

KILLER MELE

A MASTER'S THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

IN

ENGLISH

MAY 2005

By
Kahikina de Silva

This copy made available by:
Mary Kawena Pukui Hale
Kawaihuelani Center for Hawaiian Language
Hawai'i inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Killer Mele

E nā mo'olau Hawai'i,

To our people words have never been just words; stories have never been just stories. Poetry and songs have never been just pretty arrangements of the former to produce a singable record of the latter. So when contemporary *mele*, composed by *kānaka* or *haole*, in Hawaiian or English, without attention to this cultural history, become the music that represents this *'āina* and its *lāhui pono 'i*, the replacement of old with new in the name of evolution and multiculturalism has deeper effects than the obvious changes in composition and performance. When such *mele* depend on language of non-substance, on catchy tunes and stock images that are rooted not in the *mo'o* of literature native to Hawai'i but in the culture that stereotypes, trivializes, and exploits us, those deeper effects participate in the continued "dismembering" of our *lāhui*.¹

I am aware that this is one of those broad blanket statements scholars in every field warn students and fellow writers against writing or believing. It has the potential to be reductive, romanticizing, and simply wrong. However, the importance of *'ōlelo* in its various forms and functions cannot be ignored when one speaks in terms of Hawaiian identities, even as they grow and change. Consequently, I feel more than fairly secure in making this claim, at the very least as a reaffirmation and extension of that which the most famous *'ōlelo no'eau* of our ancestors teaches: *I ka 'ōlelo nō ke ola; i ka 'ōlelo nō ka make* (Pukui 1983. 'ŌN #1191). In *'ōlelo* there is life; in *'ōlelo* there is death.

Because of the importance of language to the expression and assertion of Hawaiian concepts and identities, and because of the violent colonial history that continues to threaten the sur-

¹ Such is Jonathan Osorio's description of the "racial and legal discourse that crippled the will, confidence, and trust of the Kānaka Maoli as surely as leprosy and smallpox claimed their limbs and lives" (3).

vival of Hawaiian language and worldview, 'ōlelo Hawai'i has become a *piko*² around which our people gather and through which we engage in daily struggles for *ola*. As a central source of unity and life for Hawaiians, language also performs the function of the *piko* that connects mother and baby, feeding this generation with the words and stories of our elders. In order for both *piko* and its people to live, however, a space must be reserved in which 'ike and 'ōlelo Hawai'i are context rather than solely content, in which they truly do form the *piko* from which we think, speak, act, and write.

Without such a *kapu* space, we run the risk of not only ethnologizing our own culture as an object of study, but also of severing the cross-generational link that *piko* like language maintain. Language studies show that when a linguistic link is broken, newer language forms are more likely to survive, displacing the ancestral expressions until a situation exists in which "that which was real becomes nonexistent and that which is created becomes real" (Wong, 104). What I profess here is that a similar unknotting of the ties that bind literature and song, old and new, into one common *pū'olo* of Hawaiian poetry changes our traditional forms of expression – sometimes beyond recognition – and causes that tightly-wrapped bundle to loosen and open, scattering its contents. Rather than comprising an ever-expanding *pū'olo* of cultural integrity, our knowledge becomes *hapa a hapa*, unrelated bits and pieces that break away and reunite around *piko* that are not connected to our *po'e kūpuna* or their bundles of knowledge. Rather than healthy cultural growth that allows for adaptation based on traditional values and models, the result is the

² I encourage that *piko* be considered here in its varied manifestations. Center, navel, umbilical cord, summit, and so forth. Yet in each case, *piko* is also a convergence. It is the point at which the mountain ends of *ahupua'a* meet, the means by which the *kino* of mother and child are linked, the physical and nutritional intersection of *kalo* stalk to leaf and veins, the topmost point of our own *po'o* which is our spiritual link to our ancestors and *akua*. Unlike a western binary of center and periphery, this concept of *piko* depends more on the interrelation of its parts than its distinction as the sole source of power and authenticity. Nevertheless, I encourage a reconnection to our ancestral *piko* as just that – a source of *mana*. It is therefore essential to the life of this *piko* that the focus on relationships and connection remain strong.

creation of cultural material that is merely Hawaiian-"influenced," but has as its context the values, concepts, and views of another people's *pū'olo*.

Reconnecting *piko*

This work almost begs to be written *ma ka 'ōlelo 'ōiwi*. As it is, the Hawaiian words on this page, italicized as a reflection of their outgrowth from a decidedly non-English *piko*, infiltrate nearly every sentence and threaten to overtake the comfortably upright, plain English text that surrounds them. 'Auhea 'oe, inā 'o ka 'ōlelo Hawai'i kahi *piko* e *ola ai kākou*, e hānai 'ia *aku*, hānai 'ia *mai nā mana'o nui o kākou ma o ua piko nei*. As I am continually reminded, however, our language is not yet a medium through which every *kanaka* communicates. Therefore, rather than exclude those *kānaka* who are not yet *kānaka 'ōlelo Hawai'i*, rather than issue an appeal for language learning to those who already use it comfortably, and participate in the act of "taking *poi* to Hanalei," what I offer here is a kind of transitional work. Though written mainly in English, it looks ahead to the time when papers such as this written in Hawaiian alone are neither uncommon nor discouraged as works that stand without translation, and it endeavors to increase our knowledge and awareness in preparation for such a time.

There is similar attention given to the *mele* explored in this study. Collectively, these *mele* represent various levels of rootedness in our language and *mo'olelo*, and the changes that threaten that very connection. Currently the trend in *mele* composition and appreciation seems to popularly favor the English lyrics and western point of view that displace our traditional knowledge and skills like *haku mele*. If, however, we follow the model of composers like Ron Roshia, who declares in the language available to him, "*He Hawai'i Au*," this can become a transitional period for *mele* as well. Because of the work of 'ōpio like Kaumakaiwa Kanaka'ole and Holunape, widespread reconnection to *piko* has begun and continues in pockets of revitalized appreciation for Hawaiian music. Yet their popularity is largely contained within those pockets – of *kānaka 'ōlelo Hawai'i*, *po'e hula*, and, at least in the case of Holunape, of Hawai'i-hungry Japa-

nese nationals. This study, then, also looks forward with great hope to the time when the *mele* of our *piko* become the popular *mele* of our people.

Simultaneously, this particular discussion privileges those, like the *'ōpio* named above, who have made personal and cooperative commitments to expanding the scope of our *'ōlelo* so that such a time may be reached, *nā kānaka ho'i i kau ma ke ala hāiki o nā kūpuna*. Specialized Hawaiian knowledge has been traditionally carried by elite groups of experts identified by their areas of specialty – *kāhuna*, *kumu hula*, *kālai wa'a*, *kia manu*, *a pēlā aku*. The term *kahuna* itself indicates the sacred, disciplined nature of such knowledge – *huna* glosses as "hidden secret; hidden" (Pukui and Elbert 91). Although the *kahuna* class is generally thought to be defunct and the number of contemporary Hawaiians who claim *kahuna* status has ebbed, the understanding remains that *'ike* is something to be withheld until one has earned the right to receive it, that not all knowledge is public domain, and even that if there is no fitting receptacle for old knowledge in our time, it may be *pono* to let that *'ike* leave us with the *kanaka* who keeps it.³ These concepts of knowledge itself influence my writing from both ends. I am by no means expert in what I investigate here, and there is much *'ai a ke kumu i koe ia'u*. At the same time, I feel it is my responsibility, as a *kānaka* making *kānaka* knowledge public, to protect what research I present here, that it not be "*hā'awi wale ['ia] aku*."⁴

I also believe quite strongly that we must create spaces where one's knowledge of Hawaiian is rewarded, where *kānaka 'ōlelo Hawai'i* are made privileged members of a larger, more diverse audience. In arenas such as this, the *kānaka 'ōlelo Hawai'i* receives a little more knowledge, an extra joke or two, and advantage previously unavailable to our *kūpuna 'ōlelo Hawai'i*. The annual conferring of the award *Nā Manu a Ka'ae* by the *'Ahahui 'Ōlelo Hawai'i* does so in

³ Personal communication with Kīhei and Māpuana de Silva, regarding an unnamed elder's admission of being one such *kanaka*.

⁴ Given away without thought of consequences that may arise from such unconditional generosity.

a formalized manner. Here, the reward is academic – insight and understanding where a Hawaiian *piko* is assumed rather than expounded. Consequently, translations of songs written in Hawaiian will not be given here, though particular words or lines will be approximated in English throughout my discussion of *mele*, in order to both explain general themes and make specific points regarding each work. Concepts I consider foundational to Hawaiian philosophy and literature will be explained as they relate to the materials and concepts explored here – a basic understanding will be assumed. The goal is not one of exclusion; it is one of *piko*-shift.

This *piko* consists partially of cultural metaphors, which Lilikalā Kame'eiehiwa describes as "those things, those phrases, those customs, a kind of language, if you will that *only* members of a particular group understand" (4). As one such metaphor, the term *aloha 'āina*, alternatively translated as "love of the land" and "patriotism" or "nationalism," reflects an appreciation for the land's physical characteristics but "goes beyond the love of beauty"; it encompasses, above all, a genealogical, spiritual, historical, and physical connection *kānaka maoli* have to the islands of our birth (Silva 11). These are the metaphors through which we as *kānaka* understand and relate to each other and the world. Conceptualizing language as a *piko* is not the same as identifying it as a "center," just as *aloha 'āina* is insufficiently equated with the term "love for the land." These are the metaphors that form the *piko* of our identities; they should perform the same role in our writing.

Our collective undertaking of *piko* shift, though invaluable to the advancement of our work as a *lāhui*, is bound to raise some eyebrows along the way, particularly in this, its M.A.-degree-seeking form. It is clear that my intended primary audience – those to whom this paper is addressed at the onset – is made up of *kānaka* who research, protect, and above all practice our culture in its various forms and degrees of formality. However, its initial presentation will take place in an American-style university in a program whose foundational literatures, philosophies, and practices are at times in direct conflict with those engaged here. It seems to me

that this conflict, and our efforts as indigenous scholars to resolve it in order that our voices of theory be heard, threaten to limit what we can say in the space and language given, and potentially reconfigure the way in which we theorize ourselves and our place in the world.

As scholars trained in western academies but writing about Hawaiian phenomena, we are often taught to assume that our readers are unfamiliar with any information considered "ethnographic." Assume the reader does not know Hawaiian and translate such references into English. Assume concepts of *mālama 'āina* and genealogical connection to the land are not understood by the reader and make them known. Ironically, this requirement of continual explanation results in the sharing of less knowledge, research, and theorizing. If each Hawaiian writer is expected, by the assumption of unfamiliarity and obliged courtesy to the non-native reader, to explain Hawaiian cosmogony, the history of attempted language extermination, and the meaning of *kuleana*, our creative energy spins rather than rolls. The majority of time and space in each study is devoted to the explanation of basic concepts rather than the engaging of deeper philosophies. We have been trained to write to and from a *piko* that exoticizes the language and knowledge that is native to our people. Barbara Christian writes of a similar shift and encourages those concerned about it to ask ourselves "for whom are we doing what we are doing when we do literary criticism?" (460). As she notes, how we answer this question determines the "orientation" of our thought and expression, and whether we will take the path of those once-radical academics who "have been influenced, even co-opted, into speaking a language and defining their discussion in terms alien to and opposed to our needs and orientation" (457).

What excites me about these times is that both the quantity and quality of Hawaiian scholarship and literary creativity is growing. The slow return of *kānaka* writers to the perspectives and expressions of our ancestors is in large part due to the works and voices of our own people. *Koa wiwo'ole* like Haunani-Kay Trask. Successfully traditional musicians like the Cazimeros, Ho'okena, and Keali'i Reichel. Successfully radical musicians like those of Sudden

Rush and Big Island Conspiracy. Indomitable researchers like Noenoe Silva. Language caretakers like No'eau Warner, Laiana Wong, and Leilani Basham who write for Hawaiians in Hawaiian. Incomparable orators like Jon Osorio. Countless quiet, persistent teachers and practitioners. And new *kupukupu* including Ku'ualoha Ho'omanawanui, Māhealani Dudoit, and Kimo Cashman who insists "We are hea! We are still hea!"⁵

A Return to 'Ōlelo

Such assertions are only possible through our *'ōlelo* – language, speech, discussion, writing, storytelling, orating, history-making. There is an unbreakable connection between language and identity that words, stories, songs, and histories continually forge and reform. This phenomenon is not unique to the indigenous people of Hawai'i; neither is the threat to its survival contained in our struggles alone. Indian writer and literary critic Paula Gunn Allen frequently returns to this connection in her work *The Sacred Hoop*, where she tracks the abilities of oral (and, more recently, written) traditions and Indian identities to mutually construct and express each other. As evidence of such an ability, Allen cites one purpose of Indian novels and other forms of contemporary Indian literature as providing a response "to the question of whether we can remain Indians and still participate in and influence western culture or whether we will be junked or enshrined in museums of culture" (101). Each work, each response adds another facet, perhaps another item of literary "medicine" (91) to empower and help shape varied Indian identities which, in turn, continue to produce responses and the twists and turns of identification that accompany them.

⁵ From "Looking in the Hole with my Three-Prong Cocked," Cashman's contribution to the 2004 issue of *Educational Perspectives*. This is his response to the ubiquitous graffiti-ed proclamation "Name wuz hea!" – a statement he sees as one of departure and relinquishment rather than persistence and perpetuation.

It is this accretion of responses and stories which feeds the cycle of growth and life that ensures the same growth, life, and strength of the Indian, and by extension the indigenous, inside and in spite of the global-minded communities that have cropped up around us. In effect, the words and stories that speak from, for, and of native peoples affect not only our perception by non-natives, but also the very well-being of our communities, histories, traditions, and physical selves.

We Hawaiians need look no further than our Hawaiian dictionaries to witness the intimate connection our *lāhui* observes between literature, land, and people. *Mo'olelo* – story, tale, myth, history, literature. *Mo'okū'auhau* – genealogical succession. *Iwi kuamo'o* – spine, backbone. Near and trusted relative of a chief. *Mo'opuna* – grandchild. *Mo'olau* – having many descendants. *Mo'o* – series, especially a genealogical line. Story, tradition, legend. Narrow strip of land. Narrow path, track. Ridge, as of a mountain. Grandchild. (Pukui & Elbert)

The preceding *mo'o* of words highlights the image and sound of *mo'o* that links them through its shared image of succession, continuance, and relation. It consequently forces us to contemplate each word both in the terms of *mo'o* and as one member of an obviously related group of words and concepts. Allen's proclamation of the Indian's connection to land is beautifully concise: "We are the land" (119). Hawaiians could easily expand her statement to include the literary aspect of *mo'o*: land, stories, Hawaiians – all share the same genealogy, and the existence of each depends on the health and survival of the others.

Part of our collective *mo'olelo*, the words and stories that build up to continually add to and reaffirm our identities as Hawaiians, are the *mele kupuna* that have been lovingly passed down for generations as well as *mele* that are newly created with each successive crop of *keiki*. Especially today, these musical manifestations by which the existence of our people is both expressed and perceived are often more influential than the histories themselves. By sheer virtue of accessibility and catchiness, and because of the way in which so many Hawaiians are raised, mu-

sic more than anything permeates life and consciousness in such a way as to become almost unnoticeable in the constancy of its impact. From the oldest chants of our ancestors performed in traditional *hālau hula* to the newest Hawaiian-rap-reggae conglomerations blasting from today's car stereos, the Hawaiian subconscious feeds on the music that surrounds it; *mele* provides arguably the strongest force in Hawaiian self-identification and self-assertion.

The *mele* we are raised on carry an unmistakable Hawaiian identity and cause, either overtly in their lyrics or more subtly by their existence itself. Even in times when external colonial forces are at their most forceful, the Hawaiian *piko* survives in the *mele* that support the people and traditions of Hawai'i. And the *kānaka* demand for such *mele* is strong. Leilani Basham groups such compositions under the name *mele lāhui*, an old term that she defines as "*nā mele a pau i haku 'ia no ka ho'ohano'ano 'ana a me ke kāko'o 'ana i ka Mō'i, ka 'āina, ke aupuni, a me ka lāhui o Hawai'i*" (2); she also recounts the history of perhaps the most well-known *mele lāhui*, "*Mele 'Ai Pōhaku*." The meanings of this *mele* and the circumstances of its composition are almost as widely known as the composition itself, and certain intricacies will be discussed later in this work. Its long-lived popularity, however, has become somewhat peripheral to our collective understanding of this song. According to Basham's research, it was first printed in an 1893 issue of *Ka Leo O Ka Lāhui*; over the next two years it was reprinted eight additional times in various newspapers and books. It was performed by the Royal Hawaiian Band in 1894, a year after their act of rebellion that spurred the song's composition. Since then it has been performed and re-formed, recorded and re-recorded until it has worked its way into our collective subconscious and identity (5-7).

The strength of the music that has consciously carried such a message has ebbed and surged in cycles, probably since before we can remember. From our written and oral histories, we know of *mele* like "*Ūlei Pahu*" and "*Au'a 'Ia*" written as prophecies of the changes to come. We know of *mele* like "*Mele 'Ai Pōhaku*" written in response to and protest of those

changes, including the nation's overthrow and annexation. We also know of those *mele* composed and performed in the 1960's and 1970's to lend fire to a rising movement toward increased Hawaiian self-awareness and the demand for Hawaiian self-determination. But we also know of ancestral *mele* that deliberately define Hawaiian space and identity, *mele* like "Ka Wai a Kāne" and "Eia Hawai'i." More recently, there has been a resurgence of *mele* composed in Hawaiian by a new generation of 'ōlelo-conscious *kānaka*, as well as a growing number of English-language songs that follow the path of "Ku'u Home 'o Kahalu'u" and "Nānākuli Blues" in their amazing ability to convey timeless Hawaiian concepts in the English words still used as tools of colonialism.

The question, then, becomes: What takes over when the popularity/accessibility/production of these steadfast songs ebbs? And what do we sing along to, even when their *mana* flows strong? More often than not, so many of us turn on our radios, CD players, and iPods to hip-hop or reggae rather than Hawaiian. More often than not, so many of us who do tune in to Hawaiian are immersed not in our people's *mo'olelo*-building *mele* of insistence, but in the prettily-packaged music of acquiescence that is slowly replacing it.

Like the "co-opted" critics Barbara Christian reproaches for their willingness to sacrifice their uniquely black orientation for the sake of "academic hegemony" or the power "to be published, and thereby to determine the ideas which are deemed valuable," creators and perpetuators of marketable *mele* too often neglect writing from a Hawaiian *piko* in order to satisfy the demands of those on its periphery. These days, it is not the extensions of this *piko* that make money, get radio airplay, become Disney theme songs, or find their way into either of the two primary newspapers of the day. They neither offer basic compensation to their expert creators nor help determine the material that dominates what people see, hear, read, and think about our *lāhui*. Instead, our literature – written, spoken, chanted, sung, danced, carved, tapped, weaved, cultivated, *ho'owali*-ed, or stamped – faces replacement by the more popular forms that do.

This phenomenon of replacement is one being critiqued and resisted by indigenous people of varied nations. Like the *kānaka* scholars working to denaturalize the writing of Hawaiian history based on the perspectives of non-Hawaiians, Sherman Alexie uses the medium of fiction to open our eyes to similar mis-writings of Indian novels. *Indian Killer* gives us one such *piko*-less writer, Jack Wilson. He is a white man who claims Indian blood and writes indigenously-themed mysteries which nonetheless are noticeably removed from the culture and people that are supposed to comprise the *piko* from which his stories and characters emerge. Rather than support a respectful view of Indians in all their diversity as well as their ancestral ties to each other and to the land they inhabit, Wilson's novels trap Indians in the stereotypes that have come to define them – primitive, mystical, nobly savage images. In response to the overwhelming and unquestioned representation of writers like Wilson in her literature course, one of Alexie's more vocal Indian characters says to the white professor, "Why teach Wilson? It's like his books are killing Indian books" (68). Such writing undoes with a single work decades of efforts by natives to "write back" to the dominant literature and offer a different perspective. Its validation by readers and professors suggests resistance is not only futile but frivolous as well.

Too often, the same happens with the *mele* that represent and continually recreate us as a *lāhui*. Too often, imported music that traps our own people in the same damaging stereotypes and perspectives is that which fills our ears and consciousness and kills not only our Hawaiian *mele* but the *mo'olelo*, mindset, and even people they speak for. Sometimes this literary homicide is executed by the birthing of new words which, instead of co-existing with their predecessors, turn on the parent text and eventually replace the original. The colonial child thus erases its native parent in an act of literary patricide. The addition of a new English-language verse to Bina Mossman's "He 'Ono" is a prime example. Though the first bands to sing the bonus verse, Da Blahlahs and Three Scoops of Aloha included, simply tacked it on to the two existing Hawaiian verses, their followers, like the hugely popular Ka'au Crater Boys, have replaced the original

second verse with the new English one. The replacement has occurred not only in performance, but in our collective memory as well. Evidence: one evening in 2003, I visited the Willows Restaurant in Mō'ili'ili. A certain resident trio of Hawaiian musicians began to sing "He 'Ono," and quickly skipped over verse two, moving straight from the well-known first to the English-language third. When asked to sing the original second verse, they declined. They didn't know the words.

In other cases, *mele*-killing is less obvious and more subjective in its definition. Much of the replacement we witness is a result of our immersion in and dependence on English, which we attempt to claim as part of our indigenous history and use to our advantage to subvert the systems it represents (Owens 4). However, it still betrays us when we find ourselves unable to completely shake off its colonial roots. Contemporary local music offers examples in its subgenre of English-language songs composed in apparent praise of Hawai'i and its people, but which issue their praise using the language of tourism agencies and escapism of so-called tiki culture. As we will see, these songs are easily revealed as damaging to our identities, lands, and status as Hawaiians. And yet, these very songs become the most popular, especially with 'ōpio and non-Hawaiian speakers, but even with those aware of the damaging stereotypes such *mele* perpetuate. For the majority of our people they form the basis of our musical and material identities. So let's examine some of these *mele* that help shape how we perceive ourselves and how we are perceived by others. Although many of today's compositions enrich the realization of us as diverse people and advance the movement for native self-identification and self-determination, we cannot ignore those that harm, lest they seep unnoticed into our consciousness and find acceptance and acquiescence there.

I offer here three songs that harm, including the amputated "He 'Ono" and its prosthesis, as well as an investigation into that which is damaged – the historical and political as well as the literary and cultural. These are pitted against one strong representative and strings of references

to many songs that heal, that refuse to enact the *mele*-murder that is sometimes so much easier than *mele*-nurture. It should also be said here that my comments, though critical, are aired with the belief that through critique we make ourselves and our work stronger, better, so that we become more sure of who and why we are, of what and why we do. I take responsibility for the mistakes and offenses that are bound to arise.

"He 'Ono" na Bina Mossman

This song is known, among other things, for the mouthful of quick, tongue-twisting words it packs into each verse. Part of a growing body of Hawaiian *mele* written in praise of food, "He 'Ono" reads almost like a menu designed to make our *po'e kūpuna's* mouths water. Its singer rattles off fish after fish native to the Hawaiian's diet and subtly compares their richness with the beauty and value of the people whom they nourish. The challenge of delivery that it offers seems to act on one hand as an incentive for Hawaiian musicians to perform it and display the dexterity of their vocal anatomy. But, *auē*, when that same challenge also provides musicians with an excuse for learning only half of the original *mele*. In comparison to the bombardment of mouth and brain by the jam-packed 'ōlelo that has become unfamiliar and unnatural to many of us, learning and singing a local-style verse whose lyrics are more familiar to our modern ears is much more appealing, especially when those lyrics include mention of the ubiquitous Kikkoman Shoyu. So musicians like those at Willows trade *akule* for extra salad, 'anae for kim chee, and sweet-eyed *kole* for Kikkoman. What began as a steady diet of Hawaiian fish and *mana'o* has become a mixed plate that is bound to cause some indigestion.

Here is "He 'Ono" in full form – contemporary appendage and all.

*Keu a ka 'ono ma ke alopiko la,
Kahi momona piko ka nenuē la,
Lihaliha wale ke momoni aku la,
'O ka 'ō'io halalē ke kai la,
'O ka 'ōpelu e pepenu ana la.
He 'ono toumi tou ho'i tau i to pu'u te momoni atu.*

He 'ono a he 'ono a he 'ono 'i'o nō (he 'ono nō) a he 'ono nō.

Mai pi'ikoi 'oe i ke akule la,
A he i'a a ha'i i ka hohonu la,
Ho'i iho 'oe i kahi 'anae la
Me ka manini pūlehu 'ia la
'O ke kole ē ka i'a maka onaona la.
He 'ono toumi tou ho'i tau i to pu'u te momoni atu.
He 'ono a he 'ono a he 'ono 'i'o nō (he 'ono nō) a he 'ono nō.

(Elbert and Māhoe 48)

Sure make a beef stew heavy on the extra salad,
Two scoops rice on a hamburger bun,
Hot dog, kim chee, chili pepper water
Akule, aku, mahimahi sandwich
Top it all off with the Kikkoman Shoyu
He 'ono toumi tou ho'i tau i to pu'u te momoni atu.
Manapua, manapua, pepeiao, 'ōkole, a he 'ono nō.

(islandvibrations.tripod.com)

Bina Mossman's second verse, that which is often omitted in favor of the English-dominated substitution, is the verse of substance and loyalty. Whereas the verse that begins "*He keu*" is just that – an excess, of 'ono (taste), momona (fat), lihalaha (richness), and kai (gravy) – this subsequent stanza is a warning against relying on taste alone to nourish us, a warning against getting caught up in the fatty richness of the fish of deeper waters. Here the *haku mele* reigns in her praise of those tasty fish, recognizing them now as "fish of others in the depths," and calls instead for a return to the simple fare of 'anae, manini, and kole found in shallower, closer, more dependable seas. It is in these often overlooked words, too, that we realize the "fish" here are not only fish, but human lovers as well. The centrality of this symbolism to the overall meaning of the song is cemented in the verse's closing line: "'O ke kole ē ka i'a maka onaona la," in which the cultural representation of attractive people as kole is voiced as a final reminder of the beauty and worth of humble reef-dwellers (Pukui and Elbert 162, Elbert and Mahoe 48). And with this ultimate claim that the kole's sweet eyes (*maka onaona*) are preferable to the sweetly fat belly

(*alopiko*) of other fish, Mossman effectively reverses our previous perception of the rich, fat fish in verse one as "*keu a ka 'ono*." Suddenly they're just *keu* – too much.

Erasure of this second Hawaiian-language verse, and its replacement with the contemporary local English, removes the very meat of the song and leaves us with salt and fat. But beyond the metaphor substitution, or perhaps just before it, is the substitution of language itself, an act of erasure that cannot be ignored in light of the history of the Hawaiian language and its suppression in this, its native land. Leanne Hinton observes one reason for the decline of indigenous languages like Hawaiian: "A language that is not a language of government, nor a language of education, nor a language of commerce or of wider communication is a language whose very existence is threatened in the modern world" (3). Removed from the domain of government in the Organic Act, from its role as the primary medium of education in 1893, and from the commercial arena at the establishment of the first plantations, Hawaiian is, here and now, in this *mele*, removed as well from the sphere of "wider communication" (Warner 134, 135).

In each case, the ultimate result is the painful extraction of 'ōlelo from the mouths of its people. As recently as the beginning of the 20th century, Hawaiians in Hawai'i were raised on the 'ōlelo of their ancestors, as it was fed like softened 'anae from grandparent to grandchild, parent to child. Within one generation, Hawaiian had been replaced by Hawai'i Creole English as the dominant native language of Hawaiians (Warner 135). "*He 'Ono*" began as a song generated from both the language and traditional knowledge of Hawaiians; a generation later, it has become a menu of local plate lunch items. The patterns of colonialism that replace native language with foreign, multi-cultural words and healthy native diet with bad cholesterol are thus reenacted perfectly in this one song's rewriting.

The words we are left with, English and Hawaiian, soon melt into mere sounds, popularly appreciated more for their resonance than their meanings. Part of the reason the "*Mai pi'ikoi*" verse is so often left unsung is probably that it does not rely on the repetition of sounds and word

play that drives the first and makes it most memorable. "A he i'a a ha'i" from verse two rivals the level of vowel sequencing and inversion that we hear in verse one's "ma ke alopiko... piko ka nenuē la," but it still cannot touch the appeal of the first verse's closing lines: "Lihaliha wale ke momoni akula / 'O ka 'ō'io halalē ke kai la / 'O ka 'ōpelu e pepenu ana la." It is this sound-play and food-listing that the English verse most echoes. The old appreciation of word-play has survived, along with the lyrics – English and Hawaiian – that gratify it. However, the admonition that accompanies this indulgence when the song is performed in its entirety is quickly being buried in our subconscious, along with the implicated opinion of the plea to remain in familiar waters as anachronistic and provincial – too close to the reefs of an archived Hawai'i.

By favoring the English verse over the Hawaiian, then, we do just what Mossman's *mele* tells us not to: chase after the fatty fish from distant, rich, foreign waters. This ambition and desire for more worldly foods takes on an added layer of significance when the *kaona* of the Hawaiian-language verses is considered. As I have noted, these are not simple fish that Mossman writes of, nor are they simply fish. Instead, the Hawaiian tradition of using animals, including birds and fish, to represent people is employed here to call a straying lover back from the deeper seas, where he chases "he i'a a ha'i" – the fish of another – and to return his attention to his own humble *manini*.

Mossman begins this verse deliberately with "Mai pi'ikoi 'oe i ke akule la." Pukui defines *pi'ikoi* in part as "to aspire to the best or to more than is one's due" (327). However, she also makes note of a common saying that is echoed in the first line of Mossman's second verse: "Mai pi'ikoi i ka 'ama'ama: don't strive for the 'ama'ama [...] be satisfied with what you have, why aim for the moon," also interpreted as "be satisfied with what you have, why look for a rich person?" (327, 22). The target of Mossman's warning, then, is guilty both of striving for someone out of his reach and in another's possession, as well as of looking elsewhere for excessive wealth and taste when he already has 'anae, *manini*, and *kole* enough to satisfy him. Although

the fish he strives for are not identified as foreign, the intended catch of many contemporary *la-wai'a pi'ikoi* is from decidedly foreign waters – thus the shift in population, economy, and language away from their Hawaiian *piko*.

Mine is an admittedly somber interpretation of what is, especially at first listen, a lighthearted song that teasingly reminds wandering eyes of the delicacies to be found in home waters. However, just as the threat of "rock-eating" posed by the Provisional Government to the Government Band (also known as the Royal Hawaiian Band) inspired the words of Ellen Wright Prendergast's "Mele 'Ai Pōhaku," the fulfilled threat of replacement enacted in this *mele* should inspire us to draw connections between Mossman's "Mai pi'ikoi 'oe i ke akule / A he i'a a ha'i i ka hohonu" and Prendergast's "A'ole mākou a e minamina / I ka pu'u kālā a ke aupuni" (Elbert and Mahoe 62). Both warn us against abandoning the ways and means of our *kūpuna* and replacing our focus and value on the richness of others. The earlier words of Prendergast have since strengthened countless arguments for self-determination with their unyielding Hawaiian expression of *aloha 'āina* to the death. The younger lyrics of Mossman, coupled with their even more modern replacement lyrics, urge us to retraditionalize our poetic and musical consciousness, in the way that Taiaiake Alfred urges indigenous peoples to "retraditionalize politics" (144). Literary colonialism like that acted and re-acted on *mele* like "He 'Ono" needs to be dismantled along with every other form of colonialism in order for decolonization to be truly effective. These words of our people tell us, as does Alfred, to "resist further injustice" by resisting the temptations of wealth and exotic tastes (145).

"Live a Little (Hawaiian Style)" na Wade Cambern

The 1992 Hawaiian Style Band CD that features this song is titled *Vanishing Treasures*. Although probably intended (at least officially) as a recognition of the need to take care of our people's values and valued objects and to prevent their further loss, such a naming immediately

identifies Hawaiians with a broader image of the Vanishing Native. Louis Owens gives us an overview of the Vanishing Indian – the construct of a primitive, savage, natural red man created by white colonizers to define the old people of their "New World," and thereby expedite their violent campaign for the complete destruction of those natives.

The contemporary result of this naming is twofold. First, only artifact natives – those that fit the western-imposed mold of feather-wearing, drum-beating Indian, or here, that of 'ukulele-playing, hip-shaking Hawaiian – are even recognized as native by their colonizers. The actual, living natives who "do not look, live, and talk like the anachronistic inventions portrayed in novels and movies... remain invisible and politically powerless" (Owens 129). Second in the line of injustices that continues beyond these two instances is the confinement of the same artifact-made-real to specific, powerless realms of society. Thus, the "Authentic Indian" is recognized, but only as a relic of America's past that has no place in and no influence on contemporary time and space. Similarly, the "Happy Hawaiian" is bracketed within Waikīkī *lū'au* and state-sponsored event openings, so that any attempt to step into political or other realms of power is immediately cut short, criticized as un-Hawaiian or lacking *aloha*. The combined result of these carefully defined indigenous characters, along with the cultural material like Cambern's song that maintains them, is that the "actual living" natives Owens speaks of are erased from any position of recognition, authenticity, or power.

The naming of this, the Hawaiian Style Band's second CD, and that which won the 1993 Nā Hōkū Hanohano award for Contemporary Album of the Year, as a compilation of "Vanishing Treasures" reinforces the position of Hawaiian-ness as perpetually on the edge of total extinction, pushed there to keep it out of central arenas of power, kept from falling over the edge to maintain the "Happy Hawaiian" image that is so profitably exploited.

Ironically, of the CD's ten songs, only two – "No ke Ano Ahiahi" and "Kaimana Hila" – are Hawaiian in language and literary genealogy, and even those two are given in truncated form.

The material packaged under the label that seems to advocate careful protection of our *lāhui's* treasures, vanishing or otherwise, actually presents us with that which has and continues to replace them. This musical production, following in the grand history of its American predecessors, identifies a threatened indigenous presence only to erase it.

Eia kahi mele hō'eha na'au na Wade Cambern:

You've gotta live a little Hawaiian Style
And give a little Hawaiian Style
Don't worry if the tide goes out
Don't worry if the sun goes down
Don't worry if you get caught in the rain
Don't worry if the fish don't bite
Don't worry it'll be alright
Don't worry you can throw your net again

You've got to share a little Hawaiian Style
And give a little Hawaiian Style
Live a little Hawaiian Style
Deep down we're all a little Hawaiian Style

My baby likes to ride those waves
My baby likes to wear my shades
My baby likes to get caught in the rain
There's time to take the long way home
There's time for you to be alone
There's time to show aloha to a friend

You've gotta speak a little Hawaiian Style
And give a little Hawaiian Style
Let's all live a little Hawaiian Style
Teach the kids a little Hawaiian Style

Give a little, we've got to share a little
Slow down a little Hawaiian Style

E hā'awi wale a'e Hawaiian Style
E ka'ana wale a'e Hawaiian Style

There's time to take the long way home
There's time for you to be alone
There's time to show aloha to a friend

E hā'awi wale a'e Hawaiian Style
E 'ōlelo wale a'e Hawaiian Style

E ka'ana wale a'e Hawaiian Style
I loko lilo iho Hawaiian Style
Hawaiian Style
Hawaiian Style

The Hawai'i represented in this Hōkū Award-winning song is the exotic, pain-easing prostitute Haunani-Kay Trask describes as the "fantasy [...] state of mind" that countless Americans subconsciously assume rights over – rights "to use, to take, and, above all, to fantasize about" (180). She (Trask is quick to note that this Hawai'i image is decidedly feminine – soft and yielding) provides escape, a vacation from the serious, important world Americans occupy, and she offers instead unconditional kindness and uncharted, calendar-worthy beauty. Her inherent serenity and natural simplicity will, with luck, "rub off on [...] this visitor" (180). This song, though, removes luck from the equation – it is our choice, even our responsibility, to live and teach the "Hawaiian Style."

The first lesson we are to receive and share is one vital to the characterization of Hawai'i as escape and of Hawaiians as happy – stated simply by Cambern, "Don't worry." Immediately following the opening directive that we've "gotta live a little [...] give a little Hawaiian Style" is a list of worries to keep at bay. These troubles consist of the decrease of the tide, the setting of the sun, the onset of rain, and the lack of biting fish. Nowhere is there mention of the actual challenges facing actual Hawaiians – loss of land, high poverty rates, and poor health are erased from the landscape, as are the daily manifestations of an oppressive colonial history. The implication is that the most serious problem anyone willing to live in the Hawaiian Style could possibly face is finding himself in the rain with no fish. And even that predicament is of no real consequence – the sun will certainly return, and "you can throw your net again."

Lesson number two is the logical extension of the first, the "Be Happy" portion of Cambern's implied mantra. Once the worries have been packed up and shipped out of this paradise of sun, surf, and catchable, if ornery, fish, the Hawaiian Style believer is free to take the time to in-

dulge in life's pleasures. This seemingly simple and positive outlook is complicated, though, by the prelude to this section, which proclaims "Deep down we're all a little Hawaiian Style." Not only are the problems facing *kānaka* erased; we as a people are forcibly separated from our distinct identity as Hawaiian. In a single line of lyric, that identity is watered down, repackaged as a Style, and handed out to the general populace to claim as their own. The new identity is Hawaiian in name only; its contents have been extracted and replaced with this image of a life, land, and people devoid of responsibility or worry, whose sole purpose is to give, share, and "show *aloha* to a friend." As Owens says of "Indian Territory," this space of Hawaiian geography and state of mind is "simply space to be emptied and reoccupied by the colonial power" (27). It is shocking to see this 15th century identity drainage still in operation today.

The final lesson of Hawaiian Style living that Cambern offers finalizes the conceptualization and actualization of Hawai'i as a resource of land and fantasy to be culled and exploited, of Hawaiians as compulsive givers. It is in this third section that we are instructed to "just give [...] just share from deep within," an echo of the historic and continued stereotyping of Hawaiian culture and people as "'naturally' one of giving and entertaining" (Trask 181). This sense of compulsive giving is heightened by the inclusion of the word *wale*. Alone, *hā'awi* means simply "to give." Add the modifier *wale* to any verb, though, and it becomes an action done "alone; without pay, payment, reward, cause, reason; easily; gratuitous, free, casual" (Pukui and Elbert 381). What Cambern urges his listeners to do, then, is give, speak, and apportion (*ka'ana*) without much concern for how it is done or what will be received in return. Everything this land and its people has to offer – idyllic environs, romance, even language – should be given away in the same manner of non-concern that Cambern's opening mantra first introduces.

There is particular insidiousness in the teaching of this lesson, though. It preys on the values of acceptance and reciprocated hospitality honored by our *kūpuna* and others, removing those values from their traditional context of mutual respect and using them to collect unspeci-

fied treasures which the audience is expected to give and share. And it does so by appropriating one of those threatened treasures – the *‘ōlelo* of our ancestors. The most harmful words of this song, those that instruct us to give everything away and to do it with *aloha*, are voiced in Hawaiian. Both language and values, which we continue to struggle to protect from loss and misappropriation, are snatched by this composer, detached from their histories and people, and sent back at us as an admonition for being uptight and stingy.

Which brings us to the ultimate question regarding this song – who is its target audience? The composer constructs a fairly obvious speaker-listener relationship that parallels an inherent teacher-student relationship between the song's persona and ourselves. We need to learn how to live, give, and talk Hawaiian Style, while he already enjoys the perks of such a lifestyle – he's got the babes, the shades, and the waves. Yet the identity of the "you" he addresses, of the un-Hawaiian Style population, is decidedly unclear. At first, this ambiguity seems to imply a general audience, probably comprised mostly of visitors and stressed-out locals. However, there is a sudden shift from vagueness to specificity at the end of the "Don't worry" list, when at least a segment of the intended audience is identified through consolation – if the fish don't bite, "Don't worry, you can *throw your net* again" (emphasis mine). With such a specific reference to traditional Hawaiian practices, it is difficult to imagine anyone but the survivors of the Vanishing Hawaiian population as the target of instruction. Again, insertion of a readily recognizable Hawaiian treasure is used to target Hawaiians as those with least "Hawaiian Style," to chip away at the pride and determination we've slowly regained through language, culture, and political revitalization and organization.

Though buried in a list of seemingly innocuous bits of advice, this closing line is undoubtedly one of the most damaging in the song, and thereby affects our reception of the song in its entirety. Once Hawaiians are identified as the members of Cambern's audience, "Live a Little," like "*He ‘Ono*," becomes an extension of the colonialism our ancestors endured and resisted.

Instead of 19th century instruction in proper Christian behavior and American capitalism, "Live a Little" offers a singable handbook outlining how to be Hawaiian (Style). And instead of removing *‘ōlelo Hawai‘i* as the medium of instruction in foreign behaviors, it employs our language in order to make the act of sacrificing it to the powers of appropriation seem more Hawaiian. Yet the result is the same – *kānaka* are made to feel inadequate, either because we were once too Hawaiian or because we are now not Hawaiian enough, and then are expected to abandon that which we know for that which we are force-fed. This song's addition of the word "Style" masks but does not erase the fact that it is instructing us in an assumed and simplified *Hawaiian* way of life. "Style" may modernize the concept for young listeners and allow some to dismiss it as harmless, to mentally distinguish Hawaiian Style from Hawaiian and thereby ignore the cultural and political warning bells that might sound if the line were to read: "Deep down we're all a little Hawaiian." It provides us with a means of viewing the song as innocent and non-political if we so choose, and it provides others with a means of claiming an identity and history that is not theirs. Its powers of oppression are subtle and subversive, yet this song that masquerades as an upbeat, catchy ditty is actually a fully functional tool of 21st century colonialism

As such, it too commits a form of *mele*-murder. Whereas "*He ‘Ono*" has become patricidal, turning on its parent texts as new words are born, the crime of "Live a Little" is purely littracidal. The *mele* and identities it threatens are numerous, since only the cherubic cartoon image of the simple Hawaiian has any place in the Hawaiian Style world. The maintenance of such an environment requires the erasure of rock-eating Hawaiian loyalists ("*Kaulana nā Pua*"), of Hawaiian rebellion leaders ("*Ka Māmakakaua*"), of Hawaiians justifiably *unhappy* with their treatment, even by Hawaiian institutions ("*Noe Wale mai ke Aloha*"), of Hawaiians using the language of the colonizer to assert Hawaiian self-determination ("*Ea*")... the list continues.

"*He Hawai‘i Au*" na Ron Roshā

If the original, able-bodied "*He 'Ono*" warns us Hawaiians against becoming obsessed with garnering the riches of foreign fish; if its contemporary enhancement offers a glimpse at the warning gone unheeded; if "Hawaiian Style" encourages the continued dominance of our perception of tradition and traditional Hawaiians as belonging to a rooted but entirely anachronistic era; then Ron Rosha's "*He Hawai'i Au*" recounts the experience of one and many Hawaiians who followed those fish to distant waters, found them wanting, and returned to Hawai'i, *ka piko o ka lāhui*. Rosha's insistent declaration "*He Hawai'i Au*" (I am Hawaiian) seizes the *olonā*-thin line that connects him with the very real Hawaiians that "Hawaiian Style" makes into nostalgic fantasy and refuses to let it slack. At the same time, the experiences and self-taught elementary Hawaiian from which he writes challenge that fantastical characterization of Hawaiian as a net-throwing, vanishing element of the local culture that needs to be educated in its philosophy of non-worry.

Here is Rosha's *mele*, the story of his *akule*-fetching journey that brought him home, lacking in *akule*, but with a reinforced surety of his Hawaiian identity:

I kēia pō eia au me 'oe
Kēia pō ua ho'i mai au
He loa ka helena ma ke alahahele
E huli i wahi ma kēia ao
Maopopo a, ua 'ike ho'i
Ka home i loko o ku'u pu'uwai
Ua ho'i mai au, ke 'ike nei au
'A'ole au e 'auana hou
Ke maopopo he Hawai'i au

It will be apparent to one familiar with '*ōlelo Hawai'i* and with *mele* composed in the language that Rosha's is a fairly straightforward composition. His Hawaiian is simple, his imagery both minimal and at times more rooted in Western poetics than Hawaiian concepts. In fact, two lines of this musical proclamation of unwavering Hawaiian-ness are translations of fairly common English phrases. Lines two and three read: "*He loa ka helena ma ke alahahele / E huli i wahi ma*

kēia ao," and translate as "Traveling on this road has been long / Looking for a place in this world." Although these lines work quite well in English, offering not only the reason for but also the angst of Rosha's time away, the Hawaiian has an unmistakable echo of a language, world view, even thought process that is plainly foreign. Laiana Wong names the beliefs that spur the creation of these kinds of Hawaiian phrases as "the assumption of translatability." This assumption often leads new speakers of Hawaiian to believe that Hawaiian words have a "one-to-one" correspondence with their English translations – that, as Wong indicates, *mahalo* is directly and exclusively equivalent to "thank you." Such a relationship would mandate that all meanings and usages of the word *mahalo* be contained in the phrase "thank you," and vice versa, and would therefore elicit a Hawaiian response that has the same correspondence to "you're welcome." Yet such a response simply doesn't exist; the most culturally appropriate answer is a return of the initial *mahalo*. With this exploration, the equivalence of *mahalo* and "thank you" is therefore undermined, as is that of the languages themselves.

Similarly, the words Rosha chooses to express the struggle to find security in his identity are attempts to embody in Hawaiian the thoughts that take shape in a *na'au* that has, like many of our *na'au*, been trained to think in English. It seems that this composer's description of his journey as one "*e huli i wahi ma kēia ao*" should have both the same literal meaning and the same connoted crisis of identity as the English thought from which it sprang. Instead, the Hawaiian conveys only the basic circumstances of Rosha's experience. Absent from this Hawaiian phrase are the emotional struggles of difference and the desire to connect and contribute that a speaker of English immediately identifies as a vital part of the coming-of-age process of "finding one's place in the world."

An even more noticeable disconnect occurs in the line in which Rosha celebrates the fact that he has rediscovered Hawai'i as "*ka home i loko o ku'u pu'uwai*" ("the home within my heart"). I suspect that this idiom makes sense to its audience only because we recognize the Eng-

lish *mana'o* lurking behind the Hawaiian translation. The first oddity to catch the eye (or ear) is the use of *pu'uwai* as the seat of emotion and affection, rather than *na'au*, *'ōpū*, or even *loko*. The entry for *pu'uwai* in Kawena Pukui's *Hawaiian Dictionary*, invaluable for its explanation of figurative and cultural uses of words as well as for its denotive elucidation, notes that such use "is probably a Western concept, but was noted in a chant dated 1853" (360). Modification of the line to read "*ka home i loko o ku'u na'au*" would remedy the *pu'uwai* problem, but there is still the too-literal image of home being *i loko o* – inside of – the "heart." The same *Dictionary* that is so careful in its notation of figurative meanings lists no such thing in the entry for *loko* and gives no hint that there is a connoted sense of connection or affection conveyed in the placement of one thing inside another (210). This line, then, describes not a home of which Rosha has fond memories, but one that is physically located inside his heart.

And yet, "*He Hawai'i Au*" is one of the most popular, most celebrated *mele lāhui* of our day. It is a composition with which countless contemporary Hawaiians identify. So many of us have been tempted by the ostentation of various *i'a a ha'i*, and for those of us who have chosen instead the wealth of rocks and *'anae*, Rosha tells our stories as well as he tells his own. One of the reasons this composition works so well as a *mele lāhui*, despite its western-based metaphors and narrative language, is that it is full of *'eha*, and it inspires such feelings of loving ache in performers and audiences alike. And it is in part because of the odd limbo-like origin of Rosha's writing that his message is so powerful, his *'eha* so powerfully felt. His perceived inability to speak from a solidly anchored Hawaiian *piko* only reinforces the near-frustration of his observation: "*He loa ka helena ma ke alahele / E huli i wahi ma kēia ao.*" The path toward *piko* reconnection is indeed long, and as Rosha's words imply, much of its length still remains to be traveled.

Ironically, even Rosha's use of non-Hawaiian images to assert his *kanaka* identity and *kuleana* can be traced to a Hawaiian *piko* of composition. From the onset of western contact,

haku mele have been incorporating words and images once foreign to them into their works. We still remember monarchy *mele* about hat-wearing parrots and riding whips, territorial-age songs about crowbars and telegraphs, and one particular *paniolo* composition that centers around the image of two worn cowboy boots left on a doorstep. In each case, though, the *haole* metaphor becomes a vehicle by which to convey a Hawaiian's loves, losses, and view of the world in much the same way as *lehua*, *'ōpua*, and *ua noe* have for ages.

There is, however, one example of such image- and language- borrowing that offers an even more enlightening look at "*He Hawai'i Au.*" And I propose here that, in aiding the continuing efforts of revolutionaries like Noenoe Silva to decentralize and denaturalize English-language academic texts as sources of theory, we view this *mele* not only as a piece of supporting evidence or an ethnographic example of compositional tools used by Hawaiians, but as theory itself. For this is how our *kūpuna* theorized – by *haku mele*.

In 1974 Alice Namakelua recorded a *mele* composed in the 1850's by a young Hawaiian couple whose relationship had been put to an end by their parents. The boy lived in Kohala, his sweetheart in Hilo, and the distance was just too great. The song, "*Ka Manu,*" remains a standard for modern Hawaiian musicians – it even appears on Justin Young's 2003 release *One Foot on Sand* – though its great length, too, is often shortened in performance. The majority of the *mele* is composed from an older consciousness, depending on metaphors of birds, *lehua* buds, fluttering *maile* leaves, and rough waves to convey its emotion, and making full use of *haku mele* tactics like linked terminals to create a *lei* of proper Hawaiian proportions and arrangement. Until, that is, the *mele*'s ultimate line: "Goodbye *kāua me ka 'eha'eha.*" This, the song's one word of non-Hawaiian origin, holding such a strong position in a very traditional context does so by means of a deliberate compositional choice. And the choice is a good one. What is conveyed in this careful incorporation of English thought into Hawaiian *piko* is the composers' shared *'eha*. Because that *'eha* is expressed in a completely different language, it is given the spotlight, even

though the song's only previous hint of the coming separation is the "*lili o ke kāpena*" in the preceding verse. The change of tone that occurs in this single word is one of the most powerful in Hawaiian composition.

Just as strong is the suggestion, by the use of "goodbye," that the foreign word and concept better match the feelings of the *haku mele* – that their pain and separation couldn't be contained in a familiar phrase, perhaps that the hurt was so out of context for the lovers and the separation so unnatural that it could only be expressed in a non-contextual language. If, in fact, we search for a Hawaiian equivalent for "goodbye," we turn up with only the well-known "*aloha a hui hou*." This phrase, however, indicates an intention to "meet again," an option no longer available to the lovers of "*Ka Manu*."

What we have, then, in "*Ka Manu*" is an insight into the ways our *kūpuna* theorized foreignness and incorporated its various manifestations into a *piko* whose Hawaiian integrity they nonetheless upheld. As Laiana Wong notes regarding language evolution:

one's obligation to authenticity does not necessarily have to be absolute. If it can be established, for example, that a clear connection exists between the emergent language and what the community perceives as its traditional roots, a case can be made for the authenticity of that emergent language inasmuch as it has remained true to (has not become detached from) its tradition." (103)

The same can be said regarding *mele* and the evolution of expression through compositions like "*Ka Manu*." The metaphorical environment established by the *lehua* and company of its early verses ensures the security of those inter-generational ties that bind the *pū'olo* of *mele* writing together. The thoughtful insertion of "goodbye" as both sore thumb and carrier of meaning is done in such a way as to keep the *pū'olo* secure. Like the foreign images of crowbar and riding whip, this non-*piko* item is given such compositional attention that it connects with and feeds off of the definitively Hawaiian components of its *pū'olo* until it attains full integration. The result is not a *hapa*-Hawaiian composition but a new way of composing Hawaiian *mele*. The *pū'olo* grows but remains intact.

A similar stance can easily be taken regarding "*He Hawai'i Au*" and its composer's act of grasping for appropriate metaphors by which to contain and convey his *'eha*. It is interesting to note that there are a number of traditional *'ōlelo no'eau* describing a return to one's *piko* that mirrors Rosha's narrative. Here are two especially pertinent examples:

- 1024 *Ho'i hou i ka iwi kuamo'o.*
Return to the backbone.
To return to the homeland or family after being away.
- 1026 *Ho'i hou i ke 'ehu me he moi la.*
Returns to the broiling sea like a *moi* fish.
Said of one who leaves home for a better chance of advancing but eventually comes back. (Pukui 1983)

Yet the use of one of these *'ōlelo* in place of the somewhat disjointed images we are given in "*He Hawai'i Au*" would signify either a successful return to a *piko* of both Hawaiian geography and understanding or a never-leaving. It would undoubtedly lessen the effect and authenticity of Rosha's emotional account of finding oneself on a non-*piko* path and striving to return, only to find one's consciousness is more affected by colonial residue than he had thought.

Still, the oddness of Rosha's two most intriguing lines, obvious to the newer generations of *kānaka 'ōlelo Hawai'i*, should inspire us to seek out and use the ancestral metaphors that were unavailable to *haku mele* like him. His lack, at the time, of Hawaiian metaphor becomes more than a vehicle for expressing his *'eha*; it is also a comment on the condition that causes both lack and *'eha*. Through his words we become aware of the history of our people's language, land, and *aupuni* loss that have at some level disconnected each of us from the *piko* that still holds what we are missing. In its struggle to regain that *piko*, the *mele* forges a connection to that which Rosha seeks. It is up to those that follow to further his efforts and return those Hawaiian metaphors to the consciousness of our people.

The benefits of contextualizing "*He Hawai'i Au*" and its appropriate use of English idiom to highlight the alienation central to its theme, within a tradition of *haku mele* that does the same,

are twofold. First, such means of theorization connect through contemplation new *mele* with traditional *piko*. But perhaps even more importantly, the process of recognizing these connections and reading both new and old *mele* through them provides a model for the *piko*-based thinking and writing I advocate here. Rosha's *mele* is an important component of our literary *pū'olo* because understanding and accepting it requires us to restore the position of Hawaiian knowledge and *mo'olelo* as the basis for that understanding. The 'eha of *piko* alienation that is so sharp in this composition is thus set on the path toward healing, and "*He Hawai'i Au*," when sung with an understanding of its *mo'olelo* and its lesson, becomes its own literary medicine.

"Kailua-Kona" na Ho'āikāne

"Kailua-Kona" is the composition of Ho'āikāne, a group of Hawaiian artists who began their careers as performers of traditional Hawaiian slack key guitar and *mele*. As times and band members changed, so did their music, and they are now remembered as one group that fronted the music that has become local reggae. I include this particular song of theirs primarily as an expression of hybridity that contrasts strongly with "*He Hawai'i Au*," but also as a well-meaning but ultimately harmful *mele* that cuts us off from traditional place names and their cultural character, while simultaneously affecting our concepts of *haku mele* itself. Because my examination and praise of "*He Hawai'i Au*" centers around its seemingly odd juxtaposition of asserted Hawaiian identity and stock of English-based metaphor, it is necessary to distinguish Rosha's healing *mele* from others whose attempted hybridity fails to address and therefore ease our 'eha. "Kailua-Kona" provides such a distinction.

Though this *mele* was apparently written without the Rosha-like intent of reconnecting to a Hawaiian *piko* – English is its language, not only its source of metaphor, and there is no proclamation of steadfast Hawaiian identity – it also appears to reflect a Hawaiian sense of connection to place, no matter how elementary the expression of that relationship. However, the Ha-

waiian association with 'āina runs much deeper than any sentiment this song may contain. *Ei'au wahi mele ho'ohawai'i nei*:

There is a place that is heavenly
A place where life can be so free
Where people work and live easily
That is a place for you and for me

Kailua-Kona, where the air is clean
Kailua-Kona, where the grass is green
Kailua-Kona, where the fishing's fine
Kailua-Kona, it will blow your mind

Go up to the mountains or down to the sea
Enjoy the view or eat sweet 'opihi
Work and play till the sun goes down
Cruise the beach road to Kona town

Play reggae music with the Ho'āikāne band
Surf at Banyans by the Surf and White Sands
Go north and south as far as you can go
Go Mauna Kea to see the island snow

(As appears in Ho'omanawanui 2001)

Read from a *piko* of mainstream contemporary popular music, to which the expression of familiarity, love, and connection with one's land is simply foreign, or even from a *piko* of local contemporary popular music, which enjoys what its enthusiasts profess to be a uniquely Hawaiian sentiment, this composition is reflective of the influence of *aloha 'āina* on our now multicultural society. The mere theme of place seems to be enough to characterize this ditty as a *mele* of *wahi pana* roots. It is, after all, a song about "heavenly" Kailua-Kona. It extols the beauty and country feel of the land, as well as the ways in which anyone ("a place for you and for me") can relax and feel comfortable there.

However, as Noenoe Silva reminds, "Every island, every district, every valley and stream has had songs composed lauding their beauty, but *aloha 'āina* goes beyond love of beauty as well. The Kanaka Maoli have a genealogical, familial relationship to the land" (11). Consequently, their *mele aloha 'āina* reflect a knowledge of the land that is the understanding of one's

own family. Once "Kailua-Kona's" postcard views of pristine land and simple people are exhausted, however, there is nowhere left for this song to go. Acutely disconnected from Hawaiian songs and concepts of place, it is unable to reflect the *aloha 'āina* that Silva describes. And unlike "*He Hawai'i Au*," it neither struggles to reforge that connection nor mourns a realization of the gap.

Read from a Hawaiian *piko* that is certain of *wahi pana* and their *mele*, this song becomes something less than a contemporary outpouring of traditional *aloha*. It is a lack that is observable first in the nature of the traits attributed to the Kailua of this song. Unlike the *mele* of which a Hawaiian *piko* is formed, "Kailua-Kona's" descriptions and praise of Kailua are shockingly non-specific to the *ahupua'a*. The celebration of clean air, green grass, good fishing, and an easy life reflects a visitor's expectations of a generic tropical retreat rather than a *kama'āina's* knowledge of phenomena, features, and history specific to his land. In *Mixedblood Messages*, Louis Owens attends to a similar phenomenon regarding the ancient and unrelenting perception of Indian Territory as "simply space to be emptied and reoccupied by the colonial power," both physically and metaphorically (27). Just as real land occupied by real Indians has been continuously emptied of its people by colonial expansion, so too are literary manifestations of this native space drained of their distinct Indian-ness and replaced by mainstream concepts of the form the American Frontier should take. In such works of novel and film, "the Native American presence is implicitly invoked and routinely erased" (38). "Kailua-Kona," then, participates in this larger system of erasure, seeming through its title and theme to offer a traditional *mele aloha 'āina*, while attaching to it concepts that are not only non-traditional but grounded in the worldview of tourism and globalization that threatens the survival of *mele aloha 'āina* and the lands they celebrate.

If we again take the approach of theorization through *mele*, the distinction between tourist expectation and *kama'āina* understanding can be clarified. "Hilo Hanakahi" is one of our most

famous *mele wahi pana*, and another that honors the island of Keawe. Though it appears at first listen to be a simple list of Hawai'i's *moku* and famous *ahupua'a*, a tour and quick view of the island, the representation of each area is not only unique, but tied to the character and history of that region. The introductory verse itself – "*Hilo Hanakahi i ka ua Kanilehua*" – combines, even in its brevity, the connection the *kupa* of Hilo have with its land, history, and beauty. Traditionally, Hilo was divided into three sections. Hilo One, the shoreline area; Hilo Palikū, at the base of the cliffs leading to Hāmākua; and Hilo Hanakahi, known today as Hilo Town. Those familiar with this cultural geography also know the third division was named after its chief Hanakahi, under whose leadership the people enjoyed prosperity. Even though our *ali'i* era has passed, Hanakahi and his Hilo ties are honored and kept strong through the revoicing of this simple phrase.

The second half of this *mele pana's* initial verse provides the model on which the remainder of the song is based. *Maopopo le'a iā kākou ka nui wale o nā ua a me nā kino makani i 'ike 'ia e ko kākou po'e kūpuna, 'eā?* The Hawaiian predilection for naming winds and rains native to various land divisions is reflected in the list of names that make up "Hilo Hanakahi." It takes us from the Kanilehua rain of Hilo to Kohala's 'Āpa'apa'a wind to the Kīpu'upu'u rain of Wai-mea and beyond. Therefore, our continued singing of this *mele* connects us as *kama'āina* to the specific nature of our *one hānau*, keeps the *mo'o* sequences strong, and educates new generations of *kānaka* in the language of cultural continuity.

In *mele* that focus on a single *'āina*, the extended characterization of that land is just as *piko*-driven. Take for example the traditional "*Kona Kai 'Ōpua i ka La'i*," a song easily identified as an anthem of proud Kona people. The *mele's* recognition of Kona as "*Kona kai 'ōpua i ka la'i*" has been a part of Hawaiian *mo'olelo* and song for as long as we can remember, and longer. This simple phrase has connections to the land itself – Kona is known for its commonly-seen *'ōpua* clouds – as well as its political history – the appearance of such clouds signifies an era of political stability and economic prosperity. Also featured in this *mele kūpuna* are the 'Eka

breeze that cools Kona's hot environment, the protective presence of Hualālai, and the appearance of the *hīnano* blossom and *kēhau* mist, signs of Hawaiian fertility. All are specific to Kona and stem from a Hawaiian *piko*.

Contrast this cultural and geographical specificity with the generality we have seen in "Kailua-Kona." Its composers may be *kama'āina*, but its compositional methods and details are not. Instead, it speaks from and gives life to a *piko* that lacks the concentrated cultural language and history that is vital to any people's center.

In the third verse of Ho'āikāne's creation, though, the initial fault of generic ambiguity gives way to an even more damaging specificity of tourism and development. Its harm takes shape in the individual place names chosen to distinguish Kailua from any other clean-air paradise. Those places are: Banyans, the Surf, and White Sands – surf spots and long-standing resorts fronting Ali'i Drive, the hotel strip of Kailua Town. Traditionally, recitation of specific locales and features of *wahi pana* reinforces the interdependence in which land and *lāhui* must participate to survive. Hawaiian identity is founded on genealogical relationship and experiential familiarity with the land. *Āina* as a family member requires our memory and perpetuation of its history and character in order for its essence to endure encompassing change. Yet the umbilical cord formed by this *mele*'s list of superimposed names draws nourishment not from the *āina* as our ancestors know it, but from the names and developments that have restructured both land and its perception.

This simple act of identifying places by their now-familiar names characterizes this as a killer *mele*. Erased from contemporary memory and *mele*-writing are the ancestral names that belong to these areas – Kamoā and Hōlualoa for the area near Banyans and the Surf; La'aloa for the area whose shoreline is now known as White Sands or Disappearing Sands (Clark 103, 105-6). Such misnaming is not uncommon to Kona's resort and condominium zones, where the Kona Surf is located in Keauhou, the Keauhou Resort in Kailua, and Kalākaua's surf spot He'eia is

now called by residents and subdividers Kānalua, literally "confused, of two minds."⁶ Even the single ancestral name given, Mauna Kea, is made into a tourist destination. One visits to "see the island snow," rather than to walk in Queen Emma's footsteps to the summit, pay tribute to Wai'au, where the people of each district converge, or give *mana* to its *ali'i wahine* Poli'ahu. It is reinscribed not as a center of Hawaiian spirituality and history but as a stop on our sightseeing tour of the island.

The gap exhibited by "Kailua-Kona" – an absence of traditional metaphor and place names – is similar to that of "*He Hawai'i Au*." There are, however, two prominent features of "*He Hawai'i Au*" that distinguish it from the litracidal tendencies of "Kailua-Kona" – the language of its composition and the *'eha* with which its composer writes. Both Rosha's determination to write in Hawaiian and the *'eha* of the colonial residue through which his *'ōlelo* is formed work together to help the audience recognize his experience of *piko* separation. We are consequently and implicitly urged to contemplate the causes of the gap obvious in his writing. Yet in the face of such disconnection he declares "*He Hawai'i Au*." He still claims a Hawaiian identity, and with it the responsibility of revoicing and reconnecting to a *piko* of Hawaiian language and composition. "Kailua-Kona," however, not only participates in the erasure of *mele* and *piko* components, but does so in a way that celebrates their replacement. Though the intent of "Kailua-Kona" may have been to express the connection modern Hawaiians feel to a landscape that has changed drastically since the composition of "*Kona Kai 'Ōpua*," the effect is its contribution to the continued restructuring of that landscape.

⁶ My family has been taking trips to Kona since I was an infant; my father's mother and her family are native to the *moku*, and my own mother's work as a *kumu hula* has often taken us there for research and re-connection. Dad has always pointed out the embarrassing Keauhou-Kailua mix-up. One particular visit was made for the specific purpose of finding He'eia, that we may know its *mele* better through becoming familiar with its land and sea. We spent an entire day driving around Keauhou and finally ended up in a subdivision named Kānalua by signage and resident alike. Once we had made it to the beach there, however, we saw for ourselves He'eia as it was described and pictured in my dad's research. *Ua kānalua maoli ka nohona o laila.*

There is proof in our situation today – more *kānaka* 'ōpio groove to "Kailua-Kona" than sing along to "Kona Kai 'Ōpua." They are consequently more apt to characterized Kona as a place that "will blow your mind" than as a *moku* of striated seas and *hīnano*-like clouds. Public and academic acceptance and praise of the former only ensures the rapid phasing out of the latter and therefore favors litracide and *piko* disconnection over healing and reconnection. Because such praise masks killer *mele* as healthy, hybrid expressions of a conglomerate, cross-culture identity, because such characterization supports *mele* killing of a range broader than that of individual composition, I feel it necessary to point out one such instance of praise given too freely. It is therefore necessary to reiterate my purpose of such a critique. Though this section begins, as do the previous *māhele*, with the identification of a culprit and a close examination of the words she produces, it is my intent that it not end with the laying of blame upon or discrediting of that individual. For just as each *keiki* traditionally belongs to and is raised by every member of its parents' generation, each *mele* and its understanding belongs to and is developed by every *kānaka* who feeds it. This interrogation, then, is enacted with the intent of continuing the discussion that has been opened in order that we *kānaka* may deepen our contemplation of contemporary literature and monitor its development in a way that will ensure the life and health of our *piko*. *No kākou a pau kēia kuleana.*

Aside from CD liner notes and the occasional review, writing that focuses on specific contemporary local songs popular among young Hawaiians is scant, and even less common is the authoring of such pieces by *kānaka* ourselves. So when Ku'ualoha Ho'omanawanui's article "Yo Brah, It's Hip-Hop Jawaiian Style" was published in the 2001 *Hawai'i Review*, it presented a very welcome opening of the discussion of such *mele* and their role in shaping a contemporary "youth culture" in Hawai'i. The songs on which she focuses her study are staples of the 21st century musical diet and are still very much in the public ear, a decade or so after their first appearance on FM 100. Their relevance to the evolving identities of young Hawaiians remains strong.

Ho'omanawanui's analysis of these songs, including Ho'āikāne's "Kailua-Kona," engages the observance of an irrefutable connection between music and identity that is similar to the *mo'o* of language-land-*lāhui* ties enumerated in this paper's introduction. She cites as a reason for the continuance of *haku mele* among Hawai'i's sprouting generations "the need of the youth culture to exert their creative selves, and make a statement of who they are" (172). The hybrid, "cross-over" nature of Jawaiian songs like "Kailua-Kona" is therefore a reflection of a new conglomerate Hawaiian identity that has adopted composition and performance styles of reggae, rap, hip-hop, but still "draws on [its] Hawaiian roots not only through instruments, but in theme" (149). This is where local forms of popular Jawaiian and rap music "diverge" from their mainstream originals – unlike their predecessors of reggae and rap roots, the local versions are more likely to be land-oriented and promote peaceful struggle for unity, less likely to be "cruel," misogynistic, or violent (149, 161).

And yet, the praise this article gives to Jawaiian music – especially as a force in revitalizing Hawaiian *mana'o* in our now cosmopolitan society is in my opinion too freely given, too blind to the loss and disconnection that occurs when such hybridity of composition and identity becomes our primary feeder. One sign of the disagreement between "Yo Brah" and "Killer Mele" is the former's praise of "He 'Ono," not in its entire original *kino*, but as the Ka'au Crater Boys' "Jawaiian-style" remake that participates in the song's truncation and 'ōlelo replacement. Because the updated *mele* is "more popular with a new generation," because it celebrates a common Hawaiian *mele* theme of food and eating, and despite its rewrite of the song's original *kaona*, it is deemed part of what Ho'omanawanui terms "rebirth" (148, 164). Yet it is precisely this type of rebirth that commits the literary patricide we should be wary of.

Ho'omanawanui's praise of "Kailua-Kona" centers on her classification of this song as a contemporary, hybridized *mele wahi pana* – *mele* honoring a storied place. My criticism stems from my inability to agree with this classification. Although the rhythms of "Kailua-Kona" are

decidedly "Jawaiian" in nature, although its lyrics reveal a cultural and compositional disconnect, it is identified as "a classic mele pana with lyrics that celebrate aloha 'āina" due to its 'āina-bound theme (149). The devices of *haku mele* it draws on, particularly the identification of specific place names (Banyans *mā*) and the pairing of geographical features ("Go up to the mountains or down to the sea") are indicated as evidence of this song's *mele pana* roots. However, there is no discussion of the complications that arise when the place names are all outgrowths of the visitor industry, no mention of *aloha 'āina* being any deeper than "love for the 'āina (land)" (149).

The classification of "Kailua-Kona" as *mele pana* is, in my opinion, entirely too simple, its minimum qualifications being significantly more than a theme of place.⁷ If *wahi pana* means "celebrated, noted, or legendary place," its *mele* should employ those legends, notes, and celebrations of times past (Pukui and Elbert 313). Its list of names should consist of those that need to be remembered, saved from extinction. Like "Kona Kai 'Ōpua," whose pairing of upland *hinano* and elevated 'ōpua cloud with sea spray and rising mist symbolize human fertility, its paired opposites should achieve more than a witnessing of all Kona has to offer.

The misstep of "Yo Brah" seems to be its desire to read and approve of "Kailua-Kona" from a *piko* of Hawaiian composition when the *mele's* own *piko* lies elsewhere. A song such as this – reggae influenced by Hawaiian affection for land – cannot quite be read from a standpoint of *haku mele*; the metaphors don't transfer. It should, then, be distinguished from contemporary *mele* like "He Hawai'i Au" that reflect changing times and varied identities but grow out of our ancestral *piko*, like new *kalo* shoots that attach to and are nourished by the original corm.

Rosha's *mele* should also signal to us that his struggle with language and metaphor was characteristic of *haku mele* of his era, but that if his is to truly be a transitional song, each succes-

⁷ I suspect Ho'omanawanui might think so as well, especially after the years of research that she has conducted since writing this article. Still, it needs to be said.

sive generation must work to restore knowledge and availability of the cultural metaphors and consciousness that was not a part of Rosha's inherited *piko*. It is for this reason that composers like Cambern and Ho'āikāne and their supporters like Ho'omanawanui can be held accountable. The situation of disconnect that Cambern and Ho'āikāne occupy is a result not of deliberate personal choice or political alignment, but of long-standing colonialism and commercialism. The fault of situation is not theirs. Similarly, the need contemporary critics feel to find connections between *mele* and *piko* is a result more of the relative scarcity of such music in the popular arena than anything else; Ho'omanawanui's ambitious attachment of "Kailua-Kona" to traditional *mele wahi pana* is an expression of the collective *kanaka* yearning to see himself and his *kūpuna* in the lyrics of popular music.

The fault, then, is one of complacency. Of allowing oneself to be satisfied or even inspired by *mele* that take transitional works of those like Rosha, or surface connections to resurfaced 'āina, and turn them into literary destinations. Of neglecting to force the initial phases of reconnection so that it will eventually be ingrained again in the *na'au* of our people. The language that was just barely within Rosha's reach, the metaphors that were just beyond it, are no longer so inaccessible to those who want them. 'A'ohē wāwae o ka i'a; 'o 'oe ka mea wāwae, ki'i mai (Pukui 25. 'ŌN #217). There are books, audio and video recordings, classes, and living, breathing receptacles of that language and 'ike. If this *piko* is to be part of the collective consciousness of coming *kanaka* generations, it is up to us to revive rather than ignore the metaphors upon which our *piko* is built.

Above all, though, Ho'omanawanui's article advocates for a legitimate hybrid Hawaiian identity, of both *mele* and *kānaka*. I include here a significant section of this article's view of evolution, fusion, and new composition:

Surely Hawaiian music has been subjected to outside influences for over a century now, and honestly, what has been created from the fusion between traditional Hawaiian and other forms hasn't always been that bad. We should maintain our love for the traditional

and continue to perpetuate it. And at the same time, the younger generation needs to be inspired to continue creating, to continue experimenting with new forms of music, and blending it with traditional Hawaiian forms, themes, or instrumentation. (170)

My concern is that the mere maintenance of "love for the traditional" and the separation of its perpetuation from the methods of creation, the blending and hybridizing that occurs, threatens to remove us even further from our *piko* and relegate it to the disempowered position of "influence" rather than framework. Hybrid spaces like Owens' Indian Frontier are often admired as "transcultural," and by Owens himself as "always unstable, multidirectional, hybridized, characterized by heteroglossia, and indeterminate" while "territory is clearly mapped, fully imagined as a place of containment" (33, 26). Yet, Hawaiian identity is by definition tied to territory – to a fixed space from Kumukahi to Lehua and Ka'ula. If hybridity requires a compromise of that connection, it also compromises our identity as *kānaka maoli*.

"*He Hawai'i Au*," then, provides an alternative in its steadfast declaration of Hawaiian-ness. The proclamation belted out by proud singers of Rosha's *mele* is not "*He hapa Hawai'i au!*" even though the words suggest this kind of hybrid nature. Because his *piko* connection is reforged through language, place, and 'eha, Rosha claims an identity that is simply Hawaiian. It is admittedly a new Hawaiian identity, not exactly that of his *kūpuna*, but it is Hawaiian nonetheless. If we thus allow our identities and *mele* to evolve in a healthy, healing manner, and refuse to cut the cord that attaches us to our mothers' mothers' mothers, the *piko* we protect will remain strong as our point of reference rather than our fond memory of a distant past.

For us *kānaka*, cultural change and *mele* rewriting is equivalent with loss. That which one substitutes with newer, more popular, seemingly more contextually appropriate forms is, at least for a time, lost to its new audiences. *Piko* re-connection then becomes our primary focus, though the need for such recovery could be avoided with our steady maintenance of those connections. Adaptation to changing times and tastes, then, is better achieved by continued cultural

and linguistic growth, the addition and integration of elements to our collective *pū'olo* rather than the exchange of its contents or the alteration of their roles and relationships.

I ka 'ōlelo nō ka make

The danger of these "killer *mele*" lies in their largely unconscious participation in the continued destruction of the language, land, history, and people of Hawai'i. These are killing songs not only because they commit various forms of litracide, but also because they support the very real acts of violence that continue to threaten us today. Rather than add to our *pū'olo* of material and philosophical identity, they alter the contents of that *pū'olo* – it is an adaptation of loss that is enacted in favor of healthy outgrowth from a solid foundation.

In "*He 'Ono*" the language replacement that we now struggle to reverse and resolve is mirrored by the substitution of "*Mai pi'ikoi*" with "Sure make a beef stew." The continued singing of verse three as a replacement for the original second, whether it occur on CD, on stage, at someone's birthday *lū'au*, or in the back of a truck at Makapu'u Beach, is an implicit approval and even justification of an English-over-Hawaiian choice. The economic success of recordings that make the same choice only reaffirms the message ignored by the song's rewriting. In the case of this *mele*, at least, wealth and popularity are to be gained by harnessing the appeal of tastes that, once exotic and foreign to our collective palate, have become familiar as we stray farther from the dependable, if humble, *manini*.

In "Hawaiian Style" it is the stereotypical positioning of *kanaka* as the most willing to "*hā'awi wale a'e*" that is most harmful. This rewriting of our cultural sense of mutual respect and cooperation as a compulsive, indiscriminate desire to give our treasures away again provides false proof that the *lāhui* has no need of reciprocation for that which we offer, no care for the manner or destination of its transport. In the wake of these assumptions, one false expectation and one faulty justification are fabricated. The expectation is that services like cultural perform-

ances and language translations will be provided free of charge. Each month the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Hawaiian language department receives tens of requests for translation, very few of which even suggest payment (Basham 2005). The justification is for the scattering of Hawaiian artifacts around the world. It is the impulse to give it all away, ingrained in our *ali'i*, which accounts for the great Hawaiian collections of foreign nations and their museums. It is, essentially, our own fault that we have lost so much to others.

The effects of the mindset celebrated in "Kailua-Kona," though no more nor less destructive, are perhaps more traceable than those of the other two *mele*, for the simple reason that its violence is enacted upon the land itself. As Hawaiian enthusiast and Kailua-Kona resident alike sing happily of slurping up *'opihi* and surfing Banyans, the "development" of Kailua from governmental seat and spiritual center into tourist playground reconstructs the landscape itself, along with the traditional roles of its sites.

Anthropologist Rose Schilt's report of Kona for the Bishop Museum gives the following as part of the reason for the consideration of the *moku* as an ideal field for archeological research:

(1) the region was remarkable for its development of highly intensive forms of dryland field agriculture, integrated with animal husbandry and, in some areas, arboriculture; (2) West Hawai'i was the ancestral seat of the most powerful lines of hereditary chiefs, including the famous Kamehameha, descended from 'Umi and Līloa... (xiii)

A quick survey of a map of the Kailua to Kahalu'u area, even one based on the contemporary landscape, shows the length of Ali'i Drive to be studded with *heiau* and other sites upon whose presence Kamehameha's nation and *mana* depended. Beginning in Keauhou and working our way north, we pass the battle site and burial ground of Kuamo'o, Mākole'ā Beach and the "ten [*heiau* located there,] in a comparatively small area," Kauakaiakeola Heiau, and end up at Kamehameha's final residence Kamakahonu, as well as the *heiau* 'Ahu'ena located there (Clark 101). John Clark notes of this once *kapu* space:

Although the Kailua waterfront has been altered by the construction of the pier and the adjoining sea wall protecting Ali'i Drive, the cove of white sand at Kamakahonu fronting the King Kamehameha Hotel has remained intact and still provides the most protected swimming area on the shoreline of Kailua Bay. (109)

Like the words of "Kailua-Kona," Clark's appreciation for the "protected" nature of Kamakahonu as a swimming hole is misplaced; the fact remains that one geographic *piko* of our ancestors now adjoins and fills out the resort area of Ali'i Drive.

Such has been the fate of most sites identified by archeological field research and subsequently bulldozed by city and county as well as private developers. During the construction of Kuakini Highway in the early 1980's, the state required that the Bishop Museum provide archeological monitoring of construction. Among the items uncovered by archeologists were approximately 350 burials, all of which had to be relocated, 166 sites of human activity, residence, and various portable artifacts. As Schilt writes, "the contributions of the archaeological monitoring phase to the interpretations of settlement and subsistence in the project area have been illuminating (19). Such illuminating studies, however, have not been enough to deter development, and the result has been the entombing of so-called "prehistorical" Hawai'i in museums and books, while its lands and sacred places are made into highways and resort areas that ignore the spiritual and governmental history of those places. To sing the songs like "Kailua-Kona" that attach themselves to that which has broken the *kapu* of areas like 'Ahu'ena and have relocated our ancestors' very bones is to ignore the violence behind the development in Kona and across the islands and therefore to unwittingly take part in that destruction.

I ka 'ōlelo nō ke ola – nā mele e ola ai kākou

In January of 2005, I returned to the Willows in Mō'ili'ili for an evening of genuinely pleasant, good-fun, life-giving Hawaiian music played by 'Ale'a, the "resident Hawaiian trio" on Monday evenings and, coincidentally, my high school classmates. Almost as soon as I sat down with my plate of *'ahi poke* and fried rice, they announced that they had a surprise for me. The

next *mele* that erupted from their throats and fingers was "*He 'Ono*," restored to its fullness and sung with considerably more exuberance than I had remembered hearing the first time around. They had read a much earlier draft of this paper, took my grievances to heart, and spent the next few months re-learning the rest of Aunty Bina's song. *Ua ola*.

The Merrie Monarch hula festival in April of 2005 featured the return of Robert Cazi-mero's Hālau Nā Kamalei to the competition. They chose as their *mele 'auana* the traditional Kona anthem "*Kona Kai 'Ōpua*," reintroducing it to a whole new generation of *hula* dancers and watchers. *Ua ola nō*.

In addition to the revitalization of traditional *mele* like these, there is a growing surge of new writing that promises to become the new body of *piko*-connecting compositions. Sudden Rush's appropriation of rap and the integration of its rhythms and language into the *pū'olo* of *haku mele* familiar to them both contains and transmits the emotion and self-assertion of *EA*. Their music borders on but somehow avoids becoming another commercialized reconstruction of unrelated fragments, keeping as its *piko* a sense of Hawaiian loss, struggle, and identity. Kau-makaiwa Kanaka'ole uncannily combines lyrics rooted in the metaphors and consciousness of his *kūpuna hi'ikua* with the music and rhythms that appeal to the ear of his generation. In two CDs, he achieves a contemporary Hawaiian music that is both contemporary and decidedly Ha-waiian and does so without turning to the Jawaiian Style so many young artists depend on. And there is a large enough handful of other '*ōpio Hawai'i* who attend to the rooted convergence de-scribed by the concept of *piko* that its survival is more than a mere possibility. But that is for another paper, another time. It is enough for now to know they exist.

The two most damaging attributes of killing songs are their sheer numbers and their ear-candy appeal. I have only explored three hurtful songs in this study. Hundreds more exist and are created each day – songs in Hawaiian as well as English that rename our lands, reassign re-sponsibility for them, replace our *kūpuna* with ridiculous caricatures, and rewrite our *mo'olelo*.

Each one of them has the upbeat musical appeal that gets it air time on a number of radio stations and can't-get-it-out-of-my-head status for its listeners. Yet even killer *mele* can be transformed into songs that heal. If we don't consume them without thought, if we continually search for *piko* connections, even those that have failed to connect, if we continue to create *mele* that foster the growth of such connections, *pēlā kākou e ola ai*. Our reaction and response to these songs will determine our future – whether we can exist as living, diverse, *kole*-eating, resistant *kānaka*, or whether we will adopt the powerless positions and harmful diet killer songs like these offer.

Koho au i ke kole 'ono.

na Kahikina de Silva

Works Consulted

- Alexie, Sherman. *Indian Killer*. New York: Warner Books, 1996.
- Alfred, Taiaiake. *Peace, Power, Righteousness*. Ontario: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Allen, Paula Gunn. *The Sacred Hoop*. Boston: Beacon Press Books, 1992.
- Basham, Leilani. *He Puke Mele Lāhui* (Master's Thesis). Michigan: UMI Dissertation Services, 2002.
- Basham, Leilani. Personal communication, February 2005.
- Cambern, Wade. "Live a Little." http://islandvibrations.tripod.com/sh/Hawaiian_Style.txt
- Cashman, Kimo Alexander. "Looking in the Hole with my Three-Prong Cocked." *Educational Perspectives* 37(2004): 18-22.
- Christian, Barbara. "The Race for Theory." *Cultural Critique* 6, 1987.
- Clark, John. *Beaches of the Big Island*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1985.
- de Silva, Kihei and Māpuana. Personal communication, July 2002.
- Elbert, Samuel and Noelani Mahoe. *Nā Mele o Hawai'i Nei*. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawai'i, 1970.
- Hawaiian Style Band. *Vanishing Treasures*.
- Hinton, Leanne. "Language Revitalization: An Overview." *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice*.
- Ho'āikāne. "Kailua-Kona." As Appears in Ho'omanawanui, *Hawai'i Review* 56(2001): 149.
- Ho'omanawanui, Ku'ualoha. "Yo Brah, It's Hip Hop Jawaiian Style: The Influence of Reggae and Rap on Contemporary Hawaiian Music." *Hawai'i Review* 56(2001): 136-175.
- "Ka Manu." As recorded by Alice Namakelua. *Auntie Alice Ku'uleialohapoina'ole Namakelua*. Honolulu: Hula Records, 1974.
- Kame'eleihiwa, Lilikalā. *Native Land and Foreign Desires: Pehea Lā E Pono Ai?* Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1992.

- Osorio, Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo'ole. *Dismembering Lāhui*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2002.
- Owens, Louis. *Mixedblood Messages*. Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998.
- Pukui, Mary Kawena. *'Ōlelo No'eau*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1983.
- Pukui, Mary Kawena and Samuel Elbert. *Hawaiian Dictionary*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1986.
- Schilt, Rose. *Subsistence and Conflict in Kona, Hawai'i: An Archaeological study of the Kuakini Highway Realignment Corridor*. Honolulu: Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, 1984.
- Silva, Noenoe. *Aloha Betrayed*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.
- Trask, Haunani-Kay. *From a Native Daughter*. Maine: Common Courage Press, 1993.
- Warner, Sam L. No'eau. "The Movement to Revitalize Hawaiian Language and Culture." *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice*.
- Wong, Laiana. "Authenticity and the Revitalization of Hawaiian." *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 30(1): 94-115.
- Young, Justin. *One Foot on Sand*. Honolulu: Tropical Music, 2003.