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Ominous Metaphors:
The Political Poetics of Native Hawaiian Identity

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WORK NOT SUBMITTED ELSEWHERE FOR EXAMINATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

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Preface

When I was eleven years old and about to enter secondary school, my grandmother regarded me gravely and warned, “There will always be people who know more than you. Listen first and speak later.” For the rest of her life (she lived until I was twenty-eight and she was ninety-seven) she provided ample opportunity for me to be in a position where other people knew more than I did. She warned me that there was always more to know, and then taught me to value knowledge flowing from many sources. If anyone is responsible for this PhD, she is.

In the Hawaiian tradition I found a point of understanding in the reverence shown to *tutu* (grandparents). When Hawaiians speak of *mana*, which is rather ineffectually translated as “charisma” or “power”, in reference to an older, wiser woman, I understand. It means a person who commands respect from all, love from her family and friends, and watchfulness from her adversaries. A woman who can emanate peace even whilst in a flurry of activity, who is deeply knowledgeable about her chosen subject, and fights with integrity and tenacity for what she believes to be right. There are many women described in these terms in the Hawaiian movement, and I recognise my grandmother in each one.

It is a cool March day in Honolulu (fresh from England it feels warm, but I am assured it’s unseasonable) and I’m in the first week of my research trip to the University of Hawai‘i, in the Mānoa valley. I’ve found a seat in the airy-but-boxy classroom that most British students at sixties universities are familiar with, and have confirmed I’m in the right place for Dr. Brandy Nālani McDougall’s ‘Indigenous Identity’ class. I’ve been invited to sit in whilst I’m visiting and although I’m attracting a couple of curious looks, the atmosphere in the room is friendly as students appear and the gaps around the large conference-style table begin to fill in. A gentle ebb and flow of conversation expands. The students are relaxed and familiar with each other.

When Brandy arrives she has her nine-month-old daughter Kai with her. Noticing me, Brandy initiates the awkward process of introductions. Unfamiliar names and familiar

places are offered as I smile and nod, knowing I won't remember which belongs to whom — students of fine art, literature, museum studies and anthropology, among others, from nearby Maui to far away Guam, Tonga and California. Some are studying for undergraduate and Masters degrees, and some, like me, for PhDs. I am welcomed, and the class begins.

We are discussing Eva Marie Garrouette's *Real Indians: Identity and the Survival of Native America*. As the conversation expands, against the background of Kai's chatter, I listen intently. It is an intellectually invigorating discussion that moves around different aspects of the book — the vagaries of blood quantum, the problems of maintaining tribal membership based on limiting criteria, the dangers of uncritically accepting self-identification as "native". Everyone is listening as certain people direct the discussion; there is no finger tapping, or window-staring, and what soon becomes apparent is that this is not a purely academic study; for at least half the people in the room this is a living, breathing discussion, the politics of which impacts on their lives and those of their families. Shifting my gaze around the room I notice the age range — early twenties to mid-sixties — and the tone of the conversation, intense but respectful, critical but open. Having a baby in the classroom fazes no one — there is no better reminder of why the discussion is so pertinent.

As my time at UH stretched to the full month, I was a guest in this class twice more. The lasting impression was of how personal the academic was — Brandy's husband Craig, who is from Guam, took the class on 'Militarism, Militourism and Identity' and his father came along to talk about his experiences as a Chamorro soldier in the American military. Telling personal stories lent the academic discussions gravitas, the realism of experience and a political immediacy unknown to my classes in England. This was not "ivory-tower" scholarship, but a space in which future academics, community leaders, artists etc. were hammering out the problems of existing scholarship in order to effect real change in their communities. The three classes I attended were invigorating, illuminating and humbling. As I grappled with concepts the students there are intimately familiar with I was able to relate what little I had learned from books to a lived reality.

Acknowledgements

A PhD is not a solo project, and I have been supported by the enthusiasm and dedication of many people over the last four years. The School of English at the University of Sussex granted me AHRC funding, without which I could not have embarked on this project — it kept a roof over my head and the wolf from the door. The Research & Enterprise Co-ordinator Laura Vellacott is a fount of all PhD related knowledge, and has handled my many requests with cheer and helpfulness, for which I am immensely grateful. Throughout this project my supervisor, Dr Minoli Salgado, has been a guide and support, reading drafts, forgiving innumerable missed deadlines and among my tangential ideas always finding what I meant to say. The re-writes were tough, but the advice was always good — thank you.

In Hawai‘i, Jamaica Osorio, No‘u Revilla, Kealoha, David Keali‘i MacKenzie, Lyz Soto and Brandy Nālani McDougall were all kind enough to reply to my emails, give me interviews and explain their views. Especial thanks to Brandy Nālani McDougall and Craig Santos Perez for supporting my application for research at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, and inviting me to attend their classes while I was visiting. The Hawaiian collection librarians at the Hamilton Library at UH were incredibly helpful, particularly Jodie Mattos and Kapena Shim — thank you.

My family and friends have been the most incredible and indispensable support over the last few years. Thank you to everyone who has cared enough to *not* ask when ‘it’ would be finished, but who has trusted that it would. My grandmother was my inspiration, guru and eternal support — although she left us before I could finish, this PhD is for her. Thank you to my aunt Hilary for long discussions, pertinent questions and eagle-eyed proofreading; your encouragement has meant so much. To my sister, Laura, thank you for making me laugh with your (often brutal) honesty and wit, and for being my friend. My parents have been absolutely supportive and patient as I continued along the educational route much further than any of us anticipated — I will get a job soon, I promise! Finally, to my partner-in-crime, who decided he’d like to become my husband half way through the PhD journey, I owe my sanity, my health and my heart. Thank you for surviving, and ensuring I had fun on the way. I love you.

Abstract

This thesis examines poetry by Native Hawaiian activists written between 1970 and 2016 in order to develop a detailed understanding of the multi-faceted ways poetry incorporates, transmits and enacts contemporary political identity. Whilst fundamentally a literary analysis, my methodology is discursive, and draws on a range of critical approaches, archival research and interviews with poets, in order to address why poetry is such a powerful form of resistance to American hegemony.

By reading contemporary poetry as an expression of deeply held cultural and political beliefs, this thesis suggests that writing and performing poetry are powerful forms of political resistance. Adopting a lens that is attentive to both the indigenous and colonial influences at play in Hawai‘i, it elucidates the nuanced ways that traditional literary techniques enter contemporary Native Hawaiian poetry as vehicles for cultural memory and protest. Attention to the continuities between traditional Hawaiian epistemology and the ways those same methods and values are deployed in twentieth and twenty-first century poetry, means this thesis is a part of a growing body of work that endeavours to understand indigenous literature from the perspective of its own cultural and political specificity.

The introduction establishes the historical and critical context of the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement and the Hawaiian Renaissance. It outlines the main developments in Native Hawaiian literary criticism since the late 1960s, including the reclaiming of traditional narratives and the privileging of indigenous epistemologies. Chapters One to Seven proceed chronologically, each addressing a particular collection, anthology or body of work. Chapter One focuses on Wayne Kaumuali‘i Westlake’s radical rejection of Westernised Waikīkī, whilst Chapter Two explores the anthologies *Mālama: Hawaiian Land and Water* and *Ho‘iHo‘i Hou: A Tribute to George Helm and Kimo Mitchell*, in relation to the Sovereignty Movement’s dedication to Aloha ‘Āina (love the land). Chapters Three to Five deal with five poetry collections, two by Haunani-Kay Trask, and one each by Imaikalani Kalahahele, Brandy Nālani McDougall and Māhealani Perez-Wendt. The chapters address how these poets articulate Native Hawaiian identity, nationalism and continuity through traditional

mo‘olelo (stories), which underpin the political beliefs of three generations of sovereignty activists. Chapters Six and Seven address contemporary performance poetry in both published and unpublished formats by Jamaica Osorio, David Keali‘i MacKenzie, No‘ukahau‘oli Revilla and Kealoha, demonstrating how a return to embodied performance communicates aloha (love, compassion, grace). The conclusion, Chapter Eight, indicates projects that are already productively engaging Hawaiian epistemology in the areas of geography and science, and points towards developments in the digital humanities that could extend this indigenised methodology into literary studies, in order to further engage with the depth and multiplicity of storied landscapes in Hawai‘i.

Glossary of Hawaiian terms, and a note on usage

ahupua‘a	traditional land division that extends from the uplands to the sea.
aikāne	same-sex friend, homosexual partner.
‘āina	land, earth, to eat.
akua	god, goddess, spirit.
ala	path, road, trail.
‘ala	fragrant, sweet-smelling.
ali‘i	chief, chiefess, ruler, monarch.
aloha	love, compassion, mercy, sympathy, kindness, grace, charity; said as a greeting.
aloha ‘āina	love of the land, patriotism; a very old concept, to judge from the many sayings (perhaps thousands).
ao	light, day, daylight, dawn; enlightened; to regain consciousness.
‘aumakua	family or personal gods, deified ancestors who assume the shape of animals.
ea	sovereignty, rule, independence.
hā	four, fourth; to breathe, exhale; breath, life.
hāloa	far-reaching, long; poetic name for lauloa taro; a son of Wākea.
hānau	to give birth, to lay (an egg); productive, fertile.
haole	white person, American, Englishman, Caucasian; formerly, any foreigner; strange.
ho‘iho‘i	to return, send back; restore.
honua	land, earth, world; background, as of quilt designs; basic, foundation, fundamental.
ho‘okipa	to entertain, treat hospitably.
ho‘olono	to listen.
hui	club, association, society, corporation, company, institution, organization; to join, unite, combine, mix.
huli	to turn, reverse; to curl over, as a breaker; to change.
‘ike	to see, sight; to know, perceive, be aware; understanding, comprehension, learning; to receive revelations from the gods.
kahuna	priest, sorcerer, magician, wizard, expert in any profession (whether male or female).
kalo	taro, a plant that was staple food for Hawaiians.
kanaka maoli	full-blooded Hawaiian person; person of Native Hawaiian descent.
kāne	man, male, husband, male relative.

kaona	hidden meaning, concealed reference, as to a person, thing, or place; words with double meanings that might bring good or bad fortune.
kapu	taboo, prohibition; forbidden; sacred, holy, consecrated.
kino lau	multiple forms taken by a sacred body.
kīpuka	variation, change of form; as a calm place in a high sea, opening in a forest, a clear place or oasis within a lava bed.
kohe	mortise, crease, groove, fork; vagina.
koihonua	genealogical chant.
kua‘āina	<i>lit.</i> , back land; country, countryside; rural; person from the country.
kuleana	right, privilege, concern, responsibility, authority; reason, cause, function, justification.
kumu	bottom, base, foundation; hereditary, fundamental; teacher, tutor; model, pattern; beginning, source, origin; reason, cause, goal.
kumulipo	origin, genesis, source of life; name of the Hawaiian creation chant.
kupuna	grandparent, ancestor, relative of the grandparent’s generation.
lāhui	nation, race, tribe, nationality; species, as of animal or fish; to assemble, gather together.
lehua	flower of the ‘ōhi‘a tree, also the tree itself; <i>Fig.</i> a warrior, beloved friend or relative, sweetheart.
lei	garland, wreath; necklace of flowers, leaves, shells, ivory, or feathers given as a symbol of affection.
leo	voice; tone, tune, melody, sound; command, advice, syllable.
lewa	space, sky, heavens, atmosphere; float, swing, carry, suspend; unstable; aerial; landless, homeless; vagabond, wanderer.
limu	seaweed; underwater plants, both fresh and salt; algae; mosses.
loina	rule, custom, manners, code, law; principle, as of a political party.
ma‘i	sickness, illness, disease; genitals.
maka‘āinana	Commoner, populace; citizen, subject.
makawalu	<i>lit.</i> , eight eyes; numerous, many, much.
mālama	to take care of, tend, preserve, protect, maintain; to serve, honour.
mana	supernatural or divine power; authority; divinely powerful, spiritual.
mana‘o	thought, idea, belief, opinion, theory; intention, meaning; desire.
mauna	mountain, mountainous region.
meiwi	traditional elements of Hawaiian poetry, story-telling, oratory and narration.
mele	song, chant of any kind; poem, poetry.
mele kanikau	mourning song.
moana	ocean, open sea, lake.

moe‘uhane	<i>lit.</i> , soul sleep; dream; to dream.
mo‘o	lizard, water spirit; succession, series, especially a genealogical line, lineage; story, tradition, legend.
mo‘okū‘auhau	genealogical succession.
mo‘olelo	story, myth, history, literature, legend, journal, chronicle, record.
na‘au	intestines, guts; mind, heart, affections; mood, temper, feelings.
‘ohana	family, relative, kin group; related.
‘ōiwi	native; from <i>iwi</i> , bone.
‘ōlelo	language, speech, word; oral, verbal.
‘ōlelo no‘eau	proverb, wise saying.
oli	chant that is not danced to.
‘ono	delicious, tasty.
pahu	drum, box, casket.
palapala	document of any kind, bill, deed, warrant, certificate; writing of any kind, literature; formerly the Scriptures or learning in general; to write, send a written message.
Papahānaumoku	mythical ancestor of Hawaiians; earth mother.
papakū	foundation or surface, as of the earth; floor, as of ocean; bed, as of a stream; bottom.
pō	night, darkness, obscurity; the realm of the gods; chaos, or hell; dark, obscure; <i>Fig.</i> , ignorant.
pōhaku	rock, stone; thunder.
poi	a staple foodstuff made from cooked and pounded taro corms.
pono	good, upright, moral, correct, proper, virtuous, fair, successful, in perfect order, accurate, correct; excellence, well-being, prosperity, equity, duty; use, purpose, plan; hope.
pua	flower, blossom; to issue, appear, emerge; progeny, child, descendant, offspring.
ua	rain; rain was beloved as it preserved the land, it was called <i>kāhiko o ke akua</i> , adornment of the deity.
wā	period of time, epoch, era, season, age.
wahi	place, location, position, site.
wahi pana	legendary place.
wai	fresh water, liquid of any kind other than sea water; juice, sap, honey; blood, semen.
Waikīkī	<i>lit.</i> , spouting water; place in Honolulu.
waiwai	goods, property, assets, valuables; value, worth, wealth.
Wākea	mythical ancestor of all Hawaiians; sky father.

A Note on Usage

Hawaiian orthography was not standardised until the creation of the ‘Ahahui ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian Language Association) in 1977, so there is considerable variation in spelling and the use of diacritics (‘okina and kahakō) between older and newer Hawaiian texts. I have not altered original orthography in quotations, but have otherwise used modern spellings and diacritics throughout the text.

The terms Native Hawaiian, indigenous Hawaiian and Kanaka Maoli (pl. Kānaka Maoli) are used synonymously throughout this thesis to refer to indigenous Hawaiians defined by genealogical descent. I do not use “native” (small “n”) because this is an official category employed by the State of Hawai‘i that is defined via blood-quantum, and not appropriate for this analysis. I am aware of the socio-political nuances of the terms “Native” and “indigenous” (terms I use interchangeably), as well as the use of “Hawaiian” to denote nationality rather than ethnicity. At all times “Hawaiian literature” refers to work authored by Hawai‘i’s indigenous people.

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Introduction

“You Will Be Undarkened”

you will be undarkened
by me led astray
to native waters
sunned until

old mango hills
rise leafless you will
come long and flowing

poured slowly
through the gourd of laughter
...

Haunani-Kay Trask

When I interviewed the poet No‘u Revilla as research for this thesis, she recalled that she had been at New York University, about to embark on a BA in Spanish and Journalism, when she borrowed Haunani-Kay Trask’s poetry collection *Light in the Crevice Never Seen* from the library. Trask’s poems affected her so strongly that she reappraised her position as a young Hawaiian woman planning to live and work in Europe, and moved home to Maui to pursue a different direction, becoming a poet, indigenous rights activist and academic. Revilla’s path away from Hawai‘i for an education on the continent, before undergoing a political and spiritual awakening, and returning to the islands to pursue an engagement with local issues, is common among the poets discussed in this thesis. Poet-activists are prevalent in Hawaiian literary society, and it is this thesis’ aim to explore why poetry is the literary form that so many Native Hawaiian activists choose to enliven and sustain their political life, and how poetry and politics work symbiotically in the Hawaiian context to the extent that poetry has become a vehicle for Native Hawaiian nationalism.

The body of the thesis is divided into seven chapters that map Native Hawaiian contemporary poetics onto the political struggles of the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement from the late 1960s to 2016, charting significant shifts and developments. The conclusion, Chapter Eight, positions this trajectory in relation to epistemological developments that are, for the first time, enabling effective communication between Native Hawaiian and Western theoretical positions. By examining poetry written, published and performed by Native Hawaiian activists in relation to the historical, political and cultural context of the Hawaiian Renaissance and the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement, this thesis develops a detailed understanding of the ways poetry incorporates, transmits and enacts cultural identity for Native Hawaiians, and how this identity is politicised in the Hawaiian context. It aims to address why poetry in particular is a powerful form of political resistance for Native Hawaiians who are concerned with forming a viable, living indigenous identity that does justice to both the experience of colonialism and their understanding of an alternative way of life. As the thesis develops, fundamental research questions emerge: How does poetry written by Native Hawaiian activists, in English, transmit cultural and political ideals, and for what purpose? In what ways does poetry enact and sustain Native Hawaiian literary identity and cultural nationalism? How does a non-Hawaiian scholar like myself engage with suitable methodologies for analysing Native Hawaiian poetry? In seeking answers to these questions it became clear that a purely literary approach would not suffice — the poetry studied in this thesis is deeply political and embedded in a very specific historical context. Reference to works in history, anthropology, philosophy, sociology, geography and politics enables a deeper understanding of how experiences of activism (against landowners, developers and the military) affected poets' engagement with the colonising ideologies that support their opponents.

The relationship between poetry and politics is openly acknowledged by Native Hawaiian writers, however, to date there have been no substantial studies of the specific interactions between Hawai‘i’s historical context, which provides the impetus for particular acts of political activism, and the poetry written by, about and for the activists. This thesis aims to demonstrate that, due to its unique ability to accommodate multiple meanings, poetry in the Hawaiian context is a powerful form of political expression. Ranging across a variety of relevant disciplines, this thesis employs different theoretical frameworks in accordance with the primary focus and context of the poetry selected in each chapter, but remains at the core a literary analysis.

I ka ‘ōlelo nō ke ola, i ka ‘ōlelo nō ka make: In language there is life, in language there is death (Hawaiian proverb)

For the poet-activists included in this study, poetry is just one form through which they communicate their beliefs and arguments. Language in all its forms is fundamental to the political aims of Native Hawaiian nationalists, but it is the confluence of meaning making in the Hawaiian language (and therefore culture) with the relatively constrained generic structures of English that make poetry a site of exceptional cultural communication. In her essay “Writing in captivity: Poetry in a time of Decolonisation” (1997), Haunani-Kay Trask wrote:

Like most Native people, I don’t understand the world of creative writing as divided into prose and poetry, or fiction and non-fiction. Nor do I imagine myself crossing from political resistance into artistic creation and then back again. Art is a fluid political medium to me, as politics is metaphorical and artistic. Life is a confluence of creativities. ... Our Hawaiian chiefs, for example, announced war through the use of *ominous metaphor*. And woe to the warriors who misunderstood the chiefly references. (42 emphasis added)

Poetry's capacious ability to accommodate metaphor complements Hawaiian linguistic and cultural tendencies manifest in the practice of kaona, which is the 'practice of veiling and layering meaning' in language (McDougall *Finding* 5). The nearest translation of kaona in English is "metaphor", but throughout this thesis the Hawaiian word is used to restrict the potential for the elisions, eliminations and additions of meaning that occur with translation. Trask, a contemporary Native Hawaiian warrior-poet herself, wields "ominous metaphors" with deadly accuracy. Her prediction of "woe" for the warriors who misunderstood or did not heed the language of chiefs is itself a metaphorical warning to contemporary American politicians, military chiefs and academics who are ignorant of, or refused to learn, Hawaiian culture.

Although proportionally few Native Hawaiians speak 'Ōlelo Hawai'i (the Hawaiian language) due to the pressures of American colonisation, 'Kanaka [Native Hawaiian] authors continue the practice of kaona as a form of aesthetic sovereignty' (McDougall *Finding* 5). Kaona allows a writer to speak to an audience on different levels, according to their cultural understanding; a phrase may have not only its obvious meaning, but several other meanings too. This means that an audience's understanding of Native Hawaiian literary production, whether it be poetry, song, oratory or prose, is directly correlative to their knowledge of Hawaiian culture. In an environment of repressive colonialism, such as that which Hawai'i has been experiencing since the 1890s, poetic cultural references are a cipher for subversive nationalist expression.

Hawaiian resistance to American colonialism has on the whole, with two notable exceptions in 1889 and 1895,¹ been non-violent. However, this relative lack of social disorder has historically been portrayed as acquiescence to colonial control, which

obfuscates a rich heritage of textual and narrative resistance. Whilst the contemporary Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement continues to be overwhelmingly dedicated to non-violent resistance, the confluence of poetic and political expression in the practice of *kaona* demonstrates that Native Hawaiians are engaged in a narrative war with America. Trask saw a parallel between the chiefly warriors of old who expressed their violent intent through “ominous metaphor” and the activist-poets of the Hawaiian Renaissance who declared discursive war on untruthful and repressive imperialist narratives of Hawai‘i. For this reason, and in support of the poetic combatants discussed within it, this thesis bears Trask’s phrase in its title.

Trask’s belief in life as a confluence of creativities is shared by other Native Hawaiian writers. Brandy Nālani McDougall is at pains to ‘blur... the lines between genres of critical and creative writing, as creative writing can be critical, presenting astute and complex analyses in the same way that critical writing can be poetic...’ (*Finding* 19). The complexity of meaning with which Native Hawaiian poets imbue their work indicates the breadth and variety of disciplinary approaches that are relevant to this discussion.

In order to map the connections between the poetry selected and its political, cultural and historical contexts, this thesis takes a discursive approach. By this I mean both the recognition of discourses that are negotiated through a continual process of inclusion and exclusion, and of the to-and-fro movement indicated in the etymology, as I move between/ among established discourses. Examples of such discourses include Native Nationalism and Aloha ‘Āina, which are articulated in response to settler colonial and touristic discourses in Hawai‘i. By making an intervention into multiple discourses,

via Native Hawaiian poetry, this thesis attempts to draw connections between them in order to elucidate the network of interactions and boundaries that exist between Native Hawaiians and the dominant American state system in which they live and write. I recognise the Foucauldian origin of employing such terminology in this way, but also the development of ‘discourse’ in postcolonial literary analysis as a site of contestation where resistance to dominant structures is considered possible, and emphasised. In this thesis, however, rather than looking for silences that might ‘speak’, I utilise Native Hawaiian cultural interpretations of indigenous poetry to understand what is ‘also said’.

Western philosophy is employed to analyse phenomena arising from colonialism, such as tourism, land domination, globalisation and nationalism, whilst Hawaiian epistemological approaches are applied to the products and actions of the poet-activists in order to demonstrate how they are acting culturally *and* politically. This is because, ‘Hawaiian premises about how *‘ōlelo* (language) functions and its central importance to how people live, relate to one another, and act in the material world are sufficiently different from Euro-American premises of linguistics and knowledge production that a distinctive methodological apparatus is needed for the interpretation of Hawaiian texts, relationships, and actions’ (Arista 664 original emphasis).

However, these different approaches are not conceived as being in opposition to each other, but rather in dialogue. By drawing elements from both Western and Hawaiian philosophy closer together, this thesis aims to demonstrate that although the two epistemological approaches may never touch, communication and therefore mutually beneficial exchange is increasingly possible. The poetic and cultural analysis is guided by indigenous interpretations, which tend to transform Western philosophical theory in

productive ways. Thus, for example, Jacques Derrida's reflections on the ethical exchange of hospitality are employed to analyse the alienation manifest in Wayne Westlake's poetry about Waikīkī, the epicentre of Hawai'i's 'hospitality industry'. Literary critic Rob Wilson's theorising of Hawai'i as a 'glocal' place is productively aligned with Henri Lefebvre's understanding of dominated and appropriated space, in order to analyse transformations in Hawaiian land use, which are documented in poetic calls to mālama 'āina (protect the land). The focus of the latter half of the thesis is on reading poetry from a perspective informed by Native Hawaiian philosophy, which foregrounds Hawaiian epistemological frameworks that give equal value to knowledge obtained via gross (body), subtle (mind) and causal (spirit) means (Meyer 60). This shifts the poetic analysis towards a distinctly Hawaiian framework, as articulated by Native Hawaiian practitioners in education, research and the creative arts.

It remains, however, important to acknowledge that academic engagement by non-Hawaiians in the fields of Hawaiian literature, history and anthropology has not historically been discursive, and has frequently been monolithic in its premises and historical perspective. Whilst they are not extensively explored, the controversies over representation in Hawai'i between anthropologists Marshall Sahlins and Gananath Obeyesekere for example, or between Haunani-Kay Trask and Jocelyn Linnekin, have shaped decisions about which secondary sources to prioritise when interpreting the poetry included in this thesis. Many written histories of Hawai'i start in 1778, when Captain James Cook mapped the Hawaiian Islands for Europeans, with the effect that Hawaiian history is often truncated, and conceived only in reference to colonisation. To an extent, this thesis commits this same misdemeanour, as its political focus

necessitates an engagement with Euro-American colonialism, which followed Cook's voyage, but its literary analysis is written wholly from an understanding that the Hawaiian culture and oral literature extends many thousands of years before the eighteenth century, and beyond Hawai'i, connecting it with wider Pacific cultures and histories.

Culturally informed research by Hawaiian scholars enables a non-Hawaiian like myself to undertake this kind of analysis. Whilst I understand that I am not the primary audience for the scholarship from which my literary analysis is derived, by publishing their understandings of both historical and contemporary Hawaiian intellectual culture in English, these academics and practitioners provide a means via which non-Hawaiian scholars can access meaning in Hawaiian literature in more responsible and informed ways. This thesis is mindful of its own narrative potential and has used the work of Hawaiian scholars as methodological guidance to approach contemporary Native Hawaiian poetry with the explicit intent to foreground Native Hawaiian epistemology.

Three Native Hawaiian poets kindly agreed to answer questions on their influences, practice and kuleana (rights, responsibility), so the views of Brandy Nālani McDougall, Jamaica Osorio and No'ukahau'oli Revilla also strongly inform this thesis' methodology. However, it is not possible nor desirable for academic research conducted mostly via the internet from England to dissimulate — an indigenous viewpoint is not my own, and I borrow it to assist in the decolonial project that necessitates Western theory (by which I mean Euro-American inheritors of the Judeo-Christian philosophical tradition) withdrawing from areas where it has no mandate to

dominate. However, where Western government has de facto political and social control, its theory has value to investigate its presence and provide a means for its overturning; just as Hawaiian politics cannot be fully understood without a grasp of corresponding literature, neither can colonialism be deconstructed without comprehending its underlying premises. This approach seeks to engage both Western and Hawaiian epistemology through an analysis of literature that inherits multiple traditions, in places that remember two competing social orders.

The Hawaiian conceptual epistemology that informs this approach is *papakū makawalu*, an indigenous model for the organisation of knowledge that contains three areas: *Papahulilani*, *Papahulihonua* and *Papahanaumoku*, which relate to three domains: the sky, the land and reproduction.² *Papakū* means foundation, stratum or layer and *makawalu* means eight eyes (*maka* is eyes, and *walu* is eight). The words together convey the meaning of a stable foundation from which a multiplicity opens out, meaning the production of many from one, multiplicity from singularity. That eight *eyes* look out from the epicentre demonstrates the potential of each branch to have its own perspective, its own view of the world. It is a practical, conceptual and spiritual framework for explaining relations between entities that is found in the *Kumulipo*, a Hawaiian creation chant, and as such, the three areas of *pāpaku makawalu*, taken together, can be reasonably described as an ontology (Kemp et al. 291).

Pualani Kanaka‘ole Kanahele, a Native Hawaiian kumu hula and educator, explains *papakū makawalu* as “a pedagogy for teaching our [Hawaiian] worldview” (“*Papakū Makawulu Part 2*” 39.01). Kanahele applies this conceptual framework to the vast

amount of information contained in Hawaiian chants, published in newspapers between 1834 and 1948, as “a methodology of understanding the words of our ancestors... and updating that information so we understand it in our language today” (@kteabam 0:30). Papakū makawalu offers a framework for comprehending the relation between phenomena described in the ancient mele (poems, chants, songs) that have been subsumed by the imposition of Western teleology, as it asks us to understand the world as being constituted from multiple perspectives.

Addressing Native Hawaiian poetry via a Native Hawaiian theoretical framework, but inescapably from a non-Hawaiian perspective, is intended to illustrate that a multi-perspectival engagement with Native Hawaiian poetry is analytically productive. Embracing the multiplicity of meaning inherent in the practices of kaona and papakū makawalu, successfully overturns myopic interpretations of contemporary Hawaiian literature as “young” or “unliterary” (McDougall *Finding* 11), challenges monolithic Euro-American narratives of contact and settlement, and particularly supports the communication of Hawaiian poetics’ relevance to wider discussions of indigenous political agency. The suitability of papakū makawalu as an epistemology for the twenty-first century has been demonstrated by the interdisciplinary work The Kohala Centre and Edith Kanaka‘ole Foundation have sponsored, that has, among other projects, applied it to GIScience. By digitally mapping Hawaiian cultural knowledge in ways that allow comparison with Western empirical research, papakū makawalu is proving its versatility — looking at the same thing or place from (at least) two different perspectives in order to understand them better, places indigenous and Western knowledge on an equal footing in the new digital ‘space’. Towards the end of this thesis I indicate how this multifaceted approach might open possibilities in areas

of the humanities, including poetry and literary criticism, by extending what Western theorists still consider empirically verifiable ‘information’ into the kind of storied places Hawaiian mele describe.

As the possibility of multiplicity implies, my position as a non-Hawaiian scholar relies on interpretations by culturally informed Native Hawaiians who live in the dynamic environments from which the poetry originates. Therefore the exegesis offered in this thesis is inherently partial and limited. As an English academic with only a nascent understanding of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i, this thesis predominantly engages with poetry written in English, and where Hawaiian is used the poets’ own translations and explanations are relied upon first, and then reputable Hawaiian language resources such as Pukui and Elbert’s *Hawaiian Dictionary* have been used to assist in my own translations. Any errors of translation, interpretation or analysis are my own.

Several factors affected the selection of texts for inclusion in this thesis, the principal of which was the project’s parameters, including only poetry by Native Hawaiians who have also been active politically since the 1960s. The next consideration was the necessity to limit the poetry addressed to that written in English. However, this was less restrictive than it may at first seem, as due to the historic repression of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i by the missionary establishment many of the poets studied in this thesis are not themselves fluent in the Hawaiian language. Of the poets whose work is included here, only the youngest poet, Jamaica Osorio, who was born after the establishment of ‘Aha Pūnana Leo (Hawaiian Language Nests) in 1984, was raised truly bilingual. Therefore understanding how the cultural values contained in the practice of kaona in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i were maintained in translation into English is the more vital factor for

analysing this contemporary poetry, and has been guided, as previously mentioned, by the scholarship of Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners. The second factor is the availability of poetry collections, chapbooks, journals (many of which are no longer published), and videoed performances outside of Hawai‘i/the USA. The process by which I personally ‘discovered’ each poet, gathered and organised examples of their work, was directed not only by my own research habits, but also by the more powerful forces of global publishing and distribution networks.³ Therefore there are many poets who I am aware have been left out of this analysis (including Joe Balaz, Puanani Burgess, Michael McPherson, Leialoha Apo Perkins, D. Mahealani Dudoit, ku‘ualoha ho‘omanawanui and Sage U‘ilani Takehiro), and it is likely there are many more I am as yet unaware of — indeed I hope there are, for finding new poetry is the greatest pleasure of literary scholarship.

Historical Context

In order to contextualise the theoretical approaches employed in this thesis, a summary of the origins and motivations of the main groups that constitute the Hawaiian Renaissance and Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement is useful. The summary aims to demonstrate why the historical moments addressed in this thesis became the focus for sovereignty activists, and why specific critical frameworks are employed for the evaluation of the poetry that they inspired.

The second Hawaiian Renaissance⁴ (hereafter referred to simply as the Renaissance) and contemporary Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement began in the mid-1960s and must be considered together, as they developed simultaneously, and their relationship is deeply symbiotic. Most descriptions of this period indicate that the Renaissance acted

as the precursor for the Sovereignty Movement, and suggest that the Renaissance was a historical and cultural awakening with no clear political objectives (Sai 171; G. Kanahele “The Hawaiian” 1). However, Trask has argued that interest in Hawaiian culture in the 1960s and 70s was political in the face of overwhelming pressure to Americanise and that the Renaissance has ‘often mistakenly been referred to as a “cultural revival”’, pointing out that the term has no political context (*Native* 88-90). Trask, borrowing a phrase from Ngūgĩ wa Thiong’o, prefers to consider the Renaissance as a period of intense decolonisation of the mind (*Native* 90). The participants in both the Renaissance and the Sovereignty Movement have often been the same people, complicating any perceived division between the creative and the political.

Neither the Renaissance nor the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement was without precedent, and the events and organisations of the contemporary period emerged from a long history of Hawaiian cultural production and, since colonisation, resistance. Most modern histories of Hawai‘i begin with the arrival of Captain James Cook, as his presence and death in Hawai‘i precipitated the events that transformed Hawai‘i from an independent nation into a state of America, but in order to understand the legacy of (mostly) non-violent resistance today’s activists inherited, it is necessary to understand that Hawaiian cultural history stretches for two millennia before the arrival of Cook at Kealakeakua Bay in 1779.

Hawai‘i was the last area of the Pacific to be settled by humans, and archaeological evidence suggests this occurred on O‘ahu between the third century BC and first century AD (Stannard “Before” 7). The original settlers grew to a nation of

approximately 800,000 to 1 million people in the eighteen hundred years before the first recorded contact with the West, but this population was decimated by diseases introduced by an increasing number of explorers, whalers, traders and acquisitive naval officers who followed Cook (Stannard “Before” 16). As regular epidemics swept the islands, a conservative estimate of the depopulation rate between 1778 and 1832 is seventeen people dead to every one survivor; it was probably higher (Stannard “Before” 22). The loss of specialist knowledge in all areas of life was devastating; depopulation encouraged the breaking of the kapu (taboo) system that governed religious life, and the subsequent conversion of Hawaiians to Christianity (N. Silva *Aloha* 29-30). It also profoundly affected transmission of historical information, which was held in oral chants, and facilitated the uptake of reading and writing among the remaining population, introduced by Protestant missionaries in the 1820s, as Hawaiians saw its potential as a replacement for embodied knowledge.

As European contact with Hawaiians increased, an ambitious chief on Hawai‘i Island traded with the foreigners for weaponry, and by 1810 Kamehameha had fulfilled an ancient ambition to unite all the islands under one Chief’s rule. Kamehameha was the first mō‘i (King) of Hawai‘i and he began the process of turning Hawai‘i into a nation along the lines of the European model, intending to safeguard Hawai‘i against the European colonisation occurring on other Pacific islands.

Around 1825, at the encouragement of missionaries, hereditary land holding became a part of Hawaiian law. Before this time no land was considered owned by humans, and the traditional relationship between Hawaiians and land is reflected in the proverb, He ali‘i ka ‘āina, he kaua ke kanaka; “The land is a chief, people are the stewards” (Pukui

‘Ōlelo No ‘eau #531). The transformation from the traditional land system to private property, called the Māhele, took just 33 years and by 1852 private land ownership was written into law. American and British businessmen purchased vast tracts of land for nominal sums and the common people were almost entirely dispossessed of land; of 1.5 million acres provided for them by the King, only 30,000 were successfully claimed. The transition from communal to private land ownership is the most significant injury done to the Hawaiian people by haole (white foreigners), and regaining land remains the single largest aim for the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement today.

Successive Hawaiian monarchs engaged in diplomatic and legal transactions with European and American governments, gaining recognition of Hawai‘i’s status as an independent nation. A key event was the treaty of “friendship, commerce and navigation” negotiated by Kamehameha III with the United States, because, under U.S. law, treaties can only be signed with other sovereign nations (Cruz 93; Kalt and Singer 9). However, haole plantation owners and businessmen were a powerful political force in Honolulu and by 1882 the Sugar Planters Association openly advocated for annexation to the United States. To achieve this a group of haole men, both citizens and resident non-citizens, formed the “Hawaiian League”, and with military support demanded a new constitution, including that the King would not interfere directly with elections or constitutional administration, or appoint his own cabinet (Kuykendall 360). By July 6th the “Bayonet Constitution” was signed and promulgated. This much-detested piece of legislation provided the legal excuse for deposing the next (and last) monarch, Queen Lili‘uokalani, when she attempted to replace it in 1893.

The overthrow of the monarchy was achieved on January 17 1893, by a group of armed haole men composed mainly of the same members of the Honolulu elite who had enforced the “Bayonet Constitution”. They moved into the government buildings and declared the Provisional Government under martial law with the full support of Minister Stevens of the United States, and with the conspicuous presence of troops from the U.S.S. Boston on the streets of Honolulu (Kuykendall 588/ 594-6/ 601).

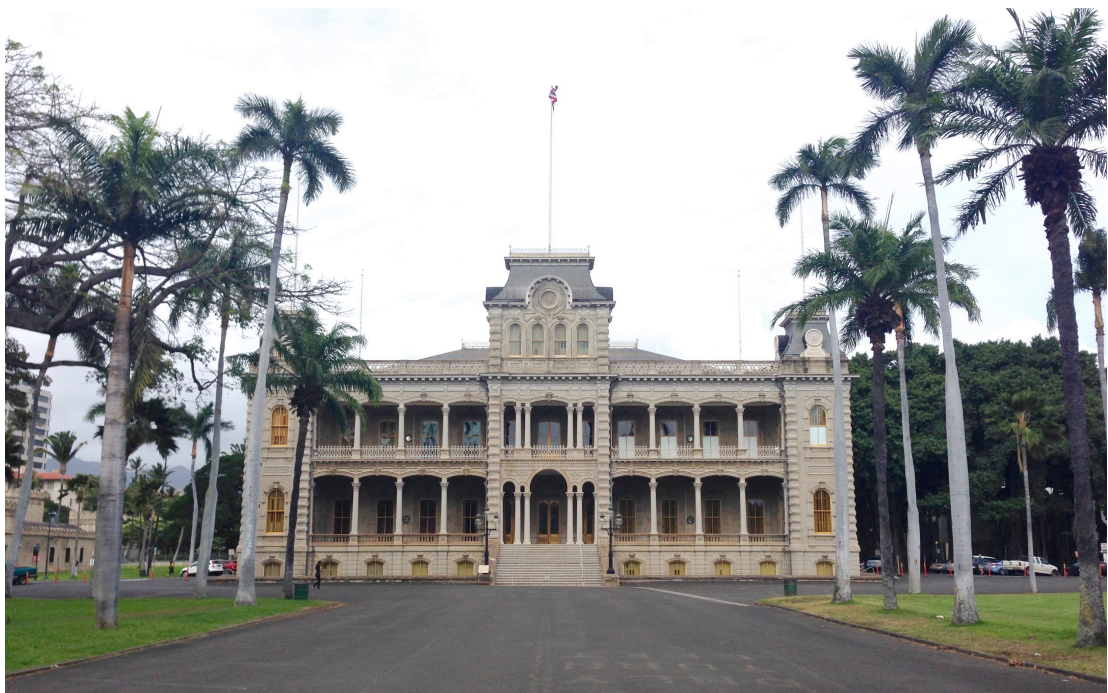


Figure 1: ‘Iolani Palace, Honolulu, Hawai‘i. Queen Lili‘uokalani was confined to the corner bedroom on the first floor (right in this image) after her conviction for treason.

Key to the current *de jure* claims of the Sovereignty Movement is that Queen Lili‘uokalani’s written protest to the Provisional Government yields control only to the ‘superior force of the United States of America ... until such time as the Government of the United States shall, upon the facts being presented to it, undo the action of its representatives and reinstate me ...’, not the Provisional Government, invalidating later transactions with that government (Kuykendall 603). President Cleveland

commissioned James H. Blount to report on the revolution to the U.S. government, and Blount's report clearly documents the repeated attempts by haole to gain control of the Hawaiian Kingdom's government; it is a key piece of evidence in the Sovereignty Movement's legal arguments (U.S. H. *Foreign Relations* 53rd cong. 3rd sess.).

Immediately after Queen Lili'uokalani was deposed, two Native Hawaiian hui (associations) organised protest petitions to be delivered to Washington to make known that the Native Hawaiians did not support annexation. Over 38,000 signatures were gathered, which 'even considering the likelihood that some people signed both petitions, ... is impressive given that the population of Kanaka Maoli at the time was around 40,000' (N. Silva *Aloha* 151). President Cleveland requested that the Provisional Government step aside and reinstate the Queen, which was refused, and when later in 1894 the United States government recognised the new Republic of Hawai'i, the revolution was complete (Kuykendall 645). In 1897 America became embroiled in a war with Spain over Cuba and the Philippines, which increased Pearl Harbor's importance as a coaling station for the U.S. navy, and under conditions of war, on July 6 1898 Congress annexed Hawai'i by Joint Resolution.

The Newlands resolution, as it is known, was an instrument of domestic law, requiring only a simple majority vote, and has no legal standing outside the United States (Kauanui 28). This provides the second basis for the legal challenges to American control of Hawai'i that continue today. The public land known as the Hawaiian kingdom and crown lands were ceded to the government of the United States (Liliuokalani 260), and the McKinley army camp was established near Diamond Head

(Churchill and Venne XLII). American influence over Hawai‘i has always been reinforced by the proximity and prominence of superior military capacity. In 1900 the Organic Act incorporated Hawai‘i as a colonial territory of the United States, and after World War II, in 1946, Hawai‘i was placed on the U.N. list of Non-Self-Governing territories, and was therefore eligible for decolonising procedures under international law (Kauanui 29). However, in 1959, around a third of Republic of Hawaii citizens (around 133,000 of 380,000 eligible voters) voted for the Hawaiian Admission Act, making Hawai‘i the 50th state of the Union. Hawai‘i was then removed from the U.N. list.⁵

The post-World War II era in which Hawai‘i became a U.S. State was characterised by the break up of European empires in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific and the transition to independence of their former colonies. However, the effects of World War II, the attack on Pearl Harbor and the internment of Japanese Americans had a profound effect on the public consciousness in Hawai‘i. The prevailing public opinion was that the new American citizens of the “Rainbow State” should assimilate quietly and shed their individual ethnic identities, and that dissent was “un-American” (G. Kanahele “The Hawaiian” 2).

However, by the late 1960s America had controversially been at war in Vietnam for over 15 years, and public attitudes began to change (G. Kanahele “The Hawaiian” 2-3). The Civil Rights movement was gaining traction on the continent, and the UK’s Anti-Apartheid movement for South Africa was global news. Both had a direct influence on the activities of the American Indian Movement (AIM) in America and the Polynesian Panthers in New Zealand, which in turn affected Hawaiians’ attitudes

towards increasing pressure to modernise and assimilate. The spirit was one of increasing questioning and defiance of authority, independence and rebellion (G. Kanahele “The Hawaiian” 3).

In 1964, John Dominis Holt IV, a Native Hawaiian man of mixed European aristocratic and Hawaiian and Tahitian ali‘i (royal) ancestry, published an essay that captured the zeitgeist of his time. “On Being Hawaiian” laid bare the emotional and spiritual cost of Americanisation, and the essay became a seminal text that many believe marks the beginning of the Renaissance (G. Kanahele “The Hawaiian” 3; Trask “Decolonizing” 181). As a truly bicultural hapa-haole (half foreign/white) Hawaiian, whose Euro-American culture was ascendant in almost every public arena, Holt expressed the pain he felt at the suppression of his Hawaiian heritage:

In Hawaii, where I was born, I am an American: a product of the historic process as it unfolds itself within the limits of the United States; but in Hawaii I am statistically, as well as ethnically, a keiki hanau o ka aina—a child born of the land—and a part-Hawaiian.

...

Realizing I am a citizen of this great republic, loving it in spite of its imperfections, and respecting to the very depths of my feeling the historic instruments that shaped our destiny in legal terms as a nation, I am strongly, in my heart, a Hawaiian. (12-13)

Holt goes on to delineate many of the themes that would become central to the Renaissance and Sovereignty Movement: the centrality of land, the difficulties of reconciling contradictory intellectual and cultural heritages and, most presciently for what was to follow, an assured statement of Hawaiians’ ability to work with the ‘welter of tradition’ they have inherited and find sense among its ‘confusion’ (“On Being Hawaiian” 18). Whilst later sovereignty activists did not share his respect for the ‘historic instruments that shaped our destiny’, Holt’s public commitment to his

Hawaiian heritage was unusual at the time, and legitimated others' increasing interest in Hawaiian history and culture.

The fifteen years from the publication of Holt's essay were so transformative that by 1979 the term "Hawaiian Renaissance" was routinely employed. It has been multifaceted and not restricted to any one group or discipline, encompassing language, literature, music, genealogy research, craft, art and sport (G. Kanahale "The Hawaiian" 1-10). The engagement of ordinary people was supported by new organisations, such as the Hawaiian Music Foundation (1971), Ahahui 'Ōlelo Hawai'i (Hawaiian Language Association, 1972) and Hale Nauā III (an indigenous artists' group, 1976). The Renaissance was educational as well as creative, and there was a significant uptake in formal courses in Hawaiian culture, as well as informal study from libraries and archives (G. Kanahale "The Hawaiian" 8). In 1979 George S. Kanahale observed, 'From young composers to canoe paddlers, from ethnomusicologists to artist, from students to professors, there's a kind of stampede back to the past. Everybody seems to be shouting, "Ho'i ana i ke kumu" or "Back to the source"' ("The Hawaiian" 7). Renewed interest in the past informed a new aesthetic that employed traditional knowledge to address contemporary problems. The Renaissance gave intellectual learning, knowledge formation and cultural understanding new credibility for Hawaiians and negated common racist stereotypes of them as lazy, stupid and slow (G. Kanahale "The Hawaiian" 8; Kosasa 19:30). It increased understanding of genealogical connections to the land through a better understanding of the language and re-educated Hawaiians about how their land and language had been taken. It supported musicians who could make a living from a strong local audience, and ignited pride in Hawaiians' voyaging history.

George S. Kanahele situates the Renaissance among other indigenous movements, adopting an international outlook that was greatly aided by the successful revival of canoe voyaging (“The Hawaiian” 6). In 1976 the replica canoe Hōkūle‘a was successfully sailed using traditional non-instrument navigation between Hawai‘i and Tahiti, sparking a resurgence in voyaging and cultural exchange across Polynesia (G. Kanahele “The Hawaiian” 6). Hōkūle‘a’s voyage was a very public achievement for Native Hawaiians, as it vindicated their narrative of their arrival in Hawai‘i and debunked the reductive theories of Western historians (Scanlan 63).

The Renaissance precipitated a change in public attitudes that opened the way for the many achievements of the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement (G. Kanahele “The Hawaiian” 9). The Sovereignty Movement grew from disputes rooted in the Māhele of the nineteenth century, and was precipitated by the post-statehood shift in Hawai‘i’s economy from plantation agriculture to tourism and land speculation (Trask “The Birth” 127). Like the Renaissance, the Sovereignty Movement has never been a unitary entity, but rather made up of smaller, often overlapping, groups, many of which were formed for specific causes and then disbanded, but some of which still operate today.⁶

The common thread through all of the struggles that make up the Movement is Hawaiians’ right to live on, access and cultivate the land of their ancestors. Milner explains that, ‘In the course of this struggle, beginning with Kalama Valley [sic], home became a metaphor for homeland, and political organizing developed accordingly’ (151). As previously explained, very few Hawaiians were able to claim

land during the Māhele, and so most were tenants, considerably poorer than other ethnic groups in Hawai‘i, certainly unable to afford housing built by any hand other than their own and many relied on traditional farming, fishing and gathering to live. In Kālāma Valley a pattern of events that was to be repeated many times throughout the 70s occurred. A wealthy landowner saw an opportunity to profit from the real estate boom caused by demand for housing, hotels and leisure facilities from newly arrived in-migrants and tourists, mostly from the continental U.S., and sought to evict their tenants.

Kālāma Valley is a 250-acre valley on O‘ahu owned by the Bishop Estate, a trust that is supposed to allocate lands to Native Hawaiians. It was farmed by tenant farmers, of mostly Hawaiian and “local” (mixed-Asian and European) ethnicity. Upon receiving eviction notices, the residents, many of whom had already suffered relocations, refused and during the struggle many were arrested and their houses bulldozed. A group of supporters, a mix of Hawaiian, local and haole of varying political leanings coalesced around the community and formed Kōkua Hawai‘i (Help Hawai‘i), which organised most of the protests against the evictions (Milner 155). Described as an “incubator” for the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement, the Kālāma Valley struggle ultimately failed, as the tenants were evicted and today the whole valley is developed. However, Milner notes that:

The conflict captured the state’s imagination, and the daily newspapers’ best reporters covered the story. Bishop Estate found itself constantly in the public eye. ... George Santos, a Kālāma pig farmer who held out the longest, received invitations to meet with key political officials. Young attorneys got their first real taste of high visibility political work. (156)

The tactics activists learned at Kālama Valley would be used at numerous proposed and actual sites of development and eviction, including Waiāhole-Waikāne Valley, Kahalu‘u, Wāwāmalu, ‘Ewa, He‘eia Kea, Mokauea, Sand Island and Kaho‘olawe, all of which pitched local people with few resources against landowners, developers, state agencies and law enforcement.

These struggles brought long-withheld conflicts over the meaning of land, home, homelessness and citizenship into sharp relief, and a narrative began to form differentiating Hawaiian and haole understandings of how land should be used.

However this was not an entirely ethnically divided conflict, as many non-Hawaiians, both local and haole, supported the Movement with time and resources. The Hawaiian narrative was based on the cultural value of aloha ‘āina, which is often translated as “patriotism”, but which is literally “love of the land”. Aloha ‘āina is fundamental to Hawaiian culture, underpinning the reciprocal relationship between people and the land that governed many hierarchies, food producing activities and human relationships in old Hawai‘i. The artistic and cultural production of the Renaissance supported and enhanced communication of the Hawaiian narrative of aloha ‘āina among Hawaiian residents, discursively distancing the moral prerogatives of the poor tenants/farmers/workers from the economic motivations of the developers and landowners.

The poet-activists whose work this thesis draws upon have engaged with the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement in multifaceted ways. Their activism has included writing editorials for local newspapers; applying for funding for legal aid for activists; giving testimony against the misuse of land; direct action to prevent the desecration of burial

sites; founding initiatives for self-government; producing t-shirts for protest marches; taking Hawaiian legal claims to the U.N.; ensuring Hawaiian poets and writers are taught in Hawaiian schools and universities; working for the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation; reading poetry at protest marches; challenging environmental destruction; engaging in ‘radical librarianship’ at the University of Hawai‘i; and building and maintaining connections with protest movements across the Pacific.



Figure 2: “Big Fish Eat Little Fish” — homemade poster from 1970s protest rally.

The scope of the activism that participants in the Renaissance and Sovereignty Movement engaged in demonstrates how limited this thesis’s snapshot is, but intends to illustrate how the creative and political areas of these poets’ work informed each other, producing radical, rooted, emplaced and embodied responses to instances of both immediate and far-reaching colonial hegemony.

The Renaissance and Sovereignty Movement transformed public discourse in Hawai‘i to such an extent that it is now common to find descriptions in magazines, newspaper and journal articles, online discussions and blog posts, and in both general interest and

scholarly books of Hawai‘i as a colonised sovereign nation. However, neither movement is constituted of a single group, or event, or even series of events, and their influence has waxed and waned according to a multitude of external factors (Kosasa 22.40-27.12). Whilst the Movement has been constituted quite differently across the decades, the research undertaken for this thesis indicates that it is still active and remains a relevant political force for contemporary Native Hawaiians.

When “On Being Hawaiian” was re-issued in 1995, Holt wrote in his new introduction that:

Times change. People change. There has been a vast awakening among us Hawaiians ... Our young people look now with fervour to the possibility of becoming once again Polynesian Hawaiians in spirit. They march, carry placards, they read, more importantly, they have learned to speak out — to externalize rage and frustration ... They have begun to sense, as only Hawaiians can sense this particular thing, that greatness, something intangible yet powerful and enduring belonged to our people.(8-9)

The tangible effects of the Sovereignty Movement are felt in the way politicians canvas Native communities during elections, how Hawaiians are regaining control over their water supplies, the transformation in public consciousness that makes it unacceptable to ridicule Hawaiians for their ethnicity, the continuing restoration work on Kaho‘olawe, the bilingual education now available to Hawaiian children, and the ongoing debates about the future of the Hawaiian nation (The Centre for Hegemony Studies 18:55; Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua et al.). The interaction of the Hawaiian Renaissance and the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement is most potent when they combine for consciousness raising, ‘externalizing rage’ as Holt put it, and education. In these areas poetry, which is one facet of the vast cultural production of the Renaissance, has been a means by which change can be realised, but the recent nature of its emergence into

the wider public and particularly academic consciousness has meant that contemporary Native Hawaiian poetry as a subject of study and analysis is relatively new.

Studies on Resistant Hawaiian Poetics: A Critical Overview

Critical work on Hawaiian poetics falls broadly into three categories: the postcolonial, Native Hawaiian literary history and Native Hawaiian literary criticism. Postcolonial analyses are mainly authored by non-Hawaiians, as were works of literary history until fairly recently, whilst cultural literary criticism requires knowledge of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and tends to be undertaken by Native Hawaiians. For this study recent works by Native Hawaiian literary critics are most relevant. *voices of Fire* (2010) by ku‘ualoha ho‘omanawani and *Finding Meaning* (2016) by Brandy Nālani McDougall are utilized for their detailed explanations of Hawaiian poetics, whilst *Aloha Betrayed* (2004) by Noenoe K. Silva provides a comprehensive overview of Native Hawaiian literary print history. *voices of Fire* is particularly concerned with Hawaiian mele (as opposed to poetry in English which draws on mele) and offers a comprehensive study of poetic structures and techniques, whilst *Finding Meaning* covers contemporary poetry in English and draws explicit connections between the meiwi (poetic techniques) of ancient mele and the poetics of Hawaiian poetry in English. *Aloha Betrayed* allows the political and historical aspects of contemporary poetry in English to be related to a lineage of literary resistance printed in the Hawaiian language.

However, this critical overview addresses works by both non-Native and Native Hawaiian critics in order to illustrate the complexity of differing cultural approaches to Native Hawaiian writing, and to position this thesis between the two. As this thesis draws on areas beyond literature, this overview also includes examples of Native

Hawaiian political science and philosophy that have a direct bearing on the literary critical perspective of the thesis. However, it excludes works in anthropology, sociology or legal studies that are referred to later on as the primary focus remains historical-political narratives of anti-imperialism via literary production.

Literary critical works on Hawaiian writing (Native or otherwise) have only begun to emerge since the late 1970s, and book-length works that treat Native Hawaiian writing as an entity in its own right span only the last decade. This is because Pacific, or Oceanic, writing first emerged in the wider academic consciousness via the regional University of the South Pacific, founded in 1968. The Hawaiian academy was much slower to acknowledge the value of an indigenous viewpoint, with the University of Hawai‘i not offering Hawaiian Studies until 1986, and then only after a protracted campaign by academics and students (Trask *Native* 151-167). As a result, culturally informed literary critical analyses by indigenous Hawaiians form a small, although increasing, body of the critical treatment of “Hawaiian literature”, which has historically been written by non-Natives.

Hawai‘i as a nation has been historically and politically formed against a backdrop of European and American colonisation. As a place it has been extensively written about, over and against, but Native Hawaiian voices are now being heard in literature and criticism, overturning pervasive colonial attitudes that Rob Wilson dubs ‘Jack London’s social Darwinist slime’, noting London’s portrayal of native Hawaiians in his short stories (*Reimagining* 30). In 1946 James Michener published his *Tales of the South Pacific*, the opening lines of which perfectly illustrate the colonial desires of Americans arriving in Hawai‘i:

I wish I could tell you about the South Pacific. The way it actually was. The endless ocean. The infinite specks of coral we call islands. Coconut palms nodding gracefully toward the ocean. Reefs upon which waves broke into spray, and inner lagoons, lovely beyond description...

But whenever I start to talk about the South Pacific, people intervene. (3)

Burdened with colonial imaginings and touristic desires that inevitably necessitate the discursive de-peopling of the lush settler colonised landscape, contemporary Native Hawaiian writers are rebelling. In the same year as Hawai'i became a U.S. state, and its nascent Renaissance was expressing culturally situated, politicised resistance to colonial definitions of Native Hawaiians, other Pacific Islands were gaining their independence. In comparison to European colonies in Africa, India, South America and the Caribbean, decolonisation came late to the Pacific, and Pacific writers that were engaged in de-colonial struggles in the 1960s and 70s demonstrably drew literary inspiration from the anti- and postcolonial struggles of newly independent nations across the world (Keown 9).

American academic Barbra Harlow was the first to propose that literature from postcolonial countries should be read as a site of political resistance to colonialism, and in her book *Resistance Literature* (1987) she insisted that critics consider non-Western texts in their particular political contexts. I share this position, and this thesis is premised on Harlow's argument that literary criticism must be contextualised in order to be useful. In her chapter on poetry Harlow includes poets from many nationalist movements across South America, Africa and the Middle East and extends the understanding of poetry as a vehicle for nationalism which 'mobiliz[es] a collective response to occupation and domination and as a repository for popular

memory and consciousness' (34). Harlow's analysis of Franz Fanon's and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's critiques of imperialism's systematic destruction of native cultures parallels the Hawaiian academics, writers and political activists Haunani-Kay Trask's and Noenoe K. Silva's later use of the work of these great anti-colonialists in their own analyses.

The late-coming of anti-colonial movements to the Pacific is analysed by Michelle Keown, in her study *Pacific Islands Writing: The Postcolonial Literatures of Aotearoa/New Zealand and Oceania* (2007) via Ali Behdad's theory of 'belatedness', in order to explain why 'there were no Pacific equivalents of early twentieth-century nationalist novels such as Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable* (1935) or Raja Rao's *Kanthapura* (1938)' (8-9). Whilst postcolonial novels were produced by Pacific writers, and indeed there are Hawaiian novelists, most notably John Dominis Holt, Kaui Hart Hemmings and Kiana Davenport, de-colonial literature in Hawai'i primarily takes the form of poetry, rather than the novel.

In her wide-ranging analysis, Keown acknowledges the complexity of using the term 'postcolonial' in relation to the vast and diverse area that is the 'Pacific' (23-5), and, whilst she includes Hawai'i in her analysis, acknowledges that, along with American Samoa and Guam, it is an American colony (126). Whilst postcolonial theory can offer a substantive framework through which anti- and de-colonial Hawaiian poetry can be analysed, particularly with regards to work by local and haole authors, it remains incomplete when addressing the very particular historical, political and legal situation of Native Hawaiians. Vilsoni Hereniko's analysis of postcoloniality in the Pacific cautions that 'in the French colonies, New Zealand and Hawai'i, where indigenous

people are still struggling for sovereignty in their own land, the term [postcolonial] is meaningless' (148). For this reason a postcolonial theoretical framework is not explicitly employed in the relatively focussed area of indigenous poetic production this thesis addresses. Although some analytical tools I deploy, specifically transformation, translation and renewal, are traits of the postcolonial, they remain characterised in other terms.

Keown's necessarily brief, given the scope of her work, treatment of Hawaiian literature acknowledges the importance of placing contemporary writing within the context of nineteenth-century Native Hawaiian literary production, but is not explicit about the resistant nature of both historical and recent endeavours. The analysis of the 'emerg[ing] generation of younger writers' in the 1970s as not engaging explicitly with Indigenous identity politics, is both correct, in that their engagement was not explicit to anyone not expecting kaona references, and misrepresentative, as it indicates that inexplicitness equals nonexistence (127). McDougall takes issue with Keown's characterisation of Hawaiian literature from the 1980s as 'polemical' (*Finding* 13), which has to do with the pejorative use of 'polemical' as a label used to dismiss the work of political activists as somehow lacking artistic or aesthetic merit, and therefore legitimacy as literature. Whilst Keown's use of the term refers to polemics as a rhetorical technique, and is not deprecatory, the need for such defence is epitomised by the work of critics such as Fredric Jameson, who intimated in his oft-criticised essay "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism" (1986) that the political content of non-European writing was 'conventional' and 'naïve', and from which there was little aesthetic pleasure to be derived (66). It remains vital for Native Hawaiian writers to emphasise that their work is crafted for

both pleasure and function, whereby much of its aesthetic skill resides in the integration of highly political messages within traditional poetic devices, accessible only via a sensitivity to Hawaiian culture and history. Writing that employs alternative rhetorical and poetic devices is usually, however, engaged in the same resistant, anti-colonial project as more explicitly polemical work. Whilst this thesis characterises Native Hawaiian poetry as political, intentionally avoiding ‘polemical’ due to contention around its occasional use to disparage writers, the epistemology of ‘polemic’, from the Greek for ‘war’, when considered within the framework this thesis employs and embeds in its title, makes the word’s strict sense of engaging in a controversial dispute appropriate for much of the work discussed here.

Trask in particular, fits this combative description, and of her poetry Keown writes that ‘political and lyrical strands are brought together ... as a metaphorical means by which to combat the forces of Americanisation in modern Hawai‘i’ (129). The ‘metaphorical means’ Keown refers to is the explosive power of Pele, yet for Trask, as for other Hawaiians, Pele is not metaphorical but real, and by (re)writing Pele’s destructive/creative power into her poems, Trask is not providing a metaphorical means to combat Americanisation, but an actual tool for the realisation of independence. This thesis argues, explicitly, that Native Hawaiian poetry is a valid, powerful tool for decolonisation, and whilst it directly engages in deconstructing colonialism, it also offers alternative, practical proposals for realising a post-American Hawai‘i.

Postmodernism, like postcolonialism, is a non-indigenous theoretical framework that has been applied to Pacific writing. Keown has worked extensively with the

postmodern elements of Samoan authors Albert Wendt's and Sia Figiel's magical realist novels, and has proposed that a 'new wave' of Pacific creativity is particularly engaged with postmodernism's aesthetic potential (10). However, the attribution of 'postmodern techniques' to Pacific writing is countered by the presence of similar techniques in pre-colonial oral, artistic and philosophical traditions of the Pacific (Keown 1999). Another Pacific literary scholar, Rob Wilson, also engages in a postmodern critique of Hawaiian literature in his monograph *Reimagining the American Pacific: From South Pacific to Bamboo Ridge and Beyond* (2000).

Wilson's analytical orientation, however, is more east-west, from America to Asia, than Oceanic, designating Hawai'i as a transnational area of immigrant built global capitalism and 'local motions' comparable with Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore. By tracing the shift from 'Pacific-Rim' to 'Asia-Pacific' Wilson focuses on the 'cultural conjunctions of global/local space as these impinge on the symbolic coherence of American national identity' (*Reimagining* 19). By enacting multicultural identity and 'critical regionalism', Wilson argues, Hawai'i becomes a 'Trojan horse' of localism within the United States national identity, undermining post-industrial grand narratives of American belonging (*Reimagining* 179). What Wilson calls localism includes indigenous Hawaiians with Pacific/Asian settlers in the 'multicultural local', and is conceived as resistant to globalising forces. However, Wilson's 'pluralist and culturally hybrid definition of "local"' undermines the political claims of Native Hawaiians, who are left to fight for space amidst the ethnically inclusive definition (Wilson *Reimagining* 122).

Wilson's postmodern analysis of local Hawaiian literature, via the journal *Bamboo*

Ridge, as a hybrid product of transnational, transcultural “lines of flight” allowed him, in 2000, to argue that Native Hawaiian literature ‘will have to cut its own space and define its own relationship to place and history rather than be assimilated into any American multicultural project...’ (*Reimagining* 122). However, in a recent collection *Postcolonial Poetry*, edited by Jahan Ramazani (2017), Wilson argues that Oceanic poetry ‘retains a saliency of cultural-political relevance [that] often activates re-indigenizing energies ... [and] aggravates more glutted neoliberal globalization frames of subjective lyrical production’ (“Postcolonial” 58). In contrast postmodern poetry is a product of ‘diasporic delinkages from place, land, or nation’ that has become a victim of its own instability. The “Pacific Postmodern”, Wilson now argues, ‘can be situated, contextualized, and decoded otherwise and elsewhere as social articulation’ (“Postcolonial” 59). The evolution of Wilson’s analytical frameworks can be observed via the normalisation of indigenous claims to sovereignty in the intervening decades, that now routinely refer to Hawai‘i as colonised, and in more Hawaiians of mixed ancestry claiming their Native Hawaiian heritage. Most importantly, however, the analytical shift accentuates the limitations of Western frameworks for exploring and explaining indigenous literary production, as despite the wider, globalised context in which it is created, in Hawai‘i at least, the nexus of concern remains the recovery and deployment of indigenous epistemologies for social recovery in a specific locale.

However, Wilson’s position in regard to Hawaiian literature is complicated by his co-editorship, with Vilsoni Hereniko, of a seminal text of Pacific literary criticism, *Inside Out: Literature, Cultural Politics and Identity in the New Pacific* (1999). Among the wide ranging essays contained in this collection are two by Haunani-Kay Trask, the Native Hawaiian scholar, activist and poet whose writing has formed a significant

portion of the foundation upon which contemporary Hawaiian literary criticism (and indeed literature), has been formed. Trask's political and literary analyses, which she explicitly and consistently entwines, were among the first to directly address colonisation in Hawai'i, in order to carve a distinct space for Native Hawaiians and explicitly foreground Native Hawaiian nationhood.

The first of Trask's essays published in *Inside Out*, "Writing in Captivity: Poetry in a Time of Decolonization" in which she outlines the political process of writing in Hawai'i, emphasises that the act (of writing) is just as valuable as the final product to the decolonial project. The second essay "Decolonizing Hawaiian Literature" is the first work to explicitly tie contemporary Hawaiian literature firmly to its oral origins and explain the cultural value of performance. Trask differentiates Native Hawaiian writing from Asian, "local" and haole writing, and briefly contextualises emergent poetry in both Hawaiian and English. She writes that,

Although composition in Hawaiian has flourished, a Hawaiian nationalist literature has also been appearing in English, including pidgin. Embracing scholarship, fiction, poetry, essays, and other work, this budding field reflects many of the same themes of literature written in Hawaiian: celebration of Hawai'i and her native people; preservation and reinvigoration of things Hawaiian (*nā mea Hawai'i*); resistance to the destruction of the natural beauty of Hawai'i; demands for restitution of the Hawaiian lāhui or nation. ("Decolonizing" 171)

The themes outlined here direct this thesis' analysis of the political potential of culturally embedded references in Native Hawaiian poetry in English, and confirms that although the language is foreign, the concepts and intentions can survive translation.

Trask's collection of political-historical essays, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism*

and Sovereignty in Hawai‘i (1993, rev ed. 1999) is crucial for understanding how social recovery has been imagined and enacted through the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement. Her development of a theory of decolonisation broadly based around a nationalist cultural and linguistic ‘peeling apart, of a forced way of behaving’ (*Native Daughter* 89), is heavily influenced by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s theories of decolonisation in his series of essays on language and culture, *Decolonising the Mind*, and Fanon’s assessment of race in *Black Skins, White Masks*. Trask analyses the double standards of knowledge value in Hawai‘i, relating instances where Hawaiian knowledge, located in people’s experience and understanding, has been dismissed as unreliable, whilst written accounts by foreigners who are not culturally fluent are regarded as true. She calls for a revolution in the way knowledge about Hawai‘i and Hawaiians is formed, recorded and transmitted, arguing that only culturally informed analyses of Hawai‘i’s historical and political situation will provide a basis from which Native Hawaiian sovereignty can emerge.

Trask’s analyses have been fundamental to deciding the direction and scope of this project, and her insistence on the confluence of politics and poetics forms its basic premise — that poetry by Native Hawaiian activists is political. Her work has been utilised in a number of ways, but primarily for foregrounding Native Hawaiian claims to primary consideration for their literature and culture, defining indigeneity, and articulating the aims of the Sovereignty Movement in the Hawaiian context.

Another key scholar whose work has shaped the direction of the Sovereignty Movement is Noenoe K. Silva, whose monograph *Aloha Betrayed* (2004) is the first comprehensive study of Hawaiian language newspaper archives by a researcher fluent

in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i. Silva expressly argues that the mele and mo‘olelo (chants, poems, histories, stories) found in the newspapers have been undervalued as historical sources, but that they are vital for understanding how Hawaiians communicated with each other, often in strongly nationalist terms, through kaona (*Aloha* 5-6). Addressing the period 1834-1948, when the Hawaiian language newspapers were most active, *Aloha Betrayed* illustrates how cultural activity, particularly publishing genealogical chants such as the Kumulipo and mele hula, constituted bold and direct dissent.

Silva’s work has had a transformative influence on the Native Hawaiian community’s understanding of resistance and sovereignty. By identifying, translating and publishing textual evidence of resistance by Native Hawaiians, Silva’s work challenged the common Western perspective of oral evidence as inferior to written evidence. When presented with verification in Hawaiian language newspapers, ‘the myth of [Hawaiian] passivity’ to colonisation was finally exploded. The significance of Silva’s research for Hawaiian literary research is that undeniable evidence of resistance to annexation meant a restoration of pride and belief in Hawaiian political agency and the recovery of traditional epic mele and mo‘olelo provoked multitudinous creative responses from contemporary Hawaiian writers.

A comprehensive overview of resistance literature in Hawai‘i is provided by D. Māhelani Dudoit in her article “Against Extinction: A Legacy of Native Hawaiian Resistance Literature” (1999). Dudoit draws on Barbara Harlow’s postcolonial scholarship, and analyses by Hawaiian historians, musicologists and political scientists Davianna McGregor, Helen Chapin, Amy Stillman and Noenoe K. Silva in order to go beyond previous analyses to emphasise the *resistant* potential of Hawaiian poetry. By

making explicit the link between the suppression and devastation of colonialism and the prevalence of nationalistic poetry, Dudoit indicates that the politicisation of Hawaiian poetry stems from the aggressive acquisitiveness of the American political elite in the nineteenth century (226). Dudoit's historical contextualisation of resistance literature in Hawai'i offers an informed foundation on which to build a detailed literary analysis, but it stops short of offering an explanation as to why poetry is the preferred medium of contemporary Hawaiian writers.

Some of the most incisive analysis of contemporary Hawaiian literature has been undertaken by poet and scholar ku'uialoha ho'omanawanui, of which one article and one monograph in particular are relevant to this thesis. The article "He Lei Ho'oheno No Na Kau a Kau: Language, Performance and Form in Hawaiian Poetry" (2005) offers both an explanation of traditional Hawaiian poetic form and a tripartite metaphorical analysis of the different influences on contemporary poetry. ho'omanawanui divides Hawaiian poetry into three categories, 'traditional' mele, transitional poetry and contemporary poetry, which correspond loosely to pre-contact, post-contact and the Hawaiian Renaissance, and offers the lei (Hawaiian flower garland) as a metaphor for how these 'strands' combine into a literary tradition. She uses the metaphor to illustrate the interweaving of tradition, form and contemporary global influences in Hawaiian poetry, explaining how since the 1960s 'something unique has been created – the "weaving together of disconnected strands, interconnecting them into something else"' creating a space in which 'themes of resistance to colonisation and loyalty to Hawaiian culture and cultural practices are often articulated' ("He Lei" 72). By tracing shifts in the technique and form of Hawaiian poetry ho'omanawanui is able to demonstrate how Hawaiian composers

absorbed and assimilated foreign literary and musical traditions as they transitioned to a literate society, whilst simultaneously maintaining the Hawaiian preference for ‘mixed artistic forms that inform and complement each other’ (“He Lei” 64). This exposition of Hawaiian poetics, informed by research in Hawaiian language mele and song, has directed this thesis’ analysis of contemporary Hawaiian poetry. The article ends with the observation that ‘despite its growing popularity... Hawaiian performance poetry is still overlooked as a legitimate form of culturally conceived poetic expression’ (“He Lei” 73). The final two chapters of this thesis engage explicitly with the cultural content of performance poetry, which ho‘omanawanui suggests requires further enquiry, and extend this analysis into the political potential of the embodied performance as a site of resistance to colonisation.

ho‘omanawanui’s monograph *voices of fire: reweaving the literary lei of pele and hi‘iaka* (2014) is a cultural-critical study of the two-thousand-year-old mo‘olelo (history/story) of the goddess Pele and her sister Hi‘iaka that draws on Hawaiian language sources published between 1860 and 1928. *voices of fire* is a key text for accessing and understanding the relationship between Hawaiian people, land and stories, as ho‘omanawanui’s detailed analysis of the Pele and Hi‘iaka mo‘olelo is the first to place nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature by Native Hawaiians within the context of ‘a long and extensive intellectual heritage, not simply one newly developed and dependant on Western literacy practices introduced in the nineteenth century, or an emerging field of world (or multicultural) literature in the twentieth’ (xxxiii).

voices of fire offers an example of culturally grounded literary criticism that actively

works to counter scholarship, predominantly undertaken by haole, ‘that has intentionally ignored, romanticized, infantilized, or vilified Kanaka Maoli [Native Hawaiian] intellectual history and cultural practices’ (*voices* xxviii). ho‘omanawanui’s scholarship is a vital contribution to a body of work that is simultaneously articulating and applying Native Hawaiian epistemology in the critical study of Native Hawaiian literature, and in doing so enabling non-Hawaiian scholars to engage in more culturally and politically responsible readings of Native Hawaiian literature.

The clearest articulation of what constitutes Hawaiian epistemology is *Ho‘oulu: Our Time of Becoming* (2003) by Manulani Aluli Meyer, which draws on fieldwork research with Hawaiian kūpuna (elders) in order to explain what is meant by Hawaiian knowledge, how it is formed, and why the understanding that flows from its sources is dramatically different from Western concepts. In traditional Hawaiian thought, theory has no value without utility to society, whether that be spiritual, emotional or practical (*Ho‘oulu* 170-3) so Meyer’s work is engaged in pedagogy, and contributes to the Hawaiian schools movement, which advocates culturally embedded education for Native Hawaiian children.

Meyer’s work argues that function is what transforms information into knowledge, and the experience of that knowledge working in reality transforms it to knowing, and that using what you know in the service of others is aloha (love), which constitutes understanding. Meyer defines this as Hawaiian intelligence. Whilst not expressly a literary analysis, Meyer’s fieldwork approach, whereby she asked for and was granted embodied, personalised and functioning knowledge by Native Hawaiians, offered a culturally immersive means through which to read Hawaiian poetry, and extends the

understanding of kaona references beyond even the metaphorical and into the philosophical. Chapters Six and Seven of this thesis in particular draw extensively on Meyer's work in order to explain the significance of performance poetry as a *re-embodied, radically emplaced* expression of Hawaiian cultural and political identity.

To date, there has been just one book length study of contemporary poetry by Native Hawaiians. Brandy Nālani McDougall's wide ranging study *Finding Meaning*, published in 2016, focuses on how the Hawaiian aesthetic practice of kaona is used by Native Hawaiian writers to 'teach their readers mo'olelo and mo'okū'auhau [traditional stories and genealogies], demonstrate their relevance to our lives, provide literal models of behaviour, and challenge readers to integrate and apply ancestral knowledge' (5). *Finding Meaning* is a wide ranging study that reads Native Hawaiian poets' work within the framework of their "kaona connectivity" to three Hawaiian creation legends, in order to emphasise the genealogy of contemporary poetry and anchor it in the Hawaiian poetic tradition. The study's focus is primarily cultural, but McDougall's work is the latest in a lineage of political-cultural writing that emphasises continuity rather than contradiction between political and artistic/aesthetic action in Hawaiian literature. McDougall situates her analysis within the context of the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement, and demonstrates how contemporary poets are actively decolonising through their use of "kaona connectivity". However, this analytical perspective is orientated inwards, primarily addressing the Native Hawaiian scholarly community in a specific historical and geographical context. *Finding Meaning* explicitly aims to further the objectives of the Sovereignty Movement by providing readings of contemporary Hawaiian poetry that serves the lāhui Hawai'i (Hawaiian nation), which is a significant reason for the inclusion of McDougall's

poetry and critical work in this thesis. By drawing on McDougall's analyses of Hawaiian poetics this thesis responds to her invitation for non-Hawaiian scholars to engage with her ideas (171 n5), but is positioned outside of Hawai'i geographically and philosophically, which allows a more flexible engagement with both Hawaiian and non-Hawaiian discourses.

Chapter Outlines

This thesis is divided into seven chapters that progress through four chronological and theoretical stages that chart the development of Native Hawaiian contemporary poetics alongside the political struggles of the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement. Chapters One and Two focus particularly on the contested nature of place and space in Hawai'i, demonstrating how poetry written between 1972 and 1984 can provide a valuable lens through which to view the significant political, economic, and societal changes that occurred after statehood. Chapters Three, Four and Five explore how 'being Hawaiian' relates to and is expressed as 'being indigenous' from the late 1980s to the 2000s, and in turn how indigeneity relates to race, nationalism and sovereignty. And Chapters Six and Seven analyse why poetry continues to be a preferred form for political activism and community engagement from the early 2000s to 2016, and how performance poetry connects the poet and audience in culturally grounded ways. Chapter Eight, the conclusion, brings together the specific ways poetry is both an expression and form of political action for Native Hawaiians, and indicates how the knowledge produced by this thesis could be productively engaged in furthering future research whereby poetry engages with Western and Hawaiian epistemological approaches in order to affect a future rapprochement as Hawai'i moves towards a sovereign future.

Chapter One focuses on Wayne Kaumuali‘i Westlake’s short series of poems “Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki” that were written between 1972 and 1973 but only published in a collection of his work in 2009, twenty-five years after his death. By reading Westlake’s short collection in its historical context of increasing urban development and in-migration to Hawai‘i, this chapter illustrates the rapid transformation of land- and people-scape that precipitated the Hawaiian Renaissance. Employing Jacques Derrida’s theory of hospitality’s potential for hostility, this chapter analyses Westlake’s poetry as a localised manifestation of the subversion of the Hawaiian value of ho‘okipa (hospitality) caused by unbridled colonisation.

Chapter Two expands the politically inflected Native Hawaiian understanding of place by reading two anthologies, *Ho‘i Ho‘i Hou: A Tribute to George Helm and Kimo Mitchell* (1984) and *Mālama: Hawaiian Land and Water* (1985) in terms of the now-established call to aloha ‘āina, that is “love the land”. Mapping the poems in these anthologies onto the major political struggle of the era, halting the military bombing of Kaho‘olawe island, this section utilises Rob Wilson’s analysis of the ‘g/local’ alongside Henri Lefebvre’s concept of dominated and appropriated space in order to demonstrate how the political aims of the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement were expressed in the poetry of the period. Through their community engagement, which included initiating the Poets in the Schools programme, the writer-activists of this period spread the message of Hawaiian Sovereignty beyond Hawaiian communities. By articulating Hawaiian continuation and connection to the ‘āina in public, in the courts, and in state government buildings, the protestors and activists of the PKO (Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana) established the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement as a

significant political force on the islands.

Chapter Three marks a shift towards defining indigeneity in Hawai‘i, and focuses on the first poetry collection by Haunani-Kay Trask *Light in the Crevice Never Seen*, (1994 rev. ed. 1999). By tracing metaphors of light and darkness across the collection it reveals how Trask creates a balance between sharp-tongued truth-telling and nuanced, culturally immersive lyricism. By framing a discussion of the racialisation of Hawaiians through the evolution of light to dark in Trask’s poetry, this chapter illustrates the complexity of a reality in which the Native Hawaiian community is neither colour-blind nor easily categorised along racial lines.

Chapter Four undertakes a comparative analysis of Trask’s second poetry collection *Night is a Sharkskin Drum* and Imaikalani Kalahale’s eponymous collection *Kalahale*, both published in 2002, to trace the emergence of a contemporary Hawaiian aesthetic. Although these two poets have widely different styles, this chapter demonstrates their common commitment to the spiritual and political function of poetry as an expression of cultural nationalism through the motif of journeying. Moving between centres and peripheries (of the earth, of the universe, of the womb, of knowledge), and traversing storied Hawaiian landscapes that respond to the traveller’s requests for enlightenment, this chapter illustrates the connective work these two seminal poets have undertaken. Ranging between their oral heritage and literary present, between Hawaiian knowledge and colonised education, concrete cityscapes and lush hinterlands, Trask and Kalahale forge a nationalism for their time.

Chapter Five takes two collections, Māhealani Perez-Wendt’s *Uluhaimalama* (2007)

and Brandy Nālani McDougall's *The Salt Wind: Ka Makani Pa'akai* (2008), and focuses on how they explore Hawaiian kinship and genealogy. Their poetry accentuates the interconnectivity of 'ohana (family) and 'āina (land) through mo'okū'auhau (genealogy), intersecting with critics from other indigenous societies, particularly American Indian, to work towards finding a political system for indigenous communities that moves beyond the 'one size fits all' of representative democracy. By following the metaphors of pua (flowers/children) and pa'akai (salt) through these collections this chapter demonstrates how both poets detect traces of the past in the present and the present in the past. Perez-Wendt's and McDougall's poetry marks the latter part of the second stage of this thesis, where the discourse shifts from exclusively fighting colonialism, to elucidating traditional forms of connection that will assist the re-building of the Hawaiian lāhui.

Moving firmly into the twenty-first century, Chapter Six watches/listens to poems by David Keali'i MacKenzie and Jamaica Heolimeleikalani Osorio and explores how, as performance poets, they practice aloha (love, compassion, sympathy, grace) for their culture, land and nation. This chapter analyses Slam poetry as a popular genre of performance poetry in Hawai'i, and looks for reasons and precedents for its swift adoption into the Hawaiian poetry scene, beyond a simplistic explanation reliant on Hawai'i's oral history. By tracing the presence of hā (breath) and leo (voice) in three poems this chapter demonstrates how performance poetry sustains and renews Hawaiian cultural and political values by re-embodiment language.

Chapter Seven is the last to address poetry, and it thematically explores the work of three poets, Osorio again, and also No'ukahau'oli Revilla and Steven Kealohapau'ole

Hong-Ming Wong, who writes under the name Kealoha, published or performed from 2011 to 2016. It considers the variety of ways Native Hawaiian poets are currently addressing contemporary social issues that have strong links to cultural losses, particularly mana wahine (female power), gender and the environment. These three poets present a snapshot of the poetic community active in Hawai‘i today, and by analysing their work in close proximity, diverse yet related threads of influence and concern can be brought to the fore, demonstrating how the contemporary transformation of themes and forms enables Native Hawaiian poets to develop their art in culturally specific, activist ways.

The conclusion, Chapter Eight, draws together the strands of the main discursive tensions of the thesis, and indicates how poetry is a powerful form of political expression for Native Hawaiians. At this point, I also briefly illustrate how Hawaiian cultural practitioners are combining the traditional knowledge framework of papakū makawalu with advances in GIScience to map “data” from Hawaiian mele digitally, in order to instigate an epistemological shift away from the binary opposition of Western and Hawaiian knowledge systems. As contemporary Hawaiian poetry is a descendant of traditional mele, such movements in the geographical sciences could provide a blueprint for utilising poetry’s place-making and identity-forming potential to further resist the appropriation of Hawaiian places and cultural narratives by non-Hawaiians, whilst simultaneously building a sense of shared value in Hawai‘i as an “earthly” place that can enhance responsible human attitudes to places and the people connected to them.

Chapter One. Displacement, alienation and subverted hospitality in Wayne Kaumualii Westlake's "Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki".

Wayne Kaumualii Westlake's series of poems "Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki (1972 to 1973)" was not published during his lifetime but is included in his posthumous collection *Westlake: Poems by Wayne Kamaualii Westlake (1947-1984)*, published in 2009. "Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki" is Westlake's unique and situated response to accelerated urban development and immigration in Honolulu that he witnessed after his return from studying at the University of Oregon in the early 1970s. Just one poem from the series was published in Westlake's lifetime, so there is very little critical analysis of the series as a whole (Hamasaki "Afterword" 265 n21).¹ This chapter engages with "Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki" on two levels: literarily, through Westlake's extensive use of juxtaposition and paradox to create tension, and philosophically, by using hospitality theory to illuminate Westlake's alienation at being subject to a foreign mode of living, and the limitations of direct language for expressing and testifying to that experience. In turn, the experience of reading Westlake's poetry allows colonialism in Hawai'i to be read as an effect of perverted hospitality, pressing Derrida's theory to anti-colonial uses.

In 1973, as today, Waikīkī was a metropolitan area of Honolulu, covered in skyscrapers, crossed by wide, car-filled avenues lined with palm trees and populated by tourists, business people and military personnel on leave. It was also expanding rapidly, as new hotels and tower blocks were constructed with investment from Japanese and American firms (Petranik et al. np.). Richard Hamasaki, Westlake's friend and editor of *Westlake* (2009), describes Hawai'i in the early 70s as 'rumbling with discontent amidst rampant overdevelopment and the growing domination ... of

American culture, tourism and corporate U.S. military interests' ("Afterword" 248). From 1972 to 1973, aged 25-6, Westlake walked from his home in 'Āina Haina, then a small East Honolulu suburb, to his job in Waikīkī as a janitor in the elegant Japanese store Okadaya. Westlake had dropped out of university in Oregon and was working to support himself through a B.A. in Chinese Studies at the University of Hawai'i. Around this time Westlake became a conscientious objector, refusing his Vietnam draft, and, although he had been a poet since his youth, he began to write prolifically, and also politically. Hamasaki noted that, 'Ironically, unknown to Westlake at the time when he originally composed "Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki," vigorous literary activism by politically outspoken indigenous authors and artists in Oceania had also emerged' ("Afterword" 248). From "Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki" onwards Westlake's poems generally become longer and more explicitly political — this series marks a return to Hawai'i and an awakening cultural and political consciousness. By 1975 Westlake was teaching with the Poets in the Schools Program, and in 1976 he collaborated with concrete poet Joe Balaz and others on a literary magazine *Seaweeds and Constructions*. As the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement gained momentum through the decade Westlake became a regular contributor of editorial letters to the local press on Native issues and an activist with the PKO. Hamasaki notes that, '[d]espite elements of impartiality in some of his editorials, Westlake believed unequivocally in a separatist relationship regarding any future demarcations between Hawai'i and the United States', an attitude which is reflected in his poetic depictions of "Amerikans" ("Introduction" xx). In 1979 he published "Manifesto (for concrete poetry)" (*Westlake* 225-227), which is both a social manifesto and a scathing critique of Western culture. In 1984, aged 36, Westlake was killed in a car crash with a drunk driver, and it took another seventeen years for his manuscripts to be collected from

termite-ridden boxes in the family shed and organised into the only collection of his work widely available today.

“Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki” is one series among a large body of poetry, and although it is read alone here, many of the themes carry across into Westlake’s other work; equally much of his poetry is far less trenchant, and celebrates the beauty of Hawai‘i in spare, evocative verse. However, in 1972-73, ‘Westlake was writing as a well educated man working as a janitor in Waikīkī, bearing a working class rage whose weaponry included classical Chinese and High Modernist allusiveness’ (Schultz “When the author” np.). Waikīkī was the most densely populated and commercially active area of Honolulu and provided Westlake with an observatory of close-packed urban life. The injustices Westlake witnessed “down” on the sidewalk, a pun on luck and homelessness, provided the material for “Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki”, which documents, with both humour and anger, the intense disorientation Westlake felt. Waikīkī, where foreigners are rich and Hawaiians are poor, where visitors have expensive hotel rooms to sleep in and Hawaiians sleep on the streets, where tourists squander money on souvenirs whilst homeless people starve, where ignorance is openly displayed and Native wisdom consistently ignored, produces tensions that manifest in Westlake’s poetry as fury and alienation.

The series uses juxtapositions to build tension between the different groups Westlake observes, particularly tourists, businessmen and homeless people. Opposing forces, including sanity and insanity, wealth and poverty, mobility and stasis, human and mutant, belonging and alienation, antagonise each other across the series, provoking the narrator to anger and despair. In positioning these opposites, however, the contrast

is often lost, or blurred across social lines, as Westlake's Native Hawaiian cultural sensibilities reposition social priorities and privilege the groups that commercial, touristic Waikīkī disregards.



Figure 3: A view of Waikīkī from Diamond Head, 2015.

The place of Waikīkī is central to an analysis of Westlake's series because the speed and scale of its growth is a synecdoche for Hawai'i's wider urban developments. In Westlake's view, which is shared by many Native Hawaiians, the extensive construction along the coastal Waikīkī area is detrimental to people and place, as it is part of a process of globalisation, which is seen in Westlake's poetry as akin to assimilation, itself an extension of colonialism. Waikīkī is a place where global capital has encroached on the local economy and culture, both Native Hawaiian culture, and 'local' mixed Euro-Asian culture, in ways that render Waikīkī an almost wholly foreign place. Westlake's poetry frames Waikīkī, or rather the concrete and steel that rests on the ground in the place Waikīkī (which means "spouting water" in Hawaiian — Waikīkī was once a wetland), as a foreign, alien place that has inserted itself between the earth and the Hawaiian people who still dwell in the "above ground"

space. French philosopher Gaston Bachelard names the poet as the artist who best understands the anachronisms of space and place, as poetry can help articulate the experience of connecting an internal dialogue of being with the external place in which the body exists (*The Poetics of Space* 222-3). However, bodies and places are never unmarked by politics: alienation and belonging drive the question of which bodies where? In a world of increasingly homogenised places (and people), is it possible to speak of the specificity of the connection between a certain person and a certain place? Westlake's poetry employs Waikīkī as a metonym for the wider experience of displacement, dislocation and alienation Native Hawaiians experienced in urban, Americanised, globalised spaces in Hawaii, and is scathing about the mechanisms of movement (of people, capital and products) that encourage the removal. His poetry is engaged with re-placing (homeless) Hawaiians and displacing/unsettling (peripatetic) Americans in highly politicised ways.

Hamasaki compares Westlake's poetry in this series to other great, global social poets:

Like Han Shan and Catullus, ... David Malo and Samuel
Mānaiakalani Kamakau, ... Epeli Hau'ofa and ... Albert Wendt,
Westlake was no social equivocator. ... Waikīkī becomes symbol and
metaphor for the colonization of his own mind, of his native world as
Kanaka Maoli— native Hawaiian— and of his indigenous nation,
language, history, and culture. ("Afterword" 248)

Tourists and businessmen are familiar with and comfortable in the concrete, steel and glass environment that is a product of globalisation and Americanisation, whilst the Native Hawaiians are homeless and poverty stricken.² The visitors have displaced the residents, in a process that renders the 'hospitality industry' an instrument of anti-hospitality, or rather, by commercialising the cultural value of hospitality, it is subverted. Like settler-colonialism, which operates through a process of displacement,

replacement and reinscription of meaning, the hospitality industry occupies the position of host, but is in fact a mechanism of the original guest — the American. By reading Westlake's depiction of businessmen (who personify the commercial activity they participate in) and tourists (who represent mobile colonisers) through the lens of hospitality theory, as articulated in the work of Immanuel Kant and Jacques Derrida, it is possible to extend Westlake's reaction against the agents of the 'hospitality industry' to include a critique of colonialism in Hawai'i. Westlake's poetic critique destabilises hegemonic assumptions about progress, belonging, human relations and even language; in his poetry the homeless are in fact at home, the 'mad' kāhuna are more knowledgeable than the 'sane' foreigners, the 'civilised' businessmen are animalistic, and the slim, manicured and beautiful tourists are 'mutants'.

As a product of Western philosophical discourse in the work of Kant and Derrida, hospitality theory may seem like an uncomfortable framework to project onto Hawaiian culture. However in the context of Hawai'i's early colonisation by Europeans and Americans, inheritors of the European philosophical tradition, hospitality theory's core principles can illuminate the complexity of interactions between the host and the 'other' which have a bearing on Hawai'i's current socio-political status as an American state with an active indigenous resistance movement, represented here by Westlake's poetry. My task is not to attempt to impose an external framework on a dynamic and developing situation in an attempt to provide a 'solution', but to highlight the intersections between Western philosophical discourses and indigenous knowledge, in situations where the two were perhaps never imagined to meet. By positioning "Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki", which was written at the beginning of the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement, within a wider historical context of

accelerated urban development and consequential local resistance, global decolonisation movements, and increasing global mobility of people and goods, this chapter investigates how Westlake's Native Hawaiian cultural identity and his sense of place are used to destabilise hegemonic perceptions of the relationship between 'guests' and 'hosts' and render Waikīkī a location of subverted hospitality.

“Down on the Sidewalk”

Westlake's poetry is an assertion of a 'place-bound identity expressing ... symbols/acts/tactics of local resistance to metropolitan centres of culture ... [as] the decentred geopolitics of *dislocation* and *displacement*' (Wilson *Reimagining* 134 original emphasis). By presenting a series of oppositions, and then layering or blurring their definitions, Westlake demonstrates how such dislocation and displacement might occur, and gestures towards a language of resistance found in the structure, syntax and kaona of his poetry. Westlake prefaces his series with a short verse that indicates the gamut of emotions that it contains:

last year i spent working as a janitor
down on the sidewalk in waikiki—
experiences ran from everything to
everything. i wrote poems to keep from
going insane ... (1973)

(Westlake 138)

These lines, like much of the poetry in “Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki” are written as free verse, and utilise stream of consciousness. Westlake's description of his experiences as ‘everything to everything’ illustrate the range and also complexity of life “down” on the sidewalk, but also how, for Westlake, ‘everything’ he observed could become poetry. Whilst there is very little succour from the relentless grind of the

Native Hawaiian or ‘local’ life in Waikīkī, occasionally the poems are darkly funny and absurdist, and they are always multi-dimensional. The material reality of Westlake’s experiences with poverty and injustice drives the emotional instability that manifests in his poetry as in/sanity.

Madness permeates “Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki”, yet who is ‘mad’ and who is not is never quite unravelled. The relationship between the body and mind is explored, as Westlake reorganises what constitutes sanity and insanity by juxtaposing ‘normal’ and infirm bodies against ‘normal’ and infirm minds, revealing and subverting the tendency of sight-dominant humans to equate physical infirmity with mental deficiency. The series’ eponymous poem demonstrates this paradox:

No need feel sorry
for the crippled man
down on the sidewalk
—in Waikiki

There are a lot more crippled
minds
limping around,
feel sorry for them!

(Westlake 139)

These sardonic observations show little love lost between Westlake and the businessmen and tourists who traverse the streets of Waikīkī; they are repeatedly represented as mentally sick, juxtaposed with the physically crippled, but mentally stable, Native Hawaiians. In a later poem called “These Drops” (150) Westlake quips, ““the girls asses/ are nice/ but the World’s/ in bad shape/ you can see it/ in their/ Eyes—”” (8-14). The poet, voyeuristically watching the ‘girls’ pass, gleans ‘these drops’ of wisdom and indicates again that physical beauty is not synonymous with

health or wellbeing. The ‘girls’ in the poem are diagnosed as being burnt out and wasted — words that indicate stress and drug use, and which are concurrent with a busy, overworked and unhealthy lifestyle. Yet, in Waikīkī, these ‘girls’ are the barometer of ‘normality’, even beauty — they are at home on the hotel beaches and in the shopping malls, both places where the crippled homeless man is ostracised and moved on. Their physical perfection shields them from social judgement.

The opposition between the physically ‘normal’ and the mentally abnormal is not, however, clearly maintained. Westlake is disparaging of overweight, sunburnt “Amerikans”, who he describes as ‘sick’, whilst the narrator of the poems is thin, often hungry and treated with caution because of his deeply tanned skin and dishevelled appearance. Yet the narrator watches the tourists and businessmen, and realises this incongruity pushes him towards madness:

i watch them
 the Pigs—
 the Pigs,
 they watch me—
 it’s enough to drive
 any man
 CRAZY

(“Out of Mind” 152:10-16)

The “pig parade” is Westlake’s obscene epithet for the constant flux of people along the sidewalks of Waikīkī. A defining feature of “Down in the Sidewalk in Waikiki” is its vocabulary of blunt crassness. Scattered with obscenities and curses and lacking the

delicacy and humour of Westlake's other work, this series typifies the difficulties of a generation groping for a vocabulary to describe their pain. The broken, staccato lines, chaotically scattered across the page represent a voice struggling to be coherent, to overcome its disgust and be understood. Simultaneously, they are an attack: an attempt to deliberately alienate and disgust the reader, in effect mimicking the emotional response Westlake has to Waikīkī.

Westlake's aggressive poetic response to "Amerikan's" bodies is intimately bound up with his experiences of how they respond to him as a Hawaiian. In the poems "A Savage Can't Live In Amerika", "George Washington's Birthday — at Honolulu Zoo" and "Mutants Everyone" his tanned, bearded and semi-clothed body elicits perplexed and alarmed reactions from white and Asian tourists. He diagnoses the reasons why they react to him in such a way as the result of Americanisation in Hawai'i and a regular lack of acknowledgement of the difference between continental America and Hawai'i. In "A Savage Can't Live In Amerika" (147) he writes:

i always had this thing
about my hair:
it gets so long
it's FREAKY!
like a SAVAGE,
you know,
it's cool
you know, but

A SAVAGE
CAN'T LIVE
IN AMERIKA!

and Amerika
i tell you
is EVERYWHERE!

...

gold hair
 brown skin
 half-naked
 crazy grin
 it's WEIRD
 i know
 i've seen my
 self a SAVAGE
 in plateglass
 windows
 down on the sidewalk
 in waikiki

and sometimes
 it SCARES ME
 TO DEATH!

(1-14/ 27-41)

His sheer human physicality renders him savage in Waikīkī, this 'Amerikan' place. Similarly, in the poem "Mutants Everyone" (165) a tourist asks Westlake if he dyes his "gold" hair. Frustrated he retorts 'just can't look/ like a human being/ these days,/ can you?' (15-18). Westlake makes clear through his own physicality, the body of the janitor who cleans up behind the over-sophisticated 'mutant' bodies of the urban centre, that he is Hawaiian and human. As a janitor, Westlake saw the full scope of close packed human life in a cosmopolitan city, and his poetry viscerally describes the blood, urine and sweat of the people he cleaned up after. The raw humanity he knows lurks behind the shiny suits and bleached hair of the denizens of the sidewalk leaves Westlake furious and amused by the discomfort his own dishevelled but very human appearance can cause.

In his poems Westlake exposes the visual signifiers of belonging and alienation as they relate to him and the tourists he encounters. To be a 'mutant' is to be chemically altered to be *the same*. Rather than mutation creating the natural variation the term

might imply, it becomes a descriptor for standardised Euro-American beauty ideals, which are directly influenced by a multi-million dollar ‘beauty’ industry. For Westlake being a ‘mutant’ is to be assimilated, whilst being natural (and Hawaiian) is to be human and unassimilated. Westlake privileges un-brushed, un-dyed and un-shaved bodies, without glorifying the poverty that can make this less of a choice than a necessity, because, in his poetry, they signify that a person is unassimilated into the (American) social and economic influences that alter what is ‘natural’ or acceptable for human bodies to look like.

However, like most tensions in Westlake’s work the division is not simple, as his own ‘savage’ appearance sometimes takes him by surprise, because he does not consider himself a savage. In the poem “Mango-Juice Slobber” (166) Westlake takes mischievous pleasure in upsetting the ‘Noble Savage’ trope to scare a female tourist who approaches him:

she looked at me
like a wildman
eating a mango
in the sun

i just laughed
an INSANE laugh
and she ran away
fast
...

(11-18)

This poem mixes a boyish impishness with a genuine surprise at how effectively he frightens her. Describing how people react to his body, whilst also observing the physical strangeness of girls’ smooth white legs and overweight Americans’ sweating

bodies, Westlake satirises the overly detailed ethnographic descriptions of Hawaiians by agents of colonialism such as anthropologists, missionaries and travel writers.³ Westlake's voyeurism turns the gaze back on haole particularly,⁴ making their bodies seem weird and open to prying observation. It also continues to destabilise the assumed link between a 'normal' appearance and sanity, and a dishevelled or poor appearance and insanity.

Westlake's predicament is a result of wider historical forces that have moved to eliminate difference within America's borders, and explicitly aimed to racially assimilate Native people into the dominant white populace (Garrouette 78-9). Westlake's glee at the shock his appearance can cause is political because it resists this destructive assimilation, and accentuates his 'otherness', which he perceives as his Hawaiian-ness. Westlake's experiences, as for many young Hawaiians of mixed blood in the 1960s and 70s, were different to earlier generations in that they consciously, and rebelliously, identified with their Hawaiian identity rather than seeking to hide or reject it, as Native Hawaiians had previously been encouraged to do. In "Blood Stains" Westlake writes, 'down // on the sidewalk // in waikiki // i look // like a Haole // but I'm not: // I got // ROYAL HAWAIIAN BLOOD!' (156). In these lines he appraises a central difficulty for Native Hawaiians — how to behave when others react to how you look in a way that is not congruent with your self-identification. Westlake's body and his writing were both assertions of difference and of Nativeness, when it was still not in his best economic or social interests to be so. The poem reinforces this: '...by now // it's probably // all gone: // seeing what's // going on // i BLEED // a lot // and no way // will // that // stop...' (156). These lines illustrate the reason that Westlake

feels like he's "out of mind" when he's in Waikīkī — 'seeing what's going on' but feeling powerless to change the inequality he witnesses there.

Westlake demonstrates how money is the driving force of all that is 'going on' in Waikīkī, driving poverty, prostitution and displacement. The poem "As Rats Climb the Coconut Trees" (161) expresses his feelings bluntly:

as rats climb
the coconut trees
the meat
keeps broiling and
fat pigs still
slide out of
cadillacs
OINKING
fingering the slimy
green GOD
of waikiki:

(1-11)

Westlake is repulsed by his need for 'the slimy/green GOD', meaning dollars, to survive, and by what he must do to earn it. "Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki" records one instance where the poet/janitor was asked to clean up the blood of a man who, high on drugs, had broken through the store window, cut himself on the glass and haemorrhaged to death in the store — the janitor was tipped \$10 for his effort. Westlake's abhorrence of the capitalist system that enslaves people to the cycle of work and wages is palpable, and his disdain for money is expressed by his willingness to share what little he has. The poet recognises the humanity of the homeless 'kāhuna'⁵ of Waikīkī without condescension or judgement:

the Kahuna stands
on the corner
of Kalakaua and Kaiulani

surrounding its wearing or disposal. The kaona of the poem illustrates the paradox between material poverty and spiritual wealth, and the value of cultural knowledge. The old man is a kahuna, a member of society who should be respected and maybe even a little feared, yet he is a homeless man in an obviously wealthy city; he wears an ‘aloha shirt’, when there is clearly very little love in his life, even of the tacky tourist variety; he smiles at finding the lei, an old Hawaiian cultural symbol, showing both pleasure in the artefact and the rarity of his reasons to smile; the ‘Heart’ of Waikīkī he stumbles into each day is emphasised by its capitalisation yet the poem ends with the assertion, also in capitals, that nothing in Waikīkī is free: the juxtaposition of the ‘free’ lei (as someone else’s rubbish) and the otherwise expensive city illustrates that Waikīkī’s heart is for sale.

Westlake’s use of kaona in this poem works to displace the tourist by showing them to be culturally ignorant, and esteems the kahuna for appreciating the lei. The presence of kaona in the series is easily missed because of the furious tone of a majority of the poems, however it forms a crucial part of Westlake’s subversiveness, as it functions as the antithesis to Waikīkī’s brash, moneyed, foreign influence. Kaona is used to privilege Hawaiian values: true aloha over the fake tourist variety, as in “The Dirty Old Kahuna” (158-9), the earth’s natural wealth over money in “Christmas Day” (154), and connection over displacement in “Lost” (163) and “Cracked” (148).

“Cracked” (148) is particularly subversive as it cuts to the heart of Westlake’s problem with Waikīkī: the transformation of earth into ‘real estate’ at the root of the social, economic and cultural ills Waikīkī preserves and perpetuates. Westlake writes: ‘HUNKS/ of raw meat/ down on the sidewalk in Waikiki/ look to me/ like something/

OBSCENE!// but it's not/ so STRANGE/ in Waikiki/ where dirt's/ expensive/ and bricks/ are cheaper/ than rocks' (148). Whilst the 'hunks of raw meat' seem to allude to the bodies of sunburnt tourists, and the title indicates madness, which sustains prominent tensions in the series, it is the references to dirt, bricks and rocks that hold real significance in this poem.

Dirt, or earth, in Hawaiian is *honua*, which has among its other meanings 'land, world; Background; at the foundation; fundamental' (Pukui and Elbert 80). Another word for land in Hawaiian is *ʻāina*, which also means 'to eat' (Pukui and Elbert 11). The confluence of *kaona* for 'dirt' is far more significant than the casual reader of English would generally infer, and the understanding that 'dirt's expensive' implies a critique of the Western practice of buying and selling land, which is alien to Native Hawaiian understandings of the reciprocal, familial relationship between *kānaka* (people) and *ʻāina* (land) (*hoʻomanawanui "Editor's Note"* 4). Westlake extends his cultural critique through the use of the comparison between bricks and rocks. Bricks are man-made building materials that are not native to Hawaiʻi. The replacement of traditional pole and grass buildings with brick built structures is just one marker in the erosion of traditional Hawaiian life precipitated by colonial encroachment, and here it is almost certainly a reference to the explosion in construction Waikīkī experienced in the 1970s. The superfluity of cheap building materials is contrasted here with rocks, which are strongly representative of Hawaiian cultural values.

Pōhaku (stones or rocks) themselves are *ʻāina* in Hawaiian — they are the land. Kumu hula (hula teacher) Pualani Kanakaʻole Kanahele writes, '[t]he notion that a rock exists as an inanimate object, especially in its creative stages, is totally foreign to the

Hawaiian. Rock, especially fresh lava flow, has a spirit ... Pele is the creative force whose name signifies the physical and spiritual essence of newly formed land' (quoted in Meyer 103). This is a familiar cultural value to Westlake, who uses rocks elsewhere in his poetry to differentiate Hawaiian from non-Hawaiian culture. Examples of his poems that invoke the kaona of stones are:

the naked child
pats the stream rocks
'hee—hee—hee!'

(Westlake 13)

Looks of disbelief
I'm on my knees
Washing a rock.

(Westlake 32)

The images of a child patting and the narrator washing rocks demonstrate a conscious, spiritual and tactile relationship between the human and the rock that reflects the place rocks have in Hawaiian cosmology. The joy of the child 'patting' the rock, as it would an animal, hints towards a deeper relationship than the casual observer might realise, and the 'disbelief' of the onlookers towards the 'I' in the second poem, demonstrates their lack of understanding as to why a person would treat a rock as it would a living thing. This relationship between humans and the natural world incorporates a kaona connection to the Hawaiian belief in the familial relationship between themselves and the islands, and is an implicit critique of Western land ownership and purchase practices which work to displace, impoverish and marginalise Native people in Hawai'i.

The expensive dirt of Waikīkī, nexus of the Hawaiian real-estate boom of the seventies, has rendered many Hawaiians homeless. Homelessness in Hawai‘i, and particularly Honolulu, is an on-going reality, and it is also true that a disproportionate number of homeless people are Native Hawaiian.⁶ Homelessness is repeatedly raised as a social and political issue in Hawai‘i with the tensions between the capitalist need for profit and cheap labour driving even working people into homelessness (“Paradise Lost” np.). Business leaders speak openly about the ‘epidemic’ of homelessness in Waikīkī, but also note the total lack of affordable housing in the district (Petranik et al. np.). The irony of the homeless of Waikīkī being a more permanent feature of the urban landscape than many of its other occupants is not lost on Westlake. These ‘transients’ of no fixed abode are more stable in their way than the travelling businessmen, military and tourists who form a large proportion of Waikīkī’s population.

“Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki” portrays Waikīkī as a place of procession and parade, where the constant flux of ‘fat sick Amerikans/ and speedy Japanese’ (“Down on the Sidewalk (In Waikiki)” 141: 24-5) staggering past Westlake’s seat are juxtaposed with the poet and the old Hawaiian, who sit and observe. The poet and the kāhuna are generally seated or still, whilst the tourists and businessmen of the poems are in a constant ‘parade’:

down on the sidewalk
 in waikiki
 I
 SEE
 EVERYTHING
 passing me:

 lost souls
 girls with nice asses,
 businessmen

with dirty assholes
and shiny suits,

bums pimps whores
freaks junkies gigolos
and burnt out Americans ...

...

they're all there
i tell you,
 man
from my seat
down on the sidewalk
in waikiki
I SEE EVERYTHING:
this gigantic PIG
 PARADE
 staggering by ...

and across the street
unnoticed,
an old Hawaiian
 slowly sweeps
 the sidewalk
 clean
 with a fallen
 coconut leaf:
away,
 you fools
 he whispers,
 away!

(“Down on the Sidewalk (In Waikiki)” 141-2:1-14, 33-54)

As in other poems in the collection, Westlake uses typography and page layout here to create emphasis, momentum and disjunction.⁷ Throughout the series capitalisation can be equated to shouting, whilst the distribution of words across the page forces the reader's eye to move back and forth, mirroring the pacing/parading of the crowds Westlake watches. The choice of the word 'parade' indicates many layers of meaning, however, as it is often preceded by the word 'pig', any sense of a joyful celebratory parade is discarded and the sense of ostentatious attention seeking is prominent.

Inherent is a display of power, indicative of a military parade. The dichotomy of wealth and poverty is aligned with movement and stillness throughout the collection. The wealthy move in comfort and for business and pleasure, assured of their right to cross borders and boundaries as global citizens; they have a ‘home’ (house) but can travel from it. The poor are moved on or out, forced to travel for work from distant neighbourhoods and are regarded as a nuisance or eyesore when they inhabit beaches, benches and sidewalks in wealthy urban areas; they do not have a ‘home’ (house).

The distinction between being homeless and houseless is important in Hawai‘i as many Native Hawaiians consider their home to be the islands, and a house to be a shelter. In “The Kahuna of Waikiki” the kahuna stumbles up to the poet asking for change for cigarettes, and mumbling “I could go home RIGHT NOW!” (Westlake 157). Whether home is a house, or another place, we sense it is not in Waikīkī. ‘Home’ for this Hawaiian man is not the urban — it is not his place. This is a politicised position as it insists that a connection to the land of Hawai‘i has been maintained despite the displacement and social alienation many Native Hawaiians experience. Without money, these people are outside, even in the centre of Waikīkī, the most iconic district of Hawai‘i’s capital. Noticing their ‘outsiderness’ Westlake eulogises them. Needing to earn to eat, the poet shares his money and cigarettes as a way of connection, hoping to mitigate his feelings of alienation. Westlake’s portrayal of Native Hawaiians as ‘outsiders’ complicates the notion of tourism and the ‘hospitality industry’, because Native Hawaiians no longer have de facto control over their ‘āina (land), and very few have any influence over, stake in or income from Waikīkī’s hotels, the proxy-homes that guests of the ‘hospitality industry’ stay in. To offer true hospitality, one must first have a home to offer.

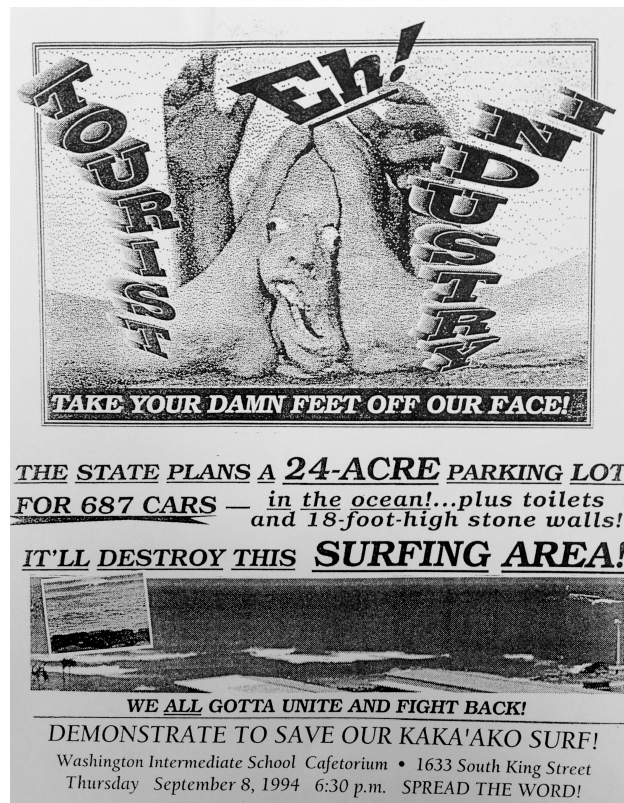


Figure 4: “Tourist Industry: Take Your Damn Feet Off Our Face!” — A protest poster advertising a meeting at Washington Intermediate School, Sept 1994. In 1992 Kaka‘ako Waterfront Park, Honolulu was constructed on the site of a former municipal landfill. The surfing site opposite was called “Incinerators” after the old incinerators used to burn the city’s waste.

In Hawaiian there is an ‘ōlelo no‘eau (proverb) which says O ke aloha ke kuleana, o kahi malihini, meaning “Love is the host in strange lands” (Kanahele *Tourism* 33).

However, hosting in Waikīkī is predominantly the prerogative of businesses that are a part of the hospitality industry, rather than a social or familial welcome. The ‘hospitality industry’ is an oxymoron that uses the reciprocal notion of hospitality to obfuscate the colonialist and appropriative economic relationships it fosters.

Jacques Derrida describes hospitality as being formed of two unequal yet mutually dependent parts: the Law of hospitality and ‘the laws’ of hospitality. The first is pure, unconditional and ethical:

Hospitality is culture itself and not simply one ethic amongst others. In so far as it has to do with the ethos, that is, the residence, one's home, the familiar place of dwelling, inasmuch as it is a manner of being there, the manner in which we relate to ourselves and to others, to others as our own or as foreigners, *ethics is hospitality*; ethics is so thoroughly coextensive with the experience of hospitality.⁸ (*On Cosmopolitanism* 16-17)

The 'Law' of hospitality, according to Derrida, is fundamental to an understanding of what makes humans human, how humans constitute their identity, and how humans co-exist in the world. Kant describes a right to universal hospitality as among the conditions he perceives as necessary for peace: 'the claim of a stranger entering foreign territory to be treated by its owner without hostility' (*Perpetual Peace* 137).⁹ But hospitality is an aporia, at war with itself: in order to realise true hospitality, Derrida argues, we put the very conditions its fulfilment relies upon at risk. If an unconditional welcome, without limits, is offered, sovereignty over the home is lost. This tension is found in the etymology of the word *hospitality*, whose root *hospes* is related to an earlier root of *hostility*, *hostis*, meaning both 'foreigner' or 'enemy', which has given birth to host, hospitable, hospitality but also host, hostile and hostility (Derrida and Dufourmantelle *Of Hospitality* 45). To open our home to the *hostis*, then, could be to a foreigner or to an enemy, and the result is either hospitality or hostility, or a mixture of both.

There is 'no hospitality ... without sovereignty of oneself over one's home, but since there is also no hospitality without finitude, sovereignty can only be exercised by filtering, choosing, and thus by excluding and doing violence' (Derrida and Dufourmantelle *Of Hospitality* 55). The violence Derrida speaks of is the conditions a host places on a guest that are prudent, limited, political, and dependent on our judgement of who or what presents itself at the opening of the home; these constitute

‘the laws’ of hospitality (Derrida *Of Hospitality* 55). When we choose to accept guests into our home we automatically do so with recourse to certain rights and duties of the guest/host interaction, (take off your shoes, do not steal from me or damage my possessions, do not stay too long). George Kanahele, co-founder of the Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association, observes that ‘in [the Hawaiian] native traditions of ho‘okipa or hospitality, it is clear that the host and guest have certain responsibilities. I don’t know of any native culture that interprets hospitality as a one-way street in which the guest is free to do whatever he or she fancies’ (*Tourism* 33).¹⁰ The concept that one can “outstay one’s welcome” epitomises the central aporia of hospitality, namely that in order to be able to offer hospitality there must be a politics of relation between the host and guest, which violates the unconditional nature of pure hospitality.

In the context of Waikīkī, this aporia drives the question of who is offering hospitality to visitors if not all Native Hawaiians, as Westlake’s poetry indicates, are? Who is maintaining the sovereignty necessary for hosting? Is the hospitality being offered recognisable by its cultural definition, or does it undermine it? To be a host is a position of power, but one that is constantly threatened by the presence of the guest; there is always the threat of the transition from ‘host of a guest’ to ‘host of a parasite’. There is an element of vulnerability in becoming a host, which indicates an analysis of colonialism as unintentional hospitality: the hosting of a guest-turned-parasite. Derrida stipulates that ‘anyone who encroaches on my “at home,” on my ipseity, on my power of hospitality, on my sovereignty as host, I start to regard as an undesirable foreigner, and virtually as an enemy. This other becomes a hostile subject, and I risk becoming their hostage’ (*Of Hospitality* 54-55). Westlake’s depiction of himself as a janitor in

Waikīkī has much in common with Derrida's formulation of the ex-host 'hostage' — as a Native Hawaiian he should be at home in Hawai'i, but instead feels trapped, threatened and alienated by Waikīkī. To maintain the 'expensive/ habit ... called Life' Westlake has to work, and 'like a young punk monkey/ facing a giant ape/ every morning/ i face off waikiki' in a contest that he 'never wins' ("The Devil of My Life" 162 1-6, 12-15). Waikīkī is an animate, menacing and powerful foe that Native Hawaiians like Westlake and the kāhuna must fight with to survive. In this way the place Waikīkī becomes a synecdoche for all Americanised places in Hawai'i and, by extension, for colonial control.

Whilst Native Hawaiians have never relinquished sovereignty over their home they have lost de facto control over a majority of land and governance since the colonisation process began two centuries ago. This process began slowly and was marked by many biological, social and political occurrences that weakened the Native Hawaiian population, government and culture, and strengthened Euro-American and Asian settler influence. It is important to remember the relatively gradual process of Hawaiian colonisation because it leads to an understanding of how hospitality can be perceived as weakness, and perverted for the advantage of the *hostis* who then moves into the position of host, with devastating consequences for the displaced original host. This paradox at the heart of philosophical hospitality mirrors the paradox at the heart of the 'hospitality industry' in Hawai'i, which transforms a reciprocal universal/cultural agreement into a monetary transaction.

It is clear that Westlake's hostility towards Waikīkī, although openly directed towards the sidewalk denizens and concrete hotels, is concerned with the loss of control over

place, the loss of sovereignty over home that has resulted in abject poverty for Native Hawaiians. Westlake is positioned as neither a homeless ‘kahuna’, nor a tourist; he occupies a liminal position, straddling both worlds, on the edge of extreme financial poverty but surviving, participating in the wage economy but finding value in Native Hawaiian culture. The poem “Lost” (163-4) gestures towards the alienation this liminality induces, as the narrator dreams he is invited to a party:

last night
in a dream
someone stapled the sea
to my mind

it was my Badge:
i was invited
to a party!

all the lunatics
the sages
the madmen
of waikiki
were there

...
but that's
all gone now—
i woke up
lost
banished
down
on the sidewalk
in waikiki
looking
looking
can't see
THE KAHUNAS
ALL GONE!
tears sliding
down my cheeks
salting
my lips
my god!
what am i doing
where
am
i?

(1-13, 26-47)

There are distinct tensions in this poem between inclusion and rejection, belonging and alienation that are tied to being a guest and the manner of relationship with the host. The poem has a surreal feel, as dreams often do, which amplifies the impact both of the exultation the narrator feels at being invited, and his devastation at waking and discovering his loss/he's lost. The narrator's invitation is a 'Badge', which signifies selection, identification and belonging — others also have the same badge. This 'badge' is the sea and it is stapled to his mind, which indicates more a state of mind, a connection between invitees embodied in the ocean, rather than a physical object. The other guests at the party were wise (or mad, or both) men from Waikīkī, and it seems that the narrator is one of them, reinforcing the sense of community among this group. Curiously the party's host is not named in the poem, but one who can summon the sea as an invitation is presumably a powerful force. The narrator's pleasure in the drinking, laughing and singing that accompanied this sea-gathering of like-minds is 'banished' upon his waking 'down on the sidewalk in waikiki'. Waikīkī, once again, despite being a place of great Hawaiian significance and history on the shore of the sea, is an agent of removal — of the guest from the party, and of joy from his mind. The kāhuna are gone, and in their absence their wisdom and skill are also gone — the narrator is left disorientated and hopeless.

This poem is by no means clear, but I interpret the dream-party the narrator is invited to as a metaphor for pre-contact Hawai'i where the wisdom of kāhuna and the community of Native Hawaiians celebrated, laughed and sang together. Upon waking the reality that the ancient wisdom of Hawai'i is 'all gone', in Waikīkī at least, and the place is transformed beyond recognition mirrors the effects of colonisation. The

narrator was a guest, I suggest, of the earth, the only force powerful enough to lift the sea — a reflection of the Native Hawaiian belief that humans are guests of the ‘āina, responsible for and to it, in a reciprocal relationship. In Waikīkī, when he awakes, the narrator is ‘banished’ to a place where the earth no longer hosts human guests, but is dominated by them.

Through his poetry Westlake illustrates the intense alienation and despair that is felt when people are ostracised, uninvited, or absent from each other and from the earth. The absence of Kāhuna ‘down on the sidewalk’ is not necessarily a physical absence, as there are plenty of homeless Native Hawaiians (who are/represent Kāhuna in Westlake’s poems) in Waikīkī, but a spiritual and cultural absence from the place. Once described by King Kalākaua as Honolulu’s most ‘beautiful and dreamy suburb’, as Waikīkī modernised it Americanised and globalised, becoming a ‘boulevard of transnational flows ... that has lost its own “sense of place,” the distinctive ingredients of place, language, and cultural attitude ... that once gave it a special feel and aura of distinct belonging’ (Wilson *Reimagining* xi, xii). As tourism, for which Waikīkī developed and on which it is sustained, continues to rely on a ‘worldwide reputation for hospitality and aloha’ (Hawai‘i Tourism 4), Westlake’s poetic inhospitality is exceptionally damning. “Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki” expresses rage and fear, which manifest in aggression, but Westlake’s poems work to distort the binaries they set up and, in their turn, displace Waikīkī, synecdoche of the metropole, from Hawai‘i.

French philosopher Henri Lefebvre suggests that art – in its broad sense of creative endeavour – could be a means by which to reclaim certain places from the domination of the technological/industrial/militarised space (*The Production of Space* 164-6).

Waikīkī has become such a place, and Westlake uses his poetry to reclaim it in surprising ways. As a Native Hawaiian, Westlake finds himself in Waikīkī not as a foreigner to Hawai‘i but an unwilling participant in a society to which his ideals are foreign. Derrida identifies a situation such as this as ‘the Foreigner Question’, which he elucidates in terms of hospitality through an analysis of *The Apology of Socrates*. Socrates argues to the Athenian courts that, on trial for his life, he should be treated as a foreigner, as he is “‘foreign” to the language of the courts ... he is *like* a foreigner’ (*Of Hospitality* 15 original emphasis). By arguing that the court’s usual language of rhetoric is ‘foreign’ to him, and because he is defending himself, Socrates insists that he should be allowed the hospitality (leniency and understanding) accorded to a foreigner.

Westlake, it seems, employs a version of the ‘foreigner question’ by adopting a method of double displacement. His narrative voice is positioned as a Native Hawaiian nationalist with American citizenship, addressing Americans and the American system from within. The great risk, as Derrida notes, is ‘of the foreigner who, inept at speaking the language, always risks being without defence before the law of the country that welcomes or expels him’ (*Of Hospitality* 15). Westlake’s use, in “Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki” of exceptionally crude language, mimics this ineptness to stunning effect — he successfully communicates the horror that Waikīkī evokes, just as the most articulate person can be reduced to swearing when truly enraged.

By placing himself as foreign to the courtroom, Socrates, as an Athenian, also implies that the courtroom is foreign to Athens: the system that dispenses justice is foreign to the subjects under its jurisdiction. Crucially, he speaks of himself as a foreigner to the

court, not as a foreigner to Athens— this is dissociation from linguistic structures of justice imposed upon him, not from the place of Athens. Similarly Westlake’s juxtaposition of the Hawaiians/kāhuna and Americans/pigs positions the Hawaiians, himself included, as foreign to Americanised Waikīkī and simultaneously native to the underlying ‘āina of Hawai‘i. Native Hawaiians are subject to American law and culture, which at all times supersedes Hawaiian ways of knowing and understanding justice, and they must operate within this legal framework in English, which is repeatedly charged with inadequacy for expressing Hawaiian meaning as it relates to the relationship between Hawaiian people and their environment and culture.¹¹

Westlake’s sparing but effective use of kaona in the series as a means of undermining powerful structures supports this. The perverted hospitality of settler colonialism has forced Native Hawaiians to take the position of foreigner in the society they live in, to be heard, not as traitors to their country, but as citizens of another nation, in the same place.

There is a clear parallel between Socrates’ courtroom and Westlake’s Waikīkī. Neither speaks the language of power in these places, and both are natives of the wider land, but remain unable/unwilling to operate within the constraints the system places on them. It is important that this displacement is from the language and legal system of the dominant society, and not from the place of Hawai‘i. “Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki” seeks to emphasise this double displacement, but, crucially, uses kaona to evoke the Hawaiian world outside of (above and below) Waikīkī. Sifting slowly through the angry diatribe to find the gems scattered among the poems, the kāhuna, the lei, the rain, the sea, the stillness, provides a glimpse of Westlake’s ‘native’ language; one which is deliberately employed to exclude the true foreigners: the denizens of the

Waikīkī sidewalks. Yet these are mere glimpses; Westlake repeatedly expresses his infuriation with and disgust at the displacement Waikīkī enacts on Native Hawaiians.

The expression of poverty, dislocation and alienation present throughout the collection culminates in the final poem “They Got Me Hanging Already” (169). Although the end of the series is unmarked in the edited collection, except by the placement of a concrete poem that acts as a visual wall between the last poem containing the line “down on the sidewalk in Waikiki” and the rest of the book, the poem is an ending as desolate as the series indicates it will be. Whilst Westlake points towards Native Hawaiian knowledge as a source of healing by placing the poem “The Hawaiian” (168) as the penultimate poem in the series, he offers no solutions. Despite the almost-epiphany in “The Hawaiian”, where the narrator follows the gaze of the old Hawaiian to the mynah birds “frolicking/ in coconut/ trees” and murmurs ‘of course!// of course!’ (168), we are swept inexorably towards his destruction.

The hanging is reminiscent of old penal punishment and lynching; punishments meted out by state and quasi-state forces against dissenters, criminals and those deemed insane. The narrator feels ‘wasted’, ‘lost and sick/ like a lost/ sick/ dog ...’, trapped in Waikīkī by unending time that seems to suspend him with a noose around his neck ‘as the world/ goes/ spinning/ by...’ (169). The image is disorientating, and not just because of its violence. Is the body spinning from an invisible point as its eyes look out, or is it still and the spinning is the uninterrupted scurrying of an indifferent world? The confusion of motion and stillness is heightened by the rhyme scheme, rarely employed by Westlake, which loops back on itself, with the final ellipsis tempting you to go back to the beginning of the poem, or even the series, and experience the pain all

over again. Westlake's collection is radical in its sense of righteous anger but, in "Down on the Sidewalk in Waikiki" at least, he is unable to broach the central aporia of hostility and hospitality and imagine a scene of co-existence.

Chapter Two. Land, water and belonging in *Ho 'iHo 'i Hou* (1984) and *Mālama: Hawaiian Land and Water* (1985).

As the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement developed into the mid-1980s it sought to articulate its ideals and motivations literarily. Two anthologies published by Bamboo Ridge Press both focus on the Hawaiian people's relationship to Hawai'i as a place and space (wahi and lewa). They demonstrate the many ways Native Hawaiians understand place, and work to resist the conflation of indigenous with 'local' into (Rob Wilson's definition of) the 'glocal'. Taking into account criticisms of the effect of the 'glocal' on the indigenous, this chapter illustrates the interconnected ways poetry from a number of Hawaiian authors engages a cultural understanding of place that has transformed Asian/American residents' understanding of their presence in Hawai'i, and has had a measurable effect on the U.S. Navy and government's relationship with Hawaiian people and land.

The first anthology, *Ho 'iHo 'i Hou: A Tribute to George Helm and Kimo Mitchell* (1984), is a special edition of Bamboo Ridge journal dedicated to the memory of Hawaiians George Helm and Kimo Mitchell who died at sea in 1977 whilst reoccupying Kaho'olawe island at the beginning of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana's (PKO's) struggle to halt the bombing of the island by the American Navy. The second anthology, *Mālama: Hawaiian Land and Water* (1985) is the first dedicated collection of Hawaiian writing published that explicitly attempts to 'reflect... in some way a distinctly Hawaiian relationship to the life of the place' (7), and is edited by Dana Naone Hall, who led a successful campaign to prevent the Ritz Carlton group building a hotel on a Hawaiian burial ground. Both *Ho 'iHo 'i Hou* (giving back, returning,

restoration) and *Mālama* (care for, preserve, protect) work to explicate the narrative of aloha ‘āina that guided the Hawaiian protest movement at this time.

The period of the 1970s-80s marked the very early stages of formal publishing of Hawaiian literature in English by ‘locals’, which at this time included Native Hawaiians and some Hawaiian born Asians, but excluded haole. The anthologies are treated together here due to the proximity of their publication and their shared matrix of political and cultural concerns. Both anthologies deal explicitly with the Hawaiian relationship to ‘āina in order to differentiate from American/non-Hawaiian land use claims, to emphasise Hawaiian continuity and community, and to propagate the message of aloha ‘āina both within and beyond the Hawaiian community.

Whilst this chapter addresses the anthologies thematically, to avoid overly burdening the analysis with historical context, the focus remains on Kaho‘olawe island as the best example of contested space. There are however, many examples of contested space/places that individuals, such as the editor of *Mālama*, Dana Naone Hall, were involved in reclaiming for Native Hawaiians. By exploring how the Hawaiian concepts of place (wahi) and space (lewa) relate to aloha ‘āina, this chapter will demonstrate how these anthologies are articulating these concepts in their political contexts. Reading these anthologies in this way necessitates a multi-faceted approach: the chapter looks first at the historical context that the creative writing discussed here is reacting to, then it adopts a theoretical lens that accounts for the conflicting narratives of colonised Hawaiian space/places, and finally moves towards analysing the resistant ways the poetry in these anthologies reconfigure those space/places so they emerge collectively as a strong narrative for Hawaiian being-in-place.

Aloha ‘Āina

When discussing Hawaiian place it is vital to first outline the concept of aloha ‘āina, as it lies at the nexus of Hawaiian cultural practice, and its politicisation since the late nineteenth century has been almost entirely due to the encroachment of non-Hawaiian settlers onto Hawaiian land. Aloha ‘āina translates literally as ‘love for the land’, but it has been used to mean ‘patriotism’,¹ whilst the (mis)use of ‘aloha’, which means ‘love’, particularly in political and commercial contexts, has caused outrage among ordinary Hawaiians.² In *Ho‘i Ho‘i Hou* Kalani Meinecke explains ‘[t]he Native Hawaiians’ deep and enduring love for their ‘*aina*, is manifest in the entirety of their being—in their philosophy of life, in their religion, in the fascination with places and place names, and in their brilliant musical heritage’ (92 original emphasis). Entwining the names of people with those of the places they inhabit, cultivate and worship strengthens the reciprocal bond with the ‘āina.

Aloha ‘āina was first expressed in the context of defending Hawaiian land rights during the turbulent years around Queen Lili‘uokalani’s overthrow in 1893 (Morales “George Helm” 20). McGregor traces its descent from the ancient Hawaiian concept of *lōkahi*, meaning unity, agreement and harmony (12; Pukui and Elbert 210). The transformation of *lōkahi* into aloha ‘āina was political, and the pressure for the shift came from increasing land incursions. For Hawaiians aloha ‘āina is the principle of the reciprocal responsibility to care for the ‘āina, and many see it as a model for human, not just Hawaiian life. When contrasted with the English etymology of the term ‘real estate’ or ‘realty’, which is derived from the Latin *res* meaning ‘thing’, the extent of the cultural gulf between Hawaiian and Euro-American epistemologies regarding land is realised.³ An extract from a speech by George Helm printed in *Ho‘i Ho‘i Hou*

proclaims “‘*Kahoolawe can teach the rest of the world Aloha ‘Aina and save us from becoming evolutionary dropouts.*’” (28 original emphasis) Helm is not referring to just Native Hawaiians: ‘us’ includes the whole human race.

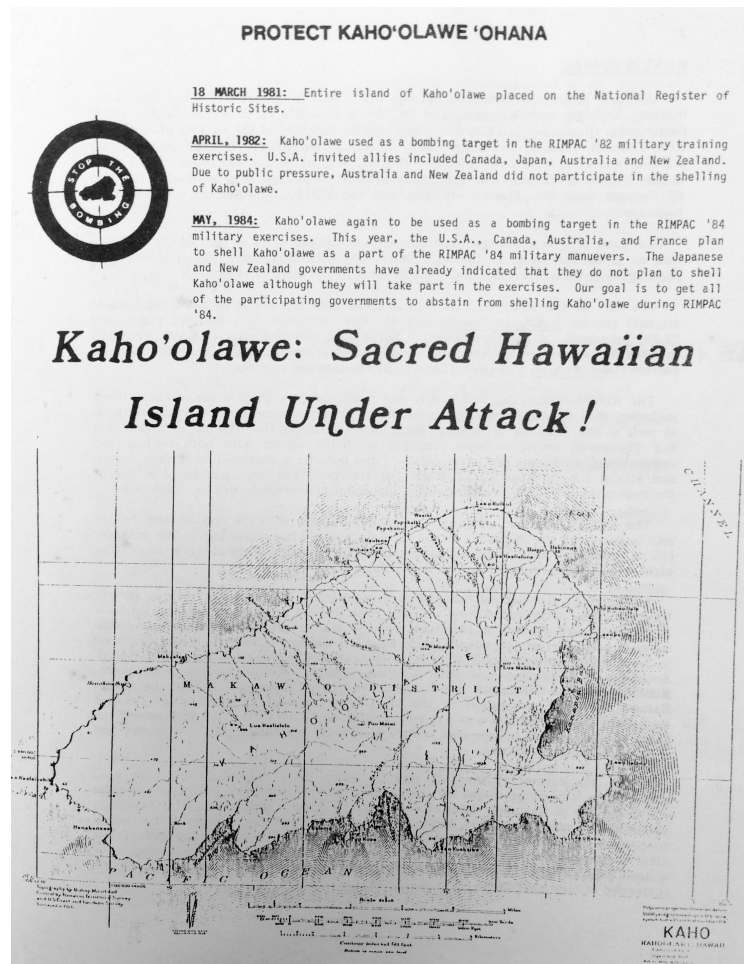


Figure 5: “Kaho‘olawe: Sacred Island Under Attack!” — Information/ protest poster produced by the PKO concerning RIMPAC naval exercises on the island, circa 1984.

Kaho‘olawe “pitted the national military needs of the [American] navy against the cultural needs of the people of Hawaii” (Hall in Blackford 52).⁴ As one poem in *Mālama*, by a local middle school student, put it ‘Kahoolawe is now the place/ to bomb Hawaiians’ (Darisay 102:1-2). Kaho‘olawe is a small island to the south of Maui, and has been used for live fire exercises by the U.S. Navy since World War II.

The U.S. Naval bombing of Kaho‘olawe ‘came to symbolize all that was wrong with how [Native Hawaiians] had been treated by Americans for over a century’ (Blackford 62) and the long battle for its return to the Hawaiian people was integral to the attitudes of today’s sovereignty movement.

Kaho‘olawe was a fight that Native Hawaiians could win, and they correctly realised that the island’s restoration could provide a finite and measurable step on the path to the restoration of Hawaiian sovereignty (Morales “George Helm” 19). The confluence of saving Kaho‘olawe and the restoration of Hawaiian sovereignty is succinctly expressed in a poem by Ellen Enoki, a fifth grade student who took part in the Poets in the Schools Program. This poem by was originally published by Westlake in the collection *Kahoolawe: Chants, Legends, Poems, Stories by Children of Maui* (1977) but appears in *Ho‘iHo‘i How*:

Kahoolawe now is a floating bomb.
They think it will go off about 300 years from now.
If you go about 30 feet away you can hear it ticking.
The bomb has been ticking away for 200 years.

(Enoki 53:1-4)

Enoki has adeptly phrased the effect that the bombing of Kaho‘olawe had on the consciousness of young Native Hawaiians in the early to mid 1970s. The ‘bomb’ of resentment against American influence and control in Hawai‘i had not lessened over its one hundred year duration, and Kaho‘olawe was indeed ‘ticking’ — the island was to become the impetus and force behind Native Hawaiian activism for two decades.

Ho‘iHo‘i How: A Tribute to George Helm and Kimo Mitchell is foremost a paean to Helm and Mitchell but it is also the first published collection of writing that is

explicitly and entirely about the *action* Hawaiians took to protect their native land, including Kaho‘olawe. In the introduction its editor Rodney Morales attributes its creation to ‘all [those who] were touched with the impulse to create ... to *ho‘okupu* (to give, to cause to grow) ‘the good bruddahs’ who talked and lived *aloha ‘aina* (love for the land; giving in return what gives you life)’ (“Introduction” 6 original emphasis). Here Morales explicitly equates action with ‘giving in return’. Similarly, the editor of *Mālama: Hawaiian Land and Water*, Dana Naone Hall, realised ‘that something was missing’ from the historical accounts of Hawai‘i, ‘some essential voice, or voices, of a place that had been the subject of so much writing by other people’ (“The Landing” 6). Both editions reference political struggles: *Ho‘iHo‘i Hou* the fight to halt the bombing of Kaho‘olawe by the American navy, and *Mālama* the ‘land and water struggles of the early 70s’ (Hall “The Landing” 7). Both texts offer a kind of genealogy of aloha ‘āina for the 1970s and 1980s that responds directly to both historical and contemporary events that affected the Native Hawaiian community.

A G/local place

Hawai‘i is a place that has been defined in many different contexts since its annexation to America in 1893. As an archipelago state of a continental nation, included both in an American national structure and a global financial network, a Pacific cultural area in which its nationality marks it as different, and a member of a regional economic union (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) Hawai‘i means many different things in different contexts but it is always contested. Rob Wilson realises this when he writes that ‘Hawai‘i ... stands for some Trojan horse of Asian/Pacific localism imploding within the national imagination of the United States’ (179).

Wilson's postmodern critique of trans-global flows of capital and power describes Hawai'i as a 'postmodern island microstate of global cultural flows and local encounters' (*Reimagining* 196). This mixing of the global and local, characterised as the 'glocal', results in Wilson designating Hawai'i as 'not so much ... a seamlessly confederated U.S. *state*, but ... a site of heteroglossic spatiality' (*Reimagining* 196). Hawai'i may be a glocal place in Wilson's analysis, but it has a significant indigenous voice that is being articulated in social, literary and critical ways. Wilson's conception of the local is 'ethnically inflected', and pays necessary attention to the multiple heritages of many Hawaiian writers. However, this has the effect of adding Native Hawaiians to the list of hyphenated American identities, rather than acknowledging a significant difference (Franklin and Lyons "Remixing" 56-7). The local in Wilson's analysis stands for hybridized, mixed race people, products of global labour flows, and his work has been criticized for lacking space for an indigenous viewpoint, and denying indigenous place as separate to the 'g/local' (Franklin and Lyons "Remixing" 56). Whilst Hawai'i is undoubtedly heteroglossic, there are spaces (or places), characterised by Native Hawaiians as "inside", that remain indigenous and are constantly being reconfigured (from within and without) so as to remain distinct from the hybridised 'glocal'. Contested places posit people on either 'side' of a conceptual definition of that place, and crossing boundaries between these places on a daily basis means repeatedly negotiating the potential for hostility; as Bachelard reminds us, 'Formal opposition is incapable of remaining calm' (212). Whilst developing Hawai'i as a place of many places, each with opposing conceptions of where their boundaries lie, risks encouraging conflict, negotiating the boundaries between particular conceptions of place is one way to imagine alternative conceptions to those that exist at present (Dirlik 180).

Boundaries are multiple and are drawn along linguistic, ethnic and political lines, even within the Native Hawaiian community, which has its own way of distinguishing between the more traditional areas and places affected by urbanisation. Whilst, by the 1970s, most native Hawaiians were physically removed from the land by urbanisation, agricultural displacement and economic pressures some areas remained comparatively isolated. In *Nā Kua 'āina* (The Back Land) historian Davianna McGregor identifies places she believes are kīpuka, meaning oases, of Hawaiian culture. Likening these rural places to areas where vegetation survived and regenerated after a volcanic eruption McGregor asserts that they were 'bypassed by major historic forces of economic, political and social change in Hawai'i' (8). The people who lived in these areas are, according to McGregor, kua'āina – an originally derogatory term akin to 'bumpkin' – who came to be respected in the 1970s and 80s as 'communities from which Native Hawaiian culture can be regenerated and revitalized in the setting of contemporary Hawai'i' (McGregor 8). George Helm was born and brought up on Moloka'i, an island that avoided the worst post-statehood over-development, but is dominated by the Moloka'i Ranch. Kimo Mitchell, who disappeared with Helm, was from Keanae, a small taro-growing community near Hana on Maui (Morales "Kimo Mitchell" 76). Rodney Morales wrote, 'like just about everyone else in this Hawaiian community, Kimo grew up practicing *aloha 'aina*' ("Kimo Mitchell" 76). Both places are considered cultural kīpuka in McGregor's analysis (10).

A similar distinction is observed by American anthropologist Jocelyn Linnekin in her controversial article "Defining Tradition: Variations on the Hawaiian Identity":⁵

Villagers use the terms "inside" and "outside" to express the dichotomy between life in the rural heartland and the foreign world of towns and cities

where most Hawaiians live today. ... When you go toward Keanae, you are going inside; when you go toward the town of Kahului, you are going outside. Hana, an old Hawaiian community at the far eastern end of Maui, is “all the way inside.” Inside and out-side are also metaphors for contrasting spheres of social relations. Outside is a world dominated by haoles (white people) and Orientals, a hot, dry world of canefields and tourist hotels. Inside is the domain of friends and “family,” a cool, wet region where Hawaiians are still predominant. (243)

Whilst the boundaries of “inside” and “outside” remain geographically undefined, Linnekin notes that ‘communities such as Keanae do represent an integral cultural identity. When Hawaiians come inside, they feel that they are returning to a world that has something “real Hawaiian” about it— and there is some truth to that estimation’ (“Defining Tradition” 243). Urbanisation has accelerated the transformation of “backland” into “oases”, divided from urban areas by non-geographical boundaries that require continual negotiation.

The distinction between place and space is one way to operationalize the negotiations between indigenous groups and the forces of colonialism in Hawai‘i. The fight for Kaho‘olawe offers an example of how different understandings of Hawai‘i as a place can unite to alter, reclaim and reconfigure the political and power relations of people in that place. There is an equal, if not greater, opposition between the understanding of ‘place’ and ‘space’ in Hawaiian as there is in English. Place in both languages implies roots, boundaries and emotional or spiritual attachment. Space implies movement, boundlessness and universality. These oppositions are indistinct at best, and quickly break down under scrutiny, but however much they overlap the nexus of meaning of space and place never quite touch.⁶

Historian Arif Dirlik demonstrates the importance of etymology surrounding space/place, and terms frequently employed in conjunction with them:

It is not surprising, given the conflation of the language of space and place with that of the global and the local, that those terms too should be imbued through and through with the ambiguities of the latter juxtaposition. In much of the discussion about places, local, spatial, and place-based are used interchangeably. The conflation is not just intellectual; it is also, and even more deeply, political. (153)

When a space/place undergoes redefinition the process is always politically motivated, for what a place means is socially constructed and therefore a nexus for both conflict and, at the point of crossing, understanding. However, there are those, particularly in the natural sciences, who define the two quite separately. Courtney Bell describes the difference in her field, geography:

...space is operationalized through variables such as distance, commute time, and the availability of transportation. It is measured in miles and minutes. ... Place refers to the social, economic, and political meanings people assign to particular spatial locations. These meanings derive from the people and purposes a place has historically supported (e.g., Lefebvre 1991; Massey 1994; Tuan 1997). (495-6)

Bell cites French philosopher Henri Lefebvre as a source for her definition of place, and later in his article Dirlik refers to ‘the psychological dimensions of place to which Lefebvre pointed’ (181 n23). Dirlik and Bell both use Lefebvre’s work to define place in terms of its social production, but Lefebvre himself does not use the language of place. Whilst this complicates the explanation, the following will attempt to map these various definitions of place and space into the context of the 1970s and 80s Hawaiian land protests.

Lefebvre has theorised human interaction with our environment as ‘social space’ — space that is *produced*, and through being so becomes a tool of thought and action, and hence control and domination (26). He aligns ‘social space’ with other ‘concrete abstractions’ such as money and commodities, and its manipulation by (state) authorities as a form of enslavement (26). The bombing of Kaho‘olawe is the most overt example of American military, and therefore state, violence and power in Hawai‘i. The island became what Lefebvre calls ‘dominated space’ which has been ‘transformed – and mediated – by technology, by practice’ (164). Lefebvre’s theorisation of dominated space is very useful for understanding how Native Hawaiian activism, and the literature that is produced by and as a form of that activism, fits into the larger flow of social and political power. Through the opposition of dominated and appropriated space, which is adapted space such as homes and gardens, Lefebvre offers a framework for how (Western) land use is above all, a political power play. He writes:

Thanks to technology, the domination of space is becoming, as it were, completely dominant. The ‘dominance’ whose acme we are thus fast approaching has very deep roots in history and in the historical sphere, for its origins coincide with those of political power itself. Military architecture, fortifications and ramparts, dams and irrigation systems — all offer many fine examples of dominated space. ... dominant space is invariably the realization of a master’s project. (164-5)

Military infrastructure, as the veins of state power, is considered the apex of the “Modern’s” technological hold over the pre-Modern. As modernity extended its reach, dominant spaces came into direct conflict with appropriated spaces, where ideally they would be combined, and generally won.

In the poem “The Ho‘okalakupua (the drift)” by Lino Kaona (*Mālama* 134) space is destructive and the loss of ‘home’, a ‘place’ in this context, is lamented. Here ‘space’ defeats ‘place’, and space is directly linked with foreignness, alienation and slavery. “The Ho‘okalakupua (the drift)” opens with, and is a response to, the terse question ‘Maopopo?’ (Understand?):

Maopopo? ‘Ae makemake nō.	(I understand)
I have always been a foreigner here,	
In my own country, I ko‘u mana‘o	(in my mind)
‘O ke Kūkini o ka ho‘āhuli ‘ana	(rebel)
Talking story how things	
Should be	
To my brother, Kauwā	(slave)
Sleeping in his flesh,	
Worn out from grabbing things	
As they are ... Maoli!	(reality!)
Ai hea kahi o ku‘u noho	(where is my home?)
I hea ku‘u manawa	(when is my time?)
My birth was a ship wreck,	
Ili I ka Wā!	(aground in Time!)
Nāhōha e ka lewa!	(broken by space!)
Marooned on my island	
Among my kinsmen.	

(*Mālama* 134)

The narrator understands that they are alienated, excluded in their own land, but that this exclusion is not solely of body from place, but also of psyche from self. “The Ho‘okalakupua (the drift)” is structured in two halves, divisible by differences in syntactic flow. The first half is descriptive; it narrates the problem, ‘Worn out from grabbing things/ as they are’ is a criticism of rampant consumerism and a reminder that the current situation is untenable for Native Hawaiians, who are ‘slaves’ (Kauwā also means outcast, pariah) to this foreign way of life. The exclamation ‘Maoli!’ is full of kaona because the meaning of maoli is real/reality, and it is used to refer to Native

Hawaiians; *kanaka maoli* directly translates as ‘real people’. Yet in this poem ‘reality’ is destructive and the ‘real’ people are slaves.

The second half of the poem is reflexive, turning inwards to question and lament the loss of safe passage in this homeland to which the narrator is foreign. Kaona uses the language of sailing to describe the disconnect he feels: ship wrecked, run aground, marooned. These are all things that happen on or near the coasts of islands, and they are all events that stay motion. They metaphorically indicate that the Hawaiian people have been stopped in their tracks by the forces of colonialism. Enforced stasis paradoxically dislocates the Hawaiian narrator from his place or path, rendering him an outcast. This point is profoundly indigenous as it regards colonialism as the cause of stasis rather than change. A colonised viewpoint would look for stasis as a sign of indigeneity, and consider movement, change or alteration as a sign of assimilation and loss of indigeneity (Garrouette 68).

At the time Kaona was writing, Hawai‘i’s seafaring heritage was foremost in the public consciousness, as when *Mālama* was published the Hawaiian voyaging canoe Hōkūle‘a was a well-known icon of cultural renewal, having completed two return voyages to Tahiti in 1976 and 1980 (Finney np.). The publicity and excitement surrounding Hōkūle‘a’s successes (and failures) indicates the depth of connection Hawaiians felt with the act of voyaging and the physical canoe itself. To be charting a course between islands, using ancient skills of star and tide navigation struck a chord with people (Kihei 103; Balaz 110). As the metaphors of movement and stasis accumulate in this poem, they echo Wayne Westlake’s words in “Kahauale‘a”: ‘It is not that we [Hawaiian people] are against progress, it is just that progress in the wrong

direction is not progress at all' (104). Drifting is directionless, whilst being marooned means almost certain death — Kaona's vision is bleak because he addresses a fundamental schism between daily Hawaiian experience and his feelings about how Hawaiians should live. The narrator expresses his sense of dislocation through the loss of direction in both space and time, asking 'Ai hea kahi o ku'u noho (where is my home?)/ I hea ku'u manawa (when is my time?)', and lamenting 'Ili I ka Wā! (aground in Time!)/ Nāhōha e ka lewa! (broken by space!)'. The line 'Nāhōha e ka lewa!' is heavy with kaona, as lewa translates not only as 'space', but also refers to the sky and heavens, or it can mean to float, to swing, or be unstable. Curiously it can also mean to know something (a place or skill) thoroughly. That 'space' in Hawaiian can have so many meanings lends depth to the line as it indicates that the narrator feels broken by instability and landlessness. The implication of this is that both movement without direction and enforced stasis are deadly to indigenous cultures.

Indigenous understandings of cultural belonging in place pose a significant challenge to the culture/nature divide by grounding critical epistemologies in modes of knowledge that developed independently of this ontology. By persistently telling stories which demonstrate the interconnection of humans and their non-human environment, and accepting this connection as familial, indigenous knowledge can begin to dismantle the thinking which dislocates people and place. In Wilson's argument, the effects of indigenous, environmental or human rights activists are only very lightly felt on the global stage, and even less so in 'glocal' places (*Reimagining* 249). Yet in Hawai'i, indigenous led activism has been fundamental in shaping the relationship Hawai'i has with the rest of America and with other Pacific nations. In his analysis of Hawai'i, Wilson believes that 'without being romanticized or nativized in

some quasi-fascist new way, the local needs to be worried into existence as the potential site of critical regionalism and what Raymond Williams called “the bond to place” as articulated ground of resistance to transnational capitalism’ (*Reimagining* 220). Wilson’s argument, although not entirely accommodating of indigenous political agency, remains useful for articulating how communities resist the encroachment of the global.

Distinctions between the ‘local’ and ‘global’, and ‘place’ and ‘space’ are blurred, but each holds meaning in relation to the other. Similarly, Lefebvre’s theorisation of ‘dominated space’ only holds its full meaning when compared to what he terms ‘appropriated space’. He explains that appropriated places are natural spaces that are ‘modified in order to serve the needs and possibilities of a group’ (165), which are often private spaces, homes and gardens. The difference is modification, not destruction. Non-Hawaiian commentators on Hawai‘i and Kaho‘olawe have noted that Native Hawaiians altered the ecology and to an extent the topography of the islands, through the introduction of plants, hunting and the building of taro terraces (Blackford 15). Hawaiians have pointed out that whilst Western explanations describe land geomorphically, indigenous epistemologies make less distinction between environment and people, viewing them as interacting, not land being acted upon: ‘indigenous knowledge and beliefs may include ancestral heroes with special powers and help to shape land and marine systems’, such as the god Maui who fished the island that bears his name from the ocean (Kana‘iaupuni and Malone 282). The way Hawaiians adapted their environment falls into Lefebvre’s formulation of ‘appropriative’ activity, which, he goes on to note, is akin ‘in concrete terms, to the work of art’ (166). Concerned with the Modern in Europe, Lefebvre’s formulation is

based on Marx, and therefore on the principle that there is such a thing as ‘human nature’, that it is inextricably linked with language, and that labour and technology are the transformative tools by which (social) man converts indifferent nature into ‘goods’ (Lefebvre 165). Marxian analysis is clearly contradictory to Native Hawaiian epistemology, but Lefebvre makes space for the reformulation of the idea of dominated and appropriate spaces in new contexts when he says that ‘appropriated space *resembles* a work of art’ (165 original emphasis).

Within Lefebvre’s theoretical structure, where Kaho‘olawe is an example of a dominated space, Native Hawaiian poetry is a ‘representational space’ (33/39). When appropriated space comes into conflict with dominated space, it is often subjugated, but it cannot be annihilated. The restitution of appropriated space, which in this context can reasonably be equated with the rural indigenous space, is possible only through the restoration of the human body within that space. Writing Hawaiian bodies back into dominated spaces, by repeating/recording Hawaiian names, stories, actions and reactions, is a large part of the ‘revolutionary ‘project’’ that aims to make those representations real. Lefebvre asserts that ‘[a]ny revolutionary ‘project’ today, whether utopian or realistic, must, if it is to avoid hopeless banality, make the reappropriation of the body, in association with the reappropriation of space, into a non-negotiable part of its agenda’ (166-7). By demanding access for Hawaiian bodies to Hawaiian spaces, and writing it so, whether or not their physical actions are wholly successful (as they have been on Kaho‘olawe), Native Hawaiians use art to reappropriate spaces, and in the process transform them into ‘places’.

Art as a way of reappropriating bodies in spaces is one way to theorise the purpose and effects of the two poetry collections discussed in this chapter. The nexus of conflicts between Native Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians has, in modern times, always been about the reappropriation or protection of particular spaces from domination. From Kālama Valley, to Waikīkī, to Waialua, to Kaho‘olawe, every protest has centred on land use and the need for continued access for Hawaiian bodies, which can enact Hawaiian culture, to those spaces. Native Hawaiian poetry and other art forms are methods of reappropriating bodies-in-space that record, commemorate, document and inspire physical action/activism. As some of the first dedicated collections of Hawaiian poetry and writing, it is significant that so many poems address the presence and continuation of Hawaiians in spaces that have become dominated.

Continuation as resistance

The purpose of *Ho‘i Ho‘i Hou* and *Mālama* is to write about Hawai‘i from a Hawaiian perspective, but doing so entailed first elucidating what that meant. A key emphasis of Native Hawaiian writing at this time was continuance — asserting that the trauma of colonisation and the modernisation of urban Hawaiians did not make them less ‘Hawaiian’, less indigenous, or less able to speak about their own culture. Hall’s introduction to *Mālama* crescendos with ‘the confident and compelling statement of a young Hawaiian, who said at a recent hearing, “I have been here for 2,000 years”’ (“The Landing” 7). In the poem “Moe‘uhane” (dream, lit. soul sleep) by Joe Balaz, the narrator associates a close relationship with nature as the ‘ways of the past’, seeming to mourn that he ‘cannot go back’ (91:2-3). Whilst the narrator’s rural pursuits are apparently occurring in a dream of the past, the final lines of the poem are intended to remind us that Native Hawaiians have never abandoned their way of life: ‘I cannot go

My Grandfather used to grow taro
and he showed me how. He pulled out
the taro first, then he pulled the roots
off from the taro and cut it off the
huli. When my grandfather passed away,
he left a note and it said:

“Take care of the taro patch.”

Sean Kahai, Grade 6
(*Mālama* 75:1-12)

Taro growing's association with grandparents in these poems indicates it is an old practice and gestures towards the important place it has in Hawaiian culture. It also shows that in an age of increasing food importation and consumer urbanisation such culturally vital subsistence activity continued in some places. Growing taro, from which poi is made, is considered by Hawaiians to be an act of spiritual as well as bodily renewal. Poi is made from pounding the taro corm, and was a food staple for Native Hawaiians. Taro, in the Hawaiian cosmology, is afforded the respect of the elder sibling, as it grew from the stillborn body of Hāloa, whose younger brother was the first of the human race (Peek 91). Therefore the taro plant is a descendant of the Hawaiian's elder sibling, which in the Hawaiian 'ohana structure, demands deferential respect and care, and in turn the older sibling, the taro, cares for and feeds the younger. The boys who watch and learn from their grandparent's cultivation of taro are learning about one of the fundamental stories of Hawaiian culture, and the values of reciprocity, respect and mālama (caring) it embodies.

The water running from the mountain is necessary for taro production, as taro grows best in flooded conditions fed by running water. The diversion of water from upland streams into plantations owned by haole, was one of the key causes of the decline in taro production, and the impetus for on going water rights litigation in Hawai'i

(Knoblauch np.). The note left by Sean Kahai’s grandfather demonstrates how the older generation prioritised the passing on of useful cultural knowledge through its action — continuing to grow taro is an effective way of feeding the family and keeping the Hawaiian culture alive. These boys were not expressing a politicised version of Hawaiian culture, or aloha ‘āina — they were writing about their own lives, their own grandparents and their own experiences.

The sea is vital to Hawaiian culture and two poems by children about the sea stand out. John Kauwenaole and Terrance Paleka describe life on the shore:

My mom is in the water
picking limu.
My dad is on the shore
cleaning fish.
My brother is surfing
at the beach.
My lazy sister is
at home sleeping.
And me, I’m on
the beach crabbing.

John Kauwenaole, Grade 4
(*Mālama* 69:1-10)

Me and my father like to
cut wood and dive.
When we go diving
we catch squid and lobster
and all kinds of fishes.
To catch a lobster
is to go in a cave,
and to catch a squid
is to look under the rocks.

Terrance Paleka, Grade 5
(*Mālama* 70:1-9)

The beach is a mainstay of all Hawaiian children’s upbringing, but for those in rural families the sea is an important extra source of food, and gathering it requires

specialist knowledge. The simplicity of John Kauwenaole's poem is affecting, because each person is in their place and it is easy to envisage the family, one member short, carrying on their lives at the beach. This could of course be at any beach, but the use of the Hawaiian word *limu* (seaweed) and the older brother's choice of pastime, surfing, give a distinctly Hawaiian identity. Surfing was a common pastime of Hawaiians but with the breaking of the religious *kapu* system in 1819 it rapidly lost its spiritual aspects. Terrance Paleka's time with his father spent fishing is a reminder of the value of the skills a parent can pass to their child: 'To catch a lobster/ is to go in a cave,/ and to catch a squid/ is to look under the rocks' (6-9). Only a child familiar with the ways of the reefs and shallows of an abundant shoreline could express knowledge thus, without explanation or elaboration. Paleka's words are absolutely poetic in their syntactic construction. The placing of the humans in Kauwenaole's poem and of sea creatures in Paleka's demonstrate a familiarity with the places themselves that, despite their youth, speaks of long association. This is because the parents, who are the subject of both poems, are themselves at home/in place, and have passed this to their children. The implication is of a *feeling* of continuity divorced from theoretical 'authenticity', which assumes an 'at-home-ness' with the local shorelines.

For some Hawaiians, their familial relationship with the land renders their relationship with the state, which officially controls that land, unimportant and occasionally distressing. The poem "Palapala Hānau" (*Mālama* 138), meaning 'birth certificate',⁸ is Lino Kaona's response to a bizarre situation that he found himself in as a young man. Hospitalised after a diving accident he was asked to fill out documents that all necessitated providing his social security number and birth certificate. Kaona didn't have a birth certificate; in hospital, at twenty years old, Kaona officially didn't exist. A

confounded official asked “‘Who are you, anyway, are you sure you know?’”

(“About” 135) As an undocumented human Kaona’s identity could be questioned — a complete stranger could ask “are you sure you know who you are?” Hawaiians such as Kaona realised early on that to be documented is to be, to a certain extent, assimilated. Following his experience in hospital, Kaona ‘[got] out of bed as fast as [his] body would allow [him and returned] to the deep green valley in Molokai where my grandfather lived alone and isolated from the documented world...’ (“About” 136). The valleys of Molokai, a cultural *kīpuka* McGregor identifies, is a place where Kaona was relatively free to live as he wished, as generations of his family had before him.

“Palapala Hānau” is about passing on knowledge between generations, about existing in social and familial memory as a part of a chain of bodies in one place that accumulate and pass on knowledge through their existence in one place. Whereas the palapala (document) has been the main means of storing information in the West for thousands of years, Kaona marks his difference by reminding the reader that knowledge can be passed on in embodied ways, through linguistic, spiritual and physical connections. While he is alive his body is the proof of his existence, not a piece of paper; and once he has passed on, the social memory of the knowledge he contributed will be his legacy, not the documents of his life. The fact of the writing and publication of “Palapala Hānau” in a book is a gesture towards the recognition that to oppose the more insidious aspects of documentary culture, Native Hawaiians must also carve a space for themselves within that culture.

In “Palapala Hānau” Kaona expresses the continuation of social memory, insisting that the embodied experience of place is an immutable fact, and demands recognition for the value of Hawaiian spirituality for the future:

One hundred years from now I want people to say:	(Au‘āpa‘apa‘a)
Ho‘omana‘o! Lino said that about the sea,	(Kūpina‘i)
Or the stars, or a frigate bird ... remember?	(Ola)
I want to be the wind, passing then,	(Mea huna)
Turning in a tight spiral to listen ...	(‘Alā)
Puahiohio ... Pā no lilo! ... Kanaka ‘e...	(Mist touch)
Kamali‘i ... kahu keiki ...	(‘O ke aka
Still with loving power, listening	o ‘oukou,
	‘o ka i‘o
	o mākou.)

(“Palapala Hānau” *Mālama* 138: 1-10)

My translation:⁹

One hundred years from now I want people to say:	(Generations have passed here)
Remember! Lino said that about the sea,	(Reverberations)
Or the stars, or a frigate bird ... remember?	(Life)
I want to be the wind, passing then,	(A Secret)
Turning in a tight spiral to listen ...	(The stones)
A whirlwind ... touch and gone! ... foreigners...	(Mist touch)
Children ... those who tend them ...	(Yours is
Still with loving power, listening	the essence,
	ours is
	the material part.)

The opening lines introduce memory and voice, which indicate that a story is about to be told: ‘One hundred years from now I want people to say: (Au‘āpa‘apa‘a)/ Ho‘omana‘o! Lino said that about the sea, (Kūpina‘i)’ (1-2). Au‘āpa‘apa‘a is a noun for a place where a lot of time has passed, metaphorically where many generations of a family have lived. In the first line Kaona embodies the poem by giving voice to his written words – this is what I want people to *say* – and places it, both physically and temporally, by calling the place where this speaking will occur

au‘āpa‘apa‘a. An au‘āpa‘apa‘a is marked by people living in it over time; it is a place that has accumulated mana; it is *known*. This is emphasised by the first word of the second line, Ho‘omana‘o! (Remember!), which is an instruction or assumption rather than a question. Kaona’s wish is for people to remember what he said, and the stimulus for remembering will be the au‘āpa‘apa‘a. Specific knowledge is remembered in a particular place. Such a place might be a wahi pana, or a sacred place. The bracketed word at the end of the second line, Kūpina‘i, means echo or reverberation — it also means lament.

The parentheses have a curious effect on the poem. The poem can be read without the parentheses, or as though they form a separate poem in their own right, or inclusively as a part of each line. Each choice gives the poem a slightly different emphasis.

Hawaiian and English are blended throughout the poem: all but one of the parenthetical words is in Hawaiian, within the body of the poem there are five lines in English, two in Hawaiian and one with both. The lines in English (possibly excepting the last line) tend to communicate straightforward information; they are descriptive rather than poetic, whereas the Hawaiian communicates spiritual ideas, making full use of the language’s kaona. As the poem is looking forward one hundred years, this illustrates Kaona’s belief that Hawaiian spirituality can continue to be communicated in Hawaiian, even if pragmatism means the workaday language in Hawai‘i is likely to remain English. The shift from using brackets to translate Hawaiian phrases, as in the poem “The Ho‘okalakupua”, towards using them as an independent structural tool marks a shift in emphasis that supports the themes of the poem. The reader is expected to manage without translations, inferring that in the future the Hawaiian language will have wider use and greater value, matched by a corresponding deepening of cultural

and spiritual understanding. “Palapala Hānau” is about the specificity of cultural knowledge and embodied memory in (a Hawaiian) place. It is about memory, legacy, transition and continuation in the Hawaiian body, not in American (or Hawaiian for that matter) documents.

Kaona wants future generations to remember what he said about ‘the sea,/ the stars, or a frigate bird’ (“Palapala Hānau” 2-3) — natural phenomena that have cultural significance for Hawaiian voyaging. When we remember the ‘shipwreck’ in the poem “The Ho‘okalakupua” (Kaona 134), and that Hawaiian star and tide navigation is one of the most prominent features of the cultural revival of the Hawaiian Renaissance, Kaona’s choice of words to be remembered seems directed towards cultural development and continuation. The stars and the frigate bird are also the subject of the poem “MAKE Manu: MANU Make” (dead bird: death bird) (137), about Kaona’s grandfather. Kaona describes his grandfather’s lessons: ‘He taught me/ To see the stars as they are/ And to place my hands dry/ Upon the oily smooth surface of the sea’ (10-13). During a lesson an aeroplane flew across the sky:

My grandfather’s face changed
Like clouds before the sun,
His whisper was like an echo-wind:

Lele ka ‘iwa
I ka nani
Hō‘ele‘ele ka mikini mokulele
I ka lani.

(frigate-bird
flies in beauty
machines
darken the sky.)

(*Mālama* 137: 25-31)

The ‘iwa, or great frigate bird, is native to Hawai‘i. Its name means thief and refers to their technique of harassing smaller seabirds until they regurgitate their food, which

they then steal (Harrison 95). With a magnificent wingspan of up to 2.3 metres the frigate bird is a striking aerial figure, yet its poetic comparison to an aeroplane is as much due to its name as its size. The ‘thief’ bird is compared to the mechanised ‘death bird’, which brings people who are as different from Hawaiians as the aeroplane is from the bird; these visitors have, historically had a tendency to stay and, wittingly or otherwise, have contributed to the theft of Hawaiian land, food resources and culture. Kaona’s choice of words to be remembered is rooted in his own personal experience of being Hawaiian, and is closely tied to voyaging across oceans, which in turn is a metaphor for strategies for cultural health and continuation. Kaona brings the imagery of “MAKE Manu: MANU Make” into “Palapala Hānau” through stars and birds, but transforms the ‘death’ his grandfather saw into ‘Ola’ (3), meaning life, health, wellbeing, for the future.

Towards the end of “Palapala Hānau” the tone shifts and the kaona deepens: ‘I want to be the wind, passing then, (Mea huna)/ Turning in a tight spiral to listen ... (‘Alā)/ Puahiohio ... Pā no lilo! ... Kanaka‘e ... (Mist touch)/ Kamali‘i Kahu keiki’ (138: 4-7). These three lines bring together wind, stone and mist, which each have cultural significance in Hawaiian. ‘Alā is volcanic stone, used for poi pounders and hula stones; in Hawaiian cosmology stones are living things, a part of the body of the volcano goddess Pele and metaphorical ‘food’ for the Hawaiian people (*Westlake* 247). It is worth noting that ‘ala (without the macron, indicating a shorter vowel sound) means fragrance, and metaphorically represents the presence of a spirit or ancestor — it is likely that the sonic similarity of the two words is intended to deepen the kaona of the poem. Puahiohio is whirlwind, and the name of the wind in Nu‘uanu, O‘ahu (Nakuina 44); naming winds, rains and currents, among other meteorological

phenomena both expressed and deepened Hawaiian's knowledge of their place, which had practical significance for their subsistence on the islands. Mist, in *mele*, has romantic connotations (Pukui and Elbert 483), so to touch or be touched by mist is, poetically, a sensual, loving experience. Reading these lines, the narrator, now embodied in the wind, swirls around the speakers, secretly listening to their reminiscences. Are these words his thoughts, or fragments of what he hears? Perhaps the speakers detect his presence: 'A whirlwind ... touch and gone! ... foreigners...(Mist touch)/ Children ... those who tend them ...' Is this simply a description of the whirlwind of foreign change as theft? Or does the whirlwind represent the listening power of the ancestors that will 'steal away' (*Pā no lilo!*) the foreigners (*kanaka'e*), metaphorically releasing future generations from the tyranny of colonialism, through the act of remembering traditional knowledge? The 'mist touch' that concludes the line, complete with romantic *kaona*, points towards the children (*Kanali'i*) of the next line. The wind appears as the ever present, ever cleansing voice of preceding *kūpuna* (elders), whose profound listening to future generations can twist knowledge tight like a whirlwind, clearing the path for the children and those who nurture them. This reading is influenced by the saying, or *pule* (prayer), that runs over the last four lines of the poem: '(*'O ke aka/ o 'oukou,/ 'o ka i'o/ o mākou*)' (7-10) which translates as 'Yours is/ the essence, ours is/ the material part' (Pukui and Elbert 12).¹⁰ *Aka* means shadow, or essence; it is a spiritual reference, which when compounded with other nouns can mean clarity, brightness or light. It refers to the physical indication of something that is coming, but is not there yet—it can mean the human embryo at the moment of conception (Pukui and Elbert 12). '*I'o* means substance, flesh or true/real, figuratively it indicates a relative (Pukui and Elbert 102). In this poem, *aka* indicates both the generations who have passed and whose

essence/shadow is left in the au‘āpa‘apa‘a, and the generations as yet unborn. The ‘i‘o are those alive now, who speak and write in the knowledge that their physical existence in a place will leave a shadow to be observed and interpreted in the future. Kaona’s poem is connective and circular, striving to articulate the sinew-like shadow of words and bodies-in-place he perceives between generations, and the mana‘o aloha (loving thoughts) he has for the future of Native Hawaiians in their wahi pana.

“Palapala Hānau” is a poem whose expression is embedded in the rocks, winds and mists of Hawai‘i. It marks Native Hawaiians as different from non-Hawaiians—Hawaiians become central, rooted, whilst haole become peripheral and transient—in a shift that is strategic and political. Kaona is not the only poet to do this. Just as Lefebvre demands the restitution of (appropriated) ‘space’ and the human body from the forces of dominated space (state power, militourism and capitalism) as the basis of any transformative challenge to the established political order, Kaona uses his poems to reappropriate spaces, and in the process transform them into ‘places’.

George Helm, a charismatic and powerful speaker, articulated the different ways of understanding the human relationship to land during the struggle for Kaho‘olawe.

Ho‘iHo‘i Hou includes the transcript of a statement he made detailing the reason for the protesters’ fourth occupation of Kaho‘olawe:

I have my thoughts, you have your thoughts, simple for me, difficult for you. Simply... the reason is... I am a Hawaiian and I’ve inherited the soul of my kupuna. It is my moral responsibility to attempt an ending to the desecration of our sacred ‘aina, Kohe Malamalama o Kanaloa, for each bomb dropped adds injury to an already wounded soul.

The truth is, there is man and there is environment. One does not supersede the other. The breath in man is the breath of Papa (the earth). Man is merely the caretaker of the land that maintains his life and

nourishes his soul. Therefore, ‘aina is sacred. The church of life is not in a building, it is the open sky, the surrounding ocean, the beautiful soil. My duty is to protect mother earth, who gives me life. (55)

Helm, who ‘was versed in religion, mythology, philosophy, and psychology’ directly opposes the Western philosophical tradition of a division between reason and nature (Morales “George Helm” 17). The comment ‘simple for me, difficult for you’ is an assertion of difference that implies that his listeners/readers cannot comprehend the connection, which Hawaiians have no difficulty with. Helm explicitly aligns place with Hawaiian culture, and its destruction (through development, resource extraction or pollution) as foreign and alien.

This kind of opposition is posited by Dirlik as a necessary challenge to notions of hybridity that have allowed the encroachment of the global into the local and the domination of place (Lefebvre’s ‘appropriated space’) by space. Dirlik expressly names indigenous people as one of the groups whose identity is ‘deconstructed’ by postmodern, hybrid re-renderings of the place/space dichotomy, and reasserts the possibility that indigenous people’s being-in-place offers a strategic alternative to hegemonic power structures, because ‘they point to the reconquest of space by place as an irreducible goal’ (181). Like Lefebvre addressing the challenges of modernity for those at its margins, Dirlik argues that ‘for all the risks [binary oppositions] entail in encouraging social conflict, such oppositions have an important part to play in considerations of alternatives to the present’ (180). A poem that uses such “binary oppositions” to elucidate the destructive dislocation of native people from their places is “People of the Earth” by Haunani-Kay Trask (*Mālama* 140), which expresses the importance of place to identity:

I.

culture and place
together
made of us
what we are

mountain people
hunt
and dream
of flying

pueblo people
plant
and love
the underworld

ocean people
fish
and chant
long voyages

earth designed us
in song and flesh
dance and spirit.

II.

but now, everywhere
there is sorrow and ash
upon the land

sky weeps without rain
oceans wash up blood
earth is rotting
her spirit disembowelled

and our tribes go in search

(1-28)

This lament for an earth destroyed by the excesses of modernity – poisoned animals, uranium fields and nuclear seas – unsparingly shows the legacy indigenous people inherit from developed nations. The cause of the woe is clear: ‘we are no longer/ people and place/ together ... we are no longer// of earthly design’ (44-50). “Tribes” are forced to ‘go in search,’ which indicates deracination and diaspora, not just

because their lands have become uninhabitable, but also because the earth's 'spirit' has been destroyed. The connection to land breaks because the symbiotic relationship of caring for the land, so it can care for the humans that live on it, is severed.

The environment we live in shapes us physically and culturally. If humans are shaped by a mechanised environment rather than a natural one, modernity becomes a force for alienation, of people from place, of humans from their humanity. In Trask's writing, just as in Helm's statement, bringing people and place together is the only way humans, not just indigenous people, will avoid self-annihilation.

In response to analysing the effects of place on identity Dirlik asks, 'Are classes conceivable without reference to places? Are genders, races, and ethnicities? Is the obliviousness to places in the use of such categories responsible for the rendering of critical categories into instruments of hegemony?' (166). In questioning not only the social categories themselves, but the universalism of such categories, Dirlik is demonstrating how fundamentally place affects our interpretations of such categories, and argues that social relations, and the categories in which we conceive them, only make sense when considered in relation to place (180). Having argued that constructions of place are political he then points out that 'indigenous arguments for political restructuring provoke far greater resistance, and even incredulity, in contrast to indigenous beliefs which would seem to have enormous psychological and cultural appeal, at least in First World societies' (181, note 23). In other words, because Western political structures are built along 'Latour's two "great Divides" of modernity' a consequence is 'the division of the self that follows from these divides' (181 n23), and whilst alternative (often indigenous) belief systems are tolerated, even

embraced, as commodities that can be consumed in a flawed attempt to overcome this *feeling* of alienation, their possibilities as a serious political alternative to Western systems are derided, sitting as they do on the other side of the “great divide”.

Acknowledging alienation, and its opposite belonging, is primarily an intellectual endeavour, but making their effects felt emotionally is a gift of the poet. Poets, particularly those who feel alienation keenly, are willing to explore their own being, to expose their own oppositions. Poetry allows dichotomies to be erected, examined and dismantled (or preserved) in a creative way that touches on the psychology of the endeavour, and acknowledges how alienation can be felt, rather than explained. Native Hawaiian politics is, by virtue of the people who practice it, rooted in indigenous belief systems that have a more holistic view of the interactions of the private and public, spiritual and political, religious and routine lives of Hawaiian people. Whilst modern democracy ostensibly requires a secular state apparatus, indigenous political models require a spiritual fluency that is (hypocritically) uncomfortable for Western politics. The influence of Christianity in United States politics is powerful, but the country’s political system is officially secular.¹¹ Trask’s poem is stark in its assertion of the dangers of dividing politics from people, and by extension the earth. She insists that the result of ignoring the coexistence of people and place is a poisoned earth, and death.

Ho ‘iHo ‘i Hou and *Mālama* seek to construct a new dialogue about indigenous people’s relation to place and space in the modern world. They represent an evolution from Westlake’s “Down in the Sidewalk in Waikiki” because they work to offer both a reflection of contemporary events and a vision of an indigenous future. Writing about mutually known places and shared experiences in those places, in the context of

Hawaiian history, strengthens bonds between people and across communities, even if those experiences are painful ones. The Native Hawaiian perspective offers a new (to contemporary Westernised society) way of thinking about how the past can relate to the present through the landscape each generation occupies. Dirlik explicitly advances indigenous epistemologies as offering possibilities to restructure space, and suggests a method that is very close to what *Ho‘iHo‘i Hou* and *Mālama* achieve. He writes:

[Indigenous societies] having recognized, however, that it may no longer be possible to go back to place, or to a past that was constructed in places, the past itself no less than space may serve only as sources for future projects that do not repudiate the present, but seek social construction or the construction of nature in place-based ways with the past always before – not behind – it. (181-2)

The acceleration of ease of movement across spaces has irreversibly redefined how place is considered. Many Hawaiians live on the continental U.S.A., and around the world. This flow of people has necessitated a re-thinking of how people relate to place and how their being-in-place can be, to borrow an oft-used metaphor in postcolonial literature, both rooted and routed (esp. DeLoughrey). Dirlik’s proposal for indigenous people to keep ‘the past always before–not behind’ is itself a Hawaiian episteme, shared by many other Pacific people, that people ‘move’ into the future back first, always ‘facing’ the past. This is a powerful metaphor for how the past shapes the actions of the present, for if a close watch is kept on the past, understanding that the future cannot be seen, then history, retold through mele and mo‘olelo, can be used to shape behaviour and understanding in the present.

The poem “E Hānai ‘Awa a Ikaika ka Makani” (*Mālama* 149), meaning ‘Feed with ‘awa so that the spirit may gain strength’, by Imaikalani Kalahale is a prayer offered to the dead ‘so that their spirits may grow strong and be a source of help to the family’

(Pukui *‘Ōlelo No ‘eau* #275). In it Kalahale is invoking the mana of his ancestors in a time of need, seeking their return and their assistance:

Returning once more
over the mo‘o’s back

Brothers of an
ancient family

gathered.

From the northeast
below Maui’s Hook

to the Southern Cross
and the lands below
a meeting of
mana was set.

We came with verse
in hand and found

the ‘awa was
still there.

(*Mālama* 149: 1-15)

The reference to the mo‘o (lizard) is heavy with kaona as mo‘o also means a succession, and refers to genealogy or lineage. These brothers returning are Hawaiian ancestors, and upon their meeting they discover spiritual and physical survival (‘awa is the food of the gods, a bitter drink made from the root of the kava plant). The narrator returns ‘with verse/ in hand’ indicating the importance of mele to Hawaiian culture and to its ultimate survival/revival. Kalahale’s poem is a reminder that the mo‘o remains unbroken, and that the physical presence of indigenous people in Hawai‘i, and other Pacific Islands, maintains their spiritual existence, both within and apart from Euro-American culture.

Through Bamboo Ridge Press, the comparatively more powerful economic leverage of the ‘local’ provided the mechanisms by which *Ho‘iHo‘i Hou* and *Mālama* were published, but the impetus and effect of the volumes are inherently indigenous. The activism that provoked and inspired this writing resists assimilation into the ‘glocal’, as Wilson envisions it, through its opposition to agents of state sponsored violence and capitalist expansion. In fact Wilson notes that, ‘cultural nationalism in the new Pacific cannot be marketed as ex-primitive tourist delight — at least not yet’ (*Reimagining* 234). By writing from an indigenous viewpoint the work anthologised in *Ho‘iHo‘i Hou* and *Mālama* makes an early attempt to define the Native Hawaiian reaction to globalisation and to emphasise the kanaka maoli conception of indigenous place in response to the increasing pressure of the globally defined ‘local’. In 1980 Wayne Westlake wrote: “‘Cultural, political, socio-economic and religious bias might plague our [Hawaiian] race and we might not be able to agree on much. But on one thing we certainly agree: All land is sacred. It was given to us by the gods and no man can take it away’” (*Westlake* 247). By emphasising continuity, denouncing colonialism and promoting Hawaiian epistemology *Ho‘iHo‘i Hou* and *Mālama* make important contributions to the articulation of the Native Hawaiian relationship to place and its role in active resistance to American control of Hawaiian lands.

Chapter 3. Blood and Race: Haunani-Kay Trask's *Light in the Crevice Never Seen* (1999).

Light in the Crevice Never Seen (2nd ed. 1999) is a magnetic and eruptive journey through Haunani-Kay Trask's politics as a kanaka maoli poet. First published in 1994, just one year after the centenary of the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom commemorated by a huge protest march at which Trask made her most famous nationalist speech,¹ this collection illustrates the divisive effects of the racialisation of Hawaiians and the complexity of a reality in which the Native Hawaiian community is neither colour blind nor easily divided along racial lines. The collection is split into 3 sections, "Chant of Lamentation", "Raw, Swift and Deadly" and the eponymous "Light in the Crevice Never Seen", which are connected through overarching metaphors of light and darkness. These metaphors work in several directions at once: they utilise and subvert Western symbolism surrounding darkness, blackness and evil, and lightness, whiteness and good, whilst overtly linking colour, nationality and race to make political arguments for decolonising and re-indigenising Hawai'i. Whilst operating within well-established theoretical frameworks of racism and nationalism, this chapter analyses Trask's particular brand of strident nativism to demonstrate how her poetry provides a counterpoint to mainstream portrayals of Hawaiians. A close reading of Trask's use and adaption of Western literary forms, such as lyricism, her satirical subversion of tropes connected to the Enlightenment through play on the dark/light dichotomy, and the employment of sensuality, illustrates how her work complicates binary reactions to her nationalist politics.

Ao e Pō: Light and Dark

In Hawaiian, ao, or light, has as one of its many meanings earth or world, and is metaphorically male. Darkness is pō, the time of the gods and of creation, before life was placed on earth; because of its generative potential, darkness is conceived as female. The collection opens with “A People Lost” (3), where Hawaiians ‘gasp for life’ (16), their ‘black hair freezing’ (13) among ‘gauges of/ Northern white’ (7-8). Through the first two sections, references to whiteness and light as death abound. The raw sunlight of day is equated with barrenness and destruction; it ‘slits/ the air’ (“Blood on the Land” 9-10), and in the poem “Thirst” ‘we are parching/ in the glare/ ... [of] a strutting sun’ (6-9). It is clear this desiccation is a metaphor for patriarchal colonialism: its brightness and whiteness a clear analogy to haole skin and the pressures of an inflated population on a delicate ecology. However, the collection moves through black and darkness to end with “I Go by the Moons” (96) where the narrator follows natural paths on moonlit nights, spaces of regeneration and healing, ‘expectant/ feeling in the throat/ for the chanter’ (22-4). Towards the end of the collection Trask begins to build images of regeneration and love, but hers is not a naive optimism; her writing is angry, dark and loaded with recrimination. Nor is there a definite sense of hope for the future; Trask’s Hawai‘i is a diseased and broken place and what little regeneration there is, is rooted in scorched and devastated earth. By refusing to offer easy solutions to the problems facing Native Hawaiians she avoids the trap of essentialist proscription, but for those willing to brave the severity of her indictment there are valuable messages about what constitutes native belonging and a new Native nationalism. This collection is personal, political, anti-colonial and gendered, and it will be read here with reference to these, but most specifically in

terms of its presentation of race² and blood,³ and their effects on Native Hawaiian nationalism and the sovereignty movement.

Light in the Crevice Never Seen controversially embraces the catharsis of violence and destruction. The last poem of the second section, “Raw, Swift and Deadly”, is titled “Racist White Woman” (67). It is a violent, angry poem, and is raw with recrimination. It begins, “I could kick /your face, puncture/ both eyes.// You deserve this kind/ of violence” (1-5). The white woman is a representation of her gender and race and only the epithet ‘racist’ gives the reader any indication that there is a particularity to *this* woman, rather than any white woman. The poem makes no attempt to apologise for or hide its violence, but revels in it, framing such ferocity as revenge. The narrator seeks to silence the white woman’s “...vicious/ tongues, obscene/ lies” (6-8) with “...a knife/ slitting [her] tight/ little heart” (9-11) in vengeance “for all my people/ under your feet //for all those years/ lived smug and wealthy// off our land” (12-16). Whilst shocking in its visceral hatred, it is a poem: in the documentary *Race is the Place* (2005) Trask said, with a smile, “[haole] should be grateful that I’m a writer. I’d rather make art than ... commit murder” (*Race is the Place* 00:34-00:41).

Whilst Trask commits poetic murder, the Native Hawaiian people have suffered very real violence (Stannard in Heckathorn np.; Stannard “Before” 1-2). Race permeates *Light in the Crevice Never Seen* because the politics of race permeates Hawai‘i. Due to the nature of its colonisation Hawai‘i’s population hails from both west and east, and a large number of people in Hawai‘i claim two or more racial and ethnic heritages. The nature of racial politics in Hawai‘i has meant that race has become an important, but highly complex, marker of identity, the shifting definitions of which entail very high

economic and social stakes. Kanaka maoli Professor Jonathan Osorio has said that ‘[o]ccasionally, haole have asked ... why I identify as a Hawaiian and not as Portuguese, Chinese, or German. ... Such questions used to strike me as expressions of curiosity, though these days there is a fairly strong institutional and political interest in Hawaiian blood quantum, which makes the question less innocent’ (“What Kine Hawaiian Are You?” 362). In her study of blood quantum politics, *Hawaiian Blood* (2008), J. Kēhaulani Kauanui analyses how the definition and re-definition of what counts as “native Hawaiian” by the American legal system has a direct relationship to American acquisition of Hawaiian land. She explores how native understandings of indigeneity can provide a counter-narrative to the legal definition premised on a system of classification known as ‘blood quantum’ that is predicated on the ‘Vanishing Indian’ trope and follows a ‘genocidal logic’ intended to erase indigeneity from the legal and political landscape through the force of ‘racial equality’ (*Hawaiian* 194).⁴ She explains that:

Blood quantum is a fractionalizing measurement—a calculation of “distance” in relation to some supposed purity to mark one’s generational proximity to a “full-blood” forbear (4/4, ½, 1/4, 1/8, 1/16, 1/32, 1/64...). ... The contemporary legal definition of “native Hawaiian” as a “descendant with at least one-half blood quantum of individuals inhabiting the Hawaiian islands prior to 1778” originated in the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) of 1920 in which the U.S. Congress allotted approximately 200,000 acres of land in small areas across the main islands to be leased for residential, pastoral and agricultural purposes by eligible “native Hawaiians.” (2)

The HHCA sought ‘to save the “dying Hawaiian race” by restoring them to rural life’ (Kauanui 7). Whilst ‘[a] key part of the HHCA’s attempt at repopulation through relocation was the link between the renewal of Hawaiian “blood” and reconnection to the soil that would tie Kānaka Maoli back to land and agriculture rather than technology and industry’, ‘blood quantum classification emerged as a way to

undermine Kanaka Maoli sovereignty claims—by not only explicitly limiting the number who could lay claim to the land but also reframing the Native connection to the land itself from a legal claim to one based on charity’ (Kauanui 8). HHCA was the first government mechanism that evolved to expressly link blood quantum and land rights, and most devastatingly it promoted the *logic* of blood quantum, which ‘presumes that one’s “blood amount” correlates to one’s cultural orientation and identity’ (Kauanui 2). Trask’s poem “Christianity” (43-4) probes the devastating effects that racialised beliefs linking blood quantum and identity have on the psyches and bodies of colonised kānaka maoli:

“Christianity”

loves God’s children
not the infidel
or African

but Europeans
Americans

Saints who came
bringing God’s love

saw black and red
naked genitals
nothing so pale

as eternal
afterlife white
civilization

spread over continents
blankets of disease
crusading armies

a slave’s hand
cut off at the wrist
a desert tribe

driven into the snow
God’s justice white

death white cold

cleansing the land
of blackness sin
of color every surviving

primitive a Christian
reciting scripture
genuflecting on

broken knees
enduring penance
for dark skin dark hearts

trying to find white
reflections
in the past quarter-white

grandmother pure
English great-great
grandfather blue

eyes in place
of black vacant
as tombstones

children of God
brought out of
darkness bearing
the mark of salvation

(1-44)

In colonised Hawai‘i whites were privileged economically and socially, and those who claimed white ancestry, following racist logic, were higher up the hierarchy than people of only Hawaiian ancestry. This led to the desperate search Trask depicts here: ‘trying to find white/ reflections/ in the past quarter-white// grandmother pure/ English great-great/ grandfather blue// eyes in place/ of black’ (31-38), and to other acts of self-repression such as not teaching children ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language), and performing Hawaiian culture for the tourist industry. The desperate sadness of the lines ‘every surviving// primitive a Christian reciting scripture/

genuflecting on// broken knees/ enduring penance/ for dark skin dark/ hearts’ (24-30) underscores the connection between race and religion; in this poem Hawaiians are instilled with Christian guilt not for what they have done, but for who they are, which is racially defined by whites. In the poem “Hawai‘i” (34-38) Trask extends this feeling of repressing identity in the face of discrimination: ‘*Haole* plover/ plundering the archipelagos/ of our world.// And we, gorging ourselves/ on lost shells/ blowing a tourist conch// into the wounds/ of catastrophe’ (21-28). The plover is a migratory bird that overwinters in Hawai‘i, and is compared here to tourists who enjoy Hawai‘i’s abundance before leaving again. The conch shell (pū), normally blown to mark the beginning of Hawaiian ceremonies, is here blown for tourists. It is a symbol of the sale of Hawaiian culture for foreigners, but here the Hawaiian blowing the shell is a participant in the catastrophe of colonisation. Whilst participating in tourism is one of few employment options available in Hawai‘i, and particularly O‘ahu, Trask frames it as false survival; the body remains fed but the psyche is disrupted. Hawaiian lawyer Mari Matsuda speaks of the ‘shifts in consciousness’ that people of colour navigate everyday in America in order to survive the experience of externally imposed (racialised) systems of identifying and codifying them (32). She writes that ‘this constant shifting of consciousness produces sometimes madness, sometimes genius, sometimes both. You can hear it in the music of Billie Holiday. You can read it in the writing of Professor Pat Williams — that shifting in and out, that tapping of a consciousness from beyond and bringing it back to the place where most people stand’ (32). Lisa Kahaleole Hall notes that many Native Hawaiians ‘carry a legacy of internalized fear, shame, and anger’ about their history which can impede their claiming of and participation in their culture (411). Trask continues the theme of participation in one’s own destruction in the poem “Colonization” (64-5):

I.

Our own people
say "Hawaiian at
heart." Makes
me sick to hear

how easily
genealogy flows
away. Two thousand
years of wise

creation bestowed
for a smile on
resident non
Natives.

(1-12)

...

III.

Hawaiian at heart:

why no "Japanese
at heart?"

How about
"*haole* at heart?"

Ruling classes
living off
natives

first
land

then
women

now
hearts

cut out
by our own
familiar hand.

(34-50)

The first few lines highlight the slogan “Hawaiian at Heart” that was coined to describe foreigners living in Hawai‘i who are ‘thought to believe and practice Hawaiian cultural values’ (Trask *Light* 66), but is used by the tourist industry to persuade visitors that they can become “Hawaiian”, with all the racist tropes that entails, for the time they are there. L. Hall writes that ““Hawaiians at heart” assume that knowing and appreciating Hawaiian culture is enough to transform them into being Hawaiian’ (410) which is in fact symptomatic of a far more complex relationship between race, ethnicity and nationality imposed by America than the cultural/knowledge definition indicates. The existence of the concept of “Hawaiians at Heart” posits that Hawaiian culture can be separated from the genealogical connection to the land of Hawai‘i, which is an inversion of the belief that indigenous people are easily assimilable into white culture through intermarriage and ‘dilution’ of ‘blood’ (Kauanui 50). If Hawaiians can be assimilated into white culture through separation from their culture, then non-Hawaiians can become Hawaiian (when it suits them) through the acquisition (through paid-for education, or the internet) of cultural knowledge. This concept has its roots in the schizophrenic machinations of Euro-American race theory.

Kauanui outlines how the racialisation of Hawaiians was preceded by Euro-American triangulations of race between white settlers, black slaves and Native Americans, where the hypodescent rule figured black ancestry as contaminating, and un-mixable with white blood, whilst Native Americans could be assimilated with whites to the point of extinction (15-17; 22-3; 89-90). Therefore a descendant from a black ancestor was still considered legally black up to eight generations later, whilst someone descended from a Native American was considered white, or rather no longer Native

American, after just two generations. These concepts developed in support of white settler property rights and were passed into American law in order to disenfranchise and dehumanise African Americans as slaves, and to lay claim to Native American land (Kauanui 22). Whiteness as a property that can ‘dilute’ other ‘blood’ ‘conferred on its “owners” aspects of citizenship that were ... valued precisely *because they were denied to others*’ (Kauanui 22 original emphasis). The right of whites to exclude is extended by Kauanui to the right to include, or specifically as the right to ‘selectively incorporate indigenous peoples’ (22). This is precisely why Trask’s question, ‘How about *haole* at heart?’ can only be answered in the negative; whilst whiteness is constructed as a property that has the absolute right to decide who is included and excluded, no other group can claim it as their own. Whiteness will always trump indigenous blood, as it is discursively figured as the solvent, not the solute.

The racialisation of Hawaiians has its roots in the nature of the transition of land use from traditional structures to private ownership,⁵ and the relationship between the three main groups on the islands: white, Hawaiian and Asian. It is useful at this point to illustrate the connections between the conceptions of private property, national characteristics and race that *haole* brought with them to Hawai‘i. Hawaiians were racialised as “Native” and subjected to similar beliefs that Native Americans had been. ‘Kanaka Maoli [were seen] as assimilable, and thus “indigenous blood” as dilutable’ (Kauanui 75), which set the scene for a discussion of who was Hawaiian and who was not according to their blood quantum.⁶ However Asians, particularly the Japanese, were excluded as “aliens” and considered “unassimilable”. This is connected to the strength of Japan and China as nations — Americans felt they would always have divided loyalties and could not be trusted (Kauanui 83-84), whereas the Hawaiian

nation could be dismantled and absorbed into American democratic political structures. The mechanism via which narratives of land ownership, Native rights, race and nationalism *officially* converged was the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act (HHCA) of 1920. The original aim of the HHCA was to rehabilitate Native Hawaiians, who even in the 1920s were suffering some of the worst living conditions, unemployment rates and health issues of any demographic in Hawai‘i (Heckathorn np.). When, in 1920, ‘the U.S. Congress allotted approximately 200,000 acres of land in small areas across the main islands to be leased ... by eligible “native Hawaiians” (Kauanui 2) what and who counted as “native Hawaiian” became a very political issue indeed.

Among these lands were ‘thirty-nine long-term leases to sugar corporations whose interests covered 26,653 acres of the best agricultural land on four major islands’ which were set to expire between 1917 and 1921, who risked the breakup of their plantations. The HHCA delegates to Washington were made up of two factions: Native Hawaiian politicians who wanted to rehabilitate Native Hawaiians through the provision of government lands, which were also made up of crown lands intended for the use of the people as homesteading and agriculture, and wealthy, powerful representatives of the haole sugar plantation elite who wanted to hold onto those same lands (Kauanui 69-70). The events which led to a situation whereby the maka‘āinana (common people) were dispossessed of land, and how that land came to be under the control of an all haole pseudo-Republican government, is well documented (Alexander; N. Silva *Aloha*; Kauanui *Hawaiian*; Vowell), but it was attempts to return them to it that accelerated their definition by blood quantum. Since Cook’s arrival, Hawai‘i has suffered high immigration, and relationships between Native Hawaiians

and other ethnic groups were common. Under the Kingdom of Hawai‘i all children born in Hawai‘i to citizens of the Kingdom, regardless of ancestry, were considered Hawaiian (Kauanui 57, 188). Therefore the number of Hawaiians, as defined by genealogical descent, was much higher than if defined by blood quantum, whereby each new generation reduced the number of Native Hawaiians. When, during the HHCA, land was being discussed as a birth right of Native Hawaiians, it became salient for those currently in control of government and crown lands to limit the number of “native Hawaiians” who could claim them. The underlying assumption of blood quantum is that the further a person is away from an undefined, arbitrary marker of racial purity, which in the Hawaiian case was the year 1778, the date of Cook’s arrival, the less “Hawaiian” they were. The implication is that those of less than 50-percent blood quantum were more Caucasian or Asian than Hawaiian, had gained the characteristics of these races that would allow them to succeed in life and therefore did not require rehabilitation under the HHCA, and conversely those who had more than 50-percent were somehow incapable and in need of state aid (Kauanui 8). This shifted the emphasis away from Native Hawaiian entitlement to land as citizens of Hawai‘i and towards being needy dependants of the U.S. government. It also had the effect of dividing communities and families by land entitlement and creating a sub-class within the Native Hawaiian community who did not meet the 50-percent criteria. The HHCA and enactment of blood quantum was a disaster for Hawaiians and actually served as a means of dispossession and a way to undermine sovereignty claims (Kauanui 8).

The failure of the HHCA, and the failure of subsequent state organisation such as the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), to return the land to Hawaiian people exacerbated poverty, and Native Hawaiians remain the worst off demographic economically, and

in terms of health and incarceration (Look et al 7, 9-14; OHA 10-12). In her notes to the poem “Refusal” (*Light* 26-28), written about a school friend whose death, whilst ‘not officially classified as suicide’ remained unexplained, Trask writes that ‘the number of Hawaiian deaths that are drug-related or occur as a result of “accidents” is much higher than that of the other major ethnic groups (white, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino) ⁷ in Hawai‘i’ (*Light* 29). The poem laments the loss of these young men to violent death, and repeatedly asks questions that cannot be answered. The second section hints at Trask’s own activism and whom she holds responsible for her friend’s death:

II.
 alone, here in the dark
 with the women fighting

 for the last
 petal of blood
 I don’t understand

 the eyes of our sons

 so knowing at twelve
 strange at fifteen
 almost blank at
 twenty-one

 were you gone before
 that, my brother?

 down the white dusty path
 to their carefully planned end
 of your life?

 (30-44)

The juxtaposition between the women who fight for “our sons” and ‘they’ who plan their demise places the narrator in opposition to an unnamed but powerful force that seems to affect boys and men. In *From a Native Daughter* Trask elucidates how

colonisation combined with its patriarchal structure worked to dismantle Hawaiian structures of governance and then draw Hawaiian men into Euro-American political structures, which excluded all women, such as democracy and written law. She argues that, tempted by the patriarchal power structures of American society, Hawaiian men are the first to be annihilated by the convergent mechanisms of racism, capitalism and political corruption (*Native* 92-3). In “Refusal” she knows her school friend’s violent death is a part of a wider system of debasement, asking ‘didn’t you think?’, ‘didn’t you pause’ before slipping ‘down the white dusty path/ to their carefully planned end/ of your life?’ (42-44). The path that leads to the young man’s death, a path of “dope” (5), “killers” (10), “death streets” (11), is white. The dust on Hawaiian roads is a deep red-brown, so this is a reference to haole government that does little to help Native Hawaiian men caught up in gangs, drugs and debilitating unemployment. Men who have been removed from their traditional ways of life but are barred by racism and institutional disadvantage from succeeding in the American system are most vulnerable. Native Hawaiian women have remained excluded from patriarchal systems of power, and so, in Trask’s poetics, are less affected by forced cultural assimilation (Trask *Native* 94).

The poem “Love Between the Two of Us” (62-3) nuances Trask’s stridently anti-haole stance by documenting her own rejection of the racist connection between ‘race’ and identity. Trask’s partner is the American academic David Stannard, and this poem documents her astonishment at their love:

I.

because I thought the *haole*
never admit wrong
without bitterness

and guilt

without attacking us
for uncovering them

I didn't believe you

(1-7)

...

II.

We all know *haole* "love"
bounded by race
and power and the heavy
fist of lust

(missionaries came
to save
by taking)

how could I possibly believe?
why should any Hawaiian believe?

but it is a year
and I am stunned
by your humility
your sorrow for my people

your chosen separation
from that which is *haole*

I wonder at the resolve
in your clear blue eye

III.

do you understand
the nature of this war?

(19-37)

The final question, in the context of the poem, demonstrates that Trask sees the "war" she is engaged in, that of fighting for Hawaiian independence, as being necessarily fought along racial lines. Stannard himself has written that 'for the first half of the twentieth century most [Hawaiians] lived under the authoritarian rule of an openly

white supremacist oligarchy' (*Honor Killing* 1). Yet Stannard, although white, does not act as Hawaiians have become accustomed to haole acting. Trask asks, rhetorically, "how could I possibly believe?/ why should any Hawaiian believe?" (24-5). This poem marks a shift in the dialogue about race, because it works to disconnect that presumption 'that one's "blood amount" correlates to one's cultural orientation and identity' (Kauanui 2). This is a partial return to an indigenous way of figuring identity, which was not based on racial characteristics, but on relationality and behaviour.

Kauanui explains that 'Oceanic concepts of a person's character tend to be assessed in terms of one's current set of committed relationships, not those into which one was born. Whereas in the colonial frameworks a person's vital substance comes from genetic inheritance, in the Pacific Islands context one's substance is acquired through genealogical inheritance and sustenance from feeding in any given set of relationships' (*Hawaiian* 52). Whilst the lovers in the poem can never claim to be of the same heritage, their commitment to the culture of the place in which they reside allows them to share a character because they are ingesting, feeding, from the same relationship. This opens a space for non-Hawaiians in a collection that is otherwise uncompromising in its indictment of whiteness as equal to death.

From the third section, "Light in the Crevice Never Seen", Trask's racial metaphors, transitioning to a symbolic language of darkness and cool, begin to lead us to a new sense of Hawaiian post-racial belonging. In the poem "Dark Time" we are looking at a photograph. Plunging into this image of the past we watch:

this morning, a pensive hour
 hung with wetness
 ...
 Hawaiian men gathering
 fern sunk deep in mud
 up to their waists their anguished hearts
 warm on the wetland

 (17: 4-14)

Away from the parching sun and up to their waists in wet mud, Hawaiian men are able to smell 'far away a familiar smell/ of aging earth// coursing back through clouded/ bloodlines to a young woman sitting/ among *lauhala* chanting' (18: 24-30). In their proximity to the earth, in the softer lights of morning and afternoon, the men are able to smell and hear their past. With their bodies in the mud they are literally re-rooting themselves back into their genealogy and enabling themselves to hear the chants of their ancestors.

Continuing to play with the motifs of light and darkness, Trask inverts the teaching of the Enlightenment to embody her political position in the poem "You Will be Undarkened" (77). Whilst Enlightenment thinking propounded rationality, logic and breaking with tradition, Trask sees this kind of light as purgatorial, leading only to the withering and death of her people. To be 'undarkened', she reasons, is to embrace the dark and its fertile creative potential before we can safely move into the light. Trask sees this embrace of the darkness as a process of decolonisation and relishes its inherent resistance to racism. There is a link between this poem and "Love Between the Two of Us" because, by using Native stereotypes, she lends a tone of ironic playfulness to the temptation for the 'you' of the poem, possibly a lover, to be 'undarkened':

you will be undarkened
 by me led astray
 to native waters
 sunned until
 ...
 yearning you will swell
 at evening's light
 rivers of you
 flooded apart and you will

 beg me so
 in your momentous showing
 to keep you translucent
 forever

 (1-4; 11-18)

In imagining the newly undarkened, not as 'enlightened', but as translucent, Trask rejects the materiality and solidity of the human psyche as something owned or known, and embraces a type of intermediacy: neither invisible, nor solid; neither day, nor night. Yet whilst embracing this transitional existence, Trask makes clear her choice to occupy the creative space of the night. As a childless woman she does not give a fertilised seed to be warmed by the sun, but is 'slyly reproductive: ideas/ books, history/ politics, reproducing// the rope of resistance/ for unborn generations' ("Sons" 55:15-20). Her role as a Native Hawaiian woman is 'defending life/ with the spear/ of memory' (45-7). In "Moon Over Manana" (71) Trask begins to rehabilitate the light. The moon is female and her domain is the night, and in the traditional Hawaiian culture the twenty-four hour "day" begins at night, as light always follows darkness (Pukui and Elbert 333). The dark night is slowly preparing to release the sun back into the sky, so the day can begin again. The sun, once it has been 'cast up' from the deep of night is restored, but it took the 'slow, meticulous/ risings' of the female moon to prepare it for its new freedom to bring a healthy day. In heralding the coming of a new

light, finally at one with the night it replaces, Trask purges the violence of her earlier poems. Yet she makes it clear that the light is only able to bring fertility if it is consciously decolonised through its relationship with the dark.

As an activist, academic and poet Trask has continued to articulate how writing and speaking for oneself as a Native Hawaiian are acts of protest and decolonisation in themselves (“Writing” 42). Ultimately Trask wants independence from the United States and as a key academic and political thinker of the sovereignty movement in the 1990s, Trask’s public declarations are direct and often essentialist. Therefore, I read her poetry as a metaphorical announcement of war; by privileging Hawai‘i and Hawaiian people in both her political and literary work she disrupts the racial hegemony emanating from the U.S. body politic.

Chapter Four. Hawaiian Aesthetics and Cultural Nationalism in Haunani-Kay Trask's *Night is a Sharkskin Drum* (2002) and Imaikalani Kalahale's *Kalahale* (2002).

Reading Trask's second poetry collection *Night is a Sharkskin Drum* (2002) and Imaikalani Kalahale's collection *Kalahale* (2002) together allows a comparative exploration of how the 'Hawaiian aesthetic' (McDougall "Putting" 3) evolved through two widely different poetic styles, which are nevertheless bound by their common commitment to the spiritual and political function of Hawaiian poetry as an expression of cultural nationalism.¹ In Hawai'i, where non-violent protest has been the mainstay of the Sovereignty Movement, poets like Kalahale and Trask have been at the centre of maintaining and enhancing an aesthetic kumupa'a (firm foundation) for new generations of Hawaiian writers to build upon.² This chapter traces narratives of journeying through time, of arrival and return, told through reinterpretations of Hawaiian mo'olelo mo'okū'auhau (genealogical stories) in order to show how these poets challenge colonial notions of disrupted linear time and foreground circularity, continuity and survival in support of the Hawaiian lāhui (nation).

Trask and Kalahale's cultural nationalism manifests in their poetry as a distinctive Hawaiian aesthetic. Their collections use widely different tones and syntax, but they draw their material from the same sources and their work is directed towards the same end — Hawaiian independence. By analysing shared motifs, kaona references and poetic devices this chapter demonstrates how these poets' aesthetic practice aims to strengthen the place of Hawaiian cultural production (poetic, artistic and political) as a vehicle for a national consciousness. Nationalism in the Hawaiian context is most often expressed culturally, even when it has clear economic and political aims, because these aims are most often centred on land access and control. As has already

been explored in Chapters One and Two, the Hawaiian connection to land is expressed culturally, so resistance to the displacement of Hawaiians from their ancestral lands is also often expressed thus. McDougall writes that kaona is ‘considered to be a hallmark of Hawaiian aesthetics. The composer may draw from shared cultural, historical, and geographical knowledge (including the winds and rains of particular ‘āina) to make his/her kaona references through allusion or symbolism’ (“Putting” 3). It is impossible, therefore, to separate cultural expressions of connection to and continuance on the ‘āina from anti-colonial nationalism and political activism.

Trask and Kalahale draw their inspiration from mo‘olelo mo‘okū‘auhau such as the Kumulipo, a creation chant that is one of the most complete surviving Native Hawaiian origin stories, the volcano goddess Pele and other deities associated with her. Both of these ‘types’ (to use a western term) of story have inherent characteristics that are referred to by the poets sometimes directly, but more often indirectly through kaona. Characteristics of mo‘olelo mo‘okū‘auhau that are perceptible in both poets’ work include concepts such as the ‘source’, recognisable as pō, the great darkness of the deep universe, Pele, the magma at the centre of the earth, and pono, which is the belief in balance between the great forces of the world. Recognising the strategic employment of kaona allows their work to be read as ‘a form of aesthetic sovereignty’ that at all times is directed towards ‘serv[ing] the Lāhui Hawai‘i [Hawaiian Nation]’ (McDougall *Finding* 5/6). By writing poems that travel both from and to the ‘source’ of Hawaiian cultural and spiritual belief, Trask and Kalahale are defining a contemporary Hawaiian aesthetic that defies notions of a fixed or static indigenous culture and simultaneously emphasises the accessibility of ancient meaning-making practices for their present political situation.

Contemporary Native Hawaiian poetry is formed of ‘different strands of cultural and linguistic influence’, and ku‘ualoha ho‘omanawanui suggests that because of this diversity, ‘a lei [traditional flower garland] is an appropriate metaphor’ to describe its form and content (“He Lei” 29). Trask and Kalahale are recent strands in this ‘literary lei’, and their work ‘has been strongly shaped and influenced by Anglo-American poetic aesthetics in some ways, while at the same time strongly resisting it, becoming something completely new, which, neither [traditionally] Hawaiian nor Anglo-American, stands on its own’ (ho‘omanawanui “He Lei” 34). The contemporary Hawaiian aesthetic is a culturally mediated experience of beauty and pleasure that grows from the common experience of Native Hawaiians in the place of Hawai‘i (Meyer 31; McDougall *Finding* 43). The recognition of a Hawaiian aesthetic in Trask and Kalahale’s poetry involves pinpointing the common cultural values and political environment they both lived in, and a recognition of the ways, both similar and different, they mediate their experiences through their poetry that are particularly Hawaiian.

An aesthetic is not created solely by an artist but is a process of active ‘meaning making’ with audiences that aims ‘to incite pleasure through sensory appeals and intellectual challenges’ (McDougall *Finding* 47). This necessitates accesses to shared experiences, places and cultural referents. Both poets were/are prolific community organisers, who have shared their work with audiences across a spectrum of Hawaiian society. Trask and Kalahale adhere to the requirement that while ‘aesthetic quality was most decidedly important to ancient Hawaiian sensibilities, it always functioned in conjunction with a practical, spiritual, or symbolic capacity, whether secular or sacred’

(Dudoit “Carving” 23). In an interview for Hawaiian television Kalahale has said that he uses his work to “look for solutions”, which he has found in Hawaiian culture, spirituality and philosophy (in Cardwell 19:11). In his own words his mission was “to put the ‘ūpepe [flat nose] back on the faces of our people” (in Cardwell 15:24) in both his writing and his art. Trask’s advocacy of Hawaiian culture in education, politics and practice attests to her belief that writing is a powerful tool for decolonisation, and a means by which Hawaiians might improve their life chances (*Native* 89-90).

McDougall has observed that Euro-American culture has often worked to isolate Hawaiian aesthetic practices from their non-aesthetic functions (spiritual, political and rhetorical) by proclaiming them quaint and ornamental (*Finding* 44). However, the self-definition of aesthetic standards, the contexts in which those standards are defined and applied, and the articulation of the goals of those aesthetics amount to ‘aesthetic sovereignty’ and ‘aesthetic resistance’ that promote cultural fortitude and long-term engagement between communities and their culture; they are a form of cultural nationalism. Trask and Kalahale write with a strong sense that their art must have purpose, an idea reiterated in critical work by Meyer and Dudoit, which is to serve the spiritual, political, and therefore practical interests of the Hawaiian people. By ensuring their work addresses Native Hawaiians in ways that ensure they have a stake in the mo‘olelo they are re-telling, both Trask and Kalahale feed the Hawaiian nation.

Arrival

The words mo‘olelo (history) and mo‘okū‘auhau (genealogy) share the root ‘mo‘o’, which means both lizard and succession or lineage. The two meanings are connected metaphorically because the mo‘o vertebrae strung along a spinal cord are imagined as

people strung along the ‘cord’ of lineage. Mo‘o are ‘aumakua (personal or family gods) to some Hawaiians and are celebrated because their form is metaphoric of genealogical connection. Hawaiian cultural leader Sam Ka‘ai explained how the mo‘o metaphor worked to connect kānaka maoli to each other and to the land. He describes the mo‘o as ‘a major force of life’:

Its head peers into the future, the white dawn yet to come. Its front feet are the ‘opio (youth), reaching, touching, examining. Next come the makua (parents), the stable hind legs of the dragon, and beyond them, the kupuna (elders). The kupuna form the spine, the collective song of all that came before. They tell how other dawns were and how this dawn will be.
(Wianecki n.p.)

The appearance of mo‘o in poems metaphorically connects the poet to their ancestors and emphasises continuance through time and space, as they represent a physical bridge between the past and the present. In his poem “Mo‘os for Diane” (*Kalahahele* 13) Kalahahele takes the narrative voice of a mo‘o among ‘friends’. Demonstrating his engagement with the ideas Ka‘ai expressed he writes,

we crossed over their
backs
up from the
beginning

moving with
us
in our journey
here

mo‘os in the
pools
loving under the
moon

destroying armies with
their tails
shaking the ground when
they walked

(14-29)

Mo‘o have an ancient and rich legend in Hawai‘i; they are shape-shifting demi-gods who live in ponds and sources of freshwater and protect them. They have the power to provide abundant fish if their homes are properly cared for, or to wreak havoc if they are not treated with respect— some legendary mo‘o are vicious foes and several appear in mo‘olelo as cunning temptresses who trick the unwary and devour them. The poem engages with the metaphor of mo‘o as a genealogical link to the ‘beginning’, but also reminds the reader of their dangerous temperament and powerful stature — perhaps a warning to those who seek to break the spine/lineage of the Hawaiian people.

Mo‘okū‘auhau is a fundamental organising principle in Hawaiian society. Genealogy has been described as “‘the Hawaiian concept of time’ that anchors [their] place in the universe’ and ‘represent[s] histories of relationality that tell [them] who [they] were and who [they] are’ (McDougall *Finding* xi). As Hawaiian culture was oral before the 1820s the hula was the main vehicle for the transmission of social memory, including mo‘okū‘auhau and creation stories (ho‘omanawanui *voices* 57). The hula dance’s movements, rhythms and gestures encode Hawaiian history and culture, from the beginning of the universe to the deeds of ali‘i who lived after first western contact. Amy Stillman describes hula as ‘a multifaceted complex of poetry, vocal recitation and choreography’ that ‘is a site of cultural memory’ in which ‘memories of people and events endure long after they have passed’ (187-8).

The goddess Pele is closely associated with the hula as, in one of the epic mo‘olelo

telling of the form's origins, her youngest sister Hi'iaka danced it at her request. The Pele tradition of hula is the oldest form of Pele worship (McDougall *Finding* 132/137). Hula is a combination of narrative, choreography and music, and the drum controls the timing of all three. The cover of Trask's collection *Night is a Sharkskin Drum* displays a photograph of a pahu drum, which is only used in hula that are sacred.³ Some practitioners believe that the sound of the drum is the voice of a god who occupies the drum for the duration of the dance (McDougall *Finding* 140). In the poem "Night is a Sharkskin Drum" (5), the rhythm of the pahu is discernable in the oli (chant) which addresses, and thereby dedicates, the poem to Pele:

Night is a Sharkskin Drum
sounding our bodies black
and gold.

All is aflame
the uplands a *shush*
of wind.

From Halema'uma'u
our fiery Akua comes:

E, Pele e,

E, Pele e,

E, Pele e.

(1-11)

The oli '*E, Pele e*' has great kaona. In her analysis of this poem McDougall explains that the repetition of Pele's name increases the mana (power) of the words, and has 'kaona connectivity' to an oli in a famous mo'olelo of Pele and her sister Hi'iaka.

One day Pele,⁴ who resides on Hawai'i Island, walks to Nānāhuki bay and sees Hōpoe

and Hā'ena, young women who are natives of the area, dancing the hula. Pele asks each of her seven sisters if they know the dance but only Hi'iakaikapoliopole, the youngest, replies that she does. Hi'iaka learns a dance from Hōpoe and performs it for Pele. Pele is delighted, and this is the origin of hula. As her sisters enjoy the beach and gather food, Pele drifts into sleep at a place called Kapa'ahu, and her spirit form leaves her body, attracted by the sound of pahu drumming. Following the sound her spirit form ends up on the island of Kaua'i and encounters a young chief called Lohi'au. Appearing in human form Pele's spirit approaches Lohi'au and they are attracted to each other, spending several days together. However, Pele's spirit must return to her body; Hi'iaka calls her back from Kaua'i with the refrain 'E Pele ē! E ala mai 'oe!' (McDougall *Finding* 141-2). Unable to stay in her dream-state any longer, and with Hi'iaka's chant calling her back, Pele leaves the distraught chief, who withers in grief and dies.

From this point, the second genre of Pele stories centres on her youngest sister Hi'iaka. Pele asks each sister in turn to return to Kaua'i to revive and retrieve Lohi'au, but only Hi'iaka agrees, on the condition that Pele protects the lehua groves of Puna and Hōpoe, with whom she has formed a deep, loving bond. Hi'iaka embarks on a perilous journey of forty days with some female companions, the narrative of which is one of the great adventures of Hawaiian mo'olelo.

McDougall explains that the Hawaiian for "Wake Up!," "E ala mai 'oe!" uses the root word 'ala', to wake, but ala can also mean to 'rise up, arise, get up, come forward', and 'ala kū'e' means 'to rise in revolt' (*Finding* 142). Trask steps metaphorically into the role of the chanter, calling the Akua (god) to her and into the present. Trask is also

asking Native Hawaiians to follow the beat of the drum, recognisable in the rhythm of her poetry, to ‘trust that the journey to find the source of the drum[ming] is a necessary one’ (McDougall *Finding* 140), and to draw on the mana of the gods for the strength to do so. The poem calls kākā maoli to wake up, remember their history and come to the spiritual centre of Hawai‘i, at Pele’s crater, and worship their traditional gods. Implicit are the rejection of the Christian god, the colonial American version of Hawaiian history and any idea of assimilation into the wider American nation. “Night is a Sharkskin Drum” is a highly nationalist poem, but its political context is secreted within the kaona references and is almost entirely unavailable to those without a fluency in Hawaiian culture.

Journeying

Pele is an important deity, particularly on the ‘Big Island’ Hawai‘i where she makes her home. The popularity of mo‘olelo about her and her family, passed on to contemporary Hawaiians both through oral re-telling and Hawaiian newspaper serialisations, means that versions of stories about her or that connect to her appear in the work of almost every contemporary Hawaiian poet (ho‘omanawanui *voices* 91). The Pele mo‘olelo are many and varied, but a version of the story that tells of her journey to Hawai‘i is useful for understanding the references in Trask and Kalāhele’s poetry.

Pele migrated to Hawai‘i from her homeland of Kahiki on the canoe *Hanuaiākea* (earth explorer) with members of her family (ho‘omanawanui *voices* 26). The reason for leaving Kahiki varies, as do the numbers and names of the ‘ohana who travel, but Pele’s youngest sister Hi‘iaka is always present, transported from Kahiki by Pele in

the form of the egg she was born as, tucked under Pele's arm, hence her full name Hi'iaka-i-ka-poli-o-pele (-in the armpit of Pele) (Beckwith 169). The Pele 'ohana approach Hawai'i from the northwest and move down the island chain, stopping at each island for Pele to plunge her 'ō'ō (digging stick) Pāoa into the ground to see if the place is suitable for her to make a home in. Members of the 'ohana stay on each island as Pele moves on, eventually settling at Halema'uma'u on Kīlauea,⁵ the volcanic border between the districts of Puna and Ka'ū on Hawai'i Island. On this high ground her 'ō'ō can dig deep without striking water, which 'is inimical to her fiery nature' (Beckwith 170 n.a). Kīlauea is an active volcano on Hawai'i Island that, in Hawaiian religion, is both Pele's residence and Pele herself.

The first section of Trask's collection *Night is a Sharkskin Drum* contains five poems that are all dedicated to Pele and her sisters. "Born in Fire" (3) addresses a traveller moving through the island's forests, and introduces many of the themes of the Hawaiian aesthetic this collection exemplifies. The traveller could be a reference to Hi'iaka's epic journey returning with Lohi'au, or possibly a contemporary Hawaiian returning to Halema'uma'u to worship an old god again. The narrative voice is gentle, indicating the traveller is kanaka maoli:

Born in fire
 you came through
 the mountainous dead

 to find sandalwood
 forests, skeins of fern
 the plump *pulu*
 of the *hāpu'u*.

 Flickering *lehua*
 guided you here.
 Stay, now, within

the trembling breast
 of Pele, steaming her
 breath into the trees

drawing your fires
 to her craterous womb

consuming your passionate heat.

(1-16)

The imagery and the kaona in this poem are powerful introductions to the journey this collection takes the reader on. Fire refers to the regenerative potential of fertile land after destructive volcanic explosions, Pele's mana, and the ahi wela (hot fire) of passionate love. Pele was fiery in both body and temperament, but from the lands she scorches, great abundance will grow. Indeed the final lines of the poem indicate lovemaking and conception, as the traveller is drawn with 'passionate heat' to the destructive-yet-regenerative centre of Pele's 'craterous womb' (15-16).

Pulu, hāpu'u and lehua are plants endemic to Hawai'i Island, which places this poem in Pele's home. Each plant has its own cultural referents: pulu is the cotton/wool like substance at the base of the hāpu'u (ferns) that was used by relatives preparing the bodies of their dead for burial (Green and Beckwith "Hawaiian Customs" 177). This indicates that the traveller may have lost a loved one among the 'mountainous dead' (3), likely a reference to the thousands of Hawaiians lost through epidemics of introduced diseases, and searching for the materials to conduct a traditional burial. The traveller is guided by 'flickering *lehua*' (8), a flower closely associated with hula and Hōpoe. Lehua can also mean a beloved person, friend, relative or sweetheart (McDougall *Finding* 132/137). Figuratively, love or affection is guiding the traveller to Halema'uma'u, which suggests, as they were born in fire, a return to their kumu,

their origin. It appears to metaphorically be an arrival at the centre of Hawaiian religious and cultural life.

Pele's home, Halema'uma'u, is represented in Kalahale's poetry as the 'source'. In the poem "dive into the source" (53), which is printed next to an illustration of a woman diving into the earth, her fingers spreading into steaming channels that carry the magma under the earth's crust, Kalahale instructs the reader to 'dive in' to the crater. The poem presents Halema'uma'u as 'the source' (2) from which to 'raise the next/ generation' (8-9), and the 'dive in' becomes a kind of poetic fertilisation, with the reader diving into (learning) the Pele mo'olelo in order to raise (teach) their children. The journey is also one of learning — a circular departure to a source of knowledge, and the return, transformed in a decolonised Hawaiian future.

The concept of a 'source', from which life springs, as both the beginning and the end of an action, its cause and effect, communicates the circularity inherent to ideal traditional Hawaiian thought, which emphasised balance. The word kumu demonstrates this; it means foundation, teacher, origin, beginning and also reason (Pukui and Elbert 182). Kalahale's understanding of such circularity – that the foundation of Hawaiian knowledge is also its reason – is well illustrated by the front and back covers of *Kalahale*. The front has a drawing of a large god-like kanaka rising from the cracked volcanic earth, wreathed in heat, light and flames. His arms are lifted and his expression is intense as his hair rises directly up from his head, as though being blown upwards by the force of the blast below him. The caption below reads "... we remember now...". The back cover has the same image that appears next to "dive into the source". As she dives, the woman's narrow frame trails billowing hair, which

waves out like smoke from her head, and she has a tail coiled around her legs. Her skin is adorned with arrowhead motifs that point downwards, towards her head. In Polynesian tattoo the arrow or spearhead can represent a warrior's bravery (Gemori 27); however, repeated geometric designs such as linked triangles or diamond shapes were often, in Hawai'i, a representation of a spine, representing lineage (Krutak np.). The patterns, when combined with her tail, certainly give the woman the impression of a mo'o. The word for spine in Hawaiian also contains the root mo'o — iwikuamo'o, literally "bone-back-succession/lizard". The caption beneath this drawing is "dive into the source...", and the source here is the earth's core.

If *Kalahele* is opened along the spine and laid pages-down, the two illustrations form a balanced pair. As an English reader the eye naturally moves from left to right, seeing the back page first. Read this way the captions read "dive into the source ...", "...we remember now...", which clearly posits the "source" as the origin of Hawaiian memory. In these illustrations the source is the volcanic earth and magma, which is Pele. Magma is Pele, and volcanic rock, vapour and smoke are her kino lau (body forms) (Handy and Pukui 28).

Pele is, however, not the only "source" in Hawaiian spiritual belief. The earth and Pele herself were born from something much older, when the universe itself was formed, and this story is told in the epic ko'ihonua (genealogical chant) the Kumulipo. Kumu means foundation, origin, source, whilst lipo means deep blue-black, as of a cavern or the sea, distant (Pukui and Elbert 182, 208). The Kumulipo is therefore a mo'olelo of the origin of life in the deep past. There were likely many variations of the Kumulipo,

and indeed other creation chants, but only a few survived Westernisation intact. The following summary is taken from *voices of fire* by ho‘omanawanui (4-6).

The Kumulipo consists of sixteen wā (epochs) that span infinite time from the beginning, when the heavens were born, to humans who lived in the seventeenth century, to whom living kānaka trace their mo‘okū‘auhau. Eight wā relate the time of pō and eight the time of ao. ho‘omanawanui explains, ‘the Maoli universe is not created from the divine breath of a singular male god, but through a birthing process beginning with Kumulipo and Pō‘ele (black night), paired (‘ēko‘a) male and female entities in the cosmos’ (*voices* 4). This principle of dual creation and balance is the basis of the cultural value of pono, which is right, good, balanced. The Kumulipo opens,

When time turned, the earth became hot
When time turned, the heavens turned inside out
When time turned, the sun was darkened

(ho‘omanawanui *voices* 5)

The first wā sees the birth of Kumulipo and Pō‘ele from the ‘night’, and from the ‘slime’ the earth and the first life upon it, the coral polyp, emerged. All life on earth emerges each from the one before until the dark earth is populated with animals. At the end of wā eight, dawn breaks and the first humans are born in a genealogy that includes both akua (gods) and ali‘i (chiefs).

There is a confluence of meaning between the Kumulipo and Pele’s home Halema‘uma‘u, as both are representative of origin in traditional mele and contemporary poetry. McDougall describes Kalahale’s poem “The Source” (12) as

being connected through kaona to the Kumulipo, which ‘emphasises the duality and pono between male and female as a necessary part of creation, which is emphasized in all genealogies ... [it] suggests that procreation mirrors godly creation’ (*Finding* 67). “The Source” (12) is a concrete poem, adapted to suit Hawaiian aesthetic meanings, that brings together many of the motifs that inspire Kalahela’s poetry and art:

from the source

revolve	to the source
the secret must	for the source
for capable hands	the secret revolves
from capable hands	to capable hands

revolve

revolve

revolve

(1-8)

The poem’s structure resists linear readings, encouraging the eye to move either clockwise or counter-clockwise. This discourages pinpointing where the poem begins, or where it ends, subverting ‘linear timelines imposed by settler colonialism that delineate ... separation between past, present and future constructs of time’ (ho‘omanawanui *voices* 221). By ensuring the poem can be read in multiple ways Kalahela is unseating the notion that time proceeds away from ‘the source’ – each direction of reading must return to, and pass through ‘the source’ – a way of saying that Native Hawaiians’ multiple perspectives are all legitimate, and all spring from the same cultural referents. The exhortation to ‘revolve’ comes from the Kumulipo, which ‘teaches that “huli”, turning or revolving, is a part of the creative process, that change

and upheaval are necessary for creation to occur' (McDougall *Finding* 68). The kaona of huli includes the understanding that life comes after great upheaval, and that such upheaval can be political.

Huli was a word regularly used on protest banners during the Kalama valley and Save Our Surf campaigns in the 1970s (Trask & Greevy 5,12, 16). Kalahale has said that his work allows him to work through the problems he sees in Hawaiian communities:

“[T]he lesson’s not to step back in time and to be old ... [but] how do we do what we need to do and where do we look for our answers. I look more and more towards my ancestry ... For me the answer really is look to the gifts of Papa [earth mother]. ... Papa has the answer. ... There is an answer, and it is in the ceremonies of the old. Meaning we need to go back to the understanding that we are all a part of everything, and we need to function and behave that way.” (in Cardwell 20:19-21:34)

The “source”, then, whether it is located at Halema‘uma‘u, in the place/time when ‘the world turned’, or everywhere as the body of Papa (earth mother), is a place of origin and of birth. For Kalahale, ke kumu (the source) is a central, powerful spiritual and intellectual concept that is entirely maoli (indigenous) and is utilised in political ways to counter monotheistic and hegemonic colonial narratives.

“The Source” is arranged on the page to use the negative space to suggest the shape of a woman’s kohe (vagina), which indicates the centrality of sex, sexuality and reproduction to the continuance of life. Unlike the Christians who colonised Hawai‘i, Hawaiians did not have any negative associations with sex and sexuality; ‘sex itself was not shameful; it was openly discussed and even taught to children by grandparents’ (N. Silva *Aloha* 67). Kalahale continually refers to sex, reproduction and ma‘i (genitals) in his poetry but always through kaona. Ma‘i are a vital part of the

Hawaiian cosmogony as life cannot exist without procreation — there are no virgin births. “The Source” (*Kalahele* 12) is steeped in reproductive kaona, as the ‘kohe is the gateway to Ao, the time of light and humankind’ (McDougall *Finding* 68). The ‘capable hands’ that pass the ‘secret’ of the source around the circle in a ‘revolution’ is clearly a reference to genealogy and the careful/capable caring of the ‘ohana (family), whose intimate knowledge of Hawaiian culture, shielded from the eyes of outsiders, will continue the ‘secret’ revolution that Kalahele is supporting. Hawaiian nationalism had mostly, from annexation until the 1970s, been conducted in ‘secret’ — in private, through the ‘ohana, and through kaona. Cultural nationalism centres on emphasising continuance, which is intimately bound with remembering, retelling and living mo‘okū‘auhau (genealogy). The circularity of the ‘revolution’, evident in the typography of “The Source” demonstrates an unwillingness to be static, and a belief that Hawaiians who journey through the source of their culture are deeply connected to the ‘capable hands’ of their wider family/nation, and resist outside definitions of those connections.

Shaping words on the page accentuates their ability to convey meaning. Kalahele is one of several Hawaiian poets, most famously Joe Balaz, but also Wayne Westlake, who have experimented with concrete poetry. The influence of the visual on the written is a way Kalahele allows form to influence meaning in his poetry, often by disrupting linear reading.

Whilst not a concrete poet, throughout *Night is a Sharkskin Drum* Trask also allows her words to move across the page, sometimes in steps, sometimes in vigorous diagonal swathes, and sometimes moving back and forth as though vibrating. Māori

poet Robert Sullivan describes the poems as ‘laid out like slashes across the body of a mourner’, highlighting ‘the disruption to history wrought by colonization’ (437).

Whilst this is certainly true of some poems such as “Tourist” (20), most of the poems move back and forth across the page like the movement of breakers against the shore — pushing hard across and drawing gently back, repeatedly across the whole collection. The overall effect is one of constant motion, sometimes queasy, sometimes gentle, but always surging.

Both Kalahale and Trask move their poetry beyond just sight and sound to evoke all the senses. For Kalahale especially, the Hawaiian aesthetic is a conversation between senses; his work as an artist, performance artist and poet has a confluence of cultural influences that shape his approach. In *Kalahale* artworks are printed alongside poems that speak to their subject — they are not illustrations, but a complementary arrangement of Kalahale’s body of work that reflects overlapping and on-going thematic concerns. In the black and white “Inaspace” series (*Kalahale* 84-89) planets and moons patterned with tattoo-like designs orbit each other, their energy and motion represented by force fields of tiny dots, which ease black into white and back again. McDougall reads this series as a visual explanation of the balance (pono) between pō (darkness, time of the gods) and ao (light, time of humans), and the orbs’ motion as the recognition of huli (overturning), the state of upheaval in which all life first occurred. Kalahale has said: “The thing about my art is ... it has a Hawaiian perspective. I don’t know if it’s every Hawaiian’s perspective, but it is one Hawaiian’s perspective” (Goto 2:42-2:52). This observation simultaneously empowers his worldview and complicates the notion of a singular ‘Hawaiian’ worldview. Kalahale was a member of Hale Nau, a group of about twenty-five artists who organised

themselves in 1976, during the Hawaiian Renaissance. Rather than committing themselves to the general push of the Renaissance which was ‘largely concerned with *recovering* our traditions and foundations’ (Dudoit “Carving” 21 emphasis added), the members of Hale Nau defined themselves as contemporary artists. Kalahale told Dudoit that:

Fo’ us guys in contemporary times, it’s been a trip. ... The cultural view of our people, the ‘ono [the good taste], all of a sudden became something that we wanted to define, not the ‘ono of da haole. When we talk about ‘art,’ what dat ‘art’ as maoli [native] people? What is our taste? What feel good to us? ... (“Carving” 22).

This expression of “art” as taste has nothing to do with the concept of good or bad judgement, but with the physical flavour of the work and its effect on the viewer.

Kalahale continues:

These are our images. Da European images were color, shape, form, balance, ka mea, ka mea, ka mea.⁶ Okay! Right on! Us guys, we dealt with other images also. We dealt with smell, taste, sound. We dealt with these other things. Fo’ me art is ‘ono. Art is not doctrine. If I wuz to take dis term ‘art’ and move it into something Hawaiian—we no mo’ one word named ‘art’—I would have to put it into a place like ‘ono. And for me, wat dat is is dealing with stuff dat’s more primal dan intellectual. Fo’ me, if we go call something art, if no mo’ ihi [inner substance], you might as well sell Coke, Bic pens. Because nice image, look sharp, heavy li’ dat, but if da ting no say not’ing, it’s like saying, ‘Plop, plop! Fizz, fizz!’ So fo’ me art gotta make da ‘ono. ‘Cause if not, it’s all bourgeois stuff. (Dudoit “Carving” 22)

Kalahale’s dismissal of ‘bourgeois stuff’ indicates a reaction against the aesthetic of American Pop artists, exemplified by Andy Warhol’s “Green Coke Bottles” (1962) and his repetitious images of stars such as Marilyn Monroe. His use of the words bourgeois is not accidental. He was a soldier who saw service in Vietnam in the 60s and, like many in the Hawaiian movement, was influenced by the militancy of the Black Panthers and the wider class and race politics of the era. Kalahale is not a part of

the Hawaiian political and educational ‘elite’ as Trask is. He left school unable to read, spent five years in the U.S. army, and came into activism through his art: he began by designing posters and t-shirts for protest marches (in Cardwell 6:09; 8:40; 12:57).

Kalahele is a poet, performance and visual artist, playwright, musician and community organiser who works in the Hawaiian literary community organising performances and readings (McDougall *Finding* 66). Whilst his poetry is always formidably anti-colonial and pro-lāhui it is occasionally critical of kānaka maoli themselves.

Towards the end of *Kalahele* there is a group of poems that are directed towards other Hawaiians, both historical and contemporary. The poem “Ua Hala” (the failure/sin/fault) (68) is addressed to Ka‘ahumanu, one of two powerful ali‘i who were responsible for finally breaking kapu, the taboo system which governed Hawaiian religious life, in 1819 by instigating ‘ai noa, or free eating. This act was seen as hastening the conversion of high-ranking Hawaiians to Christianity (Kuykendall 67-80).⁷ The poem “Loea Kālai‘āina” (Politician) (66) calls on the political classes to ‘Come! Serve the needs/ of your people’ (3-4), whilst “Nā Ali‘i - Now Kine” (Royalty - Today) (67) castigates modern descendants of past rulers:

Once you walked
proud in your malo
now Reyn’s shirts
cover your shoulders
...
and Gucci shoes
separate you from
your source.

(9-17)

Even “the source”, generally treated as the absolute centre of spiritual and political life does not escape irreverence. In the short poem “Nānā I ke Kumu’ (Look to the Source)

(69) Kalahale employs ironic humour:

Look to the source.

The room appears
to be dark.

Somebody wen
pio the faia.

(1-5)

The last two lines are in Hawaiian Creole English (HCE) and when spoken aloud are easy to hear as “went [for a] pee on the fire”. Whilst funny, there is also a dark side to this poem, which gestures towards the fact that the ‘source’ has been put out and the room is in darkness. McDougall writes that ‘[h]umor has potential as a weapon of empowerment in that our laughter represents an adamant refusal to be conquered in body and spirit’ (*Finding* 150), and certainly Kalahale uses humour in ways that resist both colonialism and the romanticisation of Hawaiian culture.

Hawaiian politicians do not escape Trask’s pen either. The poem “Sovereignty” (*Night* 25-28) lists the names of politicians from the 1990s-2000s and passes judgement:

‘Waihe‘e, Kamali‘i/ Kamau‘u, Akaka./ “Hawaiians” promising/ deliverance// with the whine/ of betrayal’ (52-57). Jonathon Osorio has observed that ‘we modern-day Kānaka Maoli are particularly hard on our leaders. And as I have become acquainted with our 18th and 19th-century ali‘i nui (great chiefs), I have realized that we’ve always been that way. We kill the weak ones, the foolish, the inept, the disloyal, and sometimes just the unfortunate’ (“On Being Hawaiian” 23). Kalahale and Trask’s criticism of powerful Hawaiians is in keeping with the role of the maka‘āinana (common people) to ensure the chiefs act in a way that benefits the whole lāhui.

The choices the poets make in their deployment of language act as an indicator of their different social milieus and of their positions within the political spectrum. *Night is a Sharkskin Drum* and *Kalahele* are both written predominantly in standard English, but both contain a mix of Hawaiian words. Kalahele's style is more direct, and he often uses character voices, speaking in HCE, to convey stories about "real" urban Hawaiian life. HCE itself a political statement due to its plantation origins, which grounds his poetry as equally in 'local' working class (Asian, Hawaiian, European haole) culture as in a Hawaiian aesthetic. *Kalahele* does not contain a glossary, any translations or other interpretation for the reader, which is a reflection of his long-term community presence in Honolulu where he has performed and published to a local audience (in journals such as *Ramrod*, *Bamboo Ridge* and *Hawaii Review*) since 1983. Whilst Kalahele's HCE diction and rhythm can make his meaning difficult to access for outsiders, Trask's words are accessible to English speakers.

Trask's lyrical style is mostly employed in *Night is a Sharkskin Drum* to convey the majesty and beauty of the 'āina (land) and akua (gods) — none of these poems are set in cities or towns. The collection does not contain notes, as *Light in the Crevice Never Seen* (1999) does, marking a turn towards a culturally fluent audience (which is marked, to an extent, by class) who no longer need to be explained to; however it does still have a glossary, which is an acknowledgement that many Hawaiians do not speak 'Ōlelo Hawai'i. In this way the poets' approaches to accessibility are similar — both accommodating a certain level of linguistic unfamiliarity, but also challenging their audience to uncover deeper cultural meaning.

Despite their differing positions in the movement, each poet has been active in cultural-political circles, and has made a vital contribution in their community. Osorio has noted that, ‘As I’ve been involved in different parts of our [sovereignty] movement ... I’ve noticed that ... [w]e want to do our own kuleana (responsibility), and it’s a very Hawaiian thing to do. We stake our claim to a particular kind of task ... [w]e want to be sure we’re doing something we are competent to do’ (“On Being Hawaiian” 24). Whilst Trask has now retired from public life, Kalahale continues to paint and exhibit in Honolulu where he resides (Goto 1:52).

Whilst differences between Trask and Kalahale’s modes of writing and their roles within the Sovereignty Movement are notable, there is a confluence between their poetry of shared ‘culturally and locationally situated values that inform perceptions of and experiences of beauty and pleasure’ (McDougall *Finding* 43). Both understand the Hawaiian aesthetic as being more than visual, and more than ornamental: for a work to be aesthetically pleasing to a Hawaiian it must employ all the senses (not necessarily in one piece, but it must engage with more than the visual) that inform Hawaiian knowledge production and it must have purpose (Meyer 32; Dudoit “Carving” 23; McDougall *Finding* 6, 46).

Kalahale’s assessment of Hawaiian art as having to have ‘ono (flavour, good taste) is reflected in the evocation to all the senses, and to subjects that ‘nourish’ the reader. We receive the world through all our senses and it is the ability to evoke all of these that makes both poets’ work so powerful. The ability to capture senses other than sight with a poem is a paradoxical experience, as the Hawaiian poet is using sight (in a printed poem) to stimulate memories/fantasies of the other senses, explicitly in order

to unseat sight as the primary sense. In the Hawaiian context, decentralising sight as the dominant sense is a political act because sight is integral to reading, and literacy has been historically used as a means to discount oral histories and undermine the legitimacy of traditional Hawaiian knowledge creation, which is multisensory.⁸ Trask is masterful at conjuring touch and smell to arouse a deep eroticism. In “Where the Fern Clings” (49) she awakens all the senses:

where the fern
clings, lingering
above slit

rock, shadows
musky in hot
perfume

... the cries
of tight-winged birds

flickering tongues,
damplit skin,

the seep
of summer
thirst

(1-13)

Eroticism is a powerful poetic tool for Native Hawaiians as it points towards sexual intimacy and fertility, both of which are counters to violent narratives of indigenous extinction. Smell is a powerful sense that represents memory, is indicative of actions that have lasting or spreading effects (both positive and negative) and even of ancestors, as metaphorically they indicate a source that exists but cannot be seen (McDougall *Finding* 46). By giving space to other senses Trask unseats sight as the dominant sense, by which we make our primary judgements, and creates space for a gentler and more nuanced experience of the poem.

Returning

The last section of *Night is a Sharkskin Drum*, “Chants of Dawn”, honours O‘ahu, Trask’s home, particularly the ahupua‘a (land division) of Waimānalo. The poems work gently, through short, delicate stanzas, natural imagery and lyrical language to deliver their messages of aloha for Hawai‘i. This section moves away from the human suffering and political strife depicted in “A Fragrance of Devouring” out towards the coastal areas of O‘ahu and the cool he‘eia uli (upland land divisions) of the Ko‘olau mountain range. For Trask “Chants of Dawn” is about mana wahine (women’s power) and the journey across/towards the ‘āina, stopping at each beautiful and sacred place to honour it with her words. McDougall notes that the places Trask names across this section are arranged in a particular order, which leads the reader along a path originally travelled in mo‘olelo. The places, He‘eia, Waiāhole, Kualoa, Ka‘a‘awa, Kahana, Punalu‘u, Lā‘ia, Mālaekahana, and Hale‘iwa, were those visited by Hi‘iaka on her way to Kaua‘i to collect Lohi‘au for Pele, and as such they have great mana (McDougall *Finding* 145). Hi‘iaka appears throughout the section in her kino lau (body form) as the rosy sunrise (Handy and Pukui 30). This is fitting, as the first section of the collection honoured Pele, and the two sisters – the eldest hot-tempered and destructive, the youngest a calming healer – create a state of pono in the collection.

The journey is a significant motif because Hawaiian history is written through great voyages – such as Pele’s arrival in Hawai‘i – and great journeys — such as Hi‘iaka’s undertaking to fetch Lohi‘au. *Night is a Sharkskin Drum* feels like a return journey to an inner-Hawai‘i the author is making herself, which she is willing to take her readers on. The extent of the readers’ engagement with that journey depends on their

knowledge and understanding of Hawaiian culture.

The readers' journey to these places, at the level of descriptive language, is one of serenity. Beauty, union and balance are the immediate gift of these poems, which journey through the natural and spiritual world of the island. The section opens with "Still is the Fern" (39), urging the reader to 'Arise and go,/ sacred, into dawn' (7-8), pausing in "To Hear the Mornings" (40) to listen quietly to the 'cunning bees/ in shell-covered sleeves/ of honeysuckle,/ ... the aqua undertones/ of cooing doves' (3-7).

There is a strong sense that the reader's journey is inwards, towards a spiritual awakening. The section then cycles through the lustrous warmth of "Afternoons" (46) where 'through tangled grasses/ the scent of men: breadfruit/ and banana' (9-11) drifts. As the collection nears its close, "Upon the Dark of Passion" (48) vibrates with emotion and connection as the narrator calls her lover to "[l]et our shadows/ swell into longing' (3-4) and 'cast into rings// the echo of our bodies' (8-9). "To Write by Moonlight" (50-1) reverberates with political kaona; the narrator uses 'the green/ ink of night' (2-3) and 'the hair of dark's// blue quill' (5-6) to write her verse, before 'weav[ing]/ our moist, reedy fog/ through Hina's/ estuary' (6-9) and resting to 'gaze/ at dawn's/ lush diffusion// and chant before/ vaulting Ko'olau' (18-22). Darkness and night are pō, the time before time, when the universe came into being, and so have deep connections to life, generation and fertility. By writing in and with the 'night' and 'dark' Trask is pointing to the life-giving potential of words — she is proclaiming and defending writing as a form of elemental creativity.

Kalaehele also honours the wahi pana (sacred places) of O'ahu with kaona references to fertility and generation. In a poem dedicated to the island both he and Trask are from,

Kalahahele names many of the same places Trask does. “O‘ahu” (*Kalahahele* 7) begins, ‘into the valley/ Lua’s water falls/ deep/ feeding a young/ island’ (1-5). In legend, each of the Hawaiian islands was conceived and born to a mother and father, and O‘ahu was born to Papa and Lua. Lua, O‘ahu’s father, is also the name of a waterfall that flows down the Ko‘olau mountains. In the Hawaiian language springs, streams, and narrow waters that flowed down into valleys and estuaries were metaphorically male. Wide areas of water, such as lakes and pools, and of land, such as valleys which received these running waters, are female, as these are the fertile places where new life grew. The next lines of the poem reinforce this reproductive balance, as they echo the Kumulipo in their use of the refrain ‘born was’:

born
was Ka‘ala draped
in clouds
born
were the Ko‘olau
long and majestic
hānau
O‘ahu
child of Papa
and Lua

(6-15)

The waters return from the high peak of Ka‘ala, down the Ko‘olau range it overlooks and into to the island itself. By tracing the water from mountain river to valley floor, in the infinite cycle travelled by all the water from sky to earth Kalahahele is mirroring the infinite cycles of birth and death the Kumulipo relates. As the water returns to the earth, the ‘young island’ is a part of a slower but just as inevitable cycle of life, of birth and death, and of arrival and return.

The final poem of Trask’s collection offers a return to the source in the time of ao

(light). “Into Our Light I Will Go Forever” (60-62) is written in stanzas reminiscent of a reversed Kumulipo. In this poem the narrator appears to be journeying towards death, but passes through many places and forms of life on O‘ahu:

Into our light
I will go forever.

Into our seaweed
clouds and saltwarm
seabirds.

Into our windswept
‘ehu kai, burnt
sands gleaming.

Into our sanctuaries
of hushed bamboo,
awash in amber.

Into the passion
of our parted Ko‘olau,
luminous vulva.

Into Kāne’s pendulous
breadfruit, resinous
with semen.

Into our wetlands
of He‘eia,
bubbling black mud.

Into our spangled,
blue-leafed *taro*,
flooded with *wai*.

(1-23)

...

Into the *wa‘a* of
Kanaloa, voyaging
moana nui.

Into our sovereign suns,
drunk on the *mana*
of Hawai‘i.

(48-53)

Each stanza gives a place, animal or plant into which the narrator will go on their path to the final ‘sovereign suns’, the hot centre of human life from which, when the first dawn broke on earth, Papa and Wākea gave birth to Hāloa, from whom humans descend. This bears a striking similarity to Kalahēle’s return to ‘the source’ and the sense of homecoming found there.

Passing back through ‘seabirds’ (5), ‘silvered fish’ (26), ‘*limu*’ (seaweed) (32) and ‘coral’ (33) the evolution of life is mapped in reverse. The places given in each stanza are spread along the windward (north eastern) coast of O‘ahu, moving from southeast to north. As McDougall has pointed out (*Finding* 145) each of these places have their own kaona in Hawaiian mele, but it is likely that their true kaona *in this poem* will remain privy only to Trask and those who know her reasons for retracing this path. For example Lā‘ie (uncapitalised) also means maile vine leaf, a plant sacred to Kāne and emblematic of royalty (Pukui and Elbert 190; 94); it is now the location of a Mormon Temple and the Polynesian Cultural Centre. Perhaps this is why it is ‘lost Lā‘ie’ of the cool, haunting light (39-40).

As scholar Puakea Nogelmeier reminds us, ‘the kaona is really the story that launched that song. The kaona is what the poet knew ... [that may] never be known outside of the circle of the poet and those that are real close’ (np.). The feeling of the poem, however, is communicated through cadence and form. The soft wash of words across the page, the balance of the final two stanzas between the ‘moana nui’ (deep ocean) and ‘sovereign suns’ is evocative of an ending peacefully reached, a journey returning

to the universe's origins where one wā of the narrator's life is ending, but another will begin.

Night is a Sharkskin Drum marks a shift inwards in Trask's focus, both personally and politically, towards lament and introspection. Whilst her poetry remains passionate, it seems that, for Trask, the belief in abrupt change or regime overthrow, so evident in *Light in the Crevice Never Seen*, has ebbed and in its place is a cooler, more contemplative stillness. The traveller motif is strong in *Night is a Sharkskin Drum* and is predominantly solitary, or addresses a singular other. This reflects the shift in Trask's public life away from confrontational protest towards teaching, and her retirement in 2010. This collection turns its back on the haole world and draws more heavily on Hawaiian kaona to communicate a distinctly Hawaiian aesthetic. This aesthetic '[holds] within it a means by which Native Hawaiians may also assert nationalism' (McDougall "Mālama nā leo" 224).

Whilst Trask's poems favour the rural and lyrical, Kalahale's work explores the urban, human world as well as the spiritual and cultural. Kalahale was, in 2002, and remains in 2016, engaged in creating and speaking publicly about culture as a practical means for maoli empowerment. Poems and art published in *Night is a Sharkskin Drum* and poems and *Kalahale* in 2002 were previously published in *ōiwi: a native hawaiian journal* (1998) immediately following Dudoit's article titled "Carving a Native Hawaiian Aesthetic" (20-26). This critical treatment, published alongside their poetry and art, both attests to the Hawaiian belief in the confluence of aesthetics with social function, and to Trask and Kalahale's shared aesthetic — their widely different *styles* do not inhibit the recognition by Hawaiian scholars of their shared cultural milieu.

ho‘omanawanui acknowledges the newness of the aesthetic contemporary poets are engaged in creating, but notes that its content and spirit are indigenous: ‘To use the lei metaphor in another way, it is the aesthetics of the lei (metaphors, images) that is valued, not the pū‘olo (package) it is delivered in’ (“He Lei” 51). Both *Night is a Sharkskin Drum* and *Kalahele* contain poems that seek to redress the lack of pono (rightness, balance, harmony, goodness) Trask and Kalahele perceive in colonised Hawai‘i. Hawaiians believe that humans should strive for pono in their lives and that to achieve it a balance must be found between all opposing forces (McDougall “Mālama nā leo” 233). Each poet’s engagement with the traditional mo‘olelo of volcano goddess Pele and her forest-dwelling sister Hi‘iaka, and the ko‘ihonua Kumulipo offers new versions of these mo‘olelo that are orientated towards expressing perspectives relevant to their contemporary political landscape. Trask and Kalahele both write poems that have an unmistakably Hawaiian ‘ono (taste). By invoking gods, both male and female, sisters, brothers, and couples, both ensure their poetry operates through the many levels of kaona, reinforcing their message of kū‘e (protest) and huli (overturning), and ensures their work has ‘ihi (spiritual substance, meaning). When read together, these collections evidence a unifying objective to foreground and give value to a Hawaiian perspective, in ways that are both decolonising and empowering.

Chapter Five. Articulating kinship in Māhealani Perez-Wendt's *Uluhaimalama* (2007) and Brandy Nālani McDougall's *The Salt Wind: Ka Makani Pa'akai* (2008).

This chapter will read Māhealani Perez-Wendt's *Uluhaimalama* (2007) and Brandy Nālani McDougall's *The Salt Wind: Ka Makani Pa'akai* (2008) in relation to kinship — the expression of identity in relation to others, which is expressed in Hawaiian as mo'okū'auhau, or genealogy. Both Perez-Wendt and McDougall develop the discourse of Hawaiian poetry from exclusively fighting colonialism (although that remains an important and implicit theme of their work) to creatively express forms of connection that will assist the re-building of the Hawaiian lāhui (nation). Perez-Wendt and McDougall's work accentuates the interconnectivity of 'ohana (family) and 'āina (land) through mo'okū'auhau (genealogy), both explicitly, through poems about family and nationhood, but more often implicitly, through kaona references — in Perez-Wendt's writing to ulu (to grow, increase, spread) and pua (flowers, children), and in McDougall's to pa'akai (salt) and mo'okū'auhau (genealogy). This marks a shift in tone from Trask and Kanahele's poetry, which explicitly aimed to huli (overturn, overthrow) previous discourses about Hawaiians. Nationalism is reconceptualised 'not as a means of boundary-making but rather a process of gathering from within' (Brooks 229) through Native Hawaiians' insistence on the centrality of mo'okū'auhau (genealogy) to the formation of a future Hawaiian nation. ku'ualoha ho'omanawanui, following Leilani Basham, writes, the "*Lāhui* is defined by mo'okū'auhau, mo'olelo, mele, 'āina, lōina [custom, law], and ea [sovereignty], not because we possess them, but because we embody them — we are who we were because we still are our genealogies, songs, hi/stories, land, cultural practices, and sovereignty. In the interweaving of each is the foundation of literary nationalism' (*voices* 38). This chapter draws out shifts that indicate the Hawaiian Sovereignty

Movement was moving at this time towards a conception of indigenous futurity that, whilst it ‘does not foreclose the inhabitation of Indigenous land by non-Indigenous peoples [... it] does foreclose settler colonialism and settler epistemologies’ (Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernandez 80).

Mo‘olelo and Mo‘okū‘auhau

In the poem “The Petroglyphs at Olowalu” (*The Salt Wind* 11) McDougall writes, “Tracing the lines those before me began—/ their words I ask for, the old work of hands’ (13-14). By engaging with, and expressing a relationship with others and the world around them as kinship, a genealogical connection enacted through a memory of shared culture, McDougall conceives that culture as expanding, renewing and timeless, in ways that are diametrically opposed to reductionist ideas of indigenous identity as biological, racial or exhaustible. ho‘omanawanui explains that ‘mo‘okū‘auhau [is] an important cultural concept, and ... an appropriate indigenous approach to the study of literature’ (*voices* xxxiii). Reading these poets’ work alongside recent studies on indigenous identity-through-kinship in continental America will illuminate how the privileging of mo‘okū‘auhau in literature is a way of offering an ancient organisational praxis, which is at the root of pre-modern Native Hawaiian and American Indian identity, as a method to begin healing the divisive effects of definition by blood quantum, thereby providing a more inclusive and sustainable model for Hawaiian sovereignty and nationalism.

Uluhaimalama is Māhealani Perez-Wendt’s first published collection of poetry and brings together three decades of writing. She is of the same generation as Trask and Kalahale, and worked for over thirty years as an administrator and executive director

for the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation, a non-profit public interest law firm. Her collection is named for Uluhaimalama, the garden created by Queen Lili‘uokalani in October 1894. The meaning of uluhaimalama is centred on the two verbs, ulu and hai. Ulu means to grow, or cause to grow, to spread and to protect, and hai means to offer or sacrifice.¹ The kaona of Uluhaimalama is “as the plants grow up out of the dark into the light, so shall the light come to the Hawaiian Nation” (Perez-Wendt 39). The garden was conceived by the Queen as a place where Hawaiians could gather safely, to tend the garden, exchange news and enjoy the kaona of the plants and flowers there at a time when public meetings of Hawaiians were forbidden by the newly formed Republic of Hawai‘i;² the Queen herself tended the flowers until her overthrow and incarceration in ‘Iolani Palace, following the second Wilcox Rebellion in 1895 (see n.1). During her imprisonment, flowers cut from Uluhaimalama were delivered to the Queen wrapped in the daily newspaper, so she might glean some news of the outside world.

The poetry collected in *Uluhaimalama* spans many years of writing and reflects the different ages of its author and era, but, like the flowers gathered from the garden it is named after, when brought together they serve a greater purpose and carry a deeper meaning. Perez-Wendt is a strong proponent of Hawaiian independence and is recognised as a grassroots activist for Hawaiian causes (Perez-Wendt 106-7; McDougall *Finding* 102). The poems collected in *Uluhaimalama* cover a wide scope of subjects but the threads of continuity through this body of work are family, memory and decolonisation. Fighting colonialism through the strength of family, despite adversity, and honouring kānaka’s genealogical connection to Papahonuaumoku, or Earth mother,³ is the unifying aim of *Uluhaimalama*. The metaphor of ulu, or growing

and flowering, underpins these threads, and bookends the collection: the first poem is titled “Bloom” (1) and the last “Blossom” (104).

At the centre of the collection is “Uluhaimalama” (39), a poem that appropriately encapsulates the mana (spirit) of Perez-Wendt’s work. Flanked by poems entitled “Keauhou (Song of Renewal)” (38), lit. “the new era”, and “Holy Ground” (40), “Uluhaimalama” (39) is an expression of steadfast love for the Hawaiian Kingdom:

We have gathered
 With manacled hands;
 We have gathered
 With shackled feet;
 We have gathered
 In the dust of forget
 Seeking the vein
 Which will not collapse.
 We have bolted
 The gunner’s fence,
 Given sacrament
 On blood-stained walls.
 We have linked souls
 End to end
 Against the razor’s slice.
 We have kissed brothers
 In frigid cells,
 Pressing our mouths
 Against their ice-hard pain.
 We have feasted well on the stones of this land:
 We have gathered in dark places
 And put down roots.
 We have covered the Earth,
 Bold flowers for her crown.
 We have climbed
 The high wire of treason—
 We will not fall.

(1-27)

Opening with the image of gathering in suffering, the poem echoes the purpose of Uluhaimalama as a meeting place for Native Hawaiians after the overthrow. The

repetition of “we have [verb]” is a *meiwi* (literary device) called *pīna‘i* (repetition) which acts here as a testimony of continued action. In traditional verse it was a technique that provided much ‘aesthetic satisfaction’, aided memory and reinforced a pattern of association (*ho‘omanawanui voices* 43). As the poem moves through the most serious losses of colonialism, forced forgetfulness, drug addiction, incarceration and break up of family, it conveys great endurance and strength. The verbs chosen demonstrate action and togetherness against the forces of violent separation: seeking, linking, kissing and pressing all bring people together, whilst only bolting denotes distance— in this case from the forced proximity of prison. Repeatedly the poem uses “we”, clearly meaning *kānaka maoli*, but it is unclear whether the reader is included or not. In Hawaiian, as McDougall explains, there are both inclusive and exclusive collective pronouns: *kāua* means “we” and includes the addressee, *māua* also means “we”, and includes the speaker and others, but excludes the addressee (*Finding* 35). Receiving the *kaona* of “*Uluhaimalama*”, particularly the line ‘we have feasted well on the stones of this land’ (20), is likely to be the marker of whether the “we” addressed is *kāua* or *māua*.

This line is a reference to “*Mele ‘Ai Pohaku*”, the ‘stone eating song’, more generally known as “*Kaulana Nā Pua*”, “Famous are the Flowers (Children)” written by Ellen Kekoaoihiwaikalani Wright Prendergast in 1894. The song itself, which is ‘said to have been sung softly at the dedication ceremony of *Uluhaimalama* as each plant and sapling was put into the earth and nourished by the tears of our people’ (McDougall *Finding* 105), was written by Prendergast at the behest of the Royal Hawaiian Band, who had refused to declare an oath of allegiance to the new Republic of Hawai‘i.

“Kaulana Nā Pua” is rich in nationalist Hawaiian kaona, and the line in “Uluhaimalama” refers to the fourth verse:

‘A‘ole makou a‘e minamina I ka pu‘ukala a ke aupuni. Ua lawa makou i ka pohaku, I ka ‘ai kamaha‘o o ka ‘aina.	We do not value The government’s sums of money. We are satisfied with the stones, Astonishing food of the land.
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

(Nordyke and Noyes 29)

Whilst the significance of stones as the metaphorical body of Pele and the ‘āina of Hawai‘i was previously explored through Westlake’s poetry, the presence of such a metaphor in such close proximity to ‘uluhaimalama’ extends to include growth and flourishing. These lines in “Kaulana Nā Pua” reference the kanaka connection to the ‘āina as food, and the continuance of the lāhui as long as there are Hawaiians in Hawai‘i. McDougall understands “Uluhaimalama” with its metaphors of growth and renewal as forming a direct connection to Papahānaumoku (*Finding* 105). In the mele ko‘ihonua (cosmogonic genealogy and origin verse), the Kumulipo, there is no single creator of the earth, and each form ‘emerges’ from the one before — ao (light) emerges from pō (darkness), and Wākea (sky) and Papa (earth) emerged from ao, and so forth, to the minutiae of life on earth. This type of mele ko‘ihonua was called ulu wale, ‘simply emerging’, by Hawaiian scholar David Malo (N. Silva “Hawaiian Literature” 114). Another type of mele ko‘ihonua is the ‘birth type’, an example of which is “Mele a Pāku‘i” in which Papahānaumoku experiences the physical discomfort of pregnancy before giving birth to the islands of the Hawaiian archipelago (N. Silva “Hawaiian Literature” 114). In “Mele a Pāku‘i” Wākea is the sky father and Papahānaumoku is the earth mother. Their lineal descendants (grandchildren in fact) are Hāloanaka,⁴ and Hāloa, the brothers from whom the taro plant and the Native

Hawaiians descend respectively. The taro, as an elder sibling and staple food of the Hawaiian people, has its literal roots in the earth, and spiritually in Earth — Papahānaumoku. The separation of the two (earth and Earth/Papa) to illustrate the metaphor is a false distinction to the Hawaiian mind — they are one and the same, just as Pele and lava are one and the same. The Native Hawaiians have their (genealogical) roots in Papa just as Hāloa/taro does, and the fertile darkness of Papa's body allows the descendants of each sibling to eat, grow and flourish.

“Uluhaimalama” continues, ‘We have gathered in dark places/ And put down roots./ We have covered the Earth,/ Bold flowers for her crown’ (21-24). These lines reconnect the meaning of ulu (to grow/flower) of the poem's title with “Kaulana Nā Pua” through the double meaning of pua as both flowers and children, and to Lili‘uokalani, through reference to the crown (McDougall *Finding* 103; N. Silva “Hawaiian Literature” 113). Taken together these lines present multiple threads of kaona that weave together into a powerful message of steadfastness, loyalty to Queen Lili‘uokalani and by extension the Hawaiian Nation, and to kanaka maoli flourishing, despite the violence of colonisation. The final lines of “Uluhaimalama” seal this message, as the ‘treason’ (27) the ‘we’ of the poem commits is against the Republic of Hawai‘i, echoing the sentence of ‘misprision of treason’ for which Lili‘uokalani was incarcerated. The ‘high wire’ (27) emphasises the precariousness of the endeavour, but also the bravery and skill of those who follow the path of sovereignty, in their assuredness that they ‘will not fall’ (28).

The layering of kaona in the poem “Uluhaimalama” centres on the related metaphors of pua and ulu – flowers/children and grow/flower – and their connection to the

mo‘olelo of Papahānaumoku, which in turn represents the mo‘okū‘auhau (genealogy) of the Native Hawaiians. These threads are carried through Perez-Wendt’s entire collection, with at least a third of the poems referring directly to family members, and many more connected through kaona to the sovereignty and resistance of the ‘family’ of the lāhui. The importance of mo‘okū‘auhau to the concept of the lāhui is the driving force behind Hawaiian sovereignty — mo‘okū‘auhau connects kanaka maoli to Papa through Hāloa (younger brother of the taro plant Hāloanaka), and so Native Hawaiians conceive their political struggle as ‘a longing to reunite with Papahānaumoku, to continue or renew a familial bond’ by continuing ‘to resist our displacement and disconnection from Papahānaumoku’ (McDougall *Finding* 107). This is well represented in Perez-Wendt’s poem “Lili‘u” (23), which is a kind of mele kanikau, or mourning song. It opens ‘We are singing a requiem for our mother,/ Our voices a shroud across this land/ Wrenched we were from Kamaka‘eha’s soft bosom,/ Wretched our grief inconsolable’ (1-4).⁵ This places Queen Lili‘uokalani, the last sovereign of the lāhui, as the ‘mother’ to her ‘children’/subjects. The poem describes that ‘our mother’s spirit was incandescent color, Green/ Ocean of emerald stars, mosses, living grass’ (9-10), which poetically brings together the sea, sky and earth, ‘to represent people of all parts of the Hawaiian nation’ (N. Silva “Hawaiian Literature” 106). Perez-Wendt brings together the twin metaphors of blood and bone (koko and ‘ōiwi) which stand for kinship with the ‘āina in the lines, ‘Her blood was a firebrand night,/ Her bones iridescent light’ (14-15). The strength of the image is increased by the use of oppositional pairs in the two lines: firebrand and iridescent, night and light. This meiwi is called ‘ēko‘a (opposites) and is an ancient one in Hawaiian mele. It acts as an implicit reminder of the value of pono, a correct balance between all opposing forces (ho‘omanawanui *voices* 6, 42, 86-7). In this way the

Queen's blood and bone, metaphorically her genealogy, is implicitly pono, or right. The poem ends with the assertion that 'Our song is for our mother,/ Our nation,/ Our rebirth' (21-23), which demonstrates the kuleana (responsibility, concern) of Perez-Wendt's work, and the clear intention of *Uluhaimalama*.

The focus on mo'okū'auhau (genealogy) as an organising praxis for nationalism could, and has, been construed as essentialist, and even as racist (Garrouette 120). However kānaka maoli, and other indigenous, scholars have argued convincingly for its use as a methodology for the exploration of indigenous identity, social organisation and political structures (Kauanui 37; Garrouette 124-5). As the preface to her study of Hawaiian identity *Hawaiian Blood* Kauanui includes two poems, one of which, "Thinking about Hawaiian Identity" (np.) by Maile Kēhaulani Sing asks, 'Is identity belonging/ Or is belonging identity' (3-4)? This alludes to the conundrum many colonised indigenous people find over how to best distinguish indigenous from non-indigenous in a context where the social and financial stakes are high.⁶ The poem notes the conflict created between Hawaiian nationalists defining "Hawaiian" themselves, outside of the American "democratic" ideal of sameness-as-equality:⁷

Hawai'i is paradise
Up for grabs
...
The only obstacle that complicates
is the call to discriminate
For the sake of sovereignty
Self determination fuelled
By genealogical identity
(32-34; 38-42)

The relationship of Hawaiian identification via genealogy is contrasted here to American claims to equality, which veil the acquisitive nature of American foreign policy by revealing American claims to Hawaiian land as a part of the American nation as colonialism, fuelled by the paradise trope. The poem ends, “Hawaiian entitlement to be free/ From the thick of/ American fantasy” (43-45).

This reclaiming of genealogical structures as a method for the realisation of sovereignty that Sing refers to has been termed “kinship”. Mo‘okū‘auhau as social praxis is fundamentally indigenous, drastically more inclusive than definitions of indigeneity based on blood-quantum and works against the violence of “vanishing” that colonial definitions rely upon. As it is not constrained by biology, it enables a flexibility of definition that encompasses culture and behaviour alongside lineal descent.

Kinship as a model for practical definitions of indigenous identity in the American context have been developed by American Indian scholars, including Cherokee sociologist Eva Marie Garrouette. In her study of American Indian identity *Real Indians*, she outlines a method of engagement with indigenous ontologies, for academics and non-academics, both indigenous and non-indigenous actors alike, called “Radical Indigenism”. The underlying principle of “Radical Indigenism” is ‘the demand that researchers [who] enter tribal philosophies ... must [also] enter tribal relations’ (108). By this Garrouette means an approach to indigenous philosophy that ‘illuminates the assumptions about knowledge that are at the root of the dominant culture’s misunderstanding and subordination of indigenous knowledge [and] argues for the reassertion and rebuilding of traditional knowledge from its roots, its

fundamental principles’ (103). She argues that American Indians must address the question posed by postcolonial theorist Kwame Anthony Appiah as to how far, if at all, non-western intellectuals “‘must give up [the world of the spirits] (or transform into something ceremonial without the old literal ontology)’” (103), and suggests that “Radical Indigenism” as a method of inquiry might involve asking whether ‘there are specific stories, teachings, oral narratives—not to mention songs, dances, and other such records’ that can be studied in order to understand how ‘ancestors created forms of community life that made flesh the teachings that the stories set forth. ... This allows us to deduce traditional principles and ideas not only from what the ancestors *said*, as this is enshrined in stories and other oral forms, but also from what they actually *did*’ (117). Among the ‘roots’ Garrouette suggests “Radical Indigenism” should re-acknowledge is kinship as a method of delineating and negotiating the boundaries of different sovereign tribes. She explains that kinship within a framework of “Radical Indigenism” is different to the definitions of kinship that have been explored and set forth by social scientists for many decades: ‘As I see it, the definition of identity founded in kinship responds to at least two themes that one encounters across a range of tribal philosophies. One of these reflects the condition of being, which I call relationship to ancestry. The second involves a condition of doing, which I call responsibility to reciprocity’ (118). The dual definition of kinship as Garrouette posits it in an American Indian context has a lot in common with the way Native Hawaiian scholars and poets have conceived it and it also stands in direct opposition to the *stated* aims of equality promoted by American democracy.⁸

Kinship, as defined by Garrouette and Kauanui, offers a radical (in the sense of *radix*, root–) restructuring of the boundaries of indigeneity with the intention to create a

system that aims towards the strengthening of the indigenous nations, whilst insisting on the right of each nation to define its own boundaries culturally (therefore fluidly) as well as genealogically (as opposed to biologically). The importance of “roots”, including both shared roots and new roots, to definitions of identity embodied in kinship relations is expressed poetically in McDougall’s poem “Kumuhonua” (*The Salt Wind* 17):

No one can say you don’t belong here
 now, though your roots are recent
 as the laua’e whose blond-haired rhizome
 nests upon the brown root fabric of nā palai.
 Together, they cling to the porous basalt beneath,
 whose fire cooled nearly 200 years ago in darkness.

Still, your name resounds in the rain
 rivuleting from the roof, through the gutter.
 Your blood is carried in the ‘alae washed
 from the cement to meet the muddy gulch.
 There, your face is carved by the wind, your eyes
 always fixed upon the heavens, toward salvation.

(17)

In the Kumuhonua (source of the earth) creation tradition the god Kāne created three worlds. These included upper heaven, lower heaven, and the earth as a garden for mankind (Beckwith 42). The first man, Kumuhonua, transgressed Kāne’s laws and was driven from the garden. There are many similarities between the Kumuhonua tradition and the Christian stories of creation, and on this point Beckwith writes, ‘[t]he similarities here to biblical stories have made readers suspicious of the stories of the forming of man out of earth and of the fall of man and his being driven out of a sacred garden. It is, however, much more likely that familiarity with the biblical stories has lent a coloring and an emphasis to traditions which were genuinely native than that the Hawaiians have invented these stories in direct imitation of Bible accounts’ (42). It is

to this shared narrative, or the potential adoption and alteration of a foreign narrative, that McDougall's "Kumuhonua" points.

Addressing a newcomer to Hawai'i, the narrator both acknowledges difference and emphasises togetherness, through the pairing of native and foreign. The laua'e is a fern, and the "blonde-haired rhizome" (3) refers to the laua'e haole (*Phlebodium aureum*), a fern native to the American tropics but found in Hawai'i, clearly metonymic of Euro-American settlers. But contrary to many poems "Kumuhonua" does not rail against this light newcomer, but accepts that its roots can grow together with those of the pālai, a native fern. Together they attach themselves to the basalt rocks, Pele's body. The use of the word rhizome has both ancient and modern kaona, as 'rhizomatic thinking' has made a transition from its origins in Deleuze and Guattari's social scientific philosophy of the late 70s into the postcolonial field of study, and has been applied to studies of kinship in the Pacific.⁹ However, in the Hawaiian context, taro is a rhizomatic crop that farmers propagate from the corm, and so McDougall is co-joining the ancient kaona of the familial relationship between kānaka and taro with contemporary discussions of kinship. Kauanui, citing Pukui, writes:

Hawaiian '*ohana*, "like taro shoots, are all from the same root. ... With Hawaiians, family consciousness of the same "root of origin" was a deeply felt, unifying force, no matter how many offshoots came from offshoots. You may be 13th or 14th cousins, as we define relationships today, but in Hawaiian terms, if you are of the same generation, you are all brothers and sisters. You are all '*ohana*' (Pukui et al. 1972: 167). ... The symbol of taro is extremely important here given the Hawaiian term for extended family, '*ohana*, signifies the family as offshoots of the same stock, etymologically, '*Ohā* is the root or corm of the taro plant. Like a scion, '*Ohā* can also mean a sprout (Handy and Pukui 1972: 3) Here there is a rootedness – being grounded in the '*āina* (land) – that comes with kinship, which is based on genealogical ties, whereas deracination (uprooting) is

the basis of the blood quantum model of identity. (*Hawaiian* 56 original emphasis)

By placing the two root systems in the same ‘āina, which here references Pele and therefore the shared genealogy of all who trace their roots to her, McDougall is privileging the indigenous conception of Hawaiian ‘ohana relationships. The second stanza of “Kumuhonua” embodies the newcomer in the water and the earth, as their blood-as-rain washes across the man-made cement and into the ‘muddy gulch’, thousands of which line roads and taro patches across the Hawaiian countryside. In the final two lines their ‘face’ is embodied as the earth, sculpted by the wind over many years, as it faces upwards to the sky, where both Christian newcomers and Native Hawaiians see the presence of gods. The choice to end the poem with the word ‘salvation’ is double edged, as it alludes to the promises of salvation made by missionaries to Native Hawaiians, but also to the process of forgiveness. Here the newcomer is depicted as both absorbed into the earth of Hawai‘i, but also seeking salvation— it remains unclear whether this is the salvation of forgiveness and family over divisiveness and recrimination, or a need to acknowledge and seek forgiveness for the course of history which has brought these ‘blonde-haired’ newcomers to Hawai‘i.

“Kumuhonua” represents a gentle but powerful shift towards articulating an identity based on mo‘okū‘auhau rather than biological descent. The presence of the laua‘e in Hawai‘i, feeding from the same earth and nourished by the same rains as the pāhai, and the reality of their shared roots in common earth, speaks powerfully to the effects of shared place on identity, over and above the binary formed through the juxtaposition of their light and dark haired roots. Having already explored how place

affects concepts of identity in Hawai‘i, it is simply a reminder that, for many Hawaiians, sharing roots and food, that is having shared mo‘okū‘auhau and eating from the same poi bowl, is more powerful than any biological definition of race or blood.

Kauanui explains that ‘a person’s vital substance is transmitted genealogically but is supplanted by the food from which one gains sustenance’ (51), and that ‘whereas in the colonial frameworks a person’s vital substance comes from genetic inheritance, in the Pacific Islands context, one’s substance is acquired through genealogical inheritance and sustenance from feeding in any given set of relationships’ (52). McDougall’s poem “Hāloanaka” (71) elucidates this tradition, and likens feeding on taro to the strengthening of family:

There is no need to sweeten
your body’s ripe offering
to suit my open mouth.

I take you in, as you are—
the taste of earth and light,
salt-wind sieved through valley rains.

Just days ago, your heart-
shaped leaves faced the sun,
funnelling light and warmth

through your long trembling
stalks. You felt the soft earth
open itself to your roots,

whose blind strands fed
the crystalline nebulae
that once purpled your corm.

Still, you give yourself over
and over again, e hiapo,

your sacrifice made ripe
in the soil’s short incubation—

so that we may live knowing love
and ‘ohana, our bright belonging.

(1-21)

Hāloanaka, the older brother of the Native Hawaiian people, feeds them through sacrificing his own body. The sensitive description of the taro corm demonstrates great tenderness for the plant itself and a bond of love forged through the process of eating. All aspects of growing, preparing and eating taro are governed by the rules of respect afforded to an elder sibling; as Manulani Aluli Meyer writes, conveying the wisdom of Kia Fronda, a taro farmer from Waipi‘o Valley, ‘you must never talk stink while you are with Hāloanakalaukapalili ... to speak ill of anything would hamper the growth and integrity of the harvest’ (15). Similarly, arguments or serious discussions were prohibited once the poi bowl was uncovered at meal times, whilst jollity and good humour were encouraged (Green and Beckwith “Hawaiian Household” 5; Meyer 110). It is the culture of reciprocity and respect surrounding the Hawaiian relationship with taro that allows McDougall to express eating as ‘knowing love and ‘ohana [family], our bright belonging’. To eat taro is to share not only a dinner table or mat, which is itself a sociable act, but to act in a cultural manner— in this way the sense of identity that surrounds belonging to a family group is transmitted through the act of eating and the food (taro) itself.

This conception of familial identity is not present in Euro-American culture, as both Kauanui (53-4) and Garrouette (122-3) have explained. In what they have described as ‘common sense’ Euro-American opinion a person’s substance is ‘formulated in concrete biogenetic terms’ (Kauanui 53) which posit that a person is a sum only of their biological inheritance, half from each of their parents. Whilst the advance of

genetic science has complicated this understanding, the ‘colonial logic vis-à-vis indigenous peoples in the United States ... still prevails by and large’ (Kauanui 54). Garrouette uses the work of David Schneider to critique the common assumption in, predominantly Western, social science studies of kinship that “‘Blood Is Thicker Than Water. Without this assumption much of what has been written [by social scientists] about kinship simply does not make sense. ... [This assumption posits that] *kinship is a strong solidary bond that is largely innate, a quality of human nature, biologically determined, however much social or cultural overlay may also be present*”’ (Schneider in Garrouette 123 original emphasis). This assumption is essentialist as it presents blood as a physical substance that contains the essence of a person’s kinship to another person, and as a substance it can be diluted, attenuated and ‘eventually exhausted’, which when taken to its logical conclusion assumes that distance over time and generations will eventually lead to people with common ancestors no longer being related (Garrouette 123). In contrast, the genealogical model of kinship insists that shared ‘blood’ (the word is the same but the metaphor works differently) is a fact of kinship, but generational distance has no bearing on the significance of that relationship: if two people have a shared ancestor, they are kin.

Such conceptions potentially have immense power to transform antagonism in contemporary race politics in Hawai‘i. Both Garrouette and Kauanui choose to use a discussion by anthropologist Jack Forbes, of Powhatan/Lenape/Saponi descent, to illustrate their cultures’ beliefs regarding kinship relations:

[P]ersons are descended in the female line from a “first” ancestor, usually a being with an animal or plant name. If, for example, one is a member of the “turtle” matrilineal lineage, one might find this situation: 500 generations ago the first turtle woman lived, and in each subsequent generation her female descendants had to marry men who were non-turtles,

i.e., with other lineages in their female lines. A modern day “turtle” person, then, might well be, in quantitative terms, one-five-hundredth “turtle” and four-hundred-ninety-nine-five-hundredths non-“turtle,” and yet, at the same time, be completely and totally a turtle person. (in Garrouette 125)

Forbes’ example offers an elegant illustration of the different underlying logics from which indigenous and Euro-American conceptions of relational kinship spring.

However, to further emphasise the ontological difference Garrouette’s study presents numerous examples of people *becoming* familially connected in tribal contexts, who were not originally kin, through ceremony (Garrouette 125-6).

Although rare, ceremony can be used to transform a person from one kinship group to another. For example, two white sisters who were captured in a raid by the Seneca were adopted, but each by a different clan – one by the Deer clan and one by the Heron clan – “and thus the blood of the sisters was changed by the rite of adoption in such wise [sic] that their children could intermarry” (Frederick Webb Hodge in Garrouette 126). The use of the blood metaphor may have been Hodge’s metaphorical imposition, but it is clear that the sisters’ fundamental substance, as conceived by the Seneca, had been altered. Indigenous essentialisms, as explored by Kauanui and Garrouette theoretically and McDougall poetically, have ‘nothing to do with the idea of race... Instead, the identity definitions ... explored emphasize the unique importance of genealogical relatedness to tribal communities while also allowing, at least in principle, the people of *any* race to be brought into kinship relations through the transformative mechanism of ceremony’ (Garrouette 127). Whilst familial relatedness is important to indigenous identity, regardless of degree, it is not the sole criteria for successful belonging.

Behaviour is also a key component of kinship and forms the second part of Garrouette's concept of "Radical Indigenism". It is not enough to simply be born into a kinship relation. Because kinship is a unifying organisational structure it requires each person to contribute to its continuation and those who behave in ways that are contrary to the good of the tribe can be expelled. Similarly, people can be absorbed into the tribe through the long-term demonstration of values and actions that are aligned with the community. DeLoughrey expresses this relational, behavioural element of kinship in the Maori context thus: '[W]hakatapu [Maori genealogy] can be challenged or revised, incorporate new honorary members, "slough off" members who have let the fires of their ancestral lands go cold, or revise hierarchical birth orders' (164). This supports Garrouette's assertion that instances where non-Indians have gained kinship relations demonstrate that kinship is not just a matter of fact, but a 'venue of wilful participation' (129). This bears similarities to criticisms levelled by Hawaiians at politicians who have failed to act in the best interests of Native Hawaiians,¹⁰ and to the insistence of scholars such as Meyer (IX) and McDougall (*Finding 6*) that being Hawaiian is as much about speaking and acting in a way that serves and supports the lāhui (Hawaiian nation) as it is about having a genealogical connection to Papahānaumoku.

Both Perez-Wendt and McDougall can claim multiple heritages (Spanish, Chinese, Scottish and Hawaiian) yet the fact of their birth in Hawai'i and their rootedness in the place of Hawai'i has had a deep effect on their choices to privilege, tend and cause to grow their Hawaiian political consciousness. In "Pondering Poi Dog: Place and racial identification of multiracial Native Hawaiians" Kana'iaupuni and Liebler conclude that 'the strength of symbolic and physical ties to Hawai'i, the cultural home, is vital

to the perpetuation of Hawaiian racial identification among multiracial children' (694). Their study, perhaps problematically for diasporic Hawaiians, finds strong evidence that living in Hawai'i leads to a stronger identification with their Native Hawaiian, over other ethnic, heritage. However, the accepted contingent and relational aspects of Hawaiian mo'okū'auhau allows for closer ties with a particular place to affect identifications in certain contexts, and would, perhaps, posit that, whilst identifications may be stronger or weaker according to the geographical and familial context of the individual, that person remains genealogically related to the 'āina of Hawai'i.

In *The Salt Wind: Ka Makani Pa'akai* salt and saltiness, so necessary to human life in tiny quantities in blood and water, work as a metaphor of genealogical connection. The word for salt, pa'akai, is literally 'solid sea', and so in the substance is carried the kaona of moana (the ocean) — through the union of pa'akai (salt) and wai (water) humans are formed from the same substance as the ocean, through which all lands are connected. The kaona of makani, which means wind, but also spirit or ghost, is felt in the hovering presence of McDougall's parents, particularly her father, in many of the poems.

All of the main kaona threads of the collection are drawn together in the poem "Over and Over the Return, Mo'okū'auhau" (86). Of particular note is the balance, or pono, created between moana (ocean) and mauna (mountain) as the sites of the great-uncle's death and resting place and the subtle presence of wind as a messenger:

There is so much in the wind's warm engulfment
as it makes its way from the green-robed mauna,
Combing the tī stalks, palms, kukui and pines
toward Hanalei Bay, where the water rolls itself

into long, untied strands of white salted lei,
as it meets the sand over and over.

Using the map my grandfather drew of the town
he left 66 years ago, I found his older brother,
an uncle I never knew, whose life ended at thirteen
in the piko of Hanalei Bay, the undertow pulling him

down into the ocean's throat before also
swallowing the man who tried to save him.

...

Soon the wind will carry its delicate fragrance
of commingled pine needles, old kukui shells and niu husk,
all the salt of its journey, infinitesimal pieces of broken bottles
under the naupaka, and everything else unseen and nearly
forgotten

turned to sand. This same wind will return
to the same folds of mauna, offering over and over
its gifts, and like nā kūpuna, always leaving, always returning.

(1-12, 21-28)

The salt/wind acts as the transmitter, or stimulus, of memory and emotion that embodies the spirits of the kūpuna and ākua visiting the living. Sydney Lehua Iaukea explains how makani (wind) can be understood as a form of epistemology in Hawai'i:

To know the winds of a particular place was to know one's precise location, to understand the deities that existed therein, and to be sensitive to the differences in landscape and seascape in that space. In other words, to know the names and movements of the winds was to know where one was both geographically and epistemologically. Understanding the wind was one way of understanding the general social framework in Hawai'i. ... This made knowledge of the winds highly political as a form of social resistance later in the 20th century. (49)

This explanation illustrates why 'there is so much in the wind's warm engulfment' (1), particularly the sense of belonging conveyed in the knowledge that 'this same wind will return/ to the same folds of mauna/ offering over and over/ its gifts' (26-28).

McDougall's collection mimics the wind of its title, moving with speed and breadth across the landscape of Maui, with an assuredness that speaks of long association.

Weaving her family story into the places that anchor her memories, McDougall succeeds in painting Maui through the characters of her poems, and her family through the essence of the places they inhabit; their loves, losses, successes and trials are delicately depicted through the ever present salt-wind against the curves of Maui's mountains and shoreline.

Like McDougall in *The Salt Wind*, Perez-Wendt writes often about her relationship with her family, particularly her mother. In both cases, the narratives surrounding the poets' relationship with their parents extend into the rhythms of wider 'ohana and are connected both metaphorically and actually to the 'āina. In her poem "Memory of My Mother" (77-100), which is 24 stanzas long, Perez-Wendt entwines her mother's life as it was told to her with what she now knows as a mother and grandmother herself. Written in the first person, a majority of the poem addresses her mother directly or recalls memories of when they spoke, asking questions, recounting, imagining and retelling. Through her mother's memories Perez-Wendt reaches back deep and wide into her own 'ohana and into the places where they lived—the vehicle of memory acts as an immediate and direct link to family and place, re-telling memory as history, and creating mo'olelo. As the poem remembers stories told years ago, it slips between memories, and memories of memories, recounted and re-told. She writes, 'Oh the light and memory/ Of that parlour/ Of all I've never seen' (77:24-6), and yet, through her remembering her mother is re-born. The narrator's voice slips in and out of the reporting perspective, sometimes seeming to lose sight of the memory, asking 'Where were you/ Where you were/ There you were/ In another house by the sea' (83:1-4). In

stanza 9 the poem recounts memories of music and family musicians and continues, ‘My grandfather was gifted/ A sweet-voiced tenor’ (86:1-2). The tone then shifts, just for stanzas 10 and 11 to matters wider than the family — to the ridiculing of Hawaiian artistry and musicality by the colonising haole. Stanza 11 is a list, of the many positions an ancient Hawaiian may have occupied, ‘Seers,/ Cultivators,/ Carvers,/ Artisans,/ Astronomers,/ Navigators,/ Poets,/ Priests,/ Warriors ... Fathers and sons,/ Mothers, their progeny/ Linked ancestrally/ To earth, rivers, ocean, stars, rain,/ Trees, rocks, sand, grass, moon,/ Singing ... Why so hard for some to understand?’ (87:1-10; 17-22; 29). The direct linkage of immediate kūpuna, her grandfather, to the ancient culture of Hawaiians is a statement of belonging, to a lineage connected not just by descent, but by shared culture and action, in this case the playing of music. Acknowledging stanza 11 as a digression, the next opens ‘But getting back to the old days/ When you were/ Growing up in Hilo’ (88:1-3), which emphasises the poem as a vehicle of memory, an intimate family mo‘okū‘auhau. The poem concludes with an attestation of the perpetual rhythms of life and death:

24

Woman Who Died—
 This doesn’t end here
 Of course it doesn’t
 There’ll be
 Birthings
 Buryings
 Blood on the hands
 Baptisms;
 Gardens
 Light streaming through;
 Songs, musings,
 Memories, things forgotten,
 All of this
 All of this
 And your light on my shoulder
 Forever.

(1-16)

Such writing emphasises family in a way that does not seek to glorify reality, or invent an unattainable ideal. The autobiographical elements that vein this work tell of experiences of poverty, racism, violence and abuse, but they also tell of deep love, of a growing understanding of the connectivity of individuals against the wider forces of colonialism that exacerbate isolation and feelings of futility; most of all they tell of a deep and abiding aloha for the ‘āina of Hawai‘i which sustains and nurtures their mana‘o and ‘ohana.

Perez-Wendt and McDougall’s poetry demonstrates a shift in the discussion of Hawaiian identity towards expressing creative connections between people that offer the foundational structure needed to build contemporary Hawaiian sovereignty. Theirs is an indigenous literary nationalism, rooted in ‘the tribal web of kinship rights and responsibilities that link the People, the land, and the cosmos together in an ongoing and dynamic system of mutually affecting relationships’ which ‘shift the focus of research away from postcolonialism studies and the effects of colonization to the contributions and potential of Indigenous worldviews’ (ho‘omanawanui *voices* xxx). Meyer’s work reflects this shift, explaining, ‘I believe Hawai‘i will be the first in the world to consciously realize that it is no longer about ethnicity, about race, or about blood quantum. As a point of history, let it be known that we never did privilege those ideas, those points of separation. What will be vital in this century is *Culture* — a way of being unique to place and people’ (x original emphasis). By explicitly foregrounding Hawaiian ways of organising family and community as a cultural method, and rejecting race and ethnicity as striating principles, *Uluhaimalama* and *The Salt Wind* undertake the ‘radical remembering of our [Hawaiian] future’ (Meyer viii-

ix), which is laced together by the connective threads of genealogy, memory and shared national belonging.

Chapter Six. Performing with Aloha.

This chapter demonstrates how contemporary performance poetry epitomises the intention to find, and exploit, connections between Western and Hawaiian practice in poetry to the Hawaiian advantage. The chapter takes poems by Steven Kealohapau‘ole Hong-Ming Wong, who writes under the name Kealoha, David Keali‘i MacKenzie, Jamaica Heolimeleikalani Osorio and Ittai Wong, and explores how they are guided by the principles and practice of aloha for their culture, land and nation. As performance poets they practice aloha (love, compassion, sympathy, grace), which is composed of the root words alo (face, presence) and hā (breath), meaning ‘to face with/in the presence of divine breath’ (Kunisue 233). By choosing to perform their work live rather than (or as well as) publish their poems, these poets honour and celebrate the Hawaiian cultural value of aloha, or the sharing of the divine breath of life, with their audiences.

Tracing the presence of hā (breath) and leo (voice) in three poems demonstrates how performance poetry sustains and renews Hawaiian cultural and political values. This extends to theoretical considerations of identity performance, which are being radically altered in their encounters with Hawaiian poets, who have a strong claim to oral performance that is difficult to subsume or ignore in theoretical considerations of the genre in Hawai‘i. As the most recent generation of politically aware Native Hawaiian poets, Kealoha, Mackenzie and Osorio build on the cultural foundations poets such as Trask, Kalahale and Perez-Wendt have laid. Whilst Trask believed in 2010 that the Sovereignty Movement had ended in the 1990s (Kosasa 17:55-19:00), Osorio in particular sees her work as continuing the Sovereignty Movement into the twenty-first century (see Appendix B 296).

This chapter will culturally situate the significance of speaking/performing in Hawai‘i within the context of the explosive success of Slam poetry in the state. Susan B.A. Somers-Willett has written that ‘[b]ecause most slam poems engage a first-person, narrative mode which encourages a live audience to perceive the performance as a confessional moment, one of the most defining characteristics of slam poetry is a poet’s performance of identity and identity politics’ (52). This chapter considers the poet’s stage as a place where Western poetic practice and theory are most easily and effectively inhabited by Native Hawaiian identity politics and redeployed in the service of Hawaiian nationalism.

There are many ways a voice can present a poem, so it is useful at this point to define the way this chapter uses some terms.¹ Performance poetry is poetry written for performance and not always for publication. That is not to say that a performance poem cannot be or is not published, but it is originally composed primarily with performance to a live audience in mind. These poems are performed without scripts, and their performance differs from poetry readings, as they may include other elements of performance, such as costumes, props, lighting techniques or live musicians. According to Helen Gregory, the term was coined by Hedwig Gorski to differentiate her performance – of poetry to music – from the genre of performance art (204). The performance poems discussed here are accessed through online videos rather than audio recordings.

Spoken word poetry is poetry written for performance, but does not necessarily use the theatrical elements of performance poetry, such as props, music or costume. I also

include here poetry written for publication but subsequently performed without a script and with vocalisation that adds to the meaning of the poem and enhances the poet's connection with the audience. Slam poetry is performance poetry written for and/or performed at a slam competition. It is a form of spoken word poetry (as it may not use props), but it is common for poets in this category to sing, rap, riff and otherwise move between vocal genres that belie the definition of "spoken". A majority of the poems discussed in this section are Slam poems, but it is also quite possible to discuss spoken word poetry in terms of its performative aspects. A poetry slam is defined as "the competitive art of performance poetry" (Poetry Slam Inc. np.), where poets perform their original poem in no longer than three minutes. It is judged by five randomly pre-selected audience members, who score it from 1.0 to 10.0; poets cannot use props, costumes or any accompaniment.

Other forms of spoken poetry that are not discussed in this chapter are the traditional poetry reading, spoken word as a category for the recording industry, including audio books, plays, poetry, chants or prayers that are recorded in a studio for reproduction, or amplified poetry that may use layering, reverberation, music, distortion or other produced effects to create a sound that could not be made with just the human voice.

Aloha

Aloha has no direct translation in English; the definition of 'aloha' in Pukui and Elbert's *Hawaiian Dictionary* takes up a quarter of a page. The first few words given are 'love, affection, compassion, mercy, sympathy' (Pukui and Elbert 21). Aloha is now an ubiquitous term in Hawai'i, for example it is found on every car licence plate (Teves 49), but, although important, it was not always as prominent as it is now.

Ohnuma, following Kanahele, explains that the term originated from a love of family, and was extended to the welcome afforded to strangers (367). '[A]lthough some Hawaiians today claim aloha was the most important of ancient Hawaiian values, evidence suggests it was just one among many important values (1986, 479)' (Ohnuma 367). Aloha has a complex genealogy in Hawai'i as a term that refers to both a sentiment and a cultural value, and, for some Native Hawaiians its use in a contemporary context has many difficulties. Aloha has been appropriated to further political, economic and religious aims that have been detrimental to Native Hawaiians, including: a defence of multiculturalism (Teves 17-18), an obfuscation of the trauma of immigrant histories (Ohnuma 366), a sense of altruism that erased the reciprocal sense of aloha (Spickard et al. 2006; Kanahele *Kū Kanaka* 483) and commercialisation to sell products (Teves 48; Trask *Native Daughter* 3, 48). However, whilst aware of its misuse, many Hawaiians remain invested in its core cultural value, and 'profoundly transformative possibilities' (Teves 48). Ramsay Taum explains aloha as a cultural value that is:

More than a greeting, a salutation, a slogan, pitch line, or monogram.

It is an overarching principle, condition, way of life, mind set, and attitude.

A spiritual principle that conveys the deepest expression of one's relationship with oneself, creative and life-giving forces, family, friends, community, and strangers.

A natural response of respect, love, and reciprocity, and not a contrived series of motions or expressions that have been rehearsed and perfected for economic gain. (38)

Yet, Taum's explanation is given in an analysis of tourism in Hawai'i, which is the context in which aloha is most often misused.

Kanahele emphasises the reciprocal nature of aloha and implies it was primarily a private value, relevant within the family, which was later translated to wider society in the form of friendship and hospitality (*Kū Kanaka* 474-7). Aloha's prominence in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is explained by its usefulness to early missionaries for defining God's love, evident in the expression "Aloha ke Akua", "God is Love", which also gave it its altruistic implications, and undermined its reciprocal nature (Kanahele *Kū Kanaka* 483).

There is potential for misinterpretation when attempting to explain a phenomenon like performance poetry through a cultural quality such as aloha. In the context of performance poetry, however, it is intended to highlight how the reciprocal nature of aloha is re-embodied in the relationship between performer and audience: the performer stands and speaks, giving aloha to the audience, and the audience responds. If the poem is good and the performance 'authentic' (a term that will be investigated further) they reciprocate the poet's aloha. This analysis is also concerned with the root of the word 'aloha', and the presence of 'breath', or *hā*, in the word. Taum describes *hā* as 'the spiritual essence and ambience of people and place' (37). Manulani Aluli Meyer defines aloha as 'asking, receiving, living and sharing the breath of life' (87). The word *hā* mimics the sound a breath makes, and is in this way onomatopoeic. The relationship between a Native Hawaiian performance poet and their audience *can* contain an instance of aloha, although this is more often discussed in the language of identity, authenticity and approbation.² Performing poetry as a Native Hawaiian in a Hawaiian context is to be open to the possibility of engaging with 'the spiritual essence and ambience of people and place' through an exchange of *hā* and aloha, made

actual in openness to, and the mutual exchange of, breath and voice.

Hā in Native Hawaiian performance poetry

Hā is both explicitly and implicitly addressed in the work of the three poets discussed in this chapter, who express both the power of hā, and the effects of its loss. In his performance poem “Dichotomy” (2004) Kealoha, who is the Poet Laureate of Hawai‘i, aligns hā with the transmission of Hawaiian identity.³ The poem opens with the statement ‘I am a Hawaiian’ (1), yet, as the title indicates, this belies the complexity of being a Hawaiian ‘in the twenty first century’ (88). The poem is presented through two voices; Kealoha indicates this on paper through typography, and on stage by shifting his body perpendicular to the audience, to face left then right as each ‘voice’ speaks — this signifies when the “Hawaiian” addresses the “American”. It is a simple movement that physically indicates the internal discord he feels. Without aggression, but with frenetic energy, Kealoha communicates the frustration and fear he feels at what he perceives to be the imminent loss of Hawaiian culture. He does this through hā (breath), both literally, in performance, and metaphorically, through references to its cultural significance.

The first stanza of “Dichotomy” introduces hā, saying ‘This ‘āina courses through my veins/ With each breath I inhale’ (5-6). The early emphasis on breathing connects the two voices and cultures of the poem. In a shift typical of Slam poetry, which often makes use of multidirectional lines to deliberately elide contrasting points, the next line connects both behind and in front:

And yet when I exhale...

My voice speaks the language of city streets

Paved with concrete

(7-9 original typography)

Kealoha breathes in the knowledge of the ‘āina and his ancestors, but his voice is that of an urban American brought up on ‘hip hop/ weaned off Run-DMC, BDP, and Grandmaster Flash’ (26-7). Inside him, an alchemic process is taking place, and it is not always easy. As the two voices spar they trade hard truths and well-worn clichés, arguing the cultural merit of hip-hop, the destructive effects of the Mahele land reallocation, the benefits and violence of English language, American education and technology.

The final lines take the voice of an epilogue, but they are not neutral. At the end of the struggle the Hawaiian perspective gains ascendance. Yet it seems a hollow victory. Delivering these lines quietly, whilst facing the audience, Kealoha concludes:

*I am a Hawaiian in the 21st century
The conflict within me is the same that divides my people
Amongst each other
Inhibiting all attempts at progress
And yet as time passes on each step we don't take is a step taken backwards
Because my culture is dying each time a kupuna loses her breath
Each time our western-bred generation inherits her strength
How can we understand her wishes if we no longer understand her breath?
"Hā 'ole..."
How can we understand her wishes if she no longer has a breath?
"Hā 'ole..."
My people... are running... out of breath*

(93-104)

Kealoha gestures towards both the literal running out of breath, which sonically indicates its corollary, death, and the cultural loss of hā (breath). The question ‘How can we understand her wishes if we no longer understand her breath?’ (100) refers to

traditional Hawaiian knowledge exchange. In an oral culture, the voice had great significance as a transmitter.

Manulani Aluli Meyer's explanation of knowledge transmission in a traditional context begins to reveal the complexity inherent in poetic references to hā. In her study of Hawaiian epistemology, *Ho'oulu: Our Time of Becoming*, she writes:

[H]ā, the breath, [is] the ritualizing of how a kumu (teacher) assures the continuity of knowledge. ... Breathing into a chosen student's mouth is one way knowledge was given and it offers a metaphor for how Hawaiians engage in knowledge maintenance. It is deeply embedded in other, in elder, in spirit. It is linked with how Hawaiians view teachers, words, timing, [and] experience. (163-4)

Meyer's figuring of hā deepens our understanding of what stands to be lost 'Each time our western-bred generation inherits [the kupuna's] strength' (99). As her breath is passed to a generation who don't speak the same language or practice the same values, the culture either dies or is transformed.

The phrase "Hā 'ole" means "without breath", and is semantically very similar to the Hawaiian word for (white) foreigner 'haole'. Apparently, 'when Hawai'ians [sic] first saw Westerners greeting or praying, they were surprised to see that the Westerners did not seem to use genuine ha, and decided to call them "people without the divine breath, or haole"' (Lewis in Kunisue 233). The presentation of "Hā 'ole" in speech marks in "Dichotomy" indicates that the kupuna is speaking. There is a sad irony that her last breaths are expended, not passing on her knowledge in the assurance of its continuation, but in a reminder, or gentle chastisement, of what will be lost as the next generation mature 'without the divine breath'.

In a poem that simultaneously exemplifies and defies the assertion that young Hawaiians are “western bred”, Jamaica Osorio subverts popular culture to indigenous uses. Written as a part of her ‘one thousand days’ poetry project, “Day 233: Sinking Bodies” is not exclusively a Slam poem but in it Osorio uses many tropes of the Slam format: word play, repetition, and the inclusion of popular culture — in this case an adaption of a song by Californian band Maroon 5. “Day 233: Sinking Bodies” refers to February 27th 2010, the day Chile was hit by an earthquake and 35 Pacific coastal cities, including Honolulu, were on tsunami alert. Watching the news in safety at college in Stanford, California, knowing that a tsunami in Hawai‘i could destroy her home town, Osorio wrote “i’m two thousand miles away/ the phone lines are hollow like opened graves” (27-28). Whilst Honolulu was not affected on that occasion, like most Pacific Islands, it remains at risk from rising sea levels caused by global warming. In “Day 233: Sinking Bodies” global warming is explicitly linked to globalisation and the uneven distribution of wealth and power it has entailed, which engenders a sense of immunity from the effects of its excesses in the wealthy. The poem opens with Osorio singing a pared down version of Maroon 5’s song “Harder to Breathe”:

*When it gets cold outside and you got nobody to love
understand what I mean when I say there's no way we are gonna give up
like a little girl cries in her bed at a monster who lives in her dream
is there anyone out there cuz it's getting harder and harder to breathe*

(1-4 original emphasis)

Most readers/audience members will be able to decipher that the emphasis on air pollution, rising sea levels and the threat of tsunamis in the poem all constitute a

threat to free breathing, and that is certainly one level of the poem's kaona. However for Hawaiian performers sharing breath, voice and language is to share a spiritual or living connection with a person/audience. No'ukahau'oli Revilla, a poet and contemporary of Osorio's, has explained her understanding that words themselves have the ability, when spoken with consideration and understanding, to alter the speaker, even if they did not originally compose them (see Appendix C 307-5).

When the Hawaiian understanding of breath and breathing is understood, Osorio's lament that it is getting "harder and harder to breathe" takes on a deeper and far more concerning significance. She means that as a native person her people and culture are finding survival a struggle. Osorio emphasises that without adequate, culturally appropriate action, suffering will be magnified through class, race and cultural oppression. She ends the poem on the sharp observation that, 'the death toll is rising with [the] sea level/ ... / it is time to decide/ who is gonna be **privileged** enough to survive/ next time" (81-84 original emphasis). Unequal wealth distribution and persistent racism mean the effects of 'natural' disasters are borne by the impoverished many, rather than the responsible few. In the mean time, she is standing and speaking; lending her breath to a genealogy of voices that connects indigenous knowledge of truly sustainable land management with the potential of our modern world.

The poem "Origins: Hā" by David Keali'i MacKenzie begins to unfold what hā means spiritually in the context of poetic performance.⁴ "Origins: Hā" utilises many meiwi (poetic devices) from traditional mele, including: direct and kaona references to the

Kumulipo, calling to the ancestors for guidance, repetitious elements reminiscent of *oli* (chants), and strong imagery (*ho‘omanawanui voices* 42). It is written as an overview, or perhaps explanation, of one *wā* (time period, epoch) recounted in the Kumulipo, which traces the development of life on earth ‘from coral polyp to human kind’ (0:15). By using recognisable poetic devices MacKenzie creates a link between his poetry and traditional forms, thereby marking it as Hawaiian *mele*.

The poem opens at the shore, ‘where land breaks into ocean foam’ (0:04), witnessing *kāhuna* (priests) looking out into the vast sky and praying to the *kūpuna* (ancestors) and *akua* (gods) to relate the story of the origins of mankind (0:03-0:22). The poem shifts between narrative positions, from third person to first and back again, mimicking the ‘voices’ of the ancestors that ‘speak’ through each *kaona* reference. Watching a *kupuna*, the third person narrator observes, ‘all eyes followed his into the expanse of night/ the great milky way/ as he asked the question “what is our origin?”/ and the night blinks an answer’ (0:22-0:32). Here the *kupuna* asks the fundamental question the poem addresses, and it is the night, or rather, if we follow his gaze, the sky, that communicates the answer. In this poem people converse freely with the natural world, both ‘asking’ and being ‘answered’.

“Origins: Hā” uses a voice that addresses both its immediate human audience, an older spiritual audience, and an ecological, or non-human, audience. The seminal question ‘what is our origin?’ cannot be answered solely by living humans, and so it is addressed to the universe, the gods, the ancestors, and the people present. The poem does not say how the question is asked, although an earlier line indicates that the wind could be the means of transmission from humans to the sky, but we are told the night

‘blinks’ back (0:30). The attentive humans are able to notice and find meaning in their observations of the sky. The night sky is dark, and pō (darkness, night) is the name given in the Kumulipo to the state before matter from which all life began. Moving into the first person MacKenzie addresses the audience and the gods directly:

Now, here I stand in this space made sacred by your presence
and I call back to the ages
first to the drum beat
the pulse of the pahu ipu heke

I call the churned lava embraced by sea
I call to the pounding of bark into tapa
I call to the crack of lightning over Kahiki
I call through the refrain of generations
Out to the gods

O Kane who provides the waters of life,
Kanaloa, as the hot striking octopus
Pele, of the sacred earth
Poli‘ahu with the mantle of snow
Laka who taught us dance

I call to the 4 and 40, the 400 the 400000 gods named and unnamed
My ‘aumakua
Let down the gift of life
Live in these lungs
Move through my bones
So I too can express a world view that begins with the phrase
Hā

The sound of the exhale of life, the exhale of death
Hā
As in hāloa ancestor to the Hawaiian people
Hā
A phrase that is beyond the big bang
Young gods speaking the universe into being, young gods dreaming
existence
Hā
A phrase carved from vibration of chant
Hā

Reflecting the world around them the kahuna
Stand on the edge of the islands
Behind them na akua, na kūpuna
Crackle mingle follow his gaze to the depths of night
And when it blinks back it answers

Hā

Hānau ka pō
And the origin is clear
Could never have been in doubt

Hānau ka pō
Hānau ka pō
Night gave birth

(0:37-2:12)

Being so rich in cultural metaphor, this poem is performed in a way that embodies the life that it evokes. By directly addressing the audience MacKenzie is forming the bond inherent in the giving and receiving of hā whilst simultaneously describing it and explaining its cultural significance. He points out the word's onomatopoeic quality in the line 'the sound of the exhale of life, the exhale of death', which itself has echoes of the Hawaiian 'ōlelo no'eau (proverb) "I ka 'ōlelo nō ke ola, I ka 'ōlelo nō ka make" meaning "In words there is life, in words there is death" (Pukui #1191). It illustrates the Hawaiian belief that 'words have the power to actualize, to be either life giving or destructive' (McDougall *Finding* 3). Keali'i empowers the Hawaiian belief in hā as the origin of life by extending it beyond the beliefs of modern science: 'Hā. A phrase that is beyond the big bang/ Young gods speaking the universe into being, young gods dreaming existence/ Hā/ The phrase carved from vibration of chant/ Hā/ Reflecting the world around them' (0:36-0:49). These lines are a bold statement about the nature of truth, of science and of origins of meaning. By insisting that hā is the means by which 'young gods speak ... the universe into being' he is pointing to both the Hawaiian belief in the power of words to create, and destroy, and the discursive nature of truth.

By placing this line directly after the assertion that hā 'is beyond the big bang' MacKenzie seems to place Western scientists in the place of those "young gods" who

speak the world into being, which, rather than lending the scientists authority, makes the big bang theory just one of many origin stories created through the act of telling it: they are a reflection of their modern world. Simultaneously, MacKenzie is offering an interpretation of the role that he, and other young poets, are fulfilling by performing their mo‘olelo. By speaking the universe into being they are the ‘young gods’ who now stand up and ‘reflect the world around them’ for new audiences. George Kanahele, in his discussion of the semiotics of Hawaiian religion, elucidates this belief:

The conventional explanation is that [the word’s] force comes from the sound that is “breathed” into [it], thereby giving it life. The idea is that when we speak words, we use our breath in making the sounds, and breath is life-giving. Through the hā, or breath, we infuse mana into the sound, hence, the meaning or intent of the word. But quite apart from the sound, the thought represented in the word has symbolic significance as well. The notion that the word-thought has a power of its own suggests that it also has an existence of its own, which is not unlike Plato’s concept of the existence of ideas as independent objective realities. (*Kū Kanaka* 45)

As words are combined into stories, poems and chants, ‘they leave us, circulate in our communities, are repeated over and over, are empowered by belief and intention, and in turn, come to have mana and lives of their own’ (McDougall *Finding* 3). If the intention is negative or dishonest, then great harm can come of these words.

By invoking hā, Kealoha, Osorio and Keali‘i are using kaona to intensify the spiritual mana of their poems, and emphasise the ritual aspect of speaking. Breathing is both the first and last thing a human does: to breathe is to live, and to speak. Life leaves the body with the breath, and so each word leaves with a little of the life of the poet. This is not to say that speaking diminishes the life of the person who speaks, but that their mana is imparted with the words they speak, and so, as McDougall suggests, it is

important for Hawaiians to speak only that which ‘empower[s] and give[s] [them] life’ (*Finding 4*).

In “Origins: Hā” MacKenzie demonstrates an understanding of the power of the words he utters when he uses the refrain “I call”. By entering the modes of oli and pule (chanting and prayer) MacKenzie emphasises the connection between the speaker, their kūpuna, ‘aumākua, and ākua (ancestors, personal/family deities, and gods), emphasising that each voice is connected through the ‘refrain of generations’; words found through breath, hā. The poem evokes other sounds too: the rhythmic sounds of the pahu ipu heke (gourd drums) that accompany hula dancers, the hiss of hot lava slipping into the sea, waves crashing against the rock, the thud of wood on bark as tapa is beaten flat, and the ‘crack of lightning’. By creating sonic links between natural and human sounds the distinction becomes blurred and the human voice becomes just one among many that speak. Hā is also the number four, pronounced with the inanimate numeral marking prefix ‘e, as in ‘ehā; four and multiples of four are ‘sacred or formulistic numbers’ (Pukui and Elbert 44). The line ‘I call to the 4 and 40, the 400 the 400000 gods named and unnamed’ is a religious reference, or prayer, to the four major deities of Hawaiian religion, Kane, Ku, Kanaloa and Lono (ho‘omanawanui *voices 7*), and, by virtue of the formalistic multiples of four, to the many other deities and ‘aumākua (family/personal gods) who guide and inform Hawaiian religious life.

Ho‘olono: Deep listening

Communicating with the natural and spiritual world is a normal heuristic approach to knowledge formation in Hawaiian culture. Manulani Meyer’s work on Hawaiian epistemology challenges assumptions ‘of what it means to know something’ by

placing her discussion in ‘a Hawaiian milieu that defines, encourages and respects [its own] attributes of intelligence — even to this day’ (77). This milieu includes listening to the entire natural world in order to gain knowledge that is useful for human existence as a part of the world.

Meyer writes, ‘It became evident [... from her research] that senses are indeed developed by culture. ... The discussion of body-centric notions is basic to understanding the specificity of Hawaiian empiricism’ (161). Meyer insists that ‘knowledge, then, is something we cause’ (163); knowledge, and therefore understanding, is entirely cultural, and Hawaiians’ relationship with the world is guided by their culturally specific interpretation of the information registered by their senses.

In Hawaiian culture the na‘au (stomach and intestines) is the seat of knowledge and wisdom, what westerners would describe as the ‘heart’ of the matter, whilst the head is the spiritual access to the body (Meyer 125). The na‘au is the place for intellect and feelings (differentiated from emotions), and each of these is an equal partner in the contribution to understanding. Unlike Western empiricism, Hawaiian knowledge is created from many sources, both tangible and intangible — as Meyer puts it, ‘the duality of Descartes is not a Hawaiian dilemma’ (125).

An exploration of how the five main senses (the sixth requires more explanation of Hawaiian spiritual practices than is necessary here) are categorised and mediated demonstrates how knowledge refers to the environment. For example ‘[understanding] is like the word a‘o, the word for teaching and learning. ... [A‘o] is also part of the

word for “taste”, as if “tasting” experience is a large part of understanding it’ (Meyer 163). Meyer describes listening (ho‘olono) as a crucial part of learning, an epistemological tool, and a cultural act that invokes the god Lono:

Listening too becomes something that is lifted beyond the mundane. To pay attention, to really listen (ho‘olono) is to invoke a spirit, a deity [Lono]. Listening then becomes a spiritual act. (163-4)

Yukari Kuniue, in her essay “Listening to the Natural World: Ecopsychology of Listening from a Hawaiian Spiritual Perspective”, explores the Hawaiian practices of speaking and listening as they occur between humans and the world, and also between humans, in the presence of the world. She explains what is clearly expressed through a multitude of kanaka maoli poems, that Hawaiians consider themselves not just related to the natural world but understand that we ‘are ecology *ourselves*’ (230).

Being the same, essentially, as the world in which we exist, we possess the means to communicate with it— to listen and to speak to it, through both verbal and non-verbal means. Kuniue explains how this is not a reified religious belief, practiced by just a few dedicated intellectuals or religious leaders but a lived belief practiced by modern Hawaiians. She writes ‘I hear chanting and pule (praying) on the lava beach on an early Sunday morning. I view authentic hula dances, both on stage ... or simply practicing in the park. ... I observe Hawai‘ian [sic] kūpuna or elders greet each other by honi ihu (nose kissing) ... I see that all these rituals are a Hawaiian way of listening to the voice of their natural environment’ (229).⁵ She includes the words of Pohaku Stone, a surfer from O‘ahu who asks, ‘Have you ever heard our ocean breathe? We should be learning the heartbeat of our ocean—listen to the breath. She is a living entity and if you listen you can hear the ocean sigh and take a deep breath. People are

so unaware of the minute changes that occur in nature that the animal world is in tune with' (in Kunisue 232). Here listening is the primary activity of human survival.

Such communication encompasses all the senses and requires *deep listening*, beyond words alone. Speech is useful for humans to communicate in a nuanced way between ourselves, but for Hawaiians it is one of many languages used to communicate with the world as a whole. When communicating with nature, talking becomes an impediment: 'The paradox that humans have in communication is that verbalising about and of nature changes the very form of communication. ... As soon as humans speak about nature it "alienates humans from the material-physical reality of non-human nature"' (Kunisue 231). Kunisue posits kaona as a method through which inter-human communication can maintain open channels with the natural, non-verbal world: 'Hawai'ian [sic] language uses metaphors and underlying meanings so its speakers can avoid such alienation' (231). The use of kaona in contemporary poetry is a way poets connect and communicate with their audiences, their 'aumakua and the place of Hawai'i at different levels.

Kaona is a form of listening-whilst-speaking because it requires the listener to be engaged at a spiritual level to gain the full meaning of what is being said. Equally, it requires the speaker to be very careful about what they say to ensure the listener receives the intended meaning. Speaking and listening should form a balanced exchange, and this is central to the successful functioning of oral literature. Oli (chant) and pule (prayer) are forms of ritualised speaking which address kūpuna (ancestors) and akua (gods) using kaona, but everyday speech and action is wholly imbued with the philosophy that speech has the power to communicate ideas and intention more

widely than to the immediate recipient. Kunisue illustrates this through the example that, in Hawai‘i, one should never directly ask a fisherman where he is going in the morning if it is obvious he is going to fish, as Hawaiians believe the fish will ‘hear’ the fisherman’s intention and therefore be forewarned of his approach (230). In these interactions between humans, animals, and the environment each ‘hear’ and understand the other; the understanding that the world is listening to us, even if we are not listening to it, places humans at a disadvantage if we do *not* practice deep listening.

The understanding that speaking and listening are intimately tied in a reciprocal relationship that, if treated respectfully, should result in pono (balance) directly informs and influences the writing and presentation of Hawaiian poetry. No‘u Revilla describes performing poetry for an audience as a joyful exchange:

My thing about performance ... is you really need to let the language breathe and let the image build up. And in order to do that you need to be patient, and [make] eye contact with your audience and really [feel] that reciprocity between you and your audience and how they’re being fed and how you’re being fed by them. So I *love* performing, there’s something about gaining your audience’s trust throughout the poem, so much that you can start whispering at some points and they’re on their seat and they’re with you and they’re trusting you to guide them through it, that you can’t do with just a page poem. (see Appendix C 306)

Revilla learned how to tell stories by observing ‘the playfulness and intentionality ... from the women in [her] family’ (see Appendix C 306) which taught her that stories had many forms and purposes. The mutual exchange inherent in speaking and listening forms a meaningful connection between a performing poet and their audience, often with the aim of entertaining, but also creating an alteration in understanding— they are cultural educators. ku‘ualoha ho‘omanawanui explains that

‘[t]he very act of creating Kanaka Maoli mo‘ōlelo, as opposed to mimicking Western writing, is political, and thus empowering, as the composer asserts a cultural political stance that our literature is important and worthy of being shared and perpetuated’ (“Hā, Mana, Leo” 90). In the context of poetry, for the ‘ōlelo to really make a difference in the world, to have utility and impact, the poems must be embodied, spoken, listened to, digested and felt.

Genuine understanding comes through a triangulation of information, experience and feeling (Meyer 179), and this cannot be achieved without being in the same place as that which causes the understanding. As MacKenzie puts it in “Origins: Hā”, acknowledging that particular convergence of bodies in space and time, ‘Now, here I stand in this space made sacred by your presence’. This, I think, is why Native Hawaiian poets take their poems out of the academy, off the page, and place themselves and their words in the public sphere where they have the opportunity to transform understanding. For Hawaiian performers the audience is not a passive receptacle but a part of the exchange—the poem only has value when it is ‘made sacred’ through a listening audience (human or otherwise) who, incidentally, is not obligated to listen. The audience’s attention is a vital part of the overall effect of the poem, and it is the poet’s job to engage with them. By facing their audience in a purposeful way, and sharing hā, performance poets are embodying aloha and maintaining it as a Hawaiian cultural, spiritual and political practice.

Performing Poetry as Political Action: Slam Poetry

Jamaica Osorio considers performing poetry as a way to present her political activism to people who have no interest in books or academia in a way they can both

understand and react positively to: ‘When we are talking about a movement and activism you are given small moments, and I think the great thing about using slam poetry for that kind of purpose is that, if you can really be accessible in a way that is still nuanced, you are going to reach the kind of people who are not willing to pick up a book. ... I think oratory and spoken word speaks to our communities in a way that often a book cannot’ (“An Interview” 55-6). ho‘omanawanui has pondered why, in her opinion, kanaka maoli produced literature that ‘has not prospered as much as our other culture arts [such as music and hula],’ reasoning that ‘writing, because a foreign introduction, is often viewed as a colonial tool of oppression rather than an Indigenous tool of empowerment; the resistance to literacy (reading and writing) equals resistance to colonialism’ (“Hā, Mana, Leo” 87). However, performance poetry is very popular in Hawai‘i, and in urban Honolulu particularly, both within and outside of the academy. Slam poetry draws large crowds to listen to poets perform competitively. Slam poetry, more than any other form of performance poetry, has begun to break down the barriers between poetry-as-literature and poetry-as-speech. Its popularity and appeal in Hawai‘i deserve attention, and whilst this is not a study of Slam poetry as a genre, or of Poetry Slams in particular as events or venues for performance, it is important to understand the genre that began the poetic careers of Kealoha, David Keali‘i MacKenzie and Jamaica Osorio.

Slam poetry is a competitive form of performance poetry invented by Marc Smith in Chicago in 1986 as a vaudeville-inspired, audience-led resuscitation of poetry that he believed had become stifled and trapped by academia (Somers-Willett 4).⁶ Begun in a Chicago working men’s club, The Green Mill, in a rowdy counter-culture atmosphere, Slam spread through popular participation (Somers-Willett 4). Due to its beginnings in

a bar/club, there was no sense that the audience was obliged to listen to the performer so the poet was tasked with compelling their audience to pay attention to them (Somers-Willett 5). This, combined with the Poetry Slam format whereby poems are judged by five pre-selected audience members who score each poem, meant that the form quickly evolved its own techniques and understanding of what worked best to gain the audience's approval. Today the form is international and Poetry Slam Inc., the organisation created in 1997 to promote slam poetry and oversee competitions, runs national and international Slams with national, and increasing global participation. Poetry Slam Inc. evolved rules to maintain some semblance of comparable form across events and locations; the title of the "Official Rules of National Poetry Slam Competition" is subtitled '(At least, those we can agree on)', and their preface highlights their ever-evolving nature (Somers-Willett 141). A slam poet must perform their own work, within a time-limit of three minutes; they may not use props, costume or music; they may not bribe the audience (although persuading the audience verbally is allowed). There are other rules regarding judging and scoring but these are the key ones. A poet's performance is judged to have started 'as soon as s/he makes a connection with the audience', either through eye contact, body language or speaking (Somers-Willett 143). There are no limits on content, and poems can be written on any subject.

Slam became a widely popular art form across the States, and the first poetry Slam in Hawai'i was founded and hosted by Kealoha at various venues in Honolulu. Kealoha first encountered slam poetry whilst working in San Francisco in 2000 and was affected deeply enough to return to Hawai'i to become a poet and writer. Kealoha was born and raised in Honolulu, and educated at the Massachusetts Institute of

Technology (MIT) in Nuclear Engineering. He returned to Honolulu in 2001 and having immersed himself in the Honolulu arts scene for three years founded HawaiiSlam and the FirstThursdays monthly Poetry Slam. This event quickly became the largest poetry slam in the world with attendances of over 500 people, and in the past decade slam poetry has become a mainstream form for poetry performance in, particularly urban, Hawai‘i. The reasons for its success are interrelated with the results, and whilst not conclusive, can be productively linked with the willingness of Hawaiian audiences to ho‘olono (listen actively), the particularity of slam as a form that encourages audience feedback and participation during the performance, and the necessity of forming a ‘moment’, as Osorio names it, between poet and audience.

Of course Poetry Slams in Hawai‘i are not only attended by Native Hawaiians, nor are all the poets who perform of Hawaiian ancestry, and of those who are, not all are self-consciously political. Yet the speed and size of Slam’s growth in the first decade of the twenty-first century in Hawai‘i indicates that a brief outline of research into Slam poetry would be helpful.

In her study *The Cultural Politics of Slam* Susan Somers-Willett draws on her extensive experiences as a slam performer and combines them with her academic research, to draw attention to the performance of marginalised cultural identity that is particularly rewarded on the slam circuit and to present some conclusions as to why that may be the case. Somers-Willett has described slam as a forum in which ‘complex dynamics of identity exchange between poets and audiences’ occur (8), and rather than framing slam as a particular genre, tone, style or form (although it certainly has a format) considers it to be more usefully explained through meaning and effect:

(successful) slam poetry is the production of an intimate and meaningful connection with an audience created through the intentional performance of authorship and self-conscious identity (Somers-Willett 12). Her research goes on to identify that, in the U.S. particularly, this self-consciously authored identity is often racially based. Her thesis is that poets from marginal ethnic and racial backgrounds in particular, but also gender and sexually diverse communities, are rewarded with success on the Slam stage by predominantly white, middle-class audiences through a complex process of identity presentation and authentication.⁷ Somers-Willett conducted her research on the continental US, which has a very different ethnic makeup to Hawai‘i. The ethnic make up of Slam audiences and participants in Hawai‘i has not been studied, but Hawai‘i’s citizens are considerably more ethnically diverse and in very different proportions than most other U.S. states, with no one ethnic or racial majority.⁸ This indicates that racial identity is less likely to be a marker of uniqueness, because there is much greater variety of difference, in the Hawai‘i Slam scene.

Cultural precedents for Slam’s success in Hawai‘i

My observation of successful (winning) Hawaiian slam poems performed, recorded and made available online over the last 6 years, indicate that poems about cultural and political difference are more likely to be successful. Difference is generally expressed in opposition to the ‘mainland’ U.S. rather than to other groups in Hawai‘i. I believe this is due to the marginal cultural position of Hawai‘i in relation to the ‘mainland’ U.S., where Slam originated, and of each of Hawai‘i’s non-white cultures in relation to the culture of their media and government, which is predominantly produced on the U.S. continent. This sense of difference is fuelled by tourism, and is closer to what Rob Wilson explores as ‘local’ culture in *Reimagining the American Pacific* (164,

180-3).

Whilst this thesis focuses on Native Hawaiian culture, it has been acknowledged that local people, that is people of various Asian, marginalised European (particularly Portuguese) and Hawaiian ancestry, who are usually marked by their use of Hawai‘i Creole English (HCE) rather than standard English, have shared many political and social equality battles in Hawai‘i as allies. HCE developed on the plantations through a combination of necessity, a shared oral culture and working class status. It helped develop a ‘local’ culture that still exists and makes identification between groups from different ethnic and racial backgrounds who live in close proximity easier. It is likely that both the shared oral culture of the plantations, known as ‘talk story,’ and the Hawaiian cultural practice of ho‘opāpā make Slam as a poetry format popular with Hawaiian audiences.

The ‘talk story’ tradition originated with plantation workers gathering in the fields to cook and eat together, where they talked about political, social and cultural issues in HCE (Schultz “Local” 351). From these gatherings the early twentieth-century unions, which brought together workers from many ethnic, racial and cultural backgrounds, were founded (Schultz “Local” 351). From its oral origins, the talk story tradition has always had a cultural, social and political focus. In the modern era this translates well into the Slam poetry format; that is, an oral presentation of identity politics for an audience of the speaker’s peers.

A precedent for Slam that is more culturally specific to Native Hawaiians is ho‘opāpā, a ‘wrangling contest of words [that] was considered one of the most sophisticated

displays of intellect’ (Meyer 117). Participants in ho‘opāpā were professionals, taught the skills and knowledge needed to compete by elders of the profession. It was a competition that ‘expressed most fully the constructive aggression of pitting intellect against intellect’ in a ‘person-against-person contest that called for a debater’s logic, quick thinking, good vocabulary, and a store of background knowledge ... [and] Hawaiian subtleties of thought’ (Pukui in Meyer 117-8). The mechanisms by which a competitor might win ho‘opāpā included a riddle an opponent could not solve or respond to, grouping words by sounds, puns, nuances of kaona, connected historical or geographical references, and surprising or witty extensions or replies to an opponent’s point (Meyer 118-120). In the “‘legend of Kaipalaoa, the ho‘opāpā youngster’” the young challenger uses the ho‘opāpā to avenge his father’s death, killing his opponent upon victory (Meyer 118-120). He wins, Meyer explains, ‘because he was able to infuse a different twist into imagery and ordinary discourse... This was a contest of wit, not of uniformity [of knowledge]’ (121).⁹

The ho‘opāpā indicates the seriousness with which displays of intellect, communicated through skill with words and exhibitions of deep cultural knowledge, were taken in ancient Hawai‘i— an element of which is still found in the skilled work of Hawaiian song-writers and poets today. ho‘omanawanui attributes the popularity of performance poetry to Hawai‘i’s oral history, the popularity of hip-hop in the USA and barriers to conventional publishing for young poets (“He Lei” 52). However, the competitive element is missing from most exhibitions of culture in Hawai‘i, except the annual Merrie Monarch hula contest, and I suggest that the Poetry Slam offers a modern stage for a skilled, competitive, culturally fluent articulation of identity.¹⁰

Just as knowledge alone was not sufficient to win the ho‘opāpā, wit and clever word play is not enough to win a Poetry Slam. Several observers and participants in the form have noted that there is something less solid, more felt, that is needed for a successful poem, that requires ‘all critics ... to listen more closely — not only with more analytic vigilance, though that too — with more openness, respect for context, and intimacy ... in which the overtones and undercurrents of the purported narrative can come to the fore’ (Damon 330). The exchange of speaking and listening, so central to hā and aloha, is here expressed in a non-Hawaiian context as openness and intimacy.

Maria Damon explains that a solely linguistic critique of Slam poetry ‘seems to rely on a conception of “quality” that ... does not take seriously the criteria of the slammers themselves, which seem to be, *tout court*, a skilled congruence of content, performance, and performer’ (328). However, ‘vague as it may sound, the criterion for slam success seems to be some kind of “realness” — authenticity at the physical/sonic and metaphysical/emotional-intellectual-spiritual levels ... some transmission/recognition of resonant difference ... a gestalt that effects a “felt change of consciousness” on the part of the listener’ (329-30). Somers-Willett makes a similar observation, noting how authenticity and “realness”, as validated by a Slam audience, is a physical (sonic) and metaphysical (felt) presence in the performer that provokes a change of consciousness in the audience that they identify (whether correctly or otherwise is irrelevant to the effect) as ‘authentic’ (7-8). This is startlingly similar to Revilla’s culturally grounded explanation of the minute physiological alterations she perceives when performing and listening to poetry (see Appendix C 307-8).

In a return to the act of close listening, Damon is asking critics to *feel* the performed ‘text’ as well as analyse its content. In the relationship between voice and ear is a felt human connection. This connection, however, is not inevitable, but is caused by something more empathetic — something that English is ill-equipped to elucidate, but that would probably be located in our ‘heart’ and Hawaiians would locate in their *na‘au* (stomach). Poets strive to present an ‘authentic’ voice and forge a connection with their audience; they understand, as Damon and Somers-Willett explain, that this is the way to win. However, there are risks involved in cultivating a relationship that might result in this type of connection with an audience.

Poets are often very aware of the delicate line between performing identity, and creating identity through performance. Slam rules insist that poetry must be original and performed by its author, and it is common for audiences to assume that poets are presenting their ‘true’ identity when on stage. Somers-Willet explains that ‘with the author’s embodiment, members of the audience are instantly privy to the physical and performative markers of identity that consciously or unconsciously inform their understanding of the poem through certain cultural lenses’ (18). Such an environment makes it more difficult for an audience to differentiate between the poet and the poem, and there is an inherent assumption that the content of the poem is directly related to the consciousness and opinion of the poet. This effect is emphasised when the poem is presented in the first person.

The conflation of performed identity and ‘real’ identity is problematic, but there is also the possibility for Slam competitions to be ‘places where identities are newly authenticated and possibilities are explored’ (Somers-Willett 9). Slams are not

windows on minority culture but cultural phenomena themselves— places where cultural identity is articulated, reflected and affirmed. Somers-Willett describes Slam as ‘verse that exists most richly in a live dynamic between authors and audiences, and it displays the qualities of popular entertainment, adaptability across media and performance contexts, competitive argumentation, and self-conscious performances of the author’s identity alongside narratives of marginalization’ (14). Generally, poets use this connection to foreground their own identities, often in political ways, and to utilise the audience’s feeling of connection to put forward alternative visions and create understanding.

The poem “Kaona” written by the 2008 Youth Speaks Hawai‘i team, and performed at the national Brave New Voices International Poetry Slam competition by Jamaica Osorio, Ittai Wong, William Giles and Alaka‘i Kotrys is “a love poem to Hawai‘i and the Hawaiian language” (Jamaica Osorio 0.05-0.10).¹¹ This team were taking part in an international Poetry Slam for the first time, and they used their platform to ensure that the Hawaiian culture gained centre stage in a continental U.S. city and on an HBO television show — the poem won the team competition that year, and has been performed on many occasions since. It is a poem with the power to move audiences, to connect across cultural barriers, to educate and to protest.

Voice and language in “Kaona” by Jamaica Osorio, Ittai Wong, William Giles and Alaka‘i Kotrys

“Kaona” tells the story of Queen Lili‘uokalani’s imprisonment by the Provisional Government and her communication with the outside world through the flowers cut from her garden that were delivered by her supporters wrapped in daily newspapers. The poem opens in Hawaiian, with Osorio pronouncing “Ua ‘ola ka ‘ōlelo mai ka

paikū ‘ana o nā pua”, which is immediately translated by Wong into English: “Our language survived through the passing of flowers” (Osorio and Wong 2010, 227:1-2; Jamaica Osorio 0:11). Their voices join together to recount Lili‘uokalani’s fate, and the ingenious method through which Hawaiian nationalists ensured the survival of their language; they explain ‘It is because of this we know our history/ the language of hidden meanings/ kaona’ (Osorio and Wong 2010, 227:12-13; Jamaica Osorio 0:36).

Speaking separately and together, in English and Hawaiian, Wong and Osorio move through the poem, defining kaona as ‘The most intricate euphemisms that ever existed’ (Osorio and Wong 2010, 227:23; Jamaica Osorio 0:36). They explain:

You had to understand the history and culture
to decrypt this language. Had to dig deeper than dictionaries
beneath oesophagus
and vocal cords
to grasp the root of the words our people would chant
just to understand their messages
This is kaona

(Osorio and Wong 2010; 227:24-30)

Kaona is more than the definition of a word or phrase; comprehending the polysemy of Hawaiian requires an engagement that moves beyond language and speech, ‘beneath oesophagus/ and vocal cords’, towards a commitment to the philosophy and spirituality of the Hawaiian culture. The performance of “Kaona” includes an oli (chant) performed by William Giles and Alaka‘i Kotrys. They spend the first part of the performance sat in the audience. When they stand and begin to chant the Brave New Voices audience in Washington DC gasps and swivels round to stare, some stand and cheer, many applaud — it’s clear that hearing such a strongly ‘other’ cultural performance has an effect (Jamaica Osorio 1:02-1:29). Presumably the effect included

some ‘transmission/recognition of resonant difference’ (Damon 329) as the poem won that year.

When performed in Hawai‘i, the shock is absent, but the pleasure is clearly heightened by recognition. The message of Hawaiian protest and cultural endurance in “Kaona” supports Somers-Willett’s analysis of the success performances of marginal identities attract on the Slam stage, and it is culturally and politically relevant that these young poets chose to focus on language and voice. To write about kaona is a highly sophisticated decision for such young poets – all four members of the team were nineteen or under at the time – because the poem itself is an act of kaona.

Whilst laying bare the story of Hawai‘i’s overthrow it simultaneously retains much of the mo‘olelo’s original kaona by taking pua (flowers/children) as its method/metaphor of communicating this particular historical fact. McDougall elaborates on this by explaining that not only was the method of communication a form of concealment in plain sight, newspaper wrapped flowers, which is itself a metaphor for kaona, but the flowers themselves were chosen for their particular kaona which reinforced the nationalist sentiments of their senders. The poem continues to reference other Hawaiian cultural symbols which each have their own mo‘olelo, kaona and mo‘okū‘auhau (stories, hidden meaning and genealogy):

speaking of flowers but meaning children
 Ua maika’i ke kalo i ka ‘ohā
 The branch is a reflection of the taro root
 We are a reflection of our genesis

(Osorio and Wong 2010; 227:19-22)

The complex dance between revealing and concealing both allows the unacquainted

audience enough understanding to comprehend what kaona is, without allowing them enough knowledge to access the whole poem. The layering of voices and languages between the performers compounds the effect. Half way through the poem Osorio takes a small step away from the microphone and Wong moves closer. They speak simultaneously, Osorio in Hawaiian and Wong in English. Osorio stepping back makes her voice quieter, and the Hawaiian is overlaid with the English. This is an accommodation of a predominantly English speaking audience and an acknowledgement that English has dominated Hawaiian from the nineteenth century to the present. By ensuring that the Hawaiian remains, however subjugated, the poets are offering resistance: in an English speaking space, in America, they bring the language back to a very public stage. As the two voices echo together, the words they speak also echo the sentiments of poets before them. Wong intones:

A dying language wrapped
a dying culture

Our flowers

Our Children

The ones we promised to die for
weren't surviving

So we sent our stories

Wrapped our children
in blankets of words

Hoping they hold on
to their meanings.

(Osorio and Wong 2010, 228: 39-49;
Jamaica Osorio 0:52-1:00)

Here Wong clearly occupies a voice older than himself – he expresses a wish of

previous generations whilst simultaneously embodying the (at least partial) fulfilment of that wish. He is a young Hawaiian man re-membering Hawaiian history for an American audience.

Voice is a vital part of the performance of “Kaona”, as the differing cadences of Osorio’s and Wong’s voices allow the two languages to be more easily distinguished. Giles and Kotrys chant with deep, powerful voices that easily fill the auditorium. The oli (chant) they perform, called “E Hō Mai” (Grant us), was composed by highly respected kumu hula Edith K. Kanāka‘ole. It is sung to help classes or small groups focus their energies on receiving wisdom and understanding. As Wong and Osorio come to the end of a bilingual piece, Giles and Kotrys’ voices resonate from the back of the room towards the stage. They chant:

E hō mai ka ‘ike mai luna mai e	Grant us the knowledge from above
O nā mea huna no‘eau o nā mele	The hidden wisdom of the chants
E hō mai	Grant it to us
E hō mai	Grant it to us
E hō mai e	Grant it to us

(Osorio and Wong 2010, 228:50-55;
Jamaica Osorio 1:02- 1:29)

Asking for ‘wisdom’ in this context is not a literal request for signs, but a way of focussing the energies of those engaged in learning. It is a way of preparing the audience to listen with all their senses even if they don’t understand the words themselves. As the performance of “Kaona” draws to its end each of the four poets in turn repeat the phrase ‘Listen to me’, emphatic in their delivery (Jamaica Osorio 1:30). The focus returns to the stage as Osorio and Wong conclude:

Existence persists as long as we have language
if we cannot communicate with each other, we cannot survive

He mana ko ka leo, a ina aohe leo, aohe ola
without language, we have nothing
We must see to it that our language survives like the past,
through flowers Ua ‘ola ka ‘ōlelo mai ka paikū ‘ana o nā pua
E hiki nā pua e ‘ola mai ka paikū ‘ana o ka ‘ōlelo
so our children can survive, through the passing of language.

(Osorio and Wong 2010, 229:83-90;
Jamaica Osorio 1:36-2:07)

The English lines translate the Hawaiian, at least superficially, and the message is clear: without *Hawaiian* language, Hawaiians will not survive. “Kaona” foregrounds listening as a vital part of language, as to speak and not be heard is equal to not being able to speak. The question is left unasked, but is inherent— what are Hawaiians listening for? In the context of performance poetry the immediate answer is ‘words’, but as “Kaona” begins to teach us, the Hawaiian language has levels of consciousness that evoke a connection to a force of far greater significance than what the West might describe in terms of ‘discourse’.

Poetry Slams are, ideally, arenas of exchange between poets and their audience, but they are not rarefied, particularly controlled or approbated. The transition of Slam poetry into historical and political performance practice is a natural one, particularly in a Hawaiian context, as in the exchange is the potential for a greater understanding of inherently contentious identity politics. Each of the poems investigated here illustrate the importance and symbiosis of deep listening with an exchange of hā (breath) and leo (voice) that leads to a reciprocal exchange between performer and audience, which at its best can create a condition of aloha ‘that conveys the deepest expression of one’s relationship with oneself, creative and life-giving forces, family, friends, community,

and strangers' (Taum 38). Bringing poetry out of the academy and into (admittedly mostly urban) public and social spaces, these poets are continuing to develop the form's potential for polysemy, in order to communicate culturally embedded and political ideas to diverse audiences. By striving for the personal connection that performance encourages, Kealoha, MacKenzie, Osorio and Wong are referencing, although not recreating, their oral histories within the context of popular culture, and simultaneously melding Hawaiian culture into new forms to ensure its continuation in the public sphere in the twenty-first century.

Chapter Seven. Sexuality and Science: Tradition in the twenty-first century.

This chapter takes the work of three poets in turn, No‘ukahau‘oli Revilla, Jamaica Osorio and Kealoha, and delineates a reversal — three areas where society and science in the West are newly aligning with Native Hawaiian values. By focusing on gender, sexuality and the environment, it examines the variety of ways Native Hawaiian poets are currently addressing themes that have significant contemporary relevance and also have strong links to aspects of Hawaiian culture that have undergone significant transformations. In Hawai‘i the Sovereignty discourse has evolved to such an extent that it is possible for younger poets to expand on what have become the core themes and tone of Native Hawaiian activist literature from the 70s-90s. Sovereignty is no longer “the S word” (Kosasa 16:46) that could not be uttered in public without provoking a backlash. The freedom provided by the political foundation created by early activists allows younger poets relative freedom to address more personal and diverse topics in their work. Revilla, Osorio and Kealoha represent a snapshot of the poetic community active in Hawai‘i today, and by analysing their work in close proximity, diverse yet related threads of influence and concern can be brought to the fore to demonstrate how the contemporary transformation of traditional themes and form is allowing kanaka maoli poets to develop their art in culturally specific ways.

No‘u Revilla’s highly feminised poetry is read as an expression of the power of shared sexuality to decolonise women, and Jamaica Osorio’s work is interpreted through the poet’s own intention to empower female relationships by rewriting the Hi‘iakaikapoliopole epic mele. The final section reads Kealoha’s performance piece *The Story of Everything* (2015) as a piece that most overtly aims to synthesise Western

and Native Hawaiian knowledge, in order to provoke an environmental awareness that is both political within Hawai‘i, but also reaches beyond the islands and into national and global concerns. As *The Story of Everything* is such a recent piece, its effect cannot reliably be commented on; however this section aims to illustrate how Kealoha is relating indigenous understanding and scientific theory in ways that resist being drawn into political and nationalist agendas, yet have specific relevance for those same agendas due to the piece’s local/Hawaiian identity.

All of the poets in this chapter perform live as well as publish their work, and there are many recordings of their performances available on the internet. Due to the nature of performance poetry in the era of electronic media, their poems are composed, performed, re-performed, altered, witnessed, watched and re-watched in ways that render impossible the concept of an ‘exclusive original’ (Somers-Willett 25).¹ Therefore an analysis cannot reasonably be organised chronologically or via an external organisational structure such as a collection.² Although both Revilla and Osorio have published chapbooks, each poet has a body of work so large and diverse as to make covering all their work impractical in this chapter; poems have been selected according to their treatment of the themes identified and for reasons of accessibility, such as the availability of chapbooks, transcripts and recorded performances.

No‘ukahau‘oli Revilla: Female sexuality and genealogy in *Say Throne* (2011)

No‘u Revilla works explicitly with feminine sexuality and gendered writing in order to speak from a position of femininity that has been repeatedly silenced in Hawai‘i.

Poems from her chapbook *Say Throne* will be read here alongside performed work for

their presentation of female sexuality and its role in Native Hawaiian genealogy. In her poetry she brings to life the violence women suffer, and their own potential for aggression, alongside their agency as sexual beings, as daughters, friends, mothers and grandmothers. Revilla's mo'olelo (stories) draw on the mana (spiritual energy/power) of her ancestors and mentors to interrogate dominant Christian views of female sexuality and how its strictures and scriptures affect Hawaiian women. Revilla's poems demonstrate the powerful role of literary dissidence in carving a space where the exploration of sexual and intellectual play is a source of joy, irreverence, and resistance for indigenous women.

In *Say Throne* Revilla explores what it means for Hawaiian women to reproduce, both biologically and intellectually, in a patriarchal society that privileges heterosexual nuclear families. She interrogates the place of childless women in such a society, demonstrating the resistant potential of literary 'offspring' in supporting the generative abilities of the Native Hawaiian 'ohana (family). *Say Throne* is a collection about transition in which a young female voice addresses sexuality, reproduction and female relationships, through the structure of mo'okū'auhau (genealogy). The poems in the collection draw on the mo'olelo of the mo'o (lizard), playing with the understanding of mo'o as beings with great power, who can shapeshift, who guard their territory fiercely (usually freshwater pools), and whose epic battles forged many deep valleys and great peaks (Pukui and Curtis 40). Revilla describes herself as coming from a long line of mo'o wahine, literally "lizard women."³

Performing her poem "Lenalena" (Yellow) Revilla takes on the persona of a mo'o (ho'omanawanui et al. 7:00). Whilst "Lenalena" is not in *Say Throne*, its shared mo'o

theme connects it to the collection, as does its context of mo‘olelo shared between family members, and Revilla has performed the poems together. In a recording of her performance of “Lenalena” at the University of Hawai‘i, Revilla introduces it as an ‘eating poem’ (ho‘omanawanui et al. 7:00). She tells the audience how it was inspired by a lesson from her grandmother, who warned that if she should notice a certain yellow hue (lenalena) on the water of a mo‘o pool, then it should be interpreted as a warning from the mo‘o to leave, which if ignored could have fatal consequences (ho‘omanawanui et al. 7.05-7.33). When performing “Lenalena” at the *Words in the World Symposium* at the University of Hawai‘i in 2013, Revilla stood on a low stage in front of her audience. Revilla is tall, with a penetrating gaze that is both friendly and powerful, and for this performance she wore a bright yellow maxi dress that bled into dark blue towards the hem— an outfit carefully chosen to reflect the yellow watery hue of her Grandmother’s warning, that clearly projected Revilla’s self-identification with the mo‘o wahine (lizard woman) whose voice she occupies. The words of “Lenalena”, when combined with Revilla’s performance makes a bold statement about territory and the mana of Maui women, directed at those who repeatedly outstay their welcome. With a broad grin and slow, deliberate delivery she tells the audience ‘...if you don’t leave, the mo‘o will take it as a sign of disrespect. And when you disrespect a mo‘o ... we play with our food’ (ho‘omanawanui et al. 7.19-7.33). The audience is palpably delighted by the droll delivery and the humorous, yet menacing tone Revilla imparts. As she opens her poem Revilla looks directly into the audience, holding people’s eyes, and smiling slowly throughout. Her delivery is entirely feminine — in fact the main purpose of the poem is to confront socialised ideas of how women should eat, making kaona references to the time of tapu when women and men ate separately. Her voice is smooth and low, her delivery slow and deliberate — she

lingers over words in a way that is compelling, whilst the images the words conjure are faintly repulsive. Her performance is hypnotic. Revilla's skill at communicating with her audience is consummate, and it is notable that she is not a Slam performer. Uninhibited by the constraints of this competitive form Revilla's delivery is different from other contemporary poets in its measured, teasing tone.

By taking the mo'ō as her influence and metaphor, Revilla is foregrounding the primacy of mo'okū'auhau as the means by which Hawaiians identify themselves and their place in the world. She consciously invokes the mana of her powerful female forebears, the mo'ō wahine, to resist the diminishing of her Native heritage. The collection *Say Throne* is deliberately inter-generational, positing the relationships between females in a family as a unique support network that shares and sustains mana wahine (female spiritual skill and power). It begins internally, with a poem voiced by a young woman, and spreads outwards and backwards; the penultimate poem is about her grandmother and the final poem, "Say Throne", pays homage to Queen Lili'uokalani. Women, femaleness, the female body, sex and female reproduction (both biological and literary) are consistent themes in this short collection.

The opening poem of *Say Throne*, called "Sentenced" (1-2), relates a young woman starting her period. The poem's seven stanzas are titled for days of the week and presented as entries on a timeline. The poem explores what it means for a young woman to discover that she is not entirely in control of her own body, and plays with the notion of being a "lady in waiting" for God/ nature to decide what her body will do. Revilla writes, 'Wednesday:/ I learn that a lady/ is in waiting. In/ God time she/ could wait forever./ I lose my virginity/ on purpose and/ use pads for lint' (18-25). Sex

is framed here as a way to reclaim control over her body from “God”, who her mother has told her “decides” when she will have her period. God in this poem is clearly the singular, male, Christian god. God’s usurpation of the natural rhythms of the female body mirrors the control Christianity claims over women’s bodies and sexuality, confining both to the private/marital realm.

In the sixth stanza, ‘Saturday’, the narration becomes ambiguous: ‘God says /blood is time./ My sister: blood/ is knowledge’ (42-45). ‘My sister’ could refer to the narrator’s sister, but the new sentence and use of a colon indicate that the statement is directed at the (female) reader. If read as the latter, then the lines ‘blood is/ knowledge’ (44-45) alters from reporting, to stating — the narrator aims to communicate an opinion directly. In this context ‘blood’ re-takes its metaphorical meaning of family relationships, but Revilla deepens the western metaphor to include the Hawaiian belief that all knowledge (that is, history) is held within genealogy. Whilst ‘God’ marks the passing of the months through periods, the narrator sees the flow of menstrual blood as ‘knowledge’ both of the genealogical chain of human existence and of her place in it. The poem ends, on Sunday, with the lines ‘Give her/ her own period./ And let her run on’ (53-56), a play not only on menstruation but writing. By reclaiming menstruation and blood as her own, the young girl refuses to accept that a distant entity such as ‘God’ has any agency to control her body’s cycles, and by implication that wider Christian or western ideas about sexuality and reproduction govern her understanding of her own body.

The second poem, “Getting Ready for Work” (3-4), vibrates with the shadow of male violence and control. A daughter has fragmented memories of her mother putting on

makeup, and getting dressed, of the house and bedroom where she learned Bible stories, but can ‘remember only that Eve is more evil than/ the serpent’ (11-12). The image of a mouth recurs in this poem, here the daughter’s fascination with her mother’s lipstick evolves into the confused observation that, ‘She had no mouth no mouth’ (21), perhaps without the lipstick. The bedroom seems to fragment into violence as a voice interjects “‘Your mother had no mouth/ before she met me’” (22-3). The imposition of this apparently male voice implies danger as immediately ‘things: shattered’ (24) and his footfalls thundered ‘Old Testament down/ those stairs’ (25-6). The vague threat felt in the earlier lines, which implies that the mother only has agency, or permission, to speak through the male in the household, coalesces into a palpable sense of fear and anger as the poem ends with fragmented images and a sense, without being explicit, that domestic violence hovers behind this young girl’s memories:

I: mouth, eat pretty like glass

reflecting, refracting
the dirty thing. Throat gives birth to lips.
Mirror child Mirror(s) mother(s).
A door separates us like a terrible thing,
and the pretty is in pieces all over the floor.

(33-8)

The implication of violent silencing is a motivating factor for Revilla to speak. She has said her “poetry resists the idea that a woman shouldn’t speak, a woman shouldn’t speak about certain things, [that] women can’t give each other stories and help each other” (see Appendix C 308). Revilla sees her poetry as a form of therapy — sharing stories of trauma can help heal women and empower them to do the same for others, protecting each other in the process. This is less about confessional poetry for the

individual, and more related to social justice for collective healing. Violence in her poetry is not only individual, but pervades all aspects of Native Hawaiian women's colonised existence.

The next three poems, "How to Use a Condom" (5-6), "Catch" (7) and "Make Rice" (8), work together to form a historical critique of sexual politics in Hawai'i. In "How to Use a Condom" (5-6) the manual-like title is followed by pseudo-instructions, and the voice of a young couple having sex interjects, muttering '*We gotta stop We gotta stop—*'. The condom's function as a barrier becomes an act of dissociation, almost of violence. The condom:

if used properly,
will reduce risk of transmission. In-and-out nothings
will eroticise motion and deepen spermicidal tendencies
will lead to murder.

(11-14)

The consonance of 'spermicidal' and 'homicidal' pre-empt the idea that trapping and discarding ejaculated sperm is akin to murder. The narrator educates us that 'Reproduction is not the problem./ Reproduction is the problem' (15-16); a reference to the legacy of the severe depopulation Native Hawaiians suffered due to epidemics of disease, including venereal disease (Stannard "Before" 16-22). The lines 'Our moments like wet hair in the cold: old stories/ with low body temperatures, low resistance to virus' (23-4) allude to this history of loss. Each 'moment' of climax that should be one of connection and potential becomes lessened, weakened and susceptible to disease. In an indigenous context, where survival is repeatedly, and highly reductively, linked to the numbers of Native children, or rather those who are at least half Native (according to blood quantum rules), the condom becomes a sign of

oppression, a signifier of reduced reproduction, curtailed lineages and lost children. Even more menacingly the simple barrier device becomes reminiscent of highly pressured, and often coercive, family planning methods visited on indigenous, Hispanic, black, disabled and poor women throughout the United States, which have included forced or un-consenting sterilisation.⁴ Whilst Revilla is not directly referencing this history, she is certainly gesturing towards issues of indigenous identity within American racial structures when she writes, ‘Reproduction is the problem, making children based on an image. We gotta stop’ (15-19).

The act of sex, those ‘in-and-out nothings/ [that] eroticise motion’ (13-14) are framed as diminishing the significance of sex; even making it so un-erotic that lubrication becomes ‘a product./ For Sale’ (26-7) rather than a natural sign of arousal. The poem makes this explicit: ‘I need connection to be source to be predicate to be don’t stop/ don’t stop don’t stop– /will your lost erections ever find their way home?’ (29-31). For a woman to fulfil her active potential, as a ‘source’ and a ‘predicate’ she must feel connected to her lover, skin to skin, mind to mind. The allusion to sentence construction in the concept of reproduction as a verb clause is a play on the concept of poetry as the reproduction of ideas, and a link to the next poem in the chapbook.

“Catch” (7) is a concrete poem that plays with the idea of orgasms, vaginas and letters as sex that is catching. The poem is a page of small ‘o’s each separated by one space, forming a pattern like perforated paper. In the centre, carving through the background of ‘o’s is a large ellipsis, positioned vertically, drawn in a heavy black line. Below the image is a quotation by French author Emma Santos, who was committed to psychiatric care throughout her life, reading “Writing is a shameful, venereal disease.”

The repetition of the ‘o’s has an oral as well as visual effect as it indicates sound (rather than words) and spaces, or holes. The large ellipsis is clearly, to borrow the Sanskrit term, yonic. The combination of ‘o’s and the ellipsis, indicative of a vagina, and Santos’ quotation offer an array of wonderfully interlinked possible meanings: the ripple of ‘o’s indicates orgasm, which in turn alludes to sexual pleasure and reproduction, which references writing (perhaps an allusion to Haunani-Kay Trask’s ‘sly reproduction’ of ideas), and writing is connected to the spread of venereal disease, which in turn alludes to Hawai‘i’s history of foreign microbiological and literary incursions. When considered alongside Emma Santos’ relationship with writing as a therapeutic exercise for her mental health, the rich allusions to complex histories offers the possibility of wonderfully varied interpretations.

The next poem “Make Rice” (8) is equally complex. The grains of rice, clasped in the narrator’s fist, seem to be metaphors for ovum. As she stands at the sink rinsing ‘fists of brown grain with water/ that comes from the faucet’ (2-3) she contemplates the rice, imagining the grains as ‘good Happy Valley children’ that ‘squeeze through holes/ in fences on private property’ (8-10). This reference is to a community near Wailuku in Maui, which is less affluent than its neighbour. Revilla seems to be saying that these children/ovum are born out of turn, as though their presence/birth is akin to trespass. There is a confluence of themes with the poem “How to Use a Condom” (5-6) as there is a sense that the existence of these children/ovum is being controlled by forces greater than their parent’s immediate choice (or not) to conceive. The final stanza explains:

Dirty water pours out,
tap water shoots in,
but I never lose a piece of rice,

because that could be my daughter.

(11-15)

The metaphor of her fist as womb and the rice as ovum is emphasised here, as is the need to protect and nurture the reproductive ability.

Taken together “How to Use a Condom” (5-6), “Catch” (7) and “Make Rice” (8) form a commentary on female sexual pleasure and the weight of history that accompanies sex for this young, historically aware, indigenous woman. Whilst western feminists assert their right to restrict their body’s reproductive capability and access to contraception, many indigenous and other ethnic minority women have historically had to fight for their right to give birth (see n4 327).

The next poem returns to the themes of genealogy and mo‘o wahine. “Pull Without Push” (9-10) occupies the voice of a young woman remembering girlhood and the awakening of her sexuality. It is a poem packed with metaphors, many recognisable from earlier poems and other poet’s (Trask’s) work: rope and mo‘o as metaphors for genealogy, water for sperm and fertility, and words for children. The poem opens with the statement ‘Grandma was a lizard at our age’ (1), and continues, imagining/ remembering grandmother as a mo‘o, climbing up and jumping off the lamp post on the pier in Hana Bay, Maui. With her legs spread ‘She landed/ and the water turned to foam. The rope was dry for thirteen days./ One for every child that swam out of her’ (28-30). The granddaughter watches the grandmother, watches the rope, watches the water and learns what her desires mean. She relates the urge to experiment, to ‘taste’ and ‘know’, ‘enacting mothers and daughters where water met fiber met/ piers’ (26-7). This poem is an open conversation about sexual discovery. The jutting pier is phallic

as the women and girls play on it, jumping into its waters and passing it into their bodies; the rope of generations is the salty knotty twisting of ‘big girl’ tongues; they dream of sex as pleasure, as reproductive, as rope — ‘Fucking formed like vowels between our legs— / not like other girls and their ABCs—we/ knew rope like A E I O U’ (34-36). Sex is sought after, imagined, experienced, and celebrated. The ‘other girls’ and their ABCs allude to the haole, or white girls, they share Hawai‘i with, descendants of the literary tradition, and purveyors of notions of Christian sexual decency. Hawaiian language has very few consonants and words are mostly constructed through repeated vowel sounds. In imagining sex as the roundness of vowels, Revilla is not only mimicking the sounds of sexual pleasure but linking that pleasure to the sounds of her Native language. Her intention here is not to repeat the trope of highly sexed, debauched Natives, as constructed by “civilizing” Christian missionaries, but to connect play and pleasure to sex, sex to genealogy, and genealogy to family, strength and survival. Hers is a blatant, discomforting sexuality because it is not for others— it has no market value, nor pornographic quality. It is the surging of hormonal, natural, emotional lust in a young girl’s imagination, in the presence of her friends, and her grandmother. It is creative and generative in a very visceral way.

Despite being undoubtedly about sex and childbirth, “Pull Without Push” is also the poem with which Revilla chooses to lace herself into her own literary genealogy. The metaphors of rope and reproduction have been used before, most notably by Haunani-Kay Trask, who was Revilla’s professor at the University of Hawai‘i. Revilla references Trask’s poem “Sons” (*Light* 55-6) directly. Trask wrote ‘I am slyly/ reproductive: ideas/ books, history/ politics, reproducing// the rope of resistance/ for unborn generations’ (15-20). Trask has no children, having dedicated her life to

writing and activism, and so her books and poems are her way of maintaining and contributing to the ‘rope’; a rope that in its very existence is resistant to the genocidal logic of “Nativity” as defined in terms of blood-quantum.

By taking words from Trask’s poem titled “Sons”, and placing it firmly within a poem about daughters, Revilla widens the metaphor of genealogy as literary production to include the sensuality of pleasure in both sex and speaking (those rounded vowels), and by extension storytelling. By framing sex as letters and words, both women begin to prise apart the connection between sex and reproduction, between being female and a mother. Whilst celebrating the generative abilities of the female body, Revilla is consciously placing herself in a genealogy of female writers, whose children are their books and poems, whose reproductive potential is intellectual as well as sexual, whose contribution to their people’s survival is creative in a literary and political way, and not confined to childbirth.

The final poem of the collection is the eponymous “Say Throne” (11-12), which honours Queen Lili‘uokalani. In an introduction to a performance of this poem Revilla speaks of her work to “decolonise desire” and look at the movement of bodies in political, cultural and emotional spaces, indicated in this poem through the use of stage directions (ho‘omanawanui et al. 9.32; 9.47). The version performed at *Words in the World* is abridged from the published version, but I quote from the published version here. The poem “looks at the materiality of the throne [as a] fancy chair” and the idea of the Queen’s overthrow as the taking of her throne/chair, and what that meant for the Hawaiian people (ho‘omanawanui et al. 9.12-9.27).

The effect of “Say Throne” is achieved through an accumulation of overlapping inferences that build through the tensions of opposing movement — pushing and pulling, in and out, sitting and standing. The poem is split into four sections, each framed by the stage directions ‘[ENTER]’ and ‘[EXIT]’ that dictate the direction of the narration and indicate a process of arrival, occupation and expulsion.

The poem opens with the direction ‘[ENTER]/ Pull out chair. Sit the lady. Push in/ chair and lady. Then/ sit, man. [EXIT]’ (1-4). In performance the first two directions are neutral, and the final one is an order. The power here most certainly lies with the ‘lady’, who commands the deference of the man, who assists her to her seat and then is ordered to ‘sit’. The narrator continues ‘You came, and lady was brown, hard, articulate./ You pulled out, telling the others The Lettuce is bad’ (5-6). At the opening of the poem the ‘sit man’ (‘you’) is looking for ‘lettuce’, a slang term for both money and vagina,⁵ but upon finding a ‘hard, articulate’ Queen decides the investment is bad — that is, she will be difficult to exploit.

The poem explicitly links colonial desire for power (over the throne) with sex, control of land and history. The narrator accuses:

... To your table the appetites arrived
but Fancy chair fuck kept you occupied.

[occupied was occupation but not occupation that kept lady occupied]

Your fuck was favour,
your feed for labor
your fiction official as cane.

(14-17)

These lines, by playing on the meaning of occupation as an interest, a job and

military incursion, link the exploratory, economic and military interests of ‘occupants’ of Hawai‘i. The ‘lady’ however, was not ‘occupied’, inferring that occupying the land did not automatically cede control of the minds of the people to the occupier; just as intercourse (inferred in the ‘push’ and ‘pull’ of the poem) did not automatically make the ‘lady’ nor the resulting ‘pua’ (flowers/children) amenable to the ‘sit man’s occupation. The final line of this stanza, ‘your fiction official as cane’ illustrates the poem’s position on the discursive nature of history through economic means: those who controlled sugar cane were, in the main, descendants of missionaries who controlled the printing presses and the course of narrative history.

The inference of sexual relations between the ‘sit man’ and the ‘lady’ runs throughout the poem, but it is often unclear whether it is consensual. By the second section of the poem the narrative voice is outraged, asking ‘How did she get on all fours?/ From sit sit to squat squatting’ (26-7). This seems to point to the displacement of Queen Lili‘uokalani, and therefore Hawaiians, from being seated on her own throne to being a ‘squatter’ on land now owned by haoles.

What is clear is the natural consequence of sex, children, are often not as amenable to their ostensible father as expected. The third section opens with the direction ‘[ENTER ... something new]’. The children of the union of the Queen and coloniser, the hapa children, mark a new turn in the poem:

They weren’t flags.
 They were flowers. Nā pua.
 Un-pluckable above that chair, there
 to teach you what in and out, out in

really mean.

(40-44)

They comfort the ‘sit man’, almost patronise him. They offer him the ‘chair’ because he ““needs the push and pull to believe in / himself again”” (45-6), whilst away from the centres of power, represented by the ‘Fancy chair’ (49), the real ‘labor’ (48) is being carried out. The parallels with grassroots activist movements that have occurred on most islands in Hawai‘i, with the ‘labor’ of the ‘lady’ is both deliberate and effective. The ‘sitter’ on the ‘fancy chair’ becomes a static, useless ‘dangling’ (49) thing, whose complacency has rendered him superfluous to those doing the real work elsewhere. The sense of the poem is that this ‘labor’ is sovereignty work, labouring to restore the ‘lady’ to her place, if not on the throne, then in her position as leader of her ‘pua’ (children).

“Say Throne” is bursting with images that require supposition and deduction to draw meaning from — a task which is aided by videos of Revilla’s performance of the poem. In her performance the ‘pull’ and ‘push’ of the poem take on a battle-like quality, of wit as well as force. The final section of the poem, after its introductory stage directions, has only two lines:

[ENTER Sit Man with his chair]

Pulled out, pushed out. [EXITING] And now, the lady.

Now the lady.

(55-6)

The final section is mostly unwritten because it is set in the future, at a time when

the 'sit man' has 'pulled out' (I think the use of a term that is common when speaking of military, as well as sexual, withdrawal is entirely intentional) and the time of the 'lady' has arrived. The four sections of the poem reflect the time before colonisation, the period of intense colonisation, the contemporary period of resistance and cultural revival, and finally a time in the future when Hawaiians, represented here by the 'lady', Queen Lili'uokalani, can truly begin to rebuild their sovereignty.

By ending the collection at this point Revilla is offering a vision of a time when Hawai'i will be post-colonial, and embodies that time in Queen Lili'uokalani, who is metonymic of the Hawaiian nation. It is important to note that this situation is brought about by the labour of 'Nā pua', the offspring of the 'sit man' and the 'lady', who were 'flowers' not 'flags'. That the modern 'children' of Hawai'i, who are inheritors of two opposing traditions, are working towards sovereignty is a strong statement against the racialisation of Hawaiian nationalism. That they are 'flowers' and not 'flags' is a reaffirmation of the importance of land over temporary political structures of government.

Revilla's collection re-places female sexuality in her poetry in ways that decolonise desire, re-sensualise play and re-politicise Hawaiian literary perspectives.

Foregrounding and strengthening mana wahine (women's spiritual power) in her work acts as a powerful antidote to American patriarchy and cultural hegemony. By writing her own stories Revilla insists on the primary ability of Hawaiian literature to tell her own socially relevant histories.

Jamaica Osorio: Writing aikāne love in “He mele no Hōpoe”

For her most recent writing project, undertaken alongside her PhD studies, Jamaica Osorio has embarked on the creation of a series of poems and short stories inspired by the epic mo‘olelo of Pele and her beloved youngest sister Hi‘iakaikapoliopole (Hi‘iaka in the bosom/ armpit of Pele). Osorio has written that it is her ‘intention that this series will come to be received as an alternate version to the Hawaiian and translated versions that already exist as a way to empower the wahine [women’s] voice’ (“Nā Wahine” np.). The series extends the traditional mele by writing the relationship between Hi‘iaka and her friend and lover Hōpoe, from whom she was separated by her quest to fetch the chief Lohi‘au to be Pele’s lover. This section will look at the first poem of the series “What They Cannot See: He mele no Hōpoe” because it recovers sensual kaona for same-sex love in delicate and feminine ways. Also, it is the poem from this series that Osorio has published and performed most widely.

Hi‘iakaikapoliopole is a hula mo‘olelo, and hula is the framing activity of the story’s plot, as it is the mechanism by which the two sets of lovers, Hi‘iaka and Hōpoe, and Pele and Lohi‘au, fall in love. Hula, as has been previously explored, was the primary mechanism of telling histories and stories in pre-literate Hawai‘i, and early on in the history of literacy in Hawai‘i many versions of this mo‘olelo were recorded and preserved (N. Silva *Aloha* 76).

Hi‘iakaikapoliopole was first published in weekly serialised form in the Hawaiian newspaper *Ka Hoku o ka Pakipika* from December 1861 to July 1862, authored by M. J. Kapihenui of Kailua, Ko‘olaupoko, O‘ahu. Hawaiian historian Noenoe K. Silva identifies this publication as the main, uncredited, source for the most famous English publication of the mo‘olelo, Nathaniel B Emerson’s *Pele and Hiiaka: A Myth from*

Hawai‘i (1915). In Emerson’s introduction to his translation, he writes:

The story of Pele and her sister Hi‘iaka stands at the fountain-head of Hawaiian myth and is the matrix from which the unwritten literature of Hawaii drew its life-blood. The material for the elaboration of this story has, in part, been found in serial contributions to the Hawaiian newspapers during the last few decades; in part, gathered by interviews with the men and women of the older regime, in whose memory it has been stored and, again, in part, it has been supplied by papers solicited from intelligent Hawaiians. The information contained in the notes has been extracted by viva voce appeal to Hawaiians themselves. These last two sources of information will soon be no longer available. (v)

Emerson’s colonialist viewpoint, that Hawaiian knowledge would soon die out, was typical of the time, and indeed shared by many Hawaiians (N. Silva *Aloha* 76), however, despite the Hawaiian language versions being created and preserved, Emerson’s translation became and remained the authoritative version of the story for many decades. Only when a new generation of Hawaiian speaking scholars began to work on the Hawaiian serialisations were they able to begin demonstrating that Emerson’s translation took great liberties with the original (ho‘omanawanui *voices* xxxiv).

One area in which English versions of the mo‘olelo differ considerably from the Hawaiian originals is in the relationship between the Goddess Hi‘iaka and the woman Hōpoe, who was the creator of the hula. According to Silva’s translation,

The mo‘olelo begins with a scene in which Pele admires the young beauty Hōpoe dancing hula on the island of Hawai‘i at a place called Hā‘ena, the easternmost point in the archipelago. Pele asks her sisters to reciprocate, but only Hi‘iakaikapoliopole does. She composes and chants an oli (chant) in tribute to the beautiful Hōpoe and her “hula lea”. (*Aloha* 76)

Of the same scene, Emerson writes,

At the conclusion of this innocent performance, the earliest mention of the hula that has reached us, Hi‘iaka went to stay with her friend Hōpoe, a person whose charm of character had fascinated the imagination of the susceptible girl and who had already become her dearest intimate, her inspiring mentor in those sister arts, song, poesy and the dance. (2)

Apart from the gendered and condescending description of the hula as a ‘sister art’ of a ‘susceptible girl’ (Pele later falls in love with Lohi‘au after seeing him perform hula), Emerson describes Hi‘iaka and Hōpoe’s relationship as that of teacher to enamoured student, or dear friends in a rather one-sided relationship. Silva’s analysis of the language of the original draws rather different conclusions. She notes that Hi‘iaka’s description of Hōpoe’s “hula lea” has kaona as ‘le‘a is a modifier that means “pleasing, delightful,” but it has a definite sexual connotation because it also means “sexual gratification, orgasm” (*Aloha* 76). Before Hi‘iaka departs to fetch Lohi‘au for Pele, she extracts a promise from Pele that she will not harm Hōpoe or the lehua groves (which are sacred to the hula) out of anger or spite. Noenoe K. Silva translates this exchange as ‘my lehua grove, do not consume by fire there ... my aikāne [Hōpoe], do not consume by fire’ (*Aloha* 77). Hi‘iaka describes Hōpoe as ‘aikāne’, which translates as ‘intimate friend’ but has strong connotations of same sex lovers.⁶

The understanding that Hi‘iaka and Hōpoe’s relationship was a deeply loving one is supported by analysis of the word ‘aikāne’ and the convention in Hawaiian literary culture of parallelism, or balance (pono), where every force has its equal opposing force. In the mo‘olelo, when Pele believes Hi‘iaka has broken her kauoha (command) to not make love to Lohi‘au, she exacts revenge by sending a lava flow over Hōpoe and the lehua groves. It makes sense that Pele takes revenge for the perceived theft of her lover by destroying her sister’s lover. Equally, once Hōpoe had died, Lohi‘au’s

fate was sealed, as to maintain pono he also had to die.

The loving nature of the relationship between Hi‘iaka and Hōpoe is not the only aikāne relationship in Hawaiian literature to have suffered erasure. Due to the persistence in translations by non-Hawaiians who speak fluent Hawaiian, of ‘errors’ such as the alteration of genders (aikāne can *only* refer to a same-sex friendship) some scholars have concluded the erasure is deliberate (Morris “Translators” 231).

Osorio’s motivation for her treatment of the ‘Hi‘iaka mo‘olelo is her belief that it contains documentation that not only contest[s] the [male authored] Hawaiian canon and anglicized scholarship[,] it represents a potential catalyst for a shift and reassessment of the entire academy surrounding Hawaiian thought and academia’ (“Nā Wahine” np.). As a contemporary artist Osorio sees her work as a tool for connecting the past and present that ‘has the potential to release the kanaka maoli from the [colonialist] belief that returning to tradition requires the complete resistance to all parts of contemporary life’ by ‘re-author[ing] and rework[ing] traditional mo‘olelo [and] also create[ing] mo‘olelo ... that are wholly applicable to their contemporary lives’ (“Nā Wahine” np.). It is vital for people to have stories with which they can identify, and Osorio recognizes that in literature kanaka maoli wahine (Native Hawaiian women) have been mutated, rewritten and translated into ‘women’ through the ‘removal of mana’ and the ‘severing [of] ties that all wahine once had with their akua wahine [female gods]’. For Osorio, the transformation of ‘wahine’ into ‘women’ is more than just a translation of words, but a translation between cultures whereby Native Hawaiian women were stripped of their mana, or rather it was relocated from ‘their skills to create (Pele) and revive (Hi‘iaka)’, to their physical beauty and

usefulness to men (“Nā Wahine” np.). By writing contemporary literature that both reflects the loving and powerful nature of same sex relationships, and to supplant Hi‘iaka and Hōpoe’s mistranslation as ‘charming’, ‘susceptible girl[s]’ (Emerson 2) with their Hawaiian portrayal as ‘strong, smart, powerful women’, Osorio is engaged in a process of resistance through relevance. She is locating, expanding and creating, to borrow James Baldwin’s phrase, reflections of herself in her own culture’s literature and using them to address her own political concerns with Native un-belonging in Americanised Hawai‘i.

In a shift from her earlier poetry, which is highly adversarial, Osorio focuses on communicating love through connections with the ‘āina. “What They Cannot See: He mele no Hōpoe” opens in Hi‘iaka’s voice as she watches Hōpoe dance hula for the first time:

I saw you dancing in the distance
pulling my glance with the diction of your stance
gliding over the land like water
over itself

(1-4)

The rhythm of the first two lines is created through the linking of vowel sounds, which when repeated aloud create a swaying effect, like the dance they describe. The movement of the language conveys the ebb and flow of the poem, which is about movement: it invokes the sway of the ha‘a (hula) both in itself and through kaona. As the hula dance was the primary means of transmitting history before literacy, the equation of hula with movement mimics the flow of time. Osorio alludes to this fact in the second line, ‘pulling my glance with the diction of your stance’. The movement of hula is intimately linked with the words of the mele it was performed to; a hula is

composed to a mele because the dance is a visual representation of the story. Here Osorio is invoking movement as the rhythm of history, and particularly of love. By equating love and movement Osorio is forming a metaphor for how love can enable movement, can enable stories to continue forming and be passed on.

In the next stanza Osorio gives Hōpoe the name Nānāhuki (6), which literally means ‘to pull away’. It has kaona, however, in its association with the gentle swaying movement of shallow waves. Nānāhuki is the name of a rock, and the surrounding sea, in the bay at Puna on Hawai‘i Island, where in some versions of the story Hi‘iaka first danced the hula for Pele, and was turned into the rock for Pele’s revenge (Pukui and Elbert 82; Beckwith 181). A stone once stood in the bay that rocked gently with each wave that pushed past it, an echo of the sway of the hula dancers’ hips (Beckwith 181). As the original story of Hi‘iakaikapoliopole was composed as a hula, there is a self-referentiality to these lines which allows Osorio to frame her poem as part of a re-telling or recovery as well as a newly composed piece. In this stanza Hi‘iaka is watching Hōpoe gathering parts of herself, ‘in the form of yellow lehua’, the blossoms which Hawaiians believe are Hōpoe’s body form, and waiting only for the sound of the pahu (drum) to signal the beginning of their dance together.

Hi‘iaka serenades Hōpoe, declaring her love in sensual, but not overtly sexual, terms:

You created of this stranger in me
 a lover
 let me cover your body in the sacred skin of ka nāhele
 plant you a fortress of rumbling lehua trees
 each blossom a promise to return. my love
 to move within your kino again
 for your hā to find home in my mele

(12-18)

This stanza is where Osorio builds the mana of her Hi‘iaka and Hōpoe in the traditional manner, by connecting them to the land. Hi‘iaka asks to cover Hōpoe’s body in the ‘sacred skin’ of the forest (ka nāhele), which ties Hōpoe to another of her names, ‘Woman-in Green’, and alludes to Hōpoe’s kino lau (body form), the lehua tree. The ‘promise to return’ embeds the poem within the Pele epic as it intimates that the narrator, Hi‘iaka, will soon be leaving on her journey to fetch Lohi‘au. The line “to move within your kino again” is both a reference to love making, and to walking through the lehua groves that are, simultaneously, Hōpoe’s body. The last line of this stanza refers to hā, or the sacred breath of life, and offers Hōpoe a second life through the mele — she is given metaphorical life through the lover’s/poet’s voice, sharing her own sacred breath.

At this point in the poem there is a shift in tone:

Can you see those strange men
 watching from beyond the page
 see the way they have drawn us naked and grown
 how they miss your skin feathered with yellow lehua
 writing us into stillness into silence
 how it seems through them
 we have been forgotten

I wonder how it is they cannot see
 I wonder
 what has made them so blind

(19-28)

The shift allows Osorio to address the erasure of the female story by male observers, quite probably a direct reference to Nathaniel Emerson’s translation. The sexualising gaze of the male coloniser inhibits the ability of the two women to share an intimate

relationship, as their naked bodies become the sexualised fetishes of the coloniser. The contrast between ‘naked and grown’ and ‘skin feathered with yellow lehua’ is deep, as Osorio uses kaona to deliberately reveal the pornographic quality of male gaze into this entirely female relationship with the Native Hawaiian associations of ali‘i (chiefly) status and sacred mana in the colour yellow (ho‘omanawanui *voices* 215). ho‘omanawanui relates a piece of Hawaiian knowledge that she finds kaona references to in this stanza:

The yellow lehua blossom is a richly layered sensual image—lehua are soft, delicate; it alludes to the Waiko‘olihilihi, a freshwater pool in Puna where lehua blossoms were floated on the water, so that when one went down to sip from the pool, the delicate stamens of the lehua gently brushed the face. It is a kaona image of oral sex performed on a female, represented by the freshwater pool. (*voices* 215-6)

The depth of kaona in this poem requires understanding of the Hawaiian culture that the watching men clearly do not possess. The poem delicately interlaces the Hawaiian meanings of seeing and knowing with blindness and ignorance. The Hawaiian word for sight, ‘ike, also means to know, or understand, and so the blindness of the ‘strange men’ who watch the women and halt the lover’s intimate dance by ‘writing [them] into stillness ... into silence’ is also their ignorance. The narrator wonders ‘how is it’, ‘what is it’, that makes these watchers blind/ignorant, and implicitly answers that it is ‘writing’. The stillness of writing, compared to the movement of the hula, is a distillation of a major cultural difference that has rendered Native Hawaiian modes of knowledge transmission illegitimate to the dominant Western literary epistemology.

Within the frame of the poem, through Hi‘iaka and Hōpoe’s relationship, Osorio is able to highlight the deception and ignorance of this attitude towards Native Hawaiian knowledge, by foregrounding the true nature of aikāne, by privileging the hula and

voice as modes of knowledge transmission, and by centring the mo‘olelo and mana of Native Hawaiian women in her (re)telling.

‘Two sides of a coin ... two tip ends of a line’: Finding connections in Kealoha’s *The Story of Everything*.

Kealoha means ‘the love’, and Steven Kealohapau‘ole Hong-Ming Wong’s poems always contain a core message of aloha. Kealoha was made the poet laureate of Hawai‘i in 2012 – the state’s first – and uses his poems to connect and educate his audiences. He has said of his work that “if you had to pare it down to something that’s always there, there’s always some level of positive messaging.... Like how can we shift our thinking or our lives to get to a better place” (Kealoha “Kealoha” np.).

Kealoha’s own story is compelling because it bridges the perceived ‘divide’ between art and science— he graduated from MIT, where he studied applied nuclear physics, and then worked in San Francisco as a business consultant. Discovering Slam poetry after reading an advert in the paper for a local event, he found his “spine tingling” and the following day he began to write (wailanaone 1:36). Returning to Hawai‘i in 2000, he stayed with his brother and spent time hiking and writing, getting involved in the Honolulu art scene, and eventually setting up FirstThursdays, a Slam Poetry event which gained a following of around 600 people a week, making it the largest Slam event in America at the time (Kealoha “Kealoha” np.). For a scientist with an interest in environmental protection (Kealoha had studied nuclear fusion as a potential source of clean energy) Slam Poetry was an art form with “the perfect combination of thinking, and theatre, and literature, and performance, and musicality” (wailanaone 1:54) with the potential to “translate thoughts and put them in a way that expresses ideas in speech or artwork that allows individuals to perceive these ideas based on their own experiences” (in Hedberg np.). Kealoha ‘strongly believes that science and

indigenous culture don't have to be at odds with each other'; he has said that ““The Hawaiian creation chant, the Kumulipo, reads like evolution theory... [s]o many Native Hawaiian stories are based on the science of what people observed around them”” (Chan np.).

Realising that “our time on Earth is limited” Kealoha “wanted to help build a community or society which does not exploit people. [He] wanted to stand up for something...” (in Hedberg np.). Storytelling and orality were not alien concepts to a Hawaiian: “Coming from Hawai‘i we grew up with a lot of oral tradition. We’ve been doing it for generations and generations, and millennia, and here we are with this ... new-ish form of spoken word which is Slam poetry and performance poetry, but really if you look at the grand scale of things it’s just a continuation of the exact same things we’ve been doing forever” (Kealoha in wailanaone 3.38). Kealoha’s relentless focus on the ‘big picture’ is a mindset that permeates his poetry. His work challenges the human ego, forcing his audiences to face their minute existence on earth, within the solar system, the universe and infinite time. His skill lies in the effect his words produce — not despair as one might expect, but a curious sense of purpose.

Whilst Kealoha has written and performed dozens of poems since he discovered the Slam poetry format in 2000, this section focuses on his most recent work, and self-described magnum opus, *The Story of Everything* (2015). As the title suggests, this work traces the history of the beginnings of life on earth to the present. Drawing on his scientific training the poem relates the science of life through the cultural language of music and human relationships. Kealoha’s gift is the communication of complex ideas in stories that entrance, amuse and provoke his audience. This epic work lasts nearly

three hours in performance, incorporating music and singing, oli (chant) and dancing. As *The Story of Everything* is so new, its effects cannot yet be reliably analysed, but Kealoha is relating indigenous understanding and scientific theory in ways that are both relevant to, and yet refuse to be explicitly drawn into, political and nationalist objectives. Kealoha's work is political because, following Haunani-Kay Trask's analysis, it offers a contrary view to the economic and political elite who are benefitting financially from our modern energy addictions and support for the status quo (*Native* 42-3). Kealoha's message, if one can reasonably be ascertained, is to put aside human exceptionalism, embrace the interconnectivity of all life, and behave as though our lives are both precious and transient.

The Story of Everything is split into six parts, each telling the story of one time period in the evolution of life in the universe: "The Big Bang", "The Stars", "The Solar System", "The Evolution of Life", "The Homo Sapien Migration" and "Our Future." These closely resemble the wā (time epochs) in the Kumulipo. Its style is narrative rather than versified, though there are technical elements of rhythm, rhyme and repetition, mainly at the beginning and end of each part when Kealoha is delivering a message rather than information. Each part is separated by a piece of music performed by the ukulele and slack-key guitar virtuosos Taimane Gardner and Makena, and the group Quadrophenix. The entire performance is set against projected scenery of incredibly detailed black and white drawings by Solomon Enos. A cast of dancers both illustrate the poem's words and amplify its emotional content through carefully choreographed scenes, including an aerial hoop display.⁷ Each part of *The Story of Everything* opens with the same verse:

Where do we come from no one knows

But we do know a lot about everything though
 So many different crossroads, but the paths look the same
 Like it could have gone different, but it went this way
 Like a hop-scotch game of infinite time
 Everytime we move forward there could have been nine...
 ...parallel dimensions but it's all in the past

This verse is written to be spoken/sung, and is structured so that the vocal flow emphasises the rhyme of the line endings, often at the expense of syntactic accuracy. The first line communicates, in one breath, the central question of the piece and the fundamental dilemma of the enquiry. It also throws into relief the strengths of the poem, through the weaknesses of human knowledge. The poem is a “theory” of “everything”, which indicates that “everything” must lead back to the fundamental question, “Where do we come from?” That “no one knows” is a reminder that there is no unified story about the origins of life, and certainly no definitive or immutable “truth” as to the answer. In *The Story of Everything* Kealoha weaves his own truths from science, indigenous knowledge and his own personal view.

Kealoha’s life parallels the *telling* of *The Story of Everything*, which is a culmination of his life’s work so far — “it could have gone different but it went this way.” This is not a contemplation of a grand design, but a look at the nature of cause and effect, of forces that culminate at every point in time to affect the progression of that which follows it: “everytime we moved forward there could have been nine/ parallel dimensions.” The concept of a possible tenth dimension is likely a reference to the ten minimum physical dimensions required to support ‘string theory’, which seeks to unify the known forces of the universe: gravity, electromagnetism and nuclear forces (Lim np.). Choosing to phrase this as “nine parallel” rather than “ten total” provides a cyclical structure to the poem, as Kealoha bases his final, ‘future’, section around the

nine outcomes of global climate change predicted by climate scientists.⁸ Framing the evolution of the universe as a hopscotch game is one of many analogies that Kealoha uses to make the incredibly complex scientific theory he is relating digestible. The other main devices employed in *The Story of Everything* are music and dance — the rapid cooling of the universe after the big bang and the subsequent gathering of neutrons are explained through ladies' night at the disco, and the formation of elements in the centre of stars by dance routines of 'lady' protons and 'dude' neutrons in a blazing 'Studio 54' 'disco.'

Kealoha's creativity in finding ways to relate science to his audience poetically is wonder-full— for the non-scientist it provokes excitement, amusement, joy and poignancy. At the end of part one, "The Big Bang", having related the formation of matter through the epic 'battles' of quarks and anti-quarks, he explains, 'and we come from all of that/ we come from both war and peace/ we come from the recycled reincarnated redefined energy/ of opposites who were created so differently but were ultimately one and the same.' *The Story of Everything* is focussed on the holding together of opposite ideas in a unifying way, and in this sense it mirrors both Hawaiian cosmology and that of other ancient cultures. In Hawaiian cosmogony the universe was born from Ao (light) and Pō (dark), and from there came Wākea (sky) and Papa (earth); in Chinese tradition similar forces are expressed through Yin and Yang. Part two, "The Stars", describes the formation of elements in the unimaginable heat at the centre of stars over billions of years. The analogies are joyously easy to understand: star centres are Manhattan discos where protons and neutrons come together as couples, and then gather in groups to form elements, via dancing the 'funky chicken' (carbon), 'pump' (oxygen) and 'robot' (silicon).

The playfulness delays, for a short while, the comprehension that such bountiful energy is finite. The aesthetic/poetic voice interjects, indicated in performance by a change in tone and focus, to remind us that the ‘disco’ will eventually end. However, ‘as far as we’re concerned ... this music is gonna last for billions of years/ more/ so relax/ and dance.’ “The Stars” ends poetically, reminding the audience,

every atom of Carbon, Nitrogen, Oxygen, and Phosphorous that
makes up our bodies was
forged in stars, in the middle of dance floors billions of years ago

...
and in our lives, we are no different
you see,
we come from dances between lovers and friends

...
and whether moments together end in a dramatic flash of brilliance or
an uneventful fizz... it will happen
and we will move on
we always do

Simultaneously devastating and uplifting Kealoha argues that we are both finite (in our present human forms) and infinite (in our elemental state). Throughout the poem Kealoha’s primary thesis and intention is to convince his audiences of human interconnectivity and our duty to use our lives to nurture the life of the whole.

Part three, “The Solar System,” is narrated entirely in Hawaiian Creole English. HCE, as a ‘local’ language, offers a lexical frame for both the analogy Kealoha uses in this part, and the lesson he wishes to impart. The solar system is described as a family — brothers and sisters with a paternalistic sun who nurtured them into existence. This solar system ‘family’ are just one of many in a galaxy ‘village,’ which in turn is part of

a universal ‘community.’ *The Story of Everything* has its roots in Kealoha’s own experience of impending fatherhood and a commission in 2014 by a local non-profit, the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation, ‘to write an hour-long performance piece to help youth understand where we come from’ (Chan np.). Part three particularly is performed in Kealoha’s voice as local Hawaiian youth educator, who describes ‘maddah earth’ as a ‘pretty mean tita’ (beautiful, hot woman), and puns on the notoriously impenetrable meaning of the words ‘mean’ and ‘kine’ in HCE — all intended to form a bond with a local Hawaiian audience.

Humour infuses this section, with puns, jokes and parodies all helping communicate in a light and memorable way millions of years of slow change. Earth’s formation from multiple collisions of meteors, comets and asteroids pulled in by the sun’s gravitational force are explained as ‘her’ huge appetite for ‘poke and poi’ (raw tuna and pounded taro, both popular traditional Hawaiian foods); Venus’s gaseous atmosphere is described as ‘one big faht and one burp ... da famileh when make up one word, yeah, dey when call it one “furp!!”’; and earth’s eventual ‘pregnancy’ with life is parodied as an excited mother-to-be doing research into nutrition and natural birthing techniques. The original pedagogical impetus for *The Story of Everything* emerges towards the end, when Kealoha uses his solar system “‘ohana” to model good behaviour for his audience:

cause relationships is all we when have in da village
and we when wear our actions loud and proud, like badges of hon-ah
dat when claim dat dis is who I am
‘cuz dis is what I when do... erre-second of erre-minute of erre-day
of my life
and if you ass(k) me, das da defini-shen of integriteth, brah

The section ends with emphasis on family, connections and building, maintaining and strengthening interpersonal relationships as the foundation of ‘where we come from,’ characterising the universe as ‘one bombucha extended famileh of stahs and planets and moons.’ This emphasis on interconnectedness is more personally and culturally directed, drawing on local family values to communicate a central message of understanding and unity. This part also, indirectly, supports traditional Hawaiian personal relationships. This is manifest in the explanation emphasising that no-one really knows who the ‘faddah’ of earth’s ‘pregnancy’ is – the moon’s gravitational pull, the sun’s rays, an asteroid’s foreign matter or ‘immaculate conception’ in the heat of the earth’s core are all possibilities – but that ‘even do’ no one when know who da bebe daddeh was/ brah, da moon was da one willing foa take responsibility, kay?’ Responsibility for caring is prioritised over monogamy or marriage.

The huge asteroid strike to earth that threw out the debris that formed the moon is heralded in language that seems to describe the Hawaiian pig-god Kamapua‘a, a symbol of virility:

[Earth] heard one “wheee... wheeee”
 and den she heard one **snort snort*
 and den she heard da rustlen-a-da leaves
 and from nowhere came the chuk-chuk-chuk-chuk-chuk
 of hooves on da trail and den all of a sudden,
 ...
 it when crash smack dab into her kino [body]

And the Bible is gently mocked through that same story of the moon’s formation:

da chunks of carnitas that when splatter out from dem aftah dey when collide?

dey when all get caught up in her orbit as tye-neh rocks
 and as dey when spin around her
 dey when collide and grew and grew and grew
 and ovah 10 yeahs plus or minuss,
 da rocks when grow up into one strapping young dude who was
 formed in her image
 you know, some people 'tink he was taken from her ribs, ah?
 das one interprahtation
 but us guys, in rrealehtee,
 we tink was more like the remnent pahts from her chess cavitee

The orientation towards Hawai'i is not explicit, but it foreshadows the fourth part of the poem, when Hawaiian culture is brought to the fore and placed alongside scientific knowledge.

For "The Evolution of Life" Kealoha shares the stage with Kauī Kanaka'ole, a Native Hawaiian 'Olapa, or expert hula dancer. The part opens with the usual verse, and the added line, 'What came when life first appeared on this planet?' The answer unifies science and Hawaiian knowledge:

It depends who you ask
 Cause if you ask an evolutionary biologist, she'll tell you that mother
 earth oli ke Kumulipo during her labor

Like five of the six scientists Kealoha metaphorically 'asks' in *The Story of Everything*, the evolutionary biologist is female, but unlike in the other parts, her reply is grounded in Hawaiian culture, telling us that mother earth chanted the Kumulipo whilst she gave birth. The Kumulipo is the most complete creation chant to have survived colonisation in Hawai'i, through its commissioning as a publication by King Kalākaua (N. Silva *Aloha* 89). At this point Kauī Kanaka'ole begins to chant the Kumulipo and Kealoha picks up the ipu heke (gourd drum).

Music provides another level of meaning making in this section as a single beat on the ipu heke represents the single celled archaea, the fundamental cell of life on earth. After millions of years the mutation that created photosynthetic cells is described as ‘a mistake played beautiful ... like jazz.’ These cells spread across earth’s oceans, photosynthesising carbon dioxide, producing oxygen and creating earth’s atmosphere. The basis for multi-cellular life, an archaea and bacteria thriving one inside the other, ‘plucked itself into existence’. Kealoha describes this new life form as a ‘sound ... organized with a nucleus for its DNA,’ ‘our own little laboratory for genetic transfer and mutation.’ The acoustic layering in the performance of this part is tremendous; as Kealoha is speaking and playing the ipu heke, Kauai Kanaka‘ole is chanting the Kumulipo and ukulele player Taimane Gardner and Quadrophenix are playing in the background, creating a cacophony of sound. In its increasing intricacy, the sound-scape successfully mimics the accelerating complexity of the life forms being described. As each animal group develops, simultaneously described in English and Hawaiian, we eventually reach the time of humans, who:

mutated into a species with the capacity for high intelligence
we harnessed the power of language,
built greater and more complex tools
and whether it was our ability to adapt to our changing environment
or just sheer luck,

we are the only ones of our human kind to have survived the passing
of time...
so far...

The customary caution, ‘so far’, foreshadows the simple fact that with evolution, far fewer species survive than die out — and evolution has not stopped. Just as other human kinds of the ‘homo’ genus preceded homo sapiens, others will succeed us. At

this point, Kealoha integrates an edited version of another of his poems, “Zoom Out,” (kealohapoetry) to end part four on his most ego-busting, anti-exceptionalism verse in *The Story of Everything*:

i want you to think about what you stand for and realize that all the
suffering you’ve ever experienced
means nothing in the long term
for every year you live, the universe will be around for trillions
and for every friend you’ve made, there are billions yet to be born
that you will never meet
in the grand scheme of things, we are nobody
and yet at the same time, we are everything

Directly, didactically challenging the common human cultural belief that our lives have meaning and purpose is a risky tactic considering *The Story of Everything* most certainly has a point to make about the detriment human activity causes to itself, other life forms and the earth.

Part five, “The Homo Sapien Migration,” is a whistle-stop tour of the 60,000 years of our 200,000-year-old existence on earth during which we migrated across earth from our birthplace in East Africa. The tour pauses only once, to narrate a significant adaptation to a changing climate that occurred around 40,000 years ago in the mountainous regions of Central Asia. In these harsh climates, humans began to adapt to lower levels of sunlight and reduced vitamin D that weakened their bones — their skin began to lighten. At this point Kealoha builds a ‘break’ into the performance. In racially charged America today, he makes the point forcefully and unequivocally. Sitting on the edge of the stage and staring directly at people in the front row, he states:

For all the racism and hate that the colour of our skin has produced...

...
 it's that simple
 hot climate
 cold climate
 lots of sun
 not much sun
 dark pigment as a natural sunscreen, good thing
 lack of pigment to capture as much sun as possible for Vitamin D,
 good thing
 period ...

Insisting on framing skin colour in a way that explicitly declares all other markers of race irrelevant is scientifically correct, and socially demanding; it requires the audience to shed all other objections they may have, and look at race discourse for what it is — a social construction. Such a presentation leaves no room for disputation.

Re-joining the main flow of the poem, Kealoha moves inexorably towards his call for the wisdom of our migratory pasts to be remembered as we tackle the ignorance of our relatively recent stationary present. Embracing metaphors that speak of the 'rhythms' of life and being 'in tune' with the seasons he reminds us of our wondrous variety and 'rich wisdom', expressed through the language of music:

reaching deep into the depths of the soil, it is our roots
 submerged beneath the surface of the sea, it is our current
 and we've heard it all along the way
 heard the faint bass of its heart beats pulsing
 heard the chorus of its chants echoing in the distance
 it is in the stories that we tell

...

generations upon generations
 of cousins and distant relatives
 who sang with the resonant frequencies of their newfound valleys,
 prairies, plains, caves, savannahs, frozen tundra, deserts, tropical
 islands, and lush streams
 who learned the nuances of their homelands with each season

and for this reason
 we are a collective of notes in the jazz scale of humanity
 united through the song of our breath
 and though we speak in different tongues
 we dream the same dreams
 connected through our collective experience
 so come out from your shelters, my children
 feel the warmth of the sun
 the time to listen to each other has just begun

To listen in Hawaiian culture, as has already been explored in the previous chapter, is to engage spiritually with each other and with the earth. Kealoha evokes listening in this sense — through the language of music, a technology that all human societies share, we can identify common rhythms, shared knowledge and mutual understanding. Finding new ways to listen to each other is an imperative of our existence on earth.

In part six, “The Future,” Kealoha addresses the ‘threat of global climate change’ via the life and death of Michael Jackson. Jackson’s extraordinary talent, huge catalogue of music, meteoric rise to fame, personal transformations and struggles, and unintentional death provide an apt illumination for a poet adept at locating his audience’s blind-spot. Beginning with the album *Thriller*, ‘when we were still black,’ then *Bad*, and finally *Dangerous*, Kealoha maps Jackson’s physical transformation against humans’ evolutionary adaptations, and his music as the fragmentation and isolated adaption of our cultures, reminding us that despite the changes and challenges ‘no matter how you spin it, or how you shake it, MJ was MJ all throughout those years/ as in, he was always the same person/ just like WE are all the same people.’ The real point to the analogy however, is the way Jackson died:

today, our entire civilization
 our entire world population...
 all of us...
 we’re like Michael right before his final

“This is It” concert series,
 because, honestly, this *IS* it...
this is it...
 and we all know how that concert series never happened

Falling asleep after ingesting a lethal dose of legal drugs, Jackson died unintentionally, destroyed by his addictions. Kealoha demands, ‘tell me we are different/ tell me we aren’t addicted to fossil fuels like how MJ was addicted to lorazepam and propofol.’ At this point in the poem the full power of Kealoha’s indictment comes to the fore: he forcefully argues that if we continue to burn fossil fuels ‘we are on a direct course towards the greatest extinction event since the massive die off of the dinosaurs.’ But Kealoha’s work does always have ‘some level of positive messaging’, and his call is for personal change.

Having looked backwards, he now asks his audience to imagine themselves in the future looking back, ‘So many different crossroads, but the paths look the same/ Like it could have gone different, but it went this way....’ There are, according to climate scientists, nine possible outcomes to climate change, only five of which entertain the survival of the human species in one form or another. Two of those five involve massive depopulation, one dramatic evolution, and just two posit that we not only survive but thrive. In one of those possibilities we turn to the technology we already have, solar, wind, tide, and cut back on our needs. The last involves Kealoha’s area of scientific research — nuclear fusion energy capable of cleanly supplying the energy needs of the planet for thousands of years to come. He imagines it thus: ‘we master the process of the stars and recreate the disco scene here on earth, and we dance.’ The message of apparent hope, that the international ITER project is building a reactor in France now (www.iter.org), is met with some unease by the audience at the premier of

The Story of Everything in Honolulu. Perhaps the mention of nuclear research by France brings the recent history of atrocities in Micronesia to the fore for a Pacific-based audience. Perhaps the memory of Hiroshima and Nagasaki for the many Japanese descendants, or the Cold War fear for those born twenty years later is still too raw to engender trust. Nuclear power has a volatile history in the hands of humans, and there is an element of doubt that we can handle the power of the stars in our delicate and ultimately finite world. However, arguing that looking at the bigger picture allows us to see the individual contributions we make as progress, not as pointless, allows Kealoha to end with a clichéd but valuable message—‘look at our addictions now/ and slowly wean ourselves off of them/ it’s not too late....’

Kealoha’s poetry is a unifying force because it expands above and beyond the issues that divide communities to look at the issues that divide humanity. By refusing to engage politically at the micro-level Kealoha encourages his audiences to engage personally and politically on a global scale, using the connections individuals have with their own places to engage them emotionally with each other and the earth as a whole. Taking cutting edge scientific research and finding points of connection with his indigenous Hawaiian contexts, Kealoha excels at creating a personal-universal connection between the individual and the whole, in order to motivate and effect personal-global change.

Although Kealoha, like Revilla and Osorio, has many and diverse influences on his work, his ultimate focus on the environment in *The Story of Everything* reflects his in-placeness in Hawai‘i, where he returned to become a poet — his creativity is implicitly tied to his birthplace. Like Osorio in her poem “Day 233: Sinking Bodies”, and

Revilla's engagement with the "wonsalwara" (one salt water i.e. one earth) Pacific movement in support of Papua New Guinea (Appendix C 306), Kealoha's engagement with the 'āina is based on his understanding of the 'āina as his home, and of earth as humans' home.

The work of each of these three poets is addressed via a different focus in this chapter, but the diversity of their poetry belies the connections between them. Contemporary Western (socially liberal) understandings of female sexuality, homosexuality and planetary science are revealing numerous and deep similarities with ancient indigenous Hawaiian culture, that are being uncovered by politically aware literary scholars, activists and poets. Building on the understanding of Hawai'i's place and culture in relation to America, the Pacific and the world established by the Sovereignty Movement activists in the 1970s-90s, Osorio, Revilla and Kealoha express an abiding attachment to and pride in Hawaiian culture through their poetry, and a strong commitment to its continuance through their performances.

Chapter Eight. Conclusion.

This thesis has politically contextualised poetry by Native Hawaiian activists from the late 1960s to 2016, and has argued that a culturally informed reading of this body of work is necessary to fully understand the motivations and aims of the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement. This thesis has sought to engage both Western and Hawaiian epistemology through an analysis of literature that inherits multiple traditions, in places that remember two competing social orders.

The act of looking for connections has enabled this thesis to draw elements of Hawaiian and European philosophy close to each other and, though they may not touch, emphasise that communication is still possible. Guided by indigenous interpretations of indigenous literature and culture, it has shown how those interpretations might be brought to bear on Western theory in productive ways, by pinpointing junctures where exchange can occur. Thus, in Chapter One, Derrida's theory of hospitality, illustrated through an Athenian's experience with Greek law, is used to reveal Westlake's alienation at being subject to coercive Americanisation, and extended this tension into an exploration of Waikīkī as a metonym for colonialism in Hawai'i.

Chapter Two engaged historical and geographic frameworks that already have considerable application in Hawai'i and other 'glocal' places. This chapter demonstrated how, by asserting indigenous continuance and mapping the inside/outside of rural communities in the face of rapid globalisation, two anthologies published in the 1980s worked to transform globalised 'space' into Hawaiian 'place'.

Chapters Three and Four operate in well-established theoretical frameworks, racism and nationalism, and focus on the ways Trask and Kalahale contribute to a large body of anti-racist and nationalist indigenous writing to provoke cultural and political dialogue between America and Hawai‘i. However, an attendant concern is to illustrate how these poets undermine assumptions that “third world” literature is necessarily political, polemic or essentialist (Jameson 69, 74). This is achieved by analysing these poets’ use and adaption of Western literary forms, such as lyric or concrete poetry, the satirical subversion of tropes such as the ‘noble Savage’ and the employment of sensuality and humour, to complicate binary reactions to both colonialism’s and Hawaiian nationalism’s effects.

Chapter Five again relies on a pre-existing framework, of genealogy and kinship studies, but marks the thesis’ shift towards employing primarily indigenous theoretical frameworks. Mirroring Hawaiian theorists’ attempts to begin to deconstruct colonialist discourses of rupture and dislocation, the poetry discussed in this chapter simultaneously recognises the material damage done by colonialism in Hawai‘i. These twin narratives of survival and continuance, captured in Anishinaabe writer Gerald Vizenor’s term “survivance”, operate as a recalibration of the tone of the poetry in this thesis, and the Sovereignty Movement, from battle-readiness to considering a replacement process. Perez-Wendt’s and McDougall’s work uses memory, individual and collective, as a vehicle to express kinship relations; they are engaged in a process of remembering that is conceived as vital for the future of Native Hawaiian sovereignty.

Chapter Six looked at the poetry of four of Hawai‘i’s most prominent contemporary

performance poets in order to demonstrate why poetry continues to be a preferred form for political activism and community engagement in the twenty-first century. In a process of cultural absorption and transformation, the transnational flows of which (via the jazz clubs of white working-class Detroit, the American Beats and Francophone Afro-Caribbean Négritude poets) are beyond the scope of this project, competitive performance poetry finds itself transformed by contact with that traditional Hawaiian test of intellectual prowess, the ho‘opāpā (contest). This includes considerations of identity performance, whereby indigenous poets inhabit and transform non-Hawaiian poetic practice, such as Slam and hip-hop, and redeploy them in the service of Hawaiian nationalism. This chapter concludes by analysing how the expression of identity found in many performance poems assists political–cultural communication between audience and poet.

Finally, Chapter Seven outlines a reversal — three areas where society and science in the West are newly aligning with Native Hawaiian values: the place of women, same-sex relationships and the centrality of the natural environment. Whilst Hawaiians have been aware of, and are working towards promoting, the value of their traditional knowledge to non-Hawaiians for many decades, the West has only recently (and partially) caught up.¹

This thesis has demonstrated that Native Hawaiian poetry provides a site where ‘a radical remembering of [a Hawaiian] future’ can occur in ways that honour the continuity of the past in the present, and insists on the possibility of a decolonised future for Native Hawaiians (Meyer IX). The critical analysis of Native Hawaiian poetry that is composed in English, via a discursive theoretical framework, is intended

to shift the focus towards a perspective that uses emergent texts on Hawaiian epistemology (only relatively recently available to an English speaking audience beyond Hawai‘i) to engage with, and transform, Western theory at sites where it has dominated indigenous knowledge practice for over a century.

Mauna Kea: a storied place

Taupōuri Tangarō wrote, in his foreword to Pua Kanaka‘ole Kanahele’s book of Hawaiian chants *Ka Honua Ola* [*The Living Earth*], that her work:

... is about being conscious of the embodied experiences that define the culture of Hawai‘i and differentiate it from the culture of the none-Hawaiian world [sic]. Does such a pointed statement shock you? Well, take a deep breath, for it is true—the author will not recant. But if this statement seems to hint at cultural imperialism and isolation, read again. Defining and differentiating do not automatically imply disconnection. Hawai‘i equates profound connection without limits to earth, sea, sky, and soul. (ix)

In making explicit Hawaiian difference Tangarō articulates a position in opposition to not just a non-Hawaiian world, but a specifically non-Pacific, non-indigenous world; Hawaiian culture has much in common with other Pacific Island and global indigenous cultures. In this short statement Tangarō enters a politics of relation that is premised on a current power structure, where indigenous cultures, including Hawaiian culture, are subordinated, assimilated or eliminated by Euro-American culture. As with almost every statement of Hawaiian difference Tangarō bases his claim on simultaneous, paradoxical connection — we are all people of this earth, and so we are connected, but you have forgotten where you are from and act in ways that harm your home, and that is how we are different. Implicit in this statement is that by remembering, indigenous communities are also reminding — a way of thinking that has increasing traction in this age of the anthropocene, as Western cultures begin to realise what has been and

what will soon be lost to rapid industrialisation and globalisation.

In a comment piece on the 2015 protests on Hawai‘i Island against the construction of another telescope on the summit of Mauna Kea mountain, Bryan Kuwada wrote, ‘Whenever we resist or insist in the face of the depredations of developers, corporate predators, government officials, university administrators, or even the general public, we are trying to protect our relationships to our ancestors, our language, our culture, and our ‘āina. But at the same time, we are trying to reawaken and protect their connections as well’ (“We Live” np.). Successful resistance relies upon successful reminding.

Mauna Kea is just one of many places where such reminding is currently taking place. It is the highest peak on Hawai‘i Island and, like all wao lani (sky regions), is within the realm of the gods and a sacred space for Native Hawaiians. It also has some of the best conditions for astronomical observations in the world, and is currently the site of thirteen telescopes and the contested site of a proposed fourteenth, the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) (Quirk 74, 76, 78). The proposed telescope has met fierce resistance from Native Hawaiian protesters, who halted groundwork construction in April 2015.² The conflict at Mauna Kea is a current example of opposing narratives about place, culture and knowledge, but it is also a complex example of real-world ambition, neglect and institutional mishandling. Native Hawaiians see it as a spiritual issue, the mountain is sacred and the TMT is a desecration, whilst many scientists see the resistance as a symptom of ‘postcolonial discontent and benighted religion’ (Quirk 72). The reality is, of course, more complex, however what is clear (and was reiterated by the Supreme Court when they invalidated TMT’s permit) is that the “BLNR [Board of Land and Natural Resources] acted improperly when it issued the permit

prior to holding a contested case hearing,” which formally allows the public to dissent and affect the outcome of permitting’ (Quirk 78).³ The culture surrounding telescope construction on Mauna Kea was (and arguably remains) one of scientific entitlement, protest, litigation and recrimination, mainly because very little has been done to address the conflicting priorities that invested communities have in this “storied place.”

Storied places present a major obstacle for cooperation between indigenous and settler societies. In his chapter “Feet to the Ground in Storied Landscapes: Disrupting the Colonial Legacy with a Poetic Politics”, Martin Mulligan relates this contradiction in an Australian context: a settler along the Victoria River, Nathaniel Buchanan, built his homestead and named it Wave Hill after a rock formation nearby. He had unwittingly built his home on the river’s flood plain so it was regularly abandoned. Subsequent generations moved the homestead to higher ground, but kept the name. Mulligan notes that, ‘As far as the Gurindji [Aboriginal people] are concerned, the real punch line of this story is that the ‘whitefellas’ could even entertain the idea that a name could be taken from one place to another. For them, this was conclusive ‘proof’ that these interlopers had no serious connection with the land that they claimed’ (296).

Similarly, on Mauna Kea, scientists claim to be concerned with furthering human understanding, but this spirit of enquiry is entirely directed towards space, and appears to disregard the earth under their telescope. University of Hawai‘i scientists have appeared entirely willing to disregard Hawaiian knowledge about the mountain and the weather that occurs over its surfaces, which engenders distrust and frustration among the Native community (*Big Island Video News* 4:30-5:20). In the Mauna Kea conflict, there has been a lack of means (and perhaps will) for astronomers and Native

Hawaiians to productively exchange stories about their views of the sky from the same mountain-top.

This type of conflict can, however, be mitigated, as has been proved by the community engagement surrounding the construction of the Square Kilometer Array (SKA), which will become the largest radio telescope in the world (Mann 14165). This global project will also encroach on indigenous land and on communities that have encountered colonialism, but organisers have broached this potential conflict through art and storytelling in order to productively engage both the scientific and indigenous communities. Mann observes that, ‘Starting in Australia, the SKA team made a point of building relationships between astronomers and the often disenfranchised people whose land they seek to use. This culminated in a traveling collaborative art exhibition, called Shared Sky, in which indigenous artists from both countries produced pieces celebrating ancient and modern stories about the cosmos’ (14166). What is interesting about this project is that it brought scientists into a realm of communication in which they were often deeply uncomfortable. One astronomer, Ray Norris, commented that ‘We spent a weekend telling each other stories’ ... ‘The artists painted and asked us about the telescope. They asked us to write some poetry, which was frankly embarrassing’ (Mann 14166). By asking him to explain his relationship to the SKA project poetically, the artist was requesting that Norris communicate in an unfamiliar language. This reversal of the testimonial/justification process that Native people are routinely put through in their encounters with state and legal apparatus (including in the public consultations that have now taken place over the TMT project) is intended to make the engagement process two-way. It is important not to glorify the SKA community engagement art project as a cure-all for the problems of land

appropriation for the advancement of scientific knowledge — it did not allow the indigenous people a mechanism by which they could refuse the telescope construction. However, ‘working together, the artists and scientists realized the extensive overlap between their descriptions of the night sky’, which engendered a sense of ownership and responsibility on both sides (Mann 14166).

Papakū Makawalu: opportunities for understanding

Science provides an excellent access point for an exchange of stories between indigenous and non-indigenous people, because the stories of science are based on empirical evidence, and often have correlates in indigenous cultures.⁴ An ‘ōlelo no‘eau (proverb) often used by Native Hawaiian writers to make the case for their own epistemological space within academia is ‘A‘ohe pau ka ‘ike i ka hālau ho‘okahi, “Not all knowledge is taught in the same school” (McDougall “Mālama” 208; Meyer “Native Hawaiian Epistemology” 22), meaning knowledge comes from many sources. Hawaiians are bringing their cultural knowledge to bear on Western practice, particularly in the areas of geography, environmental science, medicine and education, maintaining that a ‘scientist will discover that his methodologies and findings are just beginning to catch up with the knowledge Hawaiians have had for centuries’ (P. Kanahele *Ka Honua* xiv). The work being done in the sciences indicates that related interdisciplinary methodologies may be transferrable to areas of the humanities, including poetry and literary criticism, in order to better communicate the variety of conceptions of the storied places Hawaiian mele describe.

Two Hawaiian learning centres, The Kohala Centre and the Edith Kanaka‘ole Foundation, both on Hawai‘i Island, support the promulgation of Hawaiian cultural

knowledge within an interdisciplinary research framework that encompasses (in Western terms) both science and the humanities, to find culturally sensitive solutions to pressing social and environmental problems such as land use and food production, which have a direct bearing on Hawaiian sovereignty.

Pualani Kanaka‘ole Kanahele, daughter of Edith Kanaka‘ole, is an eminent Hawaiian cultural practitioner who works with the foundation and the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo to promote and heighten Hawaiian cultural awareness and education. She firmly believes that Hawaiians already have the answers to the challenges they face, but that only a few people can access them, because they are encoded in mele and oli, recorded in both human memory and Hawaiian language newspapers. She notes that the information contained in the chants has not really begun to be properly analysed yet (Kanahele *Papakū Makawulu Part 1*). To synthesise and draw meaningful conclusions from such vast amounts of information (there are estimated to be more than 125,000 pages, equaling one million manuscript pages, of Hawaiian language newspapers published between 1834 and 1948, of which a large proportion is mele) (McDougall *Finding 7*) a conceptual methodology is required. Kanahele teaches Papakū Makawalu as a Native Hawaiian conceptual model for the organisation of knowledge (Kanahele *Papakū Makawulu Part 1; Part 2; @kteabam*). As outlined in the introduction to this thesis, papakū makawalu (numerous foundations, many layers) contains three areas: Papahulilani, Papahulihonua and Papahanaumoku, which relate to three domains: the sky, the land and reproduction (see 313 n2). It is a framework for explaining relations between entities drawn from the Kumulipo, and as such, the three areas of papakū makawalu, taken together, can be reasonably described as an ontology. Kemp et al. explain how, ‘according to Papakū Makawalu, in Hawaiian epistemology relationships

between entities, whether animate or inanimate in Western parlance, are strong, pervasive, and essential. ... The connections between place and entity are not simply environmental' (293). Papakū makawalu offers a framework for Hawaiians to comprehend the relation between phenomena described in the ancient mele that have been subsumed by the imposition of Western teleology, as it asks us to understand the world as being constituted from multiple perspectives.

Kemp et al. describe how papakū makawalu 'articulates clearly the essential non-Newtonian character of Hawaiian knowledge', cautioning, however, that the nature of the relationship between place and an entity it describes,

... implies ... that integration of Hawaiian knowledge and Western science cannot be completed simply by creating an ontology that combines two distinct world views. "Integration" may, in fact, not be possible. Indeed, the intersection of time and space may be a key way for Western and indigenous knowledge holders to begin to explore and experience radically divergent – perhaps parallel – universes. (293)

Kemp et al. work in the geohumanities, which they acknowledge shares many features with the digital humanities, noting that 'We are by now well into a phase of civilization when the terrain to be mapped, explored, and annexed is information space, and what's mapped is not continents, regions, or acres but disciplines, ontologies, and concepts' (290). These researchers were engaged in a project called Ha'ahonua – which means to establish land, or to act as land – a mapping project engaged in a creative, or active, process of meaning making with regard to land. There are several diverse projects underway under the umbrella of Ha'ahonua, including supporting the work of volunteer trail stewards of the Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail on Hawai'i Island, assessing crops suitability in accordance with the

understanding provided by scientists, Hawaiian cultural practitioners and scholars, and in particular ‘a multifaceted effort to collect, organize, and share scientific, historical, and cultural information about a single ahupua‘a [traditional land division] from the coral reef up to the high mountain forests’ in order to ‘explore indicators and impacts of climate change’ (294). The tools provide an interactive information source about individual places that stretch far beyond the usual limits of map making, and draw on Hawaiian place names and knowledge to strengthen and deepen understanding of those places mapped, with the aim of supporting those who move across those places to make better, more culturally and environmentally aware decisions about how they interact with those places.

A similar resource is available on the Office of Hawaiian Affairs’ *Kipuka Database*, which provides interactive maps of the islands. Kipuka aims to ‘to create a repository of knowledge where information about Hawai‘i’s land, culture and history can be easily accessed, to develop a virtual mo‘oku‘auhau [sic] of land tenure in Hawai‘i and to provide an opportunity for individuals to forge new relationships between themselves and the ‘āina (land) that is most important to them’ (Kipuka np.). These fascinating and versatile uses for the application of GIScience, combined with Hawaiian knowledge, open possibilities in all areas of the humanities, including poetry and literary criticism.

Digitally attaching Hawaiian cultural knowledge to ‘maps’ in ways that allow comparison with Western empirical research is an evolution of papakū makawalu — looking at the same thing or place from two different perspectives in order to understand them better. But what if this multifaceted approach was extended from

what Western scientists still consider empirically verifiable ‘information’ into the kind of storied places Hawaiian mele describes? McDougall asserts that ‘[f]rom a Kanaka Maoli perspective history is a constructed narrative based on actual events but subject to perspectival interpretation” (*Finding* 4), and poet No‘u Revilla has suggested that attempts to bring together different modes of narrativisation are entirely in keeping with Hawaiian pedagogy (Appendix C 307).

Downwind Productions, founded in 1999, has created a collaborative online map of Waikīkī through which public users can access, and contribute, stories about locations in the area. By clicking on dots on the map users can open stories, poems, photos and art that is about or at that location. Entry to the site requires the user to pick an entry point, either “kanaka maoli”, “kama‘aina” or “haole” — a quotation from Antonio Gramsci’s *Prison Notebooks* accompanies this choice, ‘...the consciousness of what one really is, ... is “knowing thyself” as a product of the historical process to date which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory. The first thing to do is to make such an inventory’ (Downwind “Welcome” np.). Once on the map, the content is the same whichever initial choice you make, but the pointed decision to make users of the map define their relationship to Waikīkī is a lesson in identity politics that is reinforced by the site’s explanation of its name. Downwind ‘is subjected to everything that happens and happened upwind. When hunting, it is recommended that you position yourself downwind of the hunted’ (Downwind “About Us” np.). The implication is that the organisation’s education remit is a form of ‘hunting’ that has a target; one can surmise that those who enjoy Waikīkī’s pleasures without engaging with its history are within their sights. The premise is undoubtedly political. As a project that explicitly maps residents’ stories onto a representation of

their location, Downwind Productions' site provides a useful corollary to the OHA's Kipuka Database and Ha'ahonua as it is another means by which literature can be schematically located in real places and associated with lived experience in those place.

The sharing of stories about particular places from multiple perspectives is an exercise in papakū makawalu, and technology is increasingly providing the means through which such interactions can be mediated and disseminated. Hawaiians are already expert at articulating their identity through their cultural connection to place, as this thesis has demonstrated, but the challenge from the haole side is not only to articulate *their* stories properly, which will involve acknowledging a settler identity, but also to listen deeply and on equal terms to the stories that already exist in the places they have settled. Performance poetry particularly, with its emotive relationship between the 'real time' embodied performer and audience, and potentially productive, wider recorded performance and online audience, combines the tension between places and spaces, explored in Chapter Two, that could be productively analysed through the lens of papakū makawalu. Extending the 'mapping' of these poems/poets beyond their historical and critical context, and into their physical and spatial context could be a worthwhile, and highly interdisciplinary, extension of this thesis' ideas. A performer such as Kealoha, who is already touring America with *The Story of Everything*, creating an interesting tension between the indigenous-local-national positioning of his work with regards to its Hawaiian elements, would be an excellent case study. A project of this kind would fall under the remit of the digital humanities, but would necessitate productive relationships with performance studies and indigenous studies.

Due to the attention this thesis pays to the portrayal of the natural environment in poetry, aspects of the work might, alternatively, be considered within the remit of ecocriticism. Ecocriticism is predominantly a movement from within Western thought that, through a diverse range of methods and loci, aims to redirect the ‘historically egocentric Western imagination toward a newly emerging ecocentric paradigm’ (Lemmer 224). That is, rather than being a methodology or theory, ecocriticism offers a strategy to engage in ‘an ethical inquiry into the connections between self, society, environment and text [which is] a classical example of issue replacing theory’ (Lemmer 225). In this sense many Native Hawaiian poets’ work is ecocritical. Many kānaka maoli poets, including those prominent in the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement such as Haunani-Kay Trask, Imaikalani Kalahale, kealoha ho‘omanawanui and Brandy Nālani McDougall, write in ways that call attention to the environmental damage that modern human activity is causing, from a cultural and spiritual position where the notion of human exceptionalism is at best ludicrous and at worst vicious. Yet, because Native Hawaiians’ ecological consciousness is rooted in cultural connectedness to the ‘āina, and their relationship with their environment is familial, writers who might otherwise be described as ecopoetic are writing from a different source. It may, in the future, be possible to speak about aloha ‘āina as a value that Hawaiians can share with the world; indeed the Mālama Honua Worldwide Voyage currently being undertaken by the ocean going canoes Hōkūle‘a and Hikianalia, organised by the Polynesian Voyaging Society, expressly aims to connect communities and spread the message of caring for “our island earth” (“The Mālama” np.). Yet whilst aloha ‘āina remains predominantly a political issue for Native Hawaiians, due to the continuing domination of Hawai‘i by America, the term and its meaning serve a different purpose, and its kumu (source) should not be appropriated to

any non-Hawai‘i specific place or purpose.

The opposition that drives the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement and the Hawaiian Renaissance, and therefore this thesis, is based upon two concepts — place and memory, that is, people in place and time. By recovering memory, and reinserting Hawaiian culture into discourses about Hawai‘i (the place) in the late-twentieth and early-twenty-first centuries, poetry creates a space for a reimagining of the ‘profound connection without limits’ (P. Kanahēle *Ka Honua* ix) between not only Hawaiian people and their island space, but Pacific Islanders and their vast ocean, and humans on our “island earth”. The Hawaiian Renaissance coincided with an environmental awakening in America, often attributed to biologist Rachel Carson’s book *Silent Spring* (1962). It would be a worthwhile extension of this project to employ poetry to investigate the interrelationship between the American public’s increasing awareness of “environmental issues” and the breakthrough in consciousness of indigenous land struggles, such as those in Hawai‘i over Kaho‘olawe or the occupation of Alcatraz by Indians Of All tribes (IOAT) from 1969-1971. This might include how a positioning of indigenous people in America as “closer to nature” has affected their political claims. Such a project would fall within the remit of ecocriticism, but may offer an opportunity to critique its underlying assumptions as well as draw out potentially fruitful connections with indigenous epistemologies.

Connecting with indigenous epistemologies is only possible for a non-Hawaiian due to Hawaiian literary theorists, historians, cultural practitioners, anthropologists and political scientists building on the decolonial academic practices begun in the 1960s, and publishing their findings in English. I am fully aware that I am not the primary

audience for the theoretical texts my literary analysis is derived from, and yet, by publishing such insights into Native Hawaiian intellectual culture these practitioners have offered a door through which non-Hawaiian commentators might (re)enter a discussion of Hawaiian literature. Yet to enter through these texts is to step into a very different house than existed nearly sixty years ago. In her introduction to *Finding Meaning* Brandy Nālani McDougall notes that mid-twentieth-century descriptions of Hawaiian literature as “young” and “unliterary” reflect the limitations of non-Hawaiians who were unaware of, or unable to access, Hawaiian texts (11, 13). Since then Hawaiian scholars have made their own culturally grounded critical frameworks more widely available in English, and have simultaneously invited non-Hawaiian scholars to engage in ‘more culturally informed and responsible readings’ of indigenous texts (McDougall *Finding* 13). McDougall argues that ‘literary criticism from within and without is essential to honoring Kanaka ‘Ōiwi literature’ (*Finding* 15), and includes non-Hawaiian critics in her call because ‘Kanaka Maoli literature does not and should not exist in a vacuum of reception; rather, Kanaka Maoli text should be a site of understanding and ongoing conversations centered on colonization, decolonization, and sovereignty in Hawai‘i and elsewhere’ (*Finding* 171 n.5). McDougall explicitly positions literary criticism within a current political context. This thesis is mindful of its own narrative potential and has used McDougall’s work, and that of Hawaiian scholars N. Silva, P. Kanahēle, G. Kanahēle, Kauanui, Trask, ho‘omanawanui and Meyer, as methodological guidance to approach contemporary Native Hawaiian poetry with the explicit intent to foreground Native Hawaiian epistemology. The discursive approach this thesis has adopted has sought to engage contemporary Native Hawaiian resistance literature using both Western and Hawaiian epistemological approaches, acknowledging that this literature is heir to an indigenous

tradition but has also absorbed, transformed and redeployed a welter of Asian and Euro-American influences, whilst remaining rooted in the space/place of Hawai‘i.

The kuleana of the traditional Hawaiian storyteller was to keep a record of the major events of Hawaiian life, but to tell them in such a way that ordinary people could understand and remember the lessons held within them (TEDx Talks “Dr. Pualani” 2:42). A person’s kuleana is both their privilege, and their responsibility, and so for the storyteller there was a balance to be found between communicating, informing and teaching her audience in such a way that the story remained pono, that is right or balanced. A story must impart useful knowledge, but Hawaiians valued aesthetic skill, and so the use of kaona was prized. Pualani Kanahale describes a story’s metaphor as the fragrance of a garden of orchids, or a special spice in your food — it was present and wholesome, but unseen, working on the listeners’ senses in indirect ways. The subtle pleasures of these meiwi (literary devices) have been obscured by colonialism, but not obliterated, and contemporary poetry by Native Hawaiians is releasing recognisable, yet younger and subtly different aromas into the literary atmosphere. This analogy with food is purposeful because Hawaiian poetry, nourished by its radical connection to the ‘āina, is vital sustenance for the poet, their audience and ultimately, for the Lāhui Hawai‘i.

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Appendix A

An interview with Brandy Nālani McDougall.

This interview was conducted via email on 12th April 2014.

Emma Scanlan: In your poem “How I Learned to Write my Name” you frame the act of writing as integral to your identity as a person from an early age, but also the words produced, a name, as a part of a larger project of inscribing meaning in your (young) world. How has your relationship with writing and language shaped you and your work as a poet?

Brandy Nālani McDougall: From an early age, I was surrounded by mo‘olelo (story). My grandparents were captivating storytellers, and my family emphasized the importance of reading (I began reading at four years old). My father was a musician who wrote his own songs. His work taught me to value the sound and music of language. This familial relationship to writing and language shaped my view of poetry as a powerful vessel for genealogy, culture, and memory.

ES: Your use of kaona is both intriguing and excluding for non-Hawaiian readers. Can you tell me a little about the choices you make as a poet concerning language?

BNM: Some poems begin with a theme or subject that I want to explore, or a story that I want to tell. Others come from dreams or journal writing. From there, I begin crafting the poems, seeing if a particular form or guiding motif emerges. Then I work on the musicality of the poem, as well as the imagery. In terms of kaona, the deeper meanings often develop naturally from an engagement with Hawaiian cultural concepts, symbols, and language.

ES: Many of your poems draw on your life experiences. Is writing a means of testimony for you? And if so, how is this connected to a wider project of testifying that Native Hawaiian writers are a part of?

BNM: Yes, writing is testimony. Testimony is important to me, and other Hawaiian writers, because it is one way we can overturn colonial silencing and colonial misrepresentations of Hawaiian thought and experience. Testimony is also important because the act of speaking empowers, inspires, and dignifies us as individuals and as a community.

ES: How is your poetry connected to your resistance to colonialism? Do you see writing and activism as connected, particularly in the Hawaiian context? Do you engage in activism, other than writing?

BNM: Poetry is one form of creative resistance and activism. They are connected because, as Haunani-Kay Trask once wrote, “the best art is political” and art ought to be “unquestionably political and irrevocably beautiful at the same time.” Yes, I often read my poetry at activist events in Hawai‘i, and I have also participated in various activist groups (as an organizer, protestor, marcher, etc.). I also think of teaching as a form of activism, so my teaching is dedicated to having Indigenous histories,

languages, cultures, and issues achieve greater visibility As a writer, I have a responsibility to both lay bare the ravages of colonialism through poetry and to champion my people's ongoing efforts toward greater sovereignty and decolonization.

ES: How would you like your work, both poetic and academic, to be received by the world? What would you like readers to understand from your words?

BNM: I hope my work is received as a valuable and healing contribution to Hawaiian literature and culture, and that it does justice to the profound sense of loss experienced by Hawaiians as we strive to survive amidst the violence of American colonial occupation. I would also like readers to understand that words are powerful tools to heal, to capture our emotions, memories, and visions for the future.

ES: You freely mix English and Hawaiian in your poetry, without offering translations, which is clearly an important message about cultural consumption and belonging. How has your bilingualism shaped your writing?

BNM: Learning the Hawaiian language over the past decade has made me further appreciate Hawaiian poetics, which can be seen in everyday words and phrases. It gave me a window into how my ancestors view the world and their place in it. Bilingualism has shaped my writing by giving me another instrument to play in composing the musicality of poetry. I am also interested in the tensions and harmonies created between Hawaiian and American English when they are used side by side.

ES: Your poetry is a lot about roots, genealogy and memory. How are they connected in your creative experience?

BNM: From a Hawaiian viewpoint, we need to know who we were to know who we are. Colonialism as a process has sought to disconnect us from our ancestors; whereas writing is a creative way to invoke and record memory as well as reconnect to my roots and ancestral knowledges.

ES: In your poem "The Petroglyphs at Olowalu" you write, "Tracing the lines those before me began — / their words I ask for, the old work of hands." Where do you see your position as a poet within Hawaiian history and culture? Do you see your work as a continuum in Hawaiian culture or as a transition?

BNM: Yes, my work is both a continuum and a transition. It continues the long genealogy of Hawaiian literature and story, while also transitioning into Hawaiianizing introduced Western poetic forms.

ES: Females are important characters in your poems, from your Grandmother to Pele. Could you explain a little about the place of women and feminism in both your work, in Hawaiian culture more generally, and in the activism of recent decades?

BNM: Mana wahine (feminine power) is an important concept in Hawaiian culture. Women are seen as not only equal to men, but in many instances more powerful than men because of our ability to create life. In the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, women continue to provide vital leadership in creating and nurturing the lāhui. In my work, I hope to honor the women in Hawaiian history and story, as well as the long

line of strong women in my own family. My work also honors our akua, or gods who stand as models of powerful Hawaiian womanhood.

ES: A quote from the Greenwood Encyclopedia says that whilst “novelists are almost nonexistent the number of Hawaiian poets is virtually endless” (945) Do you agree? (If so) why do you think that is the case?

BNM: I disagree. There are quite a few Hawaiian novelists (such as John Dominis Holt, Victoria Nālani Kneubuhl, Matthew Kaopio, Kauai Hart Hemmings, Kiana Davenport, and Kristiana Kahakauwila, to name a few). However, there are definitely more Hawaiian poets. I think this is because the novel is a much more recent (and introduced) form of storytelling, and poetry lends itself to being more memorable and easier to perform for audiences. This is not to say that Hawaiian storytelling is confined to what is often seen the brevity of poetry; there are several epic mo‘olelo (that have chants within them) that continue to be celebrated. While they were recorded in writing in the 19th century Hawaiian language newspapers (often spanning several months!), these mo‘olelo are much, much older. They are often reductively described as “legends,” but this term does not do them justice at all.

ES: Thank you for taking the time to answer these Brandy, it’s really appreciated.

BNM: Thank you, Emma, for asking such thoughtful and provocative questions.

Appendix B

An Interview with Jamaica Osorio.

This interview was conducted via Skype on 1st February 2014, and an edited version is published as “An Interview with Jamaica Osorio.” *Wasafiri* 31:3 (2016): 54-58.

Emma Scanlan: I’d like to begin by asking about your experiences attending Hawaiian immersion school and learning English as a second language. Your father is a well-known musician, academic and activist. How has your experience with activism and with language shaped you and your work as a poet?

Jamaica Osorio: Just to clarify, I learnt how to read and write in English after Hawaiian, but I learned how to speak English growing up. Some people find that distinction really important. Growing up, some of my first memories are of being at rallies, and hearing some of the most iconic Hawaiian sovereignty speeches that have ever happened during our movement, so I was really lucky to be surrounded by these amazing orators. And angry orators too, you know — Haunani-Kay Trask. I got to grow up listening to her. So she gave a wonderful speech in 1993, declaring that we aren’t Americans and that we have the right to be angry. I was only 3 years old, but that was a part of how I grew up. And growing up with a father who was immersed in that movement, we were really lucky, because my mom and my dad raised us to speak out, to resist, and to stand up for ourselves. We were taught to resist the kind of rules that people would try and put on us, which I think made it hard for them to raise us, because sometimes we started resisting them. But I think being a part of a community that valued music and story, and celebrated people who could use language well, and who could speak to the masses comfortably and share their ideas. It was natural that I would eventually become a writer, someone who liked to perform, because everyone who I admired as a child could do that and I admired them for being able to captivate our nation in that way. It seems unfair almost that I had all these amazing orators and writers coming in and out of my house just because of who my father was. It has everything to do with the kind of writer and speaker I’ve become.

ES: You mentioned Haunani-Kay Trask; which other iconic speakers have you had the privilege of knowing and seeing?

JO: Lilikalā K. Kame‘eleihiwa, who is another Hawaiian activist in the Hawaiian studies department, obviously my father, Jon Kay Kamakawiwo‘ole Osorio, who’s from Maui ...

Anyone of those people were influential, but also, growing up in this movement, you talk about people who passed before you were born and the kind of audience they captivated: people like George Helm. I grew up talking about him all the time, my dad wrote songs about him. It’s not like I had any kind of personal relationship with him because he passed away before I was born, but he was always an image, like an icon.

ES: Yes, he was an amazing singer, as your father is too. You are very musical as well; you write and perform songs, and you like to perform your poetry orally. So how

does performing music and poetry come together for you? Do you see a distinction between your song writing and your poetry or is it all part of the same thing?

JO: The only distinction I see for myself between the music and the poetry is that I am much better at writing poems than I am at writing music. But I see the two as coming together for the same purpose. We talk about people like George Helm, who had an amazing voice and played beautiful music, but who could also stand and talk for hours about sovereignty. So these people who engaged in art were also the same people who were engaging us around activism: so in that way I think they're exactly the same. I think they are different tools that can be used to engage people and get people to listen. I love singing and playing music, but I definitely think my strength in writing is in poetry. I might be a little better at one than the other, but I don't think one is any better at capturing our movement. I think if anything that music has been one of the most important galvanising tools around the Sovereignty Movement. If you think about the songs "Kaulana Na Pua" [by Ellen Wright Prendergast, 1893], "Hawaiian Soul", that my dad wrote, or "Ka Mamakakaua" which is written by Palani Vaughan, all of these songs really helped the movement continue and people centred their lives around them. They started singing them to their children and it helped them continue to tell these stories and I think poetry now is just another tool. A tool that maybe they weren't using in the same way in the 70s and the 80s, but it has come to do the same thing and teams up with music and musicians.

ES: So you think this new vibe of slam poetry and coming together to perform poetry is performing a similar function to rallies [of the 70s-90s], where people used to go outside and play music to the crowd?

JO: Exactly. You watch tapes of rallies from the 70s and 80s and a lot of the speakers would start by playing music, and between speakers they would play Hawaiian music. Sometimes you can watch these things and you don't realise how political that act is, but they're singing in Hawaiian and they're singing about Hawaiian things. It's incredibly subversive. And today I can't go to a rally without someone asking me to do a poem. And it's the same thing you know: speaker-music, speaker-poem. There are all these different ways to catch the people who are a part of our movement, and some people can listen to an academic speech and be like 'Yeah' and charged, and some people want to listen to a song that will catch them.

ES: So where do you see yourself? How would you like your poetry to be received in the history of your activism, and your family and cultural history?

JO: I think of poetry and even music as adding to a conversation on Hawaiian literature. And because we have such a strong history of oral literature there is this idea that everyone is talking back and to each other. I'd like my poetry to inspire more people to write, because the important thing about this movement is that it's not a handful of voices, it's really a nation of voices coming together. But really I think my responsibility in this is just to write the stories that I know and then to give the people who know those stories the opportunity to do the same. So my poetry is a kind of outreach and giving back, and trying to engage as many people in a conversation as possible.

ES: Why is the slam side, the performance side, so vital to what you do? Why not just publish a book?

JO: First, I have a tremendous amount of respect for people who can write a book, and their words exist on a page in a way that captivates people, but I also think that one of the amazing things about Slam poetry and spoken word is that you have this task of staying accessible. Someone has to hear your poem the first time and they have to get it. It has to catch them. When you write in a book, you have as many times as someone is willing to read the poem for them to dig into it. And when we're talking about a movement and activism you're given small moments, right? And I think the great thing about Slam poetry and using Slam poetry for that kind of purpose is that if you can really be accessible in a way that is still nuanced, you're going to reach the kind of people who aren't willing to pick up a book.

We have a literacy problem as Native Hawaiians, so writing a book will work for the kind of people who are in the spaces around the university and in schools, but there's also a large contingency of Hawaiians who we are trying to reach and bring into the movement and be in conversation with who have no desire to pick up a book; they don't think a book is relevant to them. Which is completely fair, because they've been treated in a way that's told them that these things aren't even made for them. And I think oratory and spoken word speaks to our communities in a way that often a book cannot.

ES: Thinking ease of communication, you speak a lot in Hawaiian and you mix the languages English and Hawaiian together, and you've got an interesting relationship with both languages, considering the history of the repression of Hawaiian. You are one of the first generation to come through learning Hawaiian as a first language again, so how do you find this in your performances? Is most of your audience bilingual? How do you handle accessibility, especially when you go to the continental United States?

JO: Yes. Most of my audience is English speaking unfortunately, even when I'm in Hawai'i. Honestly I would love to write entirely in Hawaiian but that's another thing about access too. Even if my only audience was the lāhui, just Hawaiians, writing only in Hawaiian wouldn't work; I would exclude a lot of Hawaiians. So I write primarily in English and use the Hawaiian language either when I can't find the right word in English, just out of frustration, or as a tool to fold in these words so that they become a part of our vocabulary. I think it's a trick I can use to really mark the poem as being Hawaiian and based in place. When I do these poems on the continent I've found that sometimes people ask me questions about the Hawaiian, but usually people are able to get the gist of what the poem is about without knowing every single word. I've been really lucky that I've straddled that line in that way. But even if they didn't get the Hawaiian parts of the poem, they're not the primary audience, you know, it's not really about them. I went to Sweden and Bogota, and found that doing poems in front of people who don't really speak English is an interesting kind of argument for saying, if they can get into this there is no problem with me doing poems that are 15% Hawaiian in different parts of America. If these Spanish-speaking Colombians can get behind this poem, then I'm sure that these Californians can handle it.

ES: There is quite a large Hawaiian population in California, isn't there?

JO: Absolutely, yes. And it's not like the words I'm using are inaccessible. Some of them are outside the normal colloquial vocabulary of an English speaking Hawaiian, but I don't see them as inaccessible. And the idea is that if I use them enough, and someone who isn't Hawaiian might not do this, but a Hawaiian listening to the poem might be inspired to look it up and make it a part of their vocabulary, which would be awesome.

ES: You have said that your early poems were very angry and that you used to yell on stage, which was part of your performance, but you've also commented that in your current work you're transitioning towards themes of love, re-writing relationships and Hawaiian mo'olelo [stories, histories]. How has this come about and what is influencing your more recent work?

JO: I think the main thing is that I've matured, a lot. I'm still pretty angry about a lot of things, but I needed to write those poems in that way because I wasn't a mature writer and I didn't know any other way to write than to be angry. As I grew as a writer I learned different tools and ways that you could crescendo in a poem that didn't actually require yelling. I think it helped when I started studying different activist movements around the world and the way that they used art. So looking at the Chicano movement, or the black Civil Rights movement, or even Queer movements I realised that a lot of that work was angry too but there was also this dialogue of love – either love for culture, love for land or love for each other – that I was really drawn to and I found myself more connected with that than with the anger. And I started listening more to Martin Luther King and the kind of speeches that he gave and it just hit me that you alienate a lot of people when you're angry. I am not really at all apologetic for some of the people I alienated with my early work, but I started to wonder how many more people could I reach around this subject if I tried to approach it from a different angle. I think that the first instance of me really trying to do that was the poem I wrote for the White House. They asked me to write a poem about Hawai'i, but they specifically told me they didn't want an 'I hate America' poem.

ES: That was the poem "Kumulipo"?

JO: Yes. So that was the first exercise in celebrating Hawai'i and being intentional about the way I felt about America without yelling. I tried to nail the head from the other side, and open up the audience more so they could really listen to the claim I was making about colonialism and capitalism and the way I felt it had destroyed my home and my people. And then I found that as I started to write more like that more people started to engage in a conversation about Hawai'i. Americans could talk about Hawai'i being illegally overthrown because the first line of my poem didn't immediately alienate them. They could come and have a conversation about it, and I think those conversations are important. That's not to say that I'm not going to ever write another angry poem, because I still write angry poems, but I think there is a transition I'm going through where I'm starting to see things that I didn't see before as activism, as being very political.

ES: Can explain that a little further?

JO: There is a series of poems that I'm working on that tells the story of Hi'iakaikaupoliopole, about Pele and her younger sister Hi'iaka. Hi'iaka is sent on a

journey to fetch a lover for her elder sister. The story is really popular in Hawai‘i: it’s one of the most serialised stories in our newspapers. I’m not sure why it became one of the most serialised stories in the nineteenth century, but it was, so now we talk about it all the time, and there are a bunch of different translations of it today. But every translation just talks about Hi‘iaka travelling to fetch a male lover for her sister, and no one really examines this really intimate relationship between Hi‘iaka and her female lover Hōpoe who she leaves behind.

I started constructing this this series of poems where Hi‘iaka is writing love poems to her lover Hōpoe as she’s on this journey, so it’s a new way of kind of telling the story. In the series Hi‘iaka is telling the story of her journey to Hōpoe, through Hōpoe and through their love. I think before I would have seen it as an artistic experiment but not really that political, but the more I’ve studied these stories and realised how this particular part of the story has been silenced, and the way that queer brown women’s stories have been silenced, it started to become really clear that this re-owning of Hi‘iaka’s voice, as a queer Hawaiian woman, was exceptionally political. It’s subversive and it’s dangerous in certain ways and in my opinion has more potential than me getting on stage and yelling some poem, especially if you can reach out to a contingency of Hawaiians who have felt for a long time that these stories don’t really represent them, so they feel detached from their culture. When really the stories in their infancy did represent them, but have gone through so many steps of colonisation that they’ve been erased from them. I think this practise of uncovering what has been erased is really important today for Hawaiians, and it’s something that I’m trying to work with.

ES: So you see it more as archaeology than as invention?

JO: Yes, kind of. We talk about these stories, all the different versions, as being authored every time. There isn’t really an original that we’re coming back to. A part of being an oral culture is that there are many versions and there isn’t a beginning version and then a timeline that should be talking back and talking to and adding to a conversation. I read an article that described mo‘olelo quite beautifully: when someone tells a story it is understood that he or she is only telling a very specific part of the story and the only part that they can tell, and that it’s the responsibility of someone else to tell their version of the story so that other parts of the story are revealed.

The advent of writing in Hawai‘i in the 1820s–30s was wonderful because it helped us to preserve these stories, but it did really mess up the way that we thought, or the way that others thought, about how we told our stories. In Western culture you write something down and the first one that is written becomes the original and everything that comes after is a response to the original. I think that this idea of the wave [Barbadian writer Kamau Brathwaite’s language of “tidalectics”] is a lot more appropriate for talking about Hawaiian literature. But we’ve moved away from that because we’ve talked about Hawaiian literature for so many years in this construct of writing.

ES: In your TEDx Mānoa presentation you talked about poetry as translation. How do you consider poetry as translation?

JO: People talk about the translation of foreign literature to English or Hawaiian to English translation, but not really talking about the oral literature of Hawai'i into written literature as translation, but I see that as translation too. So, thinking about translation in that manner, when I talk about Hawaiian stories and try and put them in a poem I think there is a translation process that goes on. You decide what to keep and what goes, and how to articulate things in different ways. In the same way that I think some people are going to really be able to speak and engage via a written story, or spoken story, or an academic story, other people are going to speak poetry better. So it's the idea that we should be translating these stories or these ideas for as many of our people as possible. And poetry is something that I can do, whilst someone else might be able to do song, or write an academic paper about it.

ES: Your poems manage to get a lot of emotion in. Some are very angry, some very poignant, some incredibly sensual and some highly political. How would you prefer the world to receive your work?

JO: That's a big question. I think that the most important thing to me is that people who read my work see someone that insists on continuing to write, continuing to tell these stories. That insists on not being spoken for. That's really what the work is about; every single poem has in common a desire to speak for myself, and I think that in itself is political. For a brown woman who has been spoken for before, to say "No, I can speak for myself" is really what the work is trying to do. And if people can see my work as a body that does that, then I think I'll feel like a success.

ES: Would you ever consider putting your work together and publishing it as a series of videos of performances or a book? There is another creative step in the editing process.

JO: I struggle with collection. I'm all over the place and I think my understanding of collections is very colonised in this idea that everything has to relate in a certain way. I did self-publish a couple of chapbooks that collected the first half of the 1000 days of writing that I did, almost like a journal. It shows the steps I took in the first 500 days of the writing project, and I've been trying to think of new ways to hold this work together with some other common denominator other than it just being my voice.

ES: The internet is the way that I have accessed your work. Is that how you see the future of your kind of poetry? Your voice – literally your voice – as opposed to words on a page?

JO: Actually I see the internet as a tool, because it's boundless, right? I can write as many poems as I want and I can put them on the internet for free and people can read them or not. As you said, you can reach it all the way to the other side of the world. But I have, as practise of writing, been trying to write poems that exist well on the page that also can be spoken. And I am interested in putting together books, so I don't see the internet as something that's in my past as a writer, but I also don't see it as the only thing in my future. I'm not against poems together through different mediums, I'm just not sure exactly how that would work yet. Of course I'm going to continue to use the internet, but I would love to put out an affordable book, that we really could just throw out into the world and people would hopefully read it. It's just a matter of writing something that I feel strongly enough that it deserves to be published.

ES: But that's an interesting comment in itself, that it 'deserves to be published.'

JO: Yes, exactly, that's still a part of our consciousness unfortunately.

ES: Tell me about your research. You're writing about Kānaka Maoli literature.

JO: Yes, so I'm just starting my English PhD programme now. I'm trying to take all these different classes to think about the question of translation differently. Last semester I took a class on folk law and translation, and the politics of translation and then that was like a translation theory class but then also a folk law studies class. It was really interesting to be in a class with people who were really interested in fairy tales and the way that they build a conversation in the consciousness. Then this semester I'm taking a Hawaiian literature class with my father, and a comparative literature class between African American literature and Pacific literature. My teacher is really clear about saying that he doesn't believe in the comparative process, and he likes to think of it as influence and relationships. So what relationship does the Black Power movement on the continent have to do with the Black Power movement in Papua New Guinea, or in Aotearoa? And how is the literature there influenced by the movements? And how does black literature at least, revolve around Civil Rights in the United States? It has been a really interesting way to digest my own questions about political movements and literature and relationships to other places. So now I'm moving in a direction where I'll be able to start talking more specifically about the way these Hawaiian stories, in particular Hi'iakaikapoliopele, were translated and the choices that were made to do so, hopefully bringing in some postcolonial theory. I'm most interested in these ideas about translation and speaking back and uncovering this erasure.

ES: Does your research give you a perspective of Hawai'i as part of a global speaking back process?

JO: Yes, and I think we get caught up in this idea that since Hawai'i's so geographically isolated, we were intellectually isolated from the rest of the world, which is, well, just some kind of colonial BS, right? I mean, our ancestors travelled across the Pacific to find Hawai'i and continued to travel back to places like Tahiti and Aotearoa. And then post-contact we were sending some of our most treasured academics off to different parts of the world and that's something that's been happening since the beginning of the Hawaiian nation. I think being able to recognise that and really think critically about the Polynesian Panthers or Kokua Hawai'i and these groups and how they relate globally. We sometimes think about Hawai'i as if we're in our own bubble and we're only thinking about Hawaiian politics, but really our ancestors were quite immersed in the politics of other parts of the world and they used those politics as guides for their own work.

ES: Thank you for talking to me. It's been great. Thank you so much.

JO: Awesome. No problem, thank you.

Appendix C

An interview with No‘ukahau‘oli Revilla.

This interview was conducted in person at the University of Hawai‘i on 20th March 2015.

Emma Scanlan: I’d like to start by asking you about your chapbook *Say Throne*. What can you tell me about it?

No‘u Revilla: *Say Throne* was my first chapbook and it’s such a raw, tiny chapbook. Both Susan Schultz [editor of Tinfish Press, which published *Say Throne*] and ku‘ualoha [ho‘omanawanui] have been instrumental in my undergraduate career. Now, I’m working on a more mature second collection but I have poems spread throughout the cosmos. One of my poems closes the anthology *The Value of Hawaii 2*. It’s an anthology of essays and creative works, and the two editors, Aiko Yamashiro and Noelani Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, are amazing, beautiful, brilliant scholars.

ES: Can you tell me a little bit about what motivates you to write poetry and your influences?

NR: ku‘ualoha [ho‘omanawanui] and Haunani-Kay Trask were major mentors. Haunani’s undeniable. I was going to school in New York University and I was double majoring in Spanish and Journalism, on a very different route, and one day I borrowed *Light in the Crevice Never Seen* from a library in NYU. I sat down and I read [Trask’s] poetry and I wanted to know more, so I uncovered *From a Native Daughter* that I had on my bookshelf, and I started reading. And I was utterly enthralled, and challenged, and provoked and I suddenly looked around and realised I’m this kanaka maoli wahine [Native Hawaiian woman] living in New York, double majoring in Journalism and Spanish and ready to go to Madrid to live, and totally not be part of home. That really shook me, usefully shook me, so I came back home and I enrolled, first at Maui College, and then at Hawai‘i Pacific University, and then I finally came here [UH], and I got to know the community here, which has become my family. So when I write I always think of Haunani. She has that poem “You Will be Undarkened”, which so many people think is this sexy poem to a lover, but one day I asked her, “Haunani, everybody reads this poem, and everybody that I’ve talked to thinks it’s this love/sex poem.” And she said “Oh, that couldn’t be further from the truth.” I told her some of my mana‘o [thoughts] about how I had read it as a kind of mentorship poem, and I told her, “You’ve certainly undarkened me.” And I told her! I told her like that, being a total dork! And she just looked at me, the way Haunani looks, with her fingers on her chin and she had this smile. So I was really happy I met her before she retired.

ES: Being from a Western perspective I read that poem as anti-Enlightenment. On the one hand people colonise Hawai‘i and say you will be enlightened, and Haunani replies no, we’re not going to be enlightened, you’re going to be undarkened — it’s a counter narrative.

NR: Absolutely. And Haunani is just amazing in person. Her presence in a room, whether she’s reading a poem, giving a lesson, lecturing or just having a conversation

with the woman, is beautiful on so many levels. I was so glad to have met her. And ku‘ualoha is equally influential. My writing is really guided by strong women in my life.

There are these mentors like Haunani, ku‘ualoha and Brandy [Nālani McDougall], but the women in my family actually steer my writing. Like my grandmother, who was the forever matriarch of my writing, my aunties, my sister, my mother. And I grew up in a family where women were strong, women survived and thrived, they had voices they knew what to do with them, and we had sex and enjoyed ourselves. And, sex was never off the table, we didn’t giggle about it, or whisper about it, we certainly didn’t have these unnecessary euphemisms to train us as little girls to not talk about certain things, or if you did you talked about them in certain ways. So I come from a very brazen group of women in my family and I’m forever grateful for that.

ES: Whilst I see place as being most prominent in other poets’ work, in your work I see sexuality. Can you explain why this is such a motivating topic in your writing?

NR: I think because to be able to talk about sex confronts how women especially are not supposed to talk about sex, and that is a very important thing. Sex needs to be talked about, especially when sexual trauma teaches you to be guilty or stay silent and not name certain things or people; but in my family that does not happen. Uncles are named, fathers, brothers, cousins are named, so that your nieces and your daughters and your granddaughters know these are the men who cause these kinds of harm. We protect each other. And sex isn’t just a source of pain, although it can be, but it’s also a deep source of pleasure and play. To be able to know something like sex dimensionally, and to be able to embrace the fact that you can actually take pleasure in and play with something that causes so much pain, I think that is not only decolonising but absolutely empowering. And language —when you play with language and tell stories about sex, the way your aunties talked about it, it’s good for you.

ES: I want to ask you about gender and poetry. How important is your gender, or the gender of being female, to your identity as a Native Hawaiian poet?

NR: I love being a woman and I love being a kanaka maoli women. My ‘aumakua [personal deities] are the mo‘o [lizards] and my poetry is very shaped by that fact. The mo‘o are shape shifters; they’re half reptile, they can change into these seductive women who guard fishponds. They’re quite jealous creatures, quite territorial.

ES: One of my favourite poems is “Rope /Tongue.”

NR: Yes, where my grandmother is a mo‘o. Mo‘o are not all women, there are a few very well known stories about male mo‘o. But my being a woman, us as women if you want, is utterly part of who I am and who I celebrate myself as. And because I come from a line of unapologetically female women there’s something about me being a woman that is tied to being a mo‘o.

ES: Does your ‘aumakua being a mo‘o tie into your identity as writer?

NR: I would say so. My answer is more guided by my na‘au, my gut, to answer yes, of course it is, because I do write about sexuality and gender in my work. But I do

question why I always have to qualify my being a writer, my being an artist as ‘I’m a Hawaiian, queer, female poet’ rather than just ‘I’m a poet’.

ES: I’ve read *Say Throne*, the chapbook, and I’ve listened to “Say Throne”, the poem. Your reading just brings it to life, so I’m interested in the difference or similarities between writing and speaking poetry, the processes of each and the effects for you, and the reception that you get.

NR: I definitely would say I love performing. I love to perform because it is such a different experience. But I also love writing poems explicitly for the page, but because I’m a mo‘o I believe in that in-between space, that shape shifting and that moment when you are in the middle. And lately I’ve been writing poems to perform for awareness campaigns like West Papua and water rights in Hawai‘i. I recently came back from Papua New Guinea, where Lyz [Soto] was also. So I’ve been writing a lot of poems to perform on a specific topic, but *Say Throne* I wrote just for the page. Christina Baccleggia, who was so supportive of the work, encouraged me to have it recorded. She was gracious enough to take me to a professional recording studio and record the poem so it could be on Anglestica [journal]. My thing about performance, and I think this comes from the playfulness and intentionality I learned from the women in my family, is you really need to let the language breathe and let the image build up. And in order to do that you need to be patient, make eye contact with your audience and really expand that reciprocity between you and your audience so you’re feeding them and they’re feeding you. So I *love* performing, there’s something about gaining your audience’s trust throughout the poem, so much so that you can start whispering at some points and they’re on the edge of their seats and they’re with you and they’re trusting you to guide them through it. You just can’t do that with a page poem. So it’s another kind of play. I love playing — it’s essential. It’s essential, but it’s for a purpose.

ES: I have written ‘who do you write for’, but maybe I should ask ‘who do you play for?’

NR: I love it! For my family. I’m a Hawaiian woman, I write for my community, but it’s specifically for women, young girls. The projects that I’m working on now, my long term projects are all geared towards young girls, because the kind of education I got from my aunties, from my mentors like Haunani, are irreplaceable. To be empowered to say what you need to say, to create what you need to create, believe in your instincts and play, and don’t let anyone ever tell you not to name the people you need to name to heal, to tell the stories you need to tell to heal, to regenerate. I don’t want ever to underestimate the power of being able to say that to younger women because I needed that, and it’s something you need to give back. So, my family, my lāhui [nation] and especially younger girls.

ES: Lyz [Soto] and I talked about how she’s listened to a thousand poems [in her role as a Slam poetry coach] that are testimonial, and often about sexual violence. There’s also a testimonial poem about sexual violence in Brandy Nālani McDougall’s book *The Salt Wind*. Is this something that needs to be dealt with in a literary space, as well as perhaps in a legal space?

NR: There is a lot. Kirk Caldwell [Mayor of Honolulu] has just hosted “Now” week, to bring attention to domestic violence in Hawai‘i. I certainly think that domestic violence, sexual violence, against women of colour is a problem.

ES: By men of colour? I’m very interested in women, but I’m also interested in the liminal space that Hawaiian men occupy, between a white patriarchal society and being a patriarch of colour, in a society where their women actually come from a more equal background. Where does that leave them?

NR: What I think I’ve learned from personal experience and living in Hawai‘i is you’re raised seeing certain things as if they are normal. What is possible, being a man here and being a woman here, is limited. When we’re raised with such limited possibilities, what do we expect? So, as I tell my students every day, when you’re having an ordinary conversation and someone says something offensive, or mispronounces something, or says something hurtful, it’s so easy to let it slide, especially if it’s a stranger. But the simple act of correcting that mispronunciation, or providing an alternative, or saying “I disagree”, is itself radical and you never know how that might ripple out in the future. My own father reads my poetry and he says he has no idea what I’m talking about, however, the conversation gets juicy when my aunties say “you have no idea what she’s talking about because you’re a man.” And then they started having that conversation, albeit a very difficult conversation, but the conversation happened, which is important.

ES: Do you see all literature as creating a space for those conversations? Is that the purpose of literature, in this context?

NR: I believe literature encourages people to re-examine possibilities. So many people live with a black and white, this and that, us and them, attitude. But literature is that gorgeous in-between, interpretive space.

ES: And poetry particularly?

NR: Poetry particularly. Especially story, mo‘olelo. I know Noenoe Silva always says mo‘olelo is the theory, but literature, poetry, story telling and performance all make you O.K. in that in-between space. It gives you the feeling that “this is O.K.”, and I’m going to imagine right here that something beautiful, and different, and decolonising is going to come from this.

Have you heard of the concept or practice of makawalu? It’s a Hawaiian practice, an epistemological discourse. Makawalu is “eight eyes” — it encourages you to look at things from a different point of view. So it’s a Hawaiian way of approaching problem solving, ordinary thinking through things.

ES: A personal and pertinent question is, how would you like your poetry to be received once it’s out in the public realm?

NR: What would make me happy is that it’s received at all, but that it’s put into your mouth, and you actually put it in your body and read the poem out loud. That is enough for me. Not this casual, flippant reading, but when you really commit as a reader to poetry and when you actually put it in your mouth and you give it breath,

you're actually taking the poem seriously, and it's in your body, and then conversation can happen however it happens in your body. But if people really take the time to read my poem, Haunani's poetry, Jamaica's poetry, then read it out loud and do it purposefully and beautifully, and give it your breath and see what happens. I'd be ecstatic.

ES: One more question. Do you consider your poetry as resistance?

NR: Absolutely. Absolutely. And I believe all poetry can be resistance. To what entirely depends on the situation, but my poetry resists the idea that a woman shouldn't speak, a woman shouldn't speak about certain things, women can't give each other stories and help each other.

ES: Because we've had a gender-oriented conversation, just on a personal level I'm interested in the positive and negative effects of the idea of gender equality.

I was raised on Western feminism which is rooted in fair wages, equal pay, equal rights to birth control, to be able to work, to be able to divorce, freedom from abuse. In many cases that is inverted for indigenous women. So living within America, or at least within the reach of the federal government and its rhetoric of equality and democracy, how do you as a poet interested in sexuality, feel about feminism?

NR: Feminism has actually been very important to me. I got my BA in Women's Studies, and Jamaica [Osorio] and I constantly debate the use of Western feminism. She got a BA in Critical Race Theory, so we're always debating — I say "you cannot discount this person, you cannot discount this person," and she gets frustrated!

It gets really heated. At a certain point feminists started talking about difference, just embracing difference, and I ultimately agree. But when I think about kuleana, kuleana is not just responsibility, its privilege and it's not a gendered practice. I have my kuleana because this is who I am, this is where I come from, this is my 'āina, this is my 'ohana, thus this is my kuleana. And I think that understanding what you are meant to do is so tied to your family, how you contribute to your lāhui, where you come from, your 'āina, that if you don't take all that into consideration then you're not really practicing what kuleana means. And then, when you don't take all of that into consideration, then you start abusing your privilege. Then you start undermining other people who are actually attached to your kuleana. And the word kuleana has been thrown around, just like aloha, as this kind of Hawaiian tourist authority slogan, but when you really understand through your na'au [stomach] what your kuleana is, because you've considered all these other things, that kind of oppressive atmosphere that comes between us, you're a man and I'm a woman, you're straight and I'm queer, you're poor and I'm rich, all that b*****t really gets figured out.

ES: I agree. Thank you for taking the time to talk with me No'u. I really appreciate it.

Notes

Introduction

¹ The first Wilcox Rebellion occurred in 1889, and the second in 1895, after Queen Lili‘uokalani was deposed; both were failures. Robert J. Wilcox, who was educated at an Italian military academy, gathered a group of rebels and entered Honolulu with the intention of restoring the monarchy. Arms and ammunition belonging to the rebels were allegedly found in the grounds of the royal residence, ‘Iolani palace, prompting the Provisional Government to place Queen Lili‘uokalani under house arrest, where she remained under armed guard for around eight months. For an account of the rebellion and the Queen’s imprisonment see Liliuokalani, *Hawaii’s Story by Hawaii’s Queen*, Honolulu: Mutual Publishing, 1990, pp. 262-294.

² Papa.huli.lani comprises three words: Papa is foundation, huli is turn/ overturn, lani is sky. It refers to the knowledge of everything between the tops of our heads and the sky as far as we can see, including the winds, rains, clouds, stars and planetary movements. Papa.huli.honua means the same but for the earth (honua), and encompasses the knowledge of the ‘āina including Pele (all things volcanic), wai (fresh water), eruptions and erosions, and moana (ocean), waves, tides and currents. Papa.hanau.moku is composed of hanau, to give birth, and moku, which is both to sever (v) and island (n). It is the understanding of all things that reproduce, the rhythms of their lives and their urge to survive. The maku, or severance, element of Papahānaumakū refers to the moment when a reproductive being forms its own foundation away from its parents and begins to grow into an organism capable of reproducing itself. Each of these three areas of knowledge require specific skills and are relevant to certain spiritual and practical professions — each have elements that overlap with the others. For a detailed explanation of Papakū Makawalu see the lectures by P. Kanaka‘ole Kanahele presented by *The Kohala Centre*, particularly Part 2.

³ For a recent analysis of the dynamics of publishing in Hawai‘i see Brandy Nālani McDougall, *Finding Meaning: Kaona and Contemporary Hawaiian Literature*. University of Arizona Press, 2016, pp. 6-11.

⁴ The first Hawaiian Renaissance dates to the reign of King Kalākaua (1874-1891), who was also known as “The Merrie Monarch” for his patronage of the hula and other Hawaiian arts, in defiance of a ban instituted by missionary authorities. All further references to “the Hawaiian Renaissance” pertain to the second Hawaiian Renaissance, which began in the mid 1960s and continues to strongly influence poets in the twenty-first century.

⁵ The Admission Act ballot paper asked, “Shall Hawaii be immediately admitted into the Union as a State?” This was in contravention of UN Resolution 742 (VIII) adopted in November 1953, and ratified by the U.S., that stated that in order for a territory to be considered for removal from the list it must have been given the freedom to choose ‘on the basis of the right of self-determination of peoples between several possibilities, including independence’ (U.N. General Assembly Resolution 742). J. Kēhaulani

Kauanui notes that just months after this vote, ‘under UN criteria ... the ballot would have included both free association and independence as choices’ (*Hawaiian* 29). The implication of Kauanui’s analysis is that the Hawaiian people would not have voted to become a part of the United States if they had been given the option of independence.

⁶ Some of the groups that formed as part of the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement are A.L.O.H.A. (Aboriginal Lands of Hawaiian Ancestry), to seek reparations from the USA; Hui Alaloa (Long Road Organization), to keep public access to paths, streams and beaches; the Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana (P.K.O.), to stop the Naval bombing of Kaho‘olawe island; SOS (Save Our Surf); P.A.C.E. (People against Chinatown Evictions); ‘Ohana O Hawai‘i (Family of Hawai‘i); Ka Pākaukau (The Table), a coalition of groups working towards Hawaiian independence; Hui Na‘auao (Enlightened/ Learned Club), a coalition of 47 education groups; the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation, a non-profit public interest law firm; Nation of Hawai‘i, a republican leaning group headed by Bumpy Kanahele; Kingdom of Hawai‘i, a monarchist group, led by the King Edmund Keli‘i Silva Jr; and Ka Lāhui Hawai‘i, an organisation for self-government, which has around 10,000 enrolled members.

The Sovereignty Movement also influenced state political decisions, such as the founding of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs at the 1978 Constitutional Convention, and the Institute for the Advancement of Hawaiian Affairs in 1985.

Chapter One

¹ In 2012 the Wayne Kaumualii Westlake Art Invitational was organised at Gallery ‘Iolani by Windward Community College, titled “down on the sidewalk in waikiki”, and inspired by the series. The exhibition contained art, including Westlake’s own concrete poetry, sculpture and installations inspired by the series, created and performed by prominent Hawaiian artists including Mark Hamasaki, Kapulani Landgraf and Imaikalani Kalahale. A spoken-word CD of the series, produced by Richard Hamasaki (recording name RedFlea), contains recordings by Sia Figiel, Teresia Teaiwa and John Pule, among many others.

² In pre-contact times, without the speed of motorised transport, most travel required sleeping on the roadside. The Hawaiians considered this necessity important enough that Kamehameha I passed the ‘Law of the Splintered Paddle’ which protected the right of all Hawaiians to sleep by the roadside, ‘in the bosom of our mother [Papahānaumoku, Earth Mother]’, without fear of harm; the penalty for molesting a resting traveller was death (Watson 125). In modern times this law has been invoked in the context of homelessness and repeated attempts by the State, some more successful than others, to legislate against homelessness. Communities of homeless Hawaiians often express the opinion that they are houseless, not homeless, as the islands themselves are their home. For an analysis of the causes of homelessness in Hawai‘i see Trisha Kehaulani Watson “Homelessness”. *The Value of Hawai‘i: Knowing the Past, Shaping the Future* ed. Craig Howes and Jon Osorio, Honolulu: Biographical Research Centre, University of Hawai‘i Press, 2010, pp. 125-132.

³ For an example of anthropological description of Hawai‘i see A. L. Kroeber, “Observations on the Anthropology of Hawai‘i”. *American Anthropologist*. 23.2

(1921): 131-2. For missionary descriptions that are also travel accounts see Rufus Anderson, *The Hawaiian Islands: Their Progress and Condition Under Missionary Labors*. Boston: Gould and Lincoln. 1864. p. 164 and William J Ellis, *A Narrative of a Tour through Hawaii, or Owhyhee*. Honolulu: Hawaiian Gazette Co., Ltd. 1917, p 32. For a fictional renderings see Mark Twain, *Mark Twain's Letters from Hawai'i*. ed. Arthur Grove Day. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1975, p. 26-7.

⁴ Haole is a term for white person or foreigner in Hawaiian. Today it specifically refers to white skinned people, Hawaiian residents or otherwise, rather than people of other skin colours; it can be used pejoratively, depending on the context.

⁵ Kahuna is defined as 'Priest, sorcerer, magician, wizard, minister, expert in any profession' (Pukui and Elbert 114), demonstrating Westlake's regard for the homeless he shared the streets of Waikīkī with. It also strengthens the effect of his verse by reinforcing the impression that their lives are more pono (moral, good) than those of the wealthy who disregard them.

⁶ The percentage of homeless Native Hawaiian people in Hawai'i is generally cited as between 32-37% of the homeless population. The homeless charities Hope and H.O.M.E. cite these numbers on their websites, updated in 2015 and 2009 respectively (Hawai'i H.O.M.E. np.; Hope Services np.). A U.S. Department for Housing and Urban Development report from 1996 cites in its "Main Findings" that the lower incomes of Native Hawaiians are the main cause of their housing insecurities in an expensive state: "In response to high housing costs, Native Hawaiians are more likely than non-Natives to live with subfamilies and with multiple wage earners" (Maris Mikelsons and Karl Eschbach, "Housing Problems and Needs of Native Hawaiians", U.S. Department for Housing and Urban Development. 1996. Web. <http://www.huduser.gov/publications/pdf/hawaii.pdf>). The disparity is further enhanced because many of Hawai'i's homeless are not originally from Hawai'i. Attracted by the popular image of Hawaiian 'paradise', year-round warm weather and 'liberal public benefits laws' a study in 2008 found that nearly 60% of Hawai'i's homeless were not lifetime residents (Watson 128). Many of these people are other Pacific Islanders, particularly Micronesians, who qualify for social help under American agreements with their home nations following nuclear testing (Watson 128).

⁷ In other work, Westlake experimented with concrete poetry (*Westlake* 8, 31, 63, 67, 85, 108, 120, 130) as many Hawaiian poets did (notably Imaikalani Kalahale and Joe Balaz) and the combination of images and words (*Westlake* 36, 48, 102). This was at least partly inspired by his study of the Chinese logographic writing system (*Westlake* 21, 72).

⁸ This definition naturally leads towards the ethical expansion of hospitality towards other beings, such as animals, plants, or even the land. See Dufourmantelle's conversation with Derrida in *Of Hospitality*, particularly pages 140-142.

⁹ Problematically, neither Kant nor Derrida question the universality of hospitality, subsuming historical, geographical, linguistic and cultural differences under a banner of 'human-ness' that assumes certain patterns of social, ethical, and spiritual relations. However, the ethics of hospitable relations they describe were clearly available in

traditional Hawaiian culture, as Captain Cook's reception in Hawai'i demonstrates. It is certain that there has always been a cultural acceptance of travellers in Hawai'i as trade and migration routes between Hawai'i, the Marquesas, Tahiti and the Tuamotu Islands were active for at least one thousand years before Cook's charts first opened the archipelago to European contact (Collerson and Weisler 1911). Cook's initial welcome at Kealahou Bay and his later death demonstrates that Hawaiians in 1778-9 had a very clear understanding of their sovereignty over their own home, and what constituted a 'good' guest. To analyse the events that followed Cook's "discovery" of Hawai'i in terms of hospitality theory, then it is important to understand the Hawaiian acceptance of European explorers as visitors only. It took a hundred years and the almost complete devastation of the Hawaiian population through disease for the Hawaiian people to feel that their sovereignty was truly threatened, and to protest the fact.

¹⁰ This is indicated by the word *kuleana* which indicates right, privilege, concern and responsibility (Pukui and Elbert 1979). Clearly then, in Hawaiian 'right' and 'privilege' have as immediate and inherent corollaries 'concern' and 'responsibility.'

¹¹ See Haunani-Kay Trask's discussion of *aloha* (*Native* 3), or Noenoe K. Silva's discussion of *pono* (*Aloha* 16).

Chapter Two

¹ *Aloha 'āina* is a core Hawaiian value; Pukui and Elbert's *Hawaiian Dictionary* states that '*aloha 'āina* is a very old concept, to judge from the many sayings (perhaps thousands) illustrating deep love of the land' (21 original italics).

² The meaning and use of *aloha* is discussed in depth in the sixth chapter of this thesis. In the introduction to her theses, "We're All Hawaiians Now: Kanaka Maoli Performance and the Politics of Aloha", Stephanie Nohelani Teves wrote that when Obama addressed a crowd in Honolulu in 2008, he invoked 'Aloha' as a metaphor for inclusivity, mentioning all of Hawai'i's immigrant groups, but not once mentioning Hawaiians. Teves writes, 'And so, Kanaka Maoli were erased yet again through the invocation of their own cultural concept of *aloha*' (2). This example is, as Teves notes, 'simply a way of life' (3) in Hawai'i, and means that Hawaiians often avoid addressing the core cultural meaning of *aloha* directly because of the weight that its misused meanings hold. Poetry offers an indirect method, via *kaona*, to redress the balance and foreground the Hawaiian cultural weight of *aloha*.

³ For a discussion of the differences between ancient European and Hawaiian practices of land ownership see Trask *Native Daughter*, pp 115-116; for an in depth study see Lilikala Kame'eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires: Pehea La E Pono Ai? How Shall We Live in Harmony?* Honolulu: Bishop Museum Pr, 1992.

⁴ *Kaho'olawe* is the smallest of Hawai'i's eight major islands. At eleven by seven miles it is approximately 28,600 acres and lies a mere eight miles across the Alalakeiki Channel from Maui. *Kaho'olawe* was once called *Kohemālamalama O Kanaloa*, or simply *Kanaloa*. *Kohemālamalama o Kanaloa* translates as the "vagina" of "enlightenment" of *Kanaloa*, meaning the 'enlightened birthplace of *Kanaloa*'.

Kanaloa was a major Hawaiian deity, god of the sea. The island's traditional name can also be interpreted as meaning the sacred refuge or pu'uhonua of Kanaloa (Blackford 30). The island is the sacred kino lau (body form) of Kanaloa and as such the island is a wahi pana, a sacred place (Blackford 30). Kaho'olawe's position as the southernmost island and strong southerly currents meant it was an ideal location for launching voyages to Tahiti, and the channel to the west of the island is called Kealaikahiki, Road to Tahiti. A training platform for navigators was mounted on the highest point of Kaho'olawe, Pu'u Moaulanui, and the island was regarded as a centre for navigational learning (Blackford 30-31).

⁵ Linnekin argues that 'tradition is a conscious model' and that 'the inheritance of an authentic tradition and the naiveté of the folk are illusory' ("Defining" 241). What is detrimental to the article is the contradiction between the applied theory of deconstruction and the simultaneous claim to authority of judgment. Linnekin explicitly states 'As experts in authenticity, anthropologists, too, may be enlisted in the process of defining tradition' ("Defining" 249) but proves unwilling to give up the authority to judge authenticity herself, describing two people who participated in her research using widely different terms. One hapa-haole (half white) Hawaiian woman 'exemplifies the imitation of tradition: a deliberate self-definition according to a model of Hawaiianness' ("Defining" 244) but Harry Mitchell, father of Kimo Mitchell, 'at the time of my fieldwork, lived his traditions' ("Defining" 248). It is this inconsistent application of theory, betraying racially-based judgements of authenticity, that undermines the potential for the theory of cultural construction to be used to fruitfully to deconstruct the positivist paradigm of 'tradition' as an immutable object (which is equally inadequate for describing the Hawaiian experience). Perhaps most crucially, "Defining Tradition" lacks any form of contextual information for the 'cultural construction' Linnekin critiques. Whilst many of the theoretical and ethical gaps in the 'cultural construction' approach are addressed in her 1992 article "On the Theory and Politics of Cultural Construction in the Pacific", in 1983 Linnekin seemed intent on asserting that the 'native Hawaiian cultural revival [is an] example of invention, of a tradition moulded and reformulated according to the demands of ethnic politics' ("Defining" 241-2).

⁶ Whilst space and place, and global and local derive their meaning predominantly from their pairing, the pairs themselves have an asymmetrical relation. The term 'pair' is perhaps misleading as there is an asymmetry of power between the global/spatial and the local/place-based that privileges the former. Phenomena that are considered global, such as money, capital and the internet, tend to exist conceptually in space rather than in place. Spaces, and phenomena that could be considered 'global', must always be accessed in a place, yet places are generally given less power to alter or control the global than the global is given over the local; the benefits of the global are not equally felt around the globe, nor are they felt equally between places. Additionally, Dirlik reminds us that the global clearly does not refer to the globe itself, but to flows of political and economic power that have no connection to the earth's geometry, and which specifically discount certain areas of the world (152-3). These flows transcend national borders and the influence of governments — the presence of the truly international corporations direct flows of money and people that outstrip even the most far reaching of governments.

⁷ Using the term ‘construction’ can be controversial, but its inclusion here is meant in the way Francesca Merlan defines it: construction ‘does not deny the reality of its constituent elements’ but ‘suggests that we may best understand them as time-bound and changing products in which practical and symbolic implications of indigenous-nonindigenous relationship are cast and contested’ (126).

⁸ The palapala (written document) has a contentious history in Hawai‘i. Recognising early on the value of the ‘mouthless messenger’ the ali‘i embraced literacy and by the early twentieth century Hawai‘i had the highest recorded literacy rates in the world (K. Silva 25-6). However, documents were used to control, disempower and manipulate; the Bayonet Constitution, the Declaration of Annexation, the Bible, birth certificates and graduation certificates all form part of a lineage of colonisation.

⁹ I am not a Hawaiian speaker. All errors of translation and interpretation are my own, and this reading is by no means definitive.

¹⁰ Another possible translation is ‘the shadow is yours, the truth is ours’.

¹¹ The interaction of religion, law and the state in the USA is clearly rationalised separately in the constitution but in practice it is (at the present time) inconceivable that an avowed atheist or member of a polytheistic religion would become politically prominent.

Chapter Three

¹ In 1993 Haunani-Kay Trask delivered a speech at a protest march to ‘Iolani Palace that has become iconic in the Sovereignty Movement for its rejection of American identity. For a full transcript of the speech see Haunani-Kay Trask, Mililani Trask “Speeches from the Centennial of the Overthrow, ‘Iolani Palace, January 17, 1993”, transcribed by Joan Lander, in Jeffrey Carroll, Brandy Nālani McDougall, and Georganne Nordstrom, eds. *Huihui: Navigating Art and Literature in the Pacific*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2014: 99-114.

² Race became equated with skin colour only fairly recently in the history of racial science, but it is this marker that has the most powerful hold over social perceptions of race. Scientists now consider the selection of particular features to describe race, over and above other biological features (fingerprints, amino acid production or blood type), as arbitrary and socially produced (Kidd 4-6). In the introduction to his bibliography on ‘Race and Racism’, Andrew Wells explains that, ‘While it is recognized that race is a spurious concept with no scientific basis, the social reality of racism is impossible—and dangerous—to ignore’ (np.). His assessment indicates that the social and economic history of theories of race have real impacts on the people they affect. The development of what is today considered ‘race’ is not the result of a single discipline but is a complex and overlapping confluence of forces, political, religious, scientific, and social. Not the least of these is the literary depiction of race.

The biologist Ernst Mayr points out that ‘Literary critics have long been aware of the impact which the writings of some scientists have had on novelists and essayists and through them on the public at large. The reports of the happiness and innocence of

primitive natives of exotic countries brought home by eighteenth-century explorers, as erroneous as they were, greatly affected eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writers, and ultimately, political ideologies' (79). The discourse of race and, within Hawai'i, blood quantum has also become normative when describing identity. This should be surprising given the body of evidence biologists have now amassed that proves that race as it is usually conceived, as external appearance, is scientifically indefensible:

A wide range of evidence drawn from the biological and medical sciences directly contradicts the layperson's assumption that external indicators of race are biologically meaningful. Race is quite literally no more than skin deep, as well as scientifically incoherent. (Kidd 3)

³ An important component in understanding the development of racial theory as it relates to Hawai'i is the metaphor of 'blood'. Blood has a long history in Europe as a metaphor for race, but the emphasis was on genealogy, meaning that people who were related through descent were of shared 'blood'. In her study of British ideas of race in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Jean E. Feerick argues that 'blood' carried a symbolic value that was built around social systems more rigidly defined by class than by skin colour. She notes that texts of this period 'confound the tendency in modern racial ideologies to emphasize taxonomies of colour' (4).

In *Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza de Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico* María Elena Martínez traces the origins of Spanish ideals of *limpieza de sangre* ("purity of blood") to demonstrate how, after its conception in late medieval Castile and employment as a discriminatory tactic against Jewish and Muslim converts to Christianity, it was transported with the conquistadores to America, where it became the basis for the *sistema de castas* ("race/cast system") based on proportions of Spanish, Native American or African ancestry (Martínez 1). In the Spanish context, notions of 'blood' were tied to religious ancestry and blood politics were used to discriminate along religious lines, crucially arguing that purity of blood indicated loyalty to the religion (Martínez 1). This is important because it begins to demonstrate how personal qualities began to be tied to ideas of 'blood', which have drastic effects on modern discourses of what blood and race indicate about a person. Attributing character qualities or predicating behaviour according to a person's 'blood' (ancestry) opened the way for the 'corruption' of blood through partnerships with people deemed to be of impure ancestry.

J. Kēhaulani Kauanui uses the work done by David Schneider and Donna Haraway to illustrate how the concept of "blood" as an organising structure for familial relations is still very salient to white American identity today (*Hawaiian* 53-4).

⁴ The idea of equality developed through the tendency of early Western philosopher-scientists to apply the laws of physics to the animate world. Ernst Mayr links philosophy, science and religion in a contextualisation of the political environment that gave birth to democracy:

It was a tragedy both for biology and for mankind that the currently prevailing framework of our social and political ideals developed and was adopted when the thinking of western man was largely dominated by the

ideas of the scientific revolution, that is, by set of ideas based on the principles of the physical sciences. This included essentialistic thinking and, as a correlate, a belief in the essential identity of members of a class. Even though the ideological revolution of the eighteenth century was, to large extent, a rebellion against feudalism and class privileges, it cannot be denied that the ideals of democracy were in part derived from the stated principles of physicalism. As a consequence, democracy can be interpreted to assert not only equality before the law but also essentialistic identity in all respects. This is expressed in the claim, “All men are *created* equal,” which is something very different from the statement, “All men have equal rights and are equal before the law.” (79)

The essentialism Mayr identifies in the scientific revolution is the basis of Natural Philosophy, the precursor of natural science in Britain in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is derived from the Christian belief that God made a perfect world and all things in it are as he created them, and the scientist’s role was simply to observe and record the beauty and intricacy of the intentional world he lived in, and presided over. Smedley and Smedley explain that in the English language the term ‘race’ was similar to and interchangeable with ‘type, kind, sort, breed, and even species’ between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries (19). The Enlightenment, occurring at the time Cook arrived in Hawai‘i, sought to question all received knowledge and to formulate new ways of knowing the world, but it was unfortunate that the doctrine of observation, which was so effective in understanding the physical laws of the universe, was transferred to the living world.

During the periods of American exploration, predominantly by the British and Spanish in the seventeenth century, the term ‘race’ emerged to refer to the main three populations interacting on that continent— the Europeans, Africans and Native Americans. In the early eighteenth century the term became standardised and over the proceeding century became solidified into the meaning that still stands in the cultural and social realm. At this time race became a tool for organising and stratifying society in an unprecedented way, made necessary by the protection of slavery in law in countries that claimed to uphold the sentiment that ‘all men are created equal.’ As the American Constitution was drawn up and ratified, the only way Christians could justify slavery was to render African Americans un-human and therefore not protected by the new ‘free’ state (Smedley and Smedley 19).

Although attitudes towards race changed in the late twentieth century, these have tended towards using the law to enforce equality between races, as a form of ‘colourblindness’, rather than dismantling the discourse of race. This step is also a product of historical and social transformations, specifically the international response to Nazism, the gaining of independence by many former European colonies and the rise of the ‘multicultural state’. However, some argue that institutionalising in law the instruction to ‘ignore’ or be ‘blind’ to skin colour only reinforces racism by allowing culture and race to be conflated, and by denying people their ‘race’, as it is socially constructed, they are in fact denied their cultural consciousness (Carbado and Harris 30).

For a discussion of how the practice of “colourblindness” has been used against Native Hawaiians see Judy Rohrer, ““Got Race?” The Production of Haole and the Distortion of Indigeneity in the Rice Decision”. *The Contemporary Pacific* 18.1 (2006): 1–31.

⁵ For a full explanation of the transition from traditional to western land use see W.D. Alexander, “A Brief History of Land Titles in the Hawaiian Kingdom”, 1891. Web. <http://www.hawaiiankingdom.org/land-system.shtml>; and Noenoe K. Silva. *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism*. Duke University Press, 2004.

⁶ It is worth noting, however, that both Asians and Native Hawaiians were equally discriminated against, and both groups lived in terrible conditions in the 1920s-30s. See Stannard in John Heckathorn. “Interview: David Stannard” *Honolulu Magazine*, 1989. Web. <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~johnb/micro/m130/readings/stannard.html>; and the Introduction to David Stannard, *Honor Killing: Race, Rape, and Clarence Darrow’s Spectacular Last Case*. New York: Penguin Books, 2006.

⁷ It is notable that in Trask’s poetry nationality and ethnicity are regularly conflated. While haole refers to any white person, regardless of nationality, Asians are usually divided by nationality and are subjected to more pejorative stereotypes. In the poem “At Punalu‘u” (33) Trask puns on the racial stereotype of Asian eyes: ‘Every tourist, a camera/ to capture us Natives;/ the slant of their lens/ diminishing Hawaiians./ Japan Japanese just from/ Tokyo; Hong Kong Chinese/ and tall Taiwanese, Asia’s dragons// stumbling over lava,/ misfit Guccis/ and matching hats,/ frightened by waves and jet// black sand....’ (1-13) By stereotyping Asians Trask is turning the ‘lens’ back on tourists, who like to photograph Hawaiians when they see them, and essentialising them in return. Trask’s disdain for Asian, particularly Japanese, investment in the building industry and its exploitation of sea resources is well documented, and rooted in Japan’s colonial history in the Pacific, particularly its brutal rule in Guam (*Native* 44, 48-50, 52).

Chapter Four

¹ Brandy Nālani McDougall notes that Hawaiian writing has, for over a century, been judged against the European aesthetic tradition, ensuring the normative aesthetic is rooted in white culture. She utilises Antonio Gramsci’s theory of the ‘ideological hegemony’ of a culture’s ‘social technology’, namely its aesthetic norms, to reveal the colonised nature of normative (in America) aesthetic values that have operated to subjugate and conceal Native Hawaiian literary proliferation and skill (McDougall “Mālama nā Leo” 213-214).

² McDougall acknowledges Trask’s influence on her own life and work at the end of her book *Finding Meaning*, and dedicates the poem “The Second Gift” to Trask, describing her as ‘a prolific kumu [teacher] and intellectual who taught and trained other activists and intellectuals’ (162).

³ The hula dance does not solely consist of the type of gentle, intricate dancing generally associated with it outside of Hawai‘i. Trask has said that ‘hula, especially traditional hula, has evolved into something completely opposite to the tourist/

Hollywood fluff. Hula is now very athletic, forceful ... The emotional level is one of strength, what Hawaiians call *mana*—power’ (Franklin and Lyons “Land, Leadership, and Nation” 236 original emphasis). For an in depth discussion of hula as history see Amy Stillman, “Re-membling the History of the Hawaiian Hula” in Jeannette Marie Mageo ed., *Cultural Memory: Reconfiguring History and Identity in the Postcolonial Pacific*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2001: 187-204.

⁴ The interpretations of Pele mo‘olelo given in this chapter are taken from ho‘omanawanui’s *voices of fire: reweaving the literary lei of pele and hi‘iaka* (26-29) and Martha Warren Beckwith’s *Hawaiian Mythology* (167-174); both are English language sources.

⁵ Halema‘uma‘u translates as ‘house of ferns’, but in an example of how mo‘olelo alter meaning, when talking about the crater said to be Pele’s home, it means ‘house of endurance’. Halema‘uma‘u was one of six kahunas (powerful priests) who sought to challenge Pele, but were destroyed. In defeat the kahuna gave his name to Pele’s home and its meaning altered to reflect her victory (Westervelt 45).

⁶ Ka mea translates as ‘the thing’ (Pukui and Elbert 243). Kalahale is emphasising how European art concentrates very heavily on the visual and the object, rather than the other senses and wider experience.

⁷ The kapu system dictated that women and men could not eat together, and forbade women from eating some foods such as bananas and pork (Kuykendall 68). There was resistance to the breaking of kapu, which precipitated the destruction of the heiaus (temples) and religious icons, unsurprisingly from the kahunas (priests) but also from the maka‘āinana (common people) (Kuykendall 68-9). These events happened prior to the arrival of American missionaries in 1820, and there is certainly a strong belief that the breaking of the kapu and the conversion of many ali‘i to Christianity hastened the colonisation of Hawai‘i (Kuykendall 70).

⁸ A more thorough exploration of the breadth and multiple ways knowledge is created in Hawaiian culture is made in Chapters Six and Seven. Manulani Meyer teaches that knowledge comes from a triangulation of meaning, between gross (body), subtle (mind) and causal (spirit). That is, deductive/ empirical knowledge experienced through the senses, primarily sight; conscious agency and the subjectivity of individual thought; and the contemplation of being — the ability to hold and balance directly opposing ideas simultaneously (a state of pono). Western education primarily values gross (that is empirical) knowledge, and within this category prioritises that which can be learned and recalled via sight, particularly from books. See Manulani Aluli Meyer. *Ho‘oulu: Our Time of Becoming: Collected Early Writings Of Manulani Meyer*. Honolulu: Ai Pohaku Press, 2003: 60-66.

Chapter Five

¹ The lack of diacritical marks in the name adds to the complexity of possible meanings. Whilst ulu, the verb, means to grow, increase or flower, ‘ulu is the name for breadfruit, a plant whose straight trunk and oblong fruit are metaphorically male; its presence in mele is a sign of fertility and virility (Trask *Light* 106). In another reading,

‘ulu is a body form of Haumea, ‘a great provider of life around Oceania’ (Silver “Hawaiian Literature” 113). Whilst each reading differs in the details, the symbolism of ulu as a source of fertility and growth remains.

Similarly, malama is a noun meaning light, and also means moon/ month, referring to the Hawaiian lunar month. Mālama, as previously explained, means to care for, protect and honour (Pukui and Elbert 232).

² The garden was eventually destroyed and converted to a cemetery, but in 2008, the hula halau (school) Hālau i Ka Wekiu raised funds to begin restoring the garden so it can coexist with the cemetery (McDougall *Finding* 103). The flowers planted in Uluhaimalama included the lehua, symbolising the monarchy because of its preference by the gods, the kukui, which sought to bring light to the provisional government, and pilimai, which represents a ‘prayer for love to cling and hold fast’ (Pukui and Elbert 199, 177, 330), directed from the people’s love towards their queen. A letter to Queen Lili‘uokalani in 1895 indicated that the pilimai was intended for “the love of your people clings fast to you, O heavenly One; cling fast to your land, your people, your throne, O our Queen!” (KFVE “Halau I Ka Wekiu” np.).

³ In some mo‘olelo Papahānaumoku is manifest as Haumea (Silver “Hawaiian Literature” 113), who along with Wākea represent the mele koihonua (cosmogonic genealogy and origin verse) found in the Kumulipo. McDougall’s research into mo‘okū‘auhau and mele koihonua found that according to kanaka scholar, lawyer and nationalist J.M. Poepoe, “there are many genealogies and traditions relating to the creation of the heavens and earth,” but the five most important are the Kumulipo, Paliku, Lolo or Ololo, Puanue, and Kapohihi’ (*Finding* 174n2).

⁴ Hāloanaka’s full name is Hāloanakalaukapalili, literally “the kalo [taro] who, as an older sibling, feeds us” (McDougall *Finding* 18).

⁵ Kamaka‘eha is another name for Queen Lili‘uokalani (Perez-Wendt 23).

⁶ Garrouette’s and Kauanui’s studies explore in great detail the social, psychological, financial and health costs of defining identity and tribal/ lāhui boundaries for American Indians and Native Hawaiians. The overriding effect of colonially imposed definitions of native identity calculated using blood-quantum theory, however, is to dispossess, fracture and injure indigenous people.

⁷ I use quotation marks here to differentiate between the principles of American political democracy, which entitle every adult to vote in a legislative system, and the misuse of the word democratic to denote or imply fairness or equality in the act of treating each American citizen the same, regardless of historical context. For a further discussion of democracy in a Hawaiian context see Haunani-Kay Trask *From a Native Daughter*. University of Hawai‘i Press, 1999: 87-89.

⁸ For a further discussion of the conflict between sovereign rights and American equality laws see J. Kēhaulani Kauanui, “Precarious Positions: Native Hawaiians and U.S. Federal Recognition.” *The Contemporary Pacific* 17.1 (2005): 1–27, particularly pp. 13-14, and Judy Rohrer, “‘Got Race?’ The Production of Haole and the Distortion

of Indigeneity in the Rice Decision.” *The Contemporary Pacific* 18.1 (2006): 1–31 particularly pp. 16-18; 22-23.

⁹ ‘Rhizomatic thinking’ has been applied to areas of post-colonial studies in the Pacific particularly as a metaphor for kinship relations. The contrast between what Deleuze and Guattari posit as Western ‘arboreal thinking’ and Eastern ‘rhizomatic thinking’, in the context of Hawaiian mo‘okū‘auhau, has to do with its ‘situational modalities’ that allow the privileging and relational re-telling of a particular relationship according to a particular context (DeLoughrey *Roots and Routes* 164-5). However, the rhizome is not a ‘neat’ theoretical ‘fit’ for studies of kinship in Hawai‘i because Hawaiian culture was hierarchically structured, and, whilst it certainly has pertinence as a method of destabilising ‘arboreal’ thinking as a method of decolonisation, a full treatment would require more detail than is relevant to this discussion. McDougall’s reference to the rhizome in “Kumuhonua” (*The Salt Wind* 17) is more closely related to the kaona of Hāloanaka as the root of the Hawaiian people’s mo‘okū‘auhau.

For further discussion of the uses and challenges of ‘rhizomatic thinking’ in the Pacific context see Elizabeth DeLoughrey, *Routes and Roots*. University of Hawaii Press, 2010; Michelle Peek. “Kinship Flows in Brandy Nālani McDougall’s *The Salt-Wind/Ka Makani Pa‘akai*.” *Feminist Review* 103.1 (2013): 80–98; and Paul Rainbird. “Deleuze, Turmeric and Palau: rhizome thinking and rhizome use in the Caroline Islands”. *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* 112 (2001):13-19

¹⁰ See Trask’s analysis of Governor John Waihe‘e and Senator Daniel Akaka in *From a Native Daughter*. University of Hawai‘i Press, 1999: 92-94

Chapter Six

¹ The working definitions given here have been adapted from David Keali‘i Mackenzie’s online guide “Literature of the Pacific: Spoken Word Poetry in The Pacific, A guide to online and print sources related primarily to indigenous Pacific literature” (2013). <http://guides.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/c.php?g=105296&p=685210>

Reference has also been made to rules and definitions given in Gary Mex Glazner ed., *Poetry Slam: The Competitive Art of Performance Poetry*. San Francisco: Manic D. Press, 2000 and Susan B. A Somers-Willett. *The Cultural Politics of Slam Poetry*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2009.

² Somer-Willett discusses this process of identity performance, audience approval and then subsequent re-performances most fully in chapter three, “I Sing the Body Authentic” of *The Cultural Politics of Slam Poetry*, 2009.

³ For three different performances of “Dichotomy” see Albert Cruz. “Dichotomy”. Online video clip.; kealohapoetry. “Kealoha and Makana – Dichotomy”. Online video clip.; and kealohapoetry. “Kealoha and Makana - Dichotomy - Hawaii Writers Conference 2009”. Online video clip.

⁴ All quotations for “Origins: Hā” are taken from my transcription of a performance by David Keali‘i Mackenzie at the re-opening of the Pacific Hall at the Bishop Museum,

Honolulu on September 21, 2013. All line breaks are my own, and may not exist on the page as the poet originally intended. Quotations are given time references rather than line numbers. The video used for this discussion can be found at: D Keali'i Mackenzie, "Origins (Hā) by David Keali'i". YouTube. YouTube, 25 Sep 2013. Web.

⁵ The traditional honi ihu greeting, found around Polynesia, where two people touch noses (and sometimes foreheads) whilst resting hands on each others shoulders, is a listening for, and receiving of hā (Kunisue 233).

⁶ Marc Smith's status as the inventor of Slam is contested by Terry Jacobus' chapter "Poetic Pugilism" in *The Spoken Word Revolution* ed. Mark Eleveld and Marc Smith pp. 81-89, but he is widely acknowledged as the creator of the format that has survived as today's competitions.

⁷ This is a phenomenon that Somers-Willett explores briefly, concluding that the location of most slams in city bars and cafés dictates an audience of a certain economic freedom and educational liberalism. However, Slam began in working class Chicago and she notes that the Nuyorican Poets' Cafe in NYC is a famous exception. In Hawai'i it is certainly the case that Slam audiences are as ethnically diverse as the demographics of the state would suggest, but it remains the case that the most popular Slam venues are located in Honolulu on O'ahu, and so economic and geographic restrictions do come into play.

⁸ There is a much higher proportion of people who report being racially mixed in Hawai'i than on the continental U.S. — over one fifth, compared to just two and a half percent. It is reasonable to posit that racial heritage and 'marginalised ethnic' backgrounds do not operate in the same way in Honolulu as they do in NYC.

The following figures are taken from the U.S. Census Bureau website, and are estimates as of July 1 2015 based on figures collected in the 2010 census. The figures are organised here from highest–lowest proportion of the population in Hawai'i: Asian alone 37.3%; White alone 26.7%; 2 or more races 23%; White alone, not Hispanic or Latino 22.9%; Hispanic or Latino 10.4%; Native Hawaiian & other Pacific Islander alone 9.9%; Black alone 2.6%; American Indian alone 0.5%.

Due to the methodology these figures do not give a wholly accurate picture, but they indicate a racial makeup vastly different to the U.S. as a whole, which has a white alone population of 77.1%, black alone of 13.3% and Hispanic alone of 17.6%. The reporting of 2 or more races in the total U.S. figures is just 2.6%, whilst American Indians, and Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders alone make up just 1.5% and 0.2% respectively (U.S. Census Bureau).

The Census Bureau table is available at:

www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/HI,US/RHI125216.

The estimate methodology can be found at:

www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/HI,US/RHI125216

Methodology information can be accessed by searching in the category "Race" and then using the information tag to the left of each entry.

⁹ The American writer Allen Ginsberg has said that Slam poetry ‘cultivates the field of poetry in every direction and is a healthy mental sport’ (in Glazner ed. 12), which reflects the competitive and skilful elements of the ho‘opāpā.

¹⁰ I don’t meant to suggest that every Slam competitor of Hawaiian origin is familiar with the tradition of ho‘opāpā, but where a skill has been highly valued in the past, and its value is shared across cultures, a modern form that awakens many of the same values may find fertile ground to grow. In looking for an explanation for the undeniable success and popularity of Slam in Hawai‘i I think that the traditional Hawaiian pleasure in, and value placed on, skill with words exhibited in the ho‘opāpā is a likely one.

¹¹ The version performed at the final of the BNV competition is an abridged version—the following discussion quotes from the full version published in Osorio, Jamaica and Ittai Wong, “Kaona”. *Hāpai nā Leo*. Bill Teter ed. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i, 2010: 227-229, but discussions of performance refer to Brave New Voices, which can be found at Jamaica Osorio. “kaona cut”. Online video clip. YouTube. YouTube, 12 Aug 2009. Web. Accessed 14 Oct 2016.

Chapter Seven

¹ The poem “Kaona” is an example of this, as as it was collaboratively written for and performed at the 2008 Brave New Voices International Poetry Slam competition, where it conformed to the competition rules, but subsequent to the team winning the competition it was performed (and published) as both spoken word and performance poetry in an extended form. For the BNV version performed in Washington DC see Jamaica Osorio. “kaona cut”. Online video clip. YouTube. YouTube, 12 Aug 2009. Web.

For live performances of “Kaona” in Hawai‘i see Life Sounds Better Organic Kine! “”Kaona” - Ittai Wong & Jamaica Osorio - Youth Speaks Hawai‘i”. Online video clip. YouTube. YouTube, 20 Jul 2008.; and Dtales. “Kaona- YouthSpeaks Hawai‘i”. Online video clip. YouTube. YouTube, 24 Jul 2008.

For produced and edited performances of “Kaona” see kalamaproductionsinc. “Kaona – PV”. Online video clip. YouTube. YouTube, 31 Dec 2012.; and Gage Lucas. “Genesis (feat. Jamaica Osorio & Ittai Wong)”. Online video clip. YouTube. YouTube, 15 Apr 2013.

For published versions of “Kaona” see Jamaica Osorio and Ittai Wong, “Kaona”. *Hāpai nā Leo*. Bill Teter ed. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i, 2010: 227-229 and Osorio, Jamaica and Ittai Wong, “Kaona” *Jamaica Heolimeleikalani Osorio*. Web. <https://jamaicaosorio.wordpress.com/poetry-publications/kaona/>.

² No‘ukahau‘oli Revilla has published a chapbook *Say Throne* with Tinfish Press, 2011. Jamaica Osorio has self-published two chapbooks, *Tangled Roots and Broken Hearts* and *Coming up for Air*, and has a blog and website on which she has posted hundreds of poems. See <http://jamaicaosoriopoetry.blogspot.co.uk/> and <https://jamaicaosorio.wordpress.com> for more poems.

All four poets have contributed to academic journals and poetry collections. Where a poem has been published quotations are taken from the printed source. Where they remain unpublished quotations are taken from written sources provided by the poet, or transcribed from videos, with time references given.

³ Revilla described herself as such in a conversation with me in 2015 (Appendix C 305, 6). Mo‘o are Hawaiian ‘āumakua (family deities) and there are still families who, with varying levels of adherence, believe in and make offerings to their family gods. For a discussion of ‘āumakua beliefs in a modern context see M. Pukui, E.W Haertig and C. Lee *Nānā I Ke Kumu: Look to the Source Vol. I*. Honolulu: Hui Hānai, 1979: 41.

⁴ This phenomenon, which grew from the eugenics movement, has been well documented as a medical practice in the United States, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s. For further reading see Christina J.J. Cackler, “Female Sterilization and Poor Mental Health: Rates and Relatedness among American Indian and Alaska Native Women”. *Women's Health Issues*. 26.2 (2016): 168-175; Mark A. Largent, *Breeding Contempt: The History of Coerced Sterilization in the United States* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press) 2008: 138-9; Jane Lawrence “The Indian Health Service and the Sterilization of Native American Women”. *The American Indian Quarterly* 24.3 (2000): 400-419, esp. p. 409; Sally J. Torpy, “Native American Women and Coerced Sterilization: On the Trail of Tears in the 1970s.” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*. 24.2 (2000): 1-22; Johanna Schoen, *Choice & Coercion: Birth Control, Sterilization, and Abortion in Public Health and Welfare* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press) 2005: 5/ 108-10.

⁵ Lettuce has been a well-known slang word for money since the 1960s in America, but more recent entries in the Urban Dictionary (www.urbandictionary.com) indicate its use to refer to primarily female genitals. In Revilla’s performance at *Words in the World*, she changes ‘lettuce’ to ‘investment’, indicating the monetary meaning is the one she intended, though in the context of the poem, both are possible.

⁶ The word aikāne is translated in Pukui and Elbert as ‘friend’, with a ‘rare’ usage ‘to commit sodomy’ (10). In *The Polynesian Family System* Handy and Pukui confirm the same-sex usage of aikāne, ‘Two women, Kuku and Kama, were devoted friends. Each called the other “*Aikane*” (abbreviated to “*kane*”). This relationship can exist, and is called by the same term, whether between man and man, or women and women; but not between man and woman’ (73 original emphasis). However, they expressly deny that a ‘genuine’ aikāne relationship is ever homosexual. This is curious, as there are examples in English and Hawaiian literature that both intimate and explicitly describe the sexual nature of some relationships, and describe them as aikāne (see Robert J. Morris, “Aikāne: Accounts of Same Sex Relationships in the Journals of Captain Cook’s Third Voyage (1776-80), *Journal of Homosexuality*, 19:4 (1990): 21-54). A further comment indicates that Handy and Pukui were certainly prejudiced against homosexuality:

A homosexual relationship is referred to as *moe aikane* (*moe*, lie with or sleep). Such behaviour is said to have been known amongst some idle

and debauched *ali'i*, as it is found amongst similar unfortunates the world over. The vulgar and contemptuous term for male homosexuality was *upi laho* (*laho*, scrotum). *Upi* described the cleaning of the squid or octopus in a bowl of water or salt to rid it of its slime. Homosexuality was looked upon with contempt by commoners and by the true *ali'i*. (*The Polynesian Family* 73n8)

This obvious distaste may have been due to the authors' Christianised upbringing and education, and the overriding sentiment against homosexuality in America in the time they were writing. Other Hawaiian scholars, including Noenoe K. Silva (*Aloha* 61, 67, 76-7; "Pele, Hi'iaka" 166) and ku'ualoa ho'omanawanui (*voices* 135-8), have no reservations describing the homosexual implications of the word *aikāne*. Silva furthermore notes that whilst 'it is important not to impose the contemporary categories of sexual identity onto Hi'iaka or Hōpoe ... since there was no need to restrict or regulate such activity [in the past], the categories heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual were never created in the [Hawaiian] language' ("Pele, Hi'iaka" 166).

⁷ All of the artists who collaborated with Kealoha on *The Story of Everything* are friends (Chan np.). An analysis of the performative aspects of the interaction of Kealoha's poetry with Enos' illustrations and Taimane and Makena's music would be fruitful, but is beyond the scope of this piece. There is a clear intention to remain as creatively interdisciplinary as possible in the production of *The Story of Everything*, and the interweaving of artistic elements transforms performance from strictly poetic to a multi-sensory and deeply felt experience. The dancers who illustrate and accompany the poem are Jamie Nakama, Jonathan Clarke Sybert, Lorenzo Acosta and Wailana Simcock (Chan np.).

⁸ According to *The Story of Everything* these scenarios are (paraphrased):

Scenario 1: "Game Over". Everything dies.

Scenario 2: "Reboot". Some bacteria and archaea survive.

Scenario 3: "The Extreme". Only the hardest species of each kingdom (taxonomically speaking) survive.

Scenario 4: "No More Us". The world will look as it does now, but without humans.

Scenario 5: "Evolution". Humans survive, but as a completely different species.

Scenario 6: "A Simpler Time". We survive as humans but all the major population centres are wiped out, and we migrate north and south where it's cooler.

Scenario 7: "Business As Usual". We continue as we are now, with wars to obtain and control resources, and some countries live on and some dwindle.

Scenario 8: "Fully Integrate". Develop the renewable technology we already have and entirely stop using fossil fuels.

Scenario 9: "Brand New Game". We develop fusion energy as a reliable, infinite, environmentally friendly resource "to usher us into the next era of abundance."

Chapter Eight

¹ There is an inherent tension between the claims of the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement, and other cultural practitioners, that Hawaiians are inherently more connected to their place than non-Hawaiians, and the colonialist tendency to assume

that indigenous people are closer to “nature”. This conflict is explored in some depth in Chapter Three of Eva Marie Garrouette’s *Real Indians: Identity and the Survival of Native America* and is drawn on for Chapter Five of this thesis. As this thesis has explored, by foregrounding their contemporary indigenous experience, Native Hawaiian poets, activists and cultural practitioners are engaged in overturning concepts of indigenous identity as ‘static’ or ‘essential’, whilst simultaneously insisting that their traditions have more relevance to their particular place than imported Western ones.

² Thirty-one people were arrested, the standoff with security forces made local and national news, and Twitter and Instagram were instrumental in garnering international attention, with the hashtags #WeAreMaunaKea, #protectmaunakea and #maunakea being used by Hawaiian and Hawaiian-born celebrities and protestors alike to gather support.

³ The BLNR voted to re-issue the permit on 28 September 2017.

⁴ There are hundreds of examples of these in Hawaiian tradition. For an excellent example see P. Kanak‘ole Kanahele’s talk for TEDx Maui at TEDx Talks. “TEDxMaui - Dr. Pualani Kanahele - Living the Myth and Unlocking the Metaphor”. Online Video Clip. YouTube. YouTube, April 9 2012.