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Representing the Mixed Plate: Involving Descendant Communities and Kānaka Maoli in Hawai'i Plantation Museums

Abstract

This thesis explores the ways that the involvement of diverse stakeholders at Hawai'i plantation museums affects representations of Hawai'i's plantation history. Plantations in Hawai'i had a direct colonizing effect on *Kānaka Maoli* (Native Hawaiians), displacing them from their lands, replacing them with immigrant laborers, and putting into motion the chain of events that led to Hawai'i's annexation in 1898. The current-day population in Hawai'i continues to reflect these significant changes in the society and culture of the islands. Hawai'i's plantation museums traverse topics of labor, immigration, indentured servitude, and colonization. Simultaneously, these museums advance stories of perseverance, celebration, and multiculturalism. Through a museum ethnography of four Hawai'i plantation museums, I explore how locals and descendants of plantation laborers manage, curate, and recontextualize this history. I also explore how *Kānaka Maoli* displacement continues to be underrepresented in these museums, despite the roles that plantations had in the colonization of the islands.

Document Type

Masters Thesis

Degree Name

M.A.

First Advisor

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Keywords

Diversity, Hawai'i, Plantation museums, Representation, Tourism sites

Subject Categories

Arts and Humanities | Ethnic Studies | History | History of the Pacific Islands | Indigenous Studies | Museum Studies | Other History | Race, Ethnicity and Post-Colonial Studies

Publication Statement

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Representing the Mixed Plate: Involving Descendant Communities and *Kānaka*
Maoli in Hawai'i Plantation Museums

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Amanda Ku'uālohalanileimakamae Lane

November 2023

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Acknowledgements

I'd like to thank my research participants from the Lahaina Restoration Foundation and my *kama 'āina* plantation descendant participant from Kahului, Hawai'i. Though our interviews were short, I strongly appreciate their willingness to put aside the valuable little time available to us in August of 2020. It was a stressful year for all of us, and their flexibility and perspectives were an invaluable addition to this research.

I'd also like to thank Dr. Kelly Fayard, and of course, my advisor Dr. Christina Kreps. As I worked full-time throughout my time in the program, I would have never completed this thesis without your support. I am immensely grateful for the endless advice and reminders both of you provided to me, especially in the times when I felt like I was in an endless cycle of work and school. Thank you for reading many, many incomplete drafts of my thesis, and also offering guidance on how to compartmentalize the process of thesis writing.

I am so grateful to my friends and *ohana*, who often offered words of encouragement and reminded me to take my time. I'm so thankful that I have people in my life who remind me that it's okay to take a break. I'm most grateful to my partner, Jacob, who would always remind me of how far I'd come when I'd feel like giving up. And, for driving me to coffee shops on a weekly basis. I'd like to thank my parents, who supported me from afar, even though they still don't understand what Anthropology is. I am beyond thankful for my mom, Leihulu, who inspired my love and interest in Hawai'i's many histories. *Aloha au iā 'oe.*

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Chapter One: Introduction

Plantation museums in the United States are typically “sites based on physical structures that were originally used as part of plantation complexes during the period of slavery” which present southern history through exhibitions and tours of the site (Eichstedt quoted in Small 2018, 76). Literature on plantation museums also mostly revolves around U.S. southern plantation museums and scholars critique these sites for one-sided, white-centered, and romanticized narratives, often omitting difficult and possibly upsetting histories of the enslaved populations that worked there (Carter 2016; Eichstedt and Small 2002). In this thesis, I show how Hawai’i plantation museums do not share the same history typically represented by southern plantation sites, allowing these sites to stand out as unique plantation sites.

Hawai’i was annexed due to the U.S.’s desire to control the sugar industry, and plantations in Hawai’i have a history of indentured servitude and abuse of plantation workers (Beechert 1985; Maka’ala Gastilo 2016; Takaki 1984; MacLennan 1997). Hawai’i’s population today reflects the ethnic diversity that plantation owners recruited, with one-fourth of Hawai’i’s population identifying as multi-ethnic and nearly 60% identifying as non-white, including Asian, Native American, Native Hawaiian, Hispanic, and other Pacific Islanders (State of Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism 2018).

Joshua Maka'ala Gastilo describes Hawai'i's multiculturalism as a "mixed plate:"

These dishes are usually comprised of two scoops of rice, macaroni salad, and multiple entrees such as Hawaiian kalua pig, Japanese chicken katsu, Korean kim chee, Chinese fried rice, and many other possibilities and combinations. It is this analogy—the mixture of ethnic components— that quite accurately describes the Hawaiian archipelago's multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society (2016, 1).

Maka'ala Gastilo's analogy supports that Hawai'i's ethnic groups maintained their cultural differences or "ethnic components." Hawai'i plantation museums have a unique opportunity to represent this acculturation and community, as well as to explore the topics of diversity, hardship, and colonization in a museum setting.

Throughout this thesis, I explore the ways that Hawai'i plantation museums represent *Kānaka* and plantation descendant histories, and the role that staff and volunteer identities play in each museum. I address the following research questions:

1. What draws *kama'āina* (Hawai'i locals) and *Kānaka Maoli* (Native Hawaiians) to, or away from, Hawai'i plantation museums?
2. How involved in the museum are *kama'āina*, plantation descendants, or *Kānaka Maoli*? What role do they have as museum staff or volunteers?
3. How are the themes of diversity, hardship, and colonization represented in these museums? Do the histories differ based on *kama'āina*, descendant, or *Kānaka Maoli* involvement?

To uncover how cultural diversity has affected representation of histories at Hawai'i's plantation museums, I conducted a museum ethnography which includes three methodologies. First, I conducted interviews with two staff members of the Lahaina Restoration Foundation in Lahaina, Maui, and another interview with

a *kama 'āina* plantation descendant who speaks about the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum. With these interviews, I uncovered the effects that ethnic identity can have on interpretations of history. Second, I analyzed marketing materials and exhibit content for each museum. This content analysis allowed me to understand how each museum represents diversity, hardship, and colonialism. The marketing material provided context about each museum, including visualizing community involvement. Lastly, I pulled online reviews for each museum to understand who visits the museum and whether visitor identities affected their experiences.

As a white, *Kanaka Maoli*, and Puerto Rican woman who grew up in Hawai'i, I was in a unique position to observe the ways that racial hierarchies on plantations affected the relationships between Hawai'i's cultural groups. I lived in Ewa Beach, an area that was gentrified from plantation lands just less than fifty years ago. Over eighty percent of the community are considered racial minorities – mostly Asian, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (which often includes Filipinos), and Hispanic (US Census Bureau 2023). The high school I attended, James Campbell, was named after a renowned plantation landowner.

As an elementary student, I once visited the Hawai'i Plantation Village – a plantation museum – on my home island of O'ahu. My memories of that visit did not include any gravity of the hardships of plantation life, but instead the idea that plantations fostered diversity and community. I don't recall whether our guides had talked about the difficulties of working on plantations, or racial disparities among the ethnic groups. I recall walking from house to house, exploring the grounds and learning about how

families from different cultures lived their daily lives. Though I was young, that memory makes me wonder if the museum still has a focus on people, rather than sugar, and if they still approach this topic from the same perspective.

Ever since leaving Hawai'i for school eight years ago, I have come to realize what a privilege it was to see so much cultural diversity every day. Ethnic diversity and acceptance of cultural differences were so common in Hawai'i that I became interested in whether these characteristics were also true in museum representations. I wondered if Hawai'i plantation museums, as museums that centralize stories of Hawai'i's diverse plantation communities, would be appropriate spaces to study this phenomenon.

Hawai'i plantation museums are relatively underrepresented in U.S. plantation museum literature, so this research is intended to add to what is known about these museums. This research contributes to literature about museum tours as well. Descendent or *kama 'āina* tour guides at Hawai'i plantation museums often provide additional personal perspectives that cannot be captured by museum content. I also contribute to the growing literature about diversity in museums by demonstrating that with descendant and community-members as stakeholders in the cultural institution, museums can more openly acknowledge and represent hardship. I suggest that tour guides play an active role in leading discussions on the difficult histories of plantations. I offer some insight into why *kama 'āina* may be interested in visiting Hawai'i plantation museums and demonstrate that *kama 'āina* often reflect on their own identities throughout their visits. Lastly, I suggest the history of colonialism in Hawai'i is underrepresented in museum narratives. I warn that this lack of representation contributes to the erasure of

Kānaka Maoli people and culture and allows the history of plantation expansion as a tool of colonialism to go unnoticed.

Hawai'i's plantation museums traverse topics of labor, immigration, indentured servitude, and colonization. Simultaneously, these museums advance stories of perseverance, commemoration, and multiculturalism. This combination of historical elements makes Hawai'i plantation museums especially compelling. These museums uniquely approach complicated subjects and obstacles that many professionals throughout the world increasingly attempt to understand and overcome through their own museums.

Summaries of Museums

There are many types of museums in Hawai'i, differing in content and focus. Even Hawai'i plantation museums can differ significantly from one another. Displays can be based on the type of production carried out by local plantations. Sugar, pineapple, and coffee plantations all differ culturally, socially, and politically. The most popular types of plantation museums in Hawai'i are those that focus on industrial processes of plantation productions (For example, The Dole Plantation). These sites sometimes emphasize the lives of the plantation owner when providing the history of the plantation.

The four Hawai'i plantation museums that I selected for this study were chosen because they advertise a focus on plantation life or plantation labor. The narrower focus on the lives of laborers and families made it easier to analyze each museum, as industrial museums often do not contain much information about people or plantation life. The museum I visited as a child, Hawai'i Plantation Village in Waipahu, O'ahu, is a living

history museum that advertises a focus on the lives of plantation families (Hawai'i Plantation Village Website 2023). The Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou, Hawai'i is a small museum located in an old general store that advertises a focus on plantation life or "old Hawai'i" (Hawai'i Plantation Museum Website 2023). The Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum in Lahaina, Maui is a small museum located in the shopping center Lahaina Cannery Mall. The museum promotes "the plantation era of Maui" or "old Lahaina" (Lahaina Restoration Foundation Website 2023). The last museum of interest is The Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum in Pu'unēnē, Maui. The museum focuses on the history of sugar plantations and the role of Samuel Alexander and Henry Baldwin, the museum's founders, in the sugar industry (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Website 2023).

Summaries of Chapters

In chapter two, I explore the historical background of Hawai'i, including information about pre-colonial Hawaiian ways of living, post-colonial disease and displacement, and the roles plantation managers played in the overthrow of Hawai'i in 1893. I also provide some context about how plantations have affected the demographics and ways of living in Hawai'i today. In chapter three, I provide a history of museums, and I review theoretical concepts and frameworks that guide my analysis of Hawai'i plantation museums. I also review prominent literature and scholarly work on museum models that are similar to Hawai'i plantation museums. This literature review provides insight into possible points of contention that could be present at these museums. In

chapter four, I discuss the methodologies that I used to collect data and analyze the ways that diversity affects the representation of history at Hawai'i plantation museums.

In chapter five, I present my analysis of each museum. I begin by analyzing the marketing material and museum content for each museum individually. The analysis of interviews follows the content analysis for the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum and the Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum. The last part of this analysis chapter is an analysis of online reviews by museum visitors. The online reviews provide insight into visitor reception of each exhibit, and what parts of history stuck with them after their visit. Some online reviews also implied or provided visitor identity, such as whether a visitor was *kama'āina* or a descendant of plantations. These reviews allowed me to observe ways that visitor identity affected their experience at the museum.

In chapter six, I combine my findings from all methods of analysis, and connect findings to relevant museology literature. I also provide a wider analysis of Hawai'i plantation museums and provide answers to my above stated research questions.

In my final chapter, I provide an overview of my research, explain what my research can offer to the field of anthropology, suggest recommendations for each museum, and discuss areas of potential future research.

Language and Terms

Throughout this thesis, I use several terms that are either *ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i* or Hawaiian Pidgin. *Ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i* is the Indigenous language of Hawai'i. One method used by American stakeholders to gain control over Hawai'i was the degradation and bastardization of *'Ōlelo Hawai'i*, to separate us from our language. In an effort to retain

our language, I choose to use *ka ‘Ōlelo Hawai’i* terminology when it feels appropriate. Hawaiian pidgin is a pidginized language that was formed due to language barriers between plantation laborers (McArthur 2018). Due to the English writing standard that languages not familiar to the average English-speaking reader are italicized, I italicize words that are in *ka ‘Ōlelo Hawai’i* or Hawaiian pidgin. I also use diacritical marks for words written in *‘Ōlelo Hawai’i*. These marks often are aids for language learners that indicate how a word is pronounced but can also indicate differences in meanings. Two diacritical marks are often used in *‘Ōlelo Hawai’i*. One is the *‘okina* (‘), a glottal stop indicating the sound that you hear between the English word “uh-oh”. The other mark is *kahakō* (-), a macron that indicates the stress of a vowel.

I often use the term *kama ‘āina*, meaning “child of the land.” This term is often used to refer to people who live in Hawai’i and adhere to local norms. I sometimes switch between the words *kama ‘āina* and “local” for this reason, but I am referring to the same group of people. *Kānaka Maoli* and *Kānaka ‘Ōiwi* are the Indigenous terms for Native Hawaiians, meaning “true people.” I switch between calling people who are Indigenous to Hawai’i Native Hawaiians and *Kānaka Maoli*. I also use the *kahakō* to differentiate between the singular form, *Kanaka*, and the plural form, *Kānaka*. I sometimes shorten these terms to simply “*Kanaka/Kānaka*” or “Hawaiian.” I also use the term *haole*, meaning “foreigner” in *‘Ōlelo Hawai’i*. Some *haole* may feel this term is disrespectful, but it is generally used to refer to any foreigner, regardless of where they originated. I use these terms interchangeably as well. Every time I present an *‘Ōlelo Hawai’i* word in a

chapter, I provide a quick translation in parentheses, for convenience's sake. Please see Appendix A for a dictionary of *'Ōlelo Hawai'i* terms that I use in this thesis.

Chapter Two: Historical Background

I begin this chapter with an overview of Hawai'i's pre-colonial *mo'olelo*, or history, since *Kānaka Maoli* (Native Hawaiians) resided on the islands of Hawai'i for hundreds of years prior to colonization. I discuss colonial contact with Europeans and consequential mass death, disease, and displacement, and then the influence of Christian conversion on Hawaiian morality, customs, and literacy. Lastly, I provide an overview of how foreign Western powers influenced Hawai'i's plantation economy, immigration, land rights, and other internal politics, leading up to the annexation of Hawai'i by the U.S. government in 1897. I demonstrate how Hawai'i's plantation history is intrinsically tied to Hawai'i's statehood and the mass displacement of *Kānaka Maoli*. I also illustrate the ways that *haole* (white foreigner) actors systemically exploited and mistreated Hawaiian lands and plantation communities.

Regarding pre-colonial and colonial contact history, I rely on prominent *Kānaka* scholars Samuel Mānaiakalani Kamakau (1815-1876) and Davida Malo (1795-1853). Both were activists and scholars who wrote detailed accounts of colonial contact to capture the Hawaiian perspective of how this history unfolded (Osorio 2002, 15; Silva 2004, 25-26). Both Kamakau and Malo were educated under missionary beliefs, and some Westernized beliefs are evident in their historical texts (Osorio 2002, 15; Silva 2004, 25-26). However, both scholars were very critical of encroaching colonialism and

their texts reflect this confusing, yet prominent mindset held by many other *Kānaka* at the time (Silva 2004, 26).

Pre-Colonial *Mo'olelo*

Much of what is generally known about the origins of Native Hawaiians is captured in a *mo'olelo* (history) called the *Kumulipo* (origin, or genesis). Like all *mo'olelo*, this creation story was passed down through generations in the form of a *mele* (song or chant). The *Kumulipo* says that Papa (earth mother) and Wakea (sky father) are the progenitors of ancient Hawaiians (Kane 1997, 25; Malo 1898, 34; Lilioukalani 1897). This *mo'olelo* also suggests that Ancient Hawaiians migrated from Tahiti to Hawai'i between the seventh and nineteenth generations of Papa and Wakea (Malo 1898, 24, 36).

The *Kumulipo* intimately describes the creation of the land and the sea, and the ancient ancestors of all creatures and plants (Fox and McDermott 2020, 97; Lilioukalani 1897). The land and sea are treated as spiritual bodies, responsible for the continued creation of life (Lilioukalani 1897; Kane 1997, 31). Reciprocal relationships and complimentary balance between the sky and land were, and for some still are, the driving force for Hawaiian ways of life (Fox and McDermott 2020, 97; Handy 1940; Kane 1997, 30; Kuykendall 1947; Lilioukalani 1897).

Each generation of *Kānaka* following Papa and Wakea passed down the *mana*, or power of the spirits, in the form of gifts and talents (Handy 1940; Kane 1997, 26). *Kapu* (*tapu*, or *tabu*; taboos or restrictions) were prohibitions that were implemented in order to maintain balance and protect the *mana* of descendants (Handy 1940; Kane 1997, 26; Kuykendall 1947). If an individual broke *kapu*, it was believed that spirits would exact

retribution on that individual as a punishment (Handy 1940). Breaking *kapu* was also thought to soil one's *mana*, and *mana* could be appropriated by other *Kānaka*, in the right circumstances (Kane 1997, 26; Kuykendall 1947).

Since Papa and Wakea are the common ancestors of all *Kānaka*, the idea of royalty, or kings, is thought to have been introduced after the time of Wakea – six or so generations later (Malo 1898, 92). *Mo'olelo* does not indicate when the first king was appointed, but Malo (1898) theorized that the rank of “king” was created due to a growing need for someone who could lead the government decisively, for the benefit of all people (Malo 1898, 92). Rather than a single king, there were many *ali'i* (kings, chiefs: people of abundant *mana*) and many levels or ranks of kingship (Malo 1898, 92). Because of this, I also use “kings” and “chiefs” interchangeably when referring generally to high-ranking *Kānaka Maoli*. Kings oversaw the ordeals of people and had a definitive say in the life or death of a person, no matter their rank (Kane 1997, 37; Kuykendall 1947; Malo 1898, 97). Kings also were responsible for war-time decisions, and for allocating land rights to people (Kane 1997, 31, 34; Kuykendall 1947; Malo 1898, 97). Kings controlled all goods that people produced, imposed land taxes, and enforced punishments (Kane 1997, 31-34; Malo 1898, 97). Lastly, kings ordained religious rites, temples, and festivals (Kane 1997, 34).

Malo (1898) theorizes that after kingship was implemented, *kapu* were likely expanded so that the descendants of the first king would retain the most *mana* through an unsoiled bloodline (Malo 1898, 96). Both royalty and *maka'āinana* (common people, with average or little *mana*) had to adhere to strict *kapu* (restrictions) to preserve a king's

*mana*¹ (Handy 1940; Kane 1997, 34; Kuykendall 1947; Malo 1898, 96). The consequence of *maka 'āinana* breaking *kapu* was often death (Malo 1898, 96).

There were no specific laws about land use, taxation, or other such affairs, so land management decisions were made by individual *ali 'i* or *konohiki* (mid-ranking land managers, usually related to royalty) (Beechert 1985; Kirch 2010, 49; Malo 1898, 97). Due to this lack of regulations, some *ali 'i* and *konohiki* would misuse their power to oppress *maka 'āinana* (Malo 1898, 97; Kuykendall 1947).

Since *ali 'i* provided security and governance, *maka 'āinana* provided labor, and the land provided resources, the system was considered beneficial to all (Handy 1940; Kane 1997, 51; Kuykendall 1947; Osorio 2002, 49). Malo (1898) argued that while the classes theoretically benefitted from one another, *maka 'āinana* would try to avoid *ali 'i* and any conflict that could have them killed (Malo 1898, 100).

Other scholars state that there were many options *maka 'āinana* had to protect themselves from the tyranny of unjust *ali 'i*. If a person disagreed strongly with the leadership style of an *ali 'i*, they were free to move to another district or region (Beechert 1985; Kane 1997, 51; Osorio 2002, 55). If *ali 'i* were especially oppressive, *maka 'āinana* could even have the *ali 'i* put to death (Beechert 1985; Malo 1898, 97). There was also constant competition over kingship. Due to the possibility that kingship may have been constantly shifting, scholars argue that *maka 'āinana* might not have worried over the current leadership (Beechert 1985; Kane 1997, 51; Osorio 2002, 55).

¹ These *kapu* often involved prostration; avoiding standings too close to an *ali 'i*, their belongings, and their homes; and more (Handy 1940; Kane 1997, 34; Kuykendall 1947; Malo 1898, 96).

Each island of Hawai'i is divided into *mokupuni* (kingdoms), which are divided into *moku* (districts), divided into *ahupua'a* (subdivisions of land) (Beechert 1985; Kane 1997, 31; Kirch 2010, 47; Malo 1898, 49). *Mokupuni* and *moku* were controlled by *ali'i nui* (kings). *Ahupua'a* were controlled by *ali'i* and were regulated by *konohiki*, who coordinated land and water rights and collected island resources to be shared among *ali'i*. Each *ahupua'a* was split from the mountains all the way to the sea to allow equal access to island resources. *Ahupua'a* were further divided into smaller and smaller sections, each with their own name (Beechert 1985; Kane 1997, 31; Kirch 2010, 47; Malo 1898, 49).

Exchange of resources was collectivist in nature (Kane 1997, 42; Linnekin 1985; Trask 1986). Lindsay Linnekin (1985) detailed how trading was done through a reciprocity system where gifting goods morally required another to gift something in return. Social status played a significant role in this reciprocity (Kane 1997, 42; Linnekin 1985). Gifts received were often regifted up the social hierarchy to continue a cycle of honoring one another, since gifts honored both the recipient and the giver. Haunani-Kay Trask (1986), a renowned Hawaiian scholar, critiques Linnekin's work and says that Linnekin implies that the system is negatively influenced by an avoidance of feeling indebted to another person. Trask (1986) instead argues that reciprocity should be understood as a way of ensuring indebtedness, protecting Hawaiian solidarity and cultural ties through a cycle of reciprocity.

Ancient Hawaiian staples were *kalo* (taro, a root vegetable), sugar, banana, fish, *'ulu* (breadfruit), sweet potatoes, yams, and many other tuber or root vegetables (Beechert 1985; Kane 1997, 53; Malo 1898, 80-81). Cultivation, foraging, and hunting

practices were systemically organized activities that involved the participation of many farmers at a time (Beechert 1985; Kane 1997, 53). Gender prohibitions or *kapu* often limited the tasks that a person could perform when it came to farming as well (Malo 1898, 53; Beechert 1985). Every resource foraged, cultivated, and hunted was out of necessity and there was often no surplus of resources (Kane 1997, 42; Malo 1898, 284). To maintain a steady supply of food throughout the year, it was important that everyone contributed their skills where they were needed.

Malo (1898, 284) writes that the system of production often forced people to be hungry and at a loss at times when the food had run out, while Kane (1997, 42) writes that Ancient Hawaiians believed that there was no benefit to accumulating excess provisions. Malo (1898, 284) and Beechert (1985) attribute much of the system's failings to times of drought, which could severely cut off resource production. Effective irrigation was very important to keeping this system running (Beechert 1985; Malo 1898, 284). Irrigation channels and ponds were often formed by hand, requiring a large amount of people and energy to complete such grand tasks.

Kānaka cultivated different crops and could trade for resources grown by other farmers throughout the year (Beechert 1898; Trask 1986). Unlike individualistic societies, Hawaiian society values how much one can give, rather than how much they can collect (Kane 1997, 42; Trask 1986; Linnekin 1985). There was also no need to trade across *ahupua'a*, since the land divisions allowed everyone equal access to the resources they needed to survive (Beechert 1985; Kane 1997, 31). Trask (1986) maintained that

especially in the later times after colonial contact, the continued practice of reciprocity was a defensive practice that helped maintain cultural traditions and relationships.

To understand the effects that plantations had on *Kānaka* through land displacement, it is necessary to acknowledge that religion, governance, and tradition were all intricately tied to land stewardship. Disturbing the balance between people and land resulted in the disruption of religious practices, governing structures, and cultural traditions. Over the course of 200 years, Western powers attempted to erase this complex history of *Kānaka Maoli* society from historical records and public knowledge.

Colonial Contact

By the time of colonial contact in 1778, there were many *ali'i* who were responsible for governing specific *mokupuni* (see Page 14). As previously mentioned, due to the aggressive dispositions of many *ali'i*, political power consistently shifted from one person to another. This political turmoil in Hawaiian society is believed to have distracted *Kānaka* from the growing threat posed by British colonial powers (Osorio 2002).

Seventeen years after the first arrival of Captain James Cook in 1778, the islands were reunited under one King, Kamehameha the Great, or Kamehameha I (Kuykendall 1953). He formally established the islands as the “Kingdom of Hawai’i” and became the *ali'i nui mō'ī*, the highest-ranking *ali'i* with the utmost power over all the islands and their people (Kuykendall 1953). Kamehameha I is said to have been significantly aided by the British Navy, especially George Vancouver, during his conquest of the islands (Kuykendall 1953). The interisland wars overlapped with the growing conflict with colonial powers.

It is commonly believed that James Cook and the British Navy were the first *haole* (foreigners) to visit Hawai'i, but *mo'oku'auhau* (Hawaiian genealogy histories) suggest that travelers from afar visited the islands as early as 900 A.D. (Kamakau 1866 cited in Silva 2004, 18). These *haole* presumably joined the *Kānaka Maoli*, and some are said to have traveled back and forth between their homeland and the islands (Silva 2004, 18). *Kānaka* histories position Cook's arrival not as one of "first encounter" or "discovery," but as the beginning of the colonization of Hawai'i and its people (Kamakau 1867 cited in Silva 2004, 18).

Cook and his crew arrived at Kealakekua Bay, Hawai'i on the 17th of January 1779 (Kuykendall 1947; Obeyesekere 1992, 3; Sahlins 1985). The validity of stories recalling Cook's arrival are highly contested – most especially whether Cook was mistaken by Natives as a god. This claim was popularized by Marshall Sahlins in 1985, and then debunked by Gananath Obeyesekere in 1992. In *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook*, Obeyesekere (1992) demonstrates that the belief that Native people would see European colonizers as gods is one of many myth models formed by the European imagination to justify ongoing colonization and imperialism².

Hawaiian activist and scholar Samuel Manaiakalani Kamakau wrote in detail the *mo'olelo* of Cook's time in Hawai'i (Kamakau 1866 -1867). Kamakau's accounts were written to oppose false, westernized narratives that were spreading through the islands by the 1860s (Silva 2004). Silva argues that Kamakau's presentation of Cook's visits are representative of "how Cook was perceived within a nineteenth century *Kānaka*

² For more information, see Obeyesekere, Gananath. 1992. *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European mythmaking in the Pacific*. and Sahlins, Marshall. 1985. *Islands of History*.

worldview,” or how *Kānaka*, less than one hundred years later, collectively remembered the disposition of Cook and his crew and the series of events that took place (Silva 2004, 17).

Kamakau writes that the incitement of violence started quickly upon the navy's arrival in 1779 (Kamakau 1866 -1867 cited in Silva 2004). Hawaiians encountered constant intimidation and violence at the hands of the British Navy (Kamakau 1866 -1867 cited in Silva 2004). On February 14, 1779 James Cook held hostage Kalani‘ōpu‘u-a-Kaiamamao, the then *ali‘i nui* or reigning monarch of the Island of Hawai‘i, for the return of an impounded boat (Silva 2004; Kuykendall 1947). This injudicious decision aptly led to Cook’s ultimate demise. *Haole* visits to Hawai‘i following Cook’s death continued to bring violence and death to *Kānaka Maoli* (Kuykendall 1947; Silva 2004).

Mass Death and Disease

One *Kanaka* reports that Cook’s visits brought “venereal disease, prostitution, epidemics, and the weakening of the bodies of the Native people, all of which were no doubt responsible for a fairly swift and devastating reduction in population” (Kamakau 1866 -1867 qtd. in Silva 2004, 24). As previously mentioned, Kamakau was a Native Hawaiian activist and scholar who shared the Hawaiian perspective of historical events, as they had been shared with him from elders. Kamakau captures this history just 80 years after the arrival of the British navy, uniquely positioned to observe and comment on the condition of Natives at that time.

Hawai‘i’s *Kānaka* population was thought to range from 400,000 to 1,000,000 in 1778 and is thought to have dropped to 135,000 by the early 1820s (Kane 1997, 69;

Osorio 2002, 10; Silva 2004). By the end of the 19th century the depopulation of Hawaiians was estimated to be about 92 to 95% (Osorio 2002, 10). Diseases, including measles, *ma'i'oku'u* (cholera), whooping cough, influenza, and tuberculosis spread throughout the islands (Silva 2004). The effect of these diseases would be felt for centuries, as they killed many *ali'i* and *kūpuna* (ancestors). Surviving Hawaiians were left struggling to maintain their own livelihood in addition to the livelihood of the land itself, which had also lost hundreds of thousands of stewards (Osorio 2002, 10; Silva 2004). This severe loss of the *Kānaka* population and land had the remaining Natives in a panic to preserve the structure and survivance of the Hawaiian kingdom.

In early 1819 King Kamehameha I placed “*kapu* on the actions of foreigners and construct(ed) special temples called *hale o ke akua* (house of the *akua*) or *haleopapa* (house of Papa)” (Silva 2004, 24). Kamehameha I died in May 1819, and his son Liholiho ascended the throne and inherited the responsibility to try to stop the mass death of *Kānaka* (Osorio 2002, 11; Silva 2004). One of Kamehameha’s wives, Ka’ahumanu, also ascended the throne to co-rule with Liholiho as *Kuhina Nui* (co-regent) (Osorio 2002, 11).

In a mourning period after Kamehameha I’s death, an eating custom called ‘*ai kapu*’ was lifted temporarily (Osorio 2002, 11). ‘*Ai kapu*’ was a restriction that prohibited men and women from eating together and required men to do all cooking (Kane 1997, 53; Kuykendall 1947; Malo 1898, 63; Osorio 2002, 11; Silva 2004). Within this system, women were also not to eat certain foods. ‘*Ai kapu*’ maintained a state of balance between male and female people (Osorio 2002, 10). This balance was also important for *ali'i*, who

may be defiled by the breaking of these restrictions (ibid., 10; Kane 1997, 26; Kuykendall 1947).

Liholiho and Ka'ahumanu were at odds over whether the *'ai kapu* should be reimposed, but the lack of understanding about how diseases were spread played the largest role in their debate³ (Osorio 2002, 11; Silva 2004). In November of 1819, *'ai kapu* was permanently lifted by Liholiho due to the pressures to please his mother and *Kuhina Nui* (Osorio 2002, 10; Silva 2004). The lifting of *'ai kapu* was called *'ai noa*, or free eating.

For *ali'i*, *'ai noa* resulted in the loss of *mana* – reducing them from divine beings to common people likewise susceptible to daily misfortunes (Osorio 2002, 10). This was one of the first significant changes to the role of *ali'i* in Hawaiian society. The increase in people eating amongst one another allowed diseases to spread at a faster rate, increasing the rate of epidemics (ibid., 11).

Despite the efforts of *ali'i* to protect their people, many *Kānaka* were at odds as to who to blame for the decrease in the Native population (Osorio 2002, 8, 10; Silva 2004). Davida Malo, a Hawaiian scholar and historian, accused the *ali'i* of negligence, criticized the *kahuna lau'au lapa'au* (Native medical practitioners) for their ignorance about illnesses, and condemned “the savageries of ancient times,” only faulting foreigners when addressing the spread of venereal disease (Malo 1898 cited in Silva 2004, 25). Many

³ One reason might have been the concern that *'ai noa* might prevent death by disease. It seemed that *haole* always practiced *'ai noa* and never seemed to get sick (Silva 2004). Kamehameha I embodied *pono* (balance) as a powerful and prosperous leader, yet epidemics were understood as a loss of *pono* (Silva 2004, Osorio 2002). Since there was this contradiction of the concept of *pono*, on top of a lack of understanding about sickness and epidemics at the time, there was much confusion as to whether *'ai noa* would help the kingdom.

Kānaka like Malo felt at a loss for their inability to save their community (Osorio 2002, 10; Silva 2004). For some, it took decades of living alongside *haole* and converting to Christianity to realize that *ali'i* were not to blame, but rather the *haole* who brought epidemics to the islands (Silva 2004, 26).

A cash-based economy was introduced around the same time that epidemics were on the rise. Many *ali'i* went into debt from the cash-based economy and turned to the increasingly lucrative sandalwood trade (Silva 2004). The exploitation of sandalwood trees caused imbalances in nature that also affected many other traditional farms (Silva 2004). The institution of taxes further forced the estrangement from traditional farming practices and challenged the ability of *Kānaka* to take care of the land (Silva 2004; Kane 1997, 31; MacLennan 1997). *Kānaka* had to prioritize wage labor – employment that paid in cash – to pay off these taxes (MacLennan 1997). This was just one of the ways in which the introduction of western capitalism and the market economy widened the separation between *Kānaka* and the land, hampering Indigenous self-sustainability. Many *Kānaka* died of starvation or had to shift their priorities and abandon traditional ways of farming to stay alive in the newly cash-based society (Osorio 2002). In response to mass death and the overwhelming changes in everyday life, many *Kānaka* eventually turned to Christianity for answers (Osorio 2002, 11; Silva 2004).

Missionary Involvement and Religious Conversion

Missionaries first began to populate Hawai'i in 1820 due to the request by some previously converted *Kānaka* who lived and worked on whaling and merchant ships that sailed overseas (Osorio 2002, 9; Silva 2004). The American Board of Commissioners for

Foreign Missions (ABCFM) had recently shifted their attention to converting American Indian Peoples throughout the U.S. with the objective to “civilize and Christianize” (Osorio 2002, 19; Silva 2004). Hiram Bingham, the leader of the 1st ABCFM, aimed to convert Natives by introducing western culture through Christian society (Osorio 2002, 19). It was also widely known that the Hawaiian population was dwindling, and the ABCFM spread this fear to *Kānaka* that if they did not convert and atone for their sins, they might not be saved from impending extinction (Osorio 2002, 11, 19).

While missionaries were not happily received by all *Kānaka*, they still did not face many obstacles to their settlement (Silva 2004). Christianity offered hope in a time when death surrounded *Kānaka*, and answers when *Kānaka* questioned the abilities of their own religion, *akua* (gods), and *ali'i* (Osorio 2002, 12). Many *Kānaka* accepted these new morals with the promise from *haole* that these beliefs would help restore balance to Hawaiian society (Osorio 2002, 13). While many were still critical of western culture, they still converted for the potential benefits offered by the new religion (Osorio 2002; Silva 2004).

Ali'i were most interested in conversion because the missionaries introduced *palapala*, or reading and writing, to Hawaiian society (Silva 2004). It was only through becoming educated at missionary schools that *Kānaka* could learn these skills that they deemed as important to strengthening Hawai'i's role in the global arena (Silva 2004). Prior to this education, select *Kānaka* would memorize their histories or *mo'oku'auhau*

(genealogies) to control the dissemination of important or sacred knowledge⁴ (Kane 1997, 39; Malo 1898, 19). However, after contact with westerners, *ali'i* realized the benefit of literacy to understand *haole* and to communicate effectively with both other nations and other Hawaiians (Kane 1997, 41; Silva 2004). Meanwhile, missionaries saw *Kānaka*'s initial lack of alphabetic writing as proof of their uncivilized nature (Silva 2004).

Ka'ahumanu, Liholiho's co-ruler, had great influence over the growth of Christianity in Hawai'i due to her support of the ABCFM until 1932 (Osorio 2002, 11). Soon, Keōpūolani, the next highest ranking *ali'i* and the mother of Liholiho, converted to Christianity, and many more *ali'i* followed (Silva 2004). Ka'ahumanu and her chiefs initiated many laws based on Christian ideas of morality, resulting in many significant changes to Hawaiian culture and values, and increasing reliance on foreigners (Osorio 2002, 11; Silva 2004). *Haole*, as the arbitrators of what was *pono* (balanced, or morally correct), therefore held a great deal of power over Hawaiians as they adapted to new customs and mores (Osorio 2002, 11).

From 1825 to 1829 there were many drastic revisions to the *Kānaka* way of life, including laws prohibiting sex before marriage, enforcing monogamy, prohibiting the drinking of 'awa (kava), and most notably, forbidding *hula* (dancing) (Osorio 2002, 11). With these changes, the government had more control of Hawaiian households than ever before. As *haole* power and authority increased, so did the distrust *Kānaka* held toward

⁴ Many *Kānaka* continue to memorize their genealogies and preserve the memory of their family histories using this skill.

ali'i (Osorio 2002). Increasing distrust of the *ali'i* and their abilities to make judicial decisions caused a divide among *Kānaka* that complicated community culture and identity (ibid.). Later events, such as changes to land rights and the increase in wage labor, widened the separation of social classes (Osorio 2002, 32-36, 44).

Land Ownership and Plantation Expansion

Plantations in Hawai'i began as early as 1835, small in acreage, employment, and technologies (Takaki 1984; Beechert 1985; Osorio 2002, 32). William Hooper of Boston, Massachusetts introduced the first plantation to Hawai'i in 1835 (Hooper 1836 in Takaki 1984, 35). Hooper wrote in his journal in 1836 that a goal of his plantation expansion was to “eventually emancipate the Natives from the miserable system of "chief labour" which ever has existed at these islands” (Hooper 1836 qtd. in Takaki 1984, 35). Missionaries like Hooper strongly believed that the structure of the monarchy was oppressive, and that *maka'āinana* were essentially slaves to *ali'i* (Hooper 1836 cited in Takaki 1984, 35; Malo 1898, 100). As previously mentioned, *Kānaka* were divided about this fact (see page 19).

Haole advisors ensured Hawaiian leaders that these plantations would help preserve the Native Hawaiian population by forcing the *Kānaka* to cultivate resources for the sake of their survival (Osorio 2002, 73; Takaki 1984). Since they believed *Kānaka* to be lazy and underproducing, they argued that plantation labor would stir them into action and self-sustainability, assuring the continued survivance of the Hawaiian race (Osorio 2002, 73).

Meanwhile, Hawai'i's government was reformed from a monarchy to a democracy in 1837. Just two years later, the He kumu Kanawai Hooponopono Waiwai

(Rights and Laws of 1839) was signed into law (Beechert 1985; Osorio 2002, 16). This was the beginning of the Constitution of 1840, which created several governmental positions to be filled by *haole* businessmen (Osorio 2002, 26). The constitution later entitled all Hawaiian citizens to the rights of land ownership, including the personal responsibility to maintain the land (Osorio 2002, 26). *Haole*, especially those from the ABCFM, argued that no civilized country could exist without private property, and that the lack of individual land tenure was the reason for the depopulation of Hawai'i (Takaki 1984; Osorio 2002, 32). They argued that *Kānaka* would be more productive when working for their own interests and producing resources solely for themselves (Takaki 1984; Osorio 2002, 32).

Prior to this set of laws, land was not something to which all had rights, or even something that was formally owned by Hawaiians themselves (see page 19). This change to land rights further equalized *Kānaka* of low and high birth, since *maka 'āinana* then had independent responsibilities over land that was previously managed by specific, privileged individuals (Osorio 2002, 35-36).

In 1848 *Kānaka* gained the opportunity to apply for land ownership (Osorio 2002). Even Hawaiians in government did not have a complete understanding of what land ownership entailed (Kane 1997, 31; Osorio 2002, 46). The shift from traditional land and social relationships was confusing and even stressful for many Hawaiians. *Ali'i* and *konohiki* often felt their social status was ignored when *maka 'āinana* purchased land (Osorio 2002, 54). Not wanting to disrespect *ali'i* and hurt their relationships within their communities, many *Kānaka* avoided land ownership until after landowner rights

expanded to include *haole* (Osorio 2002, 53). The rights to access specific areas of the land were also drastically changed. Prior to the 1840s, regions from the mountains to the sea and the resources within them were equally accessible to those who lived there (see page 22). Afterward, *Kānaka* only had rights to access the land they owned, limiting their gathering and cultivation rights to specific pre-determined areas (Osorio 2002, 54).

In July of 1850, the legislature voted to allow *haole* who were not naturalized citizens to own and sell lands (Osorio 2002, 53). This vote overshadowed the naturalization requirements implemented in 1838 that proved the foreigner's commitment to the Hawaiian kingdom (Osorio 2002, 50). Under these requirements, *haole* had to live in Hawai'i for a minimum of ten years and promise their fealty to the Hawaiian government before gaining the privilege to own land (Osorio 2002, 50). After 1850, any foreigner could own land without prerequisites or proving their loyalty to the government – a snub for many *Kānaka Maoli* who for the last 50 years were adamant that *haole* should not have such opportunities offered to them freely (Osorio 2002, 50; Silva 2004).

Jonathan Osorio argues that this division of lands (also known as *Māhele*) was “the most critical dismemberment of Hawaiian society,” as land was acquired unevenly among different classes of *Kānaka* and *haole* (Osorio 2002, 44). Out of 4.2 million obtainable acres, the Hawaiian kingdom held just over one million acres: “251 *konohiki* and *ali'i nui* owned about a million and a half acres, and the 80,000 *maka'āinana* had managed to secure about 28,000 acres among them” (Osorio 2002, 44). The *Māhele* further divided *konohiki* and *maka'āinana* by forcing *Kānaka* away from the

interconnections that were necessary to care for each other and the land (Osorio 2002, 53-56).

These changes to land rights and ownership paved the way for the fast growth of plantations in Hawai'i that would mark the end of the traditional Hawaiian way of life. While *Kānaka* were reluctant to claim land for themselves, missionaries and other *haole* took advantage of their new rights – many with the intention to expand their lands and establish Hawai'i's global position as a business venture and plantation economy (Osorio 2002, 53).

As *Kānaka* continued to die from disease and land displacement, they also served as the main labor force of plantations (Osorio 2002, 120; Takaki 1984). With most *Kānaka* forced to work to pay off their taxes (which, as noted earlier, were required to be paid in cash) they were also pit against each other as “employed” and “unemployed” (MacLennan 1997; Osorio 2002, 120; Silva 2004). Unemployed Natives were portrayed as children and “potential predators” – different from the “respectable Natives” who owned land and/or worked for a wage (Osorio 2002, 120). Popular newspapers at that time were written with respectable Natives as their audience, spreading hateful accusations against landless and unemployed *Kānaka* to divide them amongst themselves and further individualistic ideas of self-preservation (Osorio 2002, 120).

Within 30 years, the number of plantations quadrupled, and Hawai'i became reliant on sugar to thrive within the global economy (Beechert 1985; MacLennan 1997; Takaki 1984). In 1864, Hawai'i plantations saw a huge increase in business and revenue

due to the demand for sugar that was compounded by the ongoing civil war in America. As northern states were denied access to southern-grown sugar, they turned to Hawai'i's growing sugar industry.

Kānaka provided over 80 percent of plantation labor at the time (Osorio 2002, 143). But, because their wages were relatively high, they demanded more from the plantations than most businessmen intended to pay (Osorio 2002, 143; Takaki 1984). The expansion of plantations, compounded by the previous structural and cultural barriers that deterred and excluded *maka 'āinana* from land ownership, displaced so many *Kānaka* that the government feared their extinction (Beechert 1985; Silva 2004; Takaki 1984).

The Bureau of Immigration was established to address this problem in 1864 (Osorio 2002, 140). The agency was responsible for contracting laborers that were increasing in number throughout the kingdom as part of the plan to provide plantation laborers (*ibid.*). On top of drafting and enforcing contracts, it recruited labor in China, Japan, and the Philippines (*ibid.*). It should be noted, however, that the Bureau mostly worked for the businessmen that managed the plantations than for the workers (*ibid.*).

Over the next eight years, “the government spent over one million dollars [about \$180 million in 2023] on the recruitment of labor while all of the plantation companies together spent half of that amount” (Osorio 2002, 140). The government's interests directly aligned with those of the sugar industry, with little consideration for the communities who worked for them and how it might benefit them (Osorio 2002, 140). By 1887, the Hawaiian kingdom had a profitable plantation economy and greatly modernized transportation and irrigation structures throughout the islands (Osorio 2002, 145).

Hawai'i's international reputation improved significantly due to the treaties and contract agreements necessary to maintain the growing needs of the plantations (Osorio 2002, 146).

Plantation Dependency, Conditions, and Race

While some foreign-born workers populated Hawai'i before the growth of plantations, this population grew dramatically after the introduction of plantations, while the *Kānaka Maoli* population quickly decreased (Silva 2004; Takaki 1984). According to the Hawai'i Kingdom census from 1850, there were 81,000 *Kānaka Maoli* throughout the islands, and about 1,000 non-Hawaiians (Hawai'i Census 1850; Bureau of Public Instruction 1891). By 1890, near the end of the Hawaiian monarchy, Hawai'i's population was about 90,000 people, with 40,000 *Kānaka Maoli* and nearly 48,000 non-Hawaiians or foreign-born people (State of Hawai'i Census 1850; Bureau of Public Instruction 1891). Most foreign-born groups were Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, German, other European, or American. By the 1930s, Hawai'i's ethnic diversity expanded to include Filipinos and other Polynesians.

The earliest plantation managers thought of laborers as they did commodities. When placing orders for tools and commodities such as horses, lumber, or iron, it was not uncommon to see orders for people – “Portuguese laborers,” “75 Japanese,” Chinese labor (40 men)” (Theo H. Davis and Company 1889-1898; William G. Irwin 1894 qtd. in Takaki 1984, 23-24). These were usually requests to a company for the recruitment of certain laborers. Managers systematically recruited laborers from a variety of countries to minimize the threat of unionization. (Maka'ala Gastilo 2016; Takaki 1984, 24).

While much labor was recruited by American businessmen on behalf of plantations, the rumors about Hawai'i's plantation labor brought many more immigrants to the islands (Takaki 1984, 54). While labor conditions in Hawai'i were poor, the conditions that some endured in their home countries seemed bleak in comparison (ibid.). War, famine, and conflict in people's home countries led them to seek the seemingly idyllic landscape of Hawai'i, even though the immigration process was dangerous and even deadly (Takaki 1984, 55). Ship conditions were especially trying (ibid.). Laborers who survived the ship were immediately assigned numbers, often stamped into a small metal "bango tag" (ibid.). These tags were a tool for dehumanizing laborers, reducing them to property (ibid.). Ronald Takaki (1984) quotes one laborer as saying, "They never call a man by his name. Always by the bango, 7209 or 6508 in that manner. And this is the thing I objected to. I wanted my name, not the number" (Takaki 1984, 89). Stripped of their identities and names, the immigrant laborers were then scrutinized by plantation managers until one chose their requested laborers to work their plantation (Takaki 1984, 55).

The ABCFM claimed to be, historically, opposed to slavery (Osorio 2002, 175). However, the treatment of laborers and the rigidity of their contracts contradicted Missionary beliefs (Osorio 2002, 175). Bystanders both inside and outside of the ABCFM often criticized Hawai'i plantations for the parallels evident between Hawai'i's contract labor and the enslavement occurring in the American South (Osorio 2002, 176). One government official, William Hillebrand, even stated that "the difference between a coolie [contract laborer] and a slave is only one of degree, not of essence" (Hillebrand

1885 qtd. in Osorio 2002, 182). The commonalities between contract labor and the enslavement of people in the American South were unavoidably scrutinized, especially since enslaved Black Americans were freed less than 20 years prior to the boom of Hawai'i's plantations (Osorio 2002, 176). While the way laborers were initially recruited and received was similar, the actual working conditions and racial hierarchies of Hawai'i's plantations are where these commonalities became most evident.

Plantation labor was difficult work. Laborers often had to wake at 5am and had to be in bed by 8pm. One laborer recalls, "All lights were out by eight-thirty; talking was not permitted, and every laborer had to be in bed" (qtd. in Osorio 1984, 90). Laborers were under constant surveillance (Osorio 1984, 90). On top of arduous work, laborers were often abused by plantation managers and *luna* (foremen/overseers). The same laborer is quoted, "At night, instead of a sweet dream of my wife and child left in Okinawa, I was wakened up frightened by a nightmare of being whipped by the *luna*" (qtd. in Osorio 1984, 91). Osorio (1984, 87) writes, "They felt they had been worked 'like horses, moving mechanically under the whipping hands of the luna.'" The constant abuse was just one of the many difficulties faced by plantation laborers.

Laborers signed different contracts depending on their race, ethnicity, and gender (Beechert 1985; MacLennan 1997). It was believed that women were deserving of less pay because they were already earning more than enough to support their central roles as homemakers (Takaki 1984). Chinese and Japanese laborers signed three to five-year contracts, some with a guarantee that after their contract was up, they could return home (Beechert 1985; MacLennan 1997). Hawaiian laborers signed much shorter contracts,

from three to six months, as they were not as dependent on the plantation for food, money, or housing (Beechert 1985; Takaki 1984). Many Hawaiians still depended on the plantation to maintain their land rights and to earn cash to pay off their land taxes (Beechert 1985; Takaki 1984). Oftentimes, immigrant laborers were completely unfamiliar with labor contracts and did not even speak the language in which the contract was written (Takaki 1984).

A typical labor contract required that a person work a minimum of 10 hours a day, 28 days a month (Beechert 1985; Takaki 1984, 35). While contracts appeared to have finite end dates, plantation policies kept many laborers poor, segregated, and dependent on the plantation and the plantation store – forcing reenlistment (MacLennan 1997). Plantation dependency was created by plantation managers when plantation demands exceeded available laborers (MacLennan 1997).

Housing was often provided to immigrant laborers as part of their contract, but all other expenses had to be paid out of their paycheck (MacLennan 1997). Housing was considered a great benefit to laborers that reduced the need for finding, and paying for, land or a place to live. However, the inclusion of housing later became a hinderance to laborers, rather than the convenience that “free” housing was made out to be. Plantation housing, often near or on plantation land, gave managers control over how the laborers used their free time and how they lived among each other – usually segregated by nationality (MacLennan 1997; Maka’ala Gastilo 2016; Takaki 1984). Free housing also justified the low pay that forced laborers to depend on the plantation for all their daily

necessities, lending to the accumulation of debt owed to the plantation (MacLennan 1997; Maka'ala Gastilo 2016; Takaki 1984).

Managers implemented policies that encouraged laborers to incur debts in housing, food, and the plantation store, which kept them re-enlisting in plantation work (Beechert 1985; MacLennan 1997). One of the most effective ways to do this was by allowing laborers to use credit from future pay when paying for food and other goods at plantation stores. Food was also a major expense, and managers complained of the costs of even the most common staples in the typical laborer's diet – taro, fish, and rice (MacLennan 1997; Takaki 1984). All three of these items were called “luxuries.” One manager complained about Chinese laborers being twice as expensive to feed as the typical Hawaiian laborer (MacLennan 1997). He writes, “twenty-eight workers ate fifty pounds of rice a day, plus meat, costing about \$5~\$6 a month more to feed each of them” (Beckwith 1864 qtd. in MacLennan 1997). Managers felt compelled to satisfy the food needs of laborers, yet still indebt them to the store so that they could make a profit (MacLennan 1997; Takaki 1984). Feeding the laborers turned out to be more expensive than managers had anticipated, so the debts allowed them to not worry so much about the amount of money they spent on securing provisions for the store.

Since laborers could not afford the costs of goods yet still needed to feed their families, they used future credit with the stores (Beechert 1985; MacLennan 1997). In 1882 each plantation worker likely owed about \$25 U.S. dollars [\$745.41 in 2023] to one plantation store, to be paid back before leaving the plantation (MacLennan 1997). \$25 U.S. dollars could be three or four months of pay, as the average worker earned between

four to seven dollars a month. The credit was often marked on the laborer's pay slips (MacLennan 1997; Takaki 1984). Indebted laborers could not return to their homelands and were forced to re-enlist if they did not pay off their debt by the end of their contracts (Beechert 1985; MacLennan 1997).

With these discriminatory and oppressive contracts and policies in place, plantation managers held a great deal of control over plantation workers and their daily lives. It was also difficult, if not illegal, to live an independent life on the islands (Beechert 1985; MacLennan 1997; Osorio 2002). If a non-white worker was able to leave their position, they also could become subjected to mistreatment in their attempts to start a new career or start relationships with local women (Osorio 2002, 145-175). White *haole* saw other foreigners, Asians and Chinese especially, as threats and rivals in the worlds of both romance and commerce (Osorio 2002, 174-175; Takaki 1984). When it became clear that Asian men and *Kānaka* women would have romantic relationships, jealous *haole* depicted *Kānaka* women as unsanitary, blaming them for the increase of death and disease on the islands (Osorio 2002, 174). When Asian businessmen attempted to start their own businesses, they often found themselves faced with impossible roadblocks (Osorio 2002, 175). Even the choice to move to America was also eventually halted by official government rules and regulations (Takaki 1984).

On top of the control managers held over workers due to their contracts, managers were also known to offer different opportunities and pay, and condone different degrees of punishment, based on a worker's race (Maka'ala Gastilo 2016; MacLennan 1997; Takaki 1984). This system supported an unjust racial hierarchy that Joshua Maka'ala

Gastilo (2016) describes as a pyramid. They write, “at the top of this hierarchy were the managers and sugar boilers, followed by the head *luna* [foreman, or boss], *luna*, as well as the skilled workers; at the bottom were the unskilled workers, the majority of which were non-white immigrants” (Maka’ala Gastilo 2016, 12). Whites were often privileged with higher positions in this hierarchy and benefited from higher wages and racist plantation policies (Maka’ala Gastilo 2016; MacLennan 1997; Takaki 1984). *Lunas*, usually white-skinned, foreign-born Portuguese men, also often held the power to physically punish other laborers with whips if they should falter in productivity (MacLennan 1997; Takaki 1984).

This hierarchy was also maintained spatially, with the manager’s house overlooking the plantation, and the homes of the non-white, darkest skinned, lowest ranked groups on the margins (Maka’ala Gastilo 2016). The most recently arrived immigrant group was often at the bottom of this hierarchy, forced to live on the perimeters of the plantation, receive the lowest pay, and be treated the most unfairly and inhumanely by the plantation manager and *lunas* (Maka’ala Gastilo 2016; MacLennan 1997).

According to Maka’ala Gastilo (2016) and Takaki (1984), plantation managers did everything in their power to maintain hierarchies where other people of color asserted their dominance over one another. By pitting plantation laborers against each other and segregating them in these ways, managers intended to dissuade revolt and unrest while maximizing productivity. Despite these attempts, there was only so much that plantation

managers could prevent in an environment where the general workers sought better working and living conditions, regardless of racial differences.

Strikes were consistently held by laborers of the same ethnic backgrounds (Beechert 1985; Takaki 1984, 145). However, the ethnic segregation of laborers continued to be an effective strategy to quell large, multiethnic strikes that could have a lasting impact on plantation work (Takaki 1984, 164; Jung 2006). For half of Hawai'i's plantation history, strikes were mostly monoethnic, and since managers systemically recruited laborers from a variety of cultural backgrounds, strikes often felt futile or ineffective (Takaki 1984, 145-164).

The earliest strike (1841) was organized by *Kānaka* laborers just six years after the start of the first plantation and resulted in most workers going back to work with unmet conditions (Beechert 1985; Takaki 1984, 145). Most of the subsequent strikes followed a similar pattern (Takaki 1984, 145-164). Many strikes resulted in intimidation, fines, arrests, evictions, and imprisonment (ibid). Later, peaceful strikes were often instigated by police and people designated as honorary policemen (Takaki 1984, 145-148).

Legally, striking violated the contracts of contract laborers (Takaki 1984, 147), but many contract laborers thought that The Organic Act of 1900 would resolve this issue, as the act “abolished the labor contract system” (Jung 2006; Takaki 1984, 148). In the first year after the act, over 8,000 laborers participated in strikes, resulting in the occurrence of over twenty strikes across the plantation system (Takaki 1984, 148).

In 1905, over 1,400 Japanese laborers in Lahaina protested the vicious beating of a laborer at the hand of an abusive *luna* (Beechert 1985; Takaki 1984, 150). The protest escalated into a riot and one striker was shot to death by a policeman (Beechert 1985; Takaki 1984, 150). The strike continued until five days later, when the manager agreed to meet several of the striker demands (Beechert 1985; Takaki 1984, 150). However, the camp remained armed with militia from that point forward (Beechert 1985; Takaki 1984, 151). One of the plantation museums I study in this research is the Lahaina Restoration Foundation's Hawai'i Plantation Museum, located in Lahaina. I will later explore how this museum represents this time in Lahaina's history.

In 1909 and 1920 occurred two of the most effective strikes in Hawai'i's plantation history, paving the way for better working conditions for all future laborers (Beechert 1985; Jung 2006; Takaki 1984, 153-176). These well-organized and cross-cultural strikes eliminated pay differentials between laborers of different nationalities (Takaki 1984, 155, 165), but both strikes also resulted in the eviction of hundreds of laborers (Jung 2006; Takaki 1984, 160, 172). Though these strikes went on for months at a time, the Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association (HSPA, an organization made up of Hawai'i plantation owning agencies) eventually quietly honored laborer demands (Jung 2006; Takaki 1984, 163, 174). After the successes of these cross-cultural strikes, multiethnic strikes increased significantly (Beechert 1985; Jung 2006; Takaki 1984, 177).

Strikes became increasingly dangerous situations to be in, though only a handful – most notably the Hanapēpē massacre – were truly deadly. However, unions often

implemented rules that prohibited violence, which may have helped avoid further situations like the massacre at Hanapēpē (Jung 2006; Takaki 1984). While these strikes continued, the ethnic diversity of plantations began to become less prominent, as most work forces were made up of Filipino laborers (Jung 2006; Takaki 1984). Previous plantation laborers, meanwhile, made their homes in Hawai'i and started lives within other occupations (Jung 2006; Takaki 1984). In the end, strikes served their purpose of increasing wages and living conditions, while fostering the endurance of multiethnic working communities that spread their cultural traditions and ways of living throughout the islands.

Political Impacts from Plantations

As Hawai'i's plantations grew, so did global interest in the islands and the rich resources they could offer. In 1875, the Reciprocity Treaty eliminated tariffs between Hawai'i and the U.S (Osorio 2002, 164). The Treaty increased U.S. control over Hawai'i's plantation economy – an economy Hawai'i was dependent on to maintain its position among global powers. The treaty benefited *haole* entrepreneurs and the plantation economy by increasing demand for immigration and plantation expansion, while further alienating the separate *Kānaka* classes (Osorio 2002, 164).

Prior to 1875, plantations were often independently owned and controlled by a plantation manager (Beechert 1985). After the treaty, plantations were quickly monopolized by five plantation management companies, which came to be known as “The Big Five” (Beechert 1985; Jung 2006; MacLennan 1997). By 1930, the companies American Factors; C. Brewer and Company; Alexander and Baldwin; Castle and Cook;

and Theo H. Davies and Company, owned 87% of the plantations throughout Hawai'i (Jung 2006). Three of these companies were owned by at least one of four families: the Cooke family, Castle family, Alexander family, or Baldwin family (ibid.). The first generations of these families arrived with the earliest arrivals of missionaries sometime between 1831 and 1837 (Jung 2006; MacLennan 1997). These four families stayed closely intertwined, even intermarrying to keep plantation control centralized (Jung 2006). The families also held stock in the other plantation agencies, and often were well-known in political circles, with personal connections to the monarchy (ibid.).

The Reciprocity Treaty was renewed in 1884, to the dismay of many Hawaiians who predicted the Treaty's underlying goals of colonization (Osorio 2002, 209). "By 1884, some 70 plantations valued at over 16 million dollars were producing over 60,000 tons of sugar annually" – it appeared that Hawai'i had a successful, profitable economy (Osorio 2002, 207; Takaki 1984). In the same year, however, a recession in the United States led to crashing sugar prices in the islands and the end of many plantations (Osorio 2002, 207). Hawai'i's dependence on American economic and foreign policy also allowed the eventual cession of Pearl Harbor to the U.S. for use as a naval port (Osorio 2002, 248; Trask 1986). Hawaiians across the islands were enraged by this amendment to the treaty – as it was another sign of encroaching colonialism – but all attempts at expressing frustrations to *konohiki* and *ali'i* went unheard (Osorio 2002, 248).

Meanwhile, the McKinley Tariff Act of 1880 proved disadvantageous to what was a previously lucrative relationship (MacLennan 1997; Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association 1949). This act raised import tariffs on foreign sugar and became an obstacle

to the previous fair-trade agreement, causing another recession (Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association 1949; Osorio 2002, 249). After these events, and the heightened distrust among all *Kānaka* towards the U.S., it was clear that *Kānaka* in power would not be likely to renew the Reciprocity Treaty in 1887 (Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association 1949; Osorio 2002, 249).

Influential *haole* were dedicated to making change in Hawai'i on a grand scale. By 1872 over 32 percent of legislators were white, while whites only made up 4.6% of Hawai'i's voting population (Osorio 2002, 198). White representation in the government grew to 40 percent by 1882 (Osorio 2002, 198). *Haole* gained more control over Hawai'i's government and made decisions that affected *haole* and the rest of Hawai'i's residents inequitably.

Efforts to control Hawai'i were still much slower than some Americans desired, and so some *haole* prepared to take drastic measures. In 1887 the Hawaiian League, an organization devoted to the governing of Hawai'i and mostly made up of powerful white businessmen, arranged the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian government (Osorio 2002, 1). On June 30, 1887, the Hawaiian League held a meeting with King Kalakaua, demanding a new constitution (Osorio 2002, 1, 239; Jung 2006; Silva 2004). Several attendees of this meeting were heavily armed – likely to intimidate the king into the right decision (Osorio 2002, 239). A week later, the league presented a constitution to the king and forced his signature on this document (Osorio 2002, 239). The document drastically changed the requirements for citizenship in the kingdom (Osorio 2002, 240). It terminated the King's executive power, offered new voting privileges to *haole*, and

voided the standing citizenship requirements to renounce previous nationality (ibid.).

This constitution, known as the Bayonet Constitution, was the last of significant political actions by *haole* that allowed them to overthrow the kingdom just ten years later (U.S. Department of State 2001-2009; Osorio 2002, 1).

The next ten years were a tumultuous time for the Hawaiian government. Many *Kānaka* were strongly in opposition to annexation and led several rebellions and petitions over this time (Archives.gov; Silva 2004). In 1891, King Kalakaua died and was succeeded by his sister Lili'oukalani, the last reigning monarch of Hawai'i (Archives.gov). Lili'oukalani attempted to restore executive power and Native rights with a new constitution but was opposed by the "Committee of Safety" (ibid.). This committee was comprised of non-Native businessmen who had interests in the sugar industry (ibid.). On January 17, 1893, the committee led a successful coup against Lili'oukalani and declared Hawai'i as a protected state (ibid.).

In 1894 a U.S. Investigator, James Blount, found that Hawai'i had been overthrown illegally, and demanded the U.S. withdraw themselves from the Hawaiian government (Archives.gov). In spite of this, on June 16, 1897, William McKinley, the new President of the United States, signed a treaty of annexation. Lili'oukalani and other Native anti-annexation groups gathered a petition demonstrating that *Kānaka* opposed annexation (ibid.; Silva 2004). More than half of the *Kānaka* reported by the Hawaiian Commission Census for that year signed the petition (ibid.; Silva 2004). Despite such strong *Kānaka* opposition, the Hawaiian Islands were officially annexed by the United

States on July 7, 1898 (Archives.gov). Hawai'i later gained statehood on August 21, 1959 (ibid.).

Modern-Day Hawai'i

Hawai'i's plantation museums and multicultural populations are some of the only surviving reminders of this time when "Sugar was King. 181 years after the first humble plantation in 1835, the last sugar plantation closed in 2016 (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Website; Kubota 2016). This plantation, located in Pu'unēnē, Maui was the final plantation owned by Alexander and Baldwin under the name The Hawaiian Commercial and Sugar Company (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Website). The Alexander and Baldwin Museum is located just across the street from the mill, within the former home of a plantation superintendent.

The effects of plantations continue to be felt throughout the islands. After statehood, tourism grew dramatically, causing the largest increase in concentrated land ownership in Hawai'i's history (Trask 1987, 127). In the 20th century, most of the land was owned by "the military, the state and large private estates, and foreign and mainland American developers," leaving only 10% of the land to small landowners (Trask 1987, 127). Prices of land also rose drastically, and Trask (1987) writes that "by 1970, nearly 80 percent of Hawai'i's residents could not afford the new units that had been built" (Trask 1987, 127). *Kānaka* and *kama 'āina* alike were subjected to the capitalization of Hawaiian land.

Kānaka have suffered most dramatically out of all other major ethnic groups in Hawai'i. Many studies report that Native Hawaiians have some of the highest rates of

poverty, imprisonment, unemployment, substance abuse, and poor health, including emotional health (Aczon-Armongstrong, Inoue, and Florentina Reyes-Salvail 2013; Fox and McDermott 2020, 105; Klest, Freyd, and Foynes 2013; Waitzfelder et al. 1998; Perutti 2010; Trask 1987; Wood, Gartrell, and Ovendon 2000).

As a result of displacement, many *Kānaka* left Hawai'i and traveled to the mainland in hopes of a better life (Browne and Braun 2017). At the same time, the number of Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders throughout the U.S. has increased dramatically from the 1900s, with over 1.2 million people self-reporting on the 2019 census (U.S. Census Bureau 2019). In 2010, the number of part and full Native Hawaiians throughout America was estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau to be 527,077, making up a little less than half of the Pacific Islander population in America (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). In 2019 it was estimated that only 355,000, or less than 30% of, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders live in Hawai'i (U.S. Census Bureau 2019).

The issue of displacement is often at the center of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement (Trask 1987; Goodyear-Ka'opua 2014). For *Kānaka*, sovereignty, or *ea*, refers to more than the re-establishment of the Hawaiian Kingdom, but to the freedom of Hawaiian lands. The close relationship between *Kānaka* and the land drives the movement, which was amplified in the late 1980s and 1990s as *Kānaka* increasingly recognized the ways that their identities, rights, and lands were being exploited by the U.S. tourism industry (Goodyear-Ka'opua 2014).

Though plantations are no longer around in Hawai'i today, they were the catalyst for cultural erasure, settler colonialism, and ruination and capitalization of Hawaiian

lands. The population of Hawai'i continues to reflect the ethnic displacement effects of plantations: White (25%), Filipino (25%), Japanese (22%), Native Hawaiian (21%), and Chinese (14%) (State of Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism 2018). The traditions, foods, and customs from plantation immigrant groups are many times fused with those of Native Hawaiians.

Though plantations were a source of misery for many workers, Hawai'i still became their home. Laborers still found ways to communicate and relate to one another, and Hawai'i's multiethnic population and community grew substantially. Much of the music, language, and food of modern-day Hawai'i was established during Hawai'i's plantation period (1835-2016). Many of Hawai'i's staple foods are not Hawaiian, but Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, or a combination of multiple ethnic cuisines (Maka'ala Gastilo 2016). The language throughout Hawai'i adapted through plantation times as well, with the prior pidginized Hawaiian transforming into the pidgin English you can hear in the islands today (McArthur 2018; Roberts 1995). This language is mostly Hawaiian, though some terms are mixed with English, Chinese, and other foreign languages spoken by contract laborers (McArthur 2018). For example, "kau kau" (to eat in pidgin) is theorized to have been derived from a combination of the Hawaiian "*ai kākou*," and Chinese slang for eat, "chow."

Many popular musical styles and instruments in Hawai'i have also been influenced by the cultural diversity brought by plantation labor and immigration (Troutman 2013). Examples of these instruments are Portuguese steel string guitars and the Hawai'i-adapted 'ukulele, which are prominent in Hawaiian music today (ibid.).

Plantations are an integral part of nearly 200 years of Hawai'i's history. These sites reflect a time of exploitation, abuse, colonialism, and indentured servitude. They also capture moments of growth, community, and stability for many immigrant groups. It's important to understand how significant plantation events were in shaping the history of post-contact Hawai'i and the consequent annexation of Hawai'i to the U.S. It is interesting to look at how *Kānaka* and descendants of plantation workers and managers choose to represent this history. Hawai'i's plantation museums are a unique case study for understanding how ethnically diverse descendant communities represent complicated and multi-layered narratives. In the following chapter, I explore the history of museums, the theories that guide my research, and how museums have come to approach the display of multi-layered and at times difficult narratives.

Chapter Three: Theory and Literature Review

In this chapter, I discuss the theoretical frameworks that I use to analyze Hawai'i plantation museums: critical museology and appropriate museology. These frameworks both offer illuminating ways to consider museum practices with a critical eye. They are both reflexive and action-oriented theories aimed at the improvement of museum practices. I also discuss critical museum literature around the topics of community, identity, representation, historical trauma and collective memory. I embrace this perspective in analyzing plantation museums and how cultural diversity contributes to the representation of the plantation system in Hawai'i. Since literature about plantation museums in Hawai'i is extremely limited, I also describe some similar museum models, including community museums, U.S. Southern plantation museums, and migration museums. I utilize these case studies to identify points of contention that could be present at Hawai'i plantation museums.

Museums and Communities

According to the International Council of Museums (ICOM) definition, museums are (non-profit institutions) in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing (ICOM 2022).

Almost annually, the definition of a museum is discussed, critiqued, debated, and rewritten at ICOM meetings. Even the definition above does not adequately describe the variety of museums and their motivations that exist now and in the future. ICOM's prior definition from 2019 meeting was equally up to debate:

Museums are not for profit. They are participatory and transparent, and work in active partnership with and for diverse communities to collect, preserve, research, interpret, exhibit, and enhance understandings of the world, aiming to contribute to human dignity and social justice, global equality and planetary wellbeing (ICOM 2019).

This definition inserts assumptions of what museums are or will be, while many museums do not fulfill all these requirements. The assertion that museums work in active partnership, or that they are working with diverse communities, is simply a hope of what these institutions will become. The 2022 definition likewise contains similar assumptions that museums are inclusive, foster diversity, and operate ethically. With the multiplicity of ways that museums operate, and the centuries that museums have evolved, defining the "museum" is an ongoing process still unresolved.

Western iterations of museums have existed since the sixteenth century, with notable beginnings as "cabinets of curiosity" (Ames 1992, 17; Bouquet 2012, 68; Lonetree 2012, 31). These displays were cabinets filled with artifacts from exotic peoples, places, and cultures, collected by rich merchants or "world travelers" (Ames 1992, 17; Bouquet 2012, 68; Lonetree 2012, 31). They were expressions of coloniality and superiority over peoples from far-off lands (Bouquet 2012, 72). Collecting was a demonstration of one's power and proof of their ability to go to a far-off place and return with eccentric treasures.

Museums then became sites for the public to view natural history in the form of *artificialia* (Bouquet 2012, 68). Artifacts were grouped and displayed based on the material they were made from, rather than their originating culture or utilization (Ames 1992, 50; Bouquet 2012, 68). With time came the ethnographic museum, where museums collected cultural objects to compare “evolutionary” progression (Lidchi 2013, 160). Kahn (2000, 57 qtd. in Kreps 2019, 3) describes that over time, some museum scholars came to perceive museums as places for “collecting and housing objects that served little purpose other than gatherers of dust.” Disconnected from their place of origin, and primarily visited by Western onlookers who had no context for understanding them, the value of artifacts within museums became limited by western perspectives.

Scholars say that museum visitors give meanings to objects based on socio-cultural backgrounds, internal biases, and life experiences (Ames 1992, 58; Bouquet 2012, 26; Gosden 2005, 5; Miller 2007, 167; Karp, Lavine, and Mullen-Kramer 1992, 3; Van Dyke 2015, 5). Gosden (2005, 5) writes that objects have their own characteristics that prompt human action, sensory experiences, and obligations to how we relate to other people. Howes and Classen (2013, 5) describe this as the “politics of the senses” – our perceptions are shared by our cultural upbringing, and “society regulates how and what we sense.” They explain that our lived experiences influence how we sense the world around us, and we also shape the world around us by how we reinforce those senses. For this reason, museum practitioners are challenged to consider how artifacts can be viewed differently based on a visitor’s background and experiences. Later in this chapter, I

discuss how museum practitioners at southern plantation museums reinterpret artifacts and spaces with consideration to how visitors might sense unspoken power relationships.

Museums have a long history of othering marginalized communities, especially Indigenous people, through their chosen exhibition and collection techniques (Ames 1992, 14; Bouquet 2012, 48; Kreps 2019, 56; Lonetree 2012, 30). Dinosaurs and other extinct mammals were displayed alongside dioramas of unmoving Native American people, frozen in time as if they themselves were facing extinction (Hill 2000, 40; Lonetree 2012, 30). Dioramas of Indigenous people can still be seen in many American museums today. Indigenous people were viewed as near extinction, therefore warranting their preservation in a museum setting. This representation of Native people only reified this belief to the public.

The rise of Native sovereignty movements in the 1960's and 1970's also brought about the rise of community museums, cultural museums hosted by Native community members (Alivizatou 2011, 20, 109). These museums challenge the dominant perspective about Native people through self-representation and displays of intangible culture (which will be discussed more later). This movement also brought about NAGPRA, or the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, requiring institutions to return human ancestral remains and culturally significant artifacts to their Native descendants (National Park Service 2023). Despite this law, Native groups still do not see those artifacts or remains repatriated in a timely manner. In some institutions, this process takes years, and Native groups must consistently justify why they want their tangible heritage returned (Lonetree 2012; Atencio, Balenquah, Beisaw, et al. 2020). Likewise, museums

have been continually called upon to improve their representation and collection techniques to properly respect and give voice to Indigenous people and their perspectives. There has been a growing concern over perspective, and how colonial biases of superiority can lead to insensitive displays unconcerned with the perspectives of Indigenous peoples (Ames 1992, 4).

Museology and The New Museology Movement

The critical study of museum pasts, and how they affect museum futures, has been established as “museology.” Kreps (2019, 9) defines museology as “the study, theorizing, and critical analysis of all matters related to museums in the past and present, as well as the methods of museum practice and the museum profession.” Museology is a growing, multifaceted field, but generally this definition covers the extent of how museology is the study and critical analysis of museums.

In this research, I consider theoretical models that have been formed by the New Museology movement, which began to gain momentum by the 1980s (Schultz 2011, 1; Kreps 2019, 18). Growing efforts to redefine the meaning of “the museum” inspired this shift from “a focus on objects to a focus on people, visitors, interests and purposes museums serve” (Gurian 2006, 1; Kreps 2003, 312 cited in Kreps 2020, 12). New Museology is people-centered, democratic, and action-oriented (Kreps 2003, 9-10). With criticality and reflexivity at the forefront of how to approach museum practices, “new” museologists increasingly analyze power and authority, collaboration, and engagement (Kreps 2003, 7). Deeper explorations into how museums can benefit their communities have uncovered many theoretical models and techniques that can advance the field

toward a more inclusive, diverse, and objective future. The models which I consider for this thesis are critical museology and appropriate museology.

Critical Museology

Operational museology is “that body of knowledge, rules of application, procedural and ethical protocols, organizational structures and regulatory interdictions, and their products that constitute the field of ‘practical’ museology” (Shelton 2013, 8). Operational museology includes the ethicality, organization, regulation, and products of museums. Most of what has become standardized as operational museology draws from the western epistemologies that originally informed traditional western museums and widespread beliefs of superiority over non-Western peoples and their museum practices.

Critical museology is the critique of operational museology (Shelton 2013, 8). Critical museology “illuminates the historical imbalances of power and authority embedded in museum collections and practices, and involves the creation of more democratic, inclusive, and reflexive strategies and interventions” (Kreps 2020, 1). This approach to museums and their functions observes power imbalances and addresses them with appropriate adjustments. Critical museology aims to “denaturalize what have become taken for granted categories of museum work such as best practices” (Kreps 2020, 14). “Best practices” can “lead to standardization, stifle creativity, (and) limit diversity of methods in the name of professionalism” (McCarthy 2015, xiv qtd. in Kreps 2020, 14). To avoid stagnation of museum practices, critical museology is dedicated to the study of the commonplace practices that are ingrained in operational museology.

By analyzing standardized methodologies from a multidisciplinary perspective, one can better understand the inner mechanisms of museums and similar institutions.

Anthony Shelton (2013) writes that critical museology is

crucial for developing new exhibitionary genres, telling untold stories, rearticulating knowledge systems for public dissemination, reimagining organizational and management structures, and repurposing museums and galleries in line with multicultural and intercultural states and communities (Shelton 2013, 1).

Shelton argues that critical museology allows museologists to recognize areas for improvement in their institution and practices and address these growth areas with concentrated attention. Critical museology is reflexive and deliberate by investigating the deep systemic and problematic issues within museums and implementing changes that can bring about a more inclusive organization (ibid.). This reflexivity likewise includes the analysis of one's own positionality within the museum structure (ibid.).

Collaboration in Museums

Over the last forty years, museums have increasingly established collaborative spaces, become tribally owned and operated, and engaged in collaborative partnerships with their stakeholders (Lonetree 2012, 19; Schultz 2011, 2). Museums have shifted focus to community-based collaboration to further demonstrate their commitment to their audiences, stakeholders, and society (Schultz 2011, 2). This attention to collaboration is evidence of reflexivity being practiced and applied to museum processes and shows that museums are questioning their significance in the social sphere (Schultz 2011, 2).

Museum scholars have drawn attention to the existence of the museum as a space that is constantly under negotiation with its communities, and these collaborative

conversations will include misunderstandings, tensions and conflict (Boast 2011, 57; Clifford 1997, 192; Schultz 2011, 2). Museums are being called upon to prove themselves worthy of public attention and resources, and collaboration with communities is the way many museums choose to address this problem.

Collaboration is a process as well as something that is practiced. As a process, “museums are spaces in which diverse intellectual, professional, and cultural communities meet and engage in work that yields new ways of thinking, new ways of living” (Silverman 2015, 2). To practice collaboration, museums need to welcome a multiplicity of experiences and backgrounds and engage community members throughout the process (ibid.). There is a good deal of experimentation and learning that takes place throughout the process. Community-collaborated programs, exhibits, events, or partnerships also may indicate that museums are more involved in society and have a greater commitment to their community (Schultz 2011, 2).

Museum Engagement

“Engagement” is one word used by museums to denote some level of collaboration with communities (Kreps 2020, 11). Engagement, like “collaboration” or “community,” is a word without a direct meaning in terms of what it involves (Kreps 2020, 10). More recently the term implies a more involved role that goes beyond collaboration, towards activism and participation (ibid.). Through active participation with source communities, museum practitioners can better understand the needs and wants of the community (Kreps 2020, 10).

Scholars argue that future museum practitioners will need to not just apply multiple perspectives to their work but be prepared to participate in key ethical issues in times of change and controversy (Kreps 2020, 22; MER Responds 2020; Ng, Marcus Ware, and Greenburg 2017, 142; Simpson 1996, 5). For museums, this means supporting Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color by actively listening to their perspectives on how they should collect, conserve, and exhibit their histories (Kreps 2003, 4; Schultz 2011, 1; MER Responds 2020; Ng, Marcus Ware, and Greenburg 2017, 145). Museums have been increasingly called upon to join their communities in addressing important issues, including structural injustice, oppression, racism, and abuses of power (La Tanya and Murawski 2019, 2; Ng, Marcus Ware, and Greenburg 2017, 143; Norris et al. 2014).

In some cases when museums took strong positions in times of crisis or unrest, the power of cultural and historical representations and interest in the past were increased (Stylianou-Lambert and Bounia 2016, 61). Other scholars have argued that in times of change and political unrest, museums help protect our connections between past and present, allowing for reflection and societal progress (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 7). Through actions that demonstrate the value of the stories and struggles of marginalized groups, museums confront their exclusionary pasts (Lonetree 2012, 167; Schultz 2011, 5). These displays of standing with and empowering marginalized community members are examples of critical museology in action.

Museum engagement can also include other forms of “participation” with community members. This participation with a source community can be with museum professionals or museum visitors. Intangible heritage, heritage represented through

performances, songs, dances, rituals, and/or oral histories, has been embraced by the museum field more frequently (Alivizatou 2011, 15; Fromm 2016, 93; Kreps 2008, 29). These practices are demonstrations of traditional knowledge and skills that communities and individuals consider to be part of their cultural heritage (Fromm 2016, 93; Kreps 2008, 29). Due to the intangible nature of such practices, these parts of culture are usually passed down as first-hand experiences or teachings from community members.

Davis (2011, 14-15) argues that an important aspect of intangible heritage is that the non-static nature of cultural performances and practices allows individuals to recontextualize their understandings of present-day identities. Fromm (2016, 92) says that intangible heritage also shifts the voice of authority from the museum professional to the stakeholders of that knowledge. When cultural heritage is represented by the original community of that tradition, it ensures they are representing themselves as they want to be seen (*ibid.*).

Community Museums

Many successful efforts at collaborative museology occur in community museums. In museum literature about “community,” this term is commonly used to denote peoples of a shared, self-determined identity to which they feel they belong (Woodward 2002 cited in Watson 2007). Benedict Anderson (1983) coined the term “imagined communities” to describe the formation of nations. Anderson says, “regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship” (Anderson 1983, 5). The nation, as a community, is socially constructed and formed out of a natural desire for commonality.

Anderson also calls this “imagined community” because, “the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (Anderson 1983, 6). Anderson frames “imagined community” as a participatory, self-elected sense of belonging among those with a common cause, despite a lack of “real” relationships with the other people who make up that community.

The communities I refer to in this thesis are *kama‘āina* and *Kānaka Maoli*. Since individuals choose their communities, they can identify with multiple communities at a time, and to different extents (Hooper-Greenhill 2007, 76). Within each community there are likely smaller communities – plantation laborers, people who grew up on a plantation camp, unionizers, etc. It could be difficult to encapsulate all of Hawai‘i’s wide-ranging plantation identities in one museum narrative. However, community museums can be made up of a wide array of stakeholders who can offer varied and important perspectives.

Community museum staff and volunteers are often local community members, who have complete control and power over the ways their artifacts are conserved, cared for, collected, and exhibited (Hoobler 2006, 443, 451). Community members represent their own identities with their own resources and can re-contextualize their history and culture based on their lived understandings and experiences (ibid., 443; Alivizatou 2011, 15).

Ellen Hoobler (2006) evaluates community museums with a focus on nearly full community collaboration, where the community of the Museum of Oaxaca, Mexico, actively controls the museum and its processes. Community members can gather and

preserve their cultural objects, re-contextualize histories, and establish community-built understandings of artifacts in the museum's collection (Hoobler 2006, 443). Many museum professionals attempt to create this level of engagement, but often cannot attain it due to pervasive colonial power structures.

Gloria Cranmer Webster (1990) examines how self-representation takes place at The U'mista Cultural Center in Canada. Some of the museum's accomplishments are a carvers' training program and the production of Kwak'waka language books (Cranmer Webster 1990). Through both these community-led programs, cultural tradition and custom are preserved and can continue to be shared with future generations. Like Davis (2011) asserts earlier on page 55, Cranmer Webster (1990) states that exhibitions and programs about Kwakwaka'wakw people and culture help support the cultural center's aim for visitors to recognize that Kwakwaka'wakw culture and people are still alive today.

Peggy Levitt and Katherine Cali (2017) also explore how local history museums benefit both local community members and tourists. Centering local histories through its displays, the Peabody Essex Museum attracts local visitors and offers visitors "a new way to look inward" (Levitt and Cali 2017, 155). The connections that the local museum makes between local and global histories allows visitors to recontextualize how their own identities fit into those broader stories. Later, I demonstrate how Hawai'i plantation museums similarly act as spaces for locals to reflect on and understand their identities in a new light.

From a content analysis of museums' public material and online reviews, I evaluate what qualities Hawai'i plantation museums share with community museums. I also analyze how these museums incorporate intangible heritage, and how involved *kama'āina* and *Kānaka* are in this process. I also recognize the relationship between the museums and their communities and investigate how *kama'āina* and *Kānaka Maoli* engage with the museums. In the spirit of critical museology, I also investigate whom these collaborative efforts benefit (the museum, the public, *kama'āina*, or *Kānaka*). Since there is so little written about Hawai'i plantation museums, I hope to add to understandings about these sites, their communities, and their collaborative efforts.

Appropriate Museology

Appropriate museology, introduced by Christina Kreps, is one way to address the history and institutionalized practices of the museum. Appropriate museology is

an approach to museum development and training that adapts museum practices and strategies for cultural heritage preservation to local cultural contexts and socioeconomic conditions. Ideally, it is a bottom-up, community-based approach that combines local knowledge and resources with those of professional museum work to better meet the needs and interests of a particular museum and its community (Kreps 2008, 26).

Appropriate museology considers both community knowledge and professional museum models. Kreps argues that museum practices need to meet the “needs, socio-economic conditions, cultural values, and meanings of their specific contexts” (Kreps 2020, 186). She describes appropriate museology as context-specific, whereas dominant operational or Eurocentric museology practices are homogenized.

As mentioned earlier, operational museology deprives museum scholars of seeing the methods and perspectives that non-western museums offer (Kreps 2003). Museum

professionals can learn from non-western museum models and consider non-western communities as experts of their lived experiences (Kreps 2008, 26; Simpson 1996, 1). Rene Rivard (1984) describes each community's own understanding of conservation efforts as "people's museography," or "a body of techniques and practices applied by a population to the conservation and enhancement, in a museum or otherwise, of the collective heritage of the community or territory" (Rivard 1984, 28). As communities form their own ways of caring for their tangible heritage, it is important that their methods are valued and applied. With "people's museography," Rivard explains that people and their relationships to objects are at the forefront of curatorial work (Rivard 1984, 84). There is no universal curatorial process or museology, but a world full of museologies.

Appropriate museology calls for multifaceted adaptation to the community to preserve cultural heritage efficiently. Local knowledge and resources are combined with professional museum methodologies to address community needs and interests. Kreps (2008) argues that museum professionals need to recognize local cultural traditions as valuable contributions to the world's cultural diversity and consider the ways local methodologies can be implemented into the traditional museum model, and vice versa (Kreps 2008, 26). Rather than there being a singular "best" practice for museum collection preservation or curation, there can be multiple valuable approaches to museology.

Peggy Levitt's (2015) concept of vernacularization shares many similarities with appropriate museology. Levitt (2015, 154) defines vernacularization as, "the act of taking

core concepts, articulating them in locally appropriate ways, and modelling new ways to put them into practice.” The vernacular museum borrows global, best practices (in this case, those of “the museum”) and shifts practices in new ways that are appropriate to their local community.

Hawai’i Plantation Museums are unique museum sites that should not be compared to other plantation museums in or outside of the U.S. Hawai’i plantations are places where colonialism, Indigeneity, and multiculturalism clashed to create multiple levels of power, cultural frameworks, and resources. With appropriate museology at the forefront of how to understand plantation museums, I explore how these sites may have their own distinctive and individual processes, or how they may be influenced by western business practices or reflect the models of operational museology.

Critical museology evaluates museums and their operationalized processes, with close attention to power and authority between the museum and communities. Appropriate museology considers the importance of appropriate practices applied to unique circumstances of each community and museum. These theories guide my approach to understanding and evaluating the role of *kama ‘āina* and *Kānaka Maoli* in Hawai’i plantation museums.

Collective Memory and Historical Trauma in Museums

Kammen (1991, 6-7) argues that the memory of a group or community that has been formed over multiple generations also plays a key role in creating a sense of community. He says that collective memory is reinforced and equally established by institutions like museums and schools – cultural institutions like museums are an integral

part of American culture and have a role in mirroring history and our imagined identities (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 7; Kammen 1991, 3; Stylianou-Lambert and Bounia 2016, 207).

Historical trauma, the emotional trauma experienced after a traumatic experience that is passed down through generations, influences collective memory and identity-making (Mohatt et al. 2014, 129, 131). This concept of trauma is most analyzed in studies around historic events such as the Holocaust, Native American displacement and genocide, and the enslavement of Black Americans (ibid., 189). Historical trauma connects mass traumatic events to present-day experiences, resulting in a series of physical and mental health complications (ibid., 129). Some such complications that have been found as a result of historically traumatic events are lower self-rated health, poor socioeconomic status, high stress, depression, anxiety, and increased exposure to sexual violence, drug use, and child welfare systems (ibid., 129). As mentioned in my background chapter, studies have shown that this is the case for *Kānaka Maoli* throughout Hawai'i.

Mohatt et al. (2014, 129) suggest that “historical trauma operates through a layering of narrative terms, including trauma as a concept represented in stories, history as socially endorsed memory, and an internal logic linking history to present suffering or resilience.” In this quote, Mohatt et al. argue that historical trauma is affected by the representation of traumatic events over time, and by how these events are socially accepted into community memory. As the memorialization of events is constructed by

socio-cultural circumstances, it is this memory that usually spreads among the wider public (Kammen 1991, 10; Mohatt et al. 2014, 129).

Additionally, scholars argue that the dominant culture usually silences the narratives of the non-dominant, and therefore has the most control over how events are remembered (Foucault 2003, 61, 70; Mohatt et al. 2014, 130; Stylianou-Lambert and Bounia 2016, 207). As those within the dominant culture may be dominant in number, the more people that attest to a narrative as “the truth,” the more the voices of people within the dominated identity are buried.

Small (2018, 86) writes, “collective memory also requires social forgetting.” When one individual or group of people is glorified as the focal hero of a historic event, it leaves the unmentioned “others” to be forgotten (Small 2018, 86; Stylianou-Lambert and Bounia 2016, 207). Later, I will review how this occurs in some Southern plantation museums, and how Hawai’i’s plantation museums might be aware of similar pitfalls. As a minority in their own land, the history of *Kānaka Maoli* – especially the colonization and displacement caused by plantations – could be at risk for collective forgetting and therefore continued historical trauma.

Indigenous museology scholars Amy Lonetree and Conal McCarthy present similar arguments in their works on museum decolonization. Since history museums have a role in producing collective memory, Lonetree (2012, 22) argues that it is important that museums address legacies of historical unresolved grief, or historical trauma, as accurately as possible and with respect to the communities that remain affected. Lonetree (2012, 24) presents an important warning to museums: If the hard truths of colonialism

are avoided, Native people may feel that they have only themselves to blame for their trauma, further traumatizing these communities. When these hard truths are acknowledged, the traumatic grief they feel is validated.

Lonetree (2012, 78, 167) and McCarthy (2018, 43) argue that an “accurate” attempt at history can be attained by including the voices and perspectives of multiple groups, and determining what information is most agreed upon as “the truth.” They also argue that sensitive and careful interpretation of traumatic events – reproduced from the community affected – can allow community members to reflect on and heal from historical or generational trauma (Lonetree 2012, 22; McCarthy 2018, 42).

In my analysis of Hawai’i plantation museums, I look at how they represent *Kānaka* and plantation laborer history, with this understanding of the effects museums have in reinforcing collective memory and historical trauma. As suggested by Lonetree, I investigate whether these museums present the hard truths of colonialism and reflect on how this representation affects *Kānaka* and plantation descendants.

United States Southern Plantation Museums

Research on plantation museums in America thus far is relatively limited. Most of the research on this topic is understandably focused on plantations in the American South. Scholars observe that southern plantation museums often focus on plantation owners and their extravagant homes, brushing over or completely avoiding the topic of slavery (Carter 2016; Eichstedt and Small 2002). The scholarship on southern plantation museums only offers some observations that can be applied to Hawai’i plantation museums. Whereas southern plantations enslaved Black Americans for nearly 400 years,

Hawai'i plantation managers instead practiced indentured servitude, forcing plantation dependence on workers with a combination of low pay and unaffordable resources (see background chapter). As I quote in my background chapter, one bystander mentioned that “the difference between a coolie [contract laborer] and a slave is only one of degree, not of essence” (Hillebrand 1885 qtd. In Osorio 2002, 182). To different degrees of severity and frequency, some contract laborers in Hawai'i and enslaved people in the American South experienced physical punishments and inhumane treatment, while being made to feel inferior to white plantation managers. Critiques of southern plantation museums offer some insight into how hardship and structural racism on a plantation is represented in museums, and the effects that the representation of these topics may have on visitors.

As mentioned earlier (page 48), the biases and experiences of a visitor affect the way that they interpret objects in a museum. Likewise, the physical space and architecture of the site communicate relationships and connections that might occur in these spaces. Many architects act as designers and artists of space and intend to draw specific emotions and perceptions from their visitors (LeCorbusier 1925, 1986 cited in Imrie and Street 2009, 2512). They mean to touch on the visitors' emotions, memories, and connections, and communicate a message to those within that space. Similarly, the placement and design of plantation homes could convey the racial hierarchies and divisions of plantation communities.

Tours situated in the mansion of a plantation owner versus in the cabins of enslaved individuals communicate vastly different messages about whose history is worth telling (Small 2018; Moody and Small 2019). Usually situated at a location that

overlooks a plantation, the layout of plantation sites communicates that the plantation owner is the most important figure in the plantation structure (Small 2018; Moody and Small 2019). As I explain in my background chapter, most plantations in Hawai'i spatially maintained racial hierarchies through the locations of laborer and manager's homes. Hawai'i plantation museums may need to be aware of similar unspoken hierarchies in living history plantation sites, with the understanding that the location and layout of the site may affect the visitor's perceptions of the relationships that took place there.

Because of this, the location focus of a tour can challenge or affirm these interpretations (Alderman, Butler, and Hanna 2016; Moody and Small 2019; Karp, Lavine, and Mullen-Kramer 1992; Small 2018). In an attempt to disrupt the tendencies of many tours to focus on plantation owners' homes, counter-narrative tours have been increasing throughout the U.S. (Small 2018; Alderman, Butler, and Hanna 2016). These tours occur within the enslaved individuals' homes and have a focus on their daily life experiences. Stephen Small (2018) investigates how identity is represented with 16 "slave cabin tours" in Natchitoches, Louisiana. He argues that the slave cabins "offer counter-narratives that challenge the dominant representation of slavery" (Small 2018, 76). Small (2018) says that these tours help reshape the understanding of Black American identity due to the focus on, rather than erasure of, Black enslavement. This approach is one strategy that Hawai'i plantation museums could take if they are located on a living history site.

Small (2018) demonstrates that the straightforward representation of slavery, and the shift of space or surroundings of the tour, situates the stories and experiences of those usually excluded at the forefront of collective memory. For this reason, counter-narratives are significant for the reimagining of memory about plantation history and the relationships that occurred there.

Some scholars also argue that representations of race and the narrative focus of these museum tours have substantial effects on how collective memory is formed and reinforced over time. Perry Carter (2016) analyzed two plantation museums and their opposing narratives. Carter found that when the focus of the plantation's narrative is on one specific story, it fails to paint the “full picture” of plantation life (Carter 2016). One museum’s narrative centered on the family that ran the plantation, and the other focused on the production and structure of the plantation. Analyzing both these strategies, he asserted that the harsh realities of slavery were non-existent (Carter 2016). Plantation narratives that focus on production, or that center around plantation family history, romanticize the role of plantation managers. Both portrayals welcome the perception that the manager’s achievements should live on in history, and the work of enslaved individuals is comparatively insignificant (Alderman, Butler, and Hanna 2016; Carter 2016; Small 2018). His work reveals that the narrow focus of many southern plantation museums weakens the ability to communicate well-balanced perspectives of historical events.

Carter (2016) believes that the topic of slavery is often avoided in plantation museums because most Americans want to see the “American Dream,” and since

plantation museums are tourist sites, “the word ‘tourism’ suggests fun and relaxation” (Carter 2016, 236). Unfortunately, the hard truths of history are far from fun and relaxing. Montes and Butler (2008) argue that this aversion to discussing slavery and racism for the fear of making tours sad or unenjoyable is not necessary. Montes and Butler (2008) study comments on an article about whether a plantation museum should be run by a plantation owner’s descendant or a plantation laborer’s descendant. Most of the comments contain discussions of Black/white relations and slavery, regardless of any racial differences among the commentators. This study demonstrates a visitor’s comfort levels in discussing slavery and power, regardless of race. Similar to the arguments presented by Lonetree (2012, 22), Montes and Butler (2008) argue that plantation sites should not shy away from the hard truths of plantation history, as the topic of enslavement might not be as uncomfortable as museum professionals fear.

Exhibitions about Migration

Literature about museums that displays or centers stories of migration is a valuable resource for understanding Hawai’i plantation museums. Migration museum displays usually focus on the history of migration of a specific community or the multiculturalism that migration often produces (Hutchison 2009; Lanz 2017). Often, migration exhibitions aim to preserve the memory of a specific local community and to demonstrate the community’s connections to local identity (Lanz 2017). With an influx of migration around the world and a desire to acknowledge the effects of migration in specific communities, these types of displays have been increasing since the 1990s (Lanz 2017).

Hutchison (2009) says that migration displays often lack discussion about unique socio-historical experiences and policies that led to the migration journey of specific communities. She argues that these displays amalgamate multiple experiences into one singular experience, ignoring the complex identities and circumstances that lead different people into migrating (Hutchison 2009).

Christina Bastos is one of the earliest scholars to study Hawai'i plantation museums. Bastos (2020) critiques the Hawai'i Plantation Village for emphasizing Hawai'i's diversity in a way that glosses over the hardship of plantation work and instead focuses on a time of community-building and hospitality. Bastos (2020) says that, like in migration museums, all communities are combined into a singular identity – the plantation worker. While most laborers migrated to Hawai'i for a shared purpose – to work on the plantations – *why* they wanted to work on plantations, and their experience in the process of migration, is circumstantial. As I mention in my background chapter, people often migrated due to unfavorable situations in their home country, but these circumstances could differ significantly in terms of severity. Bastos (2020) writes that the Hawai'i Plantation Village's multicultural narrative does not completely disregard the struggles and violence of plantation labor, but the theme of multicultural coexistence is much more prominent. She recognizes that this style of display dangerously reinforces the romanticization of Hawai'i as a multicultural paradise. Hutchison (2009) warns against exhibitions that center multiculturalism in this way, saying that these displays do not adequately educate visitors about the multifaceted experiences of migration.

Hutchison (2009) also warns against museums with “a singular cultural display” that focus on one culture’s migration history, often including artifacts from pre-migration life. Hutchison (2009, 71) argues that these exhibitions “have a limited capacity to explore migration history, (and) changes in conceptions of cultural identity since migration or interaction between cultures.” Focus on only one people’s cultural identity might instead promote this identity as the “other,” when a better option may be to explore the relationships between people of differing social and historical circumstances and backgrounds.

The Migration Museum in Adelaide, Australia made a notable attempt to focus on ethnic identity while also demonstrating the differences between multiple ethnic identities (Szekeres 2002). Szekeres (2002, 145) observed that through a display that focuses on multiculturalism, the museum was able to demonstrate cultural differences while also acknowledging institutionalized discriminatory policies. Hawai’i’s plantation museums could explore similar themes, such as racial pay disparities, or exclusionary laws (see background chapter). After some time, the display at the Migration Museum received a significant update after staff realized that their display of multiculturalism was not exploring cultural differences to the extent that they had intended. To help reconstruct the display more effectively, the museum convened community groups for interviews and oral histories. By allowing community members to explore themes beyond their ethnicity, the museum was able to examine the complexities of identity and migration (Szekeres 2002). As Bastos (2020) and Hutchison (2009) argue, the focus on multiculturalism can sometimes be detrimental to the message that is conveyed. While at first this narrative

felt like a success, it needed some re-evaluation and community involvement to more truly represent the migration experience as they had intended.

Unfortunately, the acknowledgment of discrimination and intolerance is not always positively received. Some visitors to the Migration Museum critiqued the museum as presenting “left” biased information, and others saw the museum as a “museum of misery” (Szekeres 2002, 146, 151). Szekeres (2002, 151) states that the “happy immigrant” story that these visitors seek is only “less than half the story” and would exclude many of the communities currently represented. Szekeres recognizes that in presenting the history of multiple communities, there will be opposing stories of the same events, some of which will exclude some groups of people.

To represent plantation life in Hawai’i, museums may need to communicate to their visitors the ways that migration has affected plantation communities. Due to the multicultural history of Hawai’i’s plantation museums, the way immigration is represented will be noted through review of museum content. Migration exhibitions describe situations remarkably similar to those of Hawai’i’s plantation museums and offer potential types of display that could be implemented.

Tour Guides in Museums

Tour guides can play integral roles in museums by offering additional perspective to museum tours, in the form of more contextual historical and museum process information. Schultz (2011, 4) suggests that tour guides can draw attention to collaborative efforts in museums, so that visitors can recognize how collaboration occurs. Schultz argues that museums need to draw attention to their efforts at collaboration so

that visitors understand who was responsible for shaping the museum's narratives (ibid., 2).

Tour guides can also support, refute or add critique to exhibit narratives (Modlin, Alderman, and Gentry 2011; Moody and Small 2019, 42). Guides can recontextualize objects and spaces by challenging and addressing previously unspoken power relationships (Modlin, Alderman, and Gentry 2011; Moody and Small 2019, 42). Modlin, Alderman, and Gentry (2011) argue that tour guides are the most direct creators and disseminators of both empathy and information, and visitors look to guides to challenge or reaffirm museum narratives and histories. Understandings of racialization and inequality can be reinterpreted in a way that promotes the memorialization of marginalized stories, and this is a valuable experience that tour guides can offer.

Scholars also argue that when tour guides represent themselves and can speak on the museum's content from their own personal perspectives, the visitor can engage in cross-cultural dialogue (Schorch 2013, 72; Schultz 2011, 4). The museum space then shifts from one of informal education to one of dialogue and continuous learning (Schorch 2013, 72; Schultz 2011, 4). This avenue for communication is one way for communities to express their lived experiences and perspectives and be valued by visitors as credible sources of information (Schorch 2013, 72; Modlin, Alderman, and Gentry 2011).

In this thesis, I also look at tour guide involvement and how the identities of guides affect their museums' representations of history. I show that guides often offer

personal perspectives, and online reviewers note these perspectives as valuable additions to their tours.

Chapter Four: Study Design

To explore how history is represented in Hawai'i plantation museums, I conducted a museum ethnography. Ethnography is a form of data collection where a researcher can study the complexities of social relationships and cultures of a specific place or time (Bouquet 2012, 94). This method is most commonly used by anthropologists to form a deep understanding of people and culture.

This research intends to contribute to the growing field of museum anthropology. This sub-field of anthropology was formed by anthropologists and other researchers who applied anthropological methods, like ethnography, to understand the culture of museums (Kreps 2020, 5). Museum ethnography therefore takes place in museums or similar cultural institutions. Ethnographic methods are combined with critical analysis of the fundamental operations and development processes in museums and how museums affect or are affected by their sociocultural conditions and contexts (Kreps 2020, 6). Over time, scholarly and critical analyses of museums have come to form the body of knowledge that is museum anthropology (Kreps 2020, 6).

Bouquet (2012, 94) says museum ethnography mostly uses visual methods, which can span from participant observation and interviews to content and media analysis. The methods I utilized within this museum ethnography were semi-structured interviews and content analysis of museum content, marketing materials, and online reviews. I also

combine museum ethnography with digital ethnography, another form of visual anthropology.

Digital ethnography is a method for representing culture through digital media (Bouquet 2012, 94; Pink 2006, 21; Underberg and Zorn 2013, 10). I utilize photographs of museum content and screenshots of marketing materials to paint a story about each museum and its exhibits. I also use online reviews from the internet to try to understand how visitors experience each museum. Later, I will go into more detail about this method.

A mixed method approach allowed me to understand each museum from a wider variety of perspectives than if I had just focused on one methodology (Bernard 2018, 231). I studied four Hawai'i museums: the Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou, Big Island; The Hawai'i Plantation Village in Waipahu, O'ahu Island; The Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum in Lahaina, Maui Island; and the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum in Kahului, Maui Island. Each museum was selected for their focus on life or laborers in Hawai'i's sugar plantations.

This research was conducted from July 1, 2020, to January 1, 2023. Interviews were completed from July 1, 2020, to September 1, 2020. Due to COVID restrictions prohibiting travel at the time of contact, interviews took place over the phone, with one interview participant opting to mail in their responses to the interview questions. Collection and analysis of exhibit content, marketing material, and online reviews took place from September 2020 to January 1, 2023.

Interview Recruitment

For this research, I interviewed three participants. Each individual participant of this research served as one unit of analysis. I had two sets of participants in mind for this research: plantation museum staff/volunteers, and plantation museum visitors.

Participants were recruited through a snowball sample. Snowball sampling allows researchers to explore the relationships within the organization, by allowing for the participant pool to grow based on recommendations from initial participants (Neuman 2014, 275; Bernard 2018, 150).

The initial set of participants were to be museum managers/directors or similar higher management of a museum organization. After museum directors granted permission for me to recruit participants from their museums, I asked them to share an email with current and past museum staff and volunteers. This email explained the ideal participants for the study, briefly summarized the goals for the study, and informed participants of their rights if they participated. Participants were asked to reach out to me directly to participate in an interview. Only one museum manager replied to this request and referred a few other staff members or volunteers who could participate in the research. After speaking with a staff person, I then asked them to refer another staff member or volunteer who might be interested in participating in my study. Staff at other museums either did not respond to my recruitment efforts, or the main contact at these museums stopped replying.

The second phase of the interviews involved *kama 'āina* visitors to Hawai'i plantation museums. The *kama 'āina* participants were only recruited via word of mouth

with personal or professional contacts. Snowball sampling was intended to follow, but the participant was not able to recommend anyone else who they thought would participate. In the end of this interview period, only one *kama 'āina* was able to participate. While snowball sampling is usually recommended for populations that can be hard to find, the chain of contacts in this study quickly dwindled (Bernard 2018, 150).

A lack of ability to create rapport from afar also probably played a part in the small final sample size. Due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions, which did not allow for my initially intended trip to the islands, getting in contact with museums and *kama 'āina* was difficult. I intended to gain the trust of participants through participant observation – volunteering with each museum, attending events and programs, and interacting with staff and volunteers (Bernard 2018, 274). I still offered my virtual assistance to museums but most, if not all, paused their operations after the start of the government lockdown in March of 2020. Many of the museums that I had previously been in contact with stopped all communications. *Kama 'āina* were also reluctant to participate, and my personal contacts were not very responsive. I was also not able to confirm if any of my personal contacts had been to a plantation museum. Time zone differences and COVID-19 overwhelm may have contributed to this lack of responsiveness.

COVID-19 hit the arts and culture field hard, since a lack of tourism also forced many museums to quickly pivot to digital formats to continue attracting visitors. In Hawai'i this was especially the case. Unlike other states, Hawai'i closed its borders to tourism and enforced strict COVID-19 testing for tourists. Testing requirements were not

lifted until June of 2022. Despite these requirements, many tourists still visited and moved to Hawai'i just to quarantine (Alexander 2022). While many museums throughout the U.S. started reopening in August of 2020, Hawai'i's museums stayed closed into 2021. The staff at these museums were likely experiencing more stress than the usual American museum due to extended restrictions.

Interview Design

I conducted semi-structured interviews with three participants. Two participants were museum staff of the Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum, and one participant was a *kama'āina* visitor of the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum. Semi-structured interviews allowed me to develop a basic level of understanding of volunteer and staff perceptions due to the flexibility and natural flow that semi-structured interviews allow (Bernard 2018, 165). Flexibility was an important aspect for these interviews so that participants could clarify and elaborate on any topics that were not included as interview questions. Semi-structured interviews were also ideal for meeting with participants who might not be able to meet for another interview (Bernard 2018, 165). Since it was so difficult to find participants for the interview, and museum staff in Hawai'i were exceptionally hard to reach, this seemed to be the best course of action.

Semi-structured interviews include an interview guide, or a set of questions used to guide the conversation (Bernard 2018, 165). In my interviews with museum staff, I asked questions about their role at the museum, how they became involved, and the staff person's identity (see Appendix B). The interview with the *kama'āina* visitor gathered insight not only into their perceptions of how the museum presented Hawai'i history, but

also into their ethnic identity (see Appendix C). For all interviews, I attempted to understand how the participants saw their identities reflected in the museum. Following interviews and transcription, I analyzed the transcripts for emerging themes and concepts that arose from the conversations.

Of the three interviews conducted, one was via email, and two were over the phone. The over-the-phone interviews were an average of 45 minutes. Two of the interviewees were employees of a plantation museum, and one was a *kama 'āina* visitor and descendant of plantation laborers.

This research was approved by the University of Denver's Institutional Review Board, and many precautions were taken to protect the participants of this study. The confidentiality of each participant was ensured through pseudonyms if the participant intended to be anonymous (Bernard 2018). I also redacted employee's job titles or positions which could be used to identify the employee. With this research, plantation descendant participants were at risk of experiencing negative emotions ranging from discomfort to triggering generational trauma around the subject. I offered every participant mental health resources that they could contact should these feelings arise. Staff participants' occupational standing or reputation could also be at risk, due to questions addressing personal perceptions about the museum at which they work. This was another reason why personal identifiers were redacted from participant transcripts. Of the two staff interviews completed, however, neither staff person had anything negative to say about their work or their organization.

Confidentiality was ensured by asking each participant to include either verbal or written approval by means of a consent form, sent through email or summarized by the researcher before the official start of the interview. A password-protected phone or a computer was used to record the interviews, and interviews were then transcribed verbatim. Once all interviews were transcribed, the audio files of the interviews were deleted, and these transcriptions were kept as digital files under a password-protected account.

Content Analysis

After finding that it would be difficult to build relationships with participants in Hawai'i, I decided to also collect museum content and online reviews. As previously mentioned, this mixed methods approach allowed me to understand these museums from a wider array of perspectives (Bernard 2018, 231). Museum content can reveal what language museums use to describe Hawai'i's plantation history, as well as what parts of history that museum's curators thought were important to include. Written online reviews can reveal personal perceptions and insight into what the reviewers like, dislike, and find notable about their experiences. In some cases, the reviewers even self-describe as local or as plantation descendants. Marketing materials can often give the same insight as museum content, so I analyze marketing material alongside museum content. Marketing materials were useful to try to understand what the museum wants the visitor to experience from their visit and what the museum thinks is most important for a visitor to know. Overall, content analysis allows me to try to pull common themes about these museums from a large amount of information (Neuman 2014, 49).

In August of 2021, I visited two plantation museums and took photographs of their labels, artifacts, and displays. For museums I could not visit in person, I analyzed online reviews and marketing material photos. As previously mentioned, this method is a form of digital ethnography. With digital ethnography, the researcher uses photos or similar media to form a detailed description of a particular place, people, culture, or moment in time (Underberg and Zorn 2013; Bouquet 2012; Pink 2006). Pink (2006) warns that it is important to be aware of the ways our intentions and biases affect what we capture in digital ethnographies (Pink 2006, 24). In analyzing photos, I tried to be aware of how my own biases affected what I chose to take photographs of, even though I tried to take photos of all aspects of the exhibits I visited. A museum visitor who posts their photo online to accompany their review of the museum might intend to capture their favorite part of the museum, or parts that they found especially interesting. Unlike a museum visitor, I, however, tried to gain a holistic view of the museum's exhibits. Due to this, it is possible that I am missing the full visual experience of the museums that I did not visit in person. In the spirit of digital ethnography, I tried to piece together a story about each museum through the online review photos of the museum exhibits that I did not visit (Underberg and Zorn 2013, 10). With the photographs, I only intended to capture the museum content, like display details and interpretive texts. I did not consider other details like how many people were in a photo, or what their identities might be.

To analyze exhibit content, I looked to Henrietta Lidchi's "The Poetics and Politics of Exhibiting Other Cultures" (2013) and Margaret Lindauer's "The Critical Museum Visitor" (2005). Lidchi provides a guide for exploring ethnographic museum

displays, stressing the need for museums to investigate relationships of power and knowledge (Lidchi 2013, 185). Lidchi models ways to analyze exhibits with the consideration of how information is presented and who benefits from the museum's displays and collection techniques. Lindauer similarly demonstrates ways to examine museum exhibits, introducing the role of the critical museum visitor. The critical museum visitor "studies how the visual, written, and spatial features of an exhibition collectively implicate an ideal visitor" (Lindauer 2005, 204). Lindauer suggests a visitor (the researcher or museum practitioner) who analyzes multiple aspects of an exhibition similarly considers who the exhibit benefits, including whose story the exhibit tells and whose story goes untold. I apply Lidchi and Lindauer's guides in my own analysis of exhibit content with the intention of noting what power relationships might be implicated through each museum display.

To further add to my understanding of each plantation museum, I also explored the museums' websites and analyzed online reviews. Digital ethnography methods such as this have become more common as the internet has become more entrenched in the daily lives of people (Hine 2015, 22). Christine Hine (2015, 159) suggests that the internet offers an unobtrusive avenue for exploring social interactions, as data found online is untouched by the researcher's hands (except when it comes to choosing what qualifies as data). An online user can choose to be as honest or as critical as they please, whereas a visitor speaking with a researcher might not feel as comfortable.

Ranfagni, Milanese and Guercini (2023) studied the marketing brand of Opera del Duomo Museum by analyzing the museum's website for common themes and codes that

express what the museum wants a visitor to experience. They then explored user comments, reviews, and interactions on tourism websites TripAdvisor, Yelp, and Get Your Guide. I employ a similar method, with a similar intention to understand whether reviewer perceptions and descriptions of each museum are congruent with how the museum is marketed. I additionally intend to understand what visitors find notable about the museum, and whether visitors offer additional information about the museum's historical narrative.

To collect online reviews, I visited each plantation museum's Google review page. Some museums had very few reviews, which could be due to a myriad of reasons, including size, reputation, and location. If there were not many written reviews, I pulled more reviews from review pages on Yelp. I only analyzed written reviews, as these provided context to ratings and detailed museum content. To not exclude any potential data, I compiled all past reviews until August of 2021.

While I mainly focused on the content of each review, Google and Yelp both have the option for users to self-designate themselves as local tour guides, a trait that would show under their name when they posted a review. This information served as an effective way to understand whether *kama 'āina* reviewers viewed a museum differently than tourists. At the same time, it's possible that many other online reviewers simply did not indicate that they were local, so I treat this information carefully in my analysis.

To collect museum marketing materials, I visited each museum's website and Instagram. The online presence of each museum varied drastically. I collected screenshots of the content on each website, with a focus on main pages, such as "about

us,” “volunteers/staff,” “current/future exhibits,” and “events.” I collected content on Instagram based on what seemed to be the posting trends for a specific museum. I attempt to paint a representative sample of the typical posts each museum made. For example, one museum posted archival photos and tidbits of historical information, so I collected and analyzed just a few of these posts.

I initially analyzed interviews for common themes, and then moved on to analyze museum content, online reviews, and online marketing materials. I analyzed each set of data individually, rather than utilizing one set of initial codes to lead the analysis of the other data from other methodologies. I wanted to understand if there were differences between the emerging themes depending on methodology. I analyzed all collected information for common themes or language using grounded theory. Utilizing open coding, axial coding, and then selective coding methods, I developed my final theories out of the large amount of data I analyzed (Neuman 2014, 71). These methods of coding can bring out several central themes from a large amount of data (Darlington and Scott 2002; Neuman 2014, 481). With open coding, I used the initial data to uncover new ideas by first finding any naturally emerging themes. After finding emerging themes, I conducted axial coding by describing the codes in a codebook, and then searching again for these themes with a more focused perspective. Lastly, I did selective coding and found a central theme among all the codes. This allowed me to find and select quotes that represented each theme with ease.

After theme analysis, I also produced frequencies from the online reviews. I represent these frequencies in the form of percentages. I use these themes to describe the

general trends among Hawai'i plantation museums, such as audiences, subject matter, or settings. This analysis allowed me to understand what visitors think of as important descriptors for these sites. Reviewers often touched on multiple categories or themes at a time. I paid close attention to trends of codes appearing together.

Combining museum content, online reviews, marketing materials, and interviews, I attempted to formulate an understanding about each museum. I was able to analyze how supposed staff or volunteer identity or community involvement affected the history the museums presented.

Chapter Five: Museum Analysis

In this chapter, I analyze each Hawai'i plantation museum individually. I start my analysis by describing the museum's mission, setting, and context, as indicated on the museum's website or other online material. I discuss pages of interest on the museum's website and then examine the museum's posts on Instagram. The majority of my analysis focuses on the exhibits and displays that can be found inside the museum. For the Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum, I also analyze two interviews I conducted with staff. For the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum, I analyze an interview with a *kama 'āina* descendant who grew up on plantation lands. With each content analysis, I also discuss frequencies and trends of online reviews. At the end of this chapter, I analyze online reviews in more detail.

The Hawai'i Plantation Museum at Papa'ikou Content Analysis

The Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou is in a plantation store building that was once on plantation lands. It was started by a Portuguese American plantation descendant, Wayne Subica, whose private collection soon grew so expansive that it had to be stored in its own building – now the Hawai'i Plantation Museum. The mission of the museum is “to collect, preserve and exhibit Hawai'i Island sugar plantation artifacts and small business memorabilia for the education and enjoyment of present and future generations, residents and visitors” (Hawai'i Plantation Museum Website). The museum's website says that the museum staff wants to demonstrate how the lifestyle in

Hawai'i developed into something different than it was prior to plantations. The website provides a brief summary of plantation history, including how the plantations caused drastic land, environment, and population changes. They also include that “workers and their families contributed to building a new community and culture” (Hawai'i Plantation Museum Website 2023).

The museum's website says that the museum offers several ways for a visitor to engage with information about the work and lives of people who lived on plantations (Hawai'i Plantation Museum Website 2023). This includes artifacts; signs and goods from general stores and worker's households; archival records; photos and films; scholarly works; and docents who are passionate about Hawai'i's plantation history (Hawai'i Plantation Museum Website 2023). The website lists that their visitors are from the Mainland U.S., Japan, and other countries; that they are people who lived on plantations or in similar communities; and descendants of people who lived on plantations looking to learn more about their experiences (Hawai'i Plantation Museum Website 2023).

Some pages on the museum's website offer additional ways to engage digitally with the museum, including information about the museum's archives, an online store with plantation history books written by the owner of the museum, and a page called “Video Talk Story” (Hawai'i Plantation Museum Website 2023). This page on the site is a collection of videos or oral histories, often short interviews where people talk about their lives on the plantation or other notable events that affected the people of Hawai'i Island.

Studying the museum's online marketing material, the main themes represented are local, life, business, and labor. The museum's Instagram page offers some insight into additional ways the museum engages online communities. The page promotes a couple of programs catered to their local community, such as a Portuguese archives access program, and a fundraiser with a local artist. The museum participates as a pop-up vendor at local events and acts as a venue space on occasion. Lastly, the museum shares short and interesting facts about plantation life. For example, one post states

#Didyouknow Pidgin evolved into such a unique vocabulary that during World War II, the Germans were unable to break the code of the Japanese-American 442 Regimental Battalion because they were speaking Hawaiian plantation pidgin (Hawai'i Plantation Museum Instagram Page. Accessed 2022).

Such posts seem to promote basic information that can pique a potential visitor's curiosity to learn more about the topic.

As an aside, the site also says that docents "will give you a tour, talk story, share what they know about the plantations, and listen to what you know" (Hawai'i Plantation Museum Website 2023). This sort of engagement seems to be reciprocal with visitors and invites them to share their knowledge and experience. This is just one trait that makes the museum comparable to earlier models of community museums. Further traits exhibited by this museum are that it is locally run and operated, the collection is donated by descendants, and tours are often led by *kama'āina* guides (Hoobler 2006, 443). The museum offers several avenues for descendants and other locals to access and improve museum collections and archives (Webster 1990). It also advertises several locally hosted events, and even can act as an event space for hosting other local businesses (Alivizatou 2011; Lonetree 2012). Additionally, the museum's lobby is a store with locally sourced

produce, art, books, and merchandise. Later, I will discuss how this museum, alongside the other sugar plantation museums that are community-run, allows visitors opportunities for self-reflection.

Thirty percent of museum reviewers identify themselves or a companion as local to Hawai'i. The museum has the highest frequency of reviews written by *kama 'āina*, as well as the highest frequency of online reviews about social history (40%). Nineteen percent of online reviews are about sugar history and another 19% of reviews are about local history. The reviews suggest that the museum is mostly about the social history of plantations, but also represents sugar and local history to a lesser extent.

I visited the Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou in August of 2021. Upon my arrival, there were three volunteers standing together chatting, including Wayne. The volunteers welcomed us to purchase admission to the museum, including a tour by a volunteer. They also explained that the museum's archives room and gift store were free to access.

Prior to entering the exhibit, there was an extensive timeline of Hawai'i plantation history on display which included dates of plantation development and growth, industrial advancement, local historical events, dates of first waves of immigrant groups, significant labor movements, and the date of the annexation of Hawai'i. A visitor who wishes to spend some time at the museum could glean a lot of information from this timeline, should they notice it. As most tours of this museum are led by a tour guide, however, the normal visitor might not get the chance to learn this context about plantation times. A

volunteer who had worked on the plantations spoke pidgin as he led us through the exhibit.

Thirty-eight percent of online reviewers describe the museum as a “collection.” The Hawai’i Plantation Museum in Papa’ikou is the only museum from this study where visitors use the word “collection.” The museum is indeed organized more like a collection than the formal, typical museum exhibit. There is not a lot of written context or interpretive labels, and artifacts are loosely organized, sometimes with no clear relation to one another.



Figure 5.1.1. Hawai’i Plantation Museum Papa’ikou. Interior. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

As shown in figure 5.1.1., the museum is relatively small and filled with artifacts. Flags representing each main group of immigrants’ home country hang high on all surfaces. Business signs adorn the walls, and below these, lines of display cases. Artifacts throughout the museum are infrequently accompanied by interpretive text, but the

volunteer tour guide explained that he could answer any questions about the artifacts. As most of the museum's tours are led by a guide, labels might not have been necessary.

The most common themes that I discovered in the museum were social history and alternative history. Diversity, life, and local business were also commonly interconnected themes throughout the museum. Displays coded as "alternative history" were often associated with dehumanization, unionization, and abuse/violence at the hand of plantation leadership. Those coded as "social history," on the other hand, included the topics of life, community, culture, and diversity. A notable example was a small section dedicated to sugar processes in one corner of the museum.

Life and Diversity

A few displays throughout the museum emphasize the ways that people of different cultures lived among each other and shared cultural practices and items. As suggested on the museum's website, the displays demonstrate how plantation laborers and families built a new community and culture. Items of similar uses were often placed next to each other, prompting observation of their similarities and differences. The photo below shows seven different instruments, some unlabeled.



Figure 5.1.2. Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou. Instruments. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The three instruments at the top of the photo are Puerto Rican Maracas, a Filipino Bamboo drum, and Puerto Rican bongos. The bottom shelf features a banjo, a Japanese Shamisen, and what appears to be a clarinet. The display is only accompanied by object labels, and no context is provided.

Similarly, to the right of the instruments display was a variety of cooking supplies or utensils. Mortar and pestles, teapots, and steamers from different cultures were displayed side-by-side and labeled minimally. This ethnographic method of displaying objects from different cultures allows for visitors to focus on “characteristics visible on the surface of the artefact (referred to as ‘internal criteria’), rather than external criteria such as provenance” (Bouquet 2012, 124). Ethnographic displays allow for comparison between the objects on display, in this case allowing visitors to observe how people from each culture brought musical instruments. The type of instrument, their designs, and other characteristics vary greatly. The display seems to expect visitors to observe that the

diversity of plantation communities contributed to cultural diversity of plantations and Hawai'i.

The extent of Hawai'i's diversity is also evidenced through the amount of business merchandise throughout the museum. The museum walls are adorned with business signs in a variety of languages:



Figure 5.1.3. Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou. Interior 2, signs. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The signs feature stores, cafés, resorts, diners, and more. One display of merchandise collectibles similarly features a multicultural range of business and political candidate names:



Figure 5.1.4. Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou. Merchandise Collectibles. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

Bottle openers, coins, yoyo's, pins, and more cover a variety of purposes or themes. As the museum's website suggests, broad representations of diversity emphasize how plantation communities spread and grew beyond the limits of plantations.

Japanese Laborers, Resilience, and Community

The museum also includes displays that show how Japanese women contributed to the perseverance of plantation laborers. The displays show that many home-made Japanese items were used every day by the typical plantation laborer, regardless of the laborer's nationhood or cultural background.

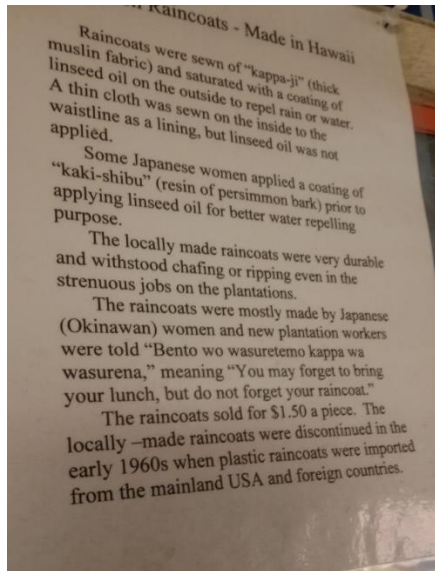


Figure 5.1.5. Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou. Raincoat Label. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The above label describes the use of durable raincoats made with linseed oil and persimmon bark. The raincoats made by Okinawan women withstood the strenuous conditions of plantation work. The quote in the label, "You may forget to bring your lunch, but do not forget your raincoat," captures the significance of this item for Hawai'i's stormy environment. A few other displays throughout the museum showcase the necessity for certain items of clothing, often made by Japanese women.



Figure 5.1.6. Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou. Plantation Gear. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The above photo is of homemade tabis, rubber boots used in the fields, as well as a facemask that protected the faces of laborers from the sharp leaves of sugar stalks. The museum also displays leggings that were worn when working on the plantation. The labels accompanying each artifact explain their origin and purpose, but don't provide context explaining that the gear was adopted by non-Japanese laborers. The museum might hope that visitors will make that assumption on their own.

Hardship: Labor Conditions, Dehumanization, and Power

The above photographs of homemade labor gear also show how poorly plantation managers prepared laborers for their poor working conditions, though that connection is not made explicit. This act of not making explicit claims about labor conditions seems to be consistent throughout the museum, as they avoid critical interpretation within their displays. For example, at the back of the labor gear display case is a plantation *luna's* (foreman/supervisor) whip.



Figure 5.1.7. Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou. *Luna* Whip. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The artifact is accompanied by a small object label, but at the back of the display case, it is almost lost among the other objects. There is also no interpretive label explaining the purpose of the whip; it appears to be just another object that was part of a laborer's daily

life. Perhaps the whip did not seem as important to the museum curators as the labor gear that is placed at the foreground of this display, or maybe they simply did not want to center the whip, as if to glorify it. In any case, the placement of the whip does not seem so much intentional as it is random, much like the other displays throughout the museum. As will be discussed throughout my analysis of plantation museums, however, tour guides might offer more flexible museum tours that enable visitors to discuss difficult topics. For example, a visitor may be free to ask about the whip, if the topic of abuse was a comfortable subject for them to seek out from their museum experience. Later on, I will discuss how online reviewers write about the content discussed on their tours.

The museum also contains displays which could demonstrate the ways that early laborers were dehumanized and treated as commodities. The below image depicts a set of photographs of Japanese laborers who immigrated to Hawai'i in 1901.



Figure 5.1.8. Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou. Laborer Headshots. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The interpretive text explains that laborers were assigned numbers, rather than names, upon their arrival. Each laborer has a number secured to their clothing. Most have solemn looks on their faces. In one photo, a woman holds a baby. These photos illustrate the sad reality of labor in Hawai'i, where people who immigrated were stripped of their names in order to work on the plantations (see background chapter).



Figure 5.1.9. Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou. Bango Tags. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The bango tags displayed in the museum likewise have a potential to address the dehumanization of laborers. This display says that bango tags were “used by sugar plantations before social security numbers to identify workers.” The label explains the uses of bango tags and how the tags were an essential part of the everyday lives of laborers. While the museum provides some context as to what these tags are and how they were used, it does not recognize how these tags were a tool by plantation managers to dehumanize laborers. The comparison to social security even diminishes the human experience of being someone who had to wear a bango tag (see background chapter). The lack of critical interpretation regarding this item that allowed *lunas* and plantation

managers to diminish laborers to property could be a notable oversight. I will later discuss how other museums similarly frame bango tags in this same palliative light.

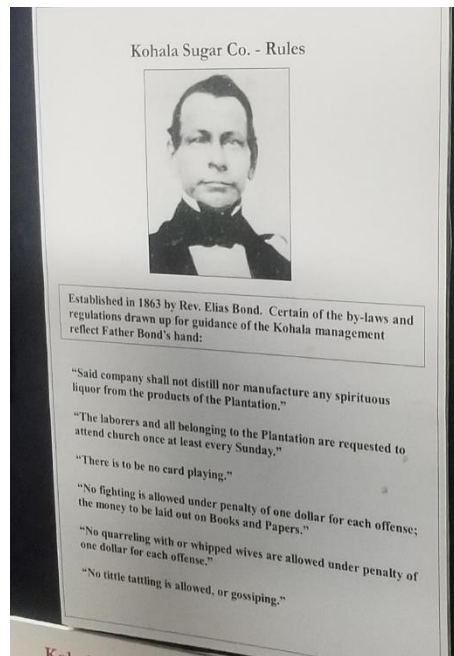


Figure 5.1.10. Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou. Kohala Sugar Co. Rules. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The above photo of Reverend Elias Bond, a plantation owner, is displayed alongside the rules which he established for his plantation in 1863. One rule says that “the laborers and all belonging to the plantation are requested to attend church once at least every Sunday.” The rule further illustrates the way that laborers were seen as property of the plantation owner, while the other rules express the oppressive nature of plantation life. Again, the museum might miss another important opportunity to explicitly recognize difficult parts of Hawai'i's plantation history. The museum could potentially address the history of missionaries and plantations, for example going into detail about the fact that plantations were one tool for missionaries – who made up the bulk of plantation owners – to civilize and Christianize *Kānaka Maoli* (see background chapter).

As with other displays, the museum presents interesting items that create the potential to delve into difficult histories but does not provide any interpretation. Without context through interpretive panels, the visitor is free to draw their own conclusions about the history that they are learning. In my discussion chapter I will explore how the other museums studied likewise often lack interpretation in their exhibits.

Hardship: Unionization and Resistance

The museum also presents the history of labor unions in Hawai'i. With the representation of unionization, the museum acknowledges that a catalyst of Hawai'i's multicultural community was the collective struggle of laborers. One label, shown below, features a timeline of protests, including the reasons that laborers protested and the outcomes of the protests. The timeline covers protests broadly, including protests that were won, and those that ended with arrests, deportation, and death.

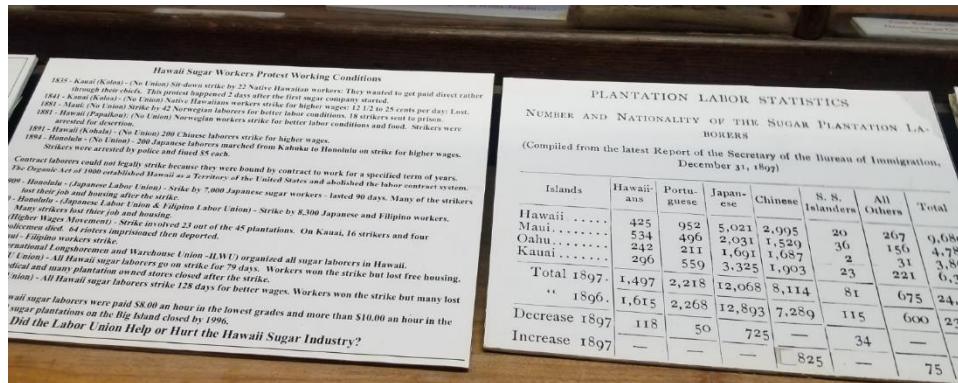


Figure 5.1.11. Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou. Protest Information and Labor Statistics. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The label also includes a prompt for visitors to consider whether the labor union “help(ed) or hurt the Hawai'i sugar industry.” This display encourages visitors to think critically about labor unions. The protest information is displayed next to another label

that describes labor statistics of the populations of each main plantation labor group. No connection is drawn between the two labels, so it is unclear whether there is a deeper message that the museum is trying to convey about the combination of this information.

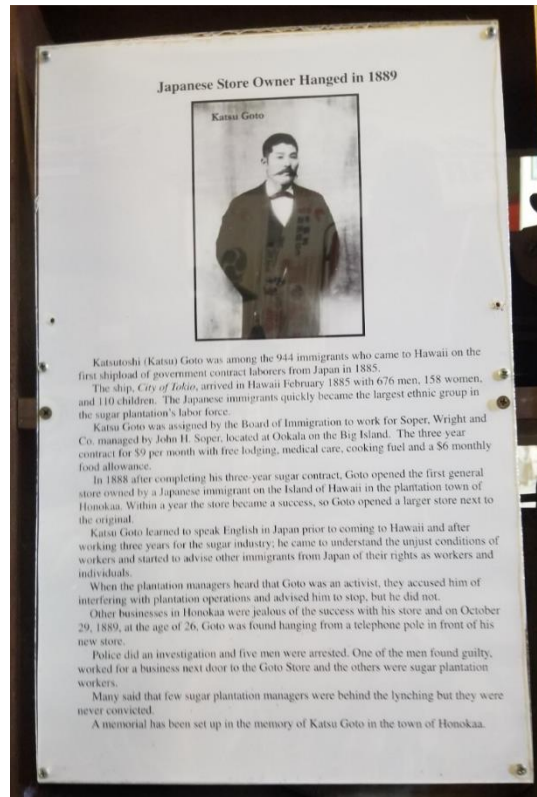


Figure 5.1.12. Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou. Katsu Goto Article. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The above display features the story of Katsu Goto, a Japanese immigrant, laborer, and activist who was hung due to his activism. Goto was one of the first Japanese immigrants who traveled to Hawai'i to work on a plantation. Goto opened a general store three years after working for the plantation and continued to be a vocal activist for labor rights. Goto's death was highly suspicious, and many believe that plantation managers were behind the lynching. Goto's story is one that demonstrates the sometimes-dire

circumstances of plantation labor, unionization, and leaving the plantation. This display appears to be the most direct acknowledgment of hardship created by the museum.

The museum represents hardships of plantation life through the use of displays that explore resilience, self-sufficiency, labor conditions, dehumanization, unionization, and resistance, but does not make explicit claims about whether the treatment of plantation laborers was good or bad. It also doesn't acknowledge the difficult history behind some artifacts, letting them instead fade into the background of displays. Perhaps as a result of the avoidance of this topic, only four percent of the museum's online reviews are about alternative history. In my discussion chapter, I review how every museum similarly breaches representations of difficult histories.

***Kānaka Maoli* Representation**

Kānaka Maoli mo'olelo (history) is also shared in the museum, though with little connections drawn between sugar plantations, colonization, or displacement of *Kānaka*. Most of the museum's displays instead show how Hawaiian cultural traditions were adopted by local people, and vice-versa.

As with earlier displays, 'ukulele are displayed ethnographically. The display elicits a comparison between the physical characteristics of the objects, as shown below:



Figure 5.1.13. Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou. 'Ukulele. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

Accompanying interpretive text adds context to the instruments' differences, while also explaining the history behind the braguinha/cavaquinho and 'ukulele. This display demonstrates one way that the Portuguese string instrument was adopted by *Kānaka*.

Another display shows how the Hawaiian practice of *lauhala*, a weaving technique, influenced a new way of creating hats and other objects:



Figure 5.1.14. Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou. Lauhala Hats. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The hats are accompanied by other woven objects, and a woven fan is displayed to the far right of the display. The label next to the fan explains that fans were traditionally created for chiefs but were made firmer and adopted by common people after conversion to Christianity. Mainly, the display exhibits how Hawaiian weaving was adapted to create hats and other objects that reflected multicultural influences.

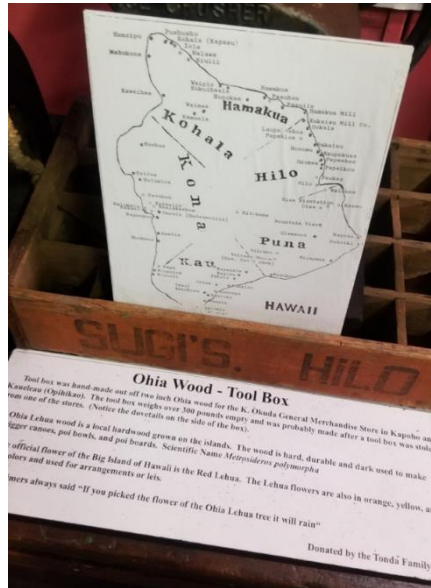


Figure 5.1.15. Hawai’i Plantation Museum Papa’ikou. ‘Ōhi‘a Wood Toolbox. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

Part of the label accompanying this ‘ōhi‘a wood toolbox display in the above photograph presents how ‘ōhi‘a wood is local to Hawai’i and continues to be used by people today to make several objects. The label also discusses Big Island’s official flower, which is produced by ‘ōhi‘a trees. The label lastly notes that the toolbox was donated by “the Tonda family,” presumably a *kama‘āina* family. This toolbox initially serves to provide the visitor with information about another Hawaiian crafting style, but

the interpretive text provides more interesting contextual information that increases the intrigue of what appears to be a simple everyday item.

The below display includes a table of statistics that demonstrates how the population of *Kānaka Maoli* declined after the introduction of disease:

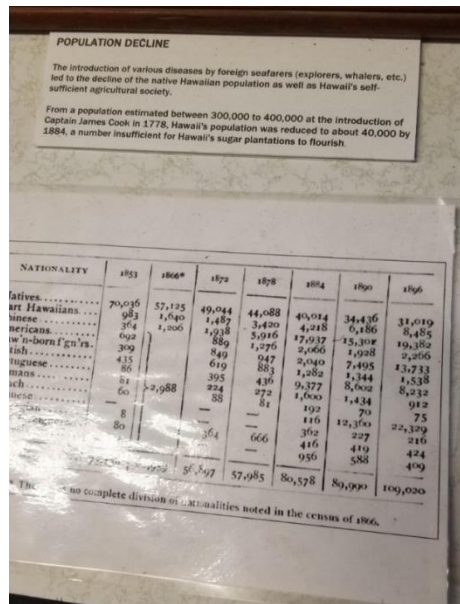


Figure 5.1.16. Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou. Population Decline. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The text panel and table below it from a census record support this phenomenon with estimates of how drastically *Kānaka* were affected. While the museum does provide critical information about *Kānaka* population decline, the display is arguably easy to miss among the plethora of information and artifacts that surround it.

The museum's display of *Kānaka Maoli* mostly focuses on artifacts that were crafted by *Kānaka*, with little connection to plantation history. Throughout this chapter I demonstrate how common it is for museums to represent history this way, and in my discussion chapter I explain the implications behind this method of display. As

interpretive texts are infrequent throughout this museum, the interpretation of *Kānaka* history is also minimal. No online reviewers mention *Kānaka* history, suggesting that these stories are likewise unnoted by visitors.

The Hawai'i Plantation Village Content Analysis

The mission of the Hawai'i Plantation Village is “ensuring that the experiences, lifestyles, struggles, sacrifices, innovations and contributions of our plantation forebearers are known, acknowledged, and visible as the cornerstones of Hawaii's successful multicultural society” (The Hawai'i Plantation Village Website 2023). The museum's site describes it as a living history museum and botanical garden. Using a collection of historic and reconstructed plantation buildings that represent Hawai'i's plantation cultures, the museum intends to promote “a time of true hospitality and cultural sharing” (The Hawai'i Plantation Village Website 2023). The museum additionally aims to take visitors back to the early 1900s and introduce them to the stories of life on Hawai'i's sugar plantations.

Like the Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou, the museum is comparable to a community museum. A handful of *kama 'āina*, plantation descendants and businessmen started the site as a “cultural garden park” in 1992, and the museum continues to be run by *kama 'āina* and plantation descendants in paid and unpaid roles (Hawai'i Plantation Village Website 2023). The museum hosts many local events, from community fundraisers to cultural ceremonies.

The site describes that the museum's tours are led by local guides and can sometimes include samples of fruit that were brought to Hawai'i with each immigrant

group. One page on the site is called “resources for historians.” The page title seems to imply resources for professional researchers, like archival materials, but instead offers short articles with historical information about bango tags and sugar mills.

The site also includes a brochure that describes Hawai’i’s plantation history in more depth. The brochure acknowledges some elements of hardship, especially regarding the treatment of plantation laborers. The brochure explores the ways that laborers were systematically made dependent on the plantations, dehumanized by plantation managers, and paid inequitably. It also explains that when workers first arrived in Hawai’i, they were not identified by their names, but by bango tag numbers; that laborers were paid in scrips (a certificate entitling the owner to a certain amount of money); that each ethnic group was paid at a different rate; and that police strictly enforced laborer’s schedules. Overall, the museum’s brochure prepares visitors with a background to plantation history that focuses on laborers and their working conditions. Later, I explore how the museum’s displays do not acknowledge labor conditions very thoroughly, despite the attention paid to this topic in promotional materials. I do suggest, however, that the museum’s online reviews indicate that *kama’āina* and plantation descendant guides may offer supplemental histories of hardship during their tours.

The museum brochure also says that pay was dependent on when, not which, ethnic groups were recruited. This perspective conflicts with that of many prominent plantation historians, who conversely argue that early plantation wage gaps were racialized (see background chapter). With this marketing material, the museum seems to ignore the racialized discrimination that occurred on plantations. Without problematizing

discriminatory plantation policies, the brochure allows visitors to romanticize the idea of the multiracial plantation. Later, I emphasize how the lack of discussion regarding racial dynamics and discriminatory policies can be detrimental to the visitor's understanding of Hawai'i's plantation history.

The museum's Instagram mainly consists of photos of different museum programs. A few represented are a Lunar New Year festival, a Hawaiian craft workshop, a Portuguese *Festa* (festival), and community food drives. Other posts on Instagram include small pieces of interesting information about plantation life or "shoutouts" recognizing specific volunteers.

The Hawai'i Plantation Village website and Instagram do not define who might be part of the museum's audiences or visitors. Seventeen percent of online reviews for the Hawai'i Plantation Village were by *kama 'āina* reviewers. This museum has fewer local reviews than the Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou. Most interpretation throughout the museum is presented in both Japanese and English, suggesting that the museum's most common visitors speak one of these languages fluently.

I determined that the most common theme covered by the content at the museum is social history, including history about life and diversity. These themes are also reflected in the museum's online content. The museum's most common online reviews are about social history (55%), alternative history (16%), and sugar (5%). Online reviews suggest that within the social history category, the museum focuses mainly on immigrants and culture.

Life and Diversity

The museum's content heavily focuses on the lives of plantation families. Museum content coded as "life" often included objects such as clothing, food stuff, religious items, sport awards and photos, and art. The museum conveys a sense of walking among a historic plantation camp, though it really is only a re-creation of a plantation camp setting. The museum's marketing brochure describes that the

Plantation Housing was situated so that the plantation manager lived at the top of the hill in a large home overlooking the plantation. The '*lunas*' or supervisors, lived below the managers and on the lower, flat lands were the laborers in 'identical wooden frame houses' or dormitory barracks for the single men (Hawai'i Plantation Village Website 2023).

Unlike the typical campsite that communicates power relationships and authority through the layout of buildings, the village is organized more loosely and does not include a plantation manager's home. Instead, the Chinese society building, pictured below, is the most elevated building at the site, situated atop a small hill.



Figure 5.2.1. Hawai'i Plantation Village. Chinese Society Building. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

Stephen Small and Jessica Moody (2019) say that living history museums located on plantations convey relationships and hierarchies through layout and architectural

styles that centralize certain buildings. Like the slave cabin tours in Natchitoches, Louisiana that allow visitors a different perspective about power dynamics (Small 2018), the Hawai'i Plantation Village's plantation camp tours allow visitors to center the lives of laborers and their families, rather than the lives of plantation owners. Likewise, the village does not center a plantation manager's home, but happens to center the Chinese society building. Labels do not explain whether the layout of the camp was intentionally planned out. The labels also do not explain that the layout of the site is not historically accurate, and do not acknowledge the fact that real plantation camps were often laid out according to a racial hierarchy. The lack of overt acknowledgement of the layout could lead to misunderstandings by visitors, who can make their own judgments about the relationships and power dynamics between laborers. Later, when discussing online reviews, I offer that volunteer tour guides may communicate the realities of plantation hierarchies during their tours.

A few buildings serve as spaces that could be found in a plantation camp, including a general store, a manager's office, and a medical office. Other buildings are recreations of plantation homes of specific plantation ethnic groups, and some buildings are shared cultural spaces. Inside each plantation culture house is a kitchen, a bedroom, and a living room. Each room has a collection of artifacts that represent "a day selected by each ethnic social group" (Hawai'i Plantation Village Website 2023). This context is provided by the museum's marketing brochure but is not provided on any interpretive labels throughout the site. Artifacts vary drastically from house to house, since they all were associated with the specific cultural group the house represents.



Figure 5.2.2. Hawai'i Plantation Village. Filipino Family House Kitchen. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The above photo was taken in the Filipino family house. This display shows a recreation of a Filipino kitchen during plantation times. There is not any interpretation in the display, except for an object label that reads “lechon (roast pig).” The marketing brochure explains that the Filipino family house was furnished and curated to represent a baptismal party.



Figure 5.2.3. Hawai'i Plantation Village. Korean Family House Bedroom. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The bedrooms in each cultural house likewise contain artifacts and furniture that were part of the typical family’s everyday life. These displays often included photographs

of family members, religious items, and home-made items such as quilts, pillows, or furniture coverings. The above photo taken within the Korean family house captures this standard setting.



Figure 5.2.4. Hawai'i Plantation Village. Korean Family House Living Space. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

Displays of shared living spaces often included cultural artifacts, including a number of recreational activities. The above photo is crowded with artifacts, but broadly captures the variety of artifacts that could be found in these spaces. The photo includes clothing, paintings, musical instruments, hats, and even hand-painted wooden ducks. Similar artifacts are on display in other plantation family houses but differ based on culture.

While the marketing brochure explains that exhibits are meant to represent specific cultural events within a home, interpretive texts at the museum did not share that information. Without interpretation, a self-guided tour allows visitors to come to their own conclusions about whether each exhibit is a snapshot of a day or an amalgam of daily experiences. Scholars (Bastos 2020; Hutchison 2009) warn against the amalgamation of immigrant experiences, or the creation of “one identity.” In this case,

the museum shows multiple cultural identities, but could risk combining several different experiences into one. I later discuss in more detail how Native Hawaiian family and daily life is similarly represented as a snapshot of a specific event.

A few of the buildings at the Hawai'i Plantation Village are shared community spaces. Some of these buildings are spaces that were shared by people of all backgrounds, such as a general store, manager's office, medical office, a saimin stand, a community furo (bath), and a social/union hall. Interpretive labels emphasize the ways those buildings may have been part of people's shared daily lives. Multiculturalism is also highlighted.



Figure 5.2.5. Hawai'i Plantation Village. Shiroma Saimin Stand. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The above saimin stand is accompanied by an interpretive label which draws attention to the multicultural composition of the saimin dish:

Saimin combines Chinese American Noodles and a Japanese seafood broth made with konbu (seaweed) and dried shrimp and/or dried bonito with a topping of slivered fishcake and green onions. The Japanese later added pork and beef bones to their broth for a richer flavor and then topped the soup with slices of spam and Chinese roast pork (Hawai'i Plantation Village. Exhibit Label. 2021).

As such a popular food throughout Hawai'i, many people do not realize that saimin is a product of plantation times. Saimin is presented here as evidence of multiculturalism and cultural sharing. The label also draws attention to the role that saimin played in people's daily lives:

Workers would crowd around stands such as this, both before and after work. Saimin was also a popular after movie snack or meal. Japanese and Filipino movies were shown weekly on selected nights at the theater. The stand would open evenings to satisfy the cravings of the families (Hawai'i Plantation Village. Exhibit Label. 2021).

The saimin stand is used to portray one aspect of people's daily lives and the way that the food brought community members together. The saimin stand is used to emphasize multiculturalism and to give visitors an idea of the daily lives of plantation families.

Another shared community space is represented through a Japanese Wakamiya Inari shrine. Some plantations would have shrines such as the one shown below, though they were mostly used by people in the Japanese camps. The shrine is used to emphasize the ways that cultural traditions and religions were perpetuated by plantation community members.



Figure 5.2.6. Hawai'i Plantation Village. Wakamiya Inari Shrine. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).



Figure 5.2.7. Hawai'i Plantation Village. Wakamiya Inari Shrine Interior. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The shrine sits between plantation family houses but is slightly elevated compared to the other buildings. An interpretive label states that the building was the first component of the Hawai'i Plantation Village. The label also states, “(the shrine) shows today's schoolchildren and other visitors a vital part of immigrant life in the islands – a life that fostered Hawai'i's unique multicultural society.” This specific shrine was never

on plantation lands but is meant to represent how Hawai'i had a "unique multicultural society" that embraced immigrant cultures, including religions.

The museum broadly focuses on plantation life and diversity. It demonstrates these themes through the use of plantation family homes that depict people's lives, allowing visitors to compare cultural differences. These themes are also displayed with shared spaces, whether spaces shared by people of different cultures or those typically used by people of one cultural group, such as the shrine used by Japanese immigrants. These community buildings spread throughout the site emphasize plantation families' shared experiences.

Commemoration

Throughout the museum site, there are several displays that spotlight people or community members who were either integral to the museum's institutional history or the history of plantations in Hawai'i. The museum's tour starts at a building that is situated across from the historic plantation buildings. In this building is a display which describes the museum's five founders.



Figure 5.2.8. Hawai'i Plantation Village. Founders Display. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

This display, shown above, pays homage to the founders of the Hawai'i Plantation Village, providing information about the people who have had significant influence over the museum's formation. While this display is in recognition of the founder's achievements, the context provided also helps us to understand that the museum was a grass roots project implemented by local people, one of whom had worked on a plantation and was actively involved in a union.



Figure 5.2.9. Hawai'i Plantation Village. 100 Year Anniversary Plaque. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The above commemoration plaque was awarded to the museum for its role in conserving the history of Filipino immigrants and their struggle alongside other plantation communities. The commemoration was awarded in part in celebration of the 100th anniversary of Filipino Immigrants to Hawai'i. This plaque demonstrates that the community supports the museum and its representations of Filipino immigrant plantation laborers.



Figure 5.2.10. Hawai'i Plantation Village. O'ahu Sugar Company Plaque. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

Another commemorative plaque is “dedicated to the immigrant workers of O’ahu Sugar Company who had no families to tend to their graves.” This plaque honors the memory of these laborers, while also providing visitors with an understanding of how after death ceremonies were something that only people with family members were privileged to. The plaque also says that the stone was hand carved by Japanese immigrant Zenichi Karioki in 1930. This context serves to highlight how immigrants practiced other skills and hobbies outside of plantation labor.

These displays commemorating plantation laborers and the museum’s founders all provide important supplemental information about plantation life. Through these displays, people who were integral to the museum and Hawai’i’s plantations are honored and recognized. Since some of the plaques were gifts to the museum for their role in preserving people’s history, the plaques also support the idea that the museum has a positive reputation among community members.

Hardship

Though the museum's marketing material draws attention to the hardships of plantation labor and life, the museum's content only partially explores these topics. The brochure may have been meant to provide background information prior to the visit, rather than to promote topics a visitor would learn more about at the museum. There is not a lot of written interpretation throughout the museum, other than the interpretive signs at the entrance of every plantation building. The interpretive signs mostly do not explore the topic of plantation labor, rather they center the personal lives of laborers. Even so, the straightforward recognition of hardship that is discussed in the museum's brochure does not appear in the museum's written interpretive materials.

Inside the Korean family house is a framed poem that describes Hawai'i's plantation history intimately.

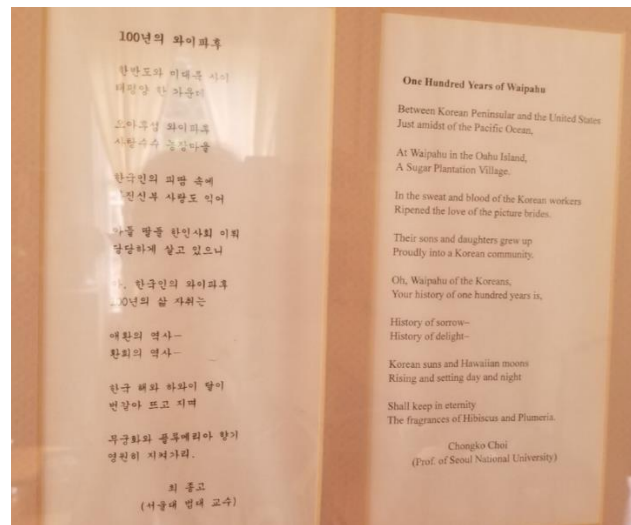


Figure 5.2.11. Hawai'i Plantation Village. Korean Family House Poem⁵. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

⁵ One Hundred Years of Waipahu Transcription: Between Korean Peninsular and the United States/Just amidst of the Pacific Ocean, / At Waipahu in the Oahu Island./A Sugar Plantation Village./In the sweat and

The poem, shown above, does not explore the exact conditions of plantation labor but implicates arduous work. The poem also acknowledges that, though in another land, Korean sons and daughters grew up in a Korean community. It also captures the common feelings of laborers when it comes to Hawai'i's plantations – sorrow and delight. As an archival document, the poem importantly gives voice to the Korean immigrant experience.

The museum also has two small displays dedicated to bango tags. One display is of bango tags of different types, next to a schedule of the typical workday. This display is just outside of the museum's plantation manager's office.



Figure 5.2.12. Hawai'i Plantation Village. Bango Tags. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

There is no interpretative text accompanying the bango tags. The regular visitor without any prior knowledge regarding these tags could be confused about what these tags mean to the laborer experience. The schedule of a typical workday is likewise very simple and

blood of the Korean workers/Ripened the love of the picture brides. / Their sons and daughters grew up Proudly into a Korean community. / Oh, Waipahu of the Koreans,/Your history of one hundred years is, / History of sorrow—/History of delight— / Korean suns and Hawaiian moons/Rising and setting day and night / Shall keep in eternity/The fragrances of Hibiscus and Plumeria.

Chongko Choi (Prof. of Seoul National University)

open to interpretation. It simply presents a ten-hour workday. The museum might rely on tour guides to communicate this sort of information to visitors. A few buildings down, another exhibit contains an interpretive label describing bango tags and their uses:

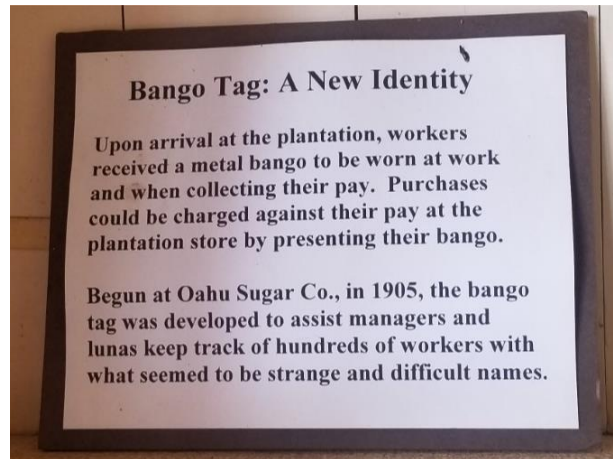


Figure 5.2.13. Hawai'i Plantation Village. Bango Tag Label. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The label presents a mostly neutral stance on bango tags. It says that bango tags served as identifying numbers, but also allowed managers the convenience of not having to recognize their workers or remember their names. The label also offers that laborers used bango tags to ease their payments with the plantation store. While the label is straightforward, it seems to empathize with plantation managers by explaining that people had “strange” and “difficult” names. While many plantation scholars argue that bango tags were a tool for dehumanizing plantation laborers (see background chapter), the language the museum uses seems to support the plantation managers’ perspectives.

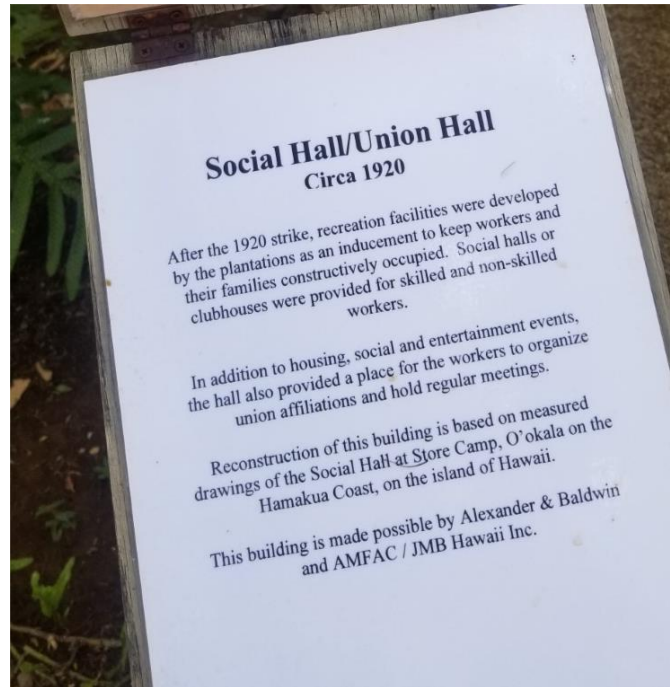


Figure 5.2.14. Hawai'i Plantation Village. Social/Union Hall Label. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

The museum also includes a social/union hall, a space where skilled and non-skilled workers alike could hold events and organize union meetings. The interpretive label above says that the creation of the social hall was a result of a strike in 1920 and implies that these buildings were meant to distract laborers from dissatisfaction. The accompanying interpretation recognizes that the building was made to deter strikes, but still provides little context about who joined the union and why they would unionize. Again, the museum presents a neutral stance by avoiding additional contextual information that could improve a visitor's understanding about the hardship endured by laborers. Nonetheless, the building recognizes unionization and the important role it played in laborer's lives.

The museum plainly acknowledges a few parts of typical plantation life that I coded as “alternative history” – those which could be seen as insensitive, dehumanizing, or a result of laborer dissatisfaction. However, it does not explore these topics in much detail or try to provide many perspectives about how these experiences may have affected laborers. Online reviews tell a different story. The Hawai’i Plantation Village has the highest frequency of reviews about alternative history when compared to the other museums. Many of these reviews simply point out that this version of history is not well-known, but is a story that needs to be told. One reviewer writes, “A different take on history. Very important to preserve. Eye opening” (Hawai’i Plantation Village Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2021). Reviewers claim that the museum displays a history that many people are unaware of, or history that differs from the knowledge they did hold about the topic. One reviewer describes the histories that they were exposed to during their visit:

I didn't know when the Europeans came to Hawaii they brought a lot of foreign illnesses that wiped out 90% of the Hawaiian population. Since there wasn't enough native hawaiiians to work the plantations they brought in poor people from Asia, Japan, Korea, Chin, Philippines and other places promising them that they would get rich and worked them like slaves (Hawai’i Plantation Village Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2016).

The reviewer says they learned about how Native Hawaiians died from foreign illnesses, and then were replaced by immigrant laborers. The reviewer also identifies that these laborers were manipulated by false promises and then were subjected to inhumane

treatment. This suggests that the museum does explore histories of hardship or colonization, though the museum's exhibits and displays only touch the surface of these topics. Online reviews also suggest that these histories might be explored outside of the museum's main tour and physical displays.

The main tour of the museum – the cultural garden park made up of plantation buildings – might not be where visitors are primarily exposed to complicated histories either, however. One visitor writes about the museum's central building, where visitors would start their tour:

The first 2 information rooms are free and packed with lots of interesting facts and photos. Explains how the local population was exploited by their own kings and then the plantation owners, however so many had died from diseases that the plantation owners had to import labour from all over the world often with false promises (Hawai'i Plantation Village Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2020).

The reviewer learned the bulk of information about the complications of plantations through self-guided exhibits not included on the museum's walking tour. The areas where visitors might be able to learn more about the harsh realities of plantations may be obscured by the museum's more uncomplicated walking tour of plantation buildings. These walking tours are marketed as the main attraction, and almost 30% of visitors mention tour guides specifically. The emphasis on the guided tour of the recreated plantation camp may unintentionally draw visitors away from the exhibit spaces that seem to offer more critical historical information.

It is possible, on the other hand, that visitors are being exposed to topics of hardship through the museum’s guided tours, where local tour guides lead the visitors through the museum’s recreated camp buildings. One reviewer writes, “Tour guide doesn't sugar coat anything” (Hawai’i Plantation Village Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2018). Like at the Hawai’i Plantation Museum in Papa’ikou, tour guides might play an important role in shaping the stories told in the museum. Later on, I further explore the role of tour guides at the museum and their impact on visitors.

***Kānaka Maoli* Representation**

The Hawai’i Plantation Village is the only museum where online reviewers wrote about *Kānaka* history. The museum recognizes several Native Hawaiian traditions and includes two recreations of traditional structures. As previously mentioned, the museum may also emphasize Native Hawaiian histories in the exhibit rooms that are not part of the main tour, and *kama’āina* guides may share additional interpretation on the museum’s content.



Figure 5.2.15. Hawai’i Plantation Village. *Halau Wa’a*. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

A *hālau wa'a* is pictured above, though older photos from the museum's website showed the structure with a leaf-thatched roof. The label for the structure explains that *hālau wa'a* were typically workspaces for canoe building. The label goes on to explain how these structures are typically made, and then explains that the *hālau* "was a special place to learn about other native Hawaiian skills, such as learning hula, making instruments for dance, weaving *lau hala*, or making spears, canoe paddles, and tools." The *hālau* pictured acts as an educational classroom for the Plantation Village, allowing "children of Hawai'i to... feel the ambiance of their ancestor's working conditions." In this way, the structure continues to serve the same purpose as a traditional *hālau*.

I did not notice the other Hawaiian structure when I was visiting the site, but another interpretive label explains this structure, a Hawaiian *hale*. *Hale* were sleeping spaces for *Kānaka*, mostly *maka'āinana*. As mentioned earlier, the location focus of a tour can communicate whose story is worth telling (Moody and Small 2019). Likewise, the spaces that surround a museum visitor activate different senses, depending on the visitor's lived experiences (Howes and Classen 2013; Karp, Lavine, and Mullen-Kramer 1992). Because the museum chooses to represent all main plantation family and cultural spaces, including Native Hawaiian homes and workspaces, these displays of *Kānaka Maoli* spaces are able to communicate to a visitor that *Kānaka* were part of the plantation community, and not separate from plantation history.

The *hale* label also explains that "some of the earliest housing for immigrant workers on the sugar plantations resembled these thatched structures," and "from 1840 to 1875, the Hawaiians constituted the majority of workers on the sugar plantations." This

label clearly recognizes that *Kānaka* worked on early plantations and influenced the earliest ways of life. While there is far more to the connections between *Kānaka* and early plantation history, this label provides much more information regarding this topic than the other museums in this study.

The museum is importantly also described as a “cultural garden park.” Indigenous and immigrant-introduced plants can be found throughout the site. Many of the plants are Indigenous or were used traditionally by *Kānaka Maoli*. The website also mentions that touring visitors can sometimes try a few ripened fruits. This opportunity allows visitors to experience plantation history through other senses not typically stimulated in the average museum visit.

A garden near the museum’s entrance includes many Native Hawaiian plants, accompanied by interpretive labels explaining how *Kānaka* and plantation laborers used those plants to treat common ailments. An introductory panel to this display presents the intention behind this decision:



Figure 5.2.16. Hawai'i Plantation Village. Garden Label. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

Plantation families are portrayed as resourceful people who had to depend on their gardens. Though the label doesn't explain exactly why, it at least expresses this dependence, and recognizes that *Kānaka* taught early immigrants about the many uses of specific plants. Beyond this panel, the garden area itself includes traditional plants and interpretive labels identifying each and explaining how they are used.

The garden park also spans many acres. The below photo demonstrates just part of the garden's scale:



Figure 5.2.17. Hawai'i Plantation Village. *Lo'i* Pond. (Photography by Amanda K. Lane, 2021).

In the photo are many *lo'i* ponds where *kalo* (taro) are grown. I was unable to find any interpretive signage about the *lo'i* or why *lo'i* is grown at the site, but as mentioned in my background chapter, *kalo* is an essential resource for *Kānaka*.

The museum acknowledges the resourcefulness of *Kānaka Maoli*, recognizing the knowledge of Native customs when it comes to natural resources. One way it does this is through recreations of *Kānaka* structures. The museum provides their *lo'i*, *hālau*, and *hale* freely to *Kānaka* so that they can continue to actively use these spaces as they were originally intended to be used. The museum also draws explicit connections between *Kānaka* and plantation history and makes visitors think about plantations as a place where *Kānaka* labored alongside their colleagues. In these displays, the museum does not mention Native displacement or annexation, but online reviews suggest that the museum does share this history elsewhere, such as on their guided tours. To be fair, however, only two reviews were about Hawaiian history, while seven reviews misuse the word Hawaiian. I later explore how all museums have at least one review that substitutes

“Hawaiian” when writing about *kama‘āina*. Despite the amount of Hawaiian history exhibited at the Hawai‘i Plantation Village, the histories of how plantations affected *Kānaka* seem to be lost among the histories of other plantation communities.

The Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum Content Analysis

The Lahaina Restoration Foundation (LRF) is a Maui-based non-profit that aims to “restore, preserve and protect the physical, historical and cultural legacies of Lahaina, and honor the era of the Hawaiian Monarchy” (Lahaina Restoration Foundation Website 2023). By preserving the region's historic buildings, sites, and collections, the organization promotes knowledge about Lahaina’s place in Hawai‘i’s history. The plantation museum (LRFPM) is one of a very small number of museums managed by LRF. The museum is home to Lahaina’s pineapple and sugar plantation collection, which was curated alongside Lahaina plantation descendants.

Because I was not able to attend this museum in person, I relied on virtual resources for my analysis. The museum is represented minimally on the LRF website and Instagram pages, with no dedicated page or site to find information or promotions about the museum. It is located in one of the storefronts of the Lahaina Cannery Mall, a shopping center. On the Lahaina Cannery Mall site, the museum has a small blurb inviting visitors to “experience old Lahaina” and “travel back in time to the Plantation Era of Maui” (Lahaina Cannery Mall Website). The Instagram of the LRF loosely promotes all the organization’s sites. A few posts promote the plantation museum’s newest location at Lahaina Cannery Mall, while others are about the museum’s opening ceremony which included performances by local musicians. The few online options also

do not define any audience for any of the museums or historical sites managed by the Lahaina Restoration Foundation.

The most common themes represented by the LRFPM content are life and sugar history. The museum broadly focuses on plantation labor history, labor conditions, and the lives of plantation laborers. Museum content coded as “life” often includes objects such as clothing, food stuff, religious items, sport awards and photos, and art. Photos, labels, and artifacts coded as “sugar” covered topics of sugar processing, industrial machinery, and the sugar industry. The museum focuses on both the sugar and pineapple plantation history of Lahaina, unlike the other plantation museums which narrowly focus on sugar plantations. Unlike the other museums, where displays seem to promote social history, like cultural differences and diversity, LRFPM more commonly centers stories of community. The museum offers only a free self-guided tour and has no staff or volunteers to manage the space, though it does include many audio-visual elements, such as videos and interactive maps.

The Lahaina Restoration Foundation has a small online presence compared to the other three museums studied. Only five written online reviews could be found for the museum. For this reason, I do not analyze this museum’s online reviews.

Hardship: Labor and Dehumanization

The museum’s exhibit mainly focuses on labor conditions and the effects that plantation management had on the lives of laborers. These displays often draw attention to the poor conditions that laborers had to endure and the tools that they used to complete the physically demanding tasks.



Figure 5.3.1. Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum. Fields Display. (Photography by Online Reviewer, Accessed 2022).

The above display is labeled “Hard Work in the Fields.” At the bottom of the photo is a display case with a picture of a laborer holding sugar stalks. The framed photo is surrounded by machetes and scythes. Above the display case, the label panel includes photos of laborers working in the field, a few of which appear to show one person standing above and overlooking the other laborers. The label describes fieldwork as “hot, hard, and dirty,” and goes on to describe that laborers had to wear heavy clothing to protect from the sharp edges of plantation products. The label concludes by explaining the typical tasks performed by field workers, and how these tasks became highly mechanized over time. Overall, the label offers insight into the demanding conditions of sugar and pineapple plantation field work.



Figure 5.3.2. Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum. Bango Tags. (Photography by Online Reviewer, Accessed 2022).

The above photo features mounted bango tags with numbers and the abbreviation for the Pioneer Mill Company Limited stamped onto the face of the tags. In the lower half of the image is a photograph titled “Pioneer Mill Company Credit Union 1955.” Because this photo was taken by an online reviewer, it is unclear whether the display is accompanied by labels explaining the objects. The bango tags alone can represent the dehumanization of laborers who worked for the plantation, but if it's true that like at the Hawai'i Plantation Village the display of bango tags lacks any accompanying contextual label, a visitor might have to assume how or whether the credit union photograph even had any direct connection to the bango tags. The museum could potentially address the dehumanization represented by bango tags using interpretive texts, but instead it lacks any information or context at all, allowing visitors to miss the important history of the bango tags and the hardship that they can reflect.



Figure 5.3.3. Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum. Life and Labor. (Photography by Online Reviewer, Accessed 2022).

The above photo features a collection of artifacts, photographs, and newspaper clippings. The far left of the display has several antique appliances surrounded by photographs of people. On the center wall are photographs of people, most of which appear to be working in the field. Some photographs are of produce and industrial machinery. The wall also has many signs and a display of canned goods. The signs are both health-related, possibly implying that fieldwork is dangerous. On the right wall, shown in the next image, is a label that claims, "Strikes Bring Change." Altogether, this display seems to emphasize life and labor conditions. The label about strikes, noticeably the largest label in this display, presents strikes as an answer to the conditions outlined through the photographs and artifacts.

The museum's representation of strikes was a point of interest for this research, due to Lahaina being the location of a five-day strike that resulted in the death of a police officer (see background chapter). Recognition of strikes shapes unionization as an

important part of Hawai'i's plantation labor history. It also helps express how laborers fought for better working conditions. Unfortunately, I was not able to read the strikes label, so it's hard to determine whether the label mentions this strike in detail. Unlike what was possible for my analysis of the Hawai'i Plantation Village, I was also unable to analyze whether the museum can offer more critical information elsewhere about strikes and their causes.

This museum's displays certainly seem to center on the lives of laborers, including the poor living and working conditions experienced by plantation families. This display of history is also not without acknowledgment of the role of strikers in improving living and working conditions. Difficult histories around plantation life are embraced by the museum, but similar to the Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou, the LRFHPM seems to explore difficult histories at a superficial level, rather than critically.

Plantation Life

The museum does not focus as much on the diversity of plantation families as it does their communal lived experiences. In one part of the museum there are interpretive panels that appear to be about 7 feet tall by 3 feet wide. There are several panels, each dedicated to telling the story of a specific cultural group. The photo I found of this display has a museum visitor in it, so I chose not to include it here to maintain their privacy. I also was unable to read much of the context provided by the labels behind the visitor. It appears from this display, however, that the museum dedicates some space to the unique stories and experiences of each cultural group. In another part of the museum are a few lanterns and an 'ukulele, which seem to not have any interpretive panels that

could provide more context regarding these items. This display seems to simply center interesting-looking cultural items, rather than provide an avenue for comparison as did the ethnographic displays at the Hawai'i Plantation Village or Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou.

The museum also explores the contextual history that affected plantation life, and features other displays of recreational activities that plantation families participated in.



Figure 5.3.4. Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum. Life Display. (Photography by Online Reviewer, Accessed 2022).

To the right of the strikes and labor display, a change from a yellow wall to a brown one signifies another exhibit. On the wall are enlarged images of newspaper clippings, both about war actions made by Japan and the U.S. These clippings are accompanied by photos of people. Though the poster of the image did not capture the entirety of the right exhibit, the wall might be dedicated to other significant events that occurred alongside Hawai'i's unfolding plantation history.

The museum also celebrates certain parts of the daily lives of plantation families. The below photos seem to encompass part of an exhibit on sports or recreation activities:



Figure 5.3.5. Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum. Recreation Display. (Photography by Online Reviewer, Accessed 2022).

Another display (not pictured) of a saddle and trophy emphasizes the accomplishments of laborers who participated in horse racing. Such recreational objects have the potential to invoke a connection between museum visitors and people who had lived or worked on plantation lands. As sports are often community-building activities, this display also conveys a sense community among plantation laborers and their families.

***Kānaka Maoli* Representation**

Like at other museums, *Kānaka Maoli* are mentioned minimally. At the LRFPM, *Kānaka* are represented through a display case with a few *lei* and a music book. Traditional *Kānaka* ways of life are centered through this display, pictured below. But without any labels, no context is offered.



Figure 5.3.6. Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum. *Kānaka* Display. (Photography by Online Reviewer, Accessed 2022).

This seems to be the only Hawaiian representation in the museum. As will later be discussed in more detail, the curator of the museum is aware of plantations' connections to *Kānaka Maoli* and is aware that widespread death and disease was caused by exposure to foreigners. Yet, the museum's representation of *Kānaka Maoli* does not engage with plantation life or labor at all and instead focuses on only a few Hawaiian cultural objects. The display appears to simply glorify *Kānaka* objects without any recognition of the role that *Kānaka Maoli* played in plantations, or the role that plantations played in *Kānaka* displacement. Objects in this display are sorted together due to being *Kānaka* in origin but are without any context or narrative. In my discussion, I analyze this approach and discuss the implications behind this type of display. From online photos, this appears to be the museum's only representation of *Kānaka Maoli*.

The Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum Staff Interviews

Interviews with staff at the Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum helped me understand how the identities of staff members might have affected the museum's representations of Lahaina's plantation history. I spoke with two white staff members of the organization, Dave and Elinor. Dave and Elinor are closely involved with the maintenance and creation of local museums such as the local plantation museum. One of the staff spoke with me over the phone, while the other chose to respond to my interview questions over email in a questionnaire format. Both staff members answered questions about their role at the museum, their experience with plantation history, and their identities as related to the museum or its content (see Appendix B).

Collecting, Consulting, and Centering Community

The plantation museum involved many community members, but most especially those who had worked or lived on a plantation in Hawai'i. Dave described how the community members led the efforts to collect plantation life artifacts:

(The museum) was community generated, (community members) were the driving force behind the collection and getting everybody who was of their generation, they are... 80, almost, I guess, (local community member) could be close to 90. A lot of the people of their generation, they contacted, they collected all these things, then I took all the objects they collected and all the information and photos and put together exhibits from it (Phone Interview. Dave, August 19, 2020).

The community used their personal connections to collect artifacts from fellow community members. Dave emphasized that his role was both designer and curator:

They gave me all the information, I had no background on plantation life or sugar plantations, and all I knew how to do was operations... but it's just another form of art to me, to take all of this, and try to put it out there so that it's enjoyable to look at, it gives you a feeling of what life was like back then, and it honors the people that used the stuff (Phone Interview. Dave, August 19, 2020).

Dave admitted that he didn't know anything about plantations prior to curating the plantation museum. Educated in fine art and design, he said that the community members contributed their artifacts and stories for him to incorporate into an exhibit. He described that his role as curator was to synthesize the information and artifacts that he received from community members.

Elinor also expressed the importance of community involvement. Elinor shared that, "What I like most about the Plantation Museum is that... the people from the plantation were actively involved with the plantation museum and we were able to get a lot of information and artifacts directly from them" (Email Interview. Elinor, July 30, 2020).

Kama 'āina who lived plantation life contributed their artifacts and their stories to the making of the exhibit. Both Elinor and Dave placed value on community involvement and the role of community members in both collecting and consulting. These interviews clarified that the community was actively involved in the making of the exhibit.

Dave also said that he tried to honor the people who used those artifacts. In another quote, Dave provided an example of one of these moments:

When we first opened up the museum, one of the best moments was this 85-year-old lady came in and saw a picture of herself, in her bon ceremony outfit, when she was 8 years old. We had a photograph of her and I had it blown up and everything, and she walks up and she looks at it, she's all hunched over... she just looked like a picture out of the book, and she looked up, with her cane there hunched over at the picture, and she goes, "Huh! It's me!" That right there is just what gives me the strong motivation... I'm all goose bumpy just thinking about it, how much it meant to her to see that she was being honored (Phone Interview. Dave, August 19, 2020).

When Dave said the visitor and plantation descendant was honored, he commented on the moment of surprise and gratification expressed by the visitor. He described another similar story when he felt satisfied with visitor's reactions to the exhibit:

One of the highlights, some high school kids came to the museum one day, about a year and a half ago, and they were looking at everything and going "and this is our history" and that is what it's all about, so those kids can look at it and say, "this is who we are, and where we came from." And that's what's sort of the driving force behind my motivation, for that particular thing (Phone Interview. Dave, August 19, 2020).

Dave was moved by the way that *kama'āina* interacted with the exhibit and saw themselves represented in the exhibit's portrayal of their histories. He seems to prioritize

the community by honoring their memories in the form of the exhibit, maintaining their image for current and future generations to see themselves and their histories represented. In my discussion chapter, I review how these moments of self-reflection are a theme across the museums.

Dave explained that the museum is “about the people that worked in the plantation, the things that surrounded their lives. Not about jobs, or about plantations, but their life. That’s why we call it the Plantation Life exhibit” (Phone Interview. Dave, August 19, 2020). He also said that the museum is about the people that lived in the camps and donated their artifacts:

(Communities) donated things they had been keeping for years, from their grandparents, part of it was from the people that – when they migrated from Japan and China, some of the things they brought with them when they migrated (Phone Interview. Dave, August 19, 2020).

Both times, Dave emphasized that the museum is about people. It displays artifacts that these people used in their everyday lives, including those objects brought over by family members when they were immigrating to Hawai’i.

Elinor wrote about a video in the museum that centers the voice of laborers. “There is an excellent video... where mill workers are interviewed about the pending closure of the (plantation mill)” (Email Interview. Elinor, July 30, 2020). Audio-visual technologies are argued to increase the authenticity of museum content, but also add a new and sometimes fun way for visitors to engage with information (Nielsen 2017, 3). In this case, a video is also a form of intangible heritage, as video interviews allow visitors

to see and hear from real people who worked at the mill, including laborer's feelings about the closure, losing their jobs, and how the closure might affect their futures.

Dave and Elinor stated that the museum presents “accurate history.” Elinor said that the history is accurate about specific plantations, “because we worked with the people who actually worked at the plantation” (Email Interview. Elinor, July 30, 2020). Dave said that the history is accurate because, “we cover the pleasant and the non-pleasant. We don’t glorify it... We don’t take a particular stance on whether sugar was a good thing, a bad thing” (Phone Interview. Dave, August 19, 2020). Dave and Elinor gave different reasons as to why the museum's history is accurate – because of community involvement, and because the history is not glorified. The staff might believe that the museum presents a more accurate, less glorified perspective of history because the descendant communities’ voices were centered in the making of the exhibits.

Through these interviews, we see the benefits of centering, collecting, and consulting with community members. These were the people who collected and consulted through the exhibition process, and the staff feels that the museum conveys both the difficulties and joys of plantation life.

Elinor said that the reason she was interested in plantation history was *because of* the people who worked plantations. “The people who worked the plantations were remarkable in their work ethic, community building among themselves, cultural appreciation, saving money so their kids did not have to work on a plantation” (Email Interview. Elinor, July 30, 2020). Elinor emphasized community, resilience, and cultural appreciation. Dave also described an appreciation for Hawai’i’s community diversity.

When asked what made him feel that he belongs in Hawai'i, Dave used the popular term “melting pot:”

Well, you've got a melting pot here... Most people are accepting of difference. And everybody's thick-headed in certain places, but out here it's much better overall... These people who (are from) all over the world live here, work here, play here. We get along together (Phone Interview. Dave, August 19, 2020).

Diversity and belonging have become significant descriptors for Hawai'i's local culture. Dave used these terms to describe his feeling of belonging in Hawai'i.

Identity, Curation, and Interpretation

I asked both Elinor and Dave if their identities are reflected in the history that the museum displays. While they both identify as white, they responded to this question in different ways. Elinor simply replied, “No. I am not from Hawaii” (Email Interview. Elinor, July 30, 2020). Elinor did not see herself in the history of plantations. *Haole* often played a powerful role in plantations, as they were often plantation managers, “skilled” workers, or *luna* (see background chapter). As a woman, it might have been hard for Elinor to imagine herself as part of this history that was also dominated by white men. Since Elinor only chose to respond via email, I was unable to solicit any elaboration of this statement in subsequent emails. Elinor's response indicated that she might think that plantation history is something only plantation descendants or people from Hawai'i can relate to. Interestingly, Dave's response was the opposite of Elinor's. His response revealed interesting insight into the ways that an exhibit narrative about people's lives can allow anyone to reflect on their own identities.

You know certain things, like the homemade puddle jumper, you take a stick and put a little thing on it so that you can stand up on it and walk through like stilts, there was a pair of those down in the garage that were made back in the 50s, I related to that. When we did the baseball stuff, I related to that cause I like playing baseball... You know, I do relate to a lot of things, I didn't directly relate to some of the (artifacts), like the kerosene stove, we never had a kerosene. The old clothes washing machine, I could identify with that. I think my wife had one of those ringer washers... I would say that the way I exhibited some of it related to how my memory was of how I saw it in action, that's a part of it (Phone Interview. Dave, August 19, 2020).

Dave suggested that both he and his wife could relate to certain objects in the museum because some of the objects that surrounded plantation communities are the same as those that other people encountered in their daily lives. The display of everyday life artifacts reminds people of the humanity of laborers, as some everyday objects bridge cultural differences.

Dave shared with me his feelings about plantation history, after he was exposed to this history through the stories shared by plantation laborers and descendants. He started off summarizing some of the worst qualities of plantation life:

A lot of the way they'd bring in the workers, consciously segregate them, things of that nature seemed at the time to be the best business practice for them, and in my mind... Oh, a step above the plantations of the south, but... the company town. These people got their little bango, had their number on it, they went to the

company store and then could run up as much as they wanted, go in debt, and so they'd have to work the rest of their life just to get out of there... The people came here because they could do it that way, it was much better than the life they came here from. So, it's an emotional mix. In some ways it was really good, and in some ways it was bad, and then what it did to the Hawaiians... the plantation has really radically changed the life of the islands. Some good, some bad (Phone Interview. Dave, August 19, 2020).

Dave showed that he was aware of the biggest social and societal problems with plantation life. He touched on racial segregation, dehumanization, and institutionalized plantation dependency. He also acknowledged, albeit very shortly, Hawaiian displacement and cultural erasure. He said that the history of plantations in Hawai'i brought up a mix of emotions. I asked him what plantation history was "good," to which he replied:

The plantations themselves improved the economy in some ways, and brought a way of earning money to those living off the land, and plus... What I see as the best, we all have to keep progressing into the future, but I guess plantations are kind of a step toward that. I don't know. I hadn't really given this a whole lot of deep thought (Phone Interview. Dave, August 19, 2020).

Much like the missionaries and American businessmen who established plantations in Hawai'i, Dave believed that the plantations allowed Hawai'i to progress into the future. He also believed the plantations allowed people to earn money if they were living off the

land. Dave regurgitated a popular perspective on Hawaiian history that justifies the introduction of a cash-based economy.

I asked Dave if the museum addresses the parts of plantation history that he describes above:

I think it touches on a bit of all of it, the large panels about each ethnic group that came here, basically how they got here, when they got here, how they contributed to the overall life not on the plantation, but of Hawaii. You know – different foods, different cultures that came here became rather unique melting of culture, and in some ways I think that’s good for everyone to have (Phone Interview. Dave, August 19, 2020).

Dave said the museum addresses both the “good” and “bad” parts of Hawai’i’s sugar plantation history, and describes some of the elements of the museum that encompass certain ideas. He mostly emphasized the immigration of each ethnic group and how they contributed to Hawai’i’s melting pot culture:

I came here thinking that culture is clear, and we need to be melding into the whole... One of those things in Hawaii is a lot of that, everybody melts together and then, they still have their little groups but part of what I like about here... Everybody is more accepting of differences, if we can get all the differences to blend together, and everybody to pretty much look alike, we’d be a lot better off (Phone Interview. Dave, August 19, 2020).

Dave describes the concept of cultures melting together into a whole, not maintaining their cultural differences. He also explains that in Hawai’i, “they still have their little

groups,” referring to cultural groups that still celebrate their cultural traditions and differences. He went on to say that society would be better off if everyone looked alike. While he previously had stated that what he likes about Hawai’i is that people accept difference, his statement here could be interpreted as contradictory. Dave’s response encompasses the problems with the ambiguous and complicated “melting pot” perspective of diversity. While the community provided perspective and artifacts to the museum, Dave’s creative freedom might have impacted the museum’s representations of diversity and relationships between laborers.

Overall, interviews with Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum staff showed that plantation descendants were very involved in the making of the exhibit. Descendants shaped the museum perspective of labor history and donated their familial artifacts to the museum’s collection. The interviews also revealed the museum leadership’s perspectives on plantation history, which seem to be influenced by what they learned from descendants throughout the process of building the museum’s exhibits.

Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Content Analysis

The Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum is located in Kahului, Maui, and is the most popular sugar plantation museum to visit across the islands. Their mission is “to preserve and present the history and heritage of the sugar industry and the multiethnic plantation life which it engendered” (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Website 2023). In accomplishing this, they aim to “provide an enriching education” about the history of Maui’s sugar industry and how plantations affected modern-day Hawai’i’s

ethnic heritage; to be a visitor destination and community educational resource; and to act as an outdoor venue for cultural festivals and other social events.

The “Know Your Roots” page of the museum’s website provides a brief background on the history of sugar cane; how sugar cane first was brought to Hawai’i by Hawaiians, or “settler Polynesians;” and how the sugar industry grew throughout the islands (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Website 2023). This page also includes information about the first sugar plantation owned by Alexander and Baldwin and how they acquired their water rights from the Hawaiian Kingdom. Lastly, it briefly explains how Hawai’i’s multicultural community members immigrated to Hawai’i to work on plantations. This page could be seen as an overview of what history would be included during a visit to the museum.

The “exhibits” page of the site supports this, providing a brief description of seven different exhibitions: The Geography/Water Room; The Founder’s Room; The Immigration Room; The Plantation Room; The Fieldwork Room; The Mill Room; and Outdoor Exhibits. The museum’s website suggests that the museum offers a well-rounded history of plantations in Hawai’i that includes people’s history as well as the industrial sugar history of plantations (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Website 2023).

Further marketing material demonstrates other priorities of the museum. Using Instagram, the museum often promotes new exhibitions, its gift shop (made up of local commodities), and books on plantation history. A few posts promote the museum’s “Plantation Days Festival,” which includes a wide array of local and Hawaiian cultural performances, foods, and activities. Many posts offer further information about plantation

history, accompanied by historic photos. The museum's marketing material covers the topics of life, the sugar industry, labor, and the multiethnic results of immigration.

The museum's most common online reviews about content were about sugar history (92), local (Maui) history (64), and social history (44). Online reviews suggest that sugar history is the central theme of the museum, unlike the marketing and content photos of the museum imply. Forty-four percent of the museum's online reviews were about sugar, including the sugar industry, processes, or mills. For context, the average frequency of sugar reviews across the three museums was only 20%. Seventeen percent of Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museums reviewers wrote about social history. This is lower than the average frequency of reviewers who wrote about social history across all museums, 31%. Some reviewers wrote about the construction machinery at the site, the expansive outdoor area or "yard," and audio-video displays. The video display most noted by visitors was about processing sugar. To contextualize these reviews, it is important to note that the museum's website does not state any intended audience, and only three percent of the museum's reviews were by local reviewers.

The museum's content seems to be in-line with the mission to preserve the history of the sugar industry and multiethnic heritage that resulted. The most common themes throughout the museum were sugar, life, and founders. Photos, labels, and artifacts coded as "sugar" covered topics of sugar processes, industrial machinery, and the sugar industry. Museum content coded as "life" often included food stuff, religious items, sport awards and photos, and art created by laborers. Content coded as "founders" included any history about founders of the museum or plantation.

Community and Diversity

Some life artifacts simply demonstrate how some people lived when they were not working. Community and diversity are often implicated through interpretive labels.

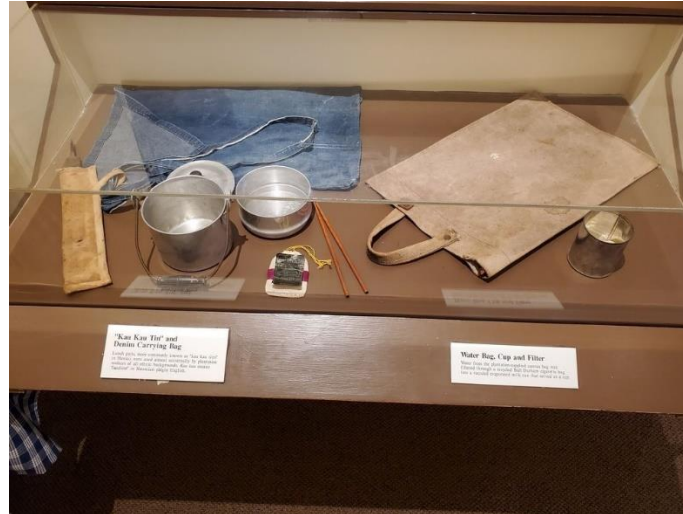


Figure 5.4.1. Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum. Kau Kau Tin Display. (Photography by Online Reviewer, Accessed 2022).

The above photo shows *kau kau* tins and explains that these were used by all plantation laborers, regardless of ethnicity. The display draws attention to the diversity of laborers by emphasizing the ways that laborers shared certain day-to-day experiences and objects, despite racial differences.

A couple photos of museum content include images of food appliances, especially ovens. The below oven was a restoration project of a Portuguese Oven, called a *forno*. The label explains how the *forno* was used in the everyday life of Portuguese plantation families. The label also says that Portuguese families were often large, and due to the amount of bread they ate, necessitated the oven to feed their family members. The *forno* appears to be another tool to introduce the ideas of diversity and self-reliance.



Figure 5.4.2. Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum. Forno. (Photography by Online Reviewer, Accessed 2022).

By centering an oven made for the very culturally specific needs of Portuguese family members, the museum draws attention to the way the Portuguese were able to maintain some of their cultural traditions and customs. The forno could imply that there was a level of respect for diversity between laborers and their employers.

The below display of sports photos, awards, and artifacts, while showing part of everyday life in a plantation camp, also demonstrates diversity and community. The first label, “sports,” touches on how some sports reflected ethnic traditions. It also describes the popularity of “All-American Baseball.” This display gives some insight into the way that people of different cultures were able to share the experiences of competition and play.



Figure 5.4.3. Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum. Recreation Display. (Photography by Online Reviewer, Accessed 2022).

As was a theme with the Lahaina Restoration Foundation's Plantation Museum exhibit, the display of recreational items might allow the regular visitor to relate to the items on a personal level. Based on these displays, the everyday lives of plantation families included struggle and self-sufficiency, but also diverse cultural differences. The displays importantly demonstrate the relatable humanity of the people who worked or lived on plantation land. Unlike the other museums, however, the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum does not provide a lot of cultural items and does not attempt to show cultural contributions or differences. Instead, it homogenizes separate community groups into one plantation community. In my discussion, I discuss in more detail why this method of display is the least effective representation of diversity across the four museums.

Industry and Labor Conditions

The museum's history is intimately tied to the history of the sugar industry, due to the role that Alexander and Baldwin held in the sugar industry's monopolization (see background chapter). The museum is the only sugar plantation museum in Hawai'i in

which the building was once the home of a plantation laborer. The laborer was a *luna* (superintendent), someone who would have held much power over other laborers during plantation times. As previously mentioned, the location of the tour can communicate to visitors a message about whose history is most important and worthy of preservation (Small 2018; Moody and Small 2019). As a few online reviewers suggest, the museum presents a few biases, mostly by avoiding certain parts of Hawai'i's plantation history. One reviewer says, "a great deal of the museum was biased and glossed over the grueling labor and poor working conditions that plantation workers endured earlier on" (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2017). In my discussion chapter, I consider these reviews in more detail.

A few online photos included sections of the museum that presented information about labor. The below label describes typical labor conditions in detail:

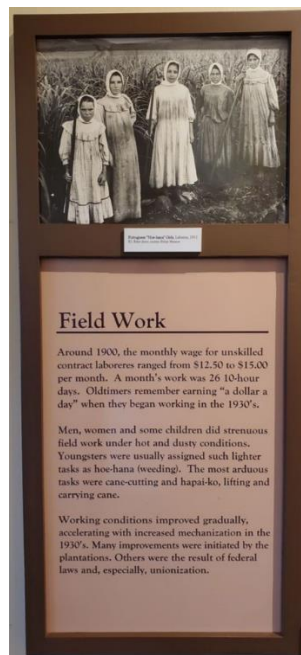


Figure 5.4.4. Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum. Field Work Label. (Photography by Online Reviewer, Accessed 2022).

The label describes the low pay and the long, arduous days in the sun that were experienced by most laborers, though does not offer any information about the physical abuse at the hands of *lunas* that was so common at plantations. This may be the kind of information that the online reviewer had wanted to see, as such information is often glossed over or ignored when it comes to the most prominent iterations of Hawai'i plantation history. The label continues to explain that labor conditions improved due to mechanization, plantation owners, federal laws, and unionization. Unionization is mentioned one other time in the exhibit, in a timeline mapping a strike for better working conditions.

One part of the exhibit, shown below, has information about labor contracts. It explains that these contracts guaranteed jobs, mentioning that the conditions of contracts depended on race and gender.

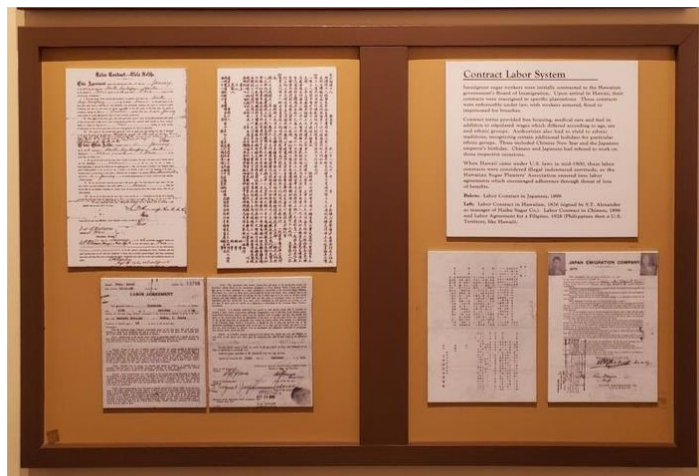


Figure 5.4.5. Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum. Labor Contracts. (Photography by Online Reviewer, Accessed 2022).

There is no mention of how drastically these contracts differed and how they strictly controlled the lives of laborers. This omission is especially egregious since plantation managers openly acknowledged that the racial hierarchy of the plantations was a tool for

ensuring subserviency, and that they hired some ethnic groups into dominating positions specifically to incite conflict between racial groups (see background chapter). Plantation scholars write that plantation *luna*, who often held such dominating positions, were also Portuguese most of the time (see background chapter). Interestingly, the most represented ethnic group at the Alexander and Baldwin Museum is the Portuguese. This could indicate that the museum avoids representation that would portray plantation managers, or their most dominant racial group, in a bad light.

The museum also avoids controversy by offering narrow perspectives. The museum does not acknowledge that the HSPA (Hawaiian Sugar Planter's Association) had sizable control over recruitment and contracts, and purposely indebted laborers to the plantation with the combination of low pay and expensive plantation stores (see background chapter). Contracts are only mentioned as predatory when they are represented as a procedure supported by the Hawaiian monarchy and then resolved by plantation managers. The label also reads,

When Hawaii came under US law in mid-1900, these labor contracts were considered illegal indentured servitude, so the Hawaiian Sugar Planter's Association entered into labor agreements which encouraged adherence through threat of loss of benefits (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum. Label. Accessed 2022).

While the museum acknowledges that new contracts by the HSPA threatened the benefits of laborers, it also uses language which points blame at the Hawaiian government and positions the HSPA and U.S. as the saviors of laborers who were under the previous

contracts. The museum represents this part of history from a sugar industry and U.S. perspective and avoids any nuance on the topic.

Two percent of the museum's online reviews were about alternative history. Interestingly, three of the museum's reviews on this topic were about how sad the museum's representation of plantation history made them feel. One reviewer wrote, "At least they're saving some stuff but. The whole thing is sad 600 ppl lost their jobs" (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2018). Another writes, "Ugliest part and saddest history of Maui, should be removed!" (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2018). While this museum's content broaches the topic of plantation hardship, and the displays don't differ too much from the displays at the other museums, these are the only reviews across all museums where reviewers lament the sad history of plantations. Unlike the Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou and the Hawai'i Plantation Village, the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum does not have any reviews that suggest other mediums where visitors might be exposed to plantation hardship. Interestingly, this is also the only museum where online reviewers write that the museum's history is biased toward the sugar industry. In my discussion chapter I review this finding in more detail.

Kānaka Maoli History

Though diversity is a common theme when discussing the lives of plantation families, the museum has few areas which represent *Kānaka Maoli* history. The right-most label on the below exhibit panel introduces visitors to how Early Polynesians brought sugar to Hawai'i:

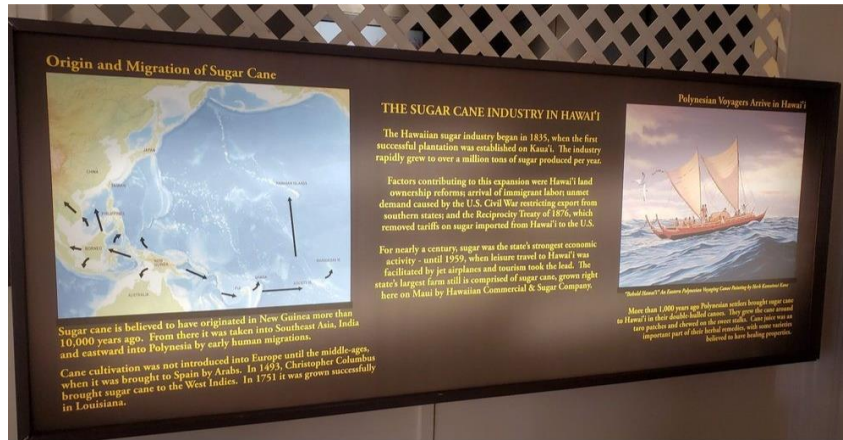


Figure 5.4.6. Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum. Sugar Cane Panel. (Photography by Online Reviewer, Accessed 2022).

The panel provides this information about early *Kānaka Maoli* under the context of “The Sugar Cane Industry in Hawai’i.” This label says that early Polynesians brought sugar to the islands and had unique uses for the sugar, including medicinally. It portrays ancient Hawaiians as innovative and resourceful. While this is a positive representation of Hawaiians, it is one of the only mentions of *Kānaka* history, besides one other panel (not pictured) providing the mythology of the God Maui to give some background on the island’s namesake.

The museum avoids addressing the role that sugar plantations had in the colonization of Hawai’i and mass displacement of *Kānaka Maoli*. One label simply states, “When labor needs could no longer be met by Native Hawaiians, laborers were recruited from various countries around the world and brought to Hawaii.” Unlike the Hawai’i Plantation Museum in Papa’ikou or the Hawai’i Plantation Village, the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum does not offer any reason why there was an insufficient number of Native Hawaiians to work on the plantations. The museum also

frames the expansion of the plantation lands as a grand accomplishment, ignoring the effects this displacement had on *Kānaka* and Hawai'i's modern-day communities.

Plantation Founders

The museum also positions its founders, and their accomplishment of implementing Maui's first irrigation ditch, in a celebratory and even romanticized light. The museum's founders are presented in much the same way that plantation owners are in the plantation museums of the U.S. South – at the heart of the museum (Carter 2016; Eichstedt and Small 2002). In the case of Alexander and Baldwin, this plantation grew into much larger areas of ownership and control of Hawai'i's resources. Alexander and Baldwin Inc. owns the East Maui Irrigation Company, which has had an ongoing permit to divert water to the plantation lands since they first developed the ditch in 1876 (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Label. Accessed 2022). The “Water Room” exhibit contains a panel which details this ownership, including that the ditch system provides “approximately one third of the county water supply” (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Label. Accessed 2022). Alexander and Baldwin Inc. is also the second largest owner of Maui land, with 65,000 acres (Hawaii State Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism 2017). The company is the largest private owner of Maui's land and water rights (ibid.). The museum emphasizes that Alexander and Baldwin Inc. serviced all of Maui via the ditch.

One panel introduces the visitor to Alexander and Baldwin and how they began their plantation journey:

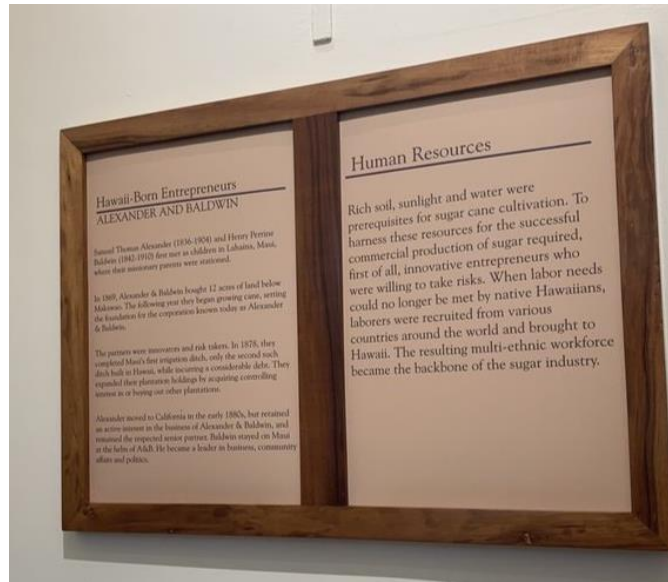


Figure 5.4.7. Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum. Founders Label. (Photography by Online Reviewer, Accessed 2022).

The label refers to the irrigation ditch and how the owners had incurred debt to implement it. It also refers to the owner’s monopolization of plantation land, though there is no mention of how the company’s land use affected *Kānaka Maoli*. The label calls Alexander and Baldwin “innovators” and “risktakers” (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Label. Accessed 2022). This sort of language, and of course the many demonstrations of Alexander and Baldwin’s accomplishments throughout the museum, makes the founders appear to be larger than life entrepreneurs who could do no wrong.

Another display (not pictured), to the right of an artifact of a “founder’s desk,” draws attention to “Dream City.” Dream City was a housing development built by Henry and Frank Baldwin in Kahului, Maui, just outside of plantation land (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Label. Accessed 2022). The display shows a map of the housing development, and labels and photos accompany it. The left label explains that Dream City was built to offer housing to plantation laborers, whose homes in the camps were

deteriorating and in very poor condition. The Alexander and Baldwin owners "began to go out of the landlord business" upon building these houses which they would then sell to plantation laborers (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Label. Accessed 2022). The label explains that buyers were eager to purchase homes, and that the prices for the houses were "a good deal even at the time" (ibid.). The Dream City display draws attention to the company fixing an issue that it had previously been responsible for maintaining. The language they use to explain this history suggests that the company takes ownership and pride in its development.

Online reviews for the museum also seem to note the museum's focus on Maui-specific plantation history. Twenty-six percent of the museum's online reviewers write about Maui history. It may be that the exhibits about water rights and the museum's founders, described on the website as mostly unique to Maui plantations, left great impressions on visitors.

Based on my analysis of the museum's content, the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum centralizes stories of sugar and the lives of plantation laborers. Sugar seems to have a more prominent role in the museum, even evidenced by the majority of the museum's exhibits dedicated to sugar, and only one exhibit that specifically addresses laboring people (the immigration room). The stories of plantation families' lives are mixed in with other exhibits, but with two exhibits specifically dedicated to the founders and their accomplishments, the stories of plantation families are outnumbered. The museum leans on the accomplishments of their founders, without addressing those issues or controversial topics which would reflect negatively on the plantation.

Online Reviews: *Kama‘āina* and Self-Reflection

Three percent of the museum’s reviews were written by *kama‘āina*. This percentage is smaller than that at The Hawai‘i Plantation Village (17%) and The Hawai‘i Plantation Museum at Papa‘ikou (24%). Despite this gap, the museum’s local reviews also show that *kama‘āina* who visit plantation museums often reflect on their identities or their families' connections to the museum’s history. One reviewer writes, “Glad there is somewhere like this to see where our races mixed and our culture was cultivated along with the sugar” (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2019). And another writes, “My family has deep roots in Pā‘ia, and I'm always ready to stop in, enjoy the museum, and make a donation. I love the sugar museum!” (Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2019). Like reviewers for the Hawai‘i Plantation Village and the Hawai‘i Plantation Museum in Papa‘ikou, the museum’s reviewers appreciate that there is somewhere that memorializes their or their families’ histories. The following interview with a *kama‘āina* plantation descendant reflects a complicated but likewise supportive perspective on the museum and the histories it represents.

Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum *Kama‘āina* Interview

Dean is a fourth-generation Filipino Japanese American man whose family members worked on the Alexander and Baldwin plantation. Their most recent visit was when they returned with a college-age school group to guide a lesson on plantation strikes. Dean's interview offers perspective on how plantation labor descendants have their own connections and experiences with plantation history. These experiences also

allowed Dean to think critically about their museum visit and how the museum's history may be biased towards the plantation's founders. After returning to the museum with a school group, Dean's visit also demonstrates how school programs and personal interaction with museum staff allow visitors to see a different perspective of the museum's history.

As was commonly expressed by *kama 'āina* online reviewers, Dean shared their connections to plantation history and the ways that the museum made them think about the experiences of their family:

For me the Alexander and Baldwin Museum was really interesting, because that's the plantation that my family worked on. So, my great grandparents and my grandparents all worked for Alexander and Baldwin. My mom grew up in camp three... When I was growing up the mill was still functioning, so, and I had a lot of uncles move up in the mill, so, I was very familiar with that history, or, familiar with that industry... All these kinds of stories as a child, it really felt relevant to myself (Phone Interview. Dean, September 30, 2020).

Dean stated that they are interested in the museum because of their familial connections to the plantation itself. Because their family had worked on the specific plantation that the museum now occupies, it's no surprise that their visit would remind them of their family members. Due to that connection, they are familiar with the organization's history and the plantation industry.

Even when you see pictures of plantation workers when they're all wrapped and have the bonnets and [indistinguishable] on, that's what my grandmother came

home in after work. And so those histories were never really histories of the past on Maui, because the plantation was still existing (Phone Interview. Dean, September 30, 2020).

Dean explained how seeing this history in the museum or in pictures reminded them of similar personal experiences seeing their grandmother in similar labor garments. They say that because they still have memories of their families working on the plantations, the history of plantations was something they lived, rather than something from the past. They provide another example of how the plantation continued to affect their life growing up:

I remember waking up in the morning and often times we'd call it Hawaiian snow – that black ash from burning the sugar cane – it would be all in the air and it would be all over the place and cover everything, and so all of that history was still very much alive and still existent when I was growing up” (Phone Interview. Dean, September 30, 2020).

Dean has first-hand memories of how the plantation was a part of their daily life. Though they did not live in a plantation camp, they still lived close enough to have experienced “Hawaiian snow” that was produced by the plantation. To Dean, the history of plantations was something they lived and personally encountered. Familial history and personal experience both affected Dean’s perspective when encountering this history told through the lens of the museum.

Returning to the topic of the museum, Dean (2020) says, “What I remember as a child was feeling grateful for seeing my family’s life, my grandparent's life in particular,

represented” (Phone Interview. Dean, September 30, 2020). In my discussion chapter, I discuss this comment in more detail, comparing it to similar findings suggested by online reviewers for Hawai’i Plantation Museums.

Dean continued, “But then when I was older, I started to think more critically about the plantation, and so I started to be more observant about what is being told and what’s not being told” (Phone Interview. Dean, September 30, 2020). The museum’s representation of plantation laborers was gratifying as a child, but as Dean grew older and started to understand this history outside of the museum setting, they realized that the museum may be presenting “the industry’s perspective of plantation history.”

Dean’s experiences and connection to the plantation community allowed them to reflect on the way that the museum displays this history. With local knowledge, or collective memory, of how this history affected local populations and *Kānaka Maoli*, Dean was later critical of the histories the museum presented. Dean also shared an example of how the museum idealizes the plantation’s founder:

The way in which they incorporated some of the stories of some of the Baldwins... the creation of Maliko gulch – the trench – the bridge that they used for the railroad, they kind of mythologize Baldwin as being one-armed and having crawled, climbed down the gulch and climbed back up the gulch, to show the workers that they could also do the same thing (Phone Interview. Dean, September 30, 2020).

This story portrays the founder of the plantation as someone who boldly led by example and was personally involved in the plantation's construction and labor practices. Dean added,

Kahului was called “Dream City” because that’s where one of the Baldwins had a dream that his workers would all own homes. But the actual story is that the tourism industry found it an eyesore that there were these racialized camps still existing in Hawaii – because it was reminiscent of slave camps. So, they had to get rid of the plantation camps and establish residential areas (Phone Interview. Dean, September 30, 2020).

This story of plantation communities being displaced due to tourism is romanticized by the museum as a noble goal of the plantation founder. As Dean mentioned, plantation managers kept laborers in racialized camps that reinforced a dependency on the plantation (see background chapter). He question the idea that a plantation manager “dreamt” that laborers would live outside of the plantation.

Dean also supported the content review finding that the museum omits history that could be damaging to their image. Dean said that Hawai'i's communities continue to be effected by the plantation:

The history of water theft by Alexander and Baldwin, stealing water from communities on the east side of Maui or from central Maui, from Nā Wai ‘Ehā, and all those histories kind of get erased in the creation of the plantation (Phone Interview. Dean, September 30, 2020).

While *Kānaka Maoli* and *kama 'āina* suffer due to the company's water theft, the museum omits this information. Dean's interview exposes how the museum mythologizes the plantation manager and tells the plantation's history from a favorable perspective. The interview also demonstrates how community memory differs from that history that the museum projects to its visitors.

I asked Dean about how he thinks that the museum could be improved. Their response is critical of the museum as an organization that is still owned and operated by Alexander and Baldwin Inc.:

(The museum) would never do this but – the history of the overthrow. The history of how they came into control of all that water. How they're still in control of a lot of water and land, and covering labor strikes. I don't remember the strikes being covered... And if it's Alexander and Baldwin property... even though Alexander and Baldwin (plantation) is now defunct, there is a specific way in which they want that history told and remembered... (Phone Interview. Dean, September 30, 2020).

Dean said that a museum like Alexander and Baldwin, which was a plantation site that continues to hurt plantation communities, will “never” improve their representation of plantation history. As a community member, Dean desired transparency from the museum. Dean continued,

If it were a community-based museum like the way the Waipahu plantation museum (Hawai'i Plantation Village) is, there might be more space for talking about the kind of injustices and problems and current issues... to a certain extent

it's asking Alexander and Baldwin to represent something that speaks against their interests, which is something that they've never been willing to do – So, a more ethnic studies approach, to me, would be more fascinating and revealing but I can see why a plantation wouldn't want to highlight those things (Phone Interview. Dean, September 30, 2020).

Dean argued that the Alexander and Baldwin Museum, as a museum still managed by Alexander and Baldwin Inc., benefits from omitting histories that reflect badly on the industry. Dean implied that a community-based museum would be more able and willing to represent injustices and current issues of the plantation industry. Dean also stated that the museum would be more interesting if it reflected the industry's injustices and took an ethnic studies approach to plantation history.

Though this museum does not acknowledge injustices through interpretive labels or artifacts, Dean once brought students to the museum as a supplement to a course on a significant Filipino-American labor strike anniversary. Dean said that the museum was an important part of the student's education, "seeing the industry's perspective of that plantation, and really trying to give you a sense as to what that life is like, and historically, how it came to be" (Phone Interview. Dean, September 30, 2020). Dean's intention of bringing students was to show them how the industry represents the life of laborers and the history of how plantations became plantations. Dean told me:

(The curator) brought out all of these different games that plantation children would play, so like milk covers and marbles and... these games with the geta and

all these other things, and so to a certain extent what was exhibited was supplemented by the curator (Phone Interview. Dean, September 30, 2020).

Dean reflected that a normal museum tour was supplemented by face-to-face interaction with the curator. The curator brought out artifacts that demonstrated plantation life and activities that went beyond the laborers and their working conditions. Dean noted: “We were lucky that the curator took an interest in us and actually gave the students more than just a tour and actually spent a lot of time talking with us and showing us different things that normally visitors wouldn’t get to see” (Phone Interview. Dean, September 30, 2020).

Dean implied that the curator offered an expanded perspective of plantation life that students would not be able to learn about during a normal museum tour. Much like I observed in online reviews by museum visitors, school programs and staff offer a different perspective of plantation life.

Dean’s interview gave some insight into the way that a *kama’āina* who is part of the plantation community experiences a visit to a Hawai’i plantation museum. Dean expressed that plantation life was something recently lived for him and his family. The family shares stories that are reflected in the museum as collective experiences of the plantation community. When it comes to issues like labor strikes and racial disparities, however, the museum omits these histories. Dean recognized that the museum, still owned and operated by the Alexander and Baldwin Inc., will not speak against the interests of the company. While it is understandable that a company would not want to represent themselves in a negative light, Dean also expressed an interest in transparency from Alexander and Baldwin. Knowing that this museum presents the singular

perspective of the plantation industry, Dean used the museum as an educational tool for students. As I mentioned throughout this analysis chapter, school programs and staff interaction may have allowed for different perspectives on the plantation industry.

Online Reviews

To strengthen my information about each museum and how tourists and *kama'āina* visitors experience these places, I analyzed 433 reviews. I coded each review and organized these tags into three main themes: audience, content, and tours. Though these general trends offer more information about the broad category of “Hawai’i plantation museum,” I also demonstrate how these museums offer different visitor experiences. Some of these reviews also strengthen contextual understanding of who is involved in each museum’s collection and curation processes. This information further informs my overall analysis of how *Kānaka Maoli* and plantation descendent involvement affects the representations of history at each museum. Additionally, the online reviews about content offer some perspective as to what parts of the museum visitors found most noteworthy.

Audience

Of 443 reviews, 23% of all reviews included information about audience identity. Some of these reviews indicated who the reviewer thought was the ideal audience for the site, while over half of these reviewers indicated the identity of themselves or another visitor (E.G. a local.) These reviews allowed me to understand who is visiting these museums, and who reviewers recommend visiting these sites.

Some reviewers recommended specific audiences that should visit the museum. Reviews suggest that Hawai'i plantation museums can be for everyone of all age groups and backgrounds. The Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papai'kou and the Hawai'i Plantation Village had reviews where locals were recommended to visit the museum. There were also a few recommendations for tourists to visit the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum and Hawai'i Plantation Village. Oftentimes, these reviews directed at tourists suggested that the museums offered a history that tourists would benefit from knowing and wouldn't usually seek out when visiting the islands.

Not many reviewers self-identify as local or tourists. Only 11% of reviews indicated whether the reviewer or someone in their group was local to Hawai'i. Most reviews by locals are for the Hawai'i Plantation Museum and the Hawai'i Plantation Village. Twenty-four percent of reviews for the Hawai'i Plantation Museum, and 17% of reviews for the Hawai'i Plantation Village were by local reviewers. Three percent of reviews for the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum were by local reviewers, and there were no reviews for the Lahaina Restoration Foundation's Plantation Museum written by local reviewers. Later, I discuss what seems to attract local visitors to these museums.

Content

Forty-nine percent of all reviews included information about the museum's content. Content reviews were coded based on how the reviewer wrote about the information presented in the museum. The most common content themes among the museums were social, sugar, and local history. Under the theme I've described as social

history, reviewers wrote about themes of Culture, Communities, Diversity, Founders, Immigrants, Laborers, Life, and Hawai'i as a Melting Pot. Themes of culture, immigrants, laborers, and life were the most common among the social history reviews. Sugar reviews were determined based on if the reviewer wrote about the sugar industry, processes, or mills/factories. Local reviews included information that connected the museum to the island or town the museum resided in.

The average frequency of sugar reviews among the three museums was only 20%, while 44% of Alexander and Baldwin reviews were about sugar. Reviews suggest that the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum maintains a focus on sugar history, while at other museums, sugar history is supplemental to social history.

Each museum had at least one review about “alternative history.” There was a total of 17 alternative history reviews. These reviews were most often about plantation laborers as indentured servants, colonization, or information about the immigration process. Sometimes, the reviewer simply stated that this history differed from the history that they were exposed to while growing up. While there aren't many reviews under this theme, these reviews reveal that each museum, though to different degrees, presents some difficulties of plantation life, or some information along these topics that was shocking to a visitor.

***Kānaka Maoli* Representation**

Much less common were reviews about *Kānaka Maoli* history. Only one museum, The Hawai'i Plantation Village, had any reviews about Hawaiian history. While Hawaiian history was only written about twice in online reviews, a total of 20 reviewers

wrote about “Hawaiians.” Nineteen of those reviewers mistakenly equate the term “Hawaiian” with people from Hawai’i, rather than reserving the term for *Kānaka Maoli*. One reviewer writes, “A must see for the curious about early Hawaiian immigration!” (Hawai’i Plantation Village Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2018). The reviewer implies that the museum mainly presents the history of *Kānaka* immigration from Polynesia, but considering the context provided by other reviews, it seems more likely that the reviewer mistakenly uses the word “Hawaiian” in reference to *kama ‘āina*.

The museums where “Hawaiian” was misused the most frequently were the Hawai’i Plantation Village and the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum. The information provided about Native Hawaiians at each museum differs significantly. It is fairly common for non-local people to assume all people who live in Hawai’i automatically adopt the title of “Hawaiian,” (People in California claim to be “Californian,” for example) so online reviewers really could be making an honest mistake. However, if these museums were to discuss *Kānaka Maoli* history adequately, visitors may not misuse the term so frequently. The misuse of this term helps to invalidate *Kānaka Maoli* Indigeneity and can also stir confusion about who the museum actually represents. This mistake among online reviewers does not help the museum, present-day *Kānaka*, *kama ‘āina*, or potential visitors. Nonetheless, every museum has at least one review that mistakenly uses the term “Hawaiian.”

Tour Guides

Twenty-six percent of reviews contained information about the tours at the museum, and eighty-two percent of these reviews were about the staff or tour guides the

reviewer encountered. The Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou and Hawaii Plantation Village are the only museums with guided walking tours, but the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum also received reviews about staff. While the Alexander and Baldwin Museum is staffed, they do not offer guided tours. Twenty-five percent of reviews about staff/tour guides contained information about staff members' identities.

Tour Guide Kama'āina/Descendant Identity

Reviewers who wrote about staff identity sometimes indicated when a staff person was of Asian descent, had worked or lived on a plantation, or was local to Hawai'i. Reviewers often mentioned when the local staff had been in Hawai'i for multiple generations. Fifty-seven percent of the Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou's online reviews were about staff or tour guides. Thirty-three percent of these reviews were about the identity of a staff person. Meanwhile, 43% of reviews for The Hawai'i Plantation Village were about museum staff or tour guides. Twenty-five percent of this museum's reviewers wrote about the identity of a staff person. The Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum's only review about staff also mentioned the identity of the staff member.

Reviewers occasionally provided information about the additional qualities or skills the staff brought to the experience. Sixty-one percent of all staff reviews mentioned the disposition of the staff person, or whether they were friendly, knowledgeable, or passionate.

Reviews suggest that the visitors of Hawai'i plantation museums think that the experiences of their guides are important to their tour. Visitors note that their guides grew

up on plantations. One writes, “Norm was our guide & he grew up in a plantation village. He gave 1st hand experience in his presentation. Norm was very knowledgeable overall & answered all questions” (Hawai’i Plantation Village Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2019). Several reviewers similarly note that their guides offered firsthand experiences.

Reviewers often draw a connection between the identity of their guide and their resourcefulness on the topic of plantation history:

We were given a tour by the lady who was one of the curators of the museum. She has lived in the area all her life, and is a descendant of one of the early families. She was more than happy to answer all the questions we had on the island.

(Hawai’i Plantation Museum Papa’ikou Online Reviewer. Yelp Reviews. 2017).

The above reviewer mentions that their guide had first-hand experiences of plantation life, and that their family had a long history with the plantations. They also draw attention to the fact that the guide had further involvement in the museum as a curator. The reviewer implies that these experiences enhanced the ability of the guide to speak on plantation life. In my discussion chapter, I discuss how this finding adds to current museological literature about how visitors perceive the reliability of tour guides.

Kama’āina and Tour Guides: Personal Connection

Kama’āina reviewers at the Hawai’i Plantation Museum in Papa’ikou seem especially impacted by descendant staff members. Half of the *kama’āina* reviewers at the Hawai’i Plantation Museum in Papa’ikou mentioned tour guides or staff members. Most of these reviewers imply that the guide was *kama’āina* or a descendent of plantations.

These reviews offer possible reasons why 30% of the museum's reviewers were local. The below reviewer notes the connection they made with the museum's staff:

What I thought would be a 30 minute walk through the past turned into a 90 minute conversation about everything to do with old Hawaii. We even both knew the sampan bus driver that used to take me to pre-school! (Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou Online Reviewer. Yelp Reviews. 2015).

The reviewers emphasized that during their visits, they were able to "talk story" or chat with their guide, often reminiscing about local, familial, and plantation history. Local reviewers connected with staff on a personal level due to their shared connections with plantation history. In my discussion chapter, I later suggest that personal connection plays a pivotal role in attracting *kama'āina* to these museums.

***Kama'āina* and Self-Reflection**

Thirty percent of *kama'āina* reviewers reflected on their own identities or family history after their museum visit. Sixty-six percent of reviews reflecting on family histories were written by *kama'āina*. Half of these self-reflection reviews were for the Hawai'i Plantation Museum, and the other half were for the Hawai'i Plantation Village. Self-reflection appears to be an important part of the experience for some local reviewers. Some reviewers imply appreciation that their history has been memorialized and others express that they learned something about themselves, their community, or their ancestors. Several other reviewers wrote about how the museums made them feel nostalgic.

Fifty percent of *kama'āina* reviewers reflected on their own identity or family history. One reviewer wrote, “My papa would have loved to see something like this! It's a great view into why Hawai'i is the amazing cultural mosaic that it is today.” (Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2017). Reviewers express that the museum allows visitors to understand the events that led to today's Hawai'i. They imply that the museum's history is part of their history.

Other reviews indicate that interactions with a local guide allowed them to further explore their family histories in relation to plantation history. One reviewer writes about how their conversations with a guide allowed them to imagine the lives of their family members, though the reviewer had not experienced plantation life themselves.

Wayne and his staff will open the doors to your ancestor's history as plantation workers. My children and grandchildren now have a better understanding of the sacrifices made by their ancestors. I can't thank the Hawaii Plantation Museum staff enough for their generous time and effort spent with my family and myself. Their aloha is golden. Mahalo. (Hawai'i Plantation Museum Papa'ikou Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2021).

This reviewer also expresses gratitude that their children will have a better understanding of the sacrifices made by their ancestors.

Similarly, *kama'āina* reviewers for the Hawai'i Plantation Village express that the museum allowed them to reflect on their identities and family backgrounds. Again, half of the *kama'āina* reviewers reflected on their own identities, family members, or experiences related to plantations. For some, self-reflection looked like appreciation that

their history was being told. One reviewer wrote, “I remember visiting my great aunt at her plantation house and am glad there's a place to learn more about the plantation experience and history of Hawaii” (Hawai’i Plantation Village Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2019). They implied that what they enjoyed about their experience was that the museums taught them something about themselves or their communities. They also expressed delight that their history is being represented and people can visit the museum to learn about it. Others noted the nostalgia the museum evoked:

I love this place because it reminds me of growing up in the sugar plantation era. All residents of Hawaii whether born here or not should experience this great museum in Waipahu. It will give you a perspective of who we are here in Hawaii. (Hawai’i Plantation Village Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2021).

These reviews reveal a trend of local museum visitors who have fond memories associated with plantation life or plantation times. Through visiting these Hawai’i plantation museums, local visitors can see themselves in the wider story of Hawai’i’s history. The museum also offers a space for these visitors to reflect on the circumstances that their ancestors may have experienced at similar plantations, whether they were laborers or just lived on a plantation. In my discussion chapter, I connect these findings to my interview findings to discuss how these museums allow people to recontextualize their identities through the museum.

***Kama‘āina* and Public Programs**

Out of all reviews about programs or events, 78% were by *kama‘āina*. Even though online marketing and social media suggest that all museums host some sort of

programming, all reviews about programs by local reviewers were for the Hawai'i Plantation Village. Seventy-eight percent of the museum's event reviews were about one event called "Haunted Plantation" which is held annually in the fall. The other three reviews are about school program visits and the special experiences these programs offer. For example, one reviewer writes that they "Spent the morning pruning and weeding with the folks from 'Olelo (a Hawaiian language and culture club)" (Hawai'i Plantation Village Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2017). Another reviewer with a school group noted "the kids really enjoyed the tiger dance" (Hawai'i Plantation Village Online Reviewer. Google Reviews. 2021). *Kama'āina* reviewers mention the additional cultural opportunities that are available with special events or programs. In my discussion chapter, I combine these findings with my content analysis of each museum to paint a fuller picture of how each museum hosts public programs. I also discuss similar literature that conveys the importance of community events to maintaining community relationships.

Conclusion

Online reviews offer some insight into the general trends among these four Hawai'i plantation museums. They also allow for some understanding of how these museums may differ, whether in terms of content, staff, or environment. Reviews broadly suggest that:

- Hawai'i plantation museums primarily display sugar and social histories of Hawai'i' plantations

- Any audience can be interested in these museums, including *kama 'āina* or plantation descendants who may have personal connections to the history the museums display
- Hawai'i plantation museums may act as places for locals to connect with other plantation descendants and reflect on their own familial histories and identities
- Reviews indicate that plantation descendants or *kama 'āina* can contribute valuable knowledge through their personal experiences with plantation lands
- Some such knowledge could include information about the difficulties that came with living on a plantation, or with immigrating to the islands. Reviews also suggest that *Kānaka Maoli* history may only be represented contextually at these museums.

In my discussion chapter, I combine my findings from each methodology to further understand these museums and the effects they have on their local visitors. I also connect these findings to prominent anthropological and museological resources. Many of the above themes that emerged from these reviews are likewise reflected in museum content and interviews with museum staff and *kama 'āina*.

Chapter Six: Discussion

Throughout this thesis, I explore how four Hawai'i plantation museums, The Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou, The Hawai'i Plantation Village, The Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum, and the Lahaina Restoration Foundation's Plantation Museum represent *Kānaka* and plantation descendant histories, and the role that staff and volunteer identities play in each museum. My research questions are:

1. What draws *kama 'āina* (Hawai'i locals) and *Kānaka Maoli* (Native Hawaiians) to, or away from, Hawai'i plantation museums?
2. How involved in the museum are *kama 'āina*, plantation descendants, or *Kānaka Maoli*? What role do they have as museum staff or volunteers?
3. How are the themes of diversity, hardship, and colonization represented in these museums? Do the histories differ based on *kama 'āina*, descendant, or *Kānaka Maoli* involvement?

In this chapter, I discuss my findings regarding these questions. I also connect these findings to my literature review and theoretical framework that I discussed earlier in this thesis. I will discuss what my research adds to existing research and anthropological theory and discuss the limitations of my research.

My research finds that Hawai'i plantation museums most commonly represent life, labor, and diversity through their exhibits. While these museums are about sugar plantations, the focus of the museums is more about the lives of plantation families than it is on sugar production, or even sugar plantation workers. The themes of diversity, hardship, and colonization are represented at each Hawai'i plantation museum to varying extents.

Diversity

Content photos from the museums show how diversity is mostly represented as a case of peaceful coexistence and cultural acceptance. While all museums celebrate the diversity of plantations, they also fall short of explicitly acknowledging the problems of multiculturalism on the plantation. They do not address systemic injustice or racial hierarchies, and instead highlight how the diversity of plantations fostered community. In online reviews, visitors note culture and diversity often, with some even using the term “melting pot” to refer to Hawai'i's cultural climate.

The museums that focus on culture and diversity the most are the Hawai'i Plantation Village and the Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou. Though the settings and size of each museum differ significantly, both museums utilize everyday cultural objects and displays prompt visitors to observe cultural differences independently, without labels or interpretive texts drawing comparisons for them. These museums take more of an ethnographic approach to displaying culture.

As I mentioned in my theory and literature review chapter, scholars caution that many immigration or similarly multiculturally-centered displays might try to amalgamate

the experiences of multiple communities into one singular community (Bastos 2020; Hutchison 2009). The Hawai'i Plantation Museum at Papa'ikou and Hawai'i Plantation Village indeed represent cultural differences through ethnographic displays, representing diversity through recognition of the different parts of everyday culture that specific communities brought to Hawai'i. Some other displays, such as the labor gear display at the Hawai'i Plantation Museum at Papa'ikou, might allow visitors to assume that the race or nationhood of laborers did not affect their experiences of working or living on the plantation. The Hawai'i Plantation Village doesn't acknowledge how the layout of the museum is not accurate to a real plantation camp, where laborer houses were laid out according to racial hierarchy (see background chapter). The lack of context provided in the displays appears to be where each museum falls short of addressing the multifaceted and racialized experiences of laborers.

The Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum and the Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum (LRFPM) do not take the same ethnographic approach to diversity as the other two museums. At LRFPM, cultural artifacts are not placed side-by-side, rather, they are given separate cultural displays (mostly in the form of interpretive text, not so much represented by cultural items). Then, the experiences of laborers and plantation families are talked about as community experiences, likewise disregarding racial discrimination. Hutchison (2009) argues that focus on cultural identity might instead promote this identity as the "other," rather than demonstrate the relationships between people of differing social and historical circumstances and backgrounds. The museum does provide a lot of context regarding separate cultural groups and what

brought them to the islands, but their separate contributions aren't seen elsewhere through the museum, unlike at the Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou. The ways that the Hawai'i Plantation Village, Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou, and the LRFPM approach diversity allows them to highlight experiences of separate cultural groups without amalgamating them into one "plantation community." Each of these museums acknowledge separate circumstances and backgrounds of each cultural group – it is in trying to demonstrate the social relationships between these groups that the museums fall short of addressing racial discrimination.

Unlike these other museums, The Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum does not appear to have many cultural items on display and does not attempt to demonstrate cultural groups independent from the plantation "community." As Bastos (2020) and Hutchison (2009) warn against, the museum amalgamates the experiences of plantation families into one singular identity. Hutchison (2009) says that migration displays that do this ignore the unique circumstances that lead different people into migrating. In this case, the museum ignores the unique circumstances of migration, and does not even acknowledge what cultural items each cultural group brought to Hawai'i.

Colonization

Hawai'i plantation museums, with the exception of the Hawai'i Plantation Village, do not represent *Kānaka Maoli* history very broadly. These displays often include artifacts that are part of *Kānaka* life, such as the lau hala hats on display at the Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou, or lei that can be found at the Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum. These displays draw attention to the hand-

crafted objects of *Kānaka*, rather than to the histories that connect *Kānaka* to plantations. Without such interpretation, these displays only seem to be a nod at Native Hawaiian cultural materials. These displays are reminiscent of early cabinets of curiosity or ethnographic displays which centered Native pieces and removed them from important contexts (Ames 1992, 62; Kreps 2019, 3). With little context for understanding these objects, they are displayed as art pieces, rather than historical objects, as the other items in the museums are presented.

The Hawai'i Plantation Village represents more of *Kānaka Maoli* history through the two structures historically used by *Kānaka*. The accompanying text panels also provide context that connects *Kānaka* to plantation history. The Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou mostly has *Kānaka* displays that seem to be loosely related to plantation history. However, the museum does have one display that recognizes the decline and mass death of *Kānaka* due to death and disease. Unfortunately, as with many of the displays at this museum, objects that could represent difficult histories are lost among the museum's collection and seem to go unnoticed by museum visitors.

As *Kānaka Maoli* were the first laborers to work on Hawai'i plantations and inevitably lost housing, opportunities, and nationhood because of plantation expansion (see background), it is important that these museums address this history. As previously mentioned in my literature review and theory chapter, Szekeres (2002) and Hutchison (2009) warn against exhibits that center multiethnicity, saying that these museums might unintentionally overlook the stories of specific communities or be unable to delve into each history in "enough" detail. Likewise, when history is shaped by the dominant

culture, it leaves the histories of others to be forgotten (Foucault 2003, 61, 70; Mohatt et al. 2014, 130; Small 2018, 86; Stylianou-Lambert and Bounia 2016, 207). As discussed on page 177, online reviews reflect a lack of understanding about who now qualifies as “Native Hawaiian,” suggesting unawareness regarding the difference between plantation laborers and Native people. This finding, combined with the lack of *Kānaka* history represented by the museums, provides a valuable example of how centering multiculturalism can allow some histories to go unrecognized. *Kānaka* end up lost to the wider, melded community of the “plantation laborer.”

Due to the role museums have in reinforcing collective memory, museums also have a responsibility to display a wide variety of stories and perspectives (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 7; Kammen 1991, 3; Lonetree 2012, 78, 167; McCarthy 2018, 43; Stylianou-Lambert and Bounia 2016, 207). The Hawai’i plantation museums studied in this research appear to involve a wide range of community perspectives but may be missing that of *Kānaka Maoli*. Other scholars argue that museums have an especially important role in recognizing the “hard truths of colonialism,” or Native death and displacement (Lonetree 2012, 24; McCarthy 2018, 42). The museums in this study mostly avoid these topics. In doing so, they avoid the history of *Kānaka*, even though it is this history of colonization that led to the multicultural setting of today’s Hawai’i. According to Lonetree (2012, 24), this lack of recognition can further harm *Kānaka* who visit the museum and internalize the messaging that their history – and the trauma experienced by their ancestors – does not matter. As scholars suggest, these museums may simply need

more Indigenous people on staff who can address the role that *Kānaka* had in plantation history from their own perspectives.

Hardship

The Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum, Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou, and Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum all have several displays that depict plantation hardship, which broadly includes displays about labor conditions and unionization. The Hawai'i Plantation Village has a small number of displays that touch on either of these themes. The lack of discussion regarding the difficulties of plantation life likewise can add to existing research on the previously discussed topic of collective memory.

Labor conditions were represented often through displays of plantation gear and tools that laborers would use when in the field. Bango tags were also commonly used to demonstrate how laborers were dehumanized upon their arrival at the plantation. At all museums, interpretive text often boasts that labor gear was homemade, without any critical comment on the role of the plantation in providing such gear. Visitors are left with a basic understanding that labor conditions were hard particularly because of the weather and the physical labor. The museums do not offer much information about whether plantation managers tried to improve labor conditions. Racism and racial pay disparities likewise go unrecognized, though contracts at the museums provide the opportunity for visitors to observe these trends themselves.

Interestingly, online reviewers don't note hardship very often. I suggest that this may be because the museums in this study do not explicitly draw connections for visitors

through interpretation. Museum interpretation is employed to explain why and how an object is used, or to explain the significance behind an object (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 67). Since visitors will give meaning to any object they come across in a museum, it's important that museums affirm or deny those meanings with contextual information (Ames 1992, 58; Bouquet 2012, 26, 123; Gosden 2005, 5; Miller 2007, 167; Karp, Lavine, and Mullen-Kramer 1992, 3; Simpson 1996, 35; Van Dyke 2015, 5). This can be in the form of written interpretation, videos, or by employing tour guides who can provide this information verbally (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 71-78). We see that the Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou and the Hawai'i Plantation Village both have tour guides that importantly add this missing interpretation. I later discuss in more detail the role that tour guides have in these museums.

As museums play such an important role in preserving people's histories and reinforcing identities, this history is not to be overlooked (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 7; Kammen 1991, 3; Lonetree 2012, 78, 167; McCarthy 2018, 43; Stylianou-Lambert and Bounia 2016, 207). If these museums do not address the abuse and racism that was present on plantations, they risk the collective loss of these experiences (Foucault 2003, 61, 70; Mohatt et al. 2014, 130; Small 2018, 86; Stylianou-Lambert and Bounia 2016, 207). As suggested by museum scholars, museums might avoid these histories out of a fear of making exhibits too sad (Carter 2016, 236; Montes and Butler 2008; Szekeres 2002, 146, 151).

Though some scholars argue that museums should attempt to represent these histories anyway (Montes and Butler 2008), the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum's

reviews might suggest otherwise. Several reviewers note that the museum is “too sad,” despite my content analysis finding that the museum only broaches the discussion of difficult histories. Interestingly, the museum is also the only one to receive this critique. It may be the museum’s focus on industrial history, rather than people’s history, that welcomes these reviews. Online reviewers likewise say that the museum presents a biased perspective on plantation history, and *kama ‘āina* interview participant Dean even says that the museum displays “the industry’s perspective.” As a member of the community that the museum represents, Dean problematizes the industry perspective. He even suggests that the museum might be better equipped to represent injustice if it was a community-based museum. He expresses that the museum is biased because it has a company reputation to maintain. Dean even offers the Hawai’i Plantation Village as an example of a museum that might be able to represent injustice from a less biased perspective.

The Hawai’i Plantation Village had the highest frequency of reviews about alternative history, even though the content of the museum does not appear to acknowledge difficult histories. In the following section I explore why this might be the case.

***Kama ‘āina* Involvement**

Kama ‘āina are involved in each museum to varying degrees. The Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum engages *kama ‘āina* in the process of shaping the museum narrative but depends on a more static approach. The curator plays an interpretive role in the museum, developing the exhibit based off the locally donated

collection and the curator's understanding of descendant wants and needs. Online reviews are not very telling as to whether locals visit this museum, so it's also hard to say whether the involvement of *kama 'āina* affects the visitor experience.

The Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum does not seem to have much *kama 'āina* involvement. As previously discussed, the museum notably reflects several biases that support and romanticize the corporation's originators, and the museum presents plantation history from the industry's perspective. Despite the museum being the most visited among those studied, it has a low number of reviews written by local reviewers.

The Hawai'i Plantation Village and Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou appear to involve *kama 'āina* more often than the other two museums. Both these museums are founded by *kama 'āina* who lived on plantation camps, and curators and volunteers continue to be local people who likewise lived on a plantation or are descendants of plantation laborers. These museums also have the most reviews by local reviewers. *Kama 'āina* also seem to play an important role in shaping the narrative of the museum through positions as tour guides. The Hawai'i Plantation Village and Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou are also the only two museums that host tours.

Tour Guides

As mentioned in the online reviews section of this thesis, some reviewers associated the quality of their tour with the identity of their staff member or tour guide. The reviewers suggest that the wisdom of their tour guides is attributed to the tour guides' identities as people who can offer their own first-hand experiences of plantation

life. These reviews imply that the descendant guides offer a valuable perspective, both because of their first-hand experiences with plantation history, and because their personal connection to plantations is combined with a passion to educate others about this history.

This finding adds to existing research which claims that tour guides can play important roles in museums by offering additional perspectives to museum content. As scholars argue, visitors look to tour guides to challenge or reaffirm meanings in the museum (Modlin, Alderman, and Gentry 2011; Schorch 2013, 72). Online reviews even suggest that tour guides offer more information about hardship. This may be because of what Schorch (2013, 72) and Schultz (2011, 4) describe as the shift from informal education to one of dialogue and continuous learning. Tours may allow visitors to engage with the museum content, rather than just observe it.

Intangible Culture

The Hawai'i Plantation Village seems to engage *kama 'āina* beyond museum content and tours. Events and programs that attract visitors seem to span beyond educational opportunities and include multiple ways for people to engage with Hawai'i's many plantation cultures. Multicultural food and performances seem to play a big role in these events. The Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou also maintains that they host events and programs, despite their small and crowded space. The Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum and the Hawai'i Plantation museum in Papa'ikou likewise host public events and programs, but these events seem to go unnoticed by online reviewers. The events advertised by the Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou seem more centered on cultural and community events than those offered by the latter.

As previously mentioned, community-centered events and programs show notable community involvement and allow for museums to highlight intangible parts of one's culture in the form of song, dance, performance, etc. (Alivizatou 2011, 15; Fromm 2016, 93; Kreps 2003). Community members can represent themselves first-hand and can continue practicing cultural traditions (Fromm 2016, 93; Kreps 2008, 29). Hawai'i Plantation Village events and programs appear to engage *kama'āina* the most out of all the museums in this study.

***Kama'āina* Visitation**

Kama'āina involvement seems to affect the way that *kama'āina* visitors experience the museums. Some *kama'āina* visitors are also drawn to Hawai'i plantation museums because they can reflect on their familial experiences and imagine what life was like for their parents, grandparents, or other ancestors who personally lived on plantation camps or worked plantation lands. Many online reviewers express appreciation that their history is memorialized in a museum, and that they can bring their children to likewise reflect on the sacrifices of their ancestors. *Kama'āina* interview participant Dean expressed that even though the representation of plantation history at the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum is biased, they still like to go to the museum because it allows them to reflect on their identity and appreciate the experiences of their family members. Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum employee Dave even noted that their visitors have similar moments where they appreciate seeing their histories preserved.

This finding supports existing research on the important role that museums play in reinforcing identity (Ambrose and Paine 2006, 7; Kammen 1991, 3; Levitt and Cali 2017,

155; Lonetree 2012, 78, 167; McCarthy 2018, 43; Stylianou-Lambert and Bounia 2016, 207). The findings support the argument that museums should acknowledge difficult histories, like these museums recognize stories of immigration, so that descendant visitors feel that the experiences of their ancestors are validated. As Levitt and Cali (2017) suggest, these museums allow for visitors to recontextualize how their identities fit into broader local and global histories.

At the Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou, *kama 'āina* tour guides play a direct role in relating to descendant visitors through "talking story." *Kama 'āina* visitors often write that they personally connected with their guide on shared experiences from having lived on plantation lands. At this museum, the connections between *kama 'āina* visitors and the museums' history are even more personal when *kama 'āina* guides relate to the visitors and discuss shared experiences. *Kama 'āina* visitors seem to find some sense of belonging at these museums. Whether they speak with a guide or simply tour the museum on their own, *kama 'āina* visitors importantly note how the museums remind them of their own experiences.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

In this chapter, I discuss some recommendations regarding representation of plantation history at the Hawai'i Plantation Village, Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou, Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum, and the Lahaina Restoration Foundation's Plantation Museum. I also discuss some limitations of my research, and then offer ideas for future research on Hawai'i plantation museums. I end this chapter by acknowledging some of the findings of this research and suggestions for how museum professionals can apply these findings to their museums.

Recommendations for Hawai'i Plantation Museums

Hawai'i plantation museums studied in this thesis offered several ways to explore representation of diversity and hardship in a museum setting. Despite this, I also noticed some areas where these museums might improve. I start my recommendations with those which apply to all of the museums studied, and then offer individualized recommendations if there's more to be said.

Through my research, I noticed that Hawai'i plantation museums focus greatly on displaying diversity and multiculturalism as results of plantations. The Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou, Hawai'i Plantation Village, and Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum all explore stories of diversity widely, whether through panels or objects that are dedicated to telling more centralized stories of specific ethnic groups. The

Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum likewise notably represents diversity but approaches the topic in a way that melds immigrants and *Kānaka* into one plantation “community.” Despite these displays, the museums all lack representation of *Kānaka* history, but especially that of colonization history. Szekeres (2002) argues that when presenting the histories of multiple communities at a time, it is likely that some groups of people will be excluded. This seems to be the case at these museums. Though not all plantation laborers were immigrants, the museums focus on multiethnic immigration in a way that overshadows histories of Native Hawaiian displacement and colonialism. I suggest that these museums work more closely with *Kānaka Maoli* and try to apply some perspective about colonialism. I urge these museums to not unintentionally erase *Kānaka* history but embrace it as part of plantation history.

The Hawai’i plantation museum in Papa’ikou seems to cover topics of plantation life and hardship openly through its objects that it has on display. As a museum that is not so much organized as it is an open collection of objects, however, it was difficult to navigate the wide range of information these objects offer. Because of the rather chaotic nature of an open collection, I suggest that the museum add more interpretive text to their displays. Texts also help to organize the visit and orient the visitor (Dean 1994, 109). Interpretive text could help the visitor to navigate the clutter and draw specific connections, so that the visitor doesn’t have to guess about the relationships that objects have with one another. While the strength of this museum appears to be the guided tours, I recommend that interpretive text could enhance the experience. Interpretive text and decluttering might allow this museum to communicate Hawai’i’s plantation history more

clearly. This could also allow the museum's objects that can represent hardship more room to be noted and recognized by visitors.

The Hawai'i Plantation Village also might benefit from more interpretive texts throughout the museum. The museum has a label at the beginning of every plantation house exhibit, and likewise seems to lean on tour guides to lend the interpretation of the actual artifacts within each house. Additional interpretation could also benefit those visitors who could not get a guided tour.

As discussed in my analysis of the Hawai'i Plantation Village, it also has an "exhibit room," that seems uncommunicated to most visitors, even though this room might contain more contextual information about hardship and colonization. One visitor mentions that the exhibit room, apparently separate from the usual museum tour that is led by a guide, is where they learned about some part of *Kānaka Maoli* plantation history. From my visit to the museum, hardship is also rarely represented in any of the buildings or "family house" displays. If this exhibit does truly depict the more difficult histories of plantation life, I suggest that the museum direct more visitors to the "exhibits" area of the museum. People who visit the Hawai'i Plantation Village do seem to write about hardship to a degree, however, so it may be that guided tours *and* this exhibit room may be where visitors are learning most of their critical information about plantations.

Findings from the Hawai'i Plantation Village and the Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou suggest that *kama 'āina* guides add invaluable personal experiences to their plantation museum tours. As the Lahaina Restoration Foundation Plantation Museum and the Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum do not have any tours, and both seem to have

a low amount of visitation by *kama'āina*, I suggest that these museums consider hiring tour guides. From my understanding, both these museums offer school tours, and these tours might offer additional information or context to museum content. This thesis supports that tours with plantation descendants or *kama'āina* allow for visitors to learn information that might surpass museum content, including information about plantation hardship and colonization. The addition of museum guides may also allow for more personalized engagement with visitors.

The Alexander and Baldwin Sugar Museum was especially intriguing as a study subject. Museum visitors and *kama'āina* participant Dean stated that the museum is biased and leans towards presenting the industry's perspective of plantation history. Likewise, visitors note the museum is sad, while they do not say the same about the other museums studied, even though other museums displayed stories of hardship more frequently. As this museum continues to be owned by the Alexander and Baldwin Company, it might benefit from hiring more plantation descendants to be involved in its processes. The museum might benefit from further involvement with descendants and *Kānaka Maoli* who can lend their own experiences and perspectives to the museum's narrative. It seems that increased community involvement might actually help the museum to represent this history in a light that does not feel disheartening.

Limitations and Future Research

It is important to note that my research does not capture all the displays at each museum. There may be a part of the museums that online review visitors did not photograph or experiences such as videos or in-person tours that can't be captured in a

photo. Due to travel restrictions during the novel coronavirus pandemic, I was not able to complete many of my initial plans for this research. In-person ethnographic observation of the museums might allow for different results, or at least different insights into these museums. As was previously proposed, this research would benefit from further interviews with museum staff, volunteers, and visitors. These interviews could add important first-hand perspectives about the connections between museum staff and volunteer identity and the roles they play at each museum. Interviews with *kama 'āina* visitors could also advance understanding of whether the involvement of *kama 'āina* staff affects how a visitor feels about the museum and the narrative that they are exposed to. “On the ground,” deeper ethnographic research would have not only allowed me to conduct in-person interviews, but also make first-hand observations of everyday operations and visitor behavior.

I am also interested in further exploring specifically how involved *Kānaka Maoli* are in the museums. Are *Kānaka* in staff or volunteer roles? How do *Kānaka* react to the museum, and what level of knowledge about plantations or colonialism do these *Kānaka* come with? I was not able to specifically uncover the role of *Kānaka Maoli* staff or visitors in these museums, and the answers to these questions could offer insight into how the representations of colonialism really affect *Kānaka Maoli* visitors.

The Hawai'i Plantation Village online reviews offered an interesting perspective into how *kama 'āina* connect with the museum's content through the program “Haunted Plantation.” In my childhood, this event was widely discussed among my community, and the most common reason anyone who I knew would go to the Plantation Village.

Likewise, growing up near plantation land, I grew up hearing stories about how those lands were haunted by plantation laborers and their families. In future research, I would be interested in exploring the ways that *kama 'āina* think about death on plantations, as well as if descendants are visiting the haunted plantation event.

Concluding Thoughts

This research explores diversity and community in the context of museums. Borrowing an approach from other critical museum scholars, I investigate the relationships and representations of people in these museums from a critical and reflexive perspective (Kreps 2020; Shelton 2013). I employ a museum anthropological approach by applying anthropological methods, in this case ethnography, to study culture in museums (Kreps 2020, 5). I used common museum ethnography and visual ethnography methods, like content analysis, and combined them with anthropological methods of digital ethnography.

Digital ethnography served as an effective way to study museums from afar, though this method hasn't been used very extensively in the museum anthropology context. By employing a critical stance to understand these museums, I recognize the relationships of power that occur at these museums and investigate how these relationships affect the museum's representations. This research also uses the similar theoretical approach of appropriate museology (Kreps 2020), finding that communities borrow museological practices and enact them in their own ways, making each museum unique from one another despite representation of identical themes. Likewise, I argue that

these museums offer new perspectives that museum professionals can apply to their own daily work.

I paint a fuller picture of what Hawai'i plantation museums are and how they differ based on levels of descendant or *kama 'āina* involvement. There is currently very little academic research available regarding Hawai'i plantation museums, even though they present unique opportunities to study the representation of diversity and hardship through the eyes of descendants. I add onto the little research about this topic, extensively exploring the power relationships that occur at these museums, and how this affects their representations of history.

Every museum approaches the representation of plantation history differently – even the museums that have more of a community museum model. As Kreps (2008, 26) and Levitt (2015, 154) note, there can be multiple valuable approaches to museology, and communities adjust their practices and approaches based on their local community needs. These museums demonstrate that there can be different yet affective approaches to representing difficult topics, such as abuse, indentured servitude, and colonialism in a museum setting. Most of the museums in this study are able to represent most of these topics without making the museum a place of misery. The Hawai'i Plantation Museum in Papa'ikou and the Hawai'i Plantation Village – both community-based museums – represent these histories through objects with little written interpretation but supplement a lack of written clarity with in-person interpretation through *kama 'āina* guides.

This research demonstrates what valuable sources of information tour guides are. It shows that tour guides do more than just add information to exhibit content. *Kama 'āina*

guides provide personal and first-hand accounts of plantation life that can delve into difficult histories. Visitors are also ecstatic about their guides, happy to have guides who are from the communities they represent. The inclusion of descendant and community guides can allow museums to offer invaluable perspectives when museums might find themselves unable to represent through exhibit content. As *kama 'āina* visitors also noted the connections they formed with *kama 'āina* guides, I also suggest that museums might see better community relationships by employing community members. Community members in other museums might similarly be able to improve the museum's relationships with their communities.

This research also challenges the vague goals to increase diverse representation and engagement with museums by diversifying museum staff. I suggest that while diversifying museum staff is a step towards diversifying the museum's approaches and perspectives, diversity means nothing if the museum still does not recognize specifically who they are missing in the histories they tell and who they represent. Some of the museums in this study have marginalized and ethnically diverse people in all levels of the museum, yet they still overlook the histories of *Kānaka Maoli*. Just as scholars warn, the voice of the dominant buries the voice of the non-dominant, and *Kānaka* are left to be forgotten (Foucault 2003). Without concentrated effort to recognize and engage specific communities who are missing from the museum's narratives, the museums fall short of truly being able to represent the "full story" of plantations. Museums can approach representing diversity in many ways, but need to be aware of who that diversity truly includes.

In this thesis, I demonstrate some ways that staff and volunteers affect the narratives of history at Hawai'i plantation museums. Through online reviews, museum content, and interviews with two museum staff and one *kama 'āina* plantation descendant, I explore what draws *kama 'āina* and *Kānaka Maoli* to, or away from, Hawai'i plantation museums; how *kama 'āina*, descendants, and *Kānaka Maoli* are involved in each museum; and how the themes of diversity, hardship, and colonization are represented at each museum. I present how narratives of the museums differ based on the involvement of *kama 'āina*, *Kānaka*, and descendants. I find that these museums offer new perspectives on how to represent culture and difficult histories in museums effectively. I urge other museum professionals to likewise look deeper into the relationships of power that occur in their museum, to identify who is missing from their museum narrative, and to engage both community members and visitors by inviting community members to represent their own histories and hardships.

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Appendix A. Dictionary of ‘Ōlelo Hawai’i terms

Term	Definition
<i>Ahupua’a</i>	Subdivisions of land
<i>‘Ai Kapu</i>	A restriction that prohibited men and women from eating together
<i>‘Ai Noa</i>	Free eating
<i>Akua</i>	Spirits
<i>Ali’i/Ali’i Nui</i>	A king, or high-ranking chief
<i>ea</i>	Sovereignty; political independence, land independence, life, death
<i>Hālau</i>	A long house, usually for canoes
<i>Hale o ke akua</i>	House of the akua
<i>Haleopapa</i>	House of papa
<i>Haole</i>	Foreigners, though this term is now used more often to refer specifically to white foreigners.
<i>Kahakō</i>	A macron (-) on top of a letter that indicates the stress of the vowel
<i>Kahuna lau’au lapa’au</i>	Medical practitioners
<i>Kanaka Maoli</i>	“True person” or Indigenous person of Hawai’i
<i>Kānaka Maoli (plural)</i>	“True people” or Indigenous people of Hawai’i
<i>Kanaka ‘Ōiwi</i>	Indigenous person of Hawai’i
<i>Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (plural)</i>	Indigenous people of Hawai’i
<i>Kama ‘āina</i>	“Child of the land” or local people or residents of Hawai’i
<i>Kapu</i>	Tapu, or tabu; taboos or restrictions/prohibitions
<i>Kapu Ali’i</i>	A high-ranking chief or king with strict restrictions as to how other <i>Kānaka</i> could interact with them.
<i>Kauwā</i>	A servant or outcast
<i>Konohiki</i>	A land manager, or headman of an ahupua’a land division under the chief.
<i>Kuhina Nui/Kahuna Nui</i>	A powerful officer who shares the executive power of the king. (Similar to a prime minister)
<i>Kumulipo</i>	Origin, genesis, or source of life; the name of the Hawaiian creation story
<i>Kūpuna</i>	Ancestor, grandparent, or elder, sometimes not related by blood.
<i>Lāhui</i>	Nation, people, or community
<i>Luna</i>	A foreman or boss, usually on a plantation.
<i>Māhele</i>	Land division
<i>Ma’i’oku’u</i>	Cholera

<i>Maka 'āinana</i>	A commoner
<i>Makahiki</i>	A rest period of four months from October to January when <i>Kānaka</i> abstained from labor and engaged in different forms of worship
<i>Mana</i>	Power, authority
<i>Mele</i>	a song, anthem, or chant
<i>Mō'ī</i>	The highest ranking of chiefs/kings. E.G. King Kamehameha
<i>Moku</i>	A District
<i>Mokupuni</i>	A Kingdom
<i>Mo'oku'auhau</i>	Genealogy
<i>Mo'olelo</i>	History, or story
<i>'Ōlelo Hawai'i</i>	Hawaiian language
<i>'Okina</i>	A glottal stop that indicates the sound you hear between “uh-oh”
<i>Palapala</i>	Reading or writing
<i>Pono</i>	Goodness, balance, morality

Appendix B. Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Museum Staff/Volunteers

The Museum

- What drew you to visit (museum site)?
- How would you describe (museum site)?
- What do you think about (museum site)?
- What do you like about (museum site)?
- What do you think could be improved?

Staff/Volunteer Involvement

- Can you describe your role at the museum?
- Why did you choose to be in that role?
- What made you want to work/volunteer here?
- Why do you continue working/volunteering?

Identity

- What ethnicity/ies are you?
- What culture or cultures do you belong to?
- Do you think your identity is reflected in the museum?
 - Why or why not?

Other Museums

- Have you been to other plantation museum sites, either in Hawai'i, other parts of the U.S., or abroad?
 - What did you think about those sites?
 - Do you think this site is different than other plantation museum sites?
 - How do you think this site does or does not differ from others?

Plantation History

- What do you think about the history of plantations in Hawai'i?
- How do you think the museum addresses the history of plantations in Hawai'i?
- Do you think the museum offers an accurate description of plantation history?
 - Why/why not?

Appendix C. Semi-Structured Interview Questions for *Kama'āina* /Descendant Museum Visitor

Museum Visitation

- How many/which plantation museums have you visited?
- What drew you to visit (museum site)?
- How would you describe (museum site)?
- What do you think about (museum site)?
- What do you like about (museum site)?
- What do you think could be improved?

Identity

- What ethnicity/ies are you?
- What culture or cultures do you belong to?
- Do you think your identity is reflected in the museum?
 - Why or why not?

Other Museums

- Have you been to other plantation museum sites, either in Hawai'i, other parts of the U.S., or abroad?
 - What did you think about those sites?
 - Do you think this site is different than other plantation museum sites?
 - How do you think this site does or does not differ from others?

Plantation History

- What do you know about the history of plantations in Hawai'i?
 - How do you know this?
- What do you think about the history of plantations in Hawai'i?
- How do you think the museum addresses the history of plantations in Hawai'i?
- Do you think the museum offers an accurate description of plantation history?
 - Why/why not?