analysis is built is patently rooted in the Marxist tradition. To be sure, the argument makes no explicit appeal to "Marxism" as a basis for either understanding or action, and the bugbear of "revolution" in any ordinary sense of that term is nowhere to be found in it. But this will probably count for little.

Hawaii, after all, is one of the fifty sovereign states of the most powerful nation in the history of the planet, and it is hard to find an issue of a daily newspaper that neglects to remind its readers of the axiom that the nation is engaged in a just and vital struggle against — not this or that people in this or that territory with this or that collection of markets, resources, and political leaders — but against "Marxism" and "Marxists" as such. In this context, particularly for those who hold the lion's share of political and economic power, evidence in public utterances of even the scantest indebtedness to the mind of Karl Marx is warrant enough both for outrage and for preemptory repudiation of any claim such utterances might make to have the power to illuminate the experience of any of the nation's citizens or the problems which they confront. Far from offering a basis for understanding or solving such problems, "Marxism" *is* the problem. So that any analysis which proceeds from "Marxist" premises or employs "Marxist" categories is seen not only as failing to provide understanding and a valid basis for political commitment, but indeed as being actively opposed to understanding and itself committed to misleading the unwary away from their true inheritance of wealth and freedom and into a false inheritance of bare "security" paid for in the currency of "slavery."

It is seen, in short, as demonic; and the only issue which might remain somewhat open for the standard-bearers of the prevailing myth, when confronted with proponents of such a demonic perspective, is the question whether these are self-conscious demons intent on possessing others or, instead, merely unsuspecting "dupes" themselves possessed by demons. What this means in practice is that, from the standpoint of the movers and shakers of private enterprise made public policy, images of political reality which reveal any taint of the "Marxist" heritage may well be either wicked or foolish, evil or insane — but they may

never be either wise or good. Grounds enough, surely, for the leading spirits of modern Hawaii, as representative and responsible Americans, to be outraged by Kent's work, whether Kent be demon himself or merely possessed.

Beyond its display of Marxist geneology, however, Kent's analysis will bring scant pleasure to Hawaii's leading spirits, either to the captains of local industry and finance or to those whom Kent commends us to see as their partners and agents in government, because it lays the burden of blame for what he commends us to see as the disastrous reality of modern Hawaii squarely on their shoulders. Probably this would be bad enough, but matters may be even worse. Modern Hawaii, after all, has learned to live with its "oligarchic" plantation past, especially now that it has been officially transcended and displaced by the "New Hawaii" and the happy blend of pluralism and representative government it officially brings with it.

The eclipse of the old oligarchs and the advent of the New Covenant are embedded as axioms in public discourse, as well as documented and codified in the scholarship of Fuchs' *Hawaii Pono* and Daws' *Shoal of Time*. In this dispensation the "peaceful revolution" undid the dominance of the few and released both government and the many it was supposed to represent from their roles as instruments of the few and their drive for public power and private wealth. More than a commonplace, it is by now a requirement for Hawaii's political myth-makers to acknowledge the blame that in retrospect is due to these greedy and oppressive masters of Hawaii's past, while in the same breath to cherish and celebrate release from their mastery. So that even if at times the bearers of this blame have bridled under its burden — as Fuchs, for example, was made aware when his own vision of Hawaii entered the public domain and showed itself capable of producing its own ration of outrage — on the whole it has been borne with discretion and forbearance even if, one suspects, without relish.

But in this foundation myth for the "New Hawaii," the oligarchs, even though surely enough blamed, are given the respect of being blamed for being authentically autonomous and powerful — for mastering the politics and economics of Hawaii with skill and daring, but more than that for *master-minding* the strategies for development to whose realization they gave their energies. They are blamed, in short, for dominating the people of Hawaii in the interests of policies which were unambiguously their own. They may have done what was necessary to conceal their private agendas from public view, but the agendas they did their best to conceal were indisputably *their own* agendas. And perhaps, in the nature of things, when the wolf is blamed by, or on behalf of, the sheep on which he has been feeding he may find ways of bearing the burden with relative grace, for he is being blamed, after all, only for being a wolf — and a wolf has his own dignity, his own pride, his own nature and integrity.

But the blame that Kent now lays on the shoulders of the present generation of Hawaii's captains of industry, finance and government affords no such redeeming grace. For in Kent's analysis, even though they are undeniably powerful over the people of Hawaii and on behalf of the developmental policies which shape Hawaii's economic and political life, they have all but entirely lost their power to design and implement their own agendas and instead are themselves by now all but wholly "dependent" on the prior and more potent agendas of others. While Hawaii remains the center of their own political and economic activities and their own demands for eminence and wealth, in the topographies of the *real* movers and shakers of modern Hawaii this center is but one of many spots on the "periphery" of the real center of power which is entirely elsewhere: in the metropolitan headquarters of multinational corporations and investors' groups in the mainland United States and Japan, whose directors can dispose of concentrations of capital far vaster than their local cohorts can even imagine, and in whose agendas Hawaii has long since been scheduled for development as a society consecrated to mass tourism as a way of life.

In the context of this vision there is little prospect for even grudging redemption in the blame Kent settles on the local men and women of capital. Posted in a periphery made such by the designs of the owners and controllers of truly immense concentrations of capital elsewhere in the world, they, like the "ordinary people" of Hawaii, are "under the influence." Far from being cast as wolves they are cast instead as jackals, earning their keep as the lion's provider by going before him to hunt up his prey, feeding on leftovers from the lion's share and on such smaller species as they may themselves bring down along the way. Far from taking Hawaii from its people and keeping it for themselves, they have collaborated in its deliverance to interests alien to Hawaii in exchange for the wealth and local eminence that still seem to come in amounts sufficient to bind them to the enterprise. To the movers and shakers of modern Hawaii, from whatever quarters it might have come, this cannot be a pretty image in which to be invited to see their own reflections; and coming from the ominous regions of "Marxism", it must be doubly unwanted or worse.

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Just what is this "dependency framework" by means of which Kent develops his vision of Hawaii's economic and political evolution, what are its central concepts and problematics, the primary components of the picture of Hawaii that results from its application to the Hawaiian case? And what is the nature of the disaster to which, in the light of this analysis, Hawaii might be seen to have been brought? On whom have its burdens most heavily fallen? And finally, what if any are their pros-

pects for deliverance from these burdens and for setting themselves on the way to a life that can be genuinely accounted good in Kent's perspective, and perhaps in their own as well?

At the center of any adequate "political economy," according to Kent, are two closely related domains of inquiry: "the ongoing dialectic between global capitalist development and local development," and "the special role of the state in relation to capital." As a vehicle for such a political economy, he argues, the dependency framework is valuable precisely because it attempts to work out a "coherent analysis of the global economic structure" and then to use this analysis "to analyze development in individual societies." So doing, it transcends traditional perspectives in which national and international processes are partitioned in splendid isolation from one another and focusses on "assembling patterns of intersystemic and international linkages" by means of which the "dynamics of social change and transformation" are set in motion, and can be revealed in their movement by the "use of history as an instrument" of disclosure.

Kent's design is to take this framework and apply it to Hawaii's economic and political evolution from the moment of first contact with the West to the moment of the completion of his own work. The central thesis to which the analysis lends its weight is given clearly enough in the preface, even if the text itself reveals the theme in significant variations over the course of Hawaii's history. From the moment of contact Hawaii has been "under the influence":

Change in Hawaiian development has corresponded historically to the development of the forces of production in the advanced capitalist world, from a center radiating influence and change out to this mid-Pacific periphery. In short, Hawaii's development for the last two hundred years has been *peripheral* in nature, a reflex of expansionist needs in some metropolitan center.

With contact Hawaii ceased to be the center of its own political and economic dynamics and began its transformation into its role as peripheral dependent society subject to powerful forces based in and spreading out from one or another center of capital accumulation and disposition.

To be sure, the locus of the effective metropolitan center has itself evolved over time as the global topography of capital accumulation has shifted. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth century the center was to be found in England and France, but before the nineteenth century had run its course the center had moved to the United States where it was to remain until well beyond the middle of the twentieth century. At this point, as far as Hawaii is concerned, the United States finds itself joining in this role with Japan in an uneasy mixture of cooperation and competition aimed at implementing the "Pacific Rim Strategy," a

strategy for the sharing out of power over, and proceeds from, the material and human resources of the Pacific Basin. But for all this movement of the mantle of centrality from metropole to metropole, Hawaii's role as a dependent periphery has remained constant, even if the precise nature and degree of its dependency has in time undergone a metamorphosis of sufficient scope to merit emphasis in Kent's analysis.

The significance of this metamorphosis in degree and nature of dependency within the fundamental continuity of dependency as the defining characteristic of post-contact Hawaii is reflected in the organization of the text itself. It is divided into two parts. The first of these, "The Ties that Bind," deals with the period from contact to roughly the advent of the "New Hawaii" not long after the close of World War II and is intended to "establish a general model of the development of a plantation society as it emerged during the first century of contact between the Islands and outsiders." Part Two, entitled "Building the 'New Hawaii'," continues the analysis into the present and focusses on Hawaii's role in the Pacific Rim Strategy, the incorporation of the islands' political elite with old-line plantation companies into an "enlarged establishment" under the direction of overseas interests, and the ensuing development of Hawaii as a "tourism society."

This plan of organization symbolizes Kent's view that the advent of the "New Hawaii" marks a significant shift in the *scope and depth* of Hawaii's economic and political dependency, and the enclosure of the image of the "New Hawaii" in quotation marks signals his contention that the claims of this image to mirror the reality of Hawaii's economic and political life must be regarded as problematic. Indeed he represents Part Two as being an "attempt to answer the fundamental question: in terms of power relationships, economic and political control, and mass participation, how genuinely *new* is the 'New Hawaii'?" His answer, which sets his work off strikingly from that of either Fuchs or Daws, is loud and clear: if the "New Hawaii" is new at all, its newness consists not in deliverance *from* the burdens of pre-War dependency and its associated ills, as embodied in the organization of Island life around plantation sugar, but instead in its deliverance even more profoundly *to* them, as embodied now in the "new plantation" — tourism. In this context the relentless projection of the imagery of the "New Hawaii" into the public discourse of the islands emerges as a symbolically reassuring mask which conceals the ugly reality which the people of Hawaii encounter in their daily experience. As mythic imagery this "New Hawaii," declining to come honestly to *terms* with that reality, deprives them of the wherewithal to come to *grips* with it, rendering them powerless where Kent would have his work contribute to empowering them.

Part one tells the story of how the "ties that bind" Hawaii — bind it globally to the purposes of world centers of capital accumulation and lo-

cally to the agenda of the capitalist elite of Hawaii — are gradually fastened and drawn ever more tightly until finally, the islands having become the unchallenged domain of King Sugar, no aspect of life can exist unless it express deference and fealty to this commanding presence, and the fortunes of the islands' people are all but entirely reflexes of the fortunes of the King. This part of Hawaii's history is old ground of course, and Kent's mapping of this familiar terrain adds few if any new "facts" to those that have already been detailed in serious scholarship about Hawaii, from Kuykendall to Fuchs and Daws.

What is new is the application of the "dependency framework" to this array of facts, and the resulting emphasis on the *connections* ("linkages") between transformations in the scope and organization of world capitalism and tandem transformations in the way in which capital is organized in Hawaii itself ("structures"). Indeed the "factual" materials for making these connections are themselves embedded in these earlier works, so that Kent's work provides no grounds for challenging this scholarship from the standpoint of its facticity, any more than it invites challenge from that scholarship on like grounds. Whatever challenges might in principle be exchanged are best regarded as challenges of interpretation, and these in turn reduce to challenges of the frameworks for analysis and interpretation which each brings to his task as well as to the social values to which each is committed.

It matters little whether these other scholars have explicitly acknowledged or even understood that what they were doing was interpreting the past and not reproducing it symbolically in its full reality — as Fuchs quite clearly did and Kuykendahl and Daws less clearly did not. Aware or not, like it or not, each sifted and assessed the significance of the "facts" in the light of his own frame of reference whose premises embodied images both of what he took to be the primary mechanisms of historical dynamics and of what he took to be the criteria by which human beings might best measure their worth and the worth of their actions: images of both the Real and the Good around which to organize thought, action and communication — *political* images, in short.

Given the frameworks for interpretation which governed the work of Kuykendall, Fuchs and Daws the factual content of their work is not presented in such a way as to bring the connections which are so central to Kent's own analysis into sharp relief and thus urge readers to deal with them as grounds for accepting a deliberately constructed and specified *model* of the reality they symbolize.

Kent's contribution to this body of scholarship consists in doing precisely that. In this context we should not be surprised to learn that Kent's critique of their contributions to the "dominant paradigm" in scholarship about Hawaii consists largely in his sense of their "lack of theoretical grounding" — of explicit testing of models of history against the facts of history — and of their "lack of self-awareness of the kinds of values (always middle class, mid-twentieth century, United

States oriented) that inform the paradigm." This is what Kent *means* when he argues for the use of history "as an instrument to reveal the dynamics of social change," and this is why he is at pains in his own work to affirm his own value commitments. There is nothing cagey or disingenuous in his identification of himself as "someone committed to the idea that quite 'ordinary' men and women are capable of building a social order that [he] would define as 'rational,' democratically accountable, socially just, and as ecologically sound as possible; in short, a society that answers *real and universal* human needs for dignity, self-respect, and genuine solidarity with other people," and that responds to "the real interests and welfare of the great majority of [his] fellow human beings." He makes it quite clear that he has no intention of giving his energies to the service of the merely self-apparent interests of that minority of human beings that is constituted by the American middle class at mid-century, interests which realize themselves in an "irrational" society in which ecological necessity, democratic accountability and social justice are too readily sacrificed on the altar of wealth and domination for the few, whether these be the minions of global, national, or merely local capitalism.

This said, it should also be said that Kent's work should be regarded as a genuine contribution to our understanding of Hawaii's political and economic history and its present prospects, even though there is little reason to suppose that it will be regarded as such by all, least of all by those very capitalists on whom he lays the responsibility for Hawaii's dependency and subjection. No matter. It deserves this status in the corpus of scholarship about Hawaii whether or not the focus it brings to bear on that history yields a sufficient schematic for revealing its "essence" and whether or not its images of the Good are our own. It deserves it simply because it is unquestionably a serious, deliberate, and transparently straightforward attempt to understand and come to terms with a reality in which the needs and hopes of all the people of Hawaii are at stake, and in whose future prospects they have nothing short of vital interests.

To return to the analysis presented in part one, however, what is most important to note is what Kent takes to be the legacy of dependency for Hawaii, and to note as well what specific form is taken by that legacy in the period before the "New Hawaii" that sets it apart from the form he believes it to have taken in the period since that time. The "dependent society" which in Kent's analysis characterizes Hawaii from contact to the present might be resolved into five features:

(1) virtually total consecration of the resources of the society — land, water, human labor — to the production of a single commodity produced for, and dependent upon, a single market in a "metropolitan center" whose managers see the producing society as "peripheral" to the center and of interest solely for its capacity to respond to the fluctuating economic and military needs of the metropole;

(2) concentration of local control over the production process itself in the hands of a small number of owners of the primary means of production;

(3) concentration of local political control in these same hands, so that the society's government becomes essentially an instrument of the owners of the larger parcels of industrial and financial capital and the vehicle for the translation of their private economic interests into the substance of public policy and the object of public expenditures;

(4) mobilization of virtually all remaining elements of the population — those not sharing significantly in capital ownership — into productive roles in the dominant industry, either as laborers selling their labor directly to the industry's "producers" or as smaller combinations of capital and labor providing ancillary services to the industry — the boundary between capital and labor sharing rough correspondence with that between different ethnic or cultural groups, and race itself symbolized in public discourse as the primary basis of social differentiation;

(5) eradication not only of previously existing uses of the society's resources and the social relations and cultural expressions associated with them ("lifestyles") that is entailed by their mobilization on behalf of the dominant industry, but also of any serious prospect for the consideration of alternative models for development — fueled in part by the systematic propagation of the myth that the welfare of the industry and that of the society are one and the same, and that objections to its continued dominance, or active proposals for change, constitute anti-social behavior.

In Kent's analysis these features combine to represent an apt description of Hawaii's political and economic reality both before and since the arrival of the "New Hawaii." In the closing chapters of part one, however, he makes plain his contention that Hawaii's dependency in the earlier period has to be regarded as less than total and, more concretely, less profound than has been characteristic of other "plantation societies." It was, instead, a period of "limited dependence," even if it was limited in only one important respect: that "unlike other dependent plantation societies, the plantation elite in Hawaii was able to maintain a certain political and economic authority within the islands vis-a-vis the metropole." This limitation, it is important to note, in no way suggests that the defining characteristics of dependency given earlier carried less full force in the plantation era than they do in the modern era of industrial tourism. All that is being said is that in the plantation period, within the relationship between large capital concentrations at the metropole and those at the periphery, the local capitalists of Hawaii enjoyed more *relative* autonomy than did their counterparts in other plantation economies the world over. Compared to these they were less a mere "collaborationist class," less a class of functionaries of the purposes of the metropole. They were able to hold this status precisely because of the strength and vitality of their control over local capital and local political life.

During this period local capitalists managed "to retain financial control over the basic economic sectors" of Hawaii, which gave them "a certain flexibility in dealing with metropolitan elites." They were able as a class to "establish a real grip on the productive and financial apparatus, and to maintain it until well after World War II." Despite developments in global capitalism that bound Hawaii into ever more solid integration with the system as a whole "*internally* the elite managed not only to maintain its economic control, but also to deepen and broaden that control through monopoly over the Islands' basic industries and related financial and service functions, and through the adept use of political power and influence in Hawaii and the metropole." In other words, while Hawaii as a whole was dependent upon, and defined and dominated by, the interests and decisions of local capitalists, these entrepreneurs were themselves relatively more free in *their* dealings with the metropole than were their counterparts in other plantation societies, more nearly electing to commit Hawaii to dependency on sugar than themselves depending for their own wealth and eminence on the success with which they implemented the interests and decisions of capitalist organizations outside of Hawaii.

In part two, however, even this exception to the otherwise universal character of the plantation economy is decisively withdrawn from the local capitalists of the "New Hawaii." In the new plantation of industrial tourism, which has by now all but displaced the agricultural plantation of old, the days of "limited dependency" are over. Local capitalists have all but entirely lost their capacity to elect Hawaii's fate on their own initiative, and have become little more than exceptionally well-paid local agents for the interests and choices of American and Japanese multinational corporations as these may apply in Hawaii. Even though Hawaii's government is no less their instrument they are themselves but instruments in the hands of others whose interest in Hawaii is in its role as a field for investment in mass tourism and as a bastion for the military support of their power to transform the Pacific Basin as a whole into a means of profit for themselves. So that in Part Two of the text the "New Hawaii" emerges as "the age of almost complete dependency" for the islands, while tourism emerges "more than any other factor" as the "root of this dependency," and Hawaii's leaders look on, apparently "helpless on all fronts," but no less rich, and no less dominant over the people of Hawaii for all that.

The key to this transformation as Kent sees it might be summarized into the following set of historical developments:

- (1) the decision by Hawaii's major industrial, commercial and financial corporations that plantation agriculture could no longer be expected to produce the profits it had in the past;
- (2) their decision to seek other sources of profitability, both in Hawaii and abroad, thus to transform themselves into multinational corporations, a step which required vast new inputs of capital which

had to be paid for in the currency of forfeited local control over economic policy to the investment priorities of the larger metropolitan sources on which they depended for new capital;

(3) the resulting integration of these corporations into the organization of metropolitan capital and the subordinization of their own investment strategies in Hawaii to those embodied in the Pacific Rim Strategy in whose vision of the Pacific as a vast "division of labor" Hawaii was scheduled for development as a tourist destination for the people of the metropole;

(4) the direct penetration, with the help of formerly Hawaii-owned corporations, of other mainland and Japanese-owned multinationals in the form of massive investments in a radically expanded tourism plant;

(5) the collapse of the new "revolutionary" Democratic Party and of the erstwhile radical I.L.W.U. as sources of serious resolve to alter the fundamental structures of economic and political power in Hawaii and their effective merger with corporate leadership in an "age of consensus" in support of this same narrowly circumscribed image of Hawaii's economic destiny;

(6) the embrace by Hawaii's government — at first hesitant, expressing concern for the dangers of excessive dependence on tourism, but finally unreservedly and unblushingly — of this same vision, its leaders forfeiting whatever genuine autonomy they might have earned in the wake of their successful challenge of the "Old Hawaii," providing land-use decisions and massive public funding of infrastructural costs in exchange for sharing disproportionately in the proceeds that the unrelenting elaboration of industrial tourism would bring to those who had either economic or political capital to invest in it.

The resulting "tourism society", for all its enormous profitability for its major investors in and out of government, extracts similarly enormous costs from the ordinary people of Hawaii. These costs take a variety of forms but in Kent's analysis they are seen as converging in their effects. "Massive government subsidies" to the industry for the creation of the necessary infrastructure make steadily increasing inroads on government support for programs serving other constituencies. Governmental allocation of the basic resources of land and water to tourism development systematically liquidate such prospects for country living or small scale agriculture and community life as have survived the era of plantation agriculture.

Earning opportunities for workers in the industry itself are minimal — indeed this is a primary foundation of its attractiveness to investors. Wages are generally exceptionally low, temporary and part-time employment an increasing tendency, and ceilings above which local employees are unable to rise are kept low by the importation of management-level employees from metropolitan centers. No less burdensome is tourism's demand that its workers present themselves in the role of smiling servant, "catering to people with whom [their] only

tie is the cash nexus," a form of institutionalized humiliation which is made no lighter by the ethnic lines that divide the industry's workers from its clientele. And as if this were not enough Hawaiians and others who identify with their concerns must witness the systematic debasement of Hawaiian culture as it is increasingly reduced to the status of a commodity for sale to anyone who is willing to pay for it.

These costs may be borne gracefully by some, resignedly by others, but for a growing constituency of Hawaii's people, they are increasingly experienced as feelings of resentment toward the industry and its clientele. Unendingly admonished not to bite the hand that feeds them, it would seem, increasingly they become aware that the premise of the metaphor casts them in the role of caged or domesticated animals whose lot is to be used for the gain or amusement of the industry and those who compromise its market, but otherwise to forfeit any claims to proprietorship over their own lives. And increasingly this resentment makes itself known in the public domain either in sporadic outbursts of spontaneous violence by individuals and small groups or in "organized political struggle," centering on issues of access to land, water, housing, and dignified labor, and the preservation of authentically "local" lifestyles.

Given all this, the question to which Kent's analysis leads him — and should lead anyone who owns to a serious interest in Hawaii's political future — is this: what are the prospects for the continued growth of this constituency of resentment, and specifically for its discovery of the capacity to organize itself for effective political struggle on behalf of redress and of the redirection of Hawaii's development? Who among Hawaii's people, and how many of them, will come to experience the costs of the present development model as unbearably great, demanding more than they can give in exchange for whatever benefits accrue to them by continued deference to it? Who and how many will translate this experience into a basis for undertaking new commitments to sustained political action, along with the risks and costs which any such commitments inevitably entail? Or, to put the question in broader historical perspective, is the unrelenting elaboration of industrial tourism at the hands of metropolitan and local capital, in partnership with Hawaii's government, unwittingly but inescapably creating the conditions for its own undoing?

In the concluding pages of his study Kent seems to find grounds, if not for faith, at least for hope that indeed it is. In the multiplex public expressions of resentment, organized and unorganized, a "common thread" appears: "the awakening of an anti-developer, anti-tourism consciousness, a desire to reassert local control and local integrity among large numbers of people." He tells us "there is a basis being laid for a new politics that repudiates the 'New Hawaii' developmental model and seeks to mobilize its victims (and non-victims) for economic, political and social change that will benefit all the people." A

new constituency is emerging "for a break with Hawaii's role as a dependent tourism society."

Kent ends his study by noting that "ultimately it is only the people of Hawaii who can break the long chain of dependent development" and build a society in which decisions are made by local people, based on their contribution to the well-being and integrity of the majority of the citizens. "Having presented his vision of their situation his work here is done. There is no detailed analysis of the constituency from which action on behalf of change might be anticipated, no breakdown of the cross-hatch of sub-constituencies and potentially contradictory interests that might be expected to impinge on the scope and force of its common concerns, no schedule of concrete organizational proposals, no manual of political strategy and tactics, no implied offer of expertise or leadership. Instead, Kent offers only the suggestion that if the people thus constituted are to succeed then *they* will have to "formulate a comprehensive political program and economic strategy" and do so "with enough vision and good sense to attract the support of the growing number of disenfranchised." Then, "and not the least," he writes in his concluding sentence, having indicated the contours of such a program in only the sparest terms, *they* "will need to build an organization capable of implementing such a program." Readers who might find themselves in the constituency whose origins his analysis explains, or might be drawn into it in the light of that analysis, and who might want to be told "what to do about it all" are given little instruction, in short. What they are given instead is an invitation, to look through the doorway he has tried to open and, if so moved, to walk through it — together.

* * *

Certainly Kent's work invites challenge as well. Readers who have not been wholly convinced of the merit of his argument before encountering it in this text will have quarrels and questions to bring to it. No doubt these will be as various as the political interests and perspectives that inform them. But a review, even one that is broadly sympathetic — as this one surely is — might usefully suggest what some of these quarrels and questions might be, and by so doing extend to others, whatever their own broad sympathies, an invitation of its own: to view the text critically, in the light of their own experience, their own knowledge, and their own need to know.

To begin from the narrowest perspective of scholarship, for example, a routine check of a sample of footnote citations discloses annoyances of various kinds which, though in themselves are hardly telling against the overall responsibility of the author to the "facts," cannot but raise questions about scholarly care and fastidiousness. On Page 42, for example, quoting from an 1867 message from Secretary of State

Seward to his Minister to Hawaii, Kent cites Page 208 of the second volume of Kuykendall's history as his source; but one looks there in vain for any such message, finally resorting to Kuykendall's index in order to find it — accurately quoted by Kent — on Page 222. A search for the source of a letter from Secretary of State Webster to a representative of the Hawaiian government, which Kent notes can be found on Page 194 of Kuykendall's *second* volume presents similar problems, although a little detective work turns it up on Page 194 of Kuykendall's *first* volume.

A somewhat different kind of gremlin appears when on Page 44 of Kent's text Kuykendall seems to be cited as authority for Kent's description of the Hawaiian government's use of public funds to subsidize labor recruiters and create the infrastructure demanded by the planters, and its use of coercion against workers on behalf of planters. Checking out this citation one finds that on the cited page of Kuykendall the only information supplied has to do with the inauguration of a mail service in 1850. In the sentence which follows this citation in Kent's text one finds him asserting that in 1854 the government spent \$40,000 on harbor improvements and \$15,000 more on wharves, while spending an additional \$30,000 on harbors in 1855. Then, scanning the Kuykendall chapter in which the mail service discussion appears and discovering there a subsection dealing with "Harbor Improvements," one finds Kuykendall telling his readers that only the \$40,000 was spent in 1854, while *both* the additional \$30,000 and the \$15,000 for wharves was spent in 1855.

Still another kind of dropped stitch, unrelated to Kent's citation practices but raising similar questions about scholarly care, turns up on page 62 of the text where Kent represents the constitution promulgated by Queen Liliuokalani in 1893 in her bid to reassert the power of Hawaiians in Hawaii's government as being "nothing less than a blunt repudiation of the plantation bourgeoisie and the political institutions it had established in the *half century* [italics supplied] since the Bayonet Constitution" — certainly a surprising characterization of Hawaii's constitutional history, given that earlier in the text Kent, like others before him, has located the "Bayonet Constitution" securely in 1887, or approximately *six years* prior to the Queen's action. Certainly errors of this kind do not detract significantly from the merit of Kent's argument as such, but neither do they strengthen its claim on our attention.

Grounds for other kinds of dissatisfaction can also be found. Surely some readers will be disappointed in the text not because they find its characterization of Hawaii's political and economic evolution in any serious way defective but instead because, finding it an apt portrayal of the situation in which they find themselves, they will be frustrated precisely by the fact that Kent stops short of providing concrete guidelines for appropriate political action. Seen in this light Kent's analysis begs for extension and pragmatic application *to* the situation thus disclosed.

This should take the form both of detailed analysis of the likely composition of — and differentiation within — the constituency which is emerging in response to the contradictions of tourism, and of concrete proposals for personal and organizational strategy grounded in such analysis. It is hard to imagine either that the need for such an analysis is beyond Kent's appreciation or that its execution is beyond his capacities. Even so, perhaps he can be forgiven this omission, given his understanding of his purpose in writing this work — to use history to reveal the dynamics of social change and to serve as a catalyst for the enfranchisement of others. Perhaps, indeed, given his identification with and confidence in the "ordinary people" of Hawaii, there is both wisdom and integrity in his decision to decline the role of strategist and the pretensions to leadership that go with it.

Some readers might find grounds for quarrelling with Kent's characterization of one or another of the array of organizations and institutions that come under review in the book. Questions might be raised, for example, about his explanation for the metamorphosis of the I.L.W.U., since the advent of the "New Hawaii," from radical critic to enthusiastic supporter of the dominant social order in partnership with its former adversaries. Kent presents a picture of an organization which is politically beaten into a posture of "friendly cooperation and collaboration with the bourgeoisie" as the price of survival, vitally weakened under the assault of post-War capitalist red-baiting and deprived of bargaining power by corporate transfers of plantation operations from Hawaii to Third World areas. But surely some case can be made for a quite different account of the evolution of the I.L.W.U. into an organization which, "comfortably assimilated into the existing order...ceased to think seriously of restructuring it." Such an account would present an image grounded not so much in defeat and failure as instead in victory and success. Having finally established their right and ability to bargain effectively, and therefore to share in the control of the industry, in the process become comfortable beyond anything they had previously imagined, a new found belief in the merit of the prevailing system, and a settled complacency about the interests of the working class as a whole, may not have been beyond them. If so, then their emergent role as collaborators might be seen not so much as something foisted upon them as, instead, something to whose embrace they freely gave themselves. It is not, after all, as if there were no precedent for such transformations of consciousness in the history of world socialism as it has emerged over the past century or more.

Other kinds of quarrels might be brought to Kent's characterization of the University of Hawaii and the role it has played in the elite's development strategy for Hawaii. Kent paints a monochromatic picture of an institution consecrated to the service of this strategy. It would not be surprising if a good many readers were to find in this image but a pale reflection of their own experience. They may grant Kent's point that

the elite intended and still intends for the university to play such a role, but may equally decline to grant his apparent conclusion that their intentions have been wholly realized in university practice. These observers see the university instead as a fractured institution, some of whose elements are undeniably bound into service to the priorities of the dominant strategy, but others of which are quite clearly not so bound and instead routinely engaged in activities whose immediate political significance is to mount a challenge to it.

To name but one such countertrend, some of whose strongest protagonists are to be found in the university, one can point to the development and persistence of the ecological critique of headlong tourist development and its implications. But the university has also been a primary source and facilitator of broad ranging social criticism, much of which must be understood as a challenge to the claims and interests of the development elite. There are even those, believe it or not, who would argue that much of the reason for the adversary quality of the State government's relationship to the university, and particularly to its faculty, which has become so pervasive in the past decade and a half, is to be found precisely in the stubbornness with which these academics define themselves as having legitimate grounds for public support even when their work does not redound in any obvious fashion to the benefit of the development strategy to which the leaders of government have given themselves. If there is any truth in all this, as there surely is in the subsidiary observation that Kent's very book has been immensely facilitated by the resources of the university, then perhaps he might want to reconsider his assessment. He might want to do so not only because his analysis of the university may be wanting in this respect, but also because it may alert him to the general danger in political analysis, as in political practice, of confusing intent with effect, and to that extent attributing power where it is not due.

A more basic question has to do with the application of the dependency framework itself, and particularly with Kent's conclusion within this framework that the elaboration of industrial tourism in modern Hawaii well-nigh exclusively reflects Hawaii's dependence, including the dependence of Hawaii's economic and political elite, on the initiatives of outside sources of capital. The quarrel here is certainly not with the notion that metropolitan capital has played a mighty role in determining both the *rapidity* and the *scope* of tourism development in Hawaii, but instead with the notion which seems to be carried in Kent's work that it has all but unilaterally determined its *direction* as well. If this *is* Kent's conclusion, then it would seem that he would be prepared to argue that *in the absence* of outside capital and the control associated with it, Hawaii's local capitalists and the political groups whose collaboration they have been able to count on, would have invested their resources in Hawaii in some developmental strategy *other than* mass tourism. To some observers this might seem a difficult argument to sustain, simply

on the grounds that major capitalists everywhere, whether in the metropole or elsewhere, seem to be uniformly and unabashedly oriented to the same fundamental objective: to invest their resources in enterprises which promise the very highest yields of sustained profit, and to evaluate geographical areas in which they might invest exclusively in terms of what is likely to be their "highest and best" use.

In this context there seems little reason to believe that the capitalists of Hawaii and those of the metropole would have made significantly different calculations with respect to the most profitable uses to which the land, water and people of modern Hawaii might be put. If this is the case then in the absence of metropolitan capital we might have expected less rapid and, at any point in time, less extensive development of tourism than has occurred in the wake of massive outside investment, but we would have no reason to expect either that mass tourism would not have been developed, or that it would not have been developed as rapidly and extensively as the profits derived from it would allow. If so, then the "dependency" of the local elite, which seems at times to resemble captivity in Kent's analysis, might deserve a somewhat more textured assessment. Perhaps, however, this is the kind of issue Kent has in mind when in his Preface he acknowledges that critics of dependency models have "rightly pointed out" that such models need "more finesse," more refinement, more "attention to nuance and subtlety," especially with respect to the way in which "degrees of dependency" are established and "what the distinctive forms that constitute a dependency relationship are." If so, then perhaps he will want to consider the questions raised here as he continues to craft the "sensitivity and discernment" in the use of the dependency framework which he believes can make it an "entirely viable way of investigating the dynamics of past and contemporary Hawaiian development," even in its relatively unrefined state.

Finally, whatever forms and degrees of dependency might obtain between periphery and metropole, underlying them all may be an even profounder dependency, the rationale for which is to be found at the very center of capitalist mythology, and of socialist mythology as well. That dependency is symbolized in the belief that the "highest and best use" of the resources of a society — its land, its water, such other capital as it may have at its disposal, and the labor of its people — is that which promises the maximum possible yield of material wealth.

Of course, in these contending mythologies, this belief is hardly an admission of anything as pathological as "dependency." Instead it is represented as an insight into the very nature of the human species. If we believe it we do so because it seems to give a telling account of what we *are*, and we are apt to have little patience with anyone who might soft-headedly suggest that we are as we seem to be because we seem to believe it. It is simply *given* in the nature of things, as an imperative of our being, and we go against it in the construction of our personal lives

or our social systems at the peril of each. We may engage in global disputes about how properly to organize our responses to this imperative, how to arrange the production process itself and how to distribute the proceeds from it among those who play a role in it; but underlying these disputes, however virulent they may become, is a bedrock of agreement that however we organize our response we must give it all we have.

It is to be remembered, in this context, that the very most telling argument for the continued expansion of industrial tourism is the belief that from this means, and from this means alone, we can wrest from these islands the maximum amount of wealth that they can be made to give up in our era. Given the central imperative which our mythology insists we accept as real, however much capital we as individuals have at our disposal, and however much labor power we have to sell to those who have more capital than ourselves, this argument for the continued growth of tourism, and for the continued liquidation of everything in the islands that does not enhance its claims on their resources, or that in any way obstructs its growth, is all but overwhelmingly persuasive.

But in the constituency which Kent's analysis reveals to be growing in response to the contradictions of tourist development, perhaps at its very center, there are some who are not persuaded by the argument because they are unwilling to give themselves to its mythic premise. Chief among these are those native Hawaiians who are coming to a new awareness of their own cultural underpinnings and embracing the authentic personal and political responsibility that goes with it. In this new awareness they find themselves embracing as well a cultural premise which in some sense they have always known to be true, but which for generations before them has been under systematic assault by the culture which has dominated, even if it has not entirely displaced them. That premise, understood to be no less real, no less imperative to them than is the central premise of the dominant culture to those who embrace it, is this: that the highest and best purpose to which the resources that bless the islands should be consecrated is not the production of ever-increasing wealth but, instead, the unending creation of *community* itself. Given this premise, to be sure, there is no denying the need for an economic calculus as an element in the public life of the community or in the personal lives of its members; but equally there is no denying that this economic calculus must defer to the higher and prior claims of the essentially spiritual calculus that redeems it and gives it meaning in the first place.

The Hawaiians, however, are not alone in this constituency of the spirit. For many others in Hawaii they hold out a tantalizing prospect for release from the cramped quarters of the dominant mythology. Watching closely the Hawaiians in their midst these others sense their truth and the power for making community that is in it and is so unlike

the power for domination that sometimes seems to be everywhere else. Sensing this, across chasms of ethnic and cultural alienation, they look to the Hawaiians for insight into their own lives and into the public reality in which they make their lives. If they do so it is because the mythology which surrounds them, for all the demands it makes upon them, fails in some important way to justify those demands and to give an account of their existences in which they can recognize their own experience, and by means of which they can share that experience with others. And in all this there is no small prospect that for these others, increasingly, looking is not enough. They want now to join with these Hawaiians in whose powers of understanding they have found grounds for trust and perhaps, as well, for commitment to an authentically new, even if also authentically old, Hawaii.

If this is true then those who would make myths and offer them to the people of Hawaii, whatever the form in which they would offer them, would do well to look to those Hawaiians whose voices are finally now making themselves heard. More importantly, they would do well to *listen* to them, to hear what these past masters of the art of storytelling have to tell them about the reality of the human condition and the human spirit, and about conditions for the well-being of Hawaii. In his effort to understand the tensions and contradictions, as well as the promise, of modern Hawaii Kent's ear is better than most, but there may still be much for him to hear and to incorporate into his own gift of story to the "ordinary people" of Hawaii.

None of this, however, denies the real power of Kent's analysis or its real prospects for capturing the imagination of the growing constituency that finds itself awakening to the contradictions inherent in the onslaught of tourist development in Hawaii. Increasingly this unrelenting transformation of the natural and cultural topography of the islands creates a world in which nothing remains that can reasonably be called "local." Increasingly Hawaii becomes more than anything else a mere functional extension of the metropolitan society whose more affluent inhabitants are themselves bent on using its land, its water, and both the labor and the spirit of its people as a means of respite from their own worlds and their own labors. Increasingly, and to increasingly many of the people of Hawaii, it becomes clear that to survive at all is to pay the price of forfeiting every last vestige of any way of life they can call either Hawaiian or in any other sense their own. There is no question, in short, but that the constituency of resentment is growing; and while there is reason to expect that new members will continue to find their way into it whether or not Kent's vision is projected before them, there is reason as well to expect that many of its members will embrace Kent's perspective, if not as a sufficient truth, then as a more sufficient truth than is afforded them by the prevailing myth of the "New Hawaii." The vision which Kent has undertaken to offer them, in short, has the makings of a powerful myth which, by accounting for

and giving credit to their experience of life in modern Hawaii, may "open a door that has been closed too long" and reveal the prospect of a future more nearly adapted to their needs because more clearly of their own making.