Title

Imposed Exoticism and Hawaiian Regalia: The Robert Dampier and Eugénie Le Brun Portraits of the Early Kamehameha Dynasty

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Publication Date

2023

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

Imposed Exoticism and Hawaiian Regalia:
The Robert Dampier and Eugénie Le Brun Portraits of the Early Kamehameha Dynasty

By

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THESIS

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

Art History

in the

OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

of the

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

DAVIS

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2023

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Abstract

The early years of the Kamehameha Dynasty (1795-1874) saw increased interaction between Hawai‘i and Europe as a by-product of rapid developments in commerce, diplomatic delegation, and most overtly, colonialism. These confrontations manifest in the visual culture created by Europeans, specifically through state portraiture. In an effort to challenge traditionally held perceptions of the history of the early nineteenth century Hawaiian Royal Family across disciplines, this thesis approaches a multi-faceted analysis of the portraits of King Kamehameha III (1814-1854) and Princess Nāhi‘ena‘ena (1815-1836) by English artist Robert Dampier (1800-1874) and situates the context of their creation against the backdrop of English imperial presence in Hawai‘i. Portraits of the former monarchs, painted by French artist Eugénie Le Brun (1797-1872), are presented in contrast to enforce the realities of stipulated conformity placed upon the Kamehameha's throughout their earliest rule. Utilizing these four portraits and the exoticized symbols of Hawaiian heritage included within them, a clear understanding of the active agenda emphasized within colonial myth-making is newly acknowledged.

Keywords: Hawai‘i, Kamehameha dynasty, Kingdom of Hawai‘i, Robert Dampier, Eugénie Le Brun, English colonization, colonial myth-making, visual indicators of royalty, state portraiture, cultural heritage

Acknowledgments

I extend my endless, overflowing gratitude to the following people who made this experience so beautiful:

First and foremost, to my committee chair, Dr. Michael Yonan. Thank you for your support from the very beginning and your belief in my research and vision. You fostered such an incredible academic environment where my ideas could flourish. Your careful consideration and wisdom helped me grow as an art historian and as a person. Thank you, for all that you have done for me, as well as for all of your students. It has been the greatest honor to learn from you and have you as a mentor.

My readers, Dr. Diana Strazdes and Dr. Katharine Burnett–thank you for your kind words and devotion to this project. I feel so fortunate to have had you both as instructors and as readers. I am so appreciative of your time, encouragement, and guidance.

My beloved cohort–Simone Gage, Xuying Liu, Hunter Kiley, Hannah Thompson, and Srđan Tunić. We always say it to each other, but it bears repeating: I am so lucky to have met you all. Your love, laughter, and friendship carried me through, and your incredible scholarship will always be my biggest inspiration.

To those who aided me in my research on-site in Honolulu in October of 2022, especially Kayla Annen of the Bishop Museum, Dr. Tory Laitila, and Vera Lee from the Honolulu Museum of Art. Thank you for your willingness to speak with me and for pointing me in the direction of scholarly material that shaped my thesis.

Thank you to Dr. Jennifer Wagelie. I will never forget our first conversation at the Templeton Colloquium when we were first introduced to each other and bonded over our shared research interests. I am beyond grateful for your knowledge and generosity.

To my family–my mom, stepdad, and brother. Thank you for being my cheerleaders. I am so grateful that you always encouraged me to follow my dreams. I would also like to thank the entirety of the Redwood SEEDS scholars, mentors, and educators, especially Beth Foraker and Abeer Humayun. The friendships I made through this program will last a lifetime.

To my husband, Jonathan Weldon. You cheered me on, read my work, and encouraged me to keep going, even when I doubted the outcome. Thank you for being with me every step of the way. I couldn't have done this without your love and encouragement.

Finally, to Peach and Lychee, who were my constant companions during the entirety of the research, writing, and editing process. Thank you for being my best friends.

Imposed Exoticism and Hawaiian Regalia: The Robert Dampier and Eugénie Le Brun Portraits of the Early Kamehameha Dynasty

Introduction

Portraiture is potent in its ability to recall moments of historical importance and those who enacted such changes. Serving much like a frozen moment in time, portraiture has the power to animate history, with an ability to conjure legacies, periods, and legends of the past and project them onto an individual who lived it. Those wealthy enough to commission a portrait of either themselves or their relatives were ensuring that their likeness would be remembered long after their death. Especially before the advent of photography, one of the only ways to achieve an everlasting record of yourself was to be painted by a portrait artist. As such, the history of royal portraiture looms large in numerous cultures over a wide span of time. This is no less true for the Royal Hawaiian family in the early nineteenth century, who were creating a visual standard of the strength of their political formation under an emerging, yet influential monarchical structure.

Yet, what more can be said about portraits, other than the fact that they are simply works that portray the likeness and character of powerful individuals? An equally pertinent question to consider is where they belong in the art historical canon. Such is the most pressing issue for works with colonial histories. The four works in this thesis are of the Kamehameha family of Hawai‘i but were painted by Europeans in a European manner. Do such works fall under a particular label or category ascribed to art closely intertwined with nationalism?[1] Can we consider these works to belong to the art historical category of their artists, as being British

[1] Sarah Thomas, “The Spectre of Empire in the British Art Museum.” (Museum History Journal, 6:1), 107.

or French? Or, is there an argument to be made that they fall into the category of Hawaiian art, as the subjects of the works would lend themselves to be? What if the work or multiple works cross the barrier between multiple cultural customs, historical realities, and differing perspectives–from the sitter to the artist? Applying unique perspectives of seeing and interpreting is necessary to garner higher levels of understanding, depending on the particulars of significance. As is the case with all objects and artworks made in colonial contexts, narratives that validate and confirm imperial legacies create geographical boundaries. Although art historians today might grapple with where to classify intercultural material culture, the fact remains that in their historical context, works that demonstrate the hybridization of ideals and aesthetics push beyond the borders of unyielding conventions. For nineteenth century Hawaiian monarchs, these concerns of representing oneself as well as one's Kingdom were equally at the forefront of consideration.

Two state portraits that currently reside in the collections of ʻIolani Palace in Honolulu, Hawaiʻi, are indicative of the dichotomy between the nineteenth century proliferation of colonial presence and the majesty of the House of Kamehameha. Painted by French artist Eugénie Le Brun, these paired portraits of King Kamehameha II and Queen Consort Kamāmalu are emblematic of a unique state of friction placed upon the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi during the early nineteenth century. They stand as a visual manifestation of the memory of a Hawaiʻi that was forced to contend with the colonial powers of Europe and the United States, at a time when establishing a diplomatic understanding between Europe and the Pacific was of the utmost importance. The works visually show the efforts the King and Queen took to present Hawaiʻi as the force that it was, while also representing the great lengths they took, both literally and figuratively, in order to meet English dominion head-on.

In understanding the nuances of the portraits, as well as acknowledging the pressures placed upon Hawai‘i as a nation, a clear image of the power and goals of the House of Kamehameha emerges. A later set of portraits of two young royals created by English artist Robert Dampier provide a window into a time of great change and uncertainty for Hawai‘i. Consequently, they have also come to symbolize the act of blending key royal Hawaiian visual indicators with the current conventions of the period. Robert Dampier's presence in Hawai‘i was predicated on the deaths of the previous ruling monarchs King Kamehameha II and Queen Kamāmalu, along with the rest of their entourage, who had ventured across the world to delegate their autonomy and position as a world power with the British. The existence of these portraits of King Kamehameha III and Princess Nāhi‘ena‘ena comes as a result of mounting imperial influence in the Pacific and the Kingdom of Hawai‘i, specifically.

These four royal portraits are situated as foils to one another, although at face value, they may appear to function in similar ways. Despite their visual differences, the works are united by their circumstance; that colonization is laid bare in layers of nuance, both on canvas and in corporeality. The Robert Dampier portraits of the young King Kamehameha III and his sister Nāhi‘ena‘ena represent continuous, concerted Eurocentric efforts to strip the Kingdom of Hawai‘i of legitimacy and autonomy. In contrast, the Le Brun portraits of former King Kamehameha II and Kamāmalu point to yet another facet of applied autonomy, or lack thereof, in portraiture. Such attempts to position a political power in its relatively novel stages of development served to satisfy the proliferation of colonial ideals of supremacy and subjugation. The visual form of portraiture aided these endeavors, wherein the works highlighted the cultural differences between Hawai‘i and Europe through the visual depictions of exoticized symbols of Hawaiian heritage, such as ‘ahu ‘ula, kāhili, and feather work.

In a post-contact Hawai‘i, the continued Euro-American presence in the Pacific since the late eighteenth century ensured that the ancient ways of conduct that once dictated Hawaiian existence were forever altered and disrupted. What seemed ripe for the taking became all too appealing to British sentimentality. To combat the looming force of this imperial agenda, ali‘i nui, or royal figures, sought and upheld amicable relationships with Europeans in order to mitigate potential skirmishes, annexations, or worst of all, the conquest of their culturally significant lands and life. Still though, and as is the case with many retellings of historical colonial relations, this begrudgingly cordial association would never satisfy perpetrators of colonialism, those being voyagers who would not halt in their imperialistic afflictions until the land had been claimed officially. Seeing such prosperous resources in one, relatively small area, combined with the problematic desire to "educate" and "reform" cultures that did not naturally model their existence off of Eurocentric convention, Europeans saw Hawai‘i as a place to own, manage, and claim. The consequences of this fragmented force of colonization manifest in a perturbed dichotomy between the colonial presence and the Kingdom of Hawai‘i, forced to reckon with imposing threats and unrest. When positioned as the prequel in a chronology of royal development in Hawai‘i that lasted up until the beginning of the twentieth century before annexation, this narrative contextualizes the embedding of imperial forces that sought to delegitimize indigenous power and autonomy. This reality manifests in the visual culture made in the period. This thesis examines the works by Le Brun and Dampier depicting the Kamehameha family in order to call attention to perceptions of inflicted power and indigeneity, as well as to critique Euro-American efforts to proselytize a burgeoning kingdom in the Pacific through royal portraiture.

An acknowledgment of previous scholarship concerning both Dampier's dual portraits and the Le Brun works must be made in order to situate and identify this argument within its scholarly context. The most exhaustive source on the portraits is, of course, Dampier's own journal written while he was in Hawai'i.[2] Serving as a provocative primary resource and one-sided account of the process by which the portraits came to be, Dampier's journal *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde* is deeply flawed for numerous reasons–the most obvious being the language, misconceptions, and racist rhetoric he inflicted on Hawaiian culture and people.[3] These ideals were extended not just to Kamehameha and Nāhi'ena'ena, but to Hawai'i and Hawaiians broadly. Recognizing problematic primary source material like the Dampier journal, and parsing through the artists' ethnographic assumptions in order to corroborate records of importance as they relate to the portraits, has served as an important exercise in the challenges of controversial source material and the level of scholarly research it entails.

The royal portraits, in a small number of cases, have been addressed and remarked on for their presentation of the splendor of nineteenth century Hawaiian feather work, or as biographical portrayals of the Hawaiian nobility. Great focus has been placed on describing the scope of the lives of the royal figures depicted on canvas, but more can be said about how the works of art represent questions and issues specific to the period in which they were created. David W. Forbes, in *Encounters with Paradise: Views of Hawai'i and Its People*, presents an excellent visual analysis, but does not touch on the nuances Dampier incorporated into both portraits, with a brief context of the emblematic state of affairs following the deaths

[2] This was a fashionable practice for voyagers of the Pacific, and like Dampier, many would take their diaries back to Europe and publish them for the public to receive.
[3] "Sandwich Islands" refers to the Hawaiian archipelago; this name was given to Hawai'i by English colonizers who had 'claimed' the islands in the name of the Fourth Earl of Sandwich, John Montagu.

of King Kamehameha II and Queen Consort Kamāmalu.[4] A short resource guide written by Alfred Frankenstein of the Oregon Historical Society chronicles the author's visit to ʻIolani Palace in 1963, where he conducted a visual analysis of the royal portraits and paired it with layers of historical context.[5] These resources were valuable in setting a baseline understanding of what has already been said about the works, and where scholarship could potentially go forward.

Especially with emphasis on decolonial theory and historiography, the ethnographic depictions of everyday culture, as well as works of or belonging to the Royal family have been most recently reevaluated. As is the case for other disciplines, scholarship is evolving, and once "indubitable" narratives are being challenged. Contemporary scholarship being published by interdisciplinary experts, cultural practitioners, and kānaka 'ōiwi, or native Hawaiians, is truly exciting–what once was the standard of authority in written works is being reframed to bolster inclusivity.[6] In the orbit of the topic of portraiture are specific sources, like Dr. Stacy Kamehiro's publications, on the lives of the royals during their rule, and how they have been perceived after their death.[7] Dr. Kamanamaikalani Beamer's 2014 publication titled *No Mākou ka Mana* powerfully highlights the layers of autonomy of key Hawaiian Royal figures.[8] Furthermore, Dr. Kailani Polzak's scholarship on European visual culture

[4] David Forbes, *Encounters with Paradise: Views of Hawaii and Its People, 1778-1941*. (Honolulu, Hawaiʻi: Honolulu Academy of Arts, 1992), 80.

[5] Frankenstein's publication was instrumental in uncovering information on the Le Brun portraits, as little to no other resources catalog the portraits themselves. These works are part of the collection at ʻIolani Palace, and hang in the front foyer amongst numerous other royal portraits.

[6] More specifically, Kānaka 'ōiwi, meaning individuals with native Hawaiian ancestry

[7] See Stacy Kamehiro, *The Arts of Kingship: Hawaiian Art and National Culture of the Kalākaua Era*, published in 2009; although centered on the last King of Hawaiʻi, David Kalākaua, whose rule falls well beyond the historical period of this paper, Dr. Kamehiro's expertise on the nuances of Royal Hawaiian politics has been invaluable.

[8] Dr. Beamer's publication was indispensable in understanding the political structure of the monarchy throughout its history, as well as highlighted primary source documents that validates the methods the aliʻi co-

concerned with racial difference in Oceania–particularly Hawai‘i–has been influential in shaping discourse on colonial collecting and intercultural myth-making in the Pacific.[9] Sources like these lay the groundwork for an understanding of the policy, personality, and reception of the Royal family.

A host of scholarly dialogue on the visual indicators of the tradition of Hawaiian feather work has been impactful for the field.[10] Due to the nature of the materiality of the Hawaiian regalia, scholarship has benefited from the perspective of ornithologists who have lent their understanding of endemic Hawaiian bird species, whose feathers are present in the feather cloaks, kāhili, and other garments in question. What has been stated about the pā‘ū, or feathered skirt of Nāhi‘ena‘ena, has been comprehensively covered in “The Feather Skirt of Nāhi‘ena‘ena: An Innovation in Post-Contract Hawaiian Art”.[11] An exquisite example of meticulous craftsmanship, the pā‘ū is relevant to this paper due in part to the connection of Princess Nāhi‘ena‘ena, but also as a case study in traditional and gendered Hawaiian conventions of dress.

Although there is great work being done currently concerning images of members of the nobility and the clothing they wore, the portraits presented in this thesis have been neglected or discussed only peripherally. Arguments and interpretations that lie beyond visual analysis have been minimally addressed, despite the fact that they warrant careful

opted to protect and ensure Hawaiian agency against Western forces. His emphasis on ‘ōiwi voices in scholarship has been so powerful in shaping the author’s approach.

[9] See Kailani Polzak, *Inscribed Distances: Picturing Human Difference and Scientific Discovery Between Europe and Oceania, 1768-1822,* published in 2017. Dr. Polzak’s extensive research on receptions of Louis Choris’ portrait of Kamehameha I has inspired the author immensely.

[10] For an excellent window into the mutli-faceted study of nā hulu ali‘i, see *Royal Hawaiian Featherwork: Nā Hulu Ali‘i*, an exhibition catalogue for a exhibit at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco in 2015; the source includes numerous essays and excerpts from scholars in the field.

[11] The work of Dr. John Charlot, author and scholar of Hawaiian and Polynesian religions, has been especially impactful in connecting ‘ahu ‘ula as well as traditions of royal Hawaiian featherwork broadly to the material legacy of the Royal Family.

examination. Perhaps, the innocuous exterior front that the portraits might portray to the world makes them more prone to being glossed over. A further probe into the early nineteenth century portraits of sitting kings and the royal women closest to them aids in a better contextualization of the progression of the Kingdom–politically and culturally. It is my hope that this thesis presents an alternative dialogue of the works and that by situating the four together, new connections and further consideration will be propagated. The continued salience of these figures and the roles they played in the narrative of Hawai‘i’s history tells us that the visual culture of their likeness possesses more than just staying power. Overall, this thesis seeks to bridge the gap between strict visual inspection and interpretive theorization of the Dampier and Le Brun portraits respectively, in order to emphasize the necessity of equal dissemination.

The House of Kamehameha and Hawai‘i Before the Monarchy

The early years of the Hawaiian monarchy are, to this day, seen as a time of crucial transition between the “old” Hawai‘i, and the “new” structure of leadership. This period leading up to and into the early years of the monarchy laid the groundwork for future political delegation, international relationships between Hawai‘i and Europe, and new modes of representation of cultural identity in an in-flux, modernizing world. As such, the portraits all rely heavily on the context in which they were created. In order to audit the four portraits in question, an acknowledgment of the period before their creation is necessary.

In May of 1795, the Kingdom of Hawai‘i was a sovereign nation that had only recently reorganized its central government to function as a monarchy. This, by proxy, did away with the ancient Hawaiian traditions of ali‘i nui, or high chiefs, who ruled over individual islands

in the archipelago.[12] Kamehameha I, or Kamehameha the Great, had a bloodline deeply entrenched in the legacy of the ruling class of Hawai‘i Island. Before becoming the ali‘i nui of the largest island in the Hawaiian archipelago, he served as a religious keeper, or kāhuna, to Kūkā‘ilimoku, the god of war.[13] This served to validate Kamehameha's divine authority and ability to rule with grace and was well received by the people of Hawai‘i Island. Backed by other ali‘i and kāhuna, Kamehameha sought to bring the other islands under a singular leader instead of various ali‘i as they had been for centuries. That ruler, of course, was himself. By 1795, Kamehameha had deployed his brigade of fierce warriors to the islands of Maui, Moloka‘i, Kaho‘olawe, and O‘ahu, where he conquered their ruling ali‘i by force.[14] Later, in 1810, a 'peaceful' negotiation with Kaumuali‘i, ali‘i of Kaua‘i and Ni‘ihau, meant that the rest of the archipelago was now under unified Hawaiian rule.[15] At last, his goal of a united Hawai‘i had come to fruition.

Kamehameha had been no stranger to European contact, even before he had set out to unite the Hawaiian Islands under his rule. In 1779, at just twenty-five years of age and well before the execution of his plan to unite the islands had even coalesced, Kamehameha had been present during Captain James Cook's landing in Kealakekua Bay on Hawai‘i Island in 1779.[16] This encounter between the two men had occurred just a month before Cook would

[12] Stacy Kamehiro, *The Arts of Kingship: Hawaiian Art and National Culture of the Kalākaua Era*. (Honolulu, Hawai‘i: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2009), 3.
[13] Paul D'Arcy, *Transforming Hawai'i*. (ANU Press, 2018), 50.
[14] Kamehiro, *The Arts of Kingship: Hawaiian Art and National Culture of the Kalākaua Era*, 3-4.
[15] The word 'peaceful' is presented in singular quotations here to emphasize the contentious assessment of the historical events of Kaua‘i's induction into the Hawaiian Kingdom under Kamehameha. Although Kaua‘i had been occupied after negotiation and not by militaristic force like the other islands, ali‘i Kaumuali‘i's position as a vassal to Kamehameha I is often misinterpreted as ineptitude in the face of danger, or that Kaua‘i had submitted willingly to Kamehameha's army. This couldn't be further from the truth, and the legacy of Kaumuali‘i's prowess and willingness to protect his people from bloodshed is remembered and celebrated on Kaua‘i to this day.
[16] D'Arcy, *Transforming Hawai'i*, 1.

be killed by a crowd in Kealakekua Bay, after the crew of Cook's ship the *HMS Resolution* had attempted to abduct the ruling aliʻi nui and uncle to Kamehameha, Kalaniʻōpuʻu, and take him as a hostage aboard their vessel.[17] Tensions between the English and the people of Hawaiʻi Island were already high, seeing that a few weeks prior, Cook had been caught ordering the desecration of a burial mound for deceased aliʻi by removing the wood structure that sat atop the site, in order to collect wood for the ship.[18] Although it is thought that Kamehameha did not have direct involvement with the infamous skirmish in the bay where Cook, his crew, and several Hawaiian warriors died on February 14, 1779, that initial meeting he had with Cook a month prior solidified Kamehameha's acute awareness of the palpable threat of Western colonial presence.

During his rule as the first King of Hawaiʻi, Kamehameha engaged in a cultural dialogue between the increasingly frequent presence of European and American voyagers, tradesmen, and missionaries. He was directly responding to a growing and continual presence of English colonial entities in Hawaiʻi, and he believed it best to strengthen the core of his nation with centralized governmental protections that he himself had established.[19] What he knew of European politics came from the conversations he engaged in with the colonial forces, and in his efforts to establish a firm footing for his people, he found it necessary to emulate the structure of monarchical rule, like that of England.[20] He held the belief that in order to protect the natural resources and cultural heritage of the Hawaiian Islands, the Kingdom would have to meet the English seat of power with the exact same level of energy,

[17] John McAleer and Nigel Rigby, *Captain Cook and the Pacific: Art, Exploration and Empire.* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 201.
[18] McAleer and Rigby, *Captain Cook and the Pacific: Art, Exploration and Empire*, 60.
[19] Jennifer Thigpen, *Island Queens and Mission Wives : How Gender and Empire Remade Hawai'i's Pacific World*. (Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 11.
[20] D'Arcy, *Transforming Hawai'i*, 186.

power, and prestige in order to be taken seriously on the world stage.[21] Without compromising visual indicators of the rich Hawaiian culture, Kamehameha entertained foreign dignitaries from Britain, France, Russia, and beyond on Hawaiian soil.[22]

Under Kamehameha and his descendants, the Hawaiian nobility worked to bridge the divide between Hawai‘i and the West. One such monarch who truly capitalized on this emphasis on relationship delegation was Kamehameha II, son of Kamehameha, who became King of the Hawaiian Islands in the spring of 1819, upon his father's death.[23] Referred also by his birth name Liholiho meaning "Royal Hawk" in ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i, Kamehameha II had stood in the shadow of his father, and as such, prioritized executing the goals of guarded openness that Kamehameha I had worked to establish before him.[24] Unlike his father, Liholiho, despite the wishes of his royal council, wished to make a journey across the ocean to visit King George IV of England.[25] He was of the belief that in order to position Hawai‘i as a nation in congruence with the powers of Europe and the Americas, the English king had to be shown the ways in which Hawai‘i and her royal family had modernized with Western customs and stature. As a byproduct, a new element to the relationship between Hawai‘i and European nations would prosper. In October of 1823, Liholiho called a council meeting in Lāhainā, Maui, urging his supporters to stand in solidarity with his decision to venture to England.[26] To further convince the skeptical council, made out of kāhuna of neighboring islands, Liholiho expressed that arrangements were already in place for the journey, as

[21] D'Arcy, *Transforming Hawai‘i*, 200.
[22] Thigpen, *Island Queens and Mission Wives: How Gender and Empire Remade Hawai‘i's Pacific World*, 10.
[23] Lorenz Gonschor, Kieko Matteson, and Anand A. Yang, *A Power in the World: The Hawaiian Kingdom in Oceania.* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2019), 24.
[24] Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Hawaii: the Past, Present, and Future of Its Island: an Historic Account of the Sandwich Islands of Polynesia.* (London: Routledge, 2009), 186.
[25] Walter Judd, *Hawai‘i Joins the World*. (Honolulu: Mutual Publishing, 1998), 31.
[26] Judd, *Hawai‘i Joins the World,* 31.

American whaler Captain Valentine Starbuck, who had been in the Hawaiian Islands in between his route around the Pacific in search of whale migration routes, had volunteered to take Liholiho and his entourage to England on his ship the *L'Aigle* at no cost to the King.[27] On November 27th, 1823, the ship left Honolulu Harbor with Kamehameha II, Queen Consort Kamāmalu, Boki who was the governor of Oʻahu and a close confidant to the King, as well as the rest of the Hawaiian royal party on board.[28]

Nearly six months later on May 17th, 1824, the *L'Aigle* arrived in Portsmouth, England.[29] As the crew disembarked on Western shores and sought to make connections with King George IV, it soon became clear that the arrival of the Royal Hawaiian entourage had not been properly received.[30] In haste, arrangements were made to accommodate Kamehameha and his party, and a royal guide by the name of Frederick Gerald Byng had been chosen to lead the entourage to various sites around the city of London.[31] Concurrently, Kamehameha was anxiously awaiting an appointment with King George. Treatment of the Hawaiian royals in England varied. Some accounts state that English people received them with joyous pretenses, although the earliest media coverage of their trip refuted this reception. Even still, a particular haughtiness disguised as general interest followed the group like a dark cloud. Walter Judd, a twentieth century historian of Hawaiian history, wrote of their recognition as a "...strong English curiosity, mostly snobbish and cruel, to see these savages

[27] Judd, *Hawaiʻi Joins the World,* 32.
[28] Kamanamaikalani Beamer, *No Mākou Ka Mana: Liberating the Nation*. (Honolulu, Hawaiʻi: Kamehameha Publishing, 2014), 91.
[29] Judd, *Hawaiʻi Joins the World*, 34.
[30] Various Authors, *Royal Hawaiian Featherwork : Nā Hulu Aliʻi.* (San Francisco, California: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 2015), 16.
[31] Various Authors, *Royal Hawaiian Featherwork : Nā Hulu Aliʻi*, 16.

from almost halfway around the world."[32] Emphasis was placed on the exhibition of their arrival and carried on throughout the duration of their visit.

The anomaly of public spectacle entranced the English, creating an overarching sense of dismissal and facetious pretension as the Royals awaited council with the King. During their visit, a barrage of conflicting opinion pieces were published, particularly by the *London Times*. One such issue, dated from May 19, 1824, stated: "The *Eagle [L'Aigle]*, Captain Starbuck, arrived at Portsmouth from Rio de Janeiro, has brought to this country the "King and Queen" of the Sandwich Islands. Their Majesties' chief object in making this very long voyage, so unusual with crowned heads, is said to be that of putting the islands under the protection of Great Britain…".[33] Of the Hawaiian entourage's dress and appearance, the Times also recorded that:

> "...the ladies were dressed in loose *robes de chambre*, of straw colour tied with rose-colored strings, and on their heads they wore turbans of feathers of scarlet, blue, and yellow. The two males [Kamehameha and Boki] appeared in European costume, wearing large black coats, silk stockings, and shoes. These islanders are of a very large size…the whole party are of the darkest copper colour, very nearly approaching to black. The King's name is Riho Riho [sic], but his assumed regal name is Tamehameho [sic]; and Wahoo [sic], one of the central islands, is his residence."[34]

An assault of ethnographic evaluations of visual differences between the English and the Hawaiian visitors, such as the one just presented, appeared in the press in droves. Yet, the longer their visit lasted, the more censored and 'complimentary' the coverage appeared. On

[32] Judd, *Hawai'i Joins the World*, 36.
[33] Alfred Frankenstein and the Oregon Historical Society, *The Royal Visitors*. (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1963), 7.
[34] Frankenstein, *The Royal Visitors*, 7.

May 25, the *Times* once again published comments on the novelty of the Royal visit: "His Majesty is of very gentlemanly appearance, and but for the darkness of his complexion might pass for an Englishman, have in every respect adopted our costume. The Queen…with the exception of her headdress, which is very plain, has she, like her Royal Husband, conformed in a great degree to the English mode of dress."[35] Just five days before, the very same publication had slandered Kamāmalu for her appearance, gait, and skin, yet the shift in coverage is indicative of the English media catching on to the importance of currying favor with the Royals. Important to note is the focus on the Westernization of Kamehameha's dress, and how it was of particular interest that Queen Kamāmalu had incorporated native Hawaiian headwear constructed with feather work with her English-style dress. The European hyper-fixation of cultural differences between these supposed dueling conventions of garb existed before–and naturally would continue–long after this visit.

Unfortunately, the meeting with King George that Kamehameha so desperately wanted would never come to fruition. By the time King George had slated a meeting with Kamehameha on June 21st, nearly a month had passed since their arrival in England. Illness struck the Hawaiian party, and both Liholiho and Kamāmalu contracted measles, to which they had no natural immunity. As the sickness spread throughout the Hawaiian entourage, all meetings were halted. Kamāmalu succumbed to the measles on July 8th, with King Kamehameha II following her on July 14th.[36] Three days later, the entirety of the Hawaiian party had either contracted the sickness or had already died due to their condition.[37] Thus, the fateful attempt to garner imperial approval had miserably failed.

[35] Frankenstein, *The Royal Visitors*, 9.
[36] Beamer, *No Mākou Ka Mana: Liberating the Nation*, 93.
[37] Judd, *Hawai'i Joins the World,* 36.

The Eugénie Le Brun Portraits of Kamehameha II and Queen Consort Kamāmalu

The record of Kamehameha and Kamāmalu's experience in England speaks to the earliest reception of the Hawaiian Royal Family abroad. The undertaking of venturing to England for the sake of forming a political alliance is marked as one of Kamehameha II's most noteworthy feats. Given the circumstances and unfortunate outcome of this venture, the portraits made in their likeness represent this turning point in the history of the Hawaiian monarchy. French artist Eugénie Le Brun represented the King and Queen on canvas, in accordance with their wishes to be depicted in European fashion. This defied the period perceptions of what non-Western cultures looked like, in accordance with Enlightenment-era theories of noble savagery. This instance of the disruption of standard beliefs in human difference inadvertently went on to impact later examples of Hawaiian state portraiture.

When Liholiho and Kamāmalu had first arrived in England, they participated in numerous royal dignitary activities in and around London, including having their likeness preserved for the purpose of commissioned works that would later follow them back to Hawai'i. It was during the days in the interim while awaiting notification that the English King was ready to receive Kamehameha, that he and Queen Kamāmalu sat for English artist John Hayter for a lithographic sketch.[38] The sketches would be later used to create oil portraits, made by French artist Eugénie Le Brun. Le Brun was the niece and pupil of the well-known artist Élisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun, who directly worked with the drawings of Hayter in France.[39] Le Brun, who later was known under her married name, Tripier Le Franc,

[38] According to Hawai'i State Archives, Hayter sketched on stone from life, and prints were made by Charles Hullmandel (1789-1850) in June of 1824.
[39] Frankenstein, *The Royal Visitors*, 18-19.

had been relatively well known in France both for her status as a student of her aunt, but also for her skill as a portraitist of a wide range of subjects. The body of her work, as well as the Royal portraits at the center of this analysis, reflects a keen eye for muted pageantry. The simplicity of her color palette contrasted with the regal prowess of her subjects makes for an excellent style for royal portraits, in particular. She had been recognized for her achievements in painting from an early age, having exhibited at the Paris Salon at the age of fourteen.[40] By the age of nineteen, she was well on her way to becoming an esteemed artist in Paris, and it was at this same age that she is speculated to have started work on the Kamehameha and Kamāmalu portraits, a short while after the deaths of her royal subjects.

Key information on these portraits has been subject to mislabeling and misunderstandings. General inquiry into the works will lead readers to a 'Eugene' Le Brun–a misgendered misspelling of Eugénie's first name.[41] Thus over time, Eugénie became the fabricated 'Eugene'–and would have remained so, if not for careful observation and extensive research of what little remains concerning the portraits in the Hawai'i State Archives, adjacent to the 'Iolani Palace. This misunderstanding was perpetuated by a shoddy conservation project, wherein an unknown conservator had painted over the already faintly inscribed signature.[42] We know that Eugénie Le Brun had to have been the true painter of the works, as undated photographs of the paired portraits exist in the Hawai'i State Archives. These photographs were able to penetrate through the coats of paint, revealing the unmistakable

[40] Frankenstein, *The Royal Visitors*, 6.
[41] Surface level internet search results, including Wiki Media, not only yield the attributed 'Eugene', but explicitly refer to this Eugene Le Brun with masculine pronouns, aiding in the perpetuation of the confusion. A goal of the author is to rectify this information by getting in contact with the hosts of these first search results.
[42] It should be noted that the idea of someone having intentionally covered the signature cannot be altogether ruled out; though whether by accident or on purpose, the signatures on the oils certainly could not be seen by the naked eye.

signature of Le Brun, corroborated by the rest of her oeuvre created before she took her married name.[43] My reattribution to Le Brun is vitally important, especially when considering the colonial contexts of the works themselves. It is important to note that in their period, credit had been given to Le Brun, but with the passing of two centuries, this designation had been mismanaged. My research sought the proper ascription in order to situate her name in conversation with works that are seemingly anomalous in her oeuvre. Just as well, the implications of the artist's limited exposure to the Hawaiian monarchs and how, by proxy, she would have acquired the opportunity to accept this commission, is called into question.

How Eugénie Le Brun might have encountered the Hayter lithographs is unclear, although the answers might be lost to time without the primary documentation of correspondence between her and an unknown patron. Scholar Alfred V. Frankenstein points to the possibility that Le Brun might have been familiar with the portraits of Kamehameha and Kamāmalu through mutual acquaintances; Jean Rives, a French citizen who served as foreign secretary and interpreter between France and Hawai'i, might have taken copies of the Hayter lithographs to Paris and commissioned the images from Le Brun.[44] This might very well be a coincidence. What is concretely known is that the portraits were brought to Hawai'i very soon after their completion and have remained there since. A letter concerning the portraits written by the British consul to Hawai'i in 1825 sheds a fraction of light on the journey they took across the world:

> "'During the residence of the Sandwich Islanders in this country, portraits were painted of the late King and Queen of the Sandwich Islands, and of their principal attendants, at the desire of Governor Boki. It appears that there were some difficulties

[43] Frankenstein, *The Royal Visitors*, 18
[44] Frankenstein, *The Royal Visitors*, 20.

> respecting the delivery of these portraits, at the time of the departure of these Islanders from this country, which, being known to His Majesty's Government, they immediately removed, by directing the purchase of the portraits in question. These portraits will be forwarded to your care on board His Majesty's Ship Blossom….signed Joseph Planta Jr.'"[45]

This letter from England arrived in Hawai'i nearly a year later in 1826, followed by the packaged portraits. Upon their arrival, the oil paintings were placed in gilded frames and hung aloft in the Throne Room of 'Iolani Palace as a mark of respect for the departed former King and Queen.

The portraits are in a standard format, conforming to the nineteenth century European convention of court portraiture (fig. 1 & 2). Each sitter is positioned so that their visage is shown cut off just before the hips, angled to a slight tilt that provokes a sense of a view in profile. The shoulders are presented as broad across the canvas, leaving a bit of background that emerges from beside them. A source of light emanates from directly behind the sitter, which accomplishes a cast glow or halo-like appearance around the neck and heads of the subjects. A neutral wash of shades of grey and brown in a multitude of hues provokes a general sense of an effort to evoke a backdrop cloth, ideal for matching the setting of wherever the portraits would later be intended to be viewed on a wall. Portraiture like this, and those that made their living painting in this style, were extremely important in instances where one might want to spread their likeness amongst circles of world leaders as well as their own constituents back home. Portrait sharing was vital in the age before the invention of photography, as it was

[45] Frankenstein, *The Royal Visitors*, 16.

a way for people in various positions of power to share with the world their appearance, wealth, and status.

The most striking element of these portraits is the style of dress that Kamehameha and Kamāmalu are depicted in. Where previous paintings and drawings of native Hawaiians were nearly exclusively exoticized, "primitive," and backward with the tropes of native "nakedness," these portraits situated the leaders of the new monarchy against the backdrop of the Euro-American convention. Most prolific in the eighteenth century, when European voyages of discovery ethnographically "documented" the Pacific in the name of science, the prior conventions were all Westerners had ever been exposed to.[46] Cognizant of these associations and firm in his stance to dismantle them, Kamehameha II and his wife came to their studio sitting dressed in the height of nineteenth century English fashion of the period. Kamehameha is seen donned in a black-breasted coat with an upturned collar and dark cravat and with hair coiffed to perfection, while the Queen Kamāmalu sits in the billows of her immaculately frilled white gown, complete with a waist sash and translucent arm sleeves. Adorning her head rests a massive plumed fascinator that cascades down behind her, covering the majority of her hair. She wears dangling gold earrings in leaf motifs, completing her elegant and extravagant look.

The importance of the Royals wearing European dress cannot be overstated. It was an intentional choice to do so, as a means to tacitly express to the world that Hawai‘i as a nation wished to equate itself to the powerhouse of English rule. Not only were they wealthy enough to wear such frocks, but they also held the sensibilities of English society, and therefore, wished to conform to their style and culture. Liholiho was extremely cognizant of this political

[46] Maile Arvin, *Possessing Polynesians: the Science of Settler Colonial Whiteness in Hawai'i and Oceania.* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), 46.

move, and as such, his reign overall is historically remembered as a time in which Hawaiian society leaned into Western technologies, aesthetics, and structures. This is not to say that Liholiho had done away with the rich traditions of native Hawaiian culture; rather, he saw the political implications of marketing the Hawaiian Islands as relatable to Western sensibilities in order to best protect the natural resources of his home and that of his people.

Stemming from the perceived moral dilemma of the English perception that only religious salvation could deliver non-European cultures from damnation, the treatment of the Pacific–particularly, Hawai‘i–was no stranger to such inflictions of racial superiority. Many Westerners were of the mindset that they owed it to those who lived in supposed sin, hinged on their ‘primitive’ practices, to eradicate their customs and social structures before reestablishing new ones in the image of Europe.[47] This included Christian religious beliefs, of which American Protestant missionaries were deployed to inflict their ‘superior’ beliefs. At this time in the early nineteenth century, Hawai‘i was acutely familiar with missionaries, although their proliferation would grow more intense in the decades of the 1830s and 1840s.

Yet even when British standards had subsequently colonized a new dominion of the Empire, some Western social observers believed that ‘primitive’ peoples could only mimic inflicted sensibilities, and never fully embrace them.[48] Concepts on degrees of ‘savagery’ filled the discourse on how to approach degrees of what was referred to as ‘noble savagery’–that which referred to people or cultures that would assimilate or adopt Western ideals, yet still retained elements of perceived ‘primitive’ ethnic qualities.[49] These theories were ascribed

[47] Patrick Brantlinger, *Taming Cannibals: Race and the Victorians*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 63.
[48] Brantlinger, *Taming Cannibals: Race and the Victorians*, 65.
[49] Paul Arthur, “Finding Paradise and Utopia in the Pacific.” In Virtual Voyages, 79–106. (London: Anthem Press, 2010), 79.

to the likes of Kamehameha II and Kamāmalu, as many saw them as simply just 'natives' from an untouched paradise, dressed in the fashions of English society. The assertion that they were inferior in all capacities, despite their concerted efforts to entertain and to some degree, even rub shoulders with the ranks of English political leaders, was all for naught. In order to be accepted without any conditions, the Hawaiian rulers would have had to become something they were not. What Kamehameha I and then later, Kamehameha II was trying to accomplish was a way for Hawai'i to exist in conjunction with colonial forces–not directly combative with the distribution of power, yet not in a state of assimilation, either. Still holding true to the cultural customs of Hawaiian society, a certain level of stress was placed on adopting customs associated with England in order to situate themselves as a powerful force to contend with.

The Voyage of the *HMS Blonde*, 1824

Situating the circumstance of further English presence in Hawai'i after the deaths of the former monarchs is needed in order to understand the significance of visual culture that emerges after this moment. It must be acknowledged that had it not been for the deaths of Kamehameha and Kamāmalu, the following two portraits in question would not exist. By recognizing this sequence of events that led to the *HMS Blonde's* expedition to Hawai'i, one can better understand the point of positioning the Le Brun portraits in comparison to future works, such as the Robert Dampier portraits of the succeeding monarch, King Kamehameha III and Princess Nāhi'ena'ena.

After the announcement of the deaths of Kamehameha II and Queen Kamāmalu, the perplexity of how to return their bodies to Hawai'i was soon broached. For the Royals to die

on foreign shores presented a host of impediments, with the foremost problem being the observation of the cultural interment rites of Hawaiian aliʻi, as well as heeding funerary protocol whilst the bodies were in England. The solution eventually coalesced when Lord George Anson Byron, a distant cousin of the Romantic poet Lord George Gordon Byron, assumed the role of the commander of the *HMS Blonde*, which was to be the ship that would take the royals back to Hawaiʻi as their final resting place.[50] On the 8th of September, 1824, the *Blonde* left Southeast London, aiming towards South America, where she was to eventually traverse around Cape Horn to reach the edge of the Pacific Ocean. Along the way and nearly three months after the departure, the *Blonde* stopped in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to refill supplies and drop off passengers. There, Lord Byron encountered Robert Dampier, an amateur English artist who had been living in Brazil.

Born in 1800 in Wiltshire, England, Robert Dampier came from a large, relatively well-to-do family of merchants and public officials in the county of Lincolnshire. Much of any information about Dampier's earlier years remain shrouded in mystery, including how he might have honed his artistic skills. In 1818, Dampier left England for Rio de Janeiro to serve as a clerk under the direction of his brother-in-law, William May.[51] Six years later, and at just twenty-four years old, his career rapidly shifted from his original focus, following Lord Byron's selection and insistence that he join his crew. Byron might have known of Dampier either by word of mouth, through mutual family acquaintances connected to the British Navy, or just by sheer coincidence.[52] Regardless, Dampier's skill in depicting landscape scenes

[50] George Anson Byron had only just assumed the title of Lord following the death of the more infamous Byron in April of 1824.
[51] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde*, ix.
[52] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde*, ix.

appealed to the captain, who wanted to bring back documentation of the Sandwich Islands on the return voyage to England.

When asked if Dampier would like to join the crew as the official artist on the voyage, the artist accepted and set off for the second half of the voyage. Customary for the time, Dampier kept a journal and recorded his experiences onboard the ship in great detail. As witnessed in his extensive writings, he appears to have had all freedom afforded to him in terms of what or whom he wished to capture.[53] Byron invited Dampier to accompany the principal English party to meetings with various high-ranking officials throughout the Hawaiian Islands that he would otherwise not be privy to.[54] Through this, Dampier was able to make connections that would ultimately be applicable to his sketches and oil paintings. He continued documenting his observations whilst in Honolulu and beyond. The words he wrote that documented his travels were far from unique, as the practice of journal-keeping would continue to be fashionable for voyagers of the Pacific. Like Dampier, many would take their diaries back to Europe and publish them for the public to receive.

More than six months later, the *Blonde* arrived in Honolulu on the island of O‘ahu on May 6, 1825. There it was greeted with a royal salute of fifteen cannon launches to welcome home the bodies of the deceased royals.[55] The royal funeral was held on May 11th. In conformity with Kamehameha II’s wishes, mourning and funerary protocol in English standards were enacted once the bodies had been deposited on Hawaiian shores. In 1819, Liholiho had controversially abolished the kapu system, or traditional Hawaiian taboo ordinances that dictated behaviors of women and men in both the common and the ali‘i

[53] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde*, viii.
[54] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde,* viii.
[55] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde*, 38.

classes.[56] Under the kapu, certain spaces, clothing, foods, funerary practices, and privileges that permeated all aspects of Hawaiian society were reserved and regulated depending on one's status, gender, and birthright. The official, legal abolishment of this ancient taboo system marked a departure from former customs and was a contended exertion of power. In spite of this, Liholiho's breaking of kapu had made certain that he and his Queen Consort would not be subject to traditional Hawaiian death rites, but rather, that their funeral would model that of an English royal funeral with the addition of symbols of the Royal Hawaiian standard. While in England, the King and Queen were deposited temporarily in St. Martin's Church for two months, while two coffins and a wax bust of Kamehameha were created in preparation for the voyage back to Hawai'i.[57] The extravagance of the British-funded mahogany-oak triple caskets and the stoic bust were of particular interest to the Hawaiian royal court upon their arrival in Honolulu. A lengthy history of English traditions concerning the creation of wax effigies for the deaths of Royal figures was reproduced for Kamehameha here, although the English tradition of wax busts had become a late practice after the seventeenth century.[58] The procession of the caskets from Honolulu Harbour to the mausoleum followed the detailed protocol of the English monarchy, including the order of procession, the decoration of the horse-drawn hearses, and the hymns read both in English and 'ōlelo Hawai'i.[59] As a consequence of Kamehameha's wishes, this marked a definitive turning point for royal death

[56] The concept of kapu and the kapu system functioned before Kamehameha II as an enforced code of conduct for all Hawaiians; many of these rules pertained to gender roles, religious doctrine, and political power. The breaking of kapu very often meant death for the malefactor. Kamehameha famously broke kapu and ended its enactment in 1819, when he ate with women in his court. Although the systematized execution of kapu ended during his rule, the ideology of kapu would continue to extend to protocol regarding regalia, including the reservation of certain garments and colors that were only to be worn by the ali'i.

[57] Ralph Thomas Kam, *Death Rites and Hawaiian Royalty: Funerary Practices in the Kamehameha and Kalākaua Dynasties, 1819-1953*. (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company Publishers, 2017), 32.

[58] Kam, *Death Rites and Hawaiian Royalty*, 33.

[59] Kam, *Death Rites and Hawaiian Royalty*, 33-34.

practices and assured the prevalence of Western death rites for years to come. The days of funerary mourning up until their burial at the Pohukaina reflected the collective sadness of the Hawaiian Kingdom.[60] Ceremonies of public remembrance proceeded for several days all the while Hawaiian councils were meeting in the interim to discuss the changing of the seat of power given the unfortunate circumstances.

The Robert Dampier Portraits of King Kamehameha III and Princess Nāhiʻenaʻena

Robert Dampier, having come to Hawaiʻi on the vessel carrying the bodies of the former royals, went on to position himself as an artist capable of documenting the Hawaiian Islands in both a naturalistic and ethnographic sense. His state portraits of Kamehameha III and Nāhiʻenaʻena were significant not just as a way to disseminate their likeness broadly, but as a representation of colonial propaganda. His written account of his time spent in the company of the Royal Family, and later, throughout various Hawaiian Islands, corroborates his held beliefs with the artistic methods he used to depict his subjects.

In Dampier's journal, he spoke of witnessing the funeral procession of King Kamehameha II and Queen Kamāmalu march down the main thoroughfare of Honolulu, where he gawked at such pomp and circumstance put on by the "simple" Islanders for their bygone rulers.[61] Still, though, he desired to capture the likeness of the young royal successors. He would soon make it his mission to establish any means to accomplish this task. "One or two days" after the funeral, Dampier approached Kamehameha III and Nāhiʻenaʻena with the

[60] Pohukaina, meaning Sacred Mound, was the initial repository for the bodies of Kamehameha II and Kamāmalu. This site was on the grounds of the future ʻIolani Palace. Later, their bodies were exhumed and interred at Mauna ʻAla, meaning "fragrant hills", which became the Royal Mausoleum of Hawaiʻi upon its completion in 1865.
[61] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde*, 38.

proposal of an official portrait session.[62] The choice to accept the offer was not for the royals to decide on their own–instead, each of their individual councils approved of Dampier's offer. In order to garner the attention needed to secure an official appointment with the Hawaiian nobility, Dampier expressed his intention to take the portraits back to England in order to show them to King George IV.[63] This never came to fruition. According to published journals kept by James Macrae, the chief botanist on the *HMS Blonde*, first encounters with the King and his sister went as follows:

> "'...the young King and his sister brought with us from the island of Mowee [sic] were seated on a shabby sofa placed crossways, having at the back of it several handsome large feather plumes of various colours, customary used by them on former times when at war or high festivals. The King was draped in a short, blue jacket with shirt and pantaloons, without any shoes or stockings and his sister in the mourning dress brought her by Madam Boki from England. Both looked to be of a delicate constitution and of rather dark complexion, full nostrils and large mouth, but had fine open countenances, with good eyes and teeth and not altogether wanting a sensibility of look that rendered them engaging.'"[64]

Already, their appearance and manner of dress was of scrutiny to the men who came to Hawai'i aboard the *Blonde*. Dampier's own account of his procurement of a portrait appointment speaks volumes. Of the Hawaiian nobility, he wrote: "These people are perfectly happy because their wants are very few."[65] In this statement, Dampier neglects the reality that

[62] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde,* 43.
[63] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde*, 43.
[64] James Macrae, edited by Brian Richardson, *The Journal of James Macrae: Botanist at the Sandwich Islands, 1825*. (Honolulu, Hawai'i: University of Hawai'i Press, 2019), 42.
[65] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde*, 47.

the Royals possessed great wealth and affluence, but that compared to European conventions, their lifestyle, wants, and desires of the Royals were fundamentally inferior in all respects; their "simplicity" can easily be interchangeable with their "noble savagery".

Once the portrait session had been scheduled, Dampier's dissatisfaction with the Hawaiian court was recorded in his journal. He made sure to scrutinize how the watchful royal attendants, or as Dampier recorded "...a parcel of dirt half-naked fellows…," doted on the King and Princess while simultaneously watching him paint, giving vocal feedback that irritated his senses.[66] Summed up in a colonial expression of superiority, he wrote: "I certainly did not anticipate that these savages would have given me so much trouble as they eventually did."[67] Furthermore, Dampier would lose his temper with both Kamehameha III and Nāhi'ena'ena when they showed up to the studio in English dress, going against what Dampier called "their country's costume".[68] Dampier's lengthy account for his irritation regarding this choice strikes the reader as particularly hypocritical—after having given so much thought to the perceived 'backwardness' of the Hawaiian people just moments before, Dampier's frustration at the idea that these young rulers would choose to be seen in the fashions of Western societies which they were pressured to wear to is painfully disrespectful. The idyllic, manufactured window into the Pacific that Dampier had wanted to achieve was eventually realized, as he insisted that they both wear the eye-catching and completely foreign royal Hawaiian feather cloaks that were sure to garner much attention from European viewers.

The portrait of Kamehameha is particularly alluring (Fig. 3). With a provocatively subtle resistance in his expression, it draws the viewer in for a closer examination. A youthful

[66] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde*, 44.
[67] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde*, 43.
[68] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde*, 43.

nature is seen in the roundness of his cheeks and the softness of his eyes, which is then contrasted with the hard lines of his mouth and the powerful grip he has on the spear in his right hand. Dampier recorded that he applauded himself on capturing the likeness of his facial features true-to-life, but that the feather cloak operated as a way to cover Kamehameha's "cutaneous disorder" which affected his skin as a rash on his forearms, neck, and torso.[69] Dampier wrote that "...the Royal Youth is a common-looking little fellow, and his regal skin was very much disfigured by a certain cutaneous disorder, not at all suitable to his dignified situation."[70] Off in the distance behind the king is a view of the Honolulu Fort that at the time, was established as an outpost for Russian fur traders but had been occupied by the governor of Oʻahu, before being refurbished as a British naval fort in later years.[71] Although the Fort is certainly not the focal point of the portrait, appearing inconsequential amidst the natural splendor around it, the inclusion of several blurred flags of red and white between the tall palms references the Hawaiian flag, or perhaps an indiscernible English Union flag.[72] Over Kamehameha's left shoulder emerges shades of pink and blue, evoking a sense of a hopeful dawn in the otherwise cloudy sky. A narrow body of water snakes in between the land and expansive mountain range.[73] The leaves of a banana tree appear behind him, appearing as a symbolic division between Kamehameha and the world around him. The portrait acts as a synthesis of the portrayal of courtly likeness, alongside a window into the natural splendor of the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi.

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[69] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde*, 44.
[70] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde*, 36.
[71] Walter Judd, *Palaces and Forts of the Hawaiian Kingdom: From Thatch to American Florentine*. (Palo Alto, California: Pacific Books Publishers, 1975), 43.
[72] Fort Honolulu was also known as Fort Kekuanohu, meaning 'thorny-back' due to the appearance of the guns and cannons affixed to the exterior walls; other period documentation refers to it as Kepapu, or gun wall.
[73] The author assumes that this vantage point must be pointed to Mānoa Valley based on the location of Fort Kekuanohu, although the exact angle Dampier used as point of reference may be different or fabricated entirely.

Nāhi‘en‘ena’s portrait works in tandem with her brother’s, both reliant on the other to complete the whole (Fig. 4). At the time of the portrait, she would have been just shy of twelve years old, and already deeply afflicted with colonial and missionary influences. By Dampier’s standards, the “...little Princess sat uncommonly well.”[74] She had originally come to Dampier’s room in an English black silk dress which was eventually completely covered by the feather cloak draped around her.[75] Her wishes to be depicted in European women’s garb were ignored in favor of Dampier’s ‘artistic’ vision. Instead of a spear, she holds a kāhili wand, or royal scepter, plumed with brown feathers–what can be argued is a nod to her grief due to the recent passing of her family members.[76]

Kāhili came in all shapes and sizes and functioned as an essential part of Hawaiian nobility, symbolic of the long lines of ali‘i who had come before.[77] Used for multiple purposes, in a funerary context, they would be held by kāhili pallbearers as the procession of a royal burial took place.[78] Compared to feather cloaks which were exclusively created from endemic bird species with rich colors, kāhili were sometimes made from feathers of small birds with mottled-brown feathers, which would later be dyed with pigment in order to achieve the desired color.[79] Historically, the handles of the kāhili were whittled from the leg

[74] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde*, 47.
[75] Forbes, *Encounters with Paradise: Views of Hawaii and Its People,* 1778-1941, 81.
[76] Although kāhili did not take different visual forms for their intended contexts, and therefore, Nāhi‘ena‘ena’s kāhili cannot concretely be identified as either a funerary kāhili or as simply a symbol of the Royal Hawaiian standard, the consequences of Dampier’s arrival in Hawai‘i following the deaths of Liholiho and Kamāmalu might be read as such. In many ways, the inclusion of this kāhili stands as a visual demarcation of Hawaiian death reverence following the tragedy of these deaths in the Royal Family.
[77] Adrienne L. Kaeppler, *The Pacific Arts of Polynesia and Micronesia*. (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2008), 119.
[78] Various Authors, *Royal Hawaiian Featherwork : Nā Hulu Ali‘i*, 68.
[79] In many examples of kāhili made post-contact, domesticated birds non-native to Hawai‘i were used, such as geese, chickens, and ducks. See Roger G. Rose, Sheila Conant, and Eric P. Kjellgren, “Hawaiian Standing Kāhili in the Bishop Museum: An Ethnological and Biological Analysis,” (The Journal of the Polynesian Society 102, no. 3, 1993), 292.

or arm bones of island chiefs who had lost important battles–indicative of the legacy and power of victorious chiefs of the past.[80] Dampier wrote in his journal that he had inquired only a "day or two" after the funeral procession of Kamehameha II and Kamāmalu, indicating that the royal Hawaiian entourage would have certainly still been in deep mourning, thereby offering an explanation for the presence of kāhili in this portrait.[81] A feather lei crowns Nāhiʻenaʻena's head and native pandanus trees close her off from the serene landscape that sweeps out to the Pacific Ocean, beyond the structures that made up Lāhainā, Maui–the island where she spent most of her life.[82]

Aside from the aesthetic similitude between the two portraits, concerning differences, such as the natural settings of the portraits, point to deeper interpretations of the historical context from which they emerge. For example, the landscape backdrops between Nāhiʻenaʻena and Kamehameha's portraits point to the artist's interpretation of the sibling's gendered roles and expectations. Where Nāhiʻenaʻena is surrounded by the picturesque, 'feminine' world of domestic island life, Kamehameha stands in front of the Honolulu Fort and a fortified harbor. It appears that Dampier wished to associate the King with these structurally 'masculine' additions to the natural landscape, whereas Nāhiʻenaʻena's scene places her in the solitude of a village known for its missionary outposts aimed at converting native Hawaiian women of various social classes to Christianity, in particular. We are left to speculate how active Dampier was in positioning these gendered aberrations, or if this might

[80] Various Authors, *Royal Hawaiian Featherwork : Nā Hulu Aliʻi*, 70.
[81] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde*, 43.
[82] Author and historian Marjorie Sinclair makes this assertion, although it cannot be confirmed nor denied that Dampier was indeed depicting the village of Lāhainā. See Marjorie Sinclair, Nāhiʻenaʻena: Sacred Daughter of Hawaiʻi. (Honolulu, Hawaiʻi: University of Hawaiʻi Press, 1976), xiv.

just be the manifestation of period gender-specific beliefs and associations that he might have held.

Furthermore, the cloaks that both sitters wear can be analogized in order to highlight their divergences. Although Nāhiʻenaʻenaʻs cloak is at first glance, strikingly similar to her brothers, she wears an alternatively patterned cloak with yellow crescents cascading down her back.[83] The painting reflects Dampierʻs choice to subtly change the pattern of Nāhiʻenaʻenaʻs cloak to make hers appear slightly different from Kamehamehaʻs. According to Jean Charlotʻs publication on the pāʻū of Nāhiʻenaʻena, which mentions the Dampier portraits in passing, it had been documented that she had been insistent about wearing the cape her brother had worn, given Dampierʻs command that she and Kamehameha wear ancient Hawaiian regalia.[84] One might assume that she was attempting to make the most of her situation and regain an element of her own free will, as her desires to be depicted in European dress were outright ignored by the artist. Regardless, in accordance with her gender and status, Nāhiʻenaʻena should not have been depicted wearing an ʻahu ʻula like her brother, as women aliʻi had an alternative protocol that discouraged the wearing of capes reserved for men.[85]

After Dampier had completed his royal portrait series, he turned his attention to Hawaiians on neighboring islands, to whom he referred to as "'...less noble, but more interesting subjects for my pencil.'"[86] In a very similar format to what he had crafted for the portraits of Kamehameha and Nāhiʻenaʻena, Dampier painted two portraits–one titled

[83] The Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum on Oʻahu holds a feather cloak attributed to Kamehameha III, of which Nāhiʻenaʻenaʻs cloak resembles almost exactly. Small details, including the absence of black bordering on the cloak in the collection, points to Dampierʻs improvisation in depicting the two cloaks in his portraits.
[84] Charlot, "The Feather Skirt of Nāhiʻenaʻena: An Innovation in Post-contact Hawaiian Art", 147; this information appears in Charlotʻs footnotes.
[85] Kaeppler, *The Pacific Arts of Polynesia and Micronesia,* 119.
[86] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S.* Blonde, 49.

Karaikapa, a Native of the Sandwich Islands, and *Tetuppa, a Native Female of the Sandwich Islands* (fig. 5 & 6).[87] In his own words, Dampier wrote:

> "I selected a boy & a girl, both uncommonly well formed and possessing agreeable countenances who for a small compensation allowed me to take their Portraits arrayed in their Native Costume. They both sat well, and altho engaged in this manner for three or four days, they betrayed not the slightest degree of impatience, but appeared quite elated at the honour I was conferring upon them."[88]

Both works feature the same angled pose of the sitters, who both stand in front of a natural landscape of sprawling mountains and lava field cliffs. Karaikapa wears a billowing blue cloak over his left shoulder, leaving the right side of his chest bare (fig. 5). He wears a lei made of sperm whale ivory ornaments and red beads, and clutches in his right hand a staff that extends past the borders of the canvas.[89] His facial expression is neutral, with a slight upturn of the corners of his mouth. Tetuppa is shown with a yellow swath of fabric cascading down from her left shoulder which consequently leaves her right breast exposed, while a piece of red fabric is tied around her middle underneath her covering (fig. 6). On top of and in contrast with her dark curled hair rests a lei of orange flowers. Her expression is equally soft as Karaikapa's, and the lack of tension in her body is meant to indicate the idea of a relaxed, candid moment captured on canvas.

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[87] These portraits, with little art historical scholarship written about them, currently reside in the collection of Washington Place in Honolulu–a National Historic Landmark mansion best known for being the home of Queen Liliʻuokalani (1838-1917). The portraits hang on public display in one of the first parlor rooms.

[88] Dampier, *To the Sandwich Islands on the H.M.S. Blonde,* 49.

[89] This lei is a form of the lei niho palaoa–a form of neckwear reserved for higher-ranked aliʻi, due to the prized materiality of sperm whale ivory ornaments known in ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi as niho palaoa. The red beads would have come to Hawaiʻi via trade with China, which signal Hawaiʻi's global trade relationships with places beyond Europe, America, or other Pacific islands.

Not much is known about either Karaikapa or Tetuppa, and Dampier fails to mention which island he met them on. Yet, the artist clearly situates in his writing their gratitude for having been selected for these portraits, in contrast to that of his experience at the royal court with Kamehameha III and Nāhiʻenaʻena, who had not been so accommodating. Dampier appears to favor the 'simple' lifestyle of people well outside of the luxuries of the Royal Family, which in many ways, falls in accordance with his held beliefs in the ideals of noble savagery. He actively 'others' Karaikapa and Tetuppa because of their unrelatability in both appearance and lifestyle to his European perspective. Their 'nativeness' is both idealized and scrutinized in the art itself as well as Dampier's writings.

Returning to Dampier's portraits of Kamehameha and Nāhiʻenaʻena, by comparing the artist's written account with the works themselves, the concerted effort to actively strip autonomy away from the newly appointed king and his sister becomes much more obvious. In choosing to ignore their wishes and agency, the power dynamics between the portraitist and sitter are overtly upended. Where the Le Brun portraits of Liholiho and Queen Kamāmalu reflect their explicit wish to wear the latest styles of European–particularly English–dress, the Dampier examples do not. Was it due to the youthful age of the royals, and therefore, their perceived inability to advocate for their own desires? It is clear by his own written account that the artist was conscious of the stratification in the power dynamics between himself and the royals. In ignorance of their prestige and position, Dampier neglected both the rights of the royals, as well as any sense of historical accuracy. Reflections of the artist's hand-crafted Hawaiian fantasy–reliant on ideas of 'noble savagery' to feign legitimacy—are made manifest on canvas. By many accounts, this type of colonial propaganda continued to proliferate art and literature produced by Westerners before the advent of photography, where myth-making

could no longer exist behind the guise of a contrived worldview. By fabricating a scene meant to reflect the supposed everyday "costume" of Hawai‘i, Dampier actively reduced the visual markers of the ali‘i who came before the Kamehameha's by undermining the ascendency of King Kamehameha III and Nāhi‘ena‘ena, specifically.

Reflecting Cultural Royalty in Body Adornment and Dress

Creating a visual iconography with Hawaiian regalia was certainly a point of significance for the monarchs of Hawai‘i, from Kamehameha the Great to the last sovereign monarch, Lili‘uokalani. Whether it was through dress, body adornment, or general material culture, Hawaiian monarchs were quick to adopt stylistic expressions that melded Hawaiian cultural insignias with Western convention. These were intentional decisions made by ruling figures and their court.

Kamehameha II's rule marked a particularly complex approach to royal symbolism for the Kingdom, seeing as his efforts in abolishing the kapu system during the ‘Ai Noa period of 1819 actively disconnected the conduct of the monarchy with traditional protocol.[90] Especially with the continued inundation of Christian missionaries and foreign businessmen to the Islands in the mid-nineteenth century, standards and manners of dress shifted to favor of Euro-American clothing. This included the standard menswear of the time, encompassing double-breasted dress coats, high-collared shirts, waistcoats, and silk or muslin cravats. Materials suitable for northern European climates had to be retrofitted for the hotter temperatures in the Pacific, but the shapes and shades of menswear remained consistent. For

[90] ‘Ai Noa was the period of time in the Kingdom in which the kapu had been broken in 1819 following the death of Kamehameha the Great. Kamehameha II ascended to the throne in late 1819, and sequentially kept the kapu broken, when he shared a meal reserved for women alone. From this point, the Hawaiian religious doctrine was reimagined and refigured in accordance with the disbanding of the kapu.

women's dresses, shapes and silhouettes were emphasized by bodices and corsets, and skirt shapes were rounded and filled out with added petticoats. Still, Hawaiian monarchs and Royal Family members continued to model elements of royal Hawaiian visual culture in their clothing, hairstyles, personal insignias, letterheads, and home decor. This sense of cultural hybridization is witnessed extensively in the utilization of feather work seen in feather cloaks, mahiole, and pāʻū as a signifier of the grandeur of the long history of chiefly adornment in Hawaiʻi–from ancient times, up until the creation of the monarchy.

Many Hawaiian feather cloaks survive and are preserved in ethnology departments both in and outside of Hawaiʻi. This is in part due to the common act of gifting associated with feather wear historically, which was dictated under the kapu system which operated as a legal set of rules established by the gods.[91] It became a typical practice for Hawaiian chiefs to give away cloaks they had plundered from rivals after skirmishes or wars, as it was believed that wearing the feather cloak of a deceased aliʻi nui would bring misfortune. Instead, chiefs would give the cloaks away to European voyagers who did not know their history, and who would ultimately take them back to Europe and accession them into collections both private and public.[92]

The cloaks themselves can be found in rectangular, semi-circular, and long, draping cape shapes.[93] Designs created with the various colors of the applied native honeycreeper feathers feature on a host of preserved cloaks in ethnology departments within and outside of Hawaiʻi. Some are impressively monochromatic, indicative of the great care and laborious nature of harvesting a singular species of birds, while others feature geometric patterning,

[91] Charlot, "The Feather Skirt of Nāhiʻenaʻena: An Innovation in Postcontact Hawaiian Art,", 122.
[92] Various Authors, *Royal Hawaiian Featherwork: Nā Hulu Aliʻi*, 24.
[93] Joseph Feher, *Hawaii: A Pictorial History.* (Honolulu, HI: Bishop Museum Press, 1969, 83.

particularly on shorter circular capes.[94] They also functioned as important garments for physical and spiritual protection, especially in their earliest applications, worn by aliʻi on all islands during times of warfare. Their thickness acted as a buffer to minimize the damage of hand-to-hand combat weapons striking the body, although they certainly could not prevent damage caused by a spear. Mahiole, or feathered helmets were often created in tandem with the ʻahu ʻula, and also served as head protection close engagement.[95] During their creation, the cloaks and ʻaha cords were held in high esteem, as chiefs and kahuna prayed in accordance with kapu.[96] In this ritual creation, the cloaks became material representations of collective prayer meant to guide and protect the aliʻi in battle.[97]As a symbol of rank and divine leadership, ʻahu ʻula are visually powerful representations of genealogical connection to sacred, individual mana.

Much of the scholarship concerning Hawaiian feather cloaks is connected to the process by which Hawaiians trapped the birds they used for the feather material, how they weaved the bundles of feathers together to assemble patterns, and how these techniques transcended over centuries even as the native bird populations dwindled. Understanding these elements of construction makes the inclusion of the cloaks in Dampier's portraits all the more gripping.

The colors yellow, black, and red were thought to spiritually protect the wearer, especially in times of warfare. The links between color and the divinity of the gods had a strong association and reverence: for red, Kū, or the god of warfare, for black, Lono, or the god of fertility, and for yellow, Kāne, the god of life itself was referenced in the vibrancy of

[94] Feher, *Hawaii: A Pictorial History*, 82.
[95] Kaeppler, *The Pacific Arts of Polynesia and Micronesia*, 121.
[96] Kaeppler, *The Pacific Arts of Polynesia and Micronesia*, 122.
[97] Kaeppler, *The Pacific Arts of Polynesia and Micronesia*, 122.

the natural hues.[98] For a period, the yellow feathers needed to make the cloaks, as well as Nāhi‘ena‘ena’s pā‘ū, or feathered skirt, were taken from the Hawaiian ‘ō‘ō species–a mostly black-feathered honeyeater with axillary yellow feathers (Fig. 7).[99] Several types of ‘ō'ō with slight visual differences could be found on nearly every Hawaiian island, with the Hawai‘i and O‘ahu ‘ō‘ō having been the most prized.[100] These birds have been extinct since the early twentieth century as a result of overhunting by mongoose and avian disease and not from overhunting for feather work, which is often the common misconception. Historically, Hawaiians would avoid killing the ‘ō‘ō at all costs, and the collection of the feathers was only performed by skilled bird handlers who would release them after harvesting, making it a laborious, but nonetheless important process. Differences in technical approach have been documented, both from one historical period to another, as well as from island to island.[101] Methods of capture included the utilization of sticky fruit juice from the papala plant, working as an adhesive similar to a modern-day glue trap, as well as woven nets and snares. Extracting yellow feathers from the ‘ō‘ō required handlers to pluck the individual tufts of yellow from axillary and undercoat coverts, meaning that the bird could be released and ensuring future yield after regrowth.[102] For the red feathers, the ‘i‘iwi or scarlet honeycreeper were trapped and harvested; ‘i‘iwi were much more advantageous birds to utilize, due to their complete red plumage.[103] Despite their compact size and generally small yield of feathers, deep associations with Hawaiian religious figures meant that particular emphasis was bestowed upon the

[98] Kaeppler, *The Pacific Arts of Polynesia and Micronesia*, 121.
[99] Various Authors, *Royal Hawaiian Featherwork: Nā Hulu Ali‘i*, 28.
[100] Storrs Olson, "The Contribution of the Voyage of H.M.S. Blonde (1825) to Hawaiian Ornithology." (Archives of natural history 23, no. 1, 1996), 30.
[101] Olson, "The Contribution of the Voyage of H.M.S. Blonde (1825) to Hawaiian Ornithology.", 35.
[102] Kaeppler, *The Pacific Arts of Polynesia and Micronesia*, 119.
[103] Various Authors, *Royal Hawaiian Featherwork: Nā Hulu Ali‘i*, 28.

ʻiʻiwiʼs quills, especially for feather cloaks and garments. Other bird species included the mamo and ʻapapane, as well as other various Hawaiian honeycreepers.[104] Small bundles of feathers were then woven onto cordage fiber mats made from olonā, a plant endemic to Hawaiʻi and known for its incredible durability due to its naturally intertwisted strands.[105] Aside from feather cloaks, you can also find the feathers of the ʻiʻiwi on mahiole. To this day, the ʻiʻiwi is the third most commonly sighted native Hawaiian land bird throughout the islands. Their unique coloring and curved beak have come to represent the beauty of nature found uniquely in Hawaiʻi. Their legacy can be seen in the feathers that remain and adorn Hawaiian artifacts from ancient times to the twentieth century; their colors bring life and meaning to the past to which they will always belong.

Aside from the capes and mahiole worn by the aliʻi of Hawaiʻi before the time of the monarchy, other examples of feather work clothing are identified in letters, chants, and other primary source documentation from the period. One such article of feather work clothing is that of Nāhiʻenaʻenaʼs pāʻū–an exquisite feather skirt made of well over one million feathers of the ʻōʻō and ʻiʻiwi (Fig. 7). The word pāʻū refers to the style of skirts worn by Hawaiian women of various social statuses and were meant to be wrapped and worn around the waist. The chest would be left uncovered. Commonly worn pāʻūʼs were made from barkcloth or kapa, making them equally flexible and durable. The ʻahu ʻula capes and mahiole were historically reserved for male aliʻi alone.[106] Nāhiʻenaʻenaʼs pāʻū is extremely unique in that it has been the only skirt ever documented to have been constructed entirely of feathers.[107] Much

[104] Feher, *Hawaii: A Pictorial History,* 80-81.
[105] Kaeppler, *The Pacific Arts of Polynesia and Micronesia,* 119.
[106] As John Charlot highlights in his scholarship on the pāʻū of Nāhiʻenaʻena, pāʻū should not erroneously be considered the female equivalent to the male ʻahu ʻula; the contexts of the respective garments functioned differently depending on their creation date and intended wearer.
[107] Charlot, "The Feather Skirt of Nāhiʻenaʻena: An Innovation in Postcontact Hawaiian Art,", 123.

like the aforementioned ʻahu ʻula, Nāhiʻenaʻena's pāʻū was made with similar wefted techniques, made possible with the olonā cordage construction.

Nāhiʻenaʻena had her exquisite feather pāʻū skirt created for her by artisans in Lāhainā between 1824 and 1825.[108] She had been expected to don the pāʻū for what was supposed to be a joyous homecoming celebration for the return of Kamehameha II and Kamāmalu from England. When their deaths were announced, the skirt became funerary in nature. Records report that Nāhiʻenaʻena had been asked by her council to wear her pāʻū for the reception of the bodies of the late royals and that her rejection to do so reflected her contentious personal relationship with ideals of morality and modesty, as dictated by her religious Christian schooling by her missionary instructors, Charles Stewart and William Richards. Of her refusal, Stewart wrote:

> "It was the desire of the chiefs that she should wear it [the pāʻū], with the wreaths for the head and neck, necessary to form the complete ancient costume of a princess at this interview; but as it was necessary, in order to this [sic], that she should be naked to the waist, nothing could induce her to consent. To escape importunity, she fled to the Mission House early in the morning. She wept so as scarcely to be pacified by us, and returned to the chiefs only in time to take her seat, and have it thrown carelessly around her over her European dress."[109]

Later, she would return to the funerary proceedings in a black English-style dress and permitted the pāʻū to be draped over her lap.[110] This strong aversion to the pāʻū reinforced the reality that, as a byproduct of exposure to European material culture, traditional regalia was

[108] Charlot, "The Feather Skirt of Nāhiʻenaʻena: An Innovation in Postcontact Hawaiian Art,", 119.
[109] Charlot, "The Feather Skirt of Nāhiʻenaʻena: An Innovation in Postcontact Hawaiian Art,", 133.
[110] Marjorie Sinclair, *Nāhiʻenaʻena: Sacred Daughter of Hawaiʻi.* (Honolulu, Hawaiʻi: University of Hawaiʻi Press, 1976), 82.

becoming significantly less appealing to the Royal family. At just eight years of age, Nāhiʻenaʻena had been able to recognize the duality of her position as a princess born into a Hawaiʻi post-contact, and that this predicated a different expectation for decorum placed on her and all of the subsequent members of the monarchy. The accounts of her rejection of her pāʻū mirror that of her resistance to Dampier's inflicted exoticization in her portrait.

Hawaiian feather work, in all its forms and functions, embodied the prowess of Hawaiian aliʻi and later, the Royal Family. In many ways, it continues to represent their genealogical connections to the past and physically legitimized the right to rule under birthright. From the aforestated sections of this thesis, the absence of feather work in the Le Brun portraits, as well as their inclusion in Dampier's, points to the shifting of perceptions of royal visual indicators in the early nineteenth century. Still serving as the physical manifestation of an extensive legacy of Hawaiian aliʻi who had come before them, the Kamehameha Dynasty saw a deviation from the previous reception of feather work. These ideals intermingled with rapidly growing preferences for Euro-American fashion. Traditions were not outright ignored but rather adopted and utilized in different ways in order to reference deep cultural heritage in a changing world. In understanding how these treasured objects functioned, viewers contextualize the ways in which they were–or were not–depicted by artists from colonial backgrounds.

Conclusion

In closing, it is imperative to return to the portraits once more. All four paintings represent a window into the majesty of the House of Kamehameha, as seen through the distorted perspective of European artists–one brought to the islands on a ship bearing the

bodies of royal family members, and the other disconnected from diplomacy in the Pacific. Overall, it is impossible not to acknowledge that the works exist solely because of the historical context of Hawaiian politics, which was strained by mounting pressures to submit to colonial enterprises. Dampier's presence in the islands was undoubtedly hinged on the reality of the consequences of what was once deemed as necessary contact with Europe, in order to protect, serve, and ensure the success of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i. As a precursor to future events, the works come to stand in for a moment in time when native Hawaiian rulers were forced to contend with the grinding friction of a global encounter–in this case, between Hawai‘i and England.

At the core, these portraits stand in for the conundrum of national identity, both as it existed in the nineteenth century, as well as for a contemporary Hawai‘i. It cannot be ignored that these oil paintings emerge from a fraught historical moment, contingent on an imperial past and rife with criticisms. Not only are the portraits physical works of art that are indicative of hybridization, but the nuance of how they were conceived, executed, and circulated reflects the period of flux in the early nineteenth century. By acknowledging their multifaceted dimensions and their justifiable inability to be defined as either this or that, it can be argued that they belong to a Hawaiian historical narrative, splintered by a colonial project.

To this day, the memory as well as the physical likeness of the Hawaiian Royal family remains a potent representation of the lengths undertaken by these leaders in order to delegate and support the early growth of Hawai‘i and its people. Just as well, these salient associations share with the world the reality of the consequences of globalization, cultural hybridization, and nineteenth century establishments of the concept of noble savagery. Especially in an American context, holding space for the complicated development of Hawai‘i before

statehood helps to provide background for a misunderstood moment in a global historical context.

The portraits by Dampier and Le Brun operate as a compelling comparison–the former having been a window into the systematized tools artists like Dampier used in order to inflict colonial misunderstanding and ignorance through clothing, while the latter highlights that during this period, the only way for Hawaiian nobility to have even remotely of a say in how their likeness and image was disseminated was to meet England where it was. The inclusion and absence of indigenous dress in each instance share with the viewer a unique window into the nineteenth century, and how relationships between Hawai‘i and England, in particular, were beyond fraught.

Finally, for the study of global material culture and the scholars who concern their research with such topics, these portraits exemplify a multifaceted perspective on colonial retaliation, resistance, and reception all their own. The history and circumstances of these paintings share with the world a rich perspective on cultural hybridity, resistance and autonomy, the emerging mobility of the early modern world, and the everlasting power of visual material that emanates from such confrontations.

Image Appendix

Figure 1.
Eugénie Le Brun after John Hayter, *Portrait of King Kamehameha II*, 1826, oil on canvas, ʻIolani Palace Royal Portrait Collection, Honolulu, Oʻahu, Hawaiʻi

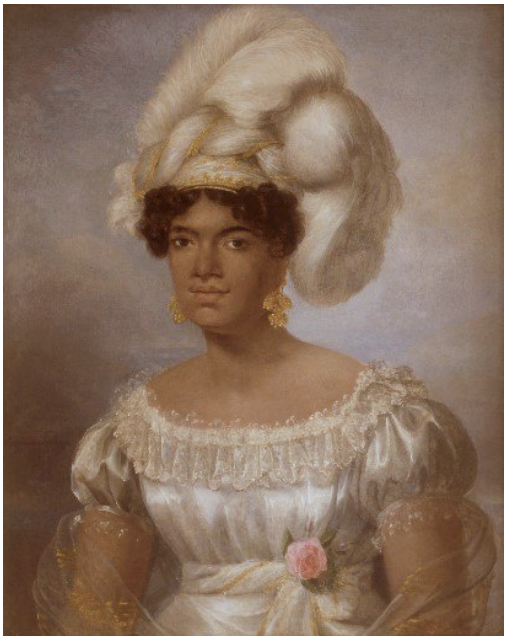

Figure 2.
Eugénie Le Brun after John Hayter, *Portrait of Queen Kamāmalu*, 1826, oil on canvas, ʻIolani Palace Royal Portrait Collection, Honolulu, Oʻahu, Hawaiʻi

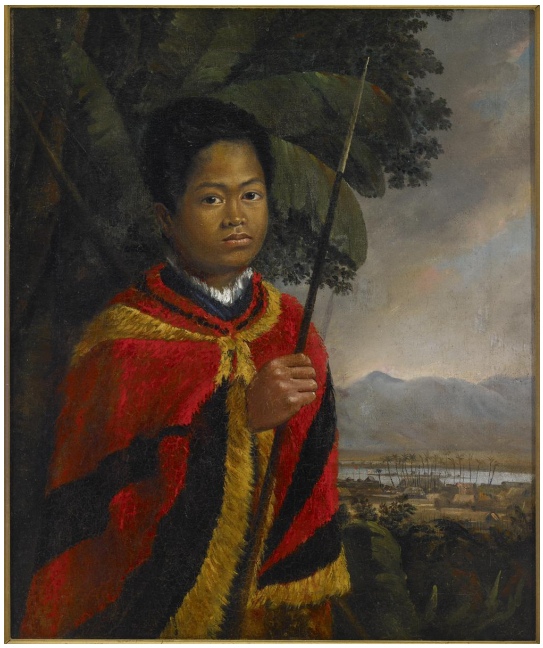

Figure 3.
Robert Dampier, *Kamehameha III*, 1825, oil on canvas, Honolulu Museum of Art, Honolulu, Oʻahu, Hawaiʻi

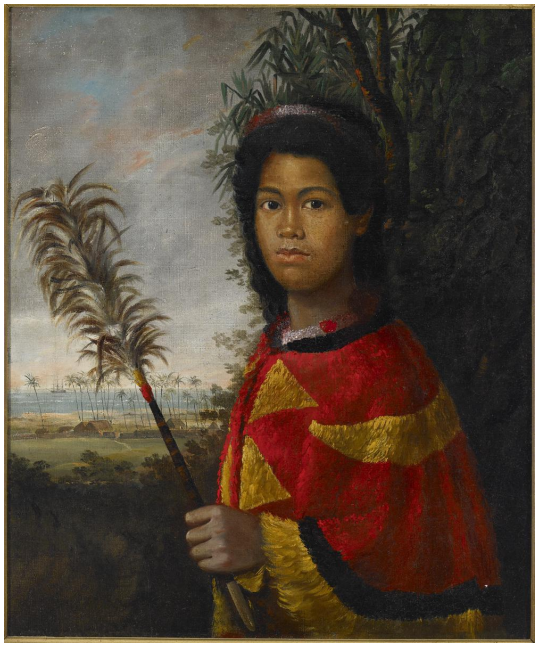

Figure 4.
Robert Dampier, *Nāhi'ena'ena (Sister of Kamehameha III)*, 1825, oil on canvas, Honolulu Museum of Art, Honolulu, Oʻahu, Hawaiʻi

Figure 5.
Robert Dampier, *Karaikapa, a Native of the Sandwich Islands*, 1825, oil on canvas, Washington Place, Honolulu, Oʻahu, Hawaiʻi

Figure 6.
Robert Dampier, *Tetuppa, a Native Female of the Sandwich Islands,* 1825, oil on canvas, Washington Place, Honolulu, Oʻahu, Hawaiʻi

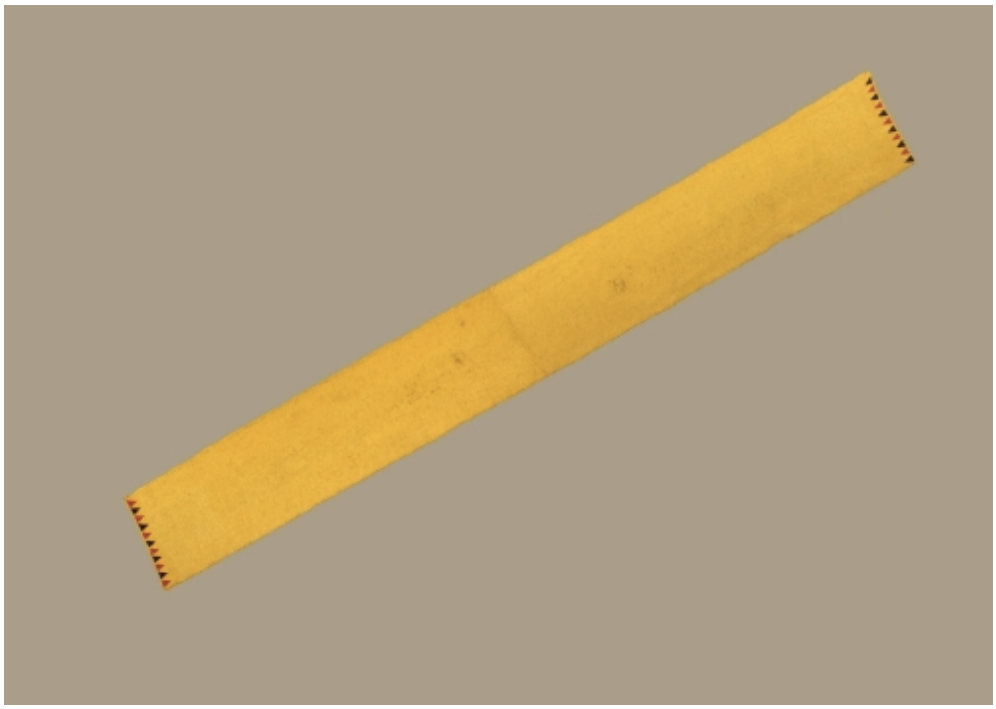

Figure 7.
Artisans in Lāhainā, Maui, *The Pāʻū of Nāhiʻenaʻena*, 1823, feather work of the ʻōʻō bird, skirt, Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, Honolulu, Oʻahu, Hawaiʻi

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