

PACKAGING A CULTURAL LANDSCAPE: A CASE STUDY OF THE  
PAPAHĀNAUMOKUĀKEA WORLD HERITAGE NOMINATION

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ABSTRACT

This thesis research explores the representation, inclusion, and exclusion of Native Hawaiians in the nomination of the Papahānaumokuākea World Heritage Cultural Landscape in Hawai'i, the only cultural landscape and mixed World Heritage site in the United States. Archival research and textual analysis methods are employed in this study to examine how goals of creating the Cultural Landscape category in 1992 are reflected in the nomination documents for this site, thus contributing to discussions of Indigenous rights, the human-environment relationship, and the local-global nexus that characterizes UNESCO World Heritage sites. This study concludes that although many efforts to include Native Hawaiians in the nomination and management of this site are evident in the nomination dossier, pre-existing institutional and management structures focused on natural resource conservation, a value of pristine nature, and representation of Native Hawaiians as a homogeneous group join the NaKoa Ikaika KaLahui Hawaii and Koani Foundation's objection to the site's nomination in challenging the idea that the nomination process was completely inclusive. This research contributes to World Heritage and heritage studies literature as well as geography, exploring the nature-culture relationship and the influence of the Sauerian cultural landscape approach on the textual representation of cultural landscape in the World Heritage context.