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# Eh, You Māhū? An Analysis of American Cultural Imperialism in Hawai'i through the Lens of Gender and Sexuality

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Claremont McKenna College

Eh, You Māhū?

An Analysis of American Cultural Imperialism in Hawai'i through  
the Lens of Gender and Sexuality

Submitted to

Professor Jennifer Taw

by

Kaylilani Minami

For

Senior Thesis

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“We are NOT American.

We will DIE as Hawaiians.

We will NEVER be Americans.”

- *Haunani-Kay Trask*

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For my family and friends who provide me with an abundance of inspiration and love.

For my Papa who taught me the aloha spirit and gave me a Hawaiian heart.

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For my Mom and my siblings, Kealohilani and Kekoakalani, who lift me up.

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For my ‘ohana in future generations.

Mahalo nui loa.

## PREFACE

### *Personal Positionality*

In light of the historical and cultural context this analysis requires, I write as a queer diasporic kānaka maoli cisgender wahine<sup>1</sup>. I do not identify as māhū<sup>2</sup> and my understanding of māhū is based on research accessible from my positionality as a college student in Claremont, California. As an indigenous group, kānaka maoli have a land-based identity and one's connection to the 'āina<sup>3</sup> is personal, spiritual, and cultural. I identify as diasporic because I was born and raised in Southern California and would spend some summers in Lahaina, Hawai'i. My experience gives me a unique connection to the 'āina as a result of settler colonialism that limits my connection to the traditional lands my ancestors are from. Spiritually, I was raised in a Christian household and this shapes my understanding of morality and righteousness. As it relates to this work, I do not have experience with traditional Hawaiian religion and am limited to the knowledge of mythology and cosmology with which I grew up.

My knowledge of Pacific Islander and indigenous cultural beliefs have been gifted to me over time from various people in my life. As such, it is important to

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<sup>1</sup> (n.) - woman

<sup>2</sup> (n.) – homosexual, of either sex; hermaphrodite (Hawaiian Dictionary by Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert, 1971)

<sup>3</sup>(n.) - land; translated as “that which feeds” to define the symbiotic relationship kānaka maoli have with the land. The people take care of the land and the land will take care of them and future generations.

recognize the transference of knowledge in indigenous cultures that varies from a Western approach of accumulating knowledge through books or research. I have gained knowledge from dancing hula in a halau when I was younger, from oral tradition gifted by friends and family members, from kumus<sup>4</sup> who continually guide me in my higher education journey, from mele<sup>5</sup>, and from the youth in the Saturday Tongan Education Program. I highlight my identity to shed light on my positionality in understanding and conveying the following work presented to the reader. In doing so, I ask the reader to take a moment to reflect on their personal positionality in understanding the following work. This requires an honest assessment on the challenges and limitations of one's identity to understand the ways in which our positionality affects the ways in which we are able to receive knowledge.

### *Notes on Language*

This text is written in English and the cultural values embedded in the 'Ōlelo Hawai'i<sup>6</sup> is impossible to fully express without using the native tongue. I acknowledge that the use of English cannot accurately portray the fullness of kānaka maoli culture and recreates colonial constructions of power and restricts access to knowledge. In 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, there is a concept known as kaona<sup>7</sup> that translates loosely into a double or hidden meaning of a word. For this reason, there is cultural knowledge embedded in the

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<sup>4</sup> (n.) - teacher, tutor, model, mentor

<sup>5</sup> (n.) - song

<sup>6</sup> (n.) – Hawaiian language

<sup>7</sup> (n.) - hidden meaning, as in Hawaiian poetry; concealed reference, as to a person, thing or place; words with double meanings that might bring good or bad fortune

Hawaiian language that cannot be translated in this work because it is written in English. This further reduces the ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i to a Western way of understanding given the cultural and spiritual value English is unable to portray. I want to further acknowledge that I do not speak ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and am a native English speaker. As such, this would color my understanding of the research I have come across and the meaning I translate to the reader.

I chose to use kānaka maoli interchangeably with Native Hawaiian(s). The use of kānaka maoli was brought about during the second Hawaiian Renaissance movement in the 1970s and reclaims indigenous self-identification. There are various words in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i incorporated throughout this thesis. The English translations are taken from Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary*, rev. Ed. (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1986). and from my own personal understanding. These translations are written in the footnotes and glossary.

### *Notes on Methodology*

The research for this paper incorporates both Western and indigenous pedagogical models. While Western scholarship places “credibility” on written accounts of history, I acknowledge that collection of this data is Eurocentric and neglects the historical accounts of indigenous peoples. Passing down knowledge in traditional kānaka maoli culture is based on oral tradition such as storytelling, meles, and olis<sup>8</sup>. Over time, the ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i was alphabetized and written that changed the ways in which kānaka

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<sup>8</sup> (n.) - chant that was not danced to, especially with prolonged phrases chanted in one breath, often with a trill at the end of each phrase

maoli transferred knowledge to future generations. However, the value of oratorship remained a primary form of knowledge production.

The research conducted for this paper is based on story-telling by word of mouth, personal accounts conveyed through film, and written works. Indigenous pedagogy also varies from Western pedagogy because there is a different framework in gaining and understanding knowledge. Indigenous understanding acknowledges the spirituality associated with various concepts and that every individual has the different capacity and authority to learn and pass on knowledge. As such, there are various cultural protocols associated with knowledge production in order to maintain the sanctity and righteousness of information. In Western understanding, value is given to ideas that are logical and analytical. It places credibility on the scientific method and those who have academic credibility have the authority to pass on knowledge. There is no cultural protocol to be followed in order to obtain or share this information.

I want to acknowledge that the information obtained for this work has not gone through the formal process of kānaka maoli cultural protocol. As such, this thesis follows a Western-based model of knowledge reproduction and carries information that is accessible to those in Western academic spaces. E kala mai to my lāhui and ohana for the lack of cultural integrity this work has the capacity to evolve into. Given the time frame of this thesis and my capacity as a college student, I acknowledge this thesis is to the best of my capacity for now. There are ways for this thesis to be reproduced to be accessible to a broader audience and to incorporate elements to make it pono. Further research would require collection of oral stories from community members and elders that would

go through cultural protocol.

### *Notes on Historical Understanding*

Many concepts in this work have a contemporary basis of understanding. The historical context of many concepts is inaccessible to contemporary historians - such as us. For example, the concept of māhū has a historical basis that cannot be accessed given its temporality. For us to understand māhū, I use concepts such as gender liminal that came into existence fairly recently. For this reason, our understanding of the past is colored by our temporal understanding of the present. As such, I have written much of this work from a contemporary understanding and can only use my current temporal positionality to translate what structures and concepts I view are at work. I want to acknowledge this as a challenge to our understanding of historical concepts.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The focus of this thesis will be on the mähū<sup>9</sup> identity as an indicator of the changing cultural climate in Hawai'i and evidence of American cultural imperialism. The relationship between gender and culture creates a pathway to analyze societal norms and society as a whole. I chose to analyze the mähū identity specifically because of their positionality as a gender liminal identity. The visibility and status of mähū has changed throughout the history of Hawai'i and will be analyzed in the following chapters. I wanted to explore the ways in which traditional kākāka maoli culture provided a space for mähūs to be celebrated, while contemporary kākāka maoli society creates varying degrees of visibility for mähūs. American settler colonialism and Western foreign influence changed the structure of Hawaiian society and the positionality of mähūs. There are degrees to which kākāka maolis are either complicit in or resistant towards American cultural imperialism throughout history. By magnifying the role of mähūs as an indicator of an evolving kākāka maoli culture, this paper will explore the degrees to which America and the West changed Hawaiian society and culture.

### *Settler Colonialism*

Kākāka maolis are known as an indigenous group to the nation of Hawai'i. To aid in the general understanding of the kākāka maoli identity and its relationship to America,

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<sup>9</sup> (n.) - homosexual, of either sex; hermaphrodite

one can conceptualize kānaka akin to Native Americans from the continental United States. Although different groups experience different forms of genocide and oppression, these indigenous groups have collectively experienced the erasure of settler colonialism. The idea of indigeneity, to begin, is an identification of a group of people who are native to a certain area. Settler colonialism, then, “refers to a history in which settlers drove indigenous populations from the land in order to construct their own ethnic and religious national communities...settlers came not to exploit the indigenous population for economic gain, but rather to remove them from colonial space.”<sup>10</sup> The theory of settler colonialism differs from the idea of “conventional” colonialism because the colonizer eventually departs. Settler colonialism, in contrast, is a continual structural process that relies on erasing the native as a means of justifying the colonizer’s claim to indigenous lands.

The first American missionaries came to Hawai’i in 1820 bringing New England Protestantism and Western ideology. These missionaries were able to settle in Hawai’i as a means to promulgate the Christian religion, fundamentally tied to American governance and society, amongst kānaka maoli. America, fundamentally, should be seen as a settler colonial society because the creation of the nation-state relied on Native American removal and continues to use systemic violence as native erasure. America continues to occupy Hawai’i as a form of settler colonialism and erases the visibility and presence of kānaka maoli in contemporary memory. The ways in which the United States continues to erase the native includes blood quantum laws, land claims, and American citizenship

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<sup>10</sup> Walter L. Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism: A History*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, 4.

through birth. Blood quantum laws include how the United States determines who has a legitimate claim to be considered a “true” kānaka maoli. The Hawaiian Homes Commission act of 1920 was a means to give back the land to kānaka maoli, but in order to be eligible to apply, “you must have a blood quantum of at least 50 percent Hawaiian.”<sup>11</sup> The idea of blood quantum gives the U.S. the ability to determine who has a legitimate claim to being kānaka. In turn, this determines whose oppression is actively recognized in order to be given rights to native land. This effectively erases the genealogical claim and historical violence imposed on those deemed as “illegitimate” kānaka. This is a form of regulating indigenous bodies and maintaining the U.S. empire’s claim to indigenous lands. This actively erases the history of violence the U.S. has inflicted on native peoples and continually keeps native populations at a disadvantage.

Another example of native erasure and settler colonialism is the idea of American citizenship through birth in the United States. If one is born in the U.S., they are automatically determined to be an American citizen. The nation-state depends on a population determined through citizenship and land claims that determine the physical space of the state.<sup>12</sup> By giving claims to citizenship to people who are born in the U.S., this actively gives the U.S. authority to land-based claims to indigenous lands, including Hawai’i. This process creates a national identity around a nation-state that prevents indigenous identities from being recognized for their ancestral land. Indigenous nations are unable to exist because if the nation-state depends on spatial recognition through land

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<sup>11</sup> “Applying for Hawaiian Home Lands”, *Department of Hawaiian Home Lands*, Hawaii.gov, <http://dhhhl.hawaii.gov/applications/applying-for-hawaiian-home-lands/>, accessed April 23, 2017.

<sup>12</sup> George W. White, *Nation, State, and Territory: Origins, Evolutions, and Relationships*, Volume 1, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004.

rights, indigenous communities will not be able to gain legitimacy under American settler colonialism. As such, this posits a problem for indigenous nations to exert their right to self-determination and sovereignty. The erasure of the native is a systemic tool essential to settler colonialism. The ways in which the U.S. continues to subvert kānaka maolis' right to self-determination must be taken into account as a systemic fiber of the United States' existence as a nation.

### *Constructing Gender and Sexuality in Kānaka Maoli and American Culture*

The māhū identity can be understood as gender liminal and encompasses neither a man nor woman identity, but an identity of its own. The notion of liminality was first theorized by Arnold van Gennep and later elaborated by Victor Turner as a means to capture an “intermediate-gender status” or the idea of the “third gender” as introduced by M. Kay Martin and Barbara Voorhees in 1975.<sup>13</sup> Māhū “embodies both masculine and feminine traits found in every one of us.”<sup>14</sup> Traditionally, māhū were respected as caretakers, healers and teachers of ancient traditions.<sup>15</sup> They were responsible for passing down intergenerational knowledge through hula<sup>16</sup>, pule<sup>17</sup>, and oli.<sup>18</sup> According to Hawaiian legend, the first māhū were said to be intersex that came from an unknown

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<sup>13</sup> Evan B. Towle and Lynn M. Morgan, “Romancing the Transgender Native: Rethinking the Use of the “Third Gender” Concept”, *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, Duke University Press, 2002, p. 469-497

<sup>14</sup> *Kumu Hina*, Dir. Dean Hamer and Joe Wilson, 2014. Netflix.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> (n.) - dance

<sup>17</sup> (n.) - pray, prayer

<sup>18</sup> (n.) - chant that was not danced to, especially with prolonged phrases chanted in one breath, often with a trill at the end of each phrase

place and landed in what is now Waikiki. With them, they brought the “Four Wizard Stones of Waikiki” also known as the Pohaku. They are believed to have brought knowledge of healing, the arts, and prayers to Hawai’i. Another mähū origin story tells of La’akapu, the long barren wife of King Kahoukapu, who gives birth to an intersex child, Kauholanuiamahu. Kauholanuiamahu later became the mō’i<sup>19</sup> of Maui.

Mähū, as a gender identity of its own, reflected the aikāne<sup>20</sup>sexual practice in kānaka maoli culture. Most mähū research is on gender liminal men, namely, men who adopt women’s societal norms and mähū’s sexual partners are typically cisgender men. An excerpt from *Female Desires: Same-Sex Relations and Transgender Practices Across Cultures* notes:

...mähū is primarily meaningful as a gender category. As a gender category, it is not tied to sexed-body assignment. Rather, gender and sexed-body status are disaggregated, with gender difference made contingent on gender performance – that is, on behavior. It is, then, the individual’s participation in or practice of particular gendered codes and behaviors that determines her or his inclusion in the gender categories woman, mähū, or man.<sup>21</sup>

This excerpt sheds light on the distinction of biological sex from gender identity and, furthermore, sexual practice from sexual orientation. Contemporary understanding of sexual orientation is based on one’s sexual practices and preferences to identify one’s sexual identity. Sexual orientation encompasses the concepts of heterosexuality or homosexuality, but it is clear that kānaka sexual practices were fluid and did not define

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<sup>19</sup> (n.) - king, sovereign, monarch, majesty, ruler

<sup>20</sup> (n.) – friend, also lover of the same sex

<sup>21</sup> Evelyn Blackwood, “Negotiating Transnational Sexual Economies: Female Mähū and Same Sex Sexuality in ‘Tahiti and Her Islands’”, *Female Desires: Same-sex Relations and Transgender Practices Across Cultures*, p. 237

one's sexual orientation. This is likely because sexual orientation was not a concept in kānaka maoli culture. According to Pukui, "sex itself was not shameful; it was openly discussed and even taught to children by grandparents until well into the twentieth century."<sup>22</sup> The kānaka maoli concept of relationships and sex allowed for aikāne and punalua<sup>23</sup> to exist. Punalua is a form of polyamory that allowed people to have consensual relationships with two or more partners. A child whose mother had relationships with two or more men was known as a po'olua and could claim these men as their father.<sup>24</sup> Since kānaka maoli culture did not have the concept of marriage, aikane practice is known as "safe sex" because it did not threaten one's lineage and could be performed in addition to one's heterosexual relationships. Genealogy is central to kānaka maoli identity and the aikāne practice taught one how to be a lover without endangering one's lineage. Aikāne was common practice among high ranking chiefs who would have sex with their warriors before going into battle as a symbolic gesture of their loyalty.<sup>25</sup> Aikāne also "held special places as close companions to the ruling chief. Those relationships were often homosexual...If the relationship was sexual it was described as "moe aikāne."<sup>26</sup> These relationships affected the ways in which kānaka conceptualized

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<sup>22</sup> Mary Kawena Pukui, E. W. Haertig, and Catherine A. Lee, *Nāna i ke Kumu (Look to the Source)*, Vol. I (Honolulu: Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center, 1972), 75-104.

<sup>23</sup> (n.) - formerly, spouses sharing a spouse, as two husbands of a wife, or two wives of a husband

<sup>24</sup> Michelle Broder Van Dyke, "A Brief History Of Sexual Identity In Hawaii", *Buzzfeed*, [https://www.buzzfeed.com/mbvd/a-brief-history-of-sexual-identity-in-hawaii?utm\\_term=.kmPKjYev8#.rbRAGjO4Z](https://www.buzzfeed.com/mbvd/a-brief-history-of-sexual-identity-in-hawaii?utm_term=.kmPKjYev8#.rbRAGjO4Z), (accessed April 20, 2017).

<sup>25</sup> *Ke Kulana He Mahu*, Dir. Kathryn Xian and Brent Anbe, 2001, DVD.

<sup>26</sup> Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism*, USA: Duke University Press, 2004. 67.

the family structure and child rearing responsibilities. The kānaka maoli cultural gender norms and roles represented a sense of fluidity that reflected human nature. This cultural position vastly differed from the Western construction of gender and sexuality.

### *The Relationship Between Cultural Imperialism and Gender and Sexuality*

Cultural imperialism is defined as “the economic, technological and cultural hegemony of the industrialized nations, which determines the direction of both economic and social progress, defines cultural values, and standardizes the civilization and cultural environment throughout the world.”<sup>27</sup> The understanding of gender, in and of itself, is a Western construction based on a gender binary system that includes the separation of gender and sex. Gender is defined as “socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed.”<sup>28</sup> The gender binary is constructed to create two distinct and separate forms of masculinity and femininity that would classify sex and gender. Since gender is determined by socially constructed characteristics of what is masculine and feminine, each society will differ in its perception of what constitutes masculine or feminine characteristics. Traditional Eurocentric constructions of gender based on Christianity posit men and women to be the only categories of gender and this gender identity would align with one’s sex and sexuality. However, developments in Western understanding of gender identity are starting to challenge the concept of a cisgender binary identity to reflect identities such

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<sup>27</sup> Carola Sandbacka, *Cultural Imperialism and Cultural Identity*, 13-36.

<sup>28</sup> “Gender”, *United Nations World Health Organization*, <http://www.who.int/gender-equity-rights/understanding/gender-definition/en/>

as transgender, agender, gender fluid, and third gender.

Cultural imperialism is related to gender and sexuality because cultural norms and values shape understanding of gender and sexuality itself. Therefore, through settler colonialism, kānaka maoli sense of gender identity and sexuality today is influenced not only by the conceptualization of gender and sexuality as defined by a Western gender binary, but also by the imposition of Western cultural values that determine what is masculine and feminine. Gendering of certain behaviors or characteristics results in a psychological understanding of what is deemed suitable for men and not for women and vice versa, known as gender norms. Gender performance is the analysis of how gender is performance and performative, to understand the ways in which behavior and gender norms help construct conceptualization of gender.<sup>29</sup> Gendered interactions, in this context, refer to how people socially interact across and within gender identities and how these interactions affect the community structure. The presence of cultural imperialism in Hawai'i is evidenced by American influence on gender conceptualization, gender norms, gender performance, and gendered interactions in contemporary kānaka maoli culture that differs from its traditional understanding.

Cultural imperialism is institutionalized in a society through both soft power and hard power tactics. Soft power tactics in Hawai'i include the institutionalization of religion, introducing the English language, and inculcating a sense of what is acceptable public attire. Hard power tactics in Hawai'i include the establishment of Western law,

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<sup>29</sup> Judith Butler theory introduced in 1990 book, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and Subversion of Identity*, that unites concepts of performativity and gender.

militarization of the Hawaiian islands, and adoption of capitalism. These tactics were used to push an American imperialist agenda across the continental U.S. and overseas. These concepts were slowly introduced to Hawai'i starting at the time of the interisland war in the 18th century as Western travellers came to the islands. The effects of American cultural imperialism on kānaka maoli culture will be further analyzed in Chapter 2.

### *Contemporary Understanding of Māhū*

My personal experience in understanding the role of māhū has changed over time. Initially, I was introduced to the idea of māhū as translating loosely to a homosexual. Typically, there were jokes used within my familial circles that would ask the question, “Eh, you māhū?” as a questioning of one’s sexuality. Janet Mock describes her initial understanding of māhū as a means to ask if one is a “sissy” and the insult is thrown at boys to challenge their masculinity.<sup>30</sup> Growing up, I never met anyone who identified as māhū, let alone someone who identifies as transgender. When I got to college, I started to meet transgender people and learn about the differences between gender and sexual orientation. Understanding queerness, transphobia, misogyny, homophobia, and toxic masculinity helped me question māhūs’ negative stigmatization. Contemporary understanding of māhūs is influenced by initial exposure to the concept of māhū. Given that many kānaka maoli have learned to conceptualize māhū as a negative part of our culture, this paper aspires to challenge these assumptions and magnify the visibility of māhū activists like Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu, also known as Kumu Hina. Kumu Hina is

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<sup>30</sup> Janet Mock, *Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love & So Much More*, New York: Atria, 2014, 102.

bringing more visibility for the māhū community and eliminating the stigma of māhūs fueled by systemic forms of discrimination, such as transphobia. Given that traditional kākana culture had a “space in the middle” for māhū to exist, in what ways have Western and American influence created a platform for transphobia, misogyny, toxic masculinity, and homophobia to exist? In what ways do contemporary māhū activists reclaim a space for māhūs to exist in a contemporary kākana maoli culture? These lines of analysis will be further explored in Chapter 4.

## II. AMERICAN CULTURAL IMPERIALISM ON KĀNAKA MAOLI CULTURE

This chapter explores the impact American cultural imperialism had on traditional kānaka maoli culture. This specifically looks at the impact Western foreigners made on Hawai'i and how this created a systemic opportunity to actively oppress the māhū identity.

### *American Influence on Kānaka Societal Structure*

The first American missionaries to arrive in Hawaii were funded by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) originating from Massachusetts. One of the Bible verses propelling the ABCFM mission was Acts 16:9 “And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us.”<sup>31</sup> This bible verse is known as as the “Macedonian call” and is the cornerstone of American exceptionalism. The Macedonian call, like modern day American exceptionalism, requires positioning a group of people who are in need of help and another group of people having god-given or natural authority to provide such relief. In essence, defining these two groups of people as those who are in need and those who provide relief creates a power-based relationship that is legitimized through a god-given or natural-selection based argument. It is this distinction between those who are perceived as calling for help and those who seem

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<sup>31</sup> Sarah Vowell, *Unfamiliar Fishes*, 80.

themselves as being called to help that characterizes the relationship colonizers see themselves as having with the colonized. In Hawai'i, those who are in need of help and are positioned by Americans as the colonized are the kānaka maoli, while those who see themselves as able to provide relief and positioning themselves as the colonizers are the American missionaries. The Macedonian call was the normative foundation for American missionaries to convert and colonize other societies and relied on the assumption that Americans were called to this work because they were fit for this work. This belief is consistent with American cultural identity as far back as the Massachusetts' Bay colonists who proclaimed themselves as a "city upon a hill," a self-image echoed by contemporary understandings of American exceptionalism.

Tools of colonization rely on narratives like the Macedonian Call to justify the violence inflicted on native communities. These narratives are implicit in the heteronormative logic of settler colonialism as it relates to gender. In the words of Andrea Smith:

"Heteropatriarchy is the logic that makes social hierarchy seem natural. Just as the patriarchy rule the family the elites of the nation-state rule their citizens. Consequently, when colonists first came to the Americas, they saw the necessity of instilling patriarchy in Native communities because they realized that Indigenous peoples would not accept colonial domination if their own Indigenous societies were not structured on the basis of social hierarchy. Patriarchy in turns rests on a gender-binary system; hence it is not a coincidence that colonizers also targeted Indigenous peoples who did not fit within this binary model. In addition, gender violence is a primary tool of colonialism and white supremacy. Colonizers did not just kill off Indigenous peoples in this land, but Native massacres were always accompanied by sexual mutilation and rape. As I have argued elsewhere, the goal of colonialism is not just to kill colonized peoples, but to destroy their sense of being people.<sup>32</sup> It is through sexual violence that a

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<sup>32</sup>Andrea Smith, *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*, (Cambridge, MA: South End Press), 2005.

colonizing group attempts to render a colonized people inherently rapable, their land inherently invadable, and their resources inherently extractable.”<sup>33</sup>

The ways in which heteronormativity and patriarchy are relied upon to create a social hierarchy has privileged and continues to privilege cisgendered heterosexual men over other gender identities can be linked through the collective term “heteropatriarchy.”<sup>34</sup>

American society is structured on this social hierarchy while kānaka maoli society, in contrast, relies on egalitarianism and mutual dependence. In Smith’s example, we understand heteropatriarchy and social hierarchy through a structural comparison of the family and the society. In kānaka maoli culture, ohana<sup>35</sup> differs from an American understanding of family because ohana includes not only blood relatives, but also hānai<sup>36</sup> children. Hānai children were informally taken into family structures by others in the community and this commonality reflected a clan-based society that considered child rearing as the responsibility of the entire community rather than based on bloodline.<sup>37</sup> This extends to contemporary relationships in which people refer to each other using titles like “Auntie” and “Uncle” when first meeting a stranger or using “cuz,” “sistah”, or “brah” with peers. Society, too, was structured based on collective responsibility rather

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<sup>33</sup> Andrea Smith, “Queer Theory and Native Studies: The Heteronormativity of Settler Colonialism”, *Queer Indigenous Studies: Critical Interventions in Theory, Politics, and Literature*, The University of Arizona Press, 2011, p. 59.

<sup>34</sup> Coinage of the term heteropatriarchy is accredited to Professor Janice G. Raymond in her 1986 book, *A Passion for Friends: Toward a Philosophy of Female Affection*.

<sup>35</sup> (n.) - family, relative, kin group; related; *Hawaiian Dictionary*

<sup>36</sup> (adj.) - foster child, adopted child

<sup>37</sup> Susan Essoyan, “In Hawaii, hānai helps to fill in for the stork : Some fear a modern culture clash may be endangering the ancient custom of sharing infants from large families with childless couples”, *Los Angeles Times*, 4 January 1993, [http://articles.latimes.com/1993-01-04/news/mn-915\\_1\\_culture-clash](http://articles.latimes.com/1993-01-04/news/mn-915_1_culture-clash)

than power-based hierarchies. The primary social structure can be understood through the relationship between the ali'i<sup>38</sup> and maka'āinana<sup>39</sup>. The ali'i consisted of higher and lesser chiefs throughout the islands and received their position based on ancestry. The ali'i were viewed as an older sibling that took care of the akua<sup>40</sup> and the maka'āinana, while the maka'āinana was the younger sibling who cared for the 'āina<sup>41</sup> that fed the community.<sup>42</sup> The dynamics of the relationship has been interpreted by Western scholars as the origin of a Hawaiian caste system based on genealogy. Although there were social divisions that were upheld through the kapu system, the lower echelons of the ali'i were scarcely distinguished from the maka'āinana<sup>43</sup> and a mutual understanding of reciprocity existed between these two classes. Additionally, the integrity of each role was maintained through one's kuleana<sup>44</sup> to care for each other and failure to respect one's kuleana resulted in the degradation of the society as a whole. The mutual dependency understood from these roles prevented the construction of social hierarchies and functions

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<sup>38</sup> (n.) - chief, chiefess, officer, ruler, monarch, peer, headman, noble, aristocrat, king, queen, commander; chief, govern, reign.

<sup>39</sup> (n.) - commoner, populace, people in general

<sup>40</sup> (n.) - gods

<sup>41</sup> (n.) - land; translated as "that which feeds" to define the symbiotic relationship kānaka maoli have with the land. The people take care of the land and the land will take care of them and future generations.

<sup>42</sup> "Ali'i", *Kumukahi: Living Hawaiian Culture*, Kamehameha Publishing 2017, [http://www.kumukahi.org/units/na\\_kanaka/kaiaulu/alii](http://www.kumukahi.org/units/na_kanaka/kaiaulu/alii)

<sup>43</sup> Caroline Ralston, "Hawaii 1778-1854: Some Aspects of Maka'ainana Response to Rapid Cultural Change", *The Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 19, No. 1, Jan 1984, p.24

<sup>44</sup> (n.) - right, privilege, concern, responsibility

in relation to gender roles expected from wāhine, kāne<sup>45</sup>, and māhū.

The balance between maka‘āinana and ali’i was disrupted with the introduction of the trade for money system brought about by Western foreigners. Traditionally, the ali’i used the kapu system to redistribute goods produced by the maka‘āinana and to maintain ecological balance. The kapu system was a form of regulation that outlined which behaviors were appropriate for the lāhui to do in order to maintain societal balance. The kapu system is known as a traditional kānaka legal system and the ali’i were tasked with determining what areas of the kapu needed to be regulated to ensure the gods were happy. In doing so, the ali’i maintained the ecological balance of the island by determining which areas were to be harvested by the maka‘āinana who were mostly subsistence farmers. The introduction of Western goods offered an opportunity for the ali’i to gain political and economic power by asserting a social hierarchy based on collecting and not redistributing foreign goods. It was noted that the ali’i were able to acquire many of the newly introduced goods by restricting certain bays to solely the ali’i under the kapu system and acquiring most of the traded goods from Westerners.<sup>46</sup> This change in social structure was initiated in 1786, when haoles<sup>47</sup> introduced the idea of trade for money. Silav describes this structural change in the following passage:

“Haole traders wanted sandalwood to sell in China, and the ali’i desired and needed weaponry among other goods, not only for the interisland wars but to defend themselves against the haole. Many ali’i went into debt that could only be paid with sandalwood, and so they ordered the maka‘āinana into the forests to cut

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<sup>45</sup> (n.) - male, husband, man; masculine

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> (n.) - originally, any foreigner; from 19th century on, specifically white foreigner

all the sandalwood trees. This left lo'i (irrigated terraces for taro) and other farms uncultivated and the forests out of balance. Such changes in the plant life left many people starving and weakened. Later on, the institution of taxes to be paid in cash also caused people to be alienated from their ancestral lands, which undoubtedly contributed to the weakening of their bodies, not to mention their spirits."<sup>48</sup>

Another significant societal restructuring occurred in the 1840s, through the introduction of new law codes, a quasi-democratic form of government, and land holding rights between 1845 and 1854.<sup>49</sup> This further caused a separation between the maka'āinana and the 'āina creating a disruption in the balance placed at the core of kānaka societal values. This shift in the traditional structuring of kānaka maoli society reflected Western hierarchal structure that placed the ali'i as the ruling class elites rather than a balance the ali'i were required to maintain between akua<sup>50</sup>, ali'i, 'āina, and maka'āinana. The ali'i started to take on a role that imitated that of the Western ruling class through institutionalized forms of governance under the guidance of Western influences. By shaping Hawaiian society to emulate Western society as a means to assert national legitimacy, the ali'i's roles changed to a hierarchal structure rather than vertically balanced.

### *Social Hierarchies, Conquest, and Dominance*

As noted previously, social hierarchies established through colonization are created through narratives that justify domination. Understanding American cultural imperialism is to understand the underlying structures that uphold American values and

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<sup>48</sup> Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 26.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, 30.

<sup>50</sup> (n.) - gods

survival of the nation state. The creation of the nation state, the United States of America, was born through expansionist policies of conquest that allowed for the literal removal of native populations to justify settler occupation of indigenous lands. Racism and heteropatriarchy are two underlying structures of U.S. cultural imperialism and help to understand the ways in which a social hierarchy functions and regulates its subjects. This particular section will explore the ways in which native bodies are regulated through American narratives as a form of imperialism and cultural imperialism in relation to gender.

As Haunani Kay-Trask notes, “Dominance is the cause and engine of racism. Power over peoples and land and economies. Power to take and consume. Power to define and confine. Power to maintain power.”<sup>51</sup> This correlates with the Macedonian call and American exceptionalism to justify the exertion of power as a means of dominance and conquest. America, even as we know it today, is a white supremacist<sup>52</sup> country. It is a nation founded upon conquest and domination of land, bodies, and cultures. “The sheer normalcy of white dominance underpins the racist assertion that white people and culture are superior, for if they were not how else do we explain their overwhelming dominance in the United States.”<sup>53</sup> This is related to the Macedonian call and American exceptionalism that creates a racial hierarchy to be used in the pursuit of conquest. For this reason, Americans and other Westerners have characterized kānaka

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<sup>51</sup> Haunani Kay Trask, “The Color of Violence”, *Social Justice*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (98), Native Women and State Violence (2004), pp. 11

<sup>52</sup>(n.) - the belief that white people are superior to those of all other races, especially the black race, and should therefore dominate society.

<sup>53</sup> Andrew Hacker, *Two Nations: Black and White, Separate, Hostile, Unequal*, New York: Ballantine. 1992

maoli and other indigenous peoples as savages who lack civilization and are, by default, subordinate to white Westerners.

An example of American justification for usurping the sovereignty of indigenous nations is evident in the *Johnson v. McIntosh* (1823) ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court. In this decision, Chief Justice Marshall declared, that “the character and religion of [America’s] inhabitants afforded an apology for considering them as a people over whom the superior genius of Europe might claim an ascendancy.”<sup>54</sup> In setting such legal precedent, Chief Justice Marshall legitimized future American jurisdiction that would infringe on the sovereignty of native peoples on the basis of biological superiority, also known as white supremacy.

Indigenous people were characterized as sub-humans, or native “savages” in need of salvation and civilization, as part of the American belief in “native dependency,” related to the concept of the white man’s burden. The “assumption that Native peoples are violent is a related notion that Native peoples are not prone to peace, rationality or the fair resolution of disputes,”<sup>55</sup> thus determining that Native people are unfit to rule themselves. Native people’s perceived incapacity for self-governance was used to justify the often violent American takeover of land and culture inherent in settler colonialism. Winthrop D. Jordan in *The White Man’s Burden: Historical Origins of Racism in the*

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<sup>54</sup>Justin D. Levinson, Robert J. Smith, *Implicit Racial Bias Across the Law*, Cambridge University Press, 2012. p.219.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

*United States*, explained how “the condition of savagery - the failure to be civilized”<sup>56</sup> was used to describe Native Americans of the continental United States. Savagery is a multiplicity of characteristics that distinguish the native from the European American and, as a concept, is foundational to white supremacy. The relation of white supremacy to the white man’s burden is akin to the Macedonian Call and Manifest Destiny. Both concepts are linked to settler colonialism to justify the erasure of indigenous populations under the guise of civilization.

In particular, American missionaries described kānaka maoli as “having an appearance of half-human and half-beast...form[ing] a link in creation...connecting man with the brute”<sup>57</sup> These descriptors not only queer the natives as being unnatural or unruly, but also in need of domination by white Americans, who have the perceived authority, right, and responsibility to do so. Racial hierarchies are established in a white supremacist society that privileges white people over other races and is enforced through violence, such as the introduction of disease and mass death.

### *Systemic Violence Towards Kānaka Maoli*

Kānaka maoli account of foreigners arriving to the island can be traced before Captain Cook’s arrival in 1778. Typically, Cook’s arrival in Hawai’i is noted as the first foreigner to visit the Hawaiian islands, but this account is from the British worldview that is Eurocentric by nature. History books still claim that Captain Cook “discovered” the

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<sup>56</sup> Winthrop D. Jordan, *The White Man’s Burden: Historical Origins of Racism in the United States*, Oxford University Press, January 24, 1974, p.13.

<sup>57</sup>, Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires: Pehea Lā e Pono Ai? How Shall We Live in Harmony?*, 1992, p.139.

Hawaiian islands, which is an elitist, ignorant, and pompous assertion given that Captain Cook did not “discover” Hawaii. Captain Cook was, however, the first haole to visit the Hawaiian islands as noted by Samuel Manaiakalani Kamakau, a kānaka who wrote the longest account of Cook in Hawaiian in 1866-1867.<sup>58</sup> From the first day Cook arrived in Hawaii, he shot and killed the warrior, Kapupu’u, who began to take iron pieces from Cook’s ship. Later that night, he “made a display of firepower, shooting guns, cannons, and fireworks intended to frighten and intimidate the ‘Ōiwi<sup>59</sup>.”<sup>60</sup> This was not the first incidence of Captain Cook’s act of aggression towards kānaka. He attempted to take Mō’i Kalani’ōpu’u hostage as he had done in the past to subjugate native populations. It is noted that these acts were not pono and evidence of his attitude of superiority. As a result, the ali’i decided to kill Cook as a form of retaliation. Subsequent haole travelers brought the violence of colonization that the kānaka continued to oppose. This includes the killing of several hundred kānaka by Captain Simon Metcalf during the Olowalu massacre in 1794. Another British visitor includes Captain Vancouver who claimed the islands for Great Britain and brought British flora and fauna that upset Hawai’i’s ecological balance.<sup>61</sup> These forms of colonial violence required active resistance in the form of war by kānaka to prevent their subjugation.

Kamakau’s account of Captain Cook’s visit was a summary of the violence brought about by haole foreigners when they arrived in Hawaii. The following passage

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<sup>58</sup> Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 16-18.

<sup>59</sup> (n.) - “of the bone”; essentially referring to kānaka maoli

<sup>60</sup> Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 21.

<sup>61</sup> Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 24.

sheds light on this violence:

“The fruits and the seeds that his [Cook’s] actions planted sprouted and grew, and became trees that spread to devastate the people of these islands.

1. Gonorrhea together with syphilis.
2. Prostitution.
3. The false idea that he was a god and worshipped.
4. Fleas and mosquitoes.
5. The spread of epidemic diseases.
6. Change in the air we breathe.
7. Weakening of our bodies.
8. Changes in plant life.
9. Change in the religions, put together with pagan religions.
10. Change in medical practice.
11. Laws in government.”<sup>62</sup>

These effects changed the Hawaiian way of life and the lāhui needed to adjust their ways of being to accommodate these changes. The biggest form of violence resulting from these changes was mass death that resulted in the reduction of population. The first epidemic was called ma’iōku’u<sup>63</sup> and was followed forty years later by epidemics of measles, whooping cough, and influenza.<sup>64</sup> “Conservative estimates of Hawai’i’s population in 1778 range from 400,000 to 1,000,000; just forty-five years later that number was reduced to about 135,000.”<sup>65</sup> The effects of mass death on the kānaka extend to their psyche and are akin to the genocidal accounts of Native Americans at the hands of American settler colonialism. The kānaka experienced a great loss that resulted in the questioning of their way of life that allowed for American cultural imperialism to pervade its way into kānaka culture. Not only did the lāhui suffer a tremendous loss based on their

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<sup>62</sup>Kamakau, *Ke Kumu Aupuni*, 57 (translation by Noenoe K. Silva).

<sup>63</sup> (n.) - crouching disease

<sup>64</sup> Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 24.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

sheer existence as a collective identity, the survivors of these epidemics experienced symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. As consequence, some survivors developed self-destructive coping mechanisms through drugs and alcohol. The psychological effects of mass death and destructive coping mechanisms extend into the experiences of future generations, known as intergenerational trauma. This trauma augmented the ability for American cultural imperialism to pervade the k̄anaka culture. Harold Napoleon noted: “No people anywhere will voluntarily discard their culture, beliefs, customs, and traditions unless they are under a great deal of stress, physically, psychologically, or spiritually...The case can be made that many of the survivors of the Great Death suffered from posttraumatic stress disorder and that it was in this condition that they surrendered and allowed their old cultures to pass away.”<sup>66</sup> The violence inflicted on k̄anaka resulting from haoles visiting Hawai’i had long lasting effects and is prolonged by American settlers who started to live among the l̄ahui.

### *White Supremacy and Cisheteropatriarchy as a Form of Systemic Violence*

The relationship between white supremacy and the cisheteropatriarchy<sup>67</sup> describes the systems of oppression prevalent in Western culture. I use cisheteropatriarchy to include gender oppression as it relates to the patriarchy, given that the focus of this section is to understand the systemic oppression of the m̄ahū identity by American

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<sup>66</sup>Harold Napoleon, *Yuuyaraq: The way of the Human Being*, (Fairbanks: Center for Cross-Cultural Studies, College of Rural Alaska, 1991), 16-17.

<sup>67</sup> Combination of cisgender, heteronormative, and patriarchy that encompasses privileging cisgender people over transgender people, heterosexual people over other sexual orientations, and men over women.

culture. These systems interact with each other to oppress certain identities, like gender nonconforming people and people of color. Intersectionality takes into account how every individual's identity is multi-pronged, allowing systems of oppression to be present even in oppressed communities. For example, within a space of people of color, women can be oppressed by men due to misogyny. Likewise, māhū can be oppressed within kānaka groups due to transphobia. In traditional kānaka culture, māhū were able to exist because the gender roles did not reflect an oppressive binary gender identities falling outside of gender expectations. In Western culture, where only men and women were recognized, there was no room for mahu. This is related to the cisheteropatriarchial state due to the nature of this relationship in the family structure.

The nuclear family, foundational to America's societal structure, was introduced to Hawaiian culture through American missionaries who preached this value. The idea of marriage entailed that a man and a woman were the heads of a nuclear family with primary responsibility over their children. Sexual relations existed solely within a monogamous marriage for the purpose of reproduction. The nuclear family became the foundation of the capitalist American society that civil society rests upon.<sup>68</sup> This idea is intimately related to the survival of the heteropatriarchy as a foundation of the US empire held together through marriage. Charles Colser, Christian Right activist says:

“Marriage is the traditional building block of human society, intended both to unite couples and bring children into the world...There is a natural moral order for the family...the family, led by married mother and father, is the best available structure for both child-rearing and cultural health. Marriage is not a private

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<sup>68</sup> James Wilson, “Lectures on Law,” in *Collected Works of James Wilson*, ed. Kermit L. Hall and Mark David Hall (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2007), Vol. 2, Part 2, Chapter 12.

institution designed solely for the individual gratification of its participants.”<sup>69</sup> The presence of māhū could not fit into the Western construction of the nuclear family and resulted in the exclusion of māhū in the framework of society. As Hawai’i continued to adopt Western societal constructions, gender roles and norms strayed away from the fluidity of traditional kānaka maoli cultural identity and started to mirror the rigidity of Western culture.

Andrea Smith makes note of the relationship between the cisheteropatriarchy and white supremacy in the following quote:

“Patriarchy in turns rests on a gender-binary system; hence it is not a coincidence that colonizers also targeted Indigenous peoples who did not fit within this binary model. In addition, gender violence is a primary tool of colonialism and white supremacy.”<sup>70</sup>

In regard to gender and sexuality, American cultural intervention in traditional Hawaiian culture entails the normalization of the gender binary and establishing monogamous relationships. This phenomenon is mentioned by Andrea Smith, who said that “it has been through sexual violence and through the imposition of European gender relationships on Native communities that Europeans were able to colonize Native peoples,” in a process that included marking Native people ‘by their sexual perversity’ as queer to colonial regimes.”<sup>71</sup> Kānaka maoli culture was positioned as queer and perverse

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<sup>69</sup> Andrea Smith, “Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy: Rethinking Women of Color Organizing”, *Color of Violence: The INCITE! Anthology*, (World: INCITE! 2016), 71.

<sup>70</sup>Andrea Smith, “Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy”, 72.

<sup>71</sup> Scott Lauria, Morgensen, “Settler Homonationalism: Theorizing Settler Colonialism within Queer Modernities”, *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, Volume 16, Number 1-2, 2010, pp. 105-131 (Article)

because Hawaiian civil society allowed for the existence of māhū and aikāne - identities that were seen as a threat to the American colonial regime. Māhū identity is at the intersection of an oppressed gender and racial identity in American society. As Hawai'i continued to adopt foundations of Western society to outwardly legitimize the nation state, Western systems of oppression started to appear in kānaka culture.

Christian values became institutionalized in legislation after King Kamehameha III adopted Western law in the 1830s. The decision to adopt Western law was a means to project Hawai'i's image as a civilized state in order to assert itself amongst European powers who were vying for Hawai'i's colonization. However, in doing so, Kamehameha III started the dissolution of monarchical powers and made Hawai'i subject to an international legal system that favored Western countries. American individualistic ideology influenced the decision to rid Hawai'i of monarchical powers, given its own history of achieving independence and promoting democratic ideals. After institutionalizing a legislative system, Kamehameha III outlawed "mischievous mating,"<sup>72</sup> since adultery did not exist in kānaka maoli culture because the concept of marriage was nonexistent. This legal decision changed the cultural makeup of kānaka maoli sexual practices and gender constructions. By legalizing and institutionalizing marriage, Kamehameha III made aikāne relationships illegal. This decision reinforced heteronormativity, institutionalized monogamy, and established a gender binary given that marriage must exist between a man and a woman. The impact of American cultural imperialism as a means of introducing white supremacy and the cisheteropatriarchy acted

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<sup>72</sup> Vowell, 78.

as a form of violence against māhū that diminished their presence and visibility in Hawaiian culture.

### *Conclusion*

American cultural imperialism was introduced to kānaka maoli culture as a form of systemic change. As Hawai'i turned towards the adoption of Western based societal practices, American cultural imperialism had a mechanism to implement white supremacy and the cisheteropatriarchy to oppress māhū and the lāhui on racial and gender grounds. Settler colonialism, as a structure, forced Hawai'i to adopt Western society because of the violence it inflicted on the native population forcing them to readjust. As American systems of oppression became present in kānaka culture, the lāhui internalized and projected these narratives on their own population. This resulted in māhūs being forced out of civil society or made invisible during this time period because traditional kānaka culture was being systematically attacked.

### III. CULTURAL AND GENDER SURVIVANCE BY KĀNAKA MAOLI

This chapter explores cultural and gender survivance by kākana maoli through the reclamation of traditional knowledge in a moment known as the First Cultural Renaissance Movement during the reign of King David Kalākaua from 1874 to 1891. The term survivance was coined by Gerald Vizenor in the 1990s to describe native survival and resistance. Vizenor defines it as the “active sense of presence, the continuance of native stories, not a mere reaction, or a survivable name. Native survivance stories are renunciations of dominance, tragedy, and victimry. Survivance means the right of succession or reversion of an estate, and in that sense, the estate of native survivancy.”<sup>73</sup> The concept is used amongst many contemporary indigenous works.

Vizenor relates survivance as a tool in the cultural war against what he coins “manifest manners.” Manifest manners are defined as “the course of dominance, the racialist notions and misnomers sustained in archives and lexicons as ‘authentic’ representations of indian cultures. Manifest manners court the destinies of monotheism, cultural determinism, objectivism, and the structural conceits of savagism and

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<sup>73</sup> Gerald Vizenor, *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. 1994.

civilization.”<sup>74</sup> To fight against the structural oppression prevalent in manifest manners, indigenous communities use survivance as a counter-cultural narrative to white supremacy and settler colonialism. As noted by Patrick Wolfe, settler colonialism relies on the elimination of the native from the present both physically and temporally.<sup>75</sup> Kalākaua’s First Cultural Renaissance was a means of countering this, by “fulfilling the need for the traditional gods and cosmology, the public celebrations of tradition served to alleviate some of the psychological harm done to the lāhui through the social and economic colonization.”<sup>76</sup> By placing kānaka tradition in the then-present consciousness of the lāhui, Kalākaua actively asserted means of survivance as a countercultural tool against American cultural imperialism.

### *Cultural Survivance During Kālākaua’s Reign*

Kalākaua’s main efforts to drive home traditional kānaka maoli practices included the establishment of the Papa Kū‘auhau o Nā Ali’i Hawai’i (board of genealogy) and the Hale Nauā to document traditional knowledge, and arranging for public hula performances at the Poni Mō‘ī (coronation) and jubilee. The Papa Kū‘auhau o Nā Ali’i Hawai’i was created in 1880 through an act of the legislature to identify the ali’i nui<sup>77</sup> and verify their genealogical claims that would assert that their genealogies went back to

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup>Patrick Wolfe, “Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native.” *Journal of Genocidal Research*, (2006), 8(4), December, 387-409.

<sup>76</sup>Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism*, USA: Duke University Press, 2004. 121.

<sup>77</sup> (n). - high-ranking ali’i; in the nineteenth century, monarchy members of the royal family, as well as other high-ranking ali’i

the origin of the world. This includes publishing the Kumulipo, mentioned later in this paper. The Hale Nauā was created in 1886 and functioned as a means “to further the humble and careful way of life as nurtured by our ancestors from the beginning of time, so that it will never be forgotten.”<sup>78</sup> The Pono Mō‘ī and jubilee featured public performances of hula and storytelling that revitalized traditional art forms.

One of Kalākaua’s court dancers, Jennie Wilson, attributed all contemporary knowledge of hula to his revitalization efforts.<sup>79</sup> Indeed, Kālākaua is known as the Merrie Monarch for his “merry” and unselfish demeanor and efforts in precisely this work of revitalizing traditional kānaka maoli arts and national pride. Elizabeth Tatar wrote that, “King Kalākaua...was, perhaps, the monarch who was the most insistent about ‘perpetuating and preserving’ traditional Hawaiian music and dance.”<sup>80</sup> Kālākaua openly praised hula as “the language of the heart and therefore the heartbeat of the Hawaiian people” and his decision to allow public performance of hula broke the 60 year ban on hula put into force by Queen Ka’ahumanu. A new genre of dance called hula ku‘i came into being as a combination of indigenous Hawaiian and Western music and dance elements. Historian, Amy Ku‘uleialoha Stillman said, “the hula ku‘i embodied the social, cultural, and political polarization” and acted as a “vehicle for reinforcing pride in

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<sup>78</sup> Hale Nauā record book, in Mookini, “Hale Nauā,” 6 (her translation).

<sup>79</sup> Jennie Wilson, interview by Joann Keali’inohomoku, 1962, audiotape, Bishop Museum Archives, Honolulu

<sup>80</sup> Elizabeth Tartar, *Nineteenth Century Hawaiian Chant*, Pacific Anthropological Records no. 33 (Honolulu: Bishop Museum, Department of Anthropology, 1982), 29.

Hawai‘i and being Hawaiian.”<sup>81</sup> The conceptualization of hula ku‘i led to the distinction of hula kahiko as the traditional form of dance that used traditional instruments such as the ipu heke or the ‘uli ‘uli. To this day, Kalākaua’s cultural efforts are honored through the Merrie Monarch Festival that occurs once a year in Hilo, Hawaii and is world-renowned for the hula competitions.

Aside from hula, Kalākaua also used literature as a way to represent ancient religion and dance to bring forms of mo’olelo, hula, mele, religion, and mo‘okū‘auhau into the consciousness and lives of the lāhui. Kalākaua also had kōnaka maoli traditions documented in writing and created the first written copy of the Kumulipo that was later translated into English by Queen Lili‘uokalani in 1897. The Kumulipo is an oli that tells the kōnaka maoli creation story reflecting a cosmogonic genealogy essential to understanding kōnaka maoli identity.

The revitalization of kōnaka maoli culture through these mediums was a form of resistance and soft power balancing to U.S. cultural imperialism. At this point in history, tensions were high between the missionaries and the kōnaka maoli. Through literature as a medium, the lāhui had access to traditional knowledge that was inaccessible to foreigners. Collectivizing around the kōnaka identity embedded in tradition was a way for the lāhui to protect themselves from “constant denigration of Kanaka culture by U.S. missionaries and their descendants and allowed them to know themselves as a strong people with a proud history. This knowledge directly contradicted, and thus effectively

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<sup>81</sup>Amy K. Stillman, “History Reinterpreted in Song: The Case of the Hawaiian Counterrevolution,” *Hawaiian Journal of History* 23 (1989): 20.

contested, the discourse that represented them as backward savages incapable of self-government.”<sup>82</sup>

Kālākaua also changed the national anthem from the Christian song “He Mele Lāhui Hawaii” to “Hawai‘i Pono‘ī” in 1874. This song pays homage to King Kamehameha I and how he unified the Hawaiian Islands during his reign. In a similar vein, Kalākaua created a united national identity for the kānaka by reclaiming traditional values that distinguished the lāhui from foreigners. He also asserted the slogan “Hawai‘i for Hawaiians” as a democratic means to empower kānaka to reclaim presence politically, culturally, and otherwise while foreigners continued to impose themselves in Hawaiian political affairs.

According to scholars, Kalākaua’s revitalization of traditional cultural values acted as a means to assert his commitment to the lāhui and legitimacy to ascend to the throne. Simultaneously, Kalākaua’s revitalization of kānaka tradition was a political action to assert the legitimacy of Hawai‘i as a nation. George Kanahēle, a kānaka scholar, said, “[Kalākaua] believed strongly that the political survival of his kingdom depended upon the cultural and spiritual revitalization of the Hawaiian people.”<sup>83</sup>

Although Kalākaua cannot be absolved from other elements of his reign that contributed to advancing American colonial interests, including the Reciprocity Treaty of 1875 that entrapped Hawai‘i in aspects of American capitalism, and putting the Hawaiian nation in

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<sup>82</sup>Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 89.

<sup>83</sup>George S. Kanahēle, ed., *Hawaiian Music and Musicians: An Illustrated History* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1979, 1951), 201.

debt, his commitment to reinforce kānaka maoli tradition was strong evidence of cultural and gender survivance.

Reclamation of traditional Hawaiian arts as a means of resistance is interrelated with forms of gendered and cultural survivance. The reclamation of traditional knowledge leads to the reclamation of traditional gender and sexual norms. The revitalization of these cultural elements serve as a tool of survivance by placing value on kānaka ways of being. Kānaka knowledge was placed into the consciousness of the lāhui, temporally asserted itself in the present, and spatially reclaimed presence. Valuing kānaka knowledge as equivalent to Western knowledge is vital in creating the environment for cultural and gender survivance. Indirectly, Kālakaua's reign leads to the survivance of māhū and could be foundational in establishing contemporary māhū visibility in the Second Cultural Renaissance Movement.

### *Gender Survivance*

The Papa Kū'auhau o Nā Ali'i Hawai'i genealogical knowledge allowed survivance, but also specifically gender survivance, through the written account of the Hawaiian creation story. In Hawaiian cosmology, "The origin of the earth takes place in the context of these balanced pairs [sun and moon, earth and heavens, stars and slime, male and female], as opposed to the Judeo-Christian singular, male creation. Creation and reproduction of life require both male and female."<sup>84</sup> In the Bible, God is assumed to be a man and He first created man, Adam, and from man, created woman, Eve. From this pair, it is assumed the rest of mankind followed. In this understanding, there only needed

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<sup>84</sup> Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 101.

to be one person to create all of life on Earth and Earth itself. In the second half of the Kumulipo<sup>85</sup>, in contrast, Haumea, Papa, and La'ila'i are symbolic of the female role in creation and reproduction. According to Silva, "All three are powerful and mysterious, and their prominence in the Kumulipo means that women are not effaced in the consciousness of the lāhui; both men and women take their parts in the creation and reproduction of life, and in the mo'olelo<sup>86</sup> that follows."<sup>87</sup> This understanding places equal importance on men and women in a way that differs from the Western religious, social, and political gender hierarchies, where men held authority, and women were deemed unfit to rule themselves or others. In Hawai'i, gender equality was represented through the presence of women in high political positions and the respect men and women gave to each other.

In kānaka genealogies and cosmologies, both male and female forces are always present. Kānaka tradition is focused on dualisms and "pono is created and maintained by the balance of complementary forces."<sup>88</sup> Pono was culturally appropriated by missionaries to subjugate the lāhui and has been roughly translated overtime to mean "righteousness." This was done when the missionaries reduced the Hawaiian language to writing to reproduce religious texts. "Pono" was translated Christian concepts of

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<sup>85</sup> (n.) - a genealogical chant, mele ko 'ihonua, recording the creation of the Hawaiian world

<sup>86</sup> (n.) - story, tale, myth, history, tradition, literature, legend, journal; translated to mean a "succession of talk" (mo'o meaning succession, olelo meaning talk)

<sup>87</sup> Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 102.

<sup>88</sup> Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 93.

“righteousness” as it relates to sin and Christian morality.<sup>89</sup> In comparison, the kānaka understanding of pono described “the ideal behavior of ali ‘i and other concepts such as balance, completeness, and material well-being.”<sup>90</sup> By appropriating one of the many meanings of pono, the missionaries were able to convey a message of Christianity that would give the kānaka everlasting life and led the lāhui away from traditional religion. In order to do that which is pono, the kānaka must maintain the balance of the universe by understanding one’s kuleana<sup>91</sup> and connection to everything around them. The Kumulipo provided the kānaka with a genealogical connection to all elements of life around them. This understanding allowed them to fulfill their kuleana with the ‘āina, each other, akua, and their ancestors - to name a few. This spiritual and cultural understanding gave women the authority to exercise political power. As such, Kālakaua maintained kānaka women as advisors to the ali ‘i and they were able to contribute to the political sphere and serve on the Hale Nauā as bearers of cultural knowledge. During this time period, there had been a transition of men into positions of power because it was deemed more credible to the Western world that based government legitimacy on male presence. As Hawai’i transitioned to Western styles of governance, women’s power in the political area eroded. However, during Kālakaua’s reign, ali ‘i wāhine were appointed to advisory positions with less overt titles, but with strong political implications.<sup>92</sup> Although the understanding of traditional roles were slowly eroding with the Hawaiian transition to

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<sup>89</sup> Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 33.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> (n.) - responsibility

<sup>92</sup> Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 94.

Western styles of governance and culture, the Kumulipo's recovery and transcription functioned as the basis for Kālakaua's "rediscovery and repatriation of what had been suppressed in the natives' past by the process of imperialism."<sup>93</sup> Banning the 'Ōlelo Hawai'i and forms of expressing Hawaiian culture had prevented widespread knowledge of traditional roles as described in the Kumulipo. The translation of the Kumulipo to English by Queen Lili'uokalani in 1896 gave more kānaka access to this traditional knowledge and acted as a form of cultural survivance.

In addition to an external balance of pono, there exists an internal balance within the kānaka. Kū and Hina are the mother and father figures that correspond to male and female energy, respectively. Within every person, there exists Kū and Hina in which the right side of our bodies correspond with Kū and the left side with Hina.<sup>94</sup> This also corresponds with religious traditions and the kapu system. Kū represents the rising of the sun, so prayers were directed to the east. Hina represents the setting of the sun, so prayers were directed to the west. This duality would explain the existence of māhū in traditional Hawaiian society.

Although it is believed in Hawai'i that all people possess Kū and Hina energies within themselves, there are varying degrees to embracing and expressing these energies. What Westerners understand as gender normative expressions of femininity and masculinity appear in wāhine and kāne who outwardly express Hina and Kū energies respectively. Those who are māhū embrace and express both the Kū and Hina aspects of

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<sup>93</sup> Edward Said describes ideological resistance as following the period of fighting the colonizer, and includes efforts to rebuild community, *Culture and Imperialism*, 209-210.

<sup>94</sup> "Kū", Kumukahi, [http://www.kumukahi.org/units/ke\\_ao\\_akua/akua/ku](http://www.kumukahi.org/units/ke_ao_akua/akua/ku)

their identity and thus do not align with a Western gender binary; they exist in a kākana understanding of gender through energy expression. Māhū can be kāne who strongly express Hina energy, wāhine who strongly express Kū energy, or a person with a gender fluid expression that ebbs and flows between outwardly expressing varying degrees of Kū and Hina energy. Understanding that there are Kū and Hina energies within everyone, the presence of māhū would not be a surprising or unnatural concept to kākana. Even today, it is very common for a person to identify as a wāhine and have strong Kū energy expression without identifying as māhū.

Kānakas access knowledge of one's gender identity as māhū, kāne, or wāhine through the na'au<sup>95</sup> and no'o no'o<sup>96</sup> that differs from Western constructions of knowledge and understanding, especially as it relates to the self.<sup>97</sup> According to the Western model, "the brain is the seat of Mind and rational thought and the "heart" is the center of emotions. This view reflects a cultural bias in the West, which organizes reality around polar opposites."<sup>98</sup> The kākana version of understanding has the na'au and no'o no'o that are two different centers of knowledge, but exist as complementary rather than adversarial.<sup>99</sup> According to Meryl Krieger:

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<sup>95</sup> (n.) - intestines, bowels, guts; mind, heart, affections; of the heart or mind; mood, temper feelings

<sup>96</sup> (n.) - thought, reflection, thinking, meditation; to think, reflect, meditate, concentrate

<sup>97</sup> *Kumu Hina*, Directed by Dean Hamer and Joe Wilson, Honolulu: Qwaves and Independent Television Service in association with Pacific Islanders in Communications, 2014.

<sup>98</sup> Meryl Krieger, *Over the Edge: Pushing the Boundaries of Folklore and Ethnomusicology*, (Cambridge Scholars Publishing: 26 Mar 2009), 76.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

“these opposites exist in the Polynesian reality without the familiar psychic and moral “tension” associated with symbolic opposites in the West. Instead they co-exist and flow into one another with surprising fluidity. This sensibility is reflected in the Hawaiian na’au concepts of mind, body and spirit. Information and knowledge are not processed by the mind alone. Instead, these are believed to be experienced simultaneously at all levels: intellectual, emotional, spiritual.”<sup>100</sup>

Therefore, understanding one’s identity as māhū requires access to traditional centers of knowledge and the presence of a knowledge duality. The reclamation of culture in the First Cultural Renaissance required a revitalization of traditional kākāka methodologies and ways of understanding. Kākāka’s cultural projects reshaped the lāuii’s understanding of the world and themselves by providing an avenue to access traditional knowledge. This provided a means of gender survivance for māhū during this time period by indirectly providing the knowledge and framework in which the māhū could exist.

Kākāka understanding of gender contradicts Western gender norms that would limit a person to express one gender based on their biological sex. Understanding that both masculine and female energies should exist within an individual allows for variations in gender expression that would make gender norms difficult to ascertain or to impose on a person based on biological sex. Additionally, kākāka valued masculine and feminine energies equally, in order to maintain a balance of pono, which is reflected in women and men holding high societal positions. This societal structuring conflicts with Western patriarchal society that places higher value on masculinity and men. It is noted that in Western structuring, “male power is dependent on the exclusion of women from

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

the centers of power” while “excluding women would have been unthinkable [in kānaka culture] because pono - balance and well-being - requires both male and female forces.”<sup>101</sup> Therefore, the First Cultural Renaissance Movement provided a means of gender survivance by preserving kānaka pedagogical models of gender as it relates to culture.

### *Conclusion*

Fluidity remains a consistent theme throughout kānaka culture that contrasts to the rigidity of Western culture, including as it relates to the understanding of gender. The First Cultural Renaissance movement provided a means to preserve and revitalize traditional kānaka culture. Kālākāua’s attempts to revitalize traditional Hawaiian culture was a political action in and of itself. Kālākāua used culture as a means to assert the power of the lāhui and strengthen the Hawaiian nation under a common cultural identity and origin. This acted as a form of Hawaiian nationalism and resistance to encroaching American political and cultural forces who sought to usurp Hawai’ian sovereignty. Kālākāua’s actions also functioned as a means to legitimize his rise to power given the speculation surrounding his bloodline.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 105.

<sup>102</sup> Kālākāua was not from the Kamehameha line, so many kānaka believed Queen Emma, widow of Kamehameha IV and descendant of Kamehameha I’s younger brother, had a greater claim to the throne. Before the deciding vote in legislature, both sides attacked the genealogical claims of the other. Since Kālākāua was not a direct descendant of Kamehameha and rather a descendant of Keaweheulu, Kamehameha I’s cousin and close advisor, he used the First Cultural Renaissance movement as a means to assert his pride in Hawaiian culture.

The First Cultural Renaissance movement was the first historical reclamation and preservation of traditional Hawaiian culture following the trauma American settlers brought to the islands. Commentary by Noenoe K. Silva regarding this time period says:

“We can see very clearly here that traditional Kanaka practices were threatening to the project of colonization, which continued to be equated with “civilization.” It is clear as well that that the editor(s) of the *Advertiser* thought of Anglo-American culture as belonging to an enlightened present and future, while Kanaka culture, though actually concurrent in time, belongs to a “brutal and degraded past.” This is also a discursive strategy that makes use of the developing theories of progress and evolution that propose that all peoples will eventually “progress” to resemble Anglo-Americans. McClintock calls this the trope of “anachronistic space” in which “the stubborn and threatening heterogeneity of the colonies was contained and disciplined not as socially or geographically different...and thus equally valid, but as *temporally* different and thus as irrevocably superannuated by history.” This trope is related to the categorization and hierarchical classification of colonized or colonized peoples according to their state of primitivity or advancement, which in turn contributed to creating the idea of “race” in biology and anthropology. Such categorization then conveniently justifies Euro-American rule over “primitive” peoples.”<sup>103</sup>

This movement provided a means of placing traditional Hawaiian culture in the anachronistic space of the presence that asserted itself as a threat to colonization. As such, this movement provided the cultural space for māhū existence that would influence the Second Cultural Renaissance movement of the 1970s and further strengthening of the Hawaiian cultural identity.

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<sup>103</sup> Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 105-106.

#### **IV. CONTEMPORARY KANAKA MAOLI CULTURE**

Hawai'i became a state of the United States of America through an illegal overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani in 1893 by an American-led coup d'etat. Today, k̄anaka maoli culture is a reflection of heterogeneous gathering of people from varying parts of the world. The effects of American settler colonialism brought about plantation workers from various parts of Asia and the Pacific, the economic and militaristic opportunities brought Americans, and there is a steady inflow of tourists from all over the world. The impact of America's settler colonialism extends to the continued practice of American cultural imperialism as it pervades contemporary k̄anaka maoli culture. I note the continued American presence in Hawai'i as a form of continued American colonialism and note that Hawai'i is not a post-colonial state. The continued occupation of Hawai'i by the United States is a form of colonization that prevents the actualization of k̄anaka sovereignty.

As mentioned in the Introduction, contemporary understanding of m̄ahū is typically associated with a negative connotation. However, m̄ahū activists are starting to increase the visibility of m̄ahū and change their stigmatization by k̄anaka maolis. This chapter will focus on contemporary k̄anaka maoli culture through an understanding of the Second Cultural Renaissance Movement that spans from the 1970s to the present and the implications of this movement on m̄ahū visibility.

## *Second Cultural Renaissance Movement and Revitalization of Traditional Kānaka Maoli Culture*

In the early 1900s, Hawai'i was painted as a tropical paradise for tourists to enjoy at their whim and was perpetuated by popular romanticized narratives in hapahaole<sup>104</sup> music. The American Civil Rights Movement from 1954 to 1968 helped raise the consciousness of other oppressed racial groups in the United States. The American Indian Movement also occurred in the 1960s and served as an example of decolonized resistance to the United States. The consciousness raising and self-awareness promoted through these movements gave kānaka maoli the tools to help the Second Cultural Renaissance Movement succeed in the 1970s. The political climate in the U.S. influenced kānaka maoli to explore their own identity. The movement was a resurgence of traditional Hawaiian culture in contemporary memory that created a kānaka maoli nationalistic identity and served as a way to redefine what it means to be Hawaiian.

This movement is referred to as a Cultural Renaissance Movement, given the promotion of traditional kānaka maoli culture. It was similar to the First movement, but differed in that it incorporated the political goal of Hawaiian national sovereignty. It was led by Hawaiian activists and cultural practitioners, and was inspired by John Dominis Holt's 1964 essay "On Being Hawaiian." This work brought about pride in being Hawaiian after years of perpetuating Hawaiians with negative stereotypes such as lazy or stupid. Important cultural elements of the Second Renaissance Movement include the revitalization of traditional forms of hula, mele, and language. Knowledge of these

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<sup>104</sup> (adj.) - part white and part Hawaiian, as an individual or phenomenon

elements then spurred the call for a Hawaiian studies program, which was created at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa in 1986. The movement is said to have died down after the 1980s, but some say that the movement is ongoing. In my own opinion, I believe the movement is ongoing given that kānaka are continually finding new and innovative ways to promote the culture. For example, kānaka showed solidarity with Standing Rock by performing sacred rituals at the site in 2016, and Project Kuleana is a music endeavor to promote Hawaiian culture using Youtube. This created a space in academia for the promulgation of kānaka maoli knowledge and a mechanism for institutionalized memory facilitated by kānaka.

The Second Hawaiian Renaissance Movement changed Hawaiian music by reclaiming traditional forms of instrumentation and song in ‘Ōlelo Hawai’i from the bastardized hapahaole genre that had, in the early 20th century, romanticized Hawai’i as an island paradise. . Kevin Fellezs notes, “singing in Hawaiian was a political act, a way to combat the attempts to eradicate Hawaiian culture by British and American missionaries and political elites, whose legacy remains in the English-language dominance of the educational and legal systems.”<sup>105</sup> This genre of music popularized the slack key guitar and brought about the fame of the Cazimero Brothers, Gabby Pahinui,

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<sup>105</sup> Kevin Fellezs, “Performing Hawaiian”, *Institute for Studies in American Music*, Conservatory of Music, Brooklyn College. 2005. March 13, 2008.  
<http://depthome.brooklyn.cuny.edu/isam/NewsletS07/Fellezs.htm>

and the Sons of Hawaii.<sup>106</sup> Mele is an easily accessible medium for kānaka to start to learn ‘Ōlelo Hawai’i and the traditions embedded in these songs.

In addition to music, expressions of traditional Hawaiian culture included the resurgence of hula kahiko<sup>107</sup> and male hula. Prior to this movement, Kanahale recalls that “no local boy would be caught dead doing the hula for fear of being called a sissy. Nowadays you may risk a punch in the mouth for calling a male dancer, who may just be on the football team, a sissy.”<sup>108</sup> Male dancers challenged the assumption that hula was only for females and that dance was a feminine activity. This actively challenged gender roles as it relates to the performance of Hawaiian culture. Hula was further promoted through the creation of the annual Merrie Monarch festival in 1963, mentioned earlier as a commemoration of King Kālakaua’s First Cultural Renaissance Movement. In my personal experience, my introduction to Hawaiian music and hula acted as the foundational basis to my understanding of Hawaiian culture. I learned ‘Ōlelo Hawai’i from the kāheas<sup>109</sup> I had to recite during my hula performances and from the melees my dad would play in the car. The reclamation of traditional forms of dance and music enabled younger generations of kānaka to access traditional forms of Hawaiian culture and express themselves with this knowledge.

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<sup>106</sup> George S. Kanahale, “The Hawaiian Renaissance”, Polynesian Voyaging Society Archives, Primary Source Documents, 1978-1984, May 1979, 4.  
<http://kapalama.ksbe.edu/archives/pvsa/primary%202/79%20kanahale/kanahale%204.htm>

<sup>107</sup> (n.) - kahiko translates to old, ancient, antique, primitive and this style of hula is a reflection of a traditional style of hula accompanied by chants and drums

<sup>108</sup> George S. Kanahale, “The Hawaiian Renaissance”, Polynesian Voyaging Society Archives, 5.

<sup>109</sup> (nvt.) - to call, cry out, invoke, greet, name; recital of the first lines of a stanza by the dancer as a cue to the chanter

‘Ōlelo Hawai’i started to become incorporated in schools through the Kula Kaiapuni, or Hawaiian Language Immersion Program. This program was introduced to Hawaiian language preschools in 1984 and subsequently spread in the State of Hawai’i Department of Education Hawaiian Language Immersion Program in 1987.<sup>110</sup> Outlawing the Hawaiian language had been used as a tool to silence kānaka. During the 1800s, the ‘Ōlelo Hawai’i was used by kānaka to communicate messages that could not be understood by foreigners given the implications of kaona. Language as a tool of resistance and cultural knowledge is essential to any national identity. Warner notes, “Older Hawaiians today still recall corporal punishment or forms of punishment aimed at humiliating Hawaiian children caught speaking Hawaiian. An example of the latter, one Hawaiian related having to hold a rock in each hand while standing on one leg after school when caught speaking Hawaiian.”<sup>111</sup> These are forms of violence that create fear in native populations and are active erasure of indigenous culture. The revitalization of ‘Ōlelo Hawai’i through the educational system is an institutionalized means of kānaka survivance through language. The importance of teaching ‘Ōlelo Hawai’i is expanded in Warner’s observation that:

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<sup>110</sup> Sam L. No’eau Warner. “Kuleana: The Right, Responsibility, and Authority of Indigenous Peoples to Speak and Make Decisions for Themselves in Language and Cultural Revitalization.” JSTOR. University of Hawai’i at Manoa: Manoa, 1999. March 14, 2008.  
<http://www.jstor.org/view/01617761/sp050112/05x0899o/0?searchUrl=http%3a//www.jstor.org/search/BasicResults%3fhp%3d25%26si%3d1%26gw%3djtx%26jtxsi%3d1%26jcpsi%3d1%26artsi%3d1%26Query%3dHawaiian%26immersion%26wc%3don&frame=noframe&currentResult=01617761%26sp050112%2605x0899o%260%2cFFFFFF07&userID=84a03699@uhh.Hawaii%26i.edu/01c0a8486519ebb118aea16618&dpi=3&conPg=jstor>, accessed April 23, 2017.

<sup>111</sup> Sam L. No’eau Warner. “Kuleana: The Right, Responsibility, and Authority of Indigenous Peoples to Speak and Make Decisions for Themselves in Language and Cultural Revitalization,” 71.

“The Hawaiian language should be perpetuated because it is part of Hawaiian heritage - what can help to make Hawaiians whole again as a people. Hawaiians need to learn and know their language, culture, stories, histories, and religion because they interrelate and are integrally linked to one another and to the people. Language - the words people use to describe their environment, thoughts, emotions - as an expression of worldview is a medium through which people transmit culture and history.”<sup>112</sup>

Using ‘Ōlelo Hawai’i in schools is also an example of culturally relevant teaching coined by Gloria Ladson-Billings as “a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes.”<sup>113</sup> Culturally relevant teaching is effective not only in retaining students, but also towards acknowledging various forms of knowledge and learning that is equally as valuable as a Western-centric pedagogy.

The establishment of a Native Hawaiian Studies Program at University of Hawaii at Mānoa was an institutionalized way to challenge the Western-centric pedagogical model. The program was created in in the 1980s, inspired by indigenous scholars such as Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Frantz Fanon. The creation of this program provided a platform for kānaka maoli activists to legitimize their work in academia and validate Native Hawaiian pedagogical models in the face of institutionalized erasure. I note institutionalized erasure given that education, especially higher education, reproduces knowledge that is deemed by society as “legitimate.” In this process, there is a sense of inaccessibility of this knowledge and using the native as a subject for study rather than

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<sup>112</sup> Sam L. No’eau Warner. “Kuleana: The Right, Responsibility, and Authority of Indigenous Peoples to Speak and Make Decisions for Themselves in Language and Cultural Revitalization,” 77.

<sup>113</sup> Gloria Ladson-Billings, *The Dreamkeepers: Successful teaching for African-American Students*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994, pp. 17–18.

allowing the native to produce their own knowledge. This relationship is best described in Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's work, "Can the Subaltern Speak?."<sup>114</sup> The subaltern in this case would be kānaka maoli who have been barred from accessing spaces of higher education that would reproduce and validate knowledge through institutionalized forms of education, such as K-12 schooling or producing scholarly research. Spivak determines that the subaltern cannot speak because the West will bar the subaltern from accessing scholarly language that would validate their claims. When kānaka were able to access higher education, this gave them a voice to tell their side of history instead of teaching future generations a Western-centric point of view that silenced kānaka maoli. Janet Mock mentions how she was able to understand the māhū identity through her Hawaiian studies classes in college.<sup>115</sup> Providing a space for kānaka maoli knowledge to be reproduced in a way that can exist outside of a Western pedagogical model allows scholars to challenge their point of view. In my own collegiate experience, I was exposed to Pacific Islander studies classes that provided me with an indigenous worldview that challenged my experience learning from a Western pedagogical model. Mock and I gained alternative ways to understand māhū through exposure to Hawaiian courses that provided us with an indigenous framework of understanding. Hawaiian studies courses taught by kānaka maoli scholars provides a mechanism to challenge Western pedagogical models that cannot translate the indigenous thought. Teaching kānaka maoli knowledge requires that Hawaiians have access to institutions of higher education. Access to

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<sup>114</sup> Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the subaltern speak?", *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1988. 271-313.

<sup>115</sup> Janet Mock, *Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love & So Much More*, New York: Atria, 2014, 102.

knowledge production of kānaka knowledge by kānaka was facilitated by the Second Cultural Renaissance Movement.

### *Implications of the Second Cultural Renaissance Movement on Gender and Sexuality*

The Second Cultural Renaissance Movement provided a mechanism for kānaka to recreate a national identity and challenge Western positions. The Second Cultural Renaissance Movement provided the cultural understanding for contemporary kānaka to access the full understanding of traditional Hawaiian culture. This included traditional ideas of gender and sexuality, to incorporate the māhū identity and aikāne practices. In contemporary circles, the idea of polyamorous relationships is taking shape as a form of punalua. The American gay liberation movement of the 1960s and 70s brought about increased transparency for the LGBTQ+ identity that allowed māhū to be more visible. At the same time, the women's liberation movement helped reclaim space and visibility for wāhine in kānaka activism. The active changes that occurred during the late 1990s set the foundation for kānaka culture to thrive and māhū identity to become visible again.

Visibility for the māhū identity is best exemplified through Hinaleimoana Wong Kalu's activism. Kumu Hina is a self-identified kānaka maoli māhū and transgender woman. She is featured in various media projects, but most notably a documentary titled, *Kumu Hina*. She founded the Kulia Na Mamo transgender health project, served as a cultural director of a Hawaiian public charter school, held position as chair of the O'ahu Island Burial Council, and was a candidate for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. She is a prominent kānaka maoli activist and brings visibility to the māhū community. As a kumu,

she is a cultural practitioner of kānaka maoli knowledge. Her visibility brings about cultural understanding of the māhū identity for kānaka and foreigners alike. She serves as an inspiration to youth to embrace “their place in the middle”<sup>116</sup> and their kānaka identity.

The fact that Kumu Hina is a prominent figure in the contemporary Hawaiian movement is evidence of the māhū identity having a place in contemporary kānaka culture. This creates space for the māhū identity to increase in visibility in tangent with the Hawaiian movement. The ability for Kumu Hina to access positions of influence as a māhū shows the change in kānaka culture as more accepting of gender identities outside of the Western gender binary.

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<sup>116</sup> Kumu Hina, Directed by Dean Hamer and Joe Wilson, Honolulu: Qwaves and Independent Television Service in association with Pacific Islanders in Communications, 2014.

## CONCLUSION

This thesis analyzes m̄hū as a gender liminal identity that was celebrated in traditional k̄naka maoli culture. With the introduction of Western foreigners, the Hawaiian nation had to adjust its way of life to accommodate the impending threat of colonization. Foreign haoles used their technological advancements to intimidate the k̄naka. At the same time, the k̄naka were forced to be implicit in adopting Western structural changes to maintain their sovereign legitimacy against Western hegemonic powers. The United States, in particular, exerted settler colonialism as a means of cultural imperialism against k̄naka culture, creating long lasting changes, given the various forms of loss and violence the l̄hui experienced through disease and mass death. To adjust to this severe form of psychological destruction, the l̄hui deemed it fit to adopt some forms of American culture, including Christianity starting in 1820 when the American missionary ship, the *Thaddeus*, landed in Hawai'i. Ali'i nui such as Queen Ka'ahumanu, who was regent following the death of King Kamehameha I in 1830 and a Christian convert. The missionaries were able to convince her to enact a hula ban because the practice was deemed to promote "heathen beliefs."<sup>117</sup> This was the beginning of incorporating Christian religion into k̄naka culture and appears throughout Hawaiian history in the form of k̄naka conversion to Christianity. These Christian values were

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<sup>117</sup> "A Hidden History of the Hula: Hawai'i's Performing Arts", Polynesian Cultural Center, [http://www.polynesia.com/polynesian\\_culture/hawaii/history-of-the-hula.html#.WFKvilMrKM8](http://www.polynesia.com/polynesian_culture/hawaii/history-of-the-hula.html#.WFKvilMrKM8)

received by the kānaka during ma'iōku'u epidemic in the early 1800s. The kānaka akua seemed to be fruitless in protecting Hawaiians from diseases brought by haole foreigners and its resulting death. Since the foreigners introduced and built up a resistance to these diseases, the kānaka perceived this as divine protection provided by the haoles' god. At the same time, American missionaries were slowly using literacy from the Bible, endorsed by the ali'i as a way to educate the general population, as a means to institutionalize homophobic and monogamous rhetoric. The combination of kānaka adoption of Western societal structure as a means to maintain sovereignty and imposition of American cultural values through Christianity provided a breeding ground for homophobia, transphobia, and misogyny to pervade the kānaka culture. As a systemic process, these ideas were gradually introduced to Hawai'i starting in the early 1800s. The impact it had on diminishing traditional Hawaiian culture can be seen as King Kālākaua's rule in 1874.

The kānaka cultural adjustments to Western culture changed the ways traditional Hawaiian knowledge was conveyed and erased much of it. In some ways, literacy provided a means for the lāhui to access and reproduce knowledge. In other ways, alphabetizing the Hawaiian language reduced the 'Ōlelo Hawai'i to a written form that omitted kaona and cultural significance, when translated into English. Throughout the history of Hawai'i, the kānaka have actively produced forms of survivance against American cultural imperialism, but the impact of American occupation in Hawai'i has proven to be a barrier to full Hawaiian sovereignty. Hand in hand with Hawaiian national sovereignty is the right to self-determination. To reiterate, the connection kānaka have to the 'āina is a way of understanding Hawaiian cultural identity as it relates to pono and

spirituality. Until kānaka have the authority to determine what is done to their land, the lāhui will never be able to attain self-determination.

The contemporary cultural relationship between the United States and Hawai'i is complex and intertwined. The history of the United States and Hawai'i has changed the definition of kānaka maoli culture. Although there are certain elements to kānaka maoli culture that are intrinsic to the Native Hawaiian identity, the impact of American cultural imperialism cannot be erased from kānaka maoli culture. For this reason, the reproduction of traditional kānaka maoli culture as it once existed in the past is an impossible task. However, the need for kānaka maoli to reclaim elements of traditional Hawaiian culture is essential in understanding what it means to be Hawaiian. What will remain constant until the end of time are the cultural values held in oli, pule, hula, and other forms of traditional Hawaiian expression. These tools are the vessels by which kānaka come to understand concepts such as pono or kuleana. Reproducing cultural elements in academia and activism is a means by which kānaka can collectivize around a national identity to distinguish what is Hawaiian from what is American.

American cultural imperialism diminished the space in which māhū were able to exist in Hawaiian society. The violence enacted on the lāhui was systemic and institutionalized through the legal and education system. To survive in a changing cultural climate, the māhū identity decreased in visibility. Generations of kānaka maoli learned to understand the māhū identity through a Western model of knowledge. As such, the full understanding of the māhū identity was inaccessible because it is a concept only accessible through a kānaka framework. Because of this, māhūs were negatively

stigmatized for generations. Through the reclamation of Hawaiian culture through the Second Cultural Renaissance Movement in the 1970s, the kānaka were able to access an indigenous framework to fully understand the role māhū have in society.

Creating a sense of pride in kānaka identity is active resistance to American cultural imperialism. Actively practicing kānaka culture and decolonizing one's mind is a form of survivance. The māhū identity is becoming more visible as awareness around trans activism and indigenous activism increases. Although American cultural imperialism cannot be erased from the history of kānaka maoli culture, Native Hawaiians do not need to reproduce the ways of the colonizer. In the words of Audre Lorde, "For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us to temporarily beat us at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change."<sup>118</sup> Kānaka must continue to fight for self-determination and exercise pono. Our ability to thrive depends on sustaining a balance our ancestors have given us the mana to achieve. It is through this balance that māhū will be able to righteously exist and kānaka maoli will be able to actualize ea.<sup>119</sup> Imua.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House", *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, New York: Kitchen Table Press, 1983, 94-101.

<sup>119</sup> (n.) - sovereignty, rule, independence; life, air, breath

<sup>120</sup>(v.) - to move forward

## GLOSSARY

1. **‘āina** (n.) - land; translated as “that which feeds” to define the symbiotic relationship kānaka maoli have with the land. The people take care of the land and the land will take care of them and future generations.
2. **aikāne** (n.) - friend, also lover of the same sex
3. **ali’i** (n.) - chief, chiefess, officer, ruler, monarch, peer, headman, noble, aristocrat, king, queen, commander; chief, govern, reign.
4. **ali’i nui** (n.) - high-ranking ali’i; in the nineteenth century, monarchy members of the royal family, as well as other high-ranking ali’i
5. **akua** (n.) - gods
6. **biological sex** (n.) - reference to identity based on reproductive or sexual anatomy that includes male, female, and intersex.
7. **Cultural imperialism**
  - a. **imperialism** (n.) - “creation & maintenance of relationships between civilizations, favoring the more powerful civilization.”
  - b. **cultural imperialism** (n.) - the use of culture as a means to create & maintain relationships between civilizations, favoring the more powerful civilization
8. **ea** (n.) - sovereignty, rule, independence; life, air, breath
9. **gender** (n.) - “socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It

varies from society to society and can be changed”<sup>121</sup> not to be convoluted with *sex*; this definition can include women, men, gender fluid, or gender nonconforming identities while differentiating between cisgender and transgender identities

10. **gendered interactions** (n.) - , refer to how people socially interact across and within gender identities and how these interactions affect the community structure
11. **gender performance** (n.) - the analysis of how gender is performance and performative to understand the ways in which behavior and gender norms help construct conceptualization of gender
12. **gender binary** (n.) - the Western-based idea that only two genders exist (women and men) and all other gender identities are nonexistent; because of this model, most Western understanding of gender identity outside of this binary is constructed within these linguistic and conceptual limitations
13. **hānai** (adj.) - foster child, adopted child
14. **haole** (n.) - originally, any foreigner; from 19th century on, specifically white foreigner
15. **hapahaole** (adj.) - part white and part Hawaiian, as an individual or phenomenon
16. **heteropatriarchy** (n.) - The ways in which heteronormativity and patriarchy are relied upon to create a social hierarchy that has privileged and continues to privilege cisgender heterosexual men over other gender identities accredited to Professor Janice G. Raymond in her 1986 book, *A Passion for Friends: Toward a Philosophy of Female Affection*.

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<sup>121</sup> <http://www.who.int/gender-equity-rights/understanding/gender-definition/en/>

17. **hula** (n.) - dance
18. **hula kahiko** (n.) - kahiko translates to old, ancient, antique, primitive and this style of hula is a reflection of a traditional style of hula accompanied by chants and drums
19. **imua** (v.) - to move forward
20. **kāhea** (nvt.) - to call, cry out, invoke, greet, name; recital of the first lines of a stanza by the dancer as a cue to the chanter
21. **kānaka maoli** (n.) - Native Hawaiian; kānaka ‘ōiwi is another form of the word that translates into people (kānaka) of bone (‘ōiwi).<sup>122</sup> This translation relays the importance of genealogy (mo‘okū‘auhau) to Native Hawaiians and their connection with the land (‘āina) that is central to their identity. At the end of life, Native Hawaiians bury their bones in the ‘āina to create a relationship with the ancestors (kūpuna). In the Native American Homelands Act of 1974, Title 43, 2992c.(4) ““Native Hawaiian” means any individual any of whose ancestors were natives of the area which consists of the Hawaiian Islands prior to 1778”<sup>123</sup>
22. **kāne** (n.) - male, husband, man; masculine
23. **kaona** (n.) - hidden meaning, as in Hawaiian poetry; concealed reference, as to a person, thing or place; words with double meanings that might bring good or bad fortune
24. **kuleana** (n.) - responsibility
25. **kumu** (n.) - teacher, tutor, model, mentor

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<sup>122</sup> [http://www.kumukahi.org/units/ka\\_hikina/oiwi](http://www.kumukahi.org/units/ka_hikina/oiwi)

<sup>123</sup> [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ana/native\\_american\\_programs\\_act.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ana/native_american_programs_act.pdf)

26. **Kumulipo** (n.) - a genealogical chant, mele ko‘ihonua, recording the creation of the Hawaiian world
27. **kupuna** (n.) – ancestors, grandparents, relative or close friend of the grandparent’s generation
28. **lāhui** (n.) - people, nation.
29. **maka‘āinana** (n.) - commoner, populace, people in general
30. **māhū** (n.) - homosexual, of either sex; hermaphrodite
31. **māhūwahine** (n.) - In terms of the eurocentric gender binary, mahuwahine would be considered a transgender woman and under this construction, māhū can also describe a “third gender” who presents a gender-fluid masculine and feminine identity. It is important to distinguish māhūwahine in reference to gender performance rather than sexual orientation and to be understood through gender as a social construct shaped by norms for men and women.<sup>124</sup>
32. **mele** (n.) - song
33. **mō‘i** (n.) - king, sovereign, monarch, majesty, ruler
34. **mo‘okū‘auhau** (n.) - genealogy
35. **mo‘olelo** (n.) - story, tale, myth, history, tradition, literature, legend, journal; translated to mean a “succession of talk” (*mo’o* meaning succession, *olelo* meaning talk)
36. **na’au** (n.) - intestines, bowels, guts; mind, heart, affections; of the heart or mind; mood, temper feelings

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<sup>124</sup> <http://www.who.int/gender-equity-rights/understanding/gender-definition/en/>

37. **no'o no'o** (n.) - thought, reflection, thinking, meditation; to think, reflect, meditate, concentrate
38. **ohana** (n.) - family, relative, kin group
39. **‘Ōiwi** (n.) - “of the bone”; essentially referring to kānaka maoli
40. **olelo** (n.) - language, speech word, quotation, statement; to speak, say, talk, mention
41. **oli** (n.) - chant that was not danced to, especially with prolonged phrases chanted in one breath, often with a trill at the end of each phrase
42. **pule** (n.) - pray, prayer
43. **punalua** (n.) - formerly, spouses sharing a spouse, as two husbands of a wife, or two wives of a husband
44. **wahine** (n.) - woman, lady, wife; female, femininity; feminine; *wāhine* plural
45. **white supremacy** (n.) - the belief that white people are superior to those of all other races, especially the black race, and should therefore dominate society.

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