DANCE IN THE SOCIETY AND HAWAIIAN ISLANDS
AS PRESENTED BY THE EARLY WRITERS, 1767-1842

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PREFACE

Although literature abounds in material on the dance of the Society and the Hawaiian Islands, there has been little research undertaken to discover the nature of this dance before it revealed evidence of extensive European influence. Scattered throughout the journals of the early European voyagers, and in the works of some translated native manuscripts, there is considerable information on this subject. It has been the purpose of the writer to collect and compile all the available material concerning the subject and written between 1767, the date of the discovery of Tahiti of the Society Islands, by Samuel Wallis, and 1842, the date of the end of the United States Exploring Expedition under the command of Charles Wilkes. This final date has been selected because of the importance of the expedition and because written accounts of the dance after this date show evidence of an increasing amount of European influence on the dance. In addition to assembling the material, the writer has prepared a brief classification of the dance together with a few comparisons that were apparent. The study should be considered primarily a compilation of references to the subject rather than an analytical or comparative work; for there is no assurance that the available material, however abundant, is a complete or unbiased picture of the dance of these islands. References to the dance by the Society Islanders and the Hawaiians in their tales, epics, songs, and chants are outside the province of this study.

As the dance of no culture should be considered as an entity apart from its instrumental and vocal accompaniment, there has been included in the study references to these elements. The musical references, however, are not complete. Helen H. Roberts, in her book entitled Ancient Hawaiian Music, has presented a very thorough description and analysis of Hawaiian
music; and E. S. Craighill Handy, in his book entitled *History and Culture in the Society Islands*, has included much valuable information on the subject of Tahitian music. The present writer suggests these books for more exhaustive study of the music of Hawaii and Tahiti.

To supplement the Hawaiian references, there has been included an interview with Mary Kawena Pukui, whose family has included dancers for generations. This will allow the reader to compare the information recorded by the early, and for the most part European, writers with that furnished by a native Hawaiian informant of established reputation.

The value of this study lies in the fact that it is the first known study to concentrate solely on the dance of the Society and the Hawaiian Islands at the period in history before European influence upon the dance had changed it to a hybrid form. The value of the study lies also in the fact that the writer has relied completely on primary sources for information concerning the description of the dance. Such works as *Polynesian Religion* by Handy, *Unwritten Literature of Hawaii* by Nathaniel B. Emerson, *Ancient Tahiti* by Teuira Henry, and the books by Roberts and Handy mentioned above, are valuable secondary sources.

The research materials have been made available through the University of Hawaii Library and the Bishop Museum Library. The writer wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Margaret Titcomb, Museum Librarian, in helping to locate material.
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CHAPTER I
THE DANCE IN THE SOCIETY ISLANDS

It is the purpose of this chapter to present references to the dance of the Society Islands as recorded by the early writers. As this is a compilation of material, there will be no analysis on the part of the present writer. The material is arranged in seven somewhat flexible sections: general observations and remarks; place of dance; music and instruments; costume and ornamentation; occasions and kinds of dance; the arici society and the dance; and missionary and other European influence on the dance.

1. General Observations and Remarks

Reports indicate that among activities of the Society Islanders, amusements, particularly singing and dancing, held a prominent position.  

1 William Ellis observed that, "The Tahitians are a social people, naturally fond of conversation, song, and dance; ..." Later he added, "As a people, the South Sea Islanders were peculiarly addicted to pleasure, and to their music, dances, and other amusements, nearly as much of their time was devoted as to all other avocations." This estimation of the freedom to engage in social activities at will seems to agree with James Wilson's views on the subject. He reported that

1. British missionary and author in Tahiti. He visited Hawaii in 1822, and 1823-1824, wrote prolifically and in great detail, and was very familiar with the native language.


3. Ibid., I, p. 193.

4. Captain of the ship Duff on a missionary voyage, 1796-1798, to the South Seas.
the Society Islanders' life was a life without toil. The people, free to
do as they wished, enjoyed great leisure. Their sports and amusements
were various and included dancing, swimming, javelin throwing, shooting
with bows and arrows, and wrestling. Both men and women participated in
each of these activities, but in separate groups.

Otto von Kotzebue indicated that other forms of amusements were
popular when he stated that their amusements consisted chiefly of "music,
dancing, mock-fights, and theatrical representations." His general re­
marks on the dance centered largely around the female dancers. He stated
that although married women were forbidden to dance, it was his opinion
that girls excelled in the dance.

Captain James Cook explained something of the general nature of
Society Islanders' amusements.

Their amusements all tend to excite and continue their
amorous passions; and songs, of which they are immoderately
fond, answer the same purpose. But as a constant succession

5. James Wilson, A Missionary Voyage to the Southern Pacific Ocean, . . .
Hereafter cited as Wilson, A Missionary Voyage.

6. Russian naval officer; cadet under Krusenstern on the Nadeshda, 1804;
lieutenant in command of the Rurick, 1816, 1817; post captain in
command of the Fredriatie, 1824-25.

7. Otto von Kotzebue, A New Voyage Round the World, in the Years 1823,
Kotzebue, New Voyage.

8. The famous British discoverer, who made three voyages to the Pacific.
He discovered the Hawaiian Islands on his third voyage on January
18, 1778. On a second visit during this voyage he was killed at
Kealakekua, Hawaii, February 14, 1779.
of sensual enjoyments must cloy, we found, that they frequently varied them to more refined subject, ... 

George Forster noticed that entire communities seemed to be in a gay mood, when the *ariori*, society of strolling entertainers, appeared. At such times it was not unusual for entertainments to appear at any time or at any place.

In the following generalizations about music and dance, Ellis spoke of the precision of the dancers. As other reference will illustrate, this was one of the outstanding characteristics of the dance.

Their dances were numerous and diversified; and were performed by men and women—in many the parties did not dance together. Their movements were generally slow, but regular and exact; the arms, during their dances, were exercised as much as their feet. The drum and the flute were the music by which they were led; and the dance was usually accompanied by song and ballads. *Ori* is the native word for dance, but each kind of dance had a distinct name. He explained further that the word *heiva*, which was usually restricted in use to mean "dance" by the voyagers, was a general name for amusement. Hence, *heiva-moana* meant wrestling; *heiva-vivo* applied to flute playing; and *heiva-ude* designated singing.

Using the term *heiva* to mean dance, Wilson also wrote of the synchronized movements of the dance.


10. British naturalist, with Captain Cook on his first two voyages; son of John Forster.


13. Ibid., I, p. 204.
Their dances are various. The heiva is performed by men and women in separate parties. The women are most gracefully dressed, and keep exact time with the music during the performance, observing a regular movement both of hands and feet, though nothing resembling our dances.\footnote{14}

\footnote{15} John Reinhold Forster's general observations, remarks, and opinions regarding dance, music, and dramatic performances of the Society Islands were made about 1775. They are detailed and are presented below almost in their entirety.

The most necessary ideas relative to food, garment, and habitation, form the first part of the education thought to be necessary among these islanders. The fertility of these isles, the mildness of their climate, together with the happy and joyful temper of their inhabitants, give them a general turn for sensual pleasures: the least happy occurrence in life is sufficient to inspire them with a high degree of glee, which sets their whole body in motion; they begin to frisk and dance, this makes a cadenced or measured breathing necessary; if in this situation men wishes to communicate his ideas to the by-standers, he will naturally give his words that kind of measure or cadence, which he has adopted with his breathing, this, together with the voice of exultation may be considered as the first origin of singing and music: if the ideas he wants to express by words, are the true feelings of the man, they will of course be more animated; the images rush forth with uncommon rapidity, he has not time to express the idea itself, he substitutes therefore any thing nearly related or similar to it, he pursues every lively quality of the thing or person he speaks of, and thus gives rise to poetry, its imagery, metaphors, similes, and the frequency of epithets. When these arts have subsisted in a country for some time, the inhabitants find likewise a pleasure in representing by mimic actions and words certain well known scenes of life, interspersed with some coarse jokes, and some strokes of unpolished wit. The better they are able to imitate the true characters, the stronger they express the disharmony or disproportion of those actions or characters, and the greater is the pleasure they procure to their audience; and thus do they give life and existence to the drama, a new kind of diversion. After these arts have once been applauded and become fashionable in a nation, it is very natural that either parents or some other persons, who have attained to some degree of perfection in these

\footnote{14} A. Wilson, A Missionary Voyage, p. 370.

\footnote{15} British naturalist, with Captain Cook on his first two voyages; father of George Forster.
arts, should communicate to the rising generation the principles upon which they acted in order to obtain some eminence in their profession: and thus the second part of education is carried on among the more polished nations of the South Sea. Their dances, poetry, music, and drums, are however by no means to be considered as performances which have any degree of perfection or excellence; they are the first rude beginnings of arts, and for that very reason they are in more general use, than the same arts are among us: females commonly dance at Tahiti and the Society-isles, and men but seldom; however they are all acquainted with the steps and motions usual in this diversion. Every individual can compose verses extemporarily, and sing them at the same time; and their dramatic performances are commonly extemporaneous pieces, and a mixture of music, poetry, and dancing, so that the Improvisadores might here find in the opposite hemisphere people possessed of this admired qualification.

The measured steps of their women, keep excellent time with their drums; which are beaten by fingers briskly and loud, and commonly accompanied by songs.16

2. Place of Dance

Those dances of an informal nature, such as those that were a part of native games, generally took place outside in the shade. The more formal dances, particularly the dramatic performances, were most often performed in a building constructed especially for that purpose. On some occasions performances were given in the open. Wilson explained,

The heiva is usually performed by torch-light... They generally dance under cover; but, by day, before the houses, unless, it rains, having large mats spread on the grass.17

The missionary Don José Varela also mentioned heivas which took place out of doors. He reported, "these take place out of doors and are attended by the whole populace, including, when given in his honour, the King and his family."18


17. Wilson, op. cit., p. 370.

18. Spanish missionary sent to the Society Islands about 1774.

Generally, however, the more formal dances, the *heivas*, were given in a building reserved for entertainment. These buildings were sketchily described by Ellis.

These *heivas* were sometimes held in the open air, but more frequently performed under the cover of the houses, erected in most of the districts for public entertainments. These structures were frequently spacious, and well built; consisting of a roof supported by pillars, without any shelter for the sides. A low fence, called *aumoa*, surrounded the house; and the inside was covered with mats, on which the company sat and the dancers performed. 20

Wilson, George Mortimer, and George Forster also described the building in which the dramatic dances were performed. Although the individual buildings varied somewhat, the general pattern seemed to have included a house with one or more sides open, a well defined dancing area separate from the spectators' area, and mats on the dancing area.

The houses in which the *heivas* are performed are open at the ends and in front, the back being screened by matting of cocoa-nut leaves: round the ends and in front of the house there is a low railing of about a foot in height, within which the performers exhibit; and without, the audience sit or stand: the area before the house and the floor are all covered with matting. 22

Mortimer witnessed a *heiva* on August 16, 1789. He described the place of performance thus:

We were seated in an area, inclosed by a low fence, opposite to a long shed or theatre, appropriated solely to these kind of amusements. The spectators, who were very numerous, ranged themselves on the outside of the inclosure. 23

The theater building which George Forster described was one at which he saw a dramatic dance performed for a chief in September, 1773. He wrote,

we were invited by him to become spectators of a dramatic dance or heeva; which was the more readily accepted by us, as we had never seen one before. The place where it was performed was an area, about twenty-five yards long and ten wide, enclosed between two houses which stood parallel to each other. The one was a spacious building, capable of containing a great multitude of spectators; but the other was only a narrow hut, which was supported on a row of posts, and open towards the area, but perfectly closed up with reeds and mats on the opposite sides; one corner of it was matted on all sides, and this was the dressing-room of the performers. The whole area was spread with three large mats of the best workmanship, striped with black on the edges. In the open part of the smaller hut we saw three drums of different sizes, cut out of solid wood, and covered with shark's skin, which were continually struck with the fingers only by four or five men with amazing dexterity. The largest of these drums was about three feet high and one in diameter. 24

On certain occasions when the "heeva or public dance" was presented for a chief, the place of performance was outside his house. When the "public heeva" was a special kind called the "heeva raa", in which only royalty performed, no one else was allowed to enter the house or area where it was performed.

There was found three reports, two by John Turnbull, of dancing in canoes. The first time he witnessed this was at sunset on September 23, 1801, just off the island of Haitia. Of this incident Turnbull recorded only that his ship was "... visited by three natives in a canoe, who amused us with their songs and dances: ..." The following year, 1802, 28

25. Ibid., I, p. 412.
27. British trader, part owner with John Buyers, in charge of cargo and trade, the Margaret.
Turnbull and his crew were again entertained by sea-going dancers. On this occasion they were off the island of Huahine, and the performers and attendants came out in "... procession, in a large double canoe, having a platform or stage erected across the fore part, on which the dancers and musicians sat." There were also smaller canoes with native spectators.

The strolling arici troupes had at their disposal, for entertainments, any place that they desired in a given community. Their favorite places were the theatre buildings or their canoes. Ellis described in some detail such a troupe in their canoes as they approached an island.

Substantial, spacious, and sometimes highly ornamented houses, were erected in several districts throughout most of the islands, principally for their accommodation, and the exhibition of their performances. Sometimes they performed in their canoes, as they approached the shore; especially if they had the king of the island, or any principal chief, on board their fleet. When one of these companies thus advanced towards the land, with their streamers floating in the wind, their drums and flutes sounding, and the Areois, attended by their chief, who acted as their prompter, appeared on a stage erected for the purpose, with their wild distortions of person, antic gestures, painted bodies, and vociferated songs, mingling with the sound of the drum and flute, the dashing of the sea, and the rolling and breaking of the surf, on the adjacent reef; the whole must have presented a ludicrous imposing spectacle, accompanied with a confusion of sight and sound, of which it is not very easy to form an adequate idea.

3. MUSIC AND INSTRUMENTS

Music, both vocal and instrumental, was an integral part of the dances and dramatic performances of the Society Islands. The native songs concerned a variety of subjects, and they were both traditional ballads and verses composed extemporaneously. They were often described

29. Ibid., pp. 158-159. See above for further description of this performance.

30. Ellis, Polynesian Researches, I, pp. 236.
as being both monotonous and nasal but always performed in strict and exact time. The accompanying instruments were drums, truncheons, and nose flutes. Shell trumpets were used but not in connection with singing and dancing.

Of the nature and subject matter of the songs and chants, Captain Cook said that many were designed to arouse the natives' "amorous passions." On the other hand, they took much pleasure in chanting their triumphs in war, and their occupations in peace; their travels to other islands, and adventures there; and the peculiar beauties, and superior advantages of their own island over the rest, or of different parts of it over other less favourite districts. This marks, that they receive great delight from music; and though they rather expressed a dislike to our complicated compositions, yet were they always delighted with the more melodious sounds produced singly on our instruments, as approaching nearer to the simplicity of their own.  

Ellis contributed additional information about the subject matter of the songs and also explained that the historical ballads were taught to the natives while they were quite young.

Their songs were generally historical ballads, which varied in their nature with the subjects to which they referred. They were exceedingly numerous, and adapted to every department of society, and every period of life. The children were early taught these udes, and took great delight in their recital. Many of their songs referred to the legends or achievements of their gods, some to the exploits of their distinguished heroes and chieftains; while others were often, when recited on public occasions, accompanied with gestures and actions corresponding to the events described, and assumed a histrionic character. In some cases, and on public occasions, the action presented a kind of pantomime. They had one song for the fishermen, another for the canoe builder, a song for cutting down the tree, a song for launching the canoe. But they were, with few exceptions, either idolatrous or impure; and were, consequently, abandoned when the people renounced their pagan worship.

31. Cook and King, A Voyage to the Pacific, II, pp. 149-150.

32. Ellis op. cit., I, pp. 199-200.
The extemporaneous songs, accompanied by drum and flute, were considered "pretty" by Kotzebue. John Hawkesworth, in describing a performance of June 12, 1769, indicated that songs might be composed extemporaneously and that the subject matter was likely to be of a contemporary nature.

Mr. Banks, in his morning walk this day, met a number of the natives whom, upon enquiry, he found to be travelling musicians; and having learnt where they were to be at night, we all repaired to the place. The band consisted of two flutes and three drums, and we found a great number of people assembled upon the occasion. The drummers accompanied the music with their voices, and, to our great surprise, we discovered that we were generally the subject of the song. We did not expect to have found among the uncivilized inhabitants of this sequestered spot, a character, which has been the subject of such praise and veneration where genius and knowledge have been most conspicuous; yet these were the bards or minstrels of Otaheite. Their song was unpremeditated, and accompanied with music; they were continually going about from place to place, and they were rewarded by the master of the house, and the audience, with such things as one wanted and the other could spare. 35

John Forster also observed that the verses were sometimes extemporaneously composed and concerned immediate topics. The language was of a poetic nature and fell into rhyme or blank verse. The flute he considered limited in perfection and harmony.

Their music is by no means so perfect or harmonious as their dances or poetry; this branch of the polite arts having made but an indifferent progress among them. The flute in the hands of a Taheitean has no more than three holes, and is therefore incapable of a variety of notes, and the music they execute upon this instrument is but a poor humming; even their vocal music has no greater compass than three or four notes, however some of their songs were not quite disagreeable. The inhabitants of the Friendly Islands are better versed in music than the Taheiteans, and the tunes of their women had something pleasing to our ears when we

34. British, LL.D; Used official journals and wrote in first person of the voyage of Byron, Wallis, Carteret, and Cook.
first heard them at E-Aoohee or Middleburgh. The inhabitants of Tanna and New Zealand have in their songs greater variation and extent, which certainly intimate better and more improved talents for this branch of the polite arts.

The verses of the Tahiteans are always delivered by singing, in the true ancient Greek style, and what is still more remarkable, we found that many of these verses were the productions of the moment, for we observed that their poetry had some relation to the persons on board our ship, or to some transactions which happened during our stay: but they had likewise many couplets or songs which had no reference to the persons or transactions occasioned by the presence of our ship. Their verses seem to be regularly divided into feet, and they observe the quantity and express it in singing. As to the beauties of their poetical style, we were not able to judge of them; because we were not sufficiently acquainted with their language; thus much however we observed that many words occurred in their poems which were not used in common conversation. The women on board our ship, seeing in the night the moon shine, frequently sung the following couplet or pehai.

Te oo wa no te Ha lama
Te oo wa te hee naro.

The cloud within the moon
That cloud I love!

We will transcribe one couplet from Hawkesworth which the natives composed when the Endeavour was at O-Taheitee.

Epaha tayo Malania taiye
No Tabane to notawa whanno maiye.

Perhaps with friendly light, this moon we view,
Has guided Banks, while to his friends he flew.

From the purport of this couplet it appears, that it was made when the moon was shining; and it may likewise be observed that the syllables at the end of each verse form rhymes, which cannot be thought to be effect of accident, though all the other couplets in Hawkesworth, together with these two now before us, are without rhyme. From whence it seems to follow, that their poetry admits both of rhymes and of blank verse. 36

Not later than 1836, Frederick Debell Bennett recorded information regarding singing on the island of Raiatea. It was his opinion that the singing was discordant, monotonous, and nasal, but that the natives'
sense of timing was perfect. The singing of the women was superior to that of the men, who seldom sang. The songs were sometimes simple native airs "with extemporaneous words on the subject of some recent or passing event. At other times, psalms were sung in a plaintive air, or the songs were ... the lively songs sung by seamen when heaving at the capstan; 33

The following description of the orchestra which accompanied the heivas reveals further facts about the unusual type of singing that was prevalent in the Society Islands.

Ces danses, plus ou moins indécentes, étaient exécutées au son d'un orchestre composé: 1) d'un ou plusieurs tambours ou plutôt grosses caisses, dont le son s'entend do très loin; 2) d'un certain nombre de flageolets en bambou dans lesquels on souffle avec le nez: leur son est tout a fait analogue à celui d'un mirliton vulgaire; 3) d'un chœur d'hommes disposés sur un ou plusieurs rangs et ordinairement assis, répondent par un refrain cadencé, guttural et inarticulé, à un chant nasillard exécuté souvent en solo par une voix très haute et très claire. L'acteur du solo fait le plus souvent les fonctions de chef d'orchestre; les gens du chœur qui lui répondent en hurlant en cadence assaisonnent leur musique de gestes bizarres exécutés du reste avec une précision duensemble très remarquable. Si le chœur est nombreux, et que vous soyez subitement introduit parmi eux pour la première fois, il y a gros à parier que la tête vous tournera comme si la salle entière avait un mouvement de rotation.39

38. Frederick Debell Bennett, Narrative of a Whaling Voyage Round the Globe, ... 1833 to 1836 ... (London, 1840), I, pp. 140-142. Hereafter cited as Bennett, Narrative of a Whaling Voyage.

39. Émile de Bövis, "Tahitian Society at the time of its Earliest Contact with European Influences", The Hakluyt Society, Works, ser. 2, no. 36, III, (1914), pp. 243-244. Hereafter cited as Bövis, "Tahitian Society". Translation by present writer:

These dances, more or less indecent, were executed to the sound of an orchestra composed: 1) of one or several drums, or rather, large caasks of which the noise could be heard at quite a distance; 2) of a certain number of bamboo flutes into which one blows with the nose; 3) of a chorus of men arranged in one or several rows and usually seated, responding in a rhythmic refrain, guttural and inarticulate, to a nasal chant often executed by a very high and clear solo voice. The performer of the solo usually performs the functions of orchestra leader; the members of the chorus who reply to him by howling in unison, season their music with bizarre gestures executed with remarkable unity and precision. If the chorus is numerous and you are suddenly thrust into their midst for the first time, it is quite likely that your head will whirl as if the entire room were going round.
The nasal vocalization was explained by Turnbull as a vocalized inhalation and exhalation of breath. On the occasion of a celebration honoring the return of a chief and his sister, the arioi performed. The musicians made a great variety of sounds just by exhalation and inhalation of breath. Only a few words were chanted at the beginning of a song. Then there was no more but this variety of tones all in perfect concert in exact unison, regularity, and good time. When the women were through dancing, one hundred and fifty young men seated themselves in two rows with an avenue, seven feet wide, between them. They chanted, inhaled, and exhaled, as the women had done.

Joseph Banks recorded two vocal concerts that were accompanied by nose flutes and, on one occasion, drums. He wrote that on April 22, 1769, four persons entertained him by performing on flutes, which were sounded with one nostril while the other was stopped with their thumbs. To this, four others sang and kept good time. For half an hour, they played one tune of not more than five or six notes. On June 12, 1769, Banks met some traveling musicians during his morning walk and inquired of them where they would be that evening. He was told, and that night he went to the designated place, there to find a crowd of people around the band. This consisted of two flutes and three drums, the drummers accompanying with their voices. They sang many songs, mostly in praise of the guests.


41. Wealthy British country gentleman, with a passion for natural history; sailed with Captain Cook on his first voyage.

Banks added that these entertainers go from house to house, and the master of the house and the audience pay them in cloth, meat, beads, or anything else they can spare and the other wants.

More detailed information was given by Hawkesworth when he described a performance on four flutes as follows:

On the 22nd, (April, 1769) Tooahah gave us a specimen of the music of this country; four persons performed upon flutes which had only two stops, and therefore could not sound more than four notes, by half tones; they were sounded like our German flutes, except that the performer, instead of applying it to his mouth, blew into it with one nostril, while he stopped the other with his thumb: to these instruments four other persons sang, and kept very good time; but only one tune was played during the whole concert.44

John Turnbull remarked that Society Islanders were passionately attached to music. He observed that, "every feature of their face, and member of the body, bear testimony to its impression, and are no inconsiderable arguments of their sensibility and social affection." They loved to watch and to listen to European music and dance, especially the Scottish bag-pipe. Turnbull added that the Society Islanders had only four notes and they were "not the most harmonious in the gamut."45

Kotzebue seemed to be in agreement with Turnbull regards the quantity of the notes, and Sydney Parkinson was in agreement concerning the quality of them. In describing the musical instruments, Kotzebue stated that they were simple and of two kinds, a nose flute which produced four notes, and a drum made of a hollow tree trunk. Parkinson declared,

43. Ibid., p. 99.
45. Turnbull, A Voyage Round the World, pp. 141-142.
46. Botanical draughtsman to Joseph Banks on his expedition round the world; died at sea, January 26, 1771.
These people have invented a musical instrument, somewhat like a flute, . . . which they blow into through their noses; but their notes, which are but very few, are rude and ungrateful.48

About 1775, Varela wrote of the musical instruments that he had seen.

The musical instruments they make use of are a fife with three holes, on which they wind very plaintive air with their nostrils, large and small drums that they tap with the hand, and two chunks of a sonorous wood, one thicker than the other and of unequal length, which on being struck with the two small truncheons, give out a sound with some show of harmony about it.49

According to Bennett, the favorite instrument was the hoe or reed which was played with the mouth and fingers and which produced a tone similar to that of the bagpipe. The upper extremity was split on one side and encircled by a "ring of tow or other soft material, by raising or depressing which the aperture is enlarged or diminished," to produce a graver or more acute tone. The hoe was usually played in concert, or as accompaniment to dances. The reeds were tuned with extreme accuracy prior to each performance. The musicians sat close together in a circle and bet their heads to their knees. A few embellished their performances with a flourish of fingers. The dancers were agile, but their attitudes were "opposed to our ideas of poetry of motion", and sometimes their allusions were indelicate. The usual place and time for such performances was outdoors at night.

Ellis wrote the most complete account of the instruments and the occasions on which they were used.


Their music wanted almost every quality that could render it agreeable to an ear accustomed to harmony, and was deficient in all that constitutes excellence. It was generally boisterous and wild, and, with the exception of the soft and plaintive warblings of the native flute, was distinguished by nothing so much as its discordant, deafening sounds.

The principal musical instrument . . . was the pahu, or drum. This varied in size and shape, according to the purpose for which it was designed. Their drums were all cut out of a solid piece of wood. The block out of which they were made, being hollowed out from one end, remaining solid at the other, and having the top covered with a piece of shark's skin, occasioned their frequently resembling, in construction and appearance, a kettledrum. The pua and the rea, which are remarkably close-grained and durable, were esteemed the most suitable kinds of wood for the manufacture of their drums. The large drums were called pahu, and the smaller ones toere. The pahu ra, sacred drum, which was ruu, or beaten, on every occasion of extraordinary ceremony at the idol temple, was particularly large, standing some-times eight feet high. The sides of one, . . . was not more than a foot in diameter, but many were much larger . . .

The drums used in their heivas and dances were ingeniously made. Their construction resembled that of those employed in the temple, the skin forming the head was fastened to the open work at the bottom by strings of cinet, made with the fibres of the cocoa-nut husk. Drums were among the martial music of the Tahitians, and were used to animate the men when proceeding to battle. The drums beaten as accompaniments to the recital of their songs, were the same in shape, but smaller. They were all neatly made, and finely polished. The large drums were beaten with two heavy sticks, the smaller ones with the naked hand. When used, they were not suspended from the shoulders of the performers, but fixed upon the ground, and consequently produced no very musical effect. The sound of the large drum at the temple, which was sometimes beaten at midnight, and associations connected therewith, were most terrific. The inhabitants of Neeva, . . . have frequently told me, that at the midnight hour, when the victim was probably to be offered on the following day, they have often been startled from their slumbers by the deep, thrilling sound of the sacred drum; and as its portentous sounds have reverberated among the rocks of the valley, every individual through the whole district has trembled with fear of the gods, or apprehension of being seized as the victim for sacrifice.

The sound of the trumpet, or shell, a species of murex, used in war to stimulate in action, by the priests in the temple, and also by the herald, and others on board their fleets, was more horrific than that of the drum. The largest shells were usually selected for this purpose, and were sometimes above a foot in length, and seven or eight inches in diameter at the mouth. In order to facilitate the blowing of this trumpet, they made a perforation, about an inch in diameter, near the apex of the shell. Into this they inserted a bamboo cane, about three feet in length, which was secured by binding it to the shell with fine braid; the aperture was rendered air-tight by cementing the outsides of it with a resinous gum from the breadfruit tree. These shells were blown when a procession walked to the temple, or their warriors marched to battle, at the inauguration of the king, during the worship at the temple, or when a tabu, or restriction, was imposed in the name of the gods . . .
The *ihara* was another exceedingly noisy instrument. It was formed from the single joint of a large bamboo cane, cut off a short distance beyond the two ends or joints. In the centre, a long aperture was made from one joint towards the other. The *ihora*, when used, was placed horizontally on the ground, and beaten with sticks. It was not used in their worship, but simply as an amusement; its sounds were harsh and discordant . . .

The *vivo*, or flute, . . . was usually a bamboo cane, about an inch in diameter, and twelve or eighteen inches long. The joint in the cane formed one end of the flute; the aperture through which it was blown was close to the end; it seldom had more than four holes, three in the upper side covered with the fingers, and one beneath, against which the thumb was placed. Sometimes, however, there were four holes on the upper side. It was occasionally plain, but more frequently ornamented, by being partially scorched or burnt with a hot stone, or having fine and beautifully plaited strings of human hair wound round it alternately with rings of neatly-braided cinet. It was not blown with the mouth, but the nostril. The performer usually placed the thumb of the right hand upon the right nostril, applied the aperture of the flute, which he held with the fingers of his right hand, to the other nostril, and, moving his fingers on the holes, produced his music. The sound was soft, and not unpleasant, though the notes were few; it was generally played in a plaintive strain, though frequently used as an accompaniment to the *pehes*, or songs. These were closely identified both with the music and the dances. The *ihara*, the drum and the flute, were generally accompanied by the song, as was also the native dance. 51

### 4. Costume and Ornamentation

Dancing was an occasion which demanded wearing one's best apparel, especially in the case of women dancers. The native girls wore their best clothes even when they participated in a dance-game that resembled football. Their traditional dance costume was elaborate and surprisingly "modern" in design. It was fashioned of many yards of *tapa* and ornamented with feathers, flowers, and/or braids of human hair. As John Forster observed, the dresses were so ornate that the performance was probably judged partially by the costumes of the ladies.

53. See below, p.130 for sketch of costume.
The dress of the women in the greater dramatic dances ... is not peculiarly connected with that art; however, so much appears from their clothes collected into long petticoats, that they by no means think the excellence of the performance to consist in the graceful motion of their hands and fingers, they shew in my opinion, the greatest dexterity and elegance. 54

The heads were likewise adorned with much finery. On one occasion ten young ladies danced

with their heads most magnificently ornamented with beads, red feathers, shells of the most beautiful colours, and wreathed with flowers in so elegant a style, as hardly to be excelled; 55

In his description of them, Wilson mentioned the fact that because of the great bulk of the costumes, few dancers appeared at one time. On occasions when the entertainment was performed before a chief, the dresses were given to him at the end of the dance.

The women’s dress is a long white petticoat of fine cloth, with a red border, and a red stripe about three inches from the bottom; a kind of vest, or corslet, made of white or coloured cloth, comes close up under the arms, and covers the breast; several tassels of the same hang around the waist, and fall as low as the knees. Two or three red or black feathers on each fore-finger supply the place of rings. On the back, from the shoulder to the hip, are fixed two large pieces of cloth neatly plaited, like a fan or furbelow, and edged with red. Their heads are ornamented with the tamou, or vast braids of human hair wrapped round like a turban, and stuck full of fragrant and beautiful flowers, intermixed with beads and shark’s teeth:

Any number of women may perform at once; but as the dress is very expansive, seldom more than two or four dance; and when this is done before the chief, the dresses are presented to him after the heiva is finished; and these contain thirty or forty yards of cloth, from one to four yards wide. 56

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Ellis stated that when the hura, entertainment which served somewhat the same purpose as a debut, was performed, the dancers numbered from one to five or six girls. They of course wore their best clothes. Ellis described the gowns thus:

Their dress was singular, but elegant. The head was ornamented with tamau, a fine and beautiful braid of human hair, wound round the head in the form of a turban. A triple wreath of scarlet, white, and yellow flowers, composed of the auto, the fragrant gardenia, or Cape jessamine, and the beslaria laurifolia, tastefully interwoven, adorned the curious head-dress. The tahema, a loose vest of spotted cloth, covered the lower part of the bosom. The tihi, of fine white stiffened cloth, frequently edged with a scarlet border, gathered like a large frill, passed under the arms, and reached below the waist; while the araitihi, a handsome fine cloth, fastened round the waist with a band or sash, covered the feet. The breasts were ornamented with rainbow-coloured mother-of-pearl shells, or the pui, which was a covering of curiously wrought net-work and feathers.

The dances which were performed in canoes were apparently no different from others, and on these occasions the usual elaborate costume was worn. Of one such performance which he observed, Turnbull wrote:

The women were dressed in a sort of long bell hooped petticoat of their own cloth, ornamented with a purple border. That answered the purpose of a hoop was a couple of stuffed pads bound round the waist to support and distend the petticoat; round the body was wrapped a large quantity of cloth; fastened with bandages; and opposite to each breast was placed a bunch of black feathers. They also wore a kind of turban, adorned with a variety of flowers.

George Forster gave a detailed account of the costumes of the female performers in a "dramatic dance or heeva", which he saw in September, 1773.

Their dress was remarkably different from the usual fashion of these islands. It consisted of a piece of brown cloth, of the country fabric; or, instead of that, of a piece of blue European cloth, wrapped round the breast, so as to resemble the close dresses which our ladies wear; a kind of ruff of four rows of their cloth, alternately red and white, rested on their hips, being tied on with a string; and from thence a great quantity of white cloth descended

57. Ellis, Polynesian Researches, I, pp. 215-216.
to the feet, forming an ample petticoat, which we expected, from its length, would be a considerable impediment to their agility, as it fairly trailed on the ground on all sides. The neck, shoulders, and arms were left uncovered, but the head was ornamented with a kind of turban, about eight inches high, made of several skains of plaited human hair, which they call tamow. These being laid above each other in circles, which enlarged towards the top, there was a deep hollow left in the middle, which they had filled up with a great quantity of sweet-scented flowers of the (gardenia) Cape jasmine. But all the front of the turban was ornamented with three or four rows of a small white flower, which formed little stars, and had as elegant an effect on the jetty black hair as if it had been set out with pearls.\textsuperscript{59}

The women had on their heads a quantity of tamou, or plaited hair, which was rolled, and flowers of gardenia were stuck between the interstices, making a head-dress truly elegant. Their shoulders, arms, and breasts as low as their arms were bare, below this they were covered with black cloth, and under each shoulder was placed a bunch of black feathers much as our ladies' nosegays or bouquets. On their hips rested a quantity of cloth plaited very full, which reached almost up to their arms, and fell down below into long petticoats, reaching below their feet, which they managed with as much dexterity as our opera dancers could have done; these plaits were brown and white alternately, but the petticoats were all white. In this dress they advanced sideways, keeping excellent time to the drums, which beat briskly and loud: They soon began to shake their hips, giving the folds of cloth that lay upon them a very quick motion, continued during the whole dance. They sometimes stood, sometimes sat, and sometimes rested on their knees and elbows, generally moving their fingers with a quickness scarcely to be imagined.\textsuperscript{60}

The same performance was recorded by Hawkesworth, who added some details which Banks omitted:

In the course of our walk we met with a company of dancers, who detained us two hours, and during all that time afforded us great entertainment. The company consisted of two women dancers, and six men, with three drums; we were informed by Tupia, that they were some of the most considerable people of the island, and that though they were continually going from place to place, they did not, like the little strolling companies of Otaheite, take any gratuity from the spectators. The women had upon their heads a considerable quantity of Tamou, or plaited hair, which was brought several times around the head, and adorned in many parts with the flowers of the cape-jessamine, which were stuck in with much taste, and made a head-dress truly elegant. Their necks, shoulders, and arms were naked; so were the breasts also as low as the parting of the arm; below that, they were covered with black cloth, which set close to the body; at the side of each breast, next the arm,
was placed a small plume of black feathers, much in the same manner as our ladies now wear their nosegays or Bouquets; upon their hips rested a quantity of cloth plaited very full, which reached up to the breast, and fell down below into long petticoats, which quite concealed their feet, and which they managed with as much dexterity as our opera dancers could have done: the plaits above the waist were brown and white alternately, the petticoats below were all white.

In this dress they advanced sideways in a measured step, keeping excellent time to the drums, which beat briskly and loud; soon after they began to shake their hips, giving the folds of cloth that lay upon them a very quick motion, which was in some degree continued through the whole dance, though the body was thrown into various postures, sometimes standing, sometimes sitting, and sometimes resting on their knees and elbows, the fingers also being moved at the same time with a quickness scarcely to be imagined. Much of the dexterity of the dancers, however, and the entertainment of the spectators, consisted in the wantonness of their attitudes and gestures, which was, indeed, such as exceeds all description.

No description of one major type of costume for men was found. As their parts in the entertainments varied from that of clown, actor, dancing master, female impersonator, to participant in a sham battle, their costumes varied too. Although he failed to describe the style or cut of the costumes, Banks did say that in one dramatic dance which he saw, the performers were divided into two parties, one wearing white clothes and the other wearing brown clothes. The "whites" represented thieves, while the "browns" were the persons from whom the goods were stolen. George Forster mentioned a "kind of drama" which was performed by five men wearing mats. He did not mention the plot of the drama nor the style of the costume.

About 1775, Varela described the costume of two female impersonators. He also mentioned a person of outstanding importance to the entertainments, the dancing master or prompter, who was necessary to nearly all the heeivas.

61. Hawkesworth, _An Account_, II, pp. 264-269
63. G. Forster, _A Voyage Round the World_, I, p. 400.
The dancers are two boys dressed up as women, with wings sticking out from their waists fashioned of the cloth they make from the bark of trees, white, yellow, and russet. In their hands they carry a small wand ornamented with feathers, with which, and with their bodies, they follow (the lead of) a dancing master who gives them their cue. The Kings and great personages each keep one of these dancing masters to teach their families, just as they keep an a pure or master versed in law for their instruction in that.

Sham-battles were frequently a part of the heivas. In these the men wore their regular "war-habits."

A party of warriors were next introduced, dressed in their war-habits, consisting, as had already been observed, of different coloured cloth, of their own manufacture, so ingeniously fashioned and blended together with so much art, as, with the helmets that cover their heads, to fill the stage with men of whose majestic figure it is not easy to convey an idea. These were armed with spears, lances, and battle-axes, and exhibited all the forms of attack and defence which are practised in real action.

On August 2, 1769, at the command of a chief, Joseph Banks and others were amused by a native man who executed a comic dance. Both Banks and Hawkesworth recorded the incident, which was notable primarily for the dancer's head-dress. Banks noted that although he generally moved slowly, employing many turns of the head, the dancer occasionally moved swiftly. This he did in order to throw the end of the head-dress near the faces of the spectators to make them start. The head-dress, called a whow, was a large cylindrical basket four feet long and eight inches in diameter. On the front was "... fastened a facing of feathers bending forward at the top and edged round with sharks' teeth and the tail feathers of tropic birds."

Hawkesworth's report was similar but somewhat more exact. He wrote:

... in one of the houses they were, by order of the master, entertained with a dance, different from any that they had seen. It was performed by one man, who put upon his head a large cylindrical piece of wicker-work, or basket, about four feet long and eight inches in diameter, which was faced with feathers, placed perpendicularly, with the tops bending forwards, and edged round with shark's teeth, and the tail feathers of Tropic birds: when he had put on this head-dress, which is called a show, he began to dance, moving slowly, and often turning his head so as that the top of his high wicker-cap described a circle, and sometimes throwing it so near the faces of the spectators as to make them start back: this was held among them as a very good joke, and never failed to produce a peal of laughter, especially when it was played off upon one of the strangers.

The leader of the heva, or kind of funeral procession, was generally a man, but on occasions a woman performed this ceremony. In either case, the costume was the same. Ellis' description of it is as follows:

Soon after the decease of a chief or person of distinction, another singular ceremony, called a heva, was performed by the relatives or dependents. The principal actor in this procession was a priest, or relative, who wore a curious dress, the most imposing part of which was the head-ornament, or parea. A cap of thick native cloth was fitted close to the head; in front were two large broad mother-of-pearl shells, covering the face like a mask, with one small aperture through which the wearer could look. Above the mask a number of beautiful, long, white, red-tipped, tail feathers of the tropic bird, were fixed, diverging like rays; beneath the mask was a curved piece of thin yet strong board, six or nine inches wide in the centre, but narrow at the ends, which, turned upwards, gave it the appearance of a crescent.

Attached to this was a beautiful kind of network of small pieces of brilliant mother-of-pearl shell called the ehu ehu, each piece being about an inch or an inch and a half long, and less than a quarter of an inch wide. Every piece was finely polished, reduced to the thinness of a card; a small perforation was made at each corner, and the pieces fastened together by threads passed through these perforations. They were fixed perpendicularly to the board, and extended nearly from one end to the other. The depth varied according to the taste or means of the family, but it was generally nine inches or a foot.

This part covered the breast of the wearer; a succession of pieces of black and yellow cloth fastened to the pearl-shell netting, surrounded the body, and reached sometimes to the loins, to


69. See below, p. 129 for sketch of the costume.
the knees, or even to the ankles. The beautiful mother-of-pearl shell net-work was fringed with feathers; a large bunch or man-of-war-bird's plumage was fixed at each end of the board, and two elegantly shaped oro-oro feather tassels, hanging from each end, were attached to the light board by cords, also covered with feathers.

In one hand the heva carried a paeho, a terrific weapon, about five feet long, one end rounded for a handle, the other broad and flat, and in shape not unlike a short scythe. The point was ornamented with a tuft of feathers, and the inner or concave side armed with a line of large, strong, sharks' teeth, fixed in the wood by the fibres of the tough ieie. In the other hand he held a tete or kind of clapper, formed with a large and a smaller pearl-oyster shell, beautifully polished . . . as he walked along, (he continued) to strike or jingle the shells against each other, to give notice of his approach. He was attended by a number of men and boys, painted with charcoal and red and white clay, . . . They wore only a maro or girdle, and were covered with these coloured earths. Sometimes the body was painted red, with black and white stripes; at other times the face painted red or black, and the rest of the body red and white . . . They were armed with a club or cudgel, and proceeded through the district, seizing and beating every person they met with, who did not shew them the greatest respect; . . .

To what extent tattooing was practiced as a type of ornamentation is not known. It has been established, however, that members of the airoi society were tattooed and that the nature of the tattooing designated the class, within the society, to which the individual belonged. Not only were they tattooed but frequently their bodies were blackened with charcoal and stained with mati.

A number of distinct classes prevailed among the Areois, each of which was distinguished by the kind or situation of the tatuau on their bodies. The first or highest class was called Avea parai, painted leg; the leg being completely blackened from the foot to the knee. The second class was called Ctiore, both arms being marked, from the fingers to the shoulders. The third class was denominated Haroaea, both sides of the body, from the arm-pits downwards, being marked with tatau. The fourth class, called Hua, had only two or three

69. Ellis, Polynesian Researches, I, pp. 412-414.
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69. Ellis, Polynesian Researches, I, pp. 412-414.
small figures, impressed with the same material, on each shoulder. The fifth class, called Atoro, had one small stripe, tattooed on the left side. Every individual in the sixth class, designated Ohemara, had a small circle marked round each ankle. The seventh class, or Poo, which included all who were in their noviciate, was usually denominated the Poo faarecrea, or pleasure-making class, and by them the most laborious part of the pantomimes, dances, etc. was performed; the principal or higher orders of Areois, though plastered over with charcoal, and stained with scarlet dye, were generally careful not to exhaust themselves by physical effort, for the amusement of others.\footnote{70}{Ibid., I, p. 238.}

Their bodies were painted with charcoal, and their faces, especially, stained with the mati, or scarlet dye. Sometimes they wore a girdle of the yellow ti leaves; ... At other times they wore a vest or ripe yellow plantain leaves, and ornamented their heads with wreaths of the bright yellow and scarlet leaves of the hutu, or Barringtonia; but, in general, their appearance was far more repulsive than when they wore these partial coverings.\footnote{71}{Ibid., I, p. 235.}

5. Occasions for Dancing and Kinds of Dance

The Society Islanders were not so far removed from primitive cultures that they had ceased to dance on serious occasions. Consequently, the events of sickness, death, war, and the ratification of peace were celebrated, in part, by dance. On the other hand, the Society Islanders were sophisticated enough to have developed several kinds of dance devoted to occasions of entertainment. These entertainments were of both an informal recreational nature and a somewhat more formal nature designed to bestow honor upon individuals.

\footnote{70}{Ibid., I, p. 238.}
\footnote{71}{Ibid., I, p. 235.}
Debuts, marriages, arrivals, departures, and returns were among the occasions on which persons might be honored by an entertainment. Furthermore, kings, chiefs, and others of high rank were often honored by a dance simply because of their exalted position.

Serious occasions. Times of illness were accompanied by many ceremonies, incantations, lamentations, and dances. Sometimes, in the event of the illness of an erii, a person of high birth, the people danced intermittently for days. One example of such was during the illness of Vehiatua, in February, 1779. The proceedings were recorded by the Spanish missionaries Geronimo Clota and Narciso Gonzalez. As was their custom, the natives, under the direction of the "Tahuas", or medicine men, kept moving their sick chief from island to island. Finally, he dismissed them and put himself in the hands of the missionaries Clota and Gonzalez, charging them to treat him. By June 14, he began to improve and

... his subjects began to come in to ... visit him and amuse him with dances, interludes, and the music of a drum and two wooden instruments they have which, when all (struck) in combination, make a great noise.

The following day about three thousand people gathered to feast and to make merry. Part of the merry making included entertainments of dancing and singing. Several days later the celebration was still continuing.
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The following day about three thousand people gathered to feast and to make merry. Part of the merry making included entertainments of dancing and singing. Several days later the celebration was still continuing.
On some days the dancing began before sun-up, and on other days it started in the afternoon or evening. At whatever time of day it came, the dancing attracted great crowds. The Tahuas had not been noticed since their dismissal; but Vehiatua's illness continued, and they again appeared.

In the morning Heyba, with music of drums, a great gathering of people and a long discourse delivered by a Tahua in the presence of all this crowd, who listened with silent attention. We were among those mentioned, by our own names, in this homily; as were also the two laymen, as well as the ariri's step-father named Titorea and another heather called Taytoa—a vassal and hanger-on of his. Of the rest of all that the Tahua declaimed we understood no word.

In the afternoon there was another Heyba, and the chief's condition did not improve but became more and more grave. The natives became more and more frantic. As he grew worse, the crowds grew larger and the drumming stronger. Until August 6, when Vehiatua died, such activities continued, and he was again moved from place to place. A variety of processions and ceremonies took place. Lamentations, dances, prayers, yelling, and drumming continued throughout the days and nights, and human sacrifices were offered. After the chief's death on August 6, the people formed a circle around the body, while the mother, who was smeared with blood, moved about inside the circle moaning and weeping.

J. R. Forster described the proceedings after a death. He wrote that as soon as it was known a person had died, relatives and friends of the deceased went to his house, there to lament all day and night until the following morning. Then the body was wrapped in white cloth and taken to the neighborhood of the temple and from there to a place near the shore.

Other ceremonies and processions ensued, until, finally, the corpse was deposited near the temple under a shed, either on posts or on a stage made for that purpose. The body was left there until the flesh putrified and separated from the bones. Meat, fruits, and ornaments were brought often and left nearby. Female relatives wailed and cut the crowns of their heads with shark’s teeth. Pieces of hair were cut from the heads of young people.

Some days after these ceremonies have been performed, one of the nearest relations, takes up the heva-dress ... and holding in one hand a clapper made of two large mother of pearl shells; and in the other a flat cudgel set with shark’s teeth along its edge, he begins a solemn procession from the house of the deceased by a long circuit to the Tupapou, preceded by two or more people almost naked and blackened by a mixture of charcoal and water, who are called NINEVA i.e. insane or mad, supposing them to be transported by the phrenzy of grief, for if the chief mourner performing the heva, should happen to meet any person during this circuit, he would run at them and strike them with shark’s teeth fixed on his stick. For which reason, no sooner is the noise of the two shells heard, than every one leaves his his habitation and endeavours to obtain shelter at a distance, and out of reach of the shark’s teeth: near the corpse, and the places where men live, a kind of sentence or prayer is pronounced. This procession is performed for about five moons at certain intervals; which become less frequent at the end of the interval than at the beginning; each relation takes this procession in his turn, and now and then the priests in company, and at the desire of the relations repeat their prayers near the corpse and offer to their deities some offering of fruit or meat. After the flesh is decayed, the bones are scraped, washed, and buried in the marai, if the person deceased was a chief, but without if he belonged not to that class. The skull of a chief is not buried with the bones, but wrapped in cloth and put in a long box which the natives call Ta-wharre-no te-oronetua, ... After this burial of the bones the relatives now and then renew some funeral ceremonies with the priest, ...

Instead of a man, I saw at O-Taha a woman wear the heva-dress; a ceremonious dance was performed at the same place, and the nearest relations appeared well dressed with presents of cloth for the drummers and musicians.73

Ellis explained that the heva was a ceremony performed by the relatives or dependents of the deceased and that the principal actor in this procession

73. J. R. Forster, Observations, pp. 559-563.
was the priest or a relative. This person wore a fantastic costume which included a mask. In one hand he held a kind of weapon five feet long, and in the other hand he held a clapper of pearl-oyster shell. He jingled the shells to give warning of his approach. He was usually attended by a number of boys and men painted with charcoal and red and white clay. They were armed with clubs and beat everyone they met who did not treat them with the utmost respect. They were supposed to be inspired by the spirit of the deceased. It was their intention to act as if deranged.

George Vancouver reported all the usual moaning, cutting of faces, shaving of heads, prayers, and ceremonies performed by the priest and others. He added that after several days as a part of a ceremony with the priest, the mourners proceeded to a place where two houses had recently been built near the shore.

Here they were entertained with a haua performed by a number of very young girls, in the wanton manner of the country. At a particular part of the dance, a fellow stepped in amongst the performers, and in a very obscene though ludicrous manner entertained the native audience; ...

After the performance, the audience gave presents to the dancers and departed.

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74. See above, p. 23 for fuller description of chief mourner's costume.
75. Ellis, Polynesian Researches, II, p. 414.
76. British; author; in British Navy, midshipman with Capt. Cook, 1776, 1777; captain in command of the Discovery and the Chatham, 1792, 1793, 1794.
Reports indicate that music and dance played an important part in the business of war. Rude and harsh kinds of music animated the warriors in their fleets, and the combatants marched to battle inspired by the sounds of the trumpet and the drum.

There were also war dances, sham battles, and dramatic dances based on conquests. These were not connected immediately with war, and they were generally performed on joyous occasions; but the significant fact is that in them the war theme was utilized. Parkinson described the war dances thus:

In their heivos, or war-dances, they assume various antic motions and gestures, like those practiced by the girls . . . playing on a clapper made of two mother-of-pearl shells; and make the ephaita, or wry mouth, . . . as a token of defiance: they also join their hands together, moving them at the same time, and clap the palms of their hands upon their breasts near their shoulders.79

To illustrate how closely these mock-fights resembled actual battle technique, a description of a sham-battle is presented here. This particular one took place between the acts of a dramatic performance.

The combatants were armed with lances and clubs. One made the attack, the other stood upon the defensive. He who made the attack brandished his lance, and either threw, pushed or used it in aid of this club. He who was upon the defensive, stuck the point of his lance in the ground, in an oblique direction so that the upper part rose above his head, and by observing the eye of his enemy, parried his blows or his strokes by the motion of his lance. By his dexterity at this maneuver he turned aside the lance, and it was rare that he was hurt by the club; if his antagonist struck at his legs, he shewed his agility by jumping over the club; and if at his head, he was no less nimble in crouching under it. Their dexterity consisted chiefly in the defense, otherwise the combat might have been fatal, which always ended in good humour.80

78. Ellis, Polynesian Researches, I, p. 285.
80. Ledyard, An Authentic Narrative, p. 100.
One of the most important ceremonies in connection with the ratification of peace was a festival, and a feast, both convivial and religious.

A heiva, or grand dance, formed a part of this ceremony. It was called the dance of peace, and was performed in the presence of the king, who, surrounded by a number of chiefs and warriors, sat at one end of the large house in which it took place. A number of men, and sometimes women, fantastical dressed, danced to the beating of the drum and the warbling of the vivo, or flute; and though the king was surrounded by a number of attendants as bodyguards, towards the close of the exhibition the men sought to approach the king's person, and kiss his hand, or the females to salute his face; when one or the other succeeded in this, the heiva, or dance, was complete, and the performance discontinued.

Occasions of entertainment. Just as the Society Islanders danced on more serious occasions, so too they did on occasions of entertainment. In fact, if the criterion be the number of times reported, perhaps the most important occasion for dance was this more festive occasion.

Entertainments of an informal recreational nature included dance-games, and dancing in connection with wrestling and boxing matches. The pannara was a dance-game resembling football and performed by two groups of women. The natives danced at wrestling and boxing matches. Ellis observed that at wrestling matches there was unbroken silence and rapt attention on the part of the spectators during the struggle, but as soon as a competitor was thrown a shout went up. "Their drums struck up; the women rose, and danced in triumph over the fallen wrestler, and sung in defiance to the opposite party." This commotion was animated and loud; but as soon as the wrestlers again started, the drumming, singing, and dancing immediately stopped, and the dancers sat down. Although boxing was a less popular sport, the same thing happened. As soon as either man fell, he

81. Ellis, Polynesian Researches, II, pp. 319-320.
82. See below, p. 39 for more complete description of the pannara.
was considered beaten; shouts and dances of triumph immediately began. More formal entertainments, although enjoyed by great numbers of people, were most often executed in honor of individuals. Persons of outstanding social position were frequently honored, by various types of dances, simply because of their rank. The hura was an entertainment that presented young females, particularly those of noble birth, to society in much the same way as modern debuts.

Marriage was an occasion on which the Society Islanders danced. Apparently there was no particular wedding dance as such. The occasion was celebrated and the pair honored by performances of the usual dances. Although only one reference of such dancing was found, the writer, Ellis, implied that it was a traditional part of the festivities. He wrote,

> When the time fixed for the marriage arrived, and the parties themselves agreed to the union, great preparations were made for the dances, amusements, and festive entertainment, usual on such occasions. A company of Areois generally attended, and, on the day preceding the nuptials, commenced their upaupa, or dance, and pantomimic exhibitions.

Arrivals, departures, and returns prompted entertainments. The arrival of Turnbull's ship off Hauhine brought forth a group of entertainers in double canoes. They performed on stages built across the front of the vessels.

> A master of the ceremonies presided in the dance, and directed the movements, which were not always of the most delicate nature. The music consisted of two drums, made from a log of wood hollowed out in a cylindrical shape, and covered at the end with a piece of shark-skin, tightly braced down the side. The musicians make no use of drum sticks, but employ their fingers, and sometimes their

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84. See below, p. 37 for description of the hura.
hands, so as to be heard at a considerable distance. They beat slowly at first, as a signal to prepare for the dance; and as the music becomes more rapid, the dancers quicken their motions. Flutes also were used on the occasion, having only three notes or stops, one of which is of such a size as to admit of the performer's applying his nostrils to fill it. . . . So eager were the performers to gain the approbation of the spectators, and so violent were their exertions, overloaded with clothing, and straitened with bandages, that many of them seemed at length ready to sink under the violence of their efforts. The director of the dances exerted himself to encourage them to a further continuance of their labour; and induced us at length to interfere, apparently much to the satisfaction of the performers.  

On February 11, 1789, a short "heiva" was given by a small group to honor Captain William Bligh prior to his departure to a different island.

It began by a dance of two young girls, to the music of drums and flutes, which lasted no long time; at the conclusion, they suddenly dropped all their dress, which was left as a present for me, and went off without my seeing them any more. After this, the men danced: their performance was more indecent than any I had before seen, but was not the less applauded on that account by the natives, who seemed much delighted.

The joyous occasion of a safe return called for gala festivities and a big holiday, if the arrivals happened to be of royal blood. Turnbull reported one such incident which was occasioned by the return of Paitia and his sister from Hawaii. For an entire week no one worked. Gaming, wrestling, feasting, and rioting were part of the exhibition, which took


87. British navigator, sailed with Captain Cook on his third voyage as Master of the Resolution. Two mutinies against his authority, the first in 1789 when he was captain of the Bounty, and the second in 1805 when he was deposed as Governor of New South Wales.

place in an area reserved for the use of the king. The singing and
drumming lasted from morning until night. Aroio were particularly active
on this occasion. They

\[\ldots\] always entertained in evening by a heva, or dance.
The women, to the amount of ninety or a hundred, formed them­
selves in two circles, one of them consisting wholly of the
residents, the other of the strangers, and each with their
separate band of music.\textsuperscript{89}

**Facial expressions.** One of the most outstanding features of dance
in the Society Islands, and one that was apparently characteristic of all
kinds of dance, was the fantastic facial expressions of the performers.
These expressions, practiced by both men and women, were an integral part
of the dances just as other bodily positions were. The talent of the
dancer was partially determined by the facial contortions. Because of
the difficulty in presenting a concise, concrete description of these
expressions, several references to them are quoted below. No attempt has
been made to identify each dance of which they were a part, for as stated
above, they were characteristic of all types of dance.

During the various kinds of dances, they never fail to make wry
mouths, which, in our opinion, were the most extravagant and
disgracing distortions, instead of being capable of giving the
spectator ideas of gracefulness and harmony: habit has taught
them to screw the mouth into an obliquely slanting direction by
a kind of sudden convulsive motion of the lips, and custom only
has made the sight of so unnatural and offensive a grimace a
performance which pleases and merits applause. This distortion
is called ootoo-roa (large lips).\textsuperscript{90}

Apart from the immodesty of the figure, they screw their mouths
awry in so hideous and absurd a fashion that they may well seem
inspired by the devil.\textsuperscript{91}

\textsuperscript{89} Turnbull, op. cit., pp. 264-269.
\textsuperscript{90} J. R. Forster, Observations, pp. 466-467.
\textsuperscript{91} Varela, "The Journal", p. 289.
Their dances are not less singular than their music; for they twist their bodies into many extravagant postures, spread their legs, set their arms a-kimbo, and, at the same time, distort the muscles of their faces, and twist their mouths diagonally, in a manner which none of us could imitate.  

The principal performers were the king's brother and a chief of gigantic stature, who displayed such wonderful grimaces and distortions of face and countenance, by way of provocation and challenge, as were not only laughable in some attitudes, but terrible in others.

The dances required very great exertion in the women to keep time to the music by expiring and inspiring their breath, drawing their mouths in contrary directions, and twirling their arms and fingers with some order, and great regularity. Those who excelled in these contortions and gestures were the most applauded.

Their attitudes and gestures were much varied, and sometimes might admit of being construed into wantonness; . . . The movement of their arms is certainly very elegant. The only action which gives offence to all our ideas of gracefulness and harmony is the frightful custom of wrihthing their mouths into the strangest distortions, which it was impossible for anyone of us to imitate. They screwed their mouth into a slanting direction, and at last threw the lips into a waving or undulated form, which seemed to us to be performed by means of an habitual and sudden convulsion.

Her wonderful agility, the graceful motion of her arms, and the quick vibrations of her fingers, were as much admired there by the natives, as we applaud them in our dancers; . . . The inhabitants were particularly delighted with the extraordinary contortions into which she screwed her mouth; though we were so little of their mind, that we could not help thinking them horribly frightful.

Specific kinds. In the Society Islands some dances were given special names. The kinds of dance were either general, in that they were composed of other kinds of dance, or they were individual and complete within

96. Ibid., II, p. 141.
themselves. **Heiva** was the word used for entertainments in general. **Heiva** plus another word further defined the activity. Captain Cook distinguished between the "private heevas" and "public heevas". Of the "private heeva" he reported that he observed about one hundred people sitting in a house,

... and in the midst of them were two women, with an old man behind each of them, beating very gently upon a drum; and the women, at intervals, singing in a softer manner, than I ever heard at their other diversions. The assembly listened with great attention and were, seemingly, almost absorbed in the pleasure the music gave them; for few took any notice of us, and the performers never once stopped.97

That night he was at the chief Otoo's house and was entertained by one of the "public heevas" called the **heeva raa**, ...

... or plays, in which his three sisters appeared as the principal characters. This was what they call a **heeva raa**, which is of such a nature, that no body is to enter the house or area, where it is exhibited. When the royal sisters are the performers, this is always the case. Their dress, on this occasion, was truly picturesque and elegant; and they acquitted themselves, in their parts, in a very distinguished manner; though some comic interludes, performed by four men, seemed to yield greater pleasure to the audience, which was numerous.98

The program of the dramatic heives or dramatic dances included several parts. This composite kind of dance was performed so frequently and described in such detail that a more comprehensive description of it is presented in the section immediately following this one. The **arioi** troupes called many of their mixed entertainments of story and dance, **upaupa**. The following general remarks by Émile de Bovis illustrate the

98. Ibid., II, p. 48.
100. See below, p. 41 for fuller description of the upaupa.
fact that upaupa and hiva were essentially the same kind of entertainment.

Nous néglignerons les fêtes proprement dites comme nous avons négligé les cérémonies dont elles ne représentent qu'une collection très étendue. L'âme de toutes ces réjouissances était la upaupa or hiva (heiva), qui n'était autre chose qu'une série de danses dont l'entraînement allait crescendo et finissait le plus souvent par une orgie . . .

Les hiva (heiva)s'exécutaient en plein vent ou dans de grandes cases construites à cet effet: elles pouvaient être plus ou moins complètes. Le chœur des hurlements est la seule partie indispensable de l'orchestre. Lorsque le divertissement était donné en l'honneur d'un chef, celui-ci le terminait ordinairement par un présent d'étoffes qu'il faisait aux musiciens; cela s'appelait Tapoi te, comme on dirait "couvrir l'orchestre," le "mettre sous le boisseau," et en effet le morceau d'étoffe était souvent étendu sur la tête de ceux à qui il était destiné.

After saying that each kind of dance had a distinct name, Ellis added that the least objectionable of these was the "hura". Judging from his information, it would seem that the "hura" served somewhat the same purpose as the western début.

The hura was sometimes a pantomimic exhibition, with dancing at intervals during the performance; but the most decent and respectable was that which consisted principally of dancing . . . .

The families of the distinguished chiefs in the neighbourhood were always invited to witness the hura. They usually came arrayed in

101. Émile de Bovis, "Tahitian Society", pp. 243-244.
Translation by present writer:

We will pass over the feasts, properly called, as we have passed over the ceremonies of which they but represent an extensive collection. The soul of all these celebrations was the upaupa or hiva, which was but a series of dances which worked up to a crescendo and usually ended with an orgy . . . . The hiva (heiva) take place out of doors or in large enclosures constructed to give the same effect: they may be more or less complete. The chorus of howls is the only indispensable part of the orchestra. Whenever the entertainment was given in honor of a chief, the latter usually ended it by a present of cloth, which he made to the musicians; this was called Tapoi te, or "cover the orchestra" and indeed the piece of cloth was often spread on the heads of those for whom it was meant.
their best apparel, followed by numbers of their attendants. It was generally designed to bring into notice the daughters of the chiefs, and recommend them to young men of rank and station equal or superior to their own, who, it was hoped might be so charmed by their dancing, as to become their future husbands.

The daughters of the chiefs, who were dancers on these occasions, at times amounted to five or six, though occasionally only one exhibited her symmetry of figure, and gracefulness of action . . . . The music of the hura was the large and small drum, and occasionally the flute. Besides the musicians, the haapili, teacher or prompter, was an important personage. He was attired in three or four finely fringed mats, fastened round his waist, and stood or sat near the mat on which the dancers stood. His business was, by the expression of his countenance and the action of his hands, to direct the performers. Their dancing was not lively and nimble, . . . Their dancing was generally slow, but always easy and natural, and no exertion, on the part of the performers, was wanting, to render them graceful and attractive. Besides the distinguished females who performed the hura, there were others who were regarded as appendages to the exhibition. These were the feata, who were men, generally four in number, who were arrayed in fringed mats, fastened round the waist, and each was a sort of clown or harlequin. Their business was, during the intervals between the different parts of the hura, to dance in the most comic and ludicrous manner, for the mirth of the spectators. . . .

Ellis mentioned, though he did not describe it, the heva tiaraau, a modest but not so excellent a dance as the hura.

The heva tiaraau was another dance, inferior to the hura, and not more objectionable. There were many others, but they were all too indelicate or obscene to be noticed.

The patau, or prompter, sat by the drum, and regulated the several parts of the performance. After the athletic exercises of the day, the dances ensued in the evening, and were often continued till the dawn of the following morning. There were gods supposed to preside over their dances, whose sanction patronized the debasing immoralities connected with them.

The Heevo he-oora, the pa-ata, and the Teai-morodee were described by J. R. Forster. The first two were kinds of hand dances,

while the third was probably some form of sex dance as it was referred
to as extremely indecent and lascivious.

They have generally long well shaped fingers, which are
wonderfully pliant, so that they can with ease bend them so
far back as to form with the rest of the hand a segment of
circle, and in this attitude they move them with an
astonishing agility. This dance is called Haerva he-oora,
and the motion of the fingers Bêree. But besides this,
they shake their hips in a rotatory motion, both when they
are standing and when they are leaning prostrate on their
knees and elbows, with a velocity which excited our astonish­
ment, and this is named òne-ôno. There are other dances
wherein they use measured steps, hold another by the hands
and clap with them; which is called pa-âta. . . . There are
other dances usual in their nocturnal festivals with the
Arreeoys, which, none of our ships company had an opportunity
of seeing, and are according to the accounts of the natives
extremely indecent and lascivious; these are called t'ëñi-
morodêè, and the women exhibiting them, Too-âno.104

The Timorodee, as reported by Hawkesworth, was a kind of sex dance.

He described it thus:

Among other diversions, there is a dance, called Timorodee,
which is performed by young girls, whenever eight or ten
of them can be collected together, consisting of motions
and gestures beyond imagination wanton, in the practice of
which they are brought up from their earliest childhood,
accompanied by words, which, if it were possible, would more
explicitly convey the same ideas. In these dances they keep
time with an exactness which is scarcely excelled by the best
performers upon the stages of Europe. But the practice which
is allowed to the virgin, is prohibited to the woman from the
moment that she has put these lessons in practice, and realized
the symbols of the dance. (The women of the Arreoy society) . . .
dance the Timorodee in all its latitude, as an incitement to
desires which it is said are frequently gratified upon the
spot.105

Wilson described a dance called pannara, which was a dance-game
similar to football. It seems, however, to have been strictly a woman's
dance.

The pannara, or evening dance, is performed by an number of
women, of any age or description, who chose to attend at the

place appointed, which is usually the cool shade. They are dressed in their best apparel, and their heads decorated with wreaths of flowers. They divide into two equal parts, about twenty-yards distant, and placing themselves in rows opposite to each other, a small green bread-fruit is brought by way of a football. The leading dancer of one party takes this in her hand, and stepping out about midway, drops it before her, and sends it with her foot to the opposite row, returning to her place; if the ball escapes, without being stopped in its course before it touches the ground, they strike up the dance and sing, beating time with their hands and feet; this lasts about five minutes, when they prepare to receive the ball from the other party who have stood still: if they catch the ball, they return it again; if it escapes them, the other party dance in their turn. After thus amusing themselves and the spectators for some hours, the ball is kicked away, and both parties strike up together. It is at this time they use the lewd gestures described by some of our voyagers; but these only are practiced by the young and wanton, who . . . are no more to be taken for the standard of manners than the ladies in the Strand, or the sea-nymphs at Spithead, would be specimens of our fair countrywomen.

Dramatic dances. The dramatic dances or dramatic heivas presented a program of various entertainments. Some of the parts or "acts" of the program were pure dance, choral groups, pure pantomime, sham battles, and playlets. From the reports found, it is impossible to determine in most cases how much of the performance of the dramatic interludes was dance, how much was vocal music, and how much -- if any -- was pure drama with spoken words.

The succeeding three references serve to introduce the overall pattern of the average dramatic performance or upaupa. The first concerned an exhibition not later than 1783.

As soon as dinner was over, . . . we were conducted to the theatre, where a company of players were in readiness to perform a dramatical entertainment. The drama was regularly divided into three acts: the first consisted of dancing and dumb shew; the second of comedy; which to those who understood the language was very laughable, . . . the last was a musical piece, in which the young princesses were the sole performers. There were between

the acts some feats of arms exhibited. . . . These entertain­
ments, which generally last about four hours, are really
diverting; . . . their comedy seems to consist of some simple
story, made laughable by the manner of delivery, . . . and their
singing is very simple and might be much improved.107

The second indicated that the Society Islanders were excellent
mimics. This report also directed attention to the indispensable master
of ceremonies, prompter, or dancing master, as he was sometimes called.

A master of ceremonies directs the movements of the dancers;
and when the women retire, their places are supplied by a chorus,
who sing with the music, or by actors, who perform pantomimes,
seizing the manners of their European visitors, which they
imitate in great perfection; not sparing the conduct of their
own chiefs, when objects of a satire; which serves as a salutary
check and admonition; for if they are faulty, they are sure to
be publicly exposed.108

Ellis' description of the typical arioi upaupa presents a rather
complete picture of the general format of the dramatic entertainments.

Upaupa was the name of many of their exhibitions. In
performing these, they sometimes sat in a circle on the ground,
and recited, in concert, a legend or song in honour of their
gods, or some distinguished Areoi. The leader of the party
stood in the centre, and introduced the recitation with a
sort of prologue, when, with a number of fantastic movements
and attitudes, those that sat around began their song in a
low and measured tone and voice; which increased as they pro­
ceeded, till it became vociferous and unintelligibly rapid. It
was also accompanied by movements of the arms and hands, in exact
keeping with the tones of the voice until they were wrought to
the highest pitch of excitement. This they continued, until,
becoming breathless and exhausted, they were obliged to suspend
the performance.

Their public entertainments frequently consisted in delivering
speeches, accompanied by every variety of gesture and action; and
their representations, on these occasions, assumed something of
the histrionic character. The priests, and others, were fearlessly
ridiculed in these performances, in which allusion was ludicrously
made to public events. In the taupiti, or oroa, they sometimes engaged

in wrestling, but never in boxing; ... Dancing, however, appears to have been their favourite and most frequent performance. In this they were always led by the manager or chief. ... They often maintained their dance through the greater part of the night, accompanied by their voices, and the music of the flute and the drum. These amusements frequently continued for a number of days and nights successively at the same place. The upaupa was then hui, or closed, and they journeyed to the next district, or principal chief's abode, where the same train of dances, wrestlings, and pantomimic exhibitions, was repeated.109

The general characteristics of the plays or dramatic dances and some of the plots are explained in more detail in the following three references. The most common plots were usually simple dramatizations of theft, conquest, birth, and jealousy. J. R. Forster outlined one of the most unusual and yet popular plots, the birth scene of an overgrown and illegitimate child, in the following quotation.

To the last branch of the liberal and polite arts exercised by the natives at Tahiti and its neighbourhood, belong their DRAMATIC PERFORMANCES. These are blended with dances and songs, with this restriction, that men only are the acting persons, in the same manner as at Rome, where no females were permitted to act. The drama is a simple representation of the common occurrences of life. A man entrusts his servants with care of his goods, they fall asleep, and though they are lying on their masters property, the thieves are subtle enough to steal them away from under the persons who were appointed to watch them; sometimes the thieves are detected and severely beaten, and sometimes they return the blows. In another farce, a man has a daughter, who has a lover; the father dislikes him and refuses his daughter, and being afraid of being deceived he watches her closely, but in the dead of the night, the lover meets the fair one and persuades her to run away with him; the consequences of this affair is the birth of a fine boy; the lady is in labour on the theatre and at last a large boy is exhibited, who immediately runs about the stage with the placenta and long umbilical cord which is here not considered as indecent, because everybody is acquainted with the incident, the children of four or five years not excepted; and the oddity that the new-born child runs about and escapes the

midwife, whose business it is to catch him, causes an universal and loud peal of laughter. The girls father upon seeing the cleverness of his grandson, is at last reconciled to his son-in-law.

Of this turn (though not in every particular) was the little extemporary farce seen by some of our friends at Haaeine, and which seemed to be levelled at a girl, a native of O-Raiedea, who came with us from Tahiti in order to return to her parents, from whom she had eloped some months before with a young Arreyo. Though the piece was but rudely performed, it however put the girl to shame, and drew tears from her eyes, . . . . when the witty sarcasms were falling from the lips of their theatrical heroes, they laughed at their jokes; but when they observed that these shafts of satire were not discarded at random, but made the person smart who was the object of their instructive irony, when they saw the marks of returning modesty, of repentance and self-condemnation, in the attempts to hide her shame, and in the copious tears of the poor girl; many an eye was moistened, and many a heart sympathized with her; lastly, when the dramatic performance was over, every one was eager to give her the most unfeigned and unsolicited marks of his esteem and friendship, to comfort her in her distress and affliction.110

The hands, the feet, the hips, the mouth, and the direction of the dancers' movements were mentioned by J. R. Forster in these generalizations.

The exercise of the common dramatic dances is very violent, the motion of the hands elegant, that of the feet not to be seen, that of the hips somewhat strange, and according to our notions indelicate; and lastly, that of the mouth horrid and disagreeable. The women performing were always attended by a man, who accompanied the drums with a kind of song; and by some loud spoken words or the clapping of hands, directed their motions; which, in my opinion seems to intimate that they have a kind of plan in their dances, end that the transitions from the oblique steps, to the motion of the fingers and agitation of the hips, is in some measure connected with the words spoken by the master of the ballet.111

Kotzebue's remarks concerning the dramatic pieces were of a very general nature. He observed that both sexes took part in them and that sometimes persons of high rank participated. He explained that his ignorance of the language prevented his understanding them, but he did know that they were of "mixed character, serious, and comic . . . ."

111. Ibid., p. 476.
Only one reference was found of a serious dramatic piece, and in it there was no indication of the plot. Although the natives apparently preferred comic or farcical plays, they were most attentive on this occasion.

There is a sameness in their drama, that admits of little or no variation, ... Be that as it may, the dresses on this occasion were entirely new, and by far more showy than formerly; the number of dancers were increased; ten young ladies composed the first group, ... had their music been equal to their performance, this part of the exhibition would have been complete. .. After these disappeared, the players were brought forward and performed a more serious piece than we had yet seen, at which the natives sat graver and more composed than usual. And the whole performance concluded with a dance of ten boys, drest in every respect like the girls in the first scene, with their hair flowing in ringlets down their shoulders, and their heads ornamented in a very theatrical style. 113

The dramatic dances were more often presented in a comical or farcical manner. The actors took advantage of mimicry to supplement their old subject matter with immediate topics, often dealing with the European visitors.

In the arioi plays the master of ceremonies was sometimes the principal source of comedy, as was explained by the missionaries Tyerman and Bennett.

The stories were called Aamu, and were dramatic in form, so that several speakers might take their distinct parts, and not merely recite, but act. These compositions, we are told, frequently did credit to the talents of the authors, while the accuracy and liveliness with which they were repeated, showed considerable powers of memory, as well as of imitation in the performances. 114

(Their) vocation was principally the exhibition of licentious dances, and occasionally dramatic scenes, rudely constructed, or the recital of romantic and diverting tales concerning their ancestors and the gods. Many of these were very long, and regularly composed, so as to be repeated verbatim, or with such illustrations only as

the wit or fancy of the narrator might have the skill to introduce. Their captain, on public occasions, was placed cross-legged on a stool seven feet high, with a fan in his hand, in the midst of the circle of laughing or admiring auditors, whom he delighted with his drollery, or transported with his grimaces, being, in fact, the merry-andrew of the corps, who, like a wise fool, well knew how to turn his folly to the best account.115

On August 16, 1789, a heiva was ordered for the entertainment of George Mortimer and others. He recorded the event thus:

The performance consisted of dancing, chanting sentences or verses, and acting, accompanied at intervals, and preceded by beating of drums. The performers were of both sexes, and acquitted themselves with a good deal of address in their different parts. The drummers in particular were very expert, keeping the most exact time and adapting the sound of their drums to the different movements of the dancers. He could not clearly make out the subject of the comedy or farce we saw acted; but it was impossible to mistake the looks and gestures of some of the actors, several of whom were great mimics, and displayed no small share of humour; which had a wonderful effect upon the visible faculties of the audience, who testified their approbation by repeated peals of laughter. I was particularly struck with a droll fellow who had twisted his hair into a variety of whimsical forms during the entertainment: . . . the man repeating it at several times at my expense. Indeed, not only in this case, but in several other instances, I observed we were made the objects of their ridicule; and if they were witnesses of any action of ours on board ship that appeared to them ludicrous or absurd, they never failed to take notice of it on the stage, with considerable embellishments.116

George Forster gave a detailed account of a dramatic dance or heeva, which was performed in September, 1773, to amuse a chief. One of the principal entertainers was the chief's daughter. The plot was not determined but he did say that the action corresponded with the words. He wrote that he had already sat

some time under the opposite roof, amidst the principal ladies of the island, when the actresses appeared. One of them was Poyadus, the fair daughter of the chief Orea, and the other a tall well shaped lady, of very agreeable features, and likewise a very fair complexion . . . . They moved to the sound of the drums, and to all

115. Ibid., I, pp. 239-240.
appearance under the direction of an old man, who danced with
them, and pronounced several words, which, from the tone of his
voice, we took to be a song. After they had danced for
about ten minutes, they retired into the part of the house which
I called their dressing room, and five men, dressed in mats,
took their place, performing a kind of drama. This consisted of
dancing in an indecent manner, and of a dialogue which had some
cadence, and in which they sometimes pronounced a few words shouting
all together. This dialogue seemed to be closely connected with
their actions. One of them kneeled down, and another beat him and
plucked him by the beard, repeating the same ceremony with two
others; but the last seized and beat him with a stick. After this
they withdrew, and the drummers gave notice of the second act of
dancing, which the two ladies performed with little variation from
the first. The men took their turn a second time; the ladies
succeeded them again, and concluded with a fourth act. Then they
set down to rest themselves, appearing fatigued to a great degree,
and in a most profuse perspiration; ... 117

On August 3, 1769, Hawkesworth witnessed a heiva in the day-time.
The performers, two women and six men, were important people in the
community. He could not determine the nature of the plot of the inter-
lude.

Between the dances of the women, the men performed a kind
of dramatic interlude, in which there was dialogue as well as
dancing; but we were not sufficiently acquainted with their
language to understand the subject.

On the 4th, some of our gentlemen saw a much more regular
entertainment of the dramatic kind, which was divided into four
acts. 118

Captain Cook witnessed a dramatic performance on August 29, 1773,
and he could not ascertain the meaning of the play, only that it was a
comedy and that parts of it concerned Cook himself.

Soon after we were conducted to the theatre; where we were
entertained with a dramatic heiva, or play, in which were both
dancing and comedy. The performers were five men, and one
woman, who was no less a person than the king's sister. The
music consisted of three drums only; it lasted about an hour
and a half, or two hours; and, upon the whole, was well conducted.

It was not possible for us to find out the meaning of the play. Some part seemed adapted to the present time, as my name was frequently mentioned. Other parts were certainly wholly unconnected with us. . . . The dancing-dress of the lady was more elegant than any I saw there, by being decorated with long tassels, made of feathers, hanging from the waist downward. 119

A few days later he was present at a similar entertainment. This time he understood something of the plot which concerned a theft. He wrote:

we were entertained . . . with such a comedy, or dramatic heave, as is generally acted in these isles. The music consisted of three drums; the actors were seven men, and one woman, the chief's daughter. The only entertaining part in the drama, was a theft committed by a man and his accomplice, in such a masterly manner, as sufficiently displayed the genius of the people in this vice. The theft is discovered before the thief has time to carry off his prize; then a scuffle ensues with those set to guard it, who, though four to two, are beat off the stage, and the thief and his accomplices bear away their plunder in triumph. 120

On August 8, 1769, Banks again saw a performance comparable to the one described above. On this occasion he was able to understand more about the dramatic dance than he had been able to previously. It was an interlude between the women's dances, and it too involved theft.

The men were divided into two parties, differing in the colour of their clothes, one brown, the other white. The chief of the browns gives a basket of meat to his servants that they might take care of it. The whites represent thieves who constantly attempt to steal it, dancing all the time. Several different expedients they make use without success, till at last they find the watchmen asleep; they then go gently up to them, and lifting them off from the basket, which for security they have placed in their middle, they go off with their prize. The others awake and dance, but seem to show little regret for their loss, or indeed hardly to miss the basket at all. 121

After seeing still more of these interludes Mr. Banks declared that they were varied and that five or six of them resembled much the


120. Ibid., II, p. 173.

drama of an English stage dance."

Mr. Forster recorded, in somewhat less detail another account of a "heeva or public dance" the subject matter of which was theft. As the entertainers approached the house of the chief O-Tah, where the heeva was to be, a gathering crowd followed the group.

The dance was begun ... by three young girls, the eldest not exceeding ten, and the youngest about five years of age. The usual music was performed on three drums, and in the intervals of the dance three men performed something of a pantomime drama, which represented travellers asleep, and thieves dextrously conveying away their goods, round which they had, for greater security, placed themselves.

The following excerpt was recorded by Forster not later than 1777. It is an account of a dramatic dance which included four interludes, one concerning Captain Cook, one concerning a theft, one of a conquest, and one of a birth scene.

In the afternoon we went ashore, to see a dramatic dance performed by Orea's daughter Foyadua, and found a great number of inhabitants assembled at the playhouse; this diversion being admired by all ranks of the people. Foyadua displayed her agility as usual, and received great applause from the European spectators. The interludes performed by the men were something different from those we had seen before. We could plainly understand the name of Captain Cook, and of several of our shipmates, mentioned in their songs, and they seemed to represent a theft committed by their people. Another of the interludes was the invasion of the Borabora men, which they expressed beating one another with a thong or whip, which made a very loud smack. But still another was more curious than all the rest: it represented a woman in labour, and provoked immoderate peals of laughter from the multitude. The man who acted this part went through the gestures, which the Greeks were wont to admire in the groves of Venus-Ariadne, near Amathus, where the same ceremony was acted on the second day of the month Gorplaeus, in memory of Ariadne, who died in childbed... A tall stout fellow, dressed in cloth, personated the new born infant in such a ludicrous style, that we could not

122. Ibid., p. 123.
refuse joining in the plaudits which his countrymen bestowed upon him. Anatomists and midwives would have been surprised to observe, that this overgrown babe had every necessary character of a child newly born; but the natives were particularly delighted with his running about the stage, whilst the rest of the dancers endeavoured to catch him. The ladies were much pleased with this scene, which, according to the simplicity of their ideas, had not the least indecency; they looked on, therefore, unconcernedly, and were not obliged, like some European dames, to peep through their fans. 124

Jealousy was the theme of the farce described below. Strangely enough, it was performed in honor of a sick chief, after the natives received news of his apparent improvement.

... after a noisy Heyba of drums, they acted (on this occasion) a farce representing one of the heathens whose wife was jealous. The function lasted an hour and a half, and was very amusing because the clown played his part with great cleverness. When from time to time the music of the drums was sounded the actors, placed in a row and in that wise bending well forward towards the ground, kept time to the measure by swaying their bodies and limbs without moving from their places; all following the lead of the clown, who was stationed in front of them. They are extraordinarily quick in their motions and move the different parts of their bodies with wonderful agility and ease, throwing themselves into a variety of contortions and making frightful grimaces the while.

Women also take part in the dances and interludes, very modestly dressed; they resemble Spanish women, and are not behind the men in agility of body. 125

Parkinson saw a play which dramatized the conquest of Bora Bora. It was, nevertheless, a comic piece.

... in the afternoon, Mr. Banks and myself went to see an entertainment called an Heivo ... . A large mat was laid upon the ground, and they began to dance upon it, putting their bodies into strange motions, writhing their mouths, and shaking their tails, which made the numerous plaits that hung about them flutter like a peacock's train. Sometimes they stood in a row one behind another, and then fell down with their faces to the ground, leaning on their arms, and shaking only their tails, the drums beating all the while, with which they kept exact time. ... (A man) stood by as a prompter, and roared out as loud

as he could at every change. These motions they continued till they were all in a sweat; they repeated them three times alternately, and, after they had done, the girls began. In the interval, between the several parts of the drama, some men came forward, who seemed to act the part of drolls; and, by what I could distinguish, they attempted to represent the Conquest of Yooolsee-tea, by the men of Bolabola; in which they exhibited the various stratagems used in the conquest, and were very vociferous, performing all in time to the drum. In the last scene, the actions of the men were very lascivious. 126

6. The Arioi Society and the Dance

Although the Arioi society was not devoted exclusively to song, dance and pantomime, these were by far the society's most important activities. Likewise, the society was an important element of the culture of the Society Islands as a whole; hence, a detailed description of the organization would reveal much of interest about the dance as well as the culture of the Society Islands.

Occupation. According to Ellis, many of the customs of the Arioi were considered indecent by European standards. They were, nevertheless, well received by the general populace.

The greatest source of amusement to the people, as a nation, was most probably the existence of... the Arioi society. Many of the regulations of this body, and the practices to which they were addicted, cannot be made public... but, so far as it can be consistently done, it seems desirable to give some particulars respecting this... institution... 127

Missionaries Daniel Tyerman and George Bennett identified the Arioi as a confraternity of strolling players who traveled from island to island entertaining. It was also noted that they were comprised of the


most outstanding persons, in wit, beauty, and often rank. Contrary to practice in Hawaii, where women dancers outnumbered men dancers, arioi men outnumbered the women of that society five to one. 

There was a description of persons, called Papaiaomu (Arosis), a kind of strolling players, who went about the country, from one chief's district to another, reciting stories and singing songs for the entertainment of the people.

They were a sort of strolling players, and privileged libertines, who spent their days in travelling from island to island, and from one district to another, exhibiting their pantomimes, and spreading a moral contagion throughout society. Great preparation was necessary before the mereva, or company, set out. Numbers of pigs were killed, and presented to Cro; large quantities of plantains and bananas, with other fruits were also offered upon his altars. Several weeks were necessary to complete the preliminary ceremonies. The concluding parts of these consisted in erecting, on board their canoes, two temporary maraes, or temples, for the worship of Orote-tefe and his brother, the tutelar deities of the society. This was merely a symbol of the presence of the gods; and consisted principally in a stone for each, from Cro's marae, and a few red feathers from the inside of the sacred image. Into these symbols the gods were supposed to enter when the priest pronounced a short ubu, or prayer immediately before the sailing of the fleet. The numbers connected with this fraternity, and the magnitude of some of their expeditions, will appear from the fact of Cook's witnessing, on one occasion.

in Huahine, the departure of seventy canoes filled with Aréois.

On landing at the place of destination, they proceeded to the
residence of the king or chief, and presented their marotai, or
present; a similar offering was also sent to the temple and to the
gods, as an acknowledgment for the preservation they had experienced
at sea. If they remained in the neighbourhood, preparations were
made for their dances and other performances.\footnote{129}

Many of the exhibitions of the aréois were called upaupa. One
feature of the entertainment was a song or legend composed in honor of
a chief or god. This was introduced in a prologue by the leader of the
group, who accompanied his prologue with many attitudes and gestures.
Speeches were delivered by the aréois, and wrestling matches were held.
They did not, however, engage in boxing. The plays, partly done in dance,
were often pieces of satire leveled at the priests. Dancing was apparently
the favorite activity, for some of it was to be found in all the upaupa
exhibitions. Often the dancing and music lasted all night, and frequently
a performance continued intermittently for several days and nights. When
it finally came to an end and the upaupa was over, the troupe moved on to
another neighborhood or island.

The several gods of the aréois were supposed to have presided over the
upaupa. These gods, "monsters in vice," patronized all the "evil" practices
\footnote{130} that accompanied the public festivals.

The above were the principal occupations of the Aréois; and
in the constant repetition of these, often obscene exhibitions,
they passed their lives, strolling from the habitation of one
chief to that of another, or sailing among the different islands
of the group. The farmers did not in general much respect them;
but the chiefs, and those addicted to pleasure, held them in high
estimation, furnishing them with liberal entertainment, and sparing
no property to gratify them. This often proved the cause of most
unjust and cruel oppression to the poor cultivators. When a party
of Aréois arrived in a district, in order to provide daily a

\footnote{129} Ellis, Polynesian Researches, I, pp. 234-235.

\footnote{130} Ibid., I, pp. 229-230. See above, pp. 8 and 24 for place of dance
and description of costume.
sumptuous entertainment for them, the chief would send his servants to the best plantations in the neighbourhood; and these grounds, without any ceremony, they plundered of whatever was fit for use. Such acts of robbery were repeated every day, so long as the Areois continued in the district; ... 131

Organization and customs. The society was composed of a hierarchy of seven classes, plus servants, who attached themselves to the groups.

The institution, licentious though many of its practices were, had certain definite standards of conduct. Ellis explained the organizations of the society and some of its customs.

In addition to the seven regular classes of Areois, there were a number of individuals, of both sexes, who attached themselves to this dissipated and wandering fraternity, prepared their food and their dresses, performed a variety of servile occupations, and attended them on their journeys, for the purpose of witnessing their dances, or sharing in their banquets. These were called Panaunau, because they did not destroy their offspring, which was indispensable with the regular members.

Although addicted to every kind of licentiousness themselves, each Areoi had his own wife, who was also a member of the society; and so jealous were they in this respect, that improper conduct towards the wife of one of their number, was sometimes punished with death ....

Singular as it may appear, the Areoi institution was held in the greatest repute by the chiefs and higher classes; and, ... the grand masters, or members of the first order, were regarded as a sort of superhuman beings, and treated with a corresponding degree of veneration by many of the vulgar and ignorant. The fraternity was not confined to any particular rank or grade in society, but was composed of individuals from every class. But although thus accessible to all, the admission was attended with a variety of ceremonies; a protracted noviciate followed; and it was only by progressive advancement, that any were admitted to the superior distinction.

It was imagined that those who became Areois were generally prompted or inspired to adopt this course by the gods. When any individual therefore wished to be admitted to their society, he repaired to some public exhibition, in a state of apparent neneva, or derangement ... he rushed through the crowd assembled round the house in which the actors or dancers were performing, and, leaping into the circle, joined with seeming frantic wildness in the dance or pantomime. He continued in the midst of the performers until the exhibition closed. This was considered an indication of his desire

131. Ibid., I, pp. 237-238.

132. See above, p. 24 for fuller explanation of the seven classes.
to join their company; and if approved, he was appointed to wait, as a servant, on the principal Areois. After a considerable trial of his natural disposition, docility, and devotedness in this occupation, if he persevered in his determination to join himself with them, he was inaugurated with all the attendant rites and observations.

The lowest members of the society were the principal actors in all their exhibitions, and on them chiefly devolved the labour and drudgery of dancing and performing for the amusement of the spectators. The superior classes led a life of dissipation and luxurious indolence. On this account, those who were novices continued a long time in the lower class; and were only admitted to the higher order, at the discretion of the leaders or grand masters.

The advancement of an Areoi from the lower classes, took place also at some public festival, when all the members of the fraternity in the island were expected to be present. Each individual appointed to receive this high honour, attended in the full costume of the order.

(Then followed a ceremony, and a feast with many kinds of food.)

Music, dancing, and pantomime exhibitions, followed, and were sometimes continued for several days.

These, though the general amusements of the Areois, were not the only purposes for which they assembled. They included 'All monstrous, all prodigious things;'. . . .133

Origin. The exact age and actual origin of the areoi society is unknown. At the time of the early voyagers, it had been in existence so long that the people said that there had always been the areoi. The legend concerning the origin of the areoi explains the importance of feathers and pigs to the society and the reason for customs such as infanticide and giving the principal areoi of each island the same names.

The legend is as follows.

How long this association has existed in the South Sea Islands, we have no means of ascertaining with correctness. . . . we can only infer . . . that the institution is of ancient origin. According to the traditions of the people, Taaroa created, and, by means of Hina, brought forth when full grown, Orotetefa and Urutetetea. They were not his sons; areoi is the term employed by the people,

133. Ellis, Polynesian Researches, I, pp. 238-243.
which seems to mean create. They were called the brothers of Oro, and were numbered among the inferior divinities. They remained in a state of celibacy; and hence the devotees were required to destroy their offspring. The origin of the Areois institution is as follows.

Oro, the son of Taaroa, desired a wife from the daughters of Taata, the first man; he sent two of his brothers, Tuvearapainuu and Tuvearapairai, to seek among the daughters of men a suitable companion for him; they searched through the whole of the islands, from Tahiti to Barebora, but saw no one that they supposed fit to become the wife of Oro, till they came to Barebora. Here, residing near the foot of Mouatuhuhuura, red-ringed mountain, they saw Vairamati. When they beheld her, they said one to the other, this is the excellent woman for our brother. Returning to the skies, they hastened to Oro, and informed him of their success; told him they had found among the daughters of men a wife for him, described the place of her abode, and represented her as a vahine purotu aiai, a female possessed of every charm. The god fixed the rainbow in the heavens, one end of it resting in the valley at the foot of the red-ringed mountain, the other penetrating the skies, and thus formed his pathway to the earth.

When he emerged from the vapour, which, like a cloud, had encircled the rainbow, he discovered the dwelling of Vairamati, the fair mistress of the cottage, who became his wife. Every evening he descended on the rainbow, and returned by the same pathway on the following morning to the heavenly regions. His wife bore a son, whom he called Hoa-tabu-i-te-rai, friend, sacred to the heavens. This son became a powerful ruler among men.

The absence of Oro from his celestial companions, during the frequent visits he made to the cottage of Vairamati in the valley of Borabora, induced two of his younger brothers, Orotetefa and Urutetefa, to leave their abode in the skies, and commence a search after him. Descending by the rainbow in the position in which he had placed it, they alighted on the earth near the base of the red-ringed mountains, and soon perceived their brother and his wife in their terrestrial habitation. Ashamed to offer their salutations to him and his bride without a present, one of them was transformed on the spot into a pig, and a bunch of uru, or red feathers. These acceptable presents the other offered to the inmates of the dwelling, as a gift of congratulation. Oro and his wife expressed their satisfaction at the present; the pig and the feathers remained the same, but the brother of the god assumed his original form.

Such a mark of attention, on such an occasion, was considered by Oro to require some expression of his commendation. He accordingly made them gods, and constituted them Areois, saying, Ei Areoi orua i te so, nei ia noaa te orua tuhae: "Be you two Areois in this world, that you may have your portion, (in the government, etc.) In the commemoration of this ludicrous fable of the pig and the feathers, the Areois, in all the tau piti, and public festivals, carried a young pig to the temple; strangulated it, bound it in the ahu haio, (a loose open kind of cloth,) and placed it on the altar. They also offered the red feathers, which they called the uru maru no te Areoi, "the shadowy uru of the Areoi," or the red feathers, of the party of the Areoi.
It has been already stated that the brothers, who were made gods and kings of the Areois lived in celibacy; consequently they had no descendants. On this account, although they did not enjoin celibacy upon their devotees, they prohibited their having any offspring. Hence, one of the standing regulations of this institution was, the murder of their children. The first company, the legend states, were nominated, according to the Oro's direction, by Uru tetefa and Orotetefa, and comprised the following individuals: Huatua, of Tahiti; Turaautua, of Moorea, or Mimeo; Temaitaa, of Sir Charles Sanders' Island; Tetoa and Ataa, of Huahine; Taramainini and Airipa, of Raiatea; Mutaha, of Tahaa; Bunaru, of Borebore; and Karore, of Maurua. These individuals, selected from the different islands, constituted the first Areoi society. To them, also, the gods whom Oro had placed over them delegated authority, to admit to their order all such as were desirous to unite with them, and consented to murder their infants. These were always the names of the principal Areois in each of the islands; and were borne by them in the several islands at the time of their renouncing idolatry; . . .134

7. Missionary and Other European Influence

Both the missionaries and other early European visitors to the Society Islands exerted influence on the dance of that nation. The missionaries deliberately set about to change and, in some cases at least, to suppress altogether the music and dance, while the other early voyagers influenced the native dance unintentionally. The result was a difference in the kind and amount of influence of the two groups.

The missionaries' influence on the dance, once their position in the islands was secure and their power over the natives was established, was greater than the influence of the other voyagers, for missionary domination eventually resulted in the restriction and suppression of music and dance for many years.

In the early days of European voyages to the Society Islands, however, the missionary opposition went unheeded, while the natives incorporated certain European elements in their dance. Very early mingling of the

134. Ibid., I, pp. 230-234.
men aboard the European vessels with the natives resulted in an exchange of entertainment. The Europeans played their instruments and danced, and the natives entertained the Europeans with demonstrations of their art. The Society Islanders quickly began to copy the visitors' dance, especially the hornpipe. Particular movements then were added to native dance as a result of European contact. Kotzebue stated that although the women excelled in the dance, the men were skilled and quickly learned such English dances as the hornpipe.

their dancing has been much improved by copying the European manner. In the hornpipe they really excel their masters: they add contortions of the face and muscles to the nimbleness of the foot, that are inimitable, and must, in spite of our gravity, provoke laughter, their country dances too are well regulated; and they have dances of their own, that are equal to those at our best theatres; . . . 136

The women adopted European beads to their already elaborate ornaments. One reference to this was made by George Forster who observed a chief's daughter perform in 1773.

In the afternoon Foydua performed a dance; and as if she meant to outshine the other actresses, she had ornamented her dress more than usual, and wore a great quantity of various sorts of European beads. 137

The Society Islanders were quick to take the behavior of their European guests as new subject matter for their dance dramas. A third contribution of European influence, therefore, was additional source material or subject matter.

The following reports indicate the attitude of the missionaries toward music and dance of the Society Islands and the steps taken to

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curtail the practice of such arts. They also reveal native reaction to the interference.

William Ellis noted that, for many years, the first missionaries to Tahiti were variously annoyed in their attempts to preach. Audiences were small and ill-mannered.

On some occasions, while they have been preaching, a number of Areois, or strolling players, passing by, have commenced their pantomime or their dance, and drawn away every one of the hearers. At such times, those who had stood round the Missionary only to insult him by their insinuations, ridicule him by their vulgar wit, or afflict his mind by their death-like indifference to the important truths he had declared, have instantly formed a ring around the Areois, and gazed on their exhibitions of folly and of vice with interest and pleasure. 138

In 1775, the Society Islanders were still practicing their dance as they pleased. Missionary Don Jose Varela at that time saw many "immodest dances" but only one "decent" one.

In their amusements, which they term heiva, they are wont to indulge in various dances of a highly immodest character; ... I saw only one decent dance, made up of several young girls who together repeated the refrain tei pare hue to what one of their number was singing. 139

By 1802, missionary influence was being felt. On one occasion a group of several young men are reported to have tried to amuse a group of natives with obscene attitudes. Formerly, that would have been well received by native audiences. On that occasion, probably because of missionary influence, the attempt was not very successful.

By 1826, the situation was apparently somewhat different, with the missionaries exerting a stronger influence. Frederick Beechey reported

that on one occasion, in March of that year, the Princess asked if a dance couldn't be performed on board the visitors' ship. The request was granted, but as such performances were prohibited by law, and there were penalties for performers and spectators, it was therefore necessary to execute it very quietly. It was essential that

the *viva*, or reed pipe, should be played in an undertone, that it might not reach the ears of an *aava*, or policeman, who was parading the beach, ... for even the use of this melodic little instrument, the delight of the natives, from whose nature the dance and the pipe are inseparable, is now strictly prohibited.\(^1\)

About the same time the missionaries Tyerman and Bennett reported that the natives had "discontinued" the licentious dances. They wrote that the dance had been connected with unutterable abominations, and therefore have been entirely discontinued since purer manners have followed in the train of Christian principles. The licentious dancers, the barbarous cock-fighting (for these were favorite games formerly), ... have been likewise abandoned; ...\(^2\)

Even the music of the flute was outlawed. Not later than 1826, Kotzebue wrote,

*By order of the Missionaries, the flute ... is heard no more.*

No music but that of the psalms is suffered in Tahiti: dancing, mock-fights, and dramatic representations are no longer permitted.\(^3\)

Not later than 1836, Frederick Debell Bennett recorded information regarding the music and dance of Raiatea. He maintained that at that time, although public performance was suppressed, many of the ancient songs and dances were yet extant, and nearly everyone was well versed in both.

Finally, when Charles Wilkes, Commander of the United States Exploring Expedition, visited the Society Islands, not later than 1842, he summed up the music and dance of that nation thus.

If they ever had any native music, it has long been forgotten, and no other singing is now heard but hymns and sailors' songs; you observe, however, a peculiar nasal sound, particularly in those who indulge in the latter class of singing.

Social amusements are prohibited by severe penalties, although the people are evidently fond of them: I neither saw nor heard myself of any dancing or theatrical amusements during our stay. Some of the officers, however, persuaded a few females to exhibit a dance, upon the strict assurance that they should not be informed against. Hats were spread upon the floor, on which two of the girls stood up to dance, while the others sat cross-legged around. One of the latter began by uttering a few words of no delicate import, in reply to which all the others made a sort of grunt, with the mouth shut. This succeed another set of sounds uttered with the mouth open.

To this all keep time, by drawing up the legs, thrusting out the arms, and making all sorts of contortions. In the meantime the two dancers proceed, twisting their bodies into all kinds of lascivious postures. Little can be said for the gracefulness of these motions, although many have described them as such. The whole finishes by a simultaneous clapping of the hands.\footnote{Charles Wilkes, Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition, \ldots 1838 \ldots 1842. (New York, 1856), II, pp. 24-25. Hereafter cited as Wilkes, Narrative.}
CHAPTER II
THE DANCE IN THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

The purpose of this chapter is to present, without analysis on the part of the present writer, the references to Hawaiian dance as recorded by the early writers. This compilation of information on the dance reveals opposing opinions and viewpoints, instances of contradictory evidence, sketchy, incomplete, and sometimes faulty information. The chapter is divided into five sections: general observations and remarks; occasions for dance; costume and ornamentation; music and instruments; and missionary opposition and influence.

1. General Observations and Remarks

Indications of Position of the Dance in the Society. Throughout the early writings on the Hawaiian Islands, there is evidence that singing and dancing was an activity engaged in with much enthusiasm by the Hawaiians. Although David Malo made the conservative statement that the "hula was a very popular amusement among the Hawaiians", other writers have revealed that the dance was practiced by almost everyone and that

1. David Malo, Hawaiian Antiquities (Hooolelo Hawaii) Tr. by Dr. N. B. Emerson from the Hawaiian, 1898 (Honolulu, 1903) p. 303. Malo, native Hawaiian, completed the above mentioned work in 1839. This was after his conversion to Christianity. (Ibid., notes by translator p. 14) His enthusiasm for his newly acquired religion was so great that it led him, in his writings, to pass judgment on ancient Hawaiian traditions and to condemn some of the customs. For this reason and because some of his information is so scanty, it may not be amiss to assume that, although he recorded much Hawaiian lore, he purposely omitted many facts that would have contributed to the total picture of the dance in the Hawaiian Islands. He did not, for instance, describe the dances that he named. See below, p. 67.
it was a source of extreme pleasure to all. Historian James Jackson Jarves, who became a resident of Hawaii in 1837, reported that "all, of every age and character," engaged in dancing. This included both the commoners and the nobility. Otto von Kotzebue observed that the occupations of the lower classes left time for various amusements, "particularly dancing, which the young people of both sexes delighted in". In 1828, a Hawaiian woman, speaking of the days before the missionaries came, told Mrs. Laura Fish Judd, an early American resident of Honolulu, "We thought only of preserving our youth and beauty, following the train of our kings and chiefs, singing, dancing and being merry." The nobility, in addition to participating in the dances themselves, spent much time listening to "the songs of the musicians, a kind of recitation, accompanied by much action; and in witnessing the performances of the dancers." Dance performances were met with spontaneous delight. The following statement of Adalbert von Chamisso represents the typical audience reaction to dance.

4. Laura Fish Judd, Honolulu: Sketches of Life . . . in the Hawaiian Islands from 1828 to 1861 (New York, 1880), p. 34.
5. Vancouver, Voyage of Discovery, V. p. 70.
7. Chamisso sailed as naturalist with Kotzebue on his first voyage, 1815-1818.
8. For additional remarks on audience reaction see below, pp. 64, 66, 70, 78.
"Such enthusiasm and joyful intoxication as the Hawaiians showed at this performance, I have never seen in any audience, or at any other performance. They threw presents to the dancers, such as clothing and jewelry."

Nature of the dance. One of the most outstanding characteristics of the dance performance was the integration of the elements of music, dance, and poetry. That Chamisso was aware of this is revealed in his statement that in the dance of Hawaii poetry, music, and dancing "appear hand in hand, in their original union, ..." He considered the dance of Hawaii a fine art, consecrated to the enjoyment and to pleasure. He described the song that accompanied the dance as monotonous, but explained further that the song with the accompanying drum beats measures the turns of the dance, ... In the varying dance, the human form develops itself to this measure, in the most admirable manner, ... (There is a) constant flow of easy unconstrained motion, in every natural and graceful position. ... (The) feet only bear the dancer. He moves forward with composure. His body, his arms, all his muscles, are expressive; his countenance is animated ... The drummers sit in the background, the dancers stand before them in one or more rows; all join their voices in the chorus. The song is at first slow and piano, and is gradually and regularly quickened and strengthened, as the dancers advance, and their action becomes animated. All execute the same motions ... (They may perform) standing or sitting, ... but (the dance is) always accompanied by graceful motions of the body and the arms.

There are several brief and general references which give some insight to the nature of the dance. After witnessing native entertainment on one occasion in 1829, James Macrae made a short entry in his journal. He


10. Otto von Kotzebue, A Voyage of Discovery into the South Seas and Bearing's Straits, ... in the Years 1815-1818, ... Ship Ruick ... (London, 1821), III, pp. 253-255. Hereafter cited as Kotzebue, Voyage of Discovery.

11. Author, and botanist with Lord Byron on his voyage to the Hawaiian Islands.
... having been much amused observing the natives' simple manners and mode of dancing, which they accompany with a song and graceful motions of the arms and body, raising their voices at intervals to a high key, then again lowering it, without any given certain time that had in the least resemblance to music.\footnote{12}

Being somewhat more specific, Archibald Campbell declared that the dancing was done principally by women, who formed solid squares with ten or twelve persons in each row; that they kept time to a drum; and that they all sang. On these occasions they were wont to display any or all the finery which they possessed. Their efforts were met with fits of laughter and great applause. He added:

(They) seldom move their feet, but throw themselves into a variety of attitudes, sometimes all squatting, and at other times springing up at the same instant. A man in front, with strings of shells on his ankles and wrists, with which he marks time, acts as fugel-man.\footnote{14}

Even though the dance may have been done principally by women, as Campbell declared, Chamisso felt that "it was the men who excelled in their art and whom one could not say that one was better than the other."\footnote{15}

He said, furthermore, that the ballet "pales in comparison with the hurra-hurra."

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  \item \footnote{12}{James Macrae, With Lord Byron at the Sandwich Islands in 1825. (Honolulu, 1922), p. 18.}
  \item \footnote{13}{Arrived in Honolulu on the "Neva" from Sitka in 1809 and left in February, 1810 on an English whaler; was a resident of Oahu for thirteen months.}
  \item \footnote{14}{Archibald Campbell, A Voyage Round the World from 1806 to 1812 ... (Edinburgh, London, and Glasgow, 1816), pp. 202-203. Hereafter cited as Campbell, Voyage Round the World.}
  \item \footnote{15}{Chamisso, "Chamisso in Hawaii", p. 70.}
\end{itemize}
In a less complimentary reference to the dance, Jarves mentioned the movements of the professional dancers.

The movements of the professional dancers consisted in a variety of uncouth motions and twistings of the body, of too lascivious a nature to bear description, and were generally preparatory to brutal revels. The dances of the youth were peculiarly graceful and pleasing.16

Sheldon Dibble, missionary and historian of the islands, was also critical of the dance movements. He did, however, record valuable facts about "exhibitions of licentiousness." He wrote, in part:

There were a great variety of dances. Some of them consisted merely in the recital of songs, accompanied with as much action as was calculated to give them force. Others consisted mainly in action. Sometimes a single girl was the actress, again a large number united. Their motions were anything but graceful, and often revolting. These motions were regulated by music, . . . 17

Dance compared to that of other Pacific Islands. William Ellis, surgeon on the voyage of Captains Cook, Clerke, and Gore in the years 1776 to 1780, compared the music and dance of Hawaii to that of the Society Islands. He found the music of Hawaii similar to that of the Society Islands; the dance he found less objectionable than that of those islands.

There songs are not various; they are sung nearly in the same tone as at Otaheitee, but their dances are different from any we have yet seen. They have none of those graceful movements which are so peculiar to the natives of Anamooka, Amsterdam, etc. nor the lewd motions which characterize the people of the Society Isles. Whenever they can collect seven or eight girls together, they generally strike up a dance, which is an amusement they are very

18. Sheldon Dibble, History of the Sandwich Islands (Lahainaluna, Hawaii, 1843, pp. 119-120.
19. This was James Cook's third voyage, during which the Hawaiian Islands were discovered. The voyage was made in the ships Discovery and Resolution.
partial to. They first begin by repeating, or rather singing several words, which appear to be in a rhyme, all of them at the same time slowly moving their legs and striking their breasts gently with their hands; this being finished, they all jump in a violent manner, but in exact time, striking their breasts or sides much harder than before, and repeating the word he'ora; those who continue this exercise the longest, are allowed to be the best dancers. 

During the same voyage, Captain James King recorded in his journal his impressions of Hawaiian dance and music. He too compared the dance to that of the Society Islands, as well as the dance of New Zealand and the Friendly Islands.

Their dances have a much nearer resemblance to those of the New Zealanders than of the Otaheiteans or Friendly Islanders. They are prefaced with a slow, solemn song, in which all the party join, moving their legs, and gently striking their breasts, in a manner, and with attitudes, that are perfectly easy and graceful; and so far they are the same with the dances of the Society Islands. When this has lasted about ten minutes, both the tune and the motions gradually quicken, and end only by their inability to support the fatigue; which part of their performance is the exact counterpart of that of the New Zealanders; and (as it is among them) the person who uses the most violent action, and holds out the longest, is applauded as the best dancer. It is to be observed, that, in this dance, the women only take a part, and that the dancing of the men is nearly of the same kind with what we saw of the small parties at the Friendly Islands; and which may, perhaps, with more propriety, be called the accompaniment of songs, with corresponding and graceful motions of the whole body. Yet as we were spectators of boxing exhibitions of the same kind with those we were entertained with at the Friendly Islands, it is probable that they had likewise their grand ceremonious dances, in which numbers of both sexes assisted.

Captain James Cook, during the same voyage, concluded that the dances of the Hawaiian Islands were similar to those of the Southern Islands. He also mentioned two types of ornamentation not mentioned elsewhere in connection with the dance.


Their amusements seem pretty various; for, during our short stay, several were discovered. The dances, at which they use the feathered cloaks and caps, were not seen; but from the motions which they made with their hands, on other occasions, when they sung we could form some judgement that they are, in some degree at least, similar to those we had met with at the Southern Islands, though not executed so skilfully.

Kinds of dance. Specific kinds of dances and their names have been recorded by Halo. He included practically no description of these dances.

The hula most frequently performed by the chiefs was the ka-leau (in which one stick was struck against another).

3-4. The children of the wealthy were ardent devotees of the hula. Among the varieties of the hula were the pa'i umauma, (beating the chest), hula pahu (with drum accompaniment), and the hula pahu'a, besides which there were also the ala'a-papa, the pa'ina'i, the pa-ipu, the ulili, the kolani, and the kiielei.

5. It was the custom of hula dancers to perform before the rich in order to obtain gifts from them.

Charles Pickering, anthropologist for the United States Exploring Expedition, 1839 to 1842, recorded the kinds of dance in Hawaii as reported to him by the missionaries. The missionaries stated that the Hawaiian dances were of three kinds; the first, licentious; the second, a kind of dirge, or memorial; and the third, a sort of panegyric addressed to their chiefs, in which epithets were used improper to be applied to a mortal.

2. Occasions for Dance

Jarves indicated the range and variety of occasions on which the Hawaiians danced when he stated that these occasions included joy, grief, and worship. Other more specific observers reported dancing on occasions.

22. Ibid., II, pp. 235-236.

23. See below, pp. 77 and 94, for descriptions of specific performances of this type of dance.


of pregnancy, birth, season of harvest, prayer, death, and entertainment. The dances which were performed for entertainment comprise a large group of the dances, and these may be divided into occasions for entertainment. On formal occasions, the dancers performed to honor the nobility, the wealthy, or distinguished visitors, to entertain the general populace, which may also include personages of high rank, or to celebrate the arrival or safe return of an individual or individuals. Dances on informal occasions were usually in the nature of games and were performed by anyone who wished to participate for amusement and pleasure.

**Pregnancy.** Information pertaining to dances in connection with pregnancy of the nobility has been recorded by Malo and Vancouver. Elaborate ceremonies were a part of the mating of a royal pair, and there was immediate joy and celebration when the princess discovered she was pregnant.

7. Then those who composed *meles* (*haku mele*) were sent for to compose a *mele inoa* that should eulogise and blazon the ancestors of the new chief-to-be, in order to add distinction to him when he should be born.

8. And when the bards had composed their *meles* satisfactorily (*a holo na mele*), they were imparted to the hula dancers to be committed to memory. It was also their business to decide upon the attitudes and gestures, and to teach the *inoa* to the men and women of the hula (*i.e.* the chorus).

9. After that the men and women of the hula company dances and recited the *mele inoa* of the unborn chief with great rejoicing, keeping it up until such time as the prince was born; then the hula-performance ceased.\(^27\)

Vancouver gave a detailed eye-witness account of a dance performed in 1794, "in compliment to the pregnancy of one of the regent's wives . . ." The dance was to have been repeated frequently until the birth three months later. The spectators were numerous and came in their best apparel and exhibited their best manners. The performers were chiefly women and

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were dressed in varicolored clothes. The entertainment, divided into
three parts, was performed by three different groups of two hundred women
each, arranged in five or six rows, and sitting on their haunches. One
man, seemingly the hero of the piece, advanced a few feet before the
center of the first row.

(He) gave tone and action to the entertainment. In this situation
and posture they exhibited a variety of gestures, almost incredible
for the human body so circumstances to perform. The whole of this
numerous group was in perfect unison of voice and action, that it
was impossible, even to the bend of finger, to have discerned the
least variation. Their voices were melodious, and their actions
were as innumerable as, by me, they are undescribable; they ex­
hibited great ease and much elegance, and the whole were executed
with a degree of correctness not easily to be imagined. This was
particularly striking in one part, when the performance instantly
changed from a loud full chorus, and vast agitation in the counte­
nances and gestures of the actors, to the most profound silence and
composure; and instead of continuing in their previous erect
attitude, all fell down as it were lifeless, and in their fall buried
themselves under their garments; conveying, in some measure, the
idea of a boisterous ocean becoming suddenly tranquillized by an
instant calm. The great diversity of their figured dresses on this
occasion had a particularly good effect; the several other parts
were conducted with the same correctness and uniformity, but were
less easy to describe. There appeared to be much variety and little
repetition, not only in the acting of the respective sets, but in
the whole of the three parts; the performers in which, could not
amount to less than six hundred persons. This hoorah was completely
free from the disgusting obscenity exhibited in the former entertain­
ments, . . . It was conducted through every part with great life and
vivacity, and was, without exception, the most pleasing ammgment of
the kind we had seen performed in the course of the voyage.

Birth. Following the birth of a child, one of the first ceremonies
was the naming of it. Then the neighbors came to drink and to sing and
perform "hurrah-hurrah." In the event the child was of noble birth,
this celebration was more elaborate. Malo reported that, "On the birth
of an ali the chiefs and people gave themselves up to the hula, and much

29. Gilbert Farquhar Mathison, Narrative of a Visit to Brazil, Chile, Peru,
and the Sandwich Islands, During the Years 1821 and 1822 . . .
(London, 1825), p. 474. Hereafter cited as Mathison, Narrative of a
Visit.
Probably closely related to the dances in celebration of birth was the dance, described by Kotzebue, in honor of King Kamehameha I's son of only nine months. The child was not present at the occasion, for, since he was not allowed to be seen for a certain period of time after birth, he was kept in a house behind the dancing place and was guarded by two men. This dancing place, which was enclosed by a bamboo fence, was in front of the governor's house. The many spectators sat in a circle in the center of which were placed mats for the distinguished spectators. Music was furnished by four male musicians who beat on hollow gourds with small sticks. The dancers, numbering three, were male professionals who went from island to island performing for money. They were nude except for such ornaments as bracelets of hogs' tusks and a kind of half armour for their feet. They came forward and arranged themselves very close to each other and opposite the distinguished spectators. They

... expressed the words to the accompanying song, by the skilful movements of the whole body. They were particularly skilful in changing their faces every moment, to suit them to the motions of the body.\(^{31}\)

The spectators enjoyed the dance and ran up at every pause, entered the circle, and gave gifts to the dancers. The succeeding attraction was a number of young women dancers who arranged themselves in three rows. Their heads and shoulders were bedecked with leis and their necks with pearls, "and various fantastic things ..." Their bosoms were bare, 

\(^{30}\) Malo, op. cit., p. 303.

\(^{31}\) Kotzebue, Voyage of Discovery, I, pp. 335-336.
and their skirts were of tapa. They accompanied "the monotonous music
with graceful movements."

Season of harvest. The season of harvest in Hawaii was called
Hakahiki. Authorities disagree as to the actual time of the onset and
the duration of this harvest rite. Probably the time of commencement
varied. Nevertheless, the season was in the nature of an annual collec-
tion in the name of Lono, god of the harvest. The celebration symbolized
the death and rebirth of fertility. According to legend, Lono's wife was
Laka, symbol of the earth's fertility and also goddess of the hula.
In a rage, Lono killed Laka but soon began to grieve for her. In his
grief, he traveled around the island boxing everyone whom he met. After
this he left for a foreign land but promised to return. The Makahiki
celebrated this event. Lono was represented both by the king and by
effigies which were carried around the island. As the procession came to
each village, the people made offerings to the god in hope that they
would be assured of another fruitful season the following year. Near the
end of the festival, a canoe of food was set adrift to symbolize the
departure of the god at the end of the season of abundant growth.

32. Ibid., I, pp. 336-337.
33. This rite came to Hawaii from the Society Islands, where it was called
pararea matahiti (ripening of the year). See Henry, Ancient Tahiti
(Honolulu, 1928), p. 177.
302.
35. Ibid., p. 309.
36. Ibid., p. 296.
37. Ibid., p. 297.
The early writers reported very little about the Kakahiki and the attendant festivities, but the following two references indicate that dancing was an established part of the season of tax collecting.

During the period called "Kacaheite," which took up all of the month of November, the priests collected taxes from the chiefs in proportion to the extent of their lands. The taxes were in the form of mats, feathers, and produce. The people celebrated this festival by dancing, wrestling, and other amusements.

The season of "Macahity," or the taboo Macahity," which comprised the twelfth month of the year, was one whole month in which the people engaged in all manner of dances, plays, and sham-fights. During this festival, which the king was compelled to open no matter where he was at the time, all punishments were remitted. Furthermore, no person could leave the place at which he began the "Macahity."

Prayer. Singing, chanting, and rhythmical movement were associated with prayer and extreme physical pain. A kind of religious dance pertaining to food was described by Captain King.

Amongst their religious ceremonies, may be reckoned the prayers and offerings made by the priests before their meals. Whilst the ava is chewing, of which they always drink before they begin their repast, the person of the highest rank takes the lead in a sort of hymn, in which he is presently joined by one, two, or more of the company; the rest moving their bodies, and striking their hands gently together, in concert with the fingers. When the ava is ready, cups of it are handed about to those who do not join in the

36. Also see Malo, Hawaiian Antiquities, pp. 186-120, and Corney, Voyages in the Northern Pacific; ... 1813 to 1818 ... (Honolulu, 1896), pp. 101-102.
39. Malo stated that four months were devoted to the celebration of Makahiki. Malo, op. cit., p. 56.
song, which they keep in their hands till it is ended; when, uniting in one loud response, they drink off their cup. The performers of the hymn are then served with ava, who drink it after a repetition of the same ceremony; and, if there be present one of a very superior rank, a cup is, last of all, presented to him, which, after chanting some time alone, and being answered by the rest, and pouring a little out on the ground, he drinks off. A piece of the flesh that is dressed, is next cut off, without any selection of the part of the animal; which, together with some of the vegetables, being deposited at the foot of the image of the Eatooa, and a hymn chanted, their meal commences. A ceremony of much the same kind is also performed by the Chiefs, whenever they drink ava, between their meals.\footnote{42}

Dibble, in reference to the laity, observed, "The people were in the habit of praying every morning to the gods, clapping their hands as they muttered a set form of words, in a sing-song tone. This practice however, was not universal.\footnote{43}"

An alleged eye-witness furnished the information pertaining to the spectacle described below.

In 1804, when Kamehameha I was on his way to invade Kauai, he stopped at Oahu where, within a few days, two-thirds of his army perished of yellow fever. The priests advised a tabu of ten days, the sacrifice of three human victims, four hundred hogs, and as many coconuts and branches of plantains. Then the three men, who had been caught eating coconuts with the old queen, were led to the marae; but there were three days left before the sacrifice could be presented. Accordingly, the eyes of the victims were scooped out, the bones of the arms and legs broken, and the men were deposited in a house to await the day of sacrifice.

Some persons, moved by curiosity, visited them in prison, and found them neither raving nor desponding, but sullenly singing the national hure—dull as the drone of a bagpipe, and hardly more variable—as though they were insensible of the pest, and indifferent to the future.\footnote{44}

\footnote{42} Cook and King, \textit{A Voyage to the Pacific}, III, p. 161.  
\footnote{43} Dibble, \textit{History of the Sandwich Islands}, p. 100.  
\footnote{44} Tyerman and Bennet, \textit{Journal of Voyages}, II, pp. 48-49.
Death. Death also was an occasion which demanded dance. In 1779, after the decease of an old chief, Captain King described a sitting dance that was part of the mourning ceremonies.

On going to the place, I found a number of people assembled, and seated round a square area, fronting the house in which the deceased lay, whilst a man, in a red feathered cap, advanced from an interior part of the house to the door, and putting out his head, at almost every moment uttered a most lamentable howl, accompanied with the most singular grimaces, and violent distortions of his face, that can be conceived. After this had passed a short time, a large mat was spread upon the area, and two men and thirteen women came out of the house and seated themselves down upon it, in three equal rows; the two men, and three of the women, being in front. The necks and hands of the women were decorated with feathered ruffs; and broad green leaves, curiously scollopèd, were spread over their shoulders. At one corner of the area, near a small hut, were half a dozen boys waving small white banners, and the tufted wands, or taboo, sticks, who would not permit us to approach them. This led me to imagine, that the dead body might be deposited in this little hut; but I afterward understood, that it was in the house where the man in the red cap opened the rites, by playing his tricks at the door. The company just mentioned, being seated on the mat, began to sing a melancholy tune, accompanied with a slow and gentle motion of the body and arms. When this had continued some time, they raised themselves on their knees, and, in a posture between kneeling and sitting, began by degrees to move their arms and their bodies with great rapidity, the tune always keeping pace with their motions. As these last exertions were too violent to continue long, they resumed, at intervals their slower movements; and after this performance had lasted an hour, more mats were brought and spread upon the area, and four or five elderly women, amongst whom, I was told, was the dead Chief's wife, advanced slowly out of the house, and seating themselves in the front of the first company, began to cry and wail most bitterly; the men in the three rows behind joining them, whilst the two men inclined their heads over them in a very melancholy and pensive attitude.

Late in the afternoon, after several hours of continued exertion, the company was still proceeding with little variation. The following morning, the corpse had been removed.

William Ellis, missionary, wrote of a solo demonstration of a middle-aged woman just after the death of the governor of the island of Maui.

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46. Ibid., III, p. 167.
He also described the funeral processions that occurred frequently as a result of the death of Keopuolani, Queen of Maui.

A day or two after the decease of Keeaumoku, governor of Maui, and the elder brother of Kuakini, governor of Hawaii, I was sitting with the surviving relatives, who were weeping around the couch on which the corpse was lying, when a middle-aged woman came in at the other end of the large house, and having proceeded about half way towards the spot where the body lay, began to sing, in a plaintive tone, accompanying her song with affecting gesticulations, such as wringing her hands, grasping her hair, and beating her breasts.

After the death of Keopuolani, we frequently saw the inhabitants of a whole district, that had belonged to her, coming to weep on account of her death. They walked in profound silence, either in single file, or two or three abreast, the old people leading the van, and the children bringing up the rear.

When they were within a few hundred yards of the house where the corpse was lying, they began to lament and wail. The crowds of mourners around the house opened a passage for them to approach it, and then one or two of their number came forward, and standing a little before the rest, began a song or recitation, showing her birth, rank, honours, and virtues, brandishing a staff or piece of sugar-cane, and accompanying their recitation with attitudes and gestures expressive of the most frantic grief. When they had finished, they sat down, and mingled with the thronging multitudes in their loud and ceaseless wailing.

Hiram Bingham, zealous pioneer missionary and historian, wrote that after the death of Kalanimoku’s wife Likelike, in 1821, all the usual mourning customs prevailed. The people cut patches of their hair, burned themselves, lay with their faces on the floor, played games, drank, and engaged in “giddy dancing.” Kalanimoku finally consented to have a funeral sermon on the Sabbath, but refused to suspend the Sabbath dancing.

47. William Ellis, A Narrative of a Tour through Hawaii, or Owhyhee; with remarks on the History, Traditions, Manners, Customs, and Language of the Inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands. (Honolulu, 1917, pp. 135-136. Hereafter cited as Ellis, Narrative of a Tour.

48. Kalanimoku, Liholiho, or Kamehameha II’s general and prime counsellor of Kaahumanu.

Unorganized dances at times of intense emotion are common to many cultures. Henri Zimmerman, on Captain Cook's third voyage, reported an incident, in connection with the death of Captain Cook, that may have been such a dance. On January 16, 1779, several days after Captain Cook's murder, Captain Clerke sent boats and men ashore in an effort to make peace with the natives and to persuade them to return Cook's body. They were, however, met with mockery, "and some of them even danced about before us, clad in some of Captain Cook's clothes." This should not be considered an organized dance but rather a spontaneous outburst of emotion, or unorganized dance.

Entertainment. As in the Society Islands, the most frequent occasion for dancing in the Hawaiian Islands was probably that of entertainment. The more formal performances were usually executed by a group of dancers and musicians, very often professionals, for the entertainment of an audience. A very suitable way to honor an individual or individuals was to dance for him, and persons of high rank and distinguished visitors were frequently honored in this manner.

Ellis described an afternoon performance which he saw at Kailua on the island of Hawaii, July 14, 1823. It was performed by strolling entertainers in honor of the governor. On this occasion the principal attraction was a solo executed by a young man. The subject matter of his accompanying chant seems to have been the celebration of former rulers.


51. See below, p.105 for explanation of organized and unorganized dance.

52. See below pp.70,77,78 for additional references to dances honoring individuals.
In the afternoon, a party of strolling musicians and dancers arrived at Kairua. About four o'clock they came, followed by crowds of people, and arranged themselves on a fine sandy beach, in front of one of the governor's houses, where they exhibited a native dance, called hura araapapa.

The five musicians first seated themselves in a line on the ground, and spread a piece of folded cloth on the sand before them. As soon as they began to sound their calabashes, the dancer, a young man, about the middle stature, advanced through the opening crowd. His jet-black hair, tied together behind, while a paraoa (an ornament made of a whale's tooth) hung pendent from it on his breast; his wrists were ornamented with bracelets, formed of polished tusks of the hog, and his ankles with loose buskins, thickly set with dog's teeth, the rattle of which, during the dance, kept time with the music of the calabash drum. A beautiful yellow tapa was tastefully fastened round his loins, reaching to his knees. He began his dance in front of the musicians, and moved forwards and backwards, across the area, occasionally chanting the achievements of former kings of Hawaii. The governor sat at the end of the ring, opposite to the musicians, and appeared gratified with the performance, which continued until the evening.

Ellis also recorded an afternoon performance given in honor of Keopuolani, queen of Maui. It was performed by a party of musicians and dancers in front of her house. He called it the, "hura ka raau" or "Dance to the beating of a stick."

Five musicians advanced first, each with a staff in his left hand, five or six feet long, about three or four inches in diameter at one end, and tapering off to a point at the other. In his right hand he held a small stick of hard wood six or nine inches long, with which he commenced his music, by striking the small stick on the larger one, beating time all the while with his right foot on a stone, placed on the ground beside him for that purpose.

Six women, fantastically dressed in yellow tapas, crowned with garlands of flowers, having also wreaths of the sweet-scented flowers of the gardenia on their necks, and branches of the fragrant mairi, (another native plant,) bound round their ankles, now made their way by couples through the crowd, and, arriving at the area, on one side of which the musicians stood, began their dance.

Their movements were slow, and though not always graceful, exhibited nothing offensive to modest propriety.

Both musicians and dancers alternately chanted songs in honor

53. See below, p. 92, for description of the instruments used in this performance.

54. Ellis, Narrative of a Tour, p. 74.
of former gods and chiefs of the islands, apparently much to the
gratification of the numerous spectators.

After they had continued their hura, (song and dance,) for
about half an hour, the queen, Keapuolani, requested them to leave
off, as the time had arrived for evening worship. The music ceased;
the dancers sat down; and, after the missionaries and some of the
people had sung one of the songs of Zion, I preached to the surround­
ing multitude with special reference to their former idolatrous
dances, and the vicious customs connected therewith. . . .

Vancouver described “a more splendid than ordinary” performance, at
which the attendants on the court of Kamehameha I performed in honor of a
captive princess who was not present. Despite the rank of the performers,
and the preparations involved, the king and queen were not permitted to
see such exhibitions except at the festival of New Year or Makahiki. If
it had been permissible, the queen would have probably joined the group of
entertainers; for she was reputed to be an excellent performer herself.

The performance was scheduled to begin at four o'clock, but long
before the appointed hour an estimated four thousand spectators, of all
ranks and attired in their best apparel, had assembled. They surrounded
a small square, the place of exhibition, and some had placed themselves in
nearby trees. Vancouver, also having arrived too early, was escorted to
the “green room,” where he watched the performers dress. Being slow in
their preparations, the ladies kept the crowd waiting for some time. The
spectators, who had assembled in rows of fifteen to twenty feet deep and
close to each other, were in good humor but impatient for the dancers.
Consequently, they shouted for things to get started. The conductor of the
ceremonies and sole manager of the occasion came forward, made an apology
at which the natives laughed, and then caused the music to begin.

55. Ibid., p. 59.
56. See below, p. 86 for description of the costumes.
57. See below, p. 93 for remarks about the instruments.
Immediately the spectators became quiet. As the ladies made their appearance, the musicians retired a few steps to allow them to take their places in front.

The heroine of the piece, who wore a green wreath round the crown of her head, was the one-time lover of Kamehameha. Next to her was a captive daughter of some chief. The third lady was a younger sister of the queen and the most exalted; therefore, she stood in the middle. "On each side of these were two of inferior quality, making in all seven actresses."

They formed a line fronting the side of the square which was occupied by chiefs and ladies of quality. The piece consisted of four parts or acts, and the performance was a compound of speaking and singing,

(thel) subject matter of which was enforced by appropriate gestures and actions. The piece was in honor of a captive princess, whose name was Crycowculleneaow; and on her name being pronounced, everyone present, men as well as women, who wore any ornaments above their waist, were obliged to take them off, though the captive lady was at least sixty miles distant. This mark of respect was unobserved by the actresses whilst engaged in the performance; but the instant any one sat down, or at the close of the act, they were obliged to comply with this mysterious ceremony. 58

The dancers displayed a variety of attitudes and a rapidity of action. There was much correspondence and harmony between the tone of voice and the display of limbs. In the first three parts, there was greater variety in songs, attitudes, and actions than the European observers had noted before in the South Seas. Their spirit, vivacity, and some of the exertions, "seemed to carry the performers beyond what their strength was able to sustain; . . . ." The fourth part was an

offensive, libidinous scene, . . . The language of the song, no doubt, corresponded with the obscenity of their actions; which were carried to a degree of extravagance that was calculated to produce nothing but disgust even in the most licentious. 59


59. Ibid., V, pp. 73-75.
At sundown, after a performance of an hour, the entertainment came to an end.

In Honolulu, on June 1, 1825, a "hura-hura, or national dance," was given to honor Lord George Anson Byron. The entertainment was described thus by an officer on board the H. M. S. Blonde:

We were seated on mats in front of the dancers, who were twenty-five young girls disposed in five rows. On either side of us sat two old men holding large calebasses, on which they beat time with the palms of their hands to the dance and to a slow song which accompanied it. The dance itself consisted of various and ever-changing motions of the limbs and body, without moving farther from the spot than a single step forwards, backwards, to the right or to the left. The song was monotonous, and sung, sometimes by a single voice, sometimes by two, and then the whole chorus would join. It was in praise of Boki, and congratulation of his happy return to Oahu. They tell us the dance may consist of any number of persons, from one to a thousand.

On another occasion Lord Byron and others were entertained, in the late afternoon by a female dancer whose motions reminded them of the Spanish dances.

A ring being formed, a very handsome girl was brought forward to dance, while two old men sat, one on each side, beating time on a drum made of a gourd. The girl's motions were slow and graceful; they reminded us of the measured Spanish dances; and were accompanied by a native song, sung by the men, the woman herself occasionally answering in equal measure.

Archibald Menzies and others were entertained one morning by a performance of a very talented young girl who was accompanied by her father who sang and beat on a small drum. Both father and daughter were

61. See below, p. 87 for description of the girls' costumes.

62. Voyage of H. M. S. Blonde to the Sandwich Islands, in the Years 1824-1825 (Longon, 1826), pp. 143-144. Hereafter cited as Voyage of the H. M. S. Blonde.

63. Ibid., p. 179.

64. Archibald Menzies was surgeon and naturalist on board the H. M. S. Discovery during the years 1792-1794, during which it made three visits to the Hawaiian Islands.
strolling professionals.

After breakfast we were entertained with the performance of a young girl, who danced in a small area before our door. She was ably assisted by her father, who beat on a small drum and joined her in the singing and reciting and sometimes in a brisk dialogue, while she, encumbered as she was with a grotesque dress, traversed the area with such measured paces and fascinating movements, with such graceful attitudes and such agility and animation of acting, so punctually timed and so varied by easy transitions as would have done credit to the most expert attitudinarian in any part of the world, and far exceeded anything of the kind we had before seen at these islands. Every joint of her limbs, every finger of her hand, every muscle of her body, partook unitedly of the varied sympathetic impulses, while the motion of her eyes transferring their transient glances and the harmony of her features were beyond the power of description.

We were given to understand that this actress, who might be termed an opera girl, and her father, belonged to a party who strolled about the country from village to village and gained their livelihood by entertaining the inhabitants with their performances.65

Many entertainments performed for the population at large have been recorded. The audience sometimes included personages of high rank, but it is not recorded that the dances were performed in their honor.

On the island of Cahu, in January, 1827, the king himself (Kamehameha III) was host at a luau, at which Frederick William Beechey was a guest. At this feast, the entertainment consisted of several dancers and the best bards in the island; and we had the pleasure of witnessing some native performances, which were the more interesting, as these entertainments will shortly lose all their originality by the introduction of foreign customs. . . . The performance opened with a song in honour of Tamehameha, to which succeeded an account of the visit of Rio Rico and his queen to England; their motives for undertaking the voyage were explained; their parting with their friends at Woahoo; their sea-sickness; their landing in England; the king's attempts to speak English; the beautiful women of this country; and the sickness and death of the youthful royal pair, were described with much humor, good-nature, and feeling.66

This was followed by a group of songs sung by long, grey-bearded bards clad in rude native costume. The subject of the warlike exploits of Kamehameha

67. See below, p. 91 for description of the bards' instruments.
was a constant theme. At times the old men seemed inspired as they struck
their left breasts violently with their palms and made evolutions of their
drums with ease, precision, and grace. This was succeeded by several
dances. The first was a solo display of muscular energy. The second,
also a solo, was by a man reputed to be the most accomplished actor of his
time on the island of Oahu. He was the son of the most celebrated dancer
the islands ever had.

Unlike the former dance, the merit of this consisted in an exhibition
of graceful action, and a repetition of elegant and unconstrained
movements . . . (The females)68 ranged themselves in a line, and began
swinging the arms carelessly, but not ungracefully, from side to side;
they then proceeded to the more active part of the dance, the principal
art of which consisted in twisting the loins without moving the feet
or the bust. After fatiguing themselves in accomplishing this to the
satisfaction of the spectators, they jumped sideways, still twisting
their bodies, and accompanying their actions with a chorus, the words
of which we supposed bore some allusion to the performance.70

On July 15, 1823, at Kailua, Hawaii, Ellis witnessed an afternoon
performance at which a great number of people gathered. This day the
chief attraction was a couple-dance performed by a boy and a girl nine
years of age. They danced for two hours.

About four o'clock in the afternoon, another party of musicians
and dancers, followed by multitudes of people, took their station
nearly on the spot occupied yesterday from Kau . . . Then the (seven)
musicians71 had arranged themselves in a line, across the beach, and a
bustling man, who appeared to be master of the ceremonies, had, with
a large branch of a cocoa-nut tree, cleared a circle of considerable
extent, two interesting little children, (a boy and a girl,) apparently
about nine years of age, came forward, habited in the dancing costume
of the country, with garlands of flowers on their heads, wreathe
around their necks, bracelets on their wrists, and buskins on their
ankles.

When they had reached the centre of the ring, they commenced
their dance to the music of the drums; cantilating, alternately with
the musicians, a song in honour of some ancient of Hawaii.

68. See below, p. 88 for description of his costume.

69. See below, p. 97 for description of females' costume.


71. See below, p. 92 for description of their instruments.
The beach was crowded with spectators, and the exhibition kept up with great spirit, till the overspreading shades of evening put an end to their mirth, and afforded a respite to the poor children, . . . much fatigued by two hours of constant exercise. 72

Captain King wrote of a male solo dancer whom he witnessed on the island of Hawaii, February 2, 1779. This dancer was a sort of clown or comic character, who screwed his face into positions which were probably quite similar to those practiced in the Society Islands.

We were this day much diverted, at the beach, by the buffooneries of one of the natives. He held in his hand an instrument, of the sort described in the last volume 73; some bits of seaweed were tied round his neck; and round each leg, a piece of strong netting, about nine inches deep, on which a great number of dongs' teeth were loosely fastened, in rows. His style of dancing was entirely burlesque, and accompanied with strange grimaces, and pantomimical distortions of the face; which though at the time inexpressibly ridiculous, yet, on the whole, was without much meaning or expression. 74

Mathison wrote of a "Houroah-houroah, or festival" at Honolulu, on July 12, 1822. Spectators were arranged in a circle around the dancers, twenty-four women arranged in two rows. They sang

in wild and not very sweet tones, and at the same time made corresponding motions with their hands and bodies. They performed with great animation, beating their breasts, and changing their respective attitudes with wonderful agility, and always in the most perfect unison both of tone and gesture. 75

The impromptu words were, "too lascivious and indelicate to admit of a very minute description." There were two or three hours of intense excitement before the performers became exhausted and stopped. 76

Gabriel Franchère, wrote briefly of a dance he witnessed on the island of Hawaii, sometime between 1811 and 1814: "The inhabitants entertained us with a dance executed by nineteen young women and one man, all singing

72. Ellis, Narrative of a Tour, pp. 78-80.
73. See below, p. 92.
74. Cook and King, A Voyage to the Pacific, III, p. 27.
75. Mathison, Narrative of a Visit, p. 396.
76. Ibid., pp. 396-399.
77. French Canadian, author and clerk in Astor's enterprise, ship Tarquin.
together, and in pretty good time."

Accounts of sham battles, which were at once a popular form of entertainment and a method of rehearsing battle skills, are numerous. There has been found no mention of singing, or the use of drums or other musical instruments, or of rhythmical movement in relation to these sham fights. This does not necessarily mean that these battles were not a form of dance. They were often on the same program with a number of dances. Vancouver stated that, although the participants used blunt spears, severe injury was not uncommon. Despite this, both spectators and participants enjoyed the sport and usually remained in excellent spirits throughout the review. Ellis remarked that there were large numbers of men engaged in these sham fights, "and each party advanced and returned, attacked and defended, and exercised all the maneuvers employed in actual engagement.

The occasion of arrivals prompted celebrations and dances. Specific dances staged in honor of the safe arrival of some member of the royal family were recorded by C. S. Stewart. The following is an account of a festival in honor of the arrival of Kamehameha II, in 1823, on Oahu.

Companies of singing and dancing girls and men, consisting of many hundreds, met the processions in different places, encircling the highest chiefs, and shouting their praise in enthusiastic adulations. The dull and monotonous sounds of the native drum and calabash, the wild notes of their songs in the loud choruses and responses of the various parties, and the pulsations, on the ground, of the tread of thousands in the dance, reached us even at the

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78. Gabriel Franchère, Narrative of a Voyage...1811, ... 1814 ... (New York, 1854), p. 57.


80. Ellis, Narrative of a Tour, p. 111.

81. American, author, missionary; arrived 1823, left 1825, chaplain in U. S. Navy on second visit to the Islands, 1829.
Missionary enclosure...we had been compelled already from our own observation, as well as from the communications of others, necessarily to associate with them exhibitions of unrivalled licentiousness, and abominations which must for ever remain untold...these songs and dances were in preparation by rehearsal and practice. With the gathering darkness of every evening, thousands of the natives assembled in a grove of cocoa-nut trees near the ship; and the fires round which they danced, were scarce ever extinguished till the break of day, while shouts of revelry and licentiousness, ... unceasingly burst upon the ear.82

At Lahaina, Maui, on June 18, 1823, an immense crowd gathered in a grove near the house of Keopuolani, queen of the island of Maui. It was almost sunset.

A hura-hura or native dance was performing in honour of the arrival of the queen and princess.

The dancers were two interesting girls, ten years of age... The musicians were six men, seated on the ground with large calabashes before them, which they beat with short sticks. The sound of these, accompanied by that of their voices repeating the song, constituted the rude music. The girls occasionally joined in the song; and often were the only singers, continuing the subject in duet, and at times by a solo. The motions of the dance were slow and graceful, and, in this instance, free from indelicacy of action; and the song, or rather recitation, accompanied by much gesticulation, was dignified and harmonious in its numbers. The theme of the whole, was the character and praises of the queen and princess, who were compared to every thing sublime in nature; and exalted as gods.84

At the moment the sun set, the queen made the dancers stop dancing. She then led them in prayer.

Dance performances of an informal nature, that is, those dances which were apparently done by anyone who cared to participate for his own amusement on everyday occasions, were not uncommon. Malo, in describing several

82. Stewart, Journal of a Residence, p. 120.
83. See below, p. 88 for description of their costume.
84. Stewart, op. cit., pp. 189-190.
85. Ibid., p. 190.
86. See above, p. 65 for reference by Ellis.
Games which were popular with the natives, added that the winning side
would often celebrate its victory by performing a dance.

Peter Corney, in his brief generalizations about dance and other
amusements in the Islands, revealed that informal social gatherings, which
included dance, sometimes lasted all evening. He stated:

On moon light nights, the natives collect on the plain to the
number of many hundreds, men, women, and children; here they sit in
a ring, where they dance, sing, and play all manner of games, and
seldom break up before midnight.

3. Costume and Ornamentation

Unlike the dancers' costume in the Society Islands, both male and
female dancers in Hawaii wore very much the same kind of costume and
ornamentation. Both young and old wore the same basic type of costume,
generally a tapa skirt plus encircling ornaments for the head, neck shoulders,
wrists, and/or ankles.

Women. The following descriptions of women's dress were, perhaps,
somewhat more elaborate than usual. Vancouver described the garments of
the noble ladies who danced to honor a captive princess. He wrote that
their lower garment was made from a considerable quantity of the finest
cloth, especially prepared for the occasion. This garment extended from
the waist to mid-calf, and was so "plaited" to look like a hoop petticoat.
Each lady had a green wreath of a kind of "bind weed, twisted together in
different parts like a rope, which was wound round from one ankle, nearly
to the lower part of the petticoat." They wore nothing on the wrists, but

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89. See above, p. 78 for description of the dance.
across the shoulders were green sashes made with broad green leaves.

The twenty-five young girls who danced to honor Lord Byron in 1825 were all clad alike.

Their dresses consisted each of two pieces of fine tapa; the under piece, dyed yellow, fell only to the knee in full and graceful folds; the upper tapa was green, arranged in festoons, and confined to the waist by a broad band of the same. The heads of the dancers were adorned with chaplets of flowers, and their arms and legs with net-work, to which dogs' teeth were loosely attached, so as to rattle and produce an effect not unlike that of the castanet in the dance.92

Vancouver described an evening solo performance, of February 1794, by a young woman named Puckoo. Her dress was fashioned of an immense quantity of thin cloth, wound round her waist, which hung as low as her knees, and was plaited to give a pretty effect to the varigated pattern of the cloth. On her head and neck were wreaths of black, red, and yellow feathers. Her bosom was bare, while her ankles were decorated with several folds of cloth,

widening upwards, as that the upper parts extended from the leg at least four inches all round; this was encompassed by a piece of net-work, wrought very close, from the meshes of which were hung the small teeth of dogs, giving this part of her dress the appearance of an ornamental funnel.93

Her wrists bore bracelets made of the tusks of large hogs. The tusks, highly polished, were set close together in a ring, with the concave sides turned outwards and the ends filed to uniform length.

These anklets were worn by young and old alike. William Ellis told of an old woman who performed a solo, the movements of which resembled the horn pipe. On her ankles, she too wore the anklets.

90. Vancouver, Voyage of Discovery, V, p. 78.
91. See above, p. 80 for description of the dance.
92. Voyage of the H. M. S. Blonde, p. 143.
94. Ibid., p. 65.
She had bracelets composed of dog’s teeth, fixed upon a kind of
netting, round her ankles, which by the continual motion her legs
were in, made no disagreeable music.95

Two girls of ten years who danced for Keopuolani, queen of Maui,
dressed in the same type of costume as the older dancers and also wore
the percussive anklets.

Their dresses were of beautiful yellow native cloth, arranged in thick
folds and festoons from the waist to the knee; with wreaths of ever­
green and wild flowers on their heads and necks,—ornaments of ivory
on their wrists—and a kind of buskin round the ankles, formed of
dog’s teeth, loosely fastened to network of hemp, so to rattle like
the castanet in the motions of the dance.97

Men. Beechey’s description of the costume of a male solo dancer
illustrates the similarity between the male and female dancing habit.

He wore an abundance of native cloth, variously stained, wrapped
about his waist, and grass ornaments fixed upon his legs above the
ankles. A garland of green leaves passed over his right shoulder
and under his left arm, and a wreath of yellow blossoms, . . . was
wound twice round his head.99

In his general remarks about costume, Jarves also mentioned tattoo­
ing. He wrote:

Their costumes were in conformity with their (lascivious) actions;
garlands of flowers, necklaces of shells, and leis, beautiful wreaths,
fabricated from red or yellow feathers, encircled the limbs of the
females. Both sexes were tattooed, though not to the extent as pre­
vailed elsewhere.100

Beechey revealed the nature of the tattooing of several musicians.

They were old men with long grey beards and

each had the under part of his right arm tattooed in straight lines
from the wrist to the armpit.101

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95. Ellis, An Authentic Narrative, p. 171.
96. See above, p. 82 for additional description of children’s costume.
98. See above, pp. 70, 74, 77 for other descriptions of male costume.
100. Jarves, History, p. 65.
4. Music and Instruments

Both vocal and instrumental music was an integral part of Hawaiian dance. The professions of orators and bards were hereditary, but those of singing, dancing, and chanting were common to all classes. The movements of the dance were regulated by music,

which consisted of a kind of drumming on various hollow vessels, such as the calabash, and a kind of drum made by drawing a piece of sharks skin over a piece of hollow log. Every variety of song was rehearsed and acted, even the most vile and lascivious, and the action, always corresponded with the sense. Sometimes a single voice rehearsed the song, sometimes a number chanted in unison. 103

Vancouver explained that there was a correspondence between the words of the song and the movement of the dance, and that the usual habit was to begin slowly and to gain speed as the dance progressed. He illustrated this by describing a solo performance of a young woman. He wrote that she advanced or retreated from the musicians a few short steps in various directions, "as the nature of the subject, and the numerous gestures and motions of her person demanded." The speech or poem began in a slow, solemn manner, and gradually became energetic, "until at length, like a true actress, the liveliness of her imagination produced a vociferous oration, accompanied by violent emotions." Following her performance there was great applause.

In discussing the music, George Dixon also observed the characteristic and regular build in the tempo of the music and the element of comedy in it.

103. Dibble, History of the Sandwich Islands, p. 119.
105. British author who was with Cook on his last voyage, 1773, 1778-89; under Portlock in command of Queen Charlotte.
The heevas, or songs, cannot be described by notes, as they rather resemble a quick energetic manner of speaking, than singing; and the performers seem to pay more attention to the motions of the body than the modulations of the voice. The women are the most frequent performers in this kind of merriment; they begin their performance slow and regular, but by degrees it grows brisker and more animated, 'till it terminates in convulsions of laughter.

It is very evident that these people have not the least idea of melody, as the tones and modulation in all their songs are invariably the same; however, there seems to be some degree of invention . . . in the composition of the words, which are often of temporary subjects; and the frequent peals of laughter are no doubt excited by some witty allusion or other contained in them.106

The subject matter of the songs was various, and even a king might be a poet. An officer on board the H. M. S. Blonde in 1825, wrote:

The songs are frequently composed for the occasion; they are sometimes in dialogue, and usually in praise of some chief: They are of all descriptions; religious, heroic, and amatory. The late king Riho Riho was a poet; and one of his compositions, in honour of his father's safe return to Honoruru from Koolau, where he had been overtaken by a thunderstorm, was given to us, . . . 107

Precision seems to have been an outstanding characteristic of the vocal music as well as the movement. Adolphe Barrot described a hula which he witnessed in 1836.

But what was admirable in this song . . . was the perfect accordance with which the five singers spoke and gesticulated. They must have been rehearsed many times to attain this degree of perfection. Each one of the five pronounced, at the same time, the same note, the same word, made the same gesture, and moved his calabash in the most perfect time, either to the right or to the left, or striking it against the ground, he caused it to give forth sounds somewhat similar to those of a bass drum. It might be said that they were all moved by the same impulse of thought and will. Sometimes the gestures varied and became inconceivably rapid, yet I was never able to discover a mistake. The voice, the hands, the fingers, the calabashes, the bodies of the five singers were always extended, moved, regulated, by a spontaneous movement.109


108. French, author, who was with Captain Vaillant on the Bonite, 1836.

Captain James King recorded his observations of the music, both vocal and instrumental, in Hawaii.

Their music is also of a ruder kind, having neither flutes nor reeds, nor instruments of any other sort, that we saw, except drums of various sizes. But their songs, which they sung in parts, and accompany with a gentle motion of the arms, in the same manner as the Friendly Islanders, had a very pleasing effect.

*In their regular concerts, each man had a bamboo, which was of a different length, and gave a different tone: these they beat against the ground, and each performer, assisted by the note given by this instrument, repeated the same note, accompanying it by words, by which means it was rendered sometimes short, and sometimes long. In this manner, they sung in chorus, and not only produced octaves to each other, according to their different species of voice, but fell on concords, such as were not disagreeable to the ear...*

The majority of the instruments were of the simple percussive type, the drum being the most popular. William Ellis, surgeon, said that the only instrument he observed in the Hawaiian Islands was the drum, and Charles Wilkes wrote:

Their music consisted of drumming on various hollow vessels, calabashes, etc.; but the instrument most used by those who could afford one, was a piece of shark’s skin, drawn tight over a hollow log.

Beechey described drums that were made of gourds. The musicians on this occasions were very old men, and were considered the best on the island of Oahu.

They accompanied themselves upon drums made of two gourds neatly joined together, and ornamented with black devices. Each bard had one of these instruments attached to his left wrist by a cord; the instrument was placed upon a cushion, and the performer throughout measured time by beating with his right hand upon the aperture of the gourd.

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Drums made of a hog's skin were described by Dixon.

They have drums which are beat by way of addition to their heevas; these are about twelve or fifteen inches high; several holes are cut in the sides, and a hog's skin is strained over one end, but they produce but a very heavy dull sound.114

Both sharks' skin drums and calabash drums were described by Ellis. This particular type of calabash drum was fashioned by fastening two calabashes together.

Their instrument was a large calabash, or rather two, one of an oval shape about three feet high, the other perfectly round, very neatly fastened to it, having also an aperture about three inches in diameter at the top.

Each musician held his instrument before him with both hands, and produced his music by striking it on the ground, where he had laid the piece of cloth, and beating it with his fingers, or the palms of his hands.115

The musicians, seven in number, seated themselves on the sand; a curiously carved drum, made by hollowing out a solid piece of wood, and covering the top with shark's skin, was placed before each, which they beat with the palm or fingers of their right hand. A neat little drum, made of the shell of a large cocoa-nut, was also fixed on the knee, by the side of the large drum, and beat with a small stick held in the left hand.116

Rattles and sticks which were used as percussive instruments were described by Captain Cook. He failed to observe any flutes in Hawaii.

Neither had they, amongst them, either flutes or reeds; and the only two musical instruments which we observed, were of an exceedingly rude kind. One of them does not produce a melody exceeding that of a child's rattle. It consists of what may be called a conic cap inverted, but scarcely hollowed at the base above a foot high, made of a coarse, sedge-like plant; the upper part of which, and the edges, are ornamented with beautiful red feathers; and to the point, or lower part, is fixed a gourdsheel, larger than the first. Into this is put something to rattle; which is done by holding the instrument by the small part, and shaking, or rather moving it, from place to place briskly, either to different sides, or backward and forward, just before the face, striking the breast with the other hand at the

114. Dixon, A Voyage, p. 278.
115. Ellis, Narrative of a Tour, p. 74.
116. Ibid., p. 78.
same time. The other musical instrument (if either of them deserve that name) was a hollow vessel of wood, like a platter, combined with the use of two sticks, on which one of our gentlemen saw a man performing. He held one of the sticks, about two feet long, as we do a fiddle, with one hand, and struck it with the other, which was smaller, and resembled a drum-stick, in a quicker or slower measure; at the same time beating with his foot upon the hollow vessel, that lay inverted upon the ground, and thus producing a tune, that was by no means disagreeable. This music was accompanied by the vocal performance of some women, whose song had a pleasing and tender effect.\footnote{117}{Cook and King, A Voyage to the Pacific, II, pp. 235-236.}

Gourds were not only made into rattles as described by Cook, above, but were also made into a different sort of instrument. These were described by Vancouver when he wrote of a dancer who performed in the open air and was accompanied by two men who sat on the ground. They both used the same kind of instrument, which was made of large shells of gourds, open at the top,

the lower ends ground perfectly flat, and as thin as possible, without endangering their splitting. These were struck on the ground, covered with a small quantity of dried grass, and in the interval between each stroke, they beat with their hands and fingers on the side of these instruments, to accompany their vocal exertions.\footnote{118}{Vancouver, Voyage of Discovery, V, p. 66.}

Other instrumental "sticks" were described by Vancouver and Montgomery. Vancouver described the musicians at an elaborate entertainment. They were five men, who stood with highly polished wooden spears in their left hands. They beat upon the spears with the smaller pieces to the accompaniment of their songs, which were varied both in time and measure. The sounds differed according to the place on which the tapering spear was struck. As the ladies made their appearance, the musicians retired a few steps to allow them to take their places in front.\footnote{119}{Ibid., V, p. 72.}

Sometime between 1821 and 1829, Montgomery, while inspecting the interior of a native hut, witnessed a dance done to the beating of sticks.

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118. Vancouver, Voyage of Discovery, V, p. 66.
119. Ibid., V, p. 72.
The performers were an old man and a young boy.

Observing, among other things, a stick rather neatly fashioned, five feet long, and tapering to a point at each end, with a hole towards one of these, we inquired the use of it. On this, the master of the house, an old man, started up, and produced a companion-stick, something shorter, which we found was to be to it what the bow is to the fiddle. Grasping the first by the middle, he began to beat upon it with the second; while a boy, with two other corresponding sticks, did the same, to something like measured time, which the master kept with his left foot. This miserably monotonous clatter of sticks, which was anything but music, was accompanied, by both minstrels, with noises which were anything but singing; the old man, all the while, writhing his limbs and distorting his visage in the most grossly ludicrous manner which it would be as difficult to describe as it will be to forget![120]

5. Missionary Opposition and Influence

Missionary opposition to native amusements, particularly dancing, was more than a cursory objection. Dibble's attitude was made clear by the following statements.

(Dancing) was practiced both night and day, but the night was the usual time for the amusement and the time most desired, and for some time after the arrival of missionaries at the islands, scarcely a night passed, in which the noise of these assemblies was not heard. The wild notes of their songs, in the loud choruses and responses of the various parties, accompanied with the dull and monotonous sounds of the native drum and calabash, and pulsations on the ground with the feet, was the sad music... missionaries were obliged to hear... With the gathering darkness of the evening, thousands of the natives assembled at some frequented spot, and continued the dance, with shouts of revelry and licentiousness, even till the break of day.... And these were not only yells and shouts, but such exhibitions of licentiousness and abomination, as must forever remain untold.[121]

Hiram Bingham described the dance of 1821, when his mission was in its second year.

(Most wasted) their time in learning, practicing or witnessing the hula, or heathen song and dance. This was intended, in part at least, as an honor and gratification to the king, especially at Honolulu, at his expected reception there, on his arrival from Kailua. For


[121] Dibble, History of the Sandwich Islands, pp. 119-120.
many weeks in succession, the first sound that fell on the ear in
the morning was the loud beating of the drum, summoning the dancers
to assemble. Some of our pupils were required to attend and perform
their part. Day after day, several hours in the day, the noisy
hula—drumming, singing, and dancing in the open air, constituted
the great attraction or annoyance. The principal scene of the hula
at Honolulu was a large yard, contiguous to the house of the governor.
The ground was covered with fresh rushes, brought from a neighboring
marsh, slung on the backs of the dancers, chiefs, and plebeins, men,
women, and children, who, in such cases, walk in single file, . . .
In the hula, the dancers are often fantastically decorated with figured
or colored kapa, green leaves, fresh flowers, braided hair, and some­
times with a gaiter on the ankle, set with hundreds of dog's teeth,
so as to be considerably heavy, and to rattle against each other in
the motion of the feet . . . much of the person is uncovered; and the
decent covering of a foreign dress was not then permitted to the public
dancers . . . (The dancers were usually) arranged in several equidistant
ranks of considerable length, and at the sound of numbers, moved
together, forward, backward, to the right, and to the left and verti­
cally, giving extended motions to the hands and feet, arms and legs,
. . . without changing their relative position. All parts of the hula
are laborious, and under a tropical sun, make the perspiration roll
off freely from the performers. Sometimes both musicians and dancers
cantilute their heathen songs together. Occasionally a single female
voice carries on the song, while the rest are silent, and sometimes
hundreds of voices are heard together. Melody and harmony are scarcely
known to them, . . . The whole arrangement and process of their old
hulas were designed to promote lasciviousness, and of course the
practice of them could not flourish in modest communities. They had
been interwoven too with their superstitions, and made subservient to
the honor of their gods, and their rulers, either living or departed
and deified. Liholiho was fond of witnessing them, and they were
managed to gratify his pride and promote his pleasure.122

Native response to missionary objections was not always what the
missionaries desired. In 1821, Bingham urged Kalanimoku to suspend the
public Sabbath dancing that was the result of Kalanimoku's wife's death.

He replied, 'This is the Hawaiian custom, and must not be hindered.'
Several of our pupils expected to be called on by the governor to
dance on the Sabbath; and fearing that their newly instructed con­
science, and inexperienced heart, could not withstand such a call,
we interceded with the king to excuse those who wished to attend out
Sabbath school, instead of the hula. 'I wish to see them dance
to-day,' was his reply; and the drum beat to summon them. His con­
sent was then asked, and gained, to allow the daily dance to be suspended
on the following Sabbath. When Boki heard this, he said with magis­
terial and atheistic air, 'Dance we will—no tabu.' . . . Believing
the dance to be connected with idolatry and licentiousness, and wholly

incompatible with Christianity, we spoke to Liholoho and Kamamalu, of the appearance of idolatry, who affirmed that it was play, not idol worship.\textsuperscript{123}

Kotzebue, however, charged that by the time of Kamehameha III, 1824, Bingham had imposed many restrictions of all kinds on the natives. There was an "endless routine of prayers" and "singing is a punishable offense; and the consummate profligacy of attempting to dance would certainly find no mercy." Lord Byron brought with him from England some magic lanterns, puppet shows, and other similar toys, and was about to exhibit them for the entertainment of the people when Bingham stopped it "because it did not become God-fearing Christians to take pleasure in such vain amusements."\textsuperscript{124}

There are other accounts which have reported native dances followed immediately by missionary sermons or prayers. The following instance which occurred July 1, 1823, at Lahaina Maui, was recorded by Stewart.

On going to prayers, (we) found the whole court with an immense crowd of common people assembled at a dance. The collection was altogether the most numerous and noisy of any we had seen. The dancers were females, eighteen in number; the musicians, seven men. They continued to dance same minutes after we entered the circle, but when the usual period for prayers arrived ... the princess stopped the dance and led the group in prayer.

Although the missionaries were responsible for many of the changes in the nature of the dance, there were other influential factors at work. Movements of the horn pipe became evident in native dance soon after the arrival of European ships. By 1827, the costume of the dancers had changed considerably. This was probably due to missionary influence, but Beechey considered the "new" costume less modest than the original ones.

\textsuperscript{123} Ibid., pp. 127-129.
\textsuperscript{124} Kotzebue, New Voyage, II, pp. 257-259.
\textsuperscript{125} Also see above, pp. 78, 85.
\textsuperscript{126} Stewart, Journal of a Residence, pp. 200-201.
\textsuperscript{127} Ellis, An Authentic Narrative, p. 171.
The dance of the females was spoiled by a mistaken refinement, which prevented their appearing, as formerly, with no other dress than a covering over the hips, and a simple garland of flowers upon the head; instead they were provided with frilled chemises, . . . (which) produced an opposite effect, . . .

Without explaining the cause, Mathison declared, either in 1821 or 1822, that the "Hurrah-hurrahs" were at that time seldom celebrated, and not attended with the same ceremonies as formerly. The mock-fights and martial games were no longer among the favorite amusements either. Under the strain of various restrictions the dance was losing some of its vitality. This is summed up in Barrot's description of a dance in 1836.

The dancing was at length announced. But the time is past when the swarms of male and female dancers assembled on the green grass, and there, in their graceful dances, accompanied by songs, recounted the glorious achievements of warriors . . . Only one thing was remarkable in this dance, and that was, that the dancer regulated the measure and from time to time gave the musician the subject of his song. The musician endeavored to make his time accord with the movements of her feet, and he succeeded with remarkable precision. Yet, at the end of half an hour the dance began to seem long . . . The dancing, so mean and monotonous, was far from realizing the idea we had formed of it. Only the singing and the singers appeared to have preserved all the originality of ancient times. . . . Formerly the women were passionately fond of these sports and public dances. Many females, even of the royal family, had the reputation of being finished actresses, . . .

A few years later, dancing flourished only in the out-of-the-way villages. The reason is made clear by Charles Wilkes' description of the general state of dancing in Hawaii at the time of the United States Exploring Expedition, 1838-1842.

Next in interest . . . were their dances. Some of these consisted, as among the other islanders, in gesture to a monotonous song, whose lascivious meaning was easily interpreted. Many persons were engaged in these dances, of which some are said to have been

129. Mathison, Narrative of a Visit, p. 471.
graceful; but if so, the people must have sadly changed since their first intercourse with the whites . . .

Since the introduction of Christianity, these amusements have been interdicted; . . . although the missionaries were somewhat averse to destroying those of an innocent character, yet, such was the proneness of all to indulge in lascivious thoughts and actions, that it was deemed by them necessary to put a stop to the whole, in order to root out the licentiousness that prevailed the land. They therefore discourage any kind of nocturnal assemblies, as they are well satisfied that it would take but little to revive these immoral propensities with more force than ever. The watchfulness of the government, police, and missionaries is constantly required to enforce the due observance of the laws.\textsuperscript{131}

\textsuperscript{131} Wilkes, \textit{Narrative}, IV, p. 47.
CHAPTER III

CLASSIFICATION OF DANCE OF THE SOCIETY AND THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

A compilation of information pertaining to dance in the Society and the Hawaiian Islands between 1767 and 1842, as recorded by the early writers, was presented in the two preceding chapters. On the basis of that information the writer proposes, in this chapter, to classify the dance of these islands as it existed between 1767 and 1842.

The method of classification employed is that of Curt Sachs. This system has been selected because of the eminence of Mr. Sachs as a dance historian and because this method has been adopted by other dance historians as valid. Mr. Sachs’ system of classification is divided into three principal parts. The dance is described in terms of movement, themes, and types, forms and choreography.

In addition to classifying the dance according to movements, themes and types, and forms and choreography, there will be some consideration of other elements of the dance experience. These elements include: music, costume and ornamentation, place of the dance, time and duration of performance, age of the dancers, talent of the dancers, native audience reaction to the dance, social status of the dancer, and missionary opposition and influence.

1. Explanation of Method of Classification

Regarding the individual movements utilized in a dance, there is a fundamental contrast between movements that are out of harmony with the

1. Mr. Sachs is the author of such books as: World History of the Dance, The Commonwealth of Art, Geist und Werden der Musikinstrumente, and Barocke Tonkunst, Das Feuer III.
Dances out of harmony with the body are convulsive. They may be classified as either pure convulsive or weakened convulsive dances.

The pure convulsive dances employ a state of forceful flexion and relaxation of the muscles which may lead to a throwing about of the body in wild paroxysms. The will has completely or to a certain extent lost control over the parts of the body; consciousness may likewise completely disappear.

The weakened convulsive dances contain all the features of the pure convulsive dances, but in this instance they are subordinated to the will. The degree of control in these dances varies. In some dances the dancer controls only certain groups of muscles, in others there is a single convulsive movement, locally restricted, in a dance that is otherwise non-convulsive.

Dances in harmony with the body, in direct opposition to those out of harmony with the body, originate in an irrepressible delight in motor expression. They give an enhanced feeling of life for both the dancer and the spectator. Stamping, bending the knee, and stretta, the development of speed and the increase of gesture from quiet and reserve to reckless abandon during the course of the dance, are characteristic of all dances in harmony with the body. There are, however, two principal types of movement which divide and further define all dances in harmony with the body. They are expanded movement and close movement.

The expanded dance is characterized by stronger motor reaction than the close dance. It is actually a rebellion against the law of gravity.

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### I. MOVEMENTS

A. Out of Harmony with the Body
   1. Pure Convulsive Dances
   2. Weakened Convulsive Dances

B. In Harmony with the Body
   1. Expanded
      a. Leap Dances
      b. Lift Dances
      c. Slep Dances
      d. Stride Dances
      e. Leg throw (Squat-fling) Dances
   f. Skip Dances
   g. Knee-lift Dances
   h. Lunge Dances
   i. Toe Dances
   2. Close
      a. Belly (Pelvic) Dances
      b. Sitting Dances
      c. Whirl Dances
      d. Wrench Dances

### II. THEMES AND TYPES

A. The Imageless (Non-mimetic) Dance
   1. Medicine Dances
   2. Fertility Dances
   3. Initiation Dances
   4. Marriage Dances
   5. Funeral and Scalp Dances
   6. War Dances

B. The Image (Mimetic Dance
   1. Animal Dances
   2. Fertility Dances
   3. Initiation Dances
   4. Funeral Dances
   5. Weapon Dances

C. Crossing of Both Types
   1. Fertility Dances
   2. Initiation Dances
   3. Weapon Dances
   4. Astral Dances
   5. The Masked Dance
III. FORMS AND CHOREOGRAPHY

A. Individual
   1. Unorganized
   2. Organized

B. Choral
   1. Simple
      a. Rounds
      b. Serpentine Rounds
      c. Choral Front
   2. Complex or Place changing
      a. Crossing
      b. Arch
      c. Bridge
      d. Chain

C. Couple

D. The Continuous Dance, and the Return Dance

E. The Sexes
There is an upward surge of the body, a pushing upwards and outwards. There is ever the attempt to be released as much as possible from the ground. Leap, lift, slap, stride, leg-throw (squat-pling), skip, kneelift, lung, toe, and one-legged dances are all further classifications of the expanded dance. In each case, the name suggests the movement typical of that dance. For instance, leaps are characteristic of leap dances, while the surge forward characterizes the stride dance.

Opposed to expanded movement is close movement. In the close dance, the gestures tend to be directed toward the body rather than out and up. The movement begins from a "fixed center of motion, the whole body or its parts swinging in both axes or in a narrow circle." Swinging, swaying, suspension, rhythm flowing with measured symmetry and suppleness through the limbs, quietness, and harmonious balance are characteristic of the close dance. Belly or pelvic dances, sitting dances, whirl dances, and wrench dances are examples of the close dance. The pelvic dance is characterized by rolling of the pelvis, and its original goal was magical. The coitus movements were supposed to promote life and growth. In the sitting dance the center of the swing is above the legs, and therefore only the upper part of the body is in active use. Though whirling is typical of each of them, there are many kinds of whirl dances. Some progress slowly, almost shyly, while others, soar steadily. The dance may include...

... light shuffling, rolling of the pelvis, leaping forwards and backwards, (or a) ... gentle swaying and balancing of the arms; ... slow walking; ... pressing together of the heels, sliding and rolling.

The wrench dances are based on stretching or pleasurable turning and twisting of the body. Jumps are used but rarely, for the accompanying movements are nearly always short steps forward and backward, standing
on log, swaying, rolling, and contracting the body.

Because "the thinking processes of primitive man do not include a comprehension of the natural relation of cause and effect", he practices magic and adheres to a system of taboos in order to achieve the ends he desires. These ends are concerned with power, health, preservation of life, and fertility of man, beast, and vegetation. In a state of exhilaration, when he can be dehumanized and loosened from the bonds of everyday life, man can work magic. He reaches this state of exhilaration by dancing, and by dancing he can accomplish all manner of things. Primitive man

... dances for every occasion; for birth, circumcision, the consecration of maidens, marriage, sickness and death, the celebration of chieftains, hunting, war, victory, the conclusion of peace, spring, harvest and pork festivals. Still the themes are limited, for the goal is everywhere the same -- life, power, abundance, health.

There are three ways, therefore three types of dances, in which these themes may be expressed; generally each theme can be expressed in each of these ways. The three types are: the imageless or non-mimetic dance; the image or mimetic dance; and a crossing of both the mimetic and the non-mimetic dance.

The imageless dance "serves an idea, a definite religious goal, without imitation in pantomime the events, forms, and gestures of life and nature." It is bound by no one form, but its movement is usually circular. It aims at ecstasy, in which power jumps from those outside the circle to those inside it, or vice versa. The dancer

... dances to lose his body and to become spirit. ... he works toward a goal which has grown from an appearance into an idea; the rain which he will bring about cannot be embodied in a dish of water, nor fertility in a phallic drama, ... 

Medicine, fertility, initiation, marriage, funeral, and war dances can all be imageless dances.
The image dance is based on the primitive assumption that by presenting or re-presenting an act, one can control the outcome of a future act or can bring about a repeated occurrence of a past act. By imitating a person, an object, or an act one can possess it or have control over it. The spirit or essence of things... adheres to what may be perceived, to form and motion. It is sufficient, therefore, to reproduce in painting or in dancing the wished-for events, the victorious battle, the successful hunt, in order to be certain of them, in order to have control of them.

Pantomime goes hand in hand with mimetic dancing.

Imitation by motion, sound, adornment, or any combination thereof, of animals in a dance, indicates a mimetic animal dance.

In fertility dances of the mimetic type the dancer may become associated with what is planted and therefore do such things as leaping high to make the seed grow high. "Human fertility dances in their purest form are drawn from two different phases of sexual intercourse: the meeting and wooing, and the act itself." Any imitation in dance of growth and harvesting, or of wooing or the sex act may be classified as mimetic fertility dances.

In the same general category within the image type are the initiation dances, including those which are danced for tattooing. The power of generating and producing is not transmitted to the novices in a magic and ecstatic circling, but in a mimetic representation of the sex act or lascivious movements.

Mimetic funeral dances may be based on one of several motifs. In order to oppose the power of death in the face of it, the primitive man may dance out continued generation and new life. Following the funeral ceremony, may come dances of abandon in which the dancers remove their clothes. On the other hand, the motif of the funeral dance may come from another concept:
life charm by the long stride and leg throw. Life is treated like growth: just as children and grain flourish when the normal stride is exaggerated in the choral dance, in like manner this exaggeration must also break the life-destroying power of death.

One of the most ancient motifs is a defense against death by dances which depict death and subsequent resurrection.

In the ear dances of mimetic cultures, the dancers depict a victorious fight in order to compel the happy outcome of an expedition. Weapons, therefore, are practically indispensable to this war or weapon dance.

There has been established as the two basic dance types the imageless and the image dance; but there is no complete purity of dance types. The mimetic dance in particular cannot remain pure imitation, for the ecstasy found in every dance pushes it more and more away from mere imitation. A crossing of the two types may be found in fertility, initiation, weapon, astral and masked dances.

Form and choreography is a complicated matter to tie down by a hard and fast systematic analysis. General and loose classification is deemed preferable, especially in view of the fact that there is insufficient evidence in respect to the form of many non-European dances. There are forms that are based on the number of dancers and the subsequent development of these, into other forms, through external influences. These may be classified as individual, as choral, or as couple dances. There are also basic forms that are more "the result of an inner and dynamic quality of man, of his particular cycle of tensions and releases, . . . These are the continuous dance and the return dance. Finally, there are the forms that are based on the sex of dancers.

The dance performed by one individual may be either unorganized or organized. The unorganized dance is a reflex expression of an emotion.
The gradual replacement of the impulsive and instinctive by something planned and organized comes about whenever an individual activity of definite purpose adopts the dance as a form of expression.

It may then be said that the dance is organized.

The choral dance, which is performed by three or more persons, is divided into the simple and the complex or place-changing choral. "In the simple choral the dancer keeps his original place, in the complex he leaves it temporarily or permanently." Within these two large groups, is "a whole progression of forms with increasing richness of movement: . . . "

The oldest form of the choral dance is the circle dance in which the dancers usually circle a central object. This is the first form of the round dance. There follows, in order of complexity, double circles, three-circle rounds, and rounds of four or more circles. Then there is the figure eight round which leads to the sepentine rounds. The last step in the progression from the simple choral to the complex choral, is the choral front dance, which employs the use of rows or lines. Just as the non-mimetic dances are usually executed in the circle form, the mimetic dancers generally form lines or rows. The choral front may be composed of two, three, four, or more columns. Mass formations are not uncommon in certain cultures. The choral front may also follow a symmetrical arrangement according to the size of the dancers. The choral front leads to the complex or place changing choral, in which the dancers change places independently. "The principal place changing figures . . . are the crossing, the bridge, the arch, and the chain."

The couple dance done among men exclusively is the earliest form of the couple dance, while those executed by men and women are of a later cultural development. Almost all the early couple dances are open, meaning that there is little or no direct contact with each other. Contact with
both hands, or close couple dances, are infrequent and come late in cultural development.

The continuous dance may be described loosely as dynamic; in it there is the tendency to move outward. The return dance may be called static; in it there is a tendency to seek the restful norm.

In the continuous dance the same movement, whether forward or backward, to right or left, is maintained. This is true of most circle dances. The return dance shifts: a few steps forward, then a return to the starting point. It is not important whether the line of movement is in a circle or in a straight line. What is essential is that it comprises only a few steps.

In general, dances for men far exceed in number dances for women. There are dances that are the property of men, and there are dances from which the male sex is excluded. Mixed dances, those allowing of both sexes, are of a late cultural development usually.

2. Classification

Movements. The movements of the dance of the Society Islands and the Hawaiian Islands were in harmony with the body. The dance was a pleasurable experience for both the spectator and the performer. Although the dancers sometimes performed until they were nearly exhausted, this prolonged activity was the result of a recreational contest to see who could dance the longest. Its aim was not an uncontrollable frenzy; and the dancers stopped, by an action of their own will, before a state of unconsciousness was reached. It is possible that some of the dances contained locally restricted convulsive movements. Conceivably, the "solo display of muscular energy" of the Hawaiian dancer described in Chapter III contained some convulsive movements. Some of the facial movements among the dancers of the Society Islands may have been convulsive.

This however, is conjecture and cannot be positively determined on the basis of available information. In any event, any locally restricted convulsive movements that may have been contained in the dances did not detract from the pleasurable impact of the dance.

The dance, being in harmony with the body, was therefore characterized by stamping, bending the knee, and stretta. This development, throughout the dance, of speed and intensity following a slow and quiet beginning was so pronounced a tendency, especially in the Hawaiian Islands, that it was obvious to even the untrained eye of the early writers.

The following characteristics indicate that the movements were close, as opposed to expanded. Gestures, such as the frequent striking of the breast, tended to be directed toward the body. Movements, such as swinging the hips or the arms, began from a "fixed center of motion, the whole body or its parts swinging in both axes or in a narrow circle". There were only one or two references to movements with an outward or an upward surge.

Further examination of the movements reveals that both the Hawaiians and the Society Islanders probably had all four classifications of the close dance: pelvic, sitting, whirl, and wrench dances. It is possible to have combinations of these kinds of movements in one dance. For instance, a pelvic dance may also have been a whirl dance. The dances, however, in which the hips were twisted without moving the feet or upper torso were pelvic dances.

The sitting dances were executed from a variety of levels, ranging from a position in which the dancer sat or lay on the ground to an upright position on the knees. Sometimes the dancers took a squatting

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4. Ibid., p. 34.
position, from which they recovered by springing up. Occasionally the
dancers moved from a seated position to one half way between kneeling
and sitting, in which position they were able to perform rapidly. They
were capable of executing a variety of movements from a position on their
haunches. From this position they sometimes moved quickly to a position
parallel to the ground. In all these attitudes the movements, which were
at times slow and at other times fast, were easy and the transitions
smooth.

The word "whirl", which connotes a rapid circular movement, was not
used by any of the early writers in describing the dance. Whirl dances,
however, may progress slowly. Furthermore they are primarily a woman's
dance, an "expression of the feminine power of conception". As will be
explained below, fertility was an ever present theme in the dances of
both the Society and the Hawaiian Islands. For these reasons and because
the dance was characterized by other movements typical of whirl dancing,
it is probable that some of the dances were whirl dances.

French dances, characterized by pleasurable stretching and turning,
were indicated by references to the writhing and twisting of the bodies.
The accompanying movements at times consisted of a single step forward,
backward, to the right, or to the left. On other occasions, the feet
scarcely moved at all while the dancers threw themselves into a variety
of attitudes. Extreme flexibility of the hands and fingers of the dancer
may indicate methodical stretching. Another example of stretching an

5. Ibid., p. 44.

6. Rolling of the pelvis, graceful swinging of the arms, and slow
walking. It may also be noted that there are whirling movements
in the hula as it is practiced today.
isolated part of the body is the facial contortions practiced largely by the Society Islanders.

In summary: movements of the dance of the Society and the Hawaiian Islands were in harmony with the body. These movements were, with few exceptions, of the close type and were displayed in pelvic, sitting, wrench, and probably whirl dances.

Themes and types. The early writers on the subject of Hawaiian dance did not describe the individual motions of the dance in sufficient detail for later readers to determine, on this basis, if they were mimetic or not. They did, however, report that there was nearly always a correspondence between the actions of the dance and the sense of the accompanying song. They revealed further that these songs were heroic, religious, amatory, and told of such things as warlike exploits, journeys, and human qualities that resembled things in nature. If, then, a song told of what happened to a person on a journey, the movement must have depicted the same and was therefore mimetic. Additional evidence of the mimetic nature of the dance was revealed when the writers described the action in such terms as: obscene, revolting, vile, lascivious, licentious, abomination, indelicate, offensive, immoral, and libidinous. Clearly, these adjectives were in reference to a mimetic representation of wooing or the sex act.

Similar reports about the Society Islanders indicate that their dancing was the same, with one exception. The Society Islanders also practiced an even more mimetic type dance than did the Hawaiians. In the Society Islands, it was common to include on a program one or more pantomimic interludes. These interludes, usually comic, sometimes serious, concerned stories of theft, conquest, or birth. They included dance and dialogue. Men, including female impersonators, were usually, if not always, the actors.
The occasions on which the Society Islanders danced were serious as well as gala. They danced at times of sickness and of death. The ratification of peace called for dance, and marriage called for dance. Victory at games, arrivals, safe returns, dance-games, entertainment of particular persons or of the population at large, and the presentation of marriageable females were occasions on which Society Islanders danced.

Of the occasions on which the Hawaiians danced, one writer listed joy, grief, and worship. Being somewhat more specific, other writers reported that the occasions of dancing included: celebration of kings and other important people, pregnancy, birth, death, festival or season of Kakahiki, arrivals and safe journeys, victory at games, amusement of both chieftains and common people, worship or prayer before eating, and capture of a princess. There was found no mention of dancing on such occasions as sickness, consecration of maidens, circumcision, hunting, spring, and the actual occasion of war. Marriage dances were not mentioned, but it was recorded that entertainments accompanied marriages. Entertainments included singing, dancing, gaming, and feasting. It is probable then that dancing was a part of the wedding festivities.

At the time of the early European voyagers to the Society and the Hawaiian Islands, the dance was in a transitional stage from purely devotional and social to the professional and theatrical. It was becoming no longer purely an emotional phenomenon nor even a religious rite. It was progressing towards a work of art to be practiced by professionals and witnessed by spectators who paid to see it. Consequently, the dance was

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7. See Appendix A, p. 134.
becoming something to be done for material ends rather than for its religious power. Because the dance was in a late stage of development, the original significance or theme of the dance was sometimes obscure. If not obscure in the native mind, at least it was in the minds of the early observers who had, in many cases, not even the advantage of knowing the language of the songs and chants which were so large a part of the dance. They did not, for instance, record information from which could be ascertained the presence or absence of initiation or astral dances among the Society Islanders or of animal, initiation, astral, mask, or medicine dances among the Hawaiians. They did reveal that such themes as animals, fertility, death and illness, and war were present in the dances.

The war theme was treated in several ways. In the first place, both the Society Islanders and the Hawaiians had sham fights in which two groups, or "armies", used weapons and performed all the formations and maneuvers particular to an actual battle. These mock battles were primarily a form of entertainment exhibited for the amusement of spectators, but they also served as a means of improving battle skills. If either music, singing, or rhythmical movement was a part of these contests it was not mentioned by the early writers. That the battles were a mimetic representation of the art of war on a recreational as well as practical level is certain.

Secondly, the warlike exploits of kings and chieftains was an ever recurring theme in the songs of the dance. Since the action of the dance corresponded to the sense of the words, it may, therefore, be concluded

9. See Appendix A, p.135, for Pukui's statement about Hawaiian spear dances.
that this was a second way in which war was represented mimetically. This, then, was a kind of mimetic weapon dance without the weapons, which are generally indispensable to a weapon dance.

Among the Society Islanders stories of conquest were acted out in their pantomimic dance-dramas. Also in the Society Isles, the combatants were sent into battle well stimulated by martial music. There, too, dance was one of the important ceremonies at the ratification of peace.

In the Society Islands and in Hawaii, death was the signal to begin a series of mourning customs which lasted, in the event of a king’s death, for the period of a month. The people wailed and moaned, cut patches of their hair, burned or tattooed themselves, knocked out their teeth, lay groaning with their faces to the floor, wore no clothes, and engaged in dancing, drinking, and gaming.

Lisiansky reported that at the death of the king in Hawaii, twelve men were sacrificed and that for a month the whole island was in a state of the utmost disorder and licentiousness. Both sexes went naked, and men cohabited with women without any distinction. If the women resisted, they violated the laws of the country. The same customs, only confined to a shorter period of time and to the particular domain, prevailed following a noble’s death.

In describing the mourning of “Terremyte”, brother of Kamehameha I, in May 1809, Campbell wrote that in addition to all the usual hair cutting and knocking out of teeth “universal, public prostitution of the women took place”.

Ellis described the customs thus:

As soon as the chief had expired, the whole neighbourhood exhibited a scene of confusion, wickedness, and cruelty, seldom witnessed even in the most barbarous society.

The people ran to and fro without their clothes, appearing and acting more like demons than human beings; every vice was practiced, and almost every species of crime perpetrated... and the gratification of every base and savage feeling sought without restraint. 12

When asked why they did bodily harm to themselves the natives answered, in effect, in order to show that their love for the deceased was greater than the pain. The loose and erotic customs could not be explained in such terms. Drinking, gaming, sexual freedom, nudity, and "giddy dancing", could have been an example of opposing the life charm to the power of death. To conquer death, they acted and danced continued generation and new life by imitating the generative process. Perhaps the original magical significance of these customs had been forgotten and they continued to exist as meaningless rituals. At least they were not explained to the early writers. Still another explanation for all the irrational acts practiced at the time of a death was suggested by J. R. Forster, who reported that the mourners behaved thus to show that they were transported by the phrensy of grief to insanity. Certain mourners in the Society Islands were even called "Nineva", meaning insane or mad.

At the same time, there existed mourning and funeral customs more acceptable to the European code of ethics. Some of the dances and funeral processions were described in Chapters II and III. Had the writers been able to preserve the texts of the songs, more about the motifs would have

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13. See Appendix A, p. 132, for Pukui's reasons for irrational acts among Hawaiians, after a death.
been revealed.

It is known that among the Society Islanders the chief mourner or the priest wore an elaborate costume which included a mask. Whether this mask was supposed to represent the spirit of the deceased, or whether it was merely a fantastic thing to frighten away evil spirits is unknown. No masks were reported in the Hawaiian Islands.

Medicine dances and ceremonies were practiced in the Society Islands, where the dancers performed their dancing, drumming, incantations, and wailings intermittently until the patient recovered or died. There was no such dance reported among the Hawaiian Islands.

Fertility, with a strong accent on the sexual — in the mimetic representation of courtship and the sex act — was the theme most clearly indicated in the reports of the early writers. This they did more by implication rather than by actual description. There were some concrete descriptions of erotic movements, statements indicating that the actions and the words were so lascivious that they must remain forever untold, leaves no doubt as to the theme of the dance. The "Timorodee" dance of the Society Islands was a fertility dance which, apparently, was designed to teach erotic movements. The process of birth was dramatized by the Society Islanders in their dance-pantomimes.

There was one report of an animal dance in the Society Islands. This was the "Upa 'upa" or butterfly dance. The early writers reported no animal dances among the Hawaiians, but it is almost certain that animal dances were numerous in Hawaii.

14. See Appendix A, p. 134, for Pukui's list of animal dances common to Hawaii.
To summarize: the predominate type in the Society Islands and the Hawaiian Islands was the image, or mimetic, dance. This does not mean that the dance was pure imitation, but to what extent non-mimetic elements were used is not known. Themes known to have been used in these dances were fertility, death (funeral dances), preservation of life (medicine dance in the Society Islands), war, and animals.

**Forms and choreography.** Dance of the Society and the Hawaiian Islands was highly organized and capitalized on the effect of synchronized, simultaneous movements of choral groups. Only one example of unorganized dance was recorded, and that was the emotional outburst of the natives after the death of Captain Cook.

In both island groups, the dancers danced individually, in couples, and in choral groups, choral dancing probably being the most prevalent. Although no eye-witness accounts are available, there are reports of dances in Hawaii that contained as many as a thousand persons. Reports indicate that generally the choral groups of the Society Islands were smaller than those of the Hawaiian Islands.

The individual dances were done by either men or women. The couple dances were practiced by men, or women, or by both sexes. The couple dances, by utilizing little or no direct contact between dancers, remained open. The choral dances were done by men, women, or a combination of men and women.

Bingham indicated that the form was a simple choral when he said that the dancers performed "without changing their relative position." No mention was found of the complex, or the place changing, choral with its crossing, arch, bridge, and chain figures.  

spectators sometimes sat in a circle around the dancers, the circular movement of the round dance was rare. Only two references to the circle dance were found. It was reported on one occasion, in the Society Islands, that the women performed in two single circles, each with its separate band of musicians. Of dance in Hawaii, one writer mentioned "the fires round which they danced, ..." But every other bit of evidence which contributed to the knowledge of the form of the dance indicated a front formation of rows, lines, columns. Sometimes the formations included two hundred women with one man dancing in front of them. Again there were squares made up of ten or twelve persons in each row and a fugel-man, or director, in front or the side of the group. This dancing master, prompter, or director seemed to have been especially prominent in the Society Islands. When the dancers were few in number, two, three, or four, the form was usually a single row. Sometimes the rows faced one direction, while on other occasions, usually less formal, the dancers divided into two groups facing each other.

Because the dancers took only a few steps in one direction, returned, and took a few more steps in another direction, their dances were of the return, as opposed to the continuous form. Instead of moving forward constantly, they seldom took more than two or three stops in one direction without returning. At times they scarcely moved their feet at all.

As has been mentioned, both men and women danced individually, as couples, and as part of a larger group or chorus. Accounts of men and women appearing on the same program were numerous, but there are few accounts of the two sexes appearing in the same dance. More reports of mixed dances came from Hawaii than came from the Society Islands. As a general rule, a given entertainment featured more female than male dancers; and the men tended to restrict their dancing to solos and participation
small groups of two or three men, while the women's groups tended to be larger. Married women were forbidden to dance in the Society Islands but not in Hawaii. The participants in the pantomimic dances of the Society Islands were nearly, if not virtually, always male. The "Timorodee" and the "pannera" of the Society Islands were probably done only by women, while the sham battles were reserved for the men. Comic dancers, or clowns, were usually men.

In summary: dance of the Society and the Hawaiian Islands, which was generally highly organized, was done individually, by choral groups, or by couples. The choreography was made up of simple choral front and return formations. More women than men participated, and there were mixed dances, dances for the men, and dances for the women.

Music. One of the outstanding characteristics of the music and the dance of both the Society and the Hawaiian Islands, was the frequency which one accompanied the other. Either vocal or instrumental, or both vocal and instrumental, music usually accompanied the dance; and although there were musical performances which included no dancing, it was by far more common for a given performance to be a synthesis of both music and dance.

The vocal music of the Society and the Hawaiian Islands consisted of singing, chanting, and, in the Society Islands, a kind of nasal and exhalation of breath. The songs were simple verses or ballads, often having a refrain. Occasionally they were composed extemporaneously. The traditional compositions were handed down hereditarily by word of mouth. The subject matter of the songs and chants included heroic, lyrical, satyric, comic, sacred, and occupational topics. The singers were sometimes divided into groups, one answering the other; or there was sometimes a solo voice which might be answered by a chorus. Either the dancers or the
musicians, or both, sang.

For the most part, the instruments of both island groups were simple percussion instruments, ranging from hand clapping and breast slapping to various kinds of drums. The Hawaiians employed a simple anklet and bracelet instrument made of teeth which rattled as the dancer moved. Gourd rattles were also common in Hawaii. Both the Society Islanders and the Hawaiians produced a regulated noise by stamping on footboards and by beating various kinds and sizes of sticks upon each other. The drums, most frequently used instrument in the Society Islands, were of various sizes and kinds. In the Society Islands, all drums were made of a hollowed out tree trunk. In the Hawaiian Islands, they were made of gourds, coconut shells, or hollowed out wood with a head of shark or hog skin. Wind instruments recorded in this study included the conch or shell trumpet and the nose flute, fashioned of bamboo.

Costume and ornamentation. The costumes of the dancers of the Society Islands have been incompletely described, with one or two notable exceptions. Unlike those of the dancers in the Hawaiian Islands, the costumes of the men and the women were apparently quite different. Only when the men impersonated women did they dress like them. On those occasions they even wore long ringlets of hair. Usually the male dancers, who were actors in the pantomimes or clowns, wore mats, sometimes fringed, that were fastened around the waist. For the sham battles they wore varied colored tapa garments and helmets. The male Areois often blackened their bodies with charcoal or stained them with scarlet dye. They were all tattooed

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16. This is an incomplete list. For detailed information on music of these islands see Roberts, Henry, and Handy as mentioned in the Preface.
according to their rank in the Society. One outstanding bit of costume worn by a male dancer and which probably belonged to the specific kind of dance was the headdress called "Whow". This was a cylindrical wicker basket, four feet high and eight inches in diameter. Fastened perpendicularly to the top of the front of the basket was a bunch of feathers which hung forward at the ends. These were edged with sharks' teeth and the tail feathers from birds.

One general type costume for the female dancers was described. Whether or not their costume ever followed another pattern is unknown. This basic costume consisted of one or more skirts of tapa, a tight fitting, shoulderless, and sleeveless top, a large wing-like frill fastened to the back, a headdress of human hair, and various ornaments. The skirt covered the feet and was usually white or white with a colored border or stripe. Hanging from the waist to the knees were tassels made either of feathers or plaited cloth. Covering above the waist was a strapless bodice, very "modern" in design. This was made of white, yellow, russet, or black cloth. Sometimes, there was fastened on each breast a pom-pom of feathers or a cluster of shells. The shoulders, neck, and arms were bare. Fastened to the back was a piece of cloth pleated, then fastened in the middle so that the ends spread out fan-like, giving the effect of wings. Braids of human hair, wound in a turban-like fashion, were worn on the head. This turban was decorated with fresh flowers, beads, feathers, shells, or sharks' teeth. Occasionally the fingers were decorated with feathers. These costumes were expansive and sometimes contained as much as thirty or forty yards of

17. See illustration p.130.
cloth, from one to four yards wide. Seldom more than four women attired in these costumes performed at once, because of the space required for them. Often the dancers removed their costumes after a performance and gave them to the honored spectator.

In the Hawaiian Islands, costumes and ornaments of both sexes followed the same general pattern. At times, nothing was worn. Certain occasions demanded that the dancers perform nude, with the exception of certain ornaments. Evidence indicates that the usual habit of the dancer included a skirt of tapa and a combination of ornaments worn on the head, wrists, neck, shoulder, and/or ankles.

The tapa covering which the men wore hung from the waist to the knees, while that of the women hung from the waists to the knees, midcalf, or ankles. These pieces of native cloth were arranged in thick folds, festoons, or in drapes around the waist. Occasionally, two skirts of two different colors were worn. These were held at the waist by a band of tapa. If long, these became cumbersome, but did not impair the quality of the dancing of the female dancers who wore them. The patterns, in green or yellow tapa, were variegated. Dancers wore the finest quality cloth that was produced in the islands; it was sometimes prepared especially for one dance occasion.

Outstanding among the characteristics of the dancers' costume was the encirclement of the head, the wrists, the ankles, the neck, and the shoulders with various ornaments. It was not necessary to adorn each of the aforementioned areas at once; any combination thereof might be decorated. Only one kind of ornament was worn on a given area at a particular time, and each ornament was made of only one material.

Those for the head included wreaths of fresh flowers, green leaves, braided hair, and black, red, or yellow feathers. Feather caps were
mentioned once. Leis, or wreaths, for the neck were fashioned of flowers, feathers, or green leaves, and there were necklaces of shells, pearls, or a single whale's tooth hanging pendant. A jesting dancer wore a necklace of sea-weed. The shoulders might be draped with broad, scalloped green leaves, and feather capes were worn occasionally. Bracelets were made of large hog tusks, polished, and set close together in a ring. The concave sides were turned outward and the ends were filed to uniform length. Bracelets of feathers or flowers were sometimes worn, but the most common were made of dog's teeth fastened loosely to a network. The teeth rattled as the dancer moved, thus making the bracelet a kind of simple musical instrument of the percussive type. The ankles were ornamented in very much the same way as the wrists, in that anklets of grass, flowers, feathers, shells, or leaves were worn. Here again the most frequently used ornament was a kind of decorative instrument constructed by fastening dog's teeth to a network of hemp. These varied in size and ornateness.

Only one mention was found of native dancers clad in anything that did not conform to the pattern described above. This was the reference to the Natives' unorganized dance following Captain Cook's death. On this occasion, it was reported that they wore pieces of Cook's clothing.

Little mention was made of the nature and extent of tattooing. That some of the natives were tattooed is certain, but if this was done for decorative purposes, indication of it was not found. It is known that tattooing as part of the mourning customs was traditional.

Place of dance. Dances in the Society Islands were performed in a variety of places. By day the dancers often performed in the shade before houses. They sometimes performed inside a private home. On other occasions the dance took place in an area reserved for members of royalty.
Dances were often performed in canoes. A stage or platform built across the front of a large double canoe was erected for the dancers and the musicians; spectators sometimes gathered in smaller canoes. The most usual place of the dance was a building or area designed especially for that purpose. Two types have been described. The first was a building open at both ends and in front, the back being screened with a matting of coconut leaves. Around the ends and in front of the building was a low railing, about one foot high, inside of which were the dancers, musicians, prompter, and sometimes outstanding spectators. This floor of this entire area was covered with mats. On the outside of this railing the audience sat or stood. The second type of "theatre" consisted of two buildings parallel to each other, with a large matted area between. The first building was large enough to accommodate "a multitude of spectators." One end of this opened on an oblong matted area about twenty-five yards long and ten yards wide. This was the principal dancing area. At the other end of this area was a narrow building, three sides of which were enclosed with mats. One end of this building was enclosed on four sides; this served as the dancers' dressing room. In the remaining area of this building, were three drums for the musicians. This part of the building was open to the main dancing area. The usual place of the dance in the Hawaiian Islands was in the open air, either on a beach, in a grove of trees, or in front of the house of the person for whom the dance was performed. It has been reported that the informal dances, such as those done by the winning team at night games, were sometimes done around a fire. There was found only two accounts of

18. See illustration p. 131.
19. See illustration p. 131.
dances performed indoors. One was the dance done to the beating of a stick performed by an old man in his house, upon a visitor's questioning him of the use of the stick. The second was the mourning dance done by a middle-aged woman as she approached the body of a governor. The chants and the rhythmical ceremony that preceded the priests' meals were in all probability done indoors.

The size of the immediate dancing area usually depended upon the number of performers; for, since there was no stage, platform or house built for the dancers, the crowd generally formed a circle around the performers, leaving them as much space as was necessary to execute their movements. The spectators could estimate the amount of space needed, as the dancers did not cover more space while dancing than a few steps in each direction. Sometimes the area, circular or square, was enclosed with mats or fresh rushes.

Spectators sat in rows around the edge of the area, and some climbed to the tops of coconut trees to view the spectacle. Honored guests were at times permitted to sit inside the circle of spectators, thus moving into the area reserved for the musicians and dancers.

Mention was found of a green room, but no information as to its place, size, or description was given.

Time and duration of performance. In both the Society and the Hawaiian Islands, morning, afternoon, and evening performances were recorded. Indications are that the afternoon hours were more favored than morning hours, and that evening hours were even more favored than afternoon hours for dancing. In Hawaii, afternoon performances usually began about four o'clock and lasted from a few minutes or a half hour to several hours, sundown being the apparent deadline. Evening entertainments, at which
dancing was the primary attraction, or games, at which dancing was done intermittently throughout the evening, were lengthy affairs. One writer stated that the participants seldom dispersed before midnight, and another declared that the dancing and revelry usually continued until dawn. Occasionally entertainments, the preparations for which had been elaborate and expensive, were completed within an hour. On other occasions, probably less formal, the dancers were judged by their ability to continue dancing for a long period of time, the best dancer being the one who could dance the longest.

Age of dancers. In both island groups, dancers were found among both sexes in all age groups. Boys and girls of approximately nine years are reported to have entertained an audience for two hours without repose. An elderly man did a stick dance. A middle-aged woman performed a funeral dance, but the greater number of existing accounts depicted dances performed by the young men and women.

Talent. The opinions of the early writers on the subject of the talent of the dancers were varied and contradictory. These criticisms ranged from denial of any talent, to admission of some small degree of talent, and to crediting the dancers with possessing as much talent as could be found elsewhere in the world. One writer even maintained that the ballet "pales in comparison" to the native dance. Despite the variety of opinions on the subject, the majority of them indicate that the dancers were indeed talented. This generalization has been made on the basis of such descriptive terms as: graceful, much variation, precision, agility, ease of transition, perfect unison of voice and action, composure, constant flow of easy and unconstrained motion, fine art, and variety of attitude and position. These terms, some of which were used repeatedly, and others of similar meaning outnumbered such negative descriptions as; anything but
graceful, not so skilled, and not always graceful. The degree or amount
of talent is, of course, impossible to determine. The nature of the
dancers' talent, however, may be said to have been embodied in two primary
characteristics: first, the capacity of a composed and variable, graceful
continuum of movement; and secondly, the ability of a group, to the number
of several hundred, to move with the precision and unity of a single body.

Native audience reaction. Virtually no reports were found that indicated
unfavorable audience reaction to the dance. Spectators, often clad in their
best apparel, gathered at the dancing places in good humor and high spirits.
If the dancers were late, the audience became impatient and shouted for the
festivities to begin. But even in the case of tardy dancers, immediately
upon their appearance, the crowd, which was sometimes boisterous up to
this point, became quiet, and attended the performance with the utmost
respect. The enthusiasm and, as one writer called it, joyful intoxication
on the part of the spectators, resulted in great applause at pauses, between
individual dances, and at the end of the entertainment. The comical dances
met with appreciative laughter. Enjoyment was expressed, not only by rapt
attention, laughter, and applause, but also by throwing gifts, such as
clothing and jewelry to the dancers. Reports gave no indication of what the
natives considered "good", except in regard to the dances that were a contest
to see who could dance the longest. In this case, the "best" dancer was
the one who danced longer than the others.

Social status. There were both professional and non-professional
dancers. The non-professional dancers came from all ranks of society

20. See above, p. 69, for Vancouver's opinion of Hawaiian talent.
including the nobility. Professional dancers in the Society Islands came from any rank of society, but the professional usually belonged to the Areoi Society, which is explained fully in Chapter II. Professionals, who functioned as teachers, sometimes were attached to the households of nobles or of the royalty. The professional dancers in Hawaii, automatically, by virtue of their heredity and profession, belonged to what Ellis called the fourth rank in society. Usually they attached themselves to some chief. Professional dancers and musicians, however, sometimes formed strolling companies and wandered from place to place entertaining for their livelihood.

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21. The government of the Sandwich Islands is an absolute monarchy.
The supreme authority is hereditary.
The rank of the principal and inferior chiefs, and the offices of the priests, and other situations of honour, influence, and emolument, descend from father to son, and often continued through many generations in the same family, though... powers... and trust is vested in the king; and persons by merit, or royal favour, frequently rise from comparatively humble rank to the highest station in the islands...

Hereditary rank and authority are not confined to the male sex, but are inherited also by the females...

Four distinct classes or ranks in society appear to exist among them. The highest rank includes the king, queens, and all the branches of the reigning family...

The second rank includes the governors of the different islands, and also the chiefs of several large divisions or districts of land...

The third rank is composed of those who hold districts or villages, and pay a regular rent for the land, cultivating it either by their own dependents and domestics, or letting it out in small allotments to tenants...

In the fourth rank may be included the small farmers who rent... land, the mechanics, canoe and house builders, fishermen, musicians, and dancers; indeed, all the labouring classes, those who attach themselves to some chief or farmer, and labour on his land for their food and clothing, as well as those who cultivate small portions of land for their own advantage.

Ellis, Narrative of a Tour, pp. 312-313.
As dance was an activity which appealed to all members of the society and in which both sexes, all ages and ranks participated, it is not amazing that dancers were esteemed and that their audiences welcomed them with enthusiasm, respect, and generosity.

Missionary opposition and influence. Missionary opposition to the dance was inevitable. In their early days in the islands, when their influence was weaker than it came to be later, their power was limited to preaching of the evils of the native dance and to pleading with the kings to enforce any small degree of reformation of the same. As more and more of the royalty became converted to Christianity, the new converts were coaxed into making and enforcing laws governing the nature of the dance. Reports of the missionary influence vary. In 1824, Kotzebue declared that, in Hawaii, singing and dancing were punishable offenses. On the other hand, Beechey told of a luau, in Hawaii, given by the king three years later in 1827, at which were performed several dances. The female dancers, however, were clad in frilly, loose-fitting garments of European, if not missionary, importation. In 1842, Wilkes, as Commander of the United States Exploring Expedition, observed that in the Society Islands social amusements were "punished by severe penalties" and that in Hawaii any evening assemblies were discouraged and that dancing was prohibited by law, the law being enforced by the government, the police, and the missionaries. Although it is not the purpose of this study to determine the nature and extent of missionary and other outside influence on the dance at different periods, it has been concluded that by 1842, outside influence had reached such a point that the dance was, at that time, hybrid.
Figure 1. Chief Mourner's Dress, Society Islands (Reproduced from Ellis' "An Authentic Narrative of a Voyage Performed by Captain Cook and Captain Clerke," Vol. I - Plate Facing, p. 130)
Figure 2. A Dance in Tahiti
(Reproduced from Plate 28, Atlas, Cook's Last Voyage - 1776-1780)
Figure 3. Ground Plans of Dancing Areas, Society Islands

- **House for spectators**
- **Roofed area**
  - 10 yards
  - **Screen**
  - **Roofed area**
    - Dancing area for dancers, musicians, prompter, honored spectators.
    - Entire area matted.
  - **Open area**
    - Spectators sit or stand in rows on three sides of the dancing area.
    - No dimensions given; dancing area estimated 30' x 40'.

- **Roofed area**
  - **Green room**
  - **Screen**
  - **Drums**

- **Matted area**
  - 25 yards

Additional note: Railing 1 foot high around entire area.
On April 24, 1951, the writer interviewed Mrs. Mary Pukui on the subject on Hawaiian dance as it was practiced in a form free from European influence.

Mary Abigail Kawena Pukui was born in the district of Ka'ū on the Island of Hawaii, on April 20, 1895. She is an assistant in Hawaiian linguistics at the Bishop Museum in Honolulu. Formally she was a teacher of Hawaiian language and culture at the Honolulu YWCA; Punahou Junior Academy, Honolulu; and at Kamehameha Preparatory School, Honolulu. Mrs. Pukui is considered one of the leading authorities on Hawaiiana, and comes from a family whose interest in the art of the hula dates back many generations. Mrs. Pukui, her mother, and her grandmother were dancers; a cousin of hers is the only living kumu-hula, teacher, leader, and priest of the hula.

The following is a resume of Mrs. Pukui's remarks during the above mentioned interview.

On the subject of death. At the time of a death, people did all kinds of strange things to show that they were "mad with grief." They did things that were associated with the behavior of deranged persons. Only one who was "pupule" would wear above the waist anything that normally

3. Hellen, loc. cit., p. 68.
4. Pukui interview, April 24, 1951, Honolulu, Hawaii.
was worn below it. Therefore, when men would snatch off their malos and fling them around their necks, they were showing that they were "pupule with grief." Some cut their hair in patches, while other tattooed their tongues, or rolled on the ground. They also cut themselves.

The body of the deceased was placed in his house and was so laid that the person sitting at the head would face the door. This person was the nearest of kin. Others sitting around the body were arranged so that the more distantly related mourners sat further from the head. When a person approached the house, the other mourners greeted him with wail-like chanting, which was composed extemporaneously. They greeted him in terms of his relation or connection to the deceased. For instance, they might begin chanting, "Here comes our dead brother's dear friend, so-and-so, who always went fishing with him and who once saved him from a shark, ..." and would continue in like manner for quite a time. Then, when this group ceased, the newcomer would begin to chant in the same way. His chant was also extemporaneous and was also in remembrance of his particular relation to the dead. He wailed of things they had done together and so on.

Dancing for the dead. There was always much dancing and singing at the time of a death. This was done to honor the dead, not to amuse the living. The general populace danced for ordinary people, but troupes of professionals might be hired to dance for the nobility's dead. There were no new songs and chants composed; rather those songs, chants, and dances that had been composed for him or had been his favorites during his lifetime, were the ones performed for him at his death. In remote districts of Hawaii this custom is still observed. As late as twenty years ago, at Ewa on Oahu, there was considerable singing and dancing at the funeral of a Hawaiian.
Birth. Soon after the birth of a child, the people gathered to name it. Two names were selected for each child, a regular name and a pet name for his sex organs. These parts were not considered ugly or disgusting to the Hawaiians, who loved them as the life-giving power. Consequently, they were given a pet name, and then the people composed a song or chant in honor of that name and, of course, a dance to go with it. This song "was not descriptive but suggestive and usually humorous." No program honoring a person was complete without one of these songs. Some exist today, with different tunes, as popular Hawaiian songs. One example is "Anepau", meaning "Frisky," which was composed for Liliuokalani.

Marriage. There was much dancing at wedding festivities.

Animal dances. Animal dances included dances about such animals as dogs, hogs, sharks, turtles, and spiders. The people did these dances to entertain. The accompanying words told something about the animal, while the dancers' movements also told the story or suggested movements typical of the animal in question. In the dog dance, the dancer barked after telling something about a dog. Similarly, the dancer might squeal in a hog dance. Hogs and hog dances were also associated with the weather. When there were no rain clouds at the top of the mountain, the hogs grunted a slow, regular grunt that sounded as if the hog were contented. But when the rain clouds gathered, the hogs became restless, and the grunts grew irregular and fast. All this was put into the words and movements of the hula. The dancers imitated the grunts of the hog. The turtle dance was a sitting dance in which the dancer would put his elbows on the ground and make motions as a turtle does when he goes in and out of his shell. The spider dance is very old and seldom done. It was a hopping dance. The dancer would hop and then point one foot in front of the other and then hop again.
Spear dance. There was spear dance, and it was done by men exclusively, for it was too strenuous for the women. It was accompanied by a group of men who sat on the ground behind the dancers and chanted. They used no instruments at all but held spears in their hands. These they sometimes moved in unison from right to left and so on. The dancers, who also held spears, were sometimes divided into two opposing groups, which looked at each other fiercely. At other times they danced as one group in rows, all facing one direction. These dances could be place changing dances in that one line moved forward at the same time another line moved backward.

Sitting dances. In the sitting dances, the dancers accompanied themselves by chanting. Neither musicians nor hula master sat by playing instruments. The dancers' chanting was the only accompaniment.

Hue dance. At an entertainment, after the program was over and "all the dances were pau," there would be a hue as a kind of finale. Everybody, including the dancing master, joined in this dance, which was looked forward to with great anticipation. It started slowly and developed speed rapidly until it was very, very fast. The goal was to see who could dance the longest. As the music began to pick up speed, the feet and arms moved less and less while the hips moved faster and faster with the tempo of the music. A good dancer with much stamina could dance for about ten or twelve minutes like this. This was a dance which the Hawaiians loved to do. "It was fun!"

Chants and songs. When a song or chant was composed in honor of a person, to celebrate his birthday, or some other special occasion, that song or chant became the personal property of the honored person and could only be used to honor that person. It was not the property of the author.
Authors were particularly careful in the selection of the words they used in a song or chant in honor of a person. As the purpose of the composition was to give pleasure and joy, all words that connected gloom, sadness, and melancholy were avoided. An author would never have written such words as "Beyond the reef, where the sea is dark and cold . . ." to honor a person. Only in dirges did they use words that were sad.

**Comparison of hula on various islands.** The hula of Kauai was more monotonous than that of Hawaii, but there were more varieties of the hula on Kauai than on Hawaii. The dances of Hawaii had more footwork and were more energetic than those of Kauai; while Kauai's dances were more sedate and dignified. The dances of Oahu were a mixture of the kinds found on Hawaii and Kauai.

There were many "versions and many variants" of the same hula on the same island or on different islands. A good hula dancer would try to do a particular hula to the drumming of perhaps five different hula masters, each of whom drummed differently. All hulas done to drumming are ancient.

**Training of hula dancers.** The training of hula dancers was done by a male hula master (*kumu hula*), who never taught all that he knew to any one individual. He was careful to reserve something so that he always knew something his pupils didn't. If a pupil had learned all that he or she could from one dancing master and still wanted to learn more, he would join another group under a different master.

The period of training was very strict. There were many taboos. The dancers were on a diet and could eat no sugar cane, bananas, or certain kinds of sea-weed. The pupils were both male and female, and they could be either single or married. During the time they were learning the hula, however, they were separated from their mates, if they were married, and lived in a long one-room rectangular building, called the *halau*, with all
the other dancers. This was where they lived and where they learned the
dance. They were not allowed to go out to reveal anything of their
learning until their graduation. This was a good taboo, for it would
reflect on the teacher if the unfinished dancer went around performing
badly. No person was allowed to graduate until his dancing was considered
a finished product. Near the end of the training period, critics, ke,
were asked to come in to watch the dancers. These ke were other dancing
masters, and they were sure to notice any imperfection, on the part of a
dancer, that might have missed the eye of the teacher. After the perfor­
mance was over, the ke would talk to the teacher, telling him what mistakes
he had seen.

Taboos regarding sex during the training period were so strict that
no one dared break them. And this was a good taboo also, for several
reasons. First of all, this training had to be taken seriously; the pupils
had to devote all their thoughts and energy to the perfection of their
art. It was good also in that no mother, wife, or husband left at home
while some member of the family learned the hula need ever worry about the
behavior of the member of the family.

The exercises for limbering the body were often quite painful, until
the muscles became strong and used to the strenuous activity. Sometimes
the dancers were walked on. One exercise involved the dancer's kneeling,
while the master stood on the thighs and held the hands of the dancer as
he bent backward until his shoulders touched the ground. Sometimes the
pupil would put his arms around a post to keep the upper part of the body
still while the hips were limbering up. This did not prove to be a good
thing, for it developed the habit of bringing the shoulders forward, which
is bad for in the hula.
All dance was closely connected with religion. In the halau, on the east side of the building was placed an altar made of three special kinds of greenery. The altar was on the east side, for that is the direction of the rising sun which is light-giving. The purpose of the hula was the same, to "enlighten," to give enjoyment. Great ceremony accompanied the gathering of the greens for the altar. The man who was to gather them would one day go out into the woods to see where he could find all three kinds close together. Then at night he would return, alone, to that spot. If, on his way there, he heard an owl or a dog, he would go back home and start again another night. When he did reach the spot where he was to gather the greenery, he used his right hand to pick the "male greenery," some of all three kinds, and the left hand for the "female greenery," also some of each kind. These were kept separately, until placed on the altar where some of the male and some of the female was placed together on each side of the altar. Since it takes male and female to complete the picture, since one goes with the other, and neither is complete without the other, some of both had to be on each side of the altar. Sometimes in the halau there was a stick of lana wood. Lana means "enlightenment," so the wood was kept there to remind the dancers of their aim and purpose.

Social status of the dancers. The people loved dancers because they were so much fun and because they gave so much happiness. This did not mean, however, that they were released from any of the taboos. All the rules of conduct were enforced on them as they were on other people.

Form of the dance. Most of the dances were done in straight lines. Sometimes one line or row would change places with another. There were some circle dances. These were informal dances, done at social functions at night. The dancers moved Indian file, each dancer facing the back of the head of the dancer in front of him, around a fire. There were no
other circle dances. They never danced around an altar.

In certain dances, the dancers would hold one hand of another dancer, but they never held both hands. Men and women sometimes faced each other when they danced, but they kept a regular distance apart. Only in some of the "vulgar luau dances" was this convention unobserved. These dances were of late development.

Generally speaking both men and women did the same dances. No dances were forbidden to one sex. Only the men did the spear dance, because it was more suitable for men to do. The vigorous breast-slapping dance was done largely by men for the same reason, but it was sometimes done by women. There was no difference between the movements the women did and the movements the men did. More women liked to dance than men, therefore there were more female than male dancers.

Movements. The movements of the dance acted out the words of the song. There was no use of spoken words in the hula. For the most part, the pantomime was done with the hands and arms.

The normal placement of the arms was; one at the chest with the palm faced downward, the elbow parallel to the ground, and the shoulder down and back; the other outstretched diagonally, palm down, elbow parallel to the ground, and the shoulder down and back.

The arm was stretched diagonally rather than straight to the side, for in the mass formations of many of the dances it would have been in the way.

In the sex dances, the basic position of the arms was the same, with the exception of one arm which was held at the waist line rather than at the chest.

In the hula, the eyes always follow the hands. The movement is done
first to one side and then to the other, for people on one side of the audience and then for the other half of the audience. The following are explanations of some of the conventional gestures and what they meant.

**News from afar:** One hand is placed behind the ear, palm out, while the other is outstretched. (a)

**Fragrance comes.** Both hands are held in front of the dancer, palms up, and they move to the body with a rippling movement. (b)

**Look.** Both hands are at the eyes and they move outward to a position in front of the body as the fingers make a rippling motion. (c)

**Sea.** Both hands move diagonally from the body outward as they make a motion like the waves rolling. (d)

**House.** The hands describe a pointed roof. (e)

**Canoe.** The hands describe the bow of a canoe. The point is held parallel to the ground instead of perpendicularly as the house gesture is. (f)

**Love.** The arms cross on the chest, as the hands and fingers move gently. (g)

**Cold.** The arms are crossed on the chest, but the hands and fingers are kept still. (h)
Rain. Both hands move from a position above and in front of the dancer's head to a position level with the dancer's chest, as the fingers flutter. (i)

Flower. The hand or hands is/or held up diagonally in front of the body. The fingers are close together in a circle if the flower is closed, but as the flower opens the fingers open too. The palms face the dancer. (j)

Waving grass. The arms move from the body to a position diagonally in front of it, as the hands go up and down as if the wind were blowing the grass over and the grass comes up again. (k)

Person. There is no gesture for "man" or "woman" but "person" is designated with both hands pointing toward each other, palms down, with the index finger touching the chest. (l)

All these gestures are old. The gesture seen now that represents patting a keike on the head is very new. That gesture would never have been made in the olden days. Everything above the shoulders was considered sacred, private, and personal. The head was the seat of the spirit and should not be struck in any way. It was considered very, very rude indeed to pull someone's hair, or to even talk of slapping a child on the face, or patting his head. Naturally then, it would not have been done in a dance.
There were three kinds of hip movements in the hula. In one of these did the abdomen go forward. The movements of the hips always kept in a line back of the natural position of the front of the body. Only in the sex dances did the opu come forward. To-day not all of the hula teachers are so careful to see to it that their pupils execute the hip movements properly.

In the hula the feet move but little. The dancer never covers much territory. Many times the feet stay in one position, and only the heel comes up and down to allow the hips to move, while the dancer dances with arms, hips, and facial expressions.

Missionary and other outside influence. Restrictions on dancing after the missionaries came was very great. After they gained control, it was only in the small and out-of-the-way areas that dance continued to flourish, for people were sometimes arrested for dancing. Some rulers went along with the missionaries in their attempt to prevent the dance, and others did not.

Very soon after the Europeans began to come, the Hawaiians picked up the horn-pipe movements from the sailors on board the ships. This they incorporated in their dance.

Marionettes or puppets. The marionettes or puppets that are mentioned by Emerson are now in the Bishop Museum. They are probably not indigenous to Hawaii as Emerson reported, for none of the very old Hawaiian dancers and dancing masters had ever heard of them, before these were made. A man by the name of Paaluhi made these, and he probably fashioned them after the Punch and Judy shows. A woman who saw a performance of them said that one of the things they were made to do was to put the arms before the face and move them as if they were wiping away tears. The dolls are made to look Hawaiian. The heads are made of a soft wood and the eyes of steel. The body, under a pink muumuu, is made of what looks like apple crates. The printing is still there.
APPENDIX B

SONG BY KAMEHAHA II

The Passage from Koolau to Honolulu.

A Popular Song,

By King Riho Riho.

Kihe Koolau, kihe ha un Koelana
I pukakele na hale a Kekele
Ino ke ala nui makani o Nuwanu
A Nuwanu i Kaleilua ha makani
Nana aku ika lau o ka Kaweru
E nio ana i ka makani a ka holo
Aliv a ka lau o keki ke kuikui me ka hau
Puchu i ka ununu a ka waahila
Hokiki na wahini noho anu i ke ala
A ke alanui wai a ke hau komo
Kono poho i ka lepo Kahuwailana
Pacioi ka husakai hele i Rono
Pahoe hena i kaaana a ka hina
Hina pulu ka apeope pulu me kahi tapa
Hele wale iho no a ore maru
Haere pu me ka ua i Rono
Harawai me ka la i Leleoe.

Translation.

Koolau was offended with the rains of Koelana,
While they defiled the entrance of Kekele* s habitations.
And roughened the stormy passage of Nuwanu,
From Nuwanu to Malalua blows the wind:
Behold the blades of the nodding kaweru
Waving in the flying gales of the passage!
While the leaves of the ti, the candle-tree, and the hau,
Shake and bend, and yield to the strong blast,
And are tossed and driven by the whirl of the mountain storm,
The goddesses sit shivering by the way-side.
Along the flowing path of the Hau bower
The travellers enter the pass— they sink in the mire.
At Kahuwailana, the company going to Rono
Slip and totter, slide, stagger, and fall,
Wet their packages, and drench their clothes;
They march on, naked and without a shelter;
Accompanied by showers, they proceed to Rono;
They meet with the sun at Leleoe.

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