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Mapping Japanese Immigrant Experience: Econarratology in Oswald Andrew Bushnell's *Gannenmono* Duology

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Abstract

This paper explores the narrative technique Oswald Andrew (O.A.) Bushnell employed in his *Gannenmono* duology. The analysis delves into the novel's polyvocal narration and spatiality, which conjures readers' immersion in the Japanese immigrant experience in Hawai'i. An econarratological framework explores the dialogism of narrative voices and spatiality within the historicity of Hawaiian locality. This paradigm problematizes the subjective consciousness in imagining material realities, incorporating Japanese, Hawaiian, and Western/*haoles* perspectives. Throughout the duology, spatiality provides textual cues for the readers as Hawai'i is transformed from an unknown/alien land into an inhabited place. The narrative construction of the *Hamakau* ditch, a symbol of intercultural interaction and the multicultural fabric of Hawai'i, is a pivotal point in this exploration. To concur, Bushnell's polyvocal narration in the *Gannenmono* duology implores readers' immersion through a localized account of the Japanese immigrant historicity and experience in Hawai'i.

Keywords: Diaspora; Eco-narratology; Japanese immigrant experience; Polyvocal narration; Spatiality.

Introduction

Within the broader discourse on diasporic communities, the discussion of the Japanese diaspora often remains sidelined despite its intricate historical evolution and lasting global impact. *Nikkei* is a collective term for individuals of Japanese origin who have permanently relocated abroad, along with their multi-generational descendants, regardless of their current nationality and level of Japanese heritage (Tsuda 2012). With around 3.8 million members in 2017, the Japanese diaspora is a prominent migration worldwide (Manzenreiter 2017). The origin of the Japanese diaspora can be traced to the 16th century as Japanese traders settled in places like China and Southeast Asia. These early communities were limited by an isolation policy in 1629 and controlled emigration under the Shogunate's *Sakoku* (isolation) policy. The Meiji Restoration in 1868 drove many Japanese to seek better lives abroad, particularly in destinations

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like the United States, drawn by opportunities in Hawai'i's sugar industry and California's gold rush (Walker 2015).

The historical significance of the Hawaiian archipelago profoundly influenced the experiences of Japanese immigrants in the United States, known today as Japanese-Americans. The earliest recorded instance of Japanese emigration occurred in 1868 when about 150 Japanese laborers journeyed to Hawai'i -then a sovereign nation- to participate in its sugarcane industry (Kinoshita 2002). By the 1880s, with a general decline in Chinese immigration as a labor source, the Kingdom of Hawai'i sought Japanese immigrants to address workforce demands. This event marked the *Kanyaku-imin* program's inception, which initially brought in around 900 immigrants and surged to over 28,000 within three decades (MacLennan 1997; Menton 1989). Between 1894 and 1900, Hawai'i's transformation into U.S. territory reshaped the Japanese immigrant experience. As sugar plantation contracts ended, many Japanese settled permanently in urban areas such as Honolulu, contributing to the development of a distinct *Nikkei* identity based on generational and birthplace distinctions. By 1920, the *Nikkei* population had burgeoned to 110,000, representing 43% of the territory's total population (Asato 2008, 64). According to a 2010 survey, the *Nikkei* ranked as the third-largest racial group in Hawai'i, totalling 185,502 individuals, making up 14 per cent of the state's total population(State of Hawai'i 2012, 6).

The landscape of Plantation-era Hawai'i diverged significantly from that of the United States, cultivating a distinctive environment for the unique Japanese immigrant experience. The governance on the islands resembled an oligarchy rather than a democracy, where Japanese immigrants struggled with establishing livelihoods in a domain primarily dominated by formidable commercial interests. As Tamura summarizes,

> "this American territory in which the Nisei grew up was dominated by a small minority of haole -European-Americans- who constituted in 1920 only 7.7 per cent of the population. They stood at the top of the socioeconomic pyramid as sugar plantation managers, businessmen, and government officials. Under them was a small but growing middle class, largely *haole* but increasingly non-white, of craftsmen, small-business people, and teachers (2002, 23)."

Within this hierarchy, both on and off the field, the plantation owners wielded significant control over the workers' lives. A rigid hierarchy predicated on national origin characterized plantation life, with differing pay rates for the same work assigned to Japanese, Chinese, and Filipino laborers. At the same time, the positions of authority were reserved for *haoles* (Okamura 2008). Yet, amidst the challenging circumstances of the plantation system, the Hawaiian Islands were a site of unparalleled cultural autonomy for Japanese immigrants. These individuals held a significant presence within Hawai'i as a majority ethnic group, even though they were often positioned in subordinate roles within the workforce (Tamura 2002).

A substantial body of literature and research has delved into the life experiences of individuals of Japanese descent in the United States, encompassing those settled along the West Coast and the Hawaiian archipelago. The enforced internment during World War II significantly shaped the Japanese-American

experience in the Western United States. In Hawai'i, *Nikkei* individuals' literary creativity delves into plantation labor challenges and the identity clash between first-generation (*Issei*) and Japanese born in the USA (*Nisei*) (Naoto 2010; Yamane 1978). The hierarchical structure of plantation society, coupled with limited avenues for social advancement, fuels tension not only between *Issei* and *Nisei* but also between other ethnicities. As Chang expounds,

> "the life of Japanese immigrants in Hawai'i during the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century was equivalent to a history of victimization under the sugarcane plantation. First, the Japanese laborers were treated inhumanely. The planters ordered and imported the Japanese into Hawai'i as suppliers and then worked them "like machines." Then, based on a "divide and control" strategy, the Japanese were pitted against workers of other ethnicities (2004, 157–58)."

The emergence of the Japanese-American experience in Hawai'i coincides with the rise of the local Hawaiian literary tradition in the 1970s and 1980s. The trajectory is exemplified by events like the 1978 Talk Story conference, noted by esteemed scholar Stephen Sumida as pivotal in the creation of a regional literary legacy (1991, 238). Another significant moment was the "Writers of Hawai'i: A Focus on Our Literary Heritage" conference in October 1980, featuring authors such as John Dominis Holt, Aldyth Morris, Maxine Hong Kingston, O.A. Bushnell, and Milton Murayama. Despite challenges like funding constraints and criticism about Bamboo Ridge's focus, the press perseveres, regularly releasing collections (Wilson 2000).

Bushnell's works *The Stone of Kannon* (1979) and its sequel, *The Water of Kane* (1980), intricately delve into the narratives of the *Gannenmono*—the initial Japanese immigrants to Hawai'i (Borecca 2018). *The Stone of Kannon* begins in Edo period during the waning days of the Tokugawa Shogunate and concludes in Wailuku, Maui, where 11 *Gannenmono* individuals establish new lives. Through his fictions, Bushnell acknowledges this historicity of Japanese immigration in Hawai'i as follows:

> "The places, circumstances, attitudes, beliefs, and customs described here were real to Japanese, Hawaiians, and *haoles* in 1868. The sequence of events, from when the First-year Men were recruited in Edo and Yokohama until they were dispersed among the sugarcane plantations of Hawai'i, has not been invented. It follows accounts written by Hilary Conroy, Roy M. Shinsato, and Masaji Marumoto — whose works are available in our public libraries (1979, vii)."

The subsequent work, *the Water of Kane* (1980), set eight years later, follows five of the Gannenmono. They contribute to the construction of the *Hämäkua* irrigation ditch on *Haleakalä's* northern flank, a project overseen by Samuel T. Alexander and Henry Perrine Baldwin, pivotal figures in Hawai'i's history as founders of Alexander & Baldwin, a cornerstone of the Big Five companies.[1] Bushnell, recognized as a "local keed" due to his familial ties to plantation laborers of diverse backgrounds, embodies the dynamic hybrid identity typical of Hawai'i-born children (Young 2001; Luangphinith 2015). The distinction between a "local keed," symbolizing assimilated Hawaiian identity, and identifying as "American" reveals

complex cultural divisions. This theme is echoed in figures like Maxine Hong Kingston, acknowledged as *kama'aina*, "child of the land."

Bushnell's duology offers a compelling lens through which to explore the complexities of portraying the Japanese-American immigrant experience in Hawai'i from the standpoint of a non-Japanese author. Sumida (1991, 235) reveals how "some readers find the narrative awkward, attempting to emulate fluent yet unidiomatic English spoken by a Japanese person." Despite in-depth research, Bushnell avoids adopting the first-person voice of an imagined Japanese narrator. Moreover, his duology is noted with the scant use of pidgin (*Hawai'i Creole English*) by the Japanese characters in his novel, a language symbolizing the unique identity of Japanese immigrants in Hawai'i (Zhang 1999, 31). Navigating the challenge of appropriating voices from diverse ethnic groups and potential resentment, especially from his intended audience, Bushnell echoes figures like Camöens and Holt. He offers his reasoning on the Preface to *the Stone of Kannon :*

> "if you are wondering why a writer who cannot claim a Japanese ancestor is telling this story, the answer is both simple and saddening: no novelist of Japanese ancestry has yet done so. Accordingly, for lack of such a writer, I have decided to tell it myself. Not incidentally, I have written this story as much for *Nisei*, *Sansei*, and *Yonsei*, and goes as for all those other *haoles* of any ethnic group who don't know anything about the Gannenmono or Hawai'i in 1868 (1979)."

Bushnell's *Gannenmono* duology offers different perspective and narrative techniques from Milton Murayama's *All I Asking for Is My Body* (published as a complete novel in 1975). While Murayama's perspective emerges from his Japanese heritage, Bushnell approaches the subject from the standpoint of the 'other' (Naoto 2010, 297–98). Bushnell emphasizes shared aspects and contested areas between Japanese immigrants and their American descendants. This local non-native consciousness of 'Japanese American cultures' seeks to convey a story of dialogue and understanding among various ethnicities in Hawai'i. On the other hand, Murayama's *All I Asking for Is My Body* stands out with its distinctive use of Hawai'i's pidgin and creole lingos, shaping the novel into a distinctively Japanese-American bildungsroman (Luangphinith 2000; Wilson 2008). Murayama adeptly renders both pidgin Japanese and pidgin English, effectively reaching a broad English-speaking audience. Sumida underscores how Murayama's incorporation of childhood perspective and 'talk story' conventions generate "literary forms rooted in the local experience, thereby displacing exoticized and tourist notions of Hawaiian culture and identity (1991, 93)."

In response to prior critiques regarding the authenticity of his representations, an econarratological analysis of Bushnell's works contends that his portrayals are not as contradictory to Murayama's perspective as they may initially appear. Bushnell navigates the Japanese immigrant experience from his outsider viewpoint while simultaneously fostering the immersion of nonlocal readers into a localized world. The econarratological examination of Bushnell's works not only reconciles his outsider perspective with Murayama's insider knowledge but also aligns with the cognitive shift in literary studies, emphasizing reader immersion and active involvement in the narrative. This cognitive turn sees reading

as a process of immersion or transportation from the readers' here and now into particular space-time narrated in the story (Austin 2018). The world-creating power of narratives, which catalyzes an imaginative relocation of readers to new and often unfamiliar worlds and experiences, is conceptualized by James through her econarratological framework (2015, 9–10).

James' reading model, eco-narratology, underscores the importance of building a mental representation of the narrative within the reader's mind. James explores how econarratology examines the storyworld in which readers engage with narratives. Econarratology explores the connection between fictional worlds and the real world, examining how the reading process can enhance awareness of diverse environmental imaginations and experiences. (James and Morel 2018, 13). Storyworld formation involves a dynamic interaction between readers and the narrative's context and environments, highlighting the significance of mental mapping as readers immerse themselves in the narrative world while engaging with the text. Characters/narrators offer textual cues, particularly regarding spatial references, to help readers mentally simulate the narrative worlds and subjective voices. The narrative voice of the narrator or focalizing character enhances reader engagement and immersion in the storyworld, fostering a deeper understanding of the characters and their experiences within the narrative (Indriyanto 2022, 92). Further elaboration about textual cues related to spatiality and narrative voices, encompassing terms such as polyvocality and dialogism will be highlighted in the analysis.

Several studies have been conducted on the study of Bushnell's fiction and other authors who represent the Japanese-American experience in Hawai'i. For instance, a study by Indriyanto focuses on Bushnell's advocacy for close collaboration between white settlers and indigenous Hawaiians (*Kānaka*) to establish a sustainable environmental discourse in his work *Ka'a'awa* (2020, 2). Differently, Naoto (2010, 298) highlights Bushnell's *Gannenmono* duology for its emphasis on the Japanese-American community's creation of a novel worker society that carefully preserves its ethnic and cultural values. Moving into the analysis of Murayama's *All I Am Asking for is My Body*, Indriyanto et al. employ an econarratological framework to scrutinize the spatial representation and homodiegetic narration techniques used in the narration. The finding concludes how the storyworld construction is facilitated through textual cues that immerse readers in the labor-intensive plantation experience and the intricate linguistic landscapes of Hawai'i depicted in the narrative (2023).

Based on reviews, it can be concluded that prior analysis of Bushnell's fiction still does not analyze his *Gannenmono* duology with an econarratological outlook. This study emphasizes how Bushnell's *Gannenmono* duology, employing its third-person narration from the focal perspective of Ishi and other focalizers, immerses readers in a fictionalized representation of Japanese immigrants' experiences in Hawai'i. Moreover, the emphasis is on the spatialization as textual cues as the narrator/focalizers interweaves various localities, mainly Japan and Hawai'i, to enrich the mental navigation of the story.

2. Diverse Voices: Polyvocal Narration of Bushnell Duology

Econarratological reading on Bushnell's duology implores readers to relive narration grounded within the historical circumstances of *Gannenmono* in Hawai'i. This mode of reading explores the

immersing capability of stories in which narrative devices of the narrator/focalizer simulate the social and material condition of the Japanese diasporic experience. These textual cues allow readers to model a fictional mode of narrative which they must emotionally inhabit to understand the narrative. An eco-narratological reading imaginatively transports the reader to an unknown/alien environment, reliving prior experiences as intended by Bushnell when he first published his works in the late 1970s :

> "Most people who live in Hawai'i today know nothing about the circumstances under which, in 1868, the first group of contract laborers from Japan was brought to these islands to work on sugar plantations. And few people today are even vaguely aware of the trials that plantation laborers imported from any foreign country had to endure as they adjusted to the utterly alien environment they found in the Kingdom of Hawai'i (Bushnell 1979, vii)."

In this context, his *Gannenmono* duology distinctly reflects the unique historical backdrop of the late 1970s Hawai'i literary scene, where Bushnell emerges as one of its pioneers. He achieves this by intricately intertwining space and experience within his text, providing readers with a profound sense of immersion into the multi-faceted Japanese immigrant experience from various perspectives. In a sense, both the Japanese characters and the readers are foreigners to Hawai'i. As the narrative unfolds, the Japanese immigrants and, by extension, the readers are familiarized with this previously alien land.

Bushnell's narration employs a third-person heterodiegetic narrative, which shifts from various characters to the omniscient voice of the narrator. While Ishi is the primary focalizer of the duology, this polyvocality allows Bushnell to conjure a "plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousness (Bakhtin 1984, 6)" as he interweaves the narration from various focal angles, perspectives, and ideologies; Japanese immigrants, Native Hawaiians, and white (*haole*) settlers. Bakhtin, drawing inspiration from the musical concept of polyphony, views the novel as a space where multiple voices interact, intertwine, and resonate with one another. Bakhtin challenges the dominance of a single authoritative voice in narratives, celebrating instead the coexistence and interaction of diverse voices. He emphasizes dialogue, negotiation, and mutual understanding as essential components of polyvocal storytelling (Jacobs 2011; Blair et al. 2021). Language and meaning are inherently dialogic, shaped through interaction and exchange. In the novel, this manifests as characters expressing multiple voices and perspectives. As Bakhtin defines, "there is a constant interaction between meanings, all of which have the potential of conditioning others (1981, 426)." Through these polyvocal voices, Bushnell strategically negotiates how his *Gannenmono* duology encourage the immersion of Hawaiian and nonlocal readers unfamiliar with the historicity of this archipelago.

In the *Stone of Kannon*, Bushnell orients readers that the historicity of *Gammenmono* immigrants began in their home country during the Meiji era. This era of unprecedented social mobility is seen from the focal point of Genzo, who later adopted the name Ishi to secure a contract with a sugar plantation in Hawai'i. This event, narrated from the third-person point of view, provides readers with an insight into Genzo's inner turmoil of leaving his homeland behind:

> "During those quiet weeks of the Fourth Month, spring beauties unfolded, one after the ordered other. Genzo could not forget that he was seeing them for the last time. The certainty that soon he would be leaving all this beauty forever often moved him to tears….But when, on the few occasions he was sent from the *yashiki* upon an errand, beyond the jostling cheerful throngs of Edokko, he saw the sick, the dying, the dead, abandoned by the wayside (Bushnell 1979, 69–70)."

From the prior excerpt, Bushnell explores how a third-person point of view can be as immersive as a first-person perspective to evoke *qualia* (what is it like) in the readers' mind. This narrative ability allows the reader to identify with the people, things, and events they encounter in the storyworld (Ryan, Foote, and Azaryahu 2017, 166), primarily through two textual cues. First, Genzo's inner thoughts are effectively narrated through the use of action verbs and adverbs. Secondly, the narrative juxtaposes the natural landscape of Japan with the devastation caused by the Meiji Restoration. These are the mechanisms by which the *Gannenmono* experience is shared with readers via narrative.

The text's polyvocal narration problematizes the subjective consciousness in imagining material realities in which several distinctive narrative voices emerge. This complexity is prominently showcased during the arrival of the *Gannenmono* in Honolulu Harbor, where their entry becomes a point of fascination for both the Hawaiian natives and the white settlers. The narrative highlights the contrast between the outsider/Japanese and insider/Hawaiian perspectives and delves into the intricate perspectives of the white settlers. This event marks the first instance where readers, accustomed to the Japanese perspective, encounter the narrative from different focalizers, expanding their engagement with the polyvocality of Bushnell's narration. At first, from the Japanese perspective the reader experiences their profound sense of inferiority as they perceive the Hawaiians and *haoles* laughing at them:

> "Those people on the pier (Hawaiians and the Whites) are laughing at us for our small bodies and unsightly clothes, they thought, seeing the laughing mouths, the flashing teeth, and the merry dark eyes of the Hawaiians. And they are scorning us for our poverty, they felt, seeing the frows, the tight unsmiling mouths, the calculating eyes of the white men (Bushnell 1979, 227–28)."

Bushnell's use of dialogic narration subverts reader's expectations by shifting perspective to the islanders, challenging their expectations of how Native Hawaiians are portrayed in the narrative. While the Japanese immigrants' narration primarily centers on their feelings of inferiority due to poverty, the shifting perspective of the Hawaiians offers a different interpretation. The Hawaiians convey the profound concept of *aloha*, a sentiment characterized by hospitality, extending to their fellow islanders and all individuals arriving on their archipelago. The Hawaiians express the idea of aloha (caring and hospitality) toward their fellow islanders and all people who come to their archipelago. Trask explores how "*aloha* is a cultural feeling and practice that works among the people and between the people and their land (1993, 141). Moreover, *aloha* is closely associated with *aloha 'āina,* love for the land and a sense of responsibility for caring for land and resources (Gupta 2014, 390). The scene of the laughing Hawaiians subverts readers initial perceptions, articulating the polyvocality of Gannenmono duology.

> "The laughing Hawaiians looked across the narrowing gap at the interesting new people coming. To them, as to their ancestors, this land was generous, and they, as its hosts, offered *aloha* to all people, whether they came from far or near. The islands were big enough for everybody to live comfortably and peacefully (Bushnell 1979, 228)."

The Water of Kane explores the dynamics of Japanese-Hawaiian cultural integration and the impact of Western Christian teachings, immersing readers in another facet of the Japanese diasporic experience. Bushnell's second novel in the *Gannenmono* duology advances the timeline eight years into the future. It depicts Ishi and his fellow Japanese immigrants settled in Maui, where most of them married local Hawaiians, resulting in a generation of half-Japanese/half-Hawaiian descendants. In line with Bakhtin's concept of polyphony where a space where multiple voices interact, intertwine, and resonate with one another, the second part of *Gannenmono* duology explores the hybridity between Japanese/Hawaiian culture and customs. Different from the first part, where the Hawaiians were only introduced in the second part of the story, *the Water of Kane* prominently features Hawaiians and Half-Hawaiians since the beginning of *the Water of Kane.*

By immersing readers in Ishi's perspective, Bushnell highlights the transformation experienced by Japanese immigrants and the areas of contention that arise among themselves, Hawaiians, and *haoles*. The opening of this novel appears to introduce a new protagonist, Iakopu Pohaku. As the narrative unfolds, readers recognize him as Ishi, adopting a Hawaiian surname (*Pohaku* -the Hawaiian word for stone) and a Hawaiian-spelled biblical name, Iakopu (Jakob). As Ishi adapts to his new life in Hawai'i, religion emerges as a focal point of contention, highlighting the struggles of reconciling Japanese heritage with the Westernized Hawaiian paradigm. This conflict is exemplified in the following quote, presented from Ishi's perspective:

> "Earlier in their life together, he had told her something of the little he knew about Nippon's many deities, especially about Kannon, the Goddess of Mercy, who had guided and protected him so well….She was shocked by the great number of gods the Japanese people worshipped. "So heathen!" she gasped, knowing nothing about the pagan history of her grandmothers (Bushnell 1980, 48)

Prior utterance highlights the domination of the Western paradigm, especially Christianity, in Hawai'i. The imposition of the Western education system led to the detachment of indigenous Hawaiians from their ancestral traditions, including their belief in Hawaiian deities and the personification of natural forces (Mitchell 1982; Beckwith 1970). The narrator remarks how Kamamalu "knows nothing about her pagan history" while derogatively accusing Ishi of paganism due to his Buddhist belief. By providing insights into the clash between Japanese heritage and the Westernized Hawaiian paradigm, these cues allow readers to construct a mental model of the cultural dynamics at play. This contested issue further immerses the reader's engagement with the historicity of Japanese immigrants' experience in late 1890's Hawai'i.

The narrative of *The Water of Kane* centers around the construction of the *Hämäkua* ditch and its associated historical circumstances. This project was pioneered by Samuel Alexander and Henry Baldwin, founders of Alexander & Baldwin (A&B) and East Maui Irrigation Company (EMI), which established the *Hämäkua* Ditch Company in 1876 and completed the *Hämäkua* Ditch in 1878. On the East Maui mountains, hundreds of men were employed almost continuously in the construction of 74 miles of canals and ditches, including *Hämäkua*, Haiku, Manuel Luis, Center, Lowrie, Koolau, New Haiku, Kauhikoa, and Wailoa, with labor being the most significant single expense for all the ditches (Wilcox 1996, 50–51).

Despite initial differences and reservations toward Hawaiians and the haoles, the narration delves into how the endeavor of constructing the seventeen-mile-long "Big Ditch" ultimately fosters cross-cultural interactions and mutual dialogues. This impact is achieved through third-person narration that constantly accommodates diverse voices such as Ishi, Henry Perrine Baldwin (Henele Paulina in Hawaiian spelling), Alexander (Alekana), and the omniscient narratorial voice. With this polyvocality, readers transition from the subjective account of the Japanese immigrant voice as experienced by Ishi into a more objective perspective of narratorial authority. The preceding excerpt articulates how the narrator accommodates various perspectives from differing ethnicities in Hawai'i:

> "*Haoles* realized that even they could learn useful skills and interesting thoughts form untraveled Hawaiians or inscrutable Orientals. Thin-skinned Hawaiians and sensitive Japanese discovered that not all *haoles* are as arrogant as plantations *luna* are made to be. A *haole*'s greatest shortcoming was his determination to comprehend no other language than the one he had learned as a child. As usual, Hawaiians, Chinese, Japanese accommodated their minds and tongues to *haole* deficiency (Bushnell 1980, 225)."

The prior excerpt encourages readers to shift from simulating primarily Nikkei experiences in Hawai'i to inhabiting emotionally a more diverse experience of interracial interaction within Hawai'i. Hawai'i as a melting pot of diverse culture is represented by the symbolism of *The Water of Kane* as the water of life and exist for everybody. In Hawaiian mythology, Kane is revered as the father of all living creatures, including the source of fresh water. The water Kane provided feeds the land (*āina*), the ancient *ahupua'a* system of land division, and all within it (Perez 2022). Through the recitation of an ancient Hawaiian chant (*oli*), the narrative highlights how *The Water of Kane* sustains all people in Hawai'i, regardless of their race or social class, by delivering water to once-arid areas of Maui via the *Hämäkua* ditch. The construction of *Hämäkua* ditch, narrated through polyvocal narration symbolizes the cooperation of the diverse ethnicities in Hawai'i as a multi-racial society. Readers are encouraged to shift from a previously dominant Japanese immigrant experience and emotionally immerse themselves within the multi-racial society of the Hawaiian isle, symbolized by the Water of Kane, the water of Life :

> "One question I ask of you
> Whence flow the Water of Kane?
> Deep in the ground, in the gushing spring.
> In the ducts of Kane and Kanaloa.
> A well-spring of water to drink.
> A water of magic power –

> The Water of Life!
> Life ! O give us this life ((Bushnell 1980, 155–56)"

Spatializing Narrative: Navigating *Nikkei* Experience in Japan and Hawai'i

Textual cues related to space or spatiality also play a pivotal role in helping readers navigate the immersive storyworld of Bushnell's duology. Readers must imagine and mentally live in another world with a different set of space-time coordinates and simulate the experiences of an alternative consciousness to understand a story (James 2015, 27). In the *Gannenmono* duology, the concept of spatiality is significant as it involves Japan as the homeland and Hawai'i as the unfamiliar/alien land. As the Japanese immigrants slowly familiarized themselves with their new home, they began to perceive not only the harshness of the plantation labor experience but also the natural beauty of this archipelago with its sacred places. This progress is also extended toward the readers as they mentally construct the storyworld. The narration culminates at the *Hämäkua* ditch as a cross-cultural interaction and site of mediation.

Ryan et al. argue that creating an imaginary world requires three main components: space or setting, time or events, and existents or characters (2017, 61). Additionally, spatial representation is consistently filtered through a subjective consciousness, mediating how space is represented and perceived. Subjective interpretation of space complicates the phenomenological understanding of the relationship between individuals and their environment, referred to as "topophilia" by Tuan. This term encompasses the affective bond between people and their surroundings, creating a sense of place (Tuan and Schoff 1988, 4). Bushnell's duology articulates how the Japanese immigrants' perception shifts from conceptualizing Hawai'i as a foreign/alien space into place. This shift encourages readers' immersion into a localized account of the *Nikkei* diasporic experience in Hawai'i.

In *the Stone of Kannon*, spatial recollection of Japanese experience foregrounds how Japan is culturally constructed as a homeland or home. In transnational and immigrant contexts, 'home' emphasizes attachment to space or place of emotional and spatial connectedness (Hall 1990). Homeland and nations are imagined and socially constructed entities, in line with Anderson's imagined community (1991). Ishi's perspective vividly portrays his emotional attachment to Japan as a homeland, emphasizing the beauty of its natural environment during springtime. The idea of moving to a place without winter/spring concerns him, symbolizing the loss of shared cultural memory connected to Japan as his homeland:

> "Now that he was about to leave it. Nippon had never looked so fair…. the splashed of scarlet, like drops of blood, which are the flower of the boke: he must look his fill upon these now, storing them in his memory, to think about during the years when he could not see them ever again. And frequently, he would wonder what he would find to take their place in a land that knew no winter and therefore could enjoy no spring (Bushnell 1979, 69–70)."

The sentence illustrates how these sights resonated in the Japanese cultural memory, serving as a reminder of their homeland and the idealized image of Hawai'i as a lush paradise. This contrast introduces a tension between the homeland and their place of residence, a common theme in diaspora

literature (Manzenreiter 2017). The narration describes it as “a place called Hawai’i. Green and well-watered. Comfortable to live upon (1979, 46).” Leaving Japan is viewed as a profoundly traumatic experience for *Nikkei*, severing their emotional connections and rooted sense of place within the homeland. This echoes Alghaberi and Mukherjee’s opinion that diaspora trauma evokes loss and mourning, a lived experience of a traumatic event by an individual (2022, 642). This theme is poignantly symbolized in Ishi's narration as he watches his homeland gradually recede into the distance, reflecting the profound emotional trauma of leaving one's homeland. “Ishi would not permit himself to weep. But he was softened by the grief he felt, and the love for this vanishing land that lay in his heart, threatening to choke him with tears (Bushnell 1979, 173).”

The contrasting spatial perceptions of 'imagined' and 'real’ Hawai’i are central themes in Bushnell's duology, offering readers an avenue to navigate the intricate nature of the Japanese immigrant experience. The arrival of the *Gannenmono* is narrated as follows, contrasting between their 'imagined' paradise and the 'real' Hawai’i they encounter:

> “From the *Scioto*’s deck, the people of Nippon looked out upon the promised land. Mingled with relief at having arrived safely came disappointment. The tiny harbor and the shabby waterfront looked like any little fishermen’s village at home. The town itself, the three or four buildings of worth standing above the shacks and the dusty streets, did not appear to be where rich men dwelled or great wealth was stored (Bushnell 1979, 222).”

From the prior passage, the spatialization of Honolulu harbor is filtered through the lingering resentment the Japanese immigrants perceived, as their imagined version of Hawai’i differs from what they experienced. The harbor and the waterfront are seen as “any little fishermen’s village,” while the town is filled with “shacks and the dusty streets.” This spatialization juxtaposes their current place of residing, viewed with resentment and the homeland they left behind.

As the narrative shifts from Honolulu to Maui Island and the labor site in Wailuku, the spatial descriptions immerse readers within the harshness of plantation labor experience. The narrator juxtaposes the dynamic and static spatial properties (Buchholz and Jahn 2005) to encourage this mental modelling of space through the hard labor of clearing the wasteland,

> “Memories may be long, but the walk to the field was short, and labor in it promised to go on forever. The waste land to be cleared was immense, seeming to have no end. It lay across the river from Japanese Camp, beyond the crest of the bank above the mill. It began at the lower edge of Wailuku village and rolled eastward from there to the plain of Kahului. Its southern boundaries lay out of sight, somewhere in the distance toward Kihei (Bushnell 1979, 300–301).”

The narrative dynamically shifts between the spatial properties involving the Japanese laborers walking to the field and toiling there and the static spatial scene observed from bird's-eye view of the wasteland. This transition moves from the ground-level perspective, with the Japanese as the central focus on their journey to the field, to an elevated aerial view that provides a broader perspective of the plantation. This

cartographic representation of space helps to delineate the present situation of the Japanese diaspora in an unfamiliar, alien land.

Benedict Anderson's concept of the imagined community describes nations as socially constructed entities, bound together by shared perceptions and collective imagination (1991, 2000). These imagined communities are not limited to physical boundaries but encompass a sense of belonging that transcends geographic constraints. Sacred places, whether religious sites, natural landmarks, or historical monuments, become imbued with symbolic meaning that reinforces the imagined community's cohesion and identity. The idea of a sacred place provides a shared cultural memory for Japanese/Hawai'i as Ishi navigates the Maui wilderness and performs a pilgrimage. The deification of mountains as sacred space in Japan originated from binary opposition between plains (where people lived) and mountains (untouched/non-activity); the mountain was seen as a space where nature was Other (Grapard 1982, 200). Upon glimpsing the distant isle of Maui from a schooner, Ishi was immediately captivated by the island's wild, untouched side, forging an immediate emotional connection with it:

> "This island was wild, untamed, unspoiled. It was rich in rocks, water, and green glowing things. It was empty of people. It called to him, across the sparkling sea, in beauty and mystery and loneliness. He fell in love with it at sight and knew that he had found his home at last (Bushnell 1979, 254)."

Deification of mountain as sacred place provides a shared sense of belonging of the Japanese diaspora, not only toward their homeland but also in Hawai'i. For the Japanese diaspora in Hawai'i, Maui embodied their idealized image of a lush and well-watered island, aligning with their preconceived notions of Hawai'i. Upon arriving, Ishi's attention is captivated by "three great valleys gouged out of this eastern face the sundered mountain (Haiku) (Bushnell 1979, 271)". Although he initially plans a pilgrimage, a tradition in Japan, the demands of plantation labor delay this sacred journey. Ishi's perspective during the pilgrimage vividly conveys his deep admiration for the awe-inspiring beauty of the valley and his unexpected discovery of an ancient Hawaiian place of worship known as a *heiau*.

> "Thrusting up from the valley's flour rose the most magnificent man-stone he had ever seen. Taller than the height of a hundred men, it stood up, proud and firm, the fertilizing god to this fertile goddess. Ishi sank to his knees before these tremendous symbols of Yo and Yin, the male and female principles, so wondrously conjoined in this silent sacred place (Bushnell 1979, 396–97)."

This spatial scene, viewed and mediated from Ishi's point of view, provides a vivid description of "the most magnificent man-stone." Ishi's perspective allows readers to emotionally connect with his reverence for this sacred site, as symbolized by his act of kneeling in respect. Reader's mental model concerning this spatiality identifies Ishi's reverence toward this sacred place/*wahi pana* (2022) he encounters. It is narrated how Ishi "sank to his knees" as if he was in Japan, and recalling these symbols as "Yo and Yin", or "male and female principles" in Buddhist teaching. His interpretation upon this Hawaiian tradition mediates between Japanese/Hawaiian notion of sacred place,

The majority of *the Water of Kane* focus upon the construction of the *Hämäkua* ditch. The project involves a diverse workforce, including Japanese, Hawaiians, *Haoles*, and other Asian ethnicities such as the Chinese. These labor camps serve as projective locations that closely align with the multicultural experiences of Hawai'i, offering various perspectives and viewpoints. One excerpt from the novel describes the situation of the labor camp by the personification of Hawaiian pantheism:

> "Despite fears openly expressed by Hawaiians, or harbored within by others, the ditch men received no further harm. Neither did the gods go away. Lono's clouds still brought much rain; Kane's water still poured from buried ducts and surface streams; and Pele still expressed anger when the tunnel men disturbed her slumber with their loud explosions (Bushnell 1979, 224)."

In contrast to the previous spatial descriptions, this scene is depicted by an omniscient narrator who vividly underlines various Hawaiian deities embodied in natural forces. This dialogic narrative immerses the reader in the local context of the text, supplanting the *Nikkei* experience with Hawaiian mythology. The narration conveys the idea of harmony, reciprocity, and care, not only within interracial interactions but also between humans and the more-than-human world. While previously, superstitious beliefs prevented the Japanese and Hawaiians from digging the pipe into *Maliko* Gulch, believed to be the "Land of Milu - Lord of the Dead," this stigma is shattered as they learn to respect, rather than fear, nature as the Other. A subsequent passage vividly illustrates the reciprocal relationship between *Hämäkua* workers and *Maliko*, allowing the reader to witness a transformation of space into an inhabited place. In turn, the preceding passage contextualize how Hawai'i is seen as a home, place of belonging not only for the Japanese diaspora but also for all the diverse ethnicities within its archipelago:

> "After this day, no one could believe that *Maliko* was the dwelling place of demons and ghosts…. When the siphon men descended into the forest beside the stream, the peace drove out all lingering fear. Crimson mountain apples clung to the branches and trunks of ohia-ai, waiting to be eaten. The stream gave the men the purest water to drink. And never once was anyone hurt as he worked among the stones and the tree. How. Then, could they remain in fear of such a gentle place? (Bushnell 1980, 415)."

Conclusion

In summary, Bushnell's polyvocal narration in the *Gannenmono* duology immerses readers through a localized account of the Japanese immigrant historicity and experience in Hawaii. The narration allows readers to explore the polyvocality of various ethnicities in Hawai'i and how spatiality transforms Hawai'i from an unfamiliar land into an inhabited, multicultural place. The text's polyvocal narration problematizes the subjective consciousness in imagining material realities, conjuring various voices including Japanese, Hawaiians and *haole* characters. Spatialization as textual cues as the narrator/focalizers interweaves various locality, mainly Japan and Hawai'i, to enrich the mental navigation of the storyworld. The construction of the Hamakau ditch, a symbol of intercultural interaction

and multicultural Hawai'i, becomes a focal point in this narrative, emphasizing the transcendent power of collaboration and reciprocity among diverse communities. In short, *Gannenmono* duology provides an avenue for the reader to construct a multi-layered storyworld mediated through various perspectives within the Hawaiian locality.

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رسم خريطة تجربة المهاجرين اليابانيين :السرديات البيئيّة في(*ثنائيات غانينمونو*) لأوزوالد أندرو بوشنيل

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الملخص

هذه الدراسة تستكشف طريقة السرد التي استخدمها أوزوالد أندرو بوشنيل في ثنائيته غانينمونو. ينشئ تحليل السرد متعدد الأصوات والتخصيص المكاني للرواية على انغماس القارئ في تجربة المهاجرين اليابانيين في هاواي. يضع الإطار السرديات البيئي حوارية الصوت السردي والتخصيص المكاني في سياق منطقة هاواي التاريخية. يشكل هذا النموذج وعيا ذاتيا في تخيل الواقع المادي ويجمع بين وجهات النظر اليابانية وهاواي والغربية. مدة الثنائيات، يوفر التخصيص المكاني على االقارئ أدلة نصية تحول هاواي من أرض أجنبية إلى مكان ذي معنى. يعد البناء السردي من حفر خندق هاماكاو، وهو رمز للتفاعل بين الثقافات والتنوع الثقافي المتعدد في هاواي، نقطة حاسمة في هذا الاستكشاف. والأخير، يتطلب سرد بوشنل متعدد الأصوات في ثنائية غانينمونو دورًا ناشطا في انغماس القارئ من خلال السرد المتضمن في التاريخ وتجربة المهاجرين اليابانيين في هاواي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الشتات، السرديات البيئيّة، تجربة المهاجرين اليابانيين، السرد متعدد الأصوات، التخصيص.

Endnotes

[1] For decades, Hawai'i"s economy was dominated by a handful of companies that controlled the sugar industry and associated businesses. Commonly referred to as the Big Five, four of them had gotten their start during the heyday of the whaling fleet. Most were founded by missionaries, or the sons of missionaries, and even into the 1930s, all had direct descendants of missionaries on their boards of directors. Their economic power translated into political power as well, an intricate cross-pollination between business and politics.

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