Through One Lens: Sources of Spiritual Influence at Kamakakūokalani

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This article examines the development of spiritual awareness and practice at the Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawai'i–Mānoa. The Center's interdisciplinary approach to studying, coupled with its own institutional history, has predisposed it toward the development of a palpable essence of spiritual well-being. Sourced in virtually all collective and individual interests, including educational philosophy, the base of this spirituality is the land and the repatriated bones that rest in the earth in the courtyard of the Center. At the Center, traditional knowledge constructions are privileged on par with conceptions of Western academia and worldview. The consequent spiritual identity becomes daily processes that influence all activities. This study is one lens through which such a phenomenon can be defined. Being historically conscious about the spiritual nature of a place may be a first step toward preserving and perpetuating neotraditional values—in theory and practice—that promote lifelong well-being.

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It has proven a remarkable success: privileging time-honored ancestral practices from the *kanaka maoli* (Native Hawaiian) knowledge paradigm and integrating them with disciplinary fields of higher education from a Western paradigm to teach about the aboriginal forebears and these islands as our beloved homeland. The interdisciplinary location of Hawaiian Studies is given great depth by the synaptic ties between ancestral orature and literature with relevant Western academic fields in the arts, humanities, and sciences.

The growth and maintenance of the Hawaiian Studies unit at the University of Hawai'i (UH)–Mānoa has moved successfully, sometimes at a breakneck pace. A legacy is being established that is nothing short of revolutionary. Add to this an international reputation via scholars whose academic credentials are stellar in their respective fields, and history is definitely in the making. I stress, though, with due respect to those colleagues, that the ideas reflected in this article are mine alone—that is, through one lens.

This work is a meditation on the meaning of Spirit. For the purposes of this piece I use a broad definition: Spirit is any manifestation of a metaphysical, paranormal, or supernatural nature that is prescribed, defined, or utilized in a known indigenous Hawaiian or acquired Hawaiian practice for which homage and tribute are paid to a higher power than the mortal. Further, the higher power takes the position it does also by precedent of ancestral custom as conveyed to descendant generations of Native Hawaiians to this day.

While Hawaiian Studies as an academic field was first conceived of in 1970, it is clear that the Ka'ū Task Force meetings and subsequent report (1986) were the catalyst for bringing the academic concept as a curriculum and program for service delivery into definition. Such definition enabled institutional structuring of various programs. And on each of the 10 campuses of the UH system, a unique example of the 1986 report's core mandate services that geographical region's communities. The report findings included an admonishment of sorts that such a commitment should have been made long ago and that systemwide program implementation must be expedited because historically, such a presence in higher education in these islands was woefully overdue.

My work reflects on the specific program influences of the Spirit that I have felt, seen, and heard over time at our campus. The faculty, staff, and students at Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies (KCHS) at Kānewai on the UH–Mānoa campus have contributed immeasurably to my spiritual growth over

the last 15 years. They have been my political, cultural, educational, and spiritual sources of sustenance in more ways than I can count. But my story does not seem exceptional, because most of us there understand the concept of Spirit and apply it to what we do when appropriate. There are no long deliberations, no feisty debates, and no polemical treatises that have to be articulated. When one calls for the invocation of Spirit, all bow.

Ours is a story of spiritual evolution that continues to resonate in the work we do for our country. Our group commitment to Spirit is real. The Center itself has become a sacred site for reasons I will detail at a later point. For now, this effort examines the most irreducible, hence foundational, aspect of Kamakakūokalani through one lens, that of the author. A broader institutional history may be forthcoming, but the foundation of such an effort will still have to place initial attention on the issue of Spirit. This applied sense of spirituality has, for my colleagues and me, run the gamut according to our most pressing needs as in days of old. We have carried the spear by any means necessary to build our home and secure it. We have employed the *ʻōʻō* (digging stick) to complete the cycle from politics back to culture, resource management, and history, which reflects more fully who we are as aboriginal Hawaiian descendants.

And through those exhilarating but toll-taking formative years, a bounteous, task-appropriate spirituality continued to echo within and around us, through the guiding voices of our ancestors. We have confronted and cajoled, demanded and asked, insulted and honored, but throughout we chose to humble ourselves together in prayer as would an extended family. Perhaps perceived publicly to be long on pride and short on humility in the 1990s, the KCHS collective presence for rightly action is much more diverse today (and truth be told, always has been). Our group triumph—if it can be so termed—is the creation of a climate of comprehensive spiritual sustenance and liturgical perpetuation in which to fulfill our mission through courses taught, communities served, and tomes and articles published. Our efforts, however misunderstood at certain junctures, have been overwhelmingly well intended. Acknowledged in a broader sense, the remarkable successes of other Hawaiian Studies higher education programs are making history as well, because each has distinguished itself in the context of its own stated priorities and self-definitions of vision, mission, and service delivery.

Spirit Problematized

My sole purpose for producing this work is to examine closely the spiritual aspects that have touched the process of curriculum development at Kamakakūokalani and by extension virtually everything else we do as a faculty and staff. This phenomenon contributes so much to our overall sustenance as an institutional unit that it cannot be taken for granted. It is in our nature as aboriginal Hawaiian descendants to intentionally leave some personally meaningful things unspoken. Perhaps matters of Spirit should not be openly acknowledged. I obviously believe otherwise.

One of the key qualitative differences between our Center and other academic units on campus may very well be the incorporation of what is spiritual into our work as an ancestral mandate. There is an internal spiritual consistency that comes from many sources for which members of our faculty are clearly the stewards, the author included. If this is even partially true, spirituality cannot just influence what we do, it must also be something we teach our students about comprehensively, and through our own conduct and revealed biases, as well. I have observed and participated in life-defining events of a strong spiritual nature at Kānewai. Such moments—including protocol and institutional, routine practices—did not really exist 30 years ago anywhere in Honolulu to my knowledge. Such experiences have affected what is taught as well as how and why the teachings will continue to be within our scope of instruction into the future. A question, then: Would it now be possible to identify a basic set of evolved standards that demonstrate the accommodation of Spirit in our collective work, particularly the courses, to define a cross-pedagogical method that others might choose to employ?

Kanaka maoli spirituality comes from a different paradigm than do the various non-maoli academic disciplines, which may, for instance, claim Asia or Hellenic and Hellenistic Greece as their respective taproots of intellectual origin. There have been necessary institutional navigations in the creation of this interdisciplinary way known as Hawaiian Studies, which acknowledge any number of worldviews for the integral construction of a truly interdisciplinary education paradigm. We employ the paradigm via unique individual pathways. There are differences in approach, but there is one ultimate source. Faculty, staff, and students of aboriginal Hawaiian ancestry work in concert together with those of other ethnic backgrounds.

We do not, we should not, and we cannot always agree. In our time, consensus is important but not universally practical. Yet, it is also true that the past is unforgiving to romanticized notions of itself. Any of us born in the last 100 years in these islands is in the same historical canoe of reality in the context of U.S. hegemony, like it or not. Greg Dening called this a "bound-together" history (Denning, 1980). And spirituality within tenets of culture is the only transcendent vessel I know of that places irreducible focus on the ancient experiences of aboriginal Hawaiian ancestors as a valid contemporary index of one's well-being. Far from romanticizing the past, our Center's representatives are practitioners of its ancient arts, which will ever connect us by genealogy to those who came before. They are also ecumenical in the sense that any universal concept of spiritual life force best represents what may be considered an "ultimate" definition of godliness.

Many faces of history, political action, culture, and the arts are integrated into our quest for academic rigor in the context of a heritage-based relevance for conveying wisdom of the ancients. The individual view I have chosen to interpret and present in this work is a lens for examining a spiritual self-concept as one side of the constant interaction between self, others, and environment.

Most obviously, our attention to the spiritual realm as practitioners—and in some cases, courteous nonparticipants—is ironic, in at least one sense, given the fact that ours is an academic unit in an American occupation government institution, according to one view of public international law. The need to assert ourselves in such a way is something we continue to do because that is our history and a mark of affiliation with ancestors who feed our identity with the life force to carry on. It stands in contrast to the hegemonic institutional "big picture," like the recent effort to include substantive changes in the university master plan that will result in a more Hawaiian sense of place.[1] The more critical need is to continually authenticate who we are based on who we were. This requires an active spiritual component. More important than any considerations regarding the Center's identity are the beneficial and very definite ancestral connections we must continue to utilize as we fulfill our individual and group missions clothed in the *kapa* (traditional Hawaiian bark cloth) of lineal and cultural descendant identities.

In this frame of reference, Spirit includes any aspect of tribute, prayer, or similar homage that honors sources of godliness as a surrounding presence and by epistemology comes from any sacred or secular paradigm of knowledge production.

Spirit is the bedrock of what is most central to the content of our character as shaped by an ancient ancestral identity, together with individuals' faith actions through any number of world religions more recently imported. Spirit is what makes a practitioner of Islam a Muslim, or a follower of Siddhartha Gautama a Buddhist. In addition, KCHS work experience has taught me that Spirit is also accommodated in a broader sense. There is a less defined but equally acceptable ecumenism to which I ascribe, influenced no doubt by the diversity of faith perspectives represented by staff, students, and faculty with whom I have prayed for more than 15 years. It is clear that spirituality is teachable through an individual—if not collective—voicing of what it means to honor ancestors and model such behavior so as to impress upon others the value to and relevance of this medium for lifelong learning. And if diversity leads to possible conflict regarding religious views, their respective histories, and particular applications in these islands, discussion is always a relevant option to clarify contentious issues within any course taught or official meeting attended. At the very least, it is the ideal to which we aspire on a daily basis.

A fair question might be, "Why such an inquiry now?" My answer is simple. Our faculty and staff at Kamakakūokalani have long ascribed to a politics of nationalism, albeit from decidedly diverse perspectives. Actions on behalf of a spiritual presence can sometimes mediate conflict and reorient a group to its more immediate, even appropriate, task. Passions on any number of subjects can run high. Consequently, the actual answer is, "because we can" as a tried-and-true method that facilitates institutional betterment.

The second answer to "why now" is in direct response to plans for offering a master's degree in Hawaiian Studies by fall of 2005. Our ideological well-being and institutional cohesion must therefore be assessed in preparation for this new challenge. It requires a critical eye to examine in detail what we have accomplished and how we have accomplished it given the new graduate program's inception. I expect mine is but one of several forthcoming such treatises on this subject. It is in this context of evaluating our evolved sense of spirituality that I make these observations. Also, I will serve as our Center's first graduate chair. While my reasons for engaging the topic at this time are more than a little self-serving, evaluating spirituality is also an important end for our multi-island community of local residents. Critical thinking about the developmental aspects of Spirit as an *ea kia'i* (guiding force) also reinforces the meaning of *kuleana* (responsibility, privilege) in light of

how what is spiritual can permeate all that we say and do as well as experience with our senses. The practical daily application of this credo is to conduct our business using time-honored procedures and protocols whenever appropriate. Spirit affirms rightly action as much as rightly action supports that which is spiritual.

Aloha ʻĀina

The most essential aspect of spirituality has to be how we relate to our "sea of islands."[2] For the *ʻōiwi* (indigenous Hawaiian) descendants, this means a sibling relationship continues to exist between land as something inalienable and humankind as its intergenerational stewards and cosmogonic younger kin (Kameʻeleihiwa, 1992).[3] Particular to this discussion, the Center's location is initial evidence of how Spirit is acknowledged. Adjacent to our 7-year-old facility of concrete, glass, and copper is a taro pond field—Ka Papa Loʻi ʻO Kānewai. Stream-connected irrigation flumes and arterial ditches feed the planted Hawaiian staple there. The taro itself is known as a *kinolau* (alternate form of a supernatural being) of the deity Kāne, among whose spiritual responsibilities rest the life-giving properties of sunlight and freshwater. This is the foundation for the name of our area, literally, "water of Kāne." One way to look at the development of such spiritual awareness as a force that in turn influences everything else we do at the Center is to think of the place name itself as an identity taproot. A previous era of conflicted interests there has healed. Our peace centers on that full healing. The time voyage, of which we are all crewmembers, has allowed landfall on the sometimes rocky, hence tenuous, prominence of human forgiveness, where mutual respect leads daily efforts. Such respect is an ideal value to teach, even if we may at times not adequately demonstrate it. I will be the first to admit that such composure is definitely something to which I aspire, and not always with success.

The lesson here that I try to apply is to influence in viable ways those actions that we most care about implementing at Kamakakūokalani. Opportunities to do so in one lifetime are extremely short-lived. Expending energy unwisely is a departure from the spiritual awareness being sought. Conserving ourselves and the energies that supply us with life, motivation, and a spiritual dedication to task comes first. Negativity over time only depletes life source energy, or *mana*.

Life Experience and Spirit

A logical element to include for a query on the diverse sources of Spirit is my own relevant life experience. The native empowerment-through-education philosophy I first heard espoused in the late 1980s came from the voice of Dr. Lilikalā Kame'eleihiwa in step with a self-determination agenda that fused spirituality with applications of culture as an approach to the study of history. She had just completed her advanced degree in the latter field and was teaching Hawaiian history at the same time. It was 1987. She went on to create nearly all of the history and culture courses within our initial curriculum. This is one of the key reasons I believe we have a foundation in Spirit through culture in the curriculum. My initiation to this as a way to teach history also came from Dr. Kame'eleihiwa, as it has been for countless others who have studied with her over the past two decades.

I had already been a lecturer for 3 years while a colleague went on extended leave from his position in the College of Education's Kinesiology and Leisure Studies department at UH–Mānoa. It was my first experience as a classroom educator. That time—from 1983 through 1986—was formative. I thoroughly enjoyed teaching the college courses. My master's degree in counseling and guidance attained in 1979 was a minimum qualification (and I do mean minimum) for the substitute position. But that was ending, and I had to make some serious career decisions. One of them, retaking 4th-year Hawaiian language 9 years after first enrolling in the course, was a must. Somehow, I was guided to this as a partial prescription for choosing a field within which to pursue a doctorate.

To better anchor my series of prospective career choices, I began taking other classes as an unclassified graduate student in 1985 while my substitute teaching position was ongoing. The first course, Pacific Islands history, was taught by then assistant professor David Hanlon. His generous demeanor and excellent scholarship were inspiring. Hanlon became a conduit for meeting indigenous peoples of Oceania, whom he had come to know in the course of his work in the region. Spirit in the form of intellectual coalition was demonstrated over and over as this American professor of Pacific Islands history introduced me to his colleagues and associates. As I developed my own ties to these perceptive, culturally grounded individuals, my personal ancestry to Polynesia was given clarity. It broadened self-perceptions of my identity as someone of aboriginal Hawaiian ancestry. I was part of a larger culture group, and the immediacy of this awareness was empowering to some extent but still rather remote.

Hanlon suggested I next take Hawaiian history. I was not able to do so until 1987. Dr. Kame'eleihiwa's class was also fascinating but for different reasons. She spoke with a force of authority about the history of our own people, integrating aspects of culture and spirituality into the evidentiary lecture material as historical evidence for events that predated the generally established arrival of Westerners here in 1778. Her passion for the subject matter went beyond academics to the core of who she was, or so it seemed. It was unlike any other educational experience for the unabashed level of passion she was able to infuse into lecture after lecture. What a revelation in the form of a course on the subject of Hawaiian history that was. I could see myself doing this in my own way as a professor someday, because it was initially modeled for me by her. The motivation to excel took over. Fueled by the inspiration of this mentor and my own desire to professionalize for the long term—including a tenure-track position someday—I went to work in earnest.

I also heard Dr. Haunani-Kay Trask speak that same semester as a guest lecturer in Dr. Kame'eleihiwa's history course. Then a professor in American Studies, her talk emphasized the importance of higher education to Native Hawaiian progeny as a key factor in the raising of political awareness, and that our history offered a context for best understanding the unconscionable record of oppression our ancestors had endured, so lethal, yet often so subtle. Some before me and countless others after have been similarly inspired by the fearless, visionary, and substantive contributions of these Hawaiian patriots. Each in her own way continues to model a brand of academic and political leadership that features counterperspectives to the status quo of an earlier generation so put upon by forces of assimilation. It was all they could do to maintain their dignity in the face of a relentless onslaught of Americanism and invidious institutional racism.

For those not cognizant of this history, a thumbnail sketch here may help. Stemming from historical events like the failed internal coup d'état of 1887 and the failed external intervention that violated our country's bilateral treaty with the United States in 1893, civil unrest scripted much of life in the Hawaiian Kingdom from 1887 to 1898. In the latter year, America was at war with Spain, and our country's neutrality was violated when U.S. warships used Hawaiian ports, a blatant imperialist strategy that was clumsily covered up by a joint resolution of Congress that had only unilateral force because treasonous parties illegally convened a substitute legislative assembly in 1887. All business for the kingdom from that time forward was done by Hawaiian leaders under duress to prevent bloodshed and maintain peace at severe cost to national security and international

standing. Those from generations in that era had little political recourse after exhausting all strategies open to them—including mass petitions that did forestall U.S. Senate deliberations on annexation in 1897 (Silva, 2004). Kingdom subjects of Native Hawaiian ancestry settled in after 1898, made the best of an awful situation, and saw survival of family and community as the utmost priority (Trask, 1993). A nationalist agenda was therefore not advocated seriously again until the 1970s, and usually within a context of self-determination and indigenous rights internal to U.S. hegemony. Spirit lives on in the noble efforts of Hawaiian patriots of different ethnicities and even national origins. Their quest to maintain their independence will never be in vain as long as patriots continue to chart the proper course today, carry forth the cause of national reestablishment, and live the often brutal but so necessary ebb and flow of the political tide, for the good of all who love this land as their country.

Today, the context of nation-state theory and international relations offers what I consider the ultimate view of state continuity for foreign affairs and the reestablishment of a constitutional monarchy to govern domestic life. If this sounds far-fetched, consider how long the occupation has lasted and how ingrained the processes of thinking, feeling, and doing become over time. Take great time to ponder the issues and study the problems. No American law alone can create what existed in 1886 when the last legal body of elected officials oversaw business in the Kingdom Legislature. Spirit can make us right by this egregious historical injustice. Nothing else does as good a job in my opinion. We only transcend our mortality and its vagaries by acknowledgment of this reality. The United States today is hardly in a position to support such a notion. The only superpower at the top of the post–Cold War mountain now, the United States does not need to befriend or ultimately make right the wrongs perpetrated against a state (including our country) any longer unless American interests are first well served. Many good American people—Spirit filled and Spirit led—populate the continent. Unfortunately, not enough of them are policymakers in that country's federal government to make a real difference. The United States needs its own people power movement to take back the reins of control in a republic gone woefully awry. The decadence, avarice, dysfunctional families, and ever-growing economic chasms between the haves and have-nots do not bode well on the domestic scene. And because of the long-standing occupation of our country, the ill effects are now planted firmly on Hawaiian soil.

As consciousness-raising of a Hawaiian nation-state continues, there is progress through public education of all sorts. Online blogs discuss these issues constantly. I occasionally dialogue with young people on this topic myself. Some of the most erudite comments regarding state sovereignty, the law of occupation, domestic kingdom law, and general tenets of public international law come from those ages 16 through 29. For them, governmental reestablishment to go with the state sovereignty that has existed continuously from 1843 is no longer a matter of if, but only an issue of when. Our country is a subject of international law; we can look to even more hopeful horizons vis-à-vis courses of possible legal action. In the meantime, under the legal rubric of "temporary allegiance," domestic affairs must be conducted in light of what entity holds power over us via those many menacing layers of institutionalized militarism by the occupier.[4] All the more reason to intend forgiveness and practice peace. Self-aggrandizing, immoral, avaricious actions by occupier nations exist worldwide but still can be met most effectively with the nonviolence politics of Lili'uokalani, Mahatma Gandhi, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. By comparison, for indigenous peoples living within occupied territories of other imperialist regimes, like French-controlled New Caledonia, it must also be said that certain freedoms afforded the occupied citizenry in Hawai'i, which influenced those of pure or part aboriginal blood by American authorities, are virtually unprecedented in the latitude they provide to voices of dissent. Unfortunately, this is the undoing of Hawaiian national possibility largely from fear and the fear-mongering of the current occupant of the White House. Perhaps the current regret in Washington, DC is that too much latitude was given for too long to dissenting voices in these islands. My generation represents a collective and significant turn away from the manner in which previous generations approached everyday life. Without the continuous tutelage of diversity-inspired thinkers, a fruition of my own ideas and theories on this subject would never have taken place so rapidly within the same time frame.

At the forefront of the movement and its connection to Spirit in the early 1970s, though, were land struggles and grassroots political efforts to organize major demonstrations and sometimes life-threatening reoccupations, among them Kalama Valley in 1970, Waiāhole-Waikāne in 1973–1974, and Hilo Airport in 1975. With the establishment of the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana (PKO) came a definitive moment in the history of spiritual advocacy (through grassroots political activism) for our entire homeland. Such advocacy was not the original PKO members' collective

intent, although one involved at the time with whom I have spoken, Walter Ritte, admitted that the acknowledgment of the spiritual dimension in what they were doing was largely attributable to George Helm. And this is the spiritual presence that two previous directors at Kamakakūokalani—Trask and Kame'eleihiwa—continued to employ in their respective courses and administrations. There is no doubt our current director, Jon Kamakawiwo'ole Osorio, will in his own way follow suit, for he not only teaches about spiritual matters with excellence but also composes and performs an outstanding array of politically relevant, resistance-affirming songs "of his natural self"[5] that convey this Spirit as well.

Political struggle, then, meant that resistance had to set the initial spiritual tone during our formative years of political maturation because mainstream political and educational forces would not hear us, could not hear us. In the context of temporary allegiance, there are those who continue to draw attention to the iniquity of a U.S. military occupation here using its own terms and defining its own agenda. What we do at the Center is often perceived as anti-American. The heartstrings of recent history aside, the Hawaiian government, in abeyance since 1893, is a rallying point for Hawaiian nationalists, and this is a bona fide subject for further research, group inquiry, and international presentations. Well-being of the spiritual ilk goes hand-in-hand with these political assertions. Without the former, there is no righteousness in the latter. I am antiracism, not anti-American. I am antiglobal corporate greed, not antibusiness. And I am anticensorship, wherever that rears its horrid countenance, not antimoral standards. American political conservatives do not have a unique claim on justice, freedom, or the presence of God. Many of our own people are involved in and committed to these and other American activities, values, and practices. The reason for articulating this position comes directly from where our Center is housed. Well-being as an educational benchmark departs from historically assimilationist policies and the genealogies that branch from them in institutions in these islands.

This is not to say that there is nothing redeeming about present-day Americanism. Not only are there redeeming qualities within Americanism, but some of them are so profoundly humane, ethical, moral, and just that they are promoted and ascribed to by no other government or nation-state in the world today. My point is, Hawai'i is equally redeeming—and perhaps more so in the spirituality and promotion of well-being that could be—if we looked at the national potential in the international scene for the Hawaiian Islands. This is not about wild reactionaries,

but about impassioned educational advocates for responsible change. This is not about demanding, tantrum-threatening children, but about civil and compassionate human beings who respect the rights of others to disagree and act accordingly.

The Center is sometimes portrayed as more of a political monolith than it ever has been in reality. I attest to the fact that we had appropriate, substantive leadership at every turn in our recent history for what needed to be accomplished at the time. This too is an intervention of the life force of Spirit. The Center was built literally from the voices of political dissent and allies in mainstream politics of the downtown variety which, together, convinced skeptical colleagues to allocate millions of dollars for the edifice that stands today. We prayed before and after demonstrations. We humbled ourselves to those greater forces because we knew what we did was the right thing. This is part of what is taught in our politics classes. More than a few kinesthetic learning opportunities come the way of our majors during their time as undergraduates. The political landscape can be volatile, and the best way to learn about its complexities is through grassroots activism. Recent evidence of this is the leadership roles our students took when they occupied Bachman Hall during the spring semester of 2005. Hawaiian Studies majors took part with others in a coalition protest against plans for a University Affiliated Research Center (UARC) on campus that would enable the U.S. Navy's classified research capability to further entrench foreign militarism to deepen the occupation. It was not easy for us during the early years of struggle, and it is by no means a stroll in the park today. But I contend that these watchdog functions and activist postures are born of Spirit.

After all, even the being to whom Christianity was later dedicated was an activist of that time. A Jewish faith interpreter and iconoclast for its orthodoxy, it is said that Jesus of Nazareth threatened the status quo within his own culture and faith group, not to mention the tributary power of Rome itself—an apt role model for contemporary activism that ferrets out iniquity and challenges authority in a substantive way by questioning its motives and delving into its oft corruption-laden interests.

Judge our well-being on how KCHS graduates serve their communities, engage in their careers, and honor their extended families. Our substance has always belied the sometimes unpleasant style in which some of our actions were carried out. The effects of occupation for more than a century have encrusted occupier institutions with racist views of aboriginal Hawaiian nationals, most of whom still

believe they are Americans by nationality. The homeland sports a public education system largely designed to teach our children nothing about the national history of our country. Many continue to discriminate against our job applicants and to dispossess Hawaiian families of their land and their homes. In our objections to such treatment, the power brokers of the early 1990s took umbrage when we questioned; yet without necessary confrontation, answers would not be forthcoming. Even with it, the door was slammed shut many a time to the private, smoke-filled rooms. Spirit has remained an integral part of the political process, its grassroots, issues-based implementation, and conceptual conveyance through the curriculum. Political analysis is an invaluable tool to place in the hands of young people. It is right and proper to do so in the context of challenging authority that often seems arbitrary and arrogant.

It has been an applied learning process, and the Center has been at the forefront of offering this alternative brand of political activism in the dual contexts of ancestral custom and contemporary need. The best protection for free speech is adamant, confrontational, impassioned, fearless speech. It is speech that is born of spiritual affirmation, for the core of its decibel-measured volume is a conduit for overall betterment. And none of this political assertiveness is done in a vacuum, ethnic or otherwise.

To acknowledge American ancestral roots, as I do, and Chinese as well, is a different declaration than one of being forced into an American nationality. I did not choose my nationality. It was introduced at the point of a gun aimed directly at my Hawaiian great-grandparents. Legally speaking, they were Hawaiian nationals of pure aboriginal blood. This is an indelible mark of well-being gone awry because of U.S. hegemony. Simply because American military power made it so by force does not mean we cannot continue the legacy of Hawaiian constitutional democracy, at the very least to appreciate the intellectual thrusts of its theoretical underpinnings.

An analysis of choices regarding nationality is not irrelevant. This is what has resulted from the earlier tutelage I received about nationalism in the Hawaiian context. Far from being resentful, angry, or vindictive, I have grown to simply teach about the power of possibility and probability in a context of international relations and nation-state theory. This discourse takes its shape from a school of political science and history that is also time honored as classical realism, for it

connects to our 19th-century ancestors and their noble, successful efforts in nation building and foreign and domestic affairs. We have much to learn from the resources that remain as archival material, including volumes of valuable data that can affect many public issues of law and governance in contemporary times when thoroughly studied.

No one need feel threatened by the development of well-being alternatives, especially those that foster understanding and academic inquiry that are well researched and intellectually responsible. I see an independent Hawai'i as a future to which I will not be a living contributor, except in Spirit. Establishing foundations is a destiny to happily fulfill now in the Spirit of betterment that no single nation-state, not even the United States, can claim to design—much less police—for the rest of the international community.

Curriculum Political and Pono

Asserting Kamakakūokalani politics without equivocation was a positive step toward being ancestrally connected to Spirit in a manner that the standard stereotypes of our people historically prohibited and habitually ignored. Regarding curriculum, this political stridence would permeate everything from teaching culture and arts to environment and economy, as would spiritualism as a factual reality for our ancestors and ourselves. And Dr. Trask deserves credit for being its primary architect and most eloquent spokesperson. It is up to each student to then apply what is relevant to her or his individual array of involvement choices and group tasks. To be passive and uninvolved is the worst course of inaction. A vibrant political literacy grows from all discourse regarding nationhood where even U.S. law, in an ideal sense, is not and never will be particularly relevant to certain future visions of a subject nationality (Young, 1998).[6] While perceived as divisive then, time has shown that American government policies toward its overseas possessions have been anything but equitable. Time also tells the story of yet another U.S. military occupation, in this instance in the Middle East with the invasion of Iraq in March 2003. It is today's version of an American occupation gone very wrong that, like the Hawaiian situation, should never have happened in the first place.

The complete story of what contributes to the spiritual foundations at our Center is the composite of all stories from all teachers, staff, and students who have both given and received the way I have. It is simply not appropriate in the context of kānaka maoli values of well-being to tell anyone else's story without first asking permission. Therefore, my own observations on the subject through a single lens must suffice for now, perhaps as a template for later works on the Center's institutional history.

So it was that in 1988, 9 years after receiving a master's degree in counseling and guidance from UH Mānoa's College of Education, I found myself accepted as a doctoral student and graduate teaching assistant in the department of history at my alma mater. It emboldened many of us at the time to contemplate the investment of effort and sacrifice required by advanced graduate studies. I was enveloped by graduate school peers-now-colleagues: Teresia Teaiwa, Lynette Cruz, Momi Kamahele, Jonathan Osorio, Barry Nakamura, Sam Kaima, Mary Sasaki, Pua Mendoca, John Cole, and David Chappell. It was a stellar group to learn from as we taught each other in seminar after seminar. This gave voice to the credo that learning can inspire, entertain, incite, and enrich, sometimes all in one afternoon in a single seminar. A classroom has to be more than a place where we just funnel people through in a stale, lifeless, cut-and-dry process that masquerades as the service delivery of an education. And professors too numerous to mention were also instrumental in my matriculation.

I still draw from that time when the formative core of Spirit learned to crawl before it walked. An intellectual identity was being formed, unwieldy as it was initially. Aside from this, my graduate school past offered ideas to share with graduate school advisees as well as undergraduates, to provide guidance in any number of ways. Thinking of the seminars, language requirements, comprehensive examinations, dissertation writing, and eventual defense as vocational training sometimes leads to constructive suggestions for students based on the real experiences I had gone through. Therefore, my academic success comes from the perseverance that is individual in the context of an extremely supportive group dynamic. This is a vital aspect for defining where my passion for higher education as a career really began.

I was surrounded by others who wanted similar things for themselves as career educators. Yet what overshadowed our individual desires for success was the unanimous view that success meant nothing without also being able to serve others and provide for hearing other (then) still-silenced voices. This is the location for spirituality. It is a discourse to incorporate into one's professional life where faith as a system of belief from a person's nonprofessional life can then be incorporated or grafted on.

Inevitably, we experience significant change with the passing of the years. Healing in many forms can and does take place. Why unnecessarily dichotomize the life experience between what is the career and what is the personal realm? As persons of Hawaiian ancestry, our goal in the 21st century is confluence and an agenda that will make us positively convergent in other important ways. Spiritualism is one path that allows ministerial-like roles to thrive in the home and the workplace within the same person.

This includes an astounding life force that island localism offers but that a purely kanaka maoli political perspective on life never will. As people of Polynesia, we already are a diverse cultural region through the history of our geographical subdivision of Oceania. Add to this a predominant multiethnic societal composition we in Hawai'i receive from many of our non-maoli ancestors, and today's local identity may very well define tomorrow's national character. Spirituality rests with the former as an ecumenical source and mark of how and why we interpret the past, as well as where and when its contemporary message of hope can be heard. Aboriginal Hawaiians must join forces with others who identify themselves with Hawai'i in some of the ways we do. This is necessary to combat the negative aspects of Americanism and globalism. The worst aspects of world economy politics will be the ultimate force of our complete marginalization in the critical contexts of educating our children and—if not their ancestral homeland—cultural differences we may find repulsive can ride comfortably on the backs of the wrong kind of economic development that, in the long run, will only despoil further these precious islands. Values-based education already relies on teaching our young people about the islands' finite resources and fragile environments, limited freshwater, and the importance of caring for land and sea as if they are beloved relatives. These ideas from my personal past in graduate school are the core of my professional present.

Another Spiritual Source

Just as the appropriate *kūpuna* (elders), including Aunty Emma DeFries and Uncle Harry Mitchell, came forward to offer their spiritual focus regarding the Kahoʻolawe issue, we at the Center for Hawaiian Studies will always remember our most outstanding elder, mentor, and benefactor, Gladys ʻAinoa Kamakakūokalani Brandt. She was an educator, administrator, university regent, and widely respected kanaka maoli voice of hope and reason whose vision may not have always dovetailed with our own. Nonetheless there was never any question of her staunch support for our "any means necessary" nationalist discourse as far as moving the Center politically was concerned. She did not have to be that voice herself to understand why it was so necessary to use. It was our kuleana to begin with. She was her generation's gift to us. KCHS as a perpetual wellspring for the education of our people and others continues to flow to many people on all islands because of Mrs. Brandt. And to still connect this way through many such *ʻaumākua* (family or personal spirits) guidance provides a spiritually appropriate foundation for all else we hope to accomplish in coming years. We give her and the rest of our departed elders the ultimate honor of our success. Our rewards from the work we do can never accrue exclusively to our own individual gain to be truly with Spirit.

Language, Carrier of Culture's Spirit

A handful of Hawaiian language educators from UH–Mānoa left that campus in the late 1980s and early 1990s for the University of Hawaiʻi–Hilo. Others remained. The combined efforts of these two sources and additional pockets of language perpetuation are yet another spiritual location that empowers thousands. For me, Larry Kimura, Haunani Bernardino, and Sarah Nākoa carried the light of educational force that language study was the root of our aboriginal knowledge base, and this they taught to a particularly eager if not always skilled student from 1973 through 1976. These beloved language educators also provided the opportunity to experience native speakers of that era, including Alice Namakelua and Joseph Makaʻai, who took the time to be with us in and out of class. Language would forever be our link to the ancestral past as long as we followed faithfully and remained steadfast advocates of its perpetuation. Admittedly, there was a brief time when my confidence about its potential growth as a flourishing everyday language waned.

For those who heard my ideas on the subject back then, *e kala mai me ka mihi wale* for any hurt this may have caused or conflict it may have created. I can only be grateful now for the passing of that temporary intellectual blindness and the reorientation to language's preeminence as a repository for the countless, value-laden, spirit-filled productions of knowledge from which we derive the elements of our curriculum base—not to mention our very identity.

The language scholars who learned from the same individuals I learned from are themselves recognized *kumu ʻōlelo Hawaiʻi* (Hawaiian language teachers) in Hawaiʻi today, leaders in the Hawaiian language immersion education effort and so much more. This has been a tremendous influence. Even mainstream society in these islands has been affected positively by the growing awareness and actual practice of Hawaiian language. Both daily newspapers and one major magazine published in Honolulu now use spelling diacriticals on all Hawaiian terms. One also hears the language spoken more frequently in public. At one point several years ago, I could transact all of my business at the bank branch in my neighborhood in Hawaiian, if the right staff were providing services that day. There is still much to accomplish. Hawaiian language educators maintain a worldview born of our heritage and nurtured by the multiple word meanings that capture a culture left to us by our heritage-founders. It has not been easy to perpetuate the language, but we all know how necessary it is.

Challenges still exist, and they always will. Still, the individual pioneers, including Kauanoe Kamanā, Koki Williams, Dr. Kalena Silva, Dr. Noʻeau Warner, and many others in my generation, have remained undaunted. Differences over the years can be put aside when the Spirit enables forgiveness, humility, and looking to one's own laurels before passing judgment. Spirit is not about being sanctimonious or self-righteous. In spite of my own shortcomings, I will always aspire to maintain this as my creed.

Immersion education was a major thrust for the comeback of Hawaiian language in the early 1970s when many of us filled to capacity those language classes taught in the mother tongue. To this day, what was learned has impact broad and narrow, and the scope of such study benefits people for their entire lifetimes here and worldwide.

This consciousness about language and how it carries culture also supports spiritual awareness. The three are actually inseparable and best felt when a chant is done in a protocol situation to honor visiting guests, the memory of a departed loved one, or a way to utilize tradition in one of our classes.

The *'Iwi* as Honored Spirits

In 1995, traditional funerary rites conducted in the process of repatriating bones at Kānewai as construction on our new facility was concluding offered yet another invocation of ancestral force through the spiritual dimension. I was asked by the officials from Hui Mālama Nā Iwi O Nā Kūpuna to offer a chant of welcome for those who were to be returned to the bosom of Papahānaumoku, our Earth Mother. And in a light but steady rain just after midnight, I trusted those who were in turn given the kuleana to bring these bones home. With two colleagues by my side, Jon Osorio and Carlos Andrade, we began the protocol, serving as the host group. To this day I can admit that the *oli* (chant) I was asked to do came from a source deep within, the existence of which was unknown until that moment when I was expected to chant.

The act itself had very little to do with me and everything to do with an ancestral mandate to keep the bones well. Nothing in that respect has changed. I cannot speak for my colleagues, but I will always believe I was given what was required at the time to do the job from a Spirit source. A year later I began to study chant formally in a *hālau* (center for formal training). But the spiritual influence did not stop there. It was eventually revealed that the teacher of my teacher had her roots in the same place as did some of my own relatives. In addition, it was a story my kumu was telling about his kumu one evening in our class that gave me the first inkling that there were spiritual connections leading me to what I was supposed to learn. The story was also particular enough to link some from my genealogy who shared common experiences with my kumu and my kumu's kumu in Lahaina before I was born. I used to call these coincidences. It seems more appropriate now to simply acknowledge the depth and breadth of spirituality as omnipresent with an ability to control and influence much of what we ought to follow yet perhaps never fully comprehend.

The Center of Our Center

This Spirit is especially inherent in the curriculum we offer at Kamakakūokalani in course content on genealogy, taro cultivation, noninstrument navigation, fiber arts, music appreciation, and traditional healing. A spiritual dimension planned or unplanned, conscious or unconscious, intentional or not, it exists for what is taught in these particular courses. My belief is that an element of spirituality has the potential to keep us out of harm's way, to maintain proper focus on our own propriety of conduct, and to ensure the most important kind of continuity there can be: that which disseminates as ancient knowledge from those who came before. Thus as the keepers of Spirit we offer critical support for what we do in the realm of truly interdisciplinary higher education. More than an accommodation to the past, this is a choice we make to enhance life and enrich what we do in the present. There is power and a keen sense of the authentic in such continuity. A chance for future generations to further the practice and expand the concept is a distinct possibility and personal hope.

There can be no substantive spiritual knowledge imparted without the presence of Spirit, our ancestral voices guiding us along the paths that are our respective destinies. In less than 20 years, the Kamakakūokalani Center for Hawaiian Studies at Kānewai has become a premier example of what it means to frame the way of our ancestors and their attendant processes of knowledge production in the courses we offer. It has become the foundation for an entire curriculum of major study in an interdisciplinary, humanities-related field. The content diversity of our course offerings reflects the success that is possible when thoughtful effort is made to harness and engage the energy from two learning paradigms. Such thoughtful effort places the Western and Hawaiian paradigms into what I would call a "willful congruence." It forces the authors of such a curriculum to work at the melding of Hawaiian, Western, and any other pertinent cultural, historical, political, and economic traditions. Some element of spirituality can be found in virtually every course but with different emphases depending on the nature of the course, who authored it, and at least initially, who would be expected to teach it.

At the same time, the KCHS began to establish itself in the university and Hawaiian communities. Purposeful action of this sort also came from various cadres of culture experts, political activists, and kindergarten through Grade 12 (K–12) educators who recognized the value of such applications of tradition to the broader educational mission.

Leo Kūpuna

Ancestral voices still speak to us as guides in the context of a revered tradition that places our forebears' legacy in many places, including the higher education forefront. We receive, convey, and keep their valued wisdom by first acknowledging them as facilitators for spiritual guidance. The voices to which I refer in the title of this work are of course 'aumākua. They guide as they advise, in constant spiritual discourse.[7] In my particular case, this occurs through the invocative power of oli. Other faculty and staff access the same Spirit through their respective interests in other aspects of the culture: wayfinding, dance and other arts, composition and performance of contemporary Hawaiian music, horticulture, ethnobotany, and geography. Their chosen strengths—and their related spiritual aspects—and expressions of experience add to our diverse use of the interdisciplinary concept.

Teaching to and about this hierarchy of extended family connections raises the spiritual awareness of our students today as I presume it did in ancient times. Today, however, we do so with less frequency in terms of how consistent we can be with practices, with no *'aikapu* (to eat under religious restriction)-like overarching social system that could function similarly in our favor. A system of daily beliefs and routine protocols, while possible, is not always practical. Making it happen as a contemporary practitioner can be complex today in ways our ancestors might have been able to overcome. This does not serve as an excuse for not consistently integrating ancient practices into contemporary life; however, extra effort to do so is often required.

Historically, such spirituality has, for some families whose elders maintained tradition in the face of relentless change beginning two centuries ago, been well kept, although this is not the usual situation. The foundational element of spirituality is invoked first and foremost as traditional protocol of one kind or another. Protocol begins a session of learning about the customs of old. Customs of old, in turn, reflect a timelessness of the ages to which we connect:

> There is a sea of time, so vast man cannot know its boundaries, so fathomless man cannot plumb its depths. Into this dark sea plunge the spirits of men, released from their earthly bodies. The sea becomes one with the sky and the land and the fiery surgings that rise from deep in the restless earth. For this is the measureless expanse of all space. This is the timelessness of all time. This is eternity. This is pō (Pukui, Haertig, Lee, 1972, 35).[8]

As those of this time engage the land, sea, stars, winds, and swells encoded in our cosmologies as remote ancestors, we go in—both in the real sense and vicariously—to the upper elevations of mountains, which rise from undersea volcanoes down to the shoreline and beyond, the oceanic vegetation zones and life forms in all their splendor. Caring for such systems becomes a distinct challenge given the kind of world that today surrounds the archipelago and informs it from within as well.

There is a Spirit of antiquity connected with any engagement and application of ancestral knowledge, and we draw from this to create and feel it when we utter prayers to pay direct homage to such a presence (Young, 1998). Most routinely applied at Kamakakūokalani are prayers that begin faculty and staff meetings, a tradition we have honored as long as I can remember. It feels *pono* (right, proper) and everyone respects the effort, some perhaps by quietly allowing the rest of us to engage in the acknowledgment of the greater spiritual force even if it is not a must for each person so assembled.

A Developing Method

The first point to make about such guidance from the realm of Spirit is that your own experience and practice of it is your educational foundation for teaching about it. A well-studied, good-faith effort to convey the concept of what is spiritual begins with self-disclosing your own relationship to the concept when facing a class. Are you an observer of *hula kahiko* (traditional Hawaiian dance) or a practitioner? And

if you practice, at what level do you do so? Then go on to define the guiding voices that articulate Spirit for you in the course of carrying out the cultural act, the political gesture, the historical inquiry, your next breath.

Next compare your own level of personal involvement with your best analysis of the ʻaikapu-era version of the same phenomenon or its closest approximation. If logistics allow, consult a practitioner and ask permission to relate knowledge shared for educational purposes. If that is not possible, consult primary archival, and then secondary published or unpublished manuscript sources on the subject (the standard academic protocol on which we can all rely). Some valued expression of what the ancestors convey spiritually is imperative in some courses, perhaps unnecessary in others. There is a continuum. Those of us who find solace by paying spiritual homage to our ancestral sources also complete the cycle of the initial protocol and asking of permission to remain right, properly involved, with the supplanting of unhealthy aspects of what we can define in part as influences from the ego.

The educator who attempts this interdependent process can directly relate the spiritual conclusions and routines to whatever ancient aspect of life is to be highlighted. From that point, the next area to acknowledge is the language as bearer of culture, tool for recording history, and medium through which we do everything from espousing politics to celebrating another birth within the *ʻohana* (family). The final and most important aspect of this process is to then connect spiritual acknowledgment with the dynamics of why we teach to begin with. A self-articulation of this can yield the kind of knowledge that produces an authenticity to your teaching supported by thousands of years in past experience coming to your side and informing all knowledge.

While individual approaches to actualize awareness of the guiding voice may differ, reverence for the spirits that offer guidance is central to conveying this knowledge from the traditional paradigm. In her formative education about this tradition, Mary Kawena Pukui "memorized names of all her family *ʻaumākua*...a total of fifty names" (Pukui et al., 1972, p. 36).

We who chant presume a relationship with these beings. Even those of us who were not raised in this particular spiritual context have somehow incorporated aspects of the tradition into our own personal belief systems. This includes acknowledgment of metaphysical dimensions that, if practiced and studied, can surely be taught. Teach the belief that aspects of Spirit are in force all around us and dwell

strongly in various natural phenomena as a paradigmatic reality and, no matter what reservations you might have to the contrary, teaching about it will be facilitated. On this point, you certainly do not have to believe wholeheartedly in what you teach, although it helps to be one of the faithful in order to convey something more than a cursory intellectual spin to your class. Even an honest articulation of issues that have you grappling with your own faith takes the educator down a more positive road of self-disclosure, growth, and potential to reach learners.

You can articulate the function and existence of Spirit based on the collective experience of others even if you are not a practiced veteran yourself, because every developmental stage of this reality is, in and of itself, a distinct and important lesson from the annals of life. It must be disseminated because if more teachers do—regardless of grade level taught—then we strengthen our collective resolve. And we must strengthen it if we expect our national identity to form an agenda beyond cultural window dressing.

There is much work to do and many fields from which to do it. But without the central impetus from area study centers such as ours, the main purveyors of Western disciplines will not know their respective places in our overall scheme to broaden the entire system's view of what it means to teach, research, and provide auxiliary support services to individuals at a university or community college committed to the meaningful institutional inclusion of the host culture on all operational levels.

Guiding voices speak to issues of propriety in discourse with those who respect and utilize such advice. It is prayerful, meditative, and just as centering spiritually as the recitation of a mantra in the practice of yoga, which I tried in the late 1970s during a period of spirituality-seeking outside my own kinship-related spheres of experience.[9] In the Hawaiian context and for everyday consumption, spiritual guidance can come from the ʻaumākua as one constant source. The latter is based in wonderful examples from the environment's fauna in physical form. This teaches the relationship from the Hawaiian paradigm between *manaʻo* (what is felt spiritually) and *ʻike* (what is known physically and metaphysically). It is explained in the context of the ancient past and given contemporary life through the personal experiences of the instructor and by associating aspects of the tradition to what surrounds. From there, the learning link is made. We can go on then to acknowledge the great polytheistic system of temple deities and elemental forces—wind, rain, sun, moon, and other dualistic spirits of ocean and island, night and day, female and male. We can explain that Lono is in the clouds and Kāne cares for

freshwater once it falls from clouds to touch your skin and our homeland. The sun as a force also belongs to the realm of Kāne, and evidence for its power remains in our constant presence by day. Similarly, Hina is the moon, her light gently bathing the earth as the sun sleeps below the horizon.

From the ancestral paradigm as well comes the basic worldview of birth as universal life source, of another female deity known as Papahānaumoku, the one foundational, procreative source within the cosmogonic scheme who has the fortitude to give birth to islands. In tandem with her male partner the Sky Father Wākea,[10] she bore the child who bore the first human being. To classify what is natural through systematic presentations of their deified presences sheds direct educational light. Students will thereby more readily appreciate the connectedness of Spirit as guiding voices, both to nature as a perceivable and engageable system and to the practices of Hawaiian humankind, within which we seek permission to work, play, pray, and celebrate through this existence as kānaka maoli progeny.

We educators who apply such traditional knowledge to how we structure curriculum and approach the challenges that alternative pedagogy presents tend to feel what we define and think about various characteristics of these spiritual realities. And while someone like April Drexel, currently an assistant professor at the Center, is responsible for teaching our course on Hawaiian mythology, interdisciplinary education as we define it requires some of this to also be taught in our survey course at the 100 level. It was in part a result of teaching the Hawaiian Studies 107 course for over a decade that my own professional and personal experiences became an active and conscious foundation for the rather eclectic and respectfully ecumenical spiritual awareness I now practice. Further, in concert with academic training, such awareness can be used to frame course content.

Depending on grade level, values clarification within a lesson plan regarding such deities is a necessary component. Formation of belief and expression of faith along some often strict religious or denominational Christian lines can already be a part of an elementary level student's daily routine. Consequently, thought must be put into any lesson plan that discusses animistic polytheism in full knowledge of the fact that monotheistic religions dominate the contemporary theological landscape.[11]

Another positive comparison is possible between religions whose dogma has evolved away from animism and polytheism, and those that have not. It is also critical to explain why these developments that take a particular system of faith

and change it over time are consequences of politics and social change, forced cultural assimilation, and history in the making. By comparison, to elucidate about how and why traditional Hawaiian religion did not go through the same processes of societal change in step with those that touched the development of Islam or Judaism in the Middle East, for example, helps to clarify the perceived reverence some pay to the maoli spirits today in their ancient contexts. The best teacher of what it means to be spiritual in a Hawaiian way with younger students can also come by comparisons with their own religious faith or ecumenical mindset (for the most part this means denominational Christianity). It is the array of examples from their own lives that makes relevant to them what is being taught as new material.

Over time, associations between natural phenomena and the personal names, stories, and qualities they embody for our people teach about the long view that runs from past to present. The eras together can be thought of as an all-encompassing genealogical navel cord, the *kaula piko,* which forever connects us to that past as a collective of wisdom conveyed through memory in a process both intergenerational and intragenerational. The genealogy is the ancient structure of remarkable deeds, noble and ignoble exploits, intrigue, as well as the routine. It was kept, transmitted, and reinternalized over time to be taught again and again until the present day, when we teach it once more in many forms and in many places. Students at all grade levels can learn by assignments in personal name analysis wherein they become the experts at interpreting the meanings of their names to peers. Their personal connections to their homelands, ancestors, and famous sites are thus included as the living embodiment of genealogy in their own identities through naming.

The pedagogy, then, begins with two basic premises. The first is that ancestral knowledge has an ultimate, irreducible, spiritual source and consequent impact. Second, such knowledge thrives today in the context of the past as a lineage of applied intellect, the roots of which were first firmly planted in the earth of practical experience throughout Oceania (Hau'ofa, 2000). When students are given this duality of concepts in the form of a didactic baseline of information, there is reinforcement in the process because the kumu serves as a positive model as the concepts are conveyed. What some charter schools have done to further the opportunity for students to experience and fully participate in these traditions is to feature them prominently on a daily basis. These are also opportunities to

participate, not just observe. Students learn the proper chants to begin their school day, similar to the way a school in the United States or some locations here in occupied Hawai'i might begin the morning with the Pledge of Allegiance or the ring of a bell.

It is important to note that these are not necessarily binary oppositions. Some Hawaiian charter schools could use all three referents—oli, the Pledge of Allegiance, and a school bell—to formally begin the school day. On the other hand, those that exclusively utilize the chant are either consciously introducing a political point of view that excludes Americanism as a value in the curriculum or are unconsciously doing so but for no intentional expression of polemics. In fact, Hawaiian nationalists who advocate independence in some cases teach their children Hawaiian patriotism, inclusive of the notion that Kamehameha I—not George Washington—was the father of their country. However trivial this might seem to a demographic majority of Americans, the educational empowerment of the kānaka maoli comes in as many forms as the waves of the ocean or the grains of sand on our beaches.

Fairest Winds

Spirituality and praxis converge in those activities of ancient life that are perpetuated today. The first example of this as pedagogy uses the metaphor "fairest winds," which indicates a good day for sailing. Such was the case in May 1999 when I became human cargo for an afternoon on the famous voyaging canoe *Hōkūle'a*. Master navigator Nainoa Thompson invited several of us to accompany him and his crew as they tested new sails that would be used on their next voyage, a more than 3,000-mile journey to Rapa Nui (Easter Island). The thought was that I would be able to more effectively teach my students at the University of Hawai'i about wayfinding after I myself had sailed, even for that short time. Observing what is done in so many areas of responsibility before sailing stays with the observer. Out at sea, navigator Thompson becomes a teacher once again, this time pointing to swells the neophyte must remember by their shape and angle as they move in reference to the canoe. Somehow, from personal experience, the senses seemed to heighten with emotion, giving way to another spiritual source and opportunity to learn.

This experience included a request of me by one of the crew to offer a chant in advance of our departure to bring up the wind so that the new sails would be appropriately tested. The chance to do so, for such a practical experience that stimulated the senses so thoroughly, was an honor. On a deeper level, this kind of request set a context for what was possible to those aboard the canoe. Such a chant to yield a desired result seemed possible for someone to accomplish. In that context, on that relatively windless day, I was not the chanter they needed. Neither was anyone else. When the time came, the canoe was towed to open ocean. She then began independent movement. Yet to teach a more ephemeral aspect of the Hawaiian worldview became possible as a result of the request to offer a chant. The request came from an internalized perspective a crew member held about the guiding voices. The faith in me to understand such a request came from previous knowledge this person had about my own internalized perspectives on the subject of maoli tradition and its contemporary application.

A replica-accurate, traditional vessel moving on the ocean teaches volumes. There is no substitute for being there and experiencing it for oneself. Anything else is a gross approximation. If I could glean this much from 4 hours, imagine what sailing canoe crews who live and work together on cross-hemispheric voyages learn in 30 days. As almost any experienced crew member will tell you, there is a definite spiritual presence and life force in the canoe itself. The leaders demonstrate this by modeling a certain behavior on behalf of the crew. The benchmarks emerge from practical experience and can reflect any relevant dimension of life, including spirituality. A captivating lesson plan could very well be written on a subject such as Kanaloa, the Polynesian deity of the ocean, in the context of voyaging yesterday and today.

The opportunity to teach further using a cross-disciplinary approach comes with a reading assignment I give to my students in the survey course—which places Hawai‘i in Polynesia first and foremost—called Hawaiian Studies 107: “Hawai‘i, in the Center of the Pacific.” The assignment is to read one of the more self-disclosing chapters from an edited version of Thompson’s journal from the 1980 voyage of the *Hōkūle‘a* to and from Tahiti. Introducing the critical concept that navigator Thompson utilized performance replica designs, modern construction materials, scientific weather data, and the stars in a virtual night sky at a local planetarium takes nothing from the spiritual connections he felt as he guided the canoe (Kyselka, 1987). Reinforcing spirituality in this context is easy because Thompson himself has become a believer. Almost solely, this experience with noninstrument

navigation throughout Polynesia and beyond taught him to frame his successes with ridgeposts of humility. The guiding voices provide fairest winds. This is the relationship between spirituality in theory and its application in practice, which becomes possible to convey because the proper context has been built. It is not that modernity must be excluded from this experiential equation, but rather that the right balance of what is contemporary must be struck with the other side—the foundational side, the traditional side.

Another example—which could just as easily be converted into a lesson plan or series of lesson plans in a single curriculum—is the Hawaiian struggle associated with the island of Kahoʻolawe. Since the mid-1970s, maoli and non-maoli alike have fought politically within and without the system to stop the bombing, clean the island of ordnance, and return the island to civilian control. The bombing meant sacred land dedicated to Kanaloa experienced continued degradation over a period of more than 40 years.

In 1994, after many brave occupations and protests on other islands, including the establishment of tacit support from mainstream politicians on the local, state, and U.S. federal levels, success was achieved. Ultimately, though, the lives of two Hawaiians, George Helm and Kimo Mitchell—allegedly lost at sea in 1977 as they went for help in a storm from the island—were validated yet again for their respective sacrifices to the cause. They gave their lives for what they believed in: To stop the bombing is to respect the Spirit of the land and her people; to continue it yields the exact opposite result—disrespect and skepticism about the motives of an occupying military force now over 100 years in the making with no signs of letting up voluntarily. The spirituality of the island now rests with Hawaiian practitioners and their allies praying during traditional seasons to traditional Spirits as their faith. Inspiration to believe, no matter the odds, is one obvious benchmark that comes from this history. There are infinitely more.

With the voyaging experience, one can teach in authentic ways about open ocean navigating, community pride, cultural awareness, and spiritual deference. Helm, on the other hand, was Kahoʻolawe's chief defender of Spirit through reoccupations of that island with his comrades in dissent and through other demonstrations of activism as well (Morales, 1984). The Kahoʻolawe story teaches about spiritualism in the context of political struggle. It brings into focus more clearly the issues of occupier hegemony, long-term cover-ups of illegal action during Hawaiian and American eras of political control, here as well as the modern-day saga of how

the spiritual life force inherent in a handful of very committed individuals would change the minds of their own people and the broader community about the righteousness of dissent in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. They took on the U.S. Navy and won a decisive victory that resulted in the conveyance of the 29,000-acre island to nonmilitary authority. In time, the Hawaiian government will receive Kahoʻolawe and become its permanent steward.

The dedicated members of the PKO have led cultural accesses to the island for more than 20 years. They have inspired new generations to take up the cause and broaden the effort to reestablish maoli identity, collective cultural awareness and spiritual dedication, as well as a heightened sense of what it meant to 19th-century maoli patriots whose agenda was to save the nation-state and its organ, the government. The past bursts forth with life in such instances. The subjective, together with the objective, together with spiritual perspectives from another dimension, teach equally well the stories of navigation and land use for maoli purposes in modern times.

ʻĀmama, Ua Noa

I begin these concluding thoughts by explaining a personal accommodation that I make to the concept of ancestral wisdom as a spiritual element and constant influence. Confirmed in the Anglican Church, I engage in such an accommodation so as to properly respect the ancestral pasts of all my ancestors by faith: my Hawaiian, Taoist, Buddhist, Presbyterian, and Baptist forebears. The kānaka maoli spiritual philosophy that guides the development of the teaching strategy I utilize accommodates this rather diverse ecumenical ken.[12] The lead experience for me, based on this ecumenicism, connects most consistently to the Hawaiian chants I have learned as a student in a traditional academy of learning and a context for this education provided by my kumu, or teaching source. All I am to this enterprise of learning that focuses on one part of my heritage is a conduit for the guiding voices through oli. I believe in the words I chant, some of which the humans-now-ancestral spirits themselves once recited ages ago when they were the life connections to their own respective pasts.

Being spiritually centered, or trying to orient toward that as a goal, allows one to operate from affirmation and positions of confidence tempered by humility. Operating out of fear was the alternative for me. It was not growth engendering. It was not positive. And it definitely was not the posture from which spiritual awareness could emanate. Instead, former fears are kept in check. Past tendencies toward depression no longer exist. Negative emotions can be chanted away, prayed away, and rebuked—never to return in the same form. This takes practice, meaning consistent application of what needs to be learned over time. What results is a reliable—even quantifiable—product of knowledge within the belief system of your making. Students can learn this as incorporated aspects of a Hawaiian Studies curriculum, as well as in the context of a course devoted solely to spirituality and the more structurally complex outgrowth—indigenous religion.

To be without this practice of acknowledging Spirit and accommodating is also a choice. In such a choice, consider the impact on students, though, if at least an academic treatment of the subject is not provided, especially when the main subject is Native Hawaiian culture. With unburied artifacts and relics, scientific evidence, archival primary source documents, and all manner of technological advances, Western systems of knowledge and the paradigm from which they grow will be guaranteed a place in our children's future. The Kamakakūokalani agenda includes more. Our ancestral wisdom, as a legacy that the paradigm of ʻōiwi tradition has built, requires proper keeping to best ensure its appropriate conveyance. Without the spiritual element, there is no life for what is thought, felt, and acted upon first in the classroom, then as a life-enhancing choice the rest of one's days.

This is the reason it is necessary to induce and invoke the spiritual dimension as a practitioner, for only by acknowledging a true act of deeply abiding personal relevance can one then convey it as a lesson to someone else. If we dare to be so presumptuous to say that in certain respects, we are who we were, then everything necessary for reestablishing ourselves in accordance with our own destiny is in our hands. Let us remain conscious about what we leave as our legacy to successive generations. It is the sum total that is important, not merely how we embellish the space we have been given to live within in our own time. The transcendent goal must be to honor the past in the way we live today and the manner we prepare in Spirit for what comes tomorrow. May we hear with clarity those guiding voices of Spirit and continue to act for the greater good in right accord with their will and in oneness with all the sacred forces that direct and maintain our created universe everywhere, especially in this our beloved Hawaiʻi nei.

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Notes

1 See University of Hawaiʻi Master Plan, 2004, http://www.hawaii.edu/

2 A phrase coined by noted literary scholar Epeli Hauʻofa that speaks of the unique consciousness and self-perceptions those of us from Oceania's island cultures carry about our surroundings as anything but confining. This is so for many reasons, not the least of which is because we have an inverse relationship to land than do most continent dwellers.

3 Many of us attribute such knowledge about indigenous Hawaiian cosmogony, accessible again by text in contemporary times, to Lilikalā Kameʻeleihiwa.

4 For recent scholarship on this and related topics, see articles in the online academic periodical, *Hawaiian Journal of Law and Politics* (http://www2.hawaii.edu/~hslp/journal.html).

5 "Songs of Our Natural Selves" is an Osorio-authored multimedia presentation blending music and historical vignettes to explain how the core identity for many Native Hawaiians is in us through the Spirit of loving the land.

6 For more on this term as originally coined, see *Rethinking the Native Hawaiian past* (Young, 1998).

7 These spirit beings were responsible for "protecting and sheltering the soul" (Beckwith, 1970).

8 Perhaps the most controversial aspect of such an educational experience, it is also the most intangible yet critical to absorb. Written as a diagnostic companion for social workers serving the Hawaiian community, there are basic definitions regarding spirituality and ancestral influence in *Nānā I Ke Kumu* (Pukui et al., 1972) that acknowledge a contemporary relevance for ancient ways.

9 Perry (1971) discusses the comparative religions context most pertinent to this discipline.

10 For a comprehensive examination of what the Western academy calls "mythology" and what aboriginal scholars know with more familiarity as the foundation for their spiritual consciousness, see Beckwith (1951) and Kame'eleihiwa (1996).

11 Akana (1992) describes an early 20th-century treatise that encompasses Christian traditions and the utility of maoli heritage to uplift our people.

12 My source for appreciating the daily practice of this ecumenical stance is John Keola Lake, master chanter, kumu hula, devout Roman Catholic. His gracious teaching of the chant changed my life 6 years ago and contributed to the restoration of my faith in the Godly presence as a oneness of all that is essentially spiritual.