

Book and Media Reviews

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I worry that its inclusion in the gallery risked reinforcing the “same old pictures, graphs, and numbers of climate representation” that the exhibition aimed to challenge (2).

The other pieces creatively and critically presented climate change in a different way, telling local stories about what sea-level rise looks and feels like. These are stories that must have a place in the movement for climate justice because they challenge the ongoing colonial and military forces at the root of the climate crisis. The exhibition contributes to a growing discourse that demands justice in the face of continuing displacement. But as I walked through the gallery, I wondered if “inundation” was the right word to use, or if people across Oceania might have used a different term to describe their experiences. The exhibition catalog refers to inundation as “the watery disasters of climate change and the overwhelming emotions they evoke” (1). As a result, audiences might interpret the term to be synonymous with drowning or sinking. But as regional climate justice activists like those of 350 Pacific and the Pacific Warrior Campaign have shown, they “are not drowning, [they] are fighting” (see the 350 Pacific website: <https://350pacific.org/pacific-climate-warriors/>).

However, a radical reimagining of rising sea levels that moves away from the disaster narrative implied by the word “inundation” was evident in the extensive programming surrounding the exhibition. For instance, Gerhardt initiated *High WaterLine: Honolulu*, a local iteration of Eve Mosher’s community art project, which premiered in New York City in 2007. With Balder-

ston, Gerhardt led two walks through Honolulu’s Kaka’ako neighborhood. While drawing a line of chalk along the future shoreline (as predicted by climate scientists), we stopped every now and then to share stories about the now-invisible stream channel beneath the concrete surface.

It was experiences like this, along with the artist talks and panel discussions, that made the exhibition especially noteworthy. Faris had a clear agenda to engage with the public beyond the space of the gallery, and this has continued past the closing of the exhibition in February 2020. Later the same year, the exhibition traveled to the Donkey Mill Art Center in Hōlualoa, Hawai’i, where it offered virtual and on-site programming from 1 July to 11 October. The catalog can still be downloaded for free from the exhibition’s website, and the extensive programming is available for viewing online.

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Reclaiming Kalākaua: Nineteenth-Century Perspectives on a Hawaiian Sovereign, by Tiffany Lani Ing. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2019. ISBN hardback: 9780824879983; ISBN paper: 9780824881566, xi + 286 pages, notes, bibliography, index. Hardback, US\$68.00; paper, US\$28.00.

Reclaiming Kalākaua: Nineteenth-Century Perspectives on a Hawaiian Sovereign by Tiffany Lani Ing is a

response to twentieth-century English-language texts about Hawaiian King David La‘amea Kamananākapu Māhinulani Nāla‘ia‘ehuokalani Lumialani Kalākaua (ruled 1874–1891) that rely on English-language sources written by supporters of the Bayonet Constitution and the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom. These texts, which have shaped understandings of who Kalākaua was and how he was viewed in the 1800s, do not accurately portray the *mō‘ī* (sovereign). Instead, Ing argues, “looking at *all* of the coverage and debate in the English-language newspapers and, above all, in the Hawaiian-language newspapers results in a far more nuanced and accurate understanding of how [Kalākaua’s] contemporaries understood and debated the role and nature of this *mō‘ī*” (197). Additionally, Ing argues that by looking at Hawaiian-language newspapers, it is clear that a majority of Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians) remained loyal to Kalākaua throughout his reign.

The first chapter examines a body of nineteenth-century commentaries starkly dismissive of Kalākaua’s character and legacy, which Ing characterizes as constituting “a genealogy of incompetence and corruption” (46). Unfortunately, the most commonly read twentieth-century histories of Kalākaua have been based on these prior works, perpetuating the genealogy of misrepresentation. The chapter focuses on the white oligarchy’s portrayal of Kalākaua and how this small group damaged Kalākaua’s reputation by portraying the *mō‘ī* as uncivilized, unrefined, and unable to govern and lead the Hawaiian Kingdom. The characterization of Kalākaua that did

the most damage, Ing argues, was the suggestion that Kalākaua was not popular among his subjects. It is this misrepresentation that *Reclaiming Kalākaua* most actively speaks against, showing through numerous Hawaiian- and English-language sources that Kalākaua was supported by his subjects.

Ing also explains that some of the nineteenth-century criticism of Kalākaua was made by Kānaka Maoli who opposed Kalākaua but still supported the sovereignty of the Hawaiian Kingdom and were concerned with the nation’s survival. Unfortunately, Ing does not spend much time on these perspectives. For example, although Kalākaua’s political rival Queen Emma and her statements regarding Kalākaua appear in the chapter, Ing does not discuss the queen’s supporters, the 1874 election between Queen Emma and Kalākaua, or reporting on the election until a later chapter. Contextualizing the political atmosphere of the time would have strengthened this section on Kalākaua’s detractors and added to the efforts of presenting Kalākaua in a more complete and nuanced manner.

The chapters that follow work to chip away at the misrepresentations of Kalākaua. In chapter 2, Ing focuses on nineteenth-century English-language accounts, published internationally and in the Hawaiian Kingdom, that describe Kalākaua favorably to show how histories of Kalākaua that rely on English-language sources have made a conscious effort to ignore these accounts in order to tell a negative version of Kalākaua’s history. Ing argues that negative depictions of Kalākaua are authored by those

motivated to discredit the mō‘ī and the Hawaiian Kingdom. Historians’ decision to ignore the more favorable accounts of Kalākaua has impacted Hawaiian historiography and how Kalākaua has been viewed over time.

For example, one of the events detailed in the second chapter is Kalākaua’s circumnavigation of the globe in 1881. Newspapers around the world reported on his stops and how he was received in each country. Ing argues that Kalākaua’s trip and the press it generated was “a form of resistance against the slanderous, trivializing, condescending, and judgmental accounts of his rule and his travels produced by Hawai‘i’s white oligarchy and by international commentators who found the very idea of a Pacific Island country ridiculous” (75). Ing shows throughout the book that Kalākaua was conscious of various threats to his kingdom and that he used the press and other methods to shape the public narrative about him and sway how he and his kingdom were viewed.

The next chapters in *Reclaiming Kalākaua* examine Hawaiian-language publications to paint a more complete picture of Kalākaua. Chapter 3 focuses on portrayals of Kalākaua from his birth to his first birthday as mō‘ī in 1874. He was well-known years before he became mō‘ī because of his various positions in government, because of his role in establishing a newspaper, and because he was a pua ali‘i (royal descendant of chiefs). Ing shows that Kānaka Maoli were aware of Kalākaua’s “support for Native nationalism and informed awareness of national and international affairs” through his involvement in the press

and through what Kānaka Maoli read about him (93).

Chapter 3 also includes a detailed account of Kalākaua’s tour throughout the Hawaiian Islands in 1874. Drawing on Hawaiian-language newspapers from the time, Ing is able to report how Kānaka Maoli throughout the islands welcomed the mō‘ī, demonstrating their loyalty for Kalākaua and support for the independence of the lāhui (people or nation). Indeed, her use of extensive analysis of Hawaiian-language sources to describe such events is one of the strong points of the book, highlighting the vast number of resources many historians ignored or actively dismissed in order to misrepresent Kalākaua and the Hawaiian Kingdom.

The fourth chapter examines Hawaiian-language publications’ representations of Kalākaua as he traveled outside of the Hawaiian Kingdom to Washington DC in 1874 and then around the world in 1881. Hawaiian-language newspapers consistently depicted the people’s support for Kalākaua and the mō‘ī’s efforts to strengthen his kingdom. Ing suggests that the world tour served to legitimize the Hawaiian Kingdom as an independent nation to the world. Kalākaua took an active role in shaping what Hawai‘i and the world saw of him and his kingdom, and one way he did so was by writing letters from his journey that were published in the newspapers in the Hawaiian Islands.

Chapter 5 centers on Kalākaua’s coronation in 1883 and the jubilee celebrating his fiftieth birthday in 1886. The celebrations organized to commemorate these events, Ing argues, were intended to protect the sover-

eighty of the monarchy as it faced threats of Westernization and annexation. The chapter also discusses how newspapers in Hawai'i represented Kalākaua during the Bayonet Constitution in 1887 and the events that followed. The sixth chapter explores Kalākaua's final days and death. Ing argues that Kānaka Maoli responses to their mō'i's death show their continued loyalty to and aloha for him. Ing investigates Joseph Moku'ōhai Poepoe's biography of the mō'i, which was sold at Kalākaua's funeral, as representative of the people's sentiments toward the mō'i and the independent nation.

Overall, *Reclaiming Kalākaua* is written for an audience familiar with Hawaiian history, as it often does not go into detail when describing key events but rather focuses on portrayals of Kalākaua in relation to these events. The book would have been strengthened by more contextualization of these portrayals and more analysis of the contemporary impacts that the various representations and misrepresentations of Kalākaua have had in the Hawaiian Islands. That said, the work Ing has done to research numerous Hawaiian- and English-language accounts has made *Reclaiming Kalākaua* a necessary resource for those studying the time period and looking for a more comprehensive depiction of Kalākaua and his contemporaries' views of him and his kingdom.

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A Power in the World: The Hawaiian Kingdom in Oceania, by Lorenz Gonschor. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2019. ISBN hardback: 9780824880019; ISBN paper: 9780824888299, xiv+235 pages, maps, tables, photographs, glossary, notes, references, and index. Hardback, US\$68.00; paper, US\$28.00.

Lorenz Gonschor's *A Power in the World: The Hawaiian Kingdom in Oceania* is a well-researched addition to the growing body of work reexamining how Hawaiians, and in this case the Hawaiian Kingdom, shaped and reshaped their relationships with nations and peoples beyond Hawai'i. Merging the fields of political science and history, Gonschor argues, convincingly, that the Kingdom of Hawai'i played a pivotal role in shaping Oceanic politics in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Chapter 1 examines the development of the Hawaiian constitutional monarchy as a model for a hybrid government recognized by the great powers of the day. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 explore Hawaiian thought and action related to diplomacy in the Pacific, specifically the promotion of the Hawaiian model by kingdom diplomat Charles St Julian and, later, by King David Kalākaua and his government. Chapters 5 and 6 investigate the far-reaching impact of the Hawaiian model in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Gonschor's research, contained within an attractive volume and complemented by a number of helpful tables and maps, draws on a diverse set of sources, threading together Hawaiian- and Tongan-language newspapers, government archives and