

**He Palapala Aloha No Kaua‘i (A Love Letter for Kaua‘i): Mana Wāhine Epistemologies  
and Pono Futurities**

by

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# **He Palapala Aloha No Kaua‘i (A Love Letter for Kaua‘i): Mana Wāhine Epistemologies and Pono Futurities**

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Our ways of knowing are intertwined with our places. In Hawai‘i, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (the Indigenous peoples of Hawai‘i) are epistemologically rooted in ‘ike kūpuna (knowledges from ancestors/ elders), including the specific landscapes, heavenscapes, and waterways Kānaka ‘Ōiwi genealogically call home. In this dissertation, I use Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as theory, method, and practice. Specifically, I use mo‘olelo (story/history/narrative) and mo‘okū‘auhau (genealogy/lineage/succession) as methodology to steward and weave the knowledges of mana wāhine (powerful women) of Kaua‘i, Hawai‘i from a decolonial perspective. This place-based, qualitative project explores what knowledges Kaua‘i mana wāhine embody, how these knowledges relate to radical healing, and how these knowledges are intergenerationally transmitted toward the purpose of re-creating pono (rightful balance) futurities on Kaua‘i. Findings indicate that kuleana (responsibility/ privilege/ burden) connectedness, as a process that involves radical healing, re-connection to ‘ike kūpuna and engaging in the communal re-creation of mo‘olelo of survivance is foundational to re-building pono futurities. With ongoing colonization and the political polarities of the twenty-first century, there is a need to re-member, re-create, and weave collective mo‘olelo of past, present, and future as interconnected. More research in and outside of academic spaces need to center Indigenous women’s knowledges using Indigenous methodologies by Indigenous researchers with Indigenous communities. This project aims to contribute to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi healing of the future through the past, while pushing research and practice to reconsider how to be

answerable to the communities that continue to be the most harmed by dominant knowledge reproduction.

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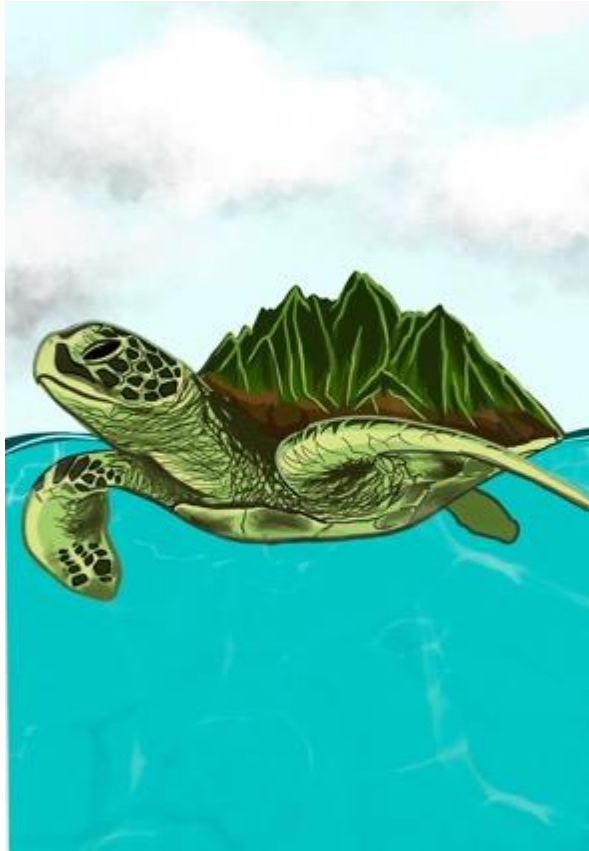
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**Honu Moku (Turtle Island)**

na Bethany Coma, Mo'olelo Murals, Kamāwaelualani

A ho'okupu (offering) to the Shawnee and Lenape peoples and ancestors of the occupied 'āina known as Pittsburgh and for those who have been made to cross borders and build bridges within the power of the margins. "I am a turtle, wherever I go I carry 'home' on my back"

(Anzaldúa, 2007, p. 21).

## **Dedication**

*To Kaua‘i of past, present, and future*

## **Pule Ho‘omālama<sup>1</sup>**

E Ka ‘Uhane,  
‘O ‘Oe Ke Kukui o ka malamalama,  
Ke noi aku nei au iā ‘Oe  
E kau mai i Kou mālmalama maluna  
o Kāu kauwā  
E ho‘omālamalama i ko‘u mau mana ‘o me ka ‘ike  
o Kou ‘oia‘i‘o  
No ka mea, he ‘onipa‘a ka ‘oia‘i‘o.  
E hō ma ii ka ‘ike e ‘ike nui.  
E ho‘opiha ‘Oe i ko‘u na‘au me Kou aloha mau.  
E ho‘oikaika i ko‘u ‘uhane me Kou mana nui.  
Eia ke Akua me a‘u i nā wā āpau  
Eia ka‘u haipule  
  
‘Āmene

---

<sup>1</sup> Pule Ho‘omālama (prayer of enlightenment) from Kahu Wendell Kalanikapuaenui Silva (2020)

## Hua ‘Ōlelo Palapala

### (NOTE ON TERMS)

A popular ‘ōlelo no‘eau or Native Hawaiian proverb reads, *I ka ‘ōlelo no ke ola, i ka ‘ōlelo nō ka make* meaning, “In language there is life. In language there is death” (Pukui et al., 1972). Opening with a mo‘olelo (story/ history/ narrative) of this ‘ōlelo no‘eau as ‘ike kūpuna (ancestral knowledges), I evoke a mo‘olelo from bell hooks (1989) who described language as a place of freedom and struggle saying, “I was just a girl coming slowly into womanhood when I read Adrienne Rich’s words, ‘This is the oppressor’s language, yet I need it to talk to you.’ This language that enabled me to attend graduate school, to write a dissertation, to speak at job interviews, carries the scent of oppression. Language is also a place of struggle... We are wedded in language, have our being in words... Dare I speak to oppressed and oppressor in the same voice? Dare I speak to you in a language that will move beyond the boundaries of domination — a language that will not bind you, fence you in, or hold you?... The oppressed struggle in language to recover ourselves, to reconcile, to reunite, to renew. Our words are not without meaning, they are an action, a resistance” (p. 16).

‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i is a descriptive language. Words in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i demonstrate the ways Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (Native Hawaiians) make sense of the world. Place names, for example, are not just names, they tell the mo‘olelo of how a particular place came to be and of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi genealogical connection to that place (Oliveira, 2009). Words are also tools of power. They tell of the sociopolitical meanings of a particular place and people (Silva, 2017). Hua ‘ōlelo (words) in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i (the Hawaiian language) means “words,” but when deconstructed means hua: fruit and ‘ōlelo: language. Epistemologically, words are the fruit of language. When crafting collective mo‘olelo of mana wāhine survivance like this project does, hua ‘ōlelo are selected by the storyteller

and strung together in such a way to create layered, interconnected, coherent meaning (ho‘omanawanui, 1999). Mana means spiritual energy/ power. Wāhine means women. “Mana wāhine” can be understood, in restrictive and simplistic terms, as divine feminine strength. Hua ‘ōlelo choice in this dissertation reflects Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology, which is both the topic and context of this project. The hua ‘ōlelo in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i used in this dissertation are handpicked from my Indigenous consciousness like fruit from the tree of knowledge. They are more than words, they are vessels to more closely explore the depths of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies. Thus, words like “Mana Wāhine,” are unpacked and repacked throughout this dissertation.

The choice to use ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i in this dissertation represents a microcosm of the larger tensions in colonial knowledge re-production, where using non-English terms and concepts is reflective of the failure of the colonial project in dismantling ideology as formed by language. English is limited when thinking in Hawaiian and writing in English. Writing both in English and ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i is necessary to this decolonial project and is an automatic refusal of the insularity of colonial academic writing and reasoning practices (wa Thiong'o, 2009). It is a place of struggle yet profound strength (hooks, 1989). Like many contemporary works in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi research and literature, this dissertation is written in English and uses ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i throughout.

Operationalizing ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i in this way is a result of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i being illegalized by an oligarchy of U.S. businessmen called the Republic of Hawai‘i in 1896. ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i was “re-legalized” in 1978 following a movement known as the second Hawaiian renaissance that pushed for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi cultural revitalization. The result of this “re-legalization” was Hawai‘i becoming the only “state” to have more than one official language: English and ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i (Wilson, 1998). Because of the systematic and violent enforcement of the ban on ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i there are few who fluently speak, write, and read in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i today. However, ‘Ōlelo

Hawai‘i is far from extinct. ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i has persevered in many Kānaka ‘Ōiwi communities. Colloquially, ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i has survived through its integration in Hawaiian Creole English, commonly known as “pidgin.” Pidgin was born out of the migration of sugar cane plantation laborers from Japan, China, the Philippines, Portugal, and Puerto Rico to Hawai‘i in the late 1800s. Like all pidginized languages, Hawaiian developed out of the functional and colonial need for intercultural communication. Widely spoken today, Hawaiian Creole English was recognized as an “official” language by the U.S. Census in 2015 (Wilson, 1998). This dissertation will use pidgin where participants use it and will be defined insofar as the definition is important for the reader to comprehend the meaning making of the participant.

Dr. Haunani-Kay Trask, a prolific Kanaka ‘Ōiwi mana wahine kupuna scholar held the position that she grew up before the “re-legalization” of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and therefore writes much of her published works in English and uses Hawaiian words when English cannot contain the meanings of Hawaiian words as a result of originating from different epistemological genealogies and therefore, language in and of itself carries different ways of knowing and knowledge formation (Trask, 2003). I was born after the “re-legalization” of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and I continue to hold Dr. Haunani-Kay Trask’s position. Writing this dissertation entirely in English would be analytically inaccurate at best and culturally irresponsible at worst. This choice represents the researcher’s analytical value call and an active resistance against the politicizing of the use of ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i in colonial systems, such as the University, that are intentionally seeped in the standardization processes of “Standard American English.”

The first dissertation that was written entirely in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i was in 2006 (Ng-Osorio & Ledward, 2011). I was an ‘ōpio (youth) in 2006 and I re-member being explicitly told by adults that I should speak “proper English” so I could get into college and people on the “mainland”

won't think I'm "uneducated" because I speak the way I do. Different than many of my peers, I did end up attending University on the U.S. "mainland" (also known as the U.S. continent/ancestrally and still known as Turtle Island or in 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, Honu Moku). While on Turtle Island, I used "proper English" well enough to get me as far as writing this dissertation. I recognize now that I was being prepped for my kuleana (responsibility—the weight of privilege must balance with the weight of burden). My kuleana, for better and worse, is as a bridge between worlds (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 2015). This dissertation combines English with 'Ōlelo Hawai'i as ancestral re-creation and is a course correction in the journey toward a pono (*lit.* upright/ correct/ moral; *fig.* righteous balance) future for my kulāiwi (homeland, lands of the ancestors).

'Ōlelo Hawai'i has also been called, "'Ōlelo Makuahine" meaning, "Mother tongue." I use the term "'Ōlelo Makuahine" in this dissertation to honor the matriarchal parts of our ancestral past and the mana wāhine leo (voices; note leo being the root of 'ōlelo or language) of the present study to build future foundations for k/new knowledges to be incubated, birthed, and nurtured (Smith, 2021). In this dissertation, I translate hua 'ōlelo in 'Ōlelo Makuahine upon first usage and refrain from doing so throughout the text to place Kānaka 'Ōiwi knowledge systems at the piko (center) of all that is and comes to be understood in this project. The 'okina (glottal stop) is part of the 'Ōlelo Makuahine thirteen letter alphabet. The kahakō (macron) signals long and short vowels. Without these diacritical markers the meaning of hua 'ōlelo can shift completely. Where there is no kahakō in a word that previously used a kahakō, the singular form is being employed (e.g., Wahine means woman. Wāhine means women).

Many Kānaka 'Ōiwi use the term, "Kānaka Maoli" to describe themselves. I was raised using this term, however, I use "Kānaka 'Ōiwi" in this dissertation because the term, "'Ōiwi" includes the word "iwi," meaning "bones." The term "Kānaka 'Ōiwi" literally translates to "people

of bone,” figuratively means “native,” and metaphorically represents the dynamism of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology. Iwi kūpuna or the bones of our ancestors are physically, spiritually, and cosmologically part of the ‘āina (land) of Hawai‘i. Using “Kānaka ‘Ōiwi” to describe someone who is Native Hawaiian implies that they are Native Hawaiian while also signaling that they are ancestrally part of the specific soils of particular places in Hawai‘i (Brown, 2016). Using the term, “native Hawaiian” is avoided as this is a colonial term and is not the term used by many Kānaka ‘Ōiwi to describe themselves outside of colonial systems of racial meaning making.

Additionally, words like “western” and “white” are not capitalized and words like “Indigenous” are capitalized to challenge the reader to remain focused on an Indigenous worldview. I translate words that are of particular relevance to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi values, beliefs, and actions within the meaning-making of this dissertation. I primarily use the direct English to ‘Ōlelo translations provided by Pukui and Elbert (1986) combined with translations that are indirect such as metaphorical, figurative, and/or colloquial usages where relevant. The use of an English word in place of hua ‘ōlelo that has been previously defined is used when referring to the word’s meanings in generalized contexts beyond that of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi meanings (e.g., using “women” to talk about all women vs. “wāhine” to talk specifically about Kānaka ‘Ōiwi women).

Deviations from these patterns is to maintain a cited author’s original words. ‘Ōlelo Makuahine used in this dissertation has been edited for accuracy by fluent ‘Ōlelo Makuahine speakers. A glossary (see Appendix B) is provided to aid the reader in reaching toward epistemological congruency with the intent of this dissertation. Any misuse of ‘Ōlelo Makuahine are the author’s own.



## **1.0 Chapter 1: Introduction**

So, let it be said and let it be known: We have what we need. We are who we need.

—Manulani Meyer, *Our Own Liberation*

### **1.1 Getting Grounded**

#### **1.1.1 Situating Place**

Before diving into the particularities of the historical, theoretical, and methodological approaches to this study, it is first and foremost important to acquaint ourselves with the matter of a specific wahi (place). This project is not contextually situated within a place, the place contextually situates this project. Cultivating this project from a specific wahi is intentional as the life of this dissertation including all analyses and discussions are nourished by the soils of this wahi and grown to provide shade for the evolving generations of ‘Āina Makuahine (mother land) scholars who practice our ancestral knowledges. Contrary to the tendency of western trained researchers to shallowly ground their studies in context and exercise their epistemological privilege when speaking about their research in revolutionary and universal terms (Ruibal, 2021), the current study is most relevant to the people and place of this study and does not associate with the façade of objectivity. However, like anything that grows from grounds of decolonial aloha (love) (Meyer, 2011; Simpson, 2017) the shade of this study can be far reaching and should be enjoyed and absorbed by outsiders in a way that honors the roots so as not to cut down the tree.

This is a placed-based, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological study that is born of Kaua‘i, Hawai‘i. What is meant by place? Place is meant to mean physical place—the valleys, oceans, mountains, and rivers that are in one’s surroundings; living place—one’s house, neighborhood, family; place of being—the relationship one has with a place at a metaphysical level, where all things, including oneself are created; place of spirit—one’s community, the feel of place made sense of through inhaling and exhaling the atmosphere. Place is synonymous with learning, sensing, and relating (Cajete, 1994). As Kānaka ‘Ōiwi mana wahine kupuna and kumu of epistemology Manulani Meyer (2008) says, “In essence you came from a place. You grew in a place and you had a relationship with that place. This is an epistemological idea” (Meyer, 2007, p. 219). Reflecting off this idea, ‘Ōlelo Makuahine use the terms ‘ike wahi to describe one’s sense of place and connection to wahi pana or storied/ special place. Wahi pana tell the specific mo‘olelo that is unique to a particular place and from which that place draws its inoa (name).

In modernist thought, place has been parceled and often been conflated with space (Johnson, 2012). Place is always ‘ōiwi. One can take up or take over space, but one cannot take up or take over place. If place is always ‘ōiwi, then according to settler colonial logics, place has been racialized to be about Indigenous identity (Patel, 2021). Indigenous identity as I mean it in this study represents the mosaic meaning of place that paints a larger picture of greater, more complex connections between the physical, spiritual, emotional; the self and others; of space and time. This is the antithesis of modernity in thought, where place and Indigenous identity are co-opted to fold neatly within the confines of Indigeneity. Indigeneity is a colonial construct whose definition is negotiated and renegotiated depending on political dealings within different nationalisms (Kauanui, 2008; Teves et al., 2015; Trigger & Dalley, 2010). As Maile Arvin (2015) states, Indigeneity “....refers to the historical and contemporary effects of colonial and anticolonial

demands and desires related to a certain land or territory and the various displacements of that place's original or longtime inhabitants" (p. 121). The act of politicizing Indigenous identity through colonial domination makes certain that Indigeneity, that is, individual Indigenous identity rather than a decolonized collective Indigeneity characteristic of our ancestors, essentializes Indigenous people not through their relationships with place, but through qualifiers of displacement. Put simply, Indigeneity more so than Indigenous identity (e.g., check the box that says you racially identify as "native Hawaiian") is reflective of both Native and colonial knowledge systems and the impact of the latter on the former. Manulani Meyer (2013) poses the epistemological, decolonial questions: "What does "native to a region" really mean? How does that influence our work as scholar-practitioners focusing on planetary awakening? What does it mean with regard to knowledge? How are you Indigenous? How am I Hawaiian?" (p. 251). She goes on to state, "I now use Indigenous as a synonym for "enduring patterns" with regard to philosophy. It helps bring forth k/new ideas that have made sense because of the ecology of these times. Indigenous is really about culture: best practices of a group of people specific to a place, over time" (p. 251). Indigeneity in this dissertation is not about individualized identity marked by colonial indicators such as an enrolled status and blood quantum, but rather is about a decolonial collective Indigeneity and enduring patterns of thought and action intergenerationally rooted in place.

Kānaka 'Ōiwi sense of place is not inextricable from Native identity; however, settler colonial logic distances Indigenous peoples from their place to ensure the settler colonial state has the space to lay false claim to a place (Calderon, 2014b). Undergoing projects with Indigenous communities means that it is necessary to consistently place all that comes to be understood within Indigenous knowledge systems. To do this, it is imperative to understand how place is

in/unextractable from Indigenous identity since place makes up the fabric of human existence in many Indigenous worldviews. Journeying to the core of this understanding is inherently an decolonial endeavor since Kānaka ‘Ōiwi as Indigenous peoples of Hawai‘i continue to be displaced by colonization and erased and re-placed by settler colonial racialization of place and people (Calderon, 2014a).

Place precludes Indigeneity and Indigeneity as collectivity includes place—the place of knowing the world and interpreting our realities as well as physical place (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001). In this case physical place is an island. Hawai‘i is 3,990 km (2,479 mi) from Los Angeles, 6,478 km (4,025 mi) from Tokyo, and 7,768 km (4,827 mi) from Washington D.C., making Hawai‘i one of the most geographically isolated land masses in the world. In colonial cartography, islands are spatially positioned in relation to a “mainland,” in this instance, to Honu Moku colonially known as the U.S. occupied North American continent. Colonial cartography of the construction of island nations places island peoples as peripheral or secondary to a main land mass. However, a strength of this physical distance is ideological distance. Hawai‘i exists physically separated from Honu Moku and the colonial settler states of the United States and Canada. This physical separation allows for the oceanic protection of Hawai‘i’s natural, cultural, and social ecosystems. Hawai‘i’s isolation also makes her geographically legible, meaning historical markers of arrival, colonization, re-matriation, and Indigenous futurities offer a straightforward connection between people and place (Grydehøj et al., 2018).

Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are physically and metaphysically of the place commonly known today as Hawai‘i. In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi knowledge systems, such as in mo‘olelo, oli (chants), mele (songs), and the *Kumulipo* (primordial creation oli), place—the physical, relational, cosmological, spiritual—is talked about as inseparable from humanness and individual/ collective Kānaka ‘Ōiwi identity.

Place is talked about as an entity rather than as an inert object to be used, abused, and/ or neglected. I re-tell the mo‘olelo of Hawai‘i to shed light onto how Kānaka ‘Ōiwi talk about the place that is Hawai‘i, because “the way we talk about a place or another entity reflects how we feel, how we see, how we understand, and most importantly, how we think about it” (Cajete, 1994, p. 44). Orienting oneself within Kānaka ‘Ōiwi visions, understandings, feelings, and thoughts about place is foundational to engaging in systemic discourse surrounding other facets of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies across time.

‘Āina when translated literally from ‘Ōlelo Makuahine means “that which feeds.” Place, in a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi worldview is that which feeds mind, body, and spirit. It is the place the natural, physical, and spiritual worlds coalesce into one, while binding us genealogically across time and space to ‘āina, including to the seascapes, landscapes, and heavenscapes (Kikiloi, 2010; Oliveira, 2014). Place is the cross section of these epistemological scapes that are part of a continuum that envelopes kinship ties of the past, present, and future between humans and nature. Place is the piko of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi identity as place birthed Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. Kānaka ‘Ōiwi in turn birth and nurture place (Kana‘iaupuni & Malone, 2006). In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi belief systems, hō‘ailona (symbols/ signs) and metaphors are used in oli, mo‘olelo, and mele that represent scientific observations of ecological, social, and cosmological and empirical phenomenon that are always tied to values, beliefs, and actions about our kuleana to our ‘āina, people, and heritage (Casumbal-Salazar, 2017). The autochthonous mo‘olelo of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi knowledge systems, the *Kumulipo*, describes the birthing of Hawai‘i and the interconnectedness of all things. In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi worldview, the *Kumulipo* should not be taken as a work of fiction, fairytale, or primitive understanding of the universe, but rather as a sophisticated mo‘olelo that weaves multiple physical and metaphysical realities into one (McDougall, 2016).

In the *Kumulipo*, the intimacy between earth and sky breathed life into the places, people, and culture of Hawai‘i. Papahānaumoku, translated to “Papa (foundational earth) that gives birth to the islands,” is known as the mother ancestor who birthed ka pae ‘āina o Hawai‘i (the Hawaiian archipelago). Wākea, translated to “the vast expanse of the sky,” is widely known as the father ancestor of ka pae ‘āina o Hawai‘i. Many origin stories tell of Papa and Wākea and the various offspring they produced including the culturally significant kalo (taro) plant by which the first Kānaka ‘Ōiwi from ancestor Hāloa were birthed (Fornander, 1969; Kikiloi, 2010, Oliveira, 2014). Origin stories differ depending on the source and interpretation and each place within ka pae ‘āina o Hawai‘i have their own mo‘olelo, but the overarching theme across mo‘olelo is the interrelatedness of ‘āina and kānaka (people) (Kikiloi, 2010; Oliveira, 2014).

Today, anthropocentric epistemological dominance leads Hawai‘i to be most commonly known as the eight islands populated by humans: The Big Island or Hawai‘i Island, O‘ahu, Maui, Moloka‘i, Lāna‘i, Kaho‘olawe, Kaua‘i, and Ni‘ihau. These eight islands are part of ka pae ‘āina o Hawai‘i that consists of islands and reefs that expand to over 1.42 million hectares (3.5 million acres). The islands, reefs, and waters are what is known today as Papahānaumokuākea, which is the largest marine protected area in the world and is unique in that it is the only designated conservatory in the world of both nature and culture. This is noteworthy because in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology nature and culture are not separate just as identity and place are not separate and conservation efforts recognizing this in protection policies is an example of epistemological alignment in practice. The name, Papahānaumokuākea is a modernized style of ‘Ōlelo Makuahine that combines the names of ancestor of earth, Papahānaumoku and ancestor of sky, Wākea, to recognize the mo‘okū‘auhau (genealogy/ lineage/ succession) of ka pae ‘āina o Hawai‘i (Kikiloi, 2010).

### 1.1.2 Kaua‘i

Within ka pae ‘āina o Hawai‘i lives the island of Kaua‘i: the place that straps my feet to the ground. I will say the inoa of some of the makani (winds), ua (rains), and ‘āina of Kaua‘i because with naming comes re-claiming (Oliveira, 2009). What is important to contextualize in this grounding of place and in naming is that hua ‘ōlelo carry mo‘olelo about who we are as an Indigenous peoples. “I ka ‘ōlelo ke ola” can be translated to, “language carries life.” As ku‘ualoha ho‘omanawanui (2014) states, “...language carries life, the lives of our ancestors, their thoughts, experiences, memories, triumphs, tragedies, lessons, warnings, celebrations—to us, through us; through the spoken, chanted, sung, prayed word, through the written poem, genealogy, history, narrative, novel, story, recipe, journal, autobiography, biography, memoir, and more” and is a “...way of recording, remembering, studying, transmitting, and sharing knowledge and experience” (p. 1). ‘Ōlelo Makuahine is a practical and poetic language that is crafted on dynamic relationships of the physical world with entities of particular places. Hua ‘ōlelo have multiple and layered meanings that are tangled and mineralized in place. In ‘Ōlelo Makuahine, name does not proceed place, place proceeds name. Place names, therefore, give us an opportunity to connect with ‘ike kūpuna. ‘Ike means to see, know, feel, greet, recognize, perceive and can also means knowledge. ‘Ike kūpuna is the knowledge of kūpuna or our elders/ ancestors. ‘Ike kūpuna is about knowing the human relationships with the natural, physical, and metaphysical world. Place names, in contemporary times, also tell of the mo‘olelo of Indigenous erasure as ancestral place names have been omitted and deleted from written records, colloquial language, and collective colonial memory.

Names are important because they provide information stolen from us by colonization about our past and future. Asserting ancestral inoa for places is an act of resistance to the

eradication ‘Ōlelo Makuahine and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi culture, history, memory, and identity by settler colonialism (Oliveira, 2009). It is therefore not enough to know the setting of this dissertation is Kaua‘i. Rather, it is fundamental to know the names, culture, language, and history of this place to dehaze false memories implanted in our individual and collective psyche by colonialization. Saying the place names of Kaua‘i is an act of establishing this study as a process of re-matriation. Re-matriation is the re-claiming of Native epistemologies and practices by Native peoples (Tuck, 2011) and the re-creation of Native nations through freedom from settler colonial states (Simpson, 2017). In re-matriation, de-contextualization in colonial research is met by radical re-contextualization through re-memembering ancestral knowledges of place names and re-creating the narrative of what these place names contribute to Indigenous futurities (Simpson, 2017; Smith, 2021; Oliveira, 2014, wa Thiong'o, 2009). Re-matriation is a term used by Indigenous women belonging to Honu Moku and is highly relevant to a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi context to describe how matrilineally rooted cultures such as Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are re-storing/ re-storying balance. Re-matriation pushes back against heteropatriarchal connotations of re-patriation and is a refusal of theories and methods that have been used to abuse Indigenous peoples. Re-matriation refuses the settler logic that Indigenous artifacts, peoples, ways of knowing, and lands can be reduced to “things” that can be taken, packaged, used out of context for extractive gain and then re-turned without re-conciliation (Vaught & Shotton, 2019).

Re-membrance is a method and re-creation is a concept Native people can use to make sense of colonial injuries, so radical healing can be realized. Re-memembering involves transcending spaces of colonial severance by engaging in re-connection with place and people of our past, present, and future (wa Thiong'o, 2009). Re-membrance is a practice of re-contextualization of our past and refusal to accept the colonial realities of the present by re-creating Indigenous futures

(Simpson, 2016). Re-creation is re-memberance in motion. Re-creation is when our material realities are stitched together with the threads of ancestral knowledges that flow into the fabric of Indigenous futurities. Intergenerational spaces of re-creation allow the severed parts of our mo‘okū‘auhau to be healed and built upon through living cultural practices (e.g., hula) and creating k/new decolonial functions to use to empower ancestral knowledge systems (e.g., writing this dissertation) that are passed on from one generation to the next. The use of the "re-" with a hyphen as part of words like “re-creation” and “re-member” (Goeman, 2013) and k/new with a slash (Edwards, 2009; Meyer, 2013) represents the intergenerational process of storying and storing ancestral knowledges in a way that is ancestrally grounded and allows for new mechanisms of survivance to emerge through present day needs. K/new is a term used to refer to knowledges that are old and new at the same time. All knowledges occupy this dual space of old and new, but where Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology is different is the practicing of knowledges in a decolonial context (Edwards, 2009). As a researcher this looks like being someone who knows what and where one’s knowledges derive while also still discovering k/new truths (Meyer, 2013a). Adding k/new functions to ancestral knowledges is an act of survivance.

In thinking about survivance in this dissertation I find resonance with Gerald Vizenor’s (1994) ideas about the “...active sense of presence, the continuance of Native stories, not a mere reaction, or a survivable name. Native survivance stories are renunciations of dominance, tragedy, and victimry. Survivance means the right of succession or reversion of an estate, and in that sense, the estate of native survivancy” (p. vii). To re-member our place names and re-tell our mo‘olelo, especially when we struggle to do so because those knowledges have been extracted from us and systematically silenced, is to heal our histories or to re-matriate our (her)stories and till the soils

for the re-creation of our mo‘olelo so our future generations can use aloha as fearless in the face of colonization (Lipe et al., 2020; Lipe, 2014; Meyer, 2013a).

Kaua‘i, was named and re-named throughout the centuries, once being known by such names as Kamāwaelualani, Laukī‘ele‘ula, and Manokalanipō (Oliveira, 2014). Some of Kaua‘i’s ua inoa (rain names) are Lena, Lūlaukō, and Ki‘owao (Pukui et al., 1974). Kaua‘i has many makani inoa (wind names), but some include Limahuli, Amu, Kiuanu, and Waipao (Fornander, 1917). Kaua‘i, like all the islands, have different types of land divisions with different place names. The two most prominent land divisions are moku and ahupua‘a. Moku (districts) are large socio-ecological segments of ‘āina on an island. Moku are divided up in to several ahupua‘a (land divisions). Ahupua‘a are a socio-ecological community within a moku. Ahupua‘a were historically ruled by ali‘i (chiefs/ royalty) and ran from mauka to makai (toward the mountains to the sea). Our kūpuna divided the ‘āina into these types of segments to be stewarded (not ruled) by ali‘i because each ahupua‘a is a self-sustainable unit that ensures that the ‘āina has all the resources needed to provide sustenance for everyone (Blaisdell et al., 2005; Winter et al., 2016).

Kaua‘i has five moku (see figure 1): Ko‘olau, Puna, Kona, Nā Pali, and Halele‘a.

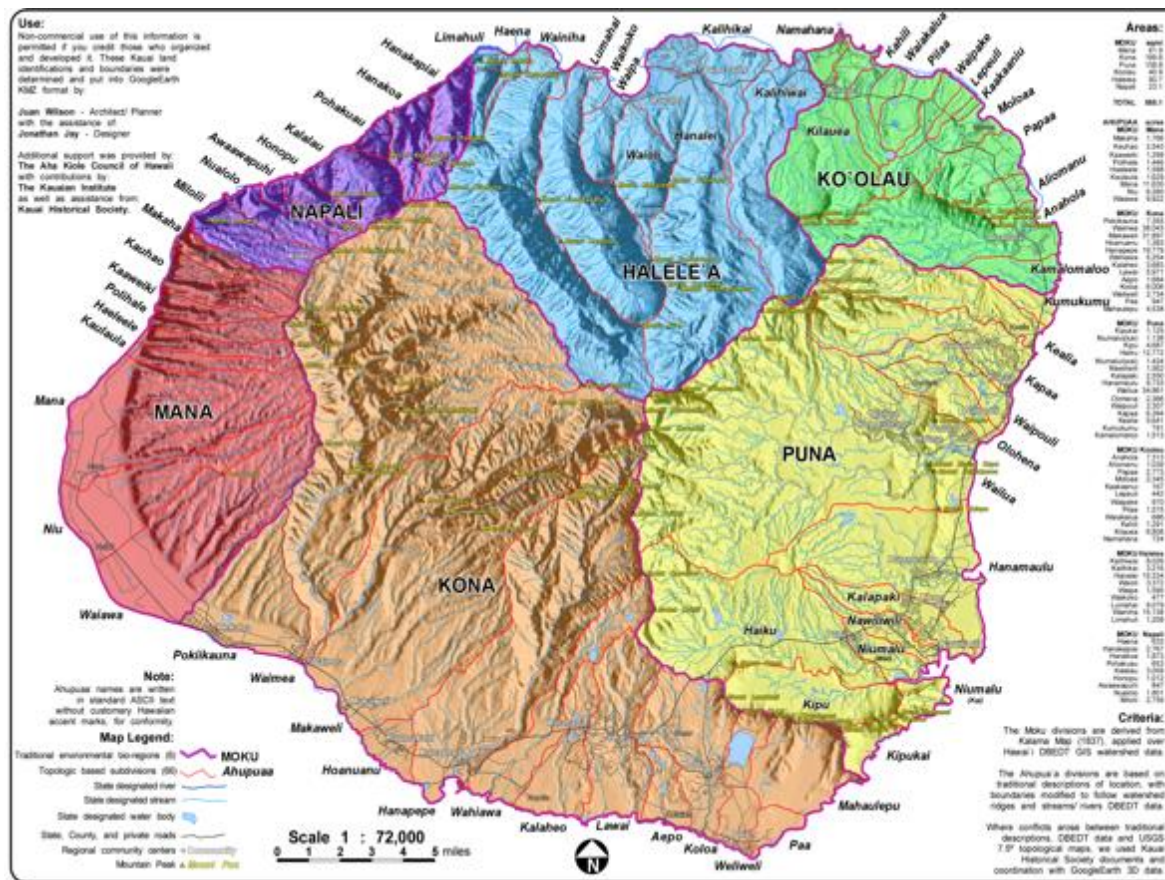


Figure 1 Kaua'i Moku'puni

**Note:** Map by Juan Wilson (2010). This map with more information can be accessed at <http://islandbreath.blogspot.com/2010/02/niihau-and-kauai-mokupuni.html>. Interactive Kaua'i Moku'puni map with mo'olelo about each place can be accessed at <https://kauainuikuapapa.com/>

There are several ahupua'a on Kaua'i (Andrade, 2008). Instead of counting and naming them all I will demonstrate how to say where one is from in 'Ōlelo Makuahine using the mo'okū'auhau of my 'ohana (family): He Kaua'i moku'puni, Kōna moku o loko, Makaweli ahupua'a au. This translates to: I am Kaua'i island, Kōna district, land division Makaweli. Note here that saying, "I am [place name]" implies that someone is from that place without using the English "from." This linguistic pattern is characteristic of the way Kānaka 'Ōiwi think of themselves and all humans as belonging to the 'āina and more narrowly to a specific soil of a specific wahi (Nāone, 2008; Oliveira, 2014). Extrapolating on the meaning of wahi, Kānaka 'Ōiwi scholar, C. Kanoelani Nāone

(2008) states, “place is where we go to ground ourselves, where our ancestors are buried, where we gather, where we love, where we remember, where we sing praises, and where we thread our genealogy” (p. 316).

Mo‘okū‘auhau can be understood as “genealogy” as in one’s ‘ohana genealogy (Pukui & Elbert, 1986). Providing more texture, mo‘okū‘auhau is a cosmogonic connection of lineages between all living elements and nonliving substances across time and space. It is a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological concept that explains how Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are inextricably linked through multidimensional genealogies impressed or coded in the natural world (Kame‘eleihiwa, 1999). Mo‘okū‘auhau is “a bridge connecting all things Kānaka ‘Ōiwi whether they are concepts, words, occupations, the natural world, the spiritual world or the human world” (Lum, 2019, p. 54).

In an act of mo‘okū‘auhau re-creation (Simpson, 2017) a celebration of place was held in Waimea, Kaua‘i in 2021 that was full of mele, oli, and hula (sacred dance that communicates mo‘olelo) to give praise to the ancestral strengths of Kaua‘i by celebrating the life of the last reigning monarch of Kaua‘i: King Kaumuali‘i. It was during King Kaumuali‘i’s reign that King Kamehameha I set about his calling to conquer and unite all of the islands under his rule. King Kamehameha I attempted to conquer Kaua‘i twice and failed both times. As King Kamehameha I conquered all the other islands, King Kaumuali‘i knew that King Kamehameha I’s forces would eventually outnumber that of Kaua‘i, but King Kaumuali‘i continued to look after Kaua‘i until King Kamehameha I’s death. In 1821, when King Kamehameha II succeeded the throne, King Kaumuali‘i became a vassal and was taken to Honolulu, O‘ahu signifying Kaua‘i being under the default rule of the Kamehameha dynasty (Croft, 2017; Fujikane, 2021).

King Kamehameha I was not the first to have attempted and failed to conquer Kaua‘i. Four hundred years prior to Kamehameha, the ruling ali‘i from Maui, Hawai‘i Island, Moloka‘i, and

O‘ahu jointly set out to conquer Kaua‘i. Ka‘ie‘iewaho is the channel that connects Kaua‘i and O‘ahu and serves as a protective element to Kaua‘i, especially in rough weather where the mana of Akua (gods/ goddesses; ancestors), Kanaloa beats against nā pali (cliffs) and shores of Kaua‘i creating lethal conditions for humans to make landfall. Kāhuna or spiritual healers and conduits of the realm of the ancestors, like some mana wāhine o Kaua‘i, were able to pule (pray) to predict or shift the elements. Because of the protective elemental character of Kaua‘i and her people, along with Kaua‘i’s then Ali‘i ‘Aimoku, King Kukona, favoring pono politics by sparing the lives of the ali‘i of the other islands, Kaua‘i was politically protected under an agreement of peace. Four hundred years of peace and absence of interisland conflict that involved Kaua‘i ensued (Young, 2015). *He ali‘i ka la‘i he kau na ke aloha* was honored—Peace is a chief, the lord of love; where peace is, aloha is (Pukui, 1983). This history is laid out for context of who Kaua‘i is and why she is. Kaua‘i is an island of protection with peace and diplomacy over division and is touted till this day as the only island that remains unconquered.

Re-creation mo‘olelo lives in the relationships and can come in the form of community ceremony. In 2021, Pā‘ula‘ula (Russian Fort) was re-claimed by King Kaumuali‘i. An 8-foot bronze statue of King Kaumuali‘i re-placed the statue of Captain James Cook as the presence that welcomes people into ahupua‘a o Waimea (Azambuja, 2015). This ceremony adds to the mo‘okū‘auhau o Kaua‘i and is practices celebration as re-membrance of the genealogical strengths throughout space and time of the people who are ‘Ōiwi o Kaua‘i. Mele, oli, and hula were practiced publicly again following COVID-19 to honor King Kaumuali‘i’s symbolic re-turn home after 200 years. Community celebratory mo‘olelo like these need to be re-told since it is in the act of re-telling that our place-based mo‘olelo are re-created communally through re-matriation collective action. Re-telling mo‘olelo such as the homecoming of King Kaumuali‘i and what this

event represents across generations, reminds us that community celebrations such as these are acts of colonial resistance just as much as protests in the streets.

King Kaumuali‘i was born in 1780 at Holoholoku heiau (shrine, sacred site, pre-Christian high place of worship) in Wailuanuiho‘āno, Kaua‘i. Wailuanuiho‘āno (commonly known as Wailuanui or Wailua) is where I was raised from birth until I was ten-years-old, when my ‘ohana was dis-placed and forced to re-locate from ahupua‘a to ahupua‘a upon the foreclosure of the hale (house) my father built. Wailuanuiho‘āno translates to “great, sacred, place,” named such because it is home to five heiau, two loko i‘a (fishponds), and the Mahunapu‘uone burial ground of iwi kūpuna (ancestral bones) that are dated to be 600-800 years old and are still functional in their original purposes. In July 2021, a culturally significant large plot of Wailuanui was auctioned off for \$22.3 million. I Ola Wailuanui is a hui (group/ team) that serves as Kia‘i (protectors) of Wailuanui by advocating for the preservation of this wahi pana and the re-claiming of the exploited parts of the ‘āina to be re-turned to the community and used as a place where the re-creation of our ancestral knowledges can be communally celebrated like was just done with King Kaumuali‘i’s re-turn home (I Ola Wailuanui, 2021). At the auctioning off of a plot of Wailuanui, I talked story with a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi kupuna who told me that he was happy to see haole<sup>2</sup> present. When I asked him why, he said because, “...that was the way of the ancestors. Our ancestors never just tell the

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<sup>2</sup> Haole means “white, American” and is one of the most widely used ‘Ōlelo Makuahine words. It is versatile in that it can be used pejoratively, descriptively, and as marker of belonging. The first recorded use of the word “haole” was in an oli dated before western arrival and was used to describe mythological people in Kahiki—a space is Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology existing right beyond our physical horizon and the mental and spiritual horizons of who we know ourselves to be as contained to this particular place and time (Case, 2021). Colonial gas lighting blames Kānaka ‘Ōiwi for the use of “haole” as a racial slur. However, the word “haole” was integrated into local vernacular by white U.S. Missionaries whose own ethnocentric interpretations made “haole” a racial slur (Manalo-Camp, 2015). “Haole” is not always derogatory. It is often used as a simple descriptor. It can also be used as an in-group identifier. For example, the phrase “haole local” refers to someone who is white, who was raised in Hawai‘i, and who are similar in thought and practice as non-white locals in Hawai‘i.

haole ‘go away,’ our ancestors used haole as advisors to understand how to get their land back so our ancestors would be happy to see all these haole here. We need them.” This kupuna who has lived and loved in Wailuanui his whole life and who after hearing I am getting a Ph.D. self-admittedly said he barely graduated high school, provided me with humbleness of perspective. There are a lot of people with a lot of schooling in my generation that would say this Kupuna’s belief in relying on haole for what is rightfully ours to protect, is antiquated and a product of the groomed dependence of Natives on the U.S. I occupy the space in-between. The position of reclaiming without permission from colonial systems, while also holding the position that this Kupuna’s truth is old with wisdom. As a mahi‘ai (farmer) and as a great grandfather of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi keiki (children) his experience has taught him that change can only come with haole using their privilege to do pono by this place; to practice the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological value of duality.

Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology holds central the duality of all things. My partner’s migrant, Filipinx grandmother, Nānā Castora Suero, would always say about various traumas, “this too has its place.” Our kuleana is to figure out what place colonial functions and their consequent impact have in our mo‘okū‘auhau so that we can ensure that the mo‘olelo we pass on to future generations about our time in the sun will be one where all the parts most relevant to their lived experiences are as pono and in lōkahi (harmony, unity) as possible. No one bid at the auction for the ‘āina at Wailuanui. In large part this is because of who Kaua‘i is. There are environmental and cultural protocol in place that protects this ‘āina from investors with extractive, capitalistic interests and the double-edged sword of colonial desire to hoard but not take care of, thereby, gaining while still losing. There was a collective exhale of relief when the ‘āina of Wailuanui was not bid on. On the inhale, there was a collective pensive pause in the timeline; a silence that exists beyond the

frequency of a colonizer's ear; a silence that voiced that this too has its place and its place is in the here and now. For right now, Wailuanui will feel the warmth of the sun instead of the cold of colonial concrete for another day.

The last reigning King of Kaua'i, King Kaumuali'i and I share a birthplace, Wailuanui. King Kaumuali'i was raised primarily by his Makuahine (Mother), Chiefess Kamakahelei, who is largely regarded as the influence who made King Kaumuali'i into the diplomatic ali'i he is known as till this day. His reputation is one of being steadfast in his values of peace and protectiveness over Kaua'i (Croft, 2017). For the influence Chiefess Kamakahelei had on shaping King Kaumuali'i and Kaua'i's history, not much is written or spoken widely about her. I attended Chiefess Kamakahelei Middle School and King Kaumuali'i Elementary School, both public schools in Puna moku. I was part of the first group of students who attended Chiefess Kamakahelei Middle School when it first opened on the ruins of a slashed sugar cane field in 2000, yet my knowledge of her (her)story is shallow. Chiefess Kamakahelei as she is commonly referred, has a higher status than the title Chiefess may denote. She is the Ali'i Nui (high Chiefess or Queen) of Kaua'i and Ni'ihau. Ali'i Nui Kamakahelei was amongst the first in Hawai'i to have contact with European colonizers when British Capitan James Cook and his crew first stumbled upon Hawai'i in 1778. She was said to have the gift of pule, where she could connect with the elements and incinerate those journeying to Kaua'i with ill intent (C. Chock, Kānaka 'Ōiwi Lāhui, Kaua'i, Hawai'i, personal communication, September 17, 2021). Women leaders such as ali'i, koa (warriors), and kāhuna (spiritual healers/ conduits of the spiritual realm) are documented in written accounts as early as 1375 A.D. Being a kane (man) was not a prerequisite for political power until western patriarchal ideologies were imposed with the arrival of the missionaries in the late 1800s (Manalo-Camp, 2021).

Re-calling the inoa of Ali‘i Nui Kamakaheli o Kaua‘i in this project is a ho‘olani (ali‘i homage) and is an act of re-matriation. *Ua hānau ka pō*— the night gives birth (Akana & Gonzalez, 2015). In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology, wāhine birthed the universe and the eldest ancestor, the one who came first, is the most powerful (Kame‘elehiwa, 1999). What this means to wāhine in the present day is what I actively seek to understand in this dissertation by “moving forward through the past” (Wilson-Hokowhitu, 2019). Wāhine are the embodiment of ‘āina momona (*lit.* fat land; *fig.* healthy, thriving, just land). Wāhine are the metaphorical embodiment of the superposition of the mental, physical, spiritual, spatial, and temporal into one honua (world), one ‘āina. When the ‘āina is violated so are wāhine (Holmes, 2012).

Wāhine are also the embodiment of colonization. Wāhine are also carriers of colonization, as oppression is not merely external but also resides within us (hooks, 1990). For example, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi wāhine are sites of gender-based violence such as domestic violence and sexual assault more than any other population in Hawai‘i (OHA et al., 2020). Like women across Honu Moku the fight for reproductive freedom is a colonial constant as settler colonial logics diminishes and manipulates Indigeneity using various mechanisms. As wāhine represent spaces that birth the universe, so too are they spaces where the universe de-structs and re-constructs (Holmes, 2012).

Prior to colonization, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi practiced gender fluid beliefs. In one of the first acts of colonial dis-placement, wāhine were stripped of their sense of place through re-replacing their names with a Christian first name and their patrilineal last name (Hall, 2008). Wāhine are metaphysical spaces of hermeneutic violence (Ruíz, 2020) and sexual violence. When the British colonizers first arrived in Hawai‘i, wāhine engaged in intercourse with these men. Their meaning making of gender and sexuality was non-monogamous and non-heteronormative and intercourse was a way to express relational interconnectedness (Hall, 2008). Wāhine then became the spaces

of colonial violence, through the rapid decline in the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi population from sexually transmitted diseases they were not immune to (Trask, 1999). Thus, wāhine were the first to have their physical mana controlled through violent, sexualized, patriarchal colonial processes of erasure, sterilization, and birthing. Wāhine were and are further subjugated through being used as spaces of ideological and physical miscegenation; the aggressive abrasion in our mo‘okū‘auhau that is intergenerationally passed down; the break in the lei.

Keiki or children are referred to as lei in some oli and mele. Lei figuratively means beloved child and literally means the garland worn around one’s neck. Keiki are referred to as the pua (flowers) of a lei because they are pua that need nurturing. When they are threaded onto a lei with other pua to make a long string or circle (interconnectedness) that is then draped on the shoulders of a person, the pua lei becomes a beloved child representing one’s genealogical connections or mo‘okū‘auhau. On a lei the pua, the keiki, are literally and metaphorically carried upon the shoulders of their ancestor. Lei are gifted at ceremonies as an intentional cosmic communication to one’s ancestors and decedents that their ancestor is carrying them in a pono way.

Lei symbolizes our interconnectedness with the elemental world and the weaving of mo‘okū‘auhau to our place and ‘āina and serves as a cosmological doorway to re-creation. When these pua are plucked off the lei without permission by colonial processes, the lei breaks. This is a colonial assault to the physical, social, emotional, ‘āina, and spiritual fabric of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies. However, the weight of justice is temporally and spatially balanced, and what is intergenerationally passed down is intergenerationally passed back up. The lei will be re-connected. Kānaka shall be kū (standing upright). We can only heal the colonially caused puka (hole/ gap) in the lei by first and foremost healing ourselves. Wāhine in the here are now represent

radical healing and the re-birth of the universe; the re-placing of our places; the re-claiming of our spaces, both ideological and physical.

## **1.2 Overview of the Colonial Project**

The U.S. colonization of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ‘āina is an ongoing problem as Kānaka ‘Ōiwi cultural values, beliefs, and practices continue to be exploited for the economic and political gain of western nations (Osorio, 2002). The effects of colonization are continuous and compounding and result in cumulative negative impacts on mind, body, and spiritual health for Indigenous peoples (Wilson & Yellow Bird, 2005). Most research on Kānaka ‘Ōiwi have been deficit-focused, meaning that research approaches work on Kānaka ‘Ōiwi from a place of inquiry fueled by a deficit constructed in comparison to a now mythic white male norm of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Patel, 2021). Hyper-individualized and de-contextualized notions of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi identity through the over-reliance on the collapsing of race, Indigenous identity, and biological deficiencies (Roberts, 2011) ensures Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are “...always at the short end of a smaller and smaller identity stick” (Meyer, 2001, p. 1240). Speaking specifically to the effects of colonization on Kānaka ‘Ōiwi health, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi on average, experience a shorter lifespan (Aluli et al., 2007; Johnson et al., 2004), a higher occurrence of heart attacks and obesity (Mau et al., 2009), and higher rates of psychological and emotional difficulties (Antonio et al., 2020) than other major racial/ethnic groups in Hawai‘i. Additionally, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi have the highest poverty, unemployment, and houselessness rates of all major ethnic groups in Hawai‘i (Look et al., 2020). Within compulsory educational systems Kānaka ‘Ōiwi students perform lower on standardized tests, experience lower graduation and college-going rates (Kana‘iaupuni et al., 2010), are overrepresented in special

education courses, and have higher school suspension rates than other racial/ethnic groups in Hawai‘i (Hawai‘i DOE, 2019). Specific to Kaua‘i, youth suicide rates as well as issues such as school absenteeism and lower English language literacy rates are higher on Kaua‘i than on any other island and are concentrated largely in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi communities (Hawai‘i DOH, 2012; Hawai‘i DOE, 2019).

These statistics should be situated as material assaults from colonial structures, rather than as a learned or inherent deficit or coincidence of individuals or communities (Patel, 2016). The harm done by these colonial assaults are intergenerationally transmitted. This is known in the psychology literature as historical trauma. Historical trauma is defined as, “cumulative emotional and psychological wounding across generations, including the lifespan, which emanates from massive group trauma” (Brave Heart et al., 2011, p. 283). For intergenerational colonial trauma lived experience experts, these generational wounds can seem inescapable and weighs on the mind, body, and spirit, repeatedly forcing Indigenous people to ask themselves, “In reality, who am I?” (Fanon, 1963). Answering this question often leads to the problematic, “Kill the Indian, Save the Man” ongoing answers (Churchill, 2004). Internalized colonization works to cause Indigenous people to consciously and/or subconsciously hate themselves, hate their communities, and anything that resembles their culture. Colonization multiplies like a virus off this disdain by causing Indigenous people to thirst for the power of the colonizer. When an Indigenous person realizes that becoming the colonizer is impossible (the Native will never die) shame, anxiety, depression, helplessness, compulsive, and self-destructive behavior is often the result (Memmi, 1965).

Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are at an elevated risk for certain physical, emotional, and relational health risks in comparison to their white and Asian settler counterparts because colonization percolates

in every one of our systems, from education to healthcare, as a pathogen that disproportionately infiltrates Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ‘āina and well-being (Look, et al. 2020). However, when re-centering Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological indicators of healing and education a different story unfolds. For example, being rooted in the values and culture of one’s ‘ohana (McCubbin, 2007), as well as in one’s kaiāulu (community), lāhui (Kānaka ‘Ōiwi nation), ‘āina (McGregor et al., 2003), and cultural practices such as dancing hula and speaking ‘Ōlelo Makuahine has a positive effect on the physical, emotional, and social healing of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (Look et al., 2014). Persisting health inequities amongst the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi population can be remedied through providing culturally grounded care that integrates Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ways of knowing, including care to ‘ike kūpuna, valuing of collectivism and culture, and physical/ mental/ spiritual/ emotional balance (Look et al., 2020).

### **1.2.1 Decolonial Approach**

I take a decolonial approach to inquiry. This requires I understand those whose leo (voices) I include in this dissertation in relationship with the locality, which is first, foremost, and will always be ‘Ōiwi and is secondarily yet nonetheless contextually important, the United States or the colonial nation-state of Hawai‘i. Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as my primary strategy of inquiry comes with the acceptance of the complexity that comes with the fact that my reader will be attempting to understand my understandings of ‘ike kūpuna as enlivened through mana wāhine, which may come with added complexity for those who are outside the realm of relationality of this particular place and people (Wilson, 2008).

Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology is a pre-colonial and default de-colonial methodology (wa Thiong’o, 2009). With this comes the recognition that the ways of knowing I document in this

dissertation are ones that precede contact with colonizers, integration by settler-states, and the contemporary state-controlled systems we find ourselves in (Calderon, 2014a). My strategies of inquiry will use Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as worldview, theory, method, and practice in understanding mana wāhine ways of knowing through multiple forms of relationality that honors that these wāhine have experience, intelligence, and insight about knowledges and healing that is best captured by them using their own mo‘olelo in whatever way they see appropriate and necessary (Olivera & Wright, 2016).

### **1.3 Purpose of This Project**

This dissertation project’s purpose was formed from a desire-based framework (Tuck, 2009). There is a collective desire amongst Kānaka ‘Ōiwi to re-connect with ‘āina and ancestral knowledges to move forward through the past (Case, 2021; Wilson-Hokowhitu, 2019). This desire is one that is largely acted upon by mana wāhine at the forefront of practices that are intentionally decolonial and are in and of themselves acts of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi survivance (Vizenor, 1994). These desires from mana wāhine are a desire to contribute to the mending of mo‘okū‘auhau and the re-creation of our mo‘olelo that our keiki can find themselves safely situated within (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2016; Wilson-Hokowhitu, 2019). I interpret this community desire as a kāhea, a call to action, toward our collective kuleana to mālama (to take care of) our future generations. The purpose of this project is to string lei of ancestral knowledges for future generations to add on to; *He hiwahiwa au na ka makua a he lei ‘ā‘ī na ke kūpuna.*

The purpose of this project is as a decolonial practice that recognizes and responds to the community desire of survivance using Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as a decolonial and Indigenous

theory and method. My own desire for this project is to string lei of resistance (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2016; Tuck, 2009). Each strand in a lei represents a community desire, a disciplined Kānaka 'Ōiwi belief, a part that makes up the whole. The materials of the lei sprouted from resistance to colonial desires and remains rooted within systems of knowing of Kānaka 'Ōiwi. To string a lei in this dissertation is done with the understanding that this lei connects to a larger lei that is as long and thick as time and space itself (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2016). Mana wāhine as re-creators and curators of Kānaka 'Ōiwi knowledges, as the embodiments of colonial de-struction and re-construction, and as those who fashion the materials to weave mo'okū'auhau of resistance from their very beings are the groundwork for re-grounding ourselves in 'āina and the aloha of our ancestors.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with the world on fire from U.S. imperialism and climate change, the re-turn to Indigenous ways of knowing is imperative. Momentum from the movements toward Kānaka 'Ōiwi survivance are shifting to the forefront of decolonial projects. This project is one of critical self and colonial systems analyses that helps build the archives of tangible working materials for use by the current and next generations of Kānaka 'Ōiwi scholar practitioners whose ways of knowing and methods of survivance can one day be legible and validated by the academy and stand in pono relationship with itself and others in the much larger fight outside it.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. What ancestral knowledges do mana wāhine o Kaua'i embody?
2. How do Kaua'i mana wāhine relate these knowledges to radical healing?
3. How do Kaua'i mana wāhine pass these knowledges on to the next generation?

### 1.5 Kānaka ‘Ōiwi Epistemology

Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology “...is not a new discussion but because of the political times it has become the hotbed of academic discourse. It is the sword against anthropological arrogance and the shield against philosophical universalisms. How one knows, indeed, what one prioritizes with regard to this knowing, ends up being the stuffing of identity, the truth that links us to our distinct cosmologies and the essence of who we are as Oceanic people” (Meyer, 2003, p. 125). *Nānā i ke Kumu*— look to the source (Pukui et al., 1972). The word “Kumu” was defined earlier as meaning teacher, but more comprehensively it is a community given, cultural title of respect for someone who educates and is disciplined in their knowledges and skills. Kumu is someone who has an adaptative understanding of their kuleana and how to carry it in a pono way. Kumu papa means “foundational source.” Kumu papa can mean the mouth of a river that feeds thousands of streams. It can mean the roots of the kalo that propagates all other kalo. It means ‘ike kūpuna: our foundational source of knowledge which comes from our ancestors and elders. *Nānā i ke Kumu*, as ancestral wisdom, will be evoked throughout this project.

The source as ‘ike kūpuna means to understand one’s truth as Kānaka ‘Ōiwi from that of the ancestors and elders which principally includes ‘āina. The source is also ‘ike wahi, including one’s spiritual, physical, and emotional connectedness to that specific place. The source is place of the ancestors, a place of Kānaka consciousness, the place where one will find truth. To find truth is a process, not a destination. It is in the mo‘okū‘auhau, our genealogical connectedness across space, time, and place that we process our knowledges and use these knowledges toward a functional good (Meyer, 2001). We know our truth through recognizing the interconnectedness of all things. The ‘āina, wai, kai (ocean), makani, lani (sky), and mo‘okū‘auhau as connected to current and future existence through relational practices are inseparable from Kānaka ‘Ōiwi sense-

abilities (Oliveira, 2014). Kānaka ‘Ōiwi sense-ability means the “...capacity to receive and perceive stimuli from our oceanscapes, landscapes, and heavenscapes and to respond to these sensory stimuli in ways that contribute to our overall understanding of the world” (Oliveira, 2014, p. 94). Kānaka ‘Ōiwi sense-abilities is the primary way I interpreted all that came with and through this project. Epistemological concepts such as mo‘okū‘auhau was the primary foundation in which I weaved mo‘olelo from mana wāhine grounded in Kaua‘i and from a space that honors the act of weaving as one that sustains critical eyes toward holism and interconnectedness of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi pono futurities o Kaua‘i.

### 1.5.1 Kānaka ‘Ōiwi Epistemology in Research

There have been many studies conducted utilizing Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as a guiding theoretical lens or methodological framework. The *Kumulipo* (1978) is the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi primordial creation chant that tells of the mo‘olelo of how ka pa ‘āina o Hawai‘i and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi came to be and is a primary source for understanding Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology. Of the written and published versions of the *Kumulipo* the one I use in this dissertation is by mana wahine and last reigning monarch of the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi nation, Queen Lili‘uokalani (1978). Queen Lili‘uokalani translated the *Kumulipo* from ‘Ōlelo Makuahine to English while under house arrest following the illegal overthrow of the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi Kingdom in 1897. Queen Lili‘uokalani’s translation of the *Kumulipo* was an act of colonial resistance because she knew that Kānaka ‘Ōiwi would continue to be dis-placed from their ‘Ōlelo Makuahine and ‘āina and therefore their origins as a people (Oliveira, 2014). Serving as a Kia‘i of the collective piko of her people, Queen Lili‘uokalani enacted her kuleana with what she had and today, the *Kumulipo* is still re-called in places of traditional Kānaka ‘Ōiwi knowledges in practice such as hula hālau (hula schools) as

well as within dominant colonial structures such as compulsory K-12 schools. In showing how Kānaka ‘Ōiwi is represented in the literature, I incorporate peer-reviewed research studies that are 1) focused exclusively or comparatively on Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, 2) utilizes Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology or a specific concept within Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as a theoretical lens and methodological framework (i.e., kuleana, mo‘olelo, aloha ‘āina, etc.), and 3) addresses or emphasizes healing and/or the re-creation/ practicing/ passing on of knowledges. I organize the preexisting literature aligned with the last line of each of the four stanzas in a poem written by mana wahine kupuna, Pualani Kanaka‘ole Kanahele in the preface to Queen Lili‘uokalani’s (1978) translated version of the *Kumulipo*.

**...the organic inception of all family systems.**

#### **1.5.1.1 *This, our kūpuna believed!***

*I maika‘i ke kalo i ka ‘oha*—the goodness of the kalo is judged by the young plant it produces (Pukui, 1983). This means that parents are often judged by the behavior of their children. The root word for ‘ohana comes from ‘ohā, which is literally the offshoot from the corm of the kalo plant. ‘Ohā is reliant on the parent kalo plant to propagate. All ‘ohā are therefore generationally linked to the same roots representing the point of ancestral coalescence between nā hōkū (stars), nā lani (skies/ heavens), and ‘āina,. Just like individual Kanaka ‘Ōiwi are of ancestor Hāloa symbolizing the Kalo plant, ‘ohana or the family system are “the offshoots” of the same union. ‘Ohana in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology comprises immediate relatives as well as ‘ohana related through marriage and hānai (foster or adopted child, also a form of traditional ‘ohana systems where a keiki of one ‘ohana is raised intentionally in another) (Kana‘iapuni, 2004; Pukui et al., 1972).

Many studies have examined ‘ohana and healing from a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological standpoint. Many Kānaka ‘Ōiwi researchers have discussed the ‘ohana as an important source of healing as the ‘ohana is the link between the individual and the beliefs and practices that involve Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological concepts, such as aloha ‘āina. The ‘ohana also is a primary source of the development of relationships between people, community, and environment that contribute to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi physical, social, emotional, and spiritual healing and sustenance (i.e., Kana‘iaupuni, 2004; McGregor, 1996; McGregor et al., 2013).

In exploring sources of colonial injury amongst Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, Browne et al. (2014) found that participants discussed issues related to historical trauma, discrimination in receiving health services, and lack of options that fit their cultural ways of knowing. The Kānaka ‘Ōiwi in their sample (n= 41) demonstrated a preference for ‘ohana as caregivers and traditional Kānaka ‘Ōiwi healing practices (e.g., Lapa‘au (traditional medicinal healing) and oli) over medical professionals and western health modalities. Cultural values, beliefs, and expectations embedded in and practiced by the ‘ohana contributes positively to a sense of physical, spiritual, and social well-being amongst Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (McCubbin, 2007) and honoring ‘ohana and ‘ike kūpuna relationships and practices reduces barriers to access to medical treatment for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (Look et al, 2020).

Regarding keiki, grounding healing from colonial assault in the ‘ohana has yielded promising benefits on healing outcomes. For example, in addressing the overrepresentation of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi in Child Welfare Services in Hawai‘i, Godinet et al. (2010) found that ‘Ohana Conferencing, a form of relational and communal healing that utilizes a strengths and community-based approach rooted in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi values such as ho‘oponopono and centers the ‘ohana as the primary deliverers and deciders of care contributes to a lowered rate of re-entry into the child

welfare system in comparison to those who received the same approach who were not Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. Likewise, in a study looking at mental and physical health amongst high school aged youth in Hawai‘i Carlton et al. (2006) found that Kānaka ‘Ōiwi youth (64% of the sample; N= 1,832;) reported that their ‘ohana was instrumental in helping them overcome mental health and physical challenges more than any other racial group in the sample.

**...the interrelationships of all things is an everlasting continuum, it is Ponahakeaola, the chaotic whirlwind of life.**

#### **1.5.1.2 *This, our kūpuna knew!***

Rather than looking primarily at one facet of a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology, many studies explored the interrelatedness of many Kānaka ‘Ōiwi values, beliefs, and practices. Mapuana Antonio et al. (2020), looked at how Kānaka ‘Ōiwi define and conceptualize health and found that participants (n= 12) held holistic views of health, including the balance between physical, emotional, and spiritual health as well as relational health with other people and the ‘āina. Similarly, Mele Look et al. (2014) found that, when interviewing Kumu Hula (culturally and community recognized educators of hula) about how hula is related to well-being, Kumu Hula discussed the physical, emotional, and spiritual benefits of hula on haumāna (students). Similarly, epistemological practices such as ha‘i mo‘olelo (storytelling), oli and mele lead to physical healing through being active, cognitive healing through consistently learning within the ways of knowing of ‘Ōlelo Makuahine and mele, relational healing through belonging to a ‘ohana and kaiāulu, and spiritual healing through re-connecting to one’s mo‘okū‘auhau and the ‘āina (Maskerinec et al., 2015).

Within the field of education, research has found that submersing keiki in experiential learning within Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies, such as learning mathematics and science from planting kalo or learning about history from kūpuna, contributes to an increase in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi relational learning both within and outside colonial measurements of academic success and contributes positively to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi haumāna spiritual, relational, and psychological health (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013). Moreover, situating academic curriculum in K-12 schools in a decolonial framework that recognizes students’ intergenerational colonial pain has been shown to positively impact Kānaka ‘Ōiwi haumāna learning processes (Benham & Cooper, 2000; Kana‘iaupuni, Ledward, & Malone, 2017; Kaomea, 2005; Torres, 2019). Further, for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi youth who have a history of injurious behaviors such as suicidal ideations and attempts with opportunities to learn in relationship with the ‘āina as opposed to only in a classroom setting (Trinidad, 2009) and formulating student services around Kānaka ‘Ōiwi college students’ epistemological reasons for gaining a postsecondary education (Reyes, 2019) has shown to positively influence Kānaka ‘Ōiwi haumāna sense of self and holistic healing processes.

**...the Hawaiian and all natural forms of [her] world were the beneficiaries of this primary cadence and flowered with the rhythm of the universe.**

#### **1.5.1.3 *This, our kūpuna experienced!***

A breadth of literature exists that details the cosmological origin mo‘olelo of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. Many scholars have situated Kānaka ‘Ōiwi cosmological origin mo‘olelo within the aim of addressing the current strengths and challenges of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ways of knowing in contemporary times. Much of this research has been archival in nature with the premise that more documentation

of our ancestral past and present is needed to ensure our knowledges are passed on to the next generation and used to build pono Kānaka ‘Ōiwi futurities (Silva, 2017).

Research has been conducted documenting the mo‘olelo of particular wahi on Kaua‘i, including Hā‘ena (Andrade, 2008; Cadiz, 2017), Kīlauea (Chandler, 2018), Hanapēpē (Nobrega-Oliveira, 2019), Kapa‘a (Fernandez, 2015), Līhu‘e (Griffin, 2014), Anini (Charlie, 2019; Vaughan et al., 2019) and other Kaua‘i-related literary narratives (Brown, 2015; Joesting, 1984; Kawahara, 2005; Wichman, 1998). Traditionally an oral culture, many scholars have written, translated, and archived thousands of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi mo‘olelo. For example, extensive archival projects have been done documenting the works of lesser known Kānaka ‘Ōiwi journalists of 18<sup>th</sup> century Hawai‘i (Silva, 2017), of Hawai‘inuiākea (the mo‘okū‘auhau ka pae ‘āina) (Kame‘elahiwa, 2009), of ‘āina, ‘Ōlelo Makuahine, kaiāulu connectivity, and of the mo‘okū‘auhau of specific ‘ohana (Holmes, 2012), just to name a few. These projects have been undertaken to gain a better understanding of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology in the present and serves as a move to preserve Kānaka ‘Ōiwi knowledges within the future. This dissertation aspires to add to the effort to protect, preserve, and perpetuate our Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies for the next generation of ‘Ōiwi scholars. The literature base on or utilizing Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology is an eō, a response meaning, “yes I am here,” to the kāhea or the ancestral call for more Kānaka ‘Ōiwi scholars to ground their research in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi intellectual, written traditions, thus, re-claiming our space in the research that continues to be dominated by haoles who have inequitable access to publishing their works about our people and places (Osorio, 2021; Silva, 2017).

Other scholars dive deep into the mo‘olelo of place and people, past, present, and future through documenting while also engaging with hermeneutics. For instance, Nālani McDougall (2016) applied the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological concept of kaona as an analytical tool in

documenting origin mo‘olelo, poems, and fictive dramas, while providing a contemporary analysis of cosmological connectivity of past to Indigenous futurity as enacted in the present. Similarly, Kapā Oliveira (2014) documented ancestral inoa throughout Hawai‘i utilizing a decolonial approach to cartography to map Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological, ontological, and cosmological mo‘olelo onto physical places, with the overarching goal of perpetuating ‘Ōlelo Makuahine through Kānaka ‘Ōiwi re-connection to place. Similarly, Natalie Kurashima et al. (2017) re-created Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ecological mapping that centers Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies to address ecological restoration efforts in Hawai‘i. A commonality amongst these works is an emphasis on kuleana as a receiver of ‘ike kūpuna to give ‘ike kūpuna back to Hawai‘i by documenting our mo‘olelo using various Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological methods to ensure Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ways of knowing are preserved and perpetuated for generations to come.

**...Haumea and Hina, with her multiple nature forms continue the episode of preservation, evolution and survival.**

#### ***1.5.1.4 This, our kūpuna learned!***

Akua Haumea and Hina are wāhine and symbolize feminine energy and are ancestors to wāhine. Haumea is divine mother of the feminine in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi cosmologies. She is Makuahine of Akua Pele and Akua Hi‘iaka and is associated with Papa who birthed ka pae ‘āina o Hawai‘i (Beckwith, 1970). Haumea and Hina take on many forms throughout origin mo‘olelo as a representation of and response to the various needs of the elements in nature. It is in their adaptability that mo‘olelo lives on and the connection to ancestral place continues. Like Akua Haumea and Hina, “preservation, evolution and survival” of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology are at the piko of scholarship that utilizes Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as theory and method.

Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology is something that one *does*. There is a blurring of epistemology within Kānaka ‘Ōiwi existence because concepts within Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology, such as aloha ‘āina and kuleana, are more than adjectives, they are verbs. Many scholars who research Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ways of knowing are also practioners. It is difficult, many would say impossible, to capture a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology without *doing*. As Manulani Meyer (2013) asks, “Are the ideas learned by doing research something I practiced today? Truly, why do research if it doesn’t guide us into enlightened action? Is the vision I hold in my heart something I extend in all directions?” (p. 254). Many scholars who do research within Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology do so with a goal of enlightened action directed toward resisting modernity that lacerates knowledge from place and peoples to claim universality (Patel, 2016). Punihei Lipe (2016), for example, engages research with kūpuna to explore the ways that ‘ike kūpuna can move the University of Hawai‘i system to be a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi place of learning, where modernity is resisted and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies are made central to the organizational fabric of the university. In practical re-imagining, Kapua Chandler (2020) presented a decolonial framework for the re-creation of the first Kānaka ‘Ōiwi college, where Kānaka ‘Ōiwi can gain a postsecondary degree using governance and curricular and extracurricular structures that embody Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies through enlightened communal practices. At the primary and secondary level Noelani Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua (2013) conducted an ethnography during her time as a principal within a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi immersion school. Through her research she presents thick descriptions of the processes of operating Hālau Kū Māna Public School that truly sets Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies as the organizational foundation, while using mitigation strategies that suspend colonial damages of westernized academic standards on Kānaka ‘Ōiwi haumāna through, for example, optimizing on the power of kaiāulu (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013; Tuck, 2009).

## 1.6 Project Significance

The interconnectedness of past, present, and future in theory and practice places this project within a continuum of ancestral healing. This project aims to help in re-connecting the parts of our mo‘okū‘auhau that are fragmented and frayed from colonial injuries. In times of ongoing colonial erasure of Indigenous peoples, it is imperative we engage in acts refusal or the rejecting of colonial realities that maintain Indigenous peoples’ subjugation to exploitation through commodification and control within dominant colonial systems (Simpson, 2017). In refusal comes the re-creation of “not just points of disruption but collective constellations of disruption, interrogation, decolonial love, and profound embodiments of nation-based Indigeneity” (Simpson, 2017, p. 198). Refusal opens Kānaka ‘Ōiwi up to re-creating creation mo‘olelo our ancestors weaved with mo‘okū‘auhau into our stitched realities of the present day. Indigenous intelligence being employed intentionally as theory and method in academic research is refusal to continued colonial damages (Simpson, 2017). A requisite to living life as holistic healing Indigenous individuals and communities requires Indigenous researchers to use our own forms of knowing, methods, and practices to better understand the colonial harms that impact us the most. Instead of having to look toward studies conducted with outside communities for answers about how to approach the poisoning of our own waters, this study instead aims to *Nānā i ke Kumu* (Pukui et al., 1972). Re-searching the most imminent problems of the present using a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological stance is not only an act of refusal but an act of re-memembering our past in the light of truth to re-create thriving Indigenous futures our ancestors, ourselves, and our descendants can be proud of (Simpson, 2017; wa Thiong'o, 2009).

Additionally, this project is a contribution to the re-claiming of more transformative space in western academic research for Indigenous research theories and methodologies to be stored,

accessed, and used as a tool for future projects dedicated to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi survivance. In this research project, I steward knowledges through documenting mo‘olelo of mana wāhine o Kaua‘i and process and contextualize these mo‘olelo within Kānaka ‘Ōiwi systems of meaning making. Traditionally, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi pass on knowledges orally. Kaua‘i being the kupuna and rural island, mo‘olelo are a prevalent method of knowledge transmittal. Further, documenting a collective mo‘olelo of mana wāhine o Kaua‘i contributes to the diversification of the literature on Kānaka ‘Ōiwi that is largely O‘ahu-centric.

## 1.7 Summary

The purpose of this dissertation project is to explore the epistemologies of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi mana wāhine and how this relates to radical healing, including the ways knowledges are intergenerationally transmitted. With this project, I aim to accomplish three interwoven goals: 1) document Kaua‘i mana wāhine epistemic mo‘olelo 2) synthesize material and nonmaterial resources regarding Kānaka ‘Ōiwi survivance through the intentional exercising of my own cultural and place-based epistemologies and 3) decolonize and add to the ongoing research base on a marginalized research population (Kānaka ‘Ōiwi) within a marginalized location (Kaua‘i). Without the equitable and just representation of nā leo of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi mana wāhine o Kaua‘i, the fight to build a sustainable and pono lāhui and more broadly, a livable future for Hawai‘i and is in vain. The goals of this research project are defaulted to the decolonial. Therefore, I actively utilize a decolonial lens throughout this project interlocked with Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as theory, method, and practice to serve the emancipatory function of this research in building toward Kānaka ‘Ōiwi survivance (Fanon, 1967).

The ultimate aim of this study is to weave strands of a lei that intertwine patterns that each tell their own mo‘olelo, but also tell a larger mo‘olelo when pieced together. Epistemological pluralism is needed to do this as I must remain keenly aware of the tools, energies, and desires that go into each strand while also weaving together a larger lei that has continuity and lōkahi in achieving a broader message of preserving, protecting, and perpetuating ‘ike kūpuna and further empowering mana wāhine for the healing of our past, present, and future. My job as a researcher employing this methodology can be summarized by the popular ‘ōlelo no‘eau, which reads, *Ho'omoe Wai Kahi Ke Kao'o*: Let us flow together like water in one direction (Pukui, 1983). Wai or water can be contained, but not bound. Kulu wai (water droplets) can be analyzed, but not irrespective of the whole. Everything presented in this dissertation flows together in one direction; the direction of surviance.

In the next chapter I provide context to colonization in Hawai‘i in the past and as it exists currently. This context is what I call “kumu papa of dis-connection,” to highlight the foundational sources where the dis-connection between Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are our epistemologies have spilled out into every corner of our reality. The next chapter is a way to name to the pain mana wāhine are healing from since understanding the sources of pain will help the reader understand more accurately and emphatically Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies.

## 2.0 Chapter 2: Kumu Papa of Dis-Connection

During my first year in my Ph.D. program at the University of Pittsburgh, I went to visit the Phipps Conservatory that was about a 15-minute walk from the School of Education building. Feeling dis-connected from my kulāiwi and hearing that this conservatory is warm and houses nonhuman life forms, I decided to go one cold day in December. I reluctantly texted two people I met through the Equity and Justice Scholars Program formally known as the Diversity Fellows Program half-jokingly asking them if they would want to go to Phipps with me to “go talk with some plants.” My social anxiety was soothed when they both said yes. As we explored the conservatory, I was stopped dead in my tracks as I saw a tree with red, thin, fissured flowers. I thought, “this can’t be...” as I approached the sign that lay at the base of its trunk it said, “*Metrosideros polymorpha*. ‘Ōhi‘a Lehua Tree.” I asked it, “what are you doing here?” I realize now that this ‘Ōhi‘a Lehua was asking me the same thing.

The ‘Ōhi‘a Lehua tree is endemic to Hawai‘i and is one of the most culturally significant life forms for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. ‘Ōhi‘a Lehua’s mo‘olelo holds that a koa, ‘Ōhi‘a, fell in love with a beautiful wahine named Lehua in Kona moku, Hawai‘i mokupuni. A highly revered and famous wahine Akua named Pele saw ‘Ōhi‘a and wanted him for her own. Pele’s kuleana is to steward the volcanos and re-create through cleansing and expanding the ‘āina with lava. ‘Ōhi‘a rejected Pele because of his commitment to Lehua. Scorned, Pele poured lava over ‘Ōhi‘a and Lehua. ‘Ōhi‘a picked up Lehua and carried her over his head attempting to keep her from being consumed by the lava. Lehua’s ‘aumakaua (‘ohana god in the form of an animal) the red ‘apapane (honeycreeper) tried to save Lehua by calling on all the animals of the forest, but they could not overcome the strength of Pele. The couple was eventually covered with lava. As the lava subsided the ‘apapane

and all the ‘aumakaua of the forest turned ‘Ōhi‘a into wood and Lehua into a blossom. Today, the ‘Ōhi‘a Lehua tree can be seen most readily in the solidified volcanic rocks on Hawai‘i mokupuni, with a sturdy trunk representing ‘Ōhi‘a, the Lehua blossom resting on the top representing Lehua, and ‘apapane nestling next to her in continued protection. It is said that if one picks the Lehua blossom from the ‘Ōhia tree it will rain, symbolizing the tears of ‘Ōhi‘a and Lehua as they are separating (Beckwith, 1970). When Pele pours her lava, sometimes circles of ‘āina form that plants and animals find refuge in to prevent themselves from getting consumed by the fire. These oases within lava beds are known as kīpuka. During my time in Pittsburgh, this ‘Ōhia Lehua tree at Phipps Conservatory was my kīpuka, the place I went to cry with ‘Ōhi‘a and Lehua, separated from their kulāiwi because when it comes to surviving in heated times, I knew ‘Ōhia Lehua would be the best kumu for that in that space.

In just one hundred years following the first arrival of the first western colonizer, Captain James Cook in Waimea ahupua‘a, Kaua‘i mokupuni in 1778, the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi population decreased from an estimated 1,000,000 to 40,000. This was the result of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi being exposed to and dying en masse from foreign disease (Trask, 1999). In 2014, ‘Ōhi‘a Lehua trees, like Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, were exposed to invasive species and diseases and started to rapidly die off. The colonial agent was found to be a fungus that was brought into Hawai‘i. The mechanism for violence is the infiltration of wounds in the ‘Ōhi‘a Lehua trees that kill the trees from the inside out. What is known as Rapid ‘Ōhi‘a Death (ROD) is caused by two fungi: The most aggressive fungus is called *Ceratocystis lukuohia* or Destroyer of ‘Ōhi‘a and the less aggressive fungus is called *Ceratocystis huliohia* or Disruptor of ‘Ōhi‘a. From a decolonial perspective, what separates a destroyer from a disruptor? A colonizer from a settler colonizer? And what do these things have in common? Whether it is rapid or gradual, overt or covert, what they have in common is an act of

violence via the destroying and disrupting of Indigenous peoples from their relation to the land through converting 'āina and Natives to property, corpses, or assimilated subordinates.

The 'Ōhi'a Lehua tree in Phipps gifted me with a re-connection to my ancestral epistemologies and to 'āina I so desperately needed in my time in Pittsburgh and therefore gifted me with the relational insights I needed to sustain myself in the academy. Kānaka 'Ōiwi in our various forms continue to exist despite colonization's every attempt at destruction. Not only do Kānaka 'Ōiwi exist, but Kānaka 'Ōiwi exist beyond where colonizers say we ought to exist. If I were grounded within my sense-abilities in the moment I met the 'Ōhia Lehua tree I would not have asked her, "what are you doing here?" I did not think to ask the other trees that question. Just as people in steel city guided by a sense of colonial entitlement asked what I was doing there when they do not think to ask white students, assumed to be of the dominant culture, that question. When we use the colonially conquered parts of our being to question Indigenous peoples' existence in places where they are not often seen (or more pointedly, erased) we are actually asking a kaona question of, "where's all the Indigenous people in places [kaona: distant exotic lands, reservations, prisons, dead] they ought to be?" while being superficially shocked when we find out that the answer is: destroyed, disrupted, and dis-placed by colonization. 'Ōhia Lehua is one of the few plants that have adapted to lava's permeability and porousness and has survived the colonial winds of change and the evasive organisms that blew in with them. 'Ōhia Lehua is symbolic of modern Kānaka 'Ōiwi refusal and adaptability to colonial realities, while remaining loyal to the soils of one's 'āina. 'Ōhi'a Lehua will continue to survive. A foreign fungus, like all foreign diseases introduced to Hawai'i, may dis-place and disrupt, but will not destroy.

## 2.1 Colonization

Colonization is like a flock of myna birds so big they blot out the sun. Myna birds were introduced to Hawai‘i in the mid-1800s and are “generally vilified for their noisy habits, quarrelsome and opportunistic nature, [...] fruit-eating and nest-robbing habits, and the possibility of adversely affecting native bird populations” (Pyle & Pyle, 2017, n. p.). They do a lot of squawking and stealing of whatever they want, followed by defecating all over everything and flying away, just to swoop in at a later time for more. Colonization is not a metaphor (Tuck & Yang, 2012) about birds. Metaphor is an epistemological tool for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi to make sense of their lived experiences through observations and dynamic relationships with the natural world. As Kumu Haunani-Kay Trask (2003) stated, “I think for lots of Hawaiians it’s very natural, any kind of metaphorical work, whether it’s in song or in chant or, in my case, poetry. It’s a beautiful inheritance” (n. p.). Just as Kānaka ‘Ōiwi inherited metaphorical ways of making sense of the world, so did they inherit practices that became decolonial in the shadow of colonization (wa Thiong’o, 2009). Pushing on Tuck and Yang’s (2012) assertion that decolonization is not a metaphor, I assert that decolonization is a metaphor, as a practice of refusal with material effects. In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology, metaphor is powerful and as such, the power behind metaphors needs to be practiced (Meyer, 1998) otherwise, it is just nice language and nice plays into the ruse of politeness politics and white fragility (Jayakumar & Adamian, 2017). Metaphor as a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemic tool means that it is also a tool of refusal of colonial realities. Metaphor as an integral part of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology and is used throughout this dissertation as a way to make sense of complicated concepts. Metaphor as methodology will be re-introduced and discussed further in chapter 5.

Colonization is not an individual-level phenomenon, although individuals are one of the many carriers of colonization. Colonization is a structure that is continually undergoing "...a very simple process of brutal dispossession in which States from Europe assumed the right to take over the lands, lives, and power of Indigenous Peoples who had done them no harm" (Jackson, 2019, p. 102). Moana Jackson (2019) discusses three key dimensions that go into the process of colonization: 1) violence as the systemic reality of colonization 2) power as the definitive hunger of colonization, and 3) the colonizers' law as pretense to reason in colonization.

### **2.1.1 Violence as the Systemic Reality of Colonization**

Violence as the systemic reality of colonization involves privileging of the colonizers' lives using methods such as guns, diseases, and ideologies to kill Indigenous peoples. Religious ideology, for example, was used by European colonizers to justify killing Indigenous people to assert their control over the land. This behavior fueled the ideology that colonizers' lives are human lives and Indigenous lives are non-human lives and therefore are capable of being dis-placed under the rationale that colonizers are moral and righteous in the eyes of god and Indigenous peoples are immoral and savage (Jackson, 2019). Violence as a systemic reality of colonization is rationalized along this line of dehumanization that is drawn between colonizer/ colonized. Colonization displaces Indigenous people and takes over places "...earlier occupied by the Heaven/ Earth, supralunar/ sublunar, and by the rational humans/ irrational animals premises of nonhomogeneity in order to enable the selected/ dysselected, and thus deserving/ undeserving status organizing principle that it encoded to function for the nation-state" (Wynter, 2003, p. 322).

These binaries of dehumanization are a violent mechanism of colonization that serves the "nation-state" of Hawai'i and always has. In the 1820s, U.S. missionaries arrived in Hawai'i with

the mission to convert Kānaka ‘Ōiwi to Christianity and in doing so proselytized Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology. Through promises of teaching Kānaka ‘Ōiwi how to write in ‘Ōlelo Makuahine, many Kānaka ‘Ōiwi converted. However, missionaries held the view that Kānaka ‘Ōiwi practices and beliefs prior to Christianity needed to be eradicated under the premise that Kānaka ‘Ōiwi were sinful in thought and action and less than human in matters of intellect and morality (Silva, 2005; Trask, 1999). According to colonial logics, these dehumanizing dichotomies between human/ non-human, colonizer/ colonized, Indigenous/ white validates the violence toward Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and feeds the hunger of colonization the food it needs to survive: Power.

### **2.1.2 Power as the Definitive Hunger of Colonization**

The definitive hunger colonization has for power feeds on the being/ power/ truth/ freedom of the Other described as non-human to satisfy the appetite of colonial knowledge for stratification and domination (Wynter, 2003). In the 1830s, hula and other forms of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ways of knowing and being were illegalized (Silva, 2000). The surest way to exercise power and dominance over a people is to rid, change, or silence their ways of knowing—the heart of the colonial project. What packs the greatest punch for colonial violence is the domination of the ideological. To control how people think is to control their tools of relating to the universe including their language, values, and practices (wa Thiong'o, 2010). As more and more colonizers came to Hawai‘i, more and more Kānaka ‘Ōiwi were indoctrinated with the beliefs of Christianity, shrouded in the veil of the white savior who promised salvation for the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi people, whose population continued to be depleted by disease (Trask, 1999).

As colonization feeds off the dehumanization of Indigenous people and land it gets bigger and bigger. The bigger and bigger colonization gets, oxymoronically the more hidden and insidious

it gets. Normalization is a favorite tool of colonization. Normalization allows the extractive relationship between colonizer/ colonized to continue, thus feeding colonization the power it derives from its kleptonic relationship with Indigenous communities, without the associated shame that comes with such behaviors. Colonization is and “has always been a culturally scripted power game and by its very nature it is a privileging of one form of political power over another” (Jackson, 2019, p. 105). Colonial power looks like using methods of ideology such as normalization as well as methods of practice such as creating and enforcing policies that infringe upon the human rights of Indigenous peoples to self-determination. The colonial constitution becomes the dominant and leaves Indigenous peoples seeking power within colonial institutions that are outside of their own in an effort to achieve the end goal of colonization: the lack of freedom and independence in ideology and practice for Indigenous peoples, which allows the conquest of land and peoples for accumulation of individualized and privatized capital to continue (Harris, 2020).

In my many conversations with political and business leaders across Hawai‘i about preventing the continued dis-placement of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and locals by more tightly regulating the amount of tourists who can visit Hawai‘i at any given time and limiting the amount of people who are not genealogically connected to Hawai‘i who can “purchase” ‘āina, the macrosystemic problem that seems to be out of everyone’s “power” or realm of influence is that it is federally unconstitutional to restrict the freedom of people with U.S. citizenry to travel and purchase land where they desire on the basis of “race,” which again is a colonially constructed category used to gas-light Indigenous peoples as “unconstitutional” and parochial in matters of diversity and inclusion. “Unconstitutional” implies there is a constitution (in this case the constitution of the United States of America). This constitution has direct power over the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi people and

‘āina, and for colonial reasons cannot be changed as to not incite change in policies and practices to be equitable and just. As long as Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are under the colonial control of the United States, there will always be an excuse for the erasure, re-placement, and killing of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and the colonial project will march onward.

### **2.1.3 The Colonizers’ Law as the Pretense to Reason**

The colonizers’ law as pretense to reason for violence against Kānaka ‘Ōiwi was validated in the past through ideological power and dominance that came with the exercising of manifest destiny and continues today through imperialism and capitalism via the illegal occupation of the United States (Trask, 1999). The colonizers’ law as pretense to reason is a main cog in the colonial system (Harris, 1993, 2020) and currently dis/ mis-places Kānaka ‘Ōiwi within the United States constitution. The Kingdom of Hawai‘i was not affiliated with the United States during the writing of the constitution. In addition to the United States issuing several formal apologies and admitting the illegality of Hawai‘i’s current “state” in the union, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights released a memorandum stating “...the lawful political status of the Hawaiian Islands is a sovereign nation-state in continuity; but a nation-state that is under a strange form of occupation by the United States resulting from an illegal military occupation and a fraudulent annexation. As such International laws (the Hague and Geneva Conventions) require that governance and legal matters within the occupied territory of the Hawaiian Islands must be administered by the application of the laws of the occupied state (in this case, the laws of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i) and not the domestic laws of the occupier (the United States)” (deZayas, 2018, n. p.). Therefore, it is inaccurate to say that Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are fighting for nationhood, because Hawai‘i is already a nation; a nation that happens to be heavily occupied by the United

States (Trask, 1999). Those who are constitutionally protected by the power of colonizers' law in traveling, living, and "purchasing" 'āina where they want are typically people who are U.S.ian<sup>3</sup>, white, upper class, etc. The definitive hunger of colonization being satisfied through the consumption and constant creation of colonial power ensures that Kānaka 'Ōiwi are not only left unprotected by the United States constitution and whiteness as the law of property, but are directly harmed by it (Harris, 1993, 2020; Trask, 1999; Jackson, 2019).

## **2.2 Whiteness as Property**

The colonizers' law as the pretense to reason privileges the colonizers' law as the only, rightful law and more specifically functions through the equating of whiteness to property. Whiteness as property is not only physical but metaphysical. "Property" is a colonial concept. It does not actually exist in and of itself. For Kānaka 'Ōiwi, law was/ is governed based on relationships between humans and land. Prior to the missionaries, Kānaka 'Ōiwi were ruled by what was known as the Kapu system, which was a system of laws that protected the sustainability of the 'āina and ensured sustenance for all (Blaisdell et al., 2005). Kānaka 'Ōiwi epistemologies hold that all humans, not just the ones racialized within colonial logics of the Native Other, are metaphysically bound so tightly with land that land is our being. The persistent pain of whiteness as property for Indigenous peoples is that white relationships with land through physical control and ideological domination is continually privileged in laws and policies that keep Indigenous peoples' relationships with land subjugated (Harris, 1993). Whiteness as property makes land

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<sup>3</sup> The term U.S.ian is used instead of "American" as a recognition of people who belong to the Americas and identify as American but do not identify with being a part of the U.S.

“ownership” contingent upon race. Whiteness as property further makes rights to land and the associated social and economic benefits to these rights contingent upon the colonizers’ law as pretense for “ownership” and being racially and ideologically white as a precursor to property as power (Harris, 1993). In a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi context, whiteness as property has materialized through specific policies in time. Colonization is not a one-off event in the past, it is an aggregation of colonial logics operating within specific policies and practices over time to create compounded oppression (Kauanui, 2016). I provide an overview of some of the events that gave way to whiteness as property within a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi context as signposts that illustrate how whiteness as property has become an embedded part of our current and persistent reality.

### **2.2.1 The Māhele**

An early example of the establishment of whiteness as property is seen during the reign of King Kamehameha the III, who was in political power in the early-mid 18<sup>th</sup> century. King Kamehameha III had haole advisors who were decedents of missionaries aiding him in negotiations with other nations. King Kamehameha III was pressured by these haole to designate more parts of the ‘āina to haole. This event served as a catalyst for the re-placing of ‘Ōlelo Makuahine with English and a precipitate for the idea of private ownership of the ‘āina (Silva, 2004). This allowed colonization to gain momentum as more businessmen and missionaries from the United States arrived, igniting tensions to create written, legal records detailing who “owned” which parcels of ‘āina and delineating boundaries of “ownership.” The act of documenting such boundaries and re-designating who has claim or stewardship over which parts of the ‘āina is what is known as the *Māhele*. The names of the moku and ahupua‘a of Kaua‘i we know today are a product of several documents gathered during the *Māhele* in 1848 (Chinen, 1958) as well as from

mo‘olelo found in mele and oli that predate colonization (Oliveira, 2014). The *Māhele* set precedence for whiteness as property to be a versatile and pervasive tool in the continued colonial control of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ‘āina and resources by the United States through the driving forces of imperialism and capitalism (Oliveira, 2014).

### **2.2.2 The Rehabilitation Bill**

One of the primary pillars of whiteness as property came with the Rehabilitation Bill moved by Territorial Senator John Wise and Territorial Congressional Delegate Prince Jonah Kūhiō of Kaua‘i in the 1920s that drastically shifted what it means to be Kānaka ‘Ōiwi to be in closer alignment with individualized colonial constructs of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi Indigeneity. Prince Kūhiō’s intent with the Rehabilitation Bill was to help re-turn ‘āina to the stewardship of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and called on the United States to “give back” ceded ‘āina to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi to “rehabilitate a dying race” (Kauanui, 2008). Rehabilitation was a process that did not work to make Kānaka ‘Ōiwi healthier through ‘āina re-connectedness and instead worked to erase Kānaka ‘Ōiwi through racializing them as a people using colonial standards (Kauanui, 2005). These savior/ savage/ salvage complexes and colonial imposition of racial categorization birthed the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act of 1921 that leased ceded government and Crown Lands of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi as homesteads. Who qualifies for these homesteads was defined in the Act as a descendent of Hawaiian Kingdom that are “...not less than one-half part of the blood of the races inhabiting the Hawaiian Islands previous to 1778” (Hawaiian Homes Commission Act,

Pub. L. 34, 1921).<sup>4</sup> With the passing of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act came the re-defining of what it means to be Kānaka ‘Ōiwi—a definition that is not derivative of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ways of knowing, but instead is a definition that erases Indigeneity under the fabricated laws of haole ‘āina ownership. This definition serves as a colonial weapon till this day to dis-place Kānaka ‘Ōiwi from their kulāiwi by exploiting genetic thresholds to enforce the imagined racialized construction that blood quantum is directly linked to how “Hawaiian” someone is and therefore, what they are and are not entitled to (including the right to connect with their own ‘āina) based on colonially constructed “Hawaianness” (Kauanui, 2005).

### 2.2.3 The Akaka Bill

During a period of time known as the second Hawaiian renaissance in the 1970s that pushed back against whiteness as property came the restructuring of the Hawai‘i State Constitution to restore the practices of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi such as the re-connection of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi with ‘āina through the re-creation of paths to sovereignty through U.S. and International policy. Since this restructuring, several controversies and subsequent legislation has been passed in the continued fight for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi self-determination. Amongst the most notable is the *Rice v. Cayetano* case in 2000, where the U.S. Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional under the fourteenth amendment to limit voting within matters concerning the Office of Hawaiian Affairs to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi.

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<sup>4</sup> According to the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, native Hawaiian (with a lower case “n”) is the “legal” definition of a Kanaka ‘Ōiwi as someone who is no less than half Hawaiian by blood. The use of Native Hawaiian (with a capital “N”) has become a common signifier for anyone of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi heritage, regardless of blood quantum level. In this dissertation I use the term Kānaka ‘Ōiwi to refer to all those from Kānaka ‘Ōiwi heritage without regard to blood quantum. I use native Hawaiian when using the definition outlined in the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act. Other terms for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are used in instances where a direct quote or reference to governmental policies are cited.

Following this case was the infamous Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act also known as the Akaka Bill. The Akaka Bill, put forth by Senator Daniel Akaka in 2000, would afford those of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ancestry the same constitutional protections as Native Americans in Honu Moku and would serve as a vehicle for the recognition of an autonomous Hawai‘i nation within the U.S. (McGregor, 2010). The ultimate failure of the Akaka Bill occurred because of controversies about the Bill’s intentions and repercussions. A main point of opposition was the potential for sovereignty to “dis-place” those who are not of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi heritage through the conflation of “race” with place, and more precisely with whiteness as property (Harris, 2020). Another main opposition of the Bill was people viewing the nation-within-a-nation model being a front for the ongoing occupation of the U.S. in Hawai‘i that continues to disregard the illegal overthrow (Kauanui, 2002; McGregor, 2010).

In the current decade, sovereignty and self-determination continue to be a controversial and central focus of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi livelihood. An independent Kānaka ‘Ōiwi internationally recognized nation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has yet to be re-created. Some believe that re-connecting Hawai‘i with the United Nations Committee on Decolonization would be the best path toward sovereignty. This path would ideally lead to a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi government being instituted that is aligned with either the independent, free association, or total integration models. Other proponents of sovereignty believe that the path that is the most pono is complete independence as a nation with international recognition as a self-governing entity. While others believe that the United Nations and World Court should aid in de-occupying U.S. forces from Hawai‘i (McGregor, 2010; Trask, 1999).

## 2.2.4 Imperialism

In 1840 King Kamehameha III worked with ali‘i, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (including wāhine), and haole to implement the first constitution of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i, shifting Hawai‘i’s governance from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy. King Kamehameha III went on to work with his ally British commander, Sir George Simpson, in working to secure the Kingdom of Hawai‘i as a recognized independent nation within the European nations and the United Nations in hopes that this recognition would deter growing threats of imperialism (Silva, 2004). When King Kamehameha III was away on diplomatic matters in England, one of the first attempts at overthrowing the monarchy occurred. Hawai‘i stationed British councilman, Richard Charlton and British warship commander, Lord George Paulet commandeered the sovereignty of the ali‘i under disputes over property “ownership.” In 1843, the British government sent military forces to Hawai‘i to restore power to the monarchy (Silva, 2004). This resulted in a joint proclamation between the Kingdom of Hawai‘i, Britain, and France recognizing Hawai‘i as a sovereign nation with Britain and France “...vowing to never take possession, either directly or under the title of protectorate or under any other form of any part of Hawai‘i” (van Dijk, 2015, p. 361). In response, the U.S. House on the Committee of Foreign Affairs issued the Tyler Doctrine of 1842 that forced Hawai‘i under the sphere of influence of the United States, thereby solidifying their continued abuse of Hawai‘i as the refueling station for many U.S. and foreign military and commercial vessels (Silva, 2004). King Kamehameha III was led to believe that the United States, like Britain and France, would not compromise the sovereignty of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i. In an 1842 letter to U.S. Congress, President Tyler stated:

Just emerging from a state of barbarism, the government of the islands is as yet feeble, but its dispositions appear to be just and pacific, and it seems anxious to improve

the condition of its people by the introduction of knowledge, of religious and moral institutions, means of education, and the arts of civilized life. It cannot but be in conformity with the interest and wishes of the Government and the people of the United States that this community, thus existing in the midst of a vast expanse of ocean, should be respected and all its rights strictly and conscientiously regarded (Tyler, 1848, p 1316).

The Tyler Doctrine upheld manifest destiny as an ideological hammer that attempted to nail the casket shut on Kānaka ‘Ōiwi self-determination. The United States’ official stance was that they had the right to exercise their control over Hawai‘i by right of conquest (Trask, 1999). In November of 1843, France, Britain, and the Kingdom of Hawai‘i celebrated Hawai‘i’s Independence when Hawai‘i officially entered into the European Nations and the United Nations. Following this, King Kamehameha III famously declared, “Ua Mau ke Ea o ka ‘Āina i ka Pono,” which translates to “the sovereignty of the land is continued because it is pono” (Silva, 2004, p. 37). These words are now the motto of the state of Hawai‘i and is generally interpreted to mean, “The life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness,” re-moving the current state of Hawai‘i’s motto from its original context in the fight for sovereignty and re-turning of ‘āina to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (Silva, 2004).

Looking to re-store the values and practices of the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi nation in the midst of imperial influence, King David Kalākaua was elected by legislative vote to oversee the Kingdom of Hawai‘i in 1874. Known as the “Merrie Monarch” Kalākaua was well liked amongst the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi people and amongst political leaders across the world. With Kalākaua’s popularity came the peeked interest of United States businessmen in eyeing Hawai‘i as a place that can help bolster their empire built on imperialism and capitalism (Saranillo, 2010). Trade agreements made between plantation owners of the time and the United States to seize ‘āina for use as a strategic

military outpost in exchange for duty-free sugar led to a coup d'état. This forced King Kalākaua to sign the Bayonet Constitution of 1887. This constitution stripped the monarchy of their political power, barred non-whites from voting and naturalizing, imposed property and income laws on voting rights, and granted full political control over Pu'uola (Pearl Harbor) to the United States (Kajihiro, 2008; Trask, 1999).

Upon King Kalākaua's death in 1891, his sister, Queen Lili'uokalani succeeded the throne. Queen Lili'uokalani adamantly and unapologetically resisted whiteness as property and sought to dissolve the Bayonet Constitution. She drafted a new constitution that would re-store political power to the monarchy and privilege Kānaka 'Ōiwi law over that of the colonizers (Osorio, 2002; Trask, 1999; Silva, 2004). Hearing that Queen Lili'uokalani had drafted a new constitution a group of haole businessmen formed what they named the "Provisional Government," which was functionally an all-haole oligarchy. Queen Lili'uokalani was arrested, charged for treason, and placed under house arrest in a room on the second floor of 'Iolani Palace. Over two hundred friends and associates of the Queen were also arrested and jailed (Lili'uokalani, 1990). In Re-membering her trial for treason she declared, "The only charge against me really was that of being a queen; and my case was judged by these, my adversaries before I came into court" (Lili'uokalani, 1990, p. 280). The haole businessmen that tried Lili'uokalani found her guilty of treason. U.S. military personnel infiltrated 'Iolani Palace and kept a close, constant, and predatory eye on her. On January 17<sup>th</sup>, 1893, Queen Lili'uokalani was forced to abdicate her position as Queen and forgo the monarchy's power. Upon doing so Lili'uokalani issued a statement, an excerpt of which reads:

To prevent the shedding of the blood of my people, natives and foreigners alike, I opposed armed interference, and quietly yielded to the armed forces brought against my throne, and submitted to the arbitrament of the government of the United

Stated the decision of my rights and those of the Hawaiian people. Since then, as it is well known to all, I have pursued the path of peace and diplomatic discussion, and not that of internal strife” (1990, p. 282).

The Provisional Government submitted an annexation treaty to the U.S. Congress for approval. President Cleveland pulled the treaty from congressional consideration until his commissioner, James Blount, could conduct an investigation of the annexation. James Blount and President Cleveland decided in favor of restitution, calling the annexation of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i “an act of war” and declaring that, “a substantial wrong has thus been done which a due regard for our national character as well as the rights of the injured people requires we should endeavor to repair” (Blount, 1893, see pp. 445-461; Lili‘uokalani, 1990). Reparative action came to a stalemate, however, when President Cleveland left office shortly after this investigation, leaving matters to President McKinley. McKinley put Hawai‘i’s livelihood in the hands of a joint resolution rather than a treaty of annexation. This resulted in the United States annexation of Hawai‘i in 1898 that came with a simple majority vote. Twenty-two United States Presidents later, Hawai‘i’s annexation is still not legally ratified. Upon the illegal annexation of Hawai‘i, The Republic of Hawai‘i was established by haole businessmen with Sanford B. Dole (cousin to James Dole, the Pineapple Plantation owner) as the first governor (Trask, 1999).

The primary driver behind the United States Congress swiftly passing the joint resolution that led to the annexation of Hawai‘i was because of the war in Spain. Military occupation in Hawai‘i quickly amplified, turning Hawai‘i into the military epicenter of the Pacific basin. The U.S. military worked with the haole oligarchy to cede ‘āina for military use. The imperialist U.S. project in Hawai‘i was efficient and merciless as they quickly seized several thousand acres of ‘āina, including Crown Lands and Hawaiian Homelands (land that is federally commissioned for

those of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi heritage). The bombing of Pu‘uloa, O‘ahu in 1941 served as an ingress to Hawai‘i’s statehood on August 21, 1959. Following WWII, militarization continued to rampage on in Hawai‘i, and statehood gave that much more power to the U.S. in ceding even more ‘āina. Today, the military controls over 5.7% of the total ‘āina in Hawai‘i and over 22.4% of the ‘āina on the most densely populated mokupuni o O‘ahu, with military personnel representing over 16% of the total population (Niheu et al., 2007).

To militarize the ‘āina means to militarize Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. For example, the U.S. ceded the entire mokupuni o Kaho‘olawe as a bomb testing site, ecologically poisoning the ‘āina and physically destroying freshwater tables so that inhabitants, both human and non-human, struggle to have a sustainable existence there (McGregor, 2010; Trask, 1999). On the other mokupuni, militarization in the form of ceded ‘āina has led to violations of aloha ‘āina (love of the land, deeply entrenched belief/ action of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi) and therefore, to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi rights violations. For example, on Kaua‘i, the Pacific Missile Range Facility has exerted control over Nohili (Barking Sands) beach. *Oki pau ka hana i ke one kani o Nohili*— Strange indeed are the activities at the sounding sands of Nohili (Pukui, 1983). Nohili is a resting place of iwi kūpuna, home to many endangered endemic wildlife, and a location where generations of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ‘ohana fish and surf. Protests in the early 1990s against missile launch testing at Nohili led to the arrest of several Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and the continued testing of nuclear weapons in our oceans (Kajihiro, 2008). Today, Nohili beach is a place snipped from the lei of our collective mo‘okū‘auhau; a puka in the narrative that will grow bigger if occupied spaces are left un-claimed and colonial ideologies of survival are not re-placed in relation to the re-membering of this place as ‘Ōiwi (Nāone, 2008; Simpson, 2011; wa Thiong’o, 2009).

### 2.2.5 Capitalism

Violence, power, and law are the logics of colonization operationalized through behaviors, ideologies, institutions, and policies to ensure the finished product of colonization: Control over Indigenous peoples, lands, and resources (Wilson & Yellow Bird, 2005). Control over Indigenous peoples, lands, and resources is in the interest of capitalism. If violence against Indigenous peoples and ‘āina is the mechanism of control, and power is the fuel, then capitalism is a reward of colonization. Capitalism is a product that only favors the colonizer and superficially rewards the colonized who assimilate to the colonizers’ ideologies and practices. Colonization as a process is about the collecting of cumulative and intergenerational wealth and the control of the means of production, including what is produced, how it is produced, by whom it was produced, and how it was distributed for white gain. This process is cardinally connected and perpetuated by military conquest of Indigenous lands and commodification of Indigenous culture (Grande, 2004). Colonization is pervasive because colonization as a process is upheld by highly pervasive ideologies. Colonization is “...underwritten by Western Christianity, defined by white supremacy, and fueled by global capitalism” (Grande, 2004, p. 19). In the process of colonization Indigenous lands and bodies are commodified and used as capital (Simpson, 2017) via methods of displacement such as deportation, massacre, and slavery to increase wealth for the colonial state (Fanon, 1963).

A strong illumination of violence as a means to harness power as acquired through the colonizers’ laws as the pretense to reason and specifically through whiteness as property is the establishing of the plantations in Hawai‘i. Many haole who acquired ‘āina as a result of the *Māhele* ended up “selling” their ‘āina to other haole and by 1888, three-quarters of the ‘āina “belonged” to haole businessmen to make way for the plantation enterprise (Trask, 1999). In the mid-1800s

the plantation industry boomed and with this economic growth came more power and control in the hands of haole.

The most prominent and powerful haole were a group of businessmen known as the Big Five. The Big Five referred to the five plantation corporations that controlled shipping to and from the islands, successfully securing a stranglehold on the economy of Hawai'i. By the 1900s, these five corporations owned 47% of all plantations, were responsible for 95% of all sugar output in Hawai'i, and have influenced and adapted to the colonial conditions that feed them the power to still control commerce today (Jung, 2006). The success of the Big Five is predicated on whiteness as property for capitalistic gain through the exploitation of Black and Brown bodies for labor.

Beginning in the 1850s haole settler colonial plantation owners began the importation of humans to work on the sugar cane and pineapple plantations. These humans came from China, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Portugal, and Puerto Rico. Settler colonialism led to Hawai'i's population more than doubling from the arrival of migrant plantation workers to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Takaki, 1983). The migrants of the plantation era and their descendants I refer to as arrivants because many of these people, such as the Filipinxs, were brought against their will or as refugees while others, like some of the Chinese were under indentured servitude contracts. Although settlers, the term arrivants highlights that these populations did not arrive under the same conditions as haole colonizers of the U.S. and Europe and do not have the social, economic, and political power of the U.S. businessmen who extracted them from their homelands (Saranillio, 2018). Nevertheless, many arrivants were complicit in recognizing the independence of the Hawaiian Kingdom and internalized the values of the colonizer about Hawai'i being an extension of the U.S. and as an unrealistically romanticized land of opportunity (Saranilio, 2010).

Following the settling and intermixing of a large multiracial population politically and economically controlled by haole and under the control of Hawai‘i’s new status as the “50<sup>th</sup> state” in the union in the 1950s, racialized relationships shifted to more closely mirror that of the U.S. mainland. Post-WWII came with a populace that was actively resisting racism in policies and practices in the workforce, education, and housing designed to maintain the inferiority of Black and Brown people. As Black and Brown veterans came home there was an active refusal to accept the racist conditions within the country they fought for that continued to treat them as subordinate to whites (Takaki, 1993). Hawai‘i’s forced arrivants from the plantations forged paths to gain higher representation within the U.S. government (Byrd, 2011; Trask, 2008). Certain racialized groups within Hawai‘i began to hierarchically mobilize and assimilate in the economic and political spheres under the shifting settler colonial dynamics that came with being *instated* in the United States union, most notably the Japanese American population (Kajihiro, 2008). The shifts in systems of racialized meaning making corresponded to the sharper shifts toward capitalism. The fractures from these social and economic shifts are the ideological cracks where the seeds of western values such as individualism and consumerism were planted and grew long, intertwining vines that cut off the water and oxygen flow of ‘Ōiwi beings to survive (Trask, 1999). U.S. imperialist and capitalist extraction of cheaper labor in Asia and South America, led to the collapse of the plantation industries in Hawai‘i and in the rubble of such a culturally significant settler colonial collapse, the tourism industry boomed. Tourism, along with the military are the largest revenue generators and largest drivers of over-development, violence to ‘āina and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, and population growth in Hawai‘i today (Kajihiro, 2008; Trask, 1999).

Today, when one visits the intersection of imperialism, settler colonialism, and capitalism in Hawai‘i, one will find a hotel. Kānaka ‘Ōiwi were dis-placed when the ‘āina was rapidly

excavated to build hotels for tourism. This further served the colonial attempt to dis-connect Kānaka ‘Ōiwi from ‘āina, which again, is more than physical land palatable to colonizers’ sense-abilities for over-development (Trask, 2000). Re-turning to ‘āina. ‘Āina, in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology, does not only mean land and “that which feeds” in the sense of feeding our body food. It also means “that which feeds” ea (breath; sovereignty) into Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. ‘Āina is also the site of the complex coalescence between Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and place. In the *Kumulipo*, Hāloa is an ancestor in the form of kalo (taro) from which kānaka (people/ humans) were born. In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology, kānaka are literally one with the ‘āina. The term “Kānaka ‘Ōiwi” comes from Kānaka ‘Ōiwi knowledge systems that place the lifecycle of humans within that of the ‘āina, which is cosmologically more connected than any one human/ group of humans can be across space and time. Kānaka are birthed from the ‘āina and are re-absorbed back in the ‘āina when they die. To be Kānaka ‘Ōiwi is to be of the ‘āina and is to have your iwi kūpuna within the soils and mana of that particular ‘āina. ‘Āina as “that which feeds” can be thought of as the feeder between kānaka and physical, cultural, and spiritual sustenance. ‘Āina is therefore synonymous with surviance and ea.

When Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are dis-connected from their physical ‘āina, their mana gets sucked from them and gets fed into the veins of the colonial system and consequently starves the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi environment and people of the nourishment needed to thrive. Poverty, food insecurity, incarceration, and school dropout rates are the highest amongst the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi population, despite being one the smallest racialized groups in Hawai‘i (McGregor, 2010). In the hospitality and tourism sector, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are overrepresented in the lowest-paying jobs (Silva, 2004). This information is presented to amplify the strengths of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi against the dominant narrative of Indigenous people as deficient or extinct under commercialized colonization. Colonization

allows the colonial state to cash out on the exploitation and death of Indigenous peoples and lands and unless disrupted, the products of colonization (control of land, erasure and exploitation of Indigenous people and culture for material gain) will sustain Indigenous illness and death, and the subsequent re-placing of all places, peoples, practices, and ideas that are Indigenous in what has been repackaged as settler colonialism (Harris, 2020; Jackson, 2019; Patel, 2016).

### **2.3 Settler Colonialism**

Settler colonialism and colonization are two concepts that are closely related yet vary in important regards. Colonization is conceptualized within the field of Decolonial Studies as a structure centered around the extraction of resources and labor from Indigenous peoples, whereas settler colonialism is a variant of colonization that erases Indigenous societies and builds upon their remnants a new society, based on property and entitlement to property (Harris, 2020, 1993; Wolfe, 2006). Settler colonialism seeks to “Kill the Indian, Save the Man,” using colonial logics, like the white savior complex to do so (Churchill, 2004). Many people from many walks of life exist upon stolen Indigenous lands and benefit directly or indirectly off of the decimation of Indigenous peoples; however, colonization is about the subjugation of the Other while settler colonialism is not necessarily about the subjection of the other in explicit terms, but about inhabitation on and the claiming of stolen Indigenous lands as one’s own (Rowe & Tuck, 2017; Wolfe, 1999).

Settler colonialism operates from a logic of elimination for re-placement. The erasing of Indigenous peoples from their own land is a primary feature of settler colonialism through assimilation and the politics of recognition such as cultural protection and individual rights

afforded to Indigenous peoples by the colonial (e)state (Kelley, 2017). Settler logics are methods by which settler colonialism is enacted and are largely concerned with land laws, assimilation, and elimination logics that are implanted into the minds of Indigenous people that evolves and spreads like a virus to stay alive (wa Thiong'o, 1981; Wolfe, 2006). Settler colonialism is intent on erasing to re-place Indigenous peoples with settlers using legal, financial, and knowledge systems to take over land for private profit (Patel, 2016; wa Thiong'o, 1981). Settler colonialism as a process of colonization is entirely concerned with property. Property in this sense means land (in the physical, material meaning of the word), people's relationships to land through the hierarchical, dichotomous, anthropocentric, owner/ non-owner logic, and the processes by which people become property through mechanisms that erase to re-place (Patel, 2016). The structure of settler colonialism necessitates that Indigenous peoples be eliminated (Wolfe, 2006) and others take their place as Indigenous (Tuck & Gaztambide, 2010).

Rather than settler colonialism being thought of as something that happened to Indigenous people in the past, it can be thought of as an ongoing structure with interlocking components to secure white property rights. Rowe and Tuck (2017) state, "Settler colonialism is a persistent societal structure, not just a historical event or origin story for a nation-state" (p. 4). Colonization is not an event or a story that happened in the past, but an on-going process that is living, breathing, and pulsating through the air we inhale at this very moment in time and space. Distinguishing between settler colonialism as a structure rather than an event is to take into account different colonial processes that affect our contemporary realities (Tuck & Gaztambide, 2010). Settler colonialism cannot be readily linked to a moment in time because it dictates on-going relations between owners, non-owners and those and that which are owned. There are events, such as the arrival of Captain Cook or the introduction of migrants from parts of Asia, that helped create the

conditions for the colonial structures of today, which are vitally attentive to the exact apparatuses of settler/ non-settler, ownership, and property (Patel, 2016).

Hawai‘i is highly heterogenous in terms of U.S. Census defined racialized categories, with white, Filipino, Japanese, Native Hawaiian, and Chinese being the top five largest racial groups in Hawai‘i, 24.2% of the population identifying as two or more races, and 85.2% identifying as non-white (U.S. Census, 2021). This means that even within the use of colonial methods of racialization such as the U.S. Census and despite the ongoing violent erasure of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, people are still identifying as Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. Colonization is fresh in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi collective consciousness as it has been less than 250 years since Captain Cook’s arrival, less than 200 years since the first forced arrivants were brought to Hawai‘i from China (La Croix, 2019), and less than 75 years since Hawai‘i became a “state.” Constitutions, nation-states, and imagined borders can be changed just as recklessly as they were constructed and applied (Anzaldúa, 1987; Yuval-Davis & Stoetzler, 2002).

The neoteric acculturation processes in Hawai‘i have been colloquially referred to as “the melting pot.” The melting pot metaphor becomes useful in thinking about the complicated web of overlapping, entangled, and multicolored strings within the structure of settler colonialism in Hawai‘i. Hawai‘i has been called a “melting pot” as a metaphor for a multiracial paradise, where racial inequity is absolute, and all racial and ethnic groups blend together until they harmoniously exist under one shared culture (Rohrer, 2016). Settler colonialism in Hawai‘i collapses human rights violations such as desecration of the ‘āina into broader discussions framed around settler rights, thereby erasing Kānaka ‘Ōiwi nā leo (voices) and re-placing them with settler colonial ones. Settler colonialism abides by the colonial/ Indigenous binary and automatically casts Kānaka ‘Ōiwi to be non-settlers (Trask, 1999). Under the erase and re-place logic of settler colonialism,

non-settlers are non-owners and therefore are non-existent. Non-existence means that the land is empty and up for the taking and that Indigenous people, if not physically eradicated, are otherwise erased and re-placed with an assimilated and/ or acculturated version of themselves (Fujikane, 2008; Patel, 2016).

Settler colonialism is engrained into the context of Hawai‘i because the majority of arrivants from across Asia and the Pacific were brought to Hawai‘i as property to work on ‘āina that was forcibly taken over and made into the property of haole plantation owners (Saranillio, 2018). The structure of settler colonialism dictating the relationships between land/ people, owners/ non-owners, settlers/ non-settlers is complicated in a Hawai‘i context because of the intermixing of various ethnoracial groups, histories, and lineages and is an act of slow erasure. If Kānaka ‘Ōiwi will not physically cease to exist, settler colonialism makes it so that they are erased under the racialized category of “mixed-race,” with their status as Kānaka ‘Ōiwi being diminished by racist blood quantum laws and policies and hidden under the colonial pressures of assimilation (Kauanui, 2018). Settler colonialism uses ideologies of miscegenation to police contemporary definitions of who is and is not Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, settler/ non-settler. The settler/ enslaved/ non-settler triad rationale that settler colonialism uses to determine relationships between people and land works to subdue Kānaka ‘Ōiwi through processes such as privileging colonizers’ jurisprudence (Jackson, 2019) through racist legal qualifiers such as blood quantum, thus ensuring settler futurity where land repartition policies currently in place, as manipulative and iniquitous as they are, will no longer exist (Fujikane, 2008). The unpacking of settler colonialism in this project is a necessary and appropriate endeavor, considering that in Hawai‘i the “empire, settlement, and internal colony have no spatial separation” and therefore, clashes of differing “decolonial desires” is normative (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 7).

### 3.0 Chapter 3: Kumu Papa of Re-Connection

#### 3.1 Kānaka ‘Ōiwi Epistemology

For this project I use the definition of epistemology used by Kumu Manulani Meyer (2003) who defines Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as “a way to engage Hawaiian ontology relative to understanding and knowing” (p. 77). Ontology, according to Meyer (2003) “is a synonym for the essence of what it means to be Hawaiian. It is tied to cosmology, belief structures and practices that uphold specific values, ways of understanding the world, and ways of engaging” (p. 78). Cosmology is concerned with metaphysical phenomenon of the universe including concepts such as temporality and spatiality. In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology cosmology is the fundamentals of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ontology. Kalo, for example, is thought of as an ancestor of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. Returning to the origin mo‘olelo at the opening of this dissertation, Wākea and Akua Ho‘ohōkūokalani had a still born son named Hāloanaka (meaning “quivering stalk”). They buried Hāloanaka facing the rising sun and Ho‘ohōkūokalani wept at his burial place. Her tears saturated the soils of Hāloanaka’s burial place. From these tears and ‘āina, the first kalo plant grew. Wākea and Ho‘ohōkūokalani had a second son. They named him Hāloa after their first son who became the first human. The kalo plant, therefore, is the sibling to all Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (Beckwith, 1970; Kame‘eleihiwa, 1992). Kalo is a staple in the diet of ancient Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and remains a primary food and cultural resource today. Kalo feeds Kānaka ‘Ōiwi not only in the literal sense, but in the epistemological sense that kalo is of the ‘āina and ancestors. This mo‘olelo shows how Kānaka ‘Ōiwi view time, space, and change and how cosmologically Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are inseparable from the ‘āina because they are literally and metaphysically of the ‘āina. Kalo as one of many origin

mo‘olelo detailing the relationships between humans and land, past and future, and all planes and axes in between, is representative of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology (Meyer, 2003).

Through enacting her ancestral kuleana, Kumu Manulani Meyer (1998, 2001, 2008, 2013a, 2013b) created seven main Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological themes from mo‘olelo collected with kūpuna: spirituality, physical place, the senses, relationships, utility, words, and body/ mind question. With these themes she discusses the values and beliefs that can be thought of as cornerstones of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology, such as kuleana, pono, aloha ‘āina, ‘ike kūpuna, lōkahi, wahi, mālama, ha‘aha‘a (humility), and mana. Out of these seven epistemological themes, Kumu Manulani Meyer (2003, 2008, 2011, 2013a) created an ontological trilogy: Body, mind, spirit. This aligns with mana kupuna wahine, Kumu Mary Kawena Pukui’s (1972) foundational work on the triple piko concept. The triple piko concept is a strong demonstration of the interrelatedness of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology. Piko colloquially means “center.” In literal terms it means “navel, umbilical cord” but can also mean “genitals” and “summit or top of a mountain.” According to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi cosmology, there are three piko in the human body: The head, the navel, and the genitals. These three piko represents areas in the body where Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are connected to the past, present, and future. A person’s head or brain literally translates to “summit or top of mountain” further exemplifying how one’s body is connected to ‘āina and represents the connection to one’s past—one’s ancestral memory. The genitals, as in reproduction, represent Kānaka ‘Ōiwi connection to future generations. The umbilical cord represents one’s connection to the present. The umbilical cord is said to run matrilineally as a line that attaches the mother to all of those present in the immediate ‘ohana (Pukui, 1972). The umbilical cord carries significance in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi culture because the piko (as in the umbilical cord) along with the ‘iewe (placenta) of a newborn is buried in the ‘āina to ground the baby in their kulāiwi. This ritual is known to

Kānaka ‘Ōiwi as contributing to the longevity and health of the baby (McGregor & Mackenzie, 2014). Mo‘okū‘auhau, then, describes how these three piko of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi intelligence are interconnected to each other and also across generational lines.

The piko, center, or navel also is connected to the epistemological center of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi intelligence, the na‘au. Na‘au is literally translated to “intestines” and also means “heart” and “mind.” It is where one’s heart and mind meet. It is where intelligence and instinct exist in lōkahi. It is the physical area in one’s body that harbors one’s sense-abilities. Not being in tune with one’s na‘au makes one insensible and unintelligent (Meyer, 2001). Sometimes people ask each other, “pehea kō piko?” This translates to, “how is your navel?” Posed in the context of modernity, this question ubiquitously asks, “how are you doing?” This tamps down the deeply reflective and existential power of the question, which more dynamically asks: “how are your three piko?” This is asked in times where one’s behaviors are questioned because of a lack of lōkahi and a need to re-ground oneself in place and practice (Pukui et al., 1972). Na‘au will be described more in detail in the following chapter.

### **3.2 Decolonization**

As Audra Simpson (2014) states, “Settler colonialism fails at what it is supposed to do: eliminate Indigenous people; take all their land; absorb them into a white, property-owning body politic” (p. 39). So why does settler colonialism fail? Or rather, why do Indigenous people continue to survive? Colonization is a process of enacting violence and grabbing at power in order to subjugate Indigenous peoples as a move to secure property and ownership. The decolonial is always present in the colonial (wa Thiong’o, 2009). Decolonization, then, is a “long-term process

involving the bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic and psychological divesting of colonial power” (Smith, 2012, p. 101).

An example of a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological practice unique to Kaua‘i that is decolonial in the face of colonization is salt making at Salt Pond. Salt Pond beach ‘oia ka mokupuni o Kaua‘i, moku o Kona, ahupua‘a o Hanapēpē (Hanapēpē, Kaua‘i). Salt Pond is the home of natural salt beds used to produce Hawaiian sea salt or pa‘akai. “Pa‘a” means “to make solid” and kai means “ocean,” so pa‘akai means “to solidify the ocean.” The mo‘olelo of Salt Pond holds that Akua Hi‘iaka (sister of Akua Pele, the Goddess of Volcanos) caught an abundance of fish at this beach. She caught such a large quantity of fish that she had no way of preserving it. Saddened that the fish would be wasted, she cried. As she wept, a woman appeared and took Hi‘iaka’s tears and put them in a basin she had dug in the red clay naturally produced at this beach. The woman told Hi‘iaka to put her fish in the basin and she complied. As the wai in her tears dissipated under the sun, the salt was left over, which preserved her fish. The woman who appeared to Hi‘iaka is said to be her sister Pele in one of her many hidden forms and the first Hawaiian sea salt produced is said to be that of Hi‘iaka’s tears at Salt Pond beach, Kaua‘i. The importance of place names is this mo‘olelo is yet again underscored. The original place name of Salt Bond Beach is Waimakaohi‘iaka, meaning “the tears of Hi‘iaka” (Beckwith, 1970). There are currently 22 ‘ohana who practice Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology at the lo‘i pa‘akai (salt patch). These ‘ohana inherited the ‘āina from their kūpuna, whose job it was to harvest pa‘akai in pre-colonial Hawai‘i. It is kapu (forbidden/ sacred) to step foot into the lo‘i pa‘akai or take pa‘akai from it if you are not a member of these ‘ohana or if you were not invited by these ‘ohana to take part in the process. The harvesting of pa‘akai is all done by hand using traditional methods with no machinery, refining, or additives

being a part of the process and remains one of the only places in the world that harvests salt using traditional methodologies (Nobrega-Oliveira, 2019).

The process of harvesting pa‘akai is always done with an emphasis on passing ‘ike kūpuna to future generations and keeping the practice alive. However, the livelihood of pa‘akai is being threatened by ongoing colonization. The Smoky Mountain Helicopters, Inc. company “own” ‘āina directly adjacent to the lo‘i pa‘akai. This ‘āina has been turned into an airport for private helicopter tour companies. Smoky Mountain Inc. lacks the proper permits to build certain infrastructures they have built and in 2019 attempted to retroactively gain these permits. There are ongoing protection efforts demanding the county of Kaua‘i refuse to issue these permits. There are concerns about air pollution and cesspool biochemical waste negatively impacting the ecosystems that maintain a healthy and functional lo‘i pa‘akai. There are also concerns about the public access road that the county of Kaua‘i built that runs through the lo‘i pa‘akai. Unregulated foot and vehicle traffic has led to the eroding of the protective structures that keep water from flooding the lo‘i pa‘akai and contributes to pollution that builds up in and around the lo‘i pa‘akai (Nobrega-Oliveira, 2019). Further, government entities such as the FDA deem pa‘akai that has the Alaea (naturally occurring red clay of this place) in it as unsafe for human consumption, despite Alaea being safely consumed by Kānaka ‘Ōiwi for centuries. What is approved by the FDA, however, is “Hawaiian salt” that is not actually Hawaiian but is pacific sea salt usually from California that is often refined and is comprised mostly of Sodium Chloride (C. Hiro, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi Lāhui, Moloka‘i, personal communication, January 10, 2020).

Decoloniality is difficult and irresponsible to separate from Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology in modern times (Trask, 1999). The above mo‘olelo shows us that when it comes to pa‘akai, colonization causes the sickness of the ‘āina. Sickness of the ‘āina leads to physical and spiritual

sickness in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. There is a saying called, *Mō ka Piko* or “the cord is cut” to signify that a piko has been severed resulting in a severed connection of a loving relationship (Pukui et al., 1972). This loving relationship is between Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and ‘āina and therefore, represents the forced slicing up of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi past, present, and future into fragmented parts of a vaguely familiar whole. It is the separation of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi from ancestral memory (the onset of collective amnesia), from ‘āina as ancestor (and therefore from oneself as a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi), and from the future by preventing the passing on of ‘ike kūpuna to the next generation.

In 2020, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Waimakaohi‘āka was used as a refuge for houseless people who are disproportionately Kānaka ‘Ōiwi because of colonial dis-placement. In practicing Kānaka ‘Ōiwi survivance, a hui of Kaua‘i artists in relationship with the houseless kaiāulu painted the restrooms at Waimakaohi‘iaka with a mural that depicts the mo‘olelo of Hi‘iaka and how pa‘akai came to be. This project was one where place-based, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological pedagogy was practiced as a re-claiming of connection to place, a re-creation of mo‘olelo, and a re-membering of our ancestral past to help us heal from the hardships of the present. The mural that was painted at Waimakaohi‘iaka in the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic became the inspiration for myself in relationship with the wāhine artists to co-found a nonprofit organization called Kamāwaelualani, the ancestral inoa o Kaua‘i, so that we can continue the work of providing avenues for kaiāulu members to re-connect to ‘āina, kaiāulu, and ‘ike kūpuna to open their sense-abilities to the communal, geographic, and cultural strengths that reside in who we are. Practicing ‘ike kūpuna as survivance means we take it as our kuleana to kōkua all humans who dwell on Kaua‘i, regardless of they are Indigenous or not, to re-member they are on Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ‘āina, specifically Kaua‘i and inspire in them their kuleana to open their senses to the

mo‘olelo of this place and people and contribute whatever pono practices they are able to our collective Kaua‘i mo‘okū‘auhau.

Projects such as painting murals of Hi‘iaka in one of her wahi, are imperative because when the ‘āina is sick, we are sick. When the ‘āina is healthy, we are healthy. Waimakaohi‘iaka and the harvesting of pa‘akai is a primary example of the impacts of colonization as destruction and disease. Human extractive relationships with ‘āina have led to unpredictable seasons and unusable pa‘akai harvests resulting in less and less pa‘akai produced each year. Less pa‘akai produced means less pa‘akai consumed, meaning Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are forced to use less healthy alternatives for salt, which can lead to physical health issues such as high cholesterol, heart attacks, and strokes; ailments that are directly representative of the colonially caused health disparities amongst the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi population in Hawai‘i (Antonio et al., 2020). The erase to re-place function of settler colonialism is alive and well in this example. Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ways of knowing revolving around pa‘akai in this particular place are erased and re-placed with settler futurities characterized by low-cost, low-quality appropriation of “Hawaiian Sea Salt” and the privatization and irresponsible access to epistemological realms of knowing including the at every level of the piko, the cosmological cord, that runs through our oceanscapes (i.e., the ocean at Salt Pond), landscapes (i.e., the beach at Salt Pond), and skylscapes (i.e., military and private enterprise helicopters that hover in the air space of Salt Pond). This process will continue to benefit settlers along the whiteness as property owning/ non-property owning binary, slowly rendering Kānaka ‘Ōiwi invisible within the intergenerational cycle of historical trauma and with it the re-cycling of colonization (Brave Heart, 2011; Wane, Torres, & Nyaga, 2019).

Decolonization is a process of naming the ways colonization causes damage at every entrail of Indigenous existence as a way to heal the hurt, while also moving toward an active re-creating

of material realities that ensure these processes for healing and amplifying Indigenous strengths and joy to dis-connect, not from Indigenous ways of knowing and doing, but from the structure and processes of colonization (Tuck, 2009; Simpson, 2017). Though the decolonial literature is expansive in terms of what the process of decolonization looks like, I will focus on two main themes prevalent in the decolonial literature specifically focused on Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies: Re-matriation, Re-membrance, and Resistance.

### **3.2.1 Re-matriation**

The seeds of colonization have been sowed in the ‘āina long ago. Despite the invasive nature of colonization, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi persist not only in existence, but in exertion of self-determination. At present, a collective shift from revitalization to preservation to perpetuation can be observed through the re-creation of grassroots organizations, growing activism, and governmental policies and programs dedicated to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi culture, education, self-determination, and healing (McGregor, 2010). One such discernable example is the Ku Kia‘i Mauna Kea (The protectors of Mauna Kea) movement. In 2010, the University of Hawai‘i at Hilo filed a Conservation District Use Application (CDUA) for the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) Corporation to build a telescope on the kapu mountain of Mauna Kea on Hawai‘i mokupuni justified by colonial ideologies about big science and the advancement of astronomical knowledge for the betterment of humanity. This telescope would stand at 55 km (about 18 stories) tall and require excavation into undisturbed ‘āina in the Northern Plateau of Mauna Kea, digging 30 km (18.64 miles) below the Earth’s surface. It would dis-place large amounts of kapu pāhoehoe (a type of smooth sacred lava) and would result in over 329,308 kg (363 tons) of chemical and human waste being stored in tanks directly above the only four aquifers that feed potable water to Hawai‘i

mokupuni (Casumbal-Salazar, 2017; ho‘omanawanui et al., 2019). Mauna Kea, short for Mauna a Wākea (re-call from the beginning of this dissertation Wākea as the Father of the sky who with Papa, Earth Mother, birthed ka pae ‘āina o Hawai‘i; Mountain of Wākea is the physical embodiment of this way of knowing), is kapu as it is thought of as a piko; the center; the umbilical cord that connects the heavens and earth. Mauna a Wākea is where many wāhine Akua (goddesses/ancestors) live, including being a primary residence of ‘Ōhia Lehua (whose mo‘olelo was evoked earlier in this dissertation). The wāhine Akua who dwell in Mauna Kea are representative of the elements that sustain ecological life, all of which are found existing in pono relationship with one another on Mauna a Wākea. Each wāhine Akua in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi belief systems are thought to be sisters and have a kuleana to specifically steward the elements: rain, mist, clouds, lakes, lava, and even snow (Casumbal-Salazar, 2017).

In 2015, TMT began construction on the telescope as Kia‘i were arrested for blocking construction on Mauna a Wākea. The Hawai‘i Supreme Court ruled that the CDUA was invalid because the permit was issued before a public contested court hearing could take place (Casumbal-Salazar, 2017). In 2018, the Hawai‘i Supreme Court ruled in favor of the issuance of the CDUA permit and in 2019 construction was scheduled to resume; however, Kia‘i blocked the access road to Mauna a Wākea successfully preventing construction crews from entering the Mauna. This led to the arrest of 33 kūpuna, who were arrested over younger Kia‘i who were attempting to protect them from law enforcement by building a human barrier around them. This incident sparked international outrage and growth in the number of Kia‘i and allies dedicated to protecting Mauna a Wākea. The Hawai‘i Unity and Liberation Institute (HULI) in collaboration with the Royal Order of Kamehameha I established the Pu‘uhonua o Pu‘uhuluhulu (sacred place of refuge of Pu‘uhuluhulu) located at the kīpuka of Mauna a Wākea where Kia‘i have been camped out 24/7

with Mauna a Wākea since July 2019. Through grassroots organizing, Kia‘i as well as all those that visit Mauna a Wākea are provided, at no monetary cost, with food, water, clothing, shelter, medical care, and education through the Pu‘uhuluhulu University (classes taught by kūpuna and other cultural practioners) (Pu‘uhuluhulu, 2019). The core philosophy employed during all protection efforts of Mauna a Wākea is kapu aloha. Kapu aloha is a way of knowing and being passed on by kūpuna (ho‘omanawanui et al., 2019). Kapu aloha is the act of carrying oneself with peace, compassion, respect, empathy, and love for everyone that engages with the Mauna, especially when conflicts and disagreements occur (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2017). The only way to generate aloha when none is given is by giving aloha. Kapu aloha is a practice of balancing the cosmological weight of justice; to be pono through doing (Casumbal-Salazar, 2017)..

To show up at Mauna a Wākea physically and in the spirit of kapu aloha is, at its core, a decolonial project as simply existing on this ‘āina is an act of refusal to disappear despite the relentless efforts of colonization to dis-place or destroy the ‘āina and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi people (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2017). As someone who has a lot of formalized education, I can genuinely say that my time with Mauna a Wākea in 2019 was amongst the most transformative learning experiences I have ever had. The lessons I learned with Mauna a Wākea were experiential and philosophical, uncomfortable and empowering, and gained through multiple mediums all at once. I do not claim Mauna a Wākea as my kulāiwi since the Mauna and Hawai‘i mokupuni are not my specific mo‘okū‘auhau or the kaiāulu I call home as it is with many Kia‘i; however, all the lessons I received were with familiar strangers. Taking part in oli, hula, and EAducation (a term used at Mauna Kea to emphasize education centering EA, which again means breath/ sovereignty). I went to Mauna Kea shortly after my re-turn home from Honu Moku upon completing my Ph.D. coursework. Standing face to face with Mauna a Wākea and observing fully with all my senses

engaged who Mauna a Wākea is caused the heavy pieces of armor I had been wearing to protect myself from colonial injury to fall off in an instant. Mauna a Wākea made the colonial logics of the University look like a faint cluster of stars in the distance on a cloudy night sky. Ever since then, I couldn't see university systems of knowledge re-production the same. It is not a coincidence that the University of Hawai'i who has been entrusted since 1998 to "legally" manage Mauna a Wākea, in partnership with the State of Hawai'i and TMT want to take this away from Kānaka 'Ōiwi (Case, 2021; Casumbal-Salazar, 2017). The collective mana generated at Mauna a Wākea helps us re-member our interconnectedness as a lāhui and as a people. Mauna a Wākea helps us decolonize our minds by helping us re-member that we are not separate mokupuni, but are one under the interconnectedness of our past, present, and future, strung together like pua on the lei of our mo'okū'auhau (Case, 2021; Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2017).

Although the present being the third Hawaiian renaissance is not widely published about at the time of this writing, I have witnessed dialogue amongst Kānaka 'Ōiwi that sounds like Kānaka 'Ōiwi ea bellowing throughout ka pae 'āina o Hawai'i. When I was engaged in learning at Pu'uhuluhulu, the handmade signs lining the Mauna a Wākea access road were tangible to the senses. One sign read, "Aloha 'Āina Forever." Another read, "Not for Sale." I approached one of the ahu (pōhaku (rocks, stones) structure that serve as an altar) to pule with the Mauna. As I neared the ahu there were signs that I had to step in closer to read. One sign said, "Third Renaissance" and another sign next to it read, "Hawaiian Kingdom Still Exists." This moment stuck out to my senses long after physically leaving Mauna a Wākea, because stepping closer to the ahu was to step closer to the intergenerational knowledge systems that are alive in our places. Mauna a Wākea was symbolic for many people of all backgrounds because like Mauna a Wākea is the place where the elemental wāhine Akua coalesce, Mauna a Wākea is a place of protection, refuge, and radical

healing for many Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, Indigenous cousins, and allies. Mauna a Wākea is also a place of experiential, holistic, and culturally sustaining learning for everyone who forms a meaningful relationship with the Mauna (Case, 2021). For me, this was a sensory re-membering of the values, beliefs, and practices that still exist and have always existed within the ‘āina and opened my senses to what my kuleana as a scholar of this kulāiwi should look like in these times of re-claiming and re-creation of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi futurities.

As we re-create our relationships with ‘āina, we re-claim our place outside of colonial power relations and within Kānaka ‘Ōiwi futurities. There is a potential for greater collective refusal to the complacency in the colonization of ‘āina and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. This refusal is an active resistance against colonization. Ku Kia‘i Mauna Kea served as a mass impetus toward Kānaka ‘Ōiwi survivance that created several entry points for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and allies to understand where they stand in relationship to their kuleana to the ‘āina and her people. Kanaka ‘Ōiwi presence, atop mountains such as Mauna a Wākea and in gentrified urban hubs such as Waikīkī, is the embodiment of the continuance of the mo‘olelo of the past linked to the re-creation of mo‘olelo of the future. Presence in our places is not an effect of the colonial (e)state, such as the U.S. State of Hawai‘i. Rather, presence in our places precedes colonial domination and the tragic narrative of victim/ statehood that is not an autochthonous string braided into the intricacies of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology. It is a string, a line, a lineage, a mo‘okū‘auhau that has been knotted on. This presents the arduous task of weaving over, ignoring, and/or cutting out the knot, not to completely undue it per se, but to understand that the knot is a part of a larger mo‘okū‘auhau and mo‘olelo that has existed before and will exist long after the knot was created. This reality conjures up a collective re-memberance of that which has survived and will continue to survive when we resist

the silencing, violence, willful ignorance, and colonial complacency that comes with ongoing colonization by continuing to weave our own epistemological strands sourced from ‘ike kūpuna.

Much like the second Hawaiian renaissance, there is a larger speaking back against colonial systems that erase Native ways of knowing and being through various modes of domination throughout the United States. Social movements such as Ku Kia‘i Mauna Kea, Stand with Standing Rock, and Black Lives Matter are manifestations of the epistemological collision of settler colonialism with its shadowed past; a past that refuses to abscond because, speaking in literal and figurative terms of relativity, shadows are always present even when they are beyond our immediate perception. Native peoples do not need to be perceived into existence by colonizers to be actualized. Even in the absence of large social movements, acts of survivance are seeped into the everyday material realities of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and all those that stand upon Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ‘āina. This is evident through continued lāhui building efforts, wa‘a (canoe) crafting and paddling, ho‘okele wa‘a (wayfinding), dancing hula, ulana (weaving), lei making, surfing, pa‘akai harvesting, mele and oli writing and performing, speaking ‘Ōlelo Makuahine, and sustainable mahi‘ai and lawa‘ia (fishing) practices. These are a few examples of ‘ike kūpuna that are transmitted to keiki with a strong emphasis on the importance of keeping these practices and knowledges alive (Trask, 1999). These epistemologies were not lost but were stolen and placed into the margins of dominant ideologies within colonial power structures. Outside of colonial power structures or even at the margins within them, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ways of knowing have survived and the third renaissance may be a modern manifestation of survivance; a denouncing of determinism, essentialized and individualistic notions of racial identity, constructed images of Native authenticity, and romanticizing and nostalgizing Indigenous cultures, all the while

continuing to practice and pass on the values, beliefs, and practices that constitute Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies to the next generations.

The colonizers of the 18<sup>th</sup> century did the work of establishing an inseparable bond between whiteness and property that remains the dominant relationship between humans and ‘āina today (Harris, 2020). A current example of whiteness as property was in 2021 when Mark Zuckerberg, billionaire and businessman, added another 44.52 hectares (110 acres) to his property in Ko‘olau and Halele‘a ahupua‘a. Zuckerberg now “owns” over 60,702 hectares (150,000 acres) of ‘āina on Kaua‘i. In 2021, Zuckerberg also spent \$4 million dollars to buy out the ‘āina from the previous “land owners” that is stewarded by the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi nonprofit Mālama Hulē‘ia at ‘Alekoko lokoi‘a (aka Menehune fishpond). A strong example of re-matriation despite neo settler colonialism is that of Mālama Hulē‘ia. Over the past decade, the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi kaiāulu prevented ‘Alekoko from suffocating under the roots of the invasive Mangrove Trees. ‘Alekoko is a wahi pana for a variety of reasons, including being over 600 years old, still being functional despite being choked by Mangrove, and being one of the finest examples of the ingenuity of our ancestors in the face of colonization. Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and volunteers including hui of keiki and ‘ōpio, so far have manually eradicated over 10.52 hectares (26 acres) of Mangrove so ‘Alekoko can breathe and are re-storing the loko‘ia to the state it was in when our ancestors first built it. The same pōhaku used to re-build the loko‘ia are the same ones our kūpuna touched centuries ago. Re-creating ‘Alekoko loko‘ia and re-claiming the ‘āina from the Mangrove is a necessary and kapu process that Kānaka ‘Ōiwi undertook despite not “owning” the 41.23 hectares (102 acre) of ‘āina that nests ‘Alekoko’s ecosystem (Mālama Hulē‘ia, 2021).

The re-claiming of ‘Alekoko is an act of refusal of the colonizer’s law as pretense to whiteness as property (Harris, 2020). Kumu Peleke Flores, who was given the ancestral kuleana

to master his craft of re-building loko‘ia across Hawai‘i and passing on this ‘ike kūpuna to the next generation stated about re-claiming ‘Alekoko, “This wahi pana is an important part of our island’s cultural history. This is where countless generations of Kaua‘i’s people for over the past 800 years worked, played and fed our communities. We are honored to be able to continue that tradition and looking forward to one day have ‘Alekoko feeding our community again mentally, physically, and spiritually while extending the Hā (breath of life) of this place for the next 800 years along with the future generations to come” (Mālama Hulē‘ia, 2021).

As early colonizers “discovered” new lands and modern day colonizers continue to do so they exercise their “right” to overshadow the laws of those already living and stewarding those lands (Jackson, 2019). Although Kaua‘i’s newspaper employed white savior colonial logics in headlining the re-claiming of ‘Alekoko as, “Alakoko ‘Menehune’ Fishpond saved; Chan, Zuckerberg make \$4 million donation,” (Bodon, 2021) pulling back the curtain of colonization reveals that it was never about saving or civilizing Indigenous people and land, it is about using colonial laws and the ideologies that maintain them to invalidate Indigenous practices and rights to land and erase collective relational Indigeneity under settler logics “...as a means of gaining access to [Indigenous] labor, land, and resources” (Grande, 2004, p. 19). For this reason, some Kānaka ‘Ōiwi refuse the perspective that Zuckerberg bought the ‘āina and gifted it to Mālama Hulē‘ia to protect in perpetuity. Many Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are attuned to knowing that exercising their Indigenous right to steward their kulāiwi is fallible to whiteness as property. In this context, this means land is commandeered, like in the common practice of the U.S. government declaring imminent domain, from Indigenous peoples for imperialist and capitalist gain. Through my relationship with ‘Alekoko and the stewards of this wahi pana, I participate in honoring ‘Alekoko as a space of kaiāulu re-creation of ‘ike kūpuna and take it as my kuleana to kōkua in re-building

‘Alekokoko as a place of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi survivance. I know that this will continue to be a place where survivance is practiced because Kānaka ‘Ōiwi do not abide by the colonizer’s law as pretense to do the work needed to protect our wahi pana and do not necessarily view whiteness as property. There is an epistemological price for whiteness as property and that price comes in the form of how much soul white “owners” of Indigenous lands are willing to pay for it. As Afro-Indigenous activist Bob Marley (1980) sings, “Don’t gain the world and lose your soul, wisdom is better than silver or gold.”

### **3.2.2 Re-memberance**

Kumu Manulani Meyer (2003) posits that, “prior to seeking out the questions that are most relevant to ourselves, our families, our communities we must first develop the correct orientation to ourselves and our place. The very idea of knowledge is now in question across all nations, and as we develop a deeper experience of our own epistemology do you see where we are heading? We are heading into our own radical remembering of our future” (Meyer, 2003, p.54). I opened this dissertation by and maintain grounding place as a re-membering, not of our past, but of our future. In refusal of settler futurities, the decolonial process at work here is Indigenous futurity (Tuck & Gaztambide, 2010), where the emphasis is on enduring Kānaka ‘Ōiwi collective Indigeneity by re-membering who we are (Kauanui, 2016). Deconstructing the term “re-membering,” *Re* means “again, anew” (Merriam-Webster, 2020). Colonizers re-named Kānaka ‘Ōiwi places, re-defined who Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are, and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi relationships to ‘āina (Chandler, 2018). Thus, re-membering requires that we re-do what colonization has tried to untie; to re-member what has been intentionally covered up and re-cover what continues to be extracted from Kānaka ‘Ōiwi contemporary consciousness (wa Thiong’o, 2009). To re-member our future

we must know the mo‘olelo of our place, develop a strong and healthy relationship with our ‘āina under our literal feet, and understand the ways that our knowing is directly tied to the ways we individually and collectively re-member events of the past, present, and future (Chandler, 2018; Nāone, 2008). Settler colonial processes intercept our sense-abilities in understanding the epistemologies of our kūpuna by erasing our memory of ‘Ōlelo Makuahine (Silva, 2017) and mo‘olelo of our particular places (Olivera, 2014). Situating ourselves in our places, speaking the inoa of our places, and immersing ourselves in the mo‘olelo of our places are decolonial strategies. These strategies have been used by Kānaka ‘Ōiwi despite and because of the attempts to erase our memories of our places and re-place them with mo‘olelo of colonization instead of those of our own creation and re-creation (Simpson, 2017; Silva, 2017; Tuck & Yang, 2012).

The erase to re-place function of settler colonialism is dependent upon collective amnesia amongst settler colonizers in “forgetting to remember or remembering to forget” (Bhabha, 1990, p. 310 as cited by Kosasa, 2008, p. 198). Systematic erasure of Indigenous people upholds the perception of the blank slate. Blankness begets settler futurity by blending in Indigenous people into the background until they are made invisible and their status as colonized political subjects denied. This perceived blankness is alluring to settlers as it provides a façade of imaginative possibilities in which guilt is outside of the realm of consciousness (Tuck, 2009) and inequality reproduced through the continuous misidentification of Indigenous peoples (Kosasa, 2008). Because settler colonialism dictates that settlers treat Indigenous land and peoples as a savage terrain in need of taming, Indigenous re-memberance must come with Indigenous re-telling. Through this re-telling Indigenous people will not only re-member their future, but breathe it into existence (Trask, 1999), which is important because unless Indigenous people re-call *and* re-tell their stories, they will continue to be seconded into the colonizer’s narrative (Kalahele, 2002).

Counter to collective amnesia is collective memory. Through *ha'i mo'olelo* and relationality in everyday practice and within areas of colonial illegitimacy such as academic research, Indigenous ways of knowing and being continue to survive the intergenerational fight against colonization (Muñoz, 2019). Intergenerational *mo'olelo* is the ancestral memory that resides within the *iwi* of our ancestors and self. *Kānaka 'Ōiwi* and *kulā'iwi* meaning Native Hawaiian and homeland respectively share the same root because ancestral memory lies within the bones of the person and home soils (McGregor & MacKenzie, 2014). We are a *wa'a* of *'ike kūpuna* navigating through oceans that are older than we are as a species. This understanding is the undercurrent of *Kānaka 'Ōiwi* epistemology. *Kānaka 'Ōiwi* is more than an identity designation or a racialized category, it is the place of the bones, of the soils rich with ancestral memory. It is an intergenerational *oli* and *hula*, a re-membering of our *mo'okū'auhau*, a re-claiming of our places, a re-creation of our *mo'olelo*. The *'āina* is alive. Ancestors are alive. They communicate with us. We understand their messages through re-connecting and actively practicing our relationships with *'ike kūpuna*, *'āina*, and through critical self-reflection. It is our *kuleana* to learn to listen and to operationalize these knowledges by responding with the utmost intentionality (Holmes, 2012; Wilson-Hokowhitu, 2019). Re-membering the future, that is, situating the past before us (Wilson-Hokowhitu, 2019), requires we learn from our *kūpuna*, re-member and re-matriate our (her)story, and heal from past and present colonial assaults without reverting to or romanticizing precolonial times (Holmes, 2012). Re-membering *'ike kūpuna* in writing and re-telling our own *mo'olelo* from our own worldviews (Keating, 2008) with the goal of re-creation and forging healthy Indigenous communities by locating injustices and recognizing the ongoing sicknesses in our colonial condition exists needs to be normalized in our practices (Maaka, 2019; Simpson, 2017).

The function of settler colonialism of erase to re-place cannot be used by Indigenous people to erase and re-place the pain caused by colonization. In re-membering, this pain is not dismissed or suppressed but honored in memory. To re-member and speak of mo‘olelo of hurt and healing, pain and survival, is a step closer to building pono futurities that are sustained in ‘ike kūpuna as practices of survivance and healing using the power of place—past, present, future.

### **3.2.3 Resistance**

Decolonization is an active resistance against colonial power structures that maintain power and control over Indigenous peoples, including the naming of settler colonialism, the fight for self-determination, and the reclaiming of Indigenous lands and knowledge systems (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Resistance is often conflated with negativity, noncompliance, and disagreeableness through settler colonial constructions. Settler surveillance is sensitive to anything remotely representing settler colonial imaginings of what a disobedient Native and the resistance to the benevolence of the colonial nation-state (Simpson, 2017). Re-membering requires that settler imaginations are removed by the re-creation of Indigenous collectives re-imagining “...their ways out of domination, who are unafraid to let those imaginings destroy the pillars of settler colonialism” (Simpson, 2017, p. 10). To decolonize is to resist the lies that colonization tells us and recognize that “...in the end, decolonization simply means having faith that we can still be brave enough to change an imposed reality” (Jackson, 2019, p. 102). The reality that colonization imposes onto Indigenous peoples can be re-imagined by normalizing the voices, teachings, practices, and words from ancestral memory in our structures and systems as resistance in and of itself (wa Thiong'o, 2009).

Central to Indigenous resistance is the fight for ea; a battle that cannot be fought apart from collective refusal (Fanon, 1967; Simpson, 2017). King Kalākaua was dedicated to re-claiming the ways of knowing of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. His reign in the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was what became known as the first Hawaiian Renaissance and the motto of his time was, “Ho‘oulu Lāhui” translated to “Increase the Nation.” To re-connect Kānaka ‘Ōiwi with the practices of hula, oli, and mele that had been severed by the colonializing doctrines of the missionaries, he started a large-scale event taking place in Hilo moku, Hawai‘i mokupuni communally celebrating Kānaka ‘Ōiwi culture that became known as the Merrie Monarch Festival, which occurs annually till this day (McDougall, 2016). He also re-stored Ka Papa Kū‘auhau o nā ‘Ali‘i and the Hale Nauā societies that are comprised of ali‘i and kāhuna dedicated to re-cording Kānaka ‘Ōiwi practices in written form for future generations. As one of the first Kanaka ‘Ōiwi scholars whose ‘ike was shaped by both Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and western knowledge systems, King Kalākaua used his knowledge from his U.S. schooling to put the *Kumulipo* into written form, publishing it in 1889, and distributing it amongst Kānaka ‘Ōiwi to assert to haole corporate factions his legitimacy as the ali‘i of Hawai‘i and re-connecting Kānaka ‘Ōiwi to a national, ancestral mo‘olelo that re-grounded them in their rights to place. King Kalākaua also opened the ‘Iolani Palace as a political hub for the monarchy. King Kalākaua, as a leader of a nation, had relationships with people and ideas all over the world, including that of electricity. Kalākaua’s niece Princess Ka‘iulani pulled the switch that lit up ‘Iolani Palace with electricity four years before the White House, who had enslaved people pull their switches out of fears of electrical shock (Wehrheim, 2021). ‘Iolani Palace became a symbol of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi sovereignty and is still used today as a site of colonial resistance where mo‘olelo of our ancestors are re-told, re-created, and communally celebrated (McDougall, 2016; Osorio, 2002).

Queen Lili‘uokalani’s reign, as the last monarch of the Hawaiian Kingdom, is characterized strongly as a reign of resistance and documented as such by Lili‘uokalani herself. Queen Lili‘uokalani used writing as a form of communication with her nation when her leo was silenced by colonizers. She wrote right through the pain of seeing her next seven to more generations being erased and in an act of resistance, wrote about Hawai‘i’s history from her perspective, including candidly and uncensored about her arrest, imprisonment, and trial. The practice of Queen Lili‘uokalani keeping a journal was her intentional intervention in the collective mo‘okū‘auhau of Hawai‘i and a gift to future generations to use as a tool for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi survivance. Even at the time of writing, Queen Lili‘uokalani understood her journal as a decolonial palapala aloha (love letter) to Hawai‘i. She wrote a mele while imprisoned at ‘Iolani Palace called, *Aloha ‘Oe*, which translates to, “Farewell to thee.” *Aloha ‘Oe* was her goodbye to a sovereign Kānaka ‘Ōiwi Kingdom. *Aloha ‘Oe* shares a similar yet revered space with *Hawai‘i Pono ‘ī*, a mele written by her brother King Kalākaua, that is now the Hawai‘i “state” anthem and tells mo‘olelo of remembrance that Hawai‘i is a pono place. Queen Lili‘uokalani published her journal in 1898 and was republished and widely circulated by the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum in 1990. Queen Lili‘uokalani’s resistance washed away the whitewash for future generations to carve their own alawai (paths of water) of resistance to colonization.

In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ways of knowing, waves are predicted by currents that come from faraway places that build momentum over the open ocean and are kept upright by the phases of moon and get their shape through the craftsmanship of the wind. The 1950s and 60s U.S. civil rights and anti-war movements caused waves of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi self-determination to gain momentum and become a movement on its own, known as the second Hawaiian renaissance (McGregor, 2010). The unyielding resistance of the second Hawaiian renaissance reignited the sovereignty movement, the

demand for ‘āina reparations, the revitalization of ‘Ōlelo Makuahine and other cultural practices, and the re-creating of several Kānaka ‘Ōiwi rights groups including Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana; a hui that garnered international attention through protection practices to re-claim Kaho‘olawe mokupuni through sit-ins that prevented further environmental destruction directly caused by United States military nuclear weapons testing (McGregor, 2010; Trask, 1999). Other ripples from the wave of the second Hawaiian renaissance was the creation of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), a semi-autonomous agency tasked to serve as a liaison between the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi people and the U.S. government in undertaking reparatory actions. In addition to the creation of OHA, the 1978 Hawai‘i State Constitutional Convention was amended to include English and ‘Ōlelo Makuahine as the official languages of Hawai‘i, the promotion of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi values and practices in public schools, and the right to use public and private ‘āina for religious, cultural, and agricultural practices for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (McGregor, 2010).

Resistance for resistance sake is not what decolonization is about. Challenging and de-constructing the imposed reality of colonization is about holding hope that we can re-imagine our own realities that can move beyond re-claiming long-lost rights and some semblance of past nationhood into re-creating and sustaining a lāhui that perpetuates kapu aloha and engages in ho‘oponopono or a protocol of ancestral healing. As discussed earlier, kapu aloha such as that which is practiced at Mauna a Wākea, arguably as part of the third Hawaiian renaissance resists colonial dichotomies of self/ Other, human/ ‘āina, colonizer/ colonized and consistently recalibrates to the social, political, environmental, and cultural context to achieve lōkahi (ho‘omanawanui et al., 2019). Ho‘oponopono is the restoration of relational justice amongst Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and is increasingly appropriated and grossly de-contextualized by colonial thinkers as an “Indigenous” framework for restorative justice (Wane et al., 2019). Kānaka ‘Ōiwi tools for

healing are tools that are being stolen and used/ abused by colonizers, but the erasure to re-place function of colonization makes Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies illegible to colonial sense-abilities and therefore, no matter how hard colonization attempts to steal the healing tools of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi they will never know how to use them to heal themselves.

Kānaka ‘Ōiwi resistance reveals the core of colonization and interrupts it through intergenerational knowing and healing. We must re-member that every individual at any given time is both a descendent and an ancestor. Resistance is about actualizing one’s Indigenous reality through understanding what is and is not one’s kuleana given the specific physical and temporal place and space one is gifted. Re-membering and enacting one’s kuleana is resistance that should always be rooted in “...love, persistence, commitment, and profound caring [to] create constellations of co-resistance” and “the working together toward a radical alternative present based on deep reciprocity and the gorgeous generative refusal of colonial recognition” (Simpson, 2017, p. 9). Refusal of colonial recognition involves working with and for a lāhui that centers on Indigenous futurity: Indigenous existence, persistence, and resistance (Kauanui, 2016).

### **3.3 Radical Healing**

Radical healing is a process that involves developing an awareness of systems of domination and subjugation and how to address these systems through engaging in behaviors that serves to liberate self and others (French et al., 2020). Radical healing involves enacting one’s kuleana to be pono, to restore balance, between leaning into the hurt of systemic injustice and the liberatory fight for justice (Lipe et al., 2020). In radical healing, a development of a critical consciousness or in this context, a mo‘okū‘auhau consciousness (Silva, 2017) is emphasized. A

mo‘okū‘auhau consciousness is a way of knowing and being in the world as Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and involves knowing one’s interconnectedness to all things is a source of power

in healing from intergenerational, colonial trauma (French et al., 2020; Silva, 2017). Radical healing is an active resistance to the colonial conditions that continually cause injury and involves taking actionable steps toward achieving justice at the individual, ‘ohana, kaiāulu, and lāhui levels (Ginwright, 2010; Lipe et al., 2020; McGregor et al., 2003).

Healing in Indigenous communities is radical because healing from trauma caused by systemic oppression such as poverty, sexism, homophobia, classism, and racism is inherently political (Ginwright, 2010). Radical, in a political sense revolves around holistic and complete systemic change as necessary to solve equity and justice issues in a way that is sustainable (French et al., 2020). Radical, in Indigenous communities, means that the tree of colonization grew from a seed where extermination of Natives was inherent. No matter what is done to the tree to make it less oppressive the tree will continue to serve the function of exterminating Natives. Chopping the tree down and planting k/new trees from k/new seeds of aloha is the answer to stopping the evasive and invasive nature of colonization. Radical healing is when Indigenous people grasp at the root of colonial trauma and at the root of the aloha of our ancestors (Davis, 1989; Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2013; Meyer, 2001). By grasping at the root of kalo for example, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi radically re-connect with ancestor Hāloa and open themselves up to developing a deeper, re-generative mo‘okū‘auhau consciousness and can do more culturally sustaining activities, such as mahi‘ai that place Kānaka ‘Ōiwi on the path toward radical healing (e.g., Goodyear- Ka‘ōpua, 2013; Holmes, 2016; Lipe et al., 2020; McDougall, 2016; Silva, 2017; Vaughan, 2018).

The process of radical healing involves using the pain from the past as an informant to present healing in a way that is relational, communal, sacred, and allows the space for re-creation

of k/new mo‘olelo around our strengths as Indigenous peoples (Ginwright, 2010; Lipe et al., 2020). Rather than healing being about individualized trauma treatment and healing from past assaults in isolation, relationships with ‘āina as ancestors, ‘ike kūpuna, ‘ohana, kaiāulu, and lāhui are centralized. It is through these relationships that one can understand the relationships between systemic inequities and lived realities, while finding a pono balance between demanding justice and remaining rooted in place. Collective healing found in the resistance and refusal to the ongoing terror of colonialism is a foundational part of radical healing and the re-creation of spaces where cultural and place-based practices can be celebrated in communion with kaiāulu (Lipe et al., 2020). In a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology all things are interconnected, and all processes must be balanced in order for the goal of survivance to be achieved. This means that Kānaka ‘Ōiwi not only share in a collective struggle with a national collective identity, but also equally if not more in collective political agency and self-determination (Ginwright, 2010).

Radical healing in Indigenous communities is about holistic well-being, thriving for pono balance between mind, body, spirit, cosmological, kaiāulu, and lāhui empowerment. For lōkahi of well-being to be practiced, Indigenous peoples need to undergo a radical healing process. Radical healing involves understanding and accepting how one fits within the overall cosmology (Duran et al., 2008; Lipe et al., 2020) of mo‘okū‘auhau and being able to dwell in the duality of resisting oppression and moving toward freedom. Staying in either extreme causes the continued disempowerment and death of Indigenous people since belonging in an unbalanced way to resisting colonial oppression can cause anger, resentment, and depression to consume one’s entire being, while lingering only in the space of movement toward freedom can dis-connect one from the depth of current realities (Tuck, 2009). Radical healing, therefore, includes both acknowledgment of and active resistance from oppression, as well as a vision of possibilities for

freedom and wellness. Moreover, the act of being in that dialectic is, in and of itself, a process of healing (French et al., 2020) and the work of healing is, in and of itself, the work of love for self, community, and place because all healing is done in places we wish to strengthen and preserve. For Indigenous people a layer of healing curtesy of the settler colonial complex is understanding one's kuleana in linking these healing practices with practices of political resistance (hooks, 2007).

Indigenous peoples need to have the freedom from systemic violence in deciding what holistic healing looks like for their communities. Indigenous practices, such as hula, reflect Indigenous epistemologies and represent a space of radical healing and self-care (Lorde, 1983). Other Indigenous practices, such as lāhui building, is an act of Indigenous survivance and movement toward freedom “with other humans and nonhumans radically imagining their ways out of domination, who are not afraid to let those imaginings destroy the pillars of settler colonialism” (Simpson, 2017, p. 10). Re-membering and re-centering Indigenous lāhui building as a movement toward freedom and as a radical healing process is not as a response to the settler colonial nation-state, but instead an act of self-and-us care (Lorde, 1983) because healing ourselves means healing our mo‘okū‘auhau—our places, ancestors, and future generations (Meyer, 2013).

Of direct relevance to the research questions of this project, the triple piko concept has been used to understand Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology and how it is interrelated with Kānaka ‘Ōiwi healing at various relational levels. In western colonial cultures, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi health is measured by indicators such as mortality rates, obesity, and high cholesterol that is used as a basis for racial difference instead of as a biological effect of systemic racism (Roberts, 2011). In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi culture, human health is “synonymous with the health and vitality of natural resources in addition to the perpetuation of cultural traditions and a communal identity” (McGregor & Mackenzie, 2014, p. 103). Davianna McGregor et al. (2003, 2013) conceptualized an ecological model of Kānaka

‘Ōiwi healing using the triple piko concept of mind, body, spirit (Meyer, 2003) and past, present, future interconnectedness (Pukui, 1972). For individuals to reach a place of radical healing in a way that aligns with Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology, the three piko must be in lōkahi. The three piko are: piko ‘aumakua (connection to ancestors), piko ‘iewe (connection to the immediate ‘ohana), and piko ‘iwe kuamo‘o (connection to future generations) (McGregor et al., 2013). The triple piko concept is important to understand because as colonization is an on-going process, so too is radical healing. Recognizing the basic social units of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ways of healing can help one understand more holistically what goes into conceptualizations of pono futurities of Kaua‘i that is solidly rooted in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ways of knowing.

### **3.3.1 ‘Ohana Healing**

Members of the ‘ohana, like taro shoots, are all from the same root (Pukui, 1972). Individual Kanaka ‘Ōiwi well-being is enhanced when ‘ohana well-being is supported (McGregor et al., 2013). ‘Ohana well-being is supported through piko ‘aumakua, which entails ‘āina connectedness or ‘ike wahi or knowledge of one’s place. ‘Aumakua is an Akua or god/ ancestor who watches over a specific ‘ohana for protection. My ‘ohana ‘aumakua is mano or shark. Mano is a relative of mine who protects me and it is my kuleana to protect them. Saying a pule or prayer for my ‘aumakua when I go to enjoy a day at the beach is an example of ‘āina connectedness and ‘ike wahi in practice. Piko ‘aumakua involves mo‘okū‘auhau or knowing (“mind” in Meyer’s conceptualization) one’s genealogical past and where in the cosmic and physical order my specific latches of connection to specific places are, which allows me to be re-create my ancestral memory. Piko ‘aumakua also embodies mālama ‘āina and aloha ‘āina, epistemological concepts emphasizing care and love the land as a steward as it is a living entity onto itself (Kanahele, 1986).

Piko ‘iwe involves the support and maintenance of the ‘ohana system, including meeting the physical, emotional, spiritual, and educational needs of ‘ohana members. This also involves engaging in cultural sustenance practices alongside ‘ohana. Piko ‘iwe kuamo‘o involves the transmission of culture, language, and values and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies to the future generations (McGregor et al., 2013). Put simply, ‘ohana well-being is achieved through taking care of the land and each other and passing on the knowledges of how this is done to the future generations.

### **3.3.2 Kaiāulu Healing**

In addition to ‘ohana healing, it is important to bring into the conversation communal healing or kaiāulu. Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology and healing does not exist in a vacuum. That is to say, just because Kānaka ‘Ōiwi have a healthy ‘ohana system does not mean that they are holistically healthy if other aspects in their ecological systems are not healthy (Antonio et al., 2020). Kaiāulu in a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi worldview entails ‘ike wahi or a sense of place, which includes sense-abilities that are developed overtime from the natural resources in one’s locale and how to relate physically, spiritually, and psychologically with those natural resources. Kaiāulu, in a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological worldview, and how it is engaged in this project means more than “community” and denotes re-creating collective “habitats that have critical effects on human behavior” that “are not merely places for co-existence, [but] are places for social interaction and organizational activity, and the development of a collective identity” (McGregor et al., 2013, p. 112). Kaiāulu for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi involves collectively maintaining the integrity of the ‘āina; sustaining place in the interconnections of the cultural, spiritual, and social; establishing informal

networking for sharing supports and resources; and establishing formal networks for leadership and organization (McGregor et al., 2013).

Re-turning to Waimakaohi'iaka and the stewarding of the lo'i pa'akai as an example of kaiāulu healing. One component of Kānaka 'Ōiwi kaiāulu healing, integrity of 'āina, involves subsistence, traditional practices for sustainability, and communal balance (McGregor et al., 2013). Pa'akai is traditionally harvested by Kaua'i 'ohana who are lineal decedents of this wahi pana and this pa'akai provides physical and spiritual subsistence. Another component of Kānaka 'Ōiwi kaiāulu healing involves the importance of maintaining the interconnectedness of cultural, spiritual, and social place. The lo'i pa'akai is a wahi pana because it is culturally significant—it is the last remaining place on earth that produces genuine pa'akai using traditional methods; it is spiritually significant—the mo'olelo of this place is one that tells of how pa'akai IS of the spirit and body of Akua Hi'iaka, whose mana remains in the pa'akai today; and it is socially significant—he ho'ohana i ka pa'akai (making Hawaiian salt) requires the Kānaka 'Ōiwi value/practice of laulima (cooperation) between individuals, 'ohana, and the broader kaiāulu. This social significance also speaks to the component of kaiāulu healing dealing with the establishing of informal networks of supports. The lo'i pa'akai is a place for educational opportunity for keiki to not just learn about the 'āina, but from and with the 'āina (Nobrega-Olivera, 2019). The lo'i pa'akai is also about resource sharing as it provides for community blessings and ceremonies. Laulima between those who harvest the pa'akai and various governmental, non-profit, and private entities to protect, produce, and distribute pa'akai is the component of Kānaka 'Ōiwi kaiāulu healing that deals with establishing sustainable and responsible formal networks of leadership and organization. An example of this is the Hui Hana Pa'akai o Hanapēpē organization, a grassroots non-profit organization made of salt makers who protect the lo'i pa'akai through raising public

awareness and voicing Kānaka ‘Ōiwi desires regarding the lo‘i pa‘akai to governmental entities (Nobrega-Oliveira, 2016).

### **3.3.3 Lāhui Healing**

Ea meaning breath, but also meaning sovereignty is not a coincidence. Lāhui healing is about breathing life, ea, into our mo‘okū‘auhau as a collective Kānaka ‘Ōiwi people. The lāhui is the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi sovereign nation. The lāhui is what connects us across mokupuni in a shared kuleana toward self-determination and perpetuating practices such as aloha ‘āina (McGregor et al., 2003). Lāhui healing occurs when reparations are made that re-connect Kānaka ‘Ōiwi to ‘āina, such as passing policies that minimize the obstruction of outside systems in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi stewarding their own land (Trask, 2001). Lāhui healing happens when there are spaces sustained by ‘ohana and kaiāulu where Kānaka ‘Ōiwi economic, spiritual, and cultural activities are practiced collectively and the threat to the continuation of these practices are minimized by efforts to protect Kānaka ‘Ōiwi self-determination at all levels and types of governance (McGregor et al., 2003).

Lāhui healing is a process of re-claiming our own ways of defining who we are as a people and how we govern, or more accurately, how we steward the ‘āina and our relationship to her. Under the colonial occupation of the U.S. there is an over reliance on ideologies surrounding race as a precursor to land rights, where “land-owning” haole systematically also own the labor of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (Harris 1993; 2020). The laws of the colonizer should not be the focus of lāhui building as colonial laws are designed to divide and a preoccupation with the occupation can cause fragmentations in the lāhui along ideological lines thus continuing the divide and conquer tired tactic of colonization (Osorio, 2001). Kānaka ‘Ōiwi self-determination is about cultural and

physical survival of the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi people and emphasizes genealogy and nationality in deciding leadership and kuleana to and of the lāhui, over race and blood quantum (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2011; Osorio, 2011). An example of lāhui healing looks like re-claiming genealogical records and deciding, within ‘ohana and kaiāulu structures, how to utilize these records in the establishing of a membership roll of a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi nation to call upon in matters of U.S. legal negotiations (McGregor et al., 2003).

Because Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are inseparable from ‘āina, a primary part of a healing lāhui involves being able to feed ourselves. The United States is transparent about the fact that currently, over 90% of the food consumed in Hawai‘i is imported (U.S. Census, 2020). In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi systems of ‘āina stewardship, food, economic, and environmental production and re-reproduction were in lōkahi and the biodiversity of our natural ecosystems were sustained. Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, especially in rural communities such as Kaua‘i, have held fast to sustainable agriculture and the spiritual, cosmological, and physical connection to ‘āina of specific wahi (McGregor et al., 2003). On Kaua‘i, for example, lo‘i kalo sustenance stewarding is done in Halele‘a moku with an entire kaiāulu of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi dedicated to keeping the practices of lo‘i kalo cultivation going so the next generation can know food sovereignty.

In addition to food sovereignty, advocacy within U.S systems of governance is a necessity to decolonization. When Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and allies prioritize and fight for wealth re-distribution to agriculture, social service, conservation, health care, and education for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and allocate material supports for organizations that perpetuate Kānaka ‘Ōiwi values and practices, lāhui healing is given more space to breathe (McGregor et al., 2003). Sustaining Kānaka ‘Ōiwi economic livelihood is to sustain Kānaka ‘Ōiwi on their own lands on their own terms, which is central to the healing of the lāhui. Policies that protect natural resources, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi kaiāulu-centered

economic development planning, and the exercising of the right to sustenance practices such as mahi'ai, hunting, and gathering rights in wahi pana are examples of what lāhui building while healing looks like (McGregor et al., 2003).

### 3.4 Summary

For centuries, Kānaka 'Ōiwi have resisted colonialization by re-membering our ancestral past through engaging in practices that re-connect us with our mo'okū'auhau and allow us to re-create the mo'olelo of our specific places and people. Existing in our places and doing Kānaka 'Ōiwi epistemology is resistance to settler coloniality. When researching with Kānaka 'Ōiwi kaiāulu it is imperative to take a decolonial interpretative approach to understanding Kānaka 'Ōiwi epistemology as fluid in time and space, where the past is the future and the future is the present. It is imperative to recognize how the suffering of our ancestors is not a one-off event but is an ongoing settler colonial struggle (Brave Hart et al., 2011). It is imperative to understand the non-linearity, non-hierarchical nature of Kānaka 'Ōiwi being and circular relationality of all things in the universe. It is imperative that the works with and by Kānaka 'Ōiwi are works pointed intentionally in the direction of liberation and self-determination through the preserving, protecting, and perpetuating of Kānaka 'Ōiwi ways of knowing (Meyer, 1998).

Queen Lili'uokalani's motto during her reign was, *e'onipa'a i ka 'imi na'auao*, which means "Be steadfast in the seeking of knowledge" (Pukui, 1983). For some scholars seeking knowledge is not always about the re-creation of new theories, typologies, and frameworks, or about the testing and re-testing of a hypothesis or intervention, or about achieving statistical significance. For some scholars being onipa'a or steadfast in the seeking of knowledge means

collecting and weaving mo‘olelo, archiving mo‘olelo, and being present in our places with our people. For me what being onipa‘a in the seeking of knowledge within this dissertation project is to continue on a decolonial journey, using Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as the fabric for my theoretical and analytical understandings as woven consistently and constantly throughout each part of my research and life’s processes.

#### 4.0 Chapter 4: The Research Mo‘olelo

I have been working to change the way I speak and write, to incorporate in the manner of telling a sense of place, of not just who I am in the present but where I am coming from, the multiple voices within me.

—bell hooks, *Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness*

Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as a methodology may cause readers not of this epistemological orientation to push their minds beyond the horizons of a set standard of research paradigms and “while it may challenge, disturb and at times even frighten or enrage readers, love is always the place [to] begin and end” (hooks, 2017, n. p.). Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as anchored in love—in aloha, temporality, and place is the foundation to understanding the cause-and-effect relationship of phenomenon such as colonization.

Colonization cumulates in dis-connections between mind, body, and spirit, and past, present, future that are expressed through pain and injury within Indigenous peoples (Wilson & Yellow Bird, 2005). Decolonization through the communal re-creation of these connections is where many Kānaka ‘Ōiwi find themselves in the present and the methodology used in this dissertation is an exercise in that. This research is a deviation away from what Eve Tuck (2009) calls, “damage-centered research” and toward what she calls a “desire-based framework.” In a desire-based framework, the starting point of research inquiry is not the damage that Indigenous communities have experienced and continue to experience. It is not nesting the purpose of a study within a problem statement that recounts all the ways Indigenous communities are damaged. What a desire-based framework is about is “...documenting the complexity, contradiction, and the

self-determination of lived lives...by documenting not only the painful elements of social realities but also the wisdom and hope” (Tuck, 2009, p. 416). In this dissertation project, I translate the use of a desire-based framework as one that starts and ends with Indigenous wisdom and hope and that uses Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as theory, method, and practice as a way to suspend damages in research (Tuck, 2009). Using this approach allows me to not only document the impacts of colonization but to also mitigate the effects of seeing ourselves as damaged (Tuck, 2009) by using methodologies that do not automatically and principally locate Kānaka ‘Ōiwi within the damage.

Using mo‘olelo and mo‘okū‘auhau as methodology, I collect, much like the *kia manu* or bird catchers of ancestral Hawai‘i, who put sap on trees for birds to get stuck to so that they could pluck a single feather off the bird to weave an ‘aha ‘ula (feathered cloak used by ali‘i) before releasing the bird back to *nā lani* (the heavens) to replenish his feathers as a practice of sustainability. Strands of *mana‘o* (thoughts/ opinions/ beliefs) are the feathers I weave through mutuality with the *mana wāhine* who are generationally rooted to and are caretakers of Kaua‘i. I intertwine these strands with conversations with the existing written and oral mo‘olelo of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology and survivance. The primary tool I use to weave this ideological lei are my hands. When one re-creates anything, from a lei to a dissertation, one’s *mana* goes into it along with the *mana* of all one’s ancestors of past and future. As such, this dissertation is an exercise of my decolonial right to my positionality and my *na‘au*, or my cultural intuition as a valid, appropriate, and sharp tool for research (Anzaldúa, 2007; Delgado Bernal, 1998).

In weaving a mo‘olelo of re-creation around *mana wāhine* visions of intergenerational holistic healing and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi *pono* futurities o Kaua‘i, I utilize a desire-based framework. This framework is “...intent on depathologizing the experiences of dispossessed and disenfranchised communities so that people are seen as more than broken and conquered. This is

to say that even when communities are broken and conquered, they are so much more than that—so much more that this incomplete story is an act of aggression” (Tuck, 2009, p. 416). Engaging in this collective mo‘olelo weaving with mana wāhine requires that looking at the “complexity and wholeness of their selves—rather than their ‘damage’” (Tuck, 2009, p. 419). Selves in this case involves examining the epistemologies that mana wāhine embody as intertwined with their physical, emotional, and spiritual selves, but also as interconnected to place, past, present, and future (McGregor et al., 2013; Meyer, 2003; Pukui, 1972; Wilson, 2008). This sort of understanding reflects the desire to approach this project as holistically as possible by resisting the urge to piecemeal mo‘olelo into coded themes and instead, interpret mo‘olelo through both what is said and not said; through what is known, what has yet to be discovered, and what is not and will never be known to the researcher (Meyer, 2013b).

Everything we do as humans is a series of enduring patterns. We do not actually invent anything new, we adapt, and we re-create. A common colonial misconception of modernity in research is that “numbers don’t lie.” Quantitative data does not speak by itself. Humans need relationships with other humans and entities to interpret data. The narrative woven around data and who is telling the story drives collective thought and action. Amid an ongoing global pandemic and political divides that are exacerbated by COVID-19, we are in a critical moment in time and space where the stories we tell, who are telling them, and how they are being told does not only inform research, policy and practice, but informs life and death itself, in literal and tangible ways.

Re-turning to the ‘ōlelo no‘eau that opened this dissertation, *I ka ‘ōlelo no ke ola, i ka ‘ōlelo nō ka make*, meaning “In language there is life. In language there is death” (Pukui et al., 1972). Mo‘olelo, with root “mo‘o” and the suffix, “‘oleo” is a succession of language, a story, the

things we tell our descendants. This is not solely a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi concept. The *way* we tell stories, learn from them, and act upon what they teach us, however, defines Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology.

Mo‘olelo as methodology, in this dissertation, is a combination of *nā leo o mana wāhine* from the past and present as accessed through preexisting literature and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi sense-abilities, which foundationally includes that of the researcher. Empiricism in western academic research is experiencing a “reality rut” (Gallagher, 2011, p. 51) and dismisses the theoretical depth of methods like *ha‘i mo‘olelo*, poetics, and relationships as valid and academically rigorous. Contrarily, to situate methods such as *mo‘olelo* within Indigenous epistemological orientations is to communicate with full richness that which is obvious, that which is “native common sense” (Gallagher, 2011; Meyer, 2013a). So then how are Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological concepts like *mo‘olelo* used as methodology in western research? By western research, I mean research that is conducted within colonial institutions of thought reproduction such universities in the United States.

#### **4.1 Kānaka ‘Ōiwi Epistemology as Strategies of Inquiry**

Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology is simultaneously and at once a worldview, theory, method, and practice and therefore, I use the terminology “strategies of inquiry” (Wilson, 2008) which recognizes that relationality with participants, place, time, and all which is spoken and unspoken are what dictates how Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology is utilized. In making sense of my interactions and relationships as data, I am primarily guided by the work of *mana wāhine* scholars. Fundamental to shaping the way I think and write about this topic, I am primarily guided by the writings of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologist Kumu Manulani Meyer (1998, 2001, 2003, 2008, 2011,

2013a, 2013b), critical Kānaka ‘Ōiwi cartographer Kapā Oliveira (2009, 2014), the edited work on Kānaka ‘Ōiwi methodologies by mana wāhine Kapā Oliveira & Kahunawai Wright (2016), and the poetical, proverbial work of Kānaka mana kupuna wahine Mary Kawena Pukui (1972, 1983), while drawing from other scholars who utilize and develop Indigenous epistemologies as methodology within Native nations who are epistemologically similar to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (e.g., Cajete, 1994; McKinley & Smith, 2019; Smith, 1992, 2005, 2006, 2012, 2021; Smith et al., 2019; Windchief & San Pedro, 2019; Wilson, 2008). This project is essentially a weaving project with multiple strands of lei. One strand that goes into the lei is the preexisting literature on Indigenous survivance. Another strand of the lei is my en/lived experiences as someone who is at once a subject and an explorer of the phenomena under study. The third strand is the mana‘o and na‘auao o Kaua‘i mana wāhine about a holistically healing lāhui through their enlivened experiences. Methodology in this dissertation may not be clear cut to many readers. I am using Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as methodology the way I am because for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, a nation of Indigenous people who almost went extinct but continue to survive, we do not have the luxury to dwell in the theoretical (Tuck & Yang, 2012). I do not have the answers on if and how this methodology is being used correctly within western academic research. Using Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as theory, method, and practice in research is to lean into the contradictions of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi survivance. It is old and k/new, fluid but tightly bound, grounded in place and adapting, from the rawest places of colonial pain and from the most genuine sources of communal joy, something I know so much and so little about. I invite researchers of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous ways of knowing to embrace the heaviness of this work and accept that it may be bewildering at times, but is indeed necessary (Case, 2015; Meyer, 2003).

#### **4.1.1 Answer with Your Life the Questions that Give it Meaning**

How has Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology been used as method? Kumu Manulani Meyer (2013a) provides five points to consider. The first goes along with the kuleana kāhea: *Answer with your life the questions that give it meaning* (p. 250). The whole reason I pursued my Ph.D. was to use my education and the privileges it affords me to re-turn to my kulāiwi. Exploring the epistemologies of the only place I call home is what gives my life and the life of my future generations meaning. To conduct this research means to give ea, the breath of sovereignty, into these research questions and draw breath from it in re-turn. As previously discussed, in ‘Ōlelo Makuahine, the term ea means breath, but it also means sovereignty, independence, to rise, to restore. To give your life breath to something, in this case a research project, means to give your mana to it so it can exist within its own values and methods as an alawai of self-determination (Goodyear- Ka‘ōpua, 2013).

#### **4.1.2 Find Truth and Bring it Forward**

The second point to consider when using Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as method is the goal to *find truth and bring it forward* (Meyer, 2013, p. 254). Colonization operates under the guise of colonial epistemes of universal truth and western ways of knowing and doing science as objective and neutral (Wynter, 1995). Mo‘olelo as a distinctly Kānaka ‘Ōiwi way of knowing and doing science is read by modernity as fictional, overly concerned with tradition, and irrelevant to current issues. Postmodernist thinker, Jean Baudrillard (1988), about storytelling as method and pushing the bounds of what counts as research and for whom (Smith, 2021) articulated, “...the point is not to write the sociology or psychology of the car, the point is to drive...that way you learn more

about this society than all academia could tell you” (Baudrillard, 1988, p. 54). In western academic research and settler culture, modernity is the measure of humanity and boasts relativism as truth. Before entertaining Indigenous epistemologies as methodology finding a place in postmodernist orientations that moves past universalism and positivism, Native communities must first address the persisting issues with modernism.

In Indigenous ways of knowing, postmodernism is colonialization re-packaged with secularization. Modernism and postmodernism as an extension of Christian European worldview continues to do the harm of colonization. Postmodernism functions in much the same way as modernism, pushing Indigenous ways of knowing to the margins, and failing to honor that Indigenous people have and continue to practice relativity in thought and behavior (Champagne, 2018). For Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, modernity is based on linear temporality that renders the interconnectedness of space, time, and all beings as central to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as illegible. When Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology is situated within frameworks of modernity and postmodernity, the current existence and contributions of Native communities are negated through ideologies of the uncivilized and romanticized ways of the “ancient Hawaiians.” On how modernity marginalizes Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, Iokepa Casumbal-Salazar (2017) discusses modernity as a structure that centers “hierarchized binary forms wherein the Native subject is backward (vs. forward) looking, provincial (vs. worldly), narrow (vs. broad) minded, emotional (vs. intellectual), fearful (vs. embracing) of [western methodologies], impulsive (vs. contemplative), passive (vs. active), et cetera. This mythology of modernity rationalizes the hierarchies that underpin the settler social order and structure male dominance over women as a conditional logic of own possibility” (p. 22). In western research and settler culture, modernity is located within the pursuit of measuring humanity for the purpose of domination (Wynter, 2003). Kānaka ‘Ōiwi who are doing the

work of re-connecting and re-creating our ancestral knowledges are thought of as regressive, savage, and ideologically insular. Nothing could be more misaligned.

Truth within Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology is not concerned with objectivity, universalities, and neutrality. Truth within Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology recognizes the truth as always contextually situated and relationally created (Smith, 2021). Within Indigenous research paradigms truth is not exclusively discovered in one’s mind. It is discovered in one’s feelings and one’s body. Intuitive feelings about a situation or topic are grounds for truth that is synonymous with na‘au. Na‘au is the root word in na‘auao, meaning “enlightened intestines.” In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology, truth generated from the body and truth generated from the mind are not mutually exclusive. Na‘au is a term that captures that body and mind are one. If something is true, then what is felt in the gut is known in the mind and vice versa (Meyer, 1998). Along this reasoning, bias is not thought of as a limitation, it is instead used to link na‘au with our enlivened experiences which informs our truth. To know what we know we must develop an interpretation of it which passes through our experiences (Meyer, 2003). Our experiences are gained through our sense-abilities. In a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological view, na‘au counts as a sixth sense. This also relates to our sense-ability of touch. A common term in Hawai‘i is “chicken-skin.” This term is used to describe something that causes a strong emotional or spiritual reaction to the point that it is felt in the body. For Kānaka ‘Ōiwi who are in tune with ‘ike kūpuna and their na‘au, it is common for this to happen when entering or leaving certain places, when talking to certain people, or when engaging in certain practices such as reciting specific oli or dancing hula to specific mele. This is the body’s cells vibrating at a molecular level to prompt the receiver to observe their internal and external worlds more deeply. This physical reaction is a form of intelligence and signals something about a kanaka’s mo‘okū‘auhau or relational connectivity to ‘āina and kūpuna. These sense-abilities are

valid in a Kanaka ‘Ōiwi methodological framework and are considered data points (Oliveira, 2009).

This research is senses-abilities oriented. In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology senses are tools of observation. If you are in pitch black darkness like Polihale (a beach that is a wahi pana on Kaua‘i) at 3 a.m., to move without injuring self or others, you must feel for where you are in space. Your physical touch through your body along with your hearing, smelling, breathing, and memory of this place lets you know if you are more makai (toward the ocean) or mauka (toward the mountain). Polihale is a leina or a jumping off place for souls into the realms of the ancestors. Iwi kūpuna and endangered endemic plants and animals call this place a pu‘uhonua (Hui Mālama Polihale, 2021). Your na‘au, your cultural intuition, will tell you where you can and cannot step, even in the absence of light. Senses are our strongest informants of intelligence. It is only through surrendering to our senses that we learn (Oliveira, 2009). In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ways of knowing, for example, tears gift life through water and preservation through salt, not only for oneself but for future generations. If Akua Hi‘iaka refrained from weeping at Waimakaohi‘iaka, we would not have pa‘akai today.

#### **4.1.3 Heal Yourself because Your Healing Helps Others Heal**

The third point of consideration in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as method is to *heal yourself because your healing helps others heal* (Meyer, 2013, p. 252). I take this point of consideration to mean, what is often termed in contemporary western qualitative research lexicon as positionality. Positionality is about being able to locate oneself in a structure of colonial power relations and understanding where one stands in various social and cultural contexts based off multiply ascribed or achieved identities (Romero, 2017). In Indigenous research contexts,

reciprocity and relationships are central, therefore it is vital that the researcher be able to articulate their positionalities and relationships with the culture, community, and place (Wilson, 2008).

To sense where my research needed to go and to be okay with that was to engage in the process of radical healing (Lorde, 1983). Healing is radical when your healing means that you are not only healing yourself, you are healing your ancestors while sensing the plight of your decedents. This is one large aspect of relational accountability (Wilson, 2008). The purpose of this research and much of the research on Indigenous healing by and for Indigenous people is what Indigenous people can conceptualize as giving back (Reyes, 2019). “How can I give back to my community all that I am learning?” was the constant question I asked myself throughout my Ph.D. schooling, making all that crossed my consciousness relevant to my kuleana in giving back to my kaiāulu the privileges on my path. Kuleana is a foundational part of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology and this idea of “giving back” and empowering the lāhui “through the steel-tipped pen” is one that resonates with many Kānaka ‘Ōiwi who document knowledges in written form (Reyes, 2019; Silva, 2017).

Extrapolating on the kuleana of giving back, Kumu Manulani Meyer (2003) states, “Research for us is not simply about asking “burning questions” we wish to resolve, but rather, we are answering a call to be of use” (p. 54). The research questions I explore in this study formulated from what I came to understand as my kuleana to be of use to my Kaua‘i kaiāulu, particularly to wāhine of past, present and future in making sense of the power of their epistemologies in healing themselves and our ‘ohana, kaiāulu, and lāhui. We all have a kuleana to our kulāiwi and to our mo‘okū‘auhau and I answered “Eō!” to the ancestral call that was sent to me based on my positionality as a researcher and being of this ‘āina. This is not to imply that I am authority on this topic or that my perspectives should be automatically understood as factual. Rather, I am a

responder whose kuleana it is to “create entry points for Indigenous knowledges to come through” (Kovach, 2021, p. 9). I understand this kuleana as one that was shaped from my huaka‘i (journey) from before I was born until my consciousness in this present moment. As much as I have subconsciously tried to evade this kuleana because of how heavy and awkward it is and the requirement of transgressive growth through decolonizing the self, kuleana is chosen for us by our ancestors and is a gift that is ours to discover and learn to use for the benefit of others (Tengan, 2005).

#### **4.1.4 Understand Coherence and its Role in Your Thinking and Doing**

The fourth consideration when utilizing a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological method is to *Understand coherence and its role in your thinking and doing* (Meyer, 2013a, p. 254). Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology is a research lens that looks much like a kaleidoscope. As method it looks like a toolbox full of objects from multiple disciplines with multiple uses, a lot of which you are not sure how to use. However, your sense-abilities of sight, listening, touch, taste, na‘au, kulāiwi, mo‘o (succession of knowledge), and au ‘āpa‘apa‘a (ancestral time) (Olivera, 2014) will clue you into which tool to use, when to use it, and how to use it if/ when the moment presents itself with the consideration your piko is pono.

There is a multiplicity of ways to experience the world. Interpreting Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological research should be done through filtering your experiences through the senses: gross (physical, objective, body), subtle (mind, subjective, rational), and causal (spiritual, transcendental, contemplation) (Meyer, 2003). The interpretive methods of a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology is “intentionally eclectic, mingling, combining, and synthesizing theories and techniques from disparate disciplines and paradigms” and requires the researcher to move “within

and between sometimes competing and or seemingly incompatible interpretive perspectives and paradigms” (Kaomea, 2003, p. 16). To utilize Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as method requires the researcher to be interpretively dynamic, drawing from theoretical frameworks and analytical tools depending on what is right for a situation. Although western research paradigms would deem this a nebulous methodology that lacks coherence, a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological framework holds the exact opposite position. These seemingly disparate and disorganized parts are tightly woven together through a “genealogical and epistemological research methodology” of relational practices (Saffery, 2016, p. 127).

#### **4.1.5 Bring Forward the Wholeness of Knowledge and Not Just its Parts**

The final consideration when using a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological method is to *bring forward the wholeness of knowledge and not just its parts* (Meyer, 2013a, p. 256). Here lies the primary interpretative tool for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological researchers. There are three laser beams of holographic epistemology: mind, body, spirit. When the multiple lasers that make a holograph exist alone, no discernable image is created, but when they reflect their lights off of each other a 3D image is created. Moreover, if this 3D image were to be split in half and the same three light beams reflected off of it, it would create the exact same image as the original. If that image were to be split in half and the three light beams were reflected off it would also produce the same image as the original. The point here is that every image produced from the confluence of these three laser beams, these three ways of interpreting data, will always carry with it its original image no matter how many times its sliced from its whole (Meyer, 2013a). Researchers using Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological method can find enduring patterns of truth through ‘ike kūpuna, the point of origin as accessed through our sense-abilities and our relationships with our

natural world and to each other, since within Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological method, all relationships comprise matter and all relationships matter (Meyer, 2013a).

Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as methodology in this dissertation is an example within the larger body of Indigenous research of the interconnectedness of Indigenous worldview, theory, method, and practice. It is this interconnectedness of theory and method that makes research by and for Indigenous communities meaningful. In Indigenous research, theories are descriptive, predictive, and explanatory but are also action oriented (Pihama et al., 2002). Paulo Freire (1973) discusses this as dialectical unity, where theory and practice are interconnected and within the points of connection exist a cycle of critical reflection that allows the fluidity of the relationship between worldview, theory, method, and practice to inform one another. Using Kānaka ‘Ōiwi methodologies, that is theory *and* method, is a way to challenge modernist notions of theory and provide one way of conducting research that utilizes theory as a method for a functional purpose (Meyer, 1998). This functional purpose within the field of Indigenous research has largely been emancipatory in nature (Toi, 2019). The dualism of theory as method and research as a decolonial project is a reflection of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological views of doing pono research and how to use various methods in lōkahi toward a functional purpose. Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as theory and method and as research that is a decolonial project means that the ways data are collected, analyzed, and presented need to make functional sense for an emancipatory gain (Fanon, 1963).

For Indigenous researchers doing work in Indigenous communities, like myself, one way that the emancipatory function of research is operationalized is in its answerability to community. Answerability is two-fold. First, our research must “make sense to the general Indigenous community” and second, we must re-create a “schema for arriving at our findings [that] must be clearly articulated to the non-Indigenous academy” (Kovach, 2010, p. 133). I am a scholar socially

conditioned within both Indigenous and colonial schools of thought situated on Honu Moku. About belonging to this balance and making it a pono one Franz Fanon (1963) states, “The colonized man who writes for his people ought to use the past with the intention of opening the future, as an invitation to action and a basis for hope. But to ensure that hope and to give it form, he must take part in action and throw himself body and soul into the national struggle” (p. 232). This dissertation is a small part of my life’s work on understanding ‘ike kūpuna and how these knowledges are practiced in contributing to a healthy, thriving mo‘okū‘auhau for the lāhui of yesterday and the lāhui of tomorrow.

## **4.2 Interdisciplinary Research**

This research project is interdisciplinary. In interdisciplinary research, objects of inquiry are defined without first establishing reference to disciplinary boundaries. Interdisciplinarity consists of creating a new object that belongs to no one (Wesley-Smith, 2016). This is an interdisciplinary study because Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are interdisciplinary people, in ideology and practice. To take knowledge and sort it into fields and disciplines and demarcate where one type of knowledge ends and the other begins and who has “ownership” to the creation of what kinds of knowledges is a non-Kānaka ‘Ōiwi way of valuing research. To own knowledge is like owning water, it makes no sense because everyone is made of water and water is for everyone, especially those whose lands run dry from colonial degradation.

Just like Kānaka ‘Ōiwi exposure to colonization is relatively k/new, Indigenous epistemology being thought of as a research methodology in western research is too. Mo‘olelo and mo‘okū‘auhau are not traditionally used in western research as methodology and neither were they

used by our ancestors in this particular way. By using mo‘olelo and mo‘okū‘auhau as methodology in western research spaces I am contributing to the re-creation of a k/new function for these concepts out of necessity. Other western research methods that are similar to mo‘olelo and mo‘okū‘auhau are insufficient for the life of this project. I attempted to use western methods such as narrative inquiry and portraiture, but in attempting to use these methods I would hit an interpretative wall. Like the tools I am weaving with were not made to weave with but I somehow have to figure out how to make it work. I have come to realize that using other methodologies to understand something like Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemologies through the embodied experiences of mana wāhine within my own kaiāulu necessitates the use of our own methods. This epistemological enlightenment clashes with the operationalizing of colonial ways of thinking in research such as writing a methodology section. As a complex space in-between, western research and writing has the potential to perturb ideological separation and holds the power to re-connect us to the essence of our being as a diasporic people (Wilson-Hokowhitu, 2019).

The space below the surface of Indigenous research is full of particles that have already collided. The kinetic energy created by such collisions, I assert, should be used to create more work that transcends the modernity of western academic canons (Anzaldúa, 2007). Identifying and documenting ways that mana wāhine mo‘olelo are in relationship with mo‘olelo from the past is a way to contribute to the written (her)stories of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, while honoring and strengthening our oral her(story) traditions to re-create mo‘olelo for modern mo‘okū‘auhau. In my case this includes methodologies that are time immemorial. That is, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi methodologies are difficult to bound because the practicing of the method precedes the methodological usefulness in western research. The modernity of the research world does not have words and practices that align perfectly with Indigenous methodologies, because western and Indigenous purpose and need for

research is epistemologically different. This is where the tension lives. Western researchers are often hyper-critical or dismissive of Indigenous research as lacking rigor and validity because Indigenous methodologies do not reside in how the external expert has pulled apart and examined the pieces (Patel, 2016; Wilson, 2008).

Not being boxed into a western research methodological orientation or an academic discipline forced me to have to trust my ‘ike kūpuna and other sense-abilities (Oliveira, 2014). *I ka nana no ka ‘ike*—Through observing one learns (Pukui et al., 1972). Just as my kūpuna did, the unlearning and re-learning of what counts as valid knowledge forced me to observe with a healing na‘au the kaona present in the conversations I was having with Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and others on Kaua‘i and beyond. I have observed with watchful eyes the signs within the micro and macro environments that point to the direction my kaiāulu is heading. I have to observe with a fine-tuned ear the quieter discourses within the preexisting literature that serve as radicles for radical healing, re-membling and re-creating modern Indigenous methodologies. I have to actively and iteratively sense how I am epistemologically in alignment and nonalignment with the existing literature and with the mo‘olelo of mana wāhine o Kaua‘i.

### **4.3 Stewarding Mo‘olelo**

Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology is the methodological perspectives that informed the way I related to mana wāhine, the way I made sense of the relationships I have with these mana wāhine and with other people, places, and things, that shape who I am and how I understand what is needed for pono futurities on Kaua‘i. As such, I will use the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological concepts of

mo‘olelo and mo‘okū‘auhau as my guiding methods by which to articulate and write through my sense-abilities.

#### **4.3.1 Purpose**

This study is a decolonial project, echoing that Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as methodology is necessarily a project of decoloniality. Indigenous researchers are moving past using the “master’s tools” (Lorde, 1983) and focusing on our own epistemologies for the sake of our own futurities using the methods of ‘ike kūpuna or the knowledges from many and all of the kūpuna of past and present, who are embodied in the physical world as well as in the spiritual (Wilson-Hokowhitu, 2019). The purpose of this project, as a decolonial project, is anchored to the ability of the research to “...unsettle and disobey—not reproduce—the reign of theory over practice” (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018, p. 9). The purpose, methods of data collection, the data itself, and the implications the data do not inform practice in this project. In this project, the practice proceeds the research design. The researcher and the “researched” in this study harness the kuleana to make sense of the data for a functional necessity. The functional necessity in this project is the necessity to preserve and pass on our epistemic power onto the next generations.

The purpose of collecting, analyzing, and archiving such knowledges is not to hoard knowledges for the sake of re-producing power in a western epistemic sense, but rather to re-claim knowledges through radically re-remembering who we are as an intentional and collective practice of Indigenous survivance (Simpson, 2017). Indigenous survivance, I have come to understand through this dissertation huaka‘i, is an accumulation of practices that are place-based, highly contextualized, and thoroughly saturated with nuance that is impossible to untangle without unraveling the whole thing, whatever the whole thing might be. In colonial research, there is a

methodological tendency to untangle to see how long, how wide, and with what we can do with the strings that we discover; however, there are a lot of strings that are knotted for a functional purpose and within Indigenous communities, researchers would be wise to refrain from unravelling what does not need unraveling for the sake of understanding what may not be ours to understand.

Studies with a decolonial purpose have grounded sense of research impact. Much of colonial research predicates its purpose from quantified impact that can be likened to how far, in miles or kilometers, the branches of a tree grow. Epistemically, Indigenous peoples know that our knowledges are k/new. Instead of focusing on the branches shading as many shadow seekers as possible from the light of k/new knowledge, decolonial studies focuses on deepening our roots. Knowledges adapt and the knowledges that do not serve a functional purpose fall off and are re-turned back to the ‘āina just like how the dis-placed, over one-hundred-year-old Banyan trees still standing in the plantation red light district of Kōloa ahupua‘a, Kaua‘i mokupuni snap off in the silence of the night and hit the soil with a dull thud to be re-absorbed back into the ‘āina to further deepen the Banyan’s roots. Understanding this process and my place in deepening roots of trees that were planted long before me and that will nurture kānaka long after me is what this project is about. The findings are relative to myself yet interconnected to a mo‘okū‘auhau of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi survivance that are both within and beyond my temporally and spatially bounded perceptions. The kuleana of the researcher and the purpose of this study are the same: to help deepen the roots of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemes so that future generations continually experience growth through the ground.

To reiterate, research as a decolonial endeavor must serve a functional purpose just like anything that contributes to the lāhui. Indigenous research using Indigenous epistemologies has an emphasis on immersive relationships and the fully activated use of one’s senses (Smith et al.,

2019). To collect and analyze data within a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi methodology means that theory, method, and practice are one in the same. They are interlinked pua on a lei. Therefore, to do pono research I had to do the individual and ‘ohana work to come to understand my kuleana in this research and beyond and I have come to understand it, like all things, as one in the same. In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology, a human’s worth is defined by what they give, not what they receive. Someone could be bequeathed the most beautiful kuleana from their ancestors and it would go to waste if it is not actualized. To actualize kuleana means to exercise your Indigenous sense-abilities and actively be giving back as you are taking (Reyes, 2019). In my case, as I re-submerged into my kaiāulu after being away on Honu Moku gathering other strands of knowledge, I needed to re-integrate my senses into the mana of Kaua‘i and I needed to put my concentrated energy into re-instilling my relationships in the community. This methodology takes sustained and consistent time, energy, and intentionality because within Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology, relationships, which principally includes the one with yourself and your place, take precedent to other tasks. In the duration of this dissertation project, relationships as I knew how to connect to them shifted as I had to spend the time to re-learn to re-connect after my sense-abilities were engaged and changed so deeply in Honu Moku and through the relationally aberrant impacts of a global pandemic. A strength of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as methodology is that the multilayered and intertwined relationships are the researcher’s to explore and the “faces of the flowers” (Pukui, 1983) are unfolded by many sources. This means that relationships do not bloom simply because they exist, they bloom because they are nurtured by more than just human stewards, they are nurtured by the ‘āina. The steward’s job is to sense and kōkua the flower to bloom.

In serving this functional purpose and operationalizing my kuleana in being a steward of knowledges and a holder of the vision of thriving Kānaka ‘Ōiwi lāhui, I co-founded a nonprofit

called Kamāwaelualani in March of 2021. Kamāwaelualani is an ancestral place name of Kaua‘i and is dedicated to the perpetuation of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi culture through public art and ‘āina-based learning. Our Mo‘olelo Murals program was inspired from the painting of the mo‘olelo of Akua Hi‘iaka at Waimakaohi‘iaka beach in Hanapēpē discussed earlier in this dissertation. I am the Executive Director of the nonprofit and work with a hui (group/ team) of all wāhine who are born and raised on Kaua‘i and are majority Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. We have a kūpuna council who are close advisors in offering kākō‘o in the nonprofit and na‘auao for our individual and collective kuleana. We are grateful to be partnered with several organizations dedicated to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi education and health and kaiāulu healing in doing community art and ‘āina-based learning with keiki, ‘ōpio, and kaiāulu. We have an upcoming project at the time of this writing where we are working in relationship with kūpuna wāhine, Kumu wāhine of various Kānaka ‘Ōiwi practices (i.e. hula and kapa), and haumāna in co-creating a “Mana Wāhine Mural” at the YWCA of Kaua‘i. This project celebrates our Kaua‘i her(story), honors our mana wāhine, builds kaiāulu cohesion, fosters re-connectedness to culture and place, and recognizes the need to continue to build upon the work of Kumu Haunani-Kay Trask in the light of her transitioning to lani kua ka‘a.

I mention my work with this nonprofit because the founding and operating of Kamāwaelualani is an alawai that can open up Kānaka ‘Ōiwi sense-abilities. It was partly through Kamāwaelualani that I have come and am still coming to know my kuleana to my mo‘okū‘auhau and the mo‘olelo I want to contribute to re-creating pono futurities o Kaua‘i. In Indigenous research methodologies, knowledge cannot be gained in the absence of relationships, in the absence of reciprocity, and in the absence of theory and method as practice (Wilson, 2008). Without the components of kuleana and relationality, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as research methodology cannot be operationalized (Meyer, 2013b). Epistemologically speaking, without the care to

relationships and actively doing the work of survivance which is a constant and continuous cycle, you will not have the analytical depth to carry out the project.

In times where I felt analytically stuck it felt like turning on a water faucet and no water comes out. Instead of washing my hands with air, I thrived to *Nānā i ke Kumu* (Pukui et al., 1972) for the answers I seek about the alawai that runs dry and how we can mālama the wai to flow and feed life again. To *Nānā i ke Kumu* required I be in pono relationship with myself and my kuleana to the point that I understood how my research fit into the larger picture of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi survivance and how my work as a researcher and more importantly as a daughter of Kaua‘i helps me come closer to the kuleana I have to give back to the kaiāulu that gifted me, at the bare minimum, a dissertation and at most, a life full of simple complexity that is worth living.

#### 4.3.2 The One Who Weaves

which me will survive / all these liberations

—Audre Lorde, *Who Said It Was Simple*

Situating positionality within a context of healing is appropriate here as this project revolves around Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology, which ultimately confronts the violent impact colonization has on Kānaka ‘Ōiwi radical healing. Multiple harms enacted within the colonial structural system on Indigenous peoples leave them to either bleed out or to heal. To undergo a project of epistemology, healing, and decolonization I must orient myself to place and community. I must confront my own colonial condition and make transparent my process of healing from colonial traumas. Colonial trauma, like ‘ō-iwi fractures, are wounds that do not return to the state they were in prior to the injury. Healing from historical trauma and ongoing colonial assaults is much less about resorting to an original state prior to colonization and more about the process of

surviving and being proud of one's embodied realities because of, with, and despite of the colonial inflicted fractures (Patel, 2021).

Our positionality is a result of traveling alawai that we individually as well as collectively are called by our ancestors to walk. I did not feel that I could do pono research with a mo'olelo that was unhealed by various colonial assaults and the physical, emotional, and spiritual distancing that had impacted me so greatly in my time in the University and in the place whose names were erased to be re-placed by Pittsburgh; a place whose mana was mangled from bouncing off shards of steel that keeps upright the walls of settler colonialism. Part of my mo'olelo in re-connecting to place, self, and purpose upon my re-turn to home, was feeling disoriented, like being in no worlds but many worlds at the same time (what some refer to as liminal space (Turner, 1969) or borrowing from Chicana epistemes, nepantilism (Anzaldúa, 2007)—the colliding and coalescing of many forms of social, cultural, and political ways of knowing to make a beautiful whole out of parts colonial realities say are disparate). I underwent continual, decolonial processes to re-gain lōkahi, which has led me to a space and in a place, where I can embark on this research project bringing my mo'olelo and outsider-within positionality (Smith, 2021) as something that should never be withdrawn, but utilized as a tool to amplify analytical strengths, while recognizing shortcomings. I use my huaka'i and the formation of this project as a tool that comes with carrying out my kuleana in my contributions to my kaiāulu in what ways they see necessary for our collective healing. As I have said since leaving for college when I was 18 years old and always finding my way back, Kaua'i is a place that provides answers if one knows how to listen.

I re-turn to my mo'olelo about the 'Ōhi'a Lehua tree at Phipps Conservatory at my doctoral institution earlier in this dissertation. What drew me to Phipps the day I met the 'Ōhi'a Lehua tree was a gravitational pull. It was a pull generated through my sense-abilities that my ways of

knowing were becoming cracked, dull, and depressed particularly, my sense-ability of na‘au and my sense-ability of kulāiwi (my relationship with my homeland) (Oliveira, 2014). The pressure I was experiencing was not uncommon for those who come from who are faced with feeling like they need to choose between maintaining their commitments to their communities and adhering to the dominant settler colonial culture of the academy (Scott, 1986).

My kulāiwi is the mokupuni o Kaua‘i, where I was born and raised. For most of my childhood I was raised in Wailua (translation: spirit, ghost, remains of the dead. Named because Wailua is made up of several heiau where ali‘i spirits dwell). I identify with ‘Ele‘ele ahupua‘a since that is where my ‘ohana generationally resides; however, I have lived in ahupua‘a across Kaua‘i. My paternal grandmother was born and raised in the plantation camp in moku Kona, ahupua‘a Makaweli. My grandfather fled to Hawai‘i from the Philippines to escape violence and worked on the sugar cane plantations. My grandfather and my grandmother married when she was sixteen years old through an arranged marriage. They had my dad along with four of his siblings. My dad was born and raised in the sugar plantation camp of Port Allen in ‘Ele‘ele ahupua‘a where he worked on a chicken farm since he was a keiki. My dad is a hunter, fisher, diver, farmer, surfer. It was through him that I learned how to be in relationship with the ocean. How to read the waves and tides, how to respect the mana of the ocean, how to mālama the ocean. I have been in the oceans of Kaua‘i since before I was born and I’m still in the oceans of Kaua‘i today. One of my most notable connections to the ocean was in high school, when I joined the paddling team. We would paddle outrigger wa‘a, similar to the ones our ancestors would paddle, and race against other high school teams. I still paddle for a hui today as paddling is instrumental to my physical, spiritual, and emotional healing. It is also vital to my relational healing as it is an act to remembering my relationship with the ocean and my relationships with others through the values of

laulima, lōkahi, and kuleana. I understand paddling as a practice in epistemology, and as such, as a part of my data collection process through providing clarity and groundedness to my sense-abilities as it should be since research that is not enlivened through the researcher is like using a strainer to bail out water from the wa‘a.

My mother and her ‘ohana are from the island of O‘ahu. My mother, my grandmother, and my aunties moved to Kaua‘i when they were keiki. My mother instilled in me my desire for music and dance. She enrolled me in a hula hālau when I was five years old. I stopped dancing hula for many years until re-turning to it again as an adult. Hula, like paddling is a practice in epistemology as method and beyond that, as integral to my holistic healing and relationships to past, present, future. My maternal grandmother was adopted at birth and perhaps her extended mo‘okū‘auhau will be re-membered one day. My grandfather was Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, Chinese, and Spanish. My mother and her sisters were primarily raised by their paternal grandmother, Tūtū Agnes “Dutchie” Kahoiwai Camacho, and spent a lot of time growing up with their extended ‘ohana. I did not question my “racial” make-up growing up because my ‘ohana never taught me that it was important thing to make sense of. What they did teach me, however, was the importance of place, of aloha ‘āina, of respect for kūpuna, of integrating ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i in my everyday conversations, of the importance of being in relationship with others in a pono way. These were practices and values I didn’t know were “unique” until I left Kaua‘i to attend college in Washington State when I was 18 years old.

As a first-generation, low-income student at a predominately white institution I received an abrasive series of lessons about what it means, in colonial ways of knowing, to be Indigenous or Filipinx or white or Asian Pacific Islander (amongst all the “Other” categories I was learning what it meant to be a part of). As a way to make sense of these ascribed identities, I sought to form

relationships with others from Hawai‘i who may have understood what I was going through. Similar to the distancing I felt that drew me to Phipps Conservatory when I was in Pittsburgh, I experienced a tug in my ways of knowing and being. I came to realize rather quickly that just because someone was from Hawai‘i did not mean that they automatically had the type of relationship to their places and kūpuna that I had.

I always felt a deep sense of connection to Kaua‘i that only got stronger the more I explored why this connection existed. No matter how far I go or how long I’m gone, Kaua‘i pulls me back. She does this because my piko is connected to her across space, time, and physical planes. After receiving my bachelor’s and master’s degrees, I re-turned home and worked as a social worker for child and family services providing therapy, advocacy, and education to foster keiki who were funneled into the system by gender-based violence. I believe what drew me to this line of work and to the broader topic of this dissertation was my own experiences with fragmentations in my ‘ohana and seeing for myself that the keiki I worked with in the foster care system were disproportionately Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. Observing the pain that these keiki experienced drove me to learn more about what the problem was so that I could understand how to empower the future generations of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi wāhine to know they are more than their colonial injuries and to empower Kaua‘i to be better than our colonial realities, because we are better.

Historical trauma and the health issues that are overrepresented in some populations over others is something I was keenly aware of before I ever developed the words to describe those lived experiences. The multiple traumas in my ‘ohana both prevented me from re-connecting as well as prompted me to re-connect with my genealogy. In trying to make sense of these traumas, the answers I received about my genealogy from ‘ohana is that my mother had been “legally” and though Kānaka ‘Ōiwi traditional kinship practices, hānai as a baby. A language barrier existed

between me and my paternal grandfather so attaining mo‘olelo from him about his lineage in the Philippines was difficult. I re-member when I was a keiki, about 7-9 years old, I asked him about his ‘ohana in the Philippines and what happened to them as I observed his hands in mine, wondering why he was missing so many fingers. My grandfather carried himself with stoicism and overtly refused to talk about the violence he experienced through the colonization of his island home by Spain telling me, “never mind, we here now, go play!” On all sides of my ‘ohana, there is missing mo‘olelo and mo‘okū‘auhau ruptures in my lineage leaving pieces that do not necessarily line up. Since I was a keiki, I have been curious about my ancestors and have actively worked to re-claim my mo‘okū‘auhau since my life, at times, literally depended on it.

Like many dis-placed from colonization, coming to understand what information to trust and what information to be critical of when doing genealogical work is a refining of your Kānaka ‘Ōiwi sense-abilities. Asking the right questions based on observation through all senses is something we learn as keiki and should not be thought of as a bias to research, but as a tool, especially when that research is with your own kaiāulu. Positionality is one of the most powerful tools we have as researchers because when we do the work of re-connecting deeply with our positioning to ourselves (researcher), our ‘āina (context), our kaiāulu (population) then understanding the complexity and density of interacting patterns becomes a worldview with layered lenses that you can unpack and repack to understand what is at the core of the epistemological phenomenon under study.

Positionality can be seen as strength if utilized as such. Deciphering mo‘olelo of my ‘ohana and what I know to be true through my sense-abilities is a process of coming to know who I am, my kuleana to this research, and is an act of decolonization. The stealing of knowledges that was rightfully mine to inherit has caused colonial damage, especially as the softening, but ever-present

voice of the colonization whispers “who are you *truly*?” (Fanon, 1963) while leaving me with the unanswered questions (for now) of, “what are the stories we don’t tell? And why?” These are epistemological, decolonial questions that give my life and every research project I chose to be involved in meaning (Meyer, 2013a).

How do I identify within colonial racialized categories? With what I know to be true, I identify as mixed. I purposefully leave out “-raced” here as -race(d) implies a process of racialization and an over-reliance on essentialized personal identifiers that always work to erase certain identities, while highlighting others in strategic power moves toward colonial desires. In my ways of knowing and honoring the wholeness of who I am, I represent the complexity of what happens when the two halves of a colonial binary become folded upon itself. In my case that would be the communion between European colonizers and the settler colonizers of the Philippines mixed with Kānaka ‘Ōiwi of a particular place (mokupuni o Kaua‘i a me O‘ahu). It’s a complicated decoding of the collision between multiple realities, the dance between varying epistemes of what defines a group as a peoples, and of borders that become blurred within colonial categories of the Other (Anzaldúa, 2009). It is this complexity that colonialism hates and tries to write off as an unfortunate defect in an otherwise perfect conquest narrative of racial purity, but as Laura Cotelli (1990) states, “I imagine myself in good humor and wish to live a responsible life, and so I’m not going to fall off the edge as some imperfect person just because I’m an accident in history” (p. 172).

Kumu Manulani Meyer (2013a) poses the epistemological, decolonial questions of, “What does “native to a region” really mean? How does that influence our work as scholar-practitioners focusing on planetary awakening? What does it mean with regard to knowledge? How are you Indigenous? How am I Hawaiian?” (p. 251). She goes on to state, “I now use Indigenous as a

synonym for “enduring patterns” with regard to philosophy. It helps bring forth k/new ideas that have made sense because of the ecology of these times. Indigenous is really about culture: best practices of a group of people specific to a place, over time” (p. 251).

I was recently making kapa (cloth made from wauke or māmaki bark) with Kumu Sabra Kauka o Kaua‘i. Kumu Kauka is a kapa practioner, elementary school teacher, and mana kupuna wahine. As we were pounding kapa, making it as flat as possible so it could be dried out and later dyed and painted, we were talking story. Making kapa is done all by hand using natural resources from trees, berries, and stone. Kapa is typically embossed, stamped, or painted with petroglyphs that tell a certain mo‘olelo. Non-coincidentally, Kumu Sabra Kauka was contacted by Phipps Conservatory; the same place I met the ‘Ōhia Lehua tree at my doctoral institution in Pittsburgh. They want to commission a kapa piece to exhibit in the conservatory. Kumu Kauka honored me with the kuleana of creating this kapa. She advised that I think about the mo‘olelo I want to tell in the kapa as a way to inspire the process. Much like kapa, this dissertation is marked with an “enduring pattern” present in my ‘ohana and in the mo‘olelo of many of the ‘ohana here. It is a mo‘olelo o Kaua‘i, one of healing the present to hold re-generative space for the suffering of our ancestral past (Brave Hart, 1998), of re-memembering who we are despite of and especially when we find ourselves submerged in unfamiliar, faraway places either spiritually, emotionally, relationally, and/ or physically, about what it means to resist looking from the inside out for answers and validation of our existence, of our survival, and to be enlightened enough to always choose to *Nānā i ke Kumu*—look to the source (Pukui et al., 1972).

I consider myself to be an “outsider-within” meaning that I belong to the community in which this knowledge is situated and that enhances my ability to sense and be a part of complex, contradictory relationships, but also serves as an ideological and material wedge between myself

and my kaiāulu (Collins, 1986) because of the inevitable ideological tensions that comes with gaining privilege and legitimacy from the dominant colonial structures of intelligence from institutions that are not of this ‘āina. A U.S. legitimized postsecondary education, especially that at a Ph.D. level is not common for people born and raised on Kaua‘i who are Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and Filipinx. For those of us who do receive postsecondary degrees, it is rare to come back because of the strength of the erase to re-place function of settler colonialism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, dis-placing Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and contributing to a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi forced diaspora (some call it economic refugeeism) to Honu Moku. Even within methodologies that are more hierarchically flattened, unequal power relations of researcher/ researched, educated/ uneducated, “have and have nots,” etc. needs to be a pond one sits in often to reflect and integrate this position well into the relational care of the research (Wilson, 2008). I am constantly cognizant of the fact that speaking about other mana wāhine knowledge systems may be unintentionally exclusionary by default. Holding mana wāhine knowledges and relationships to these knowledges as central to this project may not be perfect, but nevertheless contributes to sustaining nā wai ola (the living waters).

My positionalities locate me relative to those I engage with in the research process and requires that I constantly undergo critical reflexivity in my research as well as in my everyday belonging to maintain relational accountability (Wilson, 2008). As Shawn Kana‘iaupuni (2004) states,

The question for those of us who are insiders, advocates, people at-risk yet occupying a privileged space as scientists, is how to contribute most effectively, truthfully, and meaningfully without labeling our people and ‘ohana [...] with the doom and gloom that, as ‘ohana, pains us and, as scientists, may be difficult to move beyond. On the other hand, how do we, as scientists and advocates—and in many occasions as outsiders to

communities among our own—help create a positive space for greater voice and empowerment of a marginalized collective? I argue that we, as Hawaiians, as Pacific Islanders, and as scientists, must call for a critical, strengths-based approach to research, creating knowledge that addresses the concerns of communities first, and then of policymakers and science (p. 35).

This dissertation is rooted in place, in community. Using Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as method I utilize my position along similar lines of what Summer Maunakea (2016) calls an ‘āina aloha research framework. This research framework centers kaiāulu within the overlapping epistemological concepts and actions of laulima, mālama ‘āina, and pu‘uhonua. Laulima emphasizes the role of the collective, maintains research as action-oriented, and integrates diverse sources of knowledge throughout the research process. Mālama ‘āina honors the fundamental connection between Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and ‘āina as ancestor and forefronts the community-initiated protection protocols of place. Pu‘uhonua involves the protecting of the mo‘olelo of all the knowledge sources involved in the project against purposes and desires counter to that of the collective, emphasizes relational accountability, and presents findings that the kaiāulu finds useful to their community-identified needs (Maunakea, 2016; Wilson, 2008).

#### **4.3.3 Mana Wāhine**

I was in relationship with many wāhine and kūpuna for this project. Much of the way I made sense of what I was dis-covering and re-covering was derived from eight mana wāhine. The mana wāhine I asked to help me make sense of the research questions must have the epistemological insight of knowing themselves as mana wāhine ancestors in training and as carrying and practicing a certain concrete kuleana for our future generations. Mana wāhine ranged

in age from their 20s to their 50s, but all had the disposition of an ancestrally recognized place in the cosmic order of our mo‘okū‘auhau and therefore hold a sophisticated understanding of their age and what that means in this temporal and spatial dimension. Half of the mana wāhine are mothers and half are not, yet they all identify as primary caregivers to kūpuna. Two identify as non-gender binary in a western sense. They experience various careers in health, social work, education, conservation, and hospitality and tourism. They all identify as belonging to more than one race/ ethnicity, with Kānaka ‘Ōiwi being a foundational part of who they are and how they experience the world. Lastly, they all identify as belonging to Kaua‘i genealogically and in kuleana.

These mana wāhine were included in this research through the Indigenous research method of relationality (see for example, Cajete, 1994; Oliveira & Wright, 2016; Patel, 2016; Smith et al., 2019; Wilson-Hokowhitu, 2009; Wilson, 2008). This requires working toward establishing a continuity between the goals of the research project and the goals of the community. To do this, I need to be in relationship with my kaiāulu and honor the knowledges, mana, and efficacy of those within the community in identifying people who would be most appropriate for the study given their specific contexts (Tuck, 2011). Specifically, I was guided by the three R’s of relationality as a research method: Respect, Reciprocity, and Responsibly (Wilson, 2008). This requires that I consistently engage in a cycle of critical reflexivity where I ask myself if what I am doing and how I am doing it is respectful to my kaiāulu, including the places the research is contextually positioned within and the ideas generated collectively by the research. It also requires that I consistently re-orient my project to be one of reciprocity where my ultimate goal is to empower my kaiāulu in ways that are aligned with the work already being done in the community. Lastly, kuleana is understanding my positionality and carrying out of what my community-identified role

is within a collective that is working toward the same visions (Oliveira & Wright, 2016; Wilson, 2008). Pono research is reflective of the understanding that knowledge is relational; it is shared with all creation—from the cosmos to plants, animals and the earth (Wilson, 2008; Kovach, 2010). As Wilson explains, it “goes beyond the idea of individual knowledge to the concept of relational knowledge...you are answerable to all your relations when you are doing research” (p. 177).

Building upon our understandings of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi mana wāhine epistemologies was done through strengthening the preexisting relationships that I have within my kaiāulu, specifically those who have already committed time and energy to the nurturing the next generation of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi thinkers and doers. For mana wāhine to have an active role in this study they must identify as Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and wahine and must identify their ‘ohana mo‘okū‘auhau as connected to Kaua‘i. Consistent with Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as methodology, I held space with these mana wāhine one-on-one with no structured agenda other than talking story, sharing in mana‘o, building a lāhui, and of course, eating. I came prepared with semi-structured questions (see Appendix A) to kōkua the flow of stuck sense-abilities. There were a lot of meetings with myself and mana wāhine and it is outside this methodology to count how many hours I spent talking with them. Time, at least in the way it is understood in colonial research, is too narrow of a unit to be relevant here. They are my kaiāulu. I am indebted to them as my kuleana. We are divinely interconnected by Kaua‘i mo‘okū‘auhau. Mana wāhine chose the wahi that hosted us. The place was part of the conversation. When I find myself in these places, I know which mana wahine to send a pule to lewa lani, the highest strata of the heavens, for.

How did I know these wāhine were “mana-ful”? Mana wāhine as a research framework originates from Kūpapa Māori epistemological research (e.g., Pihama, 2019; Smith, 1992). Kūpapa Māori and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi have a closely woven mo‘okū‘auhau as we share common

ancestors and elemental understandings of human relationships with nature and nature's interconnectedness to all things. Mana wāhine as a research framework engages research at the intersection of being Māori and wāhine (Pihama, 2019). I pose several understandings of what mana wāhine encapsulates throughout this dissertation and in being consistent with this enduring pattern, I understand mana wāhine in the specific contexts of this project as existing outside of and before colonially imposed knowledges of gender and race. This study is not mixed in with the wave of liberal feminism (Trask, 1996). To understand mana wāhine as simply meaning powerful women or feminine strength is epistemologically misaligned because Kānaka 'Ōiwi wāhine move in and out of spaces that are marginalized within colonial categories of gender, sexuality, and Indigenous/ non-indigenous racialized binaries (Pihama, 2019; Simmonds, 2011). Again, we see the limitations of language in capturing epistemological nuance here as English translations and feminism in colonial schools of thought does not capture the relational, spatial, spiritual, and temporal dimensions of mana wāhine (Simmonds, 2011).

Difficult to define in English with precision, mana wāhine "...includes a strength that is inherent in our being, one inherited from our genealogies, as we descend from land bearing goddesses like our earth mother Papahānaumoku and the volcano goddess Pele" (Simmonds, 2011, p. 13). Further, "a relationship with 'āina and a land base is a strict requirement for the way mana wahine is inspired and manifested. Mana wahine is therefore an embodiment of the power offered to Kanaka wāhine through their genealogical relationship to 'āina that works towards pono (balance) with the other natural forces in the world" (Osorio, 2018, p. 23). The presence of Akua wāhine in mo'olelo signifies the importance of the divinity of feminine energy in Kānaka 'Ōiwi knowledge re-creation. Mana wāhine as a concept and as an embodiment is epistemologically

complex but is ultimately about the celebration and respect for the power (mana) wāhine hold in the radical re-creation of our people and places (Johnston & Pihama, 1995).

In formulating the criteria for who constitutes a “mana wahine,” I sought the knowledges of community celebrated mana wāhine to co-create this mo‘olelo of mana wāhine epistemologies of healing and survivance. These mana wāhine are respected in our kaiāulu for their various work within the community and I respect these mana wāhine for all I have learned from them in and outside the confines of this dissertation. To engage in respectful, pono research I needed the ability to sense that me and these wāhine are in epistemological lōkahi. That is, I observed these wāhine to have demonstrated through thought and behavior that they are committed to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi survivance and are in their own individual and ‘ohana cycle of carrying their kuleana to the lāhui. The mana wāhine who contributed to this project and I have a shared kuleana to something bigger than our individual kuleana and all of their participation without hesitation is a reflection of that.

Positivist and post-positivistic constructions of reliability and validity are not used in this project. Academic rigor as defined by quantitative and qualitative research practices in western schools of thought are not honored in this project as these constructions are irrelevant to the research paradigms used. What is of relevance, however, is the relational accountability as validity. I know if my research is valid because it is validated by mana wāhine and it serves a utilitarian purpose within our Kaua‘i kaiāulu. Further, reliability purposefully takes on a subjective form where results are not meant to be re-produced in consistent patterns. Rather, they are meant to capture a specific moment in time, space, and place and can serve (or not serve) as lei for others to weave onto. Therefore, I know this project is reliable if it can be re-storied, re-told, de/re-bunked, and adapted within the changing contexts that resist the idea of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi as homogenous and static throughout space and time (Wilson, 2008).

Along lines of relationality and community answerability, I refrained from engaging the knowledges of those who may not be in alignment with the purpose of this project as one of decolonization or who do not, within my sense-abilities, actively explore their own knowledges and how these are interconnected with ‘ike kūpuna and pono futurities. Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are not epistemologically heterogenous and choosing who not to be in relationship with was as important as choosing who to be in relationship with. Since the intent of this project is ultimately kaiāulu empowerment, avoiding doing harm by managing the mana of the study was one of my arduous tasks. We are all pua on a lei and pua are impacted by various forces differently. This results in each mana wahine having a different kuleana and because of that, making sense of colonial healing and intergenerational building of pono futurities o Kaua‘i differently, as they should. For this study, I want to understand the knowledges of those situated at a specific point of healing within our collective mo‘okū‘auhau, who carry certain kuleana, and have a relational awareness of their kuleana. I sought to deepen my preexisting relationships with those who have demonstrated an understanding of decolonization, have intentionally incorporated decolonial practices in their work or everyday lives, and who move in the world in a way that communicates to my sense-abilities that they have done their own work of understanding their kuleana to re-creating a pono Kaua‘i. I understood the mana wāhine who contributed their mana‘o to this mo‘olelo of survivance to be committed to the co-stringing of lei that symbolizes the healing of our collective mo‘okū‘auhau.

Like in many Indigenous communities, everyone on Kaua‘i is interconnected and instead of masking my research agenda under western academic ideologies of “protection” of participants through anonymity, pono research involves making my research transparent to my kaiāulu and elicit shared ownership of the project by formulating it around kaiāulu members’ mana‘o and na‘auao (Chung-Do et al., 2019). “Data” is in the full ownership of the kaiāulu, which is key

because it is important in a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological method that people know who co-created the mo‘olelo. This will also give context, utility, and credibility to the mo‘olelo (Meyer, 2003). The kuleana I have in this research is to re-create portals of epistemology that empowers my Kaua‘i kaiāulu, mana wāhine or otherwise, to step into with their sense-abilities. I reciprocate by making this project relevant toward achieving broader community-identified goals and through crafting the mo‘olelo of mana wāhine for ‘ohana, lāhui, and kaiāulu desired purposes that advance the broader goal of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi survivance through practice (Kana‘ipunui, 2005; Kovach, 2021; Tuck, 2009). Kuleana of this project is tied to the kuleana of the mo‘olelo that emerge from it that can provide us with platforms of empowerment from which we can continue to progress.

Mana wāhine, including myself, and all those who helped open my sense-abilities in watering this project to full bloom occupy both settler and non-settler relations synchronously. For people from relational experiences like mine, our lenses are layered so in weaving lei there are materials that I did not immediately recognize or anticipate. The settler colonial structure in Hawai‘i requires treading lightly as an automatic reaction to the possibility of unpredictable tides. If, when, and how much I should forefront questions and discussions of colonization, specifically related to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi in quotidian life can only be answered relationally and through doing. Thus, the following sections, reflect my conscious choices on what and where to gather. I choose to follow particular alawai to see what they reveal about ‘ike kūpuna and about ourselves in the here and now. This means that the choices I made in gathering materials to string this lei were not made lightly, they were made out of necessity and intentionality. This process was difficult and took time, but paddling our wa‘a down the alawai of most resistance that required the most endurance in finding the enduring patterns from our ‘ike kūpuna means we are well conditioned to continue the resisting colonization long after this project is complete (Case, 2021).

#### 4.3.4 Gathering Materials for the Lei

Decolonial research is empowering when the people and communities involved in the study benefit by a platform to have their *leo* and *mana‘o* valued and shared to contribute to the protection of people and place (Kana‘iaupuni, 2005). Kuleana of the study is tied to the kuleana of empowerment of having synthesized understandings of the *mo‘olelo* that get woven together from decolonial research. This research can inform the re-creation of an *alawai* that opens up to the freedom to explore more deeply the waters of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi knowledges (Oliveira & Wright, 2016). Driven by this purpose, *mo‘olelo* and *mo‘okū‘auhau* are the methods in which to pin our understandings of knowledge. Kumu Billie Terao, Kumu *ulana*, taught me that in weaving you start at the center, the *piko*. From there you must pin to weave. These pins are where the *lauhala* will be supported to weave an enduring pattern of its own. *Ulana lauhala*, like other Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ancestral practices, tells a *mo‘olelo*. The *lauhala* carries the *mana* of the weaver and the place the *lauhala* is sourced. The *mo‘olelo* told is a combination of that of the ‘*āina*, the weaver, and other conduits of ancestral knowledges (Dewhurst et al., 2013). *Mo‘olelo* and *mo‘okū‘auhau* are pins of understanding *mana wāhine* epistemologies. *Mo‘olelo* and *mo‘okū‘auhau* are appropriate to the way I make sense of the purpose of the project because they represent vast interconnectedness of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi knowledges with the methodological specificity of being inherently rooted within place. The malleability of *mo‘olelo* and *mo‘okū‘auhau* as methodology gifts me with the freedom to embrace this as an *ulana* or a weaving project as one set in development and growth. In weaving we start at the center (Dewhurst et al., 2013). We started at the *piko* of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology in this dissertation and continue to weave this *mo‘olelo* with k/new materials outward.

#### **4.3.4.1 *Mo‘olelo***

Mo‘olelo is more than a narrative or story, it is a method of communicating one’s narrative/story to transmit knowledges (Oliveira & Wright, 2016). Kapā Oliveira (2014) explains mo‘olelo stating, “Through mo‘olelo, Kanaka were able to maintain a link to the past, describing the outstanding feats of one’s ancestors, chronicling the events that happened at a particular locale, explaining the meanings of place names, attributing the formation of certain land features to the gods, and the like” (p. 111). Mo‘olelo is an appropriate method for this study because it is inherent to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology (Meyer, 1998) and emphasizes inter and intrapersonal relationships as well as the interconnectedness of people with the environment and spiritual world (Wilson, 2008).

The relationship between the researcher, mana wāhine, and other sources of knowledge is one formulated around re-membling and re-telling mo‘olelo using our own methods and means of knowledge and healing (Meyer, 2001) in a way that allows all involved to re-connect with ancestral memory, embody place, and empower individuals, their ‘ohana, and the community toward a path of healing (Muñoz, 2019). Ha‘i mo‘olelo or storytelling as an everyday practice and as a research method contributes to the survival of our mo‘okū‘auhau of place in re-collections of these mo‘olelo after we have transcended our physical beings (Nāone, 2008). Further, working toward a collective kuleana, while understanding what our individual kuleana is in collective endeavors can serve the practical function of mo‘olelo in helping to actualize community change, as determined by the community (Tuck, 2009; Wright, 2018). By determining our own mo‘olelo about the knowledge and healing of our mana wāhine we will contribute to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi futurities of physical, mental, relational, and spiritual healing as enlivened in place (Brayboy & Bang, 2019).

Ha‘i mo‘olelo as storytelling involves storying as we tell, which only happens relationally. Ha‘i mo‘olelo between myself and mana wāhine fosters a relationship that encourages them to explore and share their epistemic mo‘olelo in a way that are honest, vulnerable, mutually beneficial, and productive (Becker, 1996). Relationships between researcher/ participants unfold prior to, during, and after the research process. The researcher’s growth throughout the process meld with the growth in the relationships with sources of knowledge and the development of the participants’ understandings and connectedness to the subject matter (Kovach, 2021; Wilson, 2008).

In Hawai‘i we have a way of relating to each other called, “talk story.” Talk story is in the vein of conversational methods within Indigenous research that exemplifies the value Indigenous people have in discussion and dialogue as a form of gathering data about life (Kovach, 2010). Talk story is a Hawaiian pidgin English term for an informal and conversational style of relating to each other. It is a ha‘i mo‘olelo style and a method of learning. Talk story is “...a way people in Hawai‘i connect with each other through narratives of place, genealogy, history, and identity” (Steele, 2012, p. 39). A key characteristic of talk story is co-narration, the joint presentation of personal experiences, information, and interpretations of events by all parties (Kovach, 2010). Talk story is a method that is about making small talk in a big way and big talk in a small way. The stories we tell bring the past into the present to change the future, to represent ourselves not as we are, but as we would like to become; the expression of our stories engages a politics of possibility (Steele, 2012). Unstructured discussions with no fixed agenda were had with a talk story sensibility where questions regarding epistemology, ‘ike kūpuna and healing, and what a thriving lāhui within a Kaua‘i context looks like.

Talk story is an interpersonal exchange lamented by mutuality and culture. Developing relationships through exchange in dialogue and absorbing the other person/ entities' energy through the senses is an integral part of talk story. Relational and cultural respect ensure that the hūnā of mo'olelo is honored. Hūnā is about the scaredness of certain knowledges and the protection of these knowledges from potential harm from undue influences. Hūnā of mo'olelo is predicated off the Kānaka 'Ōiwi epistemological belief that not all knowledge is free and not everything can or should be shared with and/or understood by those in the academy or outside the kaiāulu (Cristobal, 2018; Reyes, 2019; Wright & Balutski, 2016). Tuck & Gaztambide (2010) extrapolate on this idea saying, "not everything, or even most things uncovered in a community-based inquiry process need to be reported in academic journals or settings. There are some stories that the academy has not proved itself to be worthy of knowing" (p. 84).

Colonial damages, in part, come from not understanding what is not yours to understand. At all levels of the research process, relational accountability is always foregrounded so this research is strapped to my sense-abilities as the researcher to *lawe i ka ma 'alea a ku 'ono 'ono*—acquire skill and make it deep (Pukui, 1983). To strengthen my skills of stewarding knowledges involves consistently asking the question of how this work will be of benefit to our future generations (Smith, 2021). In ensuring that my research is relationally focused I constantly had to meditate in various wahi pana and journal asking myself the following questions: Who defined the research problem? For whom is this study worthy and relevant? Who says so? What knowledge will the community gain from this study? What knowledge will the researcher gain from this study? What are some likely positive outcomes from this study? What are some of the possible negative outcomes? How can negative outcomes be eliminated? To whom is the researcher

accountable? What processes are in place to support the research, the researched and the researcher? (Smith, 2021).

#### **4.3.4.2 *Mo‘okū‘auhau***

My task as a researcher using the method of mo‘okū‘auhau is to develop what Noenoe Silva (2017) calls a mo‘okū‘auhau consciousness. A mo‘okū‘auhau consciousness develops when Indigenous researchers “draw on ancestral knowledges to accept and carry their kuleana to record it so that Kānaka in their own time/s as well as in the distant future would benefit from it” (Silva, 2017, p. 6). Mo‘okū‘auhau consciousness is an active way of knowing and being in the world and can be utilized with intention in the analysis of observation. For this study, all pieces of data were received through my sense-abilities and made sense of using a mo‘okū‘auhau consciousness (Kahakalau, 2019).

Mo‘okū‘auhau is an active story within a mo‘olelo of our cosmological and (her)storical genealogical connection to a place. These individual and ‘ohana origin mo‘olelo help mana wāhine re-member who we are and how we are related to the ‘āina and kaiāulu of our specific wahi, which strengthens the relationships we bridge with the present to the past (Hall, 2019). Breaking down the word mo‘okū‘auhau. Mo‘o means “succession, series, genealogical line, lineage” and can also mean (like in mo‘olelo) “story, narrative, history.” Moreover, mo‘o is often symbolized physically through a “lizard, dragon, serpent,” or any creature with a succession of individual vertebrae that extend the backbone beyond the main body. Each individual vertebrae can be thought of as another generation, another story, another succession in the genealogical line of our collective survival as a people. Kū means to “stand tall,” as if to stand tall in the receiving of knowledge from your ancestors and stand tall in the passing on of knowledges to your decedents. ‘Auhau means, “the femur and humerus bones of the human skeleton.” ‘Auhau adds another layer of understanding to

mo‘okū‘auhau as a genealogical connection as if bred into one’s bone (Oliveira, 2014). It is our ancestors whose mana reside in their bones in the ‘āina, who enable us to anchor ourselves in our places and be kū as Kia‘i of our ways of knowing (Wilson-Hokowhitu, 2019). The layered meaning of hua ‘ōlelo considers the ritualized practice of ceremonial stripping away of the flesh of an ali‘i after their death in order to preserve the iwi, which are the courier of mana. When hua ‘ōlelo are strung together, like when stringing pua on a lei, mo‘okū‘auhau becomes a descriptive process of re-memembering our individual and grand interconnectedness and coming to know our kuleana in re-creating our mo‘okū‘auhau for future generations.

Mo‘okū‘auhau is a cosmogonic connection of lineages between all living elements across time and space that explains how Kānaka ‘Ōiwi are inextricably linked through multidimensional genealogies impressed in the natural world (Kame‘eleihiwa, 1999; Wilson-Hokowhitu, 2019). Mo‘okū‘auhau moves beyond bloodline, and represents a relationality that embraces “intellectual, conceptual and aesthetic genealogies” (Brown, 2016, p. 27). Therefore, genealogies serve the function of facilitating connections with those animate and in-animate entities that have come before and after a person (Kame‘eleihiwa, 1999). This aspect of mo‘okū‘auhau is important in “identifying our position within a given mo‘okū‘auhau, which directs us to the roles, responsibilities, and privileges we carry in that particular relationship” (Lipe et al., 2019, p. 107). As such, a person’s kuleana within the mo‘okū‘auhau is often understood as one practicing their positionality to place in a pono way (Lipe, 2018).

This study is a project revolving around Kaua‘i mo‘okū‘auhau. Conversations of mo‘olelo cannot be void of conversations around mo‘okū‘auhau as mo‘okū‘auhau is fundamental to crafting mo‘olelo. Mo‘okū‘auhau means reciting in one’s ‘ohana lineage, but also means telling one’s mo‘olelo of who one is and what one knows to be true within the cosmologically and contextually

nested epistemologies so that our future generations know they have their ancestors to re-call upon (McDougall, 2016; Wilson-Hokowhitu, 2019).

#### **4.3.4.3 *Metaphor***

A part of mo‘olelo and mo‘okū‘auhau is an idea of metaphor as a tool for communicating deeply situated knowledges. Metaphor is used as a component of ha‘i mo‘olelo as a way knowledge, particularly conceptual and complex knowledge, is learned and transmitted (Olivera & Wright, 2016). ‘Ōlelo no‘eau, for example, have been used throughout this dissertation to highlight certain knowledges and extend certain salient points. ‘Ōlelo no‘eau are proverbs that succinctly summarize Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology. ‘Ōlelo no‘eau are linchpins of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology and are considered bountiful sources of sharing one’s na‘auao (Pukui & Curtis, 1997). Metaphor is a natural part of how mo‘olelo is crafted and how it holds the potential to provide insights into kaona at an epistemic phenomenal and metaphysical level (Meyer, 1998; Olivera & Wright, 2016). The most sophisticated, high order thoughts that are grounded in an ecological and epistemic consciousness are communicated via metaphor (Cajete, 1994). Mo‘olelo, at a basic level, are mo‘okū‘auhau metaphor. As Noenoe Silva (2017) extrapolates, “ingeniously crafted metaphors. They are carrying substantial symbolic weight and are also indicative of a way of being in the world and of conceiving the world and our place in it—we are part of a family that includes the sun, stars, ocean, and everything else in the world” (p. 191 as cited by Casumbal-Salazar, 2017, p. 5).

Within colonized communities and particularly regarding radical healing, colonial trauma is a metaphor made to be an individual’s abstraction, like an itchy wound that you would scratch if you could just figure out where in your psyche it is. Intergenerational historical trauma within Indigenous communities is treated as metaphor yet has real material consequences that lead to the

physical, spiritual, and mental poisoning of the ‘āina—that which feeds and which we eat, the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we consume, and the ideas that are massaged into the consciousnesses is contaminated with colonialism (Visser, 2015). Metaphor is a way that Kānaka ‘Ōiwi confront ongoing colonial trauma and is a way to re-connect to ‘ike kūpuna in making sense of the world around/ in/ through us and our role in re-creating Kānaka ‘Ōiwi pono futurities.

#### **4.3.5 The Materials for the Lei**

The mana wāhine in this dissertation were encouraged to share about their mo‘okū‘auhau, where they are from, and what places, spaces, and people were influential in shaping how they experience the world. Mo‘okū‘auhau consciousness was not only a requirement for me as the researcher, but also for the mana wāhine and all sources I looked to in weaving this lei. This means that those sources are intentionally connected to ancestral knowledges through thought and action so much that Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemic values saturate the research process (Kahakalau, 2019). They were encouraged to share how their mo‘okū‘auhau, their dynamic interconnectedness with ‘ohana, place, experiences, ancestors, relate to their radical healing and what the passing on of their ways of knowing to the next generation looks like.

I took an eclectic approach in seeking sources of data. This means that I was flexible to the needs of the mana wāhine I spoke with in seeking these knowledges. I kept a journal based on my observations, including descriptive and process notes that detail the what, where, when, and why of certain events in the research huaka‘i (Angrosino, 2007) as they are funneled through the axiology of my eight Kānaka ‘Ōiwi sense-abilities: sight, listening, touch, smell, na‘au, kulāiwi, mo‘o, and au ‘āpa‘apa‘a (Oliveira, 2014). Na‘au has been described earlier and will be discussed in more detail shortly but hits on “the intuitive, visceral responses to supernatural phenomena that

deny ‘rational’ explanation” (Fujikane, 2021, p. 18). Kulāiwi is sense-ability of community connectedness to the physical ‘āina beneath one’s feet and the spiritual and literal connectedness to where the iwi kūpuna are placed. When this sense-ability is activated, the researcher understands that their knowledges and skills only matter in so far as it directly benefits and belongs to one’s kaiāulu and to the lāhui. The work that happens within Indigenous communities need to increase access to k/new knowledges for transformative purposes and the process by which we navigate this alawai is open-ended because the research is always up to the community to transform and adapt to serve the function of survivance (Wilson, 2008). The sense-ability of mo‘o is the sense-ability reached through mo‘olelo and mo‘okū‘auhau and is about opening one’s observatory inputs to re-memembering one’s interconnectedness of ‘ike kūpuna and the cosmic order of knowledges across space (Oliveira, 2014). The sense-ability of au ‘āpa‘apa‘a allows one to view “life according to ancestral time, measured in the lunar cycles, the seasonal cycles, and the life cycles of the earth” (Fujikane, 2021, p. 18). As demonstrated by the eight sense-abilities, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as methodology involves bringing oneself closer to understanding time, space, and connectedness of all things through observation and reflection (Oliveira, 2014).

As part of my journaling and true to an Indigenous methodological form of observations, I intentionally engage in ecological monitoring as in changes in the weather and in the natural and human imposed environments to capture often overseen contextual aspects (Vaughan, 2016). I also documented dreamscapes as data (Oliveira, 2014; Wilson, 2008). *He manu hānai ke kanaka na ka moe*—Man is like a pet bird belonging to the realm of sleep (Pukui, 1983). Our conscious constructions of time and space do not hold up in the realm of sleep. Kaona is often found in dreamscapes if one knows how to sense with their na‘au. Dreamscapes can also come in the form of dreams that one has while sleeping as well as visions that one has while awake. It is not

uncommon to have dreams that lead to physical sensations and symbolic meanings when one's three piko are in lōkahi and the colonized divides between the heavenscapes, landscapes, and seascapes are actively resisted (Olivera, 2014).

Kaona can also be found in the physical world and can manifest in a multitude of ways. Hō'ailona or symbols from the ancestors are often clues to the relevance of knowledge for a particular task. For example, my sense-ability of mo'o is usually heightened during times where I am uncertain about a path I am on. The hō'ailona of ānuehue (rainbows) typically appear to my sense-abilities as a prompt to pause and re-member why I am on the path I am on. Another example of a common form of hō'ailona is lilinoe (light rain, fine mist). I was raised with the belief that if lilinoe appears during an event or ceremony that our ancestors are shedding tears of joy upon us. Kaona is also relational. Understanding kaona through our na'au allows us to be answerable to our relationships with our self, 'ohana, kaiāulu, and lāhui. To hear what is not explicitly stated when talking with another Kānaka 'Ōiwi wāhine is kaona. Kaona is to know what another Kānaka 'Ōiwi wāhine truly means because you can sense the transference and blending of mana flowing in the same direction.

#### **4.3.5.1 *Na'au***

Na'au, instincts, "enlightened intestines," the 'Ōiwi center of intelligence is an epistemic source of data that is also a method of collecting and analyzing data and is an inherent practice in epistemology (Meyer, 2001). The sense-ability of na'au requires the researcher to take time and space to allow revelations to percolate. Na'au as a research methodology looks like critical reflection of self, revisiting of the relational questions of pono research, dwelling in specific wahi pana that are relevant to the mo'olelo I am learning, mediating in nature, being still, being silent, passively intent on observing connections, journaling, breathing, dreaming, and re-membering

through my sense-abilities (Oliveira, 2014). Na‘au as methodology requires practice in patience. These practices widen the Indigenous researcher’s sense-ability’s to be receptive and porose to the complexity and depth of epistemological truths of self and others (Wilson-Hokowhitu, 2019). *Ka i‘a ‘imi i ka moana, na ka manu e ha‘i mai*—The fish sought by the ocean, whose presence is revealed by birds. This ‘ōleo no‘eau talks about how the noio birds flock makai when there is a school of aku fish (Pukui et al., 1972). This points to how observation is key to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology and na‘au as methodology. When fishing, patience is practiced, stillness is sought, silence tastes like the salt of a fresh catch. There is a lot of waiting, watching, smelling, tasting, listening, feeling your external and internal environment. If you are asking the question of where the fish gather, leaning into your Kānaka ‘Ōiwi sense-abilities may tell you to stop looking down and start looking toward the heavens. The manu or birds, like the noio, are better hunters of fish than humans are. They hover over schools of fish. Kānaka ‘Ōiwi sense-abilities tell you that if you want to know where to catch a fish, ask the birds.

As a curator and steward of various pieces that tell a mo‘olelo, it is my kuleana to write these pieces into a coherent mo‘olelo that is descriptively thick and expansively expressionistic, na‘au is one of the best tools of survivance in which to sharpen (Meyer, 2013a). I describe the interconnected complexity of the lived experiences of participants within their social, historical, personal, and cultural contexts (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 2002), using my sense-abilities (Oliveira, 2014) to locate, draw out, and bring to light mo‘olelo that has been subaltern in the world of western research (Spivak & Said, 1988). Na‘au and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological concepts are valid analytical tools because the generation of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi that are breathing right now serves as both the bridge in-between and the threads unseen of our not so distant ancestral past and our genealogical future unfolding fast to become our present.

#### 4.3.5.2 *Nā Pua Keiki*

In my dissertation huaka‘i, there were many times I felt like my mana was stuck and I could not fully see the picture of what pono futurities look like on Kaua‘i as based in mana wāhine epistemologies, even though the “data” was all around me. In thinking about our ancestral past and weaving lei of collective mo‘okū‘auhau of surviance it made sense to me to try to re-connect more deeply with how the next generation experiences connectedness to place and ‘ike kūpuna. This project is bequeathed to Kaua‘i, but more specifically to our future generations of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi on Kaua‘i. The way the next generation of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi make sense of survivance will invariably differ from the way my generation did, just as we were different than our parents’ generations. However, there is much continuity between Kānaka ‘Ōiwi of past and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi of present because of understanding, appreciating, and practicing intergenerational interconnectedness and re-connection to ‘āina as ancestor.

When doing the work of radical healing for future generations, one’s eyes tend to get weary. Kānaka ‘Ōiwi ways of knowing does not suggest I have to be a biological Makuahine, but I do need to relate to at least the next seven generations to coordinate my actions in the present. To kōkua my eyes open on an arduous voyage, I turned to Kāhealani Hāmākua, a mana wahine who inspires me for multiple reasons, one of which is her nurturing of her keiki as pua on the lei of our collective mo‘okū‘auhau. I asked for permission to do an activity with her keiki for this project to “kōkua Aunty” in understanding what a thriving Kānaka ‘Ōiwi future looks like. These keiki are intentionally engaged by their Makuahine and Makuakane (father) in Kānaka ‘Ōiwi beliefs and practices, including speaking ‘Ōlelo Makuahine, stewarding loko‘ia, and mālama ‘ohana. The five keiki (ages 3-12) each re-created a painting in response to prompts about what it means to be Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and what ‘ike kūpuna looks like to them. The keiki were given time to

reflect and sketch then were given canvases and paint to re-create their visions. The younger ones were helped with the practical skills of painting by Mo'olelo Murals Kumu, Bethany Coma and their Makuahine and Makuakane. These keiki were not pressured by me or their parents in what images came to their sense-abilities but encouraged to share openly what they were sensing. We talked stories during the activity about what they are painting and for what reasons.

I realized in being in relation with these keiki that these keiki are embodiments of 'ike kūpuna. They are the newest pua on the collective lei of mo'okū'auhau and therefore, view what Kānaka 'Ōiwi means and looks like with purity of perspective. What Kānaka 'Ōiwi survivance means to these to these keiki: 'Alekoko loko'ia, hae Hawai'i (Hawai'i flag), ahupua'a, Queen Lili'uokalani at 'Iolani Palace, lo'i kalo. What was it about these images that meant a pono Kānaka 'Ōiwi future? They talked about aloha 'āina and love for their place (loko'ia, kalo, ahupua'a) and about lōkahi of Kānaka 'Ōiwi across ka pae 'āina o Hawai'i (Queen Lili'uokalani at 'Iolani Palace, hae Hawai'i). The keiki talked story with me about how they know these images mean something pono because they re-member fondly going to these places as an 'ohana and seeing certain imagery and knowing, through their sense-abilities, that this is what Kānaka 'Ōiwi means.

Keiki epistemologies were not the focus of this dissertation, however, aligned with Kānaka 'Ōiwi epistemology as worldview, theory, method, and practice meant being in active relationship with Kānaka 'Ōiwi who could help me make sense of all that I was experiencing in the re-creation of this decolonial project. Kānaka 'Ōiwi are generationally bound through a cosmological mo'okū'auhau of place. This means that age in a Kānaka 'Ōiwi worldview is about where on the lei of mo'okū'auhau a pua is situated, with the emphasis always being interconnectedness across generations. Further, mana wāhine epistemologies are not bound to wāhine bodies. Mana wāhine epistemologies are embodied in keiki as keiki are of mana wāhine and mana wāhine are of 'āina;

a way knowing that was evident in the way keiki participated in the practice of the re-creation of k/new knowledges. Nā keiki paintings are featured as chapter cover images in the remainder of the dissertation.

#### **4.3.6 Weaving the Lei**

To unpack how each piece of data, whether that be from palapala (written documents of any sort), mo'olelo from mana wāhine, or something I untangled from my stirred na'au, the methodology I use takes these various pua and weaves them into a modern mo'olelo of survivance. Each piece of data is weaved into a larger tapestry that is impossible and irresponsible to weave with my pua alone. Instead, each pua is influenced by the one before it and the one that comes next. Like mo'okū'auhau and the genealogical succession of all things, the methods employed builds upon the leo of the past and the present as an analytical tool to contribute to the collective kuleana of my generation of Kānaka 'Ōiwi scholars in being both curators and creators of k/new knowledges. Understanding this holistically is part of developing a mo'okū'auhau consciousness.

I engaged in naturalistic observation including of the various scapes of mo'okū'auhau consciousness: ocean, heaven, land, dream (Oliveira, 2014) and how they are interconnected (Kahakalau, 2019). I went through constant and iterative processes including being in intentional, directed, and all-consuming relationships with Kānaka 'Ōiwi, wahi, and kaiāulu as a way to refine my sense of kuleana and sharpen my na'au and the rest of my senses. Because I am in relationship with the sources for this project, relationally balancing my understandings of 'ike kūpuna with that of mana wāhine and other sources was a natural and built-in part of the process. Without this, there is no project because relationality is the units of analyses, the methods and the purpose of this project (Wilson, 2008).

#### **4.3.6.1 *Mōhala i ka Wai ka Maka o ka Pua***

Unfolded by the water are the faces of flower (Pukui et al., 1972). Findings blossom when rooted in the appropriate sources of analyses. Consistent with mo‘okū‘auhau and to remain grounded in place, analyses occurred around three strands of an interwoven ti-leaf lei (Vaughan, 2016). The first is ‘āina as source. This entails analyzing data within place itself. All the mana wāhine I was in relationship with chose the wahi we met to discuss the research questions. This was intentional because the wāhine chose wahi that were closest to their kūpuna and that were culturally significant to them and their individual mo‘olelo and ‘ohana mo‘okū‘auhau (e.g., ‘Aliomanu). The second strand is āina as people. This involves analyzing data from those connected to a place. Of the eight mana wāhine that shared with me their na‘auao for this study, I was intentional about making sure that all five moku on Kaua‘i were represented. For example, I spoke with one mana wāhine, Kapua Chandler, whose mo‘okū‘auhau ties to Halele‘a moku and another Puanani Hee who is genealogically descendent from Kona moku. Having wāhine that are connected to various moku on Kaua‘i was a conscious choice on my part to avoid hyperextending the mo‘olelo of certain Kaua‘i mana wāhine who belong to certain wahi onto others. This was also done, for me as a researcher with genealogical connection to Kaua‘i, as a form of respect to myself and my ‘ohana mo‘olelo. The colonial trauma in my ‘ohana caused me to float across Kaua‘i and forced me find deep re-connection with wahi o Kaua‘i that I now articulate as my kuleana to give back to in ways that honor the ‘ohana who have stewarded specific wahi for time immemorial. Further, as I have already detailed, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology is about specificity. The specific ahupua‘a mana wāhine are from is important because mana wāhine are not homogenous in thought and being even on a small mokupuni. Specific places on Kaua‘i carry specific mo‘olelo and mana that fundamentally inform who these mana wāhine are. Within our Kaua‘i kaiāulu, knowing which

ahupua‘a someone is from is important to understanding how to relationally connect with them in a pono way. Just like there is a tendency for research to be O‘ahu-centric, there is a tendency for research and resources being funneled to Puna moku because that is the “town center” and is the piko for governance according to U.S. politics. Mana wāhine o Kaua‘i however, know that each moku is a wahi pana in itself and do not exist on a colonially constructed hierarchy of influence. Further, I know relationally and culturally where my ahupua‘a is (Kalapakī ahupua‘a) and in doing anything with intention in building up mana wāhine futurities o Kaua‘i I need to consult the mana wāhine of that specific ahupua‘a because by genealogical connection to ‘āina and the enacting of their kuleana to their kaiāulu, they are the stewards and Kia‘i of that ‘āina. They know best their wahi because they are their wahi.

The last strand is ‘āina as ongoing connection, which is about the interrelatedness of people and place (e.g., meta-memos about what was *not* said or recorded) (Vaughan, 2016). Since Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological methods are about re-covering and re-creating k/new knowledges in ways that are relational, all data that is communicated must involve an interpretation of dialogues consistent of not only hua ‘ōlelo, but the thoughts, feelings, and mana connected to these hua ‘ōleo (Meyer, 1998). This analytical framing aligns with Kumu Manulani Meyer’s (2003) three parts of a coherent whole within Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological method, which was also used as an analytical tool in making sense of the data. The three strands: body, mind, spirit leads to the dimensions of data collection and interpretation of gross, subtle, causal.

Gross knowledge is the collection and interpretation of data that is descriptive and asks, “what is happening at a literal level? What are we doing physically?” Subtle knowledge is the collection and interpretation of data that is driven by our cultural meaning making (Kovach, 2021) and na‘au, which in this project is about recognizing kaona or that which is not said and cannot

necessarily be interpreted if one does not have the proper sense-abilities to do so (Meyer, 2003; Oliveira, 2014). Causal knowledge represents those spaces in-between, within, and through the gross and the subtle. This is the component that leads to the making sense of and presenting what is and is becoming known cyclically. Researcher and participants as co-builders of mo‘olelo along with audience of the mo‘olelo are in a repetitious hula. In a circular relationship to data, the researcher, mana wāhine, and audience are given the freedom to de-construct their own understandings of the mo‘olelo within their own varied contexts. Researcher, participants, and audience should be able to locate themselves in the mo‘olelo, feel seen in the huaka‘i, and sense greater room for transformative change (Wilson, 2008).

To honor relational accountability and to add validity of the project, mana wāhine were involved in the presentation. Analyzing and co-creating how the data will be presented is a process that involves a high degree of relationality with the ideas and knowledge collaboratively generated using many external and internal sources in re-creating mo‘olelo (Wilson, 2008). A decolonial lens was used throughout the research process as decolonial research is answerable to not only the participants and the audience, but to the re-creation of k/new knowledges (Smith et al., 2019).

#### **4.4 Summary**

Within a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological methodology, knowledge is not stagnant and should shift over time. This project is bequeathed to future generations of Kaua‘i as a gift from their ancestral past to utilize mo‘olelo for purposes of protecting and perpetuating ‘ike kūpuna o Kaua‘i. A macrolevel aim of this project is to provide a potential medium for future generations to re-member and re-tell this mo‘olelo within their own contemporary decolonial contexts (Kovach,

2021) and to kōkua with empowering Indigenous epistemological research to stand in its own light instead of being forced within the shadows of white savior positivistic frameworks (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2013).

In this dissertation I use mo'olelo and mo'okū'auhau to understand the ancestral knowledges of Kānaka 'Ōiwi mana wāhine, using my sense-abilities to string lei of pono futurities o Kaua'i. Data was analyzed using methods of Kānaka 'Ōiwi epistemology, including the three ways of experiencing the world (gross, subtle, causal). A mo'okū'auhau consciousness is used to make sense of the data in a way that is holistic and intertwined. Relationality and kuleana are at the piko of the research process and myself as the researcher, mana wāhine participants, and the audience are on a decolonial huaka'i that explores holistic healing within a Kaua'i context. Using 'ike kūpuna and the eight Kānaka 'Ōiwi sense-abilities (Oliveira, 2014), I strive to re-create a mo'olelo of survivance that disrupts the fabric of colonialism with a collective Kaua'i mana wāhine mo'okū'auhau that has the potential to undergo re-creation within Ingenious futurities.

In the following sections, I will steer the wa'a into some of the waves of complex tensions that exist in mana wāhine discourses of epistemological healing and strengths at the individual, 'ohana, kaiāulu, and lāhui levels. Exploring how mana wāhine have come to understand and transmit 'ike kūpuna from the past, present, and future is a question of surviance. Our ways of knowing tell us that Kānaka 'Ōiwi wāhine are the personification of our ancestral past, present, and future. The worldwide political divides, environmental destruction, physical diseases, and ideological domination of the 21<sup>st</sup> century gives more credibility for the need for research using methodologies that are inherently interconnected.

In the next chapter, I present an interwoven lei made of mo'olelo and mo'okū'auhau from mana wāhine and sources of 'ike kūpuna in answering the research questions. To non-Indigenous

sense-abilities this dissertation may appear to simply be a lot of information, just like a lei may appear to those with similar sense-abilities as just a necklace with a lot of flowers, a tokenized novelty item. However, as I write I weave my mana‘o. Mana‘o means thoughts, opinions, information, but kaona holds that mana‘o means mana: divine spiritual power and o: of; this dissertation is “of divine spiritual power,” through dialogue driven by me and with mana‘o from kumu papa, foundational sources both seen and unseen. This document will become a material ancestor holding knowledges through ink on a page like our elders wear tribal patterns that tell the mo‘olelo of their mo‘okū‘auhau on their skin (Mahi, 2021). This lei we present is a mo‘olelo woven by me with my sense-abilities and through the interconnectedness of my mind, body, spirit as held in place by Kaua‘i and is therefore, driven by me as a steward of knowledges and a keiki o ka ‘āina—a child of this land, of Kaua‘i.



**Figure 2 Hale Ali'i 'O 'Iolani a me ka Mō'i Wahine, Lili'uokalani  
Na Nu'uhiwa Giminiz (11)**

## **5.0 Chapter 5: Lei for Kaua‘i**

You must remember never to cease to act because you fear you may fail...It is the width of a blade of pili grass. To gain the kingdom of heaven is to hear what is not said, to see what cannot be seen, and to know the unknowable—that is Aloha. All things in this world are two: in heaven there is but One.

—Queen Lili‘uokalani, Hawai‘i’s Story by Hawai‘i’s Queen

### **5.1 Introduction**

Queen Lili‘uokalani sewed a quilt when she was imprisoned in ‘Iolani Palace following the illegal overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i (see figure 3).



**Figure 3 Queen Lili'uokalani's Quilt**

**Note:** Photo by Rhoda E. A. Hacker and Loretta G. Woodward (2001) in *The Queen's Quilt*.

The quilt is still on display in the room she was imprisoned in at 'Iolani Palace today as a way to re-member how Queen Lili'uokalani was onipa'a in her kuleana to protect Hawai'i and tell her mo'olelo for future generations. The quilt is a kaleidoscopic pattern, stitched together by many pieces of fabric from her wardrobe and evokes the many people, places, and ways of knowing of Kānaka 'Ōiwi that kānaka of today still interpret. The piko of the quilt represents her birth, her

overthrow, her imprisonment, and her abdication. The quilt has nine squares and countless pieces of overlapping fabric that tell mo‘olelo of survivance as woven through her sense-abilities (Hackler & Woodard, 2004).

For this project, eight mana wāhine gifted their mana‘o to this mo‘olelo. The eight mana wāhine, including myself is nine. Although there are nine listed here, like Queen Lili‘uokalani’s quilt, several intersecting, overlapping, colliding, contradicting, complimenting pieces went into this lei that are mentioned by inoa here and not. Also like Queen Lili‘uokalani’s quilt, I am the piko of this collective mo‘olelo and I weave from the inside out. This chapter is a composite of my huaka‘i of re-claiming, decolonization, and radical healing, the mana‘o and enlivened experiences of the eight mana wāhine who provided materials for me to weave, and the multiple leo of the many people and places of Kaua‘i and beyond that contribute to keeping Kaua‘i and Kānaka ‘Ōiwi living and loving on an ‘āina that is stewarded well enough to continuing loving us back.

The eight mana wāhine whose mana‘o I signposted for this project were conscious of the decolonial foundation of this study and are in various stages of healing from ongoing colonial assaults to our ‘āina, kaiāulu, and lāhui. Rather than talking about the pain, the trauma, the anger, mana wāhine shared mo‘olelo of their ancestral strengths and their critical hopes for the present and future despite and because of the way they have come to accept their colonial realities and carry their kuleana in stringing lei of pono futures (Goodyear- Ka‘ōpua, 2016). The metaphors, imagery, and mana‘o presented in this chapter are evoked from the eight mana wāhine I was in relationship with for this project, as overlapped with the leo of so many other animate and inanimate life forms, grounded in place, and filtered through my sense-abilities. Citations from other sources are brought in here because the lei is made by me and therefore represents my

kuleana to tether the ‘ike I stewarded both of my kaiāulu and of related global siblings in struggle. This is a methodological strength as it reflects the perspective of the highly specific place I sit in the collective wa‘a, paddling toward pono futurities and an exercising of my unique positioning in relation to my kaiāulu having had the privilege of acquiring deep relations from faraway, high up, and far down places. It is a lei, not *the* lei of our collective surviance as mana wāhine o Kaua‘i and our broader lāhui, strung together cosmologically and metaphorically with lei from many others from different yet similar colonial struggles and ancestral strengths. This project should be made sense of the way it was weaved: through relationality and through discussions with oneself, places, ancestors, mana wāhine in one’s own kaiāulu, the author, and amongst others.

Talking story, sharing in mo‘olelo, and eating poi and poke and kope, and sitting on the beach, at the café, walking around the streets, in a loko i‘a, on a farm, under a tree, in an office, everywhere, senses fully engaged, and lungs open to receiving ea from all around us. Dwelling in our places observing, mediating, laughing with our ancestors (McDougall, 2016), crying, yawning, and being in dialogue about such complex things. I know these wāhine. When they are in my space, my na‘au senses their ano before I see them visually. By relating to each other, by relating dynamically to the wahi o mana wāhine with our sense-abilities, we engage in a radical healing process for self and our future generations. We are home. Let us begin.

## 5.2 Stringing the Lei

There is much to be said about the souls of our ancestors that live in the soils, rocks, ferns, waters, air, rains, and in the rays of the sun and the shine of the moon. They are ever-present, maintaining a divine cosmic balance, calibrating and re-calibrating constantly to sustain lōkahi

between all things. They are hūnā, in hiding. Or rather, they are hidden from us, made to be abstract like they do not actually belong to this earthly Queendom. A‘ole. The opposite is true. Nothing is more rooted in the objective truth of what this earth provides than our plants, trees, oceans, streams, winds, and rains. Our ancestors are kinolau. They take on “many forms.” They are manifestations of the spiritual and metaphysical realms of knowledge alive and fighting in our physical reality. The mana wāhine of this study, of this ‘āina, feel the heat of Akua Pele’s caldera about to explode with re-creation. Survivance smells like sulfur so strong we are forced to close our eyes and maximize our other senses. But then all at once, our eyes opened...all of eight of them.

Makawalu literally translates to “eight eyes.” In a complete consciousness of connectedness to ‘āina and ‘ike kūpuna across space and time, we infinitely transcend the colonial created conditions of the present to re-create a unified understanding of *i ka wa ma mua, ka wa ma hope*—the future in the past (Pukui et al., 1972). Makawalu is being awake, observant, and skilled in purposefully co-constructing knowledges from multiple perspectives (Pukui, 1983). E ala e! Awaken! Rise! (Kanahele, n. d.) as we oli to the sun floating further into the piko of the skies to carry out his kuleana in healing the ‘āina. Kāne, Akua of the sun with male presence and Hina, Akua of the moon with female presence heal differently, but dually dispose of the dirt of colonization, wiping the window clean for mo‘okū‘auhau consciousness to become enlightened on all eight sides, to the collective kuleana of survivance as well as our own individual kuleana to the lāhui.

The “eight eyes” of makawalu are aligned with the eight Kānaka ‘Ōiwi sense-abilities: sight, listening, touch, smell, na‘au, kulāiwi, mo‘o, and au ‘āpa‘apa‘a (Oliveira, 2014). Eight eyes. Eight wāhine. Eight human occupied islands. Makawalu is when a mana wahine “stands firm in the present, with [her] back to the future, and [her eight] eyes fixed on the past,” observing,

ruminating, looking toward ‘ike kūpuna for answers to the most pressing problems of today (Kame‘eleihiwa, 1992, p. 22).

Mo‘okū‘auhau and makawalu hold each other close. Makawalu makes mana wāhine, multiple, plural and complex. Makawalu means managing and making sense of multifaceted nature of observations. It is the practice of engaging with things from different perspectives and sources to further knowledge and develop insight (Kahakalu, 2019). Fluttering eyes, left, right, up, down in a continuous enduring pattern of retrieval. Controlled nystagmus. Looking down with discernment into the in-betweenness of being, the cracks in colonization where freedom is felt on the eyes like a soft breeze when it first hits your face on a scorching day. Looking down, looking in this direction to appear asleep to the colonizers who think looking down is looking to the past and looking to the past is parochial. Looking down to appear asleep, just like our ancestors pretended to be asleep to fall under the purview of plantation politics. Planning in the shadows, in the undercommons. And the undercommons do not come to pay their rent to ‘āina merchants (Harney & Moten, 2013). They came to re-create lei of existence. Outside of the colonizers’ consideration. And colonizers within it? Know your place. But they can’t, cause we see, with all eight of our eyes they are eternally dis-placed by their own severance. So dis-connected from place that all they know how to do anymore is take up space. And the space they take up is heavy with hewa. Let us make it light again by casting light on the shadows of colonization.

Makawalu, we see each other face to face, despite the colonizer’s mana mitigating maze. Diverting diversity into the depths of their pockets. We can see the colonial contours. Can feel the crevasses of the re-creation of pono futurities. It smells like palapalai ferns, like running waters of a healthy alawai, like the sweetness of pua picked fresh to string lei of survivance. It looks like the purple of the mokihana plant, symbolic of Kaua‘i and the color of our Queens. It sounds like the

tantrums of the colonizer's keiki. But through noise...we hear the humming of our ancestors, humming away our humdrums. And now we can concentrate on re-telling our mo'olelo.

Aloha 'ohana, aloha kaiāulu, aloha lāhui: the eyedrops that sooth the senses weary from our ways of knowing being no-bodied. When we are no-bodied, consent is not required. When we are bodied we embody so much beauty, aloha, promises, premises for protecting our places. When we are bodied we embody our ancestors in the full expanse of our eternal expressions of joy. So much joy the plants dance without music, the waters flow clean with a carefree stride, the 'āina is re-born and can breathe with ease as we hold her tight and help her re-member she is loved. We embrace her with a tender tightness. Different from the chokehold of colonization that claims to love her but loves her to death. Who loves her, but not in the ways she needs to be loved. Who hates her and blames Haumea, Mother Earth, for her own mortality. All the while mourning at her bedside, the tears of the colonizer we collect in jars so as not to allow them the gravitational permission to fall to the ground and poison our 'āina yet again.

We see Kaua'i cared for. Not turned into cities built on the blood of our ancestors. Not cities built on commodification of our culture, of capitalism, of colonial plantation houses that smell like the must of the master's old and tired truths. We want to see cities built from koa trees, loko i'a, lo'i kalo. We want to see cities of multiplicities. Firmly planted in the grounds of our kaiāulu. We want to see 'āina momona in our backyards. Bringing back produce we picked with our own hands to feed our keiki and kūpuna. 'Ai. Ea. Food sovereignty. Solving the problems of a sick subordination on the colonizer to feed our bodies and our minds. We want lo'i kalo beyond the eyes can see. Not relying on shipments that come in from the sea to feed us like Captain Cook fed us disease. Oceans full of oil. Bodies full of imported food. We want to feed ourselves, with the foods that re-connect our body to mind to spirit to 'āina. We want aloha 'āina. We aloha Kaua'i

like we aloha ourselves. Or rather, we aloha her like how we ought to aloha ourselves (Kanahele, 1986). To mālama ‘āina is to re-create lōkahi of theories, methods, and practices rooted so deeply in decolonial aloha (Meyer, 2001; Simpson, 2013) that self-care is us-care and us-care is a revolution (Lorde, 1987). A re-turn to being loyal to the soil. A re-memberance so radical that our bodies are spaces our senses-abilities go to shine through the thin veiled colonial cloths of silence like how Māmā mahina shines through thin clouds on clear days. Re-creating futures through the place that connects us to our shared kuleana to our cosmological re-creation mo‘olelo.

Mana wāhine transition through many times while being rooted to our places. Embodied in the spaces in-between, the naturally non-binary, the unreadable text of colonial logics (Smith et al., 2019). “...the interrelationships of all things is an everlasting continuum, it is Ponahakeaola, the chaotic whirlwind of life. *This, our kūpuna knew!*” (Kanahele, 1997, n. p.). Mana wāhine live in the contradictions (hooks, 2003). Move with the cadence of the chaotic, complimentary quality of duality. The “wā” in mana wāhine denotes a period in time, an epoch of existence, the space in-between. “Hine” the feminine. Māmā Mahina, mother moon, healing us with her glow in the darkest of nights. Wāhine the space between creation and re-creation. Māmā, our first ‘āina. The embodiment of re-creation of k/new knowledges. The pono space, the place we protect the most (Kānakaautomy, 2021).

Mo‘okū‘auhau, the umbilical cord that runs through our body from the heavens, through the top of the head, through the soles of our feet, and down through the ‘āina and back up (Olivera, 2014). Cosmological dualism dripping from our ancestral mo‘olelo. That which re-connects mana wāhine to the elemental nature of the universe (Ka‘ili, 2005). Wāhine. The space-in-between. This is the time and space of wāhine. Let us roll around in the mud. Skip through sugar cane and coffee

fields that are on fire. And let us dance in the contrast of the dark and light of the embers, following Pele's lead as it burns all around us. Re-claiming what is rightfully ours.

Mana wāhine. Cosmic composites of the ancestors of past, present, future. Mana wāhine. Connecting knowledges to healing: feeling wisdom, experiencing knowledge (Meyer, 1998). Disembarked long ago on the path of pono futurities, wayfinding where in one's individual and collective mo'okū'auhau, does destiny and direction decide to intersect? At the points of intersection kuleana is co-created and kūpuna knowledges come spilling out. And we re-member our ancestors and what they came to re-claim.

Mana wāhine know that a memory is a mo'olelo. In and of itself. It is a mo'olelo told so well it becomes part of our body. Our bodies are repositories of mana. Our bodies know. Your na'au knows. And your na'au will never lie to you because your na'au is the voice of your ancestors soft-toned for fine-tuned ears.

For each of the eight mana wāhine a kinolau emerged in my sense-abilities and filtered through my mo'okū'auhau consciousness. A ho'okupu for each one to honor mana wāhine as wāhine kapu. Mana wāhine: the kinolau of re-creation of mo'olelo and mo'okū'auhau for the Kānaka 'Ōiwi sense-abilities of today. The eldest ancestor always goes first.

Kinolau o Lorilani Keohokalole

The koa tree, shading three Kaua'i 'elepaio.

One 'elepaio is nest bound. He is fed the life sustaining  
waters of Kāne.

The koa tree that carries ancestral memory and  
communicates it across time and space using her root systems  
grounded in the soils of her place.

'Aliomanu, noho pono

Kinolau o Gaylen Mandrigues

Hina who consumes the darkness  
and shines through ao pōpolohua,  
the purple-blue clouds  
Creation of lace patterns in ka lewa  
Shifting her shadows strategically to  
contrast to the light of nature  
Colonialism runs away crying

Kinolau o Kira Rapozo-Baptiste

wai on pohaku  
the deep black of the pohaku  
dark like the night that preceded  
Haumea's birthing of a k/new honua  
wai on pohaku  
sitting near the alawai, which runs dry  
the porous ancestor pohaku  
refusing to surrender the wai  
sequestering it in surviance  
the wai makes the pohaku shimmer  
when the sun hits it just right  
A hāloko forms on top  
for thirsty kānaka to stay alive

Kinolau o Puanani Hee

Pueo  
gliding on the mana of moeahu  
Ho'okāpuhi with aloha from  
lewa lani

Kinloau o Kapua Chandler

Ahi

Ho‘omahana

Hō‘ā koni

Kia‘i Halele‘a

Walewaha

Kinolau o Tiffaney Kaaihue Miller

Mokihana a me Hibiscus Koki‘io

‘Ula ‘ula a me Poni

Ho‘ohihi lei aloha

Kaua‘i pilialoha

Kinolau o Haylin Chock

Promontories of Palapalai

Makawalu manifested in skin

Kinolau o Bree Blake

Naupaka Kahakai

Seeds soaked in salt water

Propagating from pono pain

Fully flowered in and of itself

These mana wāhine are kinolau of ‘ike kūpuna. Our kūpuna bring vitality to our vital signs. Our pu‘uwai (heart) beats to the enduring patterns of an ipu heke (double-gourd drum) and our spirit dances hula to the oli that re-tells our mo‘olelo of re-creation. The time signature helps us re-member the signatures of our ancestors. They are in-scripted everywhere in the natural world and are in-scripted in our consciousness. When a critical mass of us awaken, eight eyes times infinity equals what? 1,022 ancestors spanned over 200 years, across seven generations; the amount of generations many mana wāhine are taught by kūpuna to re-cite as a keiki to re-member

what and who and where they are most well. Yet doesn't even encompass the extended kinship ties of Kānaka 'Ōiwi, or the ancestors as elements, or the ancestors as Akua. Mana wāhine. Ancestors in training. Ancestors in action. Converting all that mana into kuleana of re-creation. Swinging the hefty sword of survivance as if it was feather plucked from the 'i'iwi and carried on the cloak of ali'i. Ali'i Nui Kamakahelei, adorning the cloak, a collage of feathers from every Kaua'i mana wāhine ever.

Mana wāhine mo'okū'auhau consciousness *e iho ana o luna. E pi'i ana o lalo. E hui ana nā moku. E kū ana ka paia*—The high will be brought low. The low will be lifted-up (Malo, 1903). “Where are the life sustaining waters of Kāne?” (Emerson, 1908). They will fall from the heavens and be gifted to the earth in the form of ua and ao, some of her favorite foods to get her fill. 'Āina momona. The lāhui will be re-lifted back up to the Queendom in the heavens to become the Queendom we need on earth. Where Lili'uokalani lives and all is but one.

Glaring into the colonial abyss of abstraction of our ways of knowing, making our very existence an uncertainty to a colonized consciousnesses that continues to go under challenged. Yet there is cemented certainty for mana wāhine that the experiences of the mind, body, spirit has braided beyond the colonial imposed borders. 'Ike 'imi, to seek knowledge. Diving into the dark depths of colonial conditioning, when the one doing the seeking must seek the light within the darkness of herself first. Seven generations. The first seven sections of the *Kumulipo*, primordial 'ike kūpuna oli, spent the first seven sections in darkness until the mothers of creation “stirred the darkness” and “brought forth the light— E ala ē!” (McDougall, 2016, p. 24).

When we do the work of healing ourselves, we paddle our collective wa'a closer to the horizon of survivance. We allow the salt water to wash over our bodies and the colonial compression of our place-based consciousness to de-compress. When we recognize the kinolau of

our ancestors, alawai toward freedom opens and the life sustaining waters, ka wai ola, rushes in like opening the gate of the loko i‘a at high tide. And whenever we have lost our way, we simply need to *Nānā i ke Kumu*—look to the source (Pukui et al., 1972). We are paddling down an alawai, following the flow of water to find the source. The source is ancestor. What is gifted is ‘ike. ‘Ike kūpuna. Let us accept with grace the gifts of knowledges from our ancestors and integrate it well into our well-being so much that we *ho‘omoe wai kāhi ke kāo‘o*— travel together like water flowing in one direction (Pukui et al., 1972); the direction that feeds the life sustaining waters of Akua Kāne into the embodiments of our lāhui. The path that is mo‘o; that is, serpentine, is usually the path where the epistemic rivers of difference converge (Anzaldúa, 2007). The braiding waters of ‘ike kūpuna. Multiplicity of mo‘olelo and mo‘okū‘auhau of colonial refusal, converging and diverging, to ultimately meet at the kumu papa....the foundational source where all things are one and one is many.

The cyclicity of radically healing from the harms of colonialism. We paddle together, toward kumu papa, to bathe in ka wai ola. It is a disciplined process. Iterative with introspection and imagination, toward the purpose of re-creation. Colonialism doesn’t stop paddling, so neither do we. To heal our ‘ohana, kaiāulu, and lāhui. And the waters splash in our eyes without the sting of subjugation, without the colonial burn that tries to make blind our eight eyes. And the soils, safe from chemicals. The same chemicals our parents breathed in as keiki, making them small kine pupule in the present. Air flows freely through the sinuses without free radicals lowering our life expectancy. Our sense-abilities, unclogged. And we are refreshed with flesh of our ancestors yet again. Kinolau of re-creation.

The hō‘ailona of uakoko, the earth clinging rainbow (Pukui et al., 1972). The light of the sun glistening against the surface of the water. The lo‘i kalo. The Māmā monk seal meditating

with her pup near the reef. Mo‘o, a hale gecko, unassumingly tucked in the corner of your room with subtly watchful eyes. When we watch our ancestors, with all eight eyes, and we pause to remember them, to recognize them all around us, reflect their likeliness back to them, give gratitude for their presence, we are radically healing. They are radically healing. The colonial prison cell that attempts to hold our ancestors captive, are crumbling, and in the cracks of the master’s hale (Lorde, 1987) our ancestors’ spirits have found freedom to escape back into the landscapes, heavenscapes, waterscapes, and dreamscapes. Re-membered in our senses and re-spaced into our places again and again and again. Kānaka ‘Ōiwi surviance. Pono futurities.

We call on our ancestors by name. We send a kāhea to the forces that be that their inoa be heard and echoed throughout the world. Like Akua Pele, steward of the volcanoes, who is labeled by those who lack the sense-abilities to know her as possessing anger and control issues that leads to destruction. Pele is free. A free wahine means destruction for colonial structures. Pele, the maneater of modernity. When silenced and violated for too long, she explodes with a roar that ripples throughout the fabric of the universe. Everyone hears about it, from all over of world, and watches in awe. She de-stroys to de-story. To clear the hewa energy of colonial desires from her domain. To cleanse with fire. She is not destroying. A‘ole. She is re-storying and re-creating. She is expanding her nation and protecting her place. Protecting her people. Pele’s ‘āina is some of the only ‘āina left on earth that is still growing at a constant rate. She grows through what her lava flows through. Right through the pollution. Right through the multimillion-dollar haies. Right through whatever path she chooses because she can sense, across space and time, what her kuleana is to provide the materials for her nā pua, her flowers, her genealogical keiki, her mana wāhine to be strung on the lei of infinite ancestral wisdom seeped in deep aloha for ka pae ‘āina o Hawai‘i. To mālama ‘āina is to practice aloha for humanity. Mana wāhine know this because they are this.

Many centuries had elapsed since our ancestors arrived to Hawai‘i from Kahiki, the events of which we know from (her)storical record, and more importantly that mana wāhine sense in their na‘au to be true, was not a coincidence like Cook’s was. A colonial coincidence turned cruel, taking captive our culture. Mana wāhine sense-abilities dulling from dealing with the extractive excuses of the occupied nation-state for feeding the ‘āina poison while expecting her to prostitute herself to create cash flow that rapes landscapes, oceanscapes, and heavenscapes into commodities that are tantalizing tax write-offs of the colonizers of Kaua‘i. ‘Ike kūpuna. They were/ are navigators of the stars. Sailed thousands of miles over open ocean to Hawai‘i in canoes carved from Koa trees fashioned specifically to maximize lōkahi with the elements, with the entities that are our ancestors. The map of the stars still used to navigate all seven seas sailed upon as one in the absence of western instruments. Mana wāhine know when we use our instruments, honor our own epistemologies, radically re-connect with ‘āina as ancestor, we transcend restraints and the world looks like heaven inscribed on the palm of our hands. Our ancestors made loko i‘a that remain functional till this day. Kuapā, kū against the coldness of colonialism. Feeding our keiki. Nurturing them to be mana-full. So that they are pua in the lei of our collective mo‘okū‘auhau that refuses to wilt.

Mana wāhine o Kaua‘i no need ho‘opilimea‘ai or to be dependent upon the deeds of those in power. Protectors of pono futurities pro-claiming truths, re-claiming knowledges. *He poe maku ole*, fearless in the face of colonial consequences (Lionanohokuahiwi, 1916). Onipa‘a, steadfast in their convictions like Queen Lili‘uokalani while *Kūlia i ka Nu‘u*, striving to reach the summit like Queen Kapi‘olani, Kia‘i o keiki, Kia‘i o kūpuna, Kia‘i o Kaua‘i.

No quicker had the blue in the kai, the polyps of the reefs, the mountains pungent with the smell of green, revealed themselves then when Kaua‘i cut her cord from COVID-19. Kaua‘i was

closed to malihini (visitors). Keeping it quiet (“Kauait” as is said here). So quiet, we could hear the ‘āina inhaling and exhaling as if she was in a deep, re-generative, healing hibernation. The soil vibrating beneath our feet. The sound of a slow, consistent, low frequency hum of a generational generator. Like the one Princess Ka‘iulani used to “stir the darkness” and “bring forth the light” to ‘Iolani Palace with (McDougall, 2016, p. 24). An elusive vibration of aloha showered over our sense-abilities in an effortless way. And as we re-membered, we re-created and we re-connected. Aloha ‘āina.

Compelled by the quiet makani and seduced by the sensations of wahi void of malihini, mana wāhine resisted the colonially created conditions of the COIVD-19 lockdowns by refusing to die. Re-connection to ‘āina helped the healing of mind, body, spirit illuminating mana wāhine na‘au so that nothing may interrupt the surge in mana that flowed through Kaua‘i mo‘okū‘auhau during the dawning days of the pandemic. Colonization failed...again. Foiled by the refusal of mana wāhine to inhibit all sense-abilities. By the refusal to allow their fatigued mo‘okū‘auhau consciousness to become complacent within the confines of COIVD-19. Unprecedented for whom? We have been here before. Kalaupapa on Moloka‘i. A land of leprosy. Kānaka ‘Ōiwi with leprosy banished to an island turned prison. Kānaka ‘Ōiwi kept detained in their own ‘āina, like Lili‘uokalani imprisoned in her own palace. So as not to spread disease and impede the death of colonial desires. Kalaupapa Leprosy Colony, Moloka‘i. My Kānaka ‘Ōiwi Aunty, Aunty Bobbie Marks, who in 1946 was carried away from her kulāiwi, a pua ripped from our lei of mo‘okū‘auhau when she was inoculated with a foreign disease when she was just a keiki. Living her whole life in colonial isolation, on a moku not meant for mauling mana. Rest in power to my Aunty Bobbie Marks, who was called home to take her rightful seat amongst the ancestors in 2021. Her love for learning from her wahi. The kuleana she came to carry for Kalaupapa. She actively chose not to

leave Moloka‘i when it was “safe” to do so, because she wanted to die where she lived, and return her mana to the soil as a sacrifice. So that her decadents never know the fierce isolation, the colonial confinement of foreign policy about foreign disease in Native bodies ever again (for article on Auntie Bobbie see Monson, 2021).

Mana wāhine are kāhuna. Prophets. Healers of people and places. Mana wāhine held the gates to lewa lani shut with their minds, bodies, spirits, actions. Making safe space for our place, our Kaua‘i, to rest and resist colonial attempts. Attempts at emptying our existence. Of erasing to re-place Kānaka ‘Ōiwi with wealthy whites, home confused haoles. Despite the Natives of that place vocalizing vehemently not to place here, did so anyway. Kaua‘i is in her process of healing. As are we. She is re-birthing k/new knowledges from her healing mountains, beaches, waterways, and skies. Her colonial wounds smell fresh. Mana wāhine proactive at protecting her as she heals. And will always be on guard. But the heavy handiness of settler colonialism pries the conscious wide open. And in those fragments, we find k/new kūpuna knowledges. Propagated from the plants of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi surviance. And just like that, we sense something sorting itself out within us, energy embedded into our consciousness. E ala e! Rise! awake! Makawalu, emerging from our resting places to re-set our bare soles on the grounds of our wahi. To re-ground. To re-claim. We can sense in our na‘au that a movement is mounting with more momentum than we can measure our mana against. To protect and perpetuate ‘ike kūpuna o Kaua‘i so that she may continue to undergo her process of radical healing. We could hear the echoes of our ancestors leo perambulate in our places, the preamble of pono futurities. Writing colonization in the margins of our mo‘olelo, writing and writing until it eventually falls off the page and there no paper left for more. Because they destroyed our trees. So they can sit in the waste, and soak in how it feels, to be written out of existence like they tried to do to us but failed by the flaws in their own reasoning.

Kaiāulu connectedness pumps blood into our being. Koko to re-claim. Refusal of the narrative of awakened mana wāhine as pupule. Giving oneself fully to a place. Saturated in the stimuli of the place. Belonging in pono relationship with the place. We heal reciprocally. Sustaining kaiāulu strengths summons self-and-us awareness. And preventing the ways in which we take part in perpetuating the pain of our own. And liberate our sense-abilities and that of others through radical aloha. For it is only through Aloha, kuleana is actualized. To know kuleana means kuleana to act. Epistemology that practices. An epistemology that places. Epistemology that resists as we exist. Kuleana, the crux of the crumbling of colonization.

That from the past always persists. Some of our ancestors are in-animate but alive. Sturdy, scrappy, inspiring interconnectedness in re-membrance as a communal celebration of the re-telling of our tales. Of life. Of land. Of laughter. Of joy. Mana wāhine carry kuleana to heal. Keiki of better days, bequeathed with mo‘olelo of freedom. Mo‘okū‘auhau no longer ripped from the seams. Or stitched onto the fabric of colonial realities. We exist because we are. We exist because we love. We know because we are. Aloha: the beginning and end of all mo‘olelo (hooks, 2001; Meyer & Davis, 1994).

This colonial memory, this washed mo‘olelo of imperialism and capitalism. Still carrying a magnetism to Kaua‘i that must have traveled quickly across space and time to continue cowardly attempts at conquest. And is it not our kuleana to push back against this force? Neutralize the magnetic field. So that nothing that is not pono has a place here any longer. Mana wāhine rise up! Climbing out of the depths of their mo‘okū‘auhau consciousness. With weapons forged in fires from Pele, the hearts of Hi‘iaka, the healing of Hina, the piko of Poli‘ahu, the Makawalu of Nāmaka. *O Haumea nui aiwaiwa* (Silva, 2004, p. 102). From the mysterious, magic, mana of Haumea, mana wāhine, e ala e!

Mana wāhine have tracked colonialization's infiltration into their consciousness, like we track pigs in Kōke'e. Makawalu reflections. Refractory white figures, colorless, in which they find their Indigenous epistemes are blended in. They are blended in with that of the colonizers. An undistinguishable shade of brown being of use to settler colonial systems. Mana wāhine are aware of the 'āina paraded upon. Degraded. Used as a playground to act out colonizer in paradise fantasies. The exotification of our whole beings by the perversity of heterosexual patriarchy.

Non-consensually constructing and ascribing inaccurate identities onto mana wāhine. Mana wāhine know there are "culture vultures" and "mana munchers." Ways of knowing borrowed from our Māori Indigenous cousins. Preying on our 'āina, our kaiāulu, our lāhui. Circling overhead. Waiting on the wings of airplanes. For the opportune time to be a performative ally. Or racist trope. Or appropriator. Or murderer. All of the options, for all of the oppressors.

Mana wāhine are planted in the present with the same strength of koa, the opposition of 'ōhia lehua, the intense cleansing of ahi o Pele, the powerfully gentle love of mahina. Mana wāhine mo'okū'auhau. The radical interconnectedness of lei from many moku. To know and embrace their kuleana of enacting ancestral knowledges through aloha. Breaking of the integrational cycle of colonial trauma. Fighting for the fundamental right to live in loving relationship with 'ike kūpuna. Resisting mirages of manifest destiny. Refusing the settler colonial logic of having space only for one way of knowing to belong. All the while re-membering and re-citing our vast cosmologies. Our interwoven lei of values and practices, lain on the shoulders of our decedents.

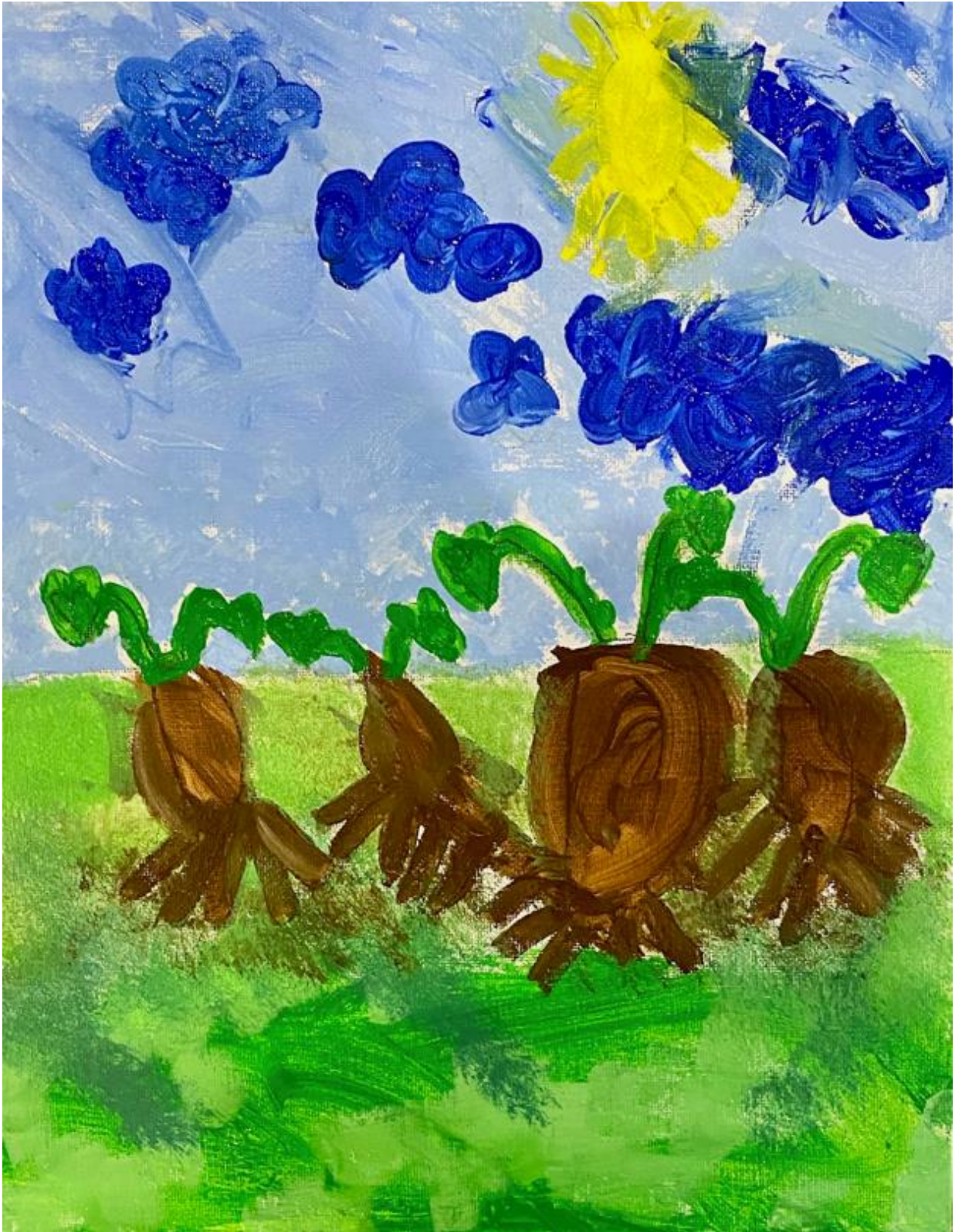
Mana wāhine take it as our kuleana to dive deep into the depths of duality. Explore the caves colonization created from a concentrated blast of nuclear weaponry. Direct hit of sick energy driven right in-between Kānaka wāhine and Kānaka kāne, thrusting us apart. Slippery footing, sliding to rip from the roots, 'ike kūpuna. Settler colonialism snatched our kāne's minds, spirits,

and bodies from their beds in the middle of the night to be used and abused. Privatization of ‘āina. Extracting the beauty for the benefit of the bottom line. Leaving the shell empty in polluted puddles of false promises. Leaving the beautiful creature that once lived in that space on the search for k/new knowledges to call home. A Pu‘uhonua, a place to find peace in the vicissitudes of victory and victories yet to be.

Mana wāhine makawalu. The radical acceptance of how kāne are continually mis-masculinized. Carried in caskets that deny their cosmologies. Death comes from the canons of colonization (hooks, 2001). Mana wāhine know, we cannot kill each other. Violence, poverty, disease. Polluted. Impoverished. But not poor. Far from poor. We are rich in all the ways that matter to this earthly Queendom of our ancestors. We will never be poor when our knowledges are so rich. Making epistemologies, ineligible for the exploitation of colonial explorers.

Mana wāhine know when kāne are in pono relationship with their masculine/feminine energies. As sustained within their kuleana. To kōkua their kāne and accept kōkua in re-turn, is a re-turn to the roots. To exercise habits that raise us all up. Awakening the senses. Bringing us into closer alignment with the divine feminine energy inherit in the universe. Mana wāhine of contemporary colonialism munch at modernity as modernity munches at our mana. A thriving, healthy, healed Kānaka ‘Ōiwi lāhui loves and needs our kāne and wāhine and māhū, practicing with the pono, piha force of conviction. The same concentrated energy our kūpuna have when chanting the rising sun awake. Their leo sending sounds waves rippling across our collective mo‘okū‘auhau. Flattening the future for the cultivating of a kīpuka for our keiki to put to rest their colonial realities. Building atolls of aloha, nā pali held in pono perpetuity of empowered Kānaka ‘Ōiwi futurities. So that they may build nations from the nutrient rich grounds of their kulāiwi, instead of on the ruins of their ancestors. We re-turn to our roots and built empires from the kinloau

of our ancestors that extend from the grounds of our kulāiwi all the way up to lewa lani. Divinely circling Kaua‘i with a vortex impenetrable by the tools of the colonizer. We re-create as we heal, mo‘olelo of our ancestors. We re-create when we carry out our kuleana, mo‘olelo of our keiki. We re-claim what is ours. We re-member who we are. And we will never forget. We will never leave. We are here to stay. To survive. To thrive. In our way. And “so, let it be said and let it be known: We have what we need. We are who we need” (Meyer, 2001. p. 146).



**Figure 4 Hāloa/ Lo'i Kalo  
na Kukui Giminiz (7)**

## 6.0 Chapter 6: Kuelana Connectedness

Mana wāhine o Kaua‘i are stewards of k/new knowledges and re-creators of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi pono futurities. Mana wāhine pono futurities o Kaua‘i is about kuleana as an active verb. It is about empowering our self, ‘ohana, kaiāulu, lāhui through healing and through understanding our relationships as interconnected to past, present, future and to all things in our physically limited plane of existence. It is a practice of re-matriation (Tuck, 2009) and carrying our kuleana in a way that honors our Kaua‘i (her)story of diplomacy and protection of our places. Kuleana is about forging a spiritual space of knowing everything is interconnected and sustainability of kuleana means finding pono balance between responsibility and burden to self, ‘ohana, kaiāulu, and lāhui. In coming to know and practice our kuleana we re-place the pukas in the lei with the love we have for our specific wahi. We weave it over with matrilineal mana where our lāhui will continue to grow.

In talking story and gathering strands of resistance to weave nā lei no Kaua‘i (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2016) the stitch of mana wāhine pono futurities of Kaua‘i was that of kuleana. Kuleana as perceived through makawalu is an ancestrally inherited responsibility can be enacted through undergoing the processes necessary to come to know one’s individual gifts with the purpose of giving back to the future generations. Mana wāhine gifts include the ways we are nurtured by people and place and can look like being a healer, an educator, an ‘āina rights advocate, a Makuahine, a farmer, a writer. Mana wāhine kuleana is not exclusively female in character and is not a matter of gender, it is about a way of carrying kuleana like one would carry a keiki. Mana wāhine is steeped in the matrilineality of our ancestral places and practices and is therefore something kāne also embody. This is distinct to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi cosmology where Akua Haumea

birthed the islands and many of the strongest elemental forces are thought to have a feminine energy, which is the same energy that resides in mana wāhine. In understanding one's kuleana to 'ohana, kaiāulu, and lāhui, birthing and nurturing of people, 'āina, and nations is a dominant metaphor for these processes. Mana wahine is not about biology and reproduction in a colonial perspective, it is about knowing one's kuleana and dedicating one's life to nurturing this kuleana out of a deep, profound sense of aloha for the next generation. The next generation does not necessarily mean one's biological kin, although nurturing biological kin are obviously important. An example of this is Queen Kapi'olani (daughter of King Kaumuali'i, sister-in-law to Queen Lili'uokalani), one of the lāhui's most beloved mana wāhine, who spent her life carrying her kuleana like a keiki on her hip. Queen Kapi'olani started the Kapi'iolani Maternity Home and Kap'iolani Home for Girls. The latter was an educational home for girls of parents who had leprosy. The former was a hospital for Kānaka 'Ōiwi mothers and newborns, which became the Kap'iolani Medical Center that is still functioning within this purpose today. My niece, Lillian Rose Melenāhōkūehiamoe Cristobal was born in October 2020 premature and spent the first six weeks of her life at Kapi'olani Medical Center. Queen Kapi'olani didn't have biological children but we say, for example, that my niece is a pua of Kap'iolani; a beloved keiki strung on the lei of her kuleana. If Queen Kap'iolani didn't come to know, love, and carry her kuleana in a pono way, my niece might have been another statistic in the deficit driven health data on infant mortality. This is what mana wāhine pono futurities is about.

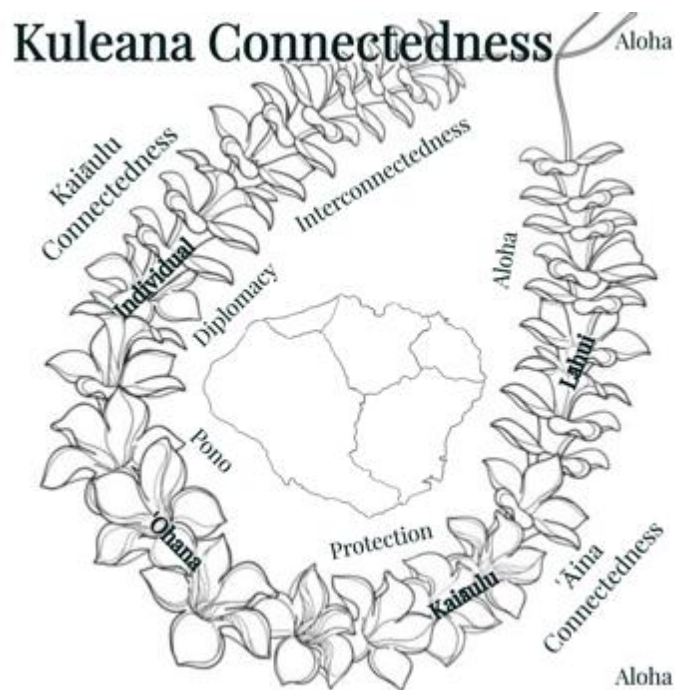
From a decolonial standpoint, mana wāhine o Kaua'i come to understand our kuleana through becoming educated on the accurate (her)story of the Kānaka 'Ōiwi nation and doing the work of radical healing so the ea we give to the lāhui and future generations is one that's kū in the face of continued colonization. Kumu Kahunawai Wright (2018) calls this process one of

developing a “Kānaka ‘Ōiwi kuleana consciousness” that flows in the same alawai as Paulo Freire’s (1993) critical consciousness, but is specific to mana wāhine using our sense-abilities to understand with criticality our place in the greater (her)story of our nation and where our kuleana lies in relationship to ourselves and the lāhui (Wright, 2018). Throughout mana wāhine mo‘olelo of pono futurities is an enduring pattern of always tying what we sense and act upon back to an existential, yet highly specific and sophisticated understanding of what our kuleana is to ourselves, ‘ohana, kaiāulu, and lāhui (Wright, 2018).

In Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology, every individual has ancestrally given gifts. I conceptualize kuleana connectedness as what happens when mana wāhine have done and continue to do the work of opening their various ancestral alawai of consciousness, including mo‘okū‘auhau consciousness (Silva, 2017) and kuleana consciousness (Wright, 2018) and use these alawai of consciousness to *e lauhoē mai na wa‘a; i ke ka, i ka hoe; i ka hoe, i ke ka; pae aku i ka ‘āina*— Paddle together, bail, paddle; paddle, bail; paddle towards the land (Pukui, 1983), toward pono futurities. Kaua‘i mana wāhine pono futurities is what I have come to understand as doing our part as Kaua‘i mana wāhine in honoring our ancestral connections to our specific wahi pana by educating ourselves about Kaua‘i’s (her)story, practicing the values of our ancestors (e.g., practicing aloha ‘āina by going to kaiāulu workdays at the lo‘i kalo to doing something simple like picking up trash when we see it), and doing the work of radically healing from intergenerational colonial trauma. Kuleana connectedness happens when mana wāhine re-connect to kaiāulu and ‘āina and then actively re-create and share mo‘olelo of survivance with built in room for the next generation to weave and add on to the lei their own mo‘olelo of re-creation gathered from aloha.

I invite the reader to take into their senses Figure 5. This drawing may kōkua with understanding the multilayered meanings behind mo‘okū‘auhau as a lei of interconnectedness.

Depending on how expansive the application is, each pua can be thought of as an individual, ‘ohana, kaiāulu, or lāhui. Although not a framework for kuleana, this drawing of Nā Pua Lei no Kaua‘i (a flower lei for Kaua‘i) emphasizes how Kaua‘i is centered in all behaviors and beliefs and how we weave with the mana inherited through Kaua‘i’s (her)story including doing and being pono, diplomatic, and protective of our ‘āina. Aloha is both within the center of the lei and outside of it because aloha is the foundation for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi existence, especially in the current aeon characterized by uncertainty, fear, and social divisiveness. Colonization is airborne, but so is aloha. The difference is aloha has been airborne a lot longer and is also born and re-born of the waters and ‘āina of Hawai‘i and we must always re-member that “aloha is our gold” (M. Meyer, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi Lāhui, O‘ahu, personal communication, January 16, 2022) and aloha “is always the place to begin and end” (hooks, 2017, n. p.).



**Figure 5 Kuleana Connectedness o Kaua‘i**

When we heal ourselves, we empower and enable others to heal. When we heal ourselves, we heal our ancestors and our decedents (Meyer, 1998). This ancestrally entrusted kuleana makes

the eight eyes of makawalu weary and the head fall heavy under the weight of the crown of Queens. But let us not be fraught as even if we are exploited to the point that we can no longer recognize our ancestors, they still exist. Be in distress if our ancestors no longer recognize us, because that is when we seize to exist with the hope of a healthy, thriving ‘āina, kaiāulu, ‘ohana, and lāhui. Colonialization’s impacts on our individual and collective mo‘okū‘auhau consciousness and the process of radical healing has cleared a huge surface, created a kīpuka, in Kānaka consciousness to practice our right to exist as full and complete humans in this life, in this world, as Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (Lipe et al., 2020). We must learn to use this space as a source of empowerment and move about it in a way that breaks the intergenerational cycles of the historical harm caused by ongoing colonization. The only ones to save us are ourselves and from ourselves. We do this through radically knowing our kuleana and acting upon it (Meyer, 2001).

Mana wāhine pono futurities are about acting upon our individual and collective kuleana. It is about undergoing the painful, powerful, beautiful, messy, and necessary processes of coming closer to knowing our kuleana (Case, 2021). We must practice with the utmost intentionality makawalu when coming to know our kuleana. What being a “mana wāhine” is about is not about being the most radical, most well-liked, most intelligent, most talented, most beautiful, most followed, or most of anything. Mana wāhine is not about being the first wahine to do something because mana wāhine know that we are never the first in the cosmic order of all things. Mana wāhine is about understanding that true power only lies within oneself, kūpuna, and ‘āina. Mana wāhine is about pouring one’s power in one’s place and people. Mana wāhine is about knowing one’s kuleana. Understanding one’s ancestrally given gifts. Knowing one’s specific set of skills and how to refine those skills and use them to benefit one’s ‘ohana, kaiāulu, and lāhui. Understanding where one’s place is in the re-claiming and re-creation of k/knew knowledges. It is

about having a realistic understanding of one's importance and impact in this space and time. It is about carrying this kuleana in a way that is pono, that is balanced relationally with all other things and to do this with respect to duality that needs to be dynamically decolonized in the way we move in the world. Mana wāhine come to know their kuleana from being situated in the spaces in-between the duality of naturalistic forces to do the work of relational restoration of balance (Pihama, 2002).

Mana wāhine of today in re-creating pono futurities o Kaua'i represent the space "in-between" (Smith et al., 2019). These spaces that exist in the pockets of duality are where we do the hard work of radically healing ourselves, 'ohana, kaiāulu, and lāhui. These pockets are ripe for planting seeds of 'ike kūpuna, which mana wāhine know are the most sustainable (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2013). Kuleana of mana wāhine is about re-claiming, while naming the hurt. Re-claiming our leo, re-claiming our 'āina, re-claiming our 'Ōlelo Makuahine, re-claiming our mo'olelo all with the direct, clear, and vested purpose of re-creating spaces of 'ike kūpuna. Sustainability of our strengths requires, "building communities of resistance, places where we know we are not alone" (hooks, 1990, p. 227). When we are awakened with our eight eyes, we must do the work of awakening others. We must do the work of tilling the grounds, re-creating pockets in the 'āina of promise, protection, and potential where our future generations can plant seeds of their own that will then grow trees that our decedents of the seventh generation and beyond will sit in the shade of (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2013).

Mana wāhine kuleana is about acting. Doing. Practicing. Kānaka 'Ōiwi epistemologies is an enlivened epistemology. You can only know it through doing it (Meyer, 2001). Through embodying it. It is about enabling ourselves as mana wāhine o Kaua'i and those in our collectives to make pono choices that bring us closer to who we are as a Kānaka 'Ōiwi people, who we are as

Kaua‘i. It is about making intentional choices to re-connect to ‘ike kūpuna through thought and action. The way we think is vital. If we are not consistently making the active choice to decolonize our psyche from colonial damage, then we are making the passive choice of degeneration and death of our people. Mana wāhine know that to have a pono Kaua‘i for our future generations “we need to work against the danger of evoking something that we don’t challenge ourselves to actually practice” (hooks, 2003, p. 163). Mana wāhine o Kaua‘i need to challenge ourselves to practice what we preach at every chance we get. The life of our ‘āina and future generations literally depend on it.

Mana wāhine o Kaua‘i must practice our values and beliefs in relationship with others, including other humans, ‘āina, and animate and in-animate entities of the natural world as interconnected. This is done through *doing* ‘ike kūpuna. Aloha ‘āina is not affinity to land, it is not the romanticism of beautiful landscapes, it is kuleana. Aloha ‘āina is actionable. To go the loko i‘a to mālama. To spend time in a place, reflecting and observing and sensing. To advocate for ‘āina against colonial attacks in policy and practice. To be present in our places and naming the elements around us with the hua ‘ōlelo of our kūpuna. To practice, especially if we have the colonial stutter of shame, cutting right through that shame by speaking ‘Ōlelo Makuahine with others. To mana wāhine o Kaua‘i healing ourselves and each other from the ongoing colonially caused disconnection we experience and re-storing pono balance that helps us carry the denseness of our kuleana in a way that makes the most sense for us and our ‘ohana.

Kuleana to honoring ‘ike kūpuna interconnectedness and duality also exists in the relationships mana wāhine have with ourselves. Just like our relationships with our kāne or our kuleana to our wahi “we are a ‘lāhui hou,’ [...] we are indeed a new race. We carry the koko of our Hawaiian ancestors in our bodies, and at the same time, we embody new nations and new

notions of who we are. We are at once ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ [...] Let us be that new nation, carrying new ideas of nationhood” (Case, 2015, p. 112). Mana wāhine are lāhui leaders, ea givers. Re-matriation is a process mana wāhine re-claimed with no hesitation (Tuck, 2011). Mana wāhine not only spearhead contemporary Kānaka ‘Ōiwi movements and Kia‘i efforts, we re-member and re-call the inoa of the mana wāhine that came before us not only in our own mo‘okū‘auhau, but in our ideological and disciplinary mo‘okū‘auhau. Mana wāhine are the ‘aha, the braided cords; the pua lei that maintains mo‘okū‘auhau survivance. As Kānaka ‘Ōiwi of this time and space of the new millennium, we are all so incredibly diverse, yet we are bound together by our shared mo‘okū‘auhau, our shared genealogies that re-connects us to our radical relationships with this elements of the natural world and all that is in it (Case, 2015). In our shared mo‘okū‘auhau there is a shared kuleana to passing on ‘ike kūpuna to the next generation. We are all pua on a lei. Wherever we are each individually situated on a lei matters. My Kumu Hula, Kumu Leina‘ala Pavao-Jardin once said that all of her haumāna are mokihana berries (the plant symbolizing Kaua‘i) on a lei and if a berry breaks off, the whole lei might break. It is our kuleana to know our position on the lei, to communicate with others using makawalu what we see from our position in re/co-creating pono futurities, and to act upon the active healing of our mo‘okū‘auhau to re-cord the cord that runs through our landscapes, heavenscapes, dreamscapes, and oceanscapes, to re-string lei of resistance that will be bequeathed to future generations (Goodyear-Ka‘ōpua, 2016).

Mana wāhine: builders of pono futurities. Mana wāhine o Kaua‘i heal the hurt and must always put our pono foot forward in passing on the knowledges of our ancestors, our ‘ike kūpuna, to the next generation so that our keiki can be kū in our culture. If we empower big enough dreamers of the next generation who re-member their dreams when their eight eyes are open, then structures of colonization can one day be thrown into the void of our mo‘okū‘auhau to take their

place in the cosmic order with all the others who have come and failed to conquer the Queendom of Kaua‘i.



Figure 6 Ahupua'a  
na Pololū Giminiz (5)

## 7.0 Chapter 7: Ho‘ohuli

I think of each generation in a spiral standing together for healing, and maybe that’s what it comes to. What each of us does makes a wave forward and backwards. We each need to be able to tell our stories and have them honored.

— Joy Harjo, Mvskoke Nation, 2019

We as the Kānaka ‘Ōiwi kaiāulu, and more broadly the local community of Kaua‘i, need to enact our kuleana in doing the work of re-connecting Kānaka ‘Ōiwi to our ‘āina and our cosmological connection to place. We need to continue re-connecting the cord that runs through our piko, our physical, spiritual, and mental planes. We need to continue re-claiming our places and knowledges and putting these knowledges into practice. Haole need to do the work of knowing their place in our places through uplifting or at the very least not obstructing (L. Patel, personal communication, January 14, 2022) the re-distribution of wealth, re-placing Native lands into Native hands, centering Native ways of knowing, and amplifying the leo of Natives in making the changes needed in our own kaiāulu; to allow Kaua‘i to change them, not to change Kaua‘i.

All people, Indigenous or not, need to do the work of educating ourselves on the struggles and strengths of Indigenous peoples around the world, but especially in places that they find themselves in physically. This dissertation project is a one of survivance, because Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemological research, although theoretical and metaphorical, is so much more than that (Tuck & Yang, 2009). Kānaka ‘Ōiwi do not enjoy the privilege of dwelling in the theoretical because our people are being killed by colonization in real time. In our material realities today that looks like the poisoning of our waters from which we drink by the United States Navy (e.g., Kapūkakī aka Red Hill, O‘ahu), the poisoning of our ‘āina from which we eat by corporate entities (e.g.,

Monsanto using DMT in Kekaha, Kaua‘i), and the disproportionate houselessness of our people from the continued privatization of our ‘āina for capital gain (e.g., Mark Zuckerberg owning over 150,000 acres on Kaua‘i purchased during a global pandemic). It also looks like the disproportionate killing of our people, including ‘ōpio suiciding, our kāne experiencing substance abuse and dying from overdoses, our wāhine experiencing domestic violence, our kaikawāhine (girls) in the military-prostitution complex going missing to turn up murdered if at all, and our kūpuna catching and dying from foreign diseases (Hawai‘i DOH, 2019). Further, it takes a more insidious form, and looks like our people dying from heart disease, diabetes, and strokes as a result of a forced reliance on outside systems that serve to dis-connect us from our ‘āina and our ways of knowing. We do not need “data” to know this is true, we simply have to look around. It is exhausting to continually have to mourn the deaths of a beloved kaiāulu member. It is exhausting to have to continually fight to protect our ‘āina from being abused. Victories are difficult to celebrate because Kānaka ‘Ōiwi know that with every victory comes a thousand more battles. I do not propret that this project or any research has the power to materially alter our conditions of life as a heavily occupied people and place, but in such works of re-creation we can contribute to identifying what tools of our own can be fashioned and re-fashioned to chip away at the master’s hale (Case, 2015).

Colonization is relentless, but so are Natives. We need to continue relentlessly paddling our collective wa‘a forward through the past, navigated in lōkahi with the shifting tides and undercurrents, just like our ancestors did. We need to be kū in the face of adversity and we need to learn through mutuality how to be in pono relationships with ourselves, each other, and our ‘āina. Our future depends on us finding this balance. Our future depends on us practicing our knowledges in our places. This dissertation is one way to contribute to the larger fight for Kānaka

‘Ōiwi survivance and the re-claiming of our knowledges. It is also a contribution to the re-creation of k/new knowledges. Speaking back to modernity, we are not infatuated with the past, we are in love with a future where our keiki are alive and thriving on their own terms. This dissertation and research projects that are by and for Indigenous communities, but that also exist in spaces of colonial knowledge reproduction such as universities occupying Honu Moku is a concrete way of providing k/new functions to the tools of our ancestors in addressing the most pressing problems of today. This is necessary because as long as colonial structures exist, so do decolonial ones (wa Thiong'o, 2009).

My hope is that this project will add to the growing literature by and for Indigenous researchers to kōkua the next generations of Indigenous scholars, in Hawai‘i and beyond, to re-create k/new Indigenous epistemological research methodologies, aligned with decolonial frameworks and designed to empower Indigenous people to continue the work of serving as kia‘i of their specific wahi and preserving and perpetuating ‘ike kūpuna. There are no hard and fast rules of using Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as methodology in academic research, such as the concepts of mo‘olelo and mo‘okū‘auhau, as methodology; however, this project lifts up the fact that for Native people doing work within their own Native communities it is necessary to ground oneself in land, relationships, and within the aim of always giving back more than what was gained (Wilson, 2008). Our ancestors honoring functionality of knowledge (Meyer, 1998) means that mo‘olelo and mo‘okū‘auhau as well as other Native concepts should always be of use to us in understanding how to understand ourselves better. In this current space and time, the utility of our own knowledges comes with resisting and refusing colonial desires and centering our own. Afterall, “our ancestors made space for us to create a different future” (Mahi, 2021, n. p.) and it is our kuleana to do the same for our future generations.

Interconnectedness and care for relationships are everything in Indigenous epistemological research and knowing the kuleana of the research to the community the research is by and for and knowing one's place within the research is to be in pono relationship with the purpose and aims of the project as one that is decolonial. Indigenous research methodologies as a practice of employing k/new knowledges, and that contributes to the empowerment of Native people and place through the re-creation of k/new knowledges, can and should lead to tangible change in policy, research, and practice.

## **7.1 Conclusion**

The ultimate purpose of this project was to empower the leo of mana wāhine o Kaua'i. By amplifying mana wāhine leo, this project helps mobilize the lāhui to resist and refuse the settler coloniality that continues to silence and erase to re-place wāhine leo, particularly in geographically marginalized places like Kaua'i. I did this through weaving a collective mana wāhine based mo'okū'auhau of survivance with the aim of understanding what is needed for the re-creation of pono futurities of Kaua'i. What knowledges do mana wāhine embody? How do they relate these knowledges to radical healing? How are these knowledges intergenerationally transmitted? Using mo'olelo and mo'okū'auhau as theory, method, and practice I explored the enlivened experiences of mana wāhine o Kaua'i in a way that honors the duality, interconnectedness, and utility of a Kānaka 'Ōiwi worldview. The epistemological focus of this project was on the complexities, connections, and contradictions of mana wāhine embodied relationships with mo'okū'auhau o Kaua'i. This project highlights the intersecting and interwoven nature of mana wāhine subjectivities, spaces and places and seeks to make visible again the erased knowledges, dis-placed

bodies, and re-placed places by engaging in a highly relational, highly immersive, and deeply genuine process of self-and-us discovery in my own kulāiwi and what an honor it is.

Talking story with Kaua‘i mana wāhine afforded me the privilege of re-creating a re-cord of our Kaua‘i (her)story that is decolonial. Majority of the literature that focuses exclusively or substantially on Kaua‘i are not decolonial and are not written by Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and especially not Kānaka ‘Ōiwi wāhine. Re-animating “mana wahine”: Mana means spiritual power. “Wa” means a space in-between multiple things that exist in time and “hine” means feminine energy. Mana wāhine, then, means powerful women but also denotes the time of mana wāhine.

This is the time of mana wāhine, just as it has always been and by being, re-creates the undeniable future of pono presence. These moments in time re-activate our ancestral mo‘olelo and helps us re-member that documenting our lived realities weaponizes us with knowledges of our past with the goal of re-creating a better future. Much of our ancestral knowledges have not been written down and we have the kuleana to give future generations more memories of our past and our present than we ourselves re-remember (Hau‘ofa, 2008). We must push the boundaries on what research looks like and for whom, whose knowledges are worth perpetuating, whose bodies (including ‘āina) are worth protecting (Smith, 2021). To do this is an act of survivance because by writing ourselves back into our own (her)stories we make Kānaka ‘Ōiwi people and ways of knowing not a thing of the past, but a thing of the indefinite future. Eō!



**Figure 7 Ka Hae Hawai'i  
na Kaihekia'i Giminiz (10)**

## Appendix A Glossary

Terms are defined using Pukui & Elbert's (1986)'s *Hawaiian Dictionary*. More context about the layered meanings of these words are provided in the body of the dissertation.

**Ahupua'a:** Land division

**'Āina:** Land; that which feeds; foundational ancestor

**'Āina Makuahine:** Mother land

**'Āina Momona:** Fat land; Healthy, thriving, well cared for land

**Ahu:** Altar

**Akua:** God/ Goddesses

**Alawai:** Path of fresh water

**Ali'i:** Chiefs/ royalty

**Aloha:** Love

**Aloha 'Āina:** Love of the land, deeply entrenched belief/ action of Kānaka 'Ōiwi

**Ano:** Presence/ essence

**Ānuenuē:** Rainbow

**'A'ole:** No

**Au 'Āpa'apa'a:** Ancestral time

**'Aumakua:** Family god/ guardian in the form of a nonhuman entity

**Ea:** Breath; Sovereignty

**Eō:** Response to a call saying "Yes, I am here"

**Ha'i Mo'olelo:** Storytelling

**Hale:** House

**Hāloanakalaukapalili:** Hāloa for short. God/ ancestor of Kalo and ancestor to the native Hawaiian people

**Haole:** White, U.S.-ian; Foreigner/ outsider

**Heiau:** Shrine; Sacred site; Pre-Christian high place of worship

**Hi'iaka:** Goddess with many kinolau or bodily forms that steward life and plants. Sister to Pele.

**Hō'ailona:** Symbols, sign

**Hōkū:** Star

**Honua:** World

**Honu Moku:** Turtle Island; The United States continent

**Ho'okele Wa'a:** Wayfinding

**Ho'okupu:** Offering

**Hua 'Ōlelo:** Words; Hua meaning fruit, 'Ōlelo meaning language

**Huaka'i:** Journey

**Hui:** Group/ team

**Hula:** Sacred traditional dance that communicates mo'olelo

**Hūnā:** Hidden

**'Ike:** See, know, feel, recognize, perceive; knowledge

**‘Ike Loa:** Seek knowledge; the value of learning  
**‘Ike Kūpuna:** Knowledges from ancestors/ elders  
**‘Ike Wahi:** Place-based knowledges or one’s sense of place  
**Inoa:** Name  
**Iwi:** Bones  
**Iwi Kūpuna:** Ancestral bones  
**Kāhea:** A call to action  
**Lani:** Sky/ Heaven  
**Lāhui:** The native Hawaiian nation  
**Laulima:** Cooperation  
**Lawa‘ia:** Fishing  
**Lei:** The garland worn around one’s neck for spiritual and cultural protection, celebration, or recognition; Symbol of mo‘okū‘auhau; generations strung together; children are symbolically pua or flowers on a lei  
**Leo:** Voice  
**Lewa Lani:** High Stratum of Heaven  
**Lilinoe:** Light rain/ mist  
**Lo‘i Kalo:** Irrigated terraces for taro  
**Lo‘i Pa‘akai:** Hawaiian salt beds  
**Lōkahi:** Harmony/ unity  
**Loko i‘a:** Fishpond  
**Mahi‘ai:** Farming  
**Mahina:** Moon  
**Māhū:** Gender non-binary, homosexual, trans  
**Makai:** Toward the ocean  
**Makani:** Wind  
**Makuahine:** Mother  
**Mālama:** To take care  
**Malihini:** Newcomer, Tourist  
**Mana:** Power; Spiritual energy  
**Mana‘o:** Thoughts, opinions, beliefs  
**Mana Wāhine:** powerful woman/ divine feminine energy  
**Mauka:** Toward the mountains  
**Mele:** Song  
**Moku:** District  
**Mo‘o:** Succession; Lizard/ gecko that is kinolau of ancestors  
**Mo‘okū‘auhau:** Genealogy/ lineage/ succession/ interconnectedness  
**Mo‘olelo:** Story/ history/ narrative  
**Nā Pali:** Cliffs; Coast on Kaua‘i  
**No‘eau:** Wisdom  
**Kahakō:** Hawaiian alphabetical macron  
**Kāhuna:** Spiritual healers/ conduits of the spiritual realm  
**Kai:** Ocean  
**Kaiāulu:** Community  
**Kalo:** Taro; Kinolau of the God, Hāloa who is ancestor of the native Hawaiian people  
**Kāhea:** Call to action

**Kānaka:** People, humans  
**Kānaka ‘Ōiwi:** native Hawaiians; the native people; “people of bone” implying native Hawaiian’s physical and cosmological relationship with the lands specific to Hawai‘i  
**Kāne:** Men  
**Kaona:** Hidden/ layered meaning  
**Kapa:** Cloth made from wauke or māmaki bark  
**Kapu:** Sacred/ forbidden  
**Kapu Aloha:** Sacred love; A protocol for being in relationship with other people, places, and things in contentious moments  
**Keiki:** Children  
**Kia‘i:** Protector  
**Koa:** Warrior  
**Kōkua:** Help  
**Kulāiwi:** Homeland, land of the ancestors  
**Kuleana:** Responsibility. Privilege weighed with burden.  
**Kumu:** Teacher; cultural and community given title of respect for someone who is skilled in their knowledges and who educates relationally; foundational source of the flow of knowledge like a delta that feeds water to several living ecosystems  
**The Māhele:** A U.S. missionary and business introduced process of dividing the ‘āina into segments to denote ownership.  
**The Kumulipo:** Native Hawaiian primordial creation chant  
**Kūpuna:** Ancestors/ elders  
**‘Ohana:** Family; Off-shoots of the Kalo plant symbolic of ancestor Hāloa connecting all native Hawaiians to land and each other  
**‘Ōiwi:** Native; of the bone of a particular land  
**‘Okina:** Hawaiian language glottal stop  
**‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i:** Hawaiian language  
**‘Ōlelo No‘eau:** Ancestral proverb/ method of communicating ancestral knowledges  
**Oli:** Chant  
**‘Onipa‘a:** Steadfast  
**‘Ōpio:** Youth  
**Palapala Aloha:** Love letter  
**Pa‘akai:** Hawaiian Salt  
**Papa:** Foundational earth; Goddess/ ancestor of the sky  
**Papahānaumokuakea:** Ancestral name for Hawai‘i that extends beyond the eight islands populated by humans  
**Pele:** Goddess of lava and re-creation  
**Piko:** Center; Navel; Umbilical cord that connects native Hawaiians to ‘āina and ‘ike kūpuna  
**Pōhaku:** Rocks/ Stones  
**Pono:** Upright/ correct/ moral; Righteous balance  
**Pua:** Flower  
**Pu‘uhonua:** Place of refuge  
**Puka:** Hole, gap  
**Pule:** Prayer  
**Ua:** Rain  
**Ulana:** Weaving

**Wa‘a:** Canoe

**Wahi:** Place

**Wahi Pana:** Storied/ special place

**Wākea:** The vast expanse of the sky; God/ ancestor of the earth

## **Appendix B Semi-Structured Interview Protocol**

1. What types of cultural knowledge do you have?
2. What significant event(s), moments, or people stand out to you when you think about how you attained and developed this cultural knowledge?
3. What types of cultural knowledge do you think are important for you to pass on to future generations?
4. How do you pass on this knowledge on to future generations?
5. How has this knowledge been passed on to you?
6. How do you practice this knowledge?
7. How do you define healing?
8. How have you healed from past trauma?
9. Has your cultural knowledge impacted your healing as you defined it?
10. How do you think your cultural knowledge will impact your decedents?
11. What do you think are the biggest problem/s on Kaua'i?
12. What is needed to solve the biggest problems of Kaua'i?
13. What are the biggest strengths of Kaua'i?
14. What is needed to maintain the strengths of Kaua'i?
15. What does a thriving lāhui look like you?
16. What do you think is needed for Kaua'i to be pono?
17. What does a pono Kaua'i look like to you?
18. What does your wahi mean to you?
19. What does this wahi that we are in mean to you?
20. How do you understand your kuleana?
21. What does being a mana wahine mean to you?
22. What are the biggest strengths of wahine on Kaua'i?
23. What are the biggest struggles of wahine on Kaua'i?
24. How is Kaua'i different than the other islands?
25. What else can you tell me that would help me understand how you view knowledge and what the purpose of knowledge should be on Kaua'i?
26. What else can you tell me that would help me understand how you view healing and how this is related to your cultural knowledge specifically on Kaua'i?
27. Is there anything else you would like to share that I have not asked?

## Appendix C Study Information Sheet

*Study Title:* He Palapala Aloha no Kaua‘i: Mana Wāhine Epistemologies and Pono Futurities of Kaua‘i

*Investigators:* Nicole Cristobal

*Purpose of the Study:* The knowledges we hold are interconnected with our particular places. In Hawai‘i, Kānaka ‘Ōiwi (the Indigenous peoples of Hawai‘i) are epistemology rooted in ‘ike kūpuna (knowledges from ancestors/ elders), including from the specific landscapes, heavenscapes, and waterways Kānaka ‘Ōiwi genealogically call home. In this dissertation, I use Kānaka ‘Ōiwi epistemology as theory, method, and practice. Specifically, I use mo‘olelo (story/legend/narrative) and mo‘okū‘auhau (genealogy/ lineage/ succession) as method to steward and weave the knowledges of mana wāhine (powerful women) on Kaua‘i from a decolonial perspective. This place-based, qualitative study explores what knowledges Kaua‘i mana wāhine embody, how these knowledges are related to radical healing, and how these knowledges are intergenerationally transmitted in re-creating pono futurities on Kaua‘i. With the continued colonization of Kānaka ‘Ōiwi and the political polarities of the twenty-first century, there is a need to re-member, re-create, and re-cord Indigenous women’s knowledges using Indigenous methodologies by Indigenous researchers for Indigenous communities. This study aims to contribute to Kānaka ‘Ōiwi healing of the future through the past, while simultaneously pushing research and practice to reconsider how to be answerable to the communities that have been the most harmed by dominant knowledge reproduction.

*Contact information:* If you have questions, concerns, complaints, you may contact the researcher, by email [ncristobal@pitt.edu](mailto:ncristobal@pitt.edu), by phone (808-346-xxxx), or in-person at xxxx ‘Umi St., Līhu‘e,

HI. 96766. This research was approved as “Not Human Subjects Research” by an Institutional Review Board (“IRB”), study #19090082. You may talk to them at (412) 383-1480 or at askirb@pitt.edu if you have questions regarding your rights in this research.

*Participation:* You were asked to take part in this dissertation research study because you identify as Native Hawaiian (Kānaka Maoli / Kānaka ‘Ōiwi), you identify as a wahine, you identify as from Kaua‘i, you are at least 18 years old, and because of your demonstrated commitment to our Kaua‘i community. Participation is completely voluntary. Participation in all, part, or none of this study is in the full discretion of the participant. Withdraw from any or all parts of the dissertation process will not be held against the participant at any time. As a participant in this study, you will be asked to take in a talk story session during which I will ask you to describe your ways of knowing as a Kānaka ‘Ōiwi wahine on Kaua‘i and what that means for our future here on Kaua‘i. The talk story session can be as long or as short and can have as many or as few sessions as you want. This talk story session will take place in person, unless COVID-19 dictates otherwise. With your permission, I will take notes as we talk. I will contact you as a follow-up to make sure I have interpreted your thoughts accurately, to get your permission on anything I have said with reference to you, and to talk story some more if needed. You may also contact me by phone, email, or in-person at any time to talk about any of the knowledge you shared and how it will be presented.

*Benefits of Participation:* No direct benefits of participation.

*Risks and Discomforts:* No direct risks or discomforts from participation are associated with this study.

*Costs and compensation:* No costs or compensation are associated with participation in this study.

*Confidentiality:* I will use your name if/when citing something you said to honor what you shared and to acknowledge that your time and energy went into this study. If you do not want your name

disclosed, you will be asked to choose a pseudonym. Anything shared as part of your participation may be used in the final publication of this dissertation and publications and/or presentations thereafter.

## Appendix D IRB Approval Form

### University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board

Human Research Protection Office  
3500 Fifth Avenue, Suite 106  
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### NOT HUMAN RESEARCH

Date:	November 22, 2019
Review Type:	Initial Study
IRB:	STUDY19090082
PI:	Nicole Cristobal
Title:	Place-Based Cultural Survivance amongst Kaua'i Women
Funding:	None
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interview Protocol , Category: Data Collection;</li><li>• HRP-721 - WORKSHEET - Exemption_Tests Surveys Public Behavior_Version_0.01 (1)_Version_0.01.docx..docx, Category: IRB Protocol;</li><li>• Recruitment Flyer, Category: Recruitment Materials;</li><li>• Research Protocol, Category: IRB Protocol;</li><li>• Research Script.docx, Category: Recruitment Materials;</li></ul>

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) determined that the proposed activity is not research involving human subjects as defined by DHHS and FDA regulations.

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these activities are research involving human in which the organization is engaged, please submit a new request to the IRB for a determination. You can create a modification by clicking **Create Modification / CR** within the study.

If you have any questions, please contact the University of Pittsburgh IRB Coordinator, [Larry Ivanco](#).

Please take a moment to complete our [Satisfaction Survey](#) as we appreciate your feedback.

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