CREATIVE PERFORMANCE AND SOCIAL CHANGE: THE HAWAIIAN CULTURAL REVOLUTION AS DRAMATIC TRANSFORMATION

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ABSTRACT

The dynamics of social change is to a large extent problematic in anthropological theory, particularly within the context of the Hawaiian cultural revolution, for here social change was rapidly accomplished in a short period of time. The Hawaiian cultural revolution has been utilized as a special case whereby macro-level theories of social change have been tested. By using Cohen's notion of creative performance as dramatic transformation and Turner's social drama as analytic framework, this paper located the dynamics of social change at the micro-level i.e., in the purposeful activity of individuals.

RESUME

La dynamique du changement social est dans un large mesure problématique dans la théorie de l'anthropologie, particulièrement dans le contexte de le la révolution culturelle hawaïenne, car le changement social s'est acompli sur une courte période. La révolution culturelle hawaïenne a été traitie comme un cas spécial permettant de mattre à l'épreuve les théories du changement social au niveau çlobal. En se servant de la notion de jeu créateur de Cohen comme transformation dramatique et le drame social de Turner comme cadre analytique, cet article ditue le dynamique du changement social au niveau des individus, c'est à dire, dnas l'activité Réfléchie.

INTRODUCTION

From May, 1819 to January, 1820, Hawaiian social life underwent radical transformation. The focus of this transformation was the traditional system of taboo: Queen Kaahumanu would have it abolished, whereas the new king, Liholiho, resisted any such tampering with the religious system. Eventually, Liholiho, resisted any such tampering with the religious sytem. Eventually, Liholiho was forced to capitulate and the taboo system was abolished. But this was no simple matter. During those seven months, members of the aristocracy and priesthood who adhered to the traditional system and those members of the royal class who wished to abolish it, comprised two opposing factions bitterly embroiled in a struggle for political power. With the overthrow of the taboo system, the fissures in the social fabric reached an hiatus that culminated in civil war. The civil war was short-lived and victory went to the royalist supporters of Queen Kaahumanu, thus ensuring the death and burial of the taboo system. It took only seven months, from the death of Kamahemeha I to the end of the civil war for the ancient structure of Hawaiian sociopolitical life to change its modus operandi and commence a new regime. What happened?

This paper attempts to explicate 'what happened' in Hawaii by testing Cohen's hypothesis that sociocultural change is causally inherent in the creation and transformation of dramatic forms. In keeping with the concept of 'dramatic transformation,, Turner's model of 'social drama' has been applied as the mode of description and framework of analysis. The argument is presented as follows:

Section I: A review of previous explanations for the sociolocultural changes in Hawaii; Section II: a prologue to the drama, a cast of characters and chronology of events; Section III: the drama; Section IV: discussion and conclusion.

SECTION I: THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION IN HAWAII REVISITED

Scholars focus explanation for the events in Hawaii on the breakdown of the ancient religious system, a breakdown which is attributed to lengthy contact with Western influences. Russell (1842) points out that since Captain Cook's discovery of the islands in 1778,

> There cannot...be any doubt that...intercourse with foreigners must have created scepticism as to the supposed origins of...faith, and a feeling of contempt fot its superstitious

> ritual. The enlightened European could not conceal...the sentiment of abhorrence with which human sacrifice, infanticide, and the humiliation of the softer sex were regarded; while, as reverence manifested towards the unseemly idols of wood or stone, the most superficial exercise of reason must have convicted...of childish credulity (op.cit.:309).

The 'supersitious ritual' was the "framework of tabus which the traditional Hawaiian socio-religious government rested" and was "symbolized by the "eating Kapu", 'ai,kapu', which required the separation of the sexes in food preparation and eating, and the denial of many foods to women" (Barrere 1975:33). Hawaiian society was intricately bound up in an ideological system which bestowed on the social order what Stanner (1965:272) refers to as a "character of absolute validity in answer to all questions of how and why" (orig. emphasis). The 'eating kapu' appears to constitute Turner's notion of a 'root Metaphor' (1974:28) and its demise is obviously no mean event.

In his brief treatment of the subject, Kroeber (1948:403) maintains that the cultural change in Hawaii was due to a phenomenon called 'culture fatigue'. While it is not entirely clear just what 'culture fatigue' is, it seems that Kroeber would have the internal cultural dynamics of the system succumbing to evolutionary pressures. The cultural system could not longer sustain its structural rigidity in the face of natural processes of change and, therefore, it collapsed.

Redfield (1953) stresses the nihilistic effects of the impact of Western civilization which led the Hawaiians to reject their pantheistic religion in favour of a more powerful monotheism--western techno-economics. Redfield adds another element to the list of probable causation in a rather poorly developed concept of relative deprivation. As the royal women of Hawaii played an important part in the abolition of the eating taboo, Redfield suggests that their actions were due to dissonance brought about by the conflicting aspects of their role as royalty and their status as females. The women were at once of high social status, acclaimed for their divinity and political authority, yet were treated like any lowly woman in Hawaii by being made subject to the demands and limitations of the food taboos as applied to women. The conflict between role and status created tension in the social structure, prompting certain of the royal women to plot the overthrow of the taboo system. While part of Redfield's explanation has some merit, viz the role of the royal women in the sociocultural change, it is on the whole, a rather glib explanation in terms of feminist rumblings for revolution based on assumed sentiments of relative deprivation between a ruling class of males and a proletariate class of females.

In her analysis of the situation, Levine (1968) utilizes Weber's concept of charismatic authority to conclude that the sociocultural change resulted from "the attempt on the part of those in power to reorganize the existing political structure so that succession to chieftainship would be determined only on the basis of heredity" (Ibid.:404). In essence, Levine's argument hinges on the concept of complementary opposition at a high level of abstraction; the opposition of sacred and profane (Ibid.:412). The charismatic authority of the paramount chief in Hawaii was derived from his sacred genealogy which traced his direct line of descent from divinity.

Levine maintains that the "concept of charisma can be seen in the relationship of the paramount chief and mana" (op.cit.:403). Careful analysis revealed to Levine that there came a time when certain of the aristocrats (those with fewer links to divinity) came to a "realisation that the political system was embedded in and subject to religious constraints and that such a religio-political structure was unstable, given Hawaiian history" (Ibid.:426). The overthrow of the taboo system thus fits the Weberian notion that charismatic leadership is fragile and unstable. Levine supports Weber's theory by positing that certain members of the aristocratic ruling family 'realized' (after how many centuries) that their structural instability rested on a fusion of church and state. They thus set out to secularize their society by making the paramount chieftaincy dependent on heredity--in a royal line--and not the divine authority of mana personified. While the end result of the events in Hawaii may appear, retroductively, to uphold Weber's theory of charismatic authority, it does little to explain what went on in Hawaii.

The highly unstable Hawaiian history that Levine refers to is the continual warring that went on between the numerous sub-chiefs, and the custom of land redistribution that followed on the death of the paramount chief (cf. Barrere 1975; Alexander 1891). These were very real problems; however, the 'system', was not unstable at all and, in fact, the religio-political system seems to have been around for some centuries. What was unstable was the longevity of any one person or group occupying the seat of power. The elimination of charismatic authority in such a situation would seem to make matters more volatile rather than more stable. For it was genealogical proximity to divinity which underwrote the ruling authority, and which kept the line of descent pure of contamination from miscegenation with less highly placed individuals. This is the source of the oft-cited incestuous endogamy of the Hawaiian royal family. In conflicts over supreme rulership it was the priests, as keepers of the faith and genealogical historians, who cast the deciding vote as to who should or should no be eligible to rule.

Levine's analysis misses two points of key importance to the events in Hawaii. Kamehemeha I had already succeeded in combining under his tutelage the whole of the island group and the dissident chieftains; and, through political concession had ensured that his son Liholiho would inherit the united kingdom uncontested. If the Hawaiian system had been unstable, it seems to have attained a certain stability under the rule of Kamehemeha I (cf. Alexander, 1891). It is also of importance to note that the events that transpired occurred during the first few months of Liholiho's succession to his father's throne. It could be argued just as fruitfully that the problems Liholiho experienced were due in fact, to his lack of charismatic authority, rather than a desire to rid the system of charismatic leadership. Liholiho is often described as an inept young man, a "heedless and dissolute young prince entirely wanting in the great qualities of his father" (Alexander 1891:166). Heavily steeped in the sacred aspects of his role as king, Liholiho was sadly deficient in the secular aspects of political life. The royal family, and its dissidents, were not oblivious of Liholiho's "unfitness to govern".

Levine does bring out three salient points necessary to an understanding of the Hawaiian situation. These are the history of factional fighting amon sub-chiefs; the important relationship between the religious and political structures of Hawaiian society; and, the conscious movement on the part of some primary chiefs to "reorganize and consolidate the political authority of the central government" (Ibid.:437).

The history of factional fighting is important in Davenport's (1969) analysis, and he reports how "chiefdoms often formed temporary political coalitions as both offensive and defensive tactics" (Ibid.:2)..."and the continuity of any one regime or dynasty was unpredictable" (Ibid.:3). Taking into consideration Liholiho's political naivety, the "phenomenal European contact" (Ibid.:14), the pressure for land redistribution, and the history of factionalism, Davenport concludes that Hawaiian social structure was in a state of stress. This stress was responded to in terms of social change that "amounted to a constitutional reform of the traditional government" (Ibid.:17). The system of law was in effect a religious law, with "the mandate to govern and impose law and order derived from religious authority" (Ibid.:9). Therefore, consitutional reform 'had' to take on the character of secularization.

Where factional disputes occurred at times of succession,

> ...the priests commanded considerable influence over the outcome because a test of political (or military) strength was, according

> to Hawaiian theory, ultimately a test of who held supernatural power (mana) from the gods. Obviously the priests were the best prognosticators and influencers of supernatural decisions about who was to receive the divine mandate to rule" (Ibid.:11).

Thus "abolition of the kapu was...a deliberate political response to a political crisis" (Ibid.:18), which, given the stress noted above, was "a structural convulsion" whereby the Hawaiian political system transformed itself "into true statehood" (Ibid.:18). Constitutional political reform necessitated the abolition of the religious sytem.

Davenport's explanatory framework is the theory of cultural evolution. Responding to environmental stress the 'cultural system' reacted in the only way possible; it removed the system of taboos in order that it might progress to the next evolutionary stage in political complexity. Davenport assumes a priori causal mechanisms of cultural evolution and interprets his data accordingly; the total situation in Hawaii is made to conform to the Procrustean bed of evolutionism. What Davenport can't explain, he reduces to the nemesis of European contact. For instance: "Why Hewahewa (the High Priest) was willing to turn away from the tradition of his office, we shall never know, but it must be noted that as an important member of the court of Kamehemeha, he had had intimate contact with Europeans for many years" (Ibid.:15). Davenport's unfalsifiable theoretical bias makes for a disappointing conclusion to an otherwise interesting analysis.

Webb (1971) presents a similar analysis in terms of cultural evolution. He has decided that all of cultural and social life is explainable under the general rubric of evolutionary theory. "The events of 1819 are in fact an example of a rule of cultural development, of an evolutionary 'law'" (Ibid.:273). The machinations of the 'law' are heady indeed.

Webb notes Redfield's observation regarding the royal women and their relative deprivation. He agrees that the women may have found the situation "irksome and humiliating", but adds that "one is loath to see so great a change as being caused essentially by the whim of a pair of even powerful women" (Ibid.:264). Instead Webb sees the atypicality of these females as being a result of cultural 'law'. Their role was determined by the 'cultural situation' which required "persons eccentric enough to embrace the cultural change needed" (Ibid.:273,174). Innovators are likened to "random viable mutations" which are only successful when the 'needs of the evolving culture' direct and regulate their activity (Ibid.:274). Webb concludes that the Hawaiian society was evolving towards its next stage, statehood.

The individuals involved in this process would carry out their actions because "they...simply worked better" and not because the rulers realized "they were part of the process of inevitable political consolidation within a newly formed secondary state" (Ibid.:274). Thus it "has not generally been necessary to worry overmuch about the motives of the individual innovators, surely a great gain in efficiency, if nothing more" (Ibid.:275). One wonders what sort of efficiency Webb has in mind.

Webb goes on in much the same vein throughout his essay and adds little to our understanding of the Hawaiian situation and even less about human behaviour generally. He is primarily interested in testing a theory of evolution, and by factoring out the human variable he has been able to ignore the fact that nothing is inevitable when it comes to human behaviour. Any data can be made to fit an evolutionary model, for all things are everywhere evolving at some rate or other as a theory of hindsight bears out. Webb has restated the obvious and avoided tackling the complexities of social life; indeed, he has made human activity a mere puppet dancing on the strings of an invisible hand called Cultural Determinism.

One final analysis of the Hawaiian events needs mention. Harfst's (1972) article appears to be the latest attempt to explain the Hawaiian data.[1] Like those before him, Harfst commences his article by critically examining and rejecting previous explanations. He particularly takes Webb to task for his evolutionist assumptions and value judgements. Harfst is a much more exacting analyst and insists that the correct procedure is to begin by dicovering the "isolating conditions, the effective variables within an action-reaction process within a given system of explanation" (Ibid.:454). He denounces descriptive theories and cultural or analytic statements which place emphasis on external stress as being unable to demonstrate the causal linkages of change. Explanation resides in answer to the question: "What after all, is the motivation for maximal use of environmental potential?" (Ibid,:461).

After a painstaking and thorough discussion, Harfst concludes that the effective variable which motivated 'maximal use of environmental potential' was the element of warfare. Harfst's basis for claiming the "paramount value of warfare [is] that social and political hierarchies paralleled the military hierarchy" an observation underwritten by the "receptivity of the ali'i [aristocracy] to the military introductions of foreigners" (Ibid.:466). These acquisitions had 'unforeseen consequences' for the political unit. Under Kamehemeha's skillful use of foreign military weapons and tactics, the islands were consolidated, making "competition and warfare no longer acceptable. The demise of

the social value of warfare necessitated immediate and widespread adjustments in the cultures as a whole" (Ibid.:466).

These included adjustments to the exchange system; a shift from military to administrative skills; a change from religious to secular justification of status; and, reconsideration of the social hierarchy as the local ruling class had been dispossessed and "upward mobility of the commoners through demonstrated loyalty in military confrontations was eliminated" (Ibid.:467). Harfst concludes his argument by stating:

> For a society which was in so many ways bound together by the needs and preoccupations of war, the effects of its cessation were endless and devastating...the overthrow of the kapu system...made explicit changes which had long before become inevitable and thereby resolved the other conditions which had perpetuated warfare and the structures of traditional Hawaiian society (Ibid.:467).

Harftst's view of Hawaiian society is that it was a closely connected system where each element of the system was linked to the others through the ubiquity of warfare. When this single unifying link is severed the remaining structural elements begin to topple. To argue the inevitability of 'explicit changes' is once again to call upon the invisible hand of cultural determinacy, which explains little, no matter how brilliantly argued. It is not enough to state that structural elements are interrelated and that changes in one effect changes in another; what must be accounted for is the process of transformation which occurs as a result of their interaction, and Harfst has not done so. Parenthetically, one might add that Harfst's theory is somewhat discordant with the fact that Hawaiian society picked a suitable unit of social life--the eating taboo--as the focus of a dispute which led to civil war in order to demonstrate that the tremendous value of social warfare was no longer necessary, or acceptable.

While all the above analyses are feasible (with the possible exception of Webb's over zealous neo-evolutionism), none offers a truly satisfactory account. If kinship, warfare, secularization, social mutants, class conflict, inevitable cultural evolution and so on are all viable explanations for the change in Hawaiian social life, then sociological theory is not advanced from the premise that culture is complex and sociocultural change an unaccounted factor in the compexity. Of all the possible variables in the chain of causalities looked at, none took into consideration the human element and the

determining effects of individual motivation. This oversight is addressed in the following section.

SECTION II: PROLOGUE

The previous section served to highlight several ethnographic factors in Hawaiian society necessary to the following analysis. Of the theories called upon to account for the events that took place, none provides an acceptable explanation. Any number of events could be taken as having caused the eventual outcome as all are part of the intricate web of necessary and sufficient conditions. Important as these antecedents are, in their own way, we are here concerned with the 'happenings' (Turner 1975:148), that fall under the general rubric of taboo abolition, for it was here that the forces at work in Hawaiian society became fully public. The multiplicity of causative factors and interpretation of their meanings are synthesized and operationalized into a uniform meaning set lived through simultaneously by the persons involved. In the analysis of public events the hidden and the private comes to view, for here 'whispered asides', altercations, promises, insinuations, understandings, misunderstanding, and reinterpretations are aired in bids for validity; in support given or demanded.

The dramatic model analyses public 'happenings' which openly portray the private meanings that actors have invested into social life, as they see it. The boundaries of the social situation are not, as Garbett (1970) suggests, arbitrarily determined by the analysts but are assigned by the indigenous concepts of time reckoning. When an event is public, it is not a methodological problem to define its temporal and spatial boundaries for it defines itself by its very publicness. In her documentary study, Barrere (1975) relates that at one point Kamehemeha returned to Hawaii after spending eight years on the island of Oahu: "the event itself...marked a point of reference in Hawaiian chronology which did not use year dates, but instead events of importance or fame to denote time periods" (Ibid.:2). In this instance the temporal boundaries of the social drama are defined by the data itself: it is circumscribed by the death of King Kamehemeha I at its beginnings and by civil war at its ending. Spatially, it encompasses the whole of Hawaiian sociey and the Hawaiian islands.

By pushing the metaphor of drama to its limits the aspect of timing becomes important, good performance depends on the actors using their cues appropriately. It becomes a matter "of style in performance...where style differs from stylization" (Turner 1975:150). In what follows, it becomes abundantly clear that Kaahumanu's sense of timing and style are impeccable. Kaahumanu took advantage of the socially accepted rite of mourning; she used it "out of its ordinary

ideological sequence and...[threw] it into crisis by placing it in the context of a power struggle in society" (Cohen 1979:106).

When a king dies in Hawaiian society, the society assumes a state of pollution which necessitates the removal of the heir apparent in order that he may avoid contamination. After the priests have ascertained that the deceased king did not die from sorcery, they offer a human sacrifice as attendant to the king in the other world. The king's corpse is then buried and baked for ten days, after which it is exhumed, the flesh removed from the bones, and the bones buried in a sacred and secret place. The dead king is now deified, the pollution removed, and the heir can return (cf. Barrere, 1975).

During this ten days of mourning, all forms of taboo are rescinded: "freely and without constraint men and women were permitted to eat together, and the women were permitted to eat forbidden foods" (Mellen 1954:33). All this is accompanied by much wailing, cutting of hair and knocking out of teeth. Alexander (1891:75n) remarks that "at the same time, the people generally threw off for the time all clothing and restraints of decency and appear 'more like demons that human beings.' Houses are burned, property was plundered, revenge taken for old forgotten injuries and a state of anarchy prevailed."

While 'anarchy' and apparent chaos seem to reign supreme, this is hardly the case. The mouring rites were part of the system of religious values and as such were the expected and customary manner in which the death of kings was observed.[2] The ascension of the new king to the throne and his interdiction that the taboos are now reinstated underscored his sacred and secular power. According to Mellen (1954), it was during this time when taboos were not in force, that Kaahumanu began to lobby against the reinstatement of the eating taboo. The seeds of insurrection were sown and would bear fruit at a future time.

By following through on the implications of the dramatic metaphor the results so far have been to point out the temporal and spatial limitations of the events under study and the crucial aspect of timing on the part of the actors involved. The next obvious criterion demanded by the metaphor is a cast of characters and chronology of events. This is furnished below.

The Cast

Litholiho

Litholiho was the first born son of King Kamahemeha and his Sacred Wife, Keopuolani. At five years of age Liholiho was declared heir apparent to the throne, and he was barely twenty years of age when he took on his kingly duties. From all acccounts, Liholiho was a petulant and weak young man, sadly lacking in political expertise (cf. Alexander, 1891; Barrere, 1975). He was the husband of five wives and considered to be a handsome and stately youth (Mellen 1954:22).

Keopulolani

Keopulolani was Kamahemeha's first queen and the Sacred Wife. She was "admitted by all to be the highest living chief, uniting in herself the blood of the highest chiefs of Maui and Hawaii" (Alexander 1891;150). As Queen Mother, and because rank "descended chiefly from the mother", the blood line Liholiho inherited from her placed him in a superior position of rank vis-a-vis his own father, Kamahemeha (Ibid.). Keopulolani is described as being shy, gentle and delicately bred person, who was so sacred she was not permitted to walk in the light of day and lived a secluded and sheltered life surrounded by attendants (Mellen 1954:24,33).

Hewahewa

Unfortunately there is litte mention of Hewahewa in the literature. He was, however, the High Priest of the Hawaiian religious order; his influence was impressive due to his ability to communicate with the gods. With the High Priest lay the "power of selecting victims for the human sacrifices" (Alexander 1891:30), and the power of veto in the determination of who shall hold the mandate to rule. As a class, the priesthood was second only to that of royalty. In general, they were the learned class, keepers of Hawaiian knowledge in astronomy, history and medicine. It was their duty to see to the maintenance of the system of belief and ritual and to teach it to the children. The ruling monarch set aside special lands for their support. Their religious (and perforce, political) power was on a par with the divine king. It was the High Priest Hawahewa who joined with Kaahumanu in her efforts to overthrow the taboo system. His reasons for doing so, or the wiles that the dowager queen may have used to convince him to do so, are long since lost in the annals of history.

Kaumualii

Kaumualii was the King of Kaui and Niihau who, as a young prince of twelve years of age, greatly impressed Captain Vancouver by his

"superior intelligence and amiability" (Alexander 1891:135). As an adult, he was the only Hawaiian who could "read and write English to any extent" (Ibid.:155). In his "personal qualities, both of body and mind, he was the beau ideal of a Hawaiian chief, and was universally beloved by his subjects and by foreigners" (Ibid.:155). Kaumualii has a key role in the drama, and it is therefore necessary to digress slightly and fill in a little of his past dealings with Kamahemeha I.

In 1810 when Kamahemeha had brought the majority of the scattered chiefdoms under his rule, Kaumualii's islands of Kauai and Niihau were the last stongholds of independent rulership. Confrontations between the two powerful men were imminent. Kaumualii, for any number of now obscure reasons, not the least of which may have been his inferior military forces, decided armed conflict was not the answer. He sent gifts to Kamahemeha along with petitions that he would "acknowledge Kamahemeha as his feudal superior" (Alexander 1891:155). He also ordered a schooner "to be built by the white mechanics in his service, in which as a last resort, he might escape from the island and seek refuge in some lands to the west" (Ibid.).

After many messages and presents had been exchanged between the two kings, Kamahemeha pledged his honour for the safety of Kaumualii that he might present himself and offer his cessation in person. Kaumualii hesitated, but was eventually convinced to travel to Hawaii with a sandalwood trader, who calmed Kaumualii's trepedations by leaving one of his own sailors as hostage/guarantor for Kaumualii's safe returen. Kamahemeha and Kaumualii met on board the schooner wherein the latter offered his islands to Kamahemeha. The King replied by telling him to "continue to hold them in fief during his lifetime on condition that Liholiho should remain heir" (Alexander 1891:156).

Later, on shore, the two men engaged in entertainment and feasting. In the background all was not pleasantness. Some of Kamahemeha's chiefs were trying to convince the king that he should have this lord of Kauai assassinated. The king refused such measures, but behind his back a plot was laid to poison Kaumualii's food at a feast the following day. One Isaac Davies heard of the plot and warned Kaumualii, who, instead of attending the feast, returned to his ship and set sail for Kauai. Alexander concludes this tale of intrigue and subterfuge by noting that "for this good act Mr. Davis was soon afterward poisoned by the perfidious chiefs, and died in April, 1810" (Ibid.:156).

Kaahumanu

Kaahumanu was Kamahemeha's favourite wife. She was married to the king when she was thirteen years of age. She spent her life in the midst of the court where her father was chief advisor to Kamahemeha's predecessor, and where she later invovled herself with her husband's political campaigns. She is depicted as being "hot tempered...impulsive...ambitious...[who] took what she wanted from life with devastating directness" (Mellen 1954:23). Because of her genealogy, which saw her descended from divinity, and her status as queen, Kaahumanu was, ipso facto, a very powerful person. The king, however, enhanced her power in two ways.

The cutom of punulua in Hawaii provided extra husbands for the wives of the king (cf. Morgan, 1877:427ff). But Kamahemeha refused the queen any paramour and did so by proclaiming her taboo to all men on pain of death should any man touch her (Mellen 1954:93). It seems that Kaahumanu was not altogether pleased with this arrangement. In reference to other events in 1796, when Kaahumanu was nineteen, Alexander (1891) inserted a cryptic footnote as follows: "Queen Kaahumanu presented Captain Broughton with a canoe in which she had lately eloped, and had nearly reached Kauai before she was overtaken and brought back" (Ibid.:148n). One wonders if the king's edict followed on this escapade for it would appear that Kaahumanu was intent on a liaison with the king of Kauai, none other than Kaumualii, who was at that time still the biggest threat to Kamahemeha's autocratic rule.

Kamahemeha elevated the status of his favourite wife in yet another unheard of manner. The taboo he placed upon her personage

> was so sacred as to provide protection for others. Thus the fugitive from justice could not be seized for punishment when near her, or even if standing on land belonging to her. It was said: Her presence is sanctuary; her lands are places of refuge, Kamahemeha deals out death; she saves from death. He has made her a pillar and a cornerstone of the state (Mellen 1954:94).

This symbolic power was formalized by Kamahemeha prior to his death when he created a new governmental position and appointed Kaahumanu kuhina nui, or prime minister "to exercise equal authority with the king" (Alexander 1891:166). Because of her power and prestige, it was Kaahumanu, rather than the queen mother, who dominated "the scene of preparation for the consecration ceremonies" and it was during the inauguration ceremony that the new regent referred to Kaahumanu as "Mother of the People" (Mellen 1954:23). The dowager queen had no children.

Chronology of Events

May 8, 1819	Death of King Kamahemeha I
May 9, 1819	Ritual pollution and rites of mourning; Liholiho leaves for Kohala to escape defilement of the land.
May 18, 1819	Liholiho returns; investiture of the new king; Kaahumanu's declaration of herself as co-ruler
May 19, 1819	Kaahumanu summons Liholiho to declare that she has abolished the eating taboo; escalating crisis.
August, 1819	Political crisis; Liholiho calls a meeting of the Grand council of Chiefs; non-decisions.
September, 1819	Kaahumanu's second summons to Liholiho; Liholiho flees; Kaahumanu's third summons to Liholiho; the queen mother's imperial order that it be obeyed; Liholiho acquiesces.
November, 1819	Liholiho eats with the women; the eating taboo is abolished; civil war in Hawaii.
December, 1819	Royalist victory; a new regime in Hawaii.
Epilogue:	October, 1820 The conquest of Kaumualii by Kaahumanu.

SECTION III: THE DRAMA

Setting the Stage

By examining the leading actors in the drama it becomes quite clear that Kaahumanu is the main protagonist who, in effect, has written the script which is about to unfold. Kaahumanu set out to gain control of Hawaiian society by placing herself at the apex of the power structure. Whether Kaahumanu's actions were altruistic (she foresaw the traditional system could not withstand the continual influx of Europeans) or egoistic (she desired power for its own sake)--is a moot point. She did, however, impose her will. Through careful manipulation of the Hawaiian politico-religious system and the symbolic values attached to her person by virtue of that system, she directed the future course of Hawaiian history.

Kaahumanu's symbolic power is weighty indeed. She was a childless female who spent her life involved in the affairs of men--she sat in court, accompanied the king during battles, and interacted as a politician with important Europeans and chieftains. She was a politically central yet symbolically liminal person. Her symbolic power had been enhanced by the divine king who decreed her person so sacred that she was exempt from the tradition of punalua; she was above the law in that her sacredness protected all, regardless of trangressions, from the wrath of the gods and the king. And she was the law; Kamahemeha had elevated her to a status equal in power, both sacred and secular, to that of the heir apparent.

Kaahumanu set out to actualize her inherent power and during the ten days of mourning she planted the idea that the eating taboo should be abolished. Kaahumanu did not attempt to abolish the totality of the religious system. She concentrated on one aspect only, the "enforced separate eating by the sexes", as this was "the one tabu that would least offend the people" (Mellen 1954:33). Through whatever means, reason or cajolery, Kaahumanu gained the support of the queen mother, Keopulolani, and the High Priest Hewahewa, two pwowerful allies.

The priesthood rallied in opposition to the dowager queen's intrigues. For many years the taboo system had been violated by foreigners who had remained unscathed by their actions (cf. Russell, 1842; Barrere, 1975). Any scepticism on the part of the people had been curtailed by Kamahemeha who refused at all time to question the divine system. "But now the restraining hand of Kamahemeha was gone" (Mellen 1954:32). Kaahumanu's criticism of divine edicts, her quest to abolish even a minor taboo, coupled with a scepticism born of past European immunity from calamity spelled disaster for the priesthood and

their own powerful political position. Abolition of the eating taboo was a minor heresy, but one the priests could not abide for they knew that "once the sacred fabric of religion, law, and order started to unravel, there would be no saving the ancient system" (Mellen 1954:34). The priests were supported by those chiefs of the aristocracy who would themselves aspire to the throne of divine kingship.

What is at stake here is not the religious system per se, but the locus of power. Desacralization of the power base would render the priests impotent in the affairs of state. For Kaahumanu, desacralization of the power base would allow her, unencumbered by religious prohibitions, to assume a key political position. As the battle for power takes shape in the background, the figure of Liholiho looms large. It has already been noted that Liholiho was politically inept, but well schooled in his religious duties and obligations. The power and prestige of the priests rested on their ability to withstand challenges to the ritual system by reinforcing the concept of divine kingship. For the dowager queen, the acquisition of power lay in undermining Liholiho's strong point, his piety, and then controlling his weak secular abilities by exercising her own political expertise.

The stage had been set: "Kaahumanu and the priests eyed each other warily; both sides manoeuvred for position...." (Mellen 1954:34). On the tenth day of mourning, Liholiho' flotilla sailed into the bay--the heir had returned for his inauguration as Kamahemeha II.

Phase 1: Breach

As Liholiho approached the beach, he was confronted with a magnificent spectacle. In quiet anticipation, the Hawaiian people crowded near the shore awaiting his arrival. In front of the populace ranged the aristocracy, resplendent in feather cloaks, the "robes of state and costly insignia of rank" (Alexander 1891:85). "Inferior chiefs had smaller capes and cloaks of various colours and more common feathers...choice yellow feathers were reserved for royalty alone. The feather cloak of Kamahemeha I is said to have occupied nine generations of kings in its construction" (Ibid.:86). At the center of this colourful arrangement, yet separated from the group, Kaahumanu stood alone, attired in the long yellow feather cloak of Kamahemeha; in her hand she carried his sacred spear. "This assumption by a woman of the royal feather cloak, by ancient tradition reserved for men only, was a precedent shattering event" (Mellen 1954:28).

Liholiho's procession proceeded apace, accompanied by the incessant chanting of the priests. As he approached the sacred platform from which he would declare the resumption of norms and the

continuation of the social order under his divine guidance, the dowager queen stepped forward and addressed him:

> "Hear me, O Kalani! For I make known the will of your revered father....Look upon these, O King--the alii [aristocracy], the makaainana [commoners]--they are all yours. Yours also the fertile lands of all these islands. Yours the surrounding waters of the sea....But you and I, O Kalani, are to share the realm together. Such was the will of your father" (Mellen 1954:29).

Liholiho did not challenge Kaahumanu's bid for power, he "remained silent, and withheld his consent" (Alexander 1891:167). At the close of his inauguration ceremony, he addressed the throngs of people and said: "I shall not depart from the pathways established by my honoured father" (Mellen 1954:30). Liholiho's impassioned reassurance that he would walk in the footsteps of his father and uphold his laws also served to sanction Kaahumanu's position in her bid for power. It was Kamehemeha who had bestowed such powers on the dowager queen; by vowing to honour his father's wishes, Liholiho could not (or at least did not) rescind Kaahumanu's exalted prestige. Kaahumanu's power increased proportionately.

Phase 2: Crisis

In the following days and weeks, Kaahumanu pressed her bid for power. Summoning Liholiho to her house, she informed him that the eating taboo was not to be reinstituted; Liholiho fled her presence. Several days later the queen mother, Keopolani--at Kaahumanu's request--summoned Liholiho to dine with her. Liholiho refused to eat with his mother and watched in shocked amazement as his mother and younger brother sat together and ate their meal. All this was too much for the young king. He boarded his schooner and sailed to the relative peace and quiet of his royal residence at Kawaihae. With the king gone, Kaahumanu declared publicly that the eating taboo was abolished and forthwith dispatched a messenger to Liholiho informing him of this fact with the added declaration that it would not be restored in the capital. Liholiho reacted by attempting to consecrate two shrines, one at Kawaihae and one at North Kona. "He failed in both cases to obtain a perfect aha or faultless ceremony, on account of the drunkenness and disorder that prevailed" (Alexander 1891:167n).

News of Kaahumanu's action spread quickly throughout the islands. This news was met with consternation and confusion on the part of the people and prompted cries for immediate action against the queen on the part of the priesthood. The priests moved swiftly among the people, attempting to re-establish their sacred power. This movement was led

by Kekuaokalani, keeper of the sacred war-god Ku, and next in line for the position of High Priest. Kekuaokalani demanded Liholiho take drastic action against the royal women by reinforcing the taboo system. This course of action presented Liholiho with yet another dilemma.

> The pattern of rituals which he had inherited from his mother was much more elaborate than those of his father, who was of lower rank. The pattern of rituals observed during Kamahemeha's reign had been his own personal tabu system. To enforce the entire pattern belonging to Liholiho would mean the imposition of many additional tabus. In view of the present agitation, the king doubted the wisdom of adding further restriction (Mellen 1954:36).

And, in his wisdom, Liholiho did nothing and remained on Kawaihae far from the burgeoning furor.

While Kaahumanu made her bid for power from a platform of religious reform, the powerful sub-chiefs watched the ebb and flow of the political situation with much interest. These were the many chiefs that Kamahemeha had subdued during his era of conquest, who, while the king was alive, had remained submissive to his rule. With Kamahemeha gone, they felt no such compunction to submit to the rule of his son. Sensing Liholiho's inability to rule, their own ambitions for leadership began to resurface. The sub-chiefs began to press their demands on Liholiho. They insisted he reinstitute the tradition of land redistribution, a custom which had always accompanied the inauguration of a new ruler and one that Kamahemeha had abolished (probably with Liholiho in mind). They also demanded that Liholiho expel the numerous Europeans living on the islands. Under pressure from the priests, who saw the European heretics as dangerous to their cause, the chiefs petitioned the king to remove the foreigners or put them to death. The chiefs further demanded that "they be given a share of the profitable sandalwood trade which had been the autocratic monopoly of Kamehemeha, who used the profits for benefit of the state" (Mellen 1954:39-40).

Three months had elapsed since Liholiho had become king--it had been a time of continued unrest and escalating crisis. Recognizing that the situation had become extremely volatile, Liholiho called for a meeting of the Grand Council, to be convened at his residence on Kawaihae (Alexander 1891;Mellen 1954).

At the Grand Council the many problems of the present regime were aired. The Hawaiian government (including Kaahumanu) attempted to

appease all factions and made a play for time. The meeting ended with all chiefs receiving a share of the sandalwood trade; however, there was no land redistribution, and no action or decision was taken on the question of the eating taboo. Once again the tactful Kaahumanu did not push her case.

Conspicuous by his absence was the prince Kekuaokalani, who had remained on his island and refused to attend the meeting. Here, at his home on Kaawaloa, "the priests flocked around him and offered him the crown....a large body of chiefs and common people rallied around the standard of the 'defender of the faith'...." (Alexander 1891:170). The forces of revolution were gathering as the sun set on the peace talks of the Grand Council.

When Kaahumanu returned to the capital from the meeting of the Grand Council, she again pressed her cause. A message was sent to Liholiho summoning him to a feast which would recognize the abolition of the eating taboo. Liholiho ignored the summons. Meanwhile the priests, caught up in their religious fervor, urged increasing obedience to the gods and issued additional taboos, presumably at the behest of the gods, as evidence of their sacred power. Kaahumanu was a worthy opponent. She parried this move by deftly pointing out "the arrogance of the priesthood; and gradually resentment against her was transferred to the priests" (Mellen 1954:42). The fact that Hewahewa was always by her side must have had some beneficial effects in swaying popular opinion.

In November, Kaahumanu dispatched another missive to Liholiho, inviting him to feast with her in honour of the establishment of free eating. This request was reinforced by the queen mother, who commanded Liholiho's presence. The king acquiesed; he could not refuse a command from the highest ranking chief in the land. "Accordingly, Liholiho with his retinue embarked in several canoes, and spent two days in a drunken debauch at sea, during which he committed several violations of tabu" (Alexander 1891:169).

The great feast was prepared and two immense tables were set up--one for women and one for men. "All the high chiefs and chiefesses and several prominent foreigners were present" (Mellen 1954:43). The air was humming with tense apprehension. All the guests took their seats--men and women separate from one another. Prior to eating, a prayer was offered to the gods by the High Priest, Hewahewa. At its close, the gathering waited expectantly, watching, leaving their food untouched. Then the king "rose and moved hesitantly in the direction of the women's table...." (Ibid.:43). It is easy to imagine Liholiho's distress as the consequences of his contemplated action tumbled

frantically through his mind. "...A multitude of common people looked on with mingled fear and curiosity to see what judgements would follow so impious an act" (Alexander 1891:168,169). Liholiho hesitated. "Then resolutely, he went directly to the table and seated himself in the one place left vacant. It was by the side of the Dowager Queen Kaahumanu" (Mellen 1954:43; cf. Barrere, 1975:34). The eating taboo was abolished, "and messengers were sent even as far as Kauai to proclaim the abolition of the tabus, which was termed ai noa or free eating, in opposition to the ai kapu" (Alexander 1891:169). The king of Kauai, Kaumualii, readily accepted the new state of affairs (Ibid.).

The situation is not unlike that "found in Greek drama, where one witnesses the helplessness of the human individual before the Fates..." (Turner 1974:35); except that it is Kaahumanu who was Liholiho's Fate personified. Liholiho had indeed sealed his fate at the feast, a feast which, ironically, took place on the "night of Kukahi, third night of the new moon and first of the three nights sacred to Ku, god of war" (Mellen 1954:43).

Phase 3: Redress

Repercussions quickly ensued. Kekuaokalani, cousin of the king and keeper of the war-god Ku, with his bevy of priests, chiefs, and commoners, took up arms against and killed a neighbouring chief. Kaahumanu "decided to try conciliatory measures and sent Naihe, the orator, and Hoapili [an uncle], together with Keopulolani [queen mother], to negotiate with Kekuaokalani; but all their entreaties were in vain, and they were glad to escape with their lives" (Alexander 1891:170). Civil war was inevitable at this point. Kekuaokalani marched on the capital, determined to restore the traditional order.

Kaahumanu gathered her generals and prepared to meet the rebels. The "two armies met near Kuamoo, about four miles north of Kaawaloa" (Alexander 1891:170). While the two armies were equal in size, the army of the queen was superior in it strength, having at its disposal eleven thousand dollars worth of guns and ammunition that Kamehemeha had purchased from a foreign trader (Alexander 1891:170). After a relatively short skirmish, the rebel army was routed, its leader, Kekuaokalani, killed. Having lost their leader, the rebel forces lost their revolutionary spirit and scattered. Another royalist army was dispatched to contain a rebel force at Waipaio; the battle was short-lived with the decision going to the royalists. Among the dead was the priest Kuawa, chief advisor to the insurgen kekuaokalani (Ibid.:171).

Phase 4: Reintegration

Chroniclers and analysts of the events just described in Hawaiian history have taken as their key point the demise of the religious system. Alexander states that "Hawaii presented to the world the strange spectacle of a nation without a religion" (1891:172). Oliver (1952:185) notes that "before a single missionary had set foot on Hawaii, the native institutions and symbols already had been profoundly altered by contact with the whites. The kapu concept was officially disavowed by a native monarch in 1820....Ironically, it was the native nobility, who lost most in power and prestige by the action, who took the initiative in these iconoclasts." And Webb (1971:261) writes that there is "general agreement that a people's abandonment of their traditional practices--not in favour of a new cult, but in exchange for nothing--is a highly unusual event." All of these conclusions are in error.

The religious system was indeed a key element in the events and their outcome--the civil war was a religious war. Over-emphasis of this fact obscures the fact that religious wars are fought for political reasons. It is also pertinent to note that acts of legislation are insufficient in themselves to abolish from a people's mind a deeply imbued system of meaning. The outward trappings of the belief system--the idols, alters and ritual observances--were banished, but much remained of Hawaiian religiousity. The Hawaiians were not left without a religion, Hawaiian royalty did not lose its power and prestige; the Hawaiian society was not left in a vacuum.

Two things occurred. Religious beliefs went underground, so to speak. Immediately following his statement above, Alexander (1891:172) observes that "still the ancient idolatry was cherished by many in secret; and many of the superstitions, especially those relating to sorcery and the cause of disease, were destined to survive for generations to come, and to blend with and color their conceptions of Christianity." The second, and most important effect, was that Kaahumanu began to reconstruct Hawaiian social structure through the implementation of her newly won political power.

Liholiho was dispatched on pilgrimages throughout the land to visit the people and calm their distress. Liholiho was divine king; the genealogical heritage of the ruling class still obtained. "As a representative of deity on earth...it was now a matter of transferring the faith of the people solely to the person of the king" (Mellen 1954:49). And this Liholiho did. The monarchy became the repository of the people's faith. Months after the civil war was ended a Christian missionary described the devastation left by the destruction of the idols and altars. She notes that at a little removed from the

ruins was a house, said to contain the bones of Kamehemeha I. The house was designated taboo, for "upon this sacred ground was no common person allowed to set his foot" (in Barrere 1975:35). It would seem that through Liholiho the government of Kaahumanu had unified the people once more under a common faith--allegiance to the monarchy.

Throughout her rise to power, Kaahumanu had never challenged Liholiho's position as king; "she never overtly attempted to replace Liholiho....By favouring Liholiho, whom she could control, over his cousin (Kekuaokalani) who was far more independent, she could manoeuvre freely" (Davenport 1969:16). While Liholiho consoled the people of Hawaii, Kaahumanu was busy rebuilding Hawaiian political structure. this she did with a great finesse and expertise, for she had realized her end (power), which she applied as means to further ends. She became "the strongest figure in government" (Webb 1971:272).

Epilogue

During the seven months of Kaahumanu's manoeuvring for power and the crises that ensued, one figure is strangely absent in the chronicle of events. This is Kaumualii. Like Kamehemeha before her, Kaahumanu was faced with this powerful adversary and potential threat to her power structure. The king of Kauai had remained aloof from the strife that had ravaged the other islands and continued to conduct his court on Kauai with the pomp and splendour befitting a king. In order that Kaahumanu unite all the islands under the leadership of the monarchy, represented by Liholiho, it was necessary to bring Kaumualii into the fold. Once again Liholiho was comandeered into action.

In the summer of 1821, Liholiho sailed to Kauai on a state visit. He was met by Kaumualii and treated to hospitality and entertainment. Once again the king of Kauai pledged his fealty to the crown.

> ...in an assembly of chiefs, Kaumualii addressed his guest, Liholiho, offering him his kingdom, his fort, guns and vessels. After this a deep silence prevailed for a short time, all awaiting with anxiety the reply of Liholiho. At length, he answered: "I did not come here to take away your island. Keep your country and take care of it as before, and do what you please with your vessels" (Alexander 1891:1978).

This seemed to resolve the tenuous situation and Liholiho spent some weeks in the company of the king of Kauai.

News of the festivities reached the capital and Liholiho's court and his wives sailed to Kauai on board a vessel called "Cleopatra's Barge". This sumptuous vessel had been built in Salem, Massachusetts and cost the monarch $90,000 to be paid off in sandalwood (Alexander 1891:177). Kaahumanu was the only royal personage who did not sail to Kauai.

Eventually Liholiho announced the departure of "Cleopatra's Barge" for the capital and invited the king of Kauai aboard for a farewell feast. None of Kaumualii's retinue had been invited and the king arrived with only his son, Kealiiahouii, and a small number of attendants. "While the unsuspecting prince was seated in the cabin, orders were secretly given to make sail, and he was torn from his kingdom, to remain henceforth a virtual prisoner of state. Soon after his arrival at Honolulu, October 9th, he was induced to marry the haughty Kaahumanu, who also took to husband his son, Kealiiahonui" (Alecander 1891:178). Kaahumanu had successfully vanquished her last obstacle to absolute rulership; "her next move was to set up a new government for the island of Kauai" (Mellen 1954:103).

In 1823 Liholiho decided to travel to Europe and America. Prior to his departure, a meeting of the Grand Council of Chiefs met and "acknowledged Kaahumanu as regent" (Alexander 1891:184). Liholiho died of measles in England six months after leaving Hawaii. Kaahumanu was truly the queen of all Hawaii and continued to be so until her death in 1832. "Her place could not be filled, and the events of the next few years showed the greatness of the loss which the nation had sustained. The "days of Kaahumanu" were long remembered as days of progress and prosperity" (Alexander 1891:209).

SECTION IV: DISCUSSION

The work 'politics' conjures up images of authority, law and order, and government--in short, formal institutionalized relations of power. But power is an aspect of all social relations and politics must also be understood as the "processes involved in the distribution, maintenance, exercise and struggle for power" (Cohen 1974: preface). Politics, when all is said and done, is undeniably concerned with the concept of power. But power is not a thing, an entity, it is an attribute inherent in the relations between and among individuals and is indicative of the degree of control an individual experiences as having over his/her life. Power always contains a symbolic dimension and cannot aptly be defined in terms of some concrete goal or other, but must be seen as a goal or end in itself, from whence all else follows. Herein lies the mystification of things 'political'--all formal and informal manifestations are dependant on the success (or

lack of it) with which individuals manipulate their common social symbols as a means to control their life and, as is often the case, the lives of others.

It follows, then, that the analysis of politico-symbolic forms must focus on individuals, for "only concrete individuals...can manipulate creatively" (Turner 1974:150). Social structures are not obdurate pillars of social life against whcih individual behaviour infringes. They are the product of human activity, their very existence and meaning the result of that which has been attributed to them by the persons who exist within a commonly perceived reality. Diversity of the human mind, in apprehending that with which it is presented, is always at work. There are always those individuals in any society who are able to objectively analyze their system of meaning and by so doing change the ongoing process of social life by actively creating new meaning or by emphasizing hitherto ambiguous aspects of old meanings. Just such a person was Queen Kaahumanu and the cultural changes that transpired in Hawaii are directly attributable to her careful and pragmatic manipulation of the social framework of meaning.

Cohen has suggested that,

> ...the study of sociocultural causation and change becomes the analysis of the creation or transformation of dramatic forms, their production, direction, authentication, the techniques they emply, the process of acting them out, living them through and the transformation they bring about in the relationships between the men and women involved in them (1979:104).

The Hawaiian material seems to conform to Cohen's views. It is the contention of this paper that the sociocultural change in Hawaiian society was a result of conscious manipulation on the part of Queen Kaahumanu of the politico-symbolic realm as a means of achieving her goal, viz the acquisition of power. Once this end was achieved, it became the means to Queen Kaahumanu's primary ambition--the reorganization of the political structure with none other than herself as the head of government.

> ...it does not matter whether the things shared are religious or political symbols (variously described as "dominant", "master", "key", "pivotal", or "central" symbols); the point is that the person or party who controls the assignment of "meaning" to them can also control the mobilizational efficacy their central cultural position has tradtionally assigned to them (Turner 1975:146).

Consideration of the full analogical implications of a dramtic model of analysis has pointed out a more flexible and dynamic concept of role and actor against the social-structural back-drop.

The actor invests his role with meaning, meaning based on an awareness of the social realm, and acts therefore with purpose and efficacy. Such purposeful activity and control is perceived as power which, when translated to public endeavours, is the very core of things political. Successful politics is based on the creative performance of individuals who manipulate shared meaning based on their own awareness of them and who have, concomitantly, an understanding of the psychology of those with whom they must interact.

Individuals intent on the reassignment of meaning in effecting political action do not manoeuver uncontested. Reinterpretation of the framework of meaning challenges individual or group apprehension of the social reality and their place in it. Vested interests are at stake and conflict situations result in a struggle for power. Turner maintains that the elements of the social drama-breach, crisis, redress and reintegration--represent the phased process of contestation and can be isolated for study in any society or whatever level.

The 'social drama' as a model of, in contradistinction to a model for social processes, enjoins the analyst of social behaviour to consider carefully the actors as not only fulfilling their roles but as creating and recreating those roles. The words 'actor' and 'role' are integral to sociological jargon, the full impact of their meaning lost in the process of assimilation as neo-logisms. The classic works of drama in the history of literary art forms all maintain through time their original structures and roles. What makes these literary dramas timeless and enduring is, in part, the continuous recreating of meaning the actors empart within the structure of their given roles. Analogically, the same idea can be applied to structural roles and the interpretations invested in them by the actors who live those roles in enduring social organizations.

Social structure is a "set of limitations" individuals carry in their heads as a result of the socialization process and, in this sense, contains within its definition the concept of role. Gurvitch (1964:46) defines social role as "a network of spring boards for possible collective and individual action". He continues by pointing out that social roles imposed on conduct may

> ...at first glance appear to serve as important reference points for regularity, regulation, structure and indeed

> organization....Spontaneous reactions made the roles, whether collective or individual, overcome all patterns, all prescriptions, all social regularity and as a result, all standardization (op.cit.:46).

Spontaneous activity is the activity of individuals who critically apprehend their environment and their place within it; it is activity born of awareness, not the compulsive activity of the automaton responding to external pressures and constraints.

Existential psychologist Aaron Esterson states that

> acting involves relating in the form of the personal...acting [means]: to do in respect of, to know what I do, and to know in some measure what I am doing, if I am doing it...[where] to do is to seek knowingly to modify the shared world of social reality (Esterson 1972:229).

Doing and acting thus imply conscious agency on the part of individuals who do not merely "react" to structurally defined roles but who purposely participate within their shared social reality. Less critically minded individuals ascribe to these actors, with their heightened social awareness, a symbolic aura of power. Faced with the external, general, and coercive Durkhiemian social fact, power is the greater degree of control certain individuals exercise in their own lives vis-a-vis other individuals subject to the same social constraints. Given the commonality of social life in its structure and function in a given social group, it is difficult to explain why some are powerful when others apparently not. Power is not then considered inherent in the individual but is assigned to symbols and signs commonly held to be 'powerful'. However manifested, the symbolic quality of power resides in the ability to grasp those mercurial aspects of a shared social reality and have them obtain as 'true' social reality.

> It does not matter whether the things shared are religious or political symbols (variously described as "dominant", "key", "pivotal", or "central" symbols); the point is that the person or party who controls the assignment of "meaning" to them can also control the mobilizational efficacy their central cultural position has traditionally assigned to them (Turner 1975: 146).

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Individuals intent on the reassignment of meaning in effecting political action do not manoeuver uncontested. Reinterpretation of the framework of meaning challenges individual or group apprehension of the social reality and their place in it. Vested interests are at stake and conflict situations result in a struggle for power. Turner maintains that the elements of the social drama-breach, crisis, redress and reintegration--represent the phased process of contestation and can be isolated for study in any society or whatever level of scale and complexity (Turner 1974:33). Although each society "could be expected to have its own 'style'...its aesthetic of conflict and redress..." comparison of the profile of social drama in different societies would make it possible to sharpen understanding of social processes (Turner 1971:352, 353).

The four phases of the social drama are discernible in the Hawaiian material. Public breach of 'norm goverened social relations' (Turner 1957:90) did occur at the inauguration of Liholiho. Breach is, however, an equivocal concept. Kaahumanu did not actually contravene social rules; she in fact reinforced them by publicly manifesting the symbolic values associated with her person. Kaahumanu's wearing of the yellow-feather cloak, a garment reserved for males, could be interpreted as breach of as in keeping with her actual and symbolic status. For wasn't Kaahumanu a childless woman, a female-male, accustomed to living and working in the realm of male activities; wasn't she a law-giver, pillar of the community, mother of the people, the giver of life? Kaahumanu was all these and more, as members of the priesthood and ambitious aristocracy readily discerned. By utilizing overtly non-political symbols, Kaahumanu's symbolic power became 'politically significant' (Cohen 1979:87). Her deft manipulation of ambiguous symbolic formations makes it unclear to those concerned just what has been breached, while at the same time they are sure that something has indeed occurred.

Kaahumanu made good her symbolic statement by issuing legal edicts to abrogate the eating taboo. Her continual pressure in this regard led to a major cleavage in relevant social relations and a situation of crisi. Adjustive mechanisms were of no avail and redressive action took the form of total conflict in civil war. Reintegration was not the resumption of the ancien regime, but was the rebuilding of Hawaiian social life according to Kaahumanu's design.

CONCLUSIONS

The dramatic model is useful as a tool for the organization and analysis of data and does indeed point out salient features of social process. Used in conjunction with Cohen's notion of socio-cultural causation as dramatic transformations and concomitant relational changes the dramatic model necessitated a closer examination of the creators of the drama. This led in turn to a more dynamic interpretation of role, and actor. The concept of power was seen to rely upon critical awareness and creative manipulation of social symbols and meanings by certain individuals. No attempt was made to fit the data precisely within the dramatic model, this is much too Procrustean an approach, and tends to deny any insights the data may have to offer which are contrary to the model. Essentially, the model is concerned with process, and process is merely the natural undirected evolution of an organism as a result of its structural and functional makeup. This is particularly the case with social process, and the mechanisms of endogenous structural-functional change are difficult if not impossible to elicit and recourse is made to assumed causalities resultant from externally imposed factors. The mechanism of social change resides in purposeful, creative activity, not mere ongoing process and such practical endeavours are only within the realm of consciously doing and acting individuals. Previous explanations for the socio-cultural change in Hawaiian social life have neglected to take this into account, to their detriment. Any theory of social change must view transformation as the creative performance of individuals within the social framework of meaning, for it is here that process becomes praxis and socicultural continuity merges into sociocultural change.

NOTES

1. At the 1980 Annual Meeting of the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania, Karen Ito presented a paper entitled "Historical Perspectives on the Political Power of Hawaiian Women." Ito had access to more extensive bibliographic resources than I was able to muster and should her paper be published it will be a valuable contribution to the Hawaiian literature. Both Ito and I arrived at similar conclusions, particularly those pertaining to the important role of women in Hawaiian society.

2. Mortuary ceremonies and attendant ritual and taboo are extremely important aspects of social life in Pacific soceities. See for example, Bendann, 1930; Rivers, 1968: Weiner, 1976.

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