hoʻomanawanui, kuʻualoha. *Voices of Fire: Reweaving the Literary Lei of Pele and Hiʻiaka*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014. 312 pages, photographs, notes, glossary, bibliography, index.

http://www.upress.umn.edu/book-division/books/voices-of-fire

Kanaka Maoli scholar kuʻualoha hoʻomanawanui's *Voices of Fire* powerfully analyzes the moʻolelo (stories, histories, narratives) of Pele and Hiʻiaka, two sister akua (goddesses) and kūpuna (ancestors) of the Hawaiian nation. While Pele and Hiʻiaka are well-known as goddesses of the volcano (specifically the currently active volcano Kīlauea on Hawaiʻi Island) and hula, respectively, most people only know small, distorted pieces of their stories, as recorded by nineteenth-century white folklorists such as Nathaniel B. Emerson. Seeking to kahuli (overturn) settler colonial accounts like Emerson's, which hoʻomanawanui argues often "intentionally ignored, romanticized, infantilized, or vilified Kanaka Maoli intellectual history and cultural practices" (xxviii), *Voices of Fire* opens up a wealth of other, previously unanalyzed sources about Pele and Hiʻiaka, largely from serialized accounts published in Hawaiʻi newspapers between 1860 and 1928, most written in ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi, Hawaiian language.

Pele and Hiʻiaka have long been cherished figures for Kanaka Maoli, especially among practicioners of hula, as many dances are dedicated to and tell the stories of either or both of the pair. As hoʻomanawanui suggests, in their opposing natures—Pele as a fiery, tempermental, and at times destructive force of nature, and Hiʻiaka as Pele's beloved younger sister, a calmer force of new growth and regeneration—the goddesses suggest a model of balance, or pono (xxvii). *Voices of Fire* does not attempt to tell their definitive story, but instead emphasizes the Hawaiian value of makawalu, or multiple perspectives, noting that different serialized versions were all treasured even when their narratives varied (xxxi, xl). Thus, rather than seek one definitive version of the Pele and Hiʻiaka narrative, *Voices of Fire* masterfully shows that debates and divergences were honored by Kanaka Maoli authors. There are many revelations in hoʻomanawanui's analysis, from her meditations on Pele arriving to Hawaiʻi from Kahiki (an ancestral homeland) that links Kanaka Maoli ancestrally to Tahiti and other parts of the Pacific to the last chapter's incorporation of contemporary Kanaka Maoli poetry about Pele and Hiʻiaka. Overall, the book is attentive to the specific places the moʻolelo take place in, including Puna on Hawaiʻi Island as a birthplace of hula (Hiʻiaka learns hula from Hōpoe, her ʻaikane—intimate friend and lover—and teaches Pele) and Kauaʻi island (where Hiʻiaka must journey to complete a task at Pele's request). It is also attentive to the historical context of the moʻolelo's publication, such as the political statements implied in their publication especially regarding the 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, as well as to the relevance of the moʻolelo's themes to contemporary Kanaka Maoli.

Voices of Fire accomplishes the reclamation and revitalization of the Pele and Hiʻiaka moʻolelo brilliantly, and yet its contribution is much more than this already remarkable feat. As hoʻomanawanui notes, *Voices of Fire* is the "first book-length study of Hawaiian literature" (xxviii), and it is certainly the first to put Hawaiian literature in conversation with Indigenous literary nationalism, as developed in Indigenous and Pacific Studies fields by scholars including Lisa Brooks, Scott Lyons, Robert Warrior, Alice Te Punga Somerville and Albert Wendt, among many others. "What is a Hawaiian literary tradition?" (xxxi) is one of the key questions the book

asks. In answering this question through the example of the varied, broad scope of the Pele and Hi‘iaka mo‘olelo, the text covers an enormous amount of ground and is truly innovative in its the theoretical and rhetorical frameworks. In terms of coverage, for example, the book’s first chapter provides an extremely comprehensive but succinct overview of Kanaka Maoli history, which (unlike many conventional historical accounts of Hawai‘i) highlights the continuous existence of Kanaka ‘Ōiwi (synonymous with Kanaka Maoli, Native Hawaiian) resistance to colonization through to the present day. This chapter deserves to become standard reading for any course teaching about Hawai‘i and the history of its colonization. In terms of theoretical innovation, a key contribution is the text’s insistence that mo‘olelo are an important source of the Kanaka Maoli lāhui’s (nation’s) intellectual and political genealogy, and that the knowledge they contain are passed down to contemporary Kanaka Maoli mai ka pō mai, from the beginning of time to now, and mai nā kūpuna mai, from the ancestors to us (xxxii). In this way, ho‘omanawanui theorizes mo‘olelo as an original and expansive Kanaka Maoli literary genre which functions as a kind of literary lei (garland of flowers), or lei palapala, as it interweaves oral and written histories together into a gift for a beloved one—namely, the Kanaka Maoli people (xxxix).

The book deeply considers the ways that traditionally valued oral performances (including mele, or song, and hula) of mo‘olelo influenced the ways mo‘olelo were written down, after the introduction of the written word and printing by missionaries in the early nineteenth-century, especially in Chapter 2. While acknowledging that printing was introduced as part of the missionary effort to convert and civilize Kanaka Maoli, ho‘omanawanui also argues that Kanaka ‘Ōiwi quickly learned to use Ka Palapala (written literature) as a technology that could “save mo‘olelo previously recorded only in memory—traditions, histories, genealogies, and related mana‘o [knowledge]—from extinction” (39). Chapter 2 also introduces meiwi, or traditional poetic devices used in the Hawaiian language, which ho‘omanawanui shows were important to the advent of a written Hawaiian literary tradition and also aimed to perpetuate rather than replace mo‘olelo ha‘i waha (orature), especially through devices encouraging memorization. Drawing on the work of Hiapo Perreira, Noenoe Silva, and Mary Kawena Pukui, among other noted Hawaiian Studies scholars, ho‘omanawanui identifies over twenty meiwi, such as pīna‘i (repetition of words, actions), kaona (veiled, poetic meaning), and ‘ēko‘a (opposites) (42-3). These devices then become important to the detailed analysis of the Pele and Hi‘iaka mo‘olelo in the book’s later chapters.

Voices of Fire itself productively challenges and disrupts the standard format of an academic book through the use of its own kinds of meiwi. The book opens and closes with pule, or prayers, printed on facing pages in Hawaiian and English that follow Kanaka Maoli protocols around asking permission to enter a sacred place and to begin and close an event. In doing so, ho‘omanawanui frames the book as a space of reverence and santicity, akin to the space of a hula hālau (the space where a hula group dances) (xli). This also creates an elegant counter-discourse to the conventions of the Western academy by reminding readers that respect and permission is required to gain certain forms of knowledge. Each chapter similarly opens with a mele (song) from the Pele and Hi‘iaka mo‘olelo, which frames and reflects the themes of the coming chapter.

Additionally, within each chapter, ho‘omanawanui weaves accounts of her own mo‘olelo, engaging stories drawn from her own experience, into the narrative. Several chapters open with a variation of the statement, “It is [year] and I am in a particular place, doing a particular thing].”

For instance, Chapter 5, which focuses on mana wahine (women's power or powerful women), as a central aspect of the Pele and Hi'iaka mo'olelo, draws the reader in with an opening story about the author drawing strength from her own mana wahine ancestors as she braves the challenges of learning to (and from) sailing a wa'a kaulua, a traditional Hawaiian double-hulled canoe. Through these personal narratives, readers learn not only of ho'omanawanui's diverse and impressive intellectual journey (including her experiences as a haumana, or student, of hula and Hawaiian language) and what it has meant to her, but also a partial but strongly felt sense of the many challenges and achievements of Kanaka 'Ōiwi efforts to restore and revitalize the lāhui's cultural, political, and intellectual life over the past several decades.

As a Kanaka Maoli scholar myself, I cannot see *Voices of Fire* as anything less than a substantial gift to the Native Hawaiian people, which indeed, as ho'omanwanui notes early in the book, was her intention, "he ho'okupu kēia i ka lāhui—an offering to the Hawaiian nation" (xxvi). As such, it "seeks to encourage 'Ōiwi agency in our continuing rediscovery and reevaluation of our kūpuna (ancestral source) texts in culturally relevant ways, approaching and discussing these cultural treasures from within the paradigm of 'Ōiwi perspectives and analysis" (xxviii). Indeed, I am deeply moved and inspired by this text's rigorous and creative contribution to Kanaka Maoli intellectual, political, and cultural sovereignty. Yet, *Voices of Fire* is also a gift to scholars across many disciplines invested in Indigenous survivance, including literature, history, and Pacific, Native American, and Indigenous Studies, as it is a beautiful example of scholarship that both demonstrates and enacts Indigenous presence and power mai ka pō mai, from the beginning of time to now, and certainly well into the future.

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