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# When Cultures Collide: The Kanaka Maoli and the Haole Women and the suppression and resurgence of Hawai'ian traditional beliefs

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## Abstract

The traditional and ritual beliefs of the *Kanaka Maoli* are intimately connected to Hawaiian identity and the relationship between the person and the universe. Therefore any examination of these, by extension, is an examination of the *Kanaka Maoli* way of life. This essay examines pre-haole Hawaiian culture, the diminishing of women's presence and authority during the missionary period through annexation, and the recent women activist voices that have emerged as part of the sovereignty discourse.

KEYWORDS: American imperialism, Hawaiian culture, traditions, woman activists, discourse

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## **When Cultures Collide: The Kanaka Maoli and the Haole Women and the suppression and resurgence of Hawai'ian traditional beliefs**

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The *comparative importance* of the changes which a nation may undergo, must depend very much on the rank it holds in the scale of general civilization and intelligence, and its relative position towards other nations; but in the annals of every people, seasons in which ancient and venerated institutions are insensibly superseded, in which the opinions and manners of the society are in a state of rapid transition, but especially in which its religious doctrines and usages sustain essential alterations, must ever merit an attentive regard. (Missionary Records, pp. 1-2)

That encounters of *haole* (foreigner) with *Kanaka Maoli* (people) did not eradicate Hawaiian culture is a wonder, but more importantly is a testament to the way the spiritual beliefs of the Kanaka were and are embedded in their everyday life, preserved by the *kahuna* and *kupuna*, the elders of the native community. It is said, “those in power write the history, those who suffer write the songs.”<sup>1</sup> This is especially true in Kanaka Maoli culture as the dances (*hula*), songs (*mele*), and stories (*‘olelo*) are the primary tools for capturing and recording their history.

The traditional and ritual beliefs of the Kanaka Maoli are intimately connected to Hawaiian identity and the relationship between the person and the universe. Therefore any examination of these, by extension, is an examination of the Kanaka Maoli way of life. This essay examines pre-*haole* Hawaiian culture, the diminishing of women's presence and authority during the missionary period through annexation, and the recent women activist voices that have emerged as part of the sovereignty discourse. It reviews the impact of several waves of immigrant contact from the first New England missionaries to the American imperialist interests that resulted in the overthrow of Queen Liliuokalani and the annexation of the Hawaiian archipelago by the United States in 1893. Finally, it looks at the current resurgence of the concept of *pono* (balance) as the *kapu* (sacred) foundation of a political movement and the role that Hawaiian women currently play in reconnecting native Hawaiians to their traditions.

### **Mana, Pono, Akua, Kapu – Hula, Mele, ‘Olelo**

Not all the prayers of the various dance halls were alike, nor the motions made by the feet and hands. Hence came the saying of old, *Aole I pau ka ike I kay halau* (“Not all knowledge is to be found in your dance hall”). (Pukui 1943, p. 214)

To grasp the nature of Hawaiian culture and traditional beliefs, one must let go of familiar Western thought and see the world from the perspective of a volcanic island surrounded by ocean. Yet, as we know, the early missionaries failed to do so, using familiar paradigms to explain the unfamiliar. For instance, James Jackson Jarves writes in 1847 of parallels he sees to Judeo-Christian traditions:

The ideas embodied in these traditions appear to be the fragments of a faith or teachings not unlike those of the Hebrews.... Kahiko, (ancient,) the first man and Kupulanakahau, the first woman gave birth to a son, called Wakea. Among the first settlers from abroad were Kukalaniehu, and his wife, Kakulaua, whose daughter married Wakea. This couple became the progenitors of the whole Hawaiian race. The names of seventy-seven generations of kings have been preserved in their historical méles, from the last of whom Kamehameha claimed descent. (Jarves p. 20).

For Hawaiians, their origins are imbued with a much different meaning: the universe comes up from the depths of the ocean: *Kumu-honua* –“Earth Source,” mated with *Kama'i-eli* –“The Vagina of the Depths,” creating *Ka-mole-o-ka-honua* –“The Taproot of the Earth” (Dudley 1990). This creation myth and other stories of origin are recorded in the *Mo'olelo*, the sacred stories, the most famous of which is the *Kumulipo*: “The grand theme of the *Kumulipo* is the detailing of evolutionary progression from the beginning, up the evolutionary ladder to man and the gods, and then up the genealogical list to the life of an *ali'i nui*, Lono-i-ka-makahiki, who lived in the seventeenth century” (p. 83). It is an *ali'i's* ability to genealogically connect his or herself in direct descent from Lono-ika-makahiki that grants them the right to rule.

The *ali'i nui* (high chiefs,) ruled because their wisdom and spiritual power (*mana*) kept them in right relationship (*pono*) to the people and to nature. They revered the *akua* (spirit consciousness or ancestral spirits) and observed *kapu* (sacred laws.) These four elements were the cornerstones of pre-*haole* Hawaiian culture.

*Mana* is spiritual power (p. 154). According to Haunani-Kay Trask (1973), it “...conveys an understanding that power is more than what the *haole* call charisma, or personal attraction. Leaders possess *mana*, they embody and display it” (p. 117). She explains further, maintaining that the source of *mana* is “not reducible to personal ability or spiritual and genealogical ancestry... it requires specific identification by the leader with the people, just as the *ali'i* or chiefs in days of old were judged by how well they cared for their people” (p. 117). In the *Sacred Canopy* (1967), Berger describes *mana* as a sacred force that pervades the cosmos in all forms: “Thus the life of men is not sharply separated from the life that extends throughout the universe” (p. 61).

*Pono* is balance, a “state when everything is as it should be” (Dudley p. 154). The term was erroneously translated by the first English speaking foreigners to “righteousness,” narrowing its meaning and, thus, helping to misconstrue the essential relationships of

which Hawaiian life consisted. For instance, the *ali'i nui* had the welfare of his people in his hands. He was responsible for their welfare and for the stewardship of the land the people cultivated. If the *ali'i* was *pono*, the people thrived. *Pono* recognizes the continuity between individual and collectivity as well as the connection between society and nature. "The life of the individual is embedded in the life of the collectivity, as the latter is in turn embedded in the totality of being, human as well as non-human" (Berger p. 61).

*Akua*, according to Michael Kioni Dudley, "basically means 'spirit consciousness,' 'cognizant entity' or 'sentient spirit.' *Akua* may refer to any kind of spirit: a spirit thought to animate a clock, a spirit living in some form of nature, the soul of man, or an ancestral spirit ('a god')" (p. 35). The *akua* could occupy stones, trees, and statues. Huston Smith (1991) tells us that in primal traditions "... the line between animate and 'inanimate' is perforated. Rocks are alive. Under certain conditions they are believed to be able to talk, and at times... they are considered divine." He suggests that this is why primal peoples consider themselves at one with their gods and their world. "The point is rather that they see distinctions as bridges instead of barriers... Male and female contribute equally to the cosmic life force. All beings, not overlooking heavenly bodies and elements of wind and rain, are brothers and sisters. Everything is alive, and each depends in ways on all the others" (p. 376). Trask is more specific: "Our deities are also of the land: *Pele* is our volcano, *Kane* and *Lono* our fertile valleys and plains, *Kanaloa* our ocean and all that lives within it, and so on with the 40,000 and 400,000 gods of Hawaii. Our whole universe, physical and metaphysical, is divine" (p. 187).

More important than *Papa-hanaumoku*—she who births the islands, is *Pele*, the goddess of the volcano. "Although most Hawaiians no longer know many of the traditional *Pele* stories, the goddess is, nonetheless, a significant part of contemporary Hawaiian culture. Stories of people seeing *Pele*, as well as summaries of the traditional tales, are frequently printed in the Hawai'i media" (Nimmo p. 2). *Pele* is an *akua wahine* (goddess) that was purportedly once a person. She had parents, siblings and led her people in a big canoe from Kahiki (Tahiti?) carrying with her the gift of fire. *Pele's* sister *Hi'iaka* is the goddess of *hula*, the ritual dance of the Kanaka Maoli.

The last, and most contentious of the Hawaiian cultural elements is *kapu*. Gavin Daws, whose history of the Hawaiian Islands *Shoal of Time* (1968) was for many years the authoritative text, tells us, "*Kapu* pervaded all of life—politics, religious worship, sex, landholding, the cultivation and eating of food, even play. It was a fixed principle, always there, just as shadow was an inevitable part of a sunlit day. To step into the shadow to violate the *kapus*, even accidentally, was to forfeit the right to live" (p. 54). *Kapu*, sometimes referred to by the early missionaries as *tabu*, was a system of creating the distinction between the sacred and the profane. It would be erroneous to conceive that touching the shadow of the *ali'i* was *kapu* (forbidden). Rather, the *ali'i* him or herself was *kapu* (sacred). Touching his or her shadow was a violation of their sacredness and

therefore was forbidden. It is an important distinction. The suspension of *kapu* signifies a disruption in the order of things. Dudley writes:

Because man stands at the pinnacle of evolution and because the *ali'i nui* stands at the head of human society, when the chief is in his place, all of nature works together. His presence holds everything together. When he dies, everything comes apart, including the societal structure... The *kapu* system also comes apart, completing the disorder throughout all of nature. Women are allowed to enter the *heiau*, to eat bananas, coconuts, and pork, and to climb over the sacred places. And women and men eat together. (p. 113)

This Mardi Gras/Carnivale shift following the death of Kamehameha I was understandably misinterpreted by the first missionaries. They arrived shortly after the king's death when the announcement went out that the new *ali'i nui* had suspended *kapu*:

The eldest son of the conqueror of Hawaii (Kamehameha I) had ascended the throne, and the very opening of his reign had been marked by a measure which is without parallel in the history of the world. A pagan king, unbidden, and uninstructed, had, in a day, cast off all the gods of his people; a superstition, which for ages had held a degraded race in servile bondage" (Mission Record 1823, p. 61).

Liholiho (Kamehame II), at the instigation of one of his father's wives, did permanently dismantle *kapu*, but the motivations were essentially political and not religious and discussion of this incident follows in the section describing changes brought about during the Missionary period of Hawaiian history.

The breaking of *kapu* by Kamehameha II did not result in the permanent dissolution of the Hawaiian cultural system. Gavin Daws reports about the downstream effects of this episode:

All the important decisions for or against the breaking of the kapus were taken by a handful of chiefs. The commoners, as usual, followed where their aliis led. Certainly the ordinary Hawaiians had good reason to be relieved when the life and death burden of religious observance was lifted, but just as certainly they did not abandon their old faith completely. Many images from the heiaus were hidden and worshipped secretly; the bones of dead chiefs in the mausoleum at Honaunau were venerated as before; the gods of fishing and planting continued to be given first fruits; Pele, the goddess of the volcano, had her devotees for decades after 1819; travelers' shrines were piled with offerings; and the spirit world of the Hawaiians was still filled with powerful supernatural beings. (p. 59)

The ambience of *mana*, *pono* and *akua* may have diminished slightly by the dissolution of kapu but they were not eradicated.

### The Sandwich Islands

I had nowhere in the course of my voyages, seen so numerous a body of people assembled at one place; for, besides those who had come off to us in canoes, all the shore of the bay was covered with spectators, and many hundreds were swimming round the ships like shoals of fishes. We could not be but struck with the singularity of the scene. (James Cook's 1778 journal as quoted in Missionary Records p. 28) (2)

The arrival of James Cook in 1778 was not the first instance of contact with *haole* or foreigners. Samuel Kamakau's history *Ruling Chiefs* refers to "a substantial genealogy of travelers" to which he adds the story of Captain Cook (Silva p. 20). However, it is this contact that forever changes the Hawaiian world, including for a time, the naming of the islands after Cook's benefactor the Earl of Sandwich. The Missionary Record reports some fifty years later:

There can be no doubt that, in general, the islanders at first regarded their visitors as superior beings. This impression was not weakened by the fatal experience of the new and terrible powers of destruction which the strangers brought with them; and which, on more than one occasion, they most wantonly and murderously exercised... It was only when the strangers, impelled by unbridled and vicious propensities reduced themselves, in seeking new gratifications, to the level of the savage, that the islanders changed their opinion of them, and found that however superior they might be in some respects, in others they were their equals, and even their inferiors. (pp. 3-4).

Evidently, Cook and his men were not paragons of gentlemanly conduct. There was much violence in this first extended encounter, resulting in Cook's death. "When Cook attempted to take Mo'i Kalani'opu'u hostage... he committed an act that was distinctly not *pono* and thus unacceptable to the other *ali'i* and to the warriors around the *mo'i*" (Silva p. 21). However, this initial contact and the ones that followed did initially give the British an advantage over other interests of the period, which they readily exploited by initiating a sandalwood trade with Canton and by using the islands for restocking and refitting their ships with provisions supplied by the native population. In the conclusion of Kamakau's recounting of Cook's visit, he lists the results of Cook's actions:

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

1. Gonorrhoea together with syphilis.
2. Prostitution.
3. The false idea that he was a god and worshipped.
4. Fleas and mosquitoes.
5. The spread of epidemic diseases.
6. Change in the air we breathe.
7. Weakening of our bodies.
8. Changes in plant life.
9. Change in the religions, put together with pagan religions.
10. Change in medical practice.
11. Laws in the government. (Silva pp. 22-23)

The missionary recorders saw the fruits and seeds a little less critically. They saw the contact of the “first discoverers of the islands” as paving the way for “visitors of another order... men who were influenced by the most sublime benevolence, who sought to ameliorate, and not increase, the sufferings of the ignorant tribes they were introduced to, and to lead them to the only true source of happiness in this world and the next” (p. 4).<sup>2</sup>

### **The Missionaries**

Keep no more wood gods. Turn to the Lord of eternal life. Best exalt the best of gods! So spake 'Io-lani, Chief of Hawai'i. (Pukui 1973, p. 34)<sup>3</sup>

How the missions came to Hawaii is tied to the contact that began with British trade ships and New England whalers. These ships occasionally took on native crewmembers and it was one of these, Obukahaia, who, upon reaching New York City in 1809, became the protégé of the captain with whom he had sailed (Missionary Report p. 58). At this time, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, a Congregationalist organization centered in Massachusetts, was actively recruiting throughout the east coast for missions in India, Java, Ceylon and now Hawaii. Obukahaia and some of his countrymen were sent to school with the express purpose of returning them to Hawaii as Christian missionaries.

There are several accounts in journals and diaries from the period that describe what missionary life in Hawaii was like. Young, newly ordained ministers who wished to undertake a mission had to be married, as did young women who felt the call to work in the missions. The result was often a marriage of convenience as this story from *American Women in Mission* (1996) relates:

The most startling illustration of the vocational significance for women of the missionary marriage occurred in the hasty courtship and marriages of Lucy Goodale and Sybil Moseley to the first missionaries to Hawaii, Asa Thurston and Hiram Bingham. In 1819, the American Board decided to send a colony of missionaries to the Sandwich Islands to open a mission in independent territory not under the control of the British Empire. The

Andover seminarians Asa Thurston and Hiram Bingham were chosen to lead the group. Shortly before their departure, the mothers of their then fiancées decided that their daughters would not be permitted to risk their lives in a pioneer mission.

Since Thurston and Bingham were facing years of forced celibacy and loneliness if they sailed without wives on the six-month voyage to the islands, they felt desperate to procure wives immediately... Both Lucy and Sybil were committed to missions prior to meeting their husbands and were waiting for the appropriate opportunity to enlist as missionary wives. (Robert, pp. 22-23)

There was a sharp contrast between the *wahine* of the Kanaka Maoli and the stoic missionary wives. The dress, sexual mores, and parenting practices of the two couldn't be more different. The relationship between Hawaiian husbands and wives was also dramatically unlike anything these New England women had known. It was often reported that Hawaiian women had lax morals because they were sexually freer and would let their children run "wild" about the village. More shocking to the New Englanders was the practice, by the *ali'i*, of close family members, sometimes brothers and sisters, mating and having children. For the Hawaiian ruling class, as it was with the Egyptian pharaohs, this practice kept the bloodline "pure" (Daws p. 54) Given the importance attached to lineage, this is hardly surprising.

To the mind of the Kanaka *Maoli*, the roles of men and women were different but egalitarian. According to *kapu* the men did all the cooking, but the methods of cooking took strength, so this bears some logic. The Missionary Record reports that "The wives of the warriors often accompanied their husbands to battle, and were frequently slain.... Some women, more courageous than the rest, or urged on by affection, advanced side by side with their husbands to the front of the battle, bearing a small calabash of water in one hand, and a spear, a dart, or a stone in the other" (p. 150). Women of the *ali'i* were also quite powerful and had positions of influence. The Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Rufus Anderson, felt that, "The heathen should have an opportunity of seeing Christian families. The domestic constitution among them is dreadfully disordered, and yet it is as true there as everywhere else, that the character of society is formed in the family. To rectify it requires example as well as precept" (quoted in Robert p. 66) Dana Robert concludes, "It is clear from the words of Secretary Anderson and from the letters and journals of the Hawaiian mission wives that their model of the 'Christian' family was in fact that of the New England evangelical nuclear family" (p. 67).

The names Thurston and Ellis figure prominently in the annals of this period. Many of these missionary families became the commercial dynasties of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. "Mary Ellis took with her to Hawaii the idea that missionary wives in that context should be role models, especially in family matters." Many of the values and practices that the Ellises modeled were racist and segregationist. They were convinced that "it was morally dangerous to educate their children alongside Hawaiian children or

to let them learn the Hawaiian language.” They encouraged their fellow missionary families that “through their living example” they should ‘raise up’ the natives to their own level. “By interpreting family life as a mission agency, the mission wives sacralized the myriad activities that ate up their strength and their days... To the missionary wives, civilizing and evangelizing activities were the same thing” (Robert p. 69).

Though well intentioned, the missionaries and their desire to “civilize” the native Hawaiians did as much damage to Hawaiian traditional culture as did the traders, whalers and sailors in the first years of contact. Perhaps more so—the sailors came and went, the missionaries stayed and had families. In looking back over the next phase of Hawaiian history, it was the sons of missionary families, names like Thurston, Bingham, Ellis, Judd, Richards and Hall that began to take over the lands for large plantations, importing Asian workers and further diluting the native population and its culture. Every one of the Big Five trading and plantation companies in control at the turn of the century “had at least one direct descendant on its board... Those names and others from the missionary family... appeared on the boards of almost every important firm that did business at Honolulu” (Daws p. 313). Not a single board featured a native Hawaiian. As Rosemary Ruether points out in *Gaia & God* (1992), white Christian hegemony in colonial lands rarely leads to balance but rather the exploitation of the people and their land:

The roots of this evil lie, as we have suggested, in patterns of domination, whereby male elites in power deny their interdependency with women, exploiting human labor and the biotic community around them. They seek to exalt their own power infinitely, by draining the lives of these other humans and nonhuman sources of life on which they depend. They create cultures of deceit, which justify this exploitation by negating the value of those they use, while denying their own dependence on them. (p. 200)

## America as Empire

Ke one ‘ai ali‘i o Kakuhihewa. The chief-destroying sands of Kakuhihewa. (Pukui 1983, p. 190)<sup>4</sup>

Ruether describes the colonial/empire phenomenon thusly: “This era of colonization decisively reshaped the human, plant, and animal ecologies of colonized regions. War and disease exterminated millions of ‘native peoples’ and reduced those who were left to slaves and serfs in the mines and plantations of the new international trade economy. New plants and animals were introduced, reshaping ecosystems” (p. 198).

The first act of the increasingly influential *haole* missionary families was a redistribution of land from the tribal *ahupua‘a* system, “a political and economic division of land running from the mountain to the sea; the basic administrative unit of territory before the kingdom” (Osorio p. 289), to *mahele*, the creation of “private and public property from the traditional land-use arrangement between *Ali‘i* and *Maka‘ainana*” (Osorio p. 291).

This upset the relationships that had kept the Hawaiian subsistence economy balanced. In the old system the “*mo‘i* (rulers) of the entire archipelago, had interests in all lands; the appointed *konohiki* (managers) had interests in all lands under their control; and the *maka‘ainana* (farmers) had interests in the lands that they worked” (Silva p. 41). It is important to note that the term “interests” in this context is not one of property but of stewardship on behalf of the *Kanaka Maoli*. An *ali‘i mo‘i* was deemed *pono* if the people were well cared for and had enough to eat. In return for the sound and balanced decisions and stewardship by the *mo‘i* and *konohiki*, the *maka‘ainana* provided tribute from the plants and fish they produce. By replacing the balanced stewardship of arable land held in trust for the whole community with a system of private property, the *haole* were able to gain control of the land. “Despite the resistance of the various *mo‘i* (rulers) to domination by the missionaries, they were persuaded that a capitalist economy would benefit the country, that they must conform to a European/American political-economic system” (Silva p. 48).

The barter economy of the pre-contact Hawaiians was replaced by a cash crop economy—in particular sugar and later pineapple and coffee. These plantations required huge resources in terms of land and labor. “Sugar plantation economies are large-scale production enterprises, and in the mid-nineteenth century they were located in colonies or other areas with populations vulnerable to exploitation” (Silva pp. 48-49). While Hawaii was by no means the only colonial culture to experience this economic and ecological destruction, it was the sugar trade that led inexorably to the final overthrow of Native sovereignty and the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands by the United States in 1893.

There was considerable resistance to annexation by the native people but such was the wealth and power of the plantation and trade company owners that knowledge of this resistance never reached Washington. While there were several anti-annexation newspapers printed in the Hawaiian language, research on newer translations of contemporaneous documents from this time indicates that the desires of the native people were never fully communicated in the American press at the time.

## **Sovereignty**

Why were not the petitions of the patriotic leagues of my people put into the inquiry? Why was not the fact that there was such an inquiry going on communicated to me? Why were my enemies informed of that which was in progress, so that they could hurry to Washington, or send their testimony, while not one of my friends was given the opportunity to raise a voice in behalf of the disfranchised Hawaiian people or their persecuted queen? (Liliuokelani p. 257)

In the introduction to her book *From a Native Daughter*, Haunani-Kay Trask quotes President Grover Cleveland chastising the Americans in Hawaii for overthrowing the sovereign and legitimate government of Hawaii and its queen, Liliuokelani:

By an act of war, committed with the participation of a diplomatic representative of the United States and without authority of Congress, the Government of a feeble but friendly and confiding people has been overthrown. A substantial wrong has thus been done with a due regard for our national character as well as the rights of the injured people requires we should endeavor to repair. (p. 19)

Unfortunately, Cleveland did not stay in office long enough to see the restitution of Hawaii's native government and shortly after, in McKinley's administration, the islands were annexed, not by treaty, which would require a two-thirds majority, but by resolution, which only required a simple majority. "As a result of these actions, Hawaiians became a conquered people, our lands and culture subordinated to another nation" (Trask p. 21).

Trask sees the cultural and religious argument as Ruether does. American culture is "structured and justified by values that emphasize male dominance over women and nature, American institutions reward men and male dominant behaviors with positions of power. . . . Colonialism brought the replacement of the Hawaiian world by the *haole* world. Hawaiian women lost their place just as Hawaiian men lost theirs" (Trask p. 119).

As the chair of the Department of Hawaiian Studies, Trask, with her colleagues, are trying to chip away at the myths about the native peoples that have grown in the past 250 years. Misinterpretations of Hawaiian culture have stemmed largely from scholars ignoring primary texts in favor of translations that were generally written by missionaries. Noenoe Silva, in *Aloha Betrayed*, has made extensive study of these primary texts and has found records of large-scale resistance to annexation never before brought to light. Trask calls this process of rediscovering Hawaiian voices "decolonization":

Part of the beauty of Hawaiian decolonization is the re-assertion of *mana* in the sovereignty movement as a defining element of cultural and political leadership. Both the people and their leaders understand the link between *mana* and *pono*, the traditional Hawaiian vale of balance between people, land, and the cosmos. Only a leader who understands this familial, genealogical link between Hawaiians and their land can hope to re-establish *pono*, the balance that has been lacking in the Hawaiian universe since the coming of the *haole*. The assertion of the value of *pono*, then awaits a leader with *mana*. (Trask p. 117)

For Trask, decolonization is not just a political process; it is a rediscovery of the primal Kanaka Maoli way of life. Huston Smith maintains that "Primal peoples are oriented to a single cosmos, which sustains them like a living womb. . . . Because they assume that it exists to nurture them, they have no disposition to challenge it, defy it, refashion it, or

escape from it... [They] are concerned with the maintenance of personal, social, and cosmic harmony” (p. 377).

In her essay “Women’s *Mana* and Hawaiian Sovereignty” Trask explains why she thinks the current sovereignty movement is largely the work of native women:

I believe the main reason women lead the nationalist front today is simply that women have not lost sight of the *lahui*, that is, of the nation. Caring for the nation is, in Hawaiian belief, an extension of caring for the family, the large family that includes both our lands and our people. Our mother is our land, *Papa-hanaumoku*-she who births the islands” (Trask p. 121).

The Hawaiian state motto is “*Ua mau ke ea o ka ‘aina i ka pono*” taken from the words of Kamehameha III. The *haole* translation of this would read: “The life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness.” *Ke ea o ka ‘aina* could be translated as “the life of the land” but as Michael Kioni Dudley tells us, “*ea* means more than just ‘life.’ It means ‘the living breath’ ... ‘life-force’ ” (p. 118). As we have learned, *pono* does not mean “righteousness,” it means “balance.” The work of Trask and others seeking sovereignty is the true meaning of Hawaii’s motto: “The life force continues in nature; nature lives on and prospers, now that the king has been restored to his proper place and has resumed his nurturing relationship with it” (p. 120).

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<sup>1</sup> A phrase often quoted by traditional singer and folksong collector Frank Harte when referring to songs of Ireland, but an expression that carries a certain resonance here.

<sup>2</sup> This observation is poignant when one considers the sharp decline of the indigenous population as a result of the epidemics of diseases introduced as a result of Cook’s contact. The pre-*haole* population of the islands is estimated at 300,000. “Fifty years later, the population was about 130,000. Fifty years after this, the population was less than 60,000” (Taeaber 1962, p. 97).

<sup>3</sup> Samuel Kamakau published this chant in the 1870s illustrating how “the Hawaiian’s love for their traditional poetry helped them... to channel their religious energies into new molds of belief” (Pukui 1973, p. 29). ‘Io-lani is another name for Kamehameha II.

<sup>4</sup> “The island of O‘ahu. When the priest Ka‘opulupulu was put to death by the chief Kahahana for warning him against cruelty to his subjects, he uttered a prophecy. He predicted that where his own corpse would lie in a heiau at Waikiki, there would lie the chief’s corpse as well. Furthermore, he said, the land would someday go to the sea—that is, to a people from across the sea. This was felt to be a curse. When Kamehameha III was persuaded by a missionary friend to move the capital from Lahaina to O‘ahu, a *kahuna*, remembering the curse, warned him not to, lest the monarchy perish. The warning was ignored, and before the century had passed, the Kingdom of Hawai‘i was no more.” Mary Pukui, 1983, p. 190.

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