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CEREMONIAL ARCHITECTURE IN EAST POLYNESIA: DEVELOPMENT AND VARIABILITY

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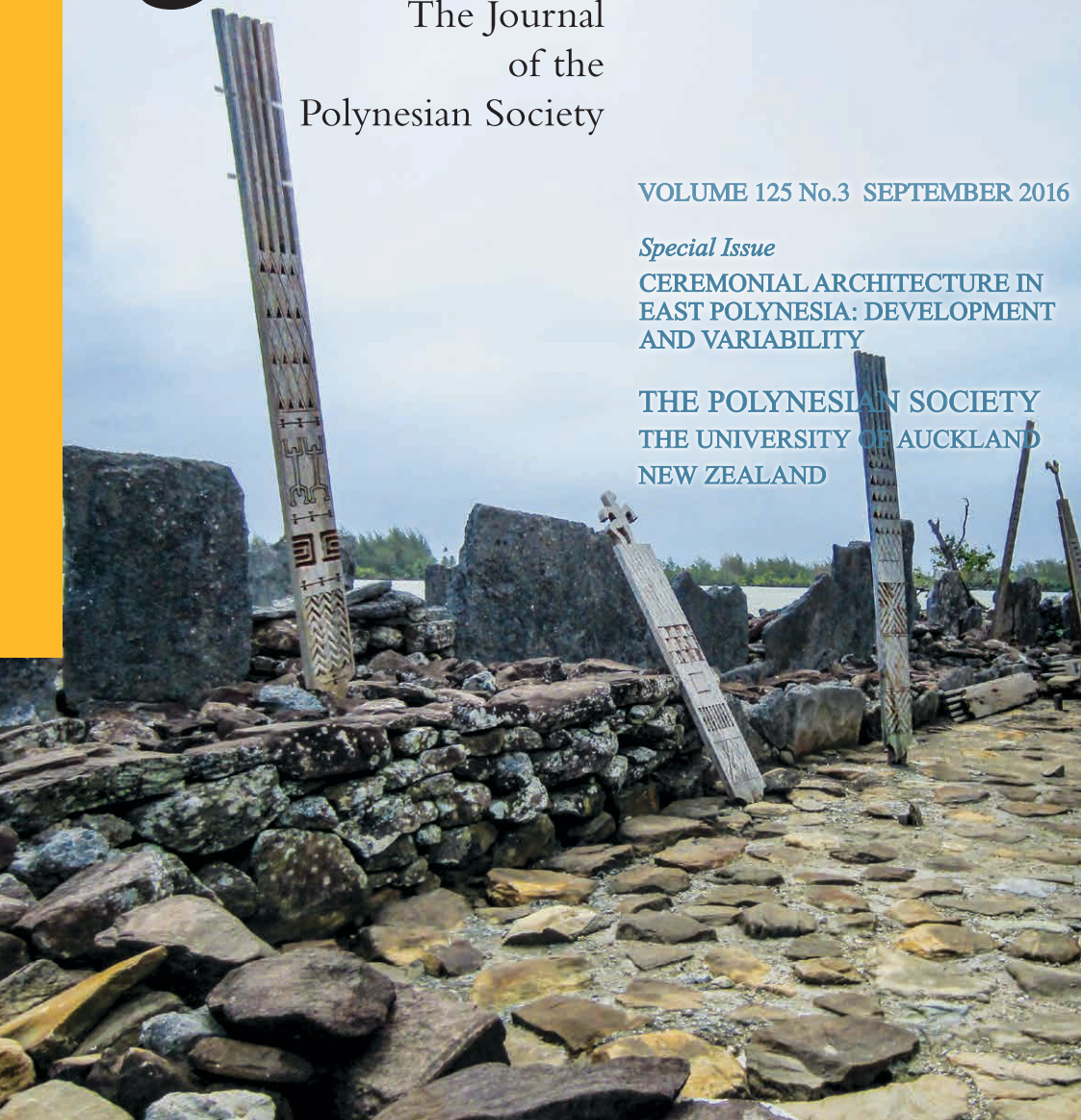

AFTER THE MISSIONARIES: HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY AND TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS SITES IN THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

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Globalisation has a simple mythology. As the story goes, beginning in the 15th century, Europeans began exploring the world. Within a few centuries, the major powers of Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Great Britain and France had established expansive colonies and empires. Wealth flowing back to Europe from the colonies provided the capital to fuel the Industrial Revolution, and thus the inequalities between the West and the rest of the world were established. Missionaries provided the moral means to rationalise conquest and colonialism through wholesale conversion to Christianity.

Anthropologists, historians, and many others, including generations of indigenous peoples, know that this simplistic story does not reflect reality, and yet, many aspects of it continue to shape approaches to archaeological research. We know that people continued to practice traditional religions in various ways long after the missionaries arrived and through to the present. In archaeological studies of indigenous religion in Polynesia, with a few laudable exceptions, the implicit purpose of studying *marae*, *heiau* and *langi* (Polynesian sacred sites) is as a window to the pre-European past, and not as a window to how life changed in a post-European world. In the life history of sites of religious ritual, there is the pre-contact period when they were built and maintained for generations, and there is the modern-day; but the time in-between the traditional and the modern is lost or at least unacknowledged.

In this paper we outline several ways to bridge the "prehistory/history divide" (Lightfoot 1995) via religious architecture in Polynesia. We argue that the study of the long-term evolution of indigenous religious practices of Kānaka Maoli or Native Hawaiians, including those of the post-contact era, offers a way to take steps towards replacing colonial just-so stories with a more realistic analysis of the past built on archaeological facts (Flexner 2014). Kānaka Maoli continue to practice traditional religion in various forms in the present, particularly in engagements with *heiau* 'temple' sites, and will continue to do so in the future (Kawelu and Pakele 2014, Tengan 2008). What historical archaeology offers is a set of links for understanding

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continuities and transformations in religious practice over the course of the 1800s and early 1900s. Since this is research that largely is yet to be done, what follows should be taken as a framework for future analyses.

HISTORY AND RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION IN POLYNESIA

In the Hawaiian Islands, one hurdle that must be overcome to refocus scholarship on religious transformation has to do with the chronological ruptures built into Western conceptions of history, especially the separation of pre- and post-Christian times. This division of Pacific Island religious histories is misleading, a rhetorical trope invented by the missionaries themselves that obscures the complicated realities of religious transformation and conversion processes. After missionaries arrived, indigenous religions continued to survive and structure Pacific Islander cosmologies and experiences (e.g., Adams 1984, Sahlins 1985). At the same time, Pacific Islanders often made Christianity their own, shaping the foreign religion to fit the indigenous context (e.g., Flexner in press, Flexner and Spriggs 2015). We know that reality falls somewhere between "pristine" natives who practice their traditional religions unaltered, and fully Westernised people who converted (Lydon and Burns 2010). But in many ways archaeology has lagged behind in developing better understandings of these dynamics, which is unfortunate as our unique approach to the past has much to offer to discussions of religious change worldwide (e.g., Hayden 2003, Shaw 2013).

We would argue that a practice theory based definition of religion (Bell 1992) can aid in breaking down the history/prehistory divide and the apparent gap between emic and etic views on religion. As Joyce (2012: 180) notes, "[a] pragmatic archaeological approach asks not what religion *is*, but what it *does*, and how the material and historical basis of archaeology might change our view of religion". This contemporary view attempts to move away from a habitual tendency amongst archaeologists to default to a functionalist view of religion that failed to engage past, or present, peoples' religious beliefs on their own terms (Fowles 2013). Importantly for this topic, the more contemporary perspective sees religion as entangled with and inseparable from other components of society, such as politics and economics.

In our analysis we do not separate Hawaiian religion as distinctive from other aspects of culture, but rather see it as embedded in a range of beliefs and practices. *Kapu* 'the sacred', *mana* 'spiritual essence or power' and *akua* and *'aumakua* 'gods, ancestors and spirits' were integral parts of the Hawaiian universe (Kamakau 1976, 1991, Malo 1951). *Kapu*, which is generally translated as 'sacred', was used to refer to a variety of strictly enforced social rules based upon supernatural beliefs. These included gendered restrictions relating to food (e.g., women were not to eat pork, bananas or certain fishes;

food to be consumed by males and females was cooked in separate ovens or *imu*); and class restrictions (e.g., commoners were to prostrate themselves before chiefs and were not allowed to look directly upon certain rituals) (see Kamakau 1976, Kirch 2010, Malo 1951, Valeri 1985).

Religious belief and ritualised practices were integral to the emergence and evolution of archaic Hawaiian states (Hommon 2013, Kirch 2010). In the kingdoms that emerged over the course of the 16th and 17th centuries, royal courts relied on religious specialists to assert and maintain their legitimacy within the cosmic order (Valeri 1985). Assertions of power by Hawaiian kings were reflected in a built landscape of *heiau* 'temples', *ko'a* 'shrines', *ki'i* 'god images' and other objects. What is crucial to remember is that for the people of all ranks, from the *maka'āinana* 'commoner' to *mo'ī* 'king', the gods and spirits were real entities within their universe. We assume that there would have been some individual variability among individual predispositions towards religiosity or scepticism. That said, a recent archaeological study found that the influence of the *kapu* system on household architecture across multiple sites within a Hawaiian community was ubiquitous (McCoy and Codlin 2016).

When Christian missionaries arrived in the Hawaiian Islands in 1820 (see below), it was simply impossible for them to "purify" the islands of existing beliefs, practices and sites (Keane 2007). As with other missions, the old order was always going to adapt to, and exist alongside, within, and around the new. Lyon's (2011) recent examination of how Nathaniel Emerson chose to translate Kānaka Maoli historian David Malo's works regarding behaviours that were traditionally socially sanctioned and correct (*pono*) and those that were not correct (*hewa*) is a good example of the complexities of unpacking meaning from 19th century English and Hawaiian documents. The material culture that is the focus of archaeological investigations offers a different kind of interpretive potential when compared with the documentary record. Using these multiple lines of evidence together provides an important opportunity to move beyond the colonial narrative.

We take inspiration from a recent critical reading of Polynesian history. In an analysis of what he calls the Polynesian iconoclasm, Sissons (2014) traces a series of dramatic Christian conversion events in Polynesia, which he argues originated in Tahiti and then spread throughout the region, including to the Cook Islands and Hawai'i. These events were read by the missionaries as a downfall of heathenism, a replacement of the old with the new as native chiefs embraced the true religion of Christianity, burning idols and throwing down the old temples. Sissons interprets these events as following an ancient Polynesian structure for maintaining the cosmic order, based on a seasonal duality measured by the rise and fall of the constellation Pleiades (see

Kirch and Green 2001: 260). 'Pleiades Above' was a time of *communitas*, feasting, dancing, celebrations and a relaxation of hierarchy. 'Pleiades Below' was a time of order, when the strict rules governing relationships between commoners, chiefs and gods were restored and enforced. This structure also served to allow for integration of new beliefs into Polynesian religion, both before and after European contacts in the region. The timing of apparent iconoclasm events followed Pleiades Above, while church building and conversion took place during Pleiades Below.

Sahlins (1992) made a similar argument for Hawai'i, in examining both royal and commoner relationships to Christianity in the early days of the Hawaiian Kingdom. The Makahiki (Pleiades Above) was "a structure of the long run, an enduring organising principle of Hawaiian history" (Sahlins 1992: 121). It shaped the cycle between apparent widespread conversion and church building activities carried out by the chiefs, and the carnivalesque backsliding that periodically gripped society. In these studies, the written record in the form of missionary correspondence, newspaper reports and other documents provides the information to make these interpretations. Sissons (2014) argues that the structuring of Polynesian iconoclasms according to Pleiades Above/ Pleiades Below occurs because of a tendency he calls "rituopraxis", that is the habitual, periodic, repetitive embodied as well as cognitive elements of religious experience.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF HAWAIIAN SACRED SITES

As is the case elsewhere in Polynesia, archaeological research on "religious" sites focuses primarily on the period before Christianity arrived on the islands in the 1820s. The study of religious architecture in the Hawaiian Islands, including *heiau*, *ko'a* and other ritual structures, featured prominently in the beginnings of the discipline of archaeology in the archipelago. While the first scientific interest in sites of religious ritual dates back to the 1841 Wilkes Expedition to Ahu a 'Umi Heiau, the systematic study of Hawaiian religious sites started in earnest with Stokes' 1906 and 1909 surveys of religious sites on Hawai'i Island and Moloka'i (Stokes 1991). Stokes was struck by the strength of traditional religious practice and knowledge, especially in the Ka'ū District, Hawai'i Island. Somewhat ironically, Stokes committed a ritual infraction at a sacred site that prevented him from working closely with the Ka'ū community (Dye 1991: 11-12), thus he lost a golden opportunity to document still vibrant traditional knowledge. Stokes and other subsequent researchers, including Bennett, Kekahuna, McAlister and Walker, made surveys aided significantly by Kānaka Maoli informants when possible, as well as local non-Hawaiians. They also based interpretations on oral traditions written down in the 19th century, called *mo'olelo* in

Hawaiian (e.g., Kamakau 1976, Malo 1951), to interpret particular features in *heiau* sites as well as their overall functions and histories. So in one way the archaeology of *heiau* has always been "historical", in the sense that it ties together multiple lines of evidence, documentary as well as physical, to understand the past.

Earlier studies were often concerned with culture historical puzzles, especially whether changes in architectural form could be linked to traditions about the arrival of the Tahitian priest Pā'ao to Hawai'i (Stokes 1991), and the evolution of temple architecture across Polynesia (e.g., Emory 1928). Pā'ao is known from oral traditions as a Tahitian priest who was said to have introduced the cult of the war god Kū and the practice of human sacrifice to Hawai'i (Kamakau 1991: 97-100, Kirch 2010: 86). There was a theory that the appearance of walled *heiau* (as opposed to platforms) was associated with this transformation of belief (Dye 1989). The evidence proved too complicated to answer these questions in a straightforward manner (see also Cochrane 2015 for a phylogenetic analysis of *heiau*). Hawaiian archaeologists remained "extremely hesitant to deal directly with religion in a serious scholarly fashion" during the earlier part of the 20th century (McCoy 2014: 74). For many scholars in Oceania and elsewhere, religious beliefs were simply too difficult to discern from the static material record (see Hawkes 1954), an attitude that in some ways continues to echo through more functionalist interpretations of the past (cf. Fowles 2013).

Starting in the 1970s, research questions in Polynesia began shifting to concerns with environmental adaptation and the emergence of socio-political complexity. *Heiau* were seen as an important class of site to be investigated as part of the overall settlement pattern (Kirch 1985: 247-83). By the 1990s, scholarship on temple architecture and sites of religious ritual began to apply an energy-expenditure model (Kolb 1994) where the stone foundations of sites became a proxy for the scale of labour marshalled for construction. Ordering architectural styles through seriation, combined with radiocarbon dating, has been attempted to address more subtle changes in temple architecture (Graves and Cachola-Abad 1996, Kolb 1994, 2006, McCoy *et al.* 2011, Mulrooney and Ladefoged 2005, Phillips *et al*. 2015). More recently, archaeological scholars have considered *heiau* in relation to the role of Hawaiian religion in providing ideological force or legitimation for rulers. Recent studies focus on the role of priests as keepers of the social order (Kirch *et al*. 2010, McCoy 1999, McCoy *et al.* 2011); archaeo-astronomy practices (Gill *et al.* 2015, Kirch 2004, Kirch *et al.* 2013, Ruggles 2000); and temple construction chronology, with high-precision uranium series dating of coral offerings indicating a notable boom c. AD 1580–1640 (Kirch *et al.* 2015, Kirch and Sharp 2005).

Just as academic archaeology has matured, so has the role of archaeology in the stewardship of sites of religious ritual. The publication of regional summaries has brought traditions, historic photos and maps out of the archives and into the hands of the local community (Kirch 1985, Stokes 1991, Summers 1971). The Bishop Museum's efforts to digitise site records, such as the detailed maps by Henry E.P. Kekahuna, a Kanaka Māoli archaeologist, have continued this trend (http://data.bishopmuseum.org/Kekahuna). Archaeologists have been on the front line of recording and preserving sites threatened by coastal flooding (Johnson *et al.* 2015), earthquakes (Johnson *et al.* 2013) and recent lava flows (Masse *et al.* 1991). Unfortunately, archaeology has also drawn serious critique for failing to protect sites (Kawelu 2007, 2015), and for the discipline's part in the creation of "ghettos" of isolated cultural sites (Major 2004). On a more positive note, archaeologists have been involved with the careful reconstruction and continued use of *heiau*, and a wave of new community archaeology, often led by Kanaka Māoli archaeologists (Kawelu 2015, Kawelu and Pakele 2014).

THE ARRIVAL OF CHRISTIANITY TO THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

Studies of *heiau* and other traditional forms of Hawaiian religious architecture rarely examine the evidence for what happened at, or to, structures after the missionaries arrived in 1820. To understand why, it is worth outlining a few key events in Hawaiian history. In 1778, Captain James Cook made the first definitive European sighting of the Hawaiian Islands during the expedition of the *Resolution* and *Discovery*. On his return in 1779, Cook was welcomed to Kealakekua Bay, Hawai'i Island. On January 29 he read a burial service for William Whatman at Hikiau Heiau, the first Christian ceremony to take place in Hawai'i, and possibly the first non-autochthonous religious ritual in the islands since the time of Pā'ao. Several weeks later, Cook was killed in a botched attempt to kidnap the island's king. His body was taken away and divided among the elite, with a portion returned to his crew. Later scholars would debate the extent to which Cook had been taken as an analogue for the Hawaiian god Lono during these events. Valeri (1991) has suggested that the events surrounding Cook's death may reflect oscillations of power associated with Makahiki seasonality and the tensions inherent to relationships between Hawaiian chiefs and religious specialists (see also Obeyesekere 1992, Sahlins 1985, 1995).

A chief named Kamehameha, the future founder of the first archipelago-wide polity, was likely present at Cook's landing at Kealakekua. In 1791 Kamehameha sacrificed his cousin and main rival, Keoua, at the consecration of Pu'ukoholā Heiau. It is unclear if this was a re-dedication after a major expansion of an existing temple, or an entirely new endeavour. Regardless,

this event sealed Kamehameha's dominance over the Hawai'i Island kingdom, and launched his unification campaign for the rest of the archipelago. Kamehameha completed his conquest of the Hawaiian Islands by 1810, unifying what had been a number of small kingdoms into a single state ruled by a monarchical dynasty. After Kamehameha I's death in 1819, the heir to the throne, Liholiho (Kamehameha II), broke a powerful ritual proscription relating to deeply sacred beliefs about the purity of chiefly bodies and food. This event, known as the *'ai noa*, signified the breaking of the *kapu* and was immediately followed by a royal decree abolishing the practice of traditional religion. It sparked a short-lived, failed insurrection and soon after many, but not all, temples were destroyed (Ellis 1969). Within a few months, in 1820, the first wave of Protestant Christian missionaries arrived and eventually the old religion 'died out' (see Daws 1968, Kuykendahl 1965). Or so the story goes.

HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS SITES IN HAWAI'I

There is, however, no reason to assume that Hawaiian religion "disappeared" after 1820. Religious change is never an immediate shift from one "pure" type to another but better thought of as interlocking shifts in practice and social structure (e.g., Bell 1992). These transformations can be gradual, and even where processes of change are rapid, we should expect to see "anachronisms", holdovers in belief and practice from the old cosmological order (Flexner in press, Keane 2007). To extend that line of thinking, the contemporary revival of religious and cultural practices at sites like Pu'ukoholā (Tengan 2008, see also Kawelu 2007) should be thought of as part of a continuous historical trajectory, rather than a modern "invention of tradition" (Johnson 2008, Linnekin 1991). The larger point is that any hypothesis regarding religious transformation should be tested against the material evidence rather than treated as a foregone conclusion.

Below, we highlight two archaeological case studies of activity at Hawaiian religious sites after the first Christian rituals were carried out in the islands. Our purpose is to demonstrate potential approaches to exploring post-1778 religious transformations in Hawai'i. Similar approaches could beneficially be applied to other areas of Polynesia, as well to search for evidence of indigenous religious practices during the time when missionaries had ostensibly begun converting the population. The original intent of the fieldwork described below was carried out with a primary focus on "pre-contact" (Puhina o Lono) or "post-contact" (Kalaupapa) archaeology. Our ongoing collaboration leads us to explore ways to span that divide through the examination of longer-term "life histories" at sites of religious ritual. Future fieldwork and research will be necessary to refine and strengthen the interpretations presented here.

Puhina o Lono, Kealakekua Bay, Hawai'i Island

The death of British Captain James Cook in Kealakekua Bay, Hawai'i Island (Fig. 1) has attracted interest from scholars, such as Pacific historians (e.g., Salmond 2003) and cultural anthropologists (e.g., Sahlins 1995), but remarkably it has remained *terra incognita* for anthropological archaeology. We begin our discussion of indigenous sites of religious ritual during an era of European contacts by examining a site called Puhina o Lono (also sometimes referred to as "Cook's Heiau"). Puhina o Lono (literally meaning 'to burn Lono') was succinctly first described by archaeologists as "an enclosure where the bones of Captain Cook were extracted" (Emory 1970: 30). The site provides an example of where archaeology can provide an independent line of evidence to address perhaps the best-known colonial narrative in the Pacific, the apotheosis of Captain Cook as the god Lono.

There are two written accounts of visits to Puhina o Lono in the years immediately following the abolition of traditional religion in 1819, one by the missionary William Ellis (1969: 52) and the other by the English naturalist Andrew Bloxam (1925 [1825]: 77). In 1823, Ellis (1969: 52) travelled along the coast of Kealakekua Bay and gives a second-hand account of the upcountry site of Puhina o Lono:

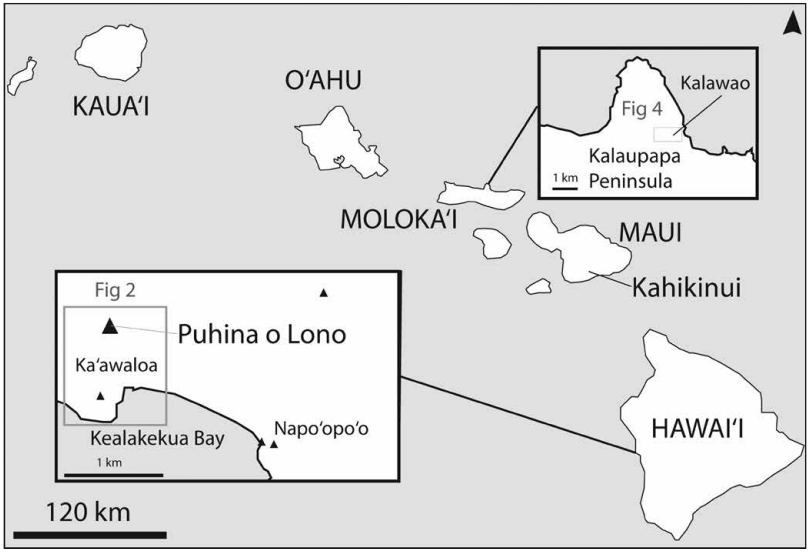

Figure 1. Locations in the Hawaiian Islands discussed in the present study.

> … Mr. Goodrich ascended a neighboring height, and visited the spot where the body of the unfortunate Captain Cook was cut to pieces, and the flesh, after being separated from the bones, was burnt. It is a small enclosure, about fifteen feet square, surrounded by a wall five feet high; within is a kind of hearth, raised about eighteen inches from the ground, and encircled by a curb of rude stones. Here the fire was kindled on the above occasion; and the place is still strewed with charcoal. (Ellis 1969: 52)

A second visit to the site on 15 July 1825 is recounted in the journal of Andrew Bloxam (1925 [1825]: 77). Bloxam describes a small group of British sailors—including himself, Lord George Anson Byron and other members of crew of the *HMS Blonde*—who were taken to the site by a local chief named Naihe (also referred to as Nahi) and told that this was the "spot where Captain Cook's body was taken and cut up immediately after he was killed" (Bloxam 1925 [1825]: 77). While both 19th century visitors give similar descriptions of the enclosure, there is no reference in this second account of the 'kind of hearth' within it. Bloxam (1925 [1825]: 77) does, however, go into great detail in his description of the creation of a monument to Cook consisting of a "stone pyramid" with a wooden post holding a brass plaque (Fig. 2):

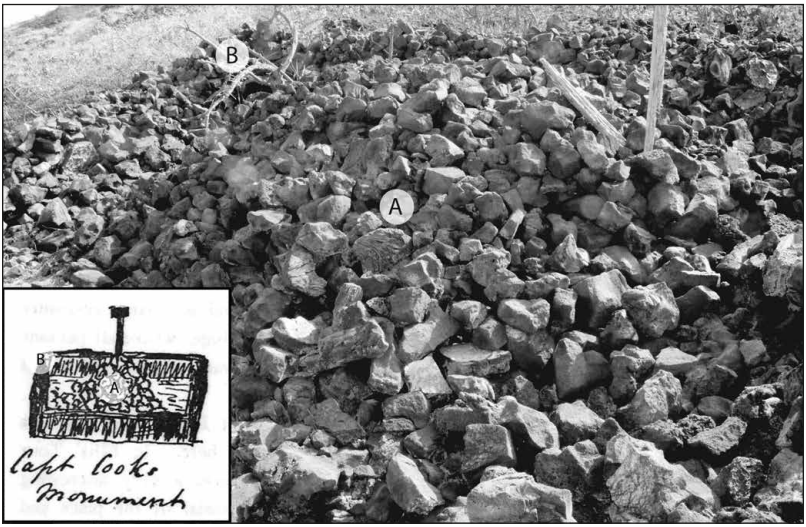

Figure 2. A photograph of "Capt Cooks Monument" today compared with a diary sketch from 1825 (inset) of the stone "pyramid" (A) within the main structure (B) at Puhina o Lono, Kealakekua, Hawai'i Island.

> In the center of this [enclosure] Lord Byron, Mr. Ball, Davis and I laid the first four stones of a pyramid to form the base of a monument to his memory. A large post was fixed in the middle of this, and on the top was nailed a brass plate, with the following words engraved upon it: To the memory of Captain James Cook, R.N., who discovered these islands in the year of our Lord 1778. This humble monument was erected by his fellow countrymen in the year of our Lord 1825. Bloxam (1925 [1825]: 77)

The site of Puhina o Lono invites two questions about ritual practices in the post-contact era: Was the site already part of the existing religious landscape when Cook's ships arrived in Kealakekua, or was it specially built in 1779 to accommodate the death of "Lono"? And why was a small group of foreign visitors allowed to remodel the site to build a monument to Cook in 1825?

In 2015, a brief survey and detailed mapping of the enclosure at Puhina o Lono was conducted (Fig. 3; McCoy 2016). The "pyramid of stone" that formed the foundation of Cook's monument can be clearly seen today and leaves little doubt this is the same location as that described in 1825. More importantly, the layout of the site and its surrounding features suggest that this was not a simple or small structure, a fact that in our view makes it unlikely it was specially built in the short time that elapsed between Captain Cook's death and when his body was partially returned to his crew. Surprisingly, the site's overall layout today does not fit well within the expected range of variation seen in temple architecture in a number of respects. For example, it is oriented to the local landform, rather than to a particular sacred direction; northeast being expected if it were dedicated to Lono (Kirch 2004). Further, there is documentary evidence to support the notion that at the time of contact the site was not used as a *heiau*. An 1883 Hawaiian Government survey map of Kealakekua Bay shows the site as a rectangular enclosure labelled as Puhina o "Lono" (Fig. 4; quotes on the original map; see also Louis 2008). While other sites on the 1883 map were identified as "Old Heiau", Puhina o Lono was not. Other early references to Puhina o Lono also do not refer to it as a *heiau* (Thrum 1908: 46). The site only begins to be referred to as a *heiau* in the 20th century, first as Puhina o Lono Heiau (USGS 1928) and later as Cook's Heiau (USGS 1959).

If the site of Puhina o Lono was not purpose-built to process Cook's body, and is also not a good fit for the architectural forms of *heiau*, there are a number of other possible roles it could have played in the ritual landscape. One scenario that we see as likely is that this structure was used in the preparation of high chiefs for burial (Green and Beckwith 1926). The close proximity of burial caves, and its placement outside both the primary coastal and upland residential zones, is circumstantial evidence supporting this interpretation. If this were the case, then in terms of the larger narrative of

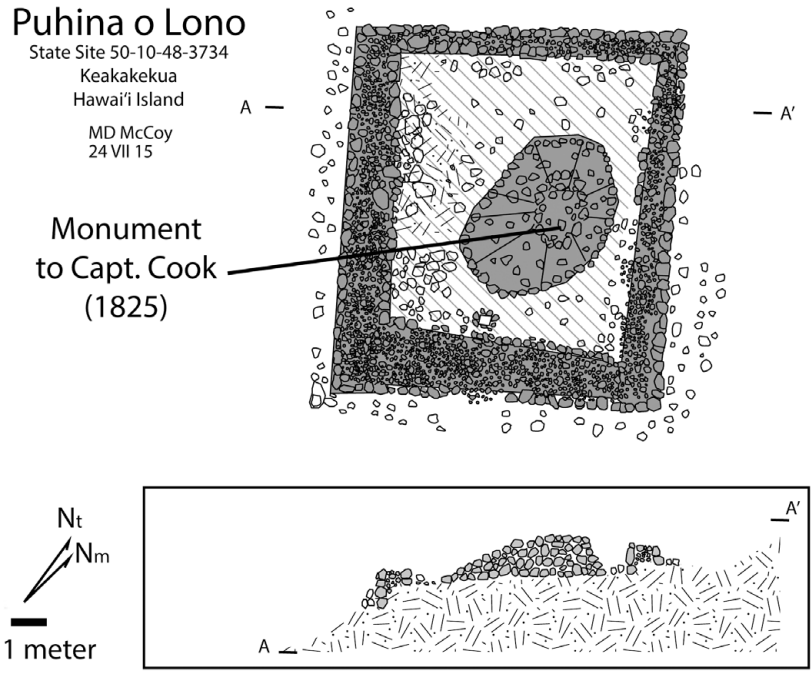

Figure 3. The main structure at Puhina o Lono. The site is registered with the State Site Inventory Number 50-10-48-3734 and Bishop Museum site number 50-Ha-C23-4 (Emory 1970, Soehren and Newman 1968). Source: McCoy (2016).

the encounter between Kānaka Maoli and Cook, it would appear that Cook's remains may have been treated in much the same fashion as a high chief, rather than requiring some new hitherto unknown and exceptional religious ritual apparatus. While this is far from definitively settling the "apotheosis or not" (Obeyesekere 1992, Sahlins 1995) debate regarding Cook, it pushes us to think about how sites of religious ritual were being used in the earliest days of the post-contact period.

Our second question is: Why was a small group of foreign visitors allowed to remodel the site to build a monument to Cook in 1825? The monument created by the crew of the *HMS Blonde* in 1825 was not the first, and certainly not the last, monument to Cook made by visitors to Kaʻawaloa. We suspect that two factors may help explain why this crew was allowed to materialise their religious ritual to Captain Cook using the stones of the original building.

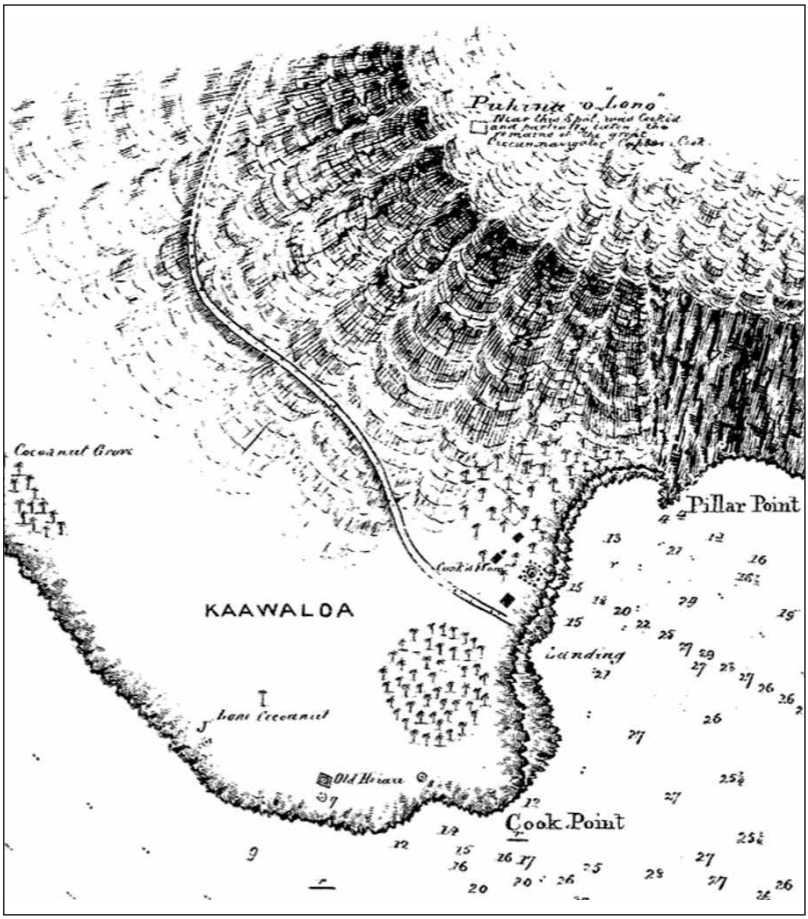

Figure 4. An 1883 map of Kealakekua Bay, Hawai‘i Island, shows Puhina o Lono located outside the main settlement at Ka‘awaloa. The site is shown as a rectangular enclosure and labelled as: *Puhina o "Lono" Near this spot was Cooked and partially eaten the remains of the great Circumnavigator Captain Cook*. Note that while other features are referred to as temples (e.g., "Old Heiau"), Puhina o Lono is not. Map by Lt. George E. Gresley Jackson, Hawaiian Royal Navy.

The timing of the *HMS Blonde*'s visit to Kaʻawaloa, so closely following the abolition of traditional religion is certainly a factor; but far more important to understanding this event is the purpose of the *HMS Blonde*'s visit to Hawaiʻi. Almost exactly a year earlier, Liholiho (King Kamehameha II) and his wife Queen Kamāmalu died from measles on a visit to the UK. The *HMS Blonde* returned the royal bodies to Oʻahu, then proceeded to Kaʻawaloa with the explicit purpose of creating a monument to Cook. The placement of the monument in the centre of the enclosure, the same location as the hearth where Cook's body was burnt, may have been deemed correct (*pono*) for the crew who had played a pivotal role in bringing the king and queen back to Hawaiʻi for burial. In sum, the monument's construction does not necessarily indicate that the site was de-sacralised in a material expression of the wholesale replacement of one set of beliefs and values with another. Rather, the specific historical context suggests the re-use of building materials in a continuously sacred, if transformed, architecture.

Kalawao, Kalaupapa Peninsula, Molokaʻi Island

A second case study comes from Kalawao, Kalaupapa Peninsula, home to a dense Kanaka Māoli population from long before European contact through the 1850s (Kirch 2002, McCoy 2006). In the early contact period, Kalaupapa's inhabitants had some connections to the capitalist world system, particularly through the export of agricultural staples in exchange for trade goods (Goodwin 1994, McCoy 2005: 351). However, Kalaupapa remained outside of direct missionary influence until the 1870s. There is good reason to believe that the traditional order would have persisted on the peninsula in some form. In 1866, the area was transformed into a leprosarium for the Hawaiian Kingdom (Greene 1985). Even in the institutional setting, missionary mythology shapes the story of religious transformation, though it is tinged with the tragic history of disease and isolation. In 1873 a Belgian Catholic Priest, Damien de Veuster, arrived in the apparently chaotic settlement. According to the myth, the "hero of Molokaʻi" worked tirelessly to comfort and aid the afflicted until he died a martyr's death in 1889 (Flexner 2010: 76-82, Moblo 1997). Archaeological and ethnohistoric evidence provides a much more prosaic account of the experiences of Kalaupapa's exiles, focusing on the Hawaiian values expressed socially and spatially in the community (Flexner 2012, Inglis 2013).

An initial examination of traditional Hawaiian religious sites in the Kalaupapa landscape suggests a variety of processes in action. One of the things that initially drew archaeologists to Kalaupapa Peninsula was the assemblage of remarkably well-preserved archaeological remains, which

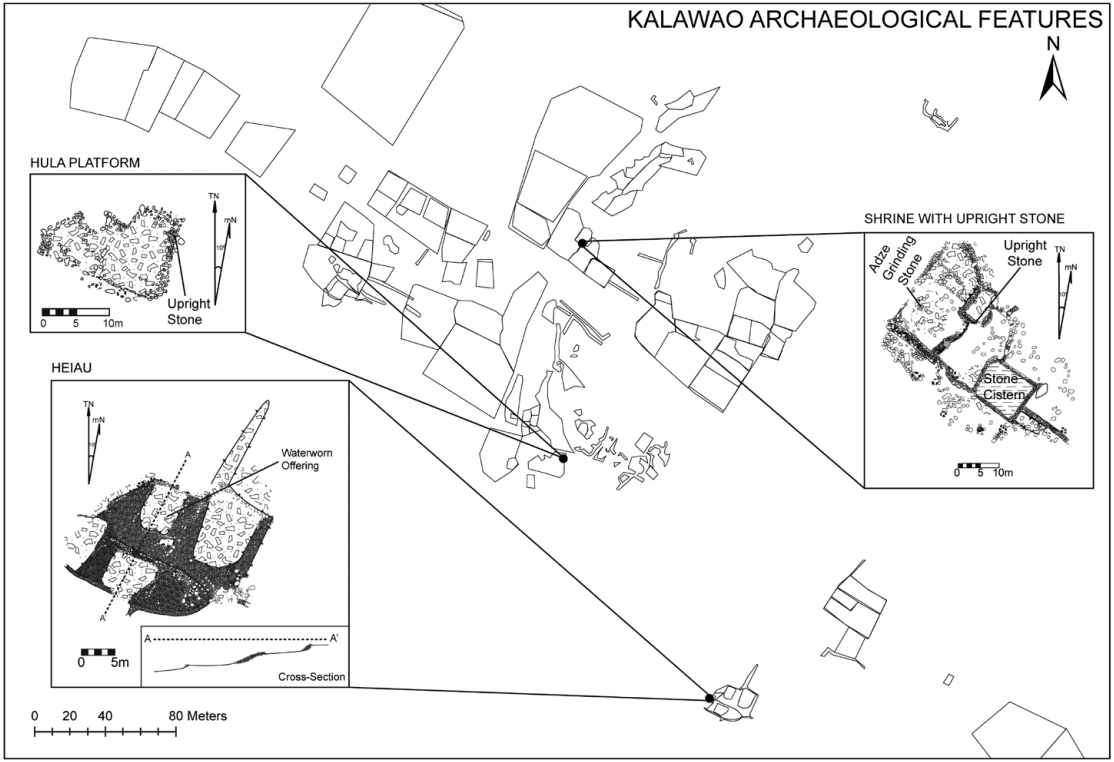

Figure 5. Nineteenth century stone walls dominate the landscape in Kalawao, Moloka‘i Island, but material signs of ritual remain. Inset maps show three sites, a *heiau*, a shrine and a possible *hula* platform. Source: Flexner (2010).

Figure 6. An anthropomorphic petroglyph on the foundation stone of a platform (Site 50-60-03-2047). The figure's raised arms could indicate *hula* or a religious ritual. See McCoy and Codlin (2015) for a recent discussion of rock art recorded on archaeological surveys in the Hawaiian Islands. Source: McCoy (2006).

ironically exist because of its history as a place of isolation (Kirch 2002). Architectural forms of religious sites range from upright stones (*pōhaku a Kāne*), to petroglyphs, to *heiau* and *ko'a*, to a rare example of a burial mound at Makapulapai (McCoy 2006, 2008). One of the well-preserved *heiau* is located on the edge of the core area of the 19th century leprosarium, abutting the talus slopes of the *pali* 'cliffs'. Two prominent upright stones are also located in the central area of the leprosarium as inhabited from 1866–1900 (Fig. 5). One is located on a relatively intact platform close to a petroglyph (Fig. 6). The petroglyph features a traditional *hula* 'dance' stance, and the nearby structure with the upright stone has been interpreted as a possible *hula* platform. The other upright stone is part of a series of terraces that were incorporated into walls built into the leprosarium's landscape of stone enclosures (Flexner 2010: 109-10, 131). Just below this feature is an adze grinding stone. On the other

Figure 7. Foundation stones of an unnamed *heiau* (Site 50-60-03-2304), Kalawao, Moloka‘i Island. All but the largest stones from the structure appear to have been removed and used to construct the nearby churchyard wall. In its original form, we presume it would have had core-filled walls and would have been about 250 m^2 (exterior footprint) and was oriented to cardinal directions to reference nearby off-shore islands. Source: Kirch (2002), reproduced here with permission.

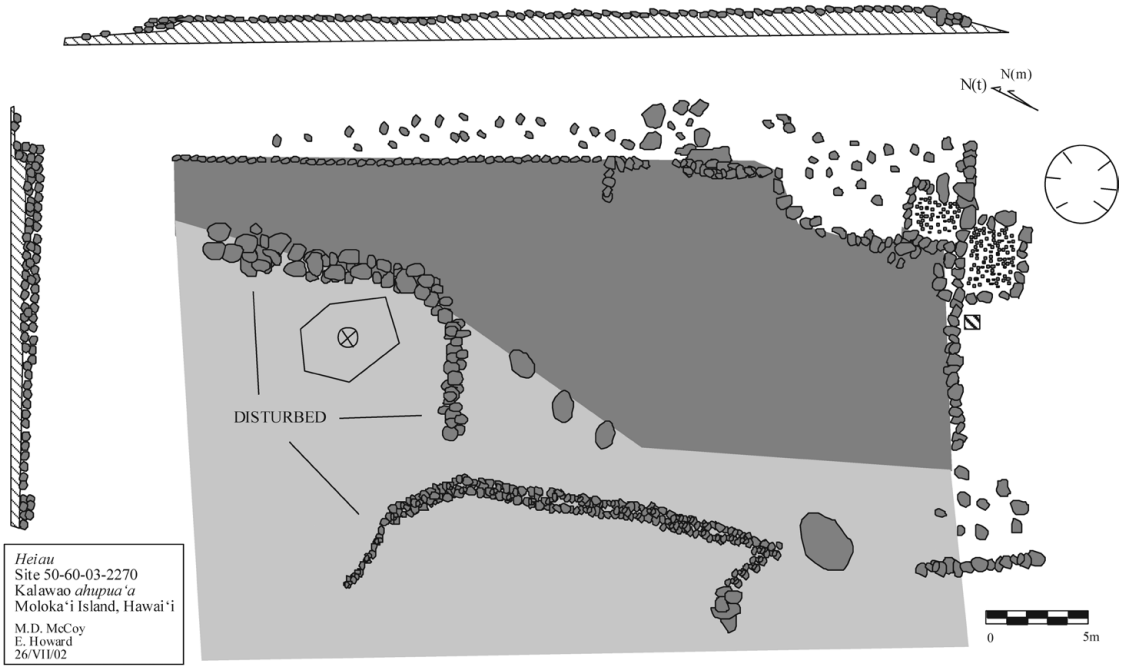

Figure 8. An unnamed *heiau* (50-60-03-2270), Kalawao, Moloka'i Island. This low platform is large (about 830 m^2) and is oriented to the northeast to reference nearby off-shore islands. It has small, formal mounds added on to the northeast corner which may be burials, and some recent disturbance, but otherwise the site is intact. Source: McCoy (2006).

side there is a stone and mortar cistern built to provide drinking water for the leprosarium. Dense scatters of 19th century artefacts relating to Kalaupapa's history as a leprosarium are found throughout the core of the 19th century settlement (Flexner 2010: 154-55). Yet such deposits are essentially absent from the sacred spaces, suggesting these sites continued to be treated as *kapu* by the mostly Kānaka Maoli population of the institution.

On the eastern (Kalawao) coast of Kalaupapa Peninsula is an un-named *heiau* on a location identified on early maps as Makali'i (literally 'Pleiades'; Fig. 7). This site's association with the Makahiki, and Lono, seems likely given its location relative to two nearby islets that served as a 'natural calendar' marking the rising and setting of Pleiades (Kirch 2002, McCoy 2014: 75). Sometime in the 1880s all but the largest stones of the *heiau* were removed, we presume to build walls for a nearby Catholic Church and cemetery. Another much larger, nearby *heiau*, also oriented to sight the rising of Pleiades, does not appear to have had any stones removed, despite a great deal of 19th century building in the immediate area and some recent modifications (Fig. 8). The removal of stones from the *heiau* at Makali'i may reflect the unusually great influence of the Belgian Catholic priest Father Damien in the institutional settlement; yet this is a unique example. For the most part, the archaeological record of Kalawao appears to show that most sacred sites were left intact through the 19th century and into the present. What is necessary in future research is the identification of potential offerings on these kinds of sites, and their chronological contexts (i.e., do they date to pre- or post-contact periods), as well as a closer examination of the archaeology to infer the formation processes (Schiffer 1987) that might indicate what kinds of specific behaviours relate to these patterns. While there is much research to be done, an initial reading of the evidence suggests that even in an "institutional" space, apparently dominated by foreign missionaries, ancient Hawaiian values, including *kapu*, continued to influence practices within the exiled population (see also Flexner 2010: 259-60, 2012).

* * *

We expect that the kinds of material evidence apparent at Puhina o Lono and Kalaupapa, while certainly special cases, do not represent isolated examples of continued engagement with Hawaiian sacred sites over the course of the 19th century. In other cases, colonial building projects integrated the fabric, locations or forms of *heiau*. Where Christian churches were built on top of *heiau*, this could be seen as an overt attempt at colonial dominance, placing the new religion above the old (though this can be an overly-simplistic interpretation, see Sissons 2011). In other cases, new relationships with

Hawaiian *heiau* emerged from colonial constructions, something Mills (2002) has suggested for the remains of "Russian" Fort Elisabeth (Hawaiian Pā ʻulaʻula o Hipo) on Kauaʻi. We note that in Kawaihae, at the site of Puʻukoholā Heiau, the conversion of Mailekini Heiau into a fortification, complete with ship's cannons, began as early as 1812. All of these represent ongoing processes of transformation in religious sites and ritualised practices, which nonetheless fit within a continuing trajectory of Kanaka Māoli belief and cosmology.

It is unlikely that beliefs about the sacredness of *heiau* and other traditional religious sites remained unchanged in the 19th century. It is certain that the ritual significance of such sites did not disappear, but rather was *transformed*. Such an observation should not be seen as taking away from the authenticity of indigenous religious practices, as it shows the creativity and dynamism of Pacific Islanders living in situations of colonialism (Flexner 2014). One transformation that is worth examining is the extent to which *heiau*, once sites of potentially great fear for Hawaiian commoners and elites, became sites of social memory and possibly nostalgia for people who were dissatisfied with the emerging colonial status quo.

Anthropological archaeology must acknowledge the continued importance of *heiau* and other cultural sites across the nearly two and a half centuries between Captain Cook's arrival in 1778 and 21st-century Kānaka Maoli. The significance of these sites and related beliefs among living Kānaka Maoli is amply apparent. Archaeologists have a responsibility to continue to work closely with living communities and to take their sacred beliefs seriously (Kawelu 2015). What historical archaeology can contribute to our understanding of this dynamic is a close analysis of continuities, as well as transformations of ritual practice as Hawaiian people's relationships to their sacred sites evolved, even as Christianity and other foreign religions were established in the islands. What this will involve is a greater sensitivity to the post-1820 materials deposited on or around these kinds of sites, including the contemporary offerings that can be common in some areas. Is there a continuous record of offerings on some sites that includes 19th and 20th-century materials? We would argue that in many cases there is, but that this is under-represented in the archaeological documentation of such places. Is there evidence that the meanings of sacred sites transformed somehow in the colonial era? What would it look like? If this did occur, how and why? These are research questions that we are still refining and revising as our understanding of this history improves.

It is our hope that archaeologists throughout Polynesia will begin to include a focus on the traces of post-contact activities on traditional sites of religious ritual. While there is much work to be done, we have an ethical, as well as

a scholarly mandate to better understand the evolution of these connections between Polynesians and the sacred, materialised through the construction of temples and other sites and the rituals enacted on the sites through time. This should include the ways sacred sites were used during the sometimes violent upheavals of the colonial era, and their ongoing engagement with Polynesian identities, beliefs and practices continuing into the future.

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ABSTRACT

Archaeology of traditional religious sites in Polynesia tends to focus on the "pre-contact" era, before religions were transformed by European influence. An historical archaeology of traditional religious sites is essential, however, for understanding the relationship between 21st-century traditional or indigenous religious beliefs and practices, and the transformations wrought during the colonial era. Traditional religion certainly did not disappear with the arrival of Christian missionaries, but there would have been some transformations. Using case studies from the Hawaiian Islands (Puhina o Lono or "Cook's Heiau" on Hawai'i Island and the leprosarium at Kalaupapa, Moloka'i Island), we explore some of the ways that sacred sites were transformed in the 18th and 19th centuries. These are initial observations and we offer a number of recommendations for future research, particularly relating to the interpretation of architectural modifications and ritual offerings. The largely unexplored colonial archaeology of traditional religious sites merits a more prominent place in Polynesian archaeology.

Keywords: Religious sites, historical archaeology, Hawai'i, *heiau*, Captain Cook

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