

Critical Toponymies

The Contested Politics of Place Naming

Edited by

LAWRENCE D. BERG
University of British Columbia, Canada

and

JANI VUOLTEENAHO
University of Helsinki, Finland

ASHGATE

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Chapter 6

The Aloha State: Place Names and the Anti-conquest of Hawai'i

Douglas Herman

In 1778, when James Cook in the ship *Resolution* rested offshore the islands of Kaua'i and Ni'ihau, he named this archipelago the "Sandwich Islands" in honour of the prominent sponsor of his third voyage, the Earl of Sandwich. By this appellation—as recorded in Cook's journal and subsequently engraved onto maps, charts, globes, and geography texts of the time—did this group of islands become known to the Westernized world. An identity imposed from without, this designation sprang from the process of inscription and classification that was producing the modern scientific and geographical order. Though over subsequent decades this name would yield to the epithet "Hawaii", this too is a colonial by-product; there was no overarching name for the entire archipelago prior to Western contact. Occupied by up to 1 million Polynesians who had been in residence for at least 1000 years, it was not, in effect, one place, but several places. It is supposed that because most early contact took place on the island of Hawai'i, this name became synonymous in Western discourse with the entire group (Blaisdell 1989).¹

In 1993, an oppositional *resolution* sailed by the Islands—one introduced to the Honolulu City council by Native Hawaiian leaders to change the name of Thurston Avenue. Lorrin A. Thurston, after whom the street was named, was denounced in the resolution as a "radical insurgent who was the early leading force behind the 1893 overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani." Thurston and a Committee of Thirteen *haole*² (white) businessmen, backed by troops from the USS Boston, forced the abdication of the Queen and declared themselves

1 For this reason, throughout this text I tend to refer to the "Islands," rather than to "Hawai'i." Some scholars (e.g. Sahlins and Valeri) use "Hawaii" for the group and "Hawai'i" for the island, reinforcing that "Hawaii" is an imposed, "English" name (hence the spelling without glottal stop). Readers should note that "Hawaiian" is an English word, so does not take the glottal stop either.

2 *Haole*, believed originally to have meant "foreigner," has historically come to designate persons of European ancestry. The connotations of this term was augmented by the historical class difference between "white" persons as owners of plantations and businesses, and other persons (Hawaiians, Asian and Portuguese immigrants) as labourers.

the new government of the island nation. This government, recognized as illegitimate by then-President Cleveland, five years later negotiated a treaty of annexation to the United States with President McKinley. The 1993 resolution asked that the city's Department of Land Utilization rename the street "Kamakaeha Avenue" based on Queen Lili'uokalani's birth name, "Lili'u Kamakaeha." Continuing to have a street named in Thurston's honour was denounced as "especially anachronistic" in light of the January 1993 centennial observance of the overthrow (Waite 1993).

The range of opinions on the resolution varied. It was immediately assaulted by some as revisionism and "political correctness." Critics pointed out that nine of the thirteen men who engineered the overthrow had streets named after them, and that the resolution's logic, if applied across the board, would lead to many more street name changes. Even McKinley High School would have to be renamed. Other views were reported in the Honolulu *Star-Bulletin* (Vickers 1993). One resident liked the idea of changing the name, "just because it seems more Hawaiian." A resident of Vietnamese ancestry felt that the name change was "disrespectful for the residents here now" noting also that she prefers "English street names. At least you can pronounce them." A third stated that "Hawaiians need to realize there's more than one ethnic group involved now. It's part of history too, good or bad. I think we need to spend more time trying to blend together and become one nation. Not just in Hawaii, but in the whole country." Lilikalā Kame'eleihiwa, assistant professor of Hawaiian studies at the University of Hawai'i, countered with "They're lucky Hawaiians don't rise up and burn the street sign."

Inasmuch as the changing of place names, especially country names, has been an ongoing part of decolonisation throughout the Pacific (Crocombe 1990) and forms part of the greater legacy of colonization world-wide, the debate over a street name seems rather trivial. Indeed, it was treated as such by Honolulu newspapers. But the comments by residents above indicate the ongoing struggle over identity that is at the heart of the postcolonial condition. Combined, these comments suggest that things Hawaiian have some value or cultural capital, making for a distinct sense of place; while at the same time, pointing out that this archipelago is not the Hawaiians' place anymore, but rather belongs to us all. It is part of America. Speak English, please.

This study examines the relationship between place names and colonialism in the Hawaiian Islands. While this relationship is a complex and often subtle one—its true magnitude easily overlooked—this study excavates ways in which American hegemony is embedded in the place name code. This hegemony consists primarily in the shift of human-environment discourses and their political-economic contexts towards a capitalist understanding of space that served Western [*haole*] interests. Close examination reveals that place names explicate the relationship between conquest and what Pratt (1992) has called "anti-conquest," while psychoanalysis allows this relationship to be more clearly understood.

Anti-conquest involves glorifying the Other at the same time that the Other is denied real power. Anti-conquest constitutes a seemingly contradictory practice interlaced into the broad field of colonial discourse, posing itself disingenuously as antithetical to overt colonisation. Behdad (1994) and Jacobs (1994) expand on this idea as being the colonizer's attempt to recapture the disappearing Other out of a nostalgia for the lost exotic. It is the positive representation of Others that serves to displace blunt modes of racial differentiation and to rearticulate them in ways that make Otherness seem natural rather than constructed and imposed. Inasmuch as glorification of "Noble Savages" has not precluded their being colonised, anti-conquest poses itself as a benign paternalism that puts the Other on a pedestal—a gesture of respect that is also an exclusion, an isolation, and a fixing of the Other into a historical space separate from the modern. In this case, anti-conquest manifests as the promotion of things Hawaiian at the same time that Hawaiians themselves are excluded from power. Anti-conquest is, therefore, a part of conquest in no way antithetical, but only masquerading as different by operating backwards.

In the matter of Hawaiian place names, "conquest" is most easily seen in the inscription of Western family names onto Honolulu's streets, occurring primarily in the decades before or soon after annexation by the United States. "Conquest" also extends to those practices which deny authority to Hawaiians. It includes the imposition and fixity of a Western order by Western authorities—the cultural colonisation in which Hawaiians themselves as authorities, and Hawaiian worldview as dominant, are overinscribed by their Western counterparts. The participation of the US government and military in this activity heightens the imperial connection to this process. Pacific Explorations from Cook onwards had a distinct, combined military-and-scientific character: well-armed naval vessels, loaded with scientists, on missions to both gather data and, where possible, to acquire territory. Both processes involved acquisition, and together they helped form what became a dominant worldview and world order, both geographically and politically.

Anti-conquest, however, manifests in the veneration and manipulation of the Hawaiian names within the process whereby they are catalogued, promoted by law, and ordered into American systems of geographical knowledge and land control. This takes place after US annexation, when Hawaiians no longer pose a major political obstacle to American hegemony. Within the resultant texts, there is always an implied respect for the integrity of the Hawaiian names. Yet a re-ordering of place is revealed, not just in how these texts are compiled and produced, but in who did so and for what purpose.

Before embarking on an analysis of Hawaiian place names and colonialism, it is worthwhile to consider *why* anti-conquest occurs, which will shed greater light on *how* it works, and what broader contexts and interactions are involved. Unlike most forms of colonialism, anti-conquest is never a conscious process. Colonizers usually see it as paying genuine respect to the local culture, and

would take offence if one were to confront them by suggesting their “gracious acts” were in fact modes of power. Anti-conquest is, rather, a subconscious act, best understood with the aid of tools from psychoanalysis. The key point to be made here is the role of language in establishing meaning, and how the assertion of meaning—hence order—is a tool of domination.

The (re)naming of places is what Lacan (1977) and Grosz (1990) would call a *phallic* practice whereby *logos* is imposed. Indigenous place names are ignored and place names in the language of the colonizer are instated, suggesting that the indigenous systems do not constitute order, any more than indigenous ways of knowing were said to constitute “science” or “rationality.” Cixous remarks that the feminized Others “always inhabit the place of silence, or at most make it echo with their singing” (1981, 49). Hawaiian place names, and Hawaiian language, have come to play this role and no more. Any effort to bring Hawaiian language and place names into the realm of *logos*—to allow them to have meaning—meets with fear and opposition by the colonizer. Thus anti-conquest silences the Other by allowing her to “talk” without allowing her to “speak”, to control meaning: “she” does not speak, she only chatters, or sings. Her words form a pleasant background noise. Hawaiian place names thus form what Shapiro (1988, 92) calls a code of those who lost the struggle to maintain their practices and have them be the ones that are intelligible—the “Others” whose practices no longer control prevailing understandings on their old turf, but whose discourses remain in a nonpolitical code.

A New World Order

In the case of land, attaching a family name to one’s abode or estate—however egotistical or patriarchal it may seem—still contains a certain geographic sense. It reflects a genuine relationship with the land. By comparison, the honorific attachment of names to land otherwise unconnected with the person involved is “commemorative” (Stewart 1970, xxx) as it establishes a monument, maintains a reminder, usually of someone designated as a “Great Man.”³ Inasmuch as language is used to command and control, to render—in this case—Western military-cum-science as the subject of culture and “natives” (lands and peoples) as voiceless objects, so much more does imposing names of Great Men on the land assert the *name of the father* by which this order is assured.

Waterman’s (1922) study of indigenous naming practices in Puget Sound points to differences in worldview between Western and Indigenous systems. Waterman notes that “it may be stated as a rule that there is a large series of names for small places, with astonishingly few names for the large features of

3 Crocombe (1990, 2) remarks that he is unaware of a single instance of place naming by a woman—Polynesian, *haole*, or otherwise—anywhere in the Pacific.

the region” (Waterman 1922, 178). There are, for example, names for places on the mountain, but not for the mountain itself, much less the mountain range as a whole. Likewise there are names for specific beaches and canoe landings, but not for “bays” or “islands” as entities. In addition, Waterman goes on to say, “there is always the difficulty of telling absolutely and finally which out of a number of explanations is correct ... there is an element of uncertainty which no scientifically minded person would deny” (Waterman 1922, 177).

The differences noted by Waterman reflects a larger aspect of the cultural contrast between the European explorers (and later colonizers) and indigenous islanders. Pre-capitalist island societies were characterized by what Cosgrove (1984) calls an “analogic” context—having a fluidity between culture and environment and an absence of land “ownership” per se. In this context, individuals understand their position of the world in terms of relationships to larger processes. Starting with the British, however, Europeans were experiencing the shift to private property and a resultant “atomistic” context in which individuals understand themselves as isolated entities. Land is commodified, the environment secularized and atomized into “resources,” rather than being understood as related aspects of a holistic system. The difference between these two worldviews is profound, and continues in varying degrees to characterize the struggle between indigenous (primal) peoples and their colonizers, European or otherwise.

Atomization is essential for capitalism: private property and the individual entrepreneur (and consumer) are, within this system, understood as “rational.” In the Hawaiian Islands, the colonial forces (missionaries, merchants, and military) sought to intentionally institutionalize this shift towards capitalism. One major result was the 1848 *Mahele* [partition]: the privatization of land brought on by Western geopolitical pressure and in the service of Western commercial interests. The subsequent rise to power of Western-owned plantations constitutes the de facto colonisation of the Islands, first by wresting control from the indigenous monarchy, and later, after a short period as an independence, achieving annexation to the US. Place names have come to show, among other things, the transformation of worldview that accompanied this shift.

A Hawaiian Worldview

Despite a social class structure rigidly defined by birth and genealogy into chiefs [*ali‘i*] and commoners [*maka‘āinana*], Hawaiian geography is characterised by fluidities. These include geographic mobility (not being legally bound to the land); a fluidity of access to resources and resource areas rather than being limited to discreet plots only; a fluidity between the human, divine, and natural realms; and a fluidity of sound, meaning and a metaphor regarding place names. Chiefliness is rooted in sacredness or divinity [*mana*], verified through

genealogical connections to ancestral deities and origins of the world itself. The highest ranking *ali'i*—with the most divinity—are linked most closely with Hawaiian deities. These deities, simultaneously, are intimately linked with every aspect of the environment, and back to humanity in a circular linkage between gods, nature and human society (Dudley 1990; Johnson 1983; Herman 1988).

The administrative hierarchy (Figure 6.1) was mirrored in spatial order. Hawaiian land divisions ran from the islands' mountainous centres to the sea like slices of a pie. Large sections (*moku*) were divided into finer slices called *ahupua'a* (Figure 6.2). Transecting the land's altitudinal zonation as well as reaching out into the sea, the *ahupua'a* encompassed the full range of natural resources necessary for subsistence. Though all land was "held" by

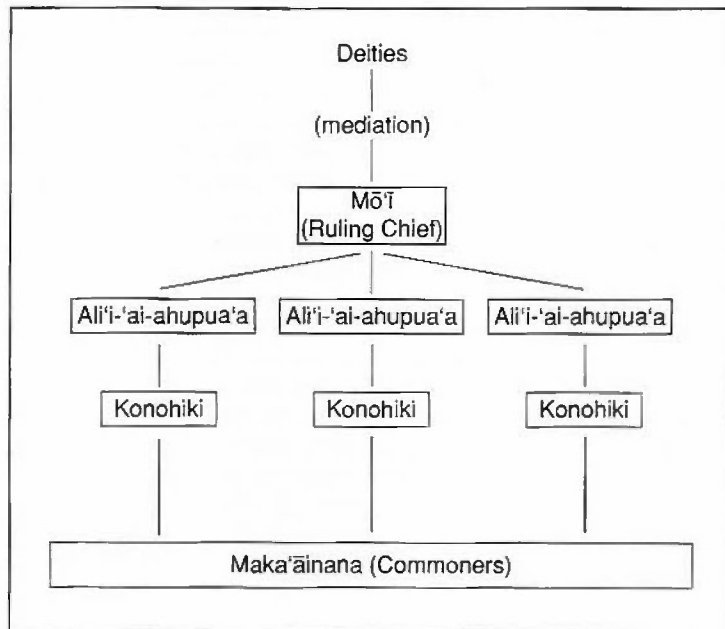


Figure 6.1 Social and political structure of traditional Hawaiian society

Source: after Kirsch (1985).

Note: The ruling chief mediated with the gods on behalf of the people. Lesser chiefs [ali'i] were put in charge of individual *ahupua'a*. They in turn could appoint *konohiki* [administrators] to manage the land and resources. Commoners [maka'āinana] mostly fished or worked the land. The goal of maximum fruitfulness produced checks and balances to discourage both poor farmers/fishermen and poor administrators.

the supreme chief, he did not own it, but served as a "trustee" under the gods Kane and Lono. He placed *moku* under the supervision of other high chiefs, who further subdivided administrative responsibility to lesser, warrior chiefs or supervisors [*konohiki*]. The final allotment was made by these retainers to the common people (Handy and Handy 1972, 41).

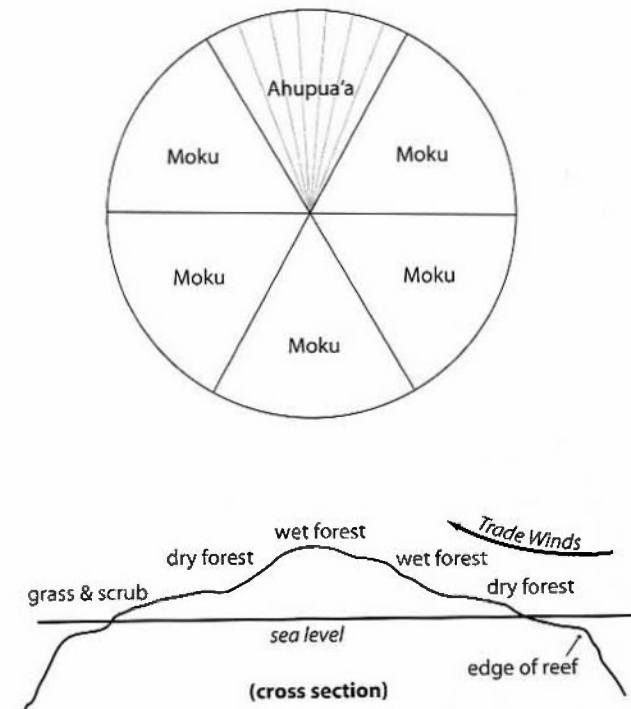


Figure 6.2 Hypothetical island, divided into large districts [moku] and administrative units [ahupua'a]

Source: after Wise (1965)

Note: With mountains roughly in the island centre (ranging as high as 13,000+ feet on the island of Hawai'i), this method of dividing land assured the full range of environmental resources was available in each *ahupua'a*. The Hawaiian word for "politics" is *kālai'āina*, or "land carving."

“Trusteeship” over the land ranged upwards from the cultivators themselves, to their local chief or supervisor, to yet higher chiefs and finally to the gods themselves. The products of the land likewise filtered upwards through the social-administrative hierarchy through taxation. Yet cutting across this vertical organization of power was a horizontal system of common access to resources. In part this formed a second economy wherein produce was exchanged within the extended family residing in an *ahupua'a*. The fruits of fishermen were exchanged with those of the planters. But most importantly, people within an *ahupua'a* had gathering rights to all the necessary resources within that land division, from the waterfront into the mountains. Thus for any family, land use was spread out to include not just individual holdings, which themselves might be spatially disconnected, but grass areas for thatch, forest areas for timber and medicinal herbs, beach access, and other resource areas.

Within the complex, diverse, and variable materials from which Hawaiian world-views may be drawn (Dudley 1986, 71), it is possible to identify an overall analogic character that differs critically from a generalized modern worldview. Three different aspects of this analogic relationship include Hawaiian “natural science” as elaborated in the *Kumulipo*, a Hawaiian creation chant; the kinship relationship between the land and people, outlined in a subportion of the *Kumulipo*; and a “spiritual ecology” wherein energies flow across the boundary between the manifest and unmanifest worlds.

The *Kumulipo*, a chant of 2,077 lines believed to have been composed around 1700 CE (Beckwith 1970, 310–11) presents the evolution of life in a natural sequence not unlike Darwinian evolution and modern natural science. Species emerge in pairs from the primordial ooze, increasing in complexity from the smallest visible organism, the coral polyp. Johnson (1981, i) states that “when life appears in the *Kumulipo*, it is the product of active, *natural* forces” though “Supernatural forces are not excluded from that process.” With each new set of lifeforms, “*akua* enters in.” The term *akua*, used elsewhere as the general term for “gods,” has been interpreted here as meaning “active consciousness” (Dudley 1990; Herman 1988). One might say that increasingly complex species are increasingly intelligent and intuitive, hence increasingly godlike. In this interpretation, beings differ quantitatively, but not qualitatively, in their degree of *akua*. At the same time, the universe is pervaded by *mana*, a living force that infuses all things and that, like its inanimate counterpart electricity, manifests more strongly in persons, places, and things that are more “godlike” (better conductors, in the electrical metaphor). And like electricity, this spiritual energy can be stored, and channelled or transferred. The Hawaiian word for “prayer”, *ho'omanamana*, literally means “to cause [to move] *mana*.” So this energy pervades—hence unites—all things, and circulates among them.

The story of Wakea and Papa, the Sky and the Level Earth, is a sub-plot within the *Kumulipo*. In this oft-repeated story, these two deities united to produce some of the Hawaiian Islands, as well as a beautiful daughter. Within the story, Wakea has an affair with the daughter, producing first a stillborn

foetus that becomes the first taro plant (the staple food of Hawaiians), then producing a child that is the first human being. Later, Wakea and Papa come together again and produce the remaining islands. This story demonstrates the *kinship relationship* between the gods, the islands, the taro plant, and human beings. All are related—the land, the people, the gods, and the taro—in a kinship bond that is primary to Hawaiian environmental understanding and comparable to other worldviews held by primal peoples elsewhere.

Finally, this worldview is integrated through the concept of *kinolau* (“many bodies”). This is the manifestation of deities as natural phenomena—plants, weather, animals. These manifestations, like the bread and wine of Holy Communion in some Christian churches, do not merely represent the deity, but are in fact the physical presence of the deity. High Gods (*akua*, again) relate to human society through smaller, more accessible versions of themselves (*'aumakua*, or familiar spirits), and both independently can manifest as *kinolau* (Figure 6.3, left side). At the same time, through the transference of *mana*, deceased ancestors can be elevated to the level of familiar spirits (*'aumakua*), who in turn can manifest back into nature through *kinolau* or take a particular physical form (Figure 6.3, right side). Gods become nature, and humans become demigods, which in turn become nature. The circle between divinity, humanity, and nature is complete, and the boundaries among them permeable (Johnson 1987; Kamakau 1964).

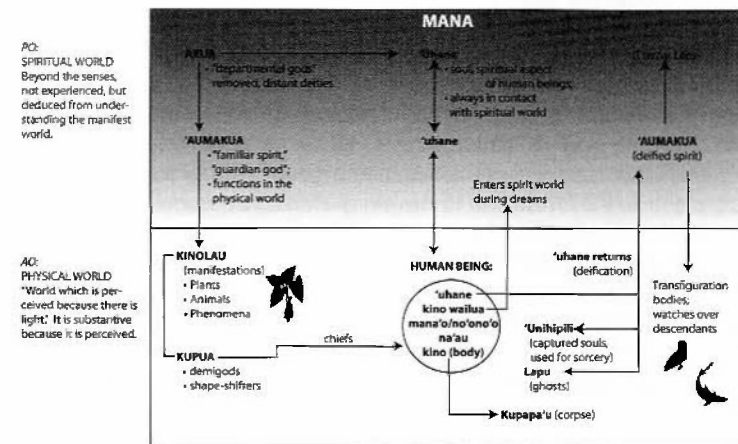


Figure 6.3 Hawaiian “spiritual ecology,” showing network of relationship between the material world and the spiritual world in Hawaiian cosmology

Source: designed by Rubellite Kawena Johnson.

Place names embody and, to a degree, codify this fluidity between society, nature, and the spiritual world. There are two other ways in which words and names have a greater fluidity in Hawaiian geographical knowledge, and both of these are linked to the non-literate nature of the language and culture. The first is in the plurality of meanings for (particularly common) words. Since words exist only in the context of the moment when they are spoken, their meaning derives from that context. Thus there is what literate Anglophone culture considers a paucity of words. “Wai,” meaning “fresh water,” is also used for any liquid other than sea water, including bodily fluids. Since one is present when the word is spoken, one knows what the referent is. Gestures, vocal inflections, and facial expressions also contribute to the meaning. Thus what appears on paper to be a simple language is actually much more subtle and complex. Each word can be used for many different shades of meaning that are clear only in the context of speech. But these contexts do not translate into writing, which poses a text abstracted from its real-life situation. On the other hand, oral language can be weak in specific terms for abstract concepts that have no real-world context: a circle drawn on a piece of paper, was identified variously by non-literate individuals as a “rock” or a “basket”—it had to *be something* (Ong 1982).⁴

Second, many different names, though often quite similar in sound, might apply to a single place. Nogelmeier’s (1985) study of the crater known commonly as “Punchbowl” produced a list of alternative, similar-sounding Hawaiian names for this one geographic feature, and despite his attempt to find the “most appropriate name,” the fact remains that *all* of them were valid. Not fixed in print, any of a number of similar-sounding names—all with different meanings—would suffice.

Hawaiian place names further demonstrate the intimate relationship between people and the environment. Pukui et al. (1974, x) remark that Hawaiians place names include “canoe landings, fishing stations in the sea, resting places in the forest, and the tiniest spots where miraculous or interesting events are believed to have taken place.” Kimura (1983, 178) and Kanahale (1986, 175–6) emphasize the evocative power of place names and the many roles they play in Hawaiian culture.

Place names intertwined with the culture not just as locational signs, but as poetry and humour. Luomala (1964), Pukui et al. (1974, 266–77), Handy and Handy (1972, 42–3), Kimura (1983) and Pi‘ianāi‘a (n.d.) discuss the richness of

4 A classic example of this is the missionaries’ effort to translate the word “adultery” into Hawaiian. Hawaiian language has no term for the abstract concept “adultery,” but has numerous terms for specific “adulterous” activities. Mr Andrews wrote that “In translating the seventh commandment, it was found they had about twenty ways of committing adultery, and of course as many specific names; and to select any one of them would be to forbid the crime in that one form and tacitly permit it in all the other cases” (*Missionary Herald* [*MH*], October 1836, 390–91).

place names in chants, songs, poems, and proverbs, and as mnemonic devices in genealogies. The versatility in the use of place names is especially found in the practice of *kaona*, or “hidden meanings,” in the various forms of Hawaiian oral literature. Most Hawaiian poetry or song is composed of several layers of meaning, from the most obvious or literal, to sexual or romantic, to *kapu* or sacred subjects. Using *kaona* allows one to talk about certain people or subjects without addressing them directly, and as such “presupposes a knowledge of place, history, and personal relationships” (Pi‘ianāi‘a n.d., 8).⁵

Pukui, Elbert, and Mo‘okini (1975, 258) break down the words used in Hawaiian place names as shown in Table 6.1. Aside from geographic terms such as words for water, hill, point, mountain, and so forth, there are a surprising number of plant names. Pukui et al. suggest that this can be construed as indicating agriculture as one of the primary interests of the early Hawaiians (Pukui et al. 1975, 260–61). Names of geographic entities, plants, animals, legendary supernaturals, and religious terms (implicit and explicit) reflect the “animist” nature of Hawaiian culture. People’s names are rarely used. Pukui et al. have said that this reflects a Hawaiian perception of human beings as fleeting, transient. While there are stories of places being named for ancestors,⁶ Hawaiians generally did not use people’s names as place names, and cases in which they do so suggest a direct relationship with the land, rather than an honorific attachment of a label.

The Transformation

Following Cook’s 1778 “discovery” of the islands, China-bound fur traders began stopping here as early as 1784. The location of this archipelago as the only reprovisioning point in the North Pacific ensured that all traders and explorers travelling between North America and East Asia (including Russia) stopped here. Local chiefs made use of trade with these ships to gain goods, weapons, and even military advisors to aid them in their internecine warfare. With the aid of Englishman John Young, Kamehameha succeeding in conquering all islands except Kaua‘i, which he gained by treaty in 1807, thus uniting all the islands, for the first time, into what was now the Kingdom of Hawai‘i.

Though Kamehameha himself remained true to his Hawaiian ways, the encroaching mercantilist economy, with its virtually instantaneous creation of

5 See Kimura (1983) for an excellent discussion of the role of language in Hawaiian culture.

6 See Kamakau (1976, 7). One Hawaiian tradition holds that Hawai‘i-Loa, discoverer of the islands, named the largest island “Hawai‘i” after himself and the others after his children, as well as naming various land divisions after the eight navigators who sailed with him (Beckwith 1970, 364).

Table 6.1 Sources of Hawaiian place name words, by category

Category	Number
Geographical features	831
Inanimate nature	265
Words of size	203
Material culture	170
Plants and plant life	153
Actions	124
Other qualities (except colours)	115
Numbers and words of quantity	71
Colours	69
Birds	68
Body parts	65
Legendary supernaturals	53
People	44
Sea life	32
Mammals	23
Locatives	10

Source: after Pukui, Elbert and Mo'okini (1975, 258).

supply and demand, set the groundwork for the Islands' entrance into a ancient world capitalist order (Ralston 1984, 25–6). Large-scale exploitation of the environment for profit began with the sandalwood trade, 1810–1830, which opened the Islands to international commerce. The socio-political changes began with the 1819 abolition of the *kapu* system, a combined religious and legal code which legitimised chiefly power as sacred. The previous consumption of goods and labour for religious concerns was now available for use by the *ali'i* in other activities, especially foreign trade. American Protestant missionaries arriving in 1820 encouraged social, cultural, and political forms conducive to capitalism, leading to the establishment in 1840 of a constitutional monarchy, and the redivision of lands—the 1848 *Mahele*.⁷

The result was that the previously fluid land-tenure system became fragmented into a fixed grid of privatized parcels. The structure of the *ahupua'a*, in which all had gathering rights in different resource zones, was dismantled. Commoners had to claim the land they used in order to maintain rights to it. Yet surveying techniques at the time were crude, and the Hawaiian

⁷ See Kame'elehiwa (1992) for an important discussion on the causes of the *Mahele*.

sense of boundaries and markers were not “precise” in a Western sense. The result was disastrous. Many people received no land at all, and some who gained freehold tenure to cultivated plots lost former communal rights to grazing land or collecting areas (Ralston 1984, 31). Subsistence farming became difficult if not impossible. Wise (1965, 87–8) explains that Hawaiians were accustomed for generations to communal rights land and sea, and could not imagine life on another basis.

The *value* of land was thereby transformed. Plots could now be bought or sold, with the result that the Hawaiian people, lacking capital, were gradually dispossessed from their land. By the mid-1840s, taxes had to be paid in cash, forcing people from remote areas to seek employment in the port towns to earn money (Ralston 1984, 31). *Kuleana* (land claims by commoners) might be rented to a large plantation, only to have them disappear under a transformed landscape: where all the familiar landmarks had been, an expanse of rice or sugar cane would stretch out. “Ditches had been filled in, dikes had been levelled off, hedges had been cut down” (Wise 1965, 90).

The transformation of landholding and the gradual transference of land from Hawaiians to foreign plantation owners was accompanied by the gradual infiltration of foreigners into the Hawaiian Government, and a steady Westernizing of the governmental form. Over the course of the nineteenth century, plantations became the new powers in the Islands: the old system of *ali'i* had been replaced by a new ruling class of foreigners that, like the old, maintained control over most of the land and labour in the Islands (Herman 1996). These businessmen became so powerful that moves on the part of the Hawaiian monarch to curb them were met with by arms in the 1893 overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani. The new Republic of Hawaii became, with annexation in 1898, the Territory of Hawaii. This progression, culminating in statehood in 1959, was accompanied by the near-complete transformation of land and the built environment. After 1898, with the Territory under control of the US federal government and its the strategic significance clearly understood, the Islands became a support system for US military personnel and operations. Save the sugar industry, federal spending became the largest source of income for the Islands. The combined resources of the local and federal government, US military and even academic Geography (Baldwin 1908; Barnes n.d.; Bryan 1915; Coulter and Serrao 1932; Freeman 1927; Guillemard 1908; Jarrett 1930; Jones 1938), came down on the Islands to lay bare the terrain, scrutinize it, map and chart it, and lock it thoroughly into the grid of geographic knowledge and control.

Names of the Fathers

The stop-and-start transformation of the Islands since Cook's visit has been pushed strongly by various *haole* forces, from early explorers and traders to

missionaries-turned-plantation owners. As stated above, this transformation was accompanied by a steady increase of Westerners holding government positions. Similarly, the plantation industry grew and spread its tentacles to every major enterprise in the Islands: banking and finance, utilities, transportation, and more. These “captains of industry” and these legislators—often the same people—are commemorated in Honolulu’s streets.⁸

This began with John Young, a British seaman recruited by Kamehameha as a military and cultural adviser, decades before there even were any “streets.” Under the first constitutional monarchy in 1840, the House of Nobles consisted of traditional *aliʻi* plus John Young (Young Street, Olohana Street—a nickname of his, from “all hands”).⁹ Eleven years later in 1851, Young was still there, plus three other haoles: Armstrong, Judd, and Wyllic (Armstrong Street, Judd Street, Judd Hillside, Wyllic Street). New Western names a decade later that now serve as street names include Bishop, McCully, Dowsett, Chamberlayne, and Green. By 1880, over half the House of Nobles was foreigners, including Cleghorn, Castle, Dominis, Isenberg, Martin, Mott-Smith, and Wilder—all of whom have at least one street to their names. By 1890, shortly before the overthrow of the monarchy, 23 out of 25 nobles were of foreign ancestry, as were 24 of 33 representatives and all eight ministers. Many Honolulu street names are found on these lists. Not only legislators, but other *haoles* Fathers are “honoured” with street names. This bespeaks the power and importance ascribed their roles: four discoverers and early explorers, 11 missionaries, six business leaders and philanthropists, five political leaders, and six military figures (Pukui et al. 1975, 263). A cluster of streets is named for Roman Catholic bishops.¹⁰

This was a practice brought to the Islands from outside, particularly from the United States from whence most of these men came, and where it was not uncommon for entire towns to be named for their founding fathers. Streets themselves are a result of Western influence in the Islands, arising after 1820 and expanding markedly after the 1898 annexation. They mark a second phase of naming, a second overlay of toponyms that correspond with the “modern” period in the Islands. Though Hawaiian place names, as stated earlier, show

8 The extensive intermarriage of Hawaiian women with *haoles* men produced a population of Hawaiians without Hawaiian family names but who nonetheless retain identity as Hawaiians. As some of these were prominent citizens, the increasing paucity of Hawaiian names in the rosters, and their invisibility in the “Blue Book” (discussed below), is not a thoroughly reliable indicator. But this loss of Hawaiian family names is another aspect of colonization and the Name of the Father.

9 Data for this section were taken from the rosters of the legislatures compiled by Lydecker (1918).

10 Another is named for ships of the Matson company. Pensacola Street is named for a US warship. Pukui et al. (1974, 263–4) have given a broader analysis of English names of streets and buildings, as well as persons (Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian) for whom “places” have been named.

little emphasis on family names, street names tell a different story. Yet among Hawaiians’ names used as street names, only a few are obvious: Kamehameha Avenue (named after the king), Kaʻahumanu Street (his favourite wife), Kinaʻu Street (his daughter); Kalākaua Avenue and Liliʻuokalani Street (the last two monarchs), and two for Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalanianaʻole (Kūhiō Street, Kalanianaʻole Highway). While this too shows a commemorating of “fathers,” it is by this time the transplantation of a Western practice onto Hawaiian culture and applied to a Western landscape form, much as the monarchs took on the regalia of their European counterparts.

More important, however, are the not-so-obvious Hawaiian names. The Armitage street map of 1949 lists and identifies 258 *haoles* family names, but only 17 street names are identified on this map as Hawaiian family names, along with about 15 Portuguese, four Chinese, and two Japanese. Fifteen names on this list are Hawaiianized versions of *haoles* names.¹¹ Yet research by Budnick and Wise (1989, 3) identifies 171 streets named for Hawaiian people—more than 120 named for original land awardees or grantees from the *Mahele*.¹² In other words, the Hawaiian names, from the *haoles* point of view, had ceased to be Names of the Father—had ceased to have logos. This loss of subjectivity accompanied the transfer of land and power from under the Hawaiians, the loss of Hawaiian cultural context, and the abandonment of Hawaiian language during the Territorial period. Largely unintelligible to Hawaiians as well as non-Hawaiians, these names became words only, markers without reference.

The transplantation of Western family names onto the urban landscape thus becomes a record of the Western transformation of the Islands. More than merely “humanizing the landscape,” these street names participate in the transforming of Hawaiian space into Western space, denoting—as did many travel texts of the time—these Western men as those who brought the Islands out of “barbarism” and fashioned them in their own image. It is a song sung repeatedly. Bates (1854, 136) was first to state that “The Honolulu of today is the creation of the foreigner, the result of his handywork.” Such sentiments were echoed by Nordhoff (1874), Musick (1897), Davis and Armitage (1941) and even Michener (1963).

11 Pukui et al. (1974, 265) give the following breakdown of place names (including streets and buildings) of foreign, non-English origin: Portuguese (25); French, Belgian French, and Hawaiianised French (19); Chinese, Hawaiianised Chinese, and Portuguese Chinese (12); Japanese (12); German (4); Russian (2); and Spanish (1). There is also a smattering of other imported names.

12 Otherwise, their breakdown of Hawaiian street names in Honolulu reveals the same connection with nature discussed earlier: 407 for geographic and topographic locations (e.g., land sections, land divisions, mountains, valleys, streams, etc.); 189 for flora; 157 for stars, planets and galaxies; 92 for fish and birds; 27 for mythological gods and goddesses; and 23 for winds and rain (Budnick and Wise 1989, 3).

A layer of Western family names was imposed during the Hawaiian Kingdom, and served as one additional means by which the resident foreigners asserted their control over a territory not their own, but of which they desperately sought to gain control. This point is demonstrated by the end of this practice and the adoption of Hawaiian words as street names following annexation to the US. The conquest had been achieved at last. Now the methods of anti-conquest were needed to cover the tracks by alleging to respect and honour Hawaiian culture.

A Paper Trail

While existing Hawaiian place names were not overlaid or eradicated by a new code, annexation heralded their subjugation to the Western geographic grid of knowledge. This took place through the compilation of place name texts after annexation. A reading of these texts and their stated intentions, methods, and viewpoints, illuminates the imposition of logos. First, there is a focus on establishing authority, of declaring what is “officially” the name of a given place. Second, this authority comes from a non-Hawaiian (and mostly, from non Hawaiian-speakers) and is placed into the hands of some official (US or state) government agency. The lack of reference to Hawaiians themselves suggests that the very idea of a “Hawaiian” authority is anathema. Third, these Hawaiian names lose their cultural context and often their meaning in the process of their transposition into the authorized texts. Finally, the fluidity associated with Hawaiian names is lost by establishing an official, unambiguous designation.

From the very first Western text on Hawaiian place names—US Coast and Geodetic Survey (Treasury Department): “Hawaiian Place names,” compiled by W.D. Alexander (1903)—the emphasis is on uniformity, fixity, and certainty. It is important for the West to *know*, for *truth* to be clarified and certified. The need to eliminate ambiguity and fix order into writing is explained in the preface, which states that this study was done because “the importance of securing uniformity in geographic nomenclature in all portions of the territory of the United States at the earliest possible date [was] being constantly felt in this office ...” (Alexander 1903, preface). A brief biographical sketch of Professor Alexander, who compiled the text, is “inserted to show his peculiar fitness for this task, and it is believed that he is the most reliable living authority on the subject.” Granting *Professor* Alexander, a non-Hawaiian, status as the “most reliable living authority” posits the supremacy of Western knowledge. Hawaiians are placed outside the discourse of knowledge regarding their own culture. The “results” of Dr Alexander’s study then become property of the US Treasury Department, part of the larger “authorisation” of the new code.

“Hawaiian Place Names” by the Assistant Chief of Staff for Military Intelligence, Headquarters Hawaiian Department (Hayes 1929), is aimed at

“attaining some degree of uniformity in the pronunciation” of Hawaiian place names. This list includes meanings of the names, though “inasmuch as the meanings are included only as a means of arousing interest in pronunciation, it is not believed necessary to include all the possible meanings of the various words.” Hayes hopes that “this publication will ... lead to contact between groups of army personnel interested in the subject and authorities of the Hawaiian language,” which might further improve pronunciation. But it is dubious that these “authorities of the Hawaiian language” are Hawaiians themselves. The text is not concerned with contact between the military and native speakers. With selected meanings provided for curiosity only, the authority of meaning inherent in the place names is itself unimportant. Just pronounce them. Similarly, Jones and Addleman (1937, v) state of their dictionary that it “is in no way a scholarly treatise. It was not intended to be. The translated meaning of many of the place names will be questioned by Hawaiian scholars; they may even be amused” The Hawaiian scholar (a *haole*) might be offended or amused, but how would a native Hawaiian react? They remain silent, invisible, outside of knowledge.

A different point comes from “A Gazetteer of the Territory of Hawaii,” compiled by John Wesley Coulter (1935), PhD, of the University of Hawaii: that once a name is fixed on some “official source,” that source becomes the new authority. Coulter’s sources are maps¹³ produced by US government agencies: the United States Geological Survey, the Territorial Survey, the survey of O’ahu by the United States Army, and the re-survey of O’ahu by the United States Geological Survey. Coulter states, “The names are listed exactly as they are spelled on the quadrangles and maps. No decisions have been made as to whether the names are correct” (Coulter 1935, 7–10). Yet correct or not, Coulter has produced a new authoritative directory. The identical procedure is employed in *Gazetteer (No. 4): Hawaiian Islands*, published by the Hydrographic office, United States Navy Department (1944). Data was compiled from the US Coast and Geodetic Survey (Department of Commerce), and “names were transcribed exactly as they appear on the source charts and maps” (Hydrographic Office 1944, iii).

Coulter’s gazetteer demonstrates an active manipulation and assertion of authority, and the consequent pruning of the analogic Hawaiian landscape into a privatized, atomistic Western one. Echoing Waterman’s difficulties in Puget Sound, Coulter (1935, 10) explains that

13 Harley (1988, 278) argues mapping reifies the conceptions of those who produce the maps and the relations of power which they represent. Though this study does not attempt a deconstructive history of cartography of Hawai'i, I affirm that control of naming is power, and mapping appropriates naming. See Fitzpatrick (1986) regarding the mapping of Hawai'i.

The names of many geographical features in the islands known to the Hawaiians are not given in the gazetteer. There are in the office of the Surveyor of the Territory maps of parts of the Hawaiian island with *unimportant features identified by name*. The Hawaiians named outstanding cliffs, rocks, small streams and gulches, and some *trivial* land marks. Such names were thought *not to be of enough importance* to include in the work. Mr A.O. Burkland, during his supervision of the United States Geological Survey ... chose the more important features to be named on the topographic sheets and the most authentic names. (Emphasis added)

A non-Hawaiian, US government official, through his selection of “importance” and “authenticity” weakens the cultural interface with the environment that Hawaiian place names served, and re-casts them into Western geographic discourse.

The paternalistic condescension towards Hawaiian people suggested here and characteristic during the Territorial period is important to understanding the disembodiment of Hawaiians from knowledge. Still another place names text exemplifies this attitude. T. Blake Clark, in an article on Honolulu’s streets (1938, 5), painted the following picture of Hawaiians [*kanaka*]:

Those kanakas were as busy as devils, pulling up fences, recklessly tearing down or setting matches to “homes” and “business houses” in the great new project of straightening Honolulu’s streets. Like the cartoon firemen of today who rush into a man’s house with axe drawn and leave his fine furniture a mangled wreck, these early Hawaiians took more delight in the destructive than in the constructive changes which they were busy making.

The “cartoon” depiction of the Hawaiians¹⁴ reinforces the idea that Honolulu was built by and for Westerners, who constitute the progressive, productive members of society—in fact, who *are* the society. Clark places Hawaiians outside “society” again when he states that in one area of Honolulu, “there were few if any residences other than the grass houses of the Hawaiians”—a Hawaiian house apparently not qualifying as a residence (Clark 1938, 10). The social directory (“Blue Book”) of that time is the clearest statement of “society” as *haole*. In this directory (Zillgitt and Snowden 1933), it is nearly impossible to locate a Hawaiian name amongst some 200 pages (see fn 17).

Clark describes the transformation of Honolulu from a dusty, disorganised assortment of structures to an organised urban centre with an orderly street

14 A different representational trope regarding Hawaiians during the Territorial period is a sort of recycled noble savagery, the “proud Hawaiian,” described in very glowing terms (see, for example, Schnack 1915). But this picture invariably designates “ancient” Hawaiians, a noble past, a “they” not connected to Hawaiians of the present. This is part of the anti-conquest characteristic of the post-annexation period.

system. Pointing out that it had become practice to use Hawaiian words for street names,¹⁵ he himself provides “good arguments against this practice:” Hawaiian names “sound alike” and “are often difficult to pronounce.” Clark goes so far as to suggest using a simple numerically coded grid, such as that used in the Kaimukī section of Honolulu: “It would be simpler to extend such a uniform method of naming.” Aside from this overt call for rectilinear order, which dates back to an 1832 missionary geography textbook,¹⁶ Clark is again suggesting that Hawai‘i is a place for English-speaking Americans, and that it is they who should encode this landscape.

The attempts to eschew ambiguity and authorize meaning can be almost comic. *Decisions on Names in Hawaii: Cumulative Decision List No. 5403*, by the United States Department of the Interior’s Board on Geographic Names (US Board 1945), gives the reader the following instructions: “The underscored names are official for United States Government use. Where part of a decision is underscored, the use of the nonunderscored part is optional. Unapproved variant names and spellings ... are listed following the word ‘Not’ ... Former decisions no longer in force are listed without underscoring and marked ‘Vacated’” (1954, 1).¹⁷ Despite the attempt to establish a uniform code, the authors are clearly struggling with the variety and ambiguity characteristic of Hawaiian place names. The text eludes the question of Hawaiian authority altogether. It is a list of “decisions” on place names, determining what is “official” for government use. Whose decisions these are we do not know, except that it comes from the official source, the US DOI’s Board on Geographic Names, and certifies what is “official” within the context of the US government.

Inasmuch as this insistence on fixed spellings and meanings is a component of print culture, the next technological-linguistic shift demands even further reduction of ambiguity. A Geographic Information Systems (GIS) print-out of Hawaiian place names and their locations in grid coordinates achieves this

15 First appointed in 1915, the seven-member Planning Commission (which, it seems, had the real power in naming streets) consisted of six *haoles* plus Prince Kūhiō Kalaniana‘ōle.

16 Woodbrige (1832). This geography [*hō‘ike homua*] textbook was the first full length schoolbook produced by the Protestant mission, and can be seen as an attempt to rewrite the world into Euro-American capitalist terms for the young Hawaiian royalty (Daws 1968). It includes praise for the sensibility of the rectilinear organization of streets found in some American urban centres.

17 In 1965, Governor John A. Burns established the Hawaii State Board on Geographic Names in the Department of Planning and Economic Development. Place names as artifacts of Hawaiian environmental perception thus went into the hands of an organization with very different plans for the land. In 1968 the Board began a series of reports on “approved names.” This function—and the Board—were transferred into the Department of Land and Natural Resources, where a new series of approved-name announcements began.

first by providing only one “approved” name, and second by the elimination of diacritical marks: use of the macron over long vowels (e.g., ē) and glottal stop (‘) which have arisen to flesh out the reductionist spelling of Hawaiian language produced by the missionaries.¹⁸ These marks are now generally considered integral to Hawaiian language, and new street signs are required to have them. But such marks are not compatible with GIS. Nor is any ambiguity.

None of the above texts was authored or authorized by a native Hawaiian. Until Pukui et al.’s (1966) work, the authority to decide what is true, correct, and important laid in the hands of non Hawaiians, or at the very least, non native-speakers. The result is a non-Hawaiian sense of place, both within these texts, and through them, in the minds of those who rely on these texts as authoritative sources on Hawaiian place names.

The Language of Anti-Conquest

As Clark mentions, it became custom during the Territorial period to name streets with Hawaiian words.¹⁹ This practice must be understood in the broader context of the political history of Hawaiian language. Literacy, introduced by the missionaries, had already weakened Hawaiian environmental discourse by creating more fixed meanings, by separating knowledge from direct experience, and by reducing the language into a literary by-product of its translation into English. But the final blow came with the replacement of Hawaiian altogether with English as the language of the Islands. The journal of Russian explorer Lisiansky foreshadowed this shift, presenting a vocabulary of Hawaiian words with the remark that “It is given more for curiosity than use, as there are several Europeans there, who may serve as interpreters; and, from the increasing civilization of the natives, the English language becomes better known to them every day” (Lisiansky 1814, 137).

By the mid-19th century, pro-annexationist discourse railed against the “almost universal rejection of the English language in the public schools, and the universal use of the Hawaiian in all clerical instruction of a public and

18 The glottal stop, or *okina* (‘), is technically a diphthong: it constitutes a distinct sound whose inclusion or deletion can change the meaning of a word entirely. As such, it is now considered a *letter* in the Hawaiian alphabet. The macron (–), on the other hand, is more a guide to emphasis than a particular sound, but nonetheless can signify differences between words.

19 Ordinance 79-54 (City and County of Honolulu 1979) which made this practice official policy, states that “Street names selected shall consist of Hawaiian names, words, or phrases and shall be selected with a view to the appropriateness of the name to historic, cultural, scenic and topographical features of the area.” Property owners along a street may petition for a change of name, but approval rests with the Director of Land Utilization.

private nature,” and concluded that “the English language is the best medium, not only of commerce, but of civilization” (Bates 1854, 422–3).²⁰ With the influx of Westerners, a “universalizing” tongue such as English became “necessary” to cope with the internationalization of the Islands. The extent of this pressure to replace Hawaiian as the official language of the Kingdom is reflected in the *Penal Code of 1869*, Chapter XC, which states “Whenever there shall be found to exist any radical and irreconcilable difference between the English and Hawaiian version of any of the laws of the Kingdom ... the English version shall be held binding.” The same law was enacted by the Republic in their 1897 Penal Code.

With the impending death of Hawaiian sovereignty just prior to annexation, the alleged near-death of the Hawaiian language was seen as a positive indicator of progress by American travel writers: “The English language is almost universally taught” Musick wrote. “I was informed that there are but three Hawaiian schools now on the islands. The Hawaiian language, always narrow, is dying, and must in time yield to some more universal tongue” (Musick 1897, 442–7). Whitney was even more positive about the change: “There has always been manifest a native disposition to acquire familiarity with the English language” he wrote, stating that “at the wish of the natives themselves the language of the islands is English” (Whitney 1899, 248).

These remarks belie the health of Hawaiian language at the time of annexation. True, Kamehameha V had encouraged the teaching of English in Hawaiian schools. But there were nonetheless more than a hundred Hawaiian-language newspapers in print at the end of the 19th century. Hawaiians constituted one of the most, if not *the* most, literate populations of its time—in its own language (Kimura 1983, 189). Yet by this time, language also reflected class and power: Hawaiian was the language of low-order government service and the courts, low-order internal business, working-class jobs, and the subsistence life of the country districts; while English was the language of the high-paying, upper administration jobs and big business (Kimura 1983, 193).

It was the Republican government, after the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, that brought an end to the widespread use of Hawaiian language. In the *Hawaii Session Laws of 1896* (Act 57, Section 30), the Department of Public Instruction is ordered to make “The English language ... the medium and basis of instruction in all public and private schools” (though with provision for teaching another language, but not as the language of instruction), specifying further that “Any schools that shall not conform ... shall not be recognized by the Department.”

20 Originally all texts for teaching Hawaiians were in Hawaiian language. Missionaries felt that access to English language would also provide access to all the vices and immorality of Western culture. Conversely, they tried to keep their own children from learning Hawaiian, for exactly the same reason—that it would give them access to all the vices and immorality of a “heathen” culture.

Within two years after formal annexation, the last vestiges of institutional support for the Hawaiian language ended under the new American government.²¹ The number of schools taught in Hawaiian dwindled to zero for lack of funding. For decades after the 1896 law, speaking Hawaiian was strictly forbidden anywhere on the school grounds, and physical punishment was often used on those who spoke it. In that psychological climate, especially during the WWII years and the drive to statehood, Hawaiians eager to prove their worth as equal citizens with the *haole* (and under social pressure to do so) abandoned the language that made them stand out as different. In that English-speaking, more racially loaded *American* environment, Hawaiian language had no value, and bad English was even worse.²² To speak Hawaiian was to be a backward, ignorant person. Hawaiian language lingered only in certain pockets, such as particular families, hula schools, churches, and on the isolated island of Ni'ihau. Despite some grassroots efforts to perpetuate the language, by the 1980s the number of native speakers was estimated at less than two thousand.

This is the broader context of cultural colonization: the forcing of Hawaiian language to the brink of extinction. The decision to use Hawaiian words to name streets during the Territorial period, while at the same time closing the Hawaiian-language schools, is distinctly anti-conquest: it offers up a token of cultural respect at the same time that linguistic and cultural purging was being enacted. The Hawaiian language, like Hawaiian rule, was a thing of the past. Hawaiian place names became a commodity intended to develop a unique sense of place for the Islands, to differentiate them symbolically from the unifying Mainland cultural economy, and to create a local identity for the predominantly non-Hawaiian population. That virtually no one understands the place names attests to their anti-conquest positioning: without meaning, unable to speak. Their translated meanings (most of them often wrong) are presented, in texts such as the Armitage map, to portray a quaintness to the modern "Hawaiian" landscape.

21 Foreign language schools run by Asian (especially Japanese) immigrants to teach their children their ancestral languages became the main target of the Territorial government, which saw these schools as "if not distinctly anti-American ... certainly un-American" (*Farrington vs. Tokushige* 1926, 4). In the early 1920s laws were enacted to regulate these schools, and aimed to see that "the Americanism of the students shall be promoted" (Department of Public Instruction 1922). Strict licensing and permits were required for schools and teachers, hours of instruction limited, and only texts issued by the Department of Public Education were to be used.

22 The rise of *pidgin*, or Hawaiian Creole English, from the plantation culture is itself a topic worthy of more discussion than is possible here. Local and mainland *haole* writers saw it as "bad English." Calling it "'da kine' plague," Michener (1963, 70–71) remarked that it is a "barbarous *lingua franca* derived from bad English, Hawaiian, Chinese, Portuguese and Japanese, all delivered in an incredible sing-song ... it remains a damnable burden."

Not only county planners, but churches and developers have coined new Hawaiian place names.²³ Many such names, such as *Lanikai* [sea heaven]—a 1924 subdivision that should have been named *Kailani* [heavenly sea]—are inappropriately constructed by non-Hawaiian-speakers. At the same time, places charging admission prefer English names (Paradise Park, Polynesian Cultural Center), to hook into the minds of tourists who are already overwhelmed with all the "foreign" Hawaiian toponymy (Pukui et al. 1974, 243). Some popularized English names for Hawaiian places aim to capture the lost sense of the exotic, but do so in a way that has nothing to do with Hawaiian culture. "Sacred Falls" on O'ahu and "Seven Sacred Pools" in Hana, Maui are popular tourist sites where the unwary mainlander may seek to encounter a spiritual experience. But the Hawaiian names tell a different story: "Sacred Falls" is *Ka-liu-wa'a*, a name that likens the waterfall's appearance to a leak in the side of a canoe. The body of water known as Seven Sacred Pools is named *Ohe'o* (its meaning unknown), and was "sacred" only to the extent that it was *kapu* for menstruating women to bath in it.

The flood of Mainland Americans moving to the Islands since the late 1960s has resulted in the growth of subdivisions, the streets of which, by law, had to have Hawaiian names. Pukui et al. (1974) observe that "on the island of Hawai'i, streets in areas that are for sale along the Kona Coast have names tailored to the convenience of newly arrived visitors or of persons who have never been to Hawaii and are unable to master Hawaiian words ... Rarely is an effort made to search in *Indices of Awards* [from the *Mahaie*] or in the State Archives for the ancient name of a place or for the names of the original Hawaiian owners, for fear such names might be hard to say or have unpoetic or risqué meanings" (1974, 243).

The greatest anti-conquest of all is the designation "The Aloha State." Vigorously employed by the tourism industry and stamped on Hawaiian license plates, this mix of English and Hawaiian terms reflects the American ideal of the Islands: it is a *state*—property of the US—and with a native culture that is gracious, warm, charming, welcoming. The appropriation of the term "aloha" to support tourism—the state's main industry—has been admirably discussed by Goss (1993). Seeing the phrase as implying "forgiveness for a forgotten history," Goss states (1993, 684) that the use of "*aloha*" is

a means to reassure readers that, despite the historical oppression and the exploitative nature of the tourist-host relationship, the people will warmly welcome the visitor from the mainland United States. *Aloha* essentializes the Hawaiians as 'friendly natives', who greet tourists with the same guileless generosity and naive conviviality with which they are supposed to have

23 Pukui et al. (1974, 241–3) observe that "In only one domain, that of surfing sites, do the increments arise anonymously" More recently, names for skateboarding locales would be included here.

greeted Cook and Europeans who brought them, among other things, guns, disease, and economic exploitation.

The English-speaking population of the “Aloha State” appreciate an identity of “otherness” in their exotic new home with a place name code partially meaningful within Hawaiian culture itself, and partially meaningless. Seemingly honouring Hawaiian culture, this use of place names continues to serve the transformation of power and place that ensued with the discursive and economic re-ordering of the islands. But now, as Hawaiian language makes its resurgence, the backlash to the new politics of language points out that the cultural capital of Hawaiian language and place names is mutually exclusive with real Hawaiian power.

Re-conquest: The Adornment of the Land

Language emerges from the direct human interaction and relationship with the physical, social, and spiritual environment; it is, as Lopez (1986) puts it, a dialogue with the land. And as such, indigenous tongues speak a particular *language of place* that intimately and inextricably represents the existential experience of that place. It is a mode of environmental understanding that takes centuries to develop, and continues to evolve along with the advances in technology, diffusion of ideas, and changes in material culture.

I have suggested that literacy was an agent in breaking up an immediate relationship with the land and creating a new relationship mediated by written texts. But the loss of Hawaiian language goes much further, breaking up social and cultural relations as well, and imposing a language of an industrial society from someplace else. English language developed in a different climatic and geographical environment, and, especially as it modernized and Americanized before coming to dominate the Hawaiian Islands, does not have the sensitivity to the subtleties of light and colour, wind and rain, and emotive landscape that these islands present. The countless names for individual winds and rains and for conditions of the sea, the cultural link with the earth, the spiritual link with unseen but clearly felt forces—in all, a great body of geographic knowledge and an entire way of understanding that is indigenous and intertwined with this *place*—is lost with the peripheralization and near extinction of Hawaiian language. While Hawaiian place names preserve part of that geographic code, that code is meaningless to all but a few.

In 1966, the collaboration of Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert provided the first authoritative work on Hawaiian place names that involved a person of Hawaiian ancestry. The considerably expanded Second Edition of *Place Names of Hawai'i* (Pukui et al. 1974) now serves as the authoritative text on Hawaiian place names, and is done in “dictionary” style with appended explanations that show Hawaiian place names as a geographic code, richly

entwined with the culture. Sources of information include Hawaiian legends and mythology, archaeological studies, journals of early explorers, accounts of post-contact Hawaiian writers, and other literary sources, as well as the previous studies.

Differing in character from the previously discussed texts, this work may be said to reflect a more “Hawaiian” approach to place names. Aside from the usual range of geographic features and urban centres, this work includes locations such as surfing areas and Honolulu streets and buildings. Emphasising the vernacular as well as the “official” places of importance and their names, it has the additional quality of having been produced by native speakers and scholars of Hawaiian language. Budnick and Wise’s *Honolulu Street Names* (1989) marks the completion of the turn-around. Subtitled “The Complete Guide to O’ahu Street Name Translations,” this text focuses exclusively on *Hawaiian* names—Western family names and words are omitted—and includes an exhortation, in a foreword by Samuel Elbert, that “To pronounce Hawaiian street names as Hawaiians do is to respect Hawaiian culture, and to honor Hawaiians.” But this text is not anti-conquest: it is re-conquest. Its elimination of Western street names from consideration or even mention, and its assertion that Hawaiian family names arc on the land—thus highlighting the dispossession brought on by the Mahele—is part of the reclaiming of meaning engaged in the reclaiming of Hawaiian identity and land from the colonial past and present.

The relationship between control and order, as discussed earlier, predicts that the movement to genuinely revive Hawaiian language should meet resistance. This indeed is what occurs, and in doing so, points up the place name code as anti-conquest: it is “safe” for the colonizers as long as it remains silent—chatters, even sings, but does not speak. Exotic place names, and the beautiful (but incomprehensible) Hawaiian music that is an integral part of the tourism landscape of the “Aloha State,” reassure the colonizer that through his control, peace and happiness exist—that the colonized state is a blissful one and the natives are happy. Any move to assert Hawaiian language as meaningful—of being logos—is political, and threatening. It threatens to yield the phallus—if not the land—back to the feminized Other.

At roughly the same time as the furore over Thurston Avenue, a related storm arose regarding the state-supported Hawaiian language immersion programme, *Pūnana Leo*.²⁴ This programme is designed to revive Hawaiian language as a mother tongue by placing young school children in a Hawaiian-

24 See Smyser (1991a, 1991b, 1992); Beamer (1991), Kamana and Wilson (1991), Keale (1992), and “Hawaiian immersion critic gets doused with objections” (1991). Hawaiian is one of two official languages in the State of Hawai'i, but as in New Zealand until recently, this official status did not translate into educational programmes. The *Pūnana Leo* (“Language Nest”) programme began in 1984, based on the *Te Kohangareo* programme established in New Zealand/Aotearoa.

only teaching environment during the day, making Hawaiian the language of instruction. It was by no means an attempt to produce monolingual children; the overwhelming English-language social and cultural environment would ensure against that. Rather, this programme aimed to produce bilingual people fluent in Hawaiian as a *mother tongue* rather than as a second language.

In response, the contributing editor to the Honolulu *Star-Bulletin*, Bud Smyser, argued that raising children to speak Hawaiian as their first language would handicap them in regard to further education and employment. This socioeconomic argument itself retains the flavour of paternal colonialism. But Smyser's other fear was that teaching children in Hawaiian would breed separatism, similar to the situation of French in Canada. English creates the "melting pot" of American culture, he argued, adding that he himself would reject the admission of Puerto Rico to the Union as a Spanish-speaking state (1991a).

For refusing to allow Hawaiians this one small bit of rejuvenated culture, Smyser was strongly condemned for what many saw as advocating racism and cultural imperialism. But showing the efficacy of over 150 years of cultural imperialism, Hawaiians themselves fell on both sides of the argument. Billie Beamer (1991, A15) wrote, "This exclusive Hawaiian programme usurps the influential formative learning years ... History has taught us that due to the seclusion of 1,500 years, our one-dimensional stone-age ancestors were grievously overwhelmed and unable to cope with the flood of practices and ideas introduced by those from the exposed cultures." The language immersion programme, it was thought by some, would create a separate community within the Islands that possibly would have fewer opportunities because of inadequate English. But then, with Hawaiians as a group as the most socially and economically marginalized population in the Islands,²⁵ it was hard to see that there was anywhere to go but up.

Smyser's words barely masked his fear: fear that "our Hawai'i"—belonging to us *all* by virtue (in part) of English language—would no longer be ours, that allowing Hawaiians to reclaim their language was one step towards allowing them to reclaim the Islands themselves. Such is the fear of the colonizer: "Some of the advocates of immersion," he later stated, "are also advocates of Hawaiian sovereignty, and their tones are pretty strident" (Smyser 1991b, A14). The Thurston Avenue controversy, and the debate and comments that surrounded it, showed that indeed the politics of language, place names, and sovereignty are intertwined.

This linkage is further illuminated by the third relevant *resolution* to sail through this story: on 12 March 1997 the Honolulu City Council passed a

25 Constituting only twelve percent of the total population today, Hawaiians form 38% of the prison population, and proportionally have the highest percentages of homelessness and unemployment. They also have the highest proportion of health risks and the lowest life expectancy.

resolution that no longer required street names to be Hawaiian. Passing by a vote of 6:3, the one Hawaiian on the council voting in opposition to it, the bill was denounced before the Council by 13 persons testifying either as individuals or as representatives of Hawaiian organizations. No one testified in its favour. One person, recalling how her grandparents and great-grandparents were punished for speaking Hawaiian during class, remarked that eliminating the requirement for Hawaiian street names would send the wrong message and be a step backward ("Road-Naming ..." 1997). Charles Rose of the Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs spoke of "the pain of being Hawaiian" when he went to Waikiki to find all signs in English and Japanese. At the same time, other Hawaiians pointed out that the legacy of intermarriage had left many Hawaiians without Hawaiian names. It should be possible, they argued, to name streets in honour of persons such as George Helm, Hawaiian activist and entertainer, who was lost at sea during a protest. *Star Bulletin* columnist Charles Meminger (1997) disagreed with the notion that attaching a Hawaiian name to something helps the culture:

Every other cold, steel high-rise in Honolulu is named "Hale Something-or-other." Calling a gigantic empty overpriced condo building a "hale" [house] is really just a ploy by the developer to cash in on Hawaiian culture, not promote it ... Likewise, giving some little cul-de-sac in a sterile neighborhood of hurricane-bait cheapo townhouses a Hawaiian name doesn't really honor the Hawaiian culture. If anything, it's a cruel joke, considering how many Hawaiians have been waiting patiently for Hawaiian Homes lots for years. I'll bet a Hawaiian would rather get his promised lot and house on a street named Boardwalk or Park Place than live in a rented dump while everyone else moves into neighborhoods with lots of Hawaiian-named streets. In other words, arguing about giving streets strictly Hawaiian names only pays lip service to the real concerns of Hawaiians.

Meanwhile, the resurgence of Hawaiian language returns to the land in other ways. Hawaiian language classes at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa are filled to capacity, having expanded from a couple of sections to more than 10, and with students wait-listed for admission. Hawaiian music, characterized primarily by use of Hawaiian language, has moved from being merely a charming backdrop to being an increasingly political vehicle for pro-sovereignty sentiments. When Hawaiian squatters took over Waimānalo Beach in 1994, their tent camps and taro patches were adorned with banners in Hawaiian language, or using Hawaiian words. The 1994 document returning the "target island" of Kaho'olawe to the state was written in Hawaiian, and the 1998 Aloha March on Washington, commemorating the Queen's 1894 visit to protest her overthrow, was accompanied by a traditional chant.

The 1976 voyage of the Hōkūle'a, a Polynesian voyaging canoe navigated from Hawai'i to Tahiti by traditional methods, and the subsequent construction

of the even larger and more authentic Hawai'i-loa canoe (named for the legendary discoverer of the islands), have become foci for the regeneration of Hawaiian culture, providing examples of a technology which, for its time, was the most sophisticated in the world. Hula, once outlawed by the missionary-inspired government, then co-opted in a banal form for the tourism industry, has made a strong comeback among Hawaiian youth, and includes instruction in language and traditional culture. Hawaiian chanting, a nearly lost art that invokes the deities and the landscape, is slowly coming back into vogue. The Hawaiian language is fast becoming a calling-card for young Hawaiians seeking to recapture their own traditions and identity, while those of the older generation of Hawaiian activists sometimes regret with justifiable bitterness the loss of their mother tongue (Trask 1993).

The anti-conquest/re-conquest interface is captured in the Hawaiian-language motto of the State of Hawai'i: *Ua mau ke ea o ka 'āina i ka pono*. Not quite a "place name," but nonetheless the phrase by which Hawai'i represents itself, this sentence was spoken by King Kamehameha III after the British restored the sovereignty of the Islands—seized by Captain Paulct—to the Hawaiian monarchy. Admiral Thomas was sent to declare sovereignty restored, which he did at a place now known as Thomas Square. Missionary doctor-cum-politician Gerritt Judd translated the King's words as "The life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness." This remains the official and oft-quoted English version.

It is a lofty-sounded phrase. But what does it mean? I posed this question to students at the University of Hawai'i and received dumbfounded silence and glassy looks. The motto sounds good, it sounds *holy*. One looks at the sky while pondering its meaning. It is inscribed under the State Seal and is spouted by government officials. It is anti-conquest in the mouths of haoles and reconquest in the mouths of Hawaiians. But its meaning escapes into the ethers. Judd's translation hinges on the word *ea*, which he read as "life." But an alternative translation of *ea* is "sovereignty, rule, independence" (Pukui and Elbert 1986). With this simple change, the motto re-translated means "The sovereignty of the land has been restored, as it should be"—a phrase that makes perfect sense given the context in which it was uttered, and which is how it has always been understood by Hawaiian intelligentsia (Pi'ianā'i'a 1987).²⁶ Few people in the Islands today are aware of this alternative meaning, and the traditional translation remains a banner for the state itself as well as for Hawaiian sovereignty groups. This misinterpretation *is perpetuated* since so few people can speak Hawaiian.

A modern Hawaiian proverb states, *O ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i ka wehi o ka 'āina*—"Hawaiian language is the adornment of the land." The loss of Hawaiian

26 "Ua mau," at the beginning of the statement, suggests past tense, action completed—it *has been* restored—while "is perpetuated" would be "e mau ana," indicating ongoing action. (Pi'ianā'i'a n.d.).

language played a key role in dismantling Hawaiian geographic discourse, in the commodification of land and resources, and in the internationalisation of the Islands to the point of annexation. With the damage overwhelmingly done—an astoundingly American built-environment dominating the landscape—one wonders how much recapturing the language can do to revive traditional Hawaiian culture. But cultures change. While Hawaiian sovereignty movements are literally gaining ground, Hawaiian language is on the resurgence. Place names—the code of those who lost the struggle—are again becoming an intelligible vocabulary from which Hawaiian environmental discourse may re-emerge: a re-conquest, the adornment of the land.

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Appendix

Glossary of Hawaiian terms:

<i>Ahupua'a</i> :	land section usually extending from the uplands to sea
<i>'Aina</i> :	land, as sustainer of life (' <i>ai</i> = to eat)
<i>Akua</i> :	god, goddess, spirit; active consciousness, volition
<i>Ali'i</i> :	person of the aristocratic or chiefly class
<i>'Aumakua</i> :	familial or guardian spirit
<i>Hale</i> :	house, building
<i>Haole</i> :	white person, American, Englishman, Caucasian (formerly, any foreigner)
<i>Hō'ike honua</i> :	Geography ("to show the earth")
<i>Kaona</i> :	hidden meaning, concealed reference in poetry
<i>Kapu</i> :	[taboo] sacred, forbidden; sacred law
<i>Kinolau</i> :	"many bodies," physical manifestations of deities
<i>Konohiki</i> :	headman of an <i>ahupua'a</i> land division, under a chief
<i>Kuleana</i> :	land claims by commoners
<i>Mahele</i> :	partition
<i>Maka'āinana</i> :	commoner, populace (people that attend the land)
<i>Mana</i> :	supernatural or divine power
<i>Moku</i> :	large land sections; districts