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MANAgement in KANAKAnomics:  
Kanaka Maoli Approaches of Organizational Behavior and Theory,  
Economic Strategy, and Entrepreneurship

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## ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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This paper studies research concerning the field of Indigenous entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs of the Pacific with particular emphasis given to the Kanaka Maoli of the Hawaiian Islands. It discusses the notion of Kanakanomics as informed by the traditional ahupua‘a system based in indigenous approaches to organizational behavior and theory. It delves into how these epistemologies then influence contemporary Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs. Lastly, this paper provides a brief case analysis of the Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu as an example of an indigenous start-up organization that has implemented the aforementioned organizational behaviors and theories.

**Keywords:** organizational behavior and theory, entrepreneurship, Indigenous entrepreneurship, Hawaiian studies, start-up organization, management

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## **Introduction**

Under the colonial tradition of capitalism, it would be the assumption that the only means for Indigenous peoples to be able to survive and thrive in a modern world would be by investing financially, intellectually, politically, and spiritually into such an economic system for their own communities and that doing so would be the only means to even have the possibility of having a competitive advantage in response to rapid urbanization and marginalization. If this is not done through mainstream avenues already existing, this would in turn call for Indigenous entrepreneurship to occur and to then follow certain practices that are in alignment with capitalistic values. Scholarly work done on successful Indigenous entrepreneurship ventures, however, is quite limited due to the collective struggles that Indigenous nations face against settler-colonial markets whose purpose is to dominate the very existence of these nations economically, socially, politically, and spiritually in order to create a dependent consumer base which in turn is the core that allows the market itself to survive and thrive off of Indigenous communities and their resources. With that, a few initial points of reference of scholarly work done on Indigenous entrepreneurship may be helpful in establishing the direction of this paper.

### **The Field of Indigenous Entrepreneurship**

In “Indigenous Entrepreneurship: An Emerging Field of Research,” Leo-Paul Dana discusses how relatively new the field of Indigenous entrepreneurship is and why it is an attractive field to study because of how some cultural values of Indigenous

entrepreneurs are incompatible with mainstream theories of entrepreneurship, such as profit maximization for example; variables and objectives that are touched on in Dana's study includes environmental sustainability and addressing the needs of the collective community. Furthermore, he explains how kinship ties are central to social organization structures that are focused on more egalitarian power relations rather than individualistic models. He goes on further to explain that even across different Indigenous peoples, there is heterogeneity regarding cultural values . He writes the following concerning self-employment:

“Individuals from different ethno-cultural backgrounds do not become self-employed for the same reason, nor should they be expected to respond the same way to any stimulus”  
(Dana, 159).

This highlights the importance of not homogenizing the intentions and desires of Indigenous entrepreneurs that come from different ethnic-cultural identifications and different land-bases. Furthermore, it establishes that entrepreneurial approaches that may work in improving the life conditions for one Indigenous people may not necessarily be appropriate for improving that of another Indigenous people. What this means is that context --- including the social, cultural, political, economic, and environmental landscapes --- is particularly important. As far as context is concerned, Dana offers the following statements that give insight to how different Indigenous nations engaging in entrepreneurship do have a common denominator in spite of the heterogeneity:

“It should be emphasised, therefore, that there is not only one indigenous worldview about entrepreneurship. What does tie indigenous approaches together as original inhabitants is a special attachment to land, that in most cases has been disrupted by relatively recent experience with colonisation (military and/or economic) usually by the nations of the core and there is usually a related desire to reassert control over traditional territories and rebuild their communities with entrepreneurship and enterprise, shaped by history, culture and values, often playing a prominent role in this process” (Dana, 160).

With relationship to land being what ties different Indigenous approaches to entrepreneurship together, land therefore must be kept at the forefront of both scholarly and non-scholarly work concerning Indigenous entrepreneurship in any context. Dana’s statement also indicates the colonial role that corporate militarism has played in disrupting these relationships. Furthermore, it makes it clear that for Indigenous entrepreneurs seeking to remedy these capitalistic violence enacted on Indigenous communities, entrepreneurship may be a possible means to achieve decolonization, deoccupation, and land repatriation so long that it is rooted in these culturally and historically informed land-based relationships and Indigenous knowledges, such as collective well-being and environmental sustainability from an Indigenous lens. This being said, self-employment for Indigenous peoples may offer ways to evade systems of dependency that have been imposed by settler-colonial governments.

Though centering a study on Aboriginals of Australia, Boyd H. Hunter provides insight about what self-employment may offer for Indigenous peoples in “Indigenous self-employment: miracle cure or risky business.” Furthermore, he gives attention to the

high level of risk that such a venture takes on --- which of course is typical for any kind of entrepreneurial start-up business or organization --- that may be due in part to reasons such as shortages of certain forms of capital, limited access to education or qualifications to strengthen business-related and administrative skills, or dependency on funding from settler-colonial governments albeit predominantly forced and imposed assistance keeping in mind the historical context of government policies that have sought to eliminate Indigenous sovereignty. Hunter states the following:

“Running a business, or otherwise being self-employed, is one avenue for economic advancement for indigenous people. However, employing oneself or others is a complex process with many potential pitfalls. In an increasingly competitive marketplace, where globalisation and instantaneous information processing have increased the mobility of consumers and producers alike, indigenous businesses have to be increasingly sophisticated to compete” (Hunter, 1)

The call for Indigenous businesses needing to be sophisticated reveals two things. The first is the notion that because it Indigenous-initiated and Indigenous-led, high levels of sophistication are needed because the current operations of business in a modernized world make it that much more difficult for Indigenous businesses to thrive by virtue of colonial business practices that Indigenous peoples have to compete against just for the survival and continuity of their communities. Such colonial business practices include the occupation and appropriation of land by foreign corporate entities (including militaries), environmental degradation for the sake of profit, and the exiling and removal of

Indigenous peoples from their homeland; these all contribute to preventing Indigenous peoples from accessing their various sources of capital derived from their relationship to the land. The second assumption is that unless they are sophisticated, they are bound to fail; however, important to keep in mind is that when concerning Indigenous peoples, the definition of a sophisticated system has historically and dominantly been defined from the perception of those whom are outsiders to the community and have limited knowledge, and particularly lived experience, in worldviews and practices of the community itself and that have been positioned relative to the systems of the mainstream, dominant forces. Hunter goes on to write:

“It certainly true that if indigenous businesses are to compete in the marketplace they must take a hard-nosed commercial attitude to any cost implication of non-commercial objectives. However, indigenous community organisations may have a competitive advantage in certain areas through their connection with traditional culture and their ability to mobilise labour in the production process. Individual financial incentives may be less effective than traditional systems of obligation in motivating craftwork” (Hunter, 13).

It is clear that potential costs and risks that Indigenous businesses take on must be considered deeply due to likelihood of failure or success. However, I argue that organizational failure and success is relative to the mission and intent of the organization, which may be defined by ‘traditional culture’ in the context of that specific community; for some Indigenous organizations that have forms of self-employment and community employment engaging in trade, performing labour, and maintaining a structure of

management, the purpose may not necessarily be about maximizing revenue in the form of measuring dollar amounts, and even yet still has the ability to increase the value of its shareholders in alternative and, most likely, more fulfilling ways regarding sovereignty of land which, in some contexts, is inherently connected to ‘traditional systems of obligation in motivating craftwork’. The ability to mobilize labour seems to be a strength considering strong kinship ties and communal relationships that exist within Indigenous organizational bodies. Because of relationships to land and kinship networks being central to Indigenous entrepreneurship, organizational operations are essentially unable to be disconnected from the work also being a spiritual process, which itself assists in mobilization of labor.

Considering the percentage of the global population that Indigenous peoples make-up and that they have been subjugated to colonial processes including dispossession of land, genocide, and forced assimilation, a question may arise is: what do Indigenous people really have to offer to the business world? In “Perspectives on indigenous entrepreneurship, innovation and enterprise,” an editorial published in the *Journal of Management & Organization*, the authors emphasize that Indigenous entrepreneurship is contextual, being sure not to make uniform statements about all Indigenous peoples, with particular attention being given to land-base, the specific Indigenous nation, environmental conditions, and governmental policy. The authors state the following about why Indigenous entrepreneurs’ success is a matter of importance:

“The success of indigenous entrepreneurs matters because they draw upon their indigeneity as sources of inspiration and innovation, contribute to the collective well-being of indigneous peoples, and some represent world class examples of sustainable ways of doing business” (Mika, 767).

The work done by Indigenous entrepreneurs has the capacity to offer true remedies to the afflictions that Indigenous peoples have faced at the hands of settler colonialism and genocide in ways that avoid the historic forms of corporate and governmental deciet that communities have had to endure; not only does this benefit Indigenous peoples, but it also benefits non-Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, Indigenous entrepreneurship has the ability to set the stage for business practices that are environmentally conscious in ways that are not merely focused on saving money, but rather saving the land and environment which is central to many Indigenous belief systems, economies, and identities itself. To add on, the success of Indigenous entrepreneurship would provide new models for a global society that would be able to establish new diplomatic partnerships as well as provide scholars more oppotunities to do research on the field. In order to provide more detail, especially to the discussions of my study, it is useful to transition from scholarship about of Indigenous peoples globally by narrowing down more regionally, namely in Moananuiākea.

### **Indigenous Entrepreneurship in Moananuiākea**

Moananuiākea is one of the names given to the “Pacific Ocean” by the Indigenous peoples of the region and is a name that has priority to the names given to the locality as

a result of colonialism by European and Westernized nations. Different names as given by the Indigenous peoples of this vast ocean region include Temoananuiakiwa and Moananuiakanaloa, for example. Moananuiākea acknowledges the interconnectedness it creates between the different island societies as sophisticated societies that have historical social, cultural, political, economic, and familial relationships with one another.

Members of island nations of Moananuiākea continue to think of ways to be innovative in order to thrive economically in modern times; such is the case of entrepreneurs that have genealogical ties to these places. In the third chapter of *Entrepreneurs and Indigenous Business in the Pacific*, “Entrepreneurship in the Pacific,” John Hailey explores what defines the term “Pacific entrepreneurs.” He emphasizes the importance that any definitions that are applied must take into consideration the cultural and social context of each island society. In the following statement, he highlights why one must also omit Western frameworks and Eurocentric perspectives when researching entrepreneurs of Moananuiākea:

“Pacific entrepreneurs operate in small isolated markets. They have limited access to credit, technology, or trained staff. They have none of the opportunities available in the extensive, well-established markets of wealthy metropolitan countries. Entrepreneurs in these countries have access to a network of financial institutions, enjoy the advantages of various technologies, and can benefit from a relatively well-educated, productive work force accustomed to sophisticated work practices. As a result, one must question the appropriateness of the economic models or business training manuals designed in the United States or Europe that are currently being used in the Pacific” (Hailey, 19-20)

This points out the disadvantages that entrepreneurs of Moananuiākea encounter that one must ponder when considering their ability to be successful as competitive agents as defined by Western models and frameworks. It therefore calls attention that a different lens needs to be applied in attempts of assessing such entrepreneurs, whether it be from academic or non-academic contexts. Hailey provides the following definition of “Pacific entrepreneur” as:

“one who shows a practical creativity and managerial ability in effectively combining resources and opportunities in new ways so as to provide goods and services appropriate to island communities, and yet who can still generate sufficient income to create new opportunities for the individual, the family, and the community as a whole” (Hailey, 28).

Such a definition centers the administrative skills that are necessary in business settings while also gives attention to the importance of organizational management practices falling within the boundaries of what is considered appropriate within that specific island context and its family-focus and community-focus approaches. The definition sets a clear foundation for what must be considered when entrepreneurs of Moananuiākea are concerned.

In order to truly assess Moananuiākea entrepreneurs as far as success is concerned, it requires understanding economic strategy, business practices, organizational behavior, and definitions of success from perspectives that are indigenous to Moananuiākea . In “Perspectives on indigenous entrepreneurship, innovation and enterprise,” an editorial written by Jason P. Mika et. al and published in the *Journal of*

*Management & Organization*, the authors also write in reference to entrepreneurs of Moananuiākea and explain why Indigenous entrepreneurial success should be taken as something that matters to a global society because they offer models of sustainable business practices. They reference eight articles of research done on entrepreneurs of Moananuiākea, such as Fiji and Aotearoa, and how relationships to the land is central to these entrepreneurs. In referencing one of the eight articles that provide perspectives from Moananuiākea, the authors write the following statement:

“They explore how sustainability is understood and practiced by indigenous entrepreneurs and how this might be measured to more accurately reflect the centrality of land to Pacific peoples. They encourage us to see beyond the limitations of Pacific business and narrow conceptions of firm value, to the vital contributions these ‘culturally-embedded’ enterprises make to their families and communities” (Mika, 768)

This makes it very clear that relationship to land is central to the practices of Indigenous entrepreneurs of Moananuiākea because of the direct relationship that land has to familial ties to place and collective identity. Furthermore, it emphasizes that culturally-informed approaches and practices are what create value for the community as the community itself, including outsiders adopted into the community, is the target consumer.

For the Indigenous peoples of Moananuiākea, land and its proper management is important for two reasons: the first being the genealogical relationship that they have to the land and the second being that island life requires sustainable stewardship otherwise the population risks depleting and decimating its own resources. In “Indigenous

Entrepreneurship on Customary Lands in the Pacific: Measuring Sustainability,” published in the *Journal of Management & Organization* and written by Regina Scheyvens et. al, the authors discuss how customary lands, or those under stewardship of Indigenous communities, of the peoples of Moananuiākea serve as the foundation for business success for Indigenous entrepreneurs of Moananuiākea. Furthermore, they seek to look beyond definitions of business success as being limited merely to financial measures, such as profit maximization, and instead call for the implementation of more holistic indicators to be used to measure business success by accounting for the socio-cultural, environmental, and spiritual objectives that such entrepreneurial ventures take on. In the following statement, they elaborate on how the use of customary lands in business for Moananuiākea entrepreneurs are done so in alignment with culturally appropriate approaches:

“Throughout the Pacific, the values of the land are upheld by its people through cultural rituals and processes that honour the ancestors and physical and spiritual dimensions within the land. Departing from these values is believed to have negative consequences; stories abound of new developments on customary land that are understood to have failed because they did not progress in a culturally appropriate way . . . When Pacific Island entrepreneurs decide to pursue business plans based on customary land they thus tend to proceed cautiously to ensure that cultural protocols are respected” (Scheyvens, 777).

Customary lands are locations where sacred sites often exist, whether they be in the form of ancestral burials, temples, shrines, freshwater sources and other precious ecosystems that sustain non-human life that in turn sustain human life, or even a combination of these

aspects. When cultural values are upheld, development on customary lands, especially from foreign entities, is typically non-negotiable; this many times results in settler-State suppression of Indigenous sovereignty, pro-development marketing propaganda from mainstream media outlets coupled with pushing ideologies about Indigenous communities as being economically, socially, technologically, and intellectually backwards and unprogressive, and police and military protection of foreign corporate interests; this is many times made possible because of the ability that foreign corporate interests in having off-the-record and under-the-table bought off governmental officials (i.e. as politicians in government seats) or regents and chancellors of educational institutions, oftentimes later exposing conflicts of interests and corruption between corporate partners. The following statement by the authors helps to clarify how land is an asset in the context of Indigenous entrepreneurs of Moananuiākea:

“For many emerging entrepreneurs in the Pacific, customary land is their greatest asset upon which they can build a business, whether they are planning an ecotourism enterprise in the rainforest, a plantation producing coffee or adding value through making cosmetics out of virgin coconut oil produced on customary land. However, that land is never perceived only as an economic asset to them; if they use it for a business, they must do so in ways which respectfully contribute to the wider society” (Scheyvens, 778).

With land being an economic asset, an intangible asset under traditional Western business accounting definitions, it brings one to question: how does the dispossession of land from Indigenous peoples, such as in Moananuiākea, affect the potential for organizational

success? What settler colonialism, such as military occupations, engage in during the process of acquiring land from Indigenous peoples is the theft of an asset that has not been traded or exchanged through legally appropriate means (i.e. through legitimate treaties), whether at national or international levels. It is through these seizures of land that settler-states then exploit land for profit in the economic benefit of the settler-state rather than greater society; greater society must not ignore that Indigenous peoples are decision-makers. Such is the case of the Kanaka Maoli (indigenous Hawaiian) people and the Kingdom of the Hawaiian Islands (the Hawaiian Kingdom) and their political-economic relationship to the State of Hawai‘i and the United States; the State of Hawai‘i is a military occupational government of the United States that denies the political sovereignty of the Kanaka Maoli people and the Hawaiian Kingdom, thus making restoration of political and economic independence --- a primary reason as to why Kanaka Maoli take on entrepreneurial routes --- even more challenging.

As I will make clear in the next section of this paper, ‘āina, or land inclusive of freshwater sources, is the most important and central asset for Kanaka Maoli organizations because ‘āina represents the collective, and therefore the collective value. As such, in order to understand Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurship efforts, one must be familiar with the social, cultural economic, and political contexts that Kanaka Maoli, particularly in the Hawaiian Islands, navigate through.

## **Ka Wai Ola a Kāne (The Life-Giving Water of Kāne):**

### **An Introduction to Hawaiian Economic Values through Kanakanomics**

He hūewai ola ke kanaka na Kāne  
("Man is Kāne's living water gourd")  
Water is life and Kāne is the keeper of water  
- Ōlelo No'eau #598

Only through being familiar with the Kanaka Maoli epistemologies and spiritual relationship that Kanaka Maoli have to the 'āina is one then able to better understand Kanaka Maoli approaches to economic development, or what some may affectionately refer to as Kanakanomics. Kanakanomics seeks the restoration and proliferation of the ahupua'a economic system, a self-sufficient organizational unit system that follows indigenous, ancient Hawaiian resource and labor management models, coupled with innovative use of technology, and that is bounded by a mauka to makai (upland to sea) land division zoning; the mauka to makai zoning gives special attention to the flow of wai, or freshwater, from the upland to sea. Thus, the center of Kanakanomics is the connected notions of akua and the protection of wai, or freshwater, as the provision for wealth accumulation wherein the cultural conception of Kāne is the point where akua and wai conjoin for the functionality of Kanakanomics.

Akua is a foundational cornerstone within the Kanaka Maoli worldview. The term akua is many times translated to the concept of "god" or "goddess" along with "divine"

and “supernatural.” However, a much deeper understanding of akua relates to elemental embodiments of the ‘āina, such as wind, rain, the sun, the ocean, the mountains, the forest, etc., that surrounds the everyday life of Kanaka Maoli. Kāne, a significant figure in the indigenous spiritual traditions of the Hawaiian Islands, is a well-recognized akua having many stories and legends that are regionally-based or island-specific. In “An Ethnohistorical Study of Wao Kele o Puna, Moku o Puna, Hawai‘i Island,” Kelly Lehuakeapuna Uyoka et. al, provide an extensive ethnohistorical report that dives in into oral traditions, geographies, traditional land divisions and uses, and historical documents associated with the district of Puna on the island of Hawai‘i along with in-depth information about the Hawaiian pantheon in regards to each members social and environmental function in ancient Hawaiian worldview. The following is written in regards to the akua Kāne:

“Kāne: The ‘leading god among the great gods‘; a god of creation and the ancestor of chiefs and commoners; a god of sunlight, fresh water, and forests to whom no human sacrifices were made. He is a god of male power of procreation, irrigated agriculture, fishponds, and sorcery. His body forms include the emerged world, light, lightning, spring water (wai), the banana, sugarcane, bamboo, ‘awa, the ‘ama‘ama and āholehole fish, the rooster, and the pig . . . Kanaloa was his constant companion, but Kāne’s name always preceded . . . Fresh water is the manifestation of Kāne” (Uyoka et. al, 65-66)

Without delving into the mythologies associated with Kāne, this highlights Kāne’s social significance in the Kanaka Maoli worldview while also clarifies what elemental aspects are understood as representations of Kāne; one such manifestation important to the

arguments of this study are that of wai, or freshwater, because they play heavily into understanding the indigenous economy. Furthermore, it lends into how Kāne is important to the ahupua‘a system because of how an ahupua‘a is dependent on freshwater sources, irrigated agriculture, and fishponds which are associated with this particular akua. Therefore, further investigation of the understanding of wai, or freshwater, in the Kanaka Maoli perspective is needed before going in-depth into the ahupua‘a system and would prove useful in better understanding Kanakanomics.

As mentioned previously, wai is freshwater and is an elemental manifestation of Kāne, this being because wai is understood as the source of life. In *Sugar Water: Hawaii’s Plantation Ditches*, Carol Wilcox focuses on the sugar industry that produced one of two major agricultural products in the Hawaiian Kingdom whose plantations were owned, managed, and operated by white, American businessmen between 1856 to 1920. It elaborates on the economics and politics surrounding the industry that had been introduced by foreign American perspectives, such as the mismanagement of freshwater sources by these businessmen impacting the livelihood of the Kanaka Maoli people, and its use of Kanaka Maoli laborers along with immigrant labor from Japan, China, the Philippines, Portugal, Mexico, and Korea for the benefit of foreign, white-American economic interests entering into the Hawaiian Kingdom. Furthermore, it explains how this economy was crucial in participating in the illegal overthrow of the native government of the Hawaiian Kingdom. The following reference in the chapter “Land and

Water in the Kingdom of Hawai‘i” helps to begin a discussion on how wai is directly connected to wealth in the Hawaiian worldview by looking into the word waiwai:

“Water, which gave life to the food plants as well as to all vegetation, symbolized bounty for the Hawaiian gardener for it irrigated his staff of life --- taro. Therefore, the word for water reduplicated meant wealth in general, for a land or a people that had abundant water was wealthy. The word waiwai means wealth, prosperity, ownership, possession. Literally it is ‘water-water.’ A Hawaiian farmer who had all the water he needed for growing taro was indeed a prosperous man” (Wilcox, 71)

This reveals how wealth is perceived through the indigenous language of the Hawaiian Islands. In order for a family-unit, such as the ahupua‘a, to be wealthy or waiwai, it requires access to clean freshwater that is correctly managed by the customs of the indigenous population. Access to freshwater sources defines wealth precisely because wealth is measured by the ability to produce food for the populus not only to meet basic needs, but to create a surplus through abundance that is capable of supplying and sustaining the livelihoods of entire communities elsewhere. Recalling the spiritual implications of wai, it then elaborates on how spirituality must be considered when understanding Kanaka Maoli engaging in economic activity because of this concept of wealth. The author continues in elaborating on how wai is understood by then looking at the word kānāwai:

“The word kānāwai, or law, also tied back to water. Ka-na-wai is literally ‘belonging-to-the-waters.’ With farms along the water system upon which all depended, a farmer took as much as he required and then closed the inlet so that the next farmer could

get his share of water --- and so it went until all had the water they needed. This became a fixed thing, the taking of one's share and looking after his neighbor's rights as well, without greed or selfishness" (Wilcox, 71)

This makes it clear how wai in the Hawaiian Islands is an asset belonging to the Kanaka Maoli people and the Hawaiian Kingdom and lends into understanding that it must be properly managed under k<sup>ā</sup>n<sup>ā</sup>wai. It is an asset that requires communal access wherein the k<sup>ā</sup>n<sup>ā</sup>wai requires one to not take more than what is needed; this is a law not practiced through privatization that occurs by foreign water companies and thus results in deprivation to many families rather than contributing to the well-being of the collective unit being taken care of. Adherence to the k<sup>ā</sup>n<sup>ā</sup>wai that pertains to wai and its proper management can then be understood as reflecting similar values of corporate social responsibility, often defined by an organization conducting practices that are accountable to both the environment and the society, including the livelihoods of Indigenous peoples.

By being familiarized with the relationship between akua and wai through wai literally being K<sup>ā</sup>ne as well as wai being the basis for defining wealth, economics in the Hawaiian Islands therefore is unable to be separated from the islands' indigenous spiritualities; this is even more so true when learning how different akua are associated with other elements or natural resources along with the goods produced from them as well as different cultural professions along with the goods produced and services provided from those professions. In being grounded in these epistemologies, one has a better starting point to understanding the ahupua'a system, how it is structured, operated,

and managed, and subsequently then how it informs the management model and practices of Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs in Kanakanomics.

### **The Ahupua‘a System and Hawaiian Organizational Behavior**

An ahupua‘a is an organizational unit within a land division that encompasses land mauka to makai, from the mountains to the sea. Traditionally, an ahupua‘a contained all the necessary resources needed for the organizational unit to be self-sufficient. They relied on fresh water streams to be diverted into irrigated agricultural innovations known as lo‘i, or kalo (taro) patches that grow a traditional food staple of the Kanaka Maoli people, where the water is then re-diverted right back into the original stream in order to ensure accountability to the kānāwai. The ahupua‘a also includes the fishponds located at the seashore that provide another essential food source. Through the organizational behavior that occurred, the ahupua‘a system was able to supply the demand of the eight main islands that are populated, estimated to range between 250,000 to close to one million people; the higher end of this estimate can be compared to the amount of residents in the islands contemporarily (Pai & Smith, 13).

In order to mobilize the necessary labor needed to supply and sustain a large consumer base, the ahupua‘a has a sophisticated organizational structure with clearly delineated kuleana, or roles and responsibilities. In “Indigenous Management Models and the Protection of the Ahupua‘a,” Luciano Minerbi discusses the ahupua‘a system as providing a model for economic activity regarding assets such as land and water, the mobilization of labor, and the redistribution of the goods produced within it. The author

provides a case study of the restoration of three ahupua‘a systems from three different islands: Moloka‘i, Maui, and Hawai‘i. Furthermore, Minerbi elaborates on details about how cultural values are central to the management model.

The author writes the following about Kanaka Maoli approaches to management:

“Hawaiian management approaches are compatible with an island way to access the resources of the land and the sea, to permit an ‘ohana (extended family) and an aloha ‘āina (love of the land) based lifestyle in the rural areas where Hawaiian culture has endured, bypassed by the plantation and the ranching economy” (Luciano, 1).

When living on an island, a sustainable economy is one that is familiar with and can navigate through the limitations of island life and still create abundance. One must consider that the traditional economy of the Hawaiian Islands survived for generations and generations through trial, error, success and innovation that is rooted in island-specific knowledge and models that sustained the resources on the island; this is significant because the plantation, ranching, tourism, and military-based economies that have been imposed by American business interests in the Hawaiian Kingdom have proven to drastically damage, deplete, or restrict native access to the natural resources of the islands and such foreign economic practices have been able to do this within only a matter of about two centuries whereas the ahupua‘a system has proven to be sustainable for at least five centuries since the time of an ali‘i of Hawai‘i island, ‘Umi-a-Līloa, born in the late 15th century. Through the ‘ohana, or extended family, which is a large network within an ahupua‘a, the labor force is then provided to the organization; this then brings

one to ponder about how the ahupua‘a is organized? Luciano writes the following concerning this:

“The Hawaiian moku (islands) were divided in ancient times in large districts called mokuoloko (island divisions; inner areas), or ‘āpana (a piece) or ‘okana (portion), or kalana (released). The ahupua‘a (ahu (altar), pua‘a (pig)) was a smaller political subdivision used for the purpose of taxation or sharecropping among the ali‘i ‘ai ahupua‘a (the chiefs who eat the ahupua‘a) and the maka‘āinana (commoners, the eyes of the land), the people residing in the district and taking care of the land. The ahupua‘a and its water was managed by the konohiki (the land agent of the chief). Ideally the ahupua‘a were wedge-shaped districts dividing the island radially and running from the upland to the ocean” (Luciano, 2).

Within this model, the ali‘i nui (great chief) could be equated to a general manager, the ali‘i ‘ai ahupua‘a as assistant managers, the konohiki as fulfilling supervisory roles, and the maka‘āinana as the large labor force that reflects the majority of the organization. This is a formation of the ‘ohana and speaks to how it operates as a management model because of the display of a management hierarchy, the level of kuleana (responsibility) pertaining to each duty, and that decision-making power within the organization functions through a governing body; however, as can be understood through the term maka‘āinana, not only as “commoner” but as “eyes of the land,” the higher managerial positions are accountable to the retention, work satisfaction, and livelihood of this work force. This accountability also pertains to the fair redistribution of goods within the organization, as can be compared to the dividends distributed on a share of a stock in

recalling how the entire community has a share of the wai, or freshwater, that is used to produce the goods of food.

The cultural value associated with sharing resources is what informs exchange within the ahupua‘a model; therefore, redistribution deserves attention. In the twelfth chapter of *Exchange Systems in Prehistory*, “A Reappraisal of Redistribution” Timothy K. Earle and Jonathan E. Ericson write about redistribution in the context of agricultural economy informed by indigenous Hawaiian epistemology regarding chiefdom-based organizational structuring. The authors provide a four-part typology of redistribution by breaking it down into the four following sections: 1) leveling mechanisms which serve to prevent wealth concentration to a small segment of the collective, 2) householding which functions to ensure that the labor force can use the goods that itself produces, 3) share-out that works to provide that everyone that participated in the labor receives their fair share, and 4) mobilization which calls for the collection of products and services to groups other than the main labor force that produced the goods (Earle & Ericson, 215). The authors write the following about when redistribution occurs:

“Redistribution in Hawaii involved the massive mobilization of goods at periodic ceremonial collections directed by the elite hierarchy. The most striking collections were associated with the annual makahiki ceremonies. During this ceremonial period, the god Lono, represented as a stick figure was sent on tour around the islands. At each ahupua‘a, the god would halt and receive the obligatory offerings from the local population” (Earle, 225).

These periodic ceremonial collections are synonymous with the processes of taxation seasons. The annual Makahiki season begins with the rise of the Makali‘i (Pleiades constellation) usually in between October and November through February. The akua Lonoikamakahiki (Lono-of-the-Makahiki) therein represented this taxation period and the subsequent redistribution of the products within not only a single ahupua‘a on an island, but throughout the entire island under the managers of ali‘i (chiefs) and kahuna (priests). As for further accountability on the part of these managers, they are also required to reinvest into the community. This can be understood in the following reference:

“ . . . the Hawaiian elites were under obligations of generosity that required them to support a destitute population and aid in reconstruction [and] capital investment in irrigation systems and fishponds appears to have significantly increased the efficiency of agricultural production in Hawaii” (Earle, 226).

Through capital investment into the irrigation systems and fishponds, those in higher positions of power then reinvested into the ability of the ‘āina in being able to produce sustenance to its optimal capacities that in turn could care for the collective organization. Critical to aiding in reconstruction on their part as managers means themselves contributing to and participating in what may be deemed as “unskilled labor” by Western standard, such as physical labor, in order to not only accomplish the task faster, but lift some of the burden off of the maka‘āina, or labor force, that literally feeds the collective. This lends into considering how else does accountability from higher level management to the main labor force manifest within Hawaiian organizational behavior?

Thus far, the ahupua‘a system has been discussed only up through the level of ali‘i nui of an island, conceptualized as equivalent to a general manager. What has yet to be referenced is the role of Mo‘ī whom serves a higher level kuleana, or responsibility, than that of ali‘i nui yet is still required to be accountable to a governing council in strategic decision-making. Mo‘ī is a term used to describe the sovereign ruler and thus has a function in Kanaka Maoli organizational structuring in the islands. In *Hawaiian Antiquities: (Moolelo Hawaii)*, Kanaka Maoli scholar and historian David Malo (1793-1853) provides written insight to indigenous Hawaiian cultural formations prior to and after the introduction of Christianity to the Hawaiian Islands in 1819 by American missionaries. Though influenced by the predation of American Christianity in the Hawaiian Islands, Malo’s upbringing was that of the kapu system --- a system of religious taboos that pertained to the management and sustainability of the islands’ natural resources --- allowing for him to be able to share knowledge about the worldviews existing in the Hawaiian Islands prior to contact by Captain James Cook that proves useful for this study. In Chapter 38, a list of one-hundred and five points are made regarding the civil polity of the ‘āina in the Hawaiian Islands prior to the date of contact by Captain James Cook. Of these one-hundred and five points, four have been identified as the most relevant to the discussion of this study as providing a blueprint for Kanaka Maoli organizational structuring that lends to be useful, especially in considering how a Mo‘ī functions similar to the role of a corporate executive officer of an organization. The four points are the following:

“1. The word kalaimoku related to the civil polity, or government, of the land. The government was supposed to have one body (kino). As the body of a [person] is one, provided with a head, with hands, feet, and numerous smaller members, so the government has many parts, but one organization (Malo, 248)

This establishes that (1) the kino, or governing body, has many roles that must be fulfilled and that each role is of equivalent importance in the functioning of the organization as a collective and (2) that as a governing body, it is fundamentally collectively responsible for the well-being of ‘aina, or land.

“2. The corporate body of the government was the whole nation, including the common people and chiefs under the king . . . The king was the real head of the government; the chiefs below the king the shoulders and chest. The priest of the king’s idol was the right hand, the minister of interior (kanaka kalaimoku) the left hand of the government. This was the theory on which the ancients worked” (Malo, 248).

This establishes that as a corporate body, there is a hierarchy of leadership, decision-making, and management, but that even the common people are a component of that corporate body and therefore have a rightful place in the decision-making processes within the context of their kuleana.

3. The soldiery were the right foot of the government, while farmers and fishermen were the left foot. The people who performed the miscellaneous offices represented the fingers and toes. The unskilled and ignorant mass of people were sometimes termed hu, sometimes makaainana. (Malo, 249)

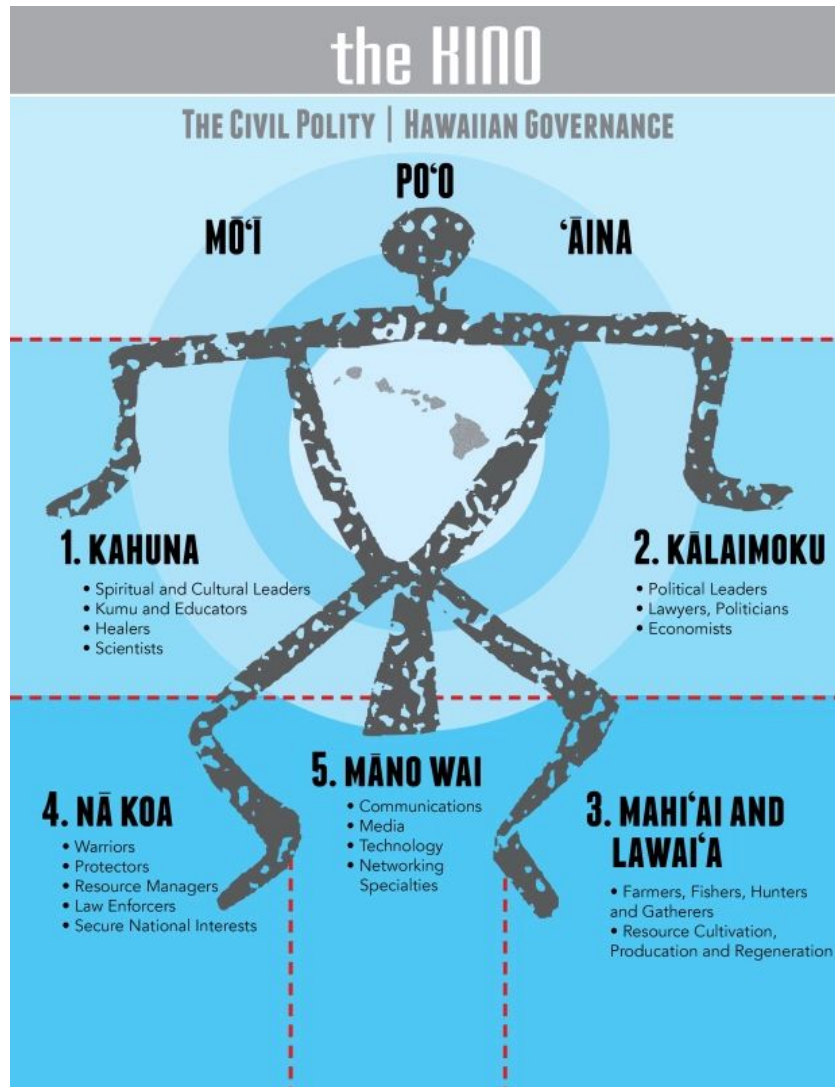
...

67. It is the king's duty to seek the welfare of the common people, because they constitute the body of the politic. Many kings have been put to death by the people because of their oppression of the makaainana. (Malo, 258)

When put in context with each other, these points reveal several things. First, those understood as “unskilled labourers” play a large role in the organization. This is by virtue of that (1) without the “unskilled labourers”, the organization would be lacking in necessary roles that need to be fulfilled and (2) the fact that they ‘constitute the body of the politic’ and therefore the working body makes up the largest sector of the organization. Secondly, it establishes the understanding that there is an ethical standard that must be upheld regarding the treatment of this sector by higher level management and that, although there is a hierarchy regarding leadership and decision-making of the body as a whole, those of higher level management are inherently required to be accountable first and foremost to the well-being of this sector rather than centering the sole benefit of those in higher positions; failure to care for the welfare of this sector results in the removal of leadership from the privileges of positions of higher level management reflective of being “put to death”. To be accountable to the maka‘āinana requires higher management to therefore be accountable to ‘āina and simultaneously, failure to be accountable to ‘āina is the failure to be accountable to maka‘āinana; therefore, failure to do so coincides with the failure of fulfilling kuleana by those

in such a position and subsequently would also call for the removal of higher management from that position under this framework.

From this ‘ike kupuna, or ancestral knowledge, facilitated by David Malo, what is made possible is a blueprint for Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs to structure an organization using basic understandings that balances centralized management along with collective leadership of the most important asset of the organization: ‘āina. The culmination of this framework is visually represented by “The Kino,” a roadmap created by ‘Aha Aloha ‘Āina and that is derived from Malo’s description of a governing body that can be used to visually understand how an organization or corporate entity operates as a single body with each part playing an equally important role for the success of the whole organization, as seen in **Figure 1**.



**Figure 1:** *The Kino - According to David Malo's description of Civil Polity - Hawaiian Antiquities - Chapter 38 ('Aha Aloha 'Aina)*

Even with this visual representation, it again highlights the role and importance of 'aina in Kanaka Maoli-led organizations through the 'Aina (land) and Mo'i (sovereign) both composing the Po'o (head) of the Kino (body).

Given The Kino as outlined by David Malo, the question that arises is: In the Kanaka Maoli perspective, what are qualities necessary for fulfilling the kuleana of Mo‘ī for management of the collective organization? Traditionally, such a kuleana is two-fold where one-part was reliant on genealogical inheritance and succession and the second-part required appropriate training and visionary leadership. Alohalani Housman provides research in “Guiding Principles of Indigenous Leadership from a Hawaiian Perspective” regarding how leadership is defined within a Kanaka Maoli epistemology. This source elaborates primarily on Hawaiian leadership with regards to canoe voyaging, Kamehameha ‘Ekahi, and the Hawaiian language revitalization movement. From these three examples, the author provides general principles and values associated with Hawaiian notions of leadership pertaining to cultural empowerment, directing a collective towards a common goal, and uplifting those in one’s charge and thus can be related to leadership qualities that are necessary for organizational success. Housman writes:

“The items showed that the exemplary Hawaiian leader acknowledges the Hawaiian culture as the source of leadership. Additionally, the exemplary Hawaiian leader must be able to apply cultural values in leadership activities and understand the balance of relationships that support a thriving community for future generations. These exemplary Hawaiians also are leaders who are guided by a higher power. Finally, exemplary Hawaiian leaders must exhibit a personal strength and aptitude for leadership” (Housman, 50).

For leadership to be viewed as exemplary in the Hawaiian Islands, it is clear that Hawaiian culture must be acknowledged, respected, supported, and participated in as a practice of life and not a practice of profit; this is because the indigenous culture is the host culture and maintains specific knowledge about the ‘āina to continue its sustainable management that can provide for the collective. On the point of being “guided by a higher power,” this even relates back to ‘āina, such as can be understood by the proverb *He ali ‘i ka ‘āina, he kauwā ke kanaka* (The land is chief, human is the servant) which is a proverb that humbles even the person in the highest ranking position of management.

In “The Development of An Inventory of Exemplary Hawaiian Leadership Behaviors,” Daniel K. Nāho‘opi‘i and Guy H. Kaulukukui behaviors that may be used to define exceptional Hawaiian leadership from indigenous cultural perspectives. It provides four categories that are used to describe exemplary Hawaiian leadership: 1) ka ‘ike (source of knowledge, intellect, and wisdom), 2) ka mana (authority through responsible behavior), 3) ke akua (Hawaiian worldview and spirituality) 4) ke kanaka (personal aptitude). They write the following:

“Research on exemplary leadership behaviors based on Hawaiian cultural values must be viewed through the filter of Hawaiian knowledge systems” (Kaulukukui & Nāho‘opi‘i, 100).

This again highlights the need to understand context and centering Indigenous perspectives in the formation of Indigenous organizations. The authors conducted a

pilot-test survey to create the Inventory of Exemplary Hawaiian Leadership Behaviors.

From the data they collected, they found the following:

“It was strongly suspected that aloha may not actually be a behavior but instead is a way of life, an intangible attribute, deeply embedded in the being of a Hawaiian leader.

Additionally, it was believed that aloha actually underlies all behaviors of an exemplary Hawaiian leader. In this case, aloha is more a ‘why’ or ‘how’ and not a ‘what.’ That is to say, aloha captures why or how one does something rather than what one does”

(Kaulukukui & Nāho‘opi‘i, 129)

This is especially important as it relates how aloha, a deeply rooted cultural concept that has been exploited and profited off by foreign businesses, informs what defines leadership in Kanaka Maoli organization and by virtue informs the organizational body. This aloha connects back to how Malo describes how those in positions that are higher management in the civil polity are required to be accountable to seeking the welfare of the maka‘āinana (the common people and labourers that constitute the body of the politic) and by virtue, the ‘āina; hence the importance of aloha ‘āina, or love of the land, as a central organizational value needed for restoring the ahupua‘a system and at the forefront of Kanakanomics.

By being familiar with these foundational organizational behaviors of the ahupua‘a system, one is then capable of better understanding the cultural foundations that inform and provide a source of family-centered organizational practices of contemporary Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs as far as operations and networking are concerned.

### **Kanak-tions: Kanaka Maoli Entrepreneurship and Networking**

Though not particularly plentiful, there has been previous research done on Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs. However, an important limitation in this project is that the works that I analyze have not been by conducted by Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs or Kanaka Maoli scholars in general; with that, previous research has not been done by those who have an insider cultural perspective or lived experience needed to provide in depth knowledge and interpretations of Kanaka Maoli epistemologies of organizational behavior, entrepreneurship, and networking.

In “Understanding Indigenous Entrepreneurship: A Case Study Analysis,” Dennis Foley writes extensively in his Doctorate’s thesis about the field of Indigenous entrepreneurship. He provides research primarily on Australia and Moananuiākea, with a great amount of attention given to the Hawaiian Islands and the Kanaka Maoli people. At the time of publishing in 2004, Foley used United States census figures from 1997 to show the percentage of Kanaka Maoli owned firms in the Hawaiian Islands. Per the data provided, 0.931029% of the firms in the Hawaiian Islands were actually owned by the Kanaka Maoli people. Foley also points out a limitation of the data in that the United States census uses racist blood quantum logics that only acknowledges Kanaka Maoli who are of ‘50% or more of Hawaiian ancestry’ (Foley, 27). With less than 1% of firms in the Hawaiian Islands being owned by the genealogical descendants of the land per these definitions as of 1997, it highlights the dire need for Kanaka Maoli to find ways out

of being dominated under forced economic dependency; thus an increase in entrepreneurship is one such pathway per the argument of Foley's work..

Recalling insight from "Perspectives on indigenous entrepreneurship, innovation and enterprise" that entrepreneurship is contextual, Foley's work builds on this as his writing attempts to understand what business success means for a Kanaka Maoli entrepreneur. He writes:

"... Previous research on Native Hawaiians determined that success for the Native Hawaiian was restricted to objective quantitative measures associated with financial statements. Success was simply the financial position of an entrepreneur rather than an attitude or value. Previous research however revealed that Hawaiian entrepreneurs considered their personal satisfaction (psychic and social wealth) of providing employment for other Hawaiians as a significant reward for their entrepreneurial efforts, which could be defined as success" (Foley, 29)

This identifies that previous research done has primarily been based on narrow definitions of business success, while also offers different ways of understanding success moving forward; in this way and as discussed previously, it reminds us of the importance of context. For Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs, self-actualization is not necessarily discovered through maximizing profit for the individual self or select few; rather, it can be realized by increasing one's ability to provide for a collective. In being able to provide for one's community, it relieves the need of the community being dependent on entities and institutions that are not actually part of the community. This includes those that do not genuinely care for the welfare of the Kanaka Maoli people but rather only seek to

profit off them by taking advantage of their assets, such as the ‘āina and even intellectual properties, such as cultural knowledge.

As far as the Kanaka Maoli participants in Foley’s research are concerned, there were a total of twenty-five entrepreneurs interviewed, all of whom were in different industry ventures. He writes the following conclusion about the interviews with Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs:

“These interviews confirmed that Native Hawaiian entrepreneurs appear to seek self-determination through economic independence, via their success in small business undertakings, to overcome a societal stereotype that they are in general welfare dependent” (Foley, 29)

This highlights the motive for Kanaka Maoli to take on entrepreneurial routes: self-determination through economic independence. The ability to be independent is a struggle that many Indigenous peoples seek, and the Kanaka Maoli people have been struggling for restoration of political and economic independence since the beginning of the illegal military occupation of the Kingdom of the Hawaiian Islands (the Hawaiian Kingdom) by the United States that began 1893 and the rapid expansion of United States military corporatism in the Hawaiian Kingdom and throughout Moananuiākea. With the societal stereotype that is mentioned, it is key to understand that what has made Kanaka Maoli people ‘welfare dependent’ is the product of the United States military occupation through the dispossession, displacement, and damaging of native welfare assets, or the ‘āina, via United States corporate military operations that are hidden by tourism

marketing. In interviewing the earlier mentioned twenty-five Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs, Foley was given a testimony by one of the participants that provides insightful knowledge about the intersections of business, culture, kinship, and self-determination within the context of Kanaka Maoli epistemology:

“ . . . small business is our way, the Hawaiian what I call Hawaiian Economic Sovereignty, this is our way of getting away from welfare and the negative pot of this. [i.e. the stereotyping, the negativity towards Hawaiian people] Business is our way of providing and living. It does not have to be profit driven, it should be product driven, profit comes late and can be measured in so many ways. It’s about building for the community, your extended family . . . This business is my family, it is Hawaiian Economic Sovereignty . . . To be able to share to give to the less fortunate to help others, and they in turn will help you when you need it. This is Hawaiian. Sharing, giving and receiving gift in return, this is Hawaiian” (Foley, 173).

What this highlights is the importance that sovereignty plays for Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs and their relationship to the larger community; through sovereignty, the communities’ dependency on United States government welfare programs will naturally decrease. Furthermore, this testimony emphasizes the redistribution and sharing of wealth and resources to provide for the community, or *lāhui*, and thus tending to the welfare of the people as a foundational cultural value. A key element that this testimony hints to is that the extended family sphere and *lāhui* is therefore a central aspect to the functionality of Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurship by way of this element being embedded in the networking process.

Recalling the ahupua‘a system and how it functions through the ‘ohana, or extended family, for the exchange of resources, Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs’ understanding of building large networks would prove to be an interesting point of discussion. In "Networking and Culture in Entrepreneurship," published in the *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development* journal, Kim Kylvan and Dennis Foley conducted a comparative case study on the role that culture plays in entrepreneurial networking, focusing on entrepreneurs from three different cultures: Danish entrepreneurs, Aboriginal Australian entrepreneurs, and Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs. Their research done on Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs’ perspectives of networking, or launaka‘i, provides insight as to how organizational development occurs through progressive, cross-cultural relationships which in turn allows for international relationships to be established or strengthened with Indigenous peoples and displaced, migrant peoples globally. They write the following about Kanaka Maoli perception of networking and establishing professional relationships:

“Native Hawaiian entrepreneurs value networking and perceive networking skills as an essential business attribute. The development and utilisation of relationships with other organizations provides many opportunities for Hawaiian entrepreneurs to build industry credibility in addition to access to supplier and customer channels. They have been able to maintain strong multicultural networks that are exceedingly important in their business pursuits, not only within the Hawaiian community, but also within other minority community networks. Long-term associations with other respected ethnic minorities have

been invaluable in business interaction providing market advantages as these associations allow entrepreneurs to access other markets” (Klyver & Foley, 9)

This makes it clear that for Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs, relationship building is fundamental and that approaches to building networks are not limited solely to Kanaka Maoli-to-Kanaka Maoli relationships but rather are extended to different ethnic groups as well. The multicultural networks have greatly been influenced by the history of immigration to the Kingdom of the Hawaiian Islands during the mid-1800s by immigrants from several countries, historically from Japan, China, the Philippines, Korea, Portugal, and Mexico, who worked alongside Kanaka Maoli on white American-owned sugar and pineapple plantations prior to the illegal military occupation of the islands by the United States that began in 1893. Many descendants of this wave of immigrants who continue to reside in the Hawaiian Islands understand this history and have a sense of collective struggle, which may not necessarily be true for newer waves of immigration that have occurred after the occupation began whom do not have the generational knowledge or historical context of their ancestors laboring alongside Kanaka Maoli under plantation conditions in the traditional homeland of the Kanaka Maoli people. It is from this understanding that Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs are willing to do business and build relationships with non-Kanaka Maoli groups; however, it is important to keep in mind that this only holds true so long as the indigenous sovereignty and the indigenous cultural integrity of the Hawaiian Islands is respected, uplifted, and maintained.

In their research, they look at the role of ‘ohana, or family, in its cultural understanding and its functions as a medium for networking and therefore its role in business and organizational behavior. The authors write the following regarding how perspectives to network building is really a process that is embedded into ‘ohana building:

“Native Hawaiian entrepreneurs regard the family as the core basis of their culture. As mentioned previously, business activities are seen as an extension of family and vice versa. Family is more than just blood connections, it also includes connections with people from other races whose business philosophy becomes inculturated within a Hawaiian family network concept” (Klyver & Foley, 12)

A critical point in their findings that needs emphasis is how ‘ohana as family and community is not limited solely to Kanaka Maoli ethnic identity; rather, ‘ohana extends to non-Kanaka Maoli groups and thus as a central aspect to networking, the concept of ‘ohana has the capacity to break down barriers between racial groups in the process of cross-organizational activities, exchanges, and education on historic race relations. However, again, it requires an understanding of relationship building, consent, respect, accountability, and corporate social responsibility to the ‘āina --- and therefore the Kanaka Maoli people --- on the part of new entrants into the ‘ohana. Another finding that they found in their study concerns the connections that business networks and ‘ohana networks have for Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs. They write the following:

“The Hawaiian entrepreneurs also have numerous business relations. An important difference to the Danish entrepreneurs is the overlap of business networks and family

networks that the Hawaiian entrepreneur maintains. Consequencely, the Hawaiian entrepreneurs have stronger and often personal relationships with their business partners” (Klyver & Foley, 13)

With Klyvan and Foley’s work, it is clear that cultural values cannot be separated from Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurship and organizational development. Furthermore, it shows that the maintenance of Kanaka Maoli culture, epistemology, leadership, and sovereignty are central in any pathways for building cross-cultural and international relationships in relation to the context of the economy of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

Approaches to networking for Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs can be seen as being connected to the cultural foundation set forth through how the ahupua‘a system functions and operates. Through the concept of ‘ohana, these networks expand and are capable of including those who are not Kanaka Maoli as well. With this, it shows that the indigenous culture of the Hawaiian islands is one that has the potential to inform the organizational behavior, management models, and business practices globally in ways that understand the importance of collective welfare. Thus, the ahupua‘a management system under Kanakanomics is a form of Hawaiian economic sovereignty of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

### **Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu: A Case Study**

The Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu provides an example in which the theories discussed in this paper have been implemented and manifested as an Kanaka Maoli-led startup organization. Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu, located at the intersection of Pu‘uhululu and the “Maunakea Access Road”, was established on July 13, 2019 as an approximately

five-acre pu‘uhonua, or place of refuge, in order to continue the indigenous stewardship and management of Maunakea. Maunakea is considered a sacred place to the Kanaka Maoli people and is a place whose customary stewardship is under the purview of the mo‘o Kāne, or the genealogical priesthood of the akua Kāne, as ‘āina that functions as a burial site, a space of indigenous Hawaiian astronomical knowledge production and practice, and a source that provides freshwater to many districts and ahupua‘a on Hawai‘i island via natural aquifers and waterways. Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu was established as a response to addressing the needs of the community in the face of the second attempted construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) project spearheaded by the University of California which is supported by international corporate partnerships. The TMT has been proposed at Maunakea, Hawai‘i without the *free, prior, and informed consent* of the Kanaka Maoli people and the government of the Hawaiian Kingdom; having not received *free, prior, and informed consent*, a process required as outlined by Articles 10, 11, 19, 28, and 29 under international law and through the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (United Nations), TMT and corporate partners have not engaged in any legitimate economic exchanges or partnerships with the Kanaka Maoli people and the government of the Hawaiian Kingdom yet has attempted to push through with militarized force through the foreign State of Hawai‘i government. As a place of refuge, the Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu organizational purpose is to ensure the protection of Maunakea from further telescope development, and therefore perpetuate indigenous-led and culturally appropriate methods and models of managing ‘āina. Having

been established with the support of the Royal Order of Kamehameha 'Ekahi in order to serve the needs of the kia'i (protectors) in the process of protecting Maunakea from the TMT or any other telescope developments, it provided a space where political-economic sovereignty and self-determination could be practiced by addressing the following needs: residence for asylum-seekers and kia'i (protectors) by providing refuge, educational services, health and wellness services, and food services.

In order to support its operations, the Pu'uhonua o Pu'uhuluhulu participated in a traditional indigenous Hawaiian model of economic exchange wherein a large network of communities shared resources as an 'ohana unit rather than relying on sales to generate revenue to balance out organizational expenditures; as such, this became a reflection of the ahupua'a system. The main sources that assisted in reducing the financial burden of the organization came through three main avenues: partnerships with non-profit organizations that would provide funding as charity, local families that would pay out of pocket and donate, and volunteer labor. Through the partnerships with two core organizations, the Hawai'i Unity and Liberation Institute (HULI) and Ka Hawaiian-Environmental Alliance (KAHEA), fundraising campaigns were taken on in order to provide ample financial support that would be able cover the costs of major expenses which in turn could support the constant operation of the pu'uhonua. Expenses predominantly involved the rental and cleaning of twenty-nine portable toilets, refilling propane tanks in order to accommodate for extreme cold weather conditions, grey water transportation, and van rentals used for picking up supplies and transporting workers.

Donations typically consisted of food, gas cards, clothing, tents, tarps, and toiletries and other basic living necessities; as a result of the donations, this also stimulated economic exchange with respective businesses that donated items had previously been purchased from, including both locally-owned business and franchise businesses.

At any given time, Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu would be serving numbers that could reach up to 3,000 people in a single day, a population comprised of Kanaka Maoli, non-Kanaka Maoli people that are local to the island, or international guests visiting from the continental United States or international guests visiting from different countries around the world. Through this organization, there was a stimulation of the economy of the State of Hawai‘i via the tourism and travel industry due to the increase of flights inter-island as well as from foreign countries by guests specifically coming to support Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu as an organization in the Hawaiian Kingdom. In order to effectively engage and handle this amount of people, several hui, or departments, collectively composed of a minimum of fifty volunteers total had been established with their own set of functions wherein some of those hui did not require much technical skills, specialized knowledge, or extensive training sessions (including academic degrees) and thereby allowed for the opportunity to have single-day or week-long volunteers to provide additional operational support to the core, long-term volunteers. Those hui were the following:

*‘Aha Hui* conducted three, hour-and-half ritual ceremonies daily at morning,

noon, and evening for the community in order to provide spiritual education, strengthen cultural understandings about Maunakea, and assist in strengthening community relations. This also included some members of this hui that would travel inter-island and internationally to the United States to teach the protocols for the ceremonies so that supporters in other locations could participate far away as well as if they visited.

*Event Planning Hui* planned for special events and entertainment, including special visits from well-known celebrities, movie stars, music artists, and other public influencers.

*Hale Ho 'olako Hui* took inventory, organized, and distributed donated, non-food items to ensure that everyone staying long-term had access to tents, warm clothes, toiletries, and other basic necessities.

*Kanaka Rangers Hui* assisted with scheduled tours of geographical landmarks, mechanical and repair services, initiated reforestation efforts, and provided additional operation support to the Kapu Aloha Hui.

*Kapu Aloha Hui* ensured that all rules, regulations, and the code of conduct were adhered to in order to maintain everyone's security through a community-led safety initiative within the pu'uhonua by discontinuing dependence on external police agencies, such as county and state police institutions.

*Kitchen Hui* kept inventory of all donated food items, prepared three free meals

each day to meet daily demand to feed the pu‘uhonua, including those who may only come to visit for a short period of time in the day, and also took care of clean-up.

*Kupuna Hui* was a council of elders that provided knowledge about the geographical area along with guidance, mentorship, and leadership development for the pu‘uhonua.

*Legal Observers Hui* provided legal assistance in the event of arrests of residents by external, foreign state agencies such as State of Hawai‘i county and state police or the United States national guard.

*Logistics Hui* included volunteers from the information booth that handled monetary donations, assisted first-time visitors in becoming acquainted with the mission of Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu through orientations, and coordinated transportation needs by vehicle for supply pick-up and kia‘i travel.

*Mauna Medics Hui* included licensed medical practitioners, including doctors and nurses, as well as lā‘au lapa‘au (traditional herbal healing) practitioners that were able to provide free medical and health services as well as distribute related supplies.

*Media Hui* updated the organization's official website and social media platforms, primarily on Instagram and Facebook, to market events, send out updates and notifications, stream press conferences, create short films, and provide

a livestream for the ritual ceremonies conducted by the ‘Aha Hui in order to reach a global audience. This hui exhibited an innovative use of information technology for marketing purposes. Besides using the official Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu media accounts, the organization also partnered with other media, including Kāko‘o Haleakala and Kanaeokana.

*‘Opala Hui* handled the organization’s waste products for recycling and trash in order to ensure that the organization remained committed to environmentally conscious decisions regarding waste disposal.

*Pu‘uhuluhulu University Hui* had the responsibility of contacting and scheduling university professors, cultural practitioners, and carriers of different specialized knowledge to provide tuition-free academic and non-academic classes, lectures, and workshops at the pu‘uhonua to participants of varying ages and backgrounds.

With the formation of these hui, what occurred is an organizational structure that reflected early stages of the formation of The Kino civil polity presented by David Malo. For Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu, the specific duties for the members of each hui were outlined in order to assist in operational functionality and efficiency by allowing individuals to discover their individual kuleana as a contribution to the collective, organizational body. As far as conceptualizations of entrepreneurship are concerned, the Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu pushed back on individualistic frameworks and profit maximization-focused approaches that are typical of traditional Western understandings

of entrepreneurship while maintained aspects of Western definitions of entrepreneurship that highlight the use of ingenuity and innovation in the process of organizational development and operations. This ingenuity and innovation was capable of surfacing through the various skills, knowledge, and capabilities that each individual (whether holding a degree or not) of the organization was able to contribute to the collective with limited resources along with the use of 'ike Hawai'i, or traditional Hawaiian knowledges, being applied to a modern organizational and economic context.

Through the innovative use of technology, Pu'uhonua o Pu'uhuluhulu was able to reach a global audience to gain support for its mission, evidenced by the view counts that can be seen on many of the saved livestream videos found on the various media platforms. Through the back and forth dealings and negotiations with the State of Hawai'i government officials, kia'i and Hawaiian Kingdom subjects managed to hold space for several months in an effort to protect Maunakea from further telescope development while providing an example of sustainable and collectivist economic practice and organizational structure. In the face of the global COVID-19 pandemic that influenced the closures of many organizations in the islands, in the United States, and in other countries coupled with the ambiguous communications in December 2019 from State of Hawai'i government officials that TMT 'would not be constructing anytime soon', Pu'uhonua o Pu'uhuluhulu released a press statement on its official media pages delivered by the Royal Order of Kamehameha 'Ekahi on March 25, 2020. Included in that press statement was the following description:

“Kapu ke ola iā Kāne. All life is sacred to Kāne. There is no imminent threat posed by the TMT and there is an imminent threat posed by COVID-19. Therefore we’ve made the decision to pack up and come off of the mauna. We will return if and when the TMT or anything else attempts to desecrate Maunakea.

It is exactly 5 years from the original mobilization on Maunakea in 2015 and thanks to you, e ka lāhui ē, we have yet again protected our Mauna. We love you. Stay safe, stay healthy. Focus on protecting your ‘ohana and the community from the current threat we face. E ola ka hā loa o ka lāhui Hawai‘i. E ola” (Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu Maunakea).

Recalling definitions of organizational success not being limited solely to measuring the ability to maximize profits, it is arguable that Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu, although discontinuing providing its services as the global COVID-19 rose, achieved organizational success. This is based on its ability to maintain its mission to protect Maunakea from desecration that would be caused by the construction of the TMT or other telescope developments on Maunakea. Additionally, it was able to do so without making a single sale and by relying instead on Kanakanomics, a form of self-determination and economic exchange that focused on the ahupua‘a management system of ‘ohana sharing resources. Furthermore, it was made clear that Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu is prepared to continue providing its services in the event that TMT or any other desecrating developments try to push forward on Maunakea.

During the May 2020 University of California Board of Regents meetings, University of California student organizers had exposed University of California financial

information that had been acquired on May 1, 2020 through a chain of emails with the University of California Office of the President (UCOP) Public Records Office via the California Public Records Act #20-2857 regarding the University's investments into TMT. This had occurred after over a year of the University withholding information that students had requested. The Act showed that the University of California had contributed \$10 million, of which \$5 million was from what were ambiguously defined as "UC own funds," to TMT in February 2020 during the rise of the global COVID-19 pandemic in addition to the amounts previously contributed in prior years, totaling in \$30,140,897 that had been invested since October 2016 under the same ambiguity of the "UC own funds" (May 20th: #UCDivestTMT Public Records Request Press Release). After this information had been made public, it is likely that Pu'uhonua o Pu'uhuluhulu is indeed prepared to resume providing its services to continue being successful in its organizational purpose with the support of a global audience in the event that TMT tries to attempt construction again.

### **Limitations**

Because of the limited amount of research that has been done on the fields of Indigenous entrepreneurship, Indigenous entrepreneurship in Moananuiākea, and Kanaka Maoli entrepreneurs, it calls for further research needing to be done and made available to a broader audience. My work is only an addition to these topics from the perspective of Kanaka Maoli epistemologies and the needs pertaining to the national lands of the Hawaiian Kingdom. As stated previously, Indigenous communities have much to offer to

the global society, especially in terms of providing examples of sustainable practices of doing business and economy. With this, the limitations of my work bring attention to the necessity that those interested in the fields of entrepreneurship, whether academic or non-academic, should consider partnering with Indigenous communities to conduct more research and implementations of economic strategies that are derived from Indigenous, decolonial perspectives and relationships to land.

### **Conclusion**

With the rise of the global COVID-19 pandemic which crippled dominating, capitalistic, settler-colonial economies into recession, it brought up questions about how to revive such economies. In the case of the Hawaiian Kingdom, though non-essential travel into the islands (i.e. tourism and military training) became restricted to an extent, many Hawaiian Kingdom subjects did not experience the same kind of fear in terms of uncertainty about how to go about reviving the capitalistic economy of an occupational government. This is because the pandemic proved the unsustainability of the dependence on tourism and military for economic survival in the Hawaiian islands. Though many families had jobs in the tourism industry and were then left without those day-to-day scenes, many saw the benefits for the environment and the 'āina from the extreme decrease of tourists wherein many endemic species were able to proliferate in ways that have not been seen for several generations. Many families now having more time to do so, responded to the impacts of the economic crisis faced by the State of Hawai'i and the United State by returning to cultivating the land as their ancestors once did and began

processes to restore the traditional functionality of their ahupua‘a. This resulted in a form of exchange that did not rely on tourism or the United States military in order to provide for the economic survival of a collective. Instead, it recentered environmental sustainability and relationships to the ‘āina through the sovereign management of the national lands and resources of the Kingdom of the Hawaiian Islands (Hawaiian Kingdom) via Kanakanomics.

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