Ola ka he‘e nalu! Surviving colonization
Hawaiian Surfing in 19th century Hawai‘i

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Through a case study of he‘e nalu (Hawaiian surfing) in the 19th century, Jeremy Lemarie shows why social scientists like Ben Finney and John Clark have come to contradictory findings regarding the state of Hawaiian surfing according to the primary sources they investigated. Early works relying on diaries of explorers and missionaries, have argued for the decline of surfing because of the Calvinists condemning native customs. Recently, a new school of thoughts working on Hawaiian newspapers and former archives has claimed that he‘e nalu well survived colonization thanks to cultural performances and staged tours orchestrated by the monarchy. To clarify this controversy, Jeremy performs a comparative analysis between Western sources and sources written by native Hawaiians and argue for continuity of Hawaiian surfing in the 19th century.

Jeremy Lemarie is a lecturer in Anthropology of Tourism at UH Mānoa and a PhD candidate in Sociology at the University of Paris West Nanterre la Défense. Having received two B.A. and M.A. degrees in Sociology and History, Jeremy grounds his research in long-term historical analyses in Hawai‘i and California. Under the joint supervision of Jonathan Friedman (UCSD/EHESS) and Anne Raulin (Paris West), his research interests deal with the global diffusion and reproduction of surfing since 1778. With a focus on mores and sensibilities, Jeremy compares Hawaiian and Western representations of the ocean in the 19th century and argues that surf tourism has been a main engine for the global distribution of surfing in the 20th century. Working with global systems and urban transformations, Jeremy conducted 24 months of participant observation between 2009 and 2015 in Hawai‘i and California and taped 45 interviews to grasp similarities and differences in the development of surf-resorts.

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