

Appendix 3: A Note on Sources

There is a wealth of material from which to develop a more comprehensive account of the role played by warfare and coercion during the wars of unification. The unification of the Hawaiian archipelago is particularly well documented because of its relatively late date, the large number of European visitors to the chain who left written accounts about the period of unification, and the recording of Hawaiian sources in the 19th century. Seven groups of sources are available for the study of Hawaiian society up until the death of the first king, Kamehameha I, in 1819: the observations of European visitors to the islands from 1778 until 1819, missionary accounts from 1820 onwards, oral traditions and oral testimony recorded by Hawaiian scholars from the 1830s onwards, ethnographic studies by Europeans from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, 19th-century land records, archaeological remains of Hawaiian culture, and modern scientific studies of the physical environment.

The earliest written accounts of Hawaiian society are the journals and logs of various members of Captain James Cook's third voyage of discovery into the Pacific. Cook made three separate visits to the Hawaiian Islands between January 1778 and February 1779. As a number of Cook's officers kept journals, it is possible to crosscheck their accounts for inconsistencies.¹ The expedition only spent three and a half months in the island chain, mostly on board ship. Only Waimea Bay on Kaua'i, and Kealakekua Bay on Hawai'i were visited for any length of time, or described in any detail. Language difficulties added to the problems of comprehending Hawaiian culture. As one of Cook's officers noted, 'There is not much dependence to be placed upon these Constructions that we put upon Signs and Words which we understand but very little of & at best can only give a probable Guess at their Meaning'.² Nevertheless, the writings of Cook, James King

1 Valeri (1985a), pp. xviii–xxii; and Beaglehole (1967), pp. clxxi ff.

2 Samwell, in Beaglehole (1967), 3:2, p. 1223, cited in Valeri (1985a), p. xix.

and David Samwell stand out for their sensitivity to Hawaiian ways. King was particularly liked by Hawaiians, and was encouraged to remain in the archipelago.

From 1786 until the late 1790s, British and American trade vessels that were shipping furs from the north-west coast of America to China stopped to provision in Hawai'i. They rarely stopped for more than a few days at any location and concerned themselves mainly with matters of commerce.³ In the early 1790s, another British naval expedition arrived in the Hawaiian Islands. Commanded by George Vancouver, a veteran of Cook's voyages, this expedition visited the chain a number of times from 1792 until 1794. This coincided with Kamehameha's wars of unification, which took place between 1790 and 1795. Vancouver was also able to comment on the long-term changes that had occurred since Cook's time. The expedition spent about four months in total in the archipelago during this time spread over a number of visits.⁴ A number of Europeans began to live in the islands in the 1790s, but none left a significant written record of their experiences. This is particularly frustrating in the cases of John Young and Isaac Davis, both of whom participated in important battles of the decade. Young, in particular, became a close adviser and friend to Kamehameha I. The Hawai'i State Archives holds a manuscript listed as *The Journal of John Young*. It consists of only 46 pages of brief administrative details concerning the periods 1801–09, 1821 and 1825. European visitor reports of conversations with Young make it apparent that he was an intelligent and perceptive observer, although at times prone to exaggeration.⁵

The number of European residents steadily increased after Kamehameha secured control over most of the chain with his victory at Nu'uaniu in 1795. A number of them left accounts of Hawaiian society in the early 19th century. Visits from European trading vessels and naval expeditions continued for the remainder of Kamehameha's reign. The most valuable accounts from this period are those of Archibald Campbell, Otto von Kotzebue and Louis Freycinet. Campbell was a sailor who spent more

3 See Judd (1974) and Valeri (1985).

4 Vancouver (1801). Another excellent account of the Hawaiian Islands, contemporary to Vancouver's, is found in Archibald Menzies (1920).

5 Bradley (1942), pp. 33–34 nn. 129–30; Bruce Cartwright, 'Some Early Foreign Residents of the Hawaiian Islands', *25th Annual Report of the Hawaiian Historical Society for the Year 1916* (Honolulu: 1917), pp. 57–64; and Maude (1968), pp. 134–77, esp. 139 ff.

than a year on O‘ahu in 1809–10. The Russian naval captain Kotzebue touched at the islands in 1816–17, while Freycinet’s French expedition arrived in Hawai‘i just after the death of Kamehameha I in 1819.⁶

The death of Kamehameha I was soon followed by the abolition of the kapu system around which much Hawaiian religious practice was organised. The arrival of Christian missionaries in 1820 served to accentuate the process of cultural transformation. The missionaries left a number of accounts of their work and of what they had learned about Hawaiian society. The most useful are those of Sheldon Dibble, William Ellis and James Jarves. While Dibble revealed a strong European bias and concentrates on the Christian mission, his accounts do include Hawaiian history. He mentions that he received detailed accounts of the Hawaiians’ wars but omitted them because he believed that, ‘to burden history with a minute account of battles and conquests would be quite unprofitable’. Ellis was more open-minded. He arrived in Hawai‘i already fluent in Tahitian, and soon learned Hawaiian. He related well to Hawaiians, and was able to collect a great deal of ethnographic and linguistic material during a two-month tour of Hawai‘i.⁷

In the 1830s, Dibble implemented a program to collect and record Hawaiian lore and traditions. He selected 10 of his best students at the mission seminary at Lahainaluna and formed them into a class of inquiry. Each student went out with a list of 10 questions drawn up by Dibble and recorded all the information they could gather on each subject from the oldest and most knowledgeable informants they could find. The 10 then met and discussed each student’s findings to reconcile discrepancies and correct errors. Finally, the various compositions were edited by Dibble and published in 1838 as *Mooolelo Hawaii (Hawaiian Antiquities)*. The published work contained information on Hawaiian culture as well as historical subjects, such as chiefly genealogies and aspects of European contact. Christian elements appear, but are easily detectable and largely confined to moral criticisms of the old ways rather than alterations of them to conform to Christian doctrine.⁸

6 Campbell (1967), von Kotzebue (1821) and Kelly (1978).

7 Dibble (1909); Ellis (1969); Jarves (1843) and later enlarged edition (1872).

8 See Ben R. Finney et al., ‘Hawaiian Historians and the First Pacific History Seminar’, in N. Gunson (ed.), *The Changing Pacific – Essays in Honor of H.E. Maude* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 308–16; and Kahananui (1984), which is based on the 1838 version.

Perhaps Dibble's best student was David Malo, whose *Moolelo Hawaii* was completed in 1839 or 1840. Malo was born in North Kona on Hawai'i in 1795. His father had been attached to the court and army of Kamehameha I, and Malo was associated with the high chief Kuakini, the brother of Kamehameha's favourite wife, Ka'ahumanu. Malo also had a close relationship with Auwai, a chief who was well versed in Hawaiian traditions through his role as Kamehameha's genealogist and ritual expert. Valerio Valeri's checking of Malo's original Hawaiian-language manuscript suggests that Nathaniel B. Emerson's English edition distorts and misrepresents the text in places, and that his notes are a misleading mixture of valuable data and falsehoods.⁹

Other Hawaiian historians followed Malo. The most important were Samuel Kamakau and John Papa I'i. Kamakau was born at Mokuleia in the Waialua district of O'ahu in 1815 and entered Lahainaluna in 1833. He based his works on tradition gathered from older people, especially his grandfather. Although Samuel Kamakau was careful to distinguish between the past and his own time, this distinction is blurred in the translations of his ethnographic works. His *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii* is, however, a chronological narrative. Dorothy Barrere has noted a number of inaccuracies and distortions in Samuel Kamakau's works, but most of these relate to early 'myth history' where he knits biblical references into Hawaiian traditions.¹⁰

John Papa I'i was born in 1800 at Waipi'o on O'ahu. He was brought to Honolulu when he was 16 and placed under the supervision of his uncle, Papa, who was an attendant at the court of Kamehameha. Papa placed I'i in the household of Liholiho, Kamehameha's son and successor. In his later years, I'i was a prominent member of Kamehameha III's court before retiring to 'Ewa, O'ahu, to work in a Christian ministry until his death in 1870. *Fragments of History* is a collection of his writings for the Hawaiian language newspaper *Kuokoa* between 1866 and 1870. It contains much information on life at the courts of Kamehameha and his successors, as well as accounts of life in Honolulu in the early 1800s.¹¹

The other significant Hawaiian sources are Kepelino Keauokalahi, S.N. Haleole, and Kelou Kamakau. Kepelino was a descendant of the priestly line of Pao on his father's side. His mother was a daughter

9 Malo (1951), pp. 1–2.

10 Kamakau (1961). For his more ethnographic work see *Ka Po'e kahiko: The People of Old* (1964).

11 I'i (1959), p. vii.

of Kamehameha I. He was born in Kailua, in the Kona district of Hawai'i around 1830, and began writing in the 1850s. Unlike most Hawaiian historians, he did not attend Lahainaluna as his family was Catholic. Kepelino's family heritage gave him access to Hawaiian priestly and chiefly traditions and the most valuable aspects of his works record chants and details of traditional Hawaiian religion not previously recorded. Haleole wrote a series of articles on Hawaiian religion in the years just prior to his death in 1866 that are based mainly on information he gathered in the 1850s. Translations of these writings were published in a subsequent collection of Hawaiian folklore and traditions. Kēlou Kamakau, a lesser chief of Kaawaloa, in the Kona district of Hawai'i, lived near to the important temple of Hikiau and his writings reveal a detailed knowledge of traditional ritual. He was around 50 years old in 1823.¹²

Most of these Hawaiian historians were associated with Kamehameha's victorious party. Malo, Kepelino and Kēlou Kamakau came from a core area of Kamehameha's support base, while I'i was closely associated with the court of the Kamehameha dynasty. They came from the leeward coast of Hawai'i and O'ahu. For this reason Samuel Kamakau's *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii* and volume two of Abraham Fornander's *An Account of the Polynesian Race* are invaluable for their accounts of the political history of each of the main islands in the archipelago. Fornander, a Swede who settled in Hawai'i in 1842, based his writings on information gathered by Hawaiians that he sent to different islands, Europeans familiar with Hawaiian culture, and the works of previous Hawaiian scholars. His works cover mythological, historical and ritual subjects. According to Barrere, most of volume two of *An Account of the Polynesian Race* relies heavily on Samuel Kamakau's writings. Fornander also referred to the work of Malo, Kepelino and S.N. Hakuole (possibly Hale'ole). The information was collected over a three-year period and published in three volumes from 1876 to 1885. After Fornander's death, Thomas G. Thrum edited another three volumes of the traditions Fornander collected and published them between 1916 and 1920 as *The Fornander Collection of Hawaiian Antiquities and Folklore*.¹³

12 Valeri (1985a), pp. xxvi–xxvii. Kepelino is discussed in Beckwith (1937, p. 4), and in Valeri (1985a, p. xxvi). Haleole's works are recorded in Thrum (1918–20, pp. 56–59). Some of Kēlou Kamakau's writings were published in Thrum, vol. 6 (1919–20), pp. 2–45.

13 Fornander (1969). See Hommon (1975), pp. 10–12; and Valeri (1985a), p. xxvii.

Hawaiian ethnography continued throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Scholars such as Mary Kawena Pukui, Martha W. Beckwith, E.S.C. Handy and Peter Buck (Te Rangi Hiroa) continued the work of translating Hawaiian texts. Pukui and Beckwith translated the vast collection of Hawaiian language material housed in the Bishop Museum. Handy and Pukui devoted much time to the collection of information on Hawaiian life in the Ka'ū district of the Hawai'i. Buck produced a description of Hawaiian material culture, while Kenneth Emory was associated with archaeological surface surveys throughout the Hawaiian Islands and Polynesia.¹⁴

The proud tradition of mid-19th- and early 20th-century Hawaiian scholars has been carried on and developed by the current generation of indigenous Hawai'ian scholars, as outlined in Chapter 1 in the work of the late Kanalu G. Terry Young and Jonathan Kay Kamakawiwo'ole Osorio and Lilikalā Kame'elehiwa.¹⁵ Kame'elehiwa's colleague and contemporary Haunani K. Trask took issue with anthropological and other outsider representations of Hawaiian history in the early 1990s. Subsequently, just prior to his death, Young articulated a powerful vision of Hawaiian historical methodology.¹⁶

Armies are products of their societies. Information on social and economic organisation can be gleaned from two 19th-century inquiries into landholdings. In 1840 the Hawaiian monarchy replaced the old system of landholding with a new system based on European concepts of land ownership. To obtain land under the new system, commoners had to prove they lived on or cultivated the land in question. The records of this system reveal much about social organisation and land use. Later in the century, a government survey plotted and named all the basic ahupua'a land units.¹⁷

14 Valeri (1985a), p. xxvi; and Hommon (1975), p. 10. For example, see Alexander (1891); Buck (1964); Beckwith (1970); E.S.C. Handy & Mary Kawena Pukui, *The Polynesian Family System in Ka'ū, Hawaii* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1972); Handy & Handy (1972), and Pukui & Elbert (1986).

15 Haunani-Kay Trask, 'Cultures in Collision: Hawai'i and England, 1778', *Pacific Studies* (Laie), vol. 7, 1983, 91–117; Haunani-Kay Trask, 'Natives and Anthropologists: The Colonial Struggle', *The Contemporary Pacific*, vol. 3 (1), 1991, 159–67.

16 Young (1998); and Kanalu G. Terry Young, 'Kuleana: Toward a Historiography of Hawaiian National Consciousness, 1780–2001', *Hawaiian Journal of Law & Politics*, vol. 2, Summer 2006, 1–33.

17 Linnekin (1983), and Kirch & Sahlins (1992).

Studies of warfare need details of the environment to assess impediments to movement and logistics. Archaeological investigations have focused on the structures of day-to-day subsistence. Settlement pattern studies have been conducted in a wide variety of environments throughout the islands and offer valuable contrasts to early European visitors' focus on Waimea and Kealahou, both populous leeward areas that are not necessarily representative of other ecosystems. Since the mid-1970s, archaeology's subsistence-ecology orientation has been enriched through correlation with Hawaiian political traditions. Initially Robert Hommon led the way but, in recent years, others have followed his lead, most notably Pat Kirch in 2010 and 2012.¹⁸

The physical environment of Hawai'i remains essentially the same as it was in the 18th century. Human settlement has altered surface features such as vegetation patterns, and volcanic activity has changed Hawai'i, in particular, since the 1700s. Volcanic eruptions are datable, and remnants of unmodified vegetation allow for the reconstruction of original patterns in most localities. Modern scientific methods provide information on physical features such as landforms and soil types, rainfall patterns and vegetation. This information provides a valuable supplement with which to analyse Hawaiian settlement patterns and agricultural activity. A series of detailed maps produced by the United States Department of the Interior in the 1920s and 1950s are particularly useful as they predate the explosion of urban development since the 1960s that has engulfed many important battlefields and settlement sites.¹⁹

18 Hommon (1976), and Kirch (1984).

19 Kirch (1985), pp. 22–33; and Sherwin Carlquist, *Hawaii: A Natural History* (2nd edn) (Honolulu: SB Printers, Inc, 1980). See also US Department of the Interior, *Geological Survey* (Washington D.C.: 1928 and 1953–55).

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