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Final Paper

*Symbiosis and the Social Mentor:
A Governance Design for the Hawaiian Archipelago*

“The ahupua‘a was an engineered environment, but in manipulating the earth, Hawaiians found a symbiotic rather than a parasitic relationship.”

Ramsay Taum, founder of Life Enhancement Institute,
quoted in Honolulu Weekly (2007: 19) on incorporating
Hawaiian cultural concepts into today’s society.

Design and comprehension of our current social systems are predominantly rooted in Charles Darwin’s (1809-1882) evolutionary principles of “natural selection”. Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), an English social Darwinist summarized his theories and coined the phrase “survival of the fittest”, a concept that would subsequently dominate the subfield of social evolution. However, paradigms of symbiosis that depict systems of cooperation based on strong reciprocity have gained momentum and today can be seen as a ubiquitous and central aspect of life. Within a symbiotic framework, emphasis is placed on the relationships that define the individual rather than the individual unit. This paradigm has become evident in shifts towards democracy, interreliance, and in the growing emphasis on pluralism, multiculturalism, and particularly ecology. Successions of planning theory have also reinforced this trend towards symbiosis as new roles of the planner have swayed from an expert *Social Engineer* to a transactive *Social Mentor*.

In 1859, Charles Darwin an Englishman published *The Origin of Species*, a culminating experience inspired by observations he made on the Voyage of the Beagle around the globe. Though he was initially met with controversy, Darwin’s concept of “natural selection” due to the competition for survival has today become the ontological foundation upon which one views the way the world works. As competition between individual organisms drives biological evolutionary change through “survival of the fittest”, competition between individuals, groups, or nations drives social evolution in human societies. Application of Darwin’s distinctive ideas from the field of biology into the social realm became known as social Darwinism. Although the term also refers to theories that predate the publication of *The Origin of Species*, it has generally been applied to the claim that Darwin’s theories of evolution by “natural selection” can be used to understand social evolution of a nation or country.

As such, Darwin’s vision assumes that organisms are at war with each other for survival or resources. His theories appear analog with Thomas Hobbes’s (1588-1679) criticism of society in his seminal book *Leviathan*, which arguably has set the agenda for nearly all subsequent Western political philosophy. Hobbes view of society was one of “war of all against all”, which he felt legitimated the need for social contracts and a

sovereign to ensure a peaceful society. Further, as Watkins (1998: 92) demonstrates, it has been put forth that Darwin's theories were greatly influenced by the culture of nineteenth-century capitalism. In particular, those of political economist Thomas Malthus (1766-1834) who speculated that population would increase at a geometric rate and food supply at an arithmetic rate. This in turn would lead to competition for scarce resources, widespread poverty, and starvation. Only to be checked by natural occurrences such as disease, high infant mortality, famine, war or moral restraint. Darwin made known his reference of Malthus's theory of population in the Introduction to *The Origin of Species*:

... the Struggle for Existence amongst all organic beings throughout the world, which inevitably follows from the high geometrical ratio of their increase, will be considered. This is the doctrine of Malthus, applied to the whole animal and vegetable kingdoms. As many more individuals of each species are born than can possibly survive; and as, consequently, there is a frequently recurrent struggle for existence, it follows that any being, if it vary however slightly in any manner profitable to itself, under the complex and sometimes varying conditions of life, will have a better chance of surviving, and thus be naturally selected. (Darwin 1981: 21; cited in Watkins 2001: 92-93)

The extent to which Darwin was influenced by the intellectual zeitgeist of his time I believe is overshadowed to the degree that the notion of "survival of the fittest" has been contemporarily used to legitimate power of some individuals over others and more broadly to vindicate the creed of manifest destiny and racial superiority. Even today, this belief is reinforced and supported in an unbalanced Global World Economy that seeks to permeate all aspects of a global civil society. Wealthier nations extort and exploit the goods and services of poorer nations, and the idea of "survival of the fittest" seems to justify and exonerate wealthier nations from these malevolent behaviors.

It is unfortunate that Darwin's focus on competition allowed him to neglect the existence of cooperation. Perhaps he felt that the antithesis of competition would undermine his entire premise and run counter to the theories of the time. Nevertheless, rather than debating why Darwin failed to explore cooperation, I believe it is more important to look for examples of how a society and the systems thereof could be based on cooperation. Yet to do so would be to commit a fallacy, as the lesser known Prince Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921) would come to discover.

Kropotkin was born in Moscow and a Geographer by discipline. As a result of his research and political thought, Kropotkin became one of Europe's foremost theorist of the Anarchist movement. His views were predominantly based on his observations of animal and human life and were developed in his 1902 book *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*. In contrast to Darwin's attention to competition, Kropotkin expounds upon the value of cooperation or "mutual aid" as an alternative view on animal and human survival. As seen in the quote below, Kropotkin makes the case that cooperation or "mutual aid" is a fundamental aspect of both animal and human social development.

But when we see that in the animal world, progressive development and mutual aid go hand in hand, while the inner struggle within the species is concomitant with retrogressive development; when we notice that with man, even success in struggle and war is proportionate to the development of mutual aid in each of the two conflicting nations, cities, parties, or tribes, and that in the process of evolution war itself (so far as it can go this way) has been made subservient to the ends of progress in mutual aid within

the nation, the city or the clan -- we already obtain a perception of the dominating influence of the mutual-aid factor as an element of progress. (Kropotkin, 1972: 296)

Both Darwin and Kropotkin aimed to develop universal laws about human behavior and their translation into social policy. How then did Darwin conclude that competition was the basis of society and Kropotkin just the opposite? Conceivably, their contrasting views are a result of the differing political and philosophical context in which their research was conducted (Munn-Giddings, 2001: 4). Unlike Darwin who lived in an overpopulated England during the industrial revolution, Kropotkin lived in a hierarchical pre-Revolutionary Russia during the time of an emerging socialist movement. Further, Munn-Giddings (2001: 4) explains that their research on animal life also took place in two distinct settings. Darwin observed a plethora of vibrant animal and plant life in tropical settings where Kropotkin witnessed expansive sparsely populated areas with vast amounts of natural resources and harsh weather conditions. Therefore, it can be acknowledged that two distinct social and natural environments heavily influenced the designs and outcomes of their individual research.

Though Kropotkin's theories faced much criticism and doubt, he is not alone in his view of evolution. Others have also made similar assertions that resonate with mutual aid theory. Of most recent occurrence can be found in the field of biology as notions of interdependence and symbiosis in evolution theory are receiving newfound attention (Fairbairn, 1994: 1204). At the forefront of this endeavor is the research of biologist and University of Massachusetts at Amherst Professor Lynn Margulis. According to Margulis, the major difference between her research and those who support Darwin's approach is that her research stems from cells and microorganisms and the latter comes out of the zoological tradition which only looks at the animal kingdom (Brockman, 1995: 130). However, Margulis does not disregard Darwin's theories. Rather she feels that of the three prerequisites of organic evolution, Darwin's approach is drawn to the interrelationship between *mutations* and environmental *selective pressures* where she and Kropotkin emphasize the value of *faithful reproduction* (Glassman, 2000: 400).

For Margulis, the theory of symbiosis turns the focus away from mutation as the mechanism for survival towards one of cooperation. Symbiosis is about the physical relationships between organisms and how organisms of different species in the same place and time are able to cooperate with each other. She further adds that symbiosis cannot be viewed within the rational cost/benefit paradigm.

The benefit/cost people have perverted the science with invidious economic analogies. The contention is not over modern symbioses, simply the living together of unlike organisms, but over whether "sympyogenesis" — long-term symbioses that lead to new forms of life — has occurred and is still occurring. The importance of sympyogenesis as a major source of evolutionary change is what is debated. I contend that sympyogenesis is the result of long-term living together — staying together, especially involving microbes — and that it's the major evolutionary innovator in all lineages of larger nonbacterial organisms (Margulis in Brockman, 1995: 135)

To summarize, the theory of symbiosis makes two points: 1) Evolution is not always gradual and new species may arise from the emerging of two or more species through cooperation. 2) The focus is no longer on the individual as the unit of "selection," but on the relationships that in fact define the "individual" organism (Watkins, 1998: 87).

Analogous with these newfound insights in biology, social scientists have been spurred to further their understanding of cooperation in social development theory.

Leading this inquiry is Robert Axelrod a political scientist and Professor at the University of Michigan who looked at the evolution of cooperation using game theory (Axelrod, 1984). In his research Axelrod employed the Prisoner's Dilemma, which is a game where participants are allowed to make a choice whether to betray or cooperate with each other, without being able to communicate, and usually play a number of rounds with the same partner. Axelrod was interested in discovering what would be the best strategy to score the most points against all strategies along with exploring under what conditions selfish agents will spontaneously cooperate. To do so, he organized two tournaments and invited fellow scientists to enter computer programs of their own design. They were also allowed to switch to another strategy if they felt one of their neighbors was more successful with a particular strategy. What he found was that the most successful strategy was in fact the simplest as well as the "nicest". Dubbed Tit for Tat, the strategy occurs when in each round of each game with each competitor, they reciprocate what the other had done Tit for Tat on the previous round. The strategy was successful because it began cooperatively and was able to sustain itself because it rewarded cooperation by its partners, yet it retaliated against cheating. Thus, programs scored points by cooperating with other similar programs, while competing programs found themselves in unproductive cycles leading to fewer gains.

In regards to evolutionary theory, Axelrod concluded that cooperative behavior evolved, even in competition with fierce strategies; and that the benefit and success of a small number of cooperators could spread until nearly the whole of a population would cooperate (Fairbairn, 1994: 1212). For Axelrod, Cooperation theory then has three central critical questions (Axelrod, 2000: 6):

- 1) Under what conditions can cooperation emerge and be sustained among actors who are egoists.
- 2) What advice can be offered to a player in a given setting about the best strategy to use.
- 3) What advice can be offered to reformers who want to alter the very terms of interaction so as to promote the emergence of cooperation?

Increasingly, understanding the scale, diversity, and historical dynamics of cooperation has merged empirical and theoretical approaches to address different scenarios that would answer Axelrod's first critical question of cooperative theory (Henrich, 2006: 60). According to West et al. (2006) this development has created a need to address the semantic confusion due to overlapping of terms and definitions found within the literature. Found within their article is a succinct overview to clear up the confusion over terms like kin selection, mutualism, mutual benefit, cooperation, altruism, reciprocal altruism, weak altruism, altruistic punishment, strong reciprocity, group selection and direct fitness. Of these terms perhaps the most enigmatic is that of altruism and its various degrees, due to its uniqueness within humans to go beyond that of genetic relatedness, repeated encounters, and reputation formation (Fehr et al., 2003: 785).

Of its various forms, the cooperative enhancing force of "strong reciprocity" has proved to be the most intriguing. In fact, so intriguing that the major impetus for research

on strong reciprocity has simply been to discover why people behave in such a way. Strong reciprocity is not a pure form of altruism where one acts unconditionally kind without regard to another's behavior, and it is not reciprocal altruism where an individual may sacrifice short-term losses with the expectation of long-term benefits. Strong reciprocity is a willingness to sacrifice resources for rewarding fair and punishing unfair behavior even if this comes at a cost and provides neither present nor future material rewards for the reciprocator (Fehr et al., 2002: 4). Fehr et al. (2002: 23) deduce that strong reciprocity greatly improves norm enforcement and is a powerful constraint for potential cheaters that is able to generate almost complete cooperation in situations in which purely selfish behavior would cause a complete breakdown of cooperation.

Nevertheless, as strong as these sentiments may be, I am sure that the role symbiosis and cooperation play in evolutionary theory will continue to be debated, researched, and criticized within the biology community. To value cooperation, as equal to or even dominant over competition challenges the very core of our current value structures. Therefore, to go beyond the biology community, I believe it is more beneficial to inquire how we are able to actively nurture and maintain relationships based on symbiosis and cooperation with others as well as with our natural and man-made environments. As mentioned in the introduction, successions of planning theory reinforce this convergence towards symbiosis and I believe it can provide a theoretical framework to address such a concern. What then are the connections between planning theory and symbiosis, or as Kisho Kurokawa (1997) a Japanese architect would say, the "philosophy of symbiosis"? And how do these connections allow us to recreate, rethink, and restructure society and the systems thereof?

Whether it is for self-interest, career development, or homegrown social activism; those who engage in planning often do so because of the ability to engender action. Feminist minded planners however would argue that it's more important to focus on the process and the relationships developed in engendering action (Hendler, 2005). Planning theory is therefore of great concern when defining what it is that planners do, in terms of approach, process, and allegiance in addressing a plethora of issues and dynamics of inter-activity within an ever-changing world. According to Sandercock (1992: 2) planning theory has three emphases: First is to describe the best ways to engender action or planning practice. Second is to examine the purpose and role of the planner within the urban political economy. Third is to understand the basic foundations of planning as a human activity that involves the translation of knowledge into action.

The notion of power and how it is enforced and reinforced is a common thread between each emphasis. For some, power is about control, and planning is about systematically controlling the various elements of urban life by a few over the majority (Nunn, 2001). This form of power can be seen as political power and can be broken down into three components: decision-making, agenda setting, and shaping preferences. Shaping preferences is perhaps the most pervasive as Lukes (1974: 24; cited in Richardson, 1996: 9) feels that even in consensual situations, power may still be at work:

...is it not the supreme and most insidious exercise of power to prevent people, to whatever degree, from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cognitions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things...

Such a contemptuous outlook of planning and power can be seen as retaliation of the rational model of planning that attempts to comprehensively overlay a rationalized system over others.

The rational model attempts to be both comprehensive and systematic where the planner is unquestionably seen as the expert. It highlights the scientific aspects of planning while assuming to know what is best for the public interest. Though heavily criticized for its centralized top down approach, the rational model continues to attract planners because its decision guidelines are logical and clear which allows planners to study alternatives and consequences (Sandercock, 1998: 88). Critics of the rational model have taken two approaches, one has been to improve upon or modify the rational approach and the other has been to abandon the model completely. Lindblom (1959) who argued for the former felt that the rational model's comprehensive mindset is unrealistic in dealing with the complexities of an optimum society, rather, planning should be about agreement on goals and focus should be on a short list of serious possibilities. In response, Lindblom called for marginal or incremental change towards previous policy and refers to this as incrementalism or "muddling through". Unfortunately, a serious drawback of incrementalism is that it is not appropriate in situations where decisions are made to move in a new direction or when a new problem arises (Levy, 2000: 351).

Unlike incrementalism that sought to improve the rational model, advocacy planning aimed to confront it. Advocacy planning challenged the oppressive and exclusionary capacity of the rational model's homogenizing tendency to search for "the common good". By rejecting objectivity and science, the advocacy model emerged from a perspective that planning was about politics and a plurality of interests in society (Davidoff, 1965). Davidoff, the founder of advocacy planning envisioned that planners would represent disempowered clients in their attempts to include interests of traditionally underrepresented groups. Despite its good intentions, critics claimed that advocacy planning perpetuates the planner as expert as they plan on "behalf-of" others (Sandercock, 1998: 90). Nonetheless, the advocacy planning model spurred future successions of planning theory geared towards participation, decentralization, and developing shared solutions to planning issues (Lane, 2001: 657).

John Friedmann (1973) for one attempted to further strip planning of its expert role through a planning process of mutual learning dubbed transactive planning. Encouraging of face-to-face dialogue, the focus of transactive planning is to develop a personal relationship with the local community as ideas are validated through action (Friedmann, 1994). This approach to planning came largely out of an acknowledgement of the value of local, or experiential knowledge and the political skills that exist within local communities (Sandercock, 1988: 95). In its extremist form, known as radical planning, loyalties are shifted to the local community rather than the planning profession. Radical planning has been utilized in movements of resistance that represent the struggles between the state and the people to define the meaning of the city and of citizenship (Shatkin, 2002: 301). In this manner, radical planning is predominantly concerned with community empowerment and the process of change to reach political empowerment where the goal is legislative transformation (Rocha, 1997: 39). To be successful takes a critical understanding of power in the planning process and the planner's role in that process.

This was the goal of John Forester's *Planning in the Face of Power* (1988). His interpretations of German philosopher and sociologist Jürgen Habermas's theories of communication offered a new breadth of insight into notions of power and communication with planning theory. Habermas was concerned with notions of the public sphere, which he felt was made up of the "lifeworld" or more popularly known as "civil society", and "systems" which refers to the market economy and the state apparatus (Soules, 2002). Through his theory of communicative action, Habermas felt that the goal of a democratic society should be to decolonize "civil society" from the encroachment of both the state and the market economy (Habermas, 1984). Notions of democracy are therefore maintained through dialogue, and acts of speech, through debate and discussion where reason is born out of inter-subjective communication that recognizes individual actors may be personally, societally, and culturally situated (Soules, 2002; Campbell et al., 2006; Lane, 2001: 662).

As a result, Forester viewed planning as a mode of intervention based on speech acts, on listening and questioning, and learning how to 'shape attention' through organizing cooperation, dialogue, and agreement (Sandercock, 1998: 96). In addition, planners also shape who participates, who receives particular information, as well as shaping the trust and expectations of those involved in the planning process (Forester, 1988: 28). Resulting from the scholarship of Forester and those influenced by his interpretations, there has been an emerging consensus that planning theory has taken a communicative or collaborative turn; and is now the major focus of planning (Allmendinger et al., 2002: 5). This emerging paradigm has made it necessary for planning to accept different ways of knowing and of taking action that arise from differences in lived experiences and collective identities based on a participatory perspective of democracy (Allmendinger et al., 2002). Still, according to Forester, planning theory should do more:

it should address possibilities for still better planning, possible directions for innovative work, avenues toward greater social welfare and lesser exploitation and domination, avenues toward lesser environmental degradation and toward more beautiful human environments (Forester, 2004: 242).

In light of this, I would like to introduce the concept of planner as a *Social Mentor*.

As a student of planning pedagogy, I am a recent recipient of a Master's of Urban and Regional Planning degree from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and am currently a doctoral student of the same program. I had originally enrolled in the master's program because I had some grand notion that it would equip me with the theories, tools, know-how, and experience to make a difference towards a better Hawai'i; and it did. Finding the master's program a success, I subsequently enrolled into the doctoral program for the same reasons. My *aloha 'aina* for *Hawai'i Nei* comes from several driving forces. First, I am an *'Oiwi* or a Native Born that has lived abroad and returned. Second, I am part-Hawaiian and am genealogically and culturally linked to these islands for centuries upon centuries. Third, I am a surfer, and the act of wave sliding binds me physically, spiritually, mentally, as well as culturally to these beloved islands. For these reasons, I sought out planning neither for personal gain nor professional advancement; but to develop into and serve as a *Social Mentor (SM)*.

A *SM* is a transactive radical planner, and in its most ideal form the *SM* is of the community that is seeking social change. A *SM* is a radical planner that strives to decolonize civil society from the state and the market economy. Emphasis is placed on civil society because it is comprised of all members of society, including the *SM* themself. However, unlike Sandercock's observations (1998: 99), the *SM* is not in opposition to the state nor market economy, but rather seeks out the complementary and antagonistic relationships between the three for potential symbiotic social transformations. In order to do so, the *SM* must be concerned with multiple levels of planning in the political arena and therefore should be equipped with various planning theories and methods when engaged with civil society, the state, or the market economy.

The *SM* concedes that at each level of planning, decisions are made on logic as well as emotion, the founding principle of "Heart Politics". The recognition of emotions in the decision making process has been the driving force behind social activist Fran Peavey, a proponent of Heart Politics. In her book, *Heart Politics Revisited* (2000), Peavey draws upon personal experience and explains that Heart Politics is about emphasizing the heart qualities of goodwill, cooperation, and integrity into the decision making process. Rational responses to problems no longer supersede emotional responses, as linkages are sought between the two. Heart Politics is about the exercise of power from a basis of connection with people, and most important, it is about having power with people rather than over people. Consistent with the concept of symbiosis, Heart Politics acknowledges that we are a part of something greater than ourselves and that relationships we are engaged in has value. Thus, the individual is no longer the unit of analysis.

In line with the sentiments of Heart Politics, the *SM* is not a leader, but exhibits leadership. Dator (2006) distinguishes that leadership is a function that often needs to be performed while "leaders" hold formal positions and require followers. Metaphorically then, the *SM* is a canoe steersperson, who had the opportunity and took the time to learn the intricacies of steering a canoe, and will steer to the best of their ability in order to stay on the course charted by the collective, of which the steersperson is included. As a result of the interdependence aboard the canoe, it is necessary for the steersperson to facilitate, mediate, and engage the collective in communicative democracy. Which is a process that emphasizes that individual's notions about political questions often change when they interact with other's ideas and experiences (Young in Wilson et.al., 1995; 140).

To fulfill the role of a good steersperson, it is necessary for the *SM* to focus on empowerment of the collective as well as empowerment of the self. One must be empowered before they can empower others. To obtain self-empowerment as a *SM*, one needs to be reflective on their roles; in order to become heightened to politics and power in decision contexts, and how to appropriately engage in participatory democracy to deal with this (Forester, 1999). Further, Allmendinger et al. contends that:

The individualistic element of planner's reflecting and learning in the face of collective community need or action is perhaps the crucial aspect of the urban planning academy's precarious role in all this. (2002: 19).

Through reflection, the *SM* is forever in a process of learning, growing, and adapting to the needs and desires of civil society, the state, and the market economy. As a result of reflection, the *SM* is a student of engendering action. Thereby separating himself or

herself from the most observant and critical flaneur, or gazer of the urban spectacle. As a student of engendering action, the *SM* is an advocate of Participatory Action Research (PAR). By going beyond data extraction, PAR is not conducted with the hopes that action will follow, but rather, it is action that is researched (Whyte, 1991). Of utmost importance to PAR for any researcher is to build a level of rapport and to connect with the community under study on a personal level. Ideally, research in PAR is by the local people and for the local people, and is consistent with the pursuit of emancipation and equity (McNicoll, 1999: 51).

To conclude, the *SM* is a catalyst for social action. Notions of interdependence require the *SM* to recognize that individuals, communities, and regions are interconnected and affect one another profoundly. Therefore, a prerequisite for success is the fundamental belief that symbiosis and cooperation are the major driving forces of social development rather than “survival of the fittest” and competition. Through this belief, the aim of the *SM* is to go beyond the deconstruction of current social systems and towards a reconstruction of new social systems of interaction and activity based on symbiosis. Thus, the *SM* has become and redefined the role of the post-modern activist as an agent of social change.

On a Governance Design for the Hawaiian Archipelago

In designing an alternative governance for the Hawaiian Archipelago, I am greatly influenced by the discourse and pedagogy of the only two political science classes I’ve taken in my grad school career; *Politics of the Future* and *The Future of Political Systems*, both taught by the enthused Jim Dator. A major theme of discussion was democracy, perhaps the most pervasive element of the American worldview, “for the people, by the people”. Yet I always felt that democracy was bogus, and to impose it on the rest of the world was even more bogus. Nothing made sense, they tell us that we live in a democracy and we determine how our government operates. But how was that happening? Voting, the one definitive act that confirms or reaffirms that we live in a democracy; I’m not so sure. I myself had not voted till I was 27. Even as an “educated” grad student, I had no idea who to vote for. The whole process seemed unsatisfying and in a way made me feel insignificant. Fortunately, as a result of the two political classes I’ve taken, I realized I am not alone. There is a reason I feel this way, and it’s a matter of design. We suffer from an antiquated design whose usefulness is waning, and since governance design is a human invention, we can change it.

A question posed by Dator that triggered much pondering is: Why is participation in the polity voluntary, but participation in the market economy mandatory? To continue this train of thought: Why are we rewarded or compensated for participating in the market economy but not in the polity? Why is it still necessary for politicians to make decisions on behalf of civil society, especially with current advancements in communicative technology? Why do we laud democracy as the foundation of society, yet choose not to exercise it in its true form? As a planner, I chose to look at the role of the planner, specifically the *Social Mentor*, in my governance design to answer these questions and more. However, before I begin, I’d like to give some context on the future of Hawai‘i.

The Hawaiian Archipelago, including the NW Hawaiian islands, can be seen as the most isolated island chain in the world. Coupled with the effects of globalization, Hawai'i is one of the most dependent places in the world on outside resources. Currently, our islands are home to approximately 1.3 million (2005 U.S. Census) people, of which almost 80% live on O'ahu. Not surprisingly though, the outer islands are catching up as large tracts of agricultural land are being developed into residential subdivisions and "gentlemen farms". Just this past year (2006) the Big Island recorded an unprecedented increase in growth. This continued growth scenario, predominantly on behalf of wealthy outsiders is not sustainable. So then why do we continue to allow outsiders to build resorts, golf courses, time-shares, and luxury homes on the most beautiful locations these islands have to offer with minimum returns for the local population? Not to mention the negative impacts on our aging infrastructure (specifically O'ahu), depletion of our natural resources, and the displacement of our local population. As we should be striving for food and energy sovereignty, the common phrase echoed amongst civil society is, "That's just the way it is, what are you going to do about it." I say, "That's not just the way it is, and what are we going to do about it!"

We have the potential to feed ourselves and lower our dependence on outside sources of energy. We still have prime agricultural lands, and parks and residential neighborhoods can be converted to grow food. *Lo'i*, or taro patches can be reopened or made anew and the same can be said for our fishponds. The NW Hawaiian Islands are a coveted fishery that we can depend on once control is returned. We have sun almost every day of the year, yet we currently lack the ability to harness it. The same could be said for the wind and the ocean. Who knows what we could accomplish in restoring our islands with advancements in nano-technology and a stronger presence of Hawaiian cultural beliefs and practices. Perhaps once again, the *mana* or life force will shine from these islands.

My governance design is neither complex nor novel. Rather, it mimics a communitarian experiment on democracy conducted in Los Horcones, Mexico, which continues to this day. As found on their website, the community of Los Horcones "...was founded in 1973 with the objective of seeking an alternative lifestyle based on cooperation, sharing, non-violence, equality and ecological sustainability" (www.loshorcones.org.mx/). By 1982, successions in their governance design lead them to a *Personalized System of Government*, based after a Personalized System of Instruction for individual students (Los Horcones, 1989: 45). Each adult member is allowed to self-appoint and hold a managerial position within one of the areas of organization such as *General Work*, *Health*, and *Economy* to name a few. Managers are referred to as *Coordinators* and are required to teach others their skill. Training or mentoring insures that the community never becomes dependent upon one person (1989: 45). In addition, Los Horcones focuses on a true democracy where (1989: 45-46):

- *All members participate in governmental decision-making*
- *Face-to-face control is encouraged*
- *Governmental matters are discussed in public*
- *Decisions are made by consensus*
- *Long-range problem solving is emphasized*

Implementation of such a design then becomes a matter of scale. Los Horcones is a small community made up of people who self select to be there, where Hawai'i in contrast is a Nation State made up of 1.3 million people. How could such a leap be made? Perhaps a closer look at their initial government design may provide some insight.

Similar to that described in *Walden Two* by J.F. Skinner, the initial governance design of Los Horcones was a planner-manager system (1989: 43). Two planners were appointed to make all the major decisions for the community and they in turn appointed managers for each major area of responsibility. Though the planners had the final authority to make decisions, they always consulted each member of the community before doing so. After a four-year period, they reached a state of cooperation where the planners no longer had complete authority. The system had transformed into something that no longer accurately portrayed the planner-manager governance design. Thereby leading Los Horcones towards the direct democracy design mentioned earlier. As a student of planning pedagogy, my thoughts then were: Is there such a way to blend the two in order to implement this design on a larger scale? What is the role of a planner now that successions of planning theory have dramatically swayed from an all-knowing expert during the time of Skinner towards a transactive *Social Mentor*? What is the role of a *Social Mentor* in direct democracy and the decolonization of civil society?

In my design, I propose an Association of Social Coordinators (ASC), to be comprised of *Social Mentors*. The mission of the ASC is to coordinate between civil society (life-world), the state (implements the rules, regulations, and basic needs and services of civil society), and the market economy (provides goods and services beyond that of the state). The ASC does not hold power. They are not politicians and do not make decisions, set agendas, nor preference shape on behalf of others. Therefore the focus is on civil society and direct democracy, as every individual is a part of civil society. The duty of the ASC is to synthesize the needs and desires of each realm and to enhance decision-making, agenda setting, and preference shaping of civil society through facilitation and mediation of planning dynamics and processes. The major driving force of the ASC is to develop meaningful relationships between individuals, communities, regions, and in order to enhance empathy and critical thinking towards solutions based on cooperation and collaboration.

The rules and regulations that are developed through such a process are adaptable and not blanketed to fit all. They are seen more as guidelines and best practices. Each community, geographically delineated by ahupua'a (land division within a moku), moku (region of an island), and mokupuni (the island), will determine if the best practices are applicable to their community. They have the capability to negate them if they desire but also must respect the best practices of another community. Additionally, each community has the right as well as the responsibility to maintain and share with others their *Kapu* (Sacred/Restricted) and *Noa* (Free/Open) regulations in regards to the natural resources of each community. Of course though, for consistency and collective identity, there are several golden rules that the entire Hawaiian Archipelago must abide by. These golden rules are to be determined by a consensus of civil society, archipelago wide. Not to be entombed in a constitution, they are kept alive in a living document called *Kahikina*; in reference to the east, from where the new day begins, hence the future. In contrast to a constitution, *Kahikina* evolves to meet the needs, desires, and mores of a forever evolving civil society.

So why hasn't this already happened in some shape or form? Especially when there are currently numerous planning firms that engage in such activity. It comes down once again to a matter of design. First of all, we live in a representational democracy that for the most part leaves civil society in a state of helplessness. Secondly, consumerism has created the desire within civil society to accumulate stuff and to "bling bling" over creating a better society. Lastly there are no incentives for civil society to participate in direct democracy. Opportunities such as community meetings are often poorly advertised, considered voluntary, and take place after a long work day when people want to relax and spend time with their family or engage in a recreational/meaningful activity that gives them a "purpose" in life. These three reasons are not the totality of why people do not participate in direct democracy, but I believe they are the three major inhibitors. How then do we create opportunities for civil society to make participation in the polity the "purpose" or at least a fulfilling part of life?

Of the three reasons listed why direct democracy is currently not exercised, my design attempts to only correct the third. Though I believe once direct democracy becomes the norm, representational democracy will seem foolish. I will then address how the ASC can be implemented and why it will be a success as a complementary agency of the current design. However, if we do encounter such a devastating blow as economic collapse, peak oil, or disasters due to global warming, my design has the ability to rise up and self organize in a disciplined rebuilding process towards a transformational society.

As an NGO, the ASC will initially be comprised of one person, myself as a *Social Mentor*. The next step is then to recruit individuals to be civil society participants. My recruiting incentive will be Aloha Hours that reinforces the motto "In Lahui (the collective) we trust". Aloha Hours is a local currency program based after the *Ithaca Hours* model developed in Ithaca, New York by Paul Glover. Glover developed the local currency called Ithaca Hours when he noticed that there were a lot of good ideas being circulated in Ithaca but no funding to implement them (Grossman, 1996: 1). Like Glover's experience, the success of Aloha Hours largely depends on local merchants and vendors willing to accept Aloha Hours as currency (Glover, 2000). Trust then becomes the foundation of Aloha Hours thereby enriching a sense of community. Advantageously, as the amount of Aloha Hours issued increases, acceptance of Aloha Hours then becomes a way to attract customers and increase business. Thus, as circulation of Aloha Hours also increases the more vibrant the local currency becomes (Grossman, 1996).

The ASC will be responsible for the creation and issuing of Aloha Hours. To receive Aloha Hours, civil society participants are required to take place in direct democracy facilitated by the ASC. Each hour of direct democracy translates into one Aloha Hour, equivalent to \$10. The *Social Mentors* are also paid participants at a rate of two Aloha Hours per hour because of their role and services during the meetings. The significance of such a design is to allow people to survive or at least supplement their income from participating in direct democracy. Direct democracy will no longer occur after the workday, but is the workday. In doing so, meetings, speak outs, focus groups, and other forms of direct democracy will be held at convenient times during the week. No more will people have to give up their nights and weekends. Subsequently, as participation increases and communities become empowered, the success of the ASC will

spread into other communities and the need for *Social Mentors* found within the communities will also increase. However, only the ASC can approve a *Social Mentor*, but the communities themselves have the ability to employ a “vote of no confidence” in the *Social Mentor*.

From this new increase in self-reliance, civil society will become hungry for greater control of their lives and demand legislative action for “Democratic Leave.” Analogous to “Sick Leave” and “Vacation Leave”, Democratic Leave is paid leave by employers; no Aloha Hours are issued to those receiving paid Democratic Leave. In addition, employers can also elect to have unpaid Democratic Leave, thereby making Democratic Leave another bargaining chip for employee recruitment. Subsequently, as the cry for Democratic Leave sweeps the islands, politicians and political hierarchies will lose their grasp on how institutions of the state are managed and administered. State institutions that are formed and informed as a result of the direct democratic process will only be concerned with the orders, needs, and desires of civil society. Thus, civil society will govern state institutions rather than institutions governing civil society.

Soon, the search for a “Good Society” rather than a “Just Society” becomes the creed as shifts towards rewarding good behavior rather than the punishment of bad behavior are made. This is not to say that evil acts won’t occur, because they will. The goal however is to increase good behavior thus making it the norm. Good children are recognized as a necessity for a Good Society. The family unit becomes the focus and multigenerational living is rewarded and encouraged. Property tax breaks are given out to multigenerational homes and housing codes are redesigned to better serve these purposes. In addition, maternity leave is extended to a year as oppose to the current three months and is no longer viewed as burden but a prerequisite for good children.

Nonetheless, civil society is well aware that good children and members of a Good Society may do bad things. They are also conscious that incarceration breeds evil acts and does not decrease recidivism. Therefore, the traditional concept of a Pu‘uhonua or spiritual sanctuary is explored on each mukupuni. As a transformational space, individuals are lead through a spiritual healing process while physically working with the ‘aina. In addition, the state no longer has the right to invoke the death penalty or kill “on-behalf” of civil society. In specific situations, to be determined by civil society, if a loss of life occurs within civil society, those who incurred the loss are able to take away the life of the person who committed the loss. If they chose not to return the favor, they have the right to request the person be taken to a Pu‘uhonua.

Further, to ensure the perpetuation of a Good Society, civil society demands that shifts in education take place. No more is the emphasis on the market economy, but rather on civil society and the role of the individual in a Good Society. To function as a *Social Mentor* and to forever rethink, reinvent, recreate, and reconstruct the world in which a Good Society is able to thrive is the focus of education. Skills, interests, and talents applicable to the market economy are the residuals of such a process, rather than the focus.

As mentioned earlier, my governance design is neither complex nor novel. A major assumption though is that as civil society becomes empowered and has a greater opportunity to participate in direct democracy the role of the ASC will spread throughout the archipelago. As a result, representational democracy will seem foolish, and civil society will initiate the necessary transformational changes towards a Good Society.

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