



READER'S GUIDE & GLOSSARY

by Dr. Jayson Makoto Chun
with Dr. John P. Rosa and
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revisions by Dr. Patrick Patterson

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Introduction

Kona Winds is a detective thriller set in the Honolulu of 1953. The novel speaks to people from Hawai'i, using local terms, concepts, histories, and ideas that add to its charm and reveals the complexity of a multicultural Hawai'i.

This novel, while understandable because of its universal themes, has another layer accessible only to those from Hawai'i, especially the older generation, who know of Hawai'i's history as a multiethnic but racially stratified colonial plantation state and will understand many of these references. Many readers not from the islands or who have moved recently to make the islands their home may miss these references. And it is possible even the younger generation born in Hawai'i may have a difficult time understanding without more context. It is hoped this reference guide will provide such context as it contains many facts and explanations. It begins with a brief historical essay, followed by notes on the novel, a glossary of terms commonly used in the islands, and questions for further discussion.

Think of it like learning from Detective Lieutenant Gideon Hanohano—you'll be able to point out trivia and facts that may be useful in the future, and also gain a sense of the richness of Hawai'i's society and people.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This is a work of **historical FICTION**. Although *Kona Winds* is grounded in Hawai'i's history and refers to key events, such as the 1949 strike, the Japanese internment, and institutions such as the 442nd, there are characters and establishments, like Billings Trust or Sternwood's, which are fictitious, although inspired by real places. Also, the vast conspiracy depicted in this novel is fictitious and the author does not imply that such a conspiracy ever existed.

Introductory History of Hawai‘i for Beginners

Kingdom of Hawai‘i (1795–1893)

Polynesians arrived in Hawai‘i around the third century. The abundance of natural resources from the land and ocean in addition to conservation and cultivation practices by Native Hawaiians¹ fostered a self-sufficient society. This society had a strict social hierarchy with ali‘i (chiefs) at the top, and the maka‘āinana (commoners), sharing many resources.

This subsistence living provided for all food, shelter, and clothing needs up until the middle of the nineteenth century. To this day, the Hawaiian Islands are the most isolated population center in the world—the nearest large city is Los Angeles, a 5½-hour plane ride away. So for Hawaiians to thrive in a society of up to 1.4 million people is quite impressive and shows an understanding of Mālama ‘Āina (care for the land) and self-sufficiency that the whole world could learn from today.

It is commonly believed that Native Hawaiians made contact with Westerners when a British expedition led by **Captain James Cook** (1728–1779) landed in 1778. But prior foreign arrivals include the Spanish and possibly the Chinese. Native Hawaiians were quick to adopt and adapt foreign technology such as reading, writing, weapons, and firearms. It is the latter, along with diplomacy and military skill, that were used by **Kamehameha I** (known as Kamehameha the Great, 1758–1819), mō‘ī (ruler) of Hawai‘i Island, who became the first ali‘i (chief) to bring all of the Hawaiian Islands under the control of one mō‘ī. His victory in the Battle of Nu‘uanu marked his conquest over the majority of the other islands. The exception was the Kaua‘i Kingdom (Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau Islands), which subsequently yielded to his authority in 1810. This was the starting point of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i.

After Kamehameha the Great’s death, his eldest son **Liholiho** (Kamehameha II, 1797–1824) became mō‘ī. During his rule, the ‘aikapu (taboo eating) was abolished. This was largely implemented by the ali‘i nui (high chiefs), **Keōpūolani** (1778–1823) and **Ka‘ahumanu** (1768–1832). Although both of these ali‘i had unions with Kamehameha the Great, they wielded authority in their own right. During her lifetime, Keōpūolani was the highest-ranking ali‘i and mother to both Kamehameha II and Kamehameha III. Born from a mo‘okūauhau (genealogy) of powerful Maui and Hawai‘i Island families, Ka‘ahumanu also wielded significant authority and, later, became the **Kuhina Nui**—there is no Western equivalent, but the role is similar to a regent or prime minister.

During this time, Honolulu developed into an important port city, furnishing food, provisions, and water to merchant, fur, and whaling ships that traveled back and forth across the Pacific. The subsequent discovery of sandalwood in upland forests brought more foreign ships to Hawai‘i for this coveted and fragrant wood that was traded in Chinese markets.

¹ “Hawaiian” or “Native Hawaiian” or more recently “Kanaka Maoli” and “Kanaka ‘Ōiwi” refer to the native, indigenous peoples who first came to the islands. In Hawai‘i, people use the term “Hawai‘i resident” or “person from Hawai‘i” or even “local” to refer to anyone who is from the islands, but not Hawaiian.

Christian missionaries from the **American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions** were another group of foreigners to arrive off the coast of Hawai'i Island in March 1820. The Christian baptism of Keōpūolani before her death in 1823 highly influenced the other ali'i nui to convert to the new religion. The newly converted ali'i nui commanded the maka'āinana (commoners) to attend Sunday services. Although the ali'i nui's motivations for their conversion are disputed by historians today, one factor might be witnessing up to 95 percent of the Indigenous population die within a few decades from disease such as smallpox, measles, and syphilis, which were brought from foreign lands. In contrast, the ever-increasing number of newcomers seemed to have more immunity to these diseases.

After Kamehameha II's death in 1824, **Kauikeaouli** (Kamehameha III, 1825–1854) became the next mō'i of Hawai'i. Under his rule, the Kingdom of Hawai'i adopted a constitution and established schools. Native Hawaiian desire to read and write resulted in Hawai'i becoming **one of the most literate nations in the world**. Another new measure implemented by the ali'i was the **Māhele of 1848** (land division) that ultimately resulted in Native Hawaiian dispossession of land through privatization. Because ownership of land, land as property, and the purchase of land were newly adopted practices, many Native Hawaiians did not make claims for or were eventually forced off the lands they resided on.

Towards the latter half of the nineteenth century, the growth of sugar plantations came to dominate the economic landscape of Hawai'i. Plantation owners benefited from the **Reciprocity Treaty** (1875) that allowed sugar to be sold duty free on the U.S. market in exchange for U.S. access to what is now known as **Pearl Harbor**.

The large amount of manual labor needed to cultivate, cut, and process sugar cane resulted in plantation owners looking to Asian countries for cheap labor. This was also largely due to Native Hawaiian refusal to work on sugar plantations since they already knew how to fish and farm for themselves. At first, Chinese laborers were brought in on slave-like contracts of indentured servitude, but too many ran away after their contracts ended to escape harsh plantation conditions. So the plantation owners turned to Portuguese laborers starting in 1878, and then Japanese labor, with full-scale Japanese immigration starting in 1885. Other groups like the Okinawans, Koreans, Puerto Ricans, and Filipinos were to follow. Plantation owners purposefully brought in diverse ethnic groups with different languages, cultural beliefs, and existing historical conflicts to prevent workers from uniting in labor strikes. Experienced Portuguese workers often rose to the level of being luna (overseers) who acted as middlemen between the plantation owners and the Asian field workers.

David Kalākaua (1836–1891, r. 1874–1891) was the first elected mō'i. He encouraged the revival of the hula, mo'olelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian [his]stories), 'oli (chants), and games that had largely gone underground due to missionary pressure. All of these cultural activities, along with the establishment of the first Hawaiian museum and library, flourished under the Kingdom's sponsorship. Kalākaua sought to further assert the sovereignty of the Hawaiian Kingdom through diplomatic acts like his worldwide tour to foster diplomacy with other countries, especially Samoa and Japan. Yet by this time, missionary descendants and plantation owners had risen to highly influential positions. Their actions, which were at times illegal, posed a threat to the sovereignty of

the Kingdom of Hawai'i. In 1887, the plantation elites forced Kalākaua at gunpoint to sign a new constitution, which became known as the "**Bayonet Constitution.**" This weakened the powers of the sovereign monarch and gave more power to his cabinet of advisors. In addition, Hawaiian subjects were also required to have a minimum income to vote. Most Native Hawaiians, being self-sufficient, were dispossessed of the franchise. Meanwhile, this extended voting rights to elite non-citizen settlers, like those of American ancestry, while denying Asians under contracts of indentured servitude. Also, by 1887, the United States received rights to establish a naval base at Pearl Harbor that deepened American interests in the islands.

After Kalākaua's death in 1891, his sister **Lili'uokalani** (1838–1917, r. 1891–1893) assumed the throne. In response to pleas from the Hawaiian people, the new mō'i drafted a new constitution to restore power to the monarchy and people, leading to the plantation elites and U.S. government minister John Stevens to plot a coup d'état to bring Hawai'i under American rule. In 1893, the plantation elites, organized under a "**Committee of Safety**" and, backed by a display of military power by the American marines from the *U.S.S. Boston*, staged a coup d'état and took over the Hawaiian government. They later imprisoned the Queen in her own palace, overthrew the Hawaiian monarchy (an act that the U.S. government in 1993 finally acknowledged as illegal), and formed a one-party state, the **Republic of Hawaii** (1894–1898) that brought an end to the Kingdom of Hawai'i.

Prewar Territorial Hawai'i

Politicians in the United States were interested in Hawai'i for its strategic naval military location, while businessmen were interested in sugar for the West Coast. The brief rule of the Republic of Hawaii ended with the islands passing into American control in 1898 and becoming the **Territory of Hawaii** in 1900.

The territorial society ostensibly had the ideology of the Aloha Spirit, where peoples of different races freely intermingled, but in reality it was run as a hierarchical colonial society stratified by race. At the top were the descendants of missionaries who had married into other missionary and elite Native Hawaiian families to form the **Big Five** oligopoly. They lived in segregated elite neighborhoods and sent their children [and grandchildren] to Punahou, a predominantly white elite private school. These families controlled the economic and social institutions of the colony.

With Hawaiians as the largest voting bloc (as most Japanese being resident aliens were unable to vote), patronage and jobs like police officers were allocated to voters who were willing to go along with the system, although many Hawaiians lived in poverty in rural areas or in urban homestead slums. The price for this collaboration was high as non-elite Native Hawaiians were now strangers in their own homeland—living in a society where English was the language of power, land was controlled by the haole elites, native culture was increasingly marginalized, the islands were militarized, and most Hawaiians were shut out of elite positions.

What worried the colonial elites by the 1920s was the growing Japanese population in Hawai'i. Large-scale immigration of Japanese plantation workers had begun in 1885 and, by the early twentieth century, they had grown to a plurality of the island's populations and were viewed as a

threat to national security, especially with the rise of Japan as a world power at the end of World War I.

Annexation ironically brought freedom to the contract plantation workers, as their contracts of indentured servitude were declared void. As a result, Japanese plantation workers had gone on labor strikes for higher pay and better working conditions in 1909 and then again in 1920. The colonial elites blamed the strike leaders as Japanese government agents sent to agitate society. Thus, efforts were made in the early twentieth century Territorial Hawai'i to clamp down on the supposed sources of these agitators: Japanese language schools, Japanese language newspapers, and Japanese temples.

Knowing that the U.S.-born *nisei* (second generation Japanese) would be able to vote when they reached legal adulthood, educators made an effort to Americanize the Japanese youth, by promoting American customs and the abandonment of Japanese values and language. And also, due to the lack of high paying professional jobs, the colonial elites attempted to convince the Japanese youth to take up plantation work after graduating high school instead of aiming for non-plantation middle class jobs, or if that didn't work, to put up barriers to Japanese taking such jobs.

Koreans had begun to arrive in Hawai'i beginning in 1903. Like the Japanese, they came in search of economic opportunity but, to make matters worse, by 1905 the Japanese empire was in the process of taking over the Korean empire. With the Japanese occupation of Korea, many Koreans, like Hawaiians, found themselves strangers in their own homeland, living in a Japanese colonial police state with Japanese the language of power. Hawai'i became one of their sites for resistance to Japanese occupation. The first Koreatown in America was established in Hawai'i, and Koreans began to work their way up in the social ladder.

With most Japanese labor cut off after the Gentleman's Agreement (1907), in which the Japanese government stopped most Japanese immigration to the U.S., Filipino **sakadas** (workers) were brought in to work, beginning in 1906.

The U.S. defeat of Spain in the Spanish-American War led to another bloody war of occupation, the Philippine-American War (1899–1902), in which about 500,000 Filipinos perished. The Philippines forcibly became a U.S. colony in 1898. Now as American nationals from America's Philippine colony, Filipinos were brought over to work in the sugar cane and pineapple fields of America's Hawai'i colony.

The sakadas suffered under harsh living and work conditions, and were paid even less than the Japanese laborers for the same work. Things came to a head with the **Hanapēpē Massacre** (1924), when a labor strike on Kaua'i Island turned violent, resulting in the deaths of 20 strikers and police.

Meanwhile, the militarization of Hawai'i continued. With the development of U.S. military installations at Pearl Harbor came a flood of new migrants from the U.S.—white and black soldiers—changing the demographics of the island. Notably, the all-Black 25th Infantry Regiment was stationed at Schofield Barracks.

There were tensions between locals and the military newcomers, such as the **Massie-Kahahawai Case** (1931–1932), in which a white Navy housewife accused a group of locals of rape, resulting in whites lynching a Native Hawaiian arrested for the crime. The perpetrators of the lynching were found guilty but set free after the territorial governor commuted their sentences under heavy federal pressure. [LINK](#)

The influx of newcomers to Hawai‘i resulted in the children of the plantation workers, who grew up in a common environment, to think of themselves as “locals.” Whether in the plantation schools or in the pool halls of Iwilei, the youth spoke to each other in a creole English (known as “**pidgin**”—probably a word inherited from a creole language used for international business in Guangdong, China, before the First Opium War (1839–1842)) that workers used to communicate among each other.² Young people, removed from the historical hatreds that their parents felt towards each other, grew up with this pan-ethnic “local” identity, easily intermingling with each other, while feeling distinct from the haole elites or military newcomers.

World War II and Postwar Territorial Hawai‘i

WWII transformed the territory. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, resulted in the islands being put under martial law, and the Japanese community came under heavy suspicion. The majority of Japanese in Hawai‘i were spared the horrors of mass internment unlike the Japanese on the continental West Coast because a mass deportation would have shut down the island economy and disrupted places like Pearl Harbor, which was reliant on local Japanese labor. Also, future governor of Hawai‘i, **John A. Burns**, a haole police officer at the time, used his ties with the local Japanese community to spare many Japanese from internment. Still, several thousand priests, language teachers, and fishermen were sent to **Honouliuli Internment Camp** on the island of O‘ahu, and then later to camps in Arkansas or Utah.

With the war, an influx of servicemen (including famed jazz saxophonist John Coltrane) came to the islands from the continental U.S. Many of these newcomers decided to stay and often married local women, thus becoming locals themselves. The wartime government spending also caused a huge boom in the economy and island youth discovered they could make more money working on military bases, or as waitresses in restaurants catering to servicemen, rather than on the plantations.

Meanwhile, thousands of young Japanese-Americans volunteered for service to prove their loyalty to the U.S. The **442nd Regiment**, an all Japanese-American military unit which served in Italy and France, was among the highest decorated military units in WWII, although at great cost in human life and sacrifice. Officially called the **100th Battalion of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team**, this group became known as the “Purple Heart Battalion.” After the war, veterans from this unit would team up with labor activists to challenge the colonial power structure.

² For the purpose of clarity, this novel is not written in pidgin English. Doing so would make it incomprehensible to most people outside of Hawai‘i. In fact, today, pidgin is falling out of use among many (but definitely not all) young locals, being replaced with Standard English or Black English from TV, the Internet, and social media.

After the war, Hawai'i underwent more changes. The labor movement, centered around the **International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU)**, was now in full force. Workers from all backgrounds, led by leaders such as **Jack Kawano**, **Jack Hall**, and the Chinese-born local labor activist **Ah Quon McElrath** started challenging the Big Five oligarchy. In 1949, this multi-racial movement went on a 171-day dockworkers' strike that shut down the islands, preventing any shipping from the continental U.S., causing food shortages but eventually helping to raise salaries for the workers, demonstrating the power of labor unions.

Supporting them was the noted African-American journalist, poet, and labor activist **Franklin Marshall Davis** (who would eventually meet a young Barack Obama) writing for the *Honolulu Record*, a labor newspaper published by **Koji Ariyoshi** (who met up with Mao Zedong during WWII as part of a U.S. government mission) with ties to the ILWU. Many of the activists of the 1930s and 1940s were Marxist in orientation, as the Communist message of class struggle, anti-racism, anti-worker exploitation, and pro-unionism strongly resonated with the oppressed workers in Hawai'i, as in other colonized parts of Asia. Many workers enlisted in the Communist Party in significant numbers because no other group was willing to take on the Big Five oligarchy.

The plantation elites publicly accused labor activists of being Communist agents trying to take over the islands, thus ushering in a "Red Scare" in early 1950s Hawai'i. Local Japanese in Hawai'i, once seen as the agents of the Japanese empire, were now portrayed as the agents of the Soviet Union. The mainstream press claimed that the ILWU was working with Joseph Stalin and the Soviet Union to destabilize Hawai'i. Elite haole housewives calling themselves the "Broom Brigade" picketed the ILWU's headquarters accusing the union of being a secret Communist group undermining Hawai'i. Rocking the islands even further, some labor union members such as Jack Kawano claimed that the ILWU had fallen victim to the influence and control of the local Communist Party. These accusations brought the attention of **The House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC)**, which held hearings in 1950 regarding Communist influence in the territory, and in the 1952, the "**Hawaii Seven**, seven labor activists and educators (including Hall and Ariyoshi) accused of being Communists advocating the violent overthrow of the United States government," were put on trial and found guilty. They were later set free by a court ruling in 1958.

So, in 1953, Hawai'i was a divided society, with supporters of the old order such as the **Big Five**, their Hawaiian patronage supporters and haole housewives pitted against the supporters of the new order, such as 442nd veterans, haole allies, Hawaiian and Asian dockworkers, and Communist activists. It was clear that demographic change was destined to come. The younger generations of Japanese-Americans were reaching voting age. Many returning 442nd veterans, having used the G.I. Bill to go back to college, were organizing under the **Democratic Party**. Neither group was willing to accept any longer second-class citizenship. Meanwhile, labor was now a powerful force that could challenge the Big Five. The stage was thus set for a changing of the guard.

The election of 1954 marked a decisive change in island politics, when the Democrats, with the backing of labor and 442nd veterans, took control of the legislature, winning a majority of seats in both the territorial house and senate. And later on, Democrats would win nearly all governorships from the early 1960s onwards. The Republican Party, as of this writing in 2022, has never regained control of the territorial, and then later, state legislature.

Kona Winds is set on the eve of a monumental change in Territorial Hawai'i. The prewar racial plantation hierarchy is still there but 442nd vets like The Sheik, mainland haole transplants like Jack, Hawaiians like Gid, and activists like Ellen, would be fighting to change this system. While we now know the outcome of this struggle, back in 1953 the outcome was far from certain.

Postscript

Hawai'i became a state in 1959. Under the rule of the Democratic Party, the 442nd veterans and the labor unions, the children of the plantation workers and dockworkers, entered the middle class. Hawai'i's economy shifted from agriculture to mass tourism and defense spending, which enriched the state coffers and allowed for heavy state spending on government workers. Facing cheaper overseas competition, agriculture went into decline, with the last sugar plantation closing in 2016.

Under the tourism and defense spending prosperity, many of the newer generations of locals intermarried, resulting in a large number of mixed-race hapa children and contributing to a rise in "local" identity. Also, a new wave of migrants came from the continental U.S. and from other Pacific Islands such as American Samoa and the Federated States of Micronesia, further adds to the cultural mix of the islands.

Unfortunately, many Native Hawaiians were left out of the statehood patronage boom, as the Democrats gave government jobs and positions to their allies, often other Japanese-Americans. Hawaiians found themselves among the lowest paid and poorest people in the islands, while seeing their indigenous culture commercialized and exploited for the entertainment of tourists. A recent Hawaiian renaissance and political movement has seen Native Hawaiians attempt to take back control of their lands, culture, and sovereignty, but that is for another story best told by a Native Hawaiian.

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Notes for *Kona Winds*
(Numbers are page numbers)

1 **Kakaako**: A neighborhood in central Honolulu known in the 1950s as a Japanese enclave. Today it is becoming a wealthy condominium district.

1 **Camp Shelby**: This was a camp in Hattiesburg, Mississippi where the *nisei* (second generation) soldiers of the 442nd trained.

1 **Anzio**: A city about 32 miles south of Rome in Italy. In 1944, the Japanese-American 100th Infantry Battalion fought here against the Nazis, and in June of the same year was joined with the newly arrived 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

1 **chicken hekka**: A Hawai'i sukiyaki-type dish that blends chicken, vegetables, and long rice (rice noodles). It seems Japanese in origin, but is actually from the plantations. [LINK](#) [LINK](#)

1 **Momotaro and Chushingura** are Japanese folk tales. Momotaro is known as the “peach boy” tale, while Chushingura is better known as the “47 loyal ronin.”

3 **Aloha Tower**: The Aloha Tower is a 10-story concrete structure constructed in 1926 to function as the Harbor Master's traffic control center and as a welcoming landmark of Honolulu Harbor to boat passengers. In its heyday, Aloha Tower was the tallest structure in all of Hawai'i. In the 1920s and 1930s, passenger arrivals, dubbed “Boat Days,” were lively celebrations that often involved the entire community. [LINK](#) [LINK](#)

4 **the Moana**: This was Waikiki's first hotel, built in 1901. It was known for catering to the elites and wealthy travelers. [LINK](#)

4 **Steel guitar**: Locals today see the Hawaiian steel guitar as touristy, but almost all have no idea it was invented in 1889 by [Joseph Kekuku](#) (1874–1932), a Hawaiian teenager. After annexation, he was part of a diaspora of Hawaiian musicians who went to the U.S. continent for better opportunities. His invention influenced American country and blues music. [LINK](#)

4 **Jack Morris**: A fictional character loosely based on the historical figure John A. Burns (1909–1975), a Hawai'i-raised haole police officer who fought against the plantation oligarchy. Burns, as the coach of a Japanese-American baseball team, made many contacts in the Japanese community, and played a key role in making sure that the vast majority of Hawai'i's Japanese were not interned during the war, thus earning their gratitude. He would help organize the Democratic Party with 442nd veterans to challenge the elites. After Hawai'i's statehood, Burns would go on to become governor in 1962.

4 **Yoshikawa**: An inside joke. The Japanese characters for “Yoshikawa” (吉川) can also be read as “Kikkawa,” the author's name.

5 **Kamehameha**: This is a set of schools for Native Hawaiian boys and girls established in accordance with the will of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop. Originally focusing more on vocational trades and activities, Kamehameha Schools is now an elite college-preparatory institution for Hawaiians. [LINK](#)

5 **Great Mahele**: (1848) This was a land redistribution to give private land plots to Hawaiians, but eventually ended up separating many of them from their land. Most Hawaiians would wonder what was so “great” about this. The Hawaiian government, with input from their western advisors, redistributed one-third of the crown lands to the maka‘āinana (common people). Unfortunately, many Hawaiians, unaccustomed to the culturally alien concept of land ownership, lost control of their plots. By the territorial years, most of these lands had been sold off to settlers from the continental U.S. or auctioned to Big Five family corporations.

6 **former agent of the Emperor of Japan . . . Stalin’s agents**: In prewar Territorial Hawai‘i, the colonial elites saw Japanese labor activists as agents of the Japanese empire sent to create social discord. In the postwar years, the same elites saw the same Japanese labor activists as Communist agents bent on destroying Hawai‘i.

6 **new Portuguese bakery in Kapahulu**: A reference to Leonard’s Bakery, established in 1952. It is now a famous place to get malasadas (a type of Portuguese donut without a hole) served in their distinctive pink box. [LINK](#)

7 **Saloon Pilot crackers**: A type of cracker popular among locals in Hawai‘i based on the hardtack eaten by sailors. Give them a try next time you are in the islands. [LINK](#)

7 **Oriental**: While this is seen as a dated and racist term in the continental U.S. (where the term “Asian” is preferred), it is still surprisingly used in Hawai‘i (although more so by the elderly). Its use in this novel reflects the state of the language in 1953.

11 **Iolani Palace**: Dedicated in 1883, this was the royal palace of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i. After annexation, it served as the capitol building of the Territory of Hawai‘i. It continued to serve as the capitol building for the State of Hawai‘i until 1969. Today, it is a museum and a site with cultural significance to Hawaiians. [LINK](#)

14 **Manoa**: This was formally an all white neighborhood with contracts not to rent or sell housing to any Asians. Now it is a multicultural community with many residents being faculty from the nearby University of Hawai‘i. Mānoa is also one of the former childhood neighborhoods of President Barack Obama.

15 **Makiki Christian Church**: This is a Christian church built in 1931. It was designed to look like a Japanese castle to appeal to Japanese worshippers. [LINK](#)

16 **Waiālae**: The idea for this book came from a drunken discussion at a bar on Wai‘ālae Avenue, when the author Kikkawa was dared to write a noir novel about 1950s Hawai‘i.

18 **stevedores**: See ILWU in Glossary.

18 **HUAC** (House Un-American Activities Committee): A committee of the House of Representatives created in 1938. HUAC investigated Americans suspected of having Communist ties. In response to the dock strike of 1949, HUAC held hearings in 1950 regarding Communist activities in Hawai'i. The film *Big Jim McLain* (1952) featured John Wayne as a HUAC investigator sent to Honolulu to break up a Communist cell. [LINK](#) (trailer for movie)

20 **rice**: Today, rice is the staple starch in Hawai'i. During the COVID pandemic, it was among the first items to sell out or disappear from shelves.

21 **Purple Heart**: The 442nd was known as the "Purple Heart Battalion," the most decorated unit of its size in U.S. military history. Over 13,000 members would serve in the regiment, with 9,486 Purple Hearts awarded in less than two years of combat. [LINK](#)

21 **Schuman Carriage**: Established in 1893, this long-running car dealership sold wagons and carts. In 2004, after 111 years in business, it closed down. [LINK](#)

24 **hanafuda**: Japanese card game. [LINK](#) (Hanafuda Hawaii homepage)

25 **SPAM**: It was introduced and popularized during WWII as a substitute for meat. SPAM is now widely eaten in Hawai'i. Locals find it puzzling that mainlanders think SPAM is disgusting.... [LINK](#)

25 **bakery in Liliha**: This is a reference to Liliha Bakery, established in 1950 and still popular today. [LINK](#)

28 **Oahu Market** is a large open-air market in Chinatown built in 1904 to serve Asian vendors, as the public market was primarily occupied by haole store owners. [LINK](#) (to hichinatown page)

28 **UH**: The University of Hawai'i–Mānoa. Locals commonly refer to it by its initials.

36 **Walter Murray Gibson Building**, built in 1930. It was named after Walter Murray Gibson, an excommunicated Mormon from San Francisco, who ended up as advisor, and then later as prime minister to King Kalakaua. Today, the building is home to the Department of Budget and Fiscal Services. [LINK](#) (to hichinatown page)

36 **Hotel Street**: "Hotel" was a euphemism for a "brothel." As such, Hotel Street was the red light district with many "hotels" (also known as "boogie houses") frequented by servicemen during WWII. [LINK](#)

37 **Korea**: Hawai'i played a key role in the Korean War (1950–1953), serving as a major military base and shipping point for troops to Korea. Panmunjom is the village where truce talks were being held, currently a truce village in the DMZ (demilitarized zone) which separates North and South Korea.

37 **daruma doll**: These red dolls are a symbol of good luck and perseverance. They can be seen in many Hawai'i stores today. [LINK](#)

40 **If it were Italians**: The Portuguese worked in the sugarcane fields as lunas, the overseers. They were not considered white by the plantation elite, but were not Asian, and were thus a middleman minority. Today, the Portuguese are not considered “haole” but rather as “portagee.” They have enriched Hawai'i culture by bringing in the cavaquinho, which evolved into the ukulele, and pãõ doce, which evolved into Hawaiian sweet bread, [LINK](#) and, of course, the malasada.

42 **Pali Honpa Hongwanji**, also known as the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin, was a Buddhist temple built in 1918. This distinctive building, a landmark in Hawai'i today, blended Indian elements—representing the roots of Buddhism—with Chinese and Japanese features. [LINK](#)

43 **McKinley**: President William McKinley High School is a high school in central Honolulu. In prewar Hawai'i, it was known as “Tokyo High” for its large numbers of Japanese students. [LINK](#) (to Densho Encyclopedia).

46 **“Tokyo High”**: See **McKinley**.

48 **corpses of old relatives**: In traditional Japanese funerals, it was common to bring a dead relative home and have other relatives spend the night watching over the body.

53 **Hawaii Hochi**: A Japanese language newspaper established in 1912 to serve the Japanese immigrant community in Hawai'i. It covered issues other newspapers ignored, such as labor strikes, American citizenship rights, and restrictions on Japanese language schools. Some of its pages were published in English for *nisei* (second generation) readers unable to read Japanese. [LINK](#)

53 **Star-Bulletin and Advertiser**: The city's two biggest daily newspapers, *The Honolulu Advertiser* was published in the morning and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* in the evening. In 2010, they merged into a single paper, the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*.

54 **Honolulu Record**: This newspaper was established in 1948 by **Koji Ariyoshi** [LINK](#). Ariyoshi was a Japanese-American social activist and *nisei* war veteran interpreter (who met Mao Zedong as part of a wartime mission to China) with backing from the ILWU (International Longshore and Warehouse Union). As labor-focused newspaper, the *Record* presented a leftist critique of the colonial plantation power structure. Copies are online here: [LINK](#)

54 **Ellen Park**: The first wave of Korean immigration started in 1903, when Koreans arrived in Hawai'i to work on pineapple and sugar plantations. By 1905, more than 7,226 Koreans had come to Hawai'i to escape the famines and impending Japanese takeover of Korea. [LINK](#) As of 2015, Koreans made up 1.6 percent of Hawai'i's 1.42 million population. In Honolulu, Korean businesses such as restaurants and supermarkets congregate on Ke'eaumoku Street, making it the unofficial “Kreatown” of Hawai'i.

55 **Hawaii Seven**: In the postwar Red Scare, the FBI arrested seven accused members of the Communist Party. The accused, known as the **Hawaii Seven**, were then tried and convicted for plotting to overthrow the U.S. government under the **Smith Act**, which made it a crime to advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government by force. Among the accused were **Koji Ariyoshi**, founder of the *Honolulu Record*, and **Jack Hall**, the Hawai'i Regional Director of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union. In 1958, the convictions of all seven were overturned when the Supreme Court ruled the Smith Act unconstitutional. [LINK](#)

56 **Punahou**: A private school for haole elites and the high caste Hawaiians who intermarried with them. Thus the reference to sounding like one went to Punahou, i.e., speaking English like a white person.

56 **Farrington**: Governor Wallace Rider Farrington High School, established in 1936, is named after the sixth governor of the Territory of Hawai'i. Located in the Kalihi district, a blue collar area of Honolulu, it is today one of Hawai'i's largest high schools.

58 **Territorial Office Building**, built in 1926, is also called the Kekuanaoa Building after the royal politician Mataio Kekūanāo'a. Kekūanāo'a was a former governor of O'ahu and Kuhina Nui (an office analogous to that of prime minister). It is now home to the Attorney General of Hawai'i and other state offices. [LINK](#)

59 **Kuakini Street** runs from downtown to Liliha Valley. It is part of the blue collar Liliha neighborhood.

59 **Kawaiahao Church** is the oldest church on O'ahu, having been completed in 1842. It is made up of coral blocks mined from the reefs and brought by canoe by Native Hawaiian converts. This was the principal church of the Hawaiian Kingdom where the Hawaiian ali'i were baptized, married, and attended worship services. [LINK](#)

61 **kokeshi doll**: These are Japanese wooden dolls distinguished by a single trunk and head, with their faces and clothing painted on.

62 **The Liberty House** was a department store founded in 1849 as Hackfeld's Dry Goods by the German businessman Heinrich Hackfeld (1816–1888). By 1862, Hackfeld ran H. Hackfeld & Co., one of Hawai'i's biggest business firms. In 1918, at the height of World War I's anti-German sentiment, the U.S. government seized H. Hackfeld & Co. and sold the company to American Factors (Amfac), a consortium that was one of the Big Five. Hackfeld's Dry Goods, the department store, was renamed The Liberty House to hide its German roots. In 1998, Liberty House filed for bankruptcy and later merged with Macy's. [LINK](#)

62 **Royal Hawaiian Hotel** is an iconic pink building on Waikīkī Beach, which dates from 1927. It was home to many famous guests and visitors. See p. 146 in the novel. [LINK](#)

66 **Lau Yee Chai**: Meaning "House of Abundance," this restaurant was built in 1929. It was notable for its elaborate, classical Chinese architecture. In the 1940s and 1950s, Lau Yee Chai was one of

the premier restaurants in Waikīkī and a landmark. The original restaurant was demolished in 1966. It then moved into a shopping plaza in Waikīkī and finally closed in the 2010s. [LINK](#)

67 going to Paris: Even today, it is rare for Hawai'i residents to leave the islands due to the costs and time involved (several hundred dollars and 5 1/2 hours for a one-way trip to Los Angeles, the nearest population center). When they do leave, they will usually visit Las Vegas (1 in 10 Hawai'i residents visit every year), usually to the California Hotel, which caters to Hawai'i tastes. [LINK](#)

69 Navigators Club: This is a *fictitious* club, one based on Hawai'i's elite social clubs that catered mainly to whites and excluded Asians.

70 Billings Trust is *fictitious*, but based on the **Big Five** companies. These companies are Castle & Cooke, Alexander & Baldwin, C. Brewer & Co., American Factors (Amfac), and Theo H. Davies & Co. All fit a pattern—their founders descended from the missionary families or from mainland haole moneymen who married into Hawai'i haole wealth. Some of the Big Five married high caste Hawaiians, giving them access to land and power. The Big Five dominated the sugar industry and politics of Territorial Hawai'i, with the Republican Party as their base, and doled out enough patronage to Hawaiian supporters (who made up the bulk of the electorate until 1954), while using the police and political system to crush striking immigrant workers. The Revolution of 1954 broke their political monopoly, while the decline of sugar broke their economic power. Most of the Big Five companies have been bought out by other companies.

71 Sanford B. Dole: A descendant of the missionaries. He was an advisor to Queen Lili'uokalani. He betrayed her during the American-backed overthrow in 1893 and became the first president of the Republic of Hawaii. After annexation, he became the first governor of the Territory of Hawaii from 1900–1903 and later served as a judge.

71 Billings Trust Building: This building is *fictitious* but is based on the four-story Alexander & Baldwin Building built in 1929. The A&B Building is also significant as an example of architecture that combines Oriental and Western designs, such as circular symbols of good fortune and water buffalo heads. [LINK](#)

71 Washington Place: A historical landmark. It was the former residence of Queen Lili'uokalani. In 1921, it became the residence of the territorial governor. Today it is the residence of the governor of Hawai'i. [LINK](#)

71 kamaaina haole: See Glossary.

71 back in '49: This is a reference to the 171-day dock strike by longshoremen of the ILWU in 1949. The strike was a pivotal event for the growing Hawai'i labor movement. The Big Five-controlled Hawai'i media portrayed this strike as a Communist plot. In response, haole housewives organized counter-pickets. In the end, with supplies running low for the entire Hawai'i population and the Big Five losing money with unsold sugar, the strikers won a wage increase. This victory for the ILWU led to charges of Communism and the House Un-American Activities Committee was sent to Hawai'i in October 1949 to investigate. In 1951, this culminated in the arrest of the Hawaii Seven,

seven prominent leaders in the ILWU and other union reformers, under the Smith Act, which allowed for the arrest of anyone who conspired against the American government through teaching to overthrow it. [LINK](#)

73 **hapa**: See Glossary.

73 **Waipahu**: In 1953, it was a plantation town. Now, it's a bedroom suburban community of Honolulu and home to many immigrants.

81 **soggy wax paper squares**: Manapua has wax paper squares on the bottom to cover up where the meat is inserted. Please remove this square before eating a manapua.

82 **Nuuanu Country Club**: This is a *fictitious* club, but it is representative of the many institutions and clubs that existed in Territorial Hawai'i (and even in statehood Hawai'i until the mid-1960s) that were overtly [off limits to Asians](#).

88 **Kewalo Basin**: Formerly a commercial fishing site, it is now a place for tour boats to pick up tourists to enjoy ocean activities. [LINK](#)

89 **Jerome, Arkansas**: The Jerome Relocation Center in Arkansas was a concentration camp for Japanese-Americans forcibly removed from the West Coast during World War II. The 442nd Regimental Combat Team trained at nearby Camp Shelby, Mississippi, so there were baseball games between the 442nd and teams from the camps. Groups of women at Jerome were also bussed to Camp Shelby to take part in dances with the men of the 442nd. [LINK](#)

89 **tent colony on Sand Island, Moiliili Language School**: Although the vast majority of Japanese-Americans in Hawai'i avoided internment due to the efforts of allies like **Jack Burns**, several thousand language school teachers, Buddhist priests, and fishermen were arrested, put through sham trials, and sent to internment camps on the U.S. mainland on suspicion of being threats to national security. O'ahu also had camps, one was at Sand Island, which sits in Honolulu Harbor, and the other at Honouliuli. These particular events are partly autobiographical: author Scott Kikkawa's hanai great-grandfather, along with glossary author Dr. Jayson Makoto Chun's grandfather, were arrested and sent to internment camps during the war. [LINK](#) [LINK](#)

91 **Democratic Party fundraiser**: This party, long marginalized during the territorial years, became energized with the addition of 442nd veterans and labor union workers.

97 **Primo** was one of Hawai'i's first beers. It was established in 1898 by Honolulu Brewing & Malting Company, discontinued in 1979, and then brought back in 2007 by Pabst Brewing.

97 **pre-harvest burn**: Sugar cane is burned to remove the outer leaves around the stalks before it is harvested. These burns were an annual occurrence, ending in 2016 with the [last sugar cane harvest](#) in Hawai'i.

98 game that was already won or lost hours ago: In the pre-satellite TV days, Hawai'i radio stations, like other U.S. radio stations, would do recreations of baseball games, with the announcer reading off pitch-by-pitch reports, using recorded sound effects like “oooohs,” booing, applause, or cheers. In this way people could listen to “live” games that had finished hours earlier on the continental U.S. Because of the greater time zone difference, baseball recreation continued in Hawai'i well into the 1970s. [LINK](#) [LINK](#)

101 Sternwood's: This is a *fictitious* restaurant based on the real-life Canlis Broiler, established in 1954 (after the events of *Kona Winds*). Canlis Broiler was known for its high-end architectural and interior design and its kimono-clad Japanese waitresses. While the restaurant was razed in 1998, its sister restaurant, Canlis, located in Seattle, Washington, still stands, ranked among America's top restaurants. [LINK](#) [LINK](#)

102 hapa haole: See Glossary.

108 “I'll bet you've acquired some knowledge during your time away.” The 442nd veterans returned as changed men. They had met up with continental Japanese-Americans and shared their experiences. While training at Camp Shelby in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, they experienced racism in the Deep South. In Europe, they were treated as liberators and experienced life in Italy and France without racism. So although this exchange playfully makes light of it, experiences abroad motivated Japanese-Americans to no longer settle for second-class citizenship. [LINK](#)

115 Club Ginza was a club downtown at 1366 College Walk which featured shows from Japan that gave a taste of Tokyo nightlife, with women in kimono or scantily clad. Anecdotal evidence from family members of the glossary author indicate that many young women from Japan danced there as cabaret dancers. [LINK](#)

117 Civic Auditorium opened in 1933 and was demolished in 1974. During its time, it was home to the *Show of Stars*, the Hawaii Chiefs professional basketball team, roller derby, and professional wrestling. [LINK](#)

120 olive drab: In the early 1950s, HPD uniforms were olive drab.

120 Lurline: The *SS Lurline* was a cruise ship that sailed round-trip from California to Honolulu. This first class ship made the crossing in 4 1/2 days, bringing over wealthy passengers. [LINK](#)

121 Louis Armstrong: Little known is that Danny Barcelona (1929–2007), a Filipino-American born in Waipahu, Hawai'i was a jazz drummer who performed with Louis Armstrong's All-Stars.

122 Fort Street Kress: Kress was the name of a national chain of retail department stores, which operated from 1896 to 1981. There was a Kress on Fort Street in downtown Honolulu.

122 cone sushi: Also known as “inari sushi.” This is a simple Japanese snack of vinegared rice put into a sweetened vinegar tofu cone or pouch. [LINK](#)

124 **Heartbreak Ridge**: A bloody battle in the Korean War that lasted from September to October 1951.

124 **five times the casualty rate**: Hawai'i soldiers suffered a disproportionate loss fighting in the Korean War. Three hundred and forty-five Hawai'i soldiers were killed in action, nearly five times the casualty rate of the rest of the United States. [LINK](#)

126 **Danny Boy Cadiz**: This character was loosely inspired by Filipino lawyer and labor activist Pablo Manlapit (1891–1969), who organized Filipino plantation workers in Hawai'i. He was falsely blamed for a 1924 strike in Hanapēpē, Kaua'i Island, that led to the death of 24 people.

130 **Kau Kau Korner**: This was Hawai'i's first drive-in restaurant, established in 1936. It was known for its famous "Crossroads of the Pacific" sign. This 24-hour drive-in was replaced by Coco's Coffee House in 1960. "Kau Kau" is pidgin for "food," "meal," or "to eat."

133 **full of shoes**: In Hawai'i, people of all backgrounds have adopted the Japanese custom of removing shoes before entering a house. So large parties usually have many shoes or slippers clustered around the front entrance.

134 **Millie's photograph**: In Japanese funerals, it is common to have a photograph of the deceased on the altar.

137 **Funeral food**: As this is a Buddhist funeral service, the food served is vegetarian.

142 **Sen-Sen mints**: A licorice breath mint commonly sold in the U.S. Discontinued in 2013.

143 **Samoan**: Samoan immigration to Hawai'i started when hundreds of Samoan converts came to help build The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints temple in Lā'ie in 1919. More Samoans came after the U.S. Navy closed its base in American Samoa in 1951. About 3 percent of Hawai'i's population as of 2010 was Samoan. [LINK](#)

158 **Natatorium**: This is a saltwater swimming pool and memorial built in 1927 by the ocean near Waikīkī to honor Hawai'i's WWI veterans. It was closed to the public in 1979 after falling into disrepair. As of 2020, there is debate as to what to do with it. [LINK](#)

156 **Freitas Meats**: A *fictitious* manufacturer of Portuguese sausage. Brought in by Portuguese immigrants, this sausage has become a staple of Hawai'i breakfasts and is even served in McDonald's with rice and eggs (with soy sauce).

167 **Times Supermarket**: This is a supermarket chain in Hawai'i, founded in 1949 by brothers Albert and Wallace Teruya, the sons of Okinawan immigrants. [LINK](#)

169 **Republican Party patronage system**: The Republican Party gained support from Hawaiian voters, the territory's largest voting bloc, in 1902 when Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana'ole joined the party. With his support, they took control of the legislature from the Native Hawaiian-based Home Rule Party. The Big Five companies favored the Republican Party and Republicans built a patronage system that staffed civil service positions with Hawaiian appointees.

169 **English Standard school**: These were public schools created in 1924 where students had to pass an English test to be admitted, since many non-elite haoles did not want their children associating with Asian plantation children. Those students who could not pass the English test (usually Asian children) were sent to district schools. This system officially ended in 1949. [LINK](#)

169 **baby luaus**: Hawaiians would have a celebration to mark a baby surviving its first year. This was the forerunner of the baby lū'au tradition, which marks a baby's first birthday. [LINK](#)

170 **Kilauea** is the world's most active volcano, located on the island of Hawai'i. Its most current eruption lasted from 1983 and 2018. It is also the home of Pele, the Hawaiian volcano deity, who is still revered and respected by Hawaiians and even non-Hawaiians. [LINK](#)

172 **Papakōlea** is a 27-acre Hawaiian homestead near the entrance to the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. In the late 1800s, many Hawaiians were displaced from their land in the rural parts of O'ahu and they crowded into downtown tenements in search of work. Several of those Hawaiian families moved onto public lands above Punchbowl crater, creating the neighborhood of Papakōlea. The community was later added as a Hawaiian homestead, open to anyone with 50 percent or more Hawaiian ancestry. [LINK](#)

176 **Punchbowl Crater**: This crater is home to the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. In ancient Hawai'i, it was known as "Pūowaina" (Hill of Sacrifice), where Hawaiians offered human sacrifices to gods and the killed violators of the taboos. In 1948, Congress approved funding to bury WWII dead here. In 1949, the cemetery opened to the public. Eventually, over 13,000 World War II dead would be laid to rest here. [LINK](#)

186 **Queen's Hospital**: Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV founded this hospital in 1859 to address the health care needs of the Hawaiian people. The native population went from 300,000 at the time of Kamehameha I to 70,000 in 1855. [LINK](#)

195–196 **Maui the Trickster** is the folk hero and trickster in Polynesian mythology. Tales of Māui's adventures are told throughout most of Polynesia. In Hawaiian mythology, he was known for stealing fire for humans, fishing up the Hawaiian Islands with his magical hook, and capturing the Sun at Haleakalā mountain to lengthen the days. [LINK](#)

197 **Bruyeres**: The Japanese-American 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Infantry Battalion liberated the town of Bruyères, France from the Nazis during World War II in the fall of 1944.

203 **Liliha Bakery**: See **bakery in Liliha**, p. 25

203 **Alfred Apaka** (1919–1960) was an influential Hawaiian musician. During the 1940s, he performed with the Royal Hawaiian Hotel house band and Ray Kenney's band in New York. Overheard by Bob Hope while singing at a lū'au in Honolulu in 1952, Apaka became a regular guest on Hope's radio and television shows before his untimely passing in 1960. [LINK](#)

205 **Blaisdell Hotel**: Opened in downtown Honolulu in 1913, this 3-story hotel boasted 64 rooms, 27 baths, a millinery shop, a grocery store, a barbershop, manicure and hairdressing parlors, a hatter, a tailor, and a telephone in every room. [LINK](#)

207 **King David Kalakaua and Queen Liliuokalani**: See Introductory History section.

212 **The Willows**: This Honolulu restaurant, surrounded by tropical gardens in a residential neighborhood, was established in 1944. It became popular for its American-Hawaiian buffet. The restaurant closed in 2018. [LINK](#)

212 **“Beyond the Reef”** is a famous song written by Canadian Jack Pitman in Hawai‘i in 1948. It was first performed by Hawaiian artist Napua Stevens in 1949. Although it is a song associated with Hawai‘i, it does not contain any Hawaiian language words or any mention of Hawai‘i. [LINK](#)

213 **Belvedere, Italy**: From June to September 1944, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team joined up with the 100th Infantry Battalion and engaged in combat in the town of Belvedere, Italy, against a crack SS motorized battalion. The 100th Battalion earned a Presidential Unit Citation, the highest possible award for a unit, given for acts of heroism against enemy forces. [LINK](#) [LINK](#)

217 **Jack Hall, “Hawaii Seven”**: Jack Hall (1915–1971) was a sailor who helped organize the unions in Hawai‘i. He settled down in the islands in 1935 and began to organize all workers into a multiracial union. He became the ILWU’s Hawai‘i regional director and made the union into a powerful force to challenge the Big Five companies. For organizing the 1949 strike, and for his Communist ties, he was convicted of conspiring to overthrow the U.S. government as a member of the “Hawaii Seven.”

226 **UN and the communists about prisoners of war at Panmunjom**: During negotiations for a cease-fire for the Korean War, prisoners of war became a thorny sticking point and the subject of many negotiations. North Korea and China insisted that their POWs be repatriated, while the United States and South Korea refused on humanitarian grounds. Finally, it was determined to let prisoners of war (POWs) either return or be granted asylum with their captors as long as a neutral UN commission handled the POWs who didn’t want to return. Those negotiations resulted in two massive prisoner exchanges that marked the war’s cease-fire. [LINK](#)

227 **Arakawa Store**: This was a famous local retail store in Waipahu. It was founded in 1909 by Zenpan Arakawa, an issei from Okinawa. It closed in 1995 due to competition from mainland retail chains. [LINK](#)

227 **Filipino village, Japanese village**: Plantation workers were separated into villages. One reason was because it was more comforting for them to be with fellow country people speaking the same language. Secondly, this kept the workers from uniting and striking as a whole.

230 **ti leaves**: Polynesians brought the ti plant to Hawai‘i. It is seen as a sacred plant with the ability to ward off evil spirits.

233 **potato bugs**: Also known as the “roly-poly bug,” these insects are common in Hawai‘i and roll up in a ball when touched.

238 **Democrats are the future**: By 1950, it was obvious that when the second generation of Japanese-Americans came of adulthood, they would make the Japanese the largest voting bloc in Hawai‘i. Since most of them were Democrats, this spelled the future rise of the Democratic Party of Hawai‘i.

243 **Honolulu Stadium:** This was a small wooden stadium in downtown Honolulu from 1926–1976, with a capacity of about 25,000. It was nicknamed “The Termite Palace” for its infestation. It was torn down and the site is now a park. Babe Ruth, Joe DiMaggio, Jesse Owens, and even Elvis Presley played or performed there. [LINK](#)

235 **cockroach:** These are very common in Hawai‘i and some of the bigger varieties can even fly when disturbed. People who fear these insects should not move to Hawai‘i.

258 **Gauguin:** French painter Paul Gauguin moved to Tahiti in the 1890s. He painted scenes of life in Tahiti, especially of the native women in their daily activities.

263 **broom brigades:** These so-called elite haole housewives carried brooms and picketed the ILWU’s headquarters, accusing the union of being a secret Communist group undermining Hawai‘i.

277 **Massie case:** In 1932, Thalia Massie, a white Navy housewife, accused a group of local men of raping her. There were inconsistencies in her testimony and evidence, which led to a hung jury when they were tried. In response, Massie’s husband and mother-in-law lynched a Native Hawaiian who was one of the accused, leading to their trial, in which they were represented by well-known lawyer Clarence Darrow. The case gained national attention and, though found guilty, their sentences were commuted by the territorial governor, under heavy federal pressure.

Glossary of Words Commonly Used in Hawai'i

Aku: Hawaiian for skipjack tuna.

Ali'i: The traditional nobility of the Hawaiian Islands.

Bagoong: A Filipino paste made by salt fermenting fish like shrimp, anchovy, herring, or perch.

Daikon: Japanese white radish commonly used in East Asian cooking.

Diamond Head: A direction indicating "towards Diamond Head Crater," i.e., east. Useless outside of Honolulu. ('Ewa is the opposite direction, toward 'Ewa district, and equally useless outside of Honolulu).

Furikake: A dry Japanese seasoning sprinkled on top of cooked rice, vegetables, and fish.

Furo: A Japanese bath where the user washes outside the tub, and soaks in the clean heated water.

Gau gee: A crispy wonton found at Chinese restaurants.

Haole: Hawaiian term originally meaning "foreigner," but now meaning "white person." Many white visitors, unaccustomed to being labeled as a race, find this term offensive, but by itself is not a racial slur and has no pejorative connotations.

Hapa-haole: A Hawaiian term that refers to a half-white, mixed race person. Due to intermarriage almost all Native Hawaiians today are of mixed blood so the term "hapa" is not as applicable as before. It can also refer to a type of Hawaiian music popular in the U.S. mainland, sung in English and with themes about Hawai'i.

Hashi: Japanese term for chopsticks," usually made of wood.

Haupia: A Hawaiian pudding made of coconut milk, often found at lū'au or Hawaiian food restaurants.

Heiau: Ancient Hawaiian temple built on sacred lands. Please treat these sites with respect.

Hisashiburi: Japanese term for "long time no see."

HPD: Honolulu Police Department, established in 1932.

HUAC: House Un-American Activities Committee, a committee of the House of Representatives that investigated Americans suspected of having Communist ties.

Ilocano: Also spelled Ilokano. A language spoken in the northwestern Philippines. Today, Ilocano is the most common non-English language spoken at home in Hawai'i.

ILWU: International Longshore and Warehouse Union.

Kamaaina: A person born and raised in Hawai'i. Hawaiian, literally, "child of the land."

Kamaaina haole: A haole born and raised in Hawai'i, usually from one of the colonial elite families.

Kanaka: Slang term for "Hawaiian person." From the Hawaiian word "kanaka," meaning "human being," it was used disparagingly to refer to Hawaiian people in colonial times. Currently some Hawaiians refer to themselves as "kānaka maoli," the "indigenous people of the islands."

Ka-san: An affectionate abbreviation for the Japanese term "okaasan," which means "mother."

Kim chee: Korean fermented cabbage, commonly eaten in Hawai'i due to the influence of Korean immigrants.

Koa: A tree endemic to Hawai'i. Koa wood is highly sought after and expensive because of its beautiful appearance.

Kombu maki: Japanese sea kelp rolls cooked in a sweet and salty sauce.

Koolaus: Refers to Ko'olau Range, the Eastern mountain range on O'ahu Island, and the backdrop to Honolulu. See also *Waianae Mountains*.

Kotonk: A pidgin English term used by Hawai'i-born Japanese-Americans to describe continental-born Japanese-Americans, who they saw as acting too haole (white). The term "Buddahead" was used to describe the Hawai'i-born Japanese. These divisions quickly disappeared on the battlefield.

Lanai: Hawaiian term for a porch-like room that has a roofed entrance that makes it possible to enjoy the outdoors year-round. Usually found on houses built in an older architectural style or of those more affluent. [LINK](#)

Limu: Hawaiian term for edible plants living underwater, such as seaweed, or plants living near water, like algae. Used as a garnish in Hawaiian food.

Lo'i patch: Lo'i is a dry or wet farm for *kalo* (taro), the staple of Native Hawaiians.

Luna: Hawaiian term for "overseer," usually Portuguese, who rode on horseback and directed the Asian plantation workers. Often the target of scorn from plantation laborers.

Mahalo: Hawaiian for "thank you." Commonly used in advertisements today.

Makai: Hawaiian term for "towards the ocean." A common way of giving directions in Hawai'i. See also Mauka.

Malasada: Portuguese donut without a hole introduced by Portuguese immigrants. A popular snack in Hawai'i.

Manapua: The Hawai'i version of *char siu bao*, a Chinese BBQ-pork filled bun, introduced by Chinese immigrants. Its name is a shortening of the Hawaiian phrase, *mea ono pua'a*, which means "delicious pork pastry."

Manju: A Japanese steamed confection made of flour dough filled with a sweet bean paste.

Mauka: Hawaiian term for “towards the mountains.” A common way of giving directions in Hawai‘i. See also Makai.

Mochi: Japanese rice cake. A very popular snack in Hawai‘i used in dishes such as ice cream, popcorn, or even fried chicken coating.

Monku: Japanese for “complaining.”

Musubi: Archaic Japanese term for a rice ball with toppings, inside or outside. People in Japan refer to this food as “*onigiri*” today, but Hawai‘i people still say “*musubi*.”

Mynah: Bird native to South Asia. It was introduced to Hawai‘i in 1865 to control an infestation of army worms.

Na‘au: Hawaiian term for “guts.” Hawaiians believed that much of one’s thinking and instincts came from the gut.

Nishime: A traditional Japanese vegetable stew prepared with either pork or chicken.

Oden: A Japanese one-pot dish consisting of ingredients such as boiled eggs, daikon, and processed fish cakes stewed in a light, soy-flavored dashi broth.

Okazuya: Japanese style delis that sell starches like rice or noodles, and side dishes like shoyu hot dogs, sweet potato tempura, pickled cucumber slices, and potato-macaroni salad. [LINK](#) [LINK](#)

Okolehao: Hawaiian alcoholic spirit made from the root of the ti plant.

Ong choy: Cantonese term for “Chinese water spinach,” commonly used in Chinese cooking.

Pake: Hawaiian term for “Chinese.” Also a slang term for someone who is stingy and overly frugal.

Pikake: Hawaiian for the Arabian jasmine, used in leis for its lovely fragrance.

Saimin: A noodle soup dish of multicultural origins common in Hawai‘i, and even sold at McDonald’s. [LINK](#)

Senko: Japanese incense burned at Buddhist altars.

Shibai: Someone who is pretentious or hypocritical. From the Japanese term “*shibai*” meaning “play” or “theater.”

Shikata ga nai: Japanese phrase for “can’t be helped.” A common phrase used when having to deal with unpleasant matters. It has an air of resignation.

Shoyu: Japanese soy sauce.

Tadaima: Japanese phrase meaning “I’m home.” A common greeting when returning home.

To-san: An affectionate abbreviation for the Japanese term “*otousan*,” which means “father.”

Tsukemono: Japanese pickled vegetables. In Hawai'i, it is usually yellowish radishes.

Uhu: Hawaiian parrotfish.

Waianae Mountains: Refers to the Wai'anae Range, the western mountain range on O'ahu island. See also *Koolaus*.

Yukata: A light Japanese cotton robe, worn in the summer during hot weather.

Questions for Discussion

Literary Criticism

1. What elements do you notice this story has of a hard-boiled detective or noir novel?
2. Do you think Francis “Sheik” Yoshikawa fits the usual stereotype for what a detective should be?
3. In what ways is Sheik a heroic knight kind of character? What are some of his key flaws and how do they move the story forward?
4. Sheik feels emotionally conflicted as a survivor of trauma. How are his feelings understandable? How did the events of WWII and postwar Hawai‘i shape him?
5. Why is Sheik so attached to his Cadillac Eldorado? What does it mean to him? Consider “the deal” that traded Japanese-American sacrifice and internment in WWII for a piece of the economic pie in Territorial Hawai‘i. How does he come to terms with this?
6. How is the concept of “kona winds” symbolic of social change that this case alludes to?
7. Why are Ellen and Sheik attracted to each other? How are they similar and how are they different from each other?
8. This book is a work of historical fiction with a careful weaving of narrative and factual research. Did this approach work for you? Provide examples.

Hawai‘i Society and History

1. What did you learn about what was occurring in postwar early 1950s Honolulu? In what way was this society making the transition from colony to state?
2. What characteristics of a colony does the Hawai‘i in the novel have? What characteristics of a U.S. state does it have? Explain how this shows that Hawai‘i is a society in between colony and state. Use a Venn diagram to help you brainstorm ideas.
3. This is a story about the rise of non-white immigrant descendants in a power structure and society that had kept them out. How applicable is this to America today?
4. Sheik is a flawed hero, but also realizes that the supposed Aloha spirit of Territorial Hawai‘i is equally if not more flawed. What does he learn about the political and social power structure of Territorial Hawai‘i?
5. What were the opportunities that women had and did not have in Territorial Hawai‘i? How do the younger women (Ellen Park and also Sheik’s sisters) in *Kona Winds* break with traditional female roles?

6. What is Ellen fighting for? What motivates her in her job as a reporter?
7. Do you believe that Sheik had no other choice than to enlist in the U.S. army? What might you have done in similar circumstances? How does this experience affect him?
8. Sheik encounters difficulties while investigating because of his background. What did you learn about the racial barriers in early 1950s Hawai'i?
9. The Native Hawaiian population was disenfranchised under American rule, but the cultural influences still stayed strong and there were even acts of resistance. In what ways do you see this in the novel?
10. In what ways were postwar Asians and Hawaiians beginning to demand their rights in early 1950s Hawai'i?
11. Labor unions have many negotiating tools in their toolkit beyond the labor strike. Why do you think the Longshoremen's strike was necessary in this case? Were there other less volatile actions they could have taken?
12. In this story ethnicity (or race) and social class intersect. Give two examples of this intersection and explain how this might be related to colonialism.
13. This story tries to show the dark side of 1950s Hawai'i. Describe how this novel asks its readers to recognize the elements of fantasy in their imagination of Hawai'i as paradise.

Writing Assignment (High School Level)

Topic: Exploring Cultures

Kikkawa portrays a postwar early 1950s Honolulu that is woven together with the cultural and ethnic traditions of many peoples. Write about any practice or cultural tradition specific to your cultural or ethnic background that is prominent in your town. Does everyone in your family practice it? Why do you or your family do so? Look it up and see how it has been modified in the United States. If you don't have a practice or cultural tradition, write about practices/traditions that you have encountered or that you have heard about, and the importance or reason for the practice/tradition.

Writing Assignment (College Level)

Topic: Effects of Racism

Detective Francis "Sheik" Yoshikawa notices old men in a booth in a bar: "Japs. Always so quiet in each other's company. Haoles think it's because we're philosophical and mysterious, each one a Zen monk in shirtsleeves."

- What is Sheik saying about the Japanese-American community and how it is perceived by outsiders?
- Why does he use an ethnic slur to describe his own community? What does this tell you about some Japanese-American conflicting views towards their own community?

- What do you think explains the self-loathing that he often feels toward his own race?
- How does this reflect a colonial Hawai'i only a few years removed from an anti-Japan prejudice of prewar and war years?

Writing Assignment (College Level)

Topic: Multicultural Hawai'i

Detective Francis "Sheik" Yoshikawa is from a Japanese-American household, but makes reference to U.S. continental culture, local Hawai'i culture, native Hawaiian culture, and Japanese culture. How does this reflect a multicultural Hawai'i of the 1950s and the complicated history of an overthrown native kingdom and colonial plantation territory (which became a U.S. state only in 1959)?

- How is continental U.S. pop culture, like movies, affecting the local Hawai'i culture?
- How did Sheik's experiences in Europe and France affect him?
- How was he influenced by native Hawaiian, Chinese, Portuguese, and other cultures?
- What are the tensions between the elites and the non-elites?

Writing Assignment (College Level)

Topic: Diversity within the Local Community

Note that *Kona Winds* portrays a range of differences within the communities of Hawai'i and shows the diversity within. How does the author Kikkawa portray generational differences and inter-family dynamics within the Yoshikawa household?

- What are some of the Japanese cultural customs that interested you the most? Have some of them been modified to fit Hawai'i and/or American culture?
- What were some of the observations that Sheik has about these customs?
- How do Sheik's sisters and Ellen navigate the blending of their parents' cultures and that of Hawai'i and America?
- What were the political and ideological differences between members of Sheik's own household?
- What were the different types of people in the Honolulu Police Department? How do Jack and Luau represent the different types of haole (white) who moved to the islands, and their relationship to the people of Hawai'i?

Writing Assignment (College Level)

Topic: Writing Multicultural Literature

The author Kikkawa made the conscientious decision for the characters to not explain local Hawai'i terms. People who lived in Hawai'i a long time would understand, but those outside of Hawai'i will have to deduce the meaning of the terms (or consult the provided glossary). Does this hinder or add to the experience of reading this book?

- Who should the story be aimed at? Does explaining all terms in the story mean the book would no longer be aimed at the local Hawai'i audience, but rather for an outsider by having to explain all details not relevant to the story?

- On the other hand, what about accessibility for those who have never lived in Hawai'i? Is it fair that they cannot fully understand this story without a glossary?
- Do the untranslated words add flavor and convey something of the feel of the author's interpretation of 1950s Hawai'i's culture or does it just serve to detract from the humor, emotion, or drama of the story?
- Is *Kona Winds* a multicultural book or is it an American book?

Writing Assignment (College Level)

Topic: Noir

In what way is Detective Francis "Sheik" Yoshikawa a "noble knight" in the noir tradition of the writer Raymond Chandler? The noble knight, as seen in Raymond Chandler's character Philip Marlowe, is an honest detective full of integrity and honesty living according to a code of ethics in a corrupt world. And he is willing to seek truth in a dark world. And he puts up a tough front, but on the inside he is good and highly sensitive.

Here's a code of ethics for the Noble Knight (<https://www.shmoop.com/study-guides/literature/big-sleep/philip-marlowe>)

- Be loyal to your client, even at the cost of your own personal gain or safety.
- Don't be motivated by money. Accept payment only for a job well done.
- Don't be afraid to break the law if it will serve your client's interests. (The police are as corrupt as criminals, anyway.)
- Never succumb to sexual temptations, even (or especially) when there is a naked woman lying in your bed.
- Carry alcohol in your pocket at all times, and smoke Camels constantly.
- Be a tough guy. Make sarcastic jokes and always be equipped with a good comeback.

Agree or disagree? Apply this to Sheik in *Kona Winds*.



Scott Kikkawa

Scott Kikkawa is a fourth generation Japanese American raised in Hawai'i Kai. Currently a federal law enforcement officer, the New York University alumnus is the author of three noir detective novels set in postwar Honolulu—*Kona Winds*, *Red Dirt*, and *Char Siu*.

He has been honored with an Elliot Cades Award for Literature, and a crime fiction short story of his was selected as one of the “Other Distinguished Stories of 2021” in *The Best American Mystery and Suspense 2022* anthology. He is a columnist and an Associate Editor for *The Hawai'i Review of Books*. His short stories have appeared in six issues of *Bamboo Ridge, Journal of Hawai'i Literature and Arts*.

Kona Winds and *Red Dirt* debuted on the Small Press Distribution fiction bestseller list and were featured in *HONOLULU Magazine's* list of “Essential Hawai'i Books You Should Read.”

Titles in this series from Bamboo Ridge Press:

[*Kona Winds*](#) (2019)

[*Red Dirt*](#) (2021)

[*Char Siu*](#) (Summer 2023)

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