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Epidemics and Culture in Hawai‘i, 1778–1840

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

Seth David Archer

August 2015

Dissertation Committee:

Dr. Steven W. Hackel, Chairperson

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The Dissertation of Seth David Archer is approved:

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Epidemics and Culture in Hawai‘i, 1778–1840

by

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Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Program in History
University of California, Riverside, August 2015
Dr. Steven W. Hackel, Chairperson

This dissertation traces the cultural impact of introduced infectious disease in Hawai‘i from the arrival of Europeans to 1840. Colonialism in Hawai‘i began with challenges to Islander health, and I argue that health remained the national crisis of the Hawaiian Islands for over a century. More chronic than labor strife and land-use disputes, more pressing than self-determination and the struggle for sovereignty, the introduction of Old World diseases—bearing directly on the above challenges—resulted in drastically reduced lifespans, crushing infertility and infant mortality, and persistent poor health for generations of Hawaiians. The *ma‘i malihini* (introduced diseases) also left a deep imprint on Hawaiian culture and on the Hawaiian national consciousness. While scholars have noted the role of epidemics in the depopulation of Hawai‘i and broader Oceania, few have considered the effects of Old World diseases on Hawaiian culture—including religion, medicine and ideas about the body, and gender and sexuality. Equally neglected by scholars have been Islanders’ own ideas about—and responses to—disease and other health challenges on the local level. Scholars’ grasp of the Hawaiian past is therefore incomplete. My work aims to fill this important gap, while at the same time providing a

comparative case study for disease and culture change among indigenous populations
across the Americas and the Pacific.

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A Note on Language and Terminology

In Hawai‘i, as in other colonized places, language is contested. There is good reason for this. As the Hawaiian proverb says, “In language there is life, in language there is death.”¹ Scholarship written for a broad audience must weigh culturally appropriate language against the demands of clarity and understanding. The University of Hawai‘i–Mānoa presents a solution to the problem by encouraging students to write their dissertations in the Hawaiian language. That task is beyond my abilities and would exclude most of the readers I hope to reach. I have done my best in this dissertation to follow Hippocrates in choosing my words: “First, do no harm.” I will not be completely successful.

A cursory glance at the recent historical scholarship on Hawai‘i reveals how far the field remains from standardized written Hawaiian. New England missionaries created an orthography for the language in the 1820s, which was gradually modified over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some Native Hawaiians today consider further standardization of the written language as a colonial imposition—with the result that the small island bordering Maui appears in written form alternately as Lāna‘i, Lana‘i, or Lanai. This presents obvious challenges to readers. As a student of the language myself, I adhere to the best practices established by my teachers and mentors at ‘Aha Pūnana Leo and the Department of Hawaiian Language at University of Hawai‘i–

¹ “*I ka ‘ōlelo no ke ola, i ka ‘ōlelo no ka make.*” The Hawaiian scholar Mary Kawena Pukui offered an alternative translation of the proverb: “Life is in speech, death is in speech.” M. K. Pukui, *‘Ōlelo No‘eau: Hawaiian Proverbs and Poetical Sayings* (Honolulu, 1983), 129.

Hilo, and to my own judgment, striving always for internal consistency. This means including diacritical marks—the ‘*okina* (‘) and *kahakō* (̄)—except, of course, where the original source does not, and correcting spellings that would otherwise cause confusion with brackets. Hawaiian words will appear in italics the first time they are used in the text; thereafter they appear in regular script except, again, where italics appear in the quoted text.

I refer to the historical people of this dissertation interchangeably as Hawaiians, Native Hawaiians (especially in the later period), Islanders, or by the town, district, or island from which they hailed (for example, “Kaua‘i Islander,” “Kula resident”). The choice of identifier is typically determined by context. Despite the recommendation of some scholars, I avoid the terms *kānaka maoli* (“true/genuine people”) and *kānaka ‘ōiwi* (“indigenous/native people”).² While these terms are culturally and politically significant today, they are mostly anachronistic for this study and obscure what were sometimes important distinctions among people of different or mixed ancestry. When it is relevant to the discussion, persons of part-Hawaiian descent are identified in the text as “part-Hawaiian” or by the Hawaiian term *hapa haole* (“part foreign”).

Nineteenth-century Hawaiians spelled their names in various ways, and some changed their names over time. In general I employ the name most commonly used by scholars and by contemporary Hawaiians to refer to their ancestors. For example, the

² E.g., Kekuni Blaisidell, “‘Hawaiian’ vs. ‘Kanakan Maoli’ as Metaphors,” *Hawaii Review* 13 (1989): 77–79; Houston Wood, *Displacing Natives: The Rhetorical Production of Hawai‘i* (Lanham, MD, 1999), chap. 1, esp. 12–13; Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham, NC, 2004), 12–13; Kanalu Young, “An Interdisciplinary Study of the Term “Hawaiian,”” *Hawaiian Journal of Law and Politics* 1 (2004): 23–45; and J. Kēhaulani Kauanui, *Hawaiian Blood: Colonialism and the Politics of Sovereignty and Indigeneity* (Durham, NC, 2008).

Royal Governor of O‘ahu appears in the text as Boki rather than Kamā‘ule‘ule (his given name) or Poki (which may approximate nineteenth-century Hawaiian pronunciation). The exception is when I believe there is good evidence that an individual preferred an alternative to the commonly used name today (for example, *David* rather than David Malo). Hawaiian monarchs are identified either by their given name (for example, Kamehameha III) or by their monarchical title (Kamehameha III). A list of important persons appears in the Appendix.

Finally, while Hawai‘i was known to much of the Western world in this period as the Sandwich Islands—and to the Chinese as the Sandalwood Mountains³—I use Hawai‘i or the Hawaiian Islands when discussing the archipelago and its people, regardless of era. I refer to the largest island in the chain alternately as Hawai‘i Island or the Big Island.⁴

³ Scholars have yet to determine when Hawai‘i became known in southeastern China as the Sandalwood Mountains—*tan heung shan* (Cantonese), *tan xiang shan* (Mandarin). Thanks to Gregory Rosenthal for this reference.

⁴ See “University of Hawai‘i System Style Guide,” rev. Sept. 2013 (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai‘i External Affairs and University Relations).

INTRODUCTION:
Colonialism, Indigenous Health, and Culture

~
Ku'ua nā 'ōlelo.
“Release the words.”

~

The Hawaiian Islands were home to half a million persons in the late-eighteenth century.¹ By the middle of the nineteenth century that population had been reduced by as much as ninety percent. The trend continued through the end of the century, buffered slightly by a slow-growing part-Hawaiian population. European and American merchants began to remark on the depopulation of Hawai‘i just twenty-five years after Europe’s discovery of the Islands in 1778.² By the time American missionaries arrived in 1820, Hawaiian population decline was noted by virtually every writer—including a few Native Hawaiian writers—discussing the Islands and their people. The problem was not limited to a particular demographic or region, and no respite was seen between 1778 and 1840. The eight monarchs who ruled the Kingdom of Hawai‘i during its hundred-year existence provide a telling example. The Kingdom’s founder Kamehameha had as many as

¹ By way of comparison, the Native population of California (a land mass twenty-five times the size of Hawai‘i) was only a few hundred thousand at contact. See Sherburne F. Cook, *The Population of the California Indians, 1769–1970* (Berkeley, 1976); S. F. Cook, “Historical Demography,” in *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 8, *California*, ed. Robert F. Heizer and William C. Sturtevant (Washington, DC, 1978), 91–98. For contact-era Hawaiian population, see Patrick Vinton Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief: The Island Civilization of Ancient Hawai‘i* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2012), 152–170, esp. 168. See also Kirch, “‘Like Shoals of Fish’: Archaeology and Population in Pre-Contact Hawai‘i,” in P. V. Kirch and Jean-Louis Rallu, eds., *The Growth and Collapse of Pacific Island Societies: Archaeological and Demographic Perspectives*, 52–69 (Honolulu, 2007); and Ross Cordy, “Reconstructing Hawaiian Population at European Contact: Three Case Studies,” in *ibid.*, 108–128.

² Glynn Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i: The Ethnographic and Historical Record* (Honolulu, 1987), 96, 100, 149–151, 168.

fourteen children. The seven monarchs who followed him produced only one surviving child, who happened to be part-Hawaiian.³

Population loss is not a common subject of historical inquiry; cultural histories of epidemiology are less common still. By illuminating four generations of Hawaiian life amid the incursion of Old World diseases, this dissertation endeavors to place the cultural impact of epidemiological change in its proper place. If the romantic conception of the Hawaiian Islands as a benign tropical paradise is overdue for a corrective historical narrative, so too is the historical narrative of colonialism in Hawai‘i. Disease, poor health, and population loss were not bit players in a cast of colonial disruptions that tore at the heart of Hawaiian life. They were instead colonial disruptions of the first order. Their impact has proven to be exceedingly durable. Native Hawaiian health disparities today constitute the surest evidence of the legacy of colonialism and Indigenous struggle for the Islands. It is for this reason that advocates of Hawaiian sovereignty champion “health decolonization” as a critical step on the path to self-determination.⁴ And it is for this reason that some political activists implore Native Hawaiians to make babies. A stable or growing Native population is a necessary condition for self-rule or sovereignty.

³ The child was Albert Kūnuiākea, son of Kauikeaouli (Kamehameha III) and Jane Lahilahi Young—who was herself part-Hawaiian—a daughter of British ali‘i John Young and the chiefess Ka‘ōana‘eha.

⁴ Wende Elizabeth Marshall, *Potent Mana: Lessons in Power and Healing* (Albany, NY, 2011), esp. chap. 3; and Juliet McMullin, *The Healthy Ancestor: Embodied Inequality and the Revitalization of Native Hawaiian Health* (Walnut Tree, CA, 2010), chap. 1. See also Michael Gracey and Malcolm King, “Indigenous Health: Determinants and Disease Patterns,” *The Lancet* 374 (2009): 65–75; and Gracey, Alexandra Smith, and King, “Indigenous Health: The Underlying Causes of the Health Gap,” in *ibid.*, 76–85. For research into the relationship between Indigenous cultural revitalization and mental health, see Laurence J. Kirmayer et al., “Rethinking Resilience from Indigenous Perspectives,” *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* 56 (2011): 84–91; and Joseph P. Gone, “Redressing First Nations Historical Trauma: Theorizing Mechanisms for Indigenous Culture as Mental Health Treatment,” *Transcultural Psychiatry* 50 (2013): 683–706.

Health, of course, on both the public and individual level, is always intertwined with a range of social factors; and any study that addresses the history of a peoples' health struggles must consider the ways in which health, poverty, land loss, displacement, and political marginalization overlapped, obscured, and contributed to one another. Yet however these social phenomena interacted over the long history of European and American colonialism, it is clear that—in Hawai'i at least—health problems came first for Indigenous people. And health problems lasted: through all manner of kings, commodities, legal regimes, and land reform. A comprehensive study of colonialism must address disease and its consequences as principal causes and prime movers of colonialism, not merely corollaries to or accidents of it. This dissertation aims to do just that.

Hawaiians today take pride in their strategic incorporation of foreign peoples, technologies, and practices. A day's drive around Honolulu makes this historical fact clear. Nor were the results all bad: the 'ukulele, for instance, introduced by Portuguese laborers, became a beloved and iconic Hawaiian musical instrument. Meanwhile, cultural survival is in evidence across the Islands. The persistence and growth across many generations of the *hula* schools—despite the imposition of Protestant morality and the barriers of foreign law (down to the present day)—are a shining example.⁵ Yet strategic incorporation and cultural persistence were not all: the colonial experience in Hawai'i

⁵ Momiala Kamahale, “‘Īlio‘ulaokalani: Defending Native Hawaiian Culture,” in *Asian Settler Colonialism*, ed. Fujikane and Okamura, 76–98; Marshall Sahlins, “Goodbye to *Tristes Tropes*: Ethnography in the Context of Modern World History,” *Journal of Modern History* 65 (1993), 8–11. For Hawaiian cultural survival, see also Isaiah Helekunihi Walker, *Waves of Resistance: Surfing and History in Twentieth-Century Hawai'i* (Honolulu, 2011).

involved equal parts accommodation, adaptation, and outright colonization. Introduced infectious diseases were one aspect of the colonial process for which accommodation by Islanders was not easy. It hardly got easier over the course of a century. Disease, in a word, *colonized* Hawai‘i, forcing adaptations on its native people that resonate down to today.



The Hawaiian people employed a metaphor for their high chiefs who wandered from district to district devouring the fruits of their subjects’ labors. They were “sharks who travel on the land.”⁶ After 1778 sharks of a far more ravenous variety roamed the Islands in the form of communicable Old World diseases. Islanders met with a series of devastating “virgin soil” epidemics that undermined their health, subsistence, worldviews, and eventually their sovereignty.⁷ In general, these *ma ‘i malihini* (introduced diseases) were no respecter of class, age, sex, or region, like little else in Hawai‘i at the time. While scholars have noted the role of epidemics in the depopulation of Hawai‘i and broader Oceania, few have considered the effects of Old World diseases on Hawaiian society and culture—including religion, medicine and ideas about the body, and gender and sexuality. Equally neglected by scholars have been Islanders’ own ideas about—and responses to—disease and other health challenges on the local level. This neglect applies equally to the

⁶ In Hawaiian: “*He manō holo ‘āina ke ali ‘i.*” See Abraham Fornander, *Fornander Collection of Hawaiian Antiquities and Folk-lore*, 6 vols., ed. Thomas G. Thrum (Honolulu, 1916–1920), 6:393–394; Mary Kawena Pukui, *‘Ōlelo No ‘eau: Hawaiian Proverbs and Poetical Sayings* (Honolulu, 1983), 87. See also Marshall Sahlins, *Anahulu: The Anthropology of History in the Kingdom of Hawai ‘i*, vol. 1, *Historical Ethnography*, with Dorothy B. Barrère (Chicago, 1992), 22; Patrick Vinton Kirch, *How Chiefs Became Kings: Divine Kingship and the Rise of Archaic States in Ancient Hawai ‘i* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2010), 41, 50, 75.

⁷ A discussion of the virgin soil narrative and its critics is below.

health history of Indigenous peoples throughout the American sphere. Historians' grasp of Indigenous responses and adaptations to epidemic disease is, in a word, inadequate.⁸ Indigenous leaders and health advocates, for their part, are generally too busy working to improve Native life, to reclaim lands, and to secure collective rights to be overly concerned with the Indigenous health *past*.

In the pages that follow I argue that health was the national crisis of Hawai'i for almost a century. More chronic than labor strife and land-use disputes, more pressing than self-determination and the struggle for sovereignty, the introduction of Old World diseases—bearing directly on the above challenges—resulted in drastically reduced lifespans, crushing infertility and soaring infant mortality, and persistent poor health for generations of Hawaiians. The *ma'i malihini* also left a deep imprint on Hawaiian culture and on the Hawaiian national consciousness. Finally introduced infectious diseases and resulting Native population decline led the Kingdom of Hawai'i to import its first foreign laborers in 1852, a process which would dramatically reshape Hawaiian society down to today.

Only one infectious disease in the Hawaiian past has garnered adequate attention by historians.⁹ Yet leprosy (also known as Hansen's disease) did not afflict Hawaiians in

⁸ On scholars' failure to address the cultural impact of disease among Indigenous Pacific populations, see, e.g., Paul D'Arcy, *The People of the Sea: Environment, Identity, and History in Oceania* (Honolulu, 2006), 127–128; and Grace Karskens, *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney* (St Leonards, NSW, 2010), 376–378.

⁹ E.g., Prince Albert Morrow, *Leprosy and Hawaiian Annexation* (New York, 1897); A[rthur] A[lbert] St. M[aur] Mouritz, "*The Path of the Destroyer*": *A History of Leprosy in the Hawaiian Islands...* (Honolulu, 1916); Gavan Daws, *Holy Man: Father Damien of Molokai* (New York, 1973); James H. Brocker, *The Lands of Father Damien: Kalaupapa, Molokai, Hawaii* (Honolulu, 1998); Richard Stewart, *Leper Priest of Moloka'i: The Father Damien Story* (Honolulu, 2000); R. D. K. Herman, "Out of Sight, Out of Mind, Out of Power: Leprosy, Race and Colonization in Hawai'i," *Journal of Historical Geography* 27

substantial numbers until the 1850s, and even then overall morbidity was dwarfed by diseases which preceded it. Earlier diseases not only set the context for the Hawaiian experience of this ancient scourge but were also of great consequence for Hawaiian society and culture. This study traces the backstory of Hawaiian disease and health after contact, and asks new questions about the broader social and cultural impact of each new health challenge faced by the Hawaiian people.

Most historians have a grasp of the impact of disease on the people they study. Bubonic plague in Europe, smallpox in North America, yellow fever and malaria in Africa and the equatorial zones all factor into our narratives of world history. Epidemics not only struck down countless people in the past, they also had social and political consequences that justify their presence in the textbooks. More difficult to access are the personal and cultural aspects of disease and poor health: not only what it felt like to be unable to bring a pregnancy to term or to lose family members in their prime to mysterious diseases, but also how these widely shared experiences were stitched into the cultural fabric. These questions are uniquely pertinent to the Indigenous past. In the Introduction to his history of Indians and empires in the early American West, Ned Blackhawk notes that “pain remains an uncommon subject in historical inquiry, partly

(2001): 319–347; John Tayman, *The Colony: The Harrowing True Story of the Exiles of Molokai* (New York, 2007); Michelle T. Moran, *Colonizing Leprosy: Imperialism and the Politics of Public Health in the United States* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2007); Kerri A. Inglis, “‘Cure the dread disease’: 19th Century Attempts to Treat Leprosy in the Hawaiian Islands,” *Hawaiian Journal of History* 43 (2009): 101–124; Anwei Skinsnes Law, *Kalaupapa: A Collective Memory* (Honolulu, 2012); Inglis, *Ma ‘i Lepera: Disease and Displacement in Nineteenth-Century Hawai‘i* (Honolulu, 2013); and the forthcoming work by Adria Imada, *Capturing Leprosy*.

because of language's inability to capture the experiential nature" of it.¹⁰ Yet by failing to uncover these experiences, scholars neglect a crucial aspect of the human past—indeed, one of the major connecting threads of modern Indigenous history.¹¹ An effort therefore must be made.

Despite the warnings of a generation of postcolonial and post-structuralist scholars, I am less skeptical about the ability of language—even foreign languages—to convey the experience of Native peoples past.¹² For one thing, *written* Native languages only developed after decades of encounters with outsiders. The orthographies and conventions of written communication were exogenous. This is not to say that Native people failed to make writing their own, but even then Native writers were usually a small elite. Hawaiian experience was not recorded in writing by Hawaiians (in any language) until the 1830s. Thus, foreigners' accounts often provide the sole record of Native life at a particular time and place, shedding light on experiences—some quite gruesome—that would otherwise be lost. For example: within hours of Capt. Cook's return to Hawaiian waters (ten months after his discovery of the Islands), Islanders off Maui climbed aboard the *Resolution*. Cook's lieutenant noted that "three of the Natives have apply'd to us, for help in their great distress....[T]hey had a Clap, their Penis was

¹⁰ Ned Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Cambridge, MA, 2006), 8.

¹¹ The field of medical anthropology may offer models for historians. See, e.g., Carolyn Moxley Rouse, *Uncertain Suffering: Racial Health Care Disparities and Sickle Cell Disease* (Berkeley, 2009), esp. chap. 6.

¹² E.g., Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (New York, 1991). For the Pacific basin: Daniel W. Clayton, *Islands of Truth: The Imperial Fashioning of Vancouver Island* (Vancouver, 1999); Houston Wood, *Displacing Natives: The Rhetorical Production of Hawai'i* (Lanham, MD, 1999); Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham, NC, 2004); and Paul Lyons, *American Pacificism: Oceania in the U.S. Imagination* (New York and London, 2006).

much swell'd, & inflamed....[T]he manner in which these innocent People complained to us, seem'd to me to shew that they consider'd us as the Original authors" of the disease.¹³ Records such as this one do not capture all, but they certainly capture something of the experience of introduced infectious disease in a virgin-soil population. Nor are the Cook journals unique; numerous early accounts of the Islands are extant due to the late date of contact and the high quality and variety of foreigners' observations. To trace developments in Hawaiian life, the historian often must read these accounts "against the grain," but the documents are no less valuable for that.¹⁴ At the same time, an important body of Hawaiian-language sources (discussed below) allows us to view the experience of colonialism after 1830 from a uniquely Indigenous perspective.



This dissertation elaborates a new theme in global Indigenous history: the juncture between colonialism, Indigenous health, and Native culture. Scholars have only sketched in broad outline the processes of Native health and culture change amid the disruptions of colonialism. For a variety of reasons, including simple geography, these transformations were perhaps nowhere more evident than the remote North Pacific.¹⁵ The broader historical problems I grapple with in this study include the mechanisms and processes of Indigenous culture change after contact with the Western world, and the

¹³ James King (28 Nov. 1778), in *The Journals of Captain James Cook on His Voyages of Discovery: The Voyage of the Resolution and Discovery, 1776–1780*, 4 vols., ed. J. C. Beaglehole (Cambridge, UK, 1967), 3:498.

¹⁴ For a meditation on the use of non-Native sources (by non-Native scholars) to write Native history, see Daniel K. Richter, "Whose Indian History?," *William and Mary Quarterly* 50 (1993): 379–393, esp. 383–386.

¹⁵ See Chapters One and Two.

ways that introduced disease was inscribed into Native culture. My subject, thus, is not how Hawai‘i lost its sovereignty while maintaining its culture—the typical story¹⁶—but rather how culture was transformed in the midst of Hawaiian self-rule. In the period under study, Hawai‘i saw the rupture and collapse of Hawaiian religious law; a rapid transition from orality to widespread literacy; and a substantial refashioning of marriage, family life, and labor, all while maintaining a hereditary monarchy. Introduced diseases suggest one way to organize our understanding of these complex processes: disease imposed limits and forced compromises on Hawai‘i in all of these areas that later forms of colonialism were able to exploit.

Culture is of course a slippery concept. For my purposes, culture denotes those features of human society beyond the biological that distinguish disparate peoples from each other—for instance, the Hawaiian *hula* versus Tahitian or Sāmoan ritual dance forms. Culture is thus rendered comparatively, or “in the margins”—which is not to suggest that culture is uniform, static, or uncontested within a society; there is ample room for *counter*-culture, individual human agency, and transformation. At the same time, any given culture is more than “the sum of [its] traits,” as the anthropologist Ruth Benedict noted many years ago: “We may know all about the distribution of a tribe’s form of marriage, ritual dances, and puberty initiations, and yet understand nothing of the

¹⁶ E.g., Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires: Pehea lā e Pono ai? How Shall We Live in Harmony* (Honolulu, 1992); Haunani-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai‘i* (Honolulu, 1999); Sally Engle Merry, *Colonizing Hawai‘i: The Cultural Power of Law* (Princeton, NJ, 2000), chaps. 1–4; Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo‘ole Osorio, *Dismembering Lāhui: A History of the Hawaiian Nation to 1887* (Honolulu, 2002); Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*; Stuart Banner, *Possessing the Pacific: Land, Settlers, and Indigenous People from Australia to Alaska* (Cambridge, MA, 2007), chap. 4; and Carlos Andrade, *Hā‘ena: Through the Eyes of the Ancestors* (Honolulu, 2008). Of the scholars listed above, Kame‘eleihiwa is probably the most sensitive to cultural change over time.

culture as a whole which has used these elements to its own purpose.”¹⁷ Clifford Geertz has defined culture as an “historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols”—that is, “a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which [people] communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and their attitudes toward life.” To Geertz’s definition, I would add that if culture is a system, it is a constantly evolving one.¹⁸ Culture is also created and “articulated” in moments of encounter, which is what makes the colonial theater such a rich field of study.¹⁹

This project proceeds from an understanding that religious practice and ideology are cultural forms, as are sexuality, gender ideologies, and family structure. Indeed, as I will argue, religion and gender were inseparable in the Hawaiian past, as women and men traditionally practiced distinct sacred activities, drawing various kinds of understanding from their rituals and cosmologies. The practice of medicine is also a cultural form, as medicine is always more than mere diagnosis and treatment of the body; medicine is just as much the attitudes, understandings, behaviors, and beliefs that practitioners and patients bring to treatment. If the cultural dimension of medicine pertains in the twenty-first century—consider placebo regimens, faith healing, mindfulness practices, and the

¹⁷ Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture* (Boston, 1934), 47. See also *ibid.*, 231–232.

¹⁸ Clifford Geertz, “Religion As a Cultural System,” in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 87–125 (New York, 1973), 89. For a useful refinement of Geertz’s definition, focusing on change over time, see William H. Sewell, Jr., “Geertz, Cultural Systems, and History: From Synchrony to Transformation,” *Representations* 59 (1997): 35–51, esp. 46–51.

¹⁹ James Clifford, “Indigenous Articulations,” *The Contemporary Pacific* 13 (2001): 468–490, esp. 479–480. Culture, observes the historian Gunlög Fur, “become[s] most visible” in the encounter. “Malleable and evolving,” culture “take[s] on new shape through human individual and collective action in encounters with others.” See G. Fur, *A Nation of Women: Gender and Colonial Encounters among the Delaware Indians* (Philadelphia, 2009), 8–9.

widely divergent results of cancer treatment—how much more so in colonial Hawai‘i where the practice of medicine was everywhere a spiritual matter.

Religion, medicine, and gender are all problematic terms for the Hawaiian past, as each blends into the other, and none can be effectively separated for scholarly observation. Translation itself can be vexing. In the Hawaiian historical context, religion was medicine was culture, and so on. The whole is what I will refer to as the Hawaiian cultural toolbox, a metaphor I borrow from the scholar of religion Craig Martin.²⁰ The fact that the Hawaiian language had no words for “religion,” “gender,” “sexuality,” and (perhaps) “family” in no way indicates that these phenomena did not exist for the people.²¹ Scholars who argue as much—in a good faith effort to avoid presentism and ethnocentrism—err by imagining that there are no phenomena without words. That notion, wholly foreign to traditional Polynesian culture, was abandoned by its foremost twentieth-century proponent (Wittgenstein) later in his career.²² Religion may be an “unstable category that does not translate from one historical moment to the next with fidelity,” in the words of archaeologist Severin M. Fowles; but the historian of

²⁰ Craig Martin, *A Critical Introduction to the Study of Religion* (Sheffield, UK, 2012).

²¹ For the Hawaiian word ‘ohana (“family”) possibly having a postcontact origin, see Sahlins, *Islands of History* (Chicago, 1985), 22–26, esp. 25n; and Jocelyn Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence: Rank, Gender, and Colonialism in the Hawaiian Islands* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1990), 114–115.

²² For the problem of defining religion in non-Western contexts, see Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (New York, 1962); Jonathan Z. Smith, *Imagining Religion: From Babylon to Jonestown* (Chicago, 1982); and Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore, 1993). Recent applications of the problem include Jason Ānanda Josephson, *The Invention of Religion in Japan* (Chicago, 2012); Brent Nongbri, *Before Religion: A History of a Modern Concept* (New Haven, CT, 2013); and Severin M. Fowles, *An Archaeology of Doings: Secularism and the Study of Pueblo Religion* (Santa Fe, NM, 2013). For Wittgenstein, early and late, see Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (New York and London, 1922); and *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (New York, 1953).

Indigenous life can hardly dispense with it.²³ For ancestral Pueblo peoples, Fowles' solution is to replace the term "religion" with "doings," a translation of a Pueblo term that covers a host of rituals and activities bound to a particular place. That is one option. But instead of rejecting cultural tools for which the world's languages do not jive, scholars have a duty to try to understand and explain social and cultural phenomena in their particular historical context—to know the individual tools and the larger toolbox.

Finally, it bears mentioning that the notion of culture itself has its origins in cultivation. The "roots" of culture, that is to say, run very deep. For many of the world's Indigenous peoples, place and culture were (and are) inextricably bound. For the history of health and disease, meanwhile, the division between nature and culture can seem largely artificial. To take one example: Abortion and infanticide in eighteenth-century Japan were known collectively as *mabiki*—"thinning" or pruning, as of rice plants or fruit trees. On the surface, *mabiki* would seem to be a straightforward horticultural metaphor, or euphemism: limits on reproduction, like weeding and pruning, allowed for healthier children (better fruit) and a more prosperous family (tree). But if Japanese understood themselves and their families as part and parcel of nature, which seems to have been the case, then their cultural notions of family planning may not have been distinct from their understanding of cultivation or of nature more broadly.²⁴

Disease and health are thus to be understood as biosocial and biocultural phenomena, neither simply socially or culturally "constructed" nor merely biological. To

²³ Fowles, *An Archaeology of Doings*, 4.

²⁴ See Fabian Drixler, *Mabiki: Infanticide and Population Growth in Eastern Japan, 1660–1950* (Berkeley, 2013).

set scientific “ways of knowing” against folkways and other Indigenous forms of knowledge is a false binary. Both are valid, even if Indigenous knowledge does not enjoy the authority of science among the general public. Yet just because the contemporary language of viruses, bacteria, and immunity was not known to people at the time does not mean that microbes were not at work, and that people did not powerfully experience their effects.²⁵ Thus I utilize contemporary medical science and the social science of demography at various places in the text to illuminate the health challenges of Hawaiians past.²⁶

Beyond the theoretical commitments outlined above, I employ no single cultural theory or method in this history of Hawaiian disease and culture. Instead, I rely upon my wide reading in Native American and Indigenous history and culture, as well as my understanding of Hawaiian religion, gender, and the history of disease and medicine. This is an “outsider” history. I make no claims to an insider’s perspective on the Hawaiian experience past or present. I believe there is ample room in the scholarship for voices of various kinds, and that outsiders can enjoy some analytical advantages. Insider or outsider, there is ultimately no “neutral shelter.” All scholars bring their life experience

²⁵ An excellent illustration can be seen in Davi Kopenawa and Bruce Albert, *The Falling Sky: Words of Yanomami Shaman*, trans. Nicholas Elliott and Alison Dundy (Cambridge, MA, 2013), chaps. 10–11. For a different perspective on these matters, see Kim TallBear, *Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science* (Minneapolis, 2013).

²⁶ For a number of reasons—some very good—academic science is often given little credence in Native American and Indigenous scholarly circles. Yet neuroscience and Western medicine often reinforce the benefits of Indigenous therapeutics and pharmacology. It is also more difficult to separate sociocultural from evolutionary and biological phenomena than most humanists and social scientists tend to recognize. See, e.g., Gary Hatfield and Holly Pittman, eds., *Evolution of Mind, Brain, and Culture* (Philadelphia, 2013); Clarence C. Gravlee, “Race, Biology, and Culture: Rethinking the Connections,” in *Anthropology of Race: Genes, Biology, and Culture*, ed. John Hartigan, 21–41 (Santa Fe, 2013); and Sandra Soo-Jin Lee, “The Political Economy of Personalized Medicine, Health Disparities, and Race,” in *ibid.*, 151–167.

and particular understandings to their work; the key for the historian is to constantly “interrogate” him— or herself “as the analyzing subject” of peoples past.²⁷ While I offer no solutions of my own to the ongoing problems of Hawaiian and Indigenous health—and would not presume to if I could—my study provides a critical backstory for those who would engage that important work. For historians, anthropologists, and other humanists, this study provides an important case study of colonialism, Indigenous health, and cultural change, with broad application across the Pacific Islands, the Americas, and beyond.

Hawaiian History, Epidemiological History

Hawaiian history in the colonial era can be periodized in various ways. Historical anthropologist Marshall Sahlins usefully arranged the Islands’ history in relation to the global markets they successively entered: a Conquest Period (1779–1812), in which King Kamehameha consolidated power over all the major islands with the help of newly acquired Western arms and ships; a Sandalwood Period (1812–1830), in which intensive cultivation of an upland resource reconfigured labor patterns on the islands, while also saddling the *ali‘i* (chiefs) with crushing debts to Euro-American traders²⁸; and a Whaling

²⁷ Roger Cooter, “The End? History-Writing in the Age of Biomedicine,” in *Writing History in the Age of Biomedicine*, ed. R. Cooter and Claudia Stein (New Haven, 2013), 1–40, esp. 7. See also Richter, “Whose Indian History,” esp. 386–388.

²⁸ Noelani Arista argues that the social effects of *ali‘i* indebtedness have been exaggerated by historians, and that the debt narrative itself is ethnocentric, with scholars hewing too closely to Anglo-American sources that privilege the virtues of thrift and “self-control.” Denise Noelani Arista, “Histories of Unequal Measure: Euro-American Encounters with Hawaiian Governance and Law, 1793–1827” (PhD dissertation, Brandeis University, 2010), chap. 2. See also Mark Rifkin, “Debt and the Transnationalization of Hawai‘i,”

Period (1830–1860), in which Hawai‘i became the “crossroads of the Pacific,” a key provisioning station for merchant ships and a desirable possession for any imperial power with the means to take it.²⁹

Without rejecting Sahlins’ periodization, this study offers an alternative arrangement of Hawaiian history around disease introduction and Hawaiian cultural responses to it. An era of contact and contagion, 1778–1787, saw the arrival of Cook and the spread of three destructive Old World diseases across the Islands. The immediate post-contact period saw the rise of the sex trade, the spread of new diseases, and the high chief Kamehameha’s consolidation of power. Hawai‘i’s Cultural Revolution (roughly, 1818–1826) stemmed from low fertility and ongoing health problems, as well as contentious gender politics among the ali‘i, leading Ka‘ahumanu and her fellow chiefesses to overturn the *kapu* system of religious law and turn decisively toward Protestant Christianity. Native Hawaiian hopes for their future were constrained by the evidence of population decline and continued disease spread. The result was widespread fatalism through the 1830s. By midcentury Americans had insinuated themselves into property-holding, plantation agriculture, and the Kingdom’s governmental structures at every level. One of the most significance consequences of disease and population loss in this final period was the opening of agricultural lands to foreigners and the importation of foreign laborers by the Kingdom to replace Native Hawaiian laborers lost in the

American Quarterly 60 (2008): 43–66.

²⁹ Sahlins, *Anahulu*, 1:1–4. In the year 1846 alone, some six hundred whalers arrived at the islands. See Gavan Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu, 1968), 169.

epidemics. Microbes were thus “inadvertent” though critical “historical actors” in the cultural and social evolution of Hawai‘i.³⁰

Colonial Hawai‘i is uniquely apposite for a study of introduced disease and culture change. In epidemiological terms, the Islands’ small size and isolation limited variables that present challenges for more diffuse or porous regions. Isolation, which limited Islanders’ immunity to introduced diseases, was also the primary contributing factor to the scale of epidemics in this period.³¹ In addition, the relative uniformity of culture across the archipelago in the late eighteenth century permits a coherent assessment of cultural change over time. Despite being politically divided, the Islands were socially, culturally, and economically linked before and after the arrival of Cook. Hawai‘i’s late encounter with colonialism, and the obsessive journalism and correspondence of colonial agents, also resulted in a rich body of documentation, the vast majority of which has survived. Late-Enlightenment observers enjoyed considerable advantages over their predecessors in documenting and comparing Native populations, disease morbidity, and cultural change. Cook’s third Pacific voyage of exploration (1776–80) alone produced eight published accounts of the Islands, while nineteenth-century New England Protestants penned perhaps the most voluminous literature (per square mile) on colonialism to date. This body of work is supplemented by rich Hawaiian histories and traditions that track cultural trends and political dynasties back to the sixteenth century.

³⁰ J. R. McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620–1914* (Cambridge, UK, 2010), 3. See Table 1 below for diseases introduced to Hawai‘i in this period.

³¹ See Chapter One.

A final advantage for historians of Hawai‘i is the remarkably high literacy rate of Native Hawaiians themselves in the latter decades of this study. The Hawaiian Kingdom’s eager embrace of *palapala* (reading and writing) in the 1820s resulted in a literacy rate later in the century that remarkably surpassed levels across the U.S. and Europe.³² Hawaiian-language documents constitute a unique documentary trove unparalleled by Indigenous peoples perhaps anywhere in the world and largely yet to be mined by scholars.³³ These documents offer an unusually rich record of Indigenous health and disease, allowing us to see the effects of colonization from some Natives’ perspectives.

The abundance of Hawaiian-language sources addressing health and disease before 1855 is surprising given that these matters were hardly considered newsworthy at the time. When Hawaiian-language newspapers began circulating in the late 1830s, disease was already an old story, part and parcel of Hawaiian life, almost too obvious to comment on. Meanwhile, barring a destructive epidemic or another public-health crisis, the everyday suffering and health concerns of common Islanders did not grab the attention of either politicians or the elite, urban editors who published Hawaiian-language newspapers beginning in the 1830s. Personal letters are rather more revealing but have garnered less scholarly attention than the newspapers and government documents.³⁴ Even

³² Albert J. Schutz, *The Voices of Eden: A History of Hawaiian Language Studies* (Honolulu, 1994). Schutz argues that Hawai‘i was second only to Scotland worldwide in literacy rates by 1863.

³³ See Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, chap. 2; and M. Puakea Nogelmeier, *Mai Pa ‘a I Ka Leo: Historical Voice in Hawaiian Primary Materials; Looking Forward and Listening Back* (Honolulu, 2010).

³⁴ E.g., Robert C. Schmitt’s numerous articles (see bibliography) about Hawai‘i’s health history relied almost entirely on documents produced by the Kingdom of Hawai‘i.

so, the everyday suffering of Hawaiians from chronic disease, infertility, and infant mortality is not easy to exhume.³⁵ Fortunately there are other ways of uncovering these experiences, including oral traditions and the unique Hawaiian vocabulary that developed around disease and health.



Existing scholarship on the history of health and disease in Hawai‘i is either too narrow to draw conclusions about the overall impact of disease on the Islands or too broad to get beyond population figures and rates of decline. Almost none of this work offers insights into the cultural impact of the ma‘i malihini.³⁶ Medical historian and microbiologist O. A. Bushnell’s *The Gifts of Civilization: Germs and Genocide in Hawai‘i* (1993) is the leading work on the history of Hawaiian health and disease. Unfortunately the book is marred by outsized claims, blanket statements, and crude caricatures of Native Hawaiian life. Bushnell’s evident bias against Hawaiian culture and the Native medical practice—which he portrays as ignorant, hapless, fearful, and unable

³⁵ For another case where the massive toll of disease epidemics is largely absent from the historical record, see McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*, 7–8.

³⁶ Local studies include Hawai‘i State demographer Robert C. Schmitt’s numerous articles for the *Hawaiian Journal of History* (see bibliography); Richard A. Greer, “Oahu’s Ordeal: The Smallpox Epidemic of 1853,” *Hawaiian Historical Review* 1–2 (1965): 221–242, 248–266; Law, *Kalaupapa*; and Inglis, *Ma‘i Lepera*. Archipelago-wide studies include David E. Stannard, *Before the Horror: The Population of Hawai‘i on the Eve of Western Contact* (Honolulu, 1989); Andrew F. Bushnell, “‘The Horror’ Reconsidered: An Evaluation of the Historical Evidence for Population Decline in Hawai‘i, 1779–1803,” *Pacific Studies* 16 (1993): 115–161; O. A. Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization: Germs and Genocide in Hawai‘i* (Honolulu, 1993); and Herman, “Out of Sight, Out of Mind, Out of Power.” Schmitt rarely expanded his view beyond the city and offered few insights into Hawaiian culture. Stannard did not address the progress of specific epidemics or their effect on Hawaiian culture and society.

or unwilling to innovate—results in a skewed portrait of the Hawaiian experience of disease and colonialism.³⁷

Historical anthropologists, for their part, have focused intently on Hawaiian society and culture in the colonial era. Marshall Sahlins, Jocelyn Linnekin, and more recently, Juri Mykkänen have added a great deal to our understanding of cultural, political, economic, and social change in the midst of Euro-American incursions. Yet for all their depth and breadth, these studies rarely addressed the cultural impact of introduced disease. Indeed, Sahlins argued that the so-called “dying out” of the Hawaiian chiefs was an “optical illusion, the effect of a cultural demise.”³⁸ It was neither. In fact, the Hawaiian Kingdom was literally struggling to survive in the nineteenth century. Over the course of almost fifty years, sitting Hawaiian monarchs had not produced a single surviving heir. When a child finally was born in 1858—Prince Albert Kamehameha—he died at the age of four.

³⁷ *The Gifts of Civilization* is “not a formal history,” as Bushnell states at the outset, but rather a series of “reflective essays.” The book presents an ethnocentric portrait of colonial Hawai‘i largely blind to the cultural logic of Native society. Bushnell also follows nineteenth-century American missionaries in blaming Native Hawaiians for their own mortality. For example: “Almost every form of their self-control” was sacrificed in the 1820s, with only their “primitive passions remain[ing]—unchecked.” Missionary instruction, which “innocent” Hawaiians “needed, in both literacy and morality,” could not come soon enough. Native Hawaiians “knew nothing about ‘free will’ and ‘freedom of choice’...and all the other privileges of free men” because “gods, priests, chiefs, and kings had been dictating their every action and almost every thought since the moment of their birth....By being unable or unwilling to change their mores, Hawaiians committed themselves to continuing mortality.” Finally: Native Hawaiians “needed help, if they were to survive, whether as individuals or as a people. Yet none of them realized how desperate was their plight....Then, just in time, from across the seas, the helpers [i.e., missionaries] came.” Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 264-265, 270, 37. Other scholars who take exception with Bushnell include Linda Bryder, review of *The Gifts of Civilization* by O. A. Bushnell, *Journal of Pacific History* 32 (1997): 250-251.

³⁸ Sahlins, *Anahulu*, 1:135. Elsewhere Sahlins mischaracterizes the population of Waialua, O‘ahu, in the 1840s as “heroic[ally]... unwilling...to reproduce itself” in the face of a “subsumed existence.” *Ibid.*, 1:176. See also Sahlins, “Cosmologies of Capitalism: The Trans-Pacific Sector of ‘The World System,’” in *Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*, ed. Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Ortner, 412-455 (Princeton, 1994), esp. 434-435.

Historians of colonial Hawai‘i have focused overwhelmingly on politics, land, and the law.³⁹ While this scholarship has effectively traced the complex developments leading to the U.S. overthrow of the monarchy in the 1890s, it has tended to underestimate the scale of change to Native life in the early period, particularly in areas such as religion, health, and gender and sexuality.⁴⁰ Another consistent pattern in the historiography is the neglect of common Hawaiians (or *maka‘āinana*). Maka‘āinana comprised some ninety-five percent of the Hawaiian population in this period, yet they hardly appear in the historiography.⁴¹ Since infectious disease, infertility, and chronic poor health affected commoners at least as much as the ruling classes, the experience of the former is every bit as critical to this study, if much more difficult to access. The absence of the maka‘āinana in Hawaiian historiography more generally must be rectified by future scholarship.

For its ethnocentrism and lack of Native perspectives, the Fatal Impact narrative of Pacific Island history was discarded decades ago.⁴² Yet in two critical areas Fatal

³⁹ E.g., Daws, *Shoal of Time*, chaps. 1–5; Merry, *Colonizing Hawai‘i*; Osorio, *Dismembering Lāhui*; Juri Mykkänen, *Inventing Politics: A New Political Anthropology of the Hawaiian Kingdom* (Honolulu, 2003); Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*; and Banner, *Possessing the Pacific*, chap. 4. An important exception is Caroline Ralston, “Hawaii 1778–1854: Some Aspects of Maka‘ainana [sic] Response to Rapid Cultural Change,” *Journal of Pacific History* 19 (1984): 21–40; and Ralston, “Changes in the Lives of Ordinary Women in Early Post-Contact Hawai‘i,” in *Family and Gender in the Pacific: Domestic Contradictions and the Colonial Impact*, ed. Margaret Jolly and Martha Macintyre, 45–64 (Cambridge, UK, 1989).

⁴⁰ An important exception in this regard is Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, who has also been a critical influence on my thinking about cultural change in colonial Hawai‘i. See Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*.

⁴¹ Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*, 203.

⁴² Alan Moorehead, *The Fatal Impact: An Account of the Invasion of the South Pacific, 1767–1840* (New York, 1966). For criticisms of the Fatal Impact narrative, see, e.g., Greg Denning, *Performances* (Melbourne, 1996); Matt K. Matsuda, “AHR Forum: The Pacific,” *American Historical Review* 111 (2006), 771–772; and Newell, *Trading Nature*, 18–19.

Impact was on point. The isolation of Pacific archipelagoes played a crucial role in the course of ecological change after contact; and introduced diseases were lethal and lasting in many Pacific Island societies.⁴³ Recent Pacific Islands scholarship, even the work of environmental historians, has neglected both long-term effects of contact.⁴⁴ More than twenty years ago, with *Fatal Impact* already considered outmoded, historian David A. Chappell observed at the annual meeting of the Pacific History Association conference that “polemics” had prevented Pacific historians from “dealing with disease.” The result, Chappell concluded, was that the cultural and social impact of introduced disease “awaits careful analysis.”⁴⁵ It does still.



Beyond Hawai‘i, the virgin soil narrative has recently come under fire by critics who argue that it is teleological or overly deterministic, contributing to a “declensionist” narrative of Indigenous history or a triumphalist reading of Euro-American progress. In a field-shaping 2003 article, medical historian David S. Jones argued that scholarly attention to the subject of Native American disease had stemmed from a desire to “assuage Euroamerican guilt over American Indian depopulation.” The “virgin” nature of

⁴³ Hawai‘i’s unique disease ecology was a function of the Islands’ broader ecology. See Chapter One.

⁴⁴ E.g., Epeli Hau‘ofa, “Our Sea of Islands,” in *A New Oceania: Rediscovering our Sea of Islands*, ed. E. Hau‘ofa, V. Naidu, and E. Waddell, 2–16 (Suva, Fiji, 1993); J. R. McNeill, “Of Rats and Men: A Synoptic Environmental History of the Island Pacific,” *Journal of World History* 5 (1994): 299–349; Nicholas Thomas, *Islanders: The Pacific in the Age of Empire* (New York, 2010); and Matt K. Matsuda, *Pacific Worlds: A History of Seas, Peoples, and Cultures* (New York, 2013). An important exception is David Iglor, “Diseased Goods: Global Exchanges in the Pacific Basin, 1770–1850,” *American Historical Review* 109 (2004): 699–716; and Iglor, *The Great Ocean: Pacific Worlds from Captain Cook to the Gold Rush* (New York, 2013).

⁴⁵ David A. Chappell, “Active Agents versus Passive Victims: Decolonized Historiography or Problematic Paradigm?” *The Contemporary Pacific* 7 (1995): 303–326, esp. 316.

New World peoples suggested that they were “weak, defenseless, susceptible,” even “female.” Virgin-soil theory itself, Jones added, bears “striking similarities to Puritan theories of providence.” Rather than focusing on the “irresistible genetic and microbial forces” of epidemics, Jones argued, historians ought to shed light on the ways that “social forces and human agency shaped” these epidemiological processes. After all, “virgin soil epidemics may have arisen from nothing more unique than the familiar forces of poverty, malnutrition, environmental stress, dislocation, and social disparity that cause epidemics among all other populations,” occurring “in all other times and places.”⁴⁶

Jones was correct to highlight the “social forces” and “human agency” that caused or exacerbated epidemics among New World populations, but he was mistaken in

⁴⁶ David S. Jones, “Virgin Soils Revisited,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 60 (2003): 703–742. For works that grapple with these ideas, see Cristobal Silva, *Miraculous Plagues: An Epidemiology of New England Narrative* (New York, 2011); Suzanne Austin Alchon, *A Pest in the Land: New World Epidemics in a Global Perspective* (Albuquerque, 2003); James D. Rice, *Nature and History in the Potomac Country: From Hunter-Gatherers to the Age of Jefferson* (Baltimore, 2009), esp. 130–133, 298–299; and Pekka Hämmäläinen, “The Politics of Grass: European Expansion, Ecological Change, and Indigenous Power in the Southwest Borderlands,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 67 (2010): 173–208, esp. 173–177, 207–208. For the original formulation of the virgin-soil narrative, see Alfred W. Crosby, “Virgin Soil Epidemics as a Factor in the Depopulation in America,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 33 (1976): 289–299; and William H. McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples* (Garden City, NY, 1976). Jones characterizes virgin soil theory as an unexamined logical construction that justifies European conquest and places the blame on Native peoples themselves, as follows: (A.) contact between Old and New World populations was “inevitable”; (B.) New World epidemics “could not have been prevented”; (therefore?), (C.) either “no one” is to blame for the outcome, or Native peoples (or their bodies) are to blame. This latter conclusion, observes Jones, is not only racist but also “deflect[s] attention away from moral and political questions” bearing on Indigenous depopulation. In fact, this logic is neither necessary nor typical in the recent work on virgin soil, as Linda A. Newson, J. R. McNeill, and others have demonstrated. A scholar might affirm A and B, for example, while in *fact* blaming Europeans for Native disease and depopulation. Alternatively, a scholar could refuse to entertain either of the counterfactuals embedded in Jones’ logic (“inevitable,” “could not have been”), and thus—by posing different questions—arrive at different conclusions. Robert Boyd and Newson, for instance, both pose markedly different questions from Jones in their respective case studies of virgin soil. See Robert Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence: Introduced Infectious Diseases and Population Decline among Northwest Coast Indians, 1774–1874* (Seattle and Vancouver, 1999); and Linda A. Newson, *Conquest and Pestilence in the Early Spanish Philippines* (Honolulu, 2009). Disease synergy (i.e., simultaneous, overlapping, or successive infections in a population) and low birth rates also earn little attention from Jones; e.g., “Virgin Soils Revisited,” 733–734.

suggesting that biology, geography, and environment serve only ideological functions in the virgin soil narrative.⁴⁷ Historians Linda A. Newson and J. R. McNeill have each recently demonstrated the critical importance of human geography (for example, population density) and environments (climate, topography, natural resources, insects) in shaping epidemiological outcomes for both Natives *and* newcomers.⁴⁸ Jones also failed to acknowledge a critical point about New World epidemics, which is that many, perhaps most, of North America's Indigenous peoples encountered Old World diseases via other Native peoples *before* encountering Old World peoples themselves, and thus before effective colonial incursions into their homelands.⁴⁹ That pattern applied in Polynesia as

⁴⁷ Jones' major contribution in "Virgin Soils Revisited" was to clarify one aspect of the virgin soil model—namely, the meaning of the term "immunity" and the biological mechanisms of human immunology. Historians often posit that New World peoples had "no immunity" to Old World pathogens; yet, as Jones shows, the response of an individual's immune system to invader microbes depends on a host of factors, including genes, disease history, and environment. Virgin soil epidemics are typically the result of a population's lack of *acquired* immunity (also known as *adaptive* immunity) to microbes. As yet little understood, the genetic dimension of *inherited* immunity (also known as *innate* or *natural* immunity) raises concern among some scholars who associate it with earlier racial science; e.g., Nancy Krieger, *Epidemiology and the People's Health: Theory and Context* (New York, 2011), esp. 249–263. Yet the differential susceptibility of Islanders to introduced infectious diseases as a result of inherited immunity cannot be ignored as a possible factor leading to disease and poor health. For recent work on genetics and inherited immunity, see, e.g., Christian G. Meyer et al., "Human Leukocyte Antigens in Tuberculosis and Leprosy," *Trends in Microbiology* 6 (1998): 148–154; David A. Schwartz, "The Genetics of Innate Immunity," *Chest* 121 (2002): 62S–68S; Pascal Rihet, "Innate Immunity Genes as Candidate Genes..." *Methods in Molecular Biology* 415 (2008): 17–48; and J. A. Traherne, "Human MHC Architecture and Evolution: Implications for Disease Association Studies," *Journal of Human Immunogenetics* 35 (2008): 179–192.

⁴⁸ Newson, *Conquest and Pestilence in the Early Spanish Philippines*, e.g. 12–13, 251–253; and McNeill, *Mosquito Empires*. For another case of low population density limiting the impact of Old World diseases, see Ian Pool, *Te Iwi Maori: A New Zealand Population Past, Present & Projected* (Auckland, NZ, 1991), 42–46.

⁴⁹ E.g., the Native societies of coastal New England and the Northwest Coast, the Mandans of the northern Plains, and the Stó:lō–Coast Salish people of present-day British Columbia. See Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence*; Elizabeth A. Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1778–1782* (New York, 2001); and Keith Thor Carlson, *The Power of Place, The Problem of Time: Aboriginal Identity and Historical Consciousness in the Cauldron of Colonialism* (Toronto, 2010).

well. More broadly, the historical record does not support Jones' claim that New World epidemics were caused by "familiar" social forces, or that they were mostly of a kind with the European experience of disease. The Indigenous peoples of California, Hawai'i, New Zealand, and southeast Australia—separated by thousands of miles of open sea, and playing host to markedly distinct colonial incursions from the 1770s—contracted the same Old World diseases, with similar effects on life expectancy, fertility, and infant mortality, and all reaching roughly the same nadir (as a percentage of precontact population) in the *same decade*.⁵⁰ One century later, in Fiji, as many as thirty-six thousand Fijians—twenty-seven percent of the entire population—died in the first outbreak of measles.⁵¹

There is something unique about virgin soil epidemics that Jones failed to grasp. Additional research on virgin soil will be required to demonstrate what the Hawaiian case suggests, which is that the manner of colonial incursions (barring enslavement) had limited effects on overall morbidity and population loss in Indigenous societies over the long run. Commerce and trade, missionization, extraction of natural resources, and even settlement by colonists—the result for Indigenous peoples may have differed little.

⁵⁰ The 1890s marked a population nadir for Indigenous peoples across North America as well. For the California–Hawai'i–New Zealand–Australia comparison, see S. F. Cook, *The Population of the California Indians, 1769–1970*; S. F. Cook, "Historical Demography," in *Handbook of North American Indians*, ed. Heizer and Sturtevant, 91–98; Robert C. Schmitt, *Demographic Statistics of Hawai'i, 1778–1965* (Honolulu, 1968); Schmitt, "New Estimates of the Pre-Censal Population of Hawai'i," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 80 (1971): 237–243; Schmitt, *Historical Statistics of Hawaii* (Honolulu, 1977); Pool, *Te Iwi Maori*; Karskens, *The Colony*; and Len Smith, et al., "Fractional Identities: The Political Arithmetic of Aboriginal Victorians," in *Indigenous Peoples and Demography: The Complex Relation Between Identity and Statistics*, ed. Per Axelsson and Peter Sköld, 15–31 (New York, 2011).

⁵¹ See Andrew Cliff, Peter Haggett, and Matthew Smallman-Raynor, *Island Epidemics* (Oxford and New York, 2000), 148–164, esp. 158. Subsequent measles outbreaks in Fiji resulted in 2,000 fatalities in 1903 and 344 in 1910–1914.

All this is not to say that the virgin soil narrative is without flaws. Indigenous peoples' understandings of, and responses to, disease on the local level represents the most glaring absence in the historiography. When smallpox swept through a village or winter encampment, Native medicine was pushed to the limit—yet it is not the case, as some historians have suggested, that Native peoples could do nothing or were rendered powerless and hopeless in the face of new diseases.⁵² For example, when Northern Paiute healer Wodziwob introduced the Ghost Dance in the wake of an 1867 typhoid epidemic, the ritual shortly blossomed among neighboring Native groups suffering waves of disease and depopulation.⁵³ Wodziwob's cultural innovation thereby "treated" disease and population loss. The challenge for scholars is to unearth these Native responses in the traces left by non-literate peoples and by their literate observers interested in other matters. For the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the cultural impact of disease in Indigenous societies is extremely difficult to trace. Hawai'i, by contrast, provides a thorough case study not only for the virgin soil narrative but also for broader processes of Indigenous cultural change in the wake of introduced infectious disease.⁵⁴

⁵² E.g., Crosby, "Virgin Soil Epidemics as a Factor in the Depopulation in America, esp. 296–297; and Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel: A Short History of Everybody for the Last 13,000 Years* (London, 1998), 214.

⁵³ Russell Thornton, *American Indian Holocaust and Survival: A Population History Since 1492* (Norman, OK, 1987), xi, 17–19. By the 1880s the Ghost Dance had evolved beyond a response to disease and depopulation.

⁵⁴ On Hawai'i as a model for virgin soil theory, see A[lfred] W. Crosby, "Hawaiian Depopulation as a Model for the Amerindian Experience," in *Epidemics and Ideas: Essays on the Historical Perception of Pestilence*, ed. Terence Ranger and Paul Slack, 175–201 (Cambridge, UK, 1992); and David E. Stannard, "Disease and Infertility: A New Look at the Demographic Collapse of Native Populations in the Wake of Western Contact." *Journal of American Studies* 24 (1990): 325–350.

Contributions

This study contributes to a new generation of scholarship that is rethinking the boundaries—geographical and chronological—of colonial America.⁵⁵ Hawai‘i rarely enters the U.S. History narrative before the 1880s, yet the Islands bore importantly on American geopolitical concerns from the 1840s, and on American evangelicalism from 1810. For New England merchants, the Pacific trade—with Hawai‘i as a principal station—was critical from the 1780s. The first book copyrighted in the new United States was Connecticut native John Ledyard’s first-person account of the discovery of Hawai‘i and the murder of Capt. Cook. Published in Hartford in 1783, Ledyard’s *Journal of Captain Cook’s Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean* was a best-seller.⁵⁶ Hawai‘i, that is to say, was on the early American radar. Hawaiian historical narratives more accurately reflect the Islands’ close connection with New England, Europe, and the Northwest Coast of North America as early as the 1790s.⁵⁷ American commerce and its agents, in particular, were central to Hawaiian life from the very founding of the United States. While there is some risk of teleology in couching Hawaiian history in an American frame (or vice versa), the Euro-American impact on Hawai‘i was felt immediately after the

⁵⁵ E.g., Alan Taylor, *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* (New York, 2001), esp. xiv–xvii; Steven W. Hackel, *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of Saint Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769–1850* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2005); Iglar, *The Great Ocean*; Pekka Hämäläinen, “The Shapes of Power: Indians, Europeans, and North American Worlds from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century,” in *Contested Spaces of Early America*, ed. Juliana Barr and Edward Countryman, 31–68 (Philadelphia, 2014); and Samuel Truett, “The Borderlands and Lost Worlds of Early America,” in *ibid.*, 300–324.

⁵⁶ John Ledyard, *A Journal of Captain Cook’s Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean...* (Hartford, 1783).

⁵⁷ E.g., Ralph S. Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778–1854: Foundation and Transformation* (Honolulu, 1938); Harold Whitman Bradley, *The American Frontier in Hawaii: The Pioneers, 1789–1843* (Stanford, CA, 1942); and Daws, *Shoal of Time*.

arrival of Capt. Cook, and the eventual American annexation of the island kingdom is best understood when traced back to the eighteenth century. In this respect, my project diverges significantly from recent work on Hawai‘i and Oceania that tends to downplay the disrupting effects of colonial incursions, instead emphasizing Islanders’ cultural persistence, strategic accommodation, and their *own* influence on the wider world.⁵⁸ In her award-winning dissertation of 2010, historian Noelani Arista urged scholars to resist the “tempting telos of Hawaiian historiography that reads the loss of the nation in 1893 back onto the 1820s.”⁵⁹ My project, instead, reads it all the way back to 1778.

Significant comparisons between Native North America and Hawai‘i constitute another reason to bring the Islands earlier into the narrative of American history. Native American history has a great deal to teach scholars of Hawaiian history and vice versa; unfortunately, the very real boundaries of geography, ecology, and culture have prevented these lessons from being learned. Obviously there were unique elements of the Hawaiian experience of colonialism, as well as features shared across the Pacific Islands; but colonialism in Hawai‘i also revealed patterns established earlier in the Americas. To take just one example: The introduction of Christianity into the sixteenth-century Pueblo world saw Pueblo women in large numbers opting for this alternative to the male-dominated *katsina* religion (itself a relatively new cultural phenomenon).⁶⁰ In a like

⁵⁸ E.g., Hau‘ofa, “Our Sea of Islands”; Gary I. Okihiro, *Island World: A History of Hawai‘i and the United States* (Berkeley, 2008); Thomas, *Islanders*; and Jennifer Newell, *Trading Nature: Tahitians, Europeans, and Ecological Exchange* (Honolulu, 2010), 18–19. See also the forthcoming work on nineteenth-century Native Hawaiians and global geography by David Chang.

⁵⁹ Arista, “Histories of Unequal Measure,” 163. On the tension between teleology and contingency in historical narratives, see Taylor, *American Colonies*, xv.

⁶⁰ James F. Brooks, “Women, Men, and Cycles of Evangelism in the Southwest Borderlands, A.D. 750

manner, Hawaiian chiefesses in the nineteenth century opted for the social and political advantages (as they saw it) of Protestant Christianity against the *kapu* system which had rendered them second-class citizens in the sacred realm. In both cases, moreover, Christianity was thoroughly indigenized. Such comparisons do not suggest that Indigenous peoples are all of a kind or that their histories are interchangeable, but rather that Euro-American colonialism and Indigenous cultural change shared broad features across time and space. Given the voluminous and comprehensive nature of the sources, colonialism in Hawai‘i may force us to reconsider what we thought we knew about Native American history generally.

Unlike earlier histories of Hawai‘i, this study reflects the central role of women and gender in the process of Hawaiian culture change. This includes women’s actions—for example, their critical role in the Cultural Revolution of the 1820s—as well as both women’s and men’s ideas about biological sex and gender roles. Women’s presence in the Euro-American documentary record is remarkable given that the commercial and evangelical efforts of most foreign visitors focused on elite Hawaiian men. Like Lenape women in the eighteenth-century Middle Colonies of British North America, Hawaiian women in this period “forced their way into the sources.”⁶¹ The present study is, therefore, in no small part an examination of sexual politics, power, and authority in Hawaiian society.

to 1750,” *American Historical Review* 118 (2013): 738–764, esp. 753–754.

⁶¹ Fur, *A Nation of Women*, 140.

A number of important gaps remain in our understanding of women and gender in colonial Hawai‘i. Thirty years after the field-shaping work on colonial Hawai‘i by Sahlins, Kame‘eleihiwa, Linnekin, and Caroline Ralston, historians are no closer to agreement on the causes and nature of the Cultural Revolution; the status of mixed-descent individuals in Hawaiian society; and the role of family planning and population control among the maka‘āinana.⁶² Next to nothing has been written about the nineteenth-century fertility crisis that reverberated down through the generations.⁶³ Sexual exchange at the Islands has received scholarly attention, but almost never in relation to Hawaiian health. A critical arena of the Hawaiian encounter with the West, the sex trade lured ships from three continents to the Islands, fashioning an exotic Pacific imaginary that lives on to this day. Of course sexual exchange also spread venereal diseases, which did surprisingly little to stem the tide of the sex trade itself.⁶⁴ As victims of this first Hawaiian epidemic, and as heirs to the infertility and poor health that came in its wake, Hawaiian women were critical agents of cultural change on the Islands. Like Indigenous women elsewhere in the world, Hawaiian women took deliberate actions in this period to

⁶² Ralston, “Hawaii 1778–1854”; Ralston, “Changes in the Lives of Ordinary Women in Early Post-Contact Hawaii”; Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*; and David A. Chappell, “Shipboard Relations between Pacific Island Women and Euroamerican Men 1767–1887,” *Journal of Pacific History* 27 (1992): 131–149.

⁶³ Boyd notes that Indigenous Northwest Coast “fertility decline during the early contact era, its extents and causes, needs further study.” Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence*, 272.

⁶⁴ Daws estimates that women at Honolulu earned about \$100,000 annually from the sex trade in the 1840s, “a sum equal to the annual revenue of the [Hawaiian] government.” Daws, *Shoal of Time*, 167. See also Sahlins, *Anahulu*, 1:147.

heal loved ones and keep their families alive and healthy.⁶⁵ In this sense, their role was outsized relative to their traditional role in Hawaiian society.

This study also contributes in important ways to the evolving scholarship on virgin-soil epidemics. Recent work in this area has focused on the broad range of colonial disruptions that enabled the spread and exacerbated the impact and duration of epidemics among vulnerable populations.⁶⁶ While Hawai‘i met with its share of disruptions to the mid-nineteenth century, it did not, tellingly, face foreign conquest, enslavement, widespread famine, or forced migration and removals.⁶⁷ While Indigenous warfare took its toll—particularly Kamehameha’s successful effort to unify the islands between 1795 and 1810—conflicts of this nature predated European contact by centuries, and the new technologies employed by Hawaiian combatants (ships, firearms, and gunpowder) did not

⁶⁵ E.g., Fur, *A Nation of Women*, 12, 127–141.

⁶⁶ Jones, “Virgin Soils Revisited”; Alchon, *A Pest in the Land*; Paul Kelton, *Epidemics and Enslavement: Biological Catastrophe in the Native Southeast, 1492–1715* (Lincoln, NE, 2007); Newson, *Conquest and Pestilence in the Early Spanish Philippines*; Robbie Ethridge and Sheri Marie Shuck-Hall, eds., *Mapping the Mississippian Shatter Zone: The Colonial Indian Slave Trade and Regional Instability in the American South* (Lincoln, NE, 2009); Ethridge, *From Chicaza to Chickasaw: The European Invasion and the Transformation of the Mississippian World, 1540–1715* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2010); Kelton, *Cherokee Medicine, Colonial Germs: An Indigenous Nation’s Fight against Smallpox, 1518–1824* (Norman, OK, 2015); and Catherine E. Cameron, Paul Kelton, and Alan C. Swedlund, eds., *Beyond Germs: Native Depopulation in North America* (forthcoming Tucson, 2015).

⁶⁷ Credit is due to Crosby who—upon reading Stannard—was the first to make this observation; see Crosby, “Hawaiian Depopulation as a Model for the Amerindian Experience,” esp. 180–183. Fiji and the Northwest Coast present similar cases to Hawai‘i in this respect. For Fiji, see J. N. Hays, *The Burdens of Disease: Epidemics and Human Response in Western History* (New Brunswick, NJ, and London, 1998), 187–190; for the Northwest Coast, see Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence*, xiii, 4–5. For “famine” in Hawai‘i, see Isabella Aiona Abbott, *Lā‘au Hawai‘i: Traditional Hawaiian Uses of Plants* (Honolulu, 1992), 41–42. A famine in upland O‘ahu during the sandalwood era may have been costly, but the extent and duration has not been the subject of careful study. (See Chapter Four.) A drought on Maui in 1806 also seems to have taken lives. See A. F. Bushnell, “‘The Horror’ Reconsidered,” 123. For early accounts of the Islands’ bounty, see James King, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, vol. 3 (London, 1784), 104–105; *John Ledyard’s Journal of Captain Cook’s Last Voyage*, ed. James Kenneth Munford (Corvallis, OR, 1963), 118–119, 134; and V[asily] M[ikhailovich] Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka, 1817–1819*, trans. Ella Lury Wiswell (Honolulu, 1979), 213–222.

contribute significantly to population decline.⁶⁸ In short, while virgin-soil epidemics in the Americas, Island Southeast Asia, and elsewhere often featured forms of violence as corollary or precipitating factors, introduced diseases in Hawai‘i exacted their costs largely unaided by famine (or widespread malnutrition), warfare, enslavement, or displacement. The question then becomes whether the Hawaiian case lends support to the old model of virgin soil proposed by Alfred W. Crosby or is simply an interesting outlier. I argue that the Hawaiian case in fact bolsters Crosby’s position and casts doubt on the assumptions and direction of the newer revisionist scholarship. In Hawai‘i at least, virgin-soil epidemics reshaped Indigenous society and culture almost without regard to the particular cast colonialism took.

This is not to say that Crosby’s was the last word on the subject. If correct about the epidemiology and demographic impact, Crosby (and historians who followed him) failed to explore how Native communities weathered catastrophe, and what became of their societies in its wake.⁶⁹ Excellent recent studies by Robert Boyd and Linda A. Newson, for instance, chronicle the epidemiological and demographic impact of infectious disease in Native populations; but there is relatively little attention what changed in those cultures and societies. This dissertation pushes the field of virgin soil

⁶⁸ Stannard notes that Polynesian warfare mostly took the lives of men not women, and thus is unlikely to have affected reproduction rates. Stannard, *Before the Horror*, 61–62, 137.

⁶⁹ E.g., Norma McArthur, *Island Populations of the Pacific* (Canberra, Australia, 1968); McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples*; Henry F. Dobyns, *Their Number Become Thinned: Native American Population Dynamics in Eastern North America* (Knoxville, TN, 1983); Thornton, *American Indian Holocaust and Survival*; Stannard, *Before the Horror*; Noble David Cook, *Born to Die: Disease and New World Conquest, 1492–1650* (Cambridge, UK, 1998).

beyond epidemiology and demography into the realm of Indigenous cultural responses to epidemic disease.⁷⁰

This study parts ways with current scholarship in one other significant way. For decades now, scholars of Indigenous peoples in the path of Euro-American expansion have narrated their histories as if Native actors were of sound body and mind when they traded, negotiated, fought, and otherwise engaged with newcomers. This was all too often not the case. To convey the *lived* experience of past Indigenous peoples, historians need to illuminate the challenges to health, well-being, and survival that individuals and communities faced on a regular and ongoing basis. One reason for scholars' avoidance of these difficult topics has to do with the so-called declensionist narrative of Native history. Built upon ethnocentric notions of progress—cultural, economic, and religious—as well as a virulent racialist ideology of white superiority and “vanishing races,” the narrative of decline at least reflected vicious demographic trends across the Americas and Oceania that the newer scholarship has tended to lose sight of. Indigenous peoples in the path of Euro-American empires met with displacement, cultural and political fragmentation, and population decline from which many groups only began to rebound in the twentieth century. Recent historians have done an admirable job giving voice to past Native peoples and providing a more accurate portrait of Native agency and resilience in the midst of Western expansion. But eschewing the subject of Native decline—and of Native

⁷⁰ A forerunner and model is Paul Kelton, “Avoiding the Smallpox Spirits: Colonial Epidemics and Southeastern Indian Survival,” *Ethnohistory* 51 (2004): 45–71.

people's actual suffering—runs the risks of misrepresenting crucial aspects of Indigenous history no less consequential than resistance and persistence.⁷¹

Thus it falls to a new generation of scholars to examine what are admittedly sensitive and troubling historical phenomena. Addressing Native decline, however, in no way denies agency to Indigenous peoples. Rather, it reminds us of how colonialism lives on in the bodies of the colonized, and also illustrates the remarkable fact of Native Americans' cultural and demographic recovery. By the second decade of the twentieth century, there were fewer than a thousand native speakers of Hawaiian, many of them living on the tiny island of Ni'ihau. Today, fluency in Hawaiian is approaching ten thousand across North America and the Pacific.⁷² Meanwhile, the State of Hawai'i now recognizes its Indigenous tongue as an official language of government and commerce, and its colleges have begun to offer degrees in Hawaiian language and culture. Perhaps most importantly, the Islands' total population of people of Hawaiian descent has increased every decade since the 1970s. With every passing day Hawai'i grows more Hawaiian.

⁷¹ Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land*, 1–15, 280–293. The “purpose of historical ethnography,” as Sahlins notes, cannot be limited to “salutary lessons in cultural continuity.” Sahlins, “Goodbye to *Tristes Tropes*,” 11. See also Scott G. Ortman, *Winds from the North: Tewa Origins and Historical Anthropology* (Salt Lake City, 2012), 366–371.

⁷² William H. (Pila) Wilson, e-mail message to author, 6 March 2012. Revitalizing Indigenous language and culture through immersion programs and community activism is one way to continue that trend. See, e.g., the American Indian Education Association, <http://www.niea.org>; and 'Aha Pūnana Leo, <http://www.ahapunaleo.org>.

Outline of the Work

The progressive and compounding nature of Hawaiian health struggles in this period calls for a chronological narrative. Chapter One traces epidemiological and cultural exchanges between Hawaiians and the Cook expedition. I argue that the introduction of venereal disease was an unparalleled catastrophe in Hawaiian society with major implications for the roles of women and for the health of all Hawaiians. In Chapters Two and Three I explore the effects of a single epidemic—the *‘ōku‘u* (“squatting disease”) of 1804—as well as a chronic, long-term disease that began to afflict Islanders in this period, tuberculosis. I also trace Hawaiian exchanges with the outside world; unregulated and uncontrollable either by Hawaiians or foreigners, these exchanges resulted in a series of social and cultural adaptations by Islanders.

Chapter Four narrates the events leading to the overthrow of the traditional Hawaiian religious-legal system in 1819 and the eventual alliance of the ruling chiefs with American Protestant missionaries. I argue that health concerns—including markedly decreased fertility—played a major role in the ruling chiefesses’ decision to overthrow the kapu system and seek a new path in alliance with the Mission. Chapter Five focuses on the Christianization of Islanders (and the “Hawaiianization” of Anglo-American Protestantism) and the work of American missionary physicians amid the ongoing crises of Native health and mortality. I argue that Native Hawaiians—under the influence of missionaries, but also by virtue of their own life experiences—came to view disease and depopulation as inevitable, and the Hawaiian race as possibly destined for extinction.

A brief Conclusion addresses the contemporary legacies of Hawai‘i’s epidemic century, including harrowing health disparities that continue to plague Native Hawaiians today, and the battles being waged by activists and public health professionals to address these disparities.



In 2012 the University of Hawai‘i Maui College introduced a new degree program in Hawaiian Studies called *Ho‘oulu Lāhui* (“increase the nation/people”). That motto was made famous by King David Kalākaua in the 1870s when the Native Hawaiian population was at an all-time low. *Ho‘oulu lāhui* was the keystone of Kalākaua’s rule, and he meant it quite literally: Hawai‘i needed more Hawaiians.⁷³ The survival of this motto across many realms of Hawaiian society is a critical reminder of the demographic aspects of cultural persistence and political self-determination.⁷⁴ Hawai‘i’s demographic challenges did not begin with the U.S.-led coup in 1893, or with the importation of plantation labor in the mid-nineteenth century, or even with the whaling and sandalwood booms in the decades before that. The problem began, precisely, with the arrival of British naval captain James Cook in January 1778.

⁷³ “*Ma ka la 22o Apr. hallo ka Moi...*” [On April 22 the King said...], *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, 9 May 1874. For a similar appeal twenty years earlier, see Alexander Liholiho (Kamehameha IV), “His Majesty’s Speech in English and Hawaiian at the Opening of the Legislature, April 7, 1855,” in *Speeches of His Majesty Kamehameha IV. to the Hawaiian Legislature...* (Honolulu, 1861), 15.

⁷⁴ See, e.g., Kekaha Solis, “*Ho‘oulu Lāhui*,” *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, 24 Aug. 2008.

CHAPTER ONE:
Pox Hawaiiana, 1778–1779

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[I]t will appear it has been we ourselves that has entailed on these poor, Unhappy people
an everlasting and Miserable plague.

–Edward Riou, HMS *Discovery*, 29 November 1778

[N]ot a pig could be purchased, without a girl was permitted to bring it to market.

–John Rickman, HMS *Discovery*, 17 January 1779

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There were certainly others. Perhaps dozens of sailors solicited sex from local people at Kaua‘i in 1778. Yet Will Bradley is marked for all time as the British seaman who, “knowing himself to be injured, with the Vener[e]al disorder,” helped himself to one or more Hawaiians anyway.¹ For this infraction Bradley received two dozen lashes of the whip on deck. It was not the first time he had been disciplined over the course of Captain James Cook’s third Pacific voyage of discovery. According to Cook’s lieutenant aboard the *Resolution*, Will Bradley was one of the “most notorious Rascals that ever stepped on board a ship.” Yet if Bradley’s earlier “insolence” and “contempt” had wronged the officers or crew, his violations at Kaua‘i were of a wholly different order.²

It is a rare instance in the annals of historical epidemiology to be able to pin a catastrophic epidemic on a single person; yet there is little doubt as to the outcome of Will Bradley’s recklessness in 1778. In assisting his illustrious captain in the discovery of new lands and peoples, Bradley and crewmen like him saddled Pacific Islanders with

¹ Henry Roberts (25 Jan. 1778), in *The Journals of Captain James Cook on His Voyages of Discovery: The Voyage of the Resolution and Discovery, 1776–1780*, 4 vols., ed. J. C. Beaglehole (Cambridge, UK, 1967), 3:266n (hereafter, Beaglehole, *Journals*).

² John Williamson (2 Nov. 1777), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:240n3.

devastating new diseases. Before their arrival at the Hawaiian Islands, Cook's men—mostly young and amounting to some 190 between the two ships—had already consorted with Tahitians, Tongans, Sāmoans, and others. Between their discovery of Kaua'i and Ni'ihau in January 1778 and their return to the Big Island of Hawai'i later that year, Cook's men had also had dealings with Aleutian Islanders and scores of Northwest Coast peoples, whom they found to be rather less agreeable to sexual exchanges than the Polynesians. Nowhere was the impact of Old World diseases worse than at Hawai'i.

For British seamen of this era, sex with Indigenous people was an expectation. After weeks or months at sea with little to distract them, the arrival at an inhabited coast entailed watering and restocking the ships and enjoying the “charms” of the local people. As one of Cook's officers put it, the sailors' “pleasure was centered in that kind of commerce in the new discovered islands, wherever they went.”³ If, for Cook, the Pacific voyages of exploration were for the glory of the motherland or the greater knowledge of humankind, for sailors a different set of goals obtained. A strict workhouse on the open sea, the sailing ship was transformed into a carnal playpen at the approach of an inhabited island. Nor did the officers, for all their scorn of common sailors, refrain from these activities. Ship surgeon and officer David Samwell matter-of-factly explained the carnal proceedings at Hawai'i in 1778: “When any one of us sees a handsome Girl in a Canoe that he has a mind to, upon waving his Hand to her she immediately jumps overboard &

³ John Rickman, *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, on Discovery; Performed in the Years 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779* (1781; repr. New York, 1967), 224.

swims to the Ship, where we receive her in our arms like another Venus just rising from the Waves.”⁴

Sexual encounters with Islanders occurred despite Capt. Cook’s on-again off-again prohibitions—and island chiefs’ taboos—on the practice. On his first voyage to the South Pacific in 1769 to record the transit of Venus, Cook grew concerned about Natives’ susceptibility to venereal infection at the Society Islands (Tahiti).⁵ Unfortunately, he determined there was nothing to be done besides bar his men from disembarking—and Natives from boarding—the ships, a prohibition regularly ignored on both sides. On the third voyage seven years later, Cook’s astronomer observed at Tahiti, “we have ½ of our people ill with the fowl disease” (gonorrhoea and/or syphilis).⁶ Six weeks after that, “there were scarce hands enough able to do duty,” with “more than 30 [men] under the surgeon’s hands”—that is, laid up with venereal symptoms.⁷ Unfortunately for Hawaiians, the newcomers arrived on their shores in roughly this shape in 1778.

The story of Cook’s “discovery” of the Hawaiian Islands has been told many times. The Hawaiian discovery of Europeans is, for obvious reasons, less well known.

⁴ David Samwell (21 Dec. 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1154. For officers’ dalliances with Hawaiians, see also John Ledyard, *Journal of Captain Cook’s Last Voyage* [1783], ed. James Kenneth Munford (Corvallis, OR, 1964), 109.

⁵ See *Captain Cook’s Journal During His First Voyage Round the World Made in H.M. Bark “Endeavour” 1768–71*, ed. W. J. L. Wharton (London, 1893), 76–77. I employ “venereal disease” instead of “sexually transmitted disease” for a number of reasons. The former term helps to distinguish venereal syphilis from endemic syphilis (see below). “Sexually transmitted disease” also suggests a host of diseases—e.g., HIV and hepatitis C—not present in eighteenth-century Hawai‘i. Finally, “venereal disease”—along with variants, such as “lues venerea”—is the term English speakers and writers themselves used in this period.

⁶ William Bayly (13 Oct. 1777), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:233n4.

⁷ Rickman, *Journal of Captain Cook’s Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, 191. See also Ledyard, *Journal of Captain Cook’s Last Voyage*, 61–64.

Given the nature of the documentation and of later Hawaiian traditions, there are limits to what can be gleaned from eighteenth-century Hawaiian perspectives. But whatever else we can say about the Hawaiian discovery of Europeans—and anthropologists and ethnohistorians have said a good deal⁸—disease transmission was a critical part of the experience. Hawai‘i’s first recorded encounter with outsiders not only set the stage for a century of health challenges but also began a process that would transform Island society and culture in remarkable and rapid fashion. At the same time, first contacts with Europeans set in motion dynamic alliances between Island women (of all classes) and foreign visitors that would shortly undermine chiefly rule.

“True Paradise”

In the 1966 Hollywood epic *Hawaii*, American missionary doctor John Whipple cradles the body of a Maui prince who has succumbed to measles in the surf at Lāhainā. In a soliloquy over the noble *ali‘i* (chief), Dr. Whipple (played by a young Gene Hackman) expresses in perfect capsule form the beleaguered trope of the “ecological Indian”: “When Captain Cook discovered these islands fifty years ago, they were a true paradise. Infectious disease was unknown; they didn’t even catch cold.”⁹ That was far

⁸ E.g., among others, Marshall Sahlins, *Social Stratification in Polynesia* (Seattle, 1958); *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1981); *Islands of History* (Chicago, 1985); *Anahulu: The Anthropology of History in the Kingdom of Hawai‘i*, vol. 1, with Dorothy B. Barrère (Chicago, 1992); and *How “Natives” Think: About Captain Cook, for Example* (Chicago, 1995).

⁹ “Quarantine,” *Hawaii*, DVD, directed by George Roy Hill (Santa Monica, CA, 2005). The film was an adaptation of James A. Michener’s 1959 novel of the same title. In the scene alluded to, “Keoki” and his countrymen are dying in droves at Lāhainā around 1830 from measles. Actually, measles did not arrive

from the case; yet the perception of Hawai‘i and its residents as prelapsarian persists, even among some scholars.¹⁰ If the Islands were not saddled with malaria, smallpox, venereal disease, or tuberculosis before 1778, they were hardly free from disease. Like Indigenous populations elsewhere before contact, Hawaiians lived short lives and contended with a number of challenges to health and well-being.¹¹ What follows is a discussion of eighteenth-century Hawaiian society—exclusive of the practice of medicine (discussed in Chapter Three)—to situate Island life and health before the arrival of the *ma‘i malihini* (introduced diseases).

For a number of reasons, precontact Hawai‘i is better understood than most Indigenous societies before the arrival of Europeans: first, contact with the West was made relatively late; second, foreign visitors were great in number and diversity, and their observations were of remarkably high quality; and third, Hawaiian oral traditions—including *mo‘olelo* (stories and histories), *mele* (songs and poems), and *no‘eau* (proverbs)—thrived both before and after contact. Hawaiian elites’ reliance upon genealogy (*mo‘okū‘auhau*) to cement their authority also resulted in oral traditions that

until 1848. For the “ecological Indian,” see Shepard Krech, III, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History* (New York, 1999).

¹⁰ E.g., Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires: Pehea lā e Pono ai? How Shall We Live in Harmony* (Honolulu, 1992), 26, 48–49, 322; David E. Stannard, *Before the Horror: The Population of Hawai‘i on the Eve of Western Contact* (Honolulu, 1989), 42 (“comparatively paradisiacal environment,” “exceptionally robust and nearly disease-free people”); and Kathryn Hilgenkamp and Colleen Pescaia, “Traditional Hawaiian Healing and Western Influence,” *Californian Journal of Health Promotion* 1 (2003): 34–39, esp. 34.

¹¹ Patrick Vinton Kirch, *Feathered Gods and Fishhooks: An Introduction to Hawaiian Archaeology and Prehistory* (Honolulu, 1985), 243–244. For disease in pre-Columbian populations, see, e.g., Krech, *The Ecological Indian*; Charles S. Mann, *1491: New Revelations of the Americas before Columbus* (New York, 2005); and Linda A. Newson, *Conquest and Pestilence in the Spanish Philippines* (Honolulu, 2009).

are less impressionistic and more attuned to change over time than that of many non-literate societies. Court-appointed genealogists were responsible for the memorization and passing-down of ali‘i genealogies that, anthropologists have determined, stretch back hundreds of years with a great deal of accuracy. One of the most remarkable aspects of the Hawaiian *mo‘olelo* and *mo‘okū‘auhau* is their general agreement with contemporary archaeology regarding human settlement of the archipelago.¹²

The archaeological record and oral tradition alike point to two major waves of human settlement of the Hawaiian Islands: the first originating in the Marquesas Islands to the southeast around 800–1000 CE, and the second from the Society Islands (Tahiti) beginning around 1000 and continuing through the fourteenth century. The Hawaiian language is full of references to *kahiki* (Tahiti) as the ancestral homeland. Even contemporary names for Hawaiian geographical and topographical features echo this distant past: the channel separating the islands of Lāna‘i and Kaho‘olawe is Kealaikahiki (“the way to Tahiti”), and the western tip of Kaho‘olawe—the nearest point on the Islands to Tahiti—is Kealaikahiki Point.

Hawai‘i’s first Polynesian settlers made the voyage north in double-hulled canoes with sails of woven tree bark. These vessels were veritable Noah’s arks full of plants and seedlings, animals of both sexes, tools and implements, and everything else needed for survival in a new land. The voyagers’ planning was wise, as the Hawaiian archipelago

¹² Patrick Vinton Kirch, *How Chiefs Became Kings: Divine Kingship and the Rise of Archaic States in Ancient Hawai‘i* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2010), chap. 3, esp. 77–87; Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief: The Island Civilization of Ancient Hawai‘i* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2012), 126 and passim. See also Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 19–22; and Robert Hommon, *The Ancient Hawaiian State: Origins of a Political Society* (Oxford and New York, 2013).

had few cultivable or edible species before the arrival of the southerners. Most of what came to be grown and cultivated on the Islands originated in the South Pacific, including taro, sweet potato, banana, coconut, and the paper mulberry tree (*wauke*), which Hawaiians used for clothing and sleeping mats.¹³ Polynesians, of course, also brought their deities, languages, and customs to the North Pacific.

Around the year 1400, for reasons unknown, voyages to and from Hawai‘i came to an abrupt end. This is confirmed, again, both by archaeology and the *mo‘olelo* which after 1400 refer exclusively to “people and places whose frame of geographic reference is limited to” the Islands.¹⁴ The Hawaiian people lacked contact with the outside world for as long as 400 years.¹⁵ This isolation was only partly due to geography; Pacific trade winds played an even more important role by blowing west-bound Manila galleons (1565–1815) and other European ships well south of the Hawaiian Islands en route to the Philippines, and well north on their return to the Americas. Besides the occasional driftwood from a shipwreck or a bird having flown wildly off course, the Islands were without visitors.¹⁶

¹³ Kirch, *Feathered Goods and Fishhooks*, chap. 9; O. A. Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization: Germs and Genocide in Hawai‘i* (Honolulu, 1993), 7.

¹⁴ Kirch, *How Chiefs Became Kings*, 87.

¹⁵ Of course it is possible that a Japanese or Spanish ship may have blown off course and made landing at the islands, but archaeological evidence is lacking. Cf. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 16–23. For a Hawaiian tradition about a foreign navigator (allegedly a Spaniard) who arrived with his sister “long before” Cook, married a Hawaiian chiefess, and remained on the Islands the rest of his life, see Mary Kawena Pukui, “Ancient Hulas of Kauai,” in *Hula: Historical Perspectives*, ed. Dorothy Barrère, M. K. Pukui, and Marion Kelly, 74–89 (Honolulu, 1980), esp. 81.

¹⁶ For the presence of small pieces of iron that Islanders had pried from driftwood, see Cook, in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:285–286, and *ibid.*, 285–286n4.

Hawai‘i’s isolation had major implications for the society and culture that developed between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. According to archaeologist Patrick Vinton Kirch, a “radically new kind of society emerged” in the North Pacific, distinct from the rest of Polynesia and the broader Island Pacific.¹⁷ In the late fifteenth century a population boom resulting from agricultural innovations led to class distinctions growing more pronounced. Human sacrifice began to be practiced at certain *heiau* (temples, altars), tapping criminals and members of a reviled, outcast class of persons known as *kauā* (or *kauwā*) as victims.¹⁸ By the late-sixteenth century, the ali‘i dressed, lived, and mated in distinctive fashion from the *maka‘āinana* (commoners) who were now required to supply their overlords with tribute from the fruits of their agricultural labors. In an apt illustration of the mystification of power dynamics on the Islands—and of the blurring of the human and divine—the annual tribute was called

¹⁷ Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief*, 230.

¹⁸ The Hawaiian *kauā*—outcasts, pariahs, slaves—have been little studied. Malo indicated that *kauā* status was hereditary, but he did not say whether it was also permanent. The fact that some *kauā* had a special mark tattooed on their foreheads suggests that their status was more than temporary. Yet with the exception of the *kauā kuapa‘a* (“load-carrying outcasts”), the *kauā* were apparently not chattels or bound labor but instead a tainted, “abhorred,” and “greatly dreaded” class of Islanders who “lived apart” from other Hawaiians and were denied what we might call basic human rights. The Dalits (“untouchables”) of India may be a useful comparison. But were *kauā* a distinct class or simply disfavored *maka‘āinana*? The size and distribution of *kauā* across the Islands (before and after 1778) is also unknown. Kamakau, who noted that *kauā* were sometimes buried alive with their masters, believed *kauā* caste disappeared upon the abolition of the *kapu* (taboo) system in 1819. (On O‘ahu, the *kauā* had been “lost in the shuffle” during the wars of the 1780s and 90s.) Samuel Manaiakalani Kamakau, *Ka Po‘e Kahiko: The People of Old*, trans. Mary Kawena Pukui, ed. Dorothy B. Barrère (Honolulu, 1964), 8–9. See also David Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities (Moolelo Hawaii)*, trans. Nathaniel B. Emerson (Honolulu, 1951), 68–72; Davida Malo, *Ka Mo‘olelo Hawai‘i: Hawaiian Traditions*, trans. Malcolm Nāea Chun (Honolulu, 1996), 39–41, 183–185; and Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary* (Honolulu, 1986), s.v. “*kauā*, *kauwā*.”

ho 'okupu, “to cause to grow.”¹⁹ Shortly, the “entire political economy” of the Islands came to depend on this system of taxation.²⁰ Meanwhile, an etiological tale was constructed to explain the existence of the *maka'āinana*, comprising ninety-nine percent of the population²¹: all Hawaiians were once *ali'i* but some had “lost” or forgotten their genealogies over the course of time.²² These were the *maka'āinana*, “the people who tend the land.”

Many writers have speculated that physical differences between *ali'i* and *maka'āinana*—in particular, the greater relative stature and girth of the former—were the result of distinct lines of descent.²³ The obvious candidate for *ali'i* ancestry, according to the this line of thinking, were the medieval Tahitian conquerors of the original settlers of the Islands. Yet oral traditions and genetic studies do not (as yet) support the theory of

¹⁹ Kirch, *How Chiefs Became Kings*, 61–63, 73–76; Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief*, 175–177, 191–199, 202–203, 207. For a similar Tongan tradition, see I[an] C. Campbell, *Island Kingdom: Tonga Ancient and Modern* (Christchurch, NZ, 1992), 31.

²⁰ Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief*, 232. See also Caroline Ralston, “Hawaii 1778–1854: Some Aspects of *Maka'ainana* [*sic*] Response to Rapid Cultural Change,” *Journal of Pacific History* 19 (1984): 21–40, esp. 22–25.

²¹ In the 1820s American missionary Charles S. Stewart estimated that *maka'āinana* accounted for “at least” 149,000 of the 150,000 “supposed, at present, to be the population of the group.” C[harles] S[amuel] Stewart, *Private Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, and Residence at the Sandwich Islands, in the Years 1822, 1823, 1824, and 1825* (New York, 1828), 136. No one has suggested a better figure since, for either the precontact or postcontact period. See, e.g., Jocelyn Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence: Rank, Gender, and Colonialism in the Hawaiian Islands* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1990), 203.

²² Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 60–63; but cf. *ibid.*, 53. For a similar tradition among the Stó:lō people of present-day British Columbia, see Keith Thor Carlson, *The Power of Place, The Problem of Time: Aboriginal Identity and Historical Consciousness in the Cauldron of Colonialism* (Toronto, 2010), 79–86. The tendency of some scholars to naturalize Polynesian class structures has led to some confusion about change over time. See, e.g., Greg Denning, *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent Land: Marquesas, 1774-1880* (Honolulu, 1980), 53; Kame'eleihiwa, *Native Lands and Foreign Desires*, chap. 2; and Kanalu G. Terry Young, *Rethinking the Native Hawaiian Past* (New York, 1998), xiv, 27–31.

²³ E.g., Louis Claude de Saulses de Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819: A Narrative Account*, trans. Ella L. Wiswell, ed. Marion Kelly (Honolulu, 1978), 53; and Stewart, *Private Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, 126.

distinct descent.²⁴ Different diets, labor regimes, lifestyles, and endogamous marriage over many generations provide the best explanation for the distinct body types noted by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century visitors.

By the eighteenth century, Hawaiian society had come to be organized around an annual cycle divided between the *akua* (gods, deities) Kū and Lono. Kū was conceived of as a war deity and Lono as an agricultural deity; both were male. It is not clear how much attention was paid to either deity by women and girls, who observed their own *akua* (see below). Lono's season, from fall to spring, was dominated by agriculture. Sacrifices and rituals devoted to Lono were required of elites and commoners alike. Lono's four months also marked the season for the gathering of tribute. Roving from island to island and district to district accompanied by their train of subchiefs, the ali'i "ate" the land; hence the common title, still in occasional use today, *ali'i 'ai moku* (chief who eats the island/district).²⁵ When spring arrived, the season for warfare commenced, with military exercises and ritual observances of Kū over the next eight months.

Cook's men noted only a few cultural differences between the people of the inhabited islands. After interacting with Hawaiians on five or more islands, Samwell opined that the "Inhabitants of...[Ni'ihau] and of Atowai [Kaua'i] differ in nothing material, either in dress, Language or appearance, from those of Ouwaihee [Hawai'i] & the other Islands to the Eastward."²⁶ The only differences Samwell could identify were in

²⁴ The chiefs and commoners were "all of one race...descended from the same ancestors, Wakea and Papa." Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 52.

²⁵ See the Royal Order of Kamehameha I, <http://www.mamalahoa.org/mamalahoa/ali-i-aimoku>.

²⁶ Samwell (14 March 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1230.

women's fashions and the pronunciation of certain consonants; for instance, the exchange of "K" for "T" on Ni'ihau, which probably dates back to the fourteenth century.²⁷ It was obvious to British officers, in short, that the Sandwich Islands constituted a nation, however hierarchical or divided by class. Indeed contact-era Hawai'i makes a kind of nonsense of the scholarly view of nations as "imagined" or invented communities.²⁸ No such ideological work was necessary on a remote archipelago where the most ancient religious and mythological ideas confirmed Hawaiian national identity.

If Hawaiian culture seemed mostly uniform to outsiders in the 1770s, Hawaiian political structures were obviously not. Four major polities existed, headquartered at each of the large islands: Hawai'i, Maui, O'ahu, and Kaua'i. The latter three islands also enjoyed control over their smaller, less populous neighbors, exacting regular tribute and coordinating labor—Maui over Lāna'i and Kaho'olawe, O'ahu over Moloka'i, and Kaua'i over Ni'ihau. Only the Big Island featured a divided polity in the late-precontact period, with roughly eastern and western polities. With the death in 1782 of the *mō'ī* (king) Kalani'ōpu'u—whose name means "the whale-tooth pendant royal/heavenly one"—the Big Island was split into three political entities ruled respectively by Kalani'ōpu'u's brother, son, and nephew Pai'ea ("hard-shelled crab"), who later became the first *mō'ī* of the unified archipelago using the name Kamehameha ("the lonely one").²⁹

²⁷ Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief*, 14.

²⁸ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London, 1983). For a cogent recent criticism, see Azar Gat, *Nations: The Long History and Deep Roots of Political Ethnicity and Nationalism* (London, 2013).

²⁹ Ralph S. Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778–1854: Foundation and Transformation* (1938;

The Big Island also had the most hierarchical system of rule in the archipelago, with distinctions between ali‘i and maka‘āinana greatest and the notion of divine kings the most highly elaborated. Kirch’s explanation for these developments on Hawai‘i Island, and to a lesser extent on Maui, hangs on environmental factors and subsistence practices. In the late-precontact period the western islands (Kaua‘i, Ni‘ihau, and O‘ahu) were characterized by irrigated taro farming, fishpond aquaculture, and an abundance of marine resources. Hawai‘i Island and Maui, by contrast, relied upon the less-productive dryland (that is, rain-irrigated) taro farming, which required a good deal more labor, both in terms of bodies and person-hours.

At the moment of Cook’s arrival, Kalani‘ōpu‘u was attempting to conquer eastern Maui. It was not the first time a high chief from the Big Island or Maui had tried to take a neighboring island, and it would not be the last.³⁰ Today scholars and Hawaiians alike refer to the islands’ historic rulers as chiefs and to the island polities as chiefdoms. It is not the best terminology. Four decades of archival research, writing, and archaeological surveys led Kirch to believe that by the late-sixteenth century the ranking ali‘i had developed a form of divine kingship akin to the ancient Egyptians, Incas, Nahuas/Aztecs, or Shang Chinese.³¹ Historical, linguistic, and archaeological evidence all support Kirch’s argument. Notions of divine kingship were apparent even in the brief encounters of 1778–1779: in addition to the peoples’ association of Kalani‘ōpu‘u with Lono, the reports

repr. Honolulu, 1947), 29–38.

³⁰ Kirch, *How Chiefs Became Kings*, 104; Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief*, 201.

³¹ Kirch, *How Chiefs Became Kings*, passim; Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief*, 217–218. See also Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 26, 38, 40–49.

of human sacrifice, and the impromptu prostration, Britons also observed the loftiest scenes of statecraft at Hawai‘i that they had seen anywhere in the Pacific. Samwell, for instance, observed a procession of ali‘i on Kaua‘i in 1779, which he considered “as great a piece of State as we have seen among any Indians.”³² Even after the introduction of Christianity in the 1820s, chiefly Hawaiians could be heard giving orders to God, as opposed to petitioning him the way commoners and foreign Christians did.³³ The chiefs’ prayer style of course drew upon traditional practice, where ali‘i served as intermediaries between the people and the akua. More than intermediaries, the ali‘i were traditionally seen as exerting control over the gods through their various rituals and cults.³⁴

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Scholars have studied the demography of precontact Hawai‘i for over a century.³⁵ Most of the important questions—including population size and distribution, average life expectancy, and infant mortality—are unresolved. In a series of studies from 1967 to 1978, Hawai‘i State Statistician Robert C. Schmitt estimated the total Hawaiian population at contact at between 200,000 and 300,000, with an average life expectancy of less than thirty years.³⁶ In 1989 historian David E. Stannard took exception with both of

³² Samwell (5 March 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1226. See also, e.g., King (26 Jan. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:511–513. In spite of Hawai‘i’s status as an archaic state (or states), I will employ use the terms “chief” and “chiefess” (or “ali‘i”) for elite Hawaiians throughout this dissertation.

³³ Oliver Pomeroy Emerson, *Pioneer Days in Hawaii* (Garden City, NY, 1928), 159.

³⁴ Juri Mykkänen, *Inventing Politics: A New Political Anthropology of the Hawaiian Kingdom* (Honolulu, 2003), 29. See also Valerio Valeri, *Kingship and Sacrifice: Ritual and Society in Ancient Hawaii*, trans. Paula Wissing (Chicago, 1985), 225–226; and Sahlins, *Islands of History*, 93.

³⁵ E.g., W[illiam] D. Alexander, *A Brief History of the Hawaiian People* (New York, 1891); Stephen H. Roberts, *Population Problems of the Pacific* (London, 1927).

³⁶ Robert C. Schmitt, “Differential Mortality in Honolulu Before 1900,” *Hawaii Medical Journal* 26

Schmitt's estimates, arguing that contact-era population was closer to 800,000–1,000,000, and that life expectancy must have been higher given that American missionary estimates in the 1820s put Native Hawaiian life expectancy above thirty *after* the introduction of syphilis, tuberculosis, influenza and other diseases. Stannard opted for a “significantly higher” estimate of precontact life expectancy but offered no figure of his own, stating only that “it is now almost certain that Hawaiians in 1778 had life expectancies greater than their European contemporaries.”³⁷ More recent scholarship suggests otherwise.³⁸ Paleodemography is a notoriously speculative science; reliable figures for contact-era Hawaiian demography remain elusive.

However, Stannard was right to challenge scholars taking early visitors' observations of Islander health and demography at face value or as representative of an entire district or island. Most eighteenth-century explorers and merchants saw only able-bodied coastal residents who bothered to gather in ports and villages. Some observers—including Lt. James King, who made an early estimate of the Islands' population—believed that Hawaiians lived *only* along the coasts. Europeans were also unclear about Polynesian family arrangements and thus faced difficulties in reckoning family size.³⁹

(1967): 537–541; Schmitt, *Historical Statistics of Hawai'i, 1778–1965* (Honolulu, 1968); Schmitt, “New Estimates of the Pre-Censal Population of Hawai'i,” *The Journal of the Polynesian Society* 80 (1971): 237–243; and Robert W. Gardner and Robert C. Schmitt, “Ninety-Seven Years of Mortality in Hawaii,” *Hawaii Medical Journal* 37 (1978): 297–302.

³⁷ Stannard, *Before the Horror*, 60–61.

³⁸ Patrick V. Kirch, “‘Like Shoals of Fish’: Archaeology and Population in Pre-Contact Hawai'i,” in *The Growth and Collapse of Pacific Island Societies: Archaeological and Demographic Perspectives*, ed. Kirch and Jean-Louis Rallu, 52–69 (Honolulu, 2007), esp. 65–67; and Ross Cordy, “Reconstructing Hawaiian Population at European Contact: Three Case Studies,” in *ibid.*, 108–128, esp. 112, 125–127.

³⁹ See, e.g., Andrew F. Bushnell, “‘The Horror’ Reconsidered: An Evaluation of the Historical Evidence

Most estimates of the Hawaiian population calculated before 1820 are thus regarded by scholars today as too low. Yet by doubling even the highest previous estimate, Stannard likely overreached. After decades of research and an entire volume dedicated to the subject, Kirch recently arrived at a serviceable estimate of half a million persons, perhaps more, upon the arrival of Cook.⁴⁰ To put this number in perspective, half a million is fully two-thirds greater than the entire Native population of California at contact, a land mass twenty-five times the size of the Hawaiian Islands.⁴¹ Given that much of the Islands tower above eight thousand feet, the population was densely packed into the habitable regions. There can be no doubt that eighteenth-century Hawai‘i was an agricultural powerhouse supporting a robust and fecund populace. This is precisely what British observers described in 1778–1779.

What is known about Hawaiian health at contact? Contrary to Stannard and others, early historical accounts and the archaeological record (including skeletal remains) suggest that Hawaiians suffered from a range of diseases, including respiratory infections, rheumatic fever, osteomyelitis, arthritis, puerperal (childbed) fever, enteritis,

for Population Decline in Hawai‘i, 1779–1803,” *Pacific Studies* 16, no. 3 (1993): 115–161, esp. 121.

⁴⁰ Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief*, 152–170, esp. 168. The volume mentioned is Kirch and Rallu, *The Growth and Collapse of Pacific Island Societies*. Interestingly, half a million is the original figure offered by James King in 1779 before he revised it down to 400,000. See King (March 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:620.

⁴¹ Hawai‘i = 6,400 square miles; California = 163,707 square miles. Over the course of many studies, Sherburne F. Cook and his colleagues arrived at a figure of 300,000 for the Native population of contact-era California. Despite significant differences between Hawai‘i and Alta California (and their peoples), both regions experienced roughly the same rate of depopulation in the decades after contact: a loss of 75–80% in fifty years. See S. F. Cook, *The Population of the California Indians, 1769–1970* (Berkeley, 1976); S. F. Cook, “Historical Demography,” in *Handbook of North American Indians*, vol. 8, *California*, ed. Robert F. Heizer and William C. Sturtevant (Washington, DC, 1978), 91–98; and S. F. Cook and Woodrow Borah, *Essays in Population History: Mexico and California* (Berkeley, 1979).

sinusitis, mastoiditis, tooth decay, eye infections, ringworm, and ulcers. Congenital malformations such as spina bifida likely also occurred on occasion. It is nearly impossible to determine which of these conditions proved fatal—candidates would include rheumatic fever, puerperal sepsis, osteomyelitis, and mastoiditis—and in what numbers. Archaeologists believe that Hawaiians also contracted zoonotic diseases by living with pigs (trichinosis), chickens (bird flu?), and dogs over several hundreds of years. Having run their course in the human population, these diseases would likely have enabled the development of immunity.⁴²

Some Hawaiian lives may have been shortened by excessive consumption of ‘awa, or kava (*Piper methysticum*), a mildly narcotic plant consumed as a beverage. Modern studies suggest the possibility of liver damage from heavy kava consumption. Various late-eighteenth-century ali‘i seem to have been wasting away as a result of the habit.⁴³ European visitors noted irritated eyes, weak or emaciated bodies, and above all, scaly whitish or yellowish skin. Lt. James King went further, deeming fatalities to ‘awa consumption second only to venereal disease in 1779.⁴⁴ King met with a “young son” of Kalani‘ōpu‘u who showed him “some places on his hip” that had become “scaly” as a

⁴² Kirch, *Feathered Gods and Fishhooks*, 243–244; Leslie B. Marshall, “Disease Ecologies of Australia and Oceania,” in *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, ed. Kenneth F. Kiple, 482–496 (Cambridge, UK, 1993), esp. 483; Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 30.

⁴³ See, e.g., British descriptions of the high chiefs “Koah,” Ke‘eaumoku, Kahekili, and Kaumuali‘i, in James King (17 Jan. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:504; Archibald Menzies (4 March 1792), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, ed. W[illiam] F[rederick] Wilson (Honolulu, 1920), 21; George Vancouver (13 March 1793), *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean and Round the World, 1791–1795*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb (London, 1984), 857–858; and John Turnbull, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Years 1800, 1801, 1802, 1803, and 1804...* (London, 1805), 34–35. See also Chapter Two.

⁴⁴ James King (March 1799), manuscript log on the *Resolution*, PRO Admiralty 55, vol. 122, National Archives, Surrey, UK. See also King (March 1799), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:612.

result of ‘awa consumption. “It is not uncommon,” wrote Capt. Charles Clerke, “to see a young man of 25 or 30 wholly enervated and unstrung” from ‘awa abuse.⁴⁵ Clerke observed that Kalani‘ōpu‘u himself was “totally debilitated and destroyed,” his eyes “continually full of Rheum and his hands shook to such a degree that it was with the utmost difficulty he could put any thing into his Mouth.”⁴⁶ James Burney noted that Kalani‘ōpu‘u’s body was “intirely covered with a kind of Scaliness, the Marks of a great Yava drinker[,] and his limbs trembling under him.”⁴⁷ Many who indulged in ‘awa had become “miserable objects,” according to King, with body tremors, sore eyes, and “Constant pain.” To King, Hawaiians seemed to consume ‘awa at a much higher rate than other Polynesians.⁴⁸

The observant King also noted poor eyesight and excessive boils among the population. Both conditions could have any number of causes. Perhaps most curious in King’s observations of Hawaiian health were the large numbers of individuals with physical deformities:

We saw here more deform’d people than in all the other [Pacific] Islands put together, some had prominences, before & behind, or were what we call humpd backd, one young man, had neither feet or hands; We saw two dwarfs, one was an old man 4 feet two Inches, perfectly well made, the

⁴⁵ Clerke (March 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:597.

⁴⁶ Clerke (March 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:597–598.

⁴⁷ For “debilitated and destroyed,” see Clerke (March 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:597–598; for “covered with a kind of Scaliness,” see James Burney, in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:512n4. King described Kalani‘ōpu‘u as an “old immaciated infirm man.” King (Jan. 1799), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:512.

⁴⁸ King, in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:612. See also King (March 1799), manuscript log on the *Resolution*, PRO Admiralty 55, vol. 122, National Archives, Surrey, UK: “In these People [i.e., heavy ‘awa consumers]... Scales peel off[f] the skin. the Eyes are red, inflamd, & very sore, the body is [emaciated] & infirm, & it makes them very stupid.”

other was a fat chubby woman, & many of their lower class of people were ill made.⁴⁹

“Ill made” Hawaiian commoners may reveal King’s prejudices, but as for the actual physical abnormalities he identified, it is not known how many or which of these conditions (besides dwarfism) were the result of birth, disease, injury, lifestyle, or old age. King also noted an “old woman” at Ni‘ihau who was “wrong in her senses, & a man at Owhyhee still worse.” King was not “surprisd, that these two personages, had every particular regard paid to them” by the people.⁵⁰

If precontact Hawai‘i was not a paradise free from disease, neither were its people ecological saints. Like people the world over, Hawaiians cleared land for their use. They utilized fire to create ideal farming plots and to enrich the soil. They encouraged the growth of certain wild plant species and discouraged others. They dug ponds and diverted streams for fish aquaculture. Such changes had obvious impacts on the non-human environment. Studies have found that nearly half of all endemic bird species and as many as a third of insect species went extinct at the Islands as a result of introduced species and human manipulation of the natural environment.⁵¹ That environment was unique due to the Islands’ extreme isolation; it was also particularly susceptible to invasion by foreign species.

⁴⁹ King (March 1799), manuscript log on the *Resolution*, PRO Admiralty 55, vol. 122, National Archives, Surrey, UK.

⁵⁰ King (March 1799), manuscript log on the *Resolution*, PRO Admiralty 55, vol. 122, National Archives, Surrey, UK.

⁵¹ Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 174–175; Krech, *The Ecological Indian*, 41; Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief*, 110–111.

Human life in Hawai‘i was also unique relative to world populations in 1778. It is remarkable that at this late date Islanders had no metallurgy, pottery, ceramics, wheeled transport, or coal power. They had no cotton, wool, hemp, or tobacco; no cows, sheep, or goats, and therefore, no dairy products. More remarkable still, Hawai‘i had no cereal crops of any kind: no rice, wheat, maize, barley, quinoa, amaranth, or oats. Unlike Indigenous people across the Americas, Hawaiians did not rely on the bow and arrow for hunting, and they did not use it at all in warfare.⁵² Hawaiians had also not developed two prototypical features of the “archaic state”: writing and urbanism. According to Kirch, neither innovation was necessary for settled, agricultural life in the North Pacific.⁵³ Perhaps more to the point is that Hawai‘i pulsed with non-written literacies of local practice, and of highly elaborated knowledge of land, sea, and place.⁵⁴

Hawaiians were expert fishers, navigators, geologists, and astronomers, and remarkably productive farmers. Their tools were constructed of wood, stone, bone, and animal teeth. Their clothes, bedding, and sails were woven from finely shredded tree bark. Their principal food crop was taro (*Colocasia* genus), a starchy corm they mashed up with water to form the thick, purple pudding called *poi*. Taro (*kalo*), along with sweet potato (*‘uala*), constituted the commoners’ primary means of subsistence and the vast majority of their carbohydrates and nutrition. Like maize in Mesoamerica, taro was a

⁵² Joseph S. Emerson, “The Bow and Arrow in Hawaii” [1906], *Twenty-Fourth Annual Report of the Hawaiian Historical Society* (Honolulu, 1916), 52–55.

⁵³ Kirch, *How Chiefs Became Kings*, 75–76.

⁵⁴ The Hawaiian Indigenous educational movement has struggled in recent decades to get state education authorities to acknowledge these literacies. See Noelani Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, *The Seeds We Planted: Portraits of a Native Hawaiian Charter School* (Minneapolis, 2013).

giver and sustainer of life in Hawai‘i; thus, Hawaiian mythology explained how the first humans were younger siblings to the taro plant.⁵⁵ The importance of taro also helps to explain why Lono, one of the four major akua of the Hawaiian pantheon, was a fertility and agricultural deity.

With the exception of an occasional drought and the rare famine, Hawaiians “ate well enough and often enough to keep them in good nutritional health.”⁵⁶ Taro in the form of *poi* was accompanied, whenever possible, by pork, fish, chicken (occasionally), sweet potatoes, sea vegetables, sugarcane, coconut, bananas and other fruit. Select foods, however, were off-limits to women and girls, including coconut, most cuts of pork, most varieties of banana, some fish, and delicacies such as green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*).⁵⁷ The food kapu were stringent and cut deep. Not only were women and girls forbidden to eat certain foods, women and men were not permitted to eat or prepare food together. Men had their own eating huts, which women were forbidden from entering. Women were not even permitted to touch the men’s food. Punishment for violating the ‘*ai kapu* (eating taboo) could be death.

Like other Indigenous societies Hawai‘i had a gender division of labor, which was more pronounced on the smaller western islands than on Hawai‘i Island and Maui where

⁵⁵ E. S. Craighill Handy and Elizabeth Green Handy, with Mary Kawena Pukui, *Native Planters in Old Hawaii: Their Life, Lore, and Environment* (Honolulu, 1972), 74–76.

⁵⁶ Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 49. The same was true of Tonga and other Polynesian groups before contact with the West. See Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 26, 31. For examples of precontact famine in Hawai‘i, passed down in the *mo‘olelo*, see Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief*, 201, 208–209. For an overview of famine in Hawaiian history, see Robert C. Schmitt, “Famine Mortality in Hawai‘i,” *Journal of Pacific History* 5 (1970): 109–115.

⁵⁷ For the kapu on green sea turtle, see Edward Bell, “Log of the *Chatham*” [March 1792], *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (1929), 19.

agriculture required many hands. In general, men farmed taro and built canoes and dwellings, women made clothes and mats, raised children, and performed other domestic tasks. Yet gender division of labor does not explain why females were forbidden from touching or preparing men's food. Some scholars have argued that females were considered to have a "polluting" effect in Polynesian culture (the Hawaiian word is *haumia*, "defilement"); others claim that females had too much spiritual power to risk close contact with males in intimate situations like eating.⁵⁸ (The Hawaiian verb for "to rule" or "to control" is actually the same word for "to eat," so obviously the gendered dimensions of the 'ai kapu were complex. And not just in Hawai'i. Eating taboos were widespread in precontact Polynesia, with women regularly barred from foods offered up in sacrifice to the deities. In Hawai'i, pork, coconut, banana, and certain fish were all sacrificial foods.) Importantly, the 'ai kapu constituted one of the principal socio-religious laws of the Islands. It was also among the first laws to be broken, despite the possibility of a death sentence.

Sahlins and others have noted the "essential ambiguity of women" in the Hawaiian ritual sphere, given that female "powers of defiling the god" were the same powers necessary for the continuation of the race.⁵⁹ In fact, the gender divide went deeper than that. The nineteenth-century Hawaiian scholar Davida Malo wrote that men and

⁵⁸ For pollution, see Denning, *Islands and Beaches*, 88–90; Sahlins, *Islands of History*, 154; and Kame'elehiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 79. For "spiritual power," see Kame'elehiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 33–40; and Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*, 5.

⁵⁹ Marshall Sahlins, "Goodbye to *Tristes Tropes*: Ethnography in the Context of Modern World History," *Journal of Modern History* 65 (1993): 1–25, esp. 9. See also Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*, chaps. 2–3; and Kame'elehiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, chaps. 2–6.

women traditionally observed different deities.⁶⁰ Cook himself provided evidence of this claim at a heiau in Waimea, Kaua‘i. Standing before two large *ki‘i* (wooden idols), Cook’s guides identified them as “Eatua no Veheina” (*he/ke/e akua no wahine*), which Cook translated as “Godess’s” but could also mean “deities of women,” “deities for women,” or “women’s deities.”⁶¹ Interestingly, Cook “doubted” that the people actually worshipped these particular idols, “as they had no objections to our going to and examining them.” In fact Cook’s Hawaiian guides were all male and probably did not worship the deities of women or women’s deities. Yet women certainly made religious observations at the *ki‘i*, as evidenced by the “offerings” Cook himself viewed: “several strips” of kapa cloth “hung to and about them,” as well as a “heap of plant” placed in the foreground and between the *ki‘i*.⁶²

Apotheosis and Other Pathogens

While the initial meeting of Britons and Hawaiians at Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau was cordial, relations took a turn for the worse the following year at Hawai‘i Island when Cook and thirty or more Hawaiians were killed in a clash at Kealahou Bay. From the

⁶⁰ Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 81–83, 108; Malo, *Ka Moolelo Hawaii*, 192–195. See also Chapter Four. On the difference between *ali‘i* and *maka‘āinana* religious practice traditionally, see Mykkänen, *Inventing Politics*, 28–29.

⁶¹ Cook (21 Jan. 1778), in in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:271. The versatile Hawaiian word “no” typically functions as a preposition and can mean any of the following: “Of, for, because of, belonging to, in behalf of, honoring, to, ... from, resulting from, concerning, about.” Pukui and Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary*, s.v., “no.” Beaglehole and Chun both pointed to Cook’s possible mistranslation. See Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:271n2; and Chun, *No Nā Mamo*, between pp. 198 and 199.

⁶² Cook (21 Jan. 1778), in in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:271. Unfortunately Cook did not identify the plant that was lying in a “heap.”

moment that the Cook journals began to circulate in 1780, writers and scholars examined the death of the great navigator from (what seemed to them) every possible angle.⁶³ The examination continues today, in some circles growing quite contentious.⁶⁴ Yet one explanation that is rarely offered for Hawaiian hostility—if not specifically for Cook’s murder—is disease transmission. There is abundant evidence for disease-related hostility both at the Big Island and at Kaua‘i in 1779. If introduced infectious disease is not a sufficient explanation for the multifarious nature of the Hawaiian-British encounter in 1778–1779, disease transmission played a role and deserves closer scrutiny.

Cook’s men first spotted the island of O‘ahu, then Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau, en route from the South Pacific to the Oregon coast in mid-January 1778. The fleet docked at Waimea Bay on the southwestern shore of Kaua‘i and remained in that vicinity for about two weeks, enjoying the fruits of the island and establishing good relations with local people whom they immediately recognized as cultural cousins to the “Indians” of the South Pacific.⁶⁵ Cook learned that he was to be venerated by the Kaua‘i Islanders as a paramount chief, deserving of the *kapu moe*, or prostration taboo: “The very instant I leapt ashore, they all fell flat on their faces, and remained in that humble posture till I made signs to them to rise.”⁶⁶ This same deference was shown to Cook repeatedly on

⁶³ Beginning with *The London Gazette*, January 8–11, 1780; see David W. Forbes, *Hawaiian National Bibliography, 1780–1900*, 3 vols. (Honolulu, 1999), 1:1–3.

⁶⁴ E.g., between Sahlins and the Sri Lankan anthropologist Gananath Obeyesekere. See Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis Of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking In The Pacific* (Princeton, NJ, 1992); and Sahlins, *How “Natives” Think*.

⁶⁵ Cook (19 Jan. 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:263–264.

⁶⁶ Cook, in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:269. See also King (20 Jan. 1778), manuscript log on the *Resolution*, Public Record Office, London (hereafter PRO), Admiralty 55, vol. 116 (photostat in Hawai‘i

Kaua‘i, as it was a year later on Hawai‘i Island. Other British officers also reported Hawaiians prostrating in their midst at O‘ahu and at Maui.⁶⁷

When Cook and his men returned from the Northwest Coast in November after an unsuccessful search for the fabled Northwest Passage, they were greeted by larger crowds than they had encountered anywhere in the vast Pacific. At Hawai‘i Island Cook himself noted that he had “no where in this Sea seen such a number of people assembled at one place....[A]ll the Shore of the bay was covered with people,” and they swarmed around the ships “like shoals of fish.”⁶⁸ Corporal John Ledyard of Connecticut estimated 15,000 “men, women, and children” congregated “in the canoes, besides those that were on floats, swimming without floats, and actually on board and hanging round the outside of the ships” as the fleet searched for a safe harbor along the treacherous lava-bed shores of the Big Island. “The beach, the surrounding rocks, the tops of houses, the branches of trees and adjacent hills were all covered” with people, noted Ledyard. There were “shouts of joy” from the men, “women dancing and clapping their hands.” It was “one of the most tumultuous and the most curious prospects that can be imagined.”⁶⁹ The lines of communication between the Islands had clearly been open, and the Big Islanders knew

State Archives).

⁶⁷ See, e.g., James King (1 March 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:586; and David Samwell (27 Feb. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1221. Note that prostration continued to occur after the killing of Cook.

⁶⁸ Cook (17 Jan 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:490–491, Cook’s final journal entry before his death. The editors of the first published version of Cook’s journals (1784) added in Cook’s words that the Sandwich Islands were “the most important [discovery] that had hitherto been made by Europeans, throughout the extent of the Pacific Ocean,” and that their discovery was a suitable consolation for not having found the Northwest Passage. See James Cook, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, Undertaken by the Command of His Majesty, for Making Discoveries in the Northern Hemisphere*, vol. 2 (London, 1784), 549.

⁶⁹ Ledyard, *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage*, 103.

who these newcomers were. By all accounts Islanders were thrilled, ecstatic even, to welcome back the visitors to Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau the previous winter. Indeed, Ledyard noted that “[a]mong all this immense multitude of people there was not the least appearance of insult.”⁷⁰ Ledyard’s fellow journalists concurred about the exuberance of the welcome at the Big Island. Nor was there any indication that the people resented the Britons’ killing of a Kaua‘i man (who may have been a chief) back in January, though they did mention it to the crew, as proof that they were aware of the expedition’s first visit.⁷¹ Most remarkable to the Britons was the Islanders’ charity, which seemed to know no bounds. The mariners were fêted and fed to the gills.

Sahlins characterized this cultural encounter at Hawai‘i Island as an “historical metaphor of a mythical reality.”⁷² What he meant, briefly, is that Hawai‘i Islanders attended to the Britons’ return with complex cultural understandings informed more by their own religious and historical traditions than by the actual days’ mundane events. In anthropological terms, structure trumped event.⁷³ While few of these meanings were grasped by Cook’s men at the time, it is plausible, as Sahlins argued (and as many Hawaiian writers and historians before him stated flatly), that some Hawai‘i Islanders

⁷⁰ Ledyard, *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage*, 103–104.

⁷¹ Rickman, *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, 223; King (27 Nov. 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:497. For the killing of this man, see Williamson (20 Jan. 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1348–1349.

⁷² Sahlins, *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities*, 11; and Sahlins, *Islands of History*, 4.

⁷³ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, trans. Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (New York, 1963). For a recent application, see Scott G. Ortman, *Winds from the North: Tewa Origins and Historical Anthropology* (Salt Lake City, 2012), chap. 14.

viewed Cook as their returning agricultural and fertility akua Lono.⁷⁴ The Lono cult was robust on the Big Island in 1778, and a number of circumstances surrounding Cook's return led to its being interpreted as the fulfillment of prophecy.⁷⁵ Nor was this phenomenon limited to the Big Island, or even to the North Pacific.⁷⁶ According to the nineteenth-century Hawaiian historian Samuel Manaiakalani Kamakau, Kaua'i Islanders had made references to both Lono and their war deity Kū upon the newcomers' arrival the previous year. These rumors swiftly crossed the Islands.⁷⁷

The Cook-as-Lono tradition gathered steam shortly after the dramatic events culminating in the killing of the great explorer and dozens of Islanders at Kealakekua Bay in 1779. Eight days after the *mêlée*, *Discovery* surgeon David Samwell noted matter-of-factly in his journal that “[t]he Indians have a Notion that Captⁿ Cook as being Orono

⁷⁴ E.g., Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 145; Malo, *Ka Mo'olelo Hawai'i*, 230; Kamakau, *Ka Po'e Kahiko*, 54; Samuel M. Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, rev. ed. (Honolulu, 1992), 92–104; and Mary Kawena Pukui, *Ōlelo No'eau: Hawaiian Proverbs and Poetical Sayings* (Honolulu, 1983), 139–140.

⁷⁵ The return of Cook's fleet happened to coincide with a number of the traditions associated with Lono prophecies—not least their arrival during the *makahiki* (new year/harvest festival) and their counter-clockwise circumnavigation of the Big Island, propelled by white sails (which looked something like Lono's ritual streamers). Elaborate ceremonies were performed on shore in early 1779 to honor, worship, or propitiate “Cook-Lono.” For an early historical account of these events by a European navigator who interviewed the Premier “William Pitt” Kalanimoku (c. 1769–1827), see Otto von Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World in the Years 1823, 24, 25, and 26*, vol. 2 (London, 1830), 179–186. See also Malo, *Ka Mo'olelo Hawai'i*, 230n11; Sahlins, *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities*, 17–28; and Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief*, 250–264.

⁷⁶ For a similar case in nineteenth-century Vanuatu, see Marshall Sahlins, “Cosmologies of Capitalism: The Trans-Pacific Sector of ‘The World System,’” in *Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*, ed. Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Ortner, 412–455 (Princeton, NJ, 1994), esp. 412, 440–441.

⁷⁷ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 92–95; Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief*, 250–264. For another case of Polynesians viewing newcomers in supernatural terms, see Vincent O'Malley, *The Meeting Place: Māori and Pākehā Encounters, 1642–1840* (Auckland, NZ, 2012), 19, 25.

[Lono] will come amongst them again in a short time.”⁷⁸ Eleven years later, a British sea captain was asked by Hawai‘i Islanders when they could expect Cook-Lono’s return.⁷⁹ A close reading of the expedition journals suggests that before his killing Cook was viewed by Hawai‘i Islanders as more or less equal to the *mō‘ī* (king) of the Big Island, Kalani‘ōpu‘u, and that *both* leaders shared in the *mana* (spiritual power) of Lono, whose ritual season it was. Samwell repeatedly mentioned local people using the term “Orono” (Lono) for both Cook *and* Kalani‘ōpu‘u and his family.⁸⁰ The previous year Kaua‘i Islanders also seem to have viewed Cook as equal in rank to their own *mō‘ī*.⁸¹ The fact that the *mō‘ī* and other paramount chiefs (*ali‘i nui*) in this period enjoyed a status as divine kings only complicates matters. Suffice it to say that local people brought complex, dynamic cultural traditions to bear on their encounter with newcomers, during and especially after the fact. Principal among these traditions were conceptions of *mana*. The nature of Cook’s status among Islanders in 1778–79 remains an open question.

⁷⁸ Samwell (20 Feb. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1217.

⁷⁹ *The Journal of Captain James Colnett Aboard the Argonaut from April 26, 1789 to Nov. 3, 1791* ed. F. W. Howay (Toronto, 1940; repr., New York, 1968), 220. See also Chapter Two. The Cook-Lono tradition lived on into the 1830s. For Big Island commoners supposedly praying to Cook-Lono, see Lorenzo Lyons to Rufus Anderson, 6 Sept. 1833, HMM. When a Hawaiian-language newspaper ran an obituary for the wife of James Cook, the writer identified her as “Lono wahine” (Lono’s wife). See “No Ka Poe Kahiko,” *Ke Kumu Hawaii*, 25 May 1836.

⁸⁰ See Samwell’s references to Lono, in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1161, 1170, 1184, 1201, 1217. In the end, Samwell understood Hawai‘i Islanders to have considered Cook as “a Chief of great consequence.” *Ibid.*, 3:1201.

⁸¹ Lt. James King noted on Kaua‘i that “we had got the name of their King, call’d Tama-hahnoo to whom they prostrate themselves in the manner they did to Captn Cook.” King (24 Jan. 1778), manuscript log on the *Resolution*, PRO Admiralty 55, vol. 116 (photostat in Hawai‘i State Archives). Beaglehole suggested that Cook was viewed by Kaua‘i Islanders as a “chief of the highest or almost the highest rank,” perhaps a “king.” Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:277n1.

Yet culture myths were not the only potent force in the Hawaiian-British encounter. While Cook's ships were probably no more disease-ridden than any other eighteenth-century round-the-world expedition, the array of pathogens they carried into the North Pacific "beggars the imagination," in the words of historian David Igler. Over the course of three long voyages, Cook's crew were at various times laid low by "malaria and dengue, dysentery, dropsy, pneumonia, influenza, viral hepatitis, smallpox," tuberculosis, and of course venereal infections.⁸² Most of these diseases would not have been fatal to Cook's men. In fact, the *Discovery* and *Resolution* lost only a dozen men (out of a crew of 190) between 1776 and 1780, of whom five were killed in the clash at Kealakekua Bay. The toll on the Hawaiian side was much higher in the years to follow. Worse still, the effects of introduced infectious disease were passed down through the generations in Hawai'i, as we shall see.

In addition to pathogens, Cook's ships were infested with rats, cockroaches, and other vermin.⁸³ The cockroaches "were so Innumerable on board the Resolution" before it arrived at Hawai'i that William Bayly described them as "run[nin]g...so thick you would think the Ship Alive[;] even the closest [i.e., tightest] box or tr[u]nk were All Alive with them & they eat & destroy everything they have."⁸⁴ One week later, William Harvey

⁸² David Igler, *The Great Ocean: Pacific Worlds from Captain Cook to the Gold Rush* (New York, 2013), 44.

⁸³ Kamakau thought the ships brought the first fleas to Kaua'i in 1778, but other scholars have argued for a later introduction. See Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 95; cf. Glenn E. Haas et al., "The Flea in Early Hawaii," *Hawaiian Journal of History* 5 (1971): 59–74.

⁸⁴ Bayly (31 Oct. 1777), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:238–239n3. For the "multitude of cockroaches" in Honolulu by 1828, see Jacobus Boelen, *A Merchant's Perspective: Captain Jacobus Boelen's Narrative of His Visit to Hawai'i in 1828*, trans. Frank J. A. Broeze (Honolulu, 1988), 67.

described the *Discovery* as “much pesterd with” rats.⁸⁵ If these Old World pests did not step, swim, or fly ashore in 1778 or 1779, they had certainly made a comfortable home for themselves in Hawai‘i by 1790. The Old World rat elbowed out its Polynesian cousin within a matter of years, mirroring events in the Americas three and a half centuries earlier, when the same Old World rat had quickly replaced its American cousin.⁸⁶

Having witnessed the destructiveness of venereal diseases among Islanders on his first two Pacific voyages, Cook had tried to prevent a similar outcome at the newly discovered islands of Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau in 1778.⁸⁷ A remarkable entry in the explorer’s posthumously published journal for January 1778 explains the challenges he faced and the long odds of success:

As there were some venereal complaints on board both the Ships, in order to prevent its being communicated to these people, I gave orders that no Women, on any account whatever were to be admitted on board the Ships, I also forbid all manner of connection with them, and ordered that none [of the sailors] who had the vener[e]al upon them should go out of the ships. But whether these regulations had the desired effect or no[,] time can only discover. It is no more than what I did when I first visited the Friendly Islands [Tonga] yet I afterwards found it did not succeed, and I am much afraid this will always be the case where it is necessary to have a number of people on shore; the oppertunities and inducements to an intercourse between the sex, are there too many to be guarded against. It is also a doubt with me, that the most skilfull of the Faculty [i.e., physicians] can tell whether every man who has had the veneral is so far cured as not to communicate it further, I think I could mention some instances to the contrary. It is likewise well known that amongst a number of men, there

⁸⁵ Harvey (6 Nov. 1777) , in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:243n1.

⁸⁶ Alfred W. Crosby, *The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492* (Westport, CT, 1972); and *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900* (New York, 1986), 190–193.

⁸⁷ For Cook’s failure to prevent venereal infection from spreading to Tahitians in June 1769, see *Captain Cook’s Journal During His First Voyage Round the World Made in H.M. Bark “Endeavour” 1768–71*, ed. W. J. L. Wharton (London, 1893), 76–77.

will be found some who will endeavor to conceal this disorder, and there are some again who care not to whom they communicate it, of this last we had an instance at Tonga-tabu in the Gunner of the Discovery... After he knew he had contracted this disease he continued to sleep with different women who were supposed not to have contracted it; his companions expostulated with him without effect; till it came to Captain Clerke's knowledge who ordered him on board.⁸⁸

If we are tempted to view Cook's lengthy rumination as a posthumous addition to his journal, other expedition journalists in January 1778 confirm Cook's "quarantine" order at Kaua'i.⁸⁹ Ships' surgeons were ultimately responsible for determining who would be given shore leave and who would not. Unfortunately, as Cook rightly surmised, both gonorrhoea and syphilis could be spread without visible symptoms, so the surgeons' examinations would have caught only a portion of the infected. Regardless, Cook's orders were promptly defied. Not only Will Bradley but other sailors were punished for "absenting themselves from the boat when on Shore" in 1778.⁹⁰ The "rascal" Bradley is exceptional, then, only in having been identified to posterity as symptomatic for gonorrhoea and/or syphilis at Hawai'i. There were others, probably dozens on the Cook voyages, enlisted men and officers alike, and the Pacific peoples they encountered were quickly made victims of the Old World pathogens the newcomers carried.

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⁸⁸ Cook (20 Jan. 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:265–266.

⁸⁹ E.g., King (20 Jan. 1778), manuscript log on the *Resolution*, PRO Admiralty 55, vol. 116 (photostat in Hawai'i State Archives)

⁹⁰ Journal of William Charlton, PRO Admiralty 51, vol. 4557, National Archives, Surrey, UK, qtd. in Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 137.

Ten months later, within hours of their return to Hawaiian waters, Cook and his men received Islanders off Maui who were concerned about their physical condition: “Three of the Natives have apply’d to us, for help in their great distress,” wrote Lieutenant James King aboard the *Resolution*: “[T]hey had a Clap, their Penis was much swell’d, & inflamed.”⁹¹ King added that “the manner in which these innocent People complained to us, seem’d to me to shew that they consider’d us as the Original authors.” Three days later King noted that “in one of them [the venereal disease] had broke out in the Groin, & in some parts seemd heald, but in other places the Morbid matter was issuing out, this person had an emaciated countenance, haggard eyes, & it was a pain to him to drag along his body.”⁹² Microbiologist and medical historian O. A. Bushnell notes the “unmistakable” signs of “acute gonorrhoea” in King’s description, “practically diagnostic to anyone who has seen” it.⁹³

On their return to the Hawaiian archipelago Cook’s ships had arrived off the windward (eastern) coasts of Maui and Hawai‘i, neither of which islands Britons had visited or even seen from the ships. Nevertheless, ship surgeon David Samwell noted that “the Disease was pretty universal among them.”⁹⁴ *Discovery* midshipman Edward Riou heard that

⁹¹ King (28 Nov. 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:498. Marshall Sahlins began his classic essay on the Hawaiian-British encounter with this very scene but made little of the effects of venereal disease on Hawaiian life and health in this period. See Sahlins, “Supplement to the Voyage of Cook; or, *le calcul sauvage*,” in *Islands of History*, chap. 1. “Clap” for gonorrhoea dates back to the sixteenth century, from the French *clapoir*, for venereal bubo. See *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 5th ed., s.v. “clap.”

⁹² King, in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:498, 500.

⁹³ Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 142.

⁹⁴ Samwell (26 Nov. 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1151.

many of the natives had been complaining...onboard the Resolution of the Venereal disease—one or two of them were examined by the Surgeon who Confirmed it,—they were asked about it & said a great many men & women were afflicted with it on Shore, and spoke of the Isle Atowi [Kaua‘i], as if we had left it at that place the Last year.⁹⁵

The surgeon Samwell noted that “many” Maui Islanders “were infected with Venereal disease & at their own request they had some medicines given to them, for which purpose it seems they came off to the ship.”⁹⁶ It is not clear what these medicines consisted of—perhaps mercurials. Given the fleet’s recent health history and the long trek ahead, ships’ surgeons may have hesitated to reduce their stock of venereal remedies. It is also difficult to know how exactly the Hawaiians used British medicines, though King noted that the infected people “readily comprehended the manner they should be us’d.”⁹⁷ There is no indication that British officers examined Hawaiian women as they did the men, though officers’ comments indicate that both sexes off the coast of Maui were afflicted. Soon enough, infected Hawaiians were spreading gonorrhoea *back* to Britons who may have been previously unexposed: “many of our people,” wrote Samwell, “contract[ed] it after being here a little time.”⁹⁸

Just days before the killing of Cook in February 1779, Samwell noted that Hawai‘i Islanders were already treating venereal infections with an herbal remedy. This

⁹⁵ Edward Riou (29 Nov. 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:474–475n5.

⁹⁶ Samwell (30 Nov. 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1152.

⁹⁷ King, in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:500.

⁹⁸ Samwell (26 Nov. 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1151.

is the first mention of the Native medical order, and it comes in the context of Samwell's description of the Hawaiian priesthood as a whole:

The Priests...are held in great Esteem & seem to possess much power and authority over these People, and it was observable that like the Chiefs they bore the Signs of hard Drinkers [of 'awa]. They seemed to be the Physicians of the Island and they shewed us the Method they used of Curing the Venereal Disease, which was by an infusion of a common Herb poured on the diseased part, but whether it had any effect we did not learn, if they do effect a Cure it is probably more owing to cleanliness and the simple Manner of living among these Islands than to any Virtue in the Herb.⁹⁹

There is no indication in the British journals or in Hawaiian oral history of what these first herbal remedies for venereal infection consisted, or whether they provided any relief. In the nineteenth century Hawaiians utilized hundreds of herbal remedies to treat syphilis and gonorrhea, including 'ōhi'a, kukui, pandanus, 'awa, sugar cane, and even clay. But clearly venereal diseases were spreading on the Big Island by 1779, and clearly Islanders were experimenting with remedies to relieve their suffering.

Samwell was astonished to find that venereal infection had spread across the archipelago in less than ten months. In fact he “found the Disorder much more common” at the Big Island (Hawai'i) and Maui than at the western islands, despite the fact that Europeans had yet to set foot on the former islands.¹⁰⁰ Capt. Clerke noted that venereal infections “rage[d] more violently” at the Hawaiian Islands than elsewhere in the Pacific, and believed the “dreadfull Symptoms operate[d] more expeditiously here than at the

⁹⁹ Samwell (4 Feb. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1185–1186. For 'awa consumption, see below.

¹⁰⁰ Samwell, “Observations Respecting the Introduction of the Venereal Disease into the Sandwich Islands,” in *A Narrative of the Death of Captain James Cook*, by David Samwell (London, 1786), 31.

Friendly or Society Isles.”¹⁰¹ Clerke attributed this fact to Hawaiian salt intake.¹⁰² A better explanation would focus on patterns of disease ecology across the far-flung archipelagoes of the eastern Pacific.

For his part, Cook “knew of no other way” that Hawaiians could have been infected with venereal disease than by the actions of his own crew. He was forced to admit that the “evil I meant to prevent...had already got amongst them.”¹⁰³ All but one of Cook’s officers and crewmembers who left journals agreed with this assessment. Midshipman Edward Riou determined that “in the end...it will appear it has been we ourselves that has entailed on these poor, Unhappy people an everlasting and Miserable plague.”¹⁰⁴ Capt. Clerke could only heap curses upon his charges:

[O]ur Seamen are in these matters so infernal and dissolute a Crew that for the gratification of the present passion that affects them they would entail universal destruction upon the whole of the Human Species.¹⁰⁵

Clerke fails to mention that in 1779 (if not the previous year), officers were *first* to avail themselves of Hawaiian partners at Kealakekua Bay, and that the sailors followed.¹⁰⁶ By

¹⁰¹ Clerke (3 Feb. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:576.

¹⁰² King similarly attributed the predominance of “boils” to excessive salt intake. See King (March 1779), manuscript log on the *Resolution*, PRO Admiralty 55, vol. 122, National Archives, Surrey, UK.

¹⁰³ Cook (17 Nov. 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:474. When a group of sailors who had been left ashore at Ni‘ihau found their way to sexual partners, Cook remarked that “the very thing happened that I had above all others wished to prevent.” Cook (30 Jan. 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:276. See also Williamson, in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1349–1350.

¹⁰⁴ Edward Riou (29 Nov. 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:474–475v. No fewer than eight accounts of the Hawaiian portion of Cook’s third voyage were published in the 1780s. Of these authors, ironically only the surgeon David Samwell, who recorded more sexual liaisons than anyone, questioned whether Cook’s men had spread venereal disease to Hawai‘i; and he did so only after the fact. Given that it was Samwell’s duty to ensure that only healthy men gained access to Islanders, he was clearly a partisan on this question. See Samwell, “Observations Respecting the Introduction of the Venereal Disease into the Sandwich Islands,” 29–34.

¹⁰⁵ Clerke (3 Feb. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:576.

sneaking out of their encampment at night, Britons were in violation of a *kapu* (prohibition) placed on the camp by the ruling ali‘i. Such defiance was not something Big Island chiefs took lightly. The typical punishment for violation of a *kapu* was death.

“In Feeling Terms”

Before taking their final leave of the Islands in March 1779, the Britons headed for Kaua‘i, their initial landfall the previous winter. With the ships approaching, Islanders began to climb aboard. Capt. Clerke, Cook’s replacement on the *Resolution*, observed

many...good Folks both Men and Women about the Ship miserably afflicted with the Venereal disease, which they accuse us of introducing among them during our last visit, they say it does not go away, that they have no Antidote for it, but that they grow worse and worse, explaining the different symptoms in the progress of the disorder till it totally destroys them.”¹⁰⁷

Despite the woeful condition of some Islanders, a steady stream of women and girls continued to approach the ships, just as they had done at the Big Island and Maui. The mood at Kaua‘i, however, was considerably changed from the previous year.¹⁰⁸ Among other aspects of the Hawaiian epidemiological encounter that have been little addressed by historians are the British seamen’s violation of the *kapu* on their Hawai‘i Island encampment, and their frosty reception at Kaua‘i the following month. Relations between

¹⁰⁶ Ledyard, *Journal of Captain Cook’s Last Voyage*, 109.

¹⁰⁷ Clerke (3 March 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:576.

¹⁰⁸ See Samwell (28 Feb.–2 March 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1222–1223; and James Burney, journal on H.M.S. *Discovery* (1–7 March 1779), Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney.

Hawai‘i Islanders and Britons seem to have soured immediately after Cook’s officers broke the ali‘i-imposed kapu on their Kealakekua Bay encampment in January 1779. New Englander John Ledyard is clear on this point: while Hawaiian commoners seemed to pay no mind to the men slipping out of camp to find sexual partners, the chiefs “thought differently, they knew it was a breach of covenant.” Ledyard notes that this behavior by the seamen “might be esteemed trivial on our part and indeed it was, but it was the beginning of our subsequent misfortunes, and acknowledged to be so afterwards when it was too late to revert the consequences.” Notably, this breach was, according to Ledyard, “at first done by the officers”; then “our soldiers and sailors saw it and practised it.”¹⁰⁹ Samwell interpreted the situation somewhat differently: “The Gentlemen who sleep on shore are mortified” by the kapu, he wrote, “as no Women will on any account come to them. They [the seamen] have offered a large Bribe to the Priest to let a Girl or two come in [to the encampment] at Night, but he was proof against the Temptation & informed them that if any [females] were seen in the place they would be killed.” Nevertheless, Samwell noted in the following sentence that “the Women are permitted to come on board the Ship.”¹¹⁰

Ali‘i responses to British violation of the kapu suggest that Big Islanders had grown frustrated with the newcomers weeks before the cycle of recriminations that followed the thefts of British property, culminating in the death of Cook, four of his men, and dozens of Hawaiians. The violence at Kealakekua Bay began with a breach of kapu,

¹⁰⁹ Ledyard, *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage*, 109.

¹¹⁰ Samwell (19 Jan. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1161.

according to Ledyard, imposed to keep Hawaiians and Britons (perhaps officers in particular) apart on shore, or, at the very least, to keep the Britons under ali‘i authority. By contrast, with the exception of the intermittent kapu placed on the ships—typically, upon the arrival of a visiting ali‘i¹¹¹—Hawaiians were free to enjoy the Britons as they pleased aboard the ships. It is therefore unlikely that the venereal outbreak was the *cause* of the ali‘i-imposed kapu on Cook’s encampment, since if the people would not get infected on shore, they obviously could (and were) contracting disease aboard the ships.

For Hawaiians, as for Indigenous peoples worldwide in this period, the akua or ‘aumākuā (ancestral spirits) sent destruction in the form of epidemics, crop failures, and natural disasters. These same spirits, in turn, offered relief from these disasters. Propitiation of the akua was the key to restoring the cosmic balance that had been set askew with the arrival of an epidemic; thus, the ritual offerings, sacrifices, and prayers so commonly practiced at Hawai‘i.¹¹² If it is true that some Hawai‘i Islanders viewed Cook as the returning Lono, then it is not unlikely that they would have considered him capable of restoring them to health, or at least of offering them tools to regain it.¹¹³ In this case, that would mean relieving them from venereal disease. On the other hand, Lono was not typically thought of as a deity of health or medicine. Yet however Hawai‘i Islanders rendered Cook’s mana in 1779, they were certainly eager to propitiate the akua and

¹¹¹ Samwell (25–29 Jan. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1168, 3:1171.

¹¹² Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 81–118; Kamakau, *Ka Po‘e Kahiko*, passim; Malcolm Nāea Chun, *No Nā Mamo: Traditional and Contemporary Hawaiian Beliefs and Practices* (Honolulu, 2011), 61–69.

¹¹³ Some Hawai‘i Islanders in 1791 seem to have believed that Cook-Lono had caused the Halema‘uma‘u volcano (Kīlauea Crater) to explode the previous year, killing some 400. See *The Journal of Captain James Colnett*, 220.

‘aumākua, and to do whatever was required of them to lift the mysterious, deadly new diseases.

The events that followed would become well known to the reading public in Europe and United States. A series of thefts and minor insults exchanged between the two sides at Kealakekua Bay resulted in the assembling of Hawaiian war canoes. A British cutter (provisioning boat) was stolen, for which Cook tried to take the mō‘ī Kalani‘ōpu‘u hostage as collateral. This move infuriated the people. Afraid for his life, Cook unloaded his musket on a few commoners. The Islanders then fell upon Cook, killing him and four of his men. The Britons responded by torching a Hawaiian village and decapitating a few of the fallen Hawaiians as trophies.¹¹⁴ Despite this precarious state of affairs, relations between the two sides thawed quickly.¹¹⁵ Remarkably, during the battle itself, Samwell noted that “[n]otwithstanding we are at open war with these people, we had a few Girls on board both Ships all this day.”¹¹⁶ One of the girls, according to Samwell, looked upon the burning village and “said it was maitai [*maika ‘i*] or very fine, at the same time we could see the Indians flying from their Houses all round the Bay, and carrying their Canoes & household Goods on their backs up the Country.”¹¹⁷ A number of commoners also continued to trade with the British fleet, whether with ali‘i blessing or not is unclear.

¹¹⁴ Samwell (17 Feb. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1212.

¹¹⁵ King (March 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:612–613.

¹¹⁶ Samwell (14 Feb. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1204.

¹¹⁷ Samwell (17 Feb. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1213.

Eight days after the *mêlée*, the fleet headed north, commanded now by Charles Clerke who happened to be quite ill with tuberculosis. Sailing by Kaho‘olawe, Maui, Lāna‘i, Moloka‘i, and O‘ahu, the fleet stopped again at Kaua‘i, their initial landfall the previous January. It was only eleven days after the violence at the Big Island, and “an injured and exasperated people” assembled to meet the Britons offshore at Waimea. No longer curious, cordial, or accommodating, the Kaua‘i Islanders seemed to the New Englander Ledyard “wild” and “uncivilized.” They had “heard of our transactions at Owyhee” and knew “us to be no more than men like themselves”—evidence, among other things, of how fast news traveled across the archipelago in this period. Ledyard matter-of-factly noted that “we had also at our first visit here spread the venereal disease among them, which had since made the most shocking ravages.”¹¹⁸ Again, Ledyard attributes the Islanders’ newfound incivility at Waimea to the spread of disease. Relations were so sour at Kaua‘i that the “only hope” Britons had of watering there was by “bestowing great presents on all the chiefs” and by the use of “mere force.” Had the Kaua‘i chiefs not protected the Britons, the Islanders “certainly would have attacked us,” observed Ledyard.¹¹⁹ Likewise, according to Lt. James King, “the smallest error on our side might have been fatal to us.”¹²⁰

Upon the fleet’s arrival back at Kaua‘i, according to King, [o]ne man[,] without any [of us] putting questions to him on our beginning the conversation[,] told us that we had left a disorder amongst their Women

¹¹⁸ Ledyard, *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage*, 155.

¹¹⁹ Ledyard, *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage*, 156.

¹²⁰ James King [and James Cook], *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean Undertaken by the Command of His Majesty...*, vol. 3 (1784), 89–95.

[in January 1778], which had killd several of them as well as Men; he himself was infectd with the Venereal disease, & describ'd in feeling terms the havock it had made, & its pains &c. I was never more thoroughly Satisfyd of a doubtful point than from this Circumstance, that we were the Authors of this disease in this Place.¹²¹

If Lt. King's informant was correct about Hawaiian fatalities to venereal infection, this would indicate that Cook's men had spread not only gonorrhea (which is rarely fatal) but also syphilis in 1778. The presence of syphilis at the Islands was later confirmed by a French expedition in 1786. (See below, pp. 45–46). While syphilis deaths at Kaua'i in 1778 cannot be individually confirmed, Lt. King's journal entry is the earliest extant documentation of Hawaiian deaths as a result of introduced infectious diseases. It is, at the same time, a remarkable sentiment conveyed by the lieutenant: the “feeling terms” the Kaua'i Islanders used to express the “havock” caused by venereal infection is a clear measure of Hawaiian distress in 1779.

Summing up the health issues affecting Hawaiians, King remarked that “the Venereal is certainly now, the Worst... They did not appear to me to have any name for it, & at last calld it sometimes ————— (burning).”¹²² Where the dashes appear in the previous sentence, King had left a blank: he may have meant to add the Hawaiian word for “burning” later or to indicate that he did not know the word. Unfortunately, there are a dozen or more Hawaiian words for “burn,” another half dozen for “sting,” so it is

¹²¹ King (1 March 1779), manuscript log on the *Resolution*, PRO Admiralty 55, vol. 122, National Archives, Surrey, UK. See also King, in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:585–586.

¹²² King (March 1779), manuscript log on the *Resolution*, PRO Admiralty 55, vol. 122, National Archives, Surrey, UK.

impossible to know which term the people had employed to describe the discomfort of their venereal infections.¹²³

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In addition to the venereal scourge, Cook's men may have introduced tuberculosis to Hawai'i. At least one officer, Capt. Clerke, was so ill during his stay at the Islands that he died from the disease on the way back to England.¹²⁴ Ship's astronomer William Bayly recorded the meeting of Clerke with a high chief on Kaua'i in January 1778: the two men "Nosed" (that is, touched noses and inhaled each other's breath), and then Clerke shook the chief's hand and slapped him on the back. The people were horrified, as this was no way to treat an ali'i nui.¹²⁵ The following January, the ailing Clerke took a Hawai'i Islander aboard the *Discovery* as shipmate. According to Cook, the man "remained on board by choice, nor did he take the first opportunity to go ashore."¹²⁶ But he was soon "so ill," according to Lt. James Burney, that "he scarce [ate] anything," and the men on board "were under great apprehensions of his dying."¹²⁷ While this unnamed Hawaiian might seem a good candidate for having developed active tuberculosis, his symptoms probably came on too early (five days after boarding the ship) for tubercular

¹²³ Pukui and Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary*, s.v. "burn," "sting."

¹²⁴ Ledyard, *Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage*, 143. Clerke was in good company: tuberculosis deaths reached an all-time high in England the following year, 1780. Lt. James King died from tuberculosis in 1784.

¹²⁵ William Bayly, in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:281n2.

¹²⁶ Cook (7 Jan. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:487.

¹²⁷ Burney (5 Jan. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:487n4.

infection via Clerke. It is likely that he was already sick before climbing aboard. But with what? The man's fate after January 1779 is unknown.

Tuberculosis is easily spread. While definitive proof of its presence on the Islands before 1790 is lacking, the disease would arrive soon enough, and spread as quickly as the venereal diseases.¹²⁸

Ship to Shore

At least two and possibly three serious bacterial diseases struck Hawai'i in 1778–1779. Without effective treatment, syphilis and tuberculosis were both potentially fatal to a virgin-soil population, while gonorrhea was painful, detrimental to fertility, and could, in rare cases, be fatal. All three diseases posed a serious risk to newborns, while syphilis caused major problems in fetal development.¹²⁹ All three of these diseases plagued Native Hawaiians far into the nineteenth century. While most victims of these diseases in the developed world today are treated quickly and effectively by a regimen of antibiotics, outcomes were different in a pre-antibiotic, virgin-soil environment. A brief discussion of the causes, progress, and results of each of these diseases will clarify the unique circumstances in the eighteenth-century North Pacific.

¹²⁸ For the debate about tuberculosis, see A. F. Bushnell, “‘The Horror’ Reconsidered,” esp. 129; O. A. Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 277; Stannard, *Before the Horror*, 70–72; and Stannard, response to book review forum on *Before the Horror*, *Pacific Studies* 13, no. 3 (1990): 284–301, esp. 292. Conclusive evidence for the introduction of influenza before the nineteenth century is also lacking, but cf. Stannard, *Before the Horror*, 70–71; and Stannard, response to book review forum on *Before the Horror*, 293–294.

¹²⁹ See below.

In the first place, it is critical wherever possible to separate out the conditions being described in the earliest written materials and in later Hawaiian oral traditions and writings. Not only were syphilis and gonorrhea regularly confused by observers and victims alike in this period, but active tuberculosis, lymphatic filariasis (elephantiasis), and even scabies could present with genital symptoms. Public lice (or crabs), for its part, *always* manifested genitally, with the parasitic *Pthirus pubis* louse causing intense itching from its blood-sucking bites. Even if we exclude the parasites and non-sexually transmitted diseases, it is important to note that until 1838 Western medicine was sharply divided over whether syphilis and gonorrhea were separate diseases or different manifestations of the same disease.¹³⁰ A century before the acceptance of the germ theory of disease, such debates were notoriously difficult to settle. Thus, in the Cook journals, as for later observers at Hawai‘i, gonorrhea and syphilis are referred to as “venereal disease,” “venereal disorder,” “venereal distemper,” or simply “the venereal.” Any of these terms could refer to either or both diseases. It was also not uncommon for sailors to carry both infections in their bodies. Interestingly, Hawaiian terms for syphilis and gonorrhea suggest that the *kāhuna lapa‘au* (Native physicians) were firmly in the differential-diagnosis camp. While it is difficult to determine exactly when these

¹³⁰ British physician Benjamin Bell’s experiments in the 1790s strongly indicated the differential diagnosis, but other authorities, particularly in France, kept the controversy alive. See Benjamin Bell, *Treatise on Gonorrhœa Virulenta, and Lues Venerea* (London, 1793); F[rançois-Xavier] Swediaur, *Practical Observations on Venereal Complaints* (London, 1784). For a discussion of the controversy, see Claude Quélet, *History of Syphilis*, trans. Judith Braddock and Brian Pike (Baltimore, 1990), 82–86. The debate was finally settled in 1838 by Parisian physician Philippe Ricord.

Hawaiian terms were coined or became widely employed, their number and variety is astonishing.

The Hawaiians with “a Clap” on deck in November 1778 were almost certainly suffering from gonorrhea. The oldest and the most common of the sexually transmitted infections, gonorrhea is an inflammatory disease caused by the bacterium *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*.¹³¹ The term derives from the Greek for “flow of seed,” a reference to the discharge of matter from the urethra. Hawaiians themselves developed various names for the disease after 1778, one of which was *kulu*, “to drip, leak, or trickle.” Among non-virgin-soil populations, genital symptoms of gonorrhea typically occur within two to five days of infection for men, or ten days for women. The primary manifestation of the disease is a milky pus (polymorphonuclear leukocytes) discharged from the urethra and, as Lt. King indicated, inflammation of the genitals. Another symptom is joint pain, particularly in the knees and ankles, though this is more common in males than females. For both sexes, once the gonococcus bacteria takes root in the bloodstream, various other health problems can ensue: pharyngitis (from oral sex), proctitis (from anal sex), arthritis, dermatitis, and conjunctivitis (typically by transmission from hands to eyes).

The genital symptoms of gonorrhea are also more prevalent in males than in females, for two reasons: first, the discharge of matter from the penis tends to cause greater discomfort while also being more visible; second, gonorrheal infection in females tends to congregate in the cervix rather than the vulva. Female cases are, for this reason,

¹³¹ Richard B. Rothenberg, “Gonorrhea,” in *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, ed. Kenneth F. Kiple (Cambridge, UK, 1993), 756–763.

frequently asymptomatic. Yet both men and women can be “silent” carriers of the disease, which of course only contributes to its spread. Among contemporary, non-virgin-soil populations the probability of gonorrheal infection in male-to-female transmission is about 50 percent for a single sexual encounter; from female to male, the percentage is closer to 22 percent per encounter.¹³²

Left untreated, gonorrhea is a particular risk to newborns who can become infected as they pass through the birth canal. The most common manifestation of this mode of infection is gonococcal ophthalmia, a painful, debilitating eye condition that can lead to scarring or blindness in the infant.¹³³ American missionary Charles Stewart witnessed an infant with this condition at Lāhainā, Maui, in 1823: “the inside of the [eye]lids were protruded on the cheeks, and swollen to the bigness of pigeons’ eggs, while they throbbled almost to bursting with inflammation. The balls of both eyes were entirely hid.”¹³⁴ It is unclear whether Stewart knew the cause of the infant’s distress.

This is not all. Barring treatment for gonorrhea, women and girls can develop any of several pelvic inflammatory diseases (PID), such as salpingitis, oophoritis, and endometritis.¹³⁵ PID consists of inflammation or scarring of the lining of the uterus, fallopian tubes, and/or ovaries, a result of the gonococcus traveling up into the

¹³² Rothenberg, “Gonorrhea,” 760.

¹³³ Rothenberg, “Gonorrhea,” 757.

¹³⁴ Stewart, *Private Journal of a...Residence at the Sandwich Islands*, 200–201.

¹³⁵ The sex trade in Hawai‘i—as elsewhere in Polynesia—involved a significant number of girls. For young girls in the sex trade at the Marquesas, see Denning, *Islands and Beaches*, 127. Chlamydia is also a common cause of PID.

reproductive organs.¹³⁶ PID tends to cause abdominal discomfort or pain and can lead to ectopic pregnancy and/or miscarriage. A study in Sweden found that sterility occurred in twelve to sixteen percent of patients after a single episode of PID. After three episodes the percentage rose to sixty percent.¹³⁷

All these outcomes for gonorrhea reflect contemporary, non-virgin-soil populations, without treatment by antibiotics. Just how much worse gonorrhea was for late eighteenth-century Hawaiians' health and fertility can only be guessed at. But, as with the syphilitic infections—and, as we shall see later, with mumps, measles, whooping cough, and smallpox—complications from gonorrhea were certainly far worse for Hawaiians than they were for the newcomers who passed the gonococcus from ship to shore.¹³⁸ None of the British seamen died from their venereal conditions that we know of; and none, obviously, gave birth to an infected or stillborn infant. Certainly the new gonorrheal infections were bad enough in 1778 that three or more Hawaiians rowed out to the *Resolution* and, unprompted, expressed concern about their condition.

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Venereal syphilis, like gonorrhea, is a sexually transmitted disease caused by a bacterium, the spiral-shaped *Treponema pallidum* of the genus *Spirochetæ*. It is a far more serious and protracted disease than gonorrhea. Like the other treponemal

¹³⁶ Thomas Benedek, "Gonorrhea and Chlamydia," in *Encyclopedia of Pestilence, Pandemics, and Plagues*, vol. 1, ed. Joseph P. Byrne (Westport, CT, 2008), 230–233, esp. 231.

¹³⁷ Rothenberg, "Gonorrhea," 757.

¹³⁸ See David E. Stannard, "Disease and Infertility: A New Look at the Demographic Collapse of Native Populations in the Wake of Western Contact," *Journal of American Studies*, 24 (1990): 325–350, esp. 338–339; and Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 30.

infections—yaws, pinta, and endemic syphilis (discussed below)—venereal syphilis is marked by three distinct stages. The first, occurring about three weeks after infection, consists of a relatively painless chancre at the site of infection, typically in the genital or anal region or on the mouth. For a majority of individuals, this stage features swollen lymph nodes but little else in terms of symptoms.¹³⁹ The three-week latency period is significant for the Hawaiian-British encounter. Assuming the typical latency period, Islanders on Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau would presumably *not* have experienced symptoms of syphilis until Cook’s fleet departed for the Northwest Coast in February 1778; however, *gonorrheal* symptoms could certainly have appeared while the fleet was present. Had the crewmen carried *only* syphilis in their bloodstreams, it is not at all clear that Hawaiians would have attributed the venereal disorders they developed to sex with the sailors. Explanations may well have focused on sorcery, whether by the newcomers or by Hawaiians, or on some other supernatural cause.¹⁴⁰ (Not that supernatural and natural explanations were mutually exclusive.) In any event, both diseases were carried aboard Cook’s fleet in January 1778.

The onset of second-stage syphilis occurs six to twelve weeks after the first sign of infection. At this point the *Treponema* has entered the bloodstream. Symptoms, which can be mild, include a patterned skin rash, typically on the chest, back, palms of the hands, and soles of the feet. In a majority of cases, moist sores appear in the genital or anal region. Filled with the *Treponema* bacteria, these sores are highly infectious.

¹³⁹ Stefan Wörhrl and Alexandra Geusau, “Syphilis,” in *Encyclopedia of Pestilence, Pandemics, and Plagues*, vol. 2, ed. Joseph P. Byrne (Westport, CT, 2008), 688–691.

¹⁴⁰ Hawaiian sorcery, or ‘*anā* ‘*anā*, is discussed in Chapter Three.

(Chancres, flatter in shape, can also occur in the mouth at this stage.) According to bioarchaeologists Mary Lucas Powell and Della Collins Cook, who specialize in the long human history of treponemal infections, “[v]irtually all untreated patients develop some secondary-stage lesions.”¹⁴¹ In the majority of cases, lymph nodes of the “neck, axles, and groin” become swollen.¹⁴² Alopecia near the hairline is common. Importantly, the second stage of syphilis can involve *all* the body’s organs, with possible effects on the central nervous system and in red-blood cell production.

Second-stage syphilis is followed by a second *latent* phase, termed “late latent syphilis.” In as many as two thirds of untreated cases, late latent syphilis can persist the remainder of an infected person’s life. (In such cases, only a blood test can determine infection.) The remaining one third of cases enter the gruesome tertiary stage, marked by granulomas (or gummas) of the skin, liver, brain, or testes. At Hawai‘i, as elsewhere in the nineteenth century, syphilitic gummas were often confused with the skin lesions caused by leprosy or lymphatic filariasis (elephantiasis). Today slightly less than ten percent of untreated victims of tertiary syphilis develop heart disease; 6.5 percent develop diseases of the central nervous system.¹⁴³ This latter condition is the “neurosyphilis” made famous in the nineteenth century by writers such as Gustave Flaubert and Thomas Mann.

¹⁴¹ Mary Lucas Powell and Della Collins Cook, “Treponematosi s: Inquiries into the Nature of a Protean Disease,” in *The Myth of Syphilis: The Natural History of Syphilis in North America*, 9–62, ed. M. L. Powell and D. C. Collins (Gainesville, FL, 2005), 11.

¹⁴² Wörhrl and Geusau, “Syphilis,” 689.

¹⁴³ Wörhrl and Geusau, “Syphilis,” 689. See also Powell and Cook, “Treponematosi s,” 11.

Again, as with gonorrhea, it is not clear whether Hawaiians would have progressed to tertiary syphilis in higher numbers in this period, or if the primary and secondary stages would have been more aggressive or debilitating than for non-virgin-soil populations. It is not unlikely. As late as the 1830s mission doctor Alonzo Chapin was chronicling the ravages of tertiary syphilis.¹⁴⁴ By the time Hawai‘i’s first hospital opened in 1859—eight decades after the arrival of Cook—sixty percent of the 765 patients to be treated in the first four months of operation were suffering the effects of venereal disease.¹⁴⁵ In terms of the long-term effects of syphilis, the notorious Oslo and Tuskegee syphilis studies might suggest comparisons with the Hawaiian case, but beyond the serious ethical problems with these studies, neither the Norwegian nor the African-American population was virgin soil for syphilis as were Hawaiians. What is known for certain is that syphilis was highly infectious and shortly affected the health and fertility of countless men, women, children, and infants on the Islands.

Modern medicine identifies four distinct treponemal diseases: venereal syphilis (the subject of our discussion), endemic syphilis, yaws, and pinta. None of these three latter diseases was present in Hawai‘i during the period under discussion, and none of them have (or had) anything like the consequences of their venereal cousin. None are sexually transmitted, and none threaten fertility or can be transmitted during pregnancy or birth.¹⁴⁶ Each offers a degree of immunity to the others. Historically, pinta was common

¹⁴⁴ Alonzo Chapin, “Remarks on the Venereal Disease at the Sandwich Islands,” *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal*, 42 (1850): 89–93.

¹⁴⁵ Stannard, “Disease and Infertility,” 341.

¹⁴⁶ Powell and Cook, “Treponematosi,” 30.

in Central and South America, endemic syphilis in Africa, and yaws in Asia. The presence or absence of yaws, in particular, had profound consequences for Pacific Islanders in the era of Cook that scholars are just beginning to grasp. Endemic to Tonga, Sāmoa, Tahiti and other South Pacific Islands, yaws seems to have made few if any inroads into Hawai‘i and Aotearoa/New Zealand. Hawaiians and Māori were thus highly susceptible to venereal syphilis upon the arrival of Europeans. Endemic yaws undoubtedly saved countless lives in Oceania after 1778 by conferring a degree immunity to venereal syphilis. Not only was yaws no threat to fertility or reproduction, it also cannot be passed in utero like venereal syphilis. While archaeologists are divided on the question of yaws in precontact Hawai‘i, it is clear that Islanders’ treponemal immunities were not sufficient to ward off venereal syphilis in the 1770s.¹⁴⁷ The same is true of tuberculosis, which may have been present in the centuries before contact, but if so, it offered little to no resistance to the disease in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹⁴⁸

Of perhaps greatest concern to Hawaiians themselves in this period was the tendency of the *Treponema* to cross the placenta and infect the fetus. Children born with congenital syphilis suffer “severe mental and physical disabilities,” which is why

¹⁴⁷ The discussion of yaws can be followed in Peter Pirie, “The Effects of Treponematosi and Gonorrhoea on the Populations of the Pacific Islands,” *Human Biology in Oceania* 1 (1972): 187–206; Charles S. Judd, “Depopulation in Polynesia,” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 51 (1977): 585–593; Stannard, *Before the Horror*, 75–77; and Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 31, 48.

¹⁴⁸ For the possibility of tuberculosis in Hawai‘i before 1778, see Charles E. Snow, *Early Hawaiians: An Initial Study of Skeletal Remains from Mokapu, Oahu* (Lexington, KY, 1974); Robert John Hommon, “The Formation of Primitive States in Pre-Contact Hawaii (PhD diss., Univ. of Hawai‘i, 1976), 36; Kirch, *Feathered Gods and Fishhooks*, 243; and cf. Stannard, *Before the Horror*, 77–78.

pregnant women today are routinely tested for syphilis.¹⁴⁹ The list of developmental problems for infants includes anemia, jaundice, deafness, neurological problems, enlargement of the liver, spleen, and lymph nodes, and skeletal and skin lesions. For infants who survive these complications, childhood poses other challenges: malformation of the skull, swelling of the knees, “saber” shins (a deformity of the anterior tibia), “flaring” shoulder blades, “thickening” of the sternoclavicular joint, malformed and weak teeth, and a distinctive “saddle-shaped” nose in which the bridge is collapsed. These marks of congenital syphilis “usually remain visible throughout life, and may occasion social prejudice, because of their association with sexually transmitted disease.”¹⁵⁰

Later visitors to Hawai‘i described children who had survived congenital syphilis. In many cases—it is hard to know how many—*Treponema* infection would have caused miscarriage, premature birth, stillbirth, or the death of an infant. In probably still more cases, infected Hawaiian adults were simply unable to become pregnant in the first place. The prevalence of childless adults and couples presented unique challenges to nineteenth-century Hawai‘i.

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Tuberculosis is a highly contagious disease caused by the bacillus *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. The bacillus is transmitted through the air by coughing, sneezing, spitting, talking, or simply breathing. Since *Mycobacterium* grows best in aerobic (oxygenated) environments, it tends to attack the lungs. Once the tuberculosis bacteria find a home in

¹⁴⁹ Wörhrl and Geusau, “Syphilis,” 690.

¹⁵⁰ Powell and Cook, “Treponematosi,” 21–31, esp. 27.

the lungs, they replicate, forming a hard lump known as a tubercle. At this point, the disease can either enter a latent state (with patients experiencing few symptoms) or escalate to “active tuberculosis”; however, a latent case can reactivate at any point over the course of an individual’s life, typically doing so when the body’s immune system is compromised. Symptoms of the disease are not unlike those of influenza or the common cold: low-grade fever, cough, muscle ache, lethargy and fatigue, loss of appetite, chills, sweating, weight loss, and irregular menses.¹⁵¹

Among contemporary, non-virgin soil populations, tuberculosis escalates to the “active” state in 5 to 10 percent of cases, at which point the tubercles begin to destroy the lungs and to spread to other organs.¹⁵² At this point, the victim appears to waste away—hence, the popular nineteenth-century term “consumption.” The younger a patient is, the more likely he or she is to develop active tuberculosis.¹⁵³ In an age before antibiotics, “more than half of active tuberculosis cases resulted in death within five years.”¹⁵⁴ Infants and young children were particularly vulnerable.

¹⁵¹ William D. Johnston, “Tuberculosis,” in *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, ed. Kenneth F. Kiple (Cambridge, UK, 1993), 1061.

¹⁵² Jeffrey Lewis, “Tuberculosis,” in *Encyclopedia of Pestilence, Pandemics, and Plagues*, vol. 2, ed. Joseph P. Byrne (Westport, CT, 2008), 703. Tuberculosis can strike the skin, bones, kidneys, spine, and genitals. What is today called “miliary tuberculosis” refers to the disease attacking all the body’s major organs simultaneously, a scenario all too common for infected infants. The diverse physical manifestations of active tuberculosis garnered a variety of names in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. “Consumption” was typically used for active tuberculosis in the lungs. “Scrofula” identified the disease in its exterior manifestations, especially swelling in the lymph nodes of the neck and other glands. In the early nineteenth-century as its meaning grew increasingly fuzzy, scrofula was largely superseded by its adjectival form “scrofulous,” often in combination with other physiological or epidemiological terms. See Roger K. French, “Scrofula (Scrophula),” in *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, ed. Kenneth F. Kiple (Cambridge, UK, 1993), 998–1000.

¹⁵³ Johnston, “Tuberculosis,” in *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, 1059–1068.

¹⁵⁴ Lewis, “Tuberculosis,” in *Encyclopedia of Pestilence, Pandemics, and Plagues*, 2:703.

Unlike gonorrhea and syphilis, where the sex act is both necessary and sufficient for infection, tuberculosis involves a number of variables: age, sex, health and nutrition, living conditions and work environment, and duration of exposure. For reasons as yet little understood, in regions where tuberculosis infection is new or on the rise, a person's sex is also a factor, with fatalities significantly higher for females than males.¹⁵⁵ This may have had a bearing on the lopsided Hawaiian sex ratios noted by nineteenth-century observers.¹⁵⁶

For tuberculosis—as, to a lesser extent, for gonorrhea and venereal syphilis—hygiene and public sanitation played a role in the spread of infection among Hawaiians. Tuberculosis epidemics in Europe and North America in this period were a direct result of industrialization and urbanization: crowded, unsanitary workplaces and living spaces for people with poor diets eased transmission of the disease. The populous, agricultural communities of Hawai'i, with large families congregated in small living spaces, were no less ripe for the spread of the disease. While the earliest visitors to Hawai'i showered praise on local people for their cleanliness and daily swimming regimen, New England missionaries later offered universal condemnation of same.¹⁵⁷ It is immensely difficult to separate out the cultural chauvinism and racial prejudice of New England Calvinists from legitimate concerns about hygiene and sanitation amid virgin-soil epidemics. Not only

¹⁵⁵ Johnston, "Tuberculosis," in *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, 1059–1068.

¹⁵⁶ There has been no research on the extent to which tuberculosis may have contributed to low fertility in nineteenth-century Hawai'i. Stannard briefly pondered this question in "Disease and Infertility," 343.

¹⁵⁷ For early descriptions of Hawaiian hygiene, see Samwell, in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1180; and [William Beresford], *A Voyage Round the World; But More Particularly to the North-West Coast of America...*, by George Dixon (London, 1789), 127.

did the missionaries harbor profound anxieties about sexuality—in particular Indigenous peoples’ sexuality—they were also terrified of tuberculosis, a disease that had taken (and would continue to take) members of their families. Nevertheless, missionaries were concerned about Hawaiian health after 1820, and they made countless recommendations to improve Hawaiian living conditions. Of course, these recommendations were of limited utility in an age when “miasmas,” “vapours,” and “unnatural intercourse” were considered the causes of bacterial diseases. In any case, missionary observations of (and complaints about) Hawaiian lifestyles should not be dismissed out of hand but rather need to be weighed carefully and understood in the context of the actual health challenges Hawaiians were facing.

It is important also to note that bacterial diseases of all kinds, then as now, are exacerbated by poverty. This was especially true of tuberculosis in the nineteenth century, but even venereal syphilis can, in “rare cases,” be transmitted “by nonsexual contact in communities living under conditions of poor personal hygiene.”¹⁵⁸ The point is that Hawaiian diets, sexual practices, hygiene, and public sanitation had all developed *in the absence of* bacterial scourges such as tuberculosis, syphilis, and gonorrhea. The new diseases presented sudden, dire challenges to Hawaiian families and to Hawaiian public health.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ Wörhrl and Geusau, “Syphilis,” 689. For tuberculosis and poverty in late-nineteenth-century South Africa, see Randall M. Packard, *White Plague, Black Labor: Tuberculosis and the Political Economy of Health and Disease in South Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1989), esp. 28–30.

¹⁵⁹ For Sahlins’ reflections on the structure of the Hawaiian family (*‘ohana*) in this period, see *Islands of History*, 22–26, esp. 25n. For a refinement of this position, see Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*, chap. 5, esp. 114–115.

Regardless of living conditions, the closer a Pacific Island group was positioned to the continents “the weaker the *cordon sanitaire*”; thus, the greater likelihood of infection over the centuries, and the more favorable the disease impact for Islanders when the cord was breached again.¹⁶⁰ The opposite was also true: the further an archipelago was from the continents and from other inhabited islands, the worse the impact. The Philippines provide a telling comparison with Hawai‘i in this respect. Positioned just off East and Southeast Asia, the Philippines’ encounter with infectious Old World diseases in the sixteenth century was much less costly to Indigenous life and health than the contemporaneous Columbian exchange was for the Americas.¹⁶¹ The epidemiological onslaught in colonial Hawai‘i was, if not on the scale of the Caribbean holocaust of the 1490s, at least nearer in scale to the sixteenth-century Americas than it was to the sixteenth-century Philippines.

Hawai‘i’s unique disease ecology was a function of the Islands’ broader unique ecology. Over ninety-five percent of Hawai‘i’s endemic flowering plants occur naturally nowhere else in the world.¹⁶² The only mammal native to the Islands before Polynesian voyagers arrived was a species of bat.¹⁶³ As a result of this high degree of endemism, “[i]n no other place in the world [did] so many species of endemic plants and animals

¹⁶⁰ Donald Denoon, “Pacific Edens?: Myths and Realities of Primitive Affluence,” in *The Cambridge History of Pacific Islanders*, 80–118, ed. Denoon (Cambridge, UK, 1997), 115.

¹⁶¹ See Newson, *Conquest and Pestilence in the Spanish Philippines*.

¹⁶² R. Warwick Armstrong, ed., *Atlas of Hawaii* (Honolulu, 1973), 63.

¹⁶³ Raymond J. Kramer, *Hawaiian Land Mammals* (Rutland, VT, 1971), 17; Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:278n3.

become extinct in so short a time.”¹⁶⁴ While the Islands’ human disease ecology in 1778 presents a more complex picture—and was considerably more varied in 1778 than in 1400 or 1000—the populace nonetheless proved highly vulnerable to Old World diseases.

¹⁶⁴ Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 23.

Table 1. Infectious Diseases Introduced to Hawai'i, 1778–1855									
DISEASE	principal Hawaiian term	type / microbe	transmission	epicenter / island(s) most affected	earliest possible appearance	likely present on one or more islands	PRESENT	source(s) discussing introduction	known victims (date)
gonorrhoea	<i>hilo</i> *	bacterial / <i>Neisseria gonorrhoeae</i>	sexual; transplacental	all	...	...	1778	Cook et al.	...
syphilis	<i>pala</i> *	bacterial / <i>Treponema pallidum</i>	sexual; transplacental	all	1778	1778	1779	Cook et al.	Kahapai'opio (1818); William Beale (1824); Hezekiah Kawalepolelepo (1838)
tuberculosis	<i>ma'i 'ai'ale</i> *	bacterial / <i>Mycobacterium</i> (various species)	respiratory (aerosol droplets of saliva or mucus)	all	1778	1793	1819	Vancouver, Merzies (1793), Freycinet (1819)	wife of Kahakii II? (1794); Kahakii II? (1794); John Toobane (1834); King Lunalilo (1874)
diarrheal epidemic, 1803–04	<i>'ōku'u</i> *	(likely) bacterial / <i>Salmonella typhi</i> ? <i>Vibrio cholerae</i> ?	fecal-oral (contaminated water or food)	Honolulu / O'ahu	...	1803	1804	Lisiansky; Malo, Kamakau; Schmitt; Bushnell	Kē'e'aumoku Pape'ihihihi, Nūmāhānā'i Kāleleokalani, Kuakini (half-brother of John Adams Kuakini), Kaaweheulu Kalua'upana, Nahina'alu'ahu, Namokuelua
unknown respiratory disease* (influenza?), Nov 1818	n/a	...	respiratory	Honolulu	...	...	1818	Marin	60 dead
unknown respiratory disease (influenza?), Jan 1820	n/a	...	respiratory	Honolulu	...	...	1820	Marin	none recorded
unknown respiratory disease, Dec 1821	n/a	...	respiratory	Honolulu	...	...	1821	Marin	Keahānōe?
unknown respiratory disease, Feb & May–July 1824	n/a	...	respiratory	Honolulu	...	...	1824	Marin,	"many" (Marin),
unknown respiratory disease (influenza?), Jan–Feb 1825	n/a	...	respiratory	Honolulu	...	...	1825	Marin, Kotzebue, Macrae	"many" (Marin), an "epidemic" with "great mortality" (Kotzebue)
influenza I (may be same as disease of Jan–Feb '25 above)	<i>pālā</i>	viral / <i>Orthomyxoviridae</i>	respiratory	Lahaina? / Maui,	1778	1818	1825	C. Wetmore? (HMH); Kamakau (RC); D. Waie	George Prince Humehume (3 May 1825)
whooping cough I	<i>kalea; kama kalea</i>	bacterial / <i>Bordetella pertussis</i>	respiratory	/ Maui	...	...	1826	G.P.Judd (1830s*), Kamakau (RC p.236)	Whāinepio; Kahala'i'a Luana'u; Boki's brother-in-law (name?); Kina'u's son (name?) – all 1826

DISEASE	principal Hawaiian term	type / microbe	transmission	epicenter / island(s) most affected	earliest possible appearance	likely present on one or more	PRESENT	source(s) discussing introduction	known victims (date)
<i>unknown, 1834</i>	FIND	...	...	O'ahu, Maui	...	...	1834	L. Chamberlain vol.17	Kuakini's daughter (name?); Keola (fiancé of Nāhi'ema'ena)
mumps	<i>auwae pahaāha</i> ("swollen chin"); <i>'ā ipahaāha; pēheū</i>	viral / <i>Rubulavirus</i>	respiratory; saliva; fomites; transplacental	Honolulu	...	...	1837–39	ABCFMC report of 1840 for 1830 & 1838; Mouritz; for 1842, N. B. Emerson (HEH); for 1848, W. Hillsbrand(?); R. Armstrong to D. Greene (ABCFM); Kamakau (RC p.237)	Kina'u, Kaikio'ewa (1839)
leprosy	<i>ma'i Pake; ma'i lepera</i>	bacterial / <i>Mycobacterium leprae</i>	respiratory?	Kaua'i, O'ahu, Honolulu?/island-wide	1830?	1835	1842	Kamali (leper in 1835, died 1848 on Kaua'i); Ahia (1842); "George" Naea (ali'i leper in 1838, died 1854)	
influenza II, Spring 1844	<i>palū</i>	viral / <i>Orthomyxoviridae</i>	respiratory	Honolulu?/island-wide	...	...	1844	C. Wetmore (HMH), S.S.Hill	?
influenza III	<i>palū</i>	viral / <i>Orthomyxoviridae</i>	respiratory	HNL, Big Island (Ka'u, Hilo, Puna, Kona)	...	...	1848-49		?
measles I	<i>'ulāli'i; ma'i 'ula</i>	viral / <i>Morbilivirus</i>	respiratory	? / ?	...	...	1848	Kamakau (RC)	William Pitt Lelelohoku; Moses Kekūāiwa; Ka'imina'au'ao (Lili'uokalani's sister)
whooping cough II	<i>kalea; kuni kalea</i>	bacterial / <i>Bordetella pertussis</i>	respiratory	?	...	...	1848	L. F. Judd (1880)	"every tenth case", incl. Moses Kaikioewa (Kina'u's son)
mumps II	<i>auwae pahaāha; 'ā ipahaāha; pēheū</i>	viral / <i>Rubulavirus</i>	respiratory; saliva; fomites; transplacental	? / ?	...	...	1848	?	?
dengue fever	<i>piwa ha 'ha'i iwi</i>	viral / <i>Flavivirus</i> (four types)	<i>Aedes</i> mosquito	? / ?	...	...	1852	TBD	TBD
measles II	<i>'ulāli'i; ma'i 'ula</i>	viral / <i>Morbilivirus</i>	respiratory	? / ?	...	...	1852	TBD	James Kakiolani (could this measles outbreak have been dengue fever, or vice versa?)
smallpox	<i>ma'i pu'u pu'u li'i li'i</i>	viral / <i>Variola</i>	respiratory	Honolulu / O'ahu & Maui	n/a	n/a	1853	W. Farrer + many others	Former wife and child; hundreds of names recorded for 1853–54, esp. by Mormons; see also HNL gravestones

“The Grand Turk Himself”

The three introduced diseases that began to ravage the Islands after 1778 were all spread by human contact. It is hard to see how physical contact could have been avoided in such an encounter. Sexual intercourse is a different matter. Despite intractable stereotypes of Pacific Islanders as sensuous or promiscuous, sexual mores were quite varied throughout Oceania and even across Polynesia. Oral traditions, anthropological research, and extensive documentation paint a complex portrait of sexual encounters between Europeans and Islanders in the late-eighteenth century.¹⁶⁵ By all accounts, Micronesians (of the Marianas, Marshalls, and Caroline Islands) and Melanesians (of New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Fiji) were less eager to engage newcomers sexually than were Polynesians. Kamchadals in coastal Siberia, Aleutian Islanders, and Northwest Coast peoples were also reticent to engage in or exchange sex with sailors; in fact, many if not most of the Northwest Coast people whom Britons engaged in sex had been enslaved in those societies.¹⁶⁶ At the Society Islands, Sāmoa, Tonga and Hawai‘i, by contrast, Islanders widely engaged newcomers in sex, sometimes of their own free will, more often at the bidding of fellow Islanders. Sexual exchange at

¹⁶⁵ See Sahlins, *Islands of History*, chap. 1; Caroline Ralston, “Changes in the Lives of Ordinary Women in Early Post-Contact Hawaii,” in *Family and Gender in the Pacific: Domestic Contradictions and the Colonial Impact*, ed. Margaret Jolly and Martha Macintyre, 45–64 (Cambridge, UK, 1989); David A. Chappell, “Shipboard Relations between Pacific Island Women and Euroamerican Men 1767–1887,” *Journal of Pacific History*, 27 (1992): 131–149, esp. 132; and Mykkänen, *Inventing Politics*, 89–102.

¹⁶⁶ Cook, in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:311; Samwell (5 April 1778), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1095; and Bayly, in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:311n4. An American trader in 1792 deemed the Nuu-chah-nulth women of Vancouver Island “remarkable for their chastity,” a striking contrast with Euro-American observations at Hawai‘i at this time. See John Hoskins, “The Narrative of a Voyage, etc.,” in *Voyages of the “Columbia” to the Northwest Coast, 1787–90 and 1790–93*, ed. Frederic W. Howay (Cambridge, MA, 1941), 260.

Hawai‘i transpired for a variety of reasons in this period and, like so much else on the Islands, evolved rapidly.

All the journalists on the Cook voyage noted that Hawaiians seemed eager to engage them sexually. This was not merely wishful thinking. While cruising the perimeter of Hawai‘i Island in December 1778, Cook noted that “no women I ever met with were more ready to bestow their favors” on his men than Hawaiians.¹⁶⁷ Ship surgeon David Samwell went further:

One thing is remarkable among them, that we found no Denial from any of them, young or old, Maid, Widow or Wife, in which they differ from the [Tahitians], the married Women there being chaste and constant to their Husbands; whereas a married Man here would as soon let you lie with his wife as his Daughter or Sister, and so as he got the Toi [piece of iron] into his Possession it was a matter of perfect indifference to him on which of his Family your choice might light, I have known an elderly woman very importunate to engage some of us to lie with her Daughter who was the wife of a Chief & had a Child by him. There may perhaps be some instances among them where a Man would refuse to prostitute his Wife, however this I can say that I met with none, however it would be wrong to conclude from this that they allow the same freedoms to each other as they did to us.¹⁶⁸

Scholars have employed such cultural comparisons to illustrate the Enlightenment’s dark legacy of racial ordering and “othering.”¹⁶⁹ There is no question that characterizations of

¹⁶⁷ Cook (5 Jan. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:486. In a similar vein, perhaps: “These people trade with the least suspicion of any Indians I ever met with.” *Ibid.*, 3:483.

¹⁶⁸ Samwell (4 Feb. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1182. For an old woman who seemed to perform the role of a “priestess” but whose religious function was “no bar to the Performance of her Devotions at the Temple of Venus,” see *ibid.*, 3:1085; and below.

¹⁶⁹ E.g., Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham, NC, 1995); Daiva Stasiulis and Nira Yuval-Davis, eds. *Unsettling Settler Societies: Articulations of Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Class* (London, 1995); and Warren Montag, “The Universalization of Whiteness: Racism and Enlightenment,” in *Whiteness: A Critical Reader*, ed. Mike Hill, 281–293 (New York, 1997).

Pacific Islanders by early observers led to pernicious racial and cultural stereotypes into the nineteenth century and beyond. When Protestant missionaries arrived in 1820, they were well-prepared to complain about Hawaiian “licentiousness,” luxury, and physical and mental “inertia,” which then became constant refrains in mission propaganda. One hundred years later, demographers still employed racist categories to explain the “population problems” of the Pacific.¹⁷⁰ Yet to dismiss the observations of Cook and his men—on sexual and other matters—as merely ethnocentric, racist, or misogynistic would be an error. Cook and a handful of his officers had wider exposure to a broader swath of Pacific Islands peoples than anyone in this period, including Pacific Islanders themselves. European bias in the early encounters does not necessarily preclude comparisons between the people against whom the bias was directed; as with later missionary observations of Hawaiian life, the analysis of such observations requires careful attention and a healthy skepticism about the journalists’ assumptions and motives. As for Samwell’s comments on Hawaiian charity with their “female favors,” this may have been hyperbole but his principal mistake was to imagine that marriage existed among commoners in anything like the way Europeans understood it. As scholars have pointed out, there were no words for “husband” or wife” in eighteenth-century Hawai‘i, only man, woman, father, mother, uncle, aunt, etc.¹⁷¹ While the ali‘i engaged in dynastic unions of various sorts, principally

¹⁷⁰ Roberts, *Population Problems of the Pacific*, passim.

¹⁷¹ Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*, 121–125. Regarding marriage among commoners, Clerke noted that “we saw no traces of it.” Clerke (March 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:596.

to differentiate themselves from the maka‘āinana, sexual partnerships (and sex itself) were a different matter.

For their part, Cook’s men were less concerned about the state of the Hawaiian marriage bond than they were about another sexual custom. Male ali‘i kept young male attendants, known as *aikāne*, for sexual and other services. At the Big Island Samwell reckoned the “business” of the aikāne as “commit[ting] the Sin of Onan upon the old King” Kalani‘ōpu‘u—presumably, oral sex or manual masturbation. “This, however strange it may appear, is fact, as we learnt from frequent Enquiries about this curious Custom, and it is an office that is esteemed honourable among them & they have frequently asked us on seeing a handsome young fellow if he was not an Ikany to some of us.”¹⁷² Not only Kalani‘ōpu‘u but also Kamehameha enjoyed the company and advice of aikāne. According to Samwell, a “Young Man of whom he seems very fond” joined Kamehameha on the ship, along with other attendants, on the night of February 10, 1779. Kamehameha’s attachment to the aikāne did not surprise Samwell “in the least...as we have had opportunities before of being acquainted with a detestable part of his Character which he is not in the least anxious to conceal.”¹⁷³

The word aikāne can be translated literally as coitus (*ai*) with a man (*kāne*). It is therefore curious that some scholars have defined the term as “courtly favorite” without

¹⁷² Samwell (29 Jan. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1171–1172. Elsewhere Samwell noted that the “Unnatural Crime which ought never to be mentioned is not unknown amongst them.” See *ibid.*, 3:1184. For an origin story of male-on-male sexual relations, which involved the fifteenth-century high chief Liloa of Waipi‘o, Hawai‘i Island, see Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 256.

¹⁷³ Samwell (29 Jan. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1190. For a discussion of Kamehameha’s aikāne, see Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, “Malama LGBT,” pt. 1, *Equally Speaking*, aired 13 Nov. 2011, ‘Ōlelo Community Media.

reference to the sexual role of these persons.¹⁷⁴ In 1786 at O‘ahu, William Beresford understood the role of aikāne as primarily sexual in nature, describing their function as “Ganymede-like.”¹⁷⁵ What Beresford seems not to have understood is that the aikāne generally held positions of importance and honor in Hawaiian society (as Samwell had suggested earlier). In the first place, Hawaiian mythology suggested that the semen of the ali‘i nui was sacred; hence, the responsibility for handling it was exalted.¹⁷⁶ Secondly, the aikāne took on much broader roles than mere sexual service. Kalani‘ōpu‘u had at least five aikāne at his service in 1779, and some if not all of these men were important advisors. Palea, for instance, was already a “Man of great Consequence” in 1779, according to Lt. James King; he would remain so through the 1780s.¹⁷⁷ One consequence of the important roles of aikāne, in King’s opinion, was to divide the “natural affections” of male ali‘i for their wives. While the Britons’ failure to observe “Domestick enderaments” between spouses is hardly evidence of its absence, it is noteworthy that

¹⁷⁴ Kirch, *A Shark Going Inland Is My Chief*, 273. Despite their obvious political importance and attachment to the divine kings of Kirch’s study, the aikāne do not appear in *How Chiefs Became Kings*.

¹⁷⁵ [William Beresford], *A Voyage Round the World; But More Particularly to the North-West Coast of America...*, by George Dixon (London, 1789), 102–103. In 1798, the American Ebenezer Townsend noticed “one Indian who always eats with the women,” and was told by John Young that “such men were completely incorporated into the society of the females, and were, no more than [the women] allowed to go into the houses of the men.” It is not clear whether such individuals (of whom Young claimed there were few) were considered to be a distinct class from the aikāne. See “Extract from the Diary of Ebenezer Townsend, Jr.,” *Hawaiian Historical Reprints*, no. 4 (1924), 26.

¹⁷⁶ Robert J. Morris, “Aikāne: Accounts of Hawaiian Same-Sex Relationships in the Journals of Captain Cook’s Third Voyage (1776–80),” *Journal of Homosexuality* 19, no. 4 (1990): 21–54, esp. 37; Abraham Fornander, *Fornander Collection of Hawaiian Antiquities and Folklore*, vol. 4 (Honolulu, 1916), 8–9.

¹⁷⁷ King (March 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:613. See also *ibid*, 3:502; and Morris, “Aikāne,” 33–34.

great affection sprouted between male ali‘i and their aikānae, and that the sexual service of the former was not distinct from their political role.¹⁷⁸

Remarkably, the twenty-eight year-old lieutenant James King was offered a position as aikāne shortly before the 1779 melee at Kealakekua Bay. According to King, Kalani‘ōpu‘u and one of his chief *kāhuna* (priests) “askd Captⁿ Cook very seriously to leave me behind; I had had proposals by our friends to elope, & they promised to hide me in the hills till the Ships were gone, & to make me a great man.” Even when the Hawaiians “wishd the Ships away,” King continued, “yet they have been desirous of retaining Individuals, often for no better motive than what Actuates Children, to be possess’d of a Curious play thing.”¹⁷⁹ But in this, King was mistaken. An aikāne such as Palea was hardly a play thing. He was a high-placed advisor whose service earned the trust and affection of Kalani‘ōpu‘u. Sexual relations were simply part of that service and no doubt played some role in the trust and affection the mō‘ī felt for him.

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In November 1778, at the same time that Maui Islanders were asking the newcomers about the new diseases they had contracted, “[m]any young Women came along side & wanted much to come on board, making many lascivious Motions & Gestures,” according to Samwell. Unfortunately for the men, Cook had imposed “restrictions in respect to our intercourse with them,” so the mariners could “not as yet

¹⁷⁸ King (3 Feb. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:624.

¹⁷⁹ King (3 Feb. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:518–519.

conveniently admit them into the Ships, for which they scolded us very smartly.”¹⁸⁰ By mid-January 1779, at Kealakekua Bay, Cook’s ships were “so overcrowded” with women that the crew lacked sufficient “room to do the necessary duty of mooring the Ship”; thus, the men “were obliged to send them over board to the Number of two or three hundred.” Samwell gloated: “We live now in the greatest Luxury, and as to the Choice & Number of fine women there is hardly one among us that may not vie with the grand Turk himself.”¹⁸¹

Over the course of eight weeks at Hawai‘i Island, Samwell referenced no less than fifteen days in which women and girls were on board, most of them staying overnight and some staying as many as “three days.”¹⁸² A number of Hawaiian females actually stayed on board for the duration of combat at Kealakekua Bay. When the violence subsided, seven Island females accompanied the fleet for an entire week as it explored Maui and the other islands.¹⁸³ For a period of two weeks in March 1779, Samwell noted that “young Women sleep on board the Ships every night,” and “[f]ine Girls come off to us every day in great plenty.”¹⁸⁴

Why did Hawaiians engage the newcomers in sexual exchange in the first place? Was Hawaiian “enthusiasm” for sexual encounters a figment of the seamen’s

¹⁸⁰ Samwell (26 Nov. 1778) in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1151. See also King (20 and 29 Jan. 1778), manuscript log on the *Resolution*, PRO Admiralty 55, vol. 116, photostat in Hawai‘i State Archives.

¹⁸¹ Samwell (17 Jan. 1779) in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1159.

¹⁸² Samwell (7 Jan. 1779) in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1157. See also Samwell (26 Nov. 1778 to 22 Feb. 1779) in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1151–1217.

¹⁸³ Samwell (26 Feb. 1779) in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1220.

¹⁸⁴ Samwell (3–4 March 1779) in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1224–1225.

imaginings? Was sex a kind of currency for Islanders, an expression of graciousness or hospitality toward guests, a means of accessing mana? Perhaps most germane to the present discussion is the question of why Islanders would continue to engage newcomers in sex once the ravages of venereal disease became clear. “Engagement” in sexual commerce, of course, suggests willing cooperation on the part of Islanders, which was not the case for the majority of Hawaiian women and girls enlisted in the trade. As with the exchange of sexual services elsewhere throughout history, participants in sexual commerce at Hawai‘i were at no point on an equal footing with solicitors and agents of the trade, the local pimps and madams. And yet, in the eighteenth century, sexual exchange at Hawai‘i was robust, consistent, and, for at least for some eighteenth-century Hawaiians, voluntary. Why?

Following earlier scholars, Marshall Sahlins attributed the frequency of sexual liaisons at Hawai‘i to an “Aphrodisian” culture of sexual “hospitality.”¹⁸⁵ American missionaries, who would later try to root out sexual commerce on the Islands, at first understood it in similar terms. Upon arriving at Kaua‘i in 1820 with the charter New England mission delegation, Reverend Samuel Whitney observed that

[t]he natives though poor are kind even to extremes; they usually set before us the best of their food, and as a mark of respect the Husband offers his wife, the Father his daughter, and the Brother his sister. We told

¹⁸⁵ Sahlins, *Islands of History*, 9. See also *Fornander Collection of Hawaiian Antiquities and Folklore*, 5:63; Samuel H. Elbert, “The Chief in Hawaiian Mythology,” *The Journal of American Folklore* 69 (1956): 341–355, esp. 345. For a recent challenge of Sahlins’ notion of “sexual hospitality” in Sāmoa, see Serge Tchekézo, *First Contacts’ in Polynesia: The Samoan Case (1722–1848); Western Misunderstandings about Sexuality and Divinity* (Canberra, Australia, 2008).

them there is a God in Heaven who has forbidden such iniquity; they say it is good, but you are strange white men.¹⁸⁶

It is possible, even likely, that these Kaua‘i Islanders knew the missionaries would turn down their “offers.” And yet countless other offers were taken up by visitors to island ports from 1778 until the mid-nineteenth century. A critical factor contributing to the volume of sexual exchange in Hawai‘i (and in Polynesia more broadly) in the early years was the social pressure toward hypergamy, or “marrying up.”¹⁸⁷ Commoners and even lower-ranked ali‘i hoped to attain a higher status by coupling with and eventually bearing children to more elite persons. Since beings of higher status necessarily held greater mana, sexual intercourse was a means of accessing mana in the early encounters. The newcomers’ ships, muskets, clothes, and tools all pointed to their possession of considerable mana. One of the most remarkable illustrations of Hawaiian conceptions of the newcomers’ mana was recorded by Samwell at Kaua‘i in 1779:

These people bring their Children’s Navels [i.e., umbilical cords or stumps] tyed up in little slips of Cloth and hide them in any little holes they can find about the Ship, but they do not mind whether they are observed by us or not; this singular Custom it is difficult to assign any reason for, perhaps it may be looked upon as a Charm, but to work what effect, they themselves are only in the secret. The Women seemed to have the chief hand in this mystic Affair, they staid in their Canoes & sent a

¹⁸⁶ Samuel Whitney, journal, 27 May 1820, Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Series ABC 19.1, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA. Sahlins wrote that it was American missionary “obsessions [that] made sexuality emblematic of Hawaiianess,” but he knew better: explorers and merchants in the decades before the Sandwich Islands Mission were responsible for constructing this emblem. Sahlins, “Goodbye to *Tristes Tropes*,” esp. 4–5.

¹⁸⁷ Sahlins, *Islands of History*, 10, 15, 22; Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*, 56, 67, 95, 99, 108; Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 40–44. For hypergamy in Tonga, see Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 28; for the Society Islands, see Anne Salmond, *Aphrodite’s Island: The European Discovery of Tahiti* (Berkeley, 2009), 63–64.

Man with [the umbilical cords] on board the Ship and directed him where to place them.¹⁸⁸

Samwell was on the right track by suggesting a “charm.” Hiding or burying a newborn’s umbilical cord/stump (*piko*) was an age-old Polynesian custom designed to secure good fortune for the child. Mothers or their surrogates would place the *piko* of the newborn in a sacred or protected location, such as the base of a tree or under a boulder or at sea.¹⁸⁹

Worshippers of the volcano deity Pele on the Big Island commonly tossed locks of their hair into the fiery depths of Mauna Kea.¹⁹⁰ For Hawaiian mothers to have identified the British ships as deserving the *piko* of their newborns is surely an indication of how highly they esteemed the newcomers’ mana. In similar fashion, Samwell noted that “some of the Indians cut off a lock of a Child’s Hair along side & threw it on board the Ship,” as the fleet sailed away from Kaua‘i in 1779.¹⁹¹

Beyond hypergamy, there was the issue of strained relations between the sexes. King, who suggested that the aikāne might be a cause for marital strain, observed outright physical violence against women in 1779. In one case an ali‘i woman who had paid too much attention to a British officer during a boxing match was beaten “unmercifully” by her jealous husband. Another “Girl” received a “terrible beating” aboard the ship for

¹⁸⁸ Samwell (4 March 1779) in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1225.

¹⁸⁹ See Mary Kawena Pukui, “Hawaiian Beliefs and Customs During Birth, Infancy, and Childhood,” *Occasional Papers of Bernice P. Bishop Museum* 16, no. 17 (1942): 357–381, esp. 362–368, 378–381; E. S. Craighill Handy and M. K. Pukui, *The Polynesian Family System in Ka‘u, Hawai‘i* (Wellington, NZ, 1958), 78; and Mary Kawena Pukui, E. W. Hartwig, and Catherine A. Lee, *Nānā I Ke Kumu (Look to the Source)*, 2 vols. (Honolulu, 1972), 2:15–18.

¹⁹⁰ William Ellis (missionary), *Journal of William Ellis: Narrative of a Tour of Hawaii, or Owyhee...* (1827; repr. Honolulu, 1963), 250.

¹⁹¹ Samwell (8 March 1779) in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1228.

“eating the wrong sort of Plantain.”¹⁹² If violence against women does not explain why they engaged newcomers sexually, it suggests at least one motivation for building alliances with them. That motivation would remain in play throughout the next two decades.¹⁹³

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Unfortunately for Hawaiians, as for other virgin-soil populations who met with Europeans in this period, there was a direct correlation between the volume of sexual exchange with foreigners and the transmission of venereal infection. Why did the ravages of venereal disease not put a damper on sexual commerce at the Islands? Did persons infected with syphilis or gonorrhea avoid sexual exchanges while they were symptomatic, or simply stop frequenting the ports altogether? Were Hawaiian agents of the sex trade aware of the toll venereal disease could take on their “clients,” apparently including their close kin? Were “sex workers” perhaps considered immune to diseases they had already contracted and managed to survive?

These questions will be taken up in later chapters, but it is important note that a strictly rationalist or materialist understanding of disease etiology did not apply in

¹⁹² King (3 Feb. 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:624.

¹⁹³ Cook’s men observed at least two women acting as priestesses. This is noteworthy given that the state religion, in Hawai’i as in broader Polynesia, was male dominated. The kāhuna were male, and the akua they worshipped were largely male deities. Perhaps as a result of their exclusion, female practitioners of the divine arts adopted something of an antic disposition. At Ni’ihau James Burney observed priestesses who acted as if “inspired by some supernatural power, performing numberless Mad and strange pranks.” See Burney journal (11 March 1779), Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales, Sydney. An older priestess, whose “extravagant” behavior and dress (“in the stile of a bedlamite”) earned comment from Samwell, was later discovered to be the wife of a kahuna, with whom she practiced rituals. Samwell encountered this “Mad Woman,” whose real name was “Waratoi” (Walako’i?), on both of his visits to Ni’ihau. She seemed to be “possessed with some fury.” Samwell (31 Jan. 1778, 6 March 1779), in Beaglehole, *Journals*, 3:1085, 1226–1227.

contact-era Hawai‘i. On the one hand, materialist and spiritual perspectives were not mutually exclusive for Hawaiians. People could explain disease as having both spiritual and physical causes. On the other hand, Hawaiians rarely if ever explained the ma‘i malihini in materialist terms. This should come as no surprise. Historically, explanations of epidemic disease in all cultures tend to be “less focused on addressing the disease symptoms of individual sufferers” than on the “cosmic disorder that such diseased bodies manifest.” Epidemic disease “represents the world out of joint,” a “disastrous upset of the expected cosmic harmony.”¹⁹⁴ How much more so for a people inhabiting an extremely isolated archipelago where some 40,000 deities were recognized. In due course there would be appeals, devotions, and rituals to the akua and ‘aumākua to lift the scourges afflicting Islanders.

Many eighteenth-century Hawaiians, then, would have interpreted epidemic disease as evidence that the world was out of balance. Others would have viewed the ma‘i malihini as punishment for transgression or proof of the deities’ displeasure.¹⁹⁵ The question Hawaiians began to ask was, what had they done to deserve punishment from the deities or ancestral spirits? What could explain such a curse coinciding with the arrival of newcomers? Why did newcomers (or their deities) desire the destruction of Hawaiian bodies and of their powers of procreation? What akua or ‘aumākua needed to be propitiated, and how?

¹⁹⁴ Louise Marshall, “Religion and Epidemic Disease, in *Encyclopedia of Pestilence, Pandemics, and Plagues*, vol. 2, ed. Joseph P. Byrne (Westport, CT, 2008), 594.

¹⁹⁵ Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 95–96; Kamakau, *Ka Po‘e Kahiko*, 95–115.

Since Cook and other European observers offer only a small window into the Hawaiian worldview amid these dire challenges, it is again critical to bear in mind that the Hawaiian understanding of the world was predominantly non-materialist in this period. Islanders were neither economic “rationalists” nor philosophical naturalists, as Sahlins noted in his book-length response to anthropologist Gananath Obeyesekere.¹⁹⁶ These reminders apply even to seemingly mundane meetings between Hawaiians and foreigners, such as the men who complained to Lt. James King about their venereal infections in November 1778. Hawaiians held both spiritual and material explanations for the diseases they had been saddled with, and they did so without cognitive dissonance. Nor does this mean that Hawaiian people held British seamen any less responsible for infecting them.

Conclusion

Hawai‘i’s epidemiological encounter with the outside world in 1778 seeded three destructive diseases on the Islands. Gonorrhea and syphilis caused discomfort and concern among Hawaiians within months of Cook’s arrival at Kaua‘i. Both diseases would shortly result in increased infant mortality and birth defects, and reduced fertility overall among Islanders of reproductive age. At the same time, and in spite of these harmful diseases, Hawaiians of all classes experimented with trading, sexual relations, and other encounters with the newcomers. Many women and girls sought to gain

¹⁹⁶ Sahlins, *How “Natives” Think*. For naturalism, see Roger Crisp, “Naturalism,” in *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, ed. Ted Honderich, 604–606 (New York, 2005).

advantage or improve their lot by playing chiefs and newcomers off one another and, in some cases, siding outright with the Britons. Epidemiological crisis, however, would prove to be the norm after European contact, and Hawaiian life would never be the same.

CHAPTER TWO:
Sex and Conquest, 1786–1796

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Above, below; the upland, the lowland; the whale that washes ashore—all belong to the chief.

– Hawaiian proverb

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In the late 1780s the Hawaiian Islands became the principal stopover for merchants in the new Pacific fur trade. Hailing from Britain, France, Spain, and by 1800 overwhelmingly from the United States, Pacific traders pulled in to any safe Hawaiian harbor that would accept them. Most harbors, most of the time, accepted them. Popular ports such as Kealahou Bay on the Big Island, Waimea Bay on Kaua‘i, and La Pérouse Bay on Maui quickly developed into international transit points, with Hawai‘i and its people caught up in global networks of exchange.

While Hawaiians were active participants in this commerce, it cannot be said that they controlled the trade in any meaningful way. No one did. And certainly Hawaiians could not have put a stop to incoming ships after 1788. For one thing, the requisite authority was not vested in anyone until Kamehameha united the eastern Islands in 1795 and then the entire archipelago in 1810. Yet even then the high chiefs remained eager for foreign commodities, especially firearms and ship technology. Nor is it clear that Kamehameha could have controlled the Islands’ exposure to international trade post-conquest, as his authority was patchy: strong on the Big Island, Maui, and southern O‘ahu, weak on Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau, which were largely under independent rule by the *mō‘ī* (king) Kaumuali‘i in this period. The Hawaiian market of the late-eighteenth

century was a commercial free-for-all, unregulated and without precedent on the Islands or in the broader Pacific. This market would thrive well into the 1850s.

Hawai‘i’s renovation as an international marketplace and way station for ocean-going vessels was hardly a blessing for common Hawaiians. Besides microbes from three continents to contend with, Islanders were inundated with liquor and tobacco, cheap and malfunctioning firearms, gunpowder, and other commodities, any of which alone might have caused a public health crisis.¹ Liquor and tobacco were especially popular among *maka‘āinana* (commoners), since, as many observers noted, intoxicants could be consumed before the chiefs confiscated them.² Introduced livestock trampled agricultural plots and occasionally mauled commoners.³ Microbes continued to inflict terrible damage, even in inland areas where direct contact with foreigners was minimal.

Meanwhile, the *ali‘i nui* (high chiefs) launched inter-island wars of conquest employing scorched-earth tactics that left many districts abandoned or barren. Willingly or otherwise, the *maka‘āinana* joined a ruinous sex trade that corralled women and girls as young as ten years of age. The population of the Islands plummeted. In just a

¹ For liquor, see, e.g., John Turnbull, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Years 1801...1804* (London, 1805), 37–38. For defective and malfunctioning firearms, see Archibald Menzies (24 Feb. 1793 and 2 Feb. 1794), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, ed. W[illiam] F[rederick] Wilson (Honolulu, 1920), 72, 174; and George Vancouver (1–7 Feb. 1794, 4 Mar. 1794), *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean and Round the World, 1791–1795*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb (London, 1984), 1161, 1194–1195 (hereafter, Lamb, ed., *Voyage*).

² Caroline Ralston, “Hawaii 1778–1854: Some Aspects of *Maka‘āinana* [*sic*] Response to Rapid Cultural Change,” *Journal of Pacific History* 19 (1984): 21–40, esp. 28. For Ralston’s sources, see *ibid.*, 28n32.

³ John Ryan Fischer, “Cattle in Hawai‘i: Biological and Cultural Exchange,” *Pacific Historical Review* 76 (2007): 347–372.

generation since Capt. Cook, Hawai‘i’s population had likely been cut in half. (See Appendix A.)

This chapter explores the world’s arrival on Hawaiian shores, highlighting the social and cultural adaptations made by Islanders in the earliest stage of European and American colonialism. The 1780s and 90s have earned little scholarly attention beyond Kamehameha’s conquests.⁴ Yet from the Islanders’ perspective, these years were of profound and lasting significance. Among the important epidemiological impacts of this period was tuberculosis, which shortened many lives and reduced the quality of many more. At the same time Hawaiians continued to struggle with venereal diseases and lowered fertility. The 1780s also saw the development of a robust sex trade on the Islands, a major industry and a critical means of biological exchange. On the whole, Hawaiian exchanges with the outside world increased competition among ali‘i and drove a wedge between elite Hawaiian men and women, with critical implications for the future. While both chiefs and commoners were affected by encounters with newcomers in this period, the burden fell disproportionately on the “children of the land.”

⁴ E.g., Ralph Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778–1854: Foundation and Transformation* (1938; repr. Honolulu, 1947), 35–54; Harold Whitman Bradley, *The American Frontier in Hawaii: The Pioneers, 1789–1843* (Stanford, CA, 1942), 13–48; Gavan Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu, 1968), 32–44; Jocelyn Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence: Rank, Gender, and Colonialism in the Hawaiian Islands* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1990); Marshall Sahlins, *Anahulu: The Anthropology of History in the Kingdom of Hawai‘i*, vol. 1, with Dorothy B. Barrère (Chicago, 1992), 36–54; Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires: Pehea lā e Pono ai? How Shall We Live in Harmony* (Honolulu, 1992); Sally Engle Merry, *Colonizing Hawai‘i: The Cultural Power of Law* (Princeton, NJ, 2000); Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo‘ole Osorio, *Dismembering Lāhui: A History of the Hawaiian Nation to 1887* (Honolulu, 2002); and Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham, NC, 2004).

Pigs and People

For seven years after Capt. Cook, apparently no foreigners arrived on Hawaiian shores. Neither written documentation nor oral traditions elucidate life on the Islands in this period. In Spring 1786, two separate fleets stopped over at the Islands within days of each other. Britons were first to arrive, en route to the Northwest Coast to procure sea otter pelts for the Canton (Guangdong) market. Cook himself had announced the lucrative possibilities of this trade in his posthumously published journals (1784). Next to arrive was an ambitious French expedition modeled after Cook's own. The arrival of the French fleet in 1786 marked the last time that the Islands would go a year without visitors from abroad.⁵ Both expeditions reported on the changed conditions for Hawaiians, though the French had a good deal more to say about the people's grave new health challenges.

British sea captains George Dixon and Nathaniel Portlock (who had been a master's mate on Cook's 1778–79 voyage) arrived at Kealakekua Bay in late May 1786. The memory of Cook's demise still fresh in their minds, they did not go ashore. According to supercargo William Beresford, the ships were "surrounded by an innumerable quantity of canoes" upon their arrival at Kealakekua Bay, with "vast numbers of both sexes, in the water." Many people "came to see us through curiosity, but numbers [of people] brought various commodities to sell, such as hogs, sweet potatoes, plantains, bread, fruit, &c. these we purchased with toes [pieces of iron], fish-hooks,

⁵ Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778–1854*, 20.

nails, and other articles of trifling value: the people bought fishing-lines, mats, and various other curiosities.”⁶ The following week on the southern shore of O‘ahu, a ship’s surgeon brought some sick seamen ashore, “expecting the land air would be of service to them; but the weather was very sultry, and the inhabitants crowded about them in such numbers” that the sailors were forced back on board.⁷ Five days later at “Yam Bay” on the western coast of Ni‘ihau, the sick were again taken ashore, and here “found great benefit from the land air, as they could walk about at their ease, without being molested by the inhabitants.” Beresford mentioned the “principal Chief” at Ni‘ihau as very helpful in this regard: having received presents from the Britons, “Abbenooe” [‘Ōpūnui] was “wholly attached to us; so that our sick were much better accommodated on his account.”⁸

These incidents hardly compare to Will Bradley’s Typhoid Mary moment in 1778, but depending on what had sickened Dixon and Portlock’s men in 1786, there may have been further opportunities for infection among the local people. On the other hand, scurvy, which waylaid the seamen upon their return to the Islands five months later, would have done no harm to Hawaiians.⁹ Beresford did not indicate the nature of the seamen’s ailments. The writings of the men of rank on the Dixon/Portlock expedition

⁶ [William Beresford] (26 May 1786), *A Voyage Round the World; But More Particularly to the North-West Coast of America...*, by George Dixon, (London, 1789), 50. See also Nathaniel Portlock (24–27 May 1786), *A Voyage Round the World; But More Particularly to the North-west Coast of America...* (London, 1789), 58–65.

⁷ Beresford (2 June 1786), *A Voyage Round the World*, 53. See also Portlock (3 June 1786), *A Voyage Round the World*, 73–74.

⁸ Beresford (7 June 1786), *A Voyage Round the World*, 54. See also Portlock (8–12 June 1786), *A Voyage Round the World*, 83–90.

⁹ Beresford (14–16 Nov 1786), *A Voyage Round the World*, 89.

also did not mention sexual encounters at Hawai‘i, whether because the subject had become a sore spot for the British navy and traders or for some other reason is unclear. Yet common seamen were more forthcoming.

Scottish sailor John Nicol left a memoir of his world travels in this period, including his time aboard the *King George* in the employ of Capt. Portlock. According to Nicol, “[a]lmost every man on board took a native women for a wife while the vessel remained” in port at Kealakekua Bay in 1786. The Hawaiian men, Nicol figured, either considered it “an honor” for their women to be so employed, or at least “for their gain, as they got many presents of iron, beads, or buttons.” Nicol continued:

The women came on board at night, and went on shore in the morning. In the evening they would call for their husbands [British seamen] by name. They often brought their friends to see their husbands, who were well pleased, as they were never allowed to go away empty.

The seamen, that is, were “never allowed” to go without a Hawaiian partner. There is also a suggestion in Nicol’s account of a Hawai‘i Island chiefesses participating in the nightly trysts: “The fattest woman I ever saw in my life our gunner chose for a wife. We were forced to hoist her on board; her thighs were as thick as my waist; no hammock in the ship would hold her; many jokes were cracked upon the pair.”¹⁰ While the woman’s physical size is no guarantee of her rank (which Nicol was not observant enough to indicate), she was more than likely a chiefess. Still, we cannot know what transpired below decks, or how the chiefess might have imagined her role and participation in

¹⁰ John Nicol, *The Life and Adventures of John Nicol, Mariner* (Edinburgh, 1822), 73–74. Film director George Roy Hill made use of this scene—minus the sexual exchanges, and in the year 1820 instead of 1786—in his 1966 film *Hawaii*. Jocelyne LeGarde played the role of the chiefess “Kalama Kanakola.”

sexual exchange with the Britons (if chiefess she was). Either way, Nicol's account is important in sketching the beginnings of a sex trade at the Islands. Nicol's report also calls into question the anthropologist Jocelyn Linnekin's claim that ali'i women only consorted with European men of rank (that is, officers) in this period.¹¹ Questions of rank aside, Big Islanders by 1786 seemed to be joining the seamen not out of curiosity or access to mana alone, but rather in exchange for some commodity of value. Six years later, George Vancouver and his crew would observe a still more ruthless and exploitative sex trade on the Islands.

After leaving the Big Island, John Nicol and his fellow sailors enjoyed *lomilomi* (massage) by local women at Kaua'i. Then, at Ni'ihau, sixteen British "men and boys" were left ashore after the crew was forced to cut the ships' cables and stand out to sea. Fully three weeks later, the fleet at last returned to find the stranded Britons "well and hearty; these kind people had lodged them two and two in their houses, gave them plenty of victuals, and liberty to ramble over the whole island."¹²

Three days after Dixon and Portlock arrived at Kealakekua Bay, a French expedition under Jean-François de Galaup, comte de la Pérouse, arrived at Maui. La Pérouse and his men were the first foreigners to set foot on the Hawaiian Islands since Cook's crew. Despite staying less than forty-eight hours, La Pérouse and his Paris-educated surgeon Claude-Nicolas Rollin made much more specific observations of Hawaiian health in 1786 than had Dixon and Portlock. Following explicit instructions by

¹¹ Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*, 56–57.

¹² *The Life and Adventures of John Nicol, Mariner*, 73–77.

the Société Royale de Médecine to chronicle both endemic and epidemic diseases (and their treatments) among the various Indigenous populations they encountered, the Frenchmen noted the obvious effects of venereal disease on Maui.¹³ La Pérouse, for instance, remarked on the scant dress of the women, which “discovered to me, among much the greater number, traces of the ravages committed by the venereal disease.” Yet if the Hawaiians had considered European sailors as the cause of these diseases, La Pérouse “perceived that this remembrance, supposing it real, had not left on their minds any kind of resentment.”¹⁴ That is unlikely, but no one aboard the French expedition bothered to record it.

La Pérouse and the physician Rollin were apparently both convinced that the venereal disease they saw at Hawai‘i could not possibly have been spread by Cook’s men. This was in spite of the Frenchmen’s knowledge that the Britons had admitted to it in print. La Pérouse, who was an ardent admirer of Cook, blamed the Spanish, who had never been to Hawai‘i. The physician Rollin had better reasons for doubting that Cook’s men were the agents of infection; he had simply never seen venereal disease spread at such a rate. According to La Pérouse, “Rollin, a very enlightened man, and surgeon-major of my ship...visited in this island several individuals who were attacked by the venereal disease, and remarked symptoms, the gradual development of which would have required twelve or fifteen years in Europe.” This remark, incidentally, constitutes the first

¹³ For the Société Royale de Médecine’s instructions, see J[ean]-F[rançois de] G[alaup] De La Pérouse, *A Voyage Round the World, In the Years 1785, 1786, 1787, and 1788*, 3 vols., ed. M. L. A. Millet-Mureau, 2nd ed. (London, 1799), 1:249–267.

¹⁴ La Pérouse, *A Voyage Round the World*, 2:50–51.

solid evidence of venereal syphilis on the Islands, as only syphilis manifests in progressive symptomatology. According to La Pérouse, Rollin also saw children “of seven or eight years old, labouring under it, who could only have been infected while yet in their mothers wombs.”¹⁵ Children of this age were right on target for a birth with congenital syphilis shortly after the arrival of Cook.

Whether because of the venereal ravages he had witnessed on Maui or some other reason, La Pérouse’s only reference to sexual exchange was that “the women testified to us, by the most expressive gestures, that there was not any mark of kindness which they were not disposed to confer upon us.”¹⁶ La Pérouse did not indicate whether that “kindness” was in fact shown. But the French officers were very busy for their two days on Maui. Back in Paris, a number of professional societies had made recommendations for the voyage in the hope that France might contribute to the world’s knowledge in some fraction of what Britain had done via Cook. In addition to requesting an overview of disease on the Pacific Islands, the Société Royale de Médecine had asked La Pérouse to treat Islanders with mercurial remedies, in order to “observe the effects of mercury upon these people.” Late-eighteenth-century European medicine conceived of the “races of man” as fundamentally distinct in body and mind; France’s leading scientists were thus curious about how their medicine would work on non-Europeans. The Société had also hoped the expedition would “endeavor to discover whether some sudorific vegetables of these islands may not have an anti-venereal virtue.” Two plants were named by the

¹⁵ La Pérouse, *A Voyage Round the World*, 2:51.

¹⁶ La Pérouse, *A Voyage Round the World*, 2:50.

Société: “*lobelia syphillitica*” (great blue lobelia) and “*celastrus inermis*” (staff vine).¹⁷

While Dr. Rollin may have had time to administer these “sudorific” (perspiration-inducing) plants in the South Pacific, there is no record of his having done so over the course of two days on Maui. Nor is there any record of the Frenchmen treating Hawaiians with mercurials. Rollin regretted that the short stay had prevented him from learning anything about the Islanders’ own modes of treatment for these conditions; nevertheless, he opined that “their hopeless resignation, and the progress of their disorder” suggested they were “ignorant of any means of alleviating their miserable situation.”¹⁸

Rollin did, however, respond to other questions posed by the Société Royale de Médecine. The French physician’s description of Hawaiian health problems begins, like many eighteenth-century accounts, with a comment on environment:

The beauty of the climate and the fertility of the soil would render the inhabitants very happy, if they were less generally and violently affected with lues venerea and leprosy. These most destructive and humiliating scourges of the human race are characterized among these islanders by the following symptoms, namely, buboes, which suppurating, leave cicatrices, with loss of substance, warts, spreading ulcers with caries of the bones, nodes, exostoses, fistulae, and tumours of the lachrymal and salivary ducts, scrofulous swellings, inveterate ophthalmiae, ichorous ulcerations of the tunica conjunctiva [i.e., ocular discharge], wasting of the eyes, blindness, inflamed itching herpetic eruptions, and indolent swellings of the extremities, and among children scald head, or a malignant tinea [ringworm], from which exudes a fetid and corrosive [matter]. I have observed, that the greater part of these unhappy victims of frailty, when arrived at the age of nine or ten, were feeble, languid, liable to marasmus and rickets.¹⁹

¹⁷ La Pérouse, *A Voyage Round the World*, 1:262–263.

¹⁸ [Claude-Nicolas] Rollin, “Dissertation on the Inhabitants of Easter Island and Mowée,” in La Pérouse, *A Voyage Round the World*, 3:180.

¹⁹ Rollin, “Dissertation on the Inhabitants of Easter Island and Mowée,” in La Pérouse, *A Voyage Round the World*, 3:179–180.

Rollin’s long list of Hawaiian health woes—in particular, his reference to “leprosy”—has puzzled scholars. Medical historian O. A. Bushnell doubted the presence of leprosy in Hawai‘i at this date and also questioned Rollin’s ability to diagnose such a large number and variety of conditions in only 48 hours.²⁰ Yet that is all the more reason to stand amazed at the scale of health woes on the southern coast of Maui. Even if Rollin had misdiagnosed a few conditions, the list he compiled in two days is shocking. Bushnell shrugged off most of these conditions as the work of scabies mites, describing the coastal residents of southern Maui as “a dirty, unwashed, unkempt, undernourished, and brutish set of miserable people who showed in their bodies the perpetual squalor in which they lived.”²¹ (Rollin’s eye conditions alone should render Bushnell’s scabies diagnosis insufficient.²²) Yet even if Rollin’s sample of the population was not representative of larger Maui or the Islands generally—and, contrary to Bushnell, there is no historical or archaeological evidence that the residents of what came to be called La Pérouse Bay were particularly disadvantaged before 1790—Rollin’s sample nevertheless provides a stark contrast with the observations of Cook and his men seven years earlier.²³ No such

²⁰ O. A. Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization: Germs and Genocide in Hawai‘i* (Honolulu, 1993), 42–44. See also Andrew F. Bushnell, “‘The Horror’ Reconsidered: An Evaluation of the Historical Evidence for Population Decline in Hawai‘i, 1779–1803,” *Pacific Studies* 16, no. 3 (1993): 115–161, esp. 132.

²¹ Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 46, 53.

²² For similar eye conditions afflicting Northwest Coast Indians in this period, see Robert Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence: Introduced Infectious Diseases and Population Decline among Northwest Coast Indians, 1774–1874* (Seattle and Vancouver, 1999), 287.

²³ For oral traditions about human settlements and agriculture on western Maui, see E. S. Craighill Handy, *The Hawaiian Planter: His Plants, Methods and Areas of Cultivation* (Honolulu, 1940), 159–161; and E. S. Craighill Handy and Elizabeth Green Handy, with Mary Kawena Pukui, *Native Planters in Old Hawaii: Their Life, Lore, and Environment* (Honolulu, 1972), 489–511.

diseased persons were seen by Cook and his men, despite the fact that Cook spent over 40 days on the Islands in 1778–1779, while La Pérouse and Rollin spent only 48 hours. Finally, it is hard to see what Dr. Rollin, La Pérouse, and the learned societies of Paris could gain by exaggerating the health problems of these distant Islanders. There were no plans in 1786 to establish a French colony let alone a hospital on Maui, and no desire by the French expedition leaders and funders to sully the reputation of their hero Cook.

Many of the conditions described by Rollin, in his late-eighteenth-century medical terminology, would have been symptoms of gonorrhoea and syphilis (for example, buboes, scars, fistula, and “herpetic eruptions”).²⁴ As for the marasmus (low body weight and/or undernourishment) and rickets, Bushnell interpreted these as signs of malnutrition, but Rollin himself referenced his own earlier comment here, recorded by La Pérouse, about congenital syphilis.

Rollin’s reference to “scrofulous swellings” might suggest tuberculosis.²⁵ If so, it would constitute the first record of the disease on the Islands and strong evidence that Cook’s men themselves had spread it. The problem is that (1) Rollin does not indicate which parts of the body were swollen—in an age before the cause of tuberculosis was known, the terms “scrofula” and “scrofulous” were bandied about without much discrimination; and (2) Rollin was likely wrong about leprosy (otherwise unrecorded on

²⁴ “Scald head, or...malignant tinea” was probably ringworm. See Thomas Luxmoore, *Observations on the Nature and Treatment of Tinea Capitis, Or Scald Head...* (London, 1812); T[homas] Bradley, *A Treatise on Worms, and Other Animals Which Infest the Human Body...* (London, 1813).

²⁵ See Charles J. Hempel, trans., *Dr. Franz Hartmann’s Diseases of Children and Their Homeopathic Treatment* (New York, 1853), 387–392; and Roger K. French, “Scrofula (Scrophula),” in *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, ed. Kenneth F. Kiple, 998–1000 (Cambridge, UK, 1993).

the Islands until the 1830s), so it is hard to know exactly what he was right about.²⁶ Still, Rollin was well-trained, and leprosy is the only condition on his list that seems to have been mistaken.

As an afterthought, Dr. Rollin noted that the “venereal virus in all its activity”—syphilis at various stages, plus gonorrhea—seemed to be “combined with psora.”²⁷ In the medical terminology of the period, *psora* (Greek for “itch”) indicated scabies, the maddening skin condition caused by the burrowing scabies mite (*Sarcoptes scabiei*). Bushnell believed that scabies “alone could account for the repulsive appearance of the natives at La Pérouse Bay—and that of their animals—which so dismayed the visiting French mariners.”²⁸ Yet to dismiss Rollin’s long list of conditions as the work of scabies mites underestimates both the severity of health problems on Maui (which certainly included venereal disease) and also the physician who recorded them. A few months later, in Alta California, Rollin compiled a thorough and entirely distinct list of health conditions affecting the Native peoples of Monterey Bay, which strongly suggests he knew the difference between scabies and syphilis.²⁹

²⁶ As the nature of the disease became increasingly obscure in the early nineteenth century, scrofula was subdivided into more descriptive terms: “scrofula vulgaris” for external signs, “scrofula mesenterica” for the internal form (marked by “swelling abdomen, pale countenance, and loss of appetite”), and “scrofula fugax” for swelling in the neck (lymphatic system). See French, “Scrofula,” 1000. The earliest reliable evidence of leprosy in Hawai‘i dates to 1842. See Table 1 above.

²⁷ Rollin, “Dissertation on the Inhabitants of Easter Island and Mowée,” in La Pérouse, *A Voyage Round the World*, 3:180.

²⁸ Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 53.

²⁹ Charles N. Rudkin, ed., *The First French Expedition to California: Laperouse in 1786* (Los Angeles, 1959), TBD; Doyce B. Nunis, Jr., “Medicine in Spanish California,” *Southern California Quarterly* 76 (1994): 31–58.

Rollin's medical expertise shone through on various occasions at Maui, not least in his decision to dissect pigs intended for Hawaiian mealtime. Understanding that pork was a mainstay of the Hawaiian diet, and noting that local swine herds were "very measly," the French physician took his knife to a few pigs to see what could be learned of their condition. Rollin "examined several whose skin was scabby and full of pimples, and entirely deprived of hair." Cutting into the pigs, he found "the caul [intestines] sprinkled with tubercles, and the viscera covered with them, so as to turn the least delicate stomach."³⁰ Bushnell has suggested tapeworm or some bacteria, perhaps tuberculosis (but not a variety infectious to human beings), as having ailed the pigs.³¹ But Rollin's observation of the swine herds might indicate more than that. It is possible that the pigs on Maui had contracted an Old World disease or two of their own. Either way, the fact that French officers encountered both sick people *and* sick pigs in 1786 is significant. Rollin, for one, knew the implications of "measly" pigs for the Islands' broader disease ecology and for Hawaiian public health.

The Prince and Princess

In early August 1787, a British fur trading ship hove in sight of Hawai'i Island. For more than seven months the miserable crew had been devastated by scurvy while trading along the Northwest Coast of North America. The *Nootka* had lost no fewer than

³⁰ Rollin, "Dissertation on the Inhabitants of Easter Island and Mowée," in La Pérouse, *A Voyage Round the World*, 3:179–180.

³¹ Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 46.

twenty-three men, including the surgeon, pilot, and a handful of coastal Native volunteers. Yet ten days after their arrival at the Big Island, according to Capt. John Meares, “every complaint had disappeared from among us.” The seamen’s recovery was remarkable since the crew were still quite ill on the voyage across the Northeast Pacific; in fact, one seaman died before the ship arrived at “the salubrious clime” of “Owhyhee.”

Capt. Meares and his men stayed at the Big Island for one month, with all the men recovering fully. The jubilant Meares observed that the island’s “zephyrs may be said to have borne health on their wings.”³² Actually, bananas, sweet potatoes, or coconuts would have been sufficient remedies for what ailed them. Yet the Islands’ fruits and “zephyrs” failed to induce such remedial effects for Hawaiians in the grip of the *ma‘i malihini* (introduced diseases). Meares’ crew were the first of many foreigners who would discover in Hawai‘i a place of healthful refuge for themselves. Not until the twentieth century would anyone note the bitter irony of Hawai‘i’s having been a place of healing for foreigners while providing no such relief to her Native people. Yet there is even more to it than that. From very early on, foreigners associated the Islands with improved health, since scurvy was one of the commonest afflictions of Pacific voyages.³³ The Islands’ healthful promises, recorded in journals and advertised abroad, would draw only more Pacific voyagers as the eighteenth century drew to a close.

³² John Meares, “An Introductory Voyage of the *Nootka*,—Cap^t Meares, from Calcutta, to the North West Coast of America, in the Years 1786, and 1787,” in *Voyages Made in the Years 1788 and 1789, from China to the North West Coast of America...* (London, 1790), xvii–xxxix, esp. xxxix.

³³ E.g., Beresford (14–16 Nov 1786), *A Voyage Round the World*, 89; “Extract from the Diary of Ebenezer Townsend, Jr.” [1798], *Hawaiian Historical Reprints*, no. 4 (1924): 1–33, esp. 4; Isaac Iselin, *Journal of a Trading Voyage Around the World, 1805–1808* (Cortland, NY, n.d.).



Most of the fur traders who stopped at the Islands en route to Canton or the Northwest Coast stayed long enough only to gather provisions, replenish their vitamin C, and make repairs to the ships. British trader James Colnett, arriving at the Big Island on New Year's Day 1788, suggested an alternative by wintering over. Colnett and his third mate Andrew Bracey Taylor, also a Royal Navy veteran, kept remarkable journals of their observations of Hawaiian life during a ten-week stay at the Islands. Visiting each of the six largest islands, Colnett and Taylor learned a great deal about Hawaiian politics, culture, commerce, and health at a critical juncture in the Islands' history, ten years after the arrival of Captain James Cook.

Like other British sea captains in the maritime fur trade, Colnett had learned his way around the Pacific in the Royal Navy under Cook—in Colnett's case, as a young midshipman on the second Pacific voyage (1772–1775). Later, Colnett and Andrew Bracey Taylor had both served aboard British ships in the American Revolution. By the time he arrived at Hawai'i in 1788, Colnett had been in and out of Pacific waters for almost sixteen years. For his part, the younger Taylor was sailing into the Great Ocean for the first time, which may explain the fresh, unfiltered quality of his observations. Taylor noted, for instance, that “every Sailor had a Lady in his burth” only the day after their arrival.³⁴ In fact, few days elapsed without women and girls aboard the ships that winter. (The crew numbered some forty men between the *Prince of Wales* and *Princess*

³⁴ Andrew Bracey Taylor journal (91a), in *A Voyage to the North West Side of America: The Journals of James Colnett, 1786–89*, ed. Robert M. Galois (Vancouver, 2004), 61. For the crew list, see *ibid.*, 289.

Royal.) A number of these women were actually identified by Colnett and Taylor. According to Taylor, the Scottish surgeon Archibald Menzies had taken up with an ali‘i named “Nahoupaio,” whom the Britons identified as “Sister to Matua.”³⁵ Other women spending considerable time on the ships included “Naravaron”—also spelled “Narahowe” and “Naraharow” by the Britons—and “Katoomatta.” Taylor also identified women and girls by their seaman-partners’ names; for example, “Smith’s girl” and “Temple’s girl.”³⁶

While Colnett and Taylor provided some evidence of coercion by Hawaiian agents in the sex trade, many of the women who boarded the British fleet in 1788 seemed—to the Britons, at least—to be bartering sex for their own gain and approaching the fleet voluntarily. At Moloka‘i in mid-January Colnett wrote that

[m]any women slept onboard at times, & I believe a good deal out of curiosity; one afternoon four came on [board] to see the Ship & were highly offended at the inattention shewn them by the ships Co[mpany].... I offer’d them beads, they told me that was not what they wanted, they came to see the Ship and were in haste to be gone[,] each of them having left young children on shore, their request was complied with, [and they] soon made...their way to the Shore.³⁷

If coastal dwellers on the Big Island, Maui, and Moloka‘i were suffering from venereal or other diseases, Colnett and Taylor did not record it. In fact, the only comment about Hawaiian health from the eastern islands came off Waikīkī on southern O‘ahu, where Taylor observed children apparently so malnourished their bones were “coming through their skin.” The children “constantly” requested food from the Britons: “their

³⁵ Taylor journal (n.p. listed), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 61.

³⁶ Taylor journal (130a, 132a), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 369n74.

³⁷ Colnett journal (14 Jan. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 177.

eagerness for any article which cou'd be ate[,] stinking fish not excepted," was, for Taylor, "sufficient Proof of their miserable Living." Taylor and Colnett did not stay long enough at O'ahu to ascertain what had caused this state of affairs, or to determine whether disease, famine, or mere poverty was afflicting the people. Regardless, the traders "were again visited by ye Women as usual" off Waikīkī.³⁸ Whether as a function of the peoples' poverty or of the general exploitation of women and girls in the sex trade by 1788, Taylor noted that the male Islanders who ferried females back to shore seemed to have "plunder[ed] from the Girls such presents as they had received[,] a Proof of their wild unthinking brutish Disposition."³⁹

After three weeks collecting provisions along the coasts of the Big Island, Maui, Moloka'i, and O'ahu, Colnett and Taylor arrived at Kaua'i and Ni'ihau where they stayed for the next two months. The two westernmost islands had developed a reputation in the wake of Cook for being the most hospitable in the North Pacific. Colnett was pleased to find the reputation deserved: at Kaua'i, the "Ship was soon crowded with...men, women, & Children...more civiliz'd and friendly" than the Hawaiians to the east.⁴⁰ Ten days later, there was "not a man in the Ship but what had been onshore & all pleas'd with their reception." The traders' hosts at Kaua'i were Ka'eo, the mō'ī of Kaua'i, whose name translates roughly as strong, zealous, or full (as of knowledge or power), and 'Ōpūnui ("big belly"), a prominent chief. Over the next two months Ka'eo and 'Ōpūnui tried to

³⁸ Taylor journal (21 Jan. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 181.

³⁹ Taylor journal (168a / 22 Jan. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 182.

⁴⁰ Colnett journal (29–30 Jan. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 182.

control Islanders' traffic with Colnett and his men, yet women and girls continued to board the *Prince of Wales* and *Princess Royal* unhindered all winter. "Our situation," wrote Colnett, "was as comfortable as could be expected."⁴¹

If Ka'eo and 'Ōpūnui were officially in charge at Kaua'i, the British traders' primary ally was a man identified by Taylor as "Tholalo" (Kolalo?), who apparently lacked the power of speech. Neither Colnett nor Taylor indicated whether Kolalo was deaf, but he seemed to rely exclusively on signs to communicate. Colnett ventured that Kolalo had been made a chief by the mō'i Ka'eo out of pity for his condition, but it is more likely that he was ali'i by birth and that his disability had no bearing on his office. Kolalo "constantly attended" the traders, "& with out fee or reward chastis'd his country men guilty of any irregularity." The Britons quickly learned from Kolalo, and from their own female partners, that the leadership on Kaua'i was contested. There had also been a plot to sack the British fleet and a successful attempt to steal a ship's anchor: "On learning the design of his countrymen against us," wrote Colnett, Kolalo "came onboard and dived for [the ship's anchor,] & much vex'd he could not see it, requested we would revenge ourselves on his Countrymen & he would assist us." Kolalo's "honesty" and fair dealing with the British merchants earned him "numberless presents."⁴² During all this time, Kolalo and the Britons communicated exclusively by the use of signs, which were apparently sufficient to the purposes at hand.

⁴¹ Colnett journal (4 Feb. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 184.

⁴² Colnett journal (24 Feb. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 191; Taylor journal (30 Jan. 1788), in *ibid.*, 370.

In the second week of February Kolalo informed Taylor that the seamen had infected Kaua‘i Islanders with venereal disease. Taylor’s journal entry reads simply: “The Seamen catching the Venereal fast, and Dumbring gave us to understand we had injurd several Girls residing to windward.” (“Dumbring” was the traders’ nickname for Kolalo, reflecting his nonverbal style of communication—what was known in eighteenth-century Britain as “dummering.”⁴³) The unfortunate “Girls” seem to have lived in eastern Kaua‘i, which was also Kolalo’s home. Surprisingly, Kolalo’s information about the Kaua‘i females was the first mention of venereal disease by Colnett or Taylor at Hawai‘i. Now, suddenly, there were “many [seamen] in a most frightful state with the Dry Pox.” Other Britons were “Discharging from all Parts of ye Body,” according to Taylor.⁴⁴

In the medical terminology of the day, “dry” or “latent pox” referred to the flu-like symptoms of prodromal (early onset) syphilis. For both gonorrhea and syphilis, prodrome is marked by internal aches and pains lacking visible, external manifestations of the disease. The London-based physician Nikolai Detlef Falck, about whom little is known, understood prodrome or “dry pox” to reside in the blood:

[W]hen...the venereal miasm...is introduced into the blood, it makes not only a disturbance in the fluids themselves, but as the infected mass passes along, it irritates the internal nervous spiral sensitive coats of the arteries, by which they are provoked to an increase of their diastolic and systolic function; and hence a fever ensues.⁴⁵

⁴³ *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “dummering.” (Thanks to Heidi Brayman Hackel for this etymological reference.) Upon being shown British muskets, Kolalo was “seizd with an extacy of Joy, cutting many antic capers, endeavoring to explain it was the very thing he thought him[self] in want of.” Colnett journal (24 Feb. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 191.

⁴⁴ Taylor journal (194b / 10–11 Feb. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 186.

⁴⁵ N[ikolai] D[etlef] Falck, *A Treatise on the Venereal Disease*, 2nd ed. (London, 1774), 252–268, 352.

Dr. Falck's medical ideas were well-known to British seamen, particularly those who had the misfortune of being at sea without a surgeon. Falck's popular work *The Seamen's Medical Instructor* (1774) was standard issue for British mariners, "Calculated," according to its title page, "for Ships that Carry No Surgeon." Falck's do-it-yourself guide included a section on the treatment of venereal diseases (including the dry pox) presented in plain language.⁴⁶

Andrew Bracey Taylor's reference to the "Dry Pox" in 1788 is an important reminder that European men carried and could spread venereal diseases at the Islands even when seemingly asymptomatic. Many British seamen would have been treated for the symptoms of dry pox by a surgeon or by their own hand. Assuming Dr. Falck's prescriptions were being followed, remedies would have included mercury taken internally, a regimented diet, and a course of purging and vomiting. Infected Hawaiians would themselves have been suffering the internal symptoms of prodromal syphilis and gonorrhea by 1788, though it is unclear whether they treated internal symptoms. Of the "several Girls residing to windward" who had been infected by Colnett's men, nothing more is known. Their kinsman Kolalo was also never heard from again.

⁴⁶ N[ikolai] D[etlef] Falck, *The Seamen's Medical Instructor...* (London, 1774), n.p., 156. The "first symptoms of a poxed blood," according to Dr. Falck, were "a universal weariness and lassitude; cold shiverings, succeeded with...a disagreeable, piercing, burning, intermittent heat...[a] dull head-ache, pain in the limbs, and in the bowels." Most patients could also expect cramping and "other rheumatic pains" once the "virus" struck the "tendons, ligaments and muscles.... Whilst the virus is wandering...no part is safe from the attack.... [S]ciatica [and] the lumbago...are frequently fellow tormentors," and together can be "as gouty as the rankest gout itself." All of this combined with a "mind laboring under a wretched dejection" to make the victim of dry pox a sad case indeed. See Falck, *A Treatise on the Venereal Disease*, 255–259.

It is odd that the British traders were racked with venereal woes on February 10, since three days earlier Colnett had remarked that “all the Crew” of the *Princess Royal* were “in good health,” except the chief mate who had been struck on the head by a paddle at Moloka‘i. Perhaps Colnett had failed to notice the onset of his men’s venereal symptoms, or perhaps symptoms had in fact come on quickly, as Taylor wrote. In any case, by February 12 the crewmen were likely being treated with mercurials by the surgeon Archibald Menzies. Colnett and Taylor did not indicate whether coastal people on Kaua‘i had themselves requested British remedies, but the chief ‘Ōpūnui threatened to kapu the women and girls multiple times, finally doing so on February 13 (though the ban was only in effect for a single day). ‘Ōpūnui had apparently ordered the kapu *not* because of the risk of venereal infection but because of a disagreement between himself and the captain of the *Princess Royal*, Charles Duncan. Nothing came of the disagreement between ‘Ōpūnui and Duncan, and on February 14 women and girls commenced boarding the ships as usual: “every Man nearly at the time was furnished with a lass for the night.”⁴⁷ By February 19, Taylor observed “Women [in] abundance endeavoring to get husbands &c.”⁴⁸ Even when the “prayer kapu” (*kapu pule*) went into effect at Kaua‘i later that week, Taylor happily noted that the “Girls were not to be prohibited on this

⁴⁷ Taylor journal (195a / 13 Feb. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 186.

⁴⁸ Taylor journal (197b / 19 Feb. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 188.

account.” Three days after that, ‘Ōpūnui tried once again to call the women off the ships, but “few obey’d him,” according to Colnett.⁴⁹

The Kaua‘i women’s defiance of the ruling ali‘i in 1788 was not limited to breaking curfew. Some Kaua‘i women actually conspired with the British traders—as Big Island women had done in 1779—against local ali‘i. Scholars’ attention to European and American perspectives on the sex trade has obscured some of the remarkable sociopolitical features of Hawaiian women’s relations with newcomers. On multiple islands, women’s actions reveal divided, contested, and shifting allegiances, depending on circumstances. And as in 1779, some Hawaiian women in 1788 sided with their new British allies against their own ruling chiefs. The question is how women (much less girls) perceived of these alliances; how far the alliances could be stretched in the face of conflict; and what, if anything, sexual relations between Hawaiian women and British men had to do with these commitments. Britons’ ventriloquism on the behalf of Hawaiian women and girls—referring to themselves as the women’s “husbands”—only muddies the interpretive waters, as there was no Hawaiian translation for “husband” among commoners.⁵⁰

In any case, it is clear that chiefly authority in 1788 was contested or divided on more than one island. Oral tradition provides little if any support for the hypothesis that ali‘i authority over female commerce and sexual exchange—and even over women generally—had been weak before Cook; the ranking chiefs’ reputation of having the

⁴⁹ Colnett journal (23 Feb. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 189.

⁵⁰ The closest terms for “husband” apparently employed by maka‘āinana were *kāne* (man) and *makuakāne* (father, uncle). Ali‘i employed distinct kinship terms for marital relations.

power over life and death over the people is a constant in oral history. It is more likely that political factions and competing ali‘i were the norm in eighteenth-century Hawai‘i—before, during, and especially after Cook. If so, the women and girls who aligned with European traders and other visitors were simply expressing their partisan views, which may or may not have been firm, and may or may not have stemmed from the men’s status as Europeans or newcomers. The decade since Cook had seen ali‘i authority over women’s and girls’ interactions with newcomers compromised. Hawaiians, as we have seen, conceived of the newcomers as holding considerable *mana* (spiritual power); it is also possible that actual sexual relations between the parties played a role in the development of allegiances, but oral tradition and the historical record do not shed light on this question.⁵¹

Whatever the broader causes of Hawaiian women’s alliances with British seamen in the 1780s, it is clear that Kaua‘i females in 1788 were relaying important information about ali‘i intentions toward the British fur traders, and even urging the Britons to avenge certain chiefs.⁵² On February 23, a “Girl [who] was always first in her Solicitations” boarded the *Prince of Wales* to inform the crew of a plot to sack the fleet. Colnett noted that the girl (or woman) was “greatly attach’d to us” and “on first coming onboard flew to

⁵¹ See Caroline Ralston, “Hawaii 1778–1854: Some Aspects of Maka‘ainana [*sic*] Response to Rapid Cultural Change,” *Journal of Pacific History* 19 (1984): 21–40; Ralston, “Changes in the Lives of Ordinary Women in Early Post–Contact Hawai‘i,” in *Family and Gender in the Pacific: Domestic Contradictions and the Colonial Impact*, ed. Margaret Jolly and Martha Macintyre, 45–64 (Cambridge, UK, 1989); Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*; and David A. Chappell, “Shipboard Relations between Pacific Island Women and Euroamerican Men 1767–1887,” *Journal of Pacific History* 27 (1992): 131–149.

⁵² For “revenge,” see Colnett journal (25 Feb. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 192.

her [seaman] husband, bursting into a flood of tears,” telling him that the British “were all to be kill’d on tomorrow.” When the seaman refused to believe her, she turned to the surgeon Menzies—who had the best grasp of the Hawaiian language among the visitors—and pleaded with *him*. The next day some Islanders attempted to cut the ship’s cable; in response, the seamen fired their muskets at approaching canoes. Despite the rising tensions, Colnett noted that “many women were onboard both Vessels for the night, & not at all alarm’d at what pass’d.”⁵³

The Kaua‘i chiefs’ inability to control women’s access to the visiting seamen is perhaps best illustrated by ‘Ōpūnui’s attempt to kapu the women on February 13. According to Taylor, the announcement of the kapu “caused an immediate stir” on board the *Prince of Wales* and *Princess Royal*:

The Girls said they must go on Shore or their Fathers wou’d be Kill’d. The Seamen were unwilling to part with their Girls but the Poor Girls[?] Fears prevail’d and most of them jumped over board instantly. this did not however seem to Effect the whole. for others came on board out of other Canoes careless of ye Taboo. & many of those who went over board[,] seeing themselves likely to be rival’d came [on] board again.⁵⁴

‘Ōpūnui’s authority over local women seemed to be dissolving right in front of the Britons’ eyes. Taylor, for one, deemed the traders to have “suffer’d little” from ‘Ōpūnui’s

⁵³ Colnett journal (24 Feb. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 191. The scene is reminiscent of the 1779 battle at Kealakekua Bay where Island females remained aboard the *Discovery* and *Resolution*. (See Chapter One.)

⁵⁴ Taylor journal (195a / 13 Feb. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 186.

kapu on Hawaiian females.⁵⁵ The seamen were well-supplied with companions for the duration of their stay at Kaua‘i.

After a short and uneventful visit to Ni‘ihau, Colnett and Taylor returned to Waimea Bay, Kaua‘i, for final provisions. The seamen bid a teary farewell to their companions and then took two or three volunteer sailors for the voyage to Canton. One of the volunteers was a Moloka‘i boy of eleven or twelve whose “parents” apparently consented to his leaving with the fleet. After crossing the Pacific the boy, Kualelo, made his way to Plymouth, England, where he was immediately inoculated for smallpox, and then “sent to a public school in the neighbourhood” of his overseer, Colnett’s chief mate James Johnstone.⁵⁶ In March 1792, the teenaged Kualelo returned to Hawai‘i with Johnstone—by way of South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand—on the expedition of George Vancouver.

The other Hawaiian recruit was known to the seamen as “John Mataturay” (Makakule?). Son of a Ni‘ihau ali‘i, Makakule sailed with Colnett to Macao, then back across the North Pacific to the Northwest Coast where the fleet was seized by Spaniards and commandeered to San Blas, Mexico. The young Makakule somehow made his way to Mexico City (where he appears in the Spanish records as “Mariano Madetroy”), and then sailed north again to Vancouver Island where he died in December 1790 of unknown

⁵⁵ Taylor journal (195a / 13 Feb. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 186.

⁵⁶ Journal of Archibald Menzies (3 March 1792), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, ed. W[illiam] F[rederick] Wilson (Honolulu, 1920), 18.

causes.⁵⁷ Of Makakule's death, Colnett noted: "On the 3rd, Modetroy the Sandwich Isle Indian died. Prior to his Death he sent for me to thank me for all the Good I had done him, and meant to do him, desired to be remembered to his father, Mother, and family, Captain Duncan, and Mr. [Capt. John] Etches; and in the Night died without a Groan."⁵⁸ It is unclear whether anyone managed to "remember" Makakule to his family.

Colnett's men, for their part, left Hawai'i in 1788 "in perfect health," except for "those who had been so unfortunate to catch the disease left by the first discoverers," that is, the Cook expedition. Fortunately, the "constitution & method of diet" of the men had "almost eradicated" the venereal woes of the seamen on the *Prince of Wales* by mid-March when they shipped out.⁵⁹ The men on Capt. Duncan's *Princess Royal* were perhaps somewhat worse off, with "several of his people being ill of a disorder contracted from the Women," as the fleet sailed west for Macao.⁶⁰ Yet no fatalities were reported on either ship.

The Odds

At the same time that James Colnett and Andrew Bracey Taylor were making their way across the Hawaiian Islands in January 1788, another British fur trader set off

⁵⁷ Jean Barman and Bruce McIntyre Watson, *Leaving Paradise: Indigenous Hawaiians in the Pacific Northwest, 1787–1898* (Honolulu, 2006), 347. See also [John Etches], *An Authentic Statement of all the Facts Relative to Nootka Sound* (London, 1790).

⁵⁸ *The Journal of Captain James Colnett Aboard the Argonaut from April 26, 1789 to Nov. 3, 1791*, ed. F. W. Howay (1940; repr. New York, 1968), 198.

⁵⁹ Colnett journal (18 March 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 200.

⁶⁰ Colnett journal (22 March 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 204.

from Macao for the Northwest Coast of North America. Captain John Meares, it will be recalled, had been at Hawai‘i five months earlier with his crew all at death’s door from scurvy. Now, at Macao, Meares had with him four Hawaiians eager to return home. All four voyagers had boarded earlier fur trading ships at the Islands: a chief of “Herculean Stature” named Ka‘iana, who most likely hailed from the Big Island and was possibly a relation of the mō‘ī Kalani‘ōpu‘u; a young woman of indeterminate class and origin whom the Britons called Winee (probably their attempt at *wahine*, “woman”); and “a stout man and boy from the island of Mowee,” also both of indeterminate class.⁶¹ Meares’ plan had been to return the Hawaiians home en route to the Northwest Coast, but the *Iphigenia* took a long detour to secure additional furs in the North Pacific. In the process, Ka‘iana became the second Hawaiian to visit the Northwest Coast of North America (Winee had been there the year before). Ka‘iana finally returned home in December 1788, full of fascinating stories of new places and peoples; he became chief of Puna district on the Big Island and a close advisor to Kamehameha, later clashing with the mō‘ī and falling to him at the Battle of Nu‘uanu in 1795.⁶²

Winee met a different fate. Shortly after Meares’s fleet left Macao in January 1788, Winee succumbed to an illness off the Philippines and died aboard the *Iphigenia*.

⁶¹ Meares, *Voyages Made in the Years 1788 and 1789*, 10. For Ka‘iana’s origin, appearance, and possible relation to Kalani‘ōpu‘u, see Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 447n1; Thomas Manby, “Journal of Vancouver’s Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, 1791–1793,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (June 1929): 11–25, esp. 16; Menzies (3 March 1792), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 13; and Urey Lisiansky, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Years 1803, 4, 5, & 6* (London, 1814), 130–133. See also Barman and Watson, *Leaving Paradise*, 18–22, 271–271, 432–433.

⁶² Journal of Archibald Menzies, 10 Feb. 1794, MS 32641, British Library. Menzies attributed Ka‘iana’s rise to his “knowledge of firearms.”

The fleet had encountered some rough weather with “piercing cold” in the South China Sea, but upon reaching the Philippines, “the opposite extreme” was felt. “Such a change,” noted Meares, along “with the heavy dews which fell morning and evening, was a very unhealthy circumstance.”⁶³ Still, the fleet was well-stocked with provisions, including plenty of fruits and vegetables, and Meares seems to have been a thorough and conscientious captain. It is impossible to say to what extent the voyage itself contributed to Winee’s demise, but it probably did not help. According to Meares,

[Winee] every day declined in strength, and nothing remained for us, but to ease the pain of her approaching dissolution, which no human power could prevent.... She had been for some time a living spectre, and on the morning of the fifth of February she expired.⁶⁴

Winee’s spectral appearance may suggest pneumonia or tuberculosis, but the cause of her death ultimately cannot be determined. Of the loss of his countrywoman, Ka‘iana was apparently quite distraught. Meares reported that Ka‘iana was “so sensibly affected by the death of Winee, as to produce a considerable alteration in the state of his health:—his fever continued, and baffled all our attentions to relieve him.”⁶⁵ Eventually, the Herculean ali‘i did recover, returning home safely on the *Iphigenia*.

The death at sea of Winee, and the safe return of Ka‘iana—like the contemporaneous death abroad of Makakule, and safe return of Kualelo (above)—stand

⁶³ Meares, *Voyages Made in the Years 1788 and 1789*, 23.

⁶⁴ Meares, *Voyages Made in the Years 1788 and 1789*, 27. Historian Andrew F. Bushnell split hairs by claiming that “Meares made no mention of disease on his three trips to the islands.” Clearly, Islanders were still catching and succumbing to Old World diseases, at home, at sea, and abroad. See A. F. Bushnell, “‘The Horror’ Reconsidered,” 135.

⁶⁵ Meares, *Voyages Made in the Years 1788 and 1789*, 36.

in for the few thousand Hawaiians who shipped out of the North Pacific between 1788 and 1865.⁶⁶ The odds for Native Hawaiians surviving abroad in this period were probably no higher than fifty percent.⁶⁷ While many of these deaths are recorded—particularly individuals attached to fur trading posts in the Pacific Northwest—the majority of Hawaiian travelers, like the “stout man and boy” from Maui, and a second boy who boarded the *Prince of Wales* with Kualelo, simply disappear from the historical record.⁶⁸ If there is anything that the important new historical scholarship on networks and voyagers in the Island Pacific has overlooked, it is the profound risk to Islanders in undertaking such journeys.⁶⁹ Yet the risk to Hawaiians travelers simply reflects the broader health calamities on the Islands in this period. Dozens of Islanders abroad succumbed to the same diseases as their kinsmen at home. In a few cases, the very same epidemic felled Hawaiians at home, in Canton, and in western North America—for instance, measles in the 1840s and smallpox in the 1850s (see Chapter Six).

⁶⁶ For an estimate of the number of Hawaiian voyagers in this period, see Gregory Rosenthal, “Hawaiians Who Left Hawai‘i: Work, Body, and Environment in the Pacific World, 1786-1876” (PhD dissertation, Stony Brook Univ., 2015), Appendix A (pp. 456–459).

⁶⁷ See Barman and Watson, “Hawaiians and Other Polynesians in the Pacific Northwest,” in *Leaving Paradise*, 219–433.

⁶⁸ See David A. Chappell, *Double Ghosts: Oceanian Voyagers on Euroamerican Ships* (Armonk, NY, 1997); and Barman and Watson, “Hawaiians and Other Polynesians in the Pacific Northwest,” in *Leaving Paradise*, 219–433.

⁶⁹ E.g., James R. Gibson, *Otter Skins, Boston Ships, and China Goods: The Maritime Fur Trade of the Northwestern Coast, 1785–1841* (Seattle, 1992); Barman and Watson, *Leaving Paradise*; Gary I. Okihiro, *Island World: A History of Hawai‘i and the United States* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2008); Nicholas Thomas, *Islanders: The Pacific in the Age of Empire* (New York, 2010); and Matt K. Matsuda, *Pacific Worlds: A History of Seas, Peoples, and Cultures* (New York, 2013), e.g., 185. An important exception is David Iglar, “Diseased Goods: Global Exchanges in the Pacific Basin, 1770–1850,” *American Historical Review* 109 (2004): 699–716; and Iglar, *The Great Ocean: Pacific Worlds from Captain Cook to the Gold Rush* (New York, 2013), chap. 2.

Few European or American reports speak to what must have been a keen Hawaiian awareness of the risks of travel abroad. In 1801, Boston sea captain Amasa Delano met a son of Kamehameha at O‘ahu. Impressed by the boy’s physical size and royal bearing, Delano asked whether he might enlist the boy on his commercial voyage to Canton. The boy’s mother was upset at the prospect, going so far as to mount a protest aboard the *Massachusetts*. Delano was sympathetic with the mother’s plight but unaware that her distress likely had as much to do with the possibility of never seeing her son again than it did mere motherly affection.⁷⁰

Fifty percent survival rate was atrocious odds for would-be travelers, laborers, and adventure-seekers lighting out from the North Pacific. In due time the Hawaiian Kingdom would establish firm limits on travel for Native Hawaiians, eventually requiring sea captains to post bonds for their safe return. Later, in 1850, Kamehameha III banned travel outright for *kama ‘āina*, the “children of the land” (Native Hawaiians). Yet if the Kingdom had become aware of the problem, how much more so those who lost loved ones without even the consolation of burying their bones (*nā ‘iwi*).⁷¹ Hawaiian oral traditions—and, later, letters home—reflect these concerns to some extent.⁷² Yet it is important to keep such losses in perspective: for all the anguish of losing a friend or

⁷⁰ Amasa Delano, *A Narrative of Voyages and Travels, in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres...* (Boston, 1817), 392. Delano, a distant cousin of U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, was later involved in the *Tryal* slave ship mutiny immortalized by Herman Melville in the novella *Benito Cereno*. See Greg Grandin, *The Empire of Necessity: Slavery, Freedom, and Deception in the New World* (New York, 2014).

⁷¹ For the sacred nature of human bones, and for the *kapu* (religious laws, prohibitions) regarding corpses, see David Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities (Moolelo Hawaii)*, trans. Nathaniel B. Emerson (Honolulu, 1951), 96–99.

⁷² See Chapter Six.

family member abroad, the survival rate for Hawaiians at home in this period was perhaps little better than for those who boarded a foreign ship.



By 1788 Americans had been visiting Hawai‘i for a decade. John Ledyard of Connecticut had been first to arrive in 1778 with Cook, and others had sailed on British fur trading vessels in the 1780s. But the first American *ship* to reach the Islands was the *Columbia Rediviva* of Boston. Commanded by Robert Gray, the *Columbia* stopped over for provisions in August 1789 on what also became the first American circumnavigation of the globe. It is unclear whether Hawaiians noted any significant differences between the new Americans and the “Britanees” with whom they had grown familiar, or if the Americans were simply another *haole* (foreign) crew come to stock up on taro, pork, and coconuts.⁷³ No one could have known that the Americans would shortly comprise the majority of foreign visitors to the Islands.

The Hawaiian portion of Gray’s *Columbia* expedition was uneventful and produced few extant records. Capt. Gray did, however, leave an American seaman at the Islands—apparently a deserter. Isaac Ridley seems to have served as an advisor and

⁷³ The American Ebenezer Townsend (1798) noted that whenever a ship arrived at the Islands, Kamehameha “always enquires...how [King] George is.” See “Extract from the Diary of Ebenezer Townsend, Jr.,” *Hawaiian Historical Reprints*, no. 4 (1924): 1–33, esp. 27 (originally published in *Papers of the New Haven Historical Society*, 1888). Chinese traders in Canton struggled to differentiate American and British traders in this period. See Kariann Yokota, “Pacific Overtures” (lecture, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA, 16 Jan. 2013). *Haole*, the Hawaiian term for foreigner, came to be associated in particular with white Americans in the nineteenth century.

interpreter to the Kona coast ali‘i on the Big Island.⁷⁴ It is unclear how long Ridley stayed on the Big Island, but he would soon have company.

Gray filled Ridley’s spot on the *Columbia* with a Hawaiian cabin boy named Kalehua who accompanied the ship to China and then the Northwest Coast (where they spent six weeks) before returning safely home to Kaua‘i. Eager for further adventures, Kalehua later joined George Vancouver’s expedition for two additional trips to the Northwest Coast in 1792 and 1793, before settling back at the Islands in 1794 under the watch of Kamehameha.⁷⁵

Shortly after Gray’s visit, an American fur trading vessel commanded by British-born New York merchant Simon Metcalfe arrived on the west coast of Maui. What followed was the first significant violence between Hawaiians and Europeans since the clash with Cook at Kealahou Bay. The battle would also result in the settling of the first two permanent foreign residents on the Islands. Working-class English seamen John Young and Isaac Davis both became high chiefs, married Hawaiian ali‘i, gained large tracts of land, and assumed royal governorships. Although Davis would be poisoned by an enemy and die in his fifties, Young would outlive his Hawaiian contemporaries by many decades. Among other part-Hawaiian children Young fathered was a son, John

⁷⁴ Bradley, *The American Frontier in Hawaii*, 26, where he appears as “Isaac Ridler.” See also [George Anson] Byron, *Voyage of H.M.S. Blonde to the Sandwich Islands, in the Years 1824–1825* (London, 1826), 147.

⁷⁵ By choice or otherwise, Kalehua was known by a host of names during his travels, including Opai, Jack, John, Ingram/Ingraham (after Gray’s second mate Joseph Ingraham), and others. See Menzies (5 March 1792), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 21; Bell, “Log of the *Chatham*,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Sept. 1929): 7–20, esp. 25; Vancouver (4 March 1792 and 14 Feb. 1793), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 450–451, 799; and Barman and Watson, *Leaving Paradise*, 280. On Hawaiians adopting Euro-American names, see below.

Young II (known to Hawaiians as Keoni Ana), who later became Premier (*kuhina nui*, roughly, “great counselor”) of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i.

The outbreak of violence between Capt. Metcalfe’s *Eleanora* and the residents of western coastal Maui was much like that at Kealahou Bay a decade earlier. Minor insults on both sides led to a ship’s boat being stolen and its seaman killed; the American traders responded by firing their cannons at the village of Olowalu whose residents were deemed responsible. A three-day *kapu* (prohibition) to ease tensions was ordered by the chiefess Kalola, widow of Kalani‘ōpu‘u and sister of Kahekili. This was followed by hundreds of Hawaiians, including people from neighboring Lāna‘i Island, approaching the fleet to trade. Metcalfe apparently encouraged the Islanders’ approach only to open fire on them, killing eighty or more.⁷⁶ According to Hawaiian historian Samuel Kamakau, the “Christians murdered the Hawaiian people without any more mercy than cannibal Nukuhivans [Marquesans] show, or people of pagan lands.” The traders “shot the people down without mercy, just as if they were creatures without souls. Even those who swam away were shot down.” The dead were then “heaped on the sands at Olowalu. Because the brains of many were oozing out where they had been shot in the head, this battle... was called ‘the spilled brains’ (*Kalolopahu*).”⁷⁷ The fact that Olowalu was a *pu‘u honoa* (place of refuge), and therefore officially safeguarded from violent reprisals, only

⁷⁶ Samuel M. Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, rev. ed. (Honolulu, 1992), 145–146; Abraham Fornander, *An Account of the Polynesian Race; Its Origins and Migration and the Ancient History of the Hawaiian People to the Times of Kamehameha I*, 2 vols. (London, 1880), 2:233–234; Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778–1854*, 24–25; Bradley, *The American Frontier in Hawaii*, 16.

⁷⁷ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 146. The future chief and royal governor of Hawai‘i Island John Young was apparently a witness to the Olowalu Massacre, and was shortly thereafter taken captive by Kamehameha on the Big Island. See Vancouver (24 Feb. 1793), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 820.

made the attack more egregious. As Kamakau's account reveals, the violation lingered in Hawaiian cultural memory.

A few weeks later, Simon Metcalfe's companion ship, the *Fair American*, which happened to be commanded by Metcalfe's eighteen-year-old son Thomas, arrived at the Big Island. The sins of the father were visited upon the son: while anchored off the Kona coast, Thomas Metcalfe and his small crew of seven (excepting one) were killed by operatives of the Kona high chief Ke'eaumoku. The sole survivor of the attack was Welsh seaman Isaac Davis. (John Young had earlier been captured from the *Eleanora* on the Big Island.) Thomas Metcalfe's sloop complete with cannon, muskets, gunpowder, clothing, and other paraphernalia became the property of the ambitious Kamehameha.

The following Spring, British fur trader James Colnett returned to the Big Island to find the chiefs on a war footing with neighboring Maui and Moloka'i, and the ali'i Kamehameha outfitted with a British sloop. Colnett was more concerned about the Spanish ships he saw in port. By 1791, Britons, French, Americans, and Spaniards were all calling at the Islands, and commercial competition was quickly building. Enterprising Hawaiian chiefs now requested weapons and gunpowder above all from the traders. Colnett, for one, was more than happy to supply both commodities in exchange for fresh food at the Big Island in 1791.⁷⁸ Having already made lengthy observations of Island life on his previous visit, Colnett made few additional notes. He stayed only a couple of weeks, stopping at the Big Island, Kaua'i, and Ni'ihau. At the Big Island, Colnett noted

⁷⁸ *The Journal of Captain James Colnett Aboard the Argonaut from April 26, 1789 to Nov. 3, 1791*, ed. F. W. Howay (1940; repr. New York, 1968), 220.

that the people “have constantly been at war since Captain Cook was killed, and also have a great deal of Sickness which never before his time afflicted them which they allege to having kill’d him.”⁷⁹ This awkwardly phrased remark, typical of Colnett, requires a moment’s explanation. By one reading Colnett is stating that Big Islanders believed that the ma‘i malihini had killed Cook (which Colnett himself knew *not* to be the case). Another reading assumes Colnett’s phrasing to be even less precise: the Hawaiians were claiming to have killed Cook *because of* the ma‘i malihini: to wit, *they “have a great deal of Sickness which never before [Cook’s] time afflicted them [and] which they allege to having” been the reason he was killed.* If the first reading is the more plausible of the two, either reading indicates a significant cultural iteration of the Hawaiian experience with introduced infectious disease by 1791. Twelve years after the return of Cook-Lono, some Hawaiians had fused the religious-political event of his return with the devastation of the ma‘i malihini.

Colnett went on to note that people on the Big Island “made strict enquiry” as to whether Cook-Lono would ever return, and “when I saw him last.” Colnett “could not tell” whether Cook would return, but he knew one thing: “the Spaniards were coming to take their Country from them and make them Slaves.” No doubt unsettled by this news, local people then “enquired if Captain Cook had sent” the Spaniards, and “how long he would be angry with them [the Hawaiians], and what they should do to get Captain Cook to entreat his [ali‘i] to send and assist them against the Spaniards.” If Colnett had any advice on this matter, he did not record it.

⁷⁹ *The Journal of Captain James Colnett Aboard the Argonaut*, 220.

Colnett's account ends with a retrospective comment about the 1790 explosion of Kīlauea crater on Hawai'i Island: "Since I was there...two Volcanoes have open'd on the [eastern] side of the Isle, which burn'd night and day with great fury and Tremendous Explosion which they say Captain Cook has caus'd."⁸⁰ Colnett did not elaborate on who exactly believed that Cook-Lono had caused the eruption of Kīlauea crater, but it is no surprise that the Britons were hearing stories about the event; as many as 400 Hawaiians were said to have perished in the eruption, including dozens of warriors (with women and children in tow) on their way home to Hilo after battling Kamehameha's forces in Hamakua district.⁸¹

While it is fair to wonder whether Colnett exaggerated the Hawai'i Islanders' fixation on the man (or divine king) who happened to be his mentor, the larger context of Colnett's journals does not support such a view. For one thing, it had been twenty years since Colnett first set out with Cook. Now a thirty-eight year-old captain and merchant, Colnett had other concerns than heaping praise on a man already widely considered the greatest British navigator of all time. Also, there seems to be minimal embellishment in Colnett's journal. Given the nature of his accounts throughout the Pacific, it is likely that Colnett recorded the Islanders' comments about Cook simply as he understood them. The only remaining reason for skepticism, then, is whether Colnett misunderstood them. But it seems unlikely that he would misunderstand both their ideas about Cook-Lono's connection to the ma'i malihini and also their ideas about his connection to the eruption

⁸⁰ *The Journal of Captain James Colnett Aboard the Argonaut*, 220.

⁸¹ Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778-1854*, 36.

of Kīlauea crater. Thus, some Big Islanders seem to have associated Cook-Lono with the forces of nature in 1791.

A few months after Colnett's departure, a French expedition commanded by Étienne Marchand reached the Big Island on their circumnavigation of the globe. Having already heard of the violence at Maui the previous year, Marchand chose not to drop anchor at the Islands. Nevertheless, a brief exchange recorded by Marchand's journalist Charles Pierre Claret de Fleurieu occurred some six miles off the coast. Hawaiian canoes "never failed to bring women intermingled with the hogs," noted Fleurieu, and offered them to the Frenchmen "conjointly with the filthy animal." With six men having already caught venereal infections at the Marquesas Islands earlier in the trip, the crewmen of the *Solide* were "prudent enough to content themselves" only with the edible commodities offered by Islanders. Regarding commerce between Hawaiians and newcomers, Fleurieu suggested that the former had "nothing to gain, for the preservation of their race, by a too immediate communication with the seamen of civilized nations." This was a pity since Hawai'i was now a "large caravansary" for commerce in the Great Ocean.⁸²

⁸² C[harles] P[ierre] Claret [de] Fleurieu (6 Oct. 1791), *A Voyage Round the World, Performed During the Years 1790, 1791, and 1792, by Étienne Marchand*, vol. 2 (London, 1801), 11–12. The surgeon Claude Roblet noted that Marchand's men had contracted venereal infections at the Marquesas. See Fleurieu, *A Voyage Round the World, Performed During the Years 1790, 1791, and 1792, by Étienne Marchand*, vol. 1 (London, 1801), 169. See also later comments by French surgeon Joseph Paul Gaimard, in Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 57–58.

Commander, Surgeon, and Mate

In March 1792 a different kind of British fleet arrived at the Islands. Royal Navy captain George Vancouver had first visited Hawai'i as a young midshipman aboard Cook's *Discovery* in 1778–1779. Following an illustrious Navy career in the 1780s, he now returned to the Islands as commander of a newly constructed HMS *Discovery*. Aboard Vancouver's fleet were the Hawaiian teenager and world-traveler Kualelo and a crew of some one hundred fifty British seamen. The Vancouver expedition was a British imperial, diplomatic, and scientific effort, modeled on the voyages of Cook, but with a principal goal of securing the Northwest Coast fur trading entrepôt of Nootka Sound from perceived Spanish threats. By March 1792 Vancouver and his men had already been out for a year; they would remain at sea for another three years, visiting the Hawaiian Islands on three separate occasions.

While Vancouver's observations of Hawaiian political affairs, warfare, agriculture, and infrastructure were generally astute, he was less interested in Hawaiian culture and was practically blind to the lot of the maka'āinana. In fact, his only concern with common people was that they might attack him, a concern that occasionally bordered on paranoia, according to his men.⁸³ Vancouver was also obsessed with order, and frequently commented on its Indigenous forms. In marked contrast with Cook, Vancouver hardly noticed the *disorder* and disruptions occasioned by introduced infectious disease. Believing the Islands' evident depopulation to be the result of

⁸³ Bell, "Log of the *Chatham*," *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Sept. 1929), 19–20.

internecine warfare, Vancouver never considered that disease had played a role. Everywhere he looked, Vancouver saw the ravages of war, which was of principal concern to him as he had hoped to make the Islands a British protectorate.⁸⁴ By contrast, the expedition's surgeon and naturalist deemed Hawaiian warfare to be "not of any long continuance or very bloody," though very destructive of property and agricultural productions; yet "after the heat of battle was over, all animosities were soon forgot, and the vanquished were admitted to live amongst [the victors] as friends."⁸⁵ Of course eighteenth-century Hawaiian warfare, like warfare everywhere, had epidemiological as well as political consequences. And as was the case in the recently fought American Revolution, far more people died of disease than combat in the Hawaiian wars of 1790–1795. This was true for warriors and noncombatants alike.

Fortunately, Vancouver's lack of interest in Hawaiian life and health was not universally shared by his men. Master's mate Thomas Manby on the *Discovery*, clerk Edward Bell on the *Chatham*, and Scottish surgeon Archibald Menzies, who had been at the Islands in 1788 with Colnett, together painted a harrowing portrait of maka'āinana life in 1792–1794, with chronic warfare, food shortages, and ongoing disease transmission. Menzies also made (what appears to be) the first diagnosis of tuberculosis, the most deadly disease in the years to come.



⁸⁴ On the imperial aspects of the Vancouver expedition, see Daniel W. Clayton, *Islands of Truth: The Imperial Fashioning of Vancouver Island* (Vancouver, 2000).

⁸⁵ Menzies (17 March 1793), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years*, 115, 117.

In spite of Vancouver's order "prohibiting general trade with the Indians," the usual exchange of food, sex, and trinkets occurred during the expedition's two-and-a-half-week visit in March 1792.⁸⁶ At Kealahou Bay, the fleet's initial harborage, Manby and Bell both reported on seamen's encounters with Island women, whom Bell described as "the cheapest articles of Traffic" in the Island economy.⁸⁷ These offshore couplings between Hawaiians and British seamen—not mentioned by Vancouver—apparently took place before any official business or meetings with ali'i that month. According to Manby, "a slight beckon" by the seamen was "sufficient invitation" for Island females to dive "like Sea Nymphs from their Canoes going under every canoe that obstructed their passage to the ship. No incumbrance of clothes impeded their swimming as they were in a state of nature, except a small strip of Cloth applied like Fig leaf worn by our Grandmother Eve."

While Manby deemed the prelapsarian women somewhat less attractive than Society Islanders, he was shortly "reconcile[d]" to their close-cropped hair and missing front teeth. The latter was a traditional mourning practice. Remarkably, Manby reported that "every woman" they met with at Kealahou Bay was "deprived...of her foreteeth"—an "abominable custom," in Manby's opinion, though it is unclear whether he understood the reason or what the prevalence of the "fashion" might suggest about Islander health and mortality.⁸⁸ Yet if Manby is to be believed, most Big Islanders in the

⁸⁶ Vancouver (1 March 1792), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 445.

⁸⁷ Bell, "Log of the *Chatham*," *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Sept. 1929), 8.

⁸⁸ Manby, "Journal of Vancouver's Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (June 1929), 15.

early 1790s had lost a local chief or someone else close to them.⁸⁹ The fact that Colnett and other visitors in the late 1780s failed to mention missing front teeth *might* suggest that the mortality rate had increased after 1790. On their second visit the following year, Manby reported that Kamehameha himself had knocked out “all his foreteeth,” though Manby and the others did not know the reason.⁹⁰ In any case, the prevalence of missing front teeth may comprise the only textual evidence that mortality rates had been increasing on the Big Island by 1792.

Weapons and gunpowder were still in great demand, yet Vancouver forbid his men from supplying Big Islanders with additional firepower—a humanitarian posture to prevent further warfare, Vancouver claimed, though this was just as much a strategy to block anyone from interfering with his own plans for Hawai‘i. On their first afternoon at Kealakekua Bay, Vancouver’s men were met by the imposing chief and world-traveler Ka‘iana, who requested first wine—or tea, according to Bell—and then firearms.⁹¹ Master’s mate Manby was surprised that Ka‘iana seemed to have forgotten most of his English since returning from the Northwest Coast. Vancouver considered this chief

⁸⁹ Mortality rates on the big island, as elsewhere, would only be calculated after 1820.

⁹⁰ Thomas Manby, “Journal of Vancouver’s Voyage to the Pacific Ocean,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (July 1929): 33–45, esp. 40. Later, Russian sea captain Urey Lisiansky was told that Kamehameha had knocked out his front teeth after learning (in 1792) that his authority was being challenged on the Big Island by the ali‘i Keawema‘uhili: “This unexpected news enraged him so much, that, in his fury, he knocked out several of his own teeth.” See Lisiansky, *A Voyage Round the World*, 130. A better explanation comes from Kamakau: Kamehameha knocked his teeth out mourning his sister Kalola (widow of Kalani‘ōpu‘u and sister of Kahekili II), who died on Moloka‘i in 1790. See Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 149; and Fornander, *An Account of the Polynesian Race*, 2:238.

⁹¹ Manby, “Journal of Vancouver’s Voyage to the Pacific Ocean,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (June 1929), 15–16; Bell, “Log of the *Chatham*,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Sept. 1929), 10. See also Manby (3 March 1792), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 447n6.

“extremeley disappointed and chagrined” at failing “to procure any fire arms or ammunition.” Not only Ka‘iana but “all his countrymen...anxiously solicited” firearms from the Britons, and were “as uniformly refused” by Vancouver.⁹² According to the surgeon Menzies, “nothing was now held in greater estimation or more eagerly sought after than fire arms and powder by those people who, but a few years back, shuddered at the report of a musquet.” Now they could handle European weapons “with a degree of ease and dexterity that equalled the most expert veteran.”⁹³

Once it became clear that firearms were not forthcoming, Big Islanders seemed “very indifferent about trading, or having any other communication with” Vancouver and his men.⁹⁴ The clerk Bell, who had never been to Hawai‘i, was “greatly disappointed” by the scene in general: “We had been lead to emagine that we should find everything in...as great plenty here as at [Tahiti]—but comparison between the two places...will not bear it.” Yet Bell had “reason to suppose that the seeming scarcity” of food and other provisions “was nothing more than” a bargaining strategy “to endeavor to force us, to offer...articals [in] a larger & better supply.”⁹⁵

One exception to Islanders’ indifference to Vancouver’s men was the enterprising ali‘i Ka‘iana who tried to learn everything he could about the newcomers from Kualelo, and encouraged the young traveler to remain with him at the Big Island as a chief. This was not a bad option for Kualelo, who had just had his heart broken in Tahiti, and now

⁹² Vancouver (2 March 1792), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 449.

⁹³ Menzies (3 March 1792), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 14.

⁹⁴ Vancouver, in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 446.

⁹⁵ Bell, “Log of the *Chatham*,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Sept. 1929), 9.

learned that his “friends and relatives at Molokai” had been killed in a “destructive war” that had “desolated” the island in his absence.⁹⁶ That desolation became apparent to Vancouver and his men as the expedition sailed north. En route to O‘ahu the fleet was approached by “some few of the natives” off the southern coast of Lāna‘i with little to offer in the way of trade goods. Vancouver deemed the “dreary and desolate appearance of their island...a sufficient apology for their coming empty-handed.” In contrast to the coastal regions of the Big Island, Maui, and O‘ahu, Lāna‘i seemed to the commander “very thinly inhabited, and incapable of affording any of its productions to strangers.” Through his telescope Vancouver could see a “few scattered miserable habitations” set upon a landscape that otherwise appeared barren.⁹⁷ Menzies had much the same impression of Lāna‘i, and also of its arid neighbor Kaho‘olawe. The western (low-lying) regions of Moloka‘i seemed to Menzies a “naked dreary barren waste without either habitation or cultivation,” an apt summation of the British conception of the drier, agriculturally marginal regions of the Hawaiian Islands.⁹⁸

Despite these observations, it is unclear whether human populations on western Moloka‘i, Lāna‘i, and Kaho‘olawe had declined since 1778–1779, and if so, what exactly was the cause.⁹⁹ In the first place, and despite Vancouver’s claim that Lāna‘i and

⁹⁶ Menzies (4 March 1792), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 15–16; Manby, “Journal of Vancouver’s Voyage to the Pacific Ocean,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (June 1929), 13, 16. But see also Bell’s account of Kualelo’s family below.

⁹⁷ Vancouver (6 March 1792), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 452.

⁹⁸ Menzies (6 March 1792), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 22.

⁹⁹ Cf. David E. Stannard, *Before the Horror: The Population of Hawai‘i on the Eve of Western Contact* (Honolulu, 1989), 71, 134–135. For skepticism regarding Stannard’s suggested rate of population decline for this period, see Eleanor C. Nordyke, “Comment,” in Stannard, *Before the Horror*, 111–112.

Kaho‘olawe “had formerly been considered fruitful and populous islands,” none of these regions sustained large populations at any point in the eighteenth or early nineteenth century.¹⁰⁰ It was also common for Hawaiians threatened by drought, famine, warfare, or political commotion to abandon their villages for another island or another region on their home island.¹⁰¹ Vancouver’s view through a British telescope does not suffice as evidence of depopulation. Indeed the Britons proved only that marginal and agriculturally poor regions in 1778–1779 remained so in 1792, and that Islanders continued to be mobile throughout this period. Even the alleged loss of Kualelo’s family and friends at Moloka‘i, tempting as it is to elaborate upon, does not prove population loss resulting from warfare: the source of this information was the upstart chief Ka‘iana, a schemer considered untrustworthy by Europeans and Hawaiians alike who also had political designs on Kualelo as a potential ally.¹⁰² Tellingly, the clerk Edward Bell’s account of these events differs markedly from that of Menzies. Bell does not mention *any* losses to Kualelo’s Moloka‘i kin, and in fact notes that “several of his family were [re]settled on the [Big] Island.”¹⁰³

While it is possible that warfare on western Moloka‘i, Lāna‘i, and Kaho‘olawe had been costly in terms of lives and agricultural productions, it is just as likely that Islanders such as Kualelo’s family fled to the hills or paddled to a neighboring island

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Vancouver (11–12 March 1792), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 856.

¹⁰¹ See above.

¹⁰² See, e.g., Bell, “Log of the *Chatham*,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Sept. 1929), 11, 17–18; and Vancouver (30 Jan. 1794), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 1152.

¹⁰³ Bell, “Log of the *Chatham*,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Sept. 1929), 11.

when war broke out—as Hawaiians had done for centuries before them. Vancouver and Menzies typically assumed the worst when they saw abandoned huts or thinly populated villages; historians have too often followed their lead.¹⁰⁴ Yet if tracking Hawaiian refugees in this period is a daunting task, determining the extent to which losses to warfare (or the occasional famine) had lasting effects on population or population density in the marginal regions of the archipelago is still more difficult.¹⁰⁵ The problem is further complicated by the fact that Islanders continued to contract and succumb to infectious Old World diseases in this period.

At O‘ahu, Vancouver was pleased to find that Islanders understood his expedition to be distinct from that of earlier fur traders. Cognizant of the political and military nature of the expedition, the Waikīkī people were “excessively orderly and docile...neither man nor woman attempted to come on board, without first obtaining permission; and when this was refused, they remained perfectly quiet in their canoes alongside.” They were also “very much afraid of fire-arms” which Vancouver’s fleet wielded in spades, anticipating potential conflicts with Spaniards and others at sea.

Overseeing the collection of fresh water near Waikīkī, Vancouver witnessed a highly cultivated landscape with ingenious irrigation and canal systems. Yet the commander was once again disappointed by the nature of the reception. Like Big

¹⁰⁴ On this point I acknowledge a debt to Andrew F. Bushnell, “‘The Horror’ Reconsidered,” 137–143. For a work that fails to interrogate the observations by Vancouver and Menzies, see Stannard, *Before the Horror*, 134–135.

¹⁰⁵ For Islanders fleeing drought-induced famine, see Menzies (29 March 1793), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 129. For similar strategies practiced in upland southeast Asia, see James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven, 2009).

Islanders, the people at southern O‘ahu seemed generally cold or indifferent to the Britons. This stood in sharp contrast—in Vancouver’s estimation—to Tahiti, where a month earlier “effusions of friendship and hospitality were evident in the countenances of every one we met.” While the Tahitians had “endeavored to anticipate our wants or our wishes by the most fascinating attention, and by sedulously striving to be first in performing any little service we required,” the Waikīkī people regarded Vancouver with “an unwelcome austerity,” and treated his desires “with a negligent indifference.” In general, the people

exhibited no assiduity to please, nor did they appear apprehensive lest offence should be given; no refreshments were offered, nor had we invitation to any of their houses. Their general behaviour was distantly civil, apparently directed by a desire to establish a peaceable intercourse with strangers, from whom there was a prospect of deriving many valuable acquisitions, which would be unattainable by any other mode of conduct.¹⁰⁶

Coastal people had become jaded about British visitors. It was not clear to Vancouver whether this posture was taken in *spite* of his being recognized by some of the older O‘ahu residents from the Cook visits of 1778–1779; because of it; or for other reasons. Yet the seamen who engaged Hawaiians in sex at Waikīkī in 1792 did not share Vancouver’s opinion of the peoples’ attitudes. According to Menzies, the women paddled out to the ships “in large groups, not only in the canoes, but on swimming boards with no other intention than of tendering their persons to anyone that would choose to have them,

¹⁰⁶ Vancouver, in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 456.

and those who were unsuccessful in their aim went away chiding us for our want of gallantry.”¹⁰⁷

At Waimea Bay, Kaua‘i, a few days later, Vancouver was once again disappointed with the reception. The “distant civility” of the typically friendly Waimea people may have been a function in part of the kapu in place, which also prevented some men from gaining access to Island women on shore.¹⁰⁸ Yet even after the kapu was lifted, the people were less than thrilled to be hosting the Britons on Kaua‘i.

Vancouver and his men had noted a trend on the Islands in 1792: common people were less eager to engage with Britons than before. Hawaiians also seemed less willing to play the role of generous hosts to the seamen. In Waimea Bay, Vancouver considered this new state of affairs as having degraded the people:

The eagerness, nay even avidity, with which the men here assisted in the prostitution of the women; and the readiness of the whole sex, without any exception, to surrender their persons without the least importunity, could not fail, at the moment, to incur our censure and dislike; and, on reflection, our disgust and aversion. I have read much, and seen something in my several visits to this ocean, of the obscenity attributed to the inhabitants of [Tahiti] and the Society islands; but no indecency that ever came under my observation, could be compared with the excessive wantonness presented in this excursion.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Menzies (8 March 1792), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 25.

¹⁰⁸ Vancouver (9 March 1792), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 460; Menzies (10 March 1792), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 31.

¹⁰⁹ Vancouver (9 March 1792), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 462. See also George Vancouver, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean* (London, 1798), 171. Of the four journalists, the clerk Edward Bell was by far the most critical of Hawaiians, especially their tendency (as he saw it) to steal; yet he did not complain of their sexual advances or of the sex trade in general, as did Vancouver. See, e.g., Bell, “Log of the *Chatham*,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Sept. 1929), 25–26.

Again Vancouver draws the unfavorable comparison with Tahiti. Yet Vancouver was not simply partial to South Pacific societies. In the journal, his indictment of the sex trade on leeward Kaua‘i comes just after his praise of Hawaiian agricultural plots and earthworks, which had left him with a “very favorable opinion of the industry and ingenuity of the inhabitants” on Kaua‘i. Furthermore, the Waimea people provided the crew with everything they needed, and Vancouver himself “had the comfort of finding all things in perfectly good order.” It would be a mistake to dismiss Vancouver’s comments about the sex trade off leeward Kaua‘i as the product of mere ethnocentrism, misogyny, or class bias. (Most Hawaiians involved in the trade were maka‘āinana.) The sex trade at Kaua‘i had evolved since 1778. And for Vancouver, at least, the development was wholly negative:

Had this levity, now so offensively conspicuous, been exhibited in my former visits to these islands, its impressions could not have been effaced, and it must have been recollected at this time with all the abhorrence which it would at first have naturally created; but as no remembrance of such behaviour occurred, I was induced to consider this licentiousness as a perfectly new acquirement, taught, perhaps, by the different civilized voluptuaries, who, for some years past, have been their constant visitors.

By “civilized voluptuaries” Vancouver meant the pleasure-seeking fur traders from various nations who had been calling at the Islands since 1786.

Importantly, sexual exchanges with newcomers by 1792 were not limited to the immediate coastal areas. The day after Vancouver observed the scene of “excessive wantonness” at Waimea Bay, Kaua‘i, he hiked inland with Menzies and a few other seamen along the Waimea River for about three miles, returning along a different path at the base of Waimea Canyon. The beauty of the natural landscape elicited no comment

from Vancouver, who was even “more pestered and disgusted” than he had been in Waimea Bay by “the obscene importunities” of local women.¹¹⁰ Vancouver here provides the earliest evidence of the sex trade having migrated inland. At leeward Kaua‘i at least, Islanders were no longer simply congregating in port to exchange sex for desirable European trade goods; they were now seeking exchanges in their home villages, perhaps even from the convenience of their own *hale* (sleeping and eating huts).

Common seamen once again held different views on the matter from their commander. While the clerk Bell was, like Vancouver, “in some measure disgusted...at first” by female enticements on leeward Kaua‘i, master’s mate Thomas Manby had quite the opposite impression: on March 9 he “slept warm and comfortable” in between four “pretty females” in a “snug little hut” erected by a Waimea chief for such liaisons.¹¹¹ On the 13th Manby spent two hours “rev[elling] in extatic enjoyment” with an unnamed “Royal female” provided by the chief Inamo‘o, regent to the young king Kaumuali‘i. Back on the *Discovery* later that afternoon, Manby heard someone alongside the ship calling for “Mappee.” He “instantly knew the voice” to be that of the woman he had “pass’d some happy moments with in the early part of the day.” She had paddled out in a canoe and was calling for Manby himself.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Vancouver (10 March 1792), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 462.

¹¹¹ Bell, “Log of the *Chatham*,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Sept. 1929), 15; Manby, “Journal of Vancouver’s Voyage to the Pacific Ocean,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (June 1929), 20.

¹¹² Manby, “Journal of Vancouver’s Voyage to the Pacific Ocean,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (June 1929), 23. See also Manby (13–14 March 1792), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 469n2. Earlier in the month Bell noted that the *Chatham* at Maui had “no small number” of women aboard, and that they “were in general more agreeable in their persons” than Big Island women. See Bell, “Log of the *Chatham*,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Sept. 1929), 14.

Like the chiefs on the eastern islands, the Kaua‘i regent Inamo‘o implored Vancouver for firearms. When weapons were refused as “*tabooed*”—in this case, because they belonged to “His Majesty King George”—Inamo‘o “immediately” requested gunpowder and musket balls instead. Meanwhile, in a pattern common throughout the Island Pacific—as it had been earlier in the Americas—the young mō‘ī Kaumuali‘i adopted the name of King George, “not suffering his [servants] to address him by any other name, and being much displeased with us, as well as his countrymen, if we called him *Tamooere*” [Kaumuali‘i].¹¹³ Various Hawaiian ali‘i, both young and old, would follow Kaumuali‘i’s lead over the next few decades while relations with the Britons remained friendly. Nor were the names adopted by Hawaiians limited to British monarchs and naval commanders. The young adventurer Kalehua took the name of second mate Joseph Ingraham on a fur trading voyage to the Northwest Coast in 1791; the following year, a Society Islander seems to have taken the name of twenty-one year-old master’s mate Thomas Manby.¹¹⁴ Unlike Indigenous leaders elsewhere in this period, Hawaiians seem to have taken British names without any expectation of mutual exchange.¹¹⁵ Northwest Coast chiefs, by contrast, imagined their new names as a

¹¹³ Vancouver (13 March 1792), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 474; Bell, “Log of the *Chatham*,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Sept. 1929), 21. Cf. Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 162. Kaua‘i ali‘i continued to take new names over the next few years. See journal of Archibald Menzies, 9 March 1794, MS 155, National Library of Australia.

¹¹⁴ Menzies (5 March 1792), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 21; Manby, “Journal of Vancouver’s Voyage to the Pacific Ocean,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (June 1929), 13. For the adoption of foreigners’ names in the Marquesas, see Greg Denning, *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent Land: Marquesas, 1774-1880* (Honolulu, 1980), 84, 209–210.

¹¹⁵ By contrast, Ka‘ahumanu insisted on a female missionary taking her name in 1828. See Laura Fish Judd, *Honolulu: Sketches of Life Social, Political, and Religious in the Hawaiian Islands from 1828 to 1861* (New York, 1880), 15.

symbolic exchange with elite newcomers who would in turn take Native leaders' names.¹¹⁶



In mid-February 1793 the Vancouver expedition returned on the second of three visits. Coasting in to Hilo Bay on windward Hawai‘i Island, Vancouver was alarmed to learn that the mō‘ī Kamehameha had forbidden Islanders (“under penalty of death”) from supplying newcomers with provisions unless he received “*arms and ammunition*” in exchange. Plenty of Islanders were willing to take this risk in order to obtain British metals (scissors, knives, and nails), looking glasses, and textiles.¹¹⁷ Particularly desirable to Big Islanders in 1793 was British red cloth. For many generations the ruling chiefs had draped themselves in red and orange garments to display their elevated status and their connection to the gods (red being a sacred color); for the same reason, red garments were forbidden to the maka‘āinana. Before the arrival of Europeans, Hawai‘i’s sole source of red apparel and decorative objects were songbird feathers. *I‘iwi* and *‘apanane* feathers were picked by hand and stitched together in the tens of thousands, coupled with the yellow and black feathers of the now-extinct *mamo*. Since these garments were time-consuming to produce, British red cloth was a desirable commodity from the moment it appeared on Hawaiian shores.

¹¹⁶ For a Haida chief’s exchange of names with British fur trade captain William Douglas, see Michael P. Robinson, *Sea Otter Chiefs* (Calgary, Alberta, 1996), chap. 2. For an O‘ahu man calling himself “General Washington” in 1798, see “Extract from the Diary of Ebenezer Townsend, Jr.,” *Hawaiian Historical Reprints*, no. 4 (1924), 20. By 1820 some ali‘i expected reciprocity in the exchange of names (see Chapter Four).

¹¹⁷ Bell, “Log of the *Chatham*,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Oct. 1929): 55–69, esp. 63.

Between Vancouver's first and second visits, Kamehameha had consolidated his power on the Big Island and begun his conquest of neighboring Maui, Moloka'i, and Lāna'i. With Vancouver and his men docked on his home island, Kamehameha's main objective was to present his authority as singular and lacking serious challengers, which was not yet true. The Big Island mō'i oversaw even the most trivial of trades while Vancouver was present, and staged the most impressive scenes of statecraft Britons had seen in the Pacific. Vancouver, Menzies, and Manby all were impressed by these royal displays. Kamehameha seemed to them a born leader, and it only seemed natural to these British naval officers that a small island nation should be ruled by a single, capable and authoritative monarch.¹¹⁸ For Vancouver, an all-powerful monarch also provided a stay against disorder, his principal fear. Vancouver observed that Kamehameha combined the Enlightenment virtues of "an open, cheerful, and sensible mind[,]...great generosity, and goodness of disposition," with the imposing physical presence and charisma of a Native chief—these latter traits being necessary for the ruler of an as-yet "savage" people.¹¹⁹

Among Kamehameha's principal advisors in 1793 were the captive (now very comfortable) British seamen John Young and Isaac Davis. In three years Young and Davis had been elevated to the status of high chiefs. Both men had married ali'i women, acquired significant landholdings, and appear to have been due all the respect of native-

¹¹⁸ American traders had much the same perspective. See William Shaler, "Journal of a Voyage between China and the North-western Coast of America, Made in 1804," *American Register* 3 (1808): 137–175.

¹¹⁹ Vancouver (20 Feb. 1793), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 807.

born chiefs.¹²⁰ For example, their food and lodgings were governed by strict kapu.

Although Davis and Young's physical appearance would have attracted Islander attention early on, there is no record of Hawaiians conceiving of Young and Davis as fundamentally different from their Native chiefs.¹²¹ The incorporation of British sailors into the ruling elite suggests that the Hawaiian reputation for hospitality was warranted. Certainly Hawaiian society was not hamstrung by racist notions that ascribed different abilities or demeanor according to people's ethnicity. Both Young and Davis were in the service of "his Owhyhean majesty" in 1793, and both served as principal informants on Island affairs to Vancouver and his men.¹²²

On this second visit by Vancouver, Kamehameha understood himself to be dealing with an emissary of the British sovereign. In fact, all of the mō'ī's dealings with the Britons seem to have been organized around this notion. At Kamehameha's direction, a magnificent 'ahu 'ula (bird-feather cloak) had been woven for King George III; the cloak was so precious that Kamehameha would not let it go on board the *Discovery* until the expedition prepared to leave the Islands. Kamehameha also "gave the strictest & most solemn injunctions" that the cloak should not be placed upon "any person's shoulders till

¹²⁰ Menzies journal (7 March 1793), British Library; Menzies (25 Feb. 1793), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 78; Vancouver (2 March 1794), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 1191. See also Bell, "Log of the *Chatham*," *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Oct. 1929), 67; and Bell (Jan. 1794), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 1144n2.

¹²¹ In a cryptic passage, Kamakau suggests that the authority of foreign chiefs such as Davis and Young may have been distinct from Native Hawaiian ali'i in this period: "For young stranger chiefs [Kamehameha] made three classes: the Okaka, the 'Ai-'ohi'a, and the Uoio." Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 176. Elbert and Pukui define 'Okaka as "a particular company of soldiers belonging to Kamehameha" without reference to race or nationality. See Elbert and Pukui, *Hawaiian Dictionary*, s.v. "'Okaka." I have been unable to find other recorded instances of "'Ai-'ohi'a" (which translates literally as "eater of mountain apple" (*ōhi'a*)—see *ibid.*, s.v. "'ōhi'a 'ai") or of "Uoio."

¹²² Vancouver (22 and 24 Feb. 1793), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 811, 825.

it was deliver'd to King George in Britannee.”¹²³ With a few important exceptions, no new information was provided by Vancouver and his fellow journalists about Hawaiian health or demography in 1793. The first exception came from Maui.

A French physician had recorded a long list of health woes plaguing the residents of the seemingly vermin-infested west coast of Maui in 1786 (Chapter One). Seven years later, the situation seems not to have improved, though it is difficult to know since Vancouver was not interested in these matters, and since neither Menzies nor Manby discussed the maka‘āinana on leeward Maui. For his part, Vancouver was under the impression that Maui had been continuously at war from 1779 to 1790, with a respite from fighting only during the preceding two years. Given this violent recent history, the commander was not surprised to find Maui impoverished in 1793: “The poverty of these people was apparent” by the condition of their canoes and habitations, and by the fact that they brought “only a few small packages of salt to dispose of.”¹²⁴ Unfortunately, this is all Vancouver had to say about coastal Maui people. Unlike Rollin’s long list of health woes, Vancouver did not make a record of Islander health at Maui, so little more is known of how the people might have weathered the seven-year interval between La Pérouse and Vancouver.¹²⁵

¹²³ Menzies (22 Feb. 1793), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 21. See also Manby, “Journal of Vancouver’s Voyage to the Pacific Ocean,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (July 1929), 40.

¹²⁴ Vancouver (10 March 1793), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 851.

¹²⁵ Sahlins believed that apparent food shortages on Maui could be explained by the regular diversion of resources to Kahekili’s standing army in the years 1791–1794. See Sahlins, *Anahulu*, 1:40.

There was, however, every indication that broader Maui had been hit hard over the past decade. King Kahekili II was still seething from the depredations of Kamehameha's forces, including the loss of hundreds if not thousands of lives.¹²⁶ The Maui mō'ī expressed his grievances to Vancouver at length:

The present reduced condition of the island, and consequently of [Kahekili's] wealth, had been wholly occasioned, he said, by the ravage of [Kamehameha's] forces, who, not content with the vast quantity of provisions consumed during their stay [at Maui], nor with loading their canoes with the productions of the soil, had laid waste the lands on all sides, broken the fences of the plantations, [and] thrown down the banks of the little canals made for watering the crops....[A]ll the hogs, dogs, and fowls, that could not be carried away, were killed, or dispersed over the country.

Kahekili's "deplorable account" of Maui was true also for the "neighbouring islands" over which he was sovereign at this time. As Vancouver understood it, the attempted conquest by Kamehameha had "so humbled and broken the spirit of the people, that little exertion had been made to restore these islands to their accustomed fertility by cultivation; and they were at that time under the necessity of collecting provisions" from O'ahu and Kaua'i for the "maintenance of their numerous army" on windward Maui, Kamehameha's favorite place of attack.¹²⁷ Yet, by contrast with La Pérouse and his physician Rollin, Vancouver and his men made little mention of disease at Maui in 1793.

King Kahekili and his thirty-three year-old son Kalanikūpule, the crown prince of Maui, elicited Vancouver's only comments about Hawaiian health at Maui and O'ahu.

¹²⁶ For an early twentieth-century account (informed by Hawaiian oral traditions) of Kamehameha's depredations at Maui, see Fornander, *An Account of the Polynesian Race*, 2:226–227.

¹²⁷ Vancouver (14 March 1793), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 860–861.

For over a decade Kalanikūpule and his father had been resisting Kamehameha's imperial ambitions for Maui and her neighbors. When Vancouver arrived at O'ahu, where Kalanikūpule was staying, the prince was so sick that he was unable to meet with the British dignitaries. Kalanikūpule's delegates explained that the prince was too ill "to walk or sit upright" without pain.¹²⁸ Two days later, the prince agreed to be raised to the deck of the ship in a chair, and then "laid on a sofa in the cabin," for the surgeon Menzies to examine him. According to Menzies, Kalanikūpule was "very weak and emaciated from a pulmonary complaint that now produced hectic symptoms [i.e., fever], for which I gave him some medicines, accompanied with some general directions how to manage his complaint."¹²⁹ While Western medicine in this period could neither explain the cause of tuberculosis nor differentiate its various manifestations, a seasoned British surgeon like Menzies would have had extensive experience (if little success) in treating it. Kalanikūpule thus presents a good candidate for an early case of tubercular infection; he would soon have company in his immediate family.¹³⁰ Meanwhile, Kalanikūpule's father Kahekili, the reigning king of Maui, Lāna'i, and Moloka'i, would shortly die of unknown causes, leaving his ailing son in charge of three islands that Kamehameha had already proven he would spare no expense to seize.

¹²⁸ Vancouver (20 March 1793), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 875.

¹²⁹ Menzies (22 March 1793), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 125.

¹³⁰ The editor of Menzies' journal was sufficiently confident in the diagnosis to title this section of the journal, "Kalanikupule, a Sufferer from Tuberculosis." See Menzies, *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 124. For Menzies' 1794 diagnosis of "consumption" for an unnamed wife of Kahekili, see below.

The death in 1794 of the mō‘ī Kahekili, the most powerful chief on the Islands, requires a moment’s explanation. Vancouver speculated—and Menzies concurred—that Kahekili’s “intemperat[e]” use of ‘awa, “which he took in great quantities,” had combined with “the toils of long and fatiguing wars” by 1793 “to bring upon him a premature old age.”¹³¹ This is curious, since earlier visitors failed to mention serious health problems. British merchant Nathaniel Portlock had met with Kahekili on three separate occasions in 1786 (for days at a time) without the least indication that the mō‘ī’s health was anything but robust. Indeed Portlock described Kahekili as “an exceedingly stout well-made man about fifty years old,” who, unlike the local kāhuna, would not “touch either wine or spirits, nor did he ever use the yava [‘awa], but always drank water.”¹³² William Beresford, Portlock’s supercargo, similarly noted that Kahekili was “tall, straight, and well-made,” but added that “his eyes seem rather weak, and affected with a kind of rheum [watery or crusty discharge]; but whether this is owing to disease, or to a temporary cold, I cannot say.”¹³³ Kahekili’s rheumy eyes in December 1786 suggest that Portlock was probably wrong about the king’s abstention from ‘awa, yet

¹³¹ Vancouver (14 March 1793), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 862. See also Menzies (12 March 1793), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 104. The health of the Kaua‘i regent Inamo‘o had also declined greatly since Vancouver’s previous visit: “His limbs[,] no longer able to support his aged and venerable person, seemed not only deserted by their former muscular strength, but their substance was also entirely wasted away, and the skin, now inclosing the bones only, hung loose and uncontracted from the joints, whilst a dry white scurf, or rather scales which overspread the whole surface of his body from head to foot, tended greatly to increase the miserable and deplorable appearance of his condition...I was not a little shocked and surprised that one so wretchedly infirm, should have taken the painful trouble of this visit.” See Vancouver (27 March 1793), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 890. The “dry white scurf, or...scales” on Inamo‘o’s skin are diagnostic of ‘awa abuse.

¹³² Nathaniel Portlock, *A Voyage Round the World; But More Particularly to the North-west Coast of America...* (London: J. Stockdale & G. Goulding, 1789), 155–158.

¹³³ [William Beresford] (5 Dec. 1786), *A Voyage Round the World; But More Particularly to the North-west Coast of America...*, by George Dixon (London: G. Goulding, 1789), 97–98.

Portlock and Beresford agreed that Kahekili's body was sound and showed none of the physical signs of heavy 'awa use with which both Britons had become familiar.¹³⁴ Two years later, in 1788, Colnett and Taylor met with Kahekili and failed to report any problems with his health.¹³⁵ In 1792, Vancouver had been unable to meet with Kahekili because the king was at battle, defending his possessions against Kamehameha.¹³⁶ Kahekili's physical condition in 1793—including his heavy consumption of 'awa—thus presents a problem: Why would a robust, “well-made,” fifty-five-year-old king suddenly look so frail and be consuming 'awa so aggressively?

One explanation assumes that Vancouver had it right: long years of warfare coupled with heavy 'awa use had worn down the formerly hale mō'ī, aging him prematurely. But so quickly? A more intriguing possibility is that Kahekili was aggressively consuming 'awa to treat some disease. One of the principal medicinal herbs in the Hawaiian materia medica, 'awa was prescribed for innumerable health conditions, including the ma'i malihini. 'Awa was the most common treatment for gonorrhea, for example.¹³⁷ As mō'ī, there would have been no limits on the amount of 'awa that Kahekili could consume, which would explain the signs of abuse that Vancouver and Menzies noted in 1793. Given that Menzies had already diagnosed Kahekili's son

¹³⁴ Portlock (1–3 Dec. 1786), *A Voyage Round the World*, 156–157. Portlock had first seen the physical effects of heavy 'awa use with Cook in 1778–79. In Dec. 1786, Portlock described excessive 'awa use among various kahunas, including “an old priest” in Kahekili's party, whose skin was marred by the tell-tale “leprous scurf.” See *ibid.*, 157.

¹³⁵ See Colnett (15 Jan. 1788), in Galois, ed., *A Voyage to the North West Side of America*, 178; and Taylor (14 Sept. 1788), in *ibid.*, 266.

¹³⁶ Vancouver (6 March 1792), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 453.

¹³⁷ See the anonymous translation (1867?) of Dr. Gerrit P. Judd's Hawaiian-language medical book (c. 1860s), n.p., Hawaiian Mission Houses Archives (hereafter, HMH).

Kalanikūpule with a “pulmonary complaint,” and would soon diagnose one of Kahekili’s wives with “consumption,” it is not unlikely that Kahekili himself was sick with tuberculosis in 1793.¹³⁸ Perhaps it was tuberculosis that killed the king the following year at age fifty-seven. Previous historians have suggested old age or ‘awa abuse as the cause of Kahekili’s death, but tuberculosis seems at least as likely.¹³⁹

Scholars have failed to note the double opportunity presented to Kamehameha by the frail health and early death of the mō‘ī Kahekili coinciding with the debilitating illness of Kahekili’s son, the novice mō‘ī Kalanikūpule. More favorable circumstances for conquest can hardly be imagined. Kamehameha shortly triumphed over Kalanikūpule at the Battle of Nu‘uanu on O‘ahu in 1795. It is unclear to what extent Kalanikūpule had regained his strength by the time of this defeat. Yet the long-term health of the Maui mō‘ī proved inconsequential: Kamehameha had him sacrificed to the war god Kū shortly after his capture. And with that, the Kingdom of Maui came to a sudden and inglorious end, less than a year after Vancouver’s third and final visit.

Before proceeding to the events of that third visit, a final incident in 1793 deserves comment. At O‘ahu Vancouver orchestrated the capture, “trial,” and execution of three local men deemed responsible for the murder of two British officers and a Portuguese seaman in May 1792. That month Capt. Richard Hergest had arrived at the Islands on the naval store ship *Daedalus* to resupply Vancouver’s fleet. Collecting water

¹³⁸ Menzies (22 March 1793), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 125. For Kahekili’s wife, see below.

¹³⁹ Kamakau recorded Native traditions that Kahekili lived to the age of eighty-seven, an error carried forward by later historians. It is not clear whether Kahekili’s premature aging contributed to this miscalculation. See Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 166; and Fornander, *An Account of the Polynesian Race*, 2:260.

at Waimea Bay on leeward O‘ahu, Hergest, his astronomer William Gooch, and two seamen (one British, one Portuguese) were attacked, and all killed, save the British seaman who managed to escape.¹⁴⁰ Despite Vancouver’s attempts in 1793 to impose European justice on the affair, he ultimately relied on hearsay to seal the accused Hawaiians’ fates. To prevent further attacks on European seamen, Vancouver made the trial and execution public, corralling as many Islanders as possible to attend. To make the punishment seem official and just, he directed the accused’s “own chief” to carry out the execution. “Tennavee,” who may or may not have enjoyed the requisite authority at Waimea, executed the men with great relish, according to Vancouver. Borrowing a ship’s pistol from the Britons, Tennavee proceeded to “bl[o]w out their brains.” All three men died “instantly.”¹⁴¹

After dozens of pages devoted to this event in his journal, Vancouver convinced himself that he had executed the right men at O‘ahu. Among other factors, the chief Tennavee’s “deportment” during the trial and execution assured the commander that the “persons executed were wholly guilty of the murder.” The truth is that no method of determining the men’s guilt could be found, and at least one British seaman doubted that the executed men had killed Hergest, Gooch, and the Portuguese seaman.¹⁴² Shirking responsibility, Menzies noted that there was simply “no means of coming nearer to the

¹⁴⁰ Greg Dening examined these events at length in *The Death of William Gooch: A History’s Anthropology* (Melbourne, 1995). Kamakau claimed that the Britons were felled by stones that the Hawaiians had hidden on their persons. See Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 164.

¹⁴¹ Vancouver (22 March 1793), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 880. According to Menzies, the pistol belonged to the ship. See Menzies (21 March 1793), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 123.

¹⁴² See Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 879n.

truth than the assertions of their own chiefs, which on this occasion were deemed sufficient.”¹⁴³ The Hawaiian historian Samuel Kamakau, writing in the 1860s, claimed to have “met one of the men who did the killing” after the fact. The man—a *pahukū* (tattooed warrior) in the service of the mō‘ī Kahekili and of his son Kalanikūpule—explained to Kamakau that the Britons were killed “to get the guns”: Kahekili and Kalanikūpule had directed the chiefs and warriors “in the back country” that “if a ship came into those parts with guns” they were to “kill the strangers and get the guns.” In fact, the “guns and swords” acquired from the fallen Britons were “taken to Kalanikūpule at Waikiki.” When Vancouver demanded justice for these murders in 1793, according to Kamakau, an ali‘i of the Waimea district, Kamohomoho, “refused to have...his men killed” on behalf of the foreigners; instead, “some other men were brought and put to death” with Vancouver none the wiser.¹⁴⁴

The execution of the three innocent Hawaiians was not a sacrifice to the war god Kū or a punishment meted out by local authorities for violation of local kapu. Neither were these men warriors or combatants captured in battle. Instead they were victims of a European form of execution, implemented with a European instrument of death, and undertaken to right perceived wrongs against foreigners. The accused did not die to fulfill any ritual function; they just died. The chiefs and their kapu had little if any bearing on the affair. For the first time Islanders had witnessed European criminal justice in action. It is a shame that no Hawaiian account of the events has been passed down (excepting a

¹⁴³ Menzies (21 March 1793), *Hawaii Nei 128 Years Ago*, 123.

¹⁴⁴ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 163–166. Kamakau named two of the assailants; see, *ibid.*, 163. See also below.

discussion of the event between Kamehameha and a British sea captain three years later). Yet it is not hard to imagine that Islanders in 1793 grasped the significance of the scene: the arbitrary and confused nature of the trial with so much lost in translation; the swift justice of a British pistol that anyone could simply pick up and fire; the violence of the bullets splitting the men's skulls; and the absence of an organizing kapu or ritual over the entire affair.¹⁴⁵

Scarcely two days before these dramatic events, master's mate Thomas Manby was luxuriating in the arms of two young women in a "neat[,] well built" hut nestled beside a coconut grove on Maui. Manby had enjoyed a similar conjugal visit with four women the previous year on Kaua'i.¹⁴⁶ Amazed at his good fortune once again in 1793, Manby tried to capture something of the experience in his journal, including the women's names as he understood them: "Phiavotos the eldest had scarcely reached her nineteenth year: Movinoo hardly her eighteenth. These, oh, ye Gods, were the partners of my bed. Ten thousand execrations did I vent, on the dawning day, that compelled me to break from the arms of these bewitching Girls so lovely and endearing." Set against the O'ahu executions two days later, Manby's sexual liaisons suggest a violence of a different kind. The young women's sexual favors had been provided to Manby by a ranking chief, the Maui ali'i nui Ke'eaumoku. It is unlikely the women had any say in the matter of spending the night with Manby and with each other. Were they aware of the health risks

¹⁴⁵ Three years later Kamehameha reported that Vancouver had in fact executed the wrong men. See William Robert Broughton (14 Feb. 1796), *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean...in the Years 1795, 1796, 1797, 1798* (London, 1804), 42; and below.

¹⁴⁶ See above; and Manby, "Journal of Vancouver's Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (June 1929), 20.

of sleeping with foreign seamen? Were the young women ali‘i or commoners in the service of Ke‘eaumoku? The scene is suggestive, though not entirely revealing, of Island class dynamics and the subordination of women in Hawaiian society at this time.¹⁴⁷

If questions abound regarding such encounters, the concluding scene in Manby’s liaison adds yet another layer of complexity. In exchange for his night’s enjoyment with the young women in the hut—“it was a little paradise”—Manby presented them each with “a pair of scissors and small looking glasses.” Later, when the fleet readied to embark for O‘ahu, Phiavotos and Movinoo “came down to the Boats” and gave Manby “two small pieces of Cloth folded up very curiously like a Ball.” When Manby unfolded the cloth, he discovered “six pearls in each.”¹⁴⁸



Three aspects of Vancouver’s third and final visit help to elucidate the impact of foreign visitors, Hawaiian chiefly competition, and elite gender politics at the end of the eighteenth century. First is Kamehameha’s supposed cession of Hawai‘i Island to George III. Vancouver was not the first or last agent of empire to believe that he had obtained the Sandwich Islands for himself or his monarch. In 1793, British trader William Brown on the *Butterworth* had apparently gained a cession of O‘ahu, “together with the four islands to windward,” from the mō‘ī Kahekili; according to Menzies, Capt. Brown’s “contract” was signed by Kahekili and four Hawaiian advisors, plus Brown and four of his own

¹⁴⁷ Manby (8 March 1793), “Journal of Vancouver’s Voyage to the Pacific Ocean,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Aug. 1929): 39–55, esp. 49.

¹⁴⁸ Manby (8 March 1793), “Journal of Vancouver’s Voyage to the Pacific Ocean,” *Honolulu Mercury* 1 (Aug. 1929): 39–55, esp. 49.

men.¹⁴⁹ Yet as with Brown's supposed trophy of five islands, Vancouver's would-be "cession" of the Big Island from Kamehameha came to nothing. The "agreement" reached by Kamehameha and Vancouver helps to illustrate ali'i conceptions of the imperial powers whose agents had become a regular part of Island life by 1794.

A second aspect of Vancouver's third visit is the Britons' observations of important Hawaiian cultural forms, notably hula. Menzies and Vancouver provided lengthy descriptions of hula performances which they deemed as artful as anything they had seen on their years-long Pacific voyage. At least one performance concluded with a "large party" of British officers remaining on shore for the night.¹⁵⁰ Another hula, massive in scale, celebrated the pregnancy of a Kaua'i chiefess.

Finally, Vancouver and Menzies met with the chiefess who would become the most influential person in the Kingdom after the death of Kamehameha: his wife and third cousin Ka'ahumanu. Queen Ka'ahumanu and another Big Island chiefess expressed concerns about physical abuse by the male chiefs to Vancouver and his fellow officers. The latter chiefess bore evident signs of abuse, eliciting the condemnation of British officers. It was the first time that violence against women in Hawai'i had been discussed in print.

¹⁴⁹ Menzies (7 March 1794), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 1196n3. (Capt. William Brown died in January 1795.) It is difficult to know what to make of historian Andrew F. Bushnell's description of a meeting between Menzies and one of Kahekili's wives whom, Bushnell claims, Menzies had first met in 1788 on the Colnett voyage. Bushnell mis-cited the scene in his 1994 article which has Menzies observing that the young woman was now "wonderfully altered" from her previous state, as she was "far gone in a consumption" and had "the appearance of a woman advanced in years." See A. F. Bushnell, "'The Horror' Reconsidered," 144. Despite extensive research into the relevant primary sources, I have been unable to verify this meeting. If Bushnell was correct, Kahekili's wife (one of three) would be the second member of the Maui royal family to be identified as potentially tubercular.

¹⁵⁰ Menzies journal, 11 March 1794, National Library of Australia.

The first news Vancouver received upon his return to the Big Island in January 1794 was that Kamehameha had been “cuckolded” by his favorite (and second-highest-ranking) wife, the chiefess Ka‘ahumanu (“the bird-feather cloak”). Born on Maui around 1768 to Namahana (the wife of an earlier king of Maui) and Ke‘eaumoku (a Big Island chief in exile on Maui, and soon-to-be royal governor of that island), Ka‘ahumanu was third cousin to Kamehameha through her father. Their marriage had been arranged when Kamehameha was a boy and Ka‘ahumanu still a toddler. Importantly, Ka‘ahumanu outranked Kamehameha, and thus officially required his deference, though it should be noted that rank and “rights” as a woman were not one and the same in Hawaiian society.¹⁵¹

With the royal marriage apparently in danger in 1794, Vancouver was happy to offer his services to reconcile the king and queen. He claimed to have had a personal conversation with Kamehameha in which the mō‘ī spoke “with great candour” about his own infidelities and those of Ka‘ahumanu. Vancouver also claimed to have been called on “frequently” as an advisor in the matter. His goal was to bring about a speedy resolution to the tiff so that no “adverse party” could take advantage of the situation to unseat Kamehameha; Ka‘ahumanu’s father Ke‘eaumoku was of particular concern to Vancouver.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ Ka‘ahumanu was probably *ali‘i naha*, third-highest rank; Kamehameha was *ali‘i wahi*, fourth-highest. See Patrick Vinton Kirch, *How Chiefs Became Kings: Divine Kingship and the Rise of Archaic States in Ancient Hawai‘i* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2010), 36; and . For the “rights” enjoyed by high-ranking chiefesses, see below.

¹⁵² Vancouver (15–17 Feb. 1794), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 1157–1159. Vancouver was under the impression that Ka‘ahumanu’s affair had been with the upstart chief Ka‘iana, discussed above. See Vancouver (10 Jan. 1794), in *ibid.*, 1142. Other sources identify the good-looking young chief Kanihonui

The commander was ultimately successful in reuniting the high chief and chiefess, though it is not clear that his services were necessary. While making his “confession” to Vancouver, Kamehameha explained that his high rank “was a sort of licence for such indulgences,” and that his own behavior in turn “pleaded [an] excuse for [Ka‘ahumanu’s] infidelity.” Nevertheless, Vancouver and Kamehameha together cooked up a scheme whereby the king and queen would be reunited aboard the *Discovery*. In a scene presaging Claude Lévi-Strauss among the Tupinamba of Brazil, Kamehameha took two sheets of paper and “made certain marks with a pencil on each of them”: one sheet indicated that the situation on the *Discovery* was auspicious, and Kamehameha could come aboard and reconcile with his wife; the other sheet indicated that all was not well and that a different plan would need to be hatched. Depending on how Vancouver found Ka‘ahumanu, he would send one or the other sheet of paper to Kamehameha on shore to indicate the course of action to be taken. For a nonliterate ruler of a pre-literate society to be engaged in this bit of written semaphore is remarkable. In the event, Ka‘ahumanu was amenable to reconciliation, and the plan worked.¹⁵³

Yet all was not settled. Vancouver was “surprized” by Ka‘ahumanu’s final request, which he took at first “as a matter of jest only”—namely, that the commander

as the object of Ka‘ahumanu’s affection. Kamakau claimed that Ka‘ahumanu was “under the influence of liquor” when she “first gave way to her desire...and slept with Ka-niho-nui.” If that is true, the vehicle of intoxication was probably rum: “Rum became the custom at feasts, the men drinking their kind and the chiefesses theirs. The commoners drank everywhere.” Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 194.

¹⁵³ Vancouver (15–17 Feb. 1794), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 1157–1159. For the Tupinamba, see Claude Lévi-Strauss, “A Writing Lesson,” in *Tristes Tropiques*, trans. John and Doreen Weightman (New York, 2012), chap. 28. For Menzies’ account of the royal affair and reconciliation, see Menzies journal, 9 Jan. 1794, British Library.

might “obtain from [Kamehameha] a solemn promise, that on [Ka‘ahumanu’s] return to his habitation he would not beat her.” The mō‘ī offered every assurance that “nothing of the kind should take place,” yet according to Vancouver, Ka‘ahumanu “would not be satisfied without my accompanying them home to the royal residence.”¹⁵⁴ In light of later events, Ka‘ahumanu’s demand of a guarantee of her own physical safety (and of her proper restoration as queen) is of greater importance than the couple’s sexual dalliances and brief estrangement in 1794; yet historians have largely failed to make note of the former.¹⁵⁵

If Ka‘ahumanu’s concern about physical violence were exceptional it might deserve little comment. However, another female ali‘i bore signs of physical abuse, according to the surgeon Archibald Menzies. Indeed, the beating of “Tipoke-avee” by Keli‘imaika‘i (“the good chief,” ironically) may have inspired Ka‘ahumanu’s request for her own physical protection. Keli‘imaika‘i was Kamehameha’s full brother, and thus, brother-in-law to Ka‘ahumanu. Perhaps the violence done to Tipoke-avee motivated Ka‘ahumanu to request protection from Vancouver. Tipoke-avee’s alleged misdemeanor, like Ka‘ahumanu’s, was sexual intimacy with a chief who was not her husband.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ Vancouver (17 Feb. 1794), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 1160.

¹⁵⁵ One exception is Jane L. Silverman, *Kaahumanu: Molder of Change Kaahumanu: Molder of Change* (Honolulu, 1987), 27–38.

¹⁵⁶ Menzies journal, 24 Feb. 1794, National Library of Australia. It is not clear what relation Tipoke-avee was to the ruling chiefs, or whether she was formally Keli‘imaika‘i’s wife. For a case of ali‘i spousal abuse c. 1809, see John Papa ‘Ī‘Ī, *Fragments of Hawaiian History*, trans. Mary Kawena Pukui, ed. Dorothy B. Barrère (Honolulu, 1983), 29. For a later queen (Kīna‘u) beaten by a husband whom she outranked, see Chapter Five.

Shortly after the reconciliation of Kamehameha and Ka‘ahumanu, the Britons took in a hula performance on the Big Island that Vancouver deemed superior to any he had seen in the Pacific. Unfortunately for the prudish navigator, this particular performance was concluded by a “libidinous scene, exhibited by the ladies,” which seemed to him “calculated to produce nothing but disgust even in the most libidinous.”¹⁵⁷ Two and a half weeks later, on Kaua‘i, Vancouver and Menzies had occasion to attend another hula that surpassed the one at the Big Island. Leaving off the salacious fourth act, the Kaua‘i hula consisted of some six hundred performers, mostly women, “dressed in various coloured clothes,” and narrating a story that was coherent to the British seamen. The net effect for Vancouver was, “without exception, the most pleasing amusement of the kind we had seen performed” over the course of a years-long voyage. Vancouver learned that the performance was to honor the Kaua‘i regent Inamo‘o’s pregnant wife: the massive hula would “frequently be repeated until she was brought to bed” to deliver, about three months hence.¹⁵⁸ It is not clear whether the Kaua‘i ali‘i’s fertility in general had been impacted by introduced infectious diseases (for example, gonorrhea and syphilis), but the scale of the hula, and the repeat performances, suggest that the stakes for royal procreation in 1794 were high.

As for Kamehameha’s “cession” of Hawai‘i Island to Vancouver in 1794, it is important to consider a short speech delivered by Kamehameha on the occasion, and

¹⁵⁷ Vancouver (19 Feb. 1794), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 1172–1173; Menzies journal (24 Jan. 1794), British Library.

¹⁵⁸ Vancouver (11 March 1794), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 1199–1200. See also Menzies journal, 11–12 March 1794, National Library of Australia.

recorded by Vancouver. With his chiefs assembled aboard the *Discovery*, Kamehameha “explained the reasons . . . that had induced him to offer the island to the protection of Great Britain.” First, he “enumerated the several nations” that had been represented at the Islands since Cook,

each of which was too powerful for them to resist; and as these visitors had come more frequently to their shores, and their numbers seemed to increase, [Kamehameha] considered that the inhabitants would be liable to more ill treatment, and still greater impositions than they had yet endured, unless they could be protected against such wrongs by some one of the civilized powers with whose people they had become acquainted.¹⁵⁹

Was Vancouver putting words in Kamehameha’s mouth? Later visitors from other nations—notably, Russian naval officers—believed that he was.¹⁶⁰ Yet it is not difficult to imagine that the Big Island *mō‘ī* saw matters more or less as recorded by Vancouver. European and American firepower and martial technology dwarfed Kamehameha’s defenses in 1794, and he and his fellow chiefs had been in desperate pursuit of European arms for half a decade. Kamehameha had eleven *haole* advisors in his inner circle at this point, two-thirds of them Britons; it is not hard to imagine that their advice to the *mō‘ī* would have been along the lines of the statement recorded by Vancouver.¹⁶¹ Meanwhile, Vancouver’s own men had just constructed for Kamehameha his first warship, which

¹⁵⁹ Vancouver (25 Feb. 1794), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 1180.

¹⁶⁰ E.g., V[asily] M[ikhailovich] Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka, 1817–1819*, trans. Ella Lury Wiswell (Honolulu, 1979), 196–197.

¹⁶¹ For the *haole* advisors to Kamehameha and the Big Island *ali‘i*, including “one Portuguese, one Chinese, and one Genoese,” see Vancouver (3 March 1794), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 1191–1194. Clerk Edward Bell listed “eleven white Men who intended remaining in the Island, and a most curious collection they were, for among them were English, Irish, Portuguese, Genoese[,] Americans and Chinese.” Bell (27 Jan. 1794), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 1194n.

would have been unthinkable without foreign tools and technology. The *Britanee* and additional warships would become Kamehameha's principal obsession in the years to come, enabling his conquest of the archipelago.¹⁶² Finally, it should be noted that Kamehameha's power was neither absolute nor uncontested in 1794, and that the volume of foreign traffic at the Big Island would have seemed, to him as to other Islanders, unrelenting and uncontrollable. Only an alliance with an imperial power could ensure the mō'ī's continued rule over the politically volatile Big Island; and only foreign ships and weapons could allow him to extend his rule to the other island polities. It is therefore difficult to maintain that the presence of Europeans "provided no more than contexts and opportunities for the working out of indigenous motivations and tendencies" in the building of Polynesian kingdoms such as Kamehameha's.¹⁶³ European influence was central and critical. Later, in the 1810s, Kamehameha's power was great enough that he could have sent away all foreigners, if he had so desired, but he did never chose to do so.

Probably the "cession" of Hawai'i Island was, for Kamehameha, more of an alliance whereby Britain would offer military protection in exchange for continued hospitality. Yet there seems to have been some acknowledgment on Kamehameha's part of the *realpolitik* of Island life amid constant incursions by foreign powers and regular

¹⁶² For Kamehameha's "obsession" with warship construction, see, e.g., G[eorg] H[einrich] von Langsdorff, *Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World, During the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806, and 1807* (Carlisle, PA, 1817), 166. For an argument disputing the importance of military technology in Kamehameha's consolidation of power, see Paul D'Arcy, "Warfare and State Formation in Hawaii," *Journal of Pacific History* 38 (2003): 29–52.

¹⁶³ Bronwen Douglas, "Pre-European Societies in the Pacific Islands," in *Culture Contact in the Pacific: Essays on Contact, Encounter and Response*, ed. Max Quanchi and Ron Adams, 15–30 (Cambridge, UK, 1993), 20.

challenges by competing chiefs. Cession or alliance: either made sense, given the circumstances. It should be noted that Hawaiian conceptions of alliances (much less contracts) differed considerably from that of the Britons. Until and unless King George III boarded a ship and sailed across the Pacific to make good Vancouver's claim, all agreements could be considered tentative at best—even Kamehameha's alleged consent to Vancouver's pronouncement that the mō'ī and his fellow Islanders "were no longer *Tanata no Owhyhee*" (people of Hawai'i) "but *Tanata no Britanee*" (people of Britain).¹⁶⁴ Kamehameha's consent (if consent it was) was probably a temporary expedient. In any case, an agreement had been made, with multiple witnesses on each side, including the Big Island high chiefs, though some did voice dissent.¹⁶⁵ One thing is certain: by the time Kamehameha had consolidated his rule across the archipelago, no such agreement with Britain or any foreign power would be abided by King Kamehameha.

As Vancouver's fleet readied to leave the Sandwich Islands for the last time in mid-March 1794, they shared a harborage at Ni'ihau with two American ships. One of these, the *Nancy*, had arrived "only a short time before" Vancouver's departure.¹⁶⁶ The Americans' presence at the Islands, with the Britons sailing off into the distance, was a sign of things to come. In fact, Vancouver's three visits would mark the high point of British influence in Hawai'i. By 1800, the British had virtually disappeared from

¹⁶⁴ Vancouver (25 Feb. 1794), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 1182.

¹⁶⁵ See, e.g., Menzies journal, 25 Feb. 1794, National Library of Australia.

¹⁶⁶ Vancouver (14 March 1794), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 1202.

Hawaiian ports, replaced wholesale (and then some) by the Americans.¹⁶⁷ As early as 1802, a British merchant at Hawai‘i was ready to cede the entire Pacific to the United States, since it appeared there was “scarcely an inlet in these most unknown seas” into which American commerce had “not penetrated.”¹⁶⁸

Sailing west from Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau, Vancouver’s fleet passed the “orphan” island of Nihoa, which Colnett had mapped and dubbed Bird Island for its abundant avifauna in 1788. Vancouver and his men had been aware of Nihoa from the reports of Colnett, Duncan, and other British merchants who had explored it. But Menzies was curious what Hawaiians themselves knew of this uninhabited rocky atoll of seventy square miles, 137 miles west of Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau (about the distance separating Ni‘ihau and O‘ahu). A few days before the fleet arrived at Nihoa, Menzies and his men had “questioned several of the Natives” of Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau about Nihoa, but “all of them declared that they knew nothing of it, & naturally enquired of us the size of it—the distance it was from them & whether it was inhabited?”¹⁶⁹ In fact, legends and songs survived among Islanders about Nihoa, which has a rich archaeological record; yet no apparently contact had been made with the Island for generations.¹⁷⁰ If all the world

¹⁶⁷ Bradley, *The American Frontier in Hawaii*, 17.

¹⁶⁸ Turnbull, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Years 1800...1804*, 14.

¹⁶⁹ Menzies journal, 15 March 1794, National Library of Australia.

¹⁷⁰ The steep slopes of Nihoa had at one time been “intensive[ly] cultivat[ed]”; religious structures also dot the island. See Kenneth P. Emory, *Archaeology of Nihoa and Necker Islands* (Honolulu, 1928), 3, 7–50. Later, in 1822, Ka‘ahumanu sailed with Capt. William Sumner (of England) to Nihoa and claimed it for her Kingdom. See Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 153.

seemed to have been arriving at Hawai‘i in the 1790s, Hawaiians themselves had yet to reach their closest neighboring island in the North Pacific.

Conclusion

From 1786 to 1796 Hawai‘i was beset by chronic, costly warfare; the continued spread of introduced infectious diseases; and a rapidly changing social and political scene. Over the course of a half decade of fighting, the Maui dynasty of Kahekili, the highest-ranking family on the Islands, fell to Kamehameha; some members of the Maui dynasty may have contracted tuberculosis in the process. Growing numbers of commoners became involved in the sex trade, which migrated inland from coastal areas. For the chiefs and other enterprising Hawaiians, the decade was a mad scramble for new knowledge, technology, and diplomatic relations that could protect them against a vast, foreign world beyond their control. Introduced infectious diseases were just one of many foreign commodities the people would have to endure, resist, and learn to control.

CHAPTER THREE:
The Islanders' New World, 1797–1817

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[T]rying to persuade them the world was so made, they could not believe a word of it; they said, putting a finger under the globe, if they were there they should drop off.

– Ebenezer Townsend, *Neptune*, August 1798

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Depopulation was the defining feature and encompassing mood of colonialism in early nineteenth-century Hawai‘i. If the Islands shared with this fate other Indigenous societies in the wake of European contact, the causes of population loss in Hawai‘i were distinct. There was, for example, no foreign military conquest and no removal of the Indigenous population, as occurred in North America. Before 1820 there was no encroachment on land or large-scale settlement by non-Natives (Australia, South Africa); no exploitation of Indigenous labor and natural resources (British India); and no program of Western cultural imperialism. Many of these developments would come to pass but not before profound changes in Hawaiian society and culture had already transpired. Nor was population loss a function of outmigration, despite claims to that effect then and since.¹ Hawaiian voyagers were mostly male and too few in this period to have a significant effect on Island demography. The depopulation of Hawai‘i was the work of a steady stream of visitors from around the globe, the germs and commodities they left in their

¹ E.g., David Malo, “On the Decrease of Population on the Hawaiian Islands,” trans. L[orin] Andrews, *Hawaiian Spectator* 2, no. 2 (1839): 121–131, esp. 127–128; Artemas Bishop, “An Inquiry into the Causes of Decrease in the Population of the Sandwich Islands,” *Hawaiian Spectator* 1, no. 1 (1838): 52–66; Robert C. Schmitt, *Demographic Statistics of Hawai‘i, 1778–1965* (Honolulu, 1968), 38–41, 182.

wake, and rising antagonism between Hawaiian elites in what can be described as a New World born of contact with the West.²

The colonial process in early nineteenth-century Hawai‘i was vicious, lethal, and inexorable; but it had no one at the helm. Dominant models or metaphors of Western colonialism in this period consistently come up short. Conquest, for example, is a flat misnomer.³ The model of domination/resistance is of little use until later in the nineteenth century, and even then it is undermined by the agency of Hawaiian elites of mixed-descent (*hapa haole*). There was no frontier against which a colonial vanguard could be enlisted to push. (The Pacific Ocean “frontier” had been penetrated by Spanish ships as early as 1521.) There was nothing in the way of a borderlands region separating cultural groups.⁴ Nor was Hawai‘i a bicultural society in this period: there were Hawaiians, there were foreigners, and eventually there were families of mixed descent. But no one eluded chiefly authority; and competing empires could hardly be played off each other when

² For the “Indians’ new world,” see James H. Merrell, *The Indians’ New World: Catawbas and Their Neighbors from European Contact through the Era of Removal* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1989). An earlier “Fatal Impact” historiography failed to acknowledge either the agency of Indigenous people or the contingency of colonial processes. (See Introduction.) Aotearoa/New Zealand offers a useful comparison to Hawai‘i in this period; see Vincent O’Malley, *The Meeting Place: Māori and Pākehā Encounters, 1642-1840* (Auckland, 2012). Other Polynesian peoples, e.g., Marquesans, suffered similar rates of depopulation in the absence of traditional forms of colonial incursion. See Greg Denning, *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent Land: Marquesas, 1774-1880* (Honolulu, 1980), esp. 155, 237–239.

³ Whether Hawai‘i was later “conquered” by New England Protestant missionaries and their families is another question. For the “conquest” of Hawai‘i, see, e.g., Haunani-Kay Trask, *From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawai‘i* (Honolulu, 1999), 25.

⁴ The Islands’ small size and pie-shaped land divisions (*ahupua‘a*), spreading outward from the coast to the mountains, resulted in Hawaiian political authority extending far into the interior and upland regions—in marked contrast to authority-defying regions in Latin America, the Philippines, and Southeast Asia. See, e.g., Inga Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatan, 1517-1570* (Cambridge, UK, 1987); Linda A. Newson, *Conquest and Pestilence in the Spanish Philippines* (Honolulu, 2009), 248; and James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven, 2009).

visitors sought little more than fresh water, food, and sex. There was no “mutual need” between Islanders and newcomers in this period, and thus Hawai‘i was not a “middle ground.”⁵ No one’s stay on the Islands was “premised on the elimination” of the Natives.⁶

Island biogeography played a role in limiting these colonial phenomena: the Islands’ size and geographical isolation set them apart ecologically, politically, and culturally from even their closest neighbors.⁷ Was Hawai‘i, then, a commercial colony? A “maritime enclave”?⁸ An inter-imperial entrepôt? From the vantage of Europe and the U.S. perhaps. But the Islands belonged to no one outside the North Pacific; and the land, resources, and people were controlled, as they had been for ages, by a chiefly class that comprised no more than one percent of the population.⁹

⁵ For the preponderance of “middle grounds”—after Richard White’s eponymous work—in historical scholarship on Indigenous encounters with Europeans and Americans, see Nancy Shoemaker’s introduction to *Clearing a Path: Theorizing the Past in Native American Studies*, ed. Shoemaker (New York, 2002), ix; and Richard White, “Preface to the Twentieth Anniversary Edition,” in *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (New York, 2011), xi–xxiv. For the “bicultural society” of the Mississippi and Missouri basins in this period, see Anne F. Hyde, *Empires, Nations, and Families: A New History of the North American West, 1800–1860* (New York, 2012), chap. 1.

⁶ Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (London, 1999), 2.

⁷ See Chapter One. For biogeography, or “bioregionalism”, see Robert H. MacArthur and Edward O. Wilson, *The Theory of Island Biogeography* (Princeton, 1967). For recent applications by historians, see James D. Rice, *Nature and History in the Potomac Country: From Hunter-Gatherers to the Age of Jefferson* (Baltimore, 2009); and Ryan Tucker Jones, “A ‘Havock Made Among Them’: Animals, Empire, and Extinction in the Russian North Pacific, 1741–1810,” *Environmental History* 16 (2011): 585–609, esp. 586–587.

⁸ Jürgen Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, trans. Shelley L. Frisch (Princeton, 1997), 10–12.

⁹ For the proportion of chiefs to commoners in this period, see C[harles] S[amuel] Stewart, *Private Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, and Residence at the Sandwich Islands, in the Years 1822, 1823, 1824, and 1825* (New York, 1828), 136.

The new scholarship on settler colonialism is enamored with Hawai‘i, but the Islands fit the paradigm poorly in this period.¹⁰ Foreigners in Hawai‘i were neither permanent nor sufficient in number to settle anything before 1820. In 1810 there were only sixty foreign residents on O‘ahu, the Islands’ hub of international commerce.¹¹ For most of the period under discussion in this chapter, a few dozen foreigners resided on the Islands, and their authority (if not their influence) was sharply limited. Most, moreover, were temporary residents. Foreigners in Hawai‘i were captives, deserters, beachcombers, and dreamers. The few who became chiefs became *Hawaiian* chiefs—speaking the Hawaiian language, taking Hawaiian wives, enforcing (and themselves adhering) to the kapu, and serving at the pleasure of the *mō‘ī* (king). To the extent that anyone brought a “settler ideology” to the remote North Pacific in this period, it was of no consequence.¹² Hawai‘i was not for the taking.

¹⁰ Foundational works on the predominantly Anglophone field of settler colonialism include Donald Denoon, “Understanding Settler Societies,” *Historical Studies* 18 (1979): 511–527; Denoon, *Settler Capitalism: The Dynamics of Dependent Development in the Southern Hemisphere* (New York, 1983); and Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology*. An assertive case for the paradigm is made by Lorenzo Veracini, “Introduction: The Settler Colonial Situation,” in *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, 1–15 (New York, 2010); and Veracini, “Introducing *Settler Colonial Studies*,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 1 (2011): 1–12. Applications of the paradigm for the Pacific include Stuart Banner, *Possessing the Pacific: Land, Settlers, and Indigenous People from Australia to Alaska* (Cambridge, MA, 2007); Margaret D. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880–1940* (Lincoln, NE, 2009); M. D. Jacobs, “Getting Out of a Rut: Decolonizing Western Women’s History,” *Pacific Historical Review* 79, no. 4 (2010): 585–604; and Gray H. Whaley, *Oregon and the Collapse of Illahee: U.S. Empire and the Transformation of an Indigenous World, 1792–1859* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2010).

¹¹ James Jackson Jarves, *History of the Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands...* (Boston, 1843), 198. As late as 1836 there were only 600 foreign residents on the entire archipelago—one half of one percent of the total population—three-quarters of them located in the bustling port town of Honolulu and the rest confined to coastal areas. This was four decades after Hawai‘i had been linked up to routes of global commerce. See Romanzo Adams, *Interracial Marriage in Hawaii* (New York, 1937), 8; and Robert C. Schmitt, *Demographic Statistics of Hawai‘i, 1778–1965* (Honolulu, 1968), 43.

¹² For “settler ideology,” see, e.g., Walter L. Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism: A History* (New

It was a new world for Hawaiians, to be sure; yet from the Big Island to Ni‘ihau, and throughout the “eight seas” that connect them, Hawai‘i was still “Native ground.”¹³ Imperial agents in Europe and the U.S. could fantasize all they liked of a Pacific entrepôt, plantation system, or other gold mine in the North Pacific. For now they were just traders. The colonial disruptions that cut at the heart of Hawaiian life and society between 1797 and 1817 were thus neither directed by foreigners nor a function of foreign presence in any significant numbers. Most of the colonial disruptions were not visible to the outside world. Microbes and gradually diminishing fertility, meanwhile, were invisible to Islanders themselves.

By 1800 foreign trade incursions had “broke[n] the subsistence nexus” of traditional Hawaiian society, with the chiefs monopolizing the trades and demanding new forms of labor from the *maka‘āinana* (commoners) in order to pay.¹⁴ In the 1810s Hawai‘i became a single Kingdom ruled by the mō‘ī Kamehameha. For the *ali‘i* (chiefs), these decades proved to be a struggle to maintain authority in a world where the *akua* (gods) seemed unable or unwilling to help the people. Since the high chiefs were

York, 2013), vii–viii, chap. 1. In this sense, Hawai‘i was distinct from the North American West, Australia, New Zealand, and other colonial spaces in this period. Latin America presents a different set of problems for settler-colonial theory and is often passed over. Taken as a whole, the late eighteenth-century colonial world suggests that the settler-colonial paradigm may be a distinction without a difference. For an overview of the various types of settler colonialism in the nineteenth-century world, see Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Patrick Camiller (Princeton, 2014), 370–371. For a different perspective on these matters that nevertheless presents case studies challenging the paradigm, see John Mack Faragher, “Settler Colonial Studies and the North American Frontier,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 4 (2014): 181–191.

¹³ Kathleen DuVal, *The Native Ground: Indians and Colonists in the Heart of the Continent* (Philadelphia, 2007).

¹⁴ Caroline Ralston, “Hawaii 1778–1854: Some Aspects of Maka‘ainana [*sic*] Response to Rapid Cultural Change,” *Journal of Pacific History* 19 (1984): 21–40, esp. 25.

considered intermediaries between the gods and the people, chiefly sway among the people was undermined by the disease and poor health that the latter suffered. By 1817 some chiefs and chiefesses had begun to question the new world that Kamehameha had built. Was it healthy? Could it be sustained? Was it *pono* (righteous, proper, effective, balanced)?

This chapter explores the grave challenges posed by introduced diseases to traditional Hawaiian medicine and to the Hawaiian ruling classes more broadly. A single epidemic—the *‘ōku‘u* (“squatting disease”) of 1804—not only posed the single greatest challenge to the Hawaiian medical order but also delayed Kamehameha’s conquest of Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau for a decade. By the 1810s, foreign medical men (and those posing as such) gained considerable political influence over the high chiefs.

The Care of the People

Writing in 1870, the Hawaiian historian, judge, and politician Samuel Manaiakalani Kamakau noted the differences between the traditional Hawaiian medical order and medicine elsewhere in the nineteenth century:

In other countries they rely on their own skill, and on the lessons taught in the medical schools. Human bodies are cut up and studied; flesh, ligaments, parts of the muscles, the position of tendons, the blood vessels that branch out from the source—the heart—and the circulation system. Also the nerves...[and] the brain; also the bones, tissues, cartilage, protuberances, glands, liver, stomach and bowels are examined to find out what remedies to use to heal diseases. Some [physicians] are medical experts, not through the mana [i.e., spiritual power] of God, but through their being guided by visual proof in their search for knowledge.

In the Hawai‘i of old, by contrast, “the god was the foundation” of medical practice. The *akua* (deity, god) determined whether a person would survive and heal or sicken and die. Thus, the importance of prayers offered by the kahuna to whichever akua guided his practice. Prayer, wrote Kamakau, was the “foundation and the guide to knowledge and skill whereby a man learned to heal and to recognize the mysterious things inside” the sick person. Only third in importance, according to Kamakau, was medical education “in the kinds of diseases.” Fourth was schooling “in the kinds of remedies; fifth, in the art of killing; and sixth, in the art of saving.”¹⁵

The organization and practice of the Hawaiian medical profession befitted the advanced, hierarchical Polynesian society it served. Eight distinct groups traditionally practiced on the Islands: (1) fertility specialists and obstetricians, (2) specialists in childhood ailments, (3) surgeons who lanced infections and tumors, and also “held back” the fontanel of infants,¹⁶ (4) diagnosticians who worked “by touch,” that is, by applying

¹⁵ Samuel Manaiakalani Kamakau, *Ka Po‘e Kahiko: The People of Old*, trans. Mary Kawena Pukui, ed. Dorothy B. Barrère (Honolulu, 1964), 107. For the original essay, see S[amuel] M. Kamakau, “*Ka Moolelo Hawaii: No Na Kahuna Lapaau*,” *Ke Au Okoa* (newspaper), 25 Aug. 1870. Kamakau and court historian John Papa ‘Ī‘Ī are widely considered the best nineteenth-century authorities on traditional Hawaiian medicine. See Malcolm Nāea Chun, trans., *Hawaiian Medicine Book: He Buke Laau Lapaau* (1837?; Honolulu, 1986), xiii–xvi. In the twentieth century, the premier authority was Mary Kawena Pukui. In the discussion that follows, I rely upon the work of all three of these scholars, among others. The scholarship on traditional Hawaiian medical practice is robust; the best general works are June Gutmanis, *Kahuna La‘au Lapa‘au: Hawaiian Herbal Medicine* (Waipahu, Hawai‘i, 1976); Isabella Aiona Abbott, *Lā‘au Hawai‘i: Traditional Hawaiian Uses of Plants* (Honolulu, 1992); and O[swald] A. Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization: Germs and Genocide in Hawai‘i* (Honolulu, 1993), chaps. 3–4.

¹⁶ Kamakau’s term for this practice is “ho[‘i]opa[‘i]ja manawa,” literally, “to hold back the fontanel.” See Kamakau, “*Ka Moolelo Hawaii: No Na Kahuna Lapaau*.” For more on this practice, see below. Editor Dorothy Barrère misinterpreted this procedure as keeping the fontanel “closed.” See Kamakau, *Ka Po‘e Kahiko*, 98. The Hawaiian word *pa‘a*—in verb form, *ho‘opa‘a*—has a wide range of meanings, one of which, in fact, is “to close”; but in the present case Kamakau meant the opposite. See M. K. Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary* (Honolulu, 1986), s.v. “*pa‘a*.”

their hands to the body, (5) diagnosticians who worked by sight alone, that is, by “critical observation” and “insight”, (6) sorcerers who employed black magic to cause illness or death, (7) specialists who used *counteracting* sorcery, like an exorcist, to thwart the sorcerers, and (8) specialists who “treated the spirits of illness,” about whom little is known.¹⁷ Scholars have added other groups to Kamakau’s major eight, including bonesetters and massage therapists.¹⁸ There was apparently no specialty dedicated to the treatment of infectious diseases before the nineteenth century.

All branches of the Hawaiian medical profession combined spiritual and physical notions and practices, in common with Polynesian medical practice elsewhere.¹⁹ It might be more accurate to say that *kāhuna* (priests, experts) admitted no distinction between spiritual and physical medicine. Not only sorcerers and exorcists (Groups 7–9), but all eight branches of the medical profession implored the gods and ancestors to direct their practice and to intervene on their behalf. One way of illustrating the connection of the medical profession to the divine is to recognize that both physicians and priests in Hawai‘i were known as *kāhuna*, and that all *kāhuna*, whether temple priests or surgeons or obstetricians, were specialists in divine power, serving as intermediaries between the

¹⁷ Kamakau, *Ka Po‘e Kahiko*, 98. For the spiritual and supernatural aspects of medicine and healing, see also Chun, *Hawaiian Medicine Book*, 23–26.

¹⁸ Gutmanis, *Kahuna La‘au Lapa‘au*, 14.

¹⁹ Dening, *Islands and Beaches*, 62–63; I[an] C. Campbell, *Island Kingdom: Tonga Ancient and Modern* (Christchurch, NZ, 1992), 43–44; Anne Salmond, *Between Worlds: Early Exchanges Between Maori and Europeans, 1773–1815* (Honolulu, 1997), 402, 503–505; A. Salmond, *Aphrodite’s Island: The European Discovery of Tahiti* (Berkeley, CA, 2009), 253; and Jennifer Newell, *Trading Nature: Tahitians, Europeans, and Ecological Exchange* (Honolulu, 2010).

people and the gods.²⁰ Thus, the whole panoply of supernatural understandings and aspects of Hawaiian religion applied in the realm of medicine.

As was true of folk medicine elsewhere, the kahuna lapa‘au relied upon proximity, suggestion, and metaphor. An ominous dream, unexpected weather, or even stubbing one’s toe could be interpreted as an omen. If the patient’s ailment was internal, the kahuna might choose a red fish for an offering because of its shared color with human blood and organs. Foods with names that had negative connotations would be removed from the patient’s diet; for example, *he‘e* (octopus), since *he‘e* means “to flee,” and the kahuna did not want the illness to flee from the medicine or treatment.²¹

Food was a fundamental part of all medical practice, since the body’s digestive system was understood to be the seat of most illnesses.²² The intestines were also understood to be the seat of emotions, intellect, and character; thus, extensive attention was paid by the kāhuna to the body’s digestive system. “Opening” foods were administered at the commencement of treatment, and “closing” foods at completion.

Training for prospective kāhuna began as early as five years of age and took place primarily in the *heiau ho‘ōla*, or healing temple. Traditionally, the Native medical profession (*‘oihana lapa‘au*) was entirely male with the exception of midwives and nurses, about whose training and selection little is known. While female kahuna have been common since the early twentieth century, if not earlier, the profession was off-

²⁰ Gutmanis, *Kahuna La‘au Lapa‘au*, 14. It was for this reason that Polynesians often viewed European ship’s surgeons as priests. See, e.g., Salmond, *Aphrodite’s Island*, 207.

²¹ Gutmanis, *Kahuna La‘au Lapa‘au*, 23–24.

²² Gutmanis, *Kahuna La‘au Lapa‘au*, 14.

limits to them under the kapu system.²³ The exclusively male nature of the medical profession may raise apprehensions about some scholars' claims regarding women's roles in traditional Hawaiian society.²⁴ Malo suggested that women practiced their own medicine, which makes sense given the gender divide in sacred matters. For instance, when a person took ill, local women "worshipped the female god of medicine" while the kāhuna performed their own tasks to make the person well.²⁵

When a chief took sick, the first duty of the kahuna lapa'au was to make an offering to the god. Nineteenth-century Hawaiian scholar and historian Davida Malo identified this god of medicine as "Mai-ola," (probably *Ma'i ola*). But the literal translation of *ma'i ola* ("to cure sickness") has led scholars to question whether this was an actual god or an incantation to the gods. Further complicating matters is the existence in the oral tradition of a god named Maui Ola ("breath of life").²⁶ Given the size of the Hawaiian pantheon and the great diversity of the Native medical practice across the Islands, it is no wonder that uncertainty and confusion surrounds many of these traditions. Yet it is clear that the various classes of medical practitioner invoked distinct

²³ Gutmanis, *Kahuna La'au Lapa'au*, 20.

²⁴ E.g., in an otherwise excellent study, Jocelyn Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence: Rank, Gender, and Colonialism in the Hawaiian Islands* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1990), 4–5, 13–19, 55–58.

²⁵ David Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities (Moolelo Hawaii)*, trans. Nathaniel B. Emerson (Honolulu, 1951), 108.

²⁶ Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 107, 109–110n1. It is not clear why Chun left out the reference to Maui-ola as the god of medicine in his translation of Malo. See Davida Malo, *Ka Moolelo Hawaii: Hawaiian Traditions*, trans. Malcolm Nāea Chun (Honolulu, 1996), 58, 207. Medical lore seems to have grown up around Malo's "Ma'i Ola." Scholar June Gutmanis recorded a tradition about this "god of healing who was said to occupy certain trees the wood of which counteracted the noxious effects of poison from the *kalai-pahoa* wood." Gutmanis, *Kahuna La'au Lapa'au*, 93–94. See also Julius Scammon Rodman, *The Kahuna Sorcerers of Hawaii, Past and Present* (Hicksville, NY, 1979), 179.

gods. There was likewise considerable regional variation to kahuna worship and practice in this period, as there was across other Polynesia island groups.²⁷ Finally, the social rank of the kāhuna lapa‘au is debated, and it remains unclear whether they were drawn primarily from the ali‘i or maka‘āinana class.²⁸

If the Hawaiian medical practice of the late eighteenth century was not yet organized in the eight classes later identified by Kamakau, the arrangement approximated it. Kamakau was not old enough to recall medical practice in this era, but he was working with written and oral sources whose authors did. Both Davida Malo (born 1793) and court historian John Papa ‘Ī‘ī (born 1800) also left notes about the medical profession of the early nineteenth century. It is ironic but probably not unusual that the worst epidemic in living memory to strike Hawaiian society—discussed below—gave birth to a rich body of medical lore.

A good deal is known about Groups 1–4 and 6–7. Much less is known about the diagnosticians who worked by critical insight and the priest-physicians who “treated the spirits of illness.” Of the two classes of obstetricians (Group 1), there were those responsible for fertility (*kāhuna ho‘ohapai keiki*), whether by potions, diet, or prayer; and those charged with delivering babies (*kāhuna ho‘ohana keiki*). Understandably, the

²⁷ For Hawai‘i, see William Ellis, *Polynesian Researches, During a Residence of Nearly Eight Years in the Society and Sandwich Islands*, 4 vols., 2nd enlarged ed. (London, 1831), 4:89–92; Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 81–87; Malo, *Ka Moolelo Hawaii*, 192–195. For Tonga, see I. C. Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 29.

²⁸ Nils P. Larsen, “Medical Art in Ancient Hawaii,” *Fifty-Third Annual Report of the Hawaiian Historical Society for the Year 1944* (Honolulu, 1946), 27; Abbott, *Lā‘au Hawai‘i*, 98; Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 62.

fertility and childbirth specialists and pediatricians (Groups 1–3) played a critical role in Hawaiian society as people struggled to bear viable and healthy offspring.²⁹

The Hawaiian surgeon—*kahuna* ‘ō‘ō (Group 3)—used sharpened bamboo or bone to make incisions. As a verb, ‘ō‘ō means to pierce, poke, dig, or lance. In addition to lancing boils and removing tumors and ulcers, the surgeon also performed circumcision on prepubescent boys, and abortions for women. There has been no research on whether Hawaiian circumcision (which was actually a modified form of subincision, cutting only the foreskin) affected venereal disease transmission. The *kahuna* ‘ō‘ō was apparently also responsible for preventing premature closure of the anterior fontanel on infants. It is not clear whether surgeons had much success in this, yet ethnographer and historian Mary Kawena Pukui recorded that “crushed *popolo* leaves were packed on the spot to check” the closure of the fontanel.³⁰ Earlier, in the 1860s, Kamakau had gathered that a prematurely closed fontanel led to fever, since body heat could not escape a skull that had become “solid like a coconut shell.” Kamakau also recorded a wholly different prescription involving the fontanel, which involved a poultice applied to the spot and “dampened frequently with milk or with ‘*olena* or *ti* sap” to prevent the child from frequent hiccupping.³¹

²⁹ Malo, e.g., devotes a whole chapter to the fertility specialists. See Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 135–140; Malo, *Ka Moolelo Hawaii*, 224–227.

³⁰ E[dward] S[mith] Craighill Handy and Mary Kawena Pukui, *The Polynesian Family System in Ka-‘u, Hawai‘i* (Wellington, NZ, 1958), 86–87. See also M. K. Pukui, E. W. Hartwig, and Catherine A. Lee, *Nānā I Ke Kumu (Look to the Source)*, 2 vols. (Honolulu, 1972), 2:30–31. Pukui’s father had been a medical *kahuna* in Ka‘ū, on the Big Island.

³¹ Kamakau, *Ka Po‘e Kahiko*, 106. The *ti* plant (*kī*, in Hawaiian) is *Cordyline fruticosa*.

These various medical practices and the cultural understandings about infant health and development deserve further comment. Scholars have offered multiple explanations for Hawaiians' attention to the anterior fontanel, or *manawa*. Anthropologist E. S. Craighill Handy in the 1950s argued that the people understood the risks involved in premature ossification of the skull and so treated against it prophylactically by packing pōpolo leaves into the crevice.³² Scholar of traditional Hawaiian medicine June Gutmanis believed something like the opposite to have been the case: herbal applications on the fontanel *aided* in its closure.³³ There is no indication that the practice had anything to do with aesthetics or beauty, such as the skull shaping procedures in other cultures. It is possible that Hawaiian understandings of the practice varied across the Islands or over time. Yet the anterior fontanel also had spiritual significance in Hawaiian culture, as it did throughout Asia and the Pacific. The highest of the body's three *piko* (organs of power and procreation)—with the navel and the genitals occupying the other two positions—the *manawa* was associated with “feelings, affections, sympathy,” and could also “refer to the spirit of a human being.”³⁴ In Hinduism, and in some sects of Chinese Buddhism, notions of the soul as entering or escaping through the anterior fontanel similarly obtained.³⁵ In the Hawaiian case, some notion of access or connection to the

³² Handy and Pukui, *The Polynesian Family System in Ka-‘u, Hawai‘i*, 86.

³³ Gutmanis, *Kahuna La‘au Lapa‘au*, 40. Gutmanis also gathered from one of her Native Hawaiians informants that mashed sweet potato was applied to the fontanel to provide nutrition to the infant before it took the nipple. Mary Kawena Pukui records this same tradition in “Hawaiian Beliefs and Customs During Birth, Infancy, and Childhood,” *Occasional Papers of Bernice P. Bishop Museum* 16, no. 17 (1942), 370; and Pukui, et al., *Nānā I Ke Kumu*, 2:30–31.

³⁴ Handy and Pukui, *The Polynesian Family System in Ka-‘u, Hawai‘i*, 86.

³⁵ See Veeraswamy Krishnaraj, *The Bhagavad-Gita: Translation and Commentary* (Lincoln, NE, 2002),

divine through the manawa may have encouraged parents or kāhuna to keep it open for as long as possible. Given the widespread religious notions across Southeast Asia and the Pacific relating to the anterior fontanel, it seems unlikely that Hawaiians' physical reasons for keeping the fontanel from closing (premature ossification) evolved into spiritual reasons (association of the fontanel with the human spirit), as Handy suggested.³⁶ Probably it was the other way round. Yet for some nineteenth-century Hawaiians, the practice may have become simply a method for preventing fever and hiccups, as Kamakau recorded, or providing nutrition to the infant, as Gutmanis was told.

The hands-on diagnosticians, or *kāhuna hāhā* (Group 4), were known for their visual charts in the shape of the human body to illustrate a patient's illness. Pebbles were arranged in the shape on the ground or on a stone table. The kahuna would kneel over the "body" and move the pebbles in the region of the malady to demonstrate his diagnosis and intended practice. The *papa 'ili 'ili* (table of pebbles) also served as a teaching tool for apprentice kāhuna. According to Kamakau, the kāhuna hāhā were of the order of Lono, said to be the first kahuna hāhā and who then became their 'aumakua (ancestral deity).³⁷ The principal role of this group was to diagnose and treat internal ailments. Kamakau considered the kāhuna hāhā— along with those who relied on critical

191; and D. H. Porter, "Secret Sects in Shantung," *The Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal* 17, no. 2 (1886): 64–73, esp. 69.

³⁶ Kamakau, *Ka Po'e Kahiko*, 106. See also Handy and Pukui, *The Polynesian Family System in Ka-'u, Hawai'i*, 87.

³⁷ Kamakau, *Ka Po'e Kahiko*, 106. See also Larsen, "Medical Art in Ancient Hawaii," 34.

observation and insight (Group 5)—to be the most skilled and knowledgeable of the kahuna lapa‘au.³⁸

Hawaiians traditionally recognized two principal types of disease: that which came from within the body and that from without, with the latter originating in non-physical causes—that is, by will of the gods or ancestors, or by black magic.³⁹ In this, they were little different from early modern peoples worldwide.⁴⁰ Yet it is critical to understand the implications of such a medical philosophy. Diseases that originated outside the body—as the *ma‘i malihini* (introduced infectious diseases) did—were attributable to supernatural causes. The default explanation for various new diseases, then, would presumably be spiritual in nature. Given the animism which pervaded Hawaiian culture, a supernatural explanation for disease etiology is hardly surprising. Yet historian of medicine Richard Kekuni Blaisdell objected to foreigners’ classification of the *kāhuna ‘anā‘anā* (Group 6) as “sorcerers” who employed “black magic.” Blaisdell—then a Professor of Medicine at the University of Hawai‘i–Mānoa—instead described the methods of the *kāhuna ‘anā‘anā* as “psychospiritual”: ‘anā‘anā was a way of “influencing, or explaining, events that might be unfavorable to some while favorable to others.”⁴¹

³⁸ Kamakau, *Ka Po‘e Kahiko*, 112.

³⁹ Abbott, *Lā‘au Hawai‘i*, 98. See also Kamakau, *Ka Po‘e Kahiko*, 95–115.

⁴⁰ See, e.g., Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World*, 187.

⁴¹ [Richard] Kekuni [Akana] Blaisdell, “Historical and Philosophical Aspects of Lapa‘au: Traditional Kanaka Maoli Healing Practices,” *In Motion Magazine*, 28 Apr. 1996 (from a lecture delivered 24 Aug. 1991).

The kāhuna ‘anā‘anā were not psychologists or psychics or fortune-tellers; nor would ‘Ī‘ī, Malo, and Kamakau recognize Blaisdell’s defanged psychospiritualists as kāhuna ‘anā‘anā. Nineteenth-century sources are all clear on this point: the kāhuna ‘anā‘anā used their powers for ill. How else to explain the pervasive fear of “being prayed to death” by such a kahuna? How else to explain the exorcists (Group 7) who used their powers to protect *against*, or reverse the spell of, the sorcerers? Speculation about ‘anā‘anā surrounded the deaths of virtually *all* ranking chiefs who died before their time, and even some who died in ripe old age such as Kamehameha.⁴² Such sorcerers practiced their dark arts elsewhere in Polynesia as well.

Every culture has its voodoo; to whitewash it in the Hawaiian context is unfortunate given that Hawaiian sorcery helps elucidate both Hawaiian religion *and* medicine. A comparison with West African juju or Haitian Vodou may be useful: in both of these African cultures, as in Hawaiian culture, one class of priests was called to cast a spell on an enemy, another was employed to thwart the spell. Aside from medicine, Hawai‘i also had *kuni* priests who could do harm to an individual—like a Vodou priest—by burning some object that came from them. Hair was commonly used in this manner, and for that reason was guarded closely by its owner.⁴³

An important question for the present study is whether the sorcerer kāhuna were blamed for the ma‘i malihini, or whether these new diseases were understood as a strictly

⁴² Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, 4:292–295; Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 100–107; Malo, *Ka Moolelo Hawaii*, 206–207.

⁴³ See Theodore Kelsey, “Hawaiian Kuehu Treatment,” in Gutmanis, *Kahuna La‘au Lapa‘au* (Appendix 2), 89–92. For priestly sorcery elsewhere in Polynesia, see Denning, *Islands and Beaches*, 62, 249–250.

foreign invasion. The difficulty arises in the fact that Western medicine began to merge with and, in some places, supplant Native medicine *during* the ma‘i malihini, so it is difficult to separate cause and effect. Of course Hawai‘i also had no written language until the 1820s. There is no evidence, in any case, of a Hawaiian “witch craze” in the midst of a nineteenth-century epidemic, and none of a specific class of kāhuna being blamed for a disease outbreak, as seems to have occurred among Northwest Coast Indians who were suffering from many of the same epidemics as Hawaiians in this era.⁴⁴ If the kahuna ‘anā‘anā was a source of speculation whenever a high chief died, this suspicion apparently did not carry over to disease outbreaks generally.

It is surprising, and perhaps revealing, that Hawaiian sources make scant mention of the medical profession’s dealings with epidemics after 1778. Malo, Kamakau, and ‘Ī‘Ī all had a good deal to say about introduced infectious disease and the toll it took on the Hawaiian population, but rarely are the kāhuna mentioned in connection with the ma‘i malihini. This fact supports the popularly held notion that the ma‘i malihini, being of foreign origin, required treatment by foreigners.⁴⁵ Either that, or these diseases were untreatable for spiritual reasons: kāhuna and ordinary Hawaiians alike tended to view pestilence (*ahulau*) principally as a curse or punishment of the gods or ancestral spirits.

The ma‘i malihini also posed a threat to the Native medical order itself. By 1823 English missionary William Ellis believed that Native Hawaiians in Honolulu who were

⁴⁴ Robert Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence: Introduced Infectious Diseases and Population Decline among Northwest Coast Indians, 1774–1874* (Seattle and Vancouver, 1999), 50, 81, 166, 169.

⁴⁵ Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 97, 104–106, 114; Gutmanis, *Kahuna La‘au Lapa‘au*, 54, 78, 86–87.

“accustomed to associate with foreigners” had a “decided preference to foreign medicines.”⁴⁶ This is not to say that people had renounced the kāhuna themselves, or even that the kāhuna resisted the introduction of foreign medicines, though both circumstances would eventually arise. While the services of European and American physicians were typically not unwelcome when available, introduced medical practices and understandings tended to merge with indigenous Hawaiian medicine, as was the case elsewhere in the non-Western world in the nineteenth century.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, by the late nineteenth century, Western medicine was dominant in Hawai‘i, while the kahuna orders were mostly relegated to local services, especially in the backcountry. Yet nowhere on the Islands was Hawaiian medicine eliminated or wholly discredited by the new methods introduced after 1800.

Little is known about the regional variations of kahuna lapa‘au practice in this period. Kahuna medicine was everywhere proprietary, as it remains today. Thus, a good deal of regional and even local variation would be expected. There are also accounts of competing kāhuna employing different remedies and therapeutics. It is difficult to know how well oral traditions about Hawaiian medical practice represent the period before 1804. Certainly the memory of medical practices survived to be recorded into the mid-nineteenth century, so that we can say that lapa‘au in its general contours had been little affected by foreign medicine, including the folk medicine practiced by Westerners who were not physicians. Finally, Malo noted that medical practices on behalf of the ali‘i were

⁴⁶ Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, 4:335.

⁴⁷ Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World*, 184.

different from those for maka‘āinana. These differences included incantations. “Every time the alii took his medicine,” according to Malo, “the *kahuna* offered prayer.” In his history, Malo recorded this prayer for the ali‘i, but it is almost entirely obscure—the two published translations of it differ in almost every word.⁴⁸



Given all this, it is surprising to read of the “inexperience” of the Hawaiian medical order upon the arrival of Europeans and Americans. In the 1990s University of Hawai‘i microbiologist and historian of medicine O. A. Bushnell characterized the Hawaiian medical order as ignorant, hapless, fearful, and unable or unwilling to innovate. The problem, Bushnell determined, was Hawaiian culture itself. Before the arrival of Christian missionaries, the Hawaiian people

lacked almost every one of those cultural and psychological preparations for coping with infectious diseases which identify a society that is accustomed to them. They lacked awareness of the signs and symptoms of epidemic diseases, the good sense to take even the most elementary care of their suffering persons, the charity to help relatives and neighbors when they fell ill, or, conversely the sense to avoid sources of infection when these appeared in a community. Like Tahitians and other Polynesians, Hawaiians too could be unreasoning, feckless, helpless, often hysterical, sometimes brutal. Their behavior—until Christian missionaries taught them the virtue of charity and their own despair plunged them into apathy—revealed a people to whom epidemic diseases were new and mystifying—and terrifying.⁴⁹

Epidemic disease was new and, at least initially, mystifying to the Hawaiian people. But there is no evidence that the people gave up in despair, failed to seek treatment or

⁴⁸ See Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 109; Malo, *Ka Moolelo Hawaii*, 209.

⁴⁹ Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 37.

innovate with new herbal remedies, much less that they needed American Christians to “teach” them charity.⁵⁰ As for lacking the “good sense” to avoid contagion, it is true that Hawaiians placed (and continue to place) a high value on *kokua*, or helping the sick and infirm. This would have important consequences for the spread of leprosy later in the century. But the practice of *kokua* was either a case of cultural values trumping an individual’s personal health or an incomplete understanding of the contagion of new diseases rather than a lack of “good sense” by Hawaiians generally. The myth of Hawaiian “apathy” (which Bushnell pulls directly from the nineteenth-century sources), and his employment of the gendered slur “hysteria,” hardly deserve comment. But if Bushnell was incorrect in his characterization of the Hawaiian response to the *ma‘i malihini*, what exactly was the response?

American trader William Shaler in 1804 noted that the Native physicians had acquired “some knowledge of botany” including the “use and application of vomits and clysters” [enemas], both of which “sometimes exhibited with success.” Also in use was “topical bleeding,” which apparently functioned the same as in Europe and North America. Nevertheless, Shaler, like other observers, noted that a good deal of “priestcraft and mummery enter into their practice.”⁵¹ Beyond that, *kāhuna lapa‘au* practice at the end

⁵⁰ Consider American trader William Shaler in 1805: “In their dispositions they are brave, generous, humane, . . . affectionate” and “possessed of great sensibility.” Shaler was, however, less approving of the chiefly class, exclusive of Kamehameha and his coterie. See William Shaler “Journal of a Voyage between China and the North-western Coast of America, Made in 1804,” *American Register* 3 (1808): 137–175, esp. 167, 169.

⁵¹ Shaler, “Journal of a Voyage between China and the North-western Coast of America,” 168.

of the eighteenth century is mostly a mystery. Much more is known about how the chiefs responded to the ma‘i malihini.

Hunger and the Itch

In January 1796, a former captain from the Vancouver expedition, William Robert Broughton, arrived at Kealahou Bay on HMS *Providence*. The American ship *Lady Washington* was already in port. Broughton stayed just three weeks at the Islands (between trading visits to the Northwest Coast and Japan) but had occasion to meet with Kamehameha at Waikīkī, on the mō‘ī’s newly conquered O‘ahu. Kamehameha was wearing “European clothes” under a “beautiful” bird-feather cloak (*‘ahu ‘ula*) that was almost large enough to cover his nearly seven-foot frame. As he had with Vancouver and other ship captains, Kamehameha offered Broughton a cloak, along with “twenty hogs, and some cocoa-nuts.”⁵² Yet little more was to be had at Waikīkī in 1796: no fresh water, no taro, no vegetables. The “situation of the natives” was “miserable, as they were nearly starving: and, as an additional grievance, universally infected with the itch.”⁵³

The “near starvation” of the Waikīkī people, and the scant supply of produce, were a result of Kamehameha’s recent conquest of the island. As for “the itch,” reports of scabies had previously come from Maui only. It is unlikely that Broughton confused

⁵² William Robert Broughton (6 Feb. 1796), *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean...in the Years 1795, 1796, 1797, 1798* (London, 1804), 38–39. See also Broughton, log book of the *Chatham* Tender, British Museum Add. Ms. 17542–17552, microfilm at University of Washington Library, Seattle.

⁵³ Broughton (14 Feb. 1796), *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean*, 40.

scabies with venereal disease, as he later distinguished these conditions at the Big Island.

Scabies, then, may have been new at O‘ahu.

Kamehameha’s attentions meanwhile were “entirely engrossed” in the new warship English carpenters were building him. Some “40 tons burthen,” the warship (Kamehameha’s second) was soon to be engaged in an attempted conquest of Kaua‘i, to complete his domination of the archipelago. Broughton claimed to have “dissuaded” the mō‘ī from this course of action, arguing that only “famine and disease” would result from further conquests of the Islands; but with “so large a supply of muskets and ammunition, together with some 3 and 4 pounders [cannons] for his boats,” Kamehameha would not be stopped. Broughton also noted that the mō‘ī enjoyed the service of some sixteen Europeans.⁵⁴ One last bit of intelligence Broughton gathered from Kamehameha was that Vancouver had in fact executed the wrong men on O‘ahu in 1794. They were not murderers, according to Kamehameha, but simply “unfortunate beings whom the [local] chief selected to satisfy Captain Vancouver.”⁵⁵ No doubt most of O‘ahu had become aware of this travesty of justice by 1796.

With O‘ahu lacking the necessary provisions, Broughton decided to move on. After gathering water at Ni‘ihau, Broughton headed for Nootka Sound to purchase pelts.

⁵⁴ Broughton (14 Feb. 1796), *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean*, 41–42. By December 1802 Kamehameha had “upwards of twenty vessels, of different sizes, from twenty-five to fifty tons; some of them were even copper-bottomed.” John Turnbull, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Years 1800...1804* (London, 1805), 60.

⁵⁵ Broughton (14 Feb. 1796), *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean*, 42. American trader Isaac Iselin later learned from John Young that the British trader William Brown had discovered one of the accused murderers aboard his ship in 1794, and had him hanged from the yard-arm. See Isaac Iselin, *Journal of a Trading Voyage Around the World, 1805–1808* (Cortland, NY, n.d.), 69.

Sailing away from Hawai‘i, Broughton noted—in what was now a familiar refrain—that his “crew was generally healthy, excepting those who were infected with the venereal disease, contracted at the Sandwich Islands.” Like Colnett’s crew in 1788, Broughton added that the “symptoms of this disorder were not very violent.”⁵⁶

At the conclusion of the Northwest Coast trading season, Broughton returned to Kealahukua Bay en route to Japan. Like before, Broughton’s men pitched their camp next to Hiki‘au *heiau* (temple), in sight of the place Cook had fallen. They remained in the vicinity from July 6 to 22 to recuperate from the long voyage. Unfortunately, Broughton failed to record much about the state of Island life. The crew was well-received on the Big Island, as they had been in February. Politically, the Island continued to be unstable, and Kamehameha’s long absence had given rise to challengers and would-be “usurper[s].” Meanwhile, Broughton judged Big Islanders to be “generally affected with the itch” but only “triflingly so with venereal complaints.”⁵⁷ Scabies had thus been reported at all three of the large islands by the summer of 1796.

Sailing on to O‘ahu, Broughton found conditions at Waikīkī worse than in February, with “all the hogs” having been destroyed by Kamehameha’s men when they left to conquer Kaua‘i, and most of the crops having “perished through neglect of cultivation.” It is doubtful that these conditions extended very far inland, yet like other visitors, Broughton generalized from the conditions he saw on shore: the “scarcity” of

⁵⁶ Broughton (22 Feb. 1796), *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean*, 48. See James Colnett journal (18 March 1788), in *A Voyage to the North West Side of America: The Journals of James Colnett, 1786–89*, ed. Robert M. Galois (Vancouver, 2004), 200.

⁵⁷ Broughton (22 July 1796), *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean*, 70.

food, he noted, “had caused the destruction of many of the unfortunate natives, who, through absolute want, had been induced to steal whatever came their way. For these thefts they were murdered by the chiefs in the most barbarous manner, and many were burnt alive. It was computed that [Kamehameha] had lost six thousand of his people” by his conquest of O‘ahu “and subsequent calamities.”⁵⁸ Broughton did not indicate who had “computed” this figure, or with what data.⁵⁹ Unfortunately, Broughton, like Vancouver, was not prepared to grasp any of these losses as the result of the ma‘i malihini; all loss of life at O‘ahu was chalked up to war and its aftermath.

Before setting off for Japan, Broughton made two final stops—at Kaua‘i for water, and at Ni‘ihau for sweet potatoes—but failed to note anything of interest regarding the Islanders. While trading at Yam Bay on the western shore of Ni‘ihau, two of Broughton’s sailors were killed by Islanders, apparently for their muskets. Broughton retaliated by burning a village and sixteen canoes: his explicit directions to the men were to “burn every house, canoe and plantation, within a mile [of] the beach.” In this, Broughton followed the lead of Cook and other wronged commanders at Hawai‘i before him. Outraged by the destruction, Islanders assembled with spears, but Broughton wanted nothing more to do with them and immediately weighed anchor. Sailing west, Broughton

⁵⁸ Broughton (25 July 1796), *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean*, 71.

⁵⁹ Hawai‘i State Statistician Robert C. Schmitt noted that estimates for total mortality in the Battle of Nu‘uanu alone have ranged from 300 to 10,000. See Schmitt, “Catastrophic Mortality in Hawaii,” *Hawaiian Journal of History* 3 (1969): 66–86, esp. 67.

wondered about the Islanders' motivations for killing his men, noting that the violence seemed entirely "unprovoked."⁶⁰

The Squatting Disease

Ships from five or more nations plying the Pacific maritime trade called at the Islands between 1797 and 1803. Illuminating observations of the Hawaiian people in this period, however, are relatively few.⁶¹ This may be a function of the novelty of Hawai'i having worn off, or of merchants seeing no need to set down what had already been recorded by a multitude of earlier visitors. Hawaiian life and society had been abundantly documented by 1796 relative to other Pacific island groups. Fortunately, Hawaiian oral traditions about this period are rich, partly due to Kamehameha's ongoing effort to

⁶⁰ Broughton (30 July 1796), *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean*, 75–77.

⁶¹ The principal accounts are by Americans: "Extract from the Diary of Ebenezer Townsend, Jr." [1798], *Hawaiian Historical Reprints*, no. 4 (1924): 1–33; Amasa Delano, *A Narrative of Voyages and Travels, in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres...* (Boston, 1817); and Turnbull, *A Voyage Round the World, in the Years 1800...1804*. Turnbull visited the Islands from mid-December 1802 to mid-January 1803 aboard the *Margaret*. Delano first visited the Islands in December 1801, at which point he enlisted one of Kamehameha's sons at O'ahu to sail with him to Canton. The young man, who took the name Alexander (Captain) Stewart, was left at Canton under the watch of a British merchant. When Delano returned to O'ahu in 1806 the people were greatly disappointed that "Captain Stewart" was no longer with him since some of them had anticipated him as "their next king." Like some British merchants before him (for example, James Colnett's chief mate James Johnstone in 1788), Delano inoculated all five of his Hawaiian passengers for smallpox upon arriving at Canton; the remedy was apparently a success. See Delano, *A Narrative of Voyages and Travels, in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres...*, 391–393, 395. At home Islanders continued to struggle with venereal diseases in this period. In 1798 Connecticut fur trader John Hurlbut noted that his men had contracted the "Sandwich Island girl disease" during their week-long stay at the Big Island. See John Hurlbut, log of the *Neptune*, Wethersfield Historical Society, Connecticut (qtd. in Alberta Eisman, "On the Neptune, Three Years Under Sail," *The New York Times*, 2 March 1997).

conquer the Islands. At the same time, new visitors began to visit Hawai‘i from the South Pacific and eastern Europe, observing the Islands and her people with fresh eyes.

Two very different groups began to observe Hawaiians in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Society Islanders (Tahitians) arrived on ships plying the Pacific trades, initiating a series of cultural interactions and exchanges recorded in part by other outsiders and also reflected in later Hawaiian oral traditions. (These exchanges are discussed at some length in Chapter Four.) A second group, more diverse than the Tahitians, consisted of Russians, Germans, Ukrainians, and Baltic Germans sent by the young Tsar Alexander I of Russia. The Tsar’s officers were highly educated scientists and naturalists, physicians, and ethnographers for whom Cook and Vancouver set the standard. These men left sophisticated observations of Hawaiian life and health in 1804, and provided the only contemporary (textual) documentation of the deadliest epidemic since the introduction of syphilis. This record has largely been ignored by historians discussing the Islands in this period.

The first Russian expedition to Hawai‘i featured a cosmopolitan and motley crew from across north-central and eastern Europe. The expedition’s physician and naturalist, for instance, was a German who studied medicine at Gottingen, then worked for six years in Lisbon with the British and Portuguese, before traveling the continent and finally signing on with the Tsar’s expedition. Both the commander Adam Johann von Krusenstern (a Baltic German from Estonia) and his captain Yuri Lisiansky (a Ukrainian of part-Cossack heritage) had extensive training in the Russian Navy, and both spoke excellent English—as did their German physician-naturalist Georg Heinrich von

Langsdorff.⁶² The Tsar’s object in sending the Krusenstern expedition was to establish trade relations with China and Japan and to explore California and South America with an eye toward settling Russian colonies. Hawai‘i was little more than a stopover on what would also become the first Russian circumnavigation of the globe. Yet the expedition’s officers were every bit as ambitious as Cook and Vancouver—whose accounts they had read carefully—and every bit as interested in the cultures of the people they visited.

A day after the arrival of the Tsar’s fleet, six canoes with a dozen Hawaiian men approached off the eastern coast of the Big Island. The men climbed aboard, “shook hands with every one they saw,” and greeted the newcomers with what sounded to Lisiansky like “how do you do[?]”⁶³ This greeting suggested the extent of Anglo-American influence in the North Pacific by 1804. Tsar Alexander’s “Russian” delegation to Hawai‘i would communicate exclusively in English (or what passed for it on the Islands) for the duration of their stay. On the Big Island, Langsdorff determined that most Islanders “of any rank or distinction” could now speak English.⁶⁴

⁶² For Langsdorff’s educational background, see G[eorg] H[einrich] von Langsdorff, *Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World, During the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806, and 1807* (Carlisle, PA, 1817), vii–viii.

⁶³ Urey Lisiansky (8 June 1804), *A Voyage Round the World, in the Years 1803, 4, 5, & 6* (London, 1814), 98. See also the earlier edition of Lisiansky’s journal (1812), in Glynn Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i: The Ethnographic and Historical Record* (Honolulu, 1987), 29–54. Lisiansky, who had spent seven years in Britain and the U.S., apparently penned both the Russian and English versions of his *Voyage*. See Lisiansky, *A Voyage Round the World*, xvi–xxi; and Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 185.

⁶⁴ Langsdorff, *Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World*, 164. Langsdorff and other journalists observed that Big Islanders understood English better than Marquesan (a related Polynesian tongue). One of the expedition’s crewmen, apparently fluent in North Marquesan, tried to communicate with Hawaiians but could not be understood. See Langsdorff, *Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World*, 162; journal of Fedor Ivanovich Shemelin, in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 97; and journal of Nikolai Petrovich Rezanov, in *ibid.*, 85.

After the departure of the Hawaiian greeting committee, an old man paddled up to the *Nadezhda* (“Hope”) with “quite a young girl” whose “awkward behaviour” indicated to Krusenstern that she was “still innocent,” that is, a virgin.⁶⁵ Krusenstern declined the offer. The next day another girl who spoke some English and was “very immodest” was again refused by the seamen.⁶⁶ The Russians’ refusal of the girls probably had less to do with their age or behavior than with their skin conditions. According to Krusenstern, there was hardly an Islander “whose skin was not scarred, either in consequence of the venereal disease or of the use of the [‘awa]; though among the lower or poorer classes, these marks could not arise from the latter.” Here Krusenstern revealed more than he realized. Scholars are divided on the question of when ‘awa consumption among the maka‘āinana rose to the level of toxicity (marked by the characteristic scaly “scurf skin”); yet by the 1810s Hawaiians of all social classes were treating venereal and other maladies with regular doses of ‘awa.⁶⁷ They would continue to do so for a century. Krusenstern

⁶⁵ A[dam] J[ohann] von Krusenstern (7 June 1804), *Voyage Round the World in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, & 1806...*, vol. 1, trans. Richard Belgrave Hoppner (London, 1813), 193. Glynn Barratt translated “awkward behaviour” as “bashfulness and modesty.” See journal of I. F. Krusenstern, in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 87. The scene made an impression on various members of the expedition, e.g., Shemelin, in *ibid.*, 91.

⁶⁶ Krusenstern (7–8 June 1804), *Voyage Round the World in the Years 1803...1806*, 194–196. Shemelin, who described this second girl as “quite attractive to look at,” was more impressed than Krusenstern: “with amazing agility [she] leapt...onto the ship by way of the side-ropes and, at the first step on deck, said in English, ‘Good morning!’ Looking at all with merry eyes full of animation, she held out her hand to everyone approaching her, or else went up to individuals and did the same. I watched her with particular attention, for her boldness and the freedom with which she was behaving with us were decidedly unusual for a native. Her vivacity was matchless.” Shemelin, in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 92.

⁶⁷ Peter Corney, *Voyages in the Northern Pacific; Narrative of Several Trading Voyages from 1813 to 1818...* (Honolulu, 1896), 104–105. For ‘awa use among commoners, see E. S. Craighill Handy, *The Hawaiian Planter: His Plants, Methods and Areas of Cultivation* (Honolulu, 1940), 201–205; and Margaret Titcomb, “Kava in Hawaii,” *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 57 (1948): 105–171, esp. 136–138. See also W. Arthur Whistler, *Polynesian Herbal Medicine* (Lawai, HI, 1992). On the historical use of ‘awa to treat

unwittingly diagnosed two conditions in one: the Islanders' distressing skin conditions—discussed below—were in all likelihood exacerbated by heavy consumption of 'awa, at least among some people.

Capt. Lisiansky, the naturalist Langsdorff, and a handful of clerks and midshipmen also noted scars, scabs, scaliness, and running sores on the bodies of various Big Islanders.⁶⁸ Fourth lieutenant and cartographer Hermann Ludwig von Löwenstern also noted that the people “were all lousy.”⁶⁹ It is unlikely that Löwenstern would mistake the white scurf seen by his shipmates for the common body louse (*Pediculus humanus humanus*), but he may well have confused body lice with scabies. If lice it was, perhaps the other journalists saw little need to mention a simple lice infestation, as the people's general uncleanliness was already noted. Body lice would, however, become a general plague among the Islands' poor by the 1820s, if not earlier.⁷⁰

As many as ten Islanders spent two full days aboard the *Nadezdha* in June 1804, enabling ship clerk Fedor Ivanovich Shemelin to observe them up close. According to

“incurable” diseases, see Chun, *Hawaiian Medicine Book*, 64–65. On the use of 'awa to treat venereal diseases as late as the 1910s, see A[rthur] A[lbert] St. M[aur] Mouritz, “*The Path of the Destroyer*”: *A History of Leprosy in the Hawaiian Islands...* (Honolulu, 1916), 115.

⁶⁸ See Langsdorff, *Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World*, 162; Lisiansky (12 June 1804), *A Voyage Round the World*, 103; Shemelin, in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai'i*, 96–97; and journal of Nikolai Ivanovich Korobitsyn, in *ibid.*, 79.

⁶⁹ Journal of E. E. Levenshtern (Löwenstern), in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai'i*, 108. Note that Moessner's translation of Löwenstern reads “scabby” for “lousy.” See Victoria Joan Moessner, trans., *The First Russian Voyage Around the World: The Journal of Hermann Ludwig von Löwenstern, 1803–1806* (Fairbanks, AK, 2003), 110. Historian Robert Boyd argues that Northwest Coast Indians were also afflicted by body lice in this period, yet the evidence he cites could (again) just as easily refer to scabies. See Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence*, 285–287.

⁷⁰ For scabies and body lice in the early 1820s, see Stewart, *Private Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, 149–153.

Shemelin, “their bodies were covered with some kind of sore which excreted morbid matter of a reddish-white color. There were few parts of their body not covered in these sores...and where there were none, weals [welts] and cicatrices [scars] took their place.” Following Krusenstern’s lead, Shemelin proposed ‘awa consumption and venereal disease as possible explanations for this condition, as well as the “torrid climate,” but ultimately rejected all three after consulting with a young Hawaiian informant whose name Shemelin recorded as “Kenokhoia.” According to Shemelin, Kenokhoia believed that seawater was the main cause of the people’s skin eruptions. “As proof,” Kenokhoia noted that the Islanders who lived inland and bathed with fresh water were “quite free of the sores.”⁷¹ Of course it is not hard to imagine that people living far from the crowded coast with its constant stream of foreigners had fewer problems with skin disease, but Shemelin was apparently satisfied with Kenokhoia’s seawater explanation. In any case, what seemed obvious signs of venereal disease in Krusenstern’s account suddenly appear less so. (The distribution of skin eruptions *across* the body also sounds more like ‘awa abuse, scabies, or perhaps tuberculosis than gonorrhoea or syphilis.) While none of the Russians mentioned “the itch” in 1804, scabies should not be eliminated as a possible contributing factor, especially given that Broughton had reported people on the Big Island “generally affected by it” in 1796.⁷²

⁷¹ Shemelin, in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 96–97. On “Kenokhoia,” who traveled to St. Petersburg with the expedition, acquiring the name “Vasilii Moller,” see *ibid.*, 102. Later American observers also attributed Hawaiian skin conditions to their bathing in seawater, e.g., Charles S. Stewart, *Journal of a Residence in the Sandwich Islands, During the Years 1823, 1824, and 1825*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1828), 155.

⁷² See Broughton (22 July 1796), *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean*, 70. For possible confusion between scabies and pediculosis (body lice) by observers at Hawai‘i, see above.

Shemelin's counterpart aboard the *Neva*, the clerk Nikolai Ivanovich Korobitsyn, was not sure whether the peoples' abundant scarring was the result of venereal disease or something else: a "scorbutic disease," for instance. This is an odd conjecture. If any disease was unlikely to afflict Hawaiians on their home islands, it was scurvy. Taro and sweet potatoes are loaded with ascorbic acid (vitamin C) which renders scurvy a near impossibility, even on famine rations. Russia, on the other hand, had long experience with endemic scurvy, while expeditions in the North Pacific had to be hypervigilant to prevent the disease below decks.⁷³ Already at the Big Island one sailor had apparently come down with scurvy from the long voyage, while another crewmember may have been on the verge of it.⁷⁴ Thus, Korobitsyn was likely using his own experience (at sea or in Russia) to understand the Hawaiians' skin conditions. Yet early-nineteenth-century European medical terminology did not help matters: while "scurvy" and "scurf" have entirely distinct etymologies, they tended to be mixed up in the medical literature, particularly since one of the clinical manifestations of scurvy is dry, rough skin, and lumps on the scalp.⁷⁵ It is also important to consider the possibility that poor diet or even

⁷³ Roger K. French, "Scurvy," in *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, ed. Kenneth F. Kiple (Cambridge, UK, 1993), 1001.

⁷⁴ Löwenstern, in Moessner, trans., *The First Russian Voyage Around the World*, 115.

⁷⁵ French, "Scurvy," 1001. References to both "dry scurf" and "dry scurvy" no doubt led to considerable confusion among practitioners and laypeople. See, e.g., Diederick Wessel Linden, *Treatise on the Three Medicinal Mineral Waters at Llandrindod, in Radnorshire, South Wales* (London, 1756), 229–230; and F[rancis] Spisbury, *A Treatise on the Method of Curing the Gout, Scurvy, Leprosy, Elephantiasis, Evil, and Other Cutaneous Eruptions* (London, 1787), 33, 117, 120. Scottish seaman Alexander Campbell referenced "dry scurvy" among the Islanders in 1809, as did American trader Peter Corney in 1815. See Archibald Campbell, *A Voyage Around the World, from 1806 to 1812* (New York, 1817), 131; and Corney, *Voyages in the Northern Pacific*, 104–105. See also Vancouver's description of the Kaua'i chief Inamo'o (27 March 1793), in Lamb, ed., *Voyage*, 890.

malnutrition among the maka‘āinana on the Kona coast may have resulted in something that *looked* to the Russians like scurvy. At least five expedition journalists described Islanders as “lean” or unimpressive of build compared to the Marquesans they had just visited.⁷⁶ Löwenstern meanwhile was so concerned about the poor rations at the Big Island that he was reduced to prayer: “May God grant us health since salt meat, peas, grits, and hardtack are our [only] food.”⁷⁷ Unfortunately, no one in 1804 reported on the actual diet of Big Islanders.

The twentieth-century editors of Nikolai Korobitsyn’s expedition account describe the humble clerk’s Russian as “confuse[d]” in its mixture of “colloquial speech” and written language, and “peculiar” in its grammar and syntax.⁷⁸ Nonetheless the clerk was the only member of the expedition to record Hawaiian treatments for skin afflictions. In fact, Korobitsyn was the very first foreigner to do so. (Cook’s surgeon in 1779 had noted a “certain herb” used to treat venereal lesions, but no one in the years since had shed any light on the matter.) The people on the Big Island, wrote Korobitsyn, “consider aienia [‘*aieana*] root an effective preventative against the disease in question, and for the

⁷⁶ Korobitsyn, in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 79; Krusenstern, in *ibid.*, 88; Shemelin, in *ibid.*, 97; Rezanov, in *ibid.*, 84; Langsdorff, *Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World*, 162. See also Georg Heinrich von Langsdorff, *Remarks and Observations on a Voyage Around the World from 1803 to 1807*, trans. Victoria Joan Moessner, ed. Richard A. Pierce (Kingston, Ontario, and Fairbanks, AK, 1993), 134: “The islanders we had an opportunity to observe were naked, unclean, not well built, of middle stature, and with dark, dirty, brown skin covered with rashes and sores, probably the result of drinking cava or of venereal disease....Many of their navels stuck so far out that the swelling was not unlike a hernia.”

⁷⁷ Löwenstern (29 May 1804), in Moessner, trans., *The First Russian Voyage Around the World*, 112.

⁷⁸ Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 186–187. See also A[leksandr] I[gnat’evich] Andreev, ed., *Russkie otkrytiia v Tikhom okeane i Severnoi Amerike v XVIII–XIX vekakh* (Moscow, 1944), 169–175. Korobitsyn’s account of the expedition was never published, perhaps due to the poor writing; the journal was discovered in 1940 in a secondhand bookstore in Leningrad/St. Petersburg. See Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 186–187.

same reason will drink sea water which, they suppose in their ignorance, is also quite efficacious.”⁷⁹ Despite the slur, Korobitsyn here provided better information about Hawaiian herbal medicine, or *lā‘au lapa‘au*, than any previous observer. Oral history and the documentary record provide countless references to ‘aiea in the Islands’ nineteenth-century *materia medica*.⁸⁰ Four species of ‘aiea can be found on the Islands today, and at least two of these, the smallflower ‘aiea tree (*Nothocestrum breviflorum*) and the longleaf ‘aiea shrub (*Nothocestrum longifolium*), are endemic to the Big Island. Longleaf ‘aiea is typically found at elevations higher than 1,500 feet, whereas smallflower ‘aiea grows in drier, low-lying forests, particularly on the western half of the island.⁸¹ Given these disparate habitats, the coastal people were probably using smallflower ‘aiea as a remedy in 1804. Korobitsyn thought they were using the “root” of the tree, which may be true, though the common preparation was by mashing, cooking, cooling, and applying the plant material (leaves and bark) to the skin with kapa cloth.

⁷⁹ Korobitsyn, in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 79. See also Andreev, *Russkie otkrytiia v Tikhom okeane i Severnoi Amerike...*, 171. Thanks to Heather VanMouwerik for reviewing Korobitsyn’s original Russian. (‘Aieana seems to have been an older form of the word ‘aiea. See Pukui and Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary*, s.v. “‘aieana.”) Of course Korobitsyn may have been mistaken in claiming that the people drank sea water; perhaps the saltwater was mixed with herbs or filtered and treated in some way that has not been recorded.

⁸⁰ E.g., Charles Gaudichaud, *Voyage Autour du Monde...Botanique* (Paris, 1826), TBD; D. M. Kaaiakamanu and J. K. Akina, *Hawaiian Herbs of Medicinal Value* [1922], trans. Akaiko Akana (Honolulu, and Rutland, VT, 1968), 4; Hawaiian Ethnobotany Online Database, <http://data.bishopmuseum.org/ethnobotanydb/>, s.v. “‘aiea, hālena.” See also Horace Mann, *Enumeration of Hawaiian Plants* (Cambridge, MA, 1867), 191; William Hillebrand, *Flora of the Hawaiian Islands* (Heidelberg, Germany, 1888), 307–309; Joseph F. Rock, *The Indigenous Trees of the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu, 1913), 417–421.

⁸¹ ‘Aiea is in the nightshade family (*Solanaceae*). Today *N. breviflorum* is listed as “critically endangered.” See Hawaiian Ethnobotany Online Database, s.v. “‘aiea, hālena.”

But what was the skin condition (or conditions) for which ‘aiea was being used? As a postscript to his discussion about the people’s mysterious ailment, Korobitsyn noted that the Islanders, “in their incontinence”—that is, promiscuity—continued “to infect one another.”⁸² This suggests that the “disease in question” was venereal in nature, yet scabies, tuberculosis, and other infectious diseases could also be passed through intimate contact. Ultimately, it cannot be determined whether the Russians were observing the work of ‘awa consumption, scabies, syphilis, tuberculosis, or some combination of these. Either way, the Russian reports show that skin conditions were onerous, aggressive, and widespread at the Big Island.



Russian refusal of the girls off the Kona coast on June 7–8 did not dissuade other Hawaiians from approaching the fleet. Three days after the second girl was turned away, “about a hundred young women” approached the fleet at dusk, “exhibiting...the most unequivocal token of pleasure, not doubting of admittance.” Capt. Lisiansky forbade his men on the *Neva* from all “licentious intercourse” with the natives, so the “troop of nymphs were compelled to return” to shore—an “affont to their charms,” Lisiansky speculated, such as “they had never experienced before” by Europeans.⁸³ The following night, the women came again at dusk, “resolved” this time on gaining access to the ships. Forced to seek the assistance of a local chief to kapu the ship, Lisiansky wrote in his

⁸² Korobitsyn, in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 79.

⁸³ Lisiansky (11 June 1804), *A Voyage Round the World*, 101.

journal that the reason for the ban was to prevent his men from catching venereal disease, of which “several of the inhabitants of both sexes...bore evident marks.”⁸⁴

Eager to get to Japan and not terribly impressed by Hawai‘i or its people, Capt. Krusenstern departed shortly on the *Nadezdha* for Kamchatka. Lisiansky on the *Neva* stayed longer, visiting multiple islands and providing the most thorough ethnographical portrait of Hawaiian life since Vancouver. In addition to the sex trade, Lisiansky covered topics ranging from Hawaiian religious forms and funerary rites to fashion and political contests. He was also the only journalist on the expedition to record a devastating epidemic on O‘ahu.

Scheduled to rendezvous at Kodiak Island in Russian America, Lisiansky wanted first to meet the king, Kamehameha, at his new stronghold of Honolulu. Heading north in the *Neva*, Lisiansky got word that “a species of epidemic disease was raging” there, so he beat a course to Kaua‘i instead, where he met with the mō‘ī Kaumuali‘i. Like Broughton and other visiting sea captains, Lisiansky was sympathetic with the Kaua‘i chiefs desire to remain (with Ni‘ihau) independent of Kamehameha’s rule. Lisiansky informed Kaumuali‘i about the epidemic which had recently halted Kamehameha’s forces in their planned conquest of his island. This news was “extremely gratifying” to Kaumuali‘i, who was “determined to defend himself to the last.” The Kaua‘i mō‘ī had good reason to believe he could do so, equipped as he was with three six-pounder cannons, forty swivels

⁸⁴ Lisiansky (12 June 1804), *A Voyage Round the World*, 103.

guns, “a number of muskets, and plenty of powder and ball.” Kaumuali‘i, Lisiansky learned, also had five Europeans in his service.⁸⁵

It is not clear whether Kaumuali‘i understood the scale of Kamehameha’s military force in 1804, but Lisiansky did. On the Big Island the captain had learned from the haole chief John Young that Kamehameha commanded some seven thousand Hawaiian soldiers and fifty foreigners, twenty-one schooners and hundreds of war canoes, six hundred muskets, dozens of swivel guns, cannons of various sizes, and “a sufficiency of powder, shot, and ball”—in other words, more than ten times the fire power of Kaumuali‘i. These forces had all been removed to Honolulu in 1803 to prepare for the invasion of Kaua‘i. Lisiansky was convinced that barring the outbreak of disease at southern O‘ahu, Kamehameha would have easily conquered Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau. In his words, Kamehameha “certainly would have reduced [conquered] Otooway [Kaua‘i] last spring, if a disease...had not spread amongst his troops, and destroyed the flower of his army.”⁸⁶ There is little doubt that this epidemic delayed Kamehameha’s conquest of the archipelago by seven years.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Lisiansky (18–19 June 1804), *A Voyage Round the World*, 111–113. For Kaumuali‘i’s facility with spoken English by 1804, see the journal of Vasilii Nikolaevitch Berkh, in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 104.

⁸⁶ Lisiansky, *A Voyage Round the World*, 115–116, 133. By 1810, Kamehameha had as many as forty-two warships in his arsenal. See Ralph Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778–1854: Foundation and Transformation* (1938; repr. Honolulu, 1947), 49–50.

⁸⁷ Kamehameha’s first attempt to conquer Kaua‘i, in 1796, was apparently halted by bad weather, which some Hawaiians took as an omen of the gods. See John Papa ‘Ī‘ī, *Fragments of Hawaiian History*, trans. Mary Kawena Pukui, ed. Dorothy B. Barrère (Honolulu, 1959), 15–16; and Samuel M. Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, rev. ed. (Honolulu, 1992), 172–173. For an introduced infectious disease among the Māori preventing a military conquest in 1835, see Harry C. Evison, *Te Wai Pounamu: The Greenstone Island; A History of the Southern Maori During the European Colonization of New Zealand* (Wellington and Christchurch, NZ, 1993), 84–85. In response to the ‘ōku‘u, Kamehameha found three kapu breakers

The disease in question was the *ma'i 'ōku'u* (“squatting sickness”). Lisansky’s observations help to date the ‘ōku’u epidemic more precisely than previous historians have managed to do. If Kamehameha’s troops would have taken Kaua’i “last spring” barring the epidemic, it can be inferred that the ‘ōku’u began not later than the spring of 1803.⁸⁸

Extensive debate surrounds the nature of this disease; Hawaiian oral traditions are no closer to agreement than the more recent medical-historical scholarship. The events surrounding the epidemic and the terminology used to describe it are revealing. The outbreak was first reported among Kamehameha’s army encamped at Honolulu. Warriors were struck dead within days, even hours.⁸⁹ People on errands “would die before [they] could reach home,” according to Kamakau, who also noted that those who “managed to hold out for a [full] day had a fair chance” of survival, but that such survivors “generally lost their hair.” Hence, another name for the disease, *po 'okole* (“head stripped bare”).⁹⁰ A letter published in the Hawaiian-language press decades later noted that the epidemic

and ordered them to be sacrificed at a local heiau. See ‘Ī‘Ī, *Fragments of Hawaiian History*, 35.

⁸⁸ Historians have dated the epidemic anywhere from 1802 to 1807. Discounting a host of Native Hawaiian writers on the subject, O. A. Bushnell stated that “no one knows when it actually happened.” See Robert C. Schmitt, “The Okuu: Hawaii’s Greatest Epidemic,” *Hawaiian Medical Journal* (1970): 359–364; and Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 103. The nineteenth-century Hawaiian-language press invariably dated the ‘ōku’u in 1804. See, e.g., W. H. Kaaukaukini, letter to the editor, *Ka Hae Hawaii*, 7 April 1858; and *Ka Hae Hawaii*, 19 Sept. 1860. A court historian wrote that Kamehameha himself had come down with the disease “in late 1803 or early 1804.” See ‘Ī‘Ī, *Fragments of Hawaiian History*, 33.

⁸⁹ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 189; ‘Ī‘Ī, *Fragments of Hawaiian History*, 33. See also Berkh, in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 105. A midshipman on the *Neva*, Berkh learned more about the epidemic the following year at Canton from an American ship captain who led him to believe the disease was “like scurvy.” For Korobitsyn’s description of skin conditions on the Big Island as possibly “scorbutic,” see above.

⁹⁰ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 189.

lasted “almost three months or more with many deaths occurring from day to day.... The death toll was greater where there were more people.”⁹¹

Three candidates have been suggested for the ‘ōku‘u: cholera, typhoid fever, and bacillary or amoebic dysentery. Each of these diseases is caused by ingesting food or water tainted with human or animal fecal matter, and each presents with acute diarrhea, causing loss of water and electrolytes, which can lead quickly to death. (Typhoid fever is additionally known for its characteristic fever and headache.⁹²) As for terminology, ‘ōku‘u translates as “squatting” or “crouching,” indicating a classic diarrheal infection, in this case, spread by the crowded, unsanitary conditions in camp. The ‘ōku‘u was also the first disease characterized in later Hawaiian-language documents as an *ahulau*, typically translated as “pestilence” or “epidemic” but meaning literally “heaped up bodies.”⁹³ The word *ahulau* is suggestive of the scale of devastation at Honolulu.

Based on the available evidence, microbiologist O. A. Bushnell favored typhoid fever to cholera or dysentery for the ‘ōku‘u.⁹⁴ Yet earlier scholars, including some Native

⁹¹ W. Kahala, “*No ka Mai Ahulau*,” *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, 28 Feb. 1863. See also Schmitt, “The Okuu,” 361; and Arthur Mouritz, *Our Western Outpost, Hawaii, in the Eye of the Sun...* (Honolulu, 1935), 20–21, 34–35.

⁹² K. David Patterson, “Amoebic Dysentery” and “Bacillary Dysentery,” in *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, 568–571, 604–606; Reinhard S. Speck, “Cholera,” in *ibid.*, 642–649; Herbert L. DuPont, “Diarrheal Diseases (Acute),” in *ibid.*, 676–680; Charles W. LeBaron and David W. Taylor, “Typhoid Fever,” in *ibid.*, 10711–1076.

⁹³ For the ‘ōku‘u as a “*ma‘i ahulau*,” see W. H. Kaaukaukini, letter to the editor, *Ka Hae Hawaii*, 7 April 1858; Davida Malo, qtd. in “Honolulu, Nov. 29, 1862,” *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, 29 Nov. 1862; and W. Kahala, “*No ka Mai Ahulau*,” *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, 28 Feb. 1863. See also Lorrin Andrews, *A Dictionary of the Hawaiian Language* (Honolulu, 1865), s.v. “*ahulau*.”

⁹⁴ Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 103, 281–282. See also Francis L. Black, review of *Before the Horror: The Population of Hawai‘i on the Eve of Western Contact*, by David E. Stannard, *Pacific Studies* 13 (1990): 269–279, esp. 275. I am not aware of any oral history or written accounts that identify fever or headache with the ‘ōku‘u. Perhaps Bushnell and Black were swayed by typhoid fever’s well-known

Hawaiian writers, made the case for cholera.⁹⁵ In one of his Hawaiian history pieces for the newspaper *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* in 1867, Kamakau noted that the bodies of victims turned black. (Darkening of the skin is characteristic of cholera-induced dehydration.) An anonymous writer for the same newspaper explicitly identified the ‘ōku‘u as “*kolera o Asia*” (Asiatic cholera).⁹⁶ Of course, there was no way in 1804 to distinguish the causative microbial agents of digestive infections, and the existing evidence simply does not allow for definitive identification of the epidemic. (The hair loss mentioned by Kamakau, for instance, does not match any of the proposed diseases.) Yet for our purposes, the microbiology of the disease is less important than the source of infection and the human toll.

Native Hawaiian scholar Davida Malo was about ten years old when the ‘ōku‘u struck. Writing in the 1830s, Malo noted that “pestilence” had killed the majority of the people “from Hawai‘i to Ni‘ihau” during his childhood.⁹⁷ Others believed that the epidemic was confined to O‘ahu. In 1970, Hawai‘i State Demographer Robert C. Schmitt argued that loss of life in the epidemic had been exaggerated, with fatalities rising in

historical role in decimating armies; for example, American troops in the Spanish-American War and British troops in the Boer Wars. See Le Baron and Taylor, “Typhoid Fever,” in Kiple, ed., in *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, 1075.

⁹⁵ Like Kamakau, demographer Robert C. Schmitt favored cholera for the ‘ōku‘u, and was apparently supported in this diagnosis by Hawai‘i State Director of Health Walter B. Quisenberry. See Schmitt, “The Okuu,” 362.

⁹⁶ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 189; “Honolulu, Nov. 29, 1862,” *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, 29 Nov. 1862.

⁹⁷ Malo, “On the Decrease of Population on the Hawaiian Islands,” 125. See also [Davida Malo], *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, 29 Nov. 1862: “*I ke au ia Kamehameha I, mai ka wa o ko‘u hanau ana a hiki i ka iwa o ko‘u makahiki, hiki mai ka mai ahulau ma na Pae Aina Hawaii, a oia ka make nui ana o na kanaka mai Hawaii a Ni‘ihau.*”

documentary records and oral tradition over the course of the nineteenth century.⁹⁸ In fact, a number of observers at O‘ahu in 1803–1806 failed to mention the epidemic at all.⁹⁹ Schmitt guessed that fatalities to the ‘ōku‘u were probably confined to O‘ahu, falling somewhere in the range of five to fifteen thousand. (Recall that Kamehameha had as many as seven thousand warriors encamped at Honolulu; if Schmitt was correct, half or more may have been cut down in the epidemic.) While the greatest number of casualties probably occurred along the crowded shores of Honolulu where the bodies were “heaped up,” it is not possible to determine either the epicenter or the extent of the epidemic. Yet Schmitt was probably correct to judge the ‘ōku‘u as “one of the three greatest epidemics in Hawaiian history.”¹⁰⁰

A number of factors seem to have contributed to the outbreak and spread of the ‘ōku‘u. The bustling new port town of Honolulu was central to them all. If dirty Honolulu was not yet the “cesspit of the Pacific” in 1803, it was headed there thanks to foreign merchants (and the Hawaiian vendors they drew to town) and Kamehameha’s military installation.¹⁰¹ While the king himself preferred to stay at nearby Waikīkī while on O‘ahu, foreign merchants had been enjoying Honolulu (“sheltered bay”) ever since the British merchant William Brown coasted into the harbor he dubbed “Fair Haven” in

⁹⁸ Schmitt, “The Okuu,” 362. Historian David E. Stannard largely ignored this warning in *Before the Horror*, 54–58.

⁹⁹ This includes Turnbull, Langsdorff, and William Shaler, who was on O‘ahu in 1803 and again in 1805. See Shaler, “Journal of a Voyage between China and the North-Western Coast of America, Made in 1804”; and Schmitt, “The Okuu,” 360.

¹⁰⁰ Schmitt, “The Okuu,” 363.

¹⁰¹ Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 182.

1794. The calm conditions and lack of treacherous lava rock made Honolulu a preferred port of call. In 1803, Kamehameha's army was encamped along the beach near present-day Kaka'ako Waterfront Park downtown. The king's shipbuilders meanwhile were busy constructing large war canoes and ships in the harbor.

Recall that the kapu were regularly being violated by foreigners at this time. It is unlikely that ancient kapu regarding hygiene and sanitation were being observed by Kamehameha's massive army in the temporary encampment.¹⁰² The kapu had been designed for rural life with low population density; Honolulu harbor in 1803 was rather the opposite. Like most armies before the twentieth century, Kamehameha's troops were probably ill-fed and living in some degree of filth for the duration of their time at Honolulu.¹⁰³ Given that cholera, typhoid fever, and the major dysenteries had not struck Hawai'i—at least not in living memory—sewage disposal was as yet a low priority on the Islands.¹⁰⁴ Local farmers, for instance, still used nightsoil as fertilizer.¹⁰⁵ Contaminated drinking water in Honolulu harbor would have been the rule rather than the exception in 1803.¹⁰⁶ Meanwhile, flies and (the apparently abundant) cockroaches easily passed fecal

¹⁰² Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 190.

¹⁰³ For the “shortage of food” in Kamehameha's army, see Berkh, in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai'i*, 105.

¹⁰⁴ Malo claimed that the early nineteenth-century medical kahuna Kama had offered “his opinion” that the ‘ōku‘u was “of the same nature as” the *ikipuahola*, a legendary disease of the time of Waia. Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 245–246.

¹⁰⁵ TBD

¹⁰⁶ Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 183, 191. For tainted water on the Kona Coast in 1807, see Iselin (7 June 1807), *Journal of a Trading Voyage Around the World*, 70. Rev. Sereno Edwards Bishop recalled that the drinking water in Honolulu in the 1830s had to be drawn from “shallow wells dug through the coral to tide level.” It was “slightly brackish” and “distasteful” to Bishop, who had grown up on the Big Island, enjoying water from mountain streams. He concluded that the drinking water in Honolulu was

bacteria from excrement to food and water sources. Finally, regardless of how well Kamehameha fed his own men, the poor nutrition of local people exacerbated the effects of the ‘ōku‘u, decreasing the odds of survival.¹⁰⁷

While local people at O‘ahu may have observed traditional kapu for burial of the dead, including various cleaning rituals after handling a corpse, it is unlikely that the heaped-up bodies were treated with anything so hygienic, or that the area around Kamehameha’s encampment was subject to any useful sanitation before or during the ‘ōku‘u.¹⁰⁸ On the Big Island, Lisiansky had learned from a “chief priest” at Kealakekua Bay that, epidemic or not, the Island poor were simply buried “any where along the beach.”¹⁰⁹ Burial practices, like all Hawaiian ritual forms, varied according to rank. Most of Kamehameha’s warriors were owed nothing in terms of burial, so their corpses would have been disposed by whatever means—and in whatever manner—was most convenient.

Finally, it is worth noting that a number of Russian observers remarked on the uncleanliness of Hawaiian dwellings, temples, and even bodies.¹¹⁰ The physician

“[p]robably...rather insanitary.” S. E. Bishop, *Reminiscences of Old Hawaii* (Honolulu, 1916), 35.

¹⁰⁷ Patterson, “Amebic Dysentery,” in Kiple, ed., *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, 568–571; Paterson, “Bacillary Dysentery,” in *ibid.*, 604–606; Speck, “Cholera,” in *ibid.*, 642–649; DuPont, “Diarrheal Diseases (Acute),” in *ibid.*, 676–680; and LeBaron and Taylor, “Typhoid Fever,” in *ibid.*, 10711–1076.

¹⁰⁸ For traditional Hawaiian burial customs, see Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 96–99; Laura C. Green and Martha Warren Beckwith, “Hawaiian Customs and Beliefs Relating to Sickness and Death,” *American Anthropologist* 28 (1926): 176–208; and Handy and Pukui, *The Polynesian Family System in Ka-‘u, Hawai‘i*, 151–153.

¹⁰⁹ Lisiansky did not name the kahuna with whom he conversed; John Young served as interpreter. Lisiansky, *A Voyage Round the World*, 121–122.

¹¹⁰ E.g., Lisiansky (13 June 1804), *A Voyage Round the World*, 105–107; Langsdorff, *Voyages and*

Langsdorff described the people at Kona as “naked, unclean, not well built, of middle stature, and with dark, dirty, brown skin covered with rashes and sores.” Of course Europeans were themselves averse to bathing in this period, and given the racist notions of the day, eastern Europeans—no less than Britons, French, and Americans—tended to see all Indigenous Pacific peoples as more or less dirty. Yet few observers had been critical of *Hawaiian* hygiene or sanitation before 1804; in fact, the opposite was typically noted, particularly in reference to their frequent bathing. Now, however, Lisiansky was surprised at the “uncommonly filthy” condition of Kamehameha’s royal residence at Kona. The adjoining heiau were “so neglected and filthy [that] they might be taken rather for hog-sties than places of worship.”¹¹¹ Lisiansky was not ignorant of a possible reason for the untidiness; namely, that Kamehameha had temporarily relocated his government to O‘ahu.¹¹² Yet the catalog of filth on the Kona coast continued. In the huts of the common people, “dirtiness and slovenliness were everywhere apparent,” wrote Lisiansky. The clerk Shemelin, otherwise very sympathetic toward the Hawaiian people, noted “filth and a disgusting lack of cleanliness” on their bodies.¹¹³

To be sure, none of the Russians set foot on O‘ahu where the ‘ōku‘u was raging; and their unfavorable comparison of Hawaiian hygiene with the Marquesans whom they

Travels in Various Parts of the World, 162; Korobitsyn, in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 79; Shemelin, in *ibid.*, 96–97; and journal of Lisiansky (1812 edition), in *ibid.*, 33–34. See also Langsdorff, *Remarks and Observations on a Voyage Around the World from 1803 to 1807*, 134.

¹¹¹ Lisiansky (13 June 1804), *A Voyage Round the World*, 105–107. See also journal of Lisiansky (1812 edition), in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 43.

¹¹² Lisiansky (13 June 1804), *A Voyage Round the World*, 107.

¹¹³ Lisiansky, in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 33–34; Shemelin, in *ibid.*, 96–97. For “a want of cleanliness” among Natives at Hilo in 1832, see the journal of Sarah Joiner Lyman, 3 Nov. 1832, in *The Lymans of Hilo*, ed. Maragart Greer Martin (Hilo, HI, 1979), 45.

had just visited is proof of nothing in particular.¹¹⁴ Yet it is possible that the Hawaiian kapu regarding sanitation and hygiene, like those regarding eating and the mixing of the sexes, had been regularly violated, ignored, or set aside by 1804. If so, the people were even more vulnerable to new bacterial infections.¹¹⁵



The ‘ōku‘u was the first Hawaiian epidemic for which the identity of victims is known. In addition to the hundreds or thousands of Kamehameha’s warriors who succumbed to the disease, four prominent ali‘i perished: the O‘ahu high chief Keaweaheulu Kalua‘apana, one of Kamehameha’s principal war leaders and great-grandfather to two future Hawaiian monarchs (Kalākaua and Lili‘uokalani); the twenty-four year-old O‘ahu chiefess and wife of John Young, Namokuelua; the chiefess and wife of Isaac Davis, Nakai Nalima‘alu‘alu, probably in her late twenties or early thirties; and most notably, Ka‘ahumanu’s father Ke‘eaumoku, who had been largely responsible for Kamehameha’s rise over the previous two decades.¹¹⁶ If the differential effects of the ma‘i malihini were not yet clear to Hawaiians, the death of the young Native wives of the

¹¹⁴ E.g., Korobitsyn, in Barratt, *The Russian Discovery of Hawai‘i*, 79; Rezanov, in *ibid.*, 84; Shemelin, in *ibid.*, 97; and Langsdorff, *Remarks and Observations on a Voyage Around the World from 1803 to 1807*, 134.

¹¹⁵ Later, in 1823, American missionary Charles S. Stewart noted that chiefly servants ate “from the same dishes and calabashes as their master.” See Stewart, There is surprisingly no record of new sanitation rules or hygienic practices taking the place of the kapu in this period. See O. A. Bushnell, “Hygiene and Sanitation among the Ancient Hawaiians,” in Richard A. Greer, ed., *Hawaii Historical Review: Selected Readings* (Honolulu, 1969), esp. 16–27, 34–35; Agnes C. Conrad, ed., “The Letters and Journal of Francisco de Paula Marin,” in Ross H. Gast, *Don Francisco de Paula Marin: A Biography* (Honolulu, 1973), 259–262, 284–292; Gutmanis, *Kāhuna Lā‘au Lapa‘au*, 78; and Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 190–191.

¹¹⁶ *Buke ‘Oihana Lapa‘au me nā ‘Apu lā‘au Hawai‘i* [Book of Medical Practices and Hawaiian Prescriptions], ed. Thomas P. Spencer (1895; Honolulu, 2003), 101.

two most prominent foreigners on the Islands—Young and Davis, neither of whom took ill—amply demonstrated that fact.

Kamehameha himself contracted the ‘ōku‘u, according to Kamakau, but survived. The king’s advisors, meanwhile, “all died,” Kamakau noted.¹¹⁷ Royal retainer and court historian John Papa ‘Ī‘Ī (1800–1870) recorded these events somewhat differently. According to ‘Ī‘Ī, Kamehameha took sick in late 1803 or early 1804 staying with his chiefs in Waipi‘o (fifteen miles northwest of Honolulu and slightly inland). Kamehameha’s medical kahuna Papa (John Papa ‘Ī‘Ī’s namesake) nursed the king back to health, at which point Kamehameha returned to Honolulu. ‘Ī‘Ī added that Keōpūolani, the king’s highest ranking wife and the mother of the future Kamehamehas II and III, also took sick with the ‘ōku‘u, narrowly avoiding going the “way of all earth.”¹¹⁸

‘Ī‘Ī believed that the ruling chiefs first took an interest in training “promising members” of court for the medical profession in the wake of the ‘ōku‘u epidemic.¹¹⁹ It is unclear whether this move involved a reorganization of the medical profession, the establishment of more formal training, or a recruitment effort. Foreigners apparently played little if any role in the reorganization. The jack-of-all-trades Francisco de Paula Marín, for instance, who had been living on O‘ahu for a decade by this point, serving as interpreter and sometime physician to Kamehameha—in both of which roles Marín was just one of many such servants—makes no mention in his diary of the recruitment effort

¹¹⁷ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 189–190.

¹¹⁸ ‘Ī‘Ī, *Fragments of Hawaiian History*, 33–35, 53.

¹¹⁹ ‘Ī‘Ī, *Fragments of Hawaiian History*, 46.

or the training of additional kāhuna lapa‘au after 1804. It is worth noting, however, that Marín enjoyed a small family of two or more Hawaiian wives and three children by 1805.¹²⁰ The Britons John Young and Isaac Davis also had children by this point. Without Western physicians to treat them and their families, foreign residents may well have supported the training and recruitment of additional medical kāhuna. On the other hand, some foreign residents remained prejudiced against the kāhuna and may have relied on their own wits when sick, or on the folk medicine practiced by their Native Hawaiian wives and family members.

Among the notable kāhuna lapa‘au who practiced on the Islands after the ‘ōku‘u was Papa, personal physician to Kamehameha and, according to ‘Ī‘ī, the “owner” of the houses of healing. Another kahuna named Kūa‘ua‘u—whose father Kama was a kahuna before him—was said to treat the common people. Kūa‘ua‘u was said to have prepared medicines and treated patients in an “entirely different” way from his father.¹²¹ It is not clear what these differences were exactly, though Kamakau notes that the elder Kama was expert in at least four types of kahuna practice, including obstetrics and pediatrics (Groups 1–2), and diagnostics and touch (Groups 4–5). Kama developed a reputation for administering medicines to young people to prevent the “hidden” or “evanescent” illnesses of childhood. According to Kamakau, if children took the medicines prescribed by Kama at the proper time, “they would not get a sudden disease (such as stoke) or an

¹²⁰ Ross H. Gast, ed., *Don Francisco de Paula Marín: A Biography* (Honolulu, 1973), 137.

¹²¹ ‘Ī‘ī, *Fragments of Hawaiian History*, 46.

introduced disease.”¹²² Unfortunately, Kamakau does not provide evidence for, or elaborate on, this rare instance of kahuna practice identified as efficacious against the ma‘i malihini.

Some ali‘i themselves gained a reputation for their practice of medicine. Boki, brother of Ka‘ahumanu, was apparently skilled at administering the poisonous gourd enema (*waikī*), which seems to have been a universal remedy. According to ‘Ī‘Ī, waikī was utilized for various ailments, including fever, headache, chills, constipation and cramping, breathing trouble, sores, and ulcers.¹²³

For all the information available on individual fatalities, it is ultimately difficult to establish the physical and emotional toll of the ‘ōku‘u in the years after 1804. Yet decades later the memory of the ‘ōku‘u remained strong. A letter published in *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* (The Independent Newspaper) in 1863 suggested that among people of Kamehameha’s generation, there was “no other sickness like this one spoken of.”¹²⁴ Kamehameha’s plans for dominance over the archipelago were put on hold indefinitely. According to Kamakau, Kamehameha and his fellow chiefs turned their attention back to farming. A return to traditional practices makes sense given the king’s long exposure to foreigners and his ceaseless stockpiling of foreign commodities, all culminating in the worst disease outbreak in living memory. It is not difficult to imagine Kamehameha and

¹²² Kamakau, *Ka Po‘e Kahiko*, 103–104

¹²³ ‘Ī‘Ī, *Fragments of Hawaiian History*, 47.

¹²⁴ W. Kalaha, “No ka Mai Ahulau,” *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, 28 Feb. 1863: “Aole no he mai e ae e like me keia mai i oleloia.” Kahala was quoting an “old man from the time of Kamehameha I.”

fellow ali‘i nui interpreting the devastation of the ‘ōku‘u as a message from the akua:
return to the soil, observe the gods, nurture the lāhui (people/nation).

Surfing, Lamenting, and More Surfing

In the years after the ‘ōku‘u, foreign visitors observed Islanders smoking tobacco, drinking distilled liquor, missing front teeth, and lacking in agricultural surplus. American supercargo Isaac Iselin aboard the *Maryland* noted another development on the Big Island: a “great want of hands to improve it”; that is, to make the island more fruitful. “The depopulation is evident,” wrote Iselin on the Kona coast, the result of “a kind of epidemic or yellow fever, said to have been brought to these Islands a few years ago, and which makes havoc amongst the natives.” Iselin was of course referring to the ‘ōku‘u; yet, like William Shaler before him, Iselin also understood that the absence of the king and his retinue had contributed to the local decrease in population.¹²⁵ If food and good water were in short supply on the Kona coast, women were not: “A great many females come swimming to the ship,” noted Iselin.¹²⁶ During his five weeks at Kealahou Bay in 1807, Iselin’s ship was “more or less encumbered” by Hawaiian men, women, and some children. Indeed, Iselin’s ship was “almost incessantly surrounded and crowded by the natives” over the course of two months at the Islands.¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Shaler “Journal of a Voyage between China and the North-western Coast of America,” 163.

¹²⁶ Iselin, *Journal of a Trading Voyage Around the World*, 65–70, 73. For bad water, see *ibid.*, 70.

¹²⁷ Iselin, *Journal of a Trading Voyage Around the World*, 70, 71, 80.

Iselin was the first foreign observer to suggest that the ali‘i were taking a cut of the now-lucrative sex trade on the Islands. Kamehameha had stored up some \$10,000 in American coin. Part of this wealth had been earned, Iselin learned, “as a kind of tribute from the belles [who] visit the ship as part of their earnings.”¹²⁸ Yet Iselin was certain that many people in the trade evaded paying tribute by stealth. Of course it is consistent with traditional tribute relations that the “chief who ate the district” (*ali‘i ‘ai moku*) would take his or her cut of the people’s “harvest.” Nor are there any accounts, by foreigners or Hawaiians, to indicate that commoners deemed the king’s cut of sex work unjust; which is not to say they did *not* voice these concerns, but the documentary record and oral history have not turned it up. In any case, foreign visitors were happy to complain on behalf of the maka‘āinana who found themselves engaged in sex work and other forms of exploitation.¹²⁹

Two years after Iselin’s visit, Scottish sailor Archibald Campbell learned that Kamehameha had ordered the execution of one of his own sons for allegedly sleeping with Ka‘ahumanu.¹³⁰ John Papa ‘Ī‘Ī explained that Kamehameha’s execution of court favorite Kanihonui had “aroused” the queen’s “wrath” to such a degree that she “considered taking the kingdom by force and giving it to the young chief, Liholiho,”

¹²⁸ Iselin, *Journal of a Trading Voyage Around the World*, 78–79.

¹²⁹ E.g., L[eonty] A[ndrianovich] Gagemeister (Jan.–March 1809), in *The Russian View of Honolulu, 1809–26*, ed. and trans. Glynn Barratt (Ottawa, 1988), 169; and V[asily] M[ikhailovich] Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka, 1817–1819*, trans. Ella Lury Wiswell (Honolulu, 1979), 208.

¹³⁰ Campbell, *A Voyage Around the World*, 153. For a later incident along these lines, see Ross Cox, *Adventures on the Columbia River, Including the Narrative of a Residence of Six Years on the Western Side of the Rocky Mountains...* (New York, 1832), 37.

Kamehameha's son (and the future Kamehameha II).¹³¹ Recall Ka'ahumanu's 1794 request of Vancouver for protection against physical abuse by Kamehameha after her alleged sexual liaison with another man.¹³² Fifteen years later, Ka'ahumanu was again unwilling to concede to her husband's impulses or his absolute rule. Kamehameha, of course, would not dream of punishing a wife who outranked him—at least not publicly—for a violation which was, in any case, minor. But he could hurt her just the same; and hurt her he did, by executing her lover.

While Ka'ahumanu was mourning the death of Kanihonui at Kapua Bay on the Kona coast, her advisors put the question to her nephew, the teenager Liholiho, about replacing the king. Liholiho's response was, "I do not want my father to die." After a day of "surfing, lamenting, and more surfing" at Kapua, Ka'ahumanu's advisors decided against the risky move, and the queen's wishes were again rendered moot.¹³³

Campbell noted that the ali'i women he encountered "seldom scruple to break" the kapu "when it can be done in secret."¹³⁴ One female ali'i at O'ahu, whom Campbell believed to a wife of Kamehameha (but was more likely simply a woman at court), invited Campbell to sit and eat with her, but he declined out of respect for Island law.¹³⁵ Scholars have failed to note that as Kamehameha's star was rising (en route to exclusive

¹³¹ ʻĪʻĪ, *Fragments of Hawaiian History*, 50–51. See also Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 195.

¹³² See Chapter Two.

¹³³ ʻĪʻĪ, *Fragments of Hawaiian History*, 50–51.

¹³⁴ Campbell, *A Voyage Around the World*, 134.

¹³⁵ Campbell, *A Voyage Around the World*, 90. It is not clear whether this woman, "Tamena," had any official connection to Kamehameha. It is possible that she offered Campbell a seat at the table due to his physical handicap.

control over the archipelago), ali'i women were simultaneously defying the laws which ensured his rule.

Commoners were less likely to take these risks. Virtually all European and American traders who called at the Islands in the first decade of the nineteenth century reported numerous days in which Hawaiian women and girls were restricted by local kapu from entering the water or visiting the ships. These rules were apparently consistent with laws in effect during from the 1780s and 1790s. Islander health seems to have had no bearing on the application of the kapu to commoners and their activities. The kapu in place before the arrival of Cook and Vancouver remained in place, though violations by Islanders increased with the arrival of newcomers. Until 1810, however, there is no evidence of new kapu put in place specifically to protect Islanders from the ma'i malihini. Nor is this attributable to the sacred or timeless nature of the kapu: by 1790, if not earlier, kapu were often applied at the desire of the ali'i (as well as various foreigners), without regard to particular gods or to religious tradition per se. For example, in 1794 Kamehameha put a kapu on the cattle herd introduced by Vancouver. Weapons, ships, and various other commodities were likewise protected by kapu.

The Scot Archibald Campbell believed that recreational consumption of 'awa (that is, non-medicinal use) had largely given way by 1809 to distilled liquors, in particular 'ōkolehao, a spirit made from ti leaves (*Cordyline fruticosa*). Some women at court had taken to drinking with two Aleutian Islanders temporarily in residence. Campbell noted that Ka'ahumanu herself enjoyed getting the Alutiiq women drunk, and

“by the end of the entertainment, her majesty was generally in the same situation.”¹³⁶

John Papa ‘Ī‘ī concurred about the quantity of liquor flowing through O‘ahu: in a number of districts, he noted, stills could be found in “great” number.¹³⁷ If it is true that “almost every one of the chiefs had his own still” by 1809, liquor and tobacco consumption among the maka‘āinana was in no way comparable to what Campbell, ‘Ī‘ī, and others observed among the ali‘i.¹³⁸ Hawaiian commoners in this period were rarely described by foreigners as “debauched” or “dissolute,” like the ali‘i. Not only sober, Hawaiian commoners were, according to Campbell, the “most industrious people I ever saw.”¹³⁹

Campbell’s captain Leonty Andrianovich (Ludwig August von) Gagemeister (Hagemeister) noted that Kamehameha’s bid for control of the Islands had been burdensome for commoners on O‘ahu. A Baltic German from Estonia, Gagemeister characterized the king as a despot who ruled by intimidation and kept the maka‘āinana in a state of dependency and poverty: “[T]he position of the common farmer... is a wretched one and very hard, for the king will sometimes... take as much as two-thirds of all the taro and sweet potatoes he has grown.... There are many who have not had the chance to eat their own meat, or even sample it, despite their possessing a sufficient number of pigs and dogs.” Gagemeister also noted that Kamehameha had begun to import workers from

¹³⁶ Campbell, *A Voyage Around the World*, 153–154.

¹³⁷ ‘Ī‘ī, *Fragments of Hawaiian History*, 85.

¹³⁸ Campbell, *A Voyage Around the World*, 133. See, e.g., Cox, *Adventures on the Columbia River*, 44.

¹³⁹ Campbell, *A Voyage Around the World*, 115. See also Cox, *Adventures on the Columbia River*, 48–49. Campbell had a better basis for this judgment than most. Before arriving at the Big Island on a Russian trading ship, Campbell had lost both his feet to frostbite on the Northwest Coast of North America. Big Island ali‘i seem to have taken pity on Campbell, and employment was found for him as a sail maker for the king’s fleet. Hour upon hour of sedentary labor ensured plenty of time for observing local customs and society among the maka‘āinana.

various parts of the Islands to aid in the construction of ships, barns, and the like: “Not only does the king pay them nothing for their labor; he even declines to feed them. One result has been insufficiencies in the food supply, and hunger has killed many people in recent times.” That may have been true, though Gagemeister was also aware that commoners secretly cultivated small plots of their own to avoid forfeiting all in tribute, an age-old strategy to defend against the “sharks upon the land.” Migrant laborers had no such opportunity. Yet there are no reports of Kamehameha’s laborers starving to death or even suffering from exhaustion or malnutrition. Nevertheless, Gagemeister believed that the king’s despotism had decreased the Islands’ population to “barely 100,000.”¹⁴⁰

It was at this point that the Spaniard Francisco de Paula Marín—horticulturalist, architect, chiefly advisor, and physician to the king—began to keep a journal. Though complicated by its transmission through a second party (the original document was lost), Marín’s journal is a critical source for the periodic, non-fatal illnesses and other health problems of the ali‘i and maka‘āinana in the 1810s. The level of detail is surprising. For instance, Marín recorded the menstrual cycles of Ka‘ahumanu and other female ali‘i at court. It is not so strange as it sounds. How Marín knew about women’s cycles explains his reason for recording it: ali‘i women retreated to special huts (*hale pe‘a*) for their *po‘ino* (unlucky) period of *haumia* (menstruation).¹⁴¹ For an advisor to know that

¹⁴⁰ Gagemeister (Jan.–March 1809), in Barratt, *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 169. Like Krusenstern and Lisiansky before him, Gagemeister spoke excellent English; see *ibid.*, 13. The population of the Islands was probably closer to 150,000 in 1809; see Appendix A.

¹⁴¹ Gutmanis, *Kahuna La‘au Lapa‘au*, 34; Jane L. Silverman, *Kaahumanu: Molder of Change* (Honolulu, 1987), 51; Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*, 15.

Ka‘ahumanu, say, would be separated from the king for a few days each month could be useful information indeed.

The first entry of Marín’s diary reads, “Kings brother dies November 1809. His bones thrown away.” The decedent was Kamehameha’s forty-four-year-old brother Keli‘imaika‘i. The cause of his death is unknown. Two months later, Marín recorded his treatment of the Maui high chief Boki for an unknown illness. Boki’s brother “William (or Billy) Pitt” Kalanimoku was apparently convinced by the Spaniard’s “cure,” and thus ordered Marín to “cure his mother.”¹⁴² It is not known what ailed Boki and his mother (or what Marín prescribed as a cure), yet it is clear from Marín’s journal that the ruling chiefs were frequently sick with chronic illnesses in the 1810s. In November 1818, and again in January 1820, Marín recorded flu-like outbreaks at southern O‘ahu; but for most of the decade, the ali‘i were contracting mundane chronic illnesses. The young King Liholiho was sick enough in January 1822 that “the alarm was given, that the king was dying at Waikiki.” In the event, he recovered in “about two weeks.”¹⁴³ Ka‘ahumanu was sick in January 1810, August 1811, August 1819, March 1821, and December 1821, when she was “brought to the borders of the grave.”¹⁴⁴ Her co-regent and cousin William Pitt Kalanimoku was sick in November 1811 and July 1812. Kalanimoku’s uncle

¹⁴² Francisco de Paula Marín journal (1810), in Ross H. Gast, ed., *Don Francisco de Paula Marin: A Biography* (Honolulu, 1973), 200.

¹⁴³ Hiram Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands...* (Hartford, 1848), 158–159.

¹⁴⁴ Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 148–149. See also Marín journal, in Gast, ed., *Don Francisco de Paula Marin*, TBD; Louis Claude de Saulses de Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819: A Narrative Account*, trans. Ella L. Wiswell, ed. Marion Kelly (Honolulu, 1978), 19; and Karl Gillesem (24 March 1821), in Barratt, ed., *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 163, 182–183.

(Ka‘uhiwawae‘ono) was sick from February 1812 until his death in April. The nineteen-year-old Queen Kamāmalu was “very ill” in April 1821 with symptoms that two Russian surgeons deemed “dangerous” enough to postpone their departure.¹⁴⁵ Boki, seemingly healthier than his kin, was sick in January 1810, and then in June 1819, at which point he was “very sick.”¹⁴⁶ In January 1820 Boki and his wife Liliha both caught the flu-like bug at O‘ahu.¹⁴⁷

Marín’s journal is the first written record of a ali‘i fatality from syphilis: “The day 10 Jan[uar]y [1819] died Cajabay-o-pio of the venereal.”¹⁴⁸ It is unclear whether Marín treated this man—Kahapai‘opi‘o?—for his condition, but his death is a reminder that the first fatal ma‘i malihini on the Islands continued to take a toll forty years later. Within a decade of Kahapai‘opi‘o’s death, other victims of syphilis would be identified in journals and letters.

Islands of the King or Ruler of Owhyhee

In Spring 1815, at Canton, American fur trader Peter Corney picked up sixteen Hawaiians who had been dropped off by a Canadian ship earlier in the trading season. Corney intended to return the Islanders to Hawai‘i, but “several” of them died “shortly

¹⁴⁵ Gillesem, in Barratt, ed., *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 182–183n2.

¹⁴⁶ Marín journal (25 Sept. 1819), in Gast, ed., *Don Francisco de Paula Marin*, 233. By August 1819, Boki seemed little better to Freycinet, who described him as “sunk in a sort of lethargy” and with “horribly ulcerated legs.” Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 34–35. For Boki’s health in 1819, see Chapter Five.

¹⁴⁷ Marín journal (25 Sept. 1819), in Gast, ed., *Don Francisco de Paula Marin*, 233.

¹⁴⁸ Marín journal (25 Sept. 1819), in Gast, ed., *Don Francisco de Paula Marin*, 225. I have been unable to locate Kahapai‘opi‘o [?] elsewhere in the written record.

after” the ships set off from the Asian mainland.¹⁴⁹ Neither the names of these Hawaiians nor the causes of their deaths were recorded. When Corney’s fleet arrived at the Big Island in November, the captain enjoyed wine below decks with a “step-sister” of the prince Liholiho. It is unlikely that this woman, whom Corney identified as “Maroo,” was Kamāmalu (Liholiho’s full sister), as Kamāmalu was only thirteen years old in 1815. But Maroo was a chiefess, and she had taken liberties by drinking wine with Corney below decks. In what was by now a common refrain, Maroo “pressed me very much to remain” at the Big Island. The chiefess, that is, showed an interest in Corney as a potential challenger to Island authorities.¹⁵⁰

The North American War of 1812 kept American and British observers of the Islands to a minimum. About the same time that American troops invaded and occupied the British-held town of Sandwich, Ontario, the king of the “Sandwich Islands,” having largely achieved his dominion over the archipelago, moved his government back to the Kona coast on the Big Island. Apparently Kamehameha was never happy living away from home. Although his return to the Big Island allowed the mō‘ī to fish and farm, this was hardly retirement. He continued to stockpile weapons, gunpowder, and ammunition, and to trade for iron and ship’s stores to build new sloops and warships.¹⁵¹ He also forced maka‘āinana to harvest and prepare sandalwood for the lucrative new trade.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ Corney, *Voyages in the Northern Pacific*, 38, 41.

¹⁵⁰ Corney, *Voyages in the Northern Pacific*, 47.

¹⁵¹ Adelbert von Chamisso, *A Voyage Around the World with the Romanzov Exploring Expedition in the Years 1815–1818 in the Brig Rurik, Captain Otto von Kotzebue*, ed. and trans. Henry Kratz (Honolulu, 1986), 182.

¹⁵² Chamisso, in Kratz, ed., *A Voyage Around the World with the Romanzov Exploring Expedition*, 115,

When foreign traders arrived at Kona—which most did before sailing on to Honolulu—Kamehameha presented himself alternately in the garb of a Euro-American military officer or in the *malo* (traditional girdle) and ‘ahu ‘ula. With either outfit he wore a European- or American-made straw hat.¹⁵³ Earlier in 1809, when the Scot Archibald Campbell first met Kamehameha, the king was dressed in European garb with “a blue coat and gray pantaloons.” Observers at the time—like scholars since—made much of the king’s choice of outfits and other royal displays.¹⁵⁴ But there is little evidence that the “adoption” of Euro-American garb meant anything in particular to Kamehameha and his fellow chiefs, beyond an expression of power.¹⁵⁵ The king appeared in various combinations of foreign and local costume, and at least once met with a ship’s captain wearing nothing but the *malo*.

When a Russian exploring expedition sent by Tsar Alexander I arrived at O‘ahu in November 1816 the seamen learned that one of their countrymen, a physician with the Russian-American (Alaska) Company, had gone rogue and built a fort on Kaua‘i. Dr.

183. Kamehameha’s move was perhaps not well-timed given that the Big Island was just coming out of a three-year drought. See Marshall Sahlins, *Anahulu: The Anthropology of History in the Kingdom of Hawai‘i*, vol. 1, *Historical Ethnography*, with Dorothy B. Barrère (Chicago, 1992), 33–34.

¹⁵³ Corney (Jan. 1815), *Voyages in the Northern Pacific*, 35; Otto von Kotzebue, *A Voyage of Discovery into the South Sea and Beering’s Straits...*, vol. 1 (London, 1821), 301; Chamisso, in Kratz, ed., *A Voyage Around the World with the Romanzov Exploring Expedition*, 115, 182; Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 181–183.

¹⁵⁴ E.g., Jennifer Thigpen, *Island Queens and Mission Wives: How Gender Remade Hawai‘i’s Pacific World* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2014), 22–25.

¹⁵⁵ The same can be said of adopting foreign names. Hawaiian names were extremely difficult for even the most diligent foreigners to understand, vocalize, and recall. Names like Billy Pitt, John Adams, George Cox, and, for cabin boys, Jack, were employed by Hawaiians for various reasons, but convenience was principal. This is not to say that the ali‘i did not admire the personages whose names they took (or that they did not like, or even prefer, their new names), but they knew little about King George, William Pitt, or John Adams besides the power these men wielded—which was reason enough to take their names.

Georg Anton Schäffer had been sent to the Islands to gain a monopoly on the lucrative sandalwood trade for the Russian-American Company. To achieve this, Schäffer would need to ingratiate himself with the ruling chiefs who controlled the trade. He did so by attending to their health. Quickly raising suspicions among Americans on O‘ahu, the “Russian spy” shortly fell out of favor with the ruling chiefs and fled to Kaua‘i where he offered protection to Kaumuali‘i against Kamehameha’s long-intended conquest. Schäffer had a large stone fort erected at Waimea Bay and began to fancy himself co-ruler of Kaua‘i with Kaumuali‘i. Growing wise to Schäffer’s ambitions, Kaumuali‘i took over the fort and sent the physician packing within a year.¹⁵⁶ It is one of the strange coincidences of Hawaiian history that Schäffer built his Russian Fort Elizabeth in Waimea Bay at the mouth of the Waimea River, overlooking the very spot where Cook first made landfall in 1778. The ruins of the fort can be visited today.

After dismissing Schäffer in 1815, Kamehameha elicited the services of English-Portuguese adventurer John Elliot de Castro as physician. It was Castro, in his role as king’s physician, who met the Tsar’s expedition at O‘ahu in November 1816 and arranged a meeting between the officers and the king. Both Schäffer and Castro, like the Spaniard Francisco de Paula Marín and the Frenchman Jean Baptiste Rives before them, gained the trust and confidence of the ruling chiefs by ministering to their health. They would hardly be the last foreigners to do so. By the time missionary physician Gerrit P.

¹⁵⁶ Chamisso, in Kratz, ed., *A Voyage Around the World with the Romanzov Exploring Expedition*, 116; Kotzebue, *A Voyage of Discovery into the South Sea and Beering’s Straits*, 303–305.

Judd arrived thirteen years later, there was a precedent for medical men ingratiating themselves with the monarchs and ruling chiefs.

Historians have overlooked the important role played by foreign medical men (and those posing as such) on the Islands.¹⁵⁷ The prospects for foreign physicians knew no limits due to the chronic health problems of the Hawaiian nobility. Schäffer was perhaps the first foreign physician to plan his strategy ahead of time, and may have been instructed by the Russian-American Company to use his medical skills to earn the king's favor. Schäffer claimed to have treated Kamehameha for a "heart illness" and Ka'ahumanu for a "severe fever" before his dismissal in 1815. These "treatments" enabled the Russian physician, as he put it in a letter to the Company, to "win over the friendship and trust" of the king.¹⁵⁸ Castro, Rives, and Marín managed to do the same thing, if with less scheming ahead of time.¹⁵⁹

A total of seven Russian ships visited the Islands on eleven occasions between 1809 and 1826, staying an average of eighteen days.¹⁶⁰ All seven ships called at Honolulu. The Russians got to know a number of the ruling chiefs, in particular Ka'ahumanu, and her cousins, the brothers Boki and William Pitt Kalanimoku. The Russians also offered a commentary on Hawaiian society and culture during a tumultuous

¹⁵⁷ E.g., for Schäffer, see Harold Whitman Bradley, *The American Frontier in Hawaii: The Pioneers, 1789–1843* (Stanford, CA, 1942), 49–51.

¹⁵⁸ N. N. Bolkhovitinov, "The Adventures of Doctor Schäffer in Hawaii, 1815–1819," trans. Igor V. Vorobyoff, *Hawaiian Journal of History* 7 (1973): 55–78. See also *ibid.*, 75n22, for an earlier mistranslation of Ka'ahumanu's illness as "yellow fever."

¹⁵⁹ For Rives' work as a physician to the ali'i, see J[acques] Arago, *Narrative of a Voyage Round the World, in the Uranie and Physicienne Corvettes...* (London, 1823), 98.

¹⁶⁰ Barratt, ed., *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 41, 45. Gagemeister's 1809 visit was the longest at fifty-six days.

period. These officers of the Tsar were, in the view of one scholar, “better read, more literate, [and] more intellectually curious than any whaling captain of the day.”¹⁶¹

Certainly their observations of Islander life in the days leading up to the cultural revolution were astute, in spite of their sharing many of their countrymen’s biases.

Exquisite depictions of Hawaiian life by two artists, the German-Russian Louis Choris and the Russian Mikhail Tikhanov, were among the best ethnographic representations of Hawai‘i since Cook.¹⁶²

The French-born German naturalist Adelbert von Chamisso, who had never sailed the Pacific, was curious about Hawaiian life and customs. He was also steeped in the Rousseauian ideology of the noble savage, which colored his observations. When solicited by sex workers at O‘ahu—“propositions” were “shouted at us by all the women round about and by all the men in the name of the women”—Chamisso noted that “chastity” was not a virtue in Hawaiian society: “In a condition closer to nature a woman is first bound...by the will of the man whose property she has become.”¹⁶³ Chamisso was

¹⁶¹ Barratt, ed., *The Russian View of Honolulu*, vii. For Chamisso’s scientific and literary production, see Kratz, ed., *A Voyage Around the World with the Romanzov Exploring Expedition*, xiv–xxiv. Chamisso wrote primarily in German. Like Krusenstern and Lisiansky before them, the Tsar’s officers in 1816—Russians, Franco-Germans, and Baltic Germans—spoke excellent English.

¹⁶² Mikhail Tikhanov was born a serf and sent by his master to the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts at age seventeen. Regarding Tikhanov’s 1818 session with Boki and George Cox Ke‘eaumoku, Golovnin observed that the chiefly brothers were “very pleased to have our artist depict them on paper.” Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 186.

¹⁶³ Chamisso, in Kratz, ed., *A Voyage Around the World with the Romanzov Exploring Expedition*, 119. Enthusiastic about the cultural diversity of Hawai‘i, Chamisso noted that Pacific trade had brought together “the most varied assortment of all the peoples of the earth.” Among the ethnicities identified by Chamisso in 1817 were Chinese, Anglo-American, an African-American, and a Flathead Indian. The latter two men had been chosen as exotic servants for a wealthy American woman. See Chamisso, in Kratz, ed., *A Voyage Around the World with the Romanzov Exploring Expedition*, 186. Chamisso had wanted to stay at the Islands for a year to observe Hawaiian customs, but Kotzebue forbade it. Chamisso’s motives were

grasping at straws, but the sex trade was in fact thriving at O‘ahu. While anchored off Honolulu, Chamisso’s captain Otto von Kotzebue noted that the ship was “from morning to evening...surrounded by the fair sex.”¹⁶⁴

Meanwhile tobacco use had become so common among Islanders that “young children smoke before they learn to walk,” and adults “have carried it to such an excess, that they have fallen down senseless, and often died in consequence.” This is unlikely, though the tobacco Kotzebue sampled at the Big Island was “extremely strong.” Ali‘i women had taken to hanging their German-made wooden-and-brass tobacco pipes from their clothing.¹⁶⁵ Other observers noted the chiefesses hung small mirrors from their garments.¹⁶⁶

Kotzebue was the first foreigner to provide extended comments about Liholiho, the heir apparent and son of Kamehameha and Keōpūolani, the highest ranking chiefess on the Islands. The Russian delegation met the twenty-year-old Liholiho in 1816 in a “neat and small” dwelling house where the prince was “stretched out on his stomach.”

apparently innocent. The Islands were losing population, he noted, and the culture would disappear with the people. Twenty years later, Chamisso was still bitter about being thwarted in his effort to document Hawaiian life. Sounding a chord from the budding European discipline of anthropology, Chamisso wrote that “no one appears to have thought of investigating and thus saving from oblivion that which could contribute to the understanding of” of the Hawaiian people, shedding light on their history and “perhaps the history of mankind.” Ibid., 125. See also Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 190, 212.

¹⁶⁴ Kotzebue (6–7 December 1816), in Barratt, ed., *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 145. Two years later Golovnin observed that “only commoners indulge in this appalling practice; the chiefs and people of rank will not trade their daughters or wives for any sum.” Golovnin (Oct. 1818), in Barratt, ed., *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 239.

¹⁶⁵ Corney, *Voyages in the Northern Pacific*, 110; Kotzebue, *A Voyage of Discovery into the South Sea and Beering’s Straits*, 306–307. According to Kotzebue, “[t]here was no hut without a tobacco pipe, and smoking appears to be one of the principal pleasures here.” Kotzebue (30 Nov. 1816), in Barratt, ed., *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 231.

¹⁶⁶ Campbell, *A Voyage Around the World*, 137; Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 7.

From this position the prince “indolently raised his head to look at” his guests, and then went back to his business, which seemed to the Russians to consist of nothing but relaxation. As an ambassador for the Tsar, Kotzebue was aghast at this indifferent reception, describing Liholiho as a corpulent “monster” with a “stupid vacant countenance,” whose name—which Kotzebue believed translated as “dog of all dogs”—suited him perfectly.¹⁶⁷

The prince’s father elicited a much different reaction. Kotzebue and his officers viewed the mō‘ī as strong, competent, judicious, and even wise. On a tour of his personal heiau, Kamehameha grasped a *ki‘i* (wooden idol) and proclaimed, ““These are our gods, whom I worship; whether I do right or wrong, I do not know; but I follow my faith, which cannot be wicked, as it commands me never to do wrong.” For a “savage” who had “raised himself by his own native strength of mind to this degree of civilization,” this avowal of Native religion “indicated much sound sense” to Kotzebue. Such a king “deserves to have a monument erected to him,” or at the very least, a more suitable heir than Liholiho. Kotzebue also noted that while Kamehameha was “fond of wine” and graciously supplied it to guests, he himself did “not indulge in it to excess,” as Liholiho seemed to do.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁷ Kotzebue, *A Voyage of Discovery into the South Sea and Beering’s Straits*, 308–309. The Russians confused the prince’s name with the Hawaiian word for dog, *‘ilio*. Chamisso described Liholiho as “weak and soulless.” Chamisso (Dec. 1816), in Barratt, *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 175.

¹⁶⁸ Kotzebue, *A Voyage of Discovery into the South Sea and Beering’s Straits*, 312, 308–309, 311. The artist Louis Choris’ portrait of Kamehameha was a “source of happiness” and greatly admired by the ali‘i. It was apparently the first portrait the self-described “King or Ruler of Owhyhee” had sat for. See Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 197. On Kamehameha’s “temperate” use of food and drink, see also Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 192. But cf. Cox, *Adventures on the Columbia River*, 37, 45. Critics of Liholiho’s drinking were legion; see Chapter Four. For chiefly



A year after Kotzebue and Chamisso's second visit to O'ahu, Capt. Vasily Mikhailovich Golovnin arrived at Honolulu on a supply mission to Kamchatka. On this, Golovnin's second visit to the Islands, there were few signs of an imminent cultural revolution. The Big Island chief with whom Golovnin first met observed kapu by stepping outside to drink to the health of the *Lūkini* (Russians). John Elliot de Castro, personal physician and close advisor to the king, himself observed the kapu, according to Golovnin. Other chiefs were governed by kapu that seemed arbitrary. One male chief was forbidden from eating pork; another jumped from the Russian ship when chicken was served at dinner; and a third would not share the Russians' fire in order to light his cigar. At Kamehameha's state house Golovnin noted that Liholiho was not permitted to enter the house since he outranked the king through his mother's line.¹⁶⁹ The kapu system, in other words, remained in place, at least in Kamehameha's neighborhood. Golovnin also saw no evidence that the king was anything but healthy, though he would die five months later.

Having visited O'ahu once before, Golovnin was surprised in 1818 to encounter chiefesses with multiple "husbands." An ali'i woman's second husband was known in the local parlance as the "husband's friend." Like Chamisso and Corney before him, Golovnin noted heavy liquor consumption among the ali'i, notably among the chiefesses. In at least one instance, the intoxication of a Kona coast chiefess resulted in blows being

consumption of liquor in 1816, see Kotzebue (30 Nov. 1816 and 4 Dec. 1816), in Barratt, *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 199, 202.

¹⁶⁹ Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 178–183, 208.

exchanged between her and other chiefs, including her “second husband.”¹⁷⁰ Liquor did not come cheap. The going rate for a bottle of rum in October 1818 was a goat kid. A large goat would fetch two bottles.¹⁷¹

Like many ships’ officers and traders before him, Golovnin was entertained by military practices (“sham battles”) and boxing matches. In the latter entertainment, “only two pairs fought and not very well at that.” The problem, thought Golovnin, was that “though many came forward they could not agree to fight, each one considering himself weaker than his opponent.” The Americans in attendance explained to Golovnin that Hawaiians “had completely lost their former warlike spirit, courage, and skill with hand arms.” Finding Euro-American weapons “much more convenient,” the American commentators continued, the people “took to guns and cannon, which they never learned to handle properly, and abandoned their own methods.”¹⁷²

Accounts of drunken chiefesses and docile boxers would lead observers to identify a societal “fatigue” or “ennui” among the Hawaiian ruling classes, with many foreigners then generalizing these developments as a broader Hawaiian “cultural decline.” Similar characterizations of Native North Americans, Aboriginal Australians, and other Pacific Islanders had long been circulating around the Pacific and Atlantic worlds, which helped observers at Hawai‘i to conceptualize the developments they saw

¹⁷⁰ Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 180–184. See also Golovnin (Oct. 1818), in Barratt, ed., *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 221: “[U]nfortunately strong spirits are in too general use among them now; and numerous chiefs have become inveterate drunkards.”

¹⁷¹ Golovnin (Oct. 1818), in Barratt, ed., *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 221. Note, however, that goats multiplied “prodigiously” on O‘ahu in 1796. Broughton (Jan. 1796), *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean*, 34–35.

¹⁷² Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 187.

there. Even today historians and other scholars occasionally trot out notions of cultural or societal fatigue, anomie, or decline in various contexts. Typically scholars conjoin population decline—a *fact* in many Native societies—with cultural “decline,” a slippery and loaded gloss on change over time.¹⁷³ With the exception of chronic health problems and shortened lifespans, there is little evidence of societal “fatigue” or cultural “decline” in this period at Hawai‘i.¹⁷⁴ What were foreigners seeing that led them to draw such conclusions, and why have these notions lived on?

European and American visitors paid careful attention to the ruling chiefs’ consumption patterns. In foreigners’ accounts, scenes of ali‘i extravagance and luxury were typically set beside observations of maka‘āinana labor in the sandalwood and sex trades. Living and working conditions for the maka‘āinana were grim, and the ruling chiefs were racking up huge debts leveraged by maka‘āinana labor in sandalwood; yet these phenomena were no departure from past practice at the Islands, much less signs of socio-cultural fatigue or decline.¹⁷⁵ Hewing close to the Euro-American sources,

¹⁷³ E.g., Denning, *Islands and Beaches*, 127–128, 197, 226–231; Alfred W. Crosby, “Virgin Soil Epidemics as a Factor in the Depopulation in America,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 33 (1976): 289–299, esp. 296–297; David E. Stannard, “Disease and Infertility: A New Look at the Demographic Collapse of Native Populations in the Wake of Western Contact,” *Journal of American Studies* 24 (1990): 325–350; Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel: A Short History of Everybody for the Last 13,000 Years* (London, 1998), 214; and Newell, *Trading Nature*, 133–136. For an early scholarly reference to cultural “fatigue” in the context of 1810s Hawai‘i, see A[lfred] L. Kroeber, *Anthropology* (New York, 1948), 403.

¹⁷⁴ Beyond references to increased liquor and tobacco consumption, infanticide and abortion, “covetousness” and consumption practices, foreign observers seem to have been thinking of the abandonment of various customs and practices. See, e.g., Gilbert Farquhar Mathison, *Narrative of Visit to Brazil, Chile, Peru, and the Sandwich Islands, During the Years 1821 and 1822* (London, 1825), 469–478.

¹⁷⁵ Kamehameha was the exception to the rule of ali‘i indebtedness to foreign traders in the 1810s; but then the king was exceptional in the wealth and power he wielded. For ali‘i debts and maka‘āinana labor in the sandalwood trade, see, e.g., David Malo, “On the Decrease of Population on the Hawaiian Islands,” trans. L[orrin] Andrews, *Hawaiian Spectator* 2 (1839): 121–131, esp. 126–127. For skepticism regarding

anthropologist Marshall Sahlins characterized the chiefs' "conspicuous and invidious" consumption of the 1810s as a "political economy of grandeur."¹⁷⁶ But these terms are of questionable usefulness in the Hawaiian context. Prestige mattered to ali'i who were in regular competition with each other for position. But, again, it is not clear that this behavior was fundamentally different from the 1770s (or the 1790s), much less that of hereditary monarchies worldwide in this period. Nor is this any excuse for ali'i treatment of the maka'āinana, which some historians have excused and naturalized in the guise of cultural norms.¹⁷⁷

Traders commented on ali'i consumption because their business was trade and because they had concerns about Hawaiian debts ever being paid back. *Scholarly* attention to ali'i consumption is another issue. Naturally, there has been a tendency to read the cultural revolution of the 1820s back onto the 1810s, the logic being that there must be a cause hiding somewhere, perhaps in the chiefs' fiscal choices. But as with the names they took and the clothes they wore, ali'i consumption may mean less than scholars have suggested. Ali'i consumption patterns of the 1810s mirror earlier patterns but with different commodities being consumed (liquor) and accumulated (clothing, accessories, weapons, iron).

the importance of ali'i debt to colonial power dynamics on the Islands, see Denise Noelani Arista, "Histories of Unequal Measure: Euro-American Encounters with Hawaiian Governance and Law, 1793–1827" (PhD dissertation, Brandeis Univ., 2009), chap. 2.

¹⁷⁶ Sahlins, *Anahulu*, 1:3, 54, 57, 64, 70. See also Marshall Sahlins, "Cosmologies of Capitalism: The Trans-Pacific Sector of 'The World System,'" in *Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory*, ed. Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Ortner, 412–455 (Princeton, 1994), esp. 432–434.

¹⁷⁷ Lilikalā Kame'eiehiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires: Pehea lā e Pono ai? How Shall We Live in Harmony* (Honolulu, 1992), 19, 21–22, 26, 36.

Scholarly claims of Hawaiian socio-cultural fatigue or decline are also motivated by gender. The gendered dimensions of Golovnin’s account are obvious, with weak and docile Hawaiian boxers having lost their warlike spirit. Yet most such comments—whether by observers or later scholars—typically involve feminization of Hawaiians, consciously or otherwise.¹⁷⁸ Observers commented on extravagant ali‘i expenditures on silk, clothing, and other nonessential luxuries, made possible by maka‘āinana selling their bodies in port and harvesting sandalwood in the uplands.¹⁷⁹ Yet Euro-American observers never compared sex work at Hawai‘i with prostitution in their home countries. Nor did foreigners recall that George Washington had been inaugurated in diamond-studded shoes, or that King George III and Tsar Alexander could outfit an army in their evening gowns. A more accurate observation would be that the ali‘i of the 1810s continued to acquire prestige goods in a pattern consistent with earlier behavior, and that some boxing contestants had grown tired of fighting on demand for the entertainment of foreign ships’ captains.

Alcohol and tobacco consumption are another matter. If ali‘i consumption of liquor—rum, brandy, gin, vodka, and ‘ōkolehao (a spirit distilled from the ti plant)—was perhaps consistent with their earlier use of ‘awa, the short and long-term health effects of heavy tobacco and liquor consumption were distinct. Chiefly women were also

¹⁷⁸ E.g. Bushnell, *Gifts of Civilization*, 193–196, 292–294; Sahlins, *Anahulu*, 1:76–81; and Sahlins, “Cosmologies of Capitalism,” 432–434. Infantilization of Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders by Euro-Americans was universal in this period. See, e.g., Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 190–196.

¹⁷⁹ E.g., Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 211–212. Golovnin believed that “young women” in 1818 were still the “most important article of trade” at the Islands.

consuming liquor and tobacco at a rate comparable to their male counterparts. (In earlier decades chiefly women's consumption of 'awa was much lower than that of the male chiefs.) If Golovnin is to be believed, even maka'āinana had begun to consume liquor regularly—and to trade for it—by 1818.¹⁸⁰ Yet heavy consumption of powerful new intoxicants is still not proof of societal “fatigue,” much less of “cultural decline.” Nineteenth-century Hawaiians, like people throughout human history, drank and got drunk for various reasons. In Hawai'i, no less than Native North America, consumption of intoxicants also had social and ritual functions. Social problems resulting from heavy consumption of liquor and tobacco would not be evident for years to come.

Conclusion

In the first two decades of the nineteenth century Kamehameha continued his conquest of the Islands. Only the 'ōku'u epidemic of 1804 could stop Kamehameha from achieving what must have seemed his clear destiny of archipelago-wide supremacy. The pestilence did just that. While nothing as lethal as the 'ōku'u—in terms of short-term fatalities—would strike Hawai'i for a generation, the years after 1804 offered little reprieve. Commoners were reported to be living in squalor, afflicted by venereal diseases, tuberculosis, and scabies. Consumption of introduced intoxicants such as liquor and tobacco had begun to take a toll on Hawaiian health. By 1817 the chiefs had begun storing up foreign luxury items purchased with the labor of commoners in the

¹⁸⁰ Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 210–211.

sandalwood and sex trades. The health of the people suffered. While vocal dissent against Kamehameha and the new world he had created was rare, alternative visions for a Hawaiian future would rise to the surface shortly after the king's death. Some chiefs were ready to act.

CHAPTER FOUR:
Queens and Iconoclasts, 1818–1824

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At sea is an omen, in the wide sea.¹
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In 1824 the Premier of Hawai‘i wrote a letter to his King and Queen in London on diplomatic tour. “Here is my message to you,” the letter began:

We have been consumed here by death from sickness.... [George Cox] Keeaumoku...died, and was returned to Kai[l]ua. Pihoo...is dead. Kirivehe [Kiliwehi] is dead. Eeka is dead. Taumuarii [Kaumuali‘i] is dead, just nine nights ago. He died at Pakaka, and was returned to Lahaina and laid inside Keopuolani’s tomb, as he ordered me to do.... Kavero [Kawelo] is dead.... By and by, we may all be dead here from sickness; you should come back.²

This letter never reached King Liholiho and Queen Kamāmalu who had died after contracting measles during their tour of London. Both monarchs were in their twenties. These events were not entirely unexpected. Some Islanders had begged the king and

¹ “*Ma kai ‘ouli, ma kai akea*”: from a chant associated with the *kapu loulu* ceremony for the “prevention of epidemics, famine, destruction.” See John Papa ‘Ī‘Ī, *Fragments of Hawaiian History*, trans. Mary Kawena Pukui, ed. Dorothy B. Barrère (Honolulu, 1959), 38; and M. K. Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary*, rev. ed. (Honolulu, 1986), s.v. “loulu,” def. 4.

² [William Pitt] Kalanimoku to Liholiho, 2 June 1824, reproduced in J. Susan Corley and M. Puakea Nogelmeier, “Kalanimoku’s Lost Letter,” *Hawaiian Journal of History* 44 (2010): 91–100. For the provenance of the letter, see *ibid.*, 91. The translation is mostly Nogelmeier’s, though I have opted for different word choices and order in places; e.g., “consumed” for “*pau*,” and “By and by” for “*Ma muli*” (lit., “At later”). For similar sentiments by Kalanimoku one year later, see Kala[n]imoku (16 Dec. 1825), in *Ka Manao o na Alii [The Thought of the Chiefs]* (Utica, NY, 1827; originally publ. Oahu: Mission Press, 1825), 2–4. Kiliwehi—daughter of Kamehameha, half-sister of Liholiho—was the third of three wives Kalanimoku lost between 1821 and 1824; she was predeceased by Likelike (d. 1821) and Keōpūolani (d. 1823). Eeka is probably ‘E‘eke, a chief in the service of Ka‘ahumanu. See Samuel M. Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, rev. ed. (Honolulu, 1992), 224. For the burial of King Kaumuali‘i of Kaua‘i, see C[harles] S[amuel] Stewart, *Private Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, and Residence at the Sandwich Islands, In the Years 1822, 1823, 1824, and 1825* (New York, 1828), 291.

queen not to leave in 1823, and thousands wailed on the beach when they departed.³ Some months later, a lunar eclipse at the Islands caused a panic, with some taking it as an omen that their monarchs would perish abroad. “In tones of deep anxiety and distress,” the people observed that “*the moon is sick, very sick—an evil moon—evil indeed!—the gods are eating up the moon.*” A missionary on hand for the eclipse, learned that an earlier eclipse had anticipated the “death of several great chiefs.” The Reverend Charles S. Stewart could not abide these signs and explanations, but acknowledged that Hawai‘i was in fact a “land of disease and death, and, in many respects, of inconceivable corruption and horror.”⁴

Five years after the death of Hawai‘i’s first king, desperate notes were sounded by Hawaiians and foreigners alike about the fate of the Islands’ Native people. The immediate response to Kamehameha’s death in 1819 was for the high chiefs to nullify the kapu system of religious law that had governed Hawaiian life for centuries.⁵ A few

³ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 256.

⁴ Stewart, *Private Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, 253–254, 295, 268. See also journal of Sybil Moseley Bingham journal (typescript), 5 Feb. 1822, Hawaiian Mission Houses, Honolulu (hereafter, HMH); and Elizabeth Edwards Bishop, “A Journal of Early Hawaiian Days” (15 Jan. 1824), *The Friend* (Oct. 1900): 82–82, esp. 82. Kamakau narrated this event as a solar rather than lunar eclipse. See Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 266. For the religious importance of the moon in this period, see Gilbert Farquhar Mathison, *Narrative of Visit to Brazil, Chile, Peru, and the Sandwich Islands, During the Years 1821 and 1822* (London, 1825), 473.

⁵ Journal of Samuel and Nancy Ruggles, 30–31 March 1820 (typescript), HMH; Sybil Moseley Bingham journal, 9 Aug. 1822, HMH; and Otto von Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World in the Years 1823, 24, 25, and 26*, vol. 2 (London, 1830), 199. See also “Letter from Mr. Bishop to the Corresponding Secretary, Dated Kairua, Nov. 30th,” *Missionary Herald* 23, no. 8 (1827): 246–247; William Ellis, *Journal of William Ellis: Narrative of a Tour of Hawaii, or Owyhee...* (1827; rpt. Honolulu, 1963), 75; W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches, During a Residence of Nearly Five Years in the Society and Sandwich Islands*, vol. 4 (London, 1831), 44; Dorothy M. Kahananui, ed. and trans., *Ka Mooolelo Hawaii* [1838] (Honolulu, 1984), 231; James J[ackson] Jarves, *History of the Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands...* (Boston, 1843), 248; ‘Ī‘Ī, *Fragments of Hawaiian History*, 157; Hiram Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands* (Hartford, 1847), 162; and Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 219–

months later, in March 1820, the first company of New England missionaries arrived to find the Islands miraculously primed for conversion.

The death of Kamehameha in 1819 was a social and cultural tipping point for the Hawaiian chiefly class. What colonial or internal factors contributed to the collapse of Hawaiian religious law, and why exactly did the chiefs think the kapu system needed to go? I argue that the high chiefesses (and widows of Kamehameha) Ka‘ahumanu and Keōpūolani had come to believe by 1819 that the traditional laws had failed to keep the Hawaiian people alive and healthy; this belief was a principal reason for their decision to nullify the kapu.⁶ Not everyone agreed with chiefesses, but they found support from various of their kinsmen, especially close relatives. Some *ali‘i* (chiefs) decided that the *akua* (gods) had betrayed them or had themselves succumbed to foreign incursions. Others said the gods had lied.⁷

Hawaiians had, to be sure, long defied chiefly restrictions by consorting with foreigners and eating forbidden foods, all without retribution from the chiefs or their gods. And not just the ‘ai kapu, but various Hawaiian laws had been broken,

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⁶ Kame‘eleihiwa seems to have been the first scholar to suggest this interpretation, though she did not elaborate. See Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires: Pehea lā e Pono ai? How Shall We Live in Harmony* (Honolulu, 1992), 80–82.

⁷ Peter Corney, *Voyages in the Northern Pacific: Narrative of Several Trading Voyages from 1813 to 1818...* (Honolulu, 1896), 102. The Hawaiian term is “wahahe‘e” (e.g., the gods were “liars,” or the gods “lied”). See Pukui and Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary*, s.v. “wahahe‘e” (lit., “slippery mouth”). Kame‘eleihiwa cited Malo to the same effect; see Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 82. Additional evidence for Hawaiian use of this term during nullification of the kapu can be found in W[illiam] D. Alexander, “Overthrow of the Ancient Tabu System in the Hawaiian Islands,” *Hawaiian Monthly* (April 1884): 82–84. For the “failure” of the gods elsewhere in Polynesia in this era, see, e.g., Anne Salmond, *Between Worlds: Early Exchanges Between Maori and Europeans, 1773–1815* (Honolulu, 1997), 512; and Jennifer Newell, *Trading Nature: Tahitians, Europeans, and Ecological Exchange* (Honolulu, 2010), 113.

compromised, or weakened. All the while, foreign commodities flooded Hawaiian society, affecting people's health, occupations, and commercial interactions. By 1819, the high chiefesses were confident that the formal repeal of the 'ai kapu was neither going to threaten their rule nor endanger the body politic. So they nullified it. But why did the chiefesses believe that the age-old laws governing Hawaiian life were no longer *pono* (righteous, effective, good, balanced)? The inability of kapu to govern Islanders' behavior is an insufficient explanation. To reverse the trend of disease and depopulation, Ka'ahumanu and Keōpūolani decided that a change needed to occur; rejection of the kapu system would be that change.

If Hawaiian health was a major cause of the 1819 cultural revolution, other important factors cannot be ignored. Ongoing interactions with foreigners, political exigencies, and the death of the *mō'ī* (king) Kamehameha all played a role. The ruling chiefesses' dissatisfaction with their second-class status in the old regime bore on their decision as well.⁸ But health and gender, it turned out, were related problems for Ka'ahumanu and Keōpūolani. By overturning the religious laws that marginalized them, the ruling chiefesses aimed to improve the health of their people in general and to reverse the fertility slide of the ali'i in particular. Among those unable to bear children in this period was the leader of the cultural revolution herself, Ka'ahumanu. The chiefesses

⁸ Work remains to be done on the role of elite women elsewhere in Polynesia in the nullification (or gradual replacement) of traditional religious law with Western law and Christianity. It may be that Hawaiian chiefesses were unique in this respect. See, e.g., Richard Gilson, *The Cook Islands, 1820–1950* (Wellington, NZ, and Suva, Fiji, 1980), 8–9, 35–36; Greg Denning, *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent Land: Marquesas, 1774–1880* (Honolulu, 1980), 125–128, 188, 213; I[an] C. Campbell, *Island Kingdom: Tonga Ancient and Modern* (Christchurch, NZ, 1992), 53–63; Harry C. Evison, *Te Wai Pounamu: The Greenstone Island; A History of the Southern Maori During the European Colonization of New Zealand* (Wellington and Christchurch, NZ, 1993), 17; and Salmond, *Between Worlds*, 442, 508–517.

believed that a new path would be required to bring “new life,” as Ka‘ahumanu called it, to the nation.⁹

For the *maka‘āinana* (commoners), political exigencies and chiefly gender dynamics had little bearing on their lives in the short-term. Nor was the overthrow of the kapu system necessarily a shock to their worldviews, religious or otherwise. Maka‘āinana and ali‘i religious practice and understandings had been largely distinct, as we have seen. The cultural revolution was state-ordered, unevenly administered, and met with indifference by a broad swath of the population. Yet the long-term consequences for the Islands and their people were profound, not least in the political alliance shortly forged between reformer chiefs and American Protestant missionaries. This chapter addresses the nullification of the ‘ai kapu and the subsequent establishment of the Sandwich Islands Mission, a watershed moment in Hawaiian history with critical implications for what would follow.

As Premier William Pitt Kalanimoku’s letter of 1824 suggests, introduced diseases continued to take a toll on elites and commoners alike. Chronic infections that had plagued Hawaiians since 1778 were now accompanied by acute infections that sometimes reached epidemic levels. The disparity between Islander and foreigner health grew stark. Foreigners were few in number, but their families grew. Hawaiians struggled to bear children at all. The ruling chiefs increasingly relied on foreign medical men (and those posing as such), which only led to further colonial incursions. The thriving sex

⁹ Elisabeta Kaahumanu (20 Dec. 1825), in *Ka Manoa o na Alii* [The Thought of the Chiefs], 5.

trade, for its part, had added only a handful of mixed-descent individuals to Hawaiian society.¹⁰ The population continued to slide.

The “most obvious sign to Hawaiians” in the 1820s that their society was in trouble, according to historian Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, was “the rapid depopulation of Native Hawaiians.”¹¹ As early as 1823, the situation was grave enough—and the relationship with American missionaries sufficiently established—for King Liholiho to announce that the people should heed “the good words” of the missionaries, “so that we all shall be set right, that our spirits shall live, that our bodies shall be well.”¹² The following Spring, the Queen Regent Ka‘ahumanu declared the Sabbath would be a day of rest, and instruction in the missionaries’ *palapala* (reading and writing) mandatory for commoners across the archipelago. Meanwhile, the highest-ranking male on the Islands closed his letter to Liholiho and Kamāmalu in London with the following: “may God and his Son save you.”¹³

¹⁰ The Hawaiian fertility crisis offers the best explanation for the slow growth of the *hapa haole* (part-Hawaiian) population in this period. There is no evidence that Hawaiians singled out their pregnancies by foreigners for abortion or infanticide. In fact, *hapa haole* were prized for raising the social status of a family. (See Chapter One.) Vasily Golovnin saw “many” children of mixed marriages in 1818: “they run around almost naked, as do the rest of the natives, but they understand English and know various trades.” V[asily] M[ikhailovich] Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka, 1817–1819*, trans. Ella Lury Wiswell (Honolulu, 1979), 201. Later, missionary son and physician Luther H. Gulick opined that *hapa haole* persons were “far more healthy, and are better physically developed than those of pure Hawaiian blood.” See L. H. Gulick, “On the Climate, Diseases and Materia Medica of the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands,” *New-York Journal of Medicine* 14 (1855): 169–211, esp. 191. The low numbers of part-Hawaiian individuals is still more surprising given that their genetic make-up may have provided some resistance to Old World diseases through innate immunity. (See Introduction.)

¹¹ Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 140.

¹² Liholiho (Jan. 1823), in *Ka Manao o na Alii [The Thought of the Chiefs]*, trans. Lōkahi Antonio, collection of the author.

¹³ Corley and Nogelmeier, “Kalanimoku’s Lost Letter,” 95, 100.

“More to Feast than to Pray”

American sandalwood trader Peter Corney made his third and final visit to Hawai‘i in autumn 1818. His ship was more or less full of Hawaiians for the duration of the five-month stay. In his brief discussion of Hawaiian medicine, Corney noted that some Islanders—he did not indicate their rank—considered ‘awa consumption a “certain cure for venereal infection.” It is the first explicit reference to ‘awa for treating an introduced infectious disease. Corney noted that “many white men” had also “go[ne] through a course of this powerful medicine.” Notably, Corney believed that Hawaiian women were “not allowed to use” the ‘awa cure for their venereal infections: “and thus, unhappily, the dreadful disease, first brought to these islands by Captain Cook’s crew, remains to curse the inhabitants.”¹⁴

Given the sex-specific nature of Hawaiian religion—and therefore of medicine—Corney’s observation about sex-specific remedies should come as no surprise. Yet it is interesting that an introduced infectious disease afflicting both sexes in 1818 was still being treated with distinct remedies. Few if any Hawaiian women had been described by foreigners as bearing the characteristic signs of ‘awa consumption. It appears that women were now denied access to ‘awa as a remedial agent for venereal infections as well. Not that ‘awa would have been very effective. It is not clear when women started to use any of the dozen or so herbal remedies for venereal disease chronicled by scholars of Hawaiian medicine in the twentieth century.

¹⁴ Corney, *Voyages in the Northern Pacific*, 104–105.

Corney also commented on the social scene. He deduced that the maka‘āinana “know nothing more about their religion than a stranger who never saw the islands.” They pay the “greatest respect to their chiefs and priests, and are kept in superstitious ignorance.” What seems at first blush a slur against commoners may be a useful commentary on Island society and the state religion that controlled it. By the 1810s the chiefs applied the kapu as they saw fit, often to their own advantage, and sometimes by mere whim.¹⁵ (The exception was traditional holidays such as the *makahiki* new year celebration). Male ali‘i also freely broke the kapu, though chiefesses could only do so in private.¹⁶ Indeed, the discriminatory nature of the kapu by sex seemed to be increasingly evident to foreigners in the late 1810s. Corney’s observation that commoners “know nothing” about “their religion” makes sense given what we know about the divide between ali‘i/state religion and commoner religion. Corney’s mistake of course was to imagine that Hawaiian religion was unitary.

In addition to other functions, the kapu system was the principal system of social control on the Islands and a means of maintaining the political power of the chiefs over commoners.¹⁷ Many maka‘āinana seem to have viewed the kapu system just so. Whatever the people’s private beliefs and religious practices, *public* religion played a different role. Some ali‘i concurred, according to Corney: “I have frequently questioned the chiefs about their religion, and their general answer was, that they go to the morais

¹⁵ See, e.g., Ross Cox, *Adventures on the Columbia River, Including the Narrative of a Residence of Six Years on the Western Side of the Rocky Mountains...* (New York, 1832), 45.

¹⁶ Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 209.

¹⁷ Jocelyn Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence: Rank, Gender, and Colonialism in the Hawaiian Islands* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1990), 23.

[temples, *heiau*] more to feast than to pray, which I believe to be really the case.”¹⁸ That may be an overstatement, given that state religion was as yet conjoined with law, politics, and social life. Going to the *heiau* to feast was not necessarily a sign of faltering religious devotion.

On the other hand, some ali‘i had begun to express a preference for foreign religion. Corney was the first foreigner to record this phenomenon. To be clear, Corney recorded the private comments of a powerful and savvy ali‘i who was also brother to the co-regent Ka‘ahumanu. George Cox Ke‘eaumoku probably had his own reasons for sharing his thoughts with Corney in 1818, yet it is no easy task to identify what kind of diplomacy was at work in this meeting. Corney wrote that Ke‘eaumoku “sets the wooden gods and priests at defiance....He says, that they are all liars, and that the white men’s God is the true and only God.”¹⁹ Whatever Ke‘eaumoku’s particular motivation in this exchange, the general thrust of these comments may well have reflected his true feelings. During mourning ceremonies for Kamehameha the following year, Ke‘eaumoku got drunk and “broke up the kahunas’ doings,” which suggests he held them in contempt.²⁰ On the other hand, despite the pleading of his sisters Ka‘ahumanu and Lydia Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia, Ke‘eaumoku never received Christian baptism. Nor did he renounce his multiple wives or the *kāhuna* with whom he continued to consult about spiritual matters. He was

¹⁸ Corney, *Voyages in the Northern Pacific*, 101–102.

¹⁹ Corney, *Voyages in the Northern Pacific*, 198. Ke‘eaumoku’s counterpart in Tonga, the chief Ulakai, “said he had given up his gods” in August 1826. See I. C. Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 53–54.

²⁰ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 214. This action by Ke‘eaumoku apparently led some people to believe that Ka‘ahumanu’s kinsmen had employed sorcery to pray the king to death.

also deeply concerned about Hawaiian sorcery (‘*anā*‘*anā*), and employed the exorcist *kāhuna* for protection against the sorcerer *kāhuna*.²¹ He did all this *after* his supposed confession to Corney about the white men’s “true and only” God.²²

Ke‘eaumoku’s spoken English by 1818 was no impediment to Corney understanding him.²³ Was Ke‘eaumoku, then, feigning rejection of the *kāhuna* and expressing his belief in the superiority of the Christian God? Perhaps, though it is not clear what he stood to gain by doing so. In the long term, a religious alliance with the Americans was shrewd, and that may be explanation enough. But what if Ke‘eaumoku was sincere? Where had he learned about Christianity? What had caused him to reject the state religion of which he was a principal beneficiary and principal administrator across multiple islands? Might Ke‘eaumoku have considered the *haole* God the “true and only” one?

Whatever Ke‘eaumoku’s understanding and opinion of Western religion, it is unlikely that he had rejected Hawaiian spiritual and religious notions. Hawaiians of all classes could reject the authority, practices, and even legitimacy of the *kāhuna*—they might even consider the white men’s God superior to the *akua*—while maintaining a Hawaiian religious worldview, complete with multiple gods and multivalent notions of

²¹ See Chapter Three. See also Marshall Sahlins, *Anahulu: The Anthropology of History in the Kingdom of Hawai‘i*, vol. 1, with Dorothy B. Barrère (Chicago, 1992), 84–87.

²² Ke‘eaumoku was to his last days a brutal taskmaster of *maka‘āinana* harvesters in the sandalwood business. He had his new name “George Cox”—a mash up of King George and an American sea captain named Cox—tattooed on his arm. In similar fashion, Ke‘eaumoku’s brother Kuakini took the name John Adams.

²³ In 1821, a British trader reported that Ke‘eaumoku spoke “English better than any other native I had yet conversed with.” Mathison, *Narrative of Visit to Brazil, Chile, Peru, and the Sandwich Islands*, 393.

divinity. Religious ideas in early nineteenth-century Hawai‘i were not mutually exclusive. Ali‘i and maka‘āinana added new religious ideas and practices to their repertoire, yet they rarely (if ever) rejected the old ones.²⁴ Among other factors that prevented Islanders’ adoption of conventional Protestant theological notions in this period was the general lack of literacy.²⁵

Ke‘eaumoku could have learned about Western religion in various ways. Conversations with foreign residents John Young, Isaac Davis, and Francisco de Paula Marín would have been one way, though none of these men was conventionally or outwardly religious. A ship’s captain or sailor calling at the Islands after 1790 might have shared Western religious notions with Ke‘eaumoku. Or perhaps Ke‘eaumoku had learned of the haole God and come to his decision about the kāhuna and their rituals on his own, and for reasons as diverse as politics, family pressure, or personal preference.

Ke‘eaumoku’s contempt for the kāhuna and their “wooden gods” is a different issue. Ali‘i strife following Kamehameha’s conquests is probably key to understanding this preference. Ke‘eaumoku was a member of the Maui ruling elite. Upon the marriage of his sister Ka‘ahumanu to Kamehameha, and the latter’s conquest of Maui and O‘ahu in 1795, Ke‘eaumoku was politically elevated. After 1804 he was appointed governor of Maui, Moloka‘i, Lāna‘i, and Kaho‘olawe by Kamehameha. Ke‘eaumoku also ruled over

²⁴ Cf. Ralph S. Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778–1854: Foundation and Transformation* (Honolulu, 1938), 66–67.

²⁵ In this sense, Ke‘eaumoku’s comments to Corney about his religious preferences should be viewed as distinct from the experiences of the Hawaiian teenagers who sailed to New England in 1809, lived with clerical families, and studied English and Christianity at the Foreign Mission School in Cornwall, Connecticut. See below.

Waialua, a large district on northern O‘ahu, where he preferred to live. Yet as we have seen, Ke‘eaumoku was apparently ready to overthrow the king as early as 1809 and to replace him with his nephew Liholiho.²⁶ Kamehameha had also recently executed Kanihonui, the lover of Ke‘eaumoku’s sister (Ka‘ahumanu) and a favorite at court.

Tensions and rivalries among the ruling chiefs were legendary. The kahunas, for their part, acted at the behest of Kamehameha. If a ruling chief such as Ke‘eaumoku was unhappy with the king, it would hardly be surprising if his feelings toward the kahunas were also negative. Ke‘eaumoku, then, had abundant reasons for doubting the intentions, abilities, and even the legitimacy of the Islands’ priests. Hawaiian religion was not the problem for Ke‘eaumoku, in other words, but the Hawaiian religious order.



In autumn 1818 a flu-like outbreak struck southern O‘ahu. Kamehameha’s personal physician Francisco de Paula Marín recorded sixty deaths from the outbreak, most if not all in southern O‘ahu. It is unlikely that Kamehameha himself, who died in May 1819, succumbed to this disease. The king was residing on the Big Island at this time, and descriptions of his demise five months later do not indicate respiratory illness. The king’s younger sister Pi‘ipi‘i Kalanikaulihiwakama, however, may have been a victim. No older than forty-five, Pi‘ipi‘i died on October 23 in the Russian calendar, the

²⁶ See Chapter Three. As late as 1816 Adelbert von Chamisso believed that George Cox Ke‘eaumoku and William Pitt Kalanimoku were conspiring to re-take Maui from Kamehameha. See Chamisso, in *The Russian View of Honolulu, 1809–26*, ed. Glynn Barratt (Ottawa, 1988), 175.

day before Kamehameha sat for his portrait at Kailua-Kona (below, Fig. 2).²⁷

Unfortunately Marín did not indicate the duration or extent of the disease outbreak.

Little is known of the king's health in the years before his death. The Russian filibuster and physician Georg Anton Schäffer claimed to have treated the king for a "heart illness" in 1815, but Schäffer is hardly a reliable source. (See Chapter Three.) The first record of Kamehameha's final illness comes from Marín, who was called away from Honolulu to attend to the king on April 15, three weeks before his death. Marín, assisted by Kamehameha's chief minister William Pitt Kalanimoku, royal physician John Elliot de Castro, and the Native physicians Kūa'ua'u and Kuakamauna, treated the king until his death on May 8.²⁸ An enema was administered on April 27, and Marín noted that the king was suffering from diarrhea on May 1. These were the extent of his recorded symptoms. Marín noted that the king's wife Ka'ahumanu was sick on April 20, and that his son Liholiho was sick on April 29. Perhaps a bug was going around court at Kailua-Kona. Whether or not Kamehameha caught this supposed infection, it was probably not the cause of his death, though it may have compromised his fragile immune system. Portraits by ships' artists suggest that the king had lost weight between 1816 and 1818. In the latter portrait by Russian artist Mikhail Tikhonov, the king's face looks sunken and his eyes hollow.

²⁷ Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 206; Barratt, ed., *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 332–333. Note that Francisco de Paula Marín's reference to the death of the king's "sister" on 13 September 1815 was not Pi'ipi'i; it is not clear who this chiefess was. See Marín journal, in Ross H. Gast, ed., *Don Francisco de Paula Marín: A Biography* (Honolulu, 1973), 217.

²⁸ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 210. For William Pitt Kalanimoku, see below; for John Eliot de Castro, see Chapter Three.

In January 1820 Marín again recorded a flu-like outbreak on O‘ahu. On the 11th: “All the people ill of coughs. On the 13th: “There are many people ill of coughs and fevers.” On the 19th: “The people very sick.” By Marín’s description, this outbreak sounds like the November 1818 bug at O‘ahu, though it is unlikely that this was a continuation of that earlier disease. Given the seasonality and the symptoms described by Marín, both outbreaks were probably strains of influenza or another respiratory infection. Boki and his wife Liliha both took ill in the January 1820 outbreak. An ali‘i by the name of Kaihi died during this outbreak, though the actual cause of his death is unknown.²⁹

Influenza, no less than syphilis and tuberculosis, was a serious risk to a population with little or no previous exposure to it.³⁰ Adult mortality tended to be high in the earliest epidemics across Oceania.³¹ Unfortunately, little is known about either the morbidity or mortality rates for these and earlier hypothesized outbreaks of influenza. It is possible that some of the sixty victims identified by Marín had succumbed to bacterial pneumonia, one of the more common consequences of the flu, particularly among populations with less than optimal care; yet this, too, cannot be ascertained. A later flu outbreak in 1848–49 on the Islands, part of a global pandemic originating in Europe, would be better documented.



²⁹ Marín journal, in Gast, ed., *Don Francisco de Paula Marín*, 236–237.

³⁰ Alfred W. Crosby, “Influenza,” in *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, ed. Kenneth F. Kiple (Cambridge, UK, 1993), 807–811.

³¹ Leslie B. Marshall, “Disease Ecologies of Australia and Oceania,” in Kiple, ed., *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, 482–496, esp. 486.

The death of the mō‘ī traditionally meant a holiday from the kapu system. In this respect, Kamehameha’s death in May 1819 was little different from earlier suspensions of the kapu. Yet by the time a French scientific expedition arrived at the Big Island in August, the kapu system had been reinstated, at least at court. While the French observers would not see the cataclysm occur, within weeks of their departure the centuries-old system of Hawaiian religious law system crumbled. Journals kept by various members of the round-the-world expedition illustrate the early phases of this cultural revolution, while at the same time providing the most extensive observations of Hawaiian health since 1804. Stowing away on the *Uranie*, the wife of the French captain, Rose Freycinet, became the first female foreigner at the Islands to leave a written record. Two French artists—every bit as capable as the Russians before them—also left a remarkable visual record of life on the Islands in this period, particularly among the ali‘i.

Observant they may have been, but expedition leader Louis Freycinet and his wife Rose had no idea in August 1819 that the kapu system was shortly to be overthrown. Kamehameha’s death had initiated a particularly raucous period of “free eating” and other liberties, but the kapu system was back in place on O‘ahu and the Kona coast by mid-August. This is noteworthy given that Liholiho’s rule—with Ka‘ahumanu in the newly created position of *kuhina nui* (roughly, “great counselor”)—was as yet uncertain, and that competing factions continued to vie for Kamehameha’s mantle.³² One might expect greater chaos given the political turmoil the Islands faced upon the death of the

³² Louis Claude de Saulses de Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819: A Narrative Account*, trans. Ella L. Wiswell, ed. Marion Kelly (Honolulu, 1978), 19.

long-ruling first king. In the event, ali‘i and maka‘āinana alike seemed to French observers to be complying with the kapu.³³

Many historians have argued that the kapu system deteriorated gradually over time.³⁴ The observations of Louis and Rose Freycinet and their contemporaries force a reconsideration of this claim. Back in December 1816 Adelbert von Chamisso explained that despite many changes to the Islands, “[a]ll the restrictive laws of the *tabu*...are preserved in their full, inviolable strength....Intercourse with Europeans has thus far had very little influence on the outward social order, way of life, or customs of these people.”³⁵ After the death of Kamehameha, a number of observers noted that Kamehameha’s *heiau* (temple) was in disrepair, a result of the weeks-long freewheeling holiday following his death.³⁶ Yet destruction of the mō‘ī’s *heiau* was standard practice after his death, not a sign of social upheaval or cultural change.

³³ E.g., Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 22–23, 72–73, 78.

³⁴ E.g., James Jackson Jarves, *History of the Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands...* (Boston, 1843), 201–212; Manley Hopkins, *Hawaii: The Past, Present, and Future of Its Island-Kingdom; An Historical Account of the Sandwich Islands (Polynesia)*, 2nd ed. (London, 1866), 172–193; David Kalakaua, *The Legends and Myths of Hawaii: The Fables and Folk-Lore of a Strange People*, ed. R. M. Daggett (New York, 1888), 431–438; Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778–1854*, 66–68; Harold Whitman Bradley, *The American Frontier in Hawaii: The Pioneers, 1789–1843* (Stanford, CA, 1942), 125; M[alcolm] C. Webb, “The Abolition of the Taboo System in Hawaii,” *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 74 (1965): 21–39; Stephanie Seto Levin, “The Overthrow of the Kapu System in Hawaii,” *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 77 (1968): 402–430; Gavan Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu, 1968), 56–60; William Davenport, “The ‘Hawaiian Cultural Revolution’: Some Political and Economic Considerations,” *American Anthropologist* 71 (1969): 1–20; S. Lee Seaton, “The Hawaiian Kapu Abolition of 1819,” *American Ethnologist* 1 (1974): 193–206; Marshall Sahlins, *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1981), 55–56; and O[swald] A. Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization: Germs and Genocide in Hawai‘i* (Honolulu, 1993), 195–197.

³⁵ Adelbert von Chamisso journal (Dec. 1816), in Barratt, ed., *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 213–214.

³⁶ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 74. For Jacques Arago’s depiction of the *heiau*, see *ibid.*, 75.

Other changes in Hawaiian society were more still minor. Mourning her deceased husband and king, Ka‘ahumanu had the date of his death tattooed on her arm.³⁷ A number of other high chiefs, including Ka‘ahumanu’s sister Lydia Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia (also wife to Kamehameha), did the same.³⁸ Memorial tattoos for the deceased mō‘ī may have been a new development at Hawai‘i, but male ali‘i had been tattooing English names on their arms since 1812 or earlier.³⁹ Other high chiefs shaved their heads, knocked out their front teeth, or burned circles onto their faces and bodies to mourn the passing of the king. Kamehameha’s daughter Kamāmalu (who was also the favorite wife of her half-brother Liholiho) bore scars from multiple burn wounds to her face in August 1819.⁴⁰ Yet other chiefs scorned such behavior. When the *Uranie*’s surgeon Joseph Paul Gaimard asked Kamehameha’s chief minister and treasurer William Pitt Kalanimoku why he had failed to knock out his front teeth to mourn the deceased mō‘ī, Kalanimoku allegedly replied, “The number of madman is already large, I did not want to increase it.”⁴¹

Aware that he was simply the latest in a distinguished group of ethnographers to visit the Islands, Louis Freycinet noted matter-of-factly that the “strict laws of tabou

³⁷ Jane L. Silverman, *Kaahumanu: Molder of Change* (Honolulu, 1987), 58; J[acques] Arago, *Narrative of a Voyage Round the World, in the Uranie and Physicienne Corvettes...* (London, 1823), 81.

³⁸ For descriptions of portraits by Jacques Arago and Alphonse Pellion, see Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 15–16; Rose Freycinet journal, in Marnie Bassett, *Realms and Islands: The World Voyage of Rose de Freycinet in the Corvette Uranie, 1817–1820* (London, 1962), 163; and journal of Otto von Kotzebue (15 Dec. 1824), in Barratt, *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 187–188.

³⁹ Cox, *Adventures on the Columbia River*, 44.

⁴⁰ See Alphonse Pellion’s portraits of Likelike and Keouawahine, in Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 6. See also Rose Freycinet journal, in Bassett, *Realms and Islands*, 163. Later renderings of Kamāmalu—at least three were produced in London in 1824—do not depict these scars.

⁴¹ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 77.

forbid women to eat with men, except when in a canoe at sea, where it would be impossible to do otherwise.” Yet Freycinet also learned that “a man who had eaten with women...would no longer have the right to eat with other men.”⁴² Freycinet and other foreigners understood this function of the kapu system as protecting men from the polluting, effeminizing influence of women. As further evidence that the kapu system was still in place, at least for the ali‘i, Rose Freycinet observed that the high chiefess Likelike was forbidden from coming aboard the ship to dine with her husband William Pitt Kalanimoku.⁴³

If the kapu were in place at southern O‘ahu and the Kona coast, signs of social and cultural change were nonetheless evident. For example, the death penalty for infraction of the kapu could now be avoided by paying a fine.⁴⁴ It is not clear whether this new form of punishment was a temporary expedient or evidence of cracks in the armor of the kapu. Payment of fines for kapu violation had apparently begun toward the end of Kamehameha’s reign, though minor infractions had been long punished without loss of life.⁴⁵

A more significant development was that high chiefs suddenly expressed an interest in baptism. On August 12 the high chief William Pitt Kalanimoku boarded the *Uranie* off Maui and asked the French priest to baptize him. According to Freycinet,

⁴² Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 68. For gender switching in the Marquesas, see Denig, *Islands and Beaches*, 88–89.

⁴³ Rose Freycinet journal, in Bassett, *Realms and Islands*, 158. See also Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 23.

⁴⁴ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 89.

⁴⁵ Samuel Manaiakalani Kamakau, *Ka Po‘e Kahiko: The People of Old*, trans. Mary Kawena Pukui, ed. Dorothy B. Barrère (Honolulu, 1964), 11–19.

Kalanimoku told the priest that his mother (Kamakahukilani) had been baptised on her deathbed, and that he himself had “for a long time wished to become a Christian.”⁴⁶ Freycinet requested that the ceremony be delayed until he could return from a visit with the king on shore. When Liholiho heard from Capt. Freycient about the impending baptism, he donned his military jacket and rounded up his five wives, his young brother, and the co-regent Ka‘ahumanu. Dozens of courtiers and the Frenchman Jean Rives also rowed out to attend the ceremony.⁴⁷ Queen Ka‘ahumanu and Liholiho’s favorite wife Kamāmalu were provided with front-row seats on deck. The Abbé de Quélen, proceeded with the baptism, and Rose Freycinet noted that Kalanimoku “appeared strongly moved” throughout the ceremony.⁴⁸ Kalanimoku was christened “Louis” after the French ship captain who stood by as godfather.⁴⁹

During the baptism, Freycinet claimed that the new king Liholiho “had word passed to me” that he too would like to undergo the ritual but that “political considerations” prevented him from doing so at the moment. After Kalanimoku’s baptism, the royal court enjoyed wine and brandy on the ship, and Rose and Louis Freycinet began to worry that the king “would render himself incapable of going ashore.”

⁴⁶ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 24. The details of Kamakahukilani’s baptism are unknown, if in fact she was baptised.

⁴⁷ Rives arrived as a youth on the Islands between 1803 and 1810. By 1819 he had at least one Hawaiian wife and twin girls (born ca. 1815), and served the Kingdom as interpreter, secretary, advisor, and physician. Later, he gained landholdings on four islands before leaving for Mexico in the early 1830s. An unpublished illustration by Jacques Arago (in the Honolulu Art Museum archives) depicts Rives in French attire with a distinctive Hawaiian hair style.

⁴⁸ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 24–28; Rose Freycinet journal, in Bassett, *Realms and Islands*, 159. For Jacques Arago’s illustration of the baptism scene, see *ibid.*, 25, and below.

⁴⁹ Marc Serge Rivière, *A Woman of Courage: The Journal of Rose de Freycinet on Her Voyage around the World, 1817–1820* (Canberra, 2003), 103.

Rose observed that “in two hours these intrepid guests drank or took away enough to provide our table for more than 3 months.”⁵⁰ In any event, all returned safely to shore. Liholiho was never baptised by the Abbé de Quélen, but Kalanimoku’s brother, the high chief Boki, requested and received baptism aboard the *Uranie* a few days later. Freycinet believed that Boki’s motivation derived entirely from the fact that his brother had received baptism. Still, Boki brought along his wife Liliha for the ceremony, and three foreign ship captains stood by as witnesses.⁵¹ In this way, two Hawaiian high chiefs were baptized into the Catholic Church in 1819.

What prompted Kalanimoku’s interest in this European ritual, and what might the ali‘i have been trying to accomplish? Were the same principles at play as in Ke‘eaumoku’s earlier claim in favor of the Westerners’ God? Samuel Kamakau, writing fifty years later, claimed that Kalanimoku did not know what he was doing by being baptized. Kamakau, who had himself joined the Catholic Church in the 1860s, explained that Kalanimoku had boarded the *Uranie* along with the septuagenarian ali‘i John Young.⁵² Freycinet and the Abbé de Quélen asked Young “what Kalani-moku’s rank was, and upon being told that he was the chief counselor” to the king “and a wise, kind, and careful man, they baptized him into the Catholic Church without [Kalanimoku]

⁵⁰ Rose Freycinet journal, in Bassett, *Realms and Islands*, 159.

⁵¹ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 35; Rose Freycinet journal, in Bassett, *Realms and Islands*, 169. Arago was skeptical about the motives of both Boki and Kalanimoku; see Arago, *Narrative of a Voyage Round the World*, 106–109.

⁵² On Kamakau’s affiliation with the Catholic Church in the 1860s, see L. K. Kame‘eleihiwa, Introduction to *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, by Samuel M. Kamakau, rev. ed. (Honolulu, 1992), v.

knowing whether what he was doing was right or wrong.”⁵³ (Kamakau did not report on the baptism of Boki.) Surely this story was devised by someone hoping to distance the ruling chiefs from Catholicism. There was good reason to do so after 1827 when the Church was officially banned by the monarchy (see Chapter Five). It is unlikely that a powerful ruling chief would have allowed a religious ceremony on his behalf to take place literally behind his back. It is equally unlikely that Freycinet and the Abbé de Quélen would have conspired to baptize a powerful chief they barely knew and whose wrath they could scarce afford to incur, anchored as they were in the middle of the vast Pacific.

One of the first foreigners to interview Kalanimoku about his baptism learned that he had had simply “yield[ed] to an inclination he had long entertained,” which was “to declare himself publicly a convert to Christianity.”⁵⁴ The key word here is “publicly.” Whatever his personal feelings, beliefs, or understanding of Christianity, Kalanimoku had decided there were definite advantages in making a public display of his connection with European religion. Kalanimoku had, in a word, chosen to be baptized.⁵⁵ Of course being sprinkled by a foreign priest in the presence of foreign and local dignitaries was not the same as joining the Catholic Church—much less becoming a Christian, or (despite the Freycinets) even showing an *interest* in Christianity. Ship captain Otto von Kotzebue was probably correct that Kalanimoku had little if any sense in 1819 of the doctrinal differences between Catholicism and the Protestantism he would embrace a few years

⁵³ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 325–326.

⁵⁴ Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World*, 201.

⁵⁵ As early as 1816 Kalanimoku was apparently greeting European ship captains with “God bless you.” See Kotzebue, in Barratt, ed., *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 143.

later.⁵⁶ Whatever else it may have been, Kalanimoku's baptism was a shrewd move by a ruling chief interested in securing the favor of powerful foreigners in an uncertain time. Boki immediately understood as much, and followed his brother's lead.

The strategic choices by Ke'eumoku, Kalanimoku, and Boki fit a pattern across Polynesia in the coming decades. A high-ranking chief repudiated the gods—sometimes to win the support of foreigners (often missionaries)—more often as a move against a rival chief who controlled the priests. The provocation was followed by the rogue chief winning over a critical mass of his fellow high-ranking chiefs, and then the official overturning of the taboo system, which resulted in a war of some duration and impact. The high-ranking Tongan chief Ulakai, for example, “said he had given up his gods” out of interest for British and Tahitian missionaries in August 1826. One year later the Tongan king Alelotu'a officially broke the *tapu* and himself defied the gods.⁵⁷ Though this particular rupture would prove temporary, the Tongan ruling class proceeded to incorporate Christianity and its representatives over the next few years, following the Hawaiian pattern of 1818–1824. The sequence of events in Hawai'i and Tonga bears more than passing resemblance.

But there is little evidence that the Hawaiian chiefs in 1819 understood themselves to be participating in a broader Polynesian reform movement. (This would, however, become clear to them no later than 1825.) There is no evidence, for example, that the chiefs had yet learned of the baptism of the Tahitian king Pōmare II by British

⁵⁶ Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World*, 203.

⁵⁷ I. C. Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 52–54.

missionaries in May 1819.⁵⁸ Hawaiian chiefs instead were simply acting according to the wisdom of the moment.

Singularly Reduced

At his first stop on the Islands in 1819, Capt. Louis Freycinet offered medicine to the Queen of Hawaii. Freycinet noted that Ka‘ahumanu was “complaining of feeling generally unwell” and “sighing and complaining in such a way as to make me believe that she was about to die.” While the queen’s “plump appearance” and “air of prosperity” led Freycinet to question whether she was in fact ill, he nonetheless “prescribed some medicine,” which the royal advisor Jean Rives administered to her.⁵⁹ Freycinet failed to identify the medicine or how Ka‘ahumanu fared in the days to come. It may seem surprising that the queen would accept medicine from foreigners she had never met, but Rives seems to have acted as a middle man. If Rives had the authority to approve medicine for the queen in 1819, then he enjoyed considerable influence indeed.

Other observations by Freycinet’s men of Hawaiian life and health proved illuminating. Midshipman Nicolas François Guérin noted an imbalance in Hawaiian sex ratios. “On the basis of...observations”— unfortunately not described—Guérin

⁵⁸ The London Missionary Society’s William Ellis bears responsibility for the claim that Liholiho and his fellow chiefs had learned of the baptism of Pōmare II by LMS missionaries in May 1819. Ellis did not arrive in Hawai‘i until 1822, and he offered no evidence for this claim, which is otherwise uncorroborated. See *Journal of William Ellis: Narrative of a Tour of Hawaii, or Owyhee...* (1827; rpt. Honolulu, 1963), 80. For scholars repeating this claim, see, e.g., Webb, “The Abolition of the Tabu System in Hawaii,” 34; and Daws, *Shoal of Time*, 54.

⁵⁹ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 19.

“concluded that there were fewer old men than old women in the Islands.” If so, this phenomenon was probably limited to southern O‘ahu and the Kona coast of the Big Island. Yet Guérin’s observation (if accurate) is difficult to explain. There is no evidence that tuberculosis, syphilis, and other infectious diseases had taken a disparate toll on the sexes by this point. ‘Awa, liquor, and tobacco consumption, on the other hand, may have shortened men’s lives enough to create an apparent imbalance in the elderly population. Guérin seems to suggest as much by attributing the gender imbalance to the “prolonged habits of debauchery among men.” Unfortunately he does not mention whether the apparent imbalance was true of the maka‘āinana as well as ali‘i.⁶⁰

Surgeon-naturalists Jean René Constant Quoy and Joseph Paul Gaimard were more specific in their observations of Hawaiian health than Guérin. Three diseases were of special concern to Quoy and Gaimard: scabies, syphilis, and tuberculosis. The first of these conditions, though not fatal, was the most widespread: “Upon reaching these islands,” wrote Quoy, “we were struck by the fact that the bodies of inhabitants were more or less covered with large scabies-like pimples, some of which were festering. These pimples were particularly noticeable in the joints and on the hands.” Hawaiians of all ages showed signs of scabies, as did “several Europeans who had been living here for a long time.” Quoy believed that contagion required long exposure, and he was pleased to report that none of his men managed to catch it during the *Uranie*’s three-week visit.⁶¹

⁶⁰ At the other end of life, Guérin noted that girls on the Islands reached puberty at the age of eleven, “although it is not unusual to see even younger ones—at nine or ten—attain marriageable age.” Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 57.

⁶¹ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 57. Like earlier scientific expeditions, the Frenchmen also took precise

Capt. Freycinet's "strict prohibition" on women boarding the *Uranie* also seems to have kept venereal infections at bay. As the expedition sailed away on August 30, there were "only a small number of infected individuals," according to Quoy. For his part, Gaimard heard that syphilis was "much more prevalent" on O'ahu than on the Big Island, and indeed he failed to see any "definite cases" on the Big Island. On the other hand, "ophthalmia, which I observed, tumors, and lachrymal and salivary fistulas could very well be manifestations of the disease. It is possible, too, that certain skin eruptions and ichorous ulceration of the conjunctiva" were signs of syphilis.⁶² Meanwhile, Quoy learned from a European resident of Maui that "the venereal disease [there] manifested itself frequently by the presence of pimples in the groin and in the armpits and by cankers, which," Quoy noted, "agrees with Doctor Roblet's observations during the Marchand voyage in 1791."⁶³ The artist Jacques Arago described the "large-jowled" king as himself "eat[en] up with I know not how many horrible diseases."⁶⁴ Arago, who did not specify what the infection might be, was the only observer to indicate that Liholiho might be ill.

measurements of Hawaiian men and women, recording everything from the angle of the lower jaw to the width of the foot. Skull size and shape were also measured with great exactitude, given the Euro-American fascination with craniometry and racial difference.

⁶² Congenital lachrymal fistula refers to an abnormal opening from the face into the eye or tear duct. Salivary fistula is an abnormal channel running from the salivary duct, oral cavity, pharynx, or esophagus to the surface of the face or neck. "Ichorous ulceration of the conjunctiva" is discharge from the eyes resulting from some kind of infection.

⁶³ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 57. For Marchand, see Chapter Two.

⁶⁴ Arago, *Narrative of a Voyage Around the World*, 90.

The surgeon Gaimard learned that Island women “sometimes die in childbirth,” and that they “invariably” did so when natural childbirth was not possible.⁶⁵ In fact, Hawaiians had procedures for caesarean delivery (like people the world over). Maternal fatality was always high in such procedures, but death was by no means inevitable.⁶⁶ Gaimard practically acknowledged as much when he noted the work of midwives on the Islands, who “make it their occupation to attend to those who are in labor.”⁶⁷

Like surgeons before him, Gaimard also identified what he thought was leprosy at Hawai‘i. Like his predecessors, he was probably incorrect in this diagnosis; yet the reasons for Gaimard’s error are significant. Specifically, Gaimard noted “a man suffering from elephantiasis whose leg was covered with consuming ulcers and a woman whose nose bones no longer existed and who was making a kind of whistling noise,” which Gaimard took as a “true symptom” of leprosy.⁶⁸ The woman without a nose (*ihu ‘ole*) was probably suffering from tertiary (advanced stage) syphilis rather than leprosy, which was otherwise unrecorded on the Islands until the 1830s.⁶⁹ A collapsed nose in advanced syphilis patients was common enough to earn the name “syphilitic saddlenose” in Europe and the Americas. Still, leprosy should not be ruled out for the woman with the atrophied nose, given that the disease attacks the face and nose.

⁶⁵ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 58.

⁶⁶ Jane Eliot Sewell, “Caesarean Section: A Brief History,” U.S. National Library of Medicine (1993), <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/cesarean/index.html>.

⁶⁷ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 58–59.

⁶⁸ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 58. See also Louis de Freycinet, *Voyage Autour du Monde...*, vol. 2, *Histoire du Voyage* (Paris, 1839), 575.

⁶⁹ See Table 1 (Chapter One).

The man with the badly ulcerated leg presents a more interesting problem for the history of Hawaiian health. *Elephantiasis graecorum* was the nineteenth-century scientific term for leprosy (Hansen’s disease), which was often confused with the unrelated parasite-borne infection lymphatic filariasis (*Elephantiasis arabum*) common throughout the tropics. To prevent confusion, nineteenth-century medical practitioners distinguished “true leprosy” (Hansen’s disease) from filariasis or “false leprosy.” No doubt this is what Gaimard had in mind when he identified the Hawaiian woman’s lack of nose as a “true symptom” of leprosy. But if Gaimard was incorrect about the woman’s condition, his misdiagnosis of the man presents more intriguing possibilities. Swelling (and thickening of the skin) of the legs, buttocks, and genitals are characteristic of lymphatic filariasis but *not* of leprosy, which tends to affect the face, hands, feet, and joints.⁷⁰ Hawaiians themselves reflected these differences in their language, using their reading of the Old Testament to distinguish leprosy, *ma ‘i Hebera* (“Hebrew disease”), from filariasis, *ma ‘i elepani* (“elephant sickness”).

Despite the distinct symptomatology of these two disfiguring diseases, medical historian O. A. Bushnell thought it possible that the Hawaiian man with the ulcerated leg was an early case of leprosy at the Islands, though he was quick to add that the condition might have been “advanced syphilis, tuberculosis, scabies, or several other kinds of mutilating diseases”—but importantly *not* filariasis.⁷¹ The reason Bushnell made an

⁷⁰ Todd L. Savitt, “Filariasis,” in Kiple, ed., *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, 724–730, esp. 726.

⁷¹ Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 288. For Arago’s portrait of two Mariana Islanders suffering from a severe case of what could have been either filariasis or tuberculosis, see Freycinet, et al., *Voyage Autour*

exception for filariasis is that the microscopic worm that causes the infection is transmitted by mosquitoes, which were unrecorded on the Islands until 1826 when a ship from San Blas, Mexico, famously dumped mosquito larvae in the harbor at Lāhainā, Maui. Black flies (*Simuliidae* family) also carry and transmit the parasitic nematode worm, but black flies have never lived on the Hawaiian Islands.⁷² Other possibilities come to mind. Perhaps the man had traveled elsewhere in the tropics and contracted filariasis abroad. The disease was common across the South Pacific: In 1822 evangelists of the London Missionary Society noted that elephantiasis was so common at the Society Islands that one to four in one hundred Tahitians were affected by it.⁷³ Given Gaimard's brief description of the man, we cannot even be sure that he was a native of the Hawaiian Islands. Exchanges of people between Hawai'i and the South Pacific were on the rise.

Less likely is the possibility that mosquitoes had already arrived on the Islands by 1819. Of course Hawaiians residing on the moist leeward side of the Islands—and in the mountains across the archipelago—could not record in writing the presence of mosquitoes until later in the 1820s. The fact that Euro-Americans spotted mosquitoes in the bustling port city of Lāhainā in 1826 does not eliminate the possibility that these pests had already made a home at the Islands and begun to spread disease. In fact, there are

du Monde, Entrepris par Ordre du Roi, Exécuté Sur les Corvettes L'Uranie et la Physicienne Pendant les Anées 1817, 1818, 1819 et 1820: Histoire du Voyage, Atlas Historique (Paris, 1825).

⁷² Neal L. Evenhuis, email to the author, 23 Sept. 2014. I am indebted to Prof. Evenhuis, Senior Entomologist at the Bishop Museum, for his insights on this topic.

⁷³ James Montgomery, ed., *Journals of Voyages and Travels by the Rev. Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet, Esq...*, 3 vols. (Boston, 1832), 1:250. For filariasis at Tonga, see I. C. Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 32.

other reports of elephantiasis on the Islands that pre-date the supposed introduction of mosquitoes in 1826.⁷⁴

Nothing more is known of the man with the ulcerated leg, yet French observers identified a second Hawaiian with “ulcerated legs,” the high chief Boki. Freycinet described Boki as “tall and of enormous girth, with horribly ulcerated legs.” The high chief was “like an inert mass hardly able to move about.” A day after meeting Freycinet in Honolulu, Boki appeared to Freycinet “unhealthy” and “sunk in a sort of lethargy” during his baptism aboard the *Uranie* (his legs were concealed by long pants).⁷⁵ Earlier, in November 1816, multiple observers from the Tsar’s Russian delegation made no mention of Boki’s “girth” or of his difficulty in moving about. Mikhail Tikhanov’s carefully drawn portrait of 1816 reveals a large, well-proportioned man with perfect legs, and not a pound overweight (below, Fig. 5). Could Boki have grown “enormous” in two and a half years by diet alone? Or was his “girth” and difficulty moving about a function of his “horribly ulcerated legs,” that is, a result of lymphatic filariasis or some other disfiguring disease? If disease seems more likely than diet, filariasis can not be identified

⁷⁴ E.g., C[harles] S[amuel] Stewart, *Journal of a Residence in the Sandwich Islands, During the Years 1823, 1824, and 1825* (New York, 1828), TBD; or Ellis?. For the introduction of mosquitoes, see John L. Culliney, *Islands in a Far Sea: Nature and Man in Hawaii* (San Francisco, 1988), 271–272; David E. Stannard, response to book review forum on *Before the Horror*, *Pacific Studies* 13, no. 3 (1990): 284–301, esp. 293; and Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 50–51. For filariasis at the Marquesas, see Denig, *Islands and Beaches*, 146, 240. It should be noted that Bushnell erred when he claimed that filariasis never struck Hawai‘i in the nineteenth century: in the early 1880s a U.S. Navy surgeon stationed in the Pacific, who knew the difference between leprosy and filariasis, reported both diseases to be afflicting patients in Honolulu. See Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 50, 178; and Arthur C. Heffinger, “Elephantiasis Arabum in the Samoan Islands,” *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* (1882): 154–156. Heffinger performed surgery on numerous debilitating cases of filariasis in the South Pacific, including one in Pago Pago (American Samoa) where he removed a thirty-five pound “lymph scrotum.”

⁷⁵ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 34.

as the cause of Boki's ailment, given that mosquitoes were not observed on the Islands until 1826. Syphilis, tuberculosis, and even 'awa consumption must all be considered as possibilities for Boki and the man with the ulcerated leg.⁷⁶ The French impressionist Paul Gauguin, for one, was afflicted with an ulcerated leg before his death from syphilis in the Marquesas Islands in 1903.

The final disease of concern to Freycinet's surgeons was tuberculosis. Perhaps introduced by Cook's men in the late 1770s, tuberculosis was most likely present in the population by 1793 (see Chapter One). Freycinet's surgeons at last provided clear evidence that tuberculosis was taking Hawaiian lives. Since no one understood the etiology of tuberculosis until 1882, caution must be taken when making inferences about the language employed by ships' surgeons. On the other hand, the disease was exceedingly common in Europe and North America, and by 1819 was the leading cause of death on both continents. In their medical notes, Gaimard and Quoy categorized Hawaiians' tubercular conditions under the category "Catarrhs," which typically referred to infections of the mucous membrane, congestion of the lungs, and coughs of various kinds. Catarrh was just one of the dozens of descriptive terms applied to tubercular symptoms in the era before the microbiology of the disease was understood. Quoy wrote that catarrhal infections "appeared to be very frequent" at the Islands. These infections "caused frequent coughing, and developed into tuberculosis of the lungs resulting in death." Gaimard, for his part, saw "a young girl, stretched on some mats under a shed,

⁷⁶ For heavy 'awa consumption allegedly leading to "ulcers," see Kotzebue (Oct. 1817), in Barratt, ed., *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 217–218.

dying from this terrible disease.” Collectively, the two French surgeons “saw several tall, strong, vigorous men afflicted with a persistent coughing that would surely become fatal.” Gaimard attributed the widespread nature of the disease to the Islands’ variable and quickly shifting climatic conditions, coupled with the peoples’ lack of proper attire and (ironically) their tendency to sleep out in the open.⁷⁷

Writing some years after his return to France, Louis Freycinet was under the “general impression” that the Islands’ population had been “singularly reduced” in recent years. In fact, Hawai‘i had lost as much as a third of its population between 1805 and 1823. (See Appendix A.) Enumerating the various causes that foreign writers had attributed to this trend, Freycinet identified Kamehameha’s wars of conquest, alcohol, earthquakes, introduced diseases, “fatigue among the lower classes” (from labor in the sandalwood trade), and finally, “debauchery and infanticide,” which, he added, were the “terrible consequences of poverty and privation.” (“Debauchery,” as in Guérin’s usage above, indicated alcohol or ‘awa abuse.) According to Freycinet’s informants on the Islands, a number of densely populated villages had been “abandoned in recent years and are now reduced to ruin.” Finally, Freycinet himself noted that sandalwood, the principal industry of the Islands, was quickly being depleted with no one making an effort to replant it.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 58. Outdoor sleeping porches were recommended for consumptives in the late nineteenth century.

⁷⁸ Freycinet, *Hawaii in 1819*, 65, 88. Freycinet’s causes for Hawaiian depopulation were often repeated by later writers.

While earthquakes and “infanticide” had taken few lives in the decades since Cook, each of the remaining factors on Freycinet’s list bore some responsibility for Hawaiian mortality and population loss over the course of a generation. For example, nineteenth-century writers and scholars today tend to agree that forced labor in the sandalwood trade exacerbated the effects of population decline among the maka‘āinana.⁷⁹ In his reference to “infanticide,” however, Freycinet provided an ethnocentric and misinformed view of what was in fact a major cause of depopulation on the Islands by 1819: sharply decreased fertility.

Cultural Revolution

On an early November day in 1819, Ka‘ahumanu, the kuhina nui and co-regent of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i, persuaded the new king, her nephew Liholiho (now Kamehameha II), to sit and eat with her. Some weeks earlier the high chiefess Keōpūolani had taken the same leap into the unknown with her young son Kauikeaouli (the future Kamehameha III). Without evident repercussion from the gods or men, the ruling chiefesses had nullified the ‘ai kapu.⁸⁰ Word went out to all the Islands that the sexes could now eat together “of all things prohibited equally.”⁸¹

⁷⁹ Malo, “On the Decrease of Population on the Hawaiian Islands,” 126–127; Sahlins, *Anahulu*, 1:57.

⁸⁰ The Hawaiian term is *ho‘onoa* (lit., “to free from taboo”). Pukui and Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary*, s.v. “noa.” Historians have used “abolish,” “repeal,” “nullify,” “overthrow,” “revoke,” and “abrogate.” Kame‘eleihiwa called the ho‘onoa of the kapu a “cataclysmic overturning of . . . ancestral wisdom.” Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 79.

⁸¹ Marin journal, 6 Nov. 1819, in Gast, ed., *Don Francisco de Paula Marin*, 234. See also Dorothy M. Kahananui, ed. and trans., *Ka Moolelo Hawaii* (1838; Honolulu, 1984), 216–218.

The high chiefs' public act of breaking the 'ai kapu entailed the nullification of Island law from top to bottom. This is not to say that Hawaiians had all turned atheists and anarchists or that Island society was plunged into chaos, though some districts were. On the local level, religious and legal practice was affected to a greater or lesser degree, depending on a host of factors, including distance from the centers of chiefly power (southern O'ahu and the leeward Big Island).⁸² Yet the fall of the kapu system was a cultural revolution without parallel in Hawaiian history. Scholars have identified a number of causes for the fall of the kapu, ranging from cultural "fatigue" to problems of succession to economic and political turmoil.⁸³ Yet two important factors have received scant attention: Hawaiian gender politics and health.

Until quite recently, scholars presented the fall of the kapu as the action of Liholiho or of the ruling chiefs as a whole.⁸⁴ In fact Liholiho was mostly an accomplice. Two factions vied for control of the Islands after the death of the mō'ī Kamehameha. On one side was Ka'ahumanu and her relations, to whom I will refer, for convenience sake, as the "Maui chiefs." Descended from the ruling families of the Kingdom of Maui, the Maui chiefs' authority reached across the archipelago by 1819. The Maui chiefs included the highest ranking chiefess of her time (and widow of the Kamehameha) Keōpūolani;

⁸² Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778–1854*, 68–69. Such distance could be geographical, topographical, or reckoned in terms of the difficulty of ocean travel.

⁸³ For "cultural fatigue," see A[lfred] L. Kroeber, *Anthropology* (New York, 1948), 403. For political turmoil, see Davenport, "The 'Hawaiian Cultural Revolution.'"

⁸⁴ See, e.g., Juri Mykkänen, *Inventing Politics: A New Political Anthropology of the Hawaiian Kingdom* (Honolulu, 2003), 35–41. Elsewhere Mykkänen notes that the "chiefs who eagerly encouraged [Liholiho] to commit this extraordinary breach of tradition were mostly women of his father's household" (*ibid.*, 45), which is a better characterization of the events.

the Premier William Pitt Kalanimoku; Ka‘ahumanu’s siblings John Adams Kuakini, George Cox Ke‘eaumoku, Kalākua Kaheiheimālie, and Lydia Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia; and the heir apparent Liholiho and his five wives (three of whom were also his half sisters).⁸⁵ A powerful kahuna and healer by the name of Hewahewa also supported the Maui chiefs’ and their reforms in 1819. A rebel faction aiming to preserve the kapu system was led by the Big Island chief Kekuaokalani. Before his death Kamehameha had named Liholiho heir but had entrusted the war god Kūkā‘ilimoku to his Big Island comrade Kekuaokalani. Kekuaokalani and his fellow traditionalists were headquartered on the Kona Coast and supported by various kahunas.⁸⁶

After May 1819 these two major factions vied for Kamehameha’s mantle. The Maui chiefs supported Ka‘ahumanu and Keōpūolani’s decision to ho‘onoa the kapu, while Kekuaokalani and the Kona chiefs resisted the reforms. Eventually a battle would decide the matter. Led by Kalanimoku, the Maui chiefs defeated Kekuaokalani’s forces on the Kona coast, and Kekuaokalani paid with his life.⁸⁷

But before all this was the singular act of the high chiefs’ breaking the ‘ai kapu. What was the nature of the chiefesses’ authority, and how might Kamehameha’s death have influenced their decision? While Kamehameha’s support of the the “kapu religion”

⁸⁵ Liholiho’s five wives by order of marriage were Kamāmalu (his half-sister), Kīna‘u (his half-sister), Kekāuluohi (his half-sister), Pauahi/Kalanipauahi (his niece), and Kekau‘ōnohi (his niece).

⁸⁶ For the make-up of the two political factions, see, e.g., Mathison, *Narrative of Visit to Brazil, Chile, Peru, and the Sandwich Islands*, chaps. 13–14; and Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 227–228. Kamakau named two kahunas in the service of Kekuaokalani: Kuaiwa and Holoī‘alena.

⁸⁷ Mathison, *Narrative of Visit to Brazil, Chile, Peru, and the Sandwich Islands*, 447–448. For more on these conflicts, see Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778–1854*, 67–70; and Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, chap. 6.

helped to keep it alive, there had been a number of important detractors in the 1810s, as well as outright defectors such as George Cox Ke‘eaumoku. The popular conception today of Kamehameha’s rule as absolute and durable is in need of revision. Events following immediately on his death prove that his rule was contingent, exceptional, and temporary.⁸⁸ No mō‘ī had ever gained control over the archipelago, and it is safe to assume that Kamehameha himself would not have done so without European contact. Kamehameha’s power was principally a function of his trade relations; in particular, the weapons and martial technology Westerners provided him.

Even within Hawaiian chiefly society, Kamehameha was not without equals. In fact, the founder of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i was actually outranked by two of his wives. Yet in spite of their high rank, Ka‘ahumanu and Keōpūolani were themselves constrained by the kapu system. If one purpose of the kapu was to keep that which was sacred (of the gods) separate from that which was profane (of the people), in practice this meant keeping men and women separate for religious and ritual functions.⁸⁹ We have seen that maka‘āinana women were quick to defy their chiefs, and in some cases to broker alliances with foreign strangers, or even solicit violence against the ali‘i (Chapters One and Two). But those were commoners’ actions. The nullification of kapu was the bidding of ruling chiefesses.

⁸⁸ Sahlins, *Anahulu*, 1:60. The mythology around Kamehameha is extensive and remains on display, especially O‘ahu and the Big Island. See, e.g., Glenn Wharton, *The Painted King: Art, Activism, and Authenticity in Hawai‘i* (Honolulu, 2012); and Stacy L. Kamehiro, *The Arts of Kingship: Hawaiian Art and National Culture of the Kalakaua Era* (Honolulu, 2009).

⁸⁹ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 222–223. See also Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 33–40; and Valerio Valeri, *Kingship and Sacrifice: Ritual and Society in Ancient Hawai‘i*, trans. Paula Wissing (Chicago, 1985). Cf. Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*, 34.

While the ranking chiefesses benefited from the privileges of their high rank, they were at the same time kept beneath their husbands and at a considerable distance from the akua merely because of their sex. Of course the chiefesses ran the risk of diminishing their own status by nullifying the kapu system but it is unlikely that either woman saw their actions as “repudiating” their “divine rank” or “declaring an end to the entire concept of sacred rank,” as one scholar has argued.⁹⁰ Instead, nullification of the kapu enhanced the power of the Maui chiefs.

Anthropologist Jocelyn Linnekin has argued that chiefly women played important roles in post-contact society despite their second-class status. The chiefesses’ influence predated and was in some ways exacerbated by European contact.⁹¹ Ka‘ahumanu is the archetype of Linnekin’s powerful chiefly woman supposedly constrained by Hawaiian religious law. Virtually everyone who met the kuhina nui agreed that she had more natural gifts for leadership than her nephew Liholiho (Kamehameha’s heir), and was more suited to rule the Islands. Such judgments are compelling in light of the male chauvinism that marked European and American society at this time. With few exceptions, Hawaiians seem to have agreed with Euro-American assessments of Ka‘ahumanu and Liholiho.⁹² Ali‘i had to earn the right to continue their rule, and

⁹⁰ Davenport, “The ‘Hawaiian Cultural Revolution,’” 16.

⁹¹ Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*, chaps. 1–2. Scholarly emphasis on questions of “purity and pollution has tended to divert attention from women’s temporal and political activities”; *ibid.*, 13. Note that rank in Hawaiian society was determined bilaterally, that is, through an individual’s father and mother equally.

⁹² Mary Ellen Birkett, “Hawaii in 1819: An Account by Camille de Roquefeuil,” *Hawaiian Journal of History* 34 (2000): 69–92, esp. 83–84.

Liholiho had done little to prove his mettle, whereas Ka‘ahumanu had been serving her people effectively for decades.⁹³

Yet Linnekin may overstate ali‘i women’s’ agency before 1819. In addition to the food restrictions, menstruation huts, and separate sleeping quarters, it should be noted that male ali‘i commonly “gave away” their wives to other ali‘i, often to ensure political alliances. Chiefesses apparently had no say in the matter.⁹⁴ Linnekin’s arguments that chiefly women were “the equal of men” in terms of “personal authority,” and that women’s roles in “land relations,” adoption, and the “transmission of spiritual property” mitigated their second-class status, are difficult to sustain. Nor is it clear that ali‘i women after 1819 “replaced men as the active, focal figures of the state religion” or that the male ali‘i “lost their *mana*, their efficacy and directedness.”⁹⁵ Hawaiian religious practice, no less than eating, had long been divided by sex. Indeed, Malo stated that men and women, like chiefs and commoners, traditionally worshipped entirely different gods.⁹⁶ From

⁹³ Liholiho’s drinking diminished his leadership in the eyes of foreigners, and probably did not help his reputation among Hawaiians. Under the guidance of Protestant missionaries in the 1830s, Hawaiian students at Lahainaluna Seminary wrote that rum had become Liholiho’s “daily bath water” by 1819. See Kahananui, *Ka Moolelo Hawaii*, 213–215. See also, e.g., journal of Sybil Moseley Bingham, 1 Jan. and 18 Feb. 1822, 8 Feb. 1823, HMH; journal of Levi Chamberlain, 28 Apr. 1823 and 6 July 1823, HMH; Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World*, 196–197; and C[harles] S[amuel] Stewart, *Private Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, and Residence at the Sandwich Islands...* (New York, 1828), 91–92. Royal advisor and physician Francisco de Paula Marín carefully recorded Liholiho’s drinking habits from 1821 to 1823. See Marín journal, in Gast, ed., *Don Francisco de Paula Marín*, 247–283. For a Marquesan ruler whose authority was in part “diminished” by his drinking—and who was, like Liholiho, childless—see Denning, *Islands and Beaches*, 218.

⁹⁴ E.g., in 1821 Liholiho gave his wife Kekāuluohi to the Kaua‘i *kaukau ali‘i* (low-ranking chief) Charles Kana‘ina. See Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 253. In 1823 Marín noted that King Liholiho “took” Boki’s wife. Marín journal (9 Feb. 1823), in Gast, ed., *Don Francisco de Paula Marín*, 272.

⁹⁵ Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*, 5–6, 72–73.

⁹⁶ Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities*, 81–83, 108; Malo, *Ka Moolelo Hawaii*, 192–195. See also Chamisso (Dec. 1816), in Barratt, *The Russian View of Honolulu*, 213–214; and Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women*

another angle it could be said that women were excluded outright from much of Hawaiian religious practice.⁹⁷ The ‘ai kapu, with its sacrificial foods off-limits to women, was a potent symbol of this exclusion.

For Linnekin, the chiefesses’ decision to nullify the kapu system was “not induced solely by the intrusion of foreign goods and ideas” but was “in part provoked by a contradiction between the ritual status of Hawaiian women and their efficacy in temporal... affairs.”⁹⁸ But what if neither cause was primary? To begin with, Ka‘ahumanu and Keōpūolani may have conceived of their decision to break kapu as nonbinding on other Hawaiians initially. In fact, this is how Ka‘ahumanu was quoted by foreigners. At the coronation ceremony for Liholiho in 1819 Ka‘ahumanu gave a speech defending her decision to break kapu. The speech was filtered through a missionary lens and only recorded decades after the fact, and therefore should be used with caution. Yet according to long-time foreign resident John Parker Palmer (informant to chronicler and missionary William D. Alexander), Ka‘ahumanu addressed the people as follows:

If you wish to continue to observe my father’s laws, it is well and we will not molest you. But as for me and my people, we intend to be free from the tabus. We intend that the husband’s food is the wife’s food and shall be cooked in the same oven, and that they shall be permitted to eat out of the same calabash. We intend to eat pork and bananas and cocoanuts, and to live as the white people do. If you think differently, you are at liberty to do so; but as for me and my people we are resolved to be free.⁹⁹

of Consequence, 6. On the difference between ali‘i and maka‘āinana religious practice traditionally, see Mykkänen, *Inventing Politics*, 28–29.

⁹⁷ A useful comparison may be found in female exclusion from the Katsina religion in contact-era New Mexico. See James F. Brooks, “Women, Men, and Cycles of Evangelism in the Southwest Borderlands, A.D. 750 to 1750,” *American Historical Review* 118 (2013): 738–764, esp. 753–754.

⁹⁸ Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*, 6.

⁹⁹ Alexander, “Overthrow of the Ancient Tabu System in the Hawaiian Islands,” 83. Writing in the

Of course Kekuaokalani and his fellow Big Island rebels would not be granted “liberty” to stage an uprising against the kingdom. But observance or non-observance of the kapu would be left up to the people. Historian Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa offered an original interpretation of this speech: Ka‘ahumanu had decided not to “live as the white people do” exactly, but rather to *live*, as the white people were living and Hawaiians were not. In other words, she had determined to do away with the old system that failed to keep the Hawaiians alive, and to forge a new path. Not that foreigners offered many good models; yet in Kame‘eleihiwa’s terms, the ranking chiefesses “no longer viewed the ‘*Ai kapu* religion as *pono*” (righteous, proper, effective, balanced).¹⁰⁰ Elsewhere Kame‘eleihiwa suggested that ongoing depopulation had caused the Hawaiian people “to question the power of their own Gods” and to undermine “their belief in the state religion.”¹⁰¹ But it is difficult to know what maka‘āinana thought about these developments. There is little evidence to suggest that commoners considered the state religion “utterly worthless,” as American missionaries wrote shortly after; nor is it clear that commoners “ardently desired” its downfall.¹⁰² Observance of the ‘*aumakua* (ancestors, tutelary deities), healing

1860s, Kamakau made no mention of this speech; he also attributed a stronger role to Keōpūolani in the fall of the kapu. See Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 224–225. Linnekin also did not address or cite this speech in *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*.

¹⁰⁰ Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 81–82. See also Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo‘ole Osorio, *Dismembering Lāhui: A History of the Hawaiian Nation to 1887* (Honolulu, 2002), 10–13. In Tonga, where the tapu was broken nine years later, male chiefs apparently led the charge; see I. C. Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 53–55.

¹⁰¹ Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, “A Synopsis of of Traditional Hawaiian Culture, the Events Leading to the 1887 Bayonet Constitution and the Overthrow of the Hawaiian Government (0 AD–1898),” (n.p, 1995), 4.

¹⁰² James Jackson Jarves, *History of the Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands...* (Boston, 1843), 210–211.

rituals, and belief in sorcery continued well after 1819.¹⁰³ It bears repeating that Ka‘ahumanu and Keōpūolani had other reasons to break the ‘ai kapu besides the health of their people, and that they may have considered nullification nonbinding on maka‘āinana as well as on other ali‘i men and women. Foreign goods and ideas, gender restrictions, and the “categorical ambivalence” about women’s roles in ali‘i society all may have played a role in the cultural revolution of 1819.¹⁰⁴ Yet disease, population loss, and the conspicuous health disparities between Hawaiians and foreigners were at least as important. Perhaps most important of all was the fertility of the ali‘i. If the chiefly class could not be sustained by new births and surviving children, the kingdom of Hawai‘i was finished.

Ultimately, as Kame‘eleihiwa noted, we can never be sure what Ka‘ahumanu and Keōpūolani were thinking in 1819.¹⁰⁵ Neither of chiefesses left written records, and the records (and oral traditions) that do survive are partial toward Christian missionaries who arrived in the wake of nullification. It is clear, however, that the ruling chiefesses had made a determined break with traditional Island society. In June, Ka‘ahumanu ordered the public burning of ten ki‘i, including a favorite idol of her deceased husband, the mō‘ī Kamehameha.¹⁰⁶ Whether they had decided “to live as the white people do” or to live *period*, Ka‘ahumanu and Keōpūolani had started anew.

¹⁰³ Davenport, “The ‘Hawaiian Cultural Revolution,’” 18.

¹⁰⁴ For “categorical ambivalence,” see Sahlins, *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities*, 47; and Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*, 22.

¹⁰⁵ Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 79.

¹⁰⁶ Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 162. In summer 1822 Ka‘ahumanu apparently ordered the burning of 102 idols on O‘ahu. See Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, 4:44.

The Long Necks

During his 1818 visit to the Islands Russian ship captain Vasily Golovnin observed that Hawaiians stood much to gain by the coming of missionaries.¹⁰⁷ Little did Golovnin know that plans were already underway. Eight weeks after the Freycinet expedition left Hawai‘i, a group of Congregationalist and Presbyterian missionaries with the Boston-based American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) set sail for Hawai‘i. They arrived five months later to learn that the “pagan” religion had been abolished and a path cleared for their evangelical work. It would take a while for American missionaries to gain the trust of the ruling chiefs, and some chiefs never were won over. But within four years of their arrival, and with the aid of a small group of British missionaries and their Tahitian converts, American evangelicals made key allies among the ali‘i, particularly women. Some chiefesses, notably the wives of King Liholiho, were ready to employ the newcomers right off the boat. Before the missionaries had even been granted permission to dock, Liholiho and his five wives boarded the *Thaddeus* off Honolulu to share dinner with the newcomers. Mission wife Nancy Ruggles wrote that the “wives appear pleasant, and say they wish to learn to read.”¹⁰⁸

To understand why Keōpūolani, Ka‘ahumanu, and other Hawaiian chiefs may have been attracted to the missionaries and their program, we must return briefly to 1807,

See also Rufus Anderson, *History of the Sandwich Islands Mission* (Boston, 1870), 23.

¹⁰⁷ Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka*, 212.

¹⁰⁸ Nancy Ruggles journal, 6 April 1820, HMH.

when two maka‘āinana teenagers boarded an American merchant ship off the coast of Ka‘ū on the Big Island. Sailing first to the Pacific Northwest, then to China, “Henry” ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia and “Thomas” Hopu arrived in New York in 1809. They were shortly shuttled to New Haven to be educated and Christianized at the Foreign Mission School in Cornwall, Connecticut. Among their classmates were five other Native Hawaiians (including the Kaua‘i prince Humehume, son of Kaumuali‘i) and a few American Indians, as well as students from the Marquesas, Malaysia, India, and China.

Hopu, ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia, and Humehume fought in the War of 1812 aboard American ships. Humehume was injured in the English Channel and given a medical discharge. Hopu’s ship was captured by the British, and the young Hawaiian was imprisoned for several months on the Caribbean island of St. Kitts where he witnessed African slaves in chains and “had a great desire to return to America.”¹⁰⁹ Meanwhile ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia had converted to Christianity in 1815 and began a New England tour to promote the school. In 1818 ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia succumbed to typhus and died at Cornwall. ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia’s death and the publication of his heavily edited “memoir” inspired a New England-wide fund-raising effort in support of a Sandwich Islands Mission.¹¹⁰

Hopu and Humehume returned to Hawai‘i with the charter delegation of New England missionaries in the Spring of 1820. Their literacy and English-language skills, combined with the social capital the young men had earned with the Americans, piqued

¹⁰⁹ “Memoirs of Thomas Hopoo,” *Hawaiian Journal of History* 2 (1968): 42–54, esp. 46.

¹¹⁰ [Edwin Welles Dwight], *Memoirs of Henry Obookiah, a Native of Owyhee...* (New Haven, CT, 1819). See also *A Narrative of Five Youth from the Sandwich Islands, Now Receiving an Education in This Country* (New York, 1816).

the interests of the ruling chiefs. It is hard to overestimate the importance of Hopu and Humehume as emissaries for the Sandwich Islands Mission. Despite the questionable parentage of both young men, the ruling chiefs could not ignore their long experience in the U.S. and their extensive travels.¹¹¹ Long-time foreign resident and ali‘i John Young was also instrumental in securing King Liholiho’s approval of the missionaries. Liholiho gave the rigid-postured “long necks” leave to stay on the Islands for one year.¹¹² By the summer of 1820 the mō‘ī of Kaua‘i (and father of Humehume) Kaumuali‘i had ordered a church built on the site of a heiau in Waimea—the first Christian church erected in Hawai‘i.¹¹³

A remarkable dual letter to the corresponding secretary of the ABCFM in Boston dictated in broken English by Kaumuali‘i and his wife Deborah Kapule Kekaiha‘akūlou (not Humehume’s mother) suggests the impact of Humehume’s experiences on them. It should be noted that the Kaua‘i chiefs had met the New England missionaries less than three months before the letter was dictated. “Dear Friend,” Kaumuali‘i’s letter to the Rev. Samuel Worcester in Boston began:

I wish to write a few lines to you, to thank you for the good book [Bible], you was so kind to send by my son. I think it is a good book; one that God gave for us to read. I hope my people will soon read this and all other good books. I believe that my idols are good for nothing; and that your God is the only true God, the one that made all things. My gods I have hove away; they are no good; they fool me; they do me no good....Now I throw them all away. I have none now. When your good people learn me, I worship your God. I feel glad you good people come to help us. We

¹¹¹ Humehume’s mother was maka‘āinana, as were both of Hopu’s parents.

¹¹² Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 172. For “long necks,” see Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 247.

¹¹³ Mykkänen, *Inventing Politics*, 43–44.

know nothing here. American people very good—kind. I love them. When they come here I take care of them; I give him eat; I give him clothes; I do every thing for him.¹¹⁴

The previous month Samuel Ruggles recorded a similar sentiment by a commoner in Waimea: “The God of America is good but the Gods of Atooi [Kaua‘i] are good for nothing,” this person had allegedly observed. “We throw them all away; by and by the American God will be the God of Atooi” [Kaua‘i].¹¹⁵ In the Kaua‘i monarchs’ letter to Boston, the queen consort Deborah Kapule added another short note to the mother of thirty-year-old mission wife Nancy Ruggles. “Dear Friend,” the queen’s letter began:

I am glad your daughter comes here. I shall be her mother now, and she be my daughter.... By and by your daughter speak Owhyhee [Hawaiian]; then she learn me how to read, and write, and sew; and talk of that great Akooah [akua], which the good people in America love.¹¹⁶

To be sure, Kaumuali‘i and Deborah Kapule had other reasons to ally with the missionaries besides interest in the Christian (American?) God and the *palapala* (reading and writing). In the summer of 1820 Kaumuali‘i was running up enormous debts in the sandalwood trade, and he may well have seen the new foreigners as an escape valve for merchants’ demands.¹¹⁷ (In coming years other chiefs would join the missionaries for precisely for this reason.) Another possible explanation is that the Kaua‘i ali‘i were happy

¹¹⁴ “Copy of a letter from the King and Queen of Atooi,” 1821, HMH. American missionaries Samuel Ruggles and Samuel Whitney first visited an enthusiastic Kaumuali‘i on Kaua‘i in early May 1820, before proceeding to Honolulu. Ruggles and Whitney returned to Waimea in late July 1820 and set up a missionary station. See Edward Joesting, *Kauai: The Separate Kingdom* (Honolulu, 1984), 122–123.

¹¹⁵ Samuel Ruggles journal, 17 June 1820, HMH.

¹¹⁶ “Copy of a letter from the King and Queen of Atooi,” 1821, HMH.

¹¹⁷ For Kaumuali‘i’s debts, see Joesting, *Kauai*, 87–94. The sandalwood trade reached its peak in 1821–22 when more than 26,000 piculs were imported to China (one picul equals 135 pounds); see *ibid.*, 91.

to discard the kapu system enforced by the Maui chiefs—and perhaps happy to abandon some of the akua—but had no intention of abandoning their own akua and ‘aumakua. On his visit of 1825, the Baltic German navigator Otto von Kotzebue learned that the Kaua‘i could hardly wait for Kamehameha to die so that they could reclaim their independence.¹¹⁸ Yet the language of the 1820 letter seems clear enough about the monarchs’ preference for American religion or religious observance. And not only Kaumuali‘i but other people on Kaua‘i in 1820 had apparently decided to go with the American missionary program, such as they understood it.

The Maui chiefs would not be such an easy catch. For one thing, they enjoyed more power than the Kaua‘i chiefs. They also had more extensive access to other foreigners besides missionaries. For the missionaries’ first two years on O‘ahu and Maui, the ruling chiefs were watchful, testing the newcomers for possible advantages they could offer. Queen Ka‘ahumanu’s change of heart toward the missionaries and their program seems to have occurred during an illness she suffered in late 1821. Tenderly nursed and thoroughly proselytized by the missionaries during this unspecified illness, Ka‘ahumanu suffered severe “paroxysms” in mid-December, and mission leader Hiram Bingham thought she was on her deathbed. Bingham later wrote that upon the restoration of her health, Ka‘ahumanu “and her friends set a higher value on the religion which we were trying to inculcate.” Baptism and conversion were another matter. It was only in

¹¹⁸ Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World*, 196.

retrospect that Ka‘ahumanu could be described as a “humble disciple of Christ, and a reformer of her nation.”¹¹⁹

Missionary writings shed some light on the perspective of maka‘āinana during this stage of the Hawaiian cultural revolution. When Bingham prompted some people in upland Kaua‘i to reflect on the beauties of nature and of the Creator, their response suggested (to Bingham) that they knew no creator. What about “Jehovah, the God of heaven?” Bingham then asked. “They said, ‘It is your god, is it not?’ ‘Yes, and is he not *yours* also?’ ‘No,’ they replied, ‘our gods are all dead.’”¹²⁰ If Bingham understood them right, the Kaua‘i maka‘āinana seemed to believe that akua—that is, the divinities of the Hawaiian state religion—were dead. This belief had little bearing on commoners’ local religion and rituals. Bingham’s fellow missionaries suggested that as many as two-thirds of Hawaiian commoners in 1824 still made sacrifices to the gods in private.¹²¹ Of course the American evangelicals could not see how the lived religion of the people could persist after the death of the “gods.” Nor could missionaries conceive that the religious and spiritual practices of commoners might have little if anything to do with the state religion of the Kingdom, with its akua and ali‘i. But such was the case.

In the meantime, a number of ruling chiefs died. In March 1821 William Pitt Kalanimoku’s “favorite” wife Likelike died at the age of twenty-one from complications

¹¹⁹ Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 148–151.

¹²⁰ Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 148–149.

¹²¹ Asa Thurston and Artemas Bishop to ABCFM, 5 Aug. 1824 (ABCFM Papers), qtd. in Sahlins, *Anahulu*, 1:73.

of childbirth; the infant also perished.¹²² Two years later Keōpūolani, the queen consort and highest-ranking chief on the Islands, died at the age of forty-five. Francisco de Paula Marín recorded the cause of death as an “ulcer on the back-bone.”¹²³ New England missionary Charles S. Stewart described her condition as an “abscess between the shoulders.” If it is hard to imagine the Queen of Hawai‘i dying of a festering wound on her back, a tumor on the spine or even a peritoneal (abdominal) abscess might cause the symptoms described in Stewart’s account (and the latter condition could have terminated in sepsis or organ failure). The period of the queen’s final illness was two weeks, during which time she was in and out of “stupor” and occasionally too weak to speak. She was seen by two foreign physicians, both well-trained and able practitioners, who determined that they could be of “no f[u]rther use to her.” Her condition was incurable.¹²⁴ There was no indication that the queen had contracted an infectious disease, and her symptoms were apparently all internal.

Hawai‘i was again plunged into mourning at the death of Keōpūolani. As the last *naha*-ranking chief, Keōpūolani was a symbol of the Hawaiian nobility and offered hope for a Hawaiian future. The “entire district” of Lāhainā, Maui, “sent forth one

¹²² Likelike died 4 March 1821. See journal of John Young (compiled by Dorothy Barrère), 10 March 1821, Hawai‘i State Archives; Marín journal, in Gast, ed., *Don Francisco de Paula Marín*, 247; Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 127; and Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 250.

¹²³ Marín journal, in Gast, ed., *Don Francisco de Paula Marín*, 281.

¹²⁴ Stewart, *Private Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, 211. The physicians were Abraham Blatchley of the Sandwich Islands Mission, and the Scot Dr. Law, Liholiho’s personal physician. For the latter, see *ibid.*, 155. Levi Chamberlain noted in his diary that word had come from Dr. Blatchley on Lāhainā that “a mortification had taken place & that there is very little room to hope she will recover.” Journal of Levi Chamberlain, 15 Sept. 1823, HMH.

uninterrupted sound of lamentation.” The “wailing” of the people—“indescribable, to one not present”—was “so overwhelming that the minute guns” fired in Keōpūolani’s honor “could scarce be heard through the din.”¹²⁵

In the final months of her life Keōpūolani had embraced the missionaries’ teachings. Upon the advice of her spiritual advisor, the Christian convert Pua‘aiki (“Blind Bartimaeus,” to the missionaries), she renounced plural marriage and settled on a single husband, the Maui ali‘i Hoapili. The Tahitian missionaries Taua and Auna and their wives, during a two-year residence on the Islands with the London Missionary Society, played an important role in winning Keōpūolani and other Hawaiian chiefesses over to Christianity.¹²⁶ The Anglo-American missionaries considered Keōpūolani a wholehearted convert to Christianity. Indeed, the odes to her Christian devotion barely fit between two covers.¹²⁷ As with the devout Tahitians Taua and Auna, the reality of Keōpūolani’s “conversion” was probably something much less clear, and much more—Hawaiian. Conversion, that is to say, poorly reflects the dynamic social maneuvering and cultural borrowing at work in such situations. The written record in this period is of little

¹²⁵ Stewart, *Private Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, 224. Keōpūolani bore eleven children but only three survived to adulthood. All three happened to be fathered by Kamehameha: Liholiho (Kamehameha II), Kauikeaouli (Kamehameha III), and the princess Nāhi‘ena‘ena.

¹²⁶ See Charles Barff, ed., “A Memoir of Auna, Translated from a Memoir of Him Printed in Tahitian, 1837,” Hamilton Library, University of Hawai‘i–Mānoa; *Journals of Voyages and Travels by the Rev. Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet...*, ed. James Montgomery, 3 vols. (Boston, 1832); *Journal of William Ellis: Narrative of a Tour of Hawaii, or Owyhee...* (1827; rpt. Honolulu, 1963). In the Marquesas, similarly, visiting Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders were, according to Greg Denning, some of “the most potent catalysts of change.” Denning, *Islands and Beaches*, 103. For the dearth of scholarship on Tahitian missionaries to Hawai‘i, see Mykkänen, *Inventing Politics*, 203–204n19.

¹²⁷ See Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 190–197; and Stewart, *Private Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, 207–203.

help on these matters because conversion was a relatively uncomplicated phenomenon for the evangelicals who spent time with Keōpūolani and other Christianized Polynesians at this time.



Despite three decades of contact with New England merchants and sailors, Hawaiians were largely unfamiliar with the contours of New England Protestantism. Protestant theology was especially alien to them. Like other Indigenous religious systems, Hawaiian religion was “instrumental” and active, a religion of rituals and activities, rather than beliefs.¹²⁸ Thus a great deal was lost in translation from the start. The historian Samuel Kamakau tells of the missionaries’ introduction to Queen Keōpūolani and her court in April 1820. At the front of the delegation was Hopu, who explained in Hawaiian to the assembled ali‘i that

‘These white people are kahunas of the most high God who have come here to tell us of the One who made heaven and earth. Hereafter will come the great day [*la*] when all will be judged before God.’ The chiefs and people thought, ‘Is the sun [*la*] going to grow bigger?’ ...and they said among themselves, ‘This traveler is telling tall tales!’ and called him a romancer.¹²⁹

To be seen as sun worshippers meant missionaries had their work cut out for them. Yet Protestant theology was of minor concern to chiefs whose primary interest was building an alliance with powerful foreigners. These particular foreigners seemed unconcerned

¹²⁸ Mykkänen, *Inventing Politics*, 44. For Pueblo religion as a set of cultural activities, see Severin M. Fowles, *An Archaeology of Doings: Secularism and the Study of Pueblo Religion* (Santa Fe, 2013).

¹²⁹ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 247.

with exploiting the chiefs or their people, and the missionaries' program at first appeared benign, centered as it was on instruction in palapala and advice on clean living.

Between 1820 and 1823, the work of the Sandwich Islands Mission was limited to O'ahu, Kaua'i, and the Kona coast of the Big Island. Yet even in these locales, maka'āinana had practically no exposure to Christian teaching or beliefs. Following a pattern set two centuries earlier in New England, missionaries strategically focused their efforts on the ruling chiefs whom they intended both to convert and "civilize." Earlier experiences among American Indians had convinced evangelical Congregationalists and Presbyterians of the necessity of imparting civilization as a stepping-stone to a robust, intellectually sound Calvinist faith.¹³⁰ Nonetheless, as conflict arose between missionaries and other foreigners on the islands, mission priorities shifted to rules-based religious instruction, as they concluded that civilization's "vices" were causing more harm than good and were, in some cases, spreading a desolation worse than the islanders' former "idolatry" and "ignorance." Following an earlier pattern of encounters between natives and newcomers in the Americas, American missionaries generally worked within the Native structures of authority. With the help of their Tahitian converts, who served as a model for Hawaiians, the missionaries won over a number of ali'i by 1823.

Kamakau believed that the ali'i immediately saw the advantages of the palapala introduced by the missionaries. The chiefesses, in particular, became "proficient" in

¹³⁰ See, for example, [Asa] Thurston and [Artemas] Bishop, "Sandwich Islands," *Missionary Herald* 32 (Oct. 1836), 384; and Dwight, *Memoirs of Henry Obookiah*, 104–114, 119–129. For a useful overview of Protestant "civilizing missions" in the early nineteenth-century world, see Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Patrick Camiller (Princeton, 2014), 826–837.

writing out “the Scripture verses translated by the teachers.” Even the elderly took to reading the Bible.¹³¹ Palapala was for most Hawaiians indistinguishable from the new religion in which they were being inculcated. For many, it seems, palapala *was* the missionary program. That program quickly drew critics among the ruling chiefs and especially among the foreign merchant class who preferred their “kanakas” (Hawaiian laborers) to work at productive labor.¹³²

A short condolence letter allegedly written by King Liholiho to the Queen Regent of Tahiti in the summer of 1822 suggests how the Hawaiian chiefs understood the role of palapala in relation to the broader missionary program. Liholiho’s letter—if authentic—also hints at how he may have been thinking about the role of the new religious system in international diplomacy.¹³³ The occasion for the letter was the death in December 1821 of the Tahitian king Pōmare II, apparently from alcohol-related causes. There is no record of Pōmare II’s death affecting Liholiho and his own consumption of alcohol (dutifully recorded by advisor Francisco de Paula Marín), but it would not be surprising if the news gave him pause. “I have compassion towards you on account of your son’s dying,” Liholiho wrote in Hawaiian to the Tahitian Queen Regent. “Love to you and the *alii*, chiefs of your islands. I now serve the God of you and us. We are now learning the

¹³¹ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 248–249.

¹³² Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World*, 254–262.

¹³³ The letter was published in the 1847 memoir of mission leader Hiram Bingham: “By this time Liholiho...had become able to write a letter of business or of friendship.... The following is a translation, with the exception of the signature, which, as to name, title, and orthography is strictly his own.” Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 171–172.

palapala. When I become skilful in learning I will then go and visit you. May you be saved by Jesus Christ.”¹³⁴

Liholiho’s diplomatic correspondence presented him as a devoted Christian determined to spread literacy among his people. The king’s daily life offers another view. In Spring 1823 Liholiho could be found arguing with his mother Keōpūolani about the rules imposed by missionaries. At Lāhainā, Maui, American missionary Charles S. Stewart reported that Liholiho argued to his mother that the missionaries were ““not good. They do not permit us *to drink rum*, or do any thing we formerly did. Their teachings are false and evil—their prayers are not good.”” Other male chiefs in attendance, “fond of dissipation,” agreed with the king, according to Stewart, but they distinguished between missionaries’ educational programs and religious indoctrination: “Part of their teachings are *true and good*” said these chiefs. For example, “It is well to attend to the ‘palapala’”:

But there is no good in the ‘pule’ religion—in the prayers, and the preaching, and the Sabbath. In India, we are told, they have the *palapala*; and they are so rich, that all the people in England and America go there for property; but they keep their stone and wooden gods still. It will be well for us, then, to secure the palapala—for it will make us rich—but let us cast off the *pule*—it is of no use!¹³⁵

In fact, both maka‘āinana and ali‘i had misgivings about the missionaries’ intentions by 1823. British missionary William Ellis reported that residents of the Big Island generally approved of the missionaries coming, although some “had heard that in several countries where foreigners had intermingled with the original natives, the latter

¹³⁴ Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 171–172.

¹³⁵ Stewart, *Private Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, 196–197.

had soon disappeared, and should missionaries come to live at Waiakea, perhaps the land would ultimately become theirs, and the... natives cease to be its occupiers.” Ellis assured these Islanders (who were probably *maka‘āinana*) that the American mission, “so far from producing such a result,” had been “especially designed, and eminently calculated, to prevent a consequence so melancholy.” The American missionaries had come, he explained, to save Hawaiians from themselves. It had been their own “sanguinary wars...their extensive and cruel practice of infanticide, their frequent intoxication, and their numerous diseases, partly [en]gendered by vicious habits,” that threatened to dispossess them of life and limb. Indeed, “there was every reason to fear the Hawaiian people would soon be annihilated, unless some antidote was found,” he warned. “There was none...so strong, as the moral restraints of Christianity, none so efficacious, as instruction and civilization, and above all the principles and doctrines of the Bible, which they could not become acquainted with, but by the residence of missionaries among them.”¹³⁶

Calvinist doctrine might well be a hard sell in the land of aloha, but the cultural naïveté (or profound optimism) of the Sandwich Islands missionaries was such that no barriers were deemed insurmountable: “Describe the character of man as it is,” the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) had instructed its

¹³⁶ [William Ellis], *A Journal of a Tour around Hawaii, the Largest of the Sandwich Islands* (Boston, 1825), 181–182.

Sandwich Islands missionaries back in Boston: “depraved, unholy, and enslaved to sin; and you need not fear but its likeness will be recognized.”¹³⁷

Missionaries were hardly averse to meeting their objectives through commercial means. A substantial portion of the mission’s expenses during the 1820s and 1830s were borne by Native Hawaiians in the form of their labor and “products of the island[s].”¹³⁸ Almost all of the missionary families kept Native Hawaiians as house servants at this time. Such contributions, missionaries reasoned, gave Hawaiians a stake in both their education and Christianization. In hindsight, mission leaders well understood—and made no apologies for—their influence on the Hawaiian people: “To save their souls was the main object,” wrote Rev. Hiram Bingham, but that was insufficient in itself:

Their uncouth and disgusting manners were to be corrected, their modes of dress and living to be improved, their grossness, destitution, and wretchedness, if possible, removed; and taste, refinement, and comfort, substituted.... Very little, of course, could be said from the pulpit in favor of improving [Hawaiian lifestyles] without interfering with the weightier matters of the law.¹³⁹

¹³⁷ *Instructions of the Prudential Committee of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Sandwich Islands Mission* (Lahainaluna, HI, 1838), 44.

¹³⁸ B[ela] B[ates] Edwards, *The Missionary Gazetteer; Comprising a Geographical and Statistical Account of the Various Stations of the American and Foreign Protestant Missionary Societies...* (Boston, 1832), 336. See also Dwight Baldwin to Rufus Anderson, 10 Aug. 1832, and Artemas Bishop to Anderson, 16 Oct. 1836, both in Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Series ABC 19.1, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (hereafter ABCFM Papers).

¹³⁹ Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 169. For similar problems among British missionaries in the Cook Islands (though with markedly less disgust), see John Williams, *A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands* (London, 1837), 127–128. Disgust was a common American missionary reaction to Hawaiian life; see Sheldon Dibble, *History and General Views of the Sandwich Islands’ Mission* (New York, 1839); Stewart, *Private Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, 136, 149–153, 201; *Journal of Lucia Ruggles Holman* (Honolulu, 1931), 25, 32–33; and Levi Chamberlain journal, 24 March 1824, ABCFM Papers.

Bingham was responding to accusations that missionaries had ignored their sacred charge to “withhold...entirely,” as their savior had, “from all interference and intermeddling with the political affairs and party concerns of the nation or people among whom” they resided.¹⁴⁰ But 18,000 miles from Boston by ship, the best-laid plans (even sacred ones) had to be adjusted to reality.



Two months after the burial of Queen Keōpūolani at Lāhainā, a Hawaiian royal delegation sailed for Europe to secure an alliance of friendship with Britain. King Liholiho, his principal wife Kamāmalu, the high chief Boki, and his wife Liliha were joined by four ali‘i advisors, a number of attendants, and the Frenchman Jean Rives. The four high chiefs all caught measles in London, and the king and queen both died. In the meantime Ka‘ahumanu’s brother and principal advisor George Cox Ke‘eaumoku died of an unknown disease at the age of thirty-nine. Two months after that, Ka‘ahumanu’s second husband, King Kaumuali‘i of Kaua‘i, died of unknown causes at the age of forty-six.

It is in the context of rising mortality among the high chiefs that the turn to the missionaries and their Christianity in 1824 must be understood.¹⁴¹ With the royal delegation yet to return, the Queen Regent and kuhina nui Ka‘ahumanu announced the Sabbath as an official day of rest across the archipelago. Whether she had accepted the missionary program, co-opted and taken control of it, or made herself, in the words of

¹⁴⁰ *Instructions of the Prudential Committee*, 28; see also *ibid.*, 41–42, 94–95, 113–114.

¹⁴¹ Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 152–157.

one scholar, the “mediative role to divinity,” Ka‘ahumanu had set a new course for the Islands.¹⁴² She was not alone. Kalanimoku, Hoapili, and other ali‘i nui followed Keōpūolani’s lead, making public declarations of their desire for the people to live as Christians. In Kalanimoku’s case, he attributed his success in putting down a rebellion on Kaua‘i to his new god Jehovah.¹⁴³

The return from Britain of the bodies of Liholiho and Kamāmalu in 1825 was a watershed moment for the mission. Five of the eleven Hawaiian elites who had sailed for Britain in 1823 did not survive. With the twelve-year-old Kauikeaouli, now Kamehameha III, being guided by the “Protestant” Maui chiefs, the path was clear for the missionary program on Hawai‘i. According to Kamakau, “within three to five years” of the Protestant missionaries’ arrival, “many of the people had turned to God.” Indeed, there was “no place from Hawaii to Kauai where the people did not turn and repent,” according to Kamakau.¹⁴⁴

Around this time the boy-king Kauikeaouli delivered a speech that had probably been composed for him by missionaries: “Let our hearts be holy before Jehovah our God, that we may go forth in His ways and keep all His commandments, in order that our souls

¹⁴² Mykkänen, *Inventing Politics*, 48. The suggestion that Ka‘ahumanu saw herself as a mediator between the Christian God and her people perhaps derives from an 1825 letter published by the Mission Press. Ka‘ahumanu’s obscure phrasing is reflected in the following translation: “My entrails [heart/mind] have much aloha for you [the people]; it is my desire that all of us shall turn towards the face of Jehovah, our Father....The entrails [heart/mind] receive the word of God from above; together with that, a part of your entrails [heart/mind] carries the love that my own entrails [heart/mind] feel for you.” Elisabeta Kaahumanu (20 Dec. 1825), *Ka Manao o na Alii [The Thought of the Chiefs]*, trans. Lōkahi Antonio, collection of the author.

¹⁴³ Kala[n]imoku (16 Dec. 1825), in *Ka Manao o na Alii [The Thought of the Chiefs]*, trans. Lōkahi Antonio, collection of the author.

¹⁴⁴ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 248. The author identified as a Catholic at the time of writing.

may live in the world to come.” It is difficult to know what Kauikeaouli and his audience would have made of this rhetoric. Yet another line from the speech would have been clear to all, irrespective of their willingness to go along with it: “Let us...forsake those sins which will contaminate our bodies.”¹⁴⁵

“Very Strong Medicine”

American missionaries were not alone in their effort to Christianize Hawai‘i. A handful of British missionaries and their Tahitian converts played a critical role. With a Pacific base in the Society Islands (Tahiti), the London Missionary Society (LMS) sent delegations not only to Hawai‘i but Tonga, Samoa, and the Cook Islands in the early 1820s.¹⁴⁶ Thus, a Pacific network of Protestant evangelical efforts managed to secure a foothold not only for Christianity but also Anglo-American commercial and political influence among all the major Polynesian groups. A historian of the Cook Islands concludes that a single Tahitian missionary (by the name of Papeiha) “accomplished more in Rarotonga [the Cook Islands] in two years than the English missionaries in Tahiti had in twenty.”¹⁴⁷ Tahitians were no less influential in winning over the ruling chiefs of Hawai‘i, in particular John Adams Kuakini, Ka‘ahumanu, her new husband Kaumuali‘i,

¹⁴⁵ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 319.

¹⁴⁶ Richard Gilson, *The Cook Islands, 1820–1950* (Wellington, NZ, and Suva, Fiji, 1980), 20–24; I. C. Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 52–54.

¹⁴⁷ Gilson, *The Cook Islands, 1820–1950*, 21.

and Keōpūolani. In the case of Keōpūolani, Kamakau wrote that Tahitian Christians had taught her “the word of God and the road to heaven.”¹⁴⁸

After a term of six years in Tahiti, twenty-eight-year-old William Ellis boarded a ship for Hawai‘i with two fellow LMS missionaries and four Tahitian converts—two men, Taua and Auna, and both of their wives—along with five unnamed Tahitians, all apparently from the island of Huahine. Ellis identified Auna as “a chief of some rank.”¹⁴⁹ Upon arriving in Hawai‘i, the delegation discovered that other Tahitians were already in the service of the Hawaiian chiefs as teachers. On the Kona coast a Tahitian named Toketa served as personal teacher to Gov. John Adams Kuakini; and in Honolulu, Kahikona served as teacher to Aaron/Aarona Keali‘iahonui, son of the Kaua‘i mō‘ī Kaumuali‘i. Kahikona seems to have remained with Keali‘iahonui and his third wife (the former queen consort) Kekau‘ōnohi well into the 1830s. Sandwich Islands Mission leader Hiram Bingham, also based in Honolulu, had at least one Tahitian missionary assistant working with him, while Bingham’s wife Sibyl was served by a Tahitian nanny. Scant attention has been paid by historians to these Tahitians whose presence in Hawai‘i was instrumental to winning the ruling chiefs over to the Protestant missionary program. As early as 1822, Sybil Bingham observed that the Tahitians’ devotion and righteous living “could not be without their influence” upon the Hawaiian chiefs.¹⁵⁰ And so it would prove to be.

¹⁴⁸ Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 254.

¹⁴⁹ Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, 4:34. See also journal of Sybil Moseley Bingham, 9 Aug. 1822, HMH.

¹⁵⁰ Sybil Moseley Bingham journal, 9 Aug. 1822, HMH. See also Dorothy Barrère and Marshall Sahlins, “Tahitians in the Early History of Hawaiian Christianity: The Journal of Toketa,” *Hawaiian Journal of*

By the summer of 1822 a few high-ranking chiefs had made up their minds about the benefits of palapala, keeping the Sabbath, and receiving instruction from the missionaries. In August Gov. George Cox Ke‘eaumoku of Maui “came publicly forth and declared his intention of having himself and his people become regular pupils” of the missionaries. The next day Gov. Ke‘eaumoku tried to persuade his sister Ka‘ahumanu to do the same, but she apparently was not ready to take the leap. Meanwhile Ka‘ahumanu’s nephew King Liholiho declared himself ready for “regular instruction,” though the missionaries themselves were skeptical of the king’s intentions.¹⁵¹

Beyond evangelizing the Hawaiian people, William Ellis understood his task to be a “survey of the religious state” of the Islands in the wake of the nullification of the kapu system. Six years’ labor in the Society Islands provided Ellis with a sophisticated grasp of Polynesian customs and languages. Ellis was captivated by Hawaiian religious understandings and practices, and he recorded various scenes of the dynamic religious change underway in the early 1820s, especially on the Big Island. Ellis’ field notes, which he set down for those who would settle additional Protestant mission stations on the Islands, resulted in three published accounts comprising the most important written record of Hawaiian religious life, practice, and ideology in the early nineteenth century.¹⁵²

History 13 (1979): 19–35.

¹⁵¹ Sybil Moseley Bingham journal, 9 Aug. 1822, HMMH.

¹⁵² [William Ellis], *A Journal of a Tour Around Hawaii, The Largest of the Sandwich Islands* (Boston and New York, 1825); W. Ellis, *Narrative of a Tour Through Hawaii, or Owyhee...*, 2nd enlarged ed. (London, 1827); W. Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*. Ellis was on the Islands from 4 February 1823 to 18 September 1824. See David W. Forbes, *Hawaiian National Bibliography, 1780–1900*, vol. 1 (Honolulu,

It was an accident that Ellis wrote about Hawai‘i at all. The LMS delegation had intended only to stop over at Hawai‘i en route to the Marquesas, but lack of transport forced the missionaries to remain on the Islands for four months, during which time they met various ali‘i and preached to commoners, the vast majority of whom had as yet no exposure to Christianity. (Ellis’ Tahitian was excellent and apparently intelligible to most of the Hawaiians with whom he conversed.) Gov. John Adams Kuakini already had a Tahitian missionary (Toketa) serving him as personal teacher, but he was eager for further missionary instruction—or perhaps a stronger alliance with Anglo-American missionaries—and asked Ellis to remain on the Big Island.¹⁵³ Ellis returned to Huahine to collect his family and returned to Hawai‘i in February 1823. The Tahitian missionary Auna and his wife, meanwhile, remained on the Islands as teachers for the ali‘i. For over a year the couple lived with Ka‘ahumanu and her new husband (the former mō‘ī of Kaua‘i) Kaumuali‘i in Honolulu. Auna and his wife finally returned to Tahiti in 1824.

On Rev. Ellis’ second trip to the Islands, the Tahitian convert Taua again joined him, this time with his “family.” A woman named Taamotu, apparently unmarried, also came along, serving as a companion for Ellis’ wife Mary. It is not clear whether Taamotu had been along for the first visit.¹⁵⁴ On this second visit Ellis and the Tahitian converts stayed in Hawai‘i for almost two years. In this way a handful of Tahitian converts—

1999), 442.

¹⁵³ George Bennet, *Journal of Voyages and Travels by the Rev. Daniel Tyerman and George Bennet, Esq...*, ed. James Montgomery, vol. 2 (Boston and New York, 1832), 18, 32–33. Toketa seems to have arrived in Hawai‘i in 1818 and remained until 1825. He left a fascinating journal; see Barrère and Sahlins, “Tahitians in the Early History of Hawaiian Christianity,” 25–32.

¹⁵⁴ Ellis, *Polynesian Researches*, 4:282–285, 295–297. Kamakau identified this woman as “Ka-‘au-a-moku.” Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 254.

including a number of women—resided among the Hawaiian chiefs during a period of critical change in Hawaiian society. Despite Ellis’ reference to Taua’s family, there is no record of the four Tahitian women—Taamotu, Auna’s wife, Taua’s wife, and Sybil Bingham’s nanny—having children in tow. Nor is there any record of these women bearing children before or after 1823, though they may well have. More relevant to the present discussion, there is no record of the ruling chiefesses of Hawai‘i *inquiring* into matters of fertility or family among the Tahitians. To be sure, there are practically no sources that shed light on Polynesian women’s conversations on the Hawaiian Islands in this period. With one exception, the relevant sources were produced by British and American men, who had scant access to such exchanges.¹⁵⁵

If little can be said about particular Polynesian women’s interactions in the early 1820s, the mere presence of female converts seems to have been a significant factor in winning over the ruling chiefesses of Hawai‘i. Barrère and Sahlins argued that Hawaiian cultural notions about *Kahiki*, the land of origin to the South, had something to do with the ruling chiefs’ acceptance of the Tahitian missionaries. More “culturally amenable” to Hawaiians than American and British Protestants, the Tahitian missionaries may have seemed a natural choice to replace the discarded priests of the kapu religion.

Additionally, the Tahitians may have helped the ali‘i to “encompass” and “control” the new foreign religion—which was after all, the “religious basis of foreign power”—on

¹⁵⁵ The exception is a diary kept by Toketa, the Tahitian teacher of Gov. John Adams Kuakini. Yet Toketa grants no more access to Polynesian women’s interchanges than his British and American fellow missionaries. See Barrère and Sahlins, “Tahitians in the Early History of Hawaiian Christianity.”

terms more favorable to them.¹⁵⁶ Yet it may be the case that the Tahitians also proved the efficacy of the Christian system simply by arriving and surviving on the Hawaiian Islands. Tahitian converts had discarded their own akua, learned to read and write, and sailed the Pacific, not as slaves or servants, but as missionary helpers to foreigners who treated them with a great deal of respect relative to other haole. To observant ali'i feeling embattled in the early 1820s, these were no small matters.

This is not to say that the British–Tahitian missionary delegation was always well-received, particularly by maka'āinana. In August 1823, Rev. Ellis preached at Hilo on the windward coast of the Big Island to a largely disinterested audience. When he had finished, an old woman who sat nearby, listening “very attentively,” declared “all at once” the power of the Hawaiian gods: “great is Pele, the goddess of Hawaii [Island]; she shall save Maaro.” Maaro [probably Malo] was a local chief, present for the sermon, who happened to be sick. Another congregant then began to sing a song “in praise of Pele, to which the people generally listened, though some began to laugh.” Ellis suspected that they were inebriated but was later told that “they were not...drunk with the rum,” but rather “inspired by the akua, goddess of the volcano.” Someone suggested that Pele herself may have been present for the sermon, which led Ellis to inquire of the old woman “Oani” whether she had listened to his sermon and understood its message. She said she had. Ellis then asked Oani, who hailed from a neighboring village, whether “she thought Jehovah was good, and those [people] happy, who made him their God. She answered, ‘He is your good God (or best God,) and it is right that you should worship

¹⁵⁶ Barrère and Sahlins, “Tahitians in the Early History of Hawaiian Christianity,” 23–24.

him; but Pele is my god, and the great god of Hawaii.” Oani then proceeded with her song in praise of Pele. As a clarification, Ellis explained that Oani “did not dispute that Jehovah was a God,” but rather the proposition that he was “the only God.” Pele, too, was a god, and “dwelt in her, and through her would heal the sick chief then present. She wished [Maaro] restored [to health], and therefore came to visit him.”¹⁵⁷

Ellis had a notion that Oani’s challenge stemmed from his own violation of Pele at Kīlauea Crater earlier that month. To the great consternation of the Hawaiians in his party, Ellis had partaken of the wild ‘ōhelo berries consecrated to the volcano goddess without praying or making an offering to her. When villagers in nearby Kealokomo heard of this infraction, they told Ellis that the missionaries had escaped “only because we were haore [haole], foreigners. No Hawaiian they added, would have done so with impunity, for Pele was a dreadful being.”¹⁵⁸ Some Hawaiians on the Big Island thus seem to have conceived of the akua’s powers as constrained when it came to foreigners. Pele’s power was “dreadful” for Hawaiians, but haole could escape her wrath unharmed.

Back in Hilo Ellis proceeded to rebuke his congregants for believing in an “imaginary deity” (Pele), noting that Jehovah was “the only true Physician, who could save both body and soul.” This only inflamed Oani, who “assum[ed] a haughty air” and exclaimed “I am Pele. I shall never die. And those who follow me, when they die, if part of their bones be taken to Kirauea [Kīlauea Crater], will live with me in the bright fires

¹⁵⁷ [William Ellis], *A Journal of a Tour Around Hawaii, the Largest of the Sandwich Islands* (Boston, 1825), 176–178.

¹⁵⁸ [William Ellis], *A Journal of a Tour Around Hawaii, the Largest of the Sandwich Islands* (Boston, 1825), 150–151.

there.” Ellis’ Hawaiian guide Makoa then intervened, arguing that Pele’s party had “destroyed the king’s land, devoured his people, and spoiled the fishing grounds. Ever since you came to the island,” Makoa continued against Oani, “you have been busied in mischief.” Oani responded by naming a number of chiefs who had recently perished. ““Who destroyed these?”” she asked rhetorically. ““Not Pele, but the rum of the foreigners, whose God you are so fond of. Their diseases and their rum have destroyed more of the king’s men, than all the volcanoes of the island.””¹⁵⁹ Ellis was “sorry” that contact with foreigners had spread diseases, but noted that “intoxication was wholly forbidden by Jehovah, the God of Christians, who had declared that no drunkard should enter the kingdom of heaven.” Finally, he warned Oani of “the fearful doom” that “awaited her” should she refuse the true God. Again, Oani responded, “I shall not die, but *ora no*,” that is, live on.¹⁶⁰

It is not clear how many of Ellis’ Hilo congregants were partial to Oani’s views, though Ellis indicated that the people “manifested by their countenances that they were not indifferent to the discussion.” The congregants apparently “continued in very earnest conversation for some time.”¹⁶¹ Other people preferred to change the subject. When Ellis visited the ill chief Maaro a few days later, Maaro told him that “native doctors” had been

¹⁵⁹ [William Ellis], *A Journal of a Tour Around Hawaii, the Largest of the Sandwich Islands* (Boston, 1825), 176–179. See also *Journal of William Ellis* (1827; rpt. Honolulu, 1963), 162–163, 215–218. For his description of the distinctive Makoa, who apparently served “many years” as Kamehameha’s messenger, see *Journal of William Ellis* (1827; rpt. Honolulu, 1963), 71–72.

¹⁶⁰ [William Ellis], *A Journal of a Tour Around Hawaii, the Largest of the Sandwich Islands* (Boston, 1825), 177–179.

¹⁶¹ [William Ellis], *A Journal of a Tour Around Hawaii, the Largest of the Sandwich Islands* (Boston, 1825), 179.

administering medicines to him “which he trusted would give relief.” Ellis had no problem with that, so long as the priests did not employ “incantations” or make “offerings to their former gods.” To this, Maaro “made no reply, but turned the conversation, by saying, he regretted that he was not able to furnish us with a canoe, and that his sickness had not allowed him to be more with us.” It seems Ellis knew how to interpret Maaro’s prevarication, but it is not clear that the missionary had understood there was no such thing as Native medicine without “incantations”—Hawaiian medicine could not be separated from its religious context. As for Oani’s challenge earlier that week, both Maaro and Ellis were diplomatic enough not to raise the topic at this second meeting.

A few months later Ellis was at Lāhainā, Maui, with Keōpūolani, Ka‘ahumanu, and other high chiefs, when another priestess of Pele arrived with “thousands” of followers. The unnamed priestess wore “prophetic robes,” with edges burned in honor of the volcano goddess, and carried “a short staff or spear.” When the ruling chiefs asked her business, the priestess responded that she had “been with Pele” in a “trance or vision” and wished to complain about the sacrilegious behavior of foreigners at Kīlauea Crater on the Big Island. If the chiefs did not banish these foreigners, the priestess threatened, Pele would “take vengeance by inundating the country with lava, and destroying the people.” According to Ellis, Ka‘ahumanu responded to this provocation by declaring the priestess a liar, burning her priestly accouterments, and sending her away. Ellis further noted that Ka‘ahumanu took these actions without missionary prompting. The priestess’ followers

soon dispersed, the priestess herself left Maui, and that was apparently the end of the Pele resistance movement in Lāhainā.¹⁶²

Earlier, Ellis had an encounter with Islanders at Waipi‘o village on the Big Island that sheds light on how local people were thinking about disease and bodies, both Hawaiian and foreign. The village chief, Ha‘a, had inquired of the missionaries’ guide Makoa about some medicine being prepared. Ellis did not indicate who was preparing the medicine or what it consisted of, but Makoa informed Ha‘a that it was “very strong medicine”—so strong that “if a native only smelt it, his breath would be taken away.” (Ellis noted that Makoa was probably thinking of the missionaries’ medicinal hartshorn, a bottle of which “had once been handed him to smell of.”) Makoa went on to observe to Ha‘a that if Hawaiians ““were to be taken sick on a journey, we should rest a few days before we thought of continuing it: but they are strange people, very unlike us; for frequently, after being sick all night, they get up in the morning, take medicine which would send us all to sleep, and then walk on all day, as if nothing were the matter with them.””¹⁶³ It is not clear whether Makoa was referring to the Anglo-American missionaries in particular or foreigners in general. But later observations by Native Hawaiians would more directly identify differences between foreigners’ and Native bodies when it came to illness and disease.

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<sup>162</sup> William Ellis, *Narrative of a Tour Through Hawaii, or Owyhee...*, 2<sup>nd</sup> enlarged ed. (London, 1827), 258–260.

<sup>163</sup> [William Ellis], *A Journal of a Tour Around Hawaii, the Largest of the Sandwich Islands* (Boston, 1825), 201. See also William Ellis, *Narrative of a Tour Through Hawaii, or Owyhee...*, 2<sup>nd</sup> enlarged ed. (London, 1827), 360–361.

On O‘ahu, meanwhile, some chiefesses sensed the urgency of the missionary message. In the summer of 1823, while Rev. Ellis and company were touring her native island, the Big Island chiefess Kapi‘olani sat down to tea with the mission wives at Kailua on windward O‘ahu. According to Elizabeth Edwards Bishop, wife of American missionary Artemas Bishop, the high chiefess “inquired how long before the missionaries would give her a Bible in the Hawaiian tongue, adding ‘We want it soon, because by and by we shall die.’”<sup>164</sup> Kapi‘olani was about forty years old and apparently in good health.<sup>165</sup>

Other Hawaiians, by contrast, decided that missionaries themselves were to blame for the carnage. In May 1824, following the funeral of King Kaumuali‘i at Honolulu, American missionary C. S. Stewart was walking near Punchbowl Crater when he was approached by a “small party of natives” who accused him of “*praying their chiefs to death*—that Taumuarii [Kaumuali‘i] was dead by my prayers—that I was killing Karaimoku [Kalanimoku], and soon there would not be a chief left on Oahu.” Stewart dispelled these “superstitious” notions, explaining that no person could pray another to death, but the people responded that “my words were *falsehood only*.” Premier Kalanimoku shortly arrived to meet Stewart, and the two men laughed off the commoners’ foolish notions. Only later did Stewart learn that he had been strolling on the

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<sup>164</sup> Elizabeth Edwards Bishop, “A Journal of Early Hawaiian Days” (3 July 1823), *The Friend* (Sept. 1900): 72–74. Women were not permitted to be missionaries for the ABCFM; hence, their identification in the sources (and here) as “mission wives.” See Patricia Grimshaw, *Paths of Duty: American Missionary Wives in Nineteenth-Century Hawaii* (Honolulu, 1989); and Jennifer Thigpen, *Island Queens and Mission Wives: How Gender Remade Hawai‘i’s Pacific World* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2014).

<sup>165</sup> Kapi‘olani died in 1841 (about sixty years old) from complications of a lumpectomy performed by American missionary physician Gerrit Judd.



site of a former heiau, “intimately associated, in the minds of the less enlightened of the people, with the superstitions of the tabu system.”<sup>166</sup>

The culmination of this flurry of missionary activity and Hawaiian resistance occurred in autumn 1824. Back at Kīlauea Crater on the Big Island the chiefess Kapi‘olani committed an act that gained her the admiration of the New England missionaries and secured her place, along with Keōpūolani, in the Christian mythology of the Islands. The chiefess, who had earlier asked the mission wives for a Bible “soon, because by and by we shall die,” peered over the crater and challenged the goddess Pele to strike her dead. Surviving this provocation, Kapi‘olani had proven the gods to be ineffectual against her own strength, bolstered by Christian teachings. (The scene was later made famous for the English-reading public in a poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.) It is not clear whether Kapi‘olani was aware that she was reprising Rev. William Ellis’ performance at Mauna Kea the year before; but she would certainly have been aware of his partaking of the ‘ōhelo berries and of his censure by the Pele partisans and priestesses such as Oani. In any case, Kapi‘olani had very publicly declared her support of the missionary faction and her disavowal of the Big Island akua.

Some scholars have viewed Kapi‘olani’s defiance of Pele as evidence of ali‘i women using their personal and political authority to overcome a second-class ritual status.<sup>167</sup> Yet Kapi‘olani had other reasons to defy the akua. Over the past year she had lost four fellow high chiefs, three of them her cousins. Like her fellow survivor

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<sup>166</sup> Stewart, *Private Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, 292–293.

<sup>167</sup> Linnekin, *Sacred Queens and Women of Consequence*, 72–73.

Ka‘ahumanu, the forty-year-old Kapi‘olani was childless. The future of the ruling classes of Hawai‘i was very much in question. A year later, in October 1825, Kapi‘olani was baptized into the Congregational Church. Yet just before that, in the winter of 1825, another flu-like outbreak struck Honolulu, carrying off untold numbers. Whether missionaries were to blame for the deaths of Hawaiians or held up as their only hope of survival, the stakes were high. The Hawaiian people faced a mortal threat in the 1820s.

### *Conclusion*

Never before had so many ruling chiefs died in peacetime. Perhaps Hawai‘i was at war in the 1820s, but if so the enemy was invisible. Like Kapi‘olani, Queen Ka‘ahumanu had lost most of her closest advisors, family, and kinsmen. She had no children. She was, for the first time in her life, alone, and faced with two options for the Hawaiian future: restore the akua and return to the old ways, or accept the missionaries’ promise of a new life. With the Tahitian converts Taua, Auna, and their wives as models, Ka‘ahumanu threw in her lot the missionaries. A new path would be required to bring “new life” (*ke ola hou*) to the nation.<sup>168</sup>

Yet a new path did not entail the rejection of old practices or ideas, particularly for *maka‘āinana*. Nor did a new path entail blind faith in the missionaries or their God. Indeed for many Hawaiians after 1820 the missionary program was only as good as its results. The mere presence of missionary families was remained contingent on the

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<sup>168</sup> Elisabeta Kaahumanu (20 Dec. 1825), in *Ka Manoa o na Alii [Thoughts of the Chiefs]*, 5.

beneficence and approval of the ruling chiefs. If the missionary program failed to improve Hawaiian life by reversing depopulation and improving the peoples' health—if Christianity itself proved a poor fit for the Islands—the chiefs would not hesitate, as one high chiefess later noted, to discard it for another creed.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> The high chiefess, Lydia Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia, was quoted by Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World*, 208–209.

**CHAPTER FIVE:**  
**The Great Fatalism, 1825–1839**

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The axe is laid at the base of my tree; the day is not known when the Lord shall take  
away my spirit.

– Ka‘ahumanu, O‘ahu, 1825

Thou wilt find all here much changed.

– Lydia Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia, O‘ahu, 1825

What we do for the people must be done quickly, for they are rapidly melting away.

– Rev. William P. Alexander, Kaua‘i, 1835

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Late one night in 1826, six years after his arrival with the charter delegation of New England missionaries, the Reverend William Richards received the Royal Governor of O‘ahu at his mission post on Maui. According to Richards, Governor Boki had called on him to raise “various questions respecting the duties imposed by Christianity.”<sup>1</sup> A number of the high chiefs had formed an alliance with the missionaries by this point, reading the Bible in Hawaiian, attending church regularly, and encouraging their people to do the same. These “Protestant” chiefs were led by Boki’s brother, the Premier William Pitt Kalanimoku, and his cousin, the Queen Regent Ka‘ahumanu.<sup>2</sup> Other chiefs, like Boki, were on the fence, weighing the lifestyle advocated by missionaries against other options, particularly those presented by foreign merchants and the small resident

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<sup>1</sup> Journal of William Richards, 23 June 1826, Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Series ABC 19.1, Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (hereafter ABCFM Papers).

<sup>2</sup> To distinguish them from the traditionalists and anti-missionary chiefs, I employ the term “Protestant chiefs” in this chapter primarily as a political designation without regard to the nature of their religious practices or beliefs (which is mostly unknown in any case). Many of these Protestant chiefs had been affiliated with the “Maui chiefs” (Chapter Four), yet by 1825 the ranks of the Protestant chiefs had expanded well beyond the Maui group.

foreigner community. The Governor's considerable influence in Island life—and his reluctance as yet to join the Protestant chiefs—made Richards eager to entertain Boki's queries, no matter the hour.

Boki led with straightforward questions about the Ten Commandments and keeping the Sabbath. Then he asked Richards the following: “What was the great crime of the children of Israel for which 24,000 died of the plague?” The reference is to a Hebrew Bible story in which the Israelites earn God's wrath by engaging in sexual immorality. New England missionaries in Hawai'i were fond of quoting the passage.<sup>3</sup> While we cannot be sure what had piqued Boki's interest in the story (or why the missionaries had directed him to it), twenty-four thousand dead happens to approximate Hawai'i's losses during the Royal Governor's own short lifetime. Perhaps closer to home for Boki were the recent losses of his sister, brother-in-law, and nephew to an outbreak of whooping cough.

Unlike his brother and cousins, Boki would never be won over to the missionary cause. He was shortly lost at sea with six hundred other Hawaiians on a sandalwood expedition to Vanuatu in the Southwest Pacific. A few years later, Ka'ahumanu and her fellow ruling chiefs formally declared Protestant Christianity the religion of the Kingdom. Yet Boki's question for Richards in 1826 suggests that he may have seen the prospects for a Hawaiian future in a manner akin to his brethren, the Protestant chiefs.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., William Ellis, *Journal of William Ellis: Narrative of a Tour of Hawaii, or Owyhee...* (1827; rpt. Honolulu, 1963), 70–71; and L[orrin] Andrews, ed. and trans., “On the Decrease of Population on the Hawaiian Islands,” by David Malo, *Hawaiian Spectator* 2 (1839): 121–131, esp. 128–129 n2. The Biblical story referenced is from *Numbers* 25.

<sup>4</sup> For Boki's official “thoughts” on the missionaries and their message, see Poki (July 1825), in *Ka*

Indeed, some Hawaiians by the late 1820s had come to view disease and population loss as inevitable and inexorable. As early as 1823 a high chiefess in the prime of life implored the missionaries for a Bible in the Hawaiian language: ‘We want it soon, because by and by we shall die.’<sup>5</sup>

Given the long odds of survival in the Hawaiian New World, the ruling chiefs (*ali‘i nui*) decided that the Sandwich Islands Mission offered the better of two options for a Hawaiian future. From one angle, the choice was obvious: the liquor, tobacco, silks, and other trade goods provided by foreign merchants and beachcombers had done nothing to help Hawaiians live or thrive. At the same time these commodities had trapped the ali‘i in a spiral of debt, largely by their buying goods on credit. The Hawaiian term for debt (*‘ai‘ē*) means “to eat beforehand” (i.e., before paying), and it is clear from extant records that the Hawaiian chiefs had been “eating beforehand” for more than a decade by 1824.<sup>6</sup> Of course chiefly debt also necessitated an ongoing relationship with the merchant community that could not be gainsaid. What is perhaps more surprising is that so few ruling chiefs in this period opted for a return to traditional political, economic, or religious practices in the face of dire new challenges. Only a brief, small-scale rebellion

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*Manao o na Alii [The Thought of the Chiefs]* (Utica, NY, 1827; originally publ. Oahu: Mission Press, 1825), 7–8.

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Edwards Bishop, “A Journal of Early Hawaiian Days” (3 July 1823), *The Friend* (Sept. 1900): 72–74. The chiefess was Kapi‘olani.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Mark Rifkin, “Debt and the Transnationalization of Hawai‘i,” *American Quarterly* 60 (2008): 43–66. For the impact of debt on the Kingdom in the 1810s and 20s, see Gregory Rosenthal, “Hawaiians Who Left Hawai‘i: Work, Body, and Environment in the Pacific World, 1786-1876” (PhD dissertation, Stony Brook Univ., 2015), chap. 1.

on Kaua‘i in 1824 advocated the removal of foreigners and a return to traditional practices. Thus, the way forward would include foreigners and foreign influence.

The chiefs’ interest in the Sandwich Islands Mission grew sufficiently strong by the 1830s for American missionaries to declare a Hawaiian “Great Awakening,” akin to their own Second Great Awakening back home. The Hawaiian version, however, was short-lived—the fervor limited to portions of the Big Island and O‘ahu. However, a broader awakening was occurring simultaneously. Hawaiians were awakening to the reality of their long-term decline due to disease, low fertility, and poor health. In fact, the Great Awakening and the Great Fatalism were linked phenomena, as American missionaries offered Hawaiians an alternative to their current life of suffering by promising them a better life in the present, or, short of that, in the afterlife.<sup>7</sup>

In the 1830s Native Hawaiian writers began to employ deterministic metaphors about foreigners pushing them out, just as invader species had been pushing out Native plants and animals since the arrival of Europeans. Hawaiians in some numbers identified Island populations—human and nonhuman—as under siege by newcomers, and facing a gradual decline in numbers and in vigor. While Euro-American notions of “vanishing

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<sup>7</sup> Traditionally, Hawaiian religion was oriented more toward ritual and practice than to theology or eschatology. Notions of the afterlife varied considerably. The “most learned people in the ancient times of Hawai‘i,” according to Kamakau, identified three principal realms for the souls (*‘uhane*) of the departed: the realm of “homeless” or “wandering” souls” (akin to Buddhism’s hungry ghosts); the realm of ancestral spirits (*ao ‘aumakua*), which included a number of “heavenly” realms; and the realm of “endless darkness” (*po pau ‘ole*), an underworld also known as the realm of Milu. Many, if not most, of these spirit realms had actual physical or geographical locations or “gateways” on the Islands (e.g., a cliff from which the soul would leap into the next realm). Unlike Protestantism, in Hawaiian traditional religion there were “many doors by which to enter the ‘aumakua realm.” Samuel Manaiakalani Kamakau, *Ka Po‘e Kahiko: The People of Old*, trans. Mary Kawena Pukui, ed. Dorothy B. Barrère (Honolulu, 1964), 47–53, esp. 47–49. Malo had little if anything to say about traditional Hawaiian notions of the afterlife; See David Malo, *Hawaiian Antiquities (Moolelo Hawaii)*, trans. Nathaniel B. Emerson (Honolulu, 1951).

“races” may have had some influence on Hawaiian thinking, Hawaiian fatalism in the 1830s was largely *sui generis*. The physical evidence in Hawai‘i was proof enough for many Native Hawaiians of what lay ahead. Island life of all kinds was under attack in the early nineteenth century. Introduced species tended to grow vigorously and unchecked. Vancouver’s small cattle herd from Alta California, for instance, had gone feral, stripped the landscape, and mauled a number of Islanders. Many Hawaiians began to conceive of the *akua* (gods, deities) and *‘aumakua* (ancestral spirits) as themselves weakening against the onslaught.<sup>8</sup> Since the people and the gods were one with nature, it followed that both were declining with the rest of Island life. By 1837 Native Hawaiian writer Davida Malo observed that Hawaiians were “small fish” destined to be eaten by larger ones.<sup>9</sup> By the 1840s a visitor noted that there was among Islanders a “general impression” of their “early extinction.”<sup>10</sup>

Hawaiian fatalism about their long-term prospects cannot be dismissed simply as missionary rhetoric or indoctrination, or as evidence of a successful “civilization” campaign. Countless scholars have examined nineteenth-century American conceptions of Indigenous peoples as “vanishing races,” yet one question that scholars have neglected

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<sup>8</sup> Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires: Pehea lā e Pono ai? How Shall We Live in Harmony* (Honolulu, 1992), 78.

<sup>9</sup> Davida Malo to Kīna‘u and Mataio Kekūāno‘a, 18 Aug. 1837, Hawai‘i State Archives, qtd. in Ralph Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778–1854: Foundation and Transformation* (1938; repr. Honolulu, 1947), 153. For analogous notions among nineteenth-century Māori, see Raeburn Lange, *May the People Live: A History of Maori Health Development, 1900–1920* (Auckland, NZ, 1999), chap. 4. See also Ferdinand von Hochstetter, *New Zealand: Its Physical Geography, Geology and Natural History...* (Stuttgart, 1867), 222. Māori physician and scholar Te Rangi Hīroa cited this passage from Von Hochstetter unfavorably in 1924, by which time the Māori population had begun to rebound. See Te Rangi Hīroa (P. H. Buck), “The Passing of the Maori,” *Transactions and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New Zealand* 55 (1924): 362–363.

<sup>10</sup> S[amuel] S. Hill, *Travels in the Sandwich and Society Islands* (London, 1856), 114.



to ask is, What did Native people themselves believe the future held for them—amid repeated epidemics, chronic poor health, and continuing population loss; and all this typically in concert with displacement from their homelands, broken treaties, and other forms of violence?<sup>11</sup> In Hawai‘i, ongoing epidemics, shortened lives, and plummeting fertility proved the need for a different path if the people were to survive. It was not clear, however, that any path could reverse the trend. For many Hawaiians, the answer resided in the promise of an afterlife inflected by new Christian notions. “The axe is laid at the base of my tree,” wrote Ka‘ahumanu to her people in 1825: “the day is not known when the Lord shall take away my spirit.”<sup>12</sup> In fact, the queen would live another seven years, but no one would have guessed it from the grim mood of her missive.

In this chapter I argue first that Hawaiians’ views on their fate as a people bore importantly on the Christianization of the Islands, and second, that the American missionary program was shaped in significant part by the Hawaiian health problems and the urgent need to stem Native Hawaiian population loss. The first few American missionary delegations had expected to focus on the conversion and instruction of Islanders. Instead they spent a great deal of time ministering to sick Hawaiians. For their part, Hawaiians overwhelmingly followed their ruling chiefs into the bosom of the American Protestant religious-political system that began to solidify in the late 1820s.

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<sup>11</sup> For “American conceptions,” see, e.g., Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man’s Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York, 1978); Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Lawrence, KS, 1982); Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven, 1998); Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (New York, 1999); and Jean M. O’Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis, 2010).

<sup>12</sup> Elisabeta Kaahumanu (20 Dec. 1825), in *Ka Manoa o na Alii [Thoughts of the Chiefs]*, 5.

While it took American missionaries to engineer the Christianization of Hawai‘i, the *ma‘i malihini* (introduced infectious diseases) did much of the heavy lifting.

### *Grass Fires*

The short-term results of the joint American-British-Tahitian missionary effort were impressive. “Within three to five years” of the missionaries’ arrival, wrote Kamakau in the 1860s, “many of the people had turned to God.” Nor was there any region on the Islands “where the people did not turn and repent.”<sup>13</sup> That was an exaggeration, but in many communities the incorporation of Protestant Christianity had been rapid. Of course it is also the case that people kept their family gods (‘aumakua) and observed various local rituals without interference from missionaries or Island authorities. Commoners also continued to rely on their medical *kāhuna* (experts), while experimenting with and incorporating foreign medicine. In all likelihood, religious and medical practice in rural and remote regions of the Islands looked little different in 1825 than in 1778.

Which is not to say that life for the *maka‘āinana* (commoners) was unchanged. Not only disease but also squalor was reported on the Islands in the early 1820s. American missionary Charles S. Stewart recorded devastating scenes of Hawaiian suffering as a result of poverty. He did so, in part, to provide evangelical readers with evidence of Hawaiians’ degraded condition, their native savagery, and the necessity of their receiving Christianity and civilization. On southern O‘ahu in 1823 Stewart reported

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<sup>13</sup> Samuel M. Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, rev. ed. (Honolulu, 1992), 248.

commoners nitpicking and ingesting the fleas from their pets, and eating head lice removed from their own (and each other's) hair—suggesting that Hawaiians' degradation came near to that of apes.<sup>14</sup> Stewart's racist report would hardly be worth recounting were it not for the possibility that impoverished commoners had resorted to eating fleas and lice because they were malnourished or chronically hungry. Stewart instead viewed these practices as the barbarous nature of Hawaiian custom combined with the vicissitudes of poverty. It is not clear whether the 1823 famine resulting from the sandalwood harvesting frenzy was limited to O'ahu, or if maka'āinana subsistence patterns had been impacted on other Islands as well.<sup>15</sup> Many laborers harvesting in the mountains of O'ahu, according to Kamakau, "suffered for food" and resorted to leaves and herbs, which earned them the nickname "excreters of green herbs (*hilalele*)."<sup>16</sup> Others simply "died and were buried there."<sup>16</sup>

In March 1824 the Reverend William Richards was called upon to visit a young friend of the king who was ill with flu-like symptoms. Richards described the boy as trembling and having cold extremities. Local people speculated that the child had fallen victim to a sorcerer (*kahuna 'anā'anā*), since another boy had recently died under mysterious circumstances. The consensus seemed to be that the same sorcerer had

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<sup>14</sup> C[harles] S[amuel] Stewart, *Journal of a Residence in the Sandwich Islands, During the Years 1823, 1824, and 1825* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., New York, 1828), 151–152. See *ibid.*, 129, for Stewart's depiction of a chiefess who shared a bone with her dog.

<sup>15</sup> See Marshall Sahlins, *Anahulu: The Anthropology of History in the Kingdom of Hawai'i*, vol. 1, *Historical Ethnography*, with Dorothy B. Barrère (Chicago, 1992), 4, 41; and Robert C. Schmitt, "Famine Mortality in Hawaii," *Journal of Pacific History* 5 (1970): 109–115.

<sup>16</sup> Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 252. For earlier "famines" in the 1810s induced by a frenzy of sandalwood harvesting on the Big Island, see *ibid.*, 204.

designs on the young friend of the king, and that this boy would die, no matter what “remedies should be used” upon him. Richards and his fellow missionaries administered opium and placed bottles of hot water against the boy’s hands and feet. The following morning, the boy woke, “surprised” to find himself “nearly well.” Hawaiian opinions about the boy’s recovery differed: “Some [thought] there was an extraordinary efficacy in our *medicine*,” while others supposed the sorcerer had simply left off terrorizing the boy.<sup>17</sup>

Like other foreigners before him, Richards noted the profound psychological power that ‘anā‘anā continued to hold over Hawaiians. A case in Richards’ own household served as evidence for his Anglo-American readers. When Richards sent some Hawaiian boys to recover a bolt of cloth that had been stolen from his yard, the boys located the thief and, in the process of taking back the cloth, ripped his clothes. In response, the thief “threatened to pray them to death.” One of the boys, according to Richards, was convinced that “there was no hope for him” unless he managed to regain the favor of the sorcerer-thief. Within three days the boy took ill, believing death to be near. Unable to identify any symptoms besides fear, Richards forced the boy to rise and engage in physical work, and within a few hours, the cure took: the boy discovered that he was not sick, according to Richards, and “concluded that not only foreigners, but also the [Hawaiian] men who live with him, are proof against the *pule ananana*” (sorcery).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> [William] Richards, “Extracts from the Journal of William Richards” (20 March 1824), *Missionary Herald* 23 (May 1827), 141–142.

<sup>18</sup> [William] Richards, “Extracts from the Journal of William Richards” (20 March 1824), *Missionary Herald* 23 (May 1827), 141–142. I have been unable to locate Native Hawaiian accounts of this episode.

Perhaps so, though no one bothered to track the boy's views on 'ānā'anā after his brief illness. And even if the boy had ceased to believe in the power of 'ānā'anā, the thief-sorcerer continued to cause havoc in Lahina in Spring 1824, and Richards himself admitted that fear of 'ānā'anā remained "nearly universal here."

Two prominent ali'i fell victim to sorcery that same month. Kiliwehi, daughter of Kamehameha I and wife of Premier William Pitt Kalanimoku, took ill with undisclosed symptoms. Kiliwehi's half-brother Kaiko'okalani then came down with the "same disease," according to Richards. Both ali'i seemed to Richards to believe that a kahuna 'ānā'anā was using sorcery against them. When Kiliwehi appeared to have recovered, she visited her brother. After a swim in the ocean, Kiliwehi "had not been out of the water more than half an hour, when, without a moment's notice she became a corpse." Kaiko'okalani had immediately called on a kahuna to save his sister. When the kahuna's prayer failed to be "answered," Richards editorialized, the kahuna "determined to pray to [the akua] no more. [He] is now attending the *palapala*, and prays to Jehovah every morning and evening."<sup>19</sup> Of course Richards provides only one perspective on these events; unfortunately, Hawaiians were not recording their thoughts in writing in any numbers yet. Yet some Native Hawaiians seem to have been questioning the efficacy of the kāhuna 'ānā 'ānā and other Native practitioners as early as 1824, while simultaneously noting the relative efficacy of some Western medicine.

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<sup>19</sup> [William] Richards, "Extracts from the Journal of William Richards" (20 March 1824), *Missionary Herald* 23 (May 1827), 143.

One thing was clear to Reverend William Richards in March 1824: there had been an “unusual mortality among the chiefs” over the past two years. Among other proposals to stop the spread of illness, according to Richards, was that the king should stop studying and instead go on a cock-fighting tour of the islands. This proposal had come from a boy who dreamed that “the sickness [was] owing to the prince’s confining himself so closely to study.” Another Hawaiian dreamed that the sickness had been caused by an infestation of the gods in local homes. The suggested remedy was to burn all the houses. Upon hearing this proposal, the boy-king Kamehameha III observed that setting little fires *next* to each house would serve the same purpose, by scaring away the akua. According to Richards, it was “but a moment before all Lahina was illuminated” with small grass fires.<sup>20</sup>



When the Baltic German navigator Otto von Kotzebue met with Premier William Pitt Kalanimoku in January 1825, the latter’s health was failing and his views on the future of the Kingdom struck a dismal note. Kotzebue noted that while Kalanimoku judged the adoption of Christianity as a net positive, he also believed that some commoners “cannot understand its superiority; and strong measures are necessary to prevent their relapsing into idolatry.” Kalanimoku himself had been forced in 1824 to lead a military campaign against Kaua‘i Islanders organized by King Kaumuali‘i’s son Humelemea, the young man who had traveled the world, gained an education in New

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<sup>20</sup> [William] Richards, “Extracts from the Journal of William Richards” (20 March 1824), *Missionary Herald* 23 (May 1827), 143–144.

England, and fought in the War of 1812. Under Humehume the Kaua‘i rebels staged a resistance campaign against the rule of Queen Ka‘ahumanu, Premier Kalanimoku, and the mission-allied chiefs. According to Kotzebue, Kalanimoku believed the overarching problem was King Liholiho had too quickly “annihilated all that [the Hawaiian people] held sacred....How all will end, I cannot foresee; but I look forward with fear. The people are attached to me, and I have influence over them; but my health declines, and the Government, which I have scarcely been able to keep together, will probably not survive me.” Other ali‘i apparently agreed with Kalanimoku. According to Kotzebue, many ali‘i “seem persuaded that the monarchy will be dismembered” at Kalanimoku’s death.<sup>21</sup>

Indeed, a closer look at the life and family of Premier William Pitt Kalanimoku shows exactly what the ali‘i were up against in the 1820s. The following paragraphs outline the genealogy of Kalanimoku, one of the most powerful men in early nineteenth-century Hawai‘i. Such genealogies were critical tools for the ruling chiefs, justifying their status and honoring their ancestors (see Chapter One). Kalanimoku’s was one of many families whose line simply ran out in the nineteenth century.

Grandson of the *mō‘ī* (king) of Maui; brother of Boki; and first cousin to Ka‘ahumanu, (1.) William Pitt Kalanimoku (born c. 1769) lived a relatively long and exceedingly prosperous life before dying from complications of edema (probably pulmonary edema) in 1827, three years after writing his letter to Liholiho and Kamāmalu in London. Kalanimoku had four wives, only one of whom, Kiliwehi, bore a surviving

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<sup>21</sup> Otto von Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World in the Years 1823, 24, 25, and 26*, vol. 2 (London, 1830), 229. Hawaiians would not learn of the Liholiho’s death until March 1825.

child. Another wife, Likelike, died in childbirth at the age of twenty-one. Kiliwehi herself succumbed to an unidentified illness on O‘ahu in early 1824 (referenced in Kalanimoku’s letter above), possibly the respiratory epidemic that had killed so many ali‘i at court.

The surviving child of Premier Kalanimoku and Kiliwehi was (2.) William Pitt Leleiohoku I, who became Royal Governor of Hawai‘i Island as a young man. William Pitt Leleiohoku I first married the princess (and daughter of Kamehameha) Nāhi‘ena‘ena, who died along with her newborn from complications of childbirth at the age of twenty-one in 1836. Gov. Leleiohoku then married a *granddaughter* of Kamehameha, Ruth Ke‘elikōlani, who—as with Kiliwehi the previous generation—bore a single surviving son. Gov. Leleiohoku himself perished in the measles epidemic of 1848 at the age of twenty-seven.

Gov. Leleiohoku’s surviving son with Ruth Ke‘elikōlani was (3.) William Pitt Kīna‘u (also known as Liliulani or John), who died at the age of sixteen in what was reported variously as an accident, poisoning, and, what is most likely, consumption.<sup>22</sup> With the death of this teenager the exalted line of Premier William Pitt Kalanimoku, the “Iron Cable” of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i, came to an end.

Kalanimoku’s case may somewhat overstate the decline of Native Hawaiian families. It is important to note that the ali‘i did not reckon family relations exclusively

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<sup>22</sup> For “accident,” see Kalena Silva, “Princess Ruth Ke‘elikōlani, Hawaiian Ali‘i,” *Biography Hawai‘i: Five Lives; A Series of Public Remembrances* (Center for Biographical Research, Univ. of Hawai‘i–Mānoa, 2003), 1; for poisoning, see Albert Pierce Taylor, *Under Hawaiian Skies: A Narrative of the Romance, Adventure and History of the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu, 1922), 200; for consumption, see “Death of a High Chief,” *Honolulu Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, 17 Sept. 1859.



by direct biological descent.<sup>23</sup> The ancient practice of *hānai* (adoption) enabled elite families, among other things, to carry on their “lines” in cases of early death or the infertility of would-be parents. Indeed, the third generation of Premier Kalanimoku’s family (above) did just that. After the death of her teenaged son William Pitt Kīna‘u in 1859, Ruth Ke‘elikōlani adopted the son of the ali‘i Caesar Kapa‘akea, William Pitt Leleiohoku Kalaho‘olewa, who shortly became known as William Pitt Leleiohoku II. Yet he too died as a young man (age 23), and Ruth Ke‘elikōlani lived out the final years of her life without children.

Some historians have suggested that the ali‘i practice of close endogamous marriage (inbreeding) may have contributed to the decline of elite families such as that of Kalanimoku.<sup>24</sup> In fact, some ali‘i couples probably faced decreased odds of conception because of consanguinity; yet the phenomenon that geneticists refer to as “pedigree collapse” does not seem to have occurred in nineteenth-century Hawai‘i. At least nothing like the profound physical and mental disabilities among the inbred Spanish Habsburgs—who also struggled with infant mortality and low fertility—are recorded among the

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<sup>23</sup> But note that there was a great deal of “blood” talk among elite Native Hawaiians as early as the 1860s, that lasted well into the twentieth-first century. For references to blood in Native Hawaiians’ writings, see, e.g., Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 259–260; Liliuokalani, *Hawaii’s Story by Hawaii’s Queen* (Boston, 1898), 25, 83, 148, 173, 360, 373. See also E. S. Craighill Handy and Mary Kawena Pukui, *The Polynesian Family System in Ka‘u, Hawai‘i* (Wellington, NZ, 1958), 48–51, 65; Kanalu G. Terry Young, *Rethinking the Native Hawaiian Past* (New York, 1998), chap. 2; and most recently, Jade Snow, “Pihana: A Hula Dancer’s Return to Self on Her Journey to Becoming Miss Aloha Hula 2013,” *MANA: The Hawaiian Magazine* (May 2014): 24–31, esp. 26.

<sup>24</sup> Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 27–29.

Hawaiian ali‘i.<sup>25</sup> Rather, the problem seems to have been low fertility and chronic infant mortality.

Not all ali‘i families followed the pattern of Premier Kalanimoku. Yet even in numerically exceptional ali‘i families, life expectancy and average life span were very low. The patriarch Caesar Kapa‘akea (1815–1866) and matriarch Analea Keohokālole (1816–1869)—co-founders of what came to be known as the House of Kalākaua—had as many as ten children (including the aforementioned William Pitt Leleiohoku II, hānai son to Ruth Ke‘elikōlani) over the course of a remarkable thirty-three-year union. Their firstborn, James Kaliokalani, died at the age of seventeen in 1852, victim to the second measles epidemic to strike Hawai‘i (see Chapter Five). As many as four other children of Kapa‘akea and Keohokālole died even younger, including Ka‘imina‘au‘ao who died in the measles epidemic in 1848 at the age of four. Yet four children survived to adulthood, and two of those individuals became monarchs. William Pitt Leleiohoku II died of rheumatic fever at the age of twenty-three. Miriam Likelike died of unknown causes at the age of thirty-six. David Kalākaua became King in 1874 and served until his death, in San Francisco, at age fifty-four. Lydia Lili‘uokalani (Hawai‘i’s last monarch) was fifty-five at the time of her overthrow in 1893, and lived to the ripe old age of seventy-nine. Of the “Four Sacred Ones of Hawai‘i,” as these surviving adult siblings of the House of Kalākaua were known, only one, Princess Miriam Likelike, produced offspring.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> John Langdon-Davies, *Carlos: The King Who Would Not Die* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1963).

<sup>26</sup> The child, Princess Ka‘iulani, was born to great fanfare in 1875 but died at the age of twenty-three in 1899. The cause was “inflammatory rheumatism.” Note that both Kalākaua and Lili‘uokalani had *hānai* (adopted) children, and Lili‘uokalani herself had been hānai daughter to Abner Pākī and Laura Kōnia.

Queen Keōpūolani (1778–1823) was the only high chiefess in this period thought to have borne more children than Analea Keohokālole. By way of comparison, three of Keōpūolani’s eleven children survived into adulthood (each, as it happens, fathered by Kamehameha I): Liholiho lived to twenty-six, Nāhi‘ena‘ena to twenty-one, and Kauikeaouli (Kamehameha III) to forty-one. As with the surviving children of Analea Keohokālole, two of Queen Keōpūolani’s surviving children became monarchs.

There is no reason to belabor the point: ali‘i families faced numerical decline in the early nineteenth century as a result of low fertility and shortened life spans. Few ali‘i perhaps thought in soulless terms of the reproductive capacity of the class and life expectancies, yet the numbers reveal that even the most blessed ali‘i couples faced extremely difficult odds of their children surviving into adulthood. The challenges faced by ali‘i families in producing heirs were real, and Hawaiians of all classes were distinctly aware of the problem by the 1830s. Various members of the ruling class were desperate to have children, not only to keep the Kingdom viable but also—and which became at least as important—to keep foreign residents from taking over the Islands. The missionary faction was equally aware of the problem of Native Hawaiian fertility and early mortality, and at least some of the laws they proposed and enacted for the Kingdom in the 1840s were intended to address the problem. By the 1850s, with the situation yet to improve, King Alexander Liholiho (Kamehameha IV) in his first address to the legislature declared Hawaiian population loss a problem “in comparison with which all

others sink into insignificance. Our acts are in vain unless we can stay the wasting hand that is destroying our people.”<sup>27</sup>



A few days after his meeting with Premier Kalanimoku in January 1825, Kotzebue received via messenger a letter from Lydia Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia, one of the widows of Kamehameha I. Kotzebue had first met “Queen Nomahanna” during his extended visit of 1816, while her husband Kamehameha I was still alive. More recently Kotzebue had spent some time with Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia upon his arrival at the royal compound in Honolulu.<sup>28</sup> The two had discussed the passing of Kamehameha I and the introduction of Christianity to the Islands, among other topics. Kotzebue had never been the recipient of a letter written by a Polynesian queen, and he had some sense of the historic nature of the occasion. He sent for longtime foreign resident and ali‘i Francisco de Paula Marín to translate. Marín read aloud: “I salute thee, Russian!”:

I love thee with my whole heart, and more than myself. I feel, therefore, on seeing thee again in my country, a joy which our poor language is unequal to express. Thou wilt find all here much changed. While [Kamehameha I] lived, the country flourished; but since his death, all has gone to ruin. The young King [Liholiho] is in London; and Chinau [Kīna‘u], who fills their place, has too little power over the people to receive thee as becomes thy rank. [She] cannot procure for thee as many hogs and sweet potatoes, and as much tarro as thou hast need of.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Alexander Liholiho (Kamehameha IV), “His Majesty’s Speech in English and Hawaiian at the Opening of the Legislature, April 7, 1855,” in *Speeches of His Majesty Kamehameha IV. to the Hawaiian Legislature...* (Honolulu, 1861), 15. See also Chapter Six.

<sup>28</sup> Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia “had so much increased in size” in the eight years since Kotzebue first met her that he did not at first recognize her. Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World*, 208.

<sup>29</sup> Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World*, 234–236. The letter, which has not survived, was written in Pi‘ia’s own hand, in Hawaiian; Kotzebue’s impression was that she had worked on the letter for “many weeks.” *Ibid.*, 236.

In their earlier conversation of December 1824 Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia had expressed to Kotzebue her concern about the Hawaiian future: with the passing of Kamehameha I the people have lost “a protector and a father. What will now be the fate of these islands, only the God of the Christians knows.” Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia was not the only ruling chief who viewed Kamehameha I’s rule as Hawai‘i’s glory days. Kalanimoku and others made similar laments to visitors from various countries. Like Kalanimoku, Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia also voiced regret about the current state of the Kingdom, and how all had “gone to ruin.” Having apologized for her poor reception of Kotzebue and his men at O‘ahu, Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia requested that Kotzebue “carry my salutations to thy whole nation. Since I am a Christian, and that thou art also such, thou wilt excuse my indifferent writing.”<sup>30</sup>

Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia was, according to Kotzebue, proud of her new religion. She was certainly quick to put it on display whenever a European or American ship captain was in town. Yet her exchange with Kotzebue illuminates how some ruling chiefs viewed the new religious program. When Kotzebue inquired “how far she had been instructed in the religion she professed” and what exactly were the “grounds of her conversion,” Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia replied that she “could not exactly describe” the means of her conversion,

but that the missionary Bingham [Hiram Bingham], who understood reading and writing perfectly well, had assured her that the Christian faith was the best; and that, seeing how far the Europeans and Americans, who were all Christians, surpassed her compatriots in knowledge, she concluded that their belief must be the most reasonable. “If, however,” she

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<sup>30</sup> Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World*, 208, 235–236.

added, “[Christianity] should be found unsuited to our people, we will reject it, and adopt another.”<sup>31</sup>

Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia’s comment about the unproven suitability of Christianity for Hawai‘i is a striking illustration of the realpolitik at play in the chiefs’ adoption of Christianity and incorporation of Protestant missionaries in the 1820s. Only time could tell whether the religious law of New England Protestantism would be useful and a good fit for the Hawaiian New World. If Christianity failed to deliver on the missionaries’ promises, Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia suggested, the ali‘i would not hesitate to find another creed.

### *Fits and Vice*

The first few foreign physicians in Hawai‘i varied not only in their medical ability and interest in Native Hawaiians but also in their devotion to the “mission family.” Although much favored by the young Kamehameha II (Liholiho) upon their arrival in 1820, Dr. Thomas Holman and his wife Lucia Ruggles Holman quickly found themselves at odds with mission leader Hiram Bingham, who censured them both and then excommunicated the physician. In laying charges on Holman, Bingham employed old Puritan standards: The physician “walketh in the counsel of the ungodly,” Bingham

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<sup>31</sup> Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World*, 208–209. For similar pragmatism by Kamehameha regarding the national flags chose to fly, see “Golovnin’s Visit to Hawai‘i in 1818,” trans. Joseph Barth, *The Honolulu Friend* (July 1894), 50–53, esp. 52: “...during the last war between England and the United States, an American jokingly told [Kamehameha] that the United States had a right to make war on him and take the islands from under the English flag. The King understood the significance of a flag, and told the American that he was not a fool, that he had many flags of different nations, and that if one would not do, he could easily change it for another.”

declared, and was also guilty of “covetousness,” “contumelious railing,” and “slanders.”<sup>32</sup> More likely, Bingham had felt threatened from the start by the favor shown to Dr. Holman by Liholiho and the other ruling chiefs. But Bingham’s pride put the New Englanders at some risk, since no physician was sent to replace Dr. Holman until the second company of missionaries arrived in 1823. With them came Abraham Blatchely (also spelled Blatchley), who spent the next few years shuttling between mission posts to attend to growing families. After suffering a year of poor health himself, Blatchely and his wife Jemima Blatchely left the islands in 1826.<sup>33</sup> Dr. Gerrit P. Judd, who arrived with the third company of missionaries in 1828, was the first physician to settle permanently in Hawai‘i. The talented Judd diversified his professional interests by taking up theology, sugar production, and, finally, government finance. By the early 1840s Judd was leading the American effort to privatize Hawaiian landholding.

Even after Judd was installed as permanent missionary physician in 1828, he focused his attention primarily on the health of the missionaries and other foreigners on the islands. This was according to plan: “Dr. Judd will remain at Honoruru [Honolulu],” mission leaders instructed, “as the most central post for the physician, and dispensatory, in reference to the mission families, foreigners, and shipping.”<sup>34</sup> In any case, the medical needs of the foreign community alone were almost more than one doctor could manage.

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<sup>32</sup> H[iram] Bingham and A[sa] Thurston to Thomas Holman, 18 Jan. and 15 Feb. 1821, Papers of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Series ABC 19.1, Houghton Library, Harvard Univ. (hereafter ABCFM Papers).

<sup>33</sup> Blatchely to Evarts, 17 June 1823; Blatchely to ABCFM, received 9 June 1827, both in ABCFM Papers.

<sup>34</sup> H[iram] Bingham and A[rtemas] Bishop, “General Letter of the Mission,” *Missionary Herald* 25 (1829), 26.

In 1831 Judd described himself as “continually travelling from island to island,” serving as “physician, midwife, nurse, kitchen, and house maid” to the growing missionary community.<sup>35</sup> Not only was he to be ready at hand for the foreigners, but he was also to begin studies in Calvinist theology, as was “the design expressed in his appointment...with a view to his preaching the Gospel.”<sup>36</sup> Judd began preaching as early as 1830. Thus, as few as they were and as great as the need for their medical services, some American physicians in Hawai‘i performed the dual role of physician and missionary to the islands. Dual roles for American physicians in general were not uncommon in the 1820s, as medicine was professionalized only gradually over the course of the nineteenth century. Physicians practicing in the Sandwich Islands, however, were to be:

well skilled in [their] profession, of approved talents and piety, and qualified and disposed to become...preacher[s] of the Gospel at no distant period. By uniting the two professions, [physicians’] residence at the islands would be...more productive of good to the mission and to the islands: [they] would approximate more nearly to the office and the work of the Lord Jesus who, while performing His mission on earth, acted as physician both of the body, and of the soul.<sup>37</sup>

In this way, Dr. Alonzo Chapin, who arrived on Maui in 1832, spent much of his first year assisting Rev. Lorrin Andrews with projects at the Lahainaluna Seminary. The physician’s time was so much occupied by Andrews—translating religious texts, drawing

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<sup>35</sup> Gerrit P. Judd IV, *Dr. Judd: Hawaii’s Friend: A Biography of Gerrit Parmele Judd, 1803–1873* (Honolulu, 1960), 85–86. See also Gerrit P. Judd to Evarts, 19 Aug. 1830, ABCFM Papers.

<sup>36</sup> Bingham and Bishop, “General Letter of the Mission,” 26.

<sup>37</sup> “Sandwich Islands,” *Missionary Herald* 23 (1827), 228. It is unclear whether this strategy had developed as a result of Dr. Holman’s excommunication.



up maps of the Holy Land, building a tool chest, saw horse, grindstone, and lathe—that “it became necessary” for him “to give up” his medical practice for most of 1833.<sup>38</sup>

Remarkably, the actual medical work of mission doctors seems to have been an afterthought for the ABCFM well into the 1830s. The Reverend Dr. Dwight Baldwin, who set sail from Boston expecting primarily to preach in the islands, was quickly swamped with medical complaints and house calls from missionary families. Baldwin, whose first love was ministering, protested in a letter to the ABCFM that, “when I left America, nothing was said to me, either in private or public instructions, on the subject of practicing medicine. It was a matter of doubt, in my mind, whether I should ever be called on much; & therefore, I took but a few books & instruments.”<sup>39</sup> Now Baldwin found himself demanding a whole host of medical supplies.

In time, missionary physicians could claim some medical successes among the Hawaiian people, but nothing on the order of the losses they continued to suffer. Missionary reports faithfully tallied those losses, perhaps because they perceived the dire situation as serving to reinforce their stated goals of civilizing and Christianizing the “benighted” Hawaiians. A typical entry in a missionary diary of 1824 reads: “Tuesday, [June] 8: It is quite sickly among the natives at present. Two chief women died on Sunday—one here and one at Waititi [Waikīkī]; and from the daily wailing heard in

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<sup>38</sup> Chapin to Anderson, 6 Oct. 1833, ABCFM Papers.

<sup>39</sup> Baldwin to Anderson, 15 Nov. 1836, ABCFM Papers. Baldwin, Chapin, and Seth L. Andrews all pleaded for more physicians to tend to missionary families in the 1830s. See Baldwin to ABCFM, 26 June 1835, and 15 Oct. 1839; Chapin to Anderson, 6 Oct. 1833, and 24 Sept. 1834; and Seth L. Andrews to Anderson, Oct. 1837, all in *ibid.*

various directions, it is probable there are many deaths among the common people.”<sup>40</sup> On Maui in 1823 missionary Charles S. Stewart inquired about a maka‘āinana baby he had heard crying all day; upon gaining access to the family’s hut, Stewart found that the infant’s eyes were “swollen to the bigness of pigeons’ eggs [and] throbbled almost to bursting with inflammation.” Stewart was aware that the baby was suffering from ophthalmia, a secondary effect of congenital venereal disease, but felt unable to do anything about it, since the nearest physician was ninety miles away on O‘ahu. The pitiable infant was, according to Stewart, “by no means a solitary case of suffering” that had come to his attention: “Indeed we seldom walk out without meeting many, whose appearance of disease and misery is appalling, and some so remediless and disgusting, that we are compelled to close our eyes against a sight that fills us with horror.”<sup>41</sup>

Records indicate that American physicians of this period tended to reserve treatment for the ali‘i. Both sexes of the Hawaiian elite were served by mission doctors, and a number of foreigners noted the special relationship American physicians had developed with the ali‘i as a result. In December 1821 mission leader Hiram Bingham and his wife Sybil Moseley Bingham spent two weeks with Queen Ka‘ahumanu during what they feared would be a fatal illness. In her diary Sybil Bingham admitted that she

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<sup>40</sup> Stewart, *Private Journal of a...Residence at the Sandwich Islands*, 295.

<sup>41</sup> Stewart, *Private Journal of a...Residence at the Sandwich Islands*, 200–201, 211–14. Cases like that of the infant described by Stewart led David E. Stannard to dismiss the notion of Hawaiian “infanticide” outright. Stannard, *Before the Horror*, 63–65, 138; and Stannard, “Recounting the Fables of Savagery: Native Infanticide and the Functions of Political Myth,” *Journal of American Studies* 25 (1991): 381–418, esp. 400–409. Cf. Alfred W. Crosby, “Hawaiian Depopulation as a Model for the Amerindian Experience,” in *Epidemics and Ideas: Essays on the Historical Perception of Pestilence*, ed. Terence Ranger and Paul Slack, 175–201 (Cambridge, UK, 1992), esp. 184–188.

could not decipher the queen's state of mind or beliefs about the next world.<sup>42</sup> A decade later Hiram Bingham reported that the Judds and Chapins had "spent some days" with Ka'ahumanu during an 1832 illness. According to Bingham, Dr. Chapin had offered the Christian Queen-regent not only medical care but also words of comfort and reassurance: "We come to you as your children to seek your good, and to promote the temporal, spiritual, and everlasting good of your people."<sup>43</sup> Indeed, the Chapins and Judds had "felt it a privilege to be near her, and to do what could be done for her." In addition to the Chapins and Judds, "most of the missionaries, both of [the Honolulu] station and other stations," visited Ka'ahumanu in her final hours.<sup>44</sup> Preferential treatment for the ali'i simply reinforced the perceptions of non-missionary foreigners that the missionaries were angling for power over the islands. In fact, ABCFM leaders in Boston had long aspired to more than the Hawaiian archipelago alone; as early as 1822 they contemplated the possibility of "radiating...religion" outward from the North Pacific. This work would be best accomplished by the strategically located Sandwich Islands missionaries.<sup>45</sup>

But the ali'i were not so easy to treat or to "civilize." The Maui chiefs' incorporation of the missionary program in the early 1820s, for example, was neither uniform nor consistent. Liholiho was a particular source of disappointment to missionaries due to his drinking and indifferent attention to the palapala. Yet even the

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<sup>42</sup> Journal of Sybil Moseley Bingham, 16–17 Dec. 1821, Hawaiian Mission Houses Archives, Honolulu (hereafter, HMH).

<sup>43</sup> Hiram Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands* (Hartford, 1847), 431. For Chapin's account, see Chapin to ABCFM, May 1832, ABCFM Papers.

<sup>44</sup> [Hiram Bingham], "Sandwich Islands," *Missionary Herald* 29 (1833), 166.

<sup>45</sup> "Mission to the Sandwich Islands," *Religious Intelligencer* 7 (1822), 415; *Boston Recorder* 7 (1822), 190.

most important allies of the Mission did not behave as missionaries expected them. For instance, the Big Island governor George Cox Ke‘eaumoku, brother of Ka‘ahumanu and one of the mission’s most important allies, continued to enjoy days-long binges with his retinue in the summer of 1822.<sup>46</sup> On the Big Island Governor John Adams Kuakini likewise continued to indulge in strong spirits despite being eager for missionary instruction. Various chiefesses also whiled away the hours, as missionaries saw it, drinking and playing cards.<sup>47</sup> The first missionaries themselves did not abstain from alcohol, but they were fierce advocates of temperance, and outright teetotalers when it came to Native peoples, a stance adopted during earlier missions to American Indians.<sup>48</sup>

Foreigners’ accounts of ali‘i consumption of liquor and tobacco are legion in the early 1820s. Unfortunately such accounts are anecdotal and do little to help us draw conclusions about the particular health effects of the new intoxicants. (The social and cultural impact is somewhat easier to trace, as we shall see.) Certainly there are numerous accounts of chiefs and chiefesses “quaffing” entire bottles of gin or rum at one sitting. And in the case of Liholiho, at least, alcohol severely compromised his health between 1820 and 1823, bringing on “fits” of delerium tremens.<sup>49</sup> Yet even if we could

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<sup>46</sup> Gilbert Farquhar Mathison, *Narrative of Visit to Brazil, Chile, Peru, and the Sandwich Islands, During the Years 1821 and 1822* (London, 1825), 392–407.

<sup>47</sup> See, e.g., Sybil Moseley Bingham journal, 14 March 1822, HMM; and Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World*, 218–219.

<sup>48</sup> John A. Andrew III, *Rebuilding the Christian Commonwealth: New England Congregationalists and Foreign Missions, 1800–1830* (Lexington, KY, 1976).

<sup>49</sup> For “fits,” see Sybil Moseley Bingham journal, 19–20 Feb. 1823, HMM. For “delerium tremens,” see Journal of Francisco de Paula Marín (1 March 1822), in *Don Francisco de Paula Marín*, ed. Ross H. Gast and Agnes C. Conrad (Honolulu, 1973), 262, 313n68. It is possible that Liholiho’s compromised health decreased his ability to recover from measles (as Boki, Liliha, and other Hawaiian ali‘i did) in London in 1824.

determine the volume of liquor or tobacco traded to the chiefs, it would probably be impossible to determine actual consumption by individuals in these years, much less which health problems were exacerbated by the use of these substances. (The best candidate for a health problem exacerbated by liquor and tobacco use would be tuberculosis.) Suffice it to say that both liquor and tobacco played a negative role in individual and public health in the 1820s. A Tahitian missionary on the Kona coast noted in May 1822 that drinking was the “main amusement in Kailua these days,” and that the people “of Kona from end to the other indulge.”<sup>50</sup> The historian Kamakau wrote that liquor consumption during Liholiho’s rule was “extravagant” among chiefs and commoners alike: “They almost bathed in it.”<sup>51</sup>

The young king’s entourage, in particular, had a reputation for drinking and carousing. Kamakau explained the consequences of this behavior for Kauikeaouli’s men at Waialua, O‘ahu, in 1826. While staying at the village of Waoala,

the men contracted a skin disease (*ma‘i pu‘upu‘u*) [literally, “illness with boils, blisters, or pimples”] resembling the oozing white sores of the sandalwood tree. These men of the King were known as ‘Bird Feathers’ (*Hulumanu*), and since they were in the habit of wasting their earnings on women, they were called ‘foul rain’ (*ua wekaweka*). Then the names combined, and they were called ‘foul–feathered birds’ (*‘Hulumanu wekaweka’*).<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Dorothy Barrère and Marshall Sahlins, “Tahitians in the Early History of Hawaiian Christianity: The Journal of Toketa,” *Hawaiian Journal of History* 13 (1979): 19–35, esp. 29.

<sup>51</sup> Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 250.

<sup>52</sup> S. M. Kamakau, “*Ka Moolelo o Na Kamehameha*,” *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* (newspaper), 23 May 1868: “*I kona noho ana nae mauka o Waoala, ua loa iho la na kanaka i ka mai puupuu [lesions, sores, bumps], a ua hoohalikeia me [resembling] ka laau ala [i.e., ka lā‘au ‘ala, sandalwood] puhapuha keokeo [white, running sores or abscesses], nolaila, ua kapaia na kanaka o ka Moi he ‘Hulumanu.’ A no ke kaihi i ka uku lilo i ka wahine, ua wekaweka [foul rain, watery discharge], nolaila, ua huipu ia ka Hainoa [name] me ka Haiano, nolaila, kapaia ai he ‘Hulumanu wekaweka.’” For Pukui’s translation, see Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 279; for Dorothy Barrère’s translation, see Caroline Ralston, “Early Nineteenth Century*

As prized possessions of the ali‘i class, bird feathers (*hulumanu*) were an appropriate appellation for Kauikeaouli’s loyal servants. Yet *manu* has a *kaona* (double or hidden) meaning—bruised, broken, scarred, or injured—which Kamakau (or his sources) may have been hinting at. “Foul rain” meanwhile is a pun suggestive of the watery discharge of gonorrhea. This meaning is only highlighted by the fact that the king’s men are described as squandering their resources on local women. Indeed, the definitive translation of Kamakau’s passage (by Pukui et al) is that the men were “wasting their substance on women,” which may be closer to the double entendre that Kamakau or his nineteenth-century sources had intended.<sup>53</sup>

Kauikeaouli’s sowing of his wild oats may have hurt his health from a young age. Dutch captain Jacobus Boelen reported in 1828 that the teenage king was “unusually large, fat, and ponderous for his age.” Girth was of course a staple of the ali‘i class, though in Kauikeaouli’s case he would eventually shed the extra weight. Yet Boelen also noted that Kauikeaouli’s face was “very ugly, round, swollen, and disfigured by the smallpox, and reflected clearly the degree to which this young prince had already become acquainted with some of the lusts harmful to youth.”<sup>54</sup> It is highly unlikely that Kauikeaouli had contracted smallpox; the first outbreak of the disease occurred in 1853 (considerably later than other Pacific islands). What, then, was the “disfiguring”

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Polynesian Millennial Cults and the Case of Hawai‘i,” *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 94 (1985): 307–332, esp. 317.

<sup>53</sup> Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 279.

<sup>54</sup> Jacobus Boelen, *A Merchant’s Perspective: Captain Jacobus Boelen’s Narrative of His Visit to Hawai‘i in 1828*, trans. Frank J. A. Broeze (Honolulu, 1988), 52.

condition that Boelen was describing? Kauikeaouli was a famous drinker, but facial scarring at the age of fourteen from alcohol consumption is probably out of the question. Leprosy tends to bypass the face and attack the extremities, and the first cases of the disease were not observed until the mid-1830s. The “lusts” of “youth” seem to suggest venereal disease. Advanced syphilis might have left the facial scarring Boelen observed, but congenital venereal disease would be more likely for a boy. There is of course no documentary evidence of either Kauikeaouli’s father (Kamehameha) or mother (Keōpūolani) carrying either disease. Perhaps Boelen was simply observing a bad case of acne. In any case, the king would never enjoy good health during his relatively long life.

Before taking leave of the Islands, Capt. Boelen took aboard a boy of “barely eight years old” who had begged to join Boelen’s Dutch crew. When the ship was ready to leave, the boy’s mother swam out to the ship and gave her son “some herbs that these islanders use as medicine in case of certain illnesses.” Boelen did not name the herb or elaborate on which illnesses it was used to treat. Probably he did not know. “With a flow of tears” and wailing that “resounded” throughout “the whole bay,” the woman bid her young son farewell.<sup>55</sup>



A telling example of New England evangelical mores affecting medical care on the Islands can be seen in Dr. Abraham Blatchley’s 1824 letter to the ABCFM regarding the part-Hawaiian convert William Beale. Blatchley was skeptical about missionaries taking young Hawaiians into their families to educate and Christianize, since he deemed

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<sup>55</sup> Boelen, *A Merchant’s Perspective*, 72.

the cultural gulf too great; Hawaiians would never cease to disappoint. Even educated Hawaiians who had been abroad would be unable to stay the course once reintroduced to the “current[s] of vice, in this polluted land.”<sup>56</sup> The young William Beale was the perfect example. The son of an unidentified American father and a Hawaiian mother, Beale lived with Hiram and Sybil Bingham in the early 1820s and was celebrated in the missionary press for his “singular attainments” of civilization and his grasp of English. In the summer of 1822, after two years of missionary instruction, Beale was chosen by Ka‘ahumanu as her personal teacher.<sup>57</sup> Dr. Blatchley was not impressed. Beale’s father was an American, after all; and the boy had been spoken to in English for years. Indeed for Blatchley, Beale was a boy “of quite ordinary abilities.” What was more—and what no one back in New England knew—was that Beale had strayed. Blatchley considered it his duty to set the record straight:

It has gone to you in manuscript (but I hope it will not be printed) that he died of a liver infection & “thus has found an early grave the flower of our school” or something to that amount— While in fact he died a victim to a disorder contracted by following the multitude in a wicked course— This I affirm for he was under my care for a long time before his death.

Beale’s “disorder” was likely either syphilis or complications from alcohol abuse. If the latter, the euphemism employed by missionaries was at least partly true; if the former, “liver infection” was simply a cover-up to protect the mission. William Beale was not the only young Hawaiian who took the “easy” road despite missionary hopes and investment.

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<sup>56</sup> Abraham Blatchley to Jeremiah Evarts, 15 [no month] 1824, ABCFM Papers. The ABCFM’s “public journal” was the Boston *Missionary Herald*. For a similar appeal for discretion in missionary correspondence, see Thigpen, *Island Queens and Mission Wives*, 98. For more on William Beale, see Sybil Moseley Bingham journal, 9 Oct. 1823, HMH.

<sup>57</sup> Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 172.



Blatchley complained of “another boy [who] begins to be named in our public journal in much the same way [as] Wm Beale... & there is not a boy that I know of whose customs & manners & habits in the streets is more nature like than his — I hope there will not be more said about him to the public at present.” Given these disappointments, Blatchley implored the ABCFM to be more cautious in its Hawaiian propaganda. Promoting false Christians and uncivilized Islanders was bound to embarrass the Mission or worse: tithing churchgoers in New England might withhold their hard-earned wages for the Sandwich Islands Mission. “For more reasons than I have time to state here,” Blatchley concluded, “there is little doubt but that the sums contributed for the support of children or youths in the mission families can be better applied in some other country than here.”<sup>58</sup>

*“Aloha for Jehovah”*

With the loss of the King and Queen in London, and the death at home of the mō‘ī Kaumuali‘i of Kaua‘i, the year 1824 seemed to be a low point for ali‘i fortunes. Overlapping epidemics during the next three years brought them lower still. Outbreaks of influenza, whooping cough, and perhaps other respiratory ailments took a heavy toll on Hawai‘i. None of these epidemics is well-documented, and even those who were well-positioned to record morbidity and mortality in these years mostly resorted to generalizations. Native Hawaiian disease and population loss were hardly news, after all,

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<sup>58</sup> Abraham Blatchley to Jeremiah Evarts, 15 [no month] 1824, ABCFM Papers. The ABCFM’s “public journal” was the Boston *Missionary Herald*. For a similar appeal for discretion in missionary correspondence, see Thigpen, *Island Queens and Mission Wives*, 98. For more on William Beale, see Sybil Moseley Bingham journal, 9 Oct. 1823, HMH.

and the accounts of 1824–26 reveal just that. For instance, the Spanish ali‘i Francisco de Paula Marín recorded the following in his diary: “many people sick” (20 Feb. 1824); “many deaths & many coughs” (20 May 1824); “many sick – few deaths” (29 May 1824); “many deaths” (6 June 1824); “many sick of fevers & colds & many dying” (1 Feb. 1825); “much illness & many deaths” (15 Feb. 1825); “many catarhs & deaths’ (11–16 Jan. 1825); “many sick of fevers & colds & many dying” (1 Feb. 1825); “much illness & many deaths” (15 Feb. 1825).<sup>59</sup>

Outside observers were hardly more specific. Regarding the flu-like outbreak in the winter of 1825, Kotzebue recorded only that “death generally followed the attack within a few days.” In Honolulu, where Kotzebue saw “many corpses daily carried to their burial,” it seemed to him that the chances of “recovery from serious illness” were nowhere “so improbable as here.”<sup>60</sup>

Among those who perished in these disease outbreaks was twenty-seven-year-old George Prince Humehume, the son of Kaua‘i mō‘ī Kaumuali‘i, who died in May 1825. Humehume’s earlier role in the Kaua‘i rebellion prevented his receiving either a Christian burial or a traditional ali‘i burial. Instead he was interred like a commoner in Honolulu where he was being held prisoner.

One week after the death of Humehume, Scottish botanist James Macrae and a fellow HMS *Blonde* officer crossed paths in Honolulu with Ka‘ahumanu and a fellow queen—either her sister Lydia Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia or her cousin Wahinepio, both of whom

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<sup>59</sup> Marín journal, in Gast and Conrad, eds., *Don Francisco de Paula Marín*.

<sup>60</sup> Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World*, 243–244.

were also widows of Kamehameha I.<sup>61</sup> The two queens were on their way to bathe in a nearby fishpond. This chance encounter occurred just a few weeks after the state funeral for the Ka‘ahumanu’s niece and nephew King Liholiho and Queen Kamāmalu. All of the ruling chiefs had attended the state funeral, as did the officers of HMS *Blonde*.<sup>62</sup> Upon meeting the British officers, the two queens were, according to Macrae, “very inquisitive to know if Mr. Forder and I were married men.” The British officers responded that they were. The queens then “wanted to know the number in our families.” Forder said that he had six children but that Macrae had none as yet. The queens’ then pointed out to the men that Macrae “could only have one wife.” It is not clear whether the chiefesses were stating the obvious, were identifying a flaw in the Christian system, or were simply teasing Macrae. “After a few more questions,” the queens continued on their way.<sup>63</sup>

Although Macrae made nothing of this exchange, the queens’ inquiry about the officers’ family size was not merely small talk—or if it was, it was small talk in a particularly Hawaiian *key* in 1825. Ka‘ahumanu was about fifty-seven years old at this time, childless, and lacking an heir. Her companion, if Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia, was about thirty-eight and also childless; Wahinepio had two surviving children in 1825, though she would die, along with her son and grandson, of whooping cough the following April. The

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<sup>61</sup> James Macrae, *With Lord Byron at the Sandwich Islands in 1825: Being Extracts from the MS Diary of James Macrae, Scottish Botanist*, ed. William F. Wilson (Honolulu, 1922), 41. Macrae identified the queen as “Pio,” which the editor took to be Lydia Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia, but Wahinepio is also a possibility. Both chiefesses were apparently living in Honolulu at this time. For other British sightings of Lydia Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia on this visit, see Andrew Bloxam, *Diary of Andrew Bloxam: Naturalist of the “Blonde” on Her Trip from England to the Hawaiian Islands, 1824–25*, ed. Stella M. Jones (Honolulu, 1925), 48; and [George Anson] Byron, *Voyage of H.M.S. Blonde to the Sandwich Islands, in the Years 1824–1825*, ed. Maria Callcott (London, 1826), 110.

<sup>62</sup> Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 265.

<sup>63</sup> Macrae, *With Lord Byron at the Sandwich Islands in 1825*, 41.

chiefesses' exchange with Macrae and Forder is significant in that Ka'ahumanu and her companion queen seem to have been thinking about how a family could be sustained in the face of infertility. Significantly, they asked the British officers about family *size*, as opposed to pedigree or gender composition or the nature of family life itself. *How many* were in the Britons' families?, the queens wanted to know.

Three days later, the first Sunday in June 1825, a cast of high chiefs—Premier Kalanimoku, the Big Island chiefess Kapi'olani, the sister-queens Ka'ahumanu, Nāmāhāna Pi'ia, and Kalākua Kaheiheimālie (along with their husbands)—and as many as one hundred other Hawaiians presented themselves to the Protestant mission for baptism. For mission leader Hiram Bingham it was clear that the death of the king and queen had drawn these most powerful ruling chiefs into the bosom of the church.<sup>64</sup> (Historians of Hawai'i have followed Bingham's understanding of this event.<sup>65</sup>) Yet the process was not so precipitous or straightforward as Bingham presented it. At the very least, the process of binding the Mission to the high chiefs had been gradual over the course of nearly five years. Bingham was not ready to baptize any Hawaiians who could not prove their desire to join the church as stemming from a conversion experience “born from above.”<sup>66</sup> Most of these ali'i supplicants would have to wait until the end of 1825 before missionaries would baptize them.

This same year the mission press published an eight-page pamphlet in Hawaiian to advertise the ruling chiefs' acceptance of Protestantism. *The Thought of the Chiefs*

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<sup>64</sup> Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 267–268.

<sup>65</sup> Gavan Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu, 1968), 74–75.

<sup>66</sup> Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 268.

began with a posthumous letter by Liholiho encouraging his people to accept Christianity. This was followed by pro-Mission and Christian devotional statements by Kauikeaouli, Kalanimoku, Ka‘ahumanu, Nāhi‘ena‘ena, and Boki. It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to know which if any of the ruling chiefs assented to these words, and who gave Elisha Loomis permission to print them. However, Kalanimoku’s statement appears consistent with his earlier remarks: “I have abandoned the old mind [or heart]; I am here with the new mind [heart].”<sup>67</sup> The young king Kauikeaouli added that he was pleased “at the turning of this land to the word of God...through which our bodies and souls shall live.”<sup>68</sup>



In 1826 an outbreak of whooping cough took the lives of a number of high-ranking chiefs, including two dowager queens: the aforementioned Wahinepio (also known as Kahakuha‘akoi and Kamo‘onohu) was the sister of William Pitt Kalanimoku and Boki, a cousin of Ka‘ahumanu, and a widow of Kamehameha I; Pauahi (also known as Kalanipauahi) was a widow (and niece) of Liholiho. Also taken by the whooping cough epidemic were the Royal Governor of Kauai Kahalai‘a Luanu‘u and his young

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<sup>67</sup> *Ua haalele i ka naau kahiko; eia wau ma ka naau hou.* My translation. (Note that the Hawaiian word *na‘au* literally means “intestines” or “bowels”; the digestive organs were considered to be the seat of the emotions. See Pukui and Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary*, s.v. “na‘au.”) Kala[n]imoku (16 Dec. 1825), in *Ka Manoa o na Alii [The Thought of the Chiefs]* (Utica, NY: W. Williams, 1827; originally publ., O‘ahu: Mission Press, 1825), 3. Historians have noted that this pamphlet, which had a print run of 3,000 copies, “was not valued by the people, nor read much.” Howard M. Ballou and George R. Carter, “The History of the Hawaiian Mission Press, with a Bibliography of the Earlier Publications,” *Papers of the Hawaiian Historical Society* 14 (1908): 9–44, esp. 21.

<sup>68</sup> Kauikeaouli (20 Nov. 1825), in *Ka Mana‘o o na Ali‘i [The Thought of the Chiefs]*, trans. Lōkahi Antonio, collection of the author.

son.<sup>69</sup> It was at this time that Gov. Boki of O‘ahu called on Rev. William Richards to inquire about the Biblical story of God’s plague on the Israelites. By 1828 Boki had largely given up his political struggle against the Protestant chiefs and settled in Honolulu to study and practice Native medicine. According to Kamakau, the Governor “was proficient” in Hawaiian medicine, and surrounded himself with some of the leading diagnosticians (*kāhuna hāhā*) of the day.<sup>70</sup>

Inquiring about Protestant theodicy was not the same as being won over to the faith. And like other high chiefs, Gov. Boki could play multiple roles in light of present circumstances. Upon surviving the journey home from England, Boki allegedly stated that “the Lord Jehovah [was] his God” and that the “chiefs and people [ought] to obey His precepts which are just and good.”<sup>71</sup> Yet Boki’s actions in 1825–26 prove that he was far from joining Richards and the missionaries. For one thing, the Governor continued to supply merchants and sailors with Hawaiians in the sex trade, against the wishes of the missionaries and the order of Ka‘ahumanu. In March 1826 Lt. John Percival of the US Navy ship *Dolphin* demanded “a young girl” who “thru fear” had run away from him. According to American merchant Stephen Reynolds, Boki simply “gave the word” and the girl “was sent” to Percival. The following day over dinner, Percival boasted about his treatment of the girl, which Reynolds deemed “too disgraceful to be related.”<sup>72</sup> When

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<sup>69</sup> Kahalai‘a Luanu‘u was the husband of Kīna‘u, Kamehameha’s daughter and Liholiho’s widow and half-sister. Their son’s name is apparently unrecorded.

<sup>70</sup> Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 291. For the Hawaiian diagnosticians, see Chapter Three.

<sup>71</sup> Journal of Elisha Loomis (typescript), 6 May 1825, HMH. See also Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 262–264.

<sup>72</sup> *Journal of Stephen Reynolds, 1823–1829*, ed. Pauline N. King (Honolulu, and Salem, MA, 1989) 128.

Percival tried to gain access to additional Hawaiian females for his sailors, he nearly started a riot. Still, Boki was not the only high chief who sold the sexual and other services of Hawaiian women to foreigners. Two decades earlier, Kamehameha had earned a considerable purse, in part by taking tribute “from the belles [who] visit the ship[s].”<sup>73</sup> Nor were male ali‘i the only procurers. In 1825 the high chiefess and Royal Governor of Maui Wahinepio (sister of Boki and Kalanimoku and widow of Kamehameha I) sold a girl named Leoki to British captain William Buckle as his companion at sea for five months. Leoki returned to the Islands pregnant and shortly gave birth to Buckle’s child.<sup>74</sup>



In February 1827, after years of “tappings” by visiting European surgeons, Premier William Pitt Kalanimoku died of dropsy, probably edema. He was about fifty-eight years old and had led Hawai‘i through turbulent times. Kalanimoku had been outranked only by Ka‘ahumanu with whom he also shared a position as a lone elder statesman, the two being among the few chiefs born before 1770. No one in the Kingdom would replace Kalanimoku in any official capacity after 1827, and Ka‘ahumanu would continue to rule the Kingdom for the next five years. (Kauikeaouli, now Kamehameha III, and his sister Princess Nāhi‘ena‘ena were both minors in 1827.) Missionaries later reported that the death of Kalanimoku was a blow to Ka‘ahumanu, and that her

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<sup>73</sup> Isaac Iselin, *Journal of a Trading Voyage Around the World, 1805–1808* (Cortland, NY, n.d.), 78–79. See also Chapter Three.

<sup>74</sup> Noelani Arista, “Listening to Leoki: Engaging Sources in Hawaiian History,” *Biography* 32 (2009): 66–73. See also Arista, “Captive Women in Paradise 1796–1826: The *Kapu* on Prostitution in Hawaiian Legal Context,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 35 (2011): 39–55.

bereavement “affected her health, and shortened her career.”<sup>75</sup> Yet reliable evidence for this claim is lacking.

Two years after Kalanimoku’s death, another Hawaiian royal also succumbed to dropsy: the dowager queen Lydia Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia was Ka‘ahumanu’s sister and a fellow widow of Kamehameha I. Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia was about forty-two years old and childless. Clearly, dropsy was on the rise in Hawai‘i, but it seems to have been limited to those chiefs who could afford to eat prodigiously and live a sedentary lifestyle. It is not clear whether Hawaiian chiefs had begun to suffer from other diseases of obesity (such as heart disease or diabetes) at this time.

Also in July 1827 the first Catholic missionaries settled in Honolulu. Two French priests and one Irishman had been sent by Pope Leo XII. Recall that the brothers Kalanimoku and Boki had been baptized by a French priest aboard the *Uranie* in 1819. Boki’s earlier baptism as a Catholic probably had nothing to do with the alliance he began to forge with the Catholic missionaries in 1827. Instead, the Catholic priests provided Boki and other disgruntled high chiefs with an alternative to Ka‘ahumanu’s alliance with American Protestants. An impressionable fourteen-year-old Kauikeaouli was swayed by Boki, and for a short time, the “Catholic” chiefs led by Boki posed a viable alternative to Ka‘ahumanu’s Protestant chiefs. Longtime foreign resident and ali‘i Francisco de Paula Marín seems to have played a role in this schism. Whether he had maintained his preference for Catholicism over the course of two decades, or like Boki,

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<sup>75</sup> Rufus Anderson, *History of the Mission of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Sandwich Islands*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Boston, 1872), 78.



simply preferred an alternative to Ka‘ahumanu and the Protestants, Marín welcomed the priests. The earliest Catholic baptisms on the Islands were conducted in Marín’s house, and Marín himself seems to have secured a safe haven for the Catholic mission. By January 1828 the new foreign priests had erected the first Catholic chapel in Honolulu, and the horrified Protestants of the Sandwich Islands Mission began a campaign to sway Ka‘ahumanu to banish the “Papists.”<sup>76</sup>

About the same time that the first Catholic missionaries settled in Honolulu, Dutch merchant and sea captain Jacobus Boelen came in sight of the Big Island on his round-the-world voyage. Still miles out from the Big Island, Boelen’s boatswain and other crewmen spotted a curious sight on the open sea: a clothed corpse drifting past the port side of the ship. It looked “like a man,” the boatswain reported to Boelen, “dressed in a short morning coat and a pair of trousers.” Without any other sea craft in sight, Boelen could not believe that a corpse would be floating on the open sea so far from land. Finally, Boelen decided that the alleged corpse sighting was “no more than a hallucination” by his crewmen, probably an effect of the vivid ghost stories told below decks.<sup>77</sup> Perhaps Boelen was right. But the past few years had been particularly deadly on the Hawaiian Islands. Influenza, whooping cough, and probably other respiratory diseases had taken countless lives. A keen Dutch sailor may well have interpreted the sight of a floating corpse off Hawai‘i as a kind of emblem of the Hawaiian peoples’ struggles in 1827.

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<sup>76</sup> Reginald Yzendoorn, *History of the Catholic Mission in the Hawaiian Islands* (Honolulu, 1929), 40–41.

<sup>77</sup> Boelen, *A Merchant’s Perspective*, 10.



Around this time Ka‘ahumanu announced a series of new laws for the Kingdom which included bans (kapu) on murder, adultery, prostitution, and the manufacture, sale, and consumption of liquor. Writing in the 1860s Kamakau noted that the new kapu were supported by chiefs across the Islands. The evidence suggests otherwise. The Royal Governor of O‘ahu Boki, for one, openly defied the new laws, as Kamakau himself noted. Boki kept a brothel in Honolulu, which made him “popular with the whites”—that is, non-missionary foreigners—who showered him with praise in the American and British newspapers. (If the new Catholic missionaries knew about Boki’s dealings in the flesh trade, they probably felt obliged to turn a blind eye, given their precarious position on the Islands.) The new laws of the Kingdom had been made verbally by Ka‘ahumanu and were apparently not yet in print. It is hard to determine the degree of support that Ka‘ahumanu enjoyed with the chiefs and the people at this time, yet the obedience of neither group was guaranteed. According to Kamakau, this was an era when “innumerable laws, laws upon laws were made,” and “there was no peace; there was bitterness everywhere.” Murder, theft, adultery, drunkenness, and “worshipping of gods” all continued to be practiced.<sup>78</sup>

With a potential civil war brewing between the Protestant– and Catholic–allied chiefs in 1829, Gov. Boki prepared a massive sandalwood expedition to Vanuatu—some 3,500 miles to the southwest—in an effort to relieve his debts to foreign traders.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 288–290.

<sup>79</sup> For “war footing,” see Yzendoorn, *History of the Catholic Mission in the Hawaiian Islands*, 58.

Apparently the flesh trade was not sufficiently lucrative. Boki allegedly gave his people a “parting charge,” explaining that he had been “foolish” in “disregarding the laws of God” but was now “resolved to take a stand on the side of truth & righteousness & wished them to obey his precepts, as coming from the word of God.”<sup>80</sup> To the end Boki seemed to play a double game; and even if he were sincere in his parting charge, it is not clear whether the “precepts” Boki supported were Catholic or Protestant. For their part the high chiefs were more concerned about Boki surviving the expedition than they were about his theological preferences. Boki’s wife Liliha, the queens Kīna‘u and Kekāuluohi, and the king Kāiūkeaouli all pleaded with him not to go. Eventually Gov. Boki escaped under cover of night and climbed aboard the *Kamehameha*. Off Waikīkī the fleet continued to take on supplies for about a week, during which time King Kāiūkeaouli “wept and refused food” for five days, according to Kamakau. The day before the fleet sailed, Royal Treasurer Mataio Kekūānāo‘a rowed out to the ship, grabbed Boki by the hands, and tried to force him into a canoe. Kekūānāo‘a was unsuccessful. As the fleet departed, “there was much wailing for Boki and those who accompanied him,” according to Kamakau.<sup>81</sup>

Boki’s sandalwood expedition was comprised of two ships with a combined crew of nearly seven hundred. The *Kamehameha*, with Boki aboard, was lost at sea and never heard from again. The *Keoko ‘i* returned to Hawai‘i some months later, with only seven or eight survivors out of a crew of two hundred. The story—as told by survivors and recorded by Kamakau—was that the ships had separated after taking on provisions at

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<sup>80</sup> Diary of Delia Bishop (typescript), 30 Nov. 1829, Hawaii-Bishop Collection, Huntington Library.

<sup>81</sup> Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 294–295.

Rotuma Island, north of Fiji. The *Kamehameha* had sailed ahead, and when the *Keoko 'i* arrived at Vanuatu, their sister ship was nowhere to be found. Waiting for the *Kamehameha* to turn up, the crew of the *Keoko 'i* were “stricken with an epidemic” that killed “almost the entire company.” Two of the survivors who returned to Hawai‘i were suffering from “swollen stomachs and falling hair.” No other symptoms were recorded.<sup>82</sup>

Back in Hawai‘i Boki’s widow Liliha replaced him as Royal Governor of O‘ahu. Like her husband, Liliha had long been resistant to the American missionary faction, and for the same reason she had cultivated a relationship with the new Catholic missionaries. It is important to remember that both Liliha and Boki had traveled to London in 1823 and spent considerable time with foreigners who did not share the American Protestant missionaries’ religious opinions or moral precepts. However, the high chief Ulumāhehehi Hoapili was firmly attached to the Sandwich Islands Mission and played a key role in containing his daughter Liliha and ultimately stripping her of her power and property after 1830.<sup>83</sup> In the end, Boki’s death eliminated the principal impediment to the Protestant chiefs’ hegemony, and thus the security and long-term stability of the Sandwich Islands Mission. Boki and Liliha’s followers on O‘ahu were shortly deposed and their lands confiscated. Foreign and Hawaiian Catholics alike would be persecuted by Ka‘ahumanu’s government over the next two years. In 1831 the French and Irish

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<sup>82</sup> Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 296. It is not clear from Kamakau’s account whether the crew of the *Keoko 'i* took ill at Rotuma Island or at Vanuatu. Two of the survivors, Kukui-nui and Kekenī, apparently returned to Hawai‘i from Rotuma Island. See *ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> At least one source claims that Liliha was actually hānai daughter to Ulumāhehehi Hoapili. See Kapiikauinamoku (Samuel Apolo Kapiikauinamokuonalani Amalu), “The Story of Maui Royalty,” *Honolulu Advertiser*, 18 April–29 June 1956.

priests were banished to California, and Catholicism was essentially outlawed on the Islands.

While the Catholic controversy was being played out, Queen Ka‘ahumanu canvassed the Islands to announce yet another set of new laws for the Kingdom. According to Kamakau, there were seven new laws, six of which were prohibitions (kapu) on behavior, and the last of which was an appeal to Islanders to “seek after truth and keep the words of God.” There was considerable overlap with the first set of printed laws (1827). The kapu of 1830 prohibited (1) murder, (2) adultery and prostitution, (3) idol worship, including worship of the akua, ‘aumakua, and other “untrue gods,” (4) hula, and also nude bathing by women, (5) planting and consumption of ‘awa, and (6) manufacture of liquor. In 1831, Ka‘ahumanu added a ban on houses of prostitution. With the exception of murder and hula, these kapu can be arranged in three categories: heresy, sex laws, and temperance. These three categories would prove to be hallmarks of Hawaiian law through the end of the century.<sup>84</sup> Hula, meanwhile, would be contested over and over again throughout the nineteenth century by the ruling chiefs.

### *“My Body Is Going”*

It would be easy to characterize the earliest Protestant and Catholic Hawaiian chiefs as opportunists. Indeed their political actions constitute our primary means of knowing these chiefs, and they were certainly no less opportunistic than political leaders

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<sup>84</sup> Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 298–299. For more on Hawaiian blue laws, see Chapter Six.

of any time and place. Yet to reduce the chiefs' new religious affiliations merely to political expediency would be a mistake. Unmediated traces in the archives suggest that some Hawaiians in this period were devout Christians such that the missionaries could recognize, admire, and even emulate. The high chief 'Aikanaka ("man eater"), who was grandfather to two future monarchs, was apparently suffering an advanced illness at Lāhainā when he wrote the following brief letter, in his own hand, in Hawaiian, to the Sandwich Islands Mission's business agent Levi Chamberlain at Honolulu. The letter reads, in full:

Here is my thought to you all. My body is going. I love you all, but my main thought is on the cross of Jesus where is my great affection. I live for Him, the Forgiver of my sins who washed them in his blood, that my body and spirit may live. He leads my thoughts in His work. This is my desire.<sup>85</sup>

Levi Chamberlain never mentioned this letter in his journal. Perhaps he was too busy with his duties in Honolulu, or perhaps the letter ended up in the possession of one of the other missionaries—Stephen Shepard and Ephraim Clark—who were included in 'Aikanaka's salutation. There is no record of 'Aikanaka having received missionary guidance in the composition of his letter, and even if he did, there is no evidence to suggest that the sentiments were not his own. Thus, we are left to conclude that *some* ali'i by 1830 were "true" converts in the sense that 'Aikanaka conveys above.

Yet for every devout 'Aikanaka or Ka'ahumanu, there was a Boki, who either played a double game or simply refused to go along with the American missionary program. The young king Kauikeaouli and the princess Nāhi'ena'ena fit the latter model

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<sup>85</sup> Aikanaka to Levi Chamberlain, 28 June 1830, trans. Henry P. Judd, HMH.

in the early 1830s. When Queen Ka‘ahumanu died in 1832 after what was reported as an intestinal illness, the nineteen-year-old Kauikeaouli apparently “abandoned all restraint.”<sup>86</sup> For a period of two or three years the king passed his days in gambling, drinking, and carousing with his friends and attendants, the *Hulumanu*. Kaomi, a lapsed Protestant and son of a Hawaiian father and Tahitian mother, earned considerable blame for leading the king astray. Scant attention has been paid by historians to Kaomi, which is surprising given that King Kauikeaouli referred to this part-Hawaiian advisor as “joint king” and “joint ruler” (*mō ‘ī ku ‘i, aupuni ku ‘ī*).<sup>87</sup> In fact, Kaomi seems to have run various functions of the kingdom during the more protracted of Kauikeaouli’s binges.

Kaomi had been in residence on the Islands for at least a decade by 1832, and had been close to George Cox Ke‘eaumoku before the latter’s death. The most significant fact about Kaomi for our purposes is that he gained influence with the King “not because he was well-educated and intelligent” (in Kamakau’s terms) but because he was skilled in the art of healing. Kaomi was a *kahuna hāhā*, a hands-on diagnostician, and was also adept at prescribing medicine. When Kaomi’s medical advice proved “successful,” the king “conceived a great liking for him.” More than that, Kauikeaouli outfitted Kaomi with bodyguards and warriors. Kaomi was empowered to dispense land grants, clothing, and “anything else that man might desire. He even granted loans from the Kingdom’s treasury. Meanwhile, the “evil ways” that had been largely “stamped out,” according to

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<sup>86</sup> Marjorie Sinclair, *Nāhi‘ena‘ena, Sacred Daughter of Hawai‘i* (Honolulu, 1976), 128. E.g., see diary of Sarah Joiner Lyman, 23 Feb. 1833, in *The Lymans of Hilo*, ed. Margaret Greer Martin (Hilo, HI, 1979), 53.

<sup>87</sup> Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 335.

Kamakau, returned with a vengeance under Kaomi and Kauikeaouli. Hula, liquor distilleries, and prostitution—all the “natural impulses” of the old days, in Kamakau’s terms, returned.<sup>88</sup>

In December 1832 the nineteen-year-old king held an enormous hula festival with traditional games. These cultural expressions and entertainments had been banned by Ka‘ahumanu the year before at the recommendation of the Sandwich Islands Mission. But with the queen gone, it was not clear who would enforce the kapu on hula generally, much less one organized by the king. A few months later, in 1833, Kauikeaouli repealed all the laws of the Kingdom except those against murder and theft. With this, the sex and temperance laws were nullified. It appeared as though the Mission with its allied chiefs was on a collision course with the young king and his libertine supporters.

The high chiefess and dowager queen Kīna‘u was the principal defender of the Mission at this time. Having inherited Ka‘ahumanu’s mantle as *kuhina nui* (roughly, “great counselor”), Queen Kīna‘u would effectively rule the Kingdom—and struggle against Kaomi’s competing rule—while the young Kauikeaouli ran wild. To reflect her new role, Kīna‘u was called “Ka‘ahumanu II” in honor of the founder of the office of *kuhina nui*. The king and Kaomi were not, however, Kīna‘u’s only problem in the early 1830s. In October 1831, according to the Mission’s secular agent, Kīna‘u was beaten by her husband Mataio Kekūanā‘a whom she outranked. Kekūanā‘a’s wrath had been

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<sup>88</sup> Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 335. See also S. J. Lyman journal, 23 Feb. 1833, in *The Lymans of Hilo*, 53. Kamakau noted that Kaomi “had the power to tell a funny story entertainingly,” which endeared him to the king; see *ibid.* Kame‘eleihiwa identified Kaomi as Kauikeaouli’s *aikane* (close advisor and sexual servant), yet evidence for this is lacking. See Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 157. For more on the *aikāne*, see Chapter One.



kindled by Kīna‘u’s too close intimacy with her half-brother (and brother-in-law) King Kauikeaouli, the man she had supposedly been protecting Hawai‘i from.<sup>89</sup> Kīna‘u, it seems, could not win.

As for Kauikeaouli, his relationship with the Sandwich Islands Mission was apparently complicated by his feelings for his sister Nāhi‘ena‘ena. Despite the fact that their mother Keōpūolani had been the offspring a full-sibling marriage—and had proceeded to marry her uncle Kamehameha—the royal siblings under the new order were forbidden from marrying. Kīna‘u and the Protestant chiefs decided that the young king should instead marry Kamanele, the daughter of Governor John Adams Kuakini. But as preparations for a royal wedding were underway in 1834, Kamanele died of unknown causes at the age of twenty. Mission wife Clarissa Chapman Armstrong claimed that the young chiefess had been “for a considerable time, given up to wickedness—drinking, &c,” and that she had “died in consequence of wicked conduct.”<sup>90</sup> Meanwhile, the intended husband of Nāhi‘ena‘ena, the young chief Keolaloa Ka‘ōleiokū, also perished. The cause of Keolaloa Ka‘ōleiokū’s death is unknown; like King Kauikeaouli’s intended wife, Princess Nāhi‘ena‘ena’s intended husband was probably no older than twenty. Thus, both young monarchs lost their equally young fiancés in 1834.

It is unclear how King Kauikeaouli felt about the death of his intended wife. He was, in any case, still in love with his sister. How Princess Nāhi‘ena‘ena felt about her

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<sup>89</sup> Chamberlain journal, 21 Oct. 1831, HMH. Chamberlain did not elaborate on the incident. For physical abuse of ali‘i women by their husbands in the 1790s, see Chapters Two and Three.

<sup>90</sup> Journal of Clarissa Chapman Armstrong, 23 [27?] May 1834, HMH. Out of concern for the reputation of the mission, Armstrong added that “this must never be told in print—remember.” See *ibid*.

brother is rather harder to determine, though when the King sent a ship from O‘ahu to Maui to collect her in early June 1834, Nāhi‘ena‘ena refused to come to him. Later that month Kauikeaouli, still drinking heavily, reportedly tried to take his own life. While the details will probably never be known, the young monarch apparently was *in extremis* at this time. Missionaries reported on the king’s suicide attempt in their personal journals but were careful not to publish the news for fear of compromising the standing of the Mission. Clarissa Chapman Armstrong, for instance, noted that the King had “attempted taking his own life—Upon peril of live [life] do not publish this hint. . . . It is dangerous to have any thing published that is unfavorable to the foreign residents here, or to the natives, because it is used to injure the progress of Christ’s course.”<sup>91</sup>

Having recovered from his dark night of the soul, King Kauikeaouli finally got his wish one month later: In the house of his close friend Abner Kuho‘oheiheipahu Pākī, the king and princess slept together.<sup>92</sup> Word spread quickly. It is not possible to recover what either Kauikeaouli or Nāhi‘ena‘ena was thinking in 1834—neither of them left written records of a personal nature, and oral traditions are unfortunately inconclusive—but the public reception of this act was deeply significant. Royal sibling mating symbolized the old ways, and the act of royal incest suggested that the *kapu* system might be reinstated and the Protestant American mission rendered obsolete.

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<sup>91</sup> Journal of Clarissa Chapman Armstrong, 29 June 1834, HMH. American merchant and Honolulu resident Stephen Reynolds recorded in his diary that “all guessed, none knew” the circumstances of the King’s attempt on his own life. See journal of Stephen Reynolds, 22 July 1834, Peabody Salem Museum, qtd. in Sinclair, *Nāhi‘ena‘ena*, 142. See also Daws, *Shoal of Time*, 93–94.

<sup>92</sup> Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 161–165; Sinclair, *Nāhi‘ena‘ena*, TBD.

The Kingdom-mission breach was short-lived. Kauikeaouli continued his “dissolute” ways through the Fall of 1834, at which time a missionary physician reported him to be “a drunkard” whose “bloated visage” was testament to the “the number of...days” that remained to him.<sup>93</sup> The king and princess seem to have carried on their sexual liaisons as well. Then a shift occurred. Still unmarried at the age of twenty-two, the king settled down and made his peace with the mission. The reasons are not entirely clear.<sup>94</sup> But the Protestants would never be able to control Kauikeaouli’s behavior; and from the missionaries’ perspective, the king would steer off course a number of times during his long rule. One thing Kauikeaouli was never willing to do was forswear his sister Nāhi‘ena‘ena.

In 1835 the American Protestant missionaries—still reeling from the incestuous union of the king and princess—arranged for Nāhi‘ena‘ena to marry the fourteen-year-old chief William Pitt Leleiohoku I, son of the late Premier William Pitt Kalanimoku. The missionaries did not much care whom the princess married, so long as it was not her brother Kauikeaouli. Reports of Nāhi‘ena‘ena’s “miserable and cast down” mood in 1835 might suggest her dissatisfaction with the match.<sup>95</sup> Yet Nāhi‘ena‘ena’s despair could also have been a function of her isolation stemming from missionary attempts to bar church members from associating with the Princess until she came around to the mission

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<sup>93</sup> Alonzo Chapin to Samuel Ruggles, 30 Sept. 1834, HMH.

<sup>94</sup> See “Extracts from the Annual Report of the Mission, Dated July 3d, 1835,” *Missionary Herald* (March 1836), 102; and Daws, *Shoal of Time*, 94. Check Chamberlain, Armstrong, Bingham, TBD.

<sup>95</sup> Richard Armstrong, qtd. in Sinclair, *Nāhi‘ena‘ena*, 156.

program.<sup>96</sup> Or perhaps her mood was simply a function of her personal psychology. For their part, Kīna‘u and the Protestant chiefs were amenable to the match of Princess Nāhi‘ena‘ena and the teenager Leleiohoku.

Nāhi‘ena‘ena shortly became pregnant—perhaps by her teenaged husband, perhaps by Kauikeaouli who claimed the child was his. (The timing of conception, around December 1834, made Kauikeaouli’s claim a possibility.) It was the princess’s first reported pregnancy. Missionaries wrote from Maui that the king and princess continued to indulge in heavy drinking through the spring of 1836, Nāhi‘ena‘ena’s second trimester.<sup>97</sup> In the summer, Kauikeaouli, Nāhi‘ena‘ena, and her fifteen-year-old husband Leleiohoku removed to Honolulu in preparation for the royal birth. Then, in early September Nāhi‘ena‘ena delivered the baby, a son, who lived only a few hours. The child would have been next in line for the throne. Nāhi‘ena‘ena herself apparently never regained her strength and remained sick through the fall of 1836. On December 30, Nāhi‘ena‘ena died in the presence of her husband Leleiohoku, the king Kauikeaouli, the premier Kīna‘u, and missionary physician Gerrit Judd and his wife Laura. The cause of her death was reported as complications from childbirth. A foreign surgeon on hand for her illness noted that the princess had, for instance, ““imprudently indulg[ed] in a cold bath”” shortly after giving birth.<sup>98</sup>

Yet a letter composed by American missionary physician Alonzo Chapin in Fall 1834 suggests that complications of childbirth were not all. From Lāhainā, where

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<sup>96</sup> Sinclair, *Nāhi‘ena‘ena*, 154.

<sup>97</sup> Sinclair, *Nāhi‘ena‘ena*, 156.

<sup>98</sup> W. S. W. Ruschenberger, qtd. in Sinclair, *Nāhi‘ena‘ena*, 157.

Nāhi‘ena‘ena was living at the time, Dr. Chapin wrote to Rev. Samuel Ruggles who had recently returned home to New England after thirteen years in the Sandwich Islands Mission. “You have probably been shocked to hear of the down fall of the princess,” Chapin began.

She has fallen, like Lucifer, we fear. She has been enlightened and has tasted of the good word of God, but has fallen away, and...is following that which is destructive to her body and soul. She is now under the physician’s care in consequence of disease contracted by her vicious course.<sup>99</sup>

No such report appeared in the *Missionary Herald* or any of the ABCFM’s other publications. Nor do any Hawaiian-language documents (that I am aware of) speak to Nāhi‘ena‘ena’s disease in late 1834. The well-trained Dr. Chapin seems to have been suggesting that Nāhi‘ena‘ena had fallen victim, like the earlier lapsed Protestant William Beale, to venereal disease. If she was in fact infected with syphilis or gonorrhea in late 1834, then the death of mother and child from “complications in childbirth” in 1836 takes on a wholly different appearance. During Nāhi‘ena‘ena’s final illness, the Sandwich Islands Mission secular agent Levi Chamberlain wrote that the Princess was in need of medical attention, so a ship was sent to Lāhainā to collect Chapin’s colleague, Dr. Gerrit Judd. Chamberlain then met with the Princess on November 7, on which day she “appeared quite low.” This was seven weeks after delivery, which again suggests that she never really recovered from childbirth. Chamberlain “conversed with her a little and exhorted her to repentance.” Though ill at this time—perhaps seriously so—Nāhi‘ena‘ena

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<sup>99</sup> Alonzo Chapin to Samuel Ruggles, 30 Sept. 1834, HMMH. (Ruggles had been a member of the original 1820 mission delegation.)

still had control of her faculties, but she could not “be much awakened with a sense of her condition”—by which Chamberlain presumably meant the “condition” of her soul.<sup>100</sup> No additional hints about the nature of Nāhi‘ena‘ena’s disease of 1834 have surfaced.

With Nāhi‘ena‘ena gone, King Kāi‘e‘ā‘ouli chose for a wife Kalama, daughter of the low-ranking chief and harbor pilot Naihe-Kukui Kapihe (also known as Capt. Jack).<sup>101</sup> The king’s choice was a great disappointment to many of the ruling chiefs, including his half-sister Kīna‘u, who considered Kalama’s rank unbecoming a king. Yet the king had not put Nāhi‘ena‘ena out of his mind. He had a large stone house built in Lāhainā, with a mausoleum on the top floor for his mother Keōpūolani, his sister, and—as he seems to have considered her—his first wife, Nāhi‘ena‘ena, and their infant child.<sup>102</sup>

Princess Nāhi‘ena‘ena was not the only prominent Hawaiian to go astray in 1834. John Toohane (Ko‘okane?), the sole Hawaiian to sail with the sixth company of New England missionaries, also deserted the mission. Arriving in Honolulu in early May 1833, Toohane proceeded to find a wife, fall away from the mission, and succumb to tuberculosis within a year.<sup>103</sup>



King Kāi‘e‘ā‘ouli may have interpreted the deaths of Nāhi‘ena‘ena and her newborn (which he believed to be his) as final proof that the akua had “forsaken him.”

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<sup>100</sup> Chamberlain journal, 5–7 Nov. 1836, HMM.

<sup>101</sup> Naihe-Kukui Kapihe had accompanied Liholiho and Kamāmalu to London in 1823, and then died of a brain hemorrhage in Valparaiso, Chile, on the return trip aboard the HMS *Blonde*.

<sup>102</sup> Sinclair, *Nāhi‘ena‘ena*, 161.

<sup>103</sup> Journal of Clarissa Chapman Armstrong, 27 May–2 July 1834, HMM.

These and other setbacks for the anti-missionary chiefs “symbolized,” according to the historian Lilikalā Kame‘eleihiwa “the ultimate divine sanction of Jehovah against [the King’s] way of life.”<sup>104</sup> Certainly Kauikeaouli would not reject the missionaries in any official manner for the remainder of his rule. With his new wife Kalama, the young king retreated to Lahaiana, leaving the kuhina nui Kīna‘u in charge of Honolulu. By November 1836 a British consul described Kīna‘u as holding the “reins” of the Kingdom but “entirely governed by the American Missionaries who through her govern the Islands with unlimited sway.”<sup>105</sup> That was an exaggeration, but it is true that Kauikeaouli had deferred to Kīna‘u, and it also is true that the *kāhuna* (priests, advisors) of Kīna‘u were now all foreign Christians. The path forward for Hawai‘i would be the one outlined by the chiefesses Keōpūolani and Ka‘ahumanu a decade earlier. Their kinswoman Kīna‘u, now styled Ka‘ahumanu II, would lead the way.

It was in this context that the Sandwich Islands Mission celebrated a changed relationship with the Hawaiian chiefs around 1837. Never reticent to employ hyperbole in their writings, the missionaries called it a Hawaiian “Great Awakening.” In hindsight, the awakening can be viewed as a slow transition from the death of Kamehameha 1819 to the deaths of the queens Ka‘ahumanu and Nāhi‘ena‘ena in the 1830s. The Sandwich Islands Mission won a number of converts in 1837–38, but these Hawaiians were almost all from

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<sup>104</sup> Kame‘eleihiwa, *Native Land and Foreign Desires*, 165.

<sup>105</sup> Richard Charlton to Lord Palmerston (23 Nov. 1826), qtd. in Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778–1854*, 136.

southern O‘ahu and the Kona coast of the Big Island. The Hawaiian Great Awakening was neither “great” in scale nor dramatic in nature.<sup>106</sup> It was also short-lived.

Perhaps the most important legacy of the so-called Awakening was the enactment of Hawai‘i’s first code of Western laws, including mandatory observation of the Sabbath. Further research will be required to determine whether the Protestant chiefs’ thinking about the 1840 Constitution bore at all on questions of Hawaiian health and population loss, or the extent to which the missionary faction used these struggles to lure the ali‘i toward drafting the new laws. A significant portion of the new laws were aimed at improving public health (see Chapter Five).<sup>107</sup> Earlier, in 1836, Kīna‘u had instituted the Kingdom’s first public health measure. All ships entering Honolulu were to be inspected and, if necessary, quarantined.<sup>108</sup>

### *Large Fishes*

As missionaries planned for bigger and better things in the Pacific, the maka‘āinana continued to suffer terrible illnesses. In 1833 newly arrived mission wife Ursula Emerson reported “a great many” Natives had been sick at Waialua on the north shore of O‘ahu: “many come every day for medicine.” Still more distressing to Emerson

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<sup>106</sup> Rev. Titus Coan is said to have baptized 1,705 residents of Hilo coast in one day in 1838. See John R. Musick, *Hawaii: Our New Possessions* (New York and London, 1898), 46. No study has been conducted on the Hilo church’s retention of Native Hawaiians as parishioners.

<sup>107</sup> I count sex laws as public health measures, for reasons outlined in Chapter Six. For the 1840 Constitution, see *Translation of the Constitution and Laws of the Hawaiian Islands, Established in the Reign of Kamehameha III* (Lahainaluna, HI, 1842).

<sup>108</sup> TBD, HSA.



were the “many sick babies” brought to the mission house, some of them covered with “sores.” With no physician to serve the newly established mission at Waialua, Emerson explained that her untrained husband had taken it upon himself to prescribe medicines—of what type, she did not say. Fortunately for the Emersons and their children, the climate at Waialua was “a healthful one for ourselves.” The chronic health woes of the Natives, she believed, were a function of “their irregular habits of living.”<sup>109</sup>

Two years later Asa Thurston and Artemas Bishop wrote to the ABCFM that “So many childless families as these of Hawaii scarcely find a parallel in any other nation.”<sup>110</sup> In 1840 missionary physician Seth L. Andrews compiled statistics on Native Hawaiian births in his district, Kailua, on Hawai‘i Island. His numbers revealed that more than half of the local Hawaiian children died within their first two years, with “a very considerable portion of these” between six and twelve months of age. Since it was clear to him that the climate of Hawai‘i was healthy “even to the tender infant,” he concluded that the high rate of infant mortality must be due to Hawaiians’ “insufficient clothing...improper food & want of cleanliness.” In light of such hardships, Dr. Andrews was “very doubtful of the wisdom of urging” Natives to support the mission financially, a plan that ABCFM leaders in Boston and a number of Sandwich Islands missionaries themselves had been urging

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<sup>109</sup> Ursula Sophia Newell Emerson journal, 28 Jan. and 8 April 1833, in Oliver Pomeroy Emerson, *Pioneer Days in Hawaii* (Garden City, NY, 1928), 66–67, 70–71. See also John S. Emerson to Anderson, 21 Aug. 1834, ABCFM Papers. I have not seen any reference to maka‘āinana believing that missionaries were spreading disease by prayer and hymn singing (i.e., by foreign sorcery), as some Tongans apparently did; see I. C. Campbell, *Island Kingdom*, 43.

<sup>110</sup> [Asa] Thurston and [Artemas] Bishop, “Sandwich Islands,” *The Missionary Herald* 32 (Oct. 1836), 385.

since the panic of 1837. Andrews nowhere mentioned venereal disease in his communiqué to the ABCFM.<sup>111</sup>

Missionary physicians' fierce resistance to the kāhuna lapa'au in this period should come as no surprise. Indeed, it might have been difficult to find a regular physician in all of New England who would have defended Native Hawaiian medical practices, although Judd had reported that other foreigners ("and men of information too") trusted Native physicians and regularly resorted to their treatments.<sup>112</sup> To the mission's first physician, Dr. Holman, the kāhuna lapa'au knew "little or nothing of distinguishing one disease from another...and if the person to whom they give medicine dies, they suppose him to have been prayed to death by some enemy."<sup>113</sup> Fifteen years later Chapin described the medical views and practices of Native Hawaiians as "a mixture of absurdities the most ridiculous, and often dangerous."<sup>114</sup> To Judd, the kāhuna lapa'au were simply "a miserable set of quacks who often shorten the lives of their

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<sup>111</sup> Seth L. Andrews to Anderson, 22 Aug. 1840, in ABCFM Papers. For comparable infant-mortality figures a decade later at Lāhainā, see David E. Stannard, "Disease and Infertility: A New Look at the Demographic Collapse of Native Populations in the Wake of Western Contact," *Journal of American Studies* 24 (1990), 334. Rev. Richard Armstrong deemed the high rate of infant mortality a result of "natural affections among Hawaiians [being] low, and dormant." R[ichard] Armstrong, L[evi] Chamberlain, and S[amuel] N. Castle, eds., *Answers to Questions Proposed by His Excellency, R. C. Wyllie, His Hawaiian Majesty's Minister of Foreign Relations, and Addressed to All the Missionaries in the Hawaiian Islands, May, 1846* (Honolulu, 1848), 51. Armstrong and Bingham had been strong supporters of Native Hawaiian financial contributions to missionary labors.

<sup>112</sup> Gerrit P. Judd, "Remarks on the Climate of the Sandwich Islands, and Its Probable Effects on Men of Bilious Habits and on Constitutions Predisposed to Pulmonary Affections," *Hawaiian Spectator* 1 (1838): 18–26, esp. 22.

<sup>113</sup> Holman to ABCFM, Nov. 21, 1820, ABCFM Papers. See also [William] Richards, "Extracts from the Journal of Mr. Richards," *Missionary Herald* 24 (1828), 149.

<sup>114</sup> Alonzo Chapin, "Remarks on the Sandwich Islands; Their Situation, Climate, Diseases, and Their Suitableness as a Resort for Individuals Affected with or Predisposed to Pulmonary Diseases," *American Journal of the Medical Sciences* 20 (1837): 43–60, esp. 55 (republished in *Hawaiian Spectator* 1 (1838): 248–267).

patients by their remedies.”<sup>115</sup> Unfortunately for ill Hawaiians, it appears that some kāhuna began to eschew treatment of diseases introduced by Westerners on the logic that illnesses of foreign origin ought to be treated by foreign doctors. Most Native physicians worked with what they had, adding new treatments to their arsenal as they became available.<sup>116</sup>

In truth, neither a strict course of the latest New England medicine nor an enlightened view of the *materia medica* of the kāhuna lapa‘au would have affected the general contours of Hawaiian epidemiology in the nineteenth century. Until the acceptance of germ theory and the development of penicillin, chronic and acute infectious diseases such as syphilis, measles, and smallpox were going to exact their toll almost regardless of treatment, particularly among peoples who lacked acquired (or adaptive) immunity. Medically speaking, the early nineteenth century was still an age of purgatives and emetics, heavy metals, and bloodletting. Nevertheless, it does come as a surprise that missionaries and physicians, while assiduously monitoring Native Hawaiian population loss, failed to make American medicines (such as they were) available to even a small minority of Hawaiians. Even more surprising are the conclusions mission doctors drew about Hawaiian epidemiology and depopulation.

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<sup>115</sup> Judd, *Dr. Judd: Hawaii's Friend*, 87. Armstrong considered “much of the practice” of Native Hawaiian doctors to be “little else than mere *manslaughter*.” Armstrong, et al., eds., *Answers to Questions Proposed by...R. C. Wyllie*, 48.

<sup>116</sup> Bushnell, *The Gifts of Civilization*, 97, 104–106, 114; June Gutmanis, *Kahuna La‘au Lapa‘au: Hawaiian Herbal Medicine* (Waipahu, HI, 1976), 54, 78, 86–87. For a discussion of changing Native Hawaiian medical ideas under missionary influence, see Virginia Metaxas, “‘Licentiousness Has Slain its Hundreds of Thousands’: The Missionary Discourse of Sex, Death, and Disease in Nineteenth-century Hawai‘i,” in *Gender and Globalization in Asia and the Pacific: Method, Practice, Theory*, ed. Kathy E. Ferguson and Monique Mironesco, 37–55 (Honolulu, 2008).

As full members of the Sandwich Islands Mission, the physicians' primary concern was Hawaiian souls rather than bodies; thus, they tended to view Native Hawaiians' physical afflictions as God's punishment for "licentiousness." New England evangelicals were not alone in their lack of charity for victims of sexually transmitted diseases. During the War of 1812 the U.S. Army withheld pay from soldiers being treated for venereal diseases and even charged them for the medicines. Even so, American soldiers generally received treatment.<sup>117</sup> A decade earlier, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark had packed a host of venereal remedies for use by their Corps of Discovery: Fully 15 percent of the expedition's "medical shopping list was made up of items for the treatment of gonorrhea or syphilis." No trained physician accompanied the Corps of Discovery, so it fell to Lewis and Clark to handle the care of their men; they did so, according to medical historian Thomas Lowry, "with remarkable success."<sup>118</sup> By the 1810s advertisements for venereal remedies—some, no doubt, by charlatans—ran daily in newspapers in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. In the U.S. South, both servants and slaves were treated with venereal disease remedies to prevent general outbreaks. Venereal diseases were, after all, nothing new to North America. Syphilis wards had been

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<sup>117</sup> See Rudolph H. Kampmeier, "Venereal Disease in the United States Army: 1775–1900," *Sexually Transmitted Diseases* 9 (1982), 100–103.

<sup>118</sup> Lewis and Clark's remedies included internal applications such as calomel (mercurous chloride) and "bilious" pills, a mixture of jalap (morning glory roots) and calomel, of which the Corps of Discovery packed fifty dozen. For the treatment of external syphilitic lesions, the Corps purchased a pound of mercury ointment. They also acquired two remedies for gonorrhea: sugar of lead, which could be "mixed with water and injected up the urethra with a penis syringe," and copaiba extract, administered orally. Thomas P. Lowry, *Venereal Disease and the Lewis and Clark Expedition* (Lincoln, NE, 2004), 42–45.

established in urban hospitals on both sides of the Atlantic as early as the late eighteenth century.<sup>119</sup>

As for the New England medical community in which the missionary physicians were trained, treatment of sexually transmitted diseases was standard practice and exceedingly common. Physicians educated at reputable medical colleges, as the mission doctors were, had a working knowledge of venereal disease etiology as well as the options for treatment, however hotly debated these sometimes were.<sup>120</sup> At the College of Physicians and Surgeons of the Western District of New York, where Judd and Andrews had earned their medical degrees, students would have had access to the standard texts on venereal disease (probably François-Xavier Swediaur's *Complete Treatise on Syphilis* or Richard Carmichael's illustrated *Essay on Venereal Diseases*) featuring entire chapters on the production and administration of remedies (mercurial and herbal) for the various stages of syphilis and gonorrhea. At the elite University of Pennsylvania, where Chapin was trained in the 1820s, the best medical resources and instructors in the United States were ready at hand. The Pennsylvania medical school was, in fact, the leading research center on venereal disease in North America.<sup>121</sup> Unfortunately, the considerable attention

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<sup>119</sup> Todd L. Savitt, *Medicine and Slavery: The Disease and Health Care of Blacks in Antebellum Virginia* (Urbana, IL, 1978), 73–80. As early as 1814 Hawaiian and American laborers in the Oregon Country were treated aggressively for syphilis, with both internal and external applications of mercury. Local Indian traders and women seem to have been treated on occasion as well. See Barry M. Gough, ed., *The Journal of Alexander Henry the Younger* (2 vols., Toronto, 1992), 2:711, 718–719; and Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence*, 69–72. On syphilis wards, see John Parascandola, *Sex, Sin, and Science: A History of Syphilis in America* (Westport, CT, 2008), 26; and George Weisz, “The Emergence of Medical Specialization in the Nineteenth Century,” *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 77 (1999), 536–574.

<sup>120</sup> Parascandola, *Sex, Sin, and Science*, 16–18, 27–31.

<sup>121</sup> The Philadelphia medical community published (or reprinted) most of the important European and American scholarship on venereal disease, including F[rançois-Xavier] Swediaur, *A Complete Treatise on*

and effort aimed at venereal diseases on the American mainland were not exported to the Sandwich Islands.

To be sure, the infrastructure of the islands, at least until the late 1820s, probably precluded the “institutionalization” of syphilitic Hawaiians. Marooning them on a remote island, as was done with victims of Hansen’s disease (leprosy) later in the century, would certainly have caused as many problems as it solved. Still, it is remarkable that missionary physicians never proposed syphilis wards or sequestration of infected persons (as opposed to simply arresting prostitutes) over their three-decade tenure in Hawai‘i.<sup>122</sup> The first such plan seems to have been suggested by a German physician, Dr. William Hillebrand, who came to the islands in 1850 to treat his own tuberculosis. Hillebrand was astonished to find that so little had been done to address the syphilis epidemic. No critic of the missionaries in general or of their goals for Hawai‘i, Hillebrand nevertheless deemed their efforts to control Native Hawaiian sexuality through rules and punishment “obnoxious.” Lives had been wasted, Hillebrand argued, and now there was probably no place on earth where syphilis was “so widespread as here.” Nine out of ten Native Hawaiians, he estimated, had been infected at some point in their lives. An overstatement, no doubt—along with his claim that there was “hardly a disease in the

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*the Symptoms, Effects, Nature and Treatment of Syphilis*, trans. Thomas T. Hewson (Philadelphia, 1815); Richard Carmichael, *An Essay on the Venereal Diseases which Have Been Confounded with Syphilis...* (Philadelphia, 1817); and Carmichael, *An Essay on Venereal Diseases, and the Uses and Abuses of Mercury in Their Treatment* (Philadelphia, 1825). See also *A Catalogue of the Medical Library, Belonging to the Pennsylvania Hospital...*, Part 2 (Philadelphia, 1818).

<sup>122</sup> The possibility that any proposal to remove infected Hawaiians would have struck New England evangelicals as unjust or counter-productive to their missionary goals deserves further exploration. As secretary of the ABCFM in the 1820s, Jeremiah Evarts had been strongly outspoken against Indian removal. See John A. Andrew, *From Revivals to Removal: Jeremiah Evarts, the Cherokee Nation, and the Search for the Soul of America* (Athens, GA, 1992).

whole dominion of Pathology” so easily treated as syphilis—yet Hillebrand was among the best authorities on syphilis in Hawai‘i. Working out of temporary dispensaries in the 1850s, he regularly treated Hawaiian women suffering from venereal infection. “Do not delay the erection of hospitals for the sick any longer,” he demanded; “Humanity demands it imperatively.” He ended his remarks in the *Transactions of the Royal Hawaiian Agricultural Society* with an appeal to foreigners’ pocketbooks, reminding readers that the Native Hawaiians were their “principal source of labor and agricultural production.”<sup>123</sup>

While it is fair to ask whether a different group of foreigners would have performed any better in the face of this public health crisis, it is clear that missionary physicians’ reaction to the Hawaiian syphilis epidemic reflected more than the islands’ infrastructure or the state of American medicine in this period. What made the mission doctors different from a physician like Hillebrand (much less a Swediaur or Carmichael) was their belief that venereal diseases were principally a mark of God’s judgment. In his Hawaiian-language anatomy book of 1838, Judd explained to his Hawaiian neophytes that the palate and nasal bones were “the ones frequently destroyed by *pala* [tertiary syphilis]. It is the sickness that God gave us as punishment to adulterous people.”<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> W[illiam] Hillebrand, “Report on Labor and Population,” *Transactions of the Royal Hawaiian Agricultural Society* 2, no. 2 (1855), 69–77, esp. 74–76. William Hillebrand was educated at Gottingen, Heidelberg, and Berlin, where he earned his medical degree. On his treatment of Native Hawaiian women, see Richard A. Greer, “The Founding of the Queen’s Hospital,” *Hawaiian Journal of History* 3 (1969), 137–141. The London-born newspaper editor Charles Gordon Hopkins had suggested government-run hospitals in 1849, but the idea failed to get traction until the smallpox epidemic of 1853. See Helen Geracimos Chapin, *Shaping History: The Role of Newspapers in Hawai‘i* (Honolulu, 1996), 68.

<sup>124</sup> “*O keia mau iwi, a me na iwi owili, a me na iwi ihu, ka i ai pinepine ia e ka pala. Oia ka mai a ke Akua i haawi mai i uku hoopai no ka poe moe kolohe.*” [Gerrit P. Judd], *Anatomia: He Palapala ia e Hoike*

Likewise, Chapin saw venereal disease as “the vilest and most loathsome” affliction “ever sent as a punishment for transgression.”<sup>125</sup> Nevertheless, both Chapin and Judd treated syphilis and gonorrhea during their stints as Island physicians. They had little choice in the matter, given that the most frequent application for their services was for the “relief of the venereal.”<sup>126</sup> Chapin did not indicate how many Native Hawaiians he treated during his brief service on Maui, apparently including some women. Judd, who practiced much longer, treated more Hawaiians for venereal conditions than anyone else associated with the mission. Judd’s extant medical writings include detailed prescriptions and treatments for venereal diseases (both men’s and women’s conditions), yet it is not clear when Judd began to practice these treatments, or on whom, as his patients are not named.<sup>127</sup>



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*Ai i ke Ano o ko ke Kanaka Kino* (O’ahu, 1838), 12. The translation is by Esther T. Mookini; see Gerrit P. Judd, *Anatomia, 1838*, trans. Mookini (Honolulu, 2003), 20.

<sup>125</sup> Chapin, “Remarks on the Sandwich Islands,” 50.

<sup>126</sup> Alonzo Chapin, “Remarks on the Venereal Disease at the Sandwich Islands,” *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* 42 (1850): 89–93, esp. 90. The well-educated Chapin drew a clear distinction between syphilis and gonorrhea. For the latter, he administered balsam of copaiba (an herbal antiseptic taken internally), which he thought to be of some use, although the condition often seemed “to get well, without interference.” (This finding accorded with Swediaur, *A Complete Treatise on Syphilis*, 16–17, 39, and Carmichael, *An Essay on Venereal Diseases*, 93–102.) Syphilis was another matter: “This disease, where I observed it, ran on spreading over the body, and increasing in severity, till it terminated in death, unless checked by appropriate remedies”—in this case, mercurial compounds (the standard treatment of the day). Chapin confessed to being unsure “how far [women] are affected by the venereal disease.” Chapin, “Remarks on the Sandwich Islands,” 53.

<sup>127</sup> For Judd’s venereal prescriptions and treatments, see the anonymous translation of Gerrit P. Judd’s Hawaiian-language medical book (1867?), HMH. The original medical book has apparently not survived. Further evidence for missionary physicians treating venereal diseases in the 1830s includes Dwight Baldwin’s request for “Bell on Venereal” in 1836, and Seth Andrews’ request of a copy of the Carmichael text in 1837. See Baldwin to Anderson, 15 Nov. 1836, and Andrews to Anderson, Oct. 1837, both in ABCFM Papers. Benjamin Bell’s *Treatise on Gonorrhœa Virulenta, and Lues Venerea* (1793; Albany, NY, 1814) was one of thirteen medical texts that the demanding Baldwin had requested in his letter to the ABCFM, along with numerous medical supplies (although no venereal disease remedies).



The most capable investigators of Hawaiian demography and epidemiology after 1820 were the Reverend Artemas Bishop, stationed at Kailua-Kona on Hawai‘i Island, and the aforementioned Alonzo Chapin, missionary physician at Lāhainā. Dr. Chapin published his observations in the prestigious *American Journal of the Medical Sciences* shortly after returning to Boston in 1837. Bishop’s piece appeared the following year in the short-lived Anglo American journal, Honolulu’s *Hawaiian Spectator*. Bishop simply collected data on the number of fatalities and (the suspected) causes of death, which had been chronicled by missionaries as early as 1825. He agreed with his fellow missionaries that it was “not civilization, but civilized vices that wither the savage. He drinks into them like water, without knowing that their attendant diseases are cutting the tendrils of his heart, and drawing away his life’s blood.” With the Hawaiian population in 1836 at 110,000, down from 400,000 in 1778 (the accepted estimate at the time), Bishop calculated it would take “but fifty or sixty years to extinguish every vestige of aboriginal blood in the land.” He believed that this regrettable state of affairs was the result of Hawaiians’ “previous looseness of morals,” which provided “a ready conductor for the disease...introduced by the first ship that touched here.”<sup>128</sup>

Bishop’s main contribution on the problem of Hawaiian morbidity was his observation that syphilis had contributed to low birth rates. For him, as for other missionaries, Hawaiian licentiousness had “slain its hundreds of thousands,” but, in Bishop’s judgment, the greatest influence of syphilis had been to “destroy the powers of

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<sup>128</sup> Artemas Bishop, “An Inquiry into the Causes of Decrease in the Population of the Sandwich Islands,” *Hawaiian Spectator* 1 (1838): 52–66, esp. 53, 59, 61.

procreation.” Indeed, syphilis and gonorrhea had not only critically affected the fertility of Hawaiian men and women but also increased the rate of infant mortality. As for the moral aspects of Hawaiian depopulation, Bishop implored his readers, “Of what advantage will it be to any one should this people be annihilated?... What will it avail us hereafter to possess their lands, with our hands stained with the guilt of their blood?”<sup>129</sup>

Chapin’s 1837 article in the *American Journal of the Medical Sciences* was the most thorough and illuminating work published on the subject of Hawaiian epidemiology. It was not without miscalculations. Had Chapin considered the likelihood of smallpox’s arrival, for example, he certainly would not have predicted “few contagious diseases” arriving on the islands. Still, Chapin provided the most medically informative and simultaneously distressing account of the Hawaiian syphilis epidemic. “Words would fail to express the wretchedness and woe which have been the result,” he wrote, including tooth decay and oral infection, malnutrition, blindness, and “visages horridly deformed.” In some cases, the “entire front of the thorax would be covered” with syphilitic ulcers. Other victims had lost their genitalia completely. In one advanced case, Chapin reported,

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<sup>129</sup> Bishop, “An Inquiry into the Causes of Decrease in the Population of the Sandwich Islands,” 61, 63. Even as they bemoaned the loss of Native Hawaiian lives, missionaries remained concerned about their own future in the North Pacific. In 1836, Hiram Bingham began to collect tithes from his Hawaiian congregants to support not only the mission’s buildings and preachers but also an “exploring agent of the American Board in Oregon” (for which \$78 was raised in Hawai‘i) and the missions in “Upper Oregon” and “Lower Oregon” (\$556 was raised). Two years later, William Richards resigned from the Mission in order to advise the ali‘i on matters of law and government. In 1840, Judd began to compile records on Hawaiian royal land grants in order to determine how Americans could acquire lands on the islands permanently. Bishop himself built a sugar mill on O‘ahu, producing forty to fifty tons of sugar (utilizing Native Hawaiian labor) in the year 1840 alone. See Bingham, *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands*, 502–503; Stuart Banner, *Possessing the Pacific: Land, Settlers, and Indigenous People from Australia to Alaska* (Cambridge, MA, 2007), 134; and Jennifer Fish Kashay, “Agents of Imperialism: Missionaries and Merchants in Early-Nineteenth-Century Hawai‘i,” *New England Quarterly* 80 (2007): 280–298, esp. 295.

the patient's skull had been "perforated to the brain with numerous fistulas." While Chapin claimed to have helped one patient suffering from secondary syphilis with a course of mercury, the physician believed there was no prospect of the epidemic letting up in Hawai'i, as the people had "no means which will control it." He reported that only a few Native Hawaiians had "access to foreign physicians, and many within reach appear too indifferent to their condition to make application."<sup>130</sup>

Like Bishop, Chapin recognized that venereal diseases had lowered the fertility of Native Hawaiians. In what was either an unguarded moment or infelicitous phrasing, Chapin observed that "not many years will be required, at this rate, to depopulate the islands of the native inhabitants." That would be a shame, no doubt, but the truth for Chapin was that the "large quantities of foreign commodities carried to the islands, and the increasing intercourse of the inhabitants with foreigners, have created such an amount of new and superfluous wants as to destroy their native character, and to make them an artificial and degenerate race." In time, Chapin figured, "their end may be read on the same page which records the fate of the wandering tribes of America."<sup>131</sup>

In July 1838 the *Hawaiian Spectator* reprinted Chapin's article from the *American Journal of the Medical Sciences* for the *Spectator's* Anglo-American readership, which had recently been presented with Bishop's and Judd's thoughts on Hawaiian depopulation. Then, in 1839, the *Spectator* published a final article on the

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<sup>130</sup> Chapin, "Remarks on the Sandwich Islands," 51; Chapin, "Remarks on the Venereal Disease," 90.

<sup>131</sup> Chapin, "Remarks on the Sandwich Islands," 55–57. Like Chapin, Armstrong believed that Hawaiians' "artificial wants" helped to explain "why they decrease." Armstrong to David Greene, 11 Nov. 1845, ABCFM Papers.

subject, this one by a Native Hawaiian convert and missionary-recruit named Davida (David) Malo. Malo is an interesting case: The first and most ardent of the Hawaiian converts to Calvinism, he provided something of a rubber-stamp for missionary attitudes and actions throughout the 1820s and 1830s. He had been educated at Lahainaluna Seminary on Maui, and before that he had lived at Kuakini's court on the Kona coast. He probably had some contact with the Tahitian Christians and various British and American missionaries in the 1820s. In the early 1830s he would have been in close contact with King Kamehameha III and Princess Nāhi'ena'ena at Lāhainā. He witnessed the Princess' fall from grace, and he may have been on hand for her death in 1836.

Regarding the decline of the Native Hawaiian population, Malo was in complete agreement with the American missionaries, attributing the decline to the wars, infanticide, murder, and human sacrifice to which the Hawaiians had been in thrall before the arrival of missionaries: "The great mortality that prevailed arose from the ignorance of the people at that time, their manner of living, the want of care and nursing when sick; and their ignorance of the proper use of medicine....From that time to this," Malo observed, "it is clear that there has been a steady decrease of the people." The major "evils" that had caused this tragedy were "the illicit intercourse of Hawaiian females with foreigners[,]...the sloth and indolence of the people at the present time[,]...[and] the disobedience of the chiefs and people to the revealed will of God."<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> David Malo, "On the Decrease of Population on the Hawaiian Islands," trans. L[orrin] Andrews, *Hawaiian Spectator* 2 (1839): 121–131, esp. 125, 130. See also [Shedon Dibble], ed., "*Ka Mooolelo Hawaii*," *ibid.*, 438–447, esp. 446–447. Malo appears to have been the sole Native Hawaiian to address this subject in writing before mid-century. (Native Hawaiian discussion of health, disease, and population loss in the Hawaiian-language press dates to the 1860s.) It is unclear to what extent the content and perspective

Malo suggested that the depopulation of Hawai‘i was inevitable. “The kingdom is sick,” he wrote. “It is reduced to a skeleton, and is near to death; yea, the whole Hawaiian nation is near to close.” Barring a miracle, “this diminishing of the people will not cease.”<sup>133</sup> That same year in a letter to the kuhina nui Kīna‘u and her husband, Malo advised them to consult frequently with their ali‘i advisors so that foreigners would be prevented from doing harm to the Kingdom. To emphasize his point, Malo employed a metaphor from the natural world:

If a big wave comes in, large fishes will come from the dark Ocean which you never saw before, and when they see the small fishes they will eat them up; such also is the case with large animals, they will prey on the smaller ones. The ships of the white man have come, and smart people have arrived from the great countries which you have never seen before, they know our people are few in number and living in a small country; they will eat us up, such has always been the case with large countries, the small ones have been gobbled up.<sup>134</sup>

In fact, the population of the Islands had plummeted in the past four years. State Demographer Robert C. Schmitt has estimated that as many as 22,000 lives were lost between 1832 and 1836.<sup>135</sup> Malo’s article of course coincided with the so-called Hawaiian Great Awakening. The timing was not coincidental. Many Hawaiians won over

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of Malo’s article was mediated by its translator, Rev. Lorrin Andrews, Malo’s instructor at Lahainaluna Seminary. Missionary influence is certainly evident throughout. See, for example, Armstrong, et al., *Answers to Questions Proposed by...R. C. Wyllie*, 6–13, 30–35, 47–50.

<sup>133</sup> Malo, “On the Decrease of Population on the Hawaiian Islands,” 130.

<sup>134</sup> Malo to Kīna‘u and Mataio Kekūānā‘o‘a, 18 Aug. 1837, Hawai‘i State Archives, qtd. in Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom*, vol. 1, 153. For Indigenous people in North America employing similar metaphors at this time, see Claudia B. Raake, “‘In the Same Predicament as Heretofore’: Proremoval Arguments in Seneca Letters from the Buffalo Creek Reservation in the 1830s and 1840s,” *Ethnohistory* 61 (2014): 57–77, esp. 62–63, 67–69.

<sup>135</sup> Robert C. Schmitt, *Historical Statistics of Hawaii* (Honolulu, 1977), 8–9.

to Protestant Christianity were swayed by their perspective on the Hawaiian people as destined to decline.



In April 1839 the kuhina nui and dowager queen Kīna‘u died from complications of the mumps. The course of her illness was apparently rapid. Chamberlain first noted the queen’s illness on March 30, and by April 4 she was gone. Kīna‘u was about thirty-three years old. While obese, Kīna‘u was apparently in robust health when she contracted the disease.

This was the first recorded instance of mumps (epidemic parotitis) on the Islands. The Hawaiian term for the disease, *auwae pahāha* (“swollen chin”) points to its most distinct feature—painful swelling of the salivary (parotid) glands. Other symptoms are generically flu-like. By the nineteenth century mumps was principally a disease of childhood in the developed world, as it remains today. Then as now, there is no specific treatment for the disease besides pain remediation and measures to reduce swelling. In non-virgin soil populations today, fifteen to twenty-seven percent of cases will display no symptoms (or non-specific symptoms), which of course serves to facilitate the spread of the disease.<sup>136</sup> It is not clear whether asymptomatic mumps is less common in populations which are virgin soil for the disease.

According to Kamakau, mumps was brought to the Islands by the (American?) ship *Quixote*, Captain Henry Pease. En route from the U.S., the *Quixote* stopped in

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<sup>136</sup> Immunization Action Coalition, “Mumps: Answers and Questions,” <http://www.vaccineinformation.org>.

Valparaiso, Chile, where someone brought the virus aboard. The crew then proceeded to spread the mumps to Tahiti, and to Honolulu upon their arrival in mid-February 1837. Because Hawai‘i was virgin social for the virus, mumps spread “among both young and old over the entire group,” according to Kamakau, “although few died of it.”<sup>137</sup> That may be true. There are, for instance, no recorded deaths of newborns from this first outbreak. Real figures for overall morbidity and mortality are also lacking. Historian David E. Stannard suggested that mumps would have caused sterility in as many as a third of Hawaiian males who contracted the disease, but this is inaccurate. In fact, male sterility is “extremely rare” in mumps because the disease—when affecting the testicles at all (twenty to thirty percent of cases in males)—does so bilaterally, involving the inflammation of only one testicle and thus having a legible effect on overall sperm count.<sup>138</sup> Even rarer is involvement of the brain, though the development of mumps meningoencephalitis is more common among adults than children.

Besides Kīna‘u, one other high chief succumbed to complications of the mumps, according to Kamakau. The Royal Governor of Kaua‘i Kaikio‘ewa was in his seventies and may well have been frail before exposure to the virus. The death of Kaikio‘ewa left only one high chief from the generation of Kamehameha and Ka‘ahumanu: Ulumāheihei Hoapili was the widower of Keōpūolani, the Royal Governor of Maui, and father of Liliha. A watercolor portrait painted by mission wife Clarissa Chapman Armstrong

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<sup>137</sup> Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, 346.

<sup>138</sup> Robert J. Kim-Farley, “Mumps,” in *The Cambridge History of World Disease*, ed. Kenneth F. Kiple, 887–889 (Cambridge, UK, 1993), esp. 888. See also Centers for Disease Control, “Mumps: Disease Description; Clinical Questions & Answers on Mumps,” <http://www.cdc.gov/mumps/clinical/qa-disease.html#b>. Cf. Stannard, “Disease and Infertility,” esp. 343.

shows a dignified man who had combined Western dress with a Native hairstyle. Along with Kīna‘u, Hoapili was a leading defender of the Sandwich Islands Mission in the 1830s. He was responsible for erecting the stone church at Waine‘e, which served as the house of worship and principal burial site for the Hawaiian royalty at Lāhainā. Other chiefs who died in 1839 include the Royal Governor of O‘ahu Liliha (widow of Boki). Like Kīna‘u, Liliha was in the prime of life; she was rumored to have been poisoned by her enemies.

At least one other notable Hawaiian passed away in 1839 but not from the mumps. The ill-fated Kawailepolepo—whose name translates as “bad (contaminated, filthy) water—was Lahainaluna-educated and apparently a loyal follower of the missionaries. As a young man, he had contracted syphilis. From about the age of twenty, Kawailepolepo took the narrow path of the missionaries. In his obituary American missionary Jonathan S. Green wrote that Kawailepolepo’s life was confirmation of the biblical adage that “*He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption.*”<sup>139</sup>

### *Conclusion*

New England missionaries had expected to spend their lives in the North Pacific dedicated to the conversion and civilizing of Hawai‘i’s Native people. They discovered different work and new roles in the 1820s and 30s. Preachers of the new religion were as often called upon as nurses and physicians. For their part, the Hawaiian chiefs were

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<sup>139</sup> J[onathan] S. Green, “Biographical Sketch of the Life and Character of Hezekiah Kawailepolepo,” *Hawaiian Spectator* 2 (1839): 80–91, esp. 88.



caught in a cycle of debt, disease, low fertility, and—increasingly—dependence on their American evangelical Protestant allies. In due time the chiefs would award these newcomers with significant offices and plots of land. The Great Awakening (or Great Fatalism) of the late 1830s had put Americans in positions of real power and permanent influence on the Islands.

## CONCLUSION:

### *Ho‘oulu Lāhui*

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Even after the [kapu] were abolished the land was well populated from Hawaii to Kauai with high chiefs, the favorites of chiefs, lesser chiefs, the children of chiefs, and commoners. The land was well filled with men, women, and children. It was a common thing to see old men and women of a hundred years and older, wrinkled and flabby-skinned, with eyelids hanging shut. One does not see such people today.

–Samuel M. Kamakau, Honolulu, June 1867<sup>1</sup>

*Lele wale aku la.*

“It is said” (*lit.*, “it has flown”).<sup>2</sup>

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In a recent memoir the Yanomami shaman Davi Kopenawa recalled back-to-back epidemics that struck his people during a childhood in the Amazon rainforest. Around 1959 an “epidemic smoke” unleashed by foreign missionaries and Brazil’s Indian Protection Service “devoured” a great number of Kopenawa’s relations. The elders “had nearly all disappeared,” Kopenawa observed. “We had become other people.”<sup>3</sup>

In the same way, this dissertation has aimed to illustrate what became of Hawaiians and their Island home after 1778. The saga of Hawaiian epidemics and population loss lasted well over a century. As late as the 1870s, King David Kalākaua implored the government of his Kingdom to “increase the nation/people” (*ho‘oulu lāhui*), and he himself pleaded with Native Hawaiians to bear offspring.

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<sup>1</sup> Samuel M. Kamakau, *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, rev. ed., (Honolulu, 1992), 172. The original passage by Kamakau was published in Hawaiian in *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa (The Independent Newspaper)*, 8 June 1867.

<sup>2</sup> The closing of a Hawaiian prayer. See Mary Kawena Pukui, *‘Ōlelo No‘eau: Hawaiian Proverbs and Poetical Sayings* (Honolulu, 1983).

<sup>3</sup> Davi Kopenawa and Bruce Albert, *The Falling Sky: Words of Yanomami Shaman*, trans. Nicholas Elliott and Alison Dundy (Cambridge, MA, 2013), 187.

The struggles of Native Hawaiian people today are not limited to population loss. Two hundred thirty-seven years after the arrival of Cook, people of Hawaiian descent suffer the worst health outcomes of any group on their native Islands. The reasons are complicated and extend beyond mere health. Native Hawaiians suffer poor social indicators across a broad spectrum, including education, employment, income, mental health and substance abuse, incarceration rates, and life expectancy. One in four Native Hawaiians on the Islands lives in poverty.<sup>4</sup> In this, they are not alone among Indigenous populations whose ancestral lands are now claimed by the United States.

In at least one way the problem of Native Hawaiian health is distinct relative to Indigenous populations elsewhere. Hawai‘i has long played host to the healthful rejuvenation and pleasure of foreigners. The Hawaiian Islands, that is, are no Pine Ridge or Papua New Guinea, though the contemporary health challenges of these far-flung peoples bear surprisingly much in common<sup>5</sup>; the Islands are instead one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world, drawing millions annually from North America, East Asia, and Europe.<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, an oblivious American press crowns Hawai‘i as the

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<sup>4</sup> Poverty and poor health among Indigenous populations in the American sphere is broadly recognized if little addressed by policymakers. For Hawaiian cases, see Kamehameha Schools, *Native Hawaiian Educational Assessment Update 2009: A Supplement to Ka Huaka‘i 2005* (Honolulu, 2009); David Stannard, “The Hawaiians: Health, Justice, and Sovereignty,” in *Asian Settler Colonialism: From Local Governance to the Habits of Everyday Life in Hawai‘i*, ed. Candace Fujikane and Jonathan Y. Okamura (Honolulu, 2008), 161–169; Healani Sonoda, “A Nation Incarcerated,” in *ibid.*, 99–115; S. M. Kana‘iaupuni, N. J. Maline, and K. Ishibashi, *Income and Poverty Among Native Hawaiians* (Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools, 2005); and Ishibashi, *Hawaiian Population Update*.

<sup>5</sup> For the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, see South Dakota Department of Health, *2009 South Dakota Vital Statistics Report: A State and County Comparison of Leading Health Indicators* (Pierre, SD, 2011), 180. For New Guinea and Melanesia, see Deborah Gewertz and Frederick Errington, *Cheap Meat: Flap Food Nations in the Pacific Islands* (Berkeley, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> Hawai‘i Tourism Authority 2012 Annual Visitor Research Report (Honolulu, 2013), 9.

healthiest U.S. State, with low rates of obesity, diabetes, and cardiac disease.<sup>7</sup> The fact that Hawai‘i’s Indigenous people cannot be counted among the Aloha State’s healthy residents only makes the problem of Hawaiian health all the more glaring and reprehensible.

Among the legacies of Hawai‘i’s epidemic century are harrowing health disparities that continue to plague Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders today.<sup>8</sup> In this respect, the *ma‘i malihini* are woven into Hawaiian culture, an inheritance from the ancestors. Meanwhile, indigenous peoples from the Amazon basin to the Indian Ocean continue to struggle with epidemiological intrusions not unlike those faced by Hawai‘i two centuries ago.<sup>9</sup> The questions addressed by this dissertation are thus not merely academic. The more we learn about the history of indigenous health and the profound, lasting consequences of colonialism, the greater (potentially) our ability to improve the lot of contemporary indigenous peoples.

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<sup>7</sup> United Health Foundation 2013 Annual Report, <http://www.americashealthrankings.org/rankings>. Native Hawaiian health outcomes apparently had little impact on the State’s broader average health.

<sup>8</sup> See Richard Kekuni Blaisdell, “The Health Status of Kanaka Maoli (Indigenous Hawaiians),” *Asian American and Pacific Islander Journal of Health* 1 (1993): 117–160; David B. Johnson, et al., “Papa Ola Lohaki Hawaiian Health Update: Mortality, Morbidity, and Behavioral Risks,” *Pacific Health Dialog* 5 (1998): 297–314; and Papa Ola Lōkahi: <http://www.papaolalokahi.org/>.

<sup>9</sup> E.g., the Jarawas of the Andaman Islands and the Yanomami peoples of the northern Amazon basin. See Sita Venkateswar, *Development and Ethnocide in the Andaman Islands* (Copenhagen, 2004); and A.C. Cabral, et al., “Increasing Incidence of Malaria in the Negro River Basin, Brazilian Amazon,” *Transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene* 104 (2010): 556–562.

| Appendix A. Population of the Hawaiian Islands, 1778-1872 |                      |                                             |                                           |                           |                  |                  |                   |                     |                   |                    |                       |                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Date                                                      | Native Hawaiians     | Part-Native Hawaiians ( <i>hapa haole</i> ) | Non-Hawaiian foreigners* ( <i>haole</i> ) | Hawai'i Island total pop. | Maui total pop.  | O'ahu total pop. | Kaua'i total pop. | Moloka'i total pop. | Lāna'i total pop. | Ni'ihau total pop. | Kaho'olawe total pop. | Sources                                                                                                                                         |
| 1778                                                      | 500,000+(a)          | 0                                           | 0                                         | 80,000 – 404,000          | 45,000 – 125,000 | 35,000 – 122,000 | 20,000 – 83,000   | 8,000 – 44,000      | 3,000 – 14,000    | 500 – 3,650        | ...                   | King (1778) and Kirch (2012) for total; Schmitt (1971) for individual islands (low), Stannard (1989) for individual islands (high)              |
| 1796                                                      | 270,000?             | <10?                                        | <10(b)                                    | ...                       | ...              | ...              | ...               | ...                 | ...               | ...                | ...                   | Adams (1925 [see Schmitt 1977]) for total; Archer (2015) for <i>hapa haole</i> and <i>haole</i>                                                 |
| 1805                                                      | 152,000 – 264,000(c) | ...                                         | <207(b)                                   | 100,000(c)                | 48,000(c)        | 40,000(c)        | 40,000(c)(f)      | 25,000(c)           | 7,000(c)          | 4,000(c)           | 160(c)                | Youngson via Freycinet (1819) = high; Schmitt (1971) = low; Youngson via Freycinet for individual islands; Archer (2015) for <i>haole</i>       |
| 1819                                                      | 145,000(d)           | ...                                         | 150                                       | ...                       | ...              | ...              | ...               | ...                 | ...               | ...                | ...                   | Adams (1925); Golovin (in Barratt, ed., 1987) for <i>haole</i>                                                                                  |
| 1823                                                      | 135,000 – 142,000(d) | ...                                         | 125–230                                   | 85,000                    | 20,000           | 20,000           | 10,000            | 3,5000              | 2,500             | 1,000              | 50                    | Ellis (1827) = high; Schmitt (1971) = low; Jarvis for individual islands; Stewart (1828) was told 150K in 1823; Stewart (1828) for <i>haole</i> |
| 1831-32(e)                                                | 124,000 – 130,000(d) | ...                                         | 400                                       | 46,000                    | 35,000           | 30,000           | 11,000            | 6,000               | 1,600             | 1,000              | 80                    | mission census (1831-32) = high; Adams (1925) = low; mission census for individual islands; Adams (1937) for <i>haole</i>                       |
| 1835-36                                                   | 108,000(d)           | ...                                         | 600                                       | 39,000                    | 24,000           | 28,000           | 9,000             | 6,000               | 1,200             | 993                | 80                    | mission census (1835-36); Adams (1937); mission census for individual islands; Adams (1937) for <i>haole</i>                                    |
| 1850                                                      | 84,165(d)            | 558                                         | 1,572                                     | 25,864                    | 21,047           | 25,440           | 6,956             | 3,540               | 604               | 714                | ...                   | mission census (1850), reproduced in Clark to Anderson, ABCFM Papers; Schmitt (1968, 1977); Adams (1937) for <i>haole</i>                       |
| 1853(f)                                                   | 70,036               | 983                                         | 2,119                                     | 24,450                    | 17,574           | 19,126           | 6,991             | 3,607               | 600               | 790                | ...                   | census data (Schmitt 1968, 1977)                                                                                                                |
| 1860                                                      | 65,647               | 1,337                                       | 2,716                                     | 21,481                    | 16,400           | 21,275           | 6,487             | 2,864               | 646               | 647                | ...                   | census data (Schmitt 1968, 1977)                                                                                                                |

| Date                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Native Hawaiians | Part-Native Hawaiians ( <i>hapa haole</i> ) | Non-Hawaiian foreigners* ( <i>haole</i> ) | Hawai'i Island total pop. | O'ahu total pop. | Kaua'i total pop. | Moloka'i total pop. | Lāna'i total pop. | Ni'ihau total pop. | Kaho'olawe total pop. | Sources                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1866                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 57,125           | 1,640                                       | 4,194                                     | 19,808                    | 19,799           | 6,299             | 2,299               | 394               | 325                | ...                   | census data (Schmitt 1968, 1977) |
| 1872                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 49,044           | 2,487                                       | 4,517                                     | 16,001                    | 20,671           | 4,961             | 2,349               | 348               | 233                | ...                   | census data (Schmitt 1968, 1977) |
| <p>• All nationalities exclusive of Hawaiian. Includes individuals born in Hawai'i to non-Hawaiian parents.</p> <p>(a) Earlier estimates include Dye's (1994) 110,000 to 150,000; A. F. Bushnell's (1993) 400,000 "or more"; Stannard's (1989) 800,000 to 1,000,000 "or more"; and Schmitt and colleagues' (1967-1978, 1989) 200,000 to 300,000.</p> <p>(b) Minimum two months in residence. (See Table 5 below.)</p> <p>(c) These figures, too high by Schmitt's estimation, came from an English carpenter in 1819 who seemed to Louis Claude de Saulces de Freycinet to "offer only rather arbitrary approximations" (Freycinet, 66). For Schmitt's lower estimates for the year 1800, see Schmitt (1971).</p> <p>(d) Estimate is total population (includes all ethnicities and nationalities).</p> <p>(e) Starting in 1831, census-takers broke the population down by sex, age, district/city, rural/urban, etc.</p> <p>(f) The Kingdom's first "official" census was taken in 1853. At this point, enumeration by racial group and national origin ("ethnic stock") began. See Schmitt (1968).</p> <p>(g) Urey Lisianski understood Kaunualii'i to be stating the population of Kaua'i as 30,000 in 1804, when the latter claimed he could raise 30,000 soldiers to defend against Kamehameha (Barratt, Russian Discovery of Hawai'i, 37).</p> |                  |                                             |                                           |                           |                  |                   |                     |                   |                    |                       |                                  |

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## Appendix B:

### GLOSSARY

(by English alphabetical order)

|                           |                                                                               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>‘ahu ‘ula:</b>         | royal cloak made of <b>kapa</b> and bird feathers.                            |
| <b>ahulau:</b>            | pestilence, epidemic (lit., “heaped-up bodies”)                               |
| <b>‘ahupua‘a:</b>         | pie-shaped district stretching from the coast to uplands (lit., “pig altar”). |
| <b>aikane, pl. aikāne</b> | male confidant, advisor, and sexual servant to a chief (lit., “coitus man”)   |
| <b>‘ai kapu:</b>          | eating taboo. (See <b>kapu</b> .)                                             |
| <b>‘āina:</b>             | land, including waterways, bays, and marine resources.                        |
| <b>‘ai noa:</b>           | free eating.                                                                  |
| <b>akua:</b>              | deity, god, spirit.                                                           |
| <b>ali‘i:</b>             | <i>s. and pl.</i> chief(ess).                                                 |
| <b>ali‘i ‘au moku:</b>    | district chief (lit., “chief who eats the [fruits of the] district”).         |
| <b>ali‘i nui:</b>         | high chief(ess).                                                              |
| <b>aloha:</b>             | love, affection, regard, greetings.                                           |
| <b>‘anā‘anā:</b>          | sorcery, divination.                                                          |
| <b>‘aumakua:</b>          | spirits of ancestors, personal/family gods.                                   |

|                            |                                                                                         |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ao:</b>                 | day, light, dawn; enlightened, knowledgeable                                            |
| <b>aupuni:</b>             | rule, order, organization (as of society)                                               |
| <b>‘awa:</b>               | kava ( <i>Piper methysticum</i> ).                                                      |
| <b>hānai:</b>              | adoption by a family member.                                                            |
| <b>hale:</b>               | hut, house, dwelling.                                                                   |
| <b>haole:</b>              | foreign, foreigner(s).                                                                  |
| <b>haumia:</b>             | uncleanliness, filth, defilement, contaminated (historically used for women in menses). |
| <b>heiau:</b>              | temple, altar.                                                                          |
| <b>hiapo:</b>              | first-born child.                                                                       |
| <b>ho‘okama:</b>           | foster/adoptive child.                                                                  |
| <b>ho‘okupu:</b>           | tribute, tax (lit., “to cause to grow”).                                                |
| <b>ho‘onoa:</b>            | to free from taboo. (See <b>noa</b> , <b>kapu</b> .)                                    |
| <b>ino:</b>                | bad, wicked, vile; sinful.                                                              |
| <b>inoa:</b>               | name.                                                                                   |
| <b>‘iwi:</b>               | bone(s).                                                                                |
| <b>kahuna, pl. kāhuna:</b> | expert, specialist, priest.                                                             |
| <b>kahuna ‘anā‘anā:</b>    | sorcerer.                                                                               |
| <b>kahuna ‘ea:</b>         | pediatrician; physician specializing in childhood ailments.                             |
| <b>kahuna hāhā:</b>        | specialist who diagnoses by laying hands on the body.                                   |

|                                |                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>kahuna ho‘ohapai keiki:</b> | specialist in inducing pregnancy.                                                                                                                      |
| <b>kahuna ho‘ohanai keiki:</b> | obstetrician; physician who delivered babies.                                                                                                          |
| <b>kahuna lā‘au lapa‘au:</b>   | herbalist; physician specializing in medicinal plants.                                                                                                 |
| <b>kahuna lapa‘au:</b>         | medical expert; physician.                                                                                                                             |
| <b>kahuna ‘ō‘ō:</b>            | surgeon; physician specializing in lancing, and in keeping open the fontanel of infants.                                                               |
| <b>kahuna pa‘ao‘ao:</b>        | pediatrician; physician specializing in childhood ailments.                                                                                            |
| <b>kalo:</b>                   | taro ( <i>Colocasia esculenta</i> ).                                                                                                                   |
| <b>kāma‘i:</b>                 | brothel, place of prostitution; to prostitute. (Also, <i>ho‘okamkama</i> , lit., “to cause children.”)                                                 |
| <b>kama‘āina:</b>              | long-time resident, native (lit., “children of the land”).                                                                                             |
| <b>kanaka:</b>                 | person, human; laborer, servant, commoner. (See also <b>maka‘āinana</b> .)                                                                             |
| <b>kanikau:</b>                | song of mourning, dirge.                                                                                                                               |
| <b>kaona:</b>                  | hidden or double meaning.                                                                                                                              |
| <b>kapa:</b>                   | Hawaiian cloth used for garments and sleeping mats, made from the bark of paper mulberry tree ( <i>Broussonetia papyrifera</i> ). (See <b>wauke</b> .) |
| <b>kapu:</b>                   | prohibition, embargo; law; to mark as sacred. (See <b>noa</b> , <b>ho‘onoa</b> .)                                                                      |
| <b>kapu moe:</b>               | prostration taboo.                                                                                                                                     |

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|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>kapu pule:</b>          | prayer taboo.                                                                                                         |
| <b>kaukau ali‘i:</b>       | low-ranked chief, servant to chief.                                                                                   |
| <b>kauā/kauwā:</b>         | slave, outcast, pariah, untouchable.                                                                                  |
| <b>ki‘i:</b>               | wooden idol(s).                                                                                                       |
| <b>kino:</b>               | human body, person, individual, self.                                                                                 |
| <b>kokoa:</b>              | help, care, aid (as for a person who is ill or frail).                                                                |
| <b>konohiki:</b>           | district chief.                                                                                                       |
| <b>kuhina nui:</b>         | royal office created by Kamehameha in 1819; principal advisor to the monarch (roughly, “great counselor”).            |
| <b>kupuna, pl. kūpuna:</b> | grandparent, elder, ancestor, forebearer.                                                                             |
| <b>lā‘au lapa‘au:</b>      | traditional (herbal) medicine                                                                                         |
| <b>lāhui:</b>              | nation, people; to unite.                                                                                             |
| <b>lama:</b>               | rum. (Also, <i>rama</i> .)                                                                                            |
| <b>leeward:</b>            | generally, the west– and south–facing regions of the islands, which tend to be sunny and dry. (See <b>windward</b> .) |
| <b>maika‘i:</b>            | good.                                                                                                                 |
| <b>ma‘i:</b>               | sick(ness), illness, disease.                                                                                         |
| <b>ma‘i malihini:</b>      | introduced (Old World) disease, typically infectious disease.                                                         |
| <b>ma‘i ‘ōku‘u:</b>        | gastrointestinal epidemic of 1804 (lit, “squatting sickness”).                                                        |

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|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>makahiki:</b>        | new year festival; twelfth month of Hawaiian calendar;<br>season of Lono.                                                         |
| <b>maka‘āinana:</b>     | commoner(s) (lit., “people who tend the land”). (See also <b>kanaka</b> .)                                                        |
| <b>makua hānai:</b>     | foster/adoptive parent.                                                                                                           |
| <b>malo:</b>            | loincloth.                                                                                                                        |
| <b>mana:</b>            | spiritual power.                                                                                                                  |
| <b>mana‘o:</b>          | thought, idea.                                                                                                                    |
| <b>manawa:</b>          | anterior fontanel (soft spot on the skull of newborns), one<br>of the body’s three <b>piko</b> (organs of power and procreation). |
| <b>mele:</b>            | song, poem.                                                                                                                       |
| <b>mō‘ī:</b>            | king, monarch.                                                                                                                    |
| <b>moku:</b>            | island; district. (Also, <i>mokupuni</i> ).                                                                                       |
| <b>mo‘olelo:</b>        | history, story, legend, narrative.                                                                                                |
| <b>mo‘o kū‘auhau:</b>   | genealogy.                                                                                                                        |
| <b>naha:</b>            | coupling of a chief with his half-sister (lit., “bent, curved<br>bowlegged”).                                                     |
| <b>nī‘aupi‘o:</b>       | offspring of sibling or half-sibling mating (lit., “bent<br>coconut midrib,” i.e., of the same stalk).                            |
| <b>noa:</b>             | free, unrestricted. (See <b>ho‘onoa</b> , <b>kapu</b> .)                                                                          |
| <b>‘oihana lapa‘au:</b> | medical profession.                                                                                                               |

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| <b>‘ōkolehao:</b>          | spirit distilled from the ti plant ( <i>Cordyline fruticosa</i> ).                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>‘ōlelo:</b>             | language, speech, word, statement.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>oli:</b>                | chant, often sacred in nature.                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>palapala:</b>           | reading and writing; book learning; missionary instruction                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>piko:</b>               | navel; umbilical cord/stump; also, genitals and crown of the head, the body’s three “organs” of power and procreation.<br><br>(See also <b>manawa</b> .)                                                               |
| <b>pi‘o:</b>               | coupling of full siblings (lit., “arched, bent, curved”).                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>pō:</b>                 | night, darkness, obscurity, chaos; realm of the gods; <i>fig.</i> , ignorant, sinful. (Also, time of, state of.)                                                                                                       |
| <b>poi:</b>                | taro mashed with water, sometimes fermented; principal foodstuff of Hawaiian people.                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>pono:</b>               | righteous; proper; harmonious; state of balance.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>wahine, pl. wāhine:</b> | woman; female; wife                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>wauke:</b>              | paper mulberry ( <i>Broussonetia papyrifera</i> ). (See <b>kapa</b> .)                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>windward:</b>           | generally, the north– and east–facing regions of the larger islands, which are cloudy and wet. The smaller islands generally lack windward climate features because of their lack of mountains. (See <b>leeward</b> .) |

Selected Sources for Appendix B

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**Appendix C:**  
**SELECTED PERSONS APPEARING IN THE TEXT**  
(alpha by surname)

**Rev. Richard Armstrong:** American missionary based in Honolulu; later, Kingdom of Hawai‘i’s Kingdom’s Minister of Education.

**Auna:** Tahitian Protestant missionary to Hawai‘i; personal teacher to **Ka‘ahumanu** in early 1820s.

**Hiram Bingham:** leader of the American Sandwich Islands Mission in 1820s, based at Honolulu.

**William Beale:** Hawaiian follower of the Sandwich Islands Mission in 1820s who succumbed to syphilis in 1824.

**Rev. Artemas Bishop:** American missionary based at Kailua-Kona, Hawai‘i Island.

**Dr. Abraham Blatchley** (also **Blatchely**): second ABCFM physician for the Sandwich Islands Mission, 1823–1826.

**Boki:** Maui high chief, brother of **William Pitt Kalanimoku**; name means “boss,” a common pet name for dogs; his given name (Kamā‘ule‘ule) translates as “the one who faints” (Pukui and Elbert, 1986).

**Dr. Alonzo Chapin:** American missionary physician based on Maui in 1830s.

**Isaac Davis:** British seaman taken captive along with **John Young** in 1790; allegedly died by poisoning in 1823.



**Rev. William Ellis:** British missionary to Tahiti and Hawai‘i in early 1820s.

**Levi (Liwai) Ha‘alelea:** advisor to **Kauikeaouli**; member of the *Hulumanu* (friends of the king)

**Hewahewa:** *kahuna* (priest) to the kings in the 1810s.

**Ulumāhehei Hoapili:** close advisor to **Kamehameha I**, royal governor of Maui, father of **Liliha**.

**(Thomas) Hopu:** one of the first Hawaiian converts to Christianity; lived in New England, 1809 to 1820; educated at Cornwall Foreign School in Connecticut.

**(George Prince) Humehume:** prince of Kaua‘i, traveled to New England; rebelled against Kingdom in 1820s; died of influenza.

**John Papa ‘Ī‘ī:** *kaukau ali‘i* attendant to **Liholiho** and **Kauikeaouli**; member of House of Nobles; Privy Councilor; writer.

**Inamo‘o:** regent of Kaua‘i in 1790s.

**Dr. Gerrit P. Judd:** American missionary physician and later a powerful official in the Hawaiian Kingdom.

**Ka‘ahumanu:** queen mother, later co-regent of Islands and *kuhina nui*; name means “the bird-feather cloak” (*‘ahu‘ula*).

**Kā‘eo** (also, **Kā‘eokūlani**): Maui high chief; later, husband of **Kamakāhelei** and high chief of Kaua‘i; *ka‘eo*, “strong, zealous; full, as of knowledge or power,” *kulani*, “in a chiefly manner.”

**Kalākua Kaheiheimālie:** queen consort/dowager, governor of Maui, founding member of the House of Nobles.

**Kahekili II:** *mō‘ī* of Maui, father of **Kalanikūpule**; name means “Kāne of the thunder.”

**Kahikona:** Tahitian Protestant missionary, personal teacher to chiefs **Keali‘iahonui** and **Kekau‘ōnohi**.

**Ka‘iana:** one of first Hawaiians (with **Winee**) to sail across Pacific on British ship, visiting both Macao and the Northwest Coast of North America; returned to Big Island circa 1790 as advisor to **Kamehameha**; killed at Battle of Nu‘uanu in 1795.

**Kaikio‘ewa:** royal governor of Kaua‘i (1825-39), guardian of **Kauikeaouli**.

**David Kalākaua:** king of Hawai‘i, 1874–91; name means “the day of battle.”

**Kalama** (also known as **Hakaleleponi Kapakuhaili**): queen consort/dowager, wife of **Kauikeaouli**.

**Kalanikūpule:** tubercular son of Kahekili II; name means “the heavenly prayer of Kū.”

**(William/Billy Pitt) Kalanimoku:** brother of **Boki** and co-regent of the Kingdom along with his cousins **Ka‘ahumanu** and later with **Kauikeaouli**; name means “the heavenly island/district.”

**Kalani‘ōpu‘u:** *mō‘ī* of Hawai‘i Island in 1778; name means “the whale-tooth-pendant royal/heavenly one.”

**Kamakahalei:** queen regnant of Kaua‘i and wife of Kā‘eo; name means “the eye/eyelid drawn down.”<sup>1</sup>

**Samuel Mānaiakalani Kamakau:** O‘ahu-born judge, representative, historian.

**Kamāmalu:** queen consort to Liholiho, with whom she died in London of measles; name means “the shade of ‘the lonely one,’” a reference to her father **Kamehameha I**.

**Kamehameha:** first *mō‘ī* of the unified Islands; name means “the lonely one”; his given name (Pai‘ea) means “hard-shelled crab.”

**Albert Kamehameha:** crown prince and son of **Alexander Liholiho** (Kamehameha IV) and **Queen Emma**; died in 1863 at age four.

**Kamanele:** daughter of **John Adams Kuakini** betrothed to **Kauikeaouli** in 1824 who died before the nuptials.

**Kanihonui:** well-liked chief who was executed by Kamehameha in 1809 after a sexual liaison with **Ka‘ahumanu**.

**Keolaloa Ka‘ōleiokū:** chief betrothed to **Nāhi‘ena’ena** in 1824 who died before the nuptials.

**Kaomi:** powerful Tahitian-Hawaiian advisor to Kauikeaouli in 1820s, who was also a **kahuna hāhā**.

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<sup>1</sup> Ectropion (eyelid drawn down) is uncommon among newborns. Perhaps the name has something to do with animal sacrifice; see Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary* (Honolulu, 1986), s.v. “maka helei”.

**Caesar Kapa‘akea:** House of Nobles, Privy Councilor; founder (with **Analea Keohokālōle**) of House of Kalākaua.

**Kapi‘olani:** Big Island chiefess who defied Pele in 1824; name means *ka pi‘o lani*, “the heavenly arch.”

**Lot/Lota Kapuāiwa:** Kamehameha V.

**Deborah Kapule:** wife of **Kaumuali‘i**, *mō‘ī* of Kaua‘i .

**Kauikeaouli:** Kamehameha III, son of **Kamehameha** and **Keōpūolani**; name means “placed in the dark clouds” (the remainder of his full name means “red trail or the roadway by which the god descends from heaven.”)

**Kaumuali‘i:** *mō‘ī* of Kaua‘i, 1790s–1824; took the name “King George” in early 1790s.

**Kawailepolepo:** Hawaiian follower of the Sandwich Islands Mission in the 1820s; died of syphilis; name means “the contaminated water.”

**(Aaron/Aarona) Keali‘iahonui:** royal family of Kaua‘i; founding member of House of Nobles (1842-48), Privy Councilor.

**Keawema‘uhili:** Big Island high chief; struggled against, and was killed by,

**Kamehameha** in 1793; *keawe*, “entangled, snarled, interwoven.”

**“George Cox” Ke‘eaumoku** (also, **Kahekili Ke‘eaumoku II**): royal governor of Maui, Moloka‘i, Lāna‘i, and Kaho‘olawe (1804–24); admiral of the king’s fleet; *ke‘eaumoku*, “island-climbing swimmer.”

**(Miriam) Kekāuluohi:** third *kuhina nui*, queen consort/dowager; name means “the vine growing (with) shoots” (*Kepano’s Combined Hawaiian Dictionary*, hereafter “CHD”).

**Kekau‘ōnohi:** fifth (and youngest) wife of **Liholiho**, and also his niece; later, royal governor of Kaua‘i and a member of the House of Nobles.

**Mataio Kekūanā‘ō:** *kaukau ali‘i* royal treasurer, royal governor of O‘ahu, fifth *kuhina nui*; name means “the standing projections” (CHD).

**Kekuaokalani:** Big Island chief entrusted by **Kamehameha** with the war god Kū in 1819; led rebel faction against **Ka‘ahumanu** and the monarchy after the fall of the kapu system.

**Analea Keohokālole:** member of House of Nobles, Privy Councilor; founder (with her cousin **Caesar Kapa‘akea**) of the House of Kalākaua.

**Keōpūolani:** queen mother; *nī‘aupi‘o*– and *naha*-ranking chiefess; name means “gathering of the clouds of heaven.”

**Kīna‘u:** second *kuhina nui* and close ally of the Sandwich Islands Mission; name means “stain, blemish, defect, minor flaw or imperfection, mistake.”

**Kolola:** chiefess in western Maui in 1790; widow of **Kalani‘ōpu‘u**, sister of **Kahekili II**.

**“John Adams” Kuakini:** advisor to **Kamehameha**; royal governor Big Island and later of O‘ahu.

**Kualelo:** Moloka‘i youth who sailed with James Colnett in 1788, returned with George Vancouver in 1792, settled on Big Island.

**Gideon Pele‘ioholani La‘anui:** Big Island ali‘i; co-founder (with **Theresa Owana Kaheihemalie Rives**) of the House of La‘anui.

**William Pitt Leleiohoku I:** husband of **Nāhi‘ena‘ena**.

**Likelike:** high chiefess and first wife of **William Pitt Kalanimoku**.

**Liholiho:** Kamehameha II, son of **Kamehameha** and **Keōpūolani**; name means “very hot, fiery, glowing (full name means “great chief with the burning back taboo”—i.e., he could not be approached from behind).

**Alexander Liholiho:** Kamehameha IV.

**Liliha:** wife of **Boki** and royal governor of O‘ahu (1829–31?); name means “heartsick; rich, as of food.”

**William Pitt Leleiohoku I:** son of Premier **William Pitt Kalanimoku**; royal governor of Big Island, 1844–46.

**Lili‘uokalani:** last queen of Hawaiian Kingdom; name means “burning (scorching, smarting) of the royal one,” apparently a reference to her aunt **Kīna‘u** whose eyes were sore when Lili‘uokalani was born.

**Kahalai‘a Luanu‘u:** royal governor of Kaua‘i, died of whooping cough in 1826.

**Makoa:** tour guide for London Missionary Society delegation in 1823–1824.

**Davida Malo:** court genealogist, writer.

**Francisco de Paula Marin:** Spanish-born interpreter and sometime physician to **Kamehameha**; later, a prominent ali‘i.

**Nāhi‘ena‘ena**: princess; daughter of **Kamehameha** and **Keōpūolani**; sister and lover of **Kauikeaouli**; name means “red-hot raging fires.”

**(Henry) ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia**: early convert to New England Protestantism, educated at Cornwall, CT, foreign school in 1810s, died of typhus there in 1819; *‘ōpūkaha‘ia*, “stomach cut open” (i.e., caesarean section).

**Oani**: priestess of Pele on the Big Island in 1823.

**‘Ōpūnui**: Kauai ali‘i in 1790s; name means “big stomach” (corpulent).

**Abner Kuho‘oheiheipahu Pākī**: Privy Councilor; Chamberlain to the King; Assistant Judge of Supreme Court; House of Nobles (1841-55).

**Pauahi** (also known as **Kalanipauahi**): queen consort/dowager; died of whooping cough in 1826.

**(Lydia) Nāmāhāna Pi‘ia**: queen dowager, royal governor of O‘ahu (1825–29?).

**Pua‘aiki** (also known as **Blind Bartimaeus**): court performer for **Liholiho**, later a devout follower the Sandwich Islands Mission and exemplar of Christian humility.

**Rev. William Richards**: member of second company of American missionaries; later, an influential politician and diplomat in Kingdom of Hawai‘i.

**Jean Baptiste Rives**: French sailor, secretary, physician, and advisor to **Kamehameha**, **Liholiho**, and **Ka‘ahumanu**.

**Theresa Owana Kaheihemalie Rives**: *hapa haole* (part-Hawaiian) co-founder (with **Gideon Pele‘ioholani La‘anui**) of the House of La‘anui.

**Rev. Charles S. Stewart:** member of third delegation of the Sandwich Islands Mission, and important chronicler of Hawaiian life in 1820s.

**Taua:** Tahitian Protestant missionary to Hawai'i in the 1820s, along with **Auna**.

**Toketa:** Tahitian Protestant missionary who served as teacher to **Gov. John Adams**

**Kuakini** on Big Island.

**Wahinepio** (also known as **Kahakuha'akoi, Kamo'onohu**): royal governor of Maui (1824–26?); name means “captive woman.”

**Winee:** one of first Hawaiians (with **Ka'iana**) to sail across Pacific on a British ship; visited the Northwest Coast and Macao; died aboard Capt. John Meares' *Iphigenia* off the Philippines; probably the English seamen's attempt at *wahine*, “woman”

**John Young:** British seaman taken captive along with **Isaac Davis** in 1790; became Hawaiian chief.