Representing the Ali‘i and Monarchy: Dress, Diplomacy, and Featherwork in Hawai‘i

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REPRESENTING THE ALI‘I AND MONARCHY:
DRESS, DIPLOMACY, AND FEATHERWORK IN HAWAI‘I

BY
TESS ELISE ANDERSON

SUBMITTED TO SCRIPPS COLLEGE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
DEGREE OF BACHELOR ARTS

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other through losing a loved one, a pandemic that continues to threaten our loved ones, periods of intense depression, isolation, and academic stress. Despite these trials and tribulations, we have experienced the happiest moments: cathartic late-night laughs, unforgettable adventures abroad, regular meals at Mallott, and returning home to our feline children. I am so thankful for your friendship and sincerely congratulate you on finishing your theses.

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Land and Language Acknowledgments

I prioritize acknowledging that the research and writing of this thesis took place in the unceded, ancestral territories of the Tongva, Gabrieleño, and Serrano peoples. These tribes persist in calling this land their home, despite facing past and present actions of erasure by colonizers. Upon this land, I am a guest of academic study in Claremont, CA, and a settler who calls Long Beach, CA, her home. I can currently trace my family’s roots to Cefalù, Sicilia, Italia, and Edmundston, New Brunswick, Canada. Edmundston lies upon a traditional gathering place and homeland of the Maliseet (Wolastoqiyik) peoples and is continuously protected by the Madawaska Maliseet First Nation. I encourage the readers of this thesis to consider the lands they utilize and become conscious of their Indigenous roots, histories, and the contemporary realities of colonial settlement and occupation.

I also would like to acknowledge the pae`āina (archipelago) of Hawai‘i. I have been a digital and literal guest of the pae`āina visiting for my dual academic thesis in art history and art conservation and heritage science. The pae`āina is a territory recognized by Indigenous Hawaiians as their ancestral grandmother, Papahānaumoku.¹ I recognize that her majesty Queen Lili`uokalani yielded the Hawaiian Kingdom, and these territories under duress and protest to the United States to avoid the bloodshed of her people. I further recognize that Hawai‘i remains an illegally occupied state of America.²

² Ibid.
I recognize that each moment I am researching, visiting digitally, and in Hawai‘i, she nourishes and gifts me with the opportunity to breathe her air, eat from her soils, drink from her waters, bathe in her sun, swim in her oceans, be kissed by her rains, and be embraced by her winds. I recognize that generations of Indigenous Hawaiians and their knowledge systems shaped Hawai‘i in sustainable ways, allowing me to enjoy these gifts today.3

In this thesis, I intentionally use ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i language terms. After providing a translation in English once, I often do not offer a translation again to retain the indigenous meaning as possible rather than approximate with English equivalencies. The Hawaiian Kingdom prioritized education and healthcare for its indigenous and settler island inhabitants. By 1893, the population neared one-hundred percent literacy.4 Under the occupation of the pa‘e‘aina by the United States, the American government intentionally infiltrated Hawaiian education: enforcing denationalization efforts, like banning the Ōlelo Hawai‘i language.

Thanks to the grandchildren of the last generation of native-speaking kūpuna (elders), the second half of the twentieth century witnessed revitalization efforts to teach Ōlelo Hawai‘i to the next generation of kānaka maoli (native Hawaiians).5 ‘Keiki Kawai‘ae‘a‘, one of the founders of the Hawaiian immersion movement in Hawai‘i and director of the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo’s Ka Haka ‘Ula O Ke‘elikolani College of Hawaiian Language, explains:

“Saving languages is part of our knowledge pool. Language contains the way we see the world knowledge that has been created by that specific

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4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
group, knowledge that is unique to any other place in the world. It connects
us to our identity of who we are and where we come from. Lose the
language and you lose the culture, the knowledge pool, and that way of
seeing and being in the world.”

For this, I am grateful as a guest and a student. I seek to support the varied
strategies that the Indigenous peoples of Hawai‘i use to protect their land,
communities, and cultural heritage. I commit to dedicating time and resources to
working in solidarity.  

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6 Ibid.
7 Native Hawaiian Place of Learning Advancement Office, “Auamo: To Collectively Engage:
Land Acknowledgement.”
Introduction

In April 1887, Queen Kapiʻolani and her sister-in-law, Princess Lydia Liliʻuokalani, embarked upon a 106-day diplomatic journey from the pae ʻāina to the other side of the world. The royal women set sail to San Francisco, the first stop of many before arriving at their ultimate destination, Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee in London. The seventh monarch of the Hawaiian Kingdom, King David Kalākaua, was invited to the Jubilee, but because of the death of his youngest sister, Miriam Kapili Likelike (Mrs. A. S. Cleghorn), the mōʻī (king) requested that his Queen and Royal Heir represent the Hawaiian delegation at the festivities. Accompanying the nine-person traveling party were fifty-five suitcases full of daywear and evening gowns, men’s attire, uniforms, shoes, headwear, jewelry, fans, and hulu manu (featherwork). As royal dignitaries, the travelers had to be prepared for many encounters and appearances with heads of state, the powerful political and social elite, ordinary citizens, students, workers, and journalists. As Queen Kapiʻolani and Princess Liliʻuokalani attended tours and dinner parties in each migratory sojourn, political allies and the press scrutinized their behavior, appearances, and majesty. Since the royal women

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9 Royal Jubilees are celebrations held in honor of important anniversaries of being on the throne, in Queen Victoria’s case, her 50th year.; Valencia, “Feathers, Diamonds, and Gowns: Hawaiian Fashion in the King Kalākaua Era,” in Hoʻoulu Hawaiʻi: The King Kalākaua Era, 182.

10 Queen Liliʻuokalani alludes to her brother inviting her upon the journey in efforts to cheer her up in her book, Hawaiʻi’s Story by Hawaiʻi’s Queen, (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1898).

11 Valencia, “Feathers, Diamonds, and Gowns: Hawaiian Fashion in the King Kalākaua Era,” in Hoʻoulu Hawaiʻi: The King Kalākaua Era, 183.; While this quantity of ensembles and adornments may be considered unnecessary and excessive in modern standards, in 1950, Princess Elizabeth (Queen Elizabeth II) was rumored to bring 40 suitcases for a three-month vacation in Malta.; Kitty Kelly, The Royals, (Sydney: Bantam Books, 1999).
represented Hawaiian prosperity, political sovereignty, and modernity, they had to supplement their first impression through iconographic fashions. At the request of Queen Victoria, all of the diplomatic representatives in attendance of her Jubilee were to wear clothing characteristic of their home country.¹² For the ali‘i (chiefs) of the nineteenth century, especially in the Kalākaua era, Hawaiian ensembles had already adapted into ‘fusion fashions’¹³ of Victorian-era aesthetics and traditional ali‘i iconography.¹⁴ In response to Victoria’s wish and the Kalākaua era’s systemic promotion of cultural heritage and national pride, Queen Kapi‘olani commissioned showstopping evening gowns accentuating the most precious materials of the Hawaiian Islands—feathers.¹⁵

Various literary, graphic, and physical materials have been preserved, ensuring our contemporary access to the ali‘i dress and adornments from the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹⁶ Remnants of the commissioned diplomatic garments composed of fabric and feathers only survive today in delicate scraps and embellishments, cared for in the storage rooms of museums.¹⁷ These ensembles were confined to a particular era of Victorian dress, and once the mode

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¹⁵ The literary/oral sources required to discuss the Hawaiian Kingdom, accurately and responsibly, come from both Hawaiian and English language sources in the form of newspapers, personal accounts, ʻōiwi (native Hawaiians; “bones of the people”) scholarship, oli (chant), mele (song), and moʻolelo (oral history); Kamanamaikalani B. Beamer, “Aliʻi Selective Appropriation of Modernity: Examining colonial assumptions in Hawaiʻi prior to 1893,” (University of Hawaiʻi at Mānoa, Hawaiʻi’), 139-141.
of the late 1880s fell out of fashion, the pieces were put away: sometimes lost, damaged by moisture and insects, or repurposed for other ensembles.\(^{18}\) The more versatile accessories and adornments were pieces such as fans, headwear, jewelry, lei hulu (feather necklaces and headpieces), and ‘ahu ‘ula (capes and cloaks). Many ali‘i ensured the preservation of their collections by willing their nā hulu ali‘i (royal featherworks) and belongings to their descendants, or into the care of museums, like the Hawaiian National Museum (1872-1891) or the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum after it opened in 1889.\(^{19}\)

In this thesis, *Part I: The Visual Language of Dress: Feathers, Fabrics, and ‘Fusion,*’ provides the historic background of Hawaiian traditional dress, hulu manu, and ‘fusion fashions’ that manifested within Hawai‘i from the late-eighteenth century to the late-nineteenth century. By analyzing case studies of historic pā‘ū, holoku, ‘ahu‘ula, and military uniforms, I highlight the significance of Hawaiian dress as an iconographic tool of socio-political, spiritual, gendered, and diplomatic power. In so doing I also emphasize the persistence of ali‘i jurisdiction in times of indigenous and haole (foreigner) encounters. In *Part II: Self Fashioning through Portraiture and Photography: Ali‘i Agency, Adaptation,*


\(^{19}\) The Bishop Museum was established to house the Hawaiian royal family’s collection of Hawaiian art, objects, and heirlooms; later, expanding to include collections of documents, photographs, objects, and art from Hawai‘i and other Pacific island cultures. The Bishop was founded in 1889 by Charles Reed Bishop in honor of his late wife, the Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, the last ali‘i descendent of the royal Kamehameha line and an established philanthropist. Her lands amassed nine percent of the Hawaiian islands and after her passing, she willed the revenues of these lands to continue to operate the Kamehameha Schools (established in 1887); Bishop Museum, “Legacy: Inspire The Next Generation,” from website, accessed April 1, 2022, [https://www.bishopmuseum.org/legacy/](https://www.bishopmuseum.org/legacy/).
and Appearances, the Kalākaua Dynasty’s utilization of photographic portraiture and the staging of nā hulu aliʿi, European regalia, and intentionally crafted ‘fusion fashions’ are accentuated as diplomatic tools used to represent Hawaiian sovereignty and modernity for both local and international audiences. The final section, Part III: The ‘Iolani Palace and The Aliʿi Garment Reproduction Project, demonstrates the powerful persistence of these aliʿi ensembles as iconographic manifestations of Hawaiian sovereignty, chiefly presence, and Hawaiian cultural heritage. Through the conception, creation, and implementation of the ‘Iolani Palace’s Aliʿi Garment Reproduction Project, these reproductions of diplomatic dress enable cultural practitioners of featherwork, designers, fashion historians, museum professionals, and visitors to animate and experience the presence of the aliʿi fashions in three-dimensional form.

These preserved modes of transmission have furnished scholars, artisans, and cultural heritage specialists with the tools to academically deconstruct and artistically replicate aliʿi clothing from the Kalākaua Dynasty of the Hawaiian Kingdom. Contemporary reproductions of historic royal fashions are an act of restoration that has allowed indigenous communities, island inhabitants, and visitors to meet face-to-face with reproductions of Hawaiian material cultural heritage. While traditionally restoration emphasizes returning a work of art, or an artifact to its visual original state, in the case of the reproduction project, the garments of the aliʿi, that no longer exist in full, are given a second life through reproduction.20 In this contemporary encounter, these products and instruments of

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20 Wilkins, “Ruffling Feathers,” 234.
Hawaiian and foreign exchange, indigenous agency, and adaptation have survived to tell the *mo‘olelo* (stories) of their ali‘i and their diplomatic presence in Hawai‘i and throughout the world. This *mo‘olelo* reveals the ali‘i utilized traditional dress and its adaptations into ‘fusion fashions’ as agents and representations of power, status, and diplomacy between the late-eighteenth century and the late-nineteenth century. By harnessing the technological innovation of photographic portraiture the Kalākaua Dynastic Monarchs publicized iconographic compositions of Hawaiian nationality, contemporary kingship, and international presence. As dress and portraiture brokered diplomatic encounters between the Hawaiian Kingdom and the world, the reproductions of these garments in the twenty-first century represent another form of agency, where the Hawaiian communities of today have reproduced and care for ensembles that embody their ali‘i and their legacies. In a world where people are absorbing information and media faster than ever before, these reproductions force visitors to slow down, meet them face-to-face, listen to their stories, and realize the visual language and power of dress.

**Part I: The Visual Language of Dress: Feathers, Fabrics, and ‘Fusion’**

“*what is made for the being, for the body—to adorn, to beautify, to bedeck—is also food for the spirit, for the soul. Within a garment’s textures and designs is a message from its creator binding the creator to the wearer. The velvet scarf, the ‘ahu ‘ula, and the feathered ma‘ihole all become the interwoven representations of encounters between those who made them, who gave them, who wore them, and who received them, and each signifies the creation of enduring relationships and the commitment to future engagement.*”\(^{21}\)

-Noelle M. K. Y. Kahanu and Maile Andrade

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As with any meeting between two persons or groups, appearance and dress play a role in how each party identifies and perceives the other. When a diplomatic encounter occurs between international entities, it is pivotal that each consular agent dress in a manner that alludes to the representatives’ positions of political power and their national identities. In these meetings of diplomacy,

“habitus, gender, and representation are closely intertwined.”

To dress one’s figure—enveloping the flesh in assemblages of identity and materiality—is an active process of connecting one’s body to a place, time, gender, age, and status in society.

In pre-contact Hawai’i, presenting the body and its adornments corresponded with visual signifiers of rank and social hierarchies. Through various layers of ornamentation, the physical body was embellished with protective symbols, materials, and rituals.

The most exclusive form of chiefly Hawaiian dress and adornment was to wrap ones most sacred parts—the head, neck, and spine—in *hulu manu*. The *hulu manu* of the Hawaiian Archipelago have long embodied the *mana*.

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24 While the enmeshment of dress, gender, and race have recently been explored in international relations scholarship; further inquiry must be broached in interdisciplinary research initiatives; Standfield, “Gendering the practice turn in diplomacy,” 148.


27 Kaeppler, “Adorning the Adorned,” 119.

28 These layers included the skin with *kākau* (tattoo), clothing, chiefly adornments, like featherwork; and environmental elements like *kāhili* (chiefly standards), which signify and protect the presence of the *ali‘i*; Kaeppler, “Adorning the Adorned,” 115-119

genealogy, ‘akumākua (ancestral spirits), and political power of the ali‘i. When crafted into nā hulu ali‘i, the “royal jewels” of the Hawaiian environment extend the mana of the akua (gods) to the ali‘i wearing or in possession of the piece. The ali‘i harnessed the power of hulu manu and featherwork as visual merits, placing their rank, status, and inherent mana above maka‘āinana and other rivaling ali‘i. The feather arts utilized by men were ‘ahu ‘ula and maihole (helmets), while women wore lei hulu. Both men and women harnessed the art of kāhili (royal standards), which visually reinforced the social “system of sacred symbols and ritual objectifications,” which divided society on a class basis rather than gender. These featherworks are iconographic symbols of “the visible manifestation of invisible concepts of knowledge, and specifically to concepts about the embodiment of the divine.” Chiefly regalia and dress were both a right only the ali‘i could harness, at risk of violating the sacred system of kapu (forbidden; restrictions of taboo), which reinforced the social, religious, and political power of the ali‘i.30

30 The utilization of feathers in chiefly clothing is prevalent among many Pacific cultures and is theorized to have arrived in Hawai‘i by Polynesian voyagers who settled the archipelago around 1000 C.E.; Leah Caldera, ed., Royal Hawaiian Featherwork: Nā Hulu Ali‘i (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2015), 10-13, 30.

31 Clothing in Hawai‘i followed tapu (sacred system) where clothing embodies personal mana. So, wearing another person’s clothing, especially older relatives, or personas of higher genealogical rank, puts one’s body at risk of damaging their own mana; Vibrant and iridescent “jewels” came in many colors were mostly sourced from the endemic birds—‘i‘iwi (Vestiaria coccinea; scarlet red), mamo (Drepanis pacifica; orange-yellow; black), ‘ō ō (Moho spp.; lemon-yellow; black), ‘ō ‘ū (Psittirostra psittacea; dark green), ‘apapane (‘akakane, Himatone sanguinea; crimson), and the ‘akialoa (Akialoa ellisia; bright green; grey; olive-green)—of the Hawaiian environment.; Marzan and ‘Ohukani‘ōhi’a Gon III, ed., “The Aesthetics,” 26-31; Kaeppler, “Adorning the Adorned,” 123.


33 Kaeppler, “Adorning the Adorned,” 119.

34 Kaeppler, “Adorning the Adorned,” 119.

and political structure of life. David Malo, Hawaiian scholar and historian, recorded that the lands that produced feathers gave *hulu* as a tribute during *Makahiki* (new year) season and were heavily taxed by the *aliʻi*, further linking the ownership of feathers to the chief’s control of the land and labor systems in Hawaiʻi.

While featherwork was the most visibly striking and protective form of *aliʻi* wardrobe, the most common textile in pre-contact Hawaiʻi was the chieffess-controlled high art of *kapa* (barkcloth). Groups of women transformed the pulp of *wauke*, or paper mulberry bark (*Broussonetia papyrifera*), into long rectangles of soft, foldable, and comfortable textiles (See Figure 1). The fabric sheets were saturated with the maker’s and wearer’s *mana*, methodically beaten into the fibers, and stamped onto the surface in intricate patterns. *Kapa* garments covered the lower half of the body in either a *malo* (loincloth) for men, a *pāʻū* (skirt) for women, and a *kihei* (shawl) or cape over one shoulder. If the *kapa* of the *pāʻū* wrapped around a woman’s torso (covering her bust and knees), this indicated she was of *aliʻi* blood; if the *pāʻū* wrapped around the woman’s waist (to her knees), she was a commoner. An example of this wrapping can be seen in the lithograph of Queen Kaʻahumanu with her servant on a rug (1816); the Queen is depicted

seated upon a matt, wrapped in layers of patterned *kapa, lei hulu* upon her neck and head, and a *kahili paʻalima* (hand-held feather standard) in her hand (See Figure 2).41 These Hawaiian modes of dress and adornment conceptually and physically transformed with society after contact with foreigners, and in under half a century, the physical fabrics of society would change.

‘Fusion Fashion’ and *He Alo Ā He Alo* Encounters

When Native Hawaiians and *haole* (foreigners) first met—in 1778, during Captain James Cook’s third expedition—both participants belonged to fashion systems unknown to the other, composed of differing materials, styles, tastes, standards, and construction techniques.42 Adrienne Kaeppler, anthropologist of Pacific cultures and textiles, declares that the most notable early diplomatic exchange during the “age of exploration” in Hawai‘i (1778-the 1840s)43 was when the high chief Kaplaniʻōpuʻu visited Captain Cook’s ships, subsequently, Cook visited the shore on January 26, 1779.44 The practice of *hoʻokupu* (sprouting)45 and *he alo ā he alo* (face-to-face) encounters are intimately tied to *aliʻi* diplomacy efforts.46 The custom of *hoʻokupu*, meaning growing or sprouting, is a ceremonial giving of gifts to “nurture the relationship between giver and

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43 These trades and gifting of *nā hulu aliʻi*, mea waiwai aliʻi, and *kapa* provide modern scholarship with the basis for our knowledge of Hawaiian featherwork and dress for pre-contact Hawai‘i; Kaeppler, “Hawaiian Featherwork,”40.
44 Ibid.
receiver or in return for mana.”47 In ‘Ōlelo No’eau: Hawaiian Proverbs & Poetical, Mary Kawena Pukui recites, “I hele i kauhale, pa’a pū’olo i ka lima,” which she translates to, “In going to the houses of others, carry a package in the hand. Take a gift.”48 Gifts can be exchanged between maka ’āinana and ali’i, kanaka ‘ōiwi (Native Hawaiians, being of the bones) and the akua (gods), and in post-contact times, between the ali’i and foreigners.49 Noelle M. K. Y. Kahanu, kanaka ‘ōiwi (Native Hawaiian) curator, scholar, and museum exhibition liaison, defines he alo ā he alo as the intimate interpersonal exchange of trust through which each participant’s character, values, ethics, and respect is shared with and for one another.50 Both of these valued traditions played extensively into the gifting and exchange of featherwork pieces to explorers, diplomats, and eventually, royals abroad. As ‘ahu ‘ula and maihole were gifted by the ali’i in he alo ā he alo encounters through the practice of ho’okupu, the Hawaiian chiefs promoted diplomatic partnerships of aloha (love and friendship) beyond the island chain.51 In turn, the featherworks of Hawaiian artisans were traded, sold, and placed into the collections of foreigners worldwide.52

50 Kahanu, “He Alo Ā He Alo / Kanohi Ki Te Kanohi / Face to Face: Curatorial Bodies, Encounters and Relations,” 296.
51 In Hawai‘i, the practice of ho’okupu (sprouting) and he alo ā he alo (face-to-face) encounters are intimately tied to the ali’i diplomacy efforts. The custom of ho’okupu, meaning growing or sprouting, is a ceremonial giving of gifts to “nurture the relationship between giver and receiver or in return for mana.”; ‘Iolani Palace Museum, “Ho’okupu,” wall text from permanent exhibition.
52 Kaeppler, “Hawaiian Featherwork During the Age of Exploration,” 40.
From this point on, the exchange, dissemination, and collection of objects, ideas, and practices were quickly adopted into the consciousness and collecting habits of ali‘i, foreign explorers and traders, and US missionaries. This period contributed to and overlapped with the Monarchy Period of Hawai‘i (ca. 1810-1893), resulting in distinct changes to Hawaiian culture's social, political, economic, religious, and environmental fabrics. Jennifer Craik, fashion historian, argues that fashion is a visual, material, and social agent of acculturation: a cultural modification that happens when “cultures merge” and have “prolonged contact,” ultimately manifesting from the diffusion of specific cultural traits into collaborative fusions of fashion and adaptation. These acculturative changes in Native Hawaiian dress were accelerated by the political, economic, and spiritual interests of the ali‘i and haole agents. Stacy L. Kamehiro, art historian and scholar of colonial Hawaiian visual and material culture, suggests that by analyzing the “mutual entanglements of those inhabiting…terrains and processes of cultural intersections or contact zones and how power is deployed and resisted in these spaces;” scholars can better recognize the fluid conceptions of Hawaiian national iconography based upon “native epistemologies and internationalist ideologies.” As the outside world was introduced to the cultural heritage of Hawaiian mea waiwai ali‘i, kākaulani (chiefly fashion), and European conceptions of Hawaiian indigeneity, the ali‘i and kama‘āina received and

56 Ibid.
adapted to incoming materials, technologies, and information.\textsuperscript{57} When these experiences with foreigners transitioned into “prolonged contact” and settlement, the importance of dress and adornment proliferated in new ways. While analyzing the ‘fusion fashions’\textsuperscript{58} of Hawaiian diplomacy, this thesis emphasizes the political and social agency through which Native Hawaiian leaders incorporated sacred symbols of Hawaiian cultural identity into a world where they navigated the mode of European monarchial aesthetics.\textsuperscript{59}

**The Pā‘ū and The Holokū**

In the Hawaiian post-contact world, chiefess power and agency over political affairs became increasingly tied to controlling the means of production, incoming material resources, and the dissemination of goods.\textsuperscript{65} By the early nineteenth century, the readymade, incoming bolts of cotton calico and silk could imitate the wrapping of *kapa* around the body for a *pā‘ū*.\textsuperscript{66} While traditional production methods and dyes persisted in *kapa* making, the skilled producers of the labour-intensive artform decreased dramatically from the declining Native Hawaiian population affected by incoming foreign diseases.\textsuperscript{67}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{57} Peter H. Buck (Te Rangi Hiroa), *Arts and Crafts of Hawaii* (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 2003), 34.
\item \textsuperscript{58} Arthur, “Fusion Fashion,” B1-21.
\item \textsuperscript{59} Valencia, “Feathers,” 186.
\item \textsuperscript{65} Kamehiro, “Hawaiian Quilts,” 24.
\item \textsuperscript{66} Johnston, “Picturing,” 140.
\item \textsuperscript{67} In a 2014 research study composed by Bisulca, Schattenburg-Raymond, and du Preez on Hawaiian dyes and pigments used on kapa, results indicated that traditional pigments and dyes were incorporated with imported materials in *kapa* production of the nineteenth century. In the study, over 150 pieces in the Bishop Museum’s collection were surveyed with fluorescence spectroscopy (XRF), UV-Vis-NIR fiber optics reflectance spectroscopy, Fourier Transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) and high-performance liquid chromatography. The results were analyzed by period, design, use, and historical context. With close collaboration of researchers and cultural practitioners, the fabrication methods tested were successful in the recreation of kapa. This study intends to expand contemporary knowledge of historical materials and techniques for
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Not only were these fabrics remedies to issues of labor and supply, but they were luxurious goods that elevated the status of whomever “conspicuously consumed” and adorned their body with foreign materials, emulating foreign mana.68 Kamehiro explains:

The concept of mana and the way it was attached to certain foreign materials and practices was key to these exchanges. Consumption amplified the chiefs’ mana and power: to their subjects, it demonstrated their capacity to properly channel the mana of the gods (akua); to foreigners, it suggested their divinity.69

Therefore, consumption and the utilization of imports by Native Hawaiians should not be seen as novel infatuations with new materials, but as calculated displays of power, control, and exchange based on the social and religious structures of Hawai‘i.70 For example, when the ali‘i publicly displayed feather garments in a ritual of presentation and subsequent destruction, the ‘worldly power’ and status of the ali‘i is emphasized by their ability to consume its mana in its entirety.71 Leading up to the apex of his power, Kamehameha I’s use of foreign goods and technologies such as clothing, arms, metal, furniture, and sailing vessels solidified his power and expanded his dominion over the Hawaiian archipelago.72 In direct response to the increasing demand for foreign fabrics, the mōʻī monopolized the importation of cloth and limited ali‘i access to the prized

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70 Ibid, 10.
71 Kamehiro, “Featherwork in the Hawaiian Monarchy Period,” 82.
72 Kamehiro, “Kalākaua’s Coronation,” 54.
goods; elevating Chinese and Japanese silks and European and American cotton calico textiles to the same superior status and social consciousness of other mea waiwai ali‘i—where for a short time, access and the ability to harness these materials was reserved for the ali‘i, like feathers.73

With this adaptation to foreign textiles established, the newly settled Christian Missionaries were quickly implored by the skilled hands of Hawaiian women to share their knowledge of sewing, garment construction, and the tailoring of western aesthetics of fashion.74 As the Missionary standards for modesty soon gained sponsorship by the prominent women ali‘i, a widespread pattern of dress was designed for the body and lifestyle of Hawaiian women—the holokū, a loose-fitting gown of long sleeves, a high neck, and a full-body length train (See Figure 3).75 Journalist, artist, and educator, Leilehua Yuen, narrates the story of the first holokū:

Learning that women were on board Thaddeus, Kalākua Kaheiheimālie, a widow of the late Kamehameha, visited them and immediately demanded they sew her a European style dress. Grabbing the opportunity for ministry, the missionary wives immediately got up their sewing circle and set to work. As they stitched the chiefess’ gown, they put her four attendants to practice stitching on strips of calico straps. Already skilled at sewing kapa with bone needles and thread they had spun from native fibers, the steel needles and silken threads of the missionary wives must have been a delight to the women…Stays, corsets, and laces were foregone, as they were only needed under the more highly constructed and complex gowns… Kalākua Kaheiheimālie became the proud owner of the first holokū.76

73 Ibid.
74 The missionary wives came to the Hawaiian Islands after 1820 and settled by the 1830s.; Ibid.
75 Mary Kawena Pukui, Samuel H. Elbert, and Esther T. Mookini, “Holokū” The Pocket Hawaiian Dictionary with a Concise Hawaiian Grammar, (University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1975): 30; Another derivative of the holokū is the muʻumuʻu, the undergarments which originally followed a similar design without the yoke or train. The muʻumuʻu was easier to work in, relax, lounge, and swim in, making the garment ideal for commoners. Ibid, 111.
By crafting the Hawaiian chiefesses Kalākua, Kīnaʻu, Keōpūolani, and Nāmāhāna the European style “Mother Hubbard Dress,” the Missionary wives unknowingly collaborated with the aliʻi in the production of a nationally recognizable garment of Hawaiian dress, pride, and freedom; surpassing over two-hundred years of its endurance.\(^7\) The garment was made in an act of proselytizing, intended to cover as much skin as possible to promote modestly while remaining breathable and adapting to changing bodies.\(^9\) While the Native Hawaiian adoption of the holokū fit the Christian moral compass, the garment was reminiscent of the symbolic hierarchical and material demonstration of fabric consumption in the kapa pāʻū.\(^8\) Several layers of kapa enveloped the human body for the pāʻū, whereas the holokū gathered greatly at the yoke, adding conspicuous volume and mana to the aliʻi.\(^1\) According to the diary entries of the Missionary wives, the holokū was standardized for Christianized Hawaiian women a mere two years later, in 1822; and by 1838, “women from all walks of life.”\(^2\)

Throughout this same period, featherwork practitioners adapted to the political, social, and spiritual agency of intercultural mixing. Despite its proliferation and dissemination in the age of exploration, the production of hulu manu decreased drastically like kapa and by the mid-nineteenth century, but their symbolic importance and power had not dwindled.\(^8\) Feathered garments were

\(^{78}\) Yuen, “The Holokū.”
\(^{79}\) Kaeppler, “Adorning the Adorned,” 134.
\(^{80}\) Yuen, “The Holokū.”
\(^{81}\) *Ibid.*
\(^{82}\) *Ibid.*
\(^{88}\) Kamehiro, “Featherwork in the Hawaiian Monarchy Period,” 80.
worn, displayed, and made for specific people and events for the Hawaiian Monarchial family. Kamehiro further argues:

“Through the exchange, display, collection, and study of feather objects, Native Hawaiians of distinguished rank expressed their status, history, and culture, and shaped spaces of engagement with newcomers and foreign entities in local, regional, and global contexts.”

The singular example of a feathered pāʻū was made for Nāhiʻenaʻena for the occasion of her brother King Kamehameha II’s return from England, designed to harbor the connotations of an ‘ahu'ula, which was kapu for women to wear in traditional Hawai‘i (See Figure 4). The pāʻū contains hundreds of approximately a million ʻōʻō hulu on the woven olonā backing, spreading twenty feet in length and two and a half feet in width. The construction of the pāʻū was monumental, as it was the first time a feathered pāʻū had been created and the first time a piece of featherwork was constructed of this size by women. Made by Native Hawaiian traditionalists at Lahaina, the pāʻū represented hope for revitalizing the cultural practices of featherwork, traditional worship, and chiefly brother-sister marriages; which were dwindling under the power of chief-backed missionary reforms, supported by Nāhiʻenaʻena’s mother Keōpūolani. Since Nāhiʻenaʻena had already navigated the dueling influences of ancient tradition and missionary

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90 Ibid.
92 Hawai‘i Alive, “The Pāʻū of Nāhiʻenaʻena.”
94 The siblings were destined for a “brother-sister” marriage, a cultural practice which “ensured genealogical superiority among Hawaiian royalty.”; Betty Lou Kam, “The Feather Pāʻū of Nāhiʻenaʻena,” in Royal Hawaiian Featherwork: Nā Hula Ali‘i, (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2015), 78-79.
instruction, she decided to break with the practice of wearing the pāʻū without undergarments and instead chose to wear the pāʻū wrapped over her modest, missionary approved clothing. Upon her untimely death at the age of 21, the pāʻū was displayed at her funeral, never to be worn again. After the ceremony, the pāʻū was cut in half and sewn together along its length to create a funerary pall that would cover her brother, Kamehameha III’s coffin in 1855, and King Kalākaua’s coffin in 1891.

Throughout the rest of the Kamehameha Dynasty (1810-1874), fashions of the Hawaiian Islands mixed many materials and styles best to serve the occasion and status of the wearer. As the Hawaiian aliʻi facilitated face-to-face diplomatic relationships with other sovereign monarchies, especially Great Britain’s, the royal tastes for foreign and familiar fashion modes became more entangled. Fashions from around the world disseminated quicker than ever, with the increasing availability of print technologies like fashion plates, magazines, and photography. Furthermore, many Hawaiian monarchs refined and catered their taste to foreign garments, styles, and materials while traveling abroad.

While cotton calicoes were popular fabrics among commoners, the female aliʻi wore the finest silks for their holokū, embellishing them with patterns, ruffles, belts, and ribbons. As the royal Hawaiian women adopted the fortified undergarments of corsets required for the structure and support of long, heavy

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96 Ibid.
99 Kamehiro, “Kalākaua’s Coronation,” 54.
100 The Victorian Era is named after Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland (1837-1901) and Empress of India (1876-1901); James Laver, Fashions and Fashion Plates 1800-1900, (London and New York: Penguin Books Limited, 1943): 3.
Victorian-style evening gowns, the *ali‘i* often relied upon the comfort and freedom afforded by the *holokū* and *mu‘umu‘u* for informal occasions and times off. In terms of adornment, since feathers were seen as the ‘jewels’ of the Hawaiian Islands, incoming gifts and purchases of diamond and gemstone jewelry were easily appropriated as a mode of bodily adornment for the women *ali‘i*. They accessorized their clothing with jewelry, feathered fans, feathered hats, *lei humupapa* (hat bands), and *lei hulu* garlands upon their heads and collars (See Figure 5). A *lei hulu* could easily be worn with a diamond tiara for an act of diplomacy or ceremony.

Queen Kapi‘olani, as the granddaughter of the last King of Kaua‘i, promoted the Native Hawaiian artforms of the Kaua‘i *lei hulu* and *Ni‘ihau* shell lei by both wearing and gifting these items as state gifts—symbolizing love, friendship, partnership, honor, and celebration—to foreign diplomats (See Figure 6). By intentionally incorporating the traditional adornments of *lei hulu* and *Ni‘ihau* shell lei into her wardrobe, Kapi‘olani preserves the iconographic power of Native Hawaiian identity and promotes it as a tool of Hawaiian diplomacy. Gabriele Mentges, a scholar of post-colonial fashion, argues:

“Thus, traditional fabrics and dress become crucial as identity markers of…nationhood. To middle-class actors on the micro level, traditional or national dress helps to transmit values and norms between the generations. Moreover, the idea of tradition evokes and relates to ‘a certain habitat of meaning and memory’ of an imagined…past that simultaneously presents a historical and a present… Fashion, in this case, becomes an object of

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101 *Ibid.; Yuen,“The Holokū.”*
103 Christophe, “Imperial Jewels,” 175.
strategic cultural interests and planning. ‘Self-orientalization’ via fashion becomes an opportunity to symbolically consolidate territorial claims.”

This utilization of *hulu mea* as visual tools of national identity simultaneously serving as diplomatic agents transcends across the Kamehameha and Kalākaua Dynastic kings and queens. In particular, Kalākaua’s audiences with world leaders differ from the encounters the Kamehameha Dynasty had experienced on the archipelago and abroad during the eighteenth and earlier nineteenth centuries. In Kamehameha I’s lifetime (ca. 1758 -1819), the King never personally left the islands of his dominion, but the succeeding Kamehameha Monarchs (1795-1874) worked rigorously abroad to achieve recognition of the Hawaiian Kingdom as an independent and sovereign state by the major colonial powers of the time (Britain, France, and the United States). Their sacrifices and fortitude ensured that Hawai‘i was respected as an autonomous, non-colonized, and non-European state. Additionally, their open diplomacy strategies and ventures abroad would persist to the Kalākaua Dynasty (1874-1893). Just as the Kamehameha Dynasty had done before, Kalākaua and his representatives traveled around the world to learn about foreign exhibitions of empire,

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105 Kahanu, “He Alo Ā He Alo / Kanohi Ki Te Kanohi / Face to Face: Curatorial Bodies, Encounters and Relations,” 296.

106 During Kamehameha III’s reign, Hawai‘i was recognized as “independent” in the formal joint-declaration of Britain and France on November 28, 1843. This recognition pivotal to the restoration of the Hawaiian Kingdom after the first British ambassador to Hawai‘i, Mr. Richard Charlton, had falsely claimed ownership of, and accessioned Hawai‘i. This day is now Lā Kūʻokoʻa (Independence Day) in the Islands.; Beamer, “Ali‘i Selective Appropriation of Modernity,” 139.


technological innovations, and the government systems they hoped to utilize to solidify their sovereignty.\textsuperscript{109} Through these meetings, the Hawaiian Kingdom recognized the necessity for appearances and actively preserved diplomatic partnerships with royalty and leaders from nations abroad.\textsuperscript{110}

\textbf{The ‘Ahu’ula and the Military Uniform}

As early as Kamehameha I, wearing European dress styles in tandem with featherwork became synonymous with important ceremonies and events. The dress of male ali‘i simultaneously appropriated the powerful and prestigious aesthetics of military uniforms and sharply tailored suits from American businessmen.\textsuperscript{111} The parallel between military uniforms and ‘ahu’ula and maihole are closer than they may seem, representing the dress of chiefly and royal bodies during warfare.\textsuperscript{113} The dress of male ali‘i simultaneously appropriated the powerful and prestigious aesthetics of military uniforms and sharply tailored suits from American businessmen.\textsuperscript{114} Kamehiro emphasizes that during diplomatic encounters:

\begin{quote}
“Notable ali‘i—for example, King Kamehameha I; Kalani‘ōpu‘u, chief of Hawai‘i; Boki, governor of O‘ahu; and Kaneoneo, chief of O‘ahu—frequently wore feather cloaks when meeting with foreign visitors.”\textsuperscript{115}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{110} Kalākaua exponentially increased foreign diplomacy through expansive legations and consulates, a study abroad program for Native Hawaiians (1880-1887), Hawai‘i joining the World Postal Union (1882), sending delegations to Tsar Alexander’s coronation (May 1883), participating in World Fairs, holding the Grand Requiem Mass in Honolulu for the Spanish King Don Alfonso XII (January 1886), and sending delegations to Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee (1887); Kamehiro, “Introduction: Hawaiian National Art,” 23-24.
\textsuperscript{111} The precursor to the suit is sailor’s shirts, which were readily traded between male ali‘i from incoming merchants and whaling industries. These loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts were called frocks; and were soon to be exchanged for American business attire, composed of tailored shirts with collars and buttons. Arthur, “Fusion Fashion,” B1-2, 4
\textsuperscript{113} Kamehiro, “Featherwork in the Hawaiian Monarchy Period,” 81.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.
In May 1819, when Liholiho was accessioning to the Hawaiian throne, the new King “wore a feather cloak and helmet over his red and yellow English uniform to acknowledge the transfer of power.” In 1824, when Kamehameha II and Queen Kamāmalu traveled to England to strengthen diplomatic ties, Liholiho did not wear feather garments, but “Kamāmalu and her attendant were seen wearing headdresses made of scarlet, yellow, and blue feathers” (See Figure 7). During a later reception, the chief Kekūanāo‘a (identified as “Joanoa”) wore an ‘ahu‘ula and maihole, but King Kamehameha II did not. Kaeppler proposes that perhaps the garments were inappropriate to wear by the King because of their connection to other chiefs. Still, it may have been because of the media’s reaction to Hawaiian featherwork. It seems that the ‘ahu‘ula the couple had brought with them were discussed heavily in the media and not in the best light. Hellmich declares:

“Their dress was intensely scrutinized and analyzed in relationship to their physical appearance and manners—considered to be collective indicators of their civility and intelligence. Their featherwork, while appreciated, was thought to be part of their ‘savage’ and ‘primitive’ nature that needed to be shed in order to be received by ‘civilized’ English society and ultimately, King George IV. The party was subject to a mix of overt racism and civil cultural curiosity during their stay, and both were manifested in the press.”

116 Ibid.
117 Ibid, 80.
119 Hellmich, “Hawaiian Featherwork Abroad,” 117.
Perhaps these accounts and instances of media attention are additional contributors to the changes in the collecting, display, and commissioning of *hulu manu* by the time of the Kalākaua Dynasty.

Before leaving for his royal tour in 1881, Kalākaua was already aware of the pageantry of royal courts and the visual iconographic value of national symbols. Keenly cognizant of the federating power of European diplomatic uniforms, the *mōʻī* was motivated to adapt the language of military regalia to serve Hawaiian National interests better.\(^\text{120}\) While diplomatic men in the 19\(^{\text{th}}\) century were typically dressed in well-tailored suits and military uniforms, with high collars, epaulettes, royal sashes, and orders, Kalākaua was determined to give the uniforms a cohesive, Hawaiian touch.\(^\text{121}\)

Before the diplomatic party began their journey, the King’s traveling companions, Colonel William N. Armstrong and Colonel Charles H. Judd, had uniforms designed of fine English cloth and embroidery upon the collar, breasts, tail, and cuffs with “gold wire to create images of *kalo* (taro) leaves and flowers and *koa* tree leaves” (See Figure 8).\(^\text{122}\) Having deep national sentiments, the *kalo* motifs on the breasts allude to the king’s *aliʻi* responsibility to protect and ensure the prosperity of the land and peoples of Hawaii.\(^\text{123}\) Later on his world tour, the *mōʻī* decided to once again commission new uniforms for himself, his

\(^{120}\) Kamehiro, “Worlding the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi: The Art of International Relations,” 87.

\(^{121}\) Ibid.

\(^{122}\) Ibid.

\(^{123}\) *Kalo* is a staple food for Hawaiians and has been linked symbolically to the ʻāina (land) and island origins in traditional Hawaiian spirituality.; Ibid.
companions, and John Owen Dominis,124 the Governor of O‘ahu. After experiencing the dress and pageantry of many countries, the king wrote to his sister, Queen Regent Lili‘uokalani, of his desire to further differentiate the delegations’ ensembles as representations of Hawaiian iconography, this time with a golden, velvet sash inscribed with gold *kalo* leaves.125

When considering traditional Hawaiian chiefly regalia in the time of Kamehameha II, it may be unsurprising to learn that Kalākaua did not wear featherwork while upon diplomatic endeavors. The King’s lack of wearing featherwork was balanced by displaying the artform to foreign dignitaries as a object symbolizing the of the highest offices in his kingdom.126 Colonel William N. Armstrong, the Hawaiian Attorney General who served as his immigration commissioner for the voyage, noted Kalākaua’s decision to present the feather *‘ahu ‘ula* as an entity of its own, rather than wearing it, because “the wearing of these cloaks over a European military or diplomatic uniform would be incongruous.”127 The King additionally had another member of his traveling party, his personal cook Robert von Oelhoffen, wear the cloak on certain occasions to allow the cloak to embody its intended display on a human form.128

It is interesting to note that von Oelhoffen was not of *ali‘i* heritage, but

124 John Owens Dominis is also the husband of Queen Lili‘uokalani; they were married in 1862. Dominis would also join the traveling party to Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee in 1887.; Collette Higgins, “Following In Kapiolani’s Footsteps,” interview by Ihilani Gutierrez, *Na Moolelo Lecture Series*, IolaniPalaceTV, April 12, 2020, video, 6:50, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xMArVUGi6o4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xMArVUGi6o4).
125 Kamehiro, “Worlding the Kingdom of Hawai‘i,” 87.
128 *Ibid*. 
German. If he had worn the ‘ahu’ula at the discretion of the King, this is possible evidence that the kapu system and social restrictions of the later-nineteenth century had become further separated from their genealogical and spiritual iconography. The historical reality of ali‘i having the exclusive right to own and harness featherwork perhaps afforded Kalākaua to extend his agency onto another body for diplomatic purposes. With the gifting of feather capes and cloaks from ali‘i to foreigners all over the world, the destruction of the kapu system in 1819, and the noa (free of taboo) systems of order in the later Hawaiian Kingdom, it is possible that this action could be another adaptation to the socio-political utilization of nā hulu ali‘i in the Kalākaua Dynasty. Furthermore, the demonstrated need to display the ‘ahu’ula in the round speaks to the King’s traditional understanding of nā hulu ali‘i as being activated as a divine “glowing” thing when worn by a chiefly body, but in his contemporary moment, anybody in service to the King would suffice.

Even though Kalākaua did not personally wear ‘ahu’ula often, he respected and honored the iconography of hulu to the Hawaiian people and their international reputations. While he was abroad on his world travels, he collected feathers from the places he visited and is said to have paid a dollar per feather brought to him. When he returned home to Honolulu, the feathers he collected were transformed into three cloaks, commissioned for his wife Queen

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One of these cloaks is a clear example of ‘fusion fashion’: composed of brown pheasant, brown fowl, and black fowl feathers, the Queen wore the cloak for carriage rides (See Figure 9). This ‘ahu’ula is made by sewing feathers onto a fabric base of velvet and silk, rather than attaching them to fiber, an innovative technique of *humupapa* (stitched feathers) featherwork—used in this time to make hatbands and cloaks in a quicker span of time. The cloak was finished with a red velvet collar and five “frog-style” clasps of East-Asian influence.

This cloak was not the only thing commissioned following his travels; after his return, Kalākaua expressed his desire for feathers to be collected, repurposed, and crafted into ‘ahu’ula and kāhili for his royal coronation in 1883. This was one of the only occasions that Kalākaua wore an ‘ahu’ula on top of his military uniform. In the pageantry of the coronation, the lowering of King Kamehameha I’s Golden Mamo cloak upon King Kalākaua was not seen as ‘incongruous,’ but quoted in the Hawaiian Gazette as “The most effective part of the ceremony” with “the cloak [looking] graceful over the King's military uniform.” Regardless of its success and iconographic power, the ‘ahu’ala transitioned into an international symbol of Hawaiian nationhood and identity, breaking from a strictly ali‘i association into “sanctified robes of state.”

131 Ibid.
132 Ibid.
133 Ibid.
134 Ibid.
136 Ibid.
Part II: ‘Fusion Fashion’ and Photography: Kalākaua Dynasty Fashions

To appreciate the importance of appearance during diplomatic encounters between Hawaiian Monarchs and foreign Heads of State, scholarship must look at material and visual remains with an interdisciplinary lens while acknowledging the historical, international, social, and political agents stitched into every ensemble. Starting long before the late 1880s, the fashionable style of Hawaiian royal dress navigated an authentic appropriation of modern monarchy while characterizing the traditional and national visual appearance of Hawai‘i.\(^{137}\) Since it had been over 100 years since the ali‘i had first contact with fashions of haole, the Hawaiian Monarchs had already accustomed to foreign modes of dress through encounters with explorers, merchants, missionaries, immigrants, and foreigners at home and abroad.\(^ {138}\) Kalākaua and Kapi‘olani selectively appropriated foreign and modern visuals of iconographic display while unifying Hawai‘i’s diverse communities through a national ocular language.\(^ {139}\)

Self-Fashioning: The Queen’s Coronation Portrait

In portraiture, clothing was a key agent in conveying tenants of identity, modernity, spirituality, and monarchy in the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Both Europeans and Hawaiians understood the power behind representation and fought for control over the narrative of Hawai‘i and Hawaiians sent to spectators across the sea. Through the patronage of portraiture, the ali‘i

appropriated the foreign modes of painting, and later photography, to advocate for the diplomatic support that they desired. Within these mediums through which diplomatic appearance and dress, Hawaiian sovereignty, modernity, and iconography could be exhibited through the staging and wearing of hulu manu.

Starting in the mid-nineteenth century, the ali`i actively participated in photographic portraits to promote Hawaiian sovereignty, modernity, and the iconography of Hawai`i’s cultural heritage and nationhood.141 King Kalākaua became an ardent patron of photography as an enthusiastic promoter of Hawaiian national imagery, cultural heritage initiatives, and scientific modernity.142 While portraiture through painting had connotations of historical and genealogical legitimacy, photographic portraiture held promises of modernity and technological astuteness. The early printmaking techniques used by mass media sources to disseminate sketched portraits of the monarchs soon were overlooked when the field of photography and its products began circulating the islands in the 1840s and 1850s.143 Photography as a medium opened a portal into new

141 Kamehiro, “Featherwork in the Hawaiian Monarchy Period,” 97.
142 Ibid.
143 Louis Daguerre’s photographic process, the daguerreotype, invented in 1829 in Paris, was the first form of photography practiced on the Islands. A small number of photographers were active in the archipelago from the late-1840s through the 1850s. Still, by the next decade, a rapid increase in “photographic printing processes, a broader distribution of images, and a larger number of photographers” were able to offer and maintain portrait services in Hawai`i.143 Photography scholar, Lynn Davis, insinuates that the demographic shifts in the Hawaiian Kingdom contributed to the field of photography diversifying on the Islands, with immigrants from America, France, Portugal, Japan, and China setting up practices. In 1845, Theophilus Metcalf, an engineer, had short lived experiments in daguerreotype portrait photography in Hawai`i; in 1847, French visitor, Senor Le Bleu, shortly sold photographic portraits in Honolulu while he was in town.; Hugo Stangenwald (1853-1858) and Stephen Goodfellow (1853) practiced photography for a time on the Islands.; Healoha Johnston, “Curator’s Notes: Healoha Johnston Details the History between King Kalākaua and Portrait Photography,” Honolulu Museum of Art Blog, uploaded 2018, accessed April 12, 2022. http://blog.honoluluacademy.org/king-kalakaua-and-portrait-photography/.
dimension of optical information transmission, a valuable tool for any monarch trying to promote an image of their kingdom and themselves at their coronation.

As a fusion of technological advancement, artistry, and utility, photography was a medium associated with the future and science—“something King Kalākaua picked up on and leveraged during his reign.”144 As scholar Anne Maxwell argues, the increased circulation of portrait photographs of the royal family between the 1880s and 1890s contributed to the popularity and support of ali‘i sovereignty in domestic and foreign audiences.145 The photograph is a diplomatic tool for the Hawaiian Kingdom, serving as a mobile, visual, and factual representation of the Kalākaua Dynasty and the Hawaiian people. Within the photograph, Kamehiro explains that the royal family could project:

“cultural refinement, sophistication, and modernity of the sitters, who were typically shown wearing sumptuous dress and expensive ornaments, with tasteful coiffures and accompanied by regalia. These details affected the perceptions of Americans and Europeans, refuting their primitivist and exotic stereotypes of Polynesians. For Native Hawaiians, the striking visibility of featherwork in photographs, especially in portraits of female ali‘i, would have signaled indigenous values associated with royal authority.”146

A principal example of the intentional fashioning of Hawaiian royal presence and agency is in the 1883 photograph of Queen Kapi‘olani’s Coronation gown (See Figure 10).147 In the image credited to James J. Williams,148 Queen

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144 Ibid.
146 Ibid, 98.
147 The coronation ceremony for Kalākaua commenced nine years into his reign to elevate the ceremonial aspects of the Hawaiian Kingdom to an international consciousness and instill national pride.; Kamehiro, “The Art of Kingship: Kalākaua’s Coronation,” 29-35.
148 James J. Williams was an English-born photographer who moved to Honolulu in 1880. In 1882, he purchased the photographic studio that he worked at, from Menzies Dickson, and changed its name to J. Williams & Company. King Kalākaua and Princess Ka‘iuulani were other
Kapiʻolani stands in a three-quarter view to the left-side of the frame; her head is directed at the spectator and her face is composed in a kind, yet regal, combination of direct eye-contact and a small smile. The Queen is dressed sumptuously in her coronation gown, robes, and long train that wraps around her left side to cover the front-right half of the photograph. Upon the Queen’s head rests a diamond crown with a Maltese cross, her ears and neckline are adorned with elaborately set jeweled pieces, and at the center of her bustline, an oval broach sparkles above a broad, blue sash from her right shoulder to her front-left hip (See Figure 11). Her opposite shoulder and breast are decorated in royal orders and ribbons. In the back, left-hand side of the photograph, Queen Kapiolani’s Royal Coronation Crown is presented as another bejeweled claim of Kingship (See Figure 12). When analyzing the details of the Crown, a spectator can see a thick, golden band set with countless diamonds, opals, emeralds, rubies, and kukui nut jewels; above, inverted hoaka’s—a visual metaphor prevalent in both featherwork and poetry of the genealogy of chiefs—connect leaves of kalo.\footnote{Kamehiro, suggests that the “hoaka was intimately associated with chiefs; it denoted ‘glory,’ ‘brightness,’ and ‘splendor’ in Hawaiian verbal and visual language, offering a poetic and visual metaphor for the revered genealogy of chiefs.” These “forms seem to have been the prerogative of chiefs, and those featured on feather garments, sculpture, and royal regalia conveyed similar meanings.”; Kamehiro, “Palaces and Sacred Places,” 72.} Both on their own, and put together, these motifs reference the aliʻi as the “source and guardian of life.”\footnote{Kamehiro, “Sacred Places,” 29-35.} The hoaka and allusion to kalo is a tactic seen in

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\footnote{Kamehiro, “Palaces and Sacred Places,” 72.}
the dress of Kalākaua Monarchs and in Queen Kapiolani’s Coronation Robe outstandingly.

The ensemble itself is constructed in the early-1880s Victorian style of a tailored three piece: bodice, skirt, and a robe acting as an overskirt. The fashion of the 1880s focused clothing design on slender, angular, and long lines which acted to concentrate adornment in the lower, back to accentuate and lengthen the body. The front of the dress has an essence of the early-1880’s “princess line” corsetry and silhouette, made with an exterior cuirasse bodice and long corset underneath. When initially constructed there were two variations of the bodice made, one with a high neck and long sleeves for daywear, and one with short sleeves and a low neck for evening wear. The bodice in the photograph is the eveningwear version and is of white silk, and has shoulder capped sleeves of lace. The skirt is just above floor length and is trimmed in a fringe, mostly covered by the robe from the sides to the back. The robe functions as both an overskirt and court train for Queen Kapi‘olani, decreasing the layers of fabric while feeding the robe into the bodice and back of the garment. The robe is made of deep scarlet silk velvet and trimmed in ermine fur—the inspiration for the mantle is European—mainly British, like the Imperial Robe (Robe of Estate). When compared to Franz Xaver Winterhalter’s oil on canvas painting Queen Victoria (1859), the coronation robes of both Queen Kapi‘olani and Queen Victoria share

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https://fashionhistory.fitnyc.edu/1880-1889/.
152 Franklin, “Fashion History Timeline: 1880-1889.”

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incredible similarities in color, fabrics, and style; the main difference is the characteristic structures of the different eras (1838 versus 1883) and the symbolic embroidery on each ensemble (See Figure 13). The bodice, skirt, and robe of Queen Kapi‘olani’s garment were beautifully embroidered in golden palapalaʻā ferns and leaves of kalo (taro), alluding the King and Queen’s ali‘i responsibility to protect and ensure the prosperity of the land and peoples of Hawai‘i. The colors of red and gold are very important to ancient Hawaiian religion and the art of featherwork; with yellow representing Kāne, god of life and creation; red representing Kū, the god of governance and warfare; and black representing Lono, god of fertility. These illusions to the Hawaiian Islands, cultural heritage, and European Monarchy align with the projected imagery of Kalākaua Monarchs in the 1880s.

After addressing the iconography demonstrated within the dress of Kapi‘olani, it is important to analyze the staging of the queen within the picture plane and the use of royal regalia as props. The inclusion of both Hawaiian monarchical and European royal symbols in the portrait, echoes the vast utilization of same tactic during Kalākaua’s Coronation Ceremony, which played into the Kalākaua Dynasty’s promotion of Hawai‘i as a modern Christian nation, and part of the international family of monarchs. In the rear-right side of the photograph, the Queen stands before a crown and ‘ahu ‘ula adorned thrown. The

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155 Kalo is a staple food for Hawaiians and has been linked symbolically to the ʻāina (land) and island origins in traditional Hawaiian spirituality. Kamehiro, “Worlding the Kingdom of Hawai‘i,” 87.
throne itself is positioned to reflect the alignment of the Queen, as if she has just stood from her seat to engage the visitor who has entered her room. The throne is made of leather and wood but is covered by the feathered cloak from the armrests up, excluding the carved crown, topped with a Christian cross. The ‘ahu‘ula that is draping Kapi‘olani’s throne is named Kalanikauika‘alaneo, which means “heavens hanging cloudless, and is named after the highest-ranking wife of Kamehameha I (See Figure 14). Also known as Keōpūolani (“the gathering of the clouds of heaven”), she was the mother of Princess Nāhi‘ena‘ena and the next two Kamehameha Kings: Prince Liholiho (Kamehameha II) and Prince Kauikeaouli (Kamehameha III). The cloak was passed down to the father of King Lunalililio, Chief Charles Kana‘iana, and after his passing was purchased in 1878, by the government of King Kalākaua. In the back left-hand side, a table is covered with another ‘ahu‘ula; which is additionally topped with a fringed velvet pillow and her crown. The ‘ahu‘ula on the table is known as the Kīwala‘ō cloak (See Figure 15); containing the mana of Kamehameha II’s maternal line, the cloak was owned by Kīwala‘ō, Keōpūolani’s father, and had been taken as a battle prize by Kamehameha I in 1782. It is unlikely that either of the historical cloaks were worn by the Kamehameha monarchs before, or after the disbandment of the kapu system; the taboo against wearing the clothing of another ali‘i was

158 Ibid.
159 The Provisional Government gave the cloak to the Bishop Museum in 1893, following the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom with US aided usurpers.; Ibid. 160 Kaepler, “Hawaiian Featherwork in the Age of Exploration,” 48.
igrained deeply into the sanctity of clothing.\textsuperscript{161} Through the acquisition and display of these Kamehameha cloaks, Kapi‘olani is projecting the Kalākaua Dynasty’s divine and political right to rule Hawai‘i through harnessing their predecessor’s \textit{mana}.

In Kalākaua’s and Kapi‘olani’s efforts to “fulfill both traditional and modern expectations” of their sovereignty on the international stage and as Hawaiians working for Hawaii led them to both collect and commission featherwork. They displayed of the \textit{nā hulu ali`i} containing “the prayers of their makers and acquired the mana of their genealogical provenance and enterprise,”\textsuperscript{162} as sanctified robes of state, put Hawaii and Hawaiian cultural heritage into a metaphorical, modern-\textit{`ahu`ula} of divine protection, like in the Royal Coat of Arms. Bishop Museum Archival Collections Manager Leah Caldiera states,

“In the tradition of the Ali`i Nui and mākua before them, King Kalākaua and Queen Kapi‘olani consecrated these objects to become \textit{mea makamae} (treasures belongings) of their people—fashioned, donned, and preserved in a continued legacy of affection: E hoʻoulu a hoʻōla I ka Lāhui!”\textsuperscript{163}

While the creation and projection of a royal wardrobe depended greatly upon the denotations of materials, techniques, and fashion styles, the \textit{ali`i} clothing could also harbor connotations concerning privileges of authority, cultural attainment, power relations, identity, and divinity. The integration of featherwork into their staging of the portrait solidified the ancestral and political lineages of their right to rule Hawaiʻi, while paying homage to past and present artisans of

\textsuperscript{161} Ibid, 48-49.
\textsuperscript{162} Calderia “Visualizing Hoʻoulu Lāhui,” 35.
\textsuperscript{163} Ibid.
Hawaiian featherwork. This portrait is not a singular case of Hawaiian Monarchs staging their dress and *hulu manu* as iconographic tools, but one of many seen in photographic archives, both disseminated in Hawai‘i and around the world.

**The Royal Jubilee: ‘Fusion’ Photography, Fabrics, and Feathers**

For the array of international representatives at Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee in 1887, the celebrations and gatherings were not just an opportunity to wish the Queen well, but also a chance to showcase their monarchies, expand royal networks of exchange, and reinforce established diplomatic relationships. Fashion played an important role for these monarchial regimes, transforming their historical legitimacy into modes relevant to the modern age.\(^{189}\) Belonging to the family of international monarchs, and speaking the same language through dress, was pivotal to be respected and honored as a sovereign nation. During their travels and time at the celebration, the Hawaiian delegation’s dress intentionally reinforced an image of Hawai‘i as a prosperous, powerful, modern, and artistically accomplished.

There are many accounts of the types of dress and adornment worn during the delegation’s travels, including mourning dress, silk *holoku’s*, feather fans, jewelry, and feather incorporating gowns.\(^{190}\) When the royal women began their journey, the passing of Princess Likelike had the traveling party dressed in black mourning clothes. On the day of their arrival in Washington, the Crown Princess and Queen called upon President Cleveland and his wife, and were invited to dine

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\(^{189}\) Valencia, “Feathers,” 175.

\(^{190}\) Valencia, “Feathers,” 186.
at the White House for dinner on May 6, 1887, two days later.\textsuperscript{191} \textit{The Washington Critic} reported the attire of the Hawaiian Delegation for this meeting:

“The Queen wore a sweeping robe of black satin, with a long train, bordered with gold embroidery. The entire front of the dress was made of the same embroidery. A short black lace shawl was draped on her shoulders, and on her head a plain black bonnet. She wore a jeweled order, and the Hawaiian colors hanging from it in narrow ribbons. The Princess Liliuokalani, who entered with her husband, General Dominis, wore a mourning costume and black crepe veil, pinned back over her bonnet.\textsuperscript{192}

Reporting on the same instance, \textit{The New York Times} observed:

“Queen Kapiolani wore a black satin dress, with short princess front, trimmed with gold embroideries. It was cut short in the front, displaying a pair of light high-cut black kid boots. The back of her dress fell in a Watteau train that was edged with deep gold braid. She wore a small bonnet and carried a black feather fan, with a centre [sic] of yellow feathers.”\textsuperscript{193}

Despite recording slightly differing accounts, congruously combining the journalistic reports paints a visual account of the fashions of diplomacy (See Figure 16). The day after the dinner, \textit{The New York Times} published their description of Queen Kapiolani's gown as:

“Court dress of Hawaii, a full flowing robe of white silk, with a yolk and straight front that was covered with silken embroidery of leaves and wild roses and yellow peahen feathers in natural colors. The embroidery continued upon the side of the dress and deep upon the train. She wore a broad crimson sash across her breast. The dress was high in the neck and long in the sleeves.”\textsuperscript{194}

It is said that First Lady Cleveland was honored by the attire of the Hawaiian Royal women and wore her wedding dress in their honor (See Figure 17).\textsuperscript{195} A beautiful satin, silk, and muslin gown lined in orange-blossom and laurel

\textsuperscript{191} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{192} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{193} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{194} Ibid, 187.  
\textsuperscript{195} 'Iolani Palace “Fashion Fit for Royalty Tour” March 16, 2022.
trimmings; Lady Cleveland’s ensemble surely impressed the Hawaiian Queen’s in return.\textsuperscript{196} Princess Liliuokalani herself explained Queen Kapi‘olani’s attire to dinner, describing:

“The toilet of Her Majesty Queen Kapiolani was of white silk brocade of the choicest Japanese manufacture, artistically embroidered with heavy raised and richly worked designs; it was cut in Hawaiian fashion, a loosely flowing robe of a pattern or mode very becoming to our women, whether made of inexpensive calico or print, or of the finest of silks or most lustrous of satins. A description of this dress was given by all the newspapers, and attracted so much attention that on our arrival abroad the Queen was requested to wear the dress at court, with which solicitation she was happy to comply.”\textsuperscript{197}

When the women did arrived in London, Queen Kapi‘olani and Princess Lili‘uokalani arranged a portraiture session at Walery Studios, the photography studio of the British royal monarchs and nobility.\textsuperscript{198} Like the coronation photograph series of Queen Kapiolani from 1883, these images attempt to promote Hawaiian national pride and sovereignty, while playing into the mode of Victorian aesthetics for fashion and royal portraiture. In an image taken at the session, it seems that Queen Kapi‘olani posed in the dress she had worn to the dinner with the American President (See Figure 18). While the gowns worn by the Hawaiian Royal delegation seemed to please both the American Heads of State and the press, the most recognizable of Queen Kapi‘olani’s personal garments from her journey were to be displayed at the Jubilee, her Lei Hulu Mamo Gown (See Figure 19) and the Peacock Gown (See Figure 20), both incorporating


\textsuperscript{197} Queen Liliuokalani, “Chapter XX: Washington-The White House-Mount Vernon,” \textit{Hawai‘i’s Story by Hawai‘i’s Queen}, (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1898).

\textsuperscript{198} Kamehiro, “Featherwork in the Hawaiian Monarchy Period,” 98.
feathers. The ali’i women often ordered the materials for custom dresses and
gowns abroad in the fashion centers of San Francisco, New York, and London;
and this is the same case for Queen Kapiʻolani’s Lei Hulu Mamo Gown and her
Peacock Gown, which were intentionally designed for attending the Royal
Jubilee. While the ‘ahuʻula in the Coronation series served the symbolic role of
the Kalākaua’s Dynastic legitimacy, there are no ahuʻula within the portraits from
London. Instead, the featherwork necessary to project and promote Hawaiian
craftsmanship and royal presence was built into the construction of the gowns
themselves. While there are journalistic and literary accounts of these garments,
the main reason that we can study Queen Kapiʻolani’s appearance is through the
memorialized technology of photographic portraiture.

In the Queen Kapiʻolani’s Lei Hulu Mamo photograph, the Queen stands
in a three-quarter pose, facing the left-hands frame of the photo (See Figure 21).
She looks dignified in posture, and looks at the viewer, despite having her head
align in the same direction as her body. Her arm on the left side of the picture
rests daintily on the top of an elaborately decorated table. On top of the table, a
pot of ‘mounted porcelain’—a piece of porcelain produced in China, Japan, or
Europe, embellished with gilt bonze or silver mounts of Eastern design—holds a
plant with long, wide leaves. Her hand is elegantly resting upon the table, as if she
is picking up a pea. Her left arm is at her hip and clasps around a beautiful light-
colored fan with a long tassel hanging down the front side of her dress from its

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199 The names I use for these ensembles come from The Friends of the Iolani Palace’s Aliʻi
Garment Reproduction Project, these reproductions and their making will be covered later in the
end. On both of her wrists, the Queen has three layers of bracelets. The necklace of small circles and a cross, bracelets, and earrings all seem to be made of green and yellow shells, possible cat eyes.  

The gown is composed of a black, velvet dress in the construction and cut of a late 1880’s Parisian style dress. Characteristic of this time, the bustle had just come back into fashion and accentuated the lower back, with voluminous folds of velvet and a long sweeping court train. Upon her upper left hipbone, four lei hulu garlands sprout from beneath a feather medallion in the shape of a tiny ‘ahu’ula; as the lei sweep across the front of the garment, they space out and disappear under the overskirt of the train on the opposite side. The feathered medallions resemble a hoaka, or crescent shape, like the ‘ahu’ula, alluding to Queen Kapi‘olani’s chiefly lineage. Placed upon both Queen’s shoulders, her left hip, and three in the center of her chest, the medallions adorn the bodice of the dress; a circular diamond broach with two dangling pearls rests upon the crescent on her chest. The lei hulu were made in the lei Kāmoe style—with the feathers wrapped face down, creating a velvet like rope of lemon-yellow feathers from the ‘ō‘ō bird; which had lemon-yellow and black feathers that gown mirrored. It is believed that the feathers were reused from older lei hulu or ‘ahu’ula because

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200 The “necklace, bracelet, and earrings of green and yellow shells—possibly cat-eye. Information from photo description at Bishop Museum,” from a note written in the description of the image on Hawaii State Digital Archives.


202 Kamehiro, suggests that the “hoaka was intimately associated with chiefs; it denoted ‘glory,’ ‘brightness,’ and ‘splendor’ in Hawaiian verbal and visual language, offering a poetic and visual metaphor for the revered genealogy of chiefs.” These “forms seem to have been the prerogative of chiefs, and those featured on feather garments, sculpture, and royal regalia conveyed similar meanings.”; Kamehiro, “Palaces and Sacred Places,” 72.

203 Kapadia, “Fit for a Queen.”
sadly, both the ‘ō‘ō bird, and its sacred feathers, were becoming scarcer to find on the Islands by the late 1880s.\textsuperscript{204} Worn to dinner at the Prime Minister and his wife, Lord and Lady Salisbury’s house for dinner, the Queen made the newspapers, who noted “the gown’s golden feathered trim and matching feathered coronet,” the headpiece seen in the photograph.\textsuperscript{205} Another reporter, “assuming the worst, described the sacrifice made by the birds in the name of fashion as “a real Massacre of the Innocents.”\textsuperscript{206} All that remains of this dress is the photograph, the newspaper accounts, the \textit{lei hulu} used in the ensemble—held in the Bishop Museum,\textsuperscript{207} and a “single feathered medallion,” held in the Bishop Museum for safe keeping.\textsuperscript{208}

Queen Kapi‘olani’s personal attendant and dressmaker, James W. L. McGuire, is responsible for designing, creating, and collecting the thousands of feathers required to assemble the Queen’s Peacock Gown.\textsuperscript{209} McGuire kept a diary of his experience joining the royal delegation for the Jubilee and published his \textit{mo‘olelo} of the behind-the-scenes trip.\textsuperscript{210} During a stopover in New York City, Kapi‘olani and McGuire ordered the azure velvet from the B. Altman & Co. department store.\textsuperscript{211} The encounter was written about in the New York Times:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{204} Valencia, “Feathers,” 186.
\item \textsuperscript{205} Kapadia, “Fit for a Queen.”
\item \textsuperscript{206} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{207} Personal meeting with the Friends of the ‘Iolani Palace, Leona Hamano and Zita Cup Choy.
\item \textsuperscript{208} Kapadia, “Fit for a Queen.”
\item \textsuperscript{209} James Washington Lonoikauonalii McGuire, was of Irish and Native Hawaiian descent and worked for the royal family for most of his life. He published his accounts of his travels in 1938, in the Hawaiian Language, titled “\textit{He Moolelo Pokole o ka Huakai hele a ka Moiwahine Kapiolani i Enelani i ka Makahiki 1887 i ka lubile o ka Moiwahine Vitoria o Beretania Nui}” (A Short Description of Queen Kapiolani’s Voyage to England to Attend the Jubilee Celebration of Queen Victoria of England in the Year 1887); Margaret Buckley McFarland, “Foreword,” \textit{A Royal Journey To London}, (Topgallant Publishing Co. Ltd., 1975).
\item \textsuperscript{210} Emily V. Warinner, “Part I: The Journey,” \textit{A Royal Journey To London}, 2-3..
\item \textsuperscript{211} Kamala Kapadia, “Fit for a Queen.”
\end{itemize}
“Queen Kapiolani spent some time while in the city in visiting our palatial dry goods houses, and expressed herself more than delighted with the magnificence of our goods and the artistic elegance of American costumes. Messrs. B. Altman & Co. captured her admiration to such an extent that she ordered from their elegant house a Court dress in which to appear at the reception to be given her Hawaiian Majesty by Queen Victoria at Buckingham Palace…when giving the order for the dress her Majesty first consulted about the color. Azure blue was suggested, and when the Queen expressed herself very happily, saying: “My name in Hawaiian means ‘Arch of Heaven,’ and, as azure blue and ‘Arch of Heaven’ are synonymous terms, the color would be most appropriate.”

The color description in the article not only indicates the importance of symbolic allegories in designing a dress for Kapi‘olani, but the journalistic accounts of the dress help scholars reinterpret the presence and imagery of the dress, something only alluded to in photographs of the time. The journalists take care to allude to the queen’s admiration of American fashion in symbiosis to the taste and refinement of the elite of society, a very different depiction of the Hawaiian Queen than that of her predecessor Queen Kamāmalu, received fifty-years earlier.

In the photographs of Queen Kapi‘olani’s Peacock Gown and Princess Lili‘uokalani’s Ribbon Gown, the Hawaiian royals are arranged in a double portrait of Princess Lili‘uokalani standing while Queen Kapiolani sits (See Figure 22). On the left side of the picture, the Crown Princess stands with her body facing forward, with her head at a three-quarter angle, looking down at her Queen, with a sweet, proud smile. Her arms are daintily crossed in front of her waist, with her left arm on top of her right; in her left hand, she is holding a bouquet of tulips as a ring, and three bangles adorn her wrist. Even though Queen Lili‘uokalani,

had only had a week to prepare for the Jubilee, she ordered her dress in transit and wore the Ribbon Gown for the events in London where it was quite admired.213 The Ribbon Gown is made of black velvet in a style like the Lei Hulu gown, a smooth front bodice, a bustle, and an extended train.214 The evening-style gown has intricate lace extending from the floor to the bustline on both sides of the front paneling; within the skirt paneling, countless loops of ribbons project from the skirt, like feathers puffing out from the breast of a bird. A royal ribbon extends from her right shoulder to her left hip and a royal order is pinned to her left bust. Delicate lace adorns the neckline and strap-like sleeves of the bodice, as a beautiful, diamond broach lays in the center of the heart-shaped bustline. Princess Liliʻuokalani’s prized diamond butterfly broach with ruby eyes—purchased on the way to the Jubilee—rests upon the right side of the Royal Heir’s updo. A ribbon choker necklace with a pendant and bow at the base of her neck, finishes the ensemble.215

Rested elegantly on the edge of her throne, Queen Kapiʻolani’s body is posed at a three-quarter angle towards the left half of the photograph. Her head faces the spectator, and her eyes demand a return of her glance. The Queen’s right arm is placed behind her body and parallels the Princess’s as it comes forward in

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213 While Queen Kapiʻolani already knew she was attending the trip, Kalakaua gave his sister a week to arrange travel plans, after deciding to invite her after the passing their sister, Princess Likelike. This resulted in herself and Queen Kapiʻolani ordering the appropriate ensembles while in transit to the Jubilee.; Docent from the Iolani Palace Fashion Fit for Royalty Tour March 14, 2022.
214 Despite the overwhelming popularity of the color black in the Victorian Era, made popular by Queen Victoria herself after her husband Prince Albert’s passing; in my opinion, Princess Liliʻuokalani, may have chosen to wear black in honor of her recently passed sister Princess Likelike.
the picture plane to hold a bouquet of flowers. Her left arm comes straight down with her elbow resting effortlessly upon the armrest of her chair; as the spectator takes their eyes down her arm, they see a spiral bangle bracelet, a stunning diamond ring, and a beautiful featherwork fan of peacock feathers. Queen Kapiʻolani’s tiara echoes the hoaka feather medallions with a central diamond-encrusted crescent. As a polished kukui nut necklace in the same setting as the Lei Hulu Gown adorns her ears and collarbones, a royal ribbon crosses her body from her shoulder at the back of her throne to her front hip. Four royal Hawaiian orders are assembled into a diamond formation, on the left half of her bodice, and a single diamond brooch mirrors Liliʻuokalani. Surprisingly, beneath all these layers of adornment is the most important iconographic method of conveying Queen Kapiʻolani’s sovereignty, lineage, and Hawaiian cultural heritage—her hulu dress.

Described in the New York Times article from earlier:

“Azure-blue velvet of the very richest quality was selected for the Court train and bodice, the train being adjustable, four yards long, and lined throughout with light blue moiré, finished under the edge with a puffing of moiré 12 inches wide, which has the effect of raising it from the floor and giving it the most graceful sweep. The train is three yards in width and disposed of in plaits. On the outer edge of the train is a band of peacock feathers, 12 inches wide at the end of the train, growing gradually narrower as it reaches the waist, where it was but an inch and a half in width. The bodice is cut low with point back and front, laced in the front with silk cord, the neck trimmed with exquisite duchesse point lace, thus adding to the effect of the feather trimming. The corsage is sleeveless, with a band of the feathers and duchesse lace. This gorgeous train will be worn over an underdress of light blue moiré with demi-train 60 inches in length, finished with a double rouching of the same over a balayeuse of fine Valenciennes lace. The front and sides of the skirt show wide panels of peacock feathers, a band of the same feathers and a veil, and her majesty selected, to be worn
with this toilet, a pair of suede gloves of a light fawn shade, of blue velvet, lined with light blue moiré.”  

Within the photograph, and others taken the same day, the Queen has been positioned on her throne to perfectly highlight the quality and fluidity of the velvet train, descending from her waist like a stream from a waterfall (See Figure 23). Despite being made of feathers non-endemic to Hawai‘i, its Hawaiian iconography is ingrained into the garment through its technical application to the fabric in humupapa. It goes without saying that Queen Kapi‘olani’s Peacock Gown was a statement crafted over countless hours, many skilled hands, and at a price of a pretty penny. One can imagine the effort and determination required for Kapi‘olani to get dressed in the ensemble (with her ladies' maids' help, of course), let alone walk with dignity and grace as she met her sister sovereign, but that is exactly what she did. Queen Kapi‘olani wore her Peacock Gown to her and Princess Lili‘uokalani’s private audience—he alo ā he alo—with Queen Victoria, and the meeting was a lovely success, with Her Majesty Victoria kissing her sister sovereign and sovereign-to-be, engaging in well wishes, recalling upon meeting and enjoying King Kalākaua in 1881, and introducing her children to Princess Lili‘uokalani.  

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217 Valencia, “Feathers,” 186.; From Princess Lili‘uokalani’s story, “Her Majesty Victoria greeted her sister sovereign, Kapiolani, with a kiss on each cheek, and then, turning to me, she kissed me once on the forehead; we were asked to be seated, the two queens sitting together on the sofa and engaging in conversation, which was translated by Colonel Iaukea. In the mean time I occupied one of the chairs. Queen Kapiolani expressed her congratulations on the great event of the day, and her gladness that the Jubilee found Her Majesty in good health, and added her expressions of hope that she might live many years to be a blessing to her subjects. The Queen received her good wishes with a like spirit of cordiality, thanking her for coming so far to see her, and then went on to speak with enthusiasm of the pleasure she had taken in meeting her husband, my brother, King Kalakaua. She said she had been much pleased with him, and had never forgotten his agreeable
During the later festivities of the Jubilee, a description by Princess Liliʻuokalani alludes to another aspect of the role of women and display during diplomatic encounters. As indicated to in Queen Liliʻuokalani’s account of a reception at the foreign office in London on June 22, the role of high-ranking women in diplomatic events was to adorn themselves with luxurious items that displayed the prestige, wealth, and genealogical status of the wearer. She writes:

“We were ushered into a large hall, well filled with ladies of rank, and all of them most magnificently dressed to do honor to the occasion. It would seem that each of these had brought out the family heirlooms in precious stones; they were duchesses with shining tiaras, marchionesses with coronets of flashing stones, noble ladies with costly necklaces or emerald ear-drops, little women who seemed almost bowed down under lofty circlets of diamonds over their brows, tall women bearing proudly off their adornments of stones of priceless value. I have never seen such a grand display or valuable gems in my life.”

Using this logic, it may have made more sense for the women aliʻi to be accepted and praised for their continued wearing of featherwork. The feathers are the ‘jewels’ of the Hawaiian Islands, and like the jewels of Europe, they are acceptable, encouraged, and almost required displays of wealth for women in ceremonial and diplomatic encounters. Diamonds are not as synergetic to a military uniform as feathers to a couture gown; instead of royal featherwork, Kalākaua wore royal orders and medals.

Nevertheless, like with any diplomatic encounter, he alo ā he alo is not enough to sustain a monarchial relationship without the practice of hoʻokupu, or

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visit… the Queen of England again kissed me on the forehead; then she took my hand, as though she had just thought of something which she had been in danger of forgetting, and said, "I want to introduce to you my children;" and one by one they came forward and were introduced. After this I hesitated a moment to see if she had anything further to say to me, and finding that she had not, I courtesied to her and withdrew.”; “Chapter XXIII: Sovereign if England and India,” Hawaiʻi’s Story by Hawaiʻi’s Queen, (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1898).

218 Liliʻuokalani, (1898): 182
gift-giving. The Hawaiian delegation extended *aloha* to Queen Victoria with *lei hulu* featherwork made by Queen Kapiʻolani’s own hand, mounted within a frame among diamonds.\(^{219}\) The Hawaiian royals' diplomatic dresses were stitched with symbolism loud as a *mele*. The relationship Queen Kapiʻolani and Princess Liliʻuokalani fostered and sustained with the British Queen lasted until her passing in 1901, with exchanges of royal orders, letters of congratulations and condolences, and diplomatic gifts.\(^{220}\) When Victoria requested that the attendants of her Golden Jubilee dress in the traditional style of their lands, the Hawaiian delegation responded with garments glistening with metaphors of Hawaiian cultural heritage, indigenous sovereignty, and aliʻi divinity.

**Part III: The ‘Iolani Palace and The Ali‘i Garment Reproduction Project:**

**The Importance of the Archive, Access, and He Alo ʻā He Alo**

The actions taken by Hawaiian *kūpuna* to promote, preserve, and celebrate Native Hawaiian heritage has enabled contemporary indigenous communities the opportunity to meet *he alo ʻā he alo* (face-to-face) with aliʻi royal garments, *nā hulu aliʻi*, and *mea waiwai aliʻi*.\(^{222}\) Noelle M. K. Y. Kahanu, *kanaka ʻōiwi* (Native Hawaiian) curator, scholar, and museum exhibition liaison, accentuates the importance of *he alo ʻā he alo* relationships and encounters between museums, Native Hawaiians, *ka poʻe kahiko* (the people of Hawaiʻi), diaspora communities,

\(^{219}\) The newspaper *The Graphic* described the piece as “a piece of work made entirely of the feathers of a very rare bird from the Sandwich Islands. It appears that there are only two of this particular feather of the bird, and it has taken some thousands of feathers to make the wreath, which is the work of the Hawaiian Queen's own hands.”; Valencia, “Feathers,” 187.


and the ancestral objects held in institutional collections.223 As a facilitator of engagements between multiple realms and times, Kahanu emphasizes,

“there is no separation between Native Hawaiian collections and those who made them, who wore them, who used them; and, as ancestral embodiments, these collections are directly connected to their descendants, current-day Native Hawaiians.”224

The museum and the archive are inherently colonial spaces with histories and contemporary realities of power imbalances, gatekeeping, and pigeonholing narratives that support institutional goals.225 While the museum can, and has, been a contact zone for Pacific collections and their communities of origin; institutional procedures, physical separation, and accessibility to Hawaiian objects are all issues indigenous peoples face when trying to meet he alo ā he alo with their ancestors.226 In the words of Maile Andrade, kanaka maoli textile and visual artist:

“I was taught to listen to our kūpuna (elders), and I always believed that kūpuna meant interactions between different generations of those still living. But many years ago, I realized that I needed to expand my definition: that the pieces I was seeing in museums were kūpuna as well, and they were speaking to us. We had to listen and pay attention because there were so many voices to be heard in these treasures…there can be a dialogue.”227

223 Kahanu, “He Alo Ā He Alo,” 296–316.
224 Ibid.
227 Ibid, 18
These “lifelines” between the past and the present are products of social and political relationships among different groups of peoples, cultures, and places in their own time.\textsuperscript{228} When their “voices” can be heard and seen, the dialogue between ancestor and descendent, \textit{he alo ā he alo}, is a proponent of the indigenous sovereignty, agency, and cultural legacies flowing between Hawaiian objects and the \textit{ka poʻe kahiko}.\textsuperscript{229} While museums around the world are beginning to collaborate with Native Hawaiian leadership and cultural practitioners to increase these exchanges and educational opportunities; some institutions, like the ‘Iolani Palace, are managing the problem of how to engage an audience when cultural treasures that had a specific utility for the royal family have been lost, damaged, or are too fragile to display.\textsuperscript{230} While institutionally run museums like the Bishop Museum, practice standard museology to preserve, exhibit, loan, and educate visitors and scholars about their collections,\textsuperscript{231} a historic house museum like the ‘Iolani Palace, has more freedom to tell stories about the historic site they inhabit, even while having less flexibility in changing permanent exhibitions. These contact sites currently navigate new worlds of exhibition design, conservation treatment, educational programming, collaborations with cultural practitioners, and community groups of indigenous heritage. In this role, it is essential for museums to actively promote engagement “as institutions of living, contemporary cultures, representative of the Native peoples” which they represent.
Christine Mullen Kreamer, deputy director and chief curator at the National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institution, observes, “communities often look to museums as places in which identity is articulated. As a result, museums have the responsibility of ensuring that exhibitions embody dynamic, not static, depictions of history and culture. Museums are increasingly asked to ensure that their exhibitions resonate with contemporary issues and present day realities.”

The ‘Iolani Palace has implemented various programs and projects within the historical site that play with this dynamic, activation of history for contemporary audiences. From the *Ali‘i Garment Reproduction Project* to educational programming and interactive tours: visitors engage *he alo ʻā he alo* with chiefly treasures and reproduction textiles that center on “first-person Native voice,” *ali‘i* agency, and indigenous sovereignty.

To represent the dynamics relating to the *ali‘i* ensembles in the Kalākaua Dynasty, the ‘Iolani Palace’s research and curatorial practices have transcended many academic and artistic disciplines. Built between 1879 and 1882, the ‘Iolani Palace has since served as a profound symbol of Hawaiian history, political sovereignty, and indigenous agency through the Kalakaua Dynasty (1883-1893).

Kamehiro enthuses, “‘Iolani Palace could dazzle the resident haole and international audiences...as well as resonate with the hopes and values of the Native population. It was an authentically modern and traditional Hawaiian symbol of the state of the nation.”

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Following the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom, the ‘Iolani Palace housed the governmental affairs of the Republic of Hawai‘i (1894-1898), the Territory of Hawai‘i (1898-1959), and the American State of Hawai‘i (1959-1969). In 1962, the ‘Iolani Palace was given another opportunity to tell the stories of Hawaiian Kingship when the site was designated a National Historic Landmark. Starting in the 1960s and 1970s, restorations commenced repairing the royal seat of government to its condition of former glory. The Junior League of Honolulu conducted research and raised funding for the project, selecting Charles E. Peterson, a “recognized architectural historian and restoration architect,” to design an organized plan of restoration for the site. Between 1965 and 1968, The Junior League completed its research efforts regarding the Palace and its grounds, and by 1972, the Architectural Report was completed. With the construction of a new state capital building in 1969, the Hawai‘i State Government Offices were relocated and restoration commenced. By 1978, the ‘Iolani Palace was officially opened to the public as a historic house museum, and since then, restorations of the rooms and palace grounds have been completed section-by-section.

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237 Ibid.
239 Ibid.
240 Ibid.
241 The restoration timeline posted by the ‘Iolani Palace follows as such: Halekoa, ‘Iolani Barracks restoration (1981); Throne Room restoration (1981); Dining Room restoration (1982); Coronation Stand, fence, and wall restoration (1983); King’s Library restoration (1983); Chamberlain’s Office restoration (1984); Landscape restoration (1984); Kana‘ina Building restoration (1987); Blue Room restoration (1991); Imprisonment Room restoration (1995); Palace Galleries open (2000); Bartels Galleries open (2003); Music Room restoration (2010), King’s and Queen’s Bedroom restoration (2011), and Basement Galleries redesign (in progress).; Ibid.
Founded by Mrs. Liliuokalani Kawanakoa Morris, the grandniece of Queen Kapiʻolani, The Friends of the Iolani Palace (The Friends) have managed the property up to the present, providing stewardship for the restoration of the palace, the grounds, and its treasures. While it was utilized by the occupying government after 1893, the interior of the palace had been modified and the possessions of the Hawaiian Kingdom had been sent to the Bishop Museum or were auctioned away. The quest to locate and recover many of the original furnishings and objects that bedecked the historical halls persists with the help of the archival photographs and research pioneered by The Junior League of Honolulu. The wall text titled “Artifact Restoration,” in the ‘Iolani Palace states:

“Conservation treatment returns artifacts to their monarchy era appearance and seeks to preserve them for as long as possible. Research determines the look of an object during the monarchy. Once a treatment approach is established, broken or missing parts are repaired and replaced; surfaces are cleaned or coated to prevent deterioration; mounts are built to support weakened areas. If an original artifact is too fragile for exhibition, a carefully reproduced replica is shown while the original remains safe in storage.”

When working in the arts and cultural heritage field, it is important to use the proper word choice when publishing information to a public audience. While the text indicates that conservation treatment “returns artifacts to their monarchy era appearance,” this practice falls more into the category of restoration, which emphasizes returning a work of art, or an artifact to its visual original state. Art conservation as a field includes all the actions, research, and education practiced

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244 Wilkins, “Ruffling Feathers,” 234.
to preserve cultural heritage physically: including preventative care, examination, documentation, and treatment.\textsuperscript{245} In the historic house museum of the ‘Iolani Palace, both restoration and conservation practices have manifested to return and maintain the grounds to the “time when their Majesties, King Kalākaua and his sister and successor, Queen Lili‘uokalani walked the grand halls.”\textsuperscript{247} While the physical bodies of the ali‘i no longer grace the halls of the ‘Iolani, The Friends have ensured that many of the important aspects of the monarch’s materiality—their chiefly regalia, textiles, adornments, and featherwork—can greet the visitors of the museum in original or reproduced forms.

During an imperative conversation with the ‘Iolani Palace’s Collections Manager, Leona Hamano, and Administrative Historian, Zita Cup Choy, I was informed of the procedures of managing the Hawaiian monarchial historic site, their stewardship of ali‘i treasures, and The Friend’s initiatives to educate the public regarding the living histories of the Kalākaua monarchs. Regarding the collections of the ‘Iolani Palace, Zita Cup Choy, in an episode of Aloha Authentic with Kamaka Pili, maintains that caring for the objects in the palace is incredibly important.\textsuperscript{248} In the ‘Iolani Palace, almost all of what you see, besides the textile reproductions, are original and have been used and owned by the monarchs and their guests.\textsuperscript{249} While it would be ideal for the ‘Iolani Palace to exhibit the hulu

\textsuperscript{249} Choy and Pili, “‘Iolani Palace- The Former Residence of Hawaiian Royalty.”
manu, kāhili, textiles, and garments worn by the aliʻi in the late nineteenth century, many of the items seen in archival photographs are lost to time or must remain in the storage rooms of the ‘Iolani Palace or the Bishop Museum. Hamano indicated that most of the ‘ahu’ula and kāhili identified in the nineteenth-century archival photographs or early inventories of the ‘Iolani Palace has gone to the Bishop Museum and have remained there since the overthrow of Queen Liliuokalani.

In the ‘Iolani Palace’s storage rooms, the ‘ahu’ula and larger clothing garments in the collection are wrapped in acid-free tissue paper, laid in archival boxes, and placed on shelves. The textile room is fully enclosed and equipped with motion sensor LED lights, a datalogger to monitor for climate control, and a smoke detector. The majority of the ‘ahu’ula in the collection are on loan for safekeeping. There is contention between two parties as to who is the owner, which places ‘Iolani Palace in an unfortunate situation that does not allow the ‘ahu’ula to be displayed until the issue of ownership has been resolved. Since the ‘ahu’ula are not displayed in the ‘Iolani Palace for visitors, they are resting and not stabilized for exhibition handling on mounts. In concluding our discussion

251 Every five years the boxes are inventoried and checked for preservation purposes.; Ibid.
252 Ibid.
of the royal objects and *hulu manu* currently in the storage rooms and exhibition spaces of the ‘Iolani Palace, Hamano states:

“Because we are a house museum, many of our gallery rooms are permanent exhibits that are based on historical photographs and period newspapers. We try to keep the rooms as authentic as possible so that our guests can experience what the rooms originally looked like. So, unless we have the appropriate context or the space to display an ‘ahu’ula, only then would it be included in the gallery room. We are in the process of renovating the basement to include additional galleries. One gallery in particular will feature regalia and adornment and we are hopeful to get a loan from the Bishop Museum that will include numerous ‘ahu’ula.”

**The Ali‘i Garment Reproduction Project: Working with Artisans, Cultural Practitioners, and Communities**

Since the ‘Iolani Palace does not necessarily have the context nor authority to display the *hulu mea* in their storage rooms, reproduction projects of the textiles and featherwork seen in historical photographs have permitted the ‘Iolani Palace to enhance the visual, tactile, and auditory visitor experience though animating the spaces and storytelling of Kalākaua Dynastic history. Two reproduction projects initiated by the ‘Iolani Palace are intimately connected to *hulu mea*, diplomatic presence, and collaboration with cultural practitioners: the *Ali‘i Garment Reproduction Project* and the *Kāhili Reproduction Project*. For the sake of this thesis, I will be focusing on the reproduction garments, while incorporating the perspective of Kawika Lum-Nelmida, the collaborating cultural practitioner of *hulu* for the two latest installments of *Kāhili Kū* (standing *kāhili*) in Queen Kapi‘olani and King Kalākaua’s bedrooms.  

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255 Ibid.  
During our discussion of the alii garment and kahili projects at the ‘Iolani Palace, Hamano emphasized the importance of the word “reproduction” over “reconstruction” referencing the garment and kahili projects at the ‘Iolani Palace. She states:

“With regards to reproduction…I strongly stress that when working with a designer or artist on the reproduction of objects, such as a kahili or gown, it is important that they are given as much historical information as possible about the object. This enables them to reproduce the object as accurately & identically as described or depicted in written documents and historical photographs…They need to understand, and we’ve learned…that the artist does not have the artistic license to do what they want. A reproduction is not the same as recreation or redesigning….Sometimes an artist may not have the research skills. Research may not be their forte and that’s alright. In such instances, it’s up to us to equip them with as much research materials to assist him or her in reproducing the object.”

While these reproductions are not authentic—“of undisputed origin”—in some definitions of the word: they are “made in the traditional or original way…that faithfully resembles the original” and are “based on accurate, or reliable facts.”

As the ‘Iolani Palace historian, Cup Choy conducts much of the research regarding the archival materials: photographs, paintings, the material remains, newspaper articles, diary entries, and collection inventories. Without
the preservation of these resources, the reproduction projects would not be possible because even with these materials: the historians, artists, and cultural practitioners had to make educated guesses and substitutions. Cup Choy explains:

“One of our major challenges with garments and feather work, especially the kahili, [is that] the photos are all black and white and all the other documents that we have might not mention colors. Even if they say ‘red,’ well, what kind of ‘red?’ They don't necessarily give us the kind of information that we need to have to be able to recreate them. So, there's a lot of educated guessing that goes on.”

In my conversation with Kawika Lum-Nelmida, cultural practitioner of hulu, we discussed the differences in available materials and the ethics surrounding the use of endemic birds versus invasive bird species, or in some cases, birds killed for food and sport. For example, when approaching a reproduction project like the kahili for Queen Kapi‘olani’s room, cultural practitioners may be able to look at a source image and tell what type of bird feathers were used, but if those birds are extinct or endangered, the substitution of materials will most likely be needed. This was the case for one of the very first garment reproduction projects at ‘Iolani Palace.

Starting in 2016, the ‘Iolani Palace’s Ali‘i Garment Reproduction Project has prolonged the reflectivity of ali‘i royal ensembles as embodiments of Hawaiian agency, artistry, and authority in the Kalākaua Dynasty. The Friends of the ‘Iolani Palace commissioned Iris Viacrusis, Hawai‘i island-based Filipino

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261 Personal conversation with ‘Iolani Palace’s Collections Manager, Leona Hamano, and Iolani Palace Historian, Zita Cup Choy.
262 Personal conversation with Kawika Lum-Nelmida, cultural practitioner of hulu.
263 Ibid.
264 Ibid.
designer, who has an extensive background in fashion and historical construction design: training in Los Angeles and Paris, Hawaiian pageants, and designing for the Merrie Monarch Festival.\textsuperscript{265} Visacrusis was commissioned to pattern, design, and construct a series of garments from the \textit{ali‘i} wardrobe and has collaborated together with art and fashion historians, archivists, collection managers, and cultural practitioners of \textit{hulu} to fill the gaps in our knowledge through reproductions of Hawaiian material cultural heritage, both within the \textit{pae‘āina} and overseas. The initial reproductions were Queen Lili‘uokalani’s Lilac Ostrich Feather (2016) and Black Ribbon gowns (2016), and Queen Kapi‘olani’s Lei Hulu (2016) and Peacock (2017) gowns (See Figure 24).\textsuperscript{266} Later in 2017, The Friends announced a second series of planned ensembles: Queen Kapi‘olani’s Coronation Gown, King Kalākaua’s Dress Uniform, King Kalākaua’s Masonic Uniform, Queen Liliuokalani’s Traveling Dress, Queen Liliuokalani’s Summer White, and Princess Kaiulani’s Ivory Ball Gown (See Figure 25).\textsuperscript{267} Currently in the middle of producing the second series, ‘Iolani Palace now has several reproductions of \textit{ali‘i} ensembles activating the rooms of the Palace, embodying the presence of the Kalākaua Monarchs.

\textsuperscript{265} It was reported by Cordero that the curator of the ‘Iolani Palace had seen one of the designer’s costumes on the former Miss Hawai‘i, Desirea Cruz, as she sang at the palace. The curator “inquired about the designer” of her ensemble and after meeting with Viacrusis to discuss his credentials, they learned that he is an active creator of Victorian and Edwardian costumes for the Merrie Monarch Festival, an annual hula, arts, and parade celebration, hosted by the non-profit organization of the same name, that honors the legacy of Kalākaua’s perpetuation of native Hawaiian “traditions, native language and arts.”; Radiant Cordero, “Embracing Interpretations of the Past,” in \textit{The Fil-Am Courier} (December 16-31, 2016): 5.; The Merrie Monarch Festival, “Merrie Monarch: The Official Site of the Merrie Monarch Festival,” accessed April 4, 2022. \url{https://www.merriemonarch.com/}.

\textsuperscript{266} While the initial proposal included set of four \textit{ali‘i} gowns and raised $20,000 for the commissions, the project’s success has expanded to include over ten garments requiring further funds.; Kapadia, “Fit for a Queen.”

Prior to the reproduction projects, the only visuals of the aliʻi dress at the ‘Iolani Palace were in the painted portraiture and photographic prints of the Kamehameha and Kalākaua monarchs, discussed in Part II. The ‘fusion fashions’ of the aliʻi wardrobe do not exist in stable conditions that can be displayed on dress forms, and in most cases, only scraps remain. Regarding the lack of aliʻi dress in museum collections, Cup Choy explains:

“Clothing did not survive. It stayed within families where it might have been reused, repurposed, or cut down for someone who was smaller. Two pieces [could be] put together to make a larger outfit…or taken apart and used in other garments. There's not much record about what happened. Unless you find a family member who remembers. We don't always remember what our grandparents [have] told us, and likewise with all these folks… you're talking about four or five generations.”

This is the case for many of the historical garments selected for the garment reproduction project. When initiating this project without complete physical source materials, Viacrusis depended heavily upon visual references of photographic portraiture (including the images taken of Queen Kapiʻolani and Princess Liliʻuokalani in London), painted portraiture, and remnants of the selected garments from the Kalākaua Dynasty. By studying multiple images of Queen Liliʻuokalani’s Ribbon Dress, Viacrusis realized that her gown had been repurposed a few times over with different embellishments. As reported in Hana Hou magazine,

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269 Personal conversation with ‘Iolani Palace’s Collections Manager, Leona Hamano, and Iolani Palace Historian, Zita Cup Choy.

270 Ibid.

271 Kapadia, “Fit for a Queen.”
“[Viacrusis] also helped Bishop Museum connect the yellow feather medallion in its collection to the lei hulu gown. Though the original lei hulu gown has followed the path of the ‘ō’ō whose feathers were plucked to make it, the medallion survives as a symbol of a once-grand royal culture.”

In the case of Queen Kapiʻolani’s Lei Hulu Gown, only three of the four ‘ō‘ō lei hulu (that trimmed the front of her skirt) and a single feathered medallion remain. These pieces are housed in the Bishop Museum collection, along with a short section of the Peacock Gown and the entire garment of Queen Liliʻuokalani’s Lilac Ostrich Feather gown. A vital part of Viacrusis’s research commenced when he “received permission from Bishop Museum’s curator, Betty Kam, to inspect remnants of the original gowns.” When Viacrusis was able to meet face-to-face with the Queen Liliʻuokalani’s Ostrich Feather gown, the garment exuded an ivory color, but under closer examination of the interior seams of the dress, he realized the silk was lilac; Indicating that the original color of the silk garment had oxidized over time from exposure air. Along with this evidence, the staff of the ‘Iolani Palace provided Viacrusis with historical literature from newspapers, inventories, and personal accounts of the ensembles.

Within a document written by Queen Liliʻuokalani that described her favorite

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272 Ibid.
273 Ibid.
274 The Ostrich Feather Gown Reproduction represents a garment worn while Queen Liliʻuokalani adjourned Parliament in 1893, where she made her last plea to the Parliament to revoke the Bayonet Constitution.; Kapadia, “Fit for a Queen.”; Personal conversation with ‘Iolani Palace’s Collections Manager, Leona Hamano, and Iolani Palace Historian, Zita Cup Choy.
As the "ō"ō is long extinct, Szirom used goose feathers dyed golden yellow. She sorted them by size and curl, trimming them to precise lengths. Using a tiny toothbrush, she brushed them until they took on the wispy look of "ō"ō feathers. She then bundled and tied them to cords in closely packed concentric rings, producing an effect that is simultaneously luxurious and delicate. Altogether Szirom put more than four hundred hours into the lei hulu gown’s featherwork. ‘It’s very meditative,’ she says, demonstrating her skill with deft, precise movements.”
This community of hulu artists, Viacrusis, and his partner, Sean Spellicy, prepared thousands of peacock feathers by trimming and bundling the hulu for attachment to fabric panels.\footnote{Ibid.} For the two panels of the skirt, over 8,000 feathers were required, for the rest of the ensemble, tens of thousands of feathers were needed.\footnote{Ibid.} For hundreds of hours, this community of artists, designers, friends, and family gathered to bundle, humupapa, and wiliwili hulu into and for the reproduction garments of the ali‘i (See Figure 27). In this act of collaboration, the cultural heritage of the Hawaiian artform of hulu and the legacy of the ali‘i is preserved and prepared for exhibition to a wider audience.

These reproduction projects further enabled the ‘Iolani Palace’s own staff to participate in this act of restoration and cultural heritage perpetuation. Hamano, in reflection upon participating in the most recent rendition of the ‘Iolani Palace’s Kāhili reproduction project, indicated:

“The things that I’ve taken away from having been involved in the project is that I see that it's very labor intensive, it's time consuming, and it requires an abundance of resources… The other thing was a sense of perpetuating the cultural tradition of feather work, and in that, is the involvement of community. Zita and I participated in the project. We were involved in gathering the different feathers and bundling them for attachment to the branches of the kahili. Our predecessors also participated in the previous kahili reproduction project.”\footnote{Personal conversation with ‘Iolani Palace’s Collections Manager, Leona Hamano, and Iolani Palace Historian, Zita Cup Choy.}

The final step in the reproduction process was involving the community of Honolulu in a greater extent through display and educational programing. After completing the reproductions of the first series, one-by-one the gowns were
displayed for a month-long residency at Bloomingdales Ala Moana before traveling to the ‘Iolani Palace for permanent exhibition (See Figure 19). Once installed Radiant Cordero, assistant editor for The Fil-Am Courier admits,

“It was hard to ignore the statuesque and commanding presence of what was once just a mannequin; but now a perfect visage of history and royalty cloaked in Victorian fashion almost demanding a passerby’s curiosity. The magnificent presence of this gown reproduction is a testament to Viacrusis’s detailed work and fashion history expertise.”

While this stop along the way to the palace can be seen as a venture that ensured the funding for further reproductions, it is apparent that this presentation of the garments utilized their iconography to inspire notions of Hawaiian nationalism and cultural heritage awareness. This could also be considered a diplomatic exchange between the commercial center of contemporary Honolulu and the historical center of the past, drawing people into the ‘Iolani Palace.

Regardless of this hypothesis, once installed within the palace, these reproductions activate an essence of monarchial presence into each room. As a visitor is guided into the Blue Room, the painted portrait of Queen Lili‘uokalani in her elegant Ribbon Dress is mirrored by the three-dimensional reproduction (See Figure 28). Queen Kapi‘olani’s bedroom is now adorned with kāhili kū and the reproduction of her Lei Hulu Gown, as if the Queen is on her way to come to get dressed for a celebration (See Figure 29). While the palace itself is breathtaking and grand, adding the reproduction garments and kāhili

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reproductions to the ‘Iolani Palace add a “texture” and beauty to each room that is indescribable. 286

While photographic and painted portraits are an incredible resource for visitors to connect face-to-face with the monarchs, the reproductions of these diplomatic ensembles enable cultural practitioners, fashion historians, designers, and museum professionals to reproduce and experience the presence of the ali‘i fashions in three-dimensional form. In an interview, curator Teresa Valencia remarks: “The goal of the project is to provide visitors with a fresh understanding into the lives of the Hawaiian ali‘i, to enhance the visitor experience and to bring Iolani Palace to life.”287 As visitors are learning about the mo‘olelo of the ali‘i, they are also able to meet, he alo ā he alo, with reproductions of the garments and adornments present for monarchial celebrations, diplomatic meetings, and government convenings.

These reproduction projects, from conception to exhibition, are an innovative act of Hawaiian cultural heritage preservation and display. Through creating these reproductions of ali‘i dress, the ‘Iolani Palace has taken the very ensembles designed for international diplomatic appearances and preserved the iconographic effects of indigenous sovereignty and national pride. These reproductions are staged in the rooms of the palace: the very rooms where the Kalākaua Monarchs had patroned the first Hawaiian Renaissance, stood up for the Hawaiian peoples' heritage, health, and sovereignty, and in the case of Queen Lili‘uokalani, protested the occupation of their Kingdom through her own

286 Ibid.; Personal Conversation with Kawika Lum-Nelmida.
287 Kapadia, “Fit for a Queen.”
imprisonment. The Hawaiian Kingdom crafted and preserved its own visual legacy, for both local and international audiences, through the technological art of photographic portraiture. Through commissioning the Ali‘i Garment Reproduction Project, ‘Iolani Palace has preserved pieces of ali‘i ‘fusion fashion’ and cultural heritage by operating through an authentic and culturally collaborative mode of reproduction: allowing audiences to listen to, learn from, and engage he alo ā he alo with an iconographic representation of the Hawaiian Kingdom and their diplomatic presence in the Kalākaua Dynasty.

**Conclusion**

Hawaiian dress and fashion have adorned and dictated the complex, intercultural encounters between Hawaiian ali‘i and foreign diplomats both on and away from the archipelago. From the late-eighteenth century to the late-nineteenth century, Hawaiian hulu mea have been witnesses to diplomatic encounters, agents of trade and ho‘okupu, and acculturated into ‘fusion fashions’ for domestic and foreign audiences. The stories behind the cultural fluidity of kapa to cotton calico, the pā‘ū to the holokū, and the ‘ahu‘ula to the military uniform, provide the context necessary to dispose of the binary, colonial perceptions of indigenous and foreign agency in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Hawaii. Instead, the exchanges of materials, styles, and ideologies surrounding dress and adornment can be analyzed, as Kamehiro stated, in terms of “mutual entanglements of those inhabiting…terains and processes of cultural intersections or contact zones and how power is deployed and resisted in these spaces.”

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Through the commissioning of the *Aliʻi Garment Reproduction Project*, the diplomatic and monarchical ensembles of the late-nineteenth century return to reanimate the presence of the Kalākaua Hawaiian royals, navigators of “native epistemologies and internationalist ideologies” through garment reproduction. This interdisciplinary collaboration among art and fashion historians, conservators, cultural heritage practitioners, the Friends of the ‘Iolani, Palace, and the public; presents an opportunity for *he alo ʻā he alo* encounters between the aliʻi, museum, educator, native Hawaiians, island residents, and tourists. The fashions emulate the presence and majesty of the aliʻi—the same visual tool used by the Hawaiian sovereigns through featherwork, fashion, and portraiture—to foster engagement, dialogue, and relationships between spectators and the past.

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303 Ibid.
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Figure 1. A note from the museum registrar suggests that perhaps some of the textiles donated in the same lot as this sample were collected during the Cook Voyages. *Kapa* (Barkcloth), 1290 mm x 640 mm, 1770’s, plant fiber (Broussonetia papyrifera), Museum of New Zealand: Te Papa Tongarewa, FE001475/4. No copyright restrictions.

Figure 2. Jean-Pierre Norblin de la Gourdaine (lithograph), *Queen Ka‘ahumanu with her servant on rug* (1816), after painting by Louis Choris, the artist aboard the Russian ship Rurick, which visited Hawai‘i in 1816. Louis Choris, Plate III, in *Louis Choris’ Voyage Pittoresque Autour de Monde*, (Paris, 1822). Hawaii State Archives.
Figure 3. Unknown Photographer, Hawaiian Dress (Holoku), 1870s., Granger Academic Photo Use, Image No. 0064455
Figure 4. The Pāʻū of Nāhiʻenaʻena on temporary Display in Hawaiian Hall at the Bishop Museum. Image from Bishop Museum on Twitter, @bishopmuseum, posted on June 16, 2021 at 5:30 PM, https://twitter.com/bishopmuseum/status/1405321830949347328.
Figure 5. Lucy Muolo Moehonua, (c.1840s-50s) the second wife of William Luther Moehonua, an adviser to the Kamehameha court. They married on September 11, 1849. She is the daughter of Kaaha and Kamaile and sister of Hiram Kahanawai. Image in public domain.
Figure 6. “A New York Studio Portrait of Queen Kapi’olani wearing a hat and necklace of several strands of Ni‘ihau shells. This photo was taken en route to Queen Victoria’s Jubilee in England, by Henry Walter Barnett of Falk Studios, in May 1887.” Caption from the Bishop Museum, Henry Walter Barnett of Falk Studios, Public domain via Wikimedia Commons.
Figure 7. J. W. Gear, King Kamehameha II (Liholiho), Queen Kamamalu and their party from the Sandwich Islands attending a performance at the Drury Lane Theatre in London on June 4, 1824, print, Published by the Hullmandel Lithography Company, 29.8 x 31.2 cm, National Portrait Gallery. Creative Commons, https://npg.si.edu/object/npg_NPG.2010.59
Figure 8. Diplomatic uniform of Walter Murray Gibson made by Stephen Winkworth Silver & Company (London), 1875, cotton, wool, gold thread and metal buttons, photo taken 2018. Hawaii State Archives. Public domain via Wikimedia Commons.
Figure 10: Queen Kapiʻolani: Coronation Dress, 1883, Negative number: 2000.218; PC 124-CC, PP-97-14-002, Courtesy of the Hawai‘i State Archives.
Figure 11: Queen Kapi‘olani: Coronation Dress Detail Photo, 1883, Courtesy of the Hawai‘i State Archives.
Figure 12. The King and Queen’s coronation crowns were ordered from England for the 1883 ceremony. The materials include diamonds, opals, emeralds, rubies, kukui nut jewels, crimson velvet, gold, and enamel. Photo Courtesy of Iolani Palace via Facebook. 
https://www.facebook.com/iolanipalace/photos/artifactfriday-for-the-kings-coronation-crowns-were-commissioned-for-him-and-que/10157323175475234.
Figure 13. Franz Xaver Winterhalter, *Queen Victoria*, 1859, oil on canvas, 242.9 cm x 157.5 cm, The Royal Collection, RCIN 405131, Public domain via Wikimedia Commons.
Figure 14. Kalanikauika‘alaneo cloak, ‘Ahu‘ula (cloak), pre-1878, Red ‘i‘iwi feathers, yellow ‘ō‘ō feathers, and olonā fiber, 134 cm x 131.5 cm, Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, Provisional Government Collection, 06830/1893.003, Image from Kaeppler 2010a, pp. 120 (CL42). Willem de Rooij - Intolerance: Band 3: Hawaiian Featherwork

Figure 15. Kīwalaʻō, ‘Ahu‘ula (cloak), 18th Century, Red ‘i‘iwi feathers, yellow ‘ō‘ō feathers, yellow mamo feathers, and olonā fiber, 152.4 cm x 366 cm, Bernice
Figure 16. J. H. Moser, Reception of Queen Kapiolani of Hawaii at the White House, from a sketch on May 04, 1887, Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center, Google Arts and Culture, https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/reception-of-queen-kapiolani-of-hawaii-at-the-white-house-j-h-moser/BAGU5XNiUSmP0A.
Figure 17. Photograph of “Frances Folsom Cleveland on her wedding day in 1886, dressed to descend the stairs, posed for this photograph to show her wedding gown and its orange blossom and laurel trimmings.” Photo from Library of Congress, caption from HTTPS://WWW.WHITEHOUSEHISTORY.ORG/FRANCES-FOLSOM-CLEVELANDS-WHITE-HOUSE-WARDROBE
Figure 18. Walery, Queen Kapi‘olani in her Japanese made holoku, for Queen Victoria’s Jubilee in London, Albumen print, board, ink and adhesive, Negative: PC 124-V, 4 x 5, Curtis P. Iaukea Collection, PPWD-15-7-020, Courtesy of Hawaii State Archives.
Figure 19. Full View of the front (A), back (B), and detail view of bodice (C), of Queen Kapi‘olani’s lei hulu gown reproduction at Bloomingdales Ala Moana before heading to the Iolani Palace. Photograph taken by Daniel Ramirez, Creative Commons Licensing.
Figure 20. Front View of Queen Kapiolani’s Blue Peacock Dress Reproduction on Display in The Iolani Palace’s thrown Room, Photo courtesy of Bonnie Nims. 
https://keolamagazine.com/culture/iris-viacrusis/
Figure 21. Walery, Queen Kapi‘olani in Lei Hulu Gown for Queen Victoria’s Jubilee in London, Negative: PC 124-G; 2000.217, 8 x 10, 4 x 5, PP-97-14-013, Courtesy of Hawaii State Archives.
Figure 22. Walery, Portrait of Princess Liliu‘okalani and Queen Kapi‘olani, London, 1887, Albumen print, board, ink and adhesive, Bishop Museum Archives, image courtesy of Bishop Museum Archives.
Figure 23. Queen Kapi‘olani, Seated in her Peacock Dress which was worn to the Jubilee of Queen Victoria, Negative number PC 124-C, size 8 x 10, PP-97-14-014, Courtesy of Hawaii State Archives.

Figure 29. Queen Kapiʻolani’s Lei Hulu Gown installed in Her Majesty’s Bedroom. Photo courtesy of Professor Julia Lum.