

## ‘IKE MŌAKAĀKA, SEEING A PATH FORWARD: HISTORIOGRAPHY IN HAWAI‘I

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The creation of a hegemonic, master narrative for Hawai‘i—sourced almost solely from English-language materials—has long offered a highly exclusive characterization of past events and figures in Hawaiian history. Elements within this dominant narrative not only shape understandings of specific individuals and actions but also work together to construct a general understanding of a people and their nation. This article advances analysis of a political biography, set in a crucial period of Hawaiian history, to highlight a historical process that continues to inform paradigmatic yet problematic histories. It calls for a decided and comprehensive move to a more inclusive historical process that offers a more complex, rich picture of Hawai‘i’s past.

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A historical research methodology that preferences English-language sources has long dominated the production of historical narrative concerning Hawai‘i. This exclusionary process has been enabled and normalized by, among other things, a tremendous decline in the number of Hawaiian-language speakers and writers over much of the 20th century.<sup>1</sup> Since the birth of language revitalization efforts, we have seen movement toward inclusion of Hawaiian-language archival materials in the writing of Hawaiian history. Recent work in accessing and presenting these materials is contesting previous understandings, rearticulating histories, and rediscovering previously elided figures.<sup>2</sup> We have, however, only scraped the surface of a massive archive of Hawaiian-language “voice,” and we continue to see English-only or English-preferenced histories dominate bibliographies and bookshelves. The former hegemonic narrative is not easily displaced.

A 2006 essay titled “On Being Hawaiian” in the journal *Hūlili* by Jonathan Osorio seeks to tie this disjuncture between past native historical voice and modern-day Hawai‘i to current difficulties within the community. He posits *huikau* (confusion) as a reason for much of the current political and social situation of Native Hawaiians. Osorio’s essay argues that this *huikau* has left the modern-day Hawaiian less assured of status or place than his or her 19th-century counterpart and is an explanation for how Hawaiians got “here” (the current state of the nation) from “there” (the state of the nation in 1893). This confusion, Osorio argues, is largely the result of the displacement of a historical record that reflects a national identity of Hawaiians as an almost fully literate, outspoken, and informed citizenry, rightfully tied to its *‘āina* (land) and its *lāhui* (nation). This former narrative forefronted a nation of Hawaiian intellectuals, political leaders, and an active populace. A late 19th-century attempt to extinguish this nation and integrate its citizenry into a foreign one—the United States of America—necessitated the production and proliferation of both a national and an international narrative that would recast Native Hawaiians as a group incapable of self-rule. A flood of material followed, attempting to re-present Native Hawaiians as second-class citizens of an American territory.

Osorio (2006) argues that current statistics placing Native Hawaiians at the lower end of education results and the higher end of categories such as homelessness, poverty, and proportional imprisonment reflect a disconnect between present understandings and past historical record. He explains that new representations of Native Hawaiians, presented to subsequent generations, work to become self-fulfilling. They are, in effect, narrated into existence.<sup>3</sup> Frantz Fanon, in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963)—a classic exploration of the psychological effects of imperialism

on the psyche of a nation—stated that a dominating country, in the process of attempting to subjugate another, “turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it. This work of devaluing pre-colonial history takes on a dialectical significance today” (p. 210). A link between a clear knowledge of the past and the well-being of modern-day indigenous peoples has been further argued by scholars such as Ngūgī wa Thiong’o (1986, 2009), Haunani-Kay Trask (1993), Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), Noenoe Silva (2004a), Kanalu Young (2006), and others. These authors have all strongly linked the present state or condition of a people to past narrative. With this understanding, it is clear that the state of the Hawaiian today itself has a mo‘okū‘auhau, a genealogy. That genealogy is a constructed narrative.

## CONSTRUCTING A NATIONAL NARRATIVE

A national narrative was created for Hawai‘i that had its genesis in the need to dislodge a people from their unambiguous identity as Hawaiian nationals and have them view themselves as Americans. A coup d’état on January 17, 1893, led by a group of mostly foreign businessmen, resulted in the declaration of a provisional government in Hawai‘i. This minority group, led by an oligarchic executive council, had no intention of running the country themselves. Their self-declared aim was simply to hold power “until terms of union with the United States of America have been negotiated and agreed upon.”<sup>4</sup> Immediately following the coup, a flood of textual sources cascaded from the presses, launching a concerted effort to link Hawai‘i to the United States in people’s minds and concurrently displace identities of Hawaiian nationality.

From the missionary press (*The Friend*) to newspapers created for the specific purpose of advocating union with the United States (*The Hawaiian Star*), proannexation voices sought to highlight American connections, interests, and influence in Hawai‘i. Within the country, educational texts commissioned by the Board of Education and produced by people such as William Dewitt Alexander, an annexation commissioner to the United States, supported the narrative of “Hawai‘i as an American place.” International efforts to naturalize the idea were directed through the positioning of a sympathetic voice as the Associated Press Honolulu correspondent to foreign newspapers.<sup>5</sup> This narrative would later expand to take monumental form as one U.S. president or public icon after another—whether in image

or name—began to dot the Hawaiian Islands’ landscape. In 1907, Honolulu High School on O’ahu was renamed President William McKinley High in memoriam to the former U.S. leader. The next year, a U.S. military base named after Lieutenant General John Schofield was established on nearly 18,000 acres of land in Wahiawā, O’ahu. The decades that followed saw the erection of Washington, Lincoln, Jefferson, and Roosevelt schools on Hawaiian soil. All of these entities, and many more, claimed space, both on the physical landscape and in the minds of a new generation of Hawaiian youth. These young Hawaiian descendants of a nearly two-millennia presence on lands birthed by their ancestor, Papahānaumoku, would now memorize U.S. state capitols and lists of American presidents. A patriotic national (U.S.) narrative would be demanded during two world wars and later be powerfully amplified through the creation of a sobering U.S. War Memorial at Pearl Harbor. Today, custodians of the memorial from the U.S. National Park Service offer a call to millions of visitors from the United States continent to travel to Pu’uloa, O’ahu, to “Experience Your America.”<sup>6</sup>

Yet in looking back through the many layers of this constructed history, Osorio (2006) insists that the Hawaiian of 1893 knew well the incongruities implicit in the political idea of being Hawaiian American. That clarity derived from a vivid sense of a sovereign, national identity and an understanding of an equal political status alongside the major nations of the world. Moving a nation of people (the overwhelming majority of whom had signed antiannexation petitions voicing their strong opposition to becoming part of the United States) from this sovereign grounding would require every tool in the imperialist’s arsenal.

In this article, I spotlight one specific means used to create the “huikau” that Osorio draws attention to. It is historiography, the process of the creation of history.<sup>7</sup> The determined production of a national narrative that presented Hawaiians as American citizens worked to displace a previous, alternate national identity. The normalization of sourcing English-language materials in the production of Hawaiian history helped reify the concept of Hawaiian American. The historiographical problem within the dominant process is, however, twofold. In addition to the lack of Hawaiian-language sources used in the building of these narratives, often the English-language sources that have been used have not been contextualized. Who are the voices that have been accessed? What is their position in relation to the material? While indeed Winston Churchill’s warning that “history is written by the victors” might be an axiom of those who examine the past, requiring more

inclusive research and contextualization of historical sources can provide us with tools with which we can begin to develop a deeper and more complex understanding of that past.

There is a broad body of work from which one could choose a case study to highlight the effects of a problematic historiography in Hawai'i. I utilize Ernest Andrade Jr.'s 1996 political biography of the prominent Native Hawaiian figure Robert William Kalanihiapo Wilcox titled *Unconquerable Rebel: Robert W. Wilcox and Hawaiian Politics, 1880–1903*. The work explores the life of a prominent Native Hawaiian figure while concomitantly interpreting the highly contested period of history at the end of the 19th century that positioned the United States to take Hawai'i.<sup>8</sup> I choose it as a pertinent example of a political biography—covering a controversial figure—that has been used to speak on the larger historical narrative of the period. It is crafted from the model that has shaped so many of the modern biographies of Hawaiian figures. The texts created from this example continue, though recently challenged, to be used as reference works by institutions, schools, and individual authors, currently producing both academic and public histories pertaining to Hawai'i.

What follows is not a straightforward book review. To do a critical book review of a text published more than a decade earlier could be seen in some ways as unfair. This essay does not seek those ends. It is rather a critique of a still prevalent historiography that produced, and continues to produce, texts like the one that this essay examines. Andrade's (1996) biography of Wilcox provides a strong example that clearly illuminates the larger problematic historiography. In this article, I highlight the lack of Hawaiian-language sourcing within the text and also contextualize the English-language materials that support Andrade's characterizations of both Wilcox and the Hawai'i of his time. I, and most others in the field of Hawaiian history, continue to return to the organized and valuable works of those like Ralph Kuykendall (1938, 1953, 1967) as "a" voice in the discursive arena—contextualized, accompanied. In their introduction to the review of Pacific histories titled *Texts and Contexts*, Doug Munro and Brij Lal (2006) deliver a necessary admonition to eager historians: "no one methodology or theory holds the key to the riddle that is history. Older perspectives can still be useful" (p. 8). Their reminder of the need for humility and context is heard and appreciated.

## HUIKAU

For much of the 20th century, the process of producing historical text in Hawai‘i has centered almost exclusively on English-language sources.<sup>9</sup> This is certainly changing. Emergent scholars and writers from the University of Hawai‘i System and other community-based sites in Hawai‘i as well as the continental United States are actively researching primary-source materials within the vast and pertinent Hawaiian-language archive. In doing so they continually problematize prior, deeply exclusionary, histories and methodologies. I suggest, however, that the productions of this faulty historiography remain ever-present and affecting. These histories still overwhelmingly dominate reference lists, library shelves, bookstores, and film credits. And although new authors produce new histories, the problematic foundation of a past process continues to mold many of these new works.

## RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

I read Andrade’s (1996) biography of Wilcox in the course of a graduate seminar in Hawaiian political thought titled *Nā Mana’o Politika i ka Nūpepa Hawai‘i* taught by Noenoe Silva. A focus of the course was the compilation of biographical material from Hawaiian-language newspapers. This work allowed students to read about Hawaiian national figures *ma ka ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i* (in Hawaiian language) and offered an opportunity for comparison between this material and the work on these same figures that had been constructed solely from the English-language archive. An important part of the analysis was the contextualization of sources. Which newspaper did the article, letter to the editor, *mele* (song), or *kanikau* (funeral dirge) come from? Who was the editor, author, respondent? Were they involved in the topic discussed? Was there a subsequent reply to the publication?

One of the figures researched was the prominent Native Hawaiian, Robert William Kalanihiapo Wilcox.<sup>10</sup> Wilcox was a political leader, military officer, and central figure in many of the events that shaped late 19th-century Hawaiian history. He was portrayed in an 1890 Hawaiian-language biography by Hawaiian newspaper editor Thomas K. Nakanaela titled *Ka Buke Mo’olelo o Hon. Robert William Wilikoki* (The Biography of the Honorable Robert William Wilcox). One of the comparative

English-language sources for the Wilcox work was obvious: the well-known and oft-cited 1996 biography by Andrade. As I worked my way through Andrade's text, however, I noted how it presented characterizations of Wilcox, and the events that he and other Hawaiians were involved in, that were distinctly different from the image that I had gleaned from many of the Hawaiian-language texts and sources. One of many examples is Andrade's treatment of the critical territorial legislature of 1901, the Territory of Hawai'i's first. An election that included a large number of newly enfranchised Native Hawaiians saw the Home Rule Party dominate and the former oligarchic republic's tight rein on governmental control challenged. Media supporting the former oligarchy sought to portray Native Hawaiians as incapable of rule and unceasingly attacked the 1901 legislature as inept. Andrade repeats this general narrative and relays opinion from the *Hawaiian Annual* describing "the incompetence and egotism" of the Home Rule members, quotes from *The Star* "a fiasco," and informs the reader that "A recent historian's [endnoted as Gavan Daws] opinion that this Native-led legislature was 'worse than anyone thought it could be' generally reflects contemporary opinion" (p. 213). Hawaiian-language newspapers, while selectively critical, offer a significantly alternate account of an elected, Native Hawaiian-run legislature, in conflict with an appointed governor possessing veto power.<sup>11</sup>

A look at academic reviews of the Andrade text brought a mixed bag of praise and criticism. Significantly, however, the reviewers nearly unanimously extolled Andrade's "thorough" research. In the journal *Pacific Affairs*, James V. Hall (1998) begins his review by describing Andrade's text as a "well-researched biography" that "presents the historical facts of that critical time in Hawaiian history" (pp. 143–144). In the *American Historical Review*, Kenton Clymer (1999) writes that Andrade's biography on Wilcox is "based on extensive research in newspapers, government documents, and private papers" (p. 585). In the *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Paul F. Hooper (1999) characterizes the biography as "carefully researched," later mentions the book's "generally impressive documentation," and finishes the review by reminding scholars that "it is formed around a tremendous amount of solid basic research" (pp. 160–161).<sup>12</sup> Andrade's research was voluminous, containing over 700 citations. What it does not include, however, is a single Hawaiian-language citation from any of the dozens of Hawaiian-language newspapers, manuscript collections, or books about the topic that were produced during the period covered by the text.<sup>13</sup>

A closer examination of Andrade's source material reveals that its dominant source by far is the English-language newspaper *The Pacific Commercial Advertiser* (363 citations). In many ways Andrade's work is nearly a transcription of the English-language presses' view of Wilcox and the political events of the period, with the *Advertiser* cited the most. Andrade, a former history professor at the University of Colorado, himself notes the reliance on these periodicals, writing "this work was based on newspaper accounts more than on any other single kind of source" (Andrade, 1996, p. 287; he is speaking of English-language newspapers). In her book *Shaping History: The Role of Newspapers in Hawai'i*, Helen Chapin (1996) begins to contextualize the voices Andrade relies upon. She writes,

Population figures are revealing (1890 census figures). Out of a total of 90,000 people, Hawaiians and part-Hawaiians numbered 40,600, or 45 percent of the population. Another 39 percent were comprised of Asians (32 percent) and "other Caucasians" like the Greeks, Italians, and Jews (7 percent) who were not Portuguese. *Thus the establishment-official press spoke for no more than 5 or 6 percent of the population [emphasis added].* This minority press led by political activists included: in English, the *Advertiser*, *Hawaiian Gazette*, *Daily Bulletin*, and *Hawaiian Star*. (p. 93)

Notwithstanding the obvious absence of Hawaiian-language sources in Andrade's text, as previously mentioned, the historiographical problem is multifaceted. Andrade relies on English-language sources that are not contextualized, thus the reader is not able to evaluate the narratives produced with a knowledge of how those sources were positioned in relation to their subject. What does the production of a Hawaiian biography, sourced primarily from a text like *The Pacific Commercial Advertiser* of 1880–1902, mean?

## BEHIND THE VOICE

The life of a newspaper evolves, adapts, and is colored by the many different entities that are a part of it. *The Pacific Commercial Advertiser* was first published in July 1856, and a somewhat related version continues to be published today, more than 150 years later.<sup>14</sup> Over this enduring life span, the paper has had numerous editors and publishers, and arguably a changing voice. To contextualize the *Advertiser* as a historical voice relevant to the events of Robert Wilcox's political life, I analyze the paper's context around the end of the 19th century.

After an early existence as both a strong governmental critic and later a publication of the government itself, the influential *Advertiser* came to be controlled and edited by those who were to lead the usurpation of native rule and advocate for the annexation of Hawai'i to the United States. One of the central figures in these events was William Richards Castle. In early 1877, W. R. Castle became a founding member of a clandestine group calling themselves the Hawaiian League. This group sought changes in government that would shift power toward the White elite in Hawai'i by both severely restricting the powers of the monarch and altering voting qualifications in the kingdom. To effect this change, they relied on a show of force. Castle's import company, Castle and Cooke, received large shipments of arms and ammunition leading up to a June 1887 revolutionary act that forced a new constitution on King David La'amea Kalākaua, stripping him of his most important executive powers. This shift in power within the kingdom ended many of Kalākaua's ongoing projects, including the military training that Robert Wilcox had been receiving at the Royal Military Academy in Turin, Italy.

In May 1888, W.R. Castle, his nephew Henry Castle, and original *Advertiser* founder Henry Martyn Whitney purchased the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*. The group became a major publishing force in Hawai'i as they already owned another significant paper, *The Gazette* (another major Andrade source). In June 1889, when Robert Wilcox led a military attempt to remove the constitution that Castle and the Hawaiian League had implemented, the major English-language newspapers reporting on the affair, the *Advertiser* and *Gazette*, were owned by Castle.

In January 1893, publisher W. R. Castle became a central member of the "Committee of 13" that overthrew the reigning sovereign, Her Majesty Queen Lili'uokalani. Days after the coup, on January 19, he was sent by the provisional government to Washington, D.C., as an annexation commissioner, tasked with delivering the

Hawaiian Islands into the hands of the United States. In covering the tumultuous events, Castle's chief editor, his nephew Henry, made clear the paper's antimonarchy and proannexation sentiment. In describing the formation of the group that had led the coup, the paper wrote that the attendance at their rallies proved "the foreign community is weary of aboriginal dynasty" (*Advertiser*, January 17, 1893).

Another prominent voice of the paper at the time was that of Honolulu city editor Ed Towse, "a Maine native who had moved to the Wyoming frontier with his Indian-fighting father and, being an adventurous type, had been attracted to Hawaii at age twenty-six by the 1893 revolution" (Chaplin, 1998, p. 99). Towse also held the position of chief editor of *The Hawaiian Star*, a newspaper founded 2 months after the coup for the purpose of pushing the idea of annexation to the United States. Chapin (1996) describes the paper as "the official voice of the Provisional Government" (p. 98). In August 1894, W. R. Castle bought out Whitney and became majority stockholder and president of both the *Advertiser* and *Gazette*. A few months later in November, he hired fellow "staunch annexationist" (Chapin, 1996, p. 98) Wallace Rider Farrington, who was quickly promoted to editor. Excited by the events transpiring in Hawai'i, Farrington wrote, "the spirit of 76 is in the air...we are making history" (Chaplin, 1998, p. 102), and on the pages of the *Advertiser* he fervently pushed the cause of annexation to the United States. He was editor for the paper until June 1897, when the antimonarchical and annexationist baton passed to missionary son William Nevins Armstrong.<sup>15</sup> Armstrong saw the battle that was going on in Hawai'i as a "racial contest" and wrote that "there will be a supreme need for unity of thought and action" (Chaplin, 1998, p. 104). When 2,500 U.S. troops landed on foreign soil in Honolulu on June 2, 1898, occupying Kapi'olani Park and transforming it into a military camp, the *Advertiser* welcomed the boys in blue and reported that in Honolulu "Old Glory floated from every housetop in a bright glow of patriotism" (*Advertiser*, June 2, 1898). On July 8, 1898, the day after word arrived of the annexation vote in Washington, the *Advertiser* printed a poem on its front page that read:

*And the Star-Spangled Banner  
In Triumph Shall Wave  
O'er the Islands of Hawaii  
And the home of the brave*

This strongly pro-American, proannexation voice—Andrade’s principal source for his political biography and description of events—was unceasingly contested by many of the Hawaiian-language newspapers that were being simultaneously published.<sup>16</sup> The *Advertiser* certainly represented a minority voice in the islands, but even some among that minority were critical of the paper. One of the most respected leaders among the non-Hawaiian community was Supreme Court Justice Albert Francis Judd. In addition to chairing the highest court in the land, Judd also led the Protestant mission in Hawai‘i as president of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association’s Hawaiian Board. A Harvard student and Yale graduate (1862), he had previously held several significant positions in the islands’ government, including stints in the Hawaiian legislature and service as attorney general. While his political allegiances over time were complicated, Judd did support the men who had overthrown the Queen, swearing allegiance to the provisional government and the later republic, and served as the new government’s chief justice.

Among the many significant documents within the recently opened collection of Judd’s papers<sup>17</sup> at the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum Archives is a brief, unpublished manuscript in which he characterizes the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* (Judd, n.d.). In this essay, Judd gives important context to this newspaper’s place among the voices of the islands. He writes, “The experiment of sustaining a newspaper *which would represent the foreign community of Honolulu* [emphasis added], independent of government patronage was never successful until the appearance of the ‘Advertiser.’”<sup>18</sup> He then went on to give a more specific characterization of the paper:

[G]laring inaccuracies are quite as common as correct statements. Striving to be ahead of its neighbor of the “Terrafin Express,” merely hearing a whisper of something that is said to have occurred, right or wrong, hit or miss, in it goes to the press; and if, in its pages, it has something in reference to an occurrence, even though every item be directly opposed to the real facts, it seems to be perfectly satisfied with its enterprise. Heresy, it clothes with all the dignity of impressive truth.

Judd continues,

If a newspaper cannot give us the truth, unvarnished facts, without blundering and stupidity, then let it not attempt to instruct its readers. And if the information thence obtained cannot be relied on, better be without the newspaper; for while error is dangerous, truth will find for itself other means of publicity, and perfect silence is much preferable to distorted facts & falsehoods.

...a character as a truthful sheet it has failed to establish.

The newspaper scene in Hawai'i during the period was indeed rancorous, with determined and often polemic writing seemingly part of many papers' editorial routine. It is notable that Judd, as a general supporter of the business and religious community that overthrew the Queen, felt so strongly about the *Advertiser*. Even disregarding Judd's own characterization of the paper as inherently untruthful, the pertinent historiographical point being made is the contextualization of it as a foreign community voice.<sup>19</sup> Yet that context is completely absent from the vast majority of works that cite the *Advertiser* of that period. In the case of Andrade's biography, which relied so heavily on that voice, it must be asked: What kind of history has been produced? What voices were kept from the narrative? At the time of the events covered in Andrade's book (1870–1902), there were more than 40 Hawaiian-language newspapers published.

## SHAPING VOICE

Andrade was not ignorant about the existence of a prevalent and pertinent Hawaiian-language press. He mentions the papers within his text and endnotes and even cites an English translation printed within one of the Hawaiian-language newspapers. Despite this knowledge, he repeatedly sources the English-language press as if it was the totality of voice in Honolulu. In explaining event after event, Andrade writes of what the "Honolulu newspapers" were saying when he is actually sourcing only the English-language press. Further, the text contains determined

interpretations of events, knowledge of which is cited to those aforementioned sources. In a chapter titled “Self-Destruction of the Monarchy,” Andrade writes on the events of the early January 1893 coup and its aftermath, stating that “The Honolulu newspapers carried surprisingly thorough accounts” (Andrade, 1996, p. 117) and cites the *Advertiser* and other English-language newspapers and documents in describing the actions of the provisional government, the Queen, and some of the leaders of both factions. Andrade follows up his chapter on the coup with one titled “Waiting for Annexation.”

What the reader of Andrade’s account of this period misses is not only alternate descriptions of the events he covers but also any mention of the actions of the great mass of people affected by the loss of their nation. Nūpepa ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language newspapers) from the period debunk any thought of passivity among the Hawaiian population by reporting and commenting prolifically about Native Hawaiian action in these days.<sup>20</sup> Among the numerous acts of resistance reported on by the Hawaiian-language press was the coordination of near-immediate prayer/fasting meetings at churches throughout the islands praying to Akua (God) for the restoration of their Queen. Starting the week after the coup, *Hawaii Holomua* and other papers wrote of meetings at Kawaiaha‘o and Kaumakapili churches. In *Holomua* and *Ka Leo o ka Lahui*, a similar announcement called to “na makaainana mai Hawaii a Niihau” (the people from Hawai‘i to Ni‘ihau) to come together at their churches and “e pule e hoomau ia ke kuokoa o ka aina” (pray that the independence of the land continues) and for “ka Moiwahine Liliuokalani” (the Queen Lili‘uokalani).<sup>21</sup>

A look at Andrade’s (1996) handling of two of the more significant events in his book—the “Insurrection of July 30, 1889” (p. 59) and “The Uprising of 1895” (p. 149)—clearly spotlights the deficiency in his collection of sources. In conveying the facts of both historical incidents, he again cites “Honolulu newspapers” (pp. 262, 272) while in fact referencing the *Advertiser* and *Bulletin*, and further, he does not cite or mention three complete texts (Hawaiian-language books) devoted to events that were published soon after the critical events. Referencing his interpretation of the 1889 case, Andrade writes, “After the revolt the Honolulu newspapers published detailed accounts of the events of July 30. The account here comes from these” (p. 262; see *Gazette*, August 6, 1889; *Bulletin*, July 31, 1889; *Advertiser*, July 31, 1889). Thomas K. Nakanaela’s 1890 publication titled *Ka Buke Mo‘olelo o Hon. Robert William Wilikoki* (The Biography of the Honorable Robert William Wilcox) describes the events of that day from the perspective of a Hawaiian-language

newspaper editor. What is clear in Nakanaela's account is the dramatic difference in the way he and many other Hawaiians viewed Wilcox and his actions. Andrade's revenge-driven, political egotist is nowhere to be found. From Wilcox's military training in Italy, to his marriage, to his election battles, Nakanaela writes of a leader greatly admired by many. The book closes with over 20 honorific mele written about Wilcox prior to its 1890 publication. This alternate view of both Wilcox and the events in question is absent from Andrade's sources.<sup>22</sup>

One of the most significant events of Wilcox's life was his leadership of the January 1895 attempt to oust the Republic of Hawai'i government and restore Queen Lili'uokalani to her throne. After failing to succeed, Wilcox and over 300 others were arrested and tried before a military commission set up under martial law. In writing about these critical events, Andrade (1996) explains his sourcing in a note, declaring that the *Advertiser's* account of trial testimony "is very comprehensive and forms the basis for the material in this chapter" (p. 272). Within the text he writes, "When the police broke up the early concentration of rebels in Kaka'ako on the night of January 3, both the *Advertiser* and the *Bulletin* gave full accounts" (p. 154). These accounts inform not only Andrade's "reporting" of the battle and subsequent trial but also his broader commentary and characterization. In the case of these events, critical Hawaiian-language texts and their historical interpretation have been elided. In the months following the revolt, Thomas P. Spencer (1895) published *Kaua Kuloko ma Honolulu, Ianuari 7, 1895* (Civil War in Honolulu, January 7, 1895). This book covers in detail both Wilcox and the events surrounding the uprising. Another Hawaiian-language text focused on this event also appeared that same year in December. The book had the explicit title, *Buke Mele Lahui hoomakaukau, hoakoakoa a hooponoia mai na mele i hoopukaia ma ka nupepa "Ka Makaainana" a me kahi mau nupepa e ae* (Book of Nationalist Songs prepared, collected, assembled and corrected from the songs published in the newspaper *Ka Makaainana* and other newspapers; Testa, 1895).

This collection of 104 patriotic mele was analyzed by Amy Stillman in a 1989 article in *The Hawaiian Journal of History*. In her article, Stillman relays that the majority of the texts (nationalist songs) in the book speak of the specific January 6 incident and that 18 of the mele specifically speak of Wilcox. Indeed, his name appears in the title of 7 mele, including *Henoheno No Wilikoki Ka Leo o Ka Lahui* (Honored Indeed Is Wilcox, Voice of the Nation), *Wilikoki Ke Koa Ola Hawaii* (Wilcox the Soldier Who Is the Life of Hawai'i), and *Hanohano Kulana Wilikoki* (Wilcox the Glorious). Stillman (1989) writes, "this is a case of celebrating in poetry a specific

episode for which a wealth of eyewitness accounts exist” (p. 2). She specifically characterizes these mele as important historical narratives that “contain a wealth of information about the political, social, and cultural climate of Hawai‘i in the 1890s in general and the Hawaiian Counterrevolution of 1895 in particular” (p. 24) and makes clear the central role of this traditional method of conveying events.<sup>23</sup>

In contrast to Andrade’s (1996) description of the January 1895 event as “a sad epitaph to Wilcox’s military career” and of Wilcox himself, quoting the *Advertiser*, “There was nothing of the appearance of a military leader about him” (p. 161), the Hawaiian mele written after the battle describe Wilcox as “He kanaka ikaika he makau ole”<sup>24</sup> (a strong and fearless man) who remains both “kaulana” (famous) and “henoheno” (honored). One begins, “Eia Wilikoki ke koa nui o na moku, Ka pukaua o ke Aupuni Hawaii” (Here’s Wilcox, the great soldier of the islands, the General of the Hawaiian Nation).<sup>25</sup> These mele, interspersed with honorific mele concerning Queen Lili‘uokalani, display important historical action by native supporters in voicing patriotic thoughts in efforts to strengthen the lāhui in its ongoing battle. Dismissal of even the most honorific of these mele as historical sources would be a mistake, as Stillman (1989) explains that their story “is expressed in terms of Hawaiian cultural values and sentiments that reflect the political and socio-cultural climate of the late 19th century Hawaii from a Hawaiian perspective” (p. 2).<sup>26</sup> These sources offer historians yet another way of “looking back” that has been lacking from most former interpretations. This group of over 100 mele written about the 1895 “Wilcox Rebellion” is neither included nor mentioned in the Andrade biography while select (English-language) newspapers were preferred because, ironically, they were considered “in a most intimate sense primary sources” (Andrade, 1996, p. 287).<sup>27</sup>

Another interesting component of this text is Andrade’s awareness, and seeming critique, of his subject’s supposed lack of proficiency in English. In the opening chapter of the text, Andrade (1996) writes of Wilcox’s difficulties with his foreign-language studies, explaining in a footnote, “Wilcox also had difficulty with English and never really felt at home in that language, preferring to write and converse in Hawaiian” (p. 257). In a later chapter concerning Wilcox’s position in 1902 as a delegate to the U.S. Congress, Andrade writes, “Finally, one more point needs to be made, and *it may be the most important of all* [emphasis added]. Wilcox was not fluent in spoken English and preferred to converse and make speeches in Hawaiian” (p. 231). Andrade does not make a connection between his bibliography and his own strongly emphasized point. In writing a biography of this Hawaiian

political figure who “was not fluent in spoken English,” Andrade relies on what were foreign-language sources and ignores the vast majority of those primary source documents produced by, and about, his subject in that subject’s native tongue. Andrade’s methods are not an anomaly. He researched within a hegemonic framework that allowed for the dismissal of Hawaiian-language sources. The notion that the research for Andrade’s text is thought of as thorough by academic reviewers speaks to the normalization of a historiography that completely ignores the vast collection of Hawaiian-language materials present.<sup>28</sup>

*‘Ike Mōakaaka (To See Clearly)*

In *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism*, Noenoe Silva (2004a) explores the issue of historiography in Hawai‘i. She explains that a long process normalized the idea that research and history about Hawai‘i was conducted in English. A principal methodology was constructed that produced a history of Hawai‘i that was in essence a synthesis of English-language texts. This enduring structure has produced histories full of people and places described by a very small but preferenced minority of voices. The majority of modern biographical works on Native Hawaiian figures of the 19th- and early 20th-centuries include few citations from the abundance of materials written about these figures in their native tongue. Hawaiian-language biographies of noted leaders such as King David La‘amea Kalākaua, Joseph Kaho‘oluhi Nāwahīokalaniopu‘u, Robert Wilcox, and many others are often not referenced in modern accounts of these significant figures in Hawaiian history. The public is given representations of these Native Hawaiian leaders that are built upon nonnative voice. My argument here does not center on any measurements of the validity of non-Hawaiian sources but rather on the idea that historians have been offered 10 witnesses to an event, have taken the testimony of one, and have written history.

A research project in the University of Hawai‘i archives reminds us of the process of constructing and privileging narratives of the past and the paths through which these narratives enter our lives. The early yearbook at the university was titled *Ka Palapala*, and the 1931 issue was formatted as a history of Hawai‘i. The album was divided by sections or “books” that describe the important changes that had come to the islands. “Book 5” of the issue on the military was headed with the title “Transition (1890–1899).” It described the events that led to the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom government:

This period reveals the Islands on the verge of dynamic changes. Queen Liliuokalani was on the throne and had ruled despotically, bringing about changes without consulting the will of her people. Revolution soon followed and her throne was seized from her. A shot fired by a Mr. Good on Fort Street precipitated the state of revolt against the de facto government. (*Ka Palapala*, 1931)

This public history is both a result and a continuation of the problematic historiography that this essay examines. It re-presents, and thereby supports, a narrative constructed from one side of a contested historical event.<sup>29</sup> Nearly four decades after the 1893 incident which it describes, the process of leaving voices behind had become easier, less contested. Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1995) speaks of these as “silenced voices” and writes, “By silence, I mean an active and transitive process: one ‘silences’ a fact or an individual as a silencer silences a gun. One engages in the practice of silencing. Mentions and silences are thus active, dialectical counterparts of which history is the synthesis” (p. 48). In the case of the taking of Hawai‘i, these silences helped bridge a political gap between two sovereign nations and allowed for a new homogeneous national narrative.

*I ka Wā Mamua, ka Wā Mahope (The Future Is in the Past)*

In his 2010 text *Mai Pa‘a I Ka Leo: Historical Voice in Hawaiian Primary Materials, Looking Forward and Listening Back*, Puakea Nogelmeier describes the vast collection of Hawaiian-language primary source materials that have yet to be accessed: “Beyond the canon is a historical written legacy of Hawaiian self-expression: Hawaiians writing their own stories, in their own language, for themselves, their peers, their descendants, and all who would come after them” (p. xiv). We must move forward accessing these types of voices, pursuing a historiography that highlights the many diverse voices that spoke of their lives, their lands, and their lāhui. We must not settle for biographies of Hawaiian leaders that lack Hawaiian voice. Silva (2004a) declares, “The most important item in my methodological toolbox...has been simply to read what the Kanaka Maoli wrote” (p. 5). Works that begin to give platform to those Hawaiian voices resonate with the people who are descendants. They not only alter an understanding of the past but also re-present the present. I have seen the effects of these native voices on Kānaka Maoli in

classes and community presentations, the incredibly articulate speech of Joseph Nāwahī quoting Virgil to the Hawaiian Kingdom Legislature in 1878, the powerful and eloquent writings of the women of Hui Aloha ‘Āina, and the courageous and steadfast declarations of loyalty by native policemen resigning their posts in a false government. These kūpuna (ancestors) offer a different image of “Native Hawaiian” to a modern-day Hawai‘i both barraged with negative statistics and stereotypes and often removed from the aforementioned past by an abundance of exclusive narratives.

Because of the diligent work of a number of current scholars, we are now hearing from Native Hawaiians like Joseph Mokuohai Poepoe, James Kaulia, William Pūnohu White, Emma and Joseph Nāwahī, J. P. Ka‘uhane, R. H. Makekau, and many others. And we have only scratched the surface. As Jonathan Osorio expressed so concisely at a recent screening of the Hawaiian-language biography film *Nāwahī*, “There are undoubtedly hundreds of Joseph Nāwahī’s.” These Hawaiians left us their voices, an incredible historical legacy for future generations. It’s well past time we listened.

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#### NOTES

- 1 For expansion on the idea of the “Normalization of English-Only Sourcing,” see Silva (2004a) and Nogelmeier (2010).
- 2 Among others, see Nogelmeier (2010), Arista (2009), Silva (2004a, 2009), Andrade (2008), and Basham (2007).
- 3 I borrow this terminology, and a deeper understanding of its implications, from Vicente Diaz’s (2010) *Repositioning the Missionary: Rewriting the Histories of Colonialism, Native Catholicism, and Indigeneity in Guam*.
- 4 Clause 2, Provisional Government Proclamation of January 17, 1893. Foreign Office & Executive, Hawai'i State Archives.
- 5 The Rev. Sereno Edwards Bishop, a Congregationalist minister and editor of *The Friend*, wrote more than 100 columns on the political situation in Hawai'i that appeared in U.S. newspapers.

6 This current motto of the U.S. National Park Service is found throughout the memorial at Pu‘uloa and in the visitor and travel literature describing the site.

7 In *The Methods and Skills of History*, Conal Furay and Micheal Salevouris (1988) define historiography as “the study of the way history has been and is written—the history of historical writing” (p. 22).

8 Andrade (1996) himself declares, “Historians have not systematically investigated the years after 1893” and “the role Wilcox played provides a key to understanding the progression and outcome” (p. 2) of events of the period.

9 Although there were significant Hawaiian-language materials produced early in the century and the newspaper *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* continued until December 29, 1927, these sources, like the others that are mentioned, were largely displaced as sources within the dominant historiography that is examined here.

10 I thank Kenneth Segawa for introducing me to the Andrade text.

11 The Home Rule Party proposed nearly 100 bills, many dealing with their constituencies’ core issues, including support of Hawaiian language, a removal of tax on all implements and products used to farm taro, a bill to require a license for those treating leprosy, and more local-based rule. *Ke Aloha Aina* (KAA) and other nūpepa carried weekly legislative reports and commentary. See *Ka Ahaolelo Mua o ke Teritori Hawaii* (The First Legislature of the Territory of Hawai‘i), KAA, Malaki 2, 1901; *He Mau Bila Kanawai Maikai!* (Good Bills!), KAA, Malaki 9, 1901; *Ka Bila Lapaau o Ewaliko* (The Medical Bill of Emmeluth), KAA, Malaki 30, 1901, for a few of the many examples. An extensive reading of the period is important for context.

12 These characterizations of Andrade’s research methodology as thorough speak strongly to the idea of the normalization of Hawaiian history through English-language sources.

13 A political party platform, translated to English in one of the Hawaiian-language newspapers, accessed by Andrade, is the one citation of any Hawaiian-language source at all in the book.

14 In February 2010 *The Honolulu Advertiser*, descendant of *The Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, was purchased by rival paper *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, and in June 2010 the papers were merged to create the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*.

15 W. N. Armstrong had accompanied King David Kalākaua on his diplomatic journey around the world in 1881 and subsequently published “Around the World With a King” (Armstrong, 1904) and also articles in U.S. newspapers (e.g., Armstrong, 1895) containing racist and paternal characterizations of both the king specifically and Native Hawaiians—a “weak, thriftless dying race”—in general.

16 Columns and headlines such as “Hoopunipuni loa ka Buletina” (The Bulletin [newspaper] lies) (*Ka Makaainana*, Sepatemaba 30, 1895, 8 ‘ao‘ao) were nearly daily occurrences throughout the highly contested periods that Andrade covers.

17 The Judd Manuscript Collection (MS Group 70), kept at the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum since 1922, was under a restriction that did not allow public access to the material until the last grandchild of A. F. Judd had died, which occurred in 2006.

18 Although the unpublished essay is marked by the museum as “not dated,” information within the text ties the work definitively to the period in which Henry M. Whitney was the proprietor.

19 Historian Ralph Kuykendall seconds this categorization in *Kingdom of Hawai‘i* (Vol. 2): “Conspicuous among such conditions and developments were the establishment of the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* (1856) as a spokesman for American interests” (Kuykendall, 1953, p. 35).

20 While the immediate focus of this example is the exclusion of Hawaiian-language newspapers, it must also be pointed out that there are large collections of Hawaiian-language correspondences—private, governmental, and institutional—that cover the period in question.

21 *Ka Leo o ka Lahui*, Ianuali 24, 1893, Buke 2, Helu 628, ‘ao‘ao 3; *Hawaii Holomua*, Ianuali 24, 1893, Buke 3, Helu 145, ‘ao‘ao 1.

22 The historiographical point being made does not stand or fall on the acceptance of either view of the subject but rather relies on an understanding of the fundamental problem of the exclusion of Hawaiian-language sources.

23 An introduction by Stillman and Puakea Nogelmeier (2003) to a Hawaiian Historical Society’s republication of this Hawaiian-language text terms the collection “an extraordinary historical treasure” (p. xiii).

24 Mele written by Annie K. Kaanoiokalani in *Buke Mele Lahui hoomakaukau, hoakoakoa a hooponoia mai na mele i hoopukaia ma ka nupepa “Ka Makaainana” a me kahi mau nupepa e ae* (Book of Nationalist Songs prepared, collected, assembled and corrected from the songs published in the newspaper *Ka Makaainana* and other newspapers; Testa, 1895).

25 He Inoa No Wilikoki (A Name Indeed Wilcox) in *Buke Mele Lahui hoomakaukau, hoakoakoa a hooponoia mai na mele i hoopukaia ma ka nupepa “Ka Makaainana” a me kahi mau nupepa e ae* (Book of Nationalist Songs prepared, collected, assembled and corrected from the songs published in the newspaper *Ka Makaainana* and other newspapers; Testa, 1895).

26 For a more complete analysis of the value and use of mele as historical text, see Stillman (1989, 1999, 2002, 2003), Silva (2000, 2004a, 2004b), and Charlot (1985).

27 There were at least 12 Hawaiian-language newspapers being published at the time of the 1895 “Wilcox Rebellion.”

28 In her review in the *Hawaiian Journal of History*, Patricia Alvarez (1997) briefly addresses the issue of sourcing in a sentence that, I argue, greatly underestimates the problem. She writes, “Had Andrade used Hawaiian-language sources, he might have created a more well-rounded portrait or provided more details of the rebel’s activities in the years between revolts and campaigns” (p. 221). She continues on, however, to represent Wilcox and his role in events through the English-language sources used.

29 A plethora of archival documentation contests this interpretation, including mass petitions to the Queen—in Hawaiian—in 1891 from her people calling for a new constitution for the kingdom. Portions of these petitions are part of a collection of documents that were taken from the Queen’s personal safe upon her arrest in 1895 and are held at the Hawai‘i State Archives.