

PELE, HI'IAKA, AND HAUMEA: WOMEN AND POWER IN TWO HAWAIIAN MO'OLELO

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This paper examines two Hawaiian *mo'olelo* published in Hawaiian in 1861 and 1905 for representations of powerful female characters. These characters are seen to be human, divine, and parts of the landscape all at once. The paper argues that the elaborated stories as literature have been lost in the processes of colonialism that eroded and nearly eradicated the Hawaiian language; the stories have been replaced with caricatures, distorted translations, and other simulacra that work to reinforce stereotypes about Hawaiians. A successful revitalization of the Hawaiian language that allowed most people to be able to read this literature would work as a powerful antidote to the poison of cultural imperialism.

THE MO'OLELO, AS ORIGINALLY WRITTEN, in all their length and complexity, have been made absent, not only through such translations, but as a direct result of the colonization of Hawai'i by the United States; colonizers usually impose their own language on the colonized, and, in the case of Hawai'i, as it is for so many indigenous peoples, the language itself has been very nearly exterminated. Most Kānaka Maoli³ cannot read these mo'olelo that were written by their own ancestors.

The loss of the language and the consequent loss of the literature have facilitated the ubiquitous deployment of stereotypes of our people: both men and women as silly and lazy natives, prone to partying and living on welfare, and women as welcoming, sexually available, powerless hula maidens. The representations in our ancestral literature are a direct and effective challenge to such stereotypes. They allow us to see that those stereotypes must be the

creation of the foreigners' minds, who project both their desires and the unwanted abject parts of themselves onto the colonized (McClintock 1995), since they have no truth in the self-representations of our recent ancestors. The mo'olelo represent women and men as fully human—intelligent beings that struggle with each other for power and for *pono* (social harmony). The mo'olelo relate Kanaka thought, history, geography, beliefs, and humor.

Furthermore, stories act as psychic frames within which we make sense of the events of the world; we translate experiences and the actions of ourselves and others into understandable narratives based on the stories we hold in our minds (Edelman 1995). As Paula Gunn Allen says, "For all of us, Indian or not, stories are a major way we make communal, transcendent meaning out of human experience" (Allen 1989, 8). Kānaka Maoli need to free our ancestral stories from the captured state, such that they become healthy frameworks for our own communal self-understanding, antidotes to the poisonous stereotypes of the colonizers. It is through the mo'olelo that we may clearly understand ourselves as linked to our ancestors and our land.

We are in the midst of a university-centered movement to revive the language, with the ultimate goal perhaps being, as Joshua Fishman put it, to reverse the language shift (Fishman 1991) so that the *'ōlelo kumu*, the original language, again becomes the primary language for Kanaka 'Ōiwi. Presently there are at least a few hundred, mainly university-trained, people who are able to read these mo'olelo as they were written and published in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although several hundred children attend Hawaiian immersion primary and secondary schools, literature of the type I discuss in this paper is not commonly part of the curriculum, partly because of the difficulty of the language. My hope is that many more people will become fluent in speaking and reading our heritage language, such that these mo'olelo will soon become an integral part of the common cultural base.

In the nineteenth century, Hawaiian was the vernacular in *Hawai'i nei*, and Hawaiian literature flourished in the mother tongue. Editors of Hawaiian language newspapers fostered the writing of literature in their papers from approximately 1860 to about 1948, when the last Hawaiian language newspaper ceased publication. Mo'olelo were sometimes said to have been translated from the oral tradition; however, it is important to understand that the written forms of mo'olelo were authored. That is, each of the authors of the many mo'olelo wrote their own versions, using both mnemonic devices from the oral tradition and literary devices that developed over time. They signed their work, usually with their own names, and sometimes with pseudonyms. Mo'olelo appeared in very specific historical contexts as creations of authors who were often also political actors.

The body of literature is distinguished by mo'olelo of powerful female deities. Although some mo'olelo were written and published beforehand, the publication of the first "Moolelo no Hiiakaikapoliopole" (1861–1863 in serial form) was in the newspaper *Ka Hoku o ka Pakipika* and, thus, part of the Kanaka 'Ōiwi's claiming of the power of the press for themselves (Kapihenui 1861). *Ka Hoku o ka Pakipika* was the first newspaper owned, written, and edited by Kanaka Maoli, and so it was the first that was free of the colonizing censorship of the Calvinist missionaries, who had controlled the press until that time (Silva 2004). The mo'olelo of Hi'iakaikapoliopole—a mo'olelo about the *akua wahine* (female deity) of the volcano, Pele, and her heroic youngest sister Hi'iaka—was a landmark event in the writing and publication of Kanaka literature, because of the relatively unexpurgated nature of its narrative and the long *mele* (song or poetry) included, some of which worships Pele (see Ho'omanawanui 2007). A half-century later, Hawaiian literature may well have reached its peak with Joseph Mokuohai Poepoe's publication of many long mo'olelo, including his "Moolelo Hawaii Kahiko" in his own newspaper *Ka Na'i Aupuni* in 1906. In "Moolelo Hawaii Kahiko," Poepoe recounts and analyzes several different *mo'okū'auhau*, cosmogonical genealogies, by earlier authors. Within one of the mo'okū'auhau, that of Wākea (the Expanse, usually glossed as Sky Father), he relates "Ka Moolelo o ko Wakea ma Noho ana ma Kalihi—Ka Loaa ana o ke Akua Ulu o Kameha'ikana" (The Mo'olelo of Wākea and Family's Residence in Kalihi—the Obtaining of the Breadfruit Deity Kāmeha'ikana). Despite the emphasis on Wākea in the title, the main character in this mo'olelo is not Wākea, but his wahine, the *akua* Haumea, her manifestation as the Breadfruit Tree deity, and her war to restore pono (right balance of relations) to the island of O'ahu.⁴ In both cases, the authors along with opinion writers in their papers stressed that mo'olelo were important for young people to understand who they were and to have *aloha* for their *'āina*—love for their land and their own people. Poepoe wrote,

Ua hoalaia ae keia hana e ka Mea Kakau no kona makee a minamina maoli i ka moolelo e pili ana i na hana, ka nohona, ame na manao o ko Hawaii nei poe kupuna i hala aku i ka po. (1906: 1 February)

(This work was commenced by the Author because of his desire and true appreciation of the mo'olelo about the deeds, the lives, and the thoughts of Hawai'i's ancestors who have passed into the night.)

The importance of these stories of powerful female deities to contemporary Kanaka women has been noted previously, especially in a speech by Mililani Trask (1986), in the short treatment, *Nā Wāhine Kapu: Divine*

Hawaiian Women by Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa (1999), and most recently in *Holo Mai Pele* by Pualani Kanaka‘ole Kanahale (2001). Trask’s speech emphasizes the value of hearing the stories orally from *kūpuna*, because a grandmother will make the moral lessons therein explicit to the young listener. Kame‘eleihiwa’s book is a catalog of the many female deities in Hawaiian religion, accompanied by contemporary examples of strong Kanaka women who have been inspired and strengthened by the stories. Kumu hula Kanahale’s book is a commentary on the hula drama and television program by Hālau o Kekuhi about Pele and Hi‘iaka.⁵ My own contribution to this ongoing analysis of our literature, in this essay, is a more detailed examination of the two mo‘olelo about Pele and Hi‘iaka and Haumea as they appeared in print in the original Hawaiian.

Neither of these mo‘olelo has had a complete translation done, although Nathaniel B. Emerson used Kapihenui’s “He Moolelo no Hiikaikapoliopole” as the basis for his English-language book called *Pele and Hiika: A Myth From Hawaii* (1993 [1915]). John Charlot notes that “long sections of [Emerson’s] book are more or less loose translations or summaries of Kapihenui” (1998, 61), but Emerson did not credit Kapihenui with authorship of the original. Ku‘ualoha Ho‘omanawanui provides a detailed examination and analysis of this in her 2007 dissertation. Emerson acknowledged that “this story, has, in part, been found in serial contributions to the Hawaiian newspapers” but did not name Kapihenui or any of the other Kanaka authors whose work he poached (Emerson 1993, v). This failure to credit the Kanaka authors in itself aids the colonizing project, as it hides the existence of Hawaiian literature from the view of the English reader, thus portraying Hawaiians as uneducated and backward (i.e., as people who did not write). As Walter Mignolo explains, imperial agencies inscribed “the idea that people without writing were people without history and that people without history were inferior human beings” (Mignolo 1995, 127). A previous book of Emerson’s on this topic (*Unwritten Literature of Hawaii*, 1909) was published by just such an imperial agency, the U.S. Smithsonian Institution’s Bureau of Ethnology, which contributed significantly to the development of scientific racism (Baker 1998). Besides these acts of cultural imperialism, Emerson also directly contributed to the armed coup d’etat, preceded and supported by an invasion by the U.S. military that ended the Native constitutional monarchy and established a colonial oligarchy in Hawai‘i.⁶

Emerson’s Eurocentric translation in flowery Victorian-era prose and poetry portrays Hi‘iaka as less powerful than she appears in the original. He continually refers to this akua wahine who rescues men and defeats sharks and other fierce beings, as a “little girl,” “little maid,” and other such diminutives (e.g., Emerson 1993: 1, 15). Poe’s “Kāmeha‘ikana” has not

suffered a similar treatment and, as far as I know, has never been translated into English. What I offer here is not a translation, but an examination that includes my (necessarily abbreviated) interpretation of the two mo'olelo.

Before we begin, I would emphasize that, although I am discussing two specific works in this paper, there are many versions of each of these mo'olelo written by different authors from different islands. There is no one authoritative version of any of these mo'olelo; indeed, such an idea would be antithetical to Hawaiian epistemology (see Ho'omanawanui 2007). The people of old said, "A'ohe pau ka 'ike i ka hālau ho'okahi" (All knowledge is not exhausted in one school) (see Pukui 1983: 24).

Images of Pele

First, let us look at Kapihenui's "He Moolelo no Hiiakaikapoliopole." Although the title and main character of the mo'olelo is Hi'iaka, the opening scenes describe the akua wahine Pele in important ways; hence, we will begin with her. The mo'olelo begins when Pele suggests to her many younger sisters that they all go from their upland home, inside the live volcano Kīlauea, down to the shore to fish. Pele herself is understood to be the volcano and to be a woman at the same time. She is an akua with *kino lau* (multiple bodies). She is also the head of a family both human and superhuman, which still has living descendants, as witnessed by Kapihenui's statement in the first paragraph, "aole kekahi o kona lahui me kakou, aia no lakou ma Kilauea i keia wa" (none of her people are here [with me on O'ahu], they are in Kīlauea [on Hawai'i] at this time) (Kapihenui 1861: 26 Dec.). In the mo'olelo, the others who physically live with her in human and divine form are her sisters, whose names are all variants of "Hi'iaka." The subject of our mo'olelo is the youngest, named Hi'iakaikapoliopole, or Hi'iaka in the bosom of Pele. The family has brothers (and parents, cousins, etc.) but they appear in this mo'olelo as living apart from the sisters. All of them share the fluid identities as human, divine, and landscape all at once.

When Pele and company arrive at the shore, they see the young woman Hōpoe dancing at the shoreline, accompanied by a young man, Hā'ena. The name of the place is also Hā'ena. Pele is delighted with the dancing and calls to her younger sisters to reciprocate. None of them respond except the youngest, Hi'iakaikapoliopole, who chants of her own pleasure at watching Hōpoe's hula. Hi'iaka is so taken with Hōpoe that she forgoes fishing with her sisters and goes to stay with Hōpoe to dance and surf.

In the next scene, we can see the fluidity of Pele's identity as landscape and woman: she announces that she is going to sleep, and that no one is to wake her no matter how long she sleeps. If they must awaken her, only her

brothers, Keowahimakaakaua, or Hi'iakaikapoliopole are allowed to do so. Pele rules the family in a manner befitting a volcano: the penalty for disobeying this order is death. She then wraps herself in the *pāhoehoe*, the smooth lava rock of the landscape, creating Pu'upāhoehoe, or Pāhoehoe Hill. Kapihenui says she put on (*aahu*) the pāhoehoe as her *kapa*, her wauke cloth covering; thus, the place she did so is still called Kapa'ahu (Covering of Kapa) at Pu'upāhoehoe.

In the following sequence we see Pele as spirit and as related to many other divine land and animal beings. In her sleep state, Pele hears the sound of *pahu hula* (hula drums). She is attracted to the sound and follows it across the islands and channels all the way from the easternmost island where she begins to one of the westernmost, Kaua'i. When she cannot locate the source of the sound, she becomes irritated. In the channel between O'ahu and Kaua'i she meets Pōhakuokaua'i (Rock of Kaua'i), who Kapihenui tells us is her *kupunakāne* (grandfather). She accuses Pōhakuokaua'i of purposely annoying her with the sound of the drums, and threatens to kill him. Pele, true to her volcanic nature, acts arbitrarily and irrationally when angry. This is merely the first incident that reveals this aspect of her.⁷ This episode is also another example of rock or landscape being presented to the reader as a living, sentient being. Pōhakuokaua'i is an actual rock, a feature of the oceanscape, visible today.

When Pele does find the source of the drums, we see her as a vibrant, beautiful, desirable, and desiring young woman. Lohi'au, the handsome young *ali'i* (ruler) of the island of Kaua'i is playing the drum along with his *kumu hula*, Mapu, and his *aikāne*, his friend (and/or lover), Kahuakaiapaoa.⁸ Pele adorns herself magically in the fragrant leaves and flowers of her homeland and then makes a dramatic entrance into the hula festival, chanting. No one knows it is the *akua wahine*, Pele, but they all see that she is beautiful, and, so the people push Lohi'au outside of the building to meet her. He is young and shy, and she chants again and then uses divine power to draw Lohi'au to her. The two then go to Lohi'au's house alone and remain there for five days and nights without emerging for food or to rejoin the hula festival. Kapihenui assures the reader that they do not have intercourse, but "o ka ihu no ka honi, o ke kino hoi aole launa aku" (they exchanged breath at the nose, but the bodies did not meet). Pele then must return to Hawai'i island—she cannot remain indefinitely in her "uhane" or spirit form. She instructs Lohi'au to wait, and she will send a woman to fetch him, promising him that they will sleep together when he arrives in Hawai'i. She also places a *kapu* on his body, that he must not sleep with anyone else, and promises that, after five days and nights with her "pa i kela kihi o Kilauea, i keia kihi o Kilauea" (having been touched by every corner of Kilauea [her land =

herself]), she will free the kapu, and he will have other women. The other women she hints at are her sisters. Pele as woman, but at the same time as akua, here is fully in command: she follows her desires and sets all the rules of this relationship. Lohi'au is rather helpless, as he does not realize that she is akua. (His name means "slow.") When he sees that Pele has left, he disobeys her order to wait for the messenger, is overcome with sadness, and hangs himself (Kapihenui 1861: 26 Dec.).

Later on in the story we again see the other side of Pele as the volcano, irrationally raging, and consuming the landscape. When her messenger, Hi'iaka, seems to be taking too long to bring Lohi'au back, Pele overreacts with volcanic fury, destroying the lehua grove and the person that her sister loves best. Let us turn now to that sister, who is the central character of the mo'olelo.

When Pele returns to her body in Hawai'i, she sends a messenger, the magical young woman, Pā'ūopala'e, to bring Hi'iaka back to Kīlauea from where she is staying with Hōpoe. Hi'iaka has super senses; hence, she knows that she may not see Hōpoe again. As she returns, she sings songs of love and grief for the impending loss of her aikāne. In these mele, Hi'iaka is seen as a master *haku mele* (composer), who weaves together the imagery of the forest and the elements to express her feelings. The first mele is this:

He ua kui lehua ko Panaewa
 He ua ma kai kui hala o Puna,
 A[l]oha—e,
 Aloha wale Koloa—e,
 Na mauu i moe o Malei. (Kapihenui 1862: 1 January)
 (Pana'ewa has a lehua-striking rain,
 Seaward is a rain that strikes the hala of Puna,
 Beloved,
 So beloved is Kōloa,
 The grasses of Mālei that slept.)

Although I have translated the word "kui" in the first two lines as "striking" and "strikes" (i.e., "ku'i"), it is just as possible to read it as "stringing" and "strings" (kui) or, as "Pana'ewa has a rain that strings lehua flowers into lei" and "Seaward is a rain that strings the hala flowers of Puna into lei." The "strike" meaning conveys the feelings of sadness and grief, while the "string" meaning denotes the closeness of the relationship. Furthermore, "Pana'ewa has a lehua-striking rain" could be read as Hi'iaka's own prophecy that she will engage in a fierce battle with Pana'ewa, since "lehua" also means "warrior." Thus, Hōpoe, whose name is described in the dictionary as "fully

developed, as a *lehua* flower” (Pukui and Elbert 1986, 82), is closely associated with the *lehua*; in other versions Hi‘iaka names her “Hōpoe” after the name of her favorite grove of *lehua*. The “hala” is the flower of the pandanus, but “hala” also means to pass and to pass away into death. The poet uses the place name Kōloa to signify that the love between the two was fulfilling: “kō” means to be fulfilled or satisfied, and “loa” means “very.” (Kōloa as a place name probably refers to a type of sugar cane.) The use of words with these double, even triple, meanings demonstrates the composer’s mastery of Hawaiian poetics. The last line uses the metaphor of sleeping grass to suggest that the two had slept together. The next section of verse emphasizes their romantic relationship:

He lei moe ipo,
 Aloha mai ka ipo,
 He ipo no—e.
 (A lover’s lei,
 Beloved is the sweetheart,
 She is a lover.)

We understand Hi‘iaka in the beginning here, then, as woman who is a skilled composer, a lover of the beauty of the forest, and a lover of the woman Hōpoe. It is important not to impose the contemporary categories of sexual identity onto Hi‘iaka or Hōpoe, however. In this Hawaiian world, since there was no need to restrict or regulate such activity, the categories heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual were never created in the language (Foucault 1990, 26–30). In this and other Hawaiian *mo‘olelo*, romantic love between people of the same sex is presented as a normal practice of everyday life rather than as an identity marker. In the stories, such love relationships are cherished by those engaged in them and are supported by others. An understanding of these relationships as valuable in our ancestors’ culture assists us in understanding ourselves as healthy when we, too, cherish such relationships.

When Hi‘iaka returns to her sisters, Pele orders the sisters, one after another, to go and fetch Lohi‘au. They all refuse because they are afraid of traveling the long distance to Kaua‘i. But they do not say so, they just cry in fear. Kapihenui writes “Aole hoi e hiki ke hai aku i keia mea, i ko lakou kaikuaana no ka makau” (It was not possible to tell this, to their older sister, about the fear) (Kapihenui 1862: 2 January). In other words, it was not acceptable to Pele that her younger sisters be afraid of anything. Hi‘iaka does not cry; she immediately agrees to go on the long journey, sacrificing her own love affair to assist Pele with hers. Pele commands her, “kii no a loa a Kauai

. . . lawe mai a hiki i Hawaii nei, mai moe olua, mai honi, mai iniki, mai lalau aku a lalau mai, o make olua ia'u" (Go and find him on Kaua'i, bring him here to Hawai'i, the two of you must not sleep together, don't *honi* [exchange breath at the nose], don't pinch, don't hold each other, or the two of you will die because of me). Hi'iaka agrees but has two commands (*kauoha*) of her own: the first is that if Pele erupts, she must not destroy Hi'iaka's favorite grove of lehua and, second, that she must not destroy her aikāne, Hōpoe. Pele agrees to these demands.

Hi'iaka leaves on her journey but stops and turns around many times, "no ka nui aloha oia nei i na kaikuaana, no Kalua, a me ka uluwehiwehi o ka aina" (because of so much aloha for her older sisters, and for Kalua [the crater] and for the lush verdure of the land). She sings of her love and her sadness at having to leave her sisters and the land of Hawai'i. Pele is merciless as she admonishes Hi'iaka to just go. Along the way, Pā'ūopala'e (skirt of lace fern) joins Hi'iaka as a traveling companion. At this point, Pele reveals the name of Lohi'auipo (lover Lohi'au) to Hi'iaka, saying that now "aohe ou mea nana e hoopilikia o ke alanui, nau ka make na ka wahine, aohe make a na kane" (you have nothing to cause you trouble along the way; you have the power of death; it is woman's power; men will have no power of death, i.e., no power to kill you). As Charlot has pointed out, this signals that their "power is specifically female" (1998, 57).

Not long after the journey begins, Hi'iaka and Pā'ūopala'e enter Pana'ewa. Pana'ewa is a dangerous, uninhabited forest area but also a monstrous being who threatens to kill and eat them. Hi'iaka battles Pana'ewa and tires. He tires, too. Pele can see all this and finally calls "na Hoaiiku kane a me na Hoaiiku wahine" (male gods and female gods) telling them "e kokua i ko kakou kaikaina" (go and assist our sister). They arrive and in one smack (*muka*), Pana'ewa is dead. In one further battle, the Hoaiiku are again called to assist her, and, thereafter, Hi'iaka is able to fight all of her battles without further intervention except for the necessary prayers and ceremonies.

Hi'iaka is then joined by a young human woman, Wahine'ōma'ō, who accompanies her the rest of the way. Still on Hawai'i island, they come to Makaukiu, a *hula'ana*—an impassable sheer cliff to the sea. Wahine'ōma'ō and Pā'ūopala'e want to swim it because that would be a lot faster than detouring inland around the cliff, but Hi'iaka explains that Makaukiu has appeared in the water as a shark, and he will kill them if they go in. The two young women are very stubborn, however, and are not persuaded. Kapihenui writes that Hi'iaka thinks of the two like this, "he mau kane laua, he wahine no keia" (they are men, I am a woman); she thinks this "no ko laua hooko ole mai i ka ia nei olelo aku ia laua" (because of their not fulfilling what she told them) (Kapihenui 1862: 16 January). It is only when they enter the water and

the huge shark rears up that the two believe Hi'iaka. Hi'iaka then battles and kills the shark. I am not sure exactly what the statement of the two being like men is meant to convey, but it is likely that it is meant to be a humorous jab at men being stubborn or failing to listen, within this very women-centered tale. Ku'ualoha Ho'omanawanui has pointed out that Lohi'au is similarly portrayed as causing his own despair by failing to listen and obey Pele's instructions (pers. comm. 2001).⁹

Hi'iaka and her companions have many more adventures on the way to Kaua'i and back. She greets many relatives along the way, who are landscape features like Pōhakuokaua'i mentioned above. She brings Lohi'au back from the dead and sails back to Hawai'i. In the meantime, Pele, in one of her volcanic furies, has broken her vow and destroyed both Hi'iaka's beloved lehua grove and her aikāne, Hōpoe. Hi'iaka is grief stricken and angry. She waits until they are in the presence of Pele to violate the command not to touch Lohi'au, and a battle ensues between the sisters. Lohi'au's aikāne Kahuakaiapaoa arrives to try to save the poor man, who is caught between the fighting sisters. In the end, he is not saved. Our impression of Hi'iaka at the end is that of a strong, intelligent young woman who has come of age in the journey. She has experienced love affairs, tested her wits in battle, and survived a fierce conflict with her older sister. She has observed the religious protocols in order to heal human beings. She has relatives who are sharks, *mo'ō* (supernatural lizard-like creatures), cliffs, and rocks. She is divine with supernatural powers, but experiences the full range of human emotions, and is able to express them in exquisite poetry and song. She is a heroine whose battles and loves transform her and whose story teaches us about what is pono in spiritual and human relationships.

Haumea and the akua 'ulu Kāmeha'ikana

The mo'olelo of Kāmeha'ikana is a narrative, interspersed with *pule* (prayers) and a few mele, that highlights Haumea's relationship to the land and the breadfruit tree. It also is a narrative that teaches about an ali'i who does not behave in a pono manner. The mo'olelo celebrates Haumea's power as a female force and a deity who assists in childbirth but who is also responsible for conducting warfare to restore pono.

The story, which I summarize here, begins with Haumea and Wākea, who are living in the back of Kalihi Valley on the ridge called Kilohana. The living is good: banana, yam, taro, and other food plants grow wild in the forest; and the seashore provides shellfish and seaweed. One day Haumea decides to go fishing at the shore at He'eia, and Wākea decides to gather food in the forest. Wākea cuts down a ripe bunch of bananas and is promptly arrested by guards

of the ali'i named Kumuhonua. They tie him hand and foot, telling him he is being taken because he has stolen the bananas. They send a messenger to Kumuhonua to ask what to do, and Kumuhonua says to kill him by baking him in an *imu* (earth oven). They take him to a place near Waikahalulu stream (an area now considered part of Honolulu) and tie him to a breadfruit tree.

Meanwhile, Haumea looks up at Kilohana and sees first the arch of a rainbow and then rain that completely covers the ridge. She suddenly understands that Wākea has been taken and worries for his life. She prepares to leave but first picks up a *pōhuehue* vine and twines it around her head. This vine is significant, according to the *'ōlelo no'eau* (figurative saying), "*kā i ka pōhuehue*," which refers to the practice of striking the *pōhuehue* vine to make surf rise dangerously when one's enemy is in the sea (Pukui 1983, 146). She goes to look for Wākea, first at Kilohana. As she leaves the forest there, she gathers palapalai fern and other greenery to adorn herself, including lehua flowers and maile. Finally, she takes *tī* leaves and drapes them across her *puhaka* (waist). The greenery and flowers are the same important ones that hula dancers associate with the female deities of hula (Abbott 1992, 117), who are the other major female deities in Kanaka traditions. Isabella Abbott says further that women draped themselves in *tī* leaf when they had to break *kapu*, as protection (Abbott 1992, 115). Haumea uses the *tī* here in a similar way as symbolic protection for the coming battle with Kumuhonua.

Haumea arrives at the stream named Pūehuehu. There she meets a man named Kali'u, who tells her that the smoke she sees is coming from an *imu* and that a man is about to be killed in it. He notices her beauty and how it is enhanced with the forest greenery. They discuss what has happened to Wākea. Haumea then delivers this soliloquy:

He maia ulu wale ko ke kuahiwi, he maia ma ka nahelehele, he inai na ke kini, ame ka puku'i o ka manu. No ke aha hoi i kapu ole ia ai ka manu i ka maia a kapu iho la hoi i ke kanaka? Hoouna ka hoi ua 'lii nei o oukou i kona poe kanaka, e kiu i ke kanaka e kii ana i ka mea a kona lima i luhī ole ai; a hoouna ole ka hoi oia i na kau kia manu ana e pu-lehua a e ahele i ka manu ai maia? He aha la kana. Ola ka manu ai maia, ola no hoi ke kanaka ai maia. Noonoo ole no hoi ua 'lii nei o oukou, he maia ke kanaka, a kona la no hoi e hua iho ai, hua no. (1906: 9 May)

(The mountains have bananas that grow wild, there are bananas in the forest, which is food for the people and for the flocks of birds. Why should the banana not be taboo to the birds, but taboo to people? That ali'i of yours has sent his people to watch for people

taking something that his hands have not worked to grow; but he doesn't send any bird catchers to snare the banana-eating birds? Why? The bird who eats bananas lives, and the person who eats bananas lives. This ali'i of yours has failed to consider that the person is a banana tree, whose day will come to fruit, and it will fruit.)

This speech of Haumea's tells us that Kumuhonua is an oppressive ali'i and why. The relationships are pono when people can gather food freely in the forest, just as the birds do. The land is there to feed the people as well as the birds. If Kumuhonua or his people had cultivated the banana, then they would have a right to the fruits of their labor. But to claim the wild bananas is an overstepping of his *kuleana* (his sphere of authority and responsibility) and, thus, not pono. It is also likely that the banana bunch is a metaphor for the people of the area and that Wākea's taking of the banana is prescient and symbolic of his and Haumea's subsequent takeover of the rule of the island. To rule an island is often expressed as *'ai moku*, (island-eating).¹⁰

Kali'u expresses sadness that the man is to be killed; hence, Haumea asks if he would help her rescue Wākea. He agrees. She asks him for *'awa* (kava), which he has, but, he says, there is no water in this stream except when it rains. She tells him to go get the *'awa* and to chew it and that she will work on getting water. She looks around until she sees a very large rock and then tells Kali'u that she will pick up and throw the rock into Waolani stream, which will make the spray from the stream cover the mountains, and then there will be water in Pūehuehu (*ehu*, meaning spray). Kali'u is amazed and says that not several sets of forty men could lift the rock. Haumea tells him to watch; she will say a pule; and then he will see that the rock will become just a little *pali pohaku* (rock cliff) in her hand. She then prays to her ancestors named Palila'a, Palikomokomo and so forth. While she is saying the pule, the words flutter in her mouth and her hands slap the rock, making the rock move like a branch swaying in the wind. She throws the rock, calling out to the akua, Kāne. The people in the vicinity hear a roar, feel the earth shake, and then see a fog rising over Waolani stream. Then Kali'u sees water coming out of the side of Pūehuehu stream, which creates a deep pool underneath.

In this section, we can clearly see the relationships being expressed among the woman, Haumea, the deity Haumea, and the land, which is represented by the names beginning with "Pali" (cliff) and the rock, which is repeatedly called a "pali pohaku," as well as the akua Kāne, who is called "Pohaku-o-Kane" (Rock of Kāne). Haumea can lift the rock because the rock is in her genealogy—it is family to her. She explains to Kali'u:

A o Paliku ame na pali apau au i lohe ai i kuu pule i uhau ai au i ka awa o kaula, oia na inoa o ko'u mau kupuna mai ka po mai. A o Paliku, oia kela pali e pale ana ia Koolau-poko ae nei ame Koolau-loa. Ua heaia kela pali mamuli oia kupuna o'u, a o ke poo nohoi ia o ko'u mookuauhau. (Poepoe 1906: 21 May)

(Palikū and all the pali [names] that you heard in my prayer that I offered up with our 'awa are the names of my kūpuna from the pō.¹¹ Palikū is also that cliff that separates Ko'olaupoko from Ko'olauloa. That cliff was named after my kupuna, and that is also the head of my genealogy.)

Haumea's explanation also hints to us that the mo'olelo is about power that is tapped into through prayer to deified ancestors, who are also features of the landscape, and that power is legitimated in their world through mo'okū'auhau (genealogy). We are reminded here that this mo'olelo is presented within a larger work of various mo'okū'auhau.

After Haumea's success at obtaining water through throwing the pali pōhaku, Kali'u mixes the 'awa with the fresh water and gives it to Haumea. Again, she offers up a pule, to the many akua: "na kini, na ka mano ame ka lehu o ke akua" (the multitudes, the four thousand, and the four hundred thousand akua). When she looks at the cup, there is a small rainbow (*punohu*) over it. She gives the cup to Kali'u, telling him to drink, and saying the rainbow was a sign that Wākea was alive. It is also important to note that, while she is the deity, she is a human woman at the same time, and hence she does not drink the 'awa but gives it to Kali'u to drink. It is within this complex of mo'olelo about Papa (Haumea) and Wākea that the 'ai kapu (sacred or restricted eating) is established: within those rules, certain foods and religious ceremonies are reserved for ali'i only, contributing to their status, and thus helping to legitimate their power; and certain foods and ceremonies are reserved for men only, for the same reasons. In this story, the 'awa ceremony is conducted by Haumea, but the 'awa itself is consumed by the man. 'Awa is consumed by women in ceremonies in hula (Abbott 1992: 115), as in the Pele and Hi'iaka mo'olelo, because Pele and family, the deities of hula, do not follow the 'ai kapu (Ho'omanawanui, pers. comm. 2001). Thus, they offer women a religious alternative to the 'ai kapu. Pele and Hi'iaka's mo'olelo disrupts the 'ai kapu, while Haumea's mo'olelo inscribes and reinforces it.

After the ceremony, Haumea instructs Kali'u to send his extended family to Kilohana and wait there. She goes to find Wākea and meets with a group of people; once again, they notice her beauty and that she is "ohu i na lipolipo o ka wao-kele" (adorned in the dark greenery of the rainforest). They greet

each other warmly; the people ask her if she is the wahine of the man who will be roasted in the imu, and she tells them the story. She tells them she wants to see the face of her kāne, and they respond that they will go with her and that she should be able to see him (Poepoe 1906: 16 May). When Wākea sees her, he begins to cry. A red glow then appears around Haumea's head, apparently as a sign of her supernatural nature and perhaps as an omen of what is about to happen. One of the women approaches the guard to ask if Haumea may *honi* (exchange breath at the nose, a traditional greeting) her kāne. When the guard agrees, Haumea tells the woman, "Ua ola oe a me kou ohana" (You and your family are granted life!) Haumea then approaches the tree where Wākea is tied up; tears are still falling down his cheeks. Haumea then poses as if to honi Wākea but instead strikes the tree so hard that it makes a thundering sound, making the earth shake. The tree then opens up like the mouth of a large cave, and the two disappear inside (Poepoe 1906: 17–18 May).

Here Haumea is the most powerful character in the story; she is an archetypal female force who rescues her seemingly helpless and tearful mate. In other parts of the cycle, and in other mo'olelo, the male characters are more powerful. That the female is powerful here is indicative of the sense of balance of male and female power that is characteristic of Hawaiian world views.¹²

Haumea and Wākea emerge on the other side of Waikahalulu stream, and go back to Kilohana, where Kalī'u and his large family are waiting. Haumea gives Kalī'u's people land to settle on, on the other side of the mountain, and she instructs them in what to learn to prepare for the coming war with Kumuhonua. The men are to learn club warfare, spear-throwing, and wrestling, while the women are to learn net-throwing (an art of war), *lua* (a martial art), and short spear-throwing. Haumea also promises to help the women with childbirth and to plant the childbirth medicine plant for them. Once again, we should notice that, while the men and women are to learn separate arts, the women are expected to learn certain arts of war; they will not be left defenseless, nor are they portrayed as weaker in any way. Haumea, the prototypical mother and goddess of childbirth (Beckwith 1970, 285) instructs women to become warriors as well as mothers (Poepoe 1906: 21 May).

To conduct the war, Haumea takes the battle to Palikū, the place that also names her genealogy; once again, her familial relationship to the land is of the utmost importance. It is in Palikū that she is the most powerful. A kahuna, who says his "mo'okahuna" or genealogy of kahuna training is also Palikū, joins them, after being rebuffed by Kumuhonua. At Palikū, Haumea leads Wākea and their entire retinue into a cave hidden inside the mountain, while

only she remains outside. When Kumuhonua's forces arrive, they see the whole landscape from the mountain to the cape at the shore covered with women holding *kukui* nuts (candle nut) in their hands. The warriors are confused at the sight and send a messenger to ask the women where Wākea's warriors are (Poepoe 1906: 7 June). The messengers meet with a beautiful woman, who tells them she is Wākea's wahine, and not to bother looking for Wākea, but that "aia ka loa ma ka ikaika" (the finding will be through strength), that is, only in battle would they locate Wākea, or, "You will have to fight me to get to them." Kumuhonua's forces then move forward to attack but meet a hail of *kukui* nuts, which hit them on the foreheads, knocking them out and killing them (Poepoe 1906: 8–9 June). Earlier we saw Haumea as goddess of childbirth, here as a fierce warrior in battle. Her female power can be used as a force to kill or to create life. The choice of *kukui* nut is symbolic of Haumea's use of intelligence as her weapon, as the nuts were used "for lights; hence, the [*kukui*] tree is a symbol of enlightenment" (Pukui and Elbert 1986, 177); further, that the nuts specifically hit the foreheads (*lae*) of the warriors makes the point more obvious, as the word "lae" also signifies wisdom or intelligence (Pukui and Elbert 1986, 189).

The battles continue, and in the end, Kumuhonua is killed by Kali'u's barbed spear. Pono is restored to the land, and the people are said to live peaceably with each other (ua noho alohaia na kanaka) under Haumea and Wākea's rule.

Conclusion

Hi'iaka and Haumea have many important characteristics in common. They both use *pule* and *mele* in ceremonies to connect with 'aumākuā and other akua. This adds to their already considerable strength and intelligence and shows how their polytheistic, ancestor- and land-based spirituality, is conceived of as a necessary and beneficial facet of life. Similarly, both are closely related to the land as family: Hi'iaka to the volcano Pele, the rock Pōhakuokaua'i et al., and Haumea to the cliffs and rocks of Palikū. They are also conceived of as the ancestors of living Kanaka Ōiwi today. Their female powers include the power to kill as well as to heal. They both work to restore pono to the life of the people, which manifests in different ways. Hi'iaka clears the land of dangerous elements, such as the evil forest mo'ō, Pana'ewa, and the shark Makaukiu, while Haumea engages in battle to depose the bad ali'i, Kumuhonua.

Moreover, both mo'olelo contain an abundance of Hawaiian place names that are no longer in use and do not appear in the reference work *Place Names of Hawaii* (Pukui, Elbert, and Mookini 1974). Many original place

names in Hawai'i have been replaced with English names or forgotten even more completely than the mo'olelo have been. Knowledge of these places and their names restores us by reestablishing the connections to our ancestors' thought, language, and way of life. Kīhei de Silva, on the liner notes for an album reclaiming one of the ancient names, expressed this well:

We live in a time of un-naming, in a time when old names for the land—names given in honor, happiness, and sorrow—have been set aside for marketing jingles that commemorate little more than a desire for sales. . . . We who learn and love these old names are, therefore, people of two worlds, residents of rival geographies. We lead our lives on the congealed, concrete, and tuff-green crust of Hawai'i's Bay Views, Crest Views, Soda Creeks, and Enchanted Lakes. But when our souls wither and thirst, we seek nourishment in that other, deeper geography. (de Silva 1993)

The mo'olelo, replete with the ancient geography, like the songs de Silva celebrates, “fashion for us a piko, a lifeline of sweet affection, by which we are connected to our source and to our future” (de Silva 1993). This source is not only the land itself, but our ancestors' relationship with it. This spiritual and familial relationship to the land is important for Kanaka Maoli self-definition. While represented in news media and everyday stereotyping as a people who do not fit in to Western society, who suffer from a preponderance of social ills, the mo'olelo represent Kanaka as an ancient people descended from deities, descended from the land itself, and connected to it. Linda Tuhiwai Smith has observed that “Many indigenous creation stories link people through genealogy to the land . . . to birds and fish, animals, insects and plants. To be connected is to be whole” (Smith 1999, 148). The mo'olelo have the potential to restore this memory and sense of wholeness.

The mo'olelo also represent two different ways of religious life, although they share relatives (in some versions, Haumea is Pele's mother), and both pray to Kāne and other akua. Haumea represents the ali'i system of religion, as explained above, and Hi'iaka belongs to the Pele tradition, whose practitioners do not follow the 'ai kapu.

Other important commonalities in the mo'olelo are the physical beauty of the akua, their use of the forest plants for adornment and protection, and the related concept of *kino lau* (multiple bodies). Pele has a variety of *kino lau*: the volcano, a young woman, an old woman, storms, and so on. Haumea's mo'olelo is in part the story of the creation of a particular *kino lau*, Kāmeha'ikana, the breadfruit tree deity that saves them. When Haumea touches the tree, she gains mana from the tree, and the tree is simultaneously

transformed into the deity. Pele, Hi'iaka, and Haumea all adorn themselves in the greenery of the forest, with many of the same plants that are still offered today at *kuahu* (altars) of the hula deities (Abbott 1992, 117). The greenery are kino lau of those hula deities. That one can attire oneself in the body of the deity, and can thus “put on” the qualities of the deity is the important concept.¹³ The gathering and donning of the greenery, accompanied by solemn ceremony, continues today in many *hālau hula* (Pukui 1980, 71, 90).

The Haumea mo'olelo, moreover, if well-known, might change the commonly held view that the four male *akua nui* were the only important ones to historical figures such as Kamehameha. It is well-known, for example, that Kamehameha inherited the akua Kūkā'ilimoku—a form of the male akua nui Kū—which assured his ascent to power. Kūkā'ilimoku, glossed as island-seizing Kū, is a deity of war and government, but he is not the only such deity. This is a translation of something Kamakau wrote, in a text not included in *Ruling Chiefs*,

The breadfruit tree became the goddess Kāmeha'ikana, a goddess famed from Hawai'i to Kaua'i for mana and for seizing governments. Kāmeha'ikana . . . became a goddess for Kamehameha during his reign (Kamakau 1993, 13).¹⁴

Haumea's mo'olelo also adds to our knowledge about women's power within the 'ai kapu system, which restricted women's eating as well as their access to certain *heiau* (temples) and their rituals. Although Haumea observes the 'ai kapu in the mo'olelo when she gives the 'awa to the man Kali'u to drink, she is clearly in power. The 'ai kapu, therefore, is not presented as a patriarchal system within which women are subordinated to men. It is a more balanced system in which men and women have different roles within which they gain and exercise power.¹⁵

Finally, the fact that the mo'olelo were skillfully written by our ancestors in and of itself reveals the lie of stereotypes. Many people in Hawai'i and elsewhere do not realize that mo'olelo exist in written form, or they believe that the mo'olelo were passed down in oral tradition, unchanged by the authors' artistry. This reflects a romanticized view that the moment prior to European contact (anthropology's zero point) was the last moment of authenticity, that all our mo'olelo, mele, and mo'okū'auhau existed in that moment, pure and unchanging, unadulterated by the West. Greg Denning writes, “the politics of the zero point is to be seen in our school textbooks over a hundred years. The authentic aborigines were the picaninnies and the nomads, not those down the street” (2001, 209). The idea of unchanging mo'olelo

originating before the zero point is another fiction posing as the authentic that hides a century and a half of writing in Hawaiian (cf. Vizenor 1998). Before writing, however, the mo'olelo always did change, because the culture was alive. Charlot has shown how the Hi'iaka cycle was added to by redactors, and the Haumea mo'olelo is embedded within mo'okū'auhau, which were regularly affected by politics (Charlot 1998; Kamakau 1991, 4). Then in the nineteenth century, the authors, "those down the street" (the real natives obscured by the idea that the only authentic culture existed before writing), gave the mo'olelo new life in print. It is a lingering injury of colonialism that Kanaka Maoli today know of Shakespeare, Melville, and Hemingway but not M. J. Kapihenui and Joseph M. Poepoe. Our recovery from the harms of colonialism includes understanding that our ancestors prior to writing created magnificent works of orature and also that our more recent ancestors subsequently created many works of written art.

The mo'olelo in this essay are just two of the many that provide us with important information and inspiring images of women. The movement to revitalize the Hawaiian language must grow so that this wealth of literature can become the cultural resource that it should be. The representations of the people in the mo'olelo together with the beauty and accomplishment of their eloquent renderings in print are like Pele, who destroys and creates in the same act. They destroy the lies that we have been told about our ancestors and simultaneously re-create stories that present women, and all of our ancestors, as complex beings—strong, powerful, and intelligent.

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NOTES

1. The word “Western” is problematic within a Hawaiian worldview, since the “West” lies to the “hikina,” the East. I have no other word, unfortunately, that includes English language and literature as well as its genealogy in Europe.

2. In the foreword to *Ka Po'e Kahiko*, the volume on “culture,” Dorothy Barrère writes, “In 1931 Bishop Museum sponsored the systematic translation of all of Samuel Kamakau’s articles on Hawaiian history and culture that had appeared in the weekly newspapers *Ku'oko'a* and *Ke Au 'Oko'a* from October 20, 1866, to February 2, 1871. Two manuscripts resulted; one, containing his historical material was published in 1861 by The Kamehameha Schools, under the title *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*. . . . The other manuscript contains Kamakau’s account of the material and social culture of the Hawaiians before and during the early period of acculturation to Western ways, and is in the library of the Museum.” She does not make clear, however, that Kamakau did not make the distinctions between “history” and “culture.”

3. “Kanaka Maoli” is one way of saying “Native Hawaiian” in Hawaiian; “Kanaka Ōiwi” and simply “Kanaka” are others. I use them interchangeably. “Kanaka” is the singular and generic, and “Kānaka” is plural.

4. I hesitate to use the common translation “wife” for “wahine,” because of the many connotations that go along with it that are foreign to the Hawaiian world being represented in the mo'olelo. Larry Kimura has noted that “Whenever Hawaiian is translated into English, the English words used add cultural connotations to the idea conveyed, while eliminating intended connotations and meanings of the original Hawaiian” (1983: 182). “Wahine” here does mean life partner, but with a different set of gender roles than is attached to the word “wife.” Similarly, I will use “kāne” for male life partner, rather than translating it into “husband.”

5. Hālau o Kekuhi was established by Kanahēle and her sister Nālani Kanaka'ole to keep “alive chants and dances that had been passed down in their family through seven generations” (Tani, “Preface” in Kanahēle 2001).

6. See letter from N. B. Emerson et al. to Sanford Dole, “President of the Provisional Government,” which reads, in part, “We the undersigned desire to offer our services to the Government as a company of sharpshooters, in case of any emergency that may require our assistance” (Foreign Office and Executive Files, 1893, Overthrow, Hawai'i State Archives).

7. Pele is also similar to tricksters in this respect. Vizenor, quoting Jarold Ramsey, notes that “native tricksters are imaginary figures” whose episodic career is based upon hostility to domesticity, maturity, good citizenship, modesty, and fidelity of any kind” (1998: 29). Louis Owens explains that the purpose of trickster stories is to “mock and taunt us into self-knowledge” (1998, 32).

8. “Aikāne” meant a close companion of the same sex, with sexual relations implicit. Al'i often took talented dancers as aikāne (Kame'eiehiwa 1992, 47). Although kāne (man) is an integral part of the word, Hi'iaka's relationships with both young women, Hōpoe

and Wahine'ōma'ō, are described as "aikāne" in the mo'olelo, and are implicitly sexual and/or romantic. In contemporary Hawaiian, aikāne now means "friend" with no sexual implication (Pukui and Elbert 1986: 10; Sam L. No'eau Warner, pers. comm. 1998).

9. I am hesitant here because it is tempting to apply interpretations about male and female behavior based on stereotypes from my own time and culture, but such interpretations are in danger of being anachronistic and foreign.

10. I am indebted to Lia Keawe, Kekeha Solis, Ty Kāwika Tengan, Annette Ipo Wong, and others of Ho'ōla Nā Iwi for pointing out this additional meaning of the taking of the bananas. In addition, Kame'eleihiwa has pointed that it also possible to interpret Wākea's action as overstepping *his* kuleana, since Kumuhonua was ali'i over the island. I agree. However, it seems to me that the lesson Haumea is imparting is about pono and that she considers Kumuhonua as not pono.

11. The pō is where our ancestors of the deep past originated, where we come from and also where we return to at death.

12. See the discussion of female power and the attempts by males to counterbalance it through imposition of the 'aikapu in Kame'eleihiwa (1992, 33–40).

13. I am grateful to Ku'ualoha Ho'omanawanui for this insight.

14. Kāmeha'ikana is mentioned several times very briefly in *Ruling Chiefs*, but her mo'olelo is not told and her importance is not emphasized there the way that it is in the book titled *Tales and Traditions of the People of Old*.

15. The 'ai kapu is always discussed as a restriction on the eating of certain foods by women. But in Kamakau's account of the end of the 'ai kapu, he notes "I ka pō mua o ka Mō'i Liholiho i hiki ai i Kailua, 'o ka 'ai noa nō ia i ka loko 'ilio noa a nā ali'i wahine" (The first night that the Mō'i Liholiho arrived in Kailua, he ate freely of the internal organs of the dog, [which was previously] free to the female ali'i); this suggests that there were restrictions on men's eating of certain foods as well. This should alter the perception that the 'ai kapu was put into place to subordinate women (Kamakau 1996, 211).

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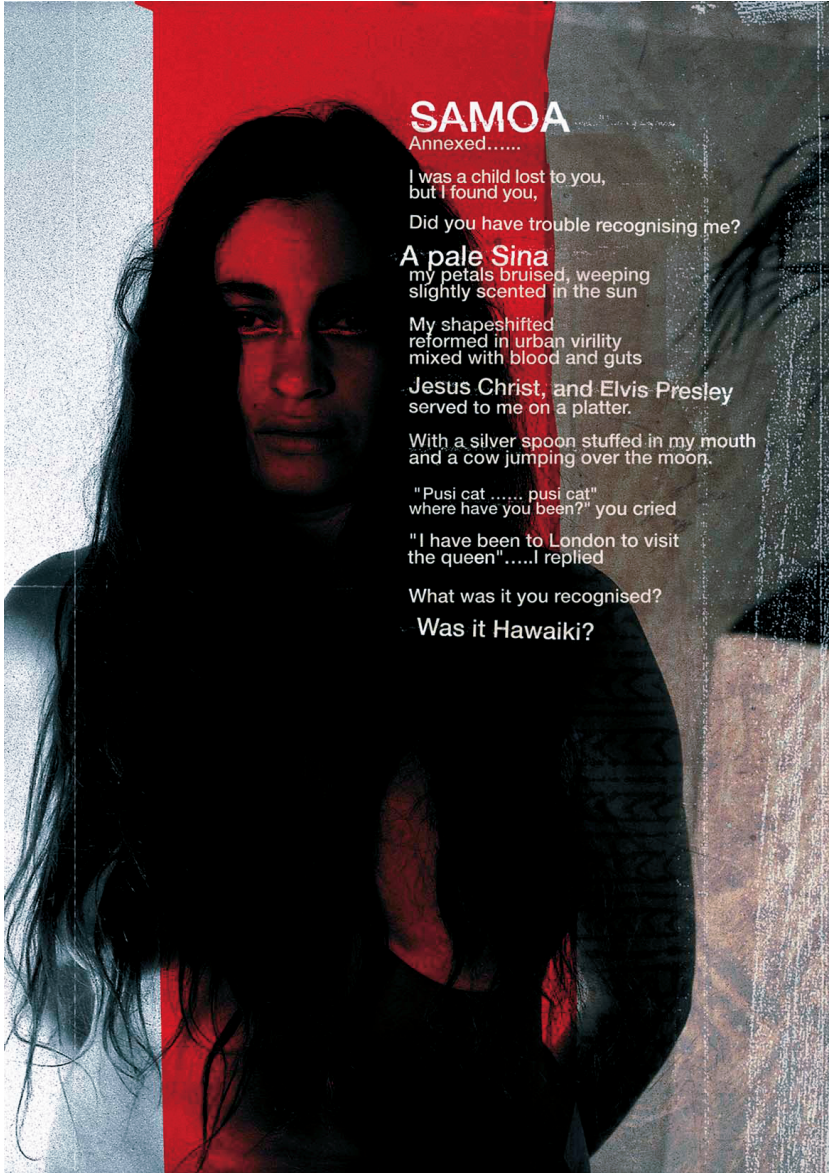
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Rosanna Raymond, 2nd stanza, "Samoa," from *Meet you in Hawaiki*.