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## Three Key Debates: Positioning Hawai'i in World History

Hawai'i figures prominently in the archaeological and anthropological literature on the transition from chiefdoms to unified states. This introductory chapter compares and contrasts academic analysis of indigenous Hawaiian society with that of wider disciplinary and geographical entities for three key debates concerning the evolution of human societies. Hawai'i is central to a number of these debates, yet marginal to others. The first theme debated is the process of political consolidation from chiefdoms based on kin loyalty derived from blood links to states based on power vested in institutional office holders and membership based on territorial residency. The second is the role of coercion and consent in political consolidation. Research on the history of Hawai'i is poorly served in this regard, despite the fact that most investigators acknowledge that unification occurred in the 1790s as a result of an extensive military campaign and the major role ascribed to warfare in state formation in most locations beyond the Pacific. The third theme is the role of European influences in ensuring the Hawaiian archipelago was unified for the first time in its history, given that this unification occurred soon after regular contact with European naval and trade vessels was established and widely acknowledged structural prerequisites for state formation were in place in Hawai'i for some time before unification occurred.

The literature on the unification of Hawai'i largely ignores comparative world history, sociology and political science in which coercion is generally allocated a central role in state formation, but which, in Pacific case studies, are largely absent. Combining frameworks from these diverse bodies of literature suggests exciting and fruitful approaches to the study of this topic in the Pacific. Indeed, the broader questions about the manifestation and consolidation of power that are explored in this chapter offer lessons for all disciplines and all regions, trapped as we are within partial and subjective prisms of observation. Three main methodological points are advocated here: the value of reading and applying approaches from other disciplines; the value of reading and applying approaches from other regions (especially combining Western and non-Western historiography); and, perhaps more problematically, the importance of local context, which requires caution in applying externally generated frameworks of analysis without modification.

While state formation in the West and elsewhere is generally acknowledged to have been forged in the crucible of violence to overcome strong senses of local identity and affiliation that characterise most of humanity, countervailing forces promoting diversity are generally acknowledged more in discussion of Western nation states as the seed that spawned later democratic institutions. In contrast, pre-colonial, non-Western, orientalist states are portrayed as ultimately held together by despotism, or hopelessly fragmented to the point of being beyond control other than by the application of often externally imposed coercion. Such mindsets justified colonial rule and postcolonial interventions across the globe by former colonial states in 'failed states'. These approaches ignore the fact that many political evolutions across the globe were based on balancing power bases for stability rather than unifying for efficiency in the delivery of outcomes. In the former, representation and relative consensus was the key objective while, in the latter, the goal was to deliver results and ensure limited dissent to block this delivery. While citing 'traditional' sources that were collected soon after European contact and before Western influence destroyed or compromised their veracity, few Western academics of state formation in the Pacific cite current indigenous academics. These indigenous Pacific academics portray a very different configuration of power in which rule is more consent-based and consultative by both necessity and social values, often in fluid and evolving circumstances.

## The dilemma of political consolidation: Focusing power while accommodating diversity

The investigation of state formation in Hawai‘i has mainly been conducted by anthropologists and archaeologists. They see economic modes of production as the key to understanding political power in Hawai‘i during the pre-unification period. This emphasis is, in part, a reflection of their disciplinary assumptions on the processes driving the evolution of human societies, which are in turn partly derived from the relative absence of written observations for the times and peoples they study, and the relative abundance of archaeologically accessible remnants of economic production, such as field systems and buildings. There is also a voluminous literature on state formation written by sociologists, political scientists and historians, who tend more to emphasise political accommodation and/or military domination as key processes, which is again, in part, a reflection of sources available and disciplinary assumptions. In the late 1950s, historian Karl Wittfogel linked the development of sociopolitical complexity to the need for coordinated management of large-scale irrigated agricultural complexes, such as those found in Hawai‘i. He argued that irrigated taro fields produced sufficient surplus to feed the warriors and administrative officers needed to support more complex forms of political organisation.<sup>1</sup> More recently, archaeologist Patrick Kirch noted that intensive dryland agriculture gave rise to inherently unstable and expansive chiefdoms. According to him, variable rainfall reduced food security and necessitated the conquest of other agricultural land.<sup>2</sup> However, the economic structures seen by British explorer Captain James Cook in the 1770s existed long before unification and do not, therefore, explain why unification occurred when and as it did.

Archaeologist Timothy Earle departs from this economic focus. He notes that the same military power that allowed expansion also introduced internal instability because the ruler could not always rely on the loyalty of warriors serving under subordinate chiefs. He emphasises the importance of ideological factors in securing sustained loyalty. Most state-builders in

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1 Karl Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), pp. 241–43.

2 P.V. Kirch, *The Wet and the Dry: Irrigation and Agricultural Intensification in Polynesia* (University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 8. Kirch has maintained this contention in his most recent works – see *How Chiefs Became Kings: Divine Kingship and the Rise of Archaic States in Ancient Hawai‘i* (Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 2010) and *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief: The Island Civilization of Ancient Hawai‘i* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).

Polynesia faced similar problems. There was always the danger of chiefs close to power making a bid for supremacy. At the same time chiefs in areas away from the centre of power might be tempted to assert their independence. This latter prospect was sometimes enhanced by problems of communication along narrow trails or across stormy seas. These problems were also common to chiefdoms outside of Polynesia.<sup>3</sup> Agriculture is important to Earle for the symbolic value of the temples and fields constructed under chiefly supervision as well as for subsistence. According to Earle, ‘these constructions of social labour encapsulated the social relations of the chiefdom or, more precisely, the historical events that defined these relations’. Reminders of chiefly power were all around, as was the place of commoners in the subsistence economy: ‘The symbolic order was thus grounded and subsumed within the everyday practice of ritual and subsistence labour in the monuments and fields of the chiefs.’<sup>4</sup> While acknowledging the role played by coercion, the anthropologists Marshall Sahlins and Valerio Valeri also emphasise the importance of belief in the ideology of sacred chieftainship for power, particularly in securing compliance from *maka‘āinana* (commoners) well into the post-unification period.<sup>5</sup>

In his 2010 study of Hawaiian political and social evolution, *How Chiefs Became Kings*, Kirch argues convincingly that, by the arrival of Cook in the 1770s, Hawaiian polities had developed an array of the institutions to support the centralisation and concentration of power under high chiefs. According to Kirch, these archaic Hawaiian states were characterised by:

the development of class stratification, land alienation from commoners and a territorial system of administrative control, a monopoly of force and endemic conquest warfare, and, most important, divine kingship legitimated by state cults with a formal priesthood.<sup>6</sup>

Two years later, Kirch published a more comprehensive history of Hawai‘i in *A Shark Going Inland is My Chief* in which he continues his consistent assertion that the driving influence on political evolution was population growth built on agricultural intensification. Once agricultural intensification had reached its limit in the 16th century, around the time

3 I.C. Campbell, *A History of the Pacific Islands* (Christchurch: University of Canterbury Press, 1989), p. 47.

4 Timothy K. Earle, *How Chiefs Come to Power: The Political Economy in Prehistory* (Stanford University Press, 1997), p. 184.

5 Marshall Sahlins, ‘Other Times, Other Customs: The Anthropology of History’, *American Anthropologist*, vol. 85 (3), 1983, esp. 522–23, and 535 n. 12; and Valerio Valeri, *Kingship and Sacrifice: Ritual and Society in Ancient Hawaii*, Paula Wissing (trans.) (University of Chicago Press, 1985a).

6 Kirch (2010), p. 27.

of ‘Umi-a-Liloa’s reign on Hawai‘i island and Pi‘ilani on Maui, the further expansion of political power lay in the conquest of other lands. In so doing Hawaiian polities moved from being ruled by chiefs who were considered kinsmen by their commoner followers to states ruled by divine kings. Kirch is more certain in *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief* than in *How Chiefs Became Kings* that Hawai‘i’s political centralisation occurred more because of multiple indigenous factors than European influences, but still cannot explain unification without recourse to the influence of Western weapons, again with almost no discussion of the evidence for this.<sup>7</sup> While making much more use of indigenous traditions than in his previous works, he still favours his previous explanations of underlying influences.<sup>8</sup> Archaeologists are increasingly coming to realise that oral traditions must be better utilised not just as a sign of respect for indigenous peoples but as key sources to enhance and clarify archaeological evidence.<sup>9</sup>

Archaeologist Robert Hommon also published his *The Ancient Hawaiian State* in 2013. Hommon pioneered the close reading of recorded traditions alongside archaeological material in the 1970s and 1980s. In his 2013 work, however, he retreats from his earlier close reading of historical processes for specific islands to emphasise that Hawaiian chiefdoms on the eve of European contact were state-like in their shared structures of political economic and social organisation.<sup>10</sup> The discussion in chapters seven and eight of the authority–power spectrum in Hawaiian polities in the lead-up to unification under Kamehameha I is of particular interest for this study. While making a strong case for the presence of the component parts of political rule that are generally associated with states, the lack of discussion on processes leading to this and how these structures were enacted in local and specific contexts means that Hommon cannot adequately explain why Hawai‘i unified when it did according to these pre-existing indigenous elements. Hommon agrees with Kirch in seeing the key driving force as being the structural instability of dryland production to support expanding populations and ambitions of dryland rulers in the eastern islands.<sup>11</sup> However, the link between this

7 Kirch (2012), p. 225.

8 Kirch (2012), pp. 68, 79. This under-utilisation of traditions was also noted in a review of Kirch (2012) by Kerri A. Inglis (‘Review of P.V. Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief: The Island Civilization of Ancient Hawai‘i*’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vol. 44 (2), Autumn 2013, 269).

9 Peter M. Whiteley, ‘Archaeology and Oral Tradition: The Scientific Importance of Dialogue’, *American Antiquity*, vol. 67 (3), Jul. 2002, 405–15.

10 Robert J. Hommon, *The Ancient Hawaiian State: Origins of a Political Society* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 2.

11 Hommon (2013), pp. 7–8, 117–35.

instability and the development and/or sophistication of specific elements of coercive capacity or other elements of state rule before or after specific events in the late 18th century is not clearly made.

This work departs from both Kirch and Hommon in arguing for greater documentation of the role of coercive mechanisms in this process and in arguing that sacred kingship was not as crucial as they and most other anthropologists and archaeologists claim. Rather, I argue here that the late 18th century witnessed the development of sophisticated methods of power sharing, resource allocation and mobilisation of resources, which consolidated the rule of certain chiefdoms at the expense of others that did not embrace these tactics in a process that can be seen as a political and military revolution. All this is recorded in Hawaiian traditions, but only modern Kānaka Maoli scholars Kanalu G. Terry Young and Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo'ole Osorio, as discussed below, have noted this in detailed reference to the recorded history of their ancestors.<sup>12</sup>

Anthropology and archaeology have been the main disciplines concerned with the investigation of state formation in pre-industrial Pacific Island societies. The Western intellectual traditions from which they derive have been heavily influenced by the idea of linear evolutionary progress. Through time, societies become increasingly complex in their organisation, more politically unified, with an increasing capacity to utilise resources more efficiently. The generally accepted model of social evolution portrays a progression from relatively egalitarian societies to socially stratified, centralised states, by means of a transition phase characterised by the development of social differentiation.<sup>13</sup> Sophistication in this body of Pacific-orientated literature is generally synonymous with greater mobilisation and concentration of resources by those in power, rather than a means of power sharing and balancing power, as argued by Kānaka Maoli scholars and scholars beyond the Pacific.

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12 Kānaka Maoli is the term used by indigenous Hawaiians to describe themselves and their culture. The best examples of the revolution in Kānaka Maoli scholarship are Kanalu G. Terry Young, *Rethinking the Native Hawaiian Past* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1998); and Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo'ole Osorio, *Dismembering Lāhui: A History of the Hawaiian Nation to 1887* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002).

13 Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. 1 (Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 35; Alexander Alland Jr, *To Be Human: An Introduction to Anthropology* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1980), pp. 438 ff.; and Joseph A. Tainter, *The Collapse of Complex Societies* (Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 24 ff.

Within mainstream Western literature on state formation, egalitarian societies are characterised by a lack of permanent hierarchical distinctions between individuals. Status is based on individual achievement rather than institutionalised rankings. Leadership tends to be minimal, and to be based on the power of persuasion. Leaders are usually only obeyed temporarily to achieve specific goals. Social organisation is based around small, intimate kin groupings. Few cooperative enterprises can be sustained for any length of time between two or more of these groupings. Resources are distributed throughout the community by the exchange of goods and services and there is very little accumulation of resources in the hands of any one individual. The route to elevated social status is to acquire resources and distribute them to attract followers. Accumulated goods are also used to enhance prestige through the holding of public feasts and gift giving. Elevated status is only maintained by continued success in the accumulation and judicious distribution of goods. The only significant form of sanction is appeal to public opinion, which acts as a strong constraint on behaviour.<sup>14</sup>

Some communities become ranked societies. Individuals are ranked hierarchically and those in higher ranks have greater access to resources and privileges. Differences in rank may become institutionalised and even hereditary. But power is still essentially based on collective consent rather than coercive capability. Authority can only be used for collective purposes. Consent is freely given and may be freely withdrawn by participants. High rank holders have status, make decisions and use material resources on behalf of the whole group. They do not possess coercive power beyond their own kin base, however, and cannot divert group resources for private use without risking other kin groups withdrawing their support. Polities are more federations than organic wholes, with an ever-present potential for fission.<sup>15</sup>

Authority rests on sacred status that is sometimes claimed to emanate from a divine source that is not open to challenge. The sacred ruler secures obedience through claims of membership or influence over the supernatural

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14 Mann (1986), p. 37; Tainter (1988), p. 24; Bruce Trigger, 'Generated Coercion and Inequality: The Basis of State Power in the Early Civilizations', in Henri J.M. Claessen, Pieter van de Velde & M. Estelle Smith (eds), *Development and Decline, The Evolution of Sociopolitical Organization* (South Hadley, Mass.: Bergin and Garvey, 1985), p. 50.

15 Mann (1986), pp. 37, 52; Christopher S. Peebles & Susan M. Kus, 'Some Archaeological Correlates of Ranked Societies', *American Antiquity*, vol. 42 (3), 1977, 421–22; B.G. Trigger, *Times and Traditions: Essays in Archaeological Interpretation* (Edinburgh University Press, 1978), pp. 197–99; Timothy Earle, 'The Evolution of Chiefdoms', *Current Anthropology*, vol. 30 (1), 1989, esp. 86; and Robert L. Carneiro, 'The Chiefdom: Precursor of the State', in Grant D. Jones & Robert R. Kautz (eds), *The Transition to Statehood in the New World* (Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 37–79.

world in societies where the supernatural are believed to have a major impact on man's fortunes. The problem with sacred authority is that, in claiming a power that transcends human power, the leader must retain sufficient distance from his subjects to develop an air of mystification, and yet not become so isolated as to risk losing popular appeal as head of a secular community. To intervene too blatantly in worldly affairs is to threaten the myth of divine control over the course of events.<sup>16</sup>

Rulers are able to use their sacred status to acquire goods and services in the name of ensuring supernatural support, but still need to redistribute goods and services to retain their secular support base. Accumulation of goods by leaders is also limited by the continued reliance on kinship as the basis of social and economic organisation. Family and kin groups tend to be primarily concerned with ensuring that their own needs are met rather than generating a large surplus for wider societal needs. Distinguished anthropologist of the Pacific Marshall Sahlins refers to this system as the Domestic Mode of Production. To Sahlins, households in this form of organisation are caught in a dilemma, 'temporising always between domestic welfare and broader obligations towards kinsmen in the hope of satisfying the latter without menacing the former'.<sup>17</sup> This curtailed the augmentation of production and polity and was the ultimate structural limitation on chiefdoms in Hawai'i and elsewhere.

Ranked societies span the full spectrum from near egalitarian to those with a marked concentration of power in the hands of a ruling body. In some ranked societies an absolute, uncontested highest rank emerges, with all other ranks' lineages being graded according to their relation to this focal point. Seniority is usually expressed in terms of genealogical proximity to the ultimate ancestors of the group, who are often associated with the gods. Leadership roles are usually reserved for those from higher ranks. Their authority derives from the belief that high genealogical rank endows them with exceptional powers or qualities through their connections with the gods. Periodic proof of the leader's abilities is required for the maintenance of authority. This type of authority is open to challenge from other competitors within the pool of genealogically qualified candidates, particularly when the incumbent is unsuccessful or fails to benefit his

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16 Irving Goldman, *Ancient Polynesian Society* (University of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. xv–xxi; Sahlins (1983), p. 518; Alland (1980), p. 435; John Keegan, *The Mask of Command* (London: Penguin, 1987), p. 318; and Mann (1986), p. 158.

17 Marshall Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics* (Chicago: Aldine, 1972), pp. 41–100, 124–32, 148, esp. 125.

followers. Kinship is still the dominant form of social organisation, with open conflict tending to occur horizontally between groups, rather than vertically between classes within a group.<sup>18</sup>

Ranked societies are sometimes referred to as chiefdoms. Anthropologist Robert Carneiro defines a chiefdom as ‘an autonomous political unit comprising a number of villages or communities under the permanent control of a paramount chief’.<sup>19</sup> To Carneiro, the major threshold in man’s sociopolitical evolution was the move from egalitarian societies to stratified societies, as this represented the first transcendence of localised autonomy. From that point onwards, change was more quantitative than qualitative. Similarly, Earle believes the fundamental dynamics of chiefdoms are essentially the same as those of states. Many scholars disagree, pointing to the continuing tendency of ranked societies to fragment. They claim that the major threshold in human social evolution was the establishment of permanent centralised authority in the form of states.<sup>20</sup>

There is much debate on what characterises a state. Most definitions usually involve notions of centralised authority, territoriality and coercive capability. One of the most concise definitions is that of sociologist Michael Mann. To Mann:

The state is a differentiated set of institutions and personnel embodying centrality, in the sense that political relations radiate outward to cover a territorially demarcated area, over which it claims a monopoly of binding and permanent rule-making, backed up by physical violence.<sup>21</sup>

The transition from advanced chiefdoms to states generally involves the conversion of temporary political authority and permanent religious centres into permanent political power, institutionalised and secularised in its access to coercive measures to quell internal dissent and prevent fission. A major part of the centralisation process is the breakdown of localised, kin-based loyalties, and their replacement with territorial affiliations. The domestic mode of production is supplemented or replaced with surplus-orientated forms of agricultural production and profit-orientated

18 Mann (1986), pp. 37, 527–30; Peebles & Kus (1977), pp. 421–22; Alland (1980), p. 450; and Stephanie Seto Levin, ‘The Overthrow of the Kapu System in Hawaii’, *Journal of the Polynesian Society*, vol. 77 (4), 1968, 403–05.

19 Carneiro (1981), pp. 37–45, esp. 45; Alland (1980), pp. 438–42; Peebles & Kus (1977), pp. 431–33; Sahlins (1983), pp. 521–22.

20 Earle (1997), p. 14; and Carneiro (1981), pp. 51–54, 70.

21 Mann (1986), p. 37.

commerce. The state's administrative structure supports itself by means of taxes and tributes levied on this surplus. Increasingly sharp vertical distinctions occur within the population as a consequence of declining kin-based obligations and affiliations.<sup>22</sup>

In a review of variations in power within West African kingdoms, historian P.C. Lloyd offers insights into the process of centralisation. The least concentrated forms of power consisted of rulers who were little more than arbitrators between the chiefs, in whom the real power lay. Autocratic rulers represented the most concentrated form of power. Although ultimately reliant on the goodwill of their chiefs, they were still able to manipulate them to achieve most of their aims. While all tended to be surrounded by a 'mystic aura', that 'surrounding the arbitrator is a substitute for control of physical force; that of the autocrat masks his secular power'.<sup>23</sup>

Effective political power required the possession of wealth and a personal following. Often the income from tribute, plunder and gifts was used to pay a personal staff. Initially salaried positions were rare in West African kingdoms. Senior office-bearers kept a proportion of the tribute collected and transmitted to higher authorities, while junior staff received free board and lodging. This limited the degree to which a ruler could increase his power at the expense of his chiefs for, to do so required gaining direct control over certain segments of the population, or establishing royal monopolies over certain types of trade. 'In a long established and politically stagnant kingdom, the allocation of these resources of wealth and people becomes institutionalised and difficult for a ruler, starting from a position of political weakness to alter.'<sup>24</sup>

To Lloyd, the key to the amount of power that can be concentrated in the hands of the ruler is the method of appointment to political office. He makes a crucial distinction between:

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22 Mann (1986), p. 38; Tainter (1988), pp. 26–28; Henri J.M. Claessen & Peter Skalnik, 'The Early State: Models and Reality', in Henri J.M. Claessen & Peter Skalnik (eds), *The Early State* (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1978a), pp. 637–50; Grant D. Jones & Robert R. Kautz, 'Issues in the Study of New World State Formation', in Grant D. Jones & Robert R. Kautz (eds), *The Transition to Statehood in the New World* (Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 14–17.

23 P.C. Lloyd, 'The Political Development of West African Kingdoms', review article, *Journal of African History*, 9 (2), 1968, 324.

24 Lloyd (1968), pp. 326–27.

those chiefs who are elected to office by the members of a group – a descent group or segment of a royal lineage – and who primarily represent the interests of that group; and those chiefs who are appointed by the king and incumbent chiefs, whose loyalties lie primarily to the king.<sup>25</sup>

The degree to which appointed chiefs secured permanency of tenure, income independent of the ruler, and were organised into exclusive, discrete corporate entities would dictate the degree to which they could rival each other and the power of the king.

The series of stages in the transition from the early state into its mature form, proposed by European social scientists Henri Claessen and Peter Skalnik, outlines the common assumptions of this literature.<sup>26</sup> The first stage is the inchoate state. Here kinship, family and community ties still dominate political allegiances. The concept of a unified supra-community polity exists mainly in the minds of the ruling elite, while the bulk of the population still retains a parochial outlook. Economically, full-time specialists are rare, and taxation is poorly developed and usually on an ad hoc basis. Social differences are countered by close kin ties between rulers and ruled. The second stage is known as the typical state. Kinship ties are now counterbalanced by territorial affiliations. Competition and appointment to office exist beside the principle of hereditary offices. Economically, ties of redistribution and reciprocity still pervade relations between social strata. The transitional state is the final stage on the road to a mature state. Appointed officials whose loyalty is to the state rather than lineages or localities now dominate government administrative posts. The administration of laws and taxation is institutionalised. With the breakdown of horizontal ties, vertical divisions based on the uneven control of resources come to the fore. The significance of the private ownership of resources increases as communal ownership declines. This process also increases the potential for social differentiation.

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25 Lloyd (1968), p. 324.

26 Claessen & Skalnik (1978a), pp. 559–60; Rolando Tamayo Y. Salmoran, 'The State as a Problem of Jurisprudence', in Henri J.M. Claessen & Peter Skalnik (eds), *The Study of the State* (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1981), pp. 405–06; Tainter (1988), pp. 27–28; Mann (1986), p. 68; Donald V. Kurtz, 'The Legitimation of Early Inchoate States', in Claessen & Skalnik (1981), pp. 178–83; Elizabeth M. Brumfiel, 'Aztec State Making: Ecology, Structure and the Origin of the State', *American Anthropologist*, vol. 85 (2), 1983, 276; R.M. Maclver, *The Web of Government* (rev. edn) (New York: The Free Press, 1965), pp. 36–37; Trigger (1985), pp. 46–52, 54, 57–60.

The mature state is usually distinguished from earlier forms primarily by the degree to which centralised power is institutionalised and legitimised. While the early state still tends to be based on appeal to sacred authority, the mature state claims legitimacy through the secular benefits it delivers to citizens. The ruler gradually comes to be portrayed as the embodiment of the authority of the state rather than as a source of sacred authority. The institutions of the state are depicted as impartial. With the institutionalisation of government, power endures beyond the lifetimes of individual office holders, although individual ability still plays an important role in the effectiveness of any office. The development of institutionalised administrative apparatus enhances state coercion by allowing the creation of professional standing armies supported by government taxes and dues.

Most scholars who discuss the transition from advanced chiefdoms to states emphasise the conversion of temporary political authority and permanent religious centres into permanent political power that is institutionalised and secularised in its access to coercive measures to quell internal dissent and prevent fission. They see the breakdown of localised, kin-based loyalties, and their replacement with territorial affiliations as essential to the centralisation process. The state's administrators support themselves by means of taxes and tribute levied on agricultural surplus.<sup>27</sup>

To anthropologist Elman Service, the rise of the state is more the result of an improved capacity for peacemaking than improved capacity for making war.<sup>28</sup> With the formalised resolution of conflicts, states are able to devote more of their energy to internal consolidation. Most enduring states recognise that unity and stability are achieved through the distribution of resources reflective of their internal balance of power. Emergent states usually succeed because they are not too intrusive, leaving much decision-making and regulatory power in the hands of family, local and occupational groupings. As long as central government does not interfere too much, it is in the interests of local leaders to support it. A challenge to one form of authority can threaten other sources of authority by bringing into question the idea of authority as eternal and unchanging.

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27 Mann (1986), p. 38; Tainter (1988), pp. 26–28; Claessen & Skalnik (1978a), pp. 637–50; Jones & Kautz (1981), pp. 14–17.

28 Elman R. Service, *The Origins of the State and Civilization* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1975), pp. 61, 100.

While there is broad agreement on the structural characteristics of the various phases of sociopolitical evolution, explaining how these patterns occur and evolve is a more contentious issue. Much explanation of social evolution in anthropology and sociology has tended to portray societies as integrated entities acting in a coherent manner similar to the behaviour of organic entities, such as the human body. This tradition was initially prominent in British anthropology's functionalist school and its principles were continued in general systems theory. This approach was heavily influenced by cybernetics, the study of regulating mechanisms in machines. Society is portrayed as a system of interrelated parts in which each element functions in such a way as to maintain the system as a whole. Like a thermostat, the system reacts to deviation from the norm. When thresholds are reached, the system brings itself back within the boundaries of the normal steady state, or homeostasis. Change is therefore usually the result of the intrusion of external factors, such as environmental change or contact with different societies. The degree of change is usually heavily influenced by societies' degree of success in incorporating new elements into existing structures.

General systems theory distinguishes between open and closed systems. Closed systems tend toward disintegration and entropy because of their inability to adapt to new circumstances, while open systems are dynamic and tend towards growth and internal differentiation. Increases in differentiation and internal integration occur because they confer a competitive advantage. Differentiation allows for increases in the quality of products through the increased skill factor that specialisation confers. Centralised, integrated structures increase efficiency by counteracting the duplication of resources and services, and providing overall coordination.<sup>29</sup>

Centralised control is important for the processing of information as well as the utilisation of energy. To coordinate internal components and react to external factors, a system must be able to gather, interpret and disseminate information to relevant sectors. The amount of information that can be processed by individuals, or groups, is finite. Information theory postulates that, as societies increase in size, the majority of individuals

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29 Barbara Abbott Segraves, 'Central Elements in the Construction of a General Theory of the Evolution of Societal Complexity', in Colin Renfrew, Michael J. Rowlands & Barbara Abbott Segraves (eds), *Theory and Explanation in Archaeology: The Southampton Conference* (New York: Academic Press, 1982), pp. 288, 294–95; Peebles & Kus (1977), p. 428; Alland (1980), pp. 262, 323; and Frank Hole & Robert F. Heizer, *An Introduction to Prehistoric Archaeology* (2nd edn) (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc., 1969), pp. 363, 373–81.

must surrender a direct role in the decision-making process to ensure that society can respond to challenges more efficiently. It becomes necessary for members to obey commands in crucial situations for the benefit of society as a whole. For example, martial law and non-consensus decision-making by the executive core of government commonly occur in times of war, as consensus-orientated decision-making could lead to fatal delays. The limits on information-processing capacity necessitate a hierarchical administrative structure. At each level, specific information is processed by specialists and passed on up the decision-making chain so that leaders are not overwhelmed by a mass of information. Political power usually involves influence on the content and targeting of the disseminated information, adding another potential avenue for rulers to consolidate or increase their influence.<sup>30</sup>

Internal divisions may be horizontal as well as vertical. Kinship, occupation, locality and other affiliations interact with class affiliations. Sociologist Michael Mann's definition of society as 'multiple overlapping and interconnecting networks of power'<sup>31</sup> can accommodate both horizontal and vertical divisions. It also suggests society is a series of spheres – economic, territorial, cultural and so on, that never coincide precisely. Mann notes that:

Human beings do not create unitary societies but a diversity of intersecting networks of social interaction. The most important of these networks form relative stability around the four power sources in any given social space. But underneath, human beings are tunnelling ahead to achieve their goals, forming new networks, extending old ones, and emerging most clearly into our view with rival configurations of one or more of the principle power networks.<sup>32</sup>

There is considerable value in combining conflict-orientated and integration-orientated perspectives. Social action may be influenced by the combination of internal power relations and external pressures. Internal power will be based on the interplay of coercive capacity and the perceived benefits of loyalty to higher authority for individuals. External pressures will either allow leaders to consolidate their powers in the name

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30 Segraves (1982), p. 297; Trigger (1985), pp. 48–49; Trigger (1978), pp. 194 ff., esp. 213–14; Tainter (1988), p. 91 ff.; Desmond Morris, *The Human Zoo* (London: World Books, 1971), chpt 1.

31 Mann (1986), p. 1.

32 Mann (1986), p. 16.

of preserving society's coherence, or allow existing contradictions to rise to the surface by diverting the power of existing leaders, or providing alternatives to their ideology and resource base.<sup>33</sup>

The development of states is sometimes explained as a result of internal responses to external pressures. At present, external pressures and elements in terms of European contact are the only theory that has been proposed to explain why Hawai'i became a state precisely when it did and not decades before, when all of the necessary internally generated conditions Kirch and others outline were already in place. According to this theory, societies change because they become hemmed in and their options are reduced or channelled. Similarly, a society is faced with a situation in which its breakup is impossible and unacceptable in the face of external pressure. The most common scenario is one of increasing population in circumstances of unchanging or declining agricultural capacity because of environmental degradation from overuse; natural disasters, such as drought; or territorial confinement because of antagonistic, powerful neighbours. Mann uses such a concept to explain why some societies developed as centralised states and others did not. According to Mann, they became 'caged' because of highly specific circumstances. The ancient river-valley civilisations of the Middle East, for example, became tied to increasingly large-scale, centrally coordinated, irrigation-based and sedentary river-valley farming with high population density only because their agricultural prosperity attracted less prosperous neighbours to press in on their borders and hem them in.<sup>34</sup>

External elements may also play a more active role by providing new sources of power. Trade goods, tribute from conquered territories or foreign mercenaries may upset the balance of power. As Lloyd suggests, one possible outcome is that:

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33 Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1979), pp. 18–24; Phil Kohl, 'Force, History and the Evolutionist Paradigm', in Mathew Spriggs (ed.), *Marxist Perspectives in Archaeology* (Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 129–30; and Mann (1986), p. 540.

34 Mann (1986), pp. 124–26. See also Robert L. Carneiro, 'A Theory of the Origin of the State', *Science*, vol. 169, 1970, 733–38; Henri J.M. Claessen & Peter Skalnik, 'The Early State: Theories and Hypotheses', in Claessen & Skalnik (1978b), pp. 3–30; Brumfiel (1983), pp. 262–63; and Earle (1989), pp. 84–86.

The contest between the categories of office holders becomes more intense as established rules do not cover the allocation of the new resources. It is through the resolution of such contests, that one is most likely to follow the changes taking place in the political structure.<sup>35</sup>

Territorial expansion is often cited as a major factor behind centralisation. Discussing Oyo in Nigeria, historian Robin Law notes, ‘The connection is two fold. First, the territorial expansion of the empire created administrative problems to which centralisation was a response. And second, the process of imperial expansion created the resources which made centralisation possible’.<sup>36</sup>

Expansion can also create and accentuate internal tensions. Because the new territories might incorporate culturally distinct or hostile peoples, a standing army might be needed to garrison new areas and protect barriers. Resources from these outer areas may provide the revenue for such a force. A number of African kingdoms witnessed the erosion of established chiefly power in the kingdom’s heartland, as the ruler was able to create his own power base in the provinces by utilising provincial resources. Indeed, expansion was sometimes initially motivated by attempts to resolve or at least divert attention from internal tensions.<sup>37</sup> Most states have been characterised by an ongoing dialectic between central authorities seeking to consolidate power and senior officials attempting to convert their positions to a more independent and permanent basis. Both were confronted with demands for increased local autonomy.

As societies increase in size they confront a series of thresholds beyond which structural differentiation and functional specialisation must increase if internal coherence is to be maintained. Political expansion increases the resource base, but runs the risk of overextending the realm because more resources might be needed to maintain coherence than were gained through expansion.<sup>38</sup> Without structural changes, the society may collapse or fragment. Societies are particularly open to change during such times of systemic stress. The inability to resolve crises often results in rapid change. There is always a tendency to be more willing to

35 Lloyd (1968), p. 322. See also Earle (1989), p. 86.

36 Robin Law, *The Oyo Empire c. 1600 – c. 1836: A West African Imperialism in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), p. 241.

37 Law (1977), pp. 241 ff.; and Lloyd (1968), pp. 328–29.

38 Campbell (1989), p. 47; and Mark Elvin, ‘Three Thousand Years of Unstable Growth: China’s Environment from Archaic Times to the Present’, *East Asian History*, no. 6, 1993, esp. p. 18.

risk tragedy or the unknown rather than endure prolonged frustration. A society's development often consists of long periods of relative stability interspersed with periods of rapid change. All aspects of society are not necessarily transformed to the same degree during times of rapid change. Continuity and change exist side by side.<sup>39</sup>

Centralised states are only one possible form of organisation and are not necessarily the logical conclusion of any social process. Power is not one-dimensional. Mann distinguishes between intensive and extensive power. The former consists of concentrated power emanating from the centre that is often weak at the periphery. The latter consists of a more diffused form of power, usually involving a balance of power between localities and interest groups. Even intensive power usually involves a balance of power between various factions at the centre of power. It may be more appropriate to view state-building as the judicious balancing of power alongside attempts to concentrate that power, particularly in the early stages of state formation.<sup>40</sup> It is argued in this book that this theory best fits the observed pattern of events and structures of organisation on the ground during Kamehameha's period. The limits on chiefly coercive power required compromises to accommodate diffuse sources of power. This contention runs counter to the theories of Kirch and others outlined above that chiefly monopolies of power allowed them to concentrate and utilise more and more of their societies' resources. On the other hand, there is no reason why societies cannot revert to older or less centralised forms of organisation. Devolution, decline, involution and stagnation are also possibilities, the last three largely involuntary, but the first in keeping with how the majority of humans have organised themselves for millennia.<sup>41</sup>

An important distinction is made in modern political science discourse on Pacific Island states between the processes of state formation and nation-building. Writing on post-2000 conflict in Melanesia, conflict resolution expert Sinclair Dinnen notes that post 2000, international

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39 Tainter (1988), pp. 194–96, 200; Mann (1986), p. 61; Jones & Kautz (1981), pp. 28–30; Kohl (1984), p. 130; Jonathan Friedman, 'Catastrophe and Continuity in Social Evolution', in Renfrew, Rowlands & Segraves (1982), pp. 179 ff.

40 Mann (1986), pp. 532–35. See also Colin Renfrew, 'Space, Time, and Man', in *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, New Series, vol. 6, 1981, 257–78; R.C.C. Law, 'The Constitutional Troubles of Oyo in the Eighteenth Century', *Journal of African History*, vol. 12 (1), 1971, 25–44; and Law (1977).

41 Friedman (1982), pp. 177–78, 181–82.

interventions to restore peace and state services combine nation-building and state formation. By overly focusing on achieving 'good governance' in institutions for the state delivery of services, planners neglected the critical need for a joint focus on state and civil society relations. Effective nation-building requires 'developing a shared sense of political community that is capable of binding together the population of a given state'.<sup>42</sup> Dinnen and many other political scientists point out that, in much of the world, nationalism often preceded state formation.<sup>43</sup> While archaeology and anthropological discourse on state formation in the indigenous Pacific emphasises the breakdown of community loyalty and its replacement by loyalty to a territorial entity as a key process in the development of states, this study and that of Kānaka Maoli and other Pacific scholars emphasises that, to be enduring, polities rather need to broaden and enhance the strength of local bonds to embrace a wider state entity. This is a crucial distinction, the wider implications of which we discuss in the conclusion with reference to its implications for scholarship and contemporary state-building interventions.

In their 2008 book *Intervention and State-building in the Pacific*, political scientists Greg Fry and Tarcisius Kabutaulaka note that the legitimisation of the doctrine of 'cooperative intervention' was first needed to justify Australian-led intervention in response to civil strife within neighbouring Melanesian nations. They note the importance of 'establishing political acceptance of the project among those affected by it'.<sup>44</sup> The interventionist, state-institution centred approach critiqued by Fry and Kabutaulaka rests on two flawed and interrelated assumptions that run counter to the conclusions reached in this study of the nature of power and authority in Hawai'i. The first is the idea that centralised institutional efficiency is at the core of converting 'failed states' into functioning states. The centralised state model of Europe advocated by many international bodies seeking to resolve conflict only became efficient after prolonged periods

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42 Sinclair Dinnen, 'The Twin Processes of Nation Building and State Building', *State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Briefing Note*, no. 1/2007 (State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Program, The Australian National University, 2007), pp. 1–2.

43 Dinnen (2007), p. 3. See also Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States AD 990–1992* (rev. edn) (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); Charles Tilly, *Trust and Rule* (Cambridge University Press, 2005); and Benedict R. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (rev. edn) (London: Verso, 1991).

44 Greg Fry & Tarcisius Tara Kabutaulaka, 'Political Legitimacy and State-building Intervention in the Pacific', in Greg Fry & Tarcisius Tara Kabutaulaka (eds), *Intervention and State-building in the Pacific: The Legitimacy of 'Cooperative Intervention'* (Manchester & New York: Manchester University Press, 2008), p. 3.

of nation-building in Europe – a period of social identity-building must precede state formation based on developing effective state institutions so as to engender loyalty from citizens working in these institutions and communities seeking to benefit from them in excess of what they can provide themselves for kin and community. The Hawaiian polity accommodated multiple power sources and local identities through both necessity and design.

This conceptualisation of accumulated power as being more diffuse and balanced well beyond centralisation than the preceding theories admit is also the belief of the current generation of indigenous Hawaiian scholars.<sup>45</sup> The work of the late Kanalu Young and Jonathan Osorio is particularly compelling and persuasive in this regard. Despite the acclaimed international reputation of the Hawai‘inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikōlani, College of Hawaiian Language of the University of Hawai‘i’s Hilo campus as leading centres of indigenous scholarship, none of the Western scholars of Hawaiian indigenous society cite Young and Osorio, or even include them in their bibliographies. Osorio’s work has been highly praised by a number of reviewers in leading history journals, making its omission from bibliographies of books on indigenous Hawaiian society even more astounding, while Young’s stunningly insightful work has not even been reviewed by the *Journal of Pacific History*. Their mentor, Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, is recognised only marginally, and her emphasis on the nurturing element of chiefly rule is not mentioned.<sup>46</sup> The same modern texts that praise the insights of mid-19th-century Hawaiian sources into their fast eroding culture, amidst European inroads and general indifference to Hawaiian beliefs, commit the same oversight in their own time against the cultural successors of scholars such as the Kānaka Maoli historians David Malo and Samuel Kamakau. It is the contention of this work that, in so doing, these scholars also misrepresent the nature of chiefly power and basis of social cohesion in Hawaiian society.

Young’s 1998 *Rethinking the Native Hawaiian Past* challenged scholars to rethink standard approaches to the study of Hawaiian history outlined above by demonstrating a different history that is based on concepts derived from the Hawaiian language and oral traditions. Through

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45 Indigenous Hawaiian and Kānaka Maoli are used interchangeably in this book.

46 Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires* (Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum Press, 1992).

detailed and nuanced studies of incidents and cultural institutions that have been largely overlooked in most academic studies of Hawai'i, Young revealed how lower ranked retainers acted as the glue that kept the polity together as intermediaries and messengers between the rulers and the ruled. Young noted that approaches to traditional Hawai'i have tended to focus on the ali'i nui (high chiefs) as leaders of a stratified society, and on the decisions they made in the context of the arrival of the haole (foreigners). This over-emphasis on the power and influence of high chiefs inadvertently marginalised other crucial institutions and internal interactions that provided stability and cohesion. Young's focus is on the vital role and evolving history of his ancestors, the kaukau ali'i. The kaukau ali'i performed a variety of supporting roles for the high chiefs, such as childcare, redistributive service for the welfare of the community, as well as forming a key element of fighting contingents. Young argues convincingly that these roles provided Hawaiian society with coherence and resilience in changing circumstances. These tasks structured the flow of daily life and their detailing does much to undermine the idea of high chiefs as despots ruling by fear. Kaukau ali'i also had empowerment strategies to advance their own interests. By shifting the focus of historical study from the high chiefs to the chiefly servers, a new perspective emerges in which the rulers are more in touch with those they rule and the flow of information and requests is more two-way than top-down.

Publication of Osorio's *Dismembering Lāhui* followed soon after Young's work. Osorio examines the effects of introducing Western-style law codes on indigenous Hawaiians between the first constitution in 1840 and the so-called Bayonet Constitution in 1887, which marked the constitutional transfer of political power to resident Westerners. While focused on the period after the unification process of Kamehameha I, Osorio's work is highly relevant because it demonstrates the long process that centralisation requires and extends Young's focus on the key role of lesser ali'i in maintaining social coherence in a time of transition, in this case as lesser known legislators. Osorio makes good use of legislative records and native petitions to government to ascertain the outlook of those outside the elite at a time when the new legislative body brought commoner and chief together.

Another important body of scholarship on Eastern Polynesian societies, which emerged parallel to these streams in the 1980s, has also received less recognition globally but adds support to the image of a less dictatorial and despotic form of governance proposed by Young and Osorio. In this era,

over a century of Aotearoa/New Zealand Māori protest at land alienation and breaches of faith by the Crown finally led to the formation of the Waitangi Tribunal to investigate injustices against Māori and to assist the Crown's attempts to address grievances. A great deal of research on indigenous histories and ways of viewing land, sea and social relations, which was conducted to make the case for compensation and restitution before the tribunal, combined with a renaissance in Māori assertions of cultural identity to produce a profound cultural and academic revolution. Across Eastern Polynesia, indigenous scholars and community leaders are emphasising that political power was always more consensus-based than most academics claim, and that the effective exercise of this community-based, consensual power required a strong basis of environmental guardianship.<sup>47</sup> This vision is in direct contrast to the majority of academic theories outlined above. This contemporary Polynesian construction of statecraft cannot be dismissed as a romanticised version of the past because of the detailed evidence that Young and Osorio use to support their claims and because this vision also finds support in state theory and observations from history, political science and sociology, as outlined above. This body of observation characterises the role and reality of government as creating balance and seeking broad consensus among competing interest groups rather than concentrating or even monopolising power in the hands of the state. We argue here that this vision is also a better fit with events and underlying processes that are said to have been at play in the Hawaiian unification process.

## Guns, hearts and minds: Balancing coercion and consent in the pursuit of power

No scholar who claims that Kamehameha's victories were due to European weapons discusses their use in battle. Weapons are simply assumed to have conferred a decisive advantage on and off the battlefield. This inflates the

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47 Tamatoa Bambridge (ed.), *The Rahui: Legal pluralism in Polynesian traditional management of resources and territories* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2016); M. Mulholland & V. Tawhai (eds), *Weeping Waters: The Treaty of Waitangi and Constitutional Change* (Wellington: Huia, 2010); Jacinta Ruru, 'The Right to Water as the Right to Identity: Legal Struggles of Indigenous peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand', in F. Sultana & A. Loftus (eds), *The Right to Water: Politics, Governance and Social Struggles* (Abingdon, UK: Earthscan, 2012), pp. 110–22; and Okusitino Māhina, 'The Poetics of Tongan Traditional History, Tala-ē-fonua: An Ecology-Centred Concept of Culture and History', *Journal of Pacific History*, vol. 38 (1), 1993, 109–21.

importance of weapons in warfare, and coercion in political consolidation. In so doing, this body of scholarship ignores and runs counter to the analysis of 40 years of scholarship on the impact of Western weaponry by Pacific historians, which has consistently concluded that Western firearms and cannon were not decisive in warfare and political consolidation.<sup>48</sup> Earle, for example, claims that:

Warfare was a strategy that determined real political relationships in the Hawaiian Islands. Succession was won on the battlefield, and rival island paramount chiefs continually confronted each other in battles of conquest. Until the introduction of western weapons, these conquests were effective only up to the natural boundaries of the major islands and their immediately neighboring islands. Complete unification of the major islands through conquest failed, and the Hawaiian state emerged only when an effective new military technology was introduced. Until then, though bound together through marriage and intrigue, the islands remained divided into separate chiefdoms focused on the islands of Hawai‘i, Maui, O‘ahu and Kaua‘i.<sup>49</sup>

Warfare is not considered to be as important as the sacred status of chiefs in the accumulation of power and influence in Hawai‘i. However, as well as the above-noted absence of analysis of the use of coercion in political power, those advocating the role of chiefs’ sacred status as a key to commanding obedience rarely examine the degree to which coercion, or the latent threat of coercion, secured the loyalty of the population within the sacred chiefs’ territories. Earle, in noting that the same military power that allowed expansion also introduced internal instability, even suggests coercive power might have threatened chiefly power rather than reinforced it, as the ruler could not always rely on the loyalty of warriors serving under subordinate chiefs.<sup>50</sup>

Very little has been written about Hawaiian warfare during this time of transition or any other time. Indeed, few have even considered the extent to which leaders were able to use violence to command obedience in indigenous Hawaiian society from 1778 to 1819. Some articles have appeared on the role of firearms and beachcombers in Kamehameha’s

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48 Dorothy Shineberg, ‘Guns and Men in Melanesia’, *Journal of Pacific History*, vol. 6, 1971, 61–82; K.R. Howe, ‘Firearms and Indigenous Warfare: A Case Study’, *Journal of Pacific History*, vol. 9, 1974, 21–38; and Paul D’Arcy, ‘Māori and Muskets from a Pan-Polynesian Perspective’, *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol. 34 (1), April 2000, 117–32.

49 Earle (1997), p. 140.

50 Earle (1997), pp. 105–10.

victories. Most authors assume that firearms secured victory without investigating the nature of the fighting that took place in the 1790s. Ethnographers such as Peter Buck provide inventories of Hawaiian weaponry, while archaeologist and ethnographer Kenneth Emory's chapter on warfare in *Ancient Hawaiian Civilization* relies heavily on two 19th-century writers: Malo and the missionary William Ellis. Both of these sources describe warfare as a series of general principles. As a result, Emory's work does not distinguish between pre- and post-unification practices, nor does it portray warfare as a process that was modified according to circumstances. Historian Gavan Daws contrasts tactical procedures and rituals with the grim reality of battle in Kamehameha's time, but spends less than a page on this subject.<sup>51</sup> Earle's study emphasises the importance of coercion, but more as a destabilising force than as a factor assisting unification. Two non-academic studies touch upon this topic: Neil Dukas's *Military History of Sovereign Hawaii* and Richard Tregaskis's *The Warrior King*. Dukas's 2004 work is a brief, popular history dealing largely with the period after the one considered here, has few footnotes and a tendency towards an uncritical reading of sources. Dukas follows the format of the ethnographic sources consulted and presents Hawaiian warfare for much of the period prior to 1819 as a static set of rules and practices rather than an evolving process. Tregaskis's book is a work of historical fiction.<sup>52</sup> The largest study of warfare in Hawai'i is James Fitzsimmons's 1969 Masters' thesis from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, 'Warfare in Old Hawaii'. The study is particularly insightful on the post-unification era.<sup>53</sup>

This neglect of warfare and other forms of coercion as influences on political evolution is somewhat at odds with social science and historical practice elsewhere in the world. Distinguished anthropologist Robert Carneiro has consistently argued and documented how war existed before states and how war was a major, if not the major, influence on the development of first chiefdoms and then states and how, in turn, war was transformed by

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51 Peter Buck, 'Warfare and Weapons', in *Arts and Crafts of Hawaii* (Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1964), pp. 417–64; J. Feher, *Hawaii: A Pictorial History* (Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum, 1969), pp. 117–19; Kenneth P. Emory, 'Warfare', in E.S.C. Handy et al., *Ancient Hawaiian Civilization – A Series of Lectures Delivered at the Kamehameha Schools* (rev. edn), (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1965); and Gavan Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1968a), p. 31.

52 Neil Dukas, *Military History of Sovereign Hawaii* (Honolulu: Mutual Publishing, 2004); and Richard Tregaskis, *The Warrior King: Hawaii's Kamehameha the Great* (London: Macmillan, 1973).

53 James Patrick Fitzsimmons, 'Warfare in Old Hawaii: The Transformation of a Poleomological System', MA Thesis, University of Hawai'i, 1969.

states.<sup>54</sup> Carneiro echoes anthropologists and archaeologists of Hawai'i in assigning a key role to political control of agricultural surpluses to supply and fund the organs of state, but places key emphasis on armies as well, not only as beneficiaries of agricultural output, but also as contributors by conquering more agricultural land to increase the output available to rulers. In this, he also finds common ground with Charles Tilly, the renowned scholar of Western and comparative state formation.<sup>55</sup> Tilly notes the variability of state formation processes and configurations, so that caution is needed in applying models from one context to another as is attempted in this book. The revised approach to state-building attempted here is, however, a better fit between observed outcomes and asserted processes. In essence, however, the three components are common and crucial to all processes of political development: coercion, or the ability to harm or disrupt persons, possessions or social relations; resources, or the material means to enforce political will; and commitment, or relations between social entities that promote their taking account of each other. In other configurations of power discussed below, this last category is usually associated with the term consent.<sup>56</sup>

In the last three decades, military history, political theory and European-orientated state-formation literature have recognised the need for a more wide-ranging vision of the role of violence in power relations. No leader can rule by coercive means alone. Power is now usually portrayed as multifaceted: involving military, economic, organisational and ideological dimensions. This literature has been synthesised into a paradigm-shifting theoretical framework for the study of coercion as a political tool that has, however, largely bypassed Pacific Studies. While Pacific specialists tend to analyse warfare as a cultural act whose form and function varies between cultures, contemporary Western military historians emphasise the importance of logistical, organisational and psychological factors.<sup>57</sup> Both groups' approaches call for a re-evaluation of the significance of European weaponry and mercenaries in the Hawaiian wars of unification.

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54 Robert L. Carneiro, 'War and Peace: Alternating Realities in Human History', in S.P. Reyna & R.E. Downs (eds), *Studying War: Anthropological Perspectives* (Langhorne, Penn.: Gordon and Breach, 1994), p. 14.

55 Decades of Tilly's thinking are admirably and concisely summarised in his 'States, State Transformation, and War', in Jerry H. Bentley (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of World History* (Oxford, University Press, 2011), esp. pp. 178–85. His ideas on the role and limits on coercion in state power are most thoroughly covered in his *Trust and Rule* (2005), and *Coercion, Capital, and European States AD 990–1992* (1992).

56 Tilly (2011), p. 180.

57 D'Arcy (2000).

On the one hand, warfare was a stage for the enhancement of personal status while, on the other, it carried more sanguine aims that were achieved through long-term attrition rather than by dramatic victories in the course of a day.

Until the 1970s, military history conventionally focused on fighting methods and weaponry. Battles were decisive turning points in human history. Warfare was analysed in terms of generalship, tactics and strategy. The latter two were discussed in terms of abstract principles of warfare that, if applied correctly, enhanced the chances of victory. Great generals controlled their men like so many chess pieces to outmanoeuvre their opponents and then deliver the decisive blow. The object of manoeuvring was to concentrate your strength at a decisive point where the enemy was weaker. Battles were described in discrete phases, rather than as a flow of confusing and overlapping incidents. Firepower and the shock of the charge were the principal ways of delivering the decisive blow. Advances in the striking power of hand-to-hand weapons or to the range, volume and accuracy of missile weapons provided a decisive advantage. This belief fuelled many arms races throughout history.<sup>58</sup>

Recent studies have challenged many of these conventions. Studies on military technology show that its performance in combat is usually well below that achieved in peacetime tests and training exercises. Calculations of peacetime military strength are usually quantitative, as size is more tangible than operational capability. The shrapnel shell favoured by many armies in World War I was found to be far less effective than believed when a shell accidentally exploded among a group of scientists after the war and all escaped unscathed.<sup>59</sup>

Strategic and tactical plans rarely go as smoothly as portrayed in conventional military texts and battle maps. War seldom goes according to plan. Rather, war is a risky enterprise with an unpredictable outcome. Nations can prepare for war, but they can never practice for the real thing. Men tend to blunder through the experience rather than control events. Order is usually created in memoirs, official records and history books produced only after the fact. Operating principles espoused in military

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58 John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (London: Penguin, 1976), pp. 25 ff.; and Michael Howard et al., 'What is Military History?', in Juliet Gardiner (ed.), *What is History Today?* (London: Macmillan, 1988), pp. 4–17.

59 James F. Dunnigan, *How to Make War: A Comprehensive Guide to Modern Warfare* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1982), pp. 216, 231, 243–44.

texts distort this reality by relying on simplified accounts of extreme cases – the great triumphs and the great disasters of military history, such the campaigns of Julius Caesar or Napoleon’s demise at Waterloo. The reality is often much less spectacular. For most of history, warfare has not been dramatically decisive, but a rather cautious, piecemeal and indecisive business with little overall grand strategy. The urge to play safe and think of defence has been just as prominent as the desire for dramatic victories and bold campaigns. Perceptions, however, often remain unchanged by experience. James Dunnigan believes history shows armies remember no more of the past than their oldest members. Peacetime armies are transformed into fighting organisations through a bloody process of trial and error, only to forget these lessons in the next lengthy period of peace.<sup>60</sup>

There has been, since 1970, a renaissance in studies on psychological factors in warfare. In his 1976 book *The Face of Battle*, John Keegan points out that the physical disintegration of an army in battle must be preceded by its moral disintegration. As such, the study of battle must be necessarily social and psychological. For Keegan, the study of battle is the study of group solidarity and its correlate, the disintegration of human groups. He focuses on the behaviour of men: ‘men striving to reconcile their instinct for self-preservation, their sense of honour and the achievement of some aim over which other men are ready to kill them’.<sup>61</sup>

The uninitiated often view the onset of war with enthusiasm. Defeat, wounding or dying are seen as remote prospects. But, as battle approaches, enthusiasm tends to turn to apprehension. Armies use pre-battle ceremonies involving religious rites or military reviews as necessary symbolic thresholds at which men pause to mentally prepare themselves for the coming shock. Without these ceremonies, armies often fight with much less resolve, as is sometimes the case in unanticipated encounters. Once in battle, many find the stress of combat preferable to the anxious wait just prior to combat. The extreme danger and stress of battle increases energy and hones physical functions. Every act has a new feeling of significance not experienced in the daily activities of everyday life. The simple desire to survive is a powerful stimulant. Dunnigan notes that heroes are often simply men who become cornered and see no other option than to fight their way to safety. The first sight of a dead body in

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60 Dunnigan (1982), pp. 216, 233; and Keegan (1987), pp. 6–7.

61 Keegan (1976), pp. 302–03.

battle is usually a great shock. Until then, death is a remote experience for young men. Experiencing the sight of death reminds combatants that they are potential victims as well as potential victors.<sup>62</sup>

A group of combatants can be likened to a crowd. Crowds have personalities that affect the actions of those within them. Crowds are easily panicked. Indeed, it is a difficult task just to keep men on the battlefield let alone inspire them to acts of bravery.<sup>63</sup> Physical coercion plays its part. Dereliction of duty usually carries severe penalties in most armies. Less obvious influences play a significant role. The 'warrior myth' is commonly used to distract attention from the brutal reality of a violent and often anonymous, meaningless death. The 'warrior myth' tells of battles won, heroic deeds of individual valour that confer lasting immortality and fame on their instigators. The generally poor treatment of veterans by modern societies has done little to overturn the myth. While, however, there are young men eager to prove their manhood, and veterans seeking to enhance their status and justify their sacrifices, the 'warrior myth' will continue to endure.<sup>64</sup>

Modern practice emphasises the importance of drill and discipline in the armed forces. In the physically and emotionally taxing environment of battle, drill and discipline are something to fall back on as automatic responses drummed into the consciousness by constant repetition. A group of drilled men tend to have a collective psychology that differs from and overrides individual identities and fears. But the most commonly cited influence behind keeping men in battle is small unit cohesiveness. Small groups that fight and live together tend to establish a strong sense of comradeship and loyalty. Group cohesion may be increased by symbols of membership, such as uniforms or regimental flags. The fear of being seen to shirk one's duty in front of comrades acts as a strong counter to the concern for personal survival. The fear of losing one's reputation as a man among close associates is often held more dearly than life itself.<sup>65</sup>

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62 Keegan (1976), pp. 259–65, 281, 333–34; Dunnigan (1982), pp. 210, 236; Paul Fussler, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 327; Ronald J. Glossop, *Confronting War: An Examination of Humanity's Most Pressing Problem* (North Carolina: McFarland, 1983), pp. 79–80.

63 Keegan (1976), pp. 174–75; and Gwynne Dyer, *War* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1985), p. 142.  
64 Dyer (1985), pp. 13–15.

65 Dyer (1985), pp. 12–13; Dunnigan (1982), p. 211; Keegan (1976), pp. 51, 176; and John Keegan & Richard Holmes, *Soldiers. A History of Men in Battle* (New York: Viking, 1985), pp. 18, 42, 261.

While morale is a decisive factor, élan alone will not carry the day against equally motivated opponents with superior weapons. This lesson was learnt by Scottish Highlanders at Culloden and by countless indigenous societies in the late 19th century against European forces armed with modern, rapid-firing weapons. Similarly, morale and weaponry are of limited value if an army cannot be maintained and supplied in the field. The process of producing and supplying enough to feed and arm troops is a major undertaking. Ultimately, the art of winning battles is really no more than the art of the logistically possible. Throughout history logistical problems have been major constraints on warfare. If wars progress beyond the initial encounters, they generally settle down into struggles of attrition. Battles are relatively infrequent in war.

While archaeologists of Hawai'i have emphasised the importance of agricultural production for providing a surplus on which chiefs could draw for political consolidation, none have realised how crucial logistical supplies were to military victory in chiefly societies. Humans have been dispersed in agricultural communities for much of history. Urban centres and assembled armies represent unusual concentrations of humanity that pose logistical problems. This century's advances in food storage and transportation have helped considerably but, for most of history, warring armies have had to live off the land, or severely restrict their movements to localities with stored caches of supplies and adequate amounts of drinking water. Many armies were little more than temporarily assembled levies who were expected to feed themselves. This was especially true in economies that generated limited agricultural surpluses beyond subsistence needs. Such societies could not spare the manpower or food for prolonged campaigns, so that fighting had to be brief and organised around agricultural seasons.<sup>66</sup>

Some armies disintegrated, without ever coming into contact with their enemies, because of inadequate supplies and poor preventive measures to avoid the outbreak of disease. Until relatively recently, disease often accounted for more deaths and incapacitation than battle casualties in warfare. Public health practices are usually difficult to implement in the field and, for much of human history, such practices were at best primitive. The medical treatment of wounds has usually been inadequate.

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66 Tilly (2011), pp. 184–85; Keegan & Holmes (1985), pp. 146–50, 225; and Robert S. Smith, *Warfare and Diplomacy in Pre-Colonial West Africa* (Norwich, Great Britain: Methuen, 1976), pp. 42–43.

In Europe, for example, there was very little provision for getting the wounded to hospitals and treating them until well into the 19th century. Treatment was a traumatic experience of amputations and removal of projectiles without anaesthetics. Sanitation was usually appalling. It was not until after 1850, when disinfectants began to be used consistently, that deaths from complications and infections of battle wounds regularly fell below deaths in battle. It was not until World War II that the chances of surviving a wound increased significantly with the use of antibiotics and blood transfusions.<sup>67</sup>

Other aspects of human activity, however, affect military capacity besides food production. Warfare is a manifestation of the societies that raise armies to pursue it, and the economies, technologies and worldviews that those societies sustain. Fighters must be motivated enough to risk their lives, while the rest of society must make sacrifices to ensure that the war effort is kept supplied. The waging of war will be heavily influenced by the organisation of society, and particularly its solidarity in supporting its leaders. Warfare needs to be examined in a wider context. No such breadth of vision has been attempted for Hawaiian society, despite the wealth of relevant information available.

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Warfare is only one form of coercion, and coercion is only one means of exercising political control. Organised violence occurs within societies as well as between them. Violence need not be direct and physical. Sociologist Johan Galtung has coined the phrase 'structural violence' to describe inequalities and social restrictions on members of a society. To Galtung, the mere absence of war is only a negative peace. True positive peace involves both the absence of hostilities and injustices.<sup>68</sup> This distinction is important for any discussion of warfare. Control is about more than just coercive ability. Coercion alone will never secure lasting compliance. Indeed, as political theorist Hannah Arendt has argued, the resort to violence is a sign of a loss of true power, which ultimately rests on a society's willingness to be governed.<sup>69</sup> From this perspective, Hawaiian traditions on the virtues of chiefly benevolence towards followers can be viewed as

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67 Dunnigan (1982), pp. 323–27; Keegan & Holmes (1985), pp. 145–49.

68 Johan Galtung, 'Twenty-five Years of Peace Research: Ten Challenges and Some Responses', *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 22 (2), 1985, 145–46.

69 Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (Orlando, Florida: Harvest Press, 1970), p. 56.

much as reflection of a fundamental reality of power as self-serving myth-making. It was a reality of power that Kamehameha embraced and his rivals ignored, to their ultimate demise.

Concepts of power vary. Power is generally portrayed as the ability to ensure one's desires are carried out even in the face of opposition, or as resting on the consent of a community. The latter is often referred to as legitimised power, or authority. The key distinction is between consent and coercion. Power can be seen to rest ultimately on coercive capacity, with the exercise of authority also resting on the threat of sanctions as the price of disobedience. Alternatively, authority can be seen as not only an aspect of power, but as the basis of power. According to this scenario, resort to physical violence is a sign of the erosion of power. The supreme exercise of power is to avert conflict and grievances by influencing, shaping and determining the perceptions of others. Although it is generally conceded that a balance between sanctions and benefits is needed to secure enduring compliance, most writers tend to emphasise the ultimate primacy of one of these two aspects of power.<sup>70</sup> In reality, however, power involves a judicious balance between coercion and consent. Retaining power involves knowing just how far coercion can be exercised without risking a counterproductive backlash. An early concession may alleviate the need for excessive violence later on in the face of mounting opposition. To French anthropologist Maurice Godelier, violence and consent are inseparable. The violence of the dominant is only useful if it secures the consent of the dominated. Obedience becomes preferable to sanctions.<sup>71</sup>

Anthropologist Peter Wilson noted that the exercise of power does not necessarily require physical actions:

Power as production of an intended effect, when given the meaning 'to make an impression', can be extended to the successful fulfillment of deception, to the successful creation of an illusion, and, most important of all, to the conviction that one sort of effect (the impression) may be taken to be a reliable confirmation of another sort of effect. In short, by producing something that makes a great impression it is possible to confirm the possibility of the capacity to produce other, more material

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70 Stephen Lukes, 'Power and Authority', in R. Nisbett & T. Baltimore (eds), *A History of Sociological Analysis* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), pp. 633, 637; Keegan (1987), p. 315; Johan Galtung, *The European Community: A Superpower in the Making* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1973), p. 35; and Arendt (1970), pp. 43 ff.

71 Maurice Godelier, 'Infrastructures, Societies, and History', *Current Anthropology*, vol. 19 (4), 1978, 767; Keegan (1987), p. 315; and Galtung (1973), p. 35.

effects without actually having to do so ... In this way, for example, a candidate, by making an impression, establishes a claim to power without ever demonstrating the power to lead.<sup>72</sup>

There are good reasons for those in power to exercise restraint. Actual capacity can only be determined when it is unleashed. Such an occurrence is wrought with unknowns. Victory, or catastrophe may result. Powerful backlashes may be generated. Restraint from using power may enhance one's power because perceptions of potential power are often much greater than the reality. As noted above, it can be argued that resort to physical coercion is a sign of the loss of power as its potential consequences have failed to deter possible opponents.

Adherence to prescribed behaviour occurs for a variety of reasons. One may conform out of fear of sanctions for not doing so. Conformity may arise through belief that the behaviour demanded is either justified, necessary, or will serve one's own interests. Consent may also be founded on the belief that alternative courses will not return the same benefits. Conformity may simply occur through force of habit, with those concerned never encountering alternative conceptions that challenge prevailing norms. The behaviour of any individual may involve the interaction of all or some of these forms of consent – fear, acquiescence, attachment, indifference and habit.<sup>73</sup>

Four spheres of human activity are generally cited as avenues for the pursuit of power. These are: economic activity, the use of coercion, organisational institutions for governing society, and the definition of norms and values.<sup>74</sup> Economic activity involves human activities and social relations for the production and distribution of goods and services. The elements of production are human labour, natural materials, and technological means for converting materials into useful resources. Economic power involves securing subsistence needs through the social organisation of the extraction, transformation, distribution and consumption of objects of nature. Most Marxists emphasise the importance of controlling modes of production, especially human labour. Others, such as Karl Polanyi,

72 Peter J. Wilson, *The Domestication of the Human Species* (particularly chpt 5, 'The Surrealities of Power', pp. 117–50) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), p. 118.

73 Lukes (1978), pp. 643 ff.; and Joseph V. Femia, *Gramsci's Political Thought Hegemony, Consciousness, and the Revolutionary Process* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), pp. 37–40, 45.

74 Mann (1986), pp. 20–49.

stress the importance of controlling the distribution of resources through trade and exchange networks. Earle sees the ultimate value of economic control as the ability to buy compliance through rewards or deprivations.<sup>75</sup>

Coercive power derives from control of the tools of coercion: weapons and obedient manpower. Coercive capacity is a relative measure. What matters is the gap between potential opponents' strength. The military and economic spheres are related not merely through payments to secure obedience and the logistical requirements of an army but also in terms of social organisation. Hunter-gatherer societies use weapons of the hunt against human rivals. The use of cavalry in feudal Europe required the decentralisation of power, as cavalry were expensive to maintain and the main form of wealth was land rather than a concentrated source, such as commerce. Earle notes that, in such decentralised systems, military strength is problematic as warriors, who are the basis of chiefly power, are also potential usurpers.<sup>76</sup>

While Marxist theory tends to dismiss government institutions as merely tools of a ruling class united by economic interests, some sociologists make a strong case for viewing government as a distinct power base. Class interests do not necessarily correlate with those of government administrative bodies. Once the functions of government are institutionalised, the foundations for new power networks are established. Loyalty to the state, or even bodies within government's administrative apparatus, replaces other loyalties based on economic interests or blood relations.<sup>77</sup> Governments in modern states tend to monopolise coercive force. The norms of society are codified into laws administered through a judiciary, and backed up by the threat of the use of governmental coercive apparatus for noncompliance. At the same time government is dependent on taxes and levies to support its administrative apparatus. Government is usually portrayed as a mutually beneficial contract between citizens and the state in which the citizen surrenders certain aspects of personal freedom in return for enhanced security.<sup>78</sup>

A number of commentators claim the crucial means of control is in determining the norms and values of society. R.C. MacIver asserts:

75 Earle (1997), p. 6; Mann (1986), p. 24; Segraves (1982), p. 297.

76 Earle (1997), p. 8, Mann (1986), pp. 25–26, 48–49; and Michael Howard, *War in European History* (Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 1–3.

77 Mann (1986), pp. 10–11; Skocpol (1979), pp. 25–30.

78 Alland (1980), pp. 447–51.

Every society is held together by a myth-system, a complex of dominating thought-forms that determines and sustains all its activities. All social relations, the very texture of human society are myth-born and myth-sustained.<sup>79</sup>

If one concept of reality is dominant, all modes of thought and behaviour will be infused with its spirit. It is this situation that Italian political theorist Antonio Gramsci refers to as hegemony. If desirable concepts are associated with existing institutions, and external influences restricted, then it will be difficult for alternative images of society to emerge. Groups, while discontented with their lot, are nevertheless unable to locate the source of their discontent because of restricted insight into the alternatives.<sup>80</sup>

Although norms and values can be manipulated to legitimise or hide the realities of power, there are limits. Ideologies are unlikely to attain a hold over people if they merely serve to justify inequality and domination. They must be at least plausible to be generally adhered to without the threat of sanction to back them up. Ideologies are able to legitimise power when they are able to capture and articulate peoples' experiences and desires.<sup>81</sup> Attitudes and beliefs are influenced by their application in practice. The basis of authority can change through time. The resilience of any normative structure in the wake of change will depend on its flexibility and ability to mould perceptions of new elements into existing worldviews through control of information dissemination.

It is important to distinguish between the four avenues of power and the enactment of power. The four modes of power are merely the realms within which the play for power is enacted. Networks of individuals attempting to utilise the four avenues to further their own interests create power. The success or failure of any network depends on its organisation of its resources to achieve its goals. Utilisation rather than possession is the key element. As MacIver points out,

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79 MacIver (1965), p. 4.

80 Femia (1981), pp. 24, 43–44, 120.

81 Mann (1986), p. 23; MacIver (1965), pp. 56–58; and John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Anatomy of Power* (London: Corgi, 1985), pp. 39–40, 43.

To say that in the struggle of groups the most powerful wins is to say nothing, for the power of a group is no simple function of the force it disposes; it depends no less on its solidarity, its organizing ability, its leadership, the resources and its resourcefulness, its tenacity of purpose, and other things.<sup>82</sup>

The four modes of power offer alternative or combinable organisational means of social control. Domination is as much a matter of relative organisational coherence as it is a trade-off between coercion and consent.

The interaction between the modes of power and their enactment in combination is perhaps most clearly articulated by Canadian economist and diplomat J.K. Galbraith in his *The Anatomy of Power*, which traces the evolution of power in the European world. He distinguishes underlying sources of power from avenues of power. Galbraith lists the sources of power as personality, organisation and property. These equate to the four spheres just discussed in that, in Galbraith's scheme, economic activity and use of coercion are combined as property. By personality, Galbraith means traits such as physique, confidence, persuasiveness and intellect that allow individuals to rise above their fellow men and secure compliance. Such qualities are usually associated with leadership. Any organisation involves the coming together of those of similar interests, values or perception. The pursuit of power requires the submission of a sufficiently large body of adherents to the purpose of the organisation; internal coherence is a key factor. Property refers to material objects whose desirability makes them useful commodities for purchasing compliance. To a lesser extent, property may enforce compliance if it is in the form of coercive instruments wielded by a coherent group.<sup>83</sup>

The key to power lies in the effective combination of the sources of power. To Galbraith, organisation is the ultimate source of power. Personality and property have effect only with the support of organisation. Personality alone may allow an individual access to power, but the individual needs the support of an organisation to maintain that power. Whether personality secures property or a following of adherents, no individual can maintain this hold without support. Galbraith points out that many leaders rule not so much because of their ability to ensure compliance but because they head an organisation whose coherence

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82 MacIver (1965), p. 12; and Mann (1986), pp. 6–7, 518, 523.

83 Galbraith (1985), pp. 23–25.

of belief is already in place. On the other hand, strong leaders can ensure an organisation maintains its direction and coherence. Property only becomes an avenue for power when organisations control and utilise property for their own ends.<sup>84</sup>

Galbraith distinguishes the three ways that the sources of power may be utilised as: condign power, compensatory power and conditional power. Condign power secures compliance through the imposition of unpleasant and painful alternatives for noncompliance with the group's wishes. Compensatory power ensures adherence to the group's objectives by rewarding compliant individuals. In each case, individuals are aware that they are submitting. In contrast, conditioned power works to ensure that submission is not recognised. By influencing beliefs, the course of action desired is made to seem natural and appropriate.<sup>85</sup> The power of an organisation depends on its association with other sources of power, and its control over all modes of power. An organisation is strong when it has access to all modes of power, and weak when access is missing. Galbraith detects the gradual emergence of organisation to replace property and personality as the dominant source of power.<sup>86</sup>

## Western influence versus indigenous continuity in Hawai'i's unification

The inability of any of the theories in the previous section to adequately explain why the conquest and unification of the Hawaiian Islands by Kamehameha I occurred specifically between 1782 and 1812, during a time of increasing European contact, has prompted the attribution of his success to European weapons and ideas. Scholars are divided on the degree to which European influences facilitated political unification. Anthropologist Irving Goldman believes Europeans merely precipitated a process of unification that would have occurred without their presence.<sup>87</sup> Historian Gavan Daws is more circumspect when he states that:

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84 Galbraith (1985), pp. 55–56, 65.

85 Galbraith (1985), pp. 4–6.

86 Galbraith (1985), pp. 89 ff., esp. 131–32.

87 Goldman (1970), p. 200.

Whether, undisturbed by contact with the West, Hawaiian society would ever have crossed the line from tribalism to some sort of unified primitive state, is problematical. Certainly the chances for new experiments in power politics provided by the appearance of white men with advanced military technology transformed Hawaiian traditional society in the space of one or two generations.<sup>88</sup>

Most academics conclude that European contact had a significant influence on unification. They generally echo Daws in assigning particular importance to European weapons to explain how Kamehameha was able to unify the archipelago.<sup>89</sup>

So far, scholars have been unable to explain the unification of the Hawaiian Islands from the late 1780s onwards solely by pre-existing factors in Hawaiian society on the eve of sustained European contact. Hawai'i is a prominent focus of one of the strengths of Pacific Studies – the dynamics of culture contact and interactions between Europeans and Pacific Islanders. Pacific Studies has led the way in examining the cultural logic behind the exchange of items and ideas between Europeans and Islanders. Island beaches are portrayed as transformative spaces and processes where objects, ideas and individuals move between cultures, mediated by power relations and acculturation.<sup>90</sup>

The decade of the 1980s, which saw the reorientation of Pacific anthropology towards greater focus on the interaction between cultural structures and historical processes, was a time when historians were coming out of two decades of adjusting their focus from history as primarily a sequence of events to one more focused on the social, economic and ideological structures underlying actions. Works like E.P. Thomson's *The Making of the English Working Class* highlighted the history of this usually neglected group in historical narratives.<sup>91</sup> The working of underlying structures into the narrative of events is no easy task. What has tended to emerge from attempts to marry structure and event was what anthropologist Nicholas

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88 O.A. Bushnell (ed.), *The Illustrated Atlas of Hawaii*, text by Gavan Daws (10th edn) (Honolulu: Island Heritage, 1987), p. 14.

89 For example, H.E. Maude, 'Beachcombers and Castaways', in H.E. Maude, *Of Islands and Men: Studies in Pacific History* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 156–57; and M. Kelly (ed.), *Hawaii in 1819: A Narrative Account by Louis Claude de Saules de Freycinet* (Honolulu: Bernice P. Bishop Museum Press, 1978), p. 103 n. 24.

90 A good example of this approach is Greg Denning's *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent Land, Marquesas 1774–1880* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1980), pp. 3, 157–61, esp. 159.

91 E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: V. Gollancz, 1980).

Thomas calls ‘systemic history’ – analysis that is more structure than process.<sup>92</sup> The idea persists that culture changes round the edges as a result of cultural interaction and changed circumstances, but the core remains intact, changing very gradually if at all. Interestingly, Pacific historian J.W. Davidson reached similar conclusions a decade before, despite coming from an intellectual tradition that emphasises historical processes over cultural beliefs.<sup>93</sup>

According to this systemic history school of thought, Pacific Islander political and social philosophy centred on the idea of melding local and exotic elements. Daws, for example, notes that power in Hawai‘i was ‘always violent, always usurping, came from the outside, and belonged to strangers. But authority was always legitimate, always came from within, belonged to those born with it, belonged to natives’.<sup>94</sup> Sahlins notes similarities between Polynesian ideas of political sovereignty and those noted in the ancient Indo-European civilisations by the classical scholar Georges Dumézil. Polynesian rulers are conceived of as hostile strangers who are gradually absorbed and domesticated by indigenous locals, this process being symbolised by their induction into the local pantheon of gods. All strangers are conceived in this way and expected to act as their predecessors did. To Sahlins, history re-enacts the myth. In more general terms, Polynesian philosophy conceives society of being made up of a combination of opposed, yet complementary qualities. He emphasises that these dichotomies are fluid and contextual. At the moment of intrusion, for example, the immigrant is male, aggressive and from the sea, while the locals are female, receptive, fertile and of the land. Hawaiians referred to their chiefs as sharks that walked on land – wild elements that needed controlling. History taught that strangers came to overthrow rulers. They then married the highest born local women to gain legitimacy, as they rarely had sufficient numbers to sustain their position

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92 Nicholas Thomas, *Out of Time: History and Evolution in Anthropological Discourse* (2nd edn) (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan, 1996), p. 96.

93 J.W. Davidson, ‘Lauaki Namalau‘ulu Mamoe: A Traditionalist in Samoan Politics’, in J.W. Davidson & Deryck Scarr (eds), *Pacific Island Portraits* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1970), p. 267.

94 Gavan Daws, ‘The Death of Captain Cook’, *Pacific Islands Monthly*, April 1984, 15–17, and May 1984, 51–53, 16.

without local cooperation.<sup>95</sup> More recently, Sahlins refined his structure of the conjuncture concept to give more influence to individuals and localities relative to general structures and word systems.<sup>96</sup>

Europeans may also have seemed usurping strangers arriving to challenge local rulers, as had been the pattern since the dawn of time.<sup>97</sup> Most scholars suggest that encounters with Europeans were radically different to previous encounters.<sup>98</sup> Prior to their arrival, most outsiders had broadly similar appearance and ways of behaving, regardless of whether they were drift voyagers or visiting kin. Even hostile invaders usually came from a world known to the communities they attacked. Other Islanders might not speak the same language, but they generally acted in ways that made sense to those encountering them.

Not all scholars subscribe to this perspective. Historian Ian Campbell points out that Pacific history has vacillated between explanations of culture contact that emphasise differences in cultural understanding, and those that opt for explanations based on desires to advance one's interests in terms of power, material possessions and physical comforts. Campbell takes issue with the idea that most conflicts occurred in contact situations because Islanders did not share the European belief about private property. Europeans often took offence when Islanders took goods without asking permission. Literary scholar the late Bill Pearson's idea that Islanders believed they had the right as hosts to take visitors' goods is based on one reference to the reception of Kau Moala in Futuna. It is not clear that this was the practice elsewhere. Campbell demonstrates that there was a clear distinction between open attempts to take goods off Western vessels, and attempts to conceal them. He demonstrates that Polynesians had the concept of property rights and punished theft severely.<sup>99</sup>

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95 Marshall Sahlins, 'The Discovery of the True Savage', in Donna Marwick (ed.), *Dangerous Liaisons: Essays in Honour of Greg Dening* (History Department, University of Melbourne, 1994), pp. 63–65, 69.

96 Marshall Sahlins, 'Structural Work: How Microhistories Become Macrohistories and Vice Versa', *Anthropological Theory*, vol. 5 (1), 2005, 5–30.

97 Greg Dening, *Performances* (Melbourne University Press, 1996), pp. 64–65; Daws (1984), p. 16; and Marshall Sahlins, *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981), pp. 129 ff.

98 For example, see Mālama Meleisea & Penelope Schoeffel, 'Discovering Outsiders', in Donald Denoon (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the Pacific Islanders* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 120–21.

99 I.C. Campbell, 'European–Polynesian Encounters: A Critique of the Pearson Thesis', *Journal of Pacific History*, vol. 29 (2), 1994, 223–25, 229.

Campbell suggests that these situations reveal not a clash of two cultures, but the moderation of cultural practices to suit what both sides realised was an unusual situation. The result was a culture of contact, where unusual patterns of behaviour occurred in response to the presence of the unfamiliar and uncertain. Polynesians would initially apply rituals and practices normally used to greet strangers, but they might also practice unusual behaviour, such as giving their women for material gain and to placate the foreigners. Similarly, Europeans sometimes overlooked theft in the name of maintaining peace.<sup>100</sup> Campbell also suggests that references to Europeans as *papalangi*, *papaa*, *etua* was not a mark of respect associating them with the gods, but a temporary label denoting anything unfamiliar and yet to be understood.<sup>101</sup> The equivalent contemporary term would be UFO. Gunson notes that *papaa* was simply the word for foreigner in Eastern Polynesia, while some early European sources translated *papalangi* as the word for the land of strangers, and others defined it as cloth from the sky (European manufactures).<sup>102</sup>

Europeans had an uneven impact in the pre-colonial Pacific. The size of their presence varied enormously. Māori were the only group in the Pacific Islands to become a minority in their own land before 1870. Elsewhere, Western settlement was limited to a few thousand people concentrated around one or two port towns, or a handful of beachcombers. In many locations, contacts were limited to visits from naval and trading vessels manned by crews of five to a few hundred men.<sup>103</sup> Few were able to impose their will without naval support. Even then, naval expeditions soon had to move on. Most local economies were able to meet the demand for provisions from visiting vessels, providing they did not outstay their welcome.<sup>104</sup> Most localities hosted larger groups than these in the course of their normal social relations. The desire for Western goods did, however, cause some communities to alter production. This was perhaps

<sup>100</sup> Campbell (1994), pp. 230–31.

<sup>101</sup> I.C. Campbell, 'Polynesian Perceptions of Europeans in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', *Pacific Studies*, vol. 5 (2), 1982, 65–69, esp. 67–69.

<sup>102</sup> Niel Gunson, 'The Coming of Foreigners', in Noel Rutherford (ed.), *Friendly Islands: A History of Tonga* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 93, 259–60 n. 34.

<sup>103</sup> On ships' complements see W. Kaye Lamb (ed.), *The Voyages of George Vancouver 1791–1795*, vol. 3 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1984), p. 819. Crew numbers on British naval vessels ranged from 70 to 115 men.

<sup>104</sup> See, for example, Ross H. Cordy, 'The Effects of European Contact on Hawaiian Agricultural Systems – 1778–1819', *Ethnohistory*, vol. 19 (4), 1972, 400–03.

most notable around ports like Honolulu, where food was grown to cater to the Western palates of crews from whaling fleets and trading vessels, and Māori growing flax to trade for muskets.<sup>105</sup>

Introduced diseases were the element of Western contact that Island communities were least able to counteract. The fatal impact thesis is most often associated with the trauma caused by introduced diseases. Fatal impact was brought into question in the 1960s and 1970s as many estimates of death rates were lowered, and significant variation in the demographic history of individual islands and communities was recognised.<sup>106</sup> The idea of Western contact as fatal has experienced a resurgence in the last two decades with the advent of environmental histories that include disease among the exotic invaders.<sup>107</sup> These decades have also seen the rise of a body of literature that seeks to re-examine the impact of European colonialism from the perspective of indigenous people. These works often include significant upward revisions of populations at contact. Such revisions require far greater death rates to reach the population figures recorded later in the 19th century. This perspective has been most forcefully articulated in the work of David Stannard, professor of American Studies at the University of Hawai‘i, on the demographic collapse of the Hawaiian population.<sup>108</sup>

Medical historian Donald Denoon presents a comprehensive overview on the heated debate over the causes and extent of Pacific Islander depopulation as a result of Western diseases. This issue rose to prominence in 1989 when Stannard published a book arguing that the indigenous Hawaiian population at European contact was at least double former estimates, so that post-contact depopulation until the first accurate census was truly catastrophic. While debate raged within the world of Pacific scholarship about Stannard’s method for calculating contact populations

105 See, on Hawai‘i, Cordy (1972), pp. 402, 407, 411–12; and Samuel M. Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii* (Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools Press, 1961), p. 190. On Aotearoa, see James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders from Polynesian Settlement to the End of the Nineteenth Century* (Auckland: Penguin, 1996), p. 152.

106 See, in particular, Norma McArthur, *Island Populations of the Pacific* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1967). My overview of the historiography of disease in the Pacific Islands is based on Victoria Luker, ‘Mothers of the Taukei: Fijian Women and “the Decrease of Race”’, PhD Thesis, The Australian National University, 1997, pp. 5–13.

107 Most notably, Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900* (Cambridge University Press, 1986).

108 See, particularly, David Stannard, *Before the Horror: The Population of Hawai‘i on the Eve of Western Contact* (Honolulu: Social Science Research Institute, University of Hawai‘i, 1989).

and whether depopulation primarily resulted from epidemics or disease-induced infertility,<sup>109</sup> epidemiologist Stephen Kunitz developed a more wide-ranging analysis which opened up the debate. Kunitz argued that the key factors affecting the rate of depopulation were not so much biological as social, economic and political. While epidemics could cause high death rates among populations with no exposure and immunity to them, the key was post-epidemic recovery which required social stability. Kunitz demonstrated that the areas with the most severe depopulation on record were areas where European colonisation and dispossession disrupted indigenous societies. As Denoon notes, ‘Depopulation was for Stannard a cause, for Kunitz an effect, of dispossession’.<sup>110</sup> Denoon also makes the important point that specific localised circumstances, such as local diet and the presence of malaria, led to variation in depopulation.

## Conclusion: Towards a framework for examining political consolidation

The wealth of material available on the unification period allows Hawaiian warfare to be examined along the lines advocated above. Ideally, the study of warfare should consider logistical and motivational factors as well as tactics and technology. Warfare is only one aspect of coercion, and coercion is only one aspect of power. Power is exercised by means of sanctions, rewards or the conditioning of social attitudes. Four aspects of human activity exist as possible avenues for power: the production and distribution of goods and services, the administration of society, coercive mechanisms, and the definition of norms and values. For power to be enduring it must also secure a degree of consent from a significant proportion of the population.

Theories on the centralisation process emphasise the institutionalisation and secularisation of the basis of power, and the importance of the breakdown of localised, usually kin-based, loyalties. During this process,

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109 See, for example, Andrew F. Bushnell, “‘The Horror’ Reconsidered: An Evaluation of the Historical Evidence for Population Decline in Hawai‘i, 1778–1803’, *Pacific Studies*, 16 (3), 1993, 115–61.

110 Stephen J. Kunitz, *Disease and Social Diversity: The European Impact on the Health of Non-Europeans* (Oxford University Press, 1994); and Donald Denoon, ‘Pacific Island Depopulation: Natural or Un-natural History?’, in Linda Bryder & Derek A. Dow (eds), *New Countries and Old Medicine* (Auckland: Pyramid Press, 1994), p. 325.

tools of coercion become increasingly concentrated in the hands of the central governing body. Centralised, coercive power is still limited, so that there is a need to establish a workable balance of power between powerful groups within the polity. Centralisation is by no means inevitable. This study proposes that Kamehameha's successful centralisation of the islands was as much a victory of the arts of peacemaking as the arts of war. It is argued that those who insist that European firearms gave him the decisive military advantage needed to secure unification overestimate the capabilities of firearms and the degree to which victory in battle translates into lasting power in human history.

To fully accommodate these multiple considerations, this study seeks to combine long-term ecological perspectives alongside cultural attitudes and institutions, and the process of day-to-day living and making decisions over choices that can fundamentally change the trajectory societies and individuals take. Kirch and Sahlins' post-contact study of Anahulu on O'ahu represents the high point of the structural history (as defined by Thomas) of Hawai'i, in its blend of emphasis on the influence of long-term environmental influences and cultural institutions on Hawaiian responses to the era of increasing exposure to European influences.<sup>111</sup> Sahlins is more comfortable in knitting structural history with specific events and actors than Kirch, but still favours structures incorporating new elements than transforming them.<sup>112</sup> In *How Chiefs Became Kings*, Kirch is almost defensive when he states that he has not pointed to a time when chiefdoms can be said to be archaic states in Hawai'i, as this was a process rather than an event.<sup>113</sup> He goes on to assert that social scientists, such as archaeologists, are superior to historians and other humanities scholars because they seek underlying reasons for actions, while 'To historians or humanists content with a strictly narrative mode of analysis, this may be the end of the road'.<sup>114</sup> Ironically, the historian he cites most in the book, Fernand Braudel, was a leading advocate of the long durée as the ultimate causation behind events, and he changed the face of history decades ahead of the social scientists who Kirch cites as his influences.

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111 P.V. Kirch & Marshall Sahlins, *Anahulu: The Anthropology of History in the Kingdom of Hawaii*, vol. 1: *Historical Ethnography* (The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

112 Sahlins (1981).

113 Kirch (2010), p. 178.

114 Kirch (2010), p. 176.

The analytical framework designed by Braudel can accommodate the range of influences needed for the broad approach to warfare, coercion and political centralisation outlined above. Braudel examined historical processes by means of a three-tier temporal scheme. His three temporal levels were geographical time, social time and individual time. Geographical time consists of permanent, or slowly changing, elements of the natural environment. These consist of certain features of the natural environment such as mountain ranges and climate. Social time incorporates aspects of human activities that endure beyond any single individual's lifetime. Social institutions, economic and demographic trends all fall into this category. Finally there is the timescale of individual lifetimes and specific events. Influences from all three groupings interact continuously. A combination of the physical environment, society's technological capacity, social and political organisation, and beliefs determine the parameters of historical action. Within these longer term structures, a number of futures are possible. Any single event will be the result of inherited structural restraints and specific actions.<sup>115</sup>

This work argues against the conventional historiography that indigenous influences were at least as important as introduced European elements. It also adopts a specifically historical approach in arguing that specific events and individuals were as important as structural features in shaping the Hawaiian Kingdom. A number of futures are possible within any combination of longer term structural parameters. Structures determine what can happen, but events determine what actually happens. History is rich with examples of critical junctures, the 'what ifs' of history. How would Europe have developed if the young Napoleon Bonaparte had not been turned down for a place on the ill-fated La Perouse expedition to the South Pacific?<sup>116</sup> For this reason, detailed narratives are produced alongside more general discussions of the nature of Hawaiian society. Because of the controversy over the degree of European influence on Hawaiian state-building, specific, datable references have been used as much as possible. Local cultural, economic and political variation within the Hawaiian archipelago is also examined. In this way, the specifics of time and place are not subsumed under more widely applicable structural features described in the next three chapters.

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115 Fernand Braudel, *On History*, Sarah Mathews (trans.) (University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 4, 26; and Ian Hodder, 'The Contribution of the Long Term', in Ian Hodder (ed.), *Archaeology as Long-term History* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 1–8.

116 Daws (1968a), p. 28.

The organisation of this work reflects the interaction between structure and process that is at the heart of the historical process. The next chapter examines the environmental and agricultural foundations and structures of power that emerged in various localities across Hawai'i from first settlement to the late 1700s. Chapters 3 and 4 examine the transformation of political and military structures of power between 1778 and 1796. Chapter 5 details the course of events in conflicts between chiefs from 1778 to 1796, when broadly similar structures of power were used differently, resulting in varying fortunes for chiefly rivals. Chapter 6 carries on this detailed interaction between broad structures and specific events and decisions to examine how military victory was converted into enduring control of all inhabited islands of the Hawaiian archipelago under one ruler for the first time in Kānaka Maoli history. An attempt is made to attribute change to Hawaiian or European actions and ideas respectively in Chapter 7. The search for Hawaiian precedents prior to the unification process in the four decades centred on Kamehameha's last major military victory in 1795 is an important part of this study. Only once indigenous precedents have been identified can attempts be made to evaluate the degree to which European agency influenced the formation of the Hawaiian Kingdom. We conclude by placing the Hawaiian achievement in wider Pacific and global contexts.

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