

Basic Detail Report



Tereoboo, King of Owyhee, Bringing Presents to Captn. Cook

Date

1784-1786

Primary Maker

Alexander Hogg

Medium

engraving

Description

Cook arrived at Hawaii during the Makahiki festival, a celebration of the harvest to commemorate Lono, the god of rain and fecundity. This coincidence led to a belief that Lono had sent Cook, and the Hawaiians received him accordingly, venerating him as an extremely high status if not semi-divine visitor. Under normal circumstances, warfare and raiding were endemic in Hawaii as four polities, ruled by elite chiefs with absolute power, vied for dominance, with King Kamehameha of the Kona Coast ultimately emerging victorious. Webber sketched the scene depicting the king, Tereoboo (Kalani'opu'u), meeting the ships on January 29, 1779. Kalani'opu'u is seated in the first double canoe with upright lateen sail behind featherwork cloaks that would be gifted to Cook, identifiable by the red and gold watercolor Webber used to highlight his original drawing. The second canoe contained additional gifts of large basketry images and cloth, and the third transported hogs and vegetables. Once on land, Cook participated in ceremonies associated with the festival, and was given a royal cloak, helmet, and flywhisk by Kalani'opu'u. For the European viewer, the Hawaiian belief that Cook was sent by the gods and the subsequent gifting of objects associated with royalty would have strengthened their conceptions of Hawaiian society as a rustic, Arcadian paradise less sophisticated than the contemporary European world. Here, as well, perhaps in deference to the importance of the scene, Hogg has reproduced his version closely to the original.

Dimensions

Sheet: 9 3/4 x 14 3/8 in. (24.8 x 36.5 cm)