

Introduction

WHAT DOES GLOBALIZATION LOOK LIKE? How does capitalism feel? To the sandalwood cutter, it was 133 pounds of wood strapped on his back, stumbling down a steep mountain path on his way to the sea. To the whale worker, it was bruises on his body; it was the songs he sang about whales, warships, and about coming up short. Kealoha felt it trembling under his skin; it was cold and unforgettable. Kailiopio heard it in the millions of birds screaming and cawing above his head. To the gold miner, it was hunger and embarrassment. Nahoia felt it in the warm tears streaming down his face. The plantation worker felt it in his stomach, in the strange foods that he ate. Hawaiian workers experienced globalization and capitalism in their bodies.

In the century from the death of Captain James Cook in 1779 to the rise of the sugar plantations in the 1870s, thousands of *Kānaka Maoli* (Native Hawaiian) men left Hawai‘i to work on ships at sea and in *nā ‘āina ‘ē* (foreign lands). Through labor, these men bridged islands and continents; they wove together a world of economic, demographic, and ecological exchanges; and they wrote about their experiences abroad in Hawaiian-language newspapers that traveled home and back out again across a transoceanic diaspora. Hawaiian men extracted sea otter furs, sandalwood, bird guano, whale oil, cattle hides, gold, and other commodities. The things they made and the stories they told traveled to every corner of the Pacific Ocean, from China in the west to the equatorial Line Islands in the south to Mexico in the east to the Arctic Ocean in the north. This is the story of the rise and fall of the Hawaiian worker in the nineteenth century. It is a story of transoceanic capitalist integration, and the story of how the world’s greatest ocean became a “Hawaiian Pacific World”—the world that Hawaiian labor made.

Historians of Hawai‘i and the Pacific have tended to ignore this narrative: how Hawai‘i’s integration into a global capitalist economy in the nineteenth century was propelled by the labor of thousands of Native men who left Hawai‘i in pursuit of wages and opportunity abroad. Historians have long focused on the complex relations among *ali‘i* (chiefs) and *haole* (foreigner) elites, consequently sidestepping investigations of the *maka‘āinana* (commoners), the indigenous workers and their experiences of capitalism.¹ Labor historians have written at great length about Hawai‘i’s immigrant work force, including Chinese, Japanese, Portuguese, and Filipina/o workers, but less is known about Hawai‘i’s indigenous workers, including those Native men and women who left Hawai‘i to pursue work on ships at sea and in foreign lands.² Pacific World historians have traced the movement of ships, goods, plants, animals, and diseases across the vast ocean, but Native workers are rarely accounted for as agents peopling those diasporas and traveling those circulations.³ This book is a study of the formation of Hawai‘i’s indigenous working class in an era of early capitalist expansion and globalization. Here, Hawaiian migrant workers take center stage. Through both work and words, Hawaiian labor linked disparate peoples, places, and processes together, making the Pacific into a “world.”

THE “KANAKA” BODY

Hawaiian workers were known as “kanakas.” The term *kanaka* (singular)/*kānaka* (plural) is Hawaiian for “person” or “people.” In the nineteenth century, Europeans and Euro-Americans circumscribed this term’s meaning to more specifically refer to a Native Hawaiian male worker. By the end of the century it was used throughout the Pacific World to refer to all manner of Pacific Islander workers. The “kanaka” represented a racialized, classed, and gendered body, the creation of a Western capitalist imagination that saw the world’s peoples as pools of labor fit for the global economy.⁴ Eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Hawaiian leaders seem to have occasionally used *kanaka* as a term designating a male servant to an ali‘i, which perhaps informed how and why outsiders began to use this term.⁵ Some Hawaiians also seemingly embraced the term *kanaka* and their application of the term may have informed Euro-American understandings.⁶ More frequently “kanaka” was used by outsiders as a derogatory label. The idea of the kanaka in the nineteenth century was born of the marriage of a Western capitalist

political economy with indigenous Hawaiian paradigms of class, labor, and personhood.⁷

Beginning in the 1810s and 1820s, capitalist and Christian values combined to engender a new body discourse in Hawai‘i. The large size of many ali‘i bodies in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was, for many Hawaiians, an indigenous expression of *mana* (divine power); one’s corporeality marked his or her legitimacy to rule over the people and the land.⁸ A rival discourse developed under capitalism in which strong, lean, and muscular male bodies were valued as commodities in the global labor marketplace. Foreign employers and missionaries alike saw the body not so much as an expression of spiritual power (*mana*) but of labor power. An indigenous system of corporeal class politics based on fatness was replaced by a new regime of fitness.⁹

At least three racial stereotypes defined the kanaka body in the Western mind. To many employers and other foreigners, Hawaiians were an “amphibious” race, “nearly as much at home in the water as on dry land.”¹⁰ This meant that Hawaiian workers were seen as particularly fit—that is, suitable or adaptable—for labor in marine and maritime work environments. This racial imaginary—certainly influenced by foreigners’ surprise at Native bathing, surfing, and fishing cultures—influenced Hawaiian work experiences all across the Pacific, where workers were frequently charged with labors that involved swimming, diving, and boating.¹¹ Second, Hawaiians were considered innately indolent. Many foreigners blamed this on the climate, thereby racializing tropicality as the combination of listless bodies with an enervating environment.¹² This discourse of tropical indolence legitimated Christian missionaries’ efforts to destroy indigenous systems of labor and domestic production; only capitalism could turn so-called lazy kanakas into industrious citizens. Employers likewise reasoned that indolence had to be driven out of the kanaka; left to his own devices, he simply would not work.¹³ Third, the kanaka body was seen as a diseased body. By mid-century, both ali‘i and influential foreigners were consumed by a discourse predicting apocalyptic population decline. True, Hawaiians were dying at an alarming rate from foreign epidemics, but the racialization and commodification of the kanaka also framed disease as a market liability.¹⁴ One of the reasons why the Kingdom of Hawai‘i eventually turned to importing foreign labor was the government’s belief that the Native kanaka would not survive long enough to sustain the economy and preserve the *lāhui* (nation).¹⁵ All told, the presumed brute strength and “amphibious” dexterity of Hawaiian male

workers made the kanaka an attractive worker, while his simultaneous penchant for indolence and susceptibility to disease made him a less than ideal partner in global commerce.

Yet for the kanaka himself, being a worker in the capitalist economy was not so much about the raced, classed, and gendered limitations of his body, or the inherent strengths or weaknesses of his corporeal nature. To him, work was about survival, and also about working-class power and possibility in a world suddenly turned upside down. Against narratives of indigenous rootedness in *ka ʻāina* (the land)—narratives that privilege stories of demographic and environmental collapse, victimization, and dispossession—we might follow an approach first charted by Epele Hauʻofa and since developed by Kealani Cook, David A. Chang, and others, to tell stories of indigenous routedness on the ocean. Rather than facing colonization and in situ victimization, thousands of Hawaiian workers challenged their Native leaders and the state as well as haole employers and imperial usurpers alike by moving their bodies along pathways opened up by globalization. Movement, migration, and mobility were not signs of defeat for the Hawaiian people but rather historical examples of working-class agency in Hawaiʻi and beyond.¹⁶

These stories have the power to “re-member” Hawaiian working-class men to nineteenth-century history. Against the debilitating, emasculating discourse of the deformed kanaka body—which Ty P. Kāwika Tengan has shown can be re-membered through indigenous articulations of Native masculinities—and the “dismembered” Hawaiian body politic (*ka lāhui*)—building on Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwoʻole Osorio’s terms—this book’s narrative of Hawaiian migrant labor is the story of physically capable and cosmopolitan workers who created a transoceanic diaspora spreading out across the world’s greatest ocean, bringing Hawaiʻi into the global economy and forever reshaping Hawaiian history, politics, and culture.¹⁷ Yet these men are routinely left out of narratives of the Hawaiian nation and Hawaiian history, and this omission has grave consequences. If that which made the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi a wealthy, cosmopolitan state on the nineteenth-century world stage was not its leaders, but rather its workers, how might this story influence current-day anticolonial strategies against U.S. empire? If labor, not land—people, not plantations—are central to Hawaiian history, how might working people, including diasporic off-Island Hawaiians, take center stage again in the Hawaiian lāhui?¹⁸

And what about women? Thousands of Hawaiian male migrant workers were supported at home by mothers, wives, sisters, cousins, and daughters.

Furthermore, hundreds of women worked on ships and abroad as migrant laborers. Some were prostitutes, some were domestic servants, others worked side-by-side with men doing the same labor yet not always receiving the same wages.¹⁹ Moreover, many historians have noted the incredible stories of female leaders in nineteenth-century Hawai‘i who ruled as queens and princesses, prime ministers and regents. Titles shifted over time, but women always took a leadership role in the Kingdom of Hawai‘i. European and Euro-American observers often wrote about Hawai‘i as a nation of women.²⁰ Yet sometimes this discourse was problematic. When foreigners wrote of Hawai‘i as a seductive land luring colonists in to “have” her, they feminized the nation and the people; colonialism thus became an exercise of exerting one’s white heteronormative masculinity and patriarchy over a nation seen as submissive, feminine, and in need of protection. Attendant with this discourse, as Adria Imada has shown, was the imperial parading of Hawaiian women as representatives of the docile and welcoming (with *aloha*, of course) colonial subject body. Native scholars Ty P. Kāwika Tengan and Isaiah Helekunihi Walker have also shown how this discourse worked to erase Hawaiian men from narratives about Hawai‘i. They were seen as superfluous, even dangerous, to the colonial project of making Hawai‘i into a paradise (as defined by the colonizers). To this day, many Hawaiian working-class men feel sidelined from the dominant colonialist narratives of their nation and their history.²¹ In this book, Hawaiian men take center stage alongside a rigorous gender analysis that explores how Western discourse emasculated men as “kanakas,” and how Hawaiian men fought back against this talk through their courageous stories of work, migration, and sacrifice upon the ocean and across the world.

A HAWAIIAN PACIFIC WORLD

Hawaiian labor made the Pacific into a “world.” They did this by weaving a web of interconnections across the vast ocean—connections that had never before existed. Over the past decade, historians have debated the concept of a Pacific World. Is, or was, the entire ocean ever a coherent, integrated space? Did people in the nineteenth century see themselves as living and laboring in such a world? What forces make for such a world—the movement of labor, capital, and material, or the transmission and sharing of stories, songs, and culture? Some scholars posit that rising empires are the agents that historically

connected disparate peoples and places together, calling the Pacific at times a Spanish Lake or referring to it, in the age of British and American imperialism, as an Anglophone Pacific World.²² Scholars of Asian migrations and diasporas have countered with the study of the transpacific—the worlds made, imagined, and populated by Asian workers, diasporic literatures, and counterhegemonic claims on imperial oceanic space.²³ Both of these approaches, however, wholly dismiss Pacific Islander peoples and indigenous perspectives on the ocean. Some scholars have used environment and ecology to argue for a Pacific World, proposing variously that tectonic plates or tsunamis or the extraction of natural resources have geographically placed the ocean's many peoples upon a singular stage.²⁴ Economic arguments paint the Pacific World as a “sector” of the global economy, or as a “primal site” of globalization. In this vein, transoceanic maritime trade with China made the Pacific into a world.²⁵ But then there are sectors within the sector; scholars have written of the Eastern Pacific and the Northern Pacific as unique arenas of economic and cultural activity.²⁶ Indigenous scholars, on the other hand, have used Native languages and literatures to propose uniquely non-Western ways of conceptualizing the ocean. Historian Damon Salesa has mapped the “native seas” of pelagic fishing and maritime networks, while Hawaiian scholar B. Pualani Lincoln Maielua has celebrated the “situated knowledge” of a canoe's-eye view of the world.²⁷

The term Hawaiian Pacific World, as used in this book, is an attempt to build upon the aforementioned approaches while also making three important new contributions: first, this book argues that labor was the glue that held the Pacific Ocean together. Workers, in both body and mind—real people moving through ocean space and thinking about the world beyond Hawai'i—were essential agents of transoceanic integration. The Pacific became a “world” to Hawaiians through Native workers' migrations, their labors abroad, and the stories and songs that they shared back home about their experiences. To argue otherwise—that Western explorers, the movement of ships, climatic or ecological pressures, the spread of disease, or other factors brought the world to Hawai'i—is to deny the agency of the thousands of Native men who traveled to distant corners of the ocean and the surrounding continents and carried aspects of the world beyond Hawai'i back home with them in their words, in the things they made, and in their altered bodies.

Second, the term Hawaiian Pacific World denotes an explicitly national conceptualization of oceanic space, time, and belonging. Pacific World historians have shied away from nationalism. Acknowledging that important

events occur both below and above the level of the nation-state, and worrying, rightly so, of any interpretation that “elides native histories and reifies imperial agendas,” scholars have instead called for transnational or “trans-local” approaches to the study of the ocean.²⁸ But such approaches may effectively deny the national claims of indigenous peoples who have long understood their engagement with the world as a crucial aspect of their nation’s story. Furthermore, transnational approaches may give the impression that the ocean is, or was, a neutral space or empty stage upon which diverse peoples have historically come into contact. But, as David Chang has argued, Hawaiians, for example, have long understood the Pacific Ocean as a known realm. They peopled the ocean with their bodies as indigenous explorers, claiming the ocean as a space of Hawaiian storytelling integral to larger narratives of national identity and belonging.²⁹ To say that there was a Hawaiian Pacific World, therefore, is to contend that Hawaiian national history goes beyond the borders of the archipelago, including the supranational spaces lived in, embodied, and transformed by migrant workers and diasporic Islanders. This book therefore presents a national history of Hawaiian engagements with global capitalism. The setting? A large swath of the Pacific Ocean and the surrounding continents, what I call the Hawaiian Pacific World.

Finally, this conceptualization is grounded in both theories of historical materialism as well as the study of culture. To argue that only material linkages, economic and ecological, made the Pacific a world would deny the importance of Hawaiian workers’ own words, through letters home as well as through stories and songs, in making the world beyond Hawai‘i legible to other Hawaiians. To argue, oppositely, that only intellectual and cultural understandings of oceanic space and time prove the existence of a larger world is to deny the monumental impact of global capitalism on Hawaiian minds, bodies, and movements. Trade networks, commodity chains, labor migrations, and capital flows, in addition to ocean currents, island ecologies, mineral deposits, and animal habitats all have materially shaped the geography of the world that Hawaiian workers came to know as theirs: a world they lived and labored in and brought home to Hawai‘i.

Specific contours of this Hawaiian Pacific World are explored in the chapters that follow. Hawaiian workers moved their bodies north, south, east, and west. Whale workers brought Hawaiian words with them to Alaska and Russia, then returned to Hawai‘i with songs about ice and snow as well as a penchant for whale blubber and strong drink. Gold miners in California

subscribed to Hawaiian-language newspapers, writing letters to editors, then finally receiving their words in print weeks or months later as these newspapers arrived in the mountains of North America. Hawaiian sandalwood cutters came to see the exchange-value of their toil in the fine Chinese cloths and furniture items in a chief's home in Honolulu. Through labor, workers set a Pacific World in motion.

They were also one of the most literate working classes in the world. They uniquely wrote about their experiences abroad, and read their comrades' words and stories in Hawaiian-language newspapers that were printed in Honolulu and shipped out across the ocean, wherever ships sailed. As Hawaiian scholar Noenoe K. Silva has shown, this was a diaspora of newsprint as much as a diaspora of people. Through the circulation of stories and songs, in print as well as through oral cultures, Hawaiians came to see themselves as part of a transoceanic diaspora.³⁰ Workers' words are crucial to this transoceanic imagining of diasporic Hawaiian space. Indigenous newspapers and Hawaiian-language geography textbooks, as demonstrated by David Chang, mapped out the ocean as a bounded and known world. To some it was *'Āinamoana*, literally "ocean land."³¹

Other people experienced their own Pacific Worlds. There was no one common sense of oceanic space or transoceanic integration shared by all Pacific peoples, indigenous or foreigner. Yet it is also possible to speak of the ocean as an increasingly integral part of the larger processes of globalization. The Hawaiian Pacific World was influenced by forces not just beyond Hawai'i, but beyond the Pacific. Capital flowed into Pacific industries from Boston, New York, and London. Specie from Latin America exchanged hands on Hawaiian shores. Consumers in China and the United States touched and tasted Hawaiian-made products. Scholars have traced the emergence of a "world economy" in the early modern era, prior to the period of Hawai'i's integration into that economic system.³² By the nineteenth century, global capitalism had expanded to yet new frontiers, forcing open distant markets and recruiting workers among indigenous societies in Africa, North America, and in Oceania, including Hawai'i.³³ Globalization did not, and will not, homogenize the world's peoples into one culture. Rather, contacts and confluences among local and global forces create hybridity as well as "friction."³⁴ Hawaiians influence the world just as the world influences Hawaiian society. The history of how Native Hawaiians engaged in (and against) the global capitalist economy can tell us something about how globalization was experienced in local, national, and regional contexts, from the

shores of Honolulu outward to the far corners of what was then the Hawaiian Pacific World.

HAWAIIAN CAPITALISM

Historians have long studied capitalism as a unique mode of production, the way that capital moves across space, transfigures peoples' sense of time, and drives workers off the land and into new relations of production. Narratives of primitive accumulation, the globalization of labor flows and markets, and the dispossession and proletarianization of indigenous peoples are commonplace themes in nineteenth-century world history.³⁵ As Hawaiians became "enmeshed in the capitalist net" of the global economy, to use Lilikalā Kame'eleihewa's words, how did indigenous workers and consumers experience this brave new world? What were the unique features of Hawaiian capitalism?³⁶

The dominant narrative of capitalism in Hawai'i focuses on changes in *ka 'āina* (the land). Westerners colluded with Native leaders to push through land reforms in the 1840s that privatized millions of acres of the former commons, thereby dispossessing the *maka'āinana*, the "people of the land." This land was initially distributed among the ali'i only, but soon much of it ended up in the hands of foreign owners. By turning the land into a commodity, Hawaiians lost their land and thereby lost their sovereignty.³⁷ Or so the story goes. This narrative is not false, but there is more. While Hawai'i's capitalist class sought to "free" the land—that is, to convert it into private property—they also simultaneously pushed for "free" trade and "free" labor. Western powers such as the United States and Great Britain employed gunboats to coerce states from the Qing Empire in China to the Kingdom of Hawai'i to open their ports to foreign commerce. So-called free trade led to the decline of indigenous industries, such as the production of *kalo* (taro) and *kapa* (cloth), while consumer debts fostered by increasing global commerce linked both individuals and states to the demands of foreign creditors.³⁸ The dehumanization of the *kanaka* body, on the other hand, with Christian missionaries seeking to kill the Hawaiian but save the man, and employers' belief in the nature of Hawaiian men as fit workers, also directed capitalism upon the human body.³⁹ Workers experienced capitalism in intimate, personal ways, from the changing rhythms of working days and seasonal voyages to the changing meanings of once-familiar plants such as sandalwood and sugarcane.⁴⁰

Indeed, capitalism conditioned workers' environmental experiences in revolutionary ways.⁴¹ In addition to seeing native plants such as sandalwood and sugarcane transformed by their own hands into globally circulating commodities, Hawaiian laborers also engaged in new relationships with Pacific Ocean animals.⁴² Migrant workers' hunt for wages actually turned them into real live hunters. Yet, animals were not just passive victims; they actively disrupted capitalist production through their movements and actions. In Pacific Ocean industries such as whaling and guano mining, human and animal labor collectively co-made the environment as a "workspace," a fluid and dialectical interface of human and nonhuman inputs.⁴³ Hawaiian migrants also caused environmental damage through their work. Their impact on local environments threatened floral and faunal habitats, disrupted other Native peoples' lifeways, and even endangered their own ability to exit the wage economy and live off the land and the sea as a commons. Capitalism in Hawai'i disrupted and displaced Native Hawaiian relationships with ka 'āina, but on the flip side it opened the door for common Hawaiians to develop cosmopolitan environmental experiences. Hawaiian migrants accumulated environmental knowledge and wisdom about the wider world that made them ambassadors for sharing stories and songs about the rare and raw natures that flourished beyond Hawai'i.⁴⁴

But how Hawaiians became migrant wage workers in the first place was a messy process. Hawaiian proletarianization came about only in complex ways.⁴⁵ As early as the 1810s, some Hawaiians worked for wages while others engaged in corvée labor. Some provided labor to ali'i as *ho'okupu* (tribute) while others labored independently for their own wealth. Some Hawaiians signed contracts aboard foreign ships and even worked overseas for foreign corporations. Hawaiian whale workers often labored for a combined share of total profits as well as a cash advance and sometimes wages for certain work but not for others. These complex entanglements of different modes of production and different relations of production, sometimes in the same places at the same times, marked Hawaiian capitalism as a bottom-up process of increasing engagements with the global economy rather than a top-down process imposed by elites or outsiders upon the people. There was no one moment when Hawaiian commoners became wage workers, and no one factor that propelled them into new forms of labor. In fact, many Hawaiian men sought out these opportunities. Capitalism was certainly embraced by some Hawaiians from the highest chief down to the lowliest worker, while it was also resisted in extraordinarily creative ways, on ships and on plantations all

across the Pacific World. Workers lived capitalism in their bodies, in their diets, in the things that they made and they consumed, and in the stories and songs that they told about a changing world.

ON SOURCES AND ETHICS

In the 1820s, Christian missionaries from New England brought the printed word to Hawai‘i. In the 1830s they began to print the Islands’ first English- and Hawaiian-language newspapers. Mission schools trained Hawaiians in *ka palapala*, reading and writing. Many Hawaiian workers learned to read and write, and their words not only helped to make a Pacific World in the nineteenth century, but they are also crucial tools for reconstructing Hawaiian history in the twenty-first century.

The government-run newspaper *Ka Hae Hawaii* (1856–1861) was the first paper to regularly feature letters to the editor by Hawaiian authors. The independent newspaper *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa* (1861–1927) also regularly featured letters to the editor. These Hawaiian-language letters, written for and published in Honolulu newspapers, are one of the few means available for reconstructing the lives of Native Hawaiian migrant workers in the nineteenth century. From California to equatorial guano islands to wherever ships sailed, Hawaiians abroad frequently sent letters home to let family and friends know about their work experiences. These letters to the editor capture nineteenth-century migrant laborers telling their story in their own words, a rare documentary source for any time period or place, much less nearly two centuries ago at the onset of global capitalism’s influence in the Pacific World. These letters are complemented by archival sources that more often portray foreigners’ points of view. Sometimes records such as ships’ logs, work contracts, and government censuses do not record much beyond the existence of a certain number of “kanakas” at any given place at any time. All available sources—from workers’ writings to Hawaiian-language songs to ships’ logs to employers’ diaries and government reports—are used in this book to tell the story of the thousands of Native men who worked in the global capitalist economy.

This book includes numerous Hawaiian-to-English translations. The act of translating from one language to another necessarily alters the meanings and messages embodied in words. Especially in the case of Hawaiian-language letters, essays, and songs, any translator is apt to completely miss the *kaona*

(the hidden meaning) of the words and what they meant at the time, if not also what they might mean to *‘ōlelo Hawai‘i* (Hawaiian language) speakers today. I am blessed to have had the guidance and encouragement of several gifted teachers in the Hawaiian language. They have patiently read and assisted with these translations. Still, English-language translations do not do justice to Hawai‘i’s nineteenth-century writers, and I therefore include in the backnotes the original Hawaiian text to accompany each and every English translation. All errors and misrepresentations are entirely my own.

I first traveled to Hawai‘i in 2010 as a doctoral student looking for an interesting topic for my dissertation. I spent three days in Honolulu, visiting ‘Iolani Palace and the Bishop Museum, and walking around Honolulu’s streets, my head pulsing with thoughts about sandalwood, China, the ocean, history. What was I looking for? I was determined to find an actual sandalwood tree. I spent four days on Kaua‘i looking for one. I was naïve, but more than that, I was reenacting colonialism. Here I was, a white person from the East Coast of the United States, bumbling my way through a foreign land looking for something that I could “sell” as a research project. I did not find an actual sandalwood tree, but I did find a story that propelled me to write this book. I have always wondered whether this is actually my story to tell, and if I am to tell it, how should it be told?

Several years ago, a friend from Hawai‘i told me about *kuleana*, a Hawaiian word that means both “privilege” and “responsibility” but cannot be reduced to either translation. She said that I needed to figure out what my *kuleana* was in regards to this project. She, as well as others, pointed me to the critical work of scholars such as Haunani-Kay Trask, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, and Julie Kaomea, who have all called for the decolonization of research and writing about Hawai‘i and the Pacific.⁴⁶ Here goes: I am not Hawaiian. I am not from Hawai‘i. As a *haole* from the mainland, I see that my *kuleana* is the “privilege” to think and write about the Pacific from the outside looking in, to imagine creative and alternative interpretations to dominant discourses; my *kuleana* is to bring outside concerns, methodologies, and research questions to bear upon local and indigenous stories, to offer new ways of seeing and to give voice to concerns that may or may not resonate with current stakeholders in the archipelago. These are all privileges that come with great responsibilities. My *kuleana* is also my “responsibility” to understand that outsider historians for centuries have committed discursive violence against Hawaiians, labeling and interpreting their bodies and behaviors and falsely claiming to speak for them on the privileged academic

stage. My kuleana is to respect and pay witness to the historic and contemporary wrongs that have been (and are) committed against Hawaiian people, by academics and by others, including the maintenance and perpetuation of U.S. colonialism and the denial of legitimate Hawaiian claims to self-determination.

THE STORY

Chapter 1 begins with the story of the opening of a trans-Pacific triangular trade in the 1780s among the United States, China, and Hawai‘i. Boki was an *ali‘i* (ruling chief) and *kia‘āina* (governor) of O‘ahu who in the 1820s became obsessed with the sandalwood trade and the riches flowing into Hawai‘i from the Qing Empire of China. The story of Boki’s predicament—how to ensure enough indigenous sandalwood supply to keep pace with Hawaiian leaders’ increasing consumption of foreign goods and their debts owed American merchants—is our entryway into understanding the emergence of the Pacific World as an integrated segment of the global capitalist economy, and one in which Hawaiian workers took center stage. In the 1840s, Western concepts of free labor and free trade revolutionized the trans-Pacific economy with the imposition of treaty port restrictions on the Qing Empire following the Opium War (1839–1842) and the imposition of a free-labor ideology in Hawaiian land and legal reforms. By 1850, the Māhele—a process of land privatization and redistribution—had dispossessed the majority of Hawai‘i’s indigenous people, leading many to seek work abroad or on foreign ships.

Chapter 2 begins with the story of Make, a Native Hawaiian whale worker on an American ship in 1850. Make was just one of thousands of Hawaiian men who served on foreign whaling vessels in the nineteenth century. As the global whaling industry emerged in the period from 1820 to 1860, transoceanic economic and ecological factors conditioned Hawaiian workers’ experiences of both whales and the ocean. Movement and mobility are key to understanding the “whale worlds” inhabited by both Hawaiian workers and migratory whales. Hawaiian migrant workers were modern-day “whale riders.” Their experiences of ocean space and ocean time were influenced not just by global economic and ecological forces, including the geographical distance of the commodity chain from production to consumption, but by the nature of the ocean itself. Our story continues by following the movement

of workers from Hawai‘i to New England and beyond; the movement of whales from feeding grounds to breeding grounds; and the movement of whale parts from sites of production to sites of consumption in the United States.

From 1848 to 1876, most Hawaiian whale workers toiled in the icy climes of the Arctic Ocean. Chapter 3 begins with the story of Kealoha, a Hawaiian whale worker who in the 1870s lived among the Inupiat of Alaska’s North Slope for over one year. Bodies—both cetacean and human—are a central category of analysis for understanding Hawaiian experiences of Arctic whaling. In the Arctic Ocean, Hawaiian men interacted not only with ice, wind, cold, and snow, but also became intimate with whale anatomy as well as their own bodies through work. European and Euro-American discourses on the *kanaka* body held that Hawaiian men were not fit for work in nontropical climates, but Kealoha and thousands of other Native men challenged these racialized ideas, proving their fitness and their manliness in the “cold seas” of the North.

Another front of extractive industry in the 1850s and 1860s was guano mining. Kailiopia was one of approximately one thousand Native Hawaiian men who worked on remote equatorial Pacific Islands mining bird guano. Chapter 4 bridges themes in animal studies and the history of the body to explore the guano workscape. The guano island work environment was a hybrid world made and maintained interdependently by both human and avian actors. Millions of nesting seabirds, and their engagements in transoceanic work—connecting distant feeding grounds with local breeding grounds—constituted the nature of Hawaiian migrant workers’ experiences of this remote world.

Meanwhile, the California Gold Rush opened up yet another front in the Hawaiian migrant experience. Eighteen-year-old Henry Nahoa wrote a letter home from California’s Sierra Nevada mountains in the 1850s to express his “aloha me ka waimaka [aloha with tears]” to family members in Hawai‘i. Nahoa was not alone in his tears: at least one thousand Hawaiians migrated to California in the period before, during, and after the Gold Rush. Chapter 5 explores workers’ experiences in Alta California from the 1830s to the 1870s. During this time, men like Nahoa lived and labored under Spanish, Mexican, and U.S. rule. They worked in sea otter hunting, cattle hide skinning, gold mining, and urban and agricultural work, from the coasts to the sierras to cities and farms. Nineteenth-century California was an integral part of the Hawaiian Pacific World.

Native workers returning to Hawai‘i in the second half of the nineteenth century found an almost unrecognizable economy and environment. Following the Māhele, Euro-American settlers had made Hawai‘i their home and were intent on reorganizing labor and land to serve global capitalism. Chapter 6 examines the rise of the sugar plantation system in Hawai‘i, and how Hawai‘i’s sugar history—so often linked with histories of U.S. empire—was actually part of the same trans-Pacific story of oceanic industrialization through sandalwooding, whaling, guano mining, and gold mining. But the new migrant workers at this time were not Hawaiian kanakas, they were Chinese coolies. George Beckwith’s plantation at Ha‘ikū, Maui, is used as a case study for exploring the intersections and entanglements of Hawaiian and Chinese labor in this period. By 1880, Chinese and other non-Natives outnumbered Hawaiian workers in the sugar industry, and across the Pacific World the collapse of extractive industries such as whaling, guano mining, and gold mining left Hawai‘i’s diasporic working class disjointed and disempowered. The end result was the dismemberment of the Hawaiian working class.

In the Epilogue to this book, I consider how the story of the rise and fall of Hawai‘i’s indigenous workers—and the diasporic, migratory nature of their experiences—revolutionizes what we think we know about the place of Hawai‘i in the Pacific, and the place of the Pacific in the world. I also raise questions about what this story can contribute to twenty-first-century struggles over capitalism and colonialism in Hawai‘i as well as across our globalizing world.